

QUALITY MATERIAL ---

CAREFUL INSPECTION --

GOOD WORKMANSHIP.

ALL COMBINED IN AN EFFORT TO  
GIVE YOU A PERFECT PAINTING.

**University of Texas at Dallas  
Arts & Humanities  
Fall 2018**

**Contemporary Art History  
AHST 3318-501  
(87353)**

**Dr. Charissa N. Terranova  
W 7:00-9:45 pm  
ATC 1.305**

**terranova@utdallas.edu**

**Office Hours: By appointment on and off  
campus**

**Office Location: ATC. 2.704**

**Description:**

This course offers a survey of the history of contemporary art, 1948-present. Through the theme of “dematerialization” we will focus on the shift from art-as-object to art-as-experience, looking to dada, neo-dada, gestural painting, performance, happenings, sound experimentation, early computer art, art and the mass media, interactive art, new media art, and conceptualism.

**Goals and Outcomes:**

- Define and understand the following terms: modernism, postmodernism, contemporary art, dematerialization, and conceptual art.
- Identify the salient characteristics of contemporary art.
- Gain knowledge of the history and theory of contemporary art.
- Improve skills of public engagement and discourse in class.
- Improve research skills.
- Improve expository writing skills.

**Requirements:**

Students are required to attend every class, complete all assignments (reading, writing, and exams), and participate with candor, verve, and commitment in class. **Students are allowed one unexcused absence after which each absence will result in the lowering of the final grade by one full letter. Students with illnesses that require extended periods of absence are encouraged to officially withdraw from the class.**

## Reading Assignments:

All reading assignments are available in the textbook or through the library by way of a service called “docutek.”

Textbook: David Hopkins. *After Modern Art, 1945-2017* (Oxford History of Art). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2018.

The URL for DOCUTEK AHST 3318 is:

<http://utdallas.docutek.com/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=2318>

Password: Serrano

## Writing Assignments: The Art Review

### Assignment #1: Comparing Critical Voices

This assignment is intended to familiarize you with the voice of the art critic. Choose one of the two exhibitions below, locate two different reviews by two different critics, compare and contrast them, and finally choose the best of the two voices. Please print the reviews and staple them to the back of your review.

- Length: 600 words
  - double space
  - 10 or 12 pt font
  - title of your review underlined and located underneath course heading
  - Please avoid personal statements in the first person, that is, using “I”, such as “I think the show was beautiful.”
  - Please avoid artspeak, exaggeration, and clichés, such as “The artist [or critic] is a genius.”
  - **Due: Wednesday September 12**
- Exhibition 1 *Hippie Modernism: The Struggle for Utopia*, Walker Art Museum, Oct 24, 2015–Feb 28, 2016
  - Exhibition 2 *International Pop*, Dallas Museum of Art, Oct. 11, 2015-Jan. 17, 2016

### Assignment #2: Review of *Ian Davenport* at the Dallas Contemporary, 161 Glass St., Dallas, TX 75207

Using your knowledge of the critic’s voice, please write a review of this exhibition. Your review might discuss the successes or failures of the exhibition according to the artist’s work and its installation – how the Dallas Contemporary has worked with the artist to install works of art the exhibition space. You must visit the art space for this assignment and include a selfie with one work of art in your review. No flashes in the gallery space.

- Length: 600 words
- double space
- 10 or 12 pt font
- title of your review underlined and located underneath course heading
- selfie with a work of art
- Please avoid personal statements in the first person, that is, using “I”, such as “I think the show was beautiful.”
- Please avoid artspeak, exaggeration, and clichés, such as “The artist [or critic] is a genius.”
- **Due: Wednesday October 24**

Assignment #3: Review of *Günther Förg: A Fragile Beauty* at the Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 North Harwood, Dallas, TX 75201

Using your knowledge of the critic's voice, please write a review of this exhibition. Your review might discuss the successes or failures of the exhibition according to the artist's work and its installation – how the Dallas Museum of Art has worked with the artist to install works of art the exhibition space. You must visit the museum for this assignment and include a selfie with one work of art in your review. No flashes in the gallery space.

- Length: 600 words
- double space
- 10 or 12 pt font
- title of your review underlined and located underneath course heading
- selfie with a work of art
- Please avoid personal statements in the first person, that is, using “I”, such as “I think the show was beautiful.”
- Please avoid artspeak, exaggeration, and clichés, such as “The artist [or critic] is a genius.”
- **Due: Wednesday December 5**

**Exams:**

The mid-term exam is **Wednesday October 10** and the final exam is **TBA**. Each will require you to identify 20 slides and answer short essay questions. There will be a review sheet disseminated at least one week prior to each exam. All slide lectures are located at [www.charissaterranova.com](http://www.charissaterranova.com). Click the “courses” icon at the top of the home page.

**NOTE ON DATES:** There are absolutely no make-up exams for people who mis-schedule the exam. I do not accept late papers or papers digitally. All written assignments should be submitted in class and printed on paper.

**Grades:**

Written Assignment #1	20%
Written Assignment #2	20%
Written Assignment #3	20%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Final Exam	<u>20%</u>
TOTAL	100%

**Standard UTD policies regarding classroom behavior, religious holidays, withdrawals, etc.:**

<http://www.utdallas.edu/deanofstudents/conductguidelines.html>

<http://provost.utdallas.edu/>

<http://www.charissaterranova.com/syllabi/utd-policies.htm>

**Opportunity for Extra Credit:**

Attend *György Kepes's Vision + Values Series and the Origins of Cybernetic Art* and submit a 300-word summary and boost your lowest grade one full letter grade. **Due October 17**

Dr. Charissa N. Terranova leads a dialogue between six internationally renowned scholars of modern and contemporary art history about artist and impresario György Kepes. Titled *György Kepes's Vision + Values Series and the Origins of Cybernetic Art*, this gathering is open to the public and takes place 10 am – 12 pm Saturday October 13 at the Nasher Sculpture Center. Audience participation is encouraged.

Kepes was a renaissance man and shapeshifter of modernism. A pioneer of new media art and heir of the Bauhaus, Kepes pushed modernist experimentalism into new realms. He incorporated science and technology as a means to rethink the avant-garde through cybernetics, both organic and mechanical. Prior to an almost thirty-year career as professor at MIT 1947-1974, he lived in North Texas, making lifelong connections here and leaving a trail of fascinating art and design projects. Join us and engage in a discussion about the life of Kepes, a second-generation Bauhaus figure, who spent a year in North Texas before embarking on his career at MIT. This event is supported by the Terra Foundation for American Art, the Edith O'Donnell Institute for Art History, and the Nasher Sculpture Center.

Modernity  
Modernization  
Modernity  
Avant-garde  
Post-modernism  
Contemporary  
Contemporary Art



- Modernity – 16th-18th centuries (or 16<sup>th</sup> century-present); ages of discovery, exploration, empire, colonization, codification of nation-state, scientific revolution, democratic revolutions
- Modernization – 18th-19th centuries; age of industrialization, the instrumentalization of modernity
- Modernism – 20th century-ongoing; commentaries on and creative expressions in art and design about modernity and modernization

Avant-garde – Historical and Neo-Avant-garde

Post-modernism

Contemporary

Contemporary Art

Dadaism

Surrealism

dada

between Zurich and Berlin

Weimar Republic in Germany

Interwar Period 1919-1933



Otto Dix, Shock Troops Advance under Gas, 1924, etching – Between New Objectivity and Dada

Below right:  
Wieland Herzfeld  
examining Otto  
Dix's Moveable  
Figure Picture at  
the First  
International Dada  
Fair, Berlin, 1919





Cabaret Voltaire 1916

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Was ist **dada**?

Eine Kunst? Eine Philosophie? ~~oder Politik?~~  
Eine Feuerversicherung?

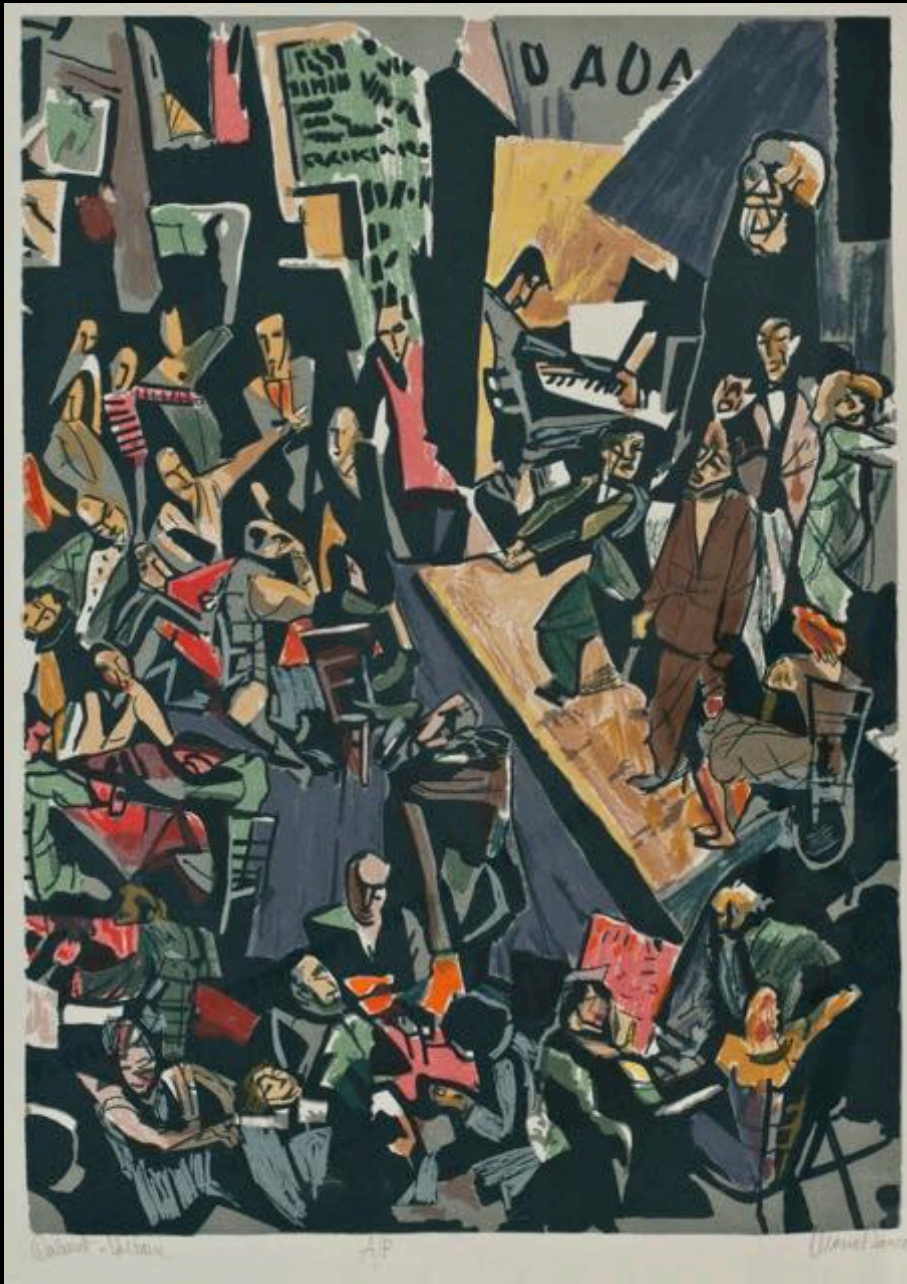
Oder: **Staatsreligion?**

ist **dada** wirkliche **Energie?**

oder ist es **Gar nichts,**  
**alles?**



Hugo Ball and Tristan Tzara  
Zurich dada



Marcel Janco.  
*Cabaret Voltaire* (1916).

“Total pandemonium. Tzara is wiggling his behind like the belly of an Oriental dancer. Janco is playing an invisible violin and bowing and scraping. Madame Hennings, with a Madonna face, is doing the splits. Huelsenbeck is banging away nonstop on the great drum, with Ball accompanying him on the piano, pale as a chalky ghost.” (Hans Arp, 1916)

Marcel Janco, *Cabaret Voltaire*, 1916





**KARAWANE**  
 jolifanto bambla ô falli bambla  
 grossiga m'pfa habla horem  
**égiga goramen**  
 higo bloiko russula huju  
 hollaka hollala  
*anlogo bung*  
 blago bung  
 blago bung  
**boëso fataka**  
 ■ ■ ■  
 schampa wulla wussa ólobo  
*hej tatta gôrem*  
 eschige zunbada  
**wolubu ssobudu ulmo ssobudu**  
 tumba ba- umf  
*kusagauma*  
 ba - umf

**KARAWANE**  
 jolifanto bambla ô falli bambla  
*grossiga m'pfa habla horem*  
**égiga goramen**  
 higo bloiko russula huju  
 hollaka hollala  
*anlogo bung*  
 blago bung  
 blago bung  
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 eschige zunbada  
**wolubu ssobudu ulmo ssobudu**  
 tumba ba- umf  
*kusagauma*  
 ba - umf

(1917)  
 Hugo Ball

Hugo Ball performing Karawane [German for "Caravan"]

Dadaism by Tristan Tzara  
(1918/1922)



Tristan Tzara photographed by Man Ray

There is a literature that does not reach the voracious mass. It is the work of creators, issued from a real necessity in the author, produced for himself. It expresses the knowledge of a supreme egoism, in which laws wither away. Every page must explode, either by profound heavy seriousness, the whirlwind, poetic frenzy, the new, the eternal, the crushing joke, enthusiasm for principles, or by the way in which it is printed. On the one hand a tottering world in flight, betrothed to the glockenspiel of hell, on the other hand: new men. Rough, bouncing, riding on hiccups. Behind them a crippled world and literary quacks with a mania for improvement.

