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MUSIC AND ITS RELATION TO FUTURISM,
CUBISM, DADAISM, AND SURREALISM
1905 TO 1950

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
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by
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Reader, if chance or native courage brings you into the presence of a young artist who has painted a picture of a fragmentary, dark-blue baby on the bridge of a pink battleship, or a composer who has written a symphony dealing with the high cost of living, be warned and refrain from asking the young painter or the young musician what is the purpose of his art. . . .

I paint things, says the young man, as the world will see them fifty years from now. I reproduce sounds, says the young man, as the world will hear them fifty years from now.

But the future writes its music on the basis of the pragmatic philosophy and paints its pictures in accordance with the principles of the New Psychology of the Abnormal as formulated by Professor Marzhasen of Gotha.

Author anonymous

The Nation, Vol. XCIV, April 11, 1912,
pp. 355-356.

FOREWORD

Inasmuch as this investigator can determine, no major study has been done concerning music's relation to the "isms" selected for this discussion. The contemporary interest in the movements themselves has been so widespread that the documentation of them, in scattered accounts, is enormous. It is disappointing that these records provide little or no information about the musical aspects of the movements; the graphic and literary accounts, on the other hand, have been accorded generous treatments. Since futurism, cubism, and surrealism, in their origins, were oriented toward the visual and literary arts, it is not surprising that these two aspects would receive the greatest amount of attention. The meager attention to music and the distortion of its role in the movements, as has largely been the case, has created an artistic imbalance.

This writer's efforts have been directed toward an exhaustive search for factors which have, in some way or other, linked music with these movements. Musical futurism has been the easiest to identify, although its underlying theories are not always clear, since the futurists, in explaining their theories, were not always convincing, perhaps even to themselves. This writer's main attempt has been to interpret ideas that were frequently vague and poorly explained

to begin with. It will become evident to the reader, in the case of the dadaists, and to some extent the surrealists, the provocative nature of their activities was deliberately designed to create incomprehension, incoherency, and confusion.

The most common points of agreement were selected, while personal judgments have also been included. This author, feeling that most of the discussions are highly controversial, and not necessarily conclusive, occasionally points out the discrepancies in the arguments. Because many of the statements are subjective opinions, the reader will frequently need to draw his own conclusions.

Since the "isms" were more active in France, Germany, and Italy, the original books, documents, and articles were written in these languages. The majority of these also have been translated into English as well as other languages. The Dada Painters and Poets, for example, contains the writings of more than a dozen of the most prominent dadaists; while the Dada Monograph includes additional writers. The "Dada Dictionary," included in this latter work, is useful in many ways, but not totally reliable. This writer has included a glossary of terms as a convenient reference for the reader unfamiliar with the terminology involved. In addition to the printed sources, a great amount of information was obtained through personal interviews, concert performances, and letters, some of which are not cited in the study sources.

The author recognizes the valuable assistance of many persons such as Virgil Thomson, Vladimir Ussachevsky, Marcel

Duchamp, Pierre Boulez, Otto Luening, and Peter Yates, who supplied documents, letters, interviews, recordings, and other information pertinent to this study. The efforts of Fred J. Backhaus and William W. Bailey in collaboration with this author were instrumental in realizing meaningful translations of materials that were otherwise available only in the German and French languages.

As far as possible, material is arranged in chronological order, although the divisions cannot always be consistent in this regard. The futurist and cubist movements, for example, developed almost concurrently, and, although many sources place cubism before futurism, futurist records reveal that its earliest theories were being formulated in Marinetti's Poesia which was founded between 1903 and 1905.

The discussion of the music itself, beginning with the third chapter, uses as its guidelines actual aesthetic creeds, collaboration among musicians, painters, and poets, and analogies provided by the writers themselves. Although analogy may appear to represent a superficial kind of treatment in many instances, and is far from being conclusive, yet it represents the speculative thinking of many critics and writers. The qualifications of the latter likewise may be questioned, but they are entitled nonetheless to their opinions. Whatever virtues this study has, the intent of this author is to point out the most significant relations, to expose the most obvious prejudices that have created considerable misunderstanding about the composers and their relations to these

movements, to establish as nearly as possible a line of musical continuity if any, and, most important, to provide an equitable account of the position of music within the four movements.

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CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENTS

Futurism

Futurism was, by and large, an Italian art movement appearing and developing approximately at the same time as cubism. There were no uncertain connotations about the use of the word, futurism, nor the movement it described; it was selected by the poet Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, and all the members of the movement accepted it wholeheartedly. Futurism began to bombard traditional art with manifestos and other literary propaganda about 1909. It was the only art movement at this time whose protagonists were apparently fully cognizant of the technological advances of the twentieth century; they were deeply concerned with the political and social changes that occurred in the first four decades of the twentieth century and attempted to develop their art ideology on the basis of these changes. The boisterous, pretentious, uncompromising, and radical attitudes of futurism were propagated by its founder Marinetti and his colleagues, who carried their movement to the public in a manner similar to that of a political campaign, though more often with greater zest and fanaticism. In order to understand better the nature of futurism's violent spirit it is necessary to provide a

brief account of the political and social factors that affected its origin and development so strongly.

Following the assassination of King Humbert (July 29, 1900) by an anarchist, and contrary to the expectations of those who had hoped for a radical uprising, Italy's new king, Victor Emanuel III, established a new monarchy that represented the beginning of a long period of social and political pacification. The political involvement of this monarchy was varied, but it was largely made up of Socialists and Catholics. This era lasted from 1903 to about 1914, with Giovanni Giolitti exerting the greatest influence and control over the Italian people, politicians, and to a great extent, Pope Pius X. Under Giolitti's leadership Italy was drawn into a system that could boast of contented industrial classes, a steady rise in economic living standards for the masses, and marked improvement in foreign relations with France and England. World War I dissolved this Triple Alliance and after the war, Italy moved rapidly towards a militant nationalism.¹

During these years Italian politics became the chief concern of several literary figures whose writings, usually political in nature and content, exerted considerable influence upon the populace. These figures included Benedetto

¹Rosa Trillo Clough, Futurism: The Story of a Modern Art Movement. A New Appraisal (New York, Philosophical Library, 1961), pp. 3-8.

Croce, G. Salvemini, Enrico Corradini, Enrico Leone, and Luigi Federzoni.² Leone and Georges Dorel, along with Benito Mussolini, became ardent patriots and promoted nationalism until the beginning of World War II. Other literary personalities such as Ardengo Soffici and Giovanni Papini were initially opposed to futurist activities, but later became closely associated with the aims and goals of nationalism and futurism and even founded a periodical, Lacerba, in the latter's behalf. This journal assumed a political position and attempted to promote patriotism, imperialism, and interventionism, as well as futurism.³

Marinetti's journal, Poesia, founded in 1904 or 1905, carried one of the earliest manifestations of futurism in 1909.⁴ In the same year (February 20) another journal, Figaro, carried a manifesto which attempted to draw attention to Italy's decadent art by denouncing all of its traditions. This proclamation, like many of its successors, was concerned with the complacent and cultural weakness of the Italian personality. It attracted such personalities as the hypercritical individualist, the pacifist, the oversexed youth and his

²Ibid., pp. 9-10. Clough mentioned Croce's La Critica, Estetica, Brevarios; Salvemini's L'Unità; Corradini's Il Regno, and Leone's Il Divenire Sociale.

³Werner Haftmann, Painting in the Twentieth Century, Vol. I, translated by Ralph Manheim (New York, Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher, 1966), p. 106.

⁴Horace B. Samuel, "The Future of Futurism," Fortnightly Review, XCIX (April, 1913), 73.

exploitation of women, and the brave patriot living in the past.⁵ A year later (February 11, 1910) Marinetti, joined by the futurist painters, Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Giacomo Balla, and Gino Severini, published another manifesto, patriotic in substance, but nevertheless condemning Italy's past. Concurrent with their condemnation of their heritage, the futurists pointed out the pre-eminent role Italy had played in the development of art, referring to themselves as primitives entering into a rebirth of nationalism.⁶

The negative side of futurism could be recognized in several attitudes concerning morality and the revolt against tradition. The denial of morality involved women's rights and the sanctity of the past, while the revolt against tradition was directed against Italian insistence on idolizing antiquity. The futurists, for example, made temerarious demands that the Venetian canals be drained and that libraries be burned. On the positive side, futurists pointed out that technical and mechanical achievements, such as the motorcar, airplane, dynamo, and electricity, should be put on an artistic footing. Marinetti, in urging that the motorcar was to assume the role of Pegasus and hence serve as the symbol of

⁵Clough, Futurism, pp. 13-15.

⁶Ibid., pp. 18-19.

a new kind of spiritual transport, sought to rekindle poetic imagination in modern terms.⁷

Philosophical influences of various personalities from the past and present were instrumental in shaping the destiny of futurism. At the outset of the movement, Papini, a poet and philosopher, opposed futurists and futurism, denouncing their efforts as noisy, clownish, and boisterous; he declared that their so-called new ideas were outdated, having actually originated with Verhaeren, Whitman, and D'Annunzio. He also insisted that vers libre had been imported from France and that Strindberg and Weininger inspired the futurists' attacks on women.⁸ Later, however, Papini recognized in futurism a healthy opposition to stagnant traditionalism and attempted to uphold futurist actions, insisting that they were new and advanced ideas for Italy.

Futurists frequently spoke of Nietzsche and D'Annunzio as good disciples of their ideals. Marinetti, however, claimed that there was a difference between the Nietzsche superman and the futurist superman, pointing out that Nietzsche was the most obstinate worshipper of ancient beauty, as well as a product of Hellenic imagination, whereas the futurist

⁷Joshua C. Taylor, Futurism (Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961), p. 11.

⁸Clough, Futurism, p. 34.

superman was "the disciple of the Engine, the enemy of books, that is, an exponent of personal experience."⁹

In 1913, the futurists, openly opposing the monarchy as well as prevailing doctrines of democracy, took an aggressive stand in politics by campaigning against Italian parliamentary institutions and even opposed the conservative party, denouncing it "as the bulwark of both the monarchy and the Vatican."¹⁰ Admitting that parliamentarism once gave the masses an illusion of participation, futurists claimed that the working classes had been misled and advocated the general strike as the only efficient weapon for the working class.¹¹ The opposition to the monarchy was further emphasized at the close of World War I and was eventually perpetuated by Mussolini and early Fascism. The futurists felt that the needs of the lower classes could be fulfilled by selecting qualified leaders from all classes and that their superior capacity should carry with it the exercise of authority.¹²

Futurists believed in youthful leadership of the government as well as the possibility of leadership through painters and poets. In the futurist platform of October 11, 1913, Marinetti pointed out that Italy had been ruled by unscrupulous lawyers, philosophers, and kings, and proposed a government

⁹Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 29-30.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 29-30. Marinetti claimed a profound respect for the working class.

¹²Ibid., p. 29.

that would be ruled by painters and poets, insisting that because of their awareness of technical progress they would, as rulers, be better qualified to comply with the needs and conditions of a mechanized society.¹³ He attempted to explain this in his play, Le Roi Bombance, in which a revolutionary movement was aimed at placing "the State under the tutelage of art and in the hands of the Poets."¹⁴

Literature

Futurism, like many other movements, aspired toward a super-reality and a sincere mystic idealism. Just how the futurists achieved a literary manifestation of this aspiration has been revealed in their attempts to construct a new kind of free verse that represented a rough figuration of machinism and a theoretical concept of speed. Clough has provided several illustrations showing how futurists attempted to develop an autonomous literature that presumably would have a life of its own. The first process employed the use of intuitive faculties involving intuition, analogy, and irony. The second process, concerning actual poetics, utilized stylistic devices that abolished syntax and included metrical reform, onomatopoeia, type-painting, and synthetic lyricism. The third process provided the result, the synthetic play and the vehicle through which they could perform and demonstrate, the theater.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

The attitude of the futurist poet toward literary intuition was anti-intellectual, and he made every attempt to oppose the intellect by attacking syllogistic reasoning. Marinetti stated that unconscious inspiration and lucid volition were often resolved in favor of one another, or occasionally existed side by side, allowing for a free creative spirit that resulted in incomprehensible spontaneity of a conception and execution. Intuition enabled the futurist to discover analogies, and analogies provided the power to discover identity in diversity--to identify human sensation with the "living feel of matter."¹⁵ Futurists adapted the aesthetics of analogy to a philosophy of irony. Soffici described this process as being

. . . the manner of seeing of those who realize the absolute futility of what they have labored at, who suddenly discover the disproportion between expectation and realization and save themselves from tragic pessimism by retreating into the citadel of poetry from whose heights they can look down and laugh at the futile spectacle of man's ambitions.¹⁶

Abolition of syntax, which involved the deletion of sentence-retarding words, provided a release from grammatical subserviency and allowed the construction of speedier phrases with more impact. This was achieved by employing several conjoined adjectives in succession (for the purpose of distinction rather than embellishment) as headlights for the substantives that followed, as well as through the deletion

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 44-46.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 47.

of adverbs or by replacing a conjugation with an infinitive, each substantive thus having a double (man-bomber, woman-bay). Along with this, punctuation disappeared and was partially replaced by mathematical signs or by familiar musical indications (più presto, rallentando). In metrical reform, free verse, at first accepted and used by futurists, was thought to be inadequate and was replaced by what was termed parole in libertà (word autonomy). Besides the metrical avoidances, futurists, through the process of onomatopoeia, distorted, deformed, and reshaped words. This was frequently accomplished through increasing or lessening the number of vowels and consonants. Onomatopoeia was also used directly and imitatively, such as ssüi to reproduce the whistle of a tugboat, or other sounds, such as boom to describe the sound of a cannon.¹⁷ Poetic application of synthetic lyricism involved the elimination of superfluous items of the clause or sentence to introduce the utmost compression. The principle of type-painting involved the dispersion of letters into every conceivable arrangement and angle. These were set up in differing styles of varying colors. Some of the results of type-painting have often suggested imitative art.¹⁸ An example of mixed words and letters is Marinetti's Parole in

¹⁷Ibid., p. 52.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 48-52. The journal Lacerba included synthetic compositions.

Libertà, and a similar idea was introduced by Carrà through a collage on cardboard called "Free-Word Painting" (Patriotic



Plate 1. Marinetti: Parole in Libertà¹⁹

Celebration, 1914).²⁰

¹⁹Taylor, Futurism, p. 110. Two other examples, Nos. 214, 215 by Giacoma Balla are included in Archivi del Futurismo, Vol. II, Maria Drudi Gambillo, editor, raccolti e ordinati da Maria Drudi Gambillo e Teresa Fiori, Roma, de Luca, 1962, p. 115.

²⁰Ibid.

Futurists were strongly opposed to drama, tragedy, and melodrama, and made the traditional theater the subject of their attacks. The vaudeville theater, informal, dynamic, and versatile, and having no formal tradition of its own, was a more adaptable medium for futurist expression. Futurist theater emphasized the abandonment of traditional art, made allowances for movement of color and form, and allowed no distinction between the stage, boxes, or orchestra. Everyone, including spectators, was allowed to become actors. This provided futurists with an almost unlimited opportunity for provocative endeavors. Their plan to integrate the theater with life often involved the most ludicrous antics: actors with blue necks and purple arms; performances intentionally stopped with fistfights; putting glue on chairs; selling tickets in a manner in which prostitutes would sit next to prudes, teachers next to pupils, enemies next to each other; and the discrediting of works of great masters such as Beethoven or Bach by having their compositions played backwards, the interpolation of Neapolitan songs, or providing syncopated renditions of Chopin. An occasion illustrating the hostility of the audience was a provocative presentation held in the Chiarella Theater in Turin, March, 1910, at which time the "Manifesto of Futurist Painters" was read from the theater stage. Their declarations were met with whistles and shouts as well as

barrages of rancid spaghetti and over-ripe fruit. Frequent fights between the performers and the audience resulted.²¹

The synthetic play (like synthetic poetry) was described as a new dramatic genre of the futurists. Based on brevity and absurdity, it was often created and performed with only a few sentences or expressions. "No sentiments, no psychological development, no atmosphere, no suggestiveness. Common sense was banished, or rather, replaced by nonsense. Stupidity, as such, was heralded as humor."²²

Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture

Marinetti's periodical, Poesia, was originally concerned with the advanced tendencies in poetry. Marinetti pondered over three words ("Electricism," "Dynamism," and "Futurism") as choices for the title of the new movement. Even though the first two were rejected, dynamism became the central theme through which all their arts evolved, especially painting.²³ Dynamism itself was influenced by impressionist doctrine which advocated "pictorial composition as the plastic expression of the influences which proceed from a milieu [environment] to an object and vice-versa."²⁴ Even though the futurists attempted to create a solidification of the impressionistic

²¹Ibid., p. 10.

²²Clough, Futurism, pp. 53-55.

²³Haftmann, Painting in the Twentieth Century, p. 107.

²⁴Clough, Futurism, p. 19.

atmosphere, they accepted divisionism not as a pictorial device but as an inborn device for complementarism. Futurist dynamism attempted to evoke sensations in which their paintings were supposed to suggest speed, velocity, and motion through an unending succession of the elements involved in the subject and content. An illustration to explain this would be a motion with all its variations. Dynamism was identified with reality--reality as the "unique form of spatial continuity."²⁵ Dynamism also stressed the importance of distortion in which an object, looked upon by a futurist painter, would be seen as the result of the action of light and of the influence of surrounding objects. Distortion, therefore, became a displacement of the elements of an object and an alteration of its rhythm. The combination of knowledge and apparition, two aspects of the futurist pictorial mentality, were to be felt as motions, one, knowledge, representing absolute motion; the other, apparition, relative motion. The combination constituted the dynamic nature of the plastic object. Clough has summarized this explanation in this statement:

Dynamism is the simultaneous action of the particular and characteristic motion of the object (absolute motion), together with the transformations experienced by the object as a result of its displacements in a moving or motionless milieu (relative motion).²⁶

Working through the central theme of dynamism, futurists referred to its use as a regenerated sensibility, a sensibility

²⁵Ibid., p. 87.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 84-85.

proceeding not from the ordinary appearance of things, but representing a "plastic consciousness" or a "plastic state of mind." Their attempts to explain what they meant by this were not always clear. To make this phrasing acceptable they drew upon modern science and philosophy to make their point. They also pointed to psychologists and physiologists, introduced mediumistic studies of spiritualism, and attacked formalism and rationalism. "States of mind" or "states of will" were considered pictorially as "states of form" and "states of color". Carra explained this principle:

Objects fused with their milieu by motion, transform themselves in our dynamically responsive consciousness into a rhythm of lines, volumes, [and] abstract and concrete scales chromatically generated, which, when exteriorized, become to the eye what the sonorous is to the ear.²⁷

In dynamism a stylistic element was featured through a principle requiring the gradual elimination of objects which were replaced through "force-lines" (and their combinations). Force-lines were to be found in the object as ideal lines, ideal forms, and ideal colors. These were supposed to be infinite, proceeding from real lines, forms, and colors. According to futurists, force-lines were the reasons why

²⁷Ibid., pp. 89-90. Taylor's Futurism has offered several examples in the nature of studies and drawings of States of Mind. The studies are in pencil and the drawings in ink. They bear three titles: Those Who Stay; The Farewells; and Those Who Go (all drawn in 1911, pp. 50-51). One of the drawings appearing in 1912 was an ink drawing called States of Mind: Those Who Go, p. 49.



Plate 2. Boccioni: Drawing after States of Mind: Those Who Go (1912)²⁸

their art had opposition. Some spectators were not able to grasp the infinite dynamism. The properly endowed spectator who understood futurist art would grasp the dynamism which the exigencies of the canvas made infinite. The artist, with the imprint of the object in his mind, used force-lines to continue the rhythms; it was then hoped that these would force the spectators into the center of the picture. The process of dissolution by lines and forces varied according to the object's personality and the viewer's emotion.²⁹

²⁸Taylor, Futurism, p. 49.

²⁹Ibid., p. 92.

The use of simultaneity expressed an attitude of seeing all things at one point--the expression of a total vision. The artist, affected by modern scientific life, used this acquired sense of speed to eliminate time and space. His simultaneous vision required continuity of representation, a principle that differed greatly from cubist simultaneity (immobility). Simultaneity, then, emphasized to the futurist the concept of dynamic continuity.³⁰



Plate 3. Balla: Dynamism of a Dog on Leash (Leash in Motion, 1912)³¹

The environment and the object were primary considerations of the formulas in which the futurists attempted to fuse

³⁰Ibid., pp. 95-96.

³¹Taylor, Futurism, p. 58.

diagrams of absolute movements with those of the actual motions of an object in its environment. The realization of this formula was through simultaneity. The transportation of the spectator (and artist) into the center of the picture was of great concern to the futurist painter. The idea of painting a model in repose (as was done by the cubists) was considered absurd to futurist artists. It was the contention of the futurist painter that he must express the "non-visible that lives and stirs behind the object in repose, the non-visible that is to the right and left of us and behind us."³²



Plate 4. Boccioni: The Noise of the Street Penetrates the House (1911)³³

³²Haftmann, Painting in the Twentieth Century, pp. 107-108.

³³Taylor, Futurism, p. 43.

Complementarism was another technique added to futurist principles. They felt that one form sought another, seeking a perfecting mate (indispensable to the integral expression of its temperament) through a desire for completion. This complementarism was extended to chiaroscuro and called complementary chiaroscuro, adaptable to laws of maximum brightness and maximum darkness.

Divisionism was used in connection with what the futurists called interpenetration of surfaces; many paintings were executed in an attempt to explain and demonstrate its theoretical value. Interpenetration of surfaces has been defined "as the intersection of lines and volumes differing in thickness, heaviness, and transparency, which produced a variety of chromatic tones in the resultant action of the pure, complementary colors."³⁴ This has been further described as the creative process in which the painter, inspired by his emotions, rearranged the object while the complementary action of the environment absorbed the unexpressed part of the object. This process (in which the environment penetrated the object) was called simultaneous interpenetration of surfaces.³⁵ This redistribution of the elements supposedly destroyed the spatial elements but it penetrated

³⁴Clough, Futurism, p. 101. ³⁵Taylor, Futurism, p. 83.

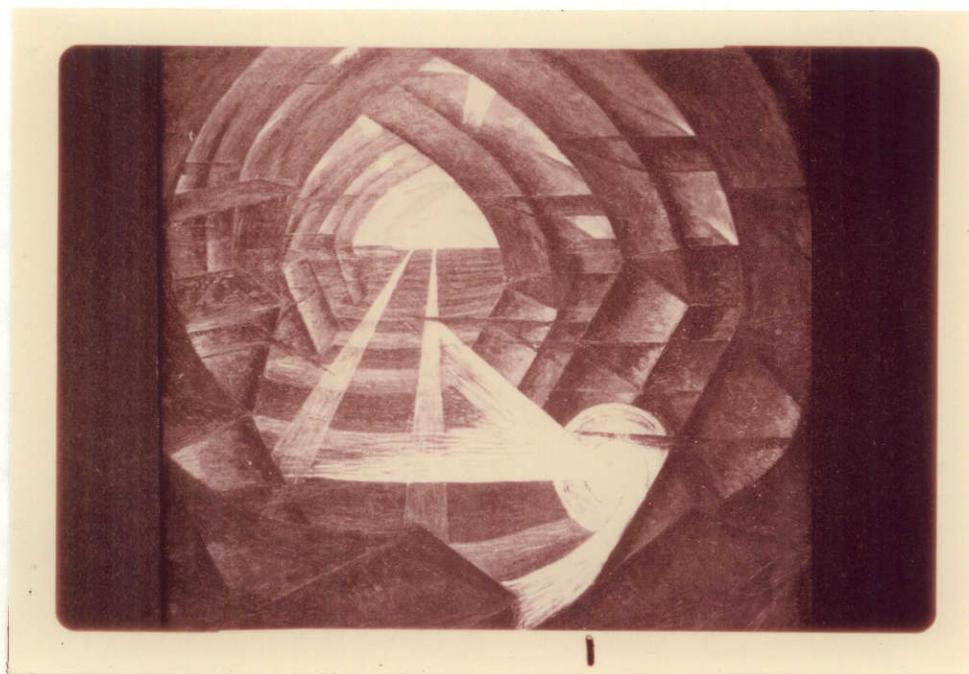


Plate 5. Russolo: Interpenetration of Houses + Light + Sky (1912)³⁶

the interior of things (objects) revealing what was hidden, at the same time disturbing the commonly observed arrangement of parts.

Many of the principles which futurist painters and sculptors used were evidenced in the titles of various works.³⁷

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Taylor, in Futurism, has provided a list of these works as follows: Solidification, Russolo, The Solidification of a Fog (1912), p. 82; velocity, speed, motion, Boccioni, The City Rises (1910-11), p. 37; distortion, Soffici, Displacement of a Lamp (1912), p. 56; dynamism, Balla, Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash (1912), p. 58; force-lines, Soffici, Lines and Volumes of a Street (1912), p. 57; rhythm, Carrà, Rhythm of Objects (ca. 1912), p. 76, Balla, Rhythm of the Violinist (1912), p. 59; simultaneity, Carrà, Simultaneity (Woman on a Balcony, 1912-13), p. 78; fusion, Boccioni, Fusion of a Head and a Window (1912), p. 93;

Marinetti's long life and active participation in Italy's nationalism under Mussolini has accounted, to a great extent, for the continuation and sporadic appearances of futurist works. The Archivi del Futurismo provides a chronological catalogue of futurist activities up to 1921; the latest example given is a manifesto by Marinetti called Tattilismo (Vedi Manifesto di vario argomento).³⁸ Futurist activities, however, continued much later than this date.

The revival of interest in painting and architecture, poetry, music, and the theater was actually a continuation and development of the theories formulated between 1909 and 1914. The names of Fortunato Depero, Enrico Prampolini, Luciano Folgare, Paolo Buzzi, Bruno Corra, and Corrado Govoni were added to the list of futurist artists during the war years. The post-war period added still more names and elaborations of the theories.

In painting a significant change was brought about with regard to the artist's basic attitude toward the object. Earlier emphasis had been placed on the objects themselves (pulleys, gears, steam shovels). Futurists, feeling that the mere fascination of these objects was not enough,

continuity and space, Boccioni, Unique Forms of Continuity and Space (1913), bronze, p. 95; Interpenetration, Russolo, Interpenetration of Houses plus Light plus Sky (1912), p. 83; interpenetration, Balla, Iridescent Interpenetrations (1912), p. 62; artist, spectator, object, environment, Boccioni, The Noise of the Street Penetrates the House (1911), p. 43.

³⁸Vol. I, p. 493.

insisted that they should become a source of spiritual inspiration. The airplane had become securely established and futurist painters formulated principles which engendered a new style of painting called aero-painting. This involved all that a painter-flyer would see from 200 to 1000 yards above the earth. In their opinion, this had nothing in common with traditional perspective of earthly panoramas. Many paintings, as a result, appeared bearing such titles as Dottori's Landscape Seen from on a High Flight, and Air Battle Over the Gulf of Naples.³⁹ This preoccupation with machines also turned to space, and Prampolini produced a canvas in 1932 called Forms and Forces in Space.⁴⁰

A curious feature of the post-war period can be seen in the renewed interest in religious art which the futurists called Sacred Futurist Art. A manifesto describing this interest was published in 1931 by Marinetti and Fillia. It set forth new standards which suggested changes relative to the use of concrete in church construction, light bulbs replacing candles, and memories of battlefields representing Hell. Futurist aero-painters painted Heaven in mystical abstraction, claiming their height advantage gave them the distinction of being the only ones qualified to produce "the

³⁹Clough, Futurism, pp. 135-144. Other examples are Emilio Veddoere's Explosion (1948), plate 8; Dottori's One Thousand Meters Above the Gulf of Spezia, plate 12; and Antonio Marasco's Airplanes, plate 14, pp. 144-145.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 144.

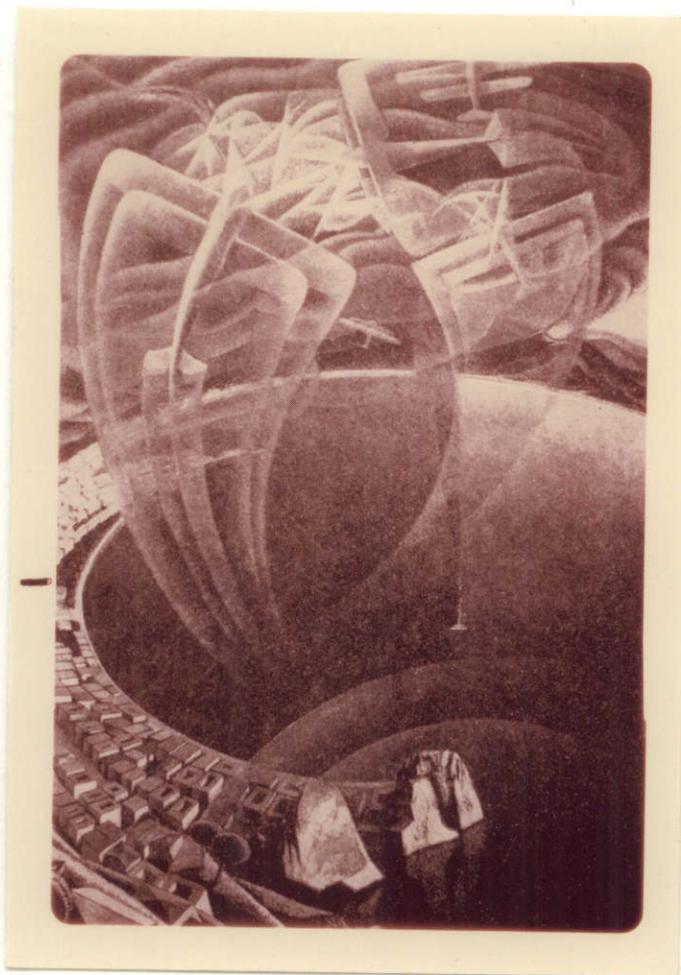


Plate 6. Dottori: Air Battle Over the Gulf of Naples⁴¹

many forms in the vitality of the 'aerial' life of the angels and saints . . . [and] to endow a fresco with the power of magical surprise in the portrayal of miracles."⁴² An exposition in Padua (1932) included Crucifixion by Dottori, and Nativity-Death-Eternity, and Adoration by Fillia.⁴³

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 141-142.

⁴³Ibid., p. 143.

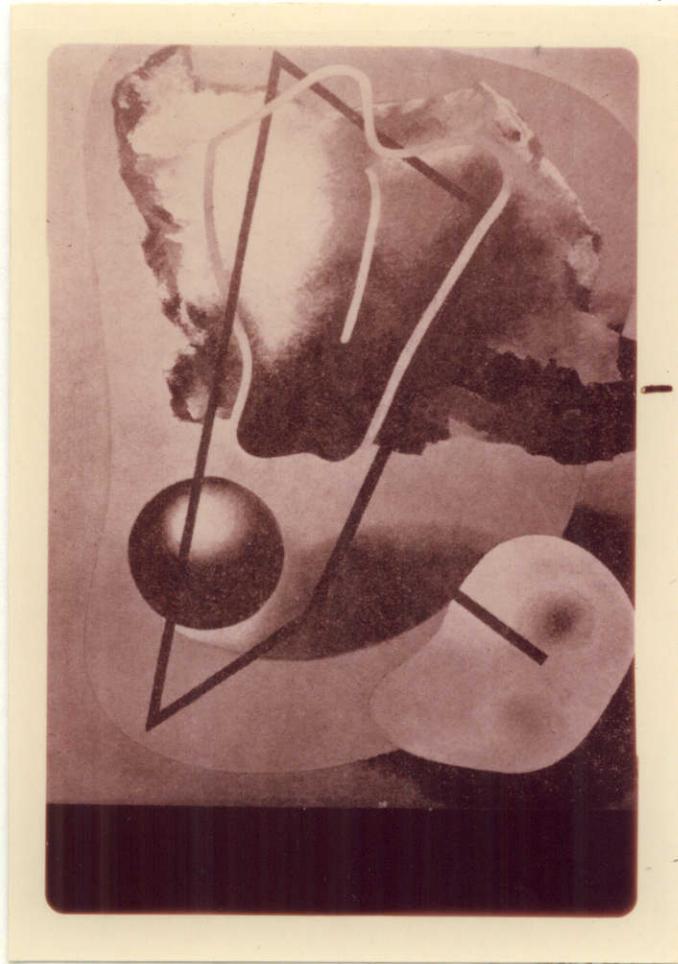


Plate 7. Prampolini: Forms and Forces in Space (1932)⁴⁴

Theater works assumed to embody the idea of improvisation in which a synthesis of many acts and scenes (not requiring months of preparation) should be enacted within a few minutes. An example of this is a play by Marinetti called The Contract, requiring approximately two minutes to perform. Prampolini, Depero, Balla, Marchi, and Bragaglia insisted on drastic changes concerning costumes,

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 144.

stage-designing, lighting, and many other factors involved in stage preparation and stage activities. Some of these changes involved the use of exaggerated colors, exaggerated make-up such as large mustaches and funnel-shaped ears. Scenery involved the use of swaying towers and trees, and collapsing roofs, while staging involved rotating platforms, slanting planes together with other attempts to create a poly-dimensional scenic space for the stage in which mechanical and electrical devices created a variety of dynamic effects. Prampolini's theories on stage technique were put into effect in 1925 when he staged Futurist Pantomimes at the Théâtre de la Madeleine in Paris.⁴⁵

The revival of futurist architecture was actually a continuation of Saint 'Elia's pre-war theories involving the planning of ideal cities. Buildings were to be the chief expression of the machine age; ornament was condemned; new materials such as concrete, glass, iron, and beaverboard as well as other synthetic materials were used. The new styles were expressed in books by Virgilio (Italia nuova) and Sartoris (Gli elementi del l'architettura funzionale), and the first exhibition of new architecture was held at Turin in 1928.⁴⁶

Literature, which showed no radical changes, was represented by two prominent writers, Marinetti and Giuseppe

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 150.

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 150-156.

Steiner. Steiner in Mental Moods in Drawing introduced a new means of expressing states of consciousness. He insisted that this could only be accomplished through drawings, expressing a real sensation exactly as it was experienced. Canguillo, in his Cafféconcerto, portrayed similar ideas and sensations, while Marinetti introduced a new futurist idea called tactilism pertaining to the sensation of touching objects. His examples were provided through tactile tables. Different materials which provided different touch impressions included sponges, silks, sandpaper, silverpaper; each was to express different touch sensations and was to be accompanied by music and special lighting.⁴⁷

Word autonomy was persistently used by Marinetti even though many of the futurists resorted to free verse. The most extreme ideas and typographical innovations were reserved for the Edizioni Futuristi di 'Poesia'. The anthology I nuovi poeti futuristi, published by Marinetti in 1925, included the names of eight poets who advocated word autonomy. Word autonomy evolved relatively little from the principles involved in its original application, especially those principles concerned with the abolition of syntax and onomatopoeia. A new type of poetry appearing, called aero-poetry, adopted the same language and principles of the plastic arts (and music in particular) already using this term, adding the expression of sensations that were supposedly experienced by aviators.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 156-158.

Cubism

Cubism came into being around 1907 as the result of the experimental studies of Pablo Picasso, a Spanish artist who had taken residence in France several years before this date. The peak of cubism's development and popularity occurred between the years 1910 and 1921. After 1922 it died out as a major art movement. Cubism developed into a major art movement because it was intellectually conceived, consciously developed, and deliberately publicized.

The name of the movement was a catchword that originated out of an incidental reference to the word "cube" by Henri Matisse. An art critic, Louis Vauxcelles, mentioned the term when referring to the works of Picasso and Georges Braque, and it was subsequently adopted by Guillaume Apollinaire.

Visual Cubism

Although several of the cubist participants were of differing nationalities, cubism was, in the main, a French movement; it was born on French soil and developed in various parts of France, particularly in Paris. Outstanding cubists who followed Picasso's style through various stages of its development were Georges Braque, Juan Gris, and Louis Marcoussis.⁴⁸ The early works of Marcoussis were closest to

⁴⁸Marcoussis was the nickname given to the artist by Guillaume Apollinaire. Louis Marcous, the real name, was replaced because Apollinaire preferred to call him Marcoussis, actually the name of a small village near Paris.

orthodox cubism than those of other artists, though his output was considerably less and his name has been omitted from many cubist discussions. Many of the painters who were fascinated with the early stages of the cubist style employed its principles for a short period of time but eventually departed from orthodox cubism, going on to develop other schools or individual styles. Even though the works of cubists were similar, especially those of Picasso and Braque, cubists themselves disliked the idea of a movement with a name and each one worked to his own conceptions.

Vital influences in Picasso's innovations were negro sculpture and late works of Cézanne, particularly examples such as Les Grandes Baigneuses (1895-1905). Even though Picasso was greatly fascinated with the pieces of negro sculpture that Maurice Vlaminck and André Derain had shown him,⁴⁹ he admitted that he found more encouragement in medieval Spanish art as well as the pre-Roman Archaic art of Iberia.⁵⁰ Most historians agree that the greatest influence on cubism was Cézanne's attention to the interpretation of form, the solidity of his works and his attempts to restore density. Fauvist art, however (see p. 116 below), was not without its influence as a number of Picasso's smaller works

⁴⁹Cecily Mackworth, Guillaume Apollinaire and the Cubists' Life, 1st American ed. (New York, Horizon Press, 1963), pp. 80-81.

⁵⁰Guy Habasque, Cubism: Biographical and Critical Study, translated by Stuart Gilbert (New York, Albert Skira, 1959), p. 16.



Plate 8. Cézanne: Les Grandes Baigneuses (ca. 1895)⁵¹

illustrate his interest in pure color, a feature which is dominant in fauvist paintings. Habasque, on the other hand, has insisted that the revelation of negro art and fauvism fell into the natural line of research that Picasso was doing rather than its being a direct influence.⁵²

The first canvas designated as a cubist work was a huge painting by Picasso (eight feet square) containing five female nudes, Les Femmes d'Alger, the painting of which began in the winter of 1906, and continued into 1907. Other works

⁵¹Maurice Raynal, Cézanne, Biographical and Critical Study, translated by James Emmons (New York, Albert Skira, 1954), p. 98.

⁵²Ibid.

were produced in 1907, setting forth the premises of the new pictorial language. One of Picasso's chief concerns was his



Plate 9. Picasso: Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. Version O) (1906-07)⁵³

attention toward form and volume, a feature which impressionism had sacrificed for color. In a number of introductory studies to Les Femmes d'Alger, Picasso introduced new methods of rendering volumes on a flat surface--volumes without recourse to

⁵³Habasque, Cubism, p. 15.

chiaroscuro. Most of the studies, consisting of figures and still lifes, evidenced vivid colors, while others were monochrome. The final result of Les Demoiselles (which was never finished) shows three figures on the left, flat, calm, massive, each with similar positions and gestures, while the two on the right differ, especially with regard to the profiles: the three on the left are in profile, while the two on the right are distorted. The noses on the heads of the two central figures are drawn in profile upon frontal faces. The latter became a commonplace feature of cubism.⁵⁴

Several artists and poets who later became cubist painters and literary advocates of cubism were startled at the sight of this highly provocative painting. Among these, Braque was highly puzzled and extremely critical. His statement to Picasso concerning this painting was: "Your painting makes one feel as if you were trying to make us eat cotton waste and wash it down with kerosene."⁵⁵

The year 1908 represented the proto-cubist year in which both Picasso and Braque were experimenting with principles that eventually led to the first important stage of cubism, analytical cubism. Picasso subsequently resorted to the extreme prominence of chiaroscuro, avoiding vivid colors, using instead dull bluish-greys, ochres, browns, dark red

⁵⁴Alfred Barr, Jr., Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art (New York, Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1946), pp. 54-55.

⁵⁵Habasque, Cubism, p. 16.

and greens. His attention to volumes resulted in pictorial results that were almost sculptural reliefs. Simple objects such as jars, bottles, vases, and fruit were favored models that allowed him to produce exact outlines (Bowls and Jugs, 1908), allowing only essential items to be

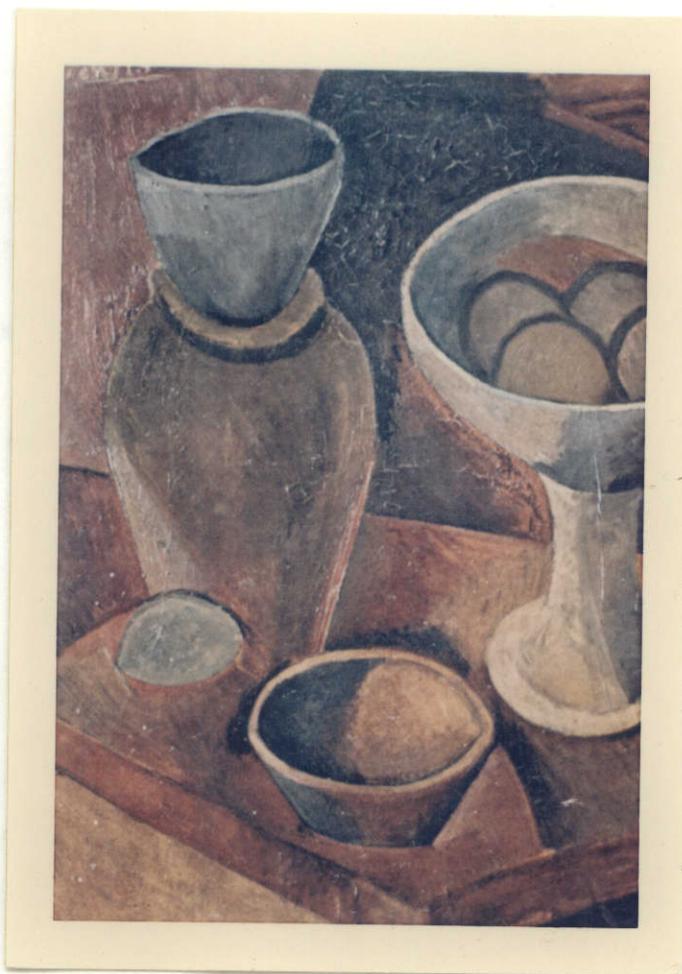


Plate 10. Picasso: Bowls and Jugs (1908)⁵⁶

emphasized. At the same time, Braque, who had become fascinated with Picasso's innovations, set about to advance

⁵⁶Habasque, Cubism, p. 26.

similar experimentation, bringing about similar results. Braque attempted to capture solid and enduring substances behind forms. His landscapes contained the most stable elements of the scene: solid leafage, tree trunk cylinders, and windowless houses. His colors were also ochres, various greens, touches of brown, and bluish-grey. Rudimentary chiaroscuro gave relief to projecting edges of volumes (Road Near L'Estaque, 1908). Picasso and Braque were of different artistic temperaments, but their techniques and results were often similar.⁵⁷ These results were generally brought about through the elimination of incidentals, bringing out prototypical geometrical forms, drastically raising horizon lines, reducing air and atmosphere, and using a minimum of light effects with color sacrificed to volume expression.⁵⁸

The initial stimulus given by Picasso and Braque in the years 1908-09 prompted other artists to utilize their principles; two artists who capitalized on the new cubist aesthetics were Juan Gris and Louis Marcoussis. The first stage of cubism, analytic, was by no means a sudden breakthrough to a new art, but was a logical consequence of the experiments of the previous years (1908-09). The analytic period was supposed to have provided a better method, and though the term analytic denotes the breaking up or taking apart the forms, many of

⁵⁷Habasque, Cubism, pp. 21-23.

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 29-31.

the geometrical connotations were only convenient descriptions that did not necessarily imply scientific or mathematical approaches; more correctly, it entailed art sensibility. Even though Princet, a mathematician friend of Picasso, may have encouraged cubist geometrizing, Barr has insisted that Princet's influence was more evident in Apollinaire's treatise on cubism, rather than on cubism itself.⁵⁹

Picasso's Girl With a Mandolin (1910), though transitional in style, has been considered one of the masterpieces of cubism appearing during this period. It involved natural forms reduced to semi-geometrical shapes, "often flattened out into rectangles or circle segments."⁶⁰ The more mature style of analytic cubism, in certain instances, involved more abstract qualities.⁶¹ By and large, analytic cubism stressed the importance of the parts assigned to planes in which the planes were dovetailed, superimposed, and tied up with the forms actually existing on the canvas; the single viewpoint of perspective was abolished and the object was viewed from a multiplicity of angles; volumes were broken up in order to liberate them from perspectives. Regardless of the varying principles (vertical, horizontal, cross-section aspects, and the use of multiple viewpoints affecting the planes), Braque and Picasso counted on the legibility of certain elements to

⁵⁹Picasso, pp. 70-71.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Female Nude (1910-11) by Picasso is an example illustrating this style.



Plate 11. Picasso: Girl With a Mandolin (1910)⁶²

make their subjects understandable. In addition, cubist experiments fluctuated back and forth with their attention varying as to the use of chiaroscuro, volume, and color: Chiaroscuro was subordinated; volume was drained of its substance and transparency of the object became evident; local color was subordinated in 1910 and 1911 but was revived

⁶²Alfred Schmeller, Cubism (New York, Crown Publishers, Inc., n. d.), Ce 20.

in 1912, usually through the imitation of textures; certain aspects of the subject were exhibited in order to characterize its form more clearly and multiplicity was fused into a single and more coherent image rather than a haphazard view of the same subject.⁶³

The period between 1910 and 1912 represented a transitional period in which analytic cubism was elaborated upon by new painting principles as well as new attitudes toward subject treatment. Even though Picasso brought forth many paintings that approached abstraction (Cadaquès, 1910; Accordionist, 1911), both he and Braque began to integrate realistic ideas in the most commonplace manner. In "Ma Jolie" (Woman with a Guitar, 1911-12), the words "Ma Jolie" (the name of a popular song) were included in the painting, an otherwise highly abstract composition.⁶⁴ In another painting, L'Arlésienne (1912), Picasso combined a profile and full face in a simultaneous application, revealing two views of an object at the same time.

Cubist interest in local color began to return through the use of papier collés. Both Braque and Picasso used materials (such as mechanically produced wall paper) in their pictures by pasting strips on the canvas. This saved them from the tedious task of painting imitations. Eventually the use of such ready made materials began to include

⁶³Habasque, Cubism, pp. 41-54. ⁶⁴Ibid.

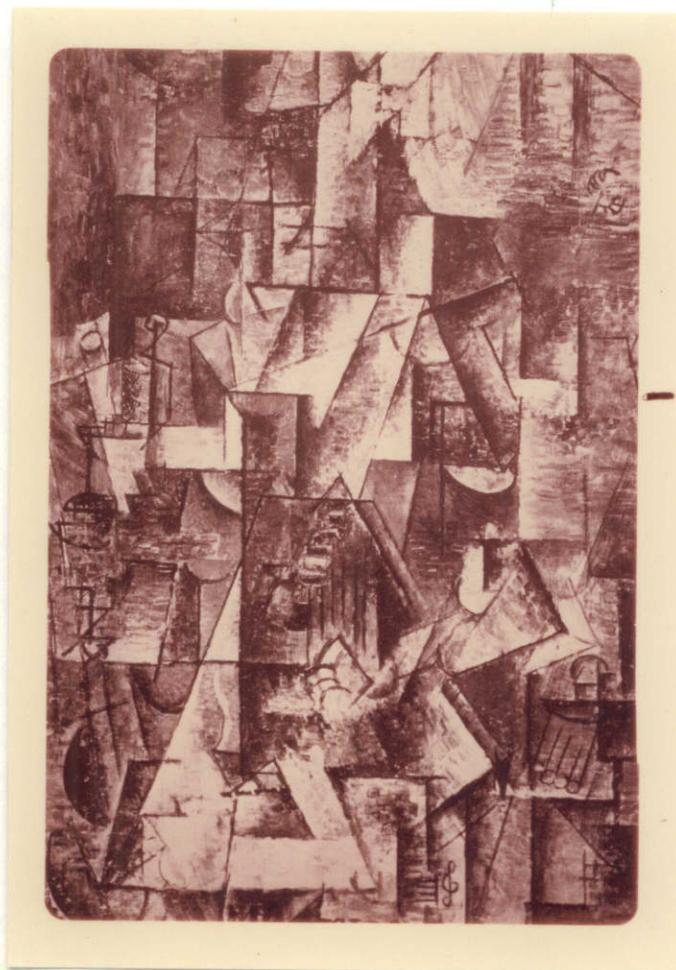


Plate 12. Picasso: "Ma Jolie" (Woman with a Guitar, 1911-12)⁶⁵

newspaper, matchboxes, postage stamps, and other materials that would be typographically more precise than hand drawn efforts. The results of these pasted objects are said to have rendered an absolute and significant value to the picture;⁶⁶ but many critics believed this procedure to be a deliberate reversion to illusionist procedures, insisting

⁶⁵Barr, Picasso, p. 76. ⁶⁶Habasque, Cubism, p. 55.

that cubist painters used this technique as a means of re-gaining touch with reality. If such is the case, then this technique would be in common with another principle, a more traditional one used by the cubists--that of trompe-l'oeil. Habasque states that this was not the case; instead, cubists were seeking to reveal the basic, constant properties of the object. He adds, however, that the cubist did not turn his back on nature but attempted to make his picture an objective representation.⁶⁷ Examples illustrating the use of papier collé are Picasso's Still Life with Chair Caning (1911-12), using pasted oilcloth simulating chair caning (also considered Picasso's first collage), and Braque's Musical Forms (1913), which used pinned paper strips.

Two prominent cubist painters whose appearance in the movement was belated were Juan Gris and Louis Marcoussis. Both began their careers by making humorous cartoons for periodicals, later following cubist principles after they were financially secure enough to paint as they wished. Many of Gris's compositions were readily comprehensible. Still Life with a Guitar (1912) and Homage to Picasso (1912), his most representative examples, provided delicacy and luminosity of color, but were more related to cubism through their tilting planes and partial variations of the viewpoint. Habasque has summed up several points of differences in

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 55-56.



Plate 13. Braque: Musical Forms (1913)⁶⁸

Gris's work and other cubists in the analytic period: the refusal to dissociate color from form; a pictorial sample of the textures figuring on the canvas-wood marble; and the subordination of various major achievements in the style were realized in Three Cards (1913) and Violin and Guitar (1913). Various works of Marcoussis showed Braque's influence and those considered the most orthodox, from the cubist

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 59.



Plate 14. Gris: Violin and Guitar (1913)⁶⁹

standpoint, were his etchings, notably La Belle Martingausie (1911-12). These contained "passages" and tilted planes showing the influence of the technique practiced by both Braque and Picasso.⁷⁰

⁶⁹James Thrall Soby, Juan Gris (New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1958), p. 29.

⁷⁰Habasque, Cubism, pp. 69-71.

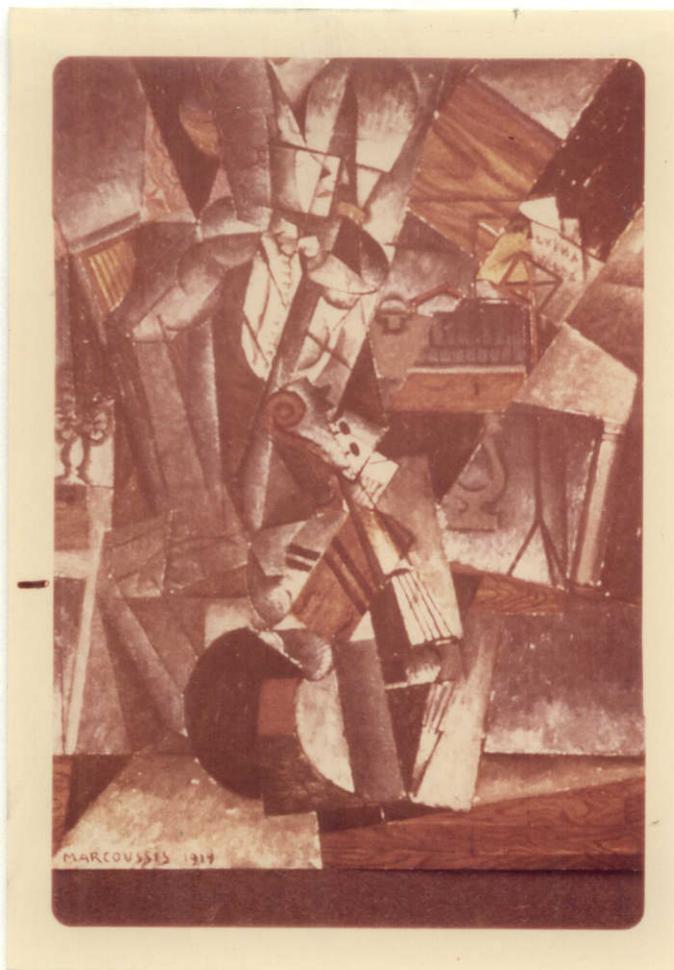


Plate 15. Marcoussis: The Musician (1914)⁷¹

The second stage of cubism, synthetic, originated as a gradual change in which its elements, appearing around 1910, began to predominate late in the year 1912 and reached a climax with Picasso's Three Musicians in 1921.⁷² The distinction between analytic and synthetic styles began with intuitive efforts directed toward penetrating the essence of the object in order to discover its basic characteristics.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 70.

⁷²Barr, Picasso, p. 82.



Plate 16. Picasso: Three Musicians (1921)⁷³

From the type-object (analytical) attention was given to the use of intuition in the gathering of preliminary data and in efforts to integrate them into a single image. In Still Life with Bottle of Maraschino (1914), Picasso used simple profiles, concentric circles for an immediate expression of its forms and volumes, stripping away the accidentals and reducing the subject to essential predicates.⁷⁴ Color, a variable attribute, was free from the servitude of "local tone." The use of collage principles was very important: "collage strengthened the awareness of the picture surface

⁷³Frank Elgar, Picasso. Cubist Period (New York, Tudor Publishing Company, 1957), p. 8.

⁷⁴Habasque, Cubism, pp. 74-76.

while at the same time it increased the range, variety and remoteness of the pictorial metaphor (. . . the relation between the picture and the object or scene represented)."⁷⁵ Papier collé was a primordial means for the expression of space and actual paper fragments together with simulated fabrics were used with greater freedom. Picasso's Sheet of Music and Guitar (1912-13) illustrates fidelity to fact as

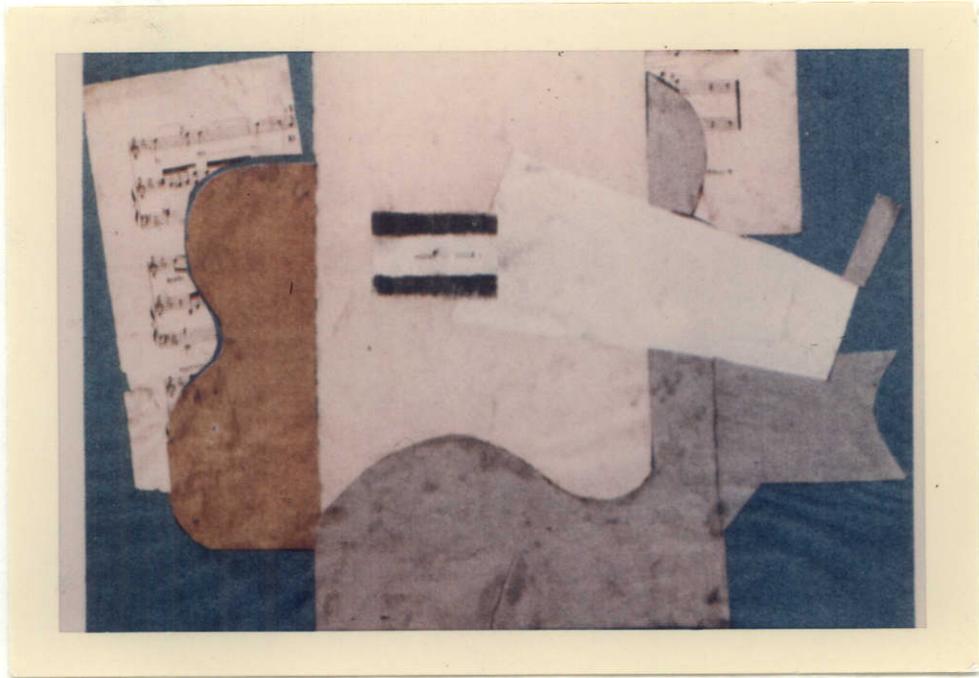


Plate 17. Picasso: Sheet of Music and Guitar (1912-13)⁷⁶

well as plastic economy of means; this picture has been described as a landmark in cubism's development.⁷⁷

⁷⁵Barr, Picasso, p. 84.

⁷⁶Herta Wescher, Picasso. Papiers Collés (New York, Tudor Publishing Co., 1960), p. 5.

⁷⁷Habasque, Cubism, pp. 76-79.

Braque moved more slowly toward the synthetic stage than did Picasso or Gris. He continued to explore the spatial possibilities of papier collés and it was not until 1918-20 that Braque departed from his consistent use of local color. One of his outstanding works of this period was the Aria de Bach (1914). Gris, on the other hand, like Picasso, reduced his objects to their essential attributes and gave his structures an ever-increasing solidity while enhancing their purity and clarity. Cup and Roses (1914) and the Bottle of Banyuls (1914) are examples illustrating these facets of his style.⁷⁸

The birth and development of cubism, thus far, has been described according to two style and period classifications which most writers are agreed upon: analytic and synthetic stages with four personalities, following close to the principles first introduced by Picasso. At this point it is necessary to introduce other style classifications provided by Guillaume Apollinaire, whose close friendship with cubist artists such as Picasso and Braque prompted him to set forth their principles in some semblance of order, since Picasso and Braque were always too concerned with painting to theorize about what they were doing. Apollinaire, constantly in touch with the painters, took a great interest in their work. His treatise, Les Peintres Cubistes. Méditations Esthétiques, illustrates this interest, providing four classifications

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 81-82.

of cubism and including lists of artists whose styles approximated these classifications: the scientific style used by Picasso, Braque, Albert Gleizes, and Marie Laurencin; physical cubism was represented by Le Fauconnier; orphic cubism included among its adherents Robert Delaunay, Fernand Léger, Francis Picabia, and Marcel Duchamp; and instinctive cubism (no names mentioned). Apollinaire indicated that the influence of instinctive cubism was common to most cubists and was widespread among European artists.⁷⁹

Apollinaire's total classification has not been generally accepted, with the possible exception of orphic cubism. The names of Laurencin and Le Fauconnier, listed by Apollinaire as artists involved in scientific cubism, raises a question as to why they were included in this treatise at all since neither had much to do with cubist painting. It is believed that Apollinaire included Laurencin's name primarily on the basis of their close friendship. Le Fauconnier actually belonged to the group of orphic cubists.

Literary Cubism

Guillaume Apollinaire, Max Jacob, André Salmon, Pierre Reverdy, and Jean Cocteau represented the literary counterpart of cubism. Even though all of these championed the cause of cubism, the first three were more consistently associated with the movement with Jacob and Apollinaire

⁷⁹Translated by Lionel Abel (New York, Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., 1949), pp. 17-18.

publicizing its activities as well as hypothesizing on its purposes and techniques. Cocteau's participation in cubism was limited to a brief period, just as it was in all other movements concerned in this study.

Apollinaire, in his poems Alcools, attempted to apply cubist theories in poetry. George Lemaitre has described Alcools as a volume of verse in which the new poetic technique was "obscure, disjointed, jerky, often in the manner of the most angular and dislocated cubist paintings."⁸⁰ This analogy, equating grammatic technics with those of painting, leaves much to be desired. An example, "Zone," from Alcools, however, may provide a small clue as to what he means. This excerpt from "Zone" illustrates the use of disjointed phrases and ideas:

In the end you are tired of this old world.
Shepherdess, O Eiffel Tower, the flock of
bridges is bleating this morning. You are
tired of living in Greek and Roman antiq-
uity. . . .⁸¹

Max Jacob, who consistently promoted cubist art through literary support in various periodicals, also succeeded in sundry painting ventures of his own. Lemaitre, in explaining Jacob's literary cubism, insisted that Jacob "assisted perhaps more than any of our contemporaries in ridding the

⁸⁰From Cubism to Surrealism in French Literature (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1947), p. 105.

⁸¹Elaine Marks, editor, French Poetry, Baudelaire to the Present, introduced and translated by Elaine Marks (New York, Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1962), p. 195.

French sentence of all its superfluous ornaments and in reducing it to a plain, angular bareness reminiscent of the most aggressive Cubist paintings."⁸² A collection of autobiographical poems considered to be in the most typical idiom is Le Cornet à dés (1917). An excerpt from an example of this group, "Le Cygne," is quoted here:

They hunt the swan in Germany, the country of Lohengrin. The swan is used as a trademark for stiff collars in urinals. On lakes people often mistake it for flowers and become ecstatic about its boatlike shape; . . . ⁸³

The literary roles which André Salmon and Pierre Reverdy played in cubist affairs have been regarded as less significant than those of Apollinaire and Jacob. The former, Salmon, though remaining reservedly in the background, helped greatly in the elucidation of cubist theories, especially through the newspapers. As an art critic "he contributed most effectively to the diffusion of Cubism, and soon he qualified as a Cubist poet."⁸⁴ Poems testifying to this fact are collected in Féeries, Le Calumet, and Le Livre et la Bouteille (all written during and after World War I). Reverdy's acquaintance with cubism came at a later time than that of the other three poets. His close friendship with Juan Gris and other artists living in the bateau lavoir

⁸²From Cubism to Surrealism, p. 133.

⁸³Marks, French Poetry, p. 223.

⁸⁴Lemaitre, From Cubism to Surrealism, p. 138.

undoubtedly prompted his interest in cubism. Lemaitre has recounted the hardships which Reverdy suffered mainly through his own introspective nature and how he developed a morbid desire for solitude, indulging unrestrainedly in his dreams. This divorce from externality and the experiencing of the harshness of a trying material, according to Lemaitre, "was in full agreement with the most abstract of the Cubist doctrines."⁸⁵ Poèmes en prose (1915) is a good example of his escape from an uncongenial mode of life. An excerpt from the collection "Saltimbanques" follows:

In the middle of the crown there is, with a child who dances, a man who lifts weights. His arms tattooed in blue appeal to the sky as a witness of their useless strength. The child dances, light in tights that are too big; . . . He is so thin.⁸⁶

Jean Cocteau's cubist activities were less pronounced than those of other poets discussed thus far. His literary style changed constantly, and it has been claimed that his interest in cubism may have been, to a certain extent, superficial. More than likely, his fervent admiration for Picasso prompted him to collaborate with Picasso, Massine, and Satie in the production of the cubist ballet, Parade, in 1917, a venture which inevitably linked him with the movement.

Dadaism

Dada cannot be said to have been an art movement in the same way that futurism, cubism, and surrealism are classified.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 143. ⁸⁶Marks, French Poetry, p. 231.

Dada displayed the same violent attitudes toward tradition and reasoning as futurism; but contrary to the militant attitude of the futurists, dadaists hated war. Dada was neither an art, literary, nor musical movement, though it issued manifestos, held exhibits, concerts, published bulletins, almanacs, and periodicals the same as other movements. It never formulated nor issued aesthetic creeds, nor did it remain consistently faithful to any art movement that was currently popular. On the contrary, it attacked modern art movements as well as the individuals belonging to them. Dada was a movement of the mind and always displayed an extremely critical attitude toward its own activities. Its personalities included poets, painters, philosophers, and musicians who believed in the necessity of extreme action of all kinds in order to fulfill its mission--to attack and destroy absolute beliefs concerning the infallibility of current art, morality, and society.

People all over Europe and America were depressed at the outbreak of World War I. The futility and uselessness of life, the brutality of war under existing moral, social, and political values was paramount in the dadaist mind. To some dadaists, suicide appeared to be an ideal solution as it was in the case of the writers Jacques Vaché and Jacques Rigaut. Dadaists had varying attitudes: nearly all of them refused to accept current logical rationality and set out to destroy values. Those who were politically demoralized attempted

to destroy bourgeois social values; those who were disillusioned with moral values attempted to revolt against life; and those who were artistically repulsed attempted to destroy art and literature through anti-art and anti-literature methods. They achieved this through a mockery of all current values, usually through the most bizarre, absurd, and shocking methods. Dada was nihilistic, negative, anti-art, anti-everything.

It becomes evident that true dadaists comprised the politically discontent, misfits, malcontents, as well as others who displayed a daring and venturesome spirit. The brunt of their attacks affected art more than anything else. The dada spirit, existing long before its chosen name, thrived simultaneously in Switzerland, America, Germany, and France. The origin and naming of the movement occurred in Zürich, Switzerland, while activities, almost identical in nature, developed in the other three countries with little or no interchange between the groups. The earliest activities originated in Zürich and New York before 1916.

The founding of dada in Zürich was not a chance event, though the name, like the names of other movements, was an accidental factor--so the dadists have claimed. In 1915 Hugo Ball, German philosopher, poet, and conscientious objector, took refuge in Zürich. Shortly after his arrival in Zürich, Ball sought a place in which he could stage exhibitions and shows. He was fortunate enough to find a cabaret which

he rented and very appropriately named Cabaret Voltaire; here his earliest shows were transformed into dada exhibitions.

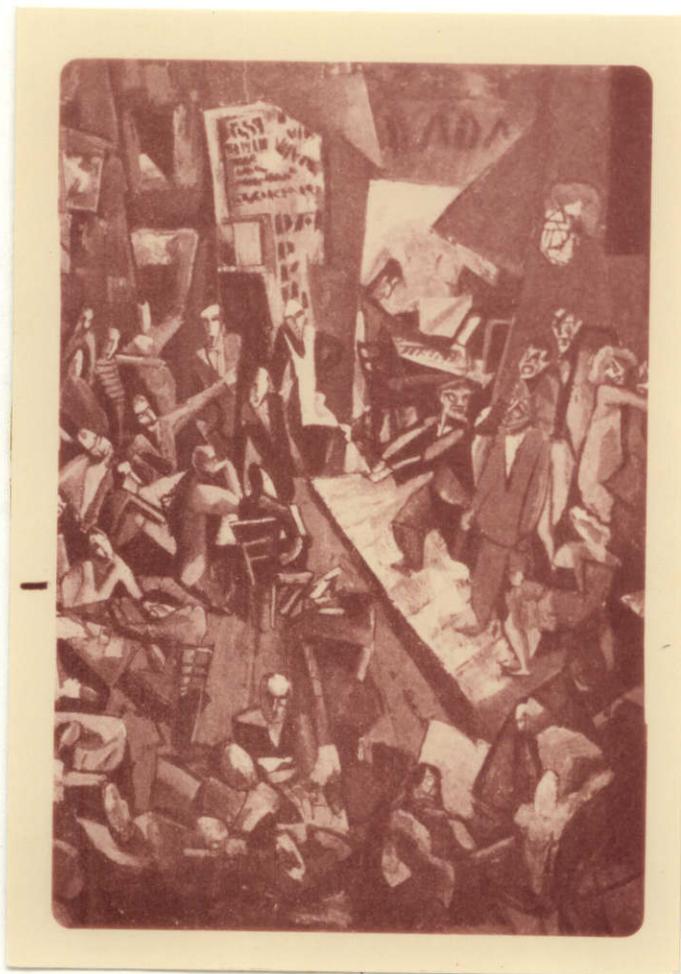


Plate 18. Marcel Janco: Cabaret Voltaire (1917)⁸⁷

Zürich was, at this time, a refuge for all kinds of revolutionaries, pacifists, conscientious objectors, and political criminals--"an oasis for the thinker, a spy-exchange, a

⁸⁷Robert Motherwell, editor, The Dada Painters and Poets; an Anthology, texts by Arp and others (New York, Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., 1951), p. 50.

nursery of ideologies, and a home for poets and liberty-loving vagabonds."⁸⁸

The cabaret, a small hall with about 100 square feet of stage, had enough audience space to accommodate 35 to 40 guests. Hugo Ball first relied upon friends to contribute drawings, paintings, and engravings, which he offered for sale. The performances were comprised of music and recitations. The principal participants who cooperated with Ball included Tristan Tzara (Rumanian poet), Richard Hülsenbeck (German poet), Hans Arp (Alsatian painter), and Marcel Janco (Hungarian painter).⁸⁹ Ball, an amateur musician, played the piano frequently, while negro chants, balalaika bands and local singers supplied the remaining parts of the program.

The absurd procedures used by dadaists in performing their activities as well as recording their own history have made it difficult to determine the validity of some of their own statements. The selection of the name itself reveals inconsistencies and confusing claims. The Dada Monograph provides this account of its origin:

Dada--From the French for "hobby-horse." Horse in children's language (Larousse). There is some doubt as to the discovery of this word in a French-German dictionary. Both Tzara and Huelsenbeck are credited with the "sole begetter." Arp and Janco have their own versions. Huelsenbeck relates that he found the

⁸⁸Marcel Janco, "Creative Dada," Dada. Monograph of a Movement, edited by Willy Verkauf, 2nd ed., (Teufen [AR] Switzerland, Arthur Niggli, Ltd., 1961), p. 28.

⁸⁹Haftmann, Painting in the Twentieth Century, p. 182.

word Dada in a French-German dictionary together with Hugo Ball when they were looking for a name for Madame Leconte, the singer in the Cabaret Voltaire. Hugo Ball writes on this point in his book Flucht aus der Zeit. (18.4 1916, p. 94). "Tzara is worrying me about the periodical. My proposal to call it Dada is accepted . . . Dada means in Rumanian Yes, Yes, in French a rocking and hobby horse. For German it is a sign of foolish naivety and a happy precreative association with the perambulator."⁹⁰

At an exhibition in 1936 at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, dada's origin was defined this way:

Dada: In 1916, a Spanish painter, Joan Miró (later among leaders of Surrealism), invented Dadaism. It had no technique and no principle beyond suppressing all relation between thought and expression. Its followers sewed onto their paintings bits of cloth, orange-peels, or whatever hit their fancy. Translated, means hobby-horse.⁹¹

Haftmann states that the actual founding of the name may have been legendary but suggested a possibility as to how it was founded: the insertion of a pen-knife between the leaves of a German-French dictionary with the first word dada appearing.⁹²

Dada in Zürich

The earliest efforts of the participants in the Cabaret Voltaire in Zürich involved the promotion of new art, which then meant, by and large, abstract art. The walls of the Cabaret Voltaire were filled with examples of art representing

⁹⁰"Dada Dictionary," Dada. Monograph, p. 149.

⁹¹"Fantastic Zanies of Painter's Brush," The Literary Digest, CXXII (December 12, 1936), 26.

⁹²Painting in the Twentieth Century, p. 182.

their (dada) own resident artists, as well as works of Picasso, Kandinsky, Matisse, Klee, Léger, and Modigliani.

The Zürich exhibitions were mildly disquieting at first, but eventually developed into provocative demonstrations that defied all rules of logic or sensibility. The contradictory spirit of dada was in full evidence when the dadaists engaged in ridiculous antics such as barking like dogs and reciting eight different poems at once. Moreover, they deliberately pressed skeptical audiences into taking part in their own absurd activities. On these occasions shouting and fistfights occurred and extreme disorder resulted--the results of which often proved to be disastrous. Dada enjoyed being contradictory and strove to live up to its childish name by using childish logic. For example, a child who says that its scribble is a "dada" will not hesitate a few moments later to assure one that it is a pussy cat. Dadaists practiced this childish logic, substituting one thing for another.⁹³

Since dadaists represented a cross section of current avant-garde groups, such as futurism and cubism, they borrowed and stole from every art movement. Even though the dadaists considered futurist activities as militant moralizing, and in spite of their own lack of faith in the future and absence of optimism, they took over futurist ideas of simultaneity and bruitism, integrating them into their own program. They

⁹³Haftmann, Painting in the Twentieth Century, p. 182.

shouted insults and acknowledged their disgust and contempt for all art and society through numerous manifestos, out-doing the futurists in this respect.

Dada's most extravagant exhibitions employed poetry, and simultaneous poems (derived from Marinetti's parole in libert ), many of which were made up almost entirely of vowels. Their poetry neither interpreted, imitated, nor utilized logic or descriptive techniques. Rather, as Haftmann has explained, it involved an automatic activity of the psyche, which may have been derived from the French "alchemists of the word," Apollinaire, Jacob, Jarry, and Rimbaud.⁹⁴ Accompanying these simultaneous recitations were all kinds of background noises that bore all the evidence of futurist bruitism. Richard H lksenbeck spoke of dadaists' unwitting use of bruitism without suspecting its philosophy or effects--the convulsive nature of bruitism. Actually, he explained, dadaists desired the opposite: "calming of the soul, an endless lullaby, art, abstract art."⁹⁵

At the outset of the movement dada championed abstract painting and cubist montage. Hans Arp, in particular, was influenced by cubist montage and the works of German expressionists. He resorted to primeval forms and experimented in pasting objects beside or over one another, rendering new

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵"En Avant Dada: A History of Dadaism (1920)," The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 26.

objects which produced surprise and shock in the viewer. The results of these experiments led him to further experimentation with chance combinations. Many of the products of the artists were conceived for general dadaist exhibitions, but very often artists such as Arp and Picabia contributed designs for title and cover pages. These varied from ridiculous typographical creations (cover for 391 by Francis Picabia, Zürich, February, 1919) to abstract designs (cover for Dada 4-5 from a woodcut by Hans Arp, Zürich, May 15, 1919).

Tristan Tzara attempted experiments similar to those of Arp, using slips of paper with words in which chance drawings and combinations were conceived as poems. The experiments of both led to new psychological discoveries; Arp's automatic drawings suggested irrational, spontaneously traced forms rising from the unconscious, and typographical innovations in which type characters were varied (that is, on a slant, or the mixing of capital and lower case letters). These materials provided the aesthetic elements; the page was treated as the formal structure. Notable examples may be found in L'Amiral cherche une maison à louer,⁹⁶ Dadameter (cover title for Die Schammade),⁹⁷ and a page from 291 (No. 9, November, 1915).⁹⁸ The influence of these experiments may be seen in many contemporary advertising illustrations.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 241.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 340.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 343.

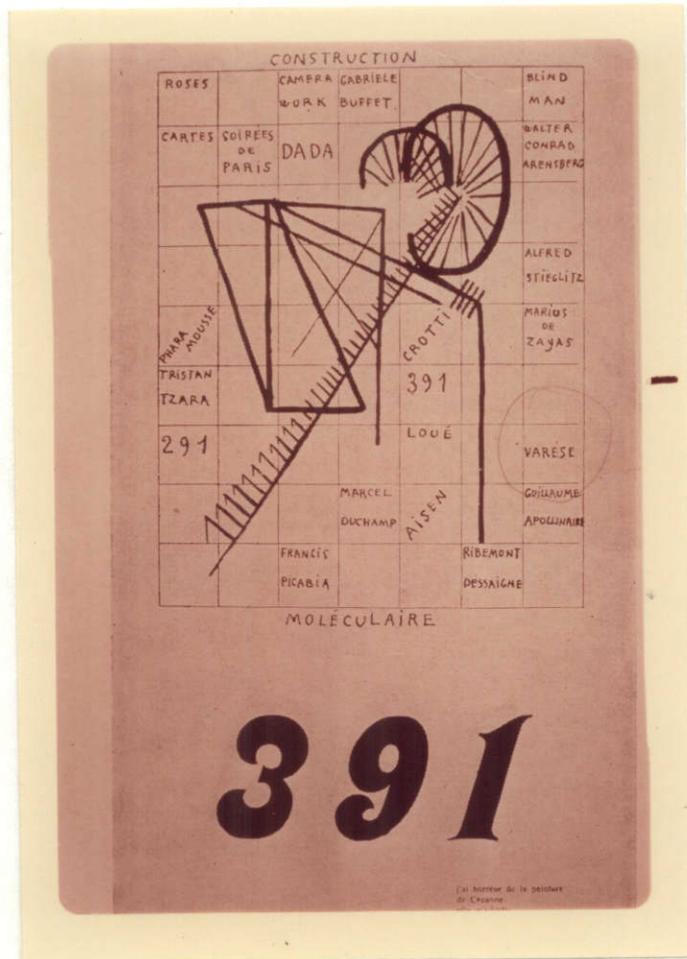


Plate 19. Picabia: Cover for 391 (February, 1919)⁹⁹

Dada in America

At the same time that Hugo Ball and other Zürich dadaists were propogating their ideas, Marcel Duchamp was forming an American counterpart of dada in New York. It was not called dada then, nor did Duchamp have any idea at the time that it would eventually adopt this name. At the outbreak of World War I, Duchamp came to New York (1914) where he met Alfred

⁹⁹Motherwell, The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 136.

