the genes of Edouard Manet

by eamon byrne

was entering into a new phase of its existence, a peculiar paradigm of the wider world where, presaged by science, economic and political ideologies were conspiring to displace the old verities of religion and aesthetics, but where yet, though wearing new clothes, it was still the old alien from a previous page with its sturdy chameleon genes, about to come around again, the nothing new under the sun, from the long underground, so that when Manet threw his first stone it was already into a fertile pond long colonised by the viruses of all future artistic possibilities, from whence the first cave marker had been the proto-dadaist, the only difference that now, at five minutes to midnight on the atomic clock, with the bones of dinosaurs about to be finally carbon-dated, in an amazing acceleration the generations were precipitating themselves, and out was fissuring art with the great *whoosh* of the modern accelerated experience, out in a splattering of paint and weirdo forms and manifestoes way beyond the capacity of galleries and printing presses to contain it, to contain it, where to wit out of its bottle that unbridled genie, winking and hobtailing as it comes and goes in its emperor's clothes, making a motza for those in the know, who got an invite to the opening show, where it's curated in grace in that immaculate gallery space, up on its whitewashed walls, where the collectors are sipping their wine and taking the piss, and the critics who'd been taking down notes have all gone home to their library shelves to look up its clones and its elves to consult with the oracle, like it thinks it OWNS THE PLACE, like what can you *do* but respect the tenacity of its genes fading and pulsing like you could only describe as CYBER, like it'd gone all *conceptual* coming in on optics, the nerve of it, some installation or other, some hologram or other, impossible to contain it, to contain it, gone all *optic* through

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