ICI, C'EST ICI STIEGLITZ
FOI ET AMOUR

291
In October 1915, with his usual flair for publicity, Francis Picabia told the New York Tribune: "This visit to America... has brought about a complete revolution in my methods of work.... Prior to leaving Europe I was engrossed in presenting psychological studies through the mediumship of forms which I created. Almost immediately upon coming to America it flashed upon me that the genius of the modern world is in machinery and that through machinery art ought to find a most vivid expression.... The machine has become more than a mere adjunct of human life. It is really a part of human life—perhaps the very soul. In seeking forms through which to interpret ideas or by which to expose human characteristics I have come at length upon the form which appears most brilliantly plastic and fraught with symbolism. I have enlisted the machinery of the modern world, and introduced it into my studio."  

In hindsight, this revelation appears as a key moment in the development of modern art. Although the term "dada" was not coined until the following year (and in Zurich, rather than New York), Picabia’s machine drawings of 1915 (pls. 59, 62–64) announce a radically different spirit in art. In comparison, even cubism seemed old-fashioned.

The development of New York dada has been meticulously chronicled by Francis M. Naumann, William Camfield, and other scholars. Nonetheless, the relations between Picabia, Duchamp, and the Stieglitz circle bear reexamination. Picabia had first shown at 291 in 1913, capitalizing on his success at the Armory Show. In January 1915 he had his second exhibition there, immediately after the show of cubist work by Picasso and
Braque that Picabia and his wife Gabrielle Buffet had played a key role in arranging. Picabia’s exhibition was accompanied, furthermore, by a second Picasso show, comprising drawings from the collection of the critic Adolphe Basler. Picabia once again appeared to the New York public as a practitioner of cubism, broadly understood. However, the drawings published in the July 1915 issue of 291 mark a dramatic break with his earlier style.

Scholars have linked Picabia’s new work to a growing rift within the Stieglitz circle. The journal 291 was published by Marius de Zayas, Agnes Ernst Meyer, and Paul Haviland, longtime friends and supporters of Stieglitz who had come to the reluctant conclusion that he was no longer promoting new art with the requisite energy. Though the new journal borrowed the name of Stieglitz’s gallery, its editorial policy was meant to mark a departure from it, summed up in Picabia’s irreverent, seemingly non-artistic drawings. Picabia also joined with de Zayas, Meyer, and Haviland in the creation of their own exhibition space, the Modern Gallery, which opened in October 1915.

At first glance, the battle lines seem clearly drawn between the proto-dada spirit of the Modern Gallery group and the more conservative aesthetic of the original 291. But on closer examination this antithesis begins to dissolve. For one, the Modern Gallery continued the exhibition policy of 291 virtually without a change (and with an equal lack of economic success). And in 1917, when the scandalous sculpture Fountain, a newly purchased urinal, was rejected by the Society of Independent Artists, it was Stieglitz who came to Duchamp’s aid.

The allegiances and divisions of these years may have been motivated as much by personalities as by aesthetic or philosophical concerns. In 1913, when Picabia and his wife first visited New York, Stieglitz was tremendously taken with them. After their departure, he wrote a friend that "All at 291 will miss him. He and his wife were about the cleanest propositions I ever met in my whole career. They were one hundred percent purity. This fact added to their wonderful intelligence made both of them a constant source of pleasure." However, it was Marius de Zayas rather than Stieglitz who went on to forge a close friendship with Picabia, during the course of a 1914 visit to Paris. In the spring of 1915, when Picabia returned, unaccompanied, to New York, he fell into an existence that his wife described, diplomatic, as "dissipated." De Zayas, a bachelor, may have found this lifestyle more sympathetic than did Stieglitz.

Duchamp, who arrived for the first time in New York in 1915, had been a friend of Picabia since 1911. In Paris, they both belonged to the ranks of secondary Salon cubists. In the United States, however, the 1913 Armory Show had, more or less by accident, established them as the leading representatives of the Paris avant-
garde. Duchamp later described Picabia as a great "negator," who helped inspire him to break with conventional painting. The roles of leader and follower were soon reversed. Between 1911 and 1913, while Picabia continued to work in a cubist style, Duchamp moved on to what would soon become known as dada, the more objective, "machine" style of his Chocolate Grind displaced the cubist/futurist imagery of earlier pictures like Nude Descending a Staircase and The Bride. It should be said, however, that the borders between cubism and dada were far more fluid at this time than they would later appear. Americans, in particular, found cubism as bizarre and provocative as dada would strive to be.

In 1915, Picabia remained far more important in the Stieglitz circle than Duchamp. His movement away from the large, brightly colored cubist canvases exhibited at 291 to the smaller "machine" drawings executed in the months that followed echoed the evolution that had occurred in Duchamp's work two years earlier, but Picabia's shift had a greater impact on the Stieglitz circle because it occurred in front of their eyes. The "machine" drawings, which announced the emergence of New York dada, have attracted most of the attention from critics and historians, but Picabia's earlier canvases in many ways hold the key to these later drawings. To clarify the internal logic of Picabia's development is also to clarify the relationships between symbolism and modernism, cubism and dada, body and machine.

