A Catalogue of Shapes

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A Composite Object Portrait of an Oral-Formulaic Homer

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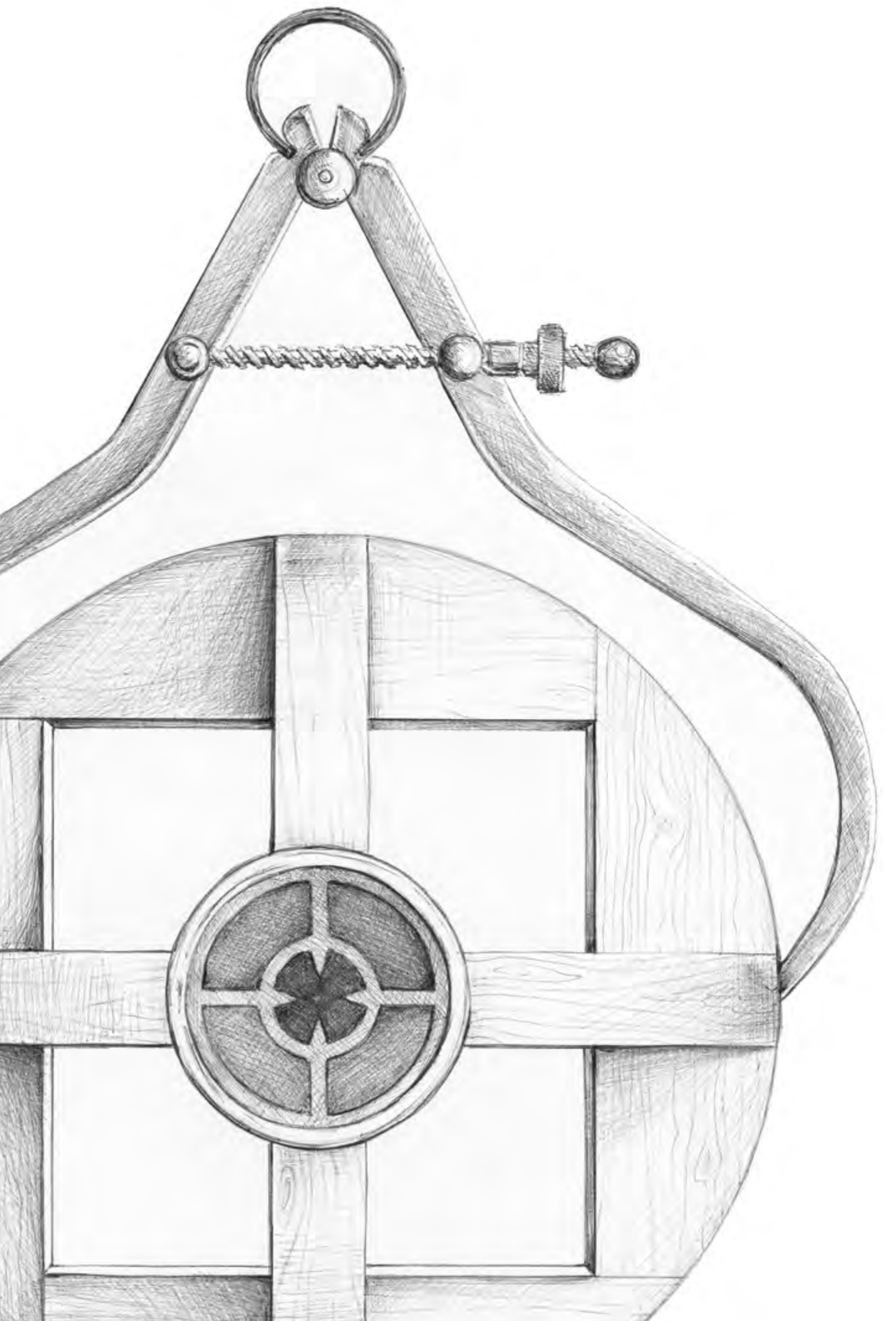
Abstract

The thesis identifies an equivalence between two seemingly disparate art-forms – Homeric poetry (the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*) and sculptural assemblage. The synthesis of form and content achieved by the re-organization, manipulation, and transformation of pre-existing components in the theory of an oral-formulaic Homer is explored by means of a practical application of sculptural assemblage. The thesis proposes that Homeric poetics and sculptural assemblage are sufficiently similar in terms of structure, methodology, and interpretive processes, to enable a sculptural evocation of the participatory interpretive aspects of Homeric composition in performance that is comprehensible to a contemporary audience.

The development of an iconography of an oral-formulaic Homer is expressed in a series of twelve sculptural assemblages entitled *A Catalogue of Shapes* 2010-13. These sculptures are composite object portraits of twelve Homeric characters. The creation of this catalogue of characters was informed by core structural, compositional, and conceptual aspects of the Iliadic *Catalogue of Ships* as a reflexive site of artistic self-awareness. *A Catalogue of Shapes* therefore represents a composite object portrait of an oral-formulaic Homer.

The representational system underlying *A Catalogue of Shapes* incorporates complex connotative allusions achieved by the manipulation of symbolically-invested materials, objects, and forms to reflect the compositional strategy underlying Homeric poetics. As an 'aesthetic translation' this series of sculptural assemblages comprises the creative and contextual re-interpretation of attributes characteristic of the form and content of an existing text/artwork, by means of creating another. It is both an autonomous artwork and an extension of an existing creative tradition.



Contents

Acknowledgements

Introduction *1*

Chapter 1: An Oral-Formulaic Homer *5*

- Composition in Performance *6*
- The Language of Homer *8*
- The Simile *11*
- The Structure of the Homeric *12*

Chapter 2: Sculptural Assemblage and the Composite Object Portrait *21*

- Cubism, Picasso, and Sculptural Assemblage *21*
- The Composite Object Portrait *34*

Chapter 3: Homeric Iconographies *41*

- Traditional Homeric Iconographies *41*
- Developing an Iconography for an Oral-Formulaic Homer *52*

Chapter 4: *A Catalogue of Shapes* 2010-13: Descriptive Catalogue of Artworks *61*

- *The Warriors* *63*
  1. *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, 2010 *65*
  2. *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ, 2011 *71*
  3. *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ, 2011 *77*
  4. *Hektor* ΕΧΩ, 2011 *83*
- *The Wives* *89*
  5. *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ, 2011 *91*
  6. *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ, 2011-2 *97*

The Deities *103*
7. *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012 *105*
8. *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ, 2012 *111*
9. *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ, 2012 *117*
10. *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ, 2012-3 *123*

The Kings *129*
11. *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ, 2013 *131*
12. *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ, 2013 *137*

Chapter 5: A Composite Object Portrait of an Oral-Formulaic Homer *143*

Aesthetic Translation *144*
Comparative Visualisation *147*
Homer as Creative Methodology *153*
Homer in a Catalogue of Characters *157*

Conclusion *165*

List of Illustrations *167*

References *173*

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Introduction

This project identifies an equivalence between two seemingly disparate art-forms – Homeric poetry (the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*) and sculptural assemblage. The synthesis of form and content achieved by the re-organization, manipulation, and transformation of pre-existing components in the theory of an oral-formulaic Homer is explored by means of a practical application of sculptural assemblage. The thesis proposes that Homeric poetics and sculptural assemblage are sufficiently similar in terms of structure, methodology, and hermeneutics, to enable a sculptural evocation of the immersive and participatory hermeneutics of an oral-formulaic Homer for a contemporary audience.

Contemporary Homeric studies tend to describe the compositional strategies which produced the Homeric epics as a creative methodology premised upon the integration of the formal with the aesthetic, and the immediate with the inherited. The result has been an enhanced recognition of the poetic significance of procedural and formal elements of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Contemporary Homeric scholarship developed from radical methodological innovations, to stand "at the forefront of scholarly research in the field of Classics" (Tsagalis 2008, xi). Its interdisciplinary nature resulted from a rejection of conventional literary criticism as inadequate for the analysis of an archaic oral epic. Milman Parry and Albert Lord's anthropological approach to studying oral performance produced a unique critical methodology where interpretation of the Homeric epic is contingent upon an understanding of its means of production.[1] Given the interdisciplinary predilections of Homeric studies, a study based on points of convergence with the practical and theoretical concerns of sculptural assemblage may yield further insight into Homeric poetics. Analysis of the construction of the Homeric has revealed significant methodological similarities with sculptural assemblage:

1. Milman Parry (1930) and Albert B. Lord (1953).

premised upon the 'anachronistic appropriation' of objects, forms, and ideas, assemblage describes a process of visual and conceptual redefinition in the production of a new and coherent whole.

Parry's procedure-focused approach to the Homeric Question echoes the basic principles of *chaîne opératoire* (operational sequence) in experimental archaeology, where theories on ancient technologies are tested by attempting to create accurate reconstructions. However, this study does not aim to examine theories of Homeric composition through a close replication of epic performance, but to produce a contemporary 'aesthetic translation' of Homeric poetics based on selected features of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. These include aspects such as structure, rhythm, composition, polysemy, and a dialectical hermeneutics, that many scholars now consider fundamental to Homeric artistry. This particular interpretive translation was created by means of a visual (sculptural) articulation of Homeric formalism. Entitled *A Catalogue of Shapes*, the translation takes the form of a series (or catalogue) of twelve composite object portraits of characters drawn from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. These were produced by means of sculptural assemblage, and function as reciprocally interrelated components of a single symbolic system.

The aim of this thesis is to describe the theoretical context, creative methodology, and conceptual objectives underlying *A Catalogue of Shapes*. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the understanding of Homeric poetics as oral-formulaic that informed this interpretation. The focus of the discussion falls on characteristics such as composition in performance, the Homeric idiom (or *Kunstprache*), linguistic flexibility, Homeric 'doubles' (sympathetic or juxtaposed antitheses), similes, parataxis, and the Homeric catalogue format. The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how, in the theory of formulaic composition, the preservation and transmission of Homeric poetry is premised on a sustained re-interpretation of the epic, and that this process entails a significant and necessary fusion of form with content through the continuous re-organization, manipulation, and transformation of pre-existing components.

Chapter 2 introduces discussion on the transformative engagement between modern art and the antique in the 'systemic Classicism' of Cubism. The methodological and hermeneutic characteristics of a formally disparate, but visually cohesive, and predominantly metaphoric (non-literal) type of sculptural assemblage are related to Pablo Picasso's innovations in collage and assemblage. Finally, the composite object portrait is discussed as an art-form premised on the creation of reciprocally allusive symbolic systems, which, in an example such as Joseph Cornell's *Juan Gris* series, incorporates a dialectical engagement between a subject and its interpreter based on both recognizable and private allusions.

Chapter 3 opens with an overview of traditional iconographies of the figure of Homer and Homeric themes and characters. The second part of the chapter is focused on describing the construction and iconography of *A Catalogue of Shapes* as a reflection on the creative methodology and aesthetics of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as understood in contemporary Homeric analyses.

Chapter 4 consists of the descriptive catalogue of artworks which details the dimensions, materials, subject, construction, composition, and iconography of each sculpture in the series.

Chapter 5 includes an account of the process of the conceptual relationship between *A Catalogue of Shapes* and the Homeric epics in terms of four models:

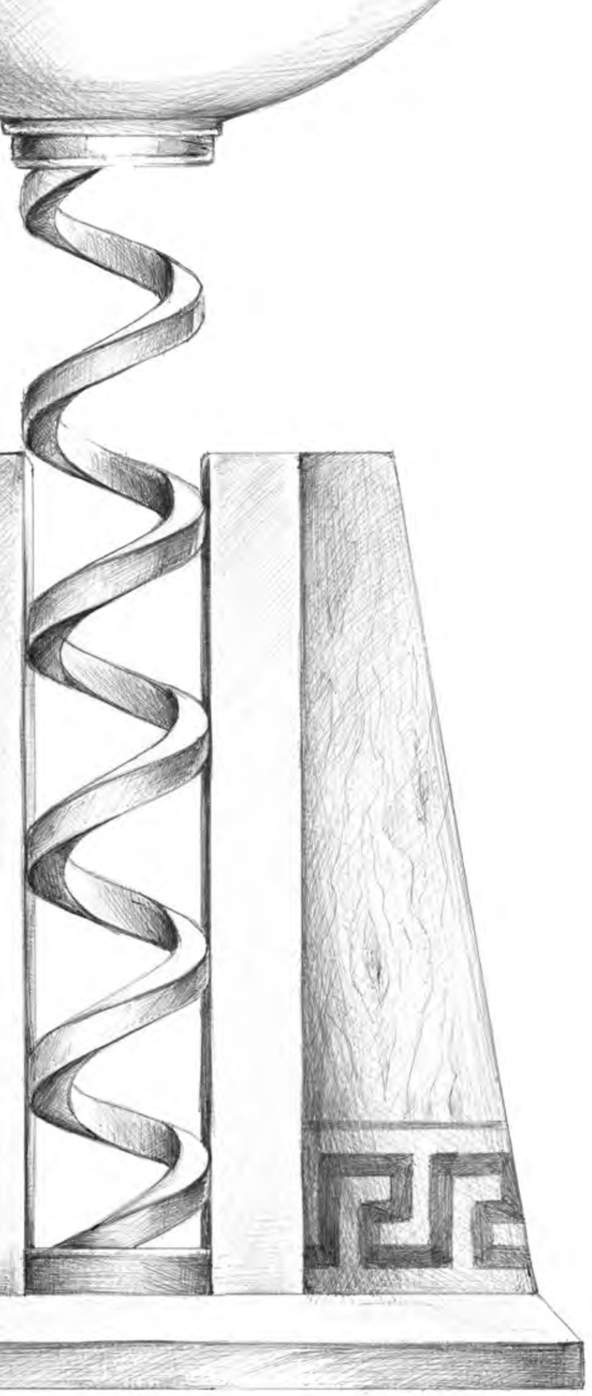
1. The creative methodology and hermeneutics of the composite object portrait are used as a model for a sculptural aesthetic translation of an oral-formulaic Homer.

2. The process of visualising aspects of the Homeric text that are comparable to sculptural assemblage is structurally and functionally related to the simile as a comparative image-making method.

3. An ancient text from the Homeric biographical tradition, *The Contest of Homer and Hesiod* (also known as the *Certamen*), is proposed as an example of an abstract 'portrait' of Homer that does not describe an historical individual, but a creative methodology.

4. The juxtaposition of the Thamyris episode in the Iliadic *Catalogue of Ships,* with the narrator's invocation of the Muses, provides an example of artistic self-awareness which, coupled with the fusion of character and performer in moments of 'primary action', provided the model for a catalogue of composite object portraits as a visual representation of an oral-formulaic Homer.

This project is intended to originate and synthesise a visual counterpart to the Homeric integration of the formal with the aesthetic (and the material with the abstract) as manifested in the means of its production. The aim is to demonstrate that the reification of Homer by means of a sculptural consolidation of Homeric formalism can reveal significant interconnections between materiality and abstraction underpinning constructive art-forms.



CHAPTER 1

An Oral-Formulaic Homer

This exploration of a dialectical relationship between Homeric poetics and modern art practice is premised on an understanding of the Homeric as a poetic system preserved and transmitted through a process of continuous and adaptive re-interpretation. An essential feature of this approach is the integration of form and content. Long considered the 'ultimate' poet, doubts regarding Homer's authenticity and creative genius at the beginning of the modern era signalled a shift in perceptions of the aesthetic and cultural merits of archaic Greek art and poetry. The notion of an oral basis underlying archaic Greek epic was initiated by Friedrich August Wolf[1] in the late eighteenth century and more fully developed in Milman Parry and Albert Lord's anthropologically informed theoretical innovations in Homeric studies.[2] Parry's theory of oral formulaic composition was premised on a predominantly functional understanding of the methodology of using prescribed phrases, and inherited themes and motifs to create complex compositions within oral epic performance traditions.[3] Subsequent Homeric scholars (such as Gregory Nagy, Egbert J. Bakker, Ahuvia Kahane, and Leonard Muellner) developed the notion further to demonstrate how formal features of the Homeric epic (such as its polysemic vocabulary, metrical structure, repetition, and variation) relate to poetic themes and characterisation. The resulting view is that the

1. Wolf's explication of his radical Homeric theory, the *Prolegomena to Homer,* was first published in 1795 and led to the establishment of the study of Classics as a science or *Alterumswissenschaft*. With a preference for historical and philological arguments, Wolf viewed the epics as artefacts to be studied for the primary purpose of defining the means of their production.

2. The link between Homer and the 'orality question' was identified in the early modern period by thinkers and writers such as Robert Wood, Friedrich August Wolf, Jean Jacques Rosseau, and later Claude Levi-Strauss, but it was not until Parry (1930) presented his theory that the epics are neither text nor conventional literature, but recordings of oral poetry composed from formulae, that the question was fully addressed (Havelock 1986, 36-37; Holoka 1973, 261).

3. Parry's research into the compositional techniques of Yugoslavian oral poets as applied to the Homeric epic was first published in 1930. After Parry's death, Albert Lord extended his theories, producing a comprehensive reconsideration of the formalisms of archaic Greek poetic composition. Lord argued that oral performers' decisions regarding how and when traditional motifs and formulae are used, allow for multiple original expressions of a shared tradition. In this context, defining the Homeric became contingent upon describing the poetic strategies of ancient composers. As a result, archaic authorship is understood as composition during performance through the application of conventional sets of formulae unique to a specific epic tradition. "The essential dimension that Parry adds is the perception that the dependence of language on verse is not merely an issue of aesthetics, the result of the hexameter functioning as a poetic generative principle, but a matter of functional motivation. Parry shows that the bewildering variety of epithets and morphologically heterogeneous dialectical 'forms' is not an arbitrary feature of 'epic style' but conforms to a system designed to facilitate oral composition in performance" (Bakker 1997, 13).

Homeric poems "constitute acts of interpretation as well as acts of creation" and that instead of being conceived of as a "simple matter of inflexible dependence on antecedents, [Homeric composition] has emerged, on the contrary, as a process of selection at every stage" (Slatkin 1995, 1-2). The conflation of selection and interpretation with creation suggests an art-form based on the continuous appropriation and alteration of existing elements. It is arguable that the ambiguity of seemingly incompatible meanings accumulated through a process of adaptive reiteration constitutes a primary feature of Homeric artistry.

Composition in Performance

James Porter (2002, 81) argues that to Parry and his contemporaries, Homer represented a "modern idea of what is ancient about antiquity – a thought we can feel, or imagine we feel, but can never really know." This separation between a knowable present and an unknowable past suggests the notion of the Homeric as having been fixed and perfected at a specific moment in the distant past, and no longer subject to further alteration through its history. Such an approach is contrary to an understanding of the Homeric as inherently adaptive and performative. On the other hand the notion of composition in performance suggests that each interpretation of the epic (by a *rhapsode* or a scholar) is an interpretative reiteration that perpetuates fundamental attributes of the poem, while simultaneously creating a unique version specific to its immediate audience and context. The resulting scenario is not of a text with a single occasion and person of origin that has since been distorted, but a revelatory and adaptive 'poetic system' perpetuated by a string of continuators.[4] The gradual fixation of the Homeric in a single and authoritive textual format reflects a long-standing desire to reconstruct the Homeric *Urtext* (such as Aristarchus' hunt for corruptions in the texts), or the most 'consistent' version (as many modern editors aim to achieve).[5] However, the extent – and apparent intentionality – of formal and conceptual ambiguities characteristic of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* suggests a method of composing poetry in which meaning is inherently variable and contextually defined.

The dialectical relationship between the Homeric canon and an interpreter may reflect the amalgamation of myth and ritual in the development of epic poetry.[6] Laura Slatkin (1995,

4. "As we attempt to trace a progression of originators within an oral poetic tradition, we will predictably fail if we start with an originator standing at a starting line, as it were, but we may indeed succeed in catching up, along the way, with successive relays of continuators, each of whom becomes an originator for the next continuator. The continuators, of course, need a continuum – a continuous setting, to match any original setting" (Nagy 1995, 216).

5. Barbara Graziosi (2007, 250) for example, rejects attempts such as Nagy's proposed multitext edition of the *Iliad* – which would allow modern audiences to comprehend the multiformity and complexity of Homeric poetry – on the basis that modern readers, like ancient ones, want to read Homer's *Iliad*, and modern editors must satisfy their reader's desire to 'read the great work of the best poet'.

6. The word *muthos* from which 'myth' originates occurs in Homer as a verb denoting an act of speech (μυθέομαι *mutheomai*). In Richard Martin's (1989, 12) analysis of *muthos* in its various contexts, the word denotes "a speech-act indicating authority, performed at length, usually in public, with a focus on full attention to every detail."

6) draws a correlation between the multiformity of Homeric epic and myth, noting that "no aboriginal prototype of a myth exists that can claim priority over other versions" and that in the depiction of a hero, the Homeric poet "draws on the full mythological range of that character's role and its relation to the poem's central ideas." In his exploration of the Homeric epic in terms of heroes' myths and cults, Nagy (1979) proposed that a 'ritualistic antagonism' between a Homeric hero and a specific deity (such as Achilles and Apollo) informed the epic, particularly as it pertained to the hero's death. The manner of death forms the basis of the hero's cult, and is inferred, but does not occur, in the hero's own epic (Xanthos predicts Achilles' death at the hands of Apollo and Paris in the *Iliad* (*Il*. 19.404-22), but his death and funeral are described in the *Odyssey* (*Od*. 24.36-97), while Odysseus learns from the seer Teiresias that he will appease Poseidon and eventually die peacefully at home (*Od*. 11.119-37).[7] A hero's epic therefore evokes a constant awareness of his death, while providing a fictional world where he can always be alive. It is both the fulfilment of the poetic immortalization the hero aims to achieve, and the constant reiteration of the process of attaining that *kleos*. A performance functions as an invocation of a deceased hero through the ritualized re-enactment of his myth.[8] Bakker (1997, 166) argues that it activates the mythic past in the present, and incorporates an understanding of this past not as a distant historical reality described by means of song, but in terms of a complete interdependence between past events and the song as sung in the present, where each exists because of the other. Performance of an epic entails the syntheses of various contradictions, such as the co-existence of the present in which the hero is dead, with the past, where he is alive. At the same time, the mythic world is invariably presented as superior to, and clearly distinct from, the banality of the present, emphasizing the incongruities of these combined realities.

The repetition of actions and verbalized statements characteristic of ritual practices is premised on a notion of the ritual as both ancient and unchanging. However, ritual practices can combine a desire for stasis with an adaptive flexibility.[9] A process of constant reinvention that gives an illusion of unchanging permanence resembles our own deceptive perceptions of

7. The thematic difference between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* is apparent in the symbolic function of the two heroes' deaths: in the *Iliad* poetic immortalization (*kleos*) is won by death in battle at the instigation of an enraged Apollo (in *Il*. 9.410-16 Achilles recounts his mother's prediction of two possible fates for him – to die young and gain *kleos*, or live a long unsung life). In the *Odyssey* the primary threat to the hero's myth is an anonymous death without a corpse to bury or witnesses to recount the event. His poetic immortalization is dependent on his successful return to, and recovery of, his home, family, and human society at large (*nostos*). The reverence associated with a legendary hero and respected king's much-mourned death in old age is, however, subject to his undertaking a further journey and conducting rituals (a sacrifice to Poseidon and the erection of a sailor's tomb marker in *Od*. 11.122-30) to re-establish a respectful relationship with the gods.

8. In living epic performance traditions such as those of the Rajastani of India, "the central belief is that singing the hero's story summons him … [and his] power is then present to protect the community. What gives the hero his ultimate power is the actual fact of his death … [which] operates as the 'generative point' for stories in local traditions" (Nagy 1995, 168).

9. Nagy (1992, 10), for example, warns that "The insistence of ritual on a set order of things should not be misunderstood to mean that all rituals are static and that all aspects of rituals are rigid.

how memory functions: neuroscientist Steven Rose (1994, 91), for example, explains that "one of the problems of studying memory is that it is a dialectical phenomenon. Because each time we remember, we in some senses do work on and transform our memories; they are not simply being called up from store and once consulted, replaced unmodified. Our memories are recreated each time we remember." In this sense, a memory is an interpretation of a previous interpretation of an event that gives the impression of being a fixed record of that event. Moreover, the context in which recollection occurs (such as the reason why a memory is recalled) significantly impacts on how it is interpreted, and the extent to which it changes. The adjustment of the past to the expectations of the present is appropriate to the Homeric as a performative art-form: Muellner (2006, 11) notes that "one cannot separate out the diachronic from the synchronic[10] when it comes to the study of Homer" as the relationship is reversed in epic. "Performance traditions renew the old and replace the new with them and vice versa" (Muellner 2006, 11). Such synthesis of incompatible realities is echoed in the formal attributes of Homeric epic. The poems feature a stylized or 'special' form of speech (see Bakker 1997). This type of speech comprises the 'normal' discourse of gods and heroes. By adopting this artificial manner of speaking, the performer evokes its mythic speakers. In addition, the formulaic attributes of heroic verbal interaction allow the poet to emphasize the distinction between the mythic and the everyday worlds as simultaneous, but disparate. This Special Speech or *Kunstsprache* is characterized by formal attributes (such as polysemy, meter, rhythm, parataxis, phonology, accidence, and the use of catalogues) that are noticeably different from everyday speech, yet derive from specific features of normal verbal interaction (such as the description of observed and remembered events).

The Language of Homer

Karl Meister's (1921) definition of Homeric language as a *Kunstsprache* described it as a wholly artificial creation.[11] The distinctiveness of the Homeric idiom is notable: its vocabulary is limited to a few thousand words; it conforms to a regular hexametrical structure; it is marked by a high frequency of repetition/recurrence – particularly of set phrases; and it does not reflect any specific vernacular, but is an assemblage of dialects,

Even in cases where a given society deems a given ritual to be static and never changing, it may in fact be dynamic and ever changing, responding to the ever-changing structure of the society that it articulates."

10. A description of a subject as it exists in a specific time and place is termed 'synchronic', while 'diachronic' refers to an analysis of its development over time. Nagy (1992, 20) argues that "Parry's own approach to the Homeric corpus was strictly synchronic … [and that his] initial impressions of South Slavic oral poetry were influenced by the diachronic standpoint of his Homerist predecessors."

11. Bakker (1997, 13) notes that Parry was a "direct heir" to the approach that characterized Homeric language as artificial: "Before Homeric style became traditional or oral, it was artificial. Philological criticism found in Homer an artificial diction that could never have been spoken in ordinary discourse at any time or place … The notion of *Kunstsprache* originated in nineteenth-century historical and descriptive linguistics [see Witte 1913 and Meister 1921] … and was based on a thorough investigation of the morphological, phonological, dialectical, and lexicographic features that distinguish Homer from other authors … The artificialities were seen as dependent on the exigencies of the dactylic hexameter."

language usages, and vocabularies from various time periods and geographic locations (see Kahane 2005, 65).[12] Scholars such as Bakker and Kahane warn against interpreting the apparent artificiality of Homeric language as indicative of a closed, rigid mechanism with 'simple deterministic regulatory codes' (Kahane 2005, 69).[13] Instead, the Homeric comprises a dynamically adaptive poetic system. While the analogy of 'strata' of accumulated dialects suggests a museum or an archive where inherited linguistic elements are conserved intact, a more complicated situation is evident: dialectical features were "routinely ignored when they threatened creativity just as readily as they were artificially extended when they proved themselves useful" (Kahane 2005, 67), while archaisms stemmed from instances where a dialectical form was an integral part of a fixed expression. In such instances, "two or more mutually incompatible elements or characteristics were forced together … [to create] a resistive amalgam of incompatible elements" (Kahane 2005, 69). In addition, what is termed Homeric language is but a part of a larger compositional system that extends beyond purely linguistic elements: this poetic system "is a higher-level system than a language, since its compositional units and syntactical conventions are more complex and feature narratives and characters as well as words and formulas and lines of poetry, but it is not a text with a single synchrony or a single grammar" (Muellner 2006, 11). In this system, content and form are intertwined.

The adaptation and transformation of linguistic elements reflects an important aspect of Homeric poetry where the meaning of a word, phrase, motif, and even a character, is flexible and can shift according to context. In Leonard Muellner's (1976) study of the verb εὔχομαι (*euchomai*) for example, he observed how, depending on its context, this word could have three very different meanings.[14] The extent of this flexibility is such that "a word's metrical, verbal, and syntactical contexts can function to support polysemy" (Muellner 2006, 2). In terms of character description, one word – *Aiantes* – can refer to either of two pairs of heroes: Ajax Telamon and Ajax Oïleus, or Ajax Telamon and his half-brother Teukros. A single entity can also be identified by two interchangeable names (such as Paris/Alexandros,

12. These include the Ionic, Doric, Thessalian, Lesbian, Boeotian, Arcado-Cypriot, and Mycenean.

13. Kahane (2005, 66-7) points out that while the "basic components of Homeric discourse are highly receptive to formal patterning … it is not possible to reduce basic Homeric diction to any single closed system or structure … [and that] the very same 'textual substance' can yield to several, indeed, mutually exclusive formalized characterizations." Bakker (1997) argues that Homeric language represents a stylization of the distinctive attributes of normal speech, and as such is more accurately defined as a specialized type of speech, specific to the ritualized performance of myth. This notion is founded on an understanding of Homeric poetry as "the verbalization of a heroic world that is literally visualized" by the Muses (Nagy in Bakker 1997, ix).

14. Muellner (2006, 2) notes that "an analysis of the formulas of the verb εὔχομαι [*euchomai*] makes it clear that its three different senses, 'pray,' 'say proudly and truly' (this is the meaning that is usually and incorrectly translated by the English word 'boast'), and 'assert/claim' (in a legal context) are as distinct in their formulas as they are in their contexts and syntax." Muellner (1976) also observes a clear differentiation between secular and sacred *euchomai* based on various usages within set formulae.

Skamandrios/Astyanax, Xanthos/Skamandros, Troy/Ilos, and Achaians/Danaans).[15] This linguistic adaptability reflects a broader preference for ambiguity where words and characters are defined primarily in terms of one another. Linguistic flexibility serves a structural purpose, allowing for the incorporation of archaisms and glosses that may be unintelligible in isolation, but are made comprehensible by their context. This approach incorporates a dialectical reciprocity based on the expressiveness of elements in combination with others.

On the level of characterization, plot, and theme, the associations most significant to this project are comparative relationships based on juxtaposition, similarity, and the seemingly paradoxical combination of contradiction with similarity. Examples of juxtaposition include what may be termed dissimilarity and opposition. E. Block (1982, 16) and Kahane (1994, 112) use the term 'sympathetic antithesis' to refer to Menelaus, Patroclus and Eumaeus[16] as paired with Agamemnon, Achilles, and Odysseus, respectively. In this context, the juxtaposition of paired heroes emphasizes their dissimilarity, but does not denote enmity. Instead, the identification of an *alter* establishes a type against which major characters can be sketched (see Crosset 1969).[17] Juxtapositions of complete opposites (such as Odysseus compared to Antinous, or Penelope compared to Clytemnestra) define characters as relative due to their dissimilarity. In such a scenario, attributes possessed by one are notably absent or oppositional in the other (such as respect for one's host, or marital fidelity). Similar actions and shared epithets can thematically link characters, such as Circe and Calypso, who are both discovered weaving and singing (*Od.* 5.61-2 and 10.221-23), and are described as goddesses with beautiful hair (ἐυπλόκαμος in *Od.* 1.86; 5.58; 7.255; 11.8; 12.149; and καλλιπλόκαμος in *Od.* 10.220) and human voices (αὐδήεις in *Od.* 12.449; 10.136; 11.8;

15. In some instances, such as Hector's son Skamandrios and the river Xanthos, specific groups of speakers will use only one of the two names to refer to that individual (in *Il.* 6.402-03 Hector's name for his son is Skamandrios while the Trojans call him Astyanax, in *Il.* 20.73-04 the river known to men as Skamandros is called Xanthos by the gods, and in *Il.* 2.811-14 the steep mound on the Trojan plain is known as Batieia by mortals and as the tomb of dancing/nimble Myrine by the gods). Clay (2011) contrasts this mound with the nameless tomb used for a turning post in the chariot race in honour of Patroclus in *Il.* 23.331, noting that as the name of the Tomb of Myrine is known only to the gods, it is lost to men, but available to the poet through the agency of the Muses. As a result, the unknown and misnamed tombs "constitute contrasting emblems: of anonymity through mortal forgetfulness on the one hand, and poetic remembrance through the divine Muses on the other" (Clay 2011, 119). In other cases, such as Paris/Alexandros, no reason is given for the use of two different names and no group of speakers displays a preference for either.

16. Patroclus, Menelaus, and Eumaeus are three principle characters that are directly addressed (apostrophed) by the Homeric narrator (Patroclus in *Il.* 16.787-88, Menelaus in *Il.* 17.702-03, and Eumaeus in *Od.* 14.55). Kahane (2005, 194) proposes that as 'ordinary' counterparts of the larger-than-life hero with whom audiences can more easily identify, these characters represent a type of 'peer group' for the poet and 'the men of today'.

17. In the case of Paris/Alexandros, this duality appears to have been combined in one person with two distinct natures (an idle coward and a brave and accomplished archer), reflected in his two different names. While many reasons have been posited for the two names of Paris/Alexandros, no discernible pattern has yet been convincingly identified. The Trojans and Achaians both refer to him by either of his names, as do the gods.

and 12.149). While comparative relationships are frequently established by the previously mentioned means, the simile represents an additional method for establishing comparative relationships in Homeric poetry, and provides the means for creating the most complex and ambiguous of these – a juxtaposition which reveals an underlying similarity.

The Simile

The hermeneutic implications of the Homeric use of expressive contrast were explored by David Porter (1972) and Ziva Ben-Porat (1992), who argue that far from providing a reprieve from 'tedious narratives' such juxtapositions (particularly in the similes) may have a significant bearing on how the poems are interpreted. Porter suggests that similes in which the savagery of war is juxtaposed with idyllic imagery intentionally question the heroic ethos of the Homeric epic by exposing the hero's savagery and eliciting sympathy for his victim.[18] Ben-Porat (1992, 741) proposes a more complex scenario: noting how the poetic simile is "structurally characterized by a low degree of clarity, on the one hand, and a high degree of richness and concreteness on the other" she identifies a deviant form of this poetic device (the multiplied simile)[19] that allows the poet to fully exploit the ambiguity and abstraction inherent in similes. These similes pose particular problems to interpreters and translators. For example, the so-called 'donkey-simile' of *Il.* 11.558-64 directly follows a simile comparing Ajax to a lion (*Il.* 11.548-57). The combination of similes comparing the hero to a lion, and then a donkey, has long puzzled scholars.[20] The complexity arises from the interpreter's expectation that the second simile is structurally similar to the first and that the theme of comparing this specific hero to an animal is continued. Instead, the donkey-simile incorporates two nuclear similes in which the Trojans can be understood to be either the boys beating back the donkey, or the donkey. Ben-Porat (1992, 749-50) notes that "Ultimately, the nuclear simile that corresponds to the formal simile mentioned above (Trojans [are] like donkey[s]) is the polar opposite of the nuclear simile reconstructed by the reader in the interpretive process: Aias is like a donkey," and argues that such elements play

18. Porter (1972, 19-20) argues that "if the technique of violent juxtaposition which I find in these similes is a familiar Homeric characteristic, so, I think, is the outlook toward war which I perceive behind that technique … Only a poet well aware of the tragedy of war could have told the story of the *Iliad* as Homer tells it, with a frequent emphasis not on the everlasting glory that can be won in war but on the horror and savagery it involves. This is not to say, let me repeat, that the *Iliad* is an anti-war document: clearly at many places the poet views war as inevitable, perhaps even necessary, and as the proving ground of valor. But I think it is also clear from the way he structures the poem as a whole, from the way he handles the motif of honor … that Homer was acutely conscious of the degradation and the waste that war inevitably entails."

19. Other examples of multiplied similes in Homer include *Il.* 13.491-95; 15.271-80; 17.520-24; and 22.188-93.

20. Kenneth Snipes (1988, 212) notes that critics as early as Zenodotus – who athetized the lion simile – struggled to accept this juxtaposion. The Scholia (Σ A Λ 548, Erbse III 228) defended the inclusion of both on the basis that each expresses a different aspect of Ajax's character, while modern scholars such as Moulton (1974, 387, 390), Scott (1974, 46, 61, 111), and Fränkel (1924, 61, 67, 84) have commented on the inappropriateness of comparing a hero to a donkey and the discrepancy between the animal's satiated hunger and the hero's half-empty hands (see also Ben-Porat 1992, 794).

a significant role in expanding an understanding of hermeneutic processes by demonstrating the "important roles that structural complexity and cognitive unclarity play in directing the interpretive process" (Ben-Porat 1992, 766).

