

# DADA

World Upside Down: Zurich and Berlin /  
The Readymade and a Machine Aesthetic: Paris and New York

# ZURICH AND BERLIN





Early 1900s: Europe resembled a tightly packed powder keg waiting for a spark.

June 28, 1914: The assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria and his wife in Sarajevo by a 19-year-old Serbian nationalist provided this spark.

July 28, 1914: Austria declared war on Serbia, an ally of the Triple Entente nations

Russia then prepared to mobilize so that they could help defend Serbia from Austria, since its interests required that it support Serbia.

Germany threatened mobilization if Russia did not halt its preparations. When Russia did not halt its preparations, Germany declared war, first on France, then on Russia.

To support her allies, and because of Germany's invasion of Belgium, Great Britain declared war on August 4, 1914.

The Allies: based on the Triple Entente of the United Kingdom, France and Russia vs.

The Central Powers: originally centred around the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy (but Italy did not enter into the war at first and ended up fighting for the Allies)

These alliances expanded as more nations entered the war.

DADA FOUNDED IN THE CONTEXT OF World War I  
(July 28, 1914-November 11, 1918)

— also known as the Great War and "the war to end all wars" (until World War II)  
because it was a war of such great proportions that the world had never seen before

Over 65 million men involved in the conflict.

Approximately 8.5 million of these died as a result of the war

About 21 million more were wounded

And another 7.5 million were taken as prisoners or missing in action

World War I led to the development of horrifying new weapons,  
horrible trench warfare, and horrific effects on the generations to come

Most devastating of all was the machine gun

—it had been used in prior conflicts but never to the extent or consequence of WWI  
— Firing up to 600 bullets a minute (the equivalent of 250 men with rifles), Machine  
Guns were then deemed to be 'weapons of mass destruction

Also heavy artillery guns and poison gas

The heavy artillery use of high explosive shells which could throw shrapnel over a wide distance in the trenches had a devastating impact on soldiers who could reconcile themselves to being shot and leaving behind some form of body that could be buried. A high explosive shell had the potential to completely destroy a body leaving nothing for anybody.

"To die from a bullet seems to be nothing; parts of our being remain intact; but to be dismembered, torn to pieces, reduced to pulp, this is the fear that flesh cannot support and which is fundamentally the great suffering of the bombardment."

—A French soldier at Verdun

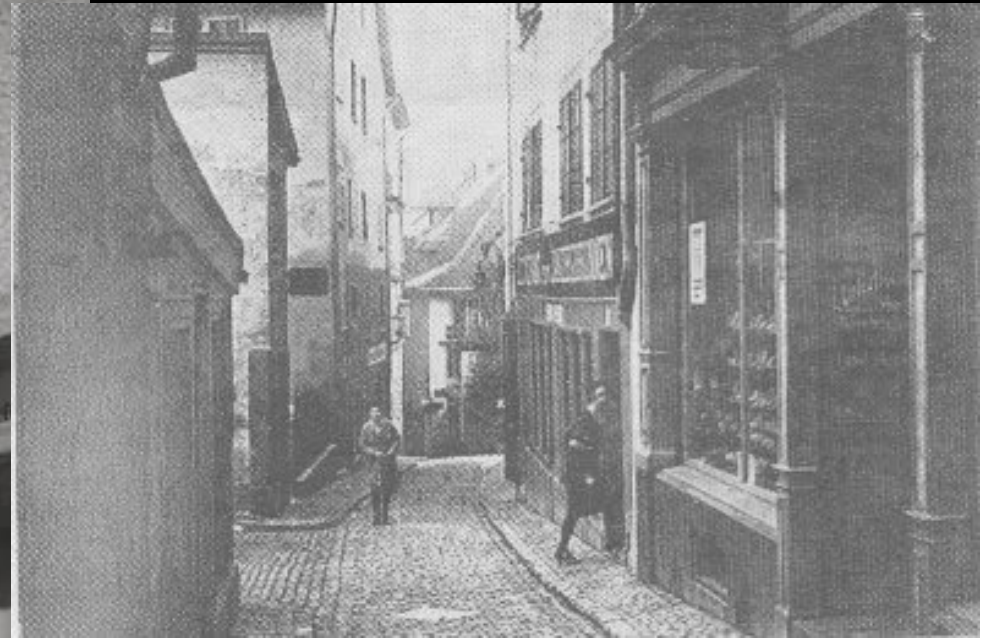
ZURICH  
AND  
THE CABARET VOLTAIRE  
1916

REFUGE FROM THE FRONT LINES





Historical site of the Cabaret Voltaire,  
place where Dada was officially founded,  
Spiegelgasse, Zurich, opened Feb. 5, 1916

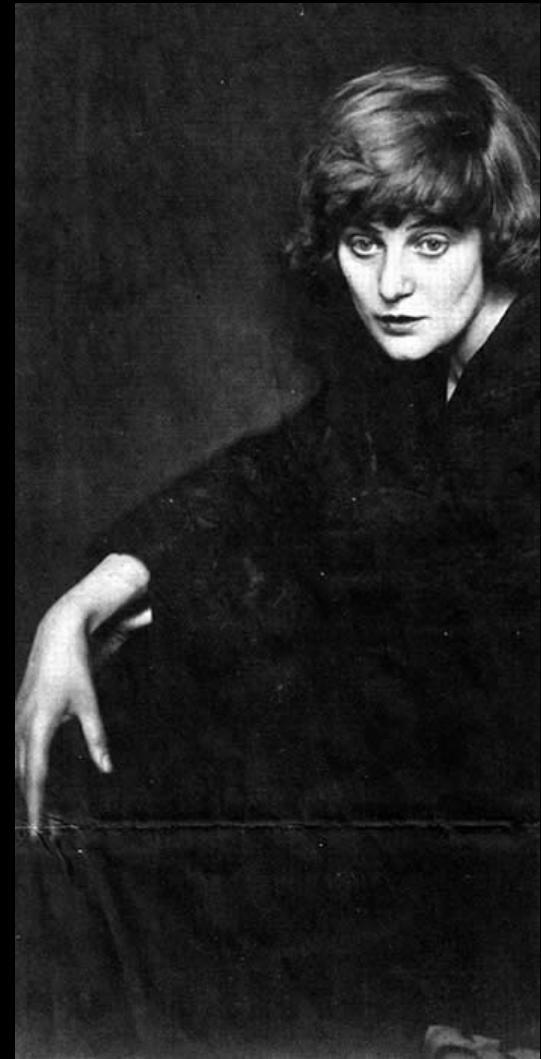


Spiegelgasse 14, the 1916 residence  
of then-exiled Vladimir Lenin where the  
revolutionary lived before returning to  
Russia a year later (just before the  
Russian Revolution of 1917)  
This address is less than a block away from  
the site of famous Dada Cabaret Voltaire





Hugo Ball and Emmy Hennings



"Shortly before the outbreak of war [Hugo Ball and I] met in Berlin. When war broke out our hatred for official Germany changed and everything associated with it changed into a kind of paroxysm of rage. We couldn't see a uniform without clenching our fists. We considered our most practical course. Revolutionary resistance to the well-oiled war machine would have been madness... My reaction against the "spirit" which I identified with Imperial German...culture began.... For the pure-minded pacifist there was only one solution: to leave a country whose actions and politics one could not accept....leave for Switzerland and try to deepen your knowledge of the situation from a neutral standpoint and take action when the time comes."

