

AHST 2331-001 (21414)

Understanding Art

Dr. Charissa N. Terranova

Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:30-12:45

ATC 1.102

Thursday April 12

Virtual Realities Constructed, Edited, and Made: Film and Montage



**MONTAGE**

*Still from Vertov's **Man with a Movie Camera***



**ADOLF, DER ÜBERMENSCH: Schluckt Gold und redet Blech**

**COLLAGE**

John Heartfield (Helmut Herzfeld), **Adolf, the Superman, Swallows Gold & Spouts Junk**, 1932

CUTTING

PARSING

TAKING APART

SCRUTINIZING

PUTTING TOGETHER

MONTAGE

COLLAGE

...CRITICAL THINKING



What is critical thinking?

How do we practice critical thinking?

**critical thinking, noun**

the objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgment.

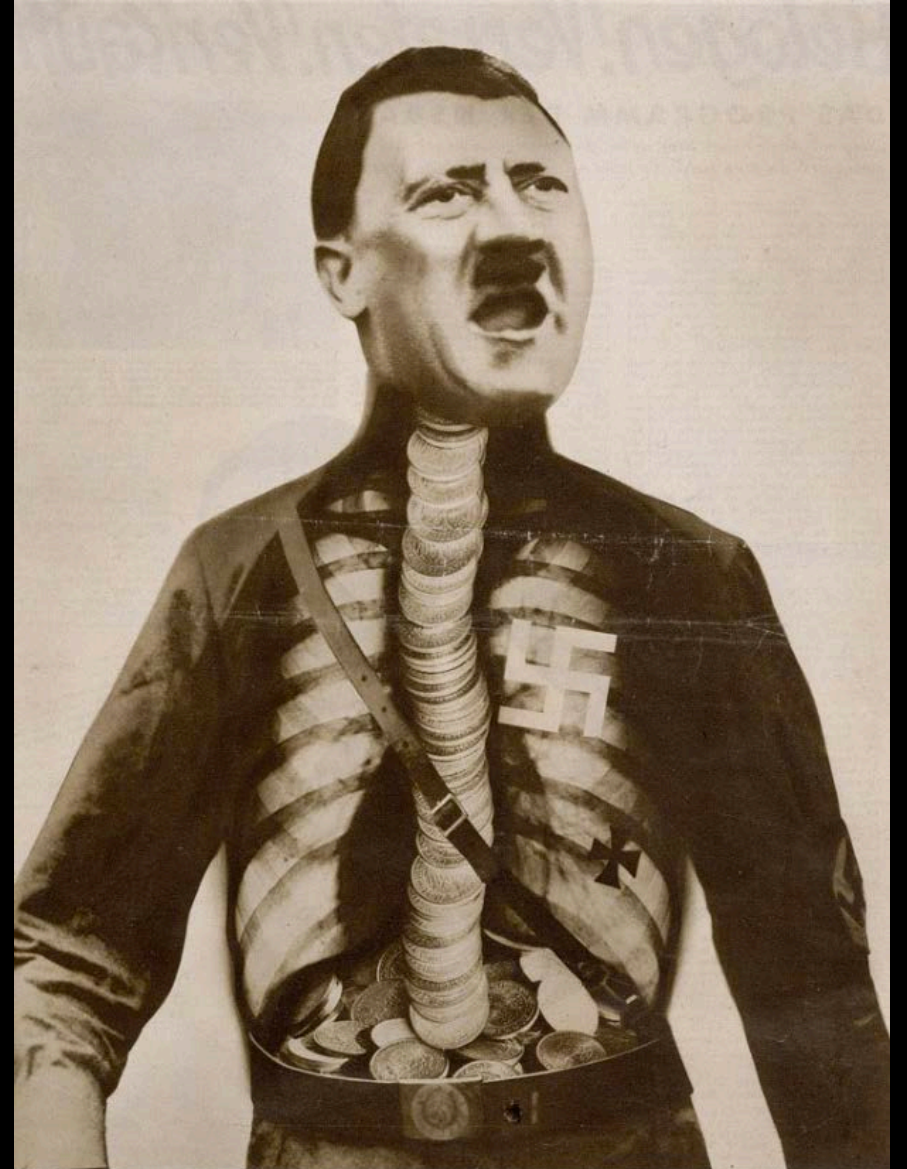
The word “critical” is based on the word “critic,” which comes from the Latin *criticus* and Greek *kritikós*, meaning skilled in judging.

- also from the Greek krínein meaning to separate, cut, and decide



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## Dziga Vertov [1896-1954]

Vertov was a Soviet filmmaker, documentarian, and film theorist.

He believed his concept of Cine-Eye, or "Kino Eye" would help contemporary man evolve from a flawed creature into a higher, more precise form. He compared man unfavorably to machines: "In the face of the machine we are ashamed of man's inability to control himself, but what are we to do if we find the unerring ways of electricity more exciting than the disorderly haste of active people [...]"

"I am an eye. I am a mechanical eye. I, a machine, I am showing you a world, the likes of which only I can see"

Dziga Vertov, Man with a Movie Camera, 1929





Dziga Vertov, Man with a Movie Camera, 1929

## Man with a Movie Camera

Directed by	Dziga Vertov
Written by	Dziga Vertov
Cinematography	Mikhail Kaufman
Edited by	Elizaveta Svilova

Dziga Vertov (né David Kaufman) and  
brother Mikhail Kaufman



Yelizaveta Ignatevna Svilova

montage, noun

1. the technique of combining in a single composition pictorial elements from various sources, as parts of different photographs or fragments of printing, either to give the illusion that the elements belonged together originally or to allow each element to retain its separate identity as a means of adding interest or meaning to the composition.

