

Thursday night, Nov. 30

- New terms :
- line-form (= heavy formline) nonsense forms
  - quadrant line-form
  - the fifth box
  - microfield, macrofield

<u>Sculpture</u>	<u>Paper</u>	<u>Painting</u>	<u>Box</u>
	Paperforms reduced to field		Formline reduced to field (5th box)
Add Subjects with Predicates (multiple)		Add Subject and Predicate (already retain multiple)	
Corogroove & Metasex generalize: a common attribute "metasex" implicit		Different levels of patterning generalize: a common attribute "pattern" explicit!	
Sculpture destroys its field as it goes, so depends on iconographic predicates (both with several associations) and generalization		Painting does not destroy its field, so fields can overlap even	
3 examples of metasex = unnatural / the white man		5 examples of patterning = pattern / all forms	

Friday

Raven dives down from sky and splits a 'cape' with his beak, and cry

The edge of the firmament at the edge of the world is as sharp as a knife

(cutting anything passing off the folds of the world)

Raven's Cry (above, and) at the crack of dawn is the transition from one <sup>world</sup> state to another as Meschote's house entrance is transformation into his house.

On phallic model, Raven's beak is hard enough to split rock, his cry, orgasm

Raven cry → daylight (a cosmic idea renewed every day) at night it is as like time of supernatural  
Raven crows, daylight comes, and it is time of men.

Blind Factories

CE slate has Raven episodes: - Clamshell origin of man  
- Raven gets female genitalia

(both with sexual associations)

but never showed: 5 boxes,

Echols of panel paper in - Beautiful porcelain  
- openwork Cunningham poles  
- canoe-loads of figures  
- panels?

Profile sculpture (H panel paper) - is it half way between engraving (painting) and full sculpture?

Frontal sculpture shows subjects  
Profile " " predicates

You are a pro, and not doing well enough in that  
(publishing) aspect of things

You are not a Sunday sailor cruising around the Gulf  
Islands, you are a pro, and pros train and race  
their boats.

The way you help your students is to race your boat.

Change the definition of the task

Try for partial closure

Saturday

Dear Eona

For the past couple of years I have been working intensively with northern MWC designs on boxes, chests and painted screens; learning some of the meanings they convey over and above the ordinary identification of iconographic subjects. It has become an investigation of the meanings expressed by "style", of the way in which meaning can be conveyed in visual systems, and of the way the human mind structures order.

The study has been preceded and is dependent on the discovery of the styles of individual artists, particularly one absolute giant and master, who I have identified to my satisfaction as the Haida chief Edenshaw (Albert Edward Edenshaw) of Kweta and Masset (c. 1815-1894). He was the uncle of Charles Edenshaw (c. 1840-1920). The sheer volume of Edenshaw's output is utterly astonishing. It includes most of the acknowledged masterpieces of northern flat design of the chiefs' carved and painted totemic chests or coffins collected from Klukwan to Bella Bella, including for example Shaker "Tumshen" chest and the Kacmisen collection, <sup>all of these we had in Haver's show, all of these illustrated by Holm 1965</sup> all but a few (earlier, later, or by other contemporaries like Tom Force of Hinstiate) were made by Edenshaw. <sup>Among large paintings I attribute to</sup> him also the Raven Screens now in Denver, the Whale screen in the Killer Whale House at Klukwan (no, not the Lam screen of the Whale House), the Pt Simpson housefront in the Smithsonian, and the great canoe in the American Museum. But what turned out to be more important are a series of <sup>half a dozen highly abstract</sup> box-dish designs culminating in what I now regard as the supreme

masterpiece of Northwest Coast painting: American  
Museum 16/1923 (Boas, Primitive Art, fig 287 b). The  
box was collected by Emmons at Kluckwan, Boas took  
drawings of it to Port Essington in 1897 and discussed  
it there with Charles Edenshaw (not publishing the  
results for 30 yrs - Primitive Art, pp. 275-6). It defied  
Boas' interpretation. It always intrigued Bill Reid,  
who brought it to Vancouver for the Arts of the Raven  
show and made painstaking copies of the designs on  
the four sides, which I have been living with for  
the intervening years.

