





# INNER NECESSITY.

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(Extracts from Kandinsky's "Ueber das Geistige in der Kunst," translated by Edward Wadsworth, by permission of Messrs. Constable, who have recently published a translation of the book by M. T. H. Sadler: "The Art of Spiritual Harmony.")

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This book is a most important contribution to the psychology of modern art. The author's eminence as an artist adds considerable value to the work—fine artists as a rule being extremely reluctant to, or incapable of, expressing their ideas in more than one medium. Herr Kandinsky, however, is a psychologist and a metaphysician of rare intuition and inspired enthusiasm. He writes of art—not in its relation to the drawing-room or the modern exhibition, but in its relation to the universe and the soul of man. He writes, not as an art historian, but essentially as an artist to whom form and colour are as much the vital and integral parts of the cosmic organisation as they are his means of expression.

The art of the East has always consciously and passionately expressed this point of view, which, if it has been perceived dimly in Western art, has been only half-heartedly expressed. European artists of the past have treated art almost entirely from a too obviously and externally human outlook. Europe to-day, which is laying the solid foundations of the Western art of to-morrow, approaches this task from the deeper and more spiritual standpoint of the soul. And Herr Kandinsky is concerned chiefly in pointing out that the *raison d'être*, the beauty and the durability of art are only possible if they have their roots in what he terms the Principle of Inner Necessity.

"Inner Necessity," he says, "arises out of three mystical fundamentals. It is created out of three mystical necessities:—

1. Every artist, as a creator, has to express himself (Element of Personality).
2. Every artist, as the child of his epoch, has to express what is particular to this epoch (Element of Style—in an inner sense, composed of the speech of the epoch, and the speech of the nation, as long as the nation exists as such).
3. Every artist, as the servant of art, has to express what is particular to all art. (Element of the pure and eternal qualities of the art of all men, of all peoples and of all times, which are to be seen in the works of art of all artists of every nation and of every epoch, and which, as the principal elements of art, know neither time nor space).

"It is necessary to penetrate with one's mental vision only the first two elements in order to see this third element exposed. One sees then that a coarsely carved



Indian Temple pillar is animated with exactly the same spirit as even the most modern vivacious work.

“ Only the third element of the eternal and pure qualities remains ever alive. It does not lose its strength with time, but continually acquires more. An Egyptian statue astounds us certainly more to-day than it could have astounded its contemporaries : for them it was associated much too strongly with characteristics and personalities of the period, which weakened its effect. To-day we hear in it the exposed timbre of eternal art. And contrarily : the more a modern work possesses the first two elements, naturally the more easily will it find access to the spirit of its contemporaries. And further : the more the third element exists in a modern work, the more will the first two be drowned, and consequently the access to the spirit of its contemporaries becomes more difficult. On this account centuries must sometimes pass away before the timbre of the third element reaches the soul of man.

“ The preponderance, then, of this third element in a work of art is a sign of its greatness and the greatness of the artist.

“ These three mystical necessities are the three necessary elements of a work of art and are closely united to one another. . . . The event of the development of art consists to a certain extent of the progression of the pure and external from the elements of personality and the style of the period. So that these two elements are not only accompanying forces, but also restraining forces.

“ These two elements are of a subjective nature. The whole epoch desires to reflect itself and express its life aesthetically. The artist desires to express himself in the same way, and chooses only those forms which are related to his spirit.

“ Gradually in the end the style of the epoch shapes itself and acquires a certain external and subjective form. The pure and eternal art is on the contrary the objective element which becomes intelligible by means of the subjective.

“ The inevitable desire to express the objective is the force which is here termed Inner Necessity, and which to-day extracts ONE universal form from the subjective and to-morrow another. . . . It is clear then that the inner spiritual force of art uses contemporary forms only as a step by which to progress.

In short—the effect of Inner Necessity, or the development of art, is a progressive expression of the eternally objective within the temporarily subjective. Or otherwise the subjugation of the subjective by the objective.

“ So one sees finally (and this is of indescribable importance for all time, and especially for to-day) that the search after personality, after style (and consequently national style), cannot only never be attained by this search, but also has not the





Drawing.

Jacob Epstein.









Drawing.

Jacob Epstein.







great importance which to-day is imputed to it. And one sees that the common relationship between works that have not become effete after centuries, but have always become more and more powerful, does not lie in externality, but in the root of roots—the mystical content of Art."

And this Principle of Inner Necessity Herr Kandinsky applies not only to the basic inspiration of creation, but also to the concrete problems of execution. This same force that animates the roots must generate a solid stem and permeate the picture in every branch and fibre, and in the organic structure of every leaf.

This leads him to an extended consideration of the emotional and psychical effect of forms and colours as such, divorced as far as is humanly possible from their attendant associations. And Herr Kandinsky does not consider the effect of form and colour on the soul only, but also its relationship to the other senses and its effect on the physical organism. Colour is more habitually accredited with powers of emotion than form, but by establishing a common root principle with regard to the emotional effects of form and colour Herr Kandinsky destroys this erroneous opinion. And he does this not only by means of logical argument and metaphysical ratiocination, but also by a minute analysis of the colours themselves—their physical characteristics, and the possibilities of psychic effect in all their gradations of lightness and darkness, and in their warm and cold tones.

Form (i.e., the suitability of the form to the emotion the artist wishes to express) springs from the same fundamental Principle of Inner Necessity, and has always a psychic import. And this is true not only of the whole composition of a picture, but also of its component parts and their relationship one to another, and also again of the form created by their relationship to the whole composition.

"Form alone, even if it is quite abstract and geometrical, has its inner timbre, and is a spiritual entity with qualities that are identical with this form: a triangle (whether it be acute-angled, obtuse-angled or equilateral) is an entity of this sort with a spiritual perfume proper to itself alone. In combination with other forms this perfume becomes differentiated, acquires accompanying nuances, but remains radically unalterable, like the smell of the rose which can never be mistaken for that of the violet.

"It is easy to notice here that some colours are accentuated in value by some forms and weakened by others. In any case bright colours vibrate more strongly in pointed, angular forms (e.g., a yellow triangle). Those that have a tendency to deepen will increase this effect in round forms (e.g., a blue circle). It is naturally clear on the other hand that the unsuitability of the form to the colour must not be regarded as something "inharmonious," but on the contrary as a new possibility, and consequently harmony.

"Form in the narrower sense is, however, nothing more than the boundaries



between one surface and another. This is its external meaning. But since everything external implicitly conceals an interior (which comes to light forcibly or feebly), so also every form has an inner content.

**"FORM IS THEN THE UTTERANCES OF ITS INNER CONTENT.** This is its inner meaning. One must think here of the simile of the piano, but apply "form" instead of "colour." The artist is the hand, which, through this or that key (= form) makes the human soul vibrate appropriately. It is clear then that the harmony of form must be based only on the appropriate striking of the human soul.

**"This we termed the Principle of Inner Necessity.**

**"The two aspects of form just mentioned are at the same time its two aims. And on account of this the external limitation is thoroughly appropriate only when it best expresses the inner meaning of the form. The exterior of the form, i.e., its boundaries, to which the form in this case is subservient, may be very diverse.**

**"But in spite of all diversity that the form can offer, it nevertheless will never exceed two exterior limits, namely:—**

1. Either the form serves as a shape, and by means of this shape, to cut out a material object on the surface: i.e., to draw this material object on the surface, or

2. The form remains abstract: i.e., it represents no real object, but is a perfect abstract entity. Such pure abstract entities, which as such have their life, their influence and their effect, are a square, a circle, a triangle, a rhombus, a trapezium, and the other innumerable forms which become ever more complicated and possess no mathematical significance. All these forms are citizens of the abstract empire with equal rights."

Once having accepted the emotional significance of form and colour as such, it follows that the necessity for expressing oneself exclusively with forms that are based on nature is only a temporary limitation similar to, though less foolish than, the eighteenth century brown-tree convention.

