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LITTÉRATURE

VINGT-TROIS MANIFESTES DU MOUVEMENT DADA

PAR

Francis PICABIA, Louis ARAGON, André BRETON,
Tristan TZARA, ARP, Paul ELUARD, Philippe SOUPAULT,
SERNER, Paul DERMÉE, Georges RIBEMONT-DESSAIGNES,
Céline ARNAULT et W. C. ARENSBERG.

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DEUX FRANCS

5.10

Twenty-Three Manifestos of the Dada Movement

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Front cover
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These manifestos were read:

At the Salon des Indépendants (Grand Palais des Champs
Elysées) 5 February 1920.

At the Club du Faubourg, 6, rue de Puteaux 7 February 1920.

At the Université Populaire of Faubourg Saint-Antoine
19 February 1920.

The order in which they are published was drawn by lot.

Dada Manifesto

No more painters, no more writers, no more musicians, no more
sculptors, no more religions, no more republicans, no more
royalists, no more imperialists, no more anarchists, no more
socialists, no more Bolsheviks, no more politicians, no more
proletarians, no more democrats, no more bourgeois, no more
aristocrats, no more armies, no more police, no more
fatherlands, enough of all these imbecilities, no more anything,
no more anything, nothing, *nothing, nothing, nothing.*

We hope something new will come from this, being exactly
what we no longer want, determinedly less putrid, less selfish,
less materialistic, less obtuse, less immensely *grotesque.*

Long live concubines and the con-cubists. All members of
the DADA movement are presidents.

ME*

Everything that is not me is incomprehensible.

Whether sought on Pacific sands or gathered in the hinterland of
my own existence, the shell that I press to my ear will ring with
the same voice and I'll think it the voice of the sea and it will be
but the sound of myself.

If I suddenly find it's no longer enough to hold every word in
my hand like pretty pearly objects, every word will enable me to
listen to the sea, and in the mirror of their sound will I find no
image but my own.

However it may seem, language boils down to just this I and
whenever I utter a word it divests itself of everything that isn't me
until it becomes an organic noise through which my life unfolds.

There is only me in this world and if I sometimes lapse into
believing that a woman exists I have but to lean my head on her
breast to hear the sound of *my* heart and recognise myself.

Feelings are only languages, enabling certain functions to
be performed.

In my left pocket I carry a remarkably accurate self-portrait:
a watch in burnished steel. It speaks, marks time and
understands none of it.

Everything that is me is incomprehensible.

LOUIS ARAGON

* Deep wells and springs

Tristan Tzara

Take a good look at me!
 I'm stupid, I'm a joker, I'm a clown.
 Take a good look at me!
 I'm ugly, my face is expressionless, I'm short.
 I'm just like all of you! (1)

But before you look, ask yourselves this: are you shooting those arrows of liquid sentiment through the iris or fly shit? Are the eyes of your belly maybe slices of tumours whose starings will one day seep out in the form of gonorrhoeal discharge from some part of your body? You view things with your navel - why are you trying to protect it from the ridiculous spectacle we're putting on especially for it? A little bit lower, cunts with teeth, gulping everything down - the poetry of eternity, love, pure love, of course - bleeding beefsteaks and oil painting.

All who see and understand readily fall into line between poetry and love, between beefsteak and painting. They'll be swallowed up, they'll be swallowed up.

I was recently accused of nicking some furs. Probably people thought I was still hanging out with poets. With poets who satisfy their legitimate need for a chilly wank in warm furs: H a h u I know some other equally purposeless pleasures. Give your family a ring and piss in the hole reserved for musical, gastronomic and sacred nonsenses.

DADA proposes 2 solutions:

NO MORE LOOKING

NO MORE SPEAKING (2)

Don't look anymore.

Don't speak anymore.

Because I, chameleon changing infiltration of convenient attitudes - multicoloured opinions to suit all occasions, size and price - I always do the opposite of what I suggest to others. (3)
 I've forgotten something:

Where? Why? How?

What I mean is:

ventilator of cold examples will serve the cavalcade's fragile snake and I have never had the pleasure of seeing you 'my dear' rigid the ear will come out of itself from the envelope like all marine equipment and products from the firm of Aa and Co chewing gum for example and dogs have blue eyes, I drink camomile, they drink the wind, DADA introduces new perspectives, nowadays people sit at the corners of tables adopting positions which slip a little to the right and to the left, this is why I am angry with Dada, people everywhere should demand the suppression of Ds, eat some Aa, polish yourselves with Aa toothpaste, dress yourselves in Aa designs. Aa is the handkerchief and sexual organ blowing its nose, rapid collapse - in rubber - without noise, has no need for manifestos or address book, gives a 25% discount dress

(1) I wanted to publicise myself a bit.