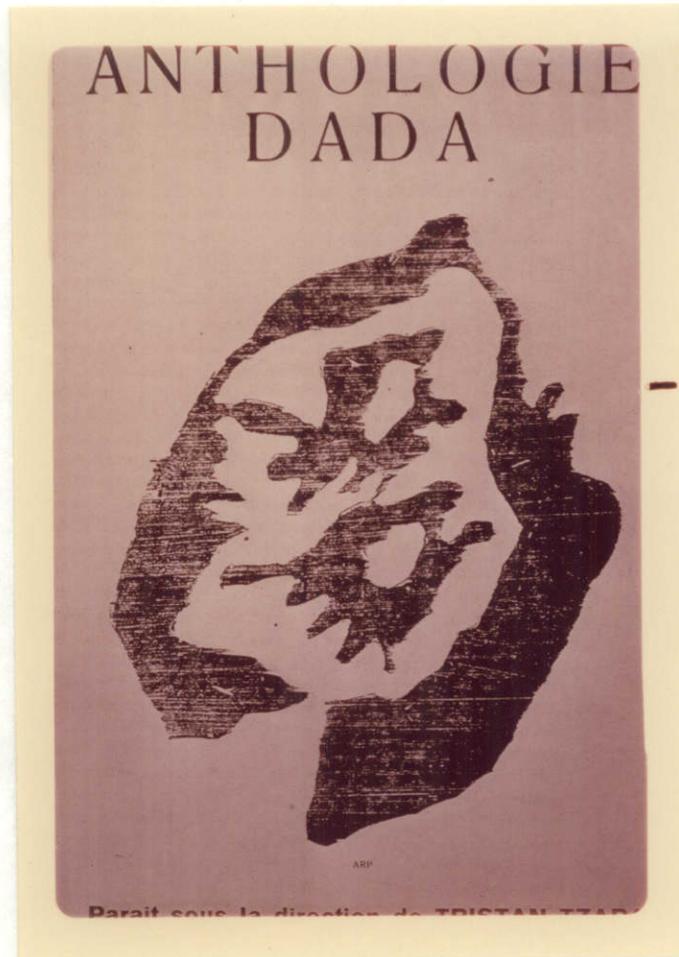


Plate 20. Arp: Cover for Dada 4-5 (May 15, 1919)¹⁰⁰

Stieglitz, who had already begun the publication of a magazine, Camera Work (1913). This publication contained poems and drawings that had a remarkable affinity to those of the later Zürich publications. About the same time, Man Ray, an American photographer who eventually became the only true American dadaist, was associated with the anarchist group known as The Masses, an artist group that turned to cubism

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 133.

after the impact of the Armory Show of 1913. In 1915 Ray became acquainted with Duchamp; it was after this meeting that Ray began his technical experiments in photography. In this same year Picabia, who had met Duchamp in 1910, came to New York and soon was assisting Stieglitz in the publication of the magazine 291 at the Stieglitz Gallery.¹⁰¹ This publication containing radical poetry and art included Apollinaire's idéogrammes, poems printed forming a picture of the Eiffel Tower; texts by Albert Savinio, Jacob, and Ribemont-Dessaignes; and cubist drawings by Braque, Picasso, and Picabia. The cover design of the December issue was a plastic montage by Picasso. Other issues also contained contributions of drawings by John Marin and Abraham Walkowitz.¹⁰²

Duchamp's activities in America included the introduction of several of his ready-mades, and in 1921 Duchamp returned to Paris to join the French dadaists. Man Ray subsequently maintained a close association with Duchamp in America and collaborated with him in various publications, an example of which is the almanac entitled New York Dada (1921). This publication included experiments in photography in which optical experimentation with unexposed photographic plates was

¹⁰¹The title 291 was taken from Stieglitz's street address which was 291 5th Avenue.

¹⁰²Haftmann, Painting in the Twentieth Century, pp. 184-185.

attempted. Further experiments with superimposed exposures were called Rayograms, Rayographs, or Photogrammes.¹⁰³

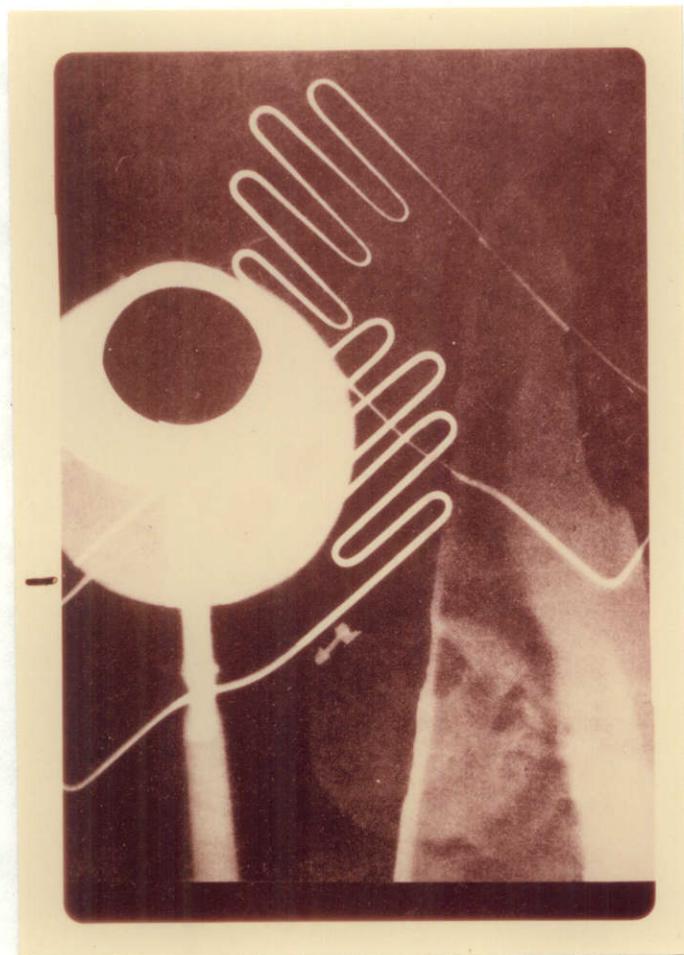


Plate 21. Ray: Photogramme¹⁰⁴

The circumstances through which America's dada group developed were similar to those of the Zürich movement, and the resemblance of their separate activities is even more quite remarkable since neither group was in contact with the

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 185. ¹⁰⁴Dada. Monograph, p. 121.

other during their first two years (1916-18). The chief differences between the two groups is evident in the larger membership and official name held by the Zürich group, while the New York group was smaller and less coordinated. The latter, however, engaged in their activities with the same unreasonable zeal. An example of its outrageous behavior occurred in 1914 when Arthur Cravan, self-styled pugilist and art critic, was engaged to lecture at the Exhibition of Independent Painters in New York.¹⁰⁵ The results of this engagement were disastrous. Cravan arrived late, drunk, tearing off his clothes, and shouting obscenities at the sophisticated audience which, in turn, made a hurried exit. Having been warned of his unpredictable behavior, several policemen grabbed Cravan and handcuffed him before he was able to complete what may have been the most infamous caper, or shocking demonstration, an American audience could have been subjected to.

Marcel Duchamp sent a ready-made object for exhibition. This object, a urinal which he signed R. Mutt and labeled

¹⁰⁵Three years earlier Cravan had created a scandal in Paris when he wrote critical comments about the artists represented in a similar Exhibition of Independents. Cravan printed his own criticisms and sold them in the area where the exhibition was being held. An account of these criticisms is given in The Dada Painters and Poets on pages 3-13. Cravan obscenely abused many of the exhibitions. His comments about Marie Laurencin aroused the ire of Guillaume Apollinaire to the extent that the latter challenged him to a duel (Cravan declined!). The tempest thus unleashed provided Cravan with much public attention--as well as a controversial reputation.

Fountain, was rejected by the exhibition judges. It was later reproduced by Duchamp in his literary pamphlet Blind Man. It has appeared in numerous publications since that time.¹⁰⁶

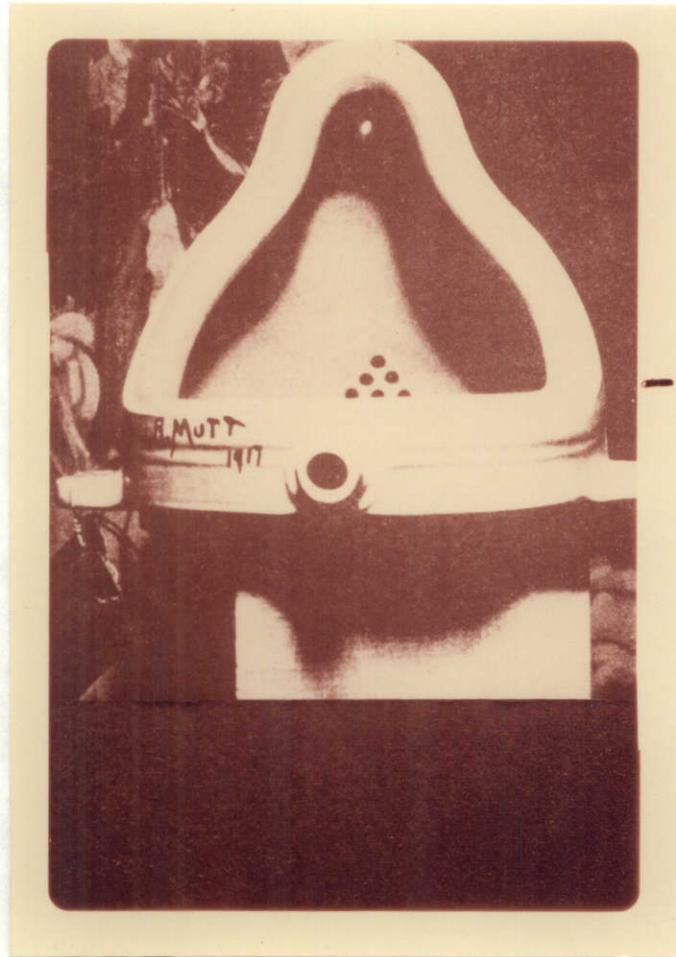


Plate 22. Duchamp: Fountain (1917)¹⁰⁷

In a later journal, Rong-Wrong, Duchamp included material that was largely preposterous, ironic, and subversive in a manner that resembled the European dada publications.

¹⁰⁶Gabrielle Buffet-Picabia, "Arthur Cravan and American Dada," The Dada Painters and Poets, pp. 13-17.

¹⁰⁷Motherwell, The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 212.

Francis Picabia left the New York group in 1917 for Barcelona (an international haven for refugees during the years 1914-18), where he published his first issue of 391 in January the same year. This contained drawings by Picabia, subversive and poetic mottos, texts by different authors such as Max Jacob and Ribbent-Dessaignes, and articles and programs which included the names of Edgar Varèse, Erik Satie, and Georges Auric. Much of the material was false and the publication eventually degenerated into a systematic assault on the world at large. Later editions severely criticized André Breton.¹⁰⁸ Subsequent issues of the periodical were published in New York in 1917, although Picabia remained in Spain; after May he was in Zürich until November 1919, and in Paris from 1919 to 1924.

In 1918 the activities of the New York group came to the attention of the Zürich dadaists through the aegis of 391. New issues of 391 and The Dada Review celebrated this discovery with the publication of contributions by Arp, Tzara, and Picabia. This fusion of 391 and Dada brought a brusque shift in the destinies of dada and especially in the career of Tristan Tzara, whose meteoric rise began in 1920.¹⁰⁹

Dada in Germany

Dada's influence spread quickly to Germany, especially through the cities of Berlin, Cologne, and Hanover.

¹⁰⁸Picabia, 391. Cf. pp. 17-47.

¹⁰⁹Gabrielle Buffet-Picabia, "Some Memories of Pre-Dada: Picabia and Duchamp (1949)," The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 266.

Hülsenbeck's arrival in Berlin was prefaced by the publication of his article "Neue Mensch" ("The New Man") in the Neue Jugend (May, 1917), a publication containing the writings of sundry authors and painters who were then considered moderns. The great political unrest in Germany at this time prepared the way for dada's appearance, and dada's introduction into Berlin was more political than artistic. In the early part of 1918, shortly after his arrival in Berlin, Hülsenbeck delivered a dada lecture in the New Secession Hall; this was succeeded by the reading of a manifesto signed by several dadaists, among them, Tzara and Hülsenbeck. This was accompanied by the simultaneous publication of several German magazines, including the Dada Club, edited by Hülsenbeck, Jung, and Haussmann, and Der Dada, edited by Haussmann with contributions by Baader, Grosz, Hülsenbeck, and Picabia. The Dada Club criticized the republican revolution, accusing it of being too soft in its radical attacks; Der Dada, on the other hand, featured such personalities as Satie, Duchamp, and Charlie Chaplin. Among the subsequent publications, the most notable was the Dada Almanac of 1920, a journal more poetic than social in content and character.¹¹⁰ The Berlin dada group, an aggressive force which used dada's technique of shock in attempts to be insulting, satirical, and destructive, was concerned with politics rather than poetry and art,

¹¹⁰Georges Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit in Painting," The Dada Painters and Poets, pp. 144-152.

though a semblance of the latter two was evident in the more absurd illustrations. These illustrations, appearing in both the Dada Club and Der Dada, are best represented by Grosz's photographic montages and Hülsenbeck's poetical style, and were recognized as having come directly from Zürich. A propaganda meeting to be held at the end of May, 1918, was advertised by the Dada Club to be comprised of "simultaneous poems, noise music, and cubist dances (10 ladies . . .)".¹¹¹

Lectures, political in nature and embracing the doctrines of Marx and Lenin, were delivered by Hülsenbeck in several major German cities and in Prague. Besides Grosz, other Berlin dadaists included Heartfeld, and Herzfelde, who were also committed to communism; Grosz later abandoned his position of political extremism, but Hülsenbeck became more firmly entrenched in this kind of politics and was eventually named (by communist groups) Commissar of Fine Arts. Dadaist activities culminated in Berlin in an event called the First International Fair, June, 1920. This exhibition took place in the rooms of Otto Burchard's art-shop.¹¹²

Shortly after his arrival in Cologne early in 1918, Max Ernst met the painters Johannes Baargeld and Hans Arp; together, they eventually formed the Cologne dada group in

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 145.

¹¹²"Chronology," Dada. Monograph, pp. 112-113.

1919. Their activities, though politically inclined, displayed a greater interest in endeavors of a more artistic nature.

The political achievements of the Cologne dadaists were realized largely through the efforts of Baargeld, who published the first dadaist pamphlet, Der Ventilator, an extremely subversive communist publication. The political content of this journal was derived from Baargeld's earlier founding of the Rhineland Communist Party. Ernst, on the other hand, being well acquainted with the works of Picasso, Chirico, and Arp, made contributions to the pamphlet, providing it with the necessary artistic balance.¹¹³

The publication of two other works, the Bulletin D of Ernst and Baargeld, and Stupid came as a result of the subsequent activities of this German group. An exhibition catalogue called Die Schammade (February, 1920) also included works of Baargeld, Arp, and Ernst, which were accompanied by more of the Zürich dadaists, Picabia, and Tzara, and the French Littérature group, Breton, Eluard, Ribemont-Dessaignes, and Soupault.¹¹⁴ A series of collages called "Fatagaga"¹¹⁵ (manufacture of guaranteed gasometric pictures), created by Arp, Ernst, and Baargeld, were described as spontaneous

¹¹³Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit in Painting," pp. 153-156.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 157.

¹¹⁵An abbreviation for "Fabrication de tableaux garantis gazométriques."

creations made of stencil designs which were cut, modified, pasted or rubbed into what has been explained as "the discovery of an accident."¹¹⁶

Georges Hugnet stated that even though their communist attachments were strong, Ernst and Baargeld refused to submit poetic illumination to communistic propaganda and that the Cologne movement was actually the most artistic one in Germany.¹¹⁷ A significant incident that relegated the Cologne group to the same absurd position of Zürich dadaists came in the form of a scandalous exhibition given in a little glassed-in court behind a cafe. This location was deliberately chosen because the only possible entrance to the court was by way of a public urinal; the unquestionable intent was to slander and insult an unwitting public. A young girl, dressed as though for her first communion, greeted people at the door by reciting obscene poems. The interior room was decorated with paintings and the floor was strewn with sundry objects. The surface of an aquarium, filled with red-tinted water, was adorned with a woman's wig. Nearby rested a chained hatchet accompanied with a directive permitting the viewer to destroy any object to which he took a dislike. The ultimate result was, of course, the destruction of the above mentioned aquarium by an inebriate. The flow of red water over the floor

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 159. That is, "The discovery of a spiritual double view, analogous in part to Salvador Dali's theory of the paranoid image."

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 157.

prompted a complaint of obscenity to the police. According to the police, however, the most objectionable exhibit was one of Albrecht Dürer's etchings and the display was allowed to continue.¹¹⁸ In February, 1920, Arp left Cologne, while Ernst remained until 1922, eventually settling in Paris. In 1922 the Cologne dada group was dissolved.¹¹⁹

The spirit of dada survived longer in Germany than elsewhere because of the efforts of Kurt Schwitters--a dadaist who initiated the Hanover movement. Most of his creative activities were accomplished without the assistance of other dadaists, though he did have the support of the publisher Paul Steegman, who issued a dada almanac, Der Marstall (The Royal Stables), as well as books by Arp and Serner. Schwitters' relations with the Berlin and Cologne dadaists were poor--in fact, antagonistic. He had failed to gain their approval for several reasons: they claimed that he had not been officially initiated as a dadaist; he was considered prudently bourgeois in political activities; and he was not wholeheartedly in sympathy with abstract art as Arp, Baargeld, and Ernst had proposed it. Fortunately, he was on good terms with Arp and the Zürich group, although he was not in complete agreement with many of their activities.

Schwitters invented his own brand of dada called Merz, a purely individual designation that described his collage

¹¹⁸Ibid., pp. 159-161.

¹¹⁹"Chronology," p. 113.

efforts in sculpture while also providing the name for his 1923 publication. His collage structures were erected from the waste of the streets (strings, broken glass, old rags, broken objects, clippings, wood, plaster, and other materials).¹²⁰ He erected a model of the monument that was



Plate 23. Schwitters: Constructions (1923)¹²¹

¹²⁰"Merz," The Dada Painters and Poets, pp. 61-63.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 61.

supposed to move and emit sounds. This monument was to be dedicated to humanity and was purported to include such articles as a corset, musical toys, and life-sized houses in the Swiss style.¹²² Merz (the periodical) only alluded to dada. Issues 8 and 9 (published together of Nascia, issued by Schwitters and Lissitsky, a Russian painter) carried reproductions of the works of Schwitters, Arp, Léger, Tatlin, Braque, and Man Ray.¹²³ This publication, however, in its opposition to dada, supplanted Merz as the organ of the Hanoverian dadaist (that is, Schwitters).

The Dada Monograph gives accounts of isolated dadaist activities in other cities. The more important of these included a dada dance and exhibition (works of Arp, Picabia, and Ribbemont-Dessaigues) in Geneva in 1920, the publication of the dada journal entitled Bleu in Italy in 1921, and the participation of Arp and Tzara in a Congress of the Constructivists (Moholy-Nagy and Theo van Doesburg) in Weimar in 1922.¹²⁴

Dada in Paris

Paris was the last and most important stronghold of dadaism. The American efforts of Duchamp and Picabia

¹²²Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit in Painting," pp. 162-164.

¹²³Ibid., p. 164.

¹²⁴"Chronology," pp. 112-114.

eventually contributed toward the founding of a new literary journal, Littérature (1919), as well as a new organization in Paris. This new organization, artistically disposed between Rimbaud and Lautréamont on the one hand and Jarry and Apollinaire on the other, was attracted by the activity offered by the dada movement. After having been exposed to the Zürich journal, (February issue of 391), Aragon, Breton, and Soupault formed the Parisian "Littérature group" early in 1919, a group which was later supplemented by the Zürich dadaists (including Tzara and Hülsenbeck) at the end of that year. Beginning with the No. 2 edition of Littérature, Paris possessed a full fledged dada group and the first efforts of this organization resulted in a provocative meeting held at the Palais des Fêtes, Friday, January 23, 1920. This program included poems by André Salmon; masked people reciting disjointed poems by Breton; and a newspaper story read by Tzara (including one by Picabia)--all cleverly arranged to provoke the audience into booing and catcalling.¹²⁵ The second memorable dada occasion, a demonstration in the Salon des Indépendents, February 5, 1920, included the simultaneous reading of several manifestos. The resultant upheaval led to much confusion on the part of both the participants and the audience, and ended with the latter throwing coins at the readers.¹²⁶

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 169.

¹²⁶Ibid., pp. 171-172.

The sixth issue of the Bulletin Dada and a new publication, Proverbs, carried articles which eventually caused a breach between dada and the other artistic movements. It was also responsible for the exclusion of all dada personalities from the "Section d'Or" (cubist and modern artists). The last Bulletin Dada, No. 7, 1920, called Dadaphone (illustrated by Picabia and Shad), contained a photomontage showing Arp and Serner in the Royal Crocodarum in London.¹²⁷ About the same time, Picabia introduced Duchamp's "Mona Lisa with a Mustache" in the No. 12 issue of 391.¹²⁸ He also attacked the activities of a number of other dadaists in the periodical, Cannible, in an early issue in April, 1920.¹²⁹

Dada activities continued through the year 1920 with more exhibitions and manifestos, both of which were designed to provoke, insult, and degrade art as well as create violent reactions from spectators and readers. The May issue of Littérature, for example, was devoted entirely to the purpose of supporting and upholding dada's absurd exhibitions. A culminating event that proved to be the crowning effort of dada's entire history was the great festival staged in the Salle Gaveau on May 26, 1920.¹³⁰ Two of the examples

¹²⁷"Chronology," p. 112. ¹²⁸Op. cit., p. 79.

¹²⁹"Chronology," p. 112.

¹³⁰This show included art, literature, and musical contributions by Dermée, Soupault, Eluard, Ribemont-Dessaignes, Picabia, Serner, Breton, Tzara, Aragon, and Arnauld.

included Vous m'oubliez, a sketch by Breton and Soupault, and la deuxième aventure de M. l'antipyrine, a short play with music performed by Tzara and others. During this performance the actors and their two grand pianos were splattered with eggs thrown from the audience, with some direct hits being scored on Ribemont's head. The dadaists were to have staged a huge hair cutting demonstration, but this part of the program failed to materialize.¹³¹

In the ensuing months dada attacked all art forms through additional demonstrations, literary channels, and public exhibitions. Examples illustrating these attacks were the slanderous and provocative articles found in Littérature; an exhibition at the Montaigne gallery;¹³² and another manifesto signed by all the dada group. About this time, late 1920 and early 1921, a group of dadaists, headed by Breton, opposed to the outrageousness of the demonstrations, began to dissent with the most radical members. Breton suggested giving up the exhibitions and arranged excursions and visits through Paris, but actually only one such trip took place. The next event, the mock trial (though taken very seriously by dadaists) of Barré, caused greater dissension in the dadaists' ranks. The year 1921 brought up many questions

¹³¹Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit in Painting," pp. 181-182.

¹³²This included paintings, objects, and productions of plays by Aragon, Eluard, Péret, Soupault, and Tzara.

about dada's usefulness since its attacks on all forms of modern art and the modern spirit caused confusion among its membership.¹³³

A number of dadaists, led by Breton, set out to prepare for and establish an International Congress for the establishment of directives for the defense of the modern spirit. It was to be called the Congress of Paris.¹³⁴ Tzara's refusal to join the congress resulted in its demise, thereby prompting Breton to withdraw from the movement. The revised Littérature group included, in addition to Breton, many other writers who had been regular contributors to the journal. The addition of new names like those of Jacques Baron, René Crevel, and Robert Desnor aided Breton in his avowed purpose of discrediting dada's efforts in the hope that the movement would soon come to an end. Hugnet has explained that Breton was attracted to dada solely for the reason that it was the vehicle through which he could best express his own ideals and ambitions. His artistic ideals, he claimed, did not spring from dada, but that Breton attempted to assimilate them to dada. His ideas about poetry, for example, were based on the word "surrealism" as Apollinaire had used it and were actually derived from the German Romantics and from Gérard de Nerval.¹³⁵ (See p. 78 below).

¹³³Ibid., pp. 181-187.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 187.

¹³⁵Ibid., pp. 190-191.

The eventual split in the dada group has been difficult to explain because of the shifting loyalty of its members to old and new groups. Subsequent issues of Littérature contained more and more surrealist ideas, especially those concerning Breton's theories of automatism. The increased ferocity of Breton's attacks on Tzara caused the latter to strike out against such moderates as Picabia, who, even though he did not share Breton's enthusiasm for surrealism, had contributed support for his cause.¹³⁶ This sort of behavior contributed to the development of Picabia's anti-dada dadaism and in the May, 1924, issue of 391 he turned on Breton in a deliberate attempt to undermine the latter's surrealist program which was well under way by this time.¹³⁷ The performance of the ballets Mercure and Relâche were also significant events contributing to the eventual split between the dadaists and the new surrealists. Picasso's scenery for Mercure was applauded by the surrealists, but they were indifferent toward Satie's music. Picabia, offended by the rejection of Satie, retaliated by collaborating with him in the production of Relâche, the second ballet an effort also rejected by the surrealists.

¹³⁶In 1922 Picabia wrote a preface for the exhibition of a Breton work in Barcelona.

¹³⁷Picabia, 391, pp. 114-130. By this time Breton had issued the first surrealist manifesto. A number of illustrations in 391 refer to "superrealisme," Rimbaud, and on pages 128-129, Picabia attacks Breton with a derisive article.

The final break between the dissenting groups occurred during the presentation of the "Soirée of the Bearded Heart" at the Théâtre Michel in July, 1923. On this occasion musical contributions were made by Auric, Satie, Stravinsky, and Milhaud, along with two films by Man Ray and Hans Richter. A chief attraction of this particular performance was Tzara's "Coeur à gaz" (performed by René Crevel, Pierre de Massot, and Jacques Baron). Some of the scheduled numbers, like the recitation of Paul Eluard, did not take place--in this instance because Eluard objected to the presentation of some of Jean Cocteau's poems. The performance climaxed in a disastrous riot in which Péret, Breton, and Aragon demonstrated against Tzara. Péret lost his clothes and Breton and Péret were thrown out of the theater. In the melee Eluard attacked the actors (who, in turn, overwhelmed him), and finally, a part of the audience joined in Eluard's defense. Massot, whose arm was broken by a cane, suffered the severest injury. Although the police quickly restored order, the theater itself suffered considerable damage.¹³⁸ Thus the organized activities of the dada movement ended in 1922. Tzara, always a dadaist at heart, remained loyal to its purposes until 1929, at which time he also joined the surrealists. The remaining dadaists withdrew entirely or following Tzara's example, joined the surrealist movement.

¹³⁸Hans Richter, Dada: Art and Anti-art, translated by David Britt, (London, Thames and Hudson, 1966), pp. 188-191.

Surrealism

Before the first surrealist manifesto was issued in 1924, the philosophy and psychology of surrealism was evident in the last stages of dadaism. André Breton, surrealism's founder and most eminent leader, contended that the prophets of surrealism in forecasting its development aided early surrealist philosophers in their formulation of the hypothesis of super reality, the existence of which, however, was not clearly set forth until the movement was well under way.

Julien Levy claims that surrealism represented a point of view which could be applied to a variety of media and attitudes, such as literature, painting, architecture, cinema, photography, politics, play, and behavior. In support of this contention, Levy has provided a list of phrases which include the names of persons whose attitudes and activities may have helped surrealism to obtain this point of view:

SWIFT is surrealist in malice
 SADE in sadism
 Chateaubriand in exoticism
 Desbordes--Valmore in love
 Poe in adventure
 RIMBAUD in life and elsewhere
 Jarry in absinthe
 Heraclitus in dialectic
 Uccello in the free-for-all fight
 Ann Radcliffe in landscape
 Carriere in drowning
 Monk Lewis in the beauty of evil
 Baudelaire in morals
 Lewis Carroll in nonsense
 Gustave Moreau in fascination
 Picasso in cubism
 Cravan in the challenge
 Chirico in the effigy

Duchamp in games
 Mack Sennett in movement
 The postman, Cheval, in ARCHITECTURE¹³⁹

In elaboration of Levy's suggestions, the following comments indicate that many of these people did indeed contribute, albeit inadvertently, to the formulation of the cause. Yves Duplessis states that Victor Hugo, Charles Baudelaire, Arthur Rimbaud, and Comte de Lautréamont were visionaries who helped shape the thinking of surrealists: Hugo suggested the whole mystery of life; Baudelaire escaped from the world's limiting boundaries into the "artificial paradise" of drunkenness; Rimbaud (often considered a direct forerunner of surrealism) portrayed his rebellion against the human condition with an assault on the unknown in his Illuminations; Lautréamont demonstrated "the world of terror and violence where the demonic fantasy of Maldoror is freed of all shackles . . .";¹⁴⁰ and Christopher Gray adds that Alfred Jarry's constant provocation and preoccupation with instincts were factors foreshadowing the interest of the surrealists in the subconscious.¹⁴¹

Guillaume Apollinaire, perhaps more than any other person, was regarded by surrealists as the most immediate influence and progenitor of their basic ideas and aesthetics. He first

¹³⁹Surrealism (New York, The Black Sun Press, 1936), p. 4.

¹⁴⁰Surrealism, translated by Paul Capon (New York, Walker & Company, 1962), pp. 9-14.

¹⁴¹Cubist Aesthetic Theories (Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1953), p. 24.

introduced the word surrealism in his preface to the ballet Parade, when he described it as a surrealist drama. Apollinaire's curious little poem "Onirocritique," first published in 1909, was claimed at a later date as being a pre-surrealist work.¹⁴² His poems "Zone" (from the Alcools, 1913), and "La Jolie Rousse" (Calligrammes, 1918) have been suggested as possessing true surrealist qualities. The former mingled unrelated images and represented memory as a thread binding the different stages of a promenade through Paris and time,¹⁴³ while the latter attempted to explain the "new spirit" in terms of an aesthetic quest "into a domain not limited by reason or time."¹⁴⁴

In 1917 Apollinaire, discharged from the military, conversed at great length during long walks with Breton, who was at that time a student in the psychiatric department of a Paris military hospital. Breton subsequently acknowledged that these conversations exercised much influence on the development of the surrealist language. Another poet, Jacques Vaché, later a felo de se, also influenced Breton's devotion to surrealistic activities by, in Breton's own words, "frustrating that conspiracy of obscure tendencies that leads to

¹⁴²Mackworth, Guillaume Apollinaire and the Cubist Life, p. 116. This poem was published in Apollinaire's L'Enchanteur Pourissant.

¹⁴³Duplessis, Surrealism, p. 12.

¹⁴⁴Marks, French Poetry, p. 299.

a belief in something as absurd as a vocation," and without him, Breton asserted, "I should have perhaps been a poet."¹⁴⁵

In spite of the ideological differences between dada and surrealism, dada served as a harbinger of the new movement. When in 1921 dada successfully negated its own aesthetic structure, surrealism filled the need felt by its survivors, enlisting those who were not already members of the group. At least surrealism appeared as an independent entity and was defined by Breton as

. . . purely psychic automatism through which we undertake to express, in words, writing, or any other activity, the actual functioning of thoughts, thoughts dictated apart from any control by reason and any aesthetic or moral consideration. Surrealism rests upon belief in the higher reality of specific forms of associations, previously neglected, in the omnipotence of dreams, and in the disinterested play of thinking.¹⁴⁶

Although the verbal and visual aspects of surrealism developed concurrently, the poets seemed to have exerted the greatest influence. Besides their theorist and leader, Breton, the most important poets included Paul Eluard and Pierre Reverdy, while the graphic arts were represented by Picasso, Man Ray, Hans Arp, Paul Klee, Max Ernst, Giorgio de Chirico, André Masson, Joan Miro, and Pierre Roy. One feature of the early stages of the movement was an incessant purge of its personalities. This ceaseless upheaval was due to the decidedly political and agnostic inclination of surrealist policy.

¹⁴⁵Duplessis, Surrealism, pp. 12-13.

¹⁴⁶Haftmann, Painting in the Twentieth Century, p. 189.

Breton leaned toward Trotsky's Marxism and readily expelled anyone for ideological deviations.

Historical Background

Surrealism expounded its theories in the numerous periodicals and manifestos which were always in evidence during the entire period of its inception and growth. The earliest publication, Littérature (1922-24), previously mentioned in the discussion of dada's decline, had as its contributors Breton, Soupault, Aragon, Reverdy, Cocteau, and others. Another publication, Les Champs magnétiques (1921), ran concurrently with Littérature and as above, Breton and Soupault were its mainstays. The works by two new surrealist writers, Pierre Naville and Benjamin Péret, appeared in the early issues of Le Premier manifeste du surréaliste in 1924. In 1928 Le Surréalisme et la peinture was published, and a year later the Second Manifeste du surréalisme appeared with a statement of Breton's political position. The purge of 1929 resulted in the expulsion of Artaud, Soupault, and Robert Desnos, leaving Breton, Aragon, Eluard, and Urik as leaders of the movement. Eventually another periodical, Grand Jeu, under the editorship of Roger-Gilbert Lecomte, Rolland de Reneville, and René Daumol, created much dissension in the movement and as a result, in 1930 Soupault and Artaud, now ex-members, attempted to bury the movement by means of their vituperation in the publication Un Cadavre. The 1930 roster

of the movement was bolstered by the addition of Luis Brumel, René Char, George Hugnet, Salvador Dali, and Tanguy to the membership; the most important publication to appear at this time was L'Immaculée Conception. In 1935 two more important literary works appeared; these were the Position politique du surréalisme and the publication Minotaure.¹⁴⁷ The following year conferences were held in Central Europe, Switzerland, and the Canary Islands, and subsequently, in 1938, another manifesto, Pour un art révolutionnaire indépendant, appeared. The years 1940 and 1941 found several of the more important surrealists immigrating to the United States (Dali, Tanguy, Breton, and Masson). A fit surrealist, Péret, shifted his activities to Mexico. In 1942, Breton issued Les Prolegomènes à troisième du surréalisme au non Arcane 17 in the United States where he had become very active in the distribution of surrealist propaganda to the artist colonies. His return in 1946 was followed by his promotion of the last significant surrealist exhibition.¹⁴⁸

In the 22 years preceding 1946, Breton had succeeded in expelling more than a dozen of the most prominent members of the surrealist community.

¹⁴⁷This was a collaborative effort which included texts of 14 year old Giselle Prassinis, and pictures by Dali, Ernst, Tanguy, Arp, Giacometti, René Magritte, Ray, and Miro.

¹⁴⁸Duplessis, Surrealism, pp. 9-23.

Theories and Sources

Even though Breton insisted that surrealism was not politically committed, he and other members frequently took a partisan stand in their manifestos and, as mentioned above, eliminated those members who disagreed with their doctrine. The reasons for Breton's contradictory attitudes are difficult to explain since he disavowed extremism, claiming that a conversion to a party or a religion, a large output of literary works, or commercialism betrayed surrealism's purity and fidelity to its ideals. In spite of the alleged non-political position of the movement, their communistic interpretation of the Moroccan conflict (1926) betrayed their protestations, as did Breton's article in Minotaure, denouncing nationalism in art, which he wrote following a Mexican visit with Trotsky in 1938.

Levy has attempted to explain the complex political involvement of surrealism by citing Breton's statements in the Position politique du surréalisme (1935): "Marxism is social consciousness; culture is consciousness of psychology . . . and the slogan with which Marx connected the first pages of the German ideology with the last drafts of Capital was 'more consciousness.'"¹⁴⁹

Surrealism and Freud.--Breton and his colleagues, believing that an inner reality was suppressed by the external

¹⁴⁹Surrealism, p. 55.

forces of logic and reasoning of the waking intelligence, made extensive experiments in attempts to penetrate the realm of the subconscious. Their theories, based upon Freud's psychoanalytic discoveries, especially those pertaining to dream analysis and examination of the subconscious, led them directly to the concept of inner reality which, opposed to the rational universe, divulged a realm of fantasy and imagination.¹⁵⁰ One of the essential attitudes necessary for the release of the subconscious, that is, the penetration of the inner reality, was the free flow of thought or images released from all rational control, moral, and aesthetic restrictions.¹⁵¹

The releasing of the subconscious described above resulted, in the words of the surrealists, in a pure psyche automatism. The first published results of psyche automatism were published in Les Champs magnétiques (Breton and Soupault). This publication contained a series of prose pieces which had no characters or ordered discussion. These were claimed by the authors as having been conceived automatically, in collaboration with one another. This technique, as explained by Matthew Josephson, resulted when "one would give the other a substantive clause or some verse, and each would write as swiftly as possible whatever words came into his head

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 5. Surrealists regarded poets and painters as the true administrators of intuition and psyche.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 31.

'automatically' and without regard for its literary effect."¹⁵²
 The result of this application of psyche automatism was named automatic writing, and according to Lemaitre, complete automatism was the condition sine qua non of the successful recording of the surrealist message in which the surrealist suppressed all efforts to organize his sentiments or thoughts:

He must be content to listen to the voice of his sub-conscious--"la voix surréaliste"--and take down whatever that voice may fancy to dictate. In order to receive this faint, whispered dictation, he must shut out, as far as possible, all disturbing outside influences. Reducing the activity of his will power to a minimum, and putting, as it were, his faculties of critical judgment to sleep, he will lapse insensibly into a semiconscious state; then he will record automatically with his pen absolutely every sentence that may represent itself to his indifferent mind.¹⁵³

The flood of images released from this state of self-imposed semi-consciousness (not hypnosis) were supposed to be instinctual expressions. Breton has insisted that under these conditions the unconscious revealed itself spontaneously, further explaining that the results were manifested in a convulsive beauty distant from that of the waking reality.

Duplessis has organized surrealist techniques into several categories: humor, the marvelous, the dream, madness, surrealist objects, the exquisite corpse, and automatic writing. Though these terms acquire a dubious connotation, the following statements, paraphrased from his explanations,

¹⁵²Life Among the Surrealists, a Memoir (New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1962), p. 214.

¹⁵³From Cubism to Surrealism, p. 205.

are offered as a means of helping the reader to understand these basic aspects of surrealist techniques.

Surrealist humor was expressed by a means of revolt, surprise, and other unexpected associations which provided a corrosive satire of reality.¹⁵⁴ The marvelous involved the artist's repudiation of the real world, his preoccupation with chance techniques, and his fascination with illusion, the fantastic, and the dream. Frequently he chose to live in an ancient mansion or a deserted castle, claiming that this environment provided a greater opportunity for free play of imagination and consequently he ventured into realms of phantasy and apparition. Under these conditions the marvelous (also referred to as the spontaneous and l'absurdité immédiate) assumed the character of surprising reality, the veritable role of surrealism.¹⁵⁵ Surrealists described the dream both as man's suppressed world and an expansion of the waking state. Breton, concurring with Freud's dream theories, asserted that a constructive use of dreams was possible if (or when) it was employed to solve life's fundamental problems and that the poet and artist were able to accomplish this through their interpretations of dreams.¹⁵⁶ Madness has often implied a paranoid state in which delusions were coherent; but the surrealists insisted that they were capable

¹⁵⁴Surrealism, p. 27.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 35.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 38-40.

of resisting what Jung called "the temptation of morbid elation" through their ability to maintain contact with reality, a factor inconsistent to the true paranoic state. The surrealist poets, who simulated temporary madness, contended that they "had the originality to isolate in an experimental way, those workings of the mind that are purely automatic, and to evoke untrammelled play of thought freed from all subjections to practical necessities."¹⁵⁷ The exquisite corpse has been described as a procedure in which attempts to form pure and striking images were made, resulting in curious drawings and titles as well as senseless expressions such as "the feathered steam seduces the padlocked bird." Paul Eluard states that the outcome of these practices resulted from a game called "Pass it on." The game consisted of the successive accumulation by other players of words or drawings which were added to the word, phrase, or drawing provided by the first player. The end result of this game was usually an unrealistic drawing or an aggregation of improbable phrases. The first attempt at this surrealist diversion culminated in the sentence: "The exquisite corpse--will drink--the new wine."¹⁵⁸ Pure automatic writing, described as a direct écriture de la pensée and involving a passive mind through the suppression of conscious talent, was a condition under which the meeting of two minds

¹⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 46-47.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 48-49.

(conscious and subconscious) induced a free flow of words without any special meaning. The surrealist explained that under these circumstances man is in his primitive state and by "relaxing all efforts at control in states such as the dream and madness, the conscious reveals itself spontaneously and automatic writing can transcribe its messages."¹⁵⁹

Literary Surrealism

The traditional aspects of poetry were incorporated into the surrealist scheme, and while Breton's poem Ma femme à la chevelure de feu de bois (My Woman with her Wood-fire Hair) stands as his most surrealist effort, many of his other works, according to Marks, were constructed to "the most traditional rules of expository style with Breton in complete control of his thought and his language."¹⁶⁰

Some of the poetry of Louis Aragon is also described as traditional. "Les Lilas," a poem that suggests that the capitulation of France in the first world war could possibly have turned into a victory, suppresses punctuation, but otherwise, it contains an introductory and a final quatrain of four lines with three eight-line stanzas, written in alexandrines with a regular ABAB rhyme pattern.¹⁶¹

On the other hand, Paul Eluard is more representative of the trend to surrealist poetry. His poem, "Pour vivre

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p. 50.

¹⁶⁰French Poetry, p. 301. ¹⁶¹Ibid., p. 299.

ici" reveals dual communion with nature as well as "the other" (inner reality). The surrealist approach to the futility of life and the spiritual plight of the frightened man was evidenced by Reverdy's poem "Un Homme fini"--but Reverdy's spiritual flight as well as his surrealist connections were terminated when he entered a monastery in 1926.¹⁶²

The tradition of Eluard and Reverdy was continued by Tristan Tzara, one of surrealisms' original antagonists, who joined the movement in 1936 and made his most significant contribution through this work with the experimental dream.¹⁶³ Robert Desno's Le Pélican is also a notable example in the continuation of the surrealist style.

Other trends in the surrealist movement are represented by Jean Cocteau and Gertrude Stein. Cocteau, one of the most controversial poets of the group, was considered bourgeois and his apparent desire to appease the public repelled his fellow surrealists. In spite of these tendencies, two of

¹⁶²Ibid., pp. 303-304.

¹⁶³Levy, Surrealism, p. 17. Tzara explained the experimental dream in this manner: "I have called this dream experimental because the intervention of the lyrical activity has been brought into play in order to illumine the problem of the interpenetration of the rational and irrational worlds; and because the variables, the provocations, the moments of liberation, do not find themselves solely subjected to the will of the poet, but rely considerably on the automatism of necessities and on reaction created by reason of the logic of the recital itself. Thus, all that which is superimposed upon the logical plot the poet registers with all the docility that his habits, his sensorial and literary tics, will permit . . . "

his early works, Vocabulaire (1922), and Plain-chant (1923) were influential on the younger generation.¹⁶⁴ An earlier pre-surrealist play, Le Sang d'un Poète (The Blood of a Poet), has been described as having surrealist overtones, and while Cocteau denied these aspects, he nonetheless admitted that the term was at least useful, especially in helping his critics to imagine that man could serve as the focal point of an amalgamation between the conscious and the subconscious.¹⁶⁵

Gertrude Stein's writings, pre-surrealistic in date, have frequently been associated with the surrealist style. Roger Shattuck, in making a reappraisal of surrealism, states that Gertrude Stein's near-automatic writing appears to be more closely related to that of the surrealists than other writers such as Cummings, Henry Miller, and William Carlos Williams, whose works only suggest a minor influence. He adds, though, that "her own genius and style made her practically impervious to influence except from painting."¹⁶⁶ Stein describes her own style and writing impulses ("stream of consciousness") as those in which words, without conscious dictation, flowed freely from her pen; the incoherent results, though pleasing to her, were beyond her own understanding and closely

¹⁶⁴Margaret Crosland, Jean Cocteau (London, Peter Neville, Ltd., 1955), p. 61.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 131-132.

¹⁶⁶Maurice Nadeau, The History of Surrealism, translated by Richard Howard (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1965), p. 32.

resembled the literary automatism of the surrealists.¹⁶⁷

In her later years at the height of the surrealist movement she felt little empathy toward them, suggesting that they were falsifiers of art, even though she admitted admiring the works of Picabia and recognized the energy of Dali's early works.¹⁶⁸

Visual Surrealism

Various authors have suggested that surrealist painters may have been influenced by impressionist works; but the general consensus points to more convincing evidence that the majority of surrealist paintings are strikingly romantic in character. Haftmann has supported this point when he declared that the dream landscapes of surrealists were often amazingly reminiscent of those of the artist Caspar David Friedrich.¹⁶⁹ The same psychological methods used by the poets, that is, attempts to reach the subconscious in order to project an inner vision, were also used by the artists and were expressed through two central ideas: through the expression of dreams or by throwing themselves on reality to revere its profundity.¹⁷⁰ Picasso, in his proximity to surrealism, bequeathed

¹⁶⁷Frank Russell, Three Studies in Twentieth Century Obscurity (London, The Hand and Flower Press, 1954), p. 22.

¹⁶⁸Elizabeth Sprigge, Gertrude Stein: Her Life and Work (New York, Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1957), p. 121.

¹⁶⁹Painting in the Twentieth Century, p. 192.

¹⁷⁰Duplessis, Surrealism, pp. 76-79.

to the movement the important concepts of the evocation of the mystery of the unconscious and the disruption of reality. The cubist collage technique, first used by Picasso, was employed by many surrealist painters for the purpose of enriching the automatic effort.¹⁷¹ In addition to collage, accidental and artificial elements, such as stamping and frottage, were applied in order to render in the object a new awareness which supposedly characterized a special kind of animism.¹⁷²

Though technical and psychological methods of painting were reasonably consistent with most surrealist painters, each artist attained visual results that provided unique and differing creations; yet, surrealist qualities are always easily discernible.

The initial stimulus was provided by the pre-surrealist painter, Giorgio di Chirico, who also indicated the trend which surrealism would follow and provided models whose details and substance best suggested the surrealist preoccupation with fantasy and imagination. Earlier works such as Nostalgia for the Infinite (1911) and Delights of the Poet (ca. 1913) supply mysterious effects of deep perspective and static,

¹⁷¹Ibid., p. 79.

¹⁷²Ibid. The most prominent surrealist artists have included André Masson, René Magritte, Max Ernst, Hans Arp, Joan Miró, Salvador Dalí, Man Ray, Giorgio di Chirico, Francis Picabia, Pierre Roy, and Yves Tanguy. Paul Klee was associated with the surrealists for a brief period of time, but most of his art resembles that of the German expressionists.



Plate 24. Chirico: The Nostalgia of the Infinite
(1913-14)¹⁷³

quiet, and motionless scenes,¹⁷⁴ while The Disquieting Muses
(1917) best illustrates surrealist fantasy or imagination.¹⁷⁵
Later surrealists profited from Chirico's use of deep

¹⁷³Werner Helwig, De Chirico. Metaphysical Paintings
(New York, Tudor Publishing Company, 1962), p. 6.

¹⁷⁴Alfred H. Barr, Jr., editor, Painting and Sculpture
in the Museum of Modern Art (New York, Simon and Schuster,
1948), pp. 191-193.

¹⁷⁵James Thrall Soby, Giorgio de Chirico (New York, The
Museum of Modern Art, 1955), pp. 139-140.

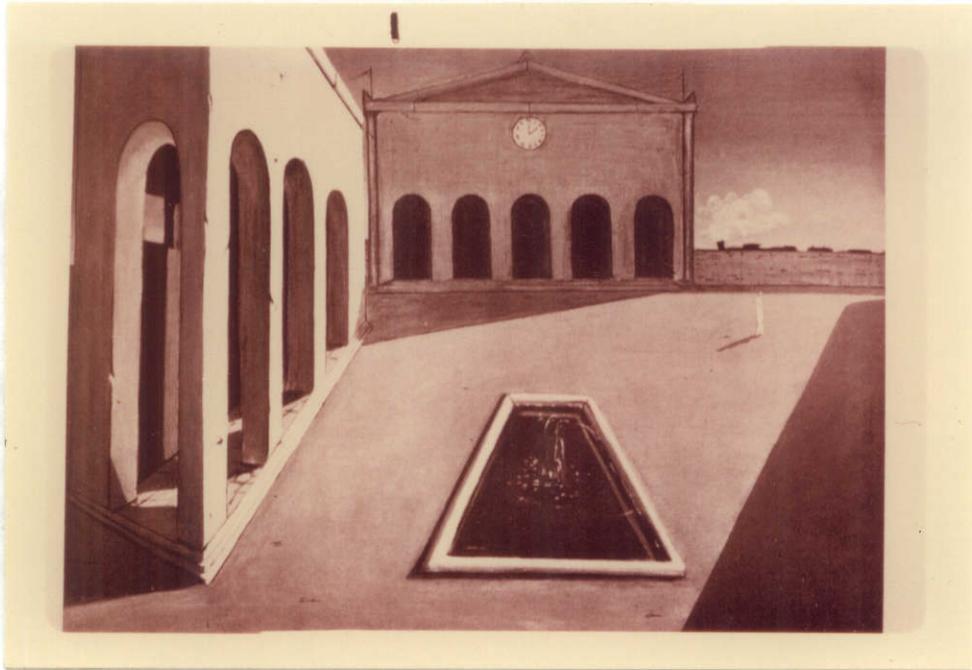


Plate 25. Chirico: The Delights of the Poet (1913)¹⁷⁶

perspective and extended this concept into a more convincing realism which they titled magic realism. Max Ernst, a surrealist painter, introduced and developed the frottage technique, a practice involving the placement of graphite coated sheets of paper at random on the surface of a paneled parquet. This supposedly intensified his mental faculties, resulting in a series of spontaneous suggestions and transformations in the manner of hypnagogic visions (hypnotic sleep). This practice was expressed in Ernst's Old Man and Flower (1923-24) and Napoleon in the Wilderness (1941). A more abstract branch of surrealism, represented by Arp, Miró,

¹⁷⁶Ibid., p. 171.



Plate 26. Chirico: The Disquieting Muses (1917)¹⁷⁷

and Masson, resorted to pure automatism as well as collage in order to enrich the canvas imagery. Masson's employment of automatic and chance elements, sand, pencil, and oil provided delusory effects that reflected greater imagination. A pictorial script illustrating this method (Battle of Fishes, 1927) reflects the result of his employment of chance. In reference to this work, he compared his own

¹⁷⁷Ibid., p. 134.

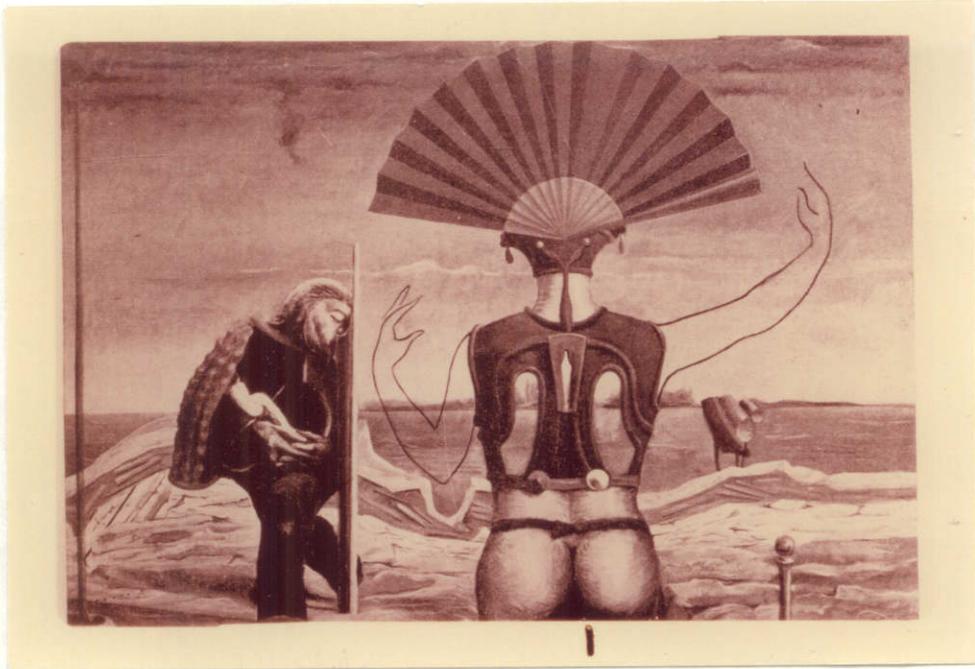


Plate 27. Ernst: Old Man and Flower (1923-24)¹⁷⁸

efforts to going fishing: "You never know what you might bring back. Sometimes you caught a big fine carp; but other times, . . . you would only fetch up an old shoe."¹⁷⁹ In the same way, Arp also used free intuitive association and automatism with cut-outs and oil on cardboard, producing Mountain, Table, Anchors, Navel (1925), a canvas depicting loosely associated figures and images.¹⁸⁰

Through photographic experiments with negatives, Man Ray provided a great number of visual works; his craft demonstrated flexibility of style that plunged him into a variety

¹⁷⁸Barr, Painting and Sculpture, p. 195.

¹⁷⁹Josephson, Life Among the Surrealists, p. 226.

¹⁸⁰Barr, Painting and Sculpture, p. 214.



Plate 28. Ernst: Napoleon in the Wilderness (1941)¹⁸¹

of experiments, some of which were unmatched by artists already discussed. The results of the photographic experiments were called Rayograms and photomontages. Barr has stated that his use of air brush in an early work, Admiration of the Orchestrelle for the Cinematograph (1919) suggested irrational humor,¹⁸² while three other examples,

¹⁸¹Ibid., p. 195.

¹⁸²Ibid., p. 212.



Plate 29. Masson: *Battle of Fishes* (1927)¹⁸³

an object called Snowball, an example called keyboard (no title), and a construction portraying a metronome to which an eye was attached (no title) prompted Paul Wescher to accuse Ray of playing with virtuosity.¹⁸⁴

Surrealist late-comers included Pierre Roy, Rene Magritte, Yves Tanguy, and Salvador Dali. Examples of their work include the trompe l'oeil in Roy's Daylight Saving Time (1929); the symbolic imagery in Magritte's False Mirror (1928); and the suggestion of dream fantasy in Tanguy's Jours de Lenteur (1947).

¹⁸³Lemaitre, From Cubism to Surrealism, p. 180.

¹⁸⁴"Man Ray as Painter," Magazine of Art, XLVI (January, 1953), p. 35.



Plate 30. Arp: Mountain, Table, Anchors, Navel
(1925)¹⁸⁵

Because of the special nature of his paintings as well as the notoriety of his personality, Salvador Dalí, perhaps more than any other surrealist artist, has attracted greater attention from the viewing public. His works involve the interpretation of the irrational by object representation by combining subconscious or dream suggestions with real

¹⁸⁵Barr, Painting and Sculpture, p. 214.

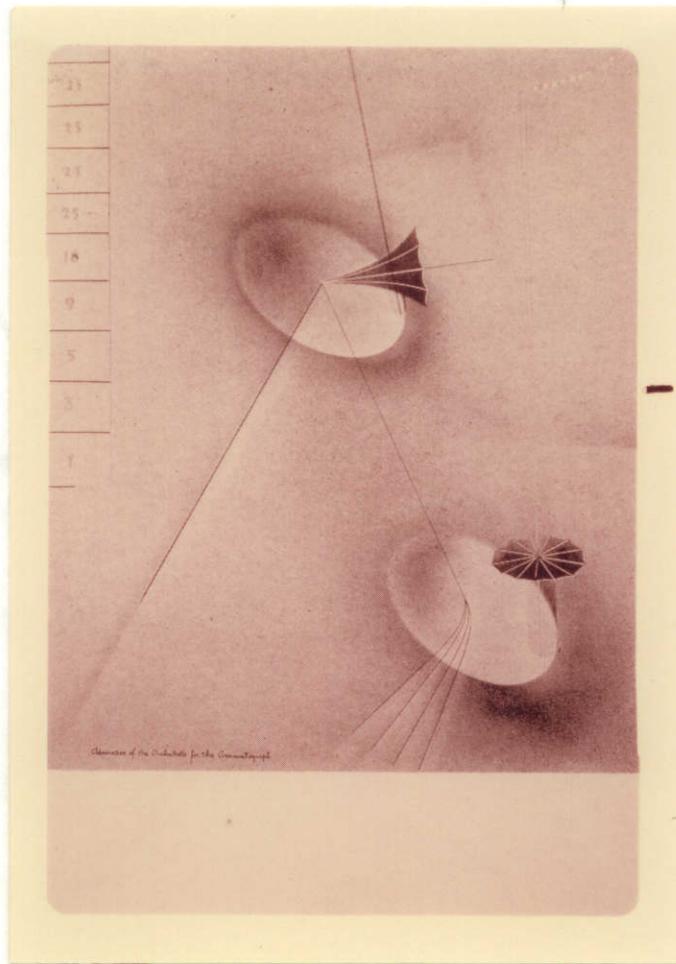


Plate 31. Ray: Admiration of the Orchestrelle for the Cinematograph (1919)¹⁸⁶

objects. His paintings have been described as grotesque, absurd, ghostly, and of a hallucinatory character. He acknowledged a belief in the constant inspirational force of the paranoia, a faith in sleep and dreams as another inspirational force and claimed that memory, the voice of the waking mind, kept the unconscious and dream images

¹⁸⁶Ibid., p. 212.

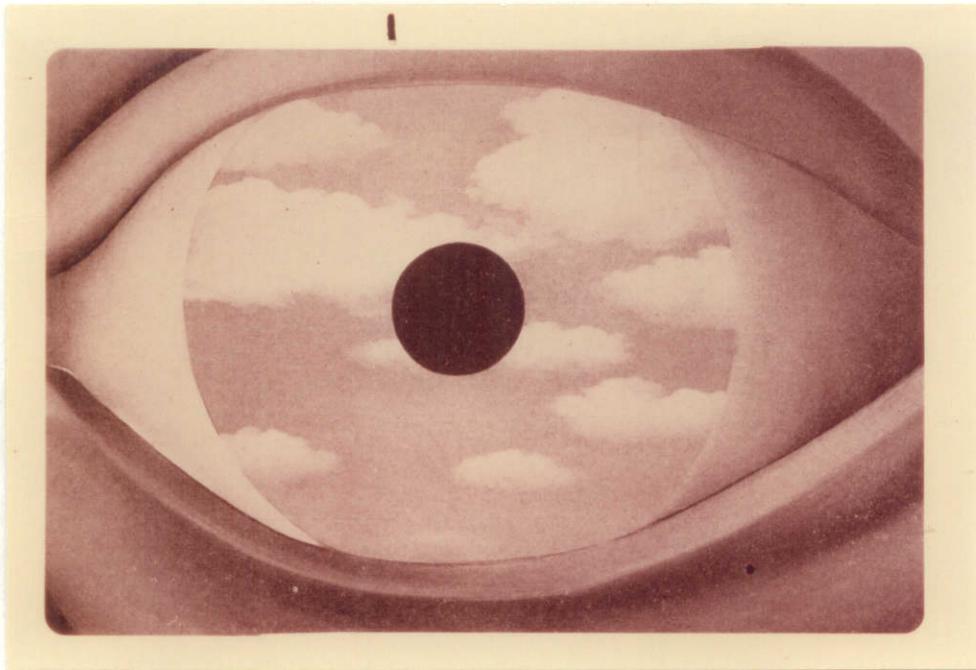


Plate 32. Magritte: False Mirror (1928)¹⁸⁷

alive. The grotesque may be observed in his Soft Construction with Boiled Beans (1936), the paranoic image in Paranoic-astral Image (1934), and the dream and memory in The Persistence of Memory (1931).¹⁸⁸

Although many painters have copied or imitated surrealist styles, only three, Paul Delvaux, Francis Picabia, and Paul Klee seem to have captured the surrealist ideal. The first produced a number of works with definite surrealist results, while the latter two, though never taking

¹⁸⁷Ibid., p. 199.

¹⁸⁸James Thrall Soby, Paintings, Drawings, Prints, Salvador Dali (New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1941), pp. 39, 61.



Plate 33. Tanguy: Jours de Lenteur (1947)¹⁸⁹

a very active interest in the surrealist movement, were on friendly terms with the surrealists and frequently had their support. Three of Klee's works, Seventeen Strays; The Miser's Parsimonious Words; and The Believer's Castle,¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹Alfred Schmeller, Surrealism, translated by Hilde Spiel (New York, Crown Publishers, Inc., n. d.), Se 34.

¹⁹⁰Marcel Jean, The History of Surrealist Painting, with collaboration of Arpad Mozei, translated by Simon Watson Taylor (New York, Grove Press, Inc., 1960), p. 146.



Plate 34. Dalí: Soft Construction with Boiled Beans (1936)¹⁹¹

have been reproduced in La Révolution surréaliste (1925). Another work by Klee, Die Zwitschermaschine (The Twittering Machine, 1922), has frequently been associated with surrealist paintings.

¹⁹¹Soby, Salvador Dalí, p. 61.

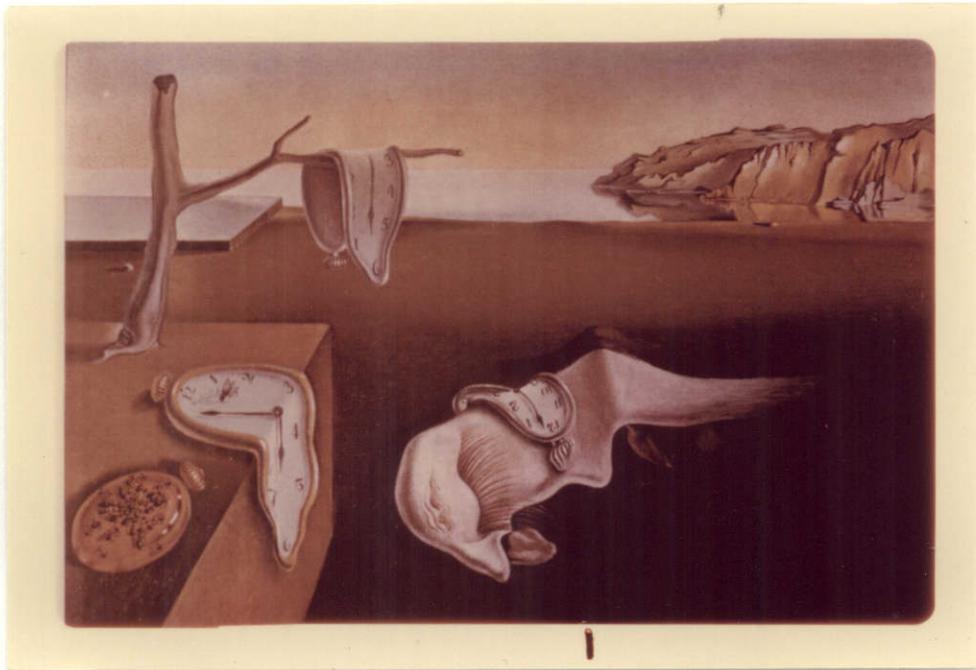


Plate 35. Dalí: The Persistence of Memory (1931)¹⁹²

Cinema, Theater, and Surrealism

Even though the surrealists regarded cinema as the perfect medium for their expression, very few took advantage of the unlimited experimental opportunities which it offered. Such opportunities in the form of camera and film tricks consisted of double exposure, flash-backs, slow motion, sequences of moving images which came to be used to illustrate thoughts and dreams. The use of color, captions, and sounds also afforded remarkable opportunities for the effective portrayal of plotless episodes as well as a wealth of innuendos to accompany all actions. Levy has stated that the combination

¹⁹²Schmeller, Surrealism, Se 28.

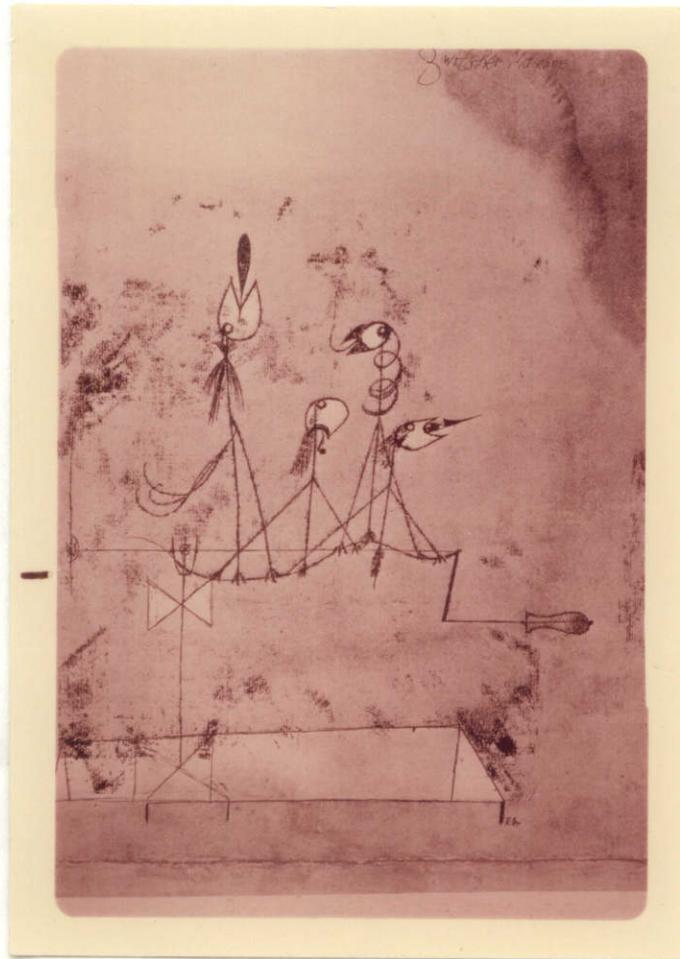


Plate 36. Klee: The Twittering Machine (1922)¹⁹³

of the latter processes formed an emotional pattern "far richer than that of the usual straight story to which our logical mind is accustomed."¹⁹⁴ Luis Bunuel and Salvador Dali were the first to use the film medium, of which Dali's Un Chien Andalou (1930) and L'Âge d'or (1931) are exceptional examples. Another interesting film with music by Paul

¹⁹³Barr, Painting and Sculpture, p. 207.

¹⁹⁴Surrealism, p. 65.

Hindemith, the Vormittags-Spuk (Spook before Breakfast), was produced for the International Music Festival at Baden-Baden in 1927.¹⁹⁵ Jean Cocteau's play, Le Sang d'un Poète, was also produced as a film with music by Georges Auric, and the symbolism and mysticism used in this film caused many persons to regard it as a surrealist endeavor.

The theater was by far the most convenient channel through which surrealists were able to convey untrammelled imagination. The earliest theater production, Les Mamelles de Tirésias (1917), a play antedating the movement, contained scenes that were surrealistic in character and in which the actors were permitted to say and do anything their fantasy dictated.¹⁹⁶ Albert Birot's play Le Bondieu (never staged) was revised by Jean Cocteau into a ballet entitled Mariés de la Tour Eiffel (music by Darius Milhaud). The first performance involved a number of actors dressed in symbolic masks and costumes (one of the characters portrayed by a gramophone) and outraged the unsuspecting audience. Even though the surrealists recognized the theater as an ideal means of portraying metaphysics in action and a chosen territory in which humor and burlesque could triumph, they failed to take advantage of its potentials.

¹⁹⁵Hans Richter, "Dada X Y Z . . . (1948)." The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 289.

¹⁹⁶Duplessis, Surrealism, p. 65.

CHAPTER II

LEGACY AND REVOLT

At the same time twentieth century art movements were attempting to break away from the conventions and styles of nineteenth and early twentieth century art, traditional influences were often recognized in their activities. What several of the new movements professed and what they actually accomplished, frequently resulted in an amalgam of old and new styles. These influences were recognized through philosophers, psychologists, politicians, writers, artists, and musicians.

In the nineteenth century the Industrial Revolution and machine productions in England and France resulted in the building of unsightly factories and a high rate of unemployment, bringing about ugliness and misery to ordinary life. Many of the people who despised the machine failed to recognize the more positive elements inherent in the new technical age. The effect of industrialization upon the populace was deplorable and counteractivities, recognized through various types of labor unions in the guise of small societies¹ in France were organized for the purpose of overcoming the

¹These were evidenced in France through the "goguettes" or singing societies.

economic adversities imposed upon them. Artists who despised industrialization offered resentment through distortion and grotesqueness, while other artists ignored their miserable surroundings and turned to serene and passive representations of life, painting landscapes, village scenes, and other models that were far removed from the sordidness and squalor evident in the industrial areas.

The positive aspects of industrialization stimulated and inspired other artists into attempts to portray a different aesthetic reality--an idealistic representation. More frequently their zeal was evidenced in a retreat into the past in which they were guided by the ideals and philosophies of previous generations, or through reactionary and materialistic factors, echoing the ages of Plato and Aristotle and subsequent periods, but coming closer to the romantic period, out of the age of Reason (Rousseau), epitomizing the emotional, free-thinking, progressive romantic, seeking out his own universal qualities. Contrary to the general opinion that many romanticists (from about 1790 to 1850) were "escapists," some writers have contended that they were not actually seeking an escape world--instead, they were grasping for a real world in which to live. Jacques Barzun has supported this contention when he stated that "the exploration of reality was the fundamental intention of romantic art."²

²Classic, Romantic and Modern, 2nd rev. ed. (Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961), p. 58.

The fundamental idea of the romantic creed was recognized in a revolt against political and religious authority. This, more specifically, concerned the objections to unjust taxation, loss of civil liberties, and protestant heresy. Romantic frustration was also revealed in an impatience with classical rules and restraints of art. Intellectual change in romanticism, however, emphasized a variety of attitudes and entertained several different views: the imaginative and emotional approach rather than rational attitudes toward life's problems; a fascination, awe, wonder, and abiding interest in the universe and its mysteries; an appreciation for the beauty of nature; a faith in the dignity of the common man; a far-away and long ago yearning; a revival of folk ballad and folk art; the establishment of the romantic ego; and romantic ruralism.³

Romantic thinking, then, evolving out of the turmoil of nineteenth century political upheavals, comprised the greatest diversity of ideas clamoring for uncensored expression. These ideas are said to have followed two main paths, developing through all the former periods of man's growth: through Plato, a stressing of idealism and formal beauty; and Aristotle in a turning to medievalism and grasping some aspects

³James D. Rust, "The Romantic Age," An Introduction to Literature and the Fine Arts (East Lansing, Michigan, Michigan State College Press, 1950), p. 269.

of their dynamic modes of expression.⁴ Stites has extended these two paths into three general moods of thinking of the romantic mind:

(1) Utopian idealism, suggesting a plan for man's destinies; (2) the idea of evolution, which proposes a plan continually modifying itself according to discoverable laws; (3) a materialistic mechanism which allows man control of the dynamic forces of nature in order to achieve freedom from physical want.⁵

Romantic art enjoyed a long period of development, involving two or three generations of growth and including a large number of artists in America and Europe. Futurism, cubism, dadaism, and surrealism, having recognized a large number of these personalities as forerunners of their activities, discovered in their works certain features common with their own. Though surrealists reacted favorably toward Edgar Allan Poe, designating him as one of America's greatest poets, America's romantic artists have attracted the least attention. Whistler's paintings, for example, have drawn slight attention from European artists, while American composers such as Lowell Mason, Horatio Parker, and George Chadwick were regarded as feeble imitators of European models. Even Italy, in spite of its enviable record of masters in the renaissance and baroque periods, was unable to provide one great nineteenth century artist (a possible exception might be Antonio Canova, a well

⁴Raymond S. Stites, The Arts and Man (New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1940), p. 683.

⁵Ibid., p. 683.

known Italian sculptor, whose works were essentially classical in style). Italian figures of great promise were also conspicuously absent, although Mazzini, Manzoni, Leopardi, Carducci, and Gabriel d'Annunzio achieved some note. Italian composers, though numerous and prolific, especially in opera works, had little or no influence on the music and musicians involved in the art movements under discussion.

The romantic movement in England, though more limited than those in Germany and France, involved a broader definition than in America and Italy. The impressive list of authors and poets includes at least a dozen (e. g. Scott, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth, Tennyson) who are still remembered. The works of the artists Constable and Turner were prophetic of French impressionism, while a little known painter, John Martin, provided striking contrasts to the serene and sentimental paintings of the former in his Satanic mines.⁶ Martin's paintings are said to have anticipated twentieth century surrealist paintings. English musical composition, however, was negligible and provided little worthy of enduring recognition.

The most important psychologists, political figures, and German philosophers of the romantic period, Fichte, Schelling, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Freud, and Marx, guided

⁶Francis D. Klingender, Art and the Industrial Revolution (London, Curwen Press, 1947), pp. 193-195. These illustrations were based on Paradise Lost, Books II and X.

the thinking of not only German artists, but many of the French, English, and American as well. The literary works of Novalis, Tieck, and Goethe also had far reaching effects upon late nineteenth century artistic thinking, and, in all probability, surrealist painters may have drawn inspiration from the grotesque and fantastic art of Füssli, the macabre sketches of Munch, and the dreamlike landscapes of Kubin.

The French Revolution of 1789 was a major condition of the cultural revolution of French romanticism. The Napoleonic regime resembled romantic undertakings not through Napoleon, who represented classicism and embraced Enlightenment ideas, but mainly through a unitary leadership based upon oppression. In spite of the great evidence of German influence in music and certain influences of German philosophers on literary thinking, France projected its own thinking and attitudes toward life and its problems and interpretations through its own literary media. The impact of the Industrial and French Revolutions and succeeding political upheavals resulted in a constant shift of literary styles in which the position of the writer and public changed so radically "that a professional author sought to please an audience much larger than ever faced by any of his predecessors, one with a markedly lower literacy rate."⁷ This shift of literary appeal appeared

⁷Albert Joseph George, The Development of French Romanticism; the Impact of the Industrial Revolution on Literature (Syracuse, New York, Syracuse University Press, 1955), p. 45 and p. 77.

around 1830 in early romanticism and was brought about by the new popularity of the romantic novel. The popularity of the novel was further enhanced by its inclusion in the newspaper, replacing poetry to a great extent and becoming the most attractive item of the newspaper. Among those who made contributions were George Sand, Balzac, Gérard de Nerval, Mme d'Agoult, Gautier, and Lamartine.⁸ The proletarian poet made his contribution to the journal with the full sanction of the great gods of romanticism, Lamartine and Hugo. The invective spirit of Nerval, Lautréamont, Baudelaire, and Rimbaud, however, inspired twentieth century artists far more than any other French writers.⁹

Impressionism and symbolism were logical extensions of romanticism and according to Arthur Symons, much of the symbolism of Mallarmé, Verlaine, and Maeterlinck can be traced to Nerval. He also claims that "the great epoch in French literature which preceded this epoch was that of the offshoot of romanticism which produced Baudelaire, Flaubert, the Goncourts, Taine, Zola, and Leconte de Lisle."¹⁰

It is quite conceivable that the wealth of poetry that resulted from literary romanticism and symbolism often inspired musical composition as well as essays on music. Baudelaire provided an essay, Richard Wagner et Tannhausér à Paris

⁸Ibid., pp. 47-65.

⁹Ibid., pp. 94-96.

¹⁰The Symbolist Movement in Literature (New York, E. P. Dutton & Company, 1919), p. 4.

(1861); Debussy, inspired by Mallarmé's L'Après-Midi d'un faune and Verlaine's Fêtes Galantes, produced musical imaginative impressions by the same titles, and also contributed musical settings to Rossetti's La Demoiselle élue and Maeterlinck's Pelléas et Mélisande. It will be pointed out later that twentieth century music drew heavily from the poetry of nineteenth century poets.

The impressionist and symbolist movements originated in France, mainly in Paris, though the principal artists maintained a close contact with the suburban boundaries of Paris and other cities such as La Grenouillère, Grenoble, and Avignon. Werner Haftmann notes that the impressionist subject matter, bright landscapes, riverbanks, boating parties, picnics, as well as industrial aspects of the city, confirmed the impressionist outlook as "characterized by an unconditional affirmation of modern life, a contemporary sensibility, a joyful, optimistic attitude towards nature."¹¹ Artists involved in this movement, at the outset, were Claude Monet, Alfred Sisley, Auguste Renoir, Edouard Manet, and Edgar Degas. Following these, other artists who gained significant recognition, and each developing in his own unique way, included Georges Seurat, Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Paul Cézanne, and Henry Matisse.

¹¹Painting in the Twentieth Century, p. 18.

While romanticism re-introduced private values into artistic creation, impressionism, on the other hand, represented a turning point in the artists' concern with nature and reality. At the same time that composers such as Tschaikowsky and Rimsky-Korsakov engaged in belated romantic composition, painters like Seurat and Signac, whose works were a logical sequence of impressionist ideas, willingly accepted the title of "neo-impressionism" to their art ideas. The impressionist concepts of many painters, however, were translated into differing attitudes of art expression. According to Haftmann, Seurat's thinking was kept alive and transmitted by Signac to Matisse and the fauves, from the fauves to the futurists, Mondrian and the Stijl groups, and thus eventually to the Bauhaus painters.¹²

A number of art styles and schools appearing in the last decades of the nineteenth and early twentieth century carried on impressionist traditions, while others revolted against them: The synthetiste group,¹³ including Gauguin, Bernard, Schuffenecker, and De Monfreid, reacted against impressionism and the "Nabis," and was Gauguin inspired, but actually formed itself around Paul Serusier.¹⁴ German

¹²Ibid., p. 23.

¹³Ibid., p. 39. These were also referred to as "Pont-Aven" painters under the leadership of Gauguin. Synthetism meant "concentration and simplification of form, aiming at the most pregnant expression of an idea."

¹⁴Ibid., p. 40. Nabis was a Hebrew word meaning "seer."

Naturlyrismus, symbolist inspired, included outstanding artists such as Millet and Böcklin;¹⁵ Pointillism, explored by van Gogh, was introduced by impressionists such as Seurat, Monet, and Pissarro; the "Jugendstil," allying itself with German "idealism," used abstract ideas which were applied to sculpture and design by artists such as Hermann Bahr and Adolph von Hildebrand.

Many individual artists, not confined to a single school, though following certain previous trends and styles, also developed in their own unique ways, choosing their own raw materials and milieu, the latter varying to include such models as a cabaret, a theater set, a gloomy attic, or an imagined jungle. Artists such as Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Edvard Munch, James Ensor, and Henri Rousseau developed their own styles with these kinds of settings.

The fauvist movement, originating around 1901-02, also re-introduced romantic principles in their art--principles not too far removed from symbolist emotional distortion.¹⁶ Matisse, the greatest fauvist, "inscribed romantic feeling in joyous liberated flat patterns; composition, he said, is reducing violent movement to decoration."¹⁷ The name fauvism

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 50-51. Haftmann states that this group had nothing to do with French impressionism, but was a legitimate offspring of the German romantics.

¹⁶Fauvism did not receive its name until 1905.

¹⁷Wylie Sypher, Rococo to Cubism in Art and Literature (New York, Random House, 1960), pp. 305-306.

came about through an accidental reference made by the art critic, Louis Vauxcelles, when he discovered a fifteenth century child's bust in the same room with works of his compatriots. The expression used was "Donatello in the midst of the wild beasts," and the name les Fauves was accepted for the new movement. Matisse, Derain, and Vlaminck formed the nucleus of this group, while Braque joined the movement late in 1905. Their use of colors and study of complementary colors and contrasts originated out of the works and writings of Gauguin and Cézanne.¹⁸ Fauvism, however, for most of these painters, served as a transitional phase through which they carried their art styles in other directions, while Matisse carried it to its logical conclusion.

