

# Comparative Study

By: Maria Jose Garzon-Torres

This comparative study explores the artworks of Lois Ehlert and Francis Picabia in a cultural and visual way, by analyzing the meaning and the usefulness and technique of each medium used in the piece. The meaning of these pieces is clearly portrayed through the art work and this comparative study explores how the meaning is effectively exhibited. The artworks compared are “Manpower Temporary Services” by Ehlert 1979, Annotation of “The Handsome Pork-Butcher”, and “Untitled (Match-Woman I)” by Francis Picabia, with the addition of my own works of “Just Number Two” and “Deterioration” which were inspired by these previous pieces . Here the mediums and meanings are discussed and explained to how they relate or disconnect with each other.

# Evaluation of Cultural Significance of Ehlert

Lois Ehlert is an American author and illustrator of children's books. She was born on November 9, 1934. Ehlert started having interest in art from a very young age due to the many influences around her house, her father was a woodworker and her mother was a talented seamstress. Ehlert would collect scraps from her parents and began to make collages, she became a very resourceful artist who loved bright colors and the contrast between different mediums. As time when on Ehlert became very accomplished, thus she received a scholarship from Layton School of Art, where she graduated in 1957. In college, Ehlert became interested in writing books for children and after graduation she was able to publish *Growing Vegetable Soup*, which was one of her greatest goals and achievements, because it combined her passion of entertaining viewers with her art and words. After her book was published she was able to take an art class at the University of Wisconsin where Ehlert was able to learn how to make her books more playful and interactive, she learned how to mix different types of tone of color plus she learned how to combine different types of elements and mediums to create a whole. From this class Ehlert decided to publish more books because her aspiration was to create interactive and colorful art that would entertain and teach an audience. The books that followed became better though time and experience. For every book she was able to experiment with different components, which gave each book an specific meaning and energy for children to experiment the world of art.

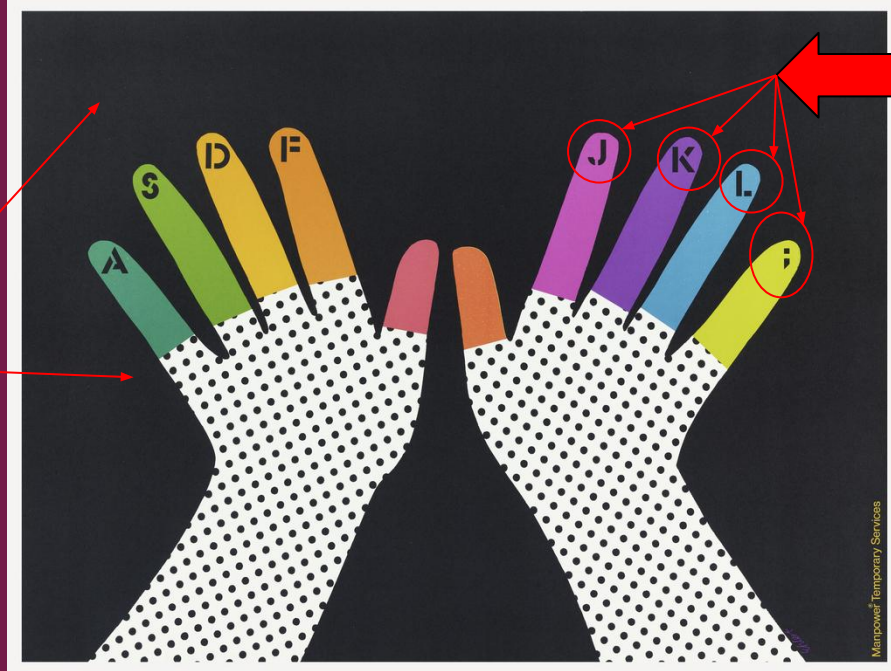
# Interpretation of Function and Purpose:

Annotation of “Manpower Temporary Services” by Ehlert 1979

This lithograph on paper was designed by Ehlert, to fulfil the desires of a customer from Manpower International and Manpower Temporary Services.

