

13 August – 4 September 2021

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We see a tree bearing letters like fruit. We see a table resting on a chair. We see departures from classification, from function, from everyday sense. And they are presented within a relatively orthodox aesthetic frame, of black and white graphics, painted elements and pleasant colours. The twisted arrays of numerals and letters, furniture and equipment, the mashing of things from different – incommensurable – systems. A fascination with the entanglement of science and the modern, with the great proposition: That science can provide the (evidence, logic, rationale) for anything. And must, and will. That what can be known is reducible to what can be known scientifically.

Reduction is Cullen's *modus operandi* too. Isn't this his point? He both critiques the reductionism of 20th century science, and practices it "at a distance". The black impersonal trees for instance are not oranges, almonds, and apple trees are they? Or are they? These gardens, stripped back and awry, shake off the idea that they can yield data.

In the black and white diagrams there is an excess of scientific infrastructure, and the notations sometimes adhere to objects but also float off untethered to the system that has called them into being. We admire their artificiality and wonder why we ever believed (in) them. Just as Giambattista Nolli's map of Rome, also simply black and white (to distinguish between object and field) could not prepare anyone for a visit to the Campidoglio whose textures and temperatures undermine the very possibility of a rationale, in the same way Cullen's ironical 'illustrations of reason' subvert reason. *Fig. 1*, for instance, appears to be a simple rendering of an Islamic Courtyard garden. But the cool trees in ordered rows (could be fruit trees, could be not) are disturbed by a canal that runs diagonally through the grid, upsetting the straightforward cosmology it represents.

In *Fig. 44* two canals cross each other, narrowly missing a third. The four quarters of the universe are no longer symmetrical. A water tank, the moon and three trees occupy the picture plane, distributed across a surface that is not articulated, but suggested by shadows: a plane undifferentiated from the space it creates. This *sketch of the outward appearance* is not that. It reflects a reality in which things both are and are not what they seem.

These 'diagrams illustrating reason,' as Cullen refers to them, aren't performative in the way the sculptures are. They're not actually defying gravity, holding each other up, abruptly intersecting with each other. In the sculptural pieces we see everyday objects tenderly but firmly rearranged, angularly for sure, but with a concern for their habitual trajectories, as if Cullen is challenging these objects to reassess their usual roles in daily life.

The sculptures aren't mistranslations or bad copies (of Tatlin, for instance), but interventions that disturb the realization of systems of thought. They expose the innocent hopefulness involved in the proposition that measurement can produce knowledge about the state of an 'empirical system.' We feel caught up in this exposé, uncovered by it, our complicity with these theories daylighted, and our willingness to go along with them chided. When we enter Cullen's own system we find a different realm – one that is familiar but unfamiliar, a complete and incomplete system where we are dismayed perhaps to find that things still work, have at least a degree of functionality even as they don't.

The practice of measuring the world occurs within a set of conceptual, ontological and technological frames that support it. Cullen plays with the quantity concepts that make this world possible, such as weight, height, length and width. He tinkers with the relationships between the instruments used to gather, transmit and evaluate data, and questions its faithfulness to "actual" objects and their relations. He draws our attention to the possibility that our world now is simply a consensus amongst an epistemological community about representing stuff with system A rather than with system B.