

dada manifesto on feeble love and bitter love (12th december 1920)

by tristan tzara

preamble = sardanapalus

one = suitcase

woman = women

trousers = water

if = moustache

2 = three

stick = perhaps

after = sightreading

irritant = emerald

vice = screw

october = periscope

nerve =

or all this drawn together in any old savory, soapy, brusque or definitive order - drawn by lot - is alive.

It is thus that over and above the vigilant spirit of the clergyman built at the corner of every road, be it animal, vegetable, imaginable or organic, everything is the same as everything that is not the same. Even if I didn't believe it, it's the truth of the fact that I've put it on paper - because it's a lie that I have FIXED like a butterfly on a hat.

Lies circulate - welcome Mister Opportune and Mister Convenient: I arrest them - they're turning into the truth.

Thus DADA takes on the job of the two-wheeled cops and of undercover morality.

Everyone (at a certain moment) was sound in mind and body.

Repeat this 30 times.

I consider myself very likeable.

Tristan Tzara

II

A manifesto is a communication made to the whole world, whose only pretensions is to the discovery of an instant cure for political, astronomical, artistic, parliamentary, agronomical and literary syphilis. It may be pleasant, and good-natured, it's always right, it's strong, vigorous and logical.

Apropos of logic, I consider myself very likeable.

Tristan Tzara

Pride is the star that yawns and penetrates through the eyes and the mouth, she insists, strikes deep, on her breast is inscribed: you will die. This is her only remedy. Who still believes in doctors? I prefer the poet who is a fart in a steam-engine - he's gentle but he doesn't cry - polite and semi-homosexual, he floats. I don't give a single damn about either one of them. It's by pure (unnecessary) chance that the first should be German and the second Spanish. Far be it from us, in actual fact, the idea of discovering theory of the probability of races and the epistolary perfection of bitterness.

III

We have always made mistakes, but the greatest mistakes are the poems we have written. Gossip has one single raison d'être: the rejuvenation and maintenance of biblical traditions. Gossip is perfecting itself, encouraged by the state-controlled tobacco company, the railways, the hospitals, the undertaking industry and cloth factories. Gossip is encouraged by the culture of the family. Gossip is encouraged by Peter's pence. Every drop of saliva that escapes from a conversation is converted into gold. Since the people have always needed divinities to protect the three essential laws, which are those of God: eating, making love and shitting, since the kinds are on their travels and the laws are too hard, the only thing that counts at the moment is gossip. The form under which it most often appears is DADA.

There are some people (journalists, lawyers, amateurs, philosophers) who even think that other forms: business, marriages, visits, wars, various conferences, limited companies, politics, accidents, dance halls, economic crises, fits of hysterics, are variations of dada. Not being an imperialist, I don't share their opinion - I believe, rather, that dada is only a divinity of the second order, which must quite simply be placed beside the other forms of the new mechanism of the religions of the interregnum.

Is simplicity simple, or dada?

I consider myself rather likeable.

Tristan Tzara

IV

Is poetry necessary? I know that those who shout loudest against it are actually preparing a comfortable perfection for it; they call it the Future Hygienic.

People envisage the (ever-impending) annihilation of art. Here they are looking for a more art-like art. Hygiene becomes mygod mygod purity.

Must we no longer believe in words? Since when do they express the contrary of what the organ that utters them things and wants?* Herein lies the great secret:

Thought is made in the mouth.

I still consider myself very likeable.

Tristan Tzara

A great Canadian philosopher said: Thought and the past are also very likeable.

* Thinks. wants, and wishes to think

V

Since diversity is diverting, this game of golf gives the illusion of a "certain" depth. I support all the conventions - to suppress them would be to make new ones, which would complicate our lives in a truly repugnant fashion.

We wouldn't know any more what if fashionable: to love the children of the first or second marriage. The "pistil of the pistol" has often landed us in bizarre and restless situations. To disorder meanings - to disorder notions and all the little tropical rains of demoralisation, disorganisation, destruction and billiard-breaks, are actions which are insured against lightning and recognised as being of public utility. There is one known fact: dadaists are only to be found these days in the French Academy. I nevertheless consider myself very likeable.