The background is kept simple to emphasise the two hands. This creates an outline of the hands and a contrast between the vibrant colors of the hands and the secluded hue in the background.

There is contrast between the hands and the background, as well as in the colors within the hands.



The letters on at the tip of the fingers suggest the placement of the hands and the way that they are positioned as if one were to type on a keyboard. Each finger has a different color, there are equal tones, but each finger is proportional to its partner. The unrealistic hues on the hands suggest that the work done is unrealistic and childish, this was done because of the previous experiences that Ehlert had by creating her previous art works.

Lois Ehlert, Manpower Temporary Services, 1979. Lithograph on paper. Cooper Hewitt Gallery.

# Analysis of Formal Qualities of Lois Ehlert

Ehlert's use of color and unrealistic features creates a powerful message on simple issues in society. Because she is the author and illustrator of her own children's books she is able to use her imagination and create work that affects the view in the daily life, while she create a fictional story, she also criticizes society. The simplicity of her work makes the work more complex because even as she adds more color, she is able to keep emphasis and create contrast on the main point of the piece.

The main purpose of Ehlert's art is to teach children about the real world and how art has a true value on everyone's lives. She was fortunate enough to have grown up with art, has inspired her to make a change in the world. She help children who are not as fortunate as she was create art for fun. Throughout the making of books she has accomplished her goal in life which was to create her own art that had the purpose to change or influence someone's life for the greater good.

The techniques that Ehlert uses on her books are ingenious, using different colors of feathers to using buttons and fabric to create animals; Ehlert has lots of creativity this is where she has been able to create fascinating art to develop her books.

Lois Ehlert, Manpower Temporary Services, 1979. Lithograph on paper. Cooper Hewitt Gallery.

