

Surrealism Against the Current: Tracts and Declarations

Surrealism Against the Current: Tracts and Declarations is an anthology of essays and manifestos by some of the most important figures in the Surrealist movement. The book was compiled and edited by Andre Breton, the founder and leader of the Surrealists. It was first published in 1938, and has since been translated into many languages.



Surrealism Against the Current: Tracts and Declarations by Angharad Lewis

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 1326 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 234 pages
Screen Reader : Supported



The essays and manifestos in Surrealism Against the Current offer a wide-ranging overview of the Surrealist movement. They cover a variety of topics, including the definition of Surrealism, the relationship between Surrealism and politics, and the role of art in society. The book also includes a number of important documents from the Surrealist movement, such as the Surrealist Manifesto and the Second Surrealist Manifesto.

Surrealism Against the Current is an essential read for anyone interested in Surrealism. It is a valuable resource for understanding the history, theory, and practice of the movement. The essays and manifestos in the book are a testament to the power of Surrealism to challenge the status quo and to open up new possibilities for art and life.

The Definition of Surrealism

In his essay "What Is Surrealism?," Andre Breton defines Surrealism as "the pure psychic automatism, by which one proposes to express, either verbally, in writing, or by any other manner, the real functioning of thought. Dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern." This definition emphasizes the importance of spontaneity and automatism in Surrealist practice. Surrealists sought to bypass the conscious mind and to tap into the unconscious, where they believed true creativity resided.

The Relationship Between Surrealism and Politics

The relationship between Surrealism and politics was a complex and often contradictory one. Some Surrealists, such as Breton, were drawn to Marxism and saw Surrealism as a revolutionary force that could help to overthrow capitalism. Others, such as Louis Aragon, were more skeptical of Marxism and believed that Surrealism should remain independent of politics. Despite these differences, the Surrealists were united in their opposition to fascism and war.

The Role of Art in Society

The Surrealists believed that art had a powerful role to play in society. They saw art as a means of liberation and transformation. They sought to create

art that would challenge the status quo and open up new possibilities for human experience. Surrealist art was often characterized by its use of dream imagery, symbolism, and automatism.

Important Documents from the Surrealist Movement

Surrealism Against the Current includes a number of important documents from the Surrealist movement. These documents include the Surrealist Manifesto, the Second Surrealist Manifesto, and the Declaration of the Rights of Man.

- **The Surrealist Manifesto** (1924) was written by Andre Breton and is considered to be the founding document of the Surrealist movement. The manifesto defines Surrealism as "a pure psychic automatism, by which one proposes to express, either verbally, in writing, or by any other manner, the real functioning of thought." It also calls for the rejection of reason and logic, and the embrace of the unconscious.
- **The Second Surrealist Manifesto** (1929) was also written by Andre Breton. It expands on the ideas presented in the first manifesto, and it includes a more detailed discussion of the relationship between Surrealism and politics. The second manifesto also calls for the creation of a "Surrealist revolution."
- **The Declaration of the Rights of Man** (1929) was written by Louis Aragon and is a response to the rise of fascism in Europe. The declaration calls for the protection of human rights and freedoms, and it condemns the use of violence and oppression.

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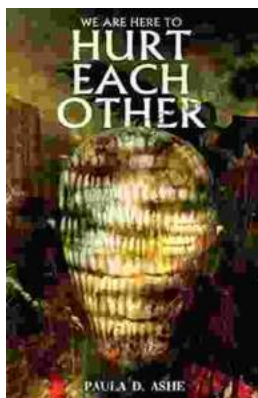


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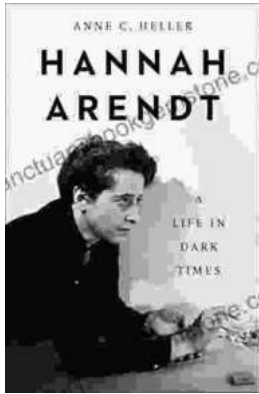
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