

Pranks and Self-Censorship: Duchamp, Dada, and the 'Image Withheld'

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of Art History
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Via ZOOM

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One of the more infamous examples of censorship in 1910s New York was the suppression of Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain*, which was excluded from the jury-less Society of Independent Artists Exhibition in 1917 – becoming an episode of deliberate and critical erasure that played out in newspapers and little magazines of the era. Yet, Duchamp was not alone in his devising of (often humorous) activities that both revealed and defied censorship. The pages of art publications such as *The Ridgefield Gazook* (1915), *The Soil* (1916-17), and *The Little Review* (1914-29) are filled with deliberately withheld images, suggesting absence operated as a method of anti-authoritarian resistance. By refusing to provide an image that might be suppressed, these publications subverted official censors while, likewise, conjuring and defying imagined censors. Here, publishers, authors, and artists realized methods of communication grounded in denial, thus mobilizing a strategy of withholding as a means of protest. Through the lens of a contextual history, this talk traces the commonalities among the publications, their connections with anarchism, and the many and varied ways that the 'image withheld' functioned as a tool of resistance to official control and governance.



Dr Sarah Archino is an Associate Professor of Art History at Furman University (South Carolina, USA). Dr Archino specializes in early twentieth-century American art, with a focus on New York. Her scholarship weaves together the avant-garde circles around Robert Henri, Alfred Stieglitz, and Walter Arensberg with a particular interest in the emergence of Dadaism in New York. Her writing has appeared in journals such as *American Art* and *Sculpture Magazine*, exhibition catalogues such as *Theresa Bernstein: A Century in Art*, and edited volumes such as *Utopia: The Avant-Garde, Modernism and (Im)possible Life*. She has held fellowships at the INHA in Paris, the Duchamp Research Center in Germany, and the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, Texas.

The talk will be conducted via Zoom: <https://hku.zoom.us/j/92333450296>
All are welcome. No registration is required.
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