

STATEMENT OF POLICY

BUCKNELL REVIEW is a scholarly interdisciplinary journal. Each issue is devoted to a major theme or movement in the humanities or sciences, or to two or three closely related topics. The editors invite heterodox, orthodox, and speculative ideas and welcome manuscripts from any enterprising scholar in the humanities and sciences.

This journal is a member of the Conference of Editors of Learned Journals

BUCKNELL REVIEW

Self, and Symbol

Edited by
MARK NEUMAN and MICHAEL PAYNE

BUCKNELL REVIEW
A Scholarly Journal of Letters, Arts, and Sciences

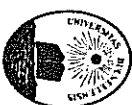
Co-Editors
MARK NEUMAN
MICHAEL PAYNE

Assistant Editor
DOROTHY I. BAUMWOLL

Editorial Board
PATRICK BRADY
WILLIAM E. GAIN
JAMES M. HEATH
STEVEN MAILLOUX
JOHN WHEATCROFT

Assistant to the Editors
JANE S. LENTZ

Contributors should send manuscripts with a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Editors, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania 17837.



LEWISBURG
BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON AND TORONTO: ASSOCIATED UNIVERSITY PRESSES

This phrase calls to mind the comment of Martin Friedland, the eminent Sheeler scholar, that "the precisionist painting process is one of the continual editing." Both remarks emphasize the process of putting art into final form; both acknowledge the distinction that art gains in cooling and shaping. In attending to this final form, Williams and Sheeler were guided by knowledge of the actual mechanics of visions, but they used that knowledge to disrupt our customary ways of seeing things. In actual vision, Rudolph Arnheim writes, the "conflict between the intruding outer world and the order of the inner world creates a tension, which is eliminated when a movement of the eyeball makes the centers coincide, thus adapting the inner order to the outer."⁴ Williams and Sheeler, in their art, control the coincidence of the two centers, placing at this convergence something viewers would customarily ignore, or off-centering their audiences deliberately.

In the process of "editing" for final form, Sheeler and Williams shared much in common. "When I paint," Sheeler said, "my object is to show what I have found, not what I am looking for." The forms he discovered, wrote a biographer, were "unfinished"—forms which for us are source forms." The same emphasis on vision and form typified Williams's work when he met Sheeler; he was on guard against a "poetic looseness" that led to "little impact upon the mind."⁵ His lines were tightly cast, his stanzas minimal. Yet, as Williams said, he and Sheeler were also interested in the "direct relation of reality." How could they have reconciled with their focus on form, necessarily a kind of abstraction, with "direct relation"?

The answer lies in their "visual editing." Both understood that they had an *acquired* way of seeing. Sheeler said that when he studied with William Merritt Chase he was ordered to complete each painting in a single sitting. "We didn't have the eyes to see beyond what a single sitting could reveal," he said. He implied that most of the picture appeared to him only after attentive, disciplined contemplation. The vision he sought was not in appearance *per se*. He wrote in his *Black Book*, a kind of personal Bible, that "we may only discern the thing when it is on the horizon—either in advance or retreat—in the moment that we pass the edges are blurred and the form unrecognized."⁶

In the same book he copied a Zen parable by Ch'ing-yuan that is revealing: "To a man who knows nothing, Mountains are Mountains, Waters are Waters, and Trees are Trees. But when

The Dynamics of Vision in William Carlos Williams and Charles Sheeler

William Marling

Case Western Reserve University

IN the 1910s both William Carlos Williams and Charles Sheeler belonged to an artistic coterie called the Arensberg Circle, but curiously, they did not meet until afterward when both were mature artists. At that point, Sheeler said, "Here is the man I've been looking for all my life." And Williams felt Sheeler "looked at things directly, truly. . . as we talked we found that we both meant to lead a life which meant direct association and communication with immediate things."¹

They became friends quickly. References to "visiting the Sheelers" in Connecticut and New York are common in Williams's correspondence after 1919. He even told his publisher to drop in on them. Sheeler read Williams's *In the American Grain* as it appeared chapter by chapter in *Broom* and "was warmly enthusiastic." Occasionally they collaborated, as in their 1925 attack on H. L. Mencken in *Aesthetic*.²

