

REBELLION FOR AUTONOMOUS FUTURE MANIFESTO & INFORMATION



autonomousfuture.org

The RAF stands in opposition to the traditional vision of the future. An underground movement engaged in guerrilla actions and non-standard education, the group is united by a shared belief in the strength of the Individual's imagination and open-ended creative policies.

Long has the Modern world been built according to the structures of film and the mass media. More important than specific aesthetic gripes (and those, we have) is the limitation of technological and social progress itself through a hegemonic notion of how the future should appear. Accelerated ever more towards the technological utopia, we are given new routes only through coincidence, never decisive action. Look. Decide. Make things your own.

Working with an ever-changing, always elusive group of artists, writers and thinkers, the RAF hopes to mobilize such members into an underground revolutionary force. Though sometimes dismissed as innocuous myth, the RAF relishes such skepticism and effusively treads toward the line separating fact from fiction.

RECENT RAF PROJECTS:

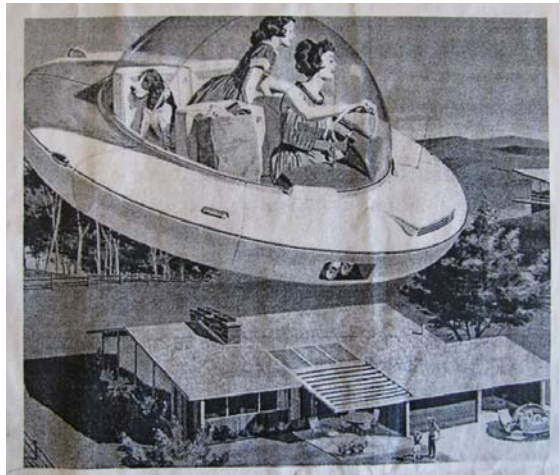
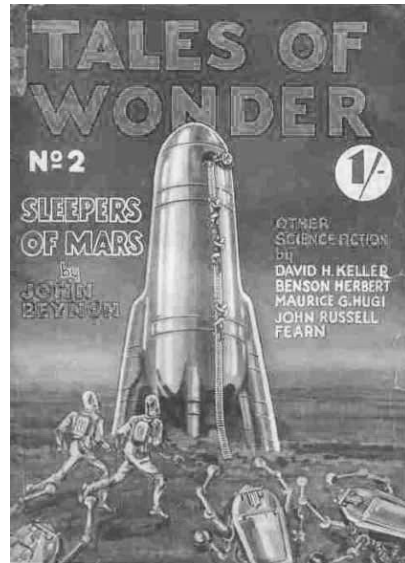
THE RAF CENSUS – An annual poll dedicated to tracking the public perception of the future. See last year's results at autonomousfuture.org

47% of those polled view Apple products as the most futuristic, more than any other company.

67% think that the “current state of the world” seems futuristic.

Silver and black are both seen as more futuristic than white, while green is more than twice as futuristic than red.

THE TOMORROW ARCHIVE – Gathering historical material relating to the version of the future developed through the mass media, the Archive appears in various public forms to create awareness and incite revolt.



MANIFESTO OF THE REBELLION FOR AUTONOMOUS FUTURE

Anarchy wears two faces, both Creator and Destroyer. Thus Destroyers topple empires; make a canvas of clean rubble where creators can then build a better world. Rubble, once achieved makes further ruins' means irrelevant. Away with our explosives, then! Away with our Destroyers! They have no place within our better world. But let us raise a toast to all our bombers, all our bastards, most unlovely and most unforgivable, let's drink their health, then meet with them no more. To the future or to the past, to a time when thought is free, when men are different from one another and do not live alone — to a time when truth exists and there is more than one technological future.

Our existence makes some people feel pressured to justify themselves. To avoid political discussion with us, to avoid comparing their practice to ours, they distort even the smallest details. The ruling class has been scared out of its skin. They thought that they had this state and all its inhabitants, classes, and contradictions under control, right down to the last detail: the intellectuals reduced to their magazines, Marxism and Leninism disarmed, and internationalism demoralized. However fragile it may

pretend to be, the power structure is not so easily damaged. One should not be tricked by this hue and cry into
25 contributing to all this noise. So we started by marching through the empty streets with placards, throwing the occasional egg at America... We shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all. A revolutionary plan should not
30 require the manipulators to disappear, on the contrary, it must make everyone a manipulator. Diderot thought of the artist as an example par excellence of a free individual; we also believe that creative autonomy and independence require both the strictest self discipline, as well as a
35 ceaseless longing for the advancement of culture.

