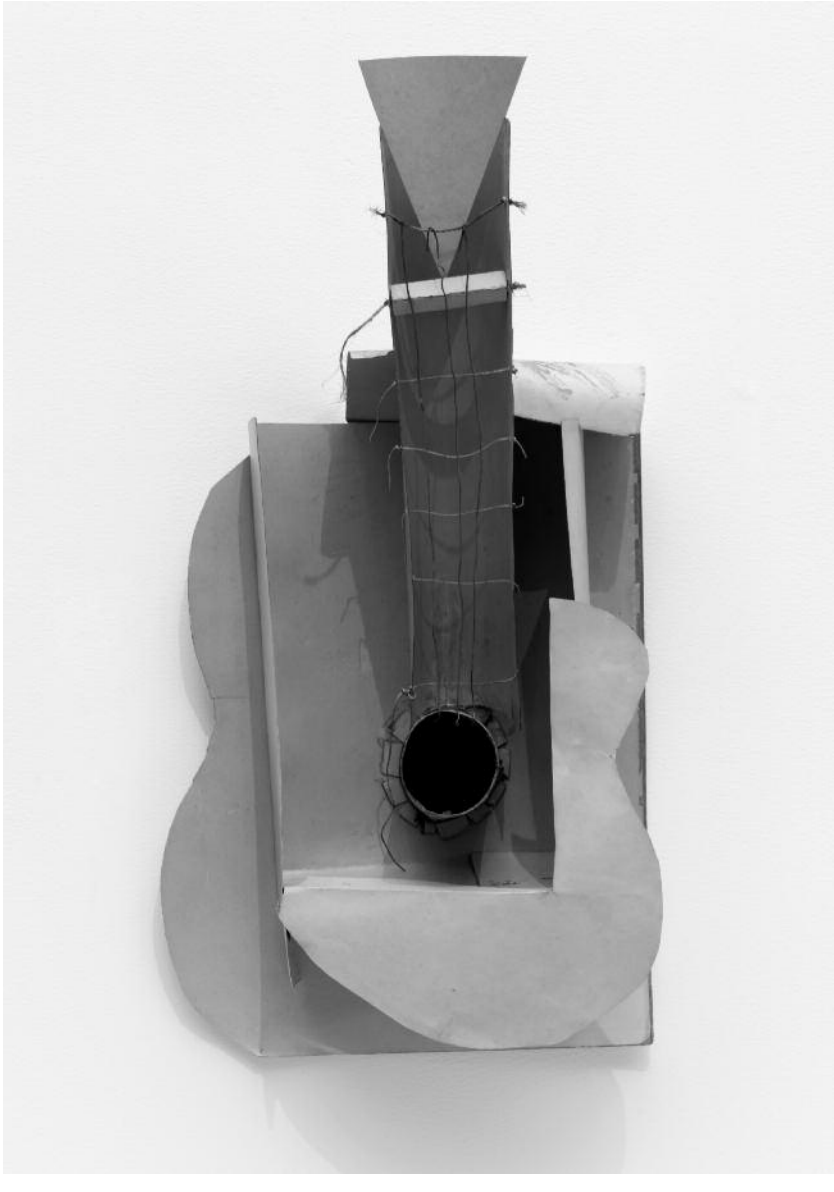

Pablo Picasso. *Guitar*, October 1912. Cardboard, string, and wire (restored), 25 ¾ × 13 × 7 ½ in. (65.1 × 33 × 19 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. © Estate of Pablo Picasso/ Artists Rights Society.

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Contingent Cubism

JEFFREY WEISS

> Who *has done this?—Not,* which Man under which name—*but what system, neither man nor name, and by what modifications to itself, amid what conditions, did it become, for a while, detached from what it was?*
>
> —Paul Valéry

The sculptural object before cubism is physically indivisible. This condition changed when techniques of carving, modeling, and casting were replaced by construction—the fabrication of the object from a variety of discrete intersecting or eliding planes, which was first deployed in 1911 or 1912 in the cubist work of Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso. The properties of constructed fabrication constitute a system of small but crucial operations determined by a narrow set of means. These means consist of cutting (the cutting of paper and, in one case, sheet metal) and the fitting together of elements (the planes), which serve as articulated, attachable parts. Such methods are not limited to the production of the sculptural object. They also encompass picture-making; for example, the technique of pasted paper, or *papier collé*, as well as paper that is pinned. Pictorial work of this kind is itself composed of physically autonomous elements: again, cuttings of paper (including drawing paper and commercial printed paper) that are generally affixed to a sheet—a paper support. The earliest constructions take the form of wall-mounted sculptural reliefs; in and of itself, this fact represents a conventional proximity of pictorial to sculptural space. Yet the material factors of construction and affixed paper signify an unprecedented conjunction—almost a crossover—of pictorial and sculptural means.

These fabrication techniques were originally adopted in order to support the conceptual maneuvers of cubist representation. Speaking in semiotic terms, this refers to the "circulation of the sign": the capacity of a single form to possess multiple referents based on its relation to other elements in a pictorial composition.[1] Yet constructed sculpture and pasted or pinned paper are significant not just for cubism but for the historical status of the aesthetic object more broadly. In multiple ways, such objects are conditional. A system of cut and attached parts means that the steps or procedures for making the object also allow for its real or imagined *un*making, a simple reciprocity that does not exist in the conventional practice of painting, drawing, or sculpture. Further,

the potential for a detachable object, above all in Picasso's practice, establishes a form of circulation that is not just sign-based but literal and thus ascribes to the object the identity of a proposition. This identity can be represented in two ways. First, while the object's form is the consequence of an intensive, ongoing investigation into problems of representation, the technical procedures according to which it is made permit the process of fabrication to possess a tolerance for temporary solutions—gambits that can be realized, reviewed, and then undone. That is, parts can be arranged and rearranged (or cut and recut) before being fixed into place. Second, the vicissitudes of the subsequent history of the object are, in terms *intrinsic* to the object's material constitution, sometimes significantly subject to changing circumstances of ownership, transmission, and display.

The camera in this context possesses a strategic role: the photograph as document is used to fix an impression of a state of the object that could be temporary. We might even infer that objects were installed in order to be subjected to the photographic record. In any case, given the indeterminacy of the work as object, the emergence of an attendant documentary practice was all but inevitable. However, because the photograph demonstrates various combinations or applications of one or more objects, the photograph itself also represents an iteration of the work. Here, cubism is a photographic practice and the cubist object exists to be staged and restaged.

Construction and affixed paper belong to a host of operations before and around 1914 that represent shifting conditions for the physical integrity of the modernist aesthetic object. These operations include the rotation or reorientation of a given object and/or the recombination of multiple elements that constitute a work; permutation, iteration, and other forms of repetition; and the principle of chance. Together with constructed fabrication and cubism's nontraditional application of mediums (e.g., putting paper in the service of sculptural and pictorial production), these factors sponsored the variable status of the object in dada and constructivism. Recuperated and radically intensified by sculptural practice after 1960, the condition of instability reached an extreme state in which contingency—of object, agency, and authorship—is explicit, even fundamental. That is, with the rise of minimal, postminimal, and conceptual practices, contingency was strategically registered by a variety of studio and poststudio tactics and new categories of work: delegated fabrication; the certificate of authenticity; the score and/or the realization or activation of the work by those who collect or show it; ephemeral materials; film and language as sculpture; the photographic documentation of serial process; the magazine piece; the scatter piece; the prop. The later urgency of contingent factors, then,

exposes a specific historical function for cubism as model that is largely unrelated to familiar questions of representation and form. One critical thread running through this narrative is the modality of time: we are speaking in each case of methods and conditions that prevent the aesthetic object from coming to rest.

The complex aesthetic object of 1912 realizes a variety of fates. Composed of discrete parts, the object's autonomy is threatened: it can be alternately regarded as a dis-integrated entity or, with respect to its place within a body of work, as one component of a constellated whole. In that the status of the object is variable—elusive, nonspecific, secondary—we speak less of its fixed identity than of its life. Such a consideration includes the influence of the object's material constitution on specific choices with respect to presentation as well as preservation or treatment made on its behalf. Consider anthropologist Alfred Gell's observation about the temporal identity of any artifact: "It is a category mistake," Gell writes, "to attribute dates to objects at all. . . . Only events have dates. What objects have is *histories*, including many dated events, and we think that objects have dates only because we often identify objects by associating them with the events surrounding their creation."[2] If the object is unstable, then it is also mobile. The nature of the work depends not on the essentialness of the object in a single state but on multiple manifestations. At stake, with respect to its activation through changing circumstance, is the status of the object in time.