2. photomontage

3. Movies, Television. juxtaposition or partial superimposition of several shots to form a single image.

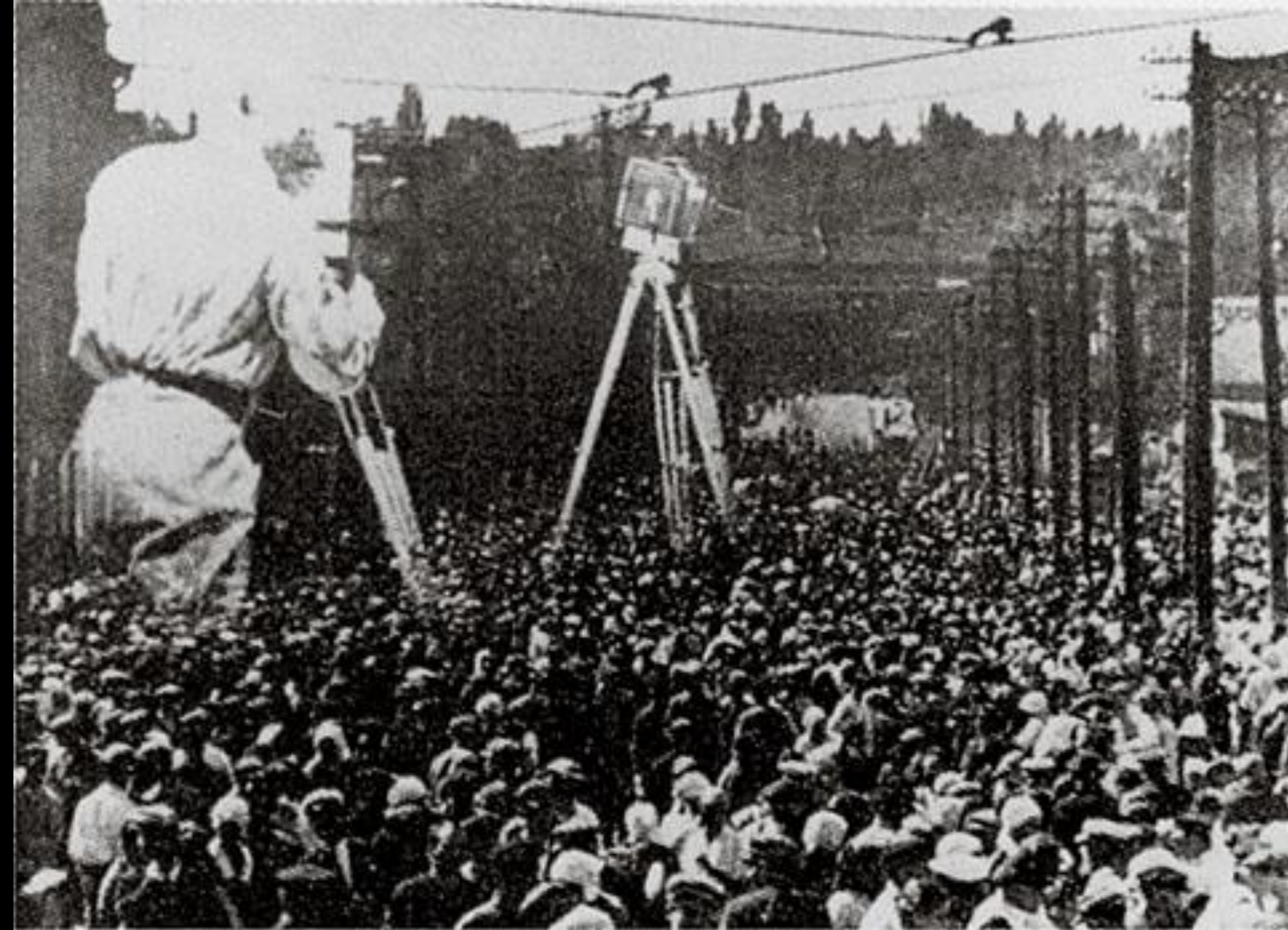
a technique of film editing in which this is used to present an idea or set of interconnected ideas.

4. any combination of disparate elements that forms or is felt to form a unified whole, single image, etc.



**Four Soviet cities —  
Kharkiv, Kiev, Moscow and Odessa — were the  
shooting locations.**

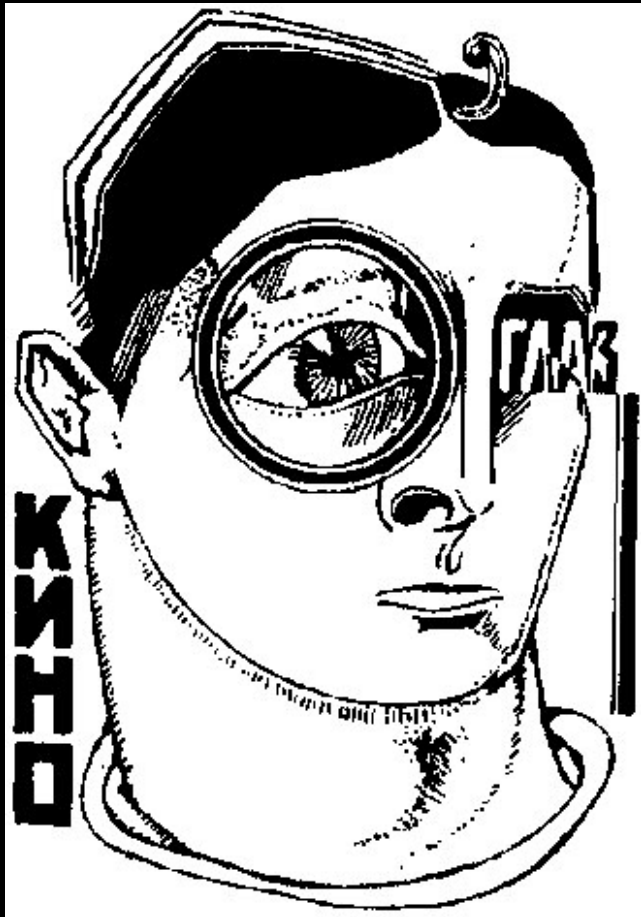




Dziga Vertov, Man with a Movie Camera, 1929

SELF-  
REFLEXIVITY

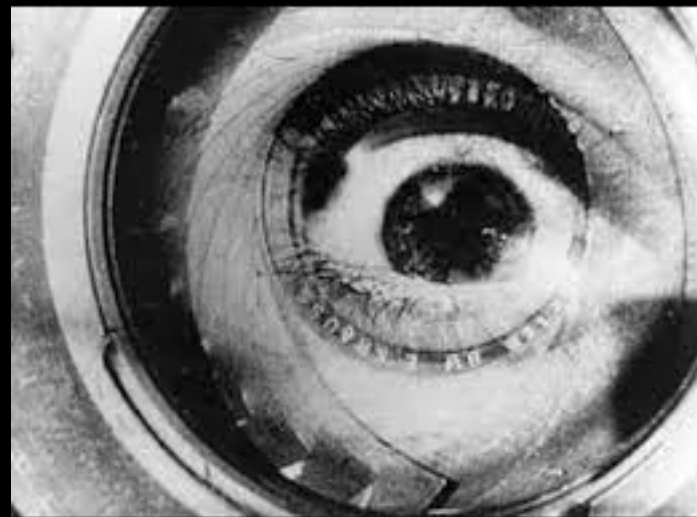
CRITICAL  
THINKING



The Kinoks: Dziga Vertov, by Pyotr Galadzhev, c. 1935

Vertov and his wife Elizaveta Svilova were "kinoks" (from "kino-oki," meaning cinema-eyes), a collective of Soviet filmmakers in 1920s Russia. The Kinoks rejected "staged" cinema with its stars, plots, props and studio shooting. They insisted that the cinema of the future be the cinema of fact: newsreels recording the real world, "life caught unawares." Vertov proclaimed the primacy of camera ("Kino-Eye") over the human eye. The camera lens was a machine that could be perfected infinitely to grasp the world in its entirety and organize visual chaos into a coherent, objective picture. At the same time Vertov emphasized that his Kino-Eye principle was a method of "communist" deciphering of the world. They declared it their mission to abolish all non-documentary styles of film-making.