I say unto you: there is no beginning and we do not tremble, we are not sentimental. We are a furious Wind, tearing the dirty linen of clouds and prayers, preparing the great spectacle of disaster, fire, decomposition. We will put an end to mourning and replace tears by sirens screeching from one continent to another. Pavilions of intense joy and widowers with the sadness of poison. Dada is the signboard of abstraction; advertising and business are also elements of poetry.

I destroy the drawers of the brain and of social organization: spread demoralization wherever I go and cast my hand from heaven to hell, my eyes from hell to heaven, restore the fecund wheel of a universal circus to objective forces and the imagination of every individual.

Philosophy is the question: from which side shall we look at life, God, the idea or other phenomena. Everything one looks at is false. I do not consider the relative result more important than the choice between cake and cherries after dinner. The system of quickly looking at the other side of a thing in order to impose your opinion indirectly is called dialectics, in other words, haggling over the spirit of fried potatoes while dancing method around it. If I cry out:  
Ideal, ideal, ideal,

-Knowledge, knowledge, knowledge,  
-Boomboom, boomboom, boomboom

I have given a pretty faithful version of progress, law, morality and all other fine qualities that various highly intelligent men have discussed in so many books, only to conclude that after all everyone dances to his own personal boomboom, and that the writer is entitled to his boomboom...



Tatlin, Model for the Monument to the 3rd International in wood and wire displayed at the VIIIth Congress of the Soviets held in December, 1920

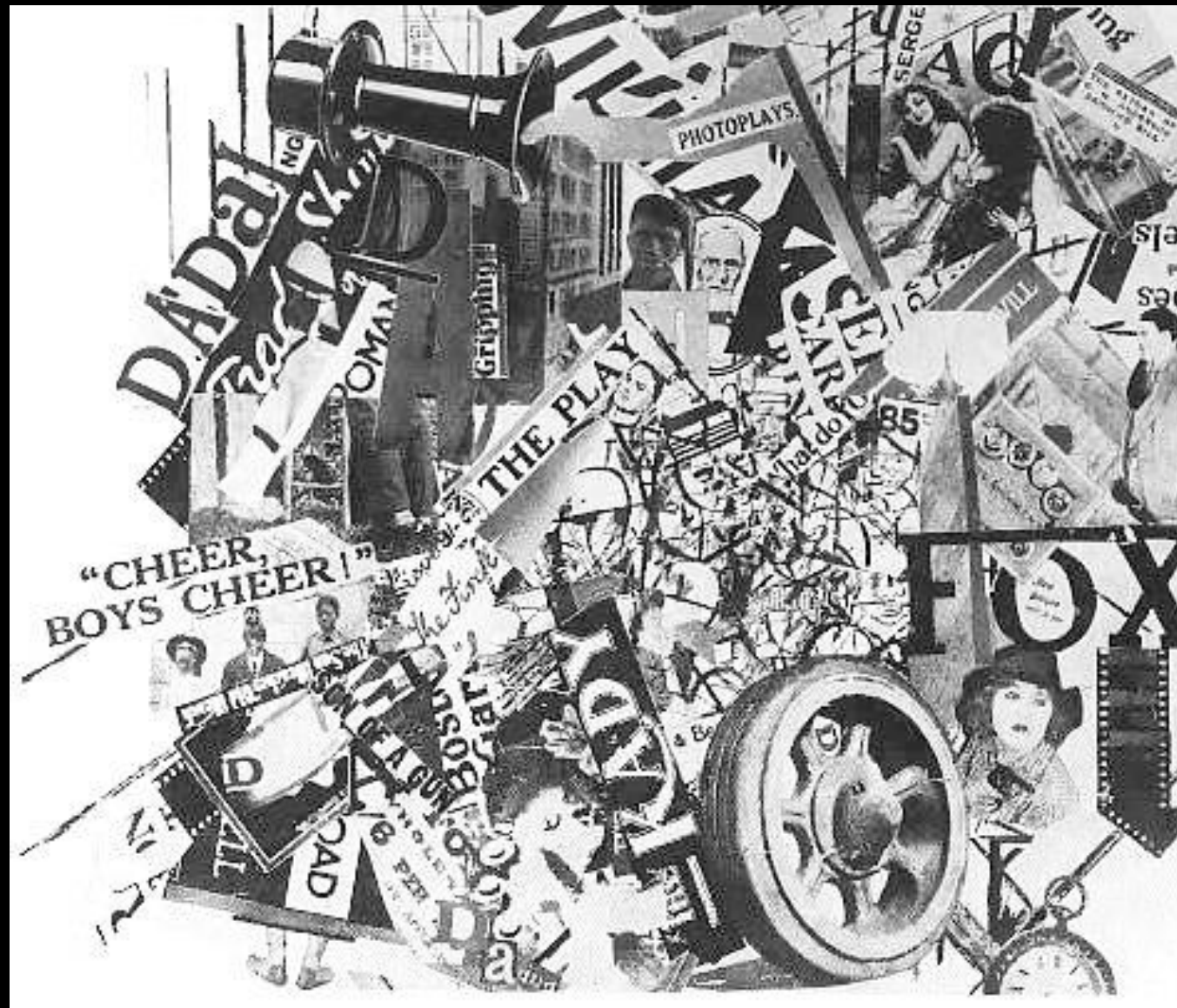
First International Dada Fair, Berlin, 1920 "Art is dead! Long live Tatlin!"



**John Heartfield and Rudolf Schlichter**  
*Preussischer Erzengel* (Prussian Archangel), 2004 (reconstruction of lost 1920 original)



John Heartfield, Cover of the exhibition catalogue of First International Dada Fair (*Erste Internationale Dada-Messe*)



George Grosz and John Heartfield, Life and Work in the Universal City at Five Past Twelve, 1919

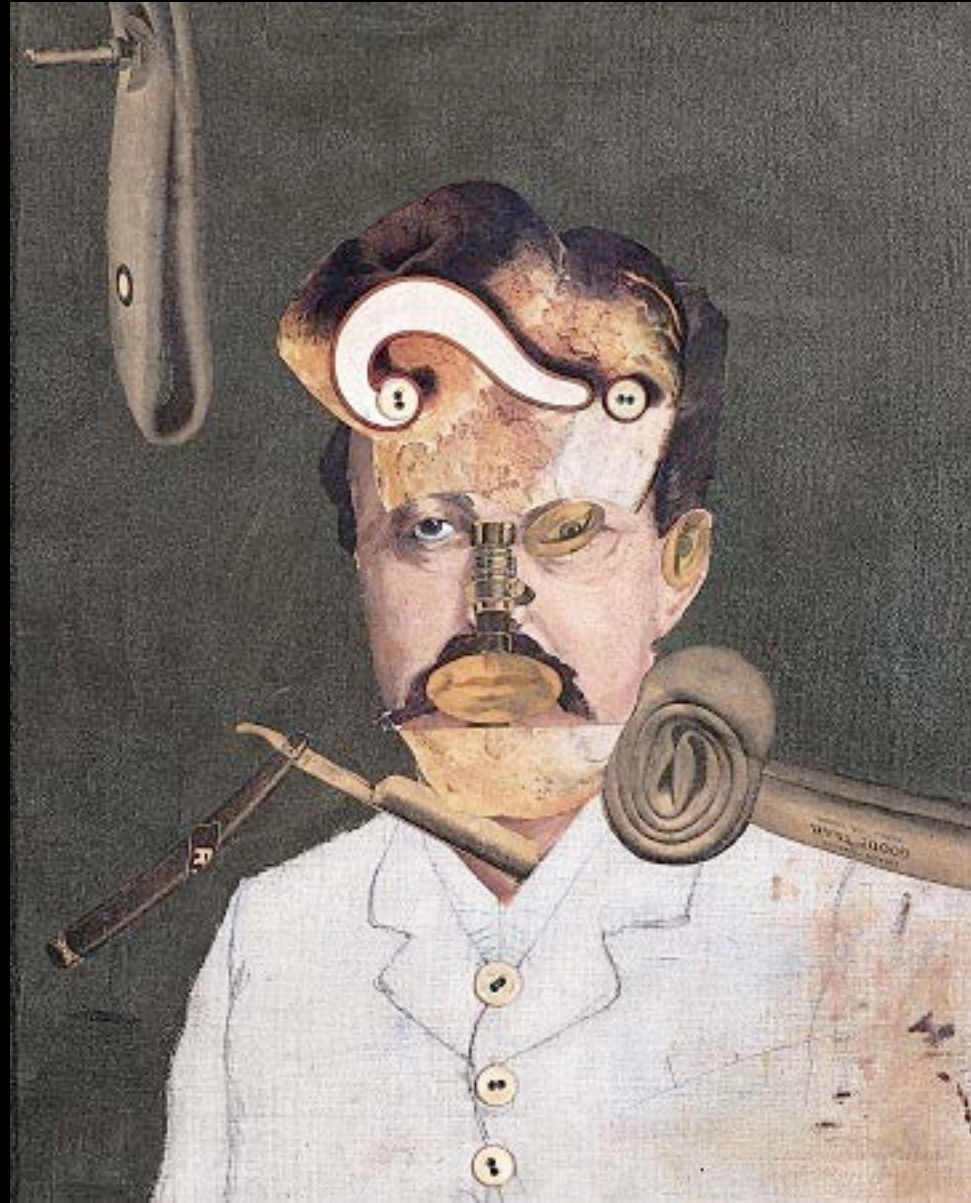
What did happen was that Heartfield was moved to develop what started as an inflammatory political joke into a conscious artistic technique.

George Grosz



George Grosz, The City, 1926-27





George Grosz, A Victim of Society, later titled Remember Uncle August, the Unhappy Inventor, 1919



George Grosz, Republican Automatons, 1920

“It is true I am opposed to war; that is to say I am opposed to any system that coerces me. From an aesthetic point of view, on the other hand, I rejoice over every German who dies a hero’s death on the field of honor (how touching!). To be a German means invariably to be crude, stupid, ugly, fat and inflexible - it means to be unable to climb up a ladder at forty, to be badly dressed - to be a German means: to be a reactionary of the worst kind; it means only one amongst a hundred will, occasionally, wash all over.

One asks oneself how it is possible that there are millions of people completely lacking a soul, unable to observe real events soberly, people whose dull and stupid eyes have been blinkered ever since they were small, whose minds have been crammed with the emblems of stultifying reaction, such as God, fatherland, and militarism. How is it possible to boast publicly that we are one of the most enlightened nations - when the worse possible principles are already disseminated in schools - principles which, from the very beginning, gag every vestige of freedom of the individual, but instead educate him to become one who follows the crowd, devoid of independent thought, feelings or will.”

-George Grosz



George Grosz, Eclipse of the Sun, 1926



George Grosz, Dallas Skyline, oil on canvas, 1952



John Heartfield (born Helmut Herzfeld), *Fathers and Sons*, 1924



WER BÜRGERBLÄTTER LIEST WIRD BLIND UND TAUBL.  
WEG MIT DEN VERDÜMMUNGSSBANDAGEN!

John Heartfield, Whoever Reads  
Bourgeois Newspapers Becomes  
Blind and Deaf: Away with These  
Stultifying Bandages! 1930

a staged photograph rather than a  
proper photomontage



John Heartfield, Adolph the  
Superman: Swallows Gold and  
Spouts Junk, 1932



Hannah Höch, Cut with the Dada Kitchen Knife through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch in Germany, 1919



Hannah Höch, Pretty Girl, 1920





Hannah Höch, Pretty Girl, 1920

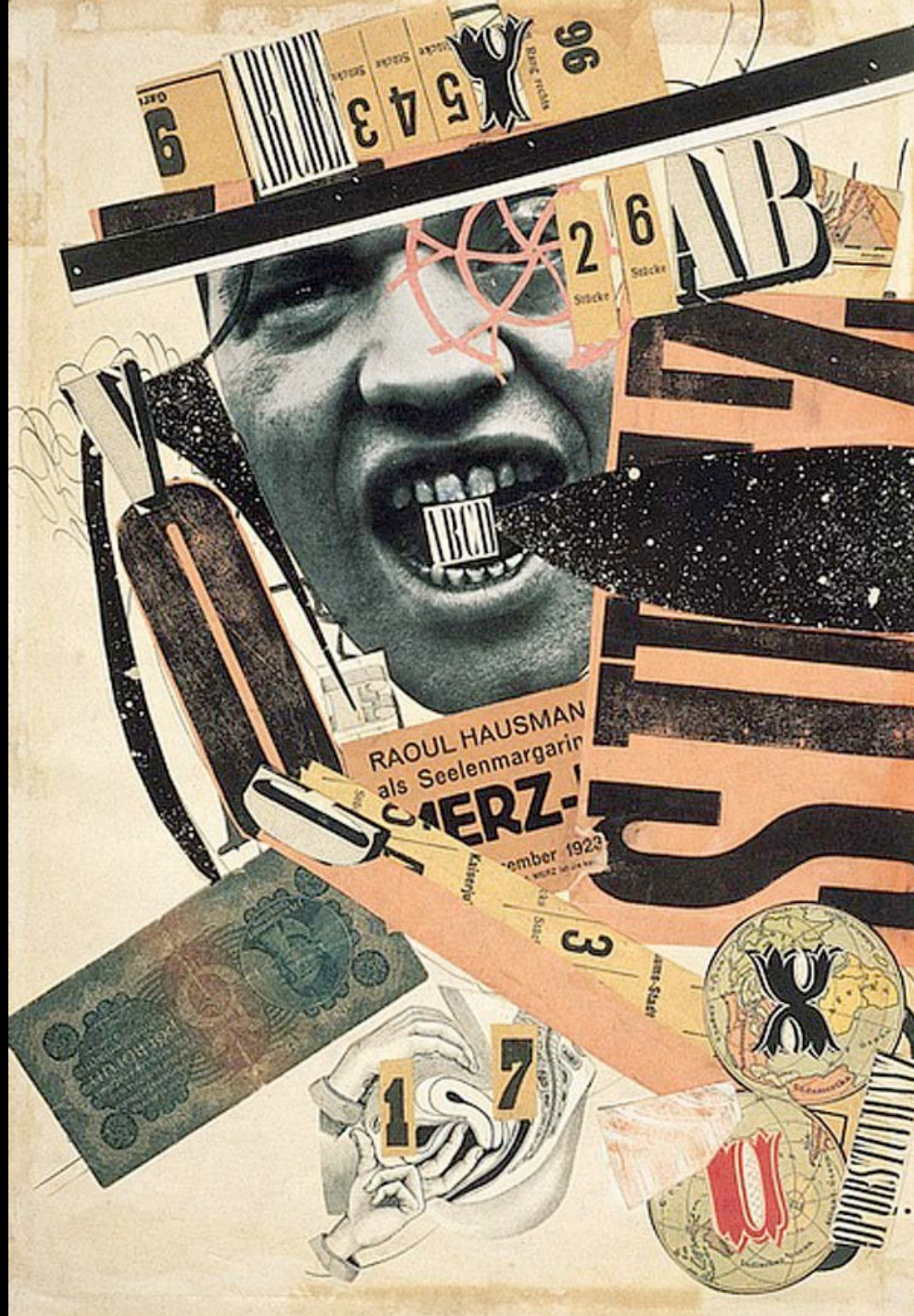


Raoul Hausmann, Spirit of Our Time, 1919

Dadasoph

"The German wants only his  
order, his king, his Sunday  
sermon, and his easy chair."

