The Modernism Project

A High School Interdisciplinary Exploration of the Modern Era in Early 20th Century Paris

Culminating in Annual Dramatic Public Performances

NAEA Convention 2017
Friday 3/3 8:00-8:50

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Modernism’s Radical Changes

19th C Modernism

Realism Abstraction
Exterior Interior
Conscious Unconscious
Single Viewpoint Multiple Viewpoint
Intentional Spontaneous
Rational Intuitive
Coherent Fragmented
Chronological Simultaneous
Western Global
Individual Collaborative
Disciplinary Multidisciplinary

See longer version at end of this handout.
Collaborative & Interdisciplinary Modernism

*Prose of the Trans-Siberian and of Little Jehanette of France* (simultaneous book) 1913
Blaise Cendrars and Sonia Delaunay
Futurist Serata (performance evenings) 1910s
Futurist Sintesi (short, symbolic plays)

*Genius and Culture* by Umberto Boccioni (see book *Futurist Performance*)

Parole in Liberta (“words in freedom” anarchic Futurist literary style)

*Zang tumb tumb* Filippo Tommaso Marinetti

Cabaret Voltaire, Zurich (Dada cabaret) 1916-17

Sound poetry by Hugo Ball

Intellectual Collaboration of Pablo Picasso and Gertrude Stein

*Portrait of Gertrude Stein*, Pablo Picasso 1906

*Parade* (ballet) 1917

Erik Satie, Jean Cocteau, Pablo Picasso, Léonide Massine

Surrealist Games like Exquisite Corpse

Calligrams

Guillaume Apollinaire

Modernism Activities

Simultaneous Book - collaborative art and poetry like Cendrars’ and Delaunay’s *Prose of the Trans-Siberian*…; poetry with adjacent abstract art mirroring the poem’s mood

Any collaborative or combined art and text

Exquisite Corpses are sequential group compositions on accordion-folded paper in which each person hides his contribution and passes paper to next person until it is finished and the composition (and collective unconscious) revealed

Exquisite Corpse (literary) seven people write one word, in turn, article-adjective-noun-verb-article-adjective-noun; paper is folded after each word; sentence is revealed after all have written

Exquisite Corpse (literary) variations:

- **Question/Answer** - one person writes question, second writes answer (both hidden)
- **Conditionals** - one person writes if-clause, second writes sentence in conditional or future tense (both hidden)
- **Syllogisms** - two people write premises, another writes conclusion (all hidden)
- **Opposites** - one person writes sentence, second person writes an oppositional sentence then hides the first sentence, third person opposes the second and so on
Exquisite Corpse (imagery) three people, in turn, draw hidden head-torso-legs, extending short lines over crease for positioning

Calligrams (shape poems)

Publish original WWI trench (or other war) magazine (research The Wipers Times)

Publish original Futurist, Dadaist, or Surrealist magazine (research historical examples)

Found Texts - scavenging, rearranging, or drastically editing existing texts; many possibilities
  Black out - obscuring words on page of text to reveal new composition; add art
  Cut out - chopping up text and rearranging (intentional or random)

Enter NY Times Annual Found Poem Contest

Words in Freedom - scatter words, change fonts and sizes, etc.; let each word/phrase take its own form and position (research Futurist Parole in Liberta)

Automatic Writing (often called Free Writing, Stream of Consciousness, Interior Dialogue or Free Association); many possibilities
  Write phrases in response to a Modern artwork or piece of music. Make collage.
  Combine an entire class’s free associations on a single topic; read or collage

Automatic Drawing or Painting - spontaneous artwork (research work of André Masson)

Blind Drawing, Painting, or Writing (either by not looking at art or totally blindfolded)
  Holding pen on paper while in moving vehicle

Decalcomania - covering a painted surface w/another surface and then pulling it away; can be developed into more intentional artwork (research work of Max Ernst and Oscar Dominguez)

Other Surrealist Techniques - frottage (rubbing), grottage (scraping), soufflage (blowing paint), …

Dream/Surreal Painting using illusionistic techniques and strange juxtapositions

Abstraction - How would you make an artwork that shows the essence of someone or some experience without representing persons, places, or things?

