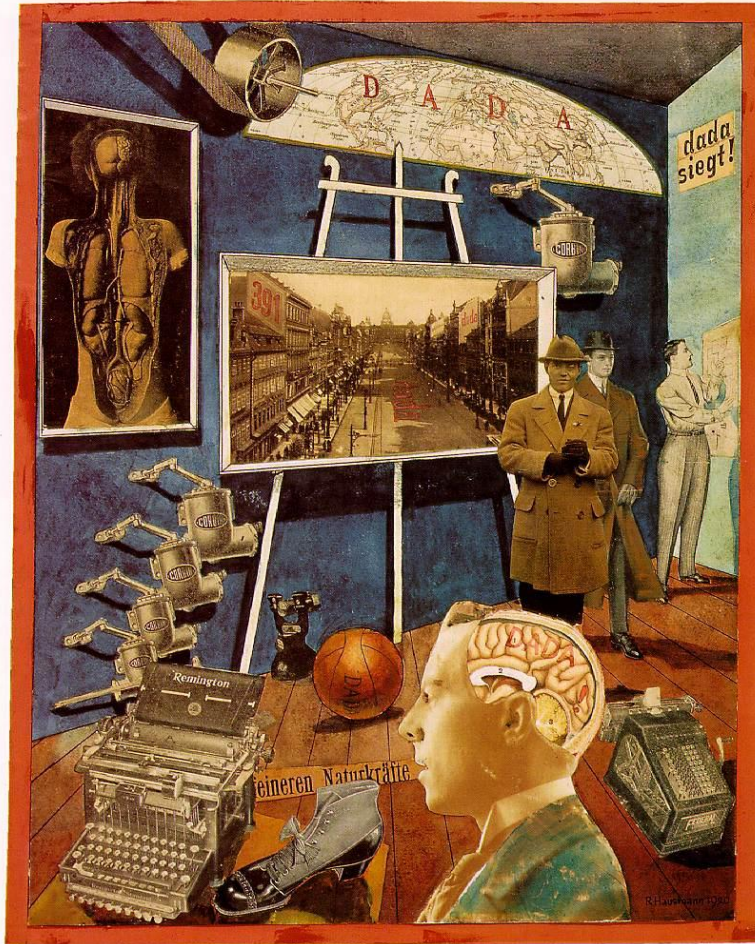


Ways of thinking essay

Deconstruct the meaning of an artwork in relation to one of the following topics: the politics of representation, race or violence.



Raoul Hausmann's Dada Siegt (1920)

This essay will examine the meaning of art in relation to the representation of the postcolonial condition and the representation of violence within this artwork. Raoul Hausmann's Dada Siegt is a historical artwork offering social commentary and political protest based on the 'Dada movement' which was incredibly influential during World War 1. The foreground within the image is painted with dull blue and orange tones using watercolours but painted to convey a rugged texture achieving a worn-out appearance upon a woven painting. Using complimentary colours such as orange and blue stands out and can be attention-grabbing which could suggest self-expression, contrast and balance. This art work was one of his first paintings in his collections during his involvement with the Dada movement, within the image you can observe important indicators associated with the motion. Numerous individuals are depicted in this painting discussing and organising a course of action. I believe Hausmann is attempting to discuss aspects of his personal life as an anatomy student, using images of parts of the human brain which could also be the motivation behind the wall painting illustrating the interior of a human body however, this could not only be concerning his academics but possibly also a statement to show how this artwork is based on his personal thoughts and beliefs as well as bringing the dada culture into practice by examining a map of the world that includes dada culture. Within the artwork, Hausmann has included musical items which to the best

of my knowledge, instruments have been used to communicate across the battlefield to intimidate the enemy, inspire courage and acknowledge victories and defeats which also highlights the themes of war and violence within 'dada seight'. Hausmann has included a painting of a peaceful town, but unsure of the correct definition I believe the relation of painting a peaceful town could suggest a visualisation of hope in the middle of the mass destruction of war. Evoking nostalgia for a period before the war reshaped the lives of the people through presenting images of quiet towns. The conflict's effects on collective memory and cultural heritage may be highlighted in the painting, which provokes feelings of longing for a past that has drastically altered. Shown within the painting are men who appear to be conversing with one another or standing and thinking alone which could be related to the prevailing ideologies or intellectual currents of the era.

