

Everyone knows Pliny's anecdote of Appelles and Protogenes. It demonstrates clearly the æsthetic pleasure resulting solely from this odd combination of which I have spoken.

Appelles landed one day on the Isle of Rhodes to see the works of Protogenes, who lived there. Protogenes was not in his studio when Appelles arrived. An old woman was there guarding a large canvas ready to be painted. Instead of leaving his name, Appelles drew on the canvas a line so delicate that nothing subtler could be conceived.

On his return Protogenes, seeing the drawn line, recognized the hand of Appelles, and traced thereupon a line of another color even more subtle, in such a way that there appeared to be three.

Appelles came back again the next day, without finding him whom he sought, and the subtlety of the line he drew that day reduced Protogenes to despair. This sketch was for a long time the admiration of connoisseurs who viewed it with as much pleasure as if gods and goddesses had been depicted instead of almost invisible tracings.



The secret aim of the young artists of the extreme schools is to produce pure painting. It is an entirely new plastic art. It is still in its first stage, and is not yet as abstract as it would like to be. Most of the young painters work a great deal with mathematics without knowing it, but they have not yet abandoned nature whom they patiently question so that she may teach them the way of life.

A Picasso studies an object as a surgeon dissects a body.

This art of pure painting, if it succeeds in disengaging itself entirely from the ancient school of painting, will not necessarily cause such painting to disappear, any more than the development of music has caused the disappearance of different kinds of literature, or than the acridity of tobacco has replaced the savour of food.