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2020

Lesson 18: On the Dada of Art versus the Dada of War

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Recommended Citation

Barry, Marie Porterfield, "Lesson 18: On the Dada of Art versus the Dada of War" (2020). *Art Appreciation Open Educational Resource*. East Tennessee State University: Johnson City.
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“On the Dada of Art versus the Dada of War” is part of the

ART APPRECIATION

Open Educational Resource

by Marie Porterfield Barry
East Tennessee State University, 2020

Introduction

This course explores the world’s visual arts, focusing on the development of visual awareness, assessment, and appreciation by examining a variety of styles from various periods and cultures while emphasizing the development of a common visual language. The materials are meant to foster a broader understanding of the role of visual art in human culture and experience from the prehistoric through the contemporary.

This is an Open Educational Resource (OER), an openly licensed educational material designed to replace a traditional textbook.

Course Materials

Presentations

The course materials consist of 24 presentations examining art across the globe from prehistory through the contemporary art world. These introduce key vocabulary, explore the way that culture and art are linked, describe the varying methods and techniques of the featured artists, and encourage classroom discourse.

Reading Lists

Each of the 24 presentations has an accompanying reading list which provides links to articles, videos, and other resources. The reading list is meant to reinforce and clarify information covered in each of the presentations.

Sample Assignments

A list of sample assignments is also included. Ranging from brief essays to simple art projects, these are designed to be completed in a sketchbook to more deeply explore course concepts. Intended to encourage learners to think like artists, art critics, and art historians, assignments emphasize practices of creative thinking and artistic method, while reinforcing concepts addressed in classroom lectures and required readings.

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Educational Fair Use

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Adopting, Adapting, or Expanding the Resource

The goal for this OER is to build an educational resource that is flexible enough to address concepts relevant to the contemporary discourse and scholarship in the visual arts. For those interested in utilizing these course materials, I am providing below some additional information that may be useful in expanding, adapting, or reinterpreting the materials. Editable versions are available in Microsoft PowerPoint and Word at <https://dc.etsu.edu/art-appreciation-oer/>

The font used to create the presentations and written documents for this OER is Calibri.

Finding Additional Readings, Lessons, and Articles

Smarthistory: <https://smarthistory.org/>

Smarthistory is an extensive open educational resource which publishes outstanding essays and video lectures about art. The Creating + Conserving section of Smarthistory includes wonderful informational articles and videos about materials and processes: <https://smarthistory.org/tag/conservation/>

MoMA Learning: https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/

MoMA Learning provides a wonderful selection of essays on works of modern art and also has assignment suggestions at the bottom of each section.

KhanAcademy: <https://www.khanacademy.org/>.

Khan Academy is an outstanding platform of open educational resources covering a variety of academic and scholarly topics.

Trivium Art History: <https://arthistoryproject.com/>

Trivium Art History is a free, online art history book with clean design and approachable descriptions of works of art, periods of art history, and fun artist biographies. The [Themes of Art](#) section is a nice tool to help students explore works that match their interests. The [World of Art](#) section is a useful tool for an exploratory World Art sketchbook prompt. The [Timeline](#) section is useful, as it separates works of art into galleries based on period.

Introduction to Art: Design, Context, and Meaning: <https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/arts-textbooks/3/>

For a more traditional, textbook approach, there is an Introduction to Art open educational resource textbook available.

Locating Images

If you are utilizing the course materials and would like to add new images that are public domain or licensed under Creative Commons, there are several useful tips provided below for finding images.

The Met Museum: <https://www.metmuseum.org/>

The Met has an option to search for Open Access images within the collection [here](#). Make sure that the “Open Access” box is checked. The image license is [CC0 1.0](#), and will be marked OA Public Domain at the lower left of the image.

Google Images: <https://www.google.com/imghp?hl=en&tab=wi&ogbl>

[Google Images](#) has an option under “Settings” > “Advanced Search” to search by “Usage Rights”. Choosing “Free to use share or modify” will allow a search for images suitable for expanding our OER.

Wikimedia Commons: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/>

[Wikimedia Commons](#) is an outstanding resource for finding open source images, with a strong collection of works of art.

Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com>

[Flickr](#) allows users to specify image licenses on uploaded photographs. Click “Some rights reserved” at the lower right of the image to check the licensing. Some images will say “Public Domain” or will be licensed under a [Creative Commons](#) (CC) license, allowing for the use in an OER.

Smarthistory Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/groups/smarthistory/pool/>

The [Smarthistory Flickr](#) is expansive with images licensed for educational purposes.

Acknowledgements

This Art Appreciation OER was adapted from existing resources by Marie Porterfield Barry as part of East Tennessee State University’s Open Educational Resources (OERs) Initiatives, which are a collaboration of the Charles C. Sherrod Library and the Center for Teaching Excellence. Deepest gratitude for the support from Ashley Sergiadis of Sherrod Library and Phil Smith of the Center for Teaching Excellence during the building of this resource. Thanks as well to my students at East Tennessee State University whose feedback and participation during our Art Appreciation classes was immensely valuable in compiling and evaluating this OER.



DADA

Marcel Duchamp, *L.H.O.O.Q., or or La Joconde*, 1964 (replica of 1919 original). *Cropped from original*. © Association Marcel Duchamp / ADAGP, Paris / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York 2017, Educational Fair Use.



DADA

= nonsense word in different languages

Dada means

“Hobby horse” in French,

“Yes, yes” in Russian,

Baby babble in German;

It is one of the first words uttered from the mouths of infants.

It was picked at random by stabbing a French-German dictionary, or so the story goes.