To adapt Mrs Thatcher's famous Dictum, there is no alternative to Utopia, and late capitalism seems to have no natural enemies. The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely
40 facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilization... In one world, it creates a world after its own image. What is seen of the screen is so manifestly shown. But the mass of mainstream film, and the conventions within which it has consciously
45 evolved, portray a hermetically sealed world which unwinds magically, indifferent to the presence of the audience, producing media fictions... aesthetic as well as social constructs. Only a limited number of combinations are possible; stylistic innovation is no longer possible. It is the
50 medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action; it is with this same imperialism that present-day simulators attempt to make the real, all of the real, coincide with their models of simulation.

55 If all records told the same tale — then the lie passed into history and became truth. The whole system becomes weightless, it is no longer itself anything but a gigantic simulacrum... never exchanged for the real, but exchanged for itself in an uninterrupted circuit without
60 reference of circumference. Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. The territory no longer precedes the map, nor does it survive it. If true, this principle spells the end not only of Utopia as a form, but of Science Fiction in general, affirming as it does that
65 even our wildest imaginings are all collages.

Are we building the digital Utopia for people or machines?

The fundamental choice that emerges, in the problems set to us by modern industrial production, is
70 between man as consumer and man as user. The system of organized magic which is modern advertising is primarily important as a functional obscuring of this choice. All rulers in all ages have tried to impose a false view of the world upon their followers. Monopolisation of the mass
75 media occurs in the absence of counter-propaganda. The people can always speak back; they can respond to whatever comes their way as... a 'source and subject, to be captured, rearranged, even manipulated, and injected back into the barrage by those who are subjected to it'. Doing so turns
80 passive listeners into active speakers, It brings the kind of agency to individuals that, in the republican tradition, transforms them from vassal (or, now consumers) into true citizens. A revolutionary political practice under the present conditions - perhaps under any conditions - presumes the

85 permanent integration of the individual's personality and
political beliefs, that is to say, political identity. Pursued by
the Empire's sinister agents, he experiences the counter-
world, the anti-bourgeois sub-culture... Gradually his
paroxysms wear off; he returns to life... Now he has the
90 strength to realize his dream of living in opposition to the
environment from which he is alienated... Dress up. Leave a
false name. Be legendary. The best Poetic Terrorism is
against the law, but don't get caught. Art as crime; crime as
art.

95 There's an aspect of imperfection in the stuff we're
making... it seems more real. It seems more like it's a living
thing or has a history at this point. If everything's perfect,
it's kind of boring. And if there are modifications that have
to be made or adjustments or things like that, they give it
100 character and interest, and also somehow they add meaning.
The loss of (bourgeois) individuality is certainly one of the
great anti-Utopian themes. It cannot be a matter of an
evolutionary movement from one distinct social system to
another, rather it is a process that promises to be fraught
105 with turbulence and disruption. Projected Futures cannot
simply and effortlessly dissolve away the solidarity of
inherited social structures. It is about bounded and
localised spatial arenas which bring individuals into direct
social contact.

110 Unity can only be created through the common struggle
of the conscious section of the working class and the
intellectuals; a small number of concentrated centers for
production of knowledge and storage of information as well
as the emission of images – one which they do not stage-
115 manage, but which they model, or else it will not happen at
all. By learning how technology works, you become better

able to control your world instead of being controlled by it.
New form of public discourse, the products of modern
science are not themselves good or bad; it is the way they
120 are used that determines their value. We think of
Modernism as being characterized by an obsession with
'tomorrow', but we're living in that tomorrow. We're right in
the middle of the science-fiction scenario that people used
to imagine.