*Our eyes see very little and very badly – so people dreamed up the microscope to let them see invisible phenomena; they invented the telescope... now they have perfected the cinecamera to penetrate more deeply into the visible world, to explore and record visual phenomena so that what is happening now, which will have to be taken account of in the future, is not forgotten.—Provisional Instructions to Kino-Eye Groups, Dziga Vertov, 1926*



It is clear that the theory of montage, viewed most abstractly, can be applied outside film. The fundamental principles -- assemblage of heterogeneous parts, juxtaposition of fragments, the demand for the audience to make conceptual connections, in all a radically new relation among parts of a whole -- seem transferable to drama, music, literature, painting, and sculpture. Bordwell, 10



# KINO-EYE

- double exposure
- fast motion
- slow motion
- freeze frames
- jump cuts
- split screens
- Dutch angles
- extreme close-ups
- tracking shots
- footage played backwards
- stop motion animation
- self-reflexive style

# KINO-EYE

double exposure



# KINO-EYE

Dutch angle



# KINO-EYE

tracking shot

A tracking shot is any shot where the camera moves alongside the object(s) it is recording.

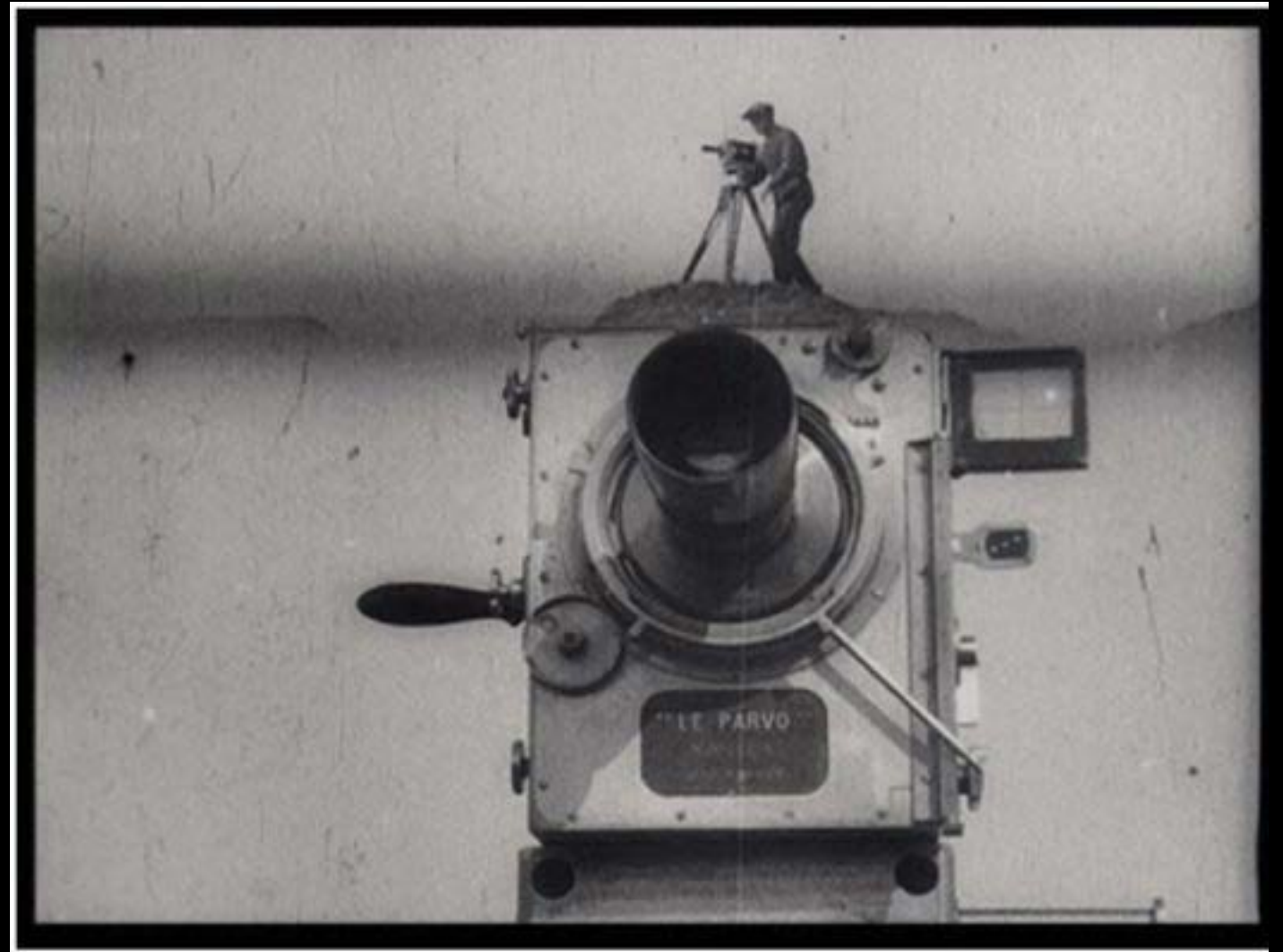


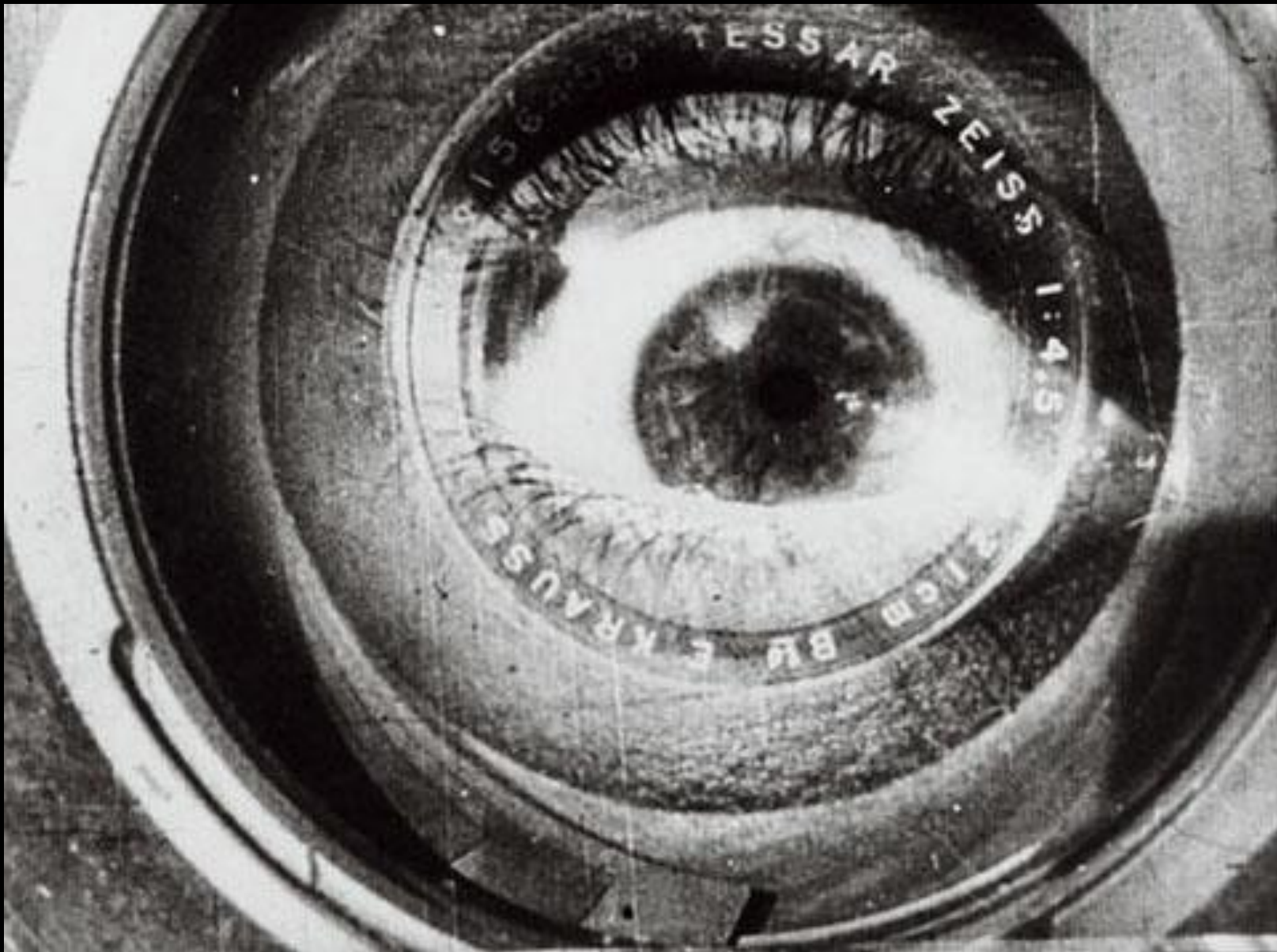
<http://www.criticalcommons.org/Members/ogaycken/clips/mwmc-tracking.mp4/view>

