ANTHROPOMORPHIC MECHANOMORPHS: SUZANNE DUCHAMP'S DIVERSION FROM MAN'S MACHINE AESTHETIC

by

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(Under the Direction of Nell Andrew)

ABSTRACT

Dada artist Suzanne Duchamp created paintings from 1916-22 that stylistically resemble the machine aesthetic of her male colleagues. However, Duchamp's use of the mechanical adds a distinct and unexplored dimension to the machine aesthetic, one that is largely unconsidered in Dada literature. Scholarship primarily characterizes the machine aesthetic with an impersonal, masculinized perspective, one that depicts individuals as machines in order to convey mindless and libidinous communication. More than mere examples of operative, unconscious, or libidinous systems that are typical in the mechanized works of Marcel Duchamp or Francis Picabia, however, Suzanne Duchamp's mechanomorphic figures offer a different interpretation through the transmission of self-reflection, thoughtfulness, and intellect. By comparing her personal and communicative mechanomorphs with those of her male colleagues, I will argue that machine aesthetic needs redefining to include the interesting, complex, and underestimated works of Suzanne Duchamp.

INDEX WORDS: machine aesthetic, anthropomorphic, mechanomorphic, Dada

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iv

LIST OF FIGURES vii

CHAPTER

1 INTRODUCTION 1

2 THE GENERATION OF THE MACHINE AESTHETIC 6

3 THE ANTHROPOMORPHIZATION OF THE MECHANOMORPH 18

CON*TEXT* CLUES 19

FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS 23

THE BREAKDOWN OF LOOKING 26

4 CONCLUSION 30

REFERENCES 32

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

Figure 1: Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2* 36

Figure 2: Jules Etienne Marey, *The Human Body in Action* 37

Figure 3: Francis Picabia, *Fille née sans mere* 38

Figure 4: Suzanne Duchamp, *Un et une menacés* 39

Figure 5: Suzanne Duchamp, *Étude pour Un et une menacés* 40

Figure 6: Marcel Duchamp, *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even* 41

Figure 7: Francis Picabia, *Machine tournez vite* 42

Figure 8: Suzanne Duchamp, *Séduction* 43

Figure 9: Francis Picabia, *Voila Elle* 44

Figure 10: Suzanne Duchamp, *Le Ready-made malheureux Marcel* 45

Figure 11: Suzanne Duchamp, *Usine de mes pensées* 46

Figure 12: Suzanne Duchamp, *Fabrique de joie* 47

Figure 13: Suzanne Duchamp, *Solitude entonnoir* 48

Figure 14: Suzanne Duchamp, *The Radiation of Two Solitary Beings Apart* 49

Figure 15: Suzanne Duchamp, *Scottish Espagnole* 50

Figure 16: Robert Doisneau, *Un regard oblique* 51

Figure 17: Francis Picabia, *Portrait d'une jeune fille americane dans l'etat de nudite* 52

Figure 18: Suzanne Duchamp, *Give me the right right to life* 53

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Western society in the early twentieth century was fascinated by the mechanization of its modern world. In various arenas, such as the Tiller Girls' dance performances, Charlie Chaplin's cinema, and Dada's machine aesthetic, the mechanical symbolized the culture of a new era. In the 1910's and 20's, Dada Artists such as Francis Picabia, Man Ray, Fernand Léger, Jean Crotti, Marcel Duchamp, and Suzanne Duchamp responded to the new century's rapid industrial expansion and technological innovations by aestheticizing mechanical forms and functions. The most well known examples of the machine aesthetic come from Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia, who used the machine or mechanical systems to convey the dehumanization of the individual and his relationships. However, Suzanne Duchamp also produced a variety of paintings, drawings, and collages from 1916-1922 that transformed the depiction of man into machine, or vice versa, yet her paintings diverge from the typical machine aesthetic used by her contemporaries in important, if unacknowledged ways.[1] More recent scholars have done well to reinscribe Duchamp's name to Dada's roster, but what remains to be examined is how her style deviates from the machine aesthetic of her contemporaries. It is my conviction that Duchamp's mechanomorphic figures are more diverse and personal as opposed to mere examples of operative, unconscious, or objective systems by which scholars have characterized with the machine aesthetic. Rather, Duchamp's machine aesthetic controls and organizes the transmission of emotion, contemplation, or a subjective attitude despite the use of "thoughtless" machines. I

[1] For the sake of clarity and brevity, I will refer to Suzanne Duchamp as "Duchamp" and distinguish her brother, Marcel Duchamp by consistently including his first name.

aim to revise the history of the machine aesthetic by including Suzanne Duchamp's innovative machine imagery, which offers a mostly uninterpreted and enlightening dimension to the machine aesthetic in Dada visual art.[2]

Suzanne Duchamp's paintings are largely unanalyzed, which is curious given her recognized involvement within Parisian Dada. Duchamp's contributions to Dada are substantial, as she frequently participated in Dada exhibitions throughout Paris and received a vast amount of critical reaction.[3] In 1925, a writer under the name of F.G. published a short review of Suzanne Duchamp's oeuvre:

> She began years ago in those pure abstractions with which women painters as a whole have concerned themselves but little. But this kind of exercise she soon found inadequate to express that intensity of life of which she herself is intensely aware. There followed canvases employing certain human elements—sections of the head of the hand—disassociated physically, but organized in a pattern completed by mechanical or abstract elements, and commented often by lettering and numbers. Later she produced portraits with less disassociation of traits, but still with a certain amount of voluntary false perspective. Her interest is never purely naturalistic. She conceives of life as a struggle between the dramatic and the comic, and it is the irony of this conflict, which is the central aim of her expression.[4]

F.G. writes a positive, focused critique of Duchamp's artistic evolution towards the machine aesthetic, crediting her for pursuing a style that uncommonly found in the work of women painters. Not only was Duchamp the first artist to use the machine aesthetic in Europe in 1916, but she continued to be the only female artist working in Paris to use the machine

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[2] For detailed investigations of Paris Dada exhibitions, publications, functions, and meetings, see Michel Sanouillet's *Dada in Paris*, rev. and exp. Anne Sanouillet, trans. Sharmilla Ganguly (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009). While Suzanne Duchamp often appears in Sanouillet's text, it is only her presence that is noted in passing. Contrary to Sanouillet's account, which focuses primarily on the male artists in the group, Suzanne Duchamp actively participated and exhibited throughout Dada events.

[3] Through the generosity of the Lamar Dodd School of Art's Art History department and the Willson Center for Humanities at the University of Georgia, I was able to travel to the Centre Pompidou's Kandinsky Library and the National Library of France's Richelieu site in Paris to see the complete compilation of newspaper and journal articles on Suzanne Duchamp throughout her career. As contemporary literature on Suzanne Duchamp is scarce, I was surprised and excited to find that the Kandinsky Library held over 350 publications in Europe and the United States that give considerable mention to Suzanne Duchamp during her career.

[4] F.G., "Round the Studios," (Oct. 11, 1925). This clipping from a newspaper article is located in the Fonds Duchamp papers at the Kandinsky Library.

aesthetic.[5] F.G. also recognizes that her works express a complex relationship or struggle within the human experience.[6] In writing that Duchamp focuses on a conflict of the dramatic and comic, F.G. aligns Duchamp's interest with that of the ancient Greeks, who thought of drama as the height of art and comedy as indirect but invaluable critiques of society.[7] Other critical commentaries on Duchamp's works describe her figures as "sincere," "spiritual," "psychological," and "intellectual."[8] Additionally, Société Anonyme president Katherine S. Dreier writes of Suzanne Duchamp's works in 1920, "The delicacy of touch, the play of imagination, as she takes her various subjects and retranslates them into terms of her own very personal art."[9] The critiques of F.G., Dreier, and others serve to show that Duchamp's works were once viewed as personal and insightful, and consideration of these interpretations are valuable as they do not align with the machine aesthetic that one reads of today.

Despite the attention Suzanne Duchamp's works received in the press of her time, her contributions are widely absent from later histories of Dada.[10] When mentioned, literature on Duchamp tends to focus on how she participated in the works of other artists, and even more recent revisionist literature that appropriately inserts Suzanne Duchamp's story into Dada's only does so as a means of better understanding works by Marcel Duchamp or husband Jean Crotti.

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[5] William A. Camfield, "Suzanne Duchamp and Dada in Paris," in *Women in Dada*, ed. Naoimi Sawelson-Gorse. (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1998), 82-102.

[6] Several sources publish the line, "She conceives of life as a struggle between the dramatic and the comic, and it is the irony of this conflict, which is the central aim of her expression." Though I am not entirely certain of the origin of this line, I suspect that because it is widely used in newspaper articles from this decade, it might have come from Suzanne Duchamp herself.

[7] "Greek Comedy," Ancient History Encyclopedia, accessed April 5, 2016, http://www.ancient.eu/Greek_Comedy/.

[8] These terms are found in articles clippings kept at the Kandinsky Library in the Duchamp archive, such as Florence Gilliam, *Paris Women in the Arts*, 1925; an anonymous newspaper clipping on "Le triomphe de la sensibilité chez trois artistse peintures" found in a newspaper section marked 1929, "Artistse d'hier et d'aujourd'hui"; and Jean-Daniel Maublanc, "Suzanne Duchamp ou le triomphe de la nuance," *La Peinture Moderne*, 1939.

[9] Katherine S. Dreier, "Suzanne Duchamp," Société Anonyme, Museum of Modern Art, 1920.

[10] Camfield, "Suzanne Duchamp and Dada in Paris." Camfield explains one reason why Suzanne Duchamp (and similarly, her husband Jean Crotti) was left out of Dada writings. He writes that Duchamp, Crotti, and Picabia all broke from the Paris Dada group in 1921, and she and Jean Crotti created and worked under the new, more conservative "Tabu Dada."

While Duchamp's personal affiliations perhaps provide clues to her cryptic paintings, readers will be dissatisfied when looking for scholarship that provide an analytical interpretation of her unique mechanical style. The writings of William Camfield and Ruth Hemus, from which my argument stems, are two scholars who pay worthy attention to Duchamp's mechanomorphic figures.[11] I am especially indebted to Ruth Hemus' chapter on Suzanne Duchamp in *Dada's Women,* which hints at the paradox of a subjective perspective or thoughtfulness found within an aesthetic that is traditionally assumed objective. [12] Hemus explains that through certain visual elements and language used throughout her work made during the machine aesthetic, Suzanne Duchamp establishes an expressive dimension to her machines, raising the possibility of communication between male and female elements.[13] If defensible, this possibility greatly complicates the objective, robotic processes associated with the machine aesthetic.[14] This study begins with Hemus' suggestion and delves deeper to consider Duchamp's formal elements, subject matter, and viewer engagement in order to support the case for Duchamp's more contemplative or personal machine aesthetic.

The machine aesthetic traditionally presents figures that are at once mechanomorphic, embodying mechanical attributes, and anthropomorphic, embodying human attributes. However, as I will argue, there is an important distinction between Suzanne Duchamp's anthropomorphized mechanical beings and the conventional mechanomorphized human figures of her male Dadaist colleagues. Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia's "mechanical

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[11] Camfield, "Suzanne Duchamp and Dada in Paris" and Ruth Hemus, "Suzanne Duchamp," in *Dada's Women* (London: Yale University Press, 2009), 129-164.
Also, see William A. Camfield and Jean-Hubert Martin, *Tabu Dada: Jean Crotti and Suzanne Duchamp, 1915-1922*, exh. cat., (Bern: Die Kunsthalle, 1983).
[12] Ruth Hemus' chapter on Suzanne Duchamp in *Dada's Women* analyzes and updates used text in their works to assign a name to an object and therefore promote the object as one up for inspection Camfield's text in *Women in Dada*, which was the first contemporary, scholarly text that focused on Duchamp's career in detail.
[13] Hemus, 137-38.
[14] Ibid., 141.

representations," I will argue, provide both an identity and drive but do not suggest the possibility of intellect, expression, or mutual connection; instead they are limited to perfunctory tasks and instinctive behaviors.[15] In contrast, Suzanne Duchamp's "human-motors", while formally abstracted in the same manner as Picabia and Marcel Duchamp's, are machines that display soulful, humanistic attributes. Suzanne Duchamp's figures are not simply at work, but rather evoke more personal characteristics and communication. I do not aim to perpetuate an essentialist stereotype that female artists work with distinguishable emotion directly because of their sex, however.[16] Marcel Duchamp's famous alter ego, Rrose Selavy, should serve to remind us of Dada's potential interest for the gendered perspectives of art making and audience. By threading relevant scholarship, theoretical and primary texts, and a detailed comparison to the machine aesthetic of Marcel Duchamp and Picabia, along with a thorough visual analysis of her mechanomorphic style, I will explain how Suzanne Duchamp's figures uniquely engage their viewers to convey personal and empathetic expressions and show how this diversifies traditional understandings of the machine aesthetic. Overall, this paper aims to consider the paradox in which Suzanne Duchamp's machines can be understood as *more* human than Marcel Duchamp's and Francis Picabia's figures, and how this paradox is revealing of the diverse context of Dada and its complicated historiography.