The relationship was more than a social one. The backdrop of Williams's development as a poet is a pattern of collaboration with painters in whom he found an echo of his interests. Friendships with Charles Demuth and Marsden Hartley expanded his thematic and technical range; the presence of Marcel Duchamp led him to numerous poetic experiments. Sheeler would seem a different case, however, since both men were mature artists when they met. Yet they looked to one another for help in promoting "the American scene," and they shared a common belief in the visual nature of the creative process. They confirmed each other, personally and artistically, in a way that Williams hinted at in his *Autobiography*, when he used Sheeler's renovated gatehouse as an analogue by which to explain the importance of "projective verse." "It is ourselves we organize" Williams concluded, "to give the mind its stay."³

he has studied and knows a little, Mountains are no longer Mountains, Waters no longer Waters, and Trees no longer Trees. But when he has thoroughly understood, Mountains are again Mountains, Waters are Waters, and Trees are Trees." Beside this Sheeler wrote "I like."⁷

Other painters who applied Eastern philosophy to their work moved in Sheeler's circle. He was a close friend of Marcel Duchamp, who had been influenced by Oriental philosophy, and he worked for and exhibited with Marius De Zayas, who "expounded the Quietist philosophy of Lao-tse with its many corollaries for art and life."⁸

Sheeler's work first attracted Williams for its "bewildering directness of vision, without blur, through the fantastic overlay with which our lives so vastly are concerned." He claimed that Sheeler's vision was related to his own. "Not ideas about the thing, but the thing itself," counseled Williams.⁹

How did this poet and painter imbue their theoretic concerns with this quality? Why do the mountains become mountains again? Koryu Osaka, a contemporary Zen master, commented on Sheeler's favorite parable that the student, after extensive meditation, understood that the world was fundamentally united as matter: "In the state of oneness, the mountain is no longer high, the water no longer deep." The world becomes undifferentiated. Osaka noted, however, that "when you work hard and do not become attached to this highly desirable state of oneness . . . you also perceive distinctions, but the distinctions are now viewed through the wisdom of subtle observation . . . the colors become subtle colors, the sounds subtle sounds, taste, subtle taste."¹⁰ Everything becomes individuated and unique, the "magic reality" typical of Sheeler's painting and Williams's poetry.

In *Visual Thinking* Rudolph Arnheim gives an Occidental explanation of this process: "There appear to be three attitudes. One kind of observer perceives the contribution of the context as an attribute of the object itself." Another type "seek[s] to peel off the influence of the context in order to obtain the local object in its pure unimpaired state." Arnheim notes the same third state as the Zen master: "The third approach fully appreciates and enjoys the infinite and often profound and puzzling changes the object undergoes as it moves from situation to situation." Arnheim calls this "the aesthetic attitude."¹¹ Whether

we choose the Eastern or Western version, we can note this visual dynamic in both Sheeler and Williams.

Sheeler's "aesthetic attitude" began with close attention to his own vision:

It is inevitable that the eye of the artist should see not one but a succession of images . . . the eye is roving, and includes at one time only a very small area that is sharply defined. Moving on, it performs the same function within another area, so that the total vision of a landscape, for instance, is really a mosaic of small fragments separately seen, which become united in our memory. This composite image creates the illusion that we have seen at one time everything within the landscape sharply defined, from the rocks at our feet to the distant blue hills, but we have not.

An unexpressed part of this process is time. "Perception takes time," notes Arnheim. Time is the realm in which this accretive, meditative dynamic of seeing accumulates. There mountains become mountains again, having been dissolved and reassembled again in what Sheeler calls a "mosaic." This mosaic is guided by the primal knowledge gained in the initial dissolution. In that stage Sheeler learned, said Williams, that "every hair on every body anywhere, now or then, in its minute distinctiveness is the same hair, on every body, anywhere, at any time, changed as it may be to feather, quill or scale."¹² Amid this oneness, Sheeler explains that "something seen keeps recurring in memory with an insistence increasingly vivid with attributes added which escape observation on first acquaintance. Gradually a mental image is built up," Sheeler said, "which takes on a personal identity."¹³

