

LANGUAGE

ART

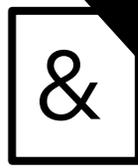
"Dyr bul shchyl..."  
-Kruchenykh

"  
-Malevich

# ВЗРЫВАЮЩИЕСЯ ЯЗЫКИ

## EXPLODING TONGUES

Note: in Russian "iazyki" means both "tongues" and "languages." The marked choice "tongues" expresses the violent irony of the Russian Avant-garde. The less common reflexive verbal participle "vzryvaiushchiesia" (v. "vzryvchatie" or "explosive"), indicative of immanent force, applies in pseudo-science, such as S.H.C. (*spontaneous human combustion*), rotting animal carcasses and non-conventional weaponry. E.g. "vzryvaiushchiesia kotiaty," "Exploding Kittens"



RUSSIAN  
АВАНГАРД

### Coarse Syllables

CSLC134/RUSN334 «EXPLODING TONGUES»

IS A HYBRID INQUIRY-BASED COURSE ABOUT THE RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE, WITH A DIGITAL AND BOOK ARTS/LETTERPRESS STUDIO COMPONENT AND AN ADDITIONAL 1-CREDIT LANGUAGE DISCUSSION SECTION FOR STUDENTS OF INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED RUSSIAN. MATERIAL COVERED WILL INCLUDE A BROAD ARRAY OF CULTURAL PHENOMENA, FROM ADVERTISING AND ARCHITECTURE TO STAGE PERFORMANCE, BUT THE CLASS WILL NOT FOLLOW CONTOURS OF A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY. IT WILL FOCUS NARROWLY, INSTEAD, ON A BRIEF AND INTENSE HISTORICAL MOMENT OF EXPLOSIVE CULTURAL CHANGE IN THE SECOND DECADE OF THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY WHILE ALLOWING WIDE LATTITUDE AND SCOPE AS WE SEEK TO ANSWER A SINGLE, OVERARCHING RESEARCH QUESTION.



## KursKONTsa (COURSEFROMEND)

примѣчаніе сочинителя—  
влечет міръ  
с конца  
в художественной виѣшности он  
выражается и так: вмѣсто 1—2—3  
событія располагаются 3—2—1 или  
3—1—2 такъ и есть в моем  
стихотвореніи



note from the instructor—  
learning begins  
from the end  
in outward appearances it  
manifests like this: instead of 1—2—3  
activities are sequenced 3—2—1 or  
3—1—2 so it is in my  
curriculum

(From: Poshchечina obshchestvennomu vkusu : stikhi, proza, stat'i. / *A Slap in the Face of Public Taste: Poetry, Prose, Articles.* )

### From Induction to Production to Transduction Toward a Futurist Logic of Interdisciplinary Research

*Thirdly: what can we learn, generally, about language in its manifold expression, from speech to writing to graphic form, in unique historical circumstances when rules are shattered and conventions are flouted?*

*Firstly: what was the specific relationship, if any, between parallel historical occurrences in different modalities of artistic expression: Russian zaum or trans-sense poetry, and fully abstract painting, such as Malevich's Suprematism?*

*Secondly, what was the cultural impact of the artist book as a form of cultural production on the literature and art of the Russian Avant-garde?*

These targeted research tasks may help shed light on some broader questions in the scholarly discourse, such as: To what extent can we speak of the Russian Avant-garde in the singular, that is, as a general movement, trend or tendency in the arts with commonalities across different media and practices? To what degree should the Russian Avant-garde(s) in its/their "utopian" reductively, as artistic

frame be considered essentially (or expression of a political urge? What materials, theories and methods should be prioritized when approaching a topic as conceptually challenging as the Russian Avant-garde?

