



# Off-Screen Cinema: Isidore Isou and the Lettrist Avant-Garde

*Kaira M. Cabañas*

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One of the most important avant-garde movements of postwar Paris was Lettrism, which crucially built an interest in the relationship between writing and image into projects in poetry, painting, and especially cinema. Highly influential, the Lettrists served as a bridge of sorts between the earlier works of the Dadaists and Surrealists and the later Conceptual artists.

*Off-Screen Cinema* is the first monograph in English of the Lettrists. Offering a full portrait of the avant-garde scene of 1950s Paris, it focuses on the film works of key Lettrist figures like Gil J Wolman, Maurice Lemaître, François Dufrêne, and especially the movement's founder, Isidore Isou, a Romanian immigrant whose “discrepant editing” deliberately uncoupled image and sound. Through Cabañas's history, we see not only the full scope of the Lettrist project, but also its clear influence on Situationism, the French New Wave, the New Realists, as well as American filmmakers such as Stan Brakhage.

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