IIIII

Picasso produced the constructed *Guitar* in late 1912. The work is composed of eighteen component parts cut from "paperboard" and cardboard and held together by glue, twine, string, and wire (along with tacks, at some point in its history)—as well as gravity, which keeps some of the work's elements in place.[3] *Guitar* was fabricated during the course of Picasso's pictorial experiments with *papier collé*. The pliant nature of the paper medium helps us imagine all of the objects as being not a series of finished works but, instead, ciphers of process. The initial works of this period—the *papiers collés*—are composed largely of various kinds of printed paper (above all, newsprint), which have been cut with scissors and fixed to the support. Other elements include drawing—usually with charcoal or graphite or ink—and sometimes the application of paint. A number of *papiers collés*, especially those Picasso produced in a sequence of severe works during late 1912, can be described as drawings with cut paper—almost exclusively cuttings from the daily press. Together they represent a distinct group, which is followed in 1913 by works that instead incorporate a variety of papers:

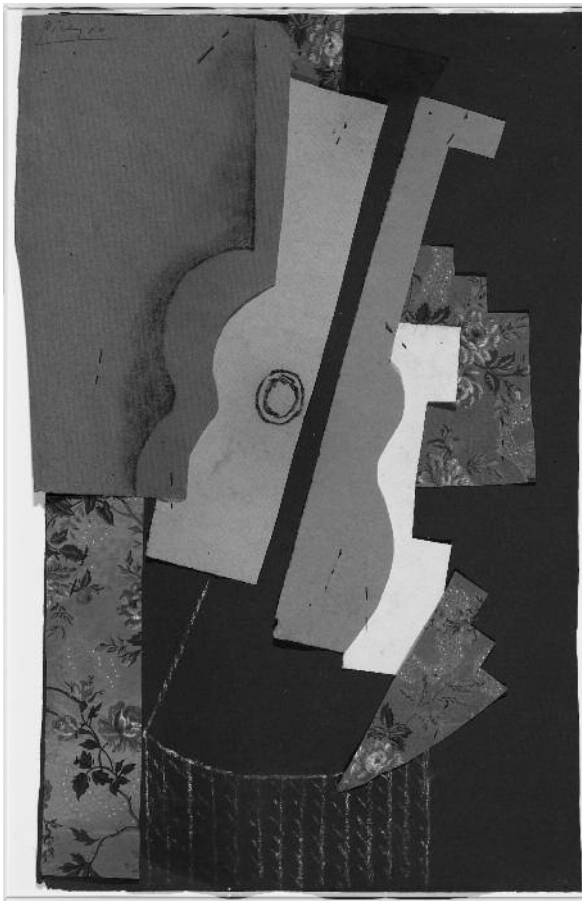
Pablo Picasso. *Bar Table with Guitar*, spring 1913. Cut-and-pinned wallpaper and colored paper, and chalk on colored paper, 24⅜ × 15⅜ in. (61.9 × 39.1 cm). Private collection. Photo: Bob Kolbrener. © 2011 Estate of Pablo Picasso/ Artists Rights Society.

multiple types of paper from non-fine-art sources (e.g., newsprint and wallpaper), as well as colored papers that have been part of fine-art studio practice since the sixteenth century when they served as supports for drawing in various mediums.[4]

Increasingly acknowledged by observers of cubism is the fact that a number of *papiers collés* show pinholes, which tell us that the papers, before they were pasted, were attached to the support with pins. One historian has likened the technique to that of the tailor or dressmaker, a comparison that was first made—disparagingly—by a critic in 1939.[5] The comparison is apt, although I am disinclined to extrapolate from this a gendering of technique, which is one direction the argument is inevitably taken. What can be said to count is the extent to which cutting and pinning, in addition to pasting, belong to a battery of methods that divulge the work's material logic. With that in mind, the origin of one technique or another in a particular craft or trade is, conceptually speaking, moot.

In material terms pinning reminds us that Picasso's *papiers collés* are made from attached parts and that (while Picasso might have drawn such a thing from among multiple crafts) within the realm of the aesthetic object the implications of the technique are extreme. The practical function of the pin is clear: it allows Picasso to arrange papers on a support in such a way as to make room for perpetual change. Works where the papers were pinned, then unpinned, moved to different positions, and repinned are, however, difficult to find, although this was surely part of the artist's working procedure. Pinning must have been a technique that allowed Picasso to maintain the contingent placement of the papers within a given work, and it must have followed a stage in which, laying the work out on a table, the artist made various adjustments in the arrangement of papers before deciding to fix them in place.

Most papers with pinholes were at some point finally pasted down. This may have happened after the works left Picasso's hands, reflecting the distress caused by the impermanence of pinning. The contingency of the pinned object puts its corporeal integrity at risk, with implications for ownership, market value, and preservation. A number of works, however, still retain pins, and a handful of them remain *solely* pinned, the most complicated example being *Bar Table with Guitar* of spring 1913. Take the pins out of that work, and the picture—as object—would physically come apart. A related work called *Still Life with Cup of Coffee* (1913) is now pasted but was once entirely pinned. In both cases, two irregular fragments of paper exceed the edge of the support, heightening the impression of the work's composite nature—its composition from physically discreet parts (since the elements internal to a conventional painting or drawing cannot escape the material confines of the



framing edge). Similarly, in both works a draftsman's illusion of chiaroscuro and the cast shadows of the depicted still life objects are opposed to the actual shadows cast by the cut papers, which are themselves material objects living in actual—rather than pictorial—conditions of light and space. The papers are set off by shadows because pinning them allows their edges to pull away from the pictorial support.

The works of 1912–1913 reflect multiple devices and operations that stand apart from anything like the application of craft and touch we associate with painting and drawing. Picasso's work is generally difficult to describe without allowing for a rare proficiency of manual technique. Yet for just that reason the work of this moment seems to represent an effort to displace, obstruct, or even *resist* technical facility—the facility of the hand. Cutting, pasting, and pinning are not themselves actions that show a display of skill.[6] We only have to observe the uneven edges of many cut papers throughout the works to recognize this. Moreover, the crudely cut paper edge looks something like a cognate for Picasso's draftsmanship during this period of work, where lines are drawn with an incremental, even deliberately halting accretion of strokes, anathema to draftsmanship possessed of nuance and control. Pinning and pasting are, therefore, not being asked to serve effects of any kind. Their roughness or provisionality remains largely, at times wholly, undisguised.

Cutting, pinning, and attaching or affixing with glue reflect material devices and operations. Thus, their relative (or handheld) mechanicity prevails. Picasso employed scissors, for example, far more often than a straightedge and a blade, which we would have expected him to use if he had set out to produce a ruled or precise edge (whereas the technique of tearing would be *too* imprecise and probably too close to the delicacy of the convention of touch). The same is true for the charcoal and graphite line, so much so that one exception, a guitar drawing of late 1912, is startling for its hard, seemingly ruled, lines. This drawing, especially the relation that exists between its design and a smaller *papier collé*, is significant because it takes us as close as the artist will get (closer than anyone but Marcel Duchamp in 1912) to the non-fine-art practice of mechanical drawing, even as that practice is being

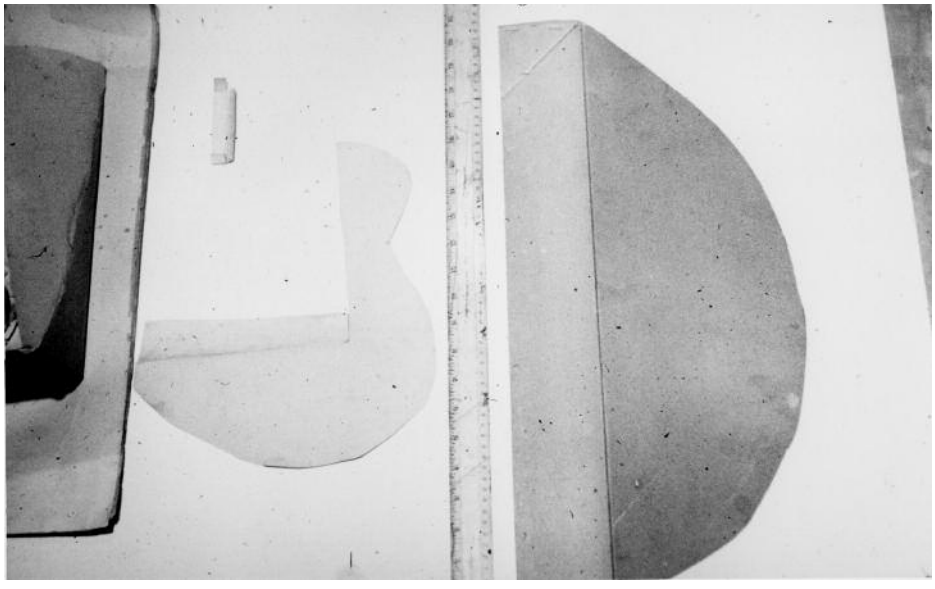
applied to a complex and ambiguous exercise in the articulation of an allover structure of folded and abutted planes—that is, even as it resists the functional clarity of mechanical drawing, as such. The proximity to mechanical drawing suggests that a work like *Guitar* could, in principle, have been constructed from a kit, and this fact is relevant to a broad scheme of depersonalization intrinsic to the work.[7]

