Line lay, somewhat oddly, behind all the activity in Duchamp's *Large Glass*. His first drawings (fig. 9.1) drafted the principals into ur-lines, orthogonals, ellipses, and loose spirals, perhaps platonic skeletons; whatever, the line itself was identifiable. It was geometrical; as such, steady and knowable, capable of being plotted into quadrants and measured to scale. At least that was how the line began. Then it sped off. It indulged itself in complex gyrations, flipped between dimensions, combined to make machine parts and then an apparatus, one for some bachelors, one for a bride. The parts spun, like motors, with desire; the bride was stripped bare, unfolded; she bloomed. The end. No recognizable body had fallen into view. All by itself the geometry had touched off a sexual plot.

Duchamp could not leave this progression from geometry to desire like this and he did not. He took some care to provide it with a text—a long full title, *La Mariee mise a nu par ses celibataires, meme*, and a battery of notes. The unseen body would at least be written in. Even with added detail though the plot was thin, offering precious little romance and no particular end, not even a kiss, only a stalemate, a splashing breeze, a surfeit of desire, several digressions on the fourth dimension, and that famous last indifferent *meme*. Withal, Duchamp claimed, hilarity would ensue. ² Laughter would make quite a difference. It would smooth over the strangeness in the linear desire, it would make light of the technical passages, and it would distinguish the picture from the usual easel painting, which was not and is not normally intended to be funny.

In some ways the *Glass* followed from Duchamp's early work in cartoons, a highly conventional genre based on flagrant incongruity, structural oddness, and broad comedic slips between the name of the cartoon, its caption, and its image. Generally the joke was made at the expense of bourgeois sexuality. But Duchamp called the *Glass* a painting, *a peinture de precision*, which is painting and not painting, a nameless alternative of his own devising that was supposed to support the logic that started with line and ended, laughing, with desire. ³ The precision in Duchamp's idea of painting will concern us in due course, not yet. It would be precipitous to jump too quickly ahead; besides, jumping to precision means glossing over vulgarity.
and the vulgarity is the best part, the "vulgarity indispensable," Duchamp called it in 1913, saying as well that it was neither poetic nor technical, nor (heaven forbid) picturesque.  

First things first. Line in its manifold vulgarity is at once tied to the body and different from it, at once sexually attached and very precisely Other. The road from line to desire was paved with historically determined and unimpeachable contradictions. Duchamp’s progression is repeating another just as riven, in fact it is part of a series of cycles, banal cycles that managed not to echo but to bend and catch and swell. This vulgarity will not be crude, nor will it display its contradictions openly. It will appear to be progress.

Duchamp had been taught his lines. In the late 1870s and the early 1880s, when the Ferry reforms of the national school system were being made and a curriculum that was free of charge, secular, and compulsory for all children was set into place as the cornerstone of the new Third Republic, programs for drawing instruction in the French public schools were elaborated. Drawing proved to be controversial, and in the course of the debate around it, line and body were pitted against each other as if they were savagely opposite poles. The question before the government was which one, line or body, would provide the classroom model and then the controlling image for French public culture, which would be the formative one, which would be imitated until it became second nature, like reading and writing, and forever after done automatically, like breathing or speaking. Each had a clear set of references and recommendations. The body was understood to be nothing less than the body as it had been rendered by the old masters of high culture, the classical sculptors and the men of the Italian Renaissance. Line was geometric line, which carried with it a wholly different tradition, the functional, technical culture of machine production. The debate between the defenders of body and the advocates of line was long and passionate, too long to outline here. Suffice it to say that geometric line won out. It was taught as part of a visual language, what was called at the time the language (langue) of industry. It was a language of forms designed for modern life, a language that lay at the beginning of the common modern picture, and a language that carved the opposition between line and body deep into the common sense of the image. Line was to lead France straight to the commodity.
For the next thirty years, geometric drawing was taught as the root of all representation and the body was put away. The pry drawing instruction, elaborated by the sculptor and director of Arts, Eugene Guillaume, and set out in the decree of January gave geometry a specific progression. In the elementary course -- with students aged 6 to 9 years -- one began with the straight line principle; one learned that all things could be reduced to their geometrically grounded lines; inversely and tautologically one that these lines were the building blocks with which all thing drawn. And so classroom instruction started with the straight line elaborated upon it. The line was divided into equal parts, ti -- between a group of straight lines were scrutinized, angles were and from them simple figures like doors (fig. 9.2). From there to the first principles of ornament, learned how to make a regi. and a circle and how to make stars. The programs were not illt . - they did not always specify models, but the manuals produc, prising teachers and textbook companies soon settled into a standard set of their own, giving the culture of line an alphabet.

industry
Roue de voiture

[Diagram of a wheel with spokes and a tire]
like the image, was built up in consecutive layers that would reenact the progress made by modernity. The middle and advanced steps of the program unveiled the direction progress would be taking.

In the middle course (for ages 9 to 12) one studied what were called ordinary curves, ellipses, and spirals (fig. 9.3). One looked at the curves borrowed from nature, stems, leaves, and flowers; though what this really meant was that the curves had to be extracted from the model before they could be given to the student; at most the student saw these curves after they had been translated into printed models. One studied low relief sculptures showing patterned friezes. One was given the first notions of mechanical drawing and perspective. Then one moved into three-dimensional figures, first geometric solids, then simple objects of everyday life, all of which were drawn in cross section and elevation and then drawn again in perspective. The conventions of shadowing were taught. The techniques of drawing using ruler, compass, protractor, and T-square were introduced; up until then all drawing had been done by the unaided hand, "à main levée."

