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Question: How useful are Manifestos to designers and/or design groups? Outline your discussion with reference to three key manifestos. Through careful critique, conclude your text by defining your own design values in a 10-point manifesto.

Word count: 2,629

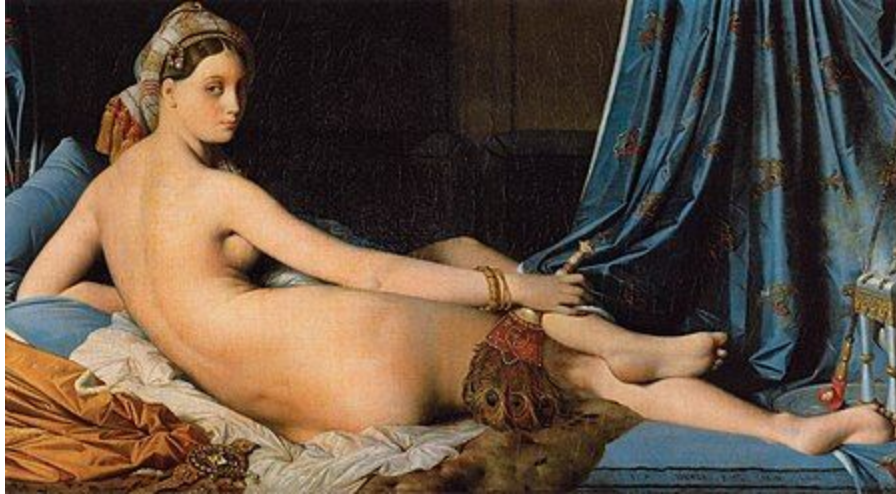
I believe manifestos are useful to designers as text beside image can create a deeper and more deliberate meaning than the image alone. The text in a manifesto can ensure little, or no, prior knowledge is needed. Because of the subjective nature of art and design, manifestos are important in clearly conveying a theme or idea if the artist or designer wants to ensure the meaning is not lost in translation. Most manifestos aim to beget change and dispose of previous ideas. Another reason manifestos are important is because they can be compared with each other to find similarities and differences between the movements and periods. I will investigate three key manifestos, the futurist manifesto, the guerrilla girls manifesto (The advantages of being a woman artist) and the Dada manifesto.

Manifestos aim to change something. If the artist or designer had nothing to change, they most likely wouldn't need to have a manifesto; It isn't generally necessary to explain something that is already happening. '*We declare that the splendor of the world has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed*' (MARINETTI, 1908). The manifesto is talking about the change in the world now that new technologies are being invented and perfected. This results in a subsequently increased speed that everything is happening as well as the literal speed that people can now achieve with engines that are being developed. The manifesto does not believe in the past being able to exist alongside the future.

The change that a manifesto sets out to achieve is often explored and explained as the disposal of old ideas. The want for change expresses dissatisfaction with the current way things are being done, therefore manifestos are frequently talking about what they don't want to bring forward into their work. '*a roaring motor car which seems to run on machine-gun fire, is more beautiful than the Victory of Samothrace.*' (MARINETTI, 1908). The futurist manifesto. This excerpt shows both the change they want to see as well as what they want to abandon. By using the direct comparison of what they are discarding and what they are focusing on in the manifesto and artwork, they can express what the manifesto is and isn't about. '*What can you find in an old picture except the painful contortions of the artist trying to break uncrossable barriers which obstruct the full expression of his dream?*' (MARINETTI, 1908). The futurists seem to be not only discarding the past but to be revolted and repelled by it. The manifesto not only demands to move on from the past but that it could taint them if they spent too long lingering on it. By talking about what the intentions are, we have insight into what is being responded to and rebelled against.

The message of change can be expressed differently, with the suggested change not having to be explicitly stated. This can be achieved through sarcastic comments, rhetoric questions and facts without directly stating the intent of the manifesto. '*Being reassured that whatever kind of art you make it will be labeled feminine.*' (GUERRILLA GIRLS, 1988). By sharing experiences women have in the art world as 'the advantages of being a woman artist', the reader is made to question the information and come to the conclusion that these are not advantages. The involvement of the reader could be seen as a way to make the reader feel as though this is their idea instead of just being someone else's manifesto. By involving the viewer in the manifesto text, they are inviting them into the discussion of the art and text. Opening a discussion is an effective way to create attention to the focus of the subject.

By repurposing artwork or texts by other artists and designers, new meanings can be achieved. By altering something that people can recognise, you are asking them to put that thing into perspective within the context that you have placed it.