125 Where's my fucking jet pack? Where's my flying car?
You're thinking it right now. Where's my vacation on the
moon? Where's my robot lover...? Where's the future we were
promised? That's what I hear you say. Who cheated me out
of my spaceship and my raygun? Stop looking for something
130 that isn't there. You live in the future and you don't know
it... It's not so long ago that a letter or photo took months to
cross the world. You can tell people where you are today and
what it looks like in seconds, no matter where they are...
You can interrogate buildings and have conversations with
135 objects. That wasn't in the future you were expecting...
When deep space exploration ramps up, it'll be the
corporations that name everything, the IBM Stellar Sphere,
the Microsoft Galaxy, Planet Starbucks. The future sneaks
up on us. It leaks in through the small ordinary things.

140 Rebel spies managed to steal secret plans to the
Empire's ultimate weapon – enforced representation – to
highlight the ways in which its formal preoccupations reflect
the physical obsessions of the society which produced it.
[We] must start specifically by reacting against these
145 obsessions and assumptions. At the end of modernity,
archives are, next to and beyond their functional aspect, an
embodiment of cultural heritage. They have to be
protected, and made available for public visit and scrutiny -

in the same way that old churches and monuments,
150 museums, theatres and libraries are. But unlike those
institutions, archives do not carry ethical characteristics;
they are in that sense amoral. Moral quality is the input of
those who access them: people make sense of archives, not
the other way around.

155 Such work will be [our] focus here. Sometimes
archival samplings push the postmodernist complications of
originality and authorship to the extreme. Oh, the joy of
seeing the glorious old canvases bobbing adrift on those
waters, discolored and shredded!... Take up your pickaxes,
160 your axes and hammers, and wreck, wreck the venerable
cities, pitilessly! In a domain (the art system) where
hypocrisy is (still and everywhere) the rule. and in a
society... where pompous discourses defined all aspects of
life for so long, it was extremely refreshing to see how the
165 shallow peaks crumble, how power figures are massified,
how fake masterpieces turn ridiculous, how oppressive
paranoiacs become a pile of paper. And all that by just
looking at pictures, by browsing, by putting black and white
image next to black and white image, until the reality
170 accepted its dominant color - grey.

... And yet, and yet, there is a future for the archive,
perhaps, and there is perhaps, an archive for the future. The
term also suggests a changed status in the work of art in an
age of digital information, which is said to follow those of
175 industrial production and mass consumption. That such a
new age exists as such is an ideological assumption; today,
however, information does often appear as a virtual
readymade, as so much data to be reprocessed and sent on,
and many artists do 'inventory,' 'sample,' and 'share' as ways
180 of working. French critic Nicolas Bourriaud has championed

such art under the rubric of 'post-production,' which
underscores the secondary manipulations often constitutive
of it. [We] made work with the archive, instead of stashing
it in the dark corner or trash it - as the standard procedures
185 go - drawn from the archives of mass culture, to ensure a
legibility that can then be disturbed or *détourné*, but [the
work] can also be obscure, retrieved in a gesture of
alternative knowledge or counter-memory. If post-
modernism offers us the melancholic freedom to pick and
190 browse the ruins of the Past and salvage whatever shards
we may find amusing, why not dig up once again (surrealist
archaeology) some of the shattered relics of resistance,
revolt, even revolution? Can these antiques ever prove
dangerous again? Can we evade or even oppose the final
195 enclosure?

We're the middle children of history, man. No
purpose or place. We have no Great War. No Great
Depression. Our Great War's a spiritual war... our Great
Depression is our lives. We've all been raised on television
200 to believe that one day we'd all be millionaires and movie
gods and rock stars. But we won't. And we're slowly
learning that fact. And we're very, very pissed off.

This is the time, my lads. This is the place. It all
happens here and now. Are we who live in the present
doomed never to experience autonomy, never to stand for
one one moment on a bit of land ruled only by freedom?
Are we reduced either to nostalgia for the past or nostalgia
for the future? Must we wait until the entire world is freed
of political control before even one of us can claim to know
freedom? As for the future, it is something that can be
determined right now, by decrees.

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- 188-195 Hakim Bey. p. xii
- 196-202 Fight club
- 203-204 Warren Ellis. 10
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