— Richard Huelsenbeck





## Künstlerkneipe Voltaire

Allabendlich (mit Ausnahme von Freitag)

Musik-Vorträge und Rezitationen

Eröffnung Samstag den 5. Februar

im Saale der „Meierei“ Spiegelgasse 1

poster for the opening of the Cabaret Voltaire,  
1916,

lithography by Marcel Slodki

A brief communique announced its opening in the Zurich newspapers:

"Cabaret Voltaire. Under this name, a company of young artists and writers has been organized with the objective of creating a center for artistic activities. The opening plans include daily sessions with musical programs and poetry readings by the artists present in the audience. All young artists of Zurich, of all tendencies, are invited to lend their support and contribute their ideas."



Marcel Janco, Cabaret Voltaire, 1916,  
Dada members depicted onstage L to R:  
Hugo Ball (at the piano),  
Tristan Tzara (wringing hands),  
Jean Arp, Richard Huelsenbeck (below Arp),  
Marcel Janco

**THE ARTISTS SAW THE CABARET  
NIGHTS AS A FORM OF REVOLT:**

"Every word spoken and sung here say at least this one thing: that this humiliating age has not succeeded in winning our respect. What could be respectable and impressive about it? Its cannons? Our big drums drown them. Its idealism? That has long been a laughing-stock... The grandiose slaughters and cannibalistic exploits? Our spontaneous foolishness and enthusiasm for illusion will destroy them."



Jean Arp explained the cast and events of the Cabaret Voltaire:

"On the stage of a gaudy, motley, overcrowded tavern there are several weird and peculiar figures representing Tzara, Janco, Ball, Huelsenbeck, Madame Hennings, and your humble servant. Total pandemonium. The people around us are shouting, laughing, gesticulating. Our replies are sighs of love, volleys of hiccups, poems, moos, and miaowing of medieval Bruitists. 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. We were given the honorary title of Nihilists."

In that period they danced and sang and recited night after night,  
and abstract art was tantamount to absolute honor

In the space of the Cabaret, Dada was founded:

<http://www.moma.org/explore/multimedia/audios/29/697>



## 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

**bosso fataka**

ü üü ü

schampa wulla wussa ólobo

*hej tatta gôrem*

eschige zunbada

**wulubu ssubudu uluw ssubudu**

tumba ba- umf

*kusagauma*

ba - umf

(1917)  
Hugo Ball  
53

Hugo Ball,  
Performing his sound poem "Karawane"  
at the Cabaret Voltaire, 1916

Hugo Ball's sound poem Karawane performed in present-day by Trio Exvoco

[http://ubumexico.centro.org.mx/sound/ball\\_hugo/Ball-Hugo\\_Karawane-Trio-Ex-Voco.mp3](http://ubumexico.centro.org.mx/sound/ball_hugo/Ball-Hugo_Karawane-Trio-Ex-Voco.mp3)



Raoul Hausmann, Dada Poem, typography, 1918





Jean Arp,  
Untitled  
(Collage with Squares Arranged  
according to the Laws of Chance),  
1916-17

Abstraction  
as opposed  
to  
Expressionism  
became the  
preoccupation  
of  
Zurich Dada



Sophie Taeuber, Dada Head,  
turned and painted wood, 34 x 20 x 20 cm,  
c 1918-1919



Sophie Taeuber, Photo with Dada Head, c. 1920, showed importance of applied arts to abstraction



Jean Arp, Portrait of Tristan Tzara, 1916-17, importance of anti-subjective art



Sophie Taeuber with her puppets, 1918



Richard Huelsenbeck from "First German Dada Manifesto, Berlin, 1918,  
Still primarily oriented to artistic concerns

"Expressionism wanted inwardness, it conceived of itself as a reaction against the times, while Dadaism is nothing but an expression of the times. Dada is one with the times, it is a child of the present epoch which one may curse, but cannot deny. Dada has taken the mechanisation, the sterility, the rigidity and the tempo of these times into its broad lap... Expressionism...is the gesture of tired people who wish to escape themselves and forget the present, the war and the misery....Dada is daring per se..."

"The signatories of this manifesto have banded together under the battle cry of DADA !!!!"

"The word Dada itself points to the internationalism of the movement, which is not tied to borders, religions or professions. Dada is the international expression of our times, the great malcontent among artistic movements..."

"Dada is a state of mind which can reveal itself in each and every conversation, so that one is compelled to say: this man is a DADAIST, but that man is not."

In defiance of the aesthetic-ethical outlook! Against the anaemic abstraction of Expressionism! Against the world-reforming theories of literary blockheads! And for Dadaism in word and image, for the spreading of a Dadaist course of events throughout the world. If you are against this manifesto you are a Dadaist!"

Very quickly  
DADA IN BERLIN  
became more overt in its  
leftist politics  
degree of critique  
and agitation

Direktion r. hausmann  
Steglitz zimmermann  
strasse 34

# DER dada

50 Pfg.

— O A D G D A T T T S A 8

16.305

hausmann - baader

3/ 3333/3333

5,0

13:7 = 1,85714285

60  
40  
50  
10  
30  
20  
60  
40

## Ach

3,14159

59,21834710116

dadadegie



Jahr 1 des Weltfriedens. Avis dada

Hirsch Kupfer schwächer. Wird Deutschland verhungern? Dann muß es unterzeichnen. Fesche junge Dame, zweiundvierziger Figur für Hermann Loeb. Wenn Deutschland nicht unterzeichnet, so wird es wahrscheinlich unterzeichnen. Am Markt der Einheitswerte überwiegen die Kursrückgänge. Wenn aber Deutschland unterzeichnet, so ist es wahrscheinlich, daß es unterzeichnet um nicht zu unterzeichnen. Amorsäle. Achtuhr-abendblattmitbrausendeshimmels. Von Viktorhahn. Lloyd George meint, daß es möglich wäre, daß Clémenceau der Ansicht ist, daß Wilson glaubt, Deutschland müsse unterzeichnen, weil es nicht unterzeichnen nicht wird können. Infolgedessen erklärt der club dada sich für die absolute Preßfreiheit, da die Presse das Kulturinstrument ist, ohne das man nie erfahren würde, daß Deutschland endgültig nicht unterzeichnet, blos um zu unterzeichnen. (Club dada, Abt. für Preßfreiheit, soweit die guten Sitten es erlauben.)