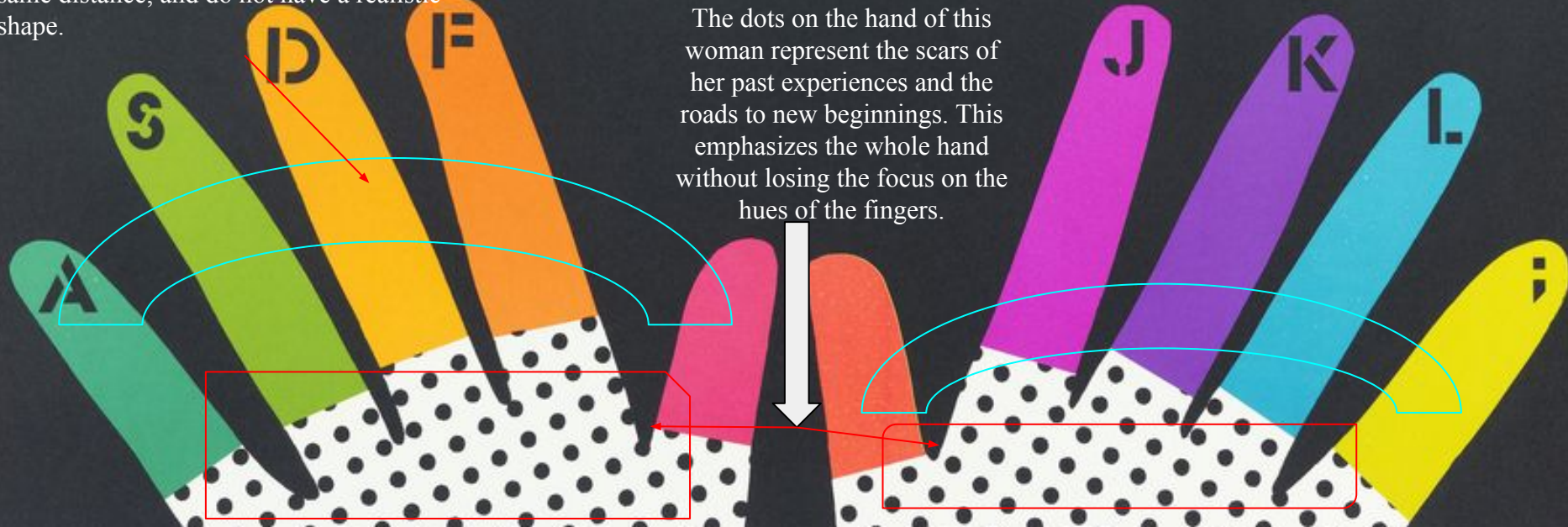


# Analysis of Details

The most notorious element in this piece is the use of color. Ehlert is a colorful artist, she fills the room with joy and passion, but in between the lines she includes a powerful message. This piece shows the hands of a working woman, perhaps a secretary, working a job on a typewriter or a keyboard which is a traditional job for a woman according to some, this connects to the way that Ehlert was raised, in a traditional, yet liberal household. Each finger has a different color and symbol because it was created for different functions, not every finger is the same, hence, not all women are the same.

All fingers are separated to approximately the same distance, and do not have a realistic shape.

The dots on the hand of this woman represent the scars of her past experiences and the roads to new beginnings. This emphasizes the whole hand without losing the focus on the hues of the fingers.



# Connection between Culture and Meaning

Lois Ehlert is a woman who was born into a dynamic couple who focused on making a more beautiful world, they did this by making art and sharing it with others in order to make the viewers feel a need to follow their steps. Ehlert was able to keep this tradition with her and create art works on which people could be inspired by to become a greater human.



Lois Ehlert, Manpower Temporary Services, 1979. Lithograph on paper. Cooper Hewitt Gallery.

With her previous experience on writing and illustrating children's books, Ehlert created this digital image for sharing her thoughts on a working woman, as if she were the working woman, and making the viewer think that no matter how traditional or undesirable a woman's job might be, there will always be room for creativity and purpose.

Just as her parents would teach her when she was little, to always be creative and follow her path to success. Ehlert wants to share this long term goal with many kids and adults around the world, and this is the best way that she is able to communicate with everyone.

Communication plays a key role in one's life, according to Ehlert, our words are not at the tip of our tongues, but at the tip of our fingers; to create art all needed is a pair of hands with thought to share, this is what Ehlert communicates to her audience.

# Evaluation of Cultural Significance of Picabia

Francis Picabia was one of the main figures of the dada movement. Picabia was born in January 22, 1879 and died on November 30, 1953. As a French painter, poet and typography art he experimented with impressionism and pointillism.

In 1895, Picabia was enrolled in École des Arts Decoratifs, which was a prestigious school of art. He began by painting in watercolors, but quickly transitioned to impressionism. This movement helped him discover his true talent, where he did many practices and sketches to create some of his most famous artworks. As the more artwork he produced, the more galleries he had, the more he became known. Picabia believed that abstract and figurative art went together to make extraordinary art and from then on he became well known to be one of the most influential figures for the Dada movement.

Picabia is well known for creating unrealistic human bodies, either with multiple sets of faces or multiple face parts, all of his choices were influenced by his culture and the data movement. His artworks mostly focused on creating people for who they truly were and how they would look in his perspective. Some of his work is untitled and open to interpretation because he believed in the freedom of the expression of art and people's desire to learn new things in different perspectives.