The evidence of fabrication allows us to map the material logic of this body of work. Scissors and attached parts, be they pasted or pinned, resist the sensibility of touch or the technical facility of the hand, distancing the work from the register of conventional painting and drawing practice—not absolutely, but, in the context of picture-making, largely so. Those actions do not *respond to* the idea of contingency as a plan or a motivation but instead motivate or implicate the contingent object. The factor of contingency, in turn, corresponds to the disavowal of technical facility, which is typically associated with the concept of a *finished* work—a work that is consummated or achieved. Further, finish pertains to the significance of pinning as a means through which a given part—a fragment of paper—is *affixed*: secured, yet, in principle, subject to change, in that the work's constitution allows it to be *unfixed.* Such a thing is increasingly unlikely over time: we are not apt to take the object apart. What matters, however, is that the potential *to do just that* does exist: pins could be removed and parts thereby set loose. In being fixed, the object articulates its own contingency through a device that brings the liberty of its parts to momentary or suspended rest.

Although we are not likely to take a work apart, that procedure has, in fact, been done. In 1973 a conservator at the Museum of Modern Art fully dismantled Picasso's *Man with a Hat*, an admittedly alarming treatment that was carefully recorded and published.[8] The work, which was in a notably bad state that had been addressed long before it arrived in the museum's collection, was subjected to what the conservator herself called a "radical treatment": its papers were unglued and separated, treated, then lined and reattached. "The collage," she wrote, "was reassembled in its exact original configuration." We do not have to

Above: The collage elements of Pablo Picasso's *Head of a Man with a Hat* (after December 3, 1912) being lifted off the support sheet while the verso is steamed during treatment at the Museum of Modern Art, 1973. Department of Conservation, Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Opposite: Pieces of Pablo Picasso's *Guitar* (1912) and its tabletop prior to reassembly, May 31, 1979. Photographed at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Edward F. Fry Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.



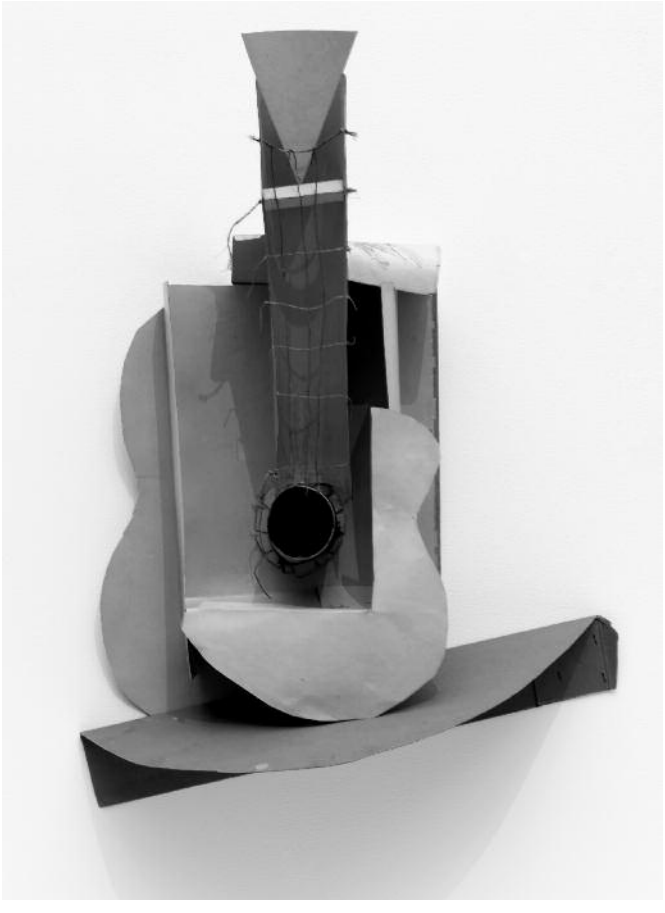
dwell on the specifics in order to acknowledge the basic material circumstances: *Man with a Hat* has been disassembled and reconstituted using one of the procedures through which it was originally produced. The very acts of fabrication, defabrication, and refabrication are, mechanically speaking, the same. Such a thing is virtually never true—is basically impossible—in the case of painting, drawing, and conventional sculpture, where cleaning or repair in the conservation studio occurs through processes that, while related to the production of the work, do not (or cannot) exactly reactivate the mechanical terms and conditions of the work's own making.[9]

A related lesson occurs when we consider the historical life of the paper *Guitar*. The work came to the Museum of Modern Art after Picasso's death in 1973, at which time it was understood to be a preparatory work for the "final" sheet metal *Guitar*, which the museum had acquired directly from the artist after much negotiation (on the part of William Rubin, chief curator of painting and sculpture) some years before. On entering the museum's collection, the paper *Guitar* was received as a secondary object and relegated to the study collection. The work arrived at the museum in six pieces (and was photographed in that state not by the museum staff but by an astute visitor, the scholar Edward Fry). Moreover, since it originated in Picasso's studio (where it had apparently been stored in this way in a cardboard box for decades), we can safely assume that the artist himself was responsible for dismantling the object. Further still, when the work was reassembled for the museum's Picasso retrospective in 1980, Rubin (now acting as a kind of coauthor) elected to omit one piece of it: the semicircular tabletop, which is a prominent element in a photograph of the work from 1916 (and which contains pinholes that can be matched to corresponding holes in the body of the instrument). Finally, when *Guitar* was prepared for exhibition in 1980, the museum chose to remake two missing "strings" and the triangular piece at the top, called a headstock.[10]

This entire state of affairs reflects something comparable to what we observe from the dismantling of *Man with a Hat*: the material constitu-

tion of the work as a concatenation of parts. Moreover, it demonstrates the fact that *Guitar* as object was *treated* in this fashion: that, given the added strings and headstock and the selectively omitted table, *Guitar* was reflexively understood to be a composite object, one that is intrinsically susceptible to acts of addition and subtraction—to a replacement or substitution of parts. The contingency of the work was acknowledged tacitly rather than openly; subliminally, it was a given.[11]

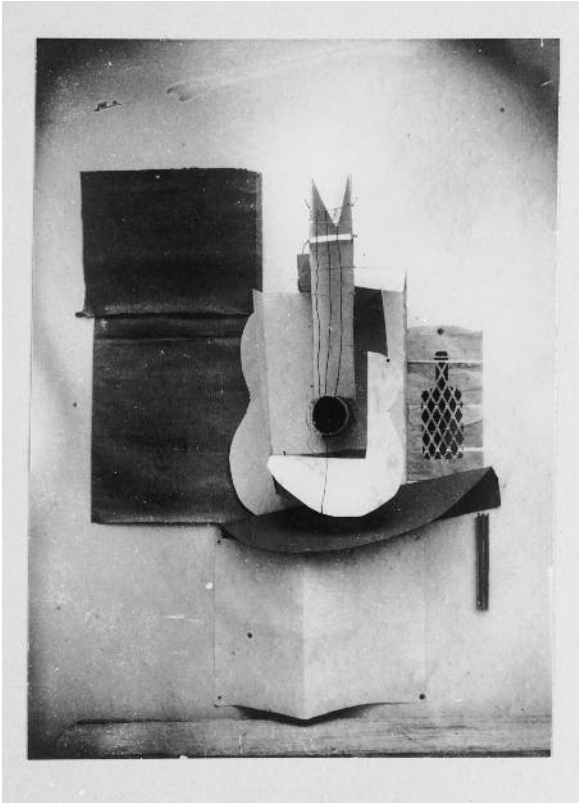
Following the lead of this series of actions concerning parts and whole, we may say that this entire phase of Picasso's work is premised on the nature and function of what we call a "mock-up" or "maquette." A maquette is generally understood to represent an interim object, one that serves the preparation of a fully developed, "final" work. I derive the word from the presumed relation of the paper *Guitar*, throughout much of its history, to the sheet-metal variant, which is believed to date to 1914, well over a year later. That is, when it arrived at the Museum of Modern Art, the paper version was reflexively taken to be secondary: to have served as a kind of early model. Picasso himself identified the paper object as such—as a maquette—when he came to use it as the model for the later object, which was probably produced in order to create a kind of durable facsimile of the first one, due to its obvious fragility.



