



The Art of Noise (futurist manifesto, 1913)

Luigi Russolo

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The slim volume of essays, presented here for the first time in English translation, is one of the significant documents of musical aesthetics of this century. If the book itself has remained the province of a mere handful of readers, its ideas, passed on through a variety of later musical and literary movements, became the inspiration for some of the most innovative artistic creations of modern times. Luigi Russolo anticipated—indeed, he may have precipitated—a whole range of musical and aesthetic notions that formed the basis of much of the avant-garde thought of the past several decades. His ideas were absorbed, modified, and eventually transmitted to later generations by a number of movements and individuals—among them the futurists, the Dadaists, and a number of composers and writers of the nineteen-twenties. The noise instruments he invented fascinated and infuriated his contemporaries, and he was among the earliest musicians to put the often-discussed microtone to regular practical use in Western music. Russolo's views looked forward to the time when composers would exercise an absolute choice and control of the sounds that their music employed. He was the precursor of electronic music before electronics had come of age.

The Art of Noise (futurist manifesto, 1913) Details

Date : Published 1967 by Something Else Press

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Author : Luigi Russolo

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From Reader Review The Art of Noise (futurist manifesto, 1913) for online ebook

Joshua Nomen-Mutatio says

Check it out:

Luigi Russolo's Art of Noise

Chris says

This guy would have loved the artist Hot Sugar. Russolo asserts that music is heading in the direction of environmental noises (birds, machines, the wind) over pure 'sounds' from instruments (violin, cello, etc). This book is a very short read, it only took me about 20 minutes to finish and I can see it being a novel concept back in the 1900s when music was still in its classical stage.

I enjoyed the book because it gave me a historical perspective of music: chords being invented in the middle ages, classical music becoming gradually more dissonant, and the idea that the industrial revolution provided an entirely new spectrum of sounds.

In the end, music is beautiful because it speaks to each individual listener in a different way. I gave this book 3 stars because the author was so matter of fact about music but music is too subjective to be that sure..

Kobita Banerjee says

Prepares one to appreciate the 'newest noises of modern war'. Pity that Marinetti's letter has only been reproduced as an excerpt and not in its entirety.

tENTATIVELY, cONVENIENCE says

Russolo's manifesto represents an important turning point in the history of music. Even before John Cage's embracing of noise (after all, Cage was a new-born babe when this manifesto was written), there was Russolo. How many noise-music enthusiasts of today are familiar w/ Italian Futurism? Some, but probably not the majority? Russolo:

"We must replace the limited variety of timbres of orchestral instruments by the infinite variety of timbres of noises obtained through special mechanisms.

"The musician's sensibility, once he is rid of facile, traditional rhythms, will find in the domain of noises the means of development and renewal, an easy task, since each noise offers us the union of the most diverse rhythms as well as its dominant one."

Alas, what little I've been able to hear of the concerts that such theory generated wasn't necessarily that exciting in contrast to what's developed since, but, HEY!, it's the thought that countdowns.

Denz says

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Tosh says

Ah, the shock of the now as it happened! A really nice collection of manifestos and essays by the Italian Futurists who see sound, noise, and yes music as an important art form that matches up with the visual arts. The early 1900's and yet the manifestos read like from the Punk era. The need to destroy the past to make way for the Present or future is a very enticing idea. Yet, the Italian branch are very much aware of its past, so the tension between the new and its history is pretty exciting. Luigi Russolo and others are mapping out a new territory that we're still exploring. Essential reading for us explorers.

Tijmen Lansdaal says

Sometimes a little reactionary, but especially Russolo and Busoni seem to have excitingly innovative ideas. They are compiled so as to give you a glimpse at the Italian music scene at the time and the Italian's imagination of a new age of music that sadly was never realized in according manner. Makes one wonder to what extent it has been followed up on in the history of modern music, to what extent the ideas have been perfected. Basically, it's a romantic musical dream laid out in letters and I don't see how you could not like that.

K R N says

i'm not entirely sure this is the right "futurist manifesto" but it seemed like the most likely one.

i read one that i thought was written by visual artists.
