



所別：英美語文學系碩士班 科目：批判閱讀

Choose **only one** group of texts below. Read carefully the literary passage, its background information (including the attached pictorial text), and answer the questions that followed.

1. The two paintings below are displayed side by side as a pair in an art exhibition held at Manchester University's Whitworth Art gallery between December 1991 and August 1992. The left is done by Frances Hodgkins (1886-1947) in 1926, entitled *Adoration* (pencil and watercolor, 52.9x37.8cm). The right is by John Bratby (1928-1992) in 1956, entitled *Jean Bending Over David* (pencil, 38.5x29.3cm).



The passage below is quoted from Sarah Hyde, *Exhibiting Gender* (1997), which discusses the above-mentioned exhibition. How do you think, according to Sarah Hyde, these two paintings were once received by their contemporaries? What were the new ideas that Hyde proposed to the viewers? How did Sarah Hyde conduct her critical readings on the two paintings? Distinguish Hyde's statements of fact, opinion, and inference, and discuss what goal her writing could reach.

注意：背面有試題

所別：英美語文學系碩士班 科目：批判閱讀

Whilst it may be that Hodgkins remained unmarried out of sexual preference, she also felt it advantageous to her career to remain single; she wrote that she 'must be alone. A woman has no future otherwise.' (McCormick 1981:278). My contention is that, regardless of an individual artist's attitude towards their own sexuality, the issue remains as important as an artist's gender. As viewers, our own sexuality affects our responses to works of art, interacting in unpredictable ways with images we encounter, inflected by the assumptions we make, consciously or not, about the gender and sexuality of the producer(s) of those images.

One of the major studies of Hodgkins' art, by E. H. McCormick, does not discuss her sexuality; he suggests that a group of figure drawings, presumably including *Adoration*, should be seen as an expression of Hodgkins' sentiments on hearing of her mother's death (McCormick 1981:103). Hodgkins' letter describing the 'extraordinary bond between a Mother and child even when you have lived so long apart' (Gill 1993:395) has been seen as further

evidence of her concerns when producing the image. Nevertheless, the rest of this letter goes on to show that Hodgkins was thinking of herself in the role of a child, and of the loneliness of going through the rest of life with 'no-one ahead of one in experience - in meeting life'. This does not seem to accord in any simple way with the *Adoration* drawing, which focuses on the feelings of the mother rather than the child, and it seems perverse to ignore the fact, commented on by so many viewers at the Whitworth, that what at first sight appears to be a family group consists of two women and a child. Many visitors wanted to know whether Hodgkins was suggesting that two women, lesbians or not, could raise and care for a child as successfully as a man and a woman. Or whether she saw herself in the role of a child still, protected and cared for by her two friends, Hannah Ritchie and Jane Saunders, who may have modelled for this drawing. Such speculation, based on biographical information available to few of those viewing the drawing when it was first exhibited in 1927, is in some ways irrelevant, but a drawing which focuses on the relationships between two women and a child raises such questions, and viewers will answer them as they can.

The absence of such unconventional possibilities made many visitors feel more at home with John Bratby's drawing. Bratby's work during the mid-1950s was part of a brief post-war movement away from abstraction and towards realism in art. Many contemporary critics associated realism not only with a particular style but also a certain subject matter, 'familiar unglamorous scenes of everyday domestic life' (*The Times* 1955, quoted in Cherry and Steyn 1982:47). For others, notably John Berger, it was also a social and political matter; realist artists accepted that they had a social responsibility to communicate directly to ordinary people, to make the viewer 'more aware of the meaning and the significance of familiar and ordinary experiences' (Cherry and Steyn 1982:47). This atmosphere could give drawings such as *Jean Bending over David* associations which are difficult to recapture forty years later; the aggressive black lines suggesting the harshness and poverty of working-class lives, the basket a substitute for the cot they could not afford.

This situation, however, meant that a group of male painters became associated with domesticity, their studios becoming merged with their domestic lives; indeed, Berger claimed that 'the realist attitude breaks down the studio wall and projects the artist into ordinary life' (Berger 1952, quoted in Cherry and Steyn 1982:00). For him the significance of the domesticity they depicted lay along the axis of class rather than gender relations; they were championing domesticity not because they were interested in dignifying the lives of women confined to domestic spaces, but because they were attaching new significance to the lives of working-class men. Berger argued strongly against art that appeared to depend too heavily on the indulgent individualism of artists wallowing in their own emotions; instead he championed 'the work of painters who draw their inspiration from a comparatively objective study of the actual world: who inevitably look at a subject through their own personality but who are more concerned with the reality of that subject than with the "reality" of their feelings about it' (Berger 1952, quoted in Cherry and Steyn 1982:47).

所別：英美語文學系碩士班 科目：批判閱讀

2.

The passage below is from the article "The Other History of Intercultural Performance," written in 1995 by artist Coco Fusco for a 1992 street performance, "Two Undiscovered Amerindians Visit..." that Fusco and Guillermo Gome-Pena devised and co-acted. What is the tone of Fusco's writings? What could the tone of their performance be? What kind of questions do you think Fusco and her partner were trying to ask by means of their performance? What could the possible effects be created by the article and performance together?

Our plan was to live in a golden cage for three days, presenting ourselves as undiscovered Amerindians from an island in the Gulf of Mexico that had somehow been overlooked by Europeans for five centuries. We called our homeland Guatinau, and ourselves Guatinais. We performed our "traditional tasks," which ranged from sewing voodoo dolls and lifting weights to watching television and working on a laptop computer. A donation box in front of the cage indicated that, for a small fee, I would dance (to rap music). [...] Two "zoo guards" would be on hand to speak to visitors (since we could not understand them), take us to the bathroom on leashes, and feed us sandwiches and fruit. At the Whitney Museum in New York we added sex to our spectacle, offering a peek at authentic Guatinaui male genitals for \$5. [...] Our project concentrated on the "zero degree" of intercultural relations in an attempt to define a point of origin for the debates that link "discovery" and "Otherness." We worked within disciplines that blur distinctions between the art object and the body (performance), between fantasy and reality (live spectacle), and between history and dramatic reenactment (the diorama). The performance was interactive, focusing less on what we did than on how people interacted with us and interpreted our actions. Entitled *Two Undiscovered Amerindians Visit...*, we chose not to announce the event through prior publicity or any other means, when it was possible to exert such control; we intended to create a surprise or "uncanny" encounter, one in which audiences had to undergo their own process of reflection as to what they were seeing, aided only by written information and paradoxically didactic zoo guards. In such encounters with the unexpected, people's defense mechanisms are less likely to operate with their normal efficiency; caught off guard, their beliefs are more likely to rise to the surface.

Our performance was based on the once popular European and North American practice of exhibiting indigenous people from Africa, Asia, and the Americas in zoos, parks, taverns, museums, freak shows, and circuses. While this tradition reached the height of its popularity in the nineteenth century, it was actually begun by Christopher Columbus, who returned from his first voyage in 1493 with several Arawaks, one of whom was left on display at the Spanish Court for two years.