Above: Pablo Picasso. *Maquette for Guitar* (variant state), October 1912. Cardboard, string, and wire (restored), 25 ¾ × 13 × 7 ½ in. (65.1 × 33 × 19 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. © Estate of Pablo Picasso/ Artists Rights Society.

Opposite: Pablo Picasso. *Guitar and Bottles*, 1913. Assemblage in Picasso's studio, Blvd. Raspail, Paris. Photo Archive, Musée Picasso, Paris. Photo © RMN–Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY.

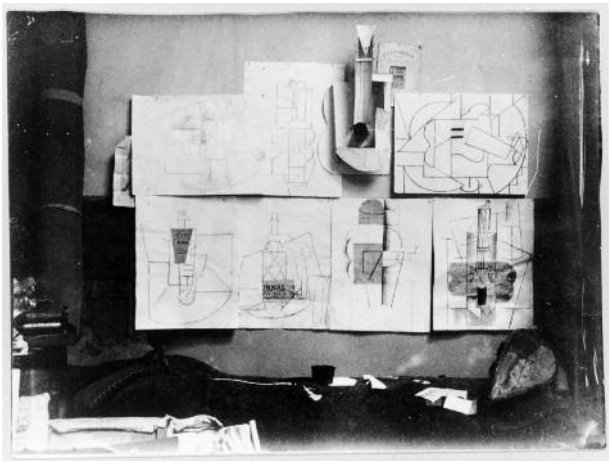
Nonetheless, the designation "maquette" holds other implications. The sameness of the two *Guitars* is striking: they are fabricated from two different materials, but both objects are composed of nearly identical attached parts and both are almost precisely the same size. Recent technical analysis allows us to infer that elements of the paper *Guitar* served as actual templates for parts of the metal version.[12] This inference implies a degree of interchangeability between the two objects, and it further establishes the mechanicity of their production. Yet the paper *Guitar* was not produced as a model or study for the metal one; it became such a thing. As such, the paper *Guitar* belongs to the *papiers collés* as a family of work in a way that the sheet-metal *Guitar* does not. Picasso's production of the metal *Guitar* tested the status of the earlier object, showing the *Guitar* of 1912 to have been not preliminary so

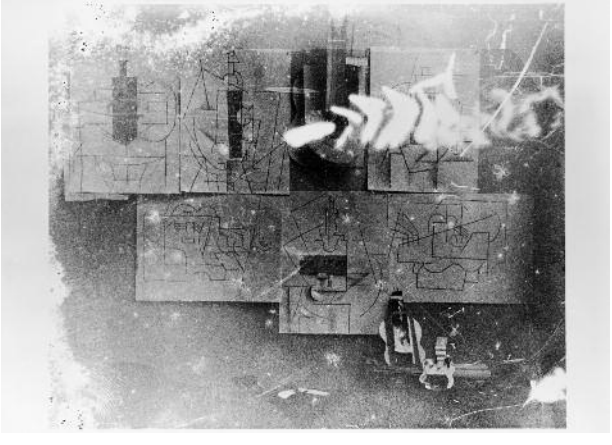


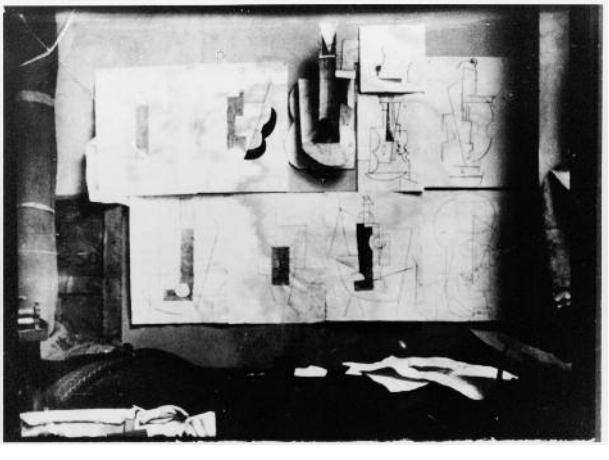
much as contingent (it *could* serve, and it *came* to serve, as a model, a collection of parts that were later used in the preparation of a second work). The second object demonstrates the latent contingency of the first. In identifying *maquette* as an operative term, I do not mean to establish a conventional relation between a so-called study and a final work. I mean instead to designate every work under discussion dating from 1912–1913 as being partly or potentially provisional, at least in material (if not formal) terms, due to the constitutional property of variable or unstable integrity: the object's condition of having been assembled and its ready potential to come apart.

The concept of maquette is intrinsic to the circumstances of Picasso's work, according to which anything like a "finished" object is forever deferred. This is not to suggest that a final work was imagined by the artist but never executed. Instead, the condition of deferral—which is related to the notion that the object, through pinning, attains a momentary state of rest—is native to the contingency of means. Together motion and deferral also represent a way to conceive of the object's temporality—the specific manner in which the objects of 1912–1913 exist in time. Picasso did not openly theorize such a thing. Yet if the pressure of extreme material considerations is acknowledged to be as significant as the motivations of form, then the works can be said to function as an implied model for a theory of the momentary actual and historical fate of the aesthetic object.

All of these issues are brought into focus by three photographs Picasso probably took in December 1912 at his studio in Paris on the boulevard Raspail, where he made the sequence of very spare *papiers collés* consisting of charcoal drawing with the addition of one or two pieces of pasted newsprint. This group, which numbers around twenty sheets, constitutes a single body of work; it is openly portrayed—even staged—as such in the photographs. Here Picasso created configurations of six, seven, and nine *papiers collés* and related drawings on sheets of paper that are largely identical in their dimensions (most of them measuring eighteen by twenty-four inches). The works are, in each case, pinned to the studio wall in two rows, the topmost row interrupted in each instance by the paper *Guitar*. That is, *Guitar* is positioned more or less at the top-center of each arrangement of individual sheets, and it is in this way made to belong to the group—to be *of* this sequence of *papiers*







collés, even its chief incarnation. In one photograph, smaller *Guitar* constructions sit on the daybed and lean against the wall. Also visible on the bed in each image are paper cuttings—leftovers from the fabrication of the works or, perhaps, parts that will be taken up in works to come.

The precise place of *Guitar* within the history of *papier collé* in 1912 has been the subject of much scrutiny and debate, and while the issue may not be completely settled, the paper *Guitar* likely preceded most of the drawings and *papiers collés* with newsprint.[13] What matters most in the context of material means is the fact that here, in this highly calculated, even strategic, sequence of photographs, the close relation of *Guitar* to a specific body of work is made clear.

By marshaling the works in this way, Picasso focuses attention on various factors. For one, the images point up the highly restricted nature of the subject matter the works represent, subject matter that takes three forms (with only minor deviations): a bottle, or bottle and glass, on a table; a guitar or violin; and the head of a man (often wearing a hat). Extrapolating from this restriction, we can say that the photographs show us that this sequence of work is iterative by nature, a quality that is sustained in a number of ways in addition to the identity of subject matter.[14] Above all, the camera underscores that iteration occurs through both formal and material means: compositions, for example, are alternately horizontal or vertical (they could only have been one or the other, but iteration lies with the fact that both positions are employed). The resulting placement of sheets on the wall reflects this at a glance. Moreover, the photographs make us see the *papiers collés* through an exaggerated contrast of light and dark. This allows the fragments of pasted newsprint themselves to stand out, such that their own collective rhythm of horizontal and

Pablo Picasso. Wall of the studio at 242 boulevard Raspail, November–December 1912. Musée Picasso, Paris. © Artists Rights Society. Photo © RMN–Grand Palais/ Art Resource, NY.

vertical placement becomes easy to perceive, especially in works that contain only a single cutting. In this setting we can also imagine cutting—with scissors instead of a straight edge—as a procedure in which the paper is rotated, turned between the artist's hands. Here the hand itself acquires a quasi-mechanical role that substitutes for the significance of the "hand" in the history of draftsmanship and paint-application, where it refers to mark-making as a form of touch.

