

Literature review of “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters”

“Manifesto of the Futurist Painters” (1910) is one of the first manifestos of the movement of Futurism, in particular it was composed from three painters and artists: Carrà, Boccioni and Russolo.

They wanted to address the political views of the Futurist intellectual Marinetti, where they saw the starting point for a political and cultural revolution in Italy.

This text is placed in a precise context. At the beginning of the 20th century new tendencies fueled by the myth of progress, the spread of machines in the military and industrial fields and in the daily lives of many people in Europe, extremely fascinated these artists.

They will use constantly in their work symbolic images that are products of Modernity: industries with smoking chimneys, locomotives, electric light poles, the plane and airships to express detachment from what was old and to create the conditions for humanity projected towards the future.

In addition to the aesthetic renewal, the Manifesto also expresses the role of the artist as a revolutionary figure.

As they wrote “the artist” has to break from the academic tradition and destroy all the passatism tendencies and be capable of interpreting the speed of modernity.

There is therefore a complete break with the tradition and cultural heritage of previous arts movements as they also introduce for the first time the figure of the artist as an authentic and active transformer of society. The artist is no longer only an observer but the creator of a new aesthetic and spiritual sensitivity.

In my opinion revolutionary potential was murdered by the invocation of violence and nationalism, ideals that are completely in opposition to an actual regeneration. These principles inevitably lead to authoritarianism and conformity which are systems that are supposed to suppress rather than liberate creativity.

The artist, who was meant to be a revolutionary transformer of society, became a propagandist for a political vision that could not sustain the open, dynamic spirit it once claimed to embody.

In this way, these futurist ideas destroyed the freedom they claimed to defend. When art began to serve power and nationalism, it lost its creative strength and became another fixed tradition.

The “Manifesto of the Futurists Painters” remains an important testimony for understanding the birth of the concept of a political art, which imagined a relationship between art and daily life.

They tried to change artistic perspectives and experimentation opened new possibilities.

Although strongly linked to the concepts of war, violence and discrimination against the weakest, their trust in the power of art in shaping the world remained as a legacy in many subsequent movements (such as Surrealism or Situationism). They are the first to have given this meaning to the term “avant-garde”.

In parallel the failure of Futurism reveals the limits of an avant-garde that seeks regeneration through destruction alone. True regeneration may require not only rejecting the past but also transforming it.

Bibliography:

"100 Artist' Manifestos- From the Futurists to the Stuckist" - Alex Danchev