

## Making and Re-Making Modernism

Modernist literary culture was built on strong relationships between writing and other kinds of making. Writers and artists were publishing their own magazines, printing their own pamphlets, and staging their own experimental plays. Virginia Woolf hand-printed and published her own books; Ford Madox Ford started his own magazine; Stephen Spender and W. H. Auden worked with Group Theatre; and the Omega Workshops brought Post-Impressionist art to chairs, lampshades, and armoires. Taking matters of literary circulation and publication literally into their own hands, modernist writers emphasized the importance of the handmade in an increasingly mechanized world. In this course, we will examine modernist little magazines, small presses, interdisciplinary artistic workshops, and theatrical productions from 1900 to 1945 in order to understand the collaborative practices and aesthetic imperatives of modernist DIY culture. Our reading of modernist texts in all genres will be informed a constellation of contemporary and modernist critical works on taste, class, and the avant-garde.

Now that about a century has passed since these artistic collaborations took place, the objects that modernists made are being re-made and re-distributed through library special collections and digitization initiatives. Everything from scraps of fabric from dance costumes to hand-printed books are being included in new digital collections as modernist works begin to come out of copyright. We will use resources such as the *Modernist Journals Project*, the *Modernist Archives Publishing Project*, and the *Modernist Versions Project* in order to work with high-resolution images of rare books.

In this course, we're going to pair critical and theoretical reading with practice, taking a cue from the modernists and from more recent Digital Humanities "maker culture," and make some things ourselves. We will undertake experiments both analogue and digital: we'll try our hands at bookbinding (by learning how to make books just as the Woolfs made them on their dining-room table in 1917); we'll do exercises in creative writing inspired by modernist forms; and we'll

also learn how to make digital editions from images of historical objects. No technical knowledge or experience with book arts is necessary in this course: we'll start by learning everything from scratch, as the modernists often did. You will, however, come away from this course with new digital skills including markup strategies for encoding literary texts; an understanding of how physical books are made; and a thorough grounding in modernist literary history and culture.