(2) No more manifestos

(3) Sometimes

yourselves in Aa designs it has blue eyes.

TRTZ

20-2-1920

Dada Mugs

What's your name? (*He shrugs.*)

Where are you? - The Grand Palais on the Champs Elysées.

What day is it? - Thursday ... February 1920.

What do you do for a living? - I used to plough the fields, I dressed the vines.

And your parents? - My father's a simpleton, without intelligence; my mother too, they're as bad as each other; I had to do everything.

A dozen eggs costs six francs; how much is one egg? - Six francs.

Why are you laughing? - The others are making me laugh.

Do you believe in God and the Holy Virgin? - They always get the job done.

How do you know? - I just know.

Did you sleep well? - My dreams take after taubes¹, after wild boars, about falling down wells, about people chasing me, trying to attack me.

How do you rate yourself? - You're far too good for me. I'm just pining away; I'd like to have some X-rays. I was really intelligent until last month.

What do you yearn for? - I don't know.

ANDRE BRETON

Philosophical Dada

To André Breton

CHAPTER I

DADA has blue eyes, a pale face and curly hair; has the English look of young men who are keen on sport.

DADA has melancholy fingers - the Spanish look.

DADA has a small nose - the Russian look.

DADA has a porcelain arse - the French look.

DADA dreams of Byron and Greece.

DADA dreams of Shakespeare and Charlie Chaplin.

DADA dreams of Nietzsche and Jesus-Christ.

DADA dreams of Barrès and sunsets.

DADA has a brain like a water lily.

DADA has a brain like a brain.

DADA is an artichoke doorknob.

DADA's face is broad and slender and its voice is arched like the sirens' tone.

DADA is a magic lantern.

DADA's tail has been twisted into an eagle's beak.

DADA's philosophy is sad and merry, indulgent and wide.

Venetian crystals, jewels, valves, bibliophiles, voyages, poetic novels, restaurants, mental illnesses, Louis XIII, dilettantism, the last operetta, sparkling star, peasant, a glass of beer downed a little at a time, a new specimen of dew, that's one aspect of DADA!

Uncomplications and uncertainties.
Changeable and highly strung, DADA is a hammock rocking a
soothing sway.

CHAPTER II

A star falls upon a river, leaving a trail of replicas. Happiness and
misery with a silent voice whisper in our ears.
Black or shining sun.
Here in the bottom of the boat we're oblivious of the course we
should choose.

A tunnel and return.
Ecstasy becomes anguish in the idyll of domesticity.
Beds are still paler than the dead, despite man's despairing cries.
DADA embraces in spring water and its kisses must be water
meeting fire.
DADA is Tristan Tzara.
DADA is Francis Picabia.
DADA is everything as it equally loves the pure at heart, nightfall,
sighing foliage and the entwined lovers drinking with abandon
from the divine double wellsprings of Love and Beauty!

CHAPTER III

DADA has always been twenty-two, it's slimmed down a bit in the
last twenty-two years. DADA is married to a peasant girl who
loves birds.

CHAPTER IV

DADA lives on a peplum cushion surrounded by
chrysanthemums wearing Parisian masks.

CHAPTER V

Human emotions appear to it on the banks of optimism, torn to
shreds by Baudelaire's antique poetry.

CHAPTER VI

'Oh God I'm turning into an imbecile!' cries DADA.
The wish to fall asleep.
To have a manservant.
An imbecile manservant at the other end of the chamber.

CHAPTER VII

The same manservant opened the door and, as usual, wouldn't
let us in. Far off we could make out the voice of Dada.
FRANCIS PICABIA
Martigues, 12 February 1920

Dada Development

Man has great respect for language and the cult of thought;
whenever he opens his mouth you see his tongue kept under
glass and the reeking mothballs of his brain stink out the air.
For us *everything* is an opportunity to have fun. Every time we

laugh we empty ourselves and the wind possesses us, rattling the
doors and windows, driving the night of wind into us.

Wind. The ones who came before us are the artists. The
others are devils. Let's take advantage of the devils, let's put
ourselves - and the idiot too - where the head and hand should
be.

We need entertaining. We're determined to stay exactly as we
are or will be. We need a free and empty body, we need a laugh
and we need nothing.
PAUL ELUARD

Literature and the Rest

I've been told repeatedly, more than two hundred times (maybe
three hundred), that two and two make four. Oh, that's good, or
too bad. But that open hand there in front of you, those five
fingers exist ... or don't exist. I couldn't care less. Beautiful words
trimmed with feathers or little perfumed rockets, sentences
constructed with transparent pebbles - none of them worth the
two sous I throw in your face.

