

## Futurism • Dada • Vorticism

### Cubism\*

- According to Picasso, "There is no such thing as abstract art, you must always start with something."
- So whatever later abstract artists were to derive from Cubism — and it became the immediate source of a stream of abstract movements such as Orphism, De Stijl, Constructivism, etc. it was certainly never intended by its creators to be non-representational.
- Subject matter was for the Cubist seldom more than a pretext, in fact, and always extremely limited and studio centered.



Georges Braque, *The Portuguese*, 1911.

\*Excerpts from Honour, H. and Fleming, J., *The Visual Arts: A History, 3rd Edition*, pages 660, Prentice Hall, 1992

### Orphic Cubism\*

- Declared by Apollinaire as a pure form of painting 'in which the subject would no longer count at all.'
- Fernand Léger believe painting should be concerned with contrasts not only of color, but of line and form. Instead of dynamism of light, his paintings are about dynamism and discord and tensions of modern life.



19.26. Fernand Léger, *Contrast of Forms*, 1913.

\*Excerpts from Honour, H. and Fleming, J., *The Visual Arts: A History, 3rd Edition*, pages 660, Prentice Hall, 1992

### 13-5. Fernand Léger, *The City*, 1919.

This monumental composition of pure, flat planes signifying the geometry, color, and energy of modern city led its creator to say that "it was advertising that first drew the consequences" from it.



### 13-6 & 13-7. Fernand Léger, pages from *La fin du monde*, 1919.

A whirlwind tour of the re-creation of the earth after the fall of man is illustrated by a pinwheel of lettering spelling "accelerated slow motion cinema."



Meggs, P. and Purvis, A., *Meggs' History of Graphic Design, 4th Edition*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1993.

### Futurism

- Launch on 20 February 1909 by the publication of an article titled, 'Le Futurisme' by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti in the Paris newspaper *Le Figaro*.
- Marinetti's intention was to reject the past, to revolutionize culture and make it more modern.

13-11. Filippo Marinetti, poem from *Les mots en liberté futuristes* (Futurist Words-in-Freedom), 1919.  
Here, the confusion, violent noise, and chaos of battle explodes above the girl reading her lover's letter from the front. Marinetti's experience trenches of war inspired this poem. Meggs



### Futurism\*

- Exhilarated by the noise and speed and mechanical energy of the modern city, Marinetti want to obliterate the past, especially the cult and culture of the Italian past and replace it with a new society, a new poetry and new art based on new dynamic sensations.

13-19. Fortunato Depero, New Futurist theater Company poster, 1924.  
Flat planes of vibrant color, diagonal composition, and angular repetitive forms produce kinetic energy. Meggs



\*Excerpts from Honour, H. and Fleming, J., *The Visual Arts: A History, 3rd Edition*, pages 660, Prentice Hall, 1992

### Futurism\*

- Umberto Boccioni proclaimed, "universal dynamism must be rendered as dynamic sensations: movement and light destroy the substance of objects."



Umberto Boccioni, *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913.

\*Excerpts from Honour, H. and Fleming, J., *The Visual Arts: A History, 3rd Edition*, pages 660, Prentice Hall, 1992

### Vorticism

- Short-Lived British child of Cubism.
- Also similar to Futurism, Vorticism sought a different 'look' from those of the Italians.



E. Knight Kauffer, *Flight of Birds*, poster for the *Daily Herald*, 1919

### Dada

- Born in Zurich in the cafés and cabarets teemed with revolutionary exiles during the time between the wars.
- A state of mind rather than a literary or artistic movement, according to its spokesman the Romanian poet Tristan Tzara.



Marcel Duchamp, *Bicycle Wheel*, 1963.

### Dada

- Dada was anarchic, nihilistic and disruptive.
- Dadaists mocked all established values, all traditional notions of good taste in art and literature, the culture symbols of a society based, they believed, on greed and materialism and agony.
- The Dadaist also believed the world was about to die.

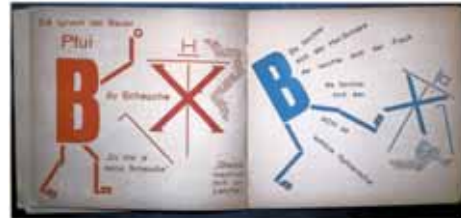


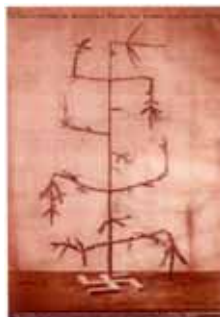
Figure: 13-29. Kurt Schwitters, Theo van Doesburg, and Kate Steinitz, page from *Die Scheuche* (the Scarecrow), 1922. In this modern fairy tale, type and image are wedded literally and figuratively as the B overpowers the X with verbiage. Meggs

### Dada

- More so than in other cities, Berlin Dada was circumscribed by political events.
- Defining the Berlin style is the use of Photo montage. The collaging of photographs from the mass media allowed the artists to dissect reality through unexpected combinations with other images or with words without retreating into realism.



457. John Heartfield, *Im Zeichen der Rationalisierung*, political poster, 1927. Heller & Chwast



13-32. John Heartfield, *Yuletide* poster, 1934. Under the headline, "Oh Tannenbaum in Germany, how crooked are your branches," a sickly tree symbolizes the ethos of the Third Reich. Meggs

## Homework?

The midterm is coming up.

Each of you are invited to submit 2 questions for possible use in the exam. All questions must have an answer and reference to either the textbook or slide lecture. Email questions to [clabough@oswego.edu](mailto:clabough@oswego.edu)