Die neue Zeit beginnt  
mit dem Todesjahr  
des Oberdada

## Ad 1

Mitwirkende: Baader,  
Hausmann, Huelsenbeck,  
Tristan Tzara.

Direktion r. hausmann

№ 2

DER

Preis 1 Mark

# DADA

*dada siegt!*



*Tretet dada bei.*

Der Dada, No. 1 and No. 2, Berlin, 1919, magazine, front covers



Cover of the first edition of the Berlin Dada publication *Everyman His Own Football*, 1919, confiscated immediately on publication by the police





George Grosz as Death in Berlin, 1918, he walked in costume along the Kurfurstendamm, one of Berlin's busiest shopping streets



George Grosz, Berlin Kurfurstendamm, 1925

## RICHARD HUELSENBECK AND RAOUL HAUSMANN

“What is Dadaism and what does it want in Germany?” (1919)

### 1 Dadaism demands:

- 1) The international revolutionary union of all creative and intellectual men and women on the basis of radical Communism;
- 2) The introduction of progressive unemployment through comprehensive mechanization of every field of activity. Only by unemployment does it become possible for the individual to achieve certainty as to the truth of life and finally become accustomed to experience;
- 3) The immediate expropriation of property (socialization) and the communal feeding of all; further, the erection of cities of light, and gardens which will belong to society as a whole and prepare man for a state of freedom.

### 2 The Central Council demands:

- a) Daily meals at public expense for all creative and intellectual men and women on the Potsdamer Platz (Berlin);
- b) Compulsory adherence of all clergymen and teachers to the Dadaist articles of faith;
- c) The most brutal struggle against all directions of so-called “workers of the spirit” (Hiller, Adler), against their concealed bourgeoisism, against expressionism and post-classical education as advocated by the Sturm group;
- d) The immediate erection of a state art center, elimination of concepts of property in the new art (expressionism); the concept of property is entirely excluded from the superindividual movement of Dadaism which liberates all mankind;

- e) Introduction of the simultaneist poem as a Communist state prayer;
- f) Requisition of churches for the performance of bruitism, simultaneist and Dadaist poems;
- g) Establishment of a Dadaist advisory council for the remodeling of life in every city of over 50,000 inhabitants;
- h) Immediate organization of a large scale Dadaist propaganda campaign with 150 circuses for the enlightenment of the proletariat;
- i) Submission of all laws and decrees to the Dadaist central council for approval;
- j) Immediate regulation of all sexual relations according to the views of international Dadaism through establishment of a Dadaist sexual center.

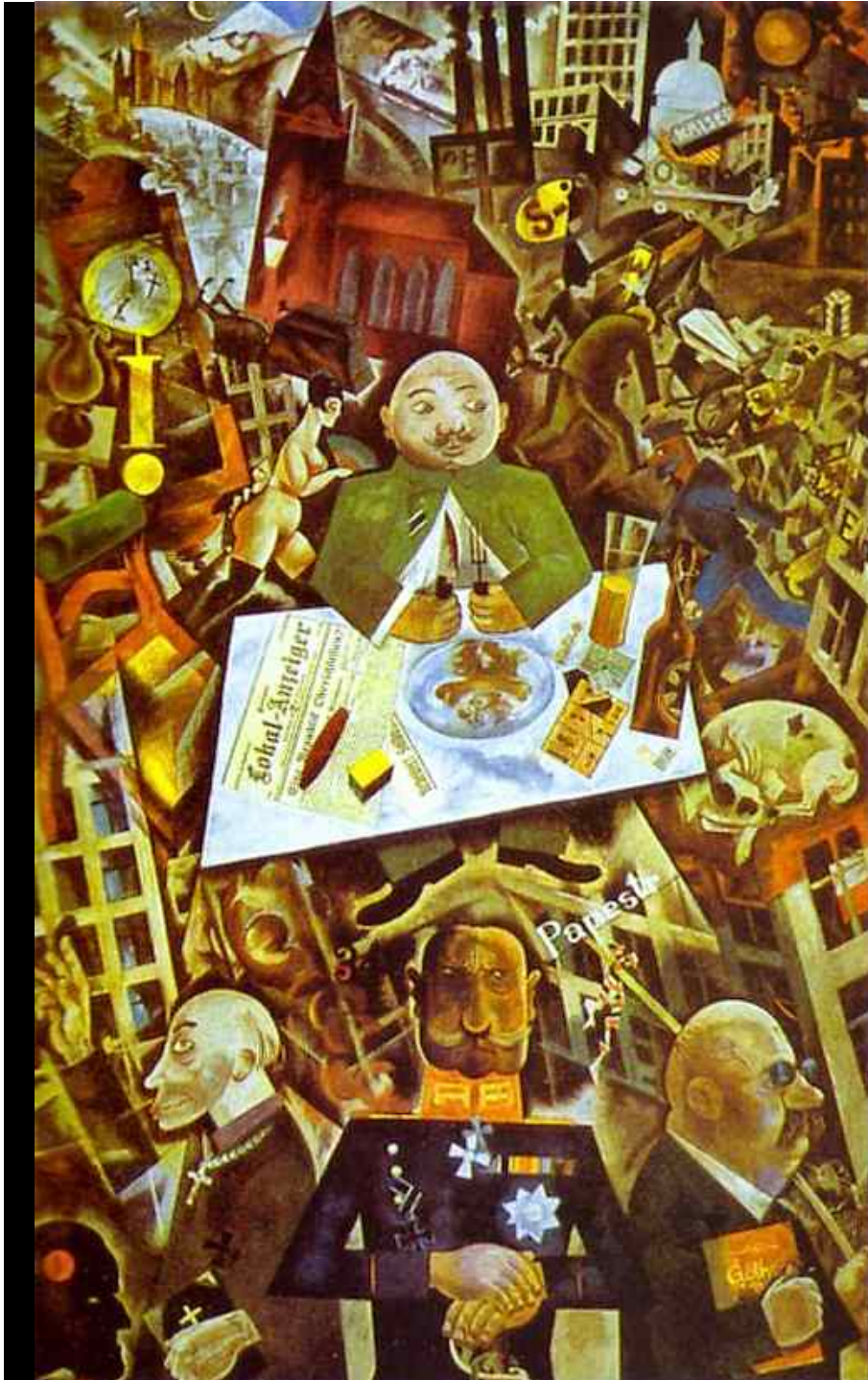
The Dadaist revolutionary central council.

German group: Hausmann, Huelsenbeck

Business Office: Charlottenburg, Kantstrasse 118.

Applications for membership taken at business office.