Marcel Duchamp, *L.H.O.O.Q., or or La Joconde*, 1964 (replica of 1919 original). *Cropped from original*. © Association Marcel Duchamp / ADAGP, Paris / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York 2017, Educational Fair Use.



DADA

Dada emerged in Europe as a reaction to the First World War. The artists reacted against the immense brutality and folly of war.

New killing technologies—like machine guns, flamethrowers, land mines, tanks, poisonous gas, submarines, and fighter jets—produced unthinkable brutality.

The First World War, stretching from 1914 to 1918, resulted in enormous and unprecedented carnage, with 16 million casualties. For the Dada artists, a society capable of such ruthlessness was suspect. Artist Jean Arp explained that the Dadaists wanted to “to destroy the hoaxes of reason and to discover an unreasoned order.”

Marcel Duchamp, *L.H.O.O.Q., or or La Joconde*, 1964 (replica of 1919 original). *Cropped from original*. © Association Marcel Duchamp / ADAGP, Paris / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York 2017, Educational Fair Use.



DADA

The loosely affiliated international movement of Dadaists began to question the concept of art itself.

Reacting to the way life was so carelessly discarded in the First World War trenches, they mocked the foundations of modern society and reasonable thought.

The new Dada unreasoned order was both critical and playful. Dada artists embraced the strange, the irrational, and the happenstance.

Marcel Duchamp, *L.H.O.O.Q., or or La Joconde*, 1964 (replica of 1919 original). *Cropped from original*. © Association Marcel Duchamp / ADAGP, Paris / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York 2017, Educational Fair Use.

Poet HUGO BALL
With
Poet and nightclub singer EMMY HENNINGS
fled Germany and opened
Cabaret Voltaire
In Zürich, Switzerland.

As Switzerland was neutral during the First World War, this was the perfect retreat for the European Dadaists. Cabaret Voltaire became a meeting place for exiled avant-garde artists and writers who felt disgust toward war.



Hugo Ball
Reciting the Sound Poem "KARAWANE"
In a publicity photo for the Cabaret Voltaire, Zürich.
1916.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#), License: Public Domain

Here, Hugo Ball recites the nonsense-sound poem "Karawane" solemnly while covered in blue cardboard tubes with a white and blue hat, a gold cape, and lobster claws.

The poem abandoned the rationality of adulthood and created a new incomprehensible language sounding like baby talk.



Hugo Ball
Reciting the Sound Poem "KARAWANE"
In a publicity photo for the Cabaret Voltaire, Zürich.
1916.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#), License: Public Domain

Hugo Ball's nonsense-sound
poem "Karawane":

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



Above: Hugo Ball's *Karawane*, Author: [Albrecht Conz](#), Source: Wikimedia Commons, License: Public Domain

Right: Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#), License: Public Domain

Hugo Ball wrote the
Dada Manifesto in 1916
Which was only one of several manifestos for
the Dada movement.



Hugo Ball
Reciting the Sound Poem "KARAWANE"
In a publicity photo for the Cabaret Voltaire, Zürich,
1916.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#), License: Public Domain

Instead of creating precious art objects,
Dadaists were interested in
(Art) ideas & (Art) actions.

Favorite materials among the Dadaists
were found object (or *readymade*),
photography, collage, photomontage,
poetry, text, and performance.

*André Breton at Dada festival in Paris
bearing a sign designed by Francis Picabia*

Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

License: Public Domain



Artist André Breton appears here wearing a placard design by fellow Dadaist Francis Picabia at a 1920 Dada festival in Paris.

The text that accompanies the giant target translates:
“For you to like something, you have to have already seen and heard it for ages, you bunch of morons.”

*André Breton at Dada festival in Paris
bearing a sign designed by Francis Picabia*

Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

License: Public Domain





Marcel Duchamp Playing Chess
Author: [Matthew Butler](#)
Source: Flickr, License: [CC BY 2.0](#)

MARCEL DUCHAMP



Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#), License: Public Domain



Marcel Duchamp
Fountain, 1917

Photograph by Alfred Stieglitz following the 1917 Society
of Independent Artists exhibit, with entry tag visible.
Gelatin Silver Print

*The original work of Duchamp is lost or destroyed (and
the negative of Stieglitz too)*

Source: [Wikimedia Common](#), License: Public Domain

Marcel Duchamp moved from France to the USA to escape the war.

He was a founding member of *The American Society of Independent Artists*, which hosted its first annual "Forum" exhibition in 1917.

"Forum" was designed as an unjuried exhibition. Any work submitted with the \$6 fee would be included.



Marcel Duchamp
Fountain, 1917

Photograph by Alfred Stieglitz following the 1917 Society of Independent Artists exhibit, with entry tag visible.

Gelatin Silver Print

Source: [Wikimedia Common](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marcel_Duchamp_-_Fountain.jpg), License: Public Domain

Duchamp made *Fountain* deliberately in order to be rejected. In order to hide his identity, he signed it as R.Mutt.

The work was REJECTED from "Forum".



Marcel Duchamp
Fountain, 1917

Photograph by Alfred Stieglitz following the 1917 Society of Independent Artists exhibit, with entry tag visible.

Gelatin Silver Print

Source: [Wikimedia Common](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marcel_Duchamp_-_Fountain.jpg), License: Public Domain

Following the rejection, Duchamp
resigned from Society of Independent
Artists in mock horror.



Marcel Duchamp
Fountain, 1917

Photograph by Alfred Stieglitz following the 1917 Society
of Independent Artists exhibit, with entry tag visible.

Gelatin Silver Print

Source: [Wikimedia Common](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marcel_Duchamp_-_Fountain.jpg), License: Public Domain

Duchamp published an editorial in a Dada journal detailing the scandal of R.Mutt, stating:

“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 - and created a new thought for that object..”

