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| Artist | Georges Braque |
| Title | Houses at L’Estaque  |
| Date | 1908 |
| Medium | Oil on canvas |
| Scale | 121cm by 95 cm |
| Scope/s | Landscape & Cubism  |
| Style | Faceted Cubism  |
| Patron | He didn’t have a patron – so they were free to experiment |
| Location | Painted at L’Estaque, France |
| Function |  |

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| Formal features/How ‘Modernist’? |
| Composition | Overlapping architecture and hillside view at L’Estaque from multiple perspectives. Darker colours at the top of the composition, with larger irregular geometric shapes (irregular prisms and triangles) in the centre. |
| Colour or texture | Mostly greys and browns colours in this landscape – typical monochromatic, dark earthy tones. Limited colour palette emphasises Braque’s use of form. |
| Light & tone | Lighter shades to show the shadow and highlight the use of different perspectives and the angles, rather than depth.  |
| Space & depth or relief | No horizon line or sky in this landscape painting (unconventional) – sense of depth given by the overlapping of the similarly painted roofs (mainly brown but outlined grey). |
| Line or brushwork | Hatching brushwork (seen particularly on the most visible house in the mid-left centre) highlights the shadows caused by the facets overlapping each other, strengthening the angular forms of the houses and gives the work an unpolished finish.  |

Influence from cultural/social factors:

Braque had worked alongside Matisse and other Fauve artists but after the Cezanne Retrospective, he returns to the South of France and paints the landscape again in a new way, inspired by the forms and limited colours of Cezanne.

Owned African carvings, their rawness inspired him. Radical simplification as a way to intensify power also important here.

Also inspired by Picasso’s compression of space in Les Demoiselles d’Avignon and his own earlier experiments in La Grande Nude

Stylistic comment and artistic influence: Braque saw Picasso’s Les Demoiselles d’Avignon and was horrified by its ugliness and intensity, but was inspired by his use of form. Braque wanted to see how he could progress Cezanne’s lack of eloquence & fusing of little facets, he went to the same locations.

Use or development of materials, techniques & processes: Braque wanted to show the process of painting and present the work as a 2D canvas, rather than trying to give the impression that it is a window into another world. Every scrap of detail is edited out, the shading not giving a feeling of solidity, and some corners could appear to be sticking out of the picture or pointing back into it. Braque wanted to compress this process of seeing into one single moment – one synthesized view

Influence from technological factors: With the invention of the camera Braque wanted to create a painting which could explore where the camera couldn’t go, seen by the multiple perspectives.

In the modern world Braque wanted to show progress on a static canvas.

E.S.



Critical text quote: “Cubes”, Vauxcelles at the Salon giving style its name.

“Obsessed with Cezanne”/ “Process of seeing into one synthesised view”, Robert Hughes