Grosz, Winter's Tale, 1917-18





Grosz, Fit for Duty, 1918

Georg Grosz was conscripted into the German Army. After attempting suicide in 1917, a court-martial sentenced him to death, but he was saved by the intervention of his former patron Count Kessler. Grosz was then diagnosed as suffering from shell shock and was discharged from the German Army



Grosz, Republican Automatons, 1920



Grosz, Grey Day, 1921



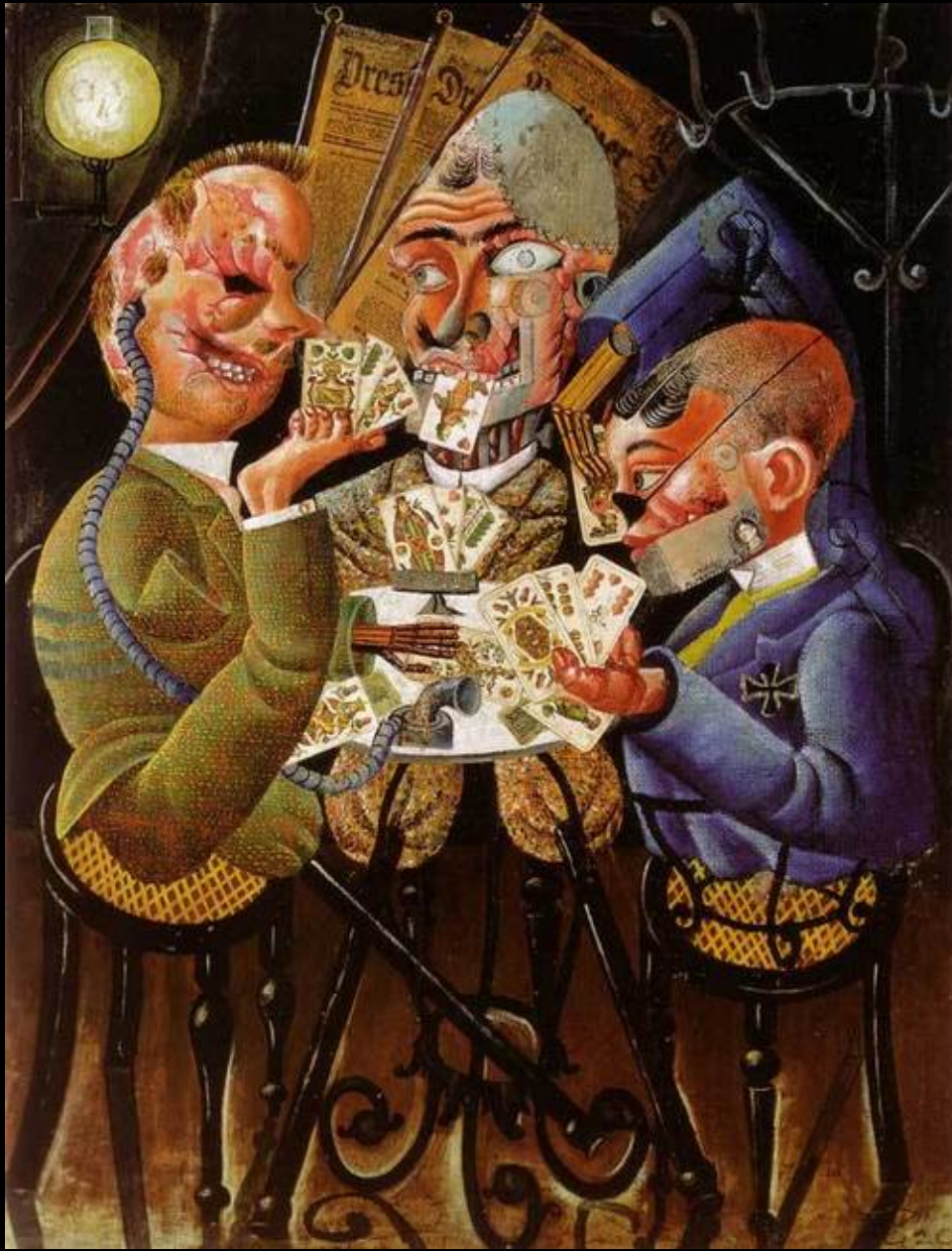


Otto Dix, Shock Troops Advance from the War, etching, aquatint and drypoints, included in the 1924 "War" portfolio of 50 etchings



Otto Dix, Wounded, 1916, etching, aquatint and drypoint,  
included in the 1924 "War" portfolio of 50 etchings, aquatints and drypoints





Otto Dix,  
Skat Players  
(later titled Card-Playing War Cripples),  
Oil and collage on canvas,  
1920





Otto Dix, The Match Seller, oil and collage on canvas, 1920





Hannah Höch,  
Cut (Incision) With a Kitchen Knife Dada  
through the Last Weimer  
Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch  
in Germany,  
photomontage and collage  
with watercolor,  
1919





Hannah Höch,  
The Beautiful Girl,





The First International Dada Fair, Berlin, 1920,  
at Dr. Otto Burchard's art gallery a converted 3-room apartment





First International Dada Fair, Berlin, 1920



Raoul Hausmann and Hannah Hoch  
At the First International Dada Fair,  
1920





Raoul Hausmann,  
Mechanical Head (The Spirit of Our Age),  
Assemblage,  
1920



George Grosz, John Heartfield,  
Elektro-mechanische Tatlin-Plastik, 1920



John Heartfield, German Natural History: Metamorphosis," 1933



John Heartfield, Adolph the Superman, 1932, (Swallows Gold and Spouts Tin)