Marcel Duchamp
Fountain (reproduction), 1917/1964
Author: [Steven Zucker](#)
Source: Flickr
License: [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)





Duchamp questions:
What is art?

For Duchamp, art is primarily conceptual. The artist chooses this *readymade* object and it becomes art.

The controversy around Duchamp's *Fountain* endures.

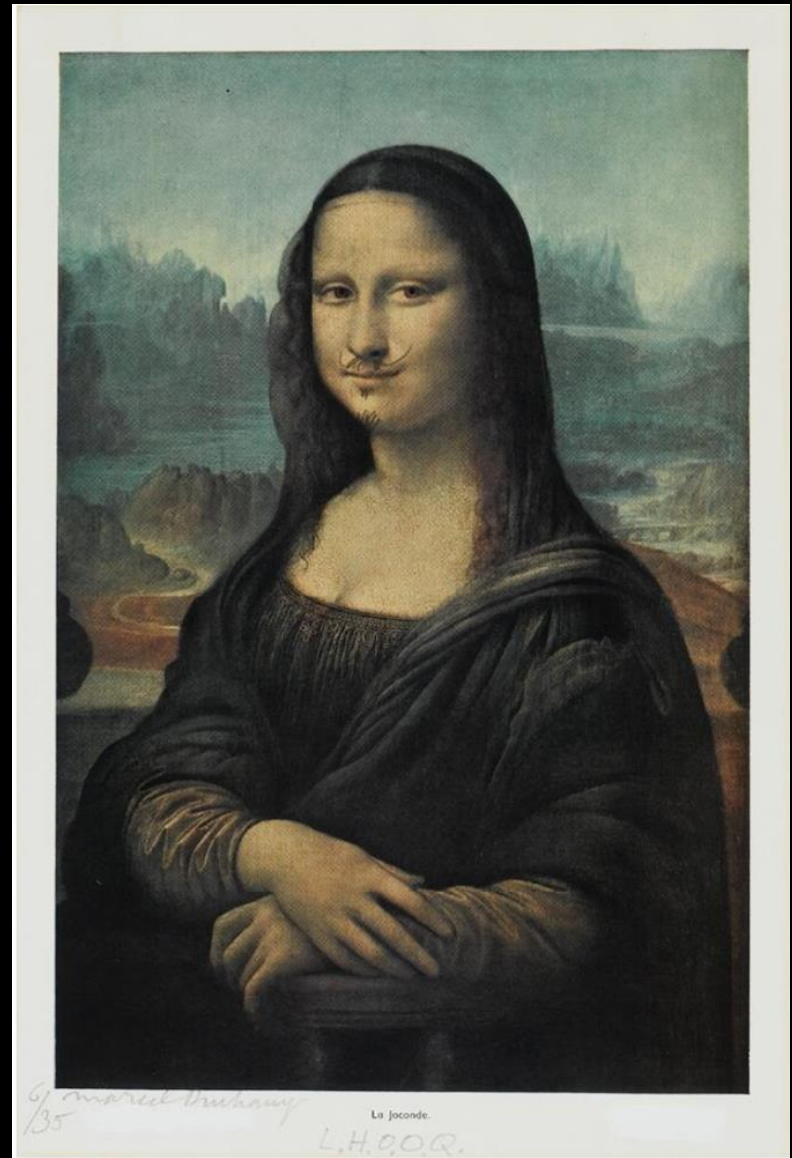
Marcel Duchamp
Fountain (reproduction), 1917/1964
Author: [Steven Zucker](#)
Source: Flickr
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A *readymade* is a mass-produced or found object that the artist, through selection and naming, transforms into art.

Marcel Duchamp
Fountain (reproduction), 1917/1964
Author: [Steven Zucker](#)
Source: Flickr
License: [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)

Marcel Duchamp, *L.H.O.O.Q., or or La Joconde*
1964 (replica of 1919 original),
Pencil on reproduction of Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa.
© Association Marcel Duchamp / ADAGP, Paris / Artists Rights Society (ARS),
New York 2017. [Educational Fair Use](#), High quality image [here](#).



Another of Duchamp's well known works of art is his modified readymade, *L.H.O.O.Q.*