Cutting up printed photo portraits and recombining as distorted Cubist portrait collage (intentional or random)

Collage and Photomontage

Cubomania - cutting up an image into squares and reassembling

Painting or Drawing to Modern Music

Coulage - “automatic sculpture”, pouring molten material, like hot wax, into cold water

Ceramic surrealist objects (using strange juxtapositions)

Photograms - placing objects instead of negatives under enlarger

Photos of something so it looks abstract, unfamiliar or like something else (use point of view, focus, zoom, etc.

Photoshop surreal collage

Found Sound Compositions using Garage Band (sample any sounds and combine)

Make machines that make noises (research Futurist intonarumori)

Artist/Movement research/presentations extended (see next page)
Combine/collaborate on Modern era dialogues/scripts - How would these people talk to each other? Develop into dramatic scenes
Make fake Facebook pages for Modernists
How do Bell Époque entertainers compare to today's divas? (look at Toulouse Lautrec artwork)
Listen to archival sound poems by Hugo Ball, Richard Huelsenbeck, Marcel Janko, and Tristan Tzara. Read Dada Manifesto and compare.
Read aloud Modern plays, poems, manifestoes (Marinetti, Stein, Apollinaire, Tzara, Ball, Breton etc.) This work was meant to be spoken.
Read Modern Manifestoes along with experiencing the Modern art, literature, or music that corresponds to it. Underline or write out and discuss manifesto ideas that are reflected in the creative work.
Write original Manifestos of personal beliefs
Read aloud Modern manifestoes but as contemporary character (see Kate Blanchett in Manifesto, a 2015 film installation not yet released)
Read or act out a Futurist Sintesi (short, symbolic plays, see book Futurist Performance)
Compare Dadaism and Surrealism to the youth movement of the ‘60s and the Punk movement of the ‘80s
Writing in museums or from sources - many possibilities
Describe and interpret. Be able to defend interpretation with visual clues.
Write a narrative as if your are the subject of the artwork, animate or inanimate.
Poetry/Automatic Writing/Free Association
How is woman as subject depicted? What if subject was a man?
How is this work Modernist? (make list of Modern characteristics first)

Possible Dramatic Scenes

Art Gallery Opening
Art Gallery Tour

Art Studio - Artist Gathering, Discussion/Debate/Games
Art Studio - Studio Visit (Gallerist, Collector, Critic)
Art Studio - Working (Interior Monologue, Pre-recorded voiceover)

WWI Battlefield - Dialogues, Letters Home, Monologues, Poetry, Trench Magazine
WWI Military Hospital - Same

Cafe - Discussion, Reminiscence that comes to life
Cafe Concert - Performance/Singing/Dancing/Clowning/Acrobatics
Cabaret - Performance, Dada Futurist Serata, Futurist Sintesi, Manifesto Reading
Music Studio - Composers and Friends Performance/Dialogue/Debate
Salon - Apartment Discussion/Reading/Art Showing/Critique
Salon - Cafe Discussion
Literary Salon - Bookstore, Writers and Friends Reading/Dialogue/Debate

Books

*Modernism: A Cultural History*  Tim Armstrong  
*Modernism: A Very Short Introduction*  Christopher Butler  
*Modernism: An Anthology of Sources and Documents*  Kolocotroni, Goldman + Taxidou  
*Modernism: The Lure of Heresy*  Peter Gay

*Bohemian Paris: Picasso, Modigliani, Matisse and the Birth of Modern Art*  Dan Franck  
*In Montmartre: Picasso, Matisse and the Birth of Modern Art*  Sue Roe  
*Shocking Paris: Soutine, Chagall, and the Outsiders of Montparnasse*  Stanley Meisler  
*When Paris Sizzled*  Mary McAuliffe

*The Great Good Place: American Expatriate Women in Paris*  William Wiser  
*The Modern Woman Revisited: Paris Between the Wars*  Chadwick and Lattimer  
*Paris Was a Woman*  Andrea Weiss  
*Women of the Left Bank: Paris 1900-1940*  Shari Benstock

*Bricktop’s Paris: African American Women in Paris Btw the Two World Wars*  Whiting  
*Negrophilia: Avant-Garde Paris and Black Culture in the 1920s*  Petrine Archer Straw  
*Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light*  Tyler Stovall

*Concepts of Modern Art*  Nikos Stangos ed  
*Inventing Abstraction: 1910-1925*  Matthew Affron et al  
*Modern Artists on Art*  Robert Herbert ed  
*“Primitivism” in 20th Century Art*  William Rubin ed  
*Theories of Modern Art*  Herschel B. Chipp