**" . . . to-day's inner laws of harmony become to-morrow's external laws, which on further application depend for their life only on this now external Necessity."**

And so logically this axiom must be accepted: that the artist can employ any forms (natural, abstracted or abstract) to express himself, if his feelings demand it.

Those who perceive no emotional significance in form and colour as such, invariably argue that to avoid human and natural forms is to sterilize one's creative faculties and to rob oneself of all that is noble in art. But—

**"On the other hand, there is no perfect concrete form in art. It is not possible to represent a natural form exactly. The artist succumbs—well or badly—either to**



his hand or his eye, which in this case are more artistic than his soul, which is incapable of desiring more than photography. The conscious artist, however, who cannot be content with recording material objects, seeks unconditionally to give expression to the object represented—what one formerly called to “idealise,” later on to “stylize,” and what to-morrow may be called anything else.

“ This impossibility and futility (in art) of copying an object without any aim, this striving to borrow expression from the object itself, is the starting point from which the artist begins to aspire to purely aesthetic aims (pictural) as opposed to literary representation.

“ And so the abstract element comes always gradually to the front in art—which even yesterday was concealed timidly and was scarcely visible behind purely material endeavours.

“ And this development and eventual preponderance of the abstract is natural.

“ It is natural, since, the more the organic form is repelled, the more the abstract comes to the front and acquires timbre.

“ The organic that remains, however, has, as we have said, its own inner Timbre, which is either identical with the inner Timbre of the second component—or abstract part of the form (simple combination of both elements)—or it may be of a very different nature—(complicated and perhaps necessarily inharmonious combination).

“ In any case, however, the Timbre of the Organic is heard in the form it chooses, even if it is quite suppressed. On this account the choice of the real object is important. In the two-fold Timbre (spiritual chord) of both component parts of the form the organic can support the abstract (by means of concord or discord) or it can be disturbing to it. The object can create only an accident Timbre, which, if substituted by another, calls forth no essential difference in the fundamental timbre.

“ A rhomboidal composition is constructed, for instance, out of a number of human figures. One judges it with one’s feelings and asks oneself the question—are the human figures absolutely necessary to the composition, or could one substitute other organic forms for them without thereby injuring the inner fundamental Timbre of the composition?

“ And if ‘yes’—then the case is imminent where the Timbre of the object not only does not help the Timbre of the abstraction, but directly injures it : inappropriate Timbre of the object weakens the Timbre of the abstraction. And this is not only logical, but is, as a matter of fact, the case in art. In the above case then, either some object should be found which corresponds more to the inner Timbre of the abstraction (corresponding concordantly or discordantly) or this whole form should remain purely abstract.

“ The more abstract the form, the more purely and therefore the more



primitively it will resound. In a composition then, where the corporeal is more or less superfluous, one can more or less leave it out and substitute for it either purely abstract forms or abstracted corporeal forms. In either of these cases one's feelings must be the only judge, guide and arbiter. And indeed, the more the artist uses these abstract or abstracted forms, the more he becomes at home in their kingdom and the deeper he enters into this sphere. And in the same way the spectator, who gathers more and more knowledge of the abstract speech until he finally masters it, is guided in this by the artist.

" And so on the one hand the difficulties of art will increase, but at the same time the abundance of forms—as a means of expression—will increase also, both in quality and quantity. Here the question of bad drawing will disappear and will be replaced by another much more aesthetic consideration. How far is the inner Timbre of the given object mystified or defined? This alteration in one's point of view will always progress and lead to a still greater enrichment of one's means of expression, since mystery is an enormous force in art. The combination of the mysterious and the definite will create a new possibility of Leitmotive in a composition of forms. . . .

" Composition of this kind (the corporeal and particularly the abstract) will always appear as unfounded arbitrariness to those who do not perceive the inner Timbre of forms. The apparent inconsequent distortion of the single forms on the surface of the picture appears in these cases like an empty joke with the forms. . . .

" When, for instance, features or different parts of the body are distorted or perverted for aesthetic reasons, one strikes against purely pictorial questions as well as anatomical ones, which restrain the pictorial intentions and obtrude upon their subsidiary calculations. In our case, however, everything subsidiary disappears, and there remains only the essential—the aesthetic aim. Exactly this apparently arbitrary, but in reality extremely determinable possibility of distorting forms is one of the sources of the endless number of purely aesthetic creations.

" The flexibility of the single form, then, its inner organic change, if one may say so ; its direction in the picture (movement), the preponderance of the corporeal over the abstract in this single form on the one hand, and on the other the combination of the forms which create the big shape of the whole picture : further, the principles of concord and discord in all the aforesaid parts, i.e., the juxtaposition of the single forms, the interpenetration of one form with another, the distortion, the binding and tearing apart of the individual forms, the same treatment of the groups of forms, of the combination of the mysterious with the definite, the rythmic with the non-rythmic on the same plane, the abstract forms with the purely geometrical (simple or complicated) and the less definitely geometrical, the same treatment of the combination of the boundary lines of the forms from one another (heavy or light), etc., etc.—all these are the elements which create the possibility of a purely aesthetic counterpoint and which will lead up to this counterpoint.



“ . . . And colour, which is itself a material for counterpoint, which conceals in itself endless possibilities, will, in conjunction with drawing, lead to a great pictorial counterpoint on which will be built also a pictorial composition that will serve God as a real, pure art. And the same infallible guide brings it to that dizzy height—The Principle of Inner Necessity.”

This insistence on the value of one's feelings as the only aesthetic impulse, means logically that the artist is not only entitled to treat form and colour according to his inner dictates, but that it is his duty to do so, and consequently his life (his thoughts and deeds) becomes the raw material out of which he must carve his creations. The author points out that on account of this, although the artist is absolutely free to express himself as he will in art, he is not free in life. “ He is not only a king . . . in the sense that he has great power, but also in the sense that his duties are great.”

The constructive tendencies of painting Herr Kandinsky divides into two groups—(1) simple composition of a more or less obviously geometrical character, which he calls “ melodic composition,” and which has been more generally employed by western artists (Duccio, Ravenna mosaics, Cezanne), and (2) complicated rhythmic composition which he calls “ symphonic,” and which is the characteristic medium of oriental art and of Kandinsky himself.











# **VORTECES AND NOTES**

**BY**

**WYNDHAM LEWIS.**









Stags.

Gaudier Brzeska.









Group.

Cuthbert Hamilton







# **“ LIFE IS THE IMPORTANT THING ! ”**

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In the revolt against Formula, revolutionaries in art sell themselves to Nature. Without Nature's aid the " coup " could not be accomplished. They, of course, become quite satisfied slaves of Nature, as their fathers were of Formula. It never occurs to them that Nature is just as sterile a Tyrant. This is what happened with the Impressionists.

An idea which haunts the head of many people is that " Nature " is synonymous with freshness, richness, constant renewal, life : " Nature " and natural art synonymous with " Life."

This idea, trotted out in various forms, reminds one of the sententious pronouncement one so often hears : " LIFE is the important thing! " It is always said with an air of trenchant and final wisdom, the implication being : " You artists are so indirect and intellectual, worry your heads about this and about that, while life is there all the time, etc., etc."

If you ask these people what they mean by LIFE (for there are as many Lives as there are people in the world), it becomes evident that they have no profounder view of life in their mind than can be included in the good dinner, good sleep, roll-in-the-grass category.

" After all, life is the important thing! " That is to live as nearly like a chicken or a King Charles as is compatible with having read " Sex and Character " and " L'Isle des Pengouins " in a translation.

This is the typical cowardly attitude of those who have failed with their minds, and are discouraged and unstrung before the problems of their Spirit ; who fall back on their stomachs and the meaner working of their senses.

Nature will give you, then, grass enough for cow or a sheep, any fleshly conquest you can compass. One thing she is unable to give, that that is peculiar to men. Such stranger stuff men must get out of themselves.

