

being newly discovered. In the 20th century Man traveled into himself—deep into the realms of the brain, into every cell of the body.

In 1899 Sigmund Freud published *The Interpretation of Dreams* and in 1905 *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. Now “the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious” could be driven on; a road that traveled through totally new territories—territories of forbidden desire, crowded with symbolic signposts along the way. The mind was a window through which fresh perspectives on life could be viewed. Freud opened it wide, allowing Man’s innermost emotions to be explored.

Immediately, original art forms appeared to express this inner landscape. In 1907 Picasso painted his *Les Femmes d’Alger (O. J. R. Version O)*—one of the most powerful visual images of the 20th century. Viewers were shocked by it. It was a picture that not only broke with tradition but also mirrored Einstein’s ideas of time and space. It was as if anarchy had arrived in the art world. Nothing would ever be the same.

Art became a psychological arena; imagination became its interpreter. Picasso and his Cubist friends (1920s) saw the world in geometric shapes; Salvador Dali and the Surrealists (1930s) painted their dreams; Jackson Pollock in his “action paintings” (1950s) splashed the cosmos on his canvas with a stick; Andy Warhol produced images of Cola Cola bottles and Marilyn Monroe (1960s) as symbols of the consumer world around him, and the artists of the 90s exhibited their “shock art” images of dead sheep and female nudes sharpened into knife blades.

■ The Stream of Consciousness and the River of Radical Ideas

Literature of the 20th century also underwent a major metamorphosis. Writers destroyed the linear storyline, and like Picasso did with a painting, they wrote from a multi-perspective point of view. James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, published in 1922, was the crowning glory of this radically new “stream of consciousness” style.

Poetry left the Victorian era behind in a few quick leaps too. Structured, metered poems became old overnight and free verse became the fashion. In 1922, the same year as *Ulysses* was published, T.S. Eliot wrote *The Wasteland*, a rhythmical masterpiece about the ugliness and impersonality of modern life, and Ezra Pound, influenced by the Japanese haiku and the Noh theater, led a poetry movement with the motto: “Make it new.”

Suddenly language was liberated from the chains of tradition. Poems became visual—words made shapes or were scattered across the page—and correct grammar and punctuation became irrelevant. Poems reflected the times. They expressed anything from political opinions to psychedelic drug experiences. They were simple and they were seas of chaos.

■ Shocking and Sensational Sounds

Music experimented on the ears. It took the listener to new sonic levels. From Igor Stravinsky's 1913 classical composition *The Rites of Spring*, a polyrhythmic score that caused a riot in Paris when it was first heard, to

John Cage's 4' 3" (a composition of four minutes and thirty-three seconds of silence) was music of a diverse nature. Furthermore, with the advent of the radio and records, music became an international commodity.



Music to make Queen Victoria scream from the grave. The shocking sounds of the streets—the revolution of Rap.

Music spoke for the views and styles of generations. Whether it was the early Jazz Bands of New Orleans in the 20s, Elvis Presley rocking and rolling in the 50s, The Beatles in “swinging London” in the 60s, or rap music from the ghettos of American cities in the 90s, music mirrored the social conditions of the times. It became a medium that crossed all cultures.

■ Visions of the Future

Sitting around a radio might have been family entertainment early in the century, but this would change, almost overnight, with the arrival of a new invention—the television. Children born in the latter half of the 20th century became “The Television Generation” and the expression “couch potato” entered the vocabulary. Moreover, in the same year as the origins of television were being developed, sound was added to silent movies and “talkies” arrived. Now, an industry, centered in Hollywood, became more than ever before, the distributor of fantasy. Cinemas were “dream palaces.” They became perfect places to exchange a dull reality for a world of glamour, excitement and untamed imagination.

Progressively, modern society became visually focused. Yet still, citizens were passive consumers, silently absorbing the information and images given to them.

From 1981 this would no longer be so—the personal computer (PC) was put on the market by IBM. 25,000 units were sold that year, and in the next three, the figure rose to four million. Within a decade these computers were connected in a huge electronic web-like system. Computer operators communicated with each other in “cyberspace” on the Internet and the Information Age was born.



The world was now a global village—united by communication but still divided by culture. A world on the threshold of a new century—a century whose wallpaper would once again undergo many colorful and chaotic changes.

The “Great Instrument of the Internet,” propelling a generation in the wild frontiers of cyberspace.



Today, looking back across the landscape of the 20th century, the view is spectacular. The last hundred years have perhaps been the most eventful and have seen the most radical change in all of Man’s history. Empires have disappeared, political powers exchanged and cultures completely altered. Two World Wars have left their indelible mark on the globe and nuclear destruction has not only shown Man’s inhumanity to Man but also how fragile and precious planet Earth is.

To condense the whole of this century into a book this size is an impossible task—one that I will not try to do. Instead, I am going to make a very personal selection of events that hold a special interest to me. I am not going to write from a historian’s point of view but rather as someone who walks along a beach picking up brightly colored shells. And as I do this, the tide will change. The Great Sea of Time will rush in to cover the sand. My footprints will disappear but the shells I select will be saved. This is the perspective from which this book is written.

So, forward, backward into the past. The shoreline of the 20th century awaits.