BLAST

Published in two issues in July 1914 and July 1915, BLAST remains one of the most important documents in the history of modernism. Edited by Wyndham Lewis, with contributions by T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Ford Maddox Hueffer (later Ford) and Rebecca West, with visual/design contributions by Lewis, Jacob Epstein, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, and others, its manifestos shocked contemporary readers and its contents revealed the radicalism of modernist artistic practice in a variety of forms. Pound described it as ‘a new Futurist, Cubist, Imagiste Quarterly’ but it is most commonly associated with the short-lived Vorticist movement.

In this one-semester module the two issues of BLAST will be considered in relation to a number of general issues such as: modernism and periodical culture; modernism and the Great War; the movements of high modernism (such as Cubism, Futurism, Imagism, and Vorticism); modernism and the machine; modernism and gender; literature and the visual arts. Consideration will also be given to the works of individual writers, especially Lewis, Pound, Eliot, Hueffer/Ford, and West. The primary reading material for the module is BLAST, issues 1 and 2, which are available online at the Modernist Journals Project website: http://dl.lib.brown.edu/mjp/journals.html.

Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this module a student should be able to:

1. Identify and describe the contents and textual/visual features of the two issues of BLAST;
2. Show an understanding of the social, political and cultural contexts in which BLAST first appeared;
3. Demonstrate awareness of the importance of BLAST in the development of literary modernism in general and in relation to certain key figures such as Lewis, Eliot, Pound, Hueffer/Ford, and West;
4. Employ a highly developed range of interpretive strategies using appropriate critical vocabulary in discussing the prescribed texts;
5. Examine and explain the critical and cultural contexts related to the production of BLAST and discuss its relevance to later understandings of modernism;
6. Use high-level transferrable skills of analytical and writing techniques in relation to chosen topics studied in the module.

For more detailed information about the module email: philip.coleman@tcd.ie

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