To consider for a moment this wide-spread notion, that " Nature," as the majority mean it, is synonymous really with " Life," and inexhaustible freshness of material :—

**NATURE IS NO MORE INEXHAUSTIBLE, FRESH, WELLING UP WITH INVENTION, ETC., THAN LIFE IS TO THE AVERAGE MAN OF FORTY, WITH HIS GROOVE, HIS DISILLUSION, AND HIS LITTLE ROUND OF HABITUAL DISTRACTIONS.**



It is true, "Life is there all the time." But he cannot get at it except through himself. For him too, even—apart from his daily fodder—he has to draw out of himself any of that richness and fineness that is something more and different to the provender and the contentment of the cow.

For the suicide, with the pistol in his mouth, "Life is there," as well, with its variety and possibilities. But a dissertation to that effect would not influence Him; on the contrary.

For those men who look to Nature for support, she does not care.

"Life" is a hospital for the weak and incompetent.

"Life" is a retreat of the defeated.

It is very salubrious—The cooking is good—

Amusments are provided.

In the same way, Nature is a blessed retreat, in art, for those artists whose imagination is mean and feeble, whose vocation and instinct are unrobust. When they find themselves in front of Infinite Nature with their little paint-box, they squint their eyes at her professionally, and coo with lazy contentment and excitement to just so much effort as is hygienic and desirable. She does their thinking and seeing for them. Of course, when they commence painting, technical difficulties come along, they sweat a bit, and anxiety settles down on them. But then they regard themselves as martyrs and heroes. They are lusty workmen, grappling with the difficulties of their trade!

No wonder painting has been discredited! "Life" IS the important thing, indeed, if much painting of Life that we see is the alternative. Who would not rather walk ten miles across country (yes, ten miles, my friend), and use his eyes, nose and muscles, than possess ten thousand Impressionist oil-paintings of that country side?

There is only one thing better than "Life"—than using your eyes, nose, ears and muscles—and that is something very abstruse and splendid, in no way directly dependent on "Life." It is no EQUIVALENT for Life, but ANOTHER Life, as NECESSARY to existence as the former.

This NECESSITY is what the indolent and vulgar journalist mind chiefly denies it. All the accusations of "mere intelligence" or "cold intellectuality" centre round misconception of this fact.

Before leaving this beautiful useful phrase—of unctuous "Life," etc.—I would prevent a confusion. I have been speaking so far of the Impressionist sensibility, and one of the arguments used by that sensibility to disparage the products of a new effort in art.



Daumier, whose work was saturated with reference to Life, has been, for instance, used to support imitation of Nature, on grounds of a common realism. This man would have been no more capable of squatting down and imitating the forms of life day after day than he would have been able to copy one of his crowds.

It was Life that **MOVED MUCH TOO QUICKLY FOR ANYTHING, BUT THE IMAGINATION** that he lived for. He combined in his art great plastic gifts with great literary gifts, and was no doubt an impure painter, according to actual standards. But it was great literature, always, along with great art. And as far as "Life" is concerned, the Impressionists produced nothing that was in any sense a progress from this great realist, though much that was a decadence. Many reproductions of Degas paintings it would be impossible, quite literally, to distinguish from photographs; and his pastels only less so because of the accident of the medium. The relative purity of their palette, and consequent habituating of the public to brighter colours, was their only useful innovation. Their analytic study of light led into the Pointilliste cul de sac (when it was found that although light can be decomposed, oil-paint is unfortunately not light).



# FUTURISM, MAGIC AND LIFE.

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I. The Futurist theoretician should be a Professor of Hoffman Romance, and attempt the manufacture of a perfect being.  
Art merges in Life again everywhere.

Leonardo was the first Futurist, and, incidentally, an airman among Quattro Cento angels.

His Mona Lisa eloped from the Louvre like any woman.

She is back again now, smiling, with complacent reticence, as before her escapade; no one can say when she will be off once more, she possesses so much vitality.

Her olive pigment is electric, so much more so than the carnivorous Belgian bumpkins by Rubens in a neighbouring room, who, besides, are so big they could not slip about in the same subtle fashion.

Rubens IMITATED Life—borrowed the colour of its crude blood, traced the sprawling and surging of its animal hulks.

Leonardo MADE NEW BEINGS, delicate and severe, with as ambitious an intention as any ingenious mediæval Empiric.

He multiplied in himself, too, Life's possibilities. He was not content to be as an individual Artist alone, any more than he was content with Art.

Life won him with gifts and talents.

2. In Northern Europe (Germany, Scandinavia and Russia) for the last half century, the intellectual world has developed savagely in one direction—that of Life.

His war-talk, sententious elevation and much besides, Marinetti picked up from Nietzsche.

Strindberg, with his hysterical and puissant autobiographies, life-long tragic coquetry with Magic, extensive probing of female flesh and spirit, is the great Scandinavian figure best representing this tendency.

Bergson, the philosopher of Impressionism, stands for this new prescience in France.

Everywhere LIFE is said instead of ART.

3. By "Life" is not meant good dinner, sleep and copulation.



There is rather only room for ONE Life, in Existence, and Art has to behave itself and struggle.

Also Art has a selfish trick of cutting the connections.

The Wild Body and Primitive Brain have found a new outside art of their own.

The Artist pleasure-man is too naturalistic for this age of religion.

“The theatre is immoral, because a place where people go to enjoy other people's sufferings and tears.” (to d'Alembert.)

The soft stormy flood of Rousseauism, Dicken's sentimental ghoul-like gloating over the death of little Nell, the beastly and ridiculous spirit of Keats' lines:—

“If your mistress some RICH anger show,  
Imprison her soft hand and let her rave,  
While you feast long,” etc.

disgusted about 1870 people who had not got a corner in dog's nerves or heart idling about the stomach instead of attending to its business of pump, and whose heads were, with an honest Birmingham screw, straightly riveted into their bodies.

The good artists, as well, repudiated the self-indulgent, special-privileged, priggish and cowardly role of “Artist,” and joined themselves to the Birmingham screws.

England emerged from Lupanars and Satanics about 1900, the Bourgeoisie having thoughtfully put Wilde in prison, and Swinburne being retired definitely to Putney.

This brings you to the famous age where we are at present gathered, in which Humanity's problem is “live with the minimum of pleasure possible for bare existence.”

4. Killing somebody must be the greatest pleasure in existence : either like killing yourself without being interfered with by the instinct of self-preservation— or exterminating the instinct of self-preservation itself !

But if you begin depositing your little titivations of pleasure in Humanity's Savings Bank, you want something for your trouble.

We all have a penetrative right over each other, to the tune of titivations lost, if not of heart blood.

5. Not many people have made up their minds yet as to the ultimate benefit or the reverse of this state of affairs.

Some people enjoy best by proxy, some by masturbation ; others prefer to do things themselves, or in the direct regular partnership of existence.

You are fiercely secretive and shy : or dislike interference.



Most fine artists cannot keep themselves out of wood and iron, or printed sheets : they leave too much of themselves in their furniture.

For their universality a course of egotistic hardening, if anything, is required.

Buddha found that his disciples, good average disciples, required a severe discipline of expansion ; he made them practice every day torpedoing East and West, to inhabit other men, and become wise and gentle.

The Artist favours solitude, conditions where silence and purity are possible, as most men favour gregariousness where they shine and exist most.

But the Artist is compensated, at present, by a crown, and will eventually arrange things for the best.

6. It is all a matter of the most delicate adjustment between voracity of Art and digestive quality of Life.

The finest Art is not pure Abstraction, nor is it unorganised life.

Dreams come in the same category as the easy abstractions and sentimentalities of art known as " Belgian."

Great Artists with their pictures and books provide Nursing Homes for the Future, where Hypnotic Treatment is the principal stunt.

To dream is the same thing as to lie : anybody but an invalid or a canaille feels the discomfort and repugnance of something not clean in it.

There is much fug in the Past—due, no doubt, to the fact that most of the ordinary Ancients neglected their persons.