The fame of a rather obscure writer, Alfred Jarry, was initiated through a single work, the play, Ubu Roi. Jarry, a literary exile who belonged to no organized school or movement, succeeded in gaining a colorful and notorious reputation in a few short years which exercised a special fascination over many writers and artists, especially Léon-Paul Fargue, Max Jacob, Paul Valéry, and Pablo Picasso. His writings for the Paris Mercure brought him in contact with the entire staff of symbolism, and according to Roger Shattuck, he "made his literary debut 'like a wild animal

¹⁸Haftmann, Painting in the Twentieth Century, pp. 60-70.

entering the ring."¹⁹ Though Jarry lived to be only thirty-four, Christopher Gray felt that the role he played in the twentieth century revolt against outworn traditions was greater than any other single figure.²⁰ Contemporary with Jarry, the artist Henri Rousseau was regarded as a primitive who constructed pictures of nature from his own imagination. According to Haftmann, Rousseau portrayed a new reality which the more sophisticated painters, such as Delaunay and Picasso, had been trying to discover.²¹

In the last stages of fauvism, both Rousseau and Jarry stood at the peak of their careers that had been influenced by the last decades of the nineteenth century in which political revolt revealed itself in the libertarian movement in Paris. During this time, Rachavol blew up the homes of several magistrates (1892); Emile Henry bombed the Café Terminus; and the Dreyfuss case rocked Europe. Boisson summed up the explosive character of these years in his Les attentats anarchistes:

Anarchists come from the most varied backgrounds. But a specific mentality links them--the spirit of revolt and its derivatives, the spirit of examination and criticism, of opposition and innovation, which leads to scorn and hate of every commitment and hierarchy in society, and ends up in the exaggeration of individualism.

¹⁹The Banquet Years, the Arts in France, 1885-1918: Alfred Jarry, Henri Rousseau, Erik Satie, Guillaume Apollinaire (New York, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961), pp. 192-193.

²⁰Cubist Aesthetic Theories, p. 21.

²¹Painting in the Twentieth Century, p. 171.

Decadent literature furnished the party with a strong contingent; in recent years there has been, especially among writers, an upsurge of anarchism.²²

The spirit of anarchy permeated the city of Paris, and the circumstances surrounding the artists' habitat, Montmartre and Montparnasse, made these places the cradle of the advanced movements that Picasso, Marinetti, and others were to figure so prominently in. One of the most significant events was a visit made by Picasso to Paris in 1900. This visit was of great importance because here he discovered a colony of artists in voluntary exile who were later to become his best friends; it was here that he was introduced to painters in the cafés of La Butte de Montmartre and visited the galleries and museums, becoming acquainted for the first time with the works of Ingres, Delacroix, Degas, Van Gogh, Gauguin, and Toulouse-Lautrec. He returned to Spain the same year, and after three years, having visited Paris several more times in the interim, he settled permanently in the bateau lavoir of Montmartre (Paris) in 1904. By this time he had formed strong ties with many of the neighborhood's residents, among them, Matisse, Braque, Rousseau, and Apollinaire.

At the same time, F. T. Marinetti, founder of the futurist movement, was making contributions to the French

²²The Banquet Years, pp. 19-21. Shattuck quotes Maurice Boisson but fails to reveal his source and page numbers.

journal Revue Blanche (1903)²³ and preparing his own review Poesia. Similarly the Jugend school was exercising a great influence on the young Italian nationalists, revolutionizing their approach to art and literature. Haftmann points out that the first Italian bridge-heads were established in Paris by Ardengo Sofficia around 1900. Sofficia was followed by Gino Severini in 1906. Marinetti visited with these people frequently during his trips to Paris and five years after he established his residency there, he met Picasso in 1909.²⁴

In the first decade of the twentieth century the nineteenth-century foundations of revolt against tradition were replaced. Twentieth century departure from nineteenth century conventions has been contrasted through two general concepts: nineteenth century art sensibility was achieved by unity expansion, that is, expansion of forms with little concern for achieving a new art identity; twentieth century art, on the other hand, proceeded with deliberate attempts to dislocate art unity for the purpose of discovering a new reality as well as for testing the possibility of a new coherence. Shattuck feels that this testing, exemplified through such examples as a poem of Apollinaire, a Gris still

²³Haftmann, Painting in the Twentieth Century, p. 44. This journal contained contributions for the cause of painting and literature by younger artists who considered symbolism anarchy. Among the contributors were Jarry, Gide, Proust, and drawings and illustrations by the Nabis.

²⁴Ibid., p. 103.

life, a passage from Proust, or a polytonal composition, was "a work of art [that] began to co-ordinate as equally present a variety of times and places and states of consciousness . . . [The] factotum word is juxtaposition."²⁵ In spite of their attitudes of revolt, all of the movements, futurism, cubism, dadaism, and surrealism, have resorted to philosophers, painters, writers, psychologists, and composers for spiritual or aesthetic reassurance of the rightness of their position.

Influences on Futurism

The publication of Benedetto Croce's Estetica in 1902 indicated the point of departure of a new and brilliant era in the history of Italian culture.²⁶ Croce, who regarded art as primarily a matter of self-expression and an issue of pure imaginative expression, valuable for itself only, exercised a political and artistic influence on nearly every person in Italy in the first decade of this century.²⁷ He identified art as being intuitive and expressive, stating that "one of the principal reasons which have prevented aesthetics from revealing the real roots of human nature 'has been its separation from the general spiritual life, then having made of it a sort of special function or

²⁵The Banquet Years, p. 331.

²⁶Clough, Futurism, p. 7.

²⁷Stites, The Arts and Man, pp. 751, 762.

aristocratic club."²⁸ Croce also felt that Hegel's idealism was sound and necessary, but repudiated his dialectic as an unnecessary encumbrance.²⁹

Futurists did not rely upon Croce's ideals entirely, but regarded politics as another stepping stone to their aesthetic aims. Keeping in mind the highly spirited and militant nature of their movement, it is conceivable that their idealism turned to Nietzsche as a forceful personality in the development of an aristocratic atheism in their movement. The futurist dislike for the common man further betrayed their search for superior leaders--either politician or artist. Their concept of Nietzsche's Superman explains their ardent support of Fascism from its earliest inception.³⁰ Their incendiary principles reflected non-conformism, rebellion and extremely virulent attitudes in which violent attacks on tradition and all that was old were made; they quoted Nietzsche in his statement "Convictions are prisons."³¹ Horace B. Samuel has stated that the attempts of Marinetti and other

²⁸Susanne K. Langer, editor, Reflections on Art, a Source Book of Writings by Artists, Critics, and Philosophers (Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1958), p. 38.

²⁹George Catlin, The Story of the Political Philosophers (New York, Tudor Publishing Company, 1939), p. 488.

³⁰Gray, Cubist Aesthetic Theories, p. 165.

³¹Anne Simone, "F. T. Marinetti and Some Principles of Futurism," Poet Lore, XXVI (November, 1915), 738.

futurists to paint ideas, as well as the subordination of intrinsic aesthetic form to emotional content, reflected the spirit of Nietzsche.³²

For the theory of intuition,³³ futurists turned to Schelling, Novalis, Schlegel, Blake, Poe, and Eckhart, repeating, as Haftmann has stated it, the history of French symbolism.³⁴ Along with intuition, morality and futurist reproachment of moral conventions created the greatest concern among those who opposed their art. A novel appearing in an early issue of Marinetti's Poesia met opposition from persons who claimed that it condoned immorality. The suit filed against Marinetti's novels has been compared to those filed against Flaubert and Baudelaire for "similar infractions of the bourgeois code."³⁵ Futurist sources of inspiration may be recognized through Dante's denunciation of syllogistic reasonings and Poe's The Colloquy of Monos Una. Marinetti used the works of these authors to justify futurist anti-intellectualism.³⁶

³²"The Future of Futurism," Fortnightly Review, XCIX (April, 1913), 725, 740.

³³Clough has explained futurist intuition as a divine gift characteristic of the Latin races (so the futurists have claimed) through a creative spirit which is able to shake off conventions and release spontaneous conception and execution; intuition, furthermore, is basically opposed to intellect.

³⁴Painting in the Twentieth Century, p. 103.

³⁵"Futurists and Venice," The Bookman, XXXVII (June, 1913), 373.

³⁶Clough, Futurism, p. 43.

Three of Marinetti's literary publications, the international review Poesia, The Little Review, and Figaro, aspired to attract the attention and support of youthful writers and artists, and also welcomed the contributions of a number of other writers who, themselves, may or may not have approved of their catechism of literature, music, painting, politics, and life. Poesia numbered among its contributors such men as D'Annunzio, Yeats, Swineburne, Seymour, Regnier, and Verhaaren.³⁷ The Little Review contained works by H. Gaudier-Brzeska, Ben Hecht, Else von Freytag, Yeats, Aldous Huxley, Dorothy Richardson, and James Joyce.³⁸ Even Alfred Jarry found inspiration in futurism, believing futurist literary mutation to be a revelation of his own ideas of monstrosity and horrible beauty. In a letter to Marinetti, Jarry wrote more revealing of himself: "It is true that in your works surprise aims less at laughter than at the beauty of the horrible [l'horriquement beau]."³⁹

Futurist painting, according to Samuel, was primarily concerned with subordination of intrinsic aesthetic form to emotional content, and is analagous to the canvases of William Blake and the Munich Secessionist, Franz von Stuck. The

³⁷Samuel, "The Future of Futurism," The Living Age, p. 744.

³⁸C. S. Evans, "The Terrors of Tushery," The Bookman, LI (March, 1920), 84.

³⁹Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 240.

latter, he notes, "sets out to paint ideas and to give aesthetic form to psychological content. . . . [expressing] in the sphere of painting the whole spirit of the Nietzschean Superman."⁴⁰ Clough has offered a detailed analysis of graphic influences on futurism in which she emphasized futurist borrowing of impressionistic principles:

. . . disintegration of light and the utilization of its component elements in the pictorial reconstitution of the throbbing intensity; . . . employing different colors which, in their optical fusion, yield a darker tone . . . [producing] a very light arabesque in which pure hues predominated, principally the colors of the solar spectrum . . . [a] vibrating application of the brush with little or no superposing, . . .⁴¹

She further claims that futurist painting, drawing upon other impressionistic ideas, suggested that a body presented itself as a nucleus of diffusion rather than a tangible thing, and that the most highly prized impressionistic gift to futurist painting was the "reciprocating chromatism which welds an object to its milieu and is a first attempt at pictorial dynamism."⁴²

Influences on Cubism

An accurate assessment of the influences on cubism is difficult to make, since the main spokesmen for the movement (Apollinaire and Jacob) were writers rather than painters. Another contributing factor was the state of

⁴⁰Samuel, "The Future of Futurism," p. 743.

⁴¹Futurism, p. 69.

⁴²Ibid.

flux that existed in cubist aesthetics during its preparatory, analytic, and synthetic periods. The cubist writers, for example, cited a number of individuals whose attitudes toward the function and interpretation of art reality, beauty, truth, logic, and form varied widely. The source of cubist aesthetics is traceable through such philosophers as Kant and Hegel, and the painter, Cézanne. The conflict of ideas, derived from such diverse backgrounds, resulted in varying interpretations of the function of intuition and the intellect. Raynal indicates that the original desires of cubism, idealistically directed towards an art of pure creation, were derived from the aesthetic principles of Kant, Schelling, and Hegel.⁴³ Various other cubist spokesmen have also expressed the feeling that cubism supported Kantian views concerning the artist's search for truth beyond the world of mere appearances--a search for a higher truth.⁴⁴ Picasso's rejection of the idea that nature and art were the same thing, moreover, was a Kantian concept, as were Max Jacob's; but he modified his attitudes to agree with those of Hegel and Schopenhauer, who in truth, believed that poetry and music held the highest place in the arts. He also agreed with Kant's statement that both belonged beyond the realm of truth: "Art is a lie, but a good artist is not a liar . . .

⁴³Gray, Cubist Aesthetic Theories, p. 137.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 143-146.

[and] art is a lie that makes us realize the truth."⁴⁵ Nietzsche felt that truthfulness in art relied entirely upon lies: "'Through art we express our conception of what nature is not.'"⁴⁶ Nietzsche, echoing Kant's statement that art is not nature, used an analogy of English to make his point: because one does not understand English does not mean that it does not exist. Picasso accepted the Nietzschean and Kantian concepts on this truthfulness in admitting that "the artist must know the manner of convincing others of the truthfulness of his lies."⁴⁷

Hegelian influence on cubists involved an intellect free from the temperament of the individual which could function in a search for new ideas and forms. Concerning this, the cubists declared correspondence of the arts to be essential, and that the visual arts, music, and poetry should not search for materials but search for "an understanding of their underlying aesthetic law, [and] pre-existent ideas."⁴⁸ On the basis of this, such cubists as Juan Gris experimented with a visual form analogous to that of musical polyphony, and Gray has stated that other cubists, among them Braque (Man with the Guitar, 1911), Metzinger (Still Life, 1911), and Picasso (Portrait of Kahnweiler, 1910), made similar attempts.⁴⁹

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 152-153.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 155.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 96.

⁴⁹Ibid.

The cubist intellectual and intuitive process of painting, constrained to the creation of an aesthetic object, did not imply the complete abandonment of the model, but rather, the reinterpretation of it. It also involved their attitude towards reality as it concerned life, idealism, and art aesthetics. Again, referring to Nietzsche, Gray states that he was one of the first to reject the sterile concept of permanence, taking life itself as the basic reality; furthermore, constant change was to be the essential life element in cubism. Nietzsche, in reference to the necessity of prevarication, insisted that the use of lies was necessary in order to rise above the reality of the world. This concept was important to Apollinaire as well, since it was a means of salvation, of "escaping from the bonds of nature through artistic creation."⁵⁰ Apollinaire declared that the cubist painter took the infinite universe as his ideal, and that this ideal permitted the painter "to proportion objects in accordance with the degree of plasticity."⁵¹

Apollinaire and Hourcade insisted that cubist painting was an art of realism, referring not to the photographic reality of the model, but rather, intellectual portrayal of it as they knew it and not as they saw it.⁵² The concept

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 67-68.

⁵¹The Cubist Painters, p. 14.

⁵²John Golding, Cubism: A History and an Analysis, 1907-1914 (New York, George Wittenborn, Inc., 1959), p. 33.

of reality differed among the cubists. Apollinaire searched for a higher reality, whereas Max Jacob, having no interest in the epic quality of Apollinaire's beliefs, revealed through his pessimistic works an abiding interest in a materialistic status of art--an art lacking spiritual and romantic qualities.⁵³ Cubist attitudes toward reality were also modified during each style change. In the analytic phase of cubism the application of logic to a proposed subject resulted in its analytical interpretation, yet allowed it to retain a recognizable identity. These principles of interpretation came directly from Cézanne's belief that the form of an object belongs to the realm of ideas and not to that of direct perception.⁵⁴ In the synthetic phase, iridescence lent itself particularly to the expression of the cubist concept of reality. This related to

. . . the conceptual totality through the simultaneous recombinations of a multitude of observations in time . . . [and] a search of a means of portraying the universal dynamism . . . the incomplete synthesis of material reality . . . in the sense that the very nature of the Cubist's concepts at this time demanded that there be an unresolved conflict.⁵⁵

Picasso, Gris, and Apollinaire were all influenced by Baudelaire, particularly Picasso during his Harlequin period. Apollinaire was attracted to Baudelaire's dislike of nature as formless, while the interest of Gris related to the

⁵³Gray, Cubist Aesthetic Theories, p. 121.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 54.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 95.

"essentially dualistic concept of the picture as a newly created object in reality itself."⁵⁶

The symbolism of Mallarmé was reflected in the works of both Apollinaire and Jacob. Apollinaire's Calligrammes are indebted to Mallarmé's idea of turning to music in order to heighten the evocative powers,⁵⁷ whereas, Jacob's expression, differing through his unrestrained use of novelty and surprise for its own sake, results in a created object

. . . that must be clear and orderly in its creation, must be polished and perfected like a jewel. His attitude [Jacob] was that of Mallarmé who weighed each word many times in a poem before reaching what he believed to be the most perfect phrasing.⁵⁸

Cézanne, under the influence of Baudelaire, was soon attracted to impressionism. The cubist attention to Cézanne was a natural consequence which explains why his influence was so significant to the development of the cubist movement.⁵⁹

Roger Shattuck contends that Henri Rousseau and fauvism exerted considerable influence on cubist activities. Rousseau, who was associated with fauvism for approximately a year, like the cubists, did not paint the world as he saw it--but rather as his mind reconstituted it.⁶⁰ Shattuck adds that for the cubists he was "like the primitives and like negro art, a justification by the instinct of the searching of

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 37-39, 64. ⁵⁷Ibid., p. 64.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 46.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰The Banquet Years, p. 109.

their minds."⁶¹ Between 1907 and 1909, the works of Rousseau, the fauves, Picasso, and Braque were promoted in the pages of the reviews by Apollinaire and were also displayed collectively at different art exhibits.⁶² The cubists themselves, on the other hand, felt that fauvism was a belated type of romanticism and eventually opposed it. In turn, the critics regarded all of these artists and writers involved in vanguard activities (Jarry, impressionists, symbolists, fauves, and cubists) as enemies of art and frequently grouped them under one name in order to afford them a larger target. The circumstances prompting this agglomeration relate to the rejection of the new art of the Paris Salon Exhibitions. In their own individual way, the new cubist artists achieved their own unique purposes, taking from the past what they wished to use, rejecting that which they did not want.

Influences on Dadaism

Dada borrowed freely from the past as well as the present. Frequently the defamatory actions of its adversaries, intended to discredit or obstruct its activities, actually helped to sustain or establish the movement more firmly.⁶³ Dada never regarded itself as a movement in the strictest

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid., p. 267.

⁶³A notable case in point was the abusive criticisms of Mme Raschild, which provided considerable attention to dada's activities. This account is given by William A. Drake in his article "The Life and Deeds of Dada," Poet Lore XXXIII (December, 1922), 498.

sense; but in certain instances, it was a more highly organized art (or anti-art) force than cubism. The name for its first official meeting place, the Cabaret Voltaire in Zürich, was not an accidental choice but was selected by the dadaists "out of veneration for a man who had fought all his life for the liberation of the creative forces from the tutelage of the advocate of power."⁶⁴ Dada was prompted by a chain reaction of impulses, originating at the beginning of the twentieth century with fauvism, followed by cubism, expressionism, futurism, and eventually providing the link to surrealism.

Since most of these movements preceded dada, it borrowed what it needed from each, ungratefully rebelling in attempts to destroy the works and undermine the values of its unwitting providers. It is noteworthy that dada's artistic endeavors, very rarely innovations, were ready-made clichés found in the avant-garde movements previously mentioned, though it should be pointed out that the dada personality was not reducible to the sum of the influences playing upon it. While dada was certain of the eventual destruction of its group activities, it was inevitable that the most outstanding feature during its entire existence, its unique spirit, would continue long after the movement itself had died. It rarely sought condolence in the

⁶⁴Richard Huelsenbeck, "Dada Lives," The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 279.

philosophies of Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche, though the influence of these persons has been shown. Its existence, concerned with the immediate, was a fleeting thing, and the influences that one might attach to dada, in reality, were those setting the stage for surrealism. Even though dada repeatedly declared that poetry, the novel, and all art was dead, it is not difficult to understand why they would applaud the works of Hugo, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Picasso, since these persons did provide the stimulus for their initial efforts.

The primary interest of the Zurich dadaists centered on the liberation of man rather than knowing how one should write. In this regard, "Rimbaud was on the order of the day, and for a long time did not cease to preoccupy them to the point where each of the group [especially Breton, Soupault, Aragon, and Eluard] struggled to find a means of adapting Rimbaud's experiments to his own needs."⁶⁵ The dadaists were attracted to the revolutionary spirit of Rimbaud rather than his works, and Aragon, impressed with the fact that Rimbaud eventually abandoned literature, avowed he would do the same.⁶⁶ Richard Hülsenbeck described the dadaists and their activities in terms of Rimbaud through this account:

Rimbaud jumped in the ocean and started to swim to St. Helena, Rimbaud was a hell of a guy, they [dadaists] sit in the cafés and rack their brains over the quickest

⁶⁵Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes, "History of Dada," The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 104.

⁶⁶Josephson, Life Among the Surrealists, p. 114.

way of getting to be a hell of a guy. . . . Rimbaud very well understood that literature and art are mighty suspicious things--and how well a man can live as a pasha or a brothel-owner, as the creaking beds sing a song of mounting profits.⁶⁷

The littérature group, Aragon, Breton, and Soupault, were belated dadaists whose attitudes slowly became surrealist. By 1919 they had assumed a position between Rimbaud and Lautréamont on the one hand, and Jarry and Apollinaire on the other; in other words, although they favored the destructive tendencies of the dadaists, they only supported the constructive aspects of this destructionism. Eventually the revolutionary spirit of Rimbaud and Lautréamont yielded to the influences of Mallarmé, Charles Cros, and Paul Valéry and led them into a less violent mode of expression.⁶⁸ With the possible exception of Jarry, most of these writers were alien to many dadaists and suited the purposes of dada's replacement, surrealism.

The dadaists, then, actually relied on only four personalities to set the stage for their activities: Alfred Jarry, Erik Satie, Arthur Cravan, and Marcel Duchamp. With the exception of Jarry, the remainder outlived dada's six short years of existence as a movement. From Jarry's Ubu Roi dada drew inspiration for the absurd attitude it held for life; from Satie dada learned to incorporate his musical

⁶⁷"En Avant Dada: A History of Dadaism (1920)," p. 29.

⁶⁸Georges Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit in Painting," pp. 165-166.

absurdities, wit, irony, and inverse humor in its own plans; from Cravan it inherited its nihilistic, anti-art attitude toward art and life; the absurd art of dada was drawn from Duchamp and his ready-made objects--an influence that is still evident in the recent activities of the "New Super Realists" (Pop Art).

Futurism contributed two important items which the dadaists used abundantly. The first, poetic distortion and the sound poem (as provided by Marinetti) provided the dadaists the stimulus to create nonsense poems, simultaneous poems, and typographical illustrations, usually unintelligible, provocative, and pictorially absurd. The second contribution was the futurist bruit (noise), incorporated by the dadaists into their sound poems and as a complementing device to their exorbitant demonstrations.

The cubist technical principle of collage was used extensively by the dadaists, almost becoming an end in itself. Hans Arp employed it as a complementing factor; Max Ernst constructed fantastic objects with ready made materials; and Kurt Schwitters built colossal structures on the collage principle, calling the results Merz rather than collage.

The dadaists were attracted to the comic activities of such American personalities as Charlie Chaplin and the Marx brothers. It is also conceivable that Satie's ballets, Parade and Relâche[^] are evidence to the fact that jazz provided a particular fascination for the dadaists.

Influences on Surrealism

Neal Oxenhandler felt that a blood kinship between futurism, dadaism, and surrealism existed in which passions, generated during World War I, seemed to have affected all Europeans through an intense subjectivity.⁶⁹ The personalities belonging to the surrealist side of the dada-surrealist split (Aragon, Breton, Soupault, and Eluard) resided temporarily in the dada environment. Subsequently they moved in their own direction and became involved in a variety of activities that preceded the movement itself. They tried vainly to maintain that their position was purely self-contained, admitting only those influences which they felt suited their purposes. Contrary to their denial of futurist influences (for example, the praise of machinery and staccato rhythms), futurist tendencies were quite evident, as may be observed in the works of Pierre-Albert Birot. Also a great amount of the absurd and fantastic aspects of dada was always present in their paintings, as in the case of Max Ernst, while a purely static and contemplative attitude was ever present in the literary works of Pierre Reverdy.

The primary concern of surrealist art and poetry, essentially the same as that which other movements had experienced, was the interpretation of a conflict of realities. Kant and Hegel had pointed out the contradictory nature of

⁶⁹Scandal and Parade; the Theatre of Jean Cocteau (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1957), p. 25.

the concept of an unknowable "thing in itself" as the ultimate reality. They and their followers (Baudelaire, Lautréamont, and the symbolists) felt that the answer was to make reality completely subject to the domain of the mind.⁷⁰ They also had support on this point from Bergson who once said that "one moment of intuition preceded twenty volumes of philosophy. . . . The primary function of the poet or artist is to communicate the immaculate primary concept."⁷¹ Paul Wescher pointed out the surrealist concern in the double aspect of life in which "the two kinds of reality were blended into one by the mental exercises and experiments of . . . surrealism."⁷²

Surrealist interest in the subconscious led them directly to the study of Freud's theories of the subconscious, dreams, and sex. Breton and Apollinaire, both vitally interested in Freud's psychology, believed that the subconscious held the key to a newer and greater reality. Breton, having a natural interest in psychology, discussed various theories with Freud and was interested in the application of his theories in art aesthetics. His medical experience in treating mad soldiers during World War I turned this interest toward psychiatry and according to Josephson, "the relationship between the illusion of mad persons and the creative processes of art

⁷⁰Gray, Cubist Aesthetic Theories, p. 10.

⁷¹Levy, Surrealism, p. 6.

⁷²"Man Ray as a Painter," p. 35.

absorbed him for years."⁷³ Surrealist excursions in psychic automatism, prompted by Freud's theories, were responsible for their selecting him as their preceptor and guide. Charles Glicksberg contends that many of their experiments fell into infantile absurdity, although he admits that "their wild plunges into the depths of the unconscious, are notable for their agonized originality, their extreme break with tradition, their violent disruption of form and order."⁷⁴ Surrealists attempted to discover, as Levy has expressed it, "the more real than real behind the real."⁷⁵ Indian philosophy advocated the possibility of comprehending the dream (both the dream and the waking state) through an unbroken continuity to consciousness and throughout the day all things must be conceived as the substance of dreams. The surrealists were attracted to this concept but relied more on Freud's theory which stated that "dream and the subconscious have existence and are introactive with reality."⁷⁶ The surrealist theory of the dream principle, as applied to art, maintained that the artist could always find a way of returning from the world of phantasy back to reality. "With his special gifts he moulds his phantasies into a new kind of reality, and men concede them as a justification as valuable reflections of actual life."⁷⁷

⁷³Life Among the Surrealists, p. 117.

⁷⁴"Art and Disease," The Nineteenth Century and After, CXLV (March, 1949), 180.

⁷⁵Surrealism, p. 5. ⁷⁶Ibid. ⁷⁷Ibid.

It has already been pointed out that the surrealists took an active stand on politics, though frequently they differed on socialist theories. The dadaists were also in frequent touch with Lenin while they engaged in their Zurich activities shortly before his return to Russia to spearhead the revolution, and their activities in Hanover, Berlin, and Cologne were consistently associated with socialist groups. Surrealism inherited a socialist political view from various dadaists, and numerous political manifestos have testified to this abiding interest in the political scene. Breton regarded Trotsky's social ideas as humanistic, but the initial phases of surrealism, which revealed a constant shifting of political loyalties, displayed a combative character.⁷⁸

Surrealism found literary inspiration in the works of Baudelaire. Eluard recognized the fact that Baudelaire, the dandy, "passed his day in an incomparable subjective dream, dissolved action in the alchemy of his sensibility, and desperately loved himself in all things."⁷⁹ Cocteau was also attracted to Baudelaire as well as to Edgar Allan Poe, and considered them to be "two men equally initiated in the use of herbs, spices, drugs, medicines, cooking, mixtures, and the effect they provoke in the organism."⁸⁰ Cocteau remarked that the work of a poet was a secretion and declared that one

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 55.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 13.

⁸⁰The Journals of Cocteau, p. 48.

line of Baudelaire often represented a victory. He quotes the following two lines as being sufficient to elevate the entire poem of Baudelaire as an example of this secretion and its subsequent victories: "And your feet went to sleep in my hands of a brother . . . The warmhearted servant you were jealous of . . ."81

Though the surrealists felt that a true penetration of the subconscious should result through a normal effort, they accepted revelations resulting from artificial inducements such as those Baudelaire had experienced. Baudelaire, for example, frequently made attempts to provoke an occult condition of correspondence with the universe by indulging in the use of hashish. The results of these involuntary caprices have been discussed in his Paradis Artificiels. Rimbaud also used drugs on certain occasions for the purpose of invoking visions not normally acquired through natural phenomena,⁸² while Alfred Jarry frequently used alcoholic beverages and absinth. Other surrealists attempted to induce clairvoyance through devious artificial methods, such as the use of opium. Cocteau, who used opium for a brief period of time, felt that this method made it easier for him to understand Baudelaire and Rimbaud, particularly Rimbaud, declaring that his poetry was difficult for the normal reader to understand.⁸³

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Josephson, Life Among the Surrealists, pp. 219-220.

⁸³The Journals of Cocteau, pp. 9-10.

The surrealists admired Rimbaud's aggressiveness, his irritation (which they considered a coefficient of life) and his immortal insupportability.⁸⁴ Paul Rosenfeld has defined Rimbaud's poetic power in terms of uniqueness, lightning-like in movement, exquisiteness, nervously tensioned, scattered, discontinuous insights--prophetic insights which may have been interpreted as the workings of the subconscious mind or the ultimate nature of reality, and visions compatible to the surrealist point of view.⁸⁵ Breton was particularly impressed with Rimbaud's attitude toward the destiny of a poet, that which agreed with Jacques Vaché's statement with regard to the use of art as a vocation, "Had not the great poet [Rimbaud] said: 'La main `a plume vaut la main `a charrue'?"⁸⁶

Besides Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Jarry, Lautréamont and Verlaine were also regarded as surrealist ancestors. Cocteau felt that all of these writers gave greatness to France. Lautréamont, probably more than all the others mentioned, was the most powerful influence on surrealism. Josephson, the surrealist biographer, was so enamoured of Lautréamont that he planned translations of his works,⁸⁷ and Julien Levy

⁸⁴Levy, Surrealism, p. 50.

⁸⁵"Rimbaud Influence," Tomorrow, IV (December, 1944), 14.

⁸⁶Josephson, Life Among the Surrealists, p. 118. "Must they become mere 'ploughmen' of literature?"

⁸⁷Life Among the Surrealists, p. 170.

actually translated Lautréamont's Les Chants de Maldoror (1868).⁸⁸ Joan Miro, the surrealist painter, has provided a drawing of the famous Maldoror (the frightening Head of a Woman, 1938) "with its wiry tangled hairs, huge paws, ovoid thorax, serrated mouth and ferocious little eye, . . ."⁸⁹ Breton, according to Josephson, "was willing to wade through gore to make people appreciate Lautréamont."⁹⁰

The surrealists acknowledged the influence of romanticism and anxiously welcomed the extension of romanticism by means of the works of the symbolist poets. The denial of reality in Mallarmé and Rilke, whose works and lives consisted of undisguised violence and hostility to the world around them, became a precept of action for surrealists.⁹¹ Symbolism was affected by the extreme idealism of Schopenhauer in which poets sought a refuge for their dissatisfaction by retreating to the ivory tower of the mind. They were concerned with ideas, things of the spirit and attempted to ignore their environment by giving up active participation in life.⁹² Chirico's paintings were rich with symbolism and his earlier works were said to have been intuitively realized.

⁸⁸Surrealism. Excerpts of translations are given on pp. 33-37 (Chant III), while excerpts on Chant II are provided on pp. 38-40.

⁸⁹Jean, The History of Surrealist Painting, p. 154.

⁹⁰Life Among the Surrealists, p. 157.

⁹¹Oxhandler, Scandal and Parade, p. 25.

⁹²Gray, Cubist Aesthetic Theories, p. 157.

At a later date he copied some of his earlier paintings in an attempt to recapture the mood in which they were conceived.⁹³

Surrealistic paintings, when compared with selected examples of earlier centuries, show striking similarities. For example, the paintings of Hieronymous Bosch (1460-1516) could almost pass for the works of some twentieth century surrealists. Although frequent parallels have been drawn between the works of Bosch and surrealism, the surrealists themselves rarely included Bosch in their discussions. The influence of Bosch has been recognized in certain examples of Ensor and Kubin,⁹⁴ who in turn, resemble each other. According to Kayser, neither of them (except for short trips) left the narrow circle of their fatherland (Ensor in Ostende and Kubin in Swickledt), nor did either join any groups but instead, worked individually and separately.⁹⁵ Their fascination with the grotesque helped them to produce fantastic works, especially in the graphic medium, and Ensor's name has even appeared on some of the surrealist programs.⁹⁶

⁹³David Drew, "Modern French Music," European Music in the Twentieth Century, edited by Howard Hartog (New York, Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher, 1957), p. 252.

⁹⁴Wolfgang Kayser, The Grotesque in Art and Literature, translated by Ulrich Weisstein (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1963). See pp. 175-176.

⁹⁵Kubin worked a very short time with the Blue Rider School.

⁹⁶Kayser, The Grotesque in Art and Literature, p. 174.

The vogue of this period (horror stories, metaphysical pictures in the early 1900's) gained prominence before World War I and Kayser points out that they, in a way, foreshadowed surrealism.⁹⁷ The work of Kubin and Ensor reveals conflicts between the conscious and subconscious self. Ensor, possessed of a morbid interest in the macabre, provided illustrations for Poe's works. Kubin accounted for his own mystic, graphic illustrations through such examples as Bad Luck Compounded and the Giant Weasel:

By forcing myself with unconditional surrender to portray what I felt most deeply, I merely yielded to a pitilessly dictating force against which my conscious self often stubbornly defended itself. . . . In special moments of greater clarity I sometimes sensed the subterranean existence of some mysterious fluid that connects all living matter. . . . I do not see the world in this manner, but noticeably these transformations in strange moments, when I seem to be only half awake.⁹⁸

A contrast of Kubin's efforts with those of surrealism reveals that Kubin sought artistic forms, whereas surrealism sought insight. Kubin, fully preoccupied with nature, was captivated by the art of Bosch, Brueghel, and Goya.⁹⁹ Holbrook Jackson, in The Complete Nonsense of Edward Lear, has intimated that Kubin's fantastic art anticipated the surrealists of our time.¹⁰⁰ Chirico and Klee were also under the influence of Kubin during their stay in Munich.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Kayser, The Grotesque in Art and Literature, p. 208. Note on p. 37.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 176.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 141.

Two other artists, Emil Nolde (1867-1956), a Brücke artist, and Edvard Munch (Norwegian, 1863-1946) have produced works which H. W. Janson believes are surrealistically oriented. Nolde had a predilection for religious themes which represented a primeval direct expression of Goya.¹⁰¹ Munch's style is also reminiscent of Toulouse-Lautrec and Gauguin. Some of these pictures have been described as images of fear and terrifying such as one would experience only in a nightmare; The Scream (1893) is one of his more notable examples.¹⁰² An example by another artist, Henri Fuseli, The Nightmare, has also shown a remarkable resemblance to surrealist art, though it was painted many years before the inception of the movement.¹⁰³

Giorgio de Chirico has been regarded as surrealism's immediate ancestor in the field of visual art. The period during which his works were considered prophetic of surrealist painting (1910-11) was also a period during which Chirico was caught up in the futurist fascination for militant nationalism. Chirico's interest in Italy's nationalism had little effect on his paintings, though it should be pointed out that he was attracted to Nietzsche's philosophy. The philosophies of Nietzsche and Fascism were diametrically opposed to those of the surrealists. Since this attraction occurred several

¹⁰¹History of Art, a Survey of the Major Visual Arts from the Dawn of History to the Present Day (New York, Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1963), p. 514.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 509.

¹⁰³Ibid.

years before the origin of surrealism, one can understand that Breton's attention to Chirico's art by this time overshadowed any questions about Chirico's philosophy or political attractions. One curious factor is evident; Chirico's fascination with Nietzsche, who consistently and stoutly defended music's position in the arts, would apparently annoy Breton, who held music in lowly esteem. The resolution of this conflict of artistic ideas is evident at a later date when Chirico, obviously changing his opinion about music, expresses it in the following statement: "Music cannot express the essence of sensation. One never knows what music is about, . . . What I listen to is worthless; there is only what I see with my eyes wide open and even better closed."¹⁰⁴

Surrealists have been reluctant to acknowledge influences on their visual art; Chirico is possibly the only exception. It is highly probable that they have recognized qualities and psychic motivation resembling their own in the works of Bosch, John Martin, Breughel, Goya, Hogarth, Callot, Busch, and Weber, but have found it more convenient to ignore these influences because an admission to these influences would negate their claims to new discoveries and originality.

¹⁰⁴Jean, The History of Surrealist Painting, p. 54.

CHAPTER III

FUTURISM AND MUSIC

Personalities involved in music in the futurist movement included two main groups: those who were acknowledged futurists, belonging to and participating in the movement itself; and those who were implied futurists, either because of their association with members of the futurist movement, or those whose performing or composing activities convinced critics and writers that they and their music belonged to some special category of bizarre musical activities; for want of a better term, they frequently called them futurists.

In this chapter, however, these are discussed not as futurists but as futurists by attribution. The former included F. T. Marinetti, futurist poet and founder of the movement; Francesco Balilla Pratella, a composer active in the futurist movement; Luigi Russolo, painter, who was active in inventing noise instruments as well as promoting noise concerts; and to a lesser extent, Antonio Russolo (brother of the latter), who collaborated by composing conventional sounding music to be used with the noise instruments. The principal members of the latter group were Ferruccio Busoni, Leo Ornstein, Arnold Schönberg, Igor Stravinsky, Carl Ruggles, Arthur Honneger, Alban Berg, and George Antheil.

Others who frequently had little or nothing at all to do with the movement or with the movement's personalities were nonetheless frequently assaulted by the critics of musical extremism and are classed here as "implied futurists" or "futurists by attribution."

Futurist musicians promoted their activities by issuing musical manifestos, composing (traditional as well as futuristic pieces), and performing concerts which employed noise instruments. They attempted to interpret and equate musical art in a manner similar to that of their colleagues in art, literature, and sculpture. Marinetti actually incorporated sound effects in his poems; Pratella proposed theories which he believed would replace the older harmonic system; Russolo, taking his cue mainly from painting theories and titles (for example, Boccioni's The Noise of the Street Penetrates the House, 1911), constructed noise apparatuses according to various sound classifications which emitted a variety of noise effects.

The futurists believed that musical sounds were too limited in the qualitative variety of timbres and that musical progress was slow in comparison to other arts. Tracing the development from the Greek period and the Middle Ages up to the twentieth century, Russolo, in explaining that music was generally consonant and soothing to the ear, contended that a sound was originally conceived as a musical entity (pure sound) and that until recently, the evolution of

noise-sound was not possible. He further insisted that a certain conditioning to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century music prepared the way for the creation of musical noise.

With particular reference to modern life in which the ear is accustomed to hearing street noises and machinery (mentioning presses, banging doors, and many machine noises) Russolo, deploring the persistent use of conventional instruments limited to four or five classifications (strings, brasses and so forth), proclaimed the need of breaking out of the restricted circle of pure sounds in order to "conquer the infinite variety of noise sounds."¹ He resorted to Marinetti's "word autonomy" as a means of describing his manner of intoning the varied noises. With this in mind, he attempted to construct noise instruments that would achieve such distinctive effects. He collaborated with Marinetti and Pratella for several years during which time they were the leading futurist team. The compositions were provided by Pratella, while Marinetti served mainly as producer and agent for the group.

F. T. Marinetti

Marinetti, whose interests in music varied widely, regarded music in much the same way that he regarded poetry. He was convinced (as were other futurists) that analogy

¹Clough, Futurism, p. 125.

served as a means of gauging poetical values. Analogy was felt to have achieved its purpose if it stupefied or startled its audience.² Futurist analogy involved conflict, and Marinetti believed that things different and hostile to each other were united by an immense love through analogy as can be seen by this statement that "by means of vast analogies, this orchestral style, at the same time polychrome, polyphonic, and polymorphic can embrace the life of matter."³ In his poetry, for example, he employed "word autonomy" to describe the orchestration of a big battle:

Every 5 seconds siege cannons disemboweled space with
a harmony ZANG-TUMB-TUUUMB mutiny of 500 echoes . . .
rapid firing batteries ferocious violence regularity
this deep base to scan the strange crazy agitated
acute notes of the battle Fury . . .⁴

Marinetti's poetry frequently described as a kind of free verse which attempts to assimilate free rhythm (as in music) was often conceived with no attempt to make any distinction between nouns and verbs, which were loosely strung together with no common links of construction.⁵ An example which represents the kind of poetry used with noise and varied stage activities illustrates free rhythm more clearly:

Hohohohowling of 1500 sick men at the carriage-doors
locked up before 18 Turkish gunners
battered to pieces

²Ibid., p. 45.

³Taylor, Futurism, p. 69.

⁴Clough, Futurism, p. 126.

⁵Samuel, "The Future of Futurism," p. 746.

rags tatters caps
 officers thrown upon the network of iron wire pass
 pass at all costs anguish writhe
 with the short bayonet tear the mails rage mouse-trap⁶

In addition to their aesthetic values, music and noise were valued for their usefulness in propagating all futurist art. The music-hall and the variety theater, as opposed to the traditional theater, represented the ideal futurist medium:

The variety theater [is] the only kind of theater where the public does not remain static and stupidly passive, but participates noisily in the action, singing, beating time with the orchestra, giving force to the actor's works by unexpected gags and queer improvised dialogs.⁷

Marinetti also regarded the variety theater as the best collaborating force with which to achieve the futurist's objectives, that is, to attack the contemporary stage in order to destroy traditionalism in music and all the arts, and to use it as a conventional medium in order to introduce the futurist concepts of speed and the machine age. Still more important to Marinetti was his belief that the theater illustrated the dominating laws of life through

The interpenetration of separate rhythms
 The inevitable nature of lying and contradiction
 The sympathetic combination of speed and transformation
 . . . It collaborates with Futurism in the destruction of the immortal masterpieces by plagiarizing them, parodying them, and by retailing them without style apparatus or pity. . . . It is absolutely necessary to abolish every vestige of logic in the performances of this

⁶"New Kind of Poetry," The Living Age, CCXXC (February 14, 1914), 400.

⁷"Futurism and Vaudeville," Literary Digest, XLVII (December 12, 1913), 1173.

variety theater . . . to enliven the works of Beethoven, Bach, Bellini, Chopin by cutting them with Neapolitan songs. . . . the music hall delights us because there, as in the smoking concert, circus, cabaret, and night club is offered the only theatrical entertainment worthy of the futurist spirit. . . . Futurism exalts the theater because, . . . it . . . has not tradition . . . no dogmas and subsists on the movement. . . . Hence the absolute impossibility of stagnation or repetition.⁸

Since there are no records that contain evidence of Marinetti's ever having composed music, or invented any music or machines, it seems that he, being the central futurist figure around which many clever artists and writers gathered, relegated himself to the role of organizer, promoter, and quite often, participant in the futurist concerts that were staged in Europe between the years 1911 and 1920. Though the majority were held in Italy, several were presented in Paris and were well attended by the dadaist group. W. H. Hadow, describing these as being vigorous, aggressive, and destructive, states that Marinetti and the futurists dispensed with formal beauty, replaced the orchestra with a babel of noise-machines, and utilized every possible opportunity to incite audiences into a state of irritability, especially those comprising dispassionate students and artists. Hadow, moreover, describes how Marinetti raised these activities to a level of violence and disorder:

They raise aloft . . . their blood-red banner. They advance . . . with their hearts full of fire, hatred and swiftness. They wage implacable war upon every

⁸Ibid., pp. 1173-1174.

known place of instruction. They demand the immediate demolition of every picture more than twenty years old. They write fierce critical volumes to prove the inutility of criticism, and declare in the most egotistical of manifestoes that they have destroyed the egotist from the earth. They have constructed a literature without verbs or particles, they have painted nightmares and built statues out of cigarettes and lamp shades: there is no extravagance which they have not committed.⁹

Marinetti's career, violent and bizarre and embracing a period longer than any other member of the movement, profited and thrived through the favors of Italy's dictator, Benito Mussolini, in the nature of honors such as a high ranking position in the Italian Academy,¹⁰ and the military rank of captain.¹¹ His prestige, which never seemed to wane, afforded him the opportunity to periodically revive the movement.

From the beginning of the futurist activities until their end, Marinetti remained its most prominent leader, and though his musical activities were confined to concert management and participation, he recognized the importance of music in the futurist program. A manifesto issued March 11, 1911, declared that the continuous process of scientific discovery should be translated into musical composition, that is, such things as the masses, the large industrial plants,

⁹"Some Aspects of Modern Music," The Musical Quarterly, I (January, 1915), 67.

¹⁰"Fascist Art is Just Marinetti," Literary Digest, CIV (February 22, 1930), 33.

¹¹"Italy, the Future," Time, XXVI (November 4, 1935), 24.

ocean steamers, battleships, automobiles, and airplanes should be given a musical soul.¹² His eager attitude toward Pratella's music in the early stages of futurism is accounted for in the Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture of Umberto Boccioni (April 11, 1912). An excerpt confirms this enthusiasm:

Futurist poetry, according to the poet Marinetti, after having destroyed the traditional meter and created free verse, now destroys syntax and the Latin sentence. Futurist poetry is an uninterrupted and spontaneous flow of analogies, each one of which is intuitively related to the central subject. Thus, wireless imaginations and free words. The Futurist music of Balilla Pratella breaks through the chronometrical tyranny of rhythm.¹³

Marinetti staunchly believed that music should be unmeasured and free as poetry, and more than anything--entirely original. Pratella's music, which was not original, that is to say, an advance over current works such as those composed by Stravinsky and Schönberg, only partially fulfilled these requirements. Russolo's noise organs were more compatible to the violent spirit of futurism and Marinetti found them

¹²Fred K. Prieberg, Musica ex Machina; über das Verhältnis von Musik und Technik (Berlin, Verlag Ullstein, 1960), p. 31. Prieberg does not provide the name of the manifesto. In all probability he is referring to Pratella's Manifesto Tecnico della Musica Futurista (1911). Although the Archivi del Futurismo, Vol. I does not carry this manifesto (as it does many others), it reveals that Marinetti corresponded with Pratella; the letter, addressed to Pratella, states that Marinetti had contacted Tito Ricordi in regard to the Manifesto tecnico. This short discussion, given on p. 232, does not provide any more information. For reasons not clear to the author of this study, the 11th day of the month was chosen for many articles and manifestos during the many years of futurism's existence.

¹³Taylor, Futurism, p. 131.

more acceptable than Pratella's later efforts. Long after the movement had officially ended (1934, except for sporadic revivals), Marinetti issued a manifesto in an Italian magazine, Stile Futurista, entitled Futurist Manifesto of Aeromusic, subtitled "Synthetic, Geometric, Creative." His pronouncement condemning Pratella's program as a failure reads in part as follows:

. . . we shall create a new futurist aeromusic whose law is synthesis--

As futurist poets and musicians

a) We condemn music for music's sake which borders fatally on the fetishism of a set form, on virtuosity or technism. . . . Bach, Beethoven and Chopin . . . have confined their genius in a maniacal pursuit of musical architecture and of music for music's sake . . .

b) We condemn the custom of setting to music "pastist" poems and subjects, . . .

Only synthesis of free words can enable music to fuse with poetry.

c) We condemn imitation of classical music. In art, every return is a defeat, . . . We must . . . extract a personal musical emotion from life.

d) We condemn the use of popular songs which has led spirits as perspicacious and cultivated as Stravinsky and most inspired talents as Pratella and Malipiero, away from synthesis in an artificial and monotonous primitivism.

e) We condemn imitations of jazz and negro music, killed by rhythmic uniformity . . .

Futurist music, a synthetic expression of great economic, erotic heroic, aviational, mechanical dynamism, will be a curative music.

We shall have the following types of syntheses, . . .

Sonorous block of feelings. Decisive crash.

Spatial harmony. Howling interrogation. Decision framed by notes. The regularity of the air ascension. Fresh fan of notes over the sea. Aerial simultaneity of harmonies. Anti-human and anti-impressionist expression of the forces of nature.

Italian musicians, be futurists, rejuvenate the souls of your listeners by swift mechanical synthesis (not exceeding a minute), thunderously arousing the

optimistic and active pride of living in the great Italy of Mussolini, which will henceforth be at the head of the Machine Age!¹⁴

As may be ascertained from the preceding paragraph, the initial mutual enthusiasm of Marinetti, Pratella, and Russolo decreased. After 1920, Marinetti's futurism moved away from its original aims. Marinetti subsequently made pacts with Fascism and glorified the music of the airplane motor as the sounding symbol of the new imperial Italian spirit. Indicative of his new ideas is a 1931 pamphlet containing fourteen points of accusation against Arturo Toscanini in which, for example, he accused Toscanini of ignoring the Italian national anthem for artistic reasons. Marinetti had discarded his own ideas because he hoped Mussolini would create an imposing new world.¹⁵

Francesco Balilla Pratella

The musical compositions of Pratella, the only personality in the futurist group with a legitimate background of musical training,¹⁶ may be considered to have been successful. One of his earliest works, the opera Lila, won the prize of the Sonzogno Contest in 1903 (performed in

¹⁴Slonimsky, Music Since 1900. The complete manifesto is reproduced on pp. 662-663.

¹⁵Prieberg, Musica ex Machina, p. 46.

¹⁶Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, 4th ed., rev. and enl., edited by Gustave Reese, Gilbert Chase, and Robert Geiger (New York, G. Schirmer, Inc., 1940), pp. 862-863. The account in Baker's states that Pratella studied with Ricci-Signorini, Cicognani, and Pietro Mascagni.

1905),¹⁷ and a later opera, La Sina d'Vargöun, for which he received the Concours Baruzzi prize, was produced in the Teatro Comunale at Bologna in December, 1909.¹⁸ According to Leigh Henry, this opera marked the beginning of a new era in Italian music.¹⁹

Pratella joined the futurist movement in 1910 and contributed two manifestos and several musical compositions to the movement. At the outset of the movement, Pratella, like other artists, revolted against traditionalism, stating that the music of Claude Debussy was like rose water, erroneously classified Schönberg with such mystics as Scriabine, and accused him of dryness of thematic ideas, also pointing out the exaggerated and decayed emotionalism of Wagner and Schumann. On the other hand, he regarded Stravinsky as the only authentic futuristic musician from Russia.²⁰

The Manifesto dei Musicisti Futuristi (1910) and the Manifesto Tecnico della Musica Futurista illustrated Pratella's personal views and aims in the development of a futurist music program. Pratella also pursued the aims of futurist principles by giving lectures throughout the peninsula and by

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Clough, Futurism, p. 131.

¹⁹"The Works of Balilla Pratella," Musical Courier, New York, LXXI (July-September, 1915), quoted in Clough's Futurism, pp. 131-132.

²⁰Prieberg, Musica ex Machina, p. 37.

publishing articles in minor journals.²¹ The aims and programs of the two manifestos, reflecting to some extent the ideas of Marinetti and other futurists, are summarized as follows:

- 1) Musicians must abandon the conservatories and the academies and compose their work in an atmosphere of complete freedom.
- 2) Librettos must be written to suit the new conceptions: dramatic poems in free verse set to music.
- 3) The traditional "mise en scene," the Neapolitan chansonette, etc., must be abandoned.
- 4) Writers must compose their own operas.²²

More specifically, the manifestos attempted to explain the faults of traditional music and suggested vague remedies and theories which, if put into practice, would supposedly supplant outworn musical ideas. It was pointed out, for example, that the whole-tone scale, the ancient modes, and major and minor scales were special phases of the unique structure of the chromatic scale.²³ It was suggested that old contrapuntal procedures could be replaced with what the futurists called harmonic polyphony, that is, through a new fusion of counterpoint and harmony. In addition, chromaticism, which only allowed a limited division of the scale into semitones, would be replaced by an enharmonic system--enharmonic, by futurist definition meaning the combination of semi-tones and a still smaller division (fractional or microtones). The effects of this smaller division is described in the manifestos

²¹G. Jean Aubry, "New Italy," The Musical Quarterly, VI (January, 1920), 54.

²²Clough, Futurism, p. 130. ²³Ibid.

as giving "to our renewed sensibility the greatest possible number of determinable and combinable sounds. Thus we can have the newest and most varied relations of accords and timbres."²⁴ An explanation of how Pratella sought to put the plan into practice was not set forth in the manifestos (a description of Russolo's principles may be found on p. 166 below). The futurist manifestos further declared that only in enharmonic music would intonation and instinctive modulation of enharmonic intervals be possible, and it was also hinted that the ideal sounds were those which would sound out of tune: "The Futurists enjoyed the enharmonic intervals produced by an orchestra that sounded out of tune from playing in various tonalities and in popular songs intoned without any knowledge of art."²⁵ Music critic Leigh Henry states that Pratella's enharmonic system was conceived before the performance and publication of Stravinsky's choreographic music drama, The Consecration of Sound, and Schönberg's Five Characteristic Pieces for Orchestra.²⁶

Other factors, rhythm (simple and compound) and traditional forms (binary and ternary) were to be used in the customary manner with the enharmonic system. Along with

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid., p. 131, Clough quoting Henry in "The Works of Balilla Pratella." Since The Consecration of Sound is not listed in Stravinsky's works, Henry may be referring to Les Noces, or even an earlier work. In all probability, the Schönberg work is Five Pieces for Orchestra, Opus 16.

the enharmonic and rhythmic treatment, it was suggested that new scientific discoveries must translate music in this manner:

. . . the musical sound of the multitude, of the great industrial factories, of trains, transatlantic steamers, war ships, automobiles and aeroplanes. . . . The changing sky, the moving waters, the forests, the mountains, the sea, the smoke entanglement of harbors, full of traffic, the great cities and their innumerable factory chimneys, . . . all transformed into powerful and prodigious voices through the soul of the musician.²⁷

During the several years that Pratella posed as a futurist composer, a number of his works were regarded as futurist works (even though they were conventional in nature, especially with regard to their instrumentation and sound). These included Musica Futurista per Orchestra, a choral work Inno alla vita (Hymn of Life, 1913), the opera L'Aviatore Dro (1920), a Trio, and Romagna (a cycle of five poems, 1920). Later works that are not related to futurism include La ninna nanna della bambola (fairy-tale opera for children's theater, Milan, 1923), a comedy with music entitled Dono primaverile (1923), and incidental music to de Maria's I paladini di Francia (1925).²⁸

Musica Futurista per Orchestra, first presented in February, 1913, in the Roman Theater Costanzin, showed little or nothing of the aims discussed above. This piece was clearly organized, contained chromaticism, but on the whole, is in

²⁷Ibid., Clough quoting Henry.

²⁸Baker's Biographical Dictionary, pp. 862-863.

a neo-classic style based on the whole-tone scale. It is also filled with impressionistic passages, unusual mannerisms, and employs a dull orchestra, common and not the least bit unique. The first publication of this piece was in the form of a piano reduction as was the first publication of Hymn of Life.²⁹

This latter work, according to William Austin, is a trivial and novel example of music utilizing the whole-tone scale with frequently changing meters such as one would find in the simplest of popular songs.³⁰ Aubry notes that futurist ideals were difficult to find in this composition, stating that "compared with the literary indignations by Marinetti it was but a straw fire."³¹ L'Aviatore Dro, a three-act opera first performed at the Teatro Communale at Lugo, was also based harmonically on the whole-tone scale. The Trio and Romagna, the latter a cycle of five poems for orchestra on folk songs of Romagna and Emilia, are described by Aubry in considerate and complimentary terms:

²⁹Prieberg, Musica ex Machina, p. 31. Prieberg (p. 40) confirms this author's discovery that the music did not survive the second World War. Investigations seeking the existing copies of Pratella's music have been in vain. Furthermore, Prieberg reveals that he found only two sheets of musical notation of the Intonarumori which indicated strata, volume, and noise character as well as noise and conventional instrument indications. The Archivi del Futurismo, Vol. I, p. 336, provides a page reproduced from the futurist periodical Lacerba, March, 1915.

³⁰"The Idea of Evolution in the Music of the 20th Century," The Musical Quarterly, XXXIX (January, 1953), p. 31.

³¹"The New Italy," p. 54.

. . . they show a real knowledge of his craft, and although he does not deserve quite all the often excessive laudatory epithets dispensed by his friends or benevolent prospectuses, his works at any rate deserve study, if one wishes to have a complete knowledge of the various tendencies which Italian music of today follows.³²

Pratella's music, composed for conventional instruments and rarely considered provocative, offers the most feasible explanation why it failed to satisfy futurist ideals concerning music. Even as early as 1917, Pratella attempted to explain his own kind of futurism as a form of patriotism.³³ Pratella's literary achievements, considered by many persons as outstanding as his compositions, included Cronache e critiche (1905-17), and Evoluzione della musica (1910-18) and others. Austin recognized the merits of these achievements through this admission:

His nationalism found better outlets in the study of folklore and in editorial assignments for I classici della musica italiani. His many later compositions attracted little attention. He became director of the Conservatory at Ravenna and editor of a magazine, Il pensiero musicale. Best paradox of all, he entitled a two-volume collection of his critical articles Evoluzione della musica.³⁴

Though Pratella theorized on the development of a new harmonic system, and the fact that writers insisted that he did not go beyond the use of the whole-tone scale and irregular meters, his compositions were undoubtedly an extension of conventional systems which did not represent a radical

³²Ibid.

³³Austin, "The Idea of Evolution," p. 31.

³⁴Ibid.

departure from previous or current musical practices. It remained then for Luigi Russolo to solve, propagate, to a greater extent, the futurist ideal of musical sounds and purposes--noise.

Luigi Russolo

Russolo's unique musical role in the futurist movement was the object of severe criticism from those writers who regarded his efforts as noisy and unmusical. Even though many of these reports played up the absurdities of his exhibitions and concerts, they also portrayed his role as a dominant and significant one. One of the most reliable accounts is provided by Fred Prieberg, who in 1958 interviewed Signora Russolo, widow of Luigi Russolo, at her residence on the shores of the Lago Maggiore in Italy. Prieberg relates that he examined the most unique collection of many hundreds of newspaper clippings from all over the world, dating from 1910 to Russolo's death--clippings which faithfully mirrored his activities in the futurist movement.³⁵ At the outset of the movement, a contribution made by Pratella to one of the concerts (held at the Teatro Costanzi di Roma)³⁶ won Russolo's

³⁵Musica ex Machina, p. 24.

³⁶An account of this performance has been provided in the Archivi del Futurismo in which Boccioni, Buzzi, Palazzeschi participated with Pratella. The account states that a *sinfonia* by Pratella was performed with recited poetry. After the group stated their creed at this concert, the audience caused a riotous demonstration and the performance ended with the police (carabinieri) interference. (Vol. I, p. 481).

approval. Russolo's later reflection on this concert caused him to conceive of a new music (or noise as he described it) which he believed suited the futurist purposes better. This in turn prompted him to issue the futurist manifesto, The Art of Noises, addressed to Pratella. This manifesto regarded life in ancient times as a time of silence in which nature itself was silent except for exceptional phenomena such as hurricanes and avalanches. It also explained that during later eons the use of sounds, which had been entrusted to the care of man, was directed to functional capacities in the nature of religious rites and ceremonies. It was eventually relegated to a position through which it achieved the sole purpose of caressing the ear with suave harmonies.³⁷ Russolo, insisting that the growing complexity of musical sounds more and more approximated noise, declared that musical evolution paralleled the growing multiplicity of machines. He further added that pure musical sounds, monotonous and barren, ceased to arouse the emotions of the listener. The auditory mechanisms of an eighteenth-century listener, according to Russolo, were unable to tolerate noise because they were acclimated to the very limited mechanical industrial noises at that time, whereas in the nineteenth century listeners, although conditioned to modern sounds, failed to adjust their musical practices to industrial progress. Russolo's decision to

³⁷Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, pp. 642-643.

provide a musical solution began with this statement: "We must break out of the narrow circle of pure sounds and conquer the infinite variety of noise-sounds."³⁸ The greatness of such composers as Beethoven, Wagner, and others was recognized, but because of consistent satiation with them, ideally, futurists perceived that one should derive greater pleasure in combining the noises of streetcars, internal-combustion engines, automobiles and busy crowds than repeated hearings of the Eroica or Pastorale. Now, Russolo stated, the time had come for futurists to replace the feeble acoustics of the violins and other instruments with a new musical realism; this, he continued, could be accomplished by inventing different types of instruments which would orchestrate the sounds of metal and other objects, such as throbbing valves, pounding pistons, and so forth. Further, the noise of warfare was regarded with importance since the destruction wrought by war reflected the futurist attitude toward tradition.³⁹ During World War I when Marinetti was in the trenches of Adrianapolis, he disclosed his feelings about war in a letter to Russolo in a language that compared the great battle to an orchestra:

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid. In Chapter V it will be pointed out that the dadaists held an opposite view of war. Most of the dadaists were pacifists or draft-dodgers and felt that war was insane and useless. Contrary to this, the futurists glorified war.

. . . what joy to see hear smell everything taratatata of the machine guns frantically screaming amid bites blows traak-traak whipcracks pic-pac pum-tumb strange goings-on leaps height 200 meters of the infantry Down down at the bottom of the orchestra stirring up pools oxen buffaloes goads wagons pluff . . . stamping clanking 3 Bulgarian battalions on the march . . . the orchestra of the noises of war swells beneath a long-held note of silence in high heaven gilded spherical balloon which surveys the shooting . . .⁴⁰

With regard to this, Russolo asserted that pitch, harmony and rhythm must be regulated accordingly, explaining that every noise has a pitch, frequently a chord is heard to predominate in the ensemble of irregular vibrations.⁴¹ He went on to say that the rhythmical movements of a noise are infinite, and therefore should be sounded, not imitated literally, that is, by selecting a sound that approximates the loudest and most predominant part of its vibration, or as Clough has interpreted it:

. . . giving to a certain noise not only a single tone but a certain variety of them [vibrations], without its losing its peculiar character, its distinctive stamp. Thus some noises obtained by a rotary movement may present an entire ascending and descending chromatic scale if the velocity of the movement is augmented or decreased.⁴²

Russolo's noise attempted to brutally awaken by using combined noises to provide acoustical enjoyment--the more noise, the more enjoyment, and in this way noise exerted its highest emotional power.⁴³ The following statements summarize the futurist creed:

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 645.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 645-646.

⁴²Futurism, p. 126.

⁴³Ibid.

1.--Futurist musicians must constantly broaden and enrich the field of sound. This is a need of our senses. . . . This need and this tendency can only be satisfied by the supplementary use of noise and its substitution for musical sounds.

2.--Futurist musicians must substitute for the limited variety of timbres of the orchestral instruments of the day the infinite variety of the timbres of noises, reproduced by suitable mechanisms.

3.--The musician's sensibility, . . . must find in noises the way to amplify and renew itself, since each noise offers a union of the most diverse rhythms, in addition to the predominant rhythm.

4.--Since every noise has in its irregular vibrations a general predominating tone, it will be easy to obtain, in constructing the instruments which imitate it, a sufficiently wide variety of tones, semitones, and quarter-tones. This variety of tones will . . . increase its tessitura, or extension.

5.--. . . Once the mechanical principle producing a given noise is found, one may vary its pitch by applying the general laws of acoustics. . . . in instruments employing rotary motion the speed of rotation will be increased or diminished; in others the size or tension of the sounding parts will be varied.

6.--Not . . . [through] a succession of noises imitating those of real life, but . . . a fanciful blending of these varied timbres and rhythms, the orchestra [will] obtain the most complex and novel sound effects. Hence every instrument must be capable of varying its pitch and must have a fairly extensive range.

7.--. . . If today, with perhaps a thousand different noises, tomorrow, as the number of new machines is multiplied, we shall be able to distinguish ten, twenty, or thirty thousand different noises . . . to be combined as our fancy dictates.

8.--Let us therefore invite young musicians of genius and audacity to listen attentively to all noises, . . . Out of this will come not merely an understanding of noises, but even a taste and enthusiasm for them. . . . Thus the motors and machines of our industrial cities may some day be intelligently pitched, so as to make of every factory an intoxicating orchestra of noises.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Slonimsky, Music Since 1900. The entire translation of Russolo's The Art of Noises by Stephen Somervell is given on pp. 642-648. Another translation of the eight points above is given in Clough's Futurism, pp. 128-129.

Russolo's experimental studio, located in a shabby Milan suburb, consisted of a large room with a hexagonal dual colored tile floor. This was furnished with a work bench and tools, and electrical conduits hanging from a patched-up ceiling where three lamps provided the only light. Here he and his assistant, Ugo Piatti, built the new instruments that eventually found their places in reputable concert halls.⁴⁵ These instruments, consisting of multiple colored boxes of various sizes and shapes, some of which were called Intonarumori, were the realization of the theories stated in The Art of Noises. Prieberg states that, although they operated on a new principle, they were controlled by simple buffers with breakers and electricity supplied by simple generators.⁴⁶ Taylor's description of the instruments and their operation is more easily understood:

They had a box-like shape with a rectangular base. In front there was a horn to collect and amplify the "noise-sound." Behind there was a crank to impart the motion which determined the character of the noisy excitation. On top there was a lever which moved on a graduated scale of tones, semi-tones, and fractional tones. By changes of position, the crank determined the height, that is, the tone of the noise, which was read on the graduated scale.⁴⁷

Even though the radio vacuum tube had been invented about 1913, Russolo was unaware of this source of sound

⁴⁵Prieberg, Musica ex Machina, p. 35.

⁴⁶Ibid. Prieberg does not explain the new principle.

⁴⁷Futurism, p. 129.

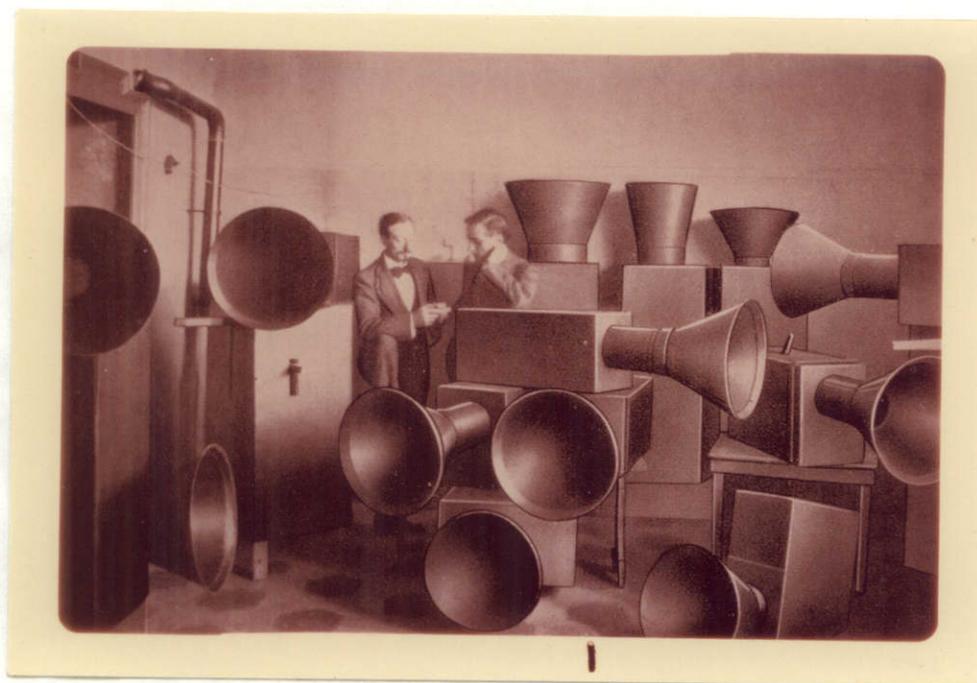


Plate 37. Luigi Russolo (left), Ugo Piatti (right) and the Intonarumori⁴⁸

generation; rather he used a principle of buzzing which he regarded as a new and remarkable discovery. By 1916, Russolo built 21 different machines for use as a part of the Intonarumori. Since he planned to use the instruments melodically, Russolo was concerned with the exact pitch level of noises. His original intention was to blend the traditional symphony orchestra with these new instruments in hope of creating different sound possibilities; conventional musical instruments, however, were not to be replaced entirely.⁴⁹ The various instruments were played by holding the lever with the left

⁴⁸Prieberg, Musica ex Machina, p. 33.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 36.

hand and turning the handcrank with the right, or by sometimes pressing a button.⁵⁰ The extent of use of these instruments is unknown, since so little of their notation survives (see footnote 29, p. 160 above). One of two sheets found by Prieberg contained instructions for the use of standard instrumentation plus harp, drum, xylophone, and glockenspiel. The other, a score fragment, indicated only the noise instruments.⁵¹ Another score example, reproduced in

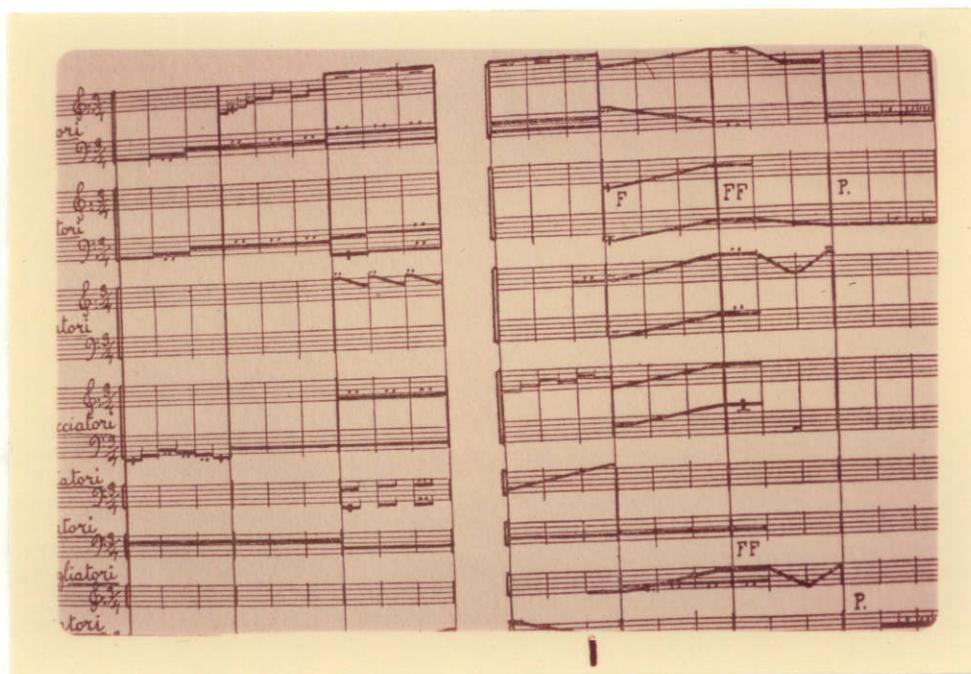


Plate 38. Score Notation for Russolo's Intonarumori: The Awakening of a City⁵²

the Archivi del Futurismo, consists almost entirely of conventional notation. A few directions, given at the bottom

⁵⁰Taylor, Futurism, p. 129.

⁵¹Musica ex Machina, p. 40.

⁵²Ibid., p. 34.

of the page, explain what various signs mean. For example, \curvearrowright = movement, \flat = flat, \sharp = sharp, and \natural = natural. The title given on this page, an extract from Lacerba, March 1, 1914, is Awakening of a City (for Intonarumori). Although the page lacks indications for specific instruments, it would appear that the noises are to be sounded simultaneously.

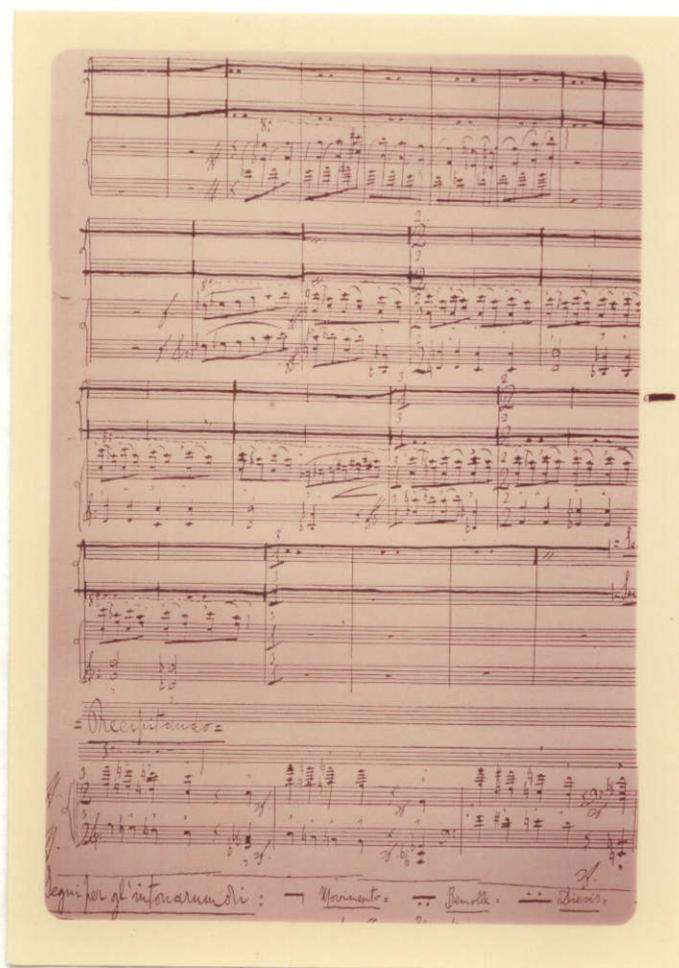


Plate 39. Russolo: Awakening of a City (for Intonarumori)⁵³

⁵³Vol. I, between pp. 336-337.

The medium of sounds proposed by Russolo was arranged in six classifications:

- (1) Booms, Thunderclaps, Explosions, Crashes, Splashes, Roars
- (2) Whistles, Hisses, Snorts
- (3) Whispers, Murmurs, Mutterings, Bustling Noises, Gurgler
- (4) Screams, Screechers, Rustlings, Buzzes, Cracklings, Sounds obtained by friction
- (5) Noises obtained by percussion on metals, wood, stone, terracotta, etc.
- (6) Voices of animals and men: Shouts, Shrieks, Groans, Howls, Laughs, Wheezes, Sobs⁵⁴

Shortly after Russolo and Piatti constructed the Intonarumori, the inaugural concert of these instruments was given at the Teatro Storchi in Modena, June 2, 1913.⁵⁵ A year later, April 5, 1914, Russolo, together with Marinetti, presented another concert of futurist music at the Teatro da Verme in Milan. On this occasion Russolo introduced a complete set of noise instruments in a piece which he described as 4 Networks of Noises. The titles of the sections of this suite were:

1. Awakening of the City
2. Meeting of automobiles and aeroplanes
3. Dining on the terrace of the Casino
4. Skirmish in the oasis⁵⁶

A letter from Marinetti to Severini on November 20, 1914, recounts that Russolo had constructed ten additional sounds

⁵⁴Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, p. 646. ⁵⁵Ibid., p. 139.

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 147-148. Instruments used in this concert consisted of 3 bumlbers, 2 exploders, 3 thunderers, 3 whistlers, 2 rufflers, 2 gurglers, 1 fracasseur, 2 stridors, and 1 snorer. No description was given regarding the sound of these instruments. (See p. 166 above).

to the Intonarumori.⁵⁷ The addition of these and subsequent acoustical supplements to the Intonarumori confirms the fact that Russolo consistently experimented with new sound effects and noise devices.

Later in 1915, several Intonarumori were used with a symphony orchestra in the production of Pratella's opera, The Hero. On June 18, 1921, they were again used in the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, on which occasion a Chorale by Antoine Russolo and Marcello Fiorda's Kapuziner, as well as several other pieces were performed with the noise organs. These concerts were advertised extensively and were frequently introduced with lectures such as the one Marinetti gave at an earlier concert in 1915. Occasionally the program contained comments about the purposes of the noises:

These futuristic bruiteurs (noisemakers) are not bizarre and cacophonous instruments, but instead are entirely new instruments with new sound colors, and among them may be found many pleasant ones which can produce entire musical scales.⁵⁸

Even though the futurists admitted that compositions by Stravinsky, Schönberg, and Strauss were advanced, they believed that their own noise music was much farther ahead. Papini,

⁵⁷Archivi del Futurismo, Vol. I, p. 349.

⁵⁸Prieberg, Musica ex Machina, p. 40. Slonimsky, in Music Since 1900, p. 216, has listed the following sounds used in this concert: Exploders, Hissers, Thunderclappers, Crashers, Mutterers, Whistlers, Snorters, Murmurers, Bustlers, Screechers, Screamers, Gurglers, Rustlers, Cracklers, Buzzers, Groaners, Shriekers, Laughers, Howlers, Sobbers, and Wheezers.

THÉÂTRE DES CHAMPS ELYSÉES - PARIS
(Direction JACQUES HÉBERTOT)

le Vendredi 17
le Lundi 20
le Vendredi 24 Juin 1921

3 CONCERTS EXCEPTIONNELS
DES
**BRUTEURS FUTURISTES
ITALIENS**

Inventés par LUIGI RUSSOLO
et construits par lui en collaboration avec UGO PIATTI

Les concerts seront dirigés
par le Maestro ANTONIO RUSSOLO
auteur des six compositions musicales pour bruiteurs

CAUSERIE PRÉLIMINAIRE
de M. MARINETTI

Les bruiteurs futuristes ne sont pas des instruments bizarres
et cacophoniques. Les bruiteurs futuristes sont des instruments
de musique absolument nouveaux qui donnent, avec des timbres

Plate 40. Notice announcing three futurist concerts⁵⁹

for example, praised the advance of futurist art, literature, philosophy, and music and claimed that Russolo's noise boldly outstripped all the descriptive efforts of the other contemporary composers.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Prieberg, Musica ex Machina, p. 43.