Leaning on all of these factors, we can further say that rotation itself is a chief operation—and even a guiding principle—of the work, including in related sheets that do not appear in the photographs. For example, guitars and violins, as objects, are shown in both horizontal and vertical positions. Or, at times, from one image to the next, the curving edge of a tabletop can be seen to migrate from the bottom to the side to the top of the sheet. The position of the newsprint itself—of the printed and pasted language—is also a device, for it, too, appears in three directions: horizontal and vertical and also inverted. And rotation implicates an inversion of back to front. At least one of the works contains a fragment of newsprint that was cut into two interlocking parts, which were pasted down as a recto-verso pair, exposing two sides of a single newspaper page.[15] Further, two *papiers collés* take the potential of mechanical inversion, which is intrinsic to the basic material nature of cutting as an operation, and put it to work on the pictorial convention of figure-ground: two nearly identical compositions—showing a bottle on a table—reflect the alternate application of the cut paper in this way. The bottle shape cut from the newsprint sheet appears in one work, and the rest of the sheet appears in another, in which the bottle is represented by negative space. (Such a simple material inversion, wherein a single material entity is cut apart and used twice—once as a positive and once as a negative representation of the same thing—can perhaps be imagined in the case of a sculptural cast or a printer's block or plate, although no real convention existed prior to 1912 in those other mediums for actually employing such a device, which is one not just of inversion but of simultaneity.)

We can also acknowledge a permuting function for the newsprint with respect to objects the works represent. Three applications of newsprint demonstrate this role: contained just within the lines that delineate an object in a still life, such as a bottle, the newsprint serves as something like a surrogate for the object's material substance; pasted well within the contours, newsprint instead signifies the liquid contents of the object, be it a bottle or a glass; finally, pasted *over* a contour line, newspaper might be said to represent itself (though lines are also sometimes drawn over the newspaper, oddly positioning the newsprint literally and pictorially—between the drawing and the support). In still

other works, especially those that show a man's head, the newsprint identifies the single plane of a penetrated volume. Together, these variants in the representational implications of the single pasted fragment constitute a simple system that governs the series of works overall.

Some of these devices, especially those of a recto-verso and figure-ground type, have been identified by critical observers of cubism, yet they are usually addressed in isolation, called on to demonstrate a specific formal claim. However, when considered together—something the photographs encourage us to do—the variable applications of the single piece of cut paper reflect a consistent material principle. This principle, while serving cubist experiments with image or form, is facilitated by cutting, pinning, and pasting—by material means. So, while examples of rotation can be observed in early cubist paintings, its consistency within this body of work from late 1912 is traceable to procedures of fabrication. Apprehension of the significance of fabrication is, in turn, heightened by other operations that the photographs record: the pinning of the sheets to the wall, for example, and their closeness to one another. While the sheets might have been squeezed together in order to fit within the camera's frame (or within the space of the wall), they nevertheless touch and overlap in ways that encourage us to recognize that each sheet—while serving as a support on which to draw and paste—is itself a paper object, a flat rectangular shape that can be moved, temporarily fixed in place, then moved again or replaced by other works.

Yet more can be said regarding the way the paper *Guitar* is, in formal terms, interrogated by the sheets that surround it in the photographs; for example, how the drawings and pasted newsprint take the constructed *Guitar* as their proper referent. Here, too, the photographs, in their distortions of contrast and cast shadow, heighten homologies between dark paper cuttings and the shadowed interior of the constructed *Guitar* as a complex object in actual space. For all that formal description of this kind is crucial to any deep grasp of cubist representation as a language of signs, the staging process of the photographs is an operation of fundamental significance. Arranging the sheets on the wall and pinning them there, then unpinning them and taking them away only to replace them with others: these actions of hanging and rehanging rehearse the close material relation between, on the one hand, drawing and, on the other hand, cutting, pinning, or pasting paper in parts to form a pictorial or sculptural whole. *Making* the work and *showing* it both depend on the same set of materials and the same series of material steps. The photographs represent a radical or attenuated aesthetic situation within which the work is deployed, and that situation demonstrates the work's *mobility*: the way contingent mechan-

ical operations and other material means do not serve an overall condition so much as instantiate it.[16]

In such a context, *literal* mobility becomes an explicit factor. This is particularly true of the way the paper *Guitar* moves through the studio and represents itself as variable. The object was photographed several times, in addition to the images from the boulevard Raspail, where it appears as a still center. In the most prominent case, the paper *Guitar* itself became an individual part in a larger work, a collage-assemblage, with the tabletop now added (apparently, in turn, to sit on a "pedestal" of folded paper), along with two sheets of imitation wood grain and other elements. This is how it appeared in the avant-garde journal *Les soirées de Paris* in late 1913, in a photograph that was commissioned by Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, Picasso's gallerist.[17]

This version corresponds to the overall direction of the artist's work in pasted paper throughout that year: the reintroduction of wallpaper and colored drawing paper, among other things, made *papier collé*—especially in an astonishing sequence of still lifes with a guitar—a far more substantial entity, both materially and visually, than it had previously been, although no less contingent given the recurrence of pins during this phase. Some time later (perhaps one or two years), *Guitar* showed up again in the photographs of his studio on the Rue Schoelcher, having shed some of its accrued parts and possibly acquiring others. The variability or mobility of the paper *Guitar* takes multiple forms: instability, including the addition or subtraction of parts; and the passage of the object through the studio and/or its rotation across the space of the wall. In every case changing positions and changing parts inflect the relation of *Guitar* to the wall and the floor, as well as its status as an autonomous object in actual space versus one object among others in a quasi-pictorialized still life. All of these things are complemented by iteration as a principle of material means. They also correspond to the experimentalism of the object's form: in and of itself, the spatiality of *Guitar*, which is its chief formal achievement, represents a kind of mobility with respect to changeability of shape.

Overall, even more than being deferred, completion is, in certain respects, obviated. The consequences are acute, and they influence the life of the work. A conservation treatment in which a *papier collé* is dismantled and reconstructed, for example, or the arrival at a museum of *Guitar* from Picasso's studio in pieces collected in a cardboard box, is unnerving not just because we normally think of the aesthetic object as being inviolable but because that object now appears before us in an extreme, scattered state that is actually intrinsic to its very constitution, something previously unimaginable. A further extrapolation is possible: the studio photographs on the boulevard Raspail do not simply portray

the paper *Guitar* and the *papiers collés* as individual works assembled in one place for the purpose of an archival record. The photographs also represent these objects together as constituting a single, complex work comprising multiple parts—a work that, subsequently partitioned and dispersed, has itself come apart.[18] This, in any case, is what I propose we imagine, and I believe that the collective significance of these objects counts as much as any individual work does—that, momentarily, it can be said to have counted even *more*. According to the principle of iteration, the works are, after all, relational: they matter most not in isolation but with respect to one other. Through the medium of paper, the pictorial and the sculptural are coextensive, with material elements functioning like a single body of component parts.