--Raoul Hausmann



Collage as a mode of “critique”

Critique from the Greek *krinein* for  
parse, cut, separate, divide, part,  
distinguish between two things or  
people or among a group of things  
or people

Raoul Hausmann, ABCD, 1923-1924

dada

between Paris and New York


Retinal Art  
versus  
Anti-Retinal Art



Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968)  
player 1911



Duchamp, Portrait of chess  
player 1911



INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION  
OF MODERN ART  
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN  
PAINTERS AND SCULPTORS  
69<sup>th</sup> INF<sup>Y</sup> REG<sup>T</sup> ARMORY, NEW YORK CITY  
FEBRUARY 15<sup>th</sup> TO MARCH 15<sup>th</sup> 1913  
AMERICAN & FOREIGN ART.

AMONG THE GUESTS WILL BE — INGRES, DELACROIX, DEGAS,  
CÉZANNE, REDON, RENOIR, MONET, SEURAT, VAN GOGH,  
HÖDLER, SLEVOGT, JOHN, PRYDE, SICKERT, MAHLOL,  
BRANCUSI, LEHMBRICK, BERNARD, MATISSE, MANET, SIGNAC,  
LAUREC, CONDER, DENIS, RUSSELL, DUFY, BRAQUE, HERBIN,  
GLEIZES, SOUZA-CARDOZO, ZAK, DU CHAMP-VILLON,  
GAUGUIN, ARCHIPENKO, BOURDELLE, C. DE SEGONZAC.

LEXINGTON AVE.—25th ST.

Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2*, 1912



"GUILFISH'S" PRIZE-WINNING  
SOLUTION OF ARMORY PUZZLE.

#### A Mathematical Solution.

Being in the fourth dimension, the artist sees all around the other three dimensions, sees all sides of the lady at once. He paints what he sees. If properly cut out and pasted together, the apparently unrelated spaces form the perfect statue of a nude lady in the act described.

William Silva,

1326 New York Ave., Washington, D. C.  
Mar. 5, 1913.

#### "Veritable Brain-Storm."

You ask for a solution of the mysterious "nude descending a stairway," in fifty words. Why fifty when one will do it? The mystery is all in the wrong translation of the title which is thus:

"Nude descending with stairway."

How plain everything is at once.

If permissible, here is another solution, but I am more fond of the first one. The painter, never having seen a nude lady, sees one on a fine morning in the month of May, which incident and time makes him rather confused. The picture plainly shows this emotion. A veritable brain-storm.

Yours very truly,

Gustave Wiegand.

Carnegie Hall, N. Y., Mar. 6, 1913.

#### Blots of Flesh Color.

The painter probably watched a nude figure rush down a dark staircase and tried to put on canvas the blots of flesh color he saw in that moving picture. As the colors are not true, he either has defective

## The Nude Lady and the Stairway

*Title of a Cubist picture at the Armory Show.*

Now this is asked on Hudson's banks

And not on shores of Niger;

Our lady's on a stairway placed,

There's no sign of a tiger.

At least the "Cubist" says she is

He who hath so devised her;

No stair nor dame can we discern

And so we're none the wiser.

If "art concealeth art"—when then

This "Cubist" is a master,

For he hath hidden stair and dame

Beneath some brown courtplaster.

Oh—Saints, Madonnas, visions fair,

Of Raphael and of Lippi.

Must we forsake Ye—and embrace

Bad dreams by painters "Dippy"?

Perish the thought—with masters old;

We'll still walk woodlands shady,

Still be inspired by visions fair,

Scat! "Stairway and Nude Lady."

SEEING NEW YORK WITH A CUBIST



The Rude Descending a Staircase  
(Rush Hour at the Subway)

32  
USA

Armory Show 1913

1998



© USPS 1998





Eliot Elisofon, Marcel Duchamp  
Walking down Stairs mimicking Nude  
Descending a Staircase, 1952



## Readymade

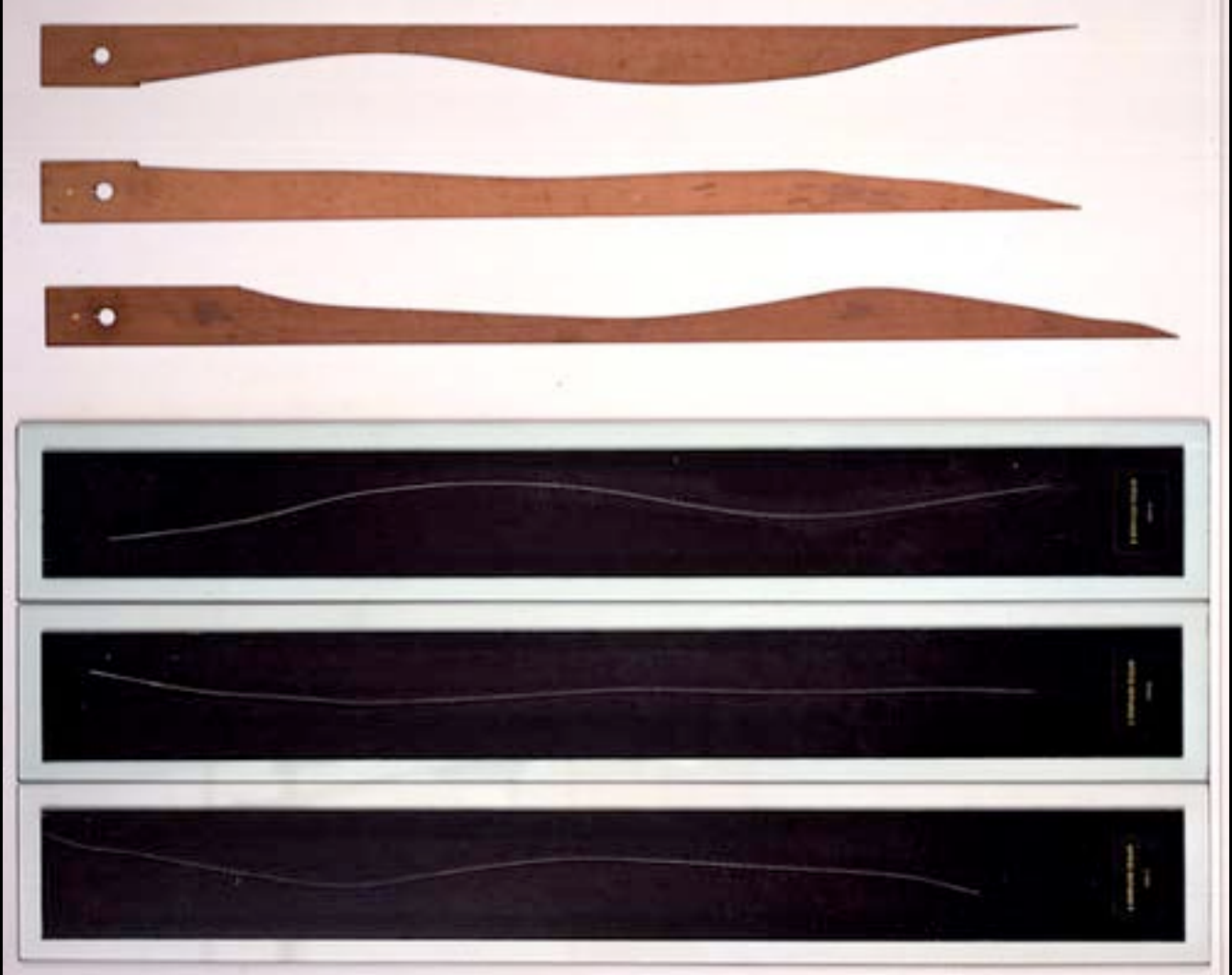
Duchamp wanted, he said, "to put art back in the service of the mind."

Duchamp, Bicycle Wheel, 1913



It is "a joke about the meter (3.2 ft)," Duchamp glibly noted about this piece, but his premise for it reads like a theorem: "If a straight horizontal thread one meter long falls from a height of one meter onto a horizontal plane twisting as *it pleases*[it] creates a new image of the unit of length."

Duchamp, Three Standard Stoppages, 1913-14





# Readymade

Duchamp, Fountain, 1917



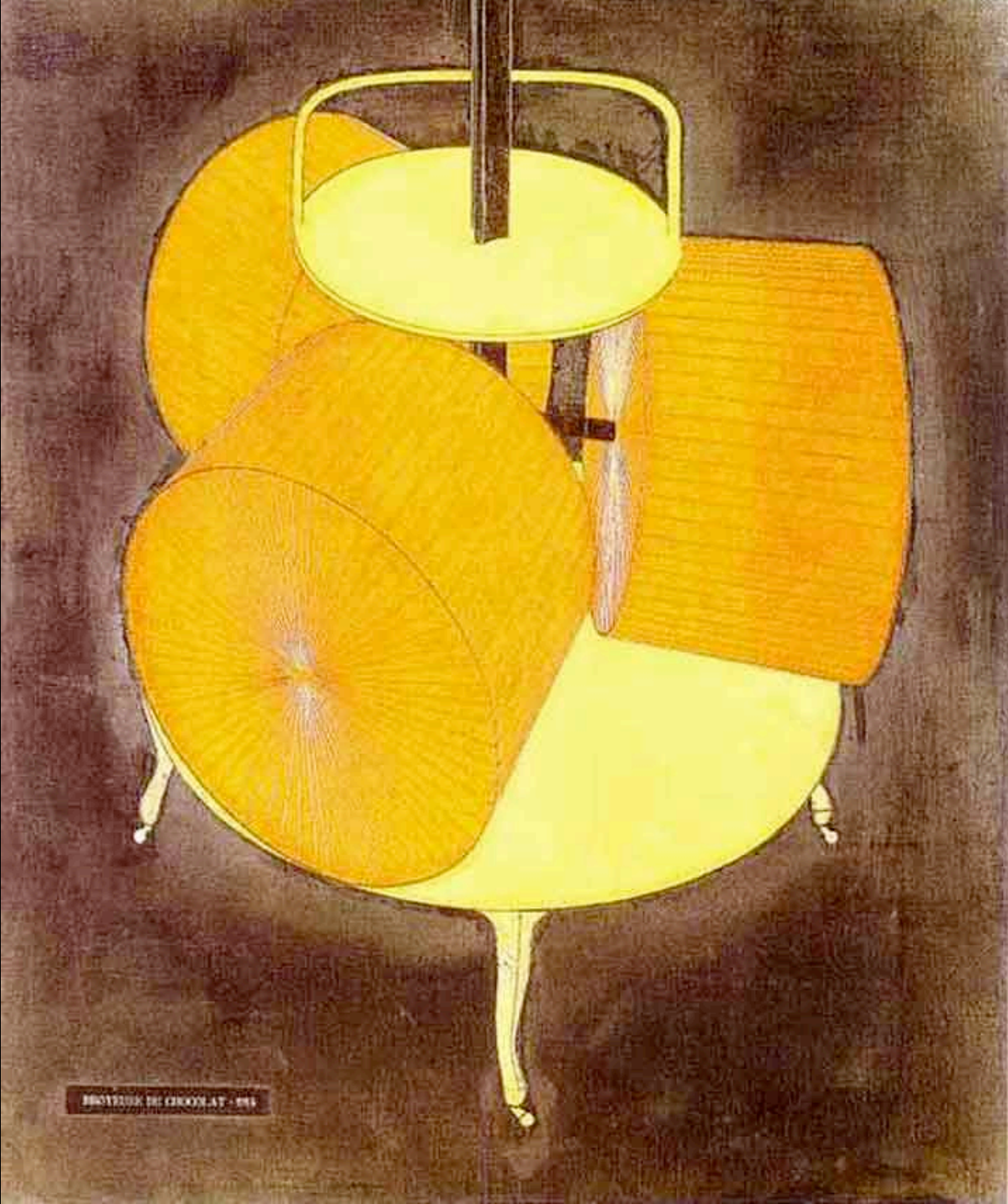
Duchamp, LHOQQ, 1919



Use "delay" instead of picture or painting ... It's merely a way of succeeding in no longer thinking that the thing in question is a picture--to make a delay of it in the most general way possible, not so much in the different meanings in which delay can be taken, but rather in their indecisive reunion...Laboring to unlock the mystery of that little word, "delay," they have linked it, among other things, to Henri Bergson's theory of duration, to the medieval practice of alchemy, and to a subconscious fear of incest on Duchamp's part. One Duchampian has suggested that it be read as an anagram for "lad[e]y," so that "delay in glass" becomes glass lady. Duchamp adored puns and perpetrated a lot of them, but his were never as heavy-footed as that. Generally overlooked in the ongoing analysis and microanalysis of Duchamp's wordplay is that it is play. He played with words, juggling a variety of senses and non-senses and taking pleasure in their "indecisive reunion." As he went on to say in that Green Box note, a delay in glass as you would say a poem in prose or a spittoon in silver.