(Grande Odalisque, 1814)



(GUERRILLA GIRLS, 1989)

The Guerrilla girls use this technique of making people think about the issues they have raised. They specifically target artwork that embodies the art that they are reacting to. They are subverting the original ideas of the artwork and bringing them into the context of the questions that their text raises. In this example, they are bringing to light the sexualisation of women in the artwork. '*Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum.*' (GUERRILLA GIRLS, 1989) The accompanying text tells something very noticeable now that it has been told. The Guerrilla Girls can extract meaning from images that without the text wouldn't be as effective. As the Guerrilla Girls' work is very text-heavy, I think that a lot of, if not all of their work could be seen as their manifesto.

Another role of the manifesto is to address wider issues. Many issues can be explored, such as politics, environmental concerns, sustainability, and social comments. By having text with imagery, you can explicate the ideas that the viewer understands. Using text beside imagery can give more information whilst being able to keep the image however detailed or simplistic you want it. By relying on text to the extent you'd like to, details in the artwork can be omitted whilst still being capable of conveying the intended message. The Guerrilla Girls have a wider context of feminism and equality in their artwork that

is able to be achieved through their manifesto and other text that accompanies their artwork. By having a manifesto that sets out to explain the problems that they see, they make it easier for people to understand what they are about. When people can understand what the artwork is saying, it can help people conclude the art. Manifestos could also help artists be more subtle with an image as text can be the cohesion in the image and the idea.

The futurist manifesto also approaches some wider issues, although on the opposite side of the spectrum. *'We want to glorify war - the only cure for the world - militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of the anarchists, the beautiful ideas which kill, and contempt for woman.'* (MARINETTI, 1908). Their points consisted of glorifying war and contempt for women. By having a note of what made people feel and react in an unfavourable way, we can apply this context to modern-day we may be able to study what about this movement cultivated or landed on sexism and attempt to prevent these ideas in the modern-day. Despite both the Guerilla Girls and the futurists embracing progress, they mean very different things. This exploration of the similarities and differences between the two manifestos is another reason for the importance of them. We can use the words of artists to understand the time in which they were created to some extent. By comparing movements, artists and times in history, we can gather more insight into the artwork themselves or concerning modern-day.

By making the intentions of the artist clear and accessible, the likelihood that the information will be taken on board by someone is increased. If someone has to study a painting or collection of paintings for hours in order to understand the concepts that the artist is trying to bring forward then it is much more likely that the viewer gets the wrong impression of the idea. If the idea is less accessible it also makes people more susceptible to giving up and moving on. When you are addressing issues through art, you want people to take on board what you are trying to convey. *'I shall be reading poems that are meant to dispense with conventional language, no less, and to have done with it.'* (BALL, 1916). The dada manifesto is effective as the movement is surreal and could exclude some people from understanding what the gist of the movement was. The manifesto explains and describes the feelings and opinions of the writers very well, getting across the strange themes that they explore in their artworks.

Manifestos are also important to the reader or the viewer of the art, especially as art students or aspiring designers. Being able to read the reasoning behind artists' and designers' work, ideas and greater understanding could be formed. By reading manifestos of the past, we can relate or distinguish these ideas from our own. Having the historical context of artists and art movements is useful when understanding works of art. Futurism makes more sense once we understand the technological advancements and industry on the up and up. On top of this, the strain on society from the upcoming world war. Dadaism makes more sense once we realise it came about during the world war. Having texts by the artists or artists in the movement of an art piece you are looking at can give you an overview of the major themes that are brought up as well as give a hint of what was happening at the time. They sought to commit themselves to this. *'We are on the extreme promontory of the centuries! What is the use of looking behind at the moment when we must open the mysterious shutters of the impossible?'* (MARINETTI, 1908). This quote shows that they saw the increasing technology as ascension. It seems strange that they would welcome war, but it seems they saw it as a means to destruction for regrowth and building anew. It was also parallel with the visceral motion of the other things they were inspired by, brutal machines and engines along with the fast, energised motion.

The futurists are scarily excited for the future and believe it would be best to destroy everything that has come before them, and the next generation should destroy everything that the original futurists have made because of the belief in the advancement of technology always bettering situations. *'To admire an old picture is to pour our sensibility into a funeral urn instead of casting it forward with violent spurts of creation and action.'* (MARINETTI, 1908). From destruction comes a will to rebuild and rebuilding calls for innovation. Although you can see the change of perspective in the artwork of futurism compared to art before it, having the text alongside the image helps both of them cognate in your mind. The energetic, broken artwork fueled by the racing and frantic text and vice versa. When looking at them both now, we can capture the newness that futurism was experiencing. By reading the text we are more able to experience what it could have been like to experience these things happening around them. With this context, it is easier to understand why the manifesto feels so rushed and excited, why the images are so dynamic and angular. With innovations coming from machines and motors, bold designs of heavy metals still able to achieve such speed. It is not hard to see that this could snowball, now that this had started why should it stop. This kind of analysis of texts alongside artwork can be useful in helping people understand the motivations behind art movements and theories that once seemed unnatural.