A third element can be added to the pictorial and sculptural (i.e., the two factors that are activated together through paper as a common medium): that of language. Picasso and Braque had for over a year been inscribing stenciled and typographic words into their painted work. In this regard, *papier collé* represents a rupture: its language is literally (materially) readymade, clipped from the printed page and pasted down. This also means that here language is inseparable from its material support. In this way, the newspaper page—with its many rows of text—induces an action, that of reading, which (at least since the Middle Ages) has been largely unfamiliar to the pictorial field.[19] As a result, the *papiers collés* of 1912 show three distinct registers of seeing: we scan the composition of the work with attention to its pictorial form; we inspect it for technical and material qualities; and we read. In that these registers are kept apart by the work's material devices, they correspond to its logic of contingency—the operations they represent, each belonging to separate realms of signification, will never fully cohere. Within the sequence of studio photographs, these factors belong to the very nature of the individual works as parts of a complex contingent whole: pasted but also pinned, and, as the photographs themselves demonstrate from one to the next, allowing for a substitution (a rotation) of works and for changing configurations, each easily unfixed over time. Equally germane to the material implications of the work is that the anonymity of printed language (it does not, as has been observed, represent Picasso's own voice but a polyphony of public voices) qualifies the conventional role of authorship in this group of works.[20] In the form of a readymade, the application of language as a material medium is analogous to the mechanicity of cutting, rotating, and attaching parts, techniques and operations that diminish the sensibility associated with the touch of the hand.[21]

A further set of implications regarding this condition of the work concerns Picasso's studio practice during the period of roughly 1909 to

1912 as it is represented by his use of the camera. Picasso took photographs of groups of like works several times during these years. Among them are three cases—including the images of the studio in 1912—in which he arranges works that seem to belong to a formal sequence or group. The first of these occurs in 1909 at Horta de Ebro in Spain, where the artist spent the summer. There he shot several studio photographs showing paintings of that moment—multiple portraits of a single sitter, Fernande Olivier—in groups or pairs, including two deliberate double exposures. The second example is from Sorgues, in the south of France, during the summer of 1912, where the artist staged and shot a group of six paintings that just precede his investigation of *papier collé* and collage. The third example is the sequence of photographs later that year on the boulevard Raspail. What these three applications of the camera tell us is that staging the work photographically is something that does not precede cubism. Before 1909, Picasso did shoot photographs of his work—and have them shot—with some frequency. But these were largely images of single paintings or of groups of paintings that represent a variety of work.

The camera's role appears to index the shifting ambitions of the work. Prior to 1909, the process of Picasso's paintings was openly genetic. To this end, we can indicate the periodic recurrence of large works toward and around which he produced numerous smaller works (both paintings and drawings), many of them studies. One key example is the *Demoiselles d'Avignon* of 1907, for which dozens of works were made by way of preparation for the big canvas.[22] The *Demoiselles* represents the summation of a long effort of trial and error in the development of thematic and compositional aspects of the work. The same can be said for Picasso's *Three Women*, an important painting from the following year, for which numerous studies of both the composition and the individual figures were produced in advance of the final canvas.

In 1909, with Picasso's multiple paintings of Fernande Olivier, however, we begin to lose sense of the distinction between work of greater and lesser significance. The paintings represent repeated attention—as before—to a single object, the head (sometimes full bust) of the sitter. Some studies or preliminary works do exist, but few of them can be identified with the process of revision: few if any are drafts, so to speak, of a final work. The series attains no conclusion. Instead, it runs on until, for no obvious reason, it stops. The aspect of Picasso's cubism that is first reflected in the photographs at Horta is the artist's dawning recognition that cubist painting—whatever he really called it at the time and whatever else it is—would not lead to a summation, that the process of the work within any given phase is less cumulative (compared to what it had been before) than repetitive or iterative by nature.[23]

This development represents a schism in his work. We could say that Picasso introduced iteration into his painting and then used the camera to record it. Yet reading backward from the photographs on the boulevard Raspail, where Picasso takes iteration to an extreme, I am inclined to believe that with the portraits of Fernande this quality was something he was still sorting out and that the camera confirmed it for him. At Sorgues iteration became a factor that the artist had now caught up to and was beginning to activate in an openly deliberate way.

Throughout this period of work the camera is crucial. In his brief correspondence with friends, Picasso called attention to photographs of his work. To Kahnweiler (who had numerous photographs of Picasso's cubist work made for the purpose of inventory), Picasso wrote in 1913 to say that photographs of his paintings are specifically useful because they surprise him. Thanks to the camera, he wrote, "I see my paintings differently from how they are."[24] This effect applies to photographs of works from any period, especially the ones that were taken to record states in the progress of a given painting (a purpose for which Picasso says he was still using the camera in 1912–1913). Even so, with respect to the sequence of photographs from 1909 to 1912, Picasso's remark anticipates something he said to Christian Zervos much later: "When we invented cubism, we had no intention whatever of inventing cubism."[25] In this way the artist tells us that certain implications of cubism were discovered as the work itself was being produced. These discoveries would have included the material implications of a body of work that was emerging in response to explicit considerations otherwise directed at problems of form.

Picasso's early application of the camera, in photos taken by himself and others, is consistent enough to represent an aesthetic practice. Examining the photograph as if it is only a record is therefore inadequate to its relevance, in this context, to the material identity of the artwork, which largely concerns the factor of unstable integrity over time. The succession of images showing the studio wall on the boulevard Raspail is just that: a succession rather than a progression that implies developmental change. Intrinsic to the photographic medium is the sensation of a present tense that is also past. Succession disperses the multiplicity of still moments along a timeline, like a sequence of isolated instants across a diachronic row. Together with the intervals of time between them, the individual frames both hold and demonstrate the process of mobility—of intervention and change. These factors inform, even figure, the role of the camera as a source of information. Therefore, as a record or inventory that directly reflects on the shifting status of the object and the very definition of *work*, the photographic group possesses its own logic. The photographs from Horta and Sorgues

help us grasp the significance of the ones from the boulevard Raspail. There, the drawings, the *papiers collés*, and the paper *Guitar* are blatantly and repeatedly constellated according to a principle that was only just beginning to emerge in the earlier images. Picasso was still making paintings during this period. With the installation of the *papiers collés*, the iterative nature of the work is not only aggressively engaged by the artist, it is inescapable, and doubly so with respect to the *Guitar*, through which iteration reaches across categories of work. What the photographs tell us is that these works are so closely related to one another in their means that they represent no real progress of formal invention over time, functioning instead as a static group of objects that can be reshuffled over and over again, arguably without any change in hierarchy of relational significance between one object and the next. This, too, is an expression of radical consequences: the works stop developmental time and, by remaining in one place, are sorted such that they circulate—as objects—through an actual space (the space of the studio wall). Genetic time is replaced by the kind of elapsing time we associate with running in place, a temporal order of nonserial repetition that can also be ascribed to the group of photographs, itself a single entity composed of multiple parts.

In that the studio on the boulevard Raspail, as depicted in the photographs, serves as a kind of site, the formal means of the works are inseparable both actually and conceptually from their material ones. The conditions and circumstances of the cubist object are indispensable to the meaning of the object as work: how the object is made; in what fashion it is to live over time; and in what ways the biography of the object (its material fate) will always reflect its identity with respect to suspension, deferral, and change. Those factors in turn conspire to demonstrate not only the mobility of constructed sculpture and *papier collé* as a total project but the extreme instability of the individual object, which, although autonomous in certain respects, functions in its own way as a component part. As such the objects in the photographs also signify an event: an intervention or acute cut into the unfolding momentum of Picasso's cubism in 1912–1913, a period that can be described as an intense phase less of progress than of recognition. The installation on the boulevard Raspail is a brief occurrence and the artist would soon retreat from its multiple implications. No matter: the model it represents for a subsequent history of advanced art would—in its unstable way—continue to hold.

Notes

Material in this essay was first presented at the Museum of Modern Art on April 5, 2011, during a study day on the occasion of the museum's exhibition *Picasso Guitars: 1912–1914* (February 13–June 6, 2011). An early version of the essay was given as a lecture at the Frick Collection, New York, on December 14, 2011.

1. Rosalind E. Krauss, "The Circulation of the Sign," in *The Picasso Papers* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1998), 28.

2. Alfred Gell, *The Anthropology of Time* (Oxford, UK: Berg, 1992), 28.

3. Two recent publications contain new historical and technical reconstructions—by Anne Umland, Blair Hartzell, and Scott Gerson—of the conditions of making and showing *Guitar*, from which I draw aspects of my own descriptive account of the work in this essay. See Anne Umland, ed., *Picasso Guitars: 1912–1914*, exh. cat. (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2011); and *Picasso: The Making of Cubism, 1912–1914* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2014). See, especially, Blair Hartzell, "Guitar," in *Picasso: The Making of Cubism*, 3.9–3.10; and Scott Gerson, "Guitar: Conservation Notes," in *Picasso: The Making of Cubism*, 3.23–3.27. As Hartzell notes (3.10), another paper construction by Picasso, *Violin* (1913), was also variably displayed and then, like *Guitar*, stored away by the artist, only to be recovered (and repaired) in time to be included in a retrospective exhibition in 1966. See also Christine Poggi, "Picasso's First Constructed Sculpture: A Tale of Two Guitars," *Art Bulletin* 94, no. 2 (June 2012): 274–298, for an exhaustive material and formal analysis of the relation between Picasso's two versions of *Guitar*, the paperboard object of 1912 and the one in sheet metal of 1914.