While a nuclear simile consists of the comparison of two different things, the "multiplied simile is an elliptical combination of two, superimposed comparative structures [and represents] an extreme actualization of the simile's potential inconsistency" (Ben-Porat 1992, 748). The difficulty for the interpreter lies in making sense of the incongruity of two comparative statements that ultimately appear to equate complete opposites.[21] In a multiplied simile a dialectical interpretive process is created wherein two characters are initially defined in terms of oppositional attributes, and are then both associated with a seemingly incompatible shared characteristic (i.e. a thesis and antithesis are established, from which a synthesis is created). The ambiguity of related elements in a multiplied simile engenders higher levels of abstraction and figurativity, than in a standard simile, as whatever "fails to meet a similarity judgment is integrated to a more abstract frame. In this way the multiplied simile contributes to the actualization of the *Iliad's* most basic – and most abstract – theme: the sameness of human nature and of human fate ... On the miniature scale of the human perspective, distinctions between opposites are real: lions are unlike fawns, and Greeks stand in opposition to Trojans. But from the omniscient perspective – of the gods or the author – Greeks are indeed utterly like Trojans" (Ben-Porat 1992, 766-7). The resulting text is multilayered and open to variable interpretations that may seem to conflict with one another, but can contribute to a deeper understanding of the epic's primary theme and meaning.

The Structure of the Homeric

The syntactic ambiguity required to create such syntheses is facilitated by the paratactic nature of Homeric composition. As a compressed form of verbal narrative, parataxis comprises the additive placing of autonomous clauses in a sentence without using conjunctives. The result is a telegraphic shorthand that does not indicate syntactical interrelationships such as subordination. Parataxis is therefore premised on the juxtaposition of apparently unrelated and independent parts. While inherited formulae, archaic words, and new words and phrases in multiple dialects cannot be seamlessly assimilated into an unambiguous and unified

21. "First, there is the incompatible formal simile, which likens Hektor not to the fawn, but to the pursuing dog: "as a dog" (1.189) – "so Hektor" (1.194). Secondly, there is an incongruity between the last clause of the BP [base point] whose grammatical subject is the dog, and the grammatical subject of the formal TP [target point] – Hektor. Here, the reader cannot enjoy the luxury of a smooth transition, which occurs when the argument of the second nuclear simile is introduced as such in the BP ... Attentive readers cannot – or should not – ignore the clash between the three actualized nuclear similes:

TD SM BD [target domain; simile marker; base domain]
(1) Achilleus [is] like dog.
(2) Hektor [is] like fawn.
(3) Hektor [is] like dog.

Nor should they ignore the inevitable inference: if Achilleus is like a dog – and Hektor is like a dog – then Achilleus is like Hektor" (Ben-Porat 1992, 757).

syntax, parataxis allows for the assembly of multiform combinations of dissimilar elements.[22] Bakker (1997, 56-7) draws a correlation between Homeric parataxis and the verbalization of an image (ecphrasis) where "the consciousness of the speaker resembles that of the observer, who can only focus on one detail at a time, the area of foveal vision[23] ... the action or object seen is broken down into its component visual details, which are then presented in linear temporal order ... the contention is that Homeric narrative is on the whole ecphrastic, and that in Homeric discourse narration and description cannot be separated: all narration is description."[24] Both narration and description in this sense constitute a process of listing observed attributes which the interpreter mentally reconstructs as an image. In the *Iliad* this relationship between an eyewitness who describes and a listener who interprets is vividly represented in the invocation of the Muses[25] at the outset of the *Catalogue of Ships* (*Il.* 2.484-93). In its first line, the poet directly addresses the Muses, by asking for a revelation ἔσπετε νῦν μοι ('tell me/reveal to me" *Il.* 2.484) and indicates that this is a reasonable request by interposing the following statement: Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι· ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαί ἐστε, πάρεστέ τε, ἴστέ τε πάντα ("you Muses who have your homes on Olympus are gods, are present everywhere and know everything" *Il.* 2.484-85) and contrasts this with his own situation: ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἷον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν ("we [poets] can only hear the *kleos*, we know nothing" *Il.* 2.486). This distinction between the Muse who sees and knows, and the poet who hears and does not know, constitutes the first part of a transmission of divine knowledge through the poet, concluded when the audience mentally visualizes the

22. Bakker (1997, 62) proposes that "Rather than constituting an allegedly primitive, preliterate type of syntax, the phenomenon usually denoted by the term "parataxis" can be shown to serve a positive, deliberate purpose in the deployment of what might be called the syntax of movement. And since movement is action, we serve the restless processual nature of Homeric discourse better when we replace "parataxis" with terms denoting not so much stylistic or syntactic *properties* of the text, as the narrator's activities on the path of speech. Hence the word "parataxis" may be reformulated as a continuation or progression, a new step on the path of speech."

23. The eye's area of foveal vision is distinct from the total field of vision. The former is the area of greatest acuity, is small in comparison to the total field, and is constantly shifting (see Bakker 1997, 45).

24. Jenny Strauss Clay (2011) has emphasized the significance of visualization in Homeric epic, demonstrating the symbolic significance of the spatial coherence in Homeric descriptions of the Trojan battlefield. She distinguishes her notion of a visual Homer from Thaddeus Zielinski's (1899-1901) *schauender Dichter* (showing poet) on the basis that Zielinski's Homer is "an eyewitness to an action that always moves forward" (Clay 2011, 32). By contrast, her own analysis emphasizes the extent to which vividly expressed individual scenes do not present a temporal sequence, but contrastive relations that create a "play of meaningful juxtapositions" (Clay 2011, 34).

25. Invocations to the Muses occur in both Homeric epics (throughout the *Iliad*, but only once in the proem of the *Odyssey*). Though challenged by G. M. Calhoun in 1938, the view of the Muses as poetic source persists. Consequently, the elaborate invocation at the outset of the *Catalogue of Ships* (*Il.* 2.484-93) functions as a veiled boast not only of the "social prestige of the poet's art form" but also to indicate "that he has access not only to the content, but also the actual form of what his eyewitnesses, the Muses, speak as they describe the realities of remote generations" (Nagy 1992, 26).

events the poet recounts. However, as the poet emphasizes in lines 489-92[26] there is a difference between the comprehensiveness of the Muses' account and that which the poet and the audience can practicably handle. Ben-Porter's notion of a multilayered epic applies, as the divine macrocosm possesses one understanding of events, and the human microcosm, another. While the complete version of everything that happened at Troy exists and is available through the Muses, the poet cannot relay all of it, and must provide an edited account instead. In the invocation the poet decides on limiting the naming of participants to the leaders of the contingents who came to Troy and the number of their ships (*Il.* 2.493). This selection is a "part that stands for the whole – not a natural icon, which reproduces the vision of the battle as such, but a more arbitrary sign, the transformation of the vision into speech" (Bakker 1997, 58). In the verses following the invocation (*Il.* 2.494-709), the poet's interpretive distillation of a potentially overwhelming mass of information occurs in a catalogue – as opposed to a narrative – format.

An association between invocations and catalogues has been acknowledged at least since Eustathius (on *Il.* 2.484) in the twelfth century. But, as William Minton (1960, 293 n.3) points out, "the perception that the association is an essential one" was only fully stated by Gilbert Murray in 1924. The Homeric catalogue format reflects the most fundamental characteristics of parataxis. Correlations between the structure of Homeric narrative and catalogues have been drawn by various scholars (such as Gisela Strasburger (1954), Charles Rowan Beye (1958), Julia Haig Gaisser (1969), Tilman Krischer (1971), Egbert Bakker (1997), and Margalit Finkelberg (1998)) with the result that catalogues are no longer conceived of as distinct from (or even alien to) the main text.[27] Benjamin Sammons (2010)

26. οὐδ' εἴ μοι δέκα μὲν γλῶσσαι, δέκα δὲ στόματ' εἶεν,
φωνὴ δ' ἄρρηκτος, χάλκεον δέ μοι ἦτορ ἐνείη,
εἰ μὴ Ὀλυμπιάδες Μοῦσαι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο
θυγατέρες μνησαίαθ' ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον·
ἀρχοὺς αὖ νηῶν ἐρέω νῆάς τε προπάσας.

"Not even if I had ten tongues and ten mouths,
a voice unbreakable, and a heart of Bronze,
not unless the Olympian Muses, Zeus who holds the Aegis
they are his daughters, reminded me of all who came to Ilios,
but I will give the leaders of the ships and the ships in their number." (*Il.* 2.489-93).

27. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, catalogues were predominantly regarded as late insertions with little stylistic or narrative relevance to the epics (see Günther Jachmann's (1958) critique of the *Catalogue of Ships* for example). Comparative research into oral literatures led C. M. Bowra (1933) to conclude that catalogues were more likely to be early components of epics. Edzard Visser (1997), John Crosset (1969), and Gregory Nagy (1979) proposed that the *Catalogue of Ships* serves a poetic (as opposed to geographical or historical) purpose, while J. K. Anderson (1995) taking a more literal view, cited the absence of kings and warriors mentioned in the *Catalogue of Ships* from the rest of the *Iliad* as evidence that it is alien to the main text, and argued for a factual basis for the information it contains. James Notopoulos (1964, 51) sees in the *Catalogue of Ships* a poet providing his audience with a means of identifying with the characters in the story through references to tribal ancestors. Hope Simpson and J. F. Lazenby (1970, 87) have observed a close correlation between an important Homeric character (Nestor) and the catalogue, noting that "Most of the place-

analysed Homeric catalogues in terms of their contexts to understand how and why both the poet and his characters deploy catalogues. He notes that while catalogues are, on a formal level, sufficiently similar to Homeric narrative to coalesce with it (as in Agamemnon's *Catalogue of Objects* (*Il.* 9.10-57)) catalogues more often fail to transform into narratives. Instead, they assume a distinctively rhetorical function (as a type of internal critique) in relation to narrative.

Repetition, distillation, juxtaposition, and allusion are all characteristic of the Homeric catalogue. Barry Powell (1978) identified an "unusually firm structural substratum" underlying the *Catalogue of Ships* which serves as an organizing principle in the absence of a guiding plot or narrative action. This structure consists of three basic patterns underlying each of its individual entries.[28] In terms of content such repetition allows catalogues to serve a paradigmatic function (in terms of theme and narrative). However, as Sammons (2010, 208) notes, the paradigm established in a catalogue is more likely to contradict than to affirm the narrative: "the world of the catalogue seems always to differ in crucial ways from the world constructed by the poet in his narrative; there is a kind of displacement between the world of the catalogue and the main narrative with which it is juxtaposed. It is here that we have located the poet's rhetoric. For through these differences he brings to light the peculiar virtues of his story and his vision of the mythical world: a world in which a great chasm separates the lot of the gods and the tragic lot of mortals." In these terms, the catalogue is also a complex extension of the Homeric practice of reciprocal characterization. An example of this comparative juxtaposition is the story of Thamyris which occurs in the Pylian entry of the *Catalogue of Ships* (*Il.* 2.594-600).[29] This episode, in which the Muses deprive the singer of the ability to perform, for having claimed that he could beat them at singing, is antithetical to the poet's description of a productive Muse-poet relationship in the

names in Nestor's tales are identical with those of the Catalogue." This is significant, as Nestor, in spite of being described as belonging to a generation that predates the one involved in the Trojan War, does not really exist beyond the confines of Homeric epic (see Lang 1995, 160).

28. Of the patterns, pattern II "is by far the most common (18 times), pattern I second most common (7 times), and pattern III least common (4 times)" (Powell 1978, 264).

29. … Δώριον, ἔνθά τε Μοῦσαι
ἀντόμεναι Θάμυριν τὸν Θρήϊκα παῦσαν ἀοιδῆς
Οἰχαλίηθεν ἰόντα παρ' Εὐρύτου Οἰχαλιῆος·
στεῦτο γὰρ εὐχόμενος νικησέμεν, εἴ περ ἂν αὐταὶ
Μοῦσαι ἀείδοιεν κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο·
αἳ δὲ χολωσάμεναι πηρὸν θέσαν, αὐτὰρ ἀοιδὴν
θεσπεσίην ἀφέλοντο καὶ ἐκλέλαθον κιθαριστύν·

"… Dorion, where the Muses
met Thamyris the Thracian stopping his singing,
from Oechalia where he had come from Eurytus of Oechalia
asserting and saying he would be victorious, if even themselves
the Muses were to sing, the daughters of Zeus aegis-bearer.
Provoked they maimed him - they deprived him of his divine
singing and made him forget his kithara-playing skill." (*Il.* 2.594-600).

invocation. As a *theomachos* (one who fights the gods) Thamyris' behaviour is more in keeping with heroes such as Diomedes and Achilles[30] than the "blind, old, feeble, 'non-self-destructive' figure of poets and singers as they are portrayed elsewhere in Homeric poetry and in the biographical tradition" (Kahane 2005, 199). This correlation is emphasized by the use of the verb *euchomai* (see n. 14), and the reference to Eurytus of Oechalia.

In Muellner's (1976, 97) analysis, the Thamyris story conforms to a secular and military use of the word εὔχομαι (*euchomai*) in what he terms 'death-*euchomai* passages.'[31] On this reading the poet is portrayed as a warrior who wins *kleos* through destruction in battle. But while the meaning of *euchomai* is particularly subject to context, in the story of Thamyris the context is sufficiently complex for more than one of these meanings to apply. Zachary Biles (2011, 20-1) for example, notes that this example of *euchomai*[32] does not clearly conform to any of the formulaic combinations identified by Muellner. Instead, in the Thamyris story, the term appears to be intentionally formulaically ambiguous. As divinities (the Muses) are present and addressed by Thamyris, an activation of *euchomai* in its sacral sense (i.e. to pray or respectfully address the gods) applies, as does an interpretation of *euchomai* in this context as a formal challenge. Biles argues that an invocation is a subspecies of prayer that marks the start of a poetic performance by establishing the communication with the Muses required for divinely inspired song. On this reading, the story creates an opposing scenario to the Muse-poet relationship of the invocation, while retaining the notion of invoking the Muses as a necessary component of both. Even a poet who aims to establish *kleos* for himself – as opposed to one who confines himself to transmitting the *kleos* of others – requires the agency of the Muse. A similar duality of meaning occurs in the reference to the court of Eurytus from which Thamyris had travelled. Odysseus claims his own superiority as an archer without human peer, but notes that he is not comparable to legendary archers such as Heracles and Eurytus (*Od*. 8.215-28). The context in which the story of Eurytus is told in the *Odyssey*[33] in many respects mirrors the context in which the Thamyris episode

30. Diomedes attacks and wounds Aphrodite and Ares (*Il.* 5.330-35 and 5.855-59 where Athena assists him) while Achilles fights the river Skamandros aided by Athena, Poseidon, and Hephaistus (*Il.* 21.233-382).

31. In this sense the singer 'proudly and truly' makes a claim in a legalistic sense or combative setting, as opposed to the translation of *euchomai* as 'boasting'.

32. In this instance, *euchomai* occurs in a context with the construction στεῦτο ... νικησέμεν (he asserted/vowed that he would be victorious), which echoes the meaning of secular *euchomai*. This doubling may either strengthen a secular reading or make it superfluous, thereby encouraging a different (sacred) interpretation of the word.

33. τῷ ῥα καὶ αἶψ' ἔθανεν μέγας Εὔρυτος, οὐδ' ἐπὶ γῆρας
ἵκετ' ἐνὶ μεγάροισι· χολωσάμενος γὰρ Ἀπόλλων
ἔκτανεν, οὕνεκά μιν προκαλίζετο τοξάζεσθαι·

"For he suddenly died, the great Eurytus, and did not grow old
in his great hall. An angered Apollo
killed him for challenging the god to an archery contest" (*Od*. 8.226-28).

is recounted in the *Iliad*.[34] In both cases the narrator of the story (Homer in the *Iliad*, Odysseus in the *Odyssey*) establishes the extent of his mastery in the relevant fields (poetry and archery), but also emphasizes his constraints (Homer lacks the physical capacity to give a complete account of all participants in the war, while Odysseus' strength has been sapped by the sea in *Od.* 8.231-33). They invoke a singer and an archer destroyed for challenging the patron gods of their respective fields. But apparent restraint masks irony: in both cases, Apollo and the Muses are described as χολωσάμενος/μεναι (*cholosamenos/menai*) 'angered/provoked' by Eurytus and Thamyris. In *Od.* 1.69, Zeus notes that the reason for Odysseus' suffering is that he had angered/provoked (κεχόλωται – *kecholotai*) Poseidon when he blinded the god's son. The hero's caution is therefore grounded in experience.[35] While presented as a negative paradigm, Eurytus is similar to Odysseus, who at this point in the epic risks his predecessor's fate of not growing old in his own home. The *Certamen* recounts the tradition of Homer as a poet who loses the contest with Hesiod despite his consummate skill.[36] It provides a similar (albeit extra-textual) correlation between Thamyris and the poet of the invocation. It is also tempting to discern a subtle reference to Odysseus/Eurytus and Homer/Thamyris in the simile that compares Odysseus stringing the bow of Eurytus to a singer stringing his lyre (*Od.* 21.404-11).[37]

As catalogue format interacts with narrative by way of paradigmatic comparison and intertextual allusion, it may also allow for allusion to other epic traditions. Sammons (2010, 209)

34. This is in partial breach of 'Monro's law' which holds that the *Odyssey* consciously avoids repeating anything contained in the *Iliad*, such as the actual death of Achilles which is predicted and symbolically enacted through the death of Patroclus in the *Iliad*, but his funeral is described in the *Odyssey* (*Od.* 24.36-97). It is notable, however, that the dead Achilles and the maimed Thamyris are both connected to the verb λανθάνω (*lanthanou* – forget): Thamyris forgets his kithara-playing skill (ἐκλέλαθον κιθαριστύν) while the dead Achilles' horsemanship is forgotten (λελασμένος ἱπποσυνάων in *Od.* 24.40). The same phrase is also applied to Kebriones in *Il.* 16.776.

35. While Odysseus never acknowledges that his troubles stem from having angered Poseidon, the seer Teiresias informs him of this fact in *Od.* 11.100-03.

36. This account occurs in the *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi* (*The Contest of Homer and Hesiod*). The *Certamen* is generally regarded as a rather crude compilation of various texts produced during the Antonine period (138-193 CE) Although late, it is believed to be based on a longstanding Certamen tradition informed by Hesiod's own account of winning a poetic contest in the *Works and Days* (650-62) and a broader Greek tradition of poetic riddling contests referred to as early as the *Iliad*. It is an example of a type of text conventionally referred to as the *Lives of Homer*, which ranged from freestanding compositions, to encyclopaedic entries and biographical information included as introductory sections in editions of the poet's works or scholarly treatises on Homer. Of these, only the *Certamen* and Pseudo-Herodotus' *On Homer's Origins, Date and Life* (composed approx. 50-150 CE) appear to attempt a coherent narrative.

37. In which case, this simile would offer two equally valid interpretations: Odysseus (who at this point is still disguised as a beggar) may be defined both in comparison to a competitive singer, and in terms of the predominantly docile Odyssean type of singer (such as the blind Demodocus in *Od.* 8.64), Phemius who claimed that the suitors forced him to entertain them (*Od*. 22.351-53), and the unnamed singer instructed by Agamemnon to keep an eye on Clytemnestra, but who was disposed of by Aegisthus so that he could seduce the queen (*Od.* 3.266-71).

suggests that such poems may be real or imaginary and provide the poet with an opportunity to "define the excellence of his own work" relative to other competing epics. Slatkin (1995, 4) argues that the "epic audience's knowledge of the alternative possibilities [of how a myth is told] allows the poet to build his narrative by deriving meaning not only from what the poem includes, but from what it consciously excludes. A telling instance of this is the *Iliad's* treatment of the Judgement of Paris. Presupposed by the poem and implicit in its plot … the Judgement of Paris would, however, remain an obscure reference, occurring as it does in a single allusion at the end of the poem (24.25-30)." In the Thamyris episode, the reference to Eurytus may also include an allusion to the most persistent heroic paradigm in Homeric epic – the demigod Heracles.[38] Martin (1989, 229) notes that the Thamyris episode reflects Homer's own predicament as a performer "when he attempts to compose an Achilles' epic against a widespread and predominant earlier tradition that privileges the role of Herakles." Homeric references to Heracles vary from the overt to the subtle. Muellner (2006, 9-11) suggests a link between the heroes of all three epics (the *Iliad,* the *Odyssey*, and the *Siege of Oechalia*) in the use of a single epithet – θυμολέων (*thumoleon* 'lion-hearted'), which occurs just five times in Homeric Epic.[39] He proposes that "the use of this epithet of Herakles … for the Homeric heroes comes at these moments in their respective stories first in internal reference of one epic to the other, but also as a receding reference to the greatest of all the Panhellenic heroes, Herakles, who stands behind them, and more especially in subtle allusion to the circumstances of hero cult, when figures of the past like these three are invoked as absent objects of grief, in connection with their death and loss but also as subjects of hope, for their benign, healing return." While the clearest reference to Heracles in the *Catalogue of Ships* occurs in the Rhodian entry, Rhodes itself is not associated with Heracles but with his son Tlepolemos. Instead, the catalogue alludes to Heracles on a more obscure, structural level. In Powell's analysis of the patterned structure of the *Catalogue of Ships*, one type (pattern III) consists of only four entries of which the Pylian (in which the Thamyris digression occurs) is one. All four of these similarly patterned entries refer to places conquered by Heracles: Orchomenos in *Il.* 2.511-16; Pylos and Oechalia in *Il.* 2.591-602; Kos in *Il.* 2.676-80; and Oechalia again in *Il.* 2.729-33. In addition, three of these entries include one character who plays an important role in the epic[40] and an *alter* with

38. In the *Odyssey,* Heracles represents a breach of the host-guest relationship by murdering Eurytus' son Iphitus whom he had entertained in his home at the time (*Od*. 21.14-30). This murder meant that Odysseus and Iphitos who had met and exchanged gifts (Odysseus received Eurytus' bow) on foreign soil could not establish a proper relationship by hosting each other in their own homes (*Od.* 21.31-37). In the *Iliad* Heracles represents the ultimate *theomachos* and in at least one instance "is alluded to as a negative exemplum (5.392-404)" (Martin 1989, 229). Heracles was also the hero of the lost epic *Oikhalias Halosis* which supposedly recounted how Heracles won Eurytus' daughter in an archery contest and sacked Oechalia when he was refused his prize. Homer was sometimes regarded as the author of this epic and that he gave it as a gift to Creophylus for hosting him on Samos (Strab. 14.1.18).

39. This word occurs once each in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as an epithet of Heracles (*Il.* 5.639; *Od.* 11.267); once, in the *Iliad*, as an epithet of Achilles (*Il.* 7.228); and twice, in the *Odyssey*, in a closely repeated sequence of lines, as an epithet of Odysseus (*Od.* 4.724, 4.814).

40. These are: Ascalaphus, Nestor, and Machaon. Ascalaphus' death in *Il.* 13.518-20 is of dramatic significance as it pits his enraged father (Ares) against Athena; Nestor plays an important role in both epics as an advisor, and it is his return to the Achaean camp with the injured Machaon that spurs Achilles to send Patroclus to determine the extent of Achaean losses, marking the beginning of Patroclus' end.

no role beyond the catalogue,[41] while the grandsons of Heracles named in the Koan entry are completely absent from the rest of the poem. In this use of 'sympathetic antitheses' the complex relationship between the world of the catalogue and the world of the narrative is made explicit. And, in the context of the *Catalogue of Ships'* listing the forces that came to conquer Troy, this silent reminder of the exploits of Heracles emphasizes an intricate appropriation and subversion of traditional poetic material in Homeric composition.

As these examples illustrate, Homeric compositional methods such as polysemy, comparative reciprocity, and the catalogue format, enable the poet to construct multilayered texts that are intended to provoke multiple readings and to stimulate constant re-interpretation. While the Homeric *Kunstsprache* suggests a closed system with its own grammar, syntax, and rules of composition, the inherently allusive nature of the epics, and the extent to which characters, themes, and even the epics themselves are defined in terms of opposition and/or similarity suggests a powerful and sophisticated art-form uniquely adaptable to changing contexts. The exploitation of formal components to achieve the complexities, ambiguities, and allusions that prompt the sustained re-interpretation on which the preservation and transmission of the epics is founded, reveals the significant and necessary fusion of form with content in Homeric poetry. As a dynamic poetic system which evokes meaning by means of juxtaposition, inconsistency, and ambiguity, Homeric epic is unsuited to translation into media characterized by the predominance of syntactic uniformity, semantic singularity, and conceptual clarity. A contemporary reiteration (i.e. comprehensible to a modern audience) of Homeric poetics will therefore require a creative methodology sufficiently variable and semantically open-ended to reflect the integration of its form with its content and continuous reinterpretation as a type of creation. In the next chapter I will discuss the creative methodology underlying sculptural assemblage and introduce the notion of the composite object portrait, which, I will argue, are uniquely suited to a visual translation of a formulaic Homer.

41. These are Ascalaphus' brother Ialmenos, the singer Thamyris who meets his doom in Nestor's kingdom, and Machaon's brother Podaleiros.

CHAPTER 2

Sculptural Assemblage and the Composite Object Portrait

Given the emphasis on methodology in the construction of meaning in contemporary applications of the theory of Homeric formulaic composition by scholars such as Gregory Nagy, Leonard Muellner, Egbert Bakker, and Ahuvia Kahane, the integration of form and content in the sculptural technique of assemblage and the symbolic iconography underlying the composite object portrait, provides appropriate means to construct a visual interpretation of Homeric poetics. Contemporary sculptural assemblage derives from a combination of developments in visual art that occurred during the early twentieth century. These include the Cubists' transformative engagement with the systemic aspects of Classical art, the appropriation and amalgamation of seemingly incompatible techniques, forms, and materials, and the development of a dialectical hermeneutics. The notion of the composite object portrait can be traced to Giuseppe Arcimboldo's unusual re-interpretation of the art and ideas of antiquity in the sixteenth century and the symbolic use of objects in modern collage and assemblage.

Cubism, Picasso, and Sculptural Assemblage

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the emphasis placed on the art and literature of antiquity by academies of visual arts meant that early Modernism was to a large extent based on rejection of the antique. As a bastion of Academic Classicism, the Homeric epic therefore seems antithetical to assemblage as a product of the *avant garde*. However, the basic principles of assemblage derive less from a rejection of Classicism, than a transformative re-evaluation of the art of antiquity. Such analyses of antiquity were undertaken by early modernists, such as Giorgio de Chirico, Fernand Léger, and Pablo Picasso. Their engagement with the Classical differed from nineteenth century Neoclassicism on a crucial point: for all of them "the art of antiquity had meaning only if it could be transformed, reinvented, revalued – and only if it could speak in the present tense" (Green 2011, 2). Each approach differed, reflecting the major advances and shifts in knowledge of antiquity during this period. Most significantly, these artists differentiated between long-held assumptions regarding ancient Greece and Rome, and antiquity as described in emerging scholarship. This scholarship extended across archaeology, art history, and Classics, and included a new recognition of the artistic and historical significance of the Cyclades, Minoans, Archaic Greece, and Etruscans, amongst other sources.

Picasso's most evident exploration of Classicism occurs in what are termed his Neoclassical works (such as *The Pipes of Pan* 1923, *Nessus and Dejanira* 1920, and *Head of a Woman* 1931). In these works, as in those of Léger and De Chirico, stylistic references to ancient art-forms are clearly evident. Edward Fry (1988) however, argues that Cubism (which Picasso developed with Georges Braque) may be regarded as an engagement with

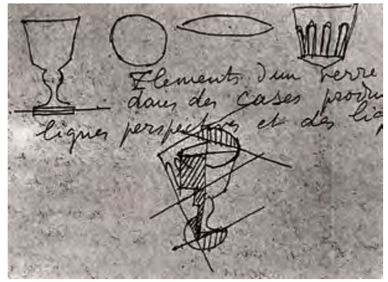
the Classical that went beyond the level of style, to a transformative reinvention based on systemic attributes. This reinvention was less immediately apparent than the figurative reimagining of the look and subject-matter of the antique in works such as *Drinking Minotaur and Reclining Woman* 1933 (see fig. 1). The notion of a 'systemic Classicism' is premised on the insight that the stylistic naturalism of ancient Greek art is only superficially mimetic, and is premised on an abstract assembly of features selected in accordance with symbolic associations and mathematical models. The combination of a considered set of formal elements with an illusionistic naturalism is produced by a representational system that Erwin Panofsky (in Spivey 1997, 42) describes as an "elastic, dynamic and aesthetically relevant system of relations." Spivey (1997, 40) cites intentional anatomical anomalies in works such as the *Riace Bronzes* (see fig. 2),[1] as examples of artworks where an obsession with formal and relational compositional concerns has "overtaken the wish to 'deceive' its viewers with an illusion of reality." He warns that the "admission of such formalism in Classical sculpture adds a qualifying gloss to any idea that the Greek revolution was simply the triumph of naturalism" (Spivey 1997, 40).

Fry's argument is premised on a supposition of "densely mediated relationships between thought and experience" as a core feature of Classicism (Fry 1988, 296). He proposes that the "special achievement of Cubism, and above all of Picasso, was to reinvent classical, mediated representation, and in that reinvention also to transform it so as to reveal its central conventions and mental processes" (Fry 1988, 296). The gradual abbreviation from the Renaissance onwards of the Classical to a purely stylistic norm obscured the complex representational system from which it originated. Cubism rejected the idealised naturalism of Neoclassical iconography, but emphasized the relational combination of conceptually determined formal elements underlying Classical art. Defining the Cubist project as 'reflexive self-demonstration', Fry locates memory at the core of both traditional art and Cubism, but maintains that "in contrast to traditional painting Cubism replaces the role of remembered iconographic texts with the memories of perceptual and cognitive experience. This displacement of idea by process, experience, and memory ... is then re-intellectualized as eidetic Cubist signs" (1988, 300). As the example of the *Riace Bronzes* demonstrates, this

1. Pablo Picasso. *Drinking Minotaur and Reclining Woman* 1933. Etching. 19.25 x 27cm (plate mark). The Courtauld Gallery, London

2. Unknown artist/s. Rear and front views of *Riace Warrior A* c. 460-420 BCE. Bronze with copper on lips and nipples, and silver inlay on eyes and teeth. Height: 2.05m. National Museum, Reggio Calabria

1. These include "the continuation of the iliac crest around the back of the figure, to divide the rear aspect as emphatically as the front; another is the descent of the spinal cord into a dimple, rather than a pad" (Spivey 1997, 40).



3. André Lhote. Sketch demonstrating how to depict a glass by combining formal elements 1952

4. Pablo Picasso. *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* 1907. Oil on canvas. 243.9 x 233.7cm. Museum of Modern Art, New York

methodology is not based on establishing an antithetical relationship between abstract and recognizable elements, or a transition from one to another, but on a synthesis of these.

In the Cubist project, formal description was not determined by the artist's individual style, but by the problem of how to represent a specific subject.[2] A systemic approach, and an unconventional understanding, and application, of style are evident in the development of Picasso's constructions, collages, and assemblages. These developed from a realization that if style as a supposedly uniquely personal rendition of form can be appropriated and combined with other, dissimilar types, then an original image can be constituted of a limitless variety of forms derived from multiple sources. Picasso had first explored this notion in *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* 1907 (see Fig. 4) by imitating in paint various means of representing the human head as found in Iberian, African, and Archaic Greek sculpture. His first collage, *Still Life with Chair Caning* (1912) (see fig. 5), features a similar combination of stylistically disparate elements. Where the artist had appropriated these elements by imitating them in the *Demoiselles*, the collage incorporates industrially manufactured elements such as the cane-print oil cloth and rope into an oil painting. With its printed illusion of wickerwork, the oil cloth reflects Picasso's imitation of sculptural form in the *Demoiselles*, and although an 'alien' intrusion into the unity of the image, the oil cloth still conforms to the notion of painting as the creation of an illusion. By contrast, the rope framing the image is an actual rope. Its representational function is highly complex as it can refer to a wooden frame, the rim of a tray, or the edge of a café table. As a frame, it reiterates the image's status as a two-dimensional artwork, but as a rim on a tray it denotes a three-dimensional object, while the canvas' oval shape bordered by the rope suggests a round table seen in perspective, resulting in an artwork that combines image with object.

2. The Cubism of Picasso and Braque differs from the 'Cubist style' of their contemporaries who adopted Cubist faceting as a recipe for stylization equally applicable to any of painting and sculpture's traditional themes (André Lhote's sketch – see fig.3 – detailing the procedure for describing a glass in Cubist terms demonstrates how easily analytic Cubism could be made into a unified set of purely formal conventions (see Chipp 1968)). Their approach, which casts Cubism as a "general pictorial language" (Spies 2000, 65), conforms to traditional notions of style as the expression of artistic temperament. In the *Demoiselles,* Picasso had refuted the notion of style as a necessarily coherent method of describing form. Christine Poggi (1992, 254) argues that with collage Picasso continued subverting expectations of stylistic unity, making distinctive methods of describing form "a property that might be appropriated and satirized."

Left: 5. Pablo Picasso, *Still Life with Chair-Caning* 1912. Oil and oilcloth on canvas with rope. 27 x 35cm. Musée National Picasso, Paris

The cardboard, sheet-metal, and wire constructions (such as the *Guitars* and *Violins*) produced by Picasso in the same year, introduced a method of creating sculpture from pieced-together parts as well as developing the notion of reversible form (see fig. 6).[3] As a result, the various materials (including prefabricated objects) from which the artwork is constructed serve both conceptual and formal functions. While the conceptual impetus for these innovations can be attributed to a systemic Classicism, the formal and material attributes of Cubist collage and Picasso's assemblages represent the introduction of techniques and creative methodologies of artisans, and so-called 'primitive' and pre-Renaissance artists into Modern art practice. Such external and anachronistic appropriation is premised on a

6. Pablo Picasso. *Guitar* 1912. Cardboard and string construction. 66.3 x 33.7 x 19.3cm. Museum of Modern Art, New York

3. The cylinder used to indicate the sound hole in *Guitar* 1912 is the most famous example of Picasso's reversible form in his constructions. This ambiguous double image is premised on the viewer's movement, as it reveals itself the moment the work is viewed from a different angle. Other examples of reversible form are more contextually based, such as the rope that circles the image in *Still Life with Chair Caning*.

dialectical engagement between previously unrelated parties. Roxana Marcoci (2000) defines the reassessment of the art of one period by artists from another as a type of historical riposte.[4] In this view, anachronistic appropriation is premised upon a reading of artistic predecessors as contemporaries (see Zizek 1998, 95-6). Marcoci (2000, 19) suggests that the aim of this essentially subjective procedure is to extract "new practices of far greater critical and historical significance than might have resulted from an objective, historicist approach."[5] In this view, the engagement between old and new is premised on an understanding of the past as not fixed in history, but fluid and open to continuous re-interpretation. This reflects the manner in which human memory works (see Chapter 1), where the context in which recollection occurs significantly impacts on how it is interpreted, and the extent to which it changes. A similar situation is evident in the Cubist appropriation of techniques and materials that were alien to artistic practice of the period. Braque's introduction of techniques used by decorators such as stencilling and wood-graining was not limited to borrowing alone, but reflected broader changes in how artists re-evaluated the work of artisans.[6]

External and anachronistic acts of artistic appropriation may have conceptually ironic results, as is evident in an early pre-Modern example of sculptural assemblage, *The Reliquary of St. Foy* (unknown artists, 10th-11th centuries with later additions, see fig. 7). By the early twentieth century, the production of objects from prefabricated elements had become confined to folk artists and amateurs[7] who lacked the artistic training required to achieve

4. She cites as an example the interpretive transformation of the work of Constantin Brancusi by contemporary artists such as Richard Pettibone, Christian Alexa, and Tom Sachs. "Brancusi's imprint on contemporary sculptural practice ranges from the dissemination of furniture-oriented sculpture and the emerging topos of architectural folly to new paradigms for public art … [as a result, his work] plays a central role in the formation of this historical riposte [and that] many postwar artists engaging in a dialogue with his legacy have read and productively misread Brancusi's work" Marcoci 2000, 19). Richard Pettibone responded to Brancusi's craftsmanship and use of abbreviated form to produce works straddling the traditional divide between art and functional design; Christian Alexa used performance and photography to explore the historical reception of Brancusi's *Endless Column* and *Table of Silence* in Romania; Tom Sachs frequently appropriates the formal motif of the *Endless Column*. In *Shredded Wheat for Oklahoma City* 1995 the truck used by Timothy McVeigh was sculpted from Nabisco Shredded Wheat boxes and sits on a base resembling the *Endless Column* made from FedEx boxes.

