



The Curatorial Avant-Garde: Surrealism and Exhibition Practice in France, 1925-1941 (Refiguring Modernism)

Adam Jolles

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All too often, the historical avant-garde is taken to be incommensurate with and antithetical to the world inhabited by the museum. In *The Curatorial Avant-Garde*, by contrast, Adam Jolles demonstrates the surrealists' radical transformation of the ways in which spectators encountered works of art between the wars. From their introduction in Paris in 1925, surrealist exhibitions dissolved the conventional boundaries between visual media, language, and the space of public display. This intrusion—by a group of amateur curators, with neither formal training nor professional experience in museums or galleries—ultimately altered the way in which surrealists made, displayed, and promoted their own art. Through interdisciplinary analyses of particular exhibitions and works of art in relation to the manner in which they were displayed, Jolles addresses this public face of surrealism. He directs attention to the venues, the contemporary debates those venues engendered, and the critical discourses in which they participated. In so doing, he shines new light on the movement's artistic and intellectual development, revealing both the political stakes attached to surrealism within the historical context of interwar Europe and the movement's instrumental role in the trajectory of modernism.

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