4. Susan Galassi, "The Cup of Coffee," in *Picasso's Drawings: 1890–1921: Reinventing Tradition*, ed. Susan Galassi and Marilyn McCully (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 213.

5. Elizabeth Cowling, "The Fine Art of Cutting: Picasso's *Papiers Collés* and Constructions in 1912–14," *Apollo*, November 1995, 10–18.

6. The matter of deskilling is a prominent element of Poggi's argument about the differences between the first and second versions of *Guitar* and the critical relation of fabrication in Picasso's work of this period to conventions of aesthetic technique and/or craft versus bricolage—and, by extension, to Marxian theories of modern labor. See Poggi, "Picasso's First Constructed Sculpture," 294.

7. Cowling, "The Fine Art of Cutting." With respect to the template as a model for the replication of parts, together with other factors at stake in the *papiers collés* and the paper *Guitar,* a crucial historical coincidence can be observed between Picasso's work of this moment and that of Duchamp. According to Duchamp's notes, 1913 was when he conceived the *3 stoppages étalon* (*3 Standard Stoppages*), a work in which the template plays a specific role. (Duchamp derived the title of the work from a word—*stoppages*—that signifies the "invisible mending" of clothing practiced by tailors.) Duchamp's proposition for the *Stoppages* is as follows: onto a blue-painted canvas, three one-meter lengths of thread were to be dropped from a height of one meter; each thread would fall to form an irregular curve and would be fixed to the canvas in that position with varnish. The canvas was ultimately cut into three strips, each containing a single string; the strips were each glued onto a separate plate of glass. In 1918, in the course of producing his painting-assemblage *Tu'm*, three wooden templates were cut according to the precise shape of the curves. In notes and other references, the resulting

templates were referred to as "rulers," a reference to their distortion of the meter as a unit of measure. In 1999, examination of the *Stoppages* by conservators at the Museum of Modern Art, where the work is held, revealed that the strings may not have been dropped and glued but carefully arranged in curving configurations and then sewn in place. See Rhonda Roland Shearer and Stephen Jay Gould, "Hidden in Plain Sight: Duchamp's *3 Standard Stoppages*, More Truly a 'Stoppage' (An Invisible Mending) Than We Ever Realized," *Tout-Fait*, December 1999, n.p. Depending on the nature of one's interest, this discovery either adds to or detracts from the interpretive complexity of the work. In any case, the way in which Duchamp first imagined the *Stoppages* still counts, now in the form of a propositional text. Principles of both chance and gravity (which implicate mobility) in the imagined *Stoppages* are of particular relevance to Picasso's paper *Guitar*, given basic aspects of material means such as pasting, cutting, and the fabrication of a whole object from discrete parts. These factors establish a reciprocal but opposing role for the template as a "measuring" device, which substitutes a form of mechanical fabrication for craft or "hand" in the potential duplication of parts. The Picasso-Duchamp coincidence represents the expression (in two works that are, in certain respects, starkly different from one another) of an attenuated material identity for both painting and sculpture as mediums around 1912. The coincidence also raises the relevance of "representation" as an increasingly complex imperative for aesthetic practice at that time. The *Guitar* and the *Stoppages* both engage representation: the first by altering the terms of iconic representation; the second (with respect to the template) by introducing a quasimechanical form of indexical representation into aesthetic practice.

The agency of mechanical replication has a long history that is relevant to the conceptual implications of its material role in Picasso's work of this period. This history, which dates back to eighteenth-century France, concerns an early form of preindustrial standardization in the manufacturing of weapons. See Ken Alder, "Making Things the Same: Representation, Tolerance and the End of the Ancien Régime in France," *Social Studies of Science* 28, no. 4 (August 1998): 499–545 (from which the following account is derived). In that context, the invention of technical drawing, which became part of trade-school curricula, established a type of pictorial representation that allowed the replication of an artifact by delegated manufacture. Through the new form of drawing, which abandoned the distortions of conventional representation—and, by extension, "imagination"—for a "projective" depiction (in profile, plan, and elevation) of the object in question, the idiosyncrasies of artisanal production were replaced by mechanical precision and uniformity, allowing for the transmission of exact information. This information was mediated, between drawing and the manufactured object, by instruments such as gauges, jigs, fixtures, cutters, and the like (which also allowed for a separation of production into a variety of discrete tasks). Denis Diderot referred to the new drawing language as a "geometry of the workshop," and its terms changed the social relations that characterized the process of design and fabrication. With drawing acting as a "common referent" between engineers and fabricators, "the goal is to limit the discretion of both the person drawing the plan *and* the person interpreting it." Yet "descriptive geometry was also a powerful 'constructive' technique, and could be used to search for new shapes and configurations." I find the lessons of this narrative of the transition to technical drawing and standardized manufacture to contain terms that are useful to the present account. Such terms pertain to the relation of both drawing and cutting to the making of an aesthetic object that brackets out certain elements of conventional art practice in order to annex techniques that restrict sensibility and the

idiosyncratic qualities (including that of imagination) typically associated with the agency of the "hand." That the parts of the paper *Guitar* could be used to replicate the object in another medium is a direct, if almost banal, expression of the mechanical copy as a form of both representation and iteration. The terms of the transition to technical drawing also recall us to the relation of drawing to cut paper in the *papiers collés* of late 1912. With the works under discussion in this text, drafting negotiates among various forms of "objective" versus "subjective" representation (projective and perspectival drawing versus freehand representation and the use of chiaroscuro). Throughout the sequence of works, the element of cut newsprint variously functions to support or interrogate these modalities of representation and the material devices used to implement them.

8. Antoinette King, "The Conservation Treatment of a Collage: *Man with a Hat*, by Pablo Picasso," in *Conservation of Library and Archive Materials and the Graphic Arts*, ed. Guy Petherbridge (London: Butterworths, 1987), 85–94. I also address this conservation treatment, in particular the ephemerality of *papier collé* as a medium and the influence of change through aging on an interpretation of the work, in Jeffrey Weiss, "Head of a Man with a Hat," in *Picasso: The Making of Cubism 1912–1914*, 8.3–8.4.

9. That is, one cannot literally "unpaint" a painting. Unlike the case of the paper *Guitar* or any given *papier collé*, in-painting and related conservation treatments of a painting require the permanent removal of original paint and/or the careful addition of new paint. This process can be described as a form of painting, but it does not—and, more important, cannot—reverse and then replicate the exact mechanical procedure through which the work was first produced.

10. For a review of this series of events, see Anne Umland, "The Process of Imagining a Guitar," in *Picasso Guitars: 1912–1914*, 29–33.

11. What I am accounting for in Picasso's work is also partly true of the work of Georges Braque, but in this context the distinctions between them are meaningful. Braque may have preceded Picasso in the production of constructed sculpture (although examples of his work of this kind, one of which has come down to us in an early photograph, have not survived), and he surely was first to experiment with *papier collé*. Picasso, however, appears to have been the first specifically to exploit the conceptual implications of technique in relation to the status of the object. Among other things, in Picasso's work material means motivated a poetics of the assembled object that literally prevents "finish," the attainment of a technical or formal resolution, while the greater refinement of Braque's *papiers collés* more closely adhere to conventions of craft. The evidence of objects and studio photographs together allow us to speculate more fully about Picasso's work of this period than about Braque's. In 1989, William Rubin posited (partly based on references in correspondence) that Braque was the first to have devised the technique of constructing paper sculpture, perhaps as early as 1911. William Rubin, "Picasso and Braque: An Introduction," in *Picasso and Braque: Pioneering Cubism*, exh. cat. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1989), 30–32. His argument of chronology is subjected to critical scrutiny by Yve-Alain Bois in "Kahnweiler's Lesson," in *Painting as Model* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 285–286 n. 46. Bois's essay was first published in 1987. Bois's discussion, which concerns historiography that postdates the original essay, was composed for the essay's republication in 1990.

12. On the topic of the later *Guitar* as a variant of the earlier one, see Poggi, "Picasso's First Constructed Sculpture," 288–290. See also Hartzell, "Guitar," 15.2–15.5; and Gerson, "Guitar: Conservation Notes," 15.10–15.11. Poggi observes that the sheet-metal

object was "evidently made to reconfigure in a new medium as well as to preserve a work of great importance to Picasso" (289–290). What the artist would have been "preserving," however, is the form of the work of 1912. The earlier object's material qualities and its provisionality in that regard—as Poggi herself notes—was lost. For this reason, the work of 1914 can better be said to represent the one of 1912 rather than to preserve it. Hartzell describes the making of the metal *Guitar* as a "memorializing" act (15.4).