5. The notion of innovation by means of a re-evaluative retrospection also echoes Karl Popper's ideas on the relation between an institution, its doctrine, and its heretics, where institutions develop to preserve and transmit particular interpretations of the world and members attempting to change the doctrine are expelled as heretics. "But the heretic claims as a rule, that his is the true doctrine of the founder" (Magee 1975, 63).

6. James Hall (2000, 190) cites Picasso and Braque as the most subversive examples of artists whose repudiation of easel-painting and migration to collage and constructed sculpture took the cult of the 'worker-artist' to extremes. As such, they "challenged received ideas about craftsmanship as much as they exploited them" (Hall 2000, 193).

7. Pictures and objects produced by means of collage predominate within craft, folk art, and amateur art, with some of the earliest known examples dating from the pre-historic period. Eddie Wolfram (1975, 7) finds a "common ground between the magical potencies that primitive tribes bestow upon

Left: 7. Unknown artist/s. *The Reliquary of St. Foy,* late 10th to early 11th centuries with later additions. Gold, silver gilt, jewels, and cameos over a wooden core. Abbey Treasury, Conques Auvergne

the naturalistic (observational and idealised) representations on which 'high-art' was based. A medieval object, such as the *Reliquary of Saint Foy* therefore represents a seemingly 'primitive' anti-Classicism compared to the close correlation between formal mimesis, material uniformity, and conceptual clarity of Post-Renaissance art.[8] The symbolically allusive function

totems, seemingly mundane objects in association and the arrangement of scraps of silk on parchment to create images of heraldic animals and magical castles in Germany in the seventeenth century." He also notes that during the mid-nineteenth-century the German educationalist Friedrich Froebel (and later Maria Montessori) encouraged creative play in their schools through the use of collage, and that the popularity of photomontage in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century photo-journalism, advertising and postcards suggest a general familiarity with collage (Wolfram 1975, 9; 14). Also see Herta Wescher's 1968 comprehensive survey of the modern history of collage.

8. Since the Renaissance, conventions of art favoured a single viewpoint, a passive viewer, and a notion of the image as a cohesive organic whole. The "ability to pictorialize was an index of rationalism," that allowed the artist full control of the viewer's encounter with the image, and was equated with the "scientific perfection of art" (Hall 2000, 53; 57). Philosophical and art theoretical associations between the single viewpoint and art as an attribute of scientific reason, discouraged

of the objects and materials used in the reliquary's construction is antithetical to the same illusionistic conventions of representation that the Cubists' project criticized. The reliquary was constructed to contain a material remnant of the saint and provide the worshipper with a visual focus of veneration, and is characterized by significant disjunctions between its subject, form, and medium. Although it celebrates a saint who was martyred for refusing to worship images of pagan gods, it takes the form of an anthropomorphic icon that invites veneration (the figure is crowned and enthroned), and incorporates materials representative of pre-Christian worship.[9] The incongruous use of Roman or 'pagan' objects in Christian iconography during this era[10] reflects the notion of anachronistic appropriation as a hijacking gesture that effectively displaces the source of the appropriated element from its prior and proper hermeneutic context (see Marcoci 2000, 19). In the context of the medieval reliquary, the intaglios represent the Catholic Church's attainment of the political authority that had previously been held by the Roman Empire.[11] It is difficult to assess the extent to which the artist/s that produced the reliquary was/were aware of the conceptual complexity of these assemblages, and by extension, whether the ironies evident to a modern viewer were intentional. It is arguable that the intaglios were part of a common symbolic currency, and widely understood as representative of power and authority. In the same manner various material remnants of saints were believed to represent the earthly presence of spiritual beings. What is significant is the incorporation of emblems of antiquity into a Christian iconography, at a time when the cultural values of ancient Greece and Rome, as expressed in these objects, were being condemned.

The ironic juxtaposition of seemingly incompatible elements is particularly characteristic of Picasso's collages and assemblages. While Braque and Juan Gris preferred to use prefabricated

modes of viewing conducive to active audience participation (which was disparaged as confusing to the viewer). The emphasis on the formal, material, and conceptual unity of the image served a hermeneutic function: the ideal was to enable the viewer to accurately comprehend the meaning intended by the artist, by exposing them to as little visual disjunction and conceptual ambiguity as possible.

9. For example, the head is believed to be a portrait of a late Roman Emperor sculpted in the 4th-5th century, while the robe and throne are decorated with ancient Roman intaglios engraved with images of rulers and motifs from Classical mythology (the body was carved from yew wood in the 9th century when the reliquary was first assembled).

10. Examples of religious objects that incorporate Roman intaglios include the *Cross of Lothar*, 10th century; the "*A of Charlemagne*" c. 11th-12th centuries; the *Reliquary of Pepin* c.9th century with multiple subsequent alterations; and the *Pulpit of Henry II* in the palace chapel at Aachen, 11th century. The "*A of Charlemagne*" features a carnelian intaglio of Victoria writing on a shield, while a similar intaglio on the *Reliquary of Pepin* depicts Apollo. The *Pulpit of Henry II* incorporates six large ivory panels dating from the sixth century that feature pagan subjects (see Sekules 2001).

11. This symbolism is particularly evident in the example of the *Cross of Lothar* (10th century, unknown artist/s, gold, silver, gemstones) where representations of worldly and spiritual authority occur separately on the front and reverse of a sculpted cross. Kenneth Clark (1974, 19) observes a clear stylistic disjunction between the elaborate arrangement of gold and gemstones around a cameo of the Emperor Augustus on one side and a simple linear engraving in silver on the other.

objects literally (a mirror to represent a mirror, newsprint to suggest a newspaper),[12] Picasso's choices were more often driven by the conceptual potential of unexpected combinations and/or substitutions of material and objects.[13] In his sculptural assemblages such as *She-Goat,* 1950 (see fig. 8) the constituent forms are largely derived from prefabricated objects that have been altered to varying degrees.[14] While the sculpture is constructed from disparate parts, the artist's primary concern is the creation of a comprehensive whole. The sculpture did not gradually emerge from an 'accidentalist' process of accumulating random objects. Instead, Picasso started with a mental (and possibly also a sketched) image of a goat[15] before proceeding to identify correspondences between various parts of the goat and the attributes of objects and materials from which to construct the sculpture. These are not 'found objects' in the Surrealist sense where an object's selection is randomly determined. Each component was chosen specifically for the role it would play within the whole, with all elements "perceived in their reciprocity" (Spies 2000, 272). Many of Picasso's sculptural assemblages of the 1950's (such as *She-Goat, Small Owl,* and *Baboon and Young*) combine an overall formal

12. John Golding (1990, 63) notes that "Picasso delights in using [fragments of collage] paradoxically, turning one substance into another and extracting unexpected meanings out of forms by combining them in new ways", while Poggi (1992, 43) identifies divergent representational aims as the reason for this difference: "Braque used faux bois paper to convey the local color and texture of wood in an effort to defeat the distortions of chiaroscuro and perspective. It is precisely because the latter produce distortions in their rendering of three-dimensional form that they must be given separately. Picasso, in contrast, delighted in confirming the essentially arbitrary nature of signs, since it is this principle which allowed him to reinvent the language of representation and its syntax."

13. In conversation with Françoise Gilot, he described his approach as follows: "If a piece of newspaper can become a bottle, that gives us something to think about in connection with both newspapers and bottles, too. This displaced object has entered a universe for which it was not made and where it retains, in a measure, its strangeness. And this strangeness was what we wanted to make people think about because we were quite aware that our world was becoming very strange and not exactly reassuring" (Picasso in Golding 1990, 63). Werner Spies (2000, 216) notes Picasso's fascination with "the reversibility of the progression from functional object to work of art to functional object again, [and] the fact that in semantic transformation or revaluations, the functional value never completely disappears." In exploring the tension that arises from the ambiguity of borrowed objects and materials, he "did everything to take questions of material appropriateness to the point of absurdity" (Spies 2000, 217).

14. In the case of *She-Goat*, the sculpture was constructed from the wood of a palm branch, a woven basket, metal strips, grape-vines, cardboard, pieces of wood, part of a lamp, a metal pipe, wire, and two pottery milk pitchers. While Picasso employed objects for a variety of formal and symbolic purposes, and altered them accordingly, the appropriation and nomination of prefabricated objects as artworks is a feature of conceptualist works such as Duchamp's largely unaltered 'readymades.' Compared to Picasso's *Bull's Head* 1942 (see Chapter 5 fig. 1), in *The Bicycle Wheel* 1913 Duchamp uses his objects literally, and as conceptual props (the wheel represents motion as contradicted by the stationary stool). As they are to be read as signifying function, they must remain largely untransformed (see Spies 2000, 208).

15. Drawing served as an intermediate phase between the formulation of the idea and the sculpture. Spies (2000, 270) notes for example, that many of *She-Goat's* characteristic features, such as its angular limbs, ears, full body, and pointed teats, also appear in drawings Picasso made of goats in Antibes from 1946 (see fig. 9).

Right: 8. Pablo Picasso. *She-Goat* 1950, in studio and bronze cast. Basket, ceramic pots, palm leaf, metal, wood, cardboard, plaster. 120.5 x 72 x 144cm. Museum of Modern Art, New York

9. Pablo Picasso. *The Goat*, 1946. Ripolin, charcoal and graphite on panel. Musée Picasso, Antibes

coherence and a strong illustrative character that contradict the accumulative and abstract method of its construction. Defined by Spies (2000, 270) as 'veiled' assemblages, the resulting interpretive process is premised on the recognition that two seemingly incompatible representational systems have been combined in syntheses of simplicity and complexity, and reality and abstraction. This is an inherently reflexive art-form that draws attention to its method of construction on the one hand, and the creation of a single cohesive whole, on the other. As such, these works come close to the "elastic, dynamic and aesthetically relevant system of relations" that Panofsky (in Spivey 1997, 42) identifies below the naturalistic surface of ancient Greek sculpture.

A similar concern with creating a cohesive whole is evident in the collages produced by Max Ernst (1891-1976). Unlike the intentional incongruity of Dada collages, Ernst's work is distinguished by the formal consistency and logical cohesion of his imagery, and the transformation of his materials.[16] In a series of images produced through the alteration of illustrations taken from a scientific catalogue

16. Spies (1991, 108) notes that in Ernst's work "nowhere is visual material quoted unaltered" and that Ernst "never simply deprived his illustrations of

of anthropological, microscopic, mineralogical, and other objects.[17] Ernst restricts his source material to a specific graphic type that, while still common in advertising, was increasingly being supplanted by photographs. His preference for such imagery as essential to his work was partly guided by technical considerations, as their strong graphic quality made them easier to incorporate seamlessly into collages, but also reveals a "fascination with the obsolete" that explores the "tension between the Now of art and an outmoded, trivial Then" (Spies 1991, 78). While Ernst's complete integration of his elements to produce an apparently seamless whole echoes the formal and stylistic unity of Picasso's 'veiled' assemblages, his work lacks the spatial complexity and expanded potential for 'visual punning' that occurs when an object in an assemblage is read alternately as 'itself' and as part of a whole.

In the more recent example of Damian Ortega's (1967-) *Controller of the Universe*, 2007 (see fig. 11) the constituent elements are neither altered, nor fused together. Yet, the work echoes Picasso's and Ernst's in significant aspects, by creating a coherent whole with a spatial interplay between two- and three-dimensions. The sculpture consists of a collection of suspended hand-tools, creating a single composition suggestive of an 'explosion' of tools. By using a limited category of elements, Ortega creates a sense of visual unity analogous to Ernst's preference for a specific graphic type. The ironic juxtaposition of using hand-tools to create an artwork that is not 'created' in the conventional sense recalls Ernst's evocation of the past in the present through his use of obsolescent materials. By constructing a disassembled assembly,[18] Ortega emphasizes how the artwork as an apparently cohesive whole is constructed by establishing spatial, formal, and conceptual relations between its individual components. Authorship in this sense is predicated less on unique origination, than on the organization and manipulation of various elements. His use of physical proximity as opposed to physical attachment to create a cohesive whole, evokes both the

10. Max Ernst. *1 Sheet of Copper 1 Sheet of Zinc 1 Sheet of Rubber … Two Ambiguous Figures,* c. 1919/20. Collage, gouache, tinta china. Collection of Judith and Michael Steinhardt, New York

their pragmatic meaning and function by selecting and signing them, thus spiriting them into the aesthetic realm. The concept of reworking posits a *distortion* of original meanings."

17. This series includes *1 Sheet of Copper 1 Sheet of Zinc 1 Sheet of Rubber … Two Ambiguous Figures*, c. 1920 (see fig. 10) where the selective emphasis of some elements and obliteration of others by means of added colour and line, creates two main groups of shapes – each of which is punctuated by a pair of goggles – to suggests two machinelike 'figures'.

18. This process of assembly by disassembly resembles the muted and amnesiac singer Thamyris, whose poetic makeup becomes apparent when the Muses deprive him of his divine voice and ability to play the kithara.

Right: 11. Damian Ortega. *Controller of the Universe*, 2007. Found tools and wire. Dimensions variable

two-dimensional space where technical drawings such as 'exploded views' are constructed and the three-dimensional space in which the viewer encounters the work, and notions of expanding space associated with the theory of the 'big bang'.[19] Similar to the co-existence of abstraction and illustration in Picasso's 'veiled' assemblages Ortega's objects are presented as occupying two incompatible modes of existence. On the one hand, the work refers to the scientific theory of the 'big bang' and on the other to demiurgic creation myths. The suspended hand-tools suggest creative production, but suspended in their 'impossible' hybrid of two- and three-dimensional space, their creations remain figments of the viewer's imagination. Ortega's deliberate confusion of seemingly incompatible categories of ideas, methods of representation, and space, echoes core aspects of Cubism.

The fracturing of pictorial space that the Cubists had experimented with in their analytic phase, had, as its corollary, a subversive interpretative shift from clarity to uncertainty: instead of enhancing comprehension, form presents a visual and conceptual puzzle to be solved, for the content of the image to be revealed. In this sense, form and content are linked, hence Spies' (2000, 65) description of Cubism as a "linguistic system for establishing a relationship between form and content" premised on a necessary iconographic reduction. In Picasso's collages and assemblages, suggestion and association are reciprocal: material fragments allude to their previous identities, while concurrently acquiring new meanings through their incorporation into a new context. The resulting interpretive

19. Commenting on Ortega's *Cosmic Thing* 2002, (which consists of suspended parts of a Volkswagen Beetle), Bruno Latour (2007, 139) notes that "For any piece of machinery, to be drawn to specs by an engineer, on one hand, or to remain functional without rusting and rotting away, on the other, requires us to accept two very different types of existence. To exist as a part *inter partes* inside the isotopic space invented by the long history of geometry, still-life painting, and technical drawing is not at all the same as existing as an entity that has to resist decay and corruption."

process is premised on the revelation that seemingly incompatible visual elements and representational systems have been combined in syntheses of simplicity and complexity, reality and abstraction. Poggi (1988) renders this representational strategy as a game, and argues that in the collages and constructions the viewer (player) cannot 'read' all of the pictorial forms at once. As the interpretive strategy is continuously shifting, disclosure takes place over time. "The question of pictorial unity itself is thus displaced from the collage to the experience of the viewer, where it is suspended and dispersed in the time of interpretive analysis, like a series of moves on a board game" (Poggi 1988, 320). Picasso's 'game' is premised on a realization that the identity and meaning of the constituent parts of an image are potentially fluid and variable. Fluidity is achieved by the combination of elements on the basis of formal and conceptual reciprocity, differentiation through intentional stylistic variation, and the creation of ambiguous images by means of reversible form.

Artists such as Man Ray (1890-1976) and Sam Smith (1908-1983) explore such conceptual play through sculptural assemblage. In Ray's *Gift* 1921 (see fig. 12) an inversion of the functionalities of its constituent elements (a flat-iron and upholstery tacks) produces a new, and essentially useless, object.[20] The title emphasizes both its pathos as inoperative and the aggressive or absurd act of bestowing a gift of an iron that will tear fabric, or upholstery tacks incapable of securing fabric. Smith's sculptures incorporate a similar combination of humour, pathos, and aggression. While Ray constructed *Gift* from prefabricated objects, Smith combines such elements with others he has carved from wood and painted. His largely figurative depictions of humans, animals, and mythological beasts (such as *Harpy Candleholder* 1972 (see fig. 13)) recall the embellished polychrome sculptures of the Greek Archaic period.[21] Smith's approach to sculpture reflects his experience as a handyman and toymaker, and recalls the Cubist appropriation of the techniques of decorative and folk art. While some components are painted in brightly coloured patterns, others feature naturalistic details (such as eyes, lips, skin tones, and hair). Smith's use of decorative colour and pattern is on the one hand closely associated with the visual languages of utility, entertainment, folk art, and religious statuary, and on the other with Robert Rauschenberg's (1925-2008) fusion of painting and sculpture in his *combines*.[22] His visual paradoxes extend to his subject-matter,

20. The sculpture conforms to the type of 'non-functioning machine' that was also explored by Francis Picabia and Max Ernst.

21. While sculpture from this period has largely lost its colour and added elements in other materials (such as gold and silver jewellery on the *korae* and bronze weapons in depictions of gods and warriors) reconstructions based on traces of pigmentation suggest that these works were not only brightly coloured, but also combined naturalistic elements (such as facial features) with elaborate patterning (see fig. 14 and also Chapter 3 fig. 19).

22. Rauschenberg's *combines* such as *Monogram,* 1955-59 reveal the extent to which the artist fused the material object with the pictorial surface to create a synthesis of sculpture and painting in which both art-forms remain clearly identifiable. Branden Joseph (2006, 50) argues that while early works (such as an untitled work with a light box of 1954, *Charlene* 1954, and *Red Interior* 1954) transform the metaphor of painting from an ideated window to a physical wall, with the development of the combines, "his "walls" did not evolve into environments, displays, or architectural design … Instead, they folded back upon themselves in a status somewhat more akin to furniture - "cabinet forms" insisting on their hybrid existence between (or as both) painting and sculpture, 2- and 3-D."

Right: 12. Man Ray. *Gift*, 1921. Painted flatiron and tacks. 15.3 x 9 x 11.4cm. Museum of Modern art, New York

Far right: 13. Sam Smith. *Harpy Candleholder* 1972. Wood, rope, wool, tin plate, stone, paint.

14. Modern polychrome reconstruction (version B) of an archer from the Aphaia temple c. 500-420 BCE, Glyptothek Munich

by, for example, presenting a harpy (a creature which endlessly torments its victim) as an apparent source of visual and fantastical amusement, but also as a caricature which describes a human subject in terms of the attributes associated with a mythological concept. In combining art with craft, and humorous play with social commentary, Smith reflects the toy as a source of imaginative play and the sculpture as an object for contemplation evoking a sense of conceptual play.

The methodological, conceptual, and hermeneutic attributes of sculptural assemblage as devised by Picasso and developed by artists such as Ortega, Ray, and Smith provide a general framework for a comparison between oral and visual constructive methods. For the more specific aim of creating a visual translation of formulaic Homeric poetics, in my body of practical works this understanding of sculptural assemblage was combined with the notion of the 'composite object portrait' to create a series of sculptures based on twelve dramatic personae whose attributes and functions in the plot elucidate Homer's principal heroes and their epics.

Left and far left: 15. Giuseppe Arcimboldo, *Summer* 1563. Oil on board. 67 x 50.8cm; and *Fire*. 1566. Oil on board. 66.5 x 50.8cm. both Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

The Composite Object Portrait

The constructive method, reversible form, and dialectical (playful) hermeneutics, that are so important in Picasso's work, also invite significant comparison with aspects of the so-called 'composite portraits' of the sixteenth century Milanese painter, Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1526/7-93) (see fig 15).[23] The composite portrait in turn, reflects the mythological exploitation of the poetic or visual personification of abstract ideas.[24] In images such as the *Seasons* 1573 and the *Elements* 1563-6, complex sets of ideas are visually expressed through representations of portrait heads of various members of the Hapsburg imperial family (including the emperor) as the elements and seasons, composed of assembled symbolic elements. Arcimboldo established conceptual relationships based on obvious correspondences (such as birds and air), and more obscure symbolic

16. Diagram illustrating relationship between the elements and seasons from Isidore of Seville's *De Natura Rerum*

23. Each painting consists of an assemblage of natural objects such as fruit or animals arranged in such a manner that the illusion of a human portrait is created. As designer and producer of the elaborately costumed festivals of the Hapsburg court, Arcimboldo specialized in the ritualised transformation of the banal into the imaginative. His innovations were very popular, and many subsequent minor painters continued to produce 'Arcimboldesques'. He became obscure during the 17th and 18th centuries, and most 'Arcimboldesques' produced after his death were simplifications of the original idea of the composite portrait, meant for amusement and decoration.

24. The still-prevalent representation of justice as a blindfolded woman holding scales is an example of such personification, as is the depiction of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as female figures in images of the Apotheosisis of Homer (see Chapter 3).

references (such as the peacock and eagle as emblematic of his patron). The artist also creates a series of complex visual and conceptual relations between the eight portraits that make up the series by pairing each season with an element that shares its characteristics.[25] Characterisation is achieved by means of allusion and the creation of a system of external and internal symbolic reciprocity. Sven Alfons (1987, 72-3) proposed that Arcimboldo's *Seasons* and *Elements* were created for the specific context of the Emperor's *Kunstkammer* which housed his artistic and scientific collections.[26] While it was common practice during this period to depict symbols of the physical world as subjects of the monarch,[27] when read as imperial allegories, Arcimboldo's images compress into single images the complex "system of correspondences [in which parallels] were found between the parts of the universe, as for example between the greater world or macrocosm, the lesser world or microcosm of man, and the body politic" (Kaufmann 1987, 99-100). In addition, many of the scientific, medical, alchemical, and philosophical theories that characterized the intellectual climate of the Hapsburg court included an understanding of the elements and the seasons as transformative and relative to one another.[28] As these ideas long predate the sixteenth century, Arcimboldo's images reflect an approach to the development of new systems of knowledge as premised on the reconsideration (or anachronistic appropriation) of the old. In the poem *Carmen,* composed by Giovanni Battista Fonteo to accompany the series, a further correspondence is drawn between the images and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (see Falchetta 1987, 151-164). Arcimboldo's iconography incorporates a complex metaphoric code that is deciphered through the recognition of its various political, scientific, and philosophical allusions, and a poetic interpretation that is premised on a non-illustrative exploration of Classical mythology, thereby fusing symbolic, iconographic, and literary traditions to create a cohesive whole, albeit one that cannot be comprehended in a single viewing.

As complex metaphors, Arcimboldo's portraits represent an exploration of the relationship between nature and humanity, but they do not conform to a core expectation of a portrait, which is the representation of attributes characteristic of the sitter. In the *Seasons,* for example, age rather than appearance or personality was the main determinant in pairing

25. Summer is paired with Fire as both are hot and dry; Spring and Air are hot and wet; Winter and Water are wet and cold; Autumn and Earth are cold and dry (see Kriegeskorte 1988, 24-5).

26. The artist was ideally suited to the project, as almost all of his "creations, for that matter, formed part of large series of images; the stained glass windows for the Duomo of Milan, the Como tapestries, the processions" (Alfons 1987, 73).

27. "Vasari, in 1555, frescoed the walls of two apartments in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence with parallel depictions drawn from Greek mythology and the family history of the Medici. In these frescoes as well, the four elements and the four seasons act as guards to the duke of Tuscany" (Alfons 1987, 72).

28. Scientific organization of the Emperor's numismatic collections had been done by Wolfgang Lazius, whose search for ancient texts had turned up a manuscript generally referred to as *De Imagine Mundi* (most probably authored by Honorius Inclusus around 1090 CE) which contained a theory on the transmutation of the elements into one another (see Alfons 1987, 74). A diagram from Isidore of Seville's *De Natura Rerum* (approx. 600 CE) illustrates the relationships between the elements and the seasons (see fig. 16).

each person with a season. Yet, despite their unique content and method of composition, Arcimboldo's composite portraits still conform to the expectation that a portrait should refer to the human head. By contrast, Francis Picabia's (1879-1953) 'machine-drawings' provide a more abstract example of the composite portrait, while paying greater attention to the description of the core attributes of a subject's character. In his 1915 'caricature' of the photographer Alfred Stieglitz (*Here, This is Stieglitz/Faith and Love*), Picabia represented his subject as a camera-like contraption composed of various mechanical elements (see fig. 17). While each element represents an aspect of Stieglitz's personality, the relationships Picabia establishes between the machine's deformed and inoperable components provide an underlying critique of his subject (hence Picabia's labelling of the portrait as a caricature).[29] The description of an individual therefore does not occur by means of creating an accurate physiological likeness, but instead, through a symbolic evocation of characteristic personality traits. The process is dependent on the viewer's ability to recognize the original function of each element, and to decipher the significance of that function within the context of the image. As noted above in the discussion of Ray's *Gift* (1921), the disruption or defeat of an object's functionality draws attention to its now confused identity and purpose. This can elicit an emotional response to an object (such as sympathy) from a viewer that is usually reserved for animate subjects. This approach evokes the use of objects in the Classical iconography of heroes and gods as markers of identity and function.[30] Such objects could also symbolize more complex ideas. For example, the singer Thamyris who was deprived of his poetic skills by the Muses in the *Iliad* (2.594-600), was frequently depicted in art and literature with a broken lyre (see fig. 18).[31] Biles (2011, 12-15) argues that the association

29. "Picabia thwarted all attempts to create the appearance of normal perspective: the anomalous lever and crisscrossing frame-work are parallel to the drawing's surface, but lens and the film box are twisted slightly toward the viewer, and the bellows is positioned impossibly within the film box itself. Given these distortions, the lens certainly will not slide easily into the box. Moreover, the bellows should connect the lens to the film compartment … [but it] has been severed from the lens, underscoring the incompatibility of the form to be photographed, the "ideal," and the actual medium of artistic creation, the film. Cut from its moorings, the bellows sags limply to the left, suggesting a condition of mechanical and artistic impotence that is reinforced by the inability of the box and the lens to come together. Finally, the lever and handle that stand prominently in the background bear no apparent relationship to the operation of the camera … Paul Schweizer, an art scholar, first recognized these objects as a brake lever and an automobile gearshift. The brake is engaged while the shift is stuck in neutral, further affirming the impotence of this machine, its lack of power, and its inability to move or accomplish anything. This is no state-of-the-art machine. Clearly, this camera will not work" (Rozaitis 1994, 47-48).

30. Spivey (1997, 46) for example, notes that recognition of the depicted deity was facilitated by means of personal traits (such as Apollo's hairstyle), but neglects to mention the bow and bowl held by the god in the image used to illustrate his point (Spivey 1997, 47, figure 20). (See also Chapter 3).

31. Pausanias reported that Polygnotus depicted Thamyris with a broken lyre in his mural at Delphi (10.30.8) and in sculpted form on Mount Helikon (9.30.2). Biles (2011, 13) notes that "Whereas Homer had the Muses punish Thamyris by causing him to forget his skill at playing the kithara, by the fifth century that element of the tale had developed further: Thamyris' lyre was destroyed in the process of his undoing. The scene is preserved on an attic hydria and was vividly described in Sophocles' *Thamyris.*"

Right: 17. Francis Picabia, *Here, This is Stieglitz/Faith and Love*, 1915. Pen, brush and ink, and cut and pasted papers on paperboard. 75.9 x 50.8cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Far Right: 18. Paestan red-figure Bell Krater depicting the blinded Thamyris (far left) with his dicarded instrument c. 400-370 BCE. Height: 10.6cm

between Thamyris and the broken lyre had become so entrenched that Artistophanes' metaphor of the playwright Cratinus as a broken lyre (*Knights* 531-3)[32] caricatures an individual subject, while revealing "an interest in exploring and criticising the agonistic ethos as Thamyris came to epitomize it" (Biles 2011, 15). Similarly, Rozaitis (1994, 48-9) argues that the depiction of Stieglitz as a broken camera forms part of a "significant exploration of the boundaries between art and antiart, but [is] also an experiment in satire, social commentary, irrationalism, nihilism, and the ready-made."

Picabia's incorporation of Stieglitz's profession as photographer into the symbolic depiction of his character is based on a fusion of Stieglitz's personality with his activities. In Joseph Cornell's (1903-1972): *A Parrot for Juan Gris*, 1953-4 (see fig. 19), one of the inventors of Cubist collage is represented in terms of his own, but also in terms of Cornell's, formal

32. νυνὶ δ' ὑμεῖς αὐτον ὁρῶντες παραληροῦντ' οὐκ ἐλεεῖτε,
ἐκπιπτουσῶν τῶν ἠλέκτρων καὶ τοῦ τόνου οὐκέτ ἐνόντος
τῶν θ' ἁρμονιῶν διαχασκουσῶν·

But now when you see him making a fool of himself, you feel no pity,
Though his pegs have popped out, and he's all out of tune,
And his joints are agape" (Biles 2011, 13).

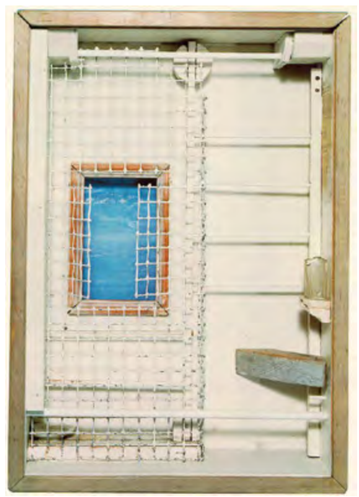
concerns. Diane Waldman (2002, 100) for example, notes that Cornell appropriates details from Gris's paintings to make his own statement about *papier collé.* While Gris's work reflects a preoccupation with form, composition, and a literal use of prefabricated elements (such as newsprint), Cornell's work is distinguished by its playfulness and symbolic imagery. The rectangular box, image of a bird (a white cockatoo), maps, stamp, wooden dowel, and toys (a cork ball, a folded handwritten note, and a metal ring to which a piece of string is attached, looped around a horizontal metal bar) recur in Cornell's other works. Like his portraits of women (such as a collage for *The Crystal Cage (Portrait of Berenice*) c. 1942, and mixed media constructions *Penny Arcade Portrait of Lauren Bacall* 1945-6, *Custodian II (Silent Dedication to MM* [Marilyn Monroe]) 1963), and his *Dovecotes* series of the 1950's based on Emily Dickinson's writings,[33] the Juan Gris series was premised on a completely personal interpretive response to his subject. While each box isolates and compresses its contents to create a private poetic world, the majority formed part of larger series of works. These were constructed over decades or more, included formal and thematic variation and repetition, and explored contemporary art, literature and media (such as the theatre and film) through the appropriation of seemingly sentimental scraps and fragments.

Cornell's interpretation of Gris makes no attempt to provide an objective depiction of a subject, but is based on an exploration of the influence of the subject on its interpreter. The art-work is therefore as self-reflexive as it is an exploration of Gris' methodology. As such, it conforms neither to Arcimboldo's almost complete submersion of his subjects into his metaphorical constructs, nor to Picabia's symbolic and satiric depiction of his photographer subject by means of references to malfunctioning photographic equipment. Instead, Cornell combines a careful analysis and representation of Gris' work with idiosyncratic features of his own (such as the box and the parrot). Although widely separated by history, aspects of Arcimboldo, Picabia, and Cornell's approaches are reflected in *A Catalogue of Shapes*, with the series of twelve composite object portraits constructed to create a visual translation of a formulaic Homeric poetics. These include references to Arcimboldo's reciprocal system of individual, yet interrelated artworks; Picabia's use of functional (and disfunctional) objects, such as machines, to express character traits; and Cornell's exploration of another artist's creative methodology in terms of his own.

In the representational systems discussed, concept and form are interrelated, and include combinatory, and organizational procedures. While each approach makes use of appropriated and/or naturalistic forms and objects, the resulting artworks are wholly fabricated in the sense that they comprise combinations of elements possible only within the context of the artwork. These methodologies involve the development of symbolic systems wherein each individual element retains a degree of autonomy while forming part of a larger whole. Elements within these systems are reciprocally related within the context of the work, as well as their previous identities, thereby creating complex series of internal and external allusions. The hermeneutics of these works are based on interactive and continuously shifting interpretive

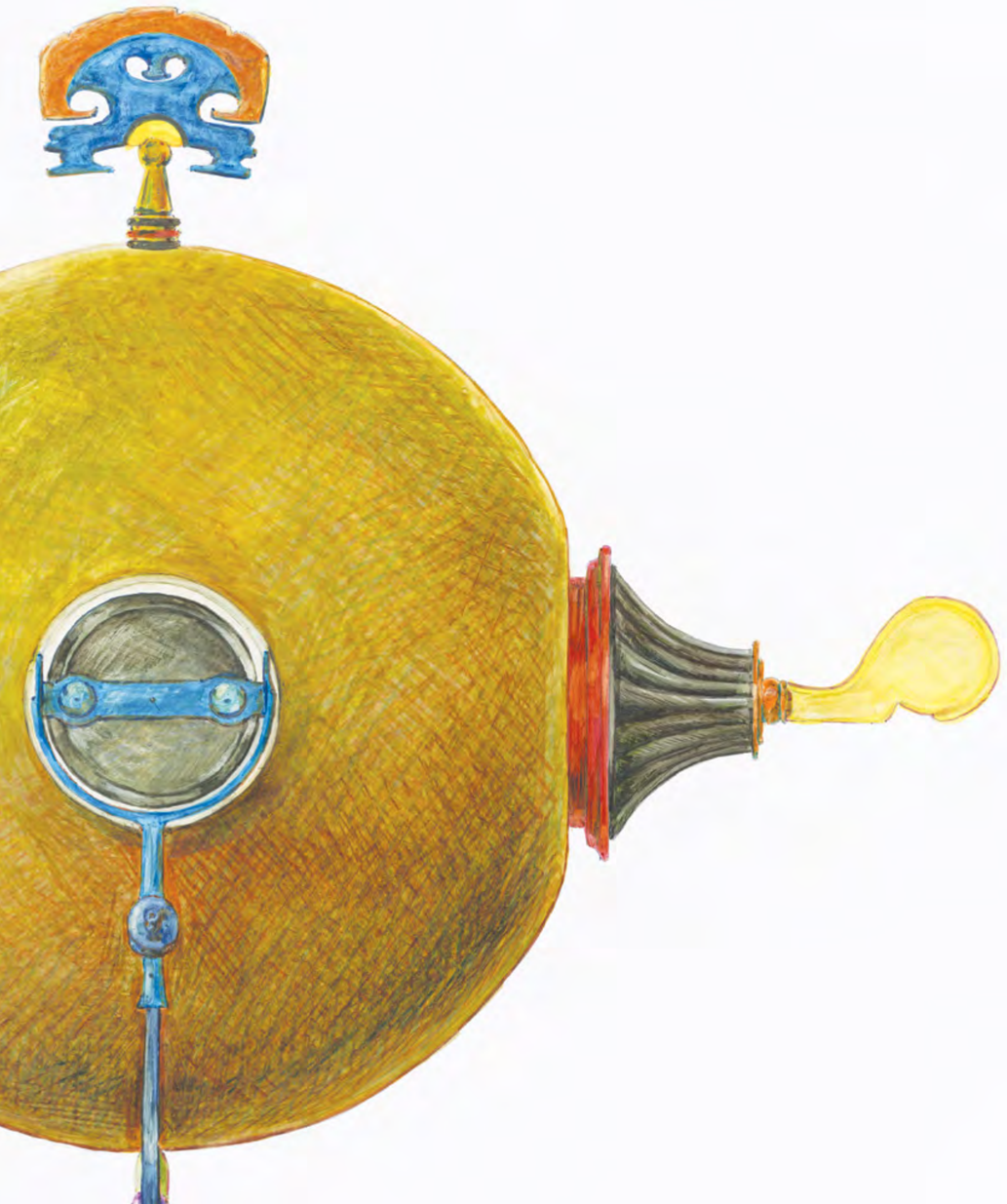
33. Waldman (2002, 99-100) notes that "the earlier interest that Cornell displayed in literary detail was replaced by an abstract arrangement of forms, a play of line, volume, and shape that is breathtaking in its beauty and simplicity." The sparseness of form and colour in this work echoes Dickinson's "short, often obscure, and deceptively simple poetry" (Waldman 2002, 85) (see fig. 20).

