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Avantgarde  
|

**European Studies**  
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**Manet: *Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*  
1863**



# Raffael (school)



# Aristotle

## *Poetics*

- Poetry in general seems to have sprung from two causes, each of them lying deep in our nature. First, the instinct of imitation is implanted in man from childhood, one difference between him and other animals being that he is the most imitative of living creatures, and through imitation (*mimesis*) learns his earliest lessons; and no less universal is the pleasure felt in things imitated. We have evidence of this in the facts of experience. Objects which in themselves we view with pain, we delight to contemplate when reproduced with minute fidelity: such as the forms of the most ignoble animals and of dead bodies. The cause of this again is, that to learn gives the liveliest pleasure, not only to philosophers but to men in general; whose capacity, however, of learning is more limited. Thus the reason why men enjoy seeing a likeness is, that in contemplating it they find themselves learning or inferring, and saying perhaps, 'Ah, that is he.' For if you happen not to have seen the original, the pleasure will be due not to the imitation as such, but to the execution, the colouring, or some such other cause.

- Imitation, then, is one instinct of our nature. Next, there is the instinct for 'harmony' and rhythm, metres being manifestly sections of rhythm. Persons, therefore, starting with this natural gift developed by degrees their special aptitudes, till their rude improvisations gave birth to Poetry.

# Drawing grid

Albrecht Dürer (1471-1428)



# ***The Draughtsman's Contract***

Peter Greenaway  
(GB 1982)













At first glance, mimesis seems to be a stylizing of reality in which the ordinary features of our world are brought into focus by a certain exaggeration, the relationship of the imitation to the object it imitates being something like the relationship of dancing to walking. Imitation always involves selecting something from the continuum of experience, thus giving boundaries to what really has no beginning or end. *Mimêsis* involves a framing of reality that announces that what is contained within the frame is not simply real. Thus the more "real" the imitation the more fraudulent it becomes (Michael Davis: *The Poetry of Philosophy: On Aristotle's Poetics* 1999)

The camera... on the one hand extends our comprehension of the necessities that rule our lives; on the other, it manages to assure us of an immense and unexpected field of action.

# Eugène Atget (1857-1927)



Not for nothing were the pictures of Atget compared with those of the scene of a crime. But is not every spot of our cities the scene of a crime? every passerby a perpetrator? Does not the photographer -- descendent of augurers and haruspices -- uncover guilt in his pictures?  
(Walter Benjamin)

# Filippo Tommaso Marinetti

Filippo Tommaso Emilio Marinetti (22 December 1876 – 2 December 1944) was an Italian poet and editor, the founder of the Futurist movement. He was associated with the utopian and Symbolists artistic and literary community Abbaye de Créteil between 1907 and 1908. Marinetti is best known as the author of the first Futurist Manifesto, which was written and published in 1909. In early 1918 he founded the Partito Politico Futurista or Futurist Political Party, which only a year later merged with Benito Mussolini's Fasci Italiani di Combattimento. Marinetti was one of the first affiliates of the Italian Fascist Party. (source: Wikipedia)





# Marinetti

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HY8kVa0qB9Q>

# MANIFESTO OF FUTURISM

- We want to sing the love of danger, the habit of energy and rashness.
- The essential elements of our poetry will be courage, audacity and revolt.
- Literature has up to now magnified pensive immobility, ecstasy and slumber. We want to exalt movements of aggression, feverish sleeplessness, the double march, the perilous leap, the slap and the blow with the fist.
- We declare that the splendor of the world has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed. A racing automobile with its bonnet adorned with great tubes like serpents with explosive breath ... a roaring motor car which seems to run on machine-gun fire, is more beautiful than the Victory of Samothrace.
- We want to sing the man at the wheel, the ideal axis of which crosses the earth, itself hurled along its orbit.
- The poet must spend himself with warmth, glamour and prodigality to increase the enthusiastic fervor of the primordial elements.
- Beauty exists only in struggle. There is no masterpiece that has not an aggressive character. Poetry must be a violent assault on the forces of the unknown, to force them to bow before man.