Francis Picabia. Untitled (Match-Woman I), 1920.  
Art Institute of Chicago

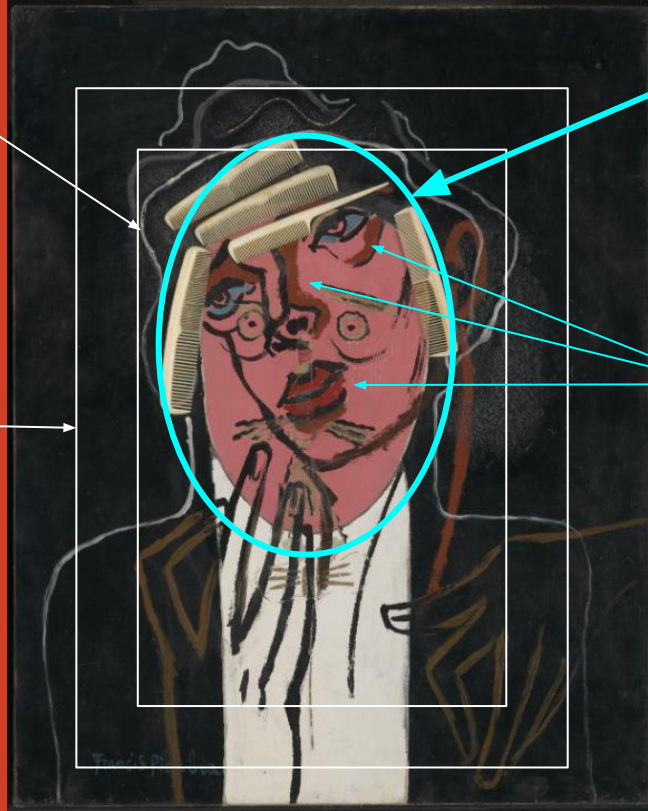
Francis Picabia. The Handsome Pork-Butcher.  
1924-1926 - 1929-1935. ADAGP, Paris and DACS,  
London 2002

# Interpretation of Function and Purpose:

## Annotation of "The Handsome Pork-Butcher" by Francis Picabia

This piece was painted in two separate stages. At the beginning it was a simple man with pink skin and a white shirt, to represent a common man who lived in this time period. Later on Picabia decided to add components to finish the man, to represent that a common man would usually wear, use and identify with household items.

The background of this piece is simple, which includes one hue and a gradient on some spots with white like powder strokes of paint; this was done to create emphasis on the man.



There is an immense emphasis on the face of the man, that it's to exhibit the facial expressions and the many thought that go through the head of this man because of the fact that he lives in this time period.

The man has an unrealistic skin tone. His facial features are dispersed and there is not much of a ratio to reality.

Picabia used common household items to create a "normal" man.

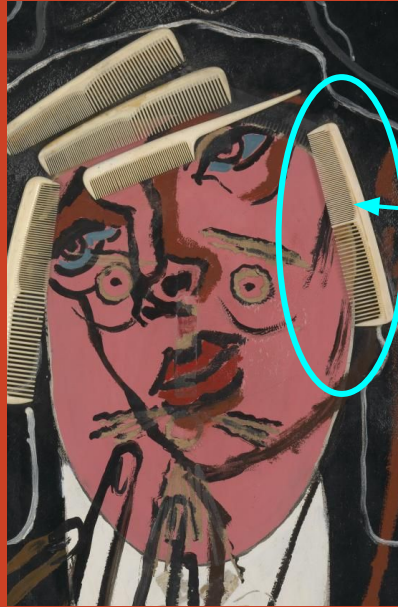
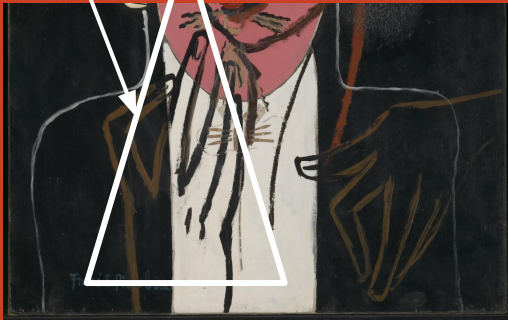
Francis Picabia. The Handsome Pork-Butcher. 1924-1926 - 1929-1935. ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2002



# Connection Between Culture and Meaning

Picabia grew up in France, where art is considered to be extremely cultural and historic, some might consider it holy or part of history.