Although Picasso and Braque, the inventors of cubism, were represented by several works at the Armory Show, Duchamp and Picabia garnered the most notice. Almost immediately upon arriving in New York, in January 1913, Picabia began a series of large watercolors presenting his impressions of the city and of the transatlantic journey that had brought him there. Exhibited at 291 in March, these works received significant coverage, mostly favorable, in the New York press. Picabia returned to Paris in April, but his U.S. visit continued to exercise an important influence. Inspired by 291, he and his wife planned to launch a Paris gallery, which opened in the following January but quickly folded. New York also seems to have provoked an important shift in Picabia's style, but it is comprehensible only within the terms of his Paris works.

Dancers at the Spring and the other 1912 canvases Picabia exhibited at the Armory Show had evoked figures and landscapes in a visual language of large flat color planes with interlocking contours—a language deriving directly from Picasso's Three Women of 1908. Hanging in the Steins' salon from 1908 through 1913, the Three Women exerted an almost incalculable influence on avant-garde painting of those years, providing a model for canvases by Paris artists such as Duchamp and Fernand Léger, Russians such as Malevich, and Americans such as Morgan Russell and Max Weber. Many of these artists perceived a resemblance between Picasso's
color planes, with their curved contours, and the cylindrical forms of modern machinery. Léger and Malevich accentuated this resemblance by shading their planes so that they looked like segments of cones and cylinders. In 1912, Duchamp began to augment these shaded planes with a network of light-colored strips and lines. The figures in canvases such as The Bride and Nude Descending a Staircase seem to have been assembled from metal tubes, struts, and wires—a still-novel technology popularized by the sport of cycling. (It is no coincidence that Duchamp's first ready-made, assembled in 1913, incorporates a bicycle wheel.) Duchamp gave The Bride to Picasso in 1912, but its influence does not become visible in his work until 1913, when Picasso visits New York.

Picasso's early 1913 watercolors reveal several different styles and sources of inspiration. The linear, diagrammatic style of a small watercolor inscribed Mechanical Expression Seen Through Our Own Mechanical Expression (fig. 74) anticipates the "mechanical" drawings of the summer of 1915. At the center of the image is a chemical retort, drawn upside down (or, more likely, drawn right-side up and then inverted). It is flanked by vertical bands that seem to represent the facades of buildings—tall "slabs" like those described by the American's reviewer—punctuated by dark lozenges suggesting windows. A long diagonal indicates a street receding between the buildings. The interior of the flask is labeled "New York," and "Napierkowska" is written below it. This was the name of an exotic dancer, Stacia Napierkowska, whom Picasso had encountered during his Atlantic crossing.

The same motifs appear in Picasso's larger, more elaborate watercolors, but segregated into distinct groups. Some develop the image of the city (pls. 37, 32), depicted in a style similar to that of Picasso's 1912 canvases. Others celebrate Picasso's memory of Stacia Napierkowska (pl. 33) and his impressions of African-American entertainers.14

Just as Picasso's 1912 visit to Spain had provided the source material for the large canvases shown at the Armory, so too his "impressions" of New York were enlarged and developed in the canvases executed after his return to Paris. The three canvases exhibited at 391 in January 1915—I See Again in Memory My Dear Udnie, This Has to Do With Me (pl. 64), and Comic Wedlock (pl. 60)—were thus, in effect, returning to their point of origin.15 All three of these display a marked change in style from his earlier Paris canvases. The broad color planes with interlocking contours, derived from Picasso, are increasingly supplemented with undulating tubes, strips, and bands derived from Duchamp. Camfield notes that the "membranellike forms
and the pendulant biomorphic shape" in the upper part of *I See Again* in *Memory My Dear Udnie* seem to be modeled directly on *The Bride*. But if *The Bride* provided the model for Picabia's "half-visceral, half-animated" forms, Picabia goes beyond Duchamp in discarding the brownish fug of 1910–1911 cubism in favor of "icy colors" suggesting the shimmer of "finely rolled steel." In this respect, as Camfield observes, the coloring of Picabia's new paintings anticipates the deliberately impersonal finish of his later "machinist paintings."16