Realism is the cleanliness of the mind.

Actuality or " fashionableness " is the desire to be spick and span, and be a man remade and burnished half-an-hour ago.

Surprise is the brilliant and prodigious fire-fly, that lives only twenty minutes : the excitement of seeing him burn through his existence like a wax-vesta makes you marvel at the slow-living world.

The most perishable colours in painting (such as Veronese green, Prussian Blue, Alizarin Crimson) are the most brilliant.

This is as it should be : we should hate other ages, and don't want to fetch £40,000, like a horse.

7. The actual approximation of Art to Nature, which one sees great signs of to-day, would negative effort equally.

The Artist, like Narcissus, gets his nose nearer and nearer the surface of Life.

He will get it nipped off if he is not careful, by some Pecksniff-shark sunning



it's lean belly near the surface, or other lurker beneath his image, who has been feeding on it's radiance.

Reality is in the artist, the image only in life, and he should only approach so near as is necessary for a good view.

The question of focus depends on the power of his eyes, or their quality.

8. The Futurist statue will move : then it will live a little : but any idiot can do better than that with his good wife, round the corner.

Nature's definitely ahead of us in contrivances of that sort.

We must remain children, less scientific than a Boy Scout, but less naive than Flaubert jeune !

Nature is grown up.

WE could not make an Elephant.

9. With Picasso's revolution in the plastic arts, the figure of the Artist becomes still more blurred and uncertain.

Engineer or artist might conceivably become transposable terms, or one, at least, imply the other.

What is the definite character of the artist ; obvious pleasure, as an element, shrinking daily, or rather approximating with Pleasure as it exists in every other form of invention?

Picasso has proved himself lately too amateurish a carpenter.

Boot-making and joining also occur to one.

Or the artist will cease to be a workman, and take his place with the Composer and Architect?

The artist till now has been his own interpreter, improvisation and accidents of a definite medium playing a very important part.

To-day there are a host of first rate interpreters : the few men with the invention and brains should have these at their disposal : but unfortunately they all want to be " composers," and their skill and temperament allow them to do very good imitations.

But perhaps things are better as they are : for it you think of those stormy Jewish faces met in the corridors of the tube, Beethovenesque and femininely ferocious, on the concert-bills, or " our great Shakespearean actors," you feel that Beethoven and Shakespeare are for the student, and not for the Bechstein Hall or the modern theatre.

At any period an artist should have been able to remain in his studio, imagining form, and provided he could transmit the substance and logic of his inventions to another man, could have, without putting brush to canvas, be the best artist of his day.



## NOTE

### [on some German Woodcuts at the Twenty-One Gallery].

At this miniature sculpture, the Woodcut, Germans have always excelled.

It is like the one-string fiddle of the African.

This art is African, in that it is sturdy, cutting through every time to the monotonous wall of space, and intense yet hale : permeated by Eternity, an atmosphere in which only the black core of Life rises and is silhouetted.

The black, nervous fluid of existence flows and forms into hard, stagnant masses in this white, luminous body. Or it is like a vivid sea pierced by rocks, on to the surface of which boned shapes rise and bask blackly.

It deals with Man and objects subject to him, on Royal white, cut out in black sadness.

White and Black are two elements. Their possible proportions and relations to each other are fixed.—All the subtleties of the Universe are driven into these two pens, one of which is black, the other white, with their multitude.

It is African black.

It is not black, invaded by colour, as in Beardsley, who was never simple enough for this blackness. But unvarying, vivid, harsh black of Africa.

The quality of the woodcut is rough and brutal, surgery of the senses, cutting and not scratching : extraordinarily limited and exasperating.

It is one of the greatest tests of fineness.

Where the Germans are best—disciplined, blunt, thick and brutal, with a black simple skeleton of organic emotion—they best qualify for this form of art.

All the things gathered here do not come within these definitions. Melzer is sculpture, too, but by suggestion, not in fact. The principle of his work is an infatuation for bronzes.

Pechstein has for nearest parallel the drawings and lithographs of Henri Matisse.

Marc, Bolz, Kandinsky, Helbig and Morgner would make a very solid show in one direction.

Bolz's "Maskenfest" is a Kermesse of black strips and atoms of life. His other design, like a playing-card, is a nerve or woman, and attendant fascinated atoms, crushed or starved.

Morgner drifts into soft Arctic snow-patches.

Marc merges once more in leaves and sun-spotting the protective markings of animals, or in this process makes a forest into tigers.

Some woodcuts by Mr. H. Wadsworth, though not part of the German show, are to be seen in the Gallery. One of a port, is particularly fine, with its white excitement, and compression of clean metallic shapes in the well of the Harbour, as though in a broken cannon-mouth.



# **POLICEMAN AND ARTIST.**

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1. In France no Artist is as good as "the Policeman."

Rousseau the Douanier, the best policeman, is better than Derain, the best French Artist.

Not until Art reaches the fresher strata of the People does it find a vigorous enough bed to flourish.

There is too much cultivation, and only the Man of the People escapes the softening and intellectualizing.

There is one exception—the crétin or sawney.

Cézanne was an imbecile, as Rousseau was a "Policeman."

Nature's defence for Cézanne against the deadly intelligence of his country was to make him a sort of idiot.

2. In England the Policeman is dull.

The People (witness dearth of Folk-song, ornament, dance, art of any sort, till you get to the Border or the Marches of Wales) is incapable of Art.

The Artist in England has the advantages and gifts possessed by the Policeman in France.

His position is very similar.

William Blake was our arch-Policeman.

Had Blake, instead of passing his time with Renaissance bogeys and athletes, painted his wife and himself naked in their conservatory (as, in a more realistic tradition, he quite conceivably might have done), the result would have been very similar to Rosseau's portraits.

The English Artist (unlike the Frenchman of the people) has no 'Artistic tradition in his blood.

His freshness and genius is apt to be obscured, therefore (as in the case of Blake, THE English Artist), by a borrowed Italian one.

3. It is almost as dangerous in England to be a sawney, as it is in France to be intelligent.

Cézanne in England would have to be a very intelligent fellow.

(You can't be too intelligent here !)

(It is the only place in Europe where that is the case.)

Blake in France would have been a Policeman.

It is finer to be an Artist than to be a Policeman !



# FĒNG SHUI AND CONTEMPORARY FORM.

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1. That a mountain, river or person may not "suit"—the air of the mountain, the character of the person—and so influence lives, most men see.

But that a hill or man can be definitely disastrous, and by mere existence be as unlucky as hemlock is poisonous, shame or stupidity prevents most from admitting.

A certain position of the eyes, their fires crossing; black (as a sort of red) as sinister; white the mourning colour of China; white flowers, in the West, signifying death—white, the radium among colours, and the colour that comes from farthest off: 13, a terrible number; such are much more important discoveries than gravitation.

The law of gravitation took its place in our common science following the fall of an apple on somebody's head, which induced reflection.

13 struck people down again and again like a ghost, till they ceased hunting for something human, but invisible, and found a Number betraying its tragic nature and destiny.

Some Numbers are like great suns, round which the whole of Humanity must turn.

But people have a special personal Numerical which for them in particular is an object of service and respect.

2. Telegraph poles were the gloomiest of all Western innovations for China: their height disturbed definitely the delicate equilibrium of lives.

They were consequently resisted with bitterness.

Any text-book on China becomes really eloquent in its scorn when it arrives at the ascendancy of the Geomancers.

Geomancy is the art by which the favourable influence of the shape of trees, weight of neighbouring water and its colour, height of surrounding houses, is determined.

"No Chinese street is built to form a line of uniform height" (H. A. Giles), the houses are of unequal heights to fit the destinies of the inhabitants.

I do not suppose that good Geomancers are more frequent than good artists.

But their functions and intellectual equipment should be very alike.