13. This critical and historical debate is complicated. For a deep and detailed account of the literature on this topic, see Bois, "Kahnweiler's Lesson," 285 n. 45. The minute chronology of collage, *papier collé*, and constructed sculpture is less central to my claims than Picasso's overall application of the material means that the three techniques together demonstrate over the course of 1912–1913.

14. The "serial" or iterative nature of the *papiers collés* of late 1912 was first identified by Yve-Alain Bois in "The Semiology of Cubism," in *Picasso and Braque: A Symposium*, ed. William Rubin and Lynn Zelevansky (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1992), 206 n. 73. There, in a context of the analysis of the nonspecific identity of a given pictorial sign (which can be asked to signify a variety of referents), Bois writes, "Here the question [of seriality] is not that of the '*rapports de grand écart*' between the signs of a given work, but the '*rapports de plus petit écarts possible,*' the smallest possible difference between the signs configuring in turn a guitar, a head, or a bottle in various works of the same series" (206 n. 73). Iteration occurs on multiple registers in this body of work, including material factors that can be said to support signification, but iteration also represents a broader play of iconographic, formal, and material means. (Krauss enlists several material examples of rotation and inversion in her text; see "The Circulation of the Sign," 27–28, 33.)

15. See Krauss, "The Circulation of the Sign," 26–28. The factors of mobility, "circulation" and deferral, understood as providing material and temporal terms for the fabrication and activation (through display) of the paper *Guitar* and the *papiers collés* of 1912–1913 correspond to Krauss's claims. Moreover, Krauss's discussion of *Violin*, in which two interlocking cuttings from the same page of a newspaper are separated, with one of them having been flipped before both were pasted onto a single sheet, is a literal expression of circulation as a semiological device (28).

16. The relative informality of a recently uncovered fourth photograph of the boulevard Raspail studio, which likely predates the sequence of three related images, demonstrates that the *formality* of arrangement in the subsequent images was intended to support a staged representation of a serial rotation of related objects. The fourth photograph was published for the first time as the frontispiece to *Picasso: The Making of Cubism*.

17. One critic referred to *Guitar* in this context as a work that is "momentary and destined only to be photographed." See [Maurice Testard?], "Les soirées de Paris," *L'art décoratif*, November 1913, suppl., 2. Until 1950 *Guitar* was known primarily through this photograph. See Hartzell, "Guitar," 3.18 n. 32.

18. Alfred Gell has characterized works that occur in series as together constituting a "macro-object" or "temporal object." This is relevant to my identification of the *papiers collés* (with the *Guitar*) as the multiple parts of a single work. See Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998), 233. Gell's context, however, is a much broader argument in which he proposes to reimagine an artist's entire body of work as being a single oeuvre composed of

"a spatio-temporally dispersed population" of "distributed objects" in a "career-long generate-and-test" sequence. (Individual works are "components" that are separated across time.) Moreover, for Gell repetition is a quality that underwrites developmental change (including the unfolding progress of artistic "style"), concerns foreign to my account of the series as being a sequential yet static, materially grounded iteration of form.

19. See Mieczyslaw Wallis, "Inscriptions in Paintings," *Semiotica* 9, no. 1 (1973): 1–28, where the term *semantic enclave* is coined to describe "that part of a work of art which consists of signs of a different kind or from a different system than the signs of which the main body of that work of art consists." In painting, this is said to refer to the occurrence of "music scores, maps, coats-of-arms, inscriptions."

20. On the matter of voice, see Krauss, "The Circulation of the Sign," 40–48.

21. Several authors have discussed the relevance to *papier collé* of the opposition between poetic and commercial language in the work of Stéphane Mallarmé. Two extended theorizations of this aspect of *papier collé* can be found in Rosalind Krauss, "The Motivation of the Sign," in *Picasso and Braque: A Symposium*, 275–282; and Christine Poggi, *In Defiance of Painting: Cubism, Futurism, and the Invention of Collage* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 141–163. In my formulation of this point, the readymade quality of Picasso's language can be identified as a specifically material aspect of the work, given the application of language in the form of cuttings from the daily press, among other printed papers. The proliferation of printed paper in Picasso's work and the way in which the works—as paper objects—were rotated across the studio wall begs a certain extrapolated correspondence between the iterative recombination of *papiers collés* in the photographs of 1912 and the structure of the printed book. Books of the period were produced as large printed sheets that are folded multiple times in order to produce signatures, which are gathered and then bound together. (The French word for *signature*—these folded sheets—is *cahier*, a word that can also mean "notebook" or "sketch book.") When the book is to be read, the signatures are separated into pages by a knife. Mallarmé wrote about these conditions of the book as object in several essays, with an emphasis on the fold and the cut. See, for example, Stéphane Mallarmé, "The Book as Spiritual Instrument," in *Stéphane Mallarmé: Divagations*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 226–230. Further, the printing of the large sheets entails a process called "imposition," in which the sheet is imprinted with text for each page so that, when folded, the sequence and orientation (recto-verso) of pages in the signature are correct. This printing procedure entails multiple rotations or inversions of text. For an early twentieth-century account of page imposition and other aspects of book production, see Theodore Low de Vinne, *Modern Methods of Book Composition* (New York: The Century Co., 1904). A book, then, is a complicated paper object filled with printed language that has been rotated, arranged, folded, sewn, and cut, terms that all correspond to the elements and procedures of the *papiers collés*. Mallarmé's own monumental, unfinished project, known as "the Book" (in French, *le Livre*), conceived over the course of decades as a multivolume work, is premised in part on a complex redeployment of the conventional structure of the printed book. Mallarmé addressed the material nature of the book throughout his notes, which, among many other things, tell us that the Book was to be a reinvention of the codex as a form. According to his scheme, there was to be no fixed approach to reading the Book—which was intended to be activated by multiple participants reading aloud in a variety of sequences and combinations during lengthy *séances*—thus no fixed beginning or end. These factors of structure and recitation were

repeatedly characterized by Mallarmé as representing "mobility" (*mobilité*). For examples, see, Stéphane Mallarmé, "Notes en vue du 'Livre,'" in *Oeuvres complètes I* (Paris: Gallimard, 1998), 70–71, 143. If Mallarmé's Book has no beginning and no end ("un livre ne commence ni ne finit," 233), then it is a conditional work. Picasso's pasted and pinned papers and his paper *Guitar* do not represent contingency deliberately deployed—which is what I take Mallarmé's calculated mobility to connote—so much as contingency discovered or divulged: inadvertent at first, yet fundamental to the material constitution of the object in 1912 and, finally, to its conceptual implications and its subsequent life over time. Yet, to the extent that the structural factors of the book correspond to *papier collé*, they do so by representing a state of pictorial practice so attenuated that terms from book composition, a separate discipline, can be directly applied. The installation on the boulevard Raspail represents a spatialization of the book itself that matches what Krauss and Poggi, among others, describe (specifically with respect to the poem "Un coup de dès") as Mallarmé's spatialization of language on the page. As such, the installation qualifies as a "dispersion" of pages. I derive that term from Maurice Blanchot, "The Book to Come," in *The Book to Come*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 235.

22. William Rubin, "From Narrative to 'Iconic' in Picasso: The Buried Allegory in *Bread and Fruitdish on a Table* and the Role of the *Demoiselles d'Avignon*," *Art Bulletin* 65, no. 4 (December 1983): 615–649.

23. The full argument regarding painting and photography at Horta occurs in my essay, "Fleeting and Fixed: Picasso's Fernandes," in *Picasso: The Cubist Portraits of Fernande Olivier*, exh. cat. (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 2004), 2–48. The indispensable resource for information concerning Picasso's use of the camera during the cubist period is Anne Baldassari, *Picasso Photographe, 1901–1916*, exh. cat. (Paris: Musée Picasso, 1994).

24. The remark comes from a letter to Kahnweiler of March 21, 1913. See *Picasso and Braque: Pioneering Cubism*, 415.

25. Picasso as quoted in Alfred H. Barr Jr., *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1946), 273. The original French is found in Christian Zervos, "Conversation avec Picasso," *Cahiers d'art* 10, no. 7–10 (1935): 173–178.