⁶⁰Archivi del Futurismo, Vol. I, p. 189. Papini's statement was published in an article "Il chercho si chiude," Lacerba, February 15, 1914.

André Coeuroy in "The Aesthetics of Contemporary Music" described Russolo's noise process as machinisme (the use of effect-producing appliances) in which the instruments were intentionally included for the purpose of enriching the orchestral timbre, with bruit (noise) however, being the dominating factor. Coeuroy did not specify which concert he heard, although he did mention the following new sounds: growlers, detonators, croakers, boomers, creakers, and a sibilator.⁶¹

One surmises that these concerts must have produced some very unique, if not disturbing, sounds. Vladimir Ussachevsky, electronic composer in the Electronic Music Center of Columbia and Princeton Universities, who obtained a rare recording of the sounds of these instruments, stated that, in his opinion, they sounded awful, noisy, and unexciting.⁶² Taylor, in referring to these noise-instruments, briefly explained their function:

By admitting "noise" into the repertory of music, the range of experience could be expanded much as the "new sensibility" had expanded the expressive forms of painting . . . [the] Intonarumori . . . which produced on cue all manner of sounds, serving their composers much as the tape recorder serves some composers today.⁶³

⁶¹The Musical Quarterly, XV (April, 1929), 264.

⁶²Statement by Vladimir Ussachevsky at Midwestern University, Wichita Falls, Texas, March 23, 1965. In 1968 this writer heard the same recording and does not necessarily agree with Ussachevsky.

⁶³Futurism, p. 80.

Austin opined that Russolo's experiments were of little value and insisted that "to call him a 'real composer' and to see a similarity between his art of noises and the so-called 'machine music' of Stravinsky and Bartok . . . is far fetched."⁶⁴ Prieberg, who obtained a recording of the noise music from Signora Russolo, had a tape copy made in Milan. The recording contained two short pieces entitled Chorale and Serenata, both composed by Antonio Russolo. Upon listening to these pieces after his return to Baden-Baden, Prieberg registered disappointment, for instead of hearing pure bruitistic music, he heard only a conventional orchestra with added noises. The disappointment, however, as he explained, did not necessarily reflect on the composing ability of Antonio Russolo nor the noise instruments of Luigi Russolo. Prieberg feels that at this time, around 1921, a recording company was necessarily concerned with the sale of records to the lay consumer and a record of the type was not feasible, adding that recording companies were even skeptical about recording the music of Stravinsky.⁶⁵

Russolo's noise experiments continued for many years, even after the futurist movement ended. Signora Russolo relates that after World War I her husband remained without a job for some time, rarely painting, playing his Intonarumori as noise background for theater performances without

⁶⁴"The Idea of Evolution in Music," p. 32.

⁶⁵Musica ex Machina, pp. 41-42. The recording was an RCA, Serial No. R6919. This tape was subsequently duplicated by the Electronic Music Center of Columbia and Princeton Universities, the one mentioned on p. 174.

any financial remuneration. In 1924 he dismantled a cable lift in Thieve⁶⁶ with the intention of developing a new instrument. After many experiments and tests, he assembled an instrument resembling a harmonium which he called Russolophone. It was equipped with a lever and produced seven different noises in twelve different strata. Russolo described it in this way:

The instrument has the shape of an ordinary harmonium with two bass pedals. Instead of the keyboard, however, seven movable levers are set at a certain position. They correspond to the intervals of the diatonic and chromatic scale. Each of these levers services a different noise, and by moving the lever one obtains all the sounds of one timbre. Besides whole and half steps it also produces smaller fractions of the half tones, quarter tones, and even eighth-tones. In short, it has all the potentials of an enharmonic system.⁶⁷

Russolo applied for patents for the Russolophone in Germany in 1920 and in Italy in 1921 and 1925. The Russolophone was employed in several concerts; in Eugene Deslaur's Vers les Robots in 1920,⁶⁸ as an accompaniment for a futuristic pantomime in the Paris Théâtre Madelaine in 1927, and for a concert in the conference hall of the Sorbonne and Paris University. It was also introduced at a concert in Paris in 1929, at which time Edgar Varèse introduced the instrument

⁶⁶Thieve is a small village north of Vicenza on the fringes of the Alps.

⁶⁷Prieberg, Musica ex Machina, p. 44. Prieberg calls the instrument Ruharmonium. It has been commonly referred to as a Russolophone.

⁶⁸Marian Hannah Winter, "The Function of Music in Sound Film," The Musical Quarterly, XXVII (April, 1941), 153.

with a short lecture.⁶⁹ Russolo felt that the potentials of this instrument were unlimited, pointing out its advantages in producing noises to accompany movies. Like the Intonarumori, Russolo explained that it did not emit literal or imitative sounds but provided a harmonic and musical organization of noises. He estimated a single production of the instrument to cost between 10,000 and 12,000 francs, while mass production would lower the cost to approximately 7,000 to 8,000 francs.⁷⁰

Actually the Russolophone was never performed with an orchestra; nor did it enter the stage of mass production. The ultimate failure of both instruments, the Intonarumori and the Russolophone, was a great disappointment to Russolo, so much that he departed from Milan to Cerro and once again devoted his efforts to painting. In 1942, however, he began construction of a new instrument, a microtonal piano which was never finished. At the time of his death in 1947, Russolo was psychologically disturbed with the failures of his later inventions.

Futurist Concerts

Futurist concerts, as a general rule, were collaborative efforts involving art, literature, and music either presented separately at the same concert, or simultaneously. The caricature of an extravagant simultaneous futurist

⁶⁹Prieberg, Musica ex Machina, pp. 44-45.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 45.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 46.

exhibition reproduced below is no exaggeration. The sketch, which portrays many conventional instruments, includes none of the Intonarumori.



Plate 41. Futurist Concert⁷²

The Archivi del Futurismo gives accounts of numerous exhibitions and evening concerts, many of which were orderly and well received, while others ended in chaos. One of the earliest accounts concerns a futurist demonstration directed against a performance of Richard Strauss's Der Rosenkavalier at the Teatro della Scala, January 11, 1911, when the futurists began to strew manifestos in the audience after the second act; the theater erupted in a riot. After this

⁷²Taylor, Futurism, p. 10.

debacle ended, another dispute concerning new music and young composers arose between Marinetti and the editor of the *Ricordi* publishing firm.⁷³ On February 11, 1912, Marinetti and Boccioni promoted a literary and musical soirée in the studio of Valentine de Saint Point. This and a subsequent affair held February 21, 1913, at the Teatro Costanzi di Roma instigated no incidents.⁷⁴

Some of the other concerts, however, were more provocative, particularly the one given at the Teatro Costanzi on March 9, 1913, with Balla, Boccioni, Buzzi, Marinetti, and Pratella participating. A composition by Pratella, described as a *sinfonia*, was performed with the simultaneous recitation of poetry. The audience became so indignant that a demonstration resulted between the performers and the audience. This conflict was resolved by the intervention of the police.⁷⁵

After the first Intonarumori sounded in June, 1913, (see p. 171 above) in the Teatro Storch in Modena, another futurist performance was presented on December 12 at the Teatro Verdi di Firenze involving the participation of Boccioni, Canguillo, Carrà, Marinetti, and Russolo. The reading of Marinetti's poems and a painting display prompted

⁷³Vol. I, p. 473.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 477 and p. 480.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 481. The Archivi del Futurismo described the composition as a *sinfonia*. This concert was described above, pp. 159-160, in which Pratella's composition was the Musica Futurista per Orchestra.

another demonstration which evolved into the customary turmoil that was customarily stopped by the police.⁷⁶ Later, Marinetti's drama Elettricità was staged at the Teatro del Corso, January 19, 1914, and on April 21 of the same year, Russolo's Intonarumori were again presented at the Teatro dal Verme along with a painting exhibition and a poetry recitation.⁷⁷ Prieberg notes that within the individual noise producers there were differences of tessitura such as one would find in a family of saxophones.⁷⁸ Marinetti, who wrote a report of this concert for the Paris Boulevard paper L'Intransigeant, describes how the tremendous crowd present at the theater contributed to the unrest and growing excitement between the futurists and traditionalists; the latter, he maintained, always attempted to disturb the concerts. By the beginning of the fourth piece, approximately an hour after the concert began, the audience was so demonstrative that Marinetti, Piatti, Carrà, and two other futurists climbed down from the stage, walked through the orchestra pit into the audience and attacked the pastiche demonstrators. The battle that ensued lasted for half an hour, while Russolo, unmoved, continued to direct his nineteen noisemakers on the stage.

⁷⁶Archivi del Futurismo, Vol. I, p. 485. Records fail to explain whether or not music was included on this program.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 487. The Intonarumori included three buzzers, two cracklers, three thunderers, whistlers, two gluckers, two screechers, one snorer, two splashers, and one roarer.

⁷⁸Musica ex Machina, p. 36.

Prieberg notes that a dozen persons were injured. Critics, angered at this concert, took issue with the futurists and one reporter from the Italian paper L'Italia called the futurists fakers and incited Russolo to the extent that Russolo slapped him. A lawsuit was filed against Russolo, and Marinetti, who testified in Russolo's behalf, declared that the only possible way to compensate for the critic's insult was to slap not once but ten times, and he would have done so had he acted instead of Russolo.⁷⁹

This Milan concert and the performances that followed in London, Dublin, Vienna, Moscow, Berlin, and Paris excited the musical world and were followed in the press by the music critics, who in their voluminous reports, either condemned, remained cautious, or merely recorded the concerts. It is no exaggeration to state that the futurist concerts and ensuing riots occupied the headlines of nearly all newspapers and journals, replacing what should have been priority news--even events such as political assassinations. The futurist assassinations, and these concerts were considered as such, were aimed against tradition and evolved into a complaining echo in which one considered parody and humorous caricature as a form of art. Carl Löhmann reported in the Fasching paper of 1914 an account which illustrates the reaction to these concerts:

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 37.

Immediately upon entering, the ten trumpets, which operated from the central heating system began to hiss, moan, and rhyme. That Eeee, covered his ears with delight, danced with all arms, shaken by invisible machinery; broken glass danced in baskets, wood was rattling against each other . . . What is this? What is this? . . . A voice answered, don't you hear? That is a symphony of factory sounds composed by the great futurist masters of the Milan school.⁸⁰

Other futurist concerts are recorded without any reference to time or place. H. K. Moderwell, recalling several futurist concerts he attended, relates the following violent reaction:

I remember a concert I once heard in Vienna, where there were three fistfights going on at once, a composer standing on one of the boxes shouting insults at the audience, a uniformed policeman dashing from group to group to separate belligerents, tearful wives entreating violent husbands to master their anger, and a hubbub of voices that made the rafters shake. Finally the police were called to clear the hall by force.⁸¹

Moderwell provides the description of another futurist concert he heard which varies little from the one above:

. . . I remember a concert, . . . in Paris, where hoots, guffaws and hisses drowned the music and the audience was presently divided into groups of men chattering in frenzy and knots of awed foreigners studying local manners and customs. In particular I remember the gentleman of the seat next to me, who stood throughout the intermission and defied the Philistines as Ajax the lightning. The casus belli in both cases [the Vienna concert above] was a new kind of music. It has been dubbed by common consent, futurist music.⁸²

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 38-39.

⁸¹"On Acquiring New Ears," The New Republic, IV (September 4, 1915), 119.

⁸²Ibid.

Many of the futurist concerts were held at respectable music halls; but as was mentioned earlier, the variety theater was preferred. A concert that took place at the Salon Margherita has been described as one of the noisiest:

When Marinetti appeared looking like a guardsman or maitre d'hotel he immediately began to advertise his own wares. . . . Then he retired and the program began.

Canquillo, the Futurist poet, appeared in an upper box and conducted an orchestra which was installed in a lower box on the other side of the hall, while a man with a cornet did his best in the gallery at the back of the building. The first surprise!

The Teatro itself consisted of a series of little scenes, each lasting less than a minute. The scenery was Futurist but of a period that we in England have thought was long since past; the make-up would have shamed a parish concert; and the scenes themselves have to be described to appreciate them at their real value. Few of them could be understood because the shower of beans, potatoes, and apples often drove the actors off the stage in the middle of a scene, . . . A vase, several saucers, and five and ten centisimi pieces were hurled at the actors, and the leading lady received a severe blow over the eye from an unripe tomatoe. The occupants of the orchestra stalls suffered considerably from tomatoe juice and beans. And the performance came to a premature end when the actors began to hurl vegetables and fruit back at the audience.⁸³

The reign of excitement and confusion at these concerts has been further described by several responsible writers who compared these epoch making concert scenes with other musical scandals such as the furor raised by the première performance of Stravinsky's Rite of Spring in 1913. Nicolas Slonimsky has provided convincing evidence that these accounts were not exaggerations:

⁸³"Making a Target of the Audience," The Literary Digest, LXXI (December 3, 1921), 27. See another account in the Dada Monograph about a 1921 concert that introduced the Parisians to a noise machine called the bruiteur, "Dada Dictionary," p. 144.

But Stravinsky's score is as gentle as a cooing dove in comparison with a composition by an Italian Futurist, Russolo, scored for a noise orchestra, including such instruments as Screamers, Screechers, . . . Wheezers and Roarers. When it was first presented in Paris, several people in the audience rushed to the stage, intending to beat up the noise musicians. But the futurists were well trained in the art of boxing, as well as in the art of noises; as a result of the clash, several of the listeners had to be hospitalized, while the performers suffered no casualties to speak of.⁸⁴

Criticism

The terms "futurist" and "futurism" came to be used by many American critics as a common reference to all advanced composers and their music. This use resulted either from the inability to understand the music or the intentions of the composer, or an utter dislike for modern music, especially music composed by Americans. Furthermore, these references frequently had little in common with the Italian movement itself. Records fail to provide evidence that futurist concerts (such as those given by Marinetti, Pratella, and Russolo) were held in America, although Moderwell implies their existence: "This music has come to America. It has not come with a crash, as cubist and post-impressionist art came, nor will any music ever provoke a fistfight in this land of free opinion."⁸⁵ Beyond this statement, he fails to elaborate except to ask the question "What is futuristic music," and then supplying his own answers:

⁸⁴The Road to Music (New York, Dodd Mead & Co., 1950), p. 153.

⁸⁵"On Acquiring New Ears," p. 119.

. . . it has no more right to a single name than the labor unrest or the trend in philosophy. It comes from many men, some of them strangers to each other in name and influence. . . . It is born of one stage of musical evolution . . . it has manifested itself to the man in the street as a definite type--that which consists solely of discords. So we may as well continue for the present to lump the new music in one and call it "futurist."⁸⁶

Hugo Leichtentritt employed the term "futuristic" in referring to certain kinds of music written between 1912 and 1922.

This mentality appears to me as a component of a daring revolutionary, even anarchistic spirit and national tendencies. The similarity of this development in the different countries is very remarkable; it goes as far as to make the extreme futuristic music of the different countries almost identical, indistinguishable from each other.⁸⁷

It is highly possible that Leichtentritt was referring more to the advanced musical tendencies of that time rather than to Russolo's noise machines. Nicholas Gatty also speaks of futurist music without indicating who the musicians were, or what music was performed. His comments discredited the music which he labeled futuristic, claiming that it lacked emotional value, also insisting that it was a series of melody, rhythm, and form intended to be sensational, while providing some nervous shocks:

. . . the Futurist composer has still to show us how his creations are going to pass this test when all the necessary means for the awakening of the inner spirit of man are dispensed with entirely. On the face of it,

⁸⁶Ibid.

⁸⁷"German Music of the Last Decade," The Musical Quarterly, X (April, 1924), 193.

their productions are little more than studies in musical noises . . . they do not adopt their ideas for musical instruments but seek to obtain more stimulating effects with especially contrived machines.⁸⁸

The mention of machines and the date of the article (1916) could possibly refer to the futurists themselves. Another writer, Carol Berard, with reference to the futurist orchestra, states that although they (futurists) have succeeded in replacing violins, cellos, flute with the hummers, sniffers, crashers, and gurglers "the futurist orchestra obeys the same laws . . . as the other instruments in the traditional orchestra. No matter how new the acoustic effects they create, they are always in need of performers."⁸⁹ There can be little doubt that this criticism was directed toward Russolo, Marinetti, Pratella--or perhaps all three.

The impact of futurism and other advanced musical art in America in the early part of the century drew caustic remarks from concerned writers. They attacked the futurist manifestos with resounding statements, accusing the writers of scorn for harmony and good taste: "These Futurists are the individualists of art gone mad as it were, in their attempt to make painting motion like music, to create dynamic sensation."⁹⁰ Henry Finck explains that all great masters

⁸⁸"Futurism, A Series of Negatives," The Musical Quarterly, II (January, 1916), 11-12.

⁸⁹"Recorded Noises--Tomorrow's Instrumentation," Modern Music, IV (January-February, 1929), 27.

⁹⁰"Art Revolutionists on Exhibit in America," The American Review of Reviews, XLVII (April, 1913), 444.

used dissonances momentarily as an element of change, surprise, but not as consistently as the futurists, adding that futurist music consisted of the sort of daubs, smudges of sound that even an amateur or person who had never taken a lesson could reproduce. His attacks were directed against the European countries in which he claims there were at least three dozen futurist composers,

. . . each doing his darndest to surpass all the others in making music mean disagreeable noises. Each one of them considers himself a genius because some of the great masters also indulged in dissonant din. . . . What the futurists do deliberately and even boastfully is to abolish melody, euphony (i. e. beauty), harmony and modulation from music.⁹¹

A similar attitude has been expressed by Hadow in a mocking description of futurist's beliefs:

Melody is to be regarded as a "Synthesis of harmony," based on the chromatic scale as unit and wholly free in rhythm; the old symphonic structures are to go by the board and the form of each composition is to be generated by its own motive of passion; church music is to be abolished as impotent, and opera (in which the composer must be his own librettist) is to be treated as a symphonic poem where the singers have no pride of place. . . . Lastly it is to be the function of the Futurist composer to express the sound of factories and trains and steamships. . . . and to wed his central motive to the domain of the machine and the victorious reign of electricity.⁹²

Hadow's comments point to the synthesis advocated by Russolo, and the libretto factor in which Pratella explained that futurist composers must write their own libretto and opera.

⁹¹"Why Make Music Hideous," Etude, XLIII (January, 1925), 11-12.

⁹²"Some Aspects of Modern Music," pp. 62-63.

Finck's criticism involves composers not belonging to the Italian group, though reference was made to dynamic sensation, an important futurist point. Hadow also attacked Pratella and other futurists, claiming that their obsession with the machine developed into a religious fervor, appealing to the reverse side of their mind by revolt from formal beauty. His remarks concerning a musical example placed at the end of Pratella's Musica Futurista paid it little respect, remarking that "it has some vigorous and swinging rhythms, but there is little in it to arrest the attention and the greater part of it seems to me either trivial or monotonous."⁹³

Otto Ortmann revealed his dislike for futurism and noise music through his admission that noise, a necessary evil, should be kept at a minimum. In explaining that noise could be used judiciously, he insisted that music is absent when noise is played alone. He tendered one additional suggestion-- that noise should play a subordinate role and be used with taste and discrimination, otherwise:

Mix the raw sense material as we will, we continue to get only shifting colors. (A similar limitation of the whole-tone scale doomed it to an early death). That is why the efforts of Pratella, Theremin, Givelet and others never got beyond their beginning.⁹⁴

Karl Eschmann extended this point of view to declare that many composers around 1921, professing faith in new music,

⁹³Ibid., p. 63.

⁹⁴"What is Wrong with Modern Music," The American Mercury, XIX (March, 1930), 373.

were so hopeful as to even put their faith in the Italian noise-machines.⁹⁵ Even Walter Damrosch, who conducted works by Schönberg, Stravinsky, Ornstein, and other composers who were considered modern, was extremely reserved in his remarks about any kind of music that was extremely dissonant. His explanation of this kind of music was offered more in the form of an apology. Vernon Granville, music critic for the New York Tribune, relates how Damrosch explained this music to the New York Symphony Society. The comments are derived from a lecture on listening to Schönberg's Kammersymphonie. Damrosch explained that it was not a freak work, but the logical result of musical ideas. This, to say the least, was a tribute to Schönberg's craft; but other comments were less flattering:

. . . the listening to this music is like that of beating a horse on the back to the extent that he becomes insensible to pain and that the human ear could do the same. . . . A continual beating of the ear thus brings us to the full enjoyment of Schönberg, Stravinsky, and Ornstein. . . . This is the haven of the musical Futurists.⁹⁶

John Runciman also disparaged the futurists:

. . . they rely upon the extraordinary, the incomprehensible, the gaudy and the outre. . . . It is not surprising that musicians have caught the craze. . . . The smelling machine has not yet been invented. The colour-organ cannot be tuned; yet we have musicians

⁹⁵"Rhetoric of Modern Music," The Musical Quarterly, VII (April, 1921), 158.

⁹⁶"Exeruciating Music," The Literary Digest, LII (March 18, 1916), 716.

in such haste to be hailed as great inventors that they will write these engines--and trust to luck.⁹⁷

It is evident that most of the music critics at this time shared a mutual dislike for modern music, especially that of the Italian futurist composers as well as the others whom they classified as futurists. Occasionally a few critics were more lenient in their remarks about dissonance and noise music; for example, Carol Berard recognized noise as being useful, especially when it was employed as an incidental factor. He visualized its potentials when he said, "Let us turn to noise, which, I believe, holds the secret of the future."⁹⁸ He questioned the extent to which people should judge music as noise or classify it as music and explained his own attitude with a more detailed and considerate point of view:

I have met a music-seller to whom Debussy's La Mer represented nothing but a trolley with bad brakes. . . . If we take a definite noise, capture and associate it with other noises according to a definite design, an act of composition is performed and a work of art is authentically created. . . . If noises were registered, they could be grouped, associated and carefully combined as are the timbres of various instruments in the routine orchestra, although with a different technique.

We could then create symphonies of noise that would be grateful to the ears.

The future of music lies in the conquest, the subjugation and the organization. . . . That, for the time, will free us from the bondage of reminiscence.⁹⁹

⁹⁷"Noises, Smells, and Colours," The Musical Quarterly, I (April 1, 1915), 159.

⁹⁸"Recorded Noises--Tomorrow's Instrumentation," p. 28.

⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 28-29.

This account, written in 1929, was more prophetic with regard to experimental music than its author would have ever realized.

Futurists by Attribution

The indiscriminate use of the word "futurist" inevitably involved a number of composers who, in many instances, were far removed from what the term actually implied. Many writers were not entirely convinced that composers such as Busoni, Ornstein, Schönberg, Stravinsky, and others were futurists, though they frequently imposed their literary views on the naive public, suggesting that they were. Undoubtedly, many of the evaluations made of the music and musicians concerned were made or based upon sincere, but unfortunately, careless inquiries. Other reports were intentionally derogatory, facetious, and biased.

Ferruccio Busoni

It has been claimed that the way for futurist aesthetics was paved by Busoni. Even though William Austin remarks that Busoni, like Debussy, greeted the futurist manifestos with a smile, he notes that Busoni admitted having anticipated futurist ideas in his Sketch.¹⁰⁰ Clough has maintained that Busoni's new theories in The New Aesthetic of Music¹⁰¹ may

¹⁰⁰Music in the 20th Century, from Debussy through Stravinsky, (New York, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1966), p. 114.

¹⁰¹Futurism, pp. 131-132. This set of theories was published by the Insel-Verlag in Leipzig, 1907.

have influenced futurist musical thinking. Ernst Krenek described the personality and influence of Busoni as Mediterranean, no less German than Nietzsche, and sufficiently strong enough to attract many poets, musicians, writers, architects, and scientists to his home where philosophical discussions were held.¹⁰² Busoni admitted being friendly with the futurists but denied any musical associations with the group.¹⁰³

Busoni explained his feelings toward futurism in several articles. One of his earliest comments was a response to an article that appeared March, 1912, in the Parisian paper La Liberté--an article proposing a set of art theories on futurist music.¹⁰⁴ The article made claims of originality with regard to the development of new harmonic systems and instruments. Busoni's answer to these claims is summarized in these statements:

The composers of today who are modern devotees of the past only deserve our contempt, for they labour in vain, composing original works with wornout means. . . . Hear then the aesthetic law of Futurism. The laws consist, in fact, of nothing more than the division of the octave into fifty intervals. The idea is physical in origin and has been considered repeatedly. Know that shortly we shall have completed "chromatic" pianofortes, stringed instruments, harps, in fact a complete "chromatic" orchestra. . . . In the shadows

¹⁰²"Busoni--Then and Now," Modern Music, XIX (January-February, 1957), 88.

¹⁰³In a letter to this writer (August 15, 1965), Edgar Varèse relates that during World War I he and Busoni attended an exhibition of futurist paintings.

¹⁰⁴Prieberg, Musica ex Machina, pp. 28-29. Prieberg theorizes that this article was the work of either Marinetti or Pratella.

of the workshops, the forms of families of instruments arise, whose unsuspected perfection will make the perfect reproduction of futuristic compositions possible.¹⁰⁵

Busoni tendered a kind note toward the futurists when he remarked that he was on their side; but he also intimated that his earlier proposals in the division of the octave predated futurist experiments:

That is right. It pleases me, and I stood on this side long ago, as only a theorist. Already in the year 1906 I proposed the division of the octave into thirty-six intervals, two rows of tripartite tones (each one divided into three) at a distance of a semitone from one another.

"The universal instrument" has already been made in America: the electric dynamic organ by [Cahill]. It cost a million, remained untouched and fell into ruins. . .

Futurism must wait for the moment. Then it becomes the present. And the Manifesto itself teaches: 'The present is a vain idea; say it is and already it is no more . . . Toute passé!'¹⁰⁶

Busoni's strongest denial of futurist associations came in his reply to Hans Pfitzner's pamphlet, "Futuristengefahr"

¹⁰⁵"The Future of Music," The Essence of Music and other Busoni's Papers, translated by Rosamund Levy (New York, Philosophical Library, 1957), p. 28.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 29. Prieberg in Musica ex Machina carries this same discussion and records some 19th century experiments in microtonal music and instruments: a quarter tone piano in Russia in 1864, microtonal tests by Karl Andreas Eitz in 1891, a quarter tone piano by G. A. Behren-Sene in 1892, Juan Carillon's fractional tone division in Zonido 13 in 1895, similar experiments by John Herber Foulds in 1898, and many others in the twentieth century. Prieberg also mentions Cahill as the inventor of the "universal instrument" (dynamophone). With regard to the claims of the futurists, Busoni, and the citations of Prieberg, one may also note the existence of earlier microtonal experiments such as those of Fabio Colonna (La sambuca lineea, Naples, 1618), and Nicola Vicentino (the Arciorgano, described in a broad sheet, published in Venice in 1561).

("The Danger of Futurism") in the Süddeutsche Monatshefte which included Busoni's name. This article was a diatribe against futurism:

The futuristic junk of our generation, which, unfortunately, is forced upon us, distinguishes itself by the fact that it is not enjoyed by anyone--hardly the futurists themselves. The delight of their sorry Italian opera, salon slapstick, movie operetta, and guide music is their own. For these poor souls, delight, enjoyment, or even higher values, however, cannot be enjoyed because they do not consider art as something to be enjoyed.¹⁰⁷

Busoni's reply to this article follows:

By the title alone, "The Danger of Futurism," you lead your reader astray by heaping on my name, in the eyes of the public, all the weaknesses and faults with which you could possibly reproach a certain group of people--a group from which I am far removed.

The word "Futurism" is not on any page of my little book, I have never attached myself to a sect--Futurism, a movement of the present time, could have no connections with my arguments.¹⁰⁸

One must be reminded that, even though Busoni may not have engaged in futurist activities, his association with the members of the movement clearly indicates that he was sympathetic toward many of their ideals.¹⁰⁹

Leo Ornstein

The pianist-composer, Ornstein, whose career (after 1911) included many appearances with practically every major symphony orchestra in the United States, was one of the most

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 39.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁰⁹The Archivi del Futurismo, Vol. I, includes Busoni's name and numerous letters he addressed to various futurists.

controversial musical personalities during the second and third decades of the twentieth century. His performing ability brought him considerable recognition; but the performance of his compositions, usually piano works, also aroused an extraordinary amount of controversy--mostly negative comments. Ornstein, perhaps more than any other musician not belonging to the Italian group, was accused of being a futurist. An article in Current Opinion in 1916 conferred the futurist title upon him:

. . . futurism in music was bound to come. It has come. In fact, it was proclaimed in a "manifesto" by its high priest, Pratella, three or more years ago. But since it confined itself then chiefly to talking, and to the obviously ridiculous advocacy of mechanical noise-makers as substitutes for orchestra instruments, it caused only smiles among the music profession. In the meantime, however, a practical musician with prodigious technical equipment, Leo Ornstein, has openly accepted the title of "futurist" composer, and after two seasons of noise-making (both in the managerial and the literal sense), he has succeeded in arousing general discussions about himself.¹¹⁰

The writer of this account contends that Ornstein's performances were intentionally provocative, creating considerable commotion in London, New York, and major European cities. In spite of the controversies over futurism, however, many English and American critics hailed him as the prophet of a new creed, though he actually received little recognition for his compositions. His amazing performances on the piano brought him wide acclaim. Walter Kramer, writer for Musical America,

¹¹⁰"Leo Ornstein Hoists the Banner of Musical Futurism," LXI (July, 1916), 30.

was one of several critics who applauded his musical creativity, while W. J. Henderson of the New York Sun was representative of those who constantly reproved Ornstein's compositions. In most cases, the critics disapproved of them: "All commentators do agree that he outdoes all those that have gone before in deliberate ugliness, cacophony and wildness."¹¹¹ An article in Puck magazine by Huneker provides an excellent beginning for a discussion of Ornstein's futurism: "'Yet tame he is, almost timid and halting, . . . Ornstein, . . . is most emphatically, the only true-blue futurist alive.'¹¹² Lawrence Gilman, writer for Opera magazine, described Ornstein's musical process as one of "throwing pots of tonal paint in the face of the public."¹¹³ Another writer wrote that Stravinsky at least seemed to have had a background in the old system and ventured this statement:

This may be the crux of the whole discussion about futuristic music. It differs from all previous art forms in that it claims no connection with the past. . . . The futurism of today, . . . denies the validity of any aesthetic laws, it claims to be a law itself, Indeed, Ornstein admits that there is no logical construction other than that which is intuitive.¹¹⁴

Ornstein himself admitted that intuition had no logical construction but refused to admit that he was a futurist. Here

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 30.

¹¹²Ibid., pp. 30-31. Quoted in "Leo Ornstein Hoists the Banner . . ." from Puck magazine.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 30. Quoted in "Leo Ornstein Hoists the Banner . . .".

¹¹⁴Ibid.

the unknown author provided no clue as to what he meant by futurism. Spontaneity, with regard to the intuitive process, perhaps better describes Ornstein's compositional procedures. Ornstein, however, described this process as a subconscious mental activity. This may have been conceived in the same way that Gertrude Stein described her own style--automatic or "stream of consciousness" experience in writing. Kramer describes Ornstein's experience:

One morning he [Ornstein] went to the piano and played a chord which he had mentally heard. He was skeptical of its significance at first; then he sat down and wrote an entire composition following this chord. It was unnamed then, but it is now the Funeral March of the Dwarves. He assures me that he was quite dissociated from himself, as it were, for several days, for he realized, judging from the new piece by the standards of music as he knew it, and also comparing it with what new music he had himself written before, that it was something quite new. "I could not stop to analyze it, however," Mr. Ornstein said, "for there were more things in my head that I simply had to write down. So I wrote a number of compositions. They were all in this new style--if it must be labeled. And before I was really aware of it I was completely inured to it and my old manner of composing was gone. Since then I have worked steadily on my real music."¹¹⁵

Francis Russell recounts the Stein experience--one in which she simply read what her arm wrote, "but following three or four words behind her pencil."¹¹⁶ Mabel Dodge's description of Stein's automatic style seems to parallel the experience of Ornstein:

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 31. Quoted in "Leo Ornstein Hoists the Banner . . .".

¹¹⁶Three Studies in 20th Century Obscurity, p. 74.

Gertrude always worked at night. After everyone was asleep she used to sit at Edwin's table next door writing automatically in a long weak handwriting--four or five lines to the page--down onto the paper with the least possible effort; she would cover a few pages so and leave them there and go to bed, and in the morning Alice [Toklas] would gather them up first thing and take them off and type them. Then she and Gertrude would always be so surprised and delighted at what she had written, for it had been done so unconsciously she'd have no idea what she said the night before!¹¹⁷

An account of an Ornstein recital including his own compositions has provided Huneker an opportunity to express his extreme dislike and annoyance with Ornstein's so-called real music. A literal account follows in order to provide a more accurate description:

Excruciating to ears attuned to the plangent progressions of Schönberg the Burlesques, Preludes, and Moods of Leo the Intrepid. Like two amorous felines in a moonlit background is the dialog of his love pieces. I was dazzled, I was stunned, especially after glissandi that ripped up the keyboard and fizzed and foamed over the stage. . . . He was supposed to depict Anger, Peace, Joy, but I could detect only rage and hell, and, again, hell let loose and suffusing it all, a diabolical humor, a frenzied humor that bruised one's very bone. . . . Ornstein exposes the psychology of a seashell, a glow-worm, a policeman. . . . Yet I do bewail the murderous means of expression with which Leo Ornstein patrolled the piano. He stormed its keys, scooping chunks of slag and spouting scoriae like a vicious volcano. Heavens! With what orgiastic abandon he played his own Wild Men's Dance. He no doubt said to himself a dance of wild men is not a cradle song but a crazy carnival of legs run. And so it is!¹¹⁸

Henry Finck remarked that futurists, in his own opinion, were the funniest class of people, intimating that Ornstein

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 77. Further discussion of Stein's automatic writing as it relates to surrealism may be found in Chapter VII, pp. 448-449.

¹¹⁸"Leo Ornstein Hoists the Banner of Musical Futurism," pp. 30-31.

was the wittiest of them all, in the meantime pointing out that neither Schönberg nor Ornstein impressed him. He stated that Schönberg's pieces sounded as if they were played like the old church organ in which the keys were hard to press down; consequently, elbows and fists were employed. He also declared they were an instructive object-lesson that displayed a characteristic of other people's unhappiness. With particular reference to Ornstein's music, he insisted that it outdid Schönberg's with impunity:

Mr. Ornstein disarmed criticism by calling his own piece a "Wild Men's Dance." . . . concerning another piece of his, "Marble Grottesque," an admirer of his says: "If we have the music of butterflies, why not of toads?" Why not indeed? or of crocodiles, and angleworms, and skunks? . . . But Mr. Ornstein should remember that Americans have a keen sense of humor. He seems to be a good pianist. Why not be a good boy, too, and play good music?¹¹⁹

Other writers are equally critical of Ornstein. Paul Rosenfeld has related how audiences hooted and booed the music of Scriabine, Schönberg, and Stravinsky; these demonstrations, he insisted, did not lessen the respect for these composers or their music. On the other hand, he claimed that Ornstein, in a brief period of time, earned a bad reputation of the first water, explaining that the hooting and booing occurring during the performance of his works did not make him a genius.¹²⁰ A slightly different attitude was advanced in comparing

¹¹⁹"Why Make Music Hideous," p. 11.

¹²⁰"Music of Ornstein," The New Republic, VII (May 27, 1916), 83.

Ornstein's technique with that of Schönberg's; Rosenfeld's description of Ornstein's was one involving a "preoccupation with form and techniques and does not speak a new music. On the other hand; . . . It is the music of Leo Ornstein, that voice of the densely crowded cities, of the factory and mines."¹²¹ Lawrence Gilman's reactions to Ornstein's compositions were even more critical than Rosenfeld's; he described Ornstein's music as involving the naive process of striking as many chromatic notes as possible at one time, concluding that "we shall be content with saying that we do not like this dernier cri of musical futurism [adding] . . . Schoenberg's Pelleas, indeed, is 'futuristic' only in spots; . . ."¹²² Gilman assumed that most critics were in agreement with his point of view since he used "we" in the editorial sense. Gilman stated that if Hanslick, who lost his temper after hearing Wagner's Tristan, could have heard Ornstein and other futurists, his reactions would have resulted in rage rather than a mere loss of temper.¹²³

Charles Buchanan, in a lengthy interview with Ornstein, stated that he had found him to be a very sincere, enthusiastic young man; but despite his disarming, friendly attitude,

¹²¹"Concerning Schoenberg's Music," The New Republic, V (January 29, 1916), 309.

¹²²"Some Adventures with the Futurists: Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Ornstein," The North American, CCIII (January, 1916), 134.

¹²³Ibid.

he had much to say against his music:

Judged hastily, his activities indubitably smack of charlatanism . . . one would class them with the riff-raff boudoir esthetics that our nouveau rich type of contemporary art imposes upon us. . . . Granting him superlative sincerity will not help his music one iota if the music itself is bad. . . . The failure of modern music: In Schönberg and Ornstein it is devoid of sun, of the gracious glow of life and the things we hitherto believed to be beauty. . . . I submit that no one of our contemporary musicians is great in the sense of personal performance, of personal survival. . . . I cannot believe that the human heart and soul finds an adequate response to the inveterate needs in the exclusive cacophony of a Stravinsky, a Schönberg, or an Ornstein.¹²⁴

Henry Bellamann castigated Ornstein with his inference that Ornstein's "note-clusters" were garments that concealed beggary of invention.¹²⁵ Although Buchanan assigned the futurist title to other composers, including Debussy, Strauss, and Reger, constantly referring to their music as chronic cacophony, his attention to Ornstein displays his chronic irritation at the compositions and performances of this young man, delegating him as a futurist "whipping boy." In the Independent magazine he asked this question:

What . . . is the intrinsic significance of the extraordinary and astounding spectacle by young Mr. Leo Ornstein both in the kind of music he plays and the manner of playing it? . . . You see a young man of a rather distraught, disheveled appearance and a sort of cowed, hang-dog manner slouch upon the stage.¹²⁶

¹²⁴"Leo Ornstein and Modern Music," The Musical Quarterly, IV (April, 1918), 174-180.

¹²⁵"Notes on the New Aesthetic of Poetry and Music," The Musical Quarterly, IX (April, 1923), 265.

¹²⁶"Futurist Music," LXXXVII (July 31, 1916), 160.

Most of the writers thus far, who have attacked Ornstein's playing as well as his music, have failed to provide any constructive analysis of his methods. To imply, as one critic did, that the survival of any of these personalities (Schönberg, Stravinsky, and others) would be very doubtful causes one to question the qualifications of the critic, especially since the music criticized, in most cases, has survived very well. It is also incredible that they survived so well under the consistent derogation of their art. The answer may be that depreciative criticisms have not necessarily doomed controversial works or personalities, but quite to the contrary, they have contributed to their success by drawing more attention to them. Most of the critics in America who were against new music made special efforts to support traditional music. This often resulted in the consistent performance of old works at the expense of new. Not all critics were against modern music, but those who were not so outspoken against it, maintained a certain degree of neutrality. Sometimes the safest comments concerned a composer's right to compose as he saw fit, but seldom more than that. Even Buchanan, one of Ornstein's severest critics, made this admission:

To say that the music of Ornstein and Schoenberg is an annihilation of the musical convention of the past is to fall into one of the slovenly stock phrases of criticism. . . . There is no discovered reason why Ornstein and Schoenberg should not compose this music should they desire.¹²⁷

¹²⁷Ibid.

Ornstein was involved in another discussion of musical futurists in which Roland Wood stated that names such as Monteverdi, Wagner, and Strauss were first jeered at and called musical futurists, while later on they were sneered at for being "old hat." He claimed that Strauss helped to make the ultra-modernists endurable, while the poorest influence included Leo Ornstein. His remarks followed the same critical pattern as that of the others:

Some songs and piano works of Leo Ornstein are certainly like those of his rivals. They are not beautiful, indeed, but they seem new. Though one would need to study all the Russian music to be sure of that. The effort to amaze and daze and startle is too evident in his work, as a composer, and at times as an interpreter. It makes one hesitate to admit his claims to fame--it checks the ardor of his sincere admirers.¹²⁸

Just who Ornstein's admirers were is not known, but they were obviously not the critics.

Henri Strauss defended radicalism and dealt a sharp attack against a critic of the New York Tribune. His attacks against the critics themselves brought encouragement to the musical promise of Ornstein, Stravinsky, and others:

And so the living composers continue to be sacrificed to the dead, and the Wagners and Debussys, the Scriabines and Stravinskys, who embody their art, all the distinctive elements of their respective ages, continue to be "futurists" to the bulk of their contemporaries. . . . Happily, a strong creative urge is not likely to capitulate to such bludgeoning; but there is always the fear that some young and tender talent will succumb to its blows--like Ornstein, for

¹²⁸"Musical Futurists of the Past and Present," Arts and Decorations, XIV (January, 1921), 234-238.

example, who has been so often blackjacked by the same critic and his satellites.¹²⁹

Finally, Buchanan, who was so outspoken against Ornstein, added a soft note concerning his impression of Ornstein as a person, not his music:

He appeals to me as a simple unspoiled, ardent, sensitive human being, full of fine normal feelings and senses of obligation and sympathetic for other people's interests and welfare. . . . Of course many people believe that Ornstein prevaricates. . . . [that] he premeditatedly elaborates his peculiar music. Ornstein denies this. He claims that these sounds are the spontaneous reflex of certain mental images and conceptions that came all unbidden to the surface of the mind.¹³⁰

It is difficult to assess Ornstein's true merits as a composer. The only yardstick for measuring his composing ability has been that which the critics used. A number of works mentioned thus far (Moods: Anger, Peace, Joy for orchestra, 1914) as well as others are listed in various sources,¹³¹ but they are seldom performed. Nearly all of the critics and writers accused him of being a futurist composer; usually these persons belittled his music as well as his ability as a performer. It is unfortunate that the composers who knew him (and undoubtedly many did) were not able

¹²⁹"Radicalism in Music," The Nation, CXII (January 5, 1921), 21-22.

¹³⁰"Ornstein and Music," p. 177.

¹³¹e. g., Baker's Biographical Dictionary, p. 806. Slonimsky in Music Since 1900 mentions Ornstein as having belonged to the Executive Board of the League of Composers in 1923 (p. 235), and includes an account of his having performed his "meta-pianistic" Concerto at a concert in New York of the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra with Stokowski conducting, February 17, 1925, (p. 259).

to defend him or help establish a true perspective of his musical status. The fact remains that they wrote music and not criticism. A recent inquiry has revealed some interesting information concerning Leo Ornstein. Edgar Varèse, who had heard Ornstein's compositions and was quite friendly with him, stated that it was a pity that he stopped composing at such an early age since he was a very talented and gifted composer.¹³² Records show that he did compose past the age of 39.¹³³

Arnold Schönberg

During the years 1912 to 1920 Schönberg, more than any other vanguard composer, with the exception of Ornstein, was designated as a futurist composer. Schönberg, who may have been aware of the Italian futurist group, actually was farther removed from this group than any other composer discussed. It is curious then why so many critics described him as a futurist composer.

Hadow's imprudent classification of the composers of the early part of this century into two groups, according to their radical attitudes, has since been discounted; Hadow considered Schönberg to be a lesser revolutionary than the group composed of Sibelius, Ravel, Scriabine, and Stravinsky.¹³⁴ Not

¹³²Letter from Edgar Varèse, August 15, 1965.

¹³³Baker's Biographical Dictionary, p. 806. In 1937 he was commissioned by the League of Composers, American Series, St. Louis to do a work, Nocturne and Dance of Fates.

¹³⁴Austin, "The Idea of Evolution in the Music of the 20th Century," p. 32. Hadow made this assumption in pointing out the insignificance of musical futurism in Italy in 1915.

only was the reference to futurism directed against the more advanced groups, but also against such staid composers as Wagner, Strauss, and Mahler. Frederick Corder also described the latter three as having "flagrantly abused the art of composition with the inclusions of wrong notes, either purposely or ignorantly so."¹³⁵ With regard to Schönberg, he expressed the opinion that his music was sheer nonsense, also insisting that Schönberg's successors were Bartok and Ornstein, whose productions were

. . . mere ordure: . . . impossible for a musical person to tolerate, much less pretend to admire them, . . . To pretend, as do the scribes, that any of the "Futurists" in any branch of art are men who have gone through all that is possible to be known and come out on the other side simply proves that neither of these men nor their admirers have any conception of what art means.¹³⁶

The difficulty in evaluating criticism is compounded when the qualifications of the critic concerned are dubious. In the case of C. S. Evans, however, there is little reflection of his critical abilities in his reaction to a concert of Schönberg's music. This critique only shows Evans' impropriety:

The idea of Futurism, so far as it was informed by anything comprehensible to be called an idea, was also carried over into music and literature. I have listened, at the concert-hall, to a soul-deadening cacophony by a Futurist composer named Schönberg. It was called a symphony, but as a matter of fact, it was nothing but a beastly noise, and I wished I might have

¹³⁵"On the Cult of Wrong Notes," The Musical Quarterly, I (July, 1915), 382-384.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 384.

been a dog, so that I could relieve my feelings by howling at it. As it was, I went outside, and sat on some uncomfortable hot-water pipes in the passageway. In literature, the apostle of Futurism before the war was an Italian named Marinetti. He, so far as I know, is the only artist of them all who attempted to justify his creed. This he did in a manifesto which was even more futuristic than his poems.¹³⁷

Another writer stated that the latest and perhaps the most violent expression of the aesthetics of futurism could be found in the musical compositions of Arnold Schönberg.¹³⁸ This opinion was advanced in the description of a concert in which the audience displayed their contempt for Schönberg's music with boos and hisses: "Fraulein Zehme's duty was 'to sigh and snort, scream and shout' her way through Albert Giraud's Lieder des Pierrot Lunaire."¹³⁹ Huneker felt the same as the other Schönberg adversaries, describing his music as futuristic dejection:

I repeat, is this that can paint a "crystal sigh," the blackness of prehistoric night, the abysm of a morbid soul, the man in the moon, the faint sweet odors of an impossible fairyland, and the strut of the Dandy from Bergamo? There is no melodic or harmonic line, only a series of points, dots, dashes, or phrases that sob and scream, despair, explode, exalt, blaspheme.¹⁴⁰

With equal abuse Thomas Gerrard, English critic, accused Schönberg of being a futurist and a fraudulent eclectic whose music consisted of "unheard-of noises imaginable . . . a

¹³⁷"The Terrors of Tushery," pp. 83-84.

¹³⁸"The First Futurist in Music," Current Opinion, LIV (March, 1913), 208.

¹³⁹Ibid. Quoted by an unidentified critic. ¹⁴⁰Ibid.

slap at Strauss's Don Quixote, . . . a dash of Reger . . . a bit of Debussy . . . [and] Mahler's eccentricity."¹⁴¹ He further suggested that Schönberg, mistakenly ascribed as a path-breaking composer, represented musical chaos and that the exquisite melody and harmony supposed to be found in his music were the results of a composer gone mad. He concluded that if Schönberg were not mad, surely someone else was. In a less severe comment, Gerrard suggested that there should be a "Wait and See Attitude" since a few interesting sounds could be heard.¹⁴² The suggestion that Schönberg's music was futuristic was challenged by Egon Wellez in an article "Schönberg and Beyond."

When one feels the criticisms which followed the performance of Schönberg's String Quartet by the Flonzaley Quartet in America, one finds running through all of them a note of surprise at the discovery that Schönberg was after all, not so much of a "futurist" as the rumors that preceded him to the continent had led everyone to expect; . . .¹⁴³

The application of futurism to Schönberg's compositions did not always involve abusive comments. In contrast to the radical deductions given above, critics frequently spoke favorably of his works. Ernest Newman, for example, in a prognosis of musical futurism, predicted that the next vital development of music would be along the lines of the best

¹⁴¹"Futurists Breaking Out in Music," The Literary Digest, XLV (September 28, 1912), 517.

¹⁴²Ibid.

¹⁴³The Musical Quarterly, II (January, 1916), 76.

of Schönberg.¹⁴⁴ It is evident, therefore, that the indictment of futurism made against Schönberg's music represented the bias of those critics who utilized this appellation as a convenient vehicle to express distaste for his music.

Igor Stravinsky

Stravinsky, unlike Ornstein and Schönberg, made friends with the Italian futurists, although his music bore no resemblance to that of the Italian group. This association linked him with them only from the social standpoint; Marinetti and the futurists, however, gave Stravinsky their full sanction. With reference to the humorous and sardonic music of Petrushka, Stravinsky, as David Ewen expressed it, cut the umbilical cord that tied him with Rimsky-Korsakov:

This was the music of the future, bold and free. To many of the younger European artists it represented a spearhead with which to attack tradition and formality. In Italy, the futurist Marinetti paraded down the streets of Rome with a banner proclaiming: "Down with Wagner. Long live Stravinsky."¹⁴⁵

Moderwell, frequently a severe critic of contemporary music, commented that Stravinsky's Firebird and Petrushka, in comparison to the works of Rimsky-Korsakov, were "technically superior, looking to the 'futurist' technique of recent years."¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴"The First Futurist in Music," p. 208.

¹⁴⁵David Ewen Introduces Modern Music (New York, Chilton Company, Pub., 1962), p. 135.

¹⁴⁶"Music of the Russian Ballet," The New Republic, V (January 22, 1916), 303.

Music containing noisy effects, such as Stravinsky's Rite of Spring, was often described as beautiful. Around 1916, music commentators defined beauty in music solely on the discreet use of consonance and dissonance, insisting that music with excessive cacophony was capable of expressing only ugliness. One writer, whose attitude in this regard demonstrates an obvious prejudice, avowed that Schönberg, Stravinsky, and Ornstein portrayed in music the ugliness which lay in the soul of a corrupt man, though admitting that a certain amount of ugliness had been used effectively in the past in the radiant form of pure beauty. Using Rembrandt's paintings as an example, he pointed out that their qualities, no matter what the subject, were always frank and wholesome. He continued that the ugliness of music written by futurists, such as Stravinsky, on the other hand, produced only cacophonous results:

. . . if the musical Futurists produce ugliness and call it beauty, they lie! And if they produce ugliness and glory in it and call it the art of the future, let us but laugh and pass on. The wind and the sea give them their answer.¹⁴⁷

The power of the critic's pen manifests itself in curious ways, and writers did not always employ the literal use of the word futurism, but frequently alluded to the elements of noise such as the Italian futurists would have used with regard to machines and so forth. Max Graf made such an allusion

¹⁴⁷"Excruciating Music," pp. 716-717.

to futurism in Stravinsky's Three Pieces for String Quartet (1914). He accomplished this by contrasting machinism evident in Three Pieces for String Quartet to the style of The Rites of Spring:

The tones had become noisy. The rhythm devoured all music and left only bones. The second movement resembled a machine. The instruments screeched like sirens. The third piece, with the voices colliding in icy air and with many high, peaked, emotionless violin tones, sounded eerie, as though all shaping forces had escaped from life.¹⁴⁸

Alexander Scriabin

The unusual and bizarre personality of Scriabin was partly responsible for the futurist title which various authors and critics gave him. Scriabin's harmonic style was described as unorthodox and his promise of the proposed colour-organ and mystery chord invited additional attention to his music, resulting eventually in undue ridicule. His proposed colour-organ was designed to use devices to display colored lights while emitting sundry odors of perfume. Runciman held little faith in Scriabin's promises and suggested that the simplest solution would be to provide opium for each concert-goer before he entered the hall; in this way he could arrive at a state of ecstatic contemplation.¹⁴⁹ He further asserted that Scriabin's proposal was cheap and

¹⁴⁸Modern Music, translated by Beatrice R. Maier (New York, Philosophical Library, Inc., 1946), p. 253.

¹⁴⁹"Noises, Smells and Colours," p. 151.

inferred that Marinetti and Pratella had previously set the stage for it. Runciman later associated Scriabin with the futurists, insisting that he offered too much pretentious comment on his work:

He is not content to be composer: he must needs be prophet as well. Further, he is with the futurists in refusing to be content with the musician's medium of expression: besides he must have colours, and in another work he means to offer us smells. . . . A deaf man with fifty pipes picked at random from debris of an old organ could build as rational and artistic an instrument as Scriabin's "clavier à lumière." Had not other futurists asked us to accept and find artistic joy in much more preposterous inventions we might call this futurism run mad.¹⁵⁰

Following an interview with Scriabin, Runciman suggested that his music had an affinity to futurism. The former was indignant with the accusation and repudiated the suggestion, but in spite of this denial, Runciman held firm to the belief that there was some affinity. Runciman also insisted that other personalities such as Stravinsky, Schönberg, Marinetti, and Pratella constituted the main branch of the futurist school, further intimating that Scriabin essayed to be the most unique since he was compelled to procure a new set of views and devise new ways of expounding them. His statement here allows little distinction between Scriabin's music and futurism:

His theories may not be Futurism, but in essentials they coincide with Futurism; his music may not be futurist, but in most respects it cannot be distinguished from music which is avowedly futurist.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 151-152.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 149.

This, through Runciman's own admission, was also a deprecation of the music of Schönberg and Stravinsky.

Hadow's views concerning Scriabin's futurism differ with those of Runciman. In discussing the futurists's worship of machinism and their creed of formal beauty and revolt, he stated that Scriabin's music contained formal beauty but predicted that if he or his contemporaries rejected this important aspect, they would "soon dispense with the beauty of sound and replace the orchestra as indeed Signor Marinetti has already done, by a babel of noise-machines."¹⁵²

Cyril Scott

In an article concerning the defense of modern music, Scott was also compelled to defend his musical stand against critics who called him a futurist. Speaking firmly in his own defense, Scott stoutly denied being a futurist, explaining that there were two kinds of music, romantic, consisting of new music--that which is beautiful, and futuristic, consisting of new music without the limits of beauty. His remarks about the latter (an offensive proposition rather than a defensive one) were directed towards its weaknesses. He commented that "the real trouble with the futurist is not that he is not new enough, for his newness, 'excruciating though it is,' lies in one direction only, and for this reason he becomes a 'monsterist.'"¹⁵³

¹⁵²"Some Aspects of Modern Music," pp. 15-16.

¹⁵³"Cyril Scott's Defense of Modernism in Music," Current Opinion, LXVI (February, 1919), 95.

He also believed that occult forces determined the manner of composition, citing certain inspired musicians such as Bach, who he felt were influenced by some divine being. Concerning futurist composers and the discordant nature of their music, Scott believed that they were trying

. . . to express in sounds the actual conditions of the astral plane; in other words, to depict another dimension in music. . . . Debussy was intended to be the tone-poet of music. . . . [he] lays stress on the color values of music which are perceptible to the clairvoyant who has trained his pituitary body or pineal gland.¹⁵⁴

Scott regarded all futurist art, sculpture and music as monstrosities, calling their creators ignoramuses. An exception was Schönberg, whose futurism he believed to be a development, not merely an admiration. He contended that the futurists disregarded all of the necessary rules, but he admitted the possibility that "the label 'futurism' is likely to take its place and be run to death, and thus be attached to a species of music where it can hardly apply at all."¹⁵⁵ Scott was referring to the loose application of the term futurism, and paradoxically, he was also guilty of its misapplication. Finally, he defines the attitudes of two types of composers:

. . . those who are wholly or partially discontented with the present and pleased solely with the past. . . those who go to the opposite extreme, as certain young "futurist" composers are said to have done, and

¹⁵⁴"Occult Forces at Play in Musical Composition," Current Opinion, LXX (May, 1921), 642-643.

¹⁵⁵Cyril Scott, "Two Attitudes," The Musical Quarterly, V (April, 1919), 158.

look upon modern music as the only music, . . . I am constrained for the sake of form to state that both of these attitudes are wrong.¹⁵⁶

Concerning these extreme attitudes he added, "they might forgive their brother Futurists, instead of condemning them wholesale as they do."¹⁵⁷ Scott's statements are filled with contradictions, but with this reproof, he attempted to clarify his own feelings about the wholesale condemnation of modern music, futurist or otherwise.

It is understandable why the composers discussed thus far have been indiscreetly identified with futurist activities. The provocative nature of some of their music was bound to have created a great deal of consternation, confusion, and misunderstanding among critics who were less favorably inclined towards new music. In one sense, this was unfortunate because much of the criticism was generalization based upon commonplace reactions, that is, on a lack of musical understanding or analytical proof of what was presumed. On the other hand, it may have been fortunate for some of the composers in that the success of some of their music was based on notoriety. In most instances, these criticisms are more notorious than elucidating.

Nevertheless, it is quite surprising how some composers who remained close to romantic musical practices were classified as futurists. In fact, very few early twentieth century

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p. 149.

¹⁵⁷Ibid.

composers, regardless of their style, escaped this classification. The following accounts illustrate how several post-romantic and post-impressionist composers were vilified by attribution of the futurist label. W. J. Henderson of the New York Sun placed Jean Sibelius in the futurist ranks after he heard the first performance of the latter's Fourth Symphony:

Now he has joined the Futurists. He is frankly as dissonant as the worst of them. He has swallowed the whole-tone scale, the disjointed sequences, the chord of the minor second, the flattened supertonic and all the Chinese horrors of the forbidden fifth.¹⁵⁸

Moderwell also placed futurism on an international basis and after excluding Strauss and Debussy, he enumerated, in a very general way, all the persons he believed to be futurist composers: Schönberg, Ravel, Stravinsky, and Busoni, though he indicated that he felt the most prominent Italian futurist would be Zandonai. He also mentioned the Austrians Alexander von Zemlinsky and Franz Schrener, although they were no more than names in the United States.¹⁵⁹

Nicholas Gatty, who insisted that futurism was a vague power menacing the whole course of musical development, included Strauss's name in his campaign against futurism in 1916.¹⁶⁰ Another critic, Paul Rosenfeld, although not

¹⁵⁸Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, p. 111.

¹⁵⁹"On Acquiring New Ears," p. 119.

¹⁶⁰"The Idea of Evolution in Music," p. 32.

directly calling Strauss and Mahler futurists, did question the origin of their ideas. The frequent use of noise effects (cowbells, whips in Elektra) by Strauss, and the frequent practice of equipping the orchestra with fantastically constructed batteries by both composers, led to this insinuation. He referred to the pre-war efforts of Pratella and other futurist activities as sheerly theoretical and empty, adding that Strauss's and Mahler's efforts followed these futurist trends.¹⁶¹

The futurist list continues to increase with the addition of other names such as Carl Ruggles, Arthur Honegger, and Alban Berg. Wood states that Ruggles boastfully admitted that he was a futurist, but quickly added that he was not to be confounded with an anarchist. While referring to the passing of visual cubism as a fad and vogue, Wood admitted that Ruggles's compositions deserved some credit since

. . . among the men who pose as futurists in music there is some sincerity, some earnestness of purpose. . . . And he [Ruggles] is only one of the many who are toiling quite unaided, hardly recognized, to put new meaning and new values into music.¹⁶²

The noise effects resulting in Honegger's Pacific 231 prompted Martin Cooper to comment that they were similar to a futurist result, though no other source has revealed any

¹⁶¹"The Assault on the Battery," The New Republic, LXVII (January 24, 1934), 309.

¹⁶²"Musical Futurists of the Past and Present," p. 238.

futurist intentions in Honegger's compositional aims. Cooper, however, seems to have found some correlation with this work and the futurist attention to speed and machines:

. . . the translation into sound of a visual impression and a state of physical impression and a state of physical enjoyment. . . . starting from objective contemplation . . . the speed increases steadily and reaches lyrical ecstasy at 75 miles an hour with 300 tons hurtling down the track! This intoxication with speed and mechanical beauty had, of course, been preached by Marinetti and the Italian Futurists ten years earlier, but it is surprising to find it allied with a deep interest in the traditional musical forms and textures.¹⁶³

He extended this statement to comment that "perhaps this breadth of sympathy, which has been a danger to Honegger, is also one of his chief virtues . . . [setting] him apart from composers like Auric or Poulenc."¹⁶⁴

Since Schönberg and Mahler did not escape the futurist tag, it is understandable that neither would Alban Berg. Though Rottweiler does not definitely designate Berg as a futurist, he compares the disconcerting effect of his compositions to that of the futurists:

It sounds as if Schönberg's Orchestral Pieces and Mahler's Ninth Symphony were being played together, and I will never forget the enormous joy in Berg's face when he heard my opinion, which would have offended any civilized ear. . . .¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³French Music from the Death of Berlioz to the Death of Faure, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 194.

¹⁶⁴Ibid.

¹⁶⁵Paul Collaer, A History of Modern Music, translated by Sally Abeles (New York, The World Publishing Company, 1961), p. 95.

Collaer opines that the quality of Berg's music, often regarded as chaotic, deserved further attention, pointing out that chaos was also a powerful force, although he added that

. . . it had already been felt and forecast by the futurists. For comparison's sake, let us quote a passage from F. T. Marinetti's passage on futurist aesthetics, published in Noi futuristi: Teorie Essenziali e Chiarificazione (Milan, 1917) . . . "Only by using very broad analogies can polychromatic, polyphonic, and polymorphous orchestral style translate the life of matter."¹⁶⁶

Futurism had at least one authentic literary representative in Russia: Vladimir Mayakovski. George Freedley and John Reeves, contending that Mayakovski was the same kind of futurist as Marinetti, provided some statements and descriptions to substantiate their contentions. One of these, they reasoned, was that he opposed the symbolists as did the futurists, explaining that the futurists opposed the poetizing of drama and used street slang like the Parisians of the same period in order to give their language new vigor and dramatic expression. The attempts of the futurists and Mayakovski to surprise and shock their audiences were the same; Mayakovski was said to have recited his poems and plays while wearing a woman's yellow blouse along with green stripes pencilled on his face.¹⁶⁷ The avant-garde movement, even though vague in its premises and objectives, moved away from ". . . Revolutionary Romanticism with its emotionalism and took what it

¹⁶⁶Ibid.

¹⁶⁷A History of the Theatre (New York, Crown Publishers, 1941), p. 410.

called a 'Realist' attitude toward life under the label of 'Futurism,' in which satire and exposure of false sentiments were elements."¹⁶⁸

The name of Mayakovski would be unimportant to this study if it did not involve the name of Serge Prokofiev. Prokofiev and Mayakovski were acknowledged leaders of this advanced Russian group. They referred to each other as "presidents of the Poetry and Music Sections of the Universe." In his autobiography, I Myself, Mayakovski has revealed how he and a friend "fled from the unbearable melodised boredom of a performance of Rachmaninov's Isle of the Dead."¹⁶⁹ The word melodised provides a clue pointing to the similarity of the futurist lack of melody and the Russian dislike of its sentimental use. Another Russian, Gorki, was also named as a member of this group and although not a futurist himself, he acknowledged Mayakovski and Prokofiev as the "artists who most truly reflected the revolutionary spirit of the times."¹⁷⁰ Nicolas Obukhov, who in 1921 claims to have designed electronic instruments, is also listed as a composer who resorted to futurist noise in his composing experiments.¹⁷¹ The Russian futurist school, according to Graf, was actually headed by Igor Severyanin (founded in 1911), who "extolled the Ego,

¹⁶⁸Bernard Stevens, "The Soviet Union," European Music in the Twentieth Century, p. 205.

¹⁶⁹Ibid.

¹⁷⁰Ibid.

¹⁷¹Dada, Monograph, p. 144.

man as a quintessence of the universe and God as the shadow that man throws into Eternity."¹⁷² This school of thought had been absorbed in the early communistic art, but in 1932 the Soviet government dissolved these artist groups and "Shostakovitch, who had an open mind for spiritual trends, absorbed symbolistic and futuristic ideas."¹⁷³

The spirit of futurism even engaged the attention, if not the participation of Erik Satie, a composer who was to be associated with every major movement represented in this study. Satie's activities did not follow a chronological pattern, and his limited attachments to futurism were very belated. Satie's part in the performance of Relâche,^A which involved a great deal of clowning on his part, resulted in the defection of many of his friends, who left him at a time when he was in the throes of a fatal illness. But Rollo Myers has stated that it was characteristic of the man that his last works should have been futuristic in tendency, thus bearing witness to his ever-green appetite for the new spirit.¹⁷⁴

Along with those already mentioned, some other composers have appeared collectively in the critics references to futurism. Henry Finck in the Musical Digest suggested that when one listens to the futuristic music of the dissonant "crew,"

¹⁷²Modern Music, p. 201.

¹⁷³Ibid.

¹⁷⁴Erik Satie (London, Dennis Dobson, Limited, 1948), p. 65.

Strauss, Ravel, Schönberg, and Stravinsky, a third ear would be needed;¹⁷⁵ Max Graf explained that Pratella's program had been adopted by Soviet composers, citing Mossolov's Iron Foundry, Shostakovitch's Second Symphony and its factory noises (including a factory whistle), Julius Meltus's Dnieprostroy and its description of steam engines, and Prokofiev's Pas d'acier which glorified the machine as examples.¹⁷⁶ Graf also expanded the list to include America's "bad boy" of music, George Antheil and his Ballet Mécanique,¹⁷⁷ while Otto Ortmann mentioned the names of other American composers who he claimed were allied to Pratella's program, placing the name of Henry Cowell and his The Joys of Music at the top of the list. Otto Ortmann, like many other writers, insisted that his own judgments were the right ones. He thought that American music was of two kinds, sensorial and intellectual, and asserted that the jazz process, an unforgivable one, was one of the trashiest forms. Along with the primitive plagiarists, he included the tone-clusterers, sonorists, and atonalists, describing the sensorialists as composers turned sensation-alists:

They point out the superb variety of noises right at hand: that of factory machinery, the screeching of brakes, the rumbling of subways, the whir of motors, the snort of locomotives, the bray of asses. Is this an exaggeration? Then I point to the theme for

¹⁷⁵"Glance at the Music of Tomorrow," Current Opinion, LXX (March, 1921), 353.

¹⁷⁶Modern Music, p. 200. ¹⁷⁷Ibid.

taxihorns in Gershwin's American in Paris, to Elliot's Bicycle sonata, to Carpenter's Sky-scrappers, to the wild scene in Milhaud's Choephorus, and to Opus I of the bruitistes, the joint painter-composer pronunciamiento of Russolo-Pratella.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸"What is Wrong with Modern Music," pp. 372-373.

CHAPTER IV

CUBISM AND MUSIC

The graphic aspects of the cubist movement have occupied by far the most prominent position, while their literary counterpart has assumed a minor role. The most prominent cubist writers, Max Jacob and Guillaume Apollinaire, were reasonably successful in providing this counterpart; and besides their literary accomplishments, including texts and libretti which were used in the most successful ballets and operas, was the support they provided toward the promotion of cubist aesthetics. Although music was never recognized as an essential part of the cubist program, it functioned in a manner similar and often on an equal footing with the other arts. It was an essential part of collaborative efforts and was frequently responsible for the success of these ventures.

The abstract qualities of music were in evidence long before art ventured beyond the commonplace reality. Isolated efforts involving fantastic and distorted art, such as the works of the sixteenth-century artist, Hieronymus Bosch, have already been discussed. Some of the musical examples of Baude Cordier and Jacob Obrecht, although not examples of distorted art, do represent some of the finest examples of media in which complex rhythms and harmonies realized through

a skillful superimposing of melodic lines, resulted in musical creations that are, in a way, comparable to many cubist paintings. The techniques of this music are similar to the cubist process, that is, the folding of a melody back on itself, augmenting or diminishing the value of notes or, in essence, musical simultaneism. The very nature of traditional polyphonic music, in fact, has involved the simultaneous process. In traditional painting, simultaneity was the attention given to the superimposition and mixing of colors on the palette or canvas in order to render a realistic interpretation of the subject, rather than the concern of subject rearrangement. Most romantic visual art, disallowing certain idealistic representations, varied little with regard to subject change, while impressionism, using color chromaticism, space, and light, allowed the artist greater imagination and provided an advance beyond the ordinary appearance of the subject.

In the twentieth century both art and music underwent considerable change. If the romantic sound (based on Viennese classical harmonies) can be equated with the romantic landscapes, portraits, and still-lives, then reality in this art (photo-likeness) may have taken on a comparable position to the consonances that were evident in romantic music. The departure of impressionistic painting and music from the accepted visual reality and consonance treatment were not radical ones. In the twentieth century artists and musicians, however, sought a different reality in their art. The results have varied,

but in cubism, by and large, objects took on multiple and simultaneous appearances, while in music, consonances, formerly the dominating sounds in many instances, gave way to the dissonance, the latter intended to be heard as a prominent factor in the music rather than as a subordinate melodic and harmonic consequence.

It has already been pointed out that futurism provided music with a definite aesthetic creed. The music of Schönberg, Stravinsky, and other composers, by the very nature of simultaneous principle (either polyphonic or homophonic), together with the rejection of a long established harmonic system, appears to be closer to cubist principles than the music of any other period. The cubist principle of brevity, that is, the object folded on top of itself from all angles, appears to be analogous to certain principles evident in serial music. This parallel may be discovered in music compression through inversion, retrogression, and the stripping of unessentials as is evidenced in the music of Schönberg, Webern, Krenek, and Babbitt. It is curious that none of these persons were connected with the cubist movement.

Music was, however, very definitely involved with the cubist movement and it was represented mainly through composers such as Stravinsky, Satie, Falla, and others. Music's position in the cubist movement has been frequently explained through numerous analogies and by references to music's incidental use; but its most obvious relation to cubism has been

recognized through the collaborative efforts of musicians, writers, and painters. Another obvious factor involving music in cubist activities can be recognized in the same basic spirit that prompted almost every twentieth century movement into action--a motivating spirit that revolted against tradition. Musical cubism may have well begun with Baudelaire's statement that sense, color, and sound all respond to each other. Satie and Stravinsky are believed to have been more closely aligned to the cubist movement than any other composer or musician. This belief may well be substantiated by factors revealing extensive collaboration of musicians with cubist personalities.

Analogy

The use of analogy in describing music's affiliation to cubism serves as a convenient means of explaining this relation, though it must be pointed out that excessive interpretation of one art through another often leads to an impasse; furthermore, analogy is subject to error and misconception. The following examples illustrate how writers and critics attempted to translate or equate music by means of the other arts. Analogy may frequently be found to have been selected as a convenient vehicle for a careless or deliberate fabrication, having little or no meaning whatsoever.

Many authors engaged in cubist aesthetic discussions have readily admitted that cubism was more than an artistic

"ism." Gray, for example, has attempted to convey its message with a deeper meaning:

Cubism was a vital force which found expression in music and literature as well as in the visual arts of painting and sculpture. It embodied a whole new outlook on the world of reality-- . . . powerful in its effect on artistic creation.¹

Eddy insists that the enjoyment of visual and musical cubism involves two distinct kinds of enjoyment: emotional and intellectual. Emotional enjoyment, he claims, was translated in terms of appreciating music, art or poetry: in music, the libretto may not be understood; in art, the patterns of a Persian rug may not be recognized; in poetry, a foreign language may preclude verbal communication. He also contends that the enjoyment of painting and music was realized in different manners. People have insisted that painting should be understood, while music, on the other hand, did not necessarily require understanding for enjoyment. Eddy continues by stating that originally, music and painting were both imitative; music imitated natural sounds while painting represented natural objects.² In the course of the development and change of both, music generally followed two courses, one towards the idea of unity and organization without extra-musical elements, and the other enlisting extra

¹Cubist Aesthetic Theories, p. 3. On page 98, Gray further comments that poetry approached closest of all the other arts to the perfection of music and had its influence on it as well.

²Arthur Jerome Eddy, Cubists and Post-Impressionism, new and rev. ed. (Chicago, A. C. McClurg & Company, 1919), pp. 83-85.

non-musical associations and attempts for literal sound representations. On the other hand, painting progressed toward the more perfect representation of natural objects. The nineteenth century separation of the two was abolished in the twentieth century when the second phase of cubism (synthetic) brought music and painting back together so that a parallel of line and color in art and sounds existed for their own pleasure, rather than for the associations they attempted to arouse. When painting and music were imitative, however, they may have allowed both intellectual and emotional enjoyment, but when they chose different courses, the enjoyment of painting involved both of these processes, while music was appreciated mainly through its own beauty. When they were reunited, Eddy explains that it was possible to appreciate music through emotional aspects without the need of understanding it, while on the same basis, art, through its own abstract representation, was capable of being enjoyed only through intellectual understanding.³

The contemporary search for purity in sound (purity possibly meaning a more abstract sonority), according to André Coeuroy, was achieved more readily through the orchestral medium through its more forceful projection of polytonality, atonality, and super-chromaticism. He further explained that the orchestra was formerly concerned with achieving blend in

³Ibid.

the families, while the modern orchestra's position assumes a role in which the families become dissociated in order to create "violent clashes--clearly limited sonorous planes like the color levels in cubist paintings."⁴

Another explanation of orchestral manipulation providing a cubist effect has been illustrated by Willard Huntington Wright--the comparison of a cubist canvas and an orchestra. This can better be explained in Wright's own words:

A Cubist painting is, let us say, like the momentary blare of a hundred musical instruments all of which play consecutive bars. By approaching each performer in order and studying his particular notes, until every musical detail is learned, we might intellectually construct from our memory an impression of a related musical composition. But should the blare be repeated even after research, the music's meaning would be no clearer than before. . . . In breaking up nature either for the sake of extending the aesthetic appreciation into time like music, or for simultaneity of presentation, all the parts must answer to an organization.⁵

Gray, who insists that both music and painting have demanded freedom with regard to the use of sound, line, and color, explains this by means of a simple illustration: if a cubist painter paints a pastoral symphony, why should he suggest landscape, brook, and sheep any more than the composer should imitate the rippling of brooks, the mooing of cows, or the bleating of sheep? Further support of this idea (the necessity of freedom) was afforded by Picabia when he deplored

⁴"The Esthetics of Contemporary Music," p. 260.

⁵Modern Painting (New York, Dodd, Mead and Company, 1930), pp. 249-250.

the fact that restrictions involving traditional rules of composition and word use stifled creativity. Picabia set forth his ideas on the composers' attitude and the need for compositional freedom from word restrictions, also pointing out a similar need in painting. He insisted that words confine his vision of melody even though they give the impression of evoking a mood. On the other hand, the absence of words and the expression of impression (made on him by a great poem) allows a greater freedom and a wider scope of subjectivity because the musical form is not required to follow the literary form of the poet. At the same time, he contends that modern composers have rebelled against the old fetters, and "modern painters have begun to feel the same need of a freer, an absolute method of expression."⁶ Picabia offers a hypothetical illustration to explain this:

A composer may be inspired by a walk in the country, . . . and produce a production of the landscape scene, of its details of form and color? No: he expresses the sound waves, he translates it into an expression of the impression, the mood. And as there are absolute waves, so there are absolute waves of color and form.⁷

With reference to Picabia's art, Apollinaire claimed cubist art to be as close to music as the opposite of music can be; although it is not musical itself, Picabia would like for it to relate to art as it relates to literature. Apollinaire has expanded this explanation, declaring that,

⁶Eddy, Cubists and Post-Impressionism, p. 91.

⁷Ibid.

in truth, music proceeds by suggestion: "Here, on the one hand, we are presented with colors which are not supposed to affect us as symbols, but as concrete forms."⁸

The idea that the cubist was a geometrician whose delineations were absolute has not been consistently accepted. This idea, in fact, has been refuted by Huc-Mazelet Luquiens in his insistence that the artist has tried to evoke ideas to obtain different results, especially the cubist artist. Harmonizing form and color, he reasoned, is similar to the approach used by Beethoven in harmonizing sound. Admitting that cubism's fate around 1916 was difficult to foresee, Luquiens believed that some day man would express it in his music. With reference to Beethoven's and Whistler's pictorial titles as well as their pictorial abstractions, Luquiens insisted that pictorial abstraction would not destroy pictorial objectivity any more than Beethoven has destroyed the song without words. A postscript to these viewpoints yields this conclusion:

"There is much in Cubism, as there is in music, that the critic can sense--the later works of Picasso and Picabia for instance--without understanding completely enough to wish to attempt explanations."⁹

The musical verse of the cubist poet, Apollinaire, whose poetry is said to have been the closest to music, has frequently

⁸The Cubist Painters, pp. 45-46.

⁹"The Post-Impressionist Revolt," The Yale Review, edited by Wilbur L. Cross, Vol. V (New Haven, Yale Publishing Association, Inc., 1916), pp. 242-243.

demonstrated a curious abruptness that is also characteristic of music which has been classified as cubist. Two of his poems that may aptly illustrate this abruptness are "La chanson du malaimé" and "L'Adieu."¹⁰ These appear to merge in a single image creating a process which the French have called instantané. The prosody of these poems has also been described by Shattuck as prolonging the movement into several measures of transparent music. He also characterizes Apollinaire's meter in terms of nostalgia, treatment of machines and wars, and free-verse. "Little wonder, when he can write such gently comic, unaffected, popular verse, that a score of composers have set Apollinaire to music."¹¹ Apollinaire's poetry has centered itself around the words "plasticity" and music. Plasticity was said to have represented a freedom that marked all phases of cubism and simultanism,

. . . a totally free manipulation of appearances of things . . . "Music" was Apollinaire's metaphor for a state of painting not burdened by any fidelity to external appearances, the way musical sounds are not burdened by any semantic function of language.¹²

Gray believes that certain influences such as medieval liturgical songs may have been evident in Apollinaire's poetry. An example that he has provided is Alcools, in which there is total suppression of punctuation.¹³

¹⁰"La chanson du malaimé" is reproduced and translated in Elaine Marks's French Poetry, p. 203. "L'Adieu" is reproduced and translated in Roger Shattuck's The Banquet Years, p. 310.

¹¹Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 310. ¹²Ibid., p. 301.

¹³Cubist Aesthetic Theories, p. 103.