This impersonal finish, however, is combined with forms of alarming sensuality. What is expressed in mechanical terms, here, is the spectacle of the female body in motion, and the male paroxysm induced by that spectacle. Picabia's representation of sexuality as a mechanical phenomenon seems to have been shaped not only by Duchamp but also by writers such as Alfred Jarry and Remy de Gourmont. Linda Dalrymple Henderson has noted the widespread influence of Gourmont's *Physique de l'amour: Essai sur l'instinct sexual*, which was published in 1903 and had gone through ten editions by 1912.17 Combining Darwinian determinism with the imagery of the industrial revolution, Gourmont strips away romance and sentiment to present sexuality as nothing more than a mechanical process, driven by the inexorable laws of reproduction. Discussing certain primitive species, he writes that "the female... is the machine and has to be wound up to go; the male is merely the key."18 Elsewhere he insists that "coupling is not fecundation; it is merely the mechanism," and that the accord between male and female sex organs is "mechanical and mathematical."19 Such views were parodied by Alfred Jarry, whose "supermale," capable of incessant, machinelike intercourse, could find a suitable partner only in a machine.20

Individual elements in Picabia's paintings, such as the projecting coil at the lower left of *I See Again* in *Memory My Dear Udnie*, suggest the masculine role as a key or trigger for sexual activity. But the proliferation of curvilinear and labial elements in Picabia's elaborate mechanisms clearly marks them as feminine. The machine style of these years is neither neuter nor inanimate; on the contrary, it is strongly gendered and very much alive. The three large canvases, with their feverish colors and wanton curves, must have made an overwhelming impression in the claustrophobic setting of 291, but the reviews were curiously indifferent.

The reviewer for the *New York Tribune* described Picabia's pictures as "mere riddles of fantasticality," which might "safely be left to the people who care to give their time to that sort of thing." (A month earlier, the same reviewer had dismissed the Picasso-Braque show at 291 by noting, "for the benefit of people who are interested in that sort of thing, that it is just the sort of thing in which they will be interested.")21 The *New York Herald*, which had praised Picabia's 1913 watercolors, focused on This
60. FRANCIS PICABIA

Comic Wedlock, 1914

EXHIBITED AT 291, 1915
61. FRANCIS PICABIA
This Has to Do with Me, 1914
EXHIBITED AT 291, 1915
Has to Do With Me: "Here Mr. Picabia, a leader of the new art, describes himself by a lot of curves, angles and streaks that look as if they might be the result of a collision between an aeroplane, an automobile and a submarine."12

The reviewer for American Art News professed to be mystified by Picabia's "combination of colored flat, curved and round surfaces, with a few odd bands and bars thrown in," but was evidently discomfited by the "souvenir of his dear ——, who produced apparently a most extraordinary effect upon him."13 (Whatever Udnie meant, the word was evidently not fit to print in a family publication.) In the New York Times, Elizabeth Carey, who had responded favorably to the preceding exhibition of Picasso and Braque, denounced Comic Wedlock and I See Again in Memory My Dear Udnie as "unpleasant arrangements of strangely sinister abstract forms that convey the sense of evil without direct statement."14 Though slightly Victorian, this seems like an accurate description of what the artist was trying to achieve in his pictures. (Later in his career, Picabia abandoned the veil of abstraction and based much of his work directly on images borrowed from pornographic magazines.)

Despite these negative reviews, when Picabia returned to New York, in May 1915, his first impulse seems to have been to continue working with sexual-mechanical imagery of the same feminine character. Soon after his arrival, he executed the drawing Girl Born Without a Mother (fig. 75), which was promptly reproduced in the fourth issue of 291. As Camfield observes, the drawing reproduces the key elements of I See Again in Memory My Dear Udnie, but strips the composition down to its mechanomorphic essentials.15 The masculine elements of the projecting springs are more prominent than in the painting, but they are still set within a context of rounded, feminine forms. The drawing clearly functioned as a kind of talisman for the 291 circle. Three months later, in the September-October issue of 291, Paul Haviland used its title to set the keynote for a text on the "age of the machine," writing that man loved the machine because it was his "daughter born without a mother."16

Picabia deployed a similar arrangement of forms in Voilà Elle, published in the November issue of 291. Picabia's drawing appeared in tandem with Elle, a drawing-poem by de Zayas modeled on Apollinaire's calligrammes, and the two works were exhibited together at the Modern Gallery in the same month (fig. 76). The two works are closely linked in both form and content.17 Both are organized around a strong vertical axis, set against curvilinear forms inclining to the right. Naumann notes that de Zayas' poem envisions woman as "a mindless being," propelled by the quest for "extremes of pleasure,"
while Camfield identifies the apparatus of Picabia’s drawing as “an automatic love machine.” The masculine pistol at left (in the same position as the springs of Girl Born Without a Mother) is clearly designed to activate the feminine pipes and cylinders around it.28