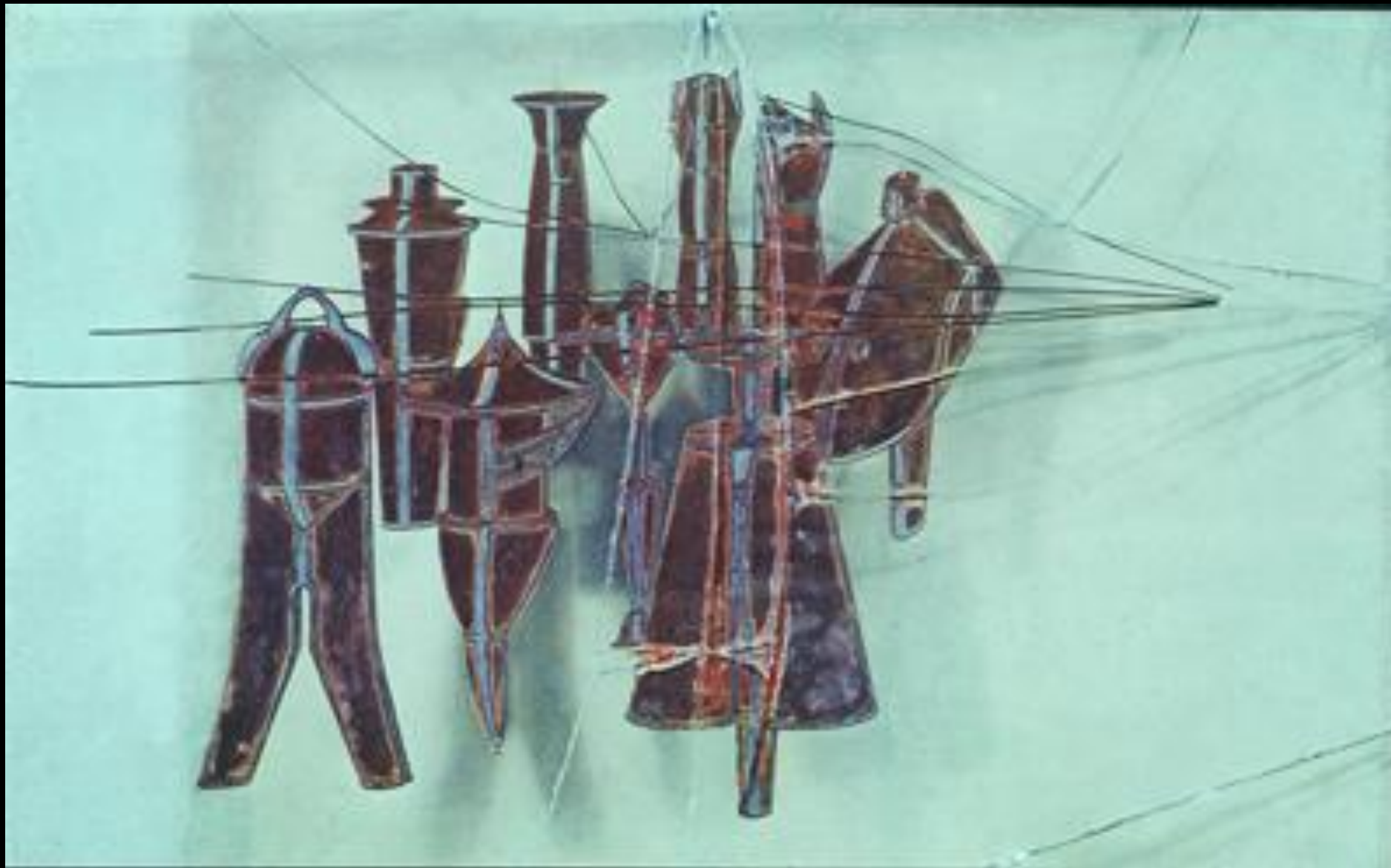
-- Calvin Tomkins, biographer of Duchamp

Duchamp, *Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors Even*, 1915-23



Duchamp, Chocolate  
Grinder No. 1, 1915





Nine Malic Moulds, detail, 1914-15



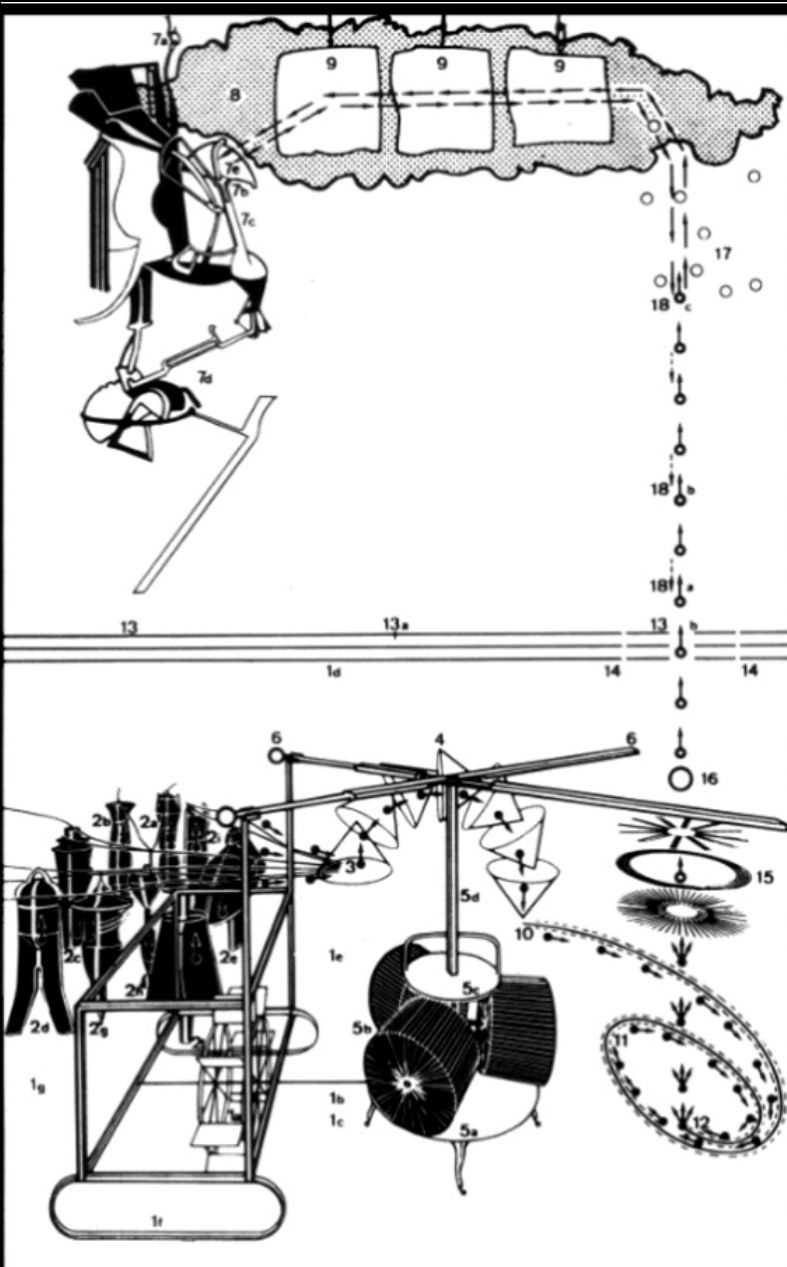
Duchamp's voluminous preparatory notes, published in 1934, reveal that his "hilarious picture" is intended to diagram the erratic progress of an encounter between the "Bride," in the upper panel, and her nine "Bachelors" gathered timidly below amidst a wealth of mysterious mechanical apparatus.



Duchamp, The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors,  
Even (The Green Box), September 1934



“The bride accepts this stripping by the bachelors, since she supplies the love gasoline to the sparks of the electrical stripping; moreover, she furthers her complete nudity by adding to the first focus of sparks (electrical stripping) the 2nd focus of the desire-magneto.”



Key to the *Large Glass*  
(including elements not executed):

- 1 Chariot or Sleigh
  - (a) Water-mill wheel
  - (b) Pinion
  - (c) Trap-door to basement
  - (d) Pulley
  - (e) Revolution of the bottle of Bénédictine
  - (f) Runners
  - (g) Sandow
- 2 Nine Malic Moulds/Cemetery of Uniforms and Liveries
  - (a) Priest
  - (b) Delivery boy
  - (c) Gendarme
  - (d) Cavalryman
  - (e) Policeman
  - (f) Undertaker
  - (g) Servant/Flunky
  - (h) Busboy/Waiter's assistant
  - (i) Station-master
- 3 Capillary Tubes
- 4 Sieves or Parasols
- 5 Chocolate Grinder
  - (a) Louis XV chassis
  - (b) Rollers
  - (c) Necktie
  - (d) Bayonet
- 6 Scissors
- 7 The *Bride/Pendu femelle*
  - (a) Suspension ring
  - (b) Mortice joint
  - (c) Stem
  - (d) Wasp
- 8 Milky Way
- 9 Draught Pistons
- 10 Region of Butterfly Pump
- 11 Toboggan or Planes/Slopes of flow
- 12 Crashes or Splashes
- 13 Horizon/Bride's garment
  - (a) Vanishing point of perspective
  - (b) Region of 'Wilson-Lincoln' effect
- 14 Boxing Match
- 15 Oculist Witnesses
- 16 Magnifying glass
- 17 Nine Shots
- 18 Handler of Gravity
  - (a) Trivet
  - (b) Rod
  - (c) Weight

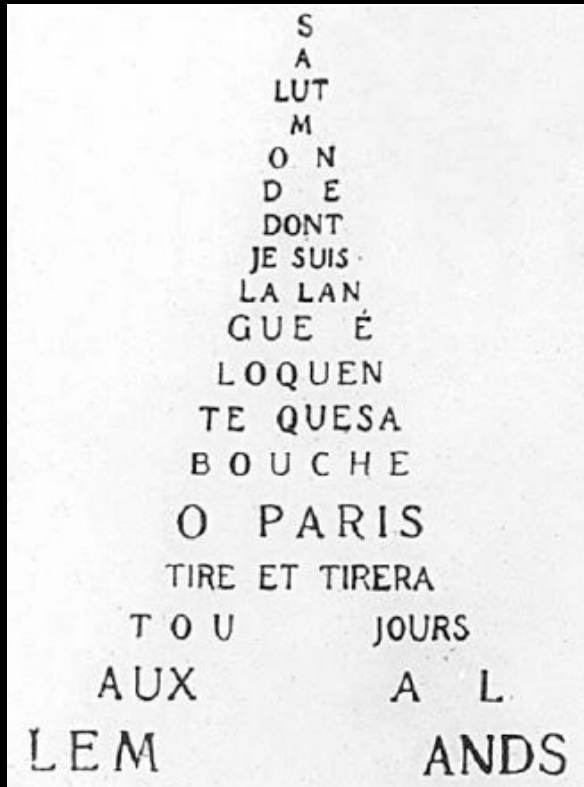
↔ path of Illuminating Gas  
→ Bride's instructions

After Jean Suquet, *Miroir de la Mariée*  
(Flammarion).