To this point, discussions relating music to cubism have allowed a limited number of analogies with reference to degrees of comparative understanding and appreciation. These illustrations have provided comparisons that are not always convincing. Analogies that may provide more concrete conclusions have been made possible through numerous activities in which cubist painters, poets, and musicians combined their creative powers to produce both successful and unsuccessful results in ballets, operas, and other dramatic undertakings. Several of these resulted in provocative undertakings and received violent receptions from their audiences. Two of the most prominent figures who participated in these integrated efforts were Erik Satie and Igor Stravinsky. Satie, according to the "gossipy chronicle" the Cri de Paris, was the preferred composer of the cubists.¹⁴

Erik Satie

A comparison of the attitudes of Satie and the cubists provides an understanding of their similar treatment of subject material. The cubists, in order to compose a new or fresh arrangement of the objects of the visible worlds, began with the reintegration of a subject whose order they had previously destroyed. This resulted in what they called an

¹⁴"The Comic Spirit as Realized in the Music of Erik Satie," Current Opinion, LXI (October, 1916), 245.

affirmation.¹⁵ Satie's musical process with regard to technique, according to Mellers, is comparable to the cubist terms of the visual symbol: "He takes the traditional model and diatonic materials of European music, splinters them up and reintegrates them with a personal vision fresher than that of a world which seemed to him to have had its day."¹⁶

The eccentric nature of Satie's personality attracted artists of cubism as well as those of other movements. He was highly respected as a composer by many persons in France, while at the same time, he was practically unknown in other parts of Europe and America. His music has been described as funny, charming, very French, and in certain instances, very traditional. The journalists of Paris frequently characterized the composer as a cubist in music.¹⁷ Since the term cubist was used by newspaper writers to describe all artists of the modern school, its application to Satie has little real meaning. Satie's bizarre personality and showmanship fascinated the Parisian artist groups and subsequently served as inspiration for several other musicians. He was also referred to as the Guillaume Apollinaire of music.¹⁸ A comparison of Satie and Apollinaire is seen through their

¹⁵W. H. Mellers, "Erik Satie and the 'Problem' of Contemporary Music," Music and Letters, XXIII (July, 1942), 211.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Cooper, French Music, p. 182.

pursuance of mysticism, although the former approached it through boredom and the latter through eroticism. Satie was frequently involved in mysticism as was evidenced by his participation in such secret organizations as the "Salon de la Rose-Croix" and the church that he founded, "l'Église métropolitaine d'art de Jesus Conducteur." Gertrude Stein, who felt that her own works were cubist in nature, exemplified Satie's ideals in what she called the destruction of associational emotion. In her Three Lives, according to Donald Sutherland, she "reduces the tonality, the pedal, and disengages the pure melody and rhythm. We are out of Wagner say into Satie."¹⁹

Shattuck, pointing out Satie's obsession with the trinity, claims that the threefold aspects of Satie's compositions have a relation to cubist simultaneity, citing Sarabandes, Gymnopédies and Gnossiennes as examples:

Satie takes one musical idea and, instead of developing it at length and waxing variations on it, regards it differently from three directions. . . . An artist drawing a head from three different sides could obtain the same effect. There are obvious grounds for comparison of this procedure with that of the cubists. They investigated the complexity in time and space of a simple object studied simultaneously from several points of view.²⁰

Shattuck further comments that Satie's songs have resembled self-denials before a text, his music following the performance

¹⁹Gertrude Stein, a Biography of Her Work (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1951), pp. 38-39.

²⁰The Banquet Years, p. 142.

demands. He has explained this by saying that "many of his descriptive piano pieces are as much studies in immobility and secret movement as in still-life painting."²¹ But he also adds that Satie attuned his music to the other arts, always working with a text of any kind, "be it a Platonic dialogue, a Cocteau ballet, a medieval legend, a Picasso set, or his own fanciful-grotesque lyrics . . . [even] including the unexplored realm of movies."²²

Paul Rosenfeld was convinced that Satie's musical virtues were largely negative, declaring that, like the modern man of letters who commences not with feeling but the word, the modern painter with shape and line, "Satie conceived his problem as a relation of musical masses and periods, a play of sonorities."²³

The style of Satie's music after his studies in the Schola represented a revolt against all traditional musical notation. From 1910 to 1915, all of Satie's works (excepting songs) were published without bar lines and key signatures-- a style often described as limpid and droll. At the same time, Apollinaire was proceeding in a similar fashion, that is, through suppression of punctuation and a peculiar typography.²⁴

²¹Ibid., p. 183.

²²Ibid., p. 175.

²³"A View of Modern Music," Dial, LXXIX (November, 1925), 387.

²⁴Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 151.

Humor, wit, and satire--The irony evidenced in Satie's personality and music can be recognized through his impish behavior around his friends, and through the display of comic effects, rarely subtle, in his music. His earliest compositions, written long before he was acquainted with the dadaist and cubist artists, displayed a spirit of clowning and buffoonery. Satie's mentality was by no means simple; yet he had the uncanny gift of expressing profound truths in his music in a simple way. Rollo Myers has diagnosed this child-like personality as "the uncanny clairvoyance of a child enabling him to see through shams and pretences--not to say pretentiousness--of all kinds: . . ."25 His clowning antics, in evidence in his late cubist activities, however, were more prominent during his association with the dada movement. This humor became evident in the year 1913, in which verbal commentaries, musical parodies, and allusions became increasingly abundant in his compositions. The first of these included his Descriptions Automatiques, the use of popular songs such as "Maman, les petits bateaux" in Sur un Vaisseau, Sur la Lanterne (alluding to a popular music-hall song), and Embryons Desséchés--all these demonstrating a highly comic demeanor. Myers contends that Embryons allegedly portrayed the "embryos" of three entirely imaginary crustaceans "invented by Satie and described in nonsensical terms recalling the manner of

²⁵Erik Satie, p. 17.

Edward Lear."²⁶ Other music suggesting humorous titles and comic intent include such works as: Croquis et Agaceries d'un Gros Bonhomme en Bois; the humoristic Chapitres Tournes en Tous Sens; Vieux Sequins et Vieilles Cuirasses (in which the music of Gounod and others is involved); and Heures Séculaires et Instantanées (containing recitation, monologue, and children's pieces).²⁷ Shattuck also referred to Satie's humor around the 1912 period, especially the humor residing in the titles and gnostic texts:

He concocted ironic instructions on interpretation . . . ludicrous dreamlike scenarios ("the man who carried huge rocks"), and parodies on the current fad of Spanish themes (a Hispano-Parisian "Espagne" about the "Puerta Maillot" and the "Rue de Madrid"). In addition to this, Satie's melodies allude with mock innocence to every genre of music: nursery rhymes, operettas, Chopin (deliberately labeled Schumann), and Gregorian chant.²⁸

Timelessness and space.--To the cubists, time, space and opacity did not exist. The purpose in painting the human figure was simply to give its envelopment by painting all sides of an object as they saw through it, claiming to have achieved effects similar to those of an X-ray. The following remarks illustrate this envelopment: "They will paint a platter on a table and the part of the table covered by the platter; they will paint the entire collar about the neck so that it is visible through the neck."²⁹ Time and space have also

²⁶Ibid., p. 78.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸The Banquet Years, p. 147.

²⁹Eddy, Cubists and Post-Impressionism, p. 173.

suggested a canvas without a beginning or end--simply a compound image that contains multiple superimpositions of the object. Some of Satie's music has been equated on these terms in allusions to timelessness and the continuous present. These concepts have been suggested in his short closet pieces and thumb nail sketches. Gertrude Stein explained the continuous present as a process which takes "each successive moment or passage as a completely new thing essential, as with Mozart, or Scarlatti, or later Satie."³⁰ She further explained that "for the composer this space of time can be measure or whatever unit can be made to express something without dependence on succession as the condition of interest."³¹ Satie's Socrate has been offered as one of the best examples to illustrate timelessness:

. . . this music has no human population; the balanced phrases unfold infinitely in an empty room of which the walls are built of parallel mirrors. There is nothing to indicate the passing of time; it is a very tiny world but it is self-reflected into infinity.

This "timelessness" can also be construed in another sense, that of "agelessness".³²

Brevity.--Satie's expression of brevity has been defined as musical stripping of non-essentials (dépouillement)--the desired or end result of a return to "simplicity." Satie's

³⁰Sutherland, Gertrude Stein, p. 52. Stein has described the prolonged present as assuming a situation or theme, dwelling on it, or developing it, as in much opera and Bach.

³¹Ibid.

³²Myers, Erik Satie, p. 56.

earliest music (Gymnopédies, 1886) was possibly the first musical manifestation of this kind of brevity, and it has been suggested that this influenced Stravinsky's music as well as the "mechanistic de-humanized productions of the Gebrauchmusik school."³³ W. H. Mellers has compared Satie's short pieces (Gymnopédies and Gnossiennes) to a cubist re-integration, in which the process is transferred from harmony to line "while the harmonies themselves become the more telling for being simple."³⁴ Mellers also has commented on the fragmentary appearance of Satie's miniature idiom:

. . . one cannot alter a note without destroying the symmetry. The poised balance of the melodic periods, the carefully placed harmonic obliquity, the lucidity, as opposed to the impressionistic haze, one of the tender lyrical phrases, the queerness of personally related diatonic chords--all these give to the music a quality of sunless transparent chastity which, although "abstract" and apparently tranquil, is acutely poignant and profoundly unhappy.³⁵

Much of Satie's music blends the comic strain with the pathetic in the same way that a puppet show leaves the audience laughing with a tinge of sadness. Sports et divertissements (1914), like some of the other humorous compositions, "have the tiny dimensions and the vast appeal of a guignol performance. They demand not the perfection of a single

³³Myers, Erik Satie, p. 55

³⁴"Erik Satie and the 'Problem' of Contemporary Music," p. 212.

³⁵Ibid.

performance, but the familiarity of frequent repetition."³⁶ Satie was also referred to as a miniaturist who "somehow contrived to pack into the small forms in which he worked a content so rich that it seems to overflow the narrow boundaries by which it is ostensibly confined."³⁷

Sports et divertissements and other tiny forms have been referred to as thumbnail sketches. One of these, classified as a short chorale and consisting of eleven bars (if bar lines were added), suggests concentrated musical thinking, rugged strength, and although austere, is far from boring.³⁸ This collection contains twenty little sketches, composed to a definite program, and intended as a musical counterpart to a set of drawings by the artist Charles Martin. A verbal description of each of these ("Yachting," "Fishing," "Golfing," "Flirting," and others) is inseparable from the music; moreover, they are amusing and serve as textual embellishments to the music.³⁹

Surprise and absurdity.--Max Jacob was one of many cubists who felt that, while art should aim at being understood, it should not be so simple that no effort is required on the part of the reader or viewer. He claimed that Mallarmé's art was stilted and obscure, whereas Rimbaud, who had neither

³⁶Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 151.

³⁷Myers, Erik Satie, p. 35.

³⁸Ibid., p. 87.

³⁹Ibid., p. 45.

style nor situation, had the Baudelaire element of surprise. This, he asserted, was the triumph over the romantic disorder. Gray suggests that both Jacob and Apollinaire used surprise with great charm.⁴⁰ The element of surprise which one hears in a Satie work such as Entr'acte often changes apparently trite musical design into something novel.⁴¹ Quite frequently surprise was displayed in a spirit of hoax. Many artists, such as Picasso, Cocteau, and Satie, in following the new aims of painting, poetry, and music, deliberately used hoax (and publicity) in their art. Satie's humor, hoax, and surprise often turned into absurdity. Lawrence Gilman, a prominent American critic in the early twenties, pointed this out when he summed up Satie's musical characteristics:

. . . the infantile buffooneries of Satie have done him ill service with many who have been deterred by these somewhat elephantine gambollings from recognizing, behind the farceur and the genius (gamin?) the gifted and original musician, the tonal pathbreaker, who is the essential Satie. Parodist, clown, poseur, a whimsical and outrageous prankplayer, deliberately and joyously engaged in the ancient pastime of making the simple-minded set up. . . .

This singular and baffling person--this "shy and genial fantaisist, part-child, part-devil, part faun, . . . played on by Impressionism, Catholicism, Rosicrucianism, Pre-Raphaelitism, Theosophy, the camaraderie of the cabaret"--has produced voluminous but music that is chiefly for the piano.

. . . . --the authentic esprit gaulois: that spirit of sly, malice, mockery, satire, gayety, ironic humor, .

. . .⁴²

⁴⁰Cubist Aesthetic Theories, p. 48.

⁴¹Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 172. Entr'acte was one of the earliest examples of pure movie music.

⁴²"Monsieur Satie and Mr. Carpenter," North American, CCXV (May, 1922), 692-693.

Shattuck believes that Satie's reliance on humor as a mask for the boldness of his innovations was a means of evoking the contemporary spirit in his music. He further alleges that Satie cultivated humor as an end in itself through which he enjoyed the absurdity of living, and in which spite, fantasy, and irony, all combined themselves into producing

. . . a skillful fairy story about a nonsense world.
 . . . Satie's entire career represents an effort to confound, to provoke laughter, to give pause, and then to disappear--and least of all to entertain or edify. Since the absurd cannot be prolonged without itself becoming reasonable and systematic, . . . Satie's talents revealed themselves best, as Paul Rosenfeld wrote, in "sudden visitations."⁴³

Surprise and absurdity were hallmarks of Satie's music and were essential elements in cubist literature and painting.

Igor Stravinsky

The musical styles of Stravinsky have been so divergent that it has been difficult to evaluate his music in terms of movements or trends. To this extent he was very much like Picasso, since the discovery of one Picasso was likely to lead to an encounter with a new one. Many authors and critics who have made a careful study of Stravinsky's musical career believe that his musical aesthetics, at least during the late analytical and early synthetic periods of cubism, were often attuned to the aims of cubism.

Stravinsky's aims and purposes, in truth, differing vastly from those of Satie, have actually been directed to

⁴³Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 178.

serve his own aesthetic outlet rather than conform to the intent of the cubists. Cubist painters, among themselves, maintained similar points of view with regard to various media (papier collé, collage); but each painter developed his own individual traits and mannerisms to achieve distinct and unique results of their own in spite of similar views. In the first stage of cubism (analytic), Picasso and Braque worked so closely with such similarity of style that it was frequently difficult to determine the identity of the painter. By way of contrast, it is easier to confuse a work of Picasso with one of Braque than it is to confuse a composition by Stravinsky with one of Satie. Curiously both Satie and Stravinsky have approximated a cubist musical style although their styles are widely divergent.

Authors and critics believing that Stravinsky and Picasso achieved a parallel course in their artistic achievements point to one significant parallel that validates this belief: the art of both persons has experienced consistent change from time to time--changes that have usually caused great consternation to viewers and listeners who had just become accustomed to a now abandoned style. As André Coeuroy points out, the parallel of their art is most significant if one can penetrate the superficial resemblance of their careers:

From every approach, there is an incessant, earnest, tenacious search, beneath a mask of indifference for that feeling which arises from the free play of art, the play of the elements composing that art. . . . Stravinsky and Picasso now practice an art without

any "expressive" intention and they have achieved in consequence an incredible intensity of expressiveness. In the music of the one we have a torrent of sound which seems to flow as if urged by an astounding force; in the painting of the other there is an outpouring of color without any obvious imaginative significance: in both cases the material seems held together, organized by a mysterious relation whose underlying principle it is the critic's duty to define. . . . The musician and the painter have at least shaken off the poet and make us feel without the aid of words.⁴⁴

With reference to Stravinsky's similarity to Picasso and Braque in the creation of a multi-leveled dismemberment of the traditional world, Robert Rosenblum notes that the most typical parallel between the composer and the artist is found in Le Sacre du Printemps in which the melodic line "is splintered into fragmentary motifs by rhythmic patterns as jagged and shifting as the angular planes of Cubist paintings and equally destructive of a traditional sense of fluid sequence."⁴⁵ He also suggests that the simultaneous sounds of Petrushka, resulting in polytonality, provide a close analogy to the multiple images of cubism in which an absolute interpretation of the work of art is destroyed.⁴⁶ The cubist attitude toward diverse styles in the destruction of absolutes has been compared to Stravinsky's ability to re-create "within the framework of his own art, the musical techniques of such disparate composers as Machaut, Pergolesi, Weber, and Tchaikowsky."⁴⁷

⁴⁴"Picasso and Stravinsky," Modern Music, V (January-February, 1928), 3-8.

⁴⁵Cubism and Twentieth-Century Art (New York, Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1960), p. 40.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 57.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 101.

Stravinsky's unexpected shifts in musical styles (romantic, impressionistic, primitivistic, futuristic, cubist, and neo-classic) have been compared to those of Picasso, whose every work has anxiously been greeted with acclaim, anger, or confusion. Concerning these shifts in the career of Stravinsky, Peter Hansen explains how Picasso's unpredictable style changes corresponded to those of Stravinsky:

No sooner has the public recovered from the shock of one kind of intellectual problem-solving painting than Picasso has started painting to a whole new "set of rules." Thus he [Stravinsky] has had his famous periods--rose, blue, cubist, new-classic, and others.⁴⁸

Max Graf, in a similar description of Picasso's style changes, hypothesized that beginning around 1914, Picasso had a part in Stravinsky's transformation. He also contended that Cocteau, Picasso, and Stravinsky changed unreality as though "mechanical forces had taken possession of the world and had distorted all figures there."⁴⁹ André Hodeir, pointing out the resemblance of Stravinsky's and Picasso's art, defined this similarity as a decline, especially in Stravinsky's music: "The second tendency . . . purely aesthetic . . . was a musical equivalent of that pictorial masochism inaugurated by Picasso at about the same time (though less powerful and authentic than its visual counterpart)."⁵⁰ Another parallel

⁴⁸An Introduction to Twentieth Century Music (Boston, Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1961), p. 156.

⁴⁹Modern Music, p. 255.

⁵⁰Since Debussy. A View of Contemporary Music, translated by Noel Burch (New York, Grove Press, Inc., 1961), p. 31.

in the art of Stravinsky and Picasso was introduced by Eric White when he compared the "calligraphic approach of Picasso with the composer's 'strictly syllabic treatment of words in vocal settings.'"⁵¹ Hansen's analogy points out that the use of smaller orchestral mediums, (pre-war period) such as one finds in the Octet for Wind Instruments, approximates the limited use of color by the cubists: "He now consciously limits his pallet of sound, just as the cubists restricted themselves to browns and grays, reacting against the exuberant color of the impressionists."⁵² Finally, Rosenfeld called attention to the brevity in Stravinsky's music when he stated that Stravinsky wrote songs (referring to 3 Poems from the Japanese, 1912-13)

. . . that are epigrammatic in their brevity; a piece for string quartet that is played in fifty seconds; a three-act opera performed in thirty minutes. . . . But the penning of music as jagged, cubical, barbarous as the prelude to the third act of Stravinsky's little opera The Nightingale, or as naked, uncouth, rectangular, rocklike, polyharmonic, headlong, as some of that of Le Sacre du Printemps required no less perfect a conviction, no less great a self-reliance.⁵³

He also adds that Stravinsky let nature move him to imitation as Picasso brings twentieth-century nature into still-lives.⁵⁴

⁵¹Jean Cocteau, pp. 44-45.

⁵²An Introduction to Twentieth Century Music, p. 159.

⁵³"Stravinsky," The New Republic, XXII (April 14, 1920), 209.

⁵⁴Ibid.

Although many of these comparisons provide the critics with convenient phrases with which to discuss Stravinsky's and Picasso's art, and although many similarities may exist in the works of the two, nonetheless, many of these aphorisms appear to be only superficial associations made on the basis of circumstantial elements.

Other Composers

From 1912 to about 1935 American writers and critics were extremely annoyed by the avant-garde composers and expressed their distaste through hyperbolic reports which were usually desultory and pernicious. It is easy to understand these perverse attitudes since the musical background of several of the many critics was rather limited. For example, Rosenfeld was educated primarily in journalism, while Lawrence Gilman was musically self-educated.⁵⁵ Other critics, secondary in importance to the ones already cited, assisted them in their literary castigations of the latter day composers, especially Varese, Antheil, and Auric. This petty carping of personalities did not confine itself to vanguard composers, but it was even applied to Richard Strauss.

Strauss, according to the writer Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, was simultaneously a futurist and a cubist. In writing of the illusion of reality (referring to cubist art) Kahnweiler drew a comparison between Pirandello's play, Six Characters

⁵⁵Baker's Biographical Dictionary, p. 925 and p. 398.

in Search of an Author (1921), and Strauss's opera Ariadne auf Naxos (1912, revised 1916). Regarding this illustration he commented that "the startling objectification of characters, stage manager, and scenery offers a comparable inconsistency on the means that produce a dramatic illusion rather than on the illusion itself."⁵⁶ He further noted that one found in the opera a similar shuffling of dramatic fiction and all the humdrum realities of dramatic production.⁵⁷ All of these comments were used to relate the work to cubism and more specifically to the cubist technique of collage: ". . . the contours of objects seem to function in counterpoint . . . so that the previously inseparable elements of line, texture, and color suddenly have independent existences."⁵⁸

Huneker, whose earlier comments placed Ornstein in the futurist group, later labeled him as a cubist, that is "a Picasso figure, messed up hair, his coat collar a study in Cubism."⁵⁹ This could be dismissed as an uncomplimentary reference to Ornstein's physical appearance had he not continued by saying:

Thus does nature pay her tribute of imitation to a painter of strong individuality. I don't know whether Ornstein ever saw a Picasso, but I do know that he is the only living pianist who can play a recital in the

⁵⁶The Rise of Cubism, translated by Henry Aronson (New York, Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., 1949), p. 71.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹"Leo Ornstein Hoists the Banner of Musical Futurism," p. 31.

Carroll Galleries and fight the fierce discordant music of its walls without perishing at the keyboard.⁶⁰

Obviously Huneker did not hold cubism in high esteem, and more than likely he has interpreted discordant music and Picasso's painting in the same light.

Paul Rosenfeld's literary imagination and wordy constructions offer little by way of concrete criticism. Concerning the music of Varèse and especially his Ionization Rosenfeld, although alluding to cubism and poetry, adds confusion to a description of Varèse's music by suggesting futurist qualities. Rosenfeld alludes to cubism in a statement that cannot be adequately rephrased--and perhaps not even understood:

His ultrastrident brassy cubical tone-poems are if possible even more daringly conceived as a pure interplay of sonorities. With Varèse music becomes a thrilling opposition of volumes of sound, piercing, highly layed, sharp as edges of brass and steel, a series of blunt, stubborn, stuttering masses rigidly held, even in a moment of climax and stress, in a cubical shape. If the music of Varèse so extraordinarily retains the character of mass, it is undoubtedly largely because of his brief intervals of silence between the pronouncement of his blaring orchestras of woodwind and brass supported by fantastic arrays of percussion, sirens, and rattles; a technic corresponding to the suppression of connectives by contemporary poets in their poetry. . . . a wild sense of material power.⁶¹

Undoubtedly Varèse was not all bad, since Rosenfeld, in some of his articles, praised the music of Varèse:

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹"A View of Modern Music," Dial, LXXIX (November, 1925), 394. The reader will undoubtedly notice here a certain similarity between Rosenfeld's style and the word autonomy of the futurist Marinetti. Cf. p.165 above.

Varese has done with the auditory phenomena of the great modern city and the port something analogous to what Picasso has done with the visual ones, and as little in the intention of description. Both have used the elfin and the brutal motifs of modern citified nature in building up subjective pictures which are relaxed and pulsant with the beat and excitement of the present hour.⁶²

One other garrulous display of literary ornamentation was written by Rosenfeld in an attempt to describe Varese's cubist innovations, cubes, compression, and abruptness. Again his style defies interpretation and he must be quoted:

On first acquaintance, his orchestra sounds like the mechanical whistles, and roars of the giant ports, the grinding groundbass of the hooting city streets. Later, the apparent mimicry of the city nature disappears, making way for the discovery of a musical structure built of aural sensations of a fabulous delicacy and power. No doubt, a sensibility to the new noises amid which we dwell, keener than hitherto found among composers, is at work in music much as that of Picasso in the visual field. Varese has not formed his style of the strange tones and timbres distilled by the industrial world any more than Picasso has of the visual ones. . . .

The form is intensely compressed. The themes have a telegraphic abruptness; their developments are precititious and continual. In effect, all these constructions are curiously "cubical" Even the intensifications and climaxes do not shatter these shining cubes.⁶³

Edmund Wilson, in relating the geometric sounds of the music of Varese to cubism, pointed out that Varese attempted to write a music of pure abstraction by using the geometry

⁶²Ibid., p. 395.

⁶³"The New American Music," Scribners, LXXXIX (January-June, 1931), 631. Rosenfeld's comments in this article are confined to comparisons and discussion of composer material of various composers such as Villa-Lobos, Milhaud, Ornstein, and Cowell; he does not name any specific compositions.

of sound. In naming the composition after calculus, Varèse himself, according to Wilson, wrote that "there is more musical fertility in the contemplation of the new stars--preferably through a telescope--and the high poetry of mathematical expositions than in the most sublime gossip of human passion."⁶⁴

J. Schaeffner was convinced that certain qualities of Auric's music, especially those which Schaeffner ascribed to his common music, were related to cubism. These qualities, designated as "something," penetrate the borderline of fantasy and association. He indicates that this "something" was drawn from the streets and taverns and that this relation was apparent in Auric's use of suggestion. With regard to this, he felt that Auric's music was similar to cubism:

. . . we find a constant play of allusions, mocking or tender, to the most humble music, to the commonplaces of the most conventional music to everything within earthly confines that bears the brand of sentimentality, that may be the refuge of a sad and barren poetry. . . . Auric borrows from these sources and suggests them, somewhat as a cubist painter who plays with nature, putting a fragment of reality into a purely imaginative plastic mass or using this bit of reality as a starting point to evolve something which will have no relation to the original except assonance or that of a pun in pictures.⁶⁵

Although cubism has been explained in many different ways, rarely has sentimentality been attributed to it. Schaeffner

⁶⁴"Stravinsky and the Modernists," The New Republic, XLII (April, 1925), 156. This author, quoting Varèse, fails to mention the name of the composition.

⁶⁵"Georges Auric--Peasant of Paris," Modern Music, VI (November-December, 1928), 12.

is probably correct in relating the borrowed elements, the fragments of tavern tunes, to the effects that the cubists attained in pasting paper on canvas to portray a real life effect, or as he has stated, to create a pun. (An example of the music of the popular singing societies and the waltzes is suggested in Auric's Les Cinq Bagatelles).

Collaboration: Artist, Poet, Musician

All historical work which pretends to elevation or importance is written under the influence of ideas. Perhaps no other period in history has provided the artist such unlimited opportunities for exchange and advance of ideas as has the first two generations in the twentieth century. These relations have afforded the most factual evidence of friendly (in most instances) collective attempts to unite a variety of artistic ideas into a unity of expression. Many of these collaborations, moreover, were highly fruitful as is evidenced through their inclusion in the standard repertoire of opera and ballet companies. Even those works whose outcomes were more of an abortion than a success gained the public eye through the scandal connected with their initial production, and in many cases, even pieces with obvious merit were riotously received. Stravinsky's Le Sacre du Printemps, after having experienced a riotous reception on its first performance was received several years later with enthusiastic acceptance. Satie's Parade created a scandal which provided

him with a great deal of attention and increased his musical stature, motivating him to the extent that he went on to create other works such as Relâche, Mercure, and Socrate.

The background of the cubist movement has occupied, for reasons that should be fairly clear by now, a geographical position that confined itself almost entirely to two sections of Paris--Montparnasse and Montmartre. The usual congregating place for artists was the café, notably the Chat Noir, Lapin Agile, Montmartre Cabaret, and Vachetto Café. The Latin Quarter provided a consistent carnival spirit, and the avant-garde groups represented an aesthetic underground which emerged fully into the twentieth century group with a full-fledged Bohemian setting.⁶⁶ The central musical figure in the Bohemian surroundings was Erik Satie, whose bizarre personality and unique musical efforts were acknowledged in Paris, but not taken as seriously as those of some other musicians who later became involved in this setting. As a young man, Satie found great pleasure in associating with painters and poets, and because of this contact with them, his sense of humor and Bohemian spirit took shape.⁶⁷

One of the most important occasions in the first decade of the twentieth century and one which points up the importance of Paris as a cubist art center was the banquet held

⁶⁶Shattuck, The Banquet Years, pp. 25-28.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 131.

in honor of Henri Rousseau, the fauvist painter. It has been argued by art historians that this banquet was a fun making occasion planned at the expense of Rousseau. In spite of the riotous nature of the banquet, it actually marked an event of considerable import--an occasion of "unpredictable new resources in the arts, a spontaneous display of high spirits to greet ideas being unearthed every-day by Picasso and Apollinaire, Max Jacob and Braque Taking Rousseau as a pretext, the banquet celebrated a whole epoch."⁶⁸ The banquet was held in Picasso's studio in the bateau laavoir. Among the total of thirty guests present were Gertrude and Leo Stein, Alice B. Toklas, Braque, Jacob, Apollinaire, Maurice Raynal, André Salmon, Maurice Cretnitz, Jacques Vaillant, Maurice de Vlaminck, René Dalize, André Warnod, Fernande Olivier, and Marie Laurencin.⁶⁹

Serge Diaghilev and the Ballet

The Paris introduction of the Russian Ballet under its impresario-director Serge Diaghilev was the starting point of many dramatic activities that drew the artists and musicians together, and through this agency a number of great works were composed. Undoubtedly, it was the start of the Picasso-Stravinsky friendship. Graf has remarked that modern artists all over Europe made the Russian Ballet their headquarters:

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 68.

⁶⁹Ibid.

Poets, painters and musicians got together at rehearsal and discussed the artistic problems of the day. New art theories, new formulas, new watchwords rose up in the air like cigaret smoke.

. . . Frenchmen like Ravel, Satie, Milhaud, Poulenc, Auric, Sauguet, Florent Schmitt; Russians like Stravinsky and Prokofieff; . . .

If one reads off the names of painters who designed costumes and decorations for the Russian Ballet, one seems to be reciting the captions of a history of modern painting: Matisse, Derain, Braque, Picasso, Rouault, Chirico.

The whole evolution of painting from the late-impressionists to surrealism, cubism and constructivism took place on the stage of the Russian Ballet.⁷⁰

Though his company was staging ballets in Paris before 1917, the most influential period of Diaghilev's ballets was 1917-1925, a period representing extensive growth for both Diaghilev's company and artists as well. Diaghilev surrounded himself with many prominent musicians (among them Stravinsky, Satie, Auric, and Poulenc), painters (Braque, Picasso, and Marie Laurencin), and writers and choreographers (Cocteau, Nijinska, and Massine). Diaghilev had enough understanding and imagination to communicate successfully with both artist and composer.⁷¹ Even though he made many enemies (notably Ravel), his efforts were usually fruitful.

Jean Cocteau: His Influence

Jean Cocteau, a literary figure of considerable stature, exerted an influence that brought about several successful collaborations between artists and musicians, including Satie,

⁷⁰Modern Music, p. 215.

⁷¹Collaer, A History of Modern Music, p. 213.

Braque, Stravinsky, and Picasso; Cocteau's career has progressed through one movement to another, and it is certain that he paused in this rapid passing to produce works in the cubist technique. Lemaitre has maintained that his fickle loyalty to any one movement came from his wanting to be up-to-date.⁷² Cocteau bickered constantly with some of the other literary figures, especially André Gide. An uncomplimentary note in the Écrits Nouveaux, written for Cocteau's benefit, was the result of one of these arguments. A reconciliatory post-script--one which gives some insight into Cocteau's activities--occurs in a letter from Cocteau to Gide:

I wanted to protect myself against a reflex action and a terrifying deluge of open letters. Time went on. Montparnasse and Cubism came. Gide kept out of the way. He could forget offenses, especially those he wrote. He telephoned me and asked me to take charge of . . . let us say, Olivier. His disciple Olivier was bored with books in Gide's library. I would introduce him to the Cubists, to the new music, to the circus where he loved bands, acrobats, and clowns.⁷³

Cocteau, according to Graf, exerted a great influence on Stravinsky:

Among the modern poets with whom Stravinsky associated, no one represented the mechanization of the whole world more intelligently than Jean Cocteau . . .

The shattering of the world, the destruction of its forms as though a bomb had torn a life to shreds, found fertile ground in Stravinsky, ground that was prepared for this type of nihilistic art [cubism] . . . But without Cocteau and without Picasso, Stravinsky's artistic development would have been accomplished less intellectually and less in conformity with new artistic

⁷²From Cubism to Surrealism, p. 147.

⁷³The Journals of Cocteau, p. 172.

slogans that floated in the shining surface of intellectual life in Paris.⁷⁴

Because of the hypercritical attitude that reflected his egotism and because he deemed himself to be a capable critic, Cocteau often sparked disagreement with his friends as well as his enemies. For example, he offended Stravinsky when he stated that Stravinsky did not belong to the race of architects. The resultant of this was the dissolution of their friendship for several years. Diaghilev, however, was impressed with this remark and began to look to the generation after Stravinsky for music for his ballets.⁷⁵

Igor Stravinsky

The consistent changes in Stravinsky's style and musical development have already been pointed out. Roman Vlad has suggested that these changes paralleled all the other trends that occurred in Paris, referring to such things as fauvism, cubism, dadaism, and neo-classical objectivism as propounded by Cocteau. He adds that Stravinsky became one of the decisive forces through his ability to change and adapt himself to the intellectual and artistic life of Paris.⁷⁶

Stravinsky and Diaghilev established close relations as early as 1909 after Diaghilev heard Stravinsky's Fantastic

⁷⁴Modern Music, p. 255.

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 52-53.

⁷⁶Stravinsky, translated by Frederick and Ann Fuller (London, Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 123.

Scherzo and Fireworks in Paris. The following year, in June, both collaborated to produce the Firebird, and almost a year later, they produced Petrushka in the Châtelet Théâtre in Paris.⁷⁷ The two ballets were both warmly accepted and repeated performances were given, such as the 1915 production of the Firebird at which time social gaieties had to be disguised as charities. This particular performance was presented as a gala affair to aid the British Red Cross; Stravinsky conducted and many of the avant-garde were in attendance.⁷⁸

Le Sacre du Printemps.--The presentation of Le Sacre du Printemps at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris on May 29, 1913, created one of the greatest scandals in the history of music performance. The description of the audience riot that ensued during the performance, as well as the critical blasts that the journals directed against Stravinsky and his collaborators is well known. The chief concern for this work and subsequent performances is important here because the variety of comments concerning the piece has compounded confusion over its merits as well as the general nature of its explosive style. Many of the comments have been based on individual bias and speculative judgments. Though Stravinsky and Picasso had met prior to the first performance of Le

⁷⁷Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, p. 89 and p. 116.

⁷⁸Guillaume Apollinaire, p. 220.

Sacre, it was not until several years later that Picasso saw and heard the performance of this ballet. One may ask these questions: how familiar was Stravinsky with cubist painting?; and was he concerned with the new cubist style?; could this have affected and changed his whole perspective pursuant to the composing of this work? Investigations have failed to reveal any evidence to corroborate or answer these questions, and neither has Stravinsky. Why then, has Rosenfeld made such comments as those following concerning Stravinsky and Le Sacre?:

Through him, music has become again cubical, lapidary, massive, mechanistic . . . great weighty metallic masses, molten piles and sheets of steel and iron, shining adamantive bulks. Contours are become grim, severe, angular. Melodies are sharp, rigid, asymmetrical. Chords are uncouth, square cluster of notes, stout and solid as the pillars that support roofs, heavy as the thirds of triphammers. . . . Indeed, the change is as radical, as complete, as though in the midst of moonlit noble gardens a giant machine had arisen swiftly from the ground, and inundated the night with electrical glare, and set its metal thews and joints relentlessly functioning.⁷⁹

Both cubism and futurism were barely born at the writing of Le Sacre and Rosenfeld seems to have had an obsession with cubes and machines and used them as a means to describe any percussive kind of work. This description also is a far-cry from Stravinsky's own program description--a description of the "Kiss of Earth," "The Great Sacrifice," and other programmatic connotations having little or nothing at all to do with metal, cubes, or machinery. Contrarily, Eddy also equates

⁷⁹"Stravinsky," p. 207.

Le Sacre to cubism:

Both the music of M. Stravinsky and the choreography of M. Nijinsky are more defiantly anarchial than anything we have ever heard before, and the purport of it all was a dark mystery, . . . As everyone knows by this time, M. Nijinsky is the apostle of a sort of post-impressionist or cubist revolution of the dance in which mere grace is ruthlessly sacrificed to significance and force of expressionism, . . . M. Stravinsky seems as determined to make the hearer sit up as his colleague. Save that he condescends to regular rhythms, his music is the last word in emancipation from form and the cacophony of it is at times distressing.⁸⁰

Margaret Crosland regarded Le Sacre as an insult to the public in which the elements of this music were being perpetuated in the same manner as the new modes of painting and writing.⁸¹

Pulcinella.--The idea for Pulcinella had been broached as early as 1917 when Picasso was in Rome. Diaghilev had evolved the idea from some newly discovered manuscripts of 1700 "from the commédia del'art called The Four Polichinelles Who Look Alike."⁸² Picasso was favorably disposed to the idea because of his early fondness for this hook-nosed character. The first ideas were based on the baroque decorations of the Italian theater:

A description of the sets portrays a false proscenium opening on to a false stage . . . In the centre was a further false opening with a long perspective flanked by arcades which opened on to a harbour with ships,

⁸⁰Eddy, Cubists and Post-Impressionism, p. 9.

⁸¹Jean Cocteau, pp. 41-42.

⁸²Roland Penrose, Picasso: His Life and Work (New York, Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1958), p. 213.

somewhat reminiscent of the silent piazzas of Chirico [surrealism].⁸³

Penrose elaborated on this description, assigning the decor to the cubist style:

Though the forced perspective and asymmetrical angular trompe l'oeil showed its cubist origins, the whole effect was "unabashed romanticism." . . . The perspective giving on to the night sky between houses, with a large full moon above a boat in the harbour, was treated in a rigorously cubist style.⁸⁴

Diaghilev and Stravinsky were not in agreement over the music; although Diaghilev did not like Stravinsky's music based upon the scores of Giambattista Pergolesi, the one-act ballet was first presented at the Théâtre National de l'Opéra in Paris, May 15, 1920, resulting in a success. Stravinsky's own satisfaction with the piece is revealed in his description of its success as a unity "where everything holds together and where all elements, subjects, music, choreography and decorative scheme form a coherent and homogeneous whole."⁸⁵

Erik Satie

One of several common attractions for collaborating artists, irrespective of their loyalties to different art movements, was the vigorous opposition to traditionalism. Possibly this was the most significant factor that prompted such persons as

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid. Penrose has implied surrealism, romanticism, and cubism in these descriptions.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 214.

Satie, Picasso, and Cocteau to collaborate in the production of perhaps the most cubist of all endeavors, Parade, although Apollinaire's notes in the program described it as a surrealist ballet.

Besides Parade, another ballet, Mercure, and the music drama, Socrate, provide some interesting although curious developments, especially with regard to the personalities involved and their association with the sundry movements. At the time Parade was written (1917), Picasso's paintings belonged to the synthetic stage of cubism, Satie was affiliated with the dadaists, while Cocteau fluctuated in his affiliations. It is understandable how the minor differences between the three collaborators were further aggravated when Picasso allowed futurists to assist in the preparation of scenery and sets.

The years between 1920 and 1924 were highly significant ones for futurism and the other movements. Although no definite dates have been established for the beginning or ending of these movements, it is generally conceded that dadaism was gradually replaced by surrealism about 1922. Cubism reached a pinnacle of popularity around 1921 and 1922; its activities as a movement ceased sometime in 1923. Futurism retained a prominent place as a movement throughout the following decade, and surrealism, challenging dada's negative attitudes around 1920, became a fully organized movement about 1924. One curious fact concerning the existence and changing status of several of these movements is that members of the different

camps, in spite of their differing attitudes toward art, pooled their talents as a means of achieving unity of expression, although vigorous exception was taken by some of the groups' members who regarded these collaborations as betrayals of their ideals. Moreover, musicians and artists who were suspected of being disloyal were frequently subjected to severe criticism by their friends. Satie endured the constant reproachment of his closest friends--even the members of les Six (as for example, Poulenc and Auric). Some of the outstanding productions of the cubist period were Le Tricorne, Les Biches, Ballet Mécanique, Salade, and Antigone. While these involved some indirect assistance from cubists, they were not necessarily considered cubist. Parade, Socrate, and Mercure, on the other hand, were categorized as cubist or cubist influenced.

Parade--Mellers, along with some other writers, has claimed that Parade was the most cubist of all Satie's compositions.⁸⁶ Other views, however, held mainly by cubists themselves and because of Picasso's participation in this ballet, have rejected Parade as a cubist product. The explanation of this attitude was due to their feeling that Picasso's participation was a prostitution of his art--the designing of sets for a ballet was held to be incompatible with the aims of the cubist movement.

⁸⁶"Erik Satie and the 'Problem' of Contemporary Music," p. 218.

The original ideas and preparation of Parade, dating back to 1915, were conceived by Cocteau, who, at this time, wished to work out these ideas with Stravinsky. They were to concern the biblical David and were to include a parade of dancers and acrobats performing before the king.⁸⁷ After having observed some of Picasso's preliminary sketches, Cocteau modified his plot and introduced what he called "super-human" characters in order to create some contrast. Mackworth contends that this resulted in the transference of pure cubism to the theater.⁸⁸

A significant factor in the selection of Satie as the composer of Parade was Diaghilev's search for talent in the younger generation of composers. Even though Satie was much older than Stravinsky at this time, his music was regarded by many (including Diaghilev) as compatible to the new spirit of the younger group of musicians.⁸⁹ Shortly before Satie agreed to compose the music (1916), a quarrel between Diaghilev and Nijinsky resulted in the replacement of the latter by Léonide Massine. While Satie composed the music in Paris, Cocteau and Picasso conferred with Massine in Rome. Accounts of the planning and painting of the proscenium curtain, backdrops, and sets have been confusing. Alfred Barr states that

⁸⁷The Journals of Cocteau, p. 46.

⁸⁸Guillaume Apollinaire, pp. 220-223.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 220.

the decor for Parade was completed in February, 1917, in Rome and that later on in the spring, Picasso continued to work on the settings at Montrouge:

Picasso painted the curtain himself with the help of assistants. It was the largest and most complete figure composition he has so far achieved and was perhaps his first painting in his new style. At first glance, it carries us back to the circus and vaudeville pictures of 1905.⁹⁰

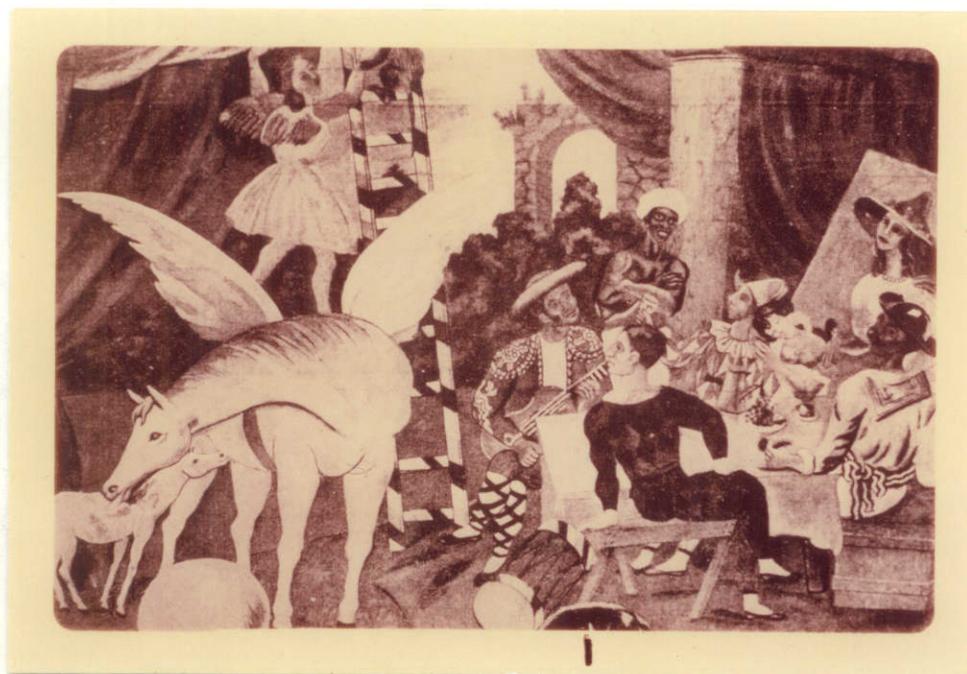


Plate 42. Curtain for Parade, Paris, 1917⁹¹

It is highly possible that Picasso may have finished the curtain and sets in France; but probably the most accurate account is the report in which Cocteau claims that they were

⁹⁰Picasso, p. 98.

⁹¹Barr, Picasso, p. 98.

created in a Roman cellar called Cave Taglioni.⁹² Penrose substantiates this report, adding that the troupes rehearsed there, while the Italian futurist painters assisted in the paintings of sets.⁹³

Parade represented, according to Mellers, a cubist manifesto in which

"The new ballet was a simplification of current life into something rich and strange"; as such it was the most lucid external expression of the aesthetic ideals to which Satie and his collaborators--Cocteau, Picasso and Picabia adhered. . . . By shedding the "human" element, by dealing with depersonalized puppets, Satie and his colleagues wanted to re-establish their contact with things, to respond to things as they are "in themselves, . . ."94

R. H. Wilenska has insisted that Parade represented an attempt by all three, Cocteau, Picasso, and Satie, "to bring Flat-pattern Cubism, as it were, to life, the subject representing the modern artists' 'cult of the circus, which had continued since the seventies.'"95

⁹²The Journals of Cocteau, p. 99. Cocteau has related that cubists considered painting sets for the Ballet Russe a crime and that the cubist code forbade any voyage beyond other than the Paris subway between Place des Abbesses and Boulevard Raspail.

⁹³Picasso, pp. 197-198. Picasso constructed the framework and painted the enormous drop curtain. Penrose has stated that possibly Boccioni, whom Picasso considered the greatest of the Italian futurist painters, may have assisted along with other futurists.

⁹⁴"Erik Satie and the 'Problem' of Contemporary Music," pp. 217-219. Mellers also makes a comparison of the puppets used in Parade and Stravinsky's Petrushka. "In Petrushka the puppets are brought to life; the essence of Parade is that the puppets are puppets."

⁹⁵Myers, Erik Satie, p. 50.

The few characters of the plot included a little American girl, the acrobats Lapolova and Zverew, managers, and a Chinese conjurer.⁹⁶ Satie's score, believed to have represented cubist sound effects, originally included dynamos, typewriters, sirens, airplanes, and Morse apparatus. Some of the action has been described in this manner:

. . . dancers and acrobats . . . made up the entire Parade, [the managers] were to have megaphone voices, spoken by actors sitting in the orchestra; finally Cocteau substituted simply the sound of steps without music, and created "fugue of footsteps" which he found more satisfactory than anything else.⁹⁷

A description of the first performance of Parade on February, 1917, at the Théâtre du Châtelet reveals its eccentric style:

Stamping across the stage comes the French manager, a figure ten feet tall and completely covered except for his legs by a cubist construction. He introduces the Chinese conjurer dressed in the most famous of Picasso's costumes--vermilion, yellow, black, and white stripes, rays and spirals. After his performance the New York manager stalks on the scene, his stamping dance like "an organized accident . . . with the strictness of a fugue." He wears cowboy boots and cubist skyscrapers, and bellows in his megaphone the virtues of his protégée, the little American girl, who, in Cocteau's words, "rides a bicycle, quivers like movies, imitates Charlie Chaplin . . . dances a ragtime . . . buys a Kodak."⁹⁸

Other action on the stage involved a dancing horse made of cardboard and cloth and animated by two dancers inside who stamped their feet in time with the managers.⁹⁹

⁹⁶Crosland, Jean Cocteau, p. 48.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 47.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Collaer, A History of Modern Music, p. 215.

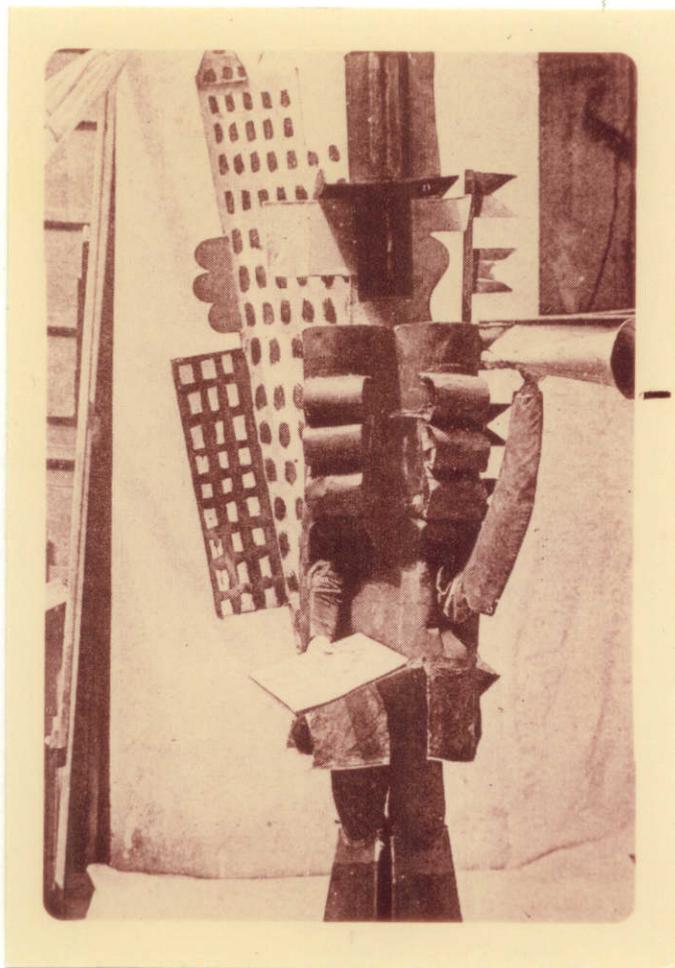


Plate 43. "The Manager from New York," designed by Picasso for Parade, 1917¹⁰⁰

Reactions to the first performance of Parade were varied. One account reveals that part of the audience came expecting to see something resembling the classical Russian ballet and were duly outraged when they saw the mobile constructions and crazy architecture.¹⁰¹ In contrast to this, Barr states that

¹⁰⁰Barr, Picasso, p. 99.

¹⁰¹Mackworth, Guillaume Apollinaire, p. 220.

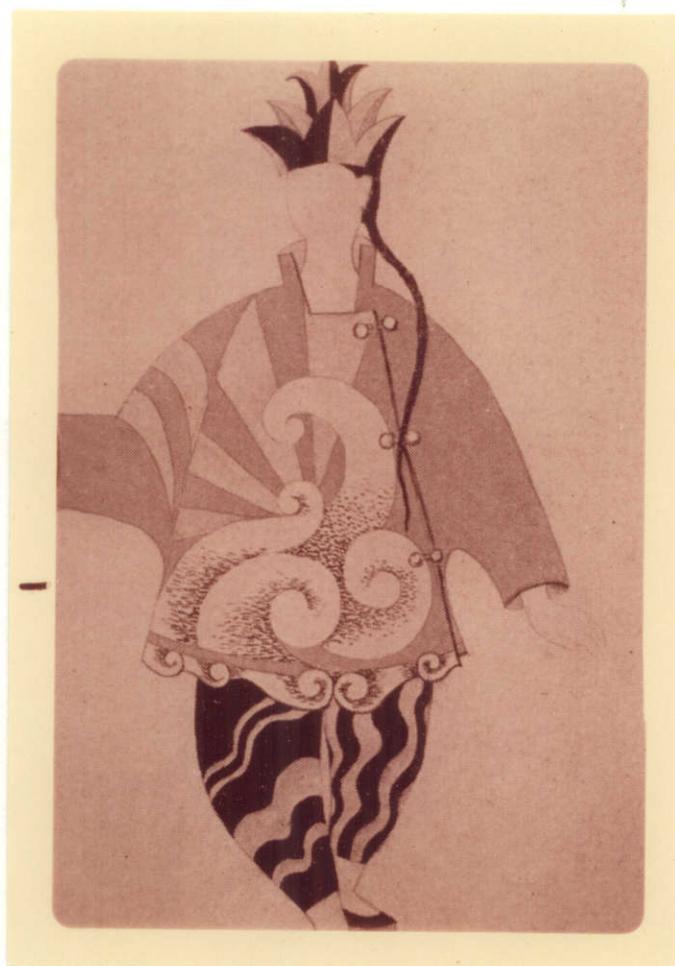


Plate 44. "Chinese Conjurer's Costume" (Le Chinois).
Rome?, 1917¹⁰²

a Russian designer found Picasso's curtain "passeiste," while other members of the audience, expecting to be shocked by Picasso's scenery, were disappointed in this respect--at least at first. He remarks that their expectancy of shock must have been soothed when they saw the curtain and heard the somber organ tones of Satie's overture. "When the

¹⁰²Barr, Picasso, p. 99.

curtain rose they knew they had been misled."¹⁰³ Other descriptions, such as this one by Mackworth, point to Parade's absurdities:

An angular pantomime--horse clodhopped about among the revelers--some more or less human, some apparently belonging to a strange race of robots--on a garishly-coloured fair-ground? Strident music accompanied grotesque gestures. There was no attempt at the grace and harmony which people had come to associate with the ballet. Naturally most of the critics were furious, but a few discerning spirits realised that here, whether they liked it or not, was a manifestation of the new approach to art.¹⁰⁴

After having studied the merits of Parade in view of its intentions, Mackworth notes some of its achievements. Picasso's scenery showed little advance over his previous efforts, while Satie's music achieved a great deal through his elimination of popular tricks as well as his being bracketed with Picasso and the theater. Cocteau, who believed Satie to be the greatest composer alive, had not stopped to consider these factors when he said that Satie's music did not contain any grand orchestral excitement. Comments were made that the Underwood typewriters were barely audible and did little to enhance the music. It was also felt that a straight music-hall version involving real dancing rather than the use of the robot managers, which only made people laugh, would have produced better results. The spirit of the audience was so antagonistic that, had Apollinaire not been there, Picasso,

¹⁰³Barr, Picasso, p. 99.

¹⁰⁴Guillaume Apollinaire and the Cubist Life, p. 220.

Satie, and Cocteau would have probably been the recipients of its violent mood.¹⁰⁵

Even though this performance of Parade was regarded by many persons as unsuccessful, its widespread publicity gave all the collaborating artists a great advantage. The general public, at this time, was more eager to attend concerts that involved controversy (such as Parade provided) than those that aroused only the general reception of applause at the conclusion of a satisfactory performance. The success of this ballet prompted Cocteau to conduct similar experiments in other works such as Le Boeuf Sur le Toit and Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel. Hansen claims that the import of Parade to the history of the theater and ballet was much greater than most people believed since it brought cubism to the stage for the first time. To substantiate this claim, he has summarized both Cocteau's opinion of Satie's music and Satie's own musical purposes:

Satie's orchestra abjures the vague and the indistinct. It yields all their grace without pedals. It is like an inspired village band. It will open a door to those young composers who are a little wary of fine impressionist polyphonies [sic]. "I composed," said Satie, modestly, "a background of certain noises which Cocteau considers indispensable in order to fix the atmosphere of his character."

Satie wanted to employ a battery of noise makers, including compressed air, dynamo, a Morse apparatus,

¹⁰⁵Crosland, Jean Cocteau, pp. 47-50. Apollinaire had returned from the war with a head wound. His head was bandaged that evening. Out of respect for Apollinaire the artists were spared physical attacks.

sirens, express train, airplane and propeller, and typewriter; but he settled for a conventional dance band.¹⁰⁶

What instruments Satie intended to use in the orchestra, what his collaborators and other people thought he should have used, and what he actually used has created a great deal of disagreement among writers. Satie's intention concerning the background of noises to provide an atmosphere for his characters was never fulfilled since he had also wanted to include a clapper, spinningtop, tumblers, metal tubes, revolver, and empty bottles, and it has been Mellers's contention that they should have been used since he believed they were significant elements in cubist expression: ". . . they were more than a product of a dismally unfunny dadaism: a word at the right moment, they were literally 'Noises' which, like Picasso's 'objects,' are to be transformed into 'something rich and strange.'"¹⁰⁷ Cocteau also explained Satie's intended use of them as a musical effort to equate the cubist technique of trompe-l'oeil (deceiving the eye) with a trompe-l'oreille (deceiving the ear).¹⁰⁸ Another writer also insisted that Satie wanted the noise effects in order to create a sound collage in a manner similar to that of a cubist visual collage:

These imitated noises of waves, typewriters, revolvers, sirens, or aeroplanes, are, in music, of the same

¹⁰⁶An Introduction to Twentieth Century Music, p. 113.

¹⁰⁷"Erik Satie and the 'Problem' of Contemporary Music," p. 217.

¹⁰⁸Myers, Erik Satie, p. 50.

character as of the bits of newspapers, painted, wood-grain, and other every-day objects that the cubist painters employ frequently in their pictures, in order to localize objects and masses in nature.¹⁰⁹

Even though this is described as a sound collage, it is essentially the same description given by Cocteau. Shattuck, however, believes that the collage effect was realized not from the intended use of noise instruments, but rather through the use of fragments of popular themes along with orchestral economy. Comparing this to the cubist subjugation of coloring, he calls the result a musical collage:

The principal numbers of the ballet achieve a different sort of existence--a self-sufficiency comparable to that of objects in cubist paintings. . . . his economical orchestration corresponds to the cubists' restraint in using color; and his raucous noise effects correspond to their experiments with new surface textures.¹¹⁰

Shattuck cautiously adds that every correlation between Satie's music and cubism is not necessarily valid since some of his musical purposes were affected by current trends in the twenties:

Parade belongs as much to the tradition of tuneful rhythmic French as to the new cubist aesthetics. What stands out eminently "modern" about Parade--modern in expressing the whole artistic attitude of the twenties even though written in 1916-1917--is its use of popular themes and jazz, its festive mood, and the clear lines of its organization.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹"The Cubist Collaborators who have Galvanized the Russian Ballet into New Life," Current Opinion, LXIII (October, 1917), 249.

¹¹⁰The Banquet Years, p. 157.

¹¹¹Ibid. Shattuck's statement is not very valid either, since he implies that Satie's musical purposes were affected by a period of time in the future.

All of these opinions concerning Satie's intended use of noise instruments only point out that if Satie had used the noise elements as he wanted to, varying musical effects, which may have resembled the visual ones of the cubists, would have resulted. The fact remains that the staging conditions of the first performance disallowed the use of all these noise instruments, excepting the typewriters. Furthermore, no mention is made of their being used in subsequent performances.¹¹²

Other persons, including the critics and personal friends of Satie, have indicated that Parade was cubist inclined for reasons other than the inclusion of noise. These reasons have been explained in terms of emotions, simplicity, naivety, syncopation, musical clarity, and the new spirit.

Stoddard Dewey, designating Parade as a cubist interlude, has interpreted it to be painfully elaborate, unexotic, also noting that as an example of cubist art, it was a miserable failure. In a less severe tone he admits that

There was the pleasure of the unexpected, a little like that of ragtime minstrels long unseen and heard. Its effect was not equal to that of the sentimental garden scene in Gillotte's "Secret Service," which excited

¹¹²The writer recently heard a recording of Parade ("Paris, 1917-1938," Mercury Stereo SR90435). This record also contained Milhaud's Le Boeuf sur le Toit and an Ouverture by Auric. The author of the record notes, Felix Aprahamian, states that the original performance included hooters, a typewriter and a revolver. This record did contain some of these sounds.

Parisian hilarity twenty years ago. The transplantation of emotions is hard--if cubism has an emotion.¹¹³

Another writer viewed it more favorably, commenting that

Parade was the most cubist of all music:

Here the recreated "order" is so symmetrical that each single movement, and sequence of movements that make up the whole, is built on a mirror structure that gives the work its remote and objective self-sufficiency . . . supple lyrical phrases are accompanied by mechanical ostinatos of the utmost bareness and simplicity and by syncopated rhythms of a mathematical monotony.¹¹⁴

Everett Helm held to the belief that if there was such a thing as cubism in music, Parade was the best example. In describing Parade's metronomic, almost mechanical precision, he has placed it in opposition to everything romanticism and impressionism stood for, adding that it influenced much of the contemporary art and music of later years:

Parade exerted a strong influence on music of the 1920's. The short movement "Rag-Time du Paquebot" is an early instance of the music-hall style in a serious composition. Of the short, parodistic fugal passages with which the work begins Satie wrote: "I love this sort of thing--slightly banal and falsely naive."¹¹⁵

Two of Satie's devotees, Darius Milhaud and Georges Auric, admitted to the strong influence of Parade on themselves, also pointing out its cubist and musical complicity:

¹¹³"Novel Music in Paris," The Nation, CIV (June 28, 1917), 769.

¹¹⁴Mellers, "Erik Satie and the 'Problem' of Contemporary Music," p. 218.

¹¹⁵"The Man With a Mask, Notes on the Enigma of Erik Satie--Part Genius, Part Charlatan, All Wit," High Fidelity, XIII (December, 1963), 56.

The clear music of Satie whose influence on contemporary art is like a beneficent ray of light, appeared together with the first cubist manifestation inspired by Picasso; décor and costumes also constituted a scandal.¹¹⁶

In his preface to Parade, Auric explained Satie's unique ability to portray the spirit of the new art through characters reminiscent of Rimbaud, who prompted the new spirit in art and music, stating that

Like that of Picasso, his art does not attempt to seduce us by means of a brilliant and lively evocation. As if seeing him for the first time he shows us the quintessence of the individual human being and portrays with great clarity the most amazing characters who remind us of Rimbaud and permit us to envisage a future exempt from boredom.¹¹⁷

Socrate.--Work on Socrate, designated as a lyric or symphonic drama in three parts, was begun by Satie in 1918; but the first performance was not given until 1924. Many people believed Socrate to be a reorientation toward a classic line and regarded it as Satie's most successful and greatest achievement. In this success, Satie was also assured of another scandal, this time choosing Plato and Socrates as his partners. His music, set to the Dialogue of Plato, represented, in Satie's own opinions, a perfect collaboration: Plato, he said, in a letter to Hugo Valentine, "is a perfect collaborator, very mild and very importunate."¹¹⁸ Satie

¹¹⁶Darius Milhaud, "Farewell to Diaghilev: The Brilliant Impresario," Modern Music, VII (December, 1929), 13.

¹¹⁷Myers, Erik Satie, p. 51.

¹¹⁸Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 159.

wrote a brouillon (rough draft) for Socrate in which he presented his notes on musical theory, especially that concerning melody and harmony. In this account, he has alluded to painting:

Material (Idea) and craftsmanship (sewing). The craftsmanship is often superior to the material.

. . . The serious examination of a melody will always constitute for the student an excellent exercise in harmony.

A melody does not have its harmony, any more than a landscape has its color. The harmonic situation of a melody is infinite, for melody is only one means of expression in the whole realm of Expression. . . .

In composition the parts no longer follow "school" rules. "School" has a gymnastic purpose and no more; composition has an aesthetic purpose in which taste alone plays a part.

. . . Musical grammar is neither more nor less than a grammar.¹¹⁹

Satie's account of theoretical principles does little to explain them; so one is unable to understand just what he actually meant in this discussion of melodic and harmonic principles concerning Socrate. Shattuck, however, attempted to reveal something significant in these words by providing this reference to the brouillon and Socrate:

Despite his statement, melody provided Satie with his primary form only in the case of Socrate--where it really amounts to an absence of form. "The music has been called "abstract," and like much abstract art it may not please immediately.¹²⁰

Wilfred Mellers feels that Satie's art can be defined in three stages. In the first, he attempted to take unrelated chords, usually modal and in melodic patterns, and organize them; next, he took the linear patterns and changed them

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 167.

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 169.

into ironic distortions of popular music; the last stage was recognized in the drame symphonique:

. . . he relinquished irony, but went as far as humanly possible--perhaps a bit further--towards losing the personality in the "pattern." His art, like Stravinsky's, was closely associated with the formalization of ballet.¹²¹

Mellers is possibly referring to the later, more abstract phases of cubism. The opinions of other writers vary regarding the classification of Satie's style at this time; Constant Lambert suggests that Socrate represented a decadent style and was the culminating work of Satie's career, while Alfred Cortot classifies it as furniture music.¹²² Shattuck, on the other hand, has held to the idea that Socrate was neither dramatic nor symphonic, but that Socrate's own life provided the dramatic subject.¹²³ He also felt that even though Socrate, in the orchestral sense, has neo-classic tendencies, it was musically effective in a cubist sense, referring in this instance to cubism's lines and colors:

He builds with a few clearly shaped pieces of material which fit close together without the cement of harmonic relationship . . . These units of construction are repeated and transposed at will--but never extended. Again there is an analogy to early cubism, which restricted itself to straight lines and planes and rejected the

¹²¹Man and His Music. The Story of Musical Experience in the West, Romanticism and the 20th Century from 1800 (London, Rockliff, 1957), p. 148.

¹²²Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 160.

¹²³Ibid.

appeal of color. Satie relied on his melody to weld these disparate pieces together. His melody was made up not of memorable phrases, but of one unbroken succession of notes.¹²⁴

Satie eventually made some revisions in both text and music, dropping adjectives and modifying phrases, following the prose rhythms in the quality of speech and de-emphasizing the dramatic elements. The music, devoid of chromatics or unusual effects, of motivic structure, and of the use of ostinato phrases or short sequences, has been described as flat and monochrome, rarely raising its voice. The structure of this orchestra, flute, oboe, English horn, harp, tympani and strings, was in keeping with the smaller groups used by Stravinsky, Falla, and other composers of the time.¹²⁵

Mercure.--There is little evidence to justify the classification of Mercure as a cubist achievement. It was accomplished through the joint efforts of Satie, Picasso, and Massine, and though it was not considered very successful in its premier performance (Théâtre Cigale in Paris, 1924), its collaborators regarded it as one of the strongest and most original ballets since Parade. An interesting description of the decor could lead one to believe that a certain cubist influence was evident, especially in the curtain effect. Early cubism used subdued colors (ochres and browns), and the drop curtain in Mercure was painted in subdued colors--

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 164.

¹²⁵Ibid., pp. 160-163.

browns and greys, using as its central theme, two musicians. The costume designs, stage effects and backcloths used configurations of lines. Picasso's obsession for drawing a solid being with one line (without taking the pen off the canvas) was used in the costume drawings and resulted in a rather masterly kind of calligraphic drawing.¹²⁶ Picasso, remembering Parade's success, devised a variety of constructions: "the chariot for the rape of Persephone . . . and the horse he [Pluto] drives were drawn in iron wire set on large simplified shapes."¹²⁷ One critic, Cyril Beaumont, described Mercure as stupid, vulgar and pointless: "had it not been for the music of Satie and Picasso's innovations in the decor it would have been forgotten."¹²⁸

Manuel de Falla

Picasso was an appropriate choice for two significant collaborations with Manuel de Falla. The first, The Three Cornered Hat, was presented in London at the Alhambra Theater in collaboration with the Russian Ballet and Diaghilev. The other, Cuadro Flamenco, was produced in London and Paris in 1921 with Diaghilev's ballet group. Neither of these ballets has been considered cubist even though each was created and presented at the height of Picasso's cubist period. Picasso's

¹²⁶Penrose, Picasso, pp. 215-216.

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸Ibid. The drop curtain has been exhibited as one of Picasso's major works.

part in both of these productions was subordinated in order to avoid shocking English audiences--described as being ten years behind their understanding.¹²⁹

The Three Cornered Hat.--Falla's main contact with the Paris musicians occurred several years before 1914. These contacts resulted more in impressionistic influence than of any other. In spite of this, the unique personality and composing ability of Falla was certain to have eventually attracted the attention of Diaghilev. On July 22, 1919, the ballet, based on Martinez Sierra's book, was reproduced by Falla, Picasso, and Diaghilev. Its performance was highly successful.¹³⁰ Penrose states that Picasso's decor contained little trace of cubism, except in the organization of the angular walls of the house. Picasso's scenery was compared to Falla's music: "It was saturated with the warmth and excitement of the Spanish night."¹³¹

Cuadro Flamenco.--A suite of Andalusian dances and songs provided the musical material for Cuadro Flamenco. These were arranged by Falla with the close collaboration of Picasso and Diaghilev. Juan Gris has claimed that Diaghilev originally asked him to provide the decor and that Picasso

¹²⁹Penrose, Picasso, pp. 210-215.

¹³⁰George Balanchine, Complete Stories of the Great Ballets, edited by Francis Mason (Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1956), p. 403.

¹³¹Penrose, Picasso, p. 210.

stepped in and took it over for himself.¹³² The idea of this ballet was actually born four years before by Picasso. The orchestra consisted of two guitarists and the troupe sat on the stage "in the conventional way in a semi-circle in front of a drop curtain that had been designed by Picasso."¹³³ Picasso's scenery and costumes were made at the house of Jove, Paris, under the direction of Madame Bongard. The ballet was first produced at the Théâtre de la Gaîté-Lyrique, Paris, May 22, 1921. No references have been made concerning cubist effects of music or decorations. A performance was also given in London in which an old male toreador (who had lost both legs) danced on his stumps until the squeamish London public demanded his withdrawal. The proscenium was described as gay with rococo ornament, while the surroundings were rich in Spanish bravado and romantic effects.¹³⁴

¹³²Ibid.

¹³³Ibid., p. 215.

¹³⁴Ibid.

CHAPTER V

DADA AND MUSIC

Dada appeared at a time when art movements were experiencing a crisis that was reflected in the struggle between tradition and change. Dada's origin and existence, brought about by the changing factors already discussed (art and literature), was also motivated by various musical activities that have been minimized by music critics, musicians, and music historians. The latter have failed to acknowledge music's role in the dada movement and, in most cases, have deliberately played down its importance, even refusing to admit that music existed in the movement, and more often ignored the movement itself. One music historian, William Austin, has related that the futurist, Marinetti, introduced bruitisme to the dadaists in 1916 and that the atmosphere of the ballet Relâche[^] brought Satie and his collaborators (Picabia and Duchamp) to the brink of dadaism; with this inference, he also claimed that the term itself has been loosely applied to many composers.¹ Contrary to the popular misconception that musical dadaism was non-existent, music served a vital function in propagating dada affairs, especially during its inception in Zürich. Dada was primarily interested

¹Music in the 20th Century, pp. 30, 168.

in borrowing and appropriating various principles from every current art endeavor in order to accomplish its anti-art tendencies, eventually attacking everything that contributed to its existence. Music, the handmaiden of dada, fulfilled its needs in various ways--to provide entertainment in its initial activities, as a provocative force, and as a collaborative device in destroying current artistic values.

The official birth of the dadaist movement in Zürich (1916) was preceded by activities in both Zürich and America (about 1913-14) which were premonstrations of the movement itself. Many of the exhibitions that occurred in France and America before the birth of dada (Exhibition at the Independents, 1914, Arthur Cravan, and the 291 associations in New York) were so strikingly similar to those of dada that they actually could be dada without a name. Pre-dada music activities in America were in evidence, though it is difficult to provide a complete and accurate account of these activities because of limited sources and vague references by American critics whose criticisms usually reflected antagonism toward advanced art tendencies, especially music.²

²John I. H. Baur, "The Machine and the Subconsciousness, Dada," Magazine of Art, XLIV (October, 1951), 237. Baur has related how concerts were planned by the Inje-Inje movement (an art movement), headed by Cahill, in which percussion instruments, including African signal drums, a primitive Philippine flute having a range of two notes when struck on the wrist, dramatic theatrics involving actors in black masks, nude with the exception of gloves and "g-strings," were to be used for deliberate shock effects. The spirit of this art endeavor was said to have been close to cubism;

The principal source which accounts for pre-dada musical activities in America is the publication 291³ in which three articles discussed new music and musicians: the music of Albert Savinio,⁴ Leo Ornstein, and a criticism of a concert of color music. Piano concerts given by Ornstein at this time created so much disturbance among music critics that they wrote desultory articles describing his compositions as infantile and incoherent, and his performing theatrics as absurd. 291 mildly attacked Ornstein but also gave him its stamp of approval:

Mr. Leo Ornstein displays in his music the mentality of an artist toy-maker. He has preserved from his career as a child wonder, the child element. His musical compositions are toy imitations. Although they are intricate in structure, the spirit has the naive charm of a child imitating what strikes his attention. Nevertheless he has brought us a breath of the intentions of modern thought as applied to music.⁵

The third musical account in 291 criticized an experimental color concert given by the Russian Symphony Orchestra at

but it was also described as offering a true dada flavor. The plans, made before World War I, were abortive. Baur has related these efforts to post-war attitudes.

³291 was a publication edited by Alfred Stieglitz. Stieglitz, a photographer, published a magazine called Camera Work. In 1912, the name of this periodical was changed to 291 after the number of his Fifth Avenue apartment. It came to symbolize an avant-garde movement. A discussion of this periodical is given by Buffet-Picabia in "Some Memories of Pre-Dada: Picabia and Duchamp (1949)," The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 262.

⁴Savinio, a poet, painter, and musician (composer and pianist), was the brother of De Chirico the Painter. He is discussed below on pp. 305-307.

⁵The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 118.

Carnegie Hall, March 20, 1915, in which simultaneous presentation of sound and visual effects were attempted. Admitting that the combination of the two theories had possibilities, the experiment was branded as a failure since one sensation, at one time or another, dominated the other, and there was no actual fusion of the two.⁶

The birth of the dada movement apparently dates from the opening of the Cabaret Voltaire in Zürich in February, 1916. Here, during the first six months of its operation, Hugo Ball introduced a variety of musical activities, combining them with dadaist art exhibitions. Later exhibitions were given in Zürich in the Waag, Weise, and Kaufleuten Halls, and in the Corray, Dada, and Wolfsberg Galleries.⁷ Music presented in these places was performed through sundry media such as piano performances, balalaika bands, and simultaneous endeavors that often included negro chants, noise music, and poem recitations. The music of such composers as Schönberg, Heusser, Savinio, Satie, Auric, and others was included on these programs.

Zürich Musical Activities

The first musical efforts in Ball's Cabaret Voltaire have presented a curious contrast to the type of art first

⁶Ibid.

⁷Tristan Tzara, "Zürich Chronicle (1915-1919)," The Dada Painters and Poets, pp. 235-242.

exhibited there. Most of the art objects were products of current cubist, futurist, and abstract artists, while the music, at least at first, was primarily traditional. Ball, an amateur pianist, performed mainly in the interest of drawing trade. Exactly what he performed is not known since such vague programmatic descriptions as "Red lamps, overture piano Ball reads Tipperary piano 'under the bridges of Paris'" allows little understanding as to what this means.⁸ Multiple references to music occur in evening programs that were devoted to the performance of French works, including chansons, folk songs (performed by personalities such as Mme Hennings and Mme Leconte), and Russian compositions that included folk songs and performances by balalaika orchestras. Even the works of Reger, Liszt, Rachmaninov, and Debussy were occasionally performed.⁹

Other references point to the incongruity of music and visual art demonstrations (the performance of romantic music and folk songs and the showing of art works by Hans Arp, Picasso, Marcel Janco, and futurist geographic map-poems). Eventually both music and art included examples intended to be provocative. In the case of music, compositions of a very old nature (Jacopone da Todi, 13th century) or very new (Schönberg and Satie) were favored, although not to the

⁸Ibid., p. 235.

⁹Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit," p. 145.

exclusion of some traditional examples. The name of Samuel Sulzberger appears on many programs; but information about him or his compositions is not available.¹⁰ A program of the Sturm-Soirée given in Zürich, April 14, 1917, included a composition titled "Cortège et fête," written and performed by Sulzberger.¹¹

Many of the dada activities,¹² as evidenced from the orderly programming of evening events, appeared to be well organized and disciplined projects; but in actuality these performances proved to be quite the opposite since the programs generally consisted of impromptu presentations that degenerated into disorderly demonstrations and riots. These results were totally acceptable to the dadaists; as a matter of fact, the more disastrous the outcome, the more pleased they were. Eventually, however, music like that of Schönberg failed to fulfill the provocative aims of the dadaists, and they quickly initiated musical activities that produced the desired (violent) audience reaction. These involved simultaneous participation by all dadaists in the different capacities of musician, poet, and actor. Even though attempts have been made to explain these events, it is difficult to

¹⁰Ibid., p. 88.

¹¹Janco, "Creative Dada," p. 36.

¹²Dada programs made little or no distinction between soirées, festivals, and exhibitions. All of these usually included a mixture of musical performances, art showings, and other type of activities.

make any distinction between musical and literary activities since one absurd activity merged into another, resulting in vague and unintelligible results that defy definition or description. Simultaneity, in the dada sense, was multifaced in its application, that is, it often involved the use of noise and poem recitations at the same time; or it may have involved the reading of several poems at the same time. In the Dada Club a notice about a coming event read like this: "Simultanistisches Gedicht (6 Mitwirkende) Bruitistische Musik Kubistische Tanze (10 Damen)."13

Negro Chants and Simultaneous Poems

Chants nègres (negro songs) were performed in connection with the recitation of poems or dancing, or both. The dadaists felt a spiritual exhaustion in European art and society and sought to recapture an expression free from inhibition. They resorted to so-called music and noise--a type of music which was able to "do without what normally was a material element of its [musical] constitution, namely fixed pitch And it was noise and rhythm that formed the basis on which Ball and his friends founded the incidental music to their chants nègres."14

¹³Motherwell, The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 334. Dada Club was a magazine edited by Hülsenbeck, Jung, and Hausmann in Berlin (1918). This notice was on the back cover announcing a propaganda meeting for the end of May.

¹⁴Klein and Blaukopf, "Dada and Music," Dada. Monograph, p. 88.