In the advanced course (from 12 to 14 years) one learned a purely geometric repertoire of ornament, which was developed into moldings, egg and (1.111) pearls, denticules, etc. Palmettes were a favorite. The basic notions of the architectural orders were given. Measured mechanical drawing, *croquis tote*, was done from geometric solids and then from objects everyday life, the instruments used for wood construction, the tools of stow and metal working, and the most ordinary pieces of furniture. The conventions of wash were taught in order to give the technical description of architectural surfaces, tiles, parquets, windows, paneling, ceilings, bi: color was only allowed to indicate the material composition of the object, i (the parts that were stone were greyed, the parts that were wood wet tanned) and to color the random map. All of this would have served the building industry's needs very well. Then an intrusion: at the last minute almost magically, the human head appeared and was drawn. But only the head. Below the neck the body remained in shadow, *acephale*, invisible, suppressed.

Still more programs were elaborated for those last optional years of school in lycée or college, where
the student was introduced to the drawing of the body, both human and animal, and to the study of
landscapes, though these would by and large be studied through the imitation of works of art. OnIN here,
at the end, at the point well beyond the schooling of the average citizen, did the fine art tradition make a
timid entrance. The curriculum did not really need it especially, in fact it did not need it much. The
programs did not proceed from it, nor from the imitation of nature, nor from the imitation of the
ancients: the public culture of the Third Republic was based on mechanical drawing, sans color, sans
nature, sans body, sans the classics, some would have said sans everything. Still, the survivor, the
measured mechanical drawing, worked as a visual language in a way that the others could not. It allowed
for the communication of specific visual properties of objects and it enabled the worker and the designer,
not to mention the consumer, to speak accurately and well to one another by means of indexical signs,
numbered pictures. By and large this was a language meant for work, not for leisure, and certainly not for
raptures or poetic, high cultural sighs. This language was preaesthetic.

Guillaume always argued for the value of his system by claiming that after graduation primary line
drawing could be taken to professional ends as

different from one another as art and engineering. Before advancement, however, there was a
primary (read working-class) level of linear competence that had to be achieved, there was a single
glowing language of industry. The other segments of the population, notably the petit and grander
bourgeois, would be educated to their respective classes in the secondary schools, where some
drawing after fine art models, as we have seen, did occur. Different relations to line and to the
economy would perforce emerge, as would different relations to art. But, Guillaume would have
argued, the primary and secondary school programs had been designed in concert, secondary was
built from primary, and drawing in all cases began with the concept that line was the basis for one
universal language that could serve the entire nation whatever one's class. Yet not everyone could
be allowed to advance. What looked cumulative had been cannily designed to ration knowledge. Even in its most mystical form, when it was only a political idea, this language of line promoted neither equality nor unity. The glow was smoky and uneven.

The idea of language did not end with the indexical line. This language was more than a form. It proclaimed itself to be more than formal. Drawing and seeing where to be taught together. The drawing programs were meant to inculcate precision seeing, by which was meant an appreciation of the geometrically grounded outlines of the things of this world. (The development of good taste was to be an outgrowth of this precision.) In the culture of line, the line of sight was singled out and ultimately became the most important line of all, far more important than any plumb line or ground line, since it set the horizons of expectation. As it happened, there was more than one horizon.

Along the way the programs had divided drawing into two: geometric, which is to say the more technical, mechanical drawing based on projection, what in French was called the geometral, was taught as a separate sequence alongside freehand, to our eyes still fairly geometric, line drawing based on perspective. The child of the Third Republic learned to expect that objects could be rendered in perspective and in projection, in other words, any child knew that there was such a thing as representation, double representation. An explanation was given: the world was in essence linear but its image was multiple, multiplied according to one’s point of view. One was the reproduction of the way things appeared to the eye (a per-
were" (a measured mechanical drawing) (fig. 9.5), which took the object into protosimultaneity. One was supposed to learn to see both a of image in a given object, to see surfaces clearly and to see beyond beyond the perceptual domain of the eye. This distinction between a(1) and true representation, between the retinal and the nonretinal, seemed fundamental to Guillaume and his supporters; they repeated a litany over and over again. In the words of Guillaume:

In effect, if we consider drawing in and of itself, we see that its object is represent things in all their truthfulness or things as they appear. In the case, it is a matter of giving the figure of the object to scale, respecting dimensions and giving its measurements. This is the drawing used by architects for their plan, elevations, and cross sections; with this engineers fit. their trace projections whose lines give the final word in precision. In subjective drawing. It is, in a word, that which is used in the crafts and professions in order to direct the labor of the worker. In the end, the graphic means by which the master craftsman expresses his idea, transmits them and renders them intelligible to those who are charged with their execution. This kind of drawing, called plane [geometrical] is the writ, proper to all the arts and the entire building industry, to the professions, that practice in the world of form. On the other hand, if it is a question of rendering the appearance of things and fixing them as they seem to be in space, perspective intervenes and permits one to secure a representation that is perfectly lifelike, a mathematical truth. If one adds to the preceding geometry also gives us the laws of tracing cast shadows and that to the domain of form, of which it makes us masters, it adds thus the domain of the effect, one sees that this science contains and constitutes all of drawing.

The distinction between the retinal and the nonretinal did not, in other words, trouble his idea that there was one national language being drawn, one hovering above regional dialects just like the mythical national French. The sixty-four word version of the litany, which Guillaume worked up for a speech in 1882, attached the idea of the unity of drawing to an entire apparatus of law and reason: "Drawing by its very nature is exact, scientific, authoritative. It images with undeniable precision (to which one must submit) things such as they are or things as they appear. Not one of its
Partie 5

POT A FLEURS

9.4 V. I

Perspective

Sec

9.5 V. I

Per ecc seii me (Pa 45.

ten
9.4
Configurations could not be atak, \textit{cd}, verified, transmitted, un\textit{k} I I. realized. In its geometrical sense, as in perspective, drawing is writti is read; it has the character of a universal language."