Unlike other painters, Sheeler experienced neither a flash of perception nor a commanding impression, and sought neither personal expression nor analytic dissection. His vision was reductive; it sought common denominators, general conditions of experience. But it was also cumulative and diverse; he waited for initially unnoticed attributes and those subjective qualities that gave a sense of "personal identity." "To cipher his widest reaches of understanding," wrote Williams, he "used characters of intensely local bearing."¹⁴

As he began his canvases, Sheeler concerned himself with mass and form; the degree to which his work is dominated by monochromatic color schemes, or open unmodulated expanses

of water, sky, or field has been unappreciated. In the background of most of his work is this suggestion of undifferentiated flux, a primal ground in which mountains are no longer mountains.

Against this background of oneness he composed the particulars masterfully. Sheeler said that he "endeavored to combine the memory and *the present* in any given painting."¹⁵ For a painter this means the closure of masses, the arrangement of forms, and the use of such rhythmic elements as lines and points.

At this point meditative art can move in two ways. One emphasizes discipline and excludes expression of the self; it insists on a high degree of finish and understatement in the handling of materials. The other, especially in semi-e painting and Zen poetry, encourages the use of the accidental and personal as notes of the differentiation present in unity.

Sheeler's proclivity, always toward the disciplined branch, was encouraged by Duchamp, with whom he talked about "suppressing the flamboyancy of personality in art." In his work, Sheeler said, he took care that "no embellishment meets the eye."¹⁶ Friedman noted that Sheeler's pictures "are brought to an icily defined and flawless finish, with virtually no evidence of the brushstrokes or the trials and hesitations of arriving at the finished stage . . . there is little reveling in the sensuous qualities of pigment."¹⁷

During this period of friendship, Williams arrived at a poetically similar technique, though by a different process. Williams's personal demon was formlessness. His friend Marsden Hartley expressed the situation in a letter to Alfred Stieglitz:

Williams you know is a very lovely fellow for himself and he certainly has made a splendid struggle to plasticize all his various selves and he is perhaps more people at once than anyone I've ever known—not vague persons but he's a small town of serious citizens in one being.¹⁸

Since childhood Williams had felt a lack of personal coherence in the face of strong emotion, particularly when dealing with women or sex. His brother Ed had counseled restraint, and had guided Williams toward a highly defined, intractable classicism in both personality and art.

Thus, until 1914 Williams wrote a traditional, neo-Keatsian poetry; emotional qualities were smothered in meter, rhyme,

and archaisms. But in the Arensberg Circle he met artists such as Demuth, Hartley, and Sheeler, who encouraged him to combine his earlier interest in painting with his poetry. This gave Williams the outline of a solution to his personal conflict:

My failure to work inside a pattern—a positive sin—is the cause of my virtues . . . I cannot work inside a pattern because I can't find a pattern that will have me. My whole effort . . . is to find a pattern large enough, modern enough, flexible enough to include my desires.¹⁹

The personal "pattern" that he eventually arrived at was so important that Williams deleted it from the final draft of the *Autobiography*:

I have had several but not many intimate friendships with men during my life, patterned I suppose, on my youthful experience with my brother . . . all artists [here he mentions Pound, Demuth, and McAlmon] . . . On the other hand, there is Flossie, my wife, who is the rock on which I have built.

Men have given the direction to my life and women have always supplied the energy.²⁰

This clue provided, an association of masculinity with form and line, of femininity with color and mass, gradually reveals itself in Williams's work. From Demuth and Hartley, Williams had learned to use these associations as a way of working out and balancing his personal inner turbulence. In Sheeler he discovered the confirmation of his method.

