

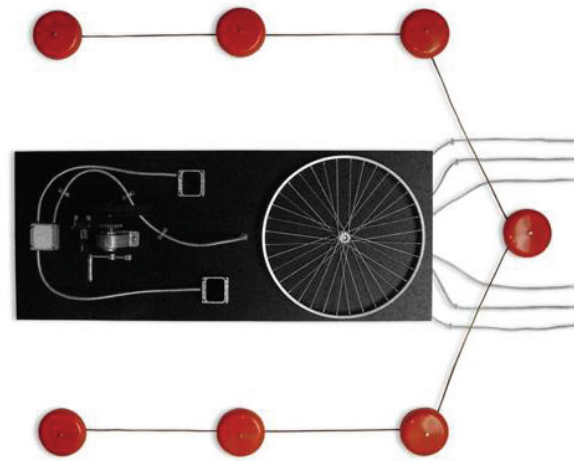
Amanda Sim

patte à physique
pas ta physique
pâte à physique

'Pataphysics.

'Pataphysics?

'Pataphysics!



*The Crank-O-Wank - Harundo Machinamenti Commissum
Le Musée Patamécanique
Ezekiel Borges Plateau*



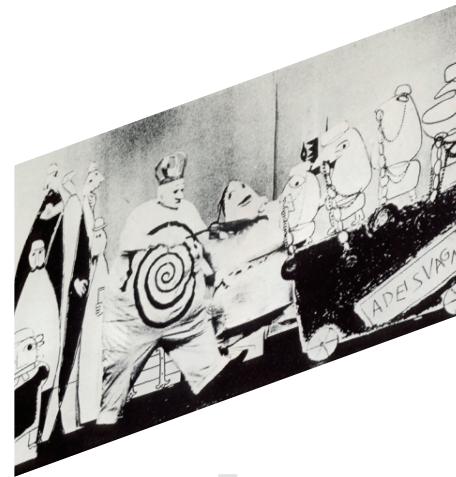
'Pataphysics

"The science of imaginary solutions, which symbolically attributes the properties of objects, described by their virtuality, to their lineaments"

leg of physics

not your physics

physics pastry dough

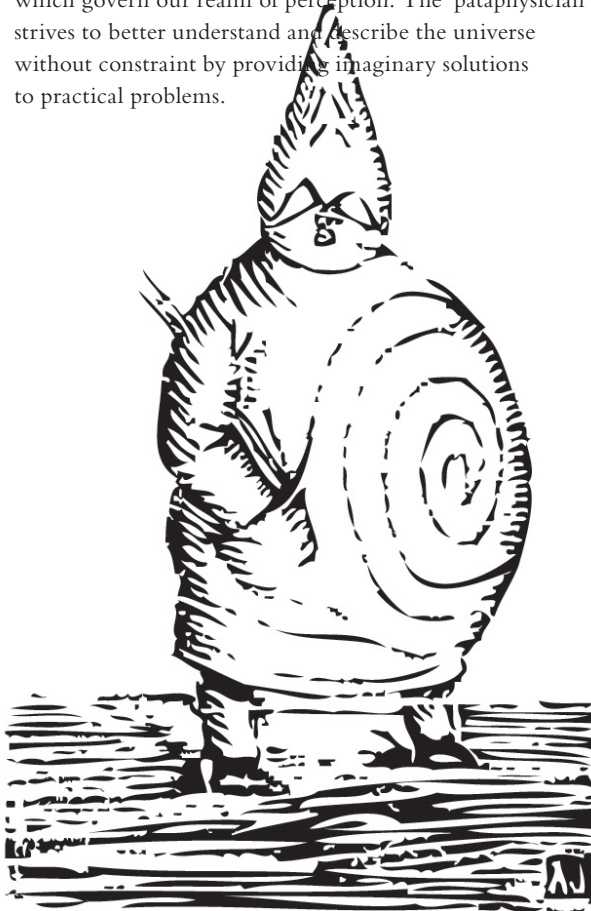


Considered a pseudo-philosophy, 'pataphysics is the study of what lies beyond the realm of metaphysics. Often approached with humor, it has also been defined as "a systematic toying with the arrangement and significance of things, until an improbable hypothesis can be seen as real." It is the study of exceptions rather than the laws, which govern our realm of perception. The 'pataphysician strives to better understand and describe the universe without constraint by providing imaginary solutions to practical problems.