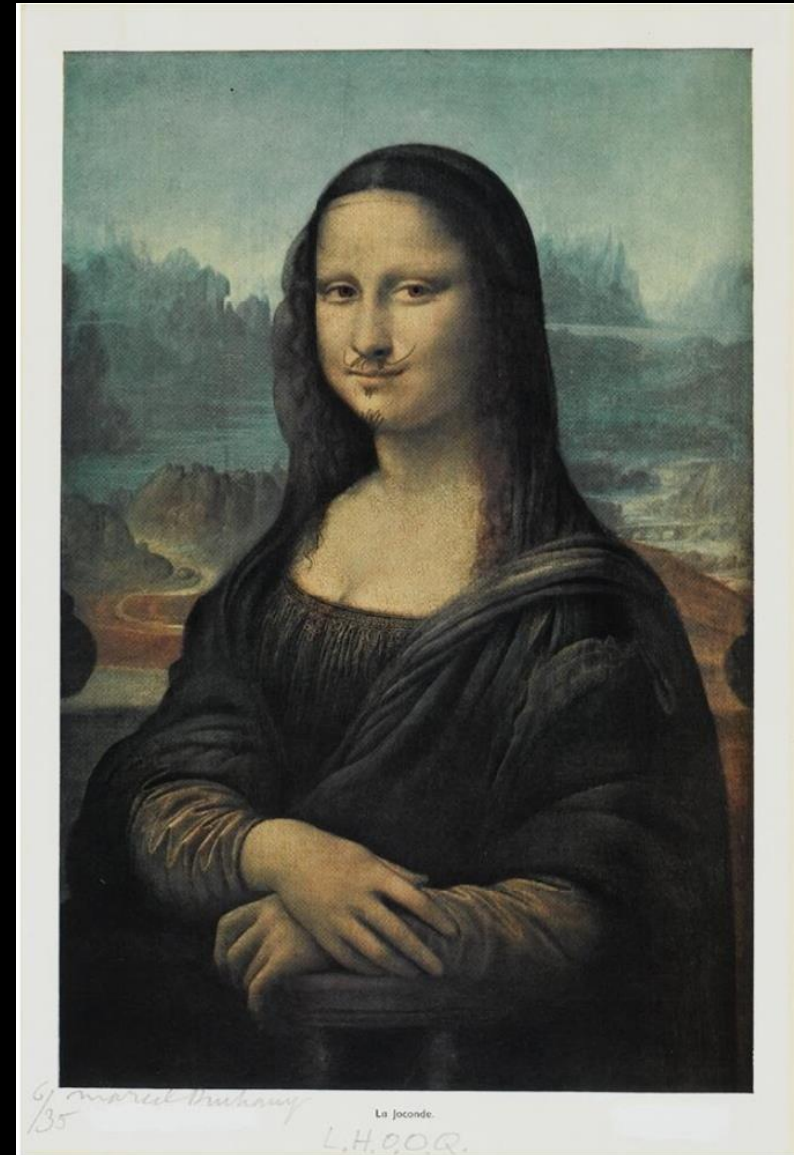
Using a bad quality Mona Lisa postcard, Duchamp drew a mustache and beard on Leonardo's Renaissance icon of balance and ideal beauty.

The letters scrawled at the bottom, when read in French, phonetically resemble a French slang phrase (*Elle a chaud au cul*) meaning "She's hot for it".

Marcel Duchamp, *L.H.O.O.Q., or or La Joconde*
1964 (replica of 1919 original),

Pencil on reproduction of Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa.

© Association Marcel Duchamp / ADAGP, Paris / Artists Rights Society (ARS),
New York 2017. Educational Fair Use, High quality image [here](#).



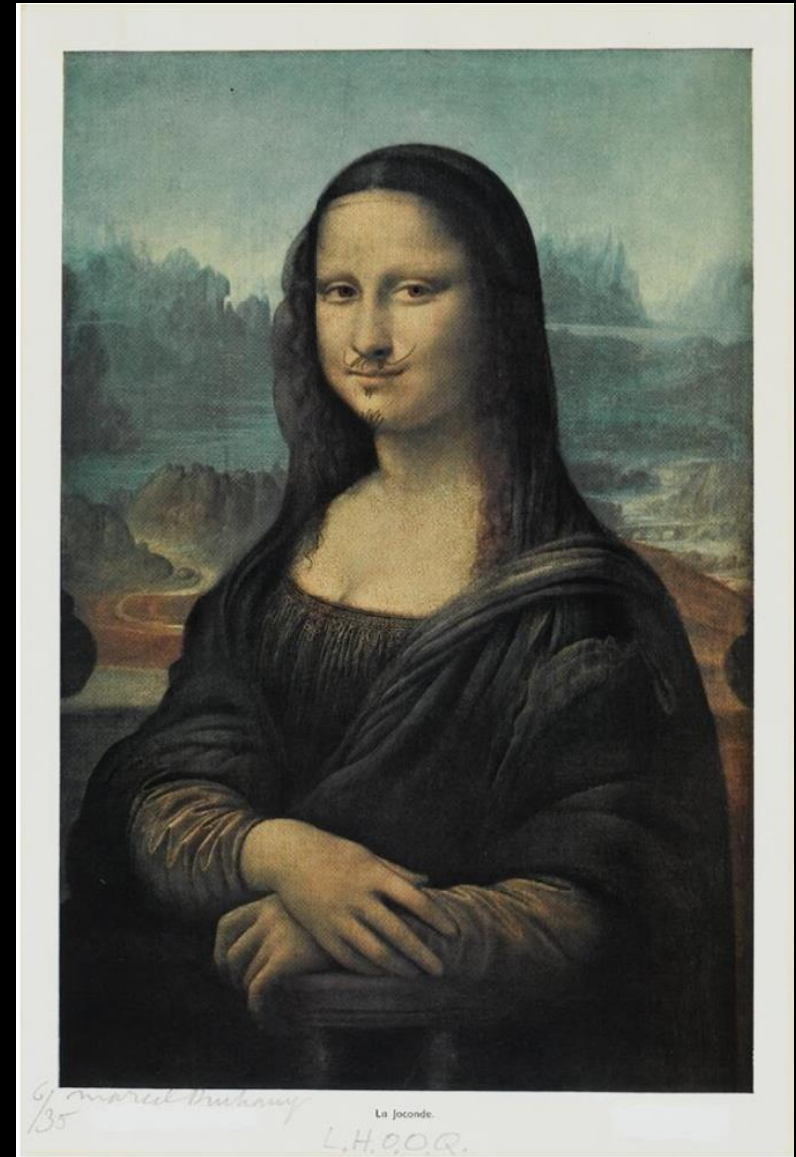
Duchamp challenges the preconceived notions
on what constitutes art.

In *L.H.O.O.Q.*, Duchamp pokes fun at an iconic
art object. He appropriates a work of art from
the canon of European art, presents it in a new
context, and provides new meaning.

Marcel Duchamp, *L.H.O.O.Q.*, or or *La Joconde*
1964 (replica of 1919 original),

Pencil on reproduction of Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*.