# KINO-EYE

freeze frame

A freeze frame is when a single frame of content shows repeatedly on the screen—"freezing" the action.





Dziga Vertov, *Man with a Movie Camera*, 1929  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPLt2qnMyA>

In the face of the machine we are ashamed of man's inability to control himself, but what are we to do if we find the unerring ways of electricity more exciting than the disorderly haste of active people [...]

I am an eye. I am a mechanical eye. I, a machine, I am showing you a world, the likes of which only I can see.

Dziga Vertov



Charlie Chaplin, Modern Times, 1936

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfGs2Y5WJ14>





## MONTAGE

Dziga Vertov [1896-1954]



Sergei Eisenstein [1898-1948]

[Filmmaker Sergei] Eisenstein claims that his theory foresaw "transmuting to screen form the abstract concept, the course and halt of concepts and ideas -- without intermediary. Without recourse to story, or invented plot." [Filmmaker Dziga] Vertov asserted that the newsreel can include ideological argument, "any political, economic, or other motif." Bordwell, 10



Sergei Eisenstein, Battleship Potemkin, 1925 – “Odessa Steps Sequence”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMWMq4AEyjU>



What were the politics of makers of filmic montage c. 1917-1933?

In October of 1917, the avant-garde was, predictably, in the ranks of the Bolsheviks. "Cubism and Futurism were the revolutionary forms in art foreshadowing the revolution in political and economic life of 1917," noted Malevich. "To accept or not to accept?" wrote Mayakovsky in his diary. "For me (as for the other Moscow Futurists) this question never arose. It is my revolution." Putting themselves at the disposal of the Soviet regime, the Futurists served on the front of the Civil War, worked on agit-trains, and directed artistic events commemorating the Revolution.

Bordwell, 12

According to Bordwell, why did the montage style die out around 1930?

...I suggest that much of the answer lies in the context of Soviet artistic activity as a whole...The montage experimenters were no longer the privileged avant-garde of Soviet art. Stalin reorganized the film industry and placed it under the control of Boris Shumyatsky, who preferred traditional narrative form to expressive montage... During the 1930's, bureaucratic pressure drove out experimental montage style.

-- Bordwell, 16





**MONTAGE**

*Still from Vertov's **Man with a Movie Camera***



**COLLAGE**

John Heartfield (Helmut Herzfeld), **Adolf, the Superman, Swallows Gold & Spouts Junk, 1932**

collage, noun

1. a technique of composing a work of art by pasting on a single surface various materials not normally associated with one another, as newspaper clippings, parts of photographs, theater tickets, and fragments of an envelope.
2. a work of art produced by this technique.
3. an assemblage or occurrence of diverse elements or fragments in unlikely or unexpected juxtaposition: The experimental play is a collage of sudden scene shifts, long monologues, musical interludes, and slapstick.
4. a film that presents a series of seemingly unrelated scenes or images or shifts from one scene or image to another suddenly and without transition.

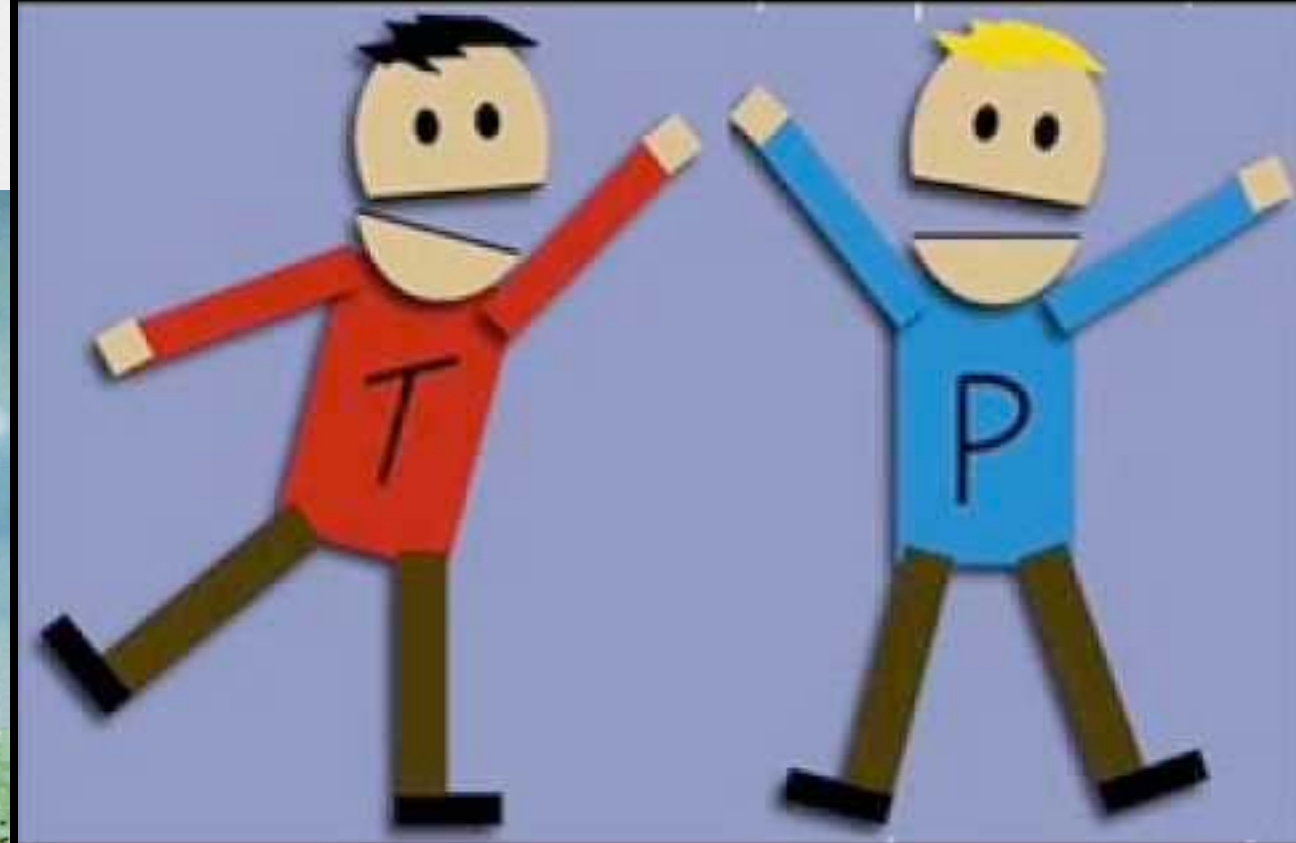
critical thinking; parsing, separating, cutting, and deciding; collage; montage