# MANIFESTO OF FUTURISM

- We are on the extreme promontory of the centuries! What is the use of looking behind at the moment when we must open the mysterious shutters of the impossible? Time and Space died yesterday. We are already living in the absolute, since we have already created eternal, omnipresent speed.
- We want to glorify war — the only cure for the world — militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of the anarchists, the beautiful ideas which kill, and contempt for woman.
- We want to demolish museums and libraries, fight morality, feminism and all opportunist and utilitarian cowardice.
- We will sing of the great crowds agitated by work, pleasure and revolt; the multi-colored and polyphonic surf of revolutions in modern capitals: the nocturnal vibration of the arsenals and the workshops beneath their violent electric moons: the gluttonous railway stations devouring smoking serpents; factories suspended from the clouds by the thread of their smoke; bridges with the leap of gymnasts flung across the diabolic cutlery of sunny rivers: adventurous steamers sniffing the horizon; great-breasted locomotives, puffing on the rails like enormous steel horses with long tubes for bridle, and the gliding flight of aeroplanes whose propeller sounds like the flapping of a flag and the applause of enthusiastic crowds.



## Umberto Boccioni, "La rue entre dans la maison"



We declare that the splendor of the world has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed. A racing automobile with its bonnet adorned with great tubes like serpents with explosive breath .

