

8 & 9 August 2025
Modern art, modern love
Robert and Sonia Delaunay
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Lecture summary

From 1910, when they married in Paris, until 1941, the year of Robert's untimely death, the Delaunays were devoted both to each other and to creating a new visual language based on their theories of light and colour. Simultanism was the name they gave to the coloured rhythms through which they sought to capture the energy of modern life, working their way towards abstraction. Having spent the First World War safe in Spain and Portugal, they faced a difficult return to Paris in 1921. Keen to reclaim their place in the city's artistic circles and bring their art into everyday life, they moved beyond the canvas and experimented with a wide range of media, including clothing, theatre design, furniture, film, and architecture.

List of works (in order of presentation)

1. Sonia Delaunay, *Movement in Simultaneous Colours*, 1912, watercolour on paper, 52 x 39 cm; *Simultaneous Contrasts*, 1912, oil on canvas, 46 x 55cm.
2. Robert Delaunay, *Sun, Tower, Airplane*, 1913, oil on canvas, 132 x 131 cm.
3. Henri Rousseau, *The Snake Charmer*, 1907, oil on canvas, 169 x 189.5 cm.
4. Pierre Auguste Renoir, *Dance at Le moulin de la Galette*, 1876, oil on canvas, 169 x 189.5 cm; Paul Gauguin, *Self-Portrait with Halo and Snake*, 1889, oil on wood, 79 x 51 cm.
5. Vincent Van Gogh, *La Berceuse (Madame Roulin)*, 1888, oil on canvas, 93 x 74 cm; Sonia Delaunay, *Philomène*, 1907, oil on canvas, 54 x 92 cm; *Young Finnish Girl*, 1907, oil on canvas, 80 x 64 cm.
6. Pablo Picasso, *Portrait of Wilhelm Uhde*, 1910, oil on canvas, 81 x 60 cm.
7. Robert Delaunay, *Portrait of Wilhelm Uhde*, 1907, oil on canvas, 73 x 48.5 cm; *Landscape with Disc*, 1906, oil on canvas, 54 x 46 cm; *Self-Portrait*, 1906, oil on canvas, 54 x 46 cm.
8. Claude Monet, *Rouen Cathedral, Full Sunlight*, 1894; oil on canvas, 107 x 73.5 cm; Robert Delaunay, *Saint-Séverin*, 1909; watercolour, 48 x 34 cm; *Saint-Séverin No. 3*, 1909, oil on canvas, 114 x 89.5 cm.
9. Robert Delaunay, *The City No. 2*, 1907, oil on canvas, 146 x 114 cm.
10. Robert Delaunay, *Eiffel Tower*, c. 1909, oil on canvas, 96.5 x 70.5 cm; *Champs de Mars: The Red Tower*, 1911, oil on canvas, 161 x 129 cm; *The Window on the City*, 1910-11, watercolour, 62 x 49.5 cm.
11. Robert Delaunay, *Red Eiffel Tower*, 1911, oil on canvas, 125 x 90 cm.
12. Robert Delaunay, *Eiffel Tower, First Study*, 1909, oil on canvas, 39 x 27 cm.
13. Sonia Delaunay, *Blanket for a Cradle*, 1911, fabrics sewn on canvas, 54 x 92 cm; *Embroidery of Foliage*, 1909, wool embroidery on canvas, 83.5 x 60.5 cm.
14. Robert Delaunay, *The Three Windows, the Tower and the Wheel*, 1912, oil on canvas, 130 x 195 cm; *Simultaneous Windows on the City*, 1912, oil on canvas and wood, 40 x 46 cm.
15. Robert Delaunay, *Simultaneous Contrasts: Sun and Moon*, 1912, oil on canvas, 134.5 cm.
16. Robert Delaunay, *The First Disc*, 1913, oil on canvas, 134 cm.
17. Pablo Picasso, *Moulin de la Galette*, 1900, oil on canvas, 90 x 117 cm.
18. Sonia Delaunay, *Le Bal Bullier*, 1913, oil on mattress ticking, 97 x 336.5 cm.
19. Sonia Delaunay, *Simultaneous Dress* (front and back view), 1913, patchwork of various fabrics.
20. Sonia Delaunay and Blaise Cendrars, *Prose of the Trans-Siberian and of Little Jehanne of France*, 1913, illustrated book with pochoir, 200 x 37 cm (open), 19.7 x 23.5 (closed).
21. Sonia Delaunay, *Electric Prisms*, 1914, oil on canvas, 250 x 250 cm.
22. Robert Delaunay, *Homage to Blériot*, 1914, tempera on canvas, 250 x 251 cm.
23. Sonia Delaunay, *Stationery for the Delaunay Atelier*, 1913, pochoir and pencil on paper, 29.5 x 21 cm.