Right: 19. Joseph Cornell. *A Parrot for Juan Gris* Winter 1953-4. Mixed media construction. 46 x 31 x 12 cm. Collection of Robert Lehrman, Washington D.C.



20. Joseph Cornell. *"Toward the Blue Peninsula"(For Emily Dickinson)* 1953. Mixed media construction. 36.8 x 26 x 13.9 cm. Collection of Robert Lehrman, Washington D.C.

processes in which form and material are invested with meaning. As a symbolic representation of a subject, the composite portrait records a transaction between artist and subject. The viewer who interprets the artwork by 'decoding' its allusive iconography participates in, and extends, this dialectical engagement. The next chapter introduces a brief overview of traditional portraits of Homer and the representation of Homeric subjects, before describing the structure, construction, and iconography of *A Catalogue of Shapes*, as a visual translation of a formulaic Homer using the understanding of sculptural assemblage discussed above, and the notion of the composite object portrait.



CHAPTER 3

Homeric Iconographies

This project is a continuation of a long tradition in the visual arts of depicting Homeric subjects. It deviates from that tradition by attempting to materially represent a contemporary understanding of Homer and the Homeric epics that is still largely devoid of an appropriate iconography. While *A Catalogue of Shapes* lacks the figurative and/or illustrative attributes historically associated with representations of the Homeric, it draws on, refers to, and transforms aspects of artworks associated with the poems dating from the Greek Geometric period (c. 1050-700 BCE) to the twentieth century.

Traditional Homeric Iconographies

Historically, the visual representation of subjects related to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* belong to either of two categories: one is the representation of the figure of Homer, the other, the predominantly narrative/illustrative depiction of scenes and events from the poems. Scholars such as Katharine Esdaile (1912) and C. P. Jones (1982) describe the artistic representation of the figure of Homer in antiquity, and Richard Kannicht (1982) and Anthony Snodgrass (1998),[1] the historic representation of scenes from the Homeric epics.

Representations of the figure of Homer have historically provided an accurate reflection of prevailing notions of Homeric poetry. Graziosi (2007, 2-3) for example, draws a correlation between "ancient (and, indeed, modern) discussions of the figure of Homer" and "the significance and meaning of the Homeric poems to specific audiences." Ancient writers recorded multiple portraits of Homer in different visual formats,[2] and Esdaile (1912, 303-5) provides a comprehensive list of such references in her study of coins featuring images of the poet. She identifies three stages in the development of the iconography of Homer on the coins (see fig. 1) which she argues, reflect that of other art-forms (such as sculpture and painting), and "correspond to all that we know from other sources of the development of

1. Snodgrass' conclusion that images from the 8th and 7th centuries could not have been influenced by the Homeric poems is premised on the assumption that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were composed by one poet sometime during the late eighth or early seventh centuries.

2. These include free-standing and relief sculptures, paintings, mosaics, coins, engraved cups, and intaglios.

Left: 1. Homeric coin types. 1-2: Second century to Imperial times; 3: Late second or early third century BCE; 4: Early second century BCE; 5: Probably later Antonine; 6: Age of Galliens; 7: After c. 300 and before 189 BCE; 8: Volusianus to Valeranius; 9: Early Antonine Period; 10: Time of Septimus Severus; 11-12: Reign of Commodus; 13: Third century BCE; 14: c. 307 BCE or earlier; 15-18: Fourth or third century BCE; 19-23: Period of the Antonines (for comprehensive discussion see Esdaile 1912)

Greek portrait art" (Esdaile 1912, 325). While the attributes of old age and blindness were well established characteristics of descriptions of Homer by the Hellenistic period, these are generally absent from portraits on coins of preceding periods.[3] The persistence of these traits in the subsequent iconographic tradition reflects the influence of the increased interest in the figure of Homer stemming from Hellenistic scholarship and the Homeric biographical tradition. The Hellenistic cult of Homer claimed the poet to be the pre-eminent source of wisdom and knowledge (see Zanker 1995). Visually expressed, a relief by Archelaos of Priene (see fig. 3) depicts Homer as a cult statue, enthroned, bearded and bearing a strong resemblance to contemporaneous artistic and literary characterizations of Zeus. His reputation

3. She notes that while the figure of Homer was closely associated with the attributes of age and blindness, the iconographic tradition does not always reflect this. The coins provide a wealth of information as to what the earlier (pre-Hellenistic) Homeric type was like, as his head or figure appears on the coins of no fewer than eight Greek cities, ranging in date from c. 307 BCE to the third century CE. It is noteworthy that, whereas most of the Hellenistic busts and reliefs represent the poet as bald with the pathos of age added to that of blindness, none of the coins represent him in this way (Esdaile 1912, 303).

Right: 2. Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres. *The Apotheosis of Homer* 1827. Oil on Canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris

3. Archelaos of Priene. Votive relief depicting the deification of Homer 2nd Century BCE. Height: 1.18 m. British Museum, London

during the Hellenistic era had been expanded to such an extent that Homer was placed in a class entirely of his own.[4] This transformation from epic poet to transcendental source of all poetry resulting in "the creed of Homeric classicism" according to which "what men were concerned to celebrate was the inspiration Homer had given, and was giving still, not only to epic poetry but to poetry and literature as a whole" (Brink 1972, 552). This Hellenic construct proved to be highly durable: in J. A. D. Ingres' painting *The Apotheosis of Homer* of 1827 (see fig. 2) the artist appropriated the ideological authority of Homer to great theoretical effect.[5] By installing Homer as the embodiment of nineteenth century Neoclassicism, Ingres cemented the

4. "Homer had come to stand for poetry, not only one poetic genre. Thus Plato had contrasted the rational world-view with the poetic or 'Homeric.' Aristotle had found in Homer the origins of drama, tragic and comic. Homer is the archetype of the serious as well as the comic spirit in Greek poetry" (Brink 1972, 584).

5. In Ingres' painting, two female figures representing his epics are seated at Homer's feet. The inclusion of allegorical female figures personifying the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in depictions of Homer are characteristic of the iconography of an apotheosized Homer, such as the relief from Priene, where they are two little girls, a silver goblet from Herculaneum, where an eagle carries Homer to heaven flanked by female personifications of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* and the fragmented remains of sculptures and plinths engraved with epigrams suggesting sculptural groups representing the poet and his poems (see Jones 1985).

association of the image of Homer with the ideals and aesthetics of academic Classicism. Subsequent artistic retorts to Ingres' *Apotheosis* rejected his canon, but not the notion of Homer as its archetype.[6]

Depictions of events and characters from the Homeric epics historically exhibit greater iconographic variation than portraits of Homer. Art historians debate whether art from the Geometric and Archaic periods could have been informed by artists' knowledge of the poems.[7] Hana Bouzková and Jan Bouzek (1966) compiled a survey of various theories relating to correlations between early Homeric epic and art of the Mycenaean and Geometric periods. These range from perceived similarities between the stylized descriptions of human bodies in art, with the poet's emphasis on specific body parts, parallels between structural and compositional patterning in decoration and the poems, to thematic resemblances. The absence of inscriptions and the abstract nature of art from these periods make such comparisons difficult to prove. The emergence of writing in the late Archaic period, enabled artists to clearly designate their subjects as depictions of topics from the Trojan Cycle by means of inscriptions alongside images.[8] Such depictions are widespread, with

4. Walter Barnes. *The Apotheosis of Degas* 1885. Photograph

5. Giulio Paolini. Installation view of *The Apotheosis of Homer* 1970-1. Music stands, black and white photographs, printing on paper. Dimensions variable. Art Institute of Chicago

6. Late Geometric Basin from Thebes c. 730 BCE. Height of figured panel: 9cm. British Museum, London

6. Walter Barnes' photograph *The Apotheosis of Degas,* 1885 (see fig. 4), Paul Cezanne's planned *Apotheosis of Delacroix,* approx. 1860-90, Salvador Dali's *Apotheosis of Homer,* 1944-5 and Giulio Paolini's installation of the same title of 1970-71 (see fig. 5), are all direct responses to the theory of art expressed in Ingres' painting. Of these, Dali's ruined marble bust is the most direct reference to the standard Homeric type, but even Paolini's seemingly radical departure retains the association of Homer with cultural canonization.

7. Kannicht (1982, 76) notes how images on objects such as an Attic basin from Thebes dating from the third quarter of the eighth century (see fig.6) and an Attic oinochoe in Munich which dates from the third quarter of the eighth century, both feature decoration depicting what could be interpreted as scenes from the epics (either the abduction of Helen by Paris, Jason and Medea, or the departing Odysseus greeting Penelope on the basin, and Odysseus' shipwreck on the oinochoe). He argues that the hermeneutic problem of these images is their openness to multiple interpretation and communication, meaning that attempts to conclusively classify them as depictions of Homeric themes will fail. By comparison, images on objects from the seventh century onwards are clearly recognizable as Homeric due to inscriptions identifying their subjects. The majority of seventh century depictions appear to draw on key events from the larger Trojan cycle, such as the wooden horse and Neoptolemos' murder of Hector's son Astyanax.

8. In the *Chrestomathy* of Proclus (a handbook on literature compiled either in the second century CE or between 412-485 CE and reproduced as part of the introductory material in codex Venetus A of Homer's *Iliad*) the Trojan cycle starts with the *Cypria*, the 'big' *Iliad*, the *Little Iliad* (which comprises three portions known as the *Aethiopis*, *Little Iliad,* and *Iliupersis*), the *Nostoi*

Right: 7. Athenian red-figure clay vase depicting Priam approaching Achilles to ransom the body of Hector c. 500-450 BC. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

the Homeric epics clearly attributable as major sources.[9] Portrayals of scenes and characters from the epics and Homeric characters occur across art-forms, and range from illustrations of specific events (such as Priam visiting Achilles to ransom Hector's body (see fig. 7)), general themes (such as battles between Greeks and Trojans) to artistic innovations (such as Achilles and Ajax playing a board game). Susan Woodford (2003, 116-119) notes that, while no literary counterpart of Achilles and Ajax playing a game has been found, this theme (which first appeared in the mid 6th century BCE) became a popular topic for vase painters. The pairing of this image with a depiction of Leda, Tyndareus, and the Dioscuri (Castor and Polydeuces) on an Attic black figure amphora of c. 540-30 by Exekias (?-c.525 BCE)[10] has been interpreted as revealing the artist's interest in the daily activities of heroes (see fig. 8 and Woodford 2003, 118). However, the image may arguably represent one of the primary underlying themes of the *Iliad*, which Nagy (1979) identified as the contest to be 'the best of the Achaeans' (in Achilles' absence, Ajax is the strongest Greek hero (*Il.*

which recounts the return of the Greek heroes after Troy, the *Odyssey*, and the *Telegony* which describes the death of Odysseus (Kannicht 1982, 71). In antiquity the entire Trojan cycle was often associated with Homer.

9. The majority of seventh century depictions appear to draw on easily recognizable events from the Cycle, such as the wooden horse, Neoptolemos' murder of Hector's son, and the blinding of Polyphemus. Iliadic scenes were either less popular during this period, or are more difficult to identify, but the combination of inscriptions with the figurative illusionism of late Archaic and Classical art resulted in visual depictions of narratives (including the Iliadic) that can be more confidently categorized as such by art historians.

10. Woodford (2003, 116) suggests that Exekias' example is the first known depiction of the theme of Achilles and Ajax playing a game. Later versions include Athena standing between the heroes and/or fighting warriors on either side. Exekias' use of Achilles' helmet to give him height over Ajax was rarely copied. Later versions tend to show both heroes either helmeted or bare-headed. The scene featuring the Dioscuri did not share the popularity of this theme and remained rare.

Left: 8. Exekias. Athenian black-figure amphora depicting Achilles and Ajax playing a board game on one side, and Leda, Tyndareus, and the Dioscuri on the other, mid 6th century. Vatican Museums

2.768-70),[11] but as Achilles is a demigod who wears armour forged by a god, he ultimately claims the title). As this rivalry does not take the form of Greek heroes physically fighting each other, it cannot be visually expressed in this manner. By contrast, two heroes playing a game symbolises amiable contestation.[12] In formal terms, this reflects the Homeric strategy of establishing 'sympathetic antitheses' to describe one character in terms of another (see Chapter 1).

Roman artists appropriated Homeric themes together with Greek art and literature. Works such as a series of wall paintings from a house on the Esquiline Hill in Rome, dating from the second half of the first century BCE, reveal a detailed knowledge of the *Odyssey* (see fig. 9). Known as the '*Odyssey* Landscapes', the paintings take the form of elaborate landscapes populated with diminutive figures, and feature extensive depictions of events that are only briefly described in the poem (such as the Laestrygonians of *Od.*10.82-199). By focusing on the exotic places the hero visits in the course of his journey home, the paintings transform the long corridor in which they appear into a mythical space through which the viewer travels. The identification of many characters in the painting with Greek script may suggest that the work is a direct Roman copy of a lost Greek original. However, as Mary Beard and John Henderson (2001, 54) argue, the writing intentionally identifies the image as the Greek *Odyssey* and may consequently reflect the cultural interplay between Greece and Rome. Moreover, the formal treatment of the landscapes echo the disruption of the conventional pictorial hierarchies of background and foreground, and the artist's reorientation of the epic story itself, by encouraging the viewer to explore the significance of the minor events in the epic background (Beard and Henderson 2001, 53).

From the Medieval to the early Renaissance period, depictions of Homeric themes were largely confined to illuminations in manuscript editions of the poems (such as the translations by Leontius Pilatus (?-1366) done at the request of Petrarch (1304-74) in

11. The comparison of Ajax to Achilles occurs at the conclusion of the *Catalogue of Ships* where the poet asks the Muses to name the best of the Achaeans and their horses (*Il.* 2.761-62).

12. By pairing this image with a depiction of the demigod Polydeuces with his human twin Castor on the rear, Exekias emphasizes both the similarities and the differences between Achilles and Ajax on which their rivalry is premised.

Right: 9. Unknown artist/s. Detail from the *Odyssey Landscapes: Odysseus/Ulysses and his followers are attacked by the Laestrygonians* c. 50-40 BCE. Vatican Museums

10. John Lydgate. Page from *The Siege of Troy* with a depiction of Hector killing Patroclus 15th century. Parchment. Bodeleian Library, Oxford

1360-62).[13] In Western Europe, the poems disappeared from popular culture, but the name 'Homer' did not. Philip Ford (2006, 1) notes that although Homer's poetry was lost to Western Europe, the name *Homer* remained a byword for the inspired poet. Renewed interest in Homer is evident in the work of early humanists such as Angelo Poliziano (1454-94) and the Byzantine scholar Janus Lascaris (1445-1534). Ford (2006, 2) points out that while readers of the *editio princeps* of Homer, which appeared in Florence in 1488,[14] admired the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as sources of all the arts, sciences, and philosophical schools, they were nonetheless put off by the formal aspects of the poems – the use of epithets, formulaic expressions, and repetitions. The association of Homer with scholarship, knowledge, and rationality persisted throughout the Renaissance and into the nineteenth century. During this period, academies of art (such as the Roman *Accademia di San Luca,* the Florentine *Accademia del Disegno*, the Carracci *Accademia degli Incamminati*, the French *Académie Royale* and its successor, the *Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux Arts*) were

13. These are ms lat. 7880(1) and 7880(2) in the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

14. The *editio princeps* contains the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, the *Homeric Hymns*, the *Battle of the Frogs and Mice,* the Herodotean and Plutarchian *Lives of Homer*, and an essay by Dio Chrysostom. An epistle by the editor, Bernardo Nerilo to Piero de' Medici represents the only significant Latin explanation of the manuscript's contents (see Ford 2006). While not direct translations, narratives based on the Trojan War, such as John Lydgate's 15th century *The Siege of Troy* (see fig. 10) were also produced.

Far left: 11. Henri Auguste Calixte César Serrur. *The Death of Ajax* 1820. Museum of Fine Arts, Lille

Left: 12. Honoré Daumier. *Ancient History: Menelaus the Vanquisher* 1841. Lithograph. The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo

closely associated with the imitation of the antique.[15] By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the core doctrine of the academy had been narrowed down to a canon of "select antique sculptures and in subjects culled primarily from the Bible and the classics on the assumption that this ideal, like these subjects, constituted the excellence and pre-eminence of Western civilization" (Goldstein 1996, 251). The manner in how approved topics, such as Ajax defying the gods as described in *Od.* 4.499-511 (see fig. 11), should be interpreted, were cemented in the academy through competitions, such as the *grand prix de l'Académie Royale*, in which contestants were required to interpret a Classical theme in accordance with fixed criteria such as "action, setting, and psychological keynote" (Mullarkey 2005).

The institutional interpretation of the Homeric, like the academic understanding of antique sculpture, was based on perceptions of the ancient Greeks as serious, dignified, and rational. Any evidence to the contrary was ignored. When Alexander Pope (1688-1744) created his 1715 translation of the *Iliad* for example, he was careful to conform to his audience's expectation of a refined, dignified, and moralistic heroism. Pamela Poynter Schwandt (1979, 387-8) notes how in the half-century before Pope began translating the *Iliad*, the Ancients-Moderns controversy had produced many complaints against Homer, with the Greek poet often unfavourably compared with Virgil. Pope approached the problem of producing an acceptable translation by "using many of the same techniques by which Virgil had adapted Homer's epics for the *Aeneid* and often working his way down to eighteenth-century England by way of *Paradise Lost* and Dryden's *Aeneid*. The narrative style, the heroes, and the gods all became more Virgilian than Homeric" (Schwandt 1979,

15. Carl Goldstein (1996, 1) notes that these institutions represent major historical phenomena, since virtually all artists in the period ranging from the seventeenth century to the early modern period were trained there.

Right: 13. Installation view of Cy Twombly's *Fifty Days at Iliam* 1977-8. From left to right: *Achaeans in Battle; The Fire That Consumes all Before It; Shades of Achilles, Patroclus and Hector; House of Priam; Ilians in Battle.* Oil, oil-crayon, and pencil on canvas. Philadelphia Museum of Art

388). Pope's most significant changes involved Homer's less 'dignified' extended similes where insects, dogs, donkeys, and other 'base' references occur. Honoré Daumier's (1808-1879) irreverent representations of Homeric characters such as Helen and Menelaus in his *Ancient History* series of 1842 (see fig. 12) appear to reflect this aspect of Homeric poetics. However, Daumier's burlesques are less an interpretation of Homeric poetics than a satirical denunciation of academic Classicism.

As discussed in Chapter 2, early Modernists such as Giorgio de Chirico, Fernand Léger, and Pablo Picasso rejected academic Classicism while re-evaluating, transforming, and reinventing the art of the antique. The systemic Classicism of the Cubists explored the underlying systemic and methodological – as opposed to the stylistic – attributes of ancient art. Although Milman Parry devised the theory of formulaic composition during the early part of the twentieth century, this understanding of Homer had little influence on popular culture, where 'Homer' remained a by-word for academic Classicism and notions of Greek rationalism.[16] Cy Twombly's (1928-2011) interpretation of Homeric poetry in *Fifty Days at Iliam* 1977-8 (see fig. 13) is primarily based on Pope's translation of the *Iliad*, and extends the Modernists' transformative reinvention of ancient art to ancient literature. *Fifty Days at Iliam* is composed of ten individual paintings,[17] installed in a single room, to form an

16. In the mid-twentieth century, E. R. Dodds (1951, 1) noted that both their critics and their apologists regarded the ancient Greeks as blind to the non-rational factors in human experience and behaviour. He cites the ideas of Paul Mazon, Gilbert Murray, and C. M. Bowra as examples of scholars who define the Homeric epics as a "complete anthropomorphic system" with no relation to religious beliefs or cultic practices (Dodds 1951, 2).

17. These are: *Shield of Achilles; Heroes of the Achaeans; Vengeance of Achilles; Achaeans in Battle; The fire that consumes all before it; Shades of Achilles, Patroclus and Hector; House of Priam; Ilians in Battle; Shades of Eternal Night;* and *Heroes of the Ilians.*

Far left: 14. Cy Twombly. Detail of *Shades of Eternal Night* 1978. Oil, oil-crayon, pencil on canvas 300 x 239cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art

Left: 15. Cy Twombly. Detail of *Ilians in Battle* 1978. Oil, oil-crayon, pencil on canvas. 300 x 380cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art

immersive environment. Rebecca Resinski (2006, 315) suggests that the spatial arrangement of the canvases comprising *Fifty Days at Iliam* may also function as a spatial equivalent to the effects of Homeric repetition by creating "ricochets of visual echoes" in which the viewer is "both pulled through a narrative and prompted to jump out of narrative sequence to trace a shape, name, color or theme through other paintings."

Twombly's engagement with the *Iliad* is neither figurative, nor illustrative. Characters and events are represented by means of words, shapes, colour, and rapidly made (and frequently erased) marks and scribbles. Pope's influence is particularly apparent in Twombly's choice of inscriptions and imagery such as clouds to represent the 'shades' of the deceased (see fig. 14) and his interpretation of Homeric similes.[18] But, whereas Pope's translation is premised on expressing an eighteenth century view of a heroic masculinity, Twombly responds to this ideal by emphasizing its underlying savagery. In many respects, the contrast between the highly emotive impact of Twombly's expressive mark-making and Pope's elegant verse echoes Daumier's rejection of the grandeur of academic Classicism by invoking its antithesis. While text, in the form of letters, words, names, and phrases form part of Twombly's work from the mid-1950's,[19] this aspect of Twombly's engagement with the *Iliad* signals the extent to which the artist approaches the *Iliad* as a founding text of the Western literary canon. The crudely scribbled names and words in *Fifty Days at Iliam* function both as text and motif (see fig. 15), particularly when Twombly combines stylized chariots in the form of disks and

18. *The fire that consumes all before it* features the phrase "Like a fire that consumes all before it" and refers to *Il.* 2.780 (οἵ δ' ἄρ' ἴσαν ὡς εἴ τε πυρὶ χθὼν πᾶσα νέμοιτο· "And then they went as if all the earth were consumed by fire"). Pope translates this phrase as "They pour along like a Fire that sweeps the whole Earth before it" and cites it in the introduction to his translation as epitomising Homeric artistry and inventiveness: "for Pope, the simile describes not only the Achaeans moving in battle formation but also the force of Homeric epic, carrying its audience along in its sweep" (Resinski 2006, 314).

19. Jon Bird (2007, 489) notes that the graphic dimension of this text is a constant, with the gestural aspect of writing as an identifiable linguistic sign emerging from the chaos of the scribble.

triangles with letters to write names such as 'Achilles'.[20] Richard Leeman (2005, 22) points out that Twombly's analysis of the origins of writing, graphic art, and the glyph replicates his interest in ancient surfaces and textures, and that writing represents a manifestation "of the 'directness' that Twombly saw in 'the primitive, the ritual, and fetish elements'" (Leeman 2005, 22-3). This interest in early writing recalls the complex relationship between the development of the textual format of the Homeric epics and historic changes in the reception of the poems. The prevalence of *scriptio continua* and *boustrophedon*[21] lettering in early inscriptions of Homeric verses reveal a lack of concern for consistency in the graphic orientation of letters that seems "to testify to a creative, original, and governing idea behind this writing: to translate directly into visible symbols what is heard" (Powell 1991, 121).[22] Lawrence Campbell (in Leeman 2005, 23) identifies a similar relationship in Twombly's work when he suggests that the artist uses text because he likes the sound of the words and not because they are descriptive. The 'evocation' occurs between the sound image of the word and the visual image of the painting. *Fifty Days at Iliam* reinterprets the notion of the Homeric epic as monument of civilized art and thought by returning to its first rudimentary inscriptions. As an antithetical inversion of the idea of a 'transcendent' Homer and its associated iconographies, Twombly's Homer therefore retains its core attributes: his *Iliad* remains a text, albeit a raw and primordial *Urtext*. By contrast, an iconography of an oral-formulaic Homer cannot be premised on expressing a phase in a process of textual origination, enhancement, and corruption. The aim instead, is to visually describe the Homeric epics as the products of a creative methodology that incorporates the transformative manipulation and organization of disparate elements.

20. Bird (2007, 500) argues that Twombly uses the chariot as a key symbolic representation of conflict: "Reduced to its simplest formal expression – a disc and triangle with their mythic associations of acceleration and attack – the chariot appears in Twombly's art from the late 1970s that stems from a "long-term and recurrent interest in the chariot form of classical antiquity and the iconography of processions and battles; of ritual, honour and death." This motif can be traced to Giacometti's introduction of the chariot form into modern art (e.g. *The Chariot* 1950) and continued by "the American sculptor, David Smith, for whom the chariot was a recurrent motif" (Bird 2007, 500).

21. *Scriptio continua* consist of unbroken lines of letters which have little or no punctuation or accentuation, and function as phonetic markers representing not individual words, but a series of sounds interpreted upon vocalization as a complete phrase. *Boustrophedon* "as the ox turns" inscriptions consist of a continuous line of writing in which letters appear in both conventional and in reverse format to indicate directionality.

22. Discontinuation of *scriptio continua* and the post-Hellenistic practice of marking the accent on each word in a given text, reflects a gradual shift in focus from the correct articulation of the verse as a metrical whole by a performer, to determining the meanings and origins of individual words by 5th century scholars (see Nagy 2000, 17). The visual format of the Homeric epics changed from a flexible 'phonetic guide' where phrases are activated by vocalization for a primarily aural reception and interpretation of its constituent parts, to a format devoid of the appropriate visual aids for rhythmic and melodic performance. Nagy (2000, 22) therefore concludes that attempts to read Homer aloud from texts produced using the notation system inherited from scholars who postdate Aristarchus will fail, as these are incompatible with readings of Homer in terms of quantitative meter.

Developing an Iconography for an Oral-Formulaic Homer

A Catalogue of Shapes 2010-13 consists of a collection of twelve sculptural assemblages. Attributes, such as spatial composition, visual and conceptual patterning, rhythm and cross-references detail the characterization, narrative, and thematic content, as well as the formal, structural, and experiential aspects of Homeric poetics (for individual discussion of each sculpture see Chapter 4). The construction and iconography of the artworks reflect on the creative methodology and aesthetics of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* as understood in contemporary Homeric analyses,[23] to function as an exploration of the integration of form and content in constructive art-forms, such as sculptural assemblage and formulaic composition. The theory of formulaic composition is underpinned by the notion of an 'immanent' or implicit Homer as the personification of the entire epic tradition (as opposed to a single historical, and creatively unsurpassable, originator (see Bakker 2006 and Chapter 5 note 21)). The iconographic separation of the relatively stable figure of Homer from the more varied depictions of Homeric subjects is therefore not compatible with an understanding of 'Homer' as a poetic system underlying the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey.*

Although neither the individual performer, nor the eponymous poet of the Homeric poems explicitly identifies themselves in the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey,* the combination of an elaborate invocation of the Muses with the story of Thamyris in the Iliadic *Catalogue of Ships* appears to represent an example of artistic self-awareness in the poems. Many of the strategies employed in the construction of this 'Homer-Thamyris complex', such as the catalogue format, the establishment of comparative pairs, parataxis, allusion, the distillation of information, and the individual contextually determined interpretation of traditional material, informed the composition of my collection of original sculptural images in *A Catalogue of Shapes*. Designed to function as a coherent unit, the twelve sculptures that make up *A Catalogue of Shapes* are arranged into two main categories (characters from the *Odyssey,* and from the *Iliad*) and four sub-categories: *The Warriors*; *The Wives*; *The Deities*; *The Kings*. This structure echoes Giuseppe Arcimboldo's combination of the *Seasons* (1573) with the *Elements* (1563-6) as well as Cy Twombly's ten part painting *Fifty Days at Iliam* (1977-8), and is acknowledged in the spatial presentation of the collection (with paired sets located either alongside or opposite each other) and by means of iconographic correlation and visual cross-referencing (see figs. 16 and 17). The strategy of pairing heroes for thematic comparison is characteristic of Homeric style and echoes Exekias' representation of the rivalry between Achilles and Ajax by depicting them seated opposite one another, engaged in a game. The selection of the dramatic 'personae' referred to in the artworks comprising *A Catalogue of Shapes* was thematically determined. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* constitute two distinct types of epic:

(1) The *Iliad*, with Achilles as its main hero, is defined as a *kleos* epic in which the dramatic theme is established by the poetic immortalization of the hero by death in battle.

23. In particular, the work of Gregory Nagy, Egbert Bakker, Benjamin Sammons, Jenny Strauss Clay, Barbara Graziosi, Laura M. Slatkin, Stephen Scully, and Barry Powell's analysis of the structure of the *Catalogue of Ships*.

(2) The *Odyssey*, which recounts the adventures of Odysseus following the Trojan War, is a *nostos* epic, in which the hero's poetic immortalization is achieved by a successful homecoming.

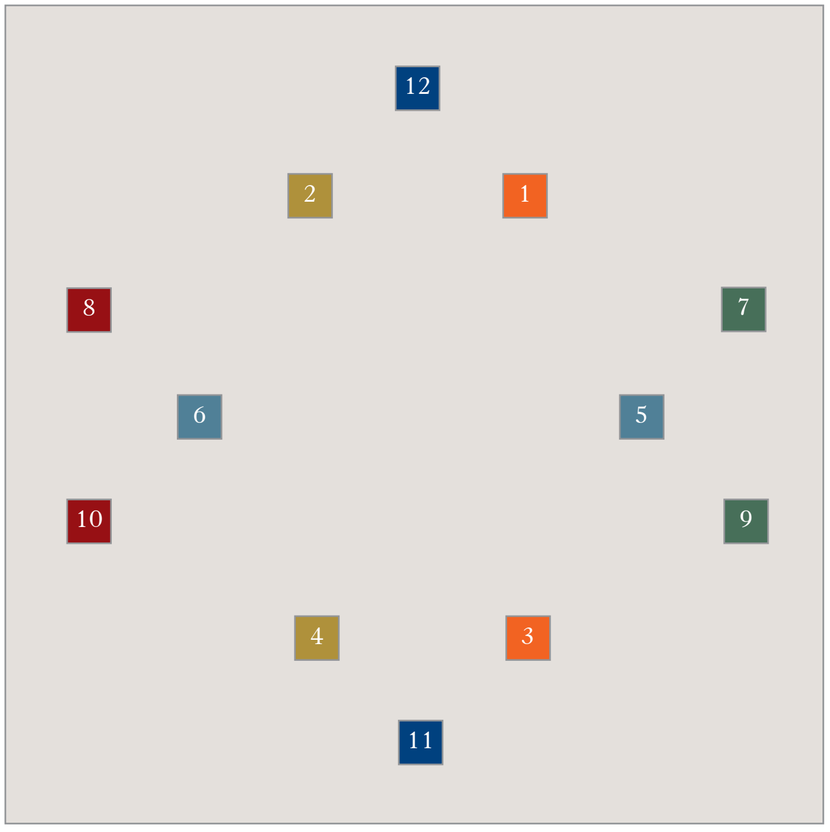
Odysseus and Achilles form the twin nuclei of my series. The twelve composite object portraits of *A Catalogue of Shapes* are intended to provide a catalogic translation, or glossary, of the characters whose attributes and functions in the plot represent Homer's principal heroes and their epics within this series of sculptural assemblages.[24] The Homeric catalogue format served as an important model as it is characterized by structural parallels, and subsets within larger sequences.[25] The *Catalogue of Ships* for example, is composed of three basic patterns (see Powell 1978), with one pattern in particular, characterized by paired heroes.[26] Thematic relationships between categories of sculptures in the series are signalled by formal means, using symmetrical geometry in the physical layout of the group. The plinths supporting the twelve sculptures are identical in colour and design with the exception of small plaques inscribed with the name of the appropriate Homeric character and an epithet on each plinth. The plinths are arranged about a central square in a grid-like format in accordance with a series of overlapping linear, rectangular, triangular and hexagonal patterns. Each pattern denotes a specific set of thematic relationships: the masculine characters[27]

24. In Aristotle a gloss (from *glossa* – 'tongue') is a foreign – as opposed to recognizable – word (this includes words from related communities, such as other Greek dialects) (*Poetics* 1457b3); while in Parry (1928, 235) it is a word with "either no correspondence, or at best a remote one, with any element of vocabulary in the current language of an author's public." A glossary provides a descriptive translation of obscure words, originally in the margins of ancient texts. Parry proposed that Homeric audiences deduced the specific meaning or intent of a 'gloss' from its context during performance. This is reflected in the descriptive, allusive, and contextual facets of this collection of sculptures.

25. Stephen Scully for example, notes that in "recounting to the Phaeacians the series of his adventures from Troy to Scheria, Odysseus makes us aware that he perceives within his travels a pattern of parallel, but diverging episodes, and he suggests that this pattern of observed correspondences is organically related to his understanding, or interpretation, of these experiences. Although the thirteen episodes of giants and monsters, intoxication and forgetfulness, demigods, and storms narrated by Odysseus to the Phaeacians (Books 9-12) may appear randomly collocated, his telling of these adventures indicates, to the contrary, that they are structured according to a cohesive, over-arching design. In commencing his tale, he does not simply proceed in chronological order, but prefaces the many adventures by doubling the two enchantresses Kalypso and Kirke … Odysseus' comparison establishes at the outset a precedent for interpreting at least some of the adventures in relation to each other. It furthermore suggests that the hero is not simply recalling his experiences mechanically but that he is also recording them in his mind according to common principles, reliving and retelling them synoptically" (Scully 1987, 401). See also Block (1982) and Kahane (1994) on the 'sympathetic antithesis' to the hero; and the hero's *alter* in Crosset (1969).

26. This pattern (II A, II B (1), II C (2) according to Powell's system) consists of the following four entries: the Minyan leaders, Ascalaphos and Ialmenos (twins) in *Il.* 2.511-16; the Pylian leader Nestor and the singer Thamyris (storytellers) in *Il.* 2.591-602; the Koan leaders Pheidippos and Antiphos (brothers) in *Il.* 2.676-80; The Trikkean leaders Podaleiros and Machaon (brothers) in *Il.* 2.729-33.

27. Menelaus, Odysseus, Achilles, Telemachus, Hector, and Nestor.



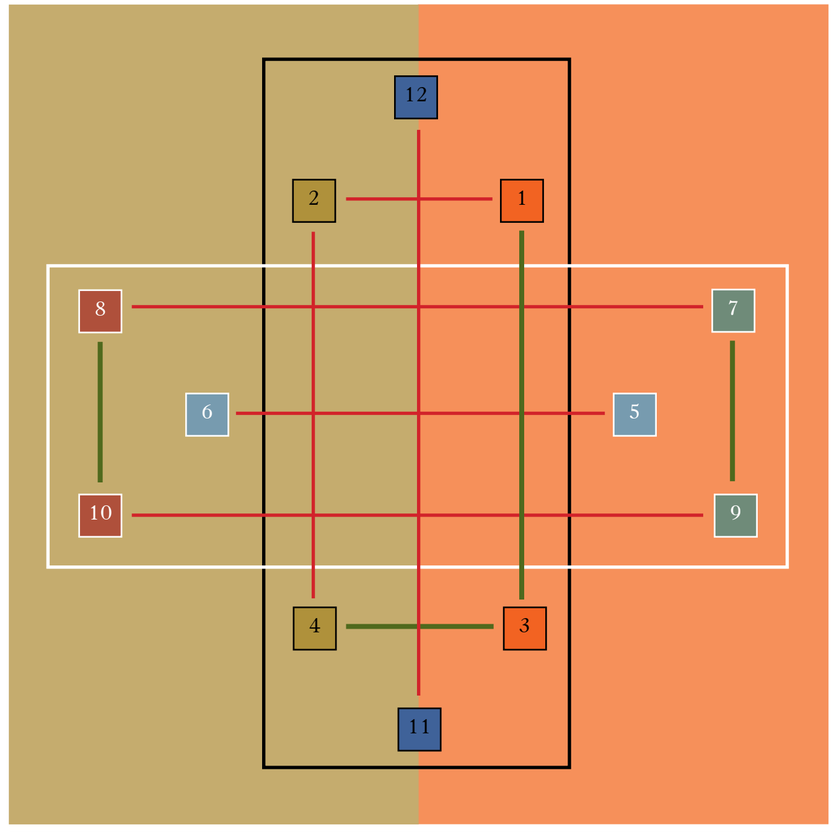
The Warriors: 1. *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ; 2. *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ; 3. *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ; 4. *Hector* ΕΧΩ

The Wives: 5. *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ; 6. *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ

The Deities: 7. *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΤΩ; 8. *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ; 9. *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ; 10. *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ

The Kings: 11. *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ; 12. *Menalaos* ΒΟΑΩ

16. Schematic representation of the spatial arrangement of *A Catalogue of Shapes*



17. Schematic representation of the primary interrelations between the sculptures comprising *A Catalogue of Shapes*

provide the North-South axis, the feminine[28] the East-West, and are symmetrical inversions of one another (see fig. 17). Axial, rectangular, and linear arrangements are gender-specific, while triangular and hexagonal patterns are not. The structure does not describe the catalogue as a purely sequential listing of information, but as the manifestation of various patterns and relationships within a collection of autonomous elements. In this sense, the catalogue is not simply a repository of names, origins and troop numbers, but a considered arrangement of sets of allusions, events and characters, that compose a predominantly spatial and visual context within which epic narrative occurs. Sammons (2010, 54; 20) for example, argues that the poet displays an "all-encompassing view" in the "geographical substrate of the Catalogue of Ships," and that this catalogue "which may seem at first glance a mere introduction to the *Iliad's* cast of characters, actually opens up our field of vision to a heroic world that goes well beyond that of the poet's narrative ... constructing a plausible epic world in which to situate his own story." The visual construction of a navigable mythic space echoes the second century BCE '*Odyssey*-Landscapes' in the Esquiline house, where the viewer's passage down the corridor evokes Odysseus' journey home.

