## KUNDA Maria Recharting Surrealism.

## Abstract

A growing body of compelling writings dispels the idea that surrealism was limited to a momentary frisson, neatly historically bounded by the two world wars. This paper provides a condensed overview of the literature in order to offer a backward look at surrealism that incorporates Bataille's mature reappraissal of its subversive force. It is argued that not only was there a something of a personal reconciliation between Bataille and Breton, but also a rapprochement in their views on surrealism. The paper supports a re-evaluation of surrealism as a *bona fide* critical force with post-war and ongoing relevance, rather than a failed avant-garde project, with a focus on the historical moment of the late 1940s and 1950s, which saw not only the maturing of Bataille's thought, but also a spate of innovatively staged exhibitions by the surrealists.

## **Biography**

Maria Kunda lectures in Art and Design History and Theory at the School of Art, Hobart. In 1997 she graduated from the University of Tasmania with a Masters of Fine Art (Research) in studio practice. She is currently undertaking a PhD in theory, the title of the thesis is *The Politics of Imperfection: The Critical Legacy of Surrealism*.

## **Recharting Surrealism**

Georges Bataille is commonly depicted as something like a 'precursor to postmodernism'. This awkward designation signals a historical blind-spot about the context of Bataille's writing, that can be remedied by tracing his trail through surrealism, a movement that marks a line that is neither 'pre' nor 'post' of modernism, rather, a shadow-line of development. As well as revival of interest in Bataille as a 'radical philosopher', roughly speaking, over the past couple of decades there has also been a curatorial trend for ransacking Bataille's conceptual kit bag in order to account for tendencies in contemporary art, and to reframe or bring to the fore aspects in post-war art that were eclipsed, suppressed or simply left dangling by art history. This type of undertaking was foreshadowed by Rosalind Krauss in 1986:

The terms that Bataille invented to shake the certainty of various normative paradigms in all their logical symmetry - terms like *informe, acéphale, basesse,* automutilation, and blindness - these terms work to release the affect that has been available all along in a whole body of work which, for many decades, has been unassimilable by us.

They are terms that might be expected as well to organize and restructure our understanding of more recent practices...It is not clear what an alternative view of the history of recent art - one opened through Bataille's disruption of the prerogatives of a visual system - would yield. It is my assumption that in gesturing toward another set of data, in suggesting another group of reasons, another description of the goals of representation, another ground for the very activity of art, its yields will be tremendous<sup>1</sup>.

A decade later, with Yve-Alain Bois, Krauss curated an exhibition, *Formless: A User's Guide*<sup>2</sup>, with a publication of the same name, in which they deployed Bataille's sixty-year old concept of the *informe* to cut a line from Dubuffet's *Olympia* (1950) to Mike Kelly's *Craft Morphology Flow Chart* (1991). It was a sectioning of modernism that did not rely on standard designations like form and content, or figuration and abstraction. The Bois - Krauss project can be seen as a rigorous exploration of a commonplace recognition that the effects of surrealism were running through art practice in the postwar years.

From the late '70s a revival of critical and curatorial interest in surrealism occurred, gathering momentum in the '80s and through '90s and continuing, manifested in a number of significant retrospective exhibitions. With a burgeoning interest in the critical potential of surrealist ideas, English translations of surrealist writings began to be increasingly available, along with a great deal of secondary literature.<sup>3</sup>

The durability and spread of surrealism was acknowledged by David Sylvester in 1978, in a catalogue for one of the early scholarly exhibition revisions of surrealism, *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed*, curated by Dawn Ades. Sylvester wrote:

If no major artist has emerged within the surrealist movement during the last thirty years, it is because the spirit of Surrealism, rather than being canalised into producing new surrealist adherents, has come to be diffused into most of the outstanding art of the time. (In the same way, attitudes characteristic of dada and surrealism have become commonplace in the subversive mores of those who have grown up in the last decade or two).<sup>4</sup>

There has been relatively little acknowledgement of the legacy of the surrealist work of the forties and fifties however. In October of 1956, the French periodical *Preuves* published an article by Alain Jouffroy who had been quite closely connected with the surrealist group. He remarked that when young painters of the day were surveyed 'they declared almost unanimously that what interested them was *the exploration of the inner world*, something that André Breton describes better than anyone else. We are therefore dealing with a group of Messieurs Jordains who are surrealists without knowing it<sup>55</sup>. Similarly, the so called neo-avant-garde of the 1950s and '60s are usually seen as having retrieved avant-garde techniques of the 1920s, such as collage and the found object, but I argue that this is not a reprise so much as simple continuity with a hitherto poorly documented and critically appraised historical moment.