24. Robert Delaunay, *Portuguese Woman (Large Portuguese)*, 1915, oil and wax on canvas, 180 x 205 cm.
25. Sonia Delaunay, *Flamenco Singers*, 1915, oil and wax on canvas, 91.5 x 91.5 cm; *Flamenco Singers (Grand Flamenco)*, oil and wax on canvas, 174.5 x 143 cm.
26. Sonia Delaunay, Design for Cleopatra and her attendants, 1918, watercolour and graphite, 25 x 32 cm.
27. Robert Delaunay, *Stage Design for Cleopatra*, 1918, watercolour and graphite on paper, 34.5 x 47 cm; Sonia Delaunay, *Costume for Cleopatra*, 1918, textile dress and mixed media.
28. Robert Delaunay, *Carousel of Pigs*, 1922, oil on canvas, 254 x 248 cm; *Carousel of Pigs*, 1906 (verso of *The Window on the City No. 3*, 1911), oil on canvas, 114 x 131 cm.
29. Pablo Picasso, *Portrait of Olga*, oil on canvas, 130 x 97 cm; Robert Delaunay, *Portrait of Tristan Tzara*, 1923, oil on board, 104.5 cm x 75 cm; *Portrait of Madame Mandel*, 1923, oil on board, 123.5 x 124 cm.
30. Robert Delaunay, *Tour Eiffel*, 1926, oil on canvas, 170 x 104 cm; *Eiffel Tower and Gardens*, 1922, oil on canvas, 178 x 170.5 cm; *La Tour Eiffel*, 1926, oil on canvas, 169 x 86 cm.
31. Sonia Delaunay, *Interior design for the Dining Room of the Delaunays' Paris Apartment*, 1924, watercolour, 45 x 63 cm.
32. Sonia Delaunay, *Simultaneous Dresses*, 1924, oil on canvas, 146 x 114 cm.
33. Sonia Delaunay, *Groupes des femmes*, 1925, gouache and watercolour on paper, 31.5 x 30 cm.
34. Robert Delaunay, *Endless Rhythm*, 1934, oil on canvas, 207 x 52 cm; *Endless Rhythm*, 1934, oil on canvas, 150 x 45 cm.
35. Robert Delaunay, *Endless Rhythm*, 1934, oil on canvas, 162 x 130 cm; *Relief Rhythm*, 1933, oil, cement and cork on panel 100 x 81 cm; *Grey Relief*, 1935, plaster, casein and metal, 226 x 180 cm.
36. Robert and Sonia Delaunay, *Sketch for the Aviation Pavilion*, gouache on paper, 99 x 136 cm.
37. Sonia Delaunay, *Propeller*, 1937, oil on canvas, 8.5 x 3 m, *Aeroplane Engine*, 1937, 8.5 x 3 m, *Dashboard*, 1937, 8.5 x 3 m.
38. Robert Delaunay, *Preparatory Study for Circular Rhythms*, 1937, oil on canvas, 254 x 301 cm.
39. Sonia Delaunay, *Study for Distant Voyages*, 1937, gouache and watercolour on board, 39 x 93 cm.
40. Sonia Delaunay, *Study for Portugal*, 1937, gouache and watercolour on board, 34 x 92 cm.
41. Robert Delaunay, *Air, Iron, Water*, 1937, Oil on canvas, 9.5 x 14.5 m; *Endless Rhythm*, 1937, relief in wood, 6.5 x 2 m.
42. Sonia Delaunay, *Rhythm*, 1938, oil on canvas, 536 x 595 cm.
43. Robert Delaunay, *Rhythm No. 1*, 1938, oil on canvas, 538 x 396 cm; *Rhythm No. 2*, 1938, oil on canvas, *Rhythm No. 3*, 1938, oil on canvas, 538 x 396 cm.
44. Sonia Delaunay, *Coloured Rhythm*, oil on canvas, 175.5 x 150 cm.
45. Frank Stella, *Khurasan Gate Variation II*, synthetic polymer on canvas on canvas, 305 x 914 cm; Bridget Riley, *Shadow Rhythm*, 1989, oil on canvas, 166 x 228 cm; Victor Vasarely, *Yon*, 1967-1967, tempera on hardboard, 59 x 59 cm.
46. Sonia Delaunay, *Horizontal Mosaic*, 1954 (2003), coloured glass mosaic on plywood, 100 x 300 cm; *Rythmes Ondulatoires*, 1970, handwoven Aubusson wool tapestry, 135.5 x 181 cm.

References

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