Etymology

Created as a pseudo-Greek term by French writer Alfred Jarry (1873–1907), 'pataphysics is a humorous variation of Aristotle's work "Metaphysics," which, in Greek, means "that which is after [Aristotle's] 'Physics'." 'Pataphysics translates to "that which is above that which is after physics," or "that which is above metaphysics."

The term 'pataphysics is a pun in French of metaphysics. These puns include *patte à physique* (leg of physics), *pas ta physique* (not your physics), and *pâte à physique* (physics pastry dough). The apostrophe should always be included in the spelling and in no way affects the meaning or pronunciation.



True portrait of Mr. Ubu
Alfred Jarry

Woodcut frontispiece for *Ubu King, Drama in five Acts in prose*.
Restored as it was represented by the puppets of the Theatre of Phynances in 1888
Paris, Editions of Mercure de France, 1896

Alfred Jarry: 'Pataphysician

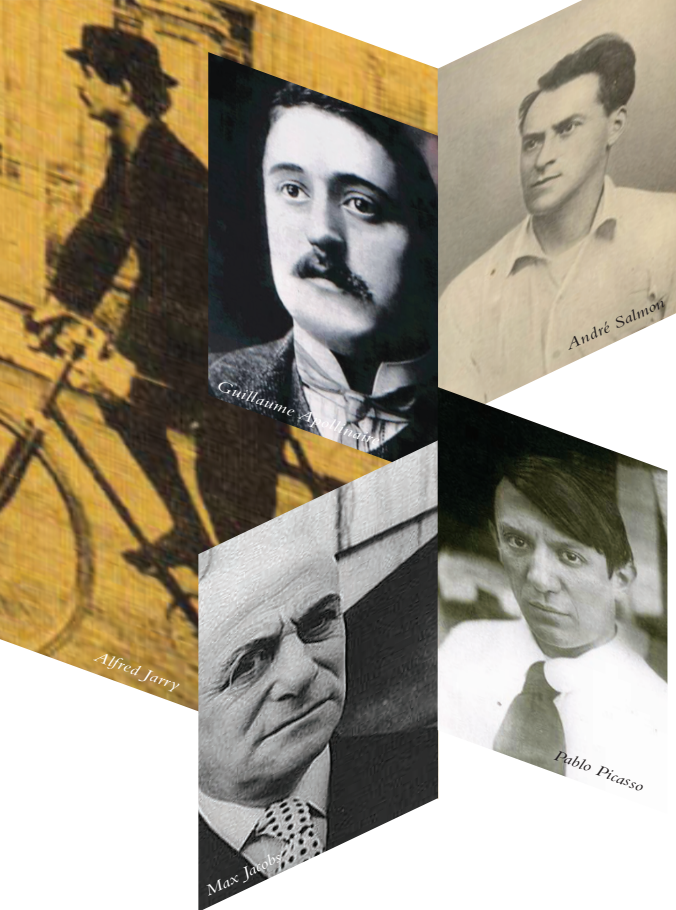
Alfred Henri Jarry was born on September 8, 1873 in Laval, France. Studying in Rennes he was a brilliant student, graduating high school with an outstanding record in Greek, Latin, German, and drawing and known for his penchant for practical jokes. While in school Jarry and classmate Henri Morin wrote a play for marionettes called *Les Polonais*. The main character of the play was based on Jarry's incompetent physics teacher, Professor Hébert, who was renamed Père Heb and portrayed as obese, incompetent, and grotesque. Jarry would continue to revise the play without Morin after graduating. *Ubu Roi* (*Ubu King*) premiered in 1896 and was one of the precursors to the Theatre of the Absurd as well as the surrealist art movement of the early twentieth century.

In 1891, Jarry left for Paris where he began studying the work of Friedrich Nietzsche and Henri Bergson. After failing the entrance exam to university three times he began to publish his work and decided to forego university. Through his writing he came to the attention of the French avant-garde artists.