# popular uses of collage aesthetic

left above: South Park

left below: Terry Gilliam of Monty Python animation of a man eating a fish

right below: South Park



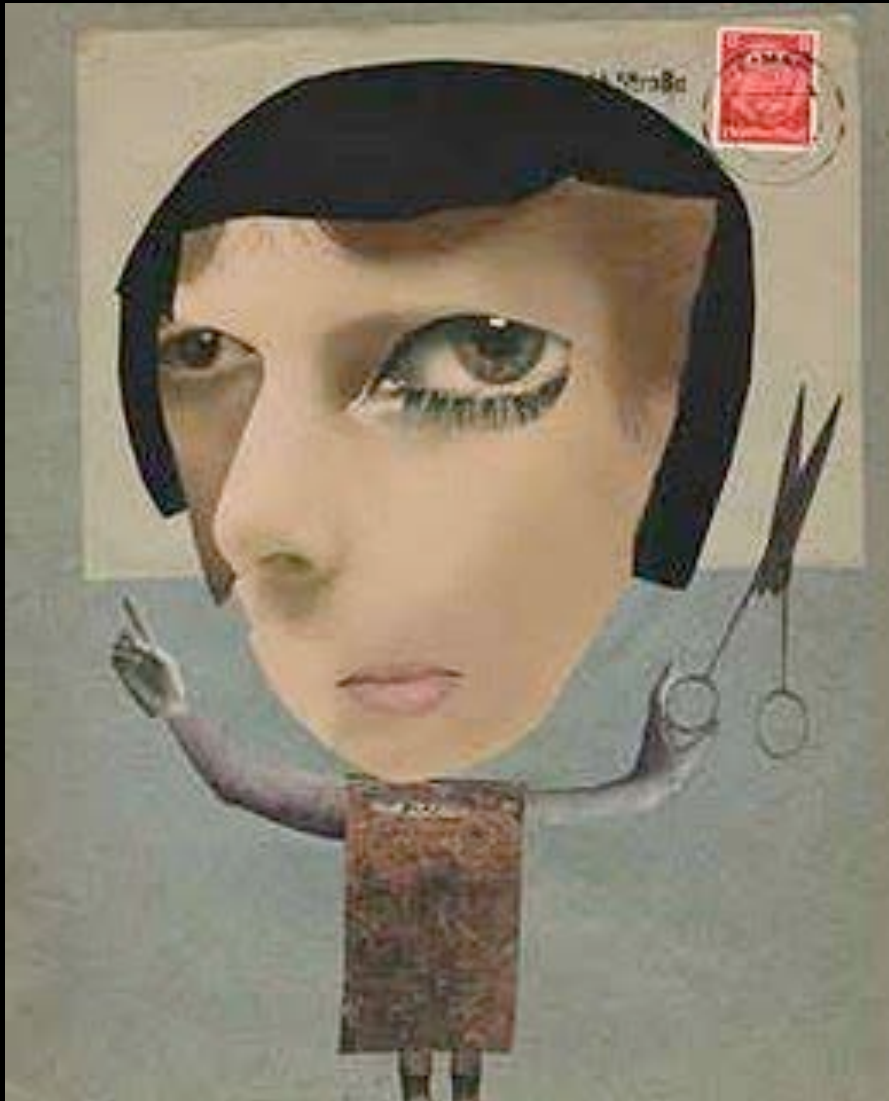
## DADA/dadaism

Participant-artists claimed various, often humorous definitions of “Dada” — “Dada is irony,” “Dada is anti-art,” “Dada will kick you in the behind” — though the word itself is a nonsense utterance. As the story goes, the name Dada was either chosen at random by stabbing a knife into a dictionary, or consciously selected for a variety of connotations in different languages—French for “hobbyhorse” or Russian for “yes, yes.”

[https://www.moma.org/learn/moma\\_learning/themes/dada](https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/dada)

Raoul Hausmann, Spirit of Our Time (Zeitgeist), 1919





Hanna Höch, Self Portrait, c. 1919  
mixed media collage



Hannah Höch, Flucht (*Flight*), 1931  
Collage, 9 1/10 × 7 1/5 in



Hannah Höch, *The Beautiful Girl*, 1919-20, photomontage, 13 3/4 x 11 7/16 in.