Explanation, this brought the double image back again and again to a single one. I matter that the unevenness in the curriculum was being seconded. doubling of representation and a split line of sight. All differen .circumvented by reducing space to drawing, that is to say, to a \textit{un\text{k}\text{i l}. line.

Mercifully the fine points of language theory were not retailed ill classroom manuals. However, what was syllable, word, and letter ill language was not critical; only the idea of language ever counted. It enough for the idea to stand quietly unchallenged behind the lesson I, and classroom exercises. The idea of language, or better, the desir. language would provide a coherence, legitimation, and
universality for was really just a visual means of industrial production. Line was a form that spoke well for reification. It would not and should not be question.ted. That, after all, was the thrust of its claim to truth. And so great justification, no theoretical ado, teachers and students seized as the purest form of language imaginable and mobilized it.

Thanks to them Guillaume’s ideas and the curriculum models were ca up in classroom repetition, peculiarly annual, sequential, massive, gered across the years of youth, and reaching every province of France, gigantic net had been thrown over the nation’s consciousness. Lines repeated, reinforced, reviewed, woven slowly into a temporary cohere dispersed, and sunk. The lines acquired their full significance through As they began to move, the play of difference in this language wide., the net could tear. The line was strong but not omnipotent, not a grid table of representation. Its march toward the commodity was in prac i halting, its capabilities unclear.

Second things second. Where and how to see a language when it has ceased to exist as a theoretical object? By drawing lines out of the dense and common ground of historical material, ground where there are always several horizons and uneven glow, ground that does not submit to a • idea of nature. No one case can suffice to show the things said and domr-
good latticed door in June, and a huge, slightly fatuous stoic head in July. One of her notebook pages from 1884 contained a pen and ink frieze of interlocking rings. She lacked a fear of knives. These notebooks show that lines were never abstracted altogether from particular experience. They were understood to represent it.

Not all experience could or would be taught; the teacher is a case in point. This subject, needless to say, was more cultural than natural; it too had been schooled so as to know its place. It had also been examined. Teachers, the instituteurs and institutrices who were sent respectively to direct the boys’ and girls’ schools (the Ferry schools separated the girls from the boys in all but the smallest villages), were carefully monitored and trained.”
Right away the programs in drawing set out in 1881 were accompanied by a stricter set of complementary programs to be used in the tea, ivy colleges. Teachers were expected to pass a certification examination, the *brevet élémentaire*. The components of the *brevet* were constantly adjusted by the government, even after the founding decrees of 1881 to 1887, but in all cases the *brevet* examination required proof of competence in drawing. By 1908 there were more than 10,000 certified. The *brevet* program condensed and articulated the primary school curriculum.

9.7 Ernestine Thomé, cahier, 29 avril 1883. (Collection of the Musée national de l’éducation, Mont Saint-Aignan.)
ards for drawing, but it also clarified them: as it separated the two drawings, it distinguished male and female parts. The teachers were to understand right away that the unity of the language was premised upon a knowing silence and upon a duality that turned back to the unseen body.

At the *brevet* level, the two kinds of drawing were not taught in equal measure to each sex. The *brevet* program gave males their training in perspective but it went on to give them a better lesson and further drilling in mechanical drawing and it asked for tutoring in the technique of ren
9.8

V. Darchez, *Nouveaux exercices de dessin à main levée. Cours supérieur et tours complémentaire suivi d'un complément spécialement destiné aux aspirants et aux aspirantes au brevet de capacité* (Paris: Belin, 1888), pl. XVIII.
dering to scale things like building parts and the organs of machines (if* phrase). Female teachers could content themselves with perspective (if* phrase) and then turn to designing for embroidery,
lace, and tapestry; they needed only to master enough projection to make and measure a sennin pattern. The split in the program followed the split in the two kind representation, with the result that a hierarchy of drawing was established according to gender. The man had to master the drawing of things as they were, the nonretinal mechanical drawing; he had to learn to see these in objects, seeing through the object to its plan; he saw what passed those days for truth. The woman had to work further on her perspe\(i\)\(s\) on seeing things as they appeared; she had to learn how to apply what she saw to cloth. He mastered both perspective and projection, however, while she mastered only enough projection to know what it was she was missing. Projection was principally a male space. Perspective was common ground.

In the language of industry the image of the body, be it draped or clothed or fig-leaved or nude, could not be the engine of gender in the picture. Gender was placed in the eye of the beholder, who would return it to the image through the identification of the privileged mode, the revealing of projection. According to this line of reasoning, gender was told by the ability to see beyond appearances, beyond perspective too, into the less abstract space of industrial production; it was told by the declarative of a specifically masculine space and by a split in the look. Gender is defined through the masculine. Femininity had no space or look of its own; it was identified by its limitation to perspective tout court. Eyes in the classroom were divided and conquered, socialized to follow from the line. Some eyes would penetrate, others would settle. The language of industrial identity was variable and dependent, alternately hostile and hospitable, open and closed.

Ris-Paquot told his female readers that they could stop after plate 17 in his manual for the brevet, stop after the culmination of the lesson on the cube in two and three dimensions. His male readers continued on to just 11.

The most that was said there was that the exam subjects asked on the drawing question of the brevet needed to be varied a bit: Mlle Rehm, a teacher at the Ecoles communales de la rue de Tolbiac (Paris 13\(^{e}\)), complained about the lack of variation in the brevet objects of everyday life; one prepared always the same thing, she remarked, "despots, des arrosoirs, et l'année suivante on recommence."
Her complaint could have triggered a discussion of the bodily differences in the programs. For one did not prepare the same objects if one were a woman as one did if one were a man.