The way everything is shown to be arranged in a small room may have referred to how disorderly the period was and how challenging it was to have numerous things going on simultaneously. The difference in the painting's initial calm appearance and its analysis in relation to the war theme suggests that there are two entirely different perspectives when it comes to seeing the war remotely and when it comes to being involved and experiencing its horrors. Within the artwork, Hausmann has included childhood objects such as a basketball which could indicate how he himself had to grow up being involved with this pandemonium however, this may also be in reference to how artists use childhood items to symbolise innocence and vulnerability which in this concept is the loss of innocence in the face of war. Extending the loss of innocence A shoe that Hausmann included in the assortment of items in this piece of art could also be referring to the loss of innocence and total mercy however, this could also suggest a tribute to remember those who have suffered or lost their lives in war as artists have often chosen to paint shoes to be used as a profound and representative element in a composition for a memorial. Another known title for this artwork is 'Bourgeois Precision Brain Incites a World Movement' The contrast between "precision" and "incites" might draw attention to the paradox of a precise, ordered class system being the catalyst for a disruptive or revolutionary movement which Hausmann refers to as the dada movement in this artwork. The ordered class system being a catalyst for revolution suggests the inequality and social injustice that comes with it, the constant battle between the rich and the poor during World War 1 which began to cause significant movements when the current social order was no longer able to be sustained or when a sizable segment of the population feel that fundamental changes are required for a better future. (1914) Artists started imagining a post-war world, they broadcasted this vision through their artworks in hopes of demonstrating to the world that change that can be created for the world and life can be peaceful again. Throughout the war, art performed a variety of roles, including influencing public opinion, capturing the realities of combat, and offering a platform for voice, and cultural preservation, each being peaceful solutions to projecting statements which were vital in both enhancing the war effort and raising human costs concerns about warfare. In addition to expressing opinions, art served as a platform for hope and had the power to produce beauty even in the face of hardship. A huge contribution of historical and influential art movements during this time was the Dada Movement. Dada was an artistic and intellectual movement which began in (1915) it was instrumental in defining modernism. Modernism was artwork created roughly between the 1860s and 1920s, which consists of the styles and philosophies of the era's art that are typically associated with art that has been abandoned in the name of experimentation which challenged the Western standards of fine art and embraced new forms of expression. Art such as modernism offers individuals a distinctive and easily approachable way of expressing their opinions that have an impact on people's lives on a cultural and intellectual level which during the 1900s was an important and commonly used strategy for people to state their beliefs. In (1914) Raoul Hausmann started to take an interest in German expressionism after World War 1 began inspiring his early work. (1900) When Hausmann was 14 years old, his family moved to Berlin, It was a vibrant and culturally diverse

city that would later become a major hub for avant-garde artistic movements however, Hausmann was forced into the harsh impact of the war on society and culture. Hausmann created a philosophy that was directed at the destruction of war, he called this Dadasophy - the narratives and structures of European avant-garde art in the early 20th century, primarily in its most destructive form. Hausmann was one of the creators of the Dada movement in Berlin. The Dada movement (1916) was political and cultural created by a group of artists in Switzerland responding to the horrors of war. Berlin Dada wasn't a cohesive trend, it was characterized by its diversity and distinct individual expressions. Despite its brief existence, it had a significant impact on the art world of Modernism and surrealism in the development of conceptual art. Dada wanted to bid farewell to the established rules, ideals and conventions. The movement's name "Dada" has no clear meaning reflecting the irrational nature of the movement itself. These paintings by Hausmann reflect his emotions during the conflict and demonstrate the psychological effects war had on the artist. Raoul Hausmann continued his art practice in references to the war in many artistic mediums such as photomontage, poetry, sculpture, assemblage and political engagement, An Example of his sculpture and photomontage work is 'Spirit of our Time' assemblage (1921) containing many common tools and devices on a wooden head, These items were frequently chosen because of their cultural or symbolic value. Dada was known for its use of found objects, which subverted conventional creative techniques. The artwork was a metaphor for his fellow Germans during this period expressing the chaotic and turbulent situation of the world at the time. The way postcolonial themes of war and politics are shown in Hausmann's work continued over his dadaist career and also followed to portray the same message in response to the horrors of the war, expressing a deep sense of disillusionment and disgust with the political, social, and cultural conditions that had led to the conflict. Hausmann's work is a great example of how powerful art movements can tribute to society to later create a great impact on the world as a whole. Later in Hausmann's life, he saw a career shift in his style and focus including abstract painting including relation to poem such as his last piece of photomontage titled 'ABCD' (1923). ABCD is a self portrait combined with text and image which shows the artist clenching the letters (ABCD) in his teeth. Hausmann composed the sound poem "ABCD" (1921), sound poems in the Dadaist tradition attempted to investigate the phonetic and rhythmic aspects of language apart from its literal meaning. However, despite these changes, his later works still maintained a connection to his earlier Dadaist principles but with a more mature and reflective perspective. To the modern day, we continue using art movements similar to Raoul Hausmann's to project our views and fight for what we believe in. An example of this is Aziz Al Asmat a Syrian artist who depicts the sorrows of Syria's war by painting the homes, schools and buildings ruined by the tragedy of the war. Aziz's goal was to tell the stories of the Assad crimes and broadcast to the world how destructive and detrimental war conflicts are, with the hope that one day there will be world peace.

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