

Collisions, Revisions, Reversals

Hybrids, Rip-offs, Cut it Out
Transformations

Collage destroys the very idea of a medium, of any one “pure” mode of art. With collage, art is nowhere and everywhere; it becomes a freewheeling way of dealing with random material, emblematic of fragmented experience. Modern experience seems fragmented because one never knows what will impinge upon it, what will turn up in it.

Donald Kuspit, “Collage: The Organizing Principle of Art”, *Collage. Critical Views*

Max Ernst



Max Ernst – Die Anatomie, 1921

“The collage technique is the systematic exploitation of the accidentally or artificially provoked encounter of two or more foreign realities on a seemingly incongruous level – and the spark of poetry that leaps across the gap as these two realities are brought together.” Ernst used illustrative material from teaching aids, catalogues, and fashion brochures, also charts taken from scientific encyclopedias illustrating botany, zoology, and mechanics.

John Heartfield



John Heartfield – a member of the Berlin Dadaclub, used art as satire and a political weapon against fascist propaganda during 20's/30's

Heartfield



Heartfield's first piece for the KPD weekly *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung* (Workers Illustrated Magazine, AIZ) was, "Whoever Reads Bourgeois Newspapers Becomes Blind and Deaf" (1930), in which a man's head is wrapped in *Vorwärts*, the SPD's paper. A bitter poem on the image begins, "I am a cabbage-head".

Hannah Höch



Hannah Höch – part of Berlin Dada group and pioneer of photomontage – looked at how women were depicted in media – critiqued the beauty industry – active in 1920's women's movement – her pieces often combine male and female in personage.

Martha Rosler



Martha Rosler

'Cleaning the Drapes' (from: Bringing the War Home: House Beautiful and Bringing the War Home: in Vietnam Series), 1967–1972 photomontage

Rosler's work critiques how women are perceived/portrayed, and also examines war – bringing the conflicts “home” – in the sense that these spheres are politically connected and cannot be glossed over. Similar to John Heartfield's strategies, Rosler here contrasts the military conflict abroad with American consumer complacency. And related to Hoch's critical strategies, Rosler's work also attempts to disrupt gender roles. She often juxtaposes the female body with technology – what impact does this have?

Martha Rosler



Saddam's Palace: Febreze 2004

"It was these two projected spaces, one idealized and the other cast completely into the other mode. It showed a picture of who we thought we might be if we only strove hard enough, our best selves, versus this picture of the rejected space. It just seemed like this is the way it had to be shown. It wasn't about contrasting two realities, but two world views: our ideal self and this other thing which was the unacceptable reality of another place. One suggested we had agency, that we could create this world, and the other suggested that we had no agency, that others had agency, the military or elected leaders or terrorists, though that's not the lingo of the day, other geopolitical forces. This was not an arena that we had any power over."

Martha Rosler on '*Bringing the War Home: House Beautiful*'.

Mary Beth Edelson



Mary Beth Edelson has always worked with archetypes, primal patterns and symbols to make powerful representations of women.

Mary Beth Edelson



The following slides are from Edelson's exhibition "Burn in Hell" 2011 – it describes an invented mythological universe. The collages build on her legacy as an activist.

Edelson



The lower regions—the underworld— have plastic rats and a chorus of black birds. In the past, a specific Egyptian bird goddess was used by Edelson. The birds here look almost like knives, they are a conglomeration of many birds. The upper wall (or heaven) are dominated by the face of Botticelli's Venus.

Edelson



Edelson



Edelson



There is also the suggestion of psychosis and even horror: the face of Venus sometimes dissolves in a glowering grey whirlpool, or splits in two, her eyes robotic. In between these two regions are other creatures: ravens, serpents, Grace Jones, Louise Bourgeois, the mythical Baubo (whose laughter cheered the mourning Demeter), the Irish trickster Sheela-na-gig, Jenebe Goldstein (famous as the bandana-wearing, machine-gun wielding marine in Aliens).

