

GS/ EN 6743 3.0 (Fall 2023)

Revolution, Reaction & Resistance: The International Avant-garde (1896-1947)

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General Description:

If we consider the first Dada performance at the Cabaret Voltaire (Feb 15, 1916) as a foundational moment for the avant-garde, we must acknowledge that the avant-garde is fundamentally an internationalist enterprise. Initiated by two Romanian Jews, three German radicals, and a Swiss-Alsatian couple, it is also not coincidental that the Dadaist movement was founded in the international metropolis of Zurich. While not discounting the importance of Paris as a cradle of several avant-garde movements (such as Symbolism and Surrealism) this course will seek to explore the international spread of avant-garde tendencies in literature including Italian Futurism, Russian Futurism, English Vorticism, and the Surrealism of the Black Diaspora.

Required Texts:

Breton, Andre. *Nadja* (Grove); Cesaire, Aime. *Notebook of a Return to the Native Land* (Wesleyan); Jarry, Alfred. *The Ubu Plays* (Grove); Loy, Mina. *The Lost Lunar Baedeker* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux); Mayakovsky, Vladimir. *The Bedbug and Selected Poetry* (Indiana); Stein, Gertrude. *Tender Buttons* [pdf]

Grading:

Two brief oral presentations (25% x 2 = 50%); Research essay of approximately 4000 words: 40%; Active and informed participation: 10%.