

<p>Georges Braque, <i>Rio Tinto Factory at L'Estaque,</i> 1910, oil on canvas, 65 x 54 cm (26 x 21")</p>	<p>initial analyses</p>	<p>In 1906 Braque travelled to L'Estaque, near Marseilles and stayed there until 1907, he was to return again on a frequent basis.</p>
<p>The Rio Tinto factory is seen from a distance, partly from below and partly as if faced directly. The buildings rise up an incline with a blur of building edges so that they are partly concealed as if in a mist.</p> <p>The palette has been limited to black, white and red with perhaps ochre.</p> <p>There is no definition of horizon and the overall effect is to shift from the depiction of a landscape towards geometric shapes.</p>		<p>Braque and Picasso met in 1907. But it was not until after 1909 that they worked from adjacent studios in the same building. Thus, these two paintings of the same subject – a factory – are factored independently at different times and in two different places, southern France and Spain.</p> <p>When Picasso was in Horta de Ebro, Braque was in La Roche-Guyon, north of Paris.</p>
<p>The Braque painting is in the Musée d'Art Moderne de le Ville de Paris and often displayed in the Centre Pompidou, Paris. The Picasso is in the Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg.</p> <p>Pablo Picasso, <i>Brick Factory in Tortosa (Factory at Horta de Ebro),</i> 1909, oil on canvas, 51 x 60 cm (20 x 24")</p>	<p>The achievement in Braque's <i>Rio Tinto Factory</i> is its ideal of representing volume and spacetime without traditional perspective and without anchoring the viewer to a single field. Picasso's comparable achievement in his 1907 <i>Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)</i> was not realised in his landscape work. This is partly because Braque and Picasso have a different use of edges depicting buildings and roofs. In fact Picasso's tendency to symbolic and decorative forms is emphasised here in his depiction of trees.</p> <p>Note 1. John Richardson, <i>The Observer</i>, 1 December 1957. Note 2. Edwin Mullins. <i>Braque</i>, London: Thames and Hudson, 1968, p. 51.</p>	<p>Braque said in December 1957, '... the whole Renaissance tradition is antipathetic to me. The hard-and-fast rules of perspective which it succeeded in imposing on art were a ghastly mistake which it has taken four centuries to redress.' (Note 1) A large retrospective of Cézanne's work in Paris opened in September 1907. Cézanne's rejection of artificial perspective and lack of aerial perspective had a profound and lasting effect on both Braque and Picasso.</p>
<p>The Brick factory in Tortosa is seen from an elevated position. The buildings have been depicted with sharp edges and have been given the solid weight of stone. Included in the background are stylised palm tree forms. The false perspective in the roofs is deliberately disruptive.</p> <p>The palette uses grey, orange and yellow, with green and black for the tree leaves and blue for part of the sky. Structurally the painting includes a horizon interrupted by a chimney and three prominent trees.</p>		<p>Braque and Picasso's preoccupation with volume and multiple spacetime moved their work away from the landscape tradition and toward still life. As Edmund Mullins noted as early as 1968, 'Braque's growing affection for the still-life theme over the forthcoming years [1910-14] represents ... not so much the shutting out of the wider world as the embracing of it, bringing it all within reach.' (Note 2) The overall subject continues to be contemplative and not the meditation encouraged by iconic or <i>trompe l'oeil</i> paintings.</p>