The drawings by Picabia and de Zayas appeared on the two inside pages of the November 291, while the front and back covers were devoted to cubist violins by Braque and Picasso, which had been exhibited at 291 in January 1915 (pls. 57, 58).29 The juxtaposition of the two pairs of images is no less significant than the pairing between Picabia and de Zayas. The metaphorical comparison between the curves of a violin, guitar, or mandolin and the curves of the female body is constantly repeated in 1910–1914 cubism. In this sense, Braque and Picasso’s images provide an important antecedent for the image of the body as a sexual apparatus. As Braque himself noted, he had been drawn to musical instruments as subject matter because “one brings them alive by touching them.”29 Furthermore, the wires descending from the nails at the upper right of Picabia’s drawing are clearly borrowed from the string and nail at the upper right of Picasso’s violin.30
In fact, the relationship between Picabia and de Zayas, on one hand, and Picasso and Braque, on the other, extended well beyond the pages of the November 291. Picasso’s summer 1912 drawing of a head (pl. 54), exhibited at 291 in January 1915, seems to have provided the model for de Zayas’ caricature of Stieglitz (pl. 34), which appeared on the cover of the first issue of 291 in March 1915. In both images, a strict vertical axis sets off a trapezoidal facial plane, tilting to the right; however, de Zayas revises Picasso’s composition by placing the narrow end of the trapezoid at upper right instead of lower left. Similarly, Picabia’s drawing Fantasy, published in the December 1915 issue of 291 (fig. 77), echoes the structure of several fall 1912 still lifes by Picasso, with a conspicuous circle at top center set against a scaffolding of short verticals and long horizontal, traversed by a prominent diagonal accent (fig. 78). These Picassos were not exhibited in New York, but Picabia might well have seen them in Paris before his departure.\(^{33}\)

The critical question is not whether Picasso and Braque’s work of 1912–1913 provided a model for this or that particular drawing by Picabia, but whether it contributed in a more fundamental way to the new machine style of 1915. Conventional histories often set up a simple antithesis between cubism as an “artistic” style and dada as an “anti-art” style. But this antithesis obscures the extent to which cubism itself was regarded as an anti-art style. The first examples of dada “machine” drawing, it might be argued, are to be found in 1912–1913 cubism. As Camfield has noted, when Braque’s Violin: “Mozart/Kubelick” was exhibited at the Armory Show, it provoked a cartoon parody depicting it as “a fanciful machine two years in advance of Picabia’s droll contraptions.” Similarly, the humorist Gelett Burgess contributed a “Nonsense Machine” of spools, wires, and cogs to a March 1913 exhibition satirizing the Armory Show.\(^{33}\) The hard-edged, inorganic geometry of cubism clearly seemed “mechanical” to contemporary viewers.\(^{34}\) And the rectilinear forms of 1912–1913 cubism seemed even more “mechanical” than the curved forms of 1908–1909.

To this extent, it seems significant that a critical mass of 1912–1913 pictures by Picasso and Braque remained on hand at 291 when Picabia arrived there in May 1915. It may have been the encounter with these pictures that provoked his shift from the organic, curvilinear style of his early paintings to the inorganic, rectilinear style that suddenly emerges in his work of 1915.
The first examples of this new style are the machine drawings published in the July-August issue of 291: metaphorical portraits of Stieglitz (pl. 59), de Zayas (pl. 64), Haviland, an unnamed "young American girl in a state of nudity" (pl. 62), and Picabia himself (pl. 63). These were the first individualized "portraits" that Picabia had created in several years. Picabia was probably familiar with the abstract caricatures that de Zayas had published in 1914 in Camera Work and Les Sourées de Paris, but these do not seem to have provoked him to experiment with caricature before his arrival in New York. Rather, the immediate stimulus for his experiment in this new genre was the appearance of 291 itself, which seems to have been intended (by Stieglitz, at least) as a vehicle for both satire and artistic experimentation. De Zayas' caricature of Stieglitz on the cover of the first issue (pl. 34) struck a definite satirical note, as did many of the other drawings in the first four issues.

Humor was a new artistic goal for Picabia, and the challenge of achieving it may well have sent him back to Henri Bergson's well-known essay on laughter, which, in the pages on caricature, stated that "The attitudes, gestures, and movements of the human body are laughable in exact proportion as that body reminds us of a mere machine." The mechanical does not represent the hidden truth of human existence for Bergson, as it does for Gourmont. Rather, the mechanical is the enemy of the truly human. The "living personality" is free, but it easily falls victim to habit. The essence of humor is to expose these mechanical habits that have imprisoned the self—"to bring out the element of automatism" that someone "has allowed to creep into his person." An ironic, intentionally literal reading of Bergson might thus have led Picabia to the idea of satirizing his subjects by representing them as machines.