The language with which Williams described his "aesthetic" is more lineal. He thought that two opposed forces ran through all art: "One is closely clipt with ascertained bounds while the other runs away, going along from point to point, like a child picking flowers under a hedge." He recognized the second, "romantic" impulse as the basis and final justification of art. But if he gave himself over to this impulse, a paralyzing personal muteness resulted. For Williams the state of "oneness" was abandonment of form. It was solitary, wordless, certain, obsessive and unproductive—a state of blankness preparatory to something else.²¹

Williams moved on to the reconstitution of the "mosaic" as soon as possible, though he tried to keep classic forms at a distance. "Sit down blind and start to fling the words around like pigments—try to see what nature would do under the same

circumstances," he wrote.²² He believed that the impulse contained its own principles, an idea he derived from Kandinsky's writings and study of Matisse. Williams learned to consider the approach and passing of his sensual impulses, in particular, as closely as Sheeler had considered objects on the horizon. When he wrote to Pound "I can't write fiction. All I do is try to understand something in its natural colors and shapes," Williams was indicating his first intimation of how to form his feelings. Color and shape were the first important modes of control that painting revealed to him.

For Williams color was an almost chemical reaction to experience. Color, he wrote, was "something in any case ponderable in the experience of other men." "Color is light," he wrote in a review of American naive painting. "Color is what most distinguished the artist: color was what these people wanted to brighten the walls of their houses, color to the last inch of the canvas." In color lay their admirable vitality and also their error, for it "ran, mostly, to the very edge of the canvas as if they were afraid that something would be left out, covered the whole of their surface."²³ Covering all, Williams learned, it diminished all.

Color is bound by the forms that it fills, and Williams learned that although form was primarily a stop on the romantic impulse, it could also be approached from the inside—employed in the putting down to create rhythm or measure:

there is a tendency expressed in all the masters when their early and later works are compared to become more simple or as I believe more abstract, more general. That is he sees not trees and fence rails but horizontal and perpendicular lines, not an apple and a human face but crimson and a faint green shadow. But beyond that there are laws, even more abstract, that one rarely discovers, which may, in general, be classed as of that rhythm which bespeaks life.²⁴

Williams found he could best achieve this rhythm through contraction, a kind of visual or poetic shorthand: "Picking out a flower or a bird in detail that becomes an abstract term of enlightenment." These highly defined details, often in the foreground of the work of Sheeler and Williams, act as visual avatars of an implied primal or "contextual" unity. This was one of the parallels in Williams's mind when he said, "A design in the poem and a design in the picture should make them more or less the same thing."²⁵

After the initial ferment occurred, Williams said, a "calming" took place, and the recalcitrant impulse was put into form: "the grossly active agent of the moment . . . tries to break the artist from his complete position to make him serve an incomplete function":

This is very bad, this looseness, according to one of the major tenets of art, conscious restriction of prescribed form, and very good according to another—unconfined acceptance of experience. Close order makes for penetration. Looseness is likely to prove weakness, having too little impact upon the mind.²⁶

Thus the classical force that keeps art "closely clipt" within ascertained bounds came to the fore. It prevented the "looseness" that led to "little impact upon the mind."

Williams devised a number of limiting devices; the ways in which the triadic line and his punctuation check the grammatical flow of his verse have been much discussed. But his purely visual means have gone unnoticed.

In Williams's early poetry the shapes of things are of particular importance. "The young doctor is dancing with happiness . . . alone at the prow of the ferry," he wrote of himself in "January Suite." The shape of the prow—the V-shape—is Williams's most frequent sign for something ineffable temporarily caught and held. In "A Solitary Disciple" the shape appears in the steeple of the church. The title of "The Attic which Is Desire" makes the meaning of the sign explicit. That poem describes "the unused tent / of / bare beams / beyond which / directly wait / the night / and day"—an empty form awaiting a nomenclature infusion. Williams pinions to this a flashing soda sign that represents the present and the particular.²⁷

The use of visual shapes in Williams's poetry is not limited to the acute angle, which he learned from Kandinsky. In "The Red Lily," when Williams addressed the spirit he wished to evoke, he stated, "the crossroads is your home." In other poems he used densely cross-hatched masses that call attention, as Osaka Roshi might say, to their "suchness." The "reddish / purplish, forked, upstanding, twiggly / stuff of bushes" in "Spring and All" is famous, as is "the alphabet of / the trees" in "The Botticellian Trees."²⁸ Williams's genius at visual "signing" reached a pinnacle in "Flowers by the Sea," in which he made the objects exchange forms and natures within eight lines.

