Women's Work: Bringing Modernism into the Everyday

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Women’s History

Women have been “written out” of History

-- 1) Restore women to the story
-- 2) Rewrite history as it includes women, that is, pay attention to those cultural roles that were seen as “outside” history**

**This is particularly true of the rhetoric of Modernity and Modernism which was all about the FUTURE and Progress and Reason, while women were consigned to the Domestic, Timeless, Tradition, Emotions
The Modern

- **Modernization** – that complex constellation of socioeconomic phenomena which originated in the context of Western development: scientific and technological innovation, the industrialization of production, rapid urbanization, an ever-expanding capitalist market, nation-states, etc.
Modernity

- The rapid technological, political, and social changes of the period 1890—1930s and the resultant sense of **dislocation** and **ambiguity** brought about by them. Specifically, the ephemeral and transitory qualities of urban culture shaped by the imperatives of **fashion**, **consumerism**, and **constant innovation**.
“The Shock of the New”

“The Kiss” 1916
Mstislav Dobuzhinsky
Modernism

An umbrella term for a kind of artistic production which arose at the end of the 1800s and continued into the 1930s, which was typified by aesthetic self-consciousness, stylistic fragmentation, a questioning of representation, spurred on by the changes and technologies of modernization, but often also critical of them.

ABSTRACTION, Movement, Fragmentation, Non-representational Art, COLOR, Simultaneity i.e., NON chronological TIME, LACK OF PERSPECTIVE
CUBISM AND ABSTRACT ART
Pre-WWI
Paris and the Avant-Garde
The “Giants” of Modernism
Picasso, *l’usine* (1909)
Nu descendant un escalier n° 2, Marcel Duchamps, 1912
Edvard Munch, *Skrik* (1910)
Modernist Historiography

- Modernism thus has a PLACE: Paris, Berlin, Vienna

- Modernism has a time: Pre-WWI, and Inter-war Period

- Modernism has a Gender -- MALE
Historiography of Modernism

- Women Written out—by their male peers AND by subsequent narratives
- Women rendered as “muses”
- Women artists and writers configured as “outside” and even insane
- Women in the shadow or derivative of their male partners
- Part of the “domestic” sphere, and thus not part of history or modernity
Woman as “Muse”
Dora Maar (1907-1997)
Pablo Picasso’s “muse” 1936-1945

Trained at Académie Julian
Surrealist Photographer
from
mid-1920s to 1930s

Her political influence
behind
Guernica, which she also
Helped paint AND photographically
documented
Tête de femme
(Dora Maar) by Picasso, 1939
Dora Maar’s Photography

- Père Ubu (1936)
"Mendiant aveugle, 1934."

"Silence, 1935-36"
Documenting Guernica
Intérieur Provençal
Dora Maar, 1952
Marie Laurencin (1883-1956)

“Muse” and lover Of Guillaume Apollinaire
Also one of the few Female Cubists

Kees van Dongen- Portrait of Marie Laurencin
Apollinaire and His Friends (1909). Portrayed from the left: the ‘Three Graces’ (Gertrude Stein, Fernande Olivier, and an unidentified blonde); Apollinaire, Picasso, Marguerite Gillot, the poet Maurice Cremnitz, with Laurencin at far right.
Picasso
*Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*
(1907)

Eduard Manet, “Le Déjeuner sur l’herbe”
1862-1863
Marie Laurencin, *Three Young Women* (ca. 1935)
Stage, Costume Design and Art Work for Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes

Les Biches, 1924
Choreographed by Bronislava Nijinska
Advertisements
Portraits

Coco Chanel  
Mme Paul  
Helena Rubinstein
Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland

1930 Limited Print (790 copies)
Wives and Mad Women

Avant-garde husband-wife artist couples from the Nordic Countries

Ateljéinteriör
1916
Sigrid Hjerten
Swedish husband-wife artists

Sigrid Hjertén (1885-1948) and Isaac Grünewald (1889-1946)
• Both Study in Paris with Matisse (1909-11)
• Both are credited with introducing Modernist art to Sweden
• Both exhibited during the 1920s, but as his career took off, she was more isolated, Isaac took on many lovers, and eventually left her
• In and out of mental institutions during the 1930s
• Late 30s Permanently institutionalized – died in 1948 of a botched Lobotomy
Sigrid Hjerten

“Girl with a Doll” (1915)
The Red Blind
1916
Girl Reading, 1918
Finnish Husband and Wife Artists: Greta Hällfors-Sipilä (1899-1974) and Sulho Sipilä (1895-1949)