[15] The term "mechanical representations" comes from Picabia's own identification of his mechanomorphic figure portraits.

[16] I want to be clear that sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics of an individual, while "gender" refers to society's expectation of behavior, roles, activities, etc. For a reading on the performative and constructed nature of gender, see Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theater Journal* 40, no. 4 (1988): 519-531.

CHAPTER 2

THE GENERATION OF THE MACHINE AESTHETIC

For Dada artists, especially those working in New York, the machine was innovative, energizing and anxiety producing. The machine replaced a function that the nude previously held in Renaissance painting, "providing a model of visual form [and] a guide to artistic practice."[17] Drawing and painting images of machines embodied the nuanced relationship between reality and representation in art; artists could render the machine realistically and objectively in order to symbolically portray a separate subject, and this provided Dadaists with a new and contemporaneous system of symbols. In many cases, the machine took the place of one's daily roles and even religion. The French photographer Paul Haviland wrote in a 1915 publication of the Dada magazine, *291*, that "We are living in the age of the Machine. Man made the Machine in his own Image."[18] Taking God (and women) out of the picture, the machine asserted man's superiority, control, and rationality.[19] For these artists, machines were not simply an influence to depict avant-garde representations of humans. Rather, they stimulated a breakdown of the distinction between man and mechanical.[20] Some Dada artists saw the efficiency and autonomy of the machine as exciting and progressive while for others the machine produced anxiety and unease. Yet, this interest and unease was widely experienced and not limited to artists. For instance, in his 1919 essay entitled "The 'Uncanny,'" psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud reviews

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[17] Tom Gunning, "Circulation and Transformation of Cinema, or Did the French Invent the American Cinema?" Publication forthcoming.
[18] Paul Haviland, *291,* no. 7-8, 1915.
[19] For another careful analysis of Haviland's quote, see Hemus, 137-38.
[20] Barbara Zabel, "The Machine and New York Dada," in *Making Mischief: Dada Invades New York*, exh. cat., (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1996), 281.
Also see Alex Goody, "Cyborgs, Women, and New York Dada," *Space Between: Literature and Culture* 3 (2007): 79-100.

German psychiatrist Ernst Jentsch's study of the Uncanny and how it is produced precisely through the automaton.[21] The automaton is uncanny, or strangely familiar, "because these excite in the spectator the feeling that automatic, mechanical processes are at work, concealed beneath the ordinary appearance of animation."[22] The machine questioned the nature and conditions of life itself, and thus it became a major motif throughout artistic works, particularly in New York.

The machine aesthetic makes its first notable appearance in New York in Marcel Duchamp's scandalous *Nude Descending A Staircase, No. 2* (fig. 1), 1912-13, unveiled at the 1913 Armory Show. Marcel Duchamp's nude is painted in a mixture of gray and skin-colored tones on a fragmented earthy brown staircase, expressing the ambiguity between the natural or human and the constructed or mechanical. The nude moves mechanically down each suggested step of the staircase, revealing unperceivable moments to the naked eye. The manner in which the figure's movement is enunciated breaks away from conventional constructions of a figure in space to convey the infinite yet individual moments captured through vision. The painting is reminiscent of the inventive chronophotographs of French physicist Étienne-Jules Marey (fig. 2), in which movement, such as running, was sequentially photographed to catch sights unnoticed by a viewer in real time. In both Marey's photographs and Marcel Duchamp's nude, viewers are forced to see the components that make up a total, continuous conception of movement.[23] While Marcel Duchamp's figure resembles a human, viewers recognize the mechanical qualities within each presumed footstep of the nude, and thus the ambiguity between man and machine; As art historian Barbara Zabel puts it, his Cubo-Dada automaton curiously resembles either "a

[21] Sigmund Freud, "The 'Uncanny,'" in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1955), 217-256.
[22] Ibid., 222.
[23] See Marta Braun's "Marey, Modern Art, and Modernism," in *Picturing Time: The Work of Etienne-Jules Marey 1830-1904* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1992), 264-318.

humanized machine or a mechanized human," or simultaneously both.[24] Throughout the next decade, artists pushed further the depiction of a mechanized human form, eventually evolving human figures into more literal representations of machines.

Francis Picabia is commonly acknowledged as the paragon of the machine aesthetic for his painting bare, representational depictions of machines, often times tracing machine illustrations found in magazines.[25] Instead of expressing the likeness between man and machine through similarly perceived movement, as in Marcel Duchamp's work, Picabia draws and paints the machine in a centered, fixed state. The figure is therefore also drawn or painted from an objective perspective, reminiscent of portraiture and thus suggestive of a human subject. The human subject is also acknowledged through the titles Picabia gives his works. The machine, or figure, depicted in *Fille née sans mère* (*Girl Born Without a Mother*) (fig. 3), 1916-17, is described in his title as a girl. She is painted in emerald green, representative of nature, fertility, and femininity, against a gold background. The figure shares a close likeness to a steam engine, yet its rounded forms are enunciated and suggest the organic. Viewers can also assume the presence of a human through the religious implications of the work's title; Picabia might be referring to Eve, who was created from Adam's rib without a mother. In addition, Picabia's gold background evokes Renaissance and Byzantine images of the Virgin and Child.[26] These religious references might suggest Haviland's aforementioned quote regarding the idolization of the machine, as Picabia was indeed passionate about the machine's godly potential. This comparison is nuanced, however; though he is referencing a female presence through the both religious and

[24] Zabel, 280.
[25] See George Baker, *The Artwork Caught by the Tail: Francis Picabia and Dada In Paris* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007): 245 for an account on the influences on Picabia's mechanical representations.
[26] The National Gallery of Scotland briefly relates Picabia's portrait to these mentioned religious allusions. "Fille née sans mère (Girl Born Without a Mother)," National Galleries Scotland, accessed January 20, 2015, https://www.nationalgalleries.org/collection/artists-a-z/p/artist/francis-picabia/object/fille-nee-sans-mere-girl-born-without-a-mother-gma-3545.

secular clues, she appears broken with her main wheel not intact. Thus, unlike Marcel Duchamp's nude who moves down the stairs, Picabia's girl is unable to act or attain agency. This is a motif throughout many of Picabia's works; although he informs the viewer that his figures are human through titles and style, he removes qualities that differentiate man and machine, such as agency, personality, and intelligence.

Suzanne Duchamp's figures visually compare to ones created by her brother and Picabia, yet she consistently provides her human-motors with precisely what Picabia removes. Made in the midst of the First World War, *Un et une menacés (A Male and Female Threatened)* (fig. 4), 1916, is Suzanne Duchamp's first painting that employs the machine aesthetic and sets an example for the rest of her works completed from 1916-22. Though what at first appears to be a single, crane-like form with no obvious indication of personality, Duchamp provides hints of two anonymous figures, one male and one female, through text within the work: "un" implying male and "une" implying female. Behind the crane, a vertical rectangle outlined in bright red is painted just off center and contains three actual metal rings or "wheels" attached to the surface that seem to circulate a pulley-system allowed by a real piece of string. Other elements of assemblage include a notched gear connected by the string to a metal plumb bob. A human form is noticeable after one sees the quasi-invisible crescent shape drawn beneath the gear piece, like legs spread in an open stance. Finally, the large diagonal crane holds a pair of pincers that face the bottom of the composition, which confuses the perceived depth within the collage by existing between the crescent shape and the body of the rectangular figure. By amalgamating actual pieces of machinery with painted, representative machine imagery that together symbolize human figures, Duchamp expresses the ambiguity between man and machine. Soon after the war's outbreak in 1914, Duchamp began serving as a nurse's aid and cared for the masses of

soldiers and civilians who were physically injured in the war.[27] Though she excludes overt suggestions of the First World War in *Un et une menacés*, Duchamp presents her mechanized figures in a uniformly vulnerable state, one that was commonly shared with most Europeans during the war.[28]

While it is important to acknowledge that Suzanne Duchamp was working within a different context as a woman in Paris, the machine aesthetic in general was subject to several influences: technology, the First World War, and the modern woman.[29] The American anxiety over industrialization, the European experience of the First World War, and the changing roles of women cannot be completely separated from the machine aesthetic, and certainly not in the case of Suzanne Duchamp. While she never traveled to the United States, Duchamp nevertheless was knowledgeable of the artistic scene rapidly transforming New York Dada through correspondence in letters with Marcel, as well as her relations with Jean Crotti, who worked with Marcel Duchamp in New York during the war and whom she would marry in 1919.[30] Marcel Duchamp would often write to Duchamp from New York regarding his artistic inspirations and ideas, and she even assisted in the completion of his first readymade.[31] Suzanne Duchamp was thus aware that Dada artists in New York were inspired by and experimenting with mechanical representations, yet from her side of the Atlantic, one may suspect that her human-motors' poignant and personal expressions reference her witnessing the dehumanizing effects of the war.

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[27] Camfield, "Suzanne Duchamp and Dada in Paris," 85.
[28] Ibid., 85.
[29] I use the term "modern woman" here to be synonymous with the "new woman."
[30] Francis M. Naumann and Marcel Duchamp, "Affectueusement, Marcel: Ten Letters from Marcel Duchamp to Suzanne Duchamp and Jean Crotti," *Archives of American Art Journal* 22, no. 4 (1982): 2-19.
[31] Hemus, 130. Hemus remarks that Arturo Schwarz's 1969 catalogue raisonné *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp* does much to devalue (or eliminate) Suzanne Duchamp's reputation throughout Dada. Among other rumors that Schwarz instigates, he writes that Suzanne Duchamp was foolish to not understand the meaning behind Marcel Duchamp's readymade, *Bottle Rack,* and thus throw it out. Ruth Hemus writes that later developments reveal this was part of Marcel Duchamp's original intent of his first readymade and that he only later disclosed his ideas for the readymade to his sister.

As the assembly line, automobiles, and rapid urbanization made ambiguities between man and machine noticeable in New York, the war's introduction and necessitation of gas masks, prostheses, and machine guns made these ambiguities evermore apparent throughout Europe. Similarly, the agency Duchamp gives to her figures is plausibly circumstantial of her liberated perspective as a woman taking part in France's war effort, visible through the blurring of identifiable genders and reference to the war. The influence of the war and the increase of technology brought about an anxiety over the ambiguity of the human and machine, but also of the roles between sexes.

Suzanne Duchamp's *Un et une menacés* certainly reveals a vagueness or confusion of the traditional divisions and relations between man and woman. Duchamp invites us to locate two gendered beings within her title, and one might identify the two largest forms, the crane and the red rectangle, as these separate beings. However, the sexes of two distinguishable forms in *Un et une menacés* is rather vague, with each "form" embodying parts that reference both male and female. William Camfield and Ruth Hemus have opposing viewpoints concerning the sexes of the figures in *Un et une menacés*, as many viewers might, and if one applies knowledge of traditional sign systems for masculine and feminine figures, the work is ultimately more confusing.[32] If the viewer assumes that rounder, open, and more organic forms are female, and that geometric and straight forms are male, then both figures in the work are hermaphroditic. Straight, erect structures representing masculinity exist within both the crane and the red rectangle, and round, open shapes representing femininity similarly exist within the pincers and the crescent-shaped "legs". Additionally, the crescent shape has a long history of suggesting feminine subjects, as the crescent moon represented the goddess, Diana, in Greek mythology. A study of *Un et une menacés* (fig. 5), 1916, shows that Duchamp at first meant for the crane and

[32] Camfield, "Suzanne Duchamp and Dada in Paris," 83-87, and Hemus, 136-37.

pincers to take the role of the male, yet in her final rendition she removes the chains (holding the pincers, or in this version, the testes) that complete a fully-outlined depiction of male genitalia. In *Un et une menaces,* the pincers can therefore represent either testes or an orifice. Even the distinction of two individual figures is uncertain; the crane-like figure is entangled between the rectangular figure and its legs, which one might presume suggests a sexual act. However, Duchamp describes these figures as threatened, eradicating overtly romantic or lustful implications. Ultimately, Duchamp's work is complex and not easily readable through one, objective perspective. She expresses a more subjective focus toward two separate but connected ambiguities: the blurred distinctions between man and machine and between man and woman.