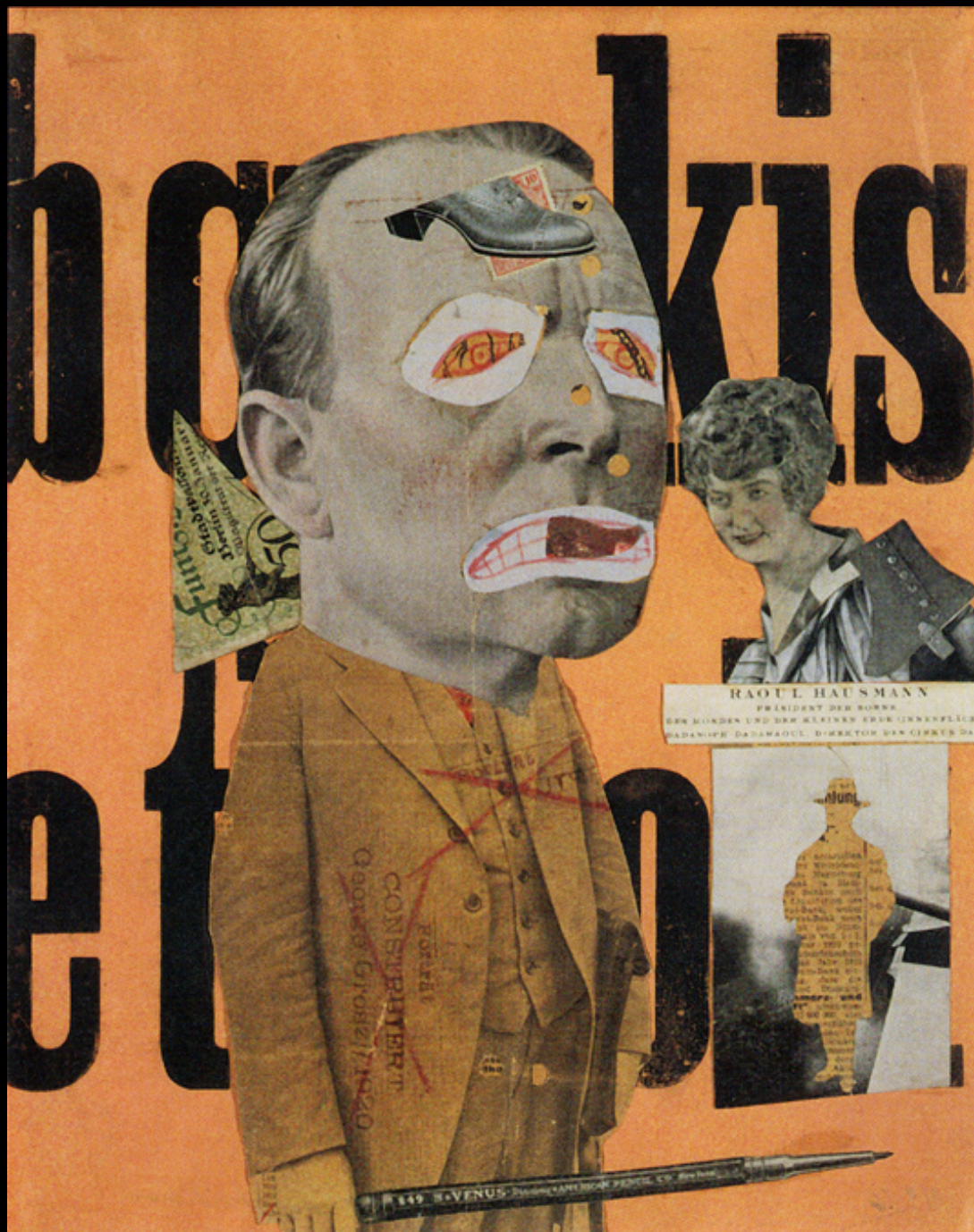


detail

Hannah Höch, Cut with the Kitchen Knife through the Beer-Belly of the Weimar Republic, 1919, collage of pasted papers, 57x 90 in.







Raoul Hausmann, Art Critic, 1919



John Heartfield (Helmut Herzfeld), Dada-america, 1919



John Heartfield, Adolf, the Superman,  
Swallows Gold & Spouts Junk, 1932



Romare Bearden [1911-1988] born in Charlotte, NC, educated in Pittsburgh, PA and New York University, lived in NYC



Romare Bearden, The Block, detail, 1971 - Cut and pasted printed, colored and metallic papers, photostats, graphite, ink marker, gouache, watercolor, and ink on Masonite



"The Block" is a tribute to Harlem, a neighborhood in New York City that nurtured both the life and work of artist Romare Bearden. Although he was born in Charlotte, North Carolina, Bearden spent part of each year in New York throughout his childhood. In 1940 he established his first studio in Harlem, at 306 West 125th Street, in the same building as the artist Jacob Lawrence and the poet-novelist Claude McKay. During the 1940s Bearden was active in the Harlem cultural community as part of the informal artists' organization known as the 306 Group and as a member of the Harlem Artists Guild.

<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1978.61.1-6/>





ROMARE BEARDEN:  
THE PREVALENCE OF RITUAL

**Romare Bearden: The  
Prevalence of Ritual**  
March 25–July 9, 1971  
The Museum of  
Modern Art



Left: Romare Bearden, Prevalence of Ritual: Tidings, 1964  
Above: Romare Bearden, Prevalence of Ritual: Conjur Woman, 1964



The conjure woman (which Bearden consistently spelled "conjur"), a spirit figure in southern African-American culture, moved north as part of the Great Migration and reappears frequently in Bearden's work. She is called upon to prepare love potions, cure illnesses, and assist with personal problems. <https://www.nga.gov/feature/bearden/170-020.htm>



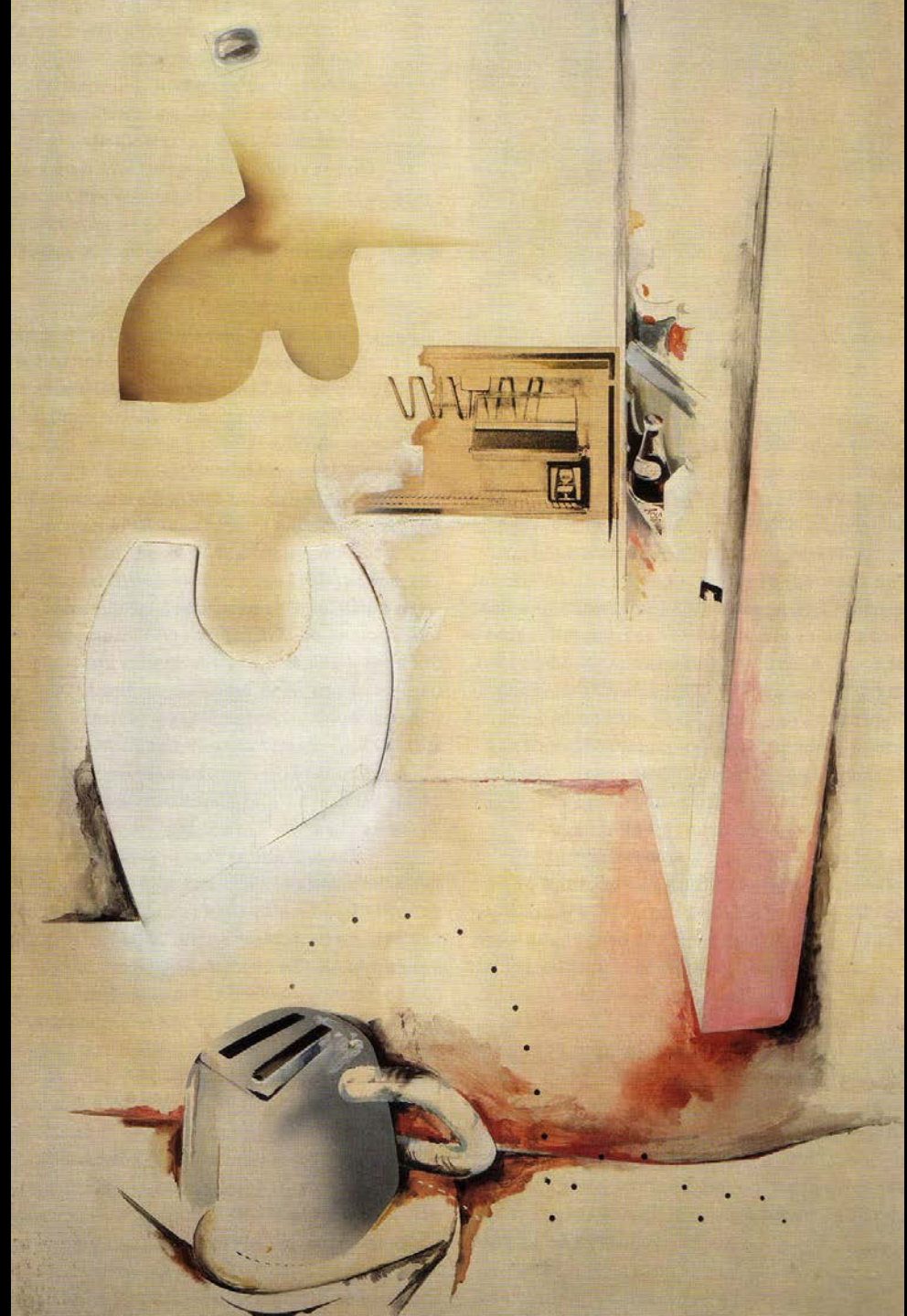
Richard Hamilton

“What Is It That Makes Today’s Homes  
So Different? So Appealing?”