Several dadaists, in acknowledging a deliberate search for subversive methods with which to shock the unwitting public, named musique nègre as one of their most convenient sources.¹⁵ Ball was the first, however, who claimed to have discovered the inherent possibilities of the primitive negro chant as a means of providing chaos and disorder. In this account he indicates that there was a possible indigenous influence:

Thence, it seems, the predilection for everything primitive, African. "Chant nègre No. 1 was performed to the accompaniment of little side drums 'like vehimic court.'" The melody to chant nègre No. 2 was supplied by our esteemed host, Mr. Jan Ephraim--in another context he was called "our worthy grill-room superintendent and hostel father--who long ago sometime in African parts, and who, in his role of instinctive and enlivening prima donna, exerted to his best endeavors for the benefit of the performance. The cult of the primitive in that circle was not, it is seen, without a certain ethnological backing of some significance."¹⁶

Besides Ball, other dadaists (Janco, Tzara, and Hülsenbeck) contributed to the odd and eccentric presentations that occurred practically every night. Sound poems, involving the onomatopoeic principles of the futurists, became so elaborate that many dadaists believed they were creating a new kind of music. The arrival of Richard Hülsenbeck, friend and collaborator of Ball, in Zürich from Berlin on February 26, 1916, and his immediate participation in the Cabaret affairs

¹⁵Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit," p. 124.

¹⁶Dada. Monograph, pp. 88-90. Jan Ephraim is the supposed indigenous influence.

accelerated provocative activities by enriching the primitive atmosphere with pseudo-African dances in black-face.

Ball recounts the part that dadaists Janco and Tzara played in rendering a typical chant and poem recitation:

. . . we played two admirable negro chants (always with one big drum: boom boom drabatje me gere, drabtja mo booooooooooooo); . . . Mr. Janco and Mr. Tzara recited (for the first time in Zürich and in the whole world) the simultaneous verses of Mr. Henri Barzun and Mr. Fernand Divoire, and a simultaneous poem of their own composition, . . .¹⁷

Tristan Tzara has provided accounts of the use of negro chants and sound poems in the Zürich activities; but the vagueness of his accounts makes it difficult to distinguish the difference between negro chants, sound poems, and activities involving other types of musical effects. An incoherent description of Dada Night, July 14, 1916, at Waag Hall affords a possible clue as to why this confusion was evident:

Cubist dance, . . . each man his own big drum on his head, noise, Negro music/ trabatgea bonoooooo oo ooooo . . . gymnastic poem, concert of vowels, bruitist poems, static poem chemical arrangement of ideas, "Biriboom biriboom" . . . (Huelsenbeck), vowel poem a a o, a i i, new interpretation the subjective folly of the arteries the dance of the heart on burning buildings and acrobats in the audience. . . the big drum, piano and impotent cannon . . .¹⁸

Other references to the use of negro music have been offered by Tzara in a chronology of Zürich activities, for example: February 26, 1916, protest music; April 14, 1917, Dada Gallery,

¹⁷Motherwell, The Dada Painters and Poets, p. xix.

¹⁸Tzara, "Zürich Chronicle," pp. 236-237.

Assault Night, negro music and dancing; and April 18, 1917, New Art Night, negro music and dances.¹⁹

Bruitisme (Noise Music)

It is highly probable that dadaists read about and heard Italian noise concerts long before their movement was created. One of the early concerts of the Intonarumori (Teatro dal Merme in Milan, April 21, 1914) has been accounted for by Marinetti in L'Intransigeant in Paris, April 29, 1914.²⁰ Since these events predated the dadaists' activities, dada biographers have been obligated to acknowledge the application of Italian bruitisme to their own purposes. Dadaist use of sound effects, however, was different from that of the Italian bruitists. The use of noise, evident in nearly every concert, was acknowledged by Huelsenbeck (in the case of Marinetti's bruitisme) to be useful to dada's purposes since, when used for imitative effects, it was a colorful reminder of life-- at least the dadaists believed so: "The appropriation by dada of . . . three principles, bruitism, simultaneity, and painting, the new medium (collage) is of course the 'accident' leading to psychological factors to which the real dada movement owed its existence."²¹

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 235-242. Though "Assault Night" may provide some clue as to what this implies, no explanation is given to explain "protest music."

²⁰Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, p. 139.

²¹Motherwell, The Dada Painters and Poets, p. xviii. Futurists did not admit their noise to be imitative, that is,

Dada noise articles were selected to create confusion and were quite varied; highly favored ones included bells, sirens, and potcovers; but other methods of noise making involved the rattling of tin cans, jangling of keys, and the use of typewriters; the result of these methods and items was called music.²² Quite often the results involved were accidental but effective, and were deliberately used with poem recitations or other types of presentation for the purpose of bringing the performance to a high state of confusion and provocation. In most instances, the total result was purposefully designed to be as discordant and deafening as possible. Hans Richter, a prominent dadaist, has revealed that the dada protest and revolt expressed itself in the law of chance (such as random words selected from a hat). He insisted that this was a discovery (such as Arp's collages) that the dadaists made meaningful through the combination of a law of rule, and accordingly, the result was free and disciplined art.²³ The employment of chance techniques was

to emulate sounds such as the wind, though the titles of their sounds leads one to believe that they suggest this. Hülsebeck's reference, "colorful reminder of life," stems from futurists's statements concerning the purposes of their art, that is, the integration of the artist's purpose in drawing everything into the picture: the object, the environment, the spectator, and the allusion to street sounds and other factors that might be involved.

²²Winthrop Sargeant, "Dada's Daddy," Life, XXXII (April 28, 1952), 105.

²³"Dada, a Clowning out of the Void," Saturday Review, XLI (February 1, 1958), 20.

also accomplished in other ways. Two methods used by Tzara involved the recitation of onomatopoeic poems to the accompaniment of an eight-inch electric bell,²⁴ and the simple act of reading a vulgar article taken out of some newspaper with a hammered accompaniment on bells.²⁵ Unsuspecting audiences who came to the dada exhibitions were often insulted beyond endurance with poem recitations which were accompanied (in addition to bells) by any audible energy superior to that of the human voice.²⁶ These inseparable effects were frequently spiced with many vowels and drawn out for long periods of time as evidenced in the

. . . sound of heavy things tumbling or the howl of sirens, not to speak of drums, gongs, etc. Hugo Ball composed a complete concert bruitiste, a "nativity play for which he carefully selected the musical instruments, such as shawms, little bells especially attuned for the purpose, and babies' rattles. Some of the instruments he made himself. This performance executed behind a white screen, made a particularly strong impression" (Emmy Hennings-Ball).²⁷

All these efforts, according to F. S. Flint (referring to Tristan Tzara's poems and noise-music) emphasized an overlay

²⁴"Dadaism: The Newest Nihilism in the Arts," Current Opinion, LXVIII (March, 1920), 687.

²⁵Ribemont-Dessaigues, "History of Dada," p. 109. Bells were consistently employed because potentiality for overtones rendered the noisiest effects.

²⁶Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit," p. 131.

²⁷Klein and Blaukopf, "Dada and Music," Dada. Monograph, p. 92.

of noise, representing a dada purposelessness.²⁸ An anonymous writer has shared a similar view concerning the purposelessness of dada's noise activities, declaring that dada art was lunatic satire on all advanced art. He describes dada's use of powerfully built machines that were useless, ridiculous "static" and "chemical" poems, modern pictures of women with matchstick faces and cut-out heads with grinding gear faces and "earsplitting kettle drum music to which devotees shrieked verses in gibberish."²⁹ The recitation of poetry also involved curious antics such as one dadaist wearing a cube shaped like a sugar loaf over his head, while another, Richard Hülsenbeck, danced and yapped with his head thrust in a stove pipe.³⁰ All this was done to harass and infuriate the audience and Bernard Myers has explained the purpose of this kind of provocation: "Dada represented a protest that attempted to destroy logic and substitute a pretended madness. At some of their meetings poetry was recited to the accompaniment of absolutely deafening music."³¹ The shock effect on the audience generally

²⁸Sheldon Cheney, "Why Dada? An Inquiry into the Connection Between the War's Ruins, Peace-Time Insanity, and the Latest Sensation in Art," The Century Magazine, CIV (May, 1922), 26-27. Cheney is discussing Flint's criticism of dada.

²⁹"Dadadadada," Time, LXI (April 27, 1953), 93.

³⁰Sargeant, "Dada's Daddy," p. 105.

³¹Modern Art in the Making, 2nd ed., (New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959), p. 364.

produced the desired effect, that is, audience retaliation. The consequences often proved disastrous when the audience, during intermission, would secure quantities of rotten eggs, chopped meat, and ripe tomatoes to throw at the performers. A performance at a dada festival in Zürich (1920) illustrates the vindictive spirit of the audience:

Phillipe Soupault was knocked down by a well aimed beefsteak, but staggered to his feet and challenged all comers to a duel. Mme Gaveau, wife of the proprietor of the concert hall, who occupied a box, had her dress splattered with tomatoes and cabbages. The police arrived and put an end to this disgraceful concert, while the Dadaists used their best arguments to divert the attention of the commissario from themselves.³²

Later activities in noise-making were accomplished by the Italian bruitistes themselves, led by Marinetti, at the Galérie Montaigne, June 6, 1922, and at a soirée and two matinees (June 10, 1922, at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées). The latter involved works for their new instruments and were dada sponsored. The musical works have been described as pale, insipid, and melodious. Russolo's noise-music was used and curiously, dadaist reaction to one of these concerts was violent. It is difficult to understand their attitudes toward this demonstration, but more than likely they were due to the growing dissension among the dadaists.³³

³²Josephson, Life Among the Surrealists, p. 128.

³³Ribemont-Dessaigues, "History of Dada," p. 117.

Noise concerts were evident in all places where dada activities existed. Josephson relates that the Berlin dadaists put on fantastic concerts using noise effects. George Grosz, Huelsenbeck, Johannes Baader, and Walter Mehring participated in these concerts with batteries of noise makers.³⁴ Schwitters composed a sound sonata inspired by a poem called fmsbw by Raoul Hausmann. No source has provided any description of how the sonata sounded, how it was performed, or whether it was even performed.³⁵ Schwitters was not a musician; but he set forth some fantastic and absurd plans for creating a Merz stage, a composite stage with materials using barbed wire entanglement, liquid and gaseous bodies, moving and revolving objects, convertible sets and many other unusual materials to comprise an experimental stage. Music was to play a vital part in his stage scheme:

Materials for the score are all tones and noises capable of being produced by the violin, drum, trombone, sewing machine, grandfather clock, stream of water, etc. . . . The movement of the set takes place silently or accompanied by noises or music. . . .

And now begins the fire of musical saturation. Organs back stage say "Futt, futt." The sewing machine rattles along in the lead. A man in the wing says: "Bah." Another suddenly enters and says: "I am stupid." (All rights reserved) . . .

Drums and flutes flash death and a streetcar conductor's whistle gleams bright. A stream of ice cold water runs down the back of the man in one wing and

³⁴Life Among the Surrealists, p. 198. Mehring was a satirical entertainer.

³⁵"Dada Dictionary," Dada. Monograph, p. 156. Hausmann was a painter, sculptor, poet, and editor of the Berlin periodical Der Dada.

into a pot. In accompaniment he sings c-sharp d, d-sharp e-flat, the whole proletarian song. Under the poet a gas flame has been lit to boil the water and a melody of violins shimmer pure and virgin-tender . . .³⁶

Schwitters' fantastic imagination is just another sharp reminder of dada's predilection for absurd plans, which very often were realized in the most unpredictable manner. It is hard to imagine, however, that a project like this could be totally carried out.

The creation of confusion was designed not only for confusion itself, and music was often an intended victim of such noisy turmoil. Lemaitre has explained that the hopeless presentation of a potpourri of old melodic strains was accompanied with harsh dissonances and discordant sounds "strung together . . . to represent in a striking and up-to-date manner the dismal voice of our contemporary art."³⁷

Jazz

As has been mentioned, dada, in its early days, was attracted to any activity that exasperated society, had qualities of crudeness, harsh and primitive features, and jazz represented all of this to dadaists. America's jazz before, during, and after World War I was unacceptable to most

³⁶Kurt Schwitters, "Merz (1920)," The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 62. Dadaists were attracted to Rube Goldberg's cartoons, but it is highly unlikely that even Goldberg could reproduce such a fantastic description.

³⁷From Cubism to Surrealism, p. 173.

concert halls, and because of this the dadaists considered jazz to be subversive and totally acceptable. Even such people as Picabia and his wife, who came to America as pacifists, regarded jazz as a way of life, and Picabia states that "no sooner had we arrived [New York] than we became a part of a motley international band which turned night into day, conscientious objectors of all nationalities and walks of life living in an inconceivable orgy of sexuality, jazz and alcohol."³⁸ Hülßenbeck has indicated that Marinetti's and Russolo's bruitiste tendencies were similar to those of jazz: "The same tendency that, in the United States, made a national music out of tap dances and rag-time, was belatedly in Europe, cramp and tendency towards 'bruit.'"³⁹

Participants in the Cabaret Voltaire were so obsessed with the shock value of primitive works (such as African sculpture) that they attempted to perform what they believed to represent a primitive musical counterpart of the visual exhibitions, employing any procedure that sounded African and using jazz as a complementing device. Tzara and other dadaists performed curious antics such as singing and dancing (waddling like bears) in gunny sacks. They admitted they were trying to insult the

. . . "stinking bourgeois" . . . who came back for more of the same treatment and even paid for it.

³⁸Buffet-Picabia, "Some Memories of Pre-Dada," p. 259.

³⁹Klein and Blaukopf, "Dada and Music," p. 92.

A crude jazz music, the ringing of bells, and the thumping of tom-toms accompanied the chants of the Dadaists:
 Boomboom, boomboom, boomboom,
 Ideal, ideal, ideal⁴⁰

Hugo Ball's incantations were supposed to have taken on certain jazz characteristics. Eugen Egger, in describing Ball's recitations, claimed that a remarkable parallel existed between his semi-musical sound-poems and jazz vocalizing known as "bopvocals" or "scat-singing." He has elaborated by saying that "these are meaningless syllables substituted by the jazz vocalists for song texts. The practice dates back to the twenties, and how Louis Armstrong was probably among the first to introduce it."⁴¹ The connection between these two types of performances cannot be proved. Egger insists, however, that a certain remote connection may be evidenced in the elements of improvization and dance, pointing out the use of masks (Janco's creations), costumes, and the dictation of well-defined movements of the absurd dances that went along with it.⁴²

One of the most active dada performers was a poet, Phillipe Soupault, who loved all things African, and collected records of negro spirituals and jazz tunes. At one dadaist soirée he darkened his face with burnt cork, dressed himself in a Liberian costume and posed as the President of the

⁴⁰Josephson, Life Among the Surrealists, p. 112.

⁴¹Klein and Blaukopf, "Dada and Music," p. 91.

⁴²Ibid., p. 92.

Liberian Republic.⁴³ The American soldier in France in 1917 had created an interest in both negro jazz bands and the cinema, and Soupault wanted to discover the true American, and therefore, according to Josephson, he adapted his own living pace to the tempo of the American.⁴⁴

Various bulletins and periodicals such as Bleu⁴⁵ contained contributions by Evola, Serna, in which occasional references were made to jazz. One issue of Bleu mentioned the organization of a "Jazz-Band Dada Ball by Evola and Schad."⁴⁶ William Drake also claimed that jazz bands, particularly in the last stages of dada (1922), became the indispensable accompaniment to dada programs.⁴⁷ It is highly probable that the fascination for American jazz was evident among most dadaists. This fact has been disclosed in a discussion about Matthew Josephson, an American who participated with the European dadaists and eventually the surrealists, and who was also the object of critical attacks by Paul Rosenfeld. Rosenfeld was extremely skeptical of the various avant-garde movements, especially that of the dadaists and

⁴³Josephson, Life Among the Surrealists, p. 121.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 123.

⁴⁵Edited by J. Evola, Cino Cantarelli, and Aldo Fiozzi, Mantova, 1921.

⁴⁶The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 333.

⁴⁷"Life and Deeds of Dada," Poet Lore, XXXIII (December, 1922), 500.

argued that Josephson, like all other Americans, having lived abroad for some time, returned with the same kind of thinking that some Europeans, especially dadaists, formed: the worship of comic movies, skyscrapers, and negro jazz. Josephson claims that in the American magazine, a taste for experiment prevailed. This, he said, was exemplified by an inebriated typography and by Cowley's burlesque songs arranged to fit well known jazz or ragtime melodies.⁴⁸ E. Wilson, an American journalist, also claimed that dadaists held great admiration for the neglected jazz tradition in America.⁴⁹

Even though some of these accounts are ill-defined and leave much to be desired in explaining a specific use of jazz, there is sufficient evidence to show that jazz occupied at least a minor place in dada's propaganda activities.

Dada Musicians

With few exceptions, musicians have been reluctant to identify themselves with any movements. Futurism claimed two self-professed musicians, a professional (Pratella) and an amateur (Russolo). Cubism was able to identify itself with such names as Satie and Stravinsky through collaboration, but aside from this the dada movement was able to furnish only one name, Hans Heusser, who was designated as a dadaist

⁴⁸Life Among the Surrealists, p. 258.

⁴⁹"An Imaginary Conversation: Paul Rosenfeld and Mr. Matthew Josephson," The New Republic, XXXVIII (April 9, 1924), 179-182.

resident composer in Zürich during the first three years of its existence there. By strange coincidence, however, more musical names have appeared on dadaist programs than on those of any other movement. The musicians who have been included on dada programs do not always constitute evidence of their association with the movement. It is a well known fact, however, that several musicians were willing participants in the dada movement, some even making appreciable contributions to their programs, either through performance, compositions, collaboration, or moral support of the movement. Musical contributions made by Emmy Hennings and Suzanne Perottet were as significant as those of Heusser or any other persons associated with dada in Zürich. Members of les Six (Auric, Milhaud, Poulenc, and Honegger) wrote music that reflected the dada spirit, and in a few instances, they actually participated in dadaist concerts. Erik Satie became the most important single figure in the movement and actually provided the musical counterpart; yet, he assumed no official role as a dada composer, though he was quite active in affairs, even acting as a mediator in their disagreements. The other musicians, that is, Stravinsky, Schönberg, and Scriabine, were implicated in dada affairs primarily because dadaists chose to involve their music and names on various programs.

Albert Savinio

Dadaists have often identified personalities for unusual or exaggerated activities. Savinio, the brother of Giorgio

de Chirico (surrealist painter), has been identified as such a personality in the multiple role of painter, poet, and musician; his musical activities, beginning before the dada movement, involved both piano playing and composing. The magazine 291 called attention to his composing abilities, praising his compositions and inferred that they should be called "New Music" rather than "Modern Music":

Savinio has devoted himself to finding the place of music among the modern arts. He does not try to express in music either a state of consciousness or an image. His music is not harmonious or even harmonized, but DISHARMONIOUS. Its structure is based on drawing. His musical drawings are, most of them, very rapid and DANSANTS, and belong to the most discordant styles, for this composer thinks that a sincere and truthful musical work must have in its formation the greater variety of music--ALL THAT WHICH ONE HEARS--all that which the ear imagines or remembers.

He does not invent, he discovers the significance of all sorts of sounds and uses them to create an emotive source.

"La Passion des Rotules" is No. 12 in a series of "Chants Etranges" which has for its title "BELLOVEES TATALES!"⁵⁰

This account is not very illuminating and leaves one without any idea as to what the sound of his music actually was.

Savinio's temperament has been described as imprudent and sometimes violent.⁵¹ He attracted Apollinaire's attention during the pre-dada war years. When Apollinaire heard Savinio perform on the piano he was impressed with his violent

⁵⁰The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 118.

⁵¹Haftmann, Painting in the Twentieth Century, p. 416. At one time Savinio was a mental patient in a hospital located in a monastery in Ferrara. In his later years he devoted himself to surrealist paintings.

technique. Apollinaire remarked that Savinio "usually ended a performance only after he had covered the keyboard with blood and broken the instrument."⁵² Since these activities are mainly pre-dada, it is difficult to determine to what extent Savinio may have continued his musical activities into the dada period. Marcel Duchamp has stated that Savinio did engage occasionally in musical activities during the dada years, but he did not describe these activities.⁵³ Eventually Savinio, following the typical dadaist trend, renounced his affiliations with music by issuing a violent and scandalous declaration against music, declaring that it was a "mad and immoral art, the perfect example of bourgeois perversity, more odious and limy than pity."⁵⁴

Hans Heusser

One of the first and foremost dada composers and performers was the Swiss, Hans Heusser. His name has been excluded from most reputable musical sources, but he was, nevertheless, listed as a dada resident composer and his activities in early dada affairs in Zürich were quite numerous. He was born in Zürich, June 10, 1892, and died in

⁵²Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 285. While Savinio was in Paris he was associated with a group centered around Apollinaire. This group included artists such as Jacob, Léger, Chagall, Modigliani, and Cendrars.

⁵³Letter in English from Marcel Duchamp, December 20, 1965.

⁵⁴Jean, The History of Surrealist Painting, p. 69.

St. Gall, 1954. His musical studies, beginning in Zürich, were continued later in Paris with Vincent d'Indy at the Schola Cantorum, during which time (1913-15) he was engaged as conductor and choirmaster at various theaters in Switzerland.⁵⁵ His compositions, traditional in character and similar to the salon compositions of the nineteenth century, bore such titles as Mund über Wasser, Burlesques turques, Festzug auf Capri, and Cortege exotique.⁵⁶

The earliest recorded performance of Heusser's music by dadaists occurred at the first dada soirée in Zurich, July 14, 1916, in the Zunfthaus zur Wass. The program, composed of his own piano works, included Prelude, Wakauabluthe, Exotische Tanzrytmen, Eine Wüstenskizze, Bacchanale aus der Oper Chrusis, Japanisches Theehaus, and Burlesque.⁵⁷ The absence of his name from then until the following spring has not been explained. It is highly probable that Heusser was involved in musical affairs outside of Zürich, but it is also possible that he may have performed on dada programs without program recognition. The second recorded performance of his music was March 23, 1917, at the grand opening of the Dada Gallery, Bahnhofstrasse 19, Zürich.⁵⁸ On April 14, he performed his

⁵⁵"Dada Dictionary," Dada. Monograph, p. 156.

⁵⁶Klein and Blaukopf, "Dada and Music," p. 88.

⁵⁷Dada. Monograph, p. 26.

⁵⁸Tzara, "Zürich Chronicle," p. 237.

compositions as part of a program entitled Strum-Soirée.

This program, dubbed by Tzara as an "assault night," included Prelude, Mond über Wasser, Burlesques turques, and Festzug auf Capri,⁵⁹ and again on May 12 a program was given at the Dada Galler that included his works.⁶⁰

The Dada Monograph states that an entire evening was devoted solely to the performance of his music. This program included works dating from the years 1912-1917, and many of the selections were those included on other programs given during his three year association with the Zurich dadaists. It also included a number of compositions for piano, voice, and harmonium. The program, presented May 25, 1917, at the Dada Gallery, Bahnhofstrasse 19, is given as follows:

- Soirée
HANS HEUSSER
(Eigene Compositionen)
werke für Klavier, Gesang, Harmonium, Rezitation
Mitwirkende: Frl. Emmy Kaeser, Sopran
Frl. Meta Gump, Sopran
Frl. Käthe Wulff (Labanschule) Rezitation
- (1912) 1. a) Prélude.
b) Adagio.
c) Certosa di Pavia.
d) Novellette.
- (1914) 2. a) Die Wanderer (Hans Roelli).
b) Tiefgelbe Rosen (Hans Roelli).
c) Herbst.
d) Tanzweise (Huggenberger).
(Gesungen von Frl. Emmy Kaeser, Zürich)
- (1915) 3. a) Danse triste.
b) Danse orientale.
- (1917) 4. a) Fragmente aus Bühnenkomposition:
"Der gelbe Klang," (von W. Kandinsky).
b) Impressiones orientales. (Für Harmonium).

⁵⁹Dada. Monograph, p. 36.

⁶⁰Tzara, "Zürich Chronicle," p. 237.

- (1916) 5. Sherezade: (Else Lasker Schüler).
 a) Ich tanze in der Moschee.
 b) Apollides und Tino kommen in eine morsche Stadt.
 c) Das Lied meines Lebens.
 (Gesprochene Gesänge Käthe Wulff).
 d) Heimlich zur Nacht.
 e) Der Tempel Jehovah.
 f) Der Epilog spricht. (Nietzsche).
 (Gesungen von Frl. Meta Gump.)
 (1916/17) 6. a) Humoresque turque.
 b) Mond über Wasser.
 c) Zwei arabische Tanzrythmen.
 (Gespielt vom Componisten).
 Das Harmonium wurde von der Firma A. Bertschinger
 & Co. zur Verfügung gestellt

Karten zu Frs. 3 und 5
 Vorverkauf bei kuoni und bei Hug & Co.⁶¹

After this performance the gallery went on an extended vacation and activities were transferred to other places. The third and final recording of Heusser's performance was April, 1919, at the Salle Kaufleuten at a Dada Soirée. Again, he repeated some earlier works to which he added the following new compositions: Vorspiel zu Der weisse Berg, Drei Tanzrythmen, Intime Harmonien, Bergsage, and Klavier-Quartet in Es dur.⁶² After this date Heusser's name disappeared from the dada programs.

Emmy Hennings and Suzanne Perottet

Both Emmy Hennings and Suzanne Perottet were included in numerous dada performances. The former, wife of Hugo Ball, was born February 2, 1885, in Flensburg (Schleswig) and died

⁶¹Klein and Blaukopf, "Dada and Music," p. 88.

⁶²The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 332.

in Magliasco (Ticino) in 1948. Two years after meeting Ball in 1913, she traveled to Switzerland with him where she assisted him in the founding and managing of the Cabaret Voltaire. Besides managing responsibilities, she also sang, danced, and gave recitations. The Züricher Post, in an article, May 7, 1916, proclaimed her as the star of the cabaret:

Just as years ago she stood before the rustling yellow curtain of a Berlin cabaret, arms akimbo, opulent as a bush in bloom, so today, with brow unbowed, she still puts her body into the same songs, only lightly worn by pain in the passing years.⁶³

Her dancing abilities were well suited to dada's absurd purposes. A performance which illustrates this was one in which Marcel Janco played on an invisible violin, Hülsenbeck on a drum, and Ball on the piano, while she, maintaining the straight face of a madonna, attempted to do a split (1917).⁶⁴

The first cabaret show on February 5, 1915, included French and Danish songs sung by Mme Leconte and Emmy Hennings; the latter's subsequent singing appearances included: February, 1916, Cabaret Voltaire; February 26, 1916;⁶⁵ July 16, Aunfthaus sur Waag, performing "Zwei Frauen" (Prosa verse); "Makrele," "Aether," "Gefangnis," "Jutland";⁶⁶ March 23, Dada Gallery (recitation); and April 28, 1917, New Art Night, Dada Gallery recitations.

⁶³"Dada Dictionary," Dada. Monograph, pp. 156-157.

⁶⁴Buffet-Picabia, "Some Memories of Pre-Dada," p. 265.

⁶⁵Tzara, "Zürich Chronicle," p. 236.

⁶⁶Dada. Monograph, p. 26.

Suzanne Perottet,⁶⁷ pianist, participated in a number of dada performances. The career of Suzanne Perottet as set forth in both the Dada Painters and Dada Monograph was recorded as having lasted from March 23, 1916, to April 9, 1919. One of her earliest appearances included the performance of new music (no compositions named), March 23, 1916, for an occasion celebrating the opening of the Dada Gallery,⁶⁸ and a later one is said to have involved the performance of works by Arnold Schönberg. One part of this early performance involving a composition for violin and piano, included the performance of Rudolph von Laban. Another part was programmed: "R. von Laban and Perottet, piano."⁶⁹ Vague references such as these have failed to reveal the kind of compositions performed. The last reference to Perottet's participation, April 9, 1919, at Kaufleuten Hall, discloses that she played piano works of both Satie and Schönberg.

Les Six

Members of les Six,⁷⁰ particularly Auric, Milhaud, Poulenc, and to a lesser extent, Honegger, have been included in dada's

⁶⁷Information concerning Perottet's musical background is unavailable.

⁶⁸Tzara, "Zürich Chronicle," p. 237.

⁶⁹Willy Verkauf, "Dada--Cause and Effect," Dada. Monograph, p. 10. The program did not reveal whether Laban or Perottet played the piano. Since Perottet was a pianist, Laban probably played the violin. Laban was actually a dancer.

⁷⁰The six was a group of French composers including Georges Auric, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc, Arthur Honegger, Louis Durey, and Germaine Tailleferre.

records either individually or collectively. Honegger's participation was negligible, while the names of Durey and Tailleferre have been mentioned only when the collective appellation les Six was used. Dadaist claims to participation by these personalities have been exorbitant, and it has been difficult to determine with any degree of accuracy to what extent les Six were active in the movement. Certain factors do, however, indicate that this group united their talents to bring about several significant achievements which brought them in direct contact with dadaists. Though their works cannot be construed to be true products of the movement, there is sufficient evidence pointing to a definite influence on them, especially the works of Auric and Milhaud. With regard to the latter, their participation came about during the years 1918 and 1919, and Shattuck has claimed that "in 1919 Milhaud and Auric were adopting a comparable artlessness to produce the musical counterpart of Dada."⁷¹ If some of their musical activities can be designated as musical counterparts of dada, or at least dada inspired, the statements of Milhaud and Meltzer may further support this contention. In describing the purpose of the group Milhaud has declared: "We are a proclamation and a protest. We proclaim the death of musical

⁷¹The Banquet Years, p. 170.

Impressionism."⁷² Meltzer described them as bruitistes, proclaiming them as worshippers of discord.⁷³

One of the strongest influences on les Six has been recognized to have been Jean Cocteau, who, in 1919, joined the dada group and made literary contributions to the movement as well as engaging in poem recitations, particularly those of Max Jacob. His interest in dada affairs continued until the final break in 1922 at which time he remained on the side of those opposing André Breton's committee of the Congress of Paris. Les Six, Satie and Cocteau, along with several painters, formed a compact group which attended the dada soirées and eventually produced a number of works, among which Le Boeuf sur le Toit (The Bull on the Roof, 1919), is the most outstanding.⁷⁴ Milhaud visited Brazil in 1917 and 1918 and upon his return to Paris, he prepared some Brazilian melodies and a Portuguese fado for a proposed Charlie Chaplin film. Cocteau suggested using them in a show and the result was a ballet for which Milhaud wrote most of the music, while Satie contributed Trois petites pièces montées, Auric, a foxtrot, and Poulenc, Cocardes. Costumes were designed by Raoul Dufy and Cocteau provided a pantomime scenario. Three

⁷²Charles Henry Meltzer, "Polytonic Six of Paris," The Forum, LXVI (December, 1921), 532.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Allen Hughes, "Les Six: A Generation Later their Youthful Spirit Endures," Musical America, LXXIV (February 15, 1954), 128.

performances were given to full houses. Critics, who believed the whole ballet to be a practical joke, described Milhaud as a clown and a strolling musician. Milhaud, however, reacted to these remarks with indignance, explaining that "I . . . had aspired to create a merry, unpretentious divertissement in memory of the Brazilian rhythms that had so captured my imagination."⁷⁵

Another collaborative effort, Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel, came about as a result of a request by De Maré to Auric to write a score on one of Cocteau's subjects. Cocteau, however, decided to put on a show by les Six, all of whom agreed to take part with the exception of Durey. The decors for this effort were designed by Irène Lagut and the costumes by Jean Hugo. A very clever trompe l'œil effect was produced in which dancers wore masks and painted costumes. This piece concerned an unlucky wedding party on the floor terrace of the Eiffel Tower and the many misfortunes that befell the group. Musical contributions provided for this performance included an overture and enchanting ritornelles by Auric; Le Danse de la Baigneuse de Trouville and Le Discours du Général by Honegger; La Marche nuptiale and La Fugue de massacre de la noce by Milhaud. According to Milhaud, Poulenc's polka and the pieces by Honegger and Auric were considered the most successful.

⁷⁵Darius Milhaud, "Divertissements variés, excerpts from Notes Without Music," Magazine of Art, XLVI (February, 1953), 59-60.

A waltz from Gounod's Faust, intended as a satire, was taken seriously by a critic and received his hearty approval. Milhaud, in commenting about the absurd nature of Les Mariés, stated that "we were all interested and amused at taking part in such an extraordinary mixture of different ingredients, the fanciful nature of which would not have been disowned by the Dadaist movement, then at its height."⁷⁶

Another elaborate program involving les Six included Satie's Musique d'ameublement (furniture music) coupled with a play by Max Jacob. The program, organized by the actor, Pierre Bertin, was presented at Paul Poiret's fashionable Barbazange Gallery. Songs by Stravinsky were also included on this production as well as a display of children's paintings entitled Les Belles Promesses. Satie's Musique d'ameublement included a ludicrous set of pieces for piano duet, small clarinet, and bass trombone, in which he mixed themes from Danse Macabre and Mignon with themes of his own.⁷⁷ The music, intentionally incidental, was designed so as not to attract attention but serve as background music during the intermission. The intentions of the music were not realized, however, and the people returned to their seats and listened to the music as seriously as if they were listening to an

⁷⁶Darius Milhaud, Notes Without Music, An Autobiography, translated by Donald Evans, 1st American ed. (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), pp. 111-112.

⁷⁷The Dada Painters and Poets, p. xvii.

opera, while the disgruntled Satie exhorted them to move about and talk.⁷⁸

A very unusual opera, Les Choéphores, composed by Milhaud in collaboration with Paul Claudel in 1915, called for a soprano narrator, singers, and a small orchestra. A performance of this work was given on June 19, 1919, with Delgrange conducting and Bathori taking the singing role of narrator. Milhaud has related how it was necessary, due to a low budget, to engage a union drummer to assist Cocteau, Auric, Honegger, Poulenc, and Lucien Daudet in their performance on the different percussion instruments during the Exhortation scene. Because some of the members of the "six" were necessarily engaged as performers, some members of the audience believed the opera was dada inspired.⁷⁹

Elements of irony, facetious wit, deliberate banality appearing in the music of les Six have led many critics to believe that they were closely connected with the movement, and all available evidence indicates that Milhaud, Auric, Honegger, and Poulenc made few attempts to deny dada associations or any references that connected them with the movement. It is highly probable that their music alluded frequently to the spirit of dada without their being aware of it, for they were reluctant to use dada's destructive

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Milhaud, Notes Without Music, p. 99.

means to realize their own purposes. Meltzer has contended that they were "rudely lumped with their unorthodox forebearers [bruitistes, futurists, and dadaists]" and offers as an example Milhaud's Orchestral Suite in which critics booed and cat-called and "damned him."⁸⁰

Four of the six composers can also be singled out as having been individually involved in dadaist affairs, as in the case of Auric, whose association had to do with both music composed for the dadaists, and interest in the internal differences that eventually spelled the death of the movement. Milhaud's activities involved only a limited amount of actual musical participation, but may have described several of his works, composed during the dada years, as being dada inspired. Poulenc collaborated with the dada poet Apollinaire in setting music to some of his works, and his music, next to Satie's, is said to have reflected a true dada spirit. Honegger's dada activities were negligible.

Georges Auric

Auric's activities with dada may have begun earlier than 1917, but his association, including a variety of musical and non-musical experiences, are more evident in dada's late activities in Paris. Picabia's 391 contains many references to Auric, some of which are very short statements, while others described some musical activity or correspondence in detail.

⁸⁰"Polytonic Six of Paris," p. 531.

Auric's interest in 391, Picabia, and the dada movement has been amply shown by the number of citations in this journal and his willingness to answer Picabia's correspondence, apparently enjoying the crudeness and vulgarity that this letter to Picabia so aptly illustrates:

My dear Picabia,

I am a stammering Auvergnat (inhabitant of Auvergne, central province of France) [sic] who wastes his talents with the single anxiety of not having much fun, at that. But, as there is no Absolute, no one has any fun, no one is worried, and I don't think that there exists anything which is exactly a talent (gift). Perhaps one day you will see me without neuralgia, without pains, without Faivre wafer-capsules. I have just left a girl friend who excused herself in this way for not having dinner with me: "I prefer to copulate than to jump rope."

But that won't cure me any more than listening to a great pianist, a singer, or any person of genius.

I would perhaps be happy for one minute if I could compose music that they would play between one o'clock and four o'clock in the morning in Place Pigalle.

If my music interests nobody--nobody interests me. I don't like catastrophes, tragedies, ruins, and I don't like to walk beside the Acropolis. Famous landscapes are as stupid as the souls of my famous neighbors. Dada--the Ninth Symphony--Debussy. Lessons of humility tire me to death, and I am bored by the Sacre du Printemps. Let us prefer it to a shot of strychnine.

And a certain absurd fatigue makes me write all that to you. Good night.

George Auric⁸¹

Picabia's published answer in 391 was comparable to Auric's letter:

Acknowledgment of acceptance: . . . My dear Auric, I have indeed received your bauble (depicting the noble head of an old man) . . . yes . . . it was joined with an amusing letter pleasantly lewd and, especially

⁸¹391, p. 102.

very pornographic . . . Oh! . . . you big rascal . . . scoundrel? . . . If your papa knew that! What a spanking! . . .⁸²

Other references from 391, actually Picabia's writings, have provided such incoherent statements about Auric as:

Curious young chap . . . funny man, that Auric! . . . Shoulder-blade, doubtless . . . Homogeneous? Why not . . . strange man (?) . . . rather upsetting, alarming and disturbing--in short . . . His filthy talk of a schoolboy? . . . Well! Well . . . Curious . . . Yes and no . . .

Invocation: . . . If my enemies do not respect my age, let them have some consideration at least, for my sense of decency (isn't it so, Auric,--and you, you big "booby" Poulenc,) . . .⁸³

Auric's musical participation in dada was evidenced in several works, two of which are pertinent to this study: three comic interludes and Le Piège de Méduse. The first had to do with the composing of a poem by a dada poet, Pierre Albert-Birot, narrating the happenings of a dada event at the Paul Guillaume Gallery, November 13, 1917. The three comic interludes were sung by Pierre Bertin. The works of Satie, Apollinaire, and Cendrars were also presented at this same performance.⁸⁴

Another contribution made by Auric to the dada programs consisted of music set to words by Max Jacob and Raymond Radiguet for a play written by Satie, Le Piège de Méduse (1913) which bordered on the absurd and suited the dada spirit at the time it was produced (1921). It was presented

⁸²Ibid., p. 122.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴The Dada Painters and Poets, p. xxxv.

by Pierre Bertin in a special program at his Théâtre Bouffé.⁸⁵ A third musical offering was made to one of dada's last programs at the Théâtre Michel, Paris, in July, 1923; this included works by Stravinsky, Milhaud, a film by Hans Richter, and a performance of Tzara's Coeur à Gaz. The name of Auric's composition is not available. The program ended in a squabble during which Aragon, Breton, and Péret demonstrated against Tzara.⁸⁶ Auric was also named in Aragon's Project for a History of Contemporary Literature, reproduced in Littérature, Paris, 1922, which included brief references to happenings between November, 1918, to January, 1920.⁸⁷

Auric's participation in dada became more obvious in the final days of the movement when he was called upon to serve in an official capacity. The ultimate break and conflict between the dadaists was reflected in the conflict between factions led by Tzara and Breton. This dispute was evidenced by a series of arguments through which Tzara and Breton expressed their grievances by means of sundry literary communications. Breton felt that dada had served its usefulness and in a press communique to Comœdia (February, 1922), insisted that the movement should be disbanded. To this end he formed a committee called the Congress of Paris, designed

⁸⁵Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 172. See footnote.

⁸⁶"Chronology," Dada. Monograph, p. 114.

⁸⁷Louis Aragon, "Projet d'Histoire Littéraire contemporaine," The Dada Painters and Poets, pp. 230-231.

to establish directives for the new spirit and its defense. Persons named in the organizing committee included Auric (first named), Breton, Delaunay, Léger, Ozenfant, Paulhan, and Roger Vitrac.⁸⁸

Darius Milhaud

Music composed by Milhaud during the dada period⁸⁹ was probably composed for purposes of his own and actually may have had little to do with the movement itself. The dadaists, however, exercised little restraint in describing him as a member of the group. Lemaitre, in describing the dada headquarters in the Café Certà in 1920, ranked the name of Milhaud with such people as Tzara, Picabia, Breton, Soupault, Aragon, and Eluard.⁹⁰ Winthrop Sargeant also assigned the name musical dadaist to Milhaud.⁹¹

Major musical works produced by Milhaud during the dada years included the ballets L'Homme et son désir (Man and His Desire, 1917), Le Boeuf sur le toit (see p. 314 above), Le

⁸⁸Josephson, Life Among the Surrealists, p. 148.

⁸⁹The reader will notice that some of the music mentioned previously is mentioned again. This applies to the music of not only Milhaud, but Satie, Poulenc, Auric, and others. The repeating of these works is necessary, because they are frequently involved in collaborations as well as being designated as music suitable for the aims of several movements.

⁹⁰From Cubism to Surrealism, p. 173.

⁹¹"Music Between Two Wars; the Paris Influence was a Blight on Musical Expression," The American Mercury, LVI (January, 1943), 39.

Train bleu (The Blue Express, 1924), Salade (choral ballet, 1924), and Musique d'ameublement (interior decorating music in collaboration with Satie, 1921, (see p. 316 above). Several of these works have been described as being inspired by the movement. Le Train was severely criticized by Allen Ross McDougall as a dada inferior product.⁹² Salade was performed at the Théâtre de la Cigale (1924) under the auspices of the Soirées de Paris where a play by Tzara called Mouchoir de Nuage and an abridged adaptation of Romeo and Juliet were also performed. Massine and Braque were responsible for the choreography and decor for this performance. L'Homme et son désir has not been discussed in any of the writings about dada.

Francis Poulenc

Poulenc's music has consistently revealed a humorous spirit, and with the possible exception of Satie, this aspect places it closer to dada than the music of any other composer. His dada activities were less pronounced than those of Auric and Milhaud, but his great admiration for the dada personality, Guillaume Apollinaire, prompted him to set music to many of his literary works. More than likely the

⁹²"Music and Dancing in Paris. A Priceless Artistic Treat Arranged to Honor the Olympic Games," Arts and Decorations, XXI (October, 1924), 35. McDougall, in this account, described a number of works composed for this event. He also listed a play written by a Bulgarian dadaist but failed to mention the name of the writer or the play.

surrealistic aspects of Apollinaire's poetry appealed to Poulenc, and the musical results reflected through the poetry the impish spirit of dada. The one significant musical setting that provides Poulenc a small place in the dada tradition are the seven settings called Calligrammes, which come closer to a true dada literary style than do any of Apollinaire's works themselves. Cecil Smith has provided a critical description which identifies these settings as dadaist absurdity:

The cycle moves between two poles of feeling--memories of the past, and the cruel realities of the present--and reaches a shocking climax in a cynical apostrophe to peace, in which the music resorts to the glib bromides usually found in cheap, sentimental patriotic exhortations.⁹³

Poulenc's choice of literary texts, however, favored those of surrealists with the exception of Le Gendarme incompris (1921), which was produced in collaboration with a dadaist poet, Raymond Radiguet.

Arthur Honegger

Two collaborative efforts by Honegger and the dadaists, Max Jacob and Fernand Léger, produced the works La Mort de Sainte Alméenne and Skating Rink. For the first of these Honegger composed an interlude (performed at the concerts Colonne on October 24, 1920), and for the latter, a ballet (1921). The ballet sets, prepared by Fernand Léger, paid

⁹³"Music: More Emissaries from France," The New Republic, CXIX (December 13, 1948), 27.

homage to the sports motive. Aside from this dada inspired effort, Honegger showed the least concern of all of les Six toward dada activities.⁹⁴

Whether les Six ever made any serious objections to dada associations or not, it is likely that they had no serious qualms about being associated with them, especially in view of the numerous inclusions of their names and performances in various dada publications. Had objections been forthcoming, it seems probable that articles of reprisal would have resulted--and none are in evidence. To the contrary, Picabia's 391 made consistent mention of all six as did an article directed at Cocteau by Picabia in which the group was mentioned unfavorably. This latter, however, apparently resulted from Picabia's rivalry with Cocteau.⁹⁵ Auric and Poulenc signed a dadaist tribute to Picasso in the periodical Mercure. In the same publication Pierre de Massot mentioned Diaghilev, Milhaud, Honegger and Auric in connection with Mariés de la Tour Eiffel.⁹⁶ Another dada publication, Littérature, frequently mentioned les Six and on one occasion, the first Friday of Littérature presented the paintings of Gris, Picabia, Léger, together with poetry by Cocteau, Eluard, Salmon, and the music of Auric, Milhaud, and Poulenc (and

⁹⁴Darius Milhaud, Notes Without Music, pp. 105-110.

⁹⁵Picabia, 391, p. 125.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 110. 391 fails to designate which issues of Mercure the tribute and the names associated with Mariés appeared.

Henri Cliquet) at the Palais des Fêtes.⁹⁷ In all probability, les Six welcomed this kind of notoriety.

Erik Satie

Perhaps no other musical personality has been more closely associated with dadaism than has Erik Satie. Although he was not designated as the official dadaist composer in Paris (a position that Heusser held in Zürich), Satie was, nonetheless, because of his personality and associations, deeply involved in the movement. Dada records point out that his absurdities preceded the official inception of the movement; further recognition of Satie's position is supported by the devotion of an entire section to Satie in The Dada Painters and Poets.⁹⁸ In the pre-dada section of this work, fragments of Satie's Memories of an Amnesic (1912-13), including "What I am," and "The Day of a Musician," are reproduced. An excerpt from "What I am" illustrates the kind of humorous ramblings so characteristic of dada nonsense:

On my phono-weigher an ordinary F sharp of a very common type, registered 93 kilograms. It came out of a very fat tenor whose weight I also took.

Do you know how to clean sounds? It's dirty business. Cataloguing them is neater; to know how to classify them is a meticulous affair and demands good eye-sight. Here, we are in phonotechnics.⁹⁹

⁹⁷Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit," p. 170.

⁹⁸Motherwell, p. xvi.

⁹⁹Erik Satie, "Memories of an Amnesic (fragments) (1912-13)," The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 18.

Other persons have discovered qualities in Satie's personality which prompted them to characterize him as a musical dadaist. Shattuck, for example, states that "dadaists and surrealists drove provocation to its violent agony and discovered Satie as one of the few musicians outrageous enough to suit their purpose."¹⁰⁰ Similarly, Margaret Crosland insists that Satie's musical eccentricities and extraordinary fantasy made him one of the most important precursors for the antics of the dadaists and surrealists, further claiming that Cocteau (with reference to Satie's freakish personality and composing mentality) sensed this before anyone else and chose Satie as a dadaist figurehead.¹⁰¹ Ozenfant states that Satie was liked because he was purposefully stupid, behaving as he did to compel people's attention; in this regard, he was somewhat responsible for the jocular trend of Picasso and Cocteau.¹⁰²

Satie's wide application of humor, wit, and sarcasm is frequently found in short witty compositions, an aphorism, the directions in his music, or a non-existent composition calling for an instrumentation as ridiculous as the following:

2 flutes "à piston" in F sharp	1 Siphon in C
1 Alto Overcoat in C	3 Keyboard Trombones
1 Spring-lock in E	in D minor

¹⁰⁰The Banquet Years, p. 184.

¹⁰¹Jean Cocteau, p. 53.

¹⁰²Foundations of Modern Art, (New York, Dover Publications, Inc., 1952), p. 167.

2 Slide-Clarinets in G minor

1 Double-Bass made
of Skin in C
chromatic

Tub in B

These instruments belong to the marvellous family of Cephalophones, have a compass of thirty octaves, and are absolutely unplayable. An amateur in Vienna (Austria) in 1875 once tried to play the Siphon in C; after executing a trill the instrument burst, broke his spinal column and scalped him completely. Since then no one has dared to avail themselves of the powerful resources of the cephalophones, and the State had to forbid these instruments to be taught in the Municipal Schools.¹⁰³

R. D. Chennèvier's evaluation of Satie's music portrays it as purely intellectual and essentially negative in which a contemptuous attitude toward life is evident. He further notes that Satie's attitude was born out of the early attitudes of this century in which the Parisian spirit, mocking, facetious, destructive as well as mystifying and incapable of artistic production, made him the very incarnation of this spirit. Chennèvier's remarks about Satie's music characterize him as an ironic buffoon whose punning pushed his jokes into extravagance. Other abusive criticisms by this author point to Satie's sterile individualism, his mundane irony, and particularism which was carried to the extreme point at which irony and farce become intermingled. Concerning Satie's musical process, he felt that Satie's musical failures were due to the absence of the human element, intellectual approaches overruling musical values, artistic contradiction, denatured music, and musical raillery

¹⁰³Myers, Erik Satie, p. 119. See footnote.

appealing only to neurotics, admitting only one good quality in Satie's musical results--originality.¹⁰⁴

Shattuck feels that Satie's musical process was similar to the literary efforts of Jarry and Apollinaire, but that Satie transformed his approach into the absurd in which it was no longer laughable. "Satie's dead pan pseudo lectures partake still of comic innocence. . . . Innocence seems to yield to something far more calculated in meaning and effect. Dada and surrealism . . . are seldom funny."¹⁰⁵

Juxtaposition, often described as a simultaneous action in art, music, and literature, may be seen in Satie's works as an enforced superposition (his ballets as well as Rousseau's Le Rêve, and Apollinaire's Calligrams).¹⁰⁶ These works also encompassed ambiguity, surprise, humor, and dream associations. Satie's comic brevity, accomplished through simultaneity, strove for a new sensibility, the possibility of telescoping time.¹⁰⁷ John Cage further claims that Satie's use of simultaneity resulted in brevity:

It is important with Satie not to be put off by his surface (by turns mystical, cabaretish . . . mirth, the erotic, the wondrous . . . expressed more often than not by means of cliché-juxtaposition). The basis of his music that no one bothered to imitate was its structure by means of related lengths of time. Think

¹⁰⁴"Erik Satie and the Music of Irony," The Musical Quarterly, V (October, 1919), 473-476.

¹⁰⁵The Banquet Years, pp. 33-34.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., pp. 345-349.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., pp. 142-143.

of Satie as interchangeable with Webern (you'll be somewhere near the truth).¹⁰⁸

Satie's tongue-in-cheek attitudes, evidenced in his early pre-dada essay, Memories of an Amnesic, next became evident in an abortive collaboration with Jean Cocteau. In 1915 Cocteau wished to do an adaptation of Midsummer Night's Dream and invited Satie to write incidental music for this production. Satie complied with Cinq Grimaces, but the project was never completed and the music was never performed.¹⁰⁹ Other composers, including Varèse, Stravinsky, Ravel, Roussel, and Florent Schmitt, were to have provided incidental music also, creating a circus version in which "Oberon was to have made his entrance into the ring of the Cirque Medrano to the strains of Tipperary."¹¹⁰ Satie produced several major works that are said to have been dadaist inclined, both by collaboration and inference. These included La Piège de Méduse, Parade, Relâche, and Socrate.

La Piège de Méduse.--In 1913 Satie wrote the play, Le Piège de Méduse (The Trap of Medusa). The Dada Monograph claims that this incursion into the theater, as well as many aphorisms in Satie's musical works and contributions to the journal 391, "demonstrated the complete seclusion

¹⁰⁸The Dada Painters and Poets, p. xvi.

¹⁰⁹Myers, Erik Satie, p. 49.

¹¹⁰Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 152. See footnote.

in which a spirit was being cultivated that anticipated the dadaist atmosphere."¹¹¹ The work was produced by Pierre Bertin as a one-act comedy at the Théâtre Michel on May 24, 1921.¹¹² Myers, in stating that it anticipated dada, also remarked that it was one of Satie's most advanced works preceding Parade, Mercure, and Relâche. The spirit of Le Piège evidenced the same kind of impish humor and nonsensibility contained in his Memories. Myers summarized its content, explaining why it was a dada creation:

It thus affords another illustration of Satie's extraordinary faculty of anticipating and breathing the prototype of almost every genre that years later was to become fashionable and elevated into the aesthetic cult. The dancing monkey Jonas "stuffed by a master hand," the Baron Méduse and his "foster-daughter" (fille de lait!). Frisette and manservant Polycarpe, and the absurd situations in which they find themselves, are pure "Dada" and belong far more to the year 1921 when Pierre Bertin produced the piece than to 1913--when it was written.¹¹³

This musical play was also issued in an illustrated book form by Georges Braque in the same year;¹¹⁴ this book also contains Auric's song settings to Radiguet's poems, as well as a shimmy written by Milhaud for "Le Nègre Gratin."¹¹⁵

Parade.--At the same time that Parade was being described as a cubist project, other writers felt that it was dada

¹¹¹Klein and Blaukopf, "Dada and Music," p. 46.

¹¹²Myers, Erik Satie, p. 62. ¹¹³Ibid., p. 47.

¹¹⁴The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 331.

¹¹⁵Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 172. See footnote.

inspired. The music was composed in 1915, but the spirit of the ballet anticipated that of dada. The political and social background (World War I) against which Satie worked in producing his last and probably most important works, and the hopelessness and meaningless circumstances which many artists fell victim to, actually provided Parade with more of a dada climate than a cubist. In spite of a similar defiant spirit evidenced in futurism and cubism, it has been argued that in Parade, Satie's revolt against illusionism and lyricism, his irony and the lack of meaning and profundity was dadaist in every respect.¹¹⁶ The cubists had little concern for creating shock effects for their own sake; therefore, Satie resorted to more extreme elements to introduce the shock effect, taking over the Italian bruitist methods--the use of noise instruments--to produce the desired results. Shattuck feels that this work unquestionably fulfilled the aims of the dadaists: "It was a serious-humorous exploitation of popular elements in art, a turning to jazz and music hall and to all paraphernalia of modern life, not in the spirit of realism, but with a sense of exhilaration in the absurd."¹¹⁷ Jean Cocteau, in describing the music hall spirit of Parade, described it as an attempt to provide a comic act in which the lines were delivered through holes in the scenery and modern properties

¹¹⁶Dada. Monograph, p. 24.

¹¹⁷The Banquet Years, p. 154.

"and movements simmered down into what was finally called a ballet réaliste."¹¹⁸ Myers also explained that Parade was born in the midst of dada's emerging spirit and dada's influence was bound to have greatly affected its outcome.¹¹⁹ The audience reaction to Parade, clapping, shouts of Boche, and ensuing fights, is believed to have been prompted by persons who actually felt that it was a German-engineered attempt to undermine French culture.¹²⁰ The dadaists who criticized Parade were mainly those who followed Breton into surrealism.¹²¹

Relâche.--The experience Satie gained from Musique d'ameublement (that of four small bands playing simultaneously resulting in a sound-collage) was said to have been translated into practice first in the film Entre'acte (René Clair) which was later used in the ballet Relâche. The music to Relâche, composed by Satie, consisted of a succession of serious and rather dry dance-movements--entrées and rentrées, with here and there a popular tune austerely disguised or blatantly proclaimed so as to give the public something they could recognize. Besides Satie's music, the two act ballet included the entr'acte film of René Clair, sets by Picabia, and

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 155.

¹¹⁹Erik Satie, p. 62.

¹²⁰Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 153.

¹²¹The Dada Painters and Poets, p. xvii. The criticisms of this group were somewhat belated, occurring in 1921.

choreography by Jean Borlin. The production, publicized in Picabia's 391,¹²² was interpreted by Myers as having a weird and crazy scenario:

There is a dance with a revolving door; the men dress and undress on the stage, . . . and all this takes place against a background of giant gramophone discs piled on top of each other so as to present their flat services to the audience and forming a solid wall towering to the height of the proscenium. In short a "spectacle Dada," intentionally grotesque and devoid of meaning.¹²³

Satie not only provided music for the ballet but participated in an acting role. Some of the films show Satie "firing a cannon on the roof of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and clambering over the gargoyles on Nôtre-Dame."¹²⁴

In the earlier ballet, Mercure, Picasso's efforts were enthusiastically applauded by the Breton camp (later surrealists), but the music of Satie was ignored. Relâche, Picabia's retaliation, provided the scandalous finale to Satie's career and also further promoted the rivalry that existed between Picabia and Breton. In several issues of 391 Picabia published a series of articles and illustrations attacking Rimbaud and surrealists. Georges Hugnet points out that the magnificent freedom found in Relâche, including its fine entr'acte film, was not surpassed by the later films of Man Ray and Salvador Dali.¹²⁵ Norman Demuth feels that Satie's craving for sensations and absurdities,

¹²²Picabia, 391, p. 130. ¹²³Erik Satie, p. 107.

¹²⁴Ibid.

¹²⁵"The Dada Spirit," p. 191.

exemplified by his arrival on the stage at the end of the ballet in a five horse-power Citroën,¹²⁶ from which he popped out onto the stage and ironically greeted the worthy audience whom he had just magnificently ridiculed, shed an unfavorable light on Satie's character.¹²⁷ The audience howled upon hearing the first strains of "The Turnip Vendor," heckling and laughter interrupted the performance, and it ended in an almost indescribable tumult. Picabia comments that

It amounts . . . to a lot of kicks in a lot of rears, sacred and otherwise. During this "instantaneous ballet" the dancers smoke incessantly, a fireman wanders through the modernistic set, constructed out of rows of metal disks, and costume changes take place on stage. It was the first time a film was ever included as a part of a ballet.¹²⁸

One other major work composed by Satie during the dada years was Socrate, a symphonic drama in three parts. Completed in 1918, it received less notoriety than Parade, but according to Cooper, it possessed more interest even though it involved little or no antagonism as far as dada was concerned.¹²⁹ Ozenfant described Socrate as a grave, pure work in which he described Satie as lucky, "for the snobbery which rewarded the aged musician's charming acrobatics, decreed he could not openly be designated tedious. But it thought so all the same:

¹²⁶Musical Trends in the Twentieth Century (London, Rockliff Publishing Corporation, Ltd., 1952), p. 27.

¹²⁷Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 174.

¹²⁸Ibid., p. 114.

¹²⁹French Music, p. 199.

to such an extent has frivolity taken the place of beauty, nobility, profundity."¹³⁰

Satie's activities were consistently recorded in the sundry dada publications. In 391, short statements in the nature of aphorisms and axioms appeared,¹³¹ along with many short articles (cahiers d'un mammifère). Also countless references to his name appeared in many articles, poems, and absurd typographical illustrations. The early numbers of Littérature, openly dada, found reasons to publish texts or speak at length about Satie, Apollinaire, and others.¹³² Even the Berlin Der Dada (Nos. 2 and 3), a communist periodical, mentioned Satie's name along with that of Charlie Chaplin.¹³³ Satie himself, in the years 1920-22, maintained left-wing political views, and his domicile, Arcueil, was nicknamed Soviet d'Arcueil.¹³⁴

Satie maintained a deep interest in dada affairs until the final break between Tzara, Picabia, and Breton, which came about because of the antagonism existing between Tzara and Breton. An early issue of Le Coeur à Barbe (edited by Tzara), a periodical that frequently attacked Breton, included

¹³⁰Ozenfant, Foundations of Modern Art, p. 167.

¹³¹Picabia, pp. 89, PT, 10.

¹³²Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 356.

¹³³Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit," p. 146.

¹³⁴Myers, Erik Satie, p. 112.

mentions of Satie, Eluard, Péret, Soupault, and Tzara.¹³⁵

Breton made an attempt to rally futurists, cubists, and all moderns in a proposed congress, but Satie, in the April, 1922, issue of Le Coeur attacked the proposed Congress of Paris; the congress never took place.¹³⁶ The Tzara-Breton fight, resulting in the downfall of dada, was resolved at a meeting in which Satie acted as mediator.

To my surprise, they rehashed the whole affair in very reasonable terms. Satie busied himself, in consultation with the others, in writing the terms of the majority resolution condemning Breton, which was to be handed to the press; he kept gurgling into his beard with amusement, as he selected some specially pompous phrases in the style in which André Breton delighted.¹³⁷

On May 3, 1924, the final break between Picabia, who was still publishing 391, and Breton occurred. Breton wrote in a final note to Picabia: "Puissent les vieilles grimaces de Satie, vous avez donc retrouvé Huelsenbeck, bravo Rigaut, etc., vous dédommager de notre refus. Votre ami: André Breton." To which Picabia responded: "Quand j'ai fumé des cigarettes, je n'ai pas pour habitude de garder les mégots. Picabia."¹³⁸

Other Musicians and Dada

Other names that have been connected with dadaist activities in various musical capacities were those whose musical

¹³⁵The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 335. ¹³⁶Ibid., p. 304.

¹³⁷Josephson, Life Among the Surrealists, p. 150.

¹³⁸391, p. 120. "Maybe the old grimaces of Satie, so you have met Huelsenbeck, bravo Rigaut, etc., compensate you for our refusal. Your friend: André Breton." Response: "When I smoked cigarettes, I didn't have the habit of keeping the butts. Picabia."

backgrounds were limited, in certain instances, or whose participation was solicited because of the lack of musically qualified persons. Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes, Marguerite Buffet, Picabia, Tzara, and Mesens were among several who attempted to compose or perform for the dadaist cause. Dada programs also carried the names of such traditional composers as Wagner and Franck. A prominent composer, Henri Sauguet, has been named in dada's late activities, and plans were also made to attempt to involve Varèse, Stravinsky, and Schönberg in some of the musical ventures. Whether these musicians actually participated or not is unknown; generally, the musical efforts proved abortive, but the dadaists still insisted that many were influenced by their productions.

It is generally known, as is evidenced in their records, that several poets and painters participated in the dada exhibitions, taking their turns in various musical activities for which they had sufficient musical training to enable them to fulfill a particular need. Considering the generous amount of clowning that accompanied almost every event, musicianship was not a prime requisite. Some dadaists, like Ribemont-Dessaignes, turned to musical composition. On March 27, 1920, a significant dada program containing a play by Ribemont-Dessaignes and poems by Eluard took place at the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre. Another work by Ribemont-Dessaignes, Le pas de la chicorée frisée (Dance of the Curled Chicory), in which melodies

of Duparc¹³⁹ were interpolated as a musical canard, was performed on the piano by Marguerite Buffet. The presentation, including a transparent set using a bicycle wheel and a clothes line adorned with hanging signs, was so absurd that the exasperated audience (which normally liked Duparc's music) whistled and protested against the whole presentation; a riot ensued.¹⁴⁰ Other music by Ribemont-Dessaigues was included on the program of the Festival Dada at the Salle Gaveau, May 26, 1920. For this occasion his composition, le nombril interlope, was interpreted on the piano by Marguerite Buffet.

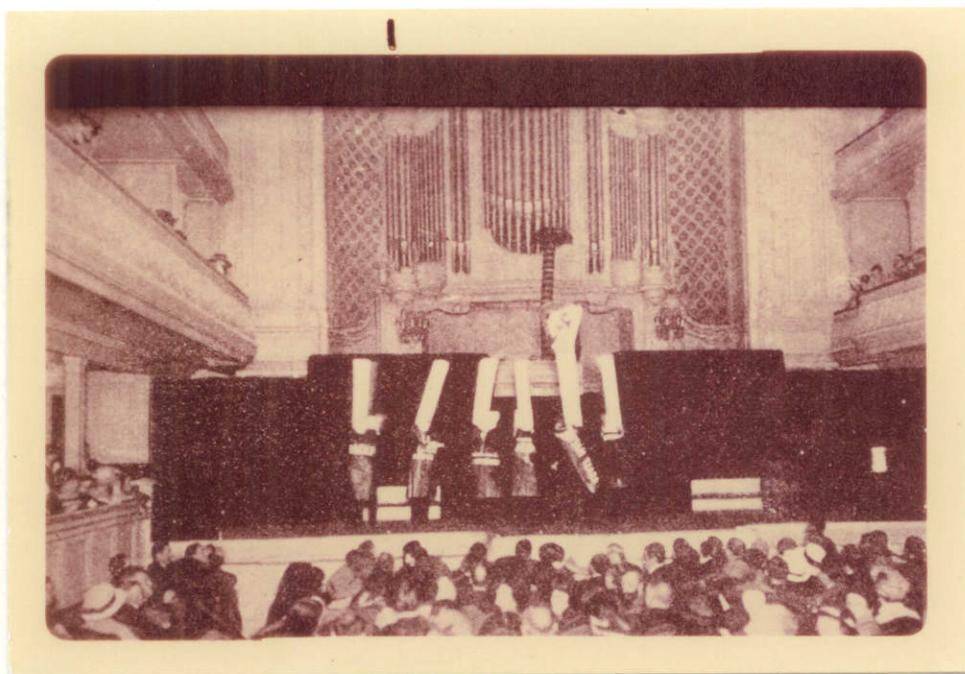


Plate 45. Dada "Festival" in Gaveau Hall, Paris, 26 May, 1920¹⁴¹

¹³⁹Reference here is possibly to Henri Duparc.

¹⁴⁰Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit," p. 176.

¹⁴¹The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 112.

On the same program Picabia also presented a musical composition which was also performed by Marguerite Buffet. The musical highlight of the occasion was supposed to have been the final selection, Vaseline symphonique, composed by Tzara and performed by twenty persons. The instrumentation is not included on the program, and the performance has been described as scarcely musical. Breton was a performer in this group and seriously resented his part in this particular selection. This composition "encountered the open hostility of André Breton, who has a horror of music and suffered from being reduced to the role of an interpreter."¹⁴² The Gaveau family and the public were equally horrified to hear a popular fox-trot, Le Pélican, played on the hall's great organ. Ribemont-Dessaignes has also been mentioned in Picabia's publication, La Pomme de Pins, February 25, 1922, (the only issue published), in which reference was made concerning his ability to compose music in such a way as for it to sound very modern. The seventh issue of Dadaphone (date not given) carried a program in which the first selection, Manifeste cannibale dans l'obscurité, named Francis Picabia as the composer of both music and text, while the interpretation and piano accompaniment were rendered by Breton¹⁴³ and Marguerite

¹⁴²Ribemont-Dessaignes, "History of Dada," p. 113.

¹⁴³It is highly probable that this may have been a recitation since Breton's aversion to music, as well as his lack of musical ability was well known by dadaists.

Buffet respectively. A small note at the end of the program announced that Mlle. Hanis Rouchine would sing a manifesto.¹⁴⁴

A casual reference to a poet turned composer, Mesens, has been made by Marcel Jean in which he described Mesens' encounter with dadaism and several of its personalities, Duchamp, Picabia, and Satie. Mesens became interested in dada after having visited Man Ray's first exhibition at the Librairie Six. Many of his musical compositions were settings of modern poems, including Soupault's Garage (1921). Mesens' decision to give up composition was influenced by the reading of a Chirico manuscript in which it was indicated that no music should be set to it; a detailed description of circumstances surrounding this event is not available.¹⁴⁵

The Dada Monograph mentions some other people and small movements whose affiliations with the dada movement remain in question. One of these was l'École d'Arcueil, for which the claim is made that the group (mainly composed of Henri Sauguet, Roger Desormière, Henri Cliquet-Pleyel, and Maxime Jacob)¹⁴⁶ became more important to the continuation of the dada spirit than les Six.¹⁴⁷ The statement concerning Arcueil's continuation of the dada spirit appears to have little foundation since

¹⁴⁴Dada Monograph, p. 67.

¹⁴⁵The History of Surrealism, p. 177.

¹⁴⁶These persons, like les Six, had chosen Satie as their spiritual leader and Satie gave them his blessing.

¹⁴⁷"Dada Dictionary," Dada. Monograph, p. 151.

dada sources fail, with one exception, to include these names in the account of their activities; the name mentioned is that of Henri Sauguet. The Arcueil group, formed about 1923, actually appeared at a time when surrealism was replacing the dada movement. Darius Milhaud,¹⁴⁸ who held Sauguet in great esteem, believed him to be one of the most gifted composers of the early twenties, was instrumental in sponsoring the debut of this group.¹⁴⁹ Norman Demuth, with regard to his association with the dadaists, described Sauguet as one of the enfants terribles of the 1920's, calling attention to the fact that his musical cynicism, absurdity, squareness, and timelessness represented all of the qualities that characterized dada's absurdness and negativeness.¹⁵⁰ Cocteau has related how Sauguet admired Raymond Radiguet, brilliant poet and friend of Satie, Auric, Picabia, as well as other dadaists.¹⁵¹ He further notes that Sauguet felt inferior in Radiguet's presence and composed music to his poems in utter secrecy.¹⁵² He also provided musical settings (two song cycles) to Jacob's poems, Visions Infernales, and Les Pénitents en Maillots

¹⁴⁸In a letter to the author, August 15, 1965, Edgar Varèse also expressed the same view.

¹⁴⁹Austin, Music in the Twentieth Century, p. 169.

¹⁵⁰Musical Trends in the Twentieth Century, p. 337.

¹⁵¹In 391 Radiguet's name is included a number of times.

¹⁵²Crosland, Jean Cocteau, p. 66.

Roses. Sauguet was approximately 17 years of age when dada began and thus would have been only 23 at the close of the movement.

The programming of the dada concerts was rather curious. Besides the usual dadaist offerings, usually by nonentities, the program also included the music of Reger, Liszt, Debussy, and Rachmaninov. A concert on May 2, 1917, at the Galérie Dada illustrates the eclecticism of the program and sometimes makes no distinction as to whether the name by the composition is the performer or the composer. For example, this program included Hans Riemann, Die Beleidigung; Jules La Forgue, Lohengrin; Alphonse Allais, Le Petit veau; McNab, Le Fiacre; and Lichtenstein, Dämmerung.¹⁵³ Another program at the Sturm-Soirées, April 14, 1917, included the performance of Musique et danse nègres by five persons, assisted by Jeanne Rigaud and Maria Cantarelli.¹⁵⁴

Tristan Tzara, among others, sincerely believed that composers like Stravinsky were sympathetic toward dada, although this has never been proven. Several young American composers were also believed to have been close to the dada spirit in their composing, especially those who used noise effect. Rudolph Klein and Kurt Blaukopf have insisted that Carpenter, Varèse, Cowell, and Antheil were duly influenced by dada.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³Dada. Monograph, p. 10.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁵⁵"Dada and Music," p. 96.

Even though some sources have claimed that many prominent composers such as Stravinsky, Berg, Schönberg, and Scriabin may have been affected or influenced by dada, as was frequently suggested in their rejection of certain musical elements as well as certain banalities and musical provocation, there is no concrete evidence to substantiate any of these claims. Scriabin's music, for example, was probably closer to traditional music than any of the above named; yet, he was described as a dadaist. Herbert Antcliffe defended Scriabin's position in this respect in the following rejoinder to a Dutch critic who made such an accusation: "If there was one school more than any other with which Scriabin has nothing in common, it is that of the dadaists."¹⁵⁶

Even after the final split between Breton and Tzara, the spirit of dada persisted in the movement which replaced it, surrealism. Dadaists and surrealists, both, in recording their history, have issued strong claims to the same aesthetic influences and events. These claims point out the qualities and traits common to both groups. In the year 1927, for example, several years after dada had integrated into surrealism, a film entitled Vormittags-Spuk (Spook Before Breakfast) was produced for the International Music Festival at Baden-Baden, Germany. The original score (destroyed by the Nazis) was written by Paul Hindemith. Hindemith,

¹⁵⁶"The Significance of Scriabin," The Musical Quarterly, X (July, 1924), 334-335.

along with Milhaud, had parts in the film. Hans Richter, the producer, admitting that the interpretations were Freudian influenced, and that although it was presented as a surrealist film, has claimed that it was, in essence, a dada film.¹⁵⁷

Dadaists seized upon every imaginable opportunity to make weird and unintelligible references to objects, art, music, and persons. An aphorism may have served the purpose, or possibly a fragment of a sentence or phrase, or even ridiculous concoctions of the imagination. Here are two among many: "5éme crime à l'horizon 2 accidents chanson pour violon--le viol sous l'eau . . .";¹⁵⁸ "Item 109; W. Stuckenschmidt, Magdourg, Musikdada II: Dieses Bild is kein Bild."¹⁵⁹ In addition to producing photos of many famous musicians (e. g. Ray's photos of Arnold Schönberg), the dadaists made up lists of important people,¹⁶⁰ who they claimed would appear on their concerts.¹⁶¹ They also concocted lists of people whom they claimed belonged to their movement. Tzara printed one

¹⁵⁷"Dada and the Film," Dada. Monograph, p. 70.

¹⁵⁸Dada. Monograph, p. 25.

¹⁵⁹The Dada Painters and Poets, pp. 88-89.

¹⁶⁰"The Good Old Dada Days," Time, LXIV (June 28, 1954), 74.

¹⁶¹On one occasion they announced that Charlie Chaplin would appear on their program, but like other predictions which did not materialize, Chaplin did not show up.

such list of these names--people whom he called "dada presidents"; this list included the names of Stravinsky and Varèse.¹⁶²

Dada concerts were intentionally unpredictable and created so much curiosity and interest that the audiences returned each time, greater in size, to witness the unexpected happenings. Their exhibitions were usually sellouts and the overcapacity audiences delighted the dadaists because they helped to stimulate dissension and build up excitement. Their overly crowded places often provoked the concert-goers into procuring articles to throw on the stage, or use in self-defense. Tzara relates that on one occasion "there were three spectators for every seat, . . . it was suffocating. Enthusiastic members of the audience had brought musical instruments to interrupt us."¹⁶³ Triumphant as dada was in its skillful methods of overpowering its audiences, occasionally, critics and various members of the audience succeeded in responding to the dadaists with rejoinders using the dadaists's own tactics:

A Dada grand ball was organized by Serner, in Geneva, in the course of which music for the xylophone with slide, stringed drums and grand or upright piano without keys, was played. There was a duet on the loves of the ornithorhynchus and the government gazette, a ballet of three feathered sardines, a "Reverie of the Forsaken Brontosaurus," and a gay monologue by Tzara.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶²"Dada Dictionary," p. 171.

¹⁶³Malcolm Cowley, "The Religion of Art II: A Discourse over the Grave of Dada," The New Republic, LXXVII (January 10-17, 1934), 247.

¹⁶⁴Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit," p. 174.

CHAPTER VI

SURREALISM AND MUSIC

Futurism established an aesthetic creed for its music and announced its programs in manifestos. Cubism, although primarily a visual art movement, invited music in its programs and encouraged art collaboration. Dadaism was conceived as using art, literature, and music to work for its best interests; later, however, it spared no art form from its brutal attacks. Surrealism inherited many of dada's literary and artistic ideals and personalities but intentionally avoided musical involvement because its leader, André Breton (as well as some other members of the movement), felt that music had no place in the surrealist program. The deliberate slight of musical art in this movement can be readily explained, since Breton acknowledged an aversion to music. His rejection of music actually represented a bumptious attitude towards its unimportance as an art. It is surprising that music could survive at all under such negative attitudes, since Breton, as the most prominent and influential figure in the new movement, consistently and personally decided whom or what he would admit or expel. The answer lies perhaps in the fact that the so-called new spirit emerging out of dada was

already permeated with musical activities, and hence a certain degree of continued musical involvement was inevitable.

Curiously, the origin of the name of the movement was to be found in two musical works, the ballet, Parade (May, 1917), in which Apollinaire had written a text for the program and employed the term in reference to l'esprit nouveau, and a reference to the term in Apollinaire's production of Les Mamelles de Tirésias (June 24, 1917), a surrealist play involving music.¹ Apollinaire has been recognized as the founder and leader of this new spirit. The founding of the Nord-Sud review, March, 1917, was the earliest substantial link in the movement from dada to surrealism, but the surrealism of adventure which Apollinaire mentioned in Les Mamelles was in evidence long before 1917. Although Breton made no secret of his dislike for music, he conceded that surrealism possibly had a musical counterpart in hot jazz and swing.² Whether this is true or not, dada had its own version of jazz which evolved from the earlier ragtime. It has also been pointed out that Chirico's paintings anticipated the surrealist visual activities. David Drew comments that ragtime resembled the figure of the little girl bowling a hoop in The Mystery and Melancholy of a Street (Chirico, 1914):

¹"Bibliographical Notes on Apollinaire and Cubism," Bernard Karpel, Part I: "The Man," Apollinaire, The Cubist Painters, p. 54.

²Letter to Alfred Barr, Jr., from André Breton, translated by Virgil Thomson, 1941. Facsimile provided for Thomas H. Greer.

The girl is a pathetic fleck of life in the deathly emptiness of the scene, menaced by the cold shadow of a hidden statue that lies ahead of her. . . . "One has the impression that even if she reaches the light, she is doomed." The tender spirit of ragtime is likewise doomed.³

Another point which strengthens the jazz influence was Satie's use of it; Satie was regarded as the musical mentor of the new spirit through les Six. This spirit, long in evidence before the dada-surrealist split, was not shaken off so easily after surrealism was firmly entrenched as a movement. Mackworth states that in spite of their intentions, Tzara, Arp, Duchamp, and Picabia had had in mind the Apollinaire of the L'antitradition futuriste.⁴ Apollinaire, in this case, found himself embarrassed by the fact that dada and surrealism were both alien to him; yet, in surrealism he was uncomfortably forced to recognize his own influence in its origins.

André Breton vs. Music

It is difficult to understand, in view of Breton's admiration for Apollinaire, how he and Louis Aragon promoted the demonstration against Satie's Mercure. McDougall has debated their attitudes towards Mercure, which, in his opinion, amounted to blackmail. He pointed out their complete lack of understanding of music and indicated that the only possible

³Hartog, European Music in the Twentieth Century, p. 251. See footnote.

⁴L'antitradition futuriste was a manifesto issued by Apollinaire (1913) when, for a short period of time, he was attracted to the futurist movement.

excuse for their behavior was the interpretation of the new spirit in terms of Satie's age. McDougall's defense of Satie suggested that Breton and Aragon were incapable of judging music: ". . . if they accuse him of being too old simply because he is sixty three years of age, they betray, for poets, the mentality of wine and cheese merchants who judge art exclusively by the number of years."⁵

Breton's own admission to his lack of musical understanding was revealed in a letter to Alfred Barr, Jr., following the latter's request for Breton's opinion on music. This letter prompted several rejoinders between Breton and Virgil Thomson. They are significant to this study because they verify Breton's negative attitude toward music. Breton and his surrealist friends, especially Péret, admitted that they had a distinct aversion to music. How much of Breton's was due to theoretical or practical considerations, Breton was unable to say; but he believed the aversion was most likely a physical peculiarity. He also confessed that noise (organized by man) was quickly incompatible to his ear.⁶ Admitting that he accepted songs with humorous words and a discreet accompaniment, he further commented that, in support of his own attitude, many writers and philosophers (Hegel and Hugo as examples) have also regarded poetry as the highest art,

⁵"Music and Dancing in Paris," p. 80.