So who's going to dare sow that absurd plant they call rye-
grass or wheat in your brains, brains that are thinner and smaller
themselves than willow leaves. They can have a good laugh if they
want by gouging out my eyes to see what grows in the manure
that serves me for a brain. You'll see nothing there because there
is nothing there. You're all as blown up as fattened geese with
ideas and principles and as like me as brothers, just go for a walk
in the fields and bear in mind that the burgeoning wheat is a
novel by Monsieur René Bazin.²

All alone here, in front of these plasterboard walls, I've come to
realise that all my friends, be they murderers or men of letters,
are every bit as stupid as me. The worst offenders are those who
enjoy taking themselves seriously.

Why have you written a manifesto? They shout at me.

I am writing a manifesto because I have nothing to say.

Literature does exist, but in the heart of imbeciles.

It's absurd to divide writers into good and bad ones. On one
side there are my friends and on the other, the rest.

When all my contemporaries have understood all these
things, it might just become possible to breathe more easily and
open your eyes and mouth without risking asphyxiation. I also
hope that the people I was just talking about, who hold me in the
most delicious disdain, will never understand a thing. That's the
blessing I wish on them.

Whether they're howling in the name of morality, tradition or
literature, it's always the same howling, the same whinging.
Their contemptuous smile is as sweet to me as the fury of their
majestic spouses. They can despise me; they'll never work out
what I think of myself because my life is running clockwise.

None of this lot here has the guts to express their disgust with
as much as a whistle. Well I've got the guts, I could whistle and
shout out loud that this manifesto is absolutely stupid and

stuffed full of contradictions, but I'd console myself later with the thought that so-called 'literature', that dandelion born in the cretins' diaphragm, is even more stupid.

PHILIPPE SOUPAULT

Dada Patisserie

The table is round, the sky is bright, the spider is tiny, the glass is transparent, eyes come in ten different colours, Louis Aragon has the Military Cross, Tzara hasn't got syphilis, elephants are silent, the rain falls, a car travels more easily than a star, I am thirsty, draughts are pointless, poets are pin cushions – or pigs, writing paper is convenient, the stove is drawing well, daggers kill well, revolvers kill better, the air is still too deep.

We swallow all of this and if we digest it we most certainly don't give a shit.

PAUL ELUARD

Dada Skating

We read the papers like other mortals. Without wishing to make anyone unhappy, it is perfectly acceptable to say that the word DADA lends itself readily to puns. That's even part of the reason we adopted it in the first place. We haven't the faintest idea how to treat any subject seriously – least of all this subject: us. So everything that's written about DADA is doing its best to please us. We'd swap the whole of art criticism for any news item whatsoever. Certainly the wartime press never stopped us taking Marshall Foch for a phoney and President Wilson for a fool.

We ask for nothing better than to be judged on appearances. It's reported all over the place that I wear glasses. If I told you why you'd never believe me. It's in remembrance of this grammatical model: 'Noses were made to wear glasses; also I wear glasses.' What is it they say? Oh yes, this brings home the fact that we're not getting any younger.

Pierre is a man. But there is no DADA truth. You've only got to say a thing for the opposite to become DADA. I once saw Tristan Tzara in a tobacconist's unable to muster up the voice to ask for a packet of cigarettes. I don't know what was the matter with him. I can still hear Philippe Soupault asking an ironmonger most insistently for some live birds. As for me, it's perfectly possible that I am dreaming at this very moment.

A white eucharistic host is equal to a red one after all. DADA makes no promises about getting you to heaven. It would be ludicrous, in principle, to anticipate a DADA masterpiece in the fields of literature and painting. Naturally we have absolutely no belief in the possibility of social improvement either, even if we do hate conservatism more than anything and pledge our full support for any revolution whatsoever. 'Peace at any price' was DADA's slogan during the war just as 'War at any price' is DADA's slogan in times of peace.

Contrariness remains nothing more than the most flattering form of posturing. I'm not aware of a hint of ambition in myself.

yet it seems to you that I'm getting all worked up: why doesn't the idea that my right side is the shadow of my left and vice versa render me utterly incapable of movement?

We pass for poets in the most general sense of the word because we target the worst conventions in language. You can be terribly familiar with the word 'hello' and still say 'goodbye' to the woman you've just met up with again after being away for a year.

DADA attacks you through your own powers of reasoning. I reduce you to a point where you maintain you're better off believing than not believing what all the religions of beauty, love, truth and justice teach, then we'll know you're not afraid of putting yourselves at the mercy of DADA, by agreeing to meet us on our chosen territory ... which is doubt.