• Even though they worked together and exhibited together, her work was less attended to although she produced More

• They were both rejected by the new Finnish society/state as too radical

• She spent the last 28 years of her life in a mental institute
Greta Hällfors-Sipilä: Johanneksen kirkko ca. 1918 mistaken until the 1960s as being the work of her HUSBAND
Greta Hällfors-Sipilä

“Kitchen” (1910)

Earliest Finnish Collage work, also earlier attributed to her husband
Sun-set (1922)
Calf on a Meadow, (1922)
Arriving at the Fennia (1930)  
Night (1931)
Greta Hällfors-Sipilä

Last self-portrait
Borghild Røed Lærum (1877–1959) and Arne Lærum (1877-1940)

*Vestbanebryggen* (1917)

New Motifs in a new Century Proletarian themes
(1916) Railroad Workers at Høvik
Wives of Famous Artists

Carl Larsson (1853-1919)  Karin Larsson (1859-1928)
“Mamma’s and the Small Girls’ Room,” Carl Larsson (1897)
“Cozy Corner,” Carl Larsson, 1894
“Day is Done, Good Night”
Carl Larsson, 1908

Dining Room in Larsson Home in Sundborn, Sweden
Karin’s designs
IKEA’s ÅKERKULLA SERIES
IKEA’s ÅKERKULLA SERIES

Swedish Style
Robert Delaunay and Sonia Delaunay Terk

1885-1941

1885-1979
Sonia Delaunay

Born in Ukraine

8-yr old Sonia Terk
St. Petersburg, 1893

Studied in European Capitals

Meets Robert in 1908
Marries in 1910
Parisian Avant-Garde

- Cubism
- Simultanisme
- Orphism
- Abstract Art
- COLOR

Robert Delaunay,
*Paysage au disque*, 1906–07
1 yr. BEFORE meeting
Sonia Terk
Robert’s Eiffel Tower Series
Abstraction, Color, Simultaneity

Robert Delaunay, *Joi de Vivre*, 1930

Sonia Delaunay, *Electric Prism*, 1914
La Prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France (1913)
Poem by Blaise Cendrars, Illustrations by Sonia Delaunay
La Prose du Transsibérien

- Recreate the journey as a whole
- Span distance and time on RR journey
- Positive negative space
- Painting and text overlapping and united expression
- Continuous, not limited by pages
- Mimic journey across space – both the accordion, fold-out binding and the train journey
- Couleurs simultanées
- Multiple Fonts – mimic movement
Sonia Delaunay (1885-1979)

“Colour excited me. I didn’t attempt to analyse what I was doing. These were things that came from inside me.”

Fashion – the “democratization of modernism”
Fashion and Stage Design

“Cleopatra”, for the Ballets Russes, 1909
Sonia Delaunay, Simultaneous Dress (Robe Simultanée) and Simultaneous Car (Voiture Simultanée), illustration by George Lepape for Vogue, 1925
• How does Modernism look different with women’s participation included in the history?
• How were women’s negotiations of modernism similar to and different from the experiences of their male contemporaries?
• How did women artists themselves address the issue of gender in their work and in Modernism?
The Modern(ist) Women
Roll Call

Self Portrait (1920)
Greta Hällfors-Sipilä

Aelita: Queen of Mars (1924)
design by
Alexandra Exter

“Fashion: As Paris Dances.” Vogue 69, no. 4 (Feb 15, 1927): 63
Women and Modernism

• Acted as agents and enablers for men – publishers, patrons, *salonnières*
• Agents and initiators of new approaches
• Worked in alternate media – often at the intersection of industrial/commercial and high art, and often in forms denigrated by art community – Fashion, Publishing, Kids’ Books
• Alternate sensibilities – challenge the notion of a monolithic modernism
Patrons and Enablers

Caresse Crosby
Black Sun Press

Sylvia Beach
Shakespeare and Co.
Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven

Responsible for Duchamps’ “Fountain”?
Agents and innovators – New Media

- Children’s Books
- Fashion
- Publishing
- Photo Journalism
- Textile Design
- Puppetry
- Stage and Costume Design
- Advertising
Thérèse Bonney (1894-1978)

- 1916 – BA UC Berkeley
- 1921 – PhD Sorbonne
- Celebrated Wartime Photojournalist and Correspondent
- Received Croix de Guerre and Legion d'Honneur, and Finnish White Rose
Bonney’s Paris of the 1920s
Documenting the Suffering of Everyday People, WWII
L’invention du chic
Bonney’s Photographs