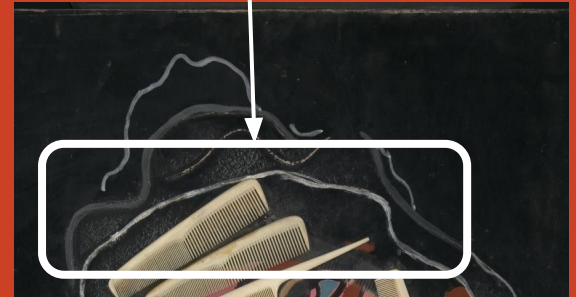
Not only did Picabia break the “rules” of art at his time, he was the beginning of a revolution, hence, creating humans in controversial aesthetics to show the public how the human body is not perfect, but it is pleasing to look at, it is an art piece.



Francis Picabia. The Handsome Pork-Butcher. 1924-1926 - 1929-1935. ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2002

The human body is an sculpture, and sculptures have a memorable place in France, however, Picabia desired to incorporate painting into sculptures, thus introducing a collage type of art where he would use the medium of painting and found objects to create a common image that the viewer might recognize.

Because of his childhood, Picabia would gather materials to create his art and this is what later influenced him to use found objects on his art works.



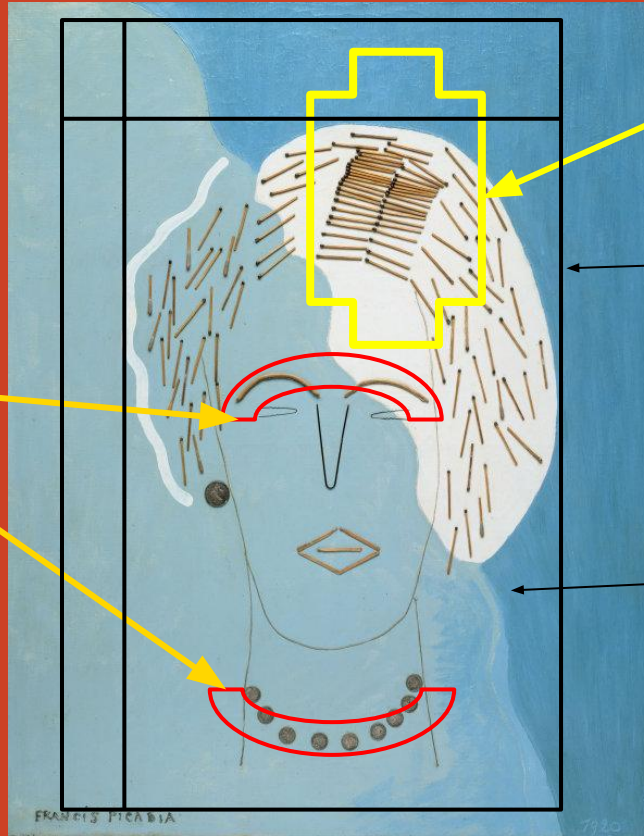
# Interpretation of Function and Purpose:

Annotation of “Untitled (Match-Woman I)” By Picabia

There is emphasis in the contrast between the background and the woman; perhaps the way that Picabia was able to separate the woman with the background is one unusual technique.

For this piece Picabia uses a range of colors that are able to complement each other, on the other hand these colors create emphasis on the elements that are not paint.

Using found objects to sculpture this woman's face features to demonstrate the significance of each one of them.