3. Sensitiveness to volume, to the life and passion of lines, meaning of water, hurried conversation of the sky, or silence, impossible propinquity of endless clay nothing will right, a mountain that is a genius (good or evil) or a bore, makes the artist; and the volume, quality, or luminosity of a star at birth of Astrologers is also a clairvoyance within the painters gift.

In a painting certain forms MUST be SO; in the same meticulous, profound manner that your pen or a book must lie on the table at a certain angle, your clothes at night be arranged in a set personal symmetry, certain birds be avoided, a set of railings tapped with your hand as you pass, without missing one.

Personal tricks and ceremonies of this description are casual examples of the same senses' activity.



# RELATIVISM AND PICASSO'S LATEST WORK.

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(Small structures in cardboard, wood, zinc, glass string, etc., tacked, sown or stuck together is what Picasso has last shown as his.)

1. Picasso has become a miniature naturalistic sculptor of the vast natures—morte of modern life.

Picasso has come out of the canvas and has commenced to build up his shadows against reality.

Reality is the Waterloo, Will o' the wisp, or siren of artistic genius.

“Reality” is to the Artist what “Truth” is to the philosopher.

(The Artists OBJECTIVE is Reality, as the Philosopher's is Truth.)

The “Real Thing” is always Nothing. REALITY is the nearest conscious and safe place to “Reality.” Once an Artist gets caught in that machinery, he is soon cut in half—literally so.

2. The moment an image steps from the convention of the canvas into life, it's destiny is different.

The statue has been, for the most part, a stone-man.

An athletic and compact statue survives. (African, Egyptian Art, etc., where faces are flattened, limbs carved in the mass of the body for safety as well as sacredness.)

You can believe that a little patch of paint two inches high on a piece of canvas is a mountain. It is difficult to do so with a two inch clay or stone model of one.

3. These little models of Picasso's reproduce the surface and texture of objects. So directly so, that, should a portion of human form occur, he would hardly be content until he could include in his work a plot of human flesh.

But it is essentially NATURES-MORTES, the enamel of a kettle, wall-paper, a canary's cage, handle of mandoline or telephone.

4. These wayward little objects have a splendid air, starting up in pure creation, with their invariable and lofty detachment from any utilitarian end or purpose.

But they do not seem to possess the necessary physical stamina to survive.

You feel the glue will come unstuck and that you would only have to blow with your mouth to shatter them.



They imitate like children the large, unconscious, serious machines and contrivances of modern life.

So near them do they come, that they appear even a sort of new little parasite bred on machinery.

Finally, they lack the one purpose, or even necessity, of a work of Art: namely Life.

5. In the experiments of modern art we come face to face with the question of the *raison d'être* of Art more acutely than often before, and the answer comes more clearly and unexpectedly.

Most of Picasso's latest work (on canvas as well) is a sort of machinery. Yet these machines neither propel nor make any known thing: they are machines without a purpose.

If you conceive them as carried out on a grand scale, as some elaborate work of engineering the paradox becomes more striking.

These machines would, in that case, before the perplexed and enraged questions of men, have only one answer and justification.

If they could suggest or convince that they were **MACHINES OF LIFE**, a sort of **LIVING** plastic geometry, then their existence would be justified.

6. To say **WHY** any particular man is alive is a difficult business; and we cannot obviously ask more of a picture than of a man.

A picture either **IS** or it **IS NOT**.

A work of art could not start from such a purpose as the manufacture of nibs or nails.

These mysterious machines of modern art are what they are **TO BE ALIVE**.

Many of Picasso's works answer this requirement.

But many, notably the latest small sculpture he has shown, attach themselves too coldly to **OTHER** machines of daily use and inferior significance.

Or, he practically **MAKES** little nature-mortes, a kettle, plate, and piece of wall-paper, for example.

He no longer so much interprets, as definitely **MAKES**, nature (and "DEAD" nature at that).

A kettle is never as fine as a man,

This is a challenge to the kettles.



# THE NEW EGOS.

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1. A civilized savage, in a desert-city, surrounded by very simple objects and restricted number of beings, reduces his Great Art down to the simple black human bullet.

His sculpture is monotonous. The one compact human form is his Tom-Tom.

We have nothing whatever to do with this individual and his bullet.

Our eyes sweep life horizontally.

Were they in the top of our head, and full of blank light, our art would be different, and more like that of the savage.

The African we have referred to cannot allow his personality to venture forth or amplify itself, for it would dissolve in vagueness of space.

It has to be swaddled up in a bullet-like lump.

But the modern town-dweller of our civilization sees everywhere fraternal moulds for his spirit, and interstices of a human world.

He also sees multitude, and infinite variety of means of life, a world and elements he controls.

Impersonality becomes a disease with him.

Socially, in a parallel manner, his egotism takes a different form.

Society is sufficiently organised for his ego to walk abroad

Life is really no more secure, or his egotism less acute, but the frontier's interpenetrate, individual demarcations are confused and interests dispersed.

2. According to the most approved contemporary methods in boxing, two men burrow into each other, and after an infinitude of little intimate pommels, one collapses.

In the old style, two distinct, heroic figures were confronted, and one ninepin tried to knock the other ninepin over.

We all to-day (possibly with a coldness reminiscent of the insect-world) are in each other's vitals—overlap, intersect, and are Siamese to any extent.

Promiscuity is normal; such separating things as love, hatred, friendship are superseded by a more realistic and logical passion.

The human form still runs, like a wave, through the texture or body of existence, and therefore of art.

But just as the old form of egotism is no longer fit for such conditions as now prevail, so the isolated human figure of most ancient Art is an anachronism.

**THE ACTUAL HUMAN BODY BECOMES OF LESS IMPORTANCE EVERY DAY.**

It now, literally, **EXISTS** much less.

Love, hatred, etc., imply conventional limitations.

All clean, clear cut emotions depend on the element of strangeness, and surprise and primitive detachment.

Dehumanization is the chief diagnostic of the Modern World.

One feels the immanence of some REALITY more than any former human beings can have felt it.

This superceding of specific passions and easily determinable emotions by such uniform, more animal instinctively logical Passion of Life, of different temperatures, but similar in kind, is, then, the phenomenon to which we would relate the most fundamental tendencies in present art, and by which we would gage it's temper.



## ORCHESTRA OF MEDIA.

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Painting, with the Venetians, was like pianoforte playing as compared to the extended complicated orchestra aspired to by the Artist to-day.

Sculpture of the single sententious or sentimental figure on the one hand, and painting as a dignified accomplished game on the other, is breaking up and caving in.

The medium (of oil-paint) is modifiable, like an instrument. Few to-day have forsaken it for the more varied instruments, or orchestra of media, but have contented themselves with violating it.

The reflection back on the present, however, of this imminent extension—or, at least the preparation for this taking-in of other media—has for effect a breaking up of the values of beauty, etc., in contemporary painting.

The surfaces of cheap manufactured goods, woods, steel, glass, etc., already appreciated for themselves, and their possibilities realised, have finished the days of fine paint.

Even if painting remain intact, it will be much more supple and extended, containing all the elements of discord and "ugliness" consequent on the attack against traditional harmony.

The possibilities of colour, exploitation of discords, odious combinations, etc., have been little exploited.

A painter like Matisse has always been harmonious, with a scale of colour pleasantly Chinese.

Kandinsky at his best is much more original and bitter. But there are fields of discord untouched.



# THE MELODRAMA OF MODERNITY.

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1. Of all the tags going, "Futurist," for general application, serves as well as any for the active painters of to-day.

It is picturesque and easily inclusive.

It is especially justifiable here in England where no particular care or knowledge of the exact (or any other in matters of art) signification of this word exist.

In France, for instance, no one would be likely to apply the term "Futurist" to Picasso or Derain; for everyone there is familiar with Marinetti's personality, the detail of his propaganda, and also the general history of the Cubist movement—Picasso's part, Derain's part, and the Futurist's.

On the other hand, here in England, Marquet, Vuillard, Besnard, even, I expect, would be called "Futurist" fairly often.