While Suzanne Duchamp acknowledges the complicated and changing dynamics between man, women, and machine in her work, Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia's mechanomorphs convey a nervousness that coincides with the crisis of masculinity. The anxiety surrounding machines' "theft" of man's role paralleled hysteria over women's "theft" of man's traditional position in the workplace and social dynamics. Both technology and the New Woman expressed and consolidated relations among men, yet at the same time threatened the conventional heightened position of man.[33] The ill-defined medical condition then known as "Neurasthenia," which caused symptoms such as migraines, fatigue, depression, and "manifestations of insanity", became prevalent throughout the late nineteenth-century, and correlated with the rise of industrialization and urbanization.[34] Excessive venery or sexual activity also suggested a neurasthenic condition, and was diagnosed in some Dada artists living

[33] Caroline A. Jones, "The Sex of the Machine: Mechanomorphic Art, New Women, and Francis Picabia's Neurasthenic Cure," in *Picturing Science, Producing Art*, ed. Peter Galison and Caroline A. Jones (New York: Routledge, 2014), 151.
[34] Freud, 222. In this section, Freud summarizes Jentsch's discussion of the "uncanny effect of epileptic seizures and manifestations of insanity," which strongly relate to neurasthenic symptoms.

in New York, including Picabia.[35] As art historian Caroline Jones writes in her "The Sex of the Machine: Mechanomorphic Art, New Women, and Francis Picabia's Neurasthenic Cure," depicting sexuality and sexual acts in art was both a condition and treatment of an overactive libido.[36] The use of objective, unemotional machines was thus a way to convey a purely instinctual sexual drive in human nature. As machines removed intellect, emotions, and human weakness from labor and production, the machine aesthetic became an efficient method of portraying human function in ways that divorced them from intellect or emotion, i.e. libido. New York Dada artists therefore often used the objective and impersonal machine in order to fulfill their desire for a functional and satisfactory jouissance.

Such thoughtless, perfunctory, and libidinous interactions are exemplified in Marcel Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare for Her Bachelors, Even*, also known as *The Large Glass* (fig. 6), 1915-23, whose interpretation often centers around a masculine narrative of frustrated masturbatory energies with the female as the object of desire.[37] *The Large Glass* consists of a variety of both organic and synthetic materials: oil, varnish, lead foil, lead wire, and dust on two large glass panels all within a steel frame. The two vertically arranged panels create a narrative to be read from top to bottom panels. The top panel depicts a mechanized yet animal-like bride, with four legs and an elongated neck, propelled within an aerial cloud of desire. The bottom panel responds with a crowd of illustrated bachelors fueled by lustful, unrequited love through what appears to be a chocolate grinder, blocked from accessing the bride through the

[35] Caroline Jones, 146.
[36] Caroline Jones, 160-61. Doctors believed that these symptoms were exacerbated and caused by modern civilization, common in women who left their homes throughout the mid- to late nineteenth century, but vastly increased in the male population during the Fin de Siècle and early twentieth century.
[37] For one closer investigation of Duchamp's *The Large Glass*, see Linda Dalrymple Henderson, *Duchamp in Context: Science and Technology in The Large Glass and Related Works* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

windowpane.[38] The figures within *The Large Glass* are distinguishable; even viewers who are unfamiliar with the narrative can discern two separate entities either through the separated panels or through recognition of vertical, anthropomorphized forms. These forms are geometric, conveying a mechanical quality, yet are painted in earth and skin tones, suggesting that the figures are indeed human or of the earth. While the figures are active, their relationships appear operatively and sexually driven rather than emotionally bonded. *The Large Glass* illustrates male and female interactions more mechanomorphically than anthropomorphically, suggesting functionality based on objective and libidinous roles and alchemical processes as opposed to intellect or emotion.

Caroline Jones' study of Picabia and the machine additionally points out that Dada artists saw no determined fixity in the sex of the machine, either male or female, but rather the machine represented more complicated and ambiguous contemporaneous cultural ideologies regarding gender. Historian Ruth Oldenziel writes in her book that since the Industrial Revolution, the workplace, industrial machinery, and technology became traditionally framed in masculine terms, while the products and commodities of the machine-driven industry, such as textiles and fabrics, became associated with femininity because of their associations with feeling and sensuality.[39] Fabrics were also largely decorative, applied superficially to a surface, and were commonly used throughout the interior and in clothing, entities that were (and still are) associated with femininity. In contrast, machinery and technology were (and remain) associated with masculinity because they involve action, agency, and work.[40] While the sex of machines may seem more simply explained in Oldenziel's text, one must consider Jones' argument that the

[38] Schwarz, 395.
[39] Ruth Oldenziel, *Making Technology Masculine: Men, Women and Modern Machines in America. 1870-1945* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1999), 19-26.
[40] For more on agency and gender, see Luce Irigaray, *The Sex Which is Not One*, trans. Catherine Porter and Carolyn Burke (Ithaca: NY: Cornell University Press, 1977).

sex of machines became indeterminate for artists and society throughout the early twentieth century, as one sees specifically in the case of Suzanne Duchamp. As the Dada artists acknowledged, the masculine technology versus feminine product analogy becomes less clear when one considers the producing effect of machines. For just as machines enabled mass production, women similarly maintain a (re)productive role in humanity. This parallel has interesting implications for Picabia's *Fille née sans mère*, for it potentially suggests that Picabia depicts his girl born without a mother (and made by man) to assert certain gender roles during the crisis of masculinity. As the definitive gendering of machines in general became more ambiguous, these Dada artists reacted by sexualizing the machine and its operations.

As Dada scholars that overlook Suzanne Duchamp's contributions will acknowledge, machine imagery most generally alludes to objectification and sexuality, primarily exhibiting a male perspective. In the case of Dada machine imagery most often described in scholarship, mechanical representations generally present obvious sexual identities in ways that secured the agency of male mechanics and their desire for consuming female parts.[41] Picabia's *Machine Tournez Vite (Machine Turn Quickly)* (fig. 7), 1916-18, which asserts gender roles and sexuality, includes a specific labeling of the gender of the two mechanical parts, and is similarly read in scholarship as having male-centric meanings.[42] In *Machine Turn Quickly*, two blue cogs, one large and one small, are presented against a dark background. The title, painted in the top of the composition, makes the image of the cogs reminiscent of scientific illustrations. This is further expressed through the key painted in the bottom right, which specifies that the "number one" cog signifies the female, and the "number two" cog signifies the male. The operative interaction

[41] Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis,* ed. Jacques Alain Miller, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York, London: Norton and Company, 1978), 49. Lacan discusses (man's) desire in depth in his section regarding the Mirror Stage.
[42] Caroline Jones, 450-53.

between the male and female apparatuses suggests that both figures' roles are to interlock, symbolizing sexually driven human interactions.[43] The much larger male gear's weight is apparent as it presses down on the smaller female gear in the left corner, completely subordinating her and suggesting that she is the object under the male gear's control, or at least that she, the gear, must "turn quickly" to make the entire process functional. While the machine aesthetic depicts all humans as literal objects, Picabia uses his machine aesthetic in ways that doubly objectify the female. [44] Not only are emotions and intellect taken away from figures via the machine aesthetic, female figures further loses their power to correctly and autonomously function when placed alongside a dominating, male-gendered operator.

As discussed previously in the case of *Un et une menacés*, Duchamp's first human motors are presented as *mutually* threatened, as opposed to one figure threatening the other, or one figure being more threatened by an outside source than the other. Together, the figures interlock, their parts less distinguishable. While this interlocking between male and female figures might have sexual implications, they may be more appropriately interpreted as banding together, as Duchamp's title indicates that they are both threatened. The ambiguity between the sexes of Duchamp's two forms, and even two distinct forms as a whole provides little room for interpreting the figures as submissive or dominant. Because Duchamp does not appropriate a specific, identifiable sex to her figures, both are given agency (would she not argue that agency is a human trait?) and vulnerability, and neither is made into a product for consumption. Whereas her Dada colleagues utilize the machine as a metaphor of libido or automated, objective

[43] Camfield, "Suzanne Duchamp and Dada in Paris," 319.
[44] Willard Bohn, "Picabia's Mechanical Expression and the Demise of the Object," *The Art Bulletin* 67, (1985): 673-677. Bohn writes on the double objectification of the figure enabled through the machine aesthetic.
Also, for a more obvious example of an artist turning the human figure into literal object, see Man Ray's photographs, *L'homme* and *La Femme* from 1920. Man Ray gives male and female genders to a hand mixer (or egg-beater) and an arrangement of two concave metal bowls above a line of clothespins. The hand mixer is generally conceived of as the male of the pair, though Man Ray did exhibit it once entitled *La Femme*, further blurring gender distinctions.

functions to assert their masculinity, Suzanne Duchamp ironically embraces the ambiguously gendered machine as a means of personal expression and genuine connection.

CHAPTER 3

THE ANTHROPOMORPHIZATION OF THE MECHANOMORPH

The second half of this paper sets three general parameters for how Suzanne Duchamp's human-motors can be distinguished from her colleagues' mechanomorphs. First, the cryptic titles as well as the included text are directed outward to a second person, an engaged viewer. She expresses through language directly emotional sentiments such as "threatened," "unhappy," and "joy" which provide signals for a deeper meaning to be found within her works. Secondly, the relationships between Suzanne Duchamp's mechanical figures are reciprocated. Her works include figures that act mutually upon each other and, while the nature of the relationships between these figures is sometimes sexual, they display an emotionally communicative and balanced bond. In contrast, Marcel Duchamp and Picabia tend to depict a male figure that acts upon an objectified female figure. Lastly, the way in which viewers are prompted to empathize with Duchamp's mechanical creatures also lends a more communicative interpretation of those figures. Rather than *to be looked at* and objectified by the viewer, the figures display a voice and look back, sometimes communicating directly to their viewer.[45] Regardless of the visual alien or robotic characteristic that make Duchamp's figures, they seem familiar and humanistic because they connect and communicate with viewers, inciting thoughtful or emotional reactions. Described by contemporaneous art critic Maurice Raynal as "spiritual and graceful fantasies,"

[45] Here I am referencing Marcel Duchamp's 1918 oil painting, *To Be Looked at (from the Other Side of the Glass) with One Eye, Close to, for Almost an Hour.*

Duchamp's works create anthropomorphized mechanomorphs' whose personalities, voices, and thoughts prevail over their mechanical appearance.[46]

CON*TEXT* CLUES

Thoughtfulness or human emotion found in Suzanne Duchamp's machine aesthetic is most apparent through text, which appears as titles and embedded within the pictures. As shapes and figures within her works are at first abstract and hard to distinguish, the text stands out as a clearly recognizable sign from the artist. For viewers literate in French and English (the primary languages Duchamp uses in her works), the text provides helpful hints to the work's subject matter or meaning, such as in her *Séduction* (fig. 8), 1920, which might otherwise seem like geometric abstractions of random objects. *Séduction* consists of angular, fan-like forms brushing against upright architectural, rhythmic forms. After reading the title, also painted within the composition, the viewer can begin to imagine a seductive interaction between two forms, and then use sign systems to associate the male with the rectangular form and the female with the multiple semi-circular forms. Though text was not uncommon in Dada works, especially in ones that utilized a machine aesthetic such as Picabia's *Machine Tournez Vite*, almost all of Suzanne Duchamp's works completed in this style include revealing titles, which are often inscribed within the frame. Duchamp's colleagues often provide text in their works to assign a name to an object and therefore promote the object as one up for inspection, such as in Francis Picabia's *Voila Elle* (*Here She Is*) (fig. 9), 1915, whose title, included within the image, allows the viewer to make a female figure out of the sketchily arranged mechanical apparatus.[47] However, one must take Picabia's *elle* at surface level; a mechanical female figure is all that is expressed

[46] Maurice Raynal, "Au Salon d'Automne" review, 1923. This clipping from a newspaper article is located in the Fonds Duchamp papers at the Kandinsky Library.

[47] Picabia's *Voila Elle* was printed next to Marius de Zayas' *Femme (Elle)* in the ninth issue of the Dada magazine 291 in 1915 and the two strikingly resemble one another. The composition and forms are situated in the same manner, yet Picabia's work resembles a machine and de Zayas' work resembles a poem.

through her depiction, excluding intellectual or emotional expression. In contrast, Suzanne Duchamp typically includes text as a means of implying a relatable and personal presence.

The text itself allows for significant visual analysis. The style of Duchamp's text varies between mechanical, typewriter-like text and curvilinear, more personal writing, thus further emphasizing the blurred distinctions between machines and humans. However, viewers may also distinguish between the typewriter text and the curvilinear writing as emphasizing the masculine and feminine. The work, *Séduction*, includes different styles of text so that the viewer may more easily distinguish the male and female forms within it. The words "FORCE et Grace" are placed in areas of the composition that seem to belong to their pictorial signs. "FORCE", in a serif font and capitalized, is positioned below the sharp-edged, geometric structure in the work, while the calligraphic and cursive word "Grace" sits below the wider, more curvaceous round shape. These words enunciate what the forms above them communicate visually, which is the sex (identifiable or not) of the forms themselves. Though masculine and feminine forms are confused in Duchamp's *Un et une menacés*, Duchamp's forms are more clearly articulated in *Séduction* with the specific placement of the text. Painted over of the words "FORCE et Grace," is the single yet broken word "Séduction." This provides a clue to how one is to understand the connection between the two forms, as will be discussed in the following section.