© Association Marcel Duchamp / ADAGP, Paris / Artists Rights Society (ARS),
New York 2017. [Educational Fair Use](#), High quality image [here](#).



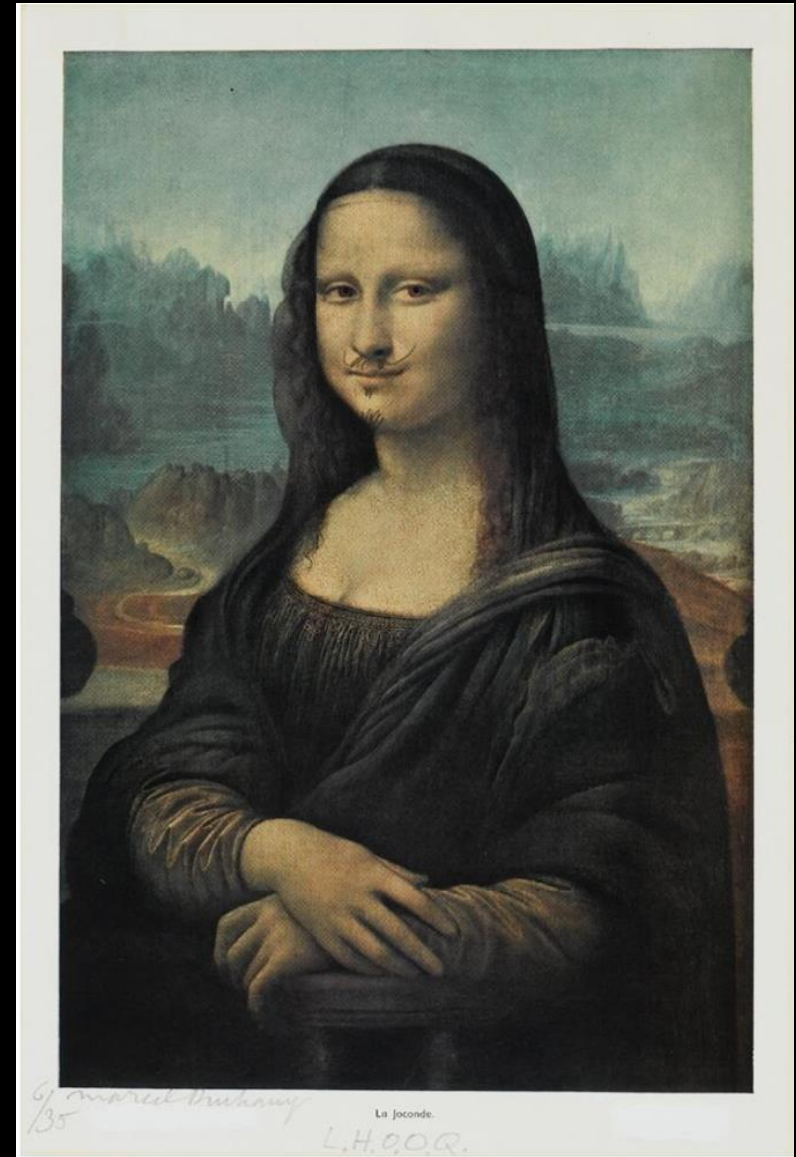
This style of appropriation will be increasingly utilized
in Postmodernism.

Thinking about our contemporary culture, we may ask
ourselves if Duchamp is the grandfather of the meme?

Marcel Duchamp, *L.H.O.O.Q., or or La Joconde*
1964 (replica of 1919 original),

Pencil on reproduction of Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa.

© Association Marcel Duchamp / ADAGP, Paris / Artists Rights Society (ARS),
New York 2017. [Educational Fair Use](#), High quality image [here](#).



After 1922, Duchamp made little art, described himself as “retired artist”, and devoted himself to chess.



Marcel Duchamp Playing Chess
Author: [Matthew Butler](#)
Source: Flickr, License: [CC BY 2.0](#)

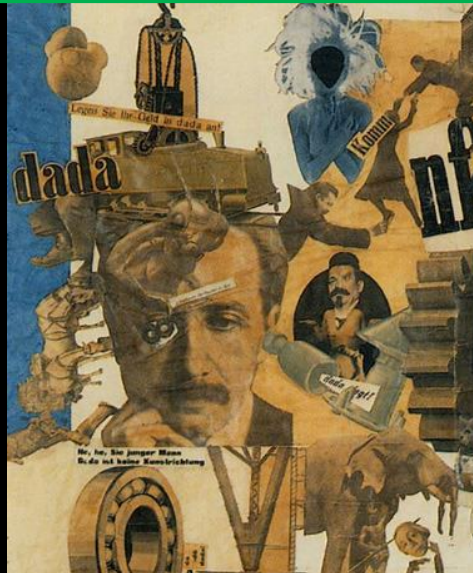
Marcel Duchamp, *L.H.O.O.Q., or or La Joconde*, 1964 (replica of 1919 original).
Cropped from original. © Association Marcel Duchamp / ADAGP, Paris / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York 2017, [Educational Fair Use](#).

Hannah Höch was the sole female member of the Berlin Dada group. Her work focused on collage and photomontage, many of which were political.