Jarry had a reputation for his eccentricity, dressing in a black stovepipe hat, gauchos, and black cape that fell to his shoes. He could be seen riding his bicycle with a green umbrella and two Browning revolvers through the streets of Paris. Jarry transformed himself into one of his own literary creations, aggressively anti-traditional in action and idea.

His idiosyncrasies were not simply for show, but as Jarry writes in *the Exploits and Opinions of Dr. Faustroll, pataphysician*, published in 1911, there is "a unity of life, literature and art," which in his view required completely redefining one's conceptual framework. 'Pataphysics encourages its practitioners to probe the worlds that exist beyond our perceptions. This view on unifying the real and unreal influenced young writers such as André Salmon, one of the defenders of cubism; Max Jacobs, often regarded as an important link between the symbolists and the surrealists; and Guillaume Apollinaire, who is credited with coining the term Surrealism. Through Apollinaire, whom Jarry met in 1903, Jarry's ideas also reached Pablo Picasso who was fascinated with the concepts behind 'pataphysics, and after Jarry's death, acquired his pistol and wore it on his nocturnal expeditions in Paris, and later bought many of Jarry's manuscripts as well as completing a drawing of him.

'Pataphysics was highly influential to symbolist and surrealist works and in 1961 Asger Jorn, 'pataphysician and member of the Situationist International, referred to 'pataphysics as a new religion in "Pataphysics - A Religion In The Making" published in *Internationale Situationniste* No. 6 (August 1961).



The Persistence of Memory
Salvador Dali, 1931



Les Femmes d'Alger (O Version)
Pablo Picasso, 1907



The Large Glass
Marcel Duchamp, 1915-23



The Collège de 'Pataphysique

The Collège de 'Pataphysique, or Ouvroir de littérature potentielle (“workshop of potential literature”), was founded 11 May 1948 in Paris, is a group of artists and writers interested in the philosophy of 'pataphysics. The motto of the college is “Eadem mutata resurgo (I arise again the same though changed).” Noted members of the college and its subcommittee, Oulipo, have included Georges Perec, Italo Calvino, Oskar Pastior, Jacques Roubaud, Noël Arnaud, Luc Etienne Périn, and Raymond Queneau. Publications of the college include the *Cahiers du Collège de 'Pataphysique* and the *Dossiers du Collège de 'Pataphysique*.



“If you let a coin fall and it falls, the next time it is just by an infinite coincidence that it will fall again the same way; hundreds of other coins on other hands will follow this pattern in an infinitely unimaginable fashion. Every event in the universe should be accepted as an extraordinary event.”

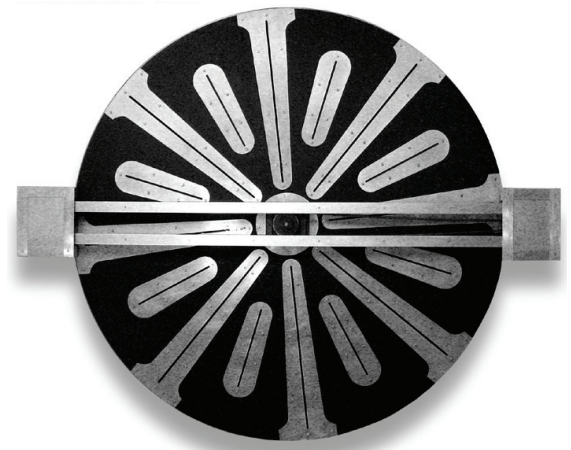
Alfred Jarry



Re-enlivening Chambers with Bees - Insecto Reanimus
Hans Spinnermen
Le Musée Patamécannique



An Olfactory Lighthouse - Pharus Foetidus Viscera
Miss Mazine Edison
Le Musée Patamécannique



A Time Machine - Lumineaus Maximus
Ezekiel Borges Plateau
Le Musée Patamécannique

