

BRUCE STERLING 11.12.08 10:06 AM

ARE THE MANIFESTO OF FUTURIST WOMAN

((((IF YOU DON'T like this, you should have your weakly sentimental head split open by an apache-dancing tramp with a pistol.)))

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The Manifesto of Futurist Woman (Response to F. T. Marinetti)"(1912)

by Valentine de Saint Point

"We will glorify war—the world's only hygiene—

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militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of freedom-bringers, beautiful ideas worth dying for, and scorn for woman.”

Marinetti, “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism”

Humanity is mediocre. The majority of women are neither superior nor inferior to the majority of men. They are all equal. They all merit the same scorn.

The whole of humanity has never been anything but the terrain of culture, source of the geniuses and heroes of both sexes. But in humanity as in nature there are some moments more propitious for such a flowering. In the summers of humanity, when the terrain is burned by the sun, geniuses and heroes abound.

We are at the beginning of a springtime; we are lacking in solar profusion, that is, a great deal of spilled blood.

Women are no more responsible than men for the way the really young, rich in sap and blood, are getting mired down.

It is absurd to divide humanity into men and women. It is composed only of femininity and masculinity. Every superman, every hero, no matter how epic, how much of a genius, or how powerful, is the prodigious expression of a race and an epoch only because he is composed at once of feminine and masculine elements, of femininity and masculinity: that is, a complete being.

Any exclusively virile individual is just a brute animal; any exclusively feminine individual is only a female.

It is the same way with any collectivity and any moment in humanity, just as it is with individuals. The fecund periods, when the most heroes and geniuses come forth from the terrain of culture in all its ebullience, are rich in masculinity and femininity.

Those periods that had only wars, with few representative heroes because the epic breath

flattened them out, were exclusively virile periods; those that denied the heroic instinct and, turning toward the past, annihilated themselves in dreams of peace, were periods in which femininity was dominant.

We are living at the end of one of these periods. What is most lacking in women as in men is virility.

That is why Futurism, even with all its exaggerations, is right.

To restore some virility to our races so benumbed in femininity, we have to train them in virility even to the point of brute animality. But we have to impose on everyone, men and women who are equally weak, a new dogma of energy in order to arrive at a period of superior humanity.

Every woman ought to possess not only feminine virtues but virile ones, without which she is just a female. Any man who has only male strength without intuition is only a brute animal. But in the period of

femininity in which we are
living, only the contrary
exaggeration is healthy: we
have to take the brute
animal for a model.

Enough of those women
whose “arms with twining
flowers resting on their laps
on the morning of
departure” should be feared
by soldiers; women as
nurses perpetuating
weakness and age,
domesticating men for their
personal pleasures or their
material needs! ... Enough
women who create children
just for themselves, keeping
them from any danger or
adventure, that is, any joy;
keeping their daughter from
love and their son from war!
... Enough of those women,
the octopuses of the hearth,
whose tentacles exhaust
men’s blood and make
children anemic, women in
carnal love who wear out
every desire so it cannot be
renewed!

Women are Furies,
Amazons, Semiramis, Joans
of Arc, Jeanne Hachettes,
Judith and Charlotte
Cordays, Cleopatras, and
Messalinas: combative

women who fight more
ferociously than males,
lovers who arouse,
destroyers who break down
the weakest and help select
through pride or despair,
“despair through which the
heart yields its fullest
return:’Let the next wars
bring forth heroines like
that magnificent Catherine
Sforza, who, during the sack
of her city, watching from
the ramparts as her enemy
threatened the life of her
son to force her surrender,
heroically pointing to her
sexual organ, cried loudly:
“Kill him, I still have the
mold to make some more!”

Yes, “the world is rotting
with wisdom,” but by
instinct, woman is not wise,
is not a pacifist, is not good.
Because she is totally
lacking in measure, she is
bound to become too wise,
too pacifist, too good
during a sleepy period of
humanity. Her intuition, her
imagination are at once her
strength and her weakness.

She is the individuality of
the crowd: she parades the
heroes, or if there are none,
the imbeciles.

According to the apostle,
the spiritual inspirer,
woman, the carnal inspirer,
immolates or takes care,
causes blood to run or
staunches it, is a warrior or
a nurse. It's the same
woman who, in the same
period, according to the
ambient ideas grouped
around the day's event, lies
down on the tracks to keep
the soldiers from leaving
for the war or then rushes
to embrace the victorious
champion.