# Surrealism

## Literary Beginnings

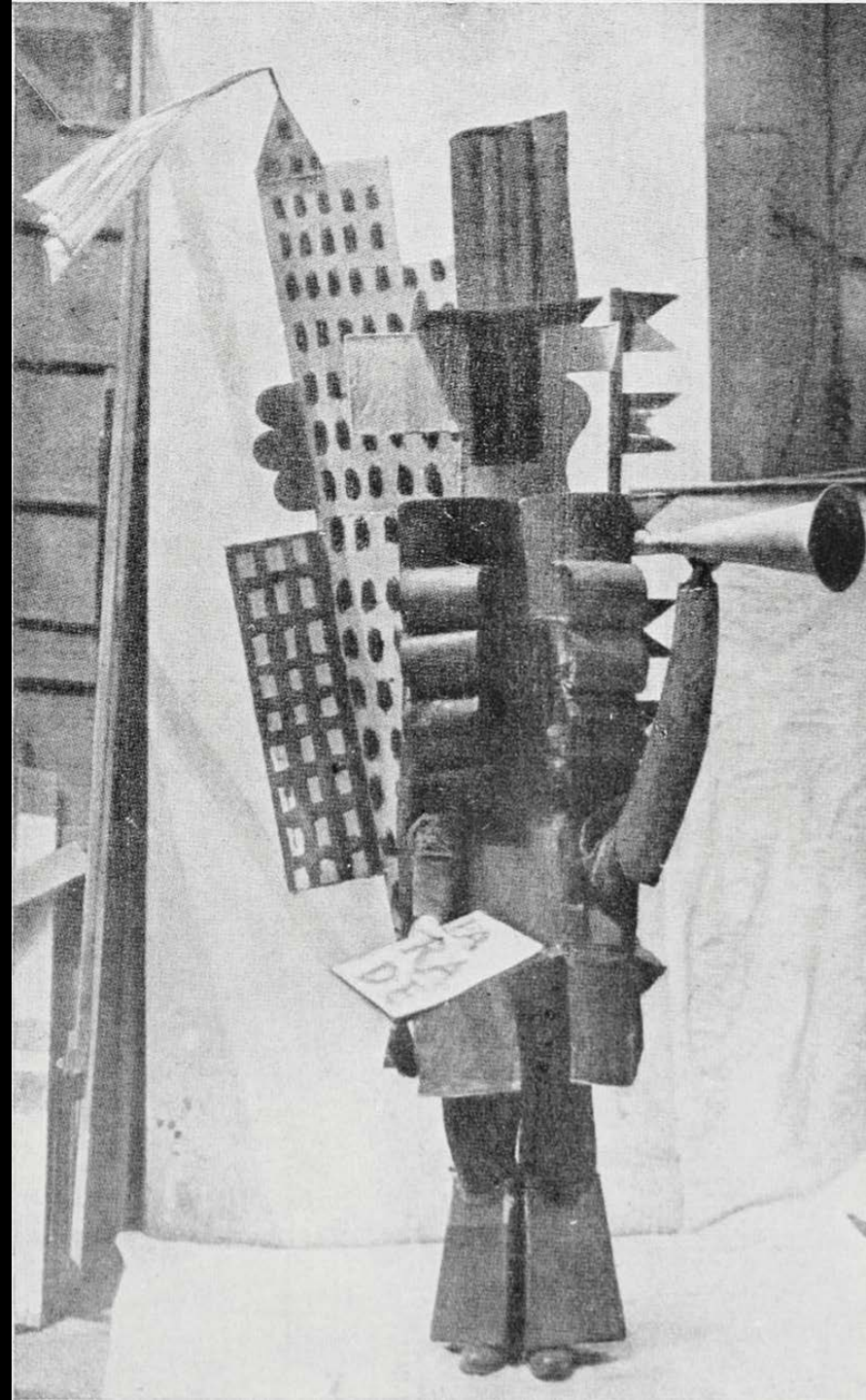
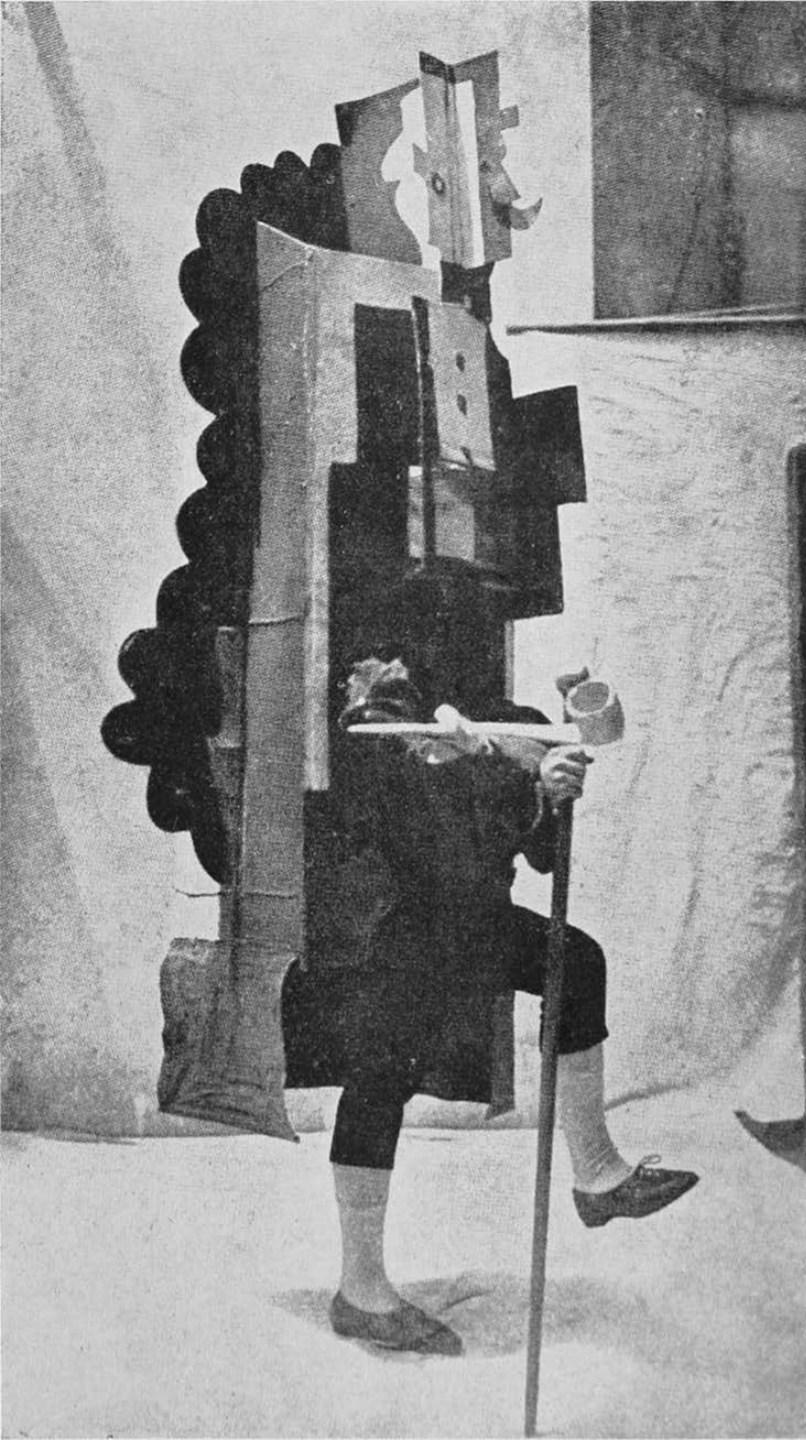


Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918)  
Calligram on Eiffel Tower, 1913-16

Apollinaire coins  
word “surrealism”  
in the program  
notes for Jean  
Cocteau and Erik  
Satie's ballet  
*Parade*, first  
performed on May  
18, 1917



André Breton (1896-1966)



Left: Two characters from "Parade" by Jean Cocteau and Erik Satie. Decor and Costumes by Pablo Picasso, Paris, May 1917. Cocteau's and Satie's "Parade" anticipated Surrealism proper only by a few years. Decor and Costumes by Pablo Picasso, Paris, May 1917

The term "surrealism" was coined by Apollinaire in the Preface to his earlier play, "The Breasts of Tiresias." "I have invented," wrote Apollinaire, "the adjective surrealist ... which defines fairly well a tendency in art" to free the arts and life from the strangulating logic of cause and effect.

Sigmund Freud and the unconscious

## First Surrealist Manifesto (1924) by ANDRÉ BRETON

We are still living under the reign of logic, but the logical processes of our time apply only to the solution of problems of secondary interest. The absolute rationalism which remains in fashion allows for the consideration of only those facts narrowly relevant to our experience. Logical conclusions, on the other hand, escape us. Needless to say, boundaries have been assigned even to experience...In the guise of civilization, under the pretext of progress, we have succeeded in dismissing from our minds anything that, rightly or wrongly, could be regarded as superstition or myth; and we have proscribed every way of seeking the truth which does not conform to convention. It would appear that it is by sheer chance that an aspect of intellectual life - and by far the most important in my opinion — about which no one was supposed to be concerned any longer has, recently, been brought back to light. Credit for this must go to Freud....

It was only fitting that Freud should appear with his critique on the dream. In fact, it is incredible that this important part of psychic activity has still attracted so little attention. (For, at least from man's birth to his death, thought presents no solution of continuity; the sum of dreaming moments - even taking into consideration pure dream alone, that of sleep - is from the point of view of time no less than the sum of moments of reality, which we shall confine to waking moments.) I have always been astounded by the extreme disproportion in the importance and seriousness assigned to events of the waking moments and to those of sleep by the ordinary observer. Man, when he ceases to sleep, is above all at the mercy of his memory, and the memory normally delights in feebly retracing the circumstance of the dream for him, depriving it of all actual consequence and obliterating the only *determinant* from the point at which he thinks he abandoned this constant hope, this anxiety, a few hours earlier. He has the illusion of continuing something worthwhile. The dream finds itself relegated to a parenthesis, like the night.



ANDRÉ BRETON

# QU'EST-CE QUE LE SURREALISME?



RENÉ HENRIQUEZ, Editeur  
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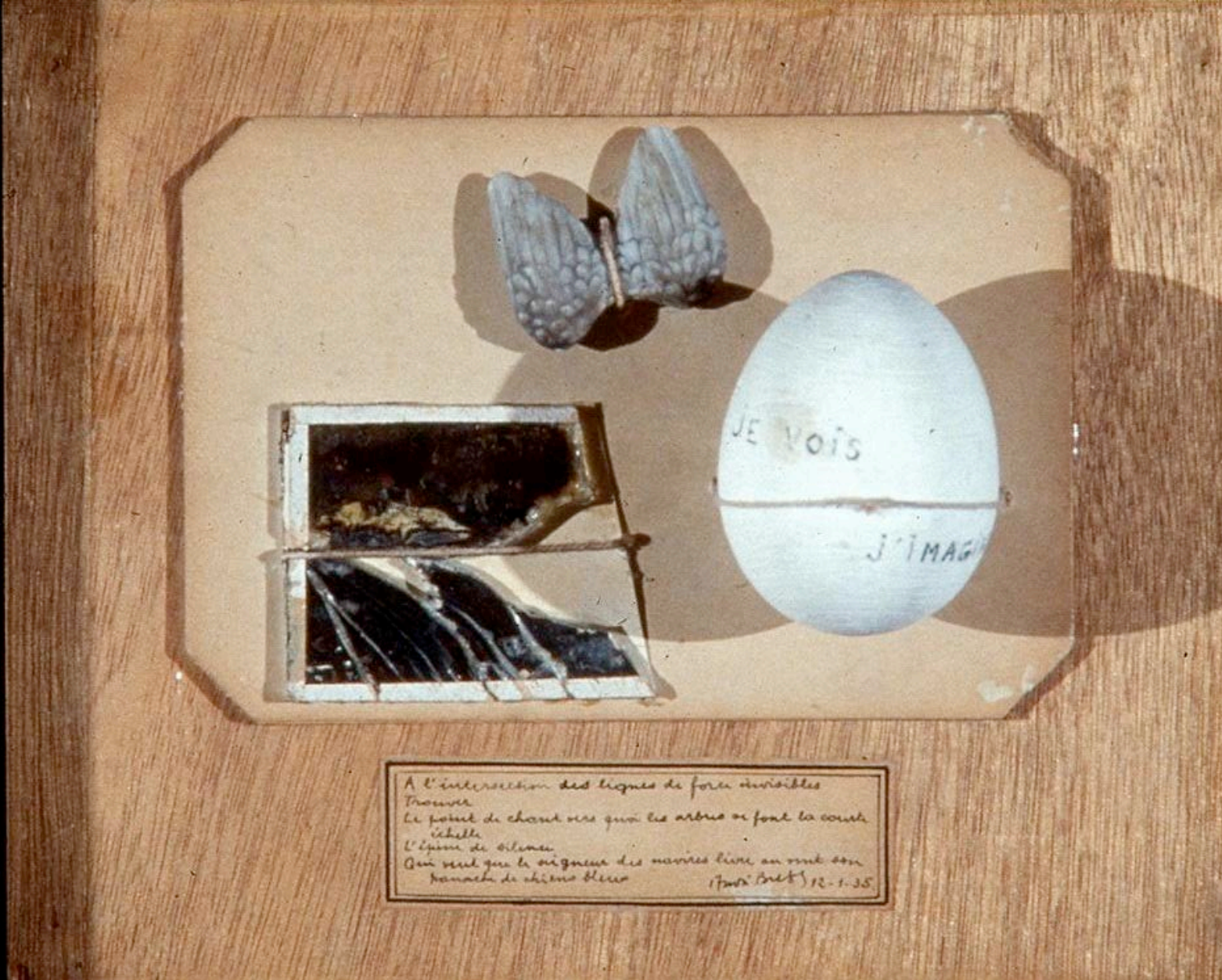
Surrealism is pure  
psychic automatism.