Amie Dicke



Amie Dicke (Dutch) uses fashion magazine images intended to project desirability that are exposed as empty and hollow. The models appear as phantoms, the flow of forms echoing tears as they cascade down the body.

Dicke



Amie Dicke –Cutting directly in the magazine







A fashion designer appropriated Dicke's collage approach to the fashion world, and designed clothing based on her cutting work.

Marie Luise Emmermann

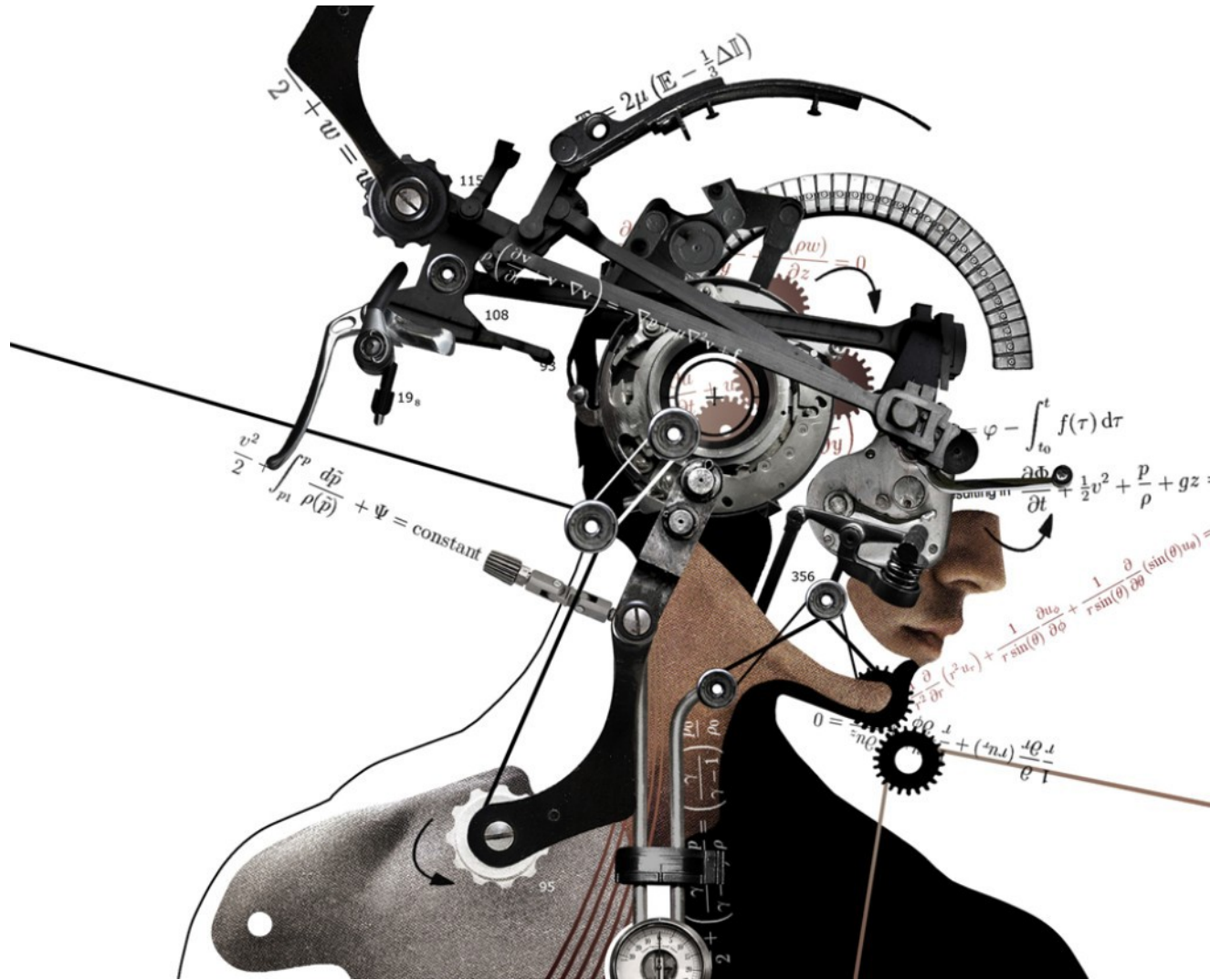


Marie Luise Emmermann – (Berlin) Glueless collages (2010) This work is about dissecting superficial beauty, about disintegration and alienation from familiar shapes. She takes her cuts and places everything in photoshop for a clean look.