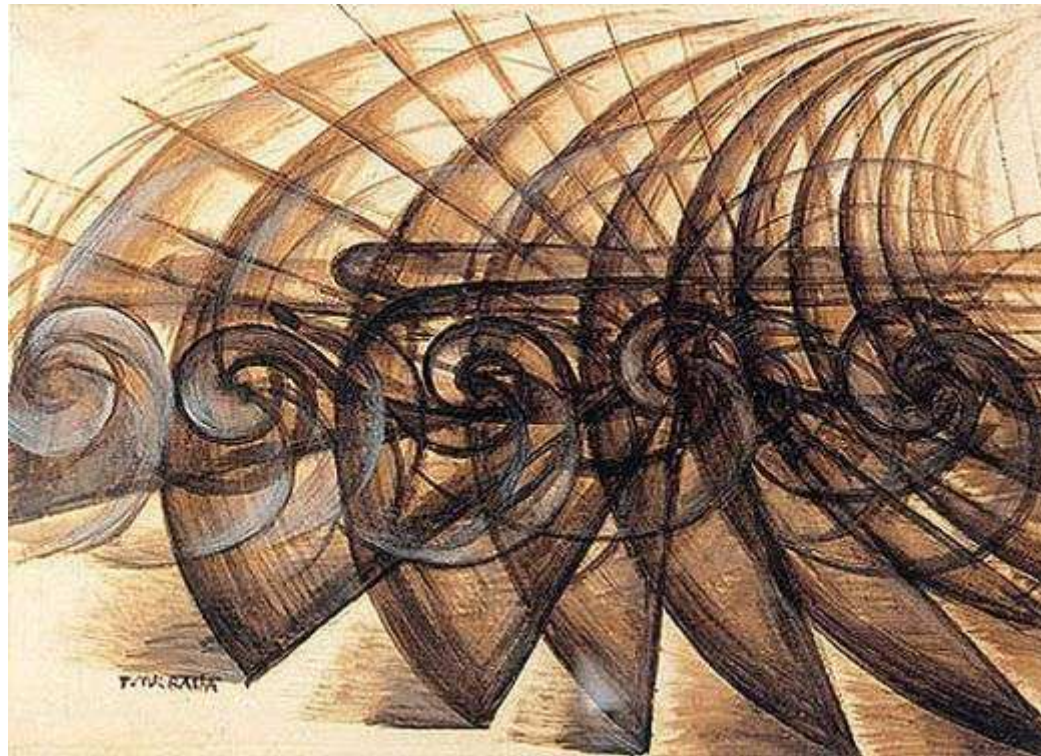
# Marinetti

## Zang Tumb Tumb

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1Yld7wGWEI>



## Vélocité d'un motorcycle, par Giacomo Balla



*Dynamisme d'une automobile*  
Luigi Russolo





# *Le cavalier* Carlo Carrà



Natalia Gontcharova

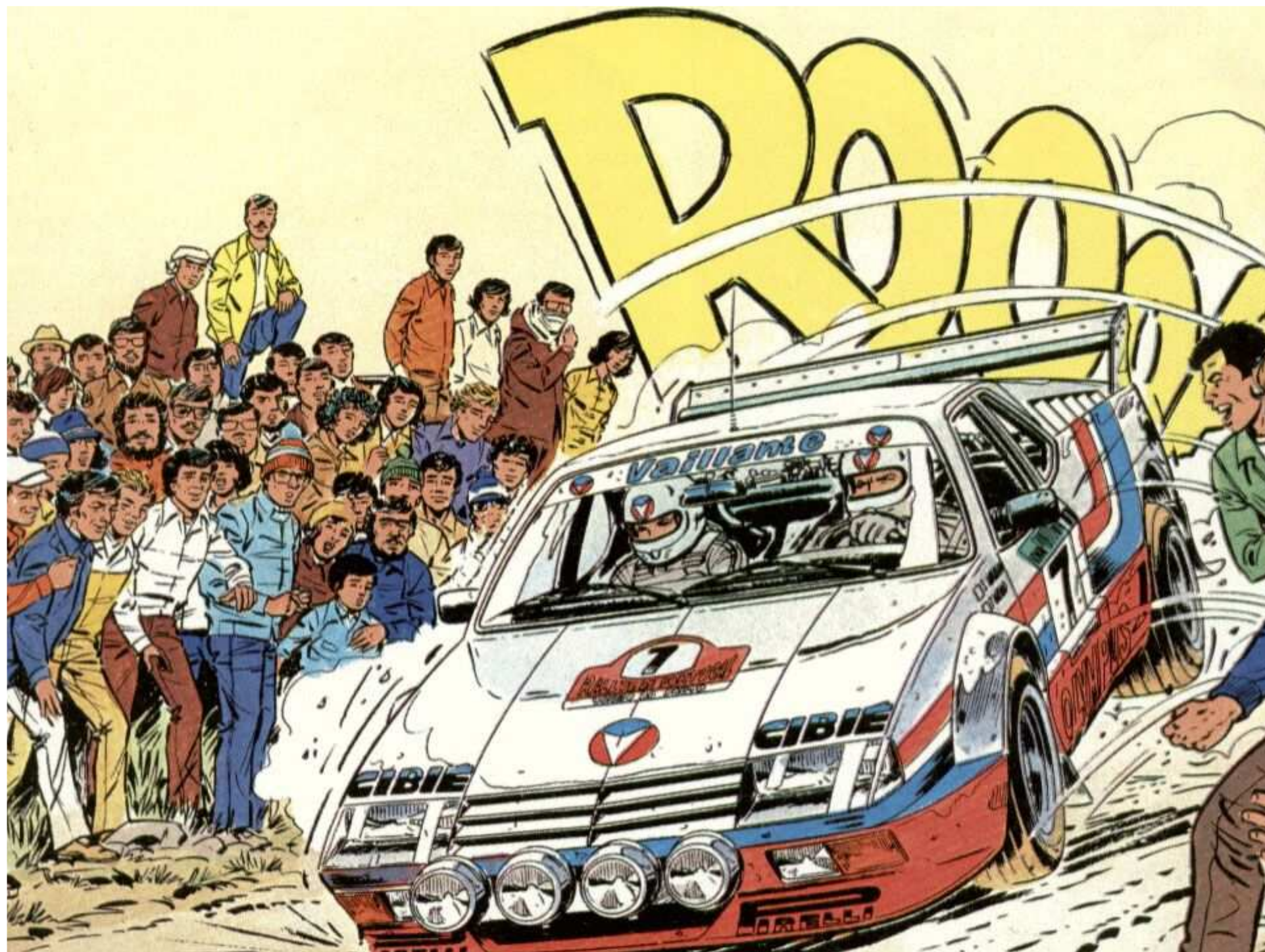


We declare that the splendor of the world has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed. A racing automobile with its bonnet adorned with great tubes like serpents with explosive breath .











Marinetti  
*Manifesto on the Ethiopian colonial war*

“For twenty-seven years we Futurists have rebelled against the branding of war as anti-aesthetic ... Accordingly we state:... War is beautiful because it establishes man’s dominion over the subjugated machinery by means of gas masks, terrifying megaphones, flame throwers, and small tanks. War is beautiful because it initiates the dreamt-of metalization of the human body. War is beautiful because it enriches a flowering meadow with the fiery orchids of machine guns. War is beautiful because it combines the gunfire, the cannonades, the cease-fire, the scents, and the stench of putrefaction into a symphony. War is beautiful because it creates new architecture, like that of the big tanks, the geometrical formation flights, the smoke spirals from burning villages, and many others ... Poets and artists of Futurism! ... remember these principles of an aesthetics of war so that your struggle for a new literature and a new graphic art ... may be illumined by them!”