ANDRE BRETON

The Pleasures of Dada

Dada has pleasures just like everyone else. Dada's principle pleasure is to see itself in others. Dada provokes laughter, curiosity or fury. Since these are three most agreeable things, Dada is very happy.

What makes Dada all the happier is if people laugh at it spontaneously. Since Art and Artists are extremely serious inventions, especially when their roots are in comedy, people go to comedies at the theatre when they wish to laugh. Not us. We don't take anything seriously. People do laugh but only to mock us. Dada is very happy.

Curiosity is awoken too. Serious-minded men, who know, deep down, how miracles are arranged – miracles such as *Père la Colique*³ or the Virgin's tears – realise that it would be much more fun to have fun with us. They have no wish to bring about the collapse of the great cathedral of Art, but look how they rub up against us trying to get our recipe. Dada doesn't have any recipes but is always hungry. Dada is very happy.

And now for fury, adorable fury. This is the way great love affairs start. Concerns for the future? Only about being loved too much. Certainly there would always be the option of swapping roles, taking it in turns to laugh, yearn or fly into a fury. But expecting some sort of benefit to arise. The gorgeous gob of somebody vomiting insults is wide open and Dada is a very good at *basse-boule*.⁴ Dada is very happy.

Dada also likes tossing stones into the water, not to see what happens but to stupidly contemplate the ripples. Anglers don't like Dada.

Dada likes ringing on doorbells, striking matches and setting light to hair and beards. It puts mustard in chalices, urine in fonts and margarine in artists' tubes of paint.

It knows you and knows the ones who lead you. It likes you and doesn't like them. You can be fun. You probably enjoy life. But you've got some bad habits. You're too fond of what you've been taught to be fond of. Cemeteries, melancholy, the tragic lover, Venetian gondolas. You shout at the moon. You believe in

art and respect Artists.

You could easily become friends of Dada – it would be enough to demolish all your little card castles and redeem every iota of your freedom. Mistrust your leaders. They exploit your ill-considered affection for the fake and the famous to lead you by the nose and make things even better for themselves.

You cling to your chains as if you want to be used with impunity like bears in a sideshow – do you? They flatter you and call you Wild Bears. Carpathian bears. They talk of freedom and magnificent mountains. But that's just to rake in the bourgeois spectators' wads of cash. You dance for an old carrot and a whiff of honey. If you weren't so cowardly, sinking under the weight of all those lofty thoughts and non-existent abstractions you've been forced into, all that nonsense dressed up as dogma, you'd stand up straight and play the massacre game, just like we do. But you're too scared of no longer believing and of bobbing about like corks on the surface of a two-gallon barrel with nothing but the memory of fizzy lemonade. You don't understand that one can be attached to nothing and be happy.

If you ever manage to pull yourself together Dada will clack its jaws as a sign of friendship. But if you rid yourselves of lice only to keep your fleas Dada will bring its little insecticide spray into play.

Dada is very happy.

GEORGES RIBEMONT-DESSAIGNES

Manifesto of the Crocrodarium Dada [Hans Arp]

Statue lamps come up from the bottom of the sea and shout long live DADA to greet the passing liners and dada presidents feminine dada masculine dada plural dada definite dada indefinite dada and three rabbits in Chinese ink by arp the dadaist in ridged bicycle porcelain we leave for London in the royal aquarium ask in every pharmacy for rasputin's and the tzar's and the pope's dadaists which are only valid for two and a half hours. ARP

ART

Essentially what's behind the word BEAUTY is unthinking, visual convention. Life bears no relation to what grammarians call *beauty*. Virtue like patriotism only exists for those mediocre intellects with a lifelong devotion to the sarcophagus. This tide of men and women who believe in *Art* as if it were a religion with *God* at its heart must be stemmed. We don't believe in *God* any more than we do in *Art* – nor his priests, bishops and cardinals.

Art is, and can only ever be, the expression of our contemporary life. *Beauty*, the institution, is exactly like the *Musée Grevin*³ and bounces easily off the *soul* of shopkeepers and *Art* experts, caretakers of the museum church of the past's crystallisations.

Tralala Tralala

Count us out.

We're not feeding ourselves at a mass for memories and

magic tricks by Robert Houdin.⁶

Let's face it, you don't understand what we're doing. And to tell the truth, my friends, we understand it even less – delightful, huh? You're quite right. But do you really believe that *God* knew English and French???

You explain *Life* to him in those two beautiful languages Tralala Tralala Tralala Tralala Tralala Tralala.

So have a good look with your sense of smell, forget the fireworks of *Beauty*⁷ at 100,000, 200,000 or 199,000,000 dollars.