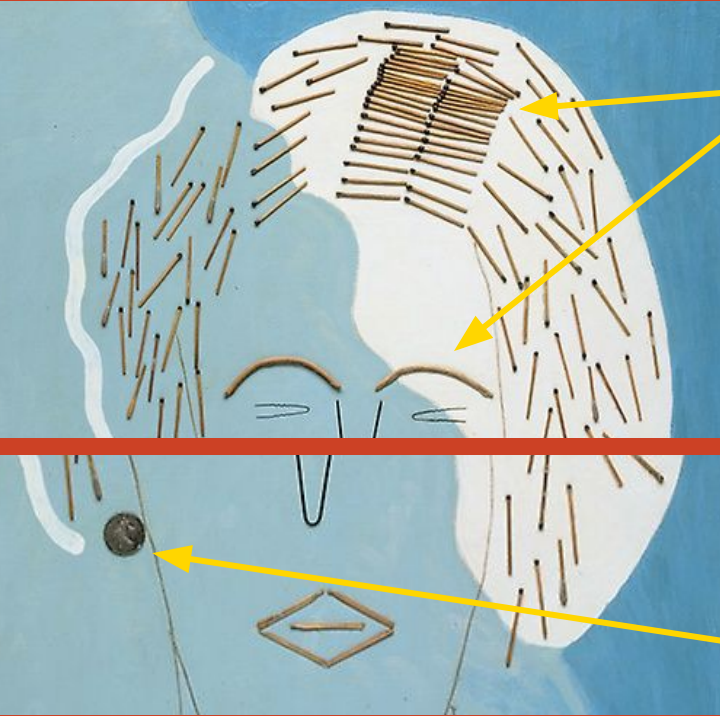
Picabia uses household items to create a woman. Just as he does with a handful of his other works of art.

The simplicity of the woman makes it a particularly interesting piece, because a woman is nothing close to simple. Picabia's use of the manufactured items is essential to her meaning, this might suggest the stereotype of the woman staying at the house.

The hues used on this piece reveal to the viewer a sense of calm and security, by giving a mother like figure.

Francis Picabia. Untitled (Match-Woman I), 1920. Art Institute of Chicago

# Analysis of Detail and Metaphors

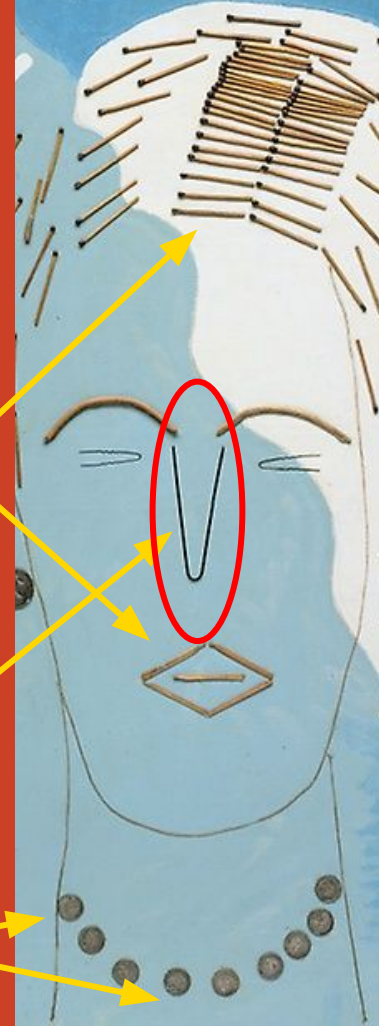


Francis Picabia. Untitled (Match-Woman I), 1920.  
Art Institute of Chicago

This is an untitled woman who is mostly made out of matches, in addition to some other found object that Picabia or anyone could find at their homes. These objects were used to create some of the most prominent features of a woman; a woman's hair and lips are used to create passion and glamour, hence, the matches because they can handle fire and are still delicate enough to not burn anything else.

The nose of this woman is made out of a wire object, that creates a long and simple nose to indicate that the emphasis of this woman is not the nose itself, but the connection of the nose with other elements.

For a woman, accessories are crucial and Picabia gave this woman a necklace that might look like a pearl necklace from afar, but once the viewer takes a closer look, desire turns into reality.