1956



Richard Hamilton, *She*, 1958-61  
oil and collage on panel





1



2



3



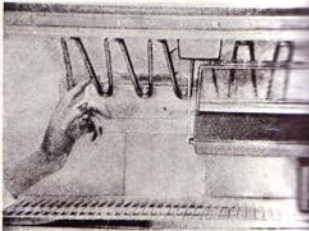
6

Now  
**FRIGIDAIRE**  
 brings you  
**FREEZING WITHOUT FROSTING**  
 in the 1959  
**FROST-PROOF**  
 Refrigerator-Freezers!

4



7



8

**MAKES EVERY**  
**DIRTY JOB BRISK**

5

**PICKS UP MORE DIRT... FASTER!**

**NEW**  
**WESTINGHOUSE**  
**SPEED CLEANER!**

**New Westinghouse Speed Cleaner!**

9



10





Richard Hamilton with photographer Robert Freeman, *Self-Portrait*, cover of *Living Arts*, 2 (1963)



Richard Hamilton,  
Swinging London,  
1967

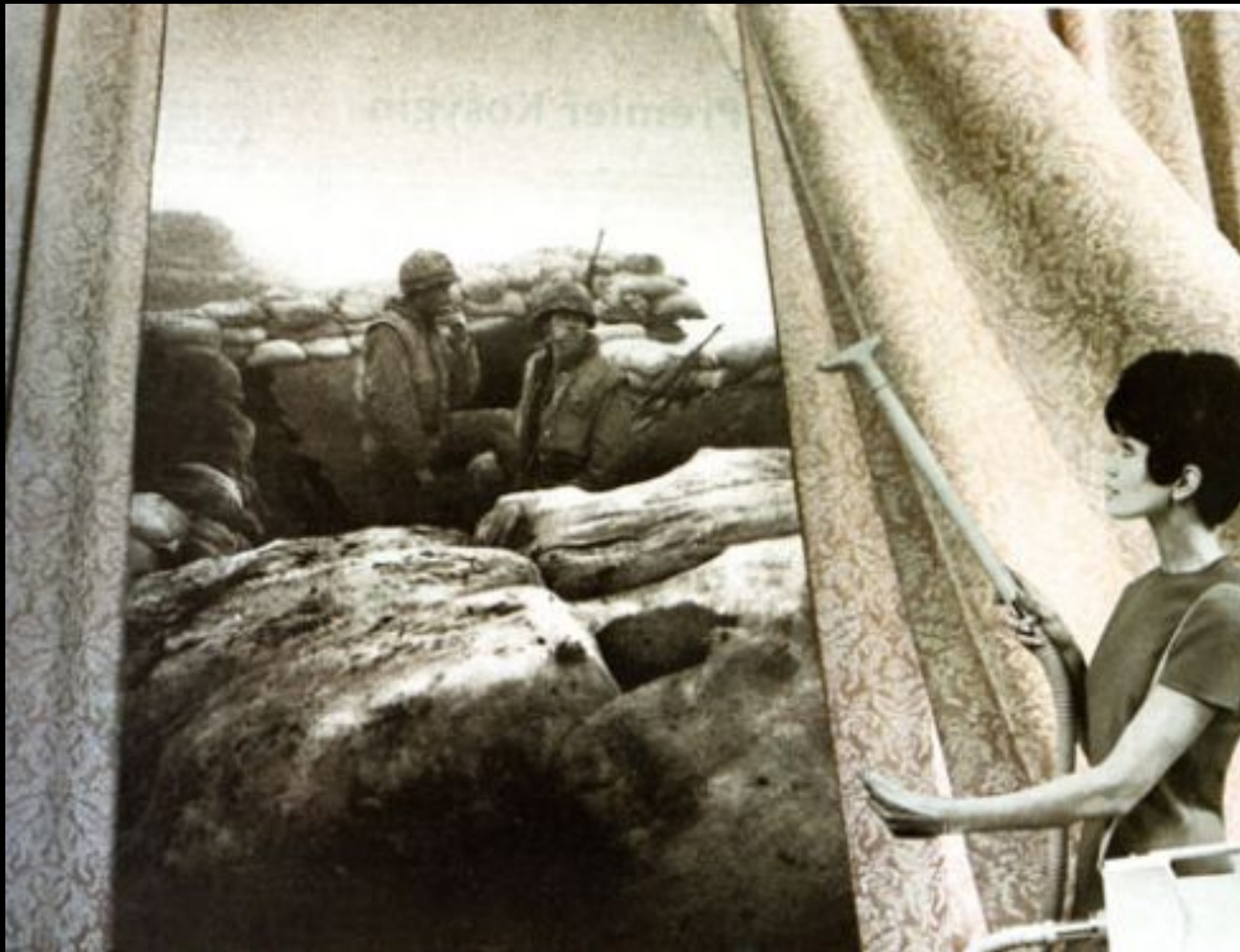


Richard Hamilton,  
Swinging London,  
1967

Richard Hamilton, Swinging  
London 67 (1968)



Martha Rosler, Red Stripe  
Kitchen, Bringing the War  
Home: House Beautiful,  
1967-72



Martha Rosler, House  
Beautiful: Cleaning the  
Drapes, 1967-72



Martha Rosler, Bringing the  
War Home: House Beautiful,  
2004



# Collage and animation

left above: Monty Python cast, 1969, British comedy group

left below: Terry Gilliam of Monty Python animation of a man eating a fish

right below: Monty Python Clip, Killer Cars, 1970-71

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dB-1d9fM3OU>

Gilliam preferred cut-out animation, which involved pushing bits of paper in front of a camera instead of photographing pre-drawn cels. The process allows for more spontaneity than traditional animation along with being comparatively cheaper and easier to do.