The ministerial order of 1887 set out the subjects to be examined on the *brevet*, including for the drawing question a list of neutral objects and gender-specific ones. Every candidate had to be ready to draw the first fifteen objects on the list:

1. Stool (for sitting) made of wood
2. Stepstool
3. Stepladder
4. Pail (in wood or zinc)
5. Tub (in wood or zinc)
6. Flowerpot
7. Music stand
8. Barrel
9. Bushel (double decaliter)
10. Wooden chest
11. Gueridon (simple)
12. Small square table
13. Trestle
14. Sawhorse
15. Mason’s trough

Then the labor of studying was divvied up. The male candidate (*aspirant*) took column A; and the female candidate (*aspirante*) was diverted to column B:
**Aspirants:**

16 Small bench (in wood) 17 Footstool 18 Table drawer

19 Saltbox or spice box
20 Abacus (school model)
21 Copy-press table (without the drawer)
22 Basket for wood
23 Saddle rack (in wood) 24 A double liter in metal
25 Cast-iron weight of at least 5 kg.
Aspirantes:
16 Lamp and lampshade
17 Basket (choose a fairly big one) 18 Umbrella (open and placed on a table)
When Darchez put together his manual for use by candidates, he respond to their different situations by producing two sets of sample problems, one for men and one for women. Gender became graphic. The man did his croquis core; the woman did the imitation drawing. When the man saw tt. kitchen table, it was made to look like an arrangement of numbered unfolding squares; when the woman looked, the table came back with feet on the ground. The man’s eye dissected the saltbox (fig. 9.8). The woman’s merely registered the tools (fig. 9.9). These separations were me to be silently passed on to the students.

The great cycles of repetition in which teachers and students participat spun differently: eyes, lines, and bodies combined according to prescribed procedures and possibilities. Jean’s little knife and lopsided bookcase were not absolutely comparable to Ernestine’s hatchet and lattice door. The horizons were being separated; even the object of everyday life would not look quite the same to each.

It therefore amazes us that well-meaning critics explain the remarkable difference between the forms attributed to nature and those of modern painting, by a desire to represent things not as they appear, but as they are. And how are they? According to them, the object possesses an absolute form, an essential form, and, in order to uncover it, we should suppress chiaroscuro and traditional perspective. What naivete! An object has not one absolute form, it has several; it has as many as there are planes in the domain of meaning. The one which these writers point to is miraculously adapted to geometric form. Geometry is a science, painting is an art. The geometer measures, the painter savors. The absolute of the one is necessarily the relative of the other; if logic is alarmed at this, so much the worse! Will it ever prevent a wine from being different in the retort of the chemist and in the glass of the drinker?

The voices are familiar but the words marshaled in support of ever more modern positions: Gleizes and Metzinger were writing on Cubism. By then other cycles of repetition had entered in to thicken the original idea of a language of industry, but those artists pointing to the virtues of abstract line had hardly discovered it; it might be more accurate to say that they could hardly avoid it. Geometric abstraction, the form fundamental to our definition of twentieth-century modernism, carried within itself the basic, industrial and masculine view of culture of the republican school; it was supported by the base and superstructure of common sense; it was founded upon a split in the look that did not require special theorizing in order to be known, though it might be renamed so as to appear aesthetic. The drive toward abstraction was, among many other things, a drive toward an immanent industrial masculinity. For the breakthrough of abstraction occurred at the point where the sexes were separated, at the break in the surface of appearance. The drive saw no difference, except that of painting, which would now occupy the place of the ordinary projection, claiming the new site of truth for its own, besotted with horizon wine.
Another voice is heard. 'Problem: trace a straight line on 'Rodin's the kiss' as seen from a viewfinder. '22 It belongs to Duchamp and it is later, 1918. His line's progress was not so aesthetic and yet not trained either, comme it a fallu, on the commodity.
9.10
Ris-Paquot, Enseignement primaire. Dessin dimitation. Cours préparatoire aux examens pour les brevets de capacité de f enseignement primaire (Paris: Laurens, 1887), pl. 21.

9.11
Moulin a cafe [Coffee Grinder], 1911. Oil on cardboard, 13 x 4\frac{1}{16} in. (The Tate Gallery, London.)
The line Duchamp proposed to draw through the kiss was no ordinary line and yet it was so innately ordinary, merely masculine. Next to such a line, "Rodin’s the kiss" seems strangely redundant, overstated and archaic. Duchamp’s lines began and ended in common culture. They were first sketched in 1911 in his painting of the coffee grinder (fig. 9.11), that loophole onto something else he would say later. Like the signs of the language of industry, they did not try to rise to the level of symbol, for they did not harbor any single meaning; rather they made a rat’s nest of referents, assumptions, and dim memory traces.

9.12
In Advance of the Broken Arm, readymade, 1915 (lost). 1945 replica bought for Katherine Dreier, 47\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 18 in. (Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven; gift of Katherine S. Dreier for the Collection Societd Anonyme.)

Duchamp did not refer to the language of industry exactly or self-consciously, he simply used it logically enough when he decided it would be important to try to make a work that was not a work of art. It gave him a significant form to express the separation of his work from traditional painting, the separation that produced his precision painting. Duchamp began to play with the language of industry on its own terms. The readymades took objects, some of them from the brevet set, and liberated them from the image, reinstalling the image of the shovel, for example, as a new thing, banal but newly enunciated, and sometimes newly named, In Advance of the Broken Arm (fig. 9.12). The readymades were very much part of the project for precision painting, as Thierry de Duve has argued. But the readymades called up not painting but an image, the preaesthetic image; they filled the lines in with solid form; they repossessed the model: they made language objects. The line was stopped before it arrived at a manifestly commodity form. The tension between language and commodity was fundamental to Duchamp’s concept of the readymade; the tension worked like a philosophical critique of the system in which these things were supposed to run together. Duchamp kept them apart. He kept his schoolboy drawing manual, a manual for the brevet, authored by
Eugene Forel and titled *Guide pratique de dessin et de perspective a l'usage des instituteurs, des institutrices et spécialement des aspirants et aspirantes aux brevets de capacité* (1897).  