With artist manifestos only dating back to 1855, the importance of the manifesto may increase in the future. Of course, the manifesto could become obsolete at some point too. However, I believe that manifestos will continue to be created as the need to compare our work and theories with others' doesn't seem to be waning. I believe manifestos exist for some of the same reasons art history does. To understand the underlying themes, ideas, and contexts of the work as well as the situation of the artist. To relate this with modern life and modern art. Assuming they do continue to be created in the future, I believe we will notice more cycles in the manifestos. Manifestos often rebel against the previous art movement, working hard to get as far away from it as it can. In that way, the futurists' manifesto is still somewhat relevant today. I do think that from the nature of manifestos, we will get movements that are near repeats of movements before.

However, if we had manifestos for the whole time we have had art, we would be sure to gain some insights that we don't have. Despite this, I think that manifestos have particular importance in modernism as it primarily focuses on the rejection of something that was beforehand somewhat expected in the art world. This kind of thinking is particularly important in the modern-day, from every movement comes the post-movement. We are reacting to the past in order to see what future we want to create. I believe manifestos are important for hearing what the artists have to say. Art isn't only about what the viewer can see in the art and the meanings the viewer gathers. The artwork is also about what the artist intended, the artwork can be about the differences between the artists' inspiration and the viewers' connotation.

A great use for designers is for preparing the mind for the artwork. By creating the right mood and setting before viewing the art, you can ensure that people are on the same page and will be more receptive to the art they are viewing. By knowing what the art is a response to, they will be able to think of what the artist was thinking of at the conception of the art. This will create a closeness to the artist and viewer as well as increase understanding. *'The word, the word, the word outside your domain, your stuffiness, this laughable impotence, your stupendous smugness, outside all the parrottry of your self-evident limitedness. The word, gentlemen, is a public concern of the first importance.'* (BALL, 1916). The dada manifesto is

an example of this as they set the mood for the artwork as well as explain the meaning behind why they create the art they do. Rather than going into looking at dadaism blind, having some background knowledge can help you delve deeper into the artwork.

Another importance of manifestos is in the distinguishment and fractures in a movement. Where multiple artists create different manifestos for the same art movement. To be able to see one distinguish itself from another when they are deemed in terms of movements to be conveying similar things. The Dada manifesto is not a single piece of text, with Hugo Ball writing in 1916 and Tristan Tzara writing in 1918. 'The word, gentlemen, is a public concern of the first importance.' (BALL, 1916). '*The magic of a word—Dada—which has brought journalists to the gates of a world unforeseen, is of no importance to us.*' (TZARA '1918). By being able to compare the two texts in the same movement, we allow ourselves to question if this is a difference of three years or a difference of two minds. The manifestos allow us to see the ideas behind works that we would not otherwise be able to so easily deduce.

In conclusion, my research has found that I find manifestos to be important for me to understand my work better in the context of history. I also find it useful to compare other artists' work to understand how similar theories and ideas can be changed because of what was happening around them at the time. Manifestos can be used as a tool for change, a mode of introspection and a means to understand.

My manifesto

- Create art every day
- See art in everything
- Explore the art of knowledge
- Explore the relationship between art and science
- Explore lenses and how I can create art based on them
- Explore the way I see the world
- Strive for sustainability in my art
- Research and learn from artists
- Don't create art to please others
- Don't let others define what is art for me

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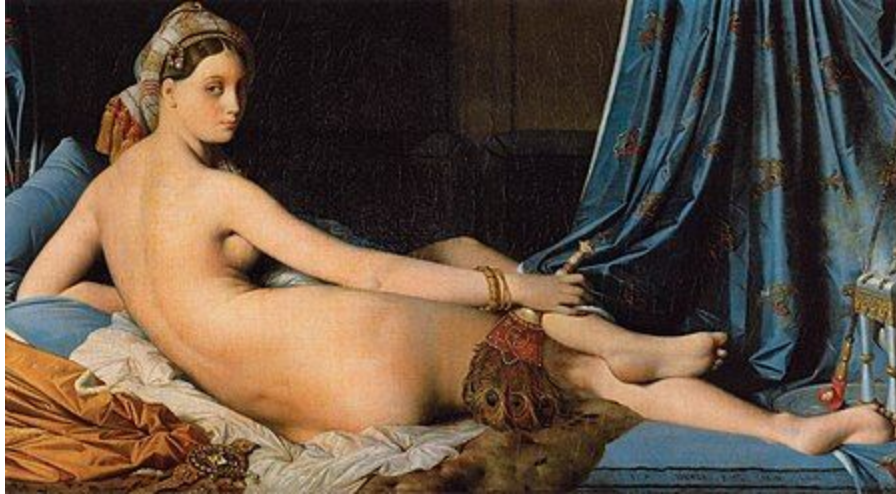
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