# PARIS AND NEW YORK



Marcel Duchamp,  
Nude Descending a Staircase, 1912



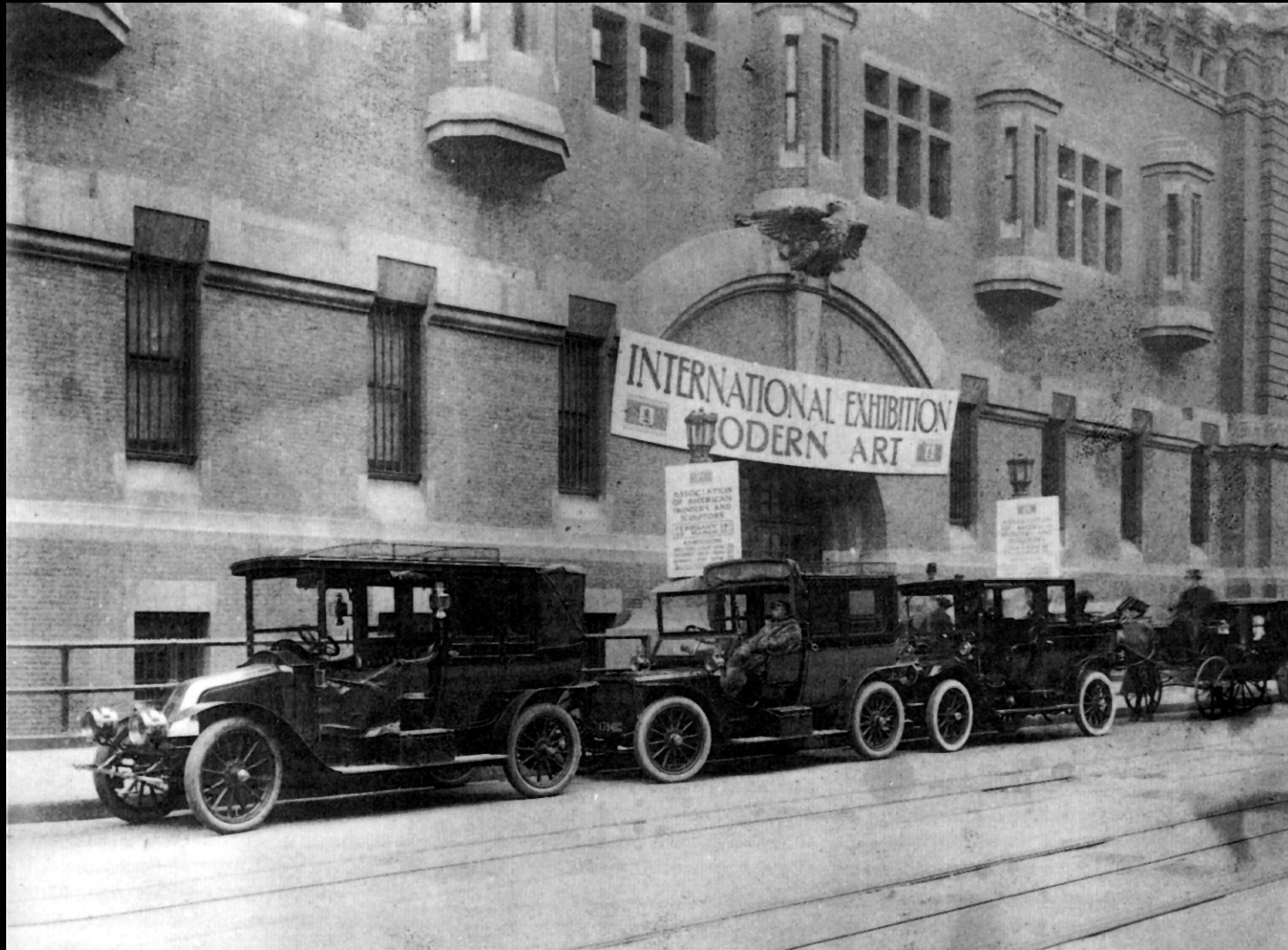
INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION  
OF MODERN ART  
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN  
PAINTERS AND SCULPTORS

69<sup>th</sup> INF'TY REGT 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, DEGA5,  
CÉZANNE, REDON, RENOIR, MONET, SEURAT, VAN GOGH,  
HODLER, SLEVOGT, JOHN, PRYDE, SICKERT, MAILLOL,  
BRANCUSI, LEHMBRUCK, BERNARD, MATISSE, MANET, SIGNAC;  
LAUTREC, CONDER, DENIS, RUSSELL, DUFY, BRAQUE, HERBIN,  
GLEIZES, SOUZA-CARDOZO, ZAK, DU CHAMP-VILLON,  
GAUGUIN, ARCHIPENKO, BOURDELLE, C. DE SEGONZAC.

LEXINGTON AVE.—25th ST.

Poster for the Armory Show of Modern Art,  
1913,  
New York



Exterior of New York's 69th Regiment Armory on Lexington Avenue btw 25th and 26th Strs, 1913



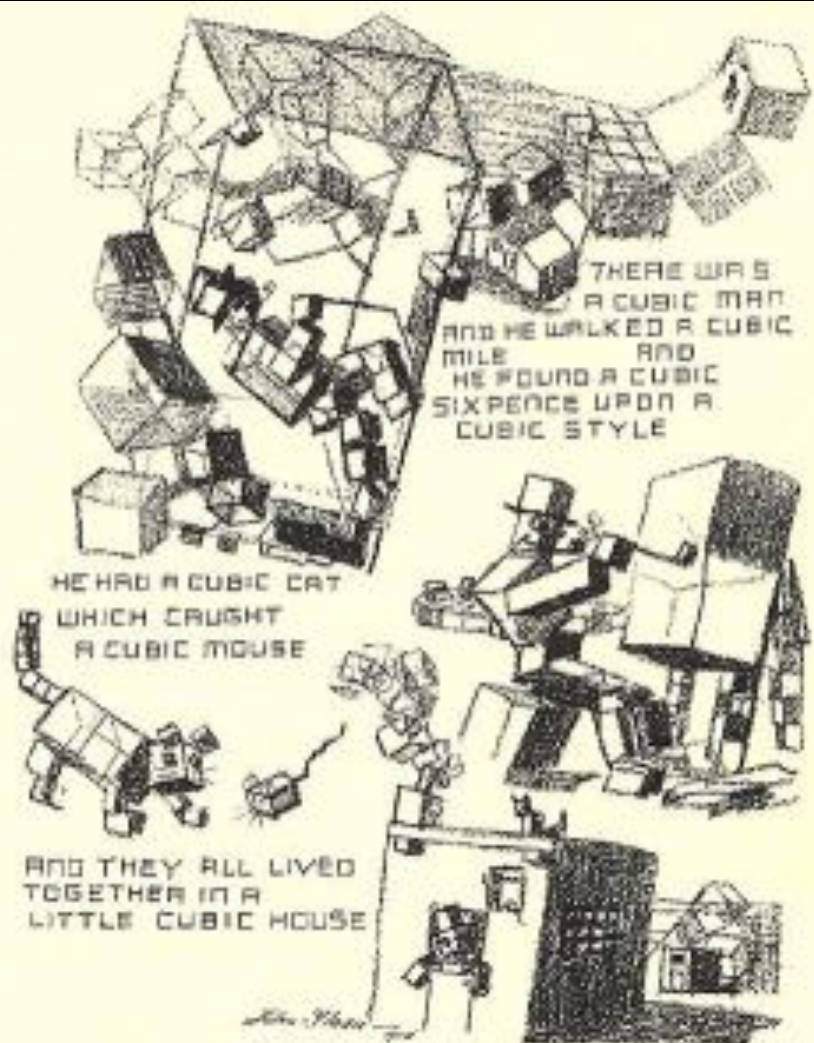


Interior view of the Armory Show, displayed approx. 1250 paintings, sculptures, and decorative works by over 300 European and American artists

SEEING NEW YORK WITH A CUBIST



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



"In this recent art exhibition, the lunatic fringe was fully in evidence, especially in the rooms devoted to the Cubists and Futurists, or Near-Impressionists....Take the picture which for some reason is called "A naked man going down stairs."...Very little of the work among the European "moderns" seems to be good in and for itself: nevertheless it has certainly helped any number of American artists to do work that is original and serious..."