Le Musée Patamécannique

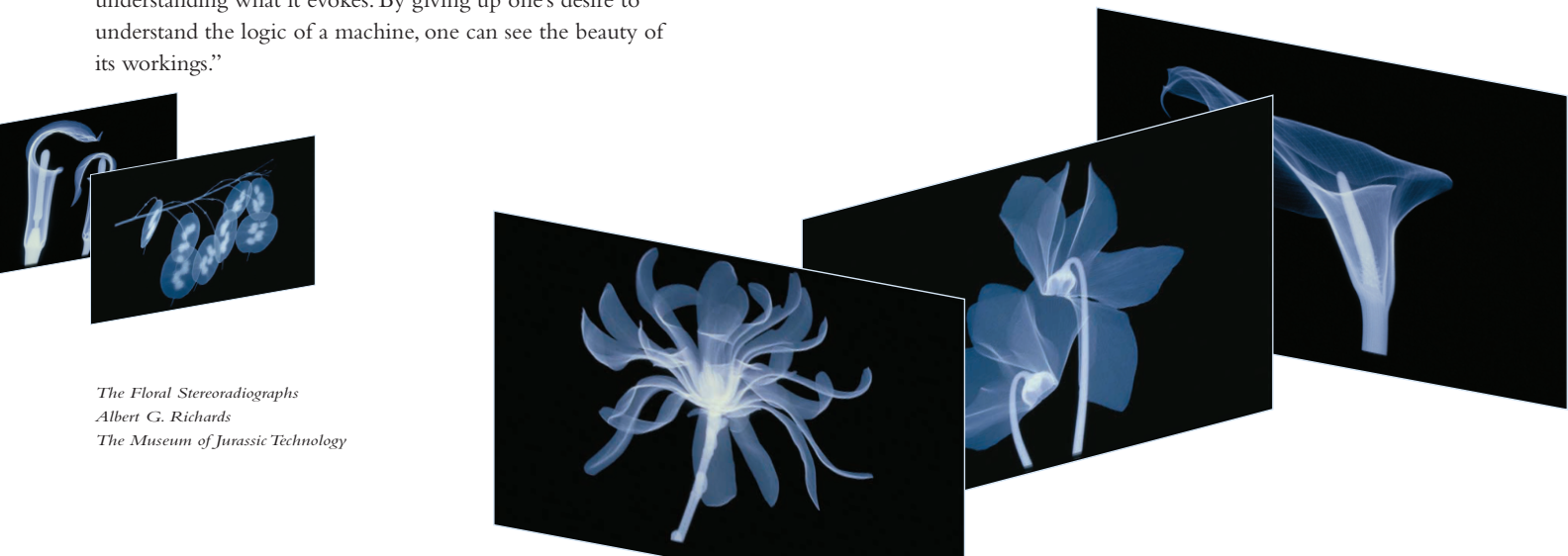
Le Musée Patamécannique is a unique experience: part performance, part history, part fantasy. It is both illuminating and mysterious leaving the viewer with beautifully unanswerable questions. It can only be seen by guided tour, courtesy of the curator, Neil Salley, Rhode Island School of Design alumni of digital + media 2006. While its exact location is kept secret by Salley and its visitors, Le Musée is located in Bristol, Rhode Island. Upon making an appointment to view the museum, Salley will send you the exact whereabouts.

"Equally as enjoyable as the experience of the mysterious machines is the understanding that they are all based on real science, or adapted from science fiction, and thus can be 'understood' as mechanical machines with logical workings... This, ultimately, is what Le Musée is all about: that knowing how something is done can often be far less important than understanding what it evokes. By giving up one's desire to understand the logic of a machine, one can see the beauty of its workings."

The Museum of Jurassic Technology

The Museum of Jurassic Technology is a specialized treasury of obscure relics and artifacts of natural history, the history of technology and science. Founded by David Hildebrand Wilson and Diana Drake Wilson in 1987 it is located in Los Angeles, California.

The Museum's catalog is modelled after 18th century cabinets of curiosities which were predecessors of modern natural history museums and includes a mixture of artistic, scientific, and unclassifiable exhibits. The factual claims of many of the Museum's exhibits strain credibility, provoking a rich array of interpretations. The Museum was the subject of a book by Lawrence Weschler in 1995 called "Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder," and the Museum's founder David Wilson received a MacArthur Foundation fellowship in 2001.



The Floral Stereoradiographs
Albert G. Richards
The Museum of Jurassic Technology

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