**Walter Benjamin**  
**The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction**  
**(1936)**

“Fiat ars – pereat mundus”, says Fascism, and, as Marinetti admits, expects war to supply the artistic gratification of a sense perception that has been changed by technology. This is evidently the consummation of “l’art pour l’art.” Mankind, which in Homer’s time was an object of contemplation for the Olympian gods, now is one for itself. Its self-alienation has reached such a degree that it can experience its own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order. This is the situation of politics which Fascism is rendering aesthetic. Communism responds by politicizing art.

# Les bras armés du train, par Gino Severini



*Vaisseau de guerre*  
Giacomo Balla



## *Theory of the Avant-Garde*

Peter Bürger

[https://monoskop.org/images/d/d0/Buerger\\_Peter\\_The\\_Theory\\_of\\_the\\_Avant-Garde.pdf](https://monoskop.org/images/d/d0/Buerger_Peter_The_Theory_of_the_Avant-Garde.pdf)

The avant-garde turns against both-the distribution apparatus on which the work of art depends, and the status of art in bourgeois society as defined by the concept of autonomy. Only after art, in nineteenth-century Aestheticism, has altogether detached itself from the praxis of life can the aesthetic develop "purely." But the other side of autonomy, art's lack of social impact, also becomes recognizable. The avant-gardiste protest, whose aim it is to reintegrate art into the praxis of life, reveals the nexus between autonomy and the absence of any consequences.

## *Theory of the Avant-Garde*

Peter Bürger

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In Aestheticism, the social functionlessness of art becomes manifest. The avant-gardiste artists counter such functionlessness not by an art that would have consequences within the existing society, but rather by the principle of the sublation of art in the praxis of life. But such a conception makes it impossible to define the intended purpose of art. For an art that has been reintegrated into the praxis of life, not even the absence of a social purpose can be indicated, as was still possible in Aestheticism. When art and the praxis of life are one, when the praxis is aesthetic and art is practical, art's purpose can no longer be discovered, because the existence of two distinct spheres (art and the praxis of life) that is constitutive of the concept of purpose or intended use has come to an end.

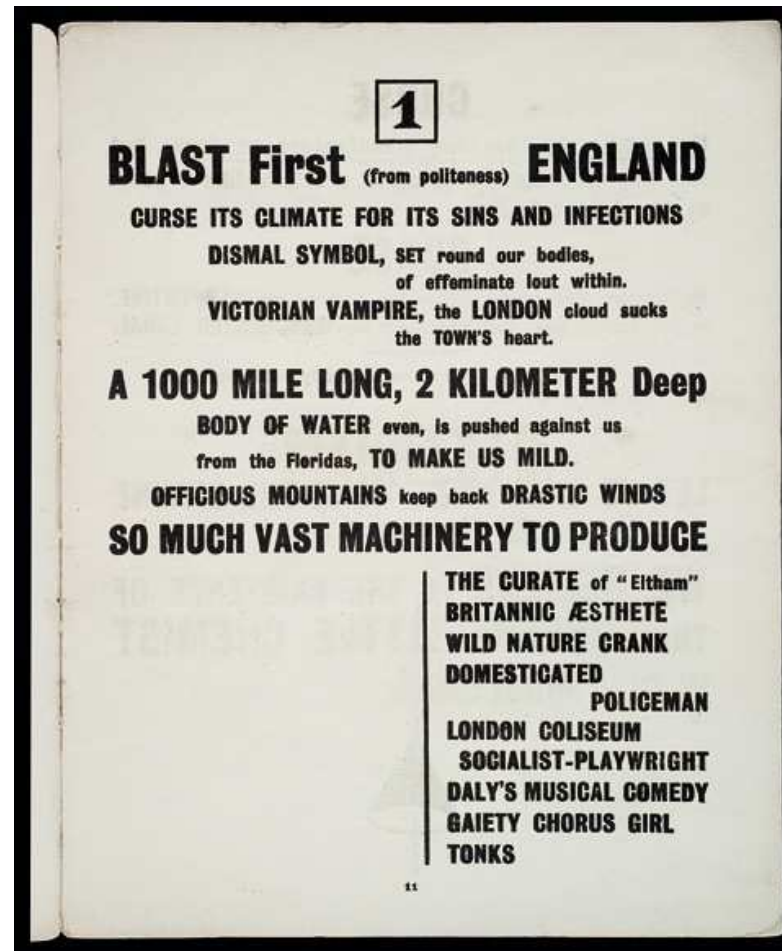


## Umberto Boccioni, "La rue entre dans la maison"





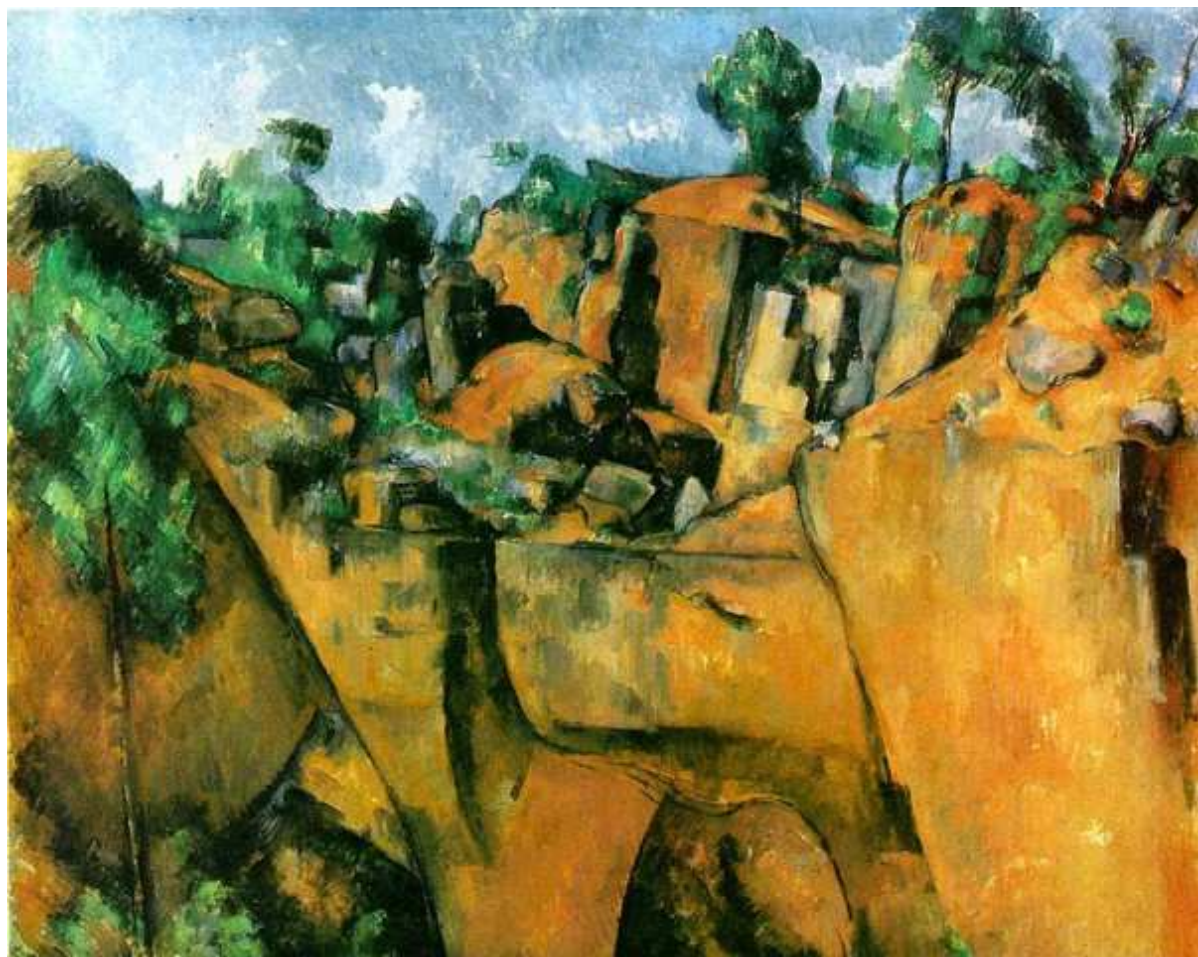
# Blast - vorticism



# A re-creation of Jacob Epstein's Rock Drill



# Cubism



Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger

*Du Cubisme*

Paris, 1912

To understand Cézanne is to foresee cubism. Henceforth we are justified in saying that between this school and previous manifestations there is only a difference of intensity, and that in order to assure ourselves of this we have only to study the methods of this realism, which, departing from the superficial reality of Courbet, plunges with Cézanne into profound reality, growing luminous as it forces the unknowable to retreat. Some maintain that such a tendency distorts the curve of tradition. Do they derive their arguments from the future or the past? The future does not belong to them, as far as we are aware, and one be singularly ingenuous to seek to measure that which exists by that which exists no longer. Unless we are to condemn all modern painting, we must regard cubism as legitimate, for it continues modern methods, and we should see in it the only conception of pictorial art now possible. In other words, at this moment cubism is painting. Here we should like to demolish a very general misunderstanding to which we have already made allusion. Many consider that decorative considerations should govern the spirit of the new painters. They cannot see that a decorative work is the antithesis of the picture. A decorative work exists only by virtue of its destination; it is animated only by the relationship existing between it and the given objects. Essentially dependent, necessarily incomplete, it must in the first place satisfy the mind so as not to distract it from the spectacle which justifies and completes it. It is an organ. The true picture, on the other hand, bears its *raison d'être* within itself









## *First Manifesto of Surrealism - 1924*

André Breton

We must give thanks to the discoveries of Sigmund Freud. On the basis of these discoveries a current of opinion is finally forming by means of which the human explorer will be able to carry his investigations much further, authorized as he will henceforth be not to confine himself solely to the most summary realities. The imagination is perhaps on the point of reasserting itself, of reclaiming its rights. If the depths of our mind contain within the strange forces capable of augmenting those on the surface, or waging a victorious battle against them, there is every reason to seize them, then, if need be, to submit them to the control of our reason. The analysts themselves have everything to gain by it. But it is worth noting that no means has been designated a priori for carrying out this undertaking, that until further notice it can be constructed to be the province of poets as well as scholars, and that its success is not dependent upon the more or less capricious paths that will be followed.

In: *100 Artist's Manifestos. From the Futurists to the Stuckists*, selected by Alex Danchev, London, Penguin (Modern Classics), 2008, p. 244.



## *First Manifesto of Surrealism - 1924*

André Breton

Freud very rightly his critical faculties to bear upon the dream. It is, in fact, inadmissible that this considerable portion of psychic activity (since, at least, from man's birth until his death, thought offers no solution of continuity, the sum of the moments of dream, from the point of view of time, and taking into consideration only the time of pure sleeping, that is the dreams of sleep, is not inferior to the sum of the moments of reality, or, to be more precisely limiting, the moments of waking) has still today been so grossly neglected. I have always been amazed at the way an ordinary observer lends so much more credence and attaches so much more importance to waking events than to those occurring in dreams. It is because man, when he ceases to sleep, is above all the plaything of his memory, and in its normal state memory takes pleasure in weakly retracing for him the circumstances of the dream, in stripping it of any real importance, and in dismissing the only *determinant* from the point where he thinks he has left it a few hours before: this firm hope, this concern. He is under the impression of continuing something that is worthwhile. Thus the dream finds itself reduced to a mere parenthesis, as the night. (p. 444sq)

*First Manifesto of Surrealism - 1924*

André Breton

Why should I not expect more from the sign of the dream more than I expect from a degree of consciousness which is daily more acute? Can't the dream also be used in solving fundamental questions of life ?











# *L'âge d'or*

*L'Age d'Or*, commonly translated as *The Golden Age* or *Age of Gold*, is a 1930 French surrealist comedy directed by Luis Buñuel about the insanities of modern life, the hypocrisy of the sexual mores of bourgeois society and the value system of the Roman Catholic Church. The screenplay is by Salvador Dalí and Buñuel. *L'Age d'Or* was one of the first sound films made in France, along with *Prix de Beauté* and *Under the Roofs of Paris*.



# *L'Âge d'or*

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aC5J\\_-A3hyw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aC5J_-A3hyw)

# André Breton

Le délire d'interprétation ne commence qu'où  
l'homme mal préparé prend peur dans cette *forêt*  
*d'indices*.

*(L'amour fou, 1937)*



*The Second Manifesto of Surrealism - 1929*

The simplest Surrealist act consists of dashing down the street, pistol in hand, and firing blindly, as fast as you can pull the trigger, into the crowd. Anyone who, at least once in his life, has not dreamed of thus putting an end to the petty system of debasement and cretinization in effect has a well-defined place in that crowd, with his belly at barrel level . . .