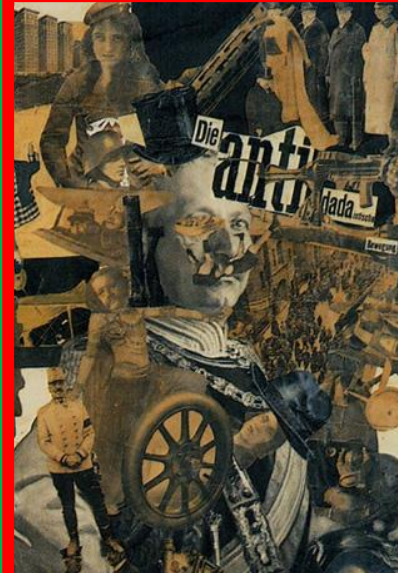
Hannah Höch
*Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada through the Last
Weimar Beer-belly Cultural Epoch in Germany*
Collage, 1919.
Source: [Wikipedia](#)
License: Public Domain (US)



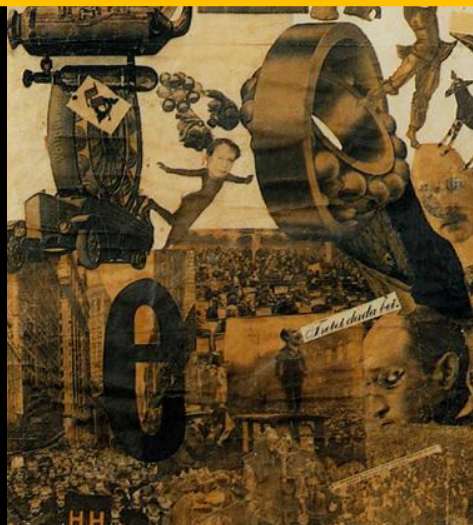
*"Invest your money
in Dada!"*
Tongue-in cheek
suggestions to fund
the Dada
movement.



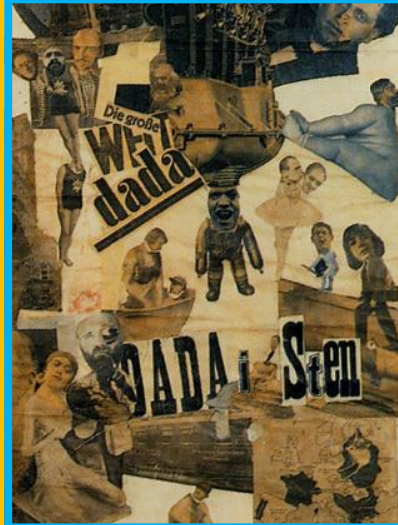
Anti-Dadaists
Images of
politicians whose
policies opposed
Dada



"Join Dada!"
With scenes of mass
gatherings in the
lower left.



*Dadaists in
Dada World*
Images of Dada
artists.



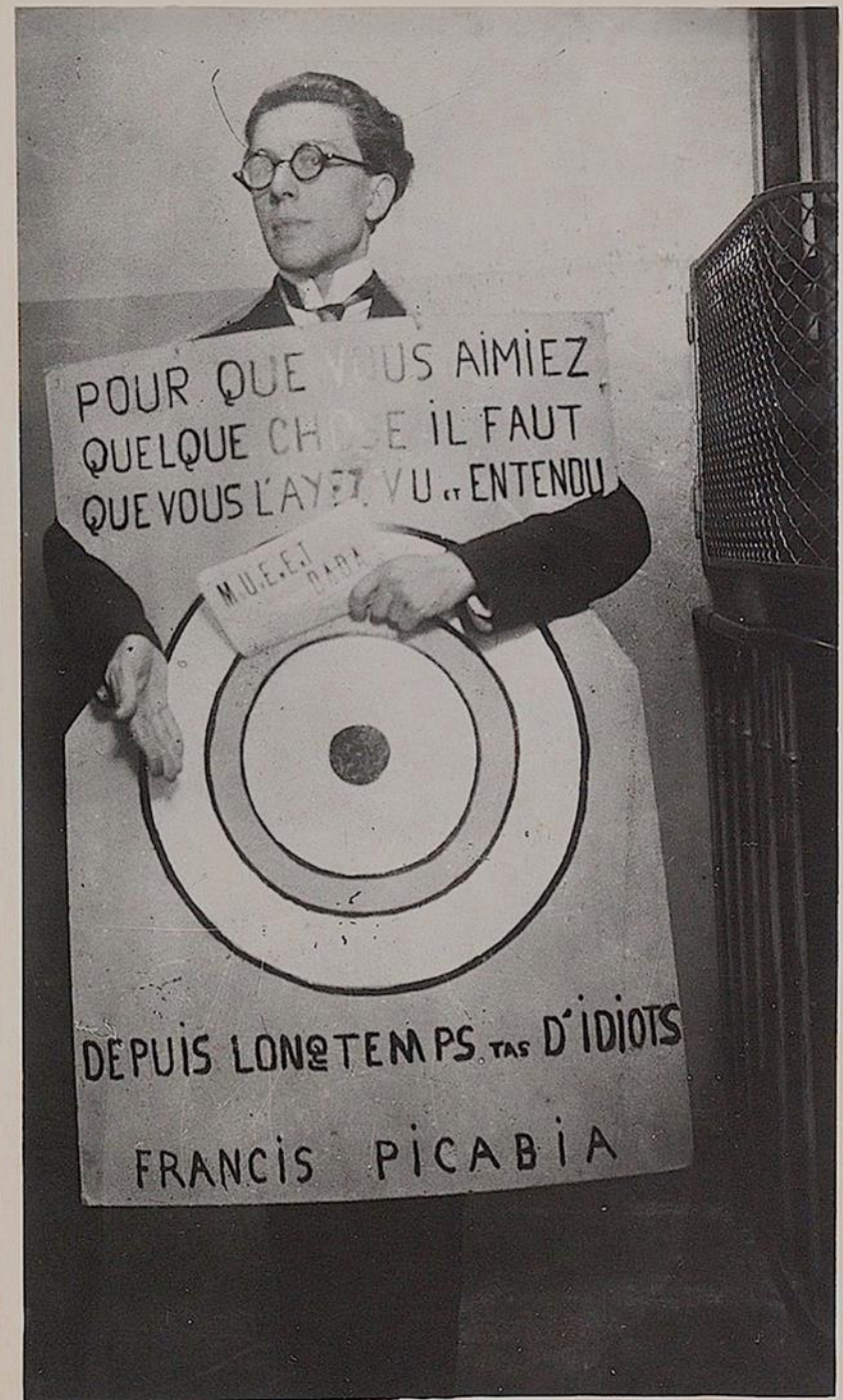
Hannah Höch *Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada through the Last Weimar Beer-belly Cultural Epoch in Germany*
Collage, 1919. Source: [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cut_with_the_Kitchen_Knife_Dada_through_the_Last_Weimar_Beer-belly_Cultural_Epoch_in_Germany), License: Public Domain (US)