He may also have been influenced by the technical demands of producing work for black-and-white reproduction rather than exhibition. Looking at the illustrations in books and catalogues, and the diagrams then common in magazine articles, Picabia would rapidly have realized that the technology of print reproduction required a style of hard lines and sharp contrasts rather than the delicate tints and washes of his 1913 watercolors. The heroic isolation of specific objects, such as the spark plug representing a "young American girl in a state of nudity" (pl. 62), may have been suggested by sophisticated advertisements such as Lucian Bernhard's 1914 poster of a Bosch spark plug (fig. 79). Duchamp had already demonstrated, in his Chocolate Grinder of 1914, that mechanical subject matter and a style of crisp mechanical precision could provide a
substitute for traditional forms of pictorial symbolism. Yet it was Picabia's "object portraits" that had the greatest historical impact as a model for artists such as Max Ernst. What made them such a potent example was Picabia's combination of machine imagery with the new pictorial syntax that had emerged in the 1912–1913 cubism of Picasso and Braque.

In this respect, it is the de Zayas portrait (pl. 64) that offers the clearest guide to Picabia's methods and intentions. As Camfield notes, the composition is based on a wiring diagram from a 1915 volume on The Gasoline Automobile, showing the connections among instrument panel, steering wheel, battery, headlights, spark plugs, and horn. Picabia rotates the diagram to create a more symmetrical composition, and diminishes the size of the realistic elements in relation to the wires. The found image of the wiring diagram provides a "ready-made" version of the cubist grid. It is an abstract scaffolding that can support a series of representational signs, some drawn and others written.

Thus the "realistic" images of headlights, engine manifold, steering wheel, spark plug, and corset (added by Picabia) correspond to the legible elements of Picasso and Braque's violins: f-shaped soundholes, scrolled necks, indented sides, etc. Similarly, the inscription, "De Zayas! De Zayas! Je suis venu sur les rivages du Pont-Euxin," paraphrasing Xenophon, occupies the position of the newspaper headlines frequently found in cubist papiers collés. The juxtaposition of spark plug, corset, and so forth evokes the theme of mechanical sex found in Picabia's earlier work. However, the formal language of the image as a whole is dramatically different. Compared to Picabia's 1913–1914 pictures, with their curvilinear, "feminine" forms, the de Zayas drawing seems stiffly "masculine."

This masculine character is even more pronounced in the other "portraits" of this series. For his self-portrait, inscribed "Le Saint des Saints: c'est de moi qu'il s'agit dans ce portrait" (pl. 65), Picabia selects the motif of an automobile horn, superimposed on what appears to be a piston or combustion chamber. The black and white shading of the horn reduces it to a silhouette, aligned on a vertical axis with the cutaway section of the piston. As in Picasso's 1912–1913 Violin (pl. 59), the cubist grid contracts to a self-enclosed arrangement
PORTRAIT
D'UNE JEUNE FILLE AMERICAINNE
DANS L'ETAT DE NUDITE

FRANCIS PICABIA
Portrait of a Young American Girl in
a State of Nudity
REPRODUCED IN 291, NOS. 5-6, JULY-AUGUST 1915
of vertical and horizontal lines, accented by occasional curves. The symmetrical, rectilinear character of the composition contrasts strongly with the asymmetrical, curvilinear character of the earlier This Has to Do With Me (pl. 61).

Picabia's Portrait d'une jeune fille américaine dans l'état de nudité (pl. 62) strips away even the remnants of the grid to focus obsessively on the outline of a spark plug. Gabrielle Buffet interpreted this as a generalized portrait of the "American Girl," a "kindler" of erotic "flames." William Innes Homer argued that it was, instead, the portrait of a specific individual: Agnes Meyer, whose intelligence, initiative, and wealth provided the spark that set 297 in motion. Willard Bohn combined these interpretations, arguing that the spark plug was meant to mock Meyer as a flirt or allumeuse. It cannot be said, however, that the spark plug is a conventionally feminine or seductive object. On the contrary, it resembles a kind of mechanical phallic, something that might have been invented by Jarry. Picabia seems to be suggesting that the American girl, beneath her feminine exterior, is essentially masculine or sexless.

This, at least, was the meaning that a contemporary critic garnered from the image. In October 1915, when the Modern Gallery opened, its organizers sent out copies of 297 as a kind of aesthetic manifesto. Reviewing the publication for the Evening Sun, Robert J. Cole responded irritably to Picabia's "Patent Office diagram or design of a straight cylinder with bolts and washers firmly placed. This may be intended to show that the young American girl is a hard, unchangeable creature without possibilities. If that is the meaning a good portrait of one would show the same thing clearly and with a thousand times the force." Stiffness and endurance might have been admirable characteristics in a man, but a girl was clearly supposed to be more pliable.

Phallic symbolism plays an even more important role in Picabia's Ici, c'est ici Stieglitz (pl. 59), which depicts a camera, supplemented with an automobile's gearshift and brake lever. Noting that the camera's bellows is broken, the gearshift is set to neutral, and the brake lever to park, critics have interpreted the image as a symbol of exhaustion. Wanda Corn, for instance, writes: "Representing Stieglitz as a driving and seeing machine, a visionary, Picabia also represented him as aging and exhausted, the phallic bellows of the Kodak camera having lost its erection."