Anyway I've had enough, those who don't understand will never understand and those who understand when they have to understand certainly don't need me.

FRANCIS PICABIA

Dada God-swatter

The most ancient and formidable enemy of Dada is called GOD!

He intervenes between us and all things and gets in the way.

His cheating eyes show up when we're staring into our glass.

He screws our mistresses and sticks himself in between their skin and ours.

He roosts on the shoulders of victorious generals, old folks crowned with the downfalls of best-selling artists. From way on high he draws adoring gazes to himself.

He's the forger, the speculator, the deceiver, the great bully and the supreme stuffer of brains.

He poisons life for a bunch of imbeciles. God's a fool, God's got goitre, God struts about like a dandy, God dresses to the left. How many poets, painters, musicians – the most ignorant of all people – pull on a God every morning like a condom, and thus disguised extend a great green belly for the worship of the masses!

Well we're going to shout about it: ENOUGH of all these annoying stinking gods festering like a disgusting verminous pea pod.

Let's QUICKLY carry out some corrosive fumigations to purify the atmosphere and scour the house with lashings of alcohol.

Cover EVERYTHING in Dada bug powder! No nonsense hygiene!

Dada God-swatter

Dada omni-swatter

Dada anti-taboo!

PAUL DERMEE

The Corridor

1st: Just as the first name Apollonie,⁸ from which the Pantheon appears exactly as it does from the rue Soufflot, is less attractive than a dogcart it's completely pointless to imagine that the most stupid amongst us is really less stupid than he appears, and therefore even more stupid. When we've finished praising certain particularly seedy gentlemen to the skies on the pretext that they

always behave exactly as they should – that is to say, idiotically – maybe it'll be time for a little fun, if we join the ranks of those who dismiss "*Aloïse ou l'Amour perversi*" (published by Albin Michel) as tedious without even bothering to open the thing. Who has ever really taken on board the fact that whatever precautions you take they will never be enough? Not daring to sit back down, due to the flatulence caused by reading until utterly worn out by hystero-mania and for fear of producing a ridiculous effect, is no reason to regret ever having stood up. It seems that by the end of the third year some trainers themselves become wild. The inhabitants of central Europe have no idea how lucky they are to find simple conversations a uniquely dangerous experience. Furthermore, is it really so consoling to tell yourself, as you stroke your highly polished shoes, that this earth is home to some truly useless men? No, in spite of everything. For sometimes their eyes are quite moist with pleasure. They live, like the others, between a butter-soft eroticism and mental chaos that compels even the brightest demon to sometimes confess her embarrassment. (And that is their greatest crime!) A misfortune makes you so cheerful that you submit to any influence that comes your way only to reject it again shortly afterwards until you get to the last one and that one is living in the hope of not being one and is to be rejected no more. Nonetheless Napoleon, on being given his Egyptian proclamation to read over again, came out with the words: "This is a bit boastful!" and perhaps we shouldn't assume that he was trying to be witty. (These are the words of an excellent man). You will only ever gain a clearer perspective when you manage to enter into a dialogue with your own prostate. Probably. By then the only truly dignified position a man can adopt is to remain lying down like an effigy, but always on the most hilarious part of the body, thus producing an outrageous effect on the sky.

2nd: People are still not sufficiently resigned to *everything*. That's what they should teach you at primary school and it's just what you want to hear endlessly repeated behind your back when you're ill.

3rd: But everybody abandons their principles for as little as someone else's apparently foolish behaviour, and it's just as true that the good Lord is nothing more than an unremarkable doctor and that people hardly love anything anymore, for they have ceased to love themselves. The final joy is no less for it. That joy has to be seen clasped between belly folds when you've managed to retrieve all the falsities that objectively escape from your brain in daytime. Obviously this is not what one would use to extract the gasses from a corpse if one manages to extract them from Maurice Barrès who still passes for being alive.
Dr VAL SERNER⁹

Dada is american

Cubism was born in Spain; France appropriated the patent for it with no government guarantee. Unfortunately, just like French matches, Cubism didn't catch on; not enough phosphorous on

the surfaces of the box. Mr Rosenberg¹⁰ is in the process of making an enormous box but the matches he's got hidden in there are soaking wet, floating about on mouldy liquid.

Cubism was Spanish, it became Alsatian, it dances on the official red carpets of a few Parisian and commercial galleries.

Unthinkable that Cubism would burst out with a 'Long live DADA'; it's a consumptive on a chaise longue; all youth has fled from its malicious eyes; it's like that old lady, Roch Grey, who hates children and speaks with enormous contempt of the kindergarten.