For an interactive image, please visit:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/32535532@N07/3179940950>



Hannah Höch
*Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada through the Last
Weimar Beer-belly Cultural Epoch in Germany*
Collage, 1919.
Source: [Wikipedia](#)
License: Public Domain (US)

The Dada art movement was brief and many of the Dadaists eventually became Surrealists. The Dada interest in the incidental and the automatic, the blending of unexpected images, and the reinterpretation of objects was then translated into Surrealist works of art.



*André Breton at Dada festival in Paris
bearing a sign designed by Francis Picabia*

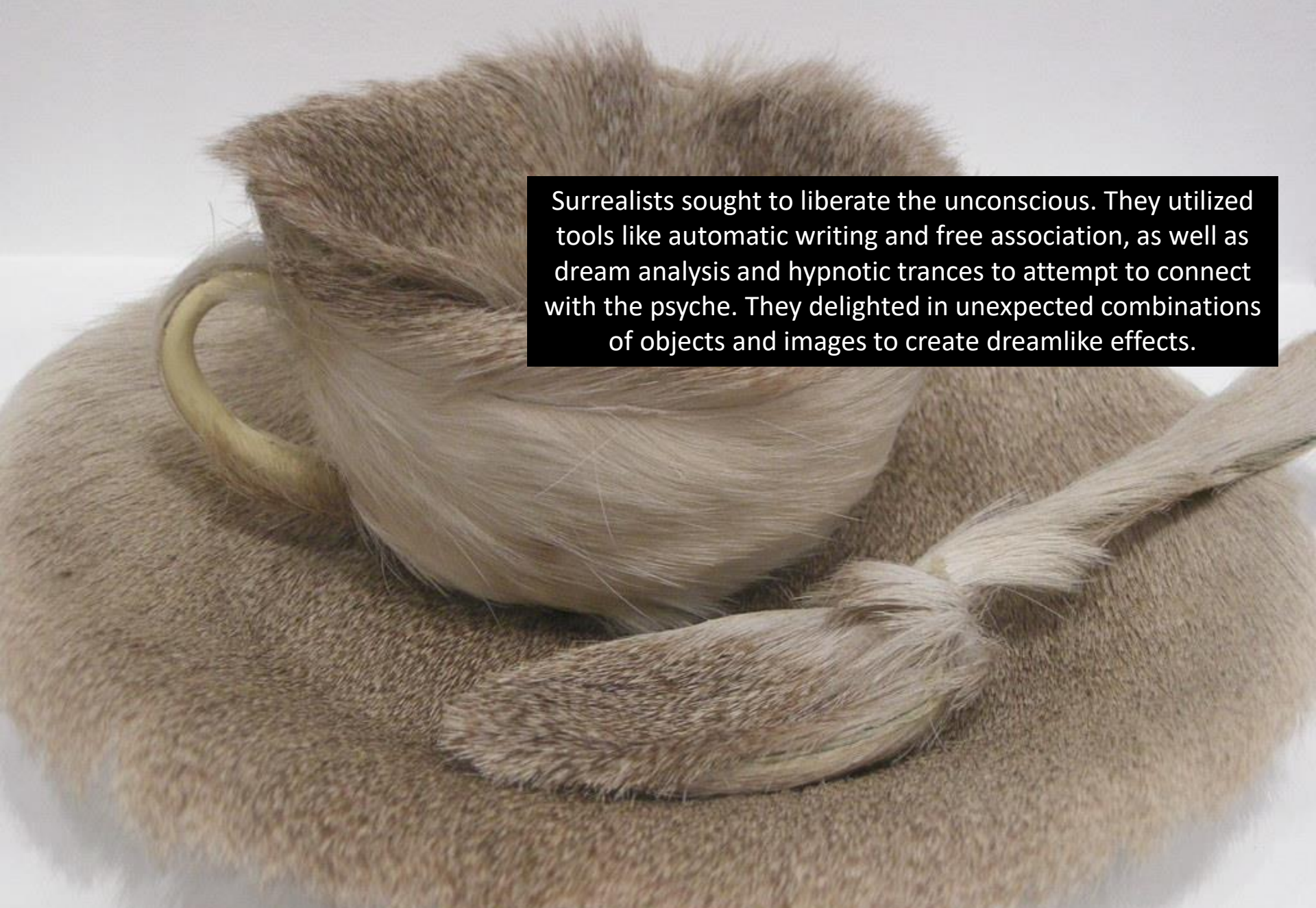
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

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A surrealist artwork by Meret Oppenheim titled 'Object'. It features a cup, saucer, and spoon covered in brown fur. The cup is on the left, the saucer is in the middle, and the spoon is on the right. The fur is a light brown color and has a soft, textured appearance. The objects are set against a plain white background.