*Cubism*  Anne Gantefruhrer-Trier  
*Cubism: Art and Ideas*  Neil Cox  
*Cubism: The Leonard Lauder Collection*  Emily Brown and Rebecca Rabinow  
*The Cubist Painters*  Guillaume Apollinaire

*Futurism*  Richard Humphreys  
*Futurism*  Sylvia Martin
Futurist Performance  Michael Kirby  
*Italian Futurism 1909-1944: Reconstructing the Universe*  Vivien Greene ed

*Dada and Surrealism: Art and Ideas*  Matthew Gale  
*Dada and Surrealism: A Very Short Introduction*  David Hopkins  
*The Dada Painters and Poets: An Anthology*  Robert Motherwell ed  
*Dada Performance*  Mel Gordon ed  
*Dadaism*  Dietmar Elgar

*A Book of Surrealist Games*  Alastair Brotchie and Mel Gooding  
*Manifestoes of Surrealism*  André Breton  
*Surrealism*  Cathrin Klingsohr-Leroy  
*Surrealism and Painting*  Andre Breton  
*Surrealism and the rue Blomet*  Eykyn Maclean  
*Surrealist Painters and Poets: An Anthology*  Mary Ann Caws ed  
*Surrealist Women: An International Anthology*  Penelope Rosemont ed  
*Women Artists of the Surrealist Movement*  Whitney Chadwick

*Art & Physics: Parallel Visions in Space, Time, and Light*  Leonard Shlain  
*The Culture of Time and Space: 1880-1918*  Stephen Kern  
*Einstein, Picasso: Space, Time, and the Beauty That Causes Havoc*  Arthur I. Miller

*Modernism: A Guide to European Literature 1890-1930*  Bradbury and McFarlane eds  
*Selected Writings*  Guillaume Apollinaire  
*Selected Writings of Gertrude Stein*  Carl van Vechten, ed  
*Theater of the Avant-Garde: 1890-1950*  Bert Cardullo and Robert Knopf eds

*The Rest is Noise: Listening to the 20th C*  Alex Ross

**Film & Video**

*Art of the Western World* (1989)  Episode 8  PBS doc  
*Ballet Mechanique* (1924)  Fernand Leger  
*La Banda Picasso* (2012)  Spanish w/English subtitles  
Archival footage of Cabaret Voltaire and Hugo Ball on YouTube  
*Manifesto,* (2015)  film installation not yet released, Kate Blanchett actress  
*Paris Was a Woman* (1996)  doc Greta Schiller dir  
*The Shock of the New* (1980)  BBC doc  
*Un Chien Andalou* (1929)  Salvador Dalí and Luis Buñuel
Modernism’s Radical Changes (longer version)

Multiple viewpoints experienced simultaneously, none privileged
Multiple places experienced simultaneously
Multiple times experienced simultaneously, non-linear thinking.
Speed, light, energy as modern subject matter and as metaphors for states of mind
Women as artists, women’s rights
Gender fluidity, discovering other genders in everyone
Unconscious aspects of the mind, dreams, fears, the “Marvelous” inner world
Feelings, states of mind more important than outward appearances
Search for essence of things, pure ideas.
Unseen structure of the world represented with geometry or any abstraction
Interest in symbolism rather than realism
Distortion/Exaggeration as revealer of truth
Anti-reason, pro-spontaneity, intuition, automatism, and chance (randomness)
Universal spirituality vs. traditional religion
Pro-war: war is agent of change, overcoming the past
Anti-war: war is destroyer of life
Inspiration from non-European (non-Western) and “primitive” art and culture
Universal humanity instead of nationalism, racism, etc.
Respect for nature as antidote to chaotic/soulless society
Respect for technology as creator of better future, the glorious Machine Age
Openness to new approaches, techniques, methods (not just technology)
Urbanism, glorification of the city as center of Modern life
Respect for working class
Consumerism, advertising, and industrialization as subject
Respect for low art (commercial or popular art, non-high art)
Anti-bourgeois attitudes, anti-conventionalism, anti-traditionalism
Merging of art and life
Respect for individual creativity (of the artist)
Lines between performance and visual art begin to disappear