Often painted within the works, a practice that many artists were employing at the time, Suzanne Duchamp's titles distinguishably hint at the emotive expressions of the figures. The title "*Le Ready-made malheureux Marcel (Marcel's Unhappy Readymade)*" (fig. 10), 1920, not only personifies a crumbled up piece of paper among an arrangement of bright, fragmented forms of color, it also reveals the emotional state of the readymade.[48] While machines and objects operate

[48] While anthropomorphism and personification essentially have the same meaning, the term "personification" is used in this section to distinguish giving human-like qualities to an object through written language as opposed to

but are unconscious, the piece of paper instead not only *does*, but *feels*. Duchamp's anthropomorphic crumbled piece of paper was influenced by Marcel Duchamp's readymade, a geometry textbook, which was sent to Suzanne Duchamp and Jean Crotti as a wedding present.[49] Marcel gave Suzanne Duchamp specific instructions to hang the readymade outside and allow the wind to whisk the pages away.[50] Suzanne's vision of a lively, expressive state (even an unhappy one) or condition of the readymade reveals more than a mere personification of the object; it reveals that Duchamp related to the objects themselves in a personal way. Thus, rather than reduce figures and their actions to an operative, mechanized state, Duchamp actually provides anthropomorphic qualities to objects that are innately inhuman.

A number of titles given to Duchamp's paintings and collages work in a similar manner, drawing up associations of expressiveness and self-consciousness within nonhuman objects, such as the crumbled piece of paper and other depicted machines. However, providing self-consciousness or thoughtfulness was not limited to portraits of a single object or pair of objects. In her *Usine de mes pensées (Plant of My Thoughts)* (fig. 11), 1920, and *Fabrique de joie (Joy Factory)* (fig. 12), 1920, Duchamp removes the anthropomorphized figure altogether. The comparison between man and machine becomes analogously larger here; in *Usine de mes pensées* and *Fabrique de joie,* Duchamp is relating an organic environment or psychological, sensual state to the factory. *Usine de mes pensées* includes a linear set of lines that project from the bottom left of the painting and recede into space backwards toward the right. The illusory background consists of a set of vertical rectangles reminiscent of a skyline or cityscape. Instead of mechanizing figures or singular objects, Duchamp mechanizes the entire landscape. And, these more explicit depictions of landscapes causes viewers to consider the compositional

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"anthropomorphism," which is related to pictorial language.
[49] Camfield and Martin, *Tabu Dada,* 20-21.
[50] Ibid., 21.

elements of her portraits, such as *Un et une menaces*, as landscapes as well. One might read Duchamp's *Un et une menacés* as a portrait of two figures, or of a crane amidst a landscape. Still, while focusing on an environment, Duchamp directly draws upon thoughts and self-consciousness with her employment of text. In *Usine de mes pensées* the use of the term "plant" is significant, for it is generatively operative, while the term "thought" connotes a more organic, human element. *Fabrique de joie,* painted in the same year, has a similar generative quality. It also includes the cityscape that sits along a horizontal line, which provides a more representative distinction between foreground and background. The term "factory," for obvious reasons, evokes machinery and mechanical production, while "joy" is significantly instinctive and human. These works' titles are related; both works' titles and text evokes thoughtfulness and expression while at the same time hint that they are born of merely mechanical processes.

The title of *Solitude entonnoir* (*Funnel of Solitude*) (fig. 13), 1921, similarly evokes an emotional state juxtaposed with a constructed, seemingly inhuman material. Muted blue and gray circular forms centripetally revolve around a black circle and are contained within sharp, fragmented triangular shapes, painted in a white skin-tone color. Dark black forms that seem to ground the funnel, or "figure", and provide perspectival contrast with the light blue, blue, and brown areas. A row of small, multicolored triangles lies just under the central form, and all that exists within Duchamp's painting is a constellation centering on the small, central black "hole". While this composition at first seems to be an array of hues and shapes, mechanical and human attributes are present. Duchamp leaves the viewer to question the anthropomorphic elements of her funnel, implicitly suggesting soulfulness within its "lonely" state. Through her amalgamation of explained emotions and objects, the curious titles and text of Duchamp's machine aesthetic ask for contemplation and empathy from the viewer.

FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

While Duchamp mechanizes the landscape in *Usine de mes pensées* and *Fabrique de joie,* her works more commonly includes two compositional figures (which, despite their geometric depiction, can often be read anthropomorphically as male and female beings) that display a communicative bond. In *The Radiation of Two Solitary Beings Apart* (fig. 14), 1916-20, for instance, Duchamp depicts two figures who convey what Camfield calls "ultra-sensible" contact despite their separated, individual parts.[51] Duchamp's collage consists of found materials such as string, wire, glass, beads, pearls, straw, and foil, which blend man-made and natural objects.[52] Camfield, again with his focus on her biography, proposes that this work was created when Suzanne Duchamp was missing Jean Crotti while he was traveling for work, and thus might convey the longing of two emotionally connected lovers.[53] This longing or connection is visually shown as well, with the geographically separated "cage-like" form located in the center and "receiving grid", the honeycombed polygon located at the bottom, connected through the larger grid that exists throughout the entire background.[54] A line is painted between the two primary figures, conveying a spatially remote yet communicative bond between one another. Again, Duchamp juxtaposes sharp and straight forms with round or organic, and similar to her *Un et une menacés*, the forms are not entirely distinguishable as male or female. The bond may be "physical, sexual, or psychological," as Hemus puts it, yet it nevertheless establishes a communication that is mutually expressed as opposed to the bachelors' one-way libidinous drive towards their bride in Marcel Duchamp's *The Large Glass*.[55]

[51] Camfield, *Tabu Dada,* 18.
[52] Hemus, 139.
[53] Camfield, "Suzanne Duchamp and Dada in Paris," 87.
[54] Linda Dalrymphe Henderson as cited in Hemus, 141.
[55] Hemus, 141.

Suzanne Duchamp conveys this mutual communication or reciprocated relationship in two ways: by painting separate figures as ambiguous and by conveying that the figures share similar, mutually active roles. As visibly shown through *Un et une menacés* and *The Radiation of Two Solitary Beings Apart*, the male and female parts of the apparatus cannot be separated as distinct parts, rather their mutual relationship and stable interaction are the subject of Duchamp's work. These figures function in an egalitarian setting without dominant or submissive cogs; they complement rather than control. While traditional Dada machine imagery (as well, we might say, as the history of art as a whole) asserts the dominance of the male figure *acting* and the female figure *being acted upon*, Duchamp's works commonly depict both figures reciprocating back and forth the engaging and being engaged. Duchamp's *Un et une menacés*' figures are mutually threatened, and are bonded together because of this mutuality.

In *Scottish Espagnole* (fig. 15), 1920, for instance, the figures participate in a dance, which is depicted by the zigzag lines that radiate from the forms to convey mechanical, repetitive, and choreographed movement. The forms are painted in varying muted earthy, organic tones, such as blues, greens, browns, and oranges. The figures themselves consist of angular, rigid rectangles that surround more organic, circular shapes within, and they communicate through a balancing black band held on a pulley. It is unclear whether the two figures are depicted as two identical but separate bodies acting in one dance, or if the right and left figures actually consist of both the male and female entangled together but in two separate temporalities. Because of this, viewers are left unable to decipher whether or not one figure takes the lead. What is more effectively communicated, rather than distinct parts, is their relationship within the dance. The functionality between the two forms evokes balance and stability. In comparison, Marcel Duchamp's *The Large Glass* also depicts the relationship between gendered

figures, though he does this to communicate a very different dynamic: his group of scopophilic male forms lust and unsuccessfully chase the single female form. There, parallels exist between the fetishized commodity and an objectified female. The physical blocking of the realms of the bachelors and desired female apparatus pronounces her position as a sought-after possession. Suzanne Duchamp does not present her figures, male or female, as sought after possessions or a fetishized commodity. The relationship between the mechanisms in Duchamp's works may at times seem restrained or in longing for one another, but this restrain or longing is depicted as mutual between the figures.

A few of Duchamp's works even depict the female figure as the looker, engager, or doer. Though Duchamp characteristically goes beyond mere sexual operations of humans and transmits human emotion, *Séduction* at first seems to lie more in line with the works of her male colleagues but in the opposite manner (the female engaging the male). The round, feminine form that coordinates with the text "Grace" actually overlaps and comes into the space of the phallic form that is juxtaposedly coordinated with "FORCE", implying that the female is the one acting upon the male. Duchamp's *Séduction* is distinctive because neither of the figures are oppressed or acted upon in an exploitative manner. Hemus writes that *Séduction* evokes the "physical (dis)connections and fragile (mis)communications" between the two forms.[56] While one may argue that Duchamp paints a scene of dysfunction, the figures remain on a same level and operate within the realm of an egalitarian setting. More importantly, the figures are not stripped bare to their primal, automatic sexual desires, but rather the opposite; by conveying that there exists a miscommunication or disconnection, Duchamp is more attentive to intellectual or affectionate relationships. She was herself described several times an intellectual, and that this

[56] Hemus, 142.

was reflected in her works.[57] *Séduction* may superficially be concerned with sexuality and instinct, but its true subject is rooted in a more complex, psychological connection between two figures.

THE BREAKDOWN OF LOOKING

Perhaps the most significant way in which Duchamp's figurative machines differ from that of her male contemporaries is through their engagement of the viewer. Certainly, the artworks of Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia engage their viewers, but in a way that invites looking rather than empathy. As noted in the above discussion of Duchamp's provided text and titles, her machines are assigned a voice that speaks to the viewer, initiating a reciprocal discussion. The text and titles provides a perspective within Duchamp's works, one that make the viewer conscious of his/her own potential reification. In Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia's works, the viewer is most commonly situated in a similar position of the male gaze with the female figure in the static position of desired object. Suzanne Duchamp's works contrast these conventions of viewership, presenting mechanical female portraits that are ambiguously female in the first place, and look back at the viewer with their own agency and autonomy.

With the advent of second-generation feminism in the 1970's, the power of looking was seen anew, aligned with masculinity, with the object as its feminized counterpart. One only needs to look to Robert Doisneau's classic *Un regard Oblique* (fig. 16), 1948, and feminist film and media scholar Mary Ann Doane's response to realize that looking is also associated with masculinity. Doisneau's photograph presents a man and woman locked by their arms and looking through the window of a store. The woman looks at a painting displayed at the front, which has its back toward the viewer. Without the woman's notice, the man peers in at a scopophilic

[57] Writer unknown, *Women Painters and Women who Paint*, 1928. This clipping from a newspaper article is located in the Fonds Duchamp papers at the Kandinsky Library.

painting of a nude bent over, one that can also be seen by the viewer of the photograph. Most of the forms in the photograph itself are representative of masculine power, including the rectangular paintings, the elongated, straight street, and the man's erect top hat. The noticeably *different* forms in the work are the penetrable round-bottomed nude in the painting and the woman's organic, folded hat. This difference is comparable to the abstracted relationship between Marcel Duchamp's animalistic bride and vertical, geometric bachelors. As Doane has argued, viewing Doisneau's photograph in the appropriate way, and being "in" on its joke, means assuming a masculine, heterosexual perspective. Because the painting of the woman is displayed to the viewer, the man and the viewer become involved in a joke at the woman's expense.[58] Even if the viewer is female, her gaze turns voyeuristic and masculine from the lure of the pleasurable painting and the woman's sensual hat, as well as the piercing gaze of the man; a gaze that forces the viewer to become aware of his or her own penetrating gaze. While the machine aesthetic and Doisneau's photograph have obvious formal differences, the phallocentric gaze that is assumed in *Un Regard Oblique* is evident in the works of Marcel Duchamp and Picabia.

Picabia's machine aesthetic works similarly assume a phallocentric gaze. In comparing the male and female gears within Picabia's *Machine Tournez Vite*, the female gear is viewable in its entirety, while the male gear is only partially in sight. This invites viewers to look primarily at the feminine component of the painting, further enunciating its position as receiver and object. His drawing, *Voila Elle*, suggests through its title and text that the female subject is an object that can be presented or given to the viewer. And, the way in which the viewer can receive or take the reified female is by looking. Similarly, Picabia's *Portrait d'une jeune fille americane dans l'etat de nudite (Portrait of a Young American Girl in a State of Nudity)* (fig. 17), 1915, presents a

[58] Mary Ann Doane, "Film and the Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator," *Screen Reader* 23 (1982): 234.

girl's portrait as an object for looking and pleasure. In this drawing, Picabia creates a finely detailed black and white depiction of an apparently female spark plug. Her mechanical body is on display entirely, she is given no eyes to look back, and she is finely rendered, making her an easily readable object that supposedly asks to be seen.[59] Picabia's portrait is significant in that it is the most literal depiction of an actual machine part, yet it ironically warrants confusion. Considering the fact that she is depicted as a spark plug, the figure may be rather understood as the object that ignites male libido. By painting women, and in this case even girls, as machines or mechanical parts, women become totally objectified and lack any voice or control.[60] In analyzing this even further, the reified female's existence, again as a sought-after possession, seems to solely function as a tool for satisfying male desire.