Living Room Design by Elise Djo-Bourgeois

Modern Art
Fashion, Design, Commercial Art
ALL PART OF THE SCENE

Sonia Delaunay’s Fashions at The 1925 Paris World’s Fair

Paolo Garretto, 1929
Nestlé Logo
Agents and initiators of new approaches

AMAZONS of the AVANT-GARDE Russian Women Artists

Alexandra Exter
Natalia Goncharova
Sonia Delaunay . . .
WWI (1914-1918) and Russian Revolution (1917)

• Avant-garde art most often accompanied a parallel avant-garde political stance
• Revolutionary, against traditional art forms and media
• The Russian Revolution in 1917 during WWI, offered political, social, and artistic promise, and many Russian Artists returned to carry on the work of the revolution
• Revolutionary Art for the Masses
Women on strike in Petrograd on International Women’s Day February 23rd, 1917 demanding an end to war and an increase in food.
The Russian Avant-Garde

In January 2001, The Museum of Modern Art received from The Judith Rothschild Foundation an extraordinary gift of some 1,100 books and 100 related works of the Russian avant-garde. In celebration of this gift, and to demonstrate the fundamental importance of the book medium in this seminal period of modern art, a selection of over 300 examples has been presented in an exhibition and accompanying catalogue. This Web site, including 112 books, is similarly organized into three roughly chronological themes. A Slap in the Face of Public Taste reflects the creative ferment of the early 1910s when stultifying conventions of the past were overturned. Transform the World! demonstrates the optimism following the Revolution of 1917 when artists believed they would play a productive role in achieving the goals of the new society.

Poster Art by V. Lebedev

Abstract Art – Constructivism – Public Art – Political Message – Worker as Hero
Early Soviet Avant-Garde Public Art

Farming Scenes Pitcher, 1928–29 designed by Vkhutemas and manufactured by Lomonosov Porcelain Factory. 1928–29

IMPERIAL FACTORIES NOW STATE OWNED – ART DESIGNED IN STATE INSTITUTION
Textile Design


Varvara Stepanova. Models and furniture designs for Alexander Sukhovo-Kobylin's play The Death of Tarelkin, 1922. © Rodchenko Stepanova Archives, Moscow

Children’s Books

1923, “Ice-Cream” by S. Marshak, illus. by Lebedev. Printed in the 10s of thousands
El Lissitzky

Four Arithmetic Operations, 1928
Berlin, unpub.
Vladimir Lebedev

Slonyonok

1922

Leningrad: Detgiz
1921 - Russian Diaspora
~ 3 million

PARIS Interwar

Sonia Delaunay
Robert Delaunay 1921
From Spain/ Portugal

Picasso
Cocteau
E. Satie

Nathalie Parain 1928
b. Kiev

Feodor Rajchakovky
1925-1926 Paris/ Berlin

Alexandra Exter 1924

Chagall 1922

Kandinsky 1933

Nathan Altman 1928
b. 1889 Ukraine

Issacher Rybak 1926
b. 1897 in Ukraine
1921 to Berlin

Sergei Diaghilev 1917

A. Archipenko 1908
b. 1887 in Kiev

Sasha Chemey
1920 Paris
1919 Berlin

Natallia Goncharova - Larionov 1917

1914 - 1929 to Russia
1922-1933 Germany/ Berlin

1914 to Russia/ Kiev
Agitprop/ Theater

Chagall 1917
Vitebsk Art Collective

1913 - 1914 Student of Exter in Kiev

1920's

1921 to Berlin

Alexandra Exter 1882 -- 1949

One of the FOREMOST Abstract ART innovators in Europe Pre-WWI
Intermediary between many artists – Networking and Cross-Fertilizing
“Paysage Urbain,”
1911
“Venice” 1917-1924
Exter in Russia/U.S.S.R. 1914-1924

• Kiev—1915-1916 Folk Art Collection together with Kazimir Malevich
• Kiev – 1917-19 Art School/studio, students include Issacher Rybak, El Lissitzky
• 1914-1920 Kamerny Theater stage and costume design
• Teacher at Free College VkhTEMAS in Moscow
• Jack of Diamonds, Donkey’s Tail Exhibitions
Russia/U.S.S.R. 1914-1924

STAGE, Theater, Costume Design
Aelita: Queen of Mars, 1924
To France, 1924

• Taught with Fernand Leger
• Focused on Stage & Costume Design
• Marionettes

Fell into obscurity with rise of Nazism, died in 1949
Exter’s 1936 first children’s book at Flammarion
#56 Mon Jardin
#67

Panorama du fleuve
Alexandra Exter
1937
Natalia Goncharova (1881-1962)