SURREALISM

Meret Oppenheim, *Object*, Fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon, 1936.
Author: [Mélisande*](#), Source: Flickr, License: [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)



Surrealists sought to liberate the unconscious. They utilized tools like automatic writing and free association, as well as dream analysis and hypnotic trances to attempt to connect with the psyche. They delighted in unexpected combinations of objects and images to create dreamlike effects.

Meret Oppenheim, *Object*, Fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon, 1936.
Author: [Mélisande*](#), Source: Flickr, License: [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)



Man Ray was first associated with the Dada artists and then became a Surrealist.

Man Ray's *The Gift*, blends Dada techniques with Surrealist interests.

Man Ray
The Gift

Author: [Jens Cederskjold](#)

Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

License: [CC BY 3.0](#)



The bizarre addition of a row of tacks to a common household iron renders it utterly unusable.

The iron, an object that is meant to maintain the status quo of tidiness and presentability, is rendered subversive by the row of tacks. The tacks invert the object and destroy its usefulness. If one were to press a shirt with this iron, the shirt would be utterly destroyed.

Man Ray
The Gift, Replica of 1921 original
Author: [Jens Cederskjold](#)
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#)
License: [CC BY 3.0](#)



Similarly, Meret Oppenheim renders a set of daily objects completely unusable in *Object*.

Meret Oppenheim

Object

Fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon, 1936.

Author: [Mélisande*](#),

Source: Flickr, License: [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)



Meret Oppenheim's *Object* is strange and dreamlike. The fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon attract the viewer with the soft, silky surface of gazelle fur.

Meret Oppenheim

Object

Fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon, 1936.

Author: [Mélisande*](#),

Source: Flickr, License: [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)



However, if one were to attempt to use the objects in the way they were intended they would become utterly repulsive.

The wet tea in the cup would instantly render the soft fur grotesque and nightmarish.

Meret Oppenheim

Object

Fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon, 1936.

Author: [Mélisande*](#),

Source: Flickr, License: [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)



Salvador Dalí's jewel-like painting *Persistence of Memory* shows a dreamscape which appears as if it is a scene from deep within an abandoned memory.

Salvador Dalí, *Persistence of Memory*, Oil on canvas, 1931.

© 2019 Salvador Dalí, Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.
Educational Fair Use, High quality image [here](#).



A desert-like landscape reminiscent of Dalí's childhood home stretches into deep space. The geometric blocks are startling within this vast landscape.

Clocks and the discarded flesh of a face with long eyelashes seem to melt in the heat. Insects hover over and consume the melting timepieces.

Salvador Dalí, *Persistence of Memory*, Oil on canvas, 1931.

© 2019 Salvador Dalí, Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.
[Educational Fair Use](#), High quality image [here](#).



The master of the Surrealist tableau, Salvador Dalí presents a scene from deep within the psyche that suggests concepts of memory and the passage of time.

Salvador Dalí, *Persistence of Memory*, Oil on canvas, 1931.

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Salvador Dalí, *Persistence of Memory*, Oil on canvas, 1931.
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Reading List: 18_On the Dada of Art Versus the Dada of War

Introduction to Dada:

<https://smarthistory.org/introduction-to-dada/>

Article with includes narrative of the meaning of the name “Dada”:

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/dada-115169154/>

Article about World War I and Dada:

https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/dada/

Military technology of World War I:

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/world-war-i-rotogravures/articles-and-essays/military-technology-in-world-war-i/>

About the photo of Andre Breton at the Paris Dada Festival:

<https://news.artnet.com/opinion/andre-breton-moma-dadaglobe-reconstructed-541673>

Video lecture on Duchamp’s *Fountain*:

<https://smarthistory.org/marcel-duchamp-fountain/>

Article including quote by Duchamp on *Fountain*:

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/feb/09/art>

Article about Duchamp, including description of *L.H.O.O.Q.*:

<https://manhattanarts.com/marcel-duchamp-stirred-controversy-and-influence/>

Detailed analysis of Hannah Höch’s *Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada Through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch of Germany*:

<https://smarthistory.org/hannah-hoch-cut-with-the-kitchen-knife-dada-through-the-last-weimar-beer-belly-cultural-epoch-of-germany/>

Trivium Art History page showing more works by Hannah Höch:

<https://arthistoryproject.com/artists/hannah-hoch/>

An introduction to Surrealism:

<https://smarthistory.org/surrealism-intro/>

An article about Man Ray’s *The Gift*:

<https://smarthistory.org/man-ray-the-gift/>

An article about Meret Oppenheim’s *Object*:

<https://smarthistory.org/meret-oppenheim-object-fur-covered-cup-saucer-and-spoon/>

An video lecture about Salvador Dali's *Persistence of Memory*:

<https://smarthistory.org/salvador-dali-the-persistence-of-memory/>

Sketchbook Assignment: 18_On the Dada of Art versus the Dada of War

(Based on project from [MoMA Learning](#) on Dada word play)

Tristan Tzara, one of the founding member of Dada, wrote in 1920:

TO MAKE A DADAIST POEM

Take a newspaper.

Take some scissors.

Choose from this paper an article of the length you want to make your poem.

Cut out the article.

Next carefully cut out each of the words that makes up this article and put them all in a bag.

Shake gently.

Next take out each cutting one after the other.

Copy conscientiously in the order in which they left the bag.

The poem will resemble you.

And there you are—an infinitely original author of charming sensibility, even though unappreciated by the vulgar herd.

In the style of a Dadaist, first choose one or two paragraphs from an article or excerpt of a favorite essay or text. You may choose to follow the Dadaist method and complete the poem by hand, using scissors, or you may use an online Dada poem generator. My favorite is here: <http://www1.lasalle.edu/~blum/c340wks/DadaPoem.htm>. Copy your poem into your sketchbook.