Tristan Tzara

A friend, who is too good a friend of mine not to be very intelligent, said to me the other day:

a shudder

a palmist

IS ONLY THE

WAY PEOPLE good morning good evening

AND

WHICH DEPENDS ON THE FORM THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN

TO its forget-me-not his hair

I answered

YOU ARE idiot prince

BECAUSE I AM

CONVINCED OF contrary Tartary

naturally we hesitate

WE ARE NOT (DO NOT)

right. I am called wish to understand

THE OTHER

VI

It seems that this exists: more logical, very logical, too logical, less logical, not very logical, really logical, fairly logical.

Well then, draw the inferences.

"I have."

Now think of the person you love most.

"Have you?"

Tell me the number and I'll tell you the lottery.

VII

A priori, in other words with its eyes closed, Dada places before action and above all: Doubt. DADA doubts everything. Dada is an armadillo. Everything is Dada, too. Beware of Dada.

Anti-dadaism is a disease: selfkleptomania, man's normal condition, is DADA.
But the real dadas are against DADA.

The selfkleptomaniac.

The person who steals - without thinking of his own interests, or of his will - elements of his individual, is a kleptomaniac. He steals himself. He causes the characters that alienate him from the community to disappear. The bourgeois resemble one another - they're all alike. They used not to be alike. They have been taught to steal - stealing has become a function - the most convenient and least dangerous thing is to steal oneself. They are all very poor. The poor are against DADA. They have a lot to do with their brains. They'll never get to the end of it. They work. The poor are against DADA. He who is against DADA is for me, a famous man said, but then he died. They buried him like a true dadaist. Anno domini Dada. Beware! And remember this example.

VIII

TO MAKE A DADAIST POEM

Take a newspaper.

Take some scissors.

Choose from this paper an article of the length you want to make your poem.

Cut out the article.

Next carefully cut out each of the words that makes up this article and put them all in a bag.

Shake gently.

Next take out each cutting one after the other.

Copy conscientiously in the order in which they left the bag.

The poem will resemble you.

And there you are - an infinitely original author of charming sensibility, even though unappreciated by the vulgar herd.*

* Example:

when dogs cross the air in a diamond like ideas and the appendix of the meninx tells the time of the alarm programme (the title is mine) prices they are yesterday suitable next pictures/ appreciate the dream era of the eyes/ pompously that to recite the gospel sort darkens/ group apotheosis imagine said he fatality power of colours/ carved flies (in the theatre) flabbergasted reality a delight/ spectator all to effort of the no more 10 to 12/ during divagation twirls descends pressure/ render some mad single-file flesh on a monstrous crushing stage/ celebrate but their 160 adherents in steps on put on my nacreous/ sumptuous of land bananas sustained illuminate/ joy ask together almost/ of has the a such that the invoked visions/ some sings latter laughs/ exits situation disappears describes she 25 dance bows/ dissimulated the whole of it isn't was/ magnificent has the band better light whose lavishness stage music-halls me/ reappears following instant moves live/ business he didn't has lent/ manner words come these people

IX

There are some people who explain, because there are others who learn. Abolish hem and all that's left is dada.

Dip your pen into a black liquid with manifesto intentions - it's only your autobiography that you're hatching under the belly of the flowering cerebellum.

Biography is the paraphernalia of the famous man. Great or strong. And there you are, a simple man like the rest of them, once you've dipped your pen into the ink, full of

PRETENSIONS

which manifest themselves in forms as diverse as they are unforeseen, which apply to every form of activity and of state of mind and of mimicry: there you are, full of

AMBITIONS

to keep yourself on the dial of life, in the place where you've only just arrived, to proceed along the illusory and ridiculous upward path towards an apotheosis that only exists in your neurasthenia: there you are, full of

PRIDE

greater, stronger, more profound than all the others.

Dear colleagues: a great man, a little one, a strong, weak, profound, superficial one, that's why you're all going to die.

There are some people who have antedated their manifestos to make other people believe that they had the idea of their own greatness a little earlier. My dear colleagues, before after, past future, now yesterday, that's why you're all going to die.