The individual artworks in *A Catalogue of Shapes* employ assemblage as the primary method of construction and composition. Each sculpture is composed of carefully selected forms and objects. By using the formal and associative aspects of things to suggest certain ideas and/or experiences, the constituent objects, forms and fragments of objects contribute to the visual representation of attributes and functions. Depictions of gods, heroes, and allegorical personifications (such as cities, rivers, and seasons) in Classical art generally reflect objects as symbolic aspects of identity and function. In representations of the apotheosis of Homer, such as the example by Archelaos of Priene and the painting by Ingres, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are represented as female figures holding a sword and/or spear for the *Iliad*, and oar and/or rudder to symbolize the *Odyssey*. As the figures lack any distinguishing physical features other than age and gender, it is the objects associated with the human figures which serve to differentiate the significance of the features. The iconography of *A Catalogue of Shapes* is therefore based on the elimination of the figure and the development of a metaphoric 'code' of objects. Visual identification by means of objects echoes the symbolic function of material goods in the Homeric epic, where objects have the quality of an economic value (for characters in the narrative),[29] as well as a poetic value understood by both characters and audience.[30] This thematic ploy allows heroic characters to make rhetorical use of catalogues of objects to "impose an identity on another character or even an interpretation of the poem itself" while appearing to engage in straightforward economic transactions (Sammons 2010, 132). The reciprocity of objects is therefore based on what they signify to both giver and recipient, and their function in the establishment of relationships. A similar dialectic occurs in composite object portraits where the subject's attributes, as selected and interpreted by the artist, are represented by means of symbolic entities.

28. Calypso, Circe, Penelope, Helen, Eris, and Ate.

29. The 'gift-economy' of the Homeric world in which relationships are established through the exchange of gifts is well documented (Donlan 1982 and 1989; Finley 1973)

30. The bow of Eurytus and the shield of Achilles, for example, allude to people, places and events (past and future), that are central to the *Odyssey's* and the *Iliad's* respective themes and narratives.

18. Attic funerary vase with detail of decoration c. 750-735 BCE. Height: 108.3 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

The Homeric world is evoked by a selective and expressive language of formulae and themes, conventionally described as a manufactured language or *Kunstsprache*. This "special speech" of gods and heroes (see Bakker 1997) exhibits two primary attributes: *parataxis* and *meter*. As discussed in Chapter 1, parataxis is a compressed form of verbal narrative based on the additive placing of autonomous clauses without conjunctives. The absence of syntactical interrelationships such as subordination allows for the juxtaposition of apparently unrelated and independent parts in paratactic sentence construction and facilitates the co-existence in Homeric language of inherited formulae, archaic words, and newer phrases in dialects from diverse regions and historical periods.[31] This resembles the structurally expressive and contrived combination of previously unassociated objects in sculptural assemblage

Applying a strategy similar to Homeric pairing, objects may also be defined in terms of adjacent forms and objects. In *A Catalogue of Shapes*, the structurally expressive and contrived combinations of previously unassociated objects occurs in the selection of objects that conform to a specific set of formal qualities, such as the materiality, symmetry, and simple geometry of designed and manufactured utilitarian goods.[32] This predominance of symmetry and geometry is informed by the reductive abstraction and considered proportionality of the art of the Geometric period. Defined by Bernhard Schweizer (1971, 16) as a feeling for accuracy (*akribeia*), balance (*summetria*), and rhythm (*rhuthmos*), the Geometric offers a representational system that Susan Langdon (2008, 1) argues, rejects "the world of direct sense and experience in favor of the constructed, the imagined, the interpreted," and is distinguished by the establishment of a "unified field of figure, object and ornament" (see fig. 18). This understanding of Geometric art describes an approach where the artwork is not intended to create an illusion of reality, but a non-mimetic and apparently self-reflexive reality. The expressive and selective approach of Geometric art is characterized by a narrow repertoire of basic forms and motifs (Langdon 2008, 8).

31. While parataxis is not unique to Homer, the combination of an agglomerative syntax with the restraint of Homeric hexameter allows for both elaboration and sharp focus. Aristotle detected a satisfying organic unity in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (*Poet.* 1450b21-1451a6), despite his critique of the paratactic style as "unpleasantly boundless" (ἔστι δὲ ἀηδὴς διὰ τὸ ἄπειρον 1409a31) (*Rh.* 3.9, 1409a27-37). See also *Rh.* 1451a16-30 for a specific discussion of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

32. These include objects such as fishing buoys, funnels, wheels, Bundt moulds, and a colander, for example (see lists of materials in individual entires in Chapter 4).

In assembling the complex sculptural images comprising *A Catalogue of Shapes*, signifying details were achieved by the manipulation of component parts. Such manipulation ranges from reduction to embellishment, with the application of colour and pattern amongst the most frequently used means of adjusting meaning. As in examples of Greek sculpture from the Archaic period where pigmentation has been restored (see fig. 19),[33] combinations of bright colours flatten, emphasize, and distort, three-dimensional form. Colour also allows for symbolic coding[34] and the establishment of reciprocal interrelations between individual sculptures. By using colour coding to establish connections between classes of things that might otherwise not share characteristics, the Iliadic and Odyssean categories have been assigned colour values specific to their allusions (see figs. 16 and 17). Orange predominates in the Odyssean group and yellow in the Iliadic. Female characters are distinguished by a central white disk,[35] while two intermediate characters respectively feature a reduced palette (*Nestor* NOOΣ, 2013) and an all-inclusive palette (*Menelaos* BOAΩ, 2013) (see entries 11 and 12 in Chapter 4).

19. Modern polychrome reconstructions (variants B and C) of the 'Peplos Kore' c. 530 BCE. Stiftung Archäologie, Munich

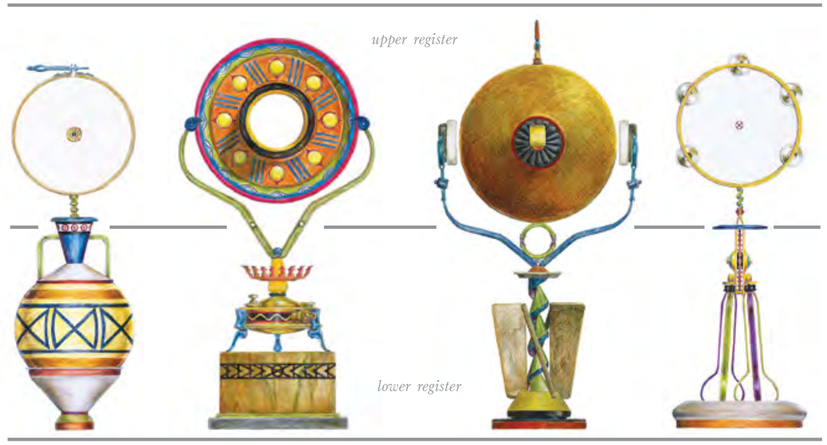
For this series of sculptures, a modified compositional template was devised to achieve a metrical format. The intention being to allow for an overall coherence, in which the smallest variation becomes significant. By creating two compositional registers (upper and lower (see fig. 20)) for each sculpture, identity is indicated by the register in which significant details and variations may be accommodated. This approach requires careful design as the simplicity of the metrical format, with an emphasis on symmetry and strong geometry, demands carefully considered proportionality and balance. Each sculptural image was originated on paper. Scale drawings (see individual entries in Chapter 4) allowed for a preliminary assessment of how combinations of objects and forms would relate. As colour and pattern became increasingly important, these preliminary drawings allowed for the exploratory testing of potential combinations.

An important consideration during the planning of the artworks was the establishment of visual and conceptual rhythms within the series. The consistent repetition of compositional features, form, and

33. Modern polychrome reconstructions by archaeologists such as Vinzenz Brinkmann and Ulrike Kock-Brinkmann are based on the scientific analysis of pigmentation found on ancient statues and textual evidence (see Gurewitsch 2008).

34. For example, Humbrol's paint colour *Mediterranean blue* appears on every sculpture in *A Catalogue of Shapes* where it symbolises the agency of the gods.

35. In *Kirke* ΦAINΩ, 2012 the central white disk is a void (see entry 9 in Chapter 4).



Right: 20. Upper and lower compositional registers in *A Catalogue of Shapes*

colour within a clearly defined scope, demarcates a visual environment in which every element is affected by adjacent detail, where previously utilitarian objects are poetically activated. John Bispham (2006) argues that the hypnotic effects of rhythm heighten experience and generate the feelings of ecstatic pleasure and social cohesiveness associated with ritual events.[36] In epic performance, rhythm is instrumental in distinguishing the performance event from normal social and verbal interaction, delineating a distinctive space in which the epic poet invokes the mythic world. Bakker (1997, 138) describes epic performance in terms of "a moment in the process of verbalization, the transformation of the stream of private consciousness into a stream of public and rhythmical speech" and notes that the "usual account of speech as deriving from consciousness is insufficient here, for the singer's consciousness not only produces the speech but is also propelled forward by the rhythmical movement of the language."

The iconography of an oral-formulaic Homer developed for this project constitutes a catalogic system (*A Catalogue of Shapes*) incorporating twelve reciprocally interrelated elements (the twelve individual sculptures). The spatial arrangement and structure of the series, the appropriation and manipulation of objects, and the symbolic use of colour, pattern, form, and material, allow the viewer to trace and identify interrelationships to construct a different catalogic sequence with each viewing. This multiform system reflects the dialectical hermeneutics of Homeric composition during performance. In the next chapter, I describe the subject, construction, composition, and iconography of each of the individual sculptural assemblages comprising *A Catalogue of Shapes*.

36. Bispham (2006, 131) hypothesizes that MRB (musical rhythmic behaviour) is primarily rooted in providing a temporal framework, collective emotionality, a feeling of shared experience, and cohesiveness to group activities and ritualistic ceremonies. He cites evidence that effects of tempo on arousal levels, the consistent use of music in altering states, and the clear relationship between rhythmic behaviours and physical action suggest that musical pulse is functional in regulating emotions and motivational states by means of affecting states of action-readiness.

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CHAPTER 4

A Catalogue of Shapes 2010-13

Descriptive Catalogue of Artworks

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THE WARRIORS

This category includes *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ (1) and *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ (2) as the main heroes of the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*; while *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ (3) and *Hektor* ΕΧΩ (4) reflect the Homeric strategy of defining a character in terms of a thematically similar or diametrically opposed 'other'.

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Left: 1. Front view of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, 2010

1. ODYSSEUS ΜΗΤΙΣ[1]

Fishing buoy, funnel, rotary breast-drill breast-plate, outdoor umbrella slider, vase cap, bell-shaped lamp holder component, ribbed rod, wood (Camphor, Jelutong, Obeche), enamel paint

51 x 30 x 20cm

2010

Subject

This assemblage is based on the character Odysseus, the hero whose quest to achieve a successful homecoming (*nostos*) forms the basis of the Odyssean narrative. Homer describes Odysseus as a successful and mentally dexterous warrior, adept at extreme endurance. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is the central character as well as a second (although unreliable) narrator.[1]

Construction

The component parts were either wholly retained or selectively manipulated to derive signifying details. The buoy and umbrella slider were chosen for their weathered state and left unaltered, except for the slider's 'foot', which was painted a deep red. The circular concertina was carved from wood and painted a similar orange to the buoy, establishing it as an extension. The colour of the funnel was changed from grey to a weathered bronze. The C-clamp (including the arc, threaded rod, and breast-plate) was carved from wood and painted blue. The wooden propeller was carved from wood and varnished. The rudder was carved from the same wood and in the same shape as the propeller's blades. It received a semi-transparent coating of moss-green paint, as did the brass ribbed rod connecting the buoy to the slider.

1. Odysseus himself recounts his adventures following the fall of Troy to his arrival on Scheria to the Phaeacians (*Od.* 9-12) The ease with which he makes up stories when in disguise (e.g. *Od.* 14.191-359) raises the possibility that the fantastical tale he tells his hosts may be untrue.

Composition

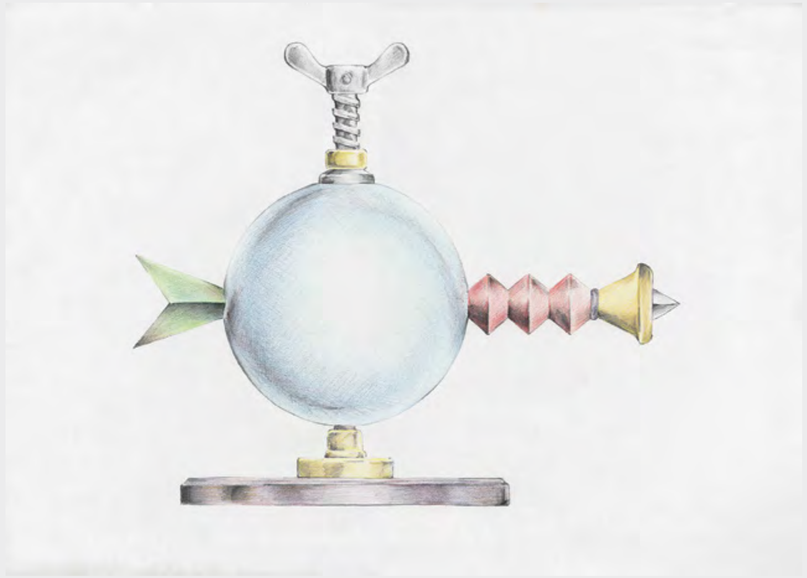
As the first in the series, and alluding to the primary Odyssean character, *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ provides the basic template of a compositional division into two main registers (upper and lower (see Chapter 3 fig 19)). The upper section comprises a sphere with five attributes. The buoy 'floats' in space on a thin neck, indicating exposure, isolation and vulnerability. The umbrella slider provides physical and visual counterweight. Its narrow base and material qualities echo the sense of precariousness, wear and durability established in the upper section. The extended neck and concertina are offset by the rudder at the back of the neck.

Iconography

The sculpture reflects on Odysseus as an experienced and weather worn seafarer, under extreme duress. The clamp alludes to the ocean and sky, and by extension the gods, as the source of this pressure. The concertina, propeller, rudder and umbrella slider suggest aspects of his voyage, while the arrow emerging from the funnel alludes to the bow of Eurytus[2] and Penelope's contest, but also suggests a tongue within a mouth. The traces of former rib connectors on the slider represent Odysseus' lost crew.

2. Odysseus acquired the bow (with which he wins Penelope's archery contest and kills the suitors) from Iphitos, son of Eurytus (*Od*. 21.14-27). The bow's association with appropriate and aberrant interactions between hosts and guests makes it a fitting instrument of Odysseus' revenge.

Right: 2. Side view of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, 2010



Left: 3. Back view of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, 2010

Right: 4. Preliminary drawing of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, 2010. Pen and coloured pencil on paper. 58.5 x 42cm

Left: 5. Front view of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ, 2011

2. ACHILLEUS ΜΗΝΙΣ[1]

Fishing buoy, spoked wheels, rotary breast-drill gear, Jamboli food press lid and handle, lid and threaded shaft, flame-shaped finial, Jaffle toaster mould plate, various bell and cup shaped lamp holder components, jingle bell, coffee press plunger shaft, cutting tool handle, anniversary clock base, linoleum tile, wood (Obeche), enamel paint

59.5 x 22 x 32cm

2011

Subject

This assemblage is based on the character Achilles, the hero whose quest for *kleos* forms the basis of the *Iliad*. Homer describes Achilles as a swift, temperamental warrior, and the best of the Achaeans. In the *Iliad*, Achilles' anger is the catalyst for the events that make up the poem. Unlike Odysseus, Achilles trades his return home (*nostos*) for a death in battle that will win him poetic immortality. Achilles' *kleos* is diminished by Agamemnon's disrespect[2] and his subsequent refusal to fight, but reestablished when he avenges the death of Patroclus[3].

Construction

The component parts were either wholly retained or selectively manipulated to derive signifying details. Indications of function on the buoy were retained and its surface polished to enhance texture and colour. Some metallic components including the jingle bell, a section of the axe and girders between the gears and wheels were

1. *menis*: 'anger; wrath; ire' also the first word and topic of the *Iliad.*

2. Forced to return the daughter of the priest Chryses to appease Apollo (*Il.* 1.440-48), Agamemnon (on the basis of his superior rank) took Briseis from Achilles in compensation (*Il.* 1.317-25).

3. Patroclus was killed by Hector while wearing Achilles' armour (with the exception of the ash spear which only Achilles could carry) and fighting in the absent Achilles' place (*Il.* 16.130-822).

left unpainted. All other parts were painted to emphasize particular attributes. The lid of the food press was painted the same yellow as the buoy, while its handle was painted blue. To make the 'shield', the maker's mark on the toaster mould plate was filed off to produce a smooth central plane onto which a solar swastika was applied. The ribbed interior was painted in alternating bands of grey and yellow with a red dot at the center to simulate a target. While the brass rims of the wheels were left unaltered, the outsides were painted a soft green and the insides a deep purple. The 'spear' and parts of the 'axe' were carved from wood and painted.

Composition

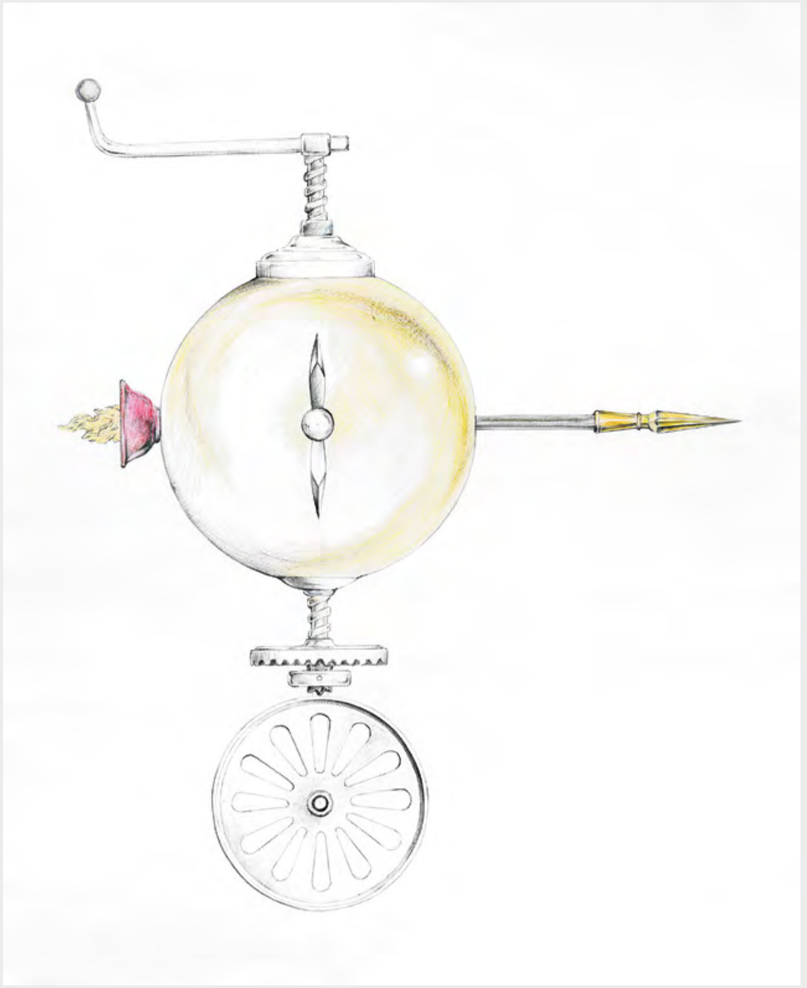
As the second image in the sub-category *The Warriors*, but the first of the Iliadic characters, *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ retains aspects of the template established in *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, (1) but also diverges enough to establish the second major 'type'. As *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ and *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ represent the *nostos* and *kleos* epics as two distinct aspects of Homeric poetry, they form a contrasting pair. While the basic design of the upper register refers to *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, in the lower, the single voluminous form of the umbrella slider is replaced with three light components comprising an outer symmetry (two wheels) and an inner axis. The structural anchoring weight needed is provided by mounting the lower section on a clock base. The width of this base exceeds that of the wheels and is an inversion of the narrow foot in *Odysseus*.

Iconography

The image of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ refers to the hero as one of the 'Sea-Peoples' who decimated the great Mediterranean cities of the Bronze Age. The wheels represent speed, the spear the weapon he alone could carry, the flame his temper, and the axe his status as king of the Myrmidons. The plume on his helmet as a blue rotating handle is indicative of interaction with the gods and enmity towards his allies and enemies. The swastika on the 'shield' in *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ reduces Hephaestus' complex embellishment to a single image.[4] The target on its rear confirms the death which Achilles knows will occur in battle.

4. Homer describes the god Hephaestus as decorating Achilles' shield with depictions of the cosmos, and scenes of human conflict, justice, festivity, and agriculture (*Il.* 18.478-606).

Right: 6. Side view of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ, 2011



Left: 7. Back view of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ, 2011

Right: 8. Preliminary drawing of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ, 2011. Pen and coloured pencil on paper. 51 x 62.5cm

Left: 9. Front view of *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ, 2011

3. TELEMACHOS ΟΦΕΛΛΩ[1]

Outside spring calliper, bobbin spools, cabinet door handle, anniversary clock weights, outdoor umbrella slider with rib connectors intact, coffee pot, ribbed lamp holder component, metal washer, wood (Pine), enamel paint

57.5 x 34.5 x 24.5cm

2011

Subject

This sculpture is based on the character Telemachus, the son of Odysseus and Penelope in the *Odyssey*. Homer describes Telemachus as initially 'uncertain and pensive', but during the course of the poem his physical and mental resemblance to Odysseus become apparent. In the *Odyssey*, Telemachus journeys in search of information on his father's whereabouts, as Odysseus alone is absent from the *nostoi* (epic songs recounting the fates of the men who went to Troy). On his return, Telemachus is the first person on the island of Ithaca to whom Odysseus reveals his hidden identity, and assists his father in killing the suitors.

Construction

The component parts were either wholly retained or selectively manipulated to achieve signifying details. The two circular frames were constructed from wood and assembled to suggest a sphere. A line runs horizontally around the faces and edges of the frames, demarcated with light-blue paint, while the inside edge of the square cut-outs at the centre of each frame were painted the same orange as used in *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ (1). Unpainted wooden surfaces were waxed to emphasize the grain. The calliper was painted Mediterranean and Oxford blue. The spotting scope was constructed by removing the handle from a coffee pot and attaching the body to a lamp-holder component. Cross-hairs were engraved onto the base of the pot to form the front of the scope.

1. *ophello:* 1. 'of what one ought to do or be doing'; 2. 'to become greater; grow; increase'.

The projector consists of a cabinet door handle with a small circle engraved on its front and two bobbin spools on either end of a curved metal band. The neck was produced by vertically stacking three clock weights, and left unpainted. The umbrella slider was broken when found, and was re-glued, sanded, waxed, and the foot painted red. The rib connectors were cleaned, re-attached and painted black inside.

Composition

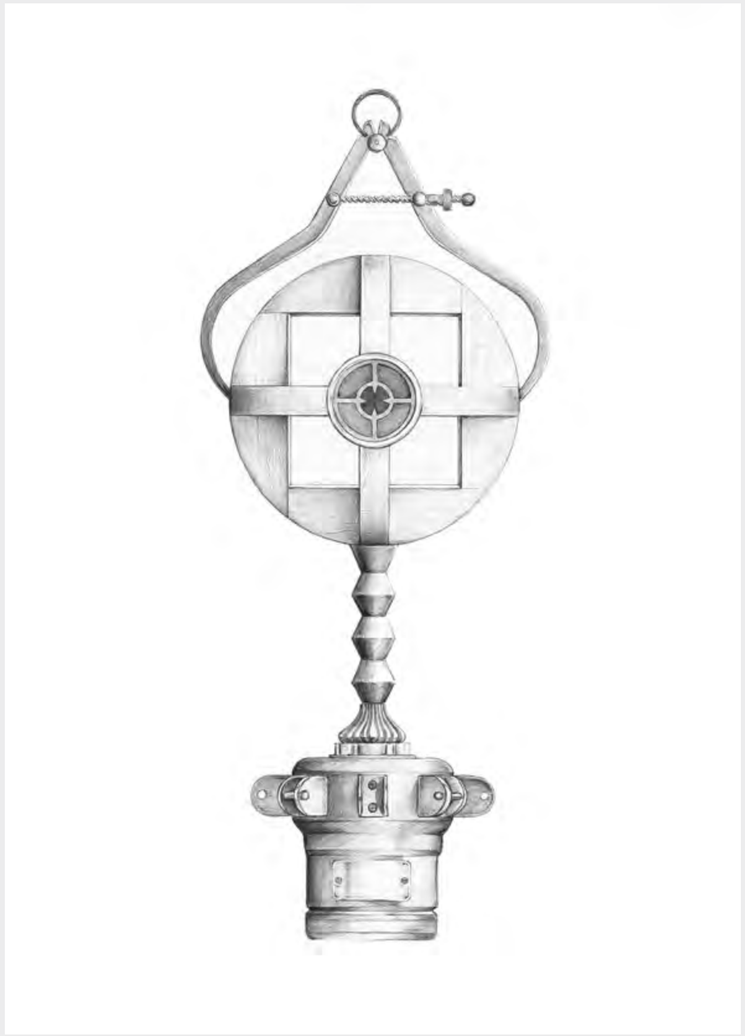
As a part of the Odyssean category, the image of *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ is a visual and conceptual response to that of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ. As Telemachus' resemblance to Odysseus in the narrative increases with maturation, they function as a 'complimentary pair' in the sub-category *The Warriors*. Devising Telemachus as an individual and as a reflection of Odysseus proved difficult. The buoy component is replaced with a structural representation of a sphere made from Pine, with a deep orange coloured grain, and painted orange interior. In place of a C-clamp, *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ includes an outside spring calliper. The cylindrical concertina in this work forms the neck, while the circular motion of the propeller is represented by film reels. The cone of the funnel on *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ is transformed into the cone of the spotting scope, while the arrow-head and cross-hairs represent archery and the name 'Telemachus'.[2] The worn umbrella slider in *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ is replaced with a smaller, reconstructed version in *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ, emphasizing the rib connectors, which are absent in *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ.

Iconography

This sculpture invokes Telemachus as a potential Odysseus. The frames suggest a sphere under construction, the callipers and concertina allude to growth; the rib connectors to his ship's crew (assembled by Athena). The spotting scope and projector describe Telemachos' function in the epic as the audience searching for Odysseus' as-yet-untold story, and as the primary verifier of his father's existence.

2. The children of Homeric heroes are often named for their father's characteristics. Nagy (1979, 146 n.2) proposes that the name Telemachus (from *tele* 'far' and *machos* 'fighting') "may mean either 'he who fights far away [at Troy]' or perhaps 'he who fights from far away [with arrows]'; both characterizations are appropriate to the father."

Right: 10. Side view of *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ, 2011



Left: 11. Back view of *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ, 2011

Right: 12. Preliminary drawing of *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ, 2011. Pen on paper. 71 x 51 cm

Left: 13. Front view of *Hektor* EXΩ, 2011

4. HEKTOR EXΩ[1]

Fishing buoy, funnel, fire sprinkler valve, gate valve hand-wheel, Electro Voice 630 microphone grille, threaded rod, metal helical ribbon, two coffee press lids, metal washer, wood (Oak), enamel paint

59 x 27.5 x 25cm

2011

Subject

This sculpture is based on the character Hector, the chief defender of Troy and primary opponent of Achilles in the *Iliad*. Homer describes Hector as an unwavering and intimidating warrior, but also as an inspiring leader, a kind husband and a skilled horseman. In the *Iliad*, Hector is the antithesis of Achilles. He lacks the latter's divine parentage, and Achilles' supra-human and sub-human excesses,[2] is reliably loyal to his people and allies, and is of little significance to the gods (despite being a frequent provider of burnt offerings). In the poem it is Hector who explains that a hero's *kleos* is marked by his victim's tomb. His own death therefore forms part of the *kleos* of his killer (Achilles), while his funeral and the lamentations for him prefigure those of Achilles, as described in the *Odyssey*.

Construction

The component parts were either wholly retained or selectively manipulated to derive signifying details. The original bright yellow of the buoy was adjusted to match the golden yellow of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ (2). The helmet was constructed from a tin funnel painted

1. *ekho:* 'to 'protect; hold; preserve'.

2. Achilles' behaviour ranges from 'godlike' to 'bestial': Apollo expresses disgust at Achilles' mutilation of Hector's corpse, and compares his savagery to that of a lion. Hera by contrast, argues that as Achilles is the son of a goddess he is superior to Hector, despite the latter man's good character and piety (*Il.* 24.31-63). Joan O'Brien (1990, 107) argues that Achilles' vengeful fury "resembles the *cholos* [lust for vengeance] and *menis* [wrath] of Hera," an association expressed in the stated desire of both for 'raw-eating' their enemies (an act symbolic of extreme depravity) in *Il.* 4.34 ff. (Hera) and *Il.* 22.346 ff. (Achilles).

bronze, with a fire sprinkler valve for its crest. The hand-wheel and microphone grille were left unpainted, whereas the two shields are coffee press lids painted yellow and grey to resemble the profile of an axe and Dipylon shield. The walls were constructed from wood, waxed outside and painted purple inside. A horizontal relief of a black, yellow and red key pattern was applied to the lower outside part of the walls, while circles containing dots and crosses were painted onto the vertical sections between the struts.

Composition

As representative of the Iliadic category, the image of *Hektor* ΕΧΩ is a visual and conceptual response to *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ. And since Hector's tomb will symbolize Achilles' *kleos*, *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ and *Hektor* ΕΧΩ form a contrasting pair. As the complementary characters that define Odysseus and Achilles in the sub-category *The Warriors*, *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ and *Hektor* ΕΧΩ form a complimentary pair. Attributes on the upper and lower registers of the image of *Hektor* ΕΧΩ are thematic and visual opposites of the image of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ. The latter suggests motion, aggression and visual expansion; by contrast, the image of *Hektor* ΕΧΩ is constructed from objects used for containment, and from 'anchoring' forms such as the cone and the square. The cross-hairs on the scope, the unpainted wooden frames, and the triangle of the calliper above the sphere in *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ (3) are echoed by the cross pattern on the microphone grille, the wooden walls and the helmet in *Hektor* ΕΧΩ. To reflect the Iliadic pattern of outer symmetry and inner axis, the weight of the buoy needed to rest on a long and fragile neck situated between the two wooden walls. Initially imagined either as a threaded shaft or a helical ribbon, the final sculpture combines both.

Iconography

This sculpture alludes to Hector as protector (and personification) of the ancient cities which fell to the roaming pirates of the Bronze Age. The crest of the most visible component, his 'shining helmet', is a fire sprinkler valve (in reference to the archaeological identification of catastrophic fire with cities destroyed by invasion). The green and purple helix suggests plants and the Homeric comparison of the human life-cycle to that of leaves.[3] The microphone might suggest Hector's function as the transmitter of Achilles' *kleos*.

3. In *Il*. 21.461-67 Apollo compares human lives to the growth and death of leaves; while in *Il.* 6.144-51 Glaukos tells Diomedes that the generations of men are like leaves, with one coming into being as another dies. In both, the transience and vulnerability of human existence is emphasized.

Right: 14. Side view of *Hektor* ΕΧΩ, 2011

Left: 15. Back view of *Hektor* EXΩ, 2011

Right: 16. Preliminary drawing of *Hektor* EXΩ, 2011. Pen on paper. 71 x 51cm

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THE WIVES

This category consists of two sculptures. *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ (5) and *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ (6) represent a pair of opposites personifying *nostos* and *kleos*, in the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* respectively.

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Left: 17. Front view of *Penelope* APETH, 2011

5. PENELOPE APETH[1]

Embroidery hoop, embroidery needle, bobbin spool, ribbed rod, funnel, vase cap, angle-grinder inner flange, drill chuck, hinge leaves, hollow soldered brass ball, lamp holder fastener, wood (Plywood), enamel paint

48.5 x 18 x 18cm

2011

Subject

This sculpture is based on the character Penelope, the wife of Odysseus in the *Odyssey*. Homer describes Penelope as intelligent and loyal to her husband, whom she equals in cunning. In the *Odyssey*, Penelope determines the success of Odysseus' homecoming. If she were to choose a new husband, then Odysseus' fate would echo Agamemnon's who returned from Troy to be murdered by his wife and her lover. Conferring *nostos*, Penelope preserves the uniqueness of the *Odyssey* by clearly differentiating it from the *Oresteia*.[2]

Construction

The component parts were either wholly retained or selectively manipulated to derive signifying details. The area usually occupied by fabric in the embroidery hoop was filled with a round Plywood disc painted white. The wood of the hoop, the needle, and the ribbed rod of the neck were left unpainted. The amphora was constructed from a variety of objects: a drill chuck for its collar; hinge leaves for its arms; a vase cap for its shoulder; its 'belly' is a hollow brass ball sitting

1. *arete:* 'merit; good character;' also the name of the Phaeacian queen.

2. If Penelope relents as Clytemnestra did, and marries a suitor, then Odysseus, like Agamemnon, will be murdered upon arrival. The hero of the ensuing epic will be Telemachus, as Orestes is hero of the *Oresteia* (see *Od.* 11.422-53). Homer is therefore careful not to let Telemachus equal his father: for example, in *Od.* 21.125-30 the younger man is prevented from stringing the bow of Eurytus, even though he was at the point of doing so.

in a funnel; while its 'foot' is an angle-grinder's inner flange. It is painted in horizontal bands of pattern and colour, while vertical light-blue bands on either side feature a hexametrical sequence of 1s and 0s.

Composition

As limited to the Odyssean category, the image of *Penelope* APETH is a visual and conceptual response to *Odysseus* MHTIΣ (1) and *Telemachos* OΦΕΛΛΩ (3). As the first of a new type, *Penelope* APETH provides a basic template which allows for adherence to established properties, but diverges sufficiently to establish a new format (*The Wives*). The most significant change occurs in the upper part where the sphere is replaced with a disc, a transition informed by the image of *Telemachos* OΦΕΛΛΩ where the sphere is constructed from intersecting frames. This reduction necessitated an adjustment in the suggestion of attributes in the upper section of the composition. The front and back attributes for *Odysseus* MHTIΣ and *Telemachos* OΦΕΛΛΩ were consolidated into two parts of a single object (the needle). By using an embroidery hoop, the contraction mechanism (the C-Clamp and the calliper which formerly enveloped the core spherical objects), becomes the object itself. The lower part conforms to the Odyssean pattern of a single solid form on a narrow foot. The pierced arms of the amphora echo the rib connectors on *Telemachos* OΦΕΛΛΩ, and the painted patterns reflect the traces left by the 'lost' connectors in *Odysseus* MHTIΣ.

Iconography

This sculpture depicts Penelope as a repository. The embroidery hoop and needle refer to Penelope's deception of weaving and unravelling Laertes' shroud to keep her household intact. The amphora as storage for provisions, and as a funerary marker, reflects her role as either the custodian of Odysseus' homecoming or as the potential instrument of his death. The needle in the embroidery hoop and the axes on the belly of the amphora evoke the archery contest.[3]

3. At Athena's instigation, Penelope proposed an archery contest to determine who would marry her. She set the archers the near-impossible task of shooting an arrow through the handles of twelve axes. This test was accomplished by Odysseus disguised as a beggar (*Od.* 21.1-434).