Tracing the careers of Sheeler and Williams in tandem reveals several interesting linkages. Sheeler discovered his "visual aesthetic" several years before Williams, beginning with *Lhasa* (1916). The subject, the holy city of Tibetan Buddhism, is linked to Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending the Staircase* in its emphasis on the stairlike structure of the mountain; the spiraling motion replicates the revolutions of the nude's legs. Reviewing the picture, Williams wrote, "The monasteries of our thoughts have walls like any others for painting to carry us beyond them to reality. Lucky the man who can dispel them with a Sheeler."²⁹ In *Flower Forms* (1917), Sheeler established the primacy of form as his meditative tool. His color is luminous but premeditated; his modulations lack the spontaneity and vibrance that mark a colorist. His shading establishes edge and mass. A calm, accretive vision begins to guide his composition, and leads logically to *Church St. El* (1920). In this view of the elevated track and buildings, Sheeler borrows again from Eastern art. He compared his spatial handling here with that found in Oriental painting, noting that he "placed the point of greatest concern close to the position of the spectator, well down in front, rather than at some distant point on the horizon."³⁰ This was also his most complex and emphatically planar canvas to date, the impression of three dimensions owing only to the receding diagonals. He shows, for the first time, the mountain as mountain again.

At a corresponding point in his career, Williams was laying out the elements in such poetic landscapes as "The Tulip Bed" (1921) with the precision of a Canaletto.

The May sun - whom
all things imitate -
that glues small leaves to
the wooden trees
shone from the sky
through bluegaze clouds
upon the ground.
Under the leafy trees
where the suburban streets
lay crossed
with houses on each corner,
tangled shadows had begun
to join
the roadway and the lawns.
With excellent precision

the tulip bed
inside the iron fence
upreared its gaudy
yellow, white and red,
rimmed round with grass,
reposedly.³¹

Notice that Williams, like a painter, first decides on the source of light, then paints from the background to the foreground, from the top to the bottom. He leafs out his trees and paints in the skyscape: "shone from the sky / through bluegaze clouds." He drops down under the "leafy trees" and fills in details closer to the viewer. There are crossed streets, houses on each corner, and shadows that blur the edges of lawn and roadway. In the foreground and at the bottom of his canvas, unexpectedly, is "the tulip bed / inside the iron fence" where the tulips thrust up their "gaudy / yellow, white and red." But Williams has learned not to let his color run off the canvas. The tulips must be "rimmed round with grass / reposedly."

Around 1920 both artists adopted urban settings. *Church St. El* began an interest in the city for Sheeler that he continued in *Offices* (1922), which generated much the same effect except that he loosened his line somewhat. The formal patterns are loosely cast, and light bathes everything in a softer ambience. Color is more muted. The monochromatic color scheme suggests a fundamental unity to the highly reticulated masses.

Williams also kept the point of view in his urban scenes well above the rooftops. In "Fine Work with Pitch and Copper" (1935) we can imagine the men at work on the rooftops of Sheeler's canvases.

Now they are resting
in the fleckless light
separately in unison

like the sacks
of sifted stone stacked
regularly by twos

about the flat roof
ready after lunch
to be opened and strewn

The copper in eight
foot strips has been
beaten lengthwise

down the center at right angles and lies ready to edge the coping

One still chewing picks up a copper strip and runs his eye along it.³²

As Peter Schmidt noted, an important feature this poem shares with Sheeler's work is its confident identification of men with their jobs. The roofers are artists in industrial Arcadia and see in their materials the potential for formal order that Brancusi saw in stone.