# Analysis of Formal Qualities of Picabia

Francis Picabia, one of the main figures of the Dada movement is able to create amazing works of art through simplicity and the contrast within this piece. Portraits of individuals is one of the main abilities that Picabia has, he creates individuals who are normals just as one of us might be. The fact that Picabia was able to use household items to create humans is amazing. The simplicity that Picabia exercises while making his pieces is essential for the piece, without the simplicity the whole meaning would change and the household items would end up being a collection, which would not turn into a normal thing that us as normal individuals would collect.

Creating humans with their own qualities to emphasize the normality of his pieces, and how they can apply to anyone, because they are considered to be normal. By showing repetition on how strong these qualities are, Picabia creates a strong bond between the real faces and the conceptual faces, Picabia shows the overlap of these to represent the image that is perhaps closest to the truth.

The emphasis on Picabia's pieces are his use of found objects, these objects create a bond with the object itself and the viewer. Picabia shows the viewer how an insignificant object can become a special part of a community, and how this might correlate with the viewer itself.

Francis Picabia. The Handsome Pork-Butcher. 1924-1926 - 1929-1935. ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2002

Francis Picabia. Untitled (Match-Woman I), 1920. Art Institute of Chicago

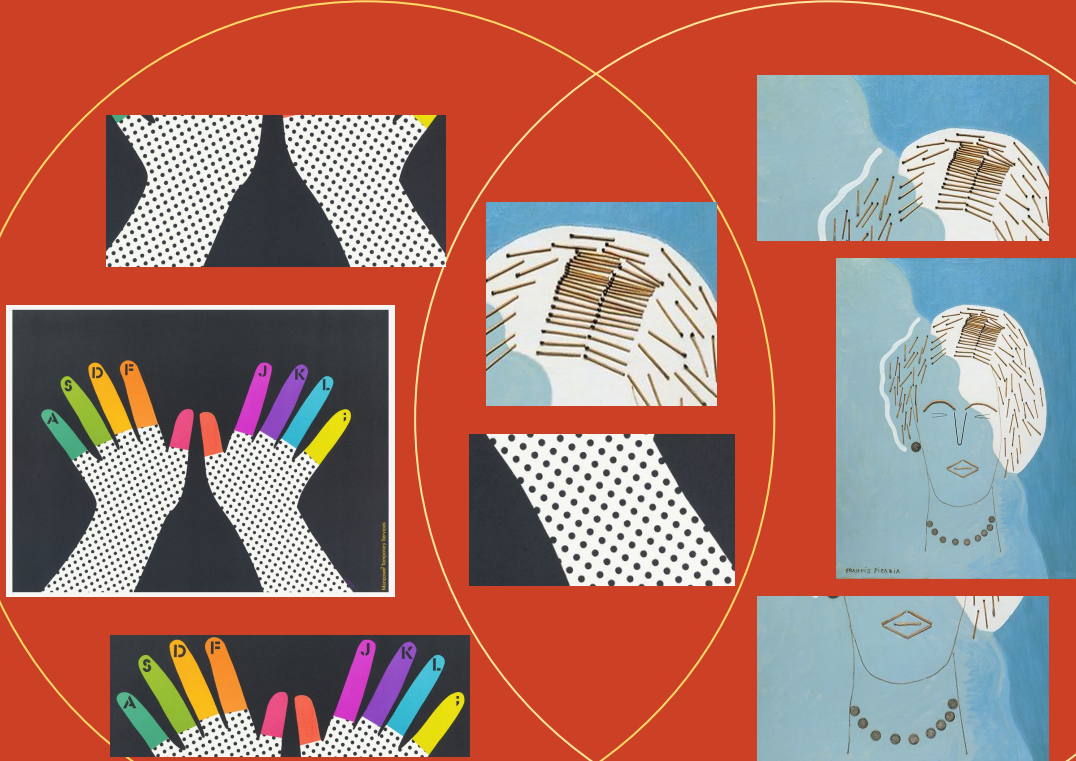
FRANCIS PICABIA

Lois Ehlert, Manpower Temporary Services, 1979. Lithograph on paper. Cooper Hewitt Gallery.