Stan Vanderbeek - (1959) - Science Friction

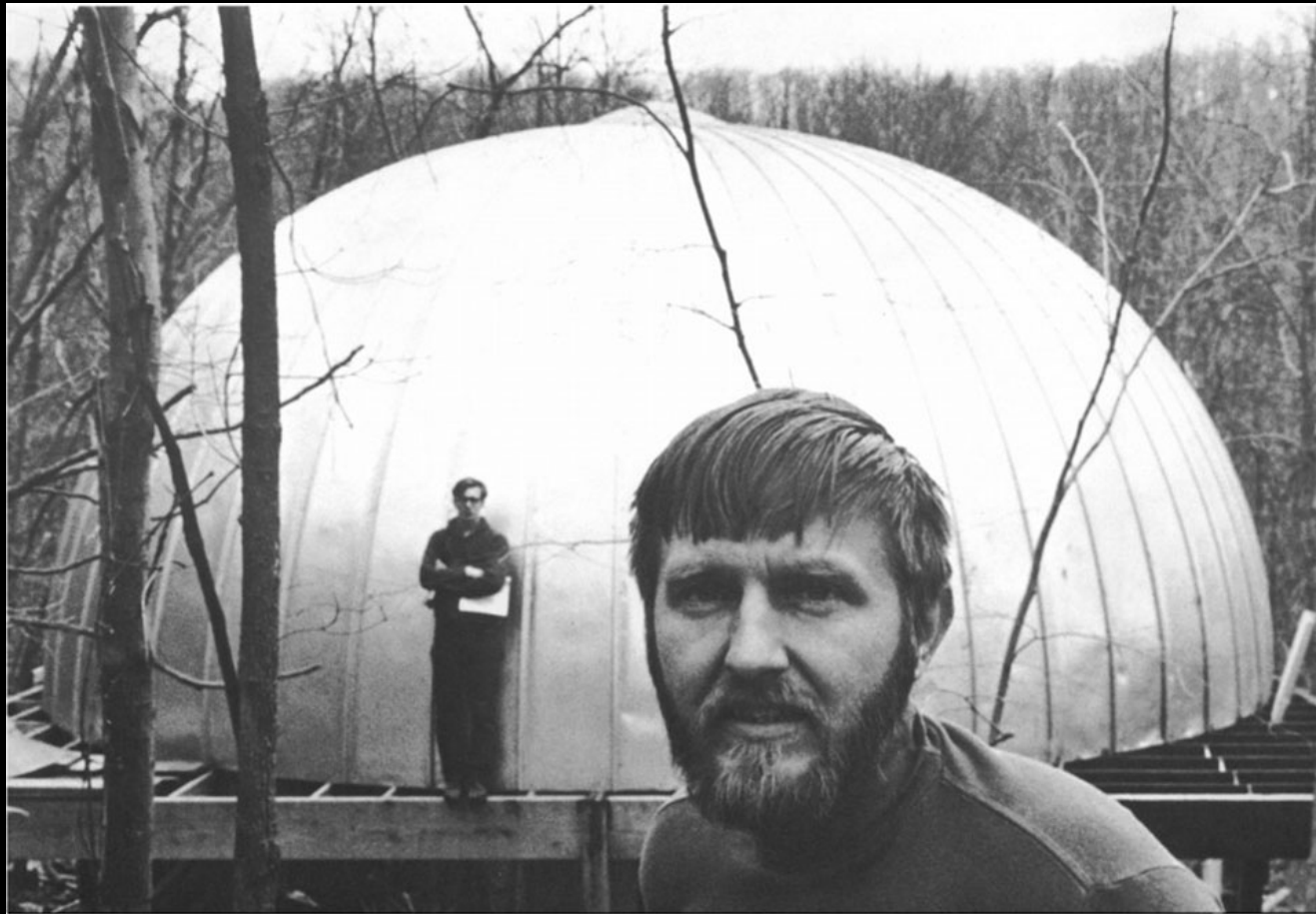
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRcppZ5Sg7I>



Stan Vanderbeek - (1960) -  
Achooo Mr. Kerroschev

[https://www.youtube.com/  
watch?v=C-1rQ\\_76seI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-1rQ_76seI)

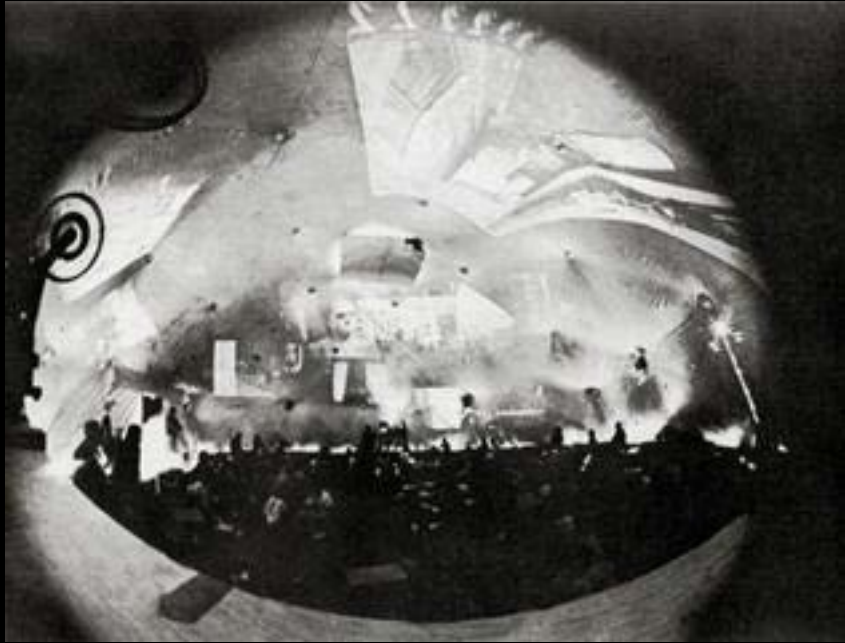




Stan VanDerBeek, Movie-Drome,  
1957-1969

Influenced by Buckminster Fuller's spheres, VanDerBeek had the idea for a spherical theater where people would lie down and experience movies all around them. Floating multi-images would replace straight one-dimensional film projection. From 1957 on, VanDerBeek produced film sequences for the Movie-Drome, which he started building in 1963. His intention went far beyond the building itself and moved into the surrounding biosphere, the cosmos, the brain and even extraterrestrial intelligence.

<http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/works/movie-drome/>



The Movie Drome was a grain silo dome transformed by VanDerBeek into an 'infinite projection screen'. Viewers entered the dome through a trap-door in the floor; then, after entering, they were invited to spread out over the floor and lie with their feet pointing towards center of the space. Then the audience experienced a dynamic and distributed set of movies and images around them, created by over a dozen slide and film projectors filling the concave surface with a thick collage of moving imagery. These experiences consisted of many random image sequences and continuities, with the result that none of the performances were alike. In this way, the analogue imagery mimics algorithmic image loops.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Vp1xJdWrOk>

Stan Vanderbeek - (1959) - Science Friction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRcppZ5Sg7I>



SCIENCE



Achooo  
Mr Kerroschev



Stan Vanderbeek - (1960) -  
Achooo Mr. Kerroschev\*

[https://www.youtube.com/  
watch?v=C-1rQ\\_76seI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-1rQ_76seI)

\*Nikita Khrushchev was  
a Soviet statesman who led  
the Soviet Union during part of  
the Cold War from 1953 to 1964.