If Bataille has 'use value' for us, for understanding works that have been 'unassimilable', then there has been a historical lag, partly because of the way that surrealism was 'mothballed' - consigned to history - prematurely, with a neat label attached, saying: 'between the wars'. Apart from the blind spot about Bataille and his mode of critique, the mothballing of surrealism has hampered our ability to trace certain lines of connections in art practice. An important 'remedial' book in this regard is Hal Foster's *Return of the Real* of 1996, which sought to work through connections between what have been designated as 'historical avant-gardes- and 'neo-avant-gardes'<sup>6</sup>. Several new publications deal with the history of surrealist exhibition practice.<sup>7</sup>

In this paper I give some attention to surrealism in the late '30s and '40s. In the first part, I give a condensed overview of some writings that demonstrate that Bataille considered himself to be a part of surrealism. Despite his 'renegade' reputation with respect to surrealism, in hindsight, Bataille's ideas appear to be sympathetic to Breton's, and they also appear to fuel some of Breton's undertakings during the '50s. In the latter part of the paper, I have pointed to a few instances of surrealist visual practice that occurred during the years of the exile and fragmentation of the Paris surrealist group - the moment prior to the Second World War, during the war itself, and in the immediate post-war years. It is difficult to determine a definitive 'end' of surrealism, precisely because it dispersed as a movement, rather than dwindling or stopping. It is also true that certain modernist myths obscured the energies of surrealism, for example, the supposedly fallow years of Duchamp, which of course were significantly productive, and which crossed with his close connection with the surrealists. My aim here is to convey that while the concerted energies of Parisian surrealism were necessarily dispersed by the war, aspects of surrealist practice ran uninterrupted from the '30s through to the '50s and have continued into the current field of installation and multi-media work. The surrealist endgame was such that it was difficult to account for the energies at play in their own day. The social conditions during the war tended to facilitate an especially provisional practice, so much so that it seemed to fail to even register as art, even to Bataille and to Breton who organised the events. In hindsight however, we can look to the '40s as the time when the surrealists were engaged strongly in a kind of post-media art, engaging in experiments with site-specific and embodied experience in ways that prefigured much later installation and performance practice.

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In 1946 Georges Bataille affirmed that he belonged within the history of surrealism, and upheld the singular relevance of surrealism for addressing the crucial issues of the post-war era. In a characteristically short, nuggety essay entitled 'On the Subject of Slumbers', Bataille dubbed himself surrealism's 'old enemy from within'. Presenting himself as an emblem of surrealism's mode of explosiveness, he declared himself to be in a prime position to appraise it:

Whenever the occasion has arisen, I have opposed surrealism. And I would now like to affirm it from within as the demand to which I have submitted and as the dissatisfaction I exemplify. But this much is clear: surrealism is defined by the possibility that I, its old enemy *from within*, can have of defining it conclusively.

From 1945 until 1951, surrealism was at the forefront of Bataille's thought and he wrote a number of other short pieces of writing, published and unpublished, on the subject. They were mainly review articles and catalogue essays, and what appears to be the first chapter of an aborted book about surrealism. In 1994, these were published as an anthology in English translation, entitled *The Absence of Myth*, edited and translated by Michael Richardson.<sup>8</sup> This collection, with Richardson's excellent introduction to it, clearly reveals Bataille's inextricable relationship with surrealism, and his abiding interest in it after the war. In these deliberations, Bataille set out to reappraise surrealism's significance, to re-specify its main tenets and to re-evaluate its ongoing 'revolutionary' potentials. The six-year span in which these commentaries were written was the most active period of writing in Bataille's life, when he wrote his major works. As Richardson argues, surrealism was the key to most of his work, including his best known and most respected writings; especially significant for *La part maudite* and *Théorie de la Religion* - both written during this time, but not published until after his death.

Bataille's writings on surrealism from the '40s did not amount to an unequivocal recant. Certainly, he modified his earlier objections, but in planting himself firmly 'within' surrealism, he retained a trenchantly critical position. It emerges vividly from these writings however, that after the Second World War, while surrealism might have dissipated and waned as a cultural force in the eyes of many, it became more cogent for Bataille.

In a couple of the 1940s writings<sup>9</sup>, Bataille specifically took up the issue of his fraught interpersonal history with Breton, particularly the events around the rift in the group that occurred in 1928 when Breton wrote his *Second Manifesto*, a document that announced a number of 'excommunications' from the group. Bataille was one of those expelled, and in the latter part of the document Breton singled him out for special denunciation. Perhaps their fiery, colourful language helped to give this falling out a legendary status. By 1935, however, Bataille and Breton had buried the hatchet, and along with Roger Callois, they established the anti-Fascist group, Contre-Attaque. In maturity, the two men paid each other respect, but far less attention has been given to their reconciliation than to their differences. In his mature reflective commentary, Bataille took pains to give a balanced coverage to the *contretemps* of the late '20s, saying that from the first, he and Breton had not liked each other. Bataille presents himself in a rather unfavourable light in his account; the picture he paints is of rivalry between two rather puerile, obnoxious – and possibly quite similar – young men. A few years after the public stoush, Bataille seemed ready to put personal differences aside, and to focus upon common ground.<sup>10</sup>

In his *Second Manifesto* denunciation of him, Breton famously called Bataille an 'excremental philosopher'. Of course, over time, that description proved to be astute, since Bataille continued to write about death and decay and his focus on the base, the marginal and the remaindered was the underpinning of his exceptional oeuvre. We should not be surprised then if as an excremental philosopher, Bataille took a special shine to surrealism, and took a certain ownership of it, at the very moment when others (including Breton) considered that it was on the nose – or rather, were willing to consign it to history. Bataille's fermented or even fortified version of surrealism had 'legs', and it acknowledged its debt to Breton. Whereas the younger Bataille had castigated surrealism from the sidelines, and retorted to the *Second Manifesto* by calling Breton castrated and impotent in his idealism, by contrast, in the '40s he lauded his erstwhile rival using similarly sexualised language but to opposite effect. Now he depicted surrealism as the most muscular and masculine mode of volition,<sup>11</sup> saying '[Surrealism] is genuinely virile opposition - nothing conciliatory, nothing divine - to all accepted limits, a rigorous will to insubordination.'<sup>12</sup>

Bataille begins the aforementioned essay, 'On the Subject of Slumbers' with a 'but'. 'But' he says, 'how have we managed to confuse the thing itself with the expression it is given by painting or poetry?'<sup>13</sup> It is typical of Bataille's style to catapult his reader into a zone that that seems to lack context, and on reading this first sentence, it is not immediately clear what that the *thing* is, that is being confused with the means of its own expression. The thing, of course, is surrealism, which for Bataille, was not identical with its artistic products. The idea that the art work was wanting is reiterated

in Bataille's main endorsement of surrealism that lies in the footnote to this essay. Here though, he could not be clearer in preferring surrealism over existentialism as a mode of resistance:<sup>14</sup>

It is unfortunate, if you like, that the intellectual aptitude of the surrealists could not have been up to the same level as their undeniable power to undermine. Today the intellectual value of existentialism is certain, but it is difficult to see what energy it would support. It is equally difficult to recognize the evidence: although surrealism may seem dead, in spite of the confectionery and poverty of the work in which it has ended (if we put to one side the question of Communism), *in terms of mankind's interrogation of itself*, there is surrealism and nothing<sup>15</sup>.

Bataille hails the power of surrealism as a mode of interrogative critique and resistance, over and above a means for creating works. 'What is crucial' he says, 'is less the result than the principle.'<sup>16</sup>

From his remarks, it would seem that for Bataille surrealism's future was theoretical. It seems strange though, that he should have seized upon painting and poetry as the only material effects of surrealism worth mentioning. Even though they were the forms that gained the broadest attention, at least initially, more 'potent' forces were at work in the movement from the start, continuing to develop through the '30s and culminate in the '40s. The remarkable manifestations in surrealist collage and photography have been identified as groundbreaking means for pictorial representation.<sup>17</sup> Arguably too, the 'poetics' that surrealism brought to the novel and to cinema (admittedly there are few examples of these) are more astonishing and penetrating than the poems themselves. It is interesting to note as well, that in complaining that the energies of surrealist art had run low, Bataille echoed the sentiments Breton had begun to voice a decade earlier. In an address he gave in 1935, Breton himself had commented deprecatingly on the spread of weak artworks under the banner of surrealism.<sup>18</sup>

In the same speech, Breton made a fairly desultory attempt to account for the importance of the surrealist object, and the *situation* of the surrealist object. He announced his intention to take his discussion beyond the *objet trouvé* and what he called 'a type of little non-scupltural construction, assemblages',<sup>19</sup> but it would seem he fell well short of what he wanted to say in his speech. Most of his discussion was devoted to poetry; not until the very end did he connect to his opening remarks on the object. While he did not go so far as to privilege the object over the pictorial, it would seem he thought that a move towards more objective encounters with 'places, scenes and external objects' would be desirable, which might imply a move beyond the image.<sup>20</sup>

The power of the object was something that had run through surrealism since inception, but towards the end of the days of the Paris group, the interest in objects and space intensified. In 1938 one of the last expressions of the surrealist group before the outbreak of the war was the *International Exhibition* held at the Gallerie des Beaux-Arts.<sup>21</sup> The exhibition was maligned for its indifferent *works*, however, what was remarkable about it was far less the individual pieces, and more the totalising use of the exhibition space, according to a logic that today we understand as installation practice. The central hall, designed by Dali is described thus:

From the vaulted ceiling hung twelve hundred coal sacks, and the undulating ground was covered with dead leaves, moss, and ferns, in the middle of which was a pond. At the centre of this space, which was both womblike and rustic, stood a brazier (whence the diffuse fear that the coal dust falling from the sacks would start a fire) like an invitation to stand huddled together; in the four corners of the hall were beds of a somewhat garish luxury, like nothing other than an invitation to lie close together.<sup>22</sup>

By 1937, Breton had tired of Dali's paintings, and of Dali, but while his paintings may have become formulaic, it is clear from this passage that Dali had not dried up creatively; quite the contrary. Breton began to refer directly to problems in pictorial surrealism in the 1939 *Latest Trends in Surrealist Painting* exhibition, but during that late '30s and early '40s, Breton made little critical attempt to account for what now seemed to have been forceful developments in surrealism. There are some glimmerings in his writing of an idea of objecthood and temporality, however. In view of the pressing political developments at the time, it is not surprising that Breton's main expressions were politically focused.

In 1938 in Mexico with Trotsky, Breton and Trotsky had co-written 'For an Independent Revolutionary Art' which emphasised that what was under threat by all types of totalitarianism was the 'subjective qualities at work in any philosophical, sociological, scientific, or artistic discovery'.<sup>23</sup> With Trotsky and Diego Rivera, Breton established the Féderation Internationale de l'Art Révolutionnaire Indépendent (FIARA – the International Federation of Independent Revolutionary Art) which was intended to unite highly diverse interests against fascism but also Stalinism. Like so many other initiatives intended to marry intellectual effort to resisting fascism, it was short-lived. On its demise Breton said 'at such a moment it merged with many others. Everything was happening as if intellectual activity, in whatever sector, was coming to a halt, as if the mind had already been warned that nothing now would have the strength to withstand the plague.'<sup>24</sup> In the light of this remark, we can see that what Breton did was to up the ante when it came to creating transformative spaces. However, he maintained an engagement with painting.

Back in Paris in 1939, Breton organised a Mexican exhibition that included paintings by Frida Kahlo. He wrote that they revealed an essential quality; they were, he said '*situated* in time and space'.<sup>25</sup> Again, there is an intimation of the relationship between imaginary depiction and the real. He continues: 'The problem is no longer whether a painting "holds up" for example when compared to a wheat field but rather whether it holds up next to the daily newspaper which, open or closed, is a jungle.'<sup>26</sup> Breton wrote that Tanguy's paintings held up.<sup>27</sup>

Over the next twenty years, in collaboration with Duchamp, Breton arranged a series of flamboyant, complex and dramatically presented exhibitions, the first of which was held during their wartime exile in the U.S. There are divergent perceptions of the impact of the surrealists on New York, for while they attracted a certain amount of interest, their activities were also marginal:

The intellectuals who were refugees in New York lived in a relatively isolated circle: cut off from the American population (particularly when they did not speak English – as was the case for Breton) they met primarily with each other, and, of necessity, irrespective of their views and background. The surrealists, in order to publish or exhibit, were obliged to cooperate momentarily with partners whom under normal circumstances they would refuse...<sup>28</sup>

In 1942 Breton and Duchamp staged the *First Papers of Surrealism* at the decorous Madison Avenue Gallery. The title alluded to the documents an immigrant needed to obtain before ultimately becoming naturalised. The works were mainly surrealists' (i.e. Europeans) but included some by Americans. The catalogue cover showed an old wall pierced by five bullet holes (the paper was punctured); the back showed a piece of Swiss Cheese. The hang was augmented or interrupted by Duchamp's installation of a web of white string, which connected the paintings and posed an obstacle course for viewers. The first post-war exhibition of surrealism was held in 1947 at the Galerie Maeght in Paris. Duchamp and the Austrian-born architect Frederick Kiesler designed and produced an environment in the gallery that incorporated primitive myth, tales of romance and Oedipal fantasy. The exhibition explored taboo and transgression, and Duchamp and Enric Dfonati's catalogue had on its cover a false breast mounted on black velvet, with the caption 'Please touch.'<sup>29</sup>

The *EROS* exhibition in Paris, 1959, was conceived by Breton and Duchamp and co-ordinated by graphic artist Pierre Faucheux.

The visitor entered the exhibition through a 'Love grotto' - a dark, cavernous tunnel that led into a warm and comforting rose-coloured chamber. Here the ceiling, designed by Duchamp, rhythmically breathed in and out by means of hidden air pumps, and the floor was covered by a layer of sand. This led to another space, with stalagmite and stalactite-like forms in green velvet, in which the sound of orgasmic sighs, recorded by [Radovan] Ivsic, and the fragrance of perfume by Houbigant, aptly called 'Flatterie', filled the air.<sup>30</sup>

A notable inclusion in the show was Raushchenberg's *Bed.* Together with the exhibition, in the apartment of surrealist poet Joyce Mansour, the Canadian surrealist Jean Benoît gave a performance entitled 'The Execution of the Testament of the Marquis de Sade.' The performance took the form of a shamanistic rite of initiation, involving a sort of striptease of a 'tribal' costume. During the performance Breton read aloud from the testament of Sade, and Benoît finished the piece by raising a hot branding iron to his chest and burning the word 'Sade' into his flesh, whereby Robert Matta spontaneously stepped forward and thrust the hot iron onto his chest too.<sup>31</sup>

The thematic tendencies in the surrealist exhibitions organised by Breton in the post-war years are redolent of Bataille's thinking on excess, eroticism and sacrifice: notably, the *EROS* exhibition was staged two years after the publication of Bataille's *L'Erotisme*, in 1957. Thoroughly imbued with an ethic of excess, with their dramatic staging, and inclusion of soundscapes and performances these exhibitions can be seen as a direct link – as opposed to a latent connection - to the neo-avante-garde art of the late '50s and '60s.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Rosalind Krauss, 'Antivision', October 36, Spring 1986, p.154.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Yve-Alain Bois and Rosalind Krauss, Formless: A User's Guide, New York: Zone Books, 1997. Again, this project was an exhibition at the Centre Georges Pompidou in 1996.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> An early example of the new curatorial scholarship on surrealism was Dawn Ades' *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed*, London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978: Ades went on to build a career as a scholar of surrealism, and had input into all of the following projects named in this list. Another major marker was the exhibition and comprehensive discursive catalogue, *L'amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism*, by Rosalind Krauss and Jane Livingstone, with an essay by Dawn Ades, Washington, D.C.: Corcoran Gallery of Art; New York: Abbeville Press, 1985. Another significant exhibition with scholarly writings was *Anxious Visions: Surrealist Art*, by Sidra Stich with essays by James Clifford, Tyler Stovall, and Steven Kovacs, an exhibition held in 1990 at the University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley. In Australia, *Surrealism: Revolution by Night* was an exhibition organised by National Gallery of Australia in 1993, curated by Michael Lloyd, Ted Gott and Christopher Chapman. Following in this line of large scale exhibition with lavish and discursive catalogue the most recent example has been *Surrealism: Desire Unbound*, edited by Jennifer Mundy with consultant editor, Dawn Ades and special advisor Vincent Gille, exhibition at the Tate Modern in 2001 and toured to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York in 2002.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> David Sylvester, in Dawn Ades, *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed*, London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Gérard Durozoi *History of the Surrealist Movement*, translated by Alison Anderson, University of Chicago Press 2002, p. 533.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Hal Foster, *Return of the Real*, MIT Press, 1996

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Lewis Kachur, *Displaying the Marvelous: Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dalí, and Surrealist Exhibition Installations*, Cambridge, Mass. ; MIT Press, 2001.

Alyce Mahon, 'Staging Desire' in *Surrealism: Desire Unbound*, edited by Jennifer Mundy with consultant editor, Dawn Ades and special advisor Vincent Gille, London: Tate Modern, 2001.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Georges Bataille, *The Absence of Myth: Writings on Surrealism*, edited translated and introduced by Michael Richardson, London: Verso, 1994.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> See 'Surrealism from Day to Day', 'The Castrated Lion' and 'Notes on the publication of "Un Cadavre", all in Georges Bataille, *The Absence of Myth: Writings on Surrealism*, edited, translated and introduced by Michael Richardson, Verso, 1994.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Georges Bataille, 'Surrealism from Day to Day', in Georges Bataille, *The Absence of Myth: Writings* on Surrealism, edited, translated and introduced by Michael Richardson, Verso, 1994, pp 34 – 47.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Masculinity in positive and negative values is a feature of the language Bataille used to describe surrealism as a theoretical force, and it is also tropic in his fiction. For an insightful discussion of the trope of impotence as political paralysis, see Susan Rubin Suleiman, 'Bataille in the Street: The Search for Virility in the 1930s', in Carolyn Bailey Gill, *Bataille: Writing the Sacred*, International Conference on Georges Bataille, 1991. London: Routledge, 1995.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Georges Bataille, *The Absence of Myth: Writings on Surrealism*, edited, translated and introduced by Michael Richardson, Verso, 1994, p.49

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Georges Bataille, 'On the Subject of Slumbers', in *The Absence of Myth: Writings on Surrealism*, edited, translated and introduced by Michael Richardson, Verso, 1994, pp 49 –51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> There have been suggestions that Bataille turned from surrealism to existentialism, but his post-war writings simply do not support such a view. A recent example of this idea was put forward by Sarah Wilson, in her 'Fêting the Wound, Georges Bataille and Jean Fautrier in the 1940s', published in *Writing the Sacred*, edited by Carolyn Bailey Gill London: Routledge, 1995. She claims, 'The shift from the 1920s and 1930s to a world scarred by the Second World War is reflected in Bataille's shift from a renegade Surrealism to an alliance with a more existentialist ethos. The leading Surrealist dissident before the war, Bataille continued to dissect the Surrealist corpse, charting its spiritual fall from grace during the 1940s. In 1945, reviewing Jules Monnerot's sociological analysis of

Surrealism, *La poésie moderne et le sacré*, in *Combat*, he agreed that the movement was essentially religious in aspiration.' Indeed, Bataille recognised that surrealism had a quasi-religious edge, but for him, this did not constitute a criticism. See especially, 'Surrealism and How it Differs from Existentialism', *The Absence of Myth: Writings on Surrealism*, edited, translated and introduced by Michael Richardson, Verso, 1994, p. 57.

<sup>15</sup> Georges Bataille, *The Absence of Myth: Writings on Surrealism*, edited, translated and introduced by Michael Richardson, Verso, 1994, p.51.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid p. 58.

<sup>17</sup> Aragon's early identification of collage as having great subversive potential was expressed in a catalogue essay entitled 'Challenge to Painting' ('La Peinture au défi', catalogue for *Exposition de Collages*, Gallerie Goemans, Paris 1930). See of *Surrealist on Art*, edited by Lucy R. Lippard, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1970, pp. 39 –50.

<sup>18</sup> Breton said, 'Perhaps the greatest danger threatening surrealism today is the fact that because of its spread throughout the world, which was very sudden and rapid, the word found favour much faster than the idea and all sorts of more or less questionable creations tend to pin the Surrealist label on themselves...' André Breton, 'Surrealist Situation of the Object', a lecture delivered in Prague, 1935, in *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, translated by Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 1972, p. 257.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid p. 259.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid pp. 272-8.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, pp. 342 – 343.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid p. 350.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid p. 252.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid p. 356.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid p. 356.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid p. 358.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid p. 391.

<sup>29</sup> Alyce Mahon, 'Staging Desire' in *Surrealism: Desire Unbound*, edited by Jennifer Mundy with consultant editor, Dawn Ades and special advisor Vincent Gille, London: Tate Modern, 2001, p. 282.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 285.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 285.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Gérard Durozoi *History of the Surrealist Movement*, translated by Alison Anderson, University of Chicago Press 2002, chapter 4.