# SEQUENCE

## SQUARE 3: INDUCTION

FOR THE FIRST THIRD OF THE COURSE, WE WILL CLOSELY INSPECT VISUAL, LINGUISTIC AND LITERARY ARTIFACTS OF THE RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE IN VARIOUS DIMENSIONS AND FROM UNUSUAL PERSPECTIVES. IN DISCUSSION (TUESDAYS) WE WILL REVIEW READINGS, SHARE



OBSERVATIONS, AND DEVELOP PLAUSIBLE INFERENCE AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THESE 'OBJECTS OF

INQUIRY.' EMERGENT THEORIES WILL BE TESTED IN LAB (THURSDAYS) BY MEANS OF THE TECHNICAL PROCEDURES OF COLLECTING, UPLOADING AND ANNOTATING MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS OF AVANT-GARDE PHENOMENA INTO THE SCHOLARLY DIGITAL TOOL SCALAR FROM THE GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE.



SQUARE 3 WILL CULMINATE ON MARCH 1 IN A FORMAL COLLABORATIVE PRESENTATION OF OUR COLLECTIVE FINDINGS AND INDIVIDUAL INSIGHTS TO ARTH 227 .

## SQUARE 1: PRODUCTION



FOR THE SECOND THIRD OF THE COURSE, WE WILL EXPERINCE A 'ZDVIIG' OR 'SHIFT' IN OUR SCHEDULE AND WORK ROUTINE. OUR CLASS WILL MEET ON WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS (1:55-4:50P) IN WEINGART 20 TO JOIN FORCES WITH ARTH 227 INTRODUCTION TO

LETTERPRESS PRINTING, TAUGHT BY JOCELYN PEDERSEN. YOU WILL COLLABORATIVELY AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATE AVANT-GARDE, AND PERHAPS ZAUM/TRANS-SENSE POETRY IN THE MANNER OF THE RUSSIANS A CENTURY AGO. RUSSIAN-



LANGUAGE OR ENGLISH-LANGUAGE TEXTS WILL BE ACCEPTED. FINISHED WORK PRODUCTS WILL BE PRINTED, COMPILED AND BOUND IN A LIMITED

EDITION BY YOU IN HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS. INDIVIDUAL ELEMENTS WILL BE SCANNED AND UPLOADED TO THE COURSE SCALAR BOOK, WITH REFLECTIVE COMMENTARY AND ANNOTATION BY THE RESPECTIVE AUTHORS. THURSDAY LAB SESSIONS DURING THE MIDDLE THIRD OF THE CLASS WILL BECOME VOLUNTARY CO-WORKING SESSIONS.

## SQUARE 2: TRANSDUCTION

DURING THE FINAL THIRD OF THE COURSE, SCHEDULING WILL RESUME TO THE REGULAR ALTERNATION OF DISCUSSION (TUES) AND LAB (THURS). SCHEDULES PERMITTING, WE WILL TAKE A FIELD TRIP TO THE GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (GRI) TO VIEW SAMPLES FROM THEIR ABUNDANT COLLECTION OF RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE BOOKS, AND TO MEET AND INTERROGATE CURATOR AND AUTHOR OF *EXPLODITY* NANCY PERLOFF. THE CULMINATING 1/3 OF THE COURSE WILL BE DEVOTED TO COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL FORMS ACROSS MEDIA: IMAGE, SPOKEN



LANGUAGE, TEXT ( + ARCHITECTURE, THEATRE, MATHEMATICS, TEXTILES, FASHION AND COSTUME DESIGN, FURNITURE, TEA SERVICES, ETC.).

ALL ANALYTICAL COMMENTARY WILL BE COMPILED, SYNTHESIZED AND ORGANIZED IN A SUMMARY SCALAR PROJECT, WITH INDIVIDUAL MULTIMODAL ESSAYS CALLED 'PATHS.' TEXT FROM PATH CONTRIBUTIONS WILL

BE TRANSLATED AND OUTPUT IN THE FORM OF A (HIGHLY) CONVENTIONAL ILLUSTRATED TERM PAPER OF APPROXIMATELY 7 PAGES.