As "Futurist," in England, does not mean anything more than a painter, either a little, or very much, occupying himself with questions of a renovation of art, and showing a tendency to rebellion against the domination of the Past, it is not necessary to correct it.

We may hope before long to find a new word.

If Kandinsky had found a better word than "Expressionist" he might have supplied a useful alternative.

2. Futurism, as preached by Marinetti, is largely Impressionism up-to-date. To this is added his Automobilmism and Nietzsche stunt.

With a lot of good sense and vitality at his disposal, he hammers away in the blatant mechanism of his Manifestos, at his *idée fixe* of Modernity.

From that harsh swarming of animal vitality in almost Eastern cities across the Alps, his is a characteristic voice, with execration making his teeth ragged, blood weltering and leaping round his eyes.

He snarls and bawls about the Past and Future with all his Italian practical directness.

This is of great use when one considers with what sort of person the artist to-day has to deal!

His certain success in England is similar to that of Giovanni Grasso. Any spectacular display of temperament carries away the English crowd. With an Italian crowd it has not the same effect. This popular orator again possesses qualities which attach him on the one hand to a vitality possessed by all artists a cut above the senile prig, and on the other hand he has access to the vitality of the People.

3. Futurism, then, in its narrow sense and in the history of modern Painting, is a picturesque, superficial and romantic rebellion of young Milanese painters against the Academism which surrounded them.

Gino Severini was the most important. Severini, with his little blocks, strips and triangles of colour, "zones" of movement, etc., made many excellent plastic discoveries. I say "was" because to-day there are practically no Futurists, or at least, Automobilists, left. Balla is the best painter of what was once the Automobilist group.



4. Modernity, for Severini, consisted in the night cafés of Paris. It is doubtful whether the Future (of his or any one else's ISM) will contain such places.

We all foresee, as I have argued in another place, in a century or so men and women being put to bed at 7 o'clock by a state nurse (in separate beds, of course!).

No cocottes for Ginos of the Future!

With their careful choice of motor omnibuses, cars, lifes, aeroplanes, etc., the Automobilist pictures were too "picturesque," melodramatic and spectacular, besides being undigested and naturalistic to a fault.

Severini only seemed to me to escape, by his feeling for pattern, and certain clearness and restraint (even in the excesses of a gigantic set-piece).

The Melodrama of Modernity is the subject of these fanciful but rather conventional Italians.

Romance about science is a thing we have all been used to for many years, and we resent it being used as a sauce for a dish claiming to belong strictly to emancipated Futures.

A motor omnibus can be just as romantically seen as Carisbrooke Castle or Shakespeare's house at Stratford.

I do not hold a brief opposed to Romance, but most of the Futurist work, in essence as sentimental as Boccioni's large earlier picture at the Sackville Gallery Show, called the BUILDING OF A CITY.

This was sheer unadulterated Belgian romance: blue clouds of smoke, pawing horses, heroic grimy workers, sententious sky-scrapers, factory chimneys' etc.

If, divested of this element of illustration, H. G. Wells romance, and pedantic naturalism, Marinetti's movement could produce profounder visions with this faith of novelty, something fine might be done.

For it does not matter what incentive the artist has to creation.

Schiller always kept a few rotten pears in his drawer, and when he felt the time had come to write another lyric, he would go to his drawer and take out a rotten pear. He would sniff and sniff. When he felt the lyric rising from the depths of him in response, he would put the pear back and seize the pen.

If "dynamic" considerations intoxicate Balla and make him produce significant patterns (as they do), all is well.

5. But as I have said, Balla is not a "Futurist" in the Automobilist sense.

He is a rather violent and geometric sort of Expressionist.

His paintings are purely abstract: he does not give you bits of automobiles, or complete naturalistic fragments of noses and ears, or any of the Automobilist bag of tricks, in short.

So in the present and latest exhibition of Futurists at the Doré Gallery there are no Futurists left, except perhaps the faithful lieutenant Boccioni: although he too becomes less representative and more abstract every day.

As to the rest, they seem to have become quite conventional and dull Cubists or Picassoists, with nothing left of their still duller Automobilism but letters and bits of newspaper stuck all over the place.

6. Cannot Marinetti, sensible and energetic man that he is, be induced to throw over this sentimental rubbish about Automobiles and Aeroplanes, and follow his friend Balla into a purer region of art? Unless he wants to become a rapidly fossilizing monument of puerility, cheap reaction and sensationalism, he had better do so.



# THE EXPLOITATION OF VULGARITY.

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When an ugly or uncomely person appeared on the horizon of their daily promenade, Ingres' careful wife would raise her shawl protectingly, and he would be spared a sight that would have offended him.

To-day the Artist's attention would be drawn, on the contrary, to anything particularly hideous or banal, as a thing not to be missed.

Stupidity has always been exquisite and ugliness fine.

Aristophanes loved a fool as much as any man his shapely sweetheart.

Perhaps his weakness for fools dulled his appreciation of the Sages.

No doubt in a perfectly "wholesome," classic state of existence, Humour would be almost absent, and discords would be scrupulously shunned, or exist only as a sacred disease that an occasional man was blighted with.

We don't want to-day things made entirely of gold (but gold mixed with flint or grass, diamond with paste, etc.) any more than a monotonous paradise or security would be palatable.

But the condition of our enjoyment of vulgarity, discord, cheapness or noise is an unimpaired and keen disgust with it.

It depends, that is, on sufficient health, not to relinquish the consciousness of what is desirable and beneficial.

Rare and cheap, fine and poor, these contrasts are the male and female, the principle of creation to-day.

This pessimism is the triumphant note in modern art.

A man could make just as fine an art in discords, and with nothing but "ugly" trivial and terrible materials, as any classic artist did with only "beautiful" and pleasant means.

But it would have to be a very tragic and pure creative instinct.

Life to-day is giddily frank, and the fool is everywhere serene and blatant.

Human insanity has never flowered so colossally.

Our material of discord is to an unparalleled extent forcible and virulent.

Pleasantness, too, has an edge or a softness of unusual strength.

The world may, at any moment, take a turn, and become less vulgar and stupid.

The great artist must not miss this opportunity.

But he must not so dangerously identify himself with vulgarity as Picasso, for instance, inclines to identify himself with the appearance of Nature.

There are possibilities for the great artist in the picture postcard.

The ice is thin, and there is as well the perpetual peril of virtuosity.



# THE IMPROVEMENT OF LIFE.

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The passion of his function to order and transmute, is exasperated in the artist of to-day, by vacuity and complication, as it was in the case of the imitators of Romanticism before "Wild Nature."

One of the most obvious questions that might have been put to any naturalistic painter of twenty years ago, or for that matter to Rembrandt or a Japanese, was this :

Is there no difference, or if so, what difference, between a bad piece of architecture or a good piece represented in a painting, or rather would it be a greater type of art that had for representative content objects finer in themselves?

This kind of argument, of course, refers only to the representative painter.

Rembrandt might have replied that there is no fine man or poor man, that vulgarity is as good as nobleness : that in his paintings all things were equal. But in taking Rembrandt the point may be confused by sentimentality about a great artist, "touching" old beggar man, "soul-painting," etc.

(Just as profound sentimentality might arise about Newness, Brand Newness, as about age, ruins, mould and dilapidation.)

Every one admits that the interior of an A. B. C. shop is not as fine as the interior of some building conceived by a great artist.

Yet it would probably inspire an artist to-day better than the more perfect building.

With its trivial ornamentation, mirrors, cheap marble tables, silly spacing, etc.: it nevertheless suggests a thousand great possibilities for the painter.

Where is the advantage, then, for the painter to-day, for Rembrandt or for a Japanese, in having a better standard of taste in architecture, finer dresses, etc ?

2. If it were not that vulgarity and the host of cheap artisans compete in earning with the true artist immeasurably more than in a "great period of art," the Present would be an ideal time for creative genius.