For my enquiries into the deeper meanings  
of Edenshaw's painted graphic system I am concentrating  
on the Raven scenes and the AMNH box (The Box).  
The charts provide a closely related problem, but all  
the necessary elements are on the two items mentioned.  
Both seem to deal with Raven the culture hero; I  
regard them as profound religious paintings. On  
the Raven scenes the iconography, <sup>"Raven"</sup> is clear, but  
it serves only to identify the topic, and the  
rest of the meanings are in the structural symbolism  
of the style. On the box one cannot look for  
iconography in the usual sense; it is a supreme  
intellectual exercise of quite another kind. The  
(style of the) Raven scenes should be mastered first, before  
approaching the box.

The stylistic features which embody meaning have  
mostly been described masterfully by Bill Holm. Bill  
described, but did not interpret them, and provided us  
with the vocabulary to discuss them. "Formline",  
"ovoid", "salmon trout head", "split-U" (it is better to

They seem to  
be a part,  
contain the  
Universe

Second level can feedback over first 100%  
[but not maturing for overall plan]

Third level can feed back over other two  
only "in attribute" (just as it is present  
only "in parts")

Level 2 has best overall plan, but strives toward it.  
retains level 3 attributes as much as possible  
(upright, precise, etc)

The 3 are levels of generalization: as you go on you  
generalize more and more broadly. Precision level 3 in the  
mould of the cosmos is a generalization that all forms  
and all behavior should strive to be like that.

Coming out:

level 2 loses overall plan, but retains as much as possible

Level 1 is of mundane outline, of this world  
retaining from level 3 only uprightness of whole  
and sublimity of parts (nodes)

retaining from level 2 the property of all its  
details and attributes

Insert ①

In doing this iconic task, the level 2  
formalness etc are working on the discursive aspect  
along a plan of lines provided by level 1.  
Level 1 has become "field" in the literal discursive  
structural sense. But it is also treated as field  
in the presentational sense; or rather a number of  
subfields; which are then used for an emerging  
secondary iconography seemingly unrelated to the  
primary image. Faces appear in the beak and in  
the torso. Tails become faces, punned or explicit.  
The meaning of this secondary iconography seems  
to be attached to the meaning of the second level  
iconics, and seems to say "man as the subject  
of both". Level 2 is not about heaven, it is about  
Mankind.

use Emmons' "flicker-feather", "non-concentricity", "junction", "primary-secondary" (I use "tertiary" in a somewhat different sense than he does) - all of these features have meaning as well as visual form.

The Raven screen works at three levels of meaning. First is the straight iconographic: the outline, gestalt, icon, image, which says "raven". The subject could just as well be stated by a simple pictograph tattooed on skin, or scratched in the sand with a stick; it does not require formlines and semi-angular curves; these are the stuff of the second level.

The meanings of the second level are not iconographic but iconic (analogic). They do not stand as metaphors for other subjects, but as analogies for other predicates. They show the shape of behavior, not the shape of form.

The visual cues are not wholes which stand as metaphors for other subjects, but are parts or attributes which stand as analogies of other predicates. They do not depict the shape of form, but the shape of behavior, conduct, relationship. A formline becomes an entity, with its own path of conduct and <sup>its own</sup> relationships with other entities.

At the second level the design becomes (to borrow Fischer's term) a "cultural cognitive map" of the Haida world and Haida society, <sup>as seen</sup> by Robertas Burke of Oodja.