Duchamp worked the limits to the authority of this language. The usual signs of the language were there to be seen: not only the *brevet* objects of everyday life but the obsession with projection. The notes for the *Glass* are full of schemes for putting out a projection without recourse to the regular mechanical drawing. Sometimes, as in the *combat de boxe* or in the plan

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to make the Wilson/Lincoln effect shimmer between a perspective and a projection image, the mechanical drawing makes an entrance, but Duchamp was more interested in conceiving a better, higher form of projection, as if to reassert the masculinity in the image, pushing the sexual power of the line into ever more spectacular, ever more superior kinds of pictorial form. So we have gunshots, virtuality in a fourth dimension, native colors that give us bachelor chocolate. At some point Duchamp decided that the bride had to live in the fourth dimension, appearing only as a three-dimensional projection of a fourth-dimensional being.  

There she was accessible only to those with extremely powerful eyes; she, the sexual female awaiting the act, could really only be seen by an extremely male line of sight, the one capable of seeing clear through the objects to the lines to the body, the one that, looking at the bachelors, could capture their "polygone imaginaire du sexe."  

Projection, the *geometral*, was the means to the end of the *Large Glass*: it alone could express the eruption of male desire in the lines. This was a scenario fraught with consequences, not to say pitfalls. Somewhat later Jacques Lacan analyzed them, but by setting another such scene. Lacan was teaching a seminar on the gaze; he pointed to the anamorphic death's head tilted across the foreground of Holbein's painting *The Ambassadors*. The *apparition* returned. "Comment ne pas voir ici," Lacan finally asked, and the French here speaks worlds, "immanent a la dimension geometrale — dimension partiale dans le champ du regard, dimension qui n'a rien a faire avec la vision comme telle quelque chose de symbolique de la fonction du manque-de l'apparition du fantome phallique?" How indeed can one not see, immanent in the projection's dimension—that dimension only partially accessible to the gaze, that dimension that has nothing to do with vision as such (it is nonretinal)—something symbolic of the function of the lack—of the apparition of the phallic ghost? That same phantom of the phallus haunted the *Large Glass*, making law and making lack. The phantom did not stem from a natural order of things, it should gently be said; the phantom sprang from common sense.

Duchamp's great accomplishment in the *Glass* was to bring the two kinds of modern male looking, the scopophilic and the projection, together and to leave them together to hang. Male vision and desire were dissipated, unfocused, scattered all around the *Glass*, aimless in a carnival atmosphere.
of mechanical tricks, painted ladies, puffs of smoke, and candy. This male desire was to be the object of great hilarity. Laughter was Duchamp's response to the phantom, there would be no thoughts of little knives.

There were other sides to his study that were concerned not so much with lack as with the blanks in this language of line, notably the problems that Thierry de Duve has analyzed so elegantly, the twin problems of nominalism and color. Finally in 1920 came the invention of Rrose Selavy. She had been latent in Duchamp's idea of apparition. The painting, he noted, meaning the Large Glass, was in general "the apparition of an apparence . . . Peinture de precision, et beaute d'indyrence." Apparition was not then within the purview of perspective; it was that peculiarly male sight, the pot of gold, the truth at the end of the projection. Put together with another note, this one datable to 11914, we see its gender better. The note is the famous

\[
\text{arrhe merdre}
\]

\[
\text{art merde}
\]

or grammatically:

\[
\text{L'arrhe de la peinture est du genre feminin}
\]

So the arrhe (downpayment) of painting is feminine. Painting taken to full term, we may assume, was different, and its difference would also be expressed by another. Peinture de precision, as Duchamp was elaborating it, broke increasingly with the feminine when it moved to figure the apparition. Precision ended pointedly with masculinity. Femininity was relegated to the purgatory of the imprecise. Rrose provided an image for that imprecision, a nonaesthetic image.

Her first two pieces set up the possibilities: Fresh Widow (fig. 9.13) and a drawing for the Oculist Witnesses (fig. 9.14). The one closed off the view through the French window, a standard schoolroom model, its opacity macabre and hard on the war widows. The other, the drawing, belonged to the higher order of visual experience Duchamp hoped to represent in the Glass. But Rrose quickly assumed a more traditional female role. By 1923 it would have been unthinkable for her to sign the Large Glass 31 She
developed along the lines of the first possibility: accordingly she had things made, like the *Fresh Widow*, and she had them copyrighted, even if they were not technically copyrightable; she could collaborate with Duchamp, or she could lend her name to his titles and commercial ventures rather like his friend and collaborator on the Societe Anonyme, Katherine Dreier; but by herself Rrose was fragile and not especially assertive; by herself she did not work very much at all; she was really just a creature of surfaces, starting with her own disguise. She did not wield a line and she did not have a body of her own. She existed in order to establish gender in the first place. The first place would never be hers. In 1925 Rrose made one of her rare drawings, a quick caricature called *Nous nous cajolions* (fig. 9.15) that stopped at the edge of a lion’s cage, caught the surface appearances well enough, and then attached a photograph of a swell spread of graffiti (drawn by the likes of “Happy the kid from Williamburg Bklyn”) from the public rest room (the men’s room it would appear) of the Lincoln Arcade. The drawing summarizes her (and women’s) limitations: she could never be “Happy."

