

Wyndham Lewis

Watch short clip as a class: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HajRJovD7WQ>

Introduction to **Wyndham Lewis (Percy Wyndham Lewis)**, (born November 18, 1882, on a yacht near Amherst, [Nova Scotia](#), Canada—died March 7, 1957, [London](#), England).

English artist and writer who founded the [Vorticist](#) movement, which sought to relate art and [literature](#) to the industrial process.

About 1893 Lewis moved to London with his mother after his parents separated. At age 16 he won a scholarship to London's Slade School of Fine Art, but he left three years later without completing his course. Instead, he went to Paris, where he practised [painting](#) and attended lectures at the Sorbonne. While in Paris, Lewis became interested in [Cubist](#) and [Expressionist](#) art; he was one of the first British artists to do so.

On his return to London in 1908, Lewis began to write satirical stories, and he developed a style of painting that drew upon aspects of Cubism and [Expressionism](#). By 1913 he was creating paintings that contained abstract geometric forms and references to machines and urban architecture.

A group of artists known as the Vorticists took their inspiration from the Italian art movement known as the Futurists. They were determined to tear away all the deadwood of the past. Machines, power and speed were the keynotes of the future, they believed, and this was reflected in the works they produced. Human beings, they asserted, were merely cogs in the machine of industrial production.

Leading artists in the movement were Wyndham Lewis, David Bomberg and Christopher Nevinson. Their work was dominated by monumental figures, near abstract compositions and a focus on dramatic light and shade.

The First World War brought an end to the Vorticist movement. The horror of what machinery could do to human beings quickly brought disillusionment to the notion that progress was bound up with machinery and technological progress.

Following Vorticist ideas and style, you will be creating your own dynamic work about life in the trenches next week.