⁶Breton has used the word noise instead of music, probably in a pejorative sense.

with painting and sculpture a close second--music, of course, was at the bottom of the list. Breton conceded that music had been defended by a small group of surrealists (Aragon and Eluard), but that the painters had rarely expressed themselves in this regard. He explained that Rimbaud, Lautréamont, and Apollinaire had granted music some slight attention, but that Mallarmé came to eventually dislike music. Aside from the above mentioned songs, he concluded that the works of Erik Satie, Claude Torrasse, and Offenbach's "La Belle Hélène" might possibly communicate with him, and that jazz was probably the only true surrealist music.⁷

The prominent American composer and music critic, Virgil Thomson, replied to Breton's appraisal of music's position with its sister arts. In an unpublished article, "Surrealism and Music,"⁸ Thomson claimed that for centuries poets, with the exception of Victor Hugo, who attacked music and called it the most "costly of noises," vied in their praise of music. According to Thomson, Richard Wagner evened the score with Hugo by writing his own libretti, subsequently collecting all of the royalties himself. Since this time, Thomson claims that the poets have been bitter and in more recent years,

⁷Letter from Alfred Barr, Jr., previously cited.

⁸In a letter to the author, September 21, 1964, Thomson stated that he did not remember having published the article, indicating possibly that it was not published. The article, in manuscript form, was loaned to the author for the purposes of this study. The article was dated 1944; during this year Thomson was music critic for the New York Herald Tribune.

have even been indignant about music in general. He referred to André Breton and the surrealist poets who adopted what he believes to be a humorous kind of poetry, adding that the painting counterpart has not realized any technical advance either. In his reply to Breton's statement that poets held little regard for music, especially in the romantic period, Thomson refuted this statement, declaring that the poets have more than matched it with their devotion to music. Thomson construed Breton's viewpoints to be snobbish, although he recognized his inadequacy for audible intellectual understanding. Furthermore, he has taken Breton to task for making a pass at Hegelian interpretation as being the answer to his own insensitivity to beauty, pointing out the fecund friendship with music and musicians as exhibited by Diderot, Helmholtz, Grimm, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche, as well as the contributions Hugo himself made in supplying libretti for Verdi's operas. With some intent to downgrade modern poetry, Thomson notes that musicians and first-class painters have been able to collaborate more successfully than musicians and poets because of poetic failure for declamation. He also contends that mathematicians, physicists, and musicians realized a more intellectual compatibility than music and poetry.⁹

Breton's reference to swing and jazz prompted Thomson to advise Breton to leave music alone--otherwise, he would find

⁹Thomson's article lists the name of Alfred Einstein. In all probability, he was referring to Albert Einstein.

that all surrealist techniques (free associations, automatic creation, and systematic subversiveness) have been borrowed from the musical profession for many years, and that musicians are always breaking rules in which automation and subversiveness are musical traditions and not vested interests. He further compares Breton's automatism to the musician's inspiration. What is probably the most significant statement in Thomson's discussion points out the lack of musical attention to Breton's writings:

Monsieur Breton is in need of being set to music; he hints as much in his letter [to Alfred Barr]. Indeed I have long observed that modern poets are friendly toward music in about the same degree to which modern musicians have paid their work the compliment of framing it in "the most costly of noises."¹⁰

Breton, complying to a request by Modern Music, presented his views on music in an article "Silence is Golden." The content of this article, in essence, revealed similar statements as those contained in his letter to Barr, quoting the same poets and philosophers, adding the names of Gautier, Baudelaire, Lemaitre, and Taine. Breton, again admitting his musical ignorance, contended that the poet could profit more in discovering an "inner music" through his inner thinking. Here he is referring to automatic writing in which the curious chain of words and phrases, as well as the tonal value of words, provides the poet with the only kind of music he needs.

¹⁰Thomson, "Surrealism and Music," (article in answer to Breton's letter to Alfred Barr).

He also confirmed his dislike for instrumental music by accusing instrumentalists of negative attitudes toward sound. Although Breton states that he deplored many poems set to music, he suggested that song and poetry were of a common origin and that their previous separation (by the Romans) now needs to be nullified, though he professed to be too ignorant musically to attempt such a reunification.¹¹

Composers and Surrealism

It is ironic that the poet who came closest to Breton's ideal, Apollinaire, approved of and contributed to several cooperative art ventures involving music. To those previously mentioned (Parade, containing Apollinaire's imprimatur, and Les Mamelles) may be added Le Bestiaire, Banalités, and Le Bestiaire ou Cortège d'Orphée. Zone has been considered the turning point in Apollinaire's career and the theme of the haunting Musicien de Saint-Merry roused long echoes among the surrealist poets:

I do not sing of this world nor of the other planets
I sing of all the possibilities within myself outside
this world and the planets. . . .¹²

The play, Les Mamelles de Tirésias, first sketched in 1904, rewritten in 1911, and produced in 1917 shortly before Apollinaire's death, has been acknowledged as his best work. Proclaimed by many critics as a surrealist play (including

¹¹Translated by Louise Varèse, XXI (March-April, 1944), 150-154.

¹²Mackworth, Guillaume Apollinaire and the Cubist Life, p. 154.

the surrealists themselves), Mamelles was a satirical fantasy with a moral theme concerned with funmaking "aimed at human absurdities generally, officialdom and the press in particular, 'woman's rights' among other things and public morals all-around."¹³ The story involves the exchange of sex between a man and his wife in order to avoid having children. Fantastic actions follow the sex change, the breasts of the woman turn into balloons which she sets free--then she grows a beard. The rest of the action involves a fortune-teller (his wife) going into the audience while the actors watch--a reversal of theatrical values. At the end of the play the man and woman happily return to their original states. Apollinaire called it a surrealist drama of poetic fantasy. From this description Breton and Soupault adopted the word surrealism "as being much more expressive of the new revery than Gérard de Nerval's name of supernaturalism, involving, as that did, the local jargon of only a special phase of surrealism, that of ghosts and magic."¹⁴ Apollinaire states that he directed his surrealist play at the French, to point out their decreasing birth-rate--pointing out the most simple remedy: procreating children.¹⁵ Mamelles was first produced on June 21, 1917, at the Théâtre

¹³Jacques de Menasce, "Poulenc's Les Mamelles de Thirésias," The Musical Quarterly, XXXV (April, 1949), 316.

¹⁴Levy, Surrealism, p. 31.

¹⁵Mackworth, Guillaume Apollinaire and the Cubist Life, p. 224.

Maubel by Germaine Albert-Birot, surrealist poet and musician; the costumes were designed by Serge Férat and Max Jacob rehearsed the choir.¹⁶ Mamelles was later revived with a new musical setting by Francis Poulenc.

Though there is no evidence to support the belief that any of these musicians were self-acknowledged surrealist composers, the surrealist writers generally did not object to having their texts set to music, the text of their predecessors, or even that of the members of its ever-changing front-- moreover, surrealist leaders were unable to prevent its members from collaborating with composers. Indeed, it appears that the surrealists were continually searching for music to coordinate with their film productions, but for the most part they had to resort to traditional music.¹⁷ As Virgil Thomson pointed out, surrealist painting was not an advance in art; fantastic and absurd as it often appeared, it was a distorted version of romantic art. The composers who dipped into surrealist literary sources for inspiration included Satie, Poulenc, and Auric. Other composers, often described as

¹⁶Ibid., p. 222. Yves Duplessis in Surrealism has described a collaboration (p. 93) in which Birot wrote a poly-drama Le Bondieu in which a number of characters were to perform on two superimposed sets. Duplessis has led one to believe that this was an outgrowth of certain surrealists' (Birot and Antonin Artaud) desire to reform the theater through a union of dance, music, and painting.

¹⁷Even before films involved coordinated sound, Satie's Entr'acte predicted this process. After the sound track became an integrated part of the film, surrealists had no choice but to solicit some kind of music.

surrealist composers (not necessarily by surrealists), included Stravinsky, Ernst Krenek, and Kurt Weill. Except for an occasional reference to jazz, the surrealists confined their remarks to literary and visual accomplishments. In view of this, the attitude of the composer toward surrealism, his interest in its aesthetics, and the opinions of the other writers and critics provide the only source through which the relation of surrealism and music has been observed.

Erik Satie

Alfred Schmeller has divided surrealism into four periods: the preparatory period (dada); the heroic period (1923-25); the critical phase (1925-30); and the autonomous phase (1930-39).¹⁸ The validity of this classification is questionable and Schmeller is alone in his use of this approach. Assuming that these are acceptable divisions of the movement, Satie would have done most of his work in the preparatory (dada) period even though he did not die until 1925. Whether or not he was ever aware that he was writing music compatible to the aesthetic purposes of this movement is doubtful, although Satie was cognizant of the aesthetic changes in all of the movements with which he had contact. According to Sutherland, his associations with religious and mystic orders (Rosicrucians, Catholicism, and his own church), his fondness for legend, as well as his superstitious nature,

¹⁸Surrealism, p. 7.

certainly made him good company for Cocteau, Apollinaire, and the surrealists.¹⁹

Satie and the surrealists had many common traits. Perhaps the most important one of these factors was his concern for the new emerging spirit of surrealism and communism. Even before Breton and other surrealists received their surrealist illuminations, Satie was busy composing fantastic little masterpieces such as Memoires d'un amnésique (1912-13), pieces which were later described as surrealistically inclined, and as reflecting the intentions of the new spirit.²⁰ Satie explained, from his point of view, the intent of the new spirit: ". . . it teaches us to aim at an emotive simplicity and a firmness of utterance enabling sonorities and rhythms to assert themselves clearly, unequivocal in design and accent, and contrived in a spirit of humility and renunciation."²¹ Satie's political feelings were compatible to those of the surrealists; he openly embraced socialism and eventually communism. At a performance of the works of les Six in Belgium, Milhaud relates how Satie asked him to relay a message to a communist:

This was done [the concert] under the auspices of Mme. Vandervelde, the wife of the Minister of Fine Arts. Satie, who had just withdrawn from the Socialist Party to join the Communists, asked me to inform her that "Erik Satie of the Soviet of Arcueil, kissed her feet."²²

¹⁹Gertrude Stein, p. 169.

²⁰Everett Helm, "Satie, Still a Fascinating Enigma," Musical America, LXXVIII (February, 1958), 23. Memoires was published in the Revue de la Société Internationale de Musique (1912-13).

²¹Myers, Erik Satie, p. 130. ²²Notes Without Music, p. 99.

Satie's spontaneous drawings have also been described as having surrealistic overtones. Helm gives one illustration of this in his reflections:

While I was pondering over the enigma of Erik Satie, dusk had fallen over the garden, where he so often sat, and, perhaps, passed the time designing those curious little slips of paper, with their surrealistic drawings and inscriptions, which are his trademark.²³

Satie's biographer, Myers, described a set of surrealistic musical pieces called Heures Séculaires et Instantanées which contained the pieces: "Crépuscule Matinel (di Midi)," "Obstacals Vénimeux," and "Affolements granitiques." These are small pieces with well-defined themes, and contain the usual eccentric texts. The treatment is described as straightforward and uncompromising, and in spite of the lunatic, hallucinatory qualities of the texts, Myers insists that the wag in Satie "was always intruding upon the musician--taking a perverse pleasure in turning the sublime into the ridiculous."²⁴ He compared these pieces to surrealist pictures and to the Nonsense Songs and Stories of Edward Lear, and to Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland, insisting that these works could also be classified as the result of pure surrealist inspiration.²⁵

Myers also feels that Satie's three waltzes, Precieux Dégouté, resembled a surrealist montage. In these the

²³"The Man With a Mask," p. 119.

²⁴Erik Satie, p. 81.

²⁵Ibid., p. 128.

absence of bar-lines, displaced stresses and dry harmony, as well as the incongruous association of ideas, that is, text and music, created "a kind of surrealist montage of image on three separate entirely disconnected planes." This group includes waltz no. 1 "Sa Taille" (waist); no. 2 "Sa Binocle" (spectacles); and no. 3 "Ses Jambes" (legs).²⁶

Some of Satie's other works, among them Le Piège de Méduse, Parade, Mercure, and Relâche, have all been described as having surrealist qualities.

Le Piège de Méduse.--Satie composed both the music and libretto to this work, and it has been named as his first avant-garde work in spite of its date (1913). Myers insisted that it was a product of the same spirit that animated the early surrealist painters (Chagall and Chirico), who were not, at that time, labeled as surrealists either.²⁷

Parade.--Three factors point to Parade's possible surrealist affinities: Apollinaire's text, an analogy to Chirico's paintings, and its jazz elements. Parade proved to be a kind of discovery for Apollinaire; after observing the incongruity of events, real and unreal, as well as the fusion of scenic and choreographic arts, the strategy of shock, Apollinaire's term, sur-realism, superseded Cocteau's preferred word, realism.²⁸

²⁶Ibid. ²⁷Ibid., p. 101. ²⁸Barr, Picasso, p. 99.

The characters in Parade (managers and performers), though ostensibly human, were considered more puppet-like than even the character in Stravinsky's Petrushka. Drew has compared these characters to Chirico's faceless oval-headed manikins. The dancers have also been described as entertainless and functional, much like the empty-lined streets which were not so much streets as pathways to the innerself. Drew insists that the meaning of Parade is "veiled in the folds of the subconscious."²⁹

The ragtime composed for the little American girl's dance has also been compared to Chirico's paintings: "There is no comic or ironic intent behind the dry biscuits, prominently displayed in certain of Chirico's paintings, any more than there is behind the snatches of ragtime and bal musette which occur throughout Parade."³⁰

Mercure.--The performance of Mercure occurred at a time when the memories of the split between dada and surrealism were still fresh in the minds of the opposing factions. Early in 1924 Satie delivered to the Comte de Beaumont the book and music for Mercure, for the latter's "Les Soirées de Paris." Picasso contributed some magnificent costumes and sets for this ballet, and Massine prepared the choreography.

²⁹"Modern French Music," European Music in the Twentieth Century, pp. 250-252.

³⁰Ibid., p. 250.

At this time the surrealists demonstrated against the music, while upholding Picasso's creations as being the crowning effort of the collaboration. Apparently Satie was undisturbed and indifferent to the reaction. He was with Milhaud and several other persons during the performance, and according to Milhaud, he left early in order to catch the train home to Arcueil. He remarked the next day to Milhaud that he had passed a group of pseudo-dadaists who made no verbal gestures toward him.³¹

The first night's performance was so noisy that the curtain had to be lowered during the middle of the performance. The music was composed in circus-music-hall style (especially the instrumentation), but was accorded an almost academic treatment. The performance has also been described as a painter's ballet with the credit going to Picasso, although Myers contends that Satie's music contributed much more to Picasso's designs than his friends and enemies were willing to admit.³²

Myers notes that the reasons for the surrealist demonstrations now seem rather obscure, but they may be explained by means of the curious chain of circumstances which existed in this particular phase of surrealism. Surrealism, primarily a literary effort at the time, could claim only a few

³¹Notes Without Music, p. 159.

³²Erik Satie, p. 61.

personages, such as Max Ernst, Hans Arp, Georges de Chirico, and some other minor artists. Picasso was reaching a zenith of popularity at this time, and although he was not necessarily the most prominent artist in Europe, he was a serious contender. He had passed through all his cubist phases of painting and was at the point of turning his art in a new direction. The surrealists were aware of this, and since music was of a lesser concern to them, the demonstration indicated their need of his talents and prestige; it came at an opportune time, regrettably at Satie's expense. Satie, furthermore, showed no interest in the new surrealist movement, siding instead with Picabia and the others who opposed Breton. Shortly after this demonstration the surrealists issued a declaration entitled Hommage à Picasso, worded in the following manner:

We hereby place on record our profound and wholehearted admiration for Picasso who, scorning what is sanctioned by tradition, has never ceased to foster present day neurosis and to express them in masterly fashion. And now, in Mercure, . . . Picasso, far more than any of those associated with him, appears today as the eternal personification of youth and the undisputed master of the situation.³³

This declaration signed by the leading surrealists was, of course, a subtle reminder of Satie's age, and was a surrealist exploitation, designed to woo Picasso to their side. This also pointed out the factors of incongruity between

³³Myers, Erik Satie, p. 105. The underlining has been added by this writer for the purpose of emphasis.

Picasso's sophisticated scenic construction and Satie's music-hall aesthetics. A perfectly compatible wedding of scenes, music, and choreography would have been contradictory to surrealist purposes because they had insisted that works should issue from a spontaneous, loosely associated process, and the result would provide the desired result--an automatic process. Surrealist rejection of this is puzzling since the noticeable lack of connection between the action on the stage, the scenery, and the mood of the music ideally designated Mercure as a surrealist revelation.³⁴

Two friends of Satie, Duchamp and Picabia, approached him after Mercure to request his collaboration in a ballet instantanéiste. Neither had joined the surrealists at this time but were considered "near-surrealists."

Relâche.--The loosely connected events that formed this musical film and ballet provided all of the fantasy that a surrealist production could muster up at this time (1924). Some of its collaborators, Picabia, Satie, René Clair, and Jean Borlin, were eventually to join the surrealist movement.

Undoubtedly, Satie's craving for sensationalism was satisfied in this undertaking. His music "Entr'acte" linked the two ballets together. The middle section of the film, tinged with surrealism and surrealist humor, consisted of

³⁴Hansen, An Introduction to Twentieth Century Music, p. 115.

a fantastic funeral cortège involving a hearse drawn by a camel, "and a motley entourage of mourners consuming the couronnes de funérailles which were made of bread, as they follow."³⁵ The hearse was decorated with advertising posters and the whole scene was projected in slow motion. It ended in a mad flight in which the cortège and the dead man vanished.

The dancer in a tutu (Jean Borlin in a female costume) seen from below as in the "mystery wells" at fun-fairs, dancing on a transparent glass floor; the open-air chess game on the roof of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées between Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray, watched by Erik Satie, . . .³⁶

All of these elements combined to produce an effect of forceful and surprising comedy.

Satie's experience and genius for cutting musical phrases, constantly repeating and juxtaposing them without any attempt to illustrate or associate them with the visual images, is described in detail by Myers.³⁷ The role of Satie's music was confined to underlining the action of the film without calling attention to itself--much in the same manner in which a picture frame encloses a picture. Many people regarded this production as the same kind of joke as Satie's Musique d'ameublement. Shattuck, however, insists that Satie's music conformed remarkably well to the contour of Clair's fast-moving

³⁵Winter, "The Function of Music in Sound Film," p. 148.

³⁶Jean, The History of Surrealist Painting, p. 91. Duchamp, Ray, and Satie participated as actors in the film.

³⁷Erik Satie, p. 60.



Plate 46. Film Scene of Entr'acte, 1924³⁸

film montage, describing it as "a joyous free-hand anticipation of all the nightmare farces the surrealists would later produce, . . ." ³⁹

Francis Poulenc

Although no one has classified Poulenc as a surrealist composer, he was probably more of a surrealist, at least in sympathies, than were many of his contemporaries. The active support that he provided for the group that opposed Picabia and Satie, and his musical settings of surrealist poetry

³⁸The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 206.

³⁹The Banquet Years, p. 170.



Plate 47. Still showing Picabia in scene of
Entr'acte, 1924⁴⁰

attest to his abiding interest in their activities. Poulenc's affiliation with Breton and Aragon in the declaration of homage to Picasso is confirmed in his endorsement of this short document. He was surely aware that his participation would insult Satie, although the available records fail to reveal any unfavorable reaction from Satie. One cannot be

⁴⁰The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 272.

certain that Satie did not feel a deep resentment towards Poulenc, but if so, it remained his secret.

Poulenc was associated with the Parisian surrealist movement almost from the outset, and judging from his output of musical works, he maintained a close attachment to its ideals well into his later years.⁴¹ His admiration for Apollinaire and the other surrealist poets prompted him to write music to many of their poems. Poulenc revealed this admiration when he related that he was deeply attracted to the ancestors of surrealism, Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Verlaine, and that Apollinaire afforded him a total contact. He relates having discovered and fallen in love with Apollinaire's poems in 1912, at the age of 13.⁴² It is unfortunate that, considering the numerous settings he made to Apollinaire's poetry, Poulenc never met him. His devotion to Apollinaire was only exceeded by his fondness for the poems of Eluard: "Such poetry, and above all that of Eluard, whose imagination is particularly rich and alert to nuances, suited the composer's [Poulenc] needs and gave him a foundation for the development of a sober and pure lyricism."⁴³

⁴¹Drew, "Modern French Music," p. 265.

⁴²Roland Gelatt, "A Vote for Francis Poulenc," Saturday Review of Literature, XXXIII (January 28, 1950), 58.

⁴³Collaer, A History of Modern Music, p. 269.

Les Mamelles de Tirésias.--Poulenc described this play as "buffoonery with no other logic than caprice."⁴⁴ His musical materials were easily adapted to surrealist needs; his revival of the period piece and the nostalgia of the post-romantic world, were, according to Menasce, evocations in which the period piece in particular gave the curious impression of looking back to one who, in his time, had been looking ahead.⁴⁵ Very often Poulenc added a tender quality to his buffoonery, engendering a knowing restraint and furnishing a keynote to the total score with tender lyricism that achieved "the kind of objectivity needed in bringing to focus the surrealist happenings on the state."⁴⁶ The opera, described as opera buffa, was not buffa in the traditional sense, nor did it contain any comic aspects. Instead, the plot involved puppet-like prototypes, surrealist in behavior, but humanly French in their reactions.⁴⁷ Roger Shattuck's remarks that Poulenc's sustained melodies overcame a trivial text confirm those of Menasce: ". . . matching their burlesque and surprise with a musical inventiveness that never falls into mere oddity. Nor does he resort to

⁴⁴Roland Gelatt, "Farce from France: Recording of Les Mamelles de Thirésias," The Saturday Review of Literature, XXXVII (May 29, 1954), 50.

⁴⁵"Poulenc's Les Mamelles de Thirésias," p. 317.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 318.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 315.

stridency or erratic harmony for the comic nature of his music."⁴⁸

Poulenc's version, performed June 10, 1947, at the Opéra Comique, Paris, was directed by Max de Rieux. Erte provided the staging, Claude Rostand revised the original libretto, and the parts were danced rather than acted. From a historical standpoint, the opera occupied "a point at which the surrealist tradition felicitously intersects the recent American tradition of the spectacular comedy show."⁴⁹

Songs and choral works.--Poulenc turned to many surrealist poets for texts for his songs and choral works. His favored ones included Eluard, Apollinaire, Cocteau, Desnos, Jacob, and Edward James. Apollinaire's Le Bestiaire ou Cortège d'Orphée was chosen as the text for one of Poulenc's best known cycles (1919). Another cycle, Banalités, was composed much later (1940). Other song cycles using Apollinaire's poems include: Trois poèmes de Louise Lalanne (1931); Quatre poèmes de Guillaume Apollinaire (1931); Deux poèmes de Guillaume Apollinaire (1937); Calligrammes (1948); and Deux mélodies (1956, which also include poems by Eluard set for mixed choir). In addition to the cycles, Poulenc set music to several single poems of Apollinaire, including Bleuet

⁴⁸"Surrealism at the Opera Comique," Theatre Arts, XXXII (January, 1948), 51.

⁴⁹Ibid. Louise Lalanne was a pseudonym for Guillaume Apollinaire.

(1938); La Grenouillère (1938); Montparnasse (1943); Hyde Park (1943); Le Pont et un poème (1946); and Rosemunde (1954).

Poulenc also acknowledged the influence of Paul Eluard, one of the most outstanding poets of the surrealist movement, declaring that he helped him make great formal strides in his smaller choral works. This was evidenced in the fact that Poulenc drew heavily on Eluard's poems. Figure humaine (1943) is an exceptional example that constitutes a successful application of music using two a capella choirs to render a skillfully constructed secular cantata.⁵⁰ Song cycles set to Eluard's poems include: Premières mélodies (1935); Tel Jour, telle nuit (1936); Cinq poèmes de Paul Eluard (1935); Miroirs brûlants (1938); La Fraîcheur et le feu (1950); and Le Travail du peintre (1956, concerning the paintings of Picasso, Chagall, Braque, Gris, Klee, Miro, and Villon). Poulenc also provided settings to single poems: Ce doux petit visage (1938); Mais Mourir (1947); and Main dominée par le coeur (1947).

The surrealist text of Max Jacob's Le Bal masqué provided Poulenc with one of his more successful works. This work, a cantata profane for baritone and orchestra, has been classified as one of Poulenc's better known works and has assumed a prominent place in the standard repertory. Other song settings to Jacob's poems include the two song cycles:

⁵⁰Gelatt, "A Vote for Francis Poulenc," p. 58.

Cinq poèmes de Max Jacob (1931); and Parisiana (1954).⁵¹

The works of the surrealist poets Robert Desno (Le Disparu, 1947), Louis Aragon (Deux poèmes d'Aragon, 1943), and Raymond Radiguet (Paul et Virginie, 1946) were also utilized.

Two other works that further emphasized Poulenc's fascination with surrealist texts have been evidenced in the cantata Sécheresses (1937) and Dialogues des Carmélite (1953-56). The first, Sécheresses, was composed to a text by Edward James. Drew has described this as one of Poulenc's most substantial serious works as well as the most interesting achievement. In referring to Poulenc's recourse to surrealist text sources, Drew has claimed this to be "the only successful translation into musical terms of the surrealist aesthetic which flourished after the First World War."⁵² Drew has afforded no explanation as to why or how Poulenc achieved this aesthetic translation. The second, Dialogues, set to words by Georges Bernanos, was based upon a novel by Gertrude von LeFort. It was originally intended for a film version but was realized by Poulenc as a full length three act opera. It has been described as monotonous and as lacking dramatic impetus due to a predominantly female cast. Hansen attributes its musical shortcomings to the psychological drama

⁵¹Jean Roy, Preséances contemporaines Musique Française (Paris, Nouvelles éditions Debresse, 1962), pp. 259-260.

⁵²"Modern French Music," p. 265.

involved, pointing out that his music was better suited to surrealist farce.⁵³

The collaboration with Cocteau resulted in the successful production of Les Biches (The House Party), a ballet in one act, which was produced at the Théâtre de Monte-Carlo, January 6, 1924, (choreography by Nijinsky and decor by Marie Laurencin). This work has been said to have resembled the simultaneous perceptions of the surrealists. Collaer feels that this work served as a bridge between Apollinaire and the later "Resistance" poets, Aragon and Eluard.⁵⁴

Another work, Cocardes (1919), a song cycle using Cocteau's poems (first performed February 21, 1919, at the Comédie des Champs Elysées), has been interpreted as both humorous and unpretentious. Cocteau's "guying" of Mallarmé pleased and suited his music, "revealing . . . close connection between clinical and poetic methods of free association and the near relationship of both to nonsense."⁵⁵ The unusual scoring of the first Cocardes ("Mi el da Narbonne") called for viola, trombone, cornet, bass drum, and triangle.

La Voix humaine, a tragédie lyrique in one act, first performed at the Opéra Comique in Paris, requires only one character, a woman who carries on a telephone conversation

⁵³An Introduction to Twentieth Century Music, p. 145.

⁵⁴A History of Modern Music, p. 268.

⁵⁵Cooper, French Music, p. 195.

involving a forty-five minute farewell monologue to her husband who is marrying another woman. Poulenc's music is constructed in episodes, but the more rational elements of Cocteau's text serve to disqualify it as a surrealist inspired work. Poulenc's music has been pictured as amusing, yet well conceived melodically, and defined in such a way as to make it an audience capturing work.⁵⁶

Georges Auric

Auric's collaboration with Jean Cocteau has raised several questions concerning his possible affiliation with surrealism, although Auric had earlier sided with Picabia during the dada-surrealist dispute. Cocteau's shifting loyalties to surrealism prompted a great deal of controversy over a revised version of his play, Le Sang d'un Poète. Le Sang, originally written for stage production, was eventually realized as a film; this version enlisted Auric's musical efforts. Claims to its being a surrealist work by numerous writers and critics are speculative and need considerable clarification. A review of Cocteau's involvement with surrealism helps to understand this controversy.

At the time of Le Sang's creation Cocteau was temporarily divorced from his surrealist activities (1932). Evidence pointing to the play's surrealist implications are strong,

⁵⁶Joseph Machlis, Introduction to Contemporary Music (New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 1961), pp. 234-238.

and even Cocteau admitted that some psychological factors, especially those involving symbolism, were present in the plot. Surrealist aesthetics were compatible to Le Sang, and the film medium was ideally suited to translate the dream images of this play into a surrealist manifestation.

The factors concerning Cocteau's play or film have placed it in close agreement with surrealist purposes. In spite of the denials of both Cocteau and surrealists, the proximity of Le Sang to the surrealist aesthetics belies their statements. Cocteau maintained that it was not surrealist and that he actually made it in opposition to the surrealists. The surrealists, on the other hand, rejected the film. These actions would lead one to assume that it could not possibly be surrealist. Several writers, however, have entered into the particulars of the film and contradict the denials of both parties, perhaps indicating that the qualities of the film were indeed surrealist. Neal Oxhandler has stated that, although Cocteau and the surrealists were bitter enemies for many years, "he [Cocteau] seems to have taken as much from them as from his personal friend, Apollinaire."⁵⁷ Many surrealists despised Cocteau because he was a prolific writer; Breton had warned against too much production, pointing out the dangers of commercialism. The surrealists also considered Cocteau to be too bourgeois. Oxhandler, on

⁵⁷Scandal and Parade, p. 23.

the other hand, comments that the primitive and uncontrollable nature of surrealism was far from Cocteau's nature, but that he resembled them in his belief and use of scandal "and the use of poetry as a revolutionary anti-bourgeois weapon."⁵⁸ Cocteau, like the surrealists, was interested in arousing his readers to the extent that they would search the mysterious depths of their "own beings and . . . accept responsibility for whatever angel or demon they may find there."⁵⁹ One stylistic difference between Cocteau's efforts and the surrealists has been pointed out--that pertaining to the uninhibited free style which Cocteau was lacking: "His work is pondered, rewritten, constricted by intellectual decisions and a persistent groping for artistic form."⁶⁰ With regard to the unrestrained free style that surrealists claimed to use, Elaine Marks points out that Breton, who insisted that all surrealist writing is uncontrolled, actually relied upon certain traditional procedures and much of his poetry was governed by form: "The passages are constructed according to the most traditional rules of expository style with Breton in complete control of his thought and of his language."⁶¹ The extent of confusion between surrealist theory and practice is evident in these remarks. Crosland's statement that Cocteau denied the surrealist label in insisting that Le Sang

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹French Poetry, p. 301.

was concerned with a conscious world that Cocteau built for himself reveals a greater contradiction when one reads Cocteau's explanation of his purpose in making the film: ". . . trying to picture the poet's inner self, as Williamson pictures the bottom of the sea. "It means going into myself, into my night . . . It means taking the poetic state by surprise."⁶² This is essentially what the surrealist attempted to do. Cocteau was closer to surrealism than he has admitted and his own statements explaining his writing style appear to verify this statement.

Whether Auric's music was surrealistic or not is debatable; but Winter has claimed that Auric's music helped translate the physical problems of film reality into a surrealist dream image because

. . . physical reproduction on the screen gave a certain reality and logic to images that normally would have clarity only in dreams, it would have been inadequate merely to use exotic music or string together distant tonalities. By certain sustained melodic passages, Auric provided a tangible element.⁶³

Igor Stravinsky

Stravinsky was constantly attracted to new movements, an inevitable result of his close contacts with Paris life through the Russian ballet. According to Max Graf, his true greatness had little to do with the moods of the day or Parisian nights;

⁶²Jean Cocteau, p. 147.

⁶³"The Function of Music in Sound Film," p. 161.

but undoubtedly they touched his music, stimulated and helped shape his everchanging style, giving his personality that special character that distinguished him from other great musicians such as Schönberg and Bartok.⁶⁴ Stravinsky's movement from one "ism" to another was brought about by this association with artists and dancers, and it is highly unlikely that he could have, after encountering different phases in which his music was called primitive, impressionistic, cubist, dadaist, and neo-classic, escaped the surrealist stamp. Ernst Krenek intimated that Stravinsky, although a composer of infinitely greater vitality than Busoni, had probably adopted Busoni's neo-classic techniques, which clearly showed surrealist trends. He explained that the classical figures and elements, not taken at face value, represented conjured up ghosts "walking about in what must be, to them, incomprehensible surroundings. . . . treated like excavated fragments, used with quotation marks, set in strange and startling proximity to heterogeneous materials."⁶⁵ Krenek felt that some of Stravinsky's music was so closely associated with surrealism that he explained his feelings in an article to this effect. A great part of this article is devoted to the praise of Jean Cocteau, who, according to Krenek, knew

⁶⁴Modern Music, p. 242.

⁶⁵"Busoni--Then and Now," pp. 90-91.

more about the real situation in music than musicians themselves.⁶⁶

Max Graf also noted that "occasionally one has the impression that Jean Cocteau is prompting Stravinsky in what to say and where to go."⁶⁷ Krenek claimed that Stravinsky's efforts were directed toward transmitting surrealism into the field of music. He designated L'Histoire du soldat as Stravinsky's point of departure after which his procedures were much more progressive than neo-classic, that is, surrealism was more concerned with the destruction of the object rather than its restoration. The old material, he explained, is treated as a conglomeration of wreckage and rebuilt to contradict the old arrangement. Concerning the shock involved in this process, he stated that

Surrealism causes a shock very similar to that produced by the introduction of really new features. But while the latter is legitimated by the direct impact of something truly novel, the shock felt in Surrealism is obtained indirectly by the distortion of old material into a newfangled structure.⁶⁸

In partial agreement with Krenek, Paul Rosenfeld retraced the route through Busoni's neo-classicism:

With Busoni a mass of the composers recoiled under the standard of neo-classicism towards the traditional means, or with Stravinsky, himself once

⁶⁶Ernst Krenek, "Strawinsky and Surrealism," Music Here and Now, translated by Barthold Fles, 1st ed., (New York, W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1939), p. 72.

⁶⁷Modern Music, p. 243.

⁶⁸Krenek, "Strawinsky and Surrealism," pp. 72-73.

an atonalist towards surrealism--which treats old material as wreckage to be built into systems contradicting the original arrangements.⁶⁹

Krenek himself, as a result of a collaboration with Chirico, also was accused of surrealistic tendencies. This endeavor resulted in an opera, Das Leben des Orest (1930-31), for which Krenek composed the music and Chirico designed the pictures. H. H. Stuckenschmidt defined the music of this work as an attempt to achieve a synthesis of jazz and classicism, but resulted instead in a mediocre surrealism: "It is experimental in style not very different from certain compositions of the sur-realist school, although it falls behind them in artistic effectiveness."⁷⁰

Kurt Weill

Ernst Krenek pointed out that Kurt Weill and Henri Sauguet, and other composers also contributed to the advance of musical surrealism. In the case of Weill, he suggested that it probably began with Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahogony. The music was intended to be simply reactionary, and beyond attack and shock hardly anything remained: "The movement has deteriorated until it has a craft and by deterioration has surrendered the essential individuality required

⁶⁹"Modern Music," The Yale Review, XXIX (Autumn-Summer, 1939-1940), 487-489. Rosenfeld provides a review of the article on Stravinsky and surrealism contained in Krenek's Music Here and Now--the 1939 edition.

⁷⁰"Hellenic Jazz," Modern Music, VII (April, 1930), 22-25.

for a really new style in art."⁷¹ Two other works of Weill have been associated with surrealism: The Protagonist, a one-act opera produced by the Dresden State Opera, March 24, 1926, and The Tzar Allows Himself to be Photographed, a satiric sketch, produced in Leipzig, February 18, 1928. Slonimsky noted that the former was of the "'surrealist' type conjugating the fantastic with the all-too-realistic in its stage action, and rhythmic squareness with harmonic compositeness, . . ."⁷² whereas the Tzar consisted of a "fantastic surrealist story and light music liberally sprinkled with dissonance, . . ."⁷³

These three musical enterprises offer little or no evidence to clearly identify the music as surrealist, but only show Weill's use of texts described as surrealist.

Surrealism and Other Composers

At this point it is quite obvious that surrealism was rarely in search of music. With a few exceptions, the contacts that were made between music and surrealism were usually musically initiated. It is necessary, however, to mention the various ways in which the musicians approached surrealism: surrealist protestations and demonstrations against things with which they disagreed or did not like;

⁷¹Music Here and Now, p. 73.

⁷²Music Since 1900, p. 273.

⁷³Ibid., p. 297.

the designation of composers as surrealists; the setting of music to pictures; the use of surrealist texts; and the collaboration with surrealists in the production of ballets and films.

Demonstrations

George Antheil was one of the first American composers to be demonstrated against by surrealists. This involved his Ballet mécanique (performed at Carnegie Hall, April 10, 1927). According to Randall Thompson, many factors contributed to the poor performance: the rehearsals were poorly organized; the intended use of film failed to materialize; and the intended use of player-pianos did not materialize. The uneasiness that existed in the front row because of small airplane propellers generated undue anxiety throughout an audience already prepared for the worst, and as a result "a group of surrealists protested violently against the Philistine and pandemonium reigned."⁷⁴

An earlier surrealist demonstration directed against Constant Lambert's Romeo and Juliet (performed at Monte Carlo, May 24, 1926) instigated a scene similar to that mentioned above. This emprise was realized through the collective efforts of the composer (Lambert), Diaghilev, and the surrealist designers, Max Ernst and Jean Negro. The

⁷⁴"American Composers V. Antheil," Modern Music, VIII (May-June, 1931), 21.

demonstration was less against the music than it was against Ernst, who had been very active in surrealist affairs, but who was, at this time, a victim of the surrealist changing front.⁷⁵

In early 1926 Breton, Desnos, and others demonstrated at a performance given by the Ballet Russe. Breton and the surrealists brought whistles and noise making devices to drown out the music and disrupt the ballet. The name of the ballet has not been preserved. It is assumed that this was the ballet La Pastorale, presented by Georges Auric and Diaghilev; Picasso designed the stage sets for this ballet. After the performance, Picasso recommended to Diaghilev that surrealist artists like Max Ernst and Joan Miro be employed to design the stage sets for the next year--Diaghilev complied.⁷⁶

André Souris

André Souris, a Belgian composer, has been called a surrealist by William Austin.⁷⁷ Slonimsky also describes his music as surrealist, listing his Quelques Airs de Clarisse Juaranville as "the first piece of musical surrealism." Scored for soprano, string quartet and piano, it was performed

⁷⁵Jean, The History of Surrealist Painting, p. 157.

⁷⁶Josephson, Life Among the Surrealists, p. 329. Though no source has definitely identified La Pastorale as the ballet causing the demonstrations, it is possible that it may have been the ballet Josephson was referring to.

⁷⁷Music in the 20th Century, p. 445.

at the International Society for Contemporary Music Festival in Barcelona, April 21, 1936. Slonimsky notes that Souris was originally a self-acknowledged dadaist, but became an aesthetic actionist.⁷⁸ Andre Hodeir more recently describes him as a twelve-tone composer.⁷⁹

Paul Klee's "The Twittering Machine"

This surrealist painting prompted Giselher Klebe to write music using the same title. The result was a short orchestral work described as variation music "of uncommon concentration and rhythmic inspiration." The first performance was given at a music festival in Donaueschingen in 1950.⁸⁰ Everett Helm mentions another performance of Klebe's The Twittering Machine by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Joseph Keilberth. He interprets it as a musical translation of Klee's surrealist picture, commenting that the effect of the music was shocking, much like the early

⁷⁸Music Since 1900, p. 409.

⁷⁹Since Debussy, p. 145.

⁸⁰H. H. Stuckenschmidt, "Synthesis and New Experiments: Four Contemporary German Composers," The Musical Quarterly, XXXVIII (July, 1952), 358. Two other composers, David Diamond and Gunther Schuller have also composed compositions with the same title. Diamond composed a group of works based on four paintings called The World of Paul Klee: "The Dance of the Grieving Child," "The Black Prince," "Pastorale," and "The Twittering Machine." The first performance was given by the Portland Junior Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Jacob Avshalomov, February 15, 1958. Each was described as being framed, presenting a version of the twelve-tone row, but not using 12 tones in the strictest sense. "Current Chronicle: United States," The Musical Quarterly, XLIV (January-October, 1958), 511.

twenties, and consisted of a "juxtaposition of short, truncated motifs, outbursts, weird cries, and ejaculations."⁸¹

Surrealist Texts

The colossal influence that Rimbaud exerted on modern poets, especially surrealists, according to Rosenfeld, has brought attention to a work of Benjamin Britten. This concerns Britten's setting of Rimbaud's Les illuminations. Surrealists carefully point to this work as one of the most prophetic examples of surrealist poetry. Illuminations contains nine poems, to which Britten composed nine pieces for tenor and string orchestra in 1939. The performance was broadcast on May 18, 1941, over the Columbia Broadcasting Station as part of the International Society for Contemporary Music Festival.⁸² Rosenfeld speculated on Rimbaud's influence on the music, tracing it from Rimbaud to Apollinaire, Hart Crane, and the later surrealist poets. Illuminations, he declared, was the "first successful and conspicuous Rimbaud-setting."⁸³

At the request of André Breton, homage was paid to one of surrealism's ancestors, Alfred Jarry through the production of two of his works: Ubu Enchaîné and a playlet, L'Objet

⁸¹"Current Chronicle: Germany," The Musical Quarterly, XXVII (April, 1951), 271.

⁸²Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, p. 501.

⁸³"Rimbaud and Musical Art," Accent, IV (Spring, 1944), 183.

Aimé. The former enlisted the efforts of Ernst (stage sets) and portrait texts by Picasso, Ray, Miro, Magritte, Marcel Jean, Maurice Henry, and Tanguay. Music was not composed for or used with Ubu Enchaîné, but L'Objet Aimé was set by the actor-composer, O'Brady.⁸⁴ Both plays were presented at the Comédie des Champs-Élysées.

Ballet and Cinema

A group of like-minded artists, Diaghilev, Chirico, and Vittorio Rieti,⁸⁵ combined their efforts to produce a ballet called Le Bal. It was performed in Monte Carlo in 1929. The set provided by Chirico attracted a great deal of attention, especially with regard to architectural and antiquated effects.⁸⁶ No sources have described the music as surrealist, although Collaer compares Rieti's music to that of Auric and Poulenc.⁸⁷

Preparation of ballets without the assistance of living composers has been practised for many years by choreographers such as Michel Fokine, Antony Tudor, and many others. In this kind of preparation, traditional music has been coordinated with the choreography, and in other instances, the

⁸⁴Jean, The History of Surrealist Painting, p. 289. O'Brady's name is absent from all prominent musical sources.

⁸⁵Rieti, an Italian composer, studied with Respighi and was greatly influenced by Alfredo Casella; he also obtained a great deal of composing knowledge by studying Stravinsky's scores.

⁸⁶Milhaud, "Farewell to Diaghilev I," p. 14.

⁸⁷Collaer, A History of Modern Music, p. 380.

choreography was developed to fit the music. In the surrealist movement, the latter practice was more the rule than the exception and perhaps may explain Breton's attitude toward some of the various surrealist painters like Dali, who frequently put surrealism on a commercial basis.

One of the first presentations of this type with surrealist collaboration was a work titled Jeux d'Enfants, a ballet said to be tinged with surrealism. This work was produced by the Ballet de Monte Carlo in 1931-32 with Joan Miro doing the sets. A description of the sets have been afforded by Frank Caspers:

Circles, triangles, and cubes are supported by dancers and are shifted about to reflect changing moods or movements. The costumes are incongruous combinations of shapes and forms and bright colors that are patched together with no regard for anatomy.⁸⁸

The name of the composer of the music for this piece is unavailable.⁸⁹

When surrealist designers were not busy providing sets for commissioned projects, they created their own ballet fantasies, usually accompanying them with pre-existing traditional music. For example, André Masson designed the scenery and costumes for the ballet Les Présages, using music by Tchaikovsky. It was performed in Monte Carlo in 1933.⁹⁰

⁸⁸"Surrealism in Overalls," Scribner's Magazine, CIV (New York, August, 1938), 17-19.

⁸⁹Bizet wrote a well-known orchestral suite called Jeux d'Enfants.

⁹⁰Jean, The History of Surrealist Painting, p. 231.

Nat Karson, a New York designer, created several surrealistic sets for the stage at Radio City Music Hall as well as other designs for the Ballet Russe.⁹¹ Salvador Dali, during the same period, designed fantastic sets, such as a sofa in the shape of lips.⁹² In 1941, Dali arranged the music and scenery for a one-act ballet called Bacchanale. The book and scenery were both by Dali with the musical accompaniment consisting of Wagner's "Venusberg" from Tannhäuser. The choreography was done by Leonide Massine and the ballet was produced in the Metropolitan Opera House, November 9, 1939. Another Dali ballet creation was Labyrinth, for which Dali again wrote the book and created the scenery and costumes. The music was chosen from Schubert's Seventh Symphony in C major. The choreography was by Massine and it was also produced in the Metropolitan Opera House, October 8, 1941. Dali had made plans to create another ballet called Mad Tristan, in which he intended to use music from Wagner's Tristan und Isolde, but this ballet failed to materialize.⁹³

Jean Cocteau has accomplished a similar venture in the production of a ballet (dance poem) called Le Jeune Homme et la Mort using the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. Choreography was effected by Roland Petit and the scenery and costumes were by Georges Wakhevitch. This was first presented

⁹¹"Surrealism in Overalls," pp. 17-19.

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Soby, Salvador Dali, p. 84.

by the Ballets des Champs-Elysées at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Paris, June 25, 1946, and later, in New York at the Metropolitan Opera House on April 9, 1951.⁹⁴ Balanchine notes that this ballet was fully prepared and rehearsed before the music was chosen. Jazz recordings were used at the first rehearsals, but later a seventeen minute score was adopted; it was an orchestration of Bach's Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor.⁹⁵

Cocteau and Dali have both produced films in which most of the music usually was selected from traditional sources. Cocteau produced Les Enfants terribles in 1950, having prepared the scenarios as well as the dialogue and commentaries which he monologued. According to Cocteau, the music he used, Bach and Vivaldi, fused admirably with the pictorial beauty of the film.⁹⁶

Salvador Dali created the scenery for two films in Paris, Un Chien Andalou in 1930 and L'Âge d'or in 1931. Louis Bunuel produced and directed both films. Music has not been mentioned in connection with these films, and it is likely that the films may have been presented without music,

⁹⁴George Balanchine, Balanchine's Complete Stories of the Great Ballets, edited by Francis Mason (Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1956), p. 217.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 218.

⁹⁶The Journals of Jean Cocteau, p. 15.

since sound films were in an infant stage of development at this time.⁹⁷

The surrealist writer, Jacques Prévert, and Maurice Jaubert, a prominent French composer, collaborated to produce a film called L'Affaire est dans le sac in 1933.⁹⁸ Man Ray, whose residence alternated between New York and Paris (finally settling in Paris in 1951) has continued his experiments with painting and photographic montages. He claims to have developed a new and superior process of developing color prints. His large studio contains many different apparatus as well as paintings, including replicas of the 1919 Lampshade which "revolve slowly near a 'loud-speaker' which can broadcast music."⁹⁹ In 1947 Man Ray collaborated with Darius Milhaud to produce a film entitled Man Ray Sequence of Dreams that Money can Buy.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷Soby, Salvador Dali, p. 84.

⁹⁸Roy, Présences contemporaines, p. 285. Jaubert has been a prolific composer. He has composed music to over thirty films, including two with René Clair: Quatorze Juillet (1933), and Le dernier milliardaire (1934), pp. 285-286.

⁹⁹Jean, The History of Surrealist Painting, p. 357.

¹⁰⁰Roy, Présences contemporaines, p. 232.

CHAPTER VII

MUSIC AND THE "ISMS" TO 1950

Although attempts have been made to define the time boundaries of the movements under discussion, strict chronological treatment of these trends has not been feasible. In contrast to the long period of development during which romanticism produced several generations of artists, twentieth century art movements have developed, with few exceptions, concurrently. The futurist movement, for example, existed along with cubism and dadaism, outlived the latter and extended its activities well into the era of the surrealist period.

Some influences of these movements upon musicians in recent years are discernible. Since surrealist activities extended after 1950, most of its musical activities have already been discussed; its latest musical endeavors are minimal. Sporadic attempts to revive futurism in the thirties and forties have yielded significant results through which the movement enjoyed additional success. The influence of cubism since 1924 is negligible. Dada's spirit has reappeared frequently and is observable in the activities of individual artists. The unmistakable imprint of these movements in more recent years can be observed in the works of individual

musicians rather than through group activities. Many of these persons involved, however, regardless of evidence to the contrary, admit little or no influence, acknowledging only social relationships with the personalities involved. Moreover, many of those who were formerly involved in futurist, dadaist, and surrealist activities, have dismissed these movements as products of an unbalanced epoch.

Music critics and historians also have demonstrated a lack of candor by playing down music's role in these movements, while others have omitted its relationship entirely. A good example of this kind of reporting may be found in Music in the 20th Century in which Austin claims that bruitisme lived only in the dictionary definition. Austin further states that futurism and dadaism were terms loosely applied to composers as staid as Richard Strauss and contends that no composers were directly associated with the dada movement. Austin is correct only about the freedom with which the appellation "dadaist" and "futurist" was applied; his other remarks about bruitisme and the dadaist composers is incorrect.¹ It appears that Austin, like so many other writers, may not have consulted sources such as The Dada Painters and Poets or the Dada Monograph, since he did not mention the musical roles of Hans Heusser or Erik Satie in the dada movement. The musical importance of these movements is

¹Music in the 20th Century, p. 30.

conspicuously neglected, while the absurd aspects, such as the futurist Intonarumori, have been overemphasized.

The futurist predilection for noise seems to have been adopted by such recent composers as Antheil, Varèse, and Pierre Schaeffer. On the other hand, those persons who have been attracted to dadaist ideals have approached it through its spirit. This spirit is recognized in the activities and bizarre experiments of such composers as John Cage, Morton Feldman, and Earle Brown.² Surrealism is evident mainly in the adaptation of surrealist texts to music and in a small number of limited collaborative efforts. In order to gain a better understanding of the futurist influence, the persistence of the dada spirit, and the cubist and surrealist implications supposedly evident in music of the recent years, a discussion of the motives and pertinent ideas and personages

²This writer has conferred with several artists, writers, and lecturers who have expressed this opinion. Virgil Thomson is convinced that the dada spirit is as evident today as it was during the period of 1916-1922. Peter Yates also confirms Thomson's opinion. In the Composite Lecture No. 1 given March 14, 1966, at Midwestern University, Wichita Falls, Texas, Yates presented a curious alternation of electronic sounds and noises (with visual accompaniment)--all providing a provocative result. In one part of the lecture, he executed a rhythmic rendition of a portion of Bach's Chaconne for solo violin with a wooden spoon and skillet. With this writer, several musicians, a poetry reader, and two artists, he participated in a "happening" in which abstract painting attempts were made, poetry was read, while several musicians performed spontaneously on numerous devices (wooden box, saw, percussion instruments, and so forth). The result was as ludicrous as the concerts of the futurist and dada movements. Bela Rozsa, in a discussion with the author, also considered dada to be an idea and stated that, in his opinion, "ideas never die."

would be helpful. Since much of the recent discussion has been in the area of American innovations, it can easily serve as the logical springboard for this discussion.

At the same time that most of the extravagant demonstrations were taking place in Europe, musicians in America, especially composers, were experiencing a period of musical harassment; this was evidenced not only in the persistence of leading musicians (mostly European immigrants) to perform only traditional music, but also in the deliberate boycotting of the music of the Americans. George Antheil recalls the deplorable status of the American musician:

Music in America has been going on a long time, and there is no doubt whatsoever in my mind that a large share of the dissipation of our own energies is due to the rafts of ultra-conservative European musicians who have flooded to our shores in past decades, ensconced themselves in positions of power and trust, and betrayed a good deal of the musical future of America. In this they have been aided by the American musical critic. As a boy of sixteen, I was so embittered by this situation that I swore never to write anything but the most revolutionary music possible--. . .³

This extreme prejudice against American composers existed until after World War I. An incident illustrating this prejudice occurred in 1920 in the nature of a contest for young composers. Selections were to be made by a panel of judges. Artur Bodanzky, the conductor, and several members of the panel, ignored the decisions of the other judges and ruled out all of the compositions, declaring them to be worthless.

³"Wanted--Opera by and for Americans," Composers on Music, p. 529.

The entire procedure of this contest, described as totally unfair, has been remembered with bitterness by many now prominent American composers.⁴

Even American performances of modern or advanced music were frowned upon by the critics; auditors were encouraged to go to London to hear concerts where modern music was not played. Lawrence Gilman, music critic, displayed strong opposition to modern music such as this account reveals:

The subscribers do not want them [modern works], the critics . . . do not want them, and the box office registers disapproval if the conductor persists. . . . the reviewers do not repine over the neglect of contemporary novelties; and the public bitterly resents being asked to listen to them. It is of course everyone's privilege to dislike a Stravinsky, or Casella, or Schönberg work after he has heard it; but . . . most of us are unwilling even to hear such works,
 . . .⁵

Paul Rosenfeld attacked the apathetic American public which idolized the works of composers like MacDowell, Chadwick, and others, whose works were based on early European models. He felt that the lack of attention given to other more contemporary composers was deplorable.⁶

⁴"American Composers Again in Hot Water," Literary Digest, LXVI (July 3, 1920), 40-41.

⁵"Musical Tramp Abroad," The North American, CCXVII (August, 1923), 265.

⁶"The American Composer," The Seven Arts, I (November, 1916), 89.

Percy Grainger noted that the public had not nearly the confidence in their composers that they had in business men.⁷

It is easy to understand why ambitious young Americans fled to Europe for study and encouragement, and in most cases, received more attention and recognition there than they did in their homeland. The anti-modern attitude of Americans was not confined to the music public alone. Modern music was often considered subversive as is evidenced in the remark of an American senator who claimed to have discovered musical elements prophesying communism in Stravinsky's Rite of Spring.⁸ Another American writer held a narrow view that the music of composers like Debussy was abnormal and would never survive as has the music of Beethoven, Mozart, and Brahms.⁹

American composers studying in Europe were definitely in contact with many of the personalities involved in avant-garde art activities. Edgar Varèse and Henry Cowell both worked extensively in the promotion of Pan American Societies and modern music. Virgil Thomson made friends with Erik Satie, Gertrude Stein, as well as various members of the dada group. George Antheil's works were widely performed in Europe and received both praise and adverse criticism. The International

⁷"Great American Composers Who Are With Us Now," Current Opinion, LXVIII (May, 1920), 642.

⁸Jean, The History of Surrealist Painting, p. 81.

⁹V. R. Grace, "Abnormal Music Versus Sane Music," Etude, XLI (June, 1923), 372.

Composers Guild in New York during the years 1921 to 1927 centered around Charles Ives, Varèse, Salzedo, and Carl Ruggles. Thomson feels that the American tradition was sustained by teachers in France and Germany, Nadia Boulanger being a prime force in this regard.¹⁰ The transient musical activities in Europe brought about an intermingling of musical thought which has been the source of much speculation about the origin and influence of current avant-garde activities.

Late Futurist Influence on Music

Many contemporary authors and musical historians have ignored the possibility that exploitation by composers of the last forty years of noise or sound effects of the airplane propeller, the siren, and other products of the technical advances of this century may have been derived from futurist models. Many of the composers who have used these sound effects are reluctant to admit any futurist influence, acknowledging only a social relationship. On the other hand, there are those who openly admitted the influence of the Italian group. Vladimir Dukelsky, for example, shocked his teachers by calling himself a futurist,¹¹ and Prokofiev, who admired the futurist poet, Vladimir Mayakovsky, even wrote a report

¹⁰Barter, Christie, "Transplanted Traditions," told to Christie Barter by Virgil Thomson, Musical America, LXXV (February 15, 1955), 213.

¹¹Austin, Music in the 20th Century, p. 385.

about the Italian futurist noisemakers.¹² Alfred Casella was so inspired by the futurist manifestos that he responded with music for the futurist theater. In 1918 Depero's marionette ballets Balli plastici ran for eleven performances at the Palazzo Odescalchi in Rome. Casella was the musical director and contributed music to the first part, "Clowns." Contributions were made for this same ballet by Gerald Tyrwhitt-Wilson (Lord Berners), "The Man with the Mustache," and by Francesco Malipiero, who composed the music for "The Savages."¹³

Prieberg mentions that around 1921 several prominent composers such as Paul Claudel, Darius Milhaud, and Igor Stravinsky listened to Russolo's concerts of noises and even suggested that Stravinsky, who was working on the instrumentation of the Russian Ballet scenes of Les Noces at this time, may have received stimulating ideas from the Italian noises. Ravel, he avowed, had actually intended to use such noise making instruments in one of his works.¹⁴ Prieberg further notes that Russolo's noises, when used in connection with Marinetti's drama The Fire Drum in Prague, were so effective that the manager of the Prague National Theater contemplated ordering twelve of the Intonarumori.¹⁵

¹²Ibid., p. 451. ¹³Clough, Futurism, pp. 146-147.

¹⁴Musica ex Machina, p. 40. Prieberg did not name the work.

¹⁵Ibid. Prieberg was unable to find evidence showing whether or not Russolo filled this order.

Even though Russolo continued to create new noise apparatus, such as the Russolophone, Stravinsky, Hindemith, and Prokofiev did not imitate his efforts, but turned to other trends such as neo-classicism and expressionism, virtually closing out the tremendous opportunities that futurism had initiated in the exploration of pure sounds and noise. The exceptions, of course, are evident in the efforts of Edgar Varèse as well as a limited number of other composers and experimentalists. It is interesting that in recent years a new penchant for noise and sounds has developed--but without any notice being given to the pioneering efforts of the Italian futurists. Historians of art and literature have been careful to make clear distinctions between the futurist and dadaist movements, while music historians have made little or no distinction between these movements with regard to music. It is likely, however, that many composers have been aware of futurist noise experiments, and Clough has even provided a list of persons who she believes, at some time or other, were interested in futurist noise effects. Her list includes Cowell, Ruggles, Ives, Antheil, Varèse, Schaeffer, and Cage. Although Cage, Varèse, and Schaeffer were designated as neo-Russolians by Clough, none of these persons have openly acknowledged the pioneering work of Russolo and Prattella as being significant.¹⁶ Nonetheless, there is

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 260-266.

considerable evidence to show that similarities exist between the musical experiments of Cowell, Anthell, Varese, Schaeffer, and those of the futurists.

Henry Cowell

At about the same time that the futurists were publishing their music manifestos (between 1913 and 1920), Henry Cowell was creating a number of musical works with unusual titles, whose performability was questionable at that time.¹⁷ In 1913 Cowell composed Dynamic Motion and What's This? Between 1914 and 1915 Cowell composed Quartet Romantic, employing two flutes, violin and viola. It was constructed so that the tonal durations and pitches were coordinated according to the ratios of the overtone series. According to Weisgall, they were considered unplayable, although he intimated that an electronic realization may have been possible.¹⁸ Another

¹⁷The performance of several of Cowell's works, according to Hugo Weisgall, was then considered impossible. Weisgall's statements have since been contradicted by Cowell himself. This writer, during an interview with Vladimir Ussachevsky, March 23, 1965, questioned him about Dynamic Motion and What's This? At that time Ussachevsky was unable to answer the feasibility of their performance and promised to ask Cowell upon his return to New York. Several days later Ussachevsky replied: "I asked Henry Cowell concerning the Dynamic Motion and What's This? Henry said that both of the pieces were played by Schnabel for private audiences though not for concert performances. Other pianists have played them as well, with a definite performance having been given in Berlin in 1923, for example."

¹⁸Ussachevsky (in a letter to the author, March 25, 1965) states that Cowell repudiated Weisgall's statement: "Henry also did not think that he has ever said to anyone that these pieces were awaiting electronic realization because of the

piece which Weisgall considered unplayable (composed between 1914 and 1929) was Vestiges for large orchestra; the pieces of this suite contained complicated multiple meters. In 1915 a string quartet, Quartet Euphometric, was constructed with meters again derived from ratios of the overtone series; these required notes of duration such as $1/5$, $1/7$ of a whole note. This complex metrical organization was also described as unplayable except electronically.¹⁹

Cowell's interest in noise and his proposed methods of performance prompted Ewen to label him as an enfant terrible. His use of tone-clusters, involving the use of the fist, elbow, and forearms in piano or keyboard works, recalls the manner in which Ornstein performed. One of Cowell's early concerts in Germany (1920's) created a riot between the people who favored his music and those who were outraged by it. Cowell was so busily engaged in his performance that he was unaware of the disturbance. At another time a New York newspaper sent a sports writer to a Cowell concert at Carnegie Hall; the review of this concert read: "'Cowell Wins in Bout with Kid Knabe.'"²⁰

difficulties inherent in them. He feels that perhaps such a composition as 'Banshee' would have been a more likely subject for electric transformation."

¹⁹Hugo Weisgall, "The Music of Henry Cowell," The Musical Quarterly, XLV (October, 1959), 499.

²⁰Ewen, David Ewen Introduces Modern Music, p. 6.

Cowell was as greatly concerned as the futurists about making the hidden value of noise known. Using Varèse's Hyperprism and its percussion instruments to keynote an article called "The Joys of Music," he described the effect of noise and musical tones much in the same manner as had been done by Russolo. He explained that the shocking truth about musical sound (such as that of a voice or violin) is that it contains noise, and although he admitted that the "disease" of noise permeates all music, it also possesses hidden delights. He insisted, however, that the concert-going public, in ignoring noise-elements, and declaring them to be the unessential things in music, has permitted itself to be lulled with the more mellifluous sounds.²¹ He further commented that percussion music to many musicians and laymen has been regarded previously as something incidental to keep in the background, being used only for occasional punctuating effects. Cowell contended that the use of noise in this manner contributed to the loss of the dynamic effect of percussion and indeterminate pitch.²² Virgil Thomson, who lauded Cowell's audacity in associating himself with the small but outspoken group, referred to Cowell and Varèse as "the rhythmic research fellows who have been joined by a much larger group, including not only percussion writers and the specialists of pure noise competition but the

²¹The New Republic, LIX (July 31, 1929), 288-289.

²²"Current Chronicle: United States," The Musical Quarterly, XXXVIII (October, 1952), 595.

tape-tamperers too."²³ Cowell's involvement with the sound experimentalists may be seen in his collaboration with Léon Theremin in the invention of the electrical Rhythmicon. His penchant for using unusual titles, such as Rhythmicana for Rhythmicon, Orchestra, Polyphonica, and Advertisement, recalls those of the futurists.²⁴

Edgar Varèse

The relationship between noise experiments of Varèse and those of the Italian futurists has not been accurately determined. During a visit in Italy in 1957, Fred Prieberg was approached with this question by a musician friend conductor, Francis Travis, who was curious as to whether or not the experiments of Edgar Varèse had any connection with those of the futurists. Travis, who was conducting a series of programs in the Milan Teatro Nuovo at this time, included Varèse's octet Octandre, a robust piece, full of temperament and rich in noise color, on one of the programs. Prieberg, after hearing this composition, investigated the possible connection, and after a protracted survey of Russolo's activities,²⁵ he concluded that Varèse's experiments surely must have used many futurist

²³"Music Now; Address," Opera News, XXV (March 11, 1961), 9-11, 33.

²⁴Balla: Rhythm of the Violinist (1912); Carra: Rhythms of Objects (ca. 1912); Balla: Swifts: Paths of Movement plus Dynamic Sequences (1913); Severini: Dynamic Hieroglyphic of the Bal Tabarin (1912).

²⁵Musica ex Machina, pp. 23-24.

ideas. He further points out that Varèse's interest in the Russolophone was so keen during the summer of 1930 that, preceding a demonstration of this instrument, Varèse delivered a highly complimentary introduction:

I have heard and studied this Russolophone with a great deal of interest. I am certain that it offers possibilities and opportunities which, together with the easiness of its application, should furnish it within a very short time, a definite place in the orchestra.²⁶

These comments, undoubtedly, were overly optimistic.

Varèse was one of the first composers to extensively use the conventional types of percussion instruments such as the siren, anvil, and so forth (Ionization, 1931). Some of his early works, however, such as Amériques (1918-21), Offrandes (1921-22), as well as later ones (Arcana, 1927) were written for conventional instruments. In Hyperprism (1923) Varèse combined winds and percussion, while Ionization utilized both noise and percussion. It is possible that these two works may have convinced some critics and writers that Varèse, more than any other composer, was influenced by the noise efforts of the Italian futurists. Varèse, however, emphatically denied futurist influences. Because Varèse often used percussion instruments exclusively, his experiments differed from those of other composers who used percussion and noise only as complementary devices. Hyperprism, first performed under the

²⁶Ibid., p. 45. In addition to Varèse's remarks, Arthur Honegger is known to have written a letter praising the values of this invention. Honegger had previously imitated the sounds of a locomotive in his Pacific 231 of 1924.

sponsorship of the International Composer's Guild of New York, was described by Cowell as containing speculative references to mathematical forms, and Cowell contended that it represented a milestone in the development of noise and musical sound. He also mentioned that Hyperprism stood at the "highest point reached by the advocates of maximum intensity of sound, insistent high-tension discord, and counterpoint of percussion qualities," further indicating that it was prophetic of a new chemistry of sounds.²⁷

Ionization was performed for the first time at the third Pan-American concert in New York under the leadership of Nicolas Slonimsky. It was hailed as a contemporary classic in the field of percussion sounds, requiring thirteen players on at least three different instruments per person. Paul Rosenfeld, speaking with unreserved praise about this composition, described the capabilities of the indeterminate group of sounds, also relating them to brute and mechanical sounds.²⁸ Henry Cowell, who held great admiration for Varèse, felt that the main idea behind Ionization was the production of pure noise: "Chains rattled in tubs, sirens, and so on. . . . Varèse's Ionization is for the most part loud."²⁹

²⁷"Current Chronicle: United States," The Musical Quarterly, XXXV (April, 1949), 293.

²⁸"Varèse and Monteverdi," The New Republic, LXXIV (April 26, 1933), 310.

²⁹"Current Chronicle," (October, 1952), 595.

The controversial position of Varèse with regard to both futurism and dadaism has prompted considerable discussion among many persons who were acquainted with his association with the movements. It is not clear why Varèse, who openly attached himself to these groups, even contributing to their periodicals,³⁰ in more recent years denied any connection at all with either group. If the unfavorable comments that so often discredit the quality of futurist noise effects are restudied, one finds that the futurists were utterly sincere and dedicated in their musical intent, and there is no indication that their instruments were intended to be destructive as Varèse has contended.

Varèse's compositions have been described as serving as a link to futurist noise music, as well as between bruitiste music and the more recent musique concrète.³¹ Hansen feels that the futurist's concepts (objects in motion, speed, superimposed images) were too limited in expression, but that Varèse's efforts were a direct action following and influenced by the futurist movement: ". . . In the twenties the works of the Franco-American composer Varèse moved in this direction and after World War II the composers of musique concrète in France employed the sound medium that Russolo, the futurist had

³⁰In Picabia's dadaist 391 Varèse denounced the negative efforts of the futurists, declaring they made more bruit than music.

³¹Klein and Blaukopf, "Dada and Music," p. 92. The Dada Monograph states that the term musique concrète was coined by Pierre Schaeffer.

recommended in 1913."³² Henry Cowell also stated that Varèse was the only man connected with the futurist manifesto written in 1913 at Milan who achieved a position of importance with regard to this technique.³³

Cowell described Varèse's compositions as belligerent sounding, explaining that "their particularized use of rows of percussion sounds melodically, and their drive towards maximum intensity of dynamic dissonance on wind instruments in particular, form an entirely distinctive style; and while this has been influential, it has never been exactly imitated."³⁴ Finally, Cowell quotes Varèse's musical intents, also adding his own comment:

"I have always looked upon the industrial world as a rich source of beautiful sounds, an unexplored mine of music in the matrix. So I went to various factories in search of certain sounds I needed for Deserts and recorded them." These noises were the raw materials out of which (after being processed by electronic means) the interpolations of organized sound were composed.³⁵

The statement above suggests two points of agreement between the methods of Varèse and those of the futurists: the inspiration of the mechanical or industrial age and the raw material source. Although the application and development of raw material may have differed somewhat from that of the futurists, Cowell believed that compositions like

³²An Introduction to Twentieth Century Music, p. 95.

³³"Current Chronicle: United States," The Musical Quarterly, XLI (July, 1955), 371.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid., p. 371. See footnote.

Ionization sprang from the composers' attention to futurist aesthetics.³⁶

In a discussion of Russolo's noise influences and percussion adventures, André Coeuroy also suggested that Varèse continued the futurist explorations:

All these explorations in the domain of noises have tended to strengthen the percussion, which attained unheard-of proportions with the Franco-American Varèse; his orchestral poem Intégrales has seventeen different parts in the "battery." He employs, among the unusual instruments, the snare drum, the Indian drum, the Chinese blocks, the Chinese cymbal, the anvil, and the electric siren.³⁷

Max Graf has implied a connection between the music of Varèse and Stravinsky and futurist noise, acknowledging the importance of the efforts of "the grotesque scions of the futuristic movement . . . as [a] protest against romantic sentiment and against realistic portrayals."³⁸ Graf quotes Russolo and comments on the possible connection:

"It is necessary to penetrate the limited circle of pure tones and to gain the unlimited diversity of tone sounds! We will intone those various sounds and arrange them harmonically and rhythmically." This idea of noise music also played a certain part in the music of the period between the two wars--particularly in the compositions of Edgar Varèse--and Stravinsky was a great pioneer in the field of tone sounds as he was in many other fields.³⁹

Evidence pointing to the influence of Italian futurist music on the music of Varèse, thus far, is based entirely on personal opinions. Because similarities exist between the

³⁶"Current Chronicle," (October, 1952), 595.

³⁷"The Esthetics of Contemporary Music," p. 264.

³⁸Modern Music, p. 202. ³⁹Ibid., pp. 202-203.

choice of medium as well as the resultant noise, some of these statements, though not totally acceptable, appear to be partially valid, but hardly conclusive. If aural comparisons between futurist sounds and those of Varèse were possible, the results could be more convincing. Only one recording, to this writer's knowledge, is available, and the acoustical results of this example are so poor that a comparison between Varèse's music and the latter would reveal no similarities.⁴⁰

Varèse objected to being called a futurist and stated that he had never been influenced by futurists. His denials are contained in the following statements:

I have been called a Futurist, a Dadaist, a Cubist composer--erroneously I believe. I have always avoided groups and isms but have been friendly with several of their protagonists. . . . When a student in Paris I met Marinetti, leader of the Futurist movement, also Russolo, inventor of the so-called bruiteurs, I say "so-called" because they made so little bruit. I met Russolo again in the late twenties when he demonstrated his instruments for me. My own ideas on the use of sounds and noises in music were entirely different from those of Russolo and his colleagues, as indicated in the following bit of rhetoric I wrote for the June 1917 number of the French magazine 391 published by Picabia in New York and here translated by my wife: "Our musical alphabet is poor and illogical. Music which should pulsate with life needs means of expression and only science can infuse it with youthful vigor. I dream of instruments obedient

⁴⁰The author of this study obtained a copy of a recording of the Inonarumori from the Electronic Laboratory files of Columbia and Princeton Universities. It is the same recording that Prieberg obtained from Signora Russolo. The sounds of the noise organs were rumblings, growling, and blips produced alternately and sometimes simultaneously with a conventional orchestra. The titles of the compositions are Chorale and Serenata, by Antonio Russolo. The orchestra was under the direction of Luigi Russolo.

to my thought which, with their contribution of unsuspected sounds, will lend themselves to the exigencies of my inner rhythm. Why, Italian Futurists, do you slavishly reproduce only what is commonplace and boring in the bustle of everyday life."⁴¹

His emphatic denial of futurist associations and his own musical purposes are afforded in another statement: "No, I never attended or wrote music for any Futurist or Dadaist manifestation. . . . I think the spirit of my music, early or late, is entirely different from that of the Futurists or Dadaists."⁴² Contrary to Varèse's objections to futurist accusations as well as his denials, certain inconsistencies in his early activities are evident, and many factors reveal that he was definitely associated with both the futurists and the dadaists. One inconsistency concerns his statement condemning the futurist instruments, which, more than likely, he had not heard at the time since he only admits having heard them in the late twenties; therefore, it is possible that Varèse's judgments were based upon rumor or hearsay. He contradicts himself about his associations because he did, in fact, pay tribute to Russolo's Russolophone (see page 404 above). His own noise efforts actually followed this hearing several years later. Although his attendance of the demonstration of the Russolophone was not necessarily a manifestation, nonetheless, he must have had an expressed interest in the futurist experiments.

⁴¹Letter in English from Varèse, August 15, 1965.

⁴²Ibid.

Varèse used simultaneous principles in his orchestrations-- a principle utilized by the futurists. Kurt List, having a great interest in Varèse's orchestration, posed this question to Varèse: "Is the orchestration of your works which impresses me (in contrast to the so-called Viennese classics) as an essential part of the compositional structure invented simultaneously with the thematic idea and put on paper in its essential details right from the start?"⁴³ Varèse's answer to this is as follows: ". . . to me orchestration is an essential part of the structure of a work . . . Contrasting dynamics are based upon the play of simultaneously opposing loudness--loudness as defined by Harvey Fletcher as the 'magnitude of sensation'."⁴⁴ John Cage, displaying an interest in Varèse's music of the future, asked this question: "I never tire of hearing of music of the future. Would you, who more than any others have sensuously dreamed of it, say what may it be, beyond the indication of your own work, as your imagination conceives it?"⁴⁵ Varèse provided this answer: "The music of the future? Surely beyond notes and based on sound. In reality, of course, the music of the future can only be the music of the present, but is, with rare exceptions, the music of the past."⁴⁶

⁴³Robert Motherwell, editor, and others, Problems of Contemporary Art: Possibilities 1 (New York, Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., Publishers, Winter, 1947/8), p. 97.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid.

William Austin gives an impressive list of composers (including the futurists) who invented or used mechanical sound producing apparatus. The tribute Austin has paid Varèse with regard to his standing out in continuous growth among and above, in most cases, those listed (referring to the older pioneers of "organized sound," electronic instruments and mechanical noise-makers) may possibly be substantiated as evidenced through Varèse's achievements; but the imagination of Varèse with regard to electronic machinery, as Austin described it, may possibly exist only in the imagination of Austin, to quote: "Varèse knew how to exploit [electronic machinery], having imagined it years in advance."⁴⁷ Varèse has admitted that our musical alphabet was poor and illogical, adding that he dreamed of instruments that perhaps science would provide and which would, in his own words, "lend themselves to the exigencies of my inner rhythm." Varèse insisted that the futurists reproduced sounds literally, whereas his purposes were more concerned with the metamorphosis of sounds into music. It is difficult to assume that Varèse was any kind of prophet who could, during the year 1917, visualize electronic devices that would realize his ambitions, and when that time came, because of his having imagined what they were like, gave him an advantage in exploiting their use. It is also obvious that Varèse's earlier experiments, even when technological

⁴⁷Music in the 20th Century, pp. 374-379.

gains were made available to him, still resorted to the use of bells, sirens, anvils, and other existing sound makers. At least the futurists had the imagination to invent mechanical devices that created new sounds, even if they were only literal imitations of various noises. Varèse's Ionization and the futurists's Intonarumori achieved similar results: noise. Contrary to Austin's statements concerning Varèse's alertness to the discoveries of Stravinsky and Schönberg and his awareness of the futurists, implying that his aims were totally different, the results of Varèse's experiments unquestionably point to the fact that he was indebted to someone in the field of noise-making.⁴⁸

Futurism and musique concrète

The most important composers who have used the principles of musique concrète, either partially or exclusively, include Pierre Schaeffer, Pierre Boulez, Pierre Henry, John Cage, and Otto Luening; Pierre Schaeffer has used it almost exclusively.

Numerous commentators and critics have insisted that the principles of musique concrète were derived from those of the futurists, that is, through the involvement of concrete musical objects and sounds. Katherine Shippen and Anca Seidlove, for example, claim that the short life of futurism, interrupted for a few years, was revived in France in the 1940's. The

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 374.

original futurist revolution, they contend, involved sound reproductions such as street sounds, factory whistles, clanking machinery, and the strident noises of civilization--all intended to replace conventional instruments, and similarly "the factory noise, machine sounds, the sounds of railroad locomotives, and of airplanes were woven into what the French called 'concrete music'."⁴⁹ Michael Mann also insists that futurist ideology is inherent in musique concrète, though he feels that its use of the absurd media (flower pots, vacuum cleaners) would doom it to the same fate that befell the futurists:

Today we find again in the musique concrète a musical ideology reminding us in more than one way of such ideologies as that of "bruitisme" 35 years ago . . . Just because in this way a priori "ideology" the philosophical speculation, assumes in the musique concrète, an even more prominent place than for example it did in "bruitisme," it will never be able to penetrate beyond the outskirts of musical art. For this reason it will succeed even less than "bruitisme" before it.⁵⁰

H. H. Stuckenschmidt, who also insists that musique concrète reverted to futurist techniques, mentions the use of several of the same sound effects by traditional composers:

It continues the bruitistic attempts and older integrations of noise and tone in musical forms, such as the Janizaries of Gluck, Mozart, and Beethoven, rifle shots and whip-cracks in opera overtures, sledge-hammers in Wagner's

⁴⁹The Heritage of Music (New York, The Viking Press, 1963), p. 281.

⁵⁰"Reaction and Continuity in Musical Composition," The Music Review, XVI (February, 1954), 39-41.