## COURSE LEARNING GOALS

- APPROACH A NUANCED UNDERSTANDING OF RUSSIAN CULTURE
- CONTEXTUALIZE DISCRETE TOPICS WITHIN CULTURAL HISTORY
- INVESTIGATE LANGUAGE AS A CONSTITUTIVE ELEMENT OF LITERATURE AND CULTURE
- LEARN CULTURE BY PRODUCING CULTURE
- DEVELOP ATTITUDES AND APTITUDES FOR COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH
- LEARN SCHOLARLY PRACTICES USING DIGITAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES
- POSE NEW QUESTIONS ABOUT LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURE

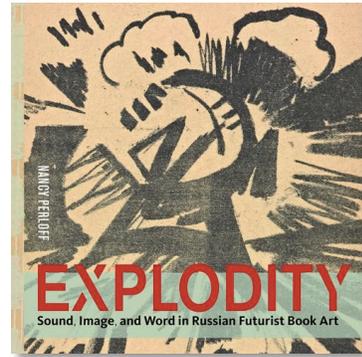
## MATERIALS

CSLC 134/RUSN 334 IS A RESPONSIVE RESEARCH CLASS, WHICH TREATS LITERATURE, IMAGERY AND OTHER CULTURAL ARTIFACTS AS EVIDENCE, RATHER THAN KNOWLEDGE. READINGS AND ANALYSES WILL BE COMPRISED OF THREE TYPES:

- GENERALLY ASSIGNED CLASS READINGS AND VIEWINGS
- INDIVIDUAL/GROUP ASSIGNED TOPICS
- CONSUMPTION OF MATERIALS DISCOVERED IN THE RESEARCH PROCESS.

YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS FOR ALL THREE TYPES, INCLUDING NOT LEAST MATERIALS DISCOVERED THROUGH RESEARCH BY YOURSELF AND YOUR PEERS.

ATTENTION TO ARTIST BOOKS IS TIMELY. THE GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE JUST LAUNCHED AN INTERACTIVE WEBSITE AND PUBLISHED A DETAILED PRINT STUDY ON THE TOPIC BY CURATOR NANCY PERLOFF (PERLOFF, NANCY. *EXPLODITY: SOUND, IMAGE, AND WORD IN RUSSIAN FUTURIST BOOK ART*. LOS ANGELES: THE GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE, 2017). THESE DIGITAL AND PRINT PUBLICATIONS REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT COLLECTION OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY RESEARCH MATERIALS RELATED TO RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE BOOKS, AS WELL AS THE BROADER ARTISTIC, LITERARY AND THEORETICAL CONTEXTS, MUCH OF WHICH IS DIGITIZED AND ACCESSIBLE FOR ACTIVE USE.



A GENERAL NOTE ABOUT THE READINGS: MANY YOU WILL FIND CHALLENGING TO UNDERSTAND, AND MANY WILL BE SHORT TEXTS AND FRAGMENTS. MOREOVER, FORMATS WILL RANGE FROM PRINT TO DIGITAL. THE EXPECTATION IS NOT THAT YOU WILL READ A CERTAIN TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES, NOR THAT YOU WILL MASTER ALL TEXTS YOU ENCOUNTER. IT IS, RATHER, THAT YOU WILL MAKE DELIBERATE EFFORT TO PURSUE PROMISING LINES OF INQUIRY, THAT YOU WILL READ IN TRACEABLE "HANDS-ON" FASHION WITH MARKUP, NOTATIONS, ETC., AND THAT WE WILL WORK COLLECTIVELY WITH ALL TEXTS TO DECODE AND INTERPRET DISCRETE PASSAGES AS ARTIFACTS.

## GRADING [REDACTED]

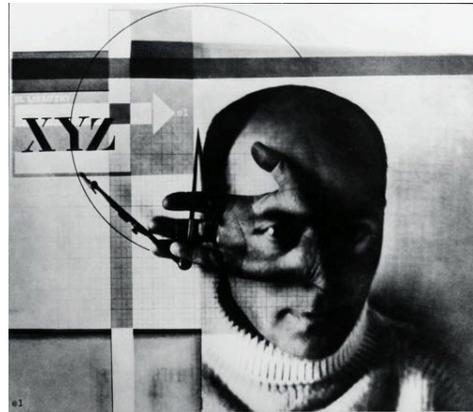
### **КРУГОВАЯ ПТОРУКА / CIRCULAR (COLLECTIVE) RESPONSIBILITY (10%)**