Right: 18. Side view of *Penelope* APETH, 2011

Left: 19. Back view of *Penelope* APETH, 2011

Right: 20. Preliminary drawing of *Penelope* APETH, 2011. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper. 71 x 51cm

Left: 21. Front view of *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ, 2011-12

6. HELENA ΑΕΘΛΟΝ[1]

Circular tambourine, Propert Swift Whip rotary egg beater, pot lid, corkscrew, metal cap of a bath plug, wood (Plywood, Oak), enamel paint

49.5 x 8 x 17cm

2011-2

Subject

This sculpture is based on the character Helen, the daughter of Zeus, and the contested wife of Menelaus and Paris/Alexandros in the *Iliad*. Homer describes Helen as desirable and regarded as blameless by others, but she speaks of herself as responsible for the war. In the *Iliad*, possession of Helen (and all her property) provides the motive for the war. Participation in the fight for her translates into poetic immortality, while Menelaus (having regained his status as son-in-law of Zeus) learns in the *Odyssey* that he will achieve immortality through transportation to the Elysian Fields at the end of his life.

Construction

The component parts were either wholly retained or selectively manipulated to derive signifying detail. The translucent membrane of the tambourine was removed and replaced with a Plywood disc. The disc was painted white and the frame a light yellow. The pairs of jingles were glued together to form single shapes and painted silver and blue. An additional pair of jingles was taken from another tambourine and inserted into the frame to produce an overall set of five (each jingle represents a year in the war's ten year duration). The neck consists of a thin rod inserted into a corkscrew. The egg beater was stripped of its handle, painted and mounted in the shallow bowl made from a painted pot lid with its handle removed.

1. *aethlon:* 'prize for a victor in a contest'.

Composition

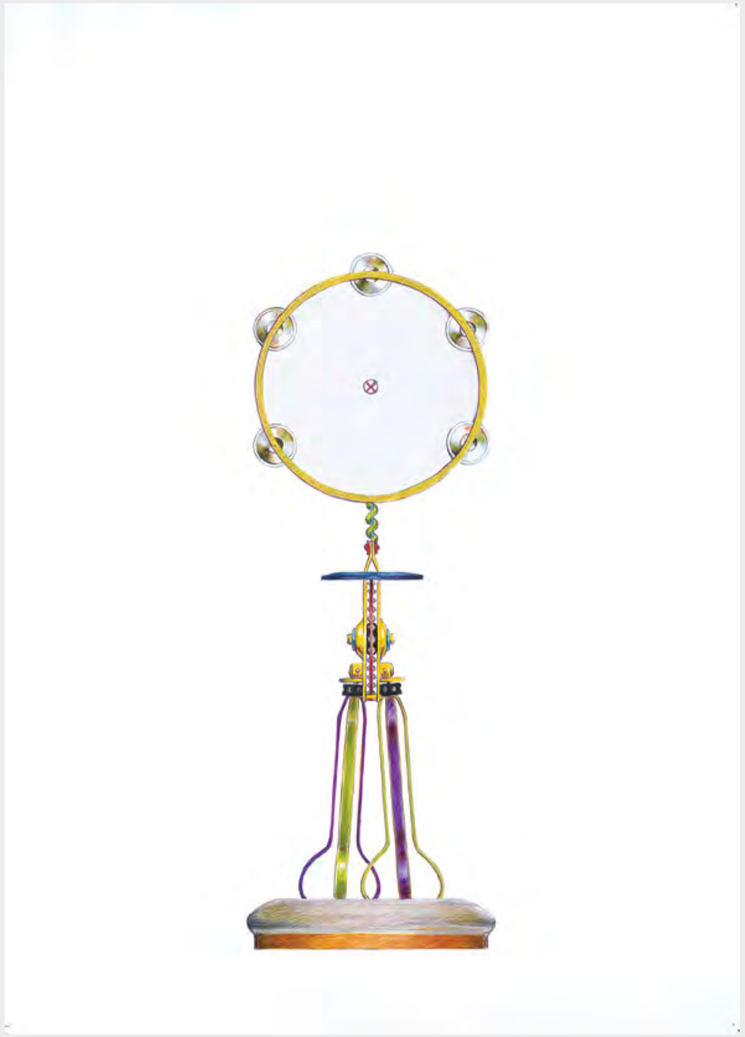
As part of the Iliadic category, *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ is a visual and conceptual response to *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ (2) and *Hektor* ΕΧΩ (4); and since the image of *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ (5) represents fidelity and that of *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ instability, they form a contrasting pair in the sub-category *The Wives*. The upper register is reduced to a disc in a circular frame; the expansiveness of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ and the containment of *Hektor* ΕΧΩ are combined in locating the jingles equally inside and outside of their frame. In the lower part of the composition, the Iliadic pattern of an outer symmetry and an inner axis is reflected by the two beaters and the vertical gear. The inclusion of a small "mantle" above the top of the gear interrupts the strong diagonal line of the conical narrowing of the section below the neck with a horizontal extension.

Iconography

This sculpture alludes to Helen as a catalyst for the erotic impetus that generated the Trojan War, and the fatal attraction of *kleos*. The tambourine recalls Maenadic frenzy, while the egg-beater suggests dancing, the ocean's waves that brought the Achaean ships to Troy, and the mingling of fluids.[2] The choice of this particular beater was informed by its ball drive mechanism, with each sphere on the gear disc representing the buoys in *The Warriors*.

2. The word μίγνυμι *mignumi* means 'to mix' or 'mingle' (properly of fluids), and describes contact between people and sexual intercourse in Homer.

Right: 22. Side view of *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ, 2011-12



Left: 23. Back view of *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ, 2011-12

Right: 24. Preliminary drawing of *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ, 2010. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper. 71 x 51cm

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THE DEITIES

This category consists of four sculptures. *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ (7), *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ (8), *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ (9), and *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ (10), depict two opposing sets of (seemingly) matching pairs. These pairs represent thematic aspects central to the plot of each poem: obstruction and transition as thematically essential to *nostos* in the *Odyssey*, and the role of conflict and narrow self-interest in the construction of *kleos* in the *Iliad*.

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Left: 25. Front view of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012

7. KALYPSO ΚΡΥΠΤΩ[1]

Colander, Primus camping stove, brass washers, pulley, fish hooks, bobbin spool, lamp holder components, warming plate lid, wood (Cypress, Plywood), brass rod, enamel paint

51.5 x 31 x 20cm

2012

Subject

This sculpture is based on the character Calypso, the goddess who rescues Odysseus when he is thrown by a tempest onto her island of Ogygia, and attempts to separate him from the world in the *Odyssey*. Homer describes Calypso as solitary and isolated from gods and men alike, with beautiful hair and a woman's (as opposed to a goddess's) voice. In the *Odyssey*, Calypso offers Odysseus immortality as her spouse, but at the cost of permanent separation from the world. As an obstacle and diversion she is a threat to the hero's *nostos*, yet spurs a supra-human transformation: Odysseus's rejection of her offer of divine (but dark) immortality returns him to the mortal world of Ithaca, which secures his poetic immortality.

Construction

The component parts were either wholly retained or selectively manipulated to devise signifying detail. White Plywood discs were applied to the interior and exterior of the colander's base. The interior and exterior of the colander were painted with spirals and interlaced bands, surrounding the patterned perforations. With the exception of the feet, the tank of the camping stove was stripped of external features, the resulting holes were filled and the entire body painted. The frieze was carved into the podium in low relief, and painted black. The wood was painted with a translucent layer of moss green and waxed to emphasize the grain.

Composition

As part of the Odyssean category, *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ is a visual and conceptual response to the images of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ (1), *Telemachos*

1. *krupto:* 'to hide; conceal; keep from view or knowledge; shield or shelter'.

ΟΦΕΛΛΩ (3), and *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ (5). As the first of *The Deities*, *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ introduces a basic template which allows for adherence to established properties, but diverges sufficiently to establish a new type. Changes occur across all sections. In the upper part, the sphere and disc are replaced with a hollow hemisphere. The connection between sections is no longer a thin central neck but two symmetrical arms running from either side of the core object in the upper register, to a central point in the lower register. A large colander was selected. Its perforated surface is reminiscent of the disc pierced by a needle in *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ, and the projector spools and rib connectors in *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ. The patterning was informed by the image of *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ and the colours by those of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ and *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ. The lower register comprises two main components, one of which is a square wooden podium. The podium intentionally creates a disproportion in scale between the colander and stove without a loss of overall height, as a symbolic differentiation between humans and gods,[2] without losing cohesive scale within the series. Despite this shift, the single solid form of the stove tank on its three fragile legs (as opposed to a narrow foot) still refers to the Odyssean type. While the body is painted a flat grey, the patterning of the image of *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ is reflected in the perforated and raised geometric pattern on the plate lid that occupies the area between the colander and the stove. The podium was made of unpainted wood to echo the wooden frames in *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ, and the umbrella sliders in *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ and *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ.

Iconography

This sculpture presents Calypso as a fishing-net made of long swirling hair, inspired by images of the Gorgon.[3] The orange ovoid at the centre of the blue patterned disc is intended to suggest her remote island's insularity, and the slender legged camping stove, perched on its podium, is based on images of the crouching Sphinx.[4]

2. In *Il.* 5.440-42 Apollo warns Diomedes who has attacked Aphrodite, to retreat 'as there is no likeness between gods and mortals'.

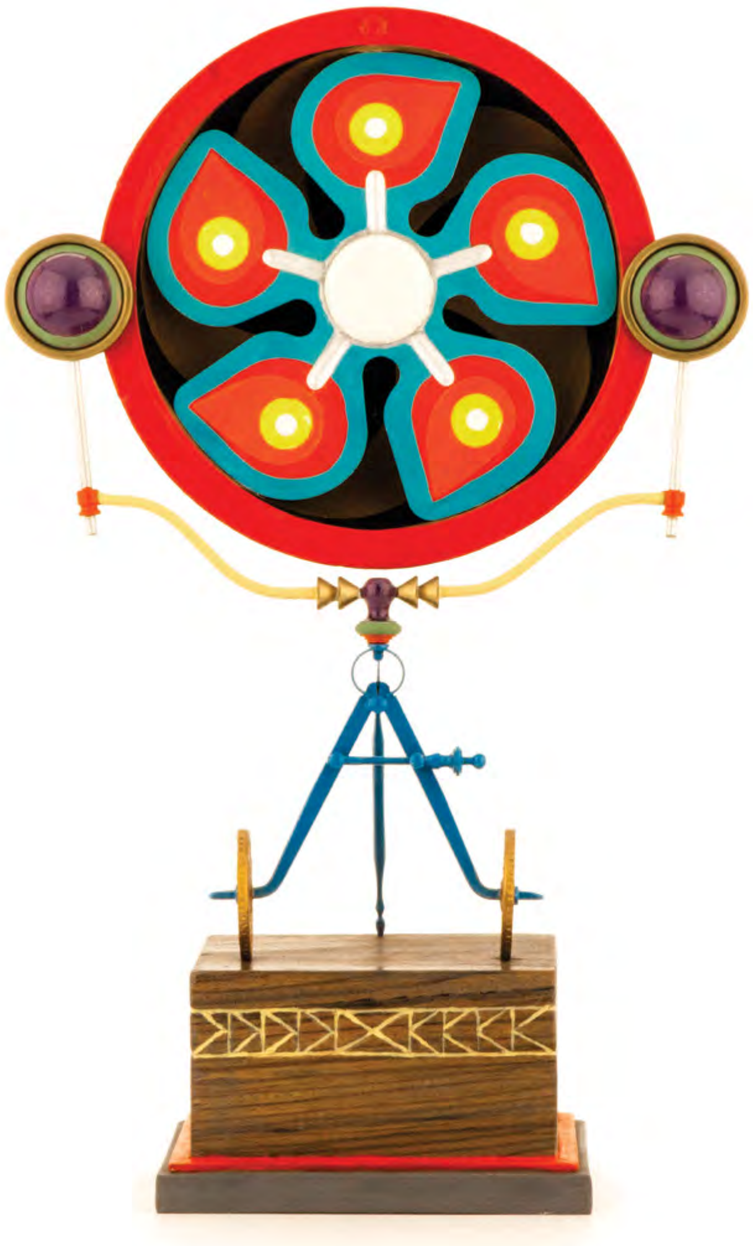
3. This image is based on depictions such as the West pediment of the temple of Artemis at Corfu, circa 580 BCE (see Boardman 1996 B, 172 and Pedley 1998, 152); a polychrome clay relief from Syracuse, circa 600 BCE (see Boardman 1996 A, 66); and on the body of the "Nessos" late proto-attic amphora, circa 625-600 BCE (Pedley 1998, 130).

4. This image is based on depictions such as the Archaic sculpture of the Naxian Sphinx at Delphi, circa 560 BCE (see Boardman 1996 A, 81 and Pedley 1998, 181); and an Attic painting of Oedipus and the Sphinx on a bowl circa 470 BCE (see Cooper 1993, 157).

Right: 26. Side view of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012

Left: 27. Back view of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012

Right: 28. Preliminary drawing of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper. 71 x 51cm



Left: 29. Front view of *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ, 2012

8. ERIS ΦΑΓΟΝ[1]

Inside spring callipers, gas heater heat deflector dish, fan blade, table-tennis ball, sprue formers, fondue fork, anniversary clock weight case, wrist watch case back, wax-working tool, section of a brass nipple, filter parts from a coffee press, metal washers, glass marbles, brass rod, wood (Plywood, Africa Zebra), enamel paint

46.8 x 31 x 18cm

2012

Subject

This sculpture is based on the character Eris, the goddess of conflict in the *Iliad*. Homer describes Eris as a small insatiable creature who grows in size as her influence spreads; roaming the battlefield even when the others gods have left. In the *Iliad*, Eris functions as the personification of the self-generative, mesmerizing and consumptive aspects of conflict. According to tradition, she caused the Trojan War in response to having been excluded from the wedding feast of Achilles' parents.[2] The dramatic function of Eris is to create and maintain the conditions for achieving *kleos*.

Construction

The component parts were either wholly retained or selectively manipulated to derive signifying details. The shield consists of a heat deflector dish. The heating device entry hole was filled using a wrist watch case back, and the dish was painted in radiating bands of black and gold with a red rim. The blade of a fan was flattened, painted in

1. *phagon:* 'to devour' (of the cannibal Cyclops; of the monster Scylla; of fish eating corpses).

2. Eris reputedly threw a golden apple inscribed 'for the fairest' amongst the guests. When Hera, Athena and Aphrodite all claimed it, Zeus decreed that Paris/Alexandros should award the prize. Aphrodite promised him Helen (wife of Menelaus) should he award her the apple, thereby instigating the Trojan War.

patterns resembling flames and/or eyes, with a small Plywood disc at its centre, painted white. The drumsticks are two halves of a table-tennis ball. The frame of the wheeled base is an inside spring calliper and a wax-working tool painted blue, and the wheels are filter parts from a coffee press, painted gold. The frieze was carved into the podium and painted yellow. The wood received a translucent layer of grey, and was waxed to emphasize the grain.

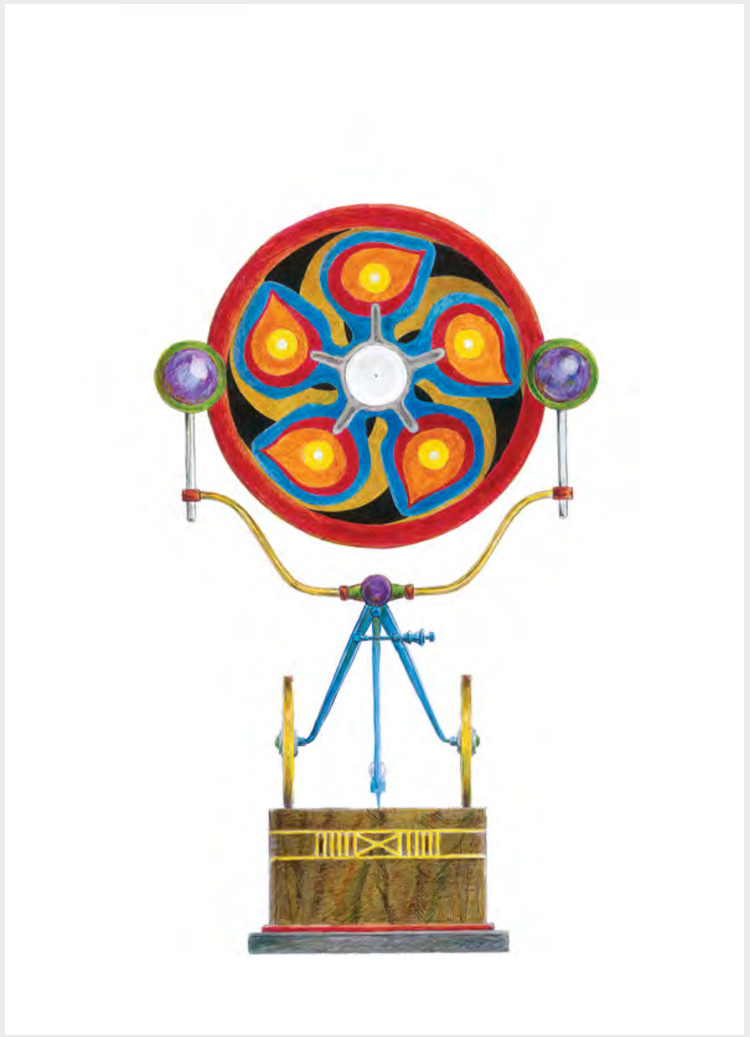
Composition

As a member of the Iliadic category, *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ is a visual and conceptual response to the images of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ (2), *Hektor* ΕΧΩ (4), and *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ (6). And as the image of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ (7) represents cool isolation, and that of *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ, combustible integration, they form a contrasting pair in the sub-category *The Deities*. The upper register is accordingly a hollow hemisphere, with its interior partly enclosed by the fan blade. The shield reflects the use of armour as primary signifiers in *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ and *Hektor* ΕΧΩ, while the number and arrangement of blades echo the five jingles in *Helen*. The references to sound in the two-pronged (tuning) fork and drumsticks are reminiscent of the jingle bell in *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ, the microphone grille in *Hektor* ΕΧΩ and the tambourine in *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ. In the lower section, the Iliadic pattern of an outer symmetry and inner axis is achieved with the two wheels and a rear support. The wheels reflect *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ, while the triangular frame recalls the helmet and walls in *Hektor* ΕΧΩ. As in *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ this section includes a wooden podium, creating disproportionate scale between the shield above, and the wheeled frame below, setting the divine apart from the human.

Iconography

This sculpture depicts Eris as a self-fuelling inferno, invoking a war chariot, armour, marching, and a call to war.

Right: 30. Side view of *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ, 2012



Left: 31. Back view of *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ, 2012

Right: 32. Preliminary drawing of *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ, 2012. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper. 71 x 51cm

Left: 33. Front view of *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ, 2012

9. KIRKE ΦΑΙΝΩ[1]

Bundt mould, outside spring calliper, Burmos camping stove, lamp burner border, ribbed and cup-shaped lamp holder components, brass washers, brass latches, wood (Obeche), enamel paint

50.5 x 24.4 x 18cm

2012

Subject

This sculpture is based on the character Circe, the goddess who transforms Odysseus' men into swine on the island of Aeaea, and instructs him to travel to the underworld in the *Odyssey*. Homer describes Circe as a dangerous and generous hostess, with beautiful hair and a woman's (as opposed to a goddess's) voice. In the *Odyssey*, Circe has a transformative power which Odysseus neutralizes with Hermes' help.[2] She sends Odysseus to the underworld to consult Teiresias, who reveals that the hero's *nostos* is (and will be) hindered by angered gods, but that he will eventually be reconciled with Poseidon.[3] Circe represents the Homeric concept of the conflicting capacity of the gods as equally helpful or harmful.[4]

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1. *phaino:* 'to bring to light; make known; bring to action'.

2. Hermes provides Odysseus with an antidote- a plant (moly) that only gods can harvest (*Od.* 10.277-307).

3. Odysseus could not resist boasting about outwitting Polyphemos, thereby enabling the Cyclops to reveal his identity to Poseidon (*Od.* 9.500-05). Teiresias predicts Odysseus' reconciliation with Poseidon: after his return home, Odysseus will take an oar inland, until it is mistaken for a winnowing fan. He will then plant the oar upright by its handle and sacrifice to Poseidon, return home, and sacrifice to the other gods (*Od.* 11.119-34).

4. Nanno Marinatos (2001) argues that the journey of Odysseus parallels the cosmic journey of the Egyptian sun god, and that Circe's island which is described as 'the House of the Rising Sun' is a 'cosmic juncture' located in the East, and is divided into two halves: one part is in the upper hemisphere, while the other part "belongs to the path of night." Circe sends the hero to the underworld, but also receives him back from it. "When Odysseus and his men return to life and light, she is naturally equated with dawn" (Marinatos 2001, 399). Marinatos locates Calypso's island of Ogygia in the West: "Given

Construction

The component parts were either wholly retained or selectively manipulated to derive signifying details. The Bundt mould was painted to emphasize its moulded patterning. The screw and spring of the calliper were removed and the arms painted green. Unlike the image of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ (7),the external features on the tank of the camping stove were retained and, with the exception of a horizontal painted band, the metal surface was left unpainted. The wood on the podium was waxed, and the frieze painted black.

Composition

As part of the Odyssean category, *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ is a visual and conceptual response to the images of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ (1), *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ (3), *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ (5), and *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ; and as Calypso and Circe are described in similar terms in the *Odyssey*, they constitute a complementary pair in the sub-category *The Deities*. The hollow hemisphere of the Bundt mould contains an inner shaft open at both ends, and the swirling spirals in *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ are replaced by more rigid geometric shapes. The open space refers to the arrow in *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, and the needle in *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ. The calliper that forms the 'arms' is of the type used in the image of *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ. The small rings at its tips are the same as those at the tips of the arms in *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΤΩ. The lower register is a reference to the image of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, with variations: the horizontal line created by the warming plate lid in *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ (suggesting an island in the ocean) is described by a lamp burner border (suggesting solar radiation) in *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ. Retaining the external parts of the stove in *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ is intended to counteract the sense of withdrawal in *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ (where these have been removed). The podium is of a similar wood, but without the translucent coat of moss green.

Iconography

This sculpture refers to Circe as initially endangering, before enabling, Odysseus' passage, and the transformation of his interaction with the gods. The geometric markings in the mould are reductively transformative, while the central open space suggests the possibility of transition. The red radiating disc with a yellow core represents Circe's origins as daughter of the sun, and the stove marks her as Calypso's Sphinx-like 'twin.'

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the fact, however, that she is the daughter of Atlas, who, according to Hesiod, stands in the far West (*Od*. 1.52-54; Hes. *Theog.* 517-20; 746-48; 779), she must be also located at the western juncture" (Marinatos 2001, 397).

Right: 34. Side view of *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ, 2012

Left: 35. Back view of *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ, 2012

Right: 36. Preliminary drawing of *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ, 2012. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper. 71 x 51cm

Left: 37. Front view of *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ, 2012-13

10. ATE ΠΑΓΙΣ[1]

Spring divider, Bundt mould, brass ball, knitting needles, Primus burner bell, filter parts from a coffee press, brass ring from a chandelier, 20g weights, wax-working tool, wood (African Zebra), enamel paint

47.5 x 21 x 18cm

2012-3

Subject

This sculpture is based on the character Ate, the goddess who induces lapses in judgment in the *Iliad.* Homer describes Ate as an exceptionally fast runner (thus avoiding detection and retribution). She is banned from Olympus,[2] making her victims exclusively human. In the *Iliad*, Ate personifies the fateful decisions that resulted in Achilles' rage and the Trojan War itself. By diminishing the status of Menelaus and Achilles by their loss of Helen and Briseis, Ate disrupts the prevailing order and endangers *kleos*, but creates conditions for the attainment of *kleos* through retribution.

Construction

The component parts were either wholly retained or selectively manipulated to derive signifying detail. The central shaft of the Bundt mould was enclosed at its narrowest point and painted to emphasize its moulded patterns. The exterior was painted in yellow, blue, red, green, and purple common to the Iliadic type, while the interior was painted black and grey with a small yellow, grey and red target at the centre. The outer ring had its connector holes filled, and was painted

1. *pagis:* 'a snare' (of women, and of the Trojan Horse).

2. At Hera's request, Ate induced Zeus to swear an oath that the child to be born (which he believed to be Heracles) would rule all men (*Il.* 19.100-13). Instead, Hera delayed the Eileithyiai (goddesses of childbirth) thus allowing Eurystheus to be born first (*Il.* 19.119-24). Realizing his mistake, Zeus permanently exiled Ate from Olympus (*Il.* 19.126-31).

red. The wheeled base consists of a spring divider and a wax-working tool painted blue. The wheels are coffee filter parts and 20g weights painted grey and dark blue. The wood of the podium was waxed and the frieze painted yellow.

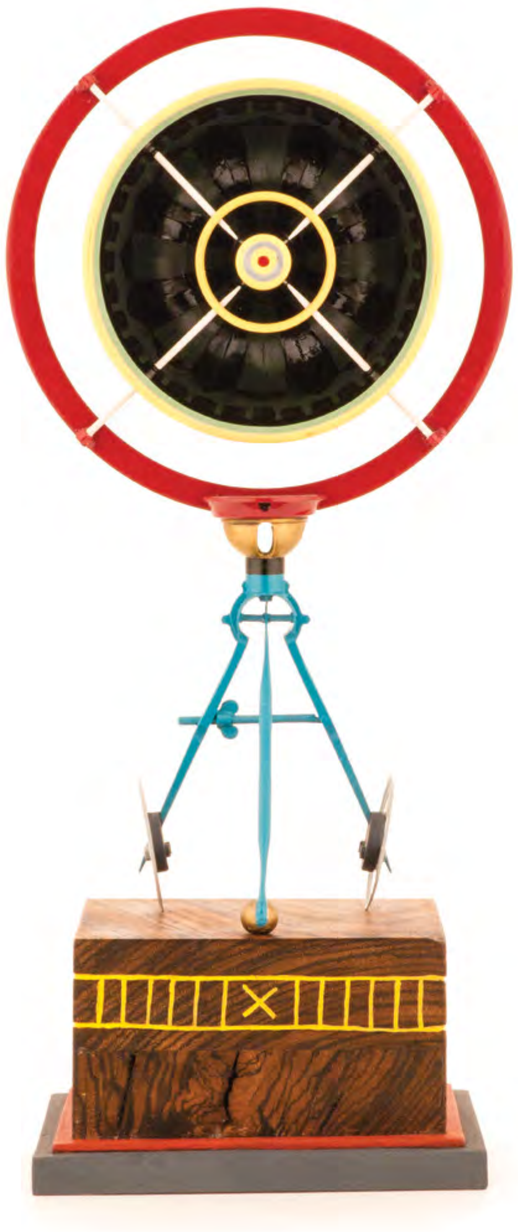
Composition

As part of the Iliadic category, the image of *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ is a visual and conceptual counterpoint to the images of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ (2), *Hektor* ΕΧΩ (4), *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ (6), and *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ (8); and as Circe encourages comprehensive understanding and Ate narrow self-interest, they constitute a contrasting pair in the sub-category *The Deities*. As Eris and Ate traditionally create and maintain the conditions for war, they form a complementary pair. In the upper register, as in *Kirke* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ (9), the hollow hemisphere is a Bundt mould, but it is reversed (with the exterior at the front), while the small disc inserted at the far end of the shaft creates a dead-end (as opposed to the open space in the image of *Kirke* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ). The red circular ring suspending the mould resembles the rim on *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ and the tambourine frame in *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ, while the small target evokes the shield in *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ. The lower section is formally similar to *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ, with significant variations: the inside spring calliper in *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ suggesting expansion is replaced by a spring divider; and the sharp edge of the wax-working tool on which *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ rests, holds a small brass ball in the image of *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ. The podium is of the same wood, but was not treated with a translucent grey.

Iconography

This sculpture compares Ate to a carnivorous plant, with a petal pattern on the front exterior, and the central space as trapping mechanism. The target at the rear suggests the actual, initially unseen danger; and the black and grey interior, the mental delusion she causes. By fixing her victim's focus on an object of desire, she conceals the context.

Right: 38. Side view of *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ, 2012-13



Left: 39. Back view of *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ, 2012-13

Right: 40. Preliminary drawing of *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ, 2012-13. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper. 71 x 51cm

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THE KINGS

This category consists of two sculptures. *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ (11) and *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ (12) form an opposing pair, representing constancy and change as fundamental aspects of form and content in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

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Left: 41. Front view of *Nestor* NOOΣ, 2013

11. NESTOR NOOΣ[1]

Fishing buoy, brass lid of an urn, acanthus leaf-shaped finial, decorative lamp-holder component, primus tank lid, hanging cheek snaffle bit, anniversary clock weight, brass ashtray, plastic lamp-holder component, wood (Oak), enamel paint

44.2 x 32.1 x 21cm

2013

Subject

This sculpture is based on the character Nestor, the patrician advisor to the Achaean army in the *Iliad*, and host to Telemachus in the *Odyssey*. Homer describes Nestor as the oldest and wisest of the Achaeans, generally referred to as the "Gerenian horseman." In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, Nestor formulates his advice to heroes on comparisons of current situations to historical precedent on the basis that all things of the present are inferior to those of the past.[2]

Construction

The component parts were either wholly retained or selectively manipulated to derive signifying details. An originally orange buoy was painted a greyish white with solid white, grey, and turquoise details. An acanthus leaf-shaped finial was painted and secured to the rear of the buoy, while the tip of the brass lid of an urn was removed, and a painted lamp holder component was inserted to create the mouth. The joints of the snaffle bit were secured in place with epoxy glue and screws and painted Oxford blue. The 'Cycladic vase' consists of an upturned ash tray for its neck, its body was carved from oak,

1. *noos:* 'the mind; sense; perception; counsel'.

2. Nestor represents a Hesiodic view, where each generation of heroes is inferior to the preceding one (see Nagy 1979, 213-221).

and placed on a conical plastic foot. The neck is brass, the foot was painted and the body was treated with the same translucent white wood stain used on the plinths.

Composition

As a visual and conceptual response to all the sculptures in this series, the image of *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ is part of both major categories (the Odyssean and the Iliadic); and as the first of *The Kings*, *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ provides a basic template which allows for the retention of established properties, but varies sufficiently to establish a new type. While such changes have to this point involved the introduction of new attributes, in *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ, variation is achieved by combining components of established types. The intention was to develop a work which conformed to existing patterns while asserting a novel, autonomous, visual and conceptual identity. The upper section conforms to the upper sections of *The Warriors* (in shape) and *The Wives* (in colour). Two attributes are indicated front and rear, and painted circles containing dots and crosses (similar to those in *Hektor* ΕΧΩ (4) and *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ (6)) mark the top, base and sides. The tongue recalls the reference to sound in the images of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ (2), *Hektor* ΕΧΩ, *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ, and *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ (8), while the tendril-like quality of the tongue and the acanthus leaf echo the helix as life-cycles in *Hektor* ΕΧΩ. The link between upper and lower registers consists of two arms emerging from a central point on the lower part, reminiscent of *The Deities*. As equestrian equipment, the bit evokes the horsemanship of Iliadic characters such as Achilles and Hector.[3] The lower section consists of a single solid form on a narrow foot, specific to the Odyssean type. The pierced lugs on the vase recall the rib connectors in *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ (3) and the arms of the amphora in *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ (5), while its function as a container, combined with the acanthus leaf as funerary symbol, reflects the amphora as signifier of life and death.

Iconography

This sculpture depicts Nestor as an archaic prototype. Of his original warrior's attributes, only two remain: his arresting voice (the tongue) and memories of the dead (the acanthus leaf). The bit represents the epithet of "Gerenian horseman," and the Cycladic vase refers to the cup only he could lift as a member of the former generation of heroes.

3. Achilles owns two immortal horses. One of them (Xanthos) reveals that Apollo was responsible for Patroclus' death and will enable a man (Paris) to kill Achilles as well (*Il.* 19.404-17). The description of Hector's funeral (and the *Iliad*) ends with his epithet *hippodamoio* 'tamer of horses' (*Il.* 24.804).

Right: 42. Side view of *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ, 2013

Left: 43. Back view of *Nestor* NOOΣ, 2013

Right: 44. Preliminary drawing of *Nestor* NOOΣ, 2013. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper. 71 x 51cm

Left: 45. Front view of *Menelaos* BOAΩ, 2013

12. MENELAOS BOAΩ[1]

Fishing buoy, lamp-holder components, whistle, violin bridge, winding key, headphones, outside spring calliper, wreath-shaped finial, conical finial, bobbin spool, Rockler Power Bore bit, wooden handle of a brace drill, threading die, wood (Plywood, Camphor, Obeche), enamel paint

53.5 x 26 x 36.2cm

2013

Subject

This sculpture is based on the character Menelaus, the wronged husband of Helen in the *Iliad*, and the first to provide Telemachus with news of Odysseus in the *Odyssey*. Homer describes Menelaus as possessing a "loud war cry," and the lesser of the two sons of Atreus, but as extremely wealthy and content by the time he returns home from Troy. Menelaus' marriage and status are endangered in the *Iliad*, but exemplary in the *Odyssey*.

Construction

The component parts were either wholly retained or selectively manipulated to derive signifying details. An originally light yellow buoy was painted and stained auburn. The cylindrical concertina was carved and painted red. The whistle was fixed to a spout constructed from lamp holder components and painted. The violin bridge was attached to a small conical finial and painted. The wreath was painted and attached to the buoy above, and the arms of an outside spring calliper below. At the tip of each arm is a headphone painted white, grey and blue. Although the headphones are located on either side of the buoy, they are not attached to it. The agitator consists of an axial drill bit and four vertically arranged wooden blades, mounted on a dome-shaped base in a shallow square pool constructed from wood and painted.

1. *boao:* 'to give a loud cry; shout;' of things 'to roar, resound'.

Composition

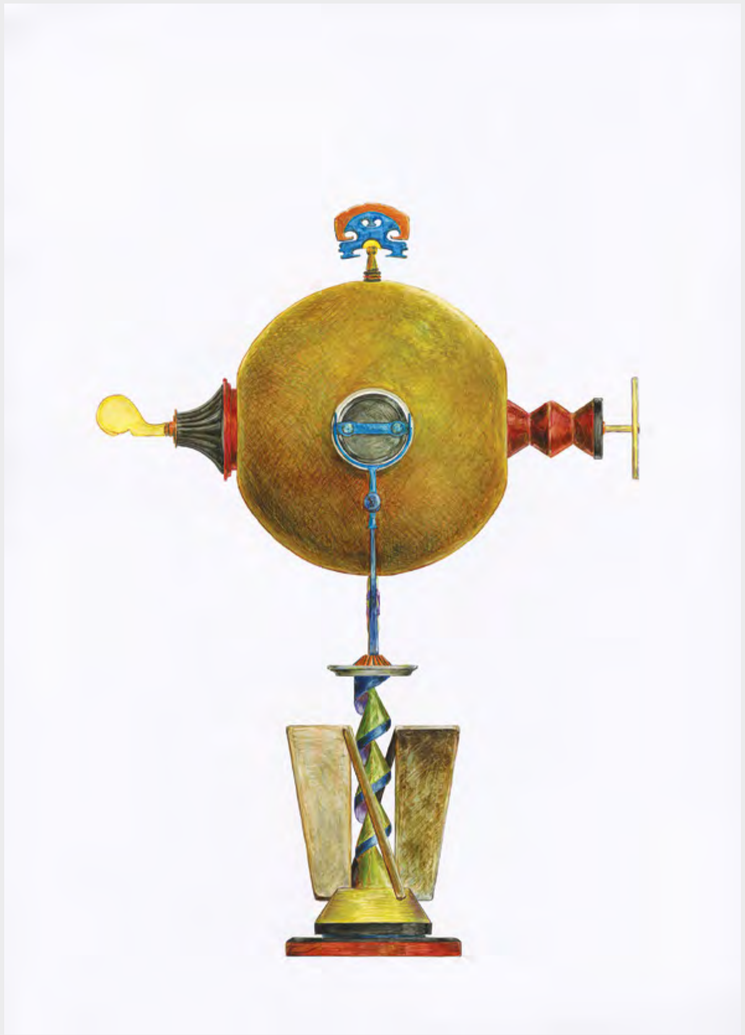
As a visual and conceptual response to all the sculptures in this series, the image of *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ is part of both major categories (the Odyssean and the Iliadic); and as *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ (11) represents stability and *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ flux, they form a contrasting pair in the sub-category *The Kings*. As the opposite of the formal restraint of *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ, *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ demanded a greater degree of visual complexity. In the upper register, the buoy with attached (and seemingly attached) attributes conforms to *The Warriors*. The dark auburn is contrasted with the white in *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ, and echoes the dark wooden umbrella sliders in the images of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ (1) and *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ (3). The calliper arms which appear to connect the upper part to the lower, recall *The Deities*, *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ and *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ (9). The use of the circular wreath to achieve the actual connection echoes the rings on the snaffle bit in *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ. The round headphones suggest the drumsticks in *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ (8), the white faces of the headphones refer to *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ (5) and *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ (6), while their apertures reflect the colander in *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ (7). The lower section consists of four symmetrical objects and a central axis, reminiscent of the Iliadic type. The agitator mirrors the egg-beater in *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ, and the disruptive power of Eris and Ate. Its square base however, equates *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ with the steadfastness of *Hektor* ΕΧΩ (4).