The symbolism of the drawing is more complex than critics have recognized. Comparison between Picabia's drawing and its source (an advertisement for a "Vest Pocket Kodak") reveals that the scissor hinges supporting the lens plate have stretched out to twice their usual height, presumably in pursuit of the "Ideal" inscribed at the top of the drawing. The phallic symbolism of these hinges is underscored in Picabia's 1918 drawing Cantharides (i.e., "Spanish Fly"), where they
reappear, labeled "Ardor" and "Organ" (fig. 80). Evidently, the fabric bellows in ici, c'est ici Stieglitz has collapsed because it has torn loose from the unnaturally extended lens plate. This contrast between the virile lens plate and the impotent bellows may correspond to the divided assessment of Stieglitz’s achievement in an editorial by de Zayas, published in the same issue of 291. Here, de Zayas credits Stieglitz with bringing still photography "to the highest degree of perfection," but laments that he has failed in his parallel effort to improve American taste by importing "works capable of serving as examples of modern thought plastically expressed." 48

Looking back over Picabia’s development, it becomes apparent that there is something distinctly misleading about his October 1915 statement that "this visit to America” had brought about a "revolution" in his art, inspiring the idea of a new machine style. 49 The experience of New York had indeed influenced his art, but in 1913 rather than 1915. The roots of his machine style lay as much—if not more—in the French art of Duchamp, Picasso, and Braque as in the direct experience of American industry and technology. The artistic breakthrough of 1915 did not have to do with machines, per se, but with the recognition that they could be reproduced in a "masculine" language of hard-edged realism and rectilinear abstraction, instead of a "feminine" language of biomorphic metaphor and curvilinear decoration.

The machine drawings published in 291 inaugurated the most original and productive phase of Picabia’s career, extending from 1915 until roughly 1920. The first exhibition of his work in this new style took place in January 1916, not at 291, but at the Modern Gallery, founded by de Zayas, Meyer, and Haviland in collaboration with Picabia and his wife. The New York critics agreed, for the most part, that the work was amusing and even beautiful—but not art. Only Henry McBride, in the Sun, spoke out in favor of it, after some hesitation, arguing that it represented an honest expression of the industrial reality of life in New York City. 50 By this time, Picabia had left New York. Although he returned for several months in 1917, his close bond with Stieglitz was never reestablished. 51
63 FRANCIS PICABIA
The Saint of Saints/ This is a Portrait
About Me
REPRODUCED IN 291, NOS. 5-6, JULY-AUGUST 1913
DE ZAYAS! DE ZAYAS!
JE SUIS VENU SUR LES RIVAGES
DU PONT-EUXIN

F. Picabia
1915
New York

43. Elizabeth Luther Cady, "Picasso and Braque." New York Times, 24 January 1911, p. 22; and William A. Camfield, "Picasso and Braque." Art in America, 1911, p. 12. Cady's detailed review of Picasso's "Ferocious Woman" and "Ferocious Woman" was published in the New York Times, 24 January 1911, section 5, p. 11. Cady's detailed review of Picasso's "Ferocious Woman" suggests that she had studied his work not just in New York but also in Germany. She provides detailed descriptions of two 1905 paintings, Le Baptême Etienne, acquired by Alfred Flechtheim in 1910, and Braque of a Pipe, owned by Paul von Mendelssohn Bartholdy (although she calls the latter a "young girl with her head crowned with flowers").

44. As Cady notes, the inclusion of actual newspaper or wallpaper is an alternative to a painted reproduction of the same material. In Picasso's paintings we often see a bit of material representation, or else the material thing itself.

45. Cady's comment about Picasso's "Ferocious Woman" is a bit of nonsense, to stimulate our interest and to introduce a new approach. So Rodin does this, too. He alternates rough, and smooth, and hard, and soft, in a way which we have become accustomed, so that Rodin's "way" has been passed into a convention, and Picasso's "way" presently will pass into a convention.

46. Dora Vallier, "Braque, la peinture et nous, proposition d'un recueil," Cahiers d'art 10 (October 1913), 2.


**PICABIA**

Anyone writing on New York dada is profoundly indebted to the many superb publications on this subject by Francis M. Naumann and William A. Camfield. In addition, I would like to thank Charles Bock, Alejandro Munoz, and Kathleen Moeck for their indispensable assistance with research for this essay. The title of my essay is adapted with apologies from Tracy Kidder, The Soul of a New Machine, Boston, 1981.


2. As noted in Camfield 1966, 329. Max Ernst, for instance, discovered Picabia's machine drawings in 1915 and adopted them as the point of departure for his own dada drawings.

3. Helma B. Levenson, From "291" to Zurich, Am. Art hist., 1983, 133, exceptionally rejects the use of the term "dada" to describe Picabia's machine drawings of 1915, on the grounds that the Zurich dadaists would not have endorsed the machine aesthetic before 1916.