So that is why no revolution
should be without her. That
is why, instead of scorning
her, we should address her.
She's the most fruitful
conquest of all, the most
enthusiastic, who, in her
turn, will increase our
followers.

But no feminism. Feminism
is a political error.
Feminism is a cerebral error
of woman, an error that her
instinct will recognize.

We must not give woman
any of the rights claimed by
feminists. To grant them to
her would bring about not
any of the disorders the

Futurists desire but on the contrary an excess of order.

To give duties to woman is to have her lose all her fecundating power.

Feminist reasonings and deductions will not destroy her primordial fatality: they can only falsify it, forcing it to make itself manifest through detours leading to the worst errors.

For centuries the feminine instinct has been insulted, only her charm and tenderness have been appreciated. Anemic man, stingy with his own blood, asks only that she be a nurse. She has let herself be tamed. But shout a new message at her, or some war cry, and then, joyously riding her instinct again, she will go in front of you toward unsuspected conquests.

When you have to use your weapons, she will polish them.

She will help you choose them. In fact, if she doesn't know how to discern genius because she relies on passing renown, she has

always known how to
rewarm the strongest, the
victor, the one triumphant
by his muscles and his
courage. She can't be
mistaken about this
superiority imposing itself
so brutally.

Let woman find once more
her cruelty and her violence
that make her attack the
vanquished because they
are vanquished, to the point
of mutilating them. Stop
preaching spiritual justice
to her of the sort she has
tried in vain. Woman,
become sublimely unjust
once more, like all the
forces of nature! Delivered
from all control, with your
instinct retrieved, you will
take your place among the
Elements, opposite fatality
to the conscious human
will. Be the egoistic and
ferocious mother, jealously
watching over her children,
have what are called all the
rights over and duties
toward them, as long as
they physically need your
protection.

Let man, freed from his
family, lead his life of
audacity and conquest, as

soon as he has the physical strength for it, and in spite of his being a son and a father. The man who sows doesn't stop on the first row he fecunds.

In my Poems of Pride and in Thirst and Mirages, I have renounced Sentimentalism as a weakness to be scorned because it knots up the strength and makes it static.

Lust is a strength, because it destroys the weak, excites the strong to exert their energies, thus to renew themselves. Every heroic people is sensual. Woman is, for them, the most exalted trophy.

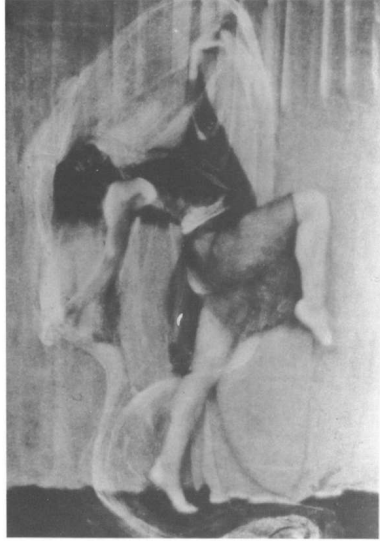
Woman should be mother or lover. Real mothers will always be mediocre lovers, and lovers, insufficient mothers, through their excess. Equal in front of life, these two women complete each other. The mother who receives the child makes the future with the past; the lover gives off desire, which leads toward the future.

LET'S CONCLUDE:

Woman who retains man through her tears and her sentimentality is inferior to the prostitute who incites her man, through braggery, to retain his domination over the lower depths of the cities with his revolver at the ready: at least she cultivates an energy that could serve better causes.

Woman, for too long diverted into morals and prejudices, go back to your sublime instinct, to violence, to cruelty.

For the fatal sacrifice of blood, while men are in charge of wars and battles, procreate, and among your children, as a sacrifice to heroism, take Fate's part. Don't raise them for yourself, that is, for their diminishment, but rather, in a wide freedom, for a complete expansion. Instead of reducing man to the slavery of those execrable sentimental needs, incite your sons and your men to surpass themselves. You are the ones who make them. You have all power over them. You owe humanity its heroes. Make them!



2. Valentine de Saint-Point in her Greek costume for the *Poème d'amour*.