

FANTASTIC ZANIES OF PAINTER'S BRUSH

Dadaism and Surréalism Embraced
in Bewildering Exhibit

The Marx Brothers of the art world are displayed, in all their unrestrained glory, in an exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surréalism at the Museum of Modern Art in New York this week.

Many visitors, to whom Surréalism* is just another ism, and Dada** has always been the first word burred by an infant, were bewildered enough by the 700-odd paintings and objects that abound throughout the Museum's four floors (see cut).

"If these guys are right, I don't want to be," one viewer remarked to his companion.

But they felt their last grip on sanity slipping when they discovered two old friends and stand-bys included with the zanies of brush and canvas—Walt Disney, *Mickey Mouse's* mentor, and Rube Goldberg (weighted in the catalog under the dignity of Reuben Lucius Goldberg), creator of the incredible comic-strip scientist, *Prof. Lucifer Gorganzola Butts, A. K.*

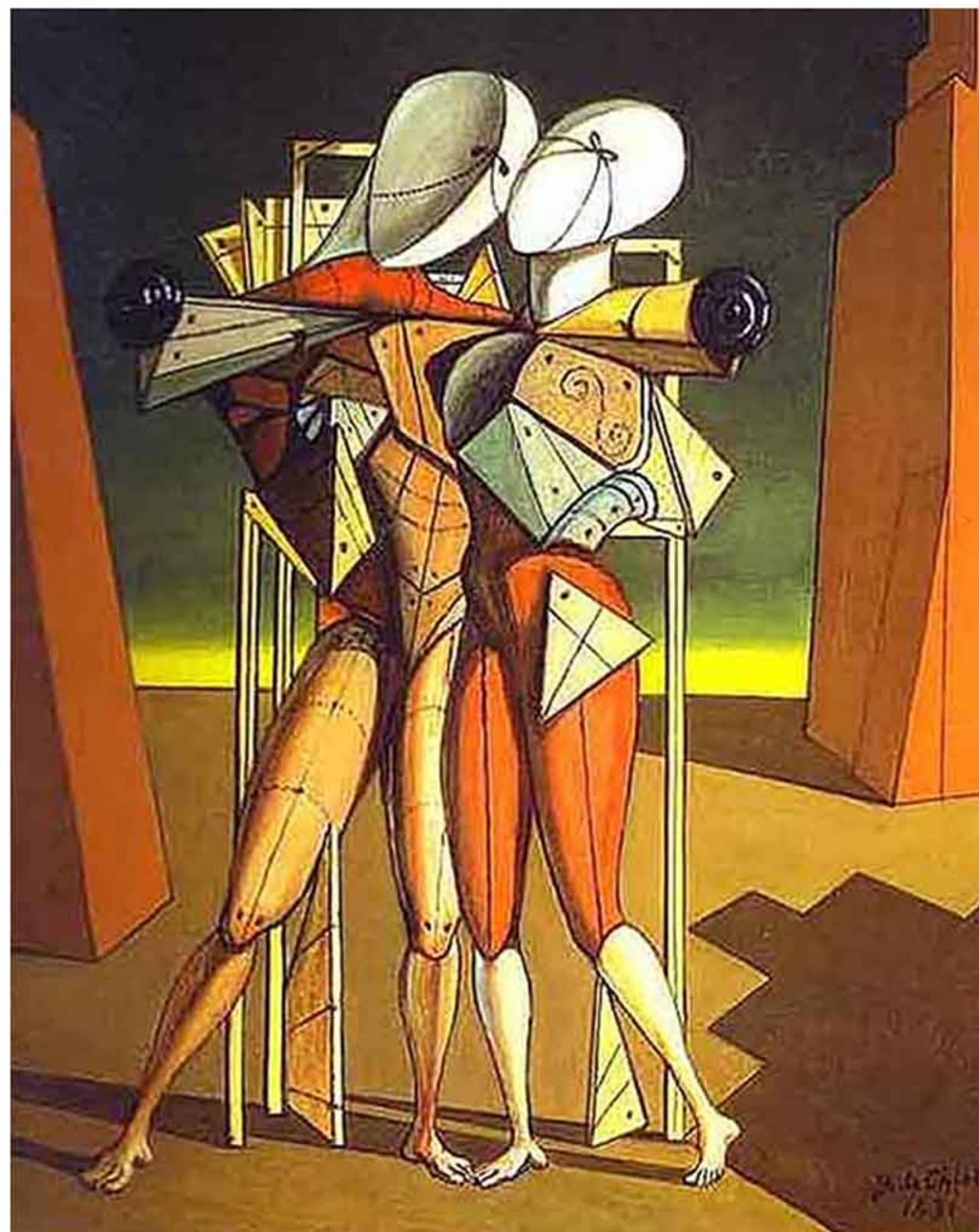
Disney is represented by a wolf pacifier, four frames from his animated film, "Three Little Wolves." Goldberg offers three apocryphal inventions: a bait-digger for fishing; an automatic lather brush for barbers; a device for keeping buttonhole flowers fresh.

