

## Social and Cultural

### Juan Gris links with Cubism

#### Bottle and Knife 1911



Figure 2 Bottle and Fish Braque



Figure 1 Bottle and Knife 1911

#### Influence from Picasso and Braque

- The painting 'The bottle and Knife' is an example of Analytical Cubism from 1911, a movement which is thought to have only lasted from 1909-1912. Juan Gris originally an engineer, moved to Paris, initially working as a newspaper cartoonist. He began focusing more on his painting in 1910, so this work is a very early exploration of a style which was heavily culturally influenced by the early cubist work of Picasso and Braque.

#### Rules of Perspective

- In the 'The Bottle and Knife' Gris shows reference to how the artists had begun to breakdown the basic rules of perspective, influenced by Cezanne, the group believed that they could create images showing multiple view points and reducing objects to their geometric parts. In Gris's painting, 'Bottle with knife' he produces a work which confuses the viewer by presenting us with a simplified version of reality, objects taken back to their most basic shapes.

#### Angular Brush Strokes

- During this movement, the works produced by Picasso, Braque and Gris shared many stylistic similarities, Gris's use of brush strokes in the painting which are very controlled and angular, dramatic diagonal strokes which are very similar to the later works of Cezanne and the early cubist

works of Picasso.



Figure 4 Cezanne close up



Figure 3 Gris close up

### **Influence on Colour**

- The colour, in the painting, like Picasso's and Braque's from this time is almost non-existent except for the use of a monochromatic scheme that often includes grey, blue and ochre. Instead of an emphasis on colour, analytic cubists focused on forms like the cylinder, sphere and the cone to represent the natural world.

### **Repetitive Imagery**

- The similarities can also be seen in paintings like Braque's 'Bottle and Fish', like Gris's painting the image is a complicated composition of multiple view points and repetitive imagery. Braque said 'once an object has been incorporated in a painting it accepts a new destiny' and this is true of the journey Braque, Picasso and Gris take the objects within their still life's on, using the objects like characters within a story to play many different parts, sometimes almost unrecognisable from the original source.

## Newspaper and Glass 1914



Figure 5 Juan Gris Glass and Newspaper 1914



Figure 6 Picasso Guitar 1912

### *Synthetic Cubism*

#### **Use of 'Papier Collé'**

- Gris quickly progressed through analytical cubism, with its faceted forms and shifting perspectives, to Synthetic cubism, in work like 'Newspaper and Glass' using overlapping flat planes of colour and texture. Gris has started to, like Picasso and Braque, experiment with forms of collage, using this exciting new medium he took his work to highly creative solutions. Clearly seen in this art work, Gris uses the new 'papier collé' technique, overlapping materials to emphasis the simplification of form and shape.

### **Gris and Henri Matisse**

#### **Influence on Colour from Matisse**

- In 1914 Gris and his wife left Paris to escape the German invasion at the start of WW1. Moving to the South of France he became friends with Henry Matisse, and the friendship had a lasting influence on both of the artist's work. Gris began show a stronger confidence in his use of colour, and the artist's individuality starts to shine through. In 'Newspaper and Glass' although Juan Gris uses some of the muted colour pallet similar to Picasso's various collaged works from this period, the use of the patterned

green table cloth, however shows the beginning of a much bolder confidence with colour, which becomes a defining factor of his work, and is attributed to his working friendship with Matisse.

### **Influence on imagery**

- The same 'le journal' newspaper is seen as recurring image as is the shaped wine glass, bottles and all three artists seem obsessed with these objects almost as their own symbolism within their art. The cubists used a variety of 'found objects' newspapers, letters posters, cigarette packets and music sheets. Gris works with positive and negative space cutting the paper with perhaps a knife to play around with negative space similar to Picasso's 'Guitar, sheet music and wine glass' and 'Guitar' 1912 – 14

### **Influence on Perspective**

- Picasso's compositions from this period are very flat and moved much more towards abstraction, Gris's picture is still using some traditional types of perspective, the tilted table and the use of form from shading, Gris still tries to give us areas of perspective we can still hold onto, and helps us read the image better.