Suzanne Duchamp's works do not invite looking and taking of that kind. Her most authoritative and purportedly feminist work, *Give me the right right to life* (fig. 18), 1919, disallows voyeuristic looking in several ways.[61] Painted in a more representational manner than some of her other machinist works, Duchamp's work presents a female head surrounded by a multitude of objects and gadgets. Objects float around the head of a female, presumably Suzanne Duchamp, known from her hairstyle; some objects are representative of nature such as a sprig of leaves, a bird and moth, and her face, and others are representative of artificial, man-made innovations, such as the lamppost and scissors.[62] Almost all of these elements, including the female head, are seemingly unfinished, reminiscent of ephemeral mental images that disappear before they are fully realized. It is also significant that most of these objects are conveyed only

[59] See Bohn's essay to find a closer investigation of Picabia's painting a young nude girl, 673-77.
[60] Bohn, 675.
[61] Though there is no documentation that Suzanne Duchamp attended feminist meetings or functions, Camfield speculates in his "Suzanne Duchamp and Dada in Paris," that she identified with the women's movement that was occurring in France during her creation of this work. He also mentions that this work could suggest Duchamp's stance on abortion rights, though as Hemus points out, this is purely speculation.
[62] The lamppost became a symbol of modernity and Haussmann's new Paris in the nineteenth-century, and thus draws up certain ideas of progress, modernization, intellect, etc.

through their silhouette, so that they are indexical of the objects. The composition itself consists of no color and seemingly erased curvilinear shapes that has no obvious purpose. The end of a trumpet appears to be shoved in the area where the female's mouth should be, disallowing her right to speak, perhaps evoking a threatened state in which the viewer is prompted to empathize. At the same time, the way in which the objects circulate around the female's head as opposed to her body signifies introspection and intelligence.

The unfinished quality and scattered words within Duchamp's *Give me the right right to life*, as opposed to Picabia's detailed and finely-rendered portraits, do not satisfy a voyeuristic viewer whose intentions are to consume an object in its totality. Similarly, the text, "Give me the right right to life" is scattered throughout, and the viewer must piece it together like a puzzle in order to find their meaning. Duchamp's portrait instead insists that the viewer *works* to understand its meaning. In addition, with one eye, the female looks directly back at the viewer, putting the viewer on display and causing an awareness of the gaze. Returning to Duchamp's *Un et une menacés* therefore causes one to consider that their viewership might be the cause of the threatened state of the male and female figure, prompting the viewer to acknowledge his/her gaze and the agency of looking. In closely analyzing Suzanne Duchamp's *Give me the right right to life*, as well as other authoritative figures within her machine aesthetic such as the paragonal male and female figure in *Un et une menacés,* one is disallowed the type of spectatorship that Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia promote; Duchamp's works insists that the viewer participate in a more mutual relationship through the enigmatic elements, commanding text, and gaze of the figure.

CONCLUSION

Though the machine aesthetic was a method to express objective, masculine, impersonal, and libidinous energies in the works of Francis Picabia and Marcel Duchamp, Suzanne Duchamp's anthropomorphic mechanomorphs negate what has formed into a generalized and masculinized definition of the machine aesthetic of Dada as a whole. This revives the opinion shared by the art critics and writers of Duchamp's time, who maintained a description of her anthropomorphic mechanomorphs as intellectual, personal, expressive, and unique.

As too often occurs in scholarship, Suzanne Duchamp was omitted from a history from which she belonged. By insisting that the machine aesthetic be observed through the masculine lens of artists such as Marcel Duchamp and Picabia, literature painted a gendered and inaccurate picture of the machine aesthetic. It is appropriate that through the hindsight following one hundred years since her first attempt to use the machine aesthetic, the definition of the machine aesthetic is broadened to include Suzanne Duchamp's contributions. Suzanne Duchamp was not simply a supporter of her brother and husband, nor was she simply a follower of other Dada artists. Rather, her works thoughtfully depicted complex, human struggles and relationships that were appreciated by the critics of her time. Broadening the definition of the machine aesthetic to include a more ambiguous understanding not only allows for a fuller account of the machine aesthetic, but it makes it more interesting. Suzanne Duchamp's contribution tells us that machine aesthetic as understood by previous art historians needs redefinition; one that profoundly ascribes human attributes (not just actions) to machine imagery. Picabia and Marcel Duchamp's machine

aesthetic illustrates anthropomorphic qualities within the machine, while Suzanne Duchamp gives her machines a soul.

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FIGURES LIST

Figure 1. Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending A Staircase, No. 2,* 1912-13. The Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Figure 2. Jules Etienne Marey, *The Human Body in Action*, c. 1870. Scientific American, 1914.

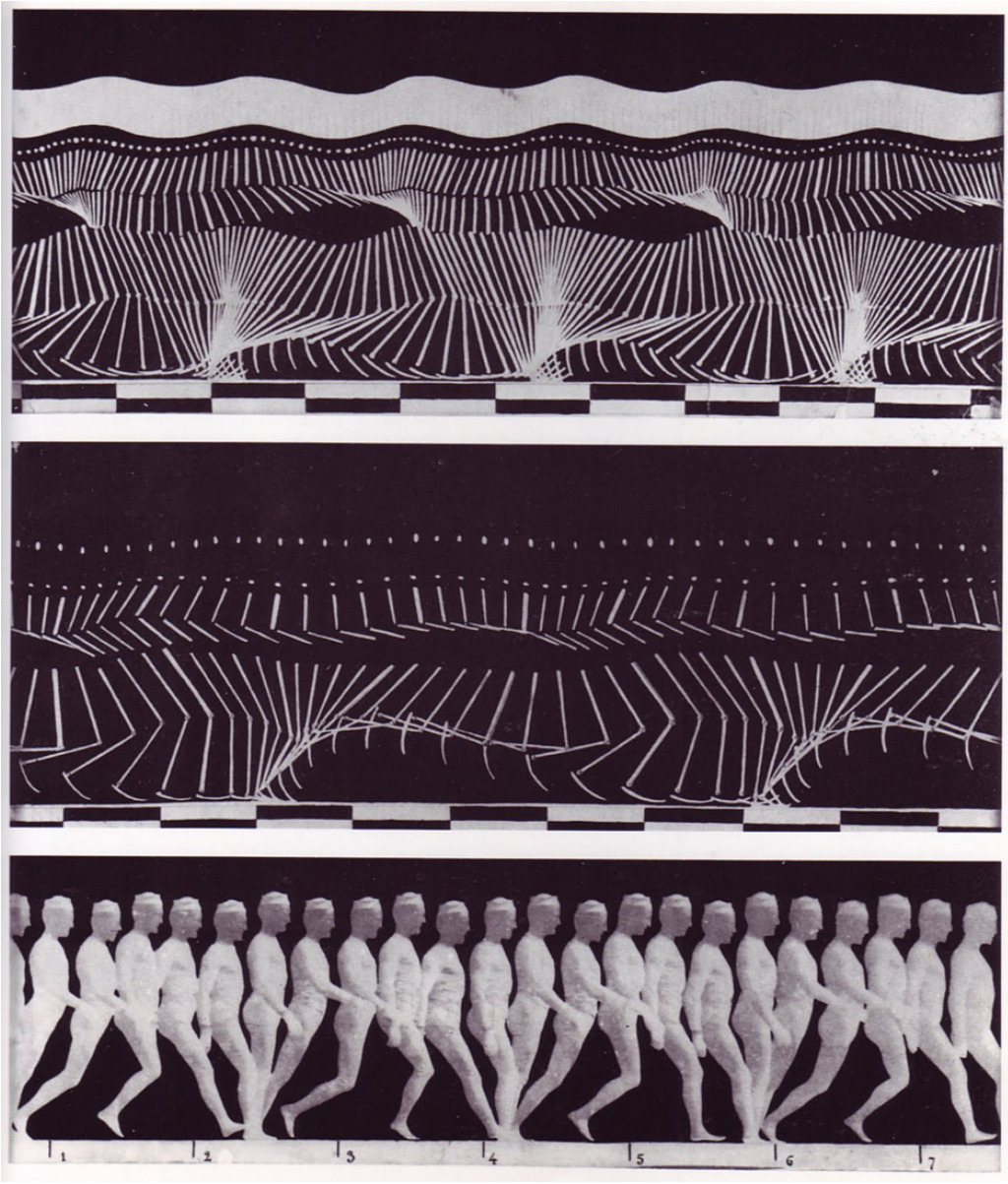

Figure 3. Francis Picabia, *Fille née sans mere* (*Girl Born Without a Mother*), 1916-17. The Scottish National Gallery.

Figure 4. Suzanne Duchamp, *Un et une menacés (A Male and Female Threatened),* 1916. Private Collection. Courtesy of Ruth Hemus, *Dada's Women,* 2009.

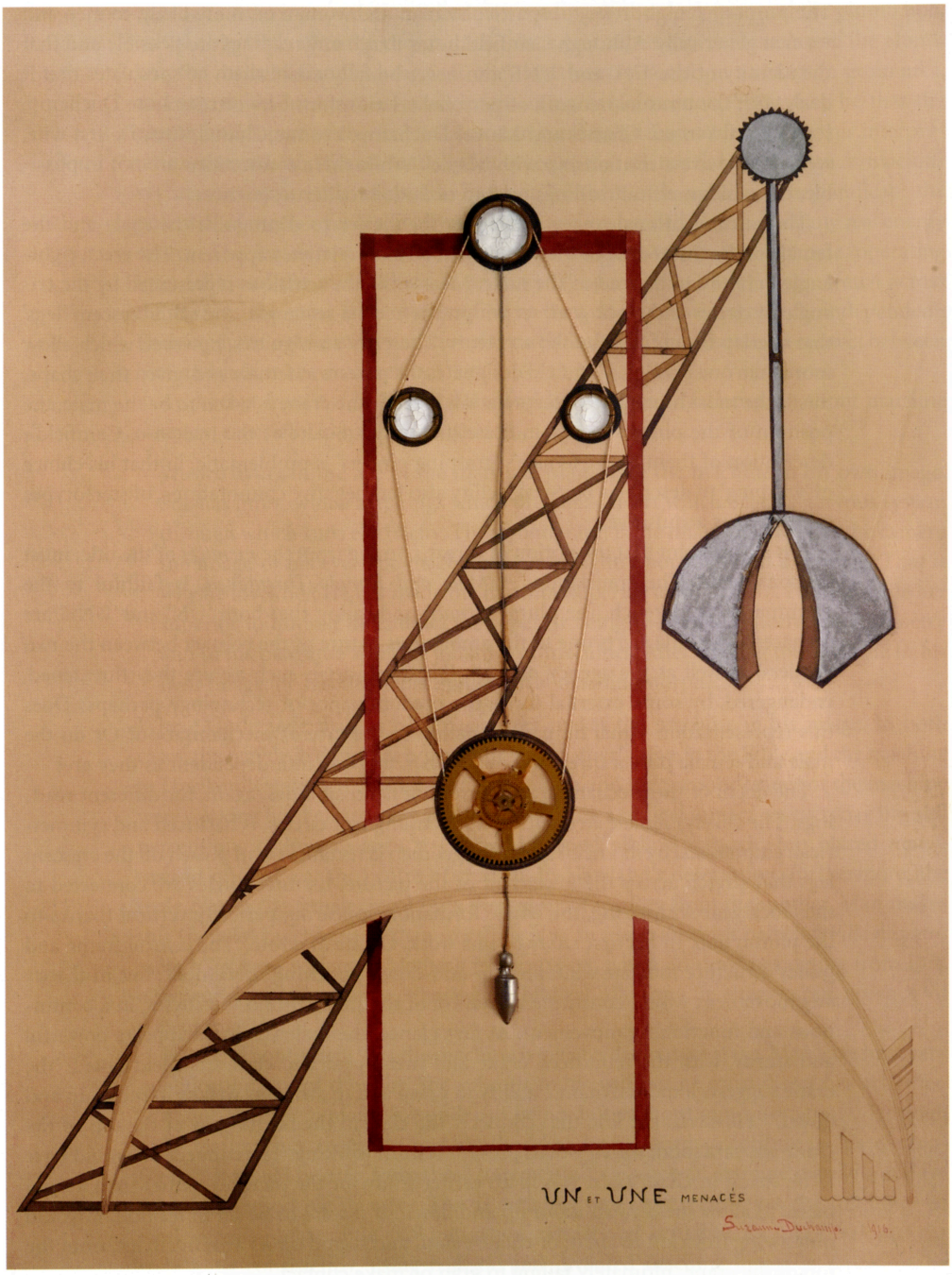

Figure 5. Suzanne Duchamp, *Étude pour Un et une menacés*, 1916. Courtesy of William A. Camfield, *Tabu Dada: Jean Crotti and Suzanne Duchamp, 1915-1922,* 1983.