- Theodore Roosevelt, U.S. President 1901 - 1908,  
"A Layman's View of an Art Exhibition," The Outlook 103, March 29, 1913

"Nude Descending a Staircase is an organization of kinetic elements, an expression of time and space through the abstract presentation of motion...But remember, when we consider the motion of form through space in a given time, we enter the realm of geometry and mathematics, just as we do when we build a machine for that purpose. Now if I show the ascent of an airplane, I try to show what it does. I do not make a still-life picture of it. When the vision of the Nude flashed upon me, I knew that it would break forever the enslaving chains of naturalism."

- Marcel Duchamp, c. 1920





Marcel Duchamp, Bicycle Wheel, 1913



Marcel Duchamp, Bottle Rack, 1914

READYMADE



Shovel is inscribed along its lower rim with the following phrase: "In Advance of the Broken Arm/(from) Marcel Duchamp 1915." (original photo and replica 1945)

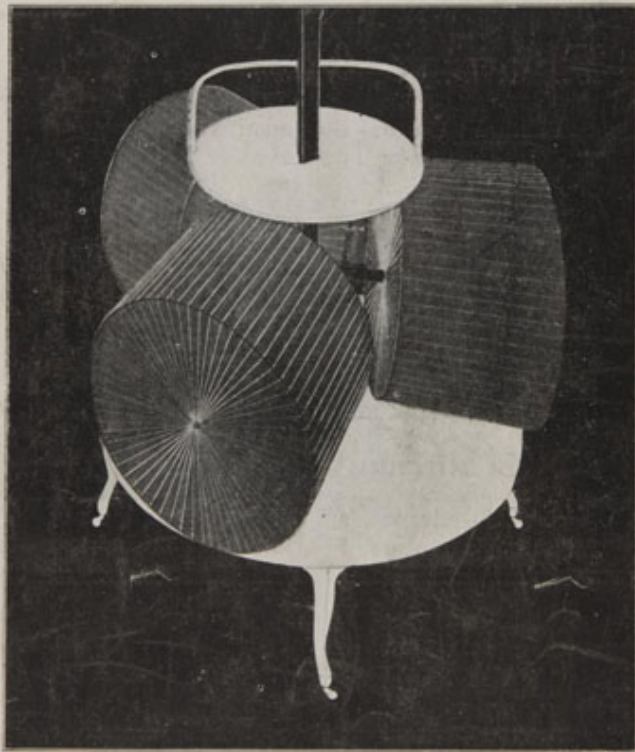




Marcel Duchamp, Fountain, 1917

P · B · T  
**THE BLIND MAN**

33 WEST 67th STREET, NEW YORK



BROYEUSE DE CHOCOLAT

Marcel Duchamp

MAY, 1917

No. 2

Price 15 Cents

22  
+26556  
2  
copy 2

The Blind Man, No. 2,  
Edited by Henri-Pierre Roché,  
Beatrice Wood, and Marcel Duchamp,  
New York, May, 1917

"They say any artist paying six dollars may exhibit. Mr Richard Mutt sent in a fountain. Without discussion this article disappeared and never was exhibited.

What were the grounds for refusing Mr Mutt's fountain:

1. Some contended it was immoral and vulgar.
2. Others, it was plagiarism, a plain piece of plumbing.

Now Mr Mutt's fountain is not immoral, that is absurd, no more than a bath tub is immoral. It is a fixture that you see every in plumbers' show windows.

Whether Mr Mutt with his own hands made the fountain or not has no importance. He CHOSE it. He took an ordinary article of life, placed it so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view - created a new thought for that object.

As for plumbing, that is absurd. The only works of art America has given are her plumbing and her bridges."

-Anonymous, but almost certainly Duchamp, published May, 1917 issue of The Blind Man





15/10/1919  
35

La Joconde.

L.H.O.O.Q.

Duchamp, L.H.O.O.Q., 1919

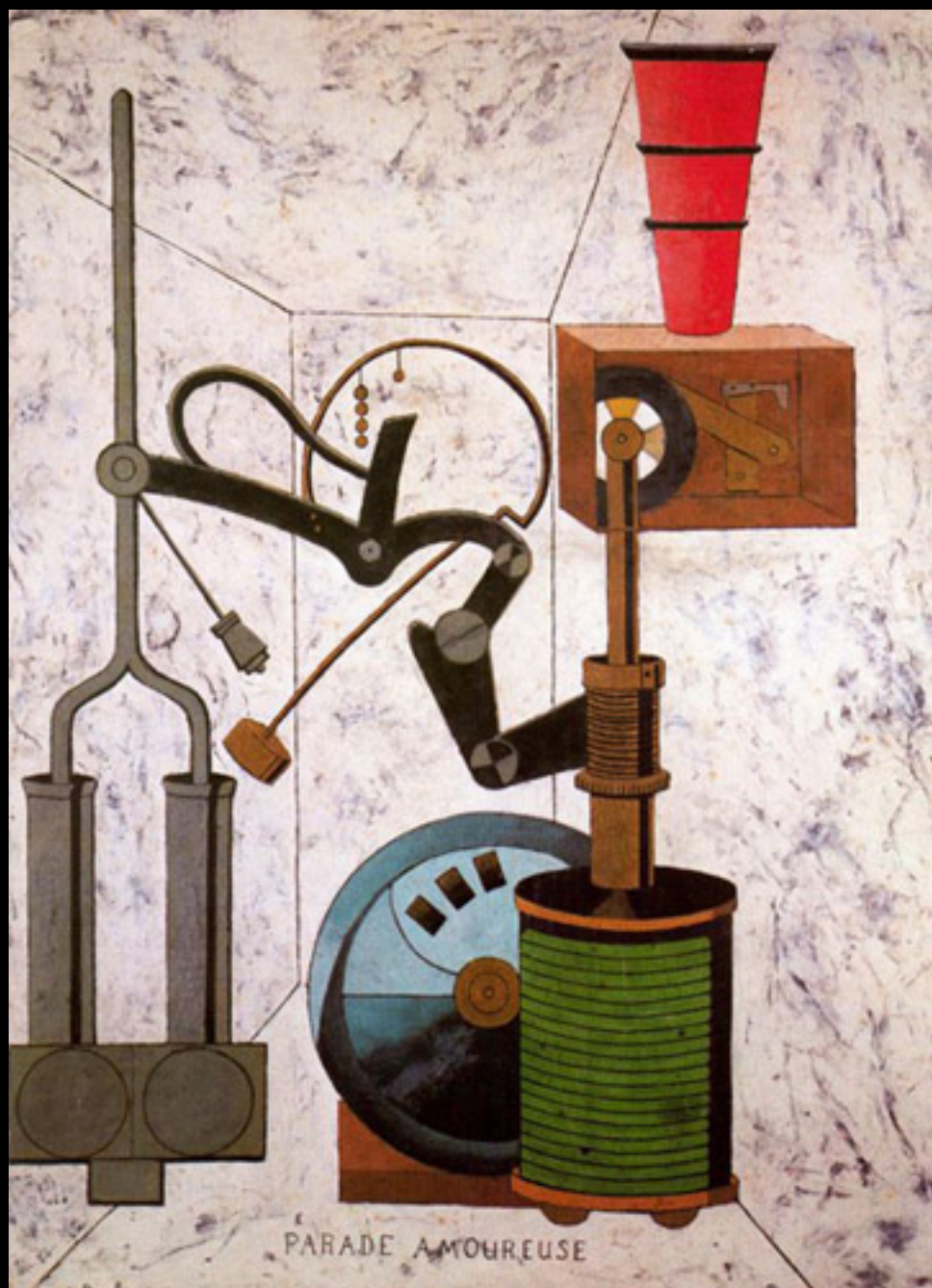
"We are living in the Age of the Machine. Man made the machine in his own image. She has limbs which act; lungs which breath; a heart which beats; a nervous system through which runs electricity. The phonograph is the image of his voice; the camera the image of the eye. The machine is the 'daughter-born-without a mother.'"