Rrose Selavy supposedly specialized in precision optics, but when it comes down to it, she almost never diagramed or drew; her work was mostly written. One of her puns targeted *aspirants* and spirals (*L'aspirant habite Javel et moi j'avais l'habite en spirale*) but with a pun that played on the sexual power of the word, not the line.32 The drama of Rrose’s existence was the conflict between her expressed desire to see, the gaudy rhetoric of her business card, *Oculisme de precision / Rrose Selavy / New York-Paris l polls et coups de pieds en toes genres*, and her inability to kick up much of a look.33 From time to time she was given the chance to try the higher orders of projection, but over the years she was gradually, then repeatedly and radically withdrawn. In 1926 she took credit for the film *Anemic Cinema*, all spirals and puns, but by the time the rotoreliefs were issued in 1935, she was no longer participating in the project, perhaps because her words were no longer needed. In the end she was withdrawn both from projection and from perspective. Rrose Selavy loved vulgarity but finally it was expressed without benefit of line, expressed through abstinence from precision optics, abstinence from the problematic surface, abstinence from the image. That discipline seemed to declare her femininity best of all: for perspective was in fact the sexes’ common visual ground; a specifically
Rose Selavy, *Fresh Widow*, 1920. Wooden window with leather panes, 30\(1/2\) x 17\(1/2\) in., on wooden sill, \(3/4\) x 21 x 4 in. (Museum of Modern Art, New York; Katherine S. Dreier Bequest, 1953.)
female image would therefore have to be defined as no image technically a female line of sight would not exist.

Rrose stood outside the language of industry as a female. She stood part of the preaesthetic that was every bit as necessary to Duchamp[1 apparition or the nth dimension. Through her behavior she began better way to show sexuality without the body. She called attention to surfaces where women languished; she was always a she, never an I. the greater projections in the Glass, she marked the scope of gender single universal language of industry, mostly by virtue of the fact th.: was not part of its One. Yet because she took so much distance from language, she could show the extent of its strength. For there are n to read this distance, as exile or negation.

Last things last. One thing is clear. Rrose Selavy speaks to the fact the idea, or was it a dream, of language had broken down. Not e% would speak in that way. Line's power was weakening; soon it would be marginalized and then treasured as art. Meanwhile industrial pry would find its true image in the advertisement.

9.14
Rose Selavy, TLmoins oculistes [Oculist Witnesses], 1920. Stylus on reverse of carbon paper, 193/8 x 143/4 in. (Philadelphia Museum of Art; The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection.)

Opposite:
9.15
Rrose Selavy, Nous nous cajolions [We were coaxing one another], 1925. Violet ink on paper with photographic collage, 71/16 x 55/16 in. (Photo The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.)
Notes

1 For example this note for the Large Glass: “Les formes principales de la machinecelibataire sont imparfaites: rectangle, cercle, parallelepipede, anse symetrique, demi-sphere = c'est-a-dire elles sont mesurees (rapport de leurs dimensions entre elles et rapport de ces formes principales a leur destination clans la machine-celibataire). Dans la mariee, les formes principales sont plus ou moins grandes ou petites, Wont plus par rapport a leur destination, une mensuration: une sphere, clans la mariee, sera de rayon quelconque (le rayon donna pour la representation est fictif et pointille).” Duchamp du signe. Ecrits, ed Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson (Paris: Flammarion, 1975), 66-67. (Herafter cited as DDS.)


3 DDS, 46.

4 Note 82, dated 1913, in the collection of Duchamp notes edited and translated by Paul Matisse, Marcel Duchamp, Notes (Paris: Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, 1980), is eloquent. The first part of it reads as follows:

Difficile de:
presenter un Repos en termes ni techniques ni poetiques: trouver la vulgarite indispensable telle qu'elle perde sa teinte vulgaire
1-Emploi de mots vulgaires eviter les mots metaphoriques ou generaux (les mots en caoutchouc, a equivoque). Mais pas recherche du mot vulgaire pour son pittoresque (la vulgarite indispensable seulement)
2- Idee predominante et langage seulement comme son instrument (de precision)
a-idee elle meme de precision et b. langage transparent

5 See, for example, Antonin-Proust's speech to the Chambre des Deputes in March 1879, reprinted in the Manuel general de V instruction primaire. Journal hebdomadaire des instituteurs et institutrices, vol.

15, no. 16 (April 19, 1879), 182. The do over the programs took place between Eugene Guillaume and Felix Ravaiss and its essence was recorded in their entries for "Dessin" in the Dictionnaire pedagogie et d'instruction primaire, Ferdinand Buisson (Paris: Hachette, 1883). The confrontation has been recounted by Christians Mauve in her articles, "L'art a I' ecole?" Esthetiques peuple (Paris: Editions la decouverte anq . Presses universitaires de Vincennes, 191M 131-144, and "Les yeux du peuple," L sauvages dans la cite. Auto-emancipado peuple et instruction des proletairXIXe siecle (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 128-135.

Manuel general, partie generale, vol. no. 6 (February 5, 1881), 113-114.

My translation. All translations in this paper are mine unless otherwise indicated. Eugene Guillaume, "Dessin," E tionnaire de pedagogie, pt. 1, p. 684:

En effet, si nous considerons le dessir = lui-meme, nous voyons qu'il a pour of er de representer les choses dans leur vou dans leur apparence. Dans le pre cas, it s agit de donner la figure des c a suivant leurs dimensions et avec leurs mesures par des delineations executees en vraie grandeur et reduites proportio ^nellement. C'est le dessin qu emploier: architectes pour leurs plans, elevation coupes; dont, avec eux, les ingenieurs font usage pour les traces d'epures qui fournissent avec la demiere rigueur le developpement de lignes qu'il serait impossible d'obtenir avec le dessin de sentiment. C est en un mot, celui qui est en usage dans toutes les professions ou metiers plastiques pour diriger le travail de l'ouvrier. C'est, en resume, le moyen graphique par lequel le maitre de l'oeu. quels qu'elle soit, exprime ses conceptions, les transmet et les rend intelligibles a ceux qui sont charges de les executer

Ce genre de dessin, qui est dit geometrat, , est l ecriture propre de tous les arts et de toutes les industries du batiment, de toutes les professions qui s exercent ce le monde de la forme. D'autre part, s s agit de rendre l apparence des choses @t de les figurer to/les qu'elles semblent env dans l'espace, la perspective intervient et

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permet d'obtenir des représentations avec une sûreté telle que la vraisemblance, qui est parfaite, devient une vérité mathématique. Si l'on ajoute à ce qui précède que la géométrie nous donne aussi les lois du trace des ombres et qu'elle ajoute ainsi au domaine de la forme dont elle nous rend maîtres, le domaine de l'effet, on voit que cette science contient et constitue le dessin tout entier.