Siegfried or rattling chains in Schoenberg's Gurre-Lieder.⁵¹

Prieberg has suggested that the phonograph turntable experiments of the late twenties may have contributed to the ideas of Pierre Schaeffer in 1948. He notes that Paul Hindemith and Ernst Toch made many tests with the phonograph by accelerating or decreasing the speed of the turntable and recording the sounds of two records onto one, thereby achieving many unique effects. Tests of this kind were also made at a chamber music festival in Donaueschingen in 1926, while similar experiments, some successful, were made at the radio testing studio of the Berlin Academy.⁵²

The idea of experimenting with the grooves of records occurred to Pierre Schaeffer and subsequently the attention to sounds for themselves became a part of the musique concrète process. Another technique resulting from the superposition of many recorded sounds is called the sound collage.⁵³ Schaeffer's musique concrète has been recognized as probably the most successful. His techniques appear to be somewhat different from those of the other experimenters:

. . . [he attempted] to reserve grooves on records and, by repeating, retarding or accelerating them and mixing them with the other parts of grooves, to create sounds

⁵¹"Contemporary Techniques in Music," p. 12.

⁵²Some of the experiments are discussed by Prieberg in Musica ex Machina, p. 82.

⁵³Peggy Glanville-Hicks, "Tapesichord: The Music of Whistle and Bang," Vogue, CXXII (July, 1953), 81.

with an entirely new timbre and dynamism. By combining them, he invented musique concrète, so named because it is engendered by concrete musical objects--the grooves of records.⁵⁴

Collaer's remarks about this process were derogatory and he equated the results with those conceived prior to 1914 by the futurists.⁵⁵ Another description of Schaeffer's efforts names the kinds of sounds he employed: dripping water, the sigh of sexual ecstasy, and the rattling of keys--all of these were subjected to technical transformations and then compiled either by montage or mixing.⁵⁶

Maurice Lemaitre, after having read Schaeffer's treatise, A la recherche de la musique concrète (1952), felt that Schaeffer had taken many of his ideas from the futurists, and deplored the fact that both Schaeffer and the historians had ignored Russolo's efforts. He further comments that Schaeffer revealed a lack of candor when he failed to give proper recognition to Marinetti and Pratella for having systematized the futurist music program.⁵⁷ Schaeffer, replying to this reprimand,

⁵⁴Collaer, A History of Modern Music, p. 393.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Stuckenschmidt, "Contemporary Techniques in Music," p. 12. This investigator has heard a composition by Schaeffer fitting part of this description of the materials described. Vladimir Ussachevsky presented a program of electronic music, including Schaeffer's Variations on a Rusty Hinge and a Sigh of Human Sexual Ecstasy (Spring, 1965, Midwestern University Auditorium, Wichita Falls, Texas), in which many of these sounds were employed.

⁵⁷Clough, Futurism, pp. 260-261. Lemaitre published an introduction to Russolo's L'arte dei rumori (1954). These comments were contained in this introduction.

stated that when he began his work on noises in 1948, he was not aware of his predecessors. It is apparent that he did take a great deal of interest in the futurists after that date, even going so far as to answer Lemaitre's criticisms by writing an article, "Russolo et les Futuristes" (1959).⁵⁸ In it he expressed his respect for the futurist sense of freedom and their value of noises from an acoustical standpoint, but challenged Russolo's statement that in ancient times the human ear would have been unable to tolerate the sounds of today. He did agree, however, with several futurist points: music in ancient times was essentially technical (different from nature), requiring competence, science, and industry;⁵⁹ futurists were able to understand that there is a difference in the richness of sound, that is, noises that are too rich, or too pure (white, diapason), are not musical; futurists were not too naive to be able to understand that abstract and concrete sounds co-existed.⁶⁰ According to Schaeffer, the real value of Russolo's eight points in the Art of Noises is contained and begins with the eighth point--the reconditioning of the ear. From the eighth Schaeffer discusses each of

⁵⁸Ibid. Clough discusses this article under the title of "Russolo and the Futurists."

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 262. Schaeffer provides examples such as violin makers, and lute tuners which he classified as technicians and mechanics. He has added a question as to why futurists and present movements seem to regress rather than progress. The error, he believes, is relative to acoustical and aesthetic misconceptions.

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 263-264.

Russolo's points in descending order: the seventh, concerning industrial machines, should not be reproduced figuratively in terms of rotations and hums as Russolo suggested, but literally by means of recording machines;⁶¹ the sixth point, regarding the blending of various timbres and rhythms instead of a literal succession of noises imitating those of life, Schaeffer agreed with; Schaeffer disagreed with the fifth point admitting, however, that Russolo had an astonishing intuition for changing speed and pitch to increase and decrease tension; the fourth point concerning instruments that could easily produce microtonal effects, Schaeffer accepted with the qualification that the more effective method was the modification of the timbre rather than the pitch because of the dominance of the former;⁶² points three and two, concerning the substitution of suitable mediums for orchestral timbres were considered valid by Schaeffer, but not to the complete negation of the orchestra; with regard to point one, Schaeffer felt instead of substituting noise for musical sound, that better results were achieved by adding the noise to the existing musical background.⁶³

⁶¹Schaeffer seems to have ignored the technical disadvantages of Russolo's time, 1914; transposing units were non-existent; recording machines were acoustically inferior to present day models. It would be interesting to know how Schaeffer would have achieved these suggestions with the available technical materials during Russolo's time.

⁶²Again Schaeffer points to the advantages of electronic transformation in which the dominant character of the tone can be muted.

⁶³Ibid.

Clough believes that the divergence between Schaeffer and the futurists arose from Schaeffer's belief in traditional extensions instead of a complete break with the past, as advocated by the futurists. She also contends that despite critical disagreement

. . . the significance of Futurist thinking, even today, for the new conceptions in music is evident. It is striking, for example, that a French movement which appeared later, known as Bruitisme, analogous to the Futurist noise program, was partly realized by the "machine-music" of Bartok, Milhaud, and Stravinsky.⁶⁴

Other composers and technicians who have utilized or are interested in the principles of musique concrète include Olivier Messiaen, Otto Luening, Vladimir Ussachevsky, John Cage, and Pierre Boulez--although, to a man, they decry any futurist influences.⁶⁵

On October 5, 1948, a program called concert de bruits, consisting of musique concrète, was presented by the French radio. The following year Pierre Henry joined Schaeffer in the composition of the Symphonie pour un homme seul, later entitled Antiphonie. This piece and other Schaeffer works were presented in New York at a later date. Henry Cowell, unimpressed with these experiments, commented that "they had a certain appeal for jaded ears, but the compositions are unconvincing musically because they are both over-simplified in form and over-developed technically."⁶⁶

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 266. ⁶⁵Glanville-Hicks, "Tapesichord," p. 81.

⁶⁶"Current Chronicle: United States," The Musical Quarterly, XXXIX (April, 1953), 254.

Pierre Boulez has not been directly implicated with futurist influences; but Everett Helm, after having heard Boulez's Polyphonie X for seventeen solo instruments, implied a relationship, stating that he believed that it would be quite easy for anyone to write a "plink-plink," "boom-boom" music such as this, noting that "one has the impression that he has heard all this before--from some of the 'wildmen' of the 1920's to be exact."⁶⁷

Futurism and John Cage

A contumelious article written by Benjamin Boretz explained that the tradition of the Cage school could be understood only after the examination of another twentieth-century tendency, "that of radical music, whose principal rationale is to be different and anti-traditional. Ever since the Italian Futurists, back in 1910, this tendency has evidenced a progressive deterioration."⁶⁸ A further reference to Cage and futurist noise excursions is supplied by Boretz in his declaration that the musical intent and results of both Cage and the futurists were the same, claiming that the radical school of the former relinquished

⁶⁷"Current Chronicle: Germany," The Musical Quarterly, XXXVIII (January, 1952), 143. This concert was given October 6 at Donaueschingen. Cowell also added that the concert created a scandal of hissing and cat-calling, while other so-called advanced listeners "found some connection between this and the music of the future."

⁶⁸"Music," The Nation, CLXXXIV (February 3, 1962), 108.

all claims to artistic sensibility, "relegating the composer to the role equivalent to that of a page-turner, and reducing the idea of creative freedom to an ultimate absurdity."⁶⁹

Boretz continues his deprecation of Cage and futurism by citing an account of a futurist demonstration witnessed by Stravinsky: "Five phonographs standing on five tables in a large and otherwise empty room emitted digestive noises, static, etc."⁷⁰ A Cage concert given in the late forties, Sonic Landscape for Twelve Radios, bears some resemblance to the futurist one described above. Cage conducted a group of persons who manipulated twelve radios by turning the volume up and down, or by turning the radio on and off; the ensuing sounds were described as a blend of sounds, voices, musical fragments, and static noises. Fred Grunfeld insists that "this was the logical jumping-off point for aleatoric music."⁷¹

A performance of John Cage's Amores (quartet for drums, rattle, woodblocks, and prepared piano) at the Museum of Modern Art prompted another critic to link him with the Italian futurists; a description of Cage's orchestra follows: eleven people who were dressed in tails and evening gowns,

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Ibid. Stravinsky's description, that is, the use of phonographs, admits the possibility that the futurists may have experimented with the rotation of the turntables and the consequent alteration of pitches and dynamics.

⁷¹"Guggenheim Roulette," The Reporter, XXVI (January 4, 1962), 36-37.

performed on such sundry items as flowerpots, tincans, automobile brake drums, and cymbals by tapping, beating, shaking, rubbing, and immersing some of the instruments in water.⁷² Kurt List also claims that Cage's highly abstract work, Construction in Metal (1944), was lightly influenced by the futurists, more especially through the technique of simultaneity; Cage's application of electrical instruments, List adds, should not be confused with the earlier noise attempts of the futurists.⁷³ Collaer, on the other hand, remarks that, although futurist influences are evident in Cage's music, futurist music failed to possess the musical traits of Cage's work.⁷⁴ Most of the foregoing comments have used futurist comparisons for the purpose of discrediting Cage's music. Aaron Copland, on the other hand, upholds Cage's efforts, stating that they were partially derived from the experimental percussion sounds of Cowell and Varèse, but possessed more originality of sound than substance, and more than likely, stemmed from Balinese, Hindu music, and Schönberg.⁷⁵

⁷²"Percussionist," Time, XLI (February 22, 1943), 70. Music by Henry Cowell and Lou Harrison was also included on this same program.

⁷³"Rhythm, Sound and Sane," The New Republic, CXIII (December 24, 1945), 870.

⁷⁴A History of Modern Music, p. 393.

⁷⁵"The New School of American Composers; Generation of the Forties," New York Times Magazine, (March 14, 1948), p. 54.

Late Dadaist Influence on Music

Since dada's decline and death around 1922, feeble attempts have been made to revive the movement under the dada name. Another art movement functioning under the name of "pop art," however, has taken on certain dada characteristics; these are evidenced in the current use of unique typography, poster art, and ready-made objects. Other trends, more dramatically inclined, such as the so-called "free expression," resemble the impromptu and dilettante performances of the early dada dramatic demonstrations. A spectacular "happening" of this nature, in Paris, 1965, depicted a man smearing spaghetti sauce on the body of a partially nude girl who was on a Renault car; other participants simultaneously smashed the car with sledge-hammers; a later occurrence involved love-making in a burlap bag. One of dada's founders, Marcel Duchamp, was pictured among the enthusiastic spectators of the former event.⁷⁶

A musical counterpart to more recent art and dramatic trends of those discussed above may possibly be identified in some of John Cage's bizarre musical endeavors.⁷⁷

⁷⁶"France, The Happening," Time, LXXXV (June 4, 1965), 26.

⁷⁷The writer has observed two performances on the NBC evening Johnny Carson television show, in which a female cellist performed a John Cage work. Both performances were given by the same cellist almost a year apart (1966 and 1967). The cellist tied the cello strings with rubber bands, used pizzicato glissando effects, blew duck callers, popped balloons, used a tape recorder, kicked tincans, dropped a large cymbal,

Many persons, including the original dadaists, who have attempted to revive the dada movement, insist that even though the movement itself died, the continued manifestation of its spirit may be recognized through the activities of such persons as Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson.⁷⁸ Marcel Janco, one of the original dadaists in Zürich, has persistently defended the spirit of dada, insisting that the living grand-dadaists should keep dada pure.⁷⁹ In 1949 Richard Hülsenbeck drew up a new dada manifesto and suggested that all dadaists sign it in order to bring about an end to the anthology then being prepared for The Dada Painters and Poets.⁸⁰ Motherwell opines that the present view of the dadaists, citing the cases of Hülsenbeck and Tzara, whose original positions have been reversed, has been somewhat colored by their present sympathies or antagonism toward the U. S. S. R.⁸¹

fired a pistol, and smashed a plate glass with a hammer. All of these cues were indicated in a score. The performance, serious from all appearances, was interspersed with silence and rests. The audience response, involving much laughter, may have been part of the cues in the score.

⁷⁸Sargeant, "Dada's Daddy," p. 106.

⁷⁹"Creative Dada," p. 26.

⁸⁰Motherwell, pp. xi-xii. This was in reference to Motherwell's compiling the anthology and a great deal of bickering that resulted between dadaists concerning old issues.

⁸¹Ibid., p. xii. Hülsenbeck, who was originally a strong spokesman for politics of the left, criticized Tzara for trying to make dada a French literary movement. Now Hülsenbeck (residing in New York) is a bitter opponent of communism, while Tzara is a Russian sympathizer living on the left bank of Paris.

After 1924 a number of exhibitions given in both America and Europe clearly indicate that the spirit of dada is still living. An exhibition given at the Sidney Janis Gallery in 1952 (presenting the works of thirty artists) included Man Ray's Flatiron (originally called Gift, 1921) with tacks on the bottom, representing frustration; Picabia's Portrait of a Woman; and Max Ernst's Above the Clouds Walks the Midnight (1920). Marcel Duchamp was also represented at this exhibition with his To Be Looked at with One Eye Closed to, for Almost an Hour, and although this item was cracked in transit, Duchamp believed that the damage improved its design. Life Magazine's picture of a group of dadaists included Edgar Varèse.⁸² Another account of this exhibition listed other exhibits, among them a Duchamp ready-made, which was a porcelain urinal decorated with a sprig of mistletoe, and "a carved wooden head festooned with watchworks, metric and alligator wallet, a sickly pink portrait of a man with blotched face and four combs for hair, a gutter collage of torn ticket stubs, discarded buttons, hairpins, and old newspapers."⁸³ At this exhibition Duchamp kept insisting: "Dada is not passé. The Dada spirit is eternal."⁸⁴

Winthrop Sargeant, after having attended a dada exhibition at the Manhattan Art Gallery in 1952, felt that the dada spirit

⁸²"Speaking of Dada; Exhibition in Sidney Janis Gallery," XXXIV (May 25, 1953), 24-26.

⁸³"Dadadadada," p. 93. ⁸⁴"Speaking of Dada," pp. 24-26.

could actually be recognized as Duchamp's revolution, further insisting that it motivated the actions of many persons, and without it, many things may not have happened:

. . . probably nobody today would consider James Thurber's cartoons art; Gertrude Stein would never have taught Ernest Hemingway how to write a crisp dialogue, museums of modern art would lack a rationale for much of what they do, and nobody but a passionately dedicated plumber would have noted that you can get a certain amount of esthetic pleasure from the contemplation of a well-made gas pipe.⁸⁵

Hans Richter also insists that there has been a rediscovery of dada and that its non-sense attitude "makes all the sense in the world."⁸⁶ Virgil Thomson confirms Richter's statement, further noting that dada, unlike surrealism's highly organized though sterile art system, will always be a living spirit that is free from the confines of a movement.⁸⁷ An exhibition entitled Pop por pop corn corny, held in France, is also pertinent to the revival of the dada spirit. Paradoxically, Edgar Varèse, who claims he was not associated with this movement, furnished the details and a program concerning this exhibition of contemporary art; it was presented in Paris, June 29 to August 14, 1965 under the supervision of Jean Lacarde and presented the works of dadaists and surrealists such as Duchamp, Picabia,

⁸⁵"Dada's Daddy," p. 100. Duchamp made reproductions of many of his early works as well as others, compiled them in packets, placed them in small valises and sold them to the visitors at this exhibit. These were reproductions of early works such as Nude Descending a Staircase and Mona Lisa with Mustache.

⁸⁶"Dada, a Clowning out of the Void," p. 20.

⁸⁷Interview with Virgil Thomson, August 17, 1964.

Ray, Dali, Ernst, Miro, and Magritte. Outstanding examples in this exhibition included Duchamp's La valise, Ray's Revolving Doors (1916), Dali's La Venus de Milo à tiroirs, and Ernst's Étude pour la Carmagnole de l'amour.⁸⁸

Dada's Influence Through Satie

The Dada Monograph claims that many artists who were mentally akin to Satie took part in the dada manifestations, but in most cases, their works revealed little enduring influence.⁸⁹ Satie's teaching efforts were confined mainly to young students living near his residence in Arcueil. The individuals in the groups that pursued his ideals, that is, les Six and École d'Arcueil, were composers who agreed with his anti-romantic tendencies; but most of these persons were not dadaists in the true sense, although several absorbed some of the qualities of his personality, humor, wit, and irony, as well as a certain subversive spirit that may be observed in some of their unconventional practices.

Satie's influence is believed to have been extended into more recent art. Musique d'ameublement (furniture music), for example, according to Satie, supposedly created vibration, serving a similar purpose as does light and heat. The graphic counterpart of this, according to Dore Ashton, is "environmental painting," a name Clement Greenberg applied to the

⁸⁸Program forwarded to the author by Varèse, August 15, 1965.

⁸⁹Klein and Blaukopf, "Dada and Music," p. 96.

huge canvases of Jackson Pollock; Greenberg claims they are intended to "absorb the spectator, to enclose him in an environment rather than force him into a frontal relationship to their surface."⁹⁰ The essential point of agreement between Satie's furniture music and Pollock's canvases is that both are intended to serve as background works.

Satie's influence was felt by almost every individual musician that he was in contact with: Henri Sauguet, Roger Desormière, Edgar Varèse, and Virgil Thomson; even composers who had never met him, such as John Cage, were influenced by him. In the case of Thomson, Abraham Skulsky alleges that Thomson's Four Saints in Three Acts may be compared to Satie's La Piège de Méduse, pointing out the originality of both works, as well as other elements with regard to the "reduction of essentials of the melodic and harmonic elements, the endless repetition of ideas, and above all the Dada spirit."⁹¹ John Cage, on the other hand, was attracted to the metrical and rhythmical aspects of Satie's works. "The symmetries in metrical structure found in much of Satie's work constitute an important element in Cage's compositional style."⁹²

⁹⁰The Unknown Shore: A View of Contemporary Art (Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1962), p. 209. This concept actually resembles the futurist concept of spectator and painting described in Chapter I, Futurism.

⁹¹"Erik Satie, One of the Most Controversial Figures in Music," Musical America, LXX (November 15, 1950), 36.

⁹²Ibid.

Although Edgar Varèse was well acquainted with Satie, there is little evidence to show that Satie exerted any influence on his music. Varèse, nevertheless, was quite active in many dadaist activities.

Edgar Varèse.--Varèse has made this statement: "I have been called a Futurist, a Dadaist, a Cubist composer--. . . I never attended or wrote music for any Futurist or Dadaist manifestation."⁹³ It is possible that Varèse may not have attended the early dadaist and futurist exhibitions, but it is clearly evident by now that Varèse was not only present to introduce Russolo's Russolophone, but at many dada exhibitions as well. He has admitted his association with several dadaists, naming Tzara, Duchamp, and several others. Although Varèse insisted that he was detached from these groups, he was a contributor to Picabia's 391, and his name has also been included many times in this journal, frequently in such senseless references as this one: "From our special envoys, March, 1917; Mr. Varèse is going around everywhere pretending to have finished the orchestration of his Danse du Robinet froid."⁹⁴ Another issue cited February, 1919, in Zurich contains this statement: "Varèse can no longer admire his whores for want of admiring his music. The Danse du Robinet froid isn't

⁹³Letter in English from Varèse (cited previously).

⁹⁴391, p. 32. Dance of the Cold Tap. This issue was produced in America.

finished yet."⁹⁵ Varèse's literary contributions to 391 are typically dada in their meaning and typography. A translation of his "Verbe" follows:

That which isn't composition of intelligence and will is organic

Certain composers have in view in their works only a succession of a light touch of sonorous aggregates--material most often of a frightening indocility--speculating only on the exterior sensuality; from other propping up their thought with a literary jumble and looking for, by grouping of phrases to justify or to criticize a title/style. Oh, the Protestant mentality of those who sweat boredom and who work as if they were fulfilling an obligation.

The triumph of feeling is not a tragedy.⁹⁶

An "Oblations" to Francis Picabia arranged in a style, the typography of which is difficult to duplicate in a translation, is also given here in the typical style of the dada ramblings:

Heaven awaits
 A woman's laughter brought so much evil to me
 My heart is heavy
 The stars light up and the river rolls along the concern
 of the world
 Speculative ideas
 The sun denied the nuptial ring to the moon
 I will never be delegate nor ambassador
 Digitale palms
 The orange of Malta
 I will command the revelry on Brooklyn Bridge to slap
 the astonished skyscrapers
 My love is dead

Edgar Varèse⁹⁷

On the same page is a poem by Walter Conrad Arensberg called Arithmetical Progression of the verb "To Be." An excerpt of this poem provides a comparison to Varèse's "Oblation":

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 64. ⁹⁶Ibid., p. 42. ⁹⁷Ibid., p. 44.

On a sheet of paper
 dropped with the intention of demolishing
 space
 by the simple subtraction of a necessary
 plane
 draw a line that leaves the present
 in addition
 carrying forward to the uncounted columns
 of the spatial ruin
 now considered as complete
 the reminder of the past. . . .⁹⁸

Besides 391, Varèse has been mentioned in other dada journals. In Dada 6 his name was listed along with many others as one of dada's presidents.⁹⁹ His name also appeared on Picabia's Portrait of Cézanne (1920), and in the Tableau Dada: "Edgar Varèse fait du cinema. Il tourne actuellement un fil dada."¹⁰⁰ In the New York Dada, April, 1921, the name of Varèse was listed with other dadaists, and then again on the third page of the same issue: "Edgar Varèse, the violinist, has donated a piece of concert resin to be used on the canvas floor, which will be made in Persia."¹⁰¹ His name also appeared with those of Tzara, Soupault, Picabia, and Duchamp in a Pamphlet Tract, Paris, January 12, 1921.¹⁰² Although the use of Varèse's name in various periodicals does not necessarily make him a dadaist, his contributions were made of his own free will, and the consistent use of his name

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit in Painting," p. 167.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 175.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 217.

¹⁰²Dada. Monograph, p. 68.

in these literary pranks also aroused no serious objections on his part at that time.

The Dada Monograph also includes Varèse's name in its biographical list, stating that he was closely associated with the dada movement in 1920. Citing Ionization as an example of noise music, and Deserts (1955) as an example of organized sound, the Monograph avows that Varèse and his experiments were important links, "spanning a generation, thus forming a bridge between the noise music of the Dada movement and the Parisian musique concrète of the fifties of this century."¹⁰³ One cannot place too much stock in the claims of the Monograph, since it intentionally introduced contradictions along with statements that cannot always be verified. Its publication followed that of The Dada Painters, and its views have frequently been colored by the rivalry that still exists between various dadaists; this is especially true concerning the lack of attention to the German movement in The Dada Painters, as well as the dadaists who turned surrealists.¹⁰⁴

Virgil Thomson.--Virgil Thomson made friends with several of the dadaists but Thomson relates that, regrettably, he did not have the privilege of attending a dadaist or futurist

¹⁰³"Dada Dictionary," p. 174.

¹⁰⁴This writer, after having studied both books cited above as well as other sources, has observed that some Germans (Hans Richter, Kurt Schwitters, and others), resented the attention given to the belated Paris movement.

concert. Thomson, who feels that Erik Satie was the most important musician in the movement, expresses the belief that the dada spirit, as reflected by Satie, is still evident, primarily in the works of some musicians and artists who have had the courage to shake off traditions through the way they compose or paint. Not naming any specific composers, other than Cage, he has suggested that Cage, for whom he has great admiration, may reflect the true spirit of dada in some of his experiments.¹⁰⁵

Thomson's encounter with Satie and the dadaists occurred in the early twenties during the time he studied composition with Nadia Boulanger (1922). Matthew Josephson, who recalls having met him in Imst, a town thirty-one miles from Innsbruck at the Gasthof Post, depicts him at this time as "a bouncing young man with a somewhat pugnacious turn of wit, whose early compositions, played for us on the ill-tuned piano of the Gasthof Post, were decidedly merry pieces, having something of the impudent humor of Satie."¹⁰⁶ Ernst Krenek also commented that, as a result of his Paris adventures, Thomson's music, more than any other composer, reveals the spirit of dadaism and surrealism.¹⁰⁷ Krenek's reference to Thomson

¹⁰⁵Interview with Thomson, August 17, 1964.

¹⁰⁶Life Among the Surrealists, p. 171.

¹⁰⁷"Virgil Thomson," Composers on Music. An Anthology of Composers' Writings from Palestrina to Copland, edited by Sam Morgenstern (New York, Pantheon Books, Inc., 1956), p. 543.

and surrealism is open to question since the latter has openly declared his aversion to surrealism. After a performance of Satie's Entr'acte at the Juilliard School of Music, Thomson, discussing this music with a tinge of nostalgia, remarked that "it takes us back to the still innocent last days of Dada, before Surrealism had turned our fantasies sour, sexy, and mean. It is not about anything at all but being young and in Paris and loving to laugh even at funerals."¹⁰⁸

According to Glanville-Hicks, Thomson's closeness to dada has been expressed through his ability to share musical experiences in a manner similar to that of Satie, and even though the ingredients of his homespun (Missouri) music are a far-cry from the French musical chic, dada "provided a unique incubator for his own developing trends."¹⁰⁹ She also points out that France liberated him and his later works were built upon a discovery that perhaps only Thomson shares with Satie.¹¹⁰ A musical parallel which places Thomson and Satie close together are Satie's miniature musical sketches and Thomson's musical portraits of such persons as Picasso, Henry McBride, and the Stettheimer ladies.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸Music Right and Left, 1st ed. (New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1951), p. 98.

¹⁰⁹"Virgil Thomson," The Musical Quarterly, XXXV (April, 1949), 211.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 220.

¹¹¹Samuel Barlow, "Virgil Thomson," Modern Music, XVIII (May-June, 1941), 246.

Thomson also spoke of Satie's influence on him and several of his colleagues; it concerned what he called the embarrassing neo-romantic movement which he and Sauguet founded in Paris about 1926.¹¹² His real dada outlook became definite when his technical evolution of classicism (Sonata da Chiesa) converged with ideological attitude. This involved a multiple system of reference in which an allusion to a Viennese waltz, a jazz idiom, or a Spanish habanera could occur within the disciplined text of a neo-classic piece, achieving an aesthetic collage.¹¹³

Glanville-Hicks believes that Gertrude Stein's writing methods were compatible to the dada intellect: "The mental process in Dadaism is one of dual control, the analytical intellect supervising the dissolution of the outworn convention while simultaneously the creative intuition reassembles the elements in a new kind of design."¹¹⁴

The satirical and witty musical temperament of Thomson provided a perfect collaborating force for Gertrude Stein's text to Four Saints in Three Acts. This opera was first produced in Hartford, Connecticut, February 8, 1934. A ballet was incorporated into the opera and Thomson chose an all negro cast to sing it because he felt that their diction was better suited to the lines of the incoherent plot. Seven major roles

¹¹²"Music Now," Opera News, XXV (March 11, 1961).

¹¹³Glanville-Hicks, "Virgil Thomson," p. 214.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 211.

were involved, and instead of four, there were many saints.¹¹⁵ The overture, beginning with an accordion in a waltz tempo, quickly turns into a series of musical segments moving around plotless activities which include speaking and singing parts. Glanville-Hicks, who remarks that the humorous score and text together formed an emotional collage recalling the whimsy method of dada, explains that Thomson's music used humor, shock, and surprise effects, unaffected hymn-book harmony with authentic and plagal cadences in a preacher's style, as well as chord progressions moving by jumps rather than by modulations.¹¹⁶ William Beyer also characterized Thomson's style as wittingly modern, spoofing, satirical with a dash of buffoonery, juxtaposing--wildly related styles that matched Stein's stammerings.¹¹⁷ Another account, though less kind to Gertrude Stein's efforts, described the opera as a sublime minstrel show with an annoying libretto, and a bland disregard of plot and characters in which Thomson "squandered his ingratiating music on Miss Stein's impenetrable but aggressively uncomplicated prose style."¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵Olin Downes, "Gertrude Stein Comes to Broadway," The Literary Digest, CXVII (March 10, 1934), 21-22. Scenario, choreography, costumes, and staging were realized by Maurice Grosser, Frederick Ashton, Florine Stettheimer, and Houseman respectively.

¹¹⁶"Virgil Thomson," p. 218.

¹¹⁷"The State of the Theater: Modern Dance and Opera," School and Society, LXXV (June 21, 1952), 393.

¹¹⁸Douglass Watt, "Four Saints in Three Acts," The New Yorker, XXVIII (April 26, 1952), 122.

Olin Downes, however, felt that

. . . he has produced music which is in the happiest contrast to the labored or lumpish scores by Americans that have been heard of late in and out of the opera house. There is at least a sense of metier, lightness and clarity of statement, and a feeling for scene. This method may be derivative. It may remind the listener of the kind of thing that old Satie and "the six" were doing, and Paris was tiring of, ten years ago.¹¹⁹

John Cage.--In all probability, the unconforming spirit and uniqueness of Cage's activities have placed him closer to the dada personality than any other living composer except Thomson. His literary style and daring musical experiments appear to substantiate this. His own personality may be compared to those of Erik Satie and Marcel Duchamp, whose methods were provocative, unconforming, and departed from all existing norms.

Cage's imaginary conversation with Satie (in which he quoted Satie literally) described the compositions as being a new departure in which chronology could not be concerned. Cage explained that Satie's works have always sprung from zero to any predictable points such as 112, 2, 149, and so forth.¹²⁰ Satie countered with the idea that the "new spirit" teaches one to tend towards absence of emotion, "and an inactivity . . . in the way of prescribing sonorities and rhythms which lets them affirm themselves clearly, in a straight

¹¹⁹"Gertrude Stein Comes to Broadway," p. 22.

¹²⁰Silence (Middletown, Connecticut, Wesleyan University Press, 1961), p. 79.

line from the plan and pitch." Cage uses Satie's point of view to emphasize his own: "To be interested in Satie one must be disinterested to begin with, accept that a sound is a sound and a man is a man, give illusions about ideas of order, expressions of sentiment, and all the rest of our inherited aesthetic claptrap."¹²¹

The prevailing idea that the dadaists abandoned art is without foundation, though Duchamp may be the exception;¹²² nonetheless, Duchamp has done more to perpetuate and maintain the spirit of dada than any other dadaist. Duchamp employed his techniques as he wished and considered the results secondary, and according to Harriet and Sidney Janis, the work of a typical dada personality falls into three categories, intentionally or otherwise:

. . . movement machine concept, and irony. Irony subdivides into three groups: selection, chance and the ravages of time. Chance configurations are designated by Marcel Duchamp as obtainable by employing the following three methods: wind, gravity and the device termed address.¹²³

The similarity of the personalities of Cage and Duchamp may be substantiated by Cage's own statement about how one should compose music: "One way to write music: study Duchamp."¹²⁴

¹²¹Ibid., p. 82.

¹²²Duchamp abandoned painting during World War I and has spent most of his life playing chess. He has not produced a significant work since then.

¹²³"Marcel Duchamp: Anti-Artist (1945)," The Dada Painters and Poets, pp. 307-308.

¹²⁴John Cage, A Year from Monday. New Lectures and Writings by John Cage (Middletown, Connecticut, Wesleyan University Press, 1967), p. 72.

Cage, in a discussion of structure and form in composition, declares that "any attempt to exclude the 'irrational' is irrational. Any composing strategy which is wholly 'rational' is irrational in the extreme."¹²⁵ His training and inspiration were derived from two prominent personalities, Schönberg and Cowell. Cage maintains that most of the avant-garde composers have had to make a decision as to which path they wanted to follow: Schönberg or Stravinsky, while at the same time they were necessarily influenced by individuals, foundations, or fostered by the League of Composers. Cage also states that Henry Cowell, with reference to musical continuity and the need to break with the tradition of continuity, pointed the way for him and three other composers who were able to work in an uncompromising manner--Christian Wolff, Earle Brown, and Morton Feldman. Cage recounts that, in response to Cowell's advice to get rid of the glue, whereas other people had felt the necessity to stick sounds together to make a continuity, "we four felt the opposite necessity to get rid of the glue so that sounds would be themselves."¹²⁶

Provocation, essential to the activities of the dada personality, has been a cardinal mark of Cage's activities as well as the three others mentioned. Cage's literary style in his book Silence is highly unorthodox, somewhat like that

¹²⁵Silence, p. 62.

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 71.

of the dadaists.¹²⁷ The format of Silence is an agglomeration of lectures, jokes, aphorisms, and chance placements of words, phrases and sentences that may be interpreted in devious ways. In "45 for a Speaker," the style is a rambling discussion on techniques, Christian Wolff, sounds, Zen, and various aspects of music, in which instructions to snore, sneeze, cough, comb hair, slap table, yawn, light match, whistle three times are interspersed in the lecture.¹²⁸ It is also strikingly similar to the style of Tristan Tzara's manifestos.¹²⁹

It appears that irrationality, illogicality, irony, provocativeness, all so evident in the workings of dada, are also basic ingredients in John Cage's literature and music. Cage obviously regards dada with a great deal of respect, since he proudly comments that critics, after attending one of his concerts or lectures, frequently associate him with dada. He has indicated that it is possible to make a connection between Zen Buddhism and dada.¹³⁰ He claims that both, possessing invigorating action, are not fixed tangibles and have changed form

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 52. Silence contains a series of lectures and writings by John Cage from 1939 to 1961.

¹²⁸Ibid., pp. 146-193.

¹²⁹Cf. "Seven Dada Manifestos," by Tzara, The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 91 and typography in Silence, p. 117.

¹³⁰Silence, p. xi. Cage has admitted a great interest in Zen, mentioning that he attended the lectures of Alan Watts and D. T. Suzuki as well as reading literature about Zen, further explaining that without Zen's influence he doesn't know whether he would have done what he has done, though he does not want his actions blamed on Zen.

in different ways at different times. He has not disclaimed or admitted dada influence, nor that he is or is not a dadaist, though he indicates he knows a great deal about dadaism. He has pointed out that dada, today, has in it a space, an emptiness, that it formerly lacked.¹³¹ John Cage appears to be one of few persons who has filled that space.

He describes chance operations as those in which the actions are unforeseen. More important than chance, he explains, is the method of composing in such a way that no predetermined course will be in evidence, working directly without any preconceived actions--nothing foreseen. Important to this process are the principles of modern painting and architecture: collage and space. The action is like dada in its underlying philosophical views and collage-like actions. Cage explains, however, that the action is unlike dada because of the space in action--a space described as emptiness of sand which needs the stones anywhere in the space in order to be empty. To better illustrate this, Cage relates how he suggested in a lecture in Darmstadt, that one may write music by observing the imperfections in the paper being used. One student asked if another piece of paper would be better with more imperfections. Cage responded that one needed to attach himself to the emptiness and silence so that the sounds could come into being. To sum all this up, Cage explained that

¹³¹Ibid., p. xi.

"each aspect of sound (frequency, amplitude, timbre, duration) is to be seen as a continuum, not as a series of discrete steps favored by conventions (Occidental or Oriental)."¹³² Many of Cage's compositions have provoked audiences to a state of hostility; for example, Four Minutes, Thirty-three Seconds involves a performer walking out on the stage, opening and closing the piano lid until the performance has used as much time as the title indicates. This may indicate Cage's blank canvas of sound, punctuated by audience sounds (coughing and laughing), and possibly demonstrates a wonderful experience of cathartic meditation or "ear-cleaning" as Cage has described it.¹³³

Many of Cage's compositions have prompted a great deal of controversy. Imaginary Landscape No. 1 has been described by Lester Trimble as a "bawdy raucous sounding affair made from a recording of constant and variable frequency records, cymbal and piano."¹³⁴ The sounds, described as coming through speakers like an inebriated glissando whistle, obviously were enjoyed as a joke by Trimble when he remarked that "the work seemed a bit raw and naive; but it was fun, not unlike a burlesque gag."¹³⁵ Trimble's report of Cage's The Wonderful

¹³²Ibid., pp. 70-71.

¹³³Harold C. Schonberg, "The Far-Out Pianist," Harper's Magazine, CCXX (June, 1960), 49.

¹³⁴"Music," The Nation, CLXXVI (May 31, 1958), 502-503.

¹³⁵Ibid.

Widow of Eighteen Springs involved a more severe criticism, when he called it a trifle. The performance involved the intoning of three notes in the lower register by a contralto, while Cage patted his hands in different rhythms on the wood of the piano, avoiding the keyboard. According to Trimble, She Is Asleep, a combination using a quartet for twelve tomtoms, and a Duo (and prepared piano) provided gorgeous sounds, though he adds that Cage did not use his full inventive powers. He further remarked that the Duo part would have provided a nice mild travelogue for a jungle movie, or a South Sea Island story, and although "the contralto sang no words, among her various non-verbal utterances, 'Aaah-wuh!' seemed important."¹³⁶ Virgil Thomson found this composition, with its long silences, capable of putting one to sleep, although Thomson was quite moved with other parts of it, and described the sound effects as not too unlike those of a Chinese opera, "sonorously agreeable and intensely almost disquietingly, realistic."¹³⁷

A series of sixteen sonatas and four interludes comprised a program for a Carnegie Hall Concert in a two night series. Maro Ajemian, pianist, performed the sonatas and interludes on a prepared piano. The author of an article, "Sonata for Bolt and Screw," states that Ajemian "thudded, clanked, banged, and chimed through these sonatas and interludes."¹³⁸

¹³⁶Ibid.

¹³⁷"John Cage Late and Early," The Saturday Review, XLIII (January 30, 1960), 38. Thomson heard this selection at a different performance.

¹³⁸Time, LIII (January 24, 1949), 36.

David Drew notes that artistic anarchy (in which composers have shed old discipline for new) has been expressed best by dada and John Cage on the prepared piano.¹³⁹ Dore Ashton supports Drew's views, declaring Cage to be a musical dadaist in many ways.¹⁴⁰

It is highly probable that Cage is not interested in reviving the dada movement. Cage's activities, in spite of the eccentric nature of his music and noise enterprises, are contrived independently of the Stravinsky or Schönberg influence. To insist that he has taken his cues from dadaism would also be too presumptuous. One can speculate, however, that many of Cage's musical activities would have had the wholehearted approval of the dadaists; and had Cage encountered the dadaists in the six years of their activities, it is highly probable that he would have been one of their most active protagonists.

Late Surrealist Influence on Music

André Breton's coercive tactics in art affairs probably discouraged many of his colleagues from taking more active parts in musical collaboration, thereby preventing what may have been many outstanding achievements in surrealism's most advantageous mediums: ballet, theater, and cinema.

¹³⁹European Music in the Twentieth Century, Howard Hartog quoting Drew, p. 1.

¹⁴⁰The Unknown Shore, p. 206.

The final stages of surrealism, however, provide a few significant achievements involving the use of music and the participation of composers and musicians. Some of these were incidental, while others, such as Virgil Thomson's Four Saints, were significant collaborations. The element of shock, used so frequently by the dadaists, was not abandoned by the surrealists, nor was the incongruity that later proved to be an essential element in surrealist poetry and art.

Only a few composers have identified themselves as surrealists, although other composers like George Antheil were surrealistically involved. André Souris is a self-acknowledged surrealist, but Paul Hindemith may well have been an unwitting collaborator in the film, Spook Before Breakfast (1927). Olivier Messiaen is also a self-acclaimed surrealist poet.

The most significant contact between music and surrealism may be recognized through a composer's attraction to surrealist poetry. The use of poetry for musical settings, however, does not necessarily identify the music as being surrealist, although the union of the two has often provided pleasing results. Three of the favored poets were Jean Cocteau, René Char, and Gertrude Stein.

George Antheil

The early music of George Antheil, besides having bruit-ist qualities, has been described as abstract, surrealist, and neo-classic. Randall Thompson recounts how the factory

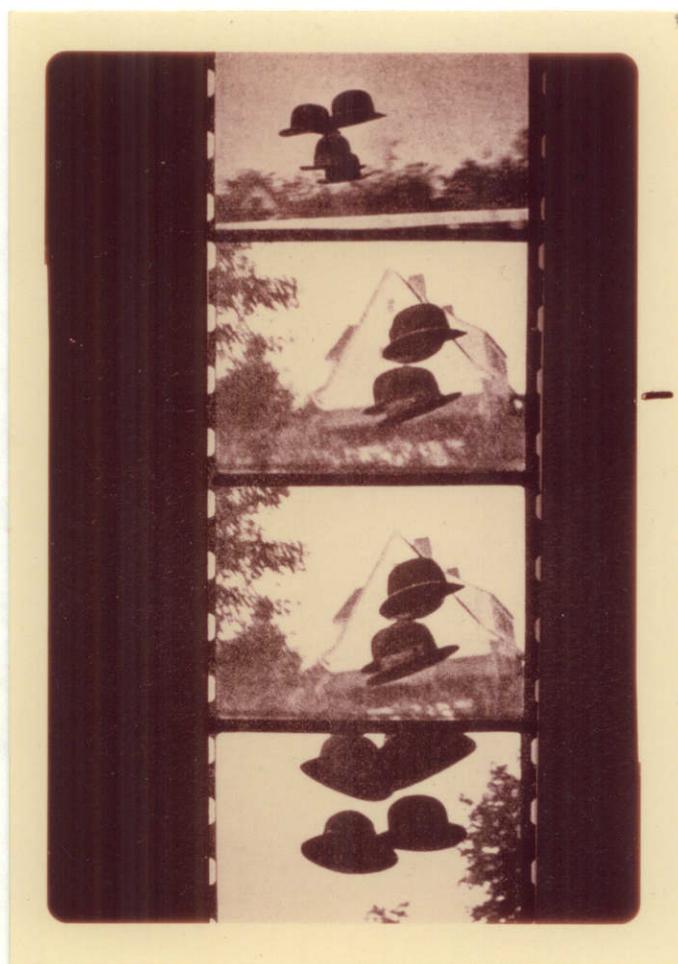


Plate 48. Still. (From Spook Before Breakfast, directed by Hans Richter), Germany, 1927¹⁴¹

influenced Antheil's music and how he attempted to develop a working aesthetic in his music, first involving theories of abstractions, and later moving to the antithesis of abstraction--surrealism. Thompson says the latter may have been the abstraction of the unconscious and provides a list of compositions (piano works) which he believes are surrealistically inclined:

¹⁴¹The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 284.

Airplane, The Profane Waltzers, Jazz Sonata, The Golden Bird (after Brancusi), and Sonata Sauvage. Antheil's infatuation with Parisian theories, according to Thompson, involved dadaism, surrealism, and neo-classicism: "The city was teeming with artistic heterogeneity, outdoing itself. Into it at this time, like Parsifal entering Klingsor's supernatural garden, strode George Antheil."¹⁴²

Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson

Stein was never involved in the surrealist movement itself; she was, moreover, antagonistic towards the members of the movement and surrealism itself. Yet her literary style ("stream of consciousness") was closer to that of the surrealists ("automatic writing") than any other writer not directly involved with surrealism. Her spontaneous writing efforts have paralleled the automatic results of the surrealists. She confessed, as had many of the surrealists, that she did not always understand what she wrote.¹⁴³ The elements common to both styles, that is, Stein's and the surrealists', involve incoherency in plot or action, lack of continuity of thought, incongruous elements, and elements of

¹⁴²"American Composers V. George Antheil," pp. 18-19. Thompson also includes Stravinsky's Les Noces and Honegger's Pacific 231 as being surrealist.

¹⁴³In the spring of 1945 this writer had an interview with Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas at the Schlossberg Hotel, Heidelberg, Germany. When questioned about meanings of many of her writings, Stein admitted that most of them had none; she also explained that she did not even understand many things she had written.

shock. A fragment from Stein's "In this Way" illustrates this:

Keys please, it is useless to alarm anyone it is useless to alarm some one it is useless to be alarming and to get fertility in gardens in salads in delitrope and in dishes. . . . We like sheep. And so does he.¹⁴⁴

Jacques Prévert's Cortège is similar:

A . . . baby in a black dresscoat and a gentleman in diapers. A gallows composer with a music bird. A collector of conscience with a director of butts. A sharpener of Coligny with a scissors admiral.¹⁴⁵

The surrealist language imposed hermetic principles, involving the use of words as hieroglyphs in which it was necessary to search for the meanings. The poetry of Valéry, Reverdy, and Char utilized these principles. Other methods employed ironic effects for the purpose of startling or presenting a comic effect, combining heterogeneous elements in order to present eclectic, fragmentary views; these may be observed in the poetry of Prévert and Cocteau. Examples of lyrical poetry, requiring a simple kind of language, may be recognized in the works of Apollinaire, Breton, Eluard, and Desnos.¹⁴⁶ Stein's works have a little of each of these, but more of the ironic and lyrical.

Stein's collaboration with Virgil Thomson on two operas, Four Saints in Three Acts and The Mother of Us All, seemingly

¹⁴⁴Gertrude Stein, Portraits and Prayers (New York, Random House, 1934), pp. 155-156.

¹⁴⁵Marks, French Poetry, p. 275.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 297-298.

realized surrealist effects. Four Saints vaguely resembles surrealism in two major aspects, surprise and incongruity: surprises and irrelevances of juxtaposition, in which Thomson's music "by separating and differentiating the repetitions of a . . . verbal sequence . . . [Thomson's] music articulates them . . . imparts to them its own structure and climax; and its effect is often the most delightful humor."¹⁴⁷ Probably more important to the surrealist effect was that achieved when Thomson added "occasional incongruities of his contriving between words and music-words of little or no sense or weight, musical style and structure of great emotional import and weight."¹⁴⁸

The Mother of Us All is even more surrealist than the Four Saints. Using Stein's inconsistent style as an example, Haggin points out her lack of poetic imagery and occasional rational meanings--meanings which he describes as amusing, often discontinuous, and dislocated in their context. He provides a fragment of Stein's prose to illustrate this discontinuous style: "He digged a pit; he digged it deep; he digged it for his brother; . . ."¹⁴⁹ Probably the most important inconsistency that appeared in the plotless text was the anachronism of the events. Presented in the historical present were

¹⁴⁷B. H. Haggin, "Music," The Nation, CLXXIV (May 3, 1952), 438.

¹⁴⁸Ibid.

¹⁴⁹"Music," The Nation, CLXIV (May 31, 1947), 667.

Susan B. Anthony, John Adams, Virgil Thomson, Daniel Webster, Lillian Russell, and Ulysses S. Grant. In this instance the past, present, and future were presented as parts of a simultaneous present.¹⁵⁰ Virgil Thomson's music, conjoined with this kind of plot, and in which he has humorously commented on the scenes with music that contradicts the time element with clowning and satire, has compounded the incomprehension, achieving a possible surrealist farce.¹⁵¹

Olivier Messiaen

Another composer, Olivier Messiaen, employed the surrealist language through texts which he wrote and used almost exclusively in his vocal works. William Austin states that Messiaen regarded himself as a surrealist poet, following the models of Breton, Reverdy, and Eluard. He mixed French and Peruvian words in Harawi (a cycle for soprano and piano, 1945), while in other works, he invented lines of pseudo-Sanskrit phrasings.¹⁵²

Musical Settings to Surrealist Literature

Surrealist poets favored by the contemporary composers include Jacob, Cocteau, Eluard, and Char. The poems of Jacob have attracted one of the youngest members of Satie's long

¹⁵⁰Sutherland, Gertrude Stein, p. 132.

¹⁵¹William H. Beyer, "The State of the Theater: Drama and Music," School and Society, LXXV (June 26, 1947), 67.

¹⁵²Music in the 20th Century, p. 391.

list of admirers, Henri Sauguet. Sauguet composed a song cycle to Jacob's Les pénitents en maillots roses (1944), and a melody cycle to Visions infernales (1948). Sauguet also provided two musical settings to Cocteau's Chansons de marins (1933), and a music and television version of his Les enfants terribles (1947). Sauguet also composed significant musical settings to two of Paul Eluard's works, one based on seven poems for voice and piano, Les Animaux et leur nommer (1921-25), and a larger work, Bêtes et méchants for men's choir and orchestra. Florent Schmitt also set music to Cocteau's poems, for example, the choral work for women's chorus and orchestra, Trois Trios (1941).

The surrealist poet, René Char, has attracted the attention of the French experimentalist, Pierre Boulez. Boulez's interest in Char's poetry is puzzling since he insists that dadaists, futurists, and surrealists have deliberately played a game of deception, declaring that their efforts were actually negligible and precluded any possibility of a lasting influence.¹⁵³ Boulez, nevertheless, wrote music for five Char poems, using contralto, chorus, and orchestra (1946-51). Another major work composed in 1948, Le Soleil des eaux, was a setting of two Char poems for soprano, tenor, bass baritone, chorus and orchestra. Boulez's cantata, Le Marteau sans maître (1944-45), was also set to a Char text, and according to Jean Roy, the

¹⁵³Letter from Pierre Boulez, July 13, 1966.

Americans who have heard it on a Columbia recording, were given a real surrealist bath in the Boulez manner.¹⁵⁴ The setting consists of nine pieces based on three Char poems for contralto, flute, alto, guitar, vibraphone, xyloimba, and percussion.

André Hodeir feels that the attitudes of Varèse and Cage are compatible to those of the surrealists and diametrically opposed to those of Boulez: "It is as though the two New Yorkers wished their experiments to remain completely apart from any tradition whatsoever; like the surrealists, they probably feel that this attitude is an assertion of what they take for absolute creative freedom."¹⁵⁵ Edo Kasemets, who described Cage as the enfant terrible of American music (with reference to his Aria for Mezzo-soprano with Fontana Mix), insists that his experiments are surrealist, stating that these compositions create a "picture assigning to the vocal soloist hisses, barks, declamations, straight singing lines and coloratura passages of the greatest variety and linguistic Babel."¹⁵⁶ Another reference to Cage and surrealism occurs in Roger Maren's article "The Musical Numbers Game," in which he notes that Cage's avoidance of formal structure

¹⁵⁴Présences contemporaines, p. 469.

¹⁵⁵Since Debussy, p. 139.

¹⁵⁶International Conference of Composers, The Modern Composer and His World, edited by John Beckwith and Edo Kasemets, A Report from the International Conference of Composers and Published with the Canadian League of Composers, held at the Stratford Festival, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1961, p. 167.

through chance methods, goes even farther than surrealism: "Writing music from the top of his head--so-called automatic writing--would not be adequate because the subconscious might impose a formal structure. . . . No musical thought or intention should control the notation."¹⁵⁷ Maren also applies automatic philosophy to both Cage and Karlheinz Stockhausen: "They devise techniques that they feel are in accord with their particular philosophic or metaphysical motions, and the music follows automatically."¹⁵⁸

It is difficult to explain Boulez's aversion to surrealism when he was so enamoured with one of surrealism's prominent poets, Char. Hôdeir accused John Cage of surrealist trickery which is diametrically opposed to Boulez's principles. It is evident that no one can truly define what surrealist music is. If one examines Paul Eluard's surrealist requirements, incongruity, artifice or calculation, conflagration of ideas, derangement of logic into absurdity, then a personal judgment can be the only deciding factor.¹⁵⁹

Harold Rosenberg states that all art in our time carries some mark of dada-surrealist influence: from Picabia and Rube Goldberg to Tinguely and Psychedelic Light Shows; from Duchamp's Tu m' to the Maps of Baruchello and the Pebble

¹⁵⁷The Reporter, XVIII (March 6, 1958), 38.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 39.

¹⁵⁹Duplessis, Surrealism, p. 60.

Beaches of Bauermeister; and from Magritte to Lichtenstein. He further declares that the victory of dada-surrealist thinking has been so nearly complete as to project its values in reverse. He deplores the attitude William S. Rubin, curator of painting and sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art, has taken regarding the strict portrayal of dada and surrealism without its early historical, philosophical, and political associations, that is, his "cleaning the slate of any aesthetically significant notions in the movements," or art values that are "aesthetically valid to the extent that they conform to Cubist principles."¹⁶⁰

It becomes evident that all of the movements discussed above have reappeared in some special setting, through a reorientation of their original negative axis, through rehabilitated aesthetics, as anti anti-art movements, or under a destructive guise. It is reasonable to assume that some of the personalities discussed above and a substantial amount of their music have been influenced directly or indirectly through the art movements themselves, their spirit, their transference into new aesthetic settings, or possibly by the ethical antagonism evidenced in current epochs of artistic upheaval.

¹⁶⁰"MOMA Dada," The New Yorker, XLIV (May 18, 1968), 140-145.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Bateau-lavoir. An apartment complex located on a narrow street called Rue Ravignon in the Montmartre section of Paris, serving as a domicile for artists such as Pablo Picasso, Max Jacob, and other artists in the early part of the twentieth century. The long building, resembling a clumsy square-built boat typical of those moored along the banks of the Seine river, was nicknamed bateau-lavoir because of its shape.

Brevity. In art, the stripping of unessential elements of the object in order to provide more objective visual results of the subject matter. Cubists preferred still-lives in order to eliminate the extra associations that might interfere with the main subject. Even in landscapes, the horizon and skies were obliterated by raising the height of the objects or rendering them obscure by chiaroscuro (the treatment or general distribution of light and dark). The cubist employment of multiplicity (representing objects from several points of view into a single image) created a subject compression.

In literature, the suppression of punctuation and the omission of unessential words provided literary brevity and thence compression, often through the reduction of a phrase or sentence to its smallest, meaningful components. Futurists claimed to have accomplished this through the abolition of syntax as well as through synthetic lyricism. In the

former, certain adjectives, modifiers and even verbs were deleted because of sentence dragging. In the latter, superfluous items were removed to provide a synthetic result, and only the essentials were used to create the utmost compression.

In music, also, the stripping of unessentials, such as discarding introductions, transitions, and codas, as evidenced in the music of Erik Satie, created a type of beginningless and endless composition. Satie composed a short chorale of several measures as well as a number of short compositions called "closet pieces" (see pp. 240-42) illustrating this. Other composers, such as Anton Webern, have accomplished similar results through musical stripping.

Bruitism (noise music). The original ideas of bruitism came from the futurist concept of simultaneity. In the painting process an artist grasped all of the factors surrounding the object painted, including street cars, people, and various objects, in order to portray a real life situation. Since sounds, as well as odors, could not be captured and placed on the canvas, artists often alluded to these in their canvases (Severini's Dynamic Hieroglyphic of the Bal Tabarin, 1912).¹ Futurists believed that sounds (more often indeterminate ones, and particularly those such as screeching brake drums and others associated with machines) could be portrayed literally, but should not be confined to

¹Taylor, Futurism, p. 68.

imitative reproduction. Sound poems were admittedly bruitist (noisy) in effect. They were developed through devious methods: the abolition of syntax (a cluster of adjectives and deletion of adjectives and verbs); metrical reforms (suppression of punctuation and free meter); onomatopoeia (distortion of sound, literal imitation of a sound such as "whang" for a speeding bullet, and the deforming and reshaping of words); and essential or synthetic lyricism (compression of sentences through the elimination of superfluous items).² Sound poems were combined with other factors, usually noise effects, in order to produce simultaneously a number of real life situations. F. T. Marinetti, in his futurist manifesto of 1913, called for a music of machines and the big city. A futurist musical creed was soon realized when Russolo outlined a systematology of noises. The instruments involved in producing these noises were placed into six classifications.³ Russolo has stated that the peculiar character of noise "is to call us brutally to life . . . and [the art of noises] will attain its highest emotional power in the acoustic enjoyment which the artist will be able to draw from combined noises."⁴

²Clough, Futurism, pp. 48-51.

³Dada, Monograph, pp. 143-144. These are discussed in Chapter III.

⁴Clough, Futurism, p. 126.

Bruit (noise), particularly the sound poem, was taken over by the dadaists in 1916 and was used in many extravagant and absurd demonstrations and concerts.

Chants nègres. Reference to this term is more evident in early dadaist activities, especially in Zürich where Hugo Ball initiated his first exhibitions and concerts (1916). Definitions of the chant nègre are vague and often fail in their attempts to illustrate how the music is conceived. In the main, the effect was described as a half sung, half spoken recitative-like song in which incidental factors such as noise, drum beating, and bell sounds were added. The performances, frequently involving the wearing of masks and absurd costumes, were intended to emphasize an African flavor or emulate a crude jazz effect. More than likely the chants were monotonous and were usually performed on two or three different pitches, and, at the most, varied within the limited range of several notes within an octave.

Chiaroscuro. A term comparable to the piano and forte contrast (soft and loud) in music, referring in art to light and dark or a contrast of lights and shades. Chiaroscuro is especially useful to a painter in his handling of atmospheric effects, allowing him "to create the illusion that his subjects are on all sides surrounded by space, letting them stand free."⁵

⁵Dagobert, Runes and Harry G. Schrichel, editors, Encyclopedia of the Arts (New York, Philosophical Library, 1946), p. 173.

Collage. A process of pasting various objects or pre-existing materials such as pieces of paper, photographs, and textured materials on a canvas to bring about results that were intentionally realistic, incongruous or bizarre, symbolic, or suggestive. Futurists, like the cubists, used the technique for real life effects; dadaists and surrealists employed collage as a means of releasing the fantasies of the subconscious.⁶

Complementarism. Involving colors which are exactly opposite physically, such as yellow and purple, red and green, and blue and orange. When mixed in equal proportions, pairs of these opposing colors produce gray or white.

Continuous Present. A concept held by artists which allowed them the freedom to begin and end at any time or point. This was a part of the simultaneous process in which unity is intensified by standing still, "a continuous present in which everything is taken together and always."⁷ An abstract explanation such as this is not very convincing, but Gertrude Stein's works have often served as good examples of this concept. Her writings frequently involve a long series of details that constantly turn back on themselves, illustrating illusions of movement in stillness. Some of these have been described as beginningless and endless, revealing only duration of feeling and incident. The Mother of Us All,

⁶Ibid., pp. 233-234. ⁷Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 347.

an opera with a musical setting by Virgil Thomson, serves as one of the best examples. It consists of a simultaneous plot in which different characters from different periods of time (Virgil Thomson, Susan B. Anthony, and Ulysses S. Grant) are placed in one time setting which is neither yesterday, today, nor tomorrow. Some of Satie's music, as for example, Socrate, is said to have produced musical versions of this concept.⁸

De Stijl. An abstract art movement whose impulse was attributed to Picasso and analytical cubism, but through a long period of development, initially under the leadership of the Dutch painter, Piet Mondrian, moved to the purposes of geometricization. The fundamental theoretical basis of the painting of this school was expressed through the simple form of the rectangle and the primary colors (red, blue, and yellow). The evolution of its style (beginning around 1916) moved from pictures elaborated in form and color (still retaining a recognizable object (Mondrian's Composition, 1917) to "pure" (non-objective) art (Theo van Doesburg, Simultaneous Counter Composition, 1929-30). The de Stijl school also included the architects J. J. P. Oud, Jan Wils, Robert van't Hoff, and Georges Vantongerloo. The movement exerted a great deal of influence on European architecture and designing.⁹

Divisionism. A painting technique used by several impressionists (and some futurists) such as Georges Seurat,

⁸Ibid., pp. 347-348.

⁹Haftmann, Painting in the Twentieth Century, pp. 198-199.

who applied pure colors (and some tinted colors) in a pointillist style (small brush and dot strokes). The color mixing is achieved by the viewer who stands some distance from the canvas in order to accomplish an optical mixing.

École d'Arcueil. Arcueil was a Paris suburb where Erik Satie lived. The School of Arcueil, though named after this locality, was not a geographical school; rather it was an association of artists, including Roger Desormière, Henri Sauguet, Maxime-Jacob, and Henry Cliquet-Pleyel, who were attracted to Erik Satie much in the same way as were les Six. Though less outstanding than les Six, the Arcueil school has been remembered through Desormière, who was an excellent conductor, and through Sauguet's operas and ballets. The Dada Monograph contends that this group was more important than les Six because of its continuation of the dada spirit.¹⁰

Frottage. Derived from the French verb, frotter: to rub or scrub. Literally, it means rubbing. The technique, as applied to painting, was developed largely by Max Ernst, surrealist painter. Ernst used it by placing at random several sheets of paper coated with powdered graphite, rubbing them on an inlay of geometrically patterned wood. From these he claims to have received a series of suggestions and transmutations arising spontaneously, "in the manner of hypnagogic (sleep hallucinations) visions, the designs thus obtained

¹⁰Verkauf, p. 151.

increasingly lose the character of the material in question (wood), and assume the aspect of images of unexpected precision."¹¹ Ernst also applied this technique to painting by "grating colors onto a base that is colored and placed on an uneven surface."¹²

Jugendstil. A term derived from the name of a magazine, Die Jugend (Youth) in Munich, 1896. In Vienna it was called "Die Sezession," and in England (where its figurehead was Aubrey Beardsley) it was known as the "Yellow Book" style.

Like other art movements, it represented a revolt against academic art, favoring, however, themes taken from medieval legends or classical mythology through sundry media as painting, ceramics, posters, wrought iron, sculpture, and architecture, applied in ornaments and abstract decorations. It aspired to bring a new freedom to art, but survived as an art movement for a very brief period of time. Its impact on subsequent art movements, however, was consequential. Several of its artists included Otto Eckmann, Peter Behrens, and Edvard Munch.¹³

Merz. A term invented by Kurt Schwitters, German dadaist, and principally applied to his type of collage as well as to the title of a periodical that he edited in Hanover. The four letters were chosen from the title of Schwitters' letterhead

¹¹Duplessis, Surrealism, p. 83. ¹²Ibid.

¹³Maurice Raynal, Modern Painting, translated by Stuart Gilbert (Switzerland, Editions d'Art Albert Skira, 1960), p. 57.

"Privat-und KomMERZbank." Schwitters also applied the term to all of his art, poetry, and painting. An example of a merz collage called Construction (1923) is reproduced in the anthology of The Dada Painters and Poets. (See Plate 13, p. 68 above). This example is a radical application of collage principles using various objects such as cardboard and old pieces of wood nailed at random.¹⁴

Multiplicity. In art, usually referring to a principle of painting, as in cubist practice, of representing objects from several points of view into a single image, with planes overlapping in order to provide transparency, rendering the possibility of objects being seen through each other.

Montage and photomontage. Both terms have been used to mean the same thing. In photography, the process involved the breaking up of shapes and the superimposing of inanimate objects; in cinema, "a complex composed of film strips containing photographic images so arranged that two or more shots are seen together, or nearly together, in a compound image."¹⁵

Both terms have been used indiscriminately, very often in a similar sense as collage, and have been applied to several areas: poems, painting, music, photography, and cinema. They have been more generally concerned with photography and the cinema. Dada poems contained word distortion with

¹⁴Motherwell, p. 61.

¹⁵Sypher, Rococo to Cubism, p. 276.

simultaneous reading of other poems, creating a poem montage (again, frequently called collage). Musical counterpoint and concrete sounds, not based on sequence and representing multiple sound perspectives, have been referred to as a sound montage. Object distortion in painting, consisting of rearrangement and juxtaposition of objects, has been referred to as a painting montage. A cover design of Picabia's magazine, 391, created by Picasso, was called a plastic montage.¹⁶ Erik Satie's ballet, Relâche (1924), contained an Entr'acte (music by Satie and film by René Clair) which was called a "fast moving montage."¹⁷ The Dada Monograph claims that photomontage was mainly applied by the German dadaists, Hannah Hock, Georg Grosz, John Heartfield, Max Ernst, and Johannes Baader.¹⁸ The montage principle has also been applied to jazz movies, the cinematic technique being equated with syncopation.¹⁹ In spite of the multiple applications or conflicting elements, the common aspect of montage and photomontage is the rule of simultaneousness rather than successive conception.²⁰

Musique concrète. The name came into being, according to Peggy Glanville-Hicks, in 1949. Pierre Schaeffer has been

¹⁶Haftmann, Painting in the Twentieth Century, p. 185.

¹⁷Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 170.

¹⁸Op. cit., p. 164.

¹⁹Sypher, Rococo to Cubism, p. 276.

²⁰Shattuck, The Banquet Years, p. 170.

named as the originator of the term. He used actual sound materials (concrete sounds) much as a painter works with pigments and canvas.²¹ Various sounds such as dripping water, rattling of keys, railway sounds and musical sounds have been explained as the noises of everyday life and industry. After the sounds have been recorded, Schaeffer's primary procedures subject them to several technical transmutations, transformations, or modulations. After this kind of processing they are usually subjected to secondary procedures involving mixing and montage, thereby creating sound collages--the result being musique concrète.²² Schaeffer has not referred to his own role as a composer; rather, he has called himself a technician. The first concert of concrete music was given in the halls of the Sorbonne and L'École Normale de Musique (1949). Other persons who have employed the principles of musique concrète have included Pierre Boulez, Olivier Messiaen, and John Cage; Otto Luening and Vladimir Ussachevsky have extended it into the realm of electronic realizations.²³

Musique de placard (closet and poster music). Referring to Satie's short self-contained compositions, which, because of their brevity, were seldom included on concert performances. Some of these included pieces for the piano such as Trois

²¹"Tapesichord," p. 81.

²²Stuckenschmidt, "Contemporary Techniques in Music," p. 12.

²³Glanville-Hicks, "Tapesichord," p. 81.

Poèmes d'amour enfantines, as well as many short humorous pieces. These have been described as miniature masterpieces. Performance of these kinds of compositions has suggested informality, such as a small group gathering around a piano to play and sing a madrigal or carol. Even though the restricted dimensions and the intimacy of these works have consigned them to less significant performing opportunities, Shattuck has asserted that they assumed the proportions of manifestos, which resulted in what he calls musique de placard, and in which this intimacy becomes a public act, much in the same way as do the drawings of Paul Klee and the poems of e. e. Cummings.²⁴

Orphism. A term originally applied by Guillaume Apollinaire to the paintings of Robert Delaunay with reference to painting suggested by intuition rather than visual reality. Apollinaire, with regard to orphism, has alluded to an art purer than that of the cubists. The term, however, was extended to include works by Pablo Picasso, Fernand Léger, Francis Picabia, and Marcel Duchamp. Contrary to Apollinaire's association, Delaunay's art stressed chromatic effects "with a strain of objective lyricism,"²⁵ rather than with cubist subjective lyrical forms. Most writers and critics

²⁴The Banquet Years, p. 176.

²⁵Encyclopedia of World Art, edited by Massimo Pallottino and others, Vol. VI (New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961), p. 151.

have agreed that the reference to this term is often imprecise. Delaunay's art innovations had a significant influence on the German Expressionists (Blaue Reiter group).

Papier collé. A principle involving the pasting of cut-out pieces (oil cloth, paper, and other materials) to oil paintings and other types of paintings, first by the cubists, particularly Picasso. Picasso pinned the cut-out pieces to his canvases in order to present two simultaneous versions of reality. He insisted that the application of this principle was intended to present pictures in their own right. An example illustrating this usage is Still-life with Chair-caning (1911-12), in which Picasso pasted a piece of oil cloth, realistically patterned with chair-caning, onto the canvas. The edges of the pasted section were camouflaged by being partly painted over with shadows and stripes. Other materials used were wallpaper patterns and newspaper strips to achieve different effects. Max Ernst achieved surrealistic effects in what he called his poetic collage of superimposed images. The most significant contribution of this technique was manifested in the reintroduction of color as an abstract value. Papier collé contributed to the development of collage.²⁶

Pastiche. The term pastiche is derived from the Italian word pasta (paste). Another word, pasticcio, referred to a medley or patchwork (musical and literary). Painters who

²⁶Penrose, Picasso, pp. 172-173.

imitated traditional styles were often referred to by their more advanced contemporaries (futurists, dadaists, cubists, and others) as pastiches, always in a pejorative sense; hence the word is also applied, in the same sense, to anyone or anything traditional.

Polychrome. In sculpture, ceramics, painting, and so forth, the use of brilliant contrasting colors, combined to form a color pattern.²⁷

Prepared piano. First introduced by John Cage in which pieces of rubber, bolts, and screws are placed between the strings of the piano keyboard at various heights and distances to produce sounds that may resemble lutes, gongs, or emit unique string vibrations. Other composers have employed this principle, notably Toshiro Mayusumi. His Pieces for Prepared Piano and Strings call for two pieces of rubber to be inserted between the strings of seven notes from A flat to b flat. Beginning with a flat two small bolts or screws are to be inserted in a flat and b natural. Large screws are to be placed in the strings of treble clef middle line b¹ flat, d², f², g² sharp, c³ sharp, and e³.²⁸

Ready-made. The origin of the ready-made object is difficult to determine. Though many artists held a fascination for mechanical objects in the first two decades of the

²⁷Martin L. Wolf, Dictionary of the Arts (New York, Philosophical Library, 1951), p. 538.

²⁸(New York, C. F. Peters Corporation, 1958).

twentieth century, Marcel Duchamp was one of the first to choose an object (usually at random), isolate it from its environment, and present it as an object of art for exhibition. Usually it was mounted on a base, provided with a title, and exhibited along with other works of art as an independent entity. Notable examples have been evidenced in Marcel Duchamp's mass-produced objects, such as the transformation of a bottle drier (Bottlerack, 1914) into a work of art and his ready-made urinal (Fountain, 1917).²⁹ A more practical application of the ready-made has been evidenced through its contribution to the collage in which the painter developed a rapport with his materials and introduced them into expressive forms.

Rayographs, Rayograms, Photogrammes. A photographic medium resulting from the direct application of objects to a sensitive photo plate (without the use of lens). These were invented by Man Ray, American dadaist, around 1917. An exhibition of dada works in 1921 presented several of Ray's photographic efforts.³⁰ This technique has also been used by Christian Shad (Shadographs), and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy.³¹ These terms are used interchangeably.

Simultanism. A general definition of simultanism implies the simultaneous presentation of different views of an object,

²⁹Arthur Cravan, "Exhibition at the Independents (1914)," The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 6.

³⁰"Chronology," Dada. Monograph, p. 99. "Dada Dictionary," Dada. Monograph, p. 121 and p. 166.

³¹"Dada Dictionary," p. 163.

or sounds (in the case of music) superimposed on one another. The futurist considered simultaneity as a succession of appearances of the same object or a series of aspects; the cubists considered simultaneity as multiple views of the same object rendered into one static compound image.

Futurists believed that simultaneity was essential to literature, painting, sculpture, and music. Ardengo Soffici, a leading futurist critic, and Umberto Boccioni, prominent futurist painter, both believed that simultaneity was the basis for all plastic investigations, and that it was one of the most significant contributions of their new school. Boccioni reduced all phases of futurist art to include simultaneity. Simultaneity, figuratively speaking, has been described as a "converging reflection . . . of the ray of stars that begin to move toward us, from different points in space, at different moments of time."³² This statement has provided a clue as to its immediate concern with time and space. A better explanation of the use of simultaneity can be provided with an illustration of how a futurist contemplates his project (the artist, object, plus environment): a person who is sitting on a balcony, the artist, who is located within the room looking at the person and the balcony attempts to give a sum total of the plastic sensations aroused if he were looking out from the balcony. This would include all objects in the surroundings,

³²Clough, Futurism, p. 94.

flower-pots, window, double row of houses--a simultaneity of surroundings "and therefore dislocation and dismemberment of the subjects, together with a fusion of details liberated from the exigencies of customary logic."³³ The concept of futurist simultaneity has been summarized in this manner:

. . . the painter, in the full realization of modern scientific life, has acquired a sense of speed that eliminates space and time. He sees all things at one point and expresses this total vision, together with the sources of the accompanying emotion, in forms which differ from those representing a concept of life in which things are made fast in their unshakable individuality and identity.³⁴

From the cubist viewpoint, simultaneity was accomplished through the simultaneity of "sensations in a complex figure, by synthetically juxtaposing differing views of the object."³⁵ This began when cubists, in their analytical phase, separated the facets of objects by

. . . spreading them out, and blending them with the forms of other objects. Such combinations gave rise to the idea of simultaneity, the representation of different aspects of an object in juxtaposition, so that the partial view of an object can be turned into a total mental view with the help of factual data, such as dimensions, ground plans, and profiles.³⁶

This provided an analytical view of the object: simultaneous views through juxtaposition--views from above, the front, all sides, blending the outlines in a normal structure. This had an aesthetic value of its own; but another factor was eventually considered in the simultaneous process: "The concept

³³Ibid., pp. 94-95.

³⁴Ibid., p. 95.

³⁵Haftmann, Twentieth Century Painting, p. 108.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 99-100.

of time was introduced in the space of the picture . . .
 [giving] way to the time-space continuum, with time playing
 the part of a fourth dimension . . ."37 The analytical stage
 of cubism evolved into a later "synthetic" stage and also into
 a splinter branch called Orphism, which was led by Robert
 Delaunay. Under orphism, simultaneity grew into a more gen-
 eral term which expressed a more dynamic direction in a
 similar way that the futurist realized it. Delaunay, along
 with Jean Metzinger, Picabia, Duchamp, and Léger, found more
 satisfaction through its representation of movement.³⁸

In poetry, Apollinaire achieved a similar use of simul-
 tanism as did the cubist, on the basis of pictorial theories
 through the suppression of punctuation,³⁹ and through tele-
 scoping time, presenting a poem not just as a succession of
 lines, but in a simultaneous experience.

The dadaist conception of simultaneism was similar to
 that of the futurists, especially with regard to the simul-
 taneous poems of Marinetti and other futurists. The poème
simultané, first introduced by Derème and Apollinaire, was
 exploited by such dadaists as Tristan Tzara; frequently, noise
 factors were added.⁴⁰ The simultaneous poem has often been
 referred to without any explanation as to its style other
 than a peculiar type of typography and absence of punctuation.

³⁷Ibid., p. 100.

³⁸Ibid., p. 110.

³⁹Ibid., p. 314.

⁴⁰Huelsénbeck, "En Avant Dada," p. 24.

Apollinaire's Arbe (1913), has been described as being in simultanist style. Dadaists have interpreted simultaneity as a direct reminder of life, offering curious illustrations of its role with regard to life. Hans Kreidler has attempted to illustrate this point saying that

. . . if we try to visualize the bloody scene in front of Verdun while at the same time the sonorous verses of a "noble" patriotic war song were being recited, we shall have a simultaneity, an entirely warranted and sensible juxtaposition of two concepts linked by time and cause, a picture of the times with no less chaotic and abrupt an effect than the performance at the Cabaret Voltaire.⁴¹

Another illustration, provided in a simultaneous poem by Hugo Ball, the Merry-go-round Horse "teaches a sense of the merry-go-round of all things; while Herr Schulze reads his paper, the Balkan express crosses the bridge at Nigh, a pig squeals in Butcher Nuttke's cellar."⁴²

Sound collage. The employment of concrete and indeterminate sounds through various processes, such as tape splicing, superposition or juxtaposition, electronic, and other methods have produced simultaneous results which have been referred to as sound collage. These techniques have frequently been compared to those used in the development of the photo-montage-- that of superimposing or replacing one photographic image upon another. An example of tape sounds may have one of the concrete sounds imposed on itself, or mixed with another concrete

⁴¹"The Psychology of Dadaism," Dada. Monograph, p. 74.

⁴²Ribemont-Dessaigues, "History of Dada," p. 106.

sound. An electronic sound collage may consist of a single sound element treated in a variety of ways, that is, augmented, filtered, stretched, diminished, dynamically altered, and superimposed on itself so as to produce a simultaneous result.

Sound poems. A species of verse usually without words, supposedly invented by Hugo Ball, and which enjoyed a great popularity at dadaist exhibitions and concerts. The absence of words referred actually to words that were often inaudible and unintelligible. Ball has related that the recitation of these verses involved heavy accents in various places as well as an intensification of the consonants, often recitative in character. He has provided the purposes of its use:

. . . we should renounce the language devastated and made impossible by journalism.

We should draw into the innermost alchemy of the word, and even surrender the word, . . .

. . . We should no longer take over words (not even speak sentences) which we did not invent absolutely new for our own use.

An example of a sound poem by Ball is as follows:

gadji beri bimba
glandridi lauli lonni cadori
gadjama bim beri glassala
glandridi glassala tuffm i zimbrabim
blassa galassassa tuffm i zimbrabim⁴³

Stream of consciousness. Relating to Gertrude Stein's style of writing. She has made claims of having written without recourse to conscious efforts or guidance, describing this procedure as one in which she wrote down what her mind

⁴³The Dada Painters and Poets, pp. xix-xx.

dictated without conscious effort, also claiming to have forgotten what she had written down. The reading of it represented an introduction to material that was totally new to her. Usually the result was a free prose with a minimum of punctuation, unrelated phrases or consistency of thought, plot, or ideas. She has confessed that she did not understand what she had written, nor that what she wrote was related to anything. This style of writing has often been confused with surrealist automatic writing, and surrealists have insisted that Stein and her works were entirely unrelated to the surrealist movement.

Trompe l'oeil (deceiving the eye). The principle of trompe l'oeil involves the representation of an object in such a way as to suggest that the object itself is actually present on the canvas, allowing two different versions of reality. The employment of this principle has been in existence for several hundred years. A more recent application of this principle was instituted by the cubist painters, Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso in the early development of synthetic cubism.⁴⁴ Trompe l'oeil was used in the development of the collage. Marcel Duchamp employed it in his mural Tu m' in which a simulated split in the canvas was held together by real safety pins.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Penrose, Picasso, p. 171

⁴⁵Harriet and Sidney Janis, "Marcel Duchamp: Anti-Artist (1945)," Appendix C, The Dada Painters and Poets, p. 314.

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