-Paul Haviland, poet, excerpt from "We are living in the Age of the Machine," published in Alfred Stieglitz' "291" Magazine, September, 1915 issue

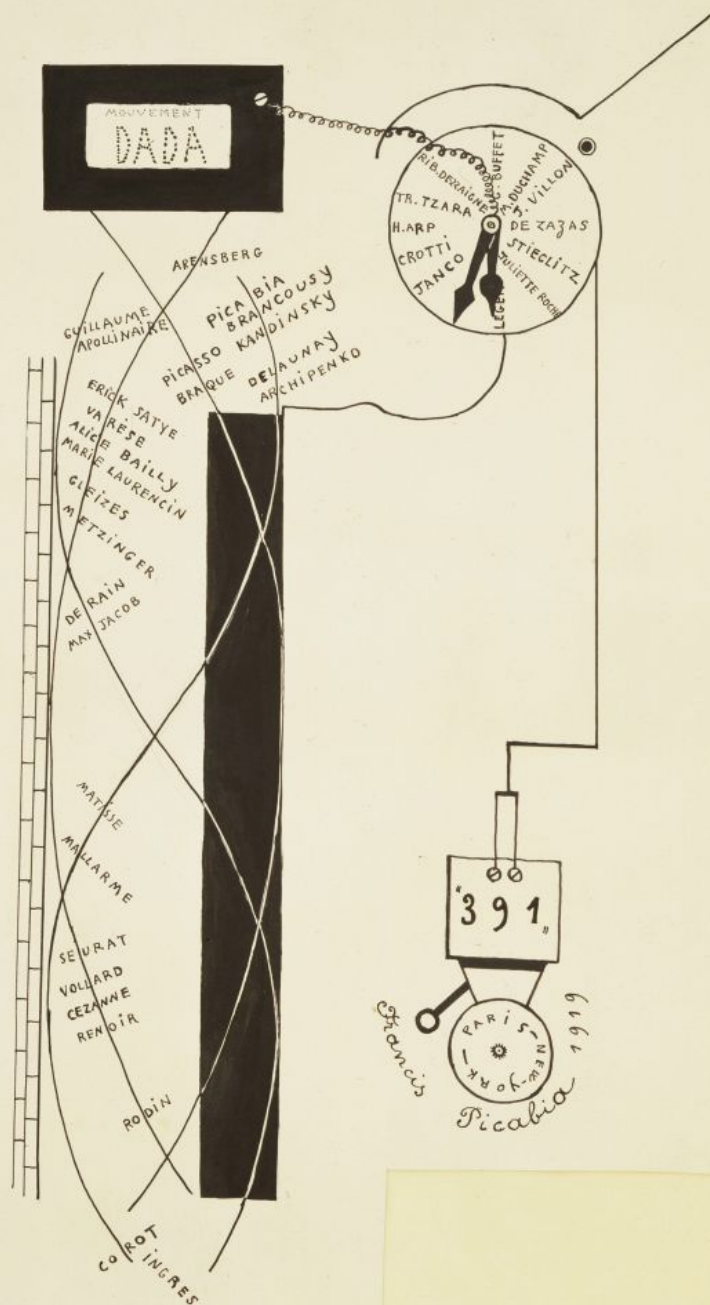


Francis Picabia, Here, This Is Stieglitz Here, 1915

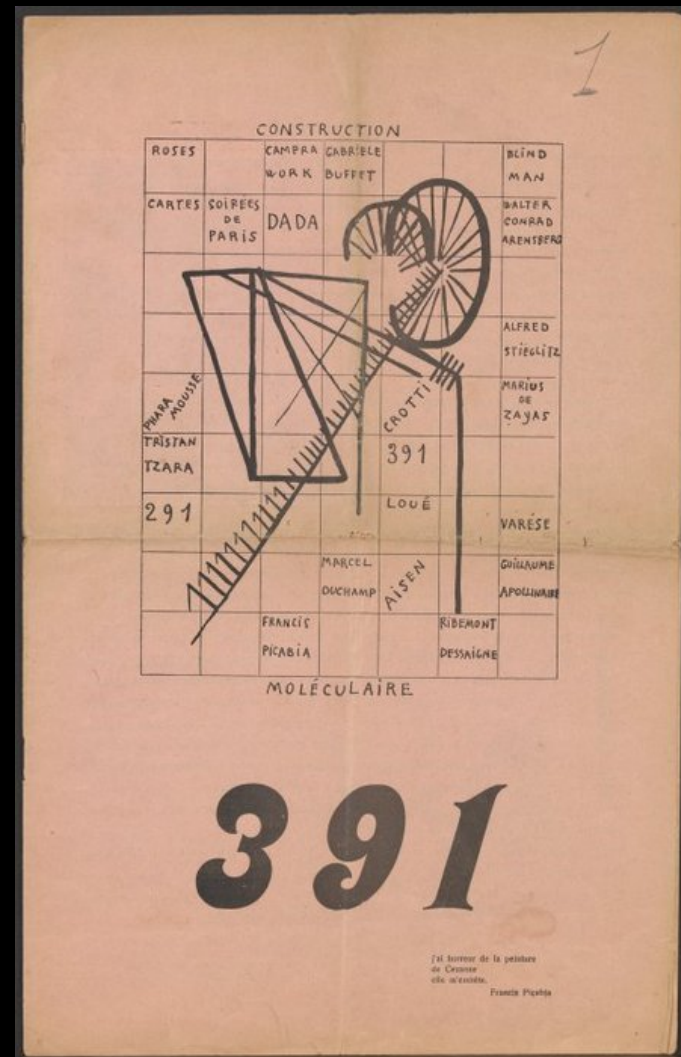
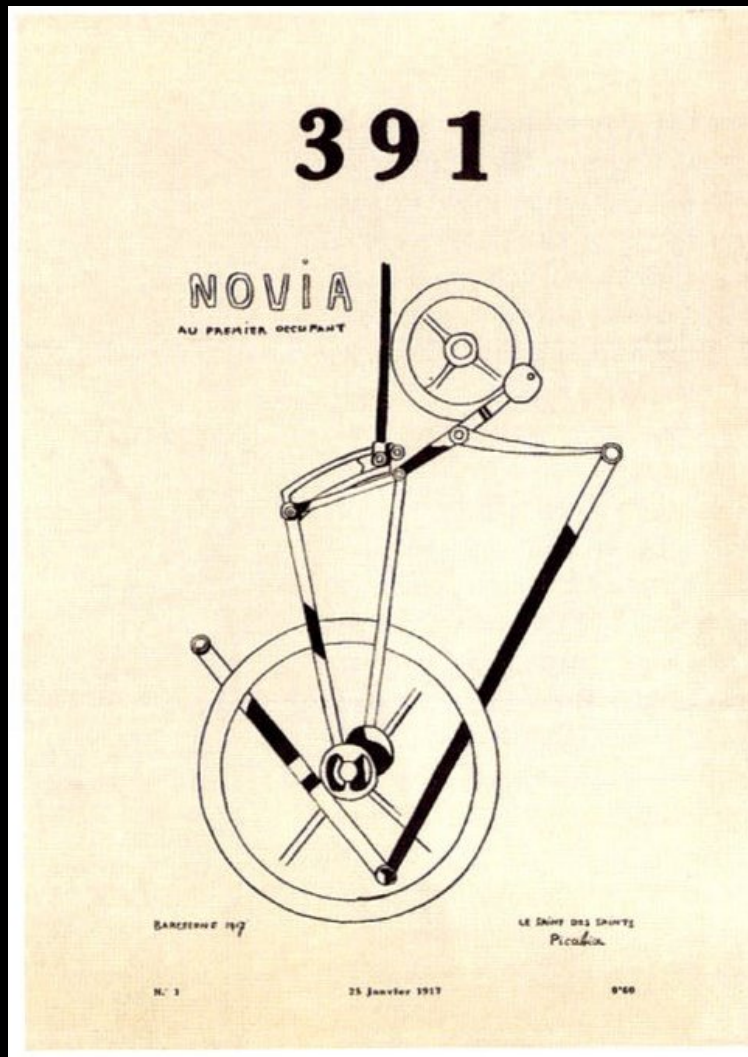