André Breton

Left: André Breton, Qu'est-ce que le  
Surréalisme? 1934

Right: Painting on cover and below  
Rene Magritte, The Rape, 1934-35





A l'intersection des lignes de force invisibles  
Trouver  
Le point de chant vers quoi les arbres se font la courbe  
l'écaille  
L'épine de silence  
Qui veut que le visage des marées lève au vent son  
panache de cheveux bleus  
André Breton 12-1-35

André Breton, Poem-Object (I See I Imagine), 1935

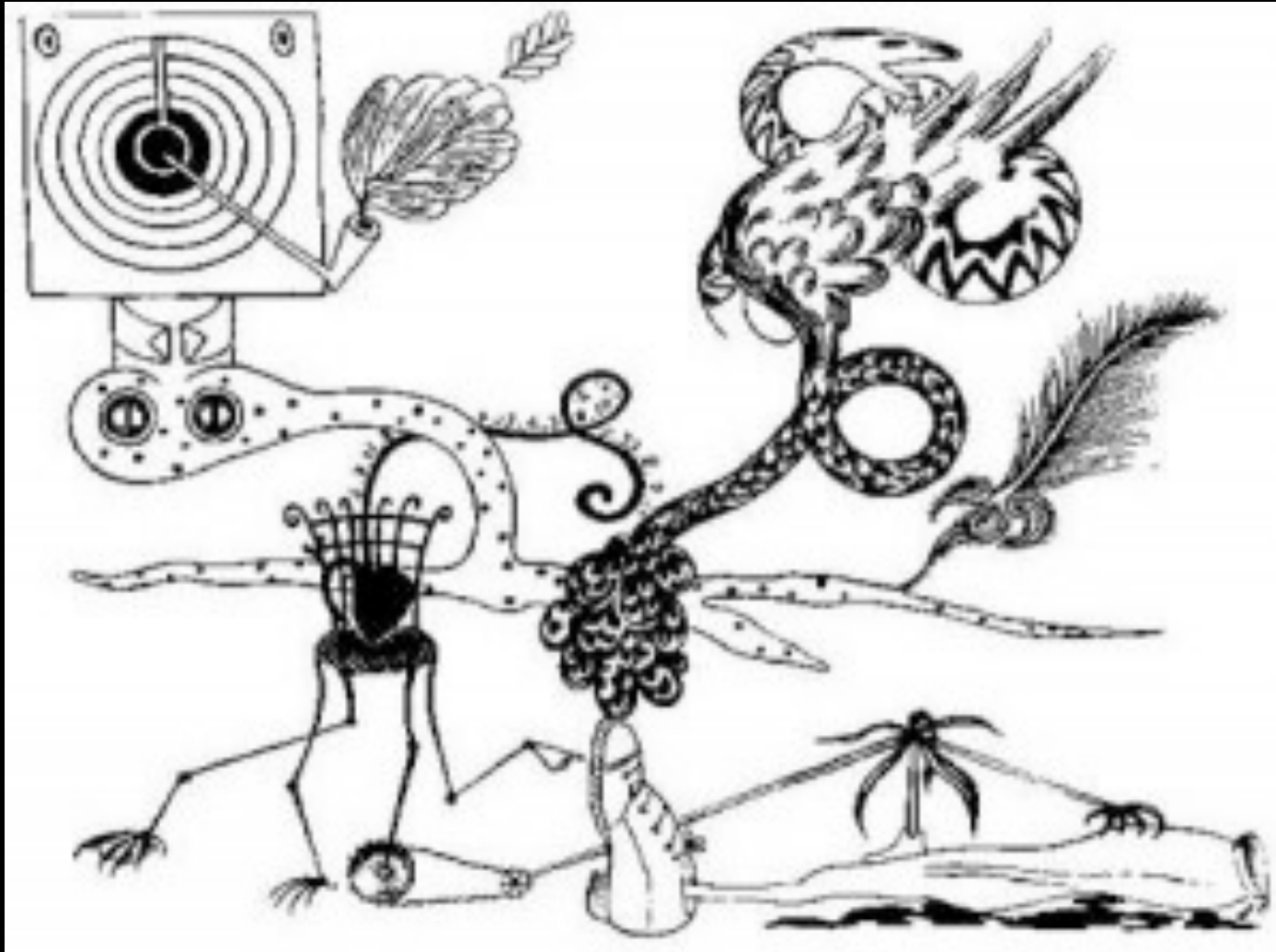
“As beautiful as the chance meeting on a dissecting-table of a sewing-machine and an umbrella!” -- Lautréamont [1846-70]