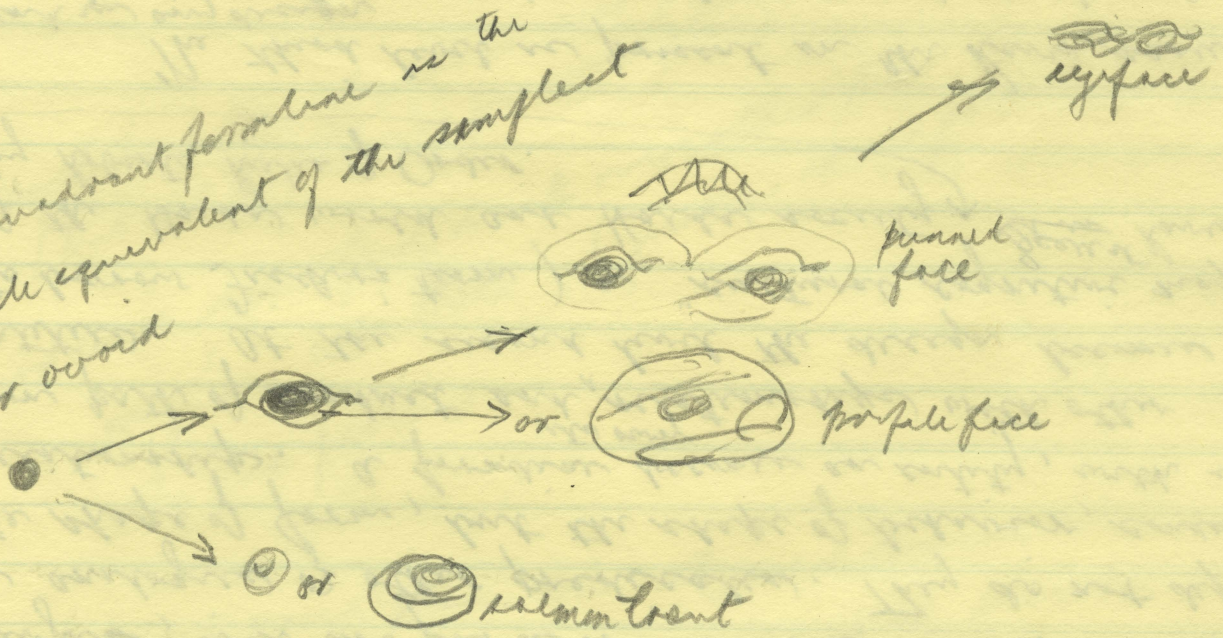
I believe the analogies are mostly to Haida social relations


Insert 2

The third level is present on the Raven screen, and in any design, ~~and also present form~~, only in the ovoid nodes of design in which an ovoid formline encloses an



The greatest formative is the  
 profile equivalent of the simplest  
 corner ovoid



An ovoid always has a top and bottom  
 nested ovoids say "everything in the world shares the same  
 rules of form  and behavior ↑  
 As salmout in an ovoid is 5 boxes nested

The form of the universe is depicted by the path of the sun  
 it is a range of forms  
 it is ovoid in shape

The rising and falling of the firmament is shown by the changing  
 path of the sun with the seasons

inner ovoid or salmon-trout head. To understand the meaning of the third level it is <sup>first</sup> necessary to understand its plan of organization (the ovoid) and its most characteristic element (the salmon trout head).

The shape of the ovoid is unique in the world of art. It is not a single shape but a continuum of shapes within a range, all having the same set of relationships. Its <sup>perfect</sup> form is the form of a space (the space contained by the enclosing formless ovoid), which then imposes ovoid form on everything within it. Every ovoid has <sup>and shows in</sup> a direction of "up", and imposes that <sup>orientation and showing</sup> direction on everything within it. Ovoids are perfect, precise, exact forms. The origin of the form has not been explained, but I believe it is the Haida conceptualization of the path the sun and moon trace on the firmament as they move through the sky. The variation in shape results from changes in the sun's path with the seasons. The path of the sun traces the shape of the universe: it is form described by behavior, a mediation of form and behavior at the most cosmic level.

An ovoid is never empty, always containing a four-floating inner ovoid, a germ of life which tends to grow, to become an eye or more commonly a salmon-trout head. The impression is of emergence. It opens to a full salmon trout head, which has become a microcosm, or vocabulary of the elements of the second level: ovoid plan, formless, flicker feathers, eye. It approaches the threshold of recognition as

One eye 4 rows. Raven notes

The world has one eye (Sun rises only on one side,  
never in northern hemisphere)

One eye → profile view. Shaped by sun's path.