Francis Picabia,  
Love Parade,  
19

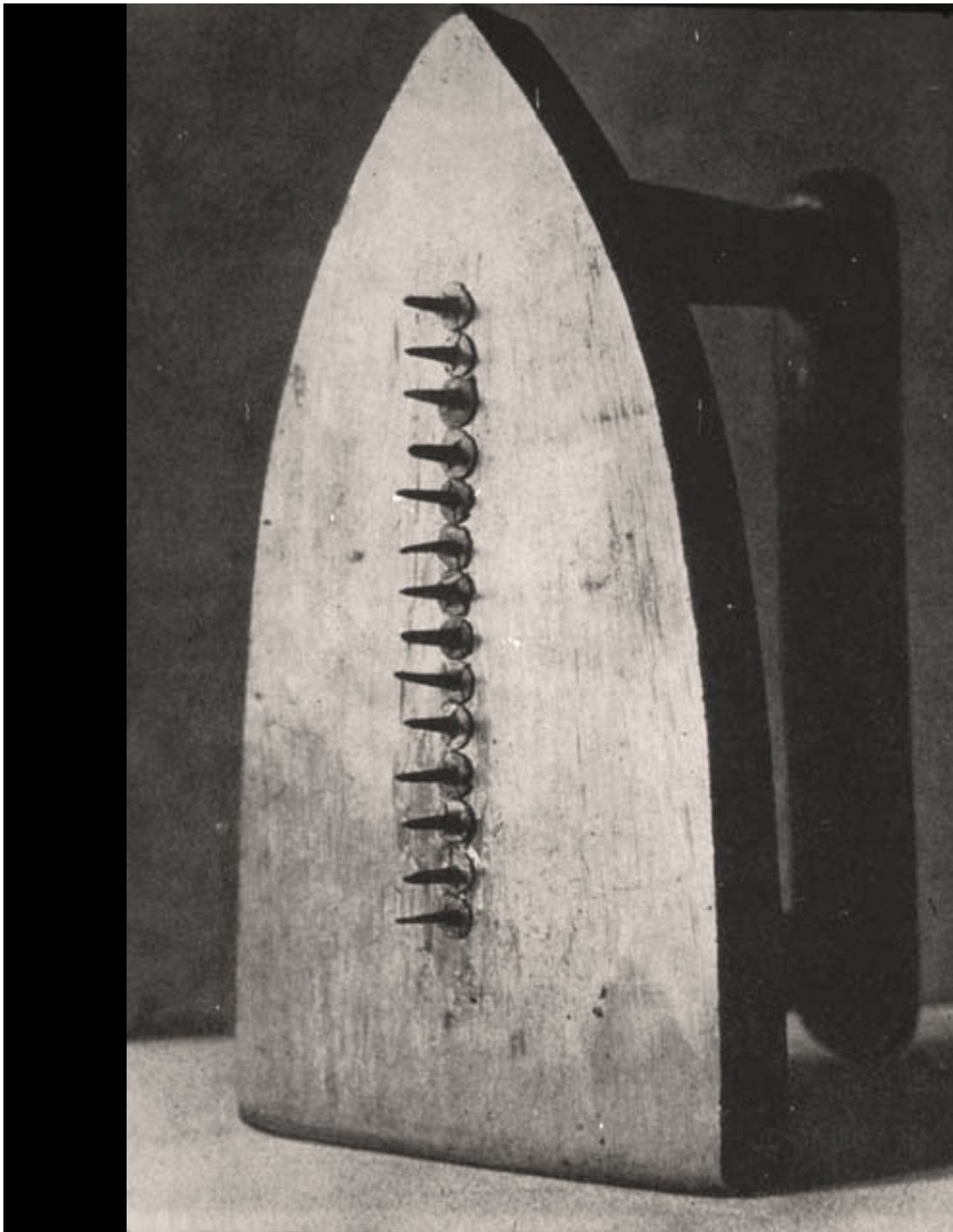


Picabia,  
Dada Movement,  
1919,  
Ink on paper



Francis Picabia, 391, magazine, issues No. 3, 1917, and No. 8, 1919





Man Ray,  
Gift,  
1921



Man Ray (born Emmanuel Radnitzky),  
Rayograph, camera-less photography, 1922,  
Gelatin silver print,  
thumbtacks, coil of wire, and other circular objects  
placed directly on photosensitive paper  
and exposed to light



Man Ray, photo of Duchamp,  
1919-20





Man Ray, portrait of Duchamp as  
Rose Sélavy, 1920-21  
and  
Belle Haleine, eau de voilette,  
photo-collage, 1921



The End