Emmermann



Emmermann

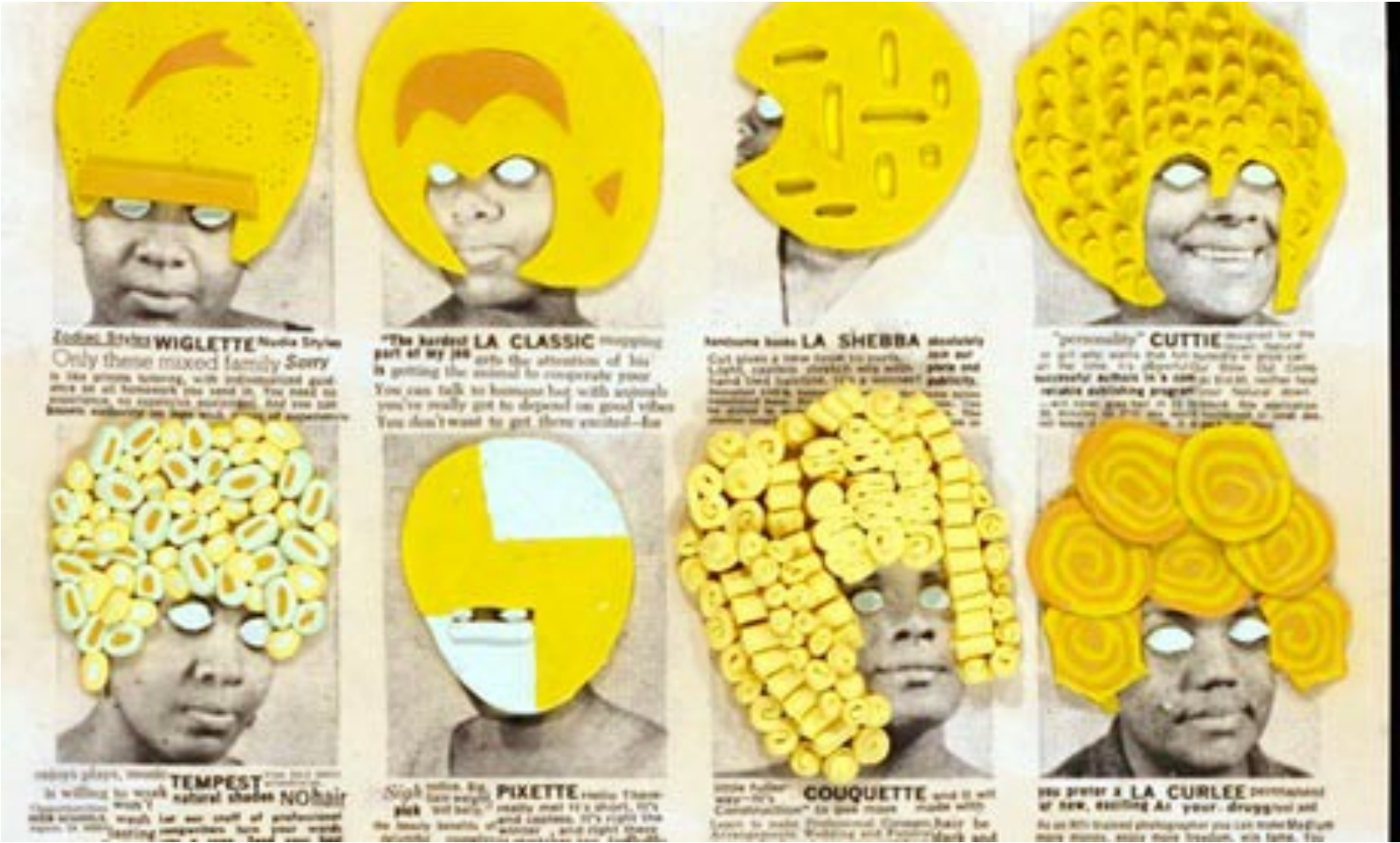


Wangechi Mutu



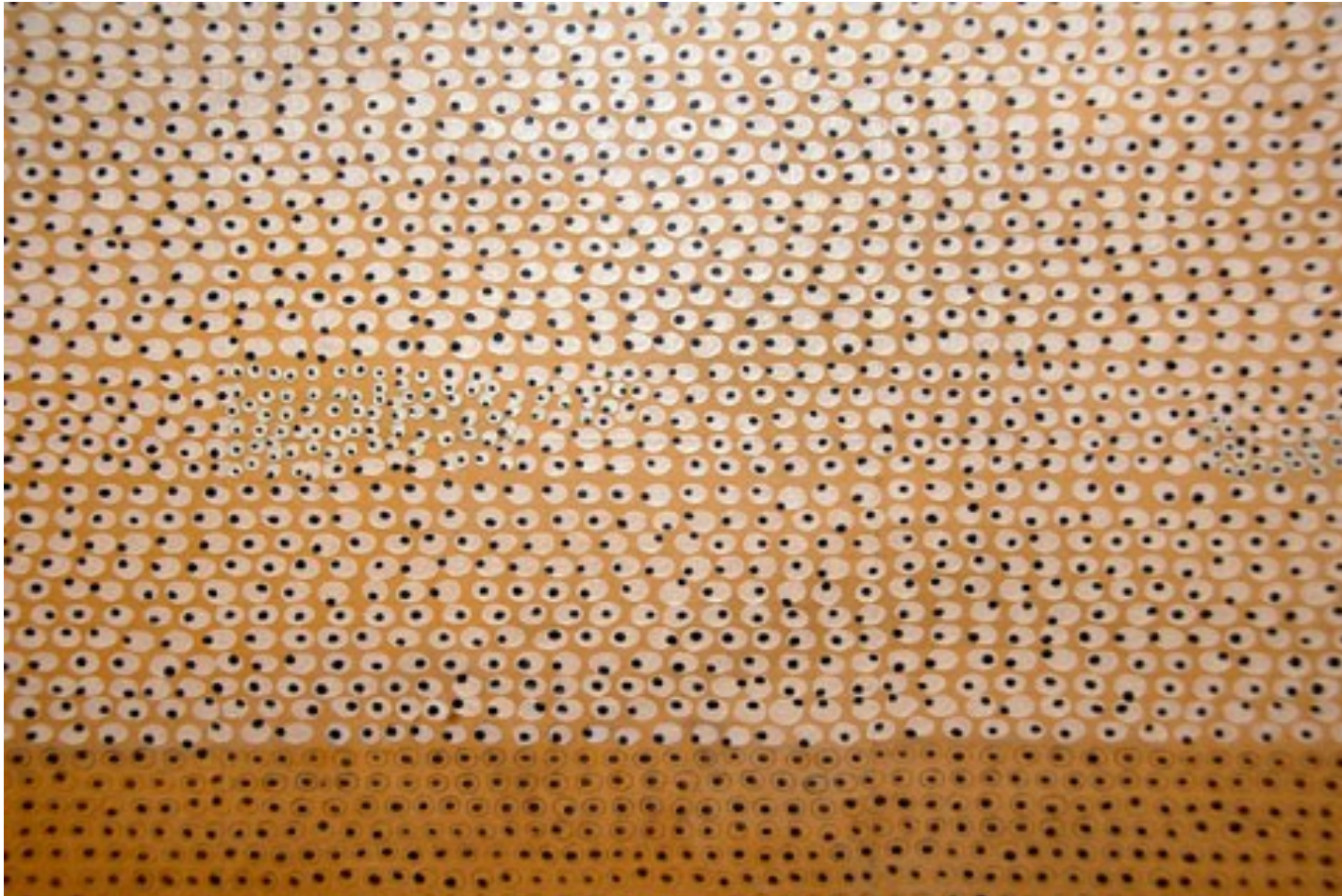
Wangechi Mutu is a Kenyan artist based in the US who experiments in collage, painting, drawing and installation, works mainly with female figures with mismatched limbs and appendages, constructed from different media. Mutu uses fashion magazine cutouts, pornographic extracts, images of (so called) primitive African artefacts, antique anatomical charts, and draws and paints into them –cyborg creatures emerge.