I felt I should talk a little about Cubism, being one of those who expected a great deal from this geometric word; I am compelled to confess my disappointment and, at the same time, my joy in observing DADA, the global expression of all that is young, lively and athletic; no religion leaking from a cathedral appendicitis for Dada.

DADA is american, DADA is russian, DADA is spanish, DADA is swiss, DADA is german, DADA is french, belgian, norwegian, swedish, monégasque. Anyone who lives without a system, who finds nothing to like about museums but the parquet floors, is DADA; museum walls are Père Lachaise or Père la Colique,¹¹ they will never be Père Dada. The life expectancy of real Dada works should be just 6 hours.

I, Walter Conrad Arensberg, american poet, hereby declare that I am against Dada, seeing that this is the only way I'm going to get involved in dada, in dada, in dada, in dada, in dada.

Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah. Long live Dada.
WALTER CONRAD ARENSBERG
New York 33 West 67th Street

The Manifesto of Mr Antipyrine

DADA is our intensity: it holds up inconsequential bayonets the German baby's Sumatral head: Dada is life without slippers or parallel; it is for and against unity and decidedly against the future; we wisely recognise that our brains will become cosy cushions, that our anti-dogmatism is as exclusivist as a civil servant and that we are not free and cry freedom harsh necessity without discipline or morality and spit on humanity.

DADA remains in the European framework of weaknesses, it's still shit, but from now on we want to shit in different colours to decorate the art zoo of all consular flags.

We direct circuses and whistle among the winds of fairs, among convents, prostitutions, theatres, realities, feelings, restaurants. Hohi, hoho, bang, bang.

We declare the car to be a feeling that quite pampered us in the slownesses of its abstractions and transatlantic liners and noises and ideas. We exteriorise the faculty, however, we are looking for the central essence and we are happy being able to hide it; we don't want to count the marvellous elite's many windows because Dada exists for nobody and we want the whole world to understand this, because it is the balcony of Dada, I

The author president was ill and mislaid his manifesto. We are reproducing an extract from 'The First Celestial Adventure of Mr Antipyrine' (Zurich, 1916, Dada Collection, out of print), the manifesto read at the first Dada evening in Zurich, 14 July 1916 at the Waag Hall.

assure you. From where you can hear military marches and descend slicing the air like a seraphim to the public baths to have a piss and understand the parable.

Dada is neither madness, nor wisdom, nor irony, take a look, dear bourgeois.

Art was a game of conkers, children strung together words with chimes at the end, then they started crying and shouted out the stanza and put dolly's booties on it and the stanza became queen to do a little expiration and the queen became a whale without an explanation, the children ran and ran with restricted respiration.

Then the great ambassadors of feeling came along and shouted historically in chorus:

Psychology psychology hihi
 Science Science Science
 Long live France
 We are not naive
 We are consecutive
 We are exclusive
 We are not simple
 and are perfectly capable of debating intelligence.

But we, DADA, we are not of their opinion, as art isn't serious, I assure you, and if we exhibit crime in order to say vegetation learnedly, it is in order to give you pleasure, dear listeners, I love you so, I love you so, I assure you and adore you.

TRISTAN TZARA

Dada Geography

Historical anecdotes are not enormously important. It's impossible to determine when and where DADA came into being. The name itself, all the better for being perfectly ambiguous, was just something one of us came up with.

Cubism was a school of painting, Futurism a political movement: DADA is a state of mind. To compare them is patently either ignorant or pretentious.

Free thinking in religious matters is nothing like a church. DADA is free thinking in artistic terms.

As long as prayers are forcibly recited in schools under the guise of museum visits and textual analysis, we will rail against despotism and seek to disrupt the ceremony.

DADA devotes itself to nothing, neither love nor work. It is unthinkable that a man should leave any trace of his existence on this earth.

DADA, acknowledging only instinct, condemns explanation in principle. According to Dada we should exercise no control over ourselves. Have done with those dogmas, morality and taste: have done with them for ever.

ANDRE BRETON

To the Public

Before I come down there among you to tear out your rotten teeth, your scab-filled ears, your canker-covered tongue.

Before shattering your putrid bones —
 Slitting open your diarrhoea-filled abdomen and removing from it your over-fattened liver, your ignoble spleen and your diabetic kidneys to be used as fertiliser on the fields —

Before I rip off your ugly, incontinent and cheesy little dick —
 Before I thus extinguish your appetite for beauty, orgasms, sugar, philosophy, pepper and metaphysical mathematical and poetical cucumbers —

Before disinfecting you with vitriol and thus making you clean and passionately buffing you up —
 Before all of that —

We're going to have a great big bath in antiseptic —
 And we're warning you —

It's us who are the murderers —
 Of all your little newborn babes —
 And to end here's a song

Ki Ki Ki Ki Ki Ki Ki

And here's God with a nightingale for a horse
 He's handsome, he's ugly —

Madam, your gob stinks of pimp's come.
 In the morning —

'Cos in the evening it's more like the arse of an angel in love with a lily.