Surrealist process

Games

Exquisite Corpse

Automatic Drawing



pure  
psychic  
automatism

André Breton, Tristan Tzara, et. al., Exquisite Corpse Drawing,  
1920



pure  
psychic  
automatism

Man Ray, Yves Tanguy, Joan Miro, Max Morise,  
4-part Corpse drawing, c. 1925



André Masson, Automatic Drawing, 1924

André Masson, Automatic Drawing, 1927



Variations on a Theme:  
Dreams and the Unconscious of Reality



Joan Miro, Harlequin's Carnival, 1924





Hieronymus Bosch, Christ In Limbo, c. 1575

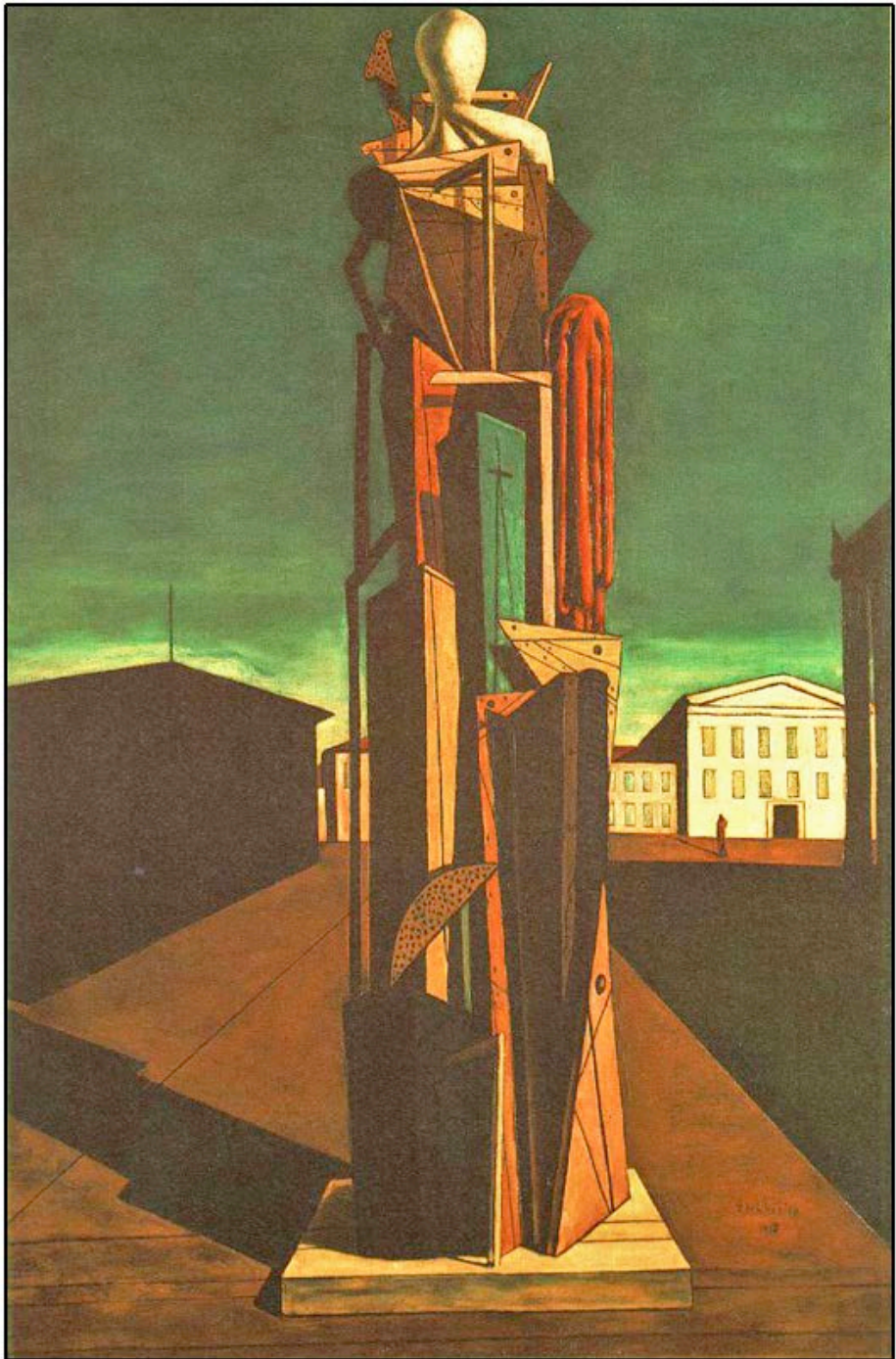


Joan Miro, Catalan Landscape (The Hunter), 1923-24

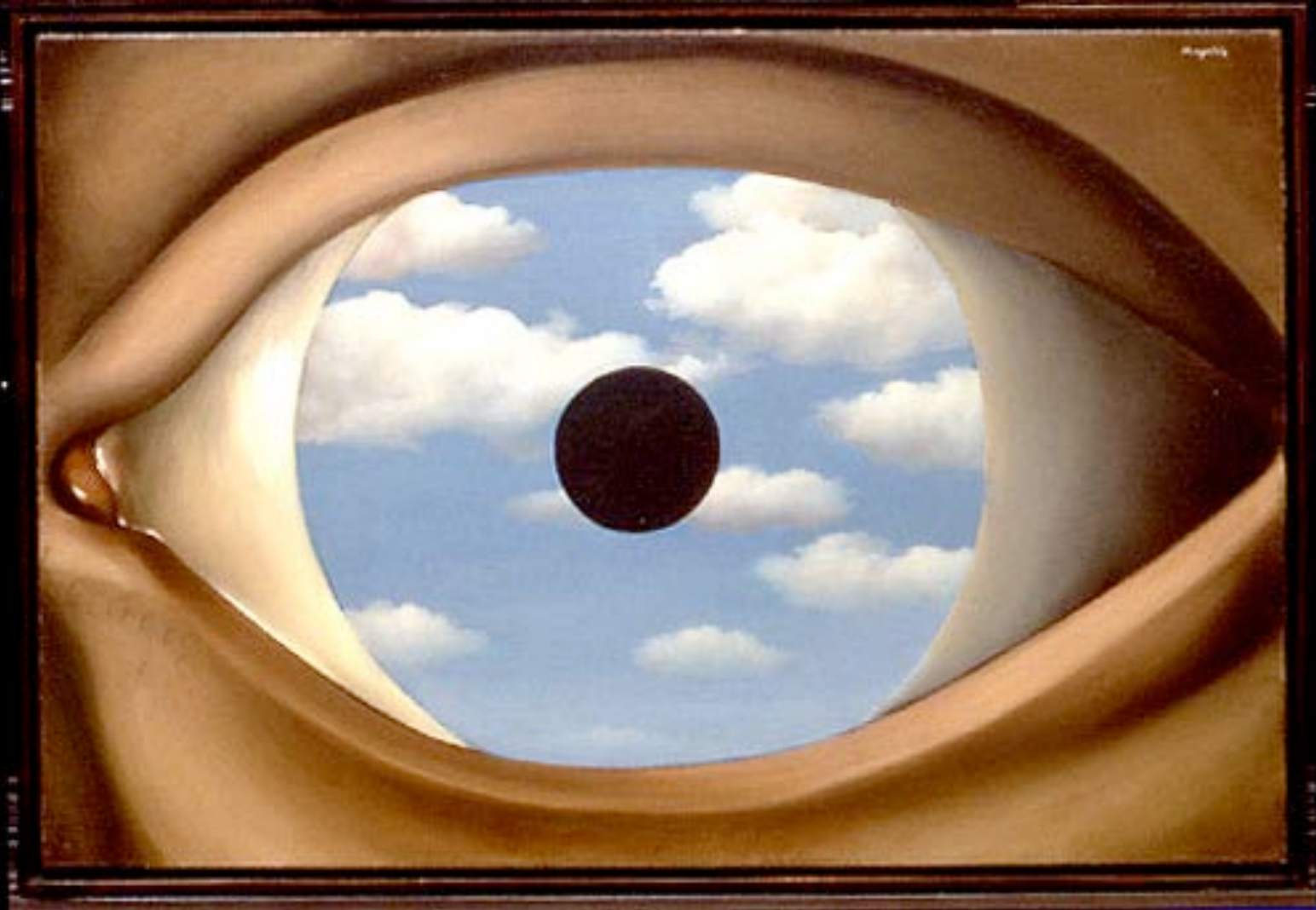


The  
Metaphysical  
School

Giorgio de Chirico, The Melancholy  
and Mystery of a Street, 1914



Giorgio de Chirico, The Great Metaphysician, 1917



René Magritte, *The False Mirror*, 1928



René Magritte, Au Seuil de la Liberté, 1929



René Magritte, La Trahison des images (Ceci n'est pas une pipe), 1929



René Magritte, Portrait, 1935



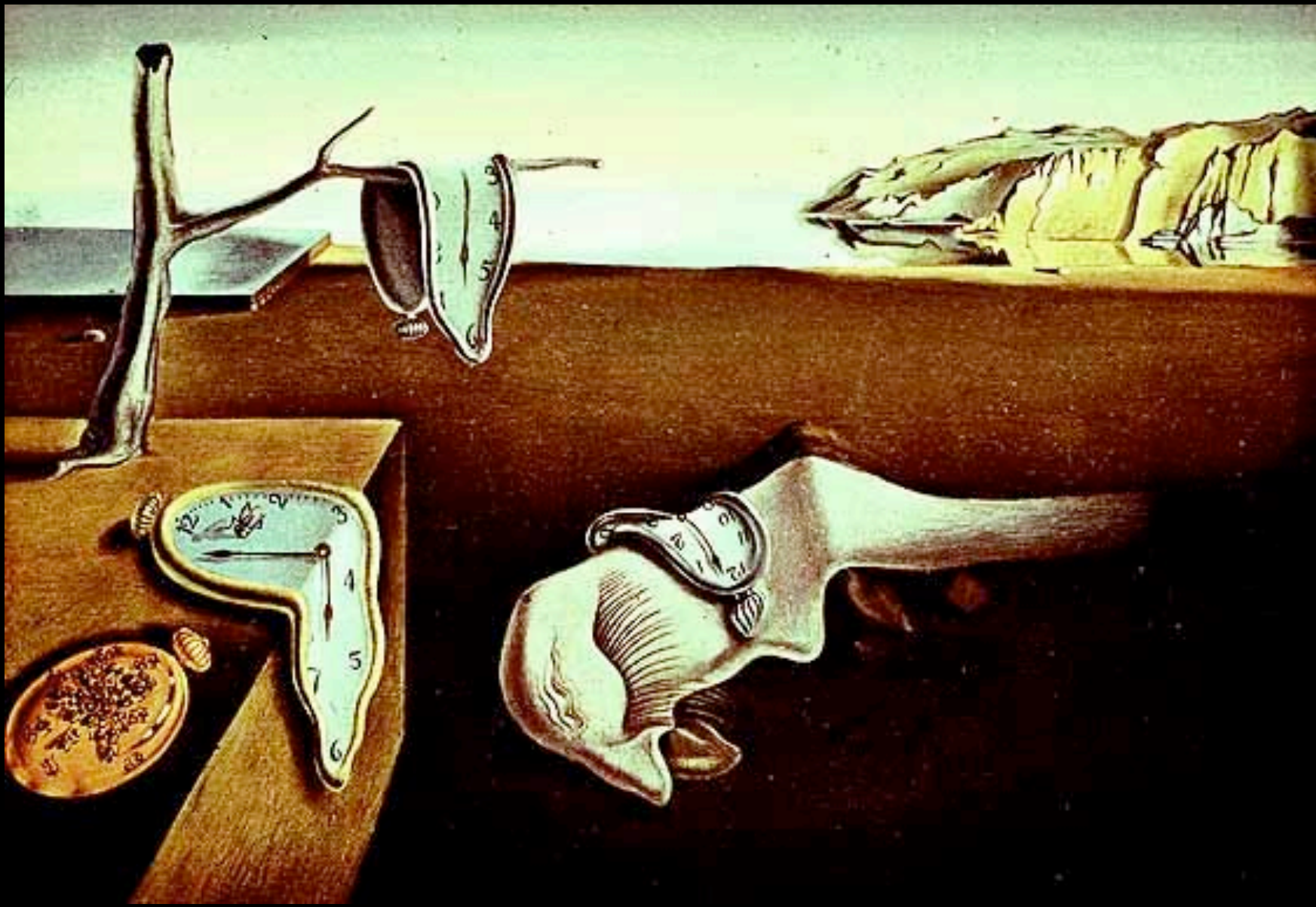


Max Ernst, *Two Children Are Threatened by a Nightingale*, 1924

Ernst said that a “feverish vision” he had experienced when he was sick with measles as a child inspired him to compose the haunting scene that unfolds in *Two Children Are Threatened by a Nightingale*. His “feverish vision” was “provoked by an imitation-mahogany panel opposite his bed, the grooves of the wood taking successively the aspect of an eye, a nose, a bird’s head, a menacing nightingale, a spinning top, and so on.” A poem he wrote shortly before making this work begins, “At nightfall, at the outskirts of the village, two children are threatened by a nightingale.”



Max Ernst, The Elephant Celebes, 1924



Salvador Dalí, Persistence of Memory, 1931 -- Dalí described these forms as “nothing more than the soft, extravagant, solitary, paranoid-critical Camembert cheese of space-time.”



Salvador Dalí, A Giraffe Aflame, 1935

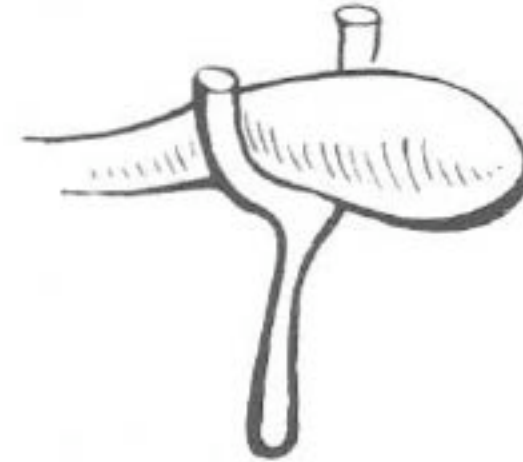


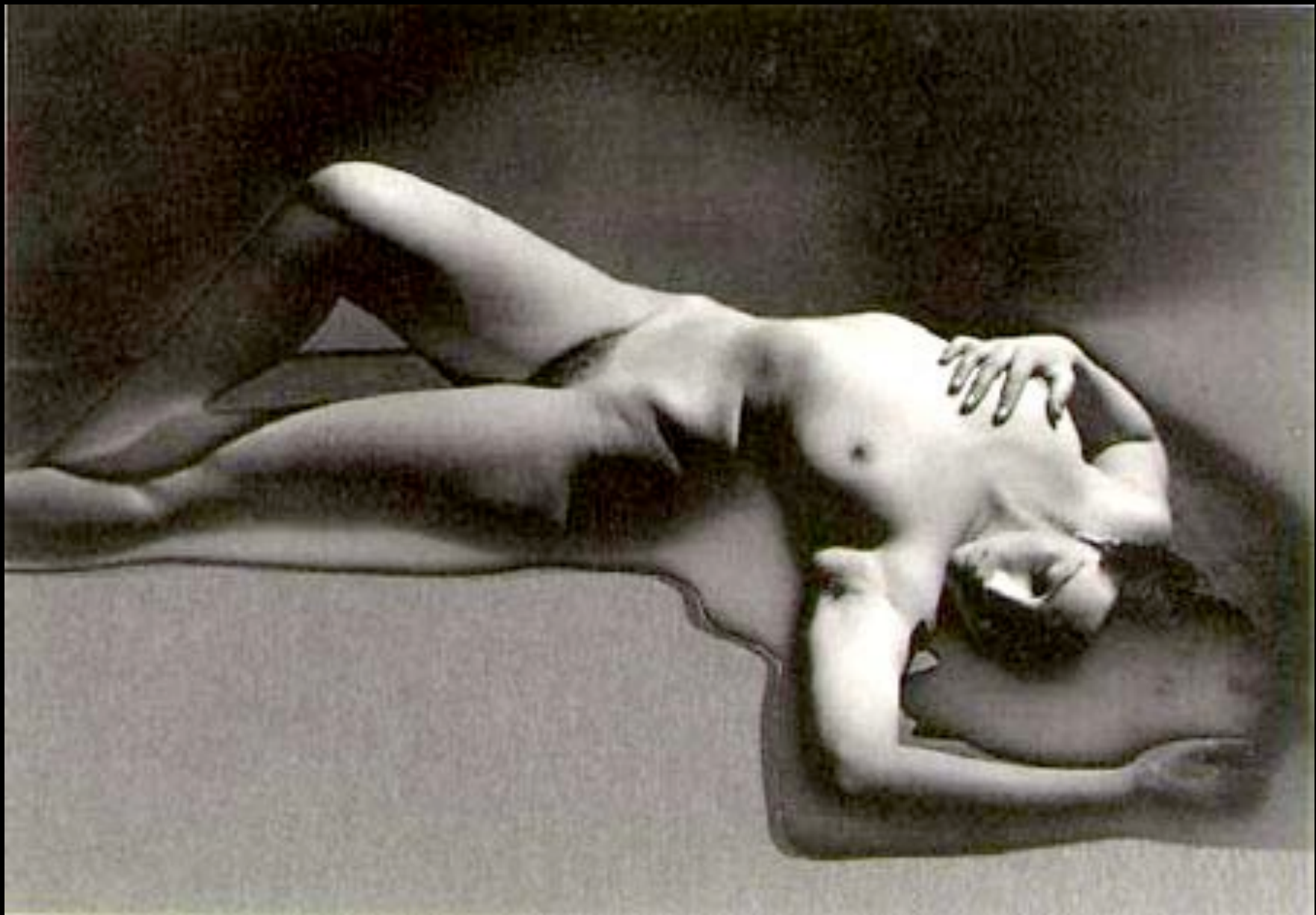
Diagram of the inner workings of the Paranoid-Critical Method: limp, unprovable conjectures generated through the deliberate simulation of paranoiac thought processes, supported (made critical) by the "crutches" of Cartesian rationality.

Paranoiac-critical activity:  
spontaneous method of  
irrational knowledge based  
on the interpretive critical  
association of delirious  
phenomena.