Ellen Gallagher



Gallagher's work critiques the historical signs of racial profiling in mass culture, as African Americans were depicted with big eyes and thick lips associated with blackface minstrelsy and other common Hollywood stereotypes

Gallagher



Gallagher uses stereotypes as raw material – at first their abstract and repetitive beauty pulls you in – and then you distressfully realize what they are. These images are “abstractly made from figurative elements” that provocatively go back and forth.

Alexandre Singh



Alexandre Singh – NY based, French artist. This work is entitled Assembly Instructions (The Pledge–Leah Kelly) (detail) – and the totality is made up of 37 framed inkjet ultrachrome archival prints and dotted pencil lines, 2011. For this series Singh conducted interviews with scientists, artists, writers, and filmmakers. He then reworked these texts into images of “fictional dialogues” using collaged photocopies connected by hand-drawn pencil marks.

Alexandre Singh



Psittacula ordinarius (solida est et tam omnino realis)

(quoth [Linnaeus](#), 1766)

Psibacula ordinarius (solida est et tam omnino realist)
(quoth Linnaeus, 1766) (part of Assembly Instructions)

Singh liberally uses art historical references: Dada, Surrealism, the 1950's Independent Group (found object aesthetic, UK precursor to Pop Art) science books, "administrative aesthetics" as found in images from government and industrial archives.

Mab Bryans



Mab Bryans – London-based –obsessive process-oriented projects –uses erasure, burning, hammering, and sanding –creates new narratives –transforms humble materials such as newspaper, wood, mud, and foil, into drawings, installations, and large-scale collages – here he erased magazine photographs down to the newsprint and pinned them onto wall.

Bryan



Bryan - detail



Raphaëlle de Groot



Raphaëlle de Groot – (Canadian) “I develop “performative” exercises that turn others’ gaze back onto me, a procedure that turns attention back to the artist’s work... Through various physical and situational constraints—obstructed vision, restrictive wear, covering up the face—I strive to work outside the purview of vision, in “un-mastery”, such as to install a state of dispossession, of loss: loss of one’s bearings, loss of control, loss of self-image.”

“From this perspective, to be an artist is to experience one’s limits, to shake up the idea of a static reality, to break the fixed patterns, and to work in a movement that looks for disorientation and accepts discomfort.”

Jan Svankmajer

Dimensions of Dialogue Part 1:

See video link on Moodle

Jan Svenkmajar – Surrealist Czech filmmaker

Dimensions of Dialogue, 1982 (Pt 1.)

Arcimboldo-like heads gradually reduce each other
to bland copies

Paul Butler *Collage Party*



'Collage Party' is a nomadic, collective studio. Paul Butler invites the public to make collage alongside him in a social setting. He started this social artwork in 1998 to recreate the art school atmosphere he was missing. At first he supplied the material –magazines, scissors, glue, music and alcohol and invited his art community to join him in the studio to make collage. The idea grew – here we see him hosting a three-day Collage Party at Goldsmiths College in London. Collage Party has travelled all over Canada, the US and Europe, being staged in all kinds of venues including museums, universities, elementary schools, galleries, and department stores.