5. For a discussion of the exhibition of works from Raker's collection, see the previous essay in this volume.

6. As William Camfield notes (in Camfield 1970, 62 and 74), Stieglitz had begun to invest less energy in 1921 when the building housing it was scheduled for demolition although this was postponed. Stieglitz increasingly assumed the role of "honored sage and advisor," while initiative was taken by his younger associates, Paul Haviland, Marius de Zayas, and Agnes Meyer, who proposed the "experiment." of the journal 291 and the Modern Gallery. As Camfield says, "Without Stieglitz's approval, they might not have materialized, but he had planned neither of them, and, in a respectful way, they were critical of him." Lewis 1983, 137, suggests that Stieglitz was concerned that de Zayas might request financial support for the Modern Gallery, but this proved not to be an issue because Agnes Meyer backed the project. Lewis 1983, 137, also underscores the fact that Stieglitz's gallery was operated on a non-commercial basis, while the Modern Gallery took a ten percent commission on all sales. On the tensions between Stieglitz and de Zayas, Meyer, and Haviland, see Lewis 1983, 132–133.


8. "And understanding friend managed to save him from the barracks by entrusting him with an important mission to Cuba. He was to go by way of New York and set sail in April 1915. Meeting Marcel Duchamp and a group of old-time friends in New York, he forgot his mission and pursued his voyage no further. This total incomprehension of the exigencies of war might have turned out very badly for him if, thanks to his dissipated life in New York, he had not fallen gravely ill. He profited from a temporary discharge, which, from medical board to medical board, carried him to the end of the war. (Gabrielle Buffet-Picabia, "Some Memories of Pre-Dada: Picabia and Duchamp," in Robert Motherwell, ed., The Dada Painters and Poets: An Anthology, New York, 1951, 258.)"


10. Machine imagery first appears in Duchamp's work with his Coffee Grinder of 1911, but this is executed in a relatively painterly, "artistic" style. The Chocolate Grinder of 1914 seems to mark the first occasion in which machine imagery is combined with a clean, mechanical style.


8. As noted in Cahiers 1979, 29 and 34, Duchamp's immediate inspiration for the image of white lines on his canvases came from the motion study photographs of Étienne Jules Marey, tracing the movements of men walking or fencing while dressed in black suits with white lines painted on them. Translated onto canvas, however, these lines acquire a striking resemblance to tubular strands, wires, and wires. Marey's best-known photographs trace the movements of men walking or fencing; but it is possible that Duchamp was also familiar with Marey's studies of a man riding a bicycle. See Martin Green, Picture This: The Work of Étienne Jules Marey (1830–1904), Chicago, 1992, Figs. 116 and 147. His second of these shows a bicycle on a track stand in Marey's laboratory in 1895—an object strangely premonitory of Duchamp's first readymades.


15. Campfield 1979, 59–60, cites a letter to Stieglitz of 16 June 1913, in which Picabia says that he is working on a large painting "concentrating" the studios shown at 291. Campfield suggests that the canvas in question is either "Biographie" or "Memory of a Gone Uncle or Aunt." But it is possible that it is "The Rose to Be with Me" (p. 68), which includes intersecting stick-like forms similar to those in the spring 1913 drawing New York (Campfield 1979, fig. 76).


20. See the summary of Jerry's The Supermale in Campfield 1979, 26, n. 2. Campfield also discusses the influence on Picabia of machine imagery in the writings of Bergson, Nietzsche, and Roussel.


25. Campfield 1979, 80. Although the drawing has occasionally been placed in 1912 or 1913, Campfield argues persuasively for a 1915 dating.

26. Paul Haviland, "We are living in the age of the machine," 2017–1918, 8 (September–October 1917), 1.

27. De Zayas' drawings are sometimes entitled "Femme;" on the basis of the inscription in its upper left corner, Willard Boon, "The Abstract Vision of Marius de Zayas," Art Bulletin 62 (September 1980), 451, argues that the inscription "Femme," at lower right, should be regarded as the title, because it functions as the visual mirror image of the word "Femme" in Picasso's drawing. Boon's insightful analysis of the two works argues for a strong link between them. The November 1915 exhibition of the two works is established in a review in Arts and Decoration (November 1915). 35, cited in Naumann 1944, 62.


29. Lemons 1983, 83, states that de Zayas' original watercolor for this issue placed his own poem on the front page. Picasso and Braque on the inside, and Picabia's drawing on the back cover.


31. Braque had introduced the motif of a projecting rail and in his winter 1912–1913 canvases, Fisch and Fisher and Fish and Fisher, Picasso took to repeating it as a kind of private joke between himself and Braque. It also reappears, for instance, in his spring 1913 sketch of a guitar or cello on a table (Zervas 1977, 389).