Francis Picabia. Untitled (Match-Woman I), 1920. Art Institute of Chicago

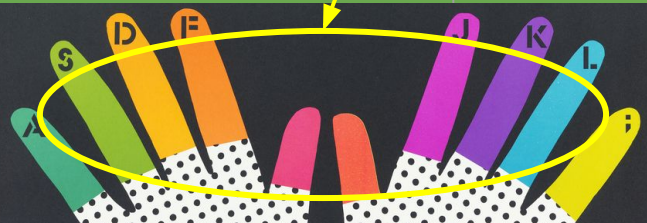
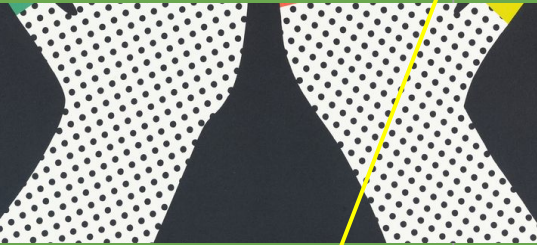
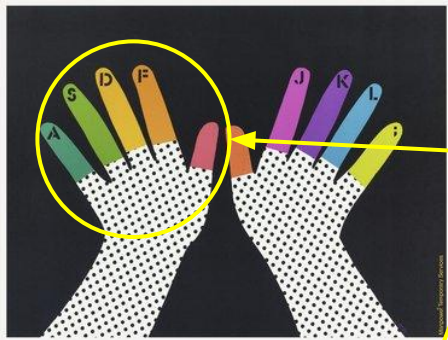
# Comparing Mediums and Techniques

- Ehlert only used digital tools to help her create this poster.
- She used a variety of hues to represent different aspects of the hands and how these hands created a bond due to their color combinations.
- There was simple detail used to show the similarity between the fingers and the rest of the piece.
- There is an emphasis on the middle of the piece which are the hands, specifically the colorful fingers with the details of the symbols.



- Picabia introduced two different mediums into creating one piece
- He used a variety of found objects that added to the meaning of the piece.
- His color palette is small, creating emphasis on the simplicity of the lines and the minimalistic features.
- Also exhibits a woman who might be like every other woman who sees this piece, easier way of sharing meaning

# Comparing Culture



Ehlert

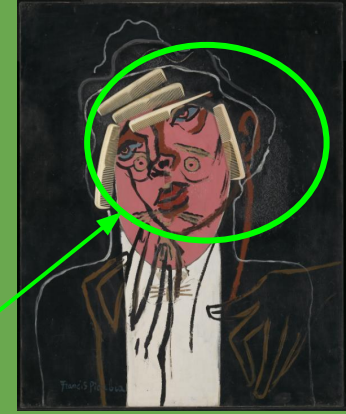
- Uses a variety of vibrant colors, representing vivid memories. Usage of creative and modern items, just as the education she completed

Both

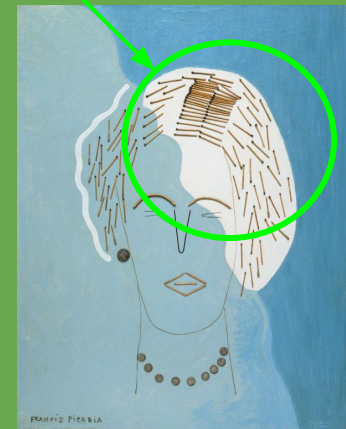
- Usage of a variety of elements within the piece, they both learned their passion by taking objects.
- Create pieces of individuals with items that identify them, just as doing collages

Picabia

- Uses a variation of colors that have a similar color scheme, because his life was almost like a routine.
- Usage of household items to show normal



Francis Picabia. The Handsome Pork-Butcher. 1924-1926 - 1929-1935. ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2002



Francis Picabia. Untitled (Match-Woman I), 1920. Art Institute of Chicago

# Analysis of Meaning

These pieces illustrate humans. These are based on body parts that make up the whole human, these parts