Tho Goldberg's absurdities seem a part of the twentieth century, there are two entries in the show that parallel his humor while predating him by centuries. Filippo Morghen concocted a Machine for Bisecting an Opossum, and made an etching of it in 1764. And in the early 1800's, an unknown Italian artist recorded devices he called New Machine for Cutting Too Long Tongues at a Fixed Price, and Machine for Perfecting the Body Free of Charge. He painted the plans in gay water-colors.

* SURREALISM daubed Paris during unrest following World War, was defined by its leader, André Breton, as: "Pure psychic automatism, by which it is intended to express, verbally, in writing or by other means, the real process of thought. Thought's dictation, in the absence of all control exercised by the reason and outside all esthetic or moral preoccupations. Surréalism rests in the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of association neglected heretofore: in the omnipotence of the dream and in the disinterested play of thought. It tends definitely to do away with all other psychic mechanisms and to substitute itself for them in the solution of the principal problems of life."

** DADA: In 1916, a Spanish painter, Joan Miro (later among leaders of Surréalism), invented Dadaism. It had no technique and no principles, beyond suppressing all relation between thought and expression. Its followers sewed onto their paintings bits of cloth, orange-peels, or whatever hit their fancy. Translated, means hobby-horse.

Dadaism and Surréalism



"Hector and Andromache," by de Chirico

When most visitors arrived at the point where they felt like *Alice* at the *Mad Hatter's* Tea Party, they were face to face with a drawing her author, Lewis Carroll, had run up—a *facsimile* illustration from the original manuscript showing *Alice* underground.

Other eye-popping items:

A fur-lined and covered teacup, saucer and spoon, lent by the artist, Meret Oppenheim.

Man Ray's (French photographer and painter) nine-feet-wide, two-feet-high canvas of a well-rouged mouth floating in a cloudy sky. The same artist's painting "Eye," a human sight organ in which the iris is a mass of clouds and blue sky, caused as much disturbance.

Locomotive—"Agog" and "Mask," submitted by Wallace Putnam. The former is the artist's interpretation of a locomotive, head-on, made of such items as an inverted lampshade, cotton covered with two ostrich-plumes rising from it, a rolling pin, umbrella frames, two well-worn rubbers, a glass insulator, a garbage-pail cover, and two oversized, empty evaporated milk tins. The mask, some six feet high and half as wide, is covered with a string of white beads, a dirty elastic knee-supporter, a tooth-brush, coat-hanger, shoe-tree, powder-puff, mouse-trap, nail-brush, sink-stopper, curtain rings, and more than a hundred other odd, assorted tit-bits.

An indescribable canvas by Max Ernst entitled "The Gramineous Bicycle Garnished With Bells and Pilfered Greybeards and the Echinoderms Bending the Spine to Look for Caresses." His painted plaster on wood with dangling objects called "Loplop Introduces a Young Girl," caused many eyebrows to arch.

Nineteen drawings, water-colors, embroideries and objects done by insane patients.

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Jokesters—An exhibition of this type is always easy prey for the practical joker. A similar show in Paris several years ago exhibited a shovel, submitted by a well-known but discontented artist as an example of perfect symmetry. Last summer, at the International Surréalist Exhibition in London, B. Howitt-Lodge, a famed animal and portrait painter, hoaxed the New Burlington Galleries.

The Museum of Modern Art runs less chance of being duped. The Director, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., an authority on the schools of art that are akin to Gertrude Stein's writing, selected only accredited objects with a knowledge that forestalled pranksters.

The collection will remain in New York until January 17. It will then be shown in Philadelphia, Boston, Springfield, Milwaukee, San Francisco and other cities throughout the country.

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