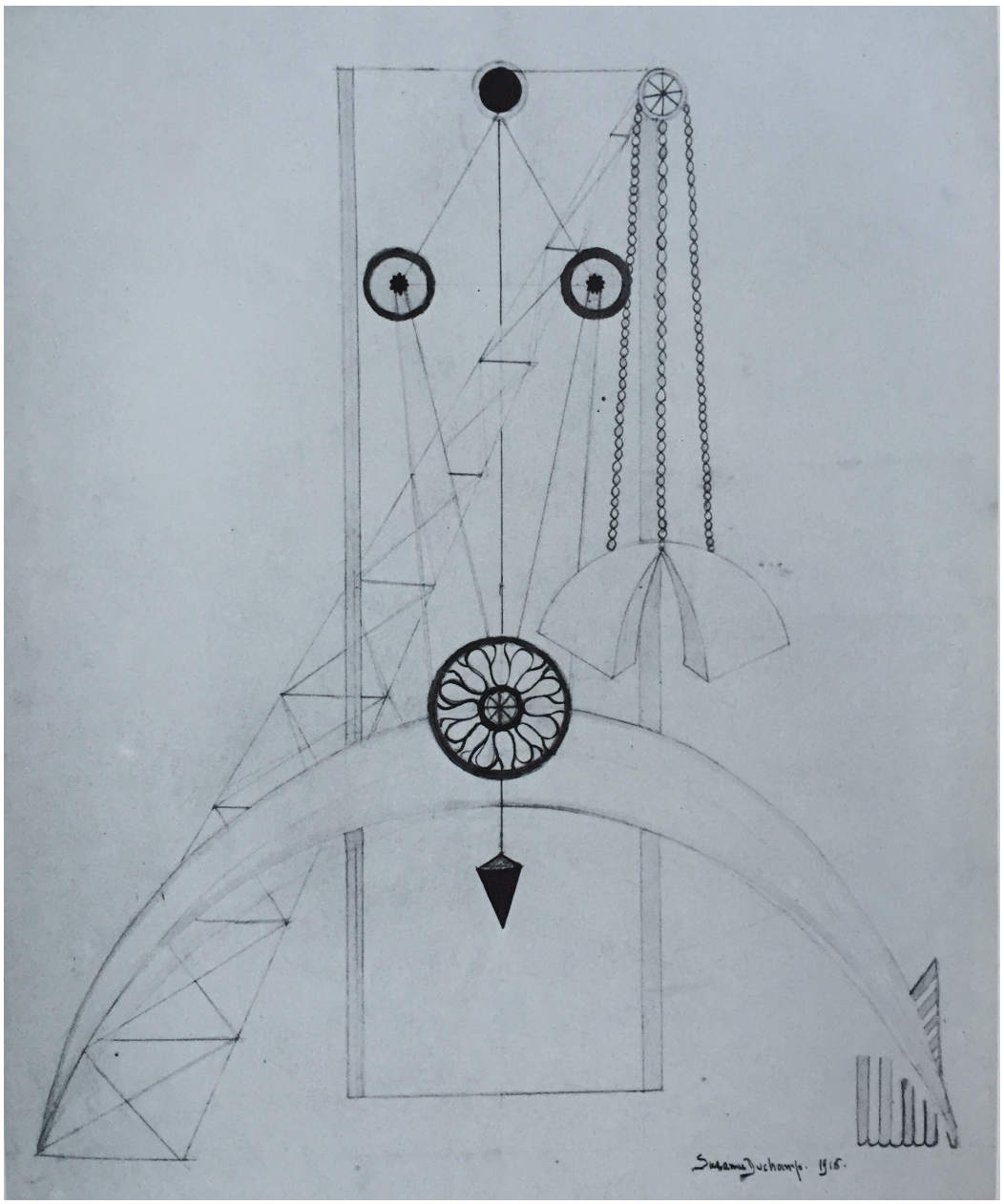

Figure 6. Marcel Duchamp, *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)*, 1915-1923. The Philadelphia Museum of Art.

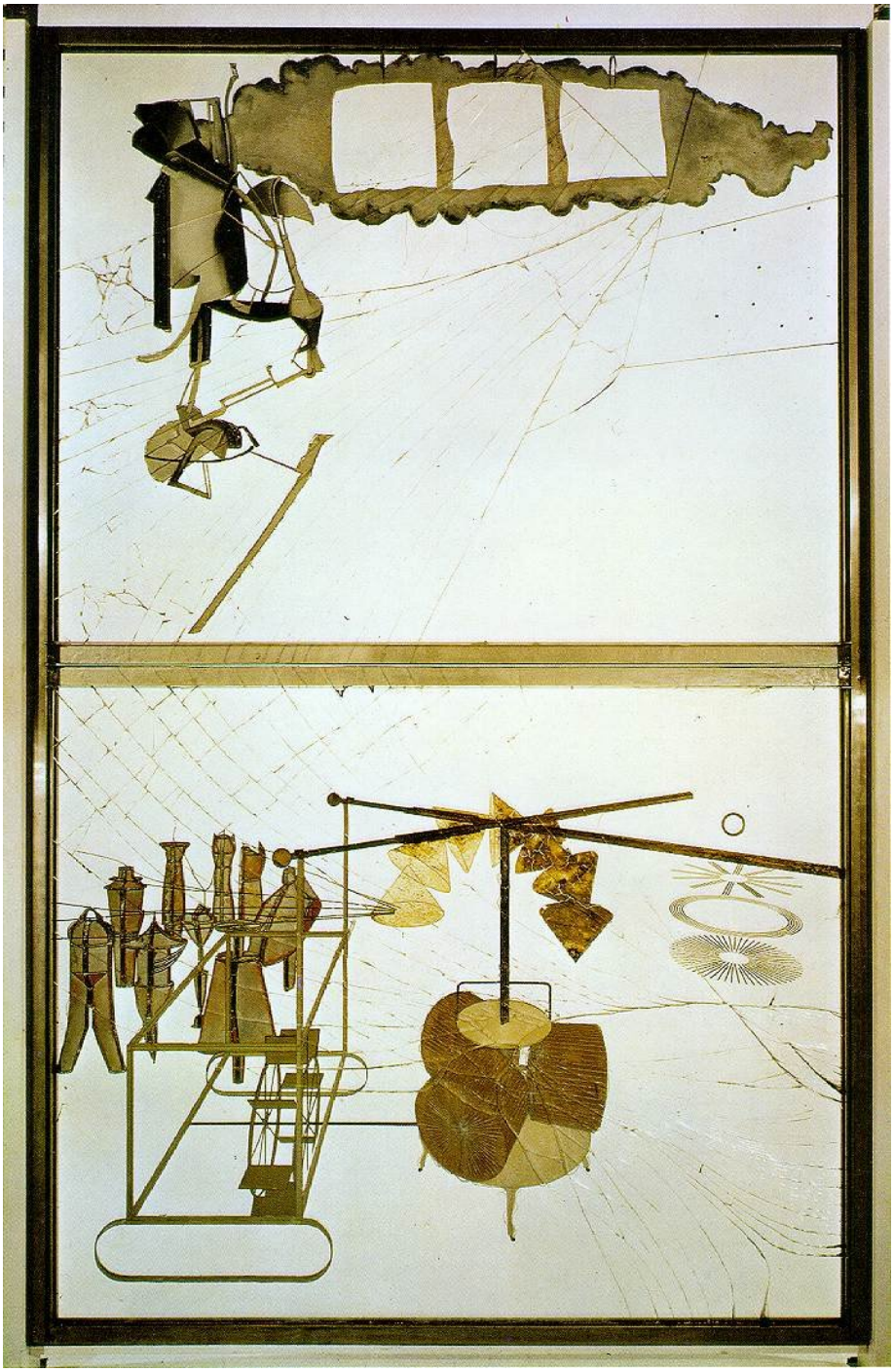

Figure 7. Francis Picabia, *Machine Tournez Vite* (*Machine Turn Quickly*), 1916-18. Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.

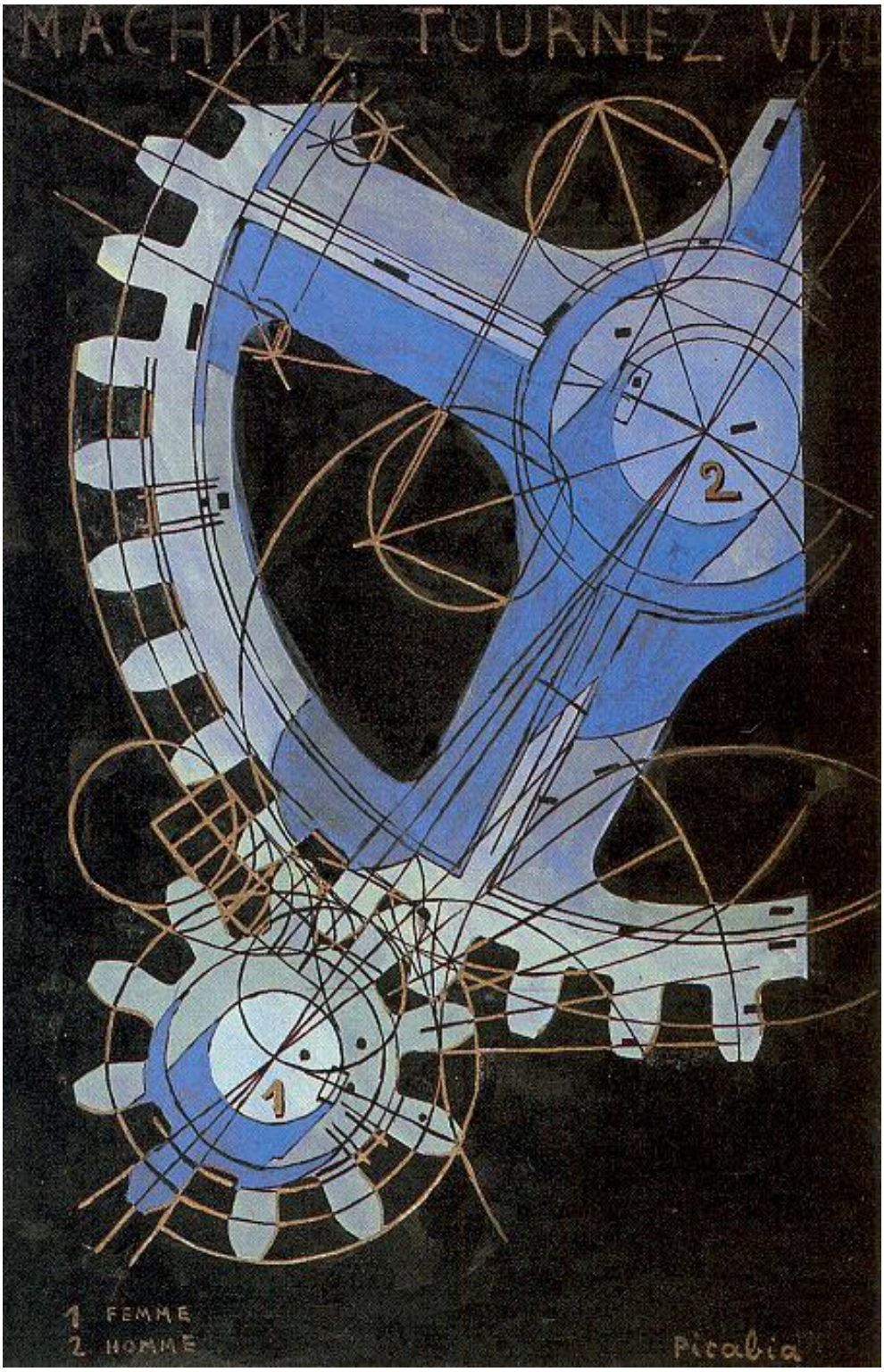

Figure 8. Suzanne Duchamp, *Séduction,* 1920. Courtesy of Ruth Hemus, *Dada's Women,* 2009.

