

**Art History internal – construct an argument based on interpretation of research in art history. Modernist styles, including cubism, Orphism and futurism, challenged the traditions of representational art.**

Modern 20<sup>th</sup> century art challenged the traditions of representational art. Until the 20<sup>th</sup> century art was always thought of as a form that represents a lot of religious values without pushing boundaries. It was always created with paint and often either showed religious views or simply a view that was around the artist. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century completely new art forms were created that challenged the traditions of representational art. These included Cubism Orphism and Futurism.

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Cubism was a truly revolutionary style of modern art developed by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque. It was the first style of abstract art which evolved at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in response to a world that was changing with a fast speed. Cubism was an attempt by artists to revitalise the tired traditions of Western art which they believed had run their course. The Cubists challenged conventional forms of representation, such as perspective, which had been the rule since the Renaissance. Their aim was to develop a new way of seeing through their art which reflected the modern age. In the four decades from 1870-1910, western society witnessed more technological progress than in the previous four centuries. During this period inventions such as photography, cinematography, sound recording, the telephone, the motor car and the airplane all came with the new age. The problem for artists at this time was how to reflect the modernity of the era using the tired and trusted traditions that had served art for the last four centuries. Photography had begun to replace painting as the tool for documenting the age and for artists to use it for illustrating cars, planes and images of the new technologies was not exactly rising to the challenge. Artists needed a more radical approach – a ‘new way of seeing’ that expanded the possibilities of art in the same way that technology was extending the boundaries of communication and travel.. the new way of seeing was called Cubism – the first abstract style of modern art. Picasso and Braque each developed their ideas on Cubism around 1907 in Paris and their starting point was a common interest in the alter paintings of Paul Cezanne. This following quote from Pablo Picasso really shows the point on how Cubism was a way to express through art which had never been done before “When we discovered cubism, we did not have the aim of discovering Cubism. We only wanted to express what was in us.”

Orphism painting was a blend of Fauvism (colour), Cubism (fragmentary planes) and Futurism (sense of motion). It appealed to the senses, using overlapping planes of contrasting colours, and specific colour combinations based on the colour theory known as the “Law of simultaneous contrasts of colours”. Delaunay himself avoided the name Orphism, preferring the more modern Futurist-sounding term Simultanisme to describe his method of capturing fleeting visual sensations. Not only did Simultanisme make reference to the law of simultaneous contrasts upon which it was based, but it was seen as a particularly apt name for a style of modern art. Robert Delaunay initiated Orphic Cubism during the period 1908-10, when he began producing Cubist-style works with vivid colours instead of the trendy browns and greys used by Braque and Picasso. His subjects were also quite different – he used dynamic Futurist-style urban imagery rather than the more

conventional Cubist still-life forms. The quote “when man wanted to make a machine that would walk he created the wheel which does not resemble a leg” by Guillaume Apollinaire, is about Orphism and also most probably refers to modern art as well. His quote shows the reasoning behind modern art works and how it challenges traditional values about how art should be and why there should be no restrictions because at the end of the day you are getting something that is beautiful, that is art. Also this quote by Pablo Picasso shows more straightforward vision of this “the fact that for a long time Cubism has not been understood and that even today there are people who cannot see anything in it means nothing. I do not read English, and English book is a blank book to me, This does not mean that the English language does not exist. Why should I blame anyone but myself if I cannot understand what I know nothing about?”

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In the early 1900s a group of rebellious Italian writers and artists emerged determined to celebrate industrialisation. They were frustrated by Italy's declining status and believed that the “machine Age” would result in an entirely new world order and even a renewed consciousness. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, the ringleader of this group, called the movement Futurism. Its members sought to recapture the idea of modernity, the sensations and aesthetics of speed, movement and industrial development. Marinetti launched Futurism in 1909 with the publication of his ‘Futurist Manifesto’ on the front page of the French newspaper *Le Figaro*. In it Marinetti lashed out against cultural tradition and called for the destruction of museums, libraries and feminism. Futurism quickly grew into an international movement. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century it was through the example of a photography effect that had finally made its way onto canvas. We find oil paintings doing something that they had never done before – using multiple limbs to indicate bodies in motion. Giacomo Balla's *Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash* is one of the most striking. A lady is walking a dog; a widow and her pet. The lady has roughly 15 feet, variably solid and see-through. The dog has eight countable tails, while its legs are lost in a flurry of blurry overlays. Four swinging leads go between them. The picture's sense of movement is created out of black forms and weird flowing lacey veils. Even without these motion effects, *Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash* would be doing something that's novel. There aren't many previous paintings that present us with such an abrupt close-up. Futurism has always got something to do with movement of speed as you can see from this piece. This represents the speed of the world around us, and the artist cleverly shows the world this through their art. Due to the speed and movement in the art work, some of the pieces would come across bizarre and rubbish nearly insulting to the traditional art world, nearly as though they had started a whole new era.

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Modern art in the 20<sup>th</sup> century pushed art to a new level completely, while doing this challenged traditional art work. Until this happened art work was always formal, elegant art that showed the world as we saw it at the time and a lot of the time showed religious values. Modern art has challenged this art in a positive light as it has made it possible for art to express itself not just from what we see, but what is actually happening all around us. Modern art challenged traditional art in a positive way as it gave people the opportunity to express themselves.

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