Adverse climatic conditions—drastic Russian winters, for example—account for much thought and profundity.

England which stands for anti-Art, mediocrity and brainliness among the nations of Europe, should be the most likely place for great Art to spring up.

England is just as unkind and inimical to Art as the Arctic zone is to Life.

This is the Siberia of the mind.

If you grant this, you will at once see the source and reason of my very genuine optimism.



# OUR VORTEX.

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## I.

Our vortex is not afraid of the Past : it has forgotten it's existence.

Our vortex regards the Future as as sentimental as the Past.

The Future is distant, like the Past, and therefore sentimental.

The mere element " Past " must be retained to sponge up and absorb our melancholy.

Everything absent, remote, requiring projection in the veiled weakness of the mind, is sentimental.

The Present can be intensely sentimental—especially if you exclude the mere element " Past."

Our vortex does not deal in reactive Action only, nor identify the Present with numbing displays of vitality.

The new vortex plunges to the heart of the Present.

The chemistry of the Present is different to that of the Past. With this different chemistry we produce a New Living Abstraction.

The Rembrandt Vortex swamped the Netherlands with a flood of dreaming.

The Turner Vortex rushed at Europe with a wave of light.

We wish the Past and Future with us, the Past to mop up our melancholy, the Future to absorb our troublesome optimism.

With our Vortex the Present is the only active thing.

Life is the Past and the Future.

The Present is Art.

## II.

Our Vortex insists on water—tight compartments.

There is no Present—there is Past and Future, and there is Art.



Any moment not weakly relaxed and slipped back, or, on the other hand, dreaming optimistically, is Art.

"Just Life" or soi-disant "Reality" is a fourth quantity, made up of the Past, the Future and Art.

This impure Present our Vortex despises and ignores.

For our Vortex is uncompromising.

We must have the Past and the Future, Life simple, that is, to discharge ourselves in, and keep us pure for non-life, that is Art.

The Past and Future are the prostitutes Nature has provided.

Art is periodic escapes from this Brothel.

Artists put as much vitality and delight into this saintliness, and escape out, as most men do their escapes into similar places from respectable existence.

The Vorticist is at his maximum point of energy when stillest.

The Vorticist is not the Slave of Commotion, but it's Master.

The Vorticist does not suck up to Life.

He lets Life know its place in a Vorticist Universe !

### III.

In a Vorticist Universe we don't get excited at what we have invented.

If we did it would look as though it had been a fluke.

It is not a fluke.

We have no Verbotens.

There is one Truth, ourselves, and everything is permitted.

But we are not Templars.

We are proud, handsome and predatory.

We hunt machines, they are our favourite game.

We invent them and then hunt them down.

This is a great Vorticist age, a great still age of artists.



## IV.

As to the lean belated Impressionism at present attempting to eke out a little life in these islands :

Our Vortex is fed up with your dispersals, reasonable chicken-men.

Our Vortex is proud of its polished sides.

Our Vortex will not hear of anything but its disastrous polished dance.

Our Vortex desires the immobile rythm of its swiftness.

Our Vortex rushes out like an angry dog at your Impressionistic fuss.

Our Vortex is white and abstract with its red-hot swiftness.





# FREDERICK SPENCER GORE.

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Born in 1879, Gore died on March 27th, 1914, of pneumonia, after an illness of three days.

Had he lived, his dogged, almost romantic industry, his passion for the delicate objects set in the London atmosphere around him, his grey conception of the artist's life, his gentleness and fineness, would have matured into an abundant personal art, something like Corot and Gessing.

His habit of telling you of things he had his eye on and intended painting three years hence, and all his system of work was with reference to minute and persistent labour, implying a good spell of life, which almost retarded accomplishment.

He projected himself into the years of work before him, and organized queerly what was to be done. He possessed physically, a busy time three years away, as much as to-day.

A boastfully confident attitude to Time's expanse, and absence of recognition of the common need to hurry, characterized him.

Death cut all this short to the dismay of those who had known him from the start, and regarded, confidently like him, this great artist and dear friend as a permanent thing in their lives, and his work as in safe hands and sure of due fulfilment. His leisureliness and confidence were infectious.

His painting as it is, although incomplete, is full of illustrations of a maturer future. His latest work, with an accentuation of structural qualities, a new and suave simplicity, might, in the case of several examples I know, be placed beside that of any of the definitely graceful artists in Europe.

The welter of pale and rather sombre colour filling London back-yards, the rather distant, still and sultry well-being of a Camden Town summer, in trivial crescents with tall trees and toy trains, was one of his favourite themes.

He was a painter of the London summer, of heavy dull sunlight, of exquisite, respectable and stodgy houses, more than anybody else.

The years he spent working on scenes from the London music-halls brought to light a new world of witty illusion. I much prefer Gore's paintings of the theatre to Dégas'. Gore gets everything that Dégas with his hard and rather paltry science apparently did not see.

He had an admirable master for his drawing in Mr. Walter Sickert, to whose advice and friendship he no doubt owed more than to anybody else.

But he was quite independent of Mr. Sickert, or of any group of artists, and even diametrically opposed to many of his friends in his feeling towards the latest movement in painting, which from the first he gave his word for. Some of his work towards the end belonged rather to this present movement than to any other.

The memorial exhibition of his work shortly to be held should, if possible, since the Cabaret Club has closed, contain the large paintings he did for that place.



# TO SUFFRAGETTES.

A WORD OF ADVICE.

IN DESTRUCTION, AS IN OTHER THINGS,  
stick to what you understand.

WE MAKE YOU A PRESENT OF OUR VOTES.

ONLY LEAVE WORKS OF ART ALONE.

YOU MIGHT SOME DAY DESTROY A  
GOOD PICTURE BY ACCIDENT.

THEN !—

MAIS SOYEZ BONNES FILLES !

NOUS VOUS AIMONS !

WE ADMIRE YOUR ENERGY. YOU AND ARTISTS  
ARE THE ONLY THINGS (YOU DON'T MIND  
BEING CALLED THINGS ?) LEFT IN ENGLAND  
WITH A LITTLE LIFE IN THEM.



**IF YOU DESTROY A GREAT WORK OF ART you  
are destroying a greater soul than if you  
annihilated a whole district of London.**

**LEAVE ART ALONE, BRAVE COMRADES !**







Brighton Pier

Spencer Gore.









Richmond Houses

Spencer Gore.







# VORTEX.

## POUND.

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The vortex is the point of maximum energy,

It represents, in mechanics, the greatest efficiency.

We use the words "greatest efficiency" in the precise sense—as they would be used in a text book of MECHANICS.

You may think of man as that toward which perception moves. You may think of him as the TOY of circumstance, as the plastic substance RECEIVING impressions.

OR you may think of him as DIRECTING a certain fluid force against circumstance, as CONCEIVING instead of merely observing and reflecting.

## THE PRIMARY PIGMENT.

The vorticalist relies on this alone; on the primary pigment of his art, nothing else.

Every conception, every emotion presents itself to the vivid consciousness in some primary form.

It is the picture that means a hundred poems, the music that means a hundred pictures, the most highly energized statement, the statement that has not yet SPENT itself its expression, but which is the most capable of expressing.

## THE TURBINE.

All experience rushes into this vortex. All the energized past, all the past that is living and worthy to live. All MOMENTUM, which is the past bearing upon us, RACE, RACE-MEMORY, instinct charging the PLACID,  
NON-ENERGIZED FUTURE.

The DESIGN of the future in the grip of the human vortex. All the past that is vital, all the past that is capable of living into the future, is pregnant in the vortex, NOW.

Hedonism is the vacant place of a vortex, without force, deprived of past and of future, the vertex of a still spool or cone.

Futurism is the disgorging spray of a vortex with no drive behind it,  
DISPERSAL.