Iconography

This sculpture depicts Menelaus as an 'emitter' and a 'receiver'. The whistle refers to his epithet as "master of the war-cry", the agitator provides the imaginary waves to carry ships to Troy, and the headphones, the privileged information Menelaus obtained from Proteus.[2]

2. Stranded on Pharos near the mouth of the Nile, Menelaus was advised to extract knowledge from Proteus (The Old Man of the Sea) by his daughter Eidothee. Proteus told Menelaus that his delayed homecoming stemmed from his failure to sacrifice to Zeus prior to leaving Egypt. Menelaus learnt of the failed *nostoi* of Ajax and Agamemnon, and that the Old Man had seen Odysseus trapped on Calypso's island. Finally, Proteus foretold Menelaus' own end in the idyllic Elysian Fields (*Od.* 4.351-569).

Right: 46. Side view of *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ, 2013



Left: 47. Back view of *Menelaos* BOAΩ, 2013

Right: 48. Preliminary drawing of *Menelaos* BOAΩ, 2013. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper. 71 x 51cm

CHAPTER 5

A Composite Object Portrait of an Oral-Formulaic Homer

The theory of formulaic composition, as developed by Homeric scholars since first proposed by Milman Parry, is essentially a theory of creative practice. However, the constructive methodology it describes differs significantly from the notion of 'originating authorship' that informs modern editions and translations of Homeric poetry. The result is a separation between the reception of the poems by a modern audience and contemporary developments in modern Homeric scholarship. A key obstacle to assessing the viability of the theory of formulaic composition and the creation of a translation of a systemically constructed poem may be seen to lie in the theorized integration of form and content in Homeric poetry. One of the aims of this project was to argue that Homeric reification by means of a sculptural manifestation of Homeric formalism can elucidate interconnections between materiality and abstraction that underpin constructive art-forms. This approach includes the development of an autonomous sculptural extension of an existing tradition to provide a visual counterpart to the Homeric integration of the formal with the aesthetic (and the material with the abstract) as exhibited in the means of its production. The assembled sculptures may therefore be understood to function as a translation of specific conceptual and formal aspects of Homeric poetics.

Translations play a significant role in shaping general perceptions of ancient works such as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.[1] But, changes in language, culture, and modes of reception, have made the possibility of constructing a comprehensive translation that faithfully expresses every facet of the Homeric epic impossible. A problem exacerbated by increased emphases on complex extra-linguistic facets, such as the musicality of the epics, the participatory role of the audience, epic performance as ritual, and composition as occurring during performance. Whitaker (2012, 62) notes that translators of Homer face the paradox of rendering "an oral derived performance text into a very different, written/printed form which has its own stylistic pressures and demands." Historically, translators such as Alexander Pope, E. V. Rieu,

1. Philip Ford (2006, 14-15) notes that various factors were responsible for the assimilation of Homer into humanist culture in Renaissance France. For example, teaching on the Homeric texts by the *lecteurs royaux* reached multiple audiences, by offering both a linguistic commentary as well as a fuller literary and cultural explanation of the *Iliad*. Another factor in the more general awareness of the Homeric epics was the French translation of the *Iliad* begun by Hugues Salel (1504–53) which was well received by the public. Produced at the request of François I, the translation proved influential and in the early 1540s, paintings which draw on Homeric themes make their appearance at Fontainebleau with the benefit of royal patronage.

R. Lattimore, Christopher Logue, Robert Fagles and Richard Whitaker,[2] adopted diverse approaches to allow contemporary audiences an understanding of various characteristics of the Homeric epic. The results range from wholly interpretative extremes (such as Pope and Logue) to literal paraphrasing (Lattimore),[3] reflecting a tension between creating a reiteration of the poem that can best convey its meaning, and faithfulness to Homeric form and/or content.

Aesthetic Translation

Given the significant formal and hermeneutic differences between literary texts and visual artworks, the approach adopted in this project does not conform to the expectation of direct translation as the conveyance of meaning in which the words of one language are replaced by words that express the same ideas from another language.[4] This definition of translation privileges the content (as most closely allied to meaning) of a text over its form (as most closely allied to language), and poses a significant barrier to the translation of texts in which form and content are integrated. However, translators such as the Pre-Raphaelite poet-painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882)[5] have proposed a method where "form and content are translated together to create a new thing of beauty." Charles Martindale (2008, 88) terms such artistic re-interpretation of an existing work an 'aesthetic translation' (Martindale

2. Pope's translation of the *Iliad* was first published in subscription form from 1715-20. His *Odyssey* (in collaboration with W. Broome and E. Fenton) was published in 1726. Pope adopted a Neoclassical approach that aimed at recreating the poetry of Homer primarily by means of formal devices, and is considered more a poetic interpretation than an accurate translation; E.V. Rieu's translation of the *Odyssey* was first published in 1946 and his *Iliad* in 1950. His prose versions follow the principle of 'dynamic equivalence' where the translator aims to communicate the content of the original, as opposed to its form; Richmond Lattimore's *Iliad*, published in 1951 is a literal free verse line-for-line rendering that intentionally avoids a poetic dialect; Christopher Logue undertook a long-term project to transform the *Iliad* into a modernist idiom from 1959-2005. His interpretations included sound recordings and printed volumes of verse such as *War Music: An Account of Books 16 to 19 of Homer's Iliad*, 1984; Robert Fagles published translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in 1990 and 1995 that attempted a balance between modern English and the original verse; Richard Whitaker published a translation of the *Iliad* in 2012 that aimed to give an impression of orality in a hybrid vernacular, particular to a contemporary Southern African context.

3. A. G. Geddes (1988, 11) ascribes the literal approach to a reluctance to "introduce anything which is not in the original," but warns that this approach does not guarantee clarity of expression or meaning.

4. John Sallis (2008, 54) defines the classical definition of translation as "a matter of putting in force the manifestive force of words set in a foreign voice, of doing so in such a way as to retrieve the thought they made manifest, so as then to lead that thought into one's own voice." This conception of translation stems from the classical determination first expressed in Plato's *Critias* 113b, and has historically remained relatively stable.

5. Rossetti created a collection initially titled *The Early Italian Poets* (1861) which was later retitled *Dante and his Circle*, and includes a translation of the *Vita Nuova*. In the preface, he noted that "a translation (involving as it does the necessity of settling many points without discussion), remains perhaps the most direct form of commentary" (Rossetti in Martindale 2008, 88).

2008, 88), with an emphasis on transmitting both meaning and artistry[6] as inextricable from one another. Such a translation should be no less an artwork than the work of which it is an interpretation. This echoes the method of 'anachronistic appropriation' (discussed in Chapter 2), where artists engage in a non-objective historical riposte with their predecessors as though they were contemporaries. In the work of early Modernists (such as Picasso, Léger, and de Chirico) their engagement with the antique was premised on the transformation, reinvention, and re-evaluation of ancient works to create art within a contemporary context. While stylistic attributes provide fertile grounds for such engagement, the Cubists' interests in the more systemic aspects of Classicism focused not on superficial attributes but on core underlying conventions and mental processes.

Martindale (2008, 92) suggests that the relationship established between an aesthetic translation and the work to which it refers should not be conceived of in hierarchical, but in dialectically reciprocal terms. He cites as an example Hans-Georg Gadamer's view of portraiture as the establishment of an ontological relationship between a portrait and the person it evokes.[7] Shearer West (2004, 44) notes that portraits conform to conventional notions of art, but "are also a special class of object that can resist classification as art." While the sitter historically precedes their portrait, the latter is both autonomous as an artwork, and relative to its subject as an interpretation of the sitter's physiology, personality – and in most cases - their social context and status. Hermeneutically, in a viewer's imagination, a portrait's creative process is evoked as a transactional encounter between artist and sitter (West 2004, 41). In a similar vein, the translation of one artwork, by means of creating another, represents a process of transformative engagement. As this process is evoked by the responding work, the ontological relationship established between such an interpretation and its source reflects the unique status of the portrait as an artwork most

6. Much of the early opposition to the theory of formulaic composition was based on the threat it seemed to pose to the status of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as works of art. For example, Frederick Combellack's (1959, 196; 208) assessment of the implications of Parry's theory for Homeric scholarship reveals that the idea of composition based on the use of pre-existing formulae appears incompatible with the predominant understanding of creative originality and authorial intent on which literary criticism was based: "The difficulty is not that Parry's work has proven that there is no artistry in these features of Homer's style, but that he has removed all possibility of any certitude or even reasonable confidence in the criticism of such features of Homeric style and has thus put this side of Homeric criticism into a situation wholly different from similar criticism of, say, Sophocles or Shakespeare. The hard fact is that in this post-Parry era critics are no longer in a position to distinguish the passages in which Homer is merely using a convenient formula from those in which he has consciously and cunningly chosen *le mot juste.*"

7. "Deconstructionists and postmodernists, suspicious of claims of origination, like to disturb the distinction between primary and secondary. One such disturbance is to say that every translation creates a new original *as an effect*. This however, might imply that it is the translation which should be figured as prior; the hierarchy would be reversed, but not abolished. So more promising is Hans-Georg Gadamer's view of the ontology of portraiture (making a portrait can easily be seen as a form of translation into a different medium). A portrait is not like an image in a mirror, rather it involves 'an increase in being', which is an increase in being not only in the form of the new thing but also the original, apart from its own independent being … As a result, 'a picture is not a copy of a copied being, but is in ontological communion with what is copied" (Martindale 2008, 92).

fully comprehensible in terms of its relation to its subject. However, the composite object portrait expands the dialectical reciprocity that the conventional portrait establishes between artist and subject by introducing a predominantly metaphoric approach and the hermeneutics of collage and assemblage. On the surface, the absence of a physiological resemblance to the subject obscures the status of the art-work as portraiture. The abstract representation of non-material attributes such as character (or in the case of Cornell's *A Parrot for Juan Gris* – their creative methodology) increases both the subjectivity and the complexity of the interpretation. A composite object portrait, as a collage or sculptural assemblage, provokes a certain kind of interpretive process. It tends to draw the viewer into the transactional encounter between artist and sitter. A conventional portrait records and evokes this encounter as having occurred at a set point in time, but the constantly shifting, reciprocally associative, and allusive functions of the disparate elements in a composite object portrait indefinitely extend the transactional event from an initial encounter between artist and sitter to each subsequent encounter between subject and interpreter.

Martindale's comparison of the ontological relationship between a text and its translation is premised on the conventional notion of a portrait as an 'increase in being' (see note 7 above). The composite object portrait entails both an increase in, and perpetuation of being. As such, it replaces the largely passive process of viewing a seamlessly mimetic image of a person with an active process of decoding, connecting, and reconstructing clues. The result is an interpretive engagement with the subject that echoes the artist's own encounter with the sitter as a fluid accumulation of potentially informative and/or contradictory attributes. This echoes the conflation of performance with composition in the theory of formulaic composition (see Chapter 1), suggesting that the hermeneutics of the composite object portrait provide an appropriate conceptual model for an aesthetic translation of Homeric poetry. The examples of aesthetic translations cited by Martindale constitute responses to literary texts in a literary format,[8] which is appropriate given that these were all produced by literate authors for largely literate audiences. By contrast, the persistent influence of the oral-formulaic foundations of Homeric poetry on its creative methodology, the multitextuality of its formative textual tradition, and core formal attributes such as the *Kunstprache* (or 'Special Speech'), parataxis, repetition, and hexametrical format, deviate significantly from the grammar, syntax, and articulation of modern literature. These differences suggest that while a literary translation is appropriate to the epics in their status as texts, many fundamental characteristics of the poems that reflect the oral-formulaic basis of the Homeric creative methodology are less suited to this format. These aspects play a significant role in a contemporary understanding of Homeric poetry which is premised on the integration of form and content as argued by scholars such as Nagy, Bakker, Muellner, and Kahane. Therefore a methodology offered by contemporary sculpture for the formulation of an approach to creating an aesthetic translation of these aspects of Homeric poetics may potentially be conducive to the expression of this understanding of Homeric poetry.

8. He notes that Rossetti translated ancient Italian verse and John Dryden (1631-1700) translated the Latin poetry of Ovid (43 BCE – 17/8 CE) into English verse.

Comparative Visualisation

The introduction of an untested extra-lingual method of translating the epics is premised on two processes: the first is the translation of the verbal into the visual, and the second, the comparison of the creative methodologies underlying Homeric formulaic composition and sculptural assemblage. Both of these processes are characteristic of the poetic simile. Metaphor and simile allow for the transformation of words into mental and visual imagery, and create meaning through the interrelation of disparate elements.[9] While the sculptural assemblages produced for this study function as visual metaphors, the simile provides a more appropriate model for the comparative analysis of two unrelated forms of art-making that informed the production of these artworks.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the simile (in particular complex forms such as expanded and multiplied similes) significantly contributes to the frequently noted 'visuality' of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It is arguable that due to its structure and hermeneutics, the simile encapsulates fundamental structural and compositional aspects of the poems such as the use of formulae, parataxis, polysemy, catalogues, and juxtaposed pairs. It also echoes sculptural assemblage. As a comparative poetic device, the simile establishes equivalence between clearly disparate objects as based on particular shared characteristics. In its basic form, two autonomous elements with pre-existing meanings and associations are joined or juxtaposed to create a reciprocal relationship between them. The audience's ability to mentally visualize these juxtaposed components both separately, and in relation to each other, recalls the use of the formulaic phrase, plot, or character in oral-formulaic poetry, and the use of appropriated elements and prefabricated objects in collage and assemblage. Representation does not occur by means of mimetic description, but through symbolic association. In complex examples, such as the multiform similes identified by Ben-Porat (1992) (see Chapter 1), the absence of syntactic subordination characteristic of paratactic sentence construction, and a catalogic, as opposed to a sequential, narrative presentation of information allows for multilayered interpretations that can even appear to contradict one another. The Homeric simile therefore elicits a continuously shifting interpretative strategy in which disclosure takes place over time, that echoes the game-like hermeneutics of Picasso's collages (see Chapter 2).

Albert Cook (1984, 40) suggests that the perceptual process underlying an assemblage such as Picasso's *Bull's Head* (see fig. 1) is comparable to the literary evocation of mental imagery through the equation of attributes in a simile such as the comparison of arrows deflected by a shield to peas and chickpeas bouncing on a threshing floor.[10] Cook describes

9. The reader receives a metaphor with its constitutive parts collapsed into a single literary image, while the simile comprises two autonomous statements linked by a simile marker (such as the phrase "is like"). The reader therefore 'unpacks' a metaphoric image to determine its constitutive parts, while the two statements comprising a simile are mentally conflated to arrive at a composite idea. Both enable comprehension by means of associative image-making, but since the visualization procedure is more immediately apparent in the structure of the simile than the metaphor, the former will be used in the remainder of this discussion.

10. Cook (1984, 40) draws a correlation between a Homeric simile (*Il*. 13.588-92) and *Bull's Head:* "A particular kind of motion is discerned, in a way that a modern painter might admire, a "found"

1. Pablo Picasso. *Bull's Head,* 1942. Bicycle seat and handlebars (leather and metal). 42 x 41 x 15cm.

the formal association between the 'found object' and the referent as a revelation proceeding from a 'visual impulse'. However, an associative comparison can also incorporate more symbolic allusions. Many things can bounce off a surface, so the seemingly strange choice of chickpeas and beans on a winnowing shovel to describe a rebounding arrow suggests that the Homeric simile includes a deeper reference to the process of winnowing itself (perhaps as symbolic of divine selection).[11] In *Bull's Head,* the formal attributes of the artwork cannot be isolated from the viewer's consciousness of the combinatory action underlying it. Its meaning is to a large extent derived from the semantic 'irritation' that arises from the persistence of an object's functional value within a semantic transformation or re-evaluation (Spies 2000, 209; 216). While correspondences based on shape and functionality may not constitute the nexus of a simile or an assemblage in its entirety, they provide an entry-point for more complex associations of attributes and meanings. The interpreter is required to recognize and visualize both the prior and altered form and/or function of at least one of the objects as it relates to others within the comparison for the allusion to be grasped, and the simile or assemblage understood. This aspect of the comparative device renders it an effective method for provoking a process in which various elements are continuously mentally disassembled, compared, and reassembled.

motion underlying the bounce of peas on a winnowing fan and the rebound of an arrow from a breast plate. The visual impulse is not so different, I mean, from that of modern "found" sculpture, when Picasso calls a bicycle seat and handlebars a bull's head." Cook does not pursue this insight further and concentrates instead on finding parallels to Homeric imagery in ancient visual art-forms instead.

11. "The winnowing-basket or fan is the emblem of the distribution of rewards and punishments, as well as that of initiation and of predestination" (Chevalier and Gheerbrant 1996, 1118). In the interchange of arrow and spear between Menelaus and Helenos, both hit their mark at the same time. The arrow is deflected, but Menelaus' spear penetrates the hand with which Helenos holds the bow.

The extent to which the constituent elements of a simile or an assemblage are 'logically' comparable has a significant impact on the interpretive process it provokes, and by extension, on its formal and conceptual complexity. Demonstrating the role of the poetic comparative device in Homeric reception, scholars such as Lorna Hardwick (1997)[12] and D. F. Rauber (1969) have studied the similes of Derek Walcott (1930-) and John Donne (1572-1631) in relation to the Homeric extended simile. In Hardwick's analysis, the relationship between Walcott and Homer is logical and clear, but while poets such as Walcott, Virgil, John Milton, and Dante Alighieri are commonly associated with either Homeric style or subject-matter, Donne is not, and Rauber's comparison appears curious. In Rauber's analysis, Donne's primary point of convergence with Homer is their frequent comparison of wholly dissimilar things (a kind of *discordia concors*[13] of which his own comparison of Donne to Homer is an example). While the nexus in discordant similes appears 'trivial', a complex conceptual abstraction emerges upon analysis to illuminate themes of particular significance to the epic as a whole (Rauber 1969, 101).[14] In this analysis, Donne's development of the discordant

12. Hardwick analyses Derek Walcott's use of Homeric poetry in his poem *Omeros* (1990) and his play *A Stage Version of the Odyssey* (1992). She proposes the development of a model of reception as simile on the basis that the structural role of the simile can contribute to the generation and transmission of the intertextual relationships between ancient and modern texts. "There is a wide spectrum of models which can be used to map the relationship between ancient texts and their reception in modern poetry and drama. Translations, adaptations, transplantations, versions – each term not only indicates a genre with its own conventions but also, more importantly, suggests a variety of aspects of the relationship between ancient and modern, including imaginative restructuring" (Hardwick 1997, 326-7).

13. Rauber (1969, 97) quotes Samuel Johnson's famous dictum on the essence of "metaphysical" wit as a "kind of *discordia concors*; a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike." An example of such a simile is the comparison of the stones thrown by Achaians and Trojans at each other with a snowstorm sent by Zeus in *Il.* 12.278-89. Rauber (1969, 99-100) notes that "The separation of elements is here at a maximum. On the one side, an extremity of violent activity, a terrible battle to the death fought amid a mighty roar; on the other, an extremity of quiet, a scene with no human actor or even observer – with, indeed, no human element except the very oblique ἀνδρῶν πίονα ἔργα (line 283) [*andron piona erga* the cultivated fields of men]. Likewise, the nexus of "falling thick" is strange and extreme; it is almost deliberately paradoxical. The lacy snow falls slowly, silently, inexorably, and the whole movement is dominated by a largely tactile sensation of a frightening downward pressure. The tone is deeply melancholic, almost Vergilian in its pathos. The stones, by contrast, are solid and hard; they are hurled, and they smash and crash through bronze and bone."

14. "In this passage [*Il.* 12.278-89] Homer presents very compactly his underlying conception of death and the position of man in the universe. The figure is, in effect, almost the whole poem in microcosm" (Rauber 1969, 100). The relation between similes and broader themes in the epics has been discussed by scholars such as C. Moulton (1975), Timothy Hofmeister 1995, and Naomi Rood. Rood (2008, 29-30) notes a series of "full" similes "of men falling like trees felled for the purpose of building oars, spears, chariot wheels, or ships which goes beyond a simple relationship of likeness. The parallel between tree and man spirals into a sequential narrative that brings out the parallel between craftsman and poet as men who shape natural material into something beautiful and cultural. The craftsman cuts down a tree and makes it into a cultural instrument – oar, spear, chariot wheel, or ship – that helps men fight the wars in which, in turn, they are cut down and made by the poet

simile represents an inadvertent extension of the fundamental structure of Homeric poetics.[15] This leads Rauber to suggest that a comparison of deep structural correspondences between two seemingly dissimilar types of poetry creates a deliberate paradox which enables "the critic to uncover areas of similarity which are likely to be missed by the ordinary machinery of criticism" (Rauber 1969, 103).

As discussed in Chapter 2, the creation of connections and establishment of complex relationships between previously unconnected and seemingly incompatible things are characteristics of Cubism, Cubist collage, and sculptural assemblage. External and anachronistic appropriation are based on the transformative re-evaluation of both contemporary and historical techniques, methodologies, artworks, and artefacts for the purpose of creating new methods of representation. This process does not include the juxtaposed elements' broader cultural, philosophical, and/or artistic frameworks.[16] Instead, like Rauber's 'discordant similes', appropriation is based on the identification of 'trivial' points of correspondence which are isolated and extracted from their normal context. Anachronistic appropriation is therefore a highly subjective and anti-historicist procedure in which the works of artistic predecessors are treated as though they were contemporary, while external appropriation is premised on the reconsideration of aspects of one discipline in relation to aspects of another. Both instances incorporate a process of decontextualisation where the appropriated element functions as an allusive, yet autonomous, representative of its original context, while acquiring a new set of meanings within its current one. The comparison of seemingly highly dissimilar entities in this project therefore echoes the 'discordant simile'. As such, the comparison is not comprehensive, but limited to deep structural correspondences with the aim being to create complex conceptual abstractions.

The structural characteristics of Homeric composition that most closely approach sculptural assemblage include the paratactic syntax of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the catalogue format, and Homeric polysemic vocabulary. The absence of syntactical subordination in Homeric parataxis allows for the inclusion and juxtaposition of unrelated and independent parts analogous to the construction of a sculptural assemblage from separate three-dimensional forms and objects. Reflecting the fundamental characteristics of parataxis, the Homeric catalogue format allows the poet to juxtapose a variety of items/entries with

into cultural heroes ... This group of technological similes is thus unique in the close and sequential relationships it presents among trees, craftsmen, and war instruments, on the one hand, and men, poet, and heroes, on the other. This uniqueness indicates that these similes convey a cycle of particular significance, expressive, I suggest, of the poem's essential function."

15. "From the point of view of this study, the extended figure of Donne can quite accurately be described as a topological distortion of the advanced Homeric simile. Or, to drop the geometrical image, Donne can be viewed as pressing forward a process of poetic complication clearly present in Homer's use of the figure, and furthermore, carrying out the development exactly upon the lines already laid down by the epic poet" (Rauber 1969, 102).

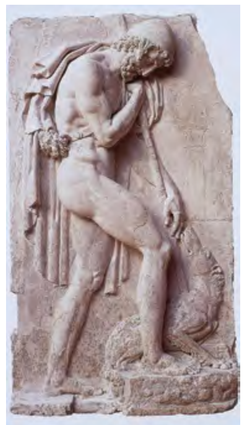
16. This also evokes the accumulation of diverse and potentially incompatible words and phrases from different contexts to create the Homeric *Kunstsprache* (see Chapter 1).

no explicit relation other than a unifying rubric[17] (such as the leaders of the Achaean contingents and their ships). The rubric establishes a context that determines which of the multiple possible meanings of the assembled elements will apply. In this view, elements within a paratactic structure are predominantly polysemic and comprehensible mainly in combination with proximate elements. Such structures allow for the establishment of associations that may be unexpected or even appear illogical, but are more expressive and/or complex than conventional sets of semantic relations. Likewise, in the non-literal application of sculptural assemblage that evolved from Picasso's approach to collage, the choice of component elements is driven by the conceptual potential of surprising combinations and/or substitutions of material and objects. In Homeric poetry, the composition undertaken by a performer, *rhapsode*, or a scholar compiling an edition of the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*, is a reiterative transmission of an existing form, making composition and interpretation concurrent in Homeric poetics. In sculptural assemblage, composition consists of the selection and combination of previously unaffiliated parts to prompt a continuously shifting interpretive strategy. Structurally, the production of a sculptural assemblage resembles the accumulative development of the Homeric *Kunstsprache*.[18] As already explained, the Homeric compositional system comprises an assemblage of often incompatible dialects, language usages, and vocabularies from various time periods and geographic locations, as well as narratives, characters, formulae, and lines of poetry. These elements are selected, altered, and adapted according to context, resulting in a dialectically reciprocal semantic system. In the same vein, a sculptural assemblage is composed of appropriated forms and prefabricated objects that are selected and altered specifically for the role they can play within the artwork as a whole. In both cases, the combination is 'artificial': although individual elements are drawn from everyday life, they are derived from different settings. The result is the co-existence of seemingly incompatible and previously unaligned things within a single context. Both art-forms combine 'old' and 'new': while their component parts are selected for, and characterized by, their predetermined origins, usage, and associations, their transformative amalgamation into an unprecedented whole gives each of these elements a new context and meaning.

Structural resemblances between sculptural assemblage and Homeric poetry extend to their respective hermeneutics, as both provoke 'constructive' interpretive processes. In an assemblage such as *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ for example (see fig. 2 and entry 1, Chapter 4), the notion of 'Odysseus' provides the primary context within which each of the sculpture's constitutive objects function to evoke formal and symbolic associations redolent of thematic, character, physical, and narrative attributes. Unlike naturalistic sculptural representations of the hero, such as Pierre-Amédée Durand's (1789-1873) *Ulysses Recognized by His Dog* 1810

17. A rubric is the "stated category or class which legitimates the inclusion or exclusion of potential items" (Sammons 2010, 9).

18. In this sense, the correlation is between the Homeric poetic system (as opposed to the individual performance that results from it) and a sculptural assemblage. While numerous twentieth and twenty-first century visual artists draw on, and allude to, classical mythologies on a thematic level, Cy Twombly's *Fifty Days at Iliam* 1977-8 represents an example of a direct and sustained engagement with a specific classical text. Twombly's "re-invisioned" *Iliad* is itself based on a prior poetic interpretation of the epic by Alexander Pope.



Far left: 2. *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ 2010

Left centre: 3. Pierre-Amédée Durand, *Ulysses Recognized by His Dog* 1810. Plaster. 113 x 69cm. Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux-Arts, France

Left: 4. Jean Baptiste Carpeaux, *Ulysses Throwing the Discus* 1871. Plaster. 36 x 20.5 x 21 cm. Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux-Arts, France

and Jean Baptiste Carpeaux's (1827-1875) *Ulysses Throwing the Discus* 1871,[19] the assemblage does not intend to provide a depiction of Odysseus' physical and mental state at a precise point in the narrative, but is an abstract composite of visual cues from which a viewer can construct an understanding of Odysseus in terms of his overall conduct, character, and thematic significance. The sequence in which these elements are interpreted, the extent to which allusions are grasped and pursued, and the significance attached to elements in relation to others will vary from one viewer (and viewing) to another. The artwork is therefore conceptually heterodox and open to multiple readings. Schwandt (1979, 415) detects a similar parataxis in the image-making process underlying Homeric similes: "The details which compose Homer's similes often appear in random order, piled one on top of the other without the subordinate conjunctions that might make clear their relationships. Homer's basic unit of composition is the formulaic phrase, two or three to a hexameter line, and each of his lines usually ends with some natural break in thought. He builds his similes out of an accumulation of formulaic phrases and of relatively self-contained lines, connected mostly by simple coordinate conjunctions. In the cauldron simile Homer begins with an image of a cauldron boiling, then moves to the flame which has heated it, then to the melting of the fat within, then to its bubbling, and last of all to the building of the fire." In the Homeric catalogue format it is similarly unclear whether a cataloguer constructs a collection of facts, or fragments a whole into its constituent elements, and the interpreter is left to assume an underlying whole (an ontological vision of history or an argument) behind the assemblage of fragments of information, and work at reassembling something that was presented in a disjointed form (Sammons 2010, 17; 16). The notion of interpretation as re-construction

19. The episodes illustrated in these works involve a limited revelation of Odysseus' identity while he is disguised as a beggar in his home, and the Phaeacians are still unaware of his true heroic stature: though dressed as a beggar, his old dog Argus recognizes him by his scent in *Od.* 17.292-327, while despite his fatigue, he still hurls the discuss furthest in *Od.* 8.186-94 (see figures 3 and 4).

places a significant creative demand on the interpreter. The artwork is not conceived of as a clear and coherent message to be transmitted whole, but as a dialectical process where the interpreter actively participates in the work's unravelling or re-articulation.

According to the theory of formulaic composition, in early Homeric poetry, re-iteration and interpretation are shared between a 'transmitter' (*rhapsode*) and an audience, so that a rhapsodic performance entails an active collaboration. For composition and performance to be aspects of the same process, it is necessary to relate authority in performance to the concept of authorship in composition. Therefore, as Nagy (1996, 19) argues, "the poet's song does not become *authoritative* until it is performed in an *authorized* setting. Only then does the song become real, authentic ... the authorization of the composer is implicitly not enough *because the transmitter as performer must also be authorized by his audience*, who are presumed to be authoritative members of the song culture (Nagy's italics)." It is assumed that this audience is sufficiently familiar with epic themes, plots, and conventions to recognize its traditional allusions alongside deviations and innovations. The performer's task is not to clarify the epic for the audience, but to select, distil, and activate whichever part of it is contextually most appropriate to the immediate setting as determined by the audience and occasion.[20] This creative and interpretive model poses significant problems to conventional methods of literary criticism. As already noted, Frederick Combellack (1959, 208) for example, argues that Parry's ideas removed both the artistry from features of Homer's style and "all possibility of any certitude in the criticism of features of Homeric style" (see note 6 above).

Homer as Creative Methodology

Depending on one's point of view, Parry's theories might be seen as either negating Homeric artistry, or providing the means for an entirely new conception of it. An oral-formulaic Homer presents the modern reader and translator, more accustomed to a notion of words as primarily signifiers, with a significant conceptual challenge. The contemporary nexus of Homeric studies is not an individual historical originator (such as the blind wanderer of the Homeric biographic tradition), but a language of objects, in which meaning is constructed by means of a grammar of formal elements. Bakker (2006) contrasts the traditional notion of an individual 'transcendental' Homer that exists outside of (transcends) poetry, with an 'immanent' Homer that is identified with the mechanisms underlying the development, transmission, and survival of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.[21] As discussed in Chapter 3, the iconography of the figure of Homer from the Hellenistic period onwards conforms to a

20. The *rhapsode*, like the narrator in the invocation preceding the *Catalogue of Ships,* relates their own selection from an established, comprehensive, and 'ideal' (in the Platonic sense) epic account to an audience which is sufficiently familiar with the conventions of the art-form to be able to relate the performed fragment to the absent whole.

21. Bakker traces the development of 'immanent Homer' from Friedrich August Wolf and Milman Parry to Gregory Nagy, who defines Homer as "a retrojection of the entire tradition, or system, to a mythical founder, or proto-poet. Homer is the personification of the entire epic tradition with all its formulas, all its rhapsodes, all its performances. Any rhapsode that sings the *Iliad* becomes Homer, turning the myth into living reality" (Bakker 2006).

'transcendent' understanding in which Homer is the pre-eminent source of wisdom and knowledge, while the epics, alongside other canonical works of antique literature such as the *Aeneid*, and the *Bible*, served as source-material for depictions of idealised heroism and Classical rationality. As an 'immanent' Homer is essentially the poetic system underlying Homeric poetry as described by Muellner (2006, 11) the visual representation of the oral-formulaic epic is an identical process to the visual representation of an 'immanent' Homer. While there is no known visual precedent for describing both the epics and their poet as one and the same, an ancient textual attempt at achieving this task may arguably exist in the form of *The Contest of Homer and Hesiod* (commonly referred to as the *Certamen*).

While the extent to which a literal reading of the Homeric biographical tradition[22] can provide factual information regarding the origins of the Homeric epics is questionable, the structure of the *Certamen* echoes important aspects of Homeric compositional and hermeneutic principles, and in a non-literal reading may function as a conceptual portrait of Homer designed to elicit a playful dialectical hermeneutics similar to Picabia and Cornell's composite object portraits. Unlike the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, whose allusions to now-lost epics cannot be conclusively proven, the manner in which the *Certamen* draws on the literary traditions of its period can be determined. Composed during the Antonine period (138-193 CE) the *Certamen* is generally regarded as a rather crude compilation of fragmentary information drawn from pre-existing texts. To a modern reader accustomed to a uniform authorial style and clarity of narrative, the extent to which the *Certamen* constitutes a catalogue of miscellaneous texts, fragments, and anecdotes suggests an absence of the conceptual and formal cohesion that characterizes creative writing. However, James Uden (2010, 133) suggests that although "the *Contest of Homer and Hesiod* preserves passages of greater antiquity than the Imperial era and of great interest to scholars,[23] we ought not to lose sight of the compilation as a whole, the ideological context in which it was produced and the internal dynamics of the work itself." This emphasis on considering the aesthetic merits of the *Certamen* entails reappraising its means of construction, wherein the compilation format is not necessarily indicative of literary poverty, but may represent a creative strategy instead.[24] The notion of a single identifiable authorial 'voice' which provides the conceptual criteria by which the *Certamen* has been edited and translated is premised on an understanding of individual creative expression as

22. Texts defined as *Lives of Homer,* range from freestanding compositions, to encyclopaedia entries and biographical information included as introductory sections in editions of the poet's works or scholarly treatises on Homer. Of these, only the *Certamen* (c. 138-193 CE) and Pseudo-Herodotus' *On Homer's Origins, Date and Life* (c. 50-150 CE) appear to attempt a coherent narrative.

23. Modern interest in the *Certamen* from Nietzsche onwards (such as N. J. Richardson (1981) and Ralph M. Rosen (2004) in particular), has centred less on the text's own merits and curiosities, but more on whether similarities between it, the Michigan Papyrus and the fragment published by B. Mandilaras (1992) (see Rosen 2004) can prove a thematic link with the narrative section describing the contest between Homer and Hesiod, and Alcidamas' *Mouseion* and Aristophanes' *The Frogs*.

24. Uden (2010, 123) notes that while there may be an expected hesitation to assess the effect of a compiled text as a whole, the compilation as a form should provoke interpretation. This is because the juxtaposition of narratives and authorities from different periods and cultural contexts allows the compiler to reframe material already known in new ways, thereby encouraging readers to make connections between sources and across time periods. These elements can be used to challenge,

stylistically, formally, and conceptually coherent. However, as Picasso demonstrated, formal description is not necessarily limited to an artist's individual signature style, but by the problem of how to represent a specific subject. While style as a distinctive visual or verbal descriptive method constitutes an individual author's unique form of expression, it may also be a property that has been appropriated and combined with other styles. While an originating author's style is premised on a consistent, distinctive, and novel descriptive method, the latter is recognizable through their preference for certain types of composite elements (such as Max Ernst's preference for illustrations from scientific journals) and the specific manner in which those elements are combined (such as Picasso's fusion of elements in his 'veiled' assemblages compared to Rauschenberg's *combines* where the painterly and sculptural elements remain clearly differentiated).