Nice, huh?

Cheerio, mate.

GEORGES RIBEMONT-DESSAIGNES

DADA PARASOL

So you don't like my manifesto?

You've come here bursting with hostility and you're going to start whistling at me before you've even heard me out?

Great! Carry on, the wheel turns as it's turned since Adam, nothing changes, except now we've only got two legs instead of four.

But you're really making me laugh and I wish to repay you for your lovely welcome by talking to you about Aart, poetry, etc. etc. hippackuanna.

Have you ever seen a telegraph pole having a tough time trying to grow beside roads between nettles and blown tyres?

But as soon as it's grown a bit taller than its neighbours it grows so fast that you could never stop it ... never!

Then it opens out right up there in the sky, lights up, swells out, is a parasol, a taxi, an encyclopaedia or a toothpick.

So are you happy now? OK... that's it ... that's all I wanted to say to you. That's poetree for you ... honest!

Poetry = toothpick, encyclopaedia, taxi or parasol-shade, and if you're not satisfied ...

TO THE NESLE TOWER WITH YOU¹²

CELINE ARNAULD¹³

Dada typewriter

Ever since we were born some lazy gits have been trying to

convince us that there's such a thing as art. Well we're even lazier and today we're going to say it loud and clear: 'Art is nothing.'

There is nothing. Once our contemporaries get around to accepting what we say they'll quickly forget that huge farce called art.

Why be stubborn?

There is nothing;

There never was anything.

You can shout all you like and chuck whatever you can lay your hands on at us, you know perfectly well that we're right.

Who's going to tell me what Art is?

Who dares claim they know what Beauty's about?

For my listeners' convenience I offer you this definition of Art, Beauty and the rest:

Art and Beauty = NOTHING.

And now, of course, you're going to start yelling or laughing again. Listen to me.

Once upon a time, some years ago, there was a bloke called Jesus Christ who cured blind and deaf people. Nobody took any notice of him. The doctors got worried and had a meeting. Then some of them went to see the Minister of Health and the bloke called Jesus Christ got awarded a big prize for services to education. It's the same thing with me ... I want to open your eyes and all you do is laugh.

You'll never be serious.

PHILIPPE SOUPAULT

Five ways to Dada shortage or two words of explanation

Tear up a bit of paper, preferably pages 35-6 of poetry RON RON, set light to it,

all DADA books are well printed, this must be done according to DADA methods, which once existed.

The road paved with gas jets, sliding corridors providing DADA

DADA, at the last minute, a long time ago for others, has neither providers nor methods

but a heck of a lot of noise is made about it since grammars, dictionaries and manifestos are still necessary.

MORAL:

We see everything, we love nothing,

We are indifferent

In - di - ffe - rent

We're dead but we're not rotting because we never have the same heart in our breast, nor the same brain in our head.

And we suck in everything around us, around us, we do NOTHING, Dada satisfaction.

PAUL ELUARD

Sensational revelations

As slowly as I open their lids, my eyes can only bear one single

light more gentle on them than your anger is to my heart: doubts feebly fizzle out when they come up against friendship. Friendship leads me to the edge of the world, it abandons me and I wait.

Today you find me abominably sad. All that my heart can produce is a damp squib. You won't like that image. I'm already beginning to bore you. I'm not even going to swear at you. Who knows where weariness starts, who knows where it ends? I'm looking at you and you're looking at me. What insignificant misdemeanour are you going to find to throw at me pretending it's a blessed olive branch? I'm not trying to force you to be silent, nor make you start shouting. All I am aware of nowadays is this great emptiness inside caused by those who are my friends as drops of water in a river are friends of the drop they sweep with them to the sea. If you want to vouch for someone you say: I'm as sure of him as I am of myself. And yet if there's one man on this earth I cannot be psychologically sure of, it's me. I don't take any notice of the rules I set for myself; and this perpetual inconsistency enables others to recognise me and call me by my name; I can't see myself in profile. I'm always betraying myself, letting myself down, contradicting myself. I'm not someone I'd ever put my trust in. No need to despair on that score. But as you know, just one look from my friends is enough to wreck all my plans - that's why we're friends. I give everything up just to waste my time with them, I even drop myself. I suppose you think I bestow on them the trust I refuse myself? Wake up! I know all about their shortcomings, thousands of things about them shock me. They do things I'd never do for all the gold in the world.

