

Ezra Pound and James Joyce: Two Different Approaches to the Relation between Literature and Visual Arts

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Abstract : This paper will suggest that Ezra Pound and James Joyce are paradigmatic for two different approaches to literature and visual arts. Both authors are infamous for being difficult, but this does not mean that their works are similar. Pound famously promoted Joyce's *Ulysses* and was instrumental in getting the work published in literary reviews. However, Pound did not appreciate Joyce's artistic development in his so-called *Work in Progress*, which was published in 1939 under the title *Finnegans Wake*. Pound and Joyce will be read as representing two different approaches to literature and other forms of art. Pound can be seen as essentially influenced by cubism and modernist techniques such as collage and montage. While many critics have used these notions to describe *The Cantos*, this paper will suggest reading Pound's opus magnum in relation to *Finnegans Wake*. The latter work shows how Joyce remained tied to an idea of the literary work as sound, as something which may – or perhaps even should – be read aloud. In contrast, Pound's *The Cantos* show clear signs of being influenced by experiments in the visual arts. The paper will argue that Pound intended to develop his work in order to bring literature 'up to date' with the development in visual arts, while Joyce stuck to a more classical understanding of the literary work as composed for oral presentation.

Keywords : collage, conceptualism, montage, literature and visual arts

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