THE FUNCTION OF CSLC134 / RUSN334 AS A RESEARCH LAB AND SEMINAR IS INSPIRED BY THE RELEVANT HISTORICAL PRECEDENT OF THE STUDY "CIRCLE," SUCH AS THE HOTBEDS OF RUSSIAN FORMALISM AND SEMIOTICS, OPOIAZ (ST. PETERSBURG), THE MOSCOW LINGUISTIC CIRCLE, AND SUBSEQUENT PRAGUE LINGUISTIC CIRCLE. WITHIN THESE INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITIES YOUNG SCHOLARS CHALLENGED ACCEPTED WISDOM, PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY IN CREATIVE CULTURE AND DREW UPON EACH OTHER'S INCIPIENT IDEAS TO FORMULATE FUNDAMENTALLY NEW PARADIGMS.

TO THAT EXTENT, YOU WILL BE ASSESSED ON THE PROCESSES AS WELL AS FINAL PRODUCTS OF YOUR WORK, AND ON HOW WELL YOU CONTRIBUTE TO AND RESPOND TO THE ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND DECISIONS OF YOUR PEERS AND PROFESSOR.

#### POSITIVE QUALITIES [REDACTED]

- CURIOUS
- DILIGENT
- THOROUGH
- INSIGHTFUL
- GENEROUS
- CREATIVE



#### PROCESSES

- ITERATING PROJECT DESIGN (REFINING SCOPE, MATERIALS SET, FRAMING QUESTIONS)
- SEEKING AND ACCOMMODATING OBSERVATIONS, NEW FINDINGS, EVIDENCE
- MAINTAINING SCOPE AND DIRECTION
- RESPONDING TO FACULTY AND PEER INPUT

THE USE OF [REDACTED] DIGITAL MATERIALS AND DEVICES IS A STRUCTURAL COMPONENT OF THE COURSE. THIS PRECLUDES DISTRACTING RECREATIONAL, SOCIAL AND OTHER USES UNRELATED TO THE COURSE.

### **SQUARE 3 PRESENTATIONS (20%)**

MARCH 1, JUST PRIOR TO SPRING BREAK WILL BE A JOINT MEETING OF OUR CLASS AND ARTH 227. WE WILL MEET IN VARELAS INNOVATION LAB FOR

PART OF THE SESSION, WHERE YOU WILL PRESENT PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND DISCOVERIES ABOUT THE AVANT-GARDE USING SCALAR. THEN WE WILL MOVE TO THE LETTERPRESS STUDIO FOR AN INTRODUCTION AND PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITY.

**HAND-MADE ARTIST BOOK (20%)**

YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO AUTHOR AND CREATE AN ARTISTIC WORK. TO RECEIVE CREDIT YOU WILL NEED TO COMPLETE THE ASSIGNMENT THOUGHFULLY AND SERIOUSLY. THE GRADE WILL BE ASSIGNED TO THE SUBMISSION OF A REFLECTIVE PAGE IN SCALAR WITH DETAILED EXPLANATION OF INTENDED MEANING AND PROCESS IN RELATION TO YOUR UNDERSTANDING.

**CLASS SCALAR PROJECT (30%)**

THE JOINT PROJECT OF THE COURSE WILL BE THE DESIGN, CREATION AND ONLINE PUBLICATION OF A MULTIMODAL DIGITAL PROJECT IN PURSUIT OF A THEORETICAL QUESTION, AND BASED ON COMPARATIVE ANALYSES OF A BROAD SET OF TEXTUAL EXAMPLES, ALONGSIDE RELEVANT IMAGERY, VIDEO AND OTHER MEDIA. ALL CONTRIBUTIONS INDICATE THE USER-CONTRIBUTOR

**RESEARCH PAPER (20%)**

DURING THE COURSE YOU WILL WORK ITERATIVELY TOWARD THE DRAFTING OF A SPECIALIZED RESEARCH PAPER, THE TOPIC OF WHICH WILL BE AGREED UPON IN RELATION TO A GENERAL THEME, AND INTEGRATED WITH THE CLASS PROJECT. TEXTS WILL BE MAXIMALLY UNIFORM IN LENGTH, MANNER AND SCHOLARLY VOICE, AND SUPPORTED BY SCHOLARLY FOOTNOTES AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY.