

EDITORS LETTER

Long Live the Manifesto

Other than to welcome you heartily to the first edition of **blown** magazine, I can't bring myself to squander the next few paragraphs banging on about how wonderful we are. I will not be reiterating the contents page whilst spouting superlatives either; all our contributors are great! There, job done! Instead I have been wondering how a **blown** manifesto might read. What crazy provocative statements could be vomited forth and, in spite of their obvious lunacy, strike a chord? I have more than a sneaking admiration for Marinetti's *Futurist Manifesto*, published in *Le Figaro* on the 20th of February 1909; it contained a series of passionate and beautifully illogical propositions, which initiated an entire movement. The cultural milieu seems dry and mean now by comparison, maybe what we need is more manifestos.

blown's manifesto could open with the statement: *Art must not to be enjoyed*. A fine cup of coffee, as I see it, is for enjoying, as is driving fast down a deserted A-road. If our only expectation of the highest and most sophisticated level of human expression is to slightly increase our serotonin levels, then lets all get pillled up and have done with it. Pills do the job faster and with less fuss. Does art really have a life beyond being eye candy for the rich or the soma of the masses? It was Andrew Fletcher who wrote "Let me write the songs of a nation; I don't care who writes its laws." Yes, surely artistic endeavor, more than any other activity, actively defines and influences who we are as human beings.

The second statement might read: *Post-modernism has failed society*. Post-modernism in itself does not offer us a single cohesive philosophical position, it is only a vague critique, a general mistrust; it is vampiric right

to its borrowed non-heart. Can anything fresh spring out of a thought that is defined only by the absence of another thought? And what happens when this non-thought is forcibly enthroned as our intellectual master? It is then no longer a petulant but endearing teenager, but instead mutates into a paranoid and stifling tyrant, capable of engendering only cynicism and apathy. A way past this impasse may only be forged with fiery passion in one hand and rigour of process in the other.

The third statement might be: *The age of the individual artist is over*. We have operated loosely within the bounds of this paradigm since Vasari deified the giants of the Renaissance. The result is an artistic landscape dominated by powerful egos and where sensitive original inquiry has at times become the sorry victim. Maybe in the next 500 years we will see collaboration becoming the norm rather than the exception.

That is the joy of an artistic manifesto, it an excuse to be ridiculous, to initiate conversations. We at **blown** have commissioned the artist Paul+a and performers Taylor Glenn and Dominique Fester to make a collaborative work. They journeyed into sleeping stranger's bedrooms in the small hours, unannounced, and enacted common nightmares on and around the victim's bed. Strangely we did not do this to confront any grand philosophical dilemma, we did it because it seemed like a very good idea at the time.

Before signing off I must say a passionate thank you to the **blown** team for their tireless labours and to my lovely family for putting up with me.

Ric Bower