Upper Deck (1929) is cited by most scholars as the turning point in Sheeler's art. The emergence of a magic reality in his painting seems at first the result of a fortuitous selection of subject, but Sheeler spoke of it as an accretive, evolving vision. He said of *Upper Deck*, "I never get over the differences between a landscape under clouds with every form receding into a common mass, and the same landscape when light falls upon it, bringing out form after form." The mechanical particulars of Sheeler's ship emerge from a skyscape with which they share a limited tonal range. In fact, if the lines defining the forms were removed, the masses would hardly be differentiated, save the extreme blacks and whites. "This" said Sheeler, "is what I have been getting ready for . . . the structural design implied in abstraction . . . presented in a wholly realistic manner."³³ Yet what Sheeler really discovered in this painting was the power of *line*. Long attracted to edges as his building blocks in the reconstructive stage of his vision, Sheeler here employed them with subtlety and precision. In mastering edges, he managed to imbue them with a noumenal quality. Dangerous, mysterious, holy, and radiant edges will slash across the best of Sheeler's mature work. They speak of the abyss under the object, the space behind the scene, a slight madness in an exact light. In human experience, after all, edges are so denotative that we overlook their phenomenology: they define walls, blades, streets, cliffs, and cracks. Yet at its edge each object is connected to everything else in the world.

"The edge cuts without cutting," noted Williams in "The Rose." In 1923 he was condensing his newfound aesthetics in the combative prose and intermittent poems of *Spring and All*. In "The Rose" he looked at a painting by Juan Gris and contemplated the sentimental value of the flower: "The rose car-

ried weight of love / but love is at an end—of roses"—and the dynamic involved in defining it freshly: "It is at the edge of the / petal that love waits." For Williams, as for Sheeler, the act of creating the edge was at this point *the* creative act. Edges created the object and related it to all other objects:

From the petals edge a line starts
that being of steel
infinitely fine, infinitely
rigid penetrates
the Milky Way
without contact . . .³⁴

Williams liked to keep his edges in motion (in the swirling shapes of "Ogre") or to change his vantage on them (as in "Young Housewife"). He liked to *arrive* at them, as he did with the attic or V-shape. He was working toward, but perhaps feared arriving at, the completely "defined" edge that dominated Sheeler's work. Sheeler had brought to culmination the aesthetic of definition/dissolution in which they were both working. Williams wanted to keep his means flexible, and an interesting parting of paths occurred about 1930, of which Williams's poem "The Yachts" and Sheeler's *Yachts* and *Pertaining to Yachts and Yachting* are a fine example.

Sheeler's *Yachts* (1924) is a lithograph, of which Williams could have seen copies; it resulted from studies for the earlier *Pertaining to Yachts and Yachting* (1922), a painting uncharacteristic of Sheeler, who was not a sportsman and had little knowledge of sailboats. The latter painting is intended to be a representation of motion, and it shows the influence in the Arensberg Circle of Futurism. The sail edges are overlaid and intersecting, conveying a dynamic quality. The waves are treated as blocky masses, suggesting faces to an imaginative viewer. Sheeler called the picture a "study in polyphonic form," a term drawn from Imagist poetry. The canvas is not typical of Sheeler's color, but its ochre to cobalt-blue range is common in Futurist paintings. Reviewing a show that included the canvas, Williams used the phrase "bellying sails," which he later included in his poem.

"The Yachts" appeared in 1935. It describes the movements of yachts in a harbor as they make several attempts to race. Williams captures the atmospheric effects of Sheeler's painting when he describes the boats as "moth-like in mists, scintillant in the minute / brilliance of cloudless days."³⁵ Through several

stanzas he appears to consider Sheeler's themes: the craftsmanship and definition of the yachts, which are "the best man knows to pit against" the ocean; the beauty of their motion; and the ubiquity of the sea. Sheeler's men are insignificant—Williams also calls them "ant-like."

Williams's first considerations are compositional, the relation of the large boats to the smaller "sycophant" ones. But after eight of the poem's eleven verses a change occurs. Williams sees that his real subject lies in his personalized images. "The horror of the race dawns staggering the mind," he writes. The yachts, objects of craft and edge, cut through a sea of human faces. Williams's focus had excluded human concerns; it was too "closely clipt." But Williams does not give over the poem to his discovery; he notes that the "skillful yachts pass over" human, emotional concerns, and he draws the conclusion back into the meditative frame. The yachts *pass over*, period. Once defined as yachts, they can hardly do otherwise.

The friendship between Williams and Sheeler continued into the fifties, but they shared less in common. Sheeler's canvases were more and more the carefully drafted, impeccably finished pictures that resulted from his study of the urban scene. Assessing the same scene, Williams would be impressed by its fecundity. In "The Poor" he wrote, "It's the anarchy of poverty / delights me."³⁶ Sheeler was an artist attending a disciplined vision, while Williams was turning, as he would write later, to the "covered, swaddled, pinched and saved, shrivelled, broken" things of life.³⁷

In later years Williams became convinced that Sheeler was "stuck," a victim of his own technique. He asked what Sheeler had done in his painting that he had not done in photography. Williams supplied no answer, but his own conclusion was clear. The disciplined, understated, highly finished school of meditative vision offered the artist a practicum, but not an end. The ceaseless innovation that Williams sought and enjoyed fed on the rough, the personal, the flamboyant, the fortuitous accident. They split irreconcilably. But their paths separated only after a long, common focus on the world as it dissolved and reestablished itself in an unmoving, patient eye.

Notes

1. Quoted in Constance Rourke, *Charles Sheeler: Artist in the American Tradition* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), pp. 49–50.
2. *Ibid.*

3. William Carlos Williams, *The Autobiography* (New York: Random House, 1951), p. 333; emphasis added.
4. Rudolph Arnheim, *Visual Thinking* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1969), p. 24.
5. Sheeler, in Rourke, pp. 40, 69. Williams in *Imaginations* (New York: New Directions, 1963), pp. 198, 203.
6. Quoted in Martin Friedman, *Charles Sheeler* (New York: Watson-Guptill, 1975), pp. 15, 95.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
8. Rourke, p. 86.
9. William Carlos Williams, introduction, *Charles Sheeler* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1939), p. 6. Williams's maxim appears variously; see "A Sort of a Song," *Selected Poems* (New York: New Directions, 1969), p. 109.
10. Koryu Osaka Roshi, *On Zen Practice II*, ed. Hakuyu Taizan Maezumi and Bernard Teisegen Glassman (Los Angeles, Calif.: Zen Center of Los Angeles, 1977), pp. 76–77.
11. Arnheim, p. 45.
12. Williams, introduction, *Sheeler*, p. 8.
13. Sheeler, in Rourke, longer passage pp. 119–20, shorter passage, p. 168.
14. Williams, unpublished draft of the introduction, *Sheeler*. Draft is ms. C-75 (a through aa, bb, and cc) at State University of New York at Buffalo.
15. Sheeler, in Friedman, *Sheeler*, p. 99.
16. Sheeler, in Rourke, p. 136.
17. Martin Friedman, *The Precisionist View in American Art* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1960), p. 13.
18. Marsden Hartley, letter to Alfred Stieglitz, 9 October 1923, Stieglitz Archive, Beinecke Library, Yale University.
19. Williams, letter to John Riordan, 13 October 1926, Barrett Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville.
20. Williams, unpublished version of *The Autobiography*, at Beinecke Library (Yale University Autobiography), Yale University.
21. William Carlos Williams, *The Embodiment of Knowledge* (New York: New Directions, 1974), p. 95.
22. William Carlos Williams, *Selected Essays* (New York: New Directions, 1969), p. 305.
23. William Carlos Williams, *Selected Letters* (New York: McDowell, Obolensky, 1957), p. 104; and *Selected Essays*, pp. 34, 330, 334.
24. Williams, *Embodiment*, p. 176.
25. Williams, *Speaking Straight Ahead: Interviews with William Carlos Williams* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1975), p. 53.
26. Williams, *Essays*, p. 203.
27. Williams, *Selected Poems*, pp. 3, 10, 47.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 24, 48.
29. Williams, introduction, *Sheeler*, p. 7.
30. Sheeler, in Friedman, *Sheeler*, p. 36.
31. William Carlos Williams, *The Collected Earlier Poems* (New York: New Directions, 1951), p. 221.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 368.
33. Sheeler, in Rourke, pp. 109, 143.
34. Williams, *Collected Earlier Poems*.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 106.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 415.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 396.