Pioneer of Futurism
Rayonism
Stage and Costume Design

Dies in poverty
The Cyclist, 1913
Costume and Stage Design in France
Other Russian Women Artists, trained in Soviet Art, work in Children’s Books

• Nathalie Parain, née **Natalia Tchelppanova**, (b. 1897 in Kiev, d. 1958, France. Trained at Vkhutemas. To Paris in 1928. )


• Elizabeth Ivanovskyy (b. 1910 Moldova, 1932 to Belgium, d. 2006)

• Esphyr Slobodkina
Nathalie Parain 1897-1958

1935 South of France
Ronds et Carrés, 1932

Illustrator: Nathalie Parain
Hélène Guertik (1897-1937)

Designed Scarves for Chanel when she first arrived in Paris.
CENDRILLON

La fée. — Tu pleures, Cendrillon?
Cendrillon. — Chère maman, mes cœurs sont partis pour le bal, et j'ai laissé toute seule au coeur du feu en m'endormant de lever la vaisselle.
La fée. — Tu les as bal, la coeur, Cendrillon.
Cendrillon. — Vos cœurs évoquent de moi, ma bonne maman. Comment jésus le bal avec cette voisine robe de saucisse, pour ma race, et mes cheveux tout pleins de cenou. Je me change de la robe...
La fée. — Apportez-moi le grand petit chapeau que posée dans la jardinière, les six petites sourires qui sont se laissé prendre dans la voix de col le coeur en beauté dans le coeur, et les six huîtres vendues derrière l'embrasse.
Un coup de baguette... Et voilà Cendrillon habillée d'une robe de dix, chaussée de petites pantoufles de veuves.
Un autre coup de baguette... et le chapeau se change en carosse, les souris en chevaux, le roi en cocher, les lièvres en licorne.
Que magnifique équipage !
— N'oublie pas, dit la fée, de quitter le bal avant que minuit arrive !
Un coup de huit, huit huit ! En route, au grand galop, vers le palais du Prince.
Minuit ! Milles ! Trois ! Trois ! Le carosse redéguet chapeau, les chevaux, souris : le gris rocheux roulent roit, les lièvres, licorne et Cendrillon redéguet Cendrillon.
Et voilà, en perdant sa petite pantoufle.
Et vous le croyez aussi bien que moi le fin de l'histoire.

PEAU D'ANE

Saviez-vous qui était Peau d'ane ? C'était une fille de rois plus belle que le jour. Alors, pourquoi l'encouragement Peau d'ane ? ne dire-vous. Parce qu'elle s'était invitée de la peau d'un âne pour faire le palais de son père.

Lorsqu'elle fut loin du palais, elle se sentit se plier comme serpente, mais elle était si souple et si gracieuse que chacun la reprochait. Qui était au dessous, on la voyait, qu'elle était de haute maitresse et protégée par une suzette ! Isabelle, La soulit cet être maitresse, aller, et parler où vous êtes. Votre peau ne soit vos habits et vos bijoux mais au-dessus sur votre être. Votre ma baguette. Des qu'elle se frotte à son, votre peau parfaite à vos yeux.

Après avoir été maintes fois réduite, Peau d'ane fut froid engagée par une femme qui l'invitait dans le coin le plus reculé de la cuisine pour laver les taches et nettoyer les couvercles. Peau Peau d'ane ! Elle était triste et malheureuse, mais elle accomplissait cependant sa route basse sans perdre un instant.

Voici venir un jour de fête. Pour récompenser Peau d'ane, la téméraire lui accorda congé. Peau d'ane se retira dans sa petite chambre, qu'elle avait souvent de couveuses, se déshabilla et fit un coup de baguette. Le plancher s'ouvrit et le couvercle apparu. Peau d'ane revint sa belle robe courte de temps. Elle la revêt, posée ses beaux cheveux, prit son coeur de diamants et se mise. Comme elle resplendit dans sa chambre cendrée !

Juste à ce moment, un jeune prince s'arrêta dans la ferme. En attendant le repas, il se promena à travers les murs et arriva jusqu'à la chambre de Peau d'ane. L'idée lui vient de regarder par le trou de la serrure. Vous devinez la suite... Bien sûr, il tombèrent Peau d'ane et jamais personne ne sera plus aimé et plus heureux.
Elizabeth Ivanovskvy

Circus, 1933
Esphyr Slobodkina

http://blogs.lib.uconn.edu/archives/2015/09/29/
esphyr-slobodkina-modernist-childrens-book-illustratorauthor/