8 L. Charvet et J. Pillet, Enseignement primaire du dessin à l’usage des écoles primaires (cours élémentaire et une partie du cours moyen d) et des lycées et collèges (classe préparatoire, huitième et une partie de la septième). Livre du maître. Première partie (Paris: Delagrave, 1883), 65: “Le dessin, de sa nature, est exact, scientifique, autoritaire. Il représente, avec une précision irrefragable et à laquelle il faut se soumettre, [as choses telles qu’elles sont ou telles qu’elles nous apparaissent. Pas une des figurations qu’il trace qui ne puisse être analysée, vérifiée, transmise, comprise, réalisée. Dans son acceptation géométrale, comme sous la forme perspective, le dessin s’écrit et se lit; il a le caractère d’une langue universelle.” The reconciliation of this language of line to traditional high culture was always worrisome, and the problem especially nagged at those of Guillaume’s men who had been trained as fine artists. The fine arts with their high culture of the body, they decided, following Guillaume, could be built upon the geometric base, and never alienated. As Paul Colin, government inspector of drawing and a painter as well, the one charged with writing the report on the state of drawing education for the 1889 World’s Fair, reiterated: “Il ne s’agit pas, en effet, de sacrifier tel ou tel grand maître au cube et à la perspective pas plus que le développement du goût à l’étude des procédés techniques; non, il ne s’agit de rien de tout cela. Les programmes ont en vue de donner à l’élève les moyens de reproduction des choses dans leur vérité absolue ou dans leur absolue vraisemblance. Il n’y a pas deux dessins; il n’y a pas le dessin des artistes et le dessin des gens du monde, il n’y a qu’un art unique, soumis à des règles dont on ne peut s’affranchir.” Paul Colin, Rapports du Jury International. Exposition Universelle Internationale de 1889 à Paris. Classe 5bis. Enseignement des arts du dessin (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1890), 11.

9 Each student was required to keep a monthly notebook to record their progress in the required republican subjects; at the end of the school year the teacher was supposed to collect them and keep them on file for use by the government inspectors. After a time they were chucked, though a few have survived and are available for consultation at the Musée national de l’éducation. They seem to have come mostly from family collections of student work. The museum has separated them into two groups, cahiers de dessin and cahiers primaires; the group, though not large, composes a random sample from both Paris and the provinces.

10 M Baron, who drew his own picture at the end of the notebook and dated it 1912, is probably also responsible for the trail of blue and brown Bs (for bien) in the margins.

11 Normal school programs were given in the decree of August 3, 1881. A. Fallières, then minister, in his “Circulaire relative à l’inspection de l’enseignement du dessin dans les écoles normales primaires 6 février 1884,” explained the top-to-bottom principle in no uncertain terms to the inspecteurs d’académie: “L’étude du dessin a pris et meritait de prendre une place beaucoup plus large qu’autrefois dans les écoles normales primaires, d’ou elle doit se repandre jusque dans les moindres écoles primaires.” Circulaires, vol. 8, p. 329. There is considerable evidence of the seriousness with which the teacher took up this mission. See Nous les maîtres d’écoles. Autobiographies d’instituteurs de la Belle Époque, ed. Jacques Ozouf (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), and Francine Muel-Dreyfuss, Le métier d’educateur (Paris: Minuit, 1983).

12 The decree of May 11, 1881, specified a drawing exam only for the brevet supérieur; the Ministry’s circular of December 30, 1884, specified it for the brevet élémentaire; see also the decree of January 18, 1887, where the subject matter of the exam is elaborated in more detail.

13 For those who would become special teachers of drawing in the lycée or collège, there was yet another test. By 1908 there were 2,000 of these special teachers of drawing. Conferences de Musée pédagogique 1908. L enseignement du dessin par MM. L. Guebin, A. Keller, G. Quenioux,

15 *Conferences du Musée pédagogique 1908*, 201, lists the differences in the program without comment.

16 *Conferences du Musée pédagogique 1908*, 212. See L. Malaval, *Le vrai dessin* (Paris: Nouvelle librairie classique, 1888), 159, on the umbrella as the object most feared by the aspirantes.

17 The list that follows is given in Darchez, *Nouveaux Exercises, partie complémentaire*, pp. i and v. In 1882 the Ministry put together a *Musée scolaire de fart* with different reproductions, plasters, engravings, and photographic reproductions from antiquity and the Renaissance-Baroque. Schools for boys were proposed a set featuring bas-reliefs from the Parthenon, Holbein and Leonardo heads, portraits of Poussin, Colbert, Racine, and Turenne, and landscapes by Claude; with the exception of the Venus of Arles, all subjects were male. Schools for girls were proposed a shorter list of completely different works that included a cherub’s head by Manni di Banco [sic], a Holy Family by Raphael, and portraits of Mme VigéeLebrun, Mme de Sevigne, Fenelon, and La Fontaine. With the exception of the portraits of Fenelon and La Fontaine, all subjects involved the depiction of women and children. The list is given in Colin, *Rapport 1889*, 41.