EVERY CONCEPT, EVERY EMOTION PRESENTS ITSELF TO THE VIVID CONSCIOUSNESS IN SOME PRIMARY FORM. IT BELONGS TO THE ART OF THIS FORM. IF SOUND, TO MUSIC; IF FORMED WORDS, TO LITERATURE; THE IMAGE, TO POETRY; FORM, TO DESIGN; COLOUR IN POSITION, TO PAINTING; FORM OR DESIGN IN THREE PLANES, TO SCULPTURE; MOVEMENT TO THE DANCE OR TO THE RHYTHM OF MUSIC OR OF VERSES.

Elaboration, expression of second intensities, of dispersedness belong to the secondary sort of artist. Dispersed arts HAD a vortex.

Impressionism, Futurism, which is only an accelerated sort of impressionism, DENY the vortex. They are the CORPSES of VORTICES. POPULAR BELIEFS, movements, etc., are the CORPSES OF VORTICES. Marinetti is a corpse.

## THE MAN.

The vorticist relies not upon similarity or analogy, not upon likeness or mimicry.

In painting he does not rely upon the likeness to a beloved grandmother or to a caressable mistress.

VORTICISM is art before it has spread itself into a state of flaccidity, of elaboration, of secondary applications.

## ANCESTRY.

"All arts approach the conditions of music."—*Pater*.

"An Image is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time."—*Pound*.

"You are interested in a certain painting because it is an arrangement of lines and colours."—*Whistler*.

Picasso, Kandinski, father and mother, classicism and romanticism of the movement.

## POETRY.

The vorticist will use only the primary media of his art.

The primary pigment of poetry is the IMAGE.

The vorticist will not allow the primary expression of any concept or emotion to drag itself out into mimicry.

In painting Kandinski, Picasso.

In poetry this by, "H. D."

Whirl up sea —  
Whirl your pointed pines,  
Splash your great pines  
On our rocks,  
Hurl your green over us,  
Cover us with your pools of fir.



# VORTEX.

## GAUDIER BRZESKA.

---

Sculptural energy is the mountain.

Sculptural feeling is the appreciation of masses in relation.

Sculptural ability is the defining of these masses by planes.

The PALEOLITHIC VORTEX resulted in the decoration of the Dordogne caverns.

Early stone-age man disputed the earth with animals.

His livelihood depended on the hazards of the hunt—his greatest victory the domestication of a few species.

Out of the minds primordially preoccupied with animals Fonts-de-Gaume gained its procession of horses carved in the rock. The driving power was life in the absolute—the plastic expression the fruitful sphere.

The sphere is thrown through space, it is the soul and object of the vortex—

The intensity of existence had revealed to man a truth of form—his manhood was strained to the highest potential—his energy brutal—HIS OPULENT MATURITY WAS CONVEX.

The acute fight subsided at the birth of the three primary civilizations. It always retained more intensity East.

The HAMITE VORTEX of Egypt, the land of plenty—

Man succeeded in his far reaching speculations—Honour to the divinity!

Religion pushed him to the use of the VERTICAL which inspires awe. His gods were self made, he built them in his image, and RETAINED AS MUCH OF THE SPHERE AS COULD ROUND THE SHARPNESS OF THE PARALLELOGRAM.

He preferred the pyramid to the mastaba.

The fair Greek felt this influence across the middle sea.



The fair Greek saw himself only. HE petrified his own semblance.

**HIS SCULPTURE WAS DERIVATIVE** his feeling for form secondary.  
The absence of direct energy lasted for a thousand years.

The Indians felt the hamitic influence through Greek spectacles. Their extreme temperament inclined towards asceticism, admiration of non-desire as a balance against abuse produced a kind of sculpture without new form perception—and which is the result of the peculiar

**VORTEX OF BLACKNESS AND SILENCE.**

**PLASTIC SOUL IS INTENSITY OF LIFE BURSTING THE PLANE.**

The Germanic barbarians were verily whirled by the mysterious need of acquiring new arable lands. They moved restlessly, like strong oxen stampeding.

The **SEMITIC VORTEX** was the lust of war. The men of Elam, of Assur, of Bebel and the Kheta, the men Armenia and those of Canaan had to slay each other crullly for the possession of fertile valleys. Their gods sent them the vertical direction, the earth, the **SPHERE**.

They elevated the sphere in a splendid squatness and created the **HORIZONTAL**.

From Sargon to Amir-nasir-pal men built man-headed bulls in horizontal flight-walk. Men flayed their their captives alive and erected howling lions : **THE ELONGATED HORIZONTAL SPHERE BUTTRESSED ON FOUR COLUMNS**, and their kingdoms disappeared.

Christ flourished and perished in Yudah.

Christianity gained Africa, and from the seaports of the Mediterranean it won the Roman Empire.

The stampeding Franks came into violent contact with it as well as with the Groeco-Roman tradition.

They were swamped by the remote reflections of the two vortices of the West.

Gothic sculpture was but a faint echo of the **HAMITO-SEMITIC** energies through Roman traditions, and it lasted half a thousand years, and it wilfully divagated again into the Greek derivation from the land of Amen-Ra.

**VORTEX OF A VORTEX !!**

**VORTEX IS THE POINT ONE AND INDIVISIBLE !**

**VORTEX IS ENERGY !** and it gave forth **SOLID EXCREMENTS** in the quattro é cinco cento, **LIQUID** until the seventeenth century, **GASES** whistle till now. **THIS** is the history of form value in the West until the **FALL OF IMPRESSIONISM**.



The black-haired men who wandered through the pass of Khotan into the valley of the YELLOW RIVER lived peacefully tilling their lands, and they grew prosperous.

Their paleolithic feeling was intensified. As gods they had themselves in the persons of their human ancestors—and of the spirits of the horse and of the land and the grain.

**THE SPHERE SWAYED.**

**THE VORTEX WAS ABSOLUTE.**

The Shang and Chow dynasties produced the convex bronze vases.

The features of Tao-t'ie were inscribed inside of the square with the rounded corners—the centuple spherical frog presided over the inverted truncated cone that is the bronze war drum.

**THE VORTEX WAS INTENSE MATURITY.** Maturity is fecundity—they grew numerous and it lasted for six thousand years.

The force relapsed and they accumulated wealth, forsook their work, and after losing their form-understanding through the Han and T'ang dynasties, they founded the Ming and found artistic ruin and sterility.

**THE SPHERE LOST SIGNIFICANCE AND THEY ADMIRERD THEMSELVES.**

During their great period off-shoots from their race had landed on another continent.—After many wanderings some tribes settled on the highlands of Yukatan and Mexico.

When the Ming were losing their conception, these nei-Mongols had a flourishing state. Through the strain of warfare they submitted the Chinese sphere to horizontal treatment much as the Semites had done. Their cruel nature and temperament supplied them with a stimulant: **THE VORTEX OF DESTRUCTION.**

Besides these highly developed peoples there lived on the world other races inhabiting Africa and the Ocean islands.

When we first knew them they were very near the paleolithic stage. Though they were not so much dependent upon animals their expenditure of energy was wide, for they began to till the land and practice crafts rationally, and they fell into contemplation before their sex: the site of their great energy: **THEIR CONVEX MATURITY.**

They pulled the sphere lengthways and made the cylinder, **this is the VORTEX OF FECUNDITY**, and it has left us the masterpieces that are known as love charms.



The soil was hard, material difficult to win from nature, storms frequent, as also fevers and other epidemics. They got frightened: This is the **VORTEX OF FEAR**, its mass is the **POINTED CONE**, its masterpieces the fetishes.

And **WE** the moderns: Epstein, Brancusi, Archipenko, Dunikowski, Modigliani, and myself, through the incessant struggle in the complex city, have likewise to spend much energy.

The knowledge of our civilisation embraces the world, we have mastered the elements.

We have been influenced by what we liked most, each according to his own individuality, we have crystallized the sphere into the cube, we have made a combination of all the possible shaped masses—concentrating them to express our abstract thoughts of conscious superiority.

Will and consciousness are our

## **VORTEX.**





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