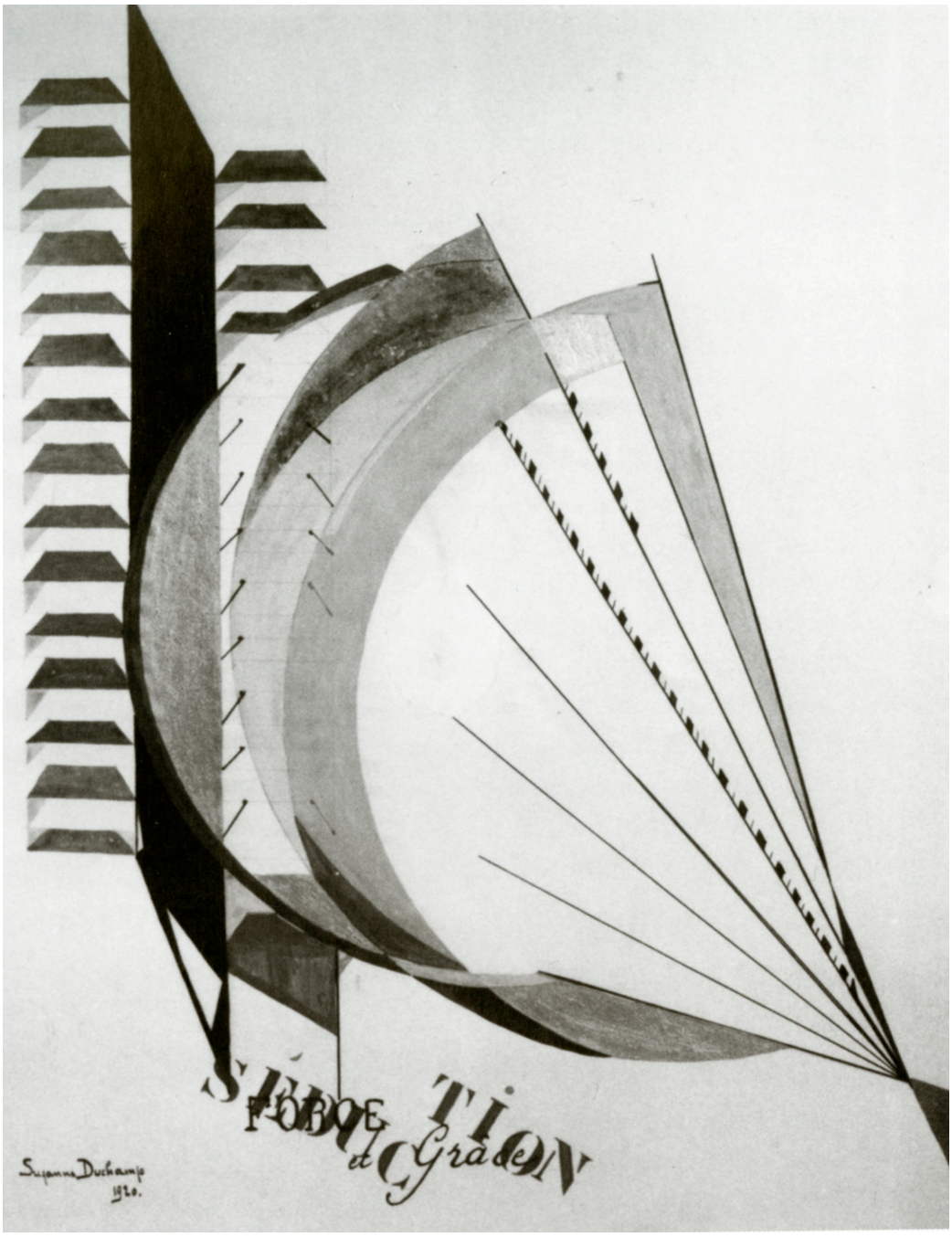

Figure 9. Francis Picabia, *Voila Elle* (*Here She Is*), published in 291, 1915. The Metropolitan Museum Library.

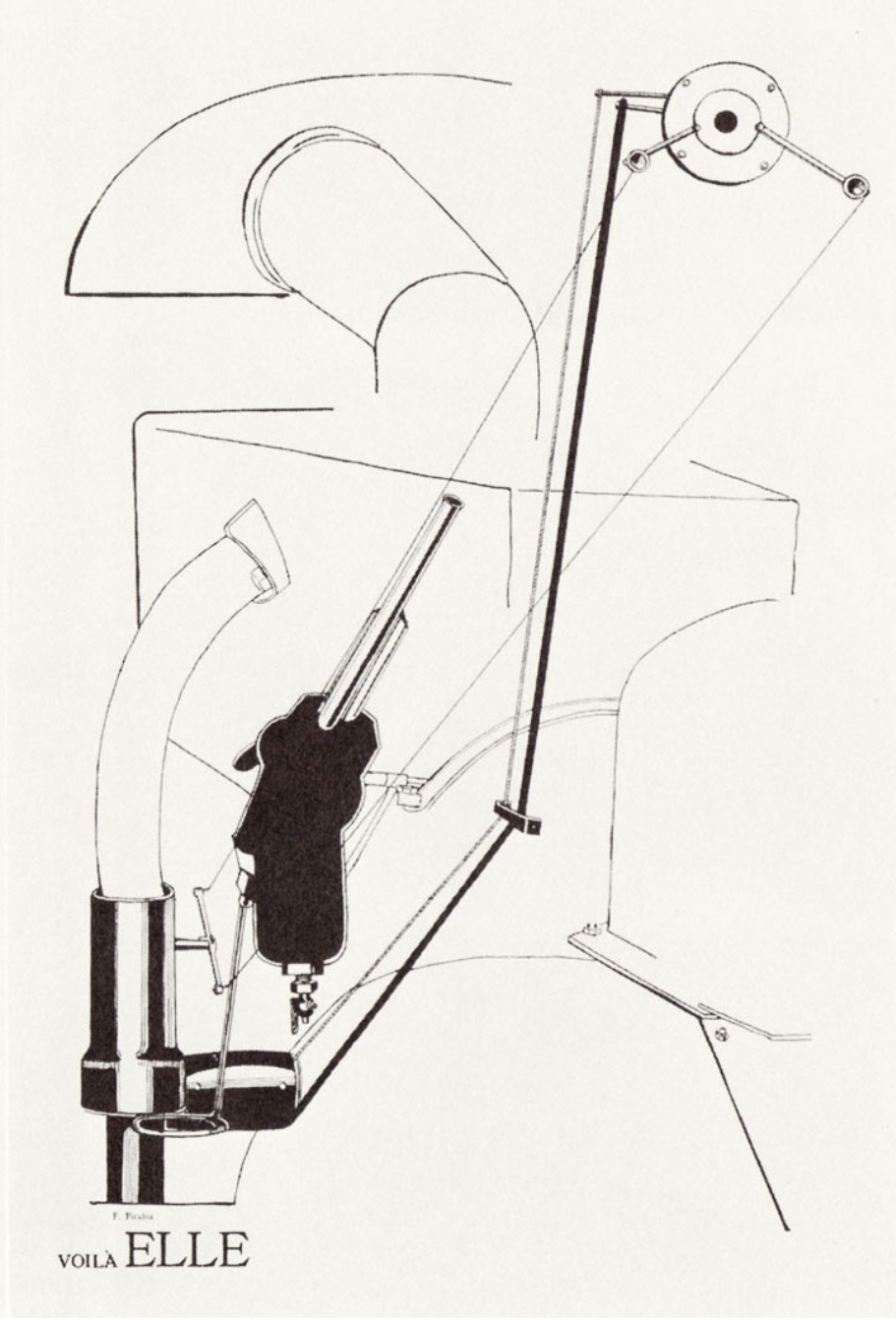

Figure 10. Suzanne Duchamp, *Le Ready-made malheureux Marcel (Marcel's Unhappy Readymade),* 1920. Courtesy of Archives Dada.

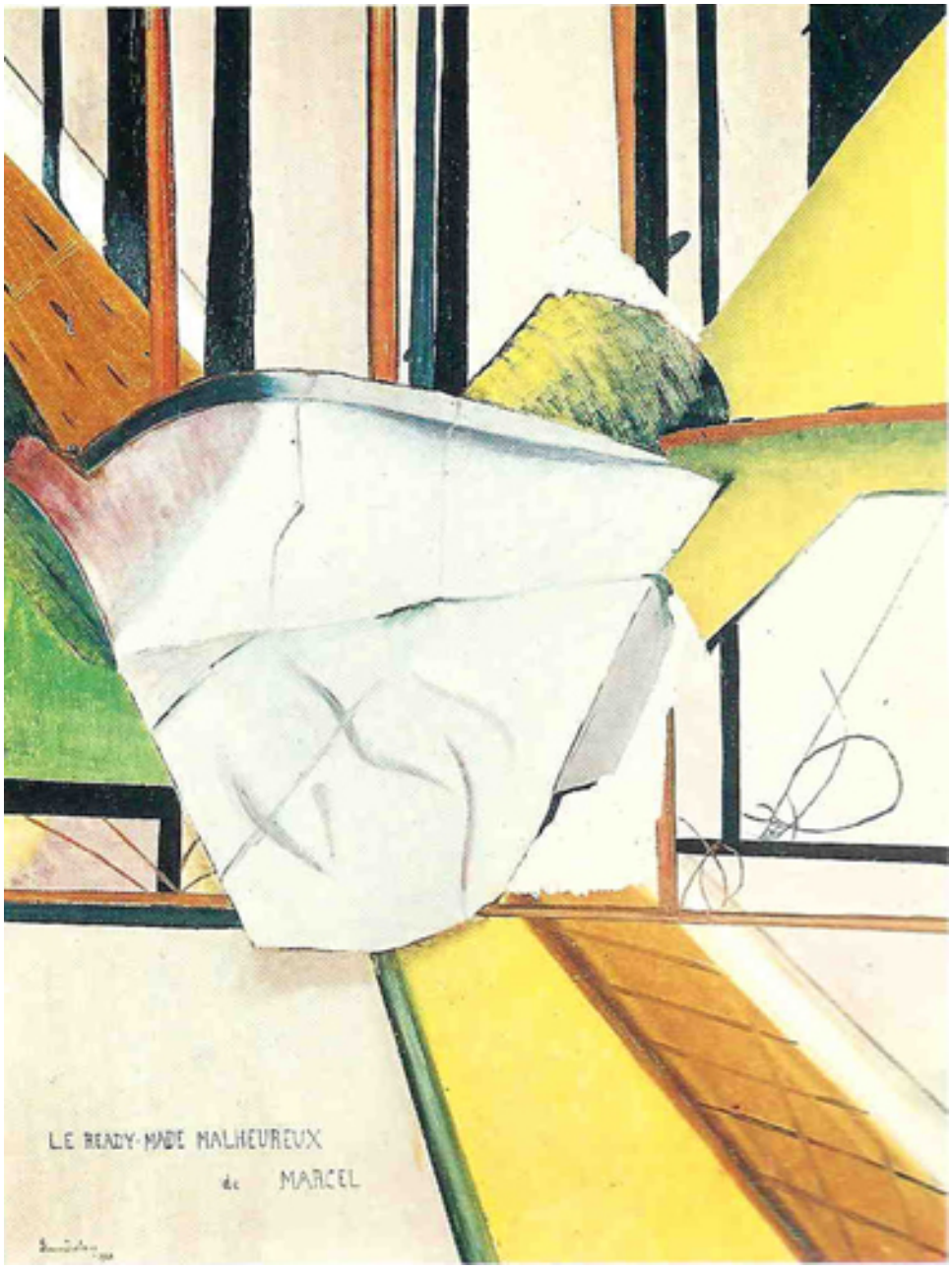

Figure 11. Suzanne Duchamp, *Usine de mes pensées (Plant My Thoughts),* 1920. Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.