# The Surrealist Object



Meret Oppenheim, Object (Lunch in Fur), 1936



Man Ray, Nude, 1924



**Man Ray, Erotique voilée, 1933**

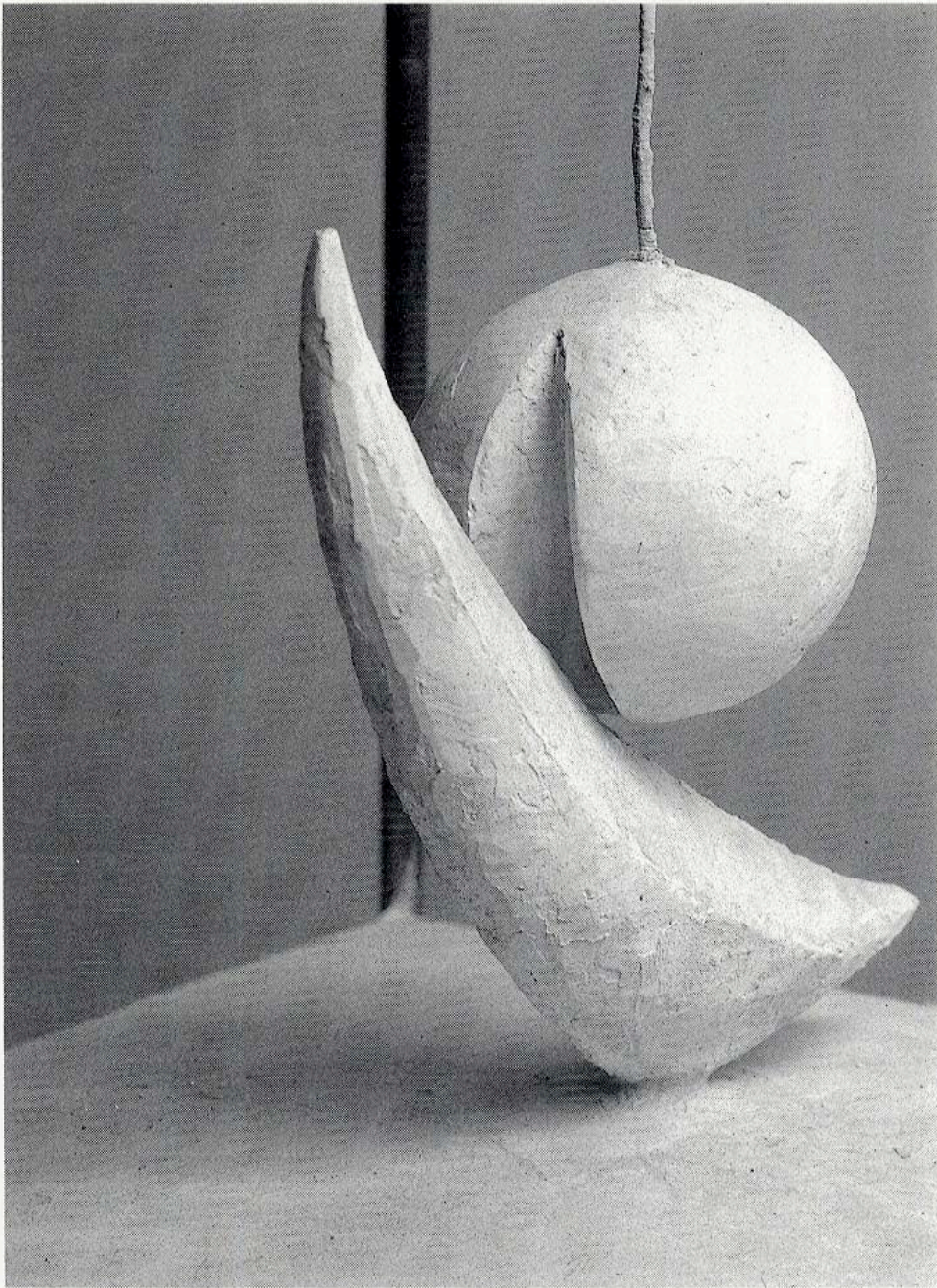


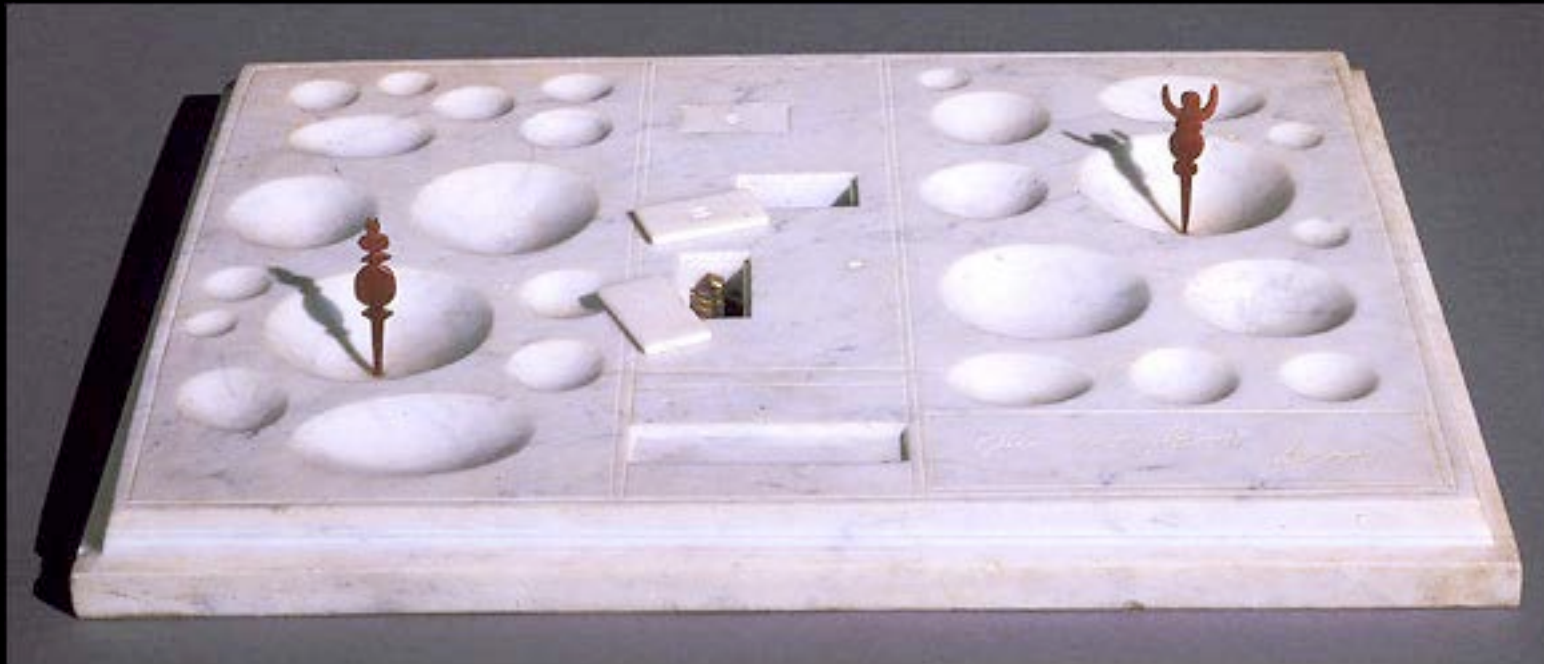


Meret Oppenheim, My Nursemaid, 1936

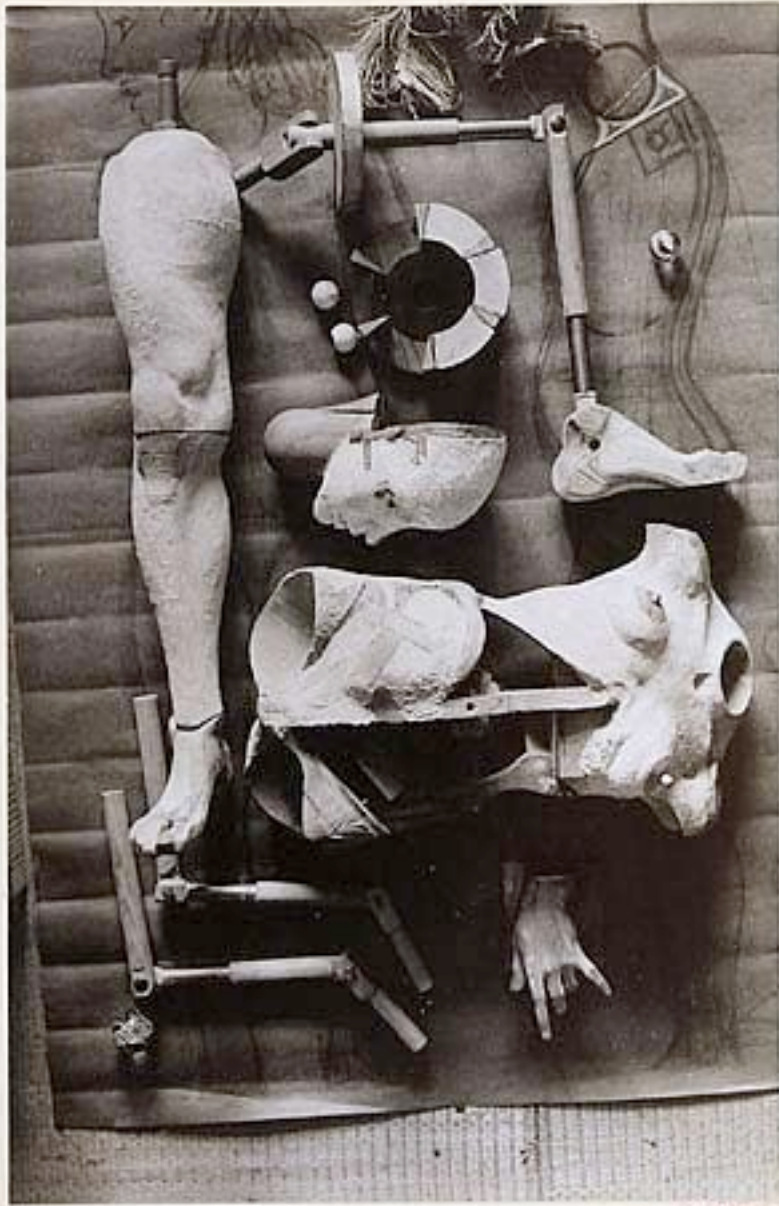


Alberto Giacometti,  
Suspended Ball, 1930-  
31





Alberto Giacometti, No More Play, 1932



Hans Bellmer, *La Poupée*, 1934

Bellmer constructed his first doll—"an artificial girl with multiple anatomical possibilities," he said—in 1933 in Berlin.

- meeting a beautiful teenage cousin in 1932 (and perhaps other unattainable beauties)
- attending a performance of Jacques Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann* (in which a man falls tragically in love with an automaton)
- receiving a box of his old toys



A year later, at his own expense, Bellmer published *Die Puppe* (*The Doll*) (reprinted in French, as *La Poupée*, in 1936), a book of ten photographs documenting the stages of the doll's construction. The pictures created a stir among the Surrealists, who recognized its subversive nature, and French poet Paul Éluard decided to publish eighteen photographs of the doll in the December 1934 issue of the Surrealist journal *Minotaure*.

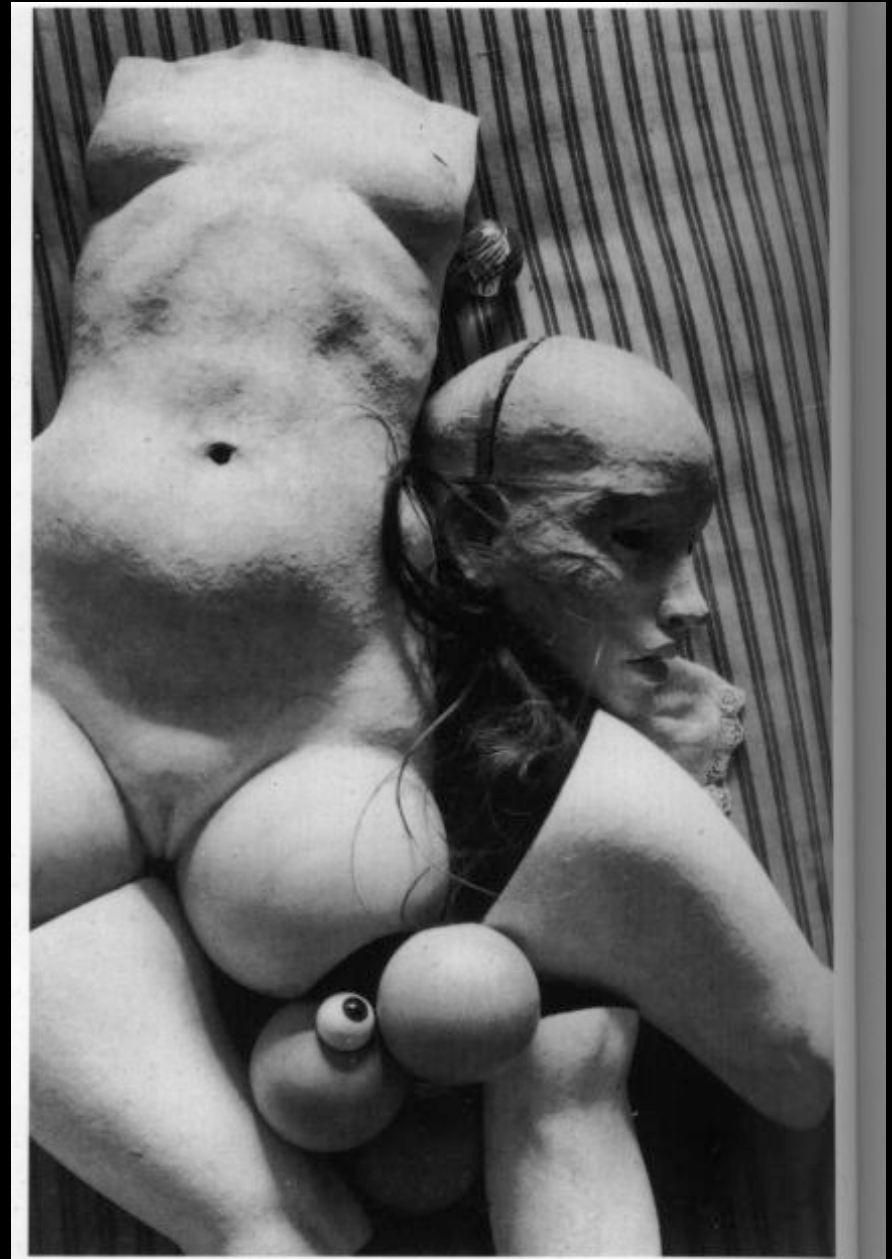


...an artificial girl  
with multiple  
anatomical  
possibilities...

Hans Bellmer, La Poupée, 1934

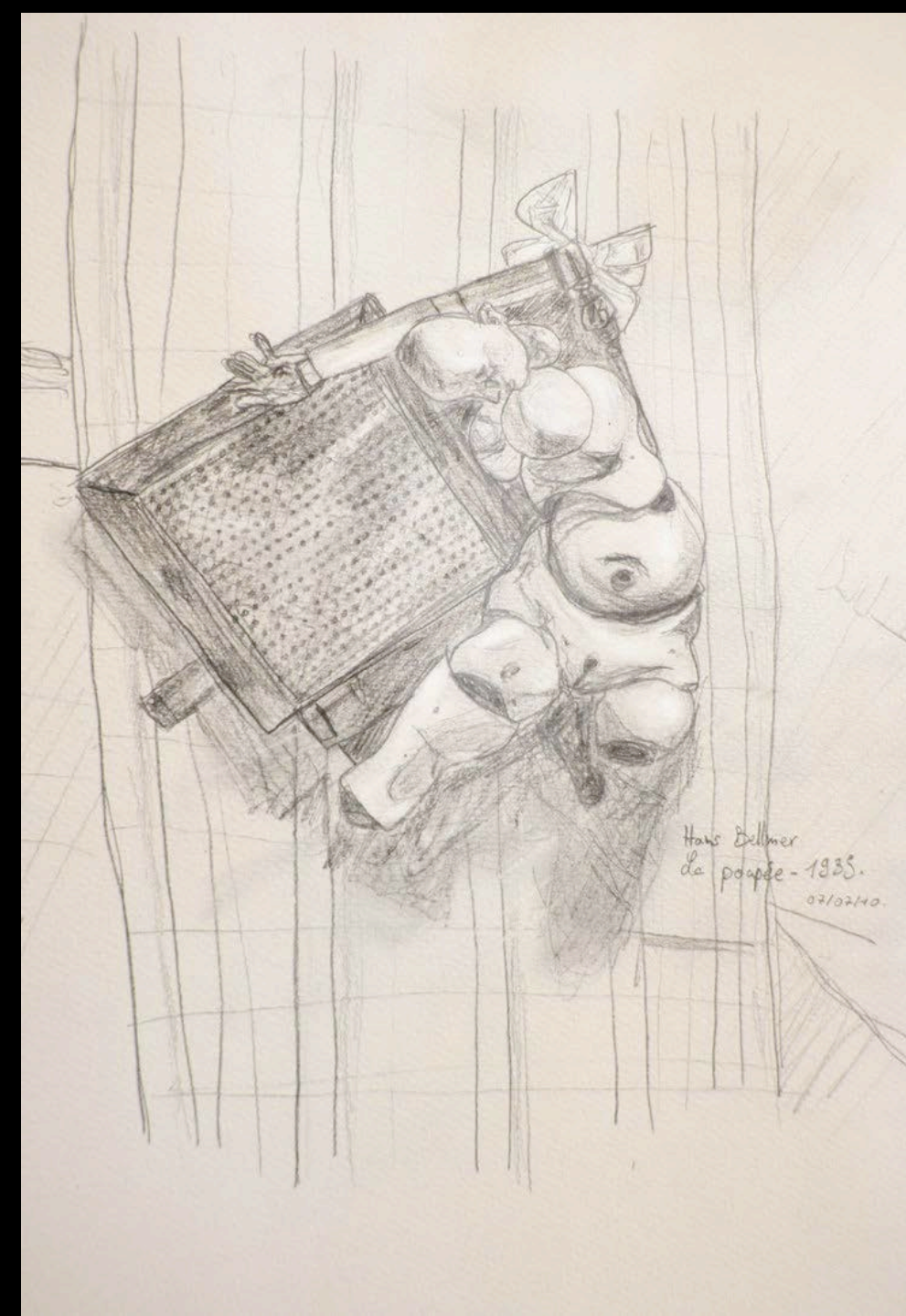


Hans Bellmer, La Poupée, 1934



Hans Bellmer, La Poupée, 1934





Left: Hans Bellmer, La Poupée, 1936

Right: Hans Bellmer, La Poupée, 1935

In 1935 Bellmer constructed a second, more flexible doll, which he photographed in various provocative scenarios involving acts of dismemberment. These transformations of the doll's body offered an alternative to the image of the ideal body and psyche popularized in German fascist propaganda of the 1930s.