There are some people who have said: dada is good because it isn't bad, dada is bad, dada is a religion, dada is a poem, dada is a spirit, dada is sceptical, dada is magic, I know dada.

My dear colleagues: good bad, religion poetry, spirit scepticism, definition definition, that's why you're all going to die, and you will die, I promise you.

The great mystery is a secret, but it's known to a few people. They will never say what dada is. To amuse you once again I'll tell you something like:

dada is the dictatorship of the spirit, or

dada is the dictatorship of language,

or else

dada is the death of the spirit,

which will please many of my friends. Friends.

X

It is certain that since Gambetta, the war, Panama and the Steinheil affair, intelligence is to be found in the street. The intelligent man has become an all-round, normal person. What we lack, what has some interest, what is rare because he has the anomalies of a precious being, the freshness and liberty of the great antimen, is

THE IDIOT

Dada is working with all its might towards the universal installation of the idiot. But consciously. And tends itself to become more and more of one.

Dada is terrible: it doesn't feel sorry about the defeats of intelligence.

Dada could rather be called cowardly, but cowardly like a mad dog; it recognises neither method nor persuasive excess.

The lack of garters which makes it systematically bend down reminds us of the famous lack of system which basically has never existed. The false rumour was started by a laundress at the bottom of her page, the page was taken to the barbaric country where humming-birds act as the sandwich-men of cordial nature.

This was told me by a watch-maker who was holding a supple syringe which, in characteristic memory of the hot countries, he called phlegmatic and insinuating.

XI

Dada is a dog - a compass - the lining of the stomach - neither new nor a nude Japanese girl - a gasometer of jangled feelings - Dada is brutal and doesn't go in for propaganda - Dada is a quantity of life in transparent, effortless and gyratory transformation.

XII

gentlemen and ladies buy come in and buy and don't read you'll see the fellow who has in his hands the key to niagara the man with a game leg in the game box his hemispheres in a suitcase his nose enclosed in a chinese lantern you'll see you'll see you'll see the belly dance in the massachusetts saloon the fellow who sticks the nail in and the tyre goes down mademoiselle atlantide's silk stockings the trunk that goes 6 times round the world to find the addressee monsieur and his fiancee his brother and his sister-in-law you'll find the carpenter's address the toad-watch the nerve like a paper-knife you'll have the address of the minor pin for the feminine sex and that of the fellow who supplies the obscene photos to the kind of greece as well as the address of l'action francaise.

XIII

DADA is a virgin microbe
DADA is against the high cost of living
DADA
limited company for the exploitation of ideas
DADA has 391 different attitudes and colours according to the sex of the president
It changes - affirms - says the opposite at the same time - no importance - shouts - goes fishing.
Dada is the chameleon of rapid and self-interested change.
Dada is against the future. Dada is dead. Dada is absurd. Long live Dada. Dada is not a literary school, howl

Tristan Tzara

XIV

To "prettify" life in the lorgnette - a blanket of caresses - a panoply with butterflies - that's the life of life's chambermaids.

To sleep on a razor and on fleas in rut - to travel in a barometer - to piss like a cartridge - to make faux pas, be idiotic, take showers of holy minutes - be beaten, always be the last one - shout out the opposite of what the other fellow says - be the editorial office and the bathroom of God who every day takes a bath in us in company with the cesspool clearer - that's the life of dadaists.

To be intelligent - respect everyone - die on the field of honour - subscribe to the Loan - vote for So-and-So - respect for nature and painting - to barrack at dada manifestations - that's the life of men.

XV

DADA is not a doctrine to be put into practice: Dada - is for lying: a successful business. Dada gets into debt and doesn't live on its well-filled wallet. The good Lord created a universal language, that's why people don't take him seriously. A language is a utopia. God can allow himself not to be successful: so can Dada. That's why the critics say: Dada goes in for luxuries, or Dada is in rut. God goes in for luxuries, or God is in rut. Who's right: God, Dada or the critic?

"You're deviating," a charming reader tells me.

- No no, not at all! I simply wanted to reach the conclusion: Subscribe to Dada, the only loan that doesn't pay.