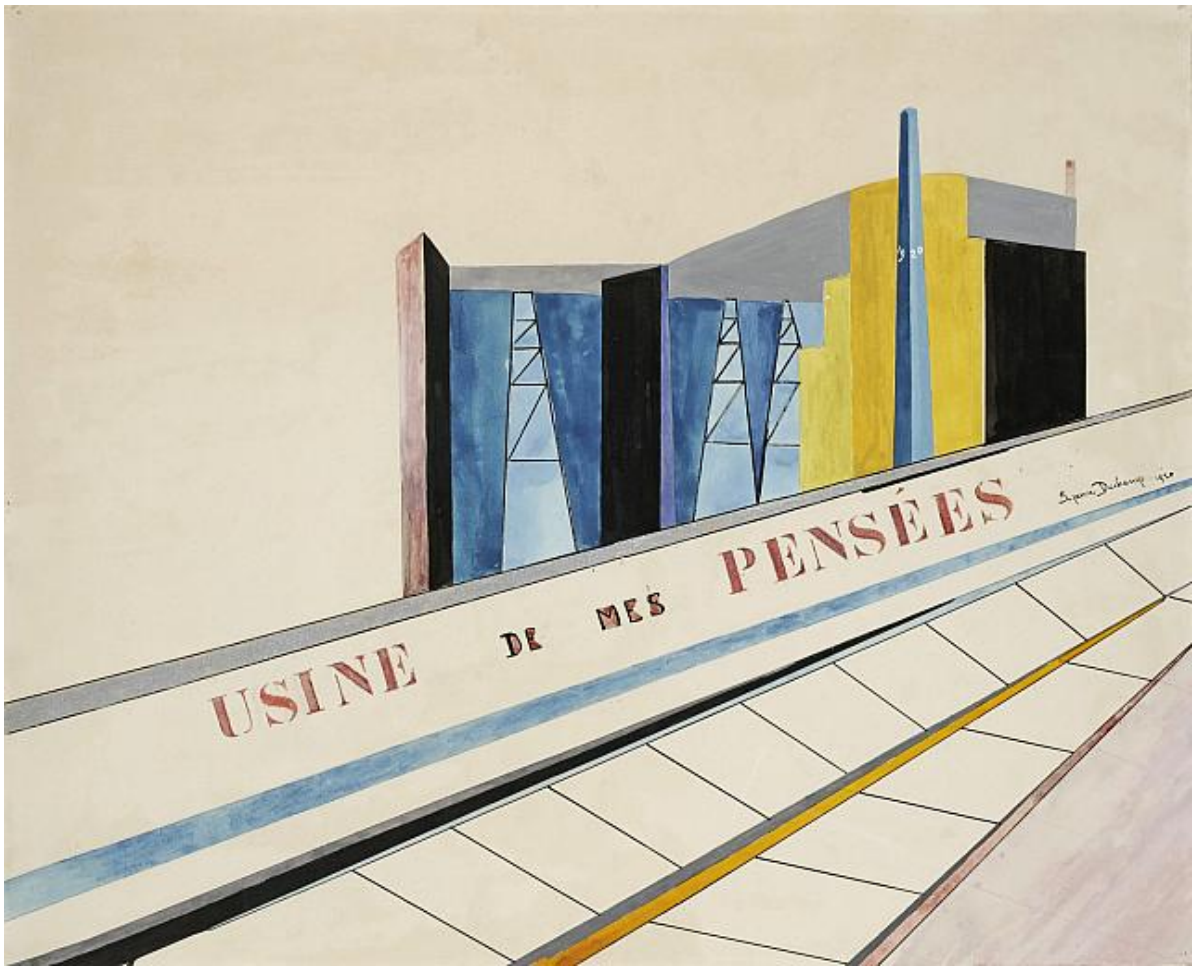

Figure 12. Suzanne Duchamp, *Fabrique de joie (Joy Factory),* 1920. Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.

Figure 13. Suzanne Duchamp, *Solitude entonnoir (Funnel of Solitude),* 1921. Courtesy of Ruth Hemus, *Dada's Women,* 2009.

Figure 14. Suzanne Duchamp, *The Radiation of Two Solitary Beings Apart,* 1916-20. Courtesy of Ruth Hemus, *Dada's Women,* 2009.

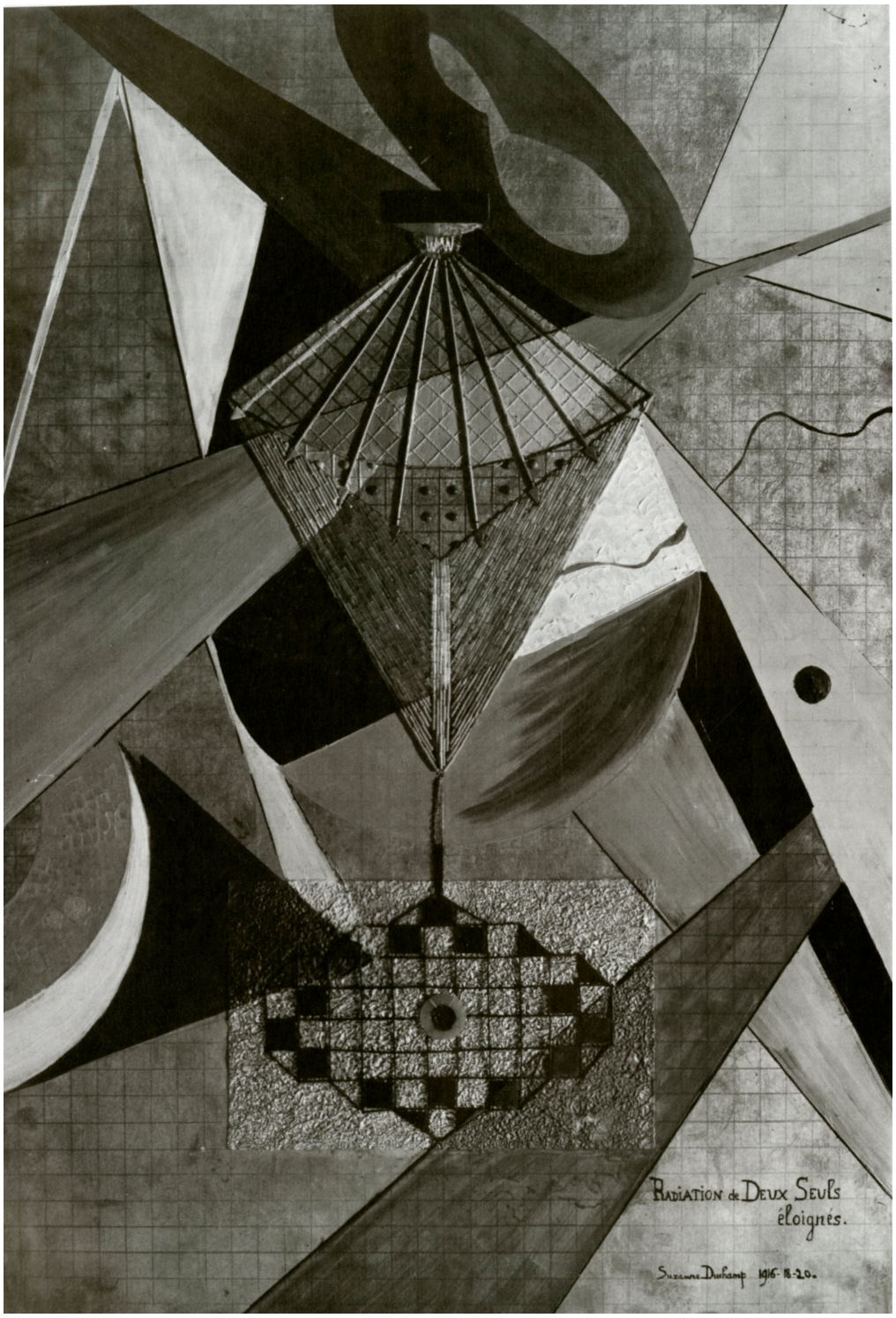

Figure 15. Suzanne Duchamp, *Scottish Espagnole,* 1920. Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.

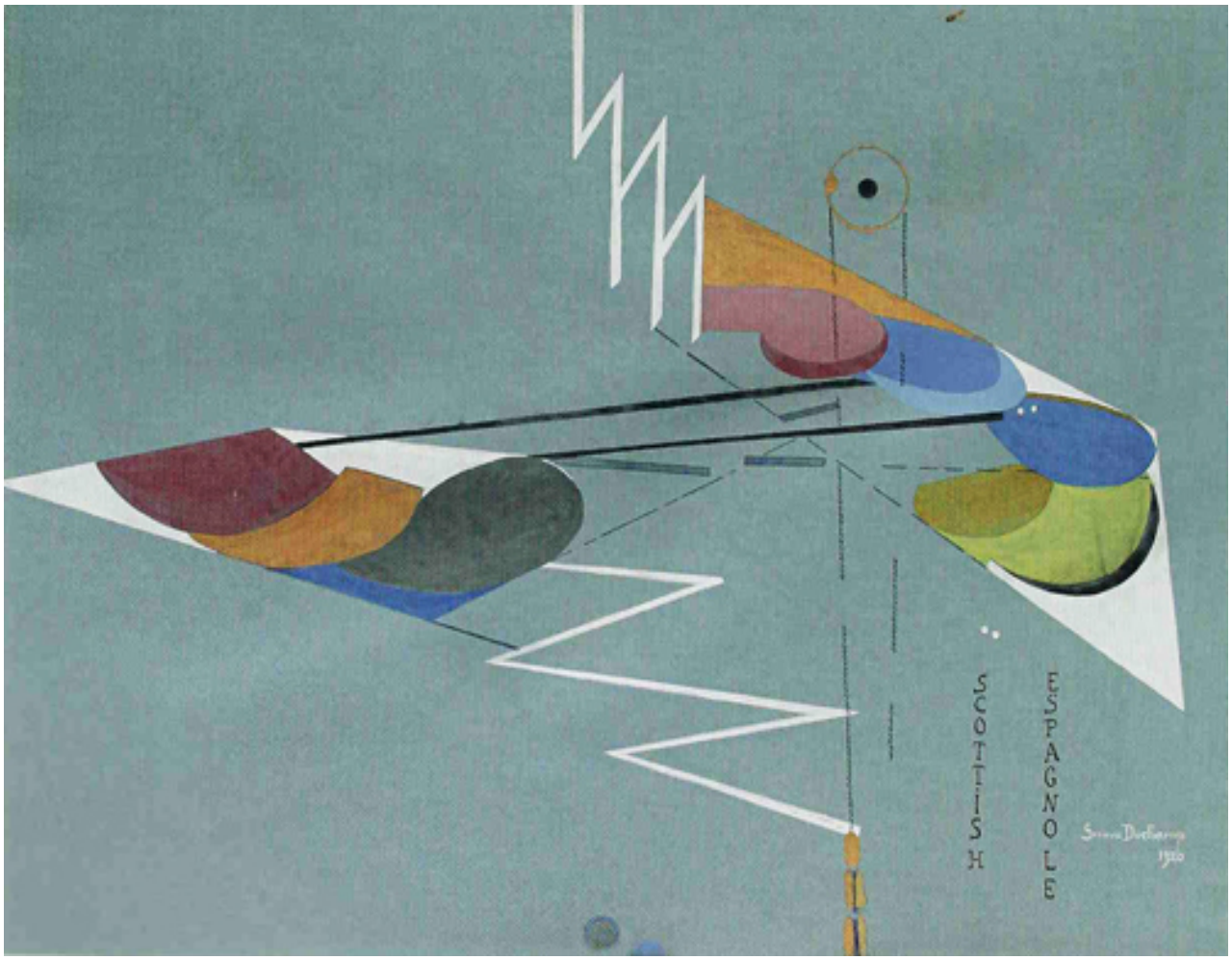

Figure 16. Robert Doisneau, *Un regard Oblique*, 1948. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Figure 17. Francis Picabia, *Portrait d'une jeune fille americane dans l'etat de nudite* (*Portrait of a Young American Girl in a State of Nudity*), 1915. *291*.

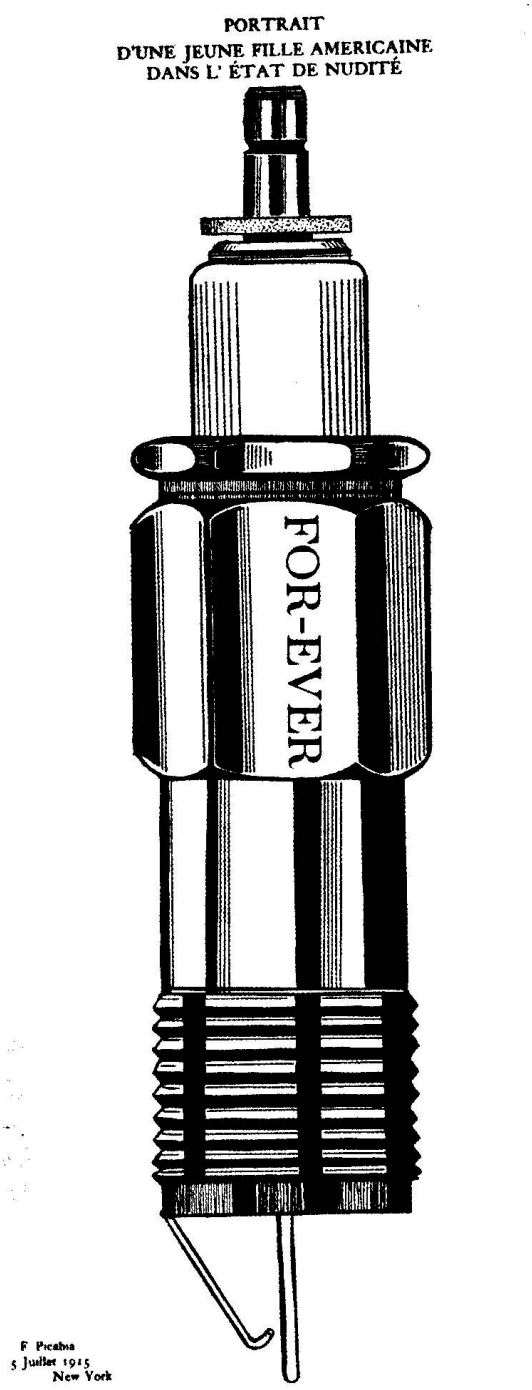

Figure 18. Suzanne Duchamp, *Give me the right right to life,* 1919. Courtesy of Ruth Hemus, *Dada's Women,* 2009.