32. Picasso's Guitar on a Table (fig. 7) belongs to Gertrude Stein and would have been visible at her rue de Fleurus salon. Campfield 1979, 66, records Picasso's contacts with Stein in spring 1912. Picabia might also have seen other works from this series, such as the drawing Black and White Guitar (B.R. 311) at Picasso's studio. William Camfield makes a telling comparison between Picabia's image and a nineteenth-century illustration of a beam steam engine (Camfield 1979, fig. 10), though it may well have been one of several multiple sources for Picabia's image, but the style of execution is closer to cubism than to nineteenth-century illustration.

33. Camfield 1979, 44, and illus. 17. Like Marius de Zayas, Gébriel Burgess was both a humorist and a student of cubism. The invention of the word "blurb" (and numerous other nonce terms), he was also the author of an article on "The Wild Men of Paris," published in The Architectural Record 27 (May 1912), 400–414, describing his visits, in 1912, to the studios of Picasso, Braque, Matisse, Derain, and other avant-garde painters.

34. The analogy between machine parts and the curved forms of 1914–1915 cubism first becomes explicit in the early "rubber" canvases by Fernand Léger, such as his 1915–1916 Nu au Bateau, and in 1912–1913 pictures by Kasimir Malevich, such as Taking the Row.

35. It is questionable whether the cubist Femme Fille of 1912, reproduced in Francis Picabia, ed., Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, 1964, 7, pl. 22, should be regarded as a portrait. Beyond this, it may be necessary to go back to the Espagnole of 1902 (Camfield 1979, fig. 1) to find a portrait by Picabia.

36. See Boon 1980.
32. Leasens 1933, 128.
33. See, for instance, the poem-drawing Flirt by de Zayas and Agnes Meyer, in the second issue, and the drawing of a "Cop Cauldron" by Edward Steichen, in the third issue. These stand in marked contrast to the texts accompanying them, which are often sentimental or just plain sappy. Bohn 1986, 449, also links Picabia's "humorous" drawings with Flirt.
34. Henri Bergson, "Laughter," 1920, translated in Wylie Sypher, ed., Comedy, Garden City, 1956, 79. Caricature is discussed on pages 74–79. Bergson's relevance to Picabia's machine imagery was first noted in Camfield 1956, 31. Bergson's study was clearly familiar to the Stieglitz circle, since an excerpt from it (although only concerning artifice in a very general sense rather than humor) was published in Camera Work 37, as noted in Camfield 1959, 53.
36. Buffet–Picabia 1931, 253. It seems to have been the first time that the "Division portrait s" of Picasso's "subject portraits" are depicted "with the precision and relief of a mail order catalogue, with no attempt at aesthetic expression. They are distinguished from catalog descriptions only by their isolation and by the intentions with which they are charged." Leasens 1933, 33, discusses the increasing use of diagrams in the journal in the 30s.
37. Camfield 1956, 355 and fig. 12.
38. In conjunction with the phrase "Jeans venant les rivages du Pont-Neuf," the exclamation "De Zayas, De Zayas," seems like a reference to the Greek orchestras. Jean Hubert Martin, "Ses tableaux sont peints pour rencontrer et non pour prouver," in Paris 1976, 40. 41. Demonstrates that this and other gnomic phrases in Picabia's machine drawings were taken from a list of Latin and other foreign phrases in the Petite Larousse. It is possible that the concept inserted in Picabia at the upper left of his image was inspired by the "realistic" drawing of a woman, from an advertisement, that appears in Picasso's paper collec de Bon Marché (D.8, 575), of early 1913.
40. Robert J. Cole, Evening Sun, 12 October 1915, 89, cited in Camfield 1959, 81. In an earlier passage of the review, not cited by Camfield, Cole writes, "From 290 Fifth Avenue comes a sheaf of large unbound papers containing many words about art, many words that evidently meant something to the men that made them and finally a genuine beautiful and moving picture, the Steerage," by Alfred Stieglitz published in 251, no. 7, 81. It is alive, it is true, it speaks to the mind and to the soul.


47. The original advertisement for a "West Pocket Kodak" is reproduced in Homer 1975, fig. 6. and also in John Vassilakis and Harvey Gupnik, High and Low: Modern Art and Popular Culture (exh. cat., The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1990, 269).
48. Martin de Zayas' untitled text in 291, 5-6 (July–August 1915), 6.
49. See n. n.
51. Henry McBride, the critic for The Sun, gave the exhibition an ambivalent review in the issue of 16 January 1916, section 3, 7, and then returned to it more enthusiastically in the issue of 23 January 1916, section 7, 8.
52. Whelan 1995, 353, writes: "Although Stieglitz and Francis still remained friends... the photographer could certainly no longer view his friend as one of the 'elegant propositions' ever for he was suffering from a debilitating mental illness, was more addicted than ever to opium and cocaine, and was having a tumultuous affair with Isadora Duncan."

**NOTES**

**DUCHAMP**

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