18 In French:

1. Tabouret (siege) en bois
2. Marchepied 3. Escabeau
14. Chevalet 15. Auge de mason
Aspirants
16. Petit banc (en bois) 17. Tabouret de pied 18. Tiroir de table
19. Boite a set ou boite a epices
25. Un poids en fonte (de 5 kg. au mo
Aspirantes:
16. Lampe avec abat-jour
17. Panier (le choisir assez grand)
18. Parapluiue (ouvert et place sur une table)
19. Casserole (de grande dimension) 20. Poele a frire
21. Rateau de jardin 22. Pelle
26. Marmite (en metal) 27. Broc
28. Cruche
29. Four de campagne 30. Tamis
31. Chaise


20 Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger, *Du Cubisme* (Paris: Figuiere, 1912), 30-3’ “Aussi nous etonne-t-il que des critiq bien intentionnes expliquent la differeremarquable entre les formes attribuela nature et celles de la peinture actue par la volonté de representer les chose non telles qu’elles paraissent mais to qu’elles sont. Comment sont-elles? D’apres eux l’objet possererait une fo absolue, essentielle, et ce sererait pour delivrer que nous suprimerions le c e obscur at la perspective traditionnels Quelle simplicite! Un objet n’a pas ur forme absolue, it en a plusieurs, it en autant qu’il y de plans clans le dorm de la signification. Celle que signaler’ ecritains s’adapte comme par mirac e forme geometrique. La geometrie es: science, la peinture est un art. Le ge mettre mesure, le peintre savoure. L’a: de l’un est fatalement le relatif de l’a.i si la logique s’en effarouche tant pis’
empechera-t-elle jamais un vin d’être différemment parfait dans la cornue du chimiste et clans le verre du buveur?" I have used

21 The classic texts here are: Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" in Women in a Sexist Society, ed.
; Carol Duncan, "Virility and Domination in Early Twentieth Century Vanguard Painting," Artforum 12 (December 1973), 30-39;
Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," Screen 16, no. 3 (1975), 6-18; T. J. Clark, The Painting of Modern Life:
Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers (New York: Knopf, 1985), chapter "Olympia's Choice"; and Carol M. Armstrong,
"Edgar Degas and the Representation of the Female Body," in The Female Body in Western Culture, ed. Susan Suleiman

22 Note 184 in Matisse, ed., Marcel Duchamp, Notes. In French: "Probleme: tracer une ligne droite sur le 'baiser de Rodin' vu d'un
viseur."


24 Duchamp's copy is from the fourth edition of Forel and is now in the collection of Mme Marcel Duchamp. Forel's Guide would have
been appropriate for Duchamp's drawing class at the Lycee Corneille in Rouen, where he was a student from 1897 to 1904. The
surviving archival material does not specify which texts were used in those classes. The inspections done at this elementary
school in Blainville-Crevon do mention drawing, but nothing specific about the manuals used when he was attending the school
(Archives departementales de Rouen, 7TP63). Forel started with the straight line, namely the plumb line. He did not overly
concern himself with the brevet questions themselves; rather he bent himself to explaining the fundamentals of representation
that everyone, male and female, needed to understand, which is to say, perspective drawing, and he insisted that the point of
such study was the develop
ment of vision, not the training of artists: "Nous avons cherche, en nous servant d'exemples que le lecteur a sans cesse sous les
yeux, a eveiller son attention, a l'inciter a ('observation et a ('analyse des faits, a lui apprendre, en un mot, a voir et comprendre ces phenomenes, ces faits qu'une habitude quotidienne lui rend insensibles ou plutbt indifferentes. Voir est, en effet, tout le secret du dessin" (p. 4). He concluded with an invocation to practice his lessons; the rules of perspective, he assured his reader, will then come automatically in the act of drawing "en quelque sorte d'une maniere inconsciente, machinale" (p. 162).
Duchamp learned and returned to such ideas. He dropped the plumb lines to make the stoppages; he went along with precision
seeing; when he decided that indifference was beautiful, he pulled back to a pre-preaesthetic level of culture that Forel would
have condemned. Forel also authored two other manuals, Methode de dessin conforme aux programmes officiels de l enseigne-
ment primaire. Livre du maître. Premiere partie (Paris: Hatier, 1899) and Methode de dessin conforme aux programmes offi-

25 Duchamp's use of the fourth dimension has been the focus of much scholarly work, all of which implicitly argues for the
importance of projection per se, fourthdimensional or not, in Duchamp's work: Linda Henderson, The Fourth Dimension and Non-
Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art (Princeton University Press, 1983), especially the chapter "Duchamp and the New Geometries"
; Jean Clair, Marcel Duchamp ou le grand fictif (Paris: Gallilee, 1975); John Dee, "Ce fagonnement symetrique," Marcel Duchamp:
tradition de la rupture ou rupture de la tradition. Colloque de Cerisy (Paris: Union generale d'editions, 1977), 351-402; Craig

26 Note 134 in Matisse's edition. See also Duchamp's observation that perspective drawing was "la portee de toutes les
intelligences," note 104.

established by Jacques-Alain Miller (Paris: Seuil, 1972), 82.
28 Thierry de Duve, Nominalisme pictural. Marcel Duchamp, la peinture et la modernité (Paris: Minuit, 1984). Thierry de Duve has taken this name-of-the-color study to be the key to Duchamp's transition from painting to readymade and the means of explaining how the readymades were part of a project of painting. To catch the culture of line lying behind the color study, or for that matter to see the textbook image in the readymade, only reinforces de Duve's argument. See also his article "The Readymade and the Tube of Paint."
29 DDS, 45-46. See also 120-122. 30 DDS, 37.

31 In 1965 when Duchamp made an engraving after the drawing of the oculist witnesses, Rose’s signature did not survive.

32 DDS, 161. Duchamp, notes Sanouillet, disavowed authorship of this pun, but it was part of the Anemic Cinema copyrighted by Rose in 1926 and as such can be allowed to remain as part of Rose’s oeuvre.

33 DDS, 153.

34 On the domain of the one, see Luce Irigaray, Ce sexe qui Wen est pas un (Paris: Minuit, 1977).