I know they have no great affection for me. It's a long time since we stopped carrying those little scales around with us that weigh up a person's worth. I don't believe in my friends just as I don't believe in myself.

I have put myself at the mercy of these people I call friends for the most idiotic - yet strongly heartfelt - reasons. It's a torrent sweeping me along and I acknowledge it as my master and flatter it with my voice.

You lot, immobilised in this room like a stagnant pool of mud, don't ask me what route I'm going to take out of this world, nor what makes me bow to a foreign power. The man whose body is caught up in a spiral from here on in is speaking to you serenely: don't listen to the words he is forming, just hear the monotonous song of his lips.

Today you find me abominably sad.
LOUIS ARAGON

Manifesto of Monsieur Aa the antiphilosopher

Without looking for I adore you
who's a French boxer
irregular maritime values like Dada's depression in the blood
of the two-headed one
I slide undecided between death and phosphates

which scratch the communal brain of dadaist poets for a bit
 happily
 for
 now
 aspect
 tariffs and high living costs made me decide to give up Ds
 it's not true that Dada falsehoods tore them off me since
 repayment will start from
 here's a reason to cry the nothing that's called nothing
 and I swept the illness through customs
 me the armour and umbrella of the brain from midday to two
 hours of subscription
 superstitious releasing wheels
 of the spermatozoid ballet that you will find at dress rehearsal in
 the hearts of all suspect individuals
 I'm going to nibble your fingers for a bit
 I'll pay for your resubscription to love on film that screeches like
 metal doors
 and you are all idiots
 I'll come back some time as your urine
 reborn into life's delights the midwife wind
 and I'm setting up a boarding school for poets' pimps
 and I'll come back again some time just to start all over again
 and you are all complete idiots
 and the selfcleptomaniac's key only turns with the aid of dim
 revolutionary oil
 on the node of every machine is the nose of a newborn
 and we are all complete idiots
 and very suspicious of a new form of intelligence and a new
 logic in our usual way
 which is certainly not Dada
 and you allow yourselves to be swept along by A-ism
 and you are all complete idiots
 poultices
 made with the alcohol of purified sleep
 bandages
 and virgin
 idiots
 TRISTAN TZARA

5-11

No.15, July/August 1920

Paul Eluard
Examples

Translated from
 the French
 by Ian Monk

SLEEPER
 THE SHADOW OF THE HEART TOWARDS MORNING,
 IN HASTE,
 AT REST.

IN ITS SLEEP NOTHING ENVELOPS
 THIS HEART MORE SWOLLEN THAN THE WINDOWS.

SHADOW, NIGHT AND SLEEP.
 A HEART SHAKES OFF
 ALL THAT IT DOES NOT KNOW.

WHEELS

WHEELS OF ROUTES
 WHEELS THREAD TO THREAD NIMBLE
 WORN.

CANTICLE

THE CHILD LOOKS AT THE NIGHT FROM ON HIGH
 (DO NOT BELIEVE IN AEROPLANES, IN BIRDS,
 HE IS MORE HIGH).
 IF THE CHILD DIES, NIGHT TAKES ITS PLACE.

FOUR KIDS

THE BARE GOURMAND,
 PUFFING UP HIS CHEEKS,
 SWALLOWING A FLOWER,
 SWEET-SMELLING INNER SKIN,
 GOOD BOY,
 WHISTLE;
 MOUTH OBVIOUSLY PINK,
 MOUTH LIGHT UNDER THE HEAVY HEAD,
 ONE TO TEN, TEN TO ONE.
 THE ORPHAN,
 THE BREAST THAT FED HIM COVERED WITH BLACK,
 WILL NOT WASH IT.
 DIRTY
 AS A FOREST ONE WINTER'S NIGHT.
 DEAD,
 HIS BEAUTIFUL TEETH, BUT HIS BEAUTIFUL MOTIONLESS
 EYE,
 STARING!
 WHAT FLY OF HIS LIFE
 IS THE MOTHER OF THE FLIES OF HIS DEATH?

OTHER KIDS

CONFIDENCE:
 'LITTLE CHILD OF MY FIVE SENSES
 AND OF MY SWEETNESS.'
 LET US ROCK OUR LOVES
 WE WILL HAVE GOOD CHILDREN.
 IN GOOD COMPANY
 WE SHALL FEAR NOTHING ON EARTH ANY MORE,
 GOOD FORTUNE, HAPPINESS, PRUDENCE,
 LOVES
 AND THAT LEAP FROM AGE TO AGE,