In such a reading, the structure of the *Certamen* exploits the reader's assumption that encyclopaedic texts, catalogues, myths, and oracles are authoritative sources of knowledge with supposed errors masking the intentional juxtaposition of seemingly incompatible ideas (such as the names of scholars cited and 'speaking names'[25] in the catalogues, and the substitution of an expected name with an unexpected one).[26] The reader's expectation of logical coherence and dependability from an oracle or a catalogue allows for the construction of a complex web of potential interpretations and misinterpretations.[27] The four oracles in the *Certamen* share

complement, or contradict each other. "Ultimately, the meaning of the work as a whole will be determined not by a reading of one constituent source or anecdote, but rather by an understanding of the complex interplay between them" (Uden 2010, 123).

25. Scholars cited in the catalogue of fathers include a Cleanthes (servant of *kleos*) and a Democritus (chosen of the people) of Troezen. M. L. West (2003, 321) argues that the author actually meant Neanthes of Cyzicus and Demetrius of Troezen, but, I propose that these may be invented 'speaking names' instead. Insertion of 'speaking names' into catalogues is not unknown in Homer with J. M. Cook (1967) suggesting that in the *Catalogue of Ships*, Epistrophos and Schedios are inventions of the poet, with their inclusion motivated by the etymology of their names. Sammons (2010, 161) emphasizes that the ironic play associated with the addition of 'speaking names' to catalogues of conventional characters is possible if "one admits that the catalogue may in part be a field for poetic invention."

26. In the so-called 'Hadrianic oracle' the Delphic Pythia responds to the emperor's inquiry regarding Homer's origins with a genealogy that includes Telemachus and a mother named as Nestor's daughter, Epicaste. West (2003, 322-323) is so certain that 'Epicaste' is a mistake that he changes the text to read 'Polycaste' in his translation, commentary, and edition of the Greek. His only reference to an alternative version of line 36 occurs in a footnote to Nietzsche's edition of the *Certamen*. Keld Zeruneith (2007, 33) also substitutes the one name for the other when paraphrasing the oracle.

27. The most intriguing of which is the potentially oblique reference to Oedipus in the seemingly mistaken use of his mother's name Epicaste to refer to Nestor's daughter in the Hadrianic oracle. The assumption that "Nestor's daughter Epicaste" in line 36 is a mistake or corruption of the text is understandable, given that the narrator has already stated in the catalogue of mothers in line 25 that some claim Homer's mother to be "Nestor's daughter Polycaste," while Telemachus was already included in the preceding catalogue of fathers. T. W. Allen (1912) notes that only the *Certamen* and the tenth-century *Suda* lists Telemachus and Polycaste as parents of Homer). However, Polycaste and Epicaste appear in two different contexts, with the 'incorrect' version enjoying the narrator's own

the amorphous and subversive attributes of the riddle and the pun, where the questioner's failure to imagine a meaning beyond the apparent message sets off a course of action which ultimately reveals the oracle's initially undetected meaning. This aspect of the enigmatic oracle is prevalent in the foundation myths of the Greek colonies of the archaic period[28] where linguistic ambiguity serves as a basis for oracular puns and word-play. Such punning relies on the flexibility of words and imagery to appear contradictory on one level, but make sense on another, and reflects Aristotle's comparison of riddles with metaphors as the combination of things that are impossibly true.[29] Ian Hamnett (1967, 381-2) argues that the social and cognitive function of riddles is to categorize ambivalent words, concepts or items of behaviour within more than one frame of reference to allow for "a point of transition between these different frames of reference or classificatory sets. It can, indeed, mediate between sets that are not only different, but in many aspects opposed, and in this way it can form the basis for a differing system of classification, or allow contrasting classifications and conceptual frameworks to co-exist at the same time." Despite its encyclopaedic format, the *Certamen's* seemingly dry accumulation of trivia masks a complex literary game of allusions, riddles, and puns. Ultimately, it fails to provide any historical or biographical information about the poet, emphasizing the complex polysemic nature of the Homeric text and the manner in which it resists attempts at definitive interpretations instead.

In the *Certamen,* Homer emerges as an elusive and protean fusion of characters that populate his epics – an abstract personification of the distinctive attributes of Homeric composition. In a similar vein, Scott Richardson (2006, 353-4) argues that in the *Odyssey,* the narrator shares Odysseus' defining characteristics,[30] but ascribes Odyssean characteristics

endorsement. The context of an inquiry to an oracle regarding unknown parentage is most appropriate to the myth of Oedipus, as are the attributes of riddling and blindness. The theme of a story-gathering traveller applies to Telemachus, while Nestor represents durability and knowledge. The poetic contest between Homer and Hesiod that forms the narrative core of the *Certamen* echoes the poetic contest between Thamyris and the Muses in the *Iliad*. Thamyris and Homer both lose, despite their skill, as their 'war-poetry' represents a risk to the ideal social order.

28. In her study of colonization oracles, Carol Dougherty (1992, 29) points out that the majority of enigmatic oracles are colonial. This enigmatic aspect of colonial oracles is understandable: the very process of making sense of the oracle's obscure instructions in establishing a settlement on unknown territory raises the risks of applying conventional means of understanding to the wholly unfamiliar. This mediation between the known and the foreign is often expressed linguistically: in many examples, the native name for a geographical feature is identified with a similar-sounding Greek word for an animal or plant which the colonists recognize to solve the oracle's riddle.

29. "The essence of a riddle consists in describing a fact by an impossible combination of words. By merely combining the ordinary names of things this cannot be done, but it is made possible by combining metaphors. For instance, 'I saw a man weld bronze upon a man with fire,' and so on. A medley of rare words is jargon. We need then a sort of mixture of the two. For the one kind will save the diction from being prosaic and commonplace, the rare word, for example, and the metaphor and the 'ornament,' whereas the ordinary words give clarity" (trans. Fyfe, *Poet*. 22.1458a26-27).

30. "Both practice a number of techniques to keep control and throw their interlocutors off guard. They feign straightforwardness while unobtrusively engaging in misdirection, concealment and obfuscation. After a fashion, Homer has created a narrator in his hero's image and has thereby

to the narrator of the *Odyssey* as opposed to its author. Richardson therefore distinguishes the attributes of the epic from Homer as its author – which the *Certamen* conflates – to retain the notion of Homer as an objective author, separated from the epics by his own invention of a devious narrator. By contrast, John Miles Foley (2007) recounts how each of the Slavic singers (*guslari*) interviewed by Parry and Lord described a great *Guslar* whose existence is widely attested, but inherently inconsistent, and he concludes that this figure represents an anthropomorphization of the poetic tradition itself, "a story-based way to talk about the inheritance of oral epic."[31] If the reader accepts its inconsistent and ambiguous aspects as intentional juxtapositions, then the portrait of Homer that emerges from the *Certamen* is of a poetic system incorporating a similar allusive, reciprocally dialectical, and game-like interpretive process that is evident in Picasso's collages and assemblages.

Homer in a Catalogue of Characters

As is expected of a biographical text, the question of Homer's origins predominates throughout the *Certamen*, and is shared by the poet himself who – like Oedipus – consults an oracle on the topic. On the one hand, the *Certamen* fails as a biography by emphasizing the ultimate unknowability of an historical person named Homer, but on the other, it combines a number of characteristically Homeric features, such as catalogues, narratives, juxtaposition, and polysemy, to create an abstract representation of Homeric poetics. *A Catalogue of Shapes* is premised on a similar contradiction. On the one hand, none of the twelve composite object portraits in the series describes 'Homer'. On the other, the work draws on the expressions of artistic self-awareness in the combination of the invocation preceding the Iliadic *Catalogue of Ships* with the story of Thamyris (see Chapters 1 and 3), and the conflation of character and performer in moments of 'primary action' (see below). The invocation preceding the *Catalogue of Ships* incorporates the narrator's self-description as having access to a direct eyewitness account, but lacking the means to relay every detail. While the performer can determine which part of the known information will be communicated, the 'authorizing' audience expects core events to be described accurately, and for major characters to speak and

developed a devious relationship with his audience that mimics that between Odysseus and the people he encounters … as our expectations are frustrated and our sense of understanding and clarity frequently undermined, we enter the instability and unreliability that characterize the world of the *Odyssey*" (Richardson 2006, 353-4).

31. Foley (2007, 6-7) notes that "although he boasted a repertoire of songs many times larger than any ever observed during fieldwork, and although he was credited as the source of all the finest ones, none of the *guslari* who sang his praises ever actually met him. Again depending on the informant, the explanation given was that he lived in another village, or was always traveling, or plied his trade a generation or two earlier ("he was not even my father's father," said Stolac singer Ibro Bašić). Indeed, none of the Parry-Lord *guslari* had ever encountered him face-to-face. If we aggregate all of his often unverifiable, "tall-tale" bio-data, we gain a composite portrait of the master-singer or *Guslar* not as a historical person but as a legend. Moreover, it is a portrait that, like all legends, morphs to fit the local circumstances: real-life singers used the *Guslar* to establish their own bardic lineage and prominence, as well as to stamp certain of their songs as the best. The fact that they describe – and even name – the *Guslar* in mutually inconsistent ways is simply a function of the role such a figure plays for them."

behave in accordance with their primary characteristics.[32] However, given the link between the fundamental facts of the poems and their characters, variations may be indicative of how performers used seemingly extraneous variations in conjunction with fixed elements to create narrative tension, amplify important themes, or even critique the epic tradition itself. Graeme Bird (2010, 100) for example, notes that individual performers "could and did choose to heighten the emotional level by means of things such as variation in word choice, and intertextual links to other Homeric episodes; since a line of verse does not operate in isolation (or a vacuum), "importing" it into what may appear to be a "new" location has the effect of bringing with that line all of its thematic connections and connotations." On a few occasions in the *Odyssey* for example, it is suggested by both gods and heroes that Agamemnon's disastrous homecoming may serve as a potential precedent for Odysseus' own return,[33] while in *Il.* 9.142, Agamemnon's offer of his daughter in marriage to Achilles (which is included in a catalogue of prospective gifts (*Il.* 9.120-57)) constitutes a 'para-narrative' that may offer a telling contrast or competing motif to the narrative in which it appears (see Sammons 2010, 125). The story of Thamyris as it relates to the self-description of the narrator in the invocation in *Iliad* book 2 constitutes such a para-narrative, the function of which may extend beyond comparing a constructive muse-poet relationship with an antagonistic one. Scholars such as Martin (1989) and Slatkin (1995) have argued that para-narratives locate the Homeric epics within a much broader poetic tradition (incorporating such epics as the *Oresteia,* the *Oikhalias Halosis* (the *Siege of Oichalia*), the *Cypria,* and possibly other poems known to ancient audiences that have since been lost).[34] In this view, seemingly minor deviations from the main plot and narrative allow the poet to create complex networks of allusions against which the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* may contextually be defined. Innovation is not vested in creating new characters and narratives, but in finding ways to give audiences new insights into what a well known character or narrative can be made to mean through comparative allusion to other poems.

Sculptural assemblage is premised on a similar approach: the sculptor does not devise new means of expressing form or describing action, but establishes a network of reciprocal allusions where each element individually retains its original/most familiar meaning (to varying degrees), while concurrently taking on new meanings through incorporation into a new context. By exploiting viewers' awareness of the provenance of objects and their normative use, the sculptor can draw from a well-established reservoir of social, cultural, and

32. As such, the defining fact of Achilles is that he gains *kleos* by dying at Troy, and the defining fact of Odysseus is that he gains *kleos* by returning home (i.e. achieving *nostos*). According to the logic of the heroic world, the function of the epic performance is to perpetuate the poetic immortality of heroes. The existence of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* is therefore evidence to Homer's audience that Achilles and Odysseus both succeeded in gaining *kleos*. The respective fates of these heroes constitute relatively fixed elements that are as integral to the Homeric poetic system as the epithets and formulaic phrases, and are not the inventions of individual performers.

33. The examples of Orestes, Clytemnestra, and Agamemnon are compared to Telemachus, Penelope, and Odysseus in *Od*. 1.30; 1.40; 1.298; *Od.* 3.306, *Od*. 4.546, and *Od.* 11.461.

34. Martin suggests that the figure of Heracles is a constant presence throughout Homeric epic as the prototypical hero against which Achilles and Odysseus must prove themselves. Slatkin detects a distillation of the primary themes of the Trojan cycle in Thetis' role in the *Iliad*.

Right: 5. *Kalypso*
ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012

Far right: 6. Primus 96 camping stove as used in *Kalypso*
ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012

Right below: 7. Aluminium colander as used in *Kalypso*
ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012

personal associations to create artworks that might initially appear obscure, but are in fact sufficiently open to interpretation to allow several multilayered readings. In *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ for example (see fig. 5 and entry 7, Chapter 4), the colander (unlike the less familiar camping stove below it) is an easily recognizable kitchen implement that most viewers will have either seen in use, or used themselves (see figs. 6 and 7). In the sculpture, alterations and additions to the colander emphasize those aspects of its usual context and function most relevant to the formal and conceptual requirements of the sculpture in particular, and the series of sculptures as a whole, to allow for the expression of Calypso's more abstract attributes, including her personal characteristics and her role in the plot and theme of the *Odyssey*.[35]

35. The colander is an implement designed to facilitate the separation of a solid from a liquid, suggesting Calypso rescuing Odysseus from the sea, but also her own separation from the world. The interlacing patterns painted onto its interior and exterior link the form of the colander to spirals and

The manner in which Homeric heroes are described, the actions they engage in, and the speeches they make can also be reflexive. While the poet's 'presence' is evident in passages such as the invocation preceding the *Catalogue of Ships*, and in apostrophe, key characters can also convey the narrative. Bakker (1997, 166-7) for example, argues that in moments of 'primary action' (events of core thematic significance to the outcome of the poem) the character becomes the author of the epic tale. In this context, the epic figure serves as the agent "directly responsible for the experience of the performance now, in performing a deed that bridges the gulf between the past and the present. The most obvious type of action that significantly contributes to the course of events as re-behaved and re-experienced in the performance is the very action of which the performance consists: speech. The epiphany of a god or hero in the epic performance is most direct and forceful when the hero is presented as doing what the performer does himself, when indeed the performer becomes the epic character, in uttering the authoritative speech of the latter. The typical speech act of heroes, in fact, as has been recently suggested,[36] is itself a performance, designated by the term *mûthos*" (Bakker 1997, 167). This conflation of character and performer extends to the audience which takes on the role of the epic speaker's own mythic addressees, allowing each interpreter to function as a type of *therápon* (ritual substitute)[37] suggesting that such an evocation of the mythic past is immersively participatory.

The twelve sculptures comprising *A Catalogue of Shapes* each describe five individual characters central to the plot and theme of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* respectively, and two characters that

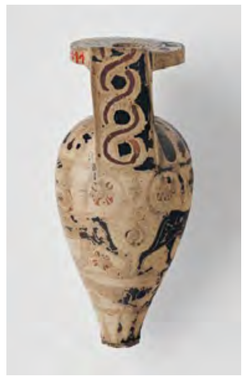
8. Early Cycladic 'Frying pan' with incised representations of a solar wheel, spirals (waves), and fish, c. 2800-2300 BCE. Terracotta. National Archaeological Museum, Athens

9. Mycenaean disk depicting an octopus with spiralling tentacles, c. 1600-1500 BCE. Gold. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

guilloche patterns on ancient artefacts (see figs. 8-10), fishing nets, ribbons, and Calypso's epithet describing her flowing hair, all of which suggest concealment, containment and entanglement. The four fish-hooks emphasize the colander's connection with water (see fig. 11), and by extension, with the fishing buoys used to construct *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ, *Hektor* ΕΧΩ, *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ, and *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ.

36. Martin 1989, 12-37; 231-39 and Nagy 1996, 61.

37. Nagy developed the notion of the poet as *therapon* (ritualistic substitute) to the Muses. The word denotes an impersonating *alter ego* of a god or hero, but is premised on their proximity to that god or hero. He notes how Patroclus qualifies as the ritualistic substitute of Achilles only as long as he stays within his limits as the recessive equivalent of the dominant hero. In the words of Achilles himself, Patroclus and he are equivalent warriors, so long as Patroclus stays by his side, but once he is on his own, however, the identity of Patroclus is in question (Nagy 1979, 292-3).



10. Greek Orientalizing Aryballos with an interlaced band pattern (guilloche) on the handle, c. 650-630 BCE. Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge Massachusetts

11. Detail of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012 showing spirals, interlaced banding pattern, and fishing hooks

play an equally significant role in both epics.[38] The attributes and functions in the plot of these characters elucidate Homer's principal heroes and their epics. While the moments of 'primary action' which Bakker describes are set points in the narrative, the portraits do not aim to illustrate the character as they appear or behave at a specific moment. Instead, the selection and representation of characters were determined by their overall contribution to the expression of the fundamental plot and theme of each epic. As the *Odyssey* is a *nostos* (homecoming) poem, the main character Odysseus, is defined in terms of his familial relationships, with the core themes of isolation, obstruction, transformation, and passage, all of which inform the inclusion of Calypso and Circe. In terms of the *Iliad's* emphasis on conflict as a means to obtain *kleos*, Achilles is defined in terms of his main opponent[39] and Helen as both source of the conflict and prize for the victorious side. The core themes of self-fuelling rage and catastrophic self-interest are represented by Eris and Ate.

As in moments of 'primary action' in the epic, where character and narrator are conflated to create an immersive and participatory hermeneutics, the sculptures are intended to evoke Homer's poetic world by means of a continuous and dialectical interpretive process. In an example of a composite object portrait, such as Joseph Cornell's *A Parrot for Juan Gris*, 1953-4, the artwork is predominantly an expression of the reciprocal dialectic between a subject (Gris as inventor of a type of collage) and its interpreter (Cornell as an artist using a methodology that developed from Cubist collage).[40] As a

38. As discussed in Chapters 3, 4, and in this chapter below, the plot and theme of the *Odyssey* is represented by Odysseus, Telemachus, Penelope, Calypso, and Circe. The plot and theme of the *Iliad* is represented by Achilles, Hector, Helen, Eris, and Ate. Two additional characters – Nestor and Menelaus – function as intermediate characters representative of aspects of both the Iliadic and Odyssean plots and themes.

39. While Achilles can more logically be paired with either Patroclus or Ajax, as closely allied or – in the case of Ajax – friendly rivals (see the discussion on vase paintings of Achilles and Ajax in Chapter 3), and although it will be Paris (with the help of Apollo) who will ultimately kill him, Hector as Troy's greatest defender is opposed to Achilles as the city's greatest threat.

40. Anne d'Harnoncourt (1978, 9) suggests that Cornell's interest in Gris stemmed from a recognition of artistic correspondences, and "there is visual evidence that among the three great practitioners of Cubist collage Gris offered Cornell an aesthetic most harmonious with his own concerns … A latecomer to the Cubist field, Gris was rigorous in his desire to dissect and reconstitute visual reality with an almost mathematical precision, but he never relinquished his love of the object he was depicting."

viewer encounters Gris via a set of Cornell's private associations,[41] the extent to which each individual interpreter will be able to decode and unravel each of the multiple allusions and associations that make up the work will differ.[42] The process is dependent on the viewer's ability to recognize the original function of each element, and to decipher the significance of that function within the context of the image. This interpretive experience differs significantly from a conventional understanding of translation as making a foreign and/or ancient text easily comprehensible to a contemporary audience. Therefore, as the aim of this project is to convey an understanding of how the complexities of Homeric composition inform its content, the twelve sculptural assemblages that make up *A Catalogue of Shapes* do not present the viewer with an unambiguous 'solved' interpretation of the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. The result is a visual symbolic system in which the Homeric poetic system is expressed as a catalogue of composite object portraits. As in the Homeric epic, the interpreter is responsible for mentally reconstructing the relational, narrative, and thematic significance of each catalogic entry as relative both to each other and to the series as a whole.

While the traditional iconography of Homer and Homeric poetry is closely associated with an historicist approach to the Classical in the visual arts and the notion of a 'transcendent' Homer in scholarship, the iconography developed for this project for the representation of an 'immanent' oral-formulaic Homer is premised on a dialectical visual engagement with antiquity. In artistic terms, Hegel had defined Classical sculpture as an ideal actualized in history that is not susceptible to further revision and provides a standard type which can never be attained again (Krukowski 1986, 283). From this standpoint, engagement with antiquity involves a nostalgic re-creation of Classical forms to invoke the mythologized achievements and values of ancient Greece and Rome.[43] The rejection of the Classical as a static paradigm antithetical to modernity by much of the *avant garde* in the early twentieth century, was consequently premised on theories described by Krukowski (1986, 279) as self-consciously historical. Such definition of the Classic – and by extension the Homeric – as historically perfected, fixed, and resistant to revision, is intrinsically oppositional. It resists the dialectical engagement between the contemporary and the Classical required for a synthesis of the immediate and the inherited on which the notion of an oral-formulaic Homer is premised. The 'systemic Classicism' underlying Cubist innovations in visual representation, exemplifies a transformative engagement with antiquity that echoes the Homeric composing performer's reiterative interpretation of the epic, and provides a model for the creation of a contemporary interpretation of the Homeric as

41. The transformation of one of Cornell's favourite images – the parrot – in the Gris series, illustrates the extent to which these allusions derived from Cornell's own understanding of the artist. D'Harnoncourt (1978, 12) points out how in his notes, Cornell often associated Gris with the nineteenth century opera singer Maria Malibran, who was described by many admirers as a "bird of song", and suggests that the crisp white frontal image of the cockatoo seems appropriate to Gris's passion for precision and clarity. The white parrot incorporates aspects of Cornell, Gris, and Malibran in one image.

42. As seen in the commentary on Picabia's *Ici, c'est ici Stieglitz, 1915,* Paul Schweizer's recognition of the objects that make up the portrait as an engaged brake lever and a gearshift stuck in neutral, further affirmed the suggested impotence of Stieglitz as the machine (see Rozaitis 1994, 47-48).

43. Sara Cochran (2011, 32) notes, for example, that to nineteenth century Europe and America, the Classical was the antithesis of the 'traditional' and 'primitive', and that they "championed their idea of progress by aligning themselves with the great thinkers of the ancient world, a world which they saw as equal in ambition and innovation."

a poetic system. The sculptural technique of assemblage that developed from Picasso's Cubist collages, shares sufficient methodological, conceptual, and hermeneutic traits with core aspects of Homeric poetics to allow for a process of comparative visualisation, while the notion of the composite object portrait provides a model for an immersive and participatory 'aesthetic' translation of an oral-formulaic Homer.

Conclusion

The understanding of Homeric poetry that emerged from the theory of formulaic composition is of a constructive creative methodology underlying a dynamically adaptive poetic system. The textual multiformity, transformative re-iteration, and integration of form with content in the epics, differs so significantly from a modern literary idiom as to render a conventional literate translation formally, conceptually, and hermeneutically incompatible with composition in performance. The representational system underlying a formally disparate, yet visually cohesive, and predominantly metaphoric (non-literal) type of sculptural assemblage offers a useful contemporary parallel. The interrelation of concept and form by means of combinatory and organizational procedures in assemblage invests both form and material with meaning, provoking an interactive and continuously shifting interpretive process.

This project draws on core structural, compositional, and conceptual aspects of the Iliadic *Catalogue of Ships* as a reflexive site of artistic self-awareness, expressed in the formulation of a 'Homer-Thamyris complex'. The visual expression of Homeric formalism was addressed through the development of an iconography for the Homeric integration of form and content, the immediate with the inherited, and the fabricated with the prefabricated. The dialectical hermeneutics of Homeric composition during performance were explored through the application of sculptural assemblage as a multiform system of representation. The resulting catalogue of composite object portraits reflects a complex representational system, based on internal and external connotative allusions that are achieved by manipulation of symbolically-invested materials, objects, and forms.

While differences between visual and verbal expression may preclude the direct transmission of a text into an image, these are less prohibitive in an 'aesthetic translation'. This approach constitutes the creative and contextual re-interpretation of attributes characteristic of the form and content of an existing text/artwork by means of creating another. The series of twelve sculptures that make up *A Catalogue of Shapes*, 2010-13 is therefore both autonomous as an artwork, and an extension of an existing creative tradition. The reciprocal dialectic that is established in a composite object portrait between its subject and interpreter provides a model for the ontological relationship, created through this project, between Homeric poetry and *A Catalogue of Shapes*.

Allusive and reciprocally dialectical image-making mechanisms underlying literary devices such as metaphors and similes allow for a process of comparative visualization that is premised on an individual interpretation of Homeric poetics. An example of anachronistic appropriation, *A Catalogue of Shapes* reflects a subjective and non-historicist engagement with antiquity that draws on core attributes of Homeric composition in performance to evoke its immersive and participatory hermeneutics for a modern audience.

List of Illustrations

Cover illustration: Detail of *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ 2013

Title page spread: Detail of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ 2012 and detail of *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ 2013

Opposite Contents page: Detail of preliminary drawing for *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ 2011

Page 4: Detail of preliminary drawing for *Hektor* ΕΧΩ 2011

Page 20: Detail of preliminary drawing for *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ 2012

Chapter 2:

1. Pablo Picasso. *Drinking Minotaur and Reclining Woman*, 1933. Etching. Height: 19.25 cm (plate mark); Width: 27 cm (plate mark). The Courtauld Gallery, London. http://www.artandarchitecture.org.uk/images/gallery/813a335e.html

2. Unknown artist/s. Rear and front views of *Riace Warrior A*. c. 460-420 BCE. Bronze with copper on lips and nipples, and silver inlay on eyes and teeth. Height: 2.05m. National Museum, Reggio Calabria. www.pinterest.com

3. André Lhote. Sketch demonstrating how to depict a glass by combining formal elements. 1952. Chipp (1968, 197)

4. Pablo Picasso. *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon,* 1907. Oil on canvas. Height: 243.9 cm; Width: 233.7 cm. Museum of Modern Art, New York. www.moma.org

5. Pablo Picasso, *Still Life with Chair-Caning*, 1912. Oil and oilcloth on canvas with rope. Height: 27 cm; Width: 35 cm. National Picasso Museum, Paris. Januszczak (1998, 359)

6. Pablo Picasso. *Guitar*, 1912. Cardboard and string construction. Height: 66.3cm; Width: 33.7 cm; Depth: 19.3 cm. Museum of Modern Art, New York. www.moma.org

7. Unknown artist/s. *The Reliquary of St. Foy,* late 10th to early 11th centuries with later additions. Gold, silver gilt, jewels, and cameos over a wooden core. Abbey Treasury, Conques Auvergne. http://klimtlover.wordpress.com/12-1000-1200-romanesque-europe

8. Pablo Picasso. *She-Goat* 1950 in studio and in bronze. Basket, ceramic pots, palm leaf, metal, wood, cardboard, plaster. Height: 120.5 cm; Width: 72 cm; Width 144 cm. Museum of Modern Art, New York. Spies (2000, 270-71)

9. Pablo Picasso. *The Goat*, 1946. Ripolin, charcoal and graphite on panel. Musée Picasso, Antibes. www.pinterest.com

10. Max Ernst. *1 Sheet of Copper 1 Sheet of Zinc 1 Sheet of Rubber … Two Ambiguous Figures,* c. 1919/20. Collage, gouache, tinta china. Collection of Judith and Michael Steinhardt, New York. www.wikiart.org

11. Damian Ortega. *Controller of the Universe*, 2007. Found tools and wire. Dimensions variable. www.artdaily.com

12. Man Ray. *Gift*, 1921. Painted flatiron and tacks. Height: 15.3 cm; Width: 9cm; Width: 11.4 cm. Museum of Modern art, New York. www.moma.org

13. Sam Smith. *Harpy Candleholder*, 1972. Mixed media. www.sam-smith.org

14. Modern polychrome reconstruction (version B) of an archer from the Aphaia temple, c. 500-420 BCE. Stiftung Archäologie, Munich. www.harvardmagazine.com/2007/11/dazzlers/html

15. Giuseppe Arcimboldo, *Summer,* 1563. Oil on board. Height: 67 cm; Width: 50.8 cm; and *Fire*. 1566. Height: 66.5 cm; Width: 50.8 cm. both Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. www.wikiart.org

16. Diagram illustrating relationship between the elements and seasons from Isidore of Seville's *De Natura Rerum*. www.artstor.org

17. Francis Picabia, *Here, This is Stieglitz/Faith and Love*, 1915. Pen, brush and ink, and cut and pasted papers on paperboard. Height: 75.9 cm; Width: 50.8 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. www.artstor.org

18. Paestan red-figure Bell Krater depicting the blinded Thamyris with his discarded instrument c. 400-370 BCE. Height: 10.6cm. www.royalathena.com/PAGES/GreekCatalog/Vases/SouthIt/ER1204C.html

19. Joseph Cornell. *A Parrot for Juan Gris*, Winter 1953-4. Mixed media construction. Height: 46 cm; Width: 31 cm; Depth: 12 cm. Collection of Robert Lehrman, Washington D.C. Waldman (2002, 101)

20. Joseph Cornell. *"Toward the Blue Peninsula" (For Emily Dickinson)* 1953. Mixed media construction. 36.8 x 26 x 13.9 cm. Collection of Robert Lehrman, Washington D.C. www.sheilaomalley.com

Page 40: Detail of preliminary drawing for *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ 2013

Chapter 3:

1. Homeric coin types. Esdaile (1912, Pl. V)

3. Archelaos of Priene. Votive relief depicting the deification of Homer, 2nd Century BCE. Height: 1.18 m. British Museum, London. www.wikipedia.org

2. Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres. *The Apotheosis of Homer,* 1827. Oil on Canvas. Louvre, Paris. www.wikiart.org

4. Walter Barnes. *The Apotheosis of Degas,* 1885. Photograph. www.getty.edy/art

5. Giulio Paolini. *The Apotheosis of Homer*, 1970-1. Music stands (33), chromogenic prints (2), gelatine silver prints (30) typescript, and audio recording. printing on paper. Edition 8/10. Dimensions variable. Art institute of Chicago. www.pinterest.com

6. Late Geometric Basin from Thebes c. 730 BCE. Height of figured panel: 9 cm. British Museum, London. Pedley (1998, 119)

7. Athenian red-figure clay vase depicting Priam approaching Achilles to ransom the body of Hector, c. 500-450 BC. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. www.cambridgescp.com

8. Exekias. Athenian black-figure amphora depicting Achilles and Ajax playing a board game on one side, and Leda, Tyndareus, and the Dioscuri on the other, mid 6th century. Height: 61 cm. Vatican Museums. http://greekpaintedpottery.wordpress.com

9. Unknown artist/s. *Odyssey Landscapes: Odysseus/Ulysses and his followers are attacked by the Laestrygonians*, c. 50-40 BCE. Vatican Museums. http://hcc.byu.edu/macfarlane/OGCMA/assets/Lestrygonian.s

10. John Lydgate. Page from *The Siege of Troy* with a depiction of Hector killing Patroklos. 15th century. Parchment. Bodeleian Library, Oxford. www.artstor.org

11. Henri Auguste Calixte César Serrur. *The Death of Ajax,* 1820. Museum of Fine Arts, Lille. www.wikimedia.org

12. Honoré Daumier. *Ancient History: Menelaus the Vanquisher.* 1841. Lithograph. The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo. http://collection.nmwa.go.jp

13. Installation view of Cy Twombly's *Fifty Days at Iliam*, 1977-8. From left to right: *Achaeans in Battle; The Fire That Consumes all Before It; Shades of Achilles, Patroclus and Hector; House of Priam; Ilians in Battle.* Oil, oil-crayon, and pencil on canvas. Philadelphia Museum of Art. www.philamuseum.org/collections/permanent

14. Cy Twombly. Detail of *Shades of Eternal Night* 1978. Oil, oil-crayon, pencil on canvas 300 x 239cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art. https://thebluesuitcase.wordpress.com/category/philadelphia/

15. Cy Twombly. Detail of *Ilians in Battle* 1978. Oil, oil-crayon, pencil on canvas. 300 x 380cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art. http://factorxx.wordpress.com/2013/10/06/the-city-of-brotherly-and-sisterly-love/

16. Schematic representation of the spatial arrangement of *A Catalogue of Shapes*

17. Schematic representation of various interrelations between the sculptures comprising *A Catalogue of Shapes*

18. Attic funerary vase, c. 750-735 BCE. Height: 108.3 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. www.metmuseum.org; detail of decoration, Boardman et al (2001, 273)

19. Modern polychrome reconstruction (variants B and C) of the 'Peplos Kore' c. 530 BCE. Stiftung Archäologie, Munich. www.stiftung-archaeologie.de

20. Upper and lower compositional registers in *A Catalogue of Shapes*

Chapter 4:

All artwork in this chapter by C. I. von Solms. Photographs of sculptures by I. C. Grobler.

1. Front view of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, 2010

2. Side view of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, 2010

3. Back view of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, 2010

4. Preliminary drawing of *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, 2010. Pen and coloured pencil on paper

5. Front view of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ, 2011

6. Side view of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ, 2011

7. Back view of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ, 2011

8. Preliminary drawing of *Achilleus* ΜΗΝΙΣ, 2011. Pen and coloured pencil on paper

9. Front view of *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ, 2011

10. Side view of *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ, 2011

11. Back view of *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ, 2011

12. Preliminary drawing of *Telemachos* ΟΦΕΛΛΩ, 2011. Pen on paper

13. Front view of *Hektor* ΕΧΩ, 2011

14. Side view of *Hektor* ΕΧΩ, 2011

15. Back view of *Hektor* ΕΧΩ, 2011

16. Preliminary drawing of *Hektor* ΕΧΩ, 2011. Pen on paper

17. Front view of *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ, 2011

18. Side view of *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ, 2011

19. Back view of *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ, 2011

20. Preliminary drawing of *Penelope* ΑΡΕΤΗ, 2011. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper

21. Front view of *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ, 2011-12

22. Side view of *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ, 2011-12

23. Back view of *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ, 2011-12

24. Preliminary drawing of *Helena* ΑΕΘΛΟΝ, 2010. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper

25. Front view of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012
26. Side view of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012
27. Back view of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012
28. Preliminary drawing of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper
29. Front view of *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ, 2012
30. Side view of *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ, 2012
31. Back view of *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ, 2012
32. Preliminary drawing of *Eris* ΦΑΓΟΝ, 2012. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper
33. Front view of *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ, 2012
34. Side view of *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ, 2012
35. Back view of *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ, 2012
36. Preliminary drawing of *Kirke* ΦΑΙΝΩ, 2012. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper
37. Front view of *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ, 2012-13
38. Side view of *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ, 2012-13
39. Back view of *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ, 2012-13
40. Preliminary drawing of *Ate* ΠΑΓΙΣ, 2012-13. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper
41. Front view of *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ, 2013
42. Side view of *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ, 2013
43. Back view of *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ, 2013
44. Preliminary drawing of *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ, 2013. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper
45. Front view of *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ, 2013
46. Side view of *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ, 2013
47. Back view of *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ, 2013
48. Preliminary drawing of *Menelaos* ΒΟΑΩ, 2013. Pen, Indian ink, and marker on paper

Page 142: Detail of preliminary drawing for *Nestor* ΝΟΟΣ 2013

Chapter 5:

1. Pablo Picasso. *Bull's Head,* 1942. Bicycle seat and handlebars. Height: 33.5 cm; Width: 43.5 cm; Depth: 19 cm. http://www.toutceciestmagnifique.com/2012_09_01_archive.html
2. C. I. von Solms. *Odysseus* ΜΗΤΙΣ, 2010
3. Pierre-Amédée Durand, *Ulysses Recognized by His Dog,* 1810, Plaster. Height: 113 cm; Wirdth: 69 cm. Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux-Arts, France. www.artstor.org
4. Jean Baptiste Carpeaux, *Ulysses Throwing the Discus*, 1871, Plaster. Height: 20.5 cm; Width: 36 cm; Depth: 21 cm. Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux-Arts, France. www.artstor.org
5. C. I. von Solms. *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012
6. Primus 96 camping stove as used in *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012. www.spiritburner.com
7. Aluminium colander as used in *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012. www.lulushop.co.za
8. Early Cycladic 'Frying pan' with incised representations of a solar wheel, spirals (waves), and fish, c. 2800-2300 BCE. Terracotta. National Archaeological Museum, Athens. http://farm9static.flickr.com
9. Mycenaean disk depicting an octopus with spiralling tentacles, c. 1600-1500 BCE. Gold. Diameter: 6.4 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. www.metmuseum.org
10. Greek Orientalizing Aryballos with an interlaced band pattern (guilloche) on the handle, c. 650-630 BCE. Height: 8.4 cm; Width: 3.7 cm. Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge Massachusetts. www.harvardartmuseums.org
11. Detail of *Kalypso* ΚΡΥΠΤΩ, 2012 showing spirals, interlaced banding pattern, and fishing hooks

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