Level 1 - necessity of immediate act


2 - propriety of usual conduct

3 - sublimity of character

A death is also the ascendance of a nephew. Someone is  
always king.

Level 1 - the attribute of conduct - precision

" " " pattern - uprightness

and as a part, symmetry  arrangement  
and as 4, tending to oval plan (as in house) of profiles

Whole - form (as whole) - outline - gestalt.

Part or attribute

quality

Level 1: Form - is the subject (icnographic)

Parts of whole - can conform to level 2 rules

Only parts can be level 3.

Level 2: Form - silent field for real subject

All parts of whole - the subject - they are iconic

Contribution to icnography? is not to primary icnography of whole,  
so has to flow into partial fields, punning as it goes, showing the  
'subject' of which predicate elements are predicate.

Level 3: Form of parts is quality form - total traits of form = precision  
" " " pattern = uprightness

re level 2: <sup>relevant</sup> parts

re level 1: framed parts (can be part of the primary icnography only  
as punned elements: "joints" (nodes of perfect form and conduct  
are placed at fulcrums of behavior, motion)

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pattern of profile face <sup>a face groove of</sup> (the glaucous face of man and animal). It gets only so complex, no more. Conceptually, the part is ripe, ready to burst, <sup>metamorphose</sup> (like a butterfly from pupa, plant from <sup>bird from egg</sup> seed, salmon trout from egg, <sup>bird into flight</sup> child from womb), presumably into a full design of its own.

The nodes of "third level" design in the Raven screens, ovoids containing salmon trout heads, are <sup>the shapes</sup> depictions of cosmic behavior and cosmic form; form and behavior organized to maximum perfection in this world. The ultimate shape of the Harada universe is ovoid, like the inside of an egg, stood small end up. <sup>of annual</sup> The pulsing of the universe, described by the changing path of the sun, gives rise to the ovoid continuum. The most general attribute of life in the universe is emergence and growth, as shown by the salmon-trout head continuum. The most profound generalization (or most fervent hope) is that all form, all behavior in the world follow the same fundamental rules of order, a generalization usually expressed by the perfect, upward straining nesting of everything <sup>within</sup> in the ovoid. In all its attributes, this segment of design is the most perfect and tightly moulded; since everything about it expresses cosmic perfection of form and behavior, it is logical that as many attributes as possible should feed out to diffuse the totality of the design with echoes of perfection. So level 2 design is given the perfection of level 3: man's conduct echoes as closely as possible the conduct of the cosmos. This detours the iconography of level 1, but it is flexible anyway and still retains its ability to identify its subject.

As you go onto the Raven screen, you go in 3 steps. First, instant gestalt recognition of Raven as ideograph and subject. Second, a concentration on parts rather than whole; the iconic behavior of entities in a structure (Raven by Roberts Kube of Order); and the interstitial secondary iconography of emerging faces, showing that man is meant.

Third, only in parts or nodes, the tight and beautiful ovoid segment with salmon trout head emerging; saying that each design has within it centres of cosmic growth. Looking into the spiral centres of these elements you see eternity. It is emerging; growing at level 3 at the rate of the pulse of the seasons, at level 2 at the rate of man's considered conduct, and at level 1 at the instant flash of recognition of Raven's form. The 3 levels thus set up the continuum of time as well.

Coming out, the perfection of forms attained with the cosmic generalizations of level 3 are suppressed on level 2 and level 1. Man's conduct and designs should reflect universal generalities. Raven should be Raven by cosmic rules of order.

There are 4 Ravens, in 2 saward-facing pairs at the back of the house, all pointing and tilted slightly upward to the center line.  They form an iconic pattern: all upright and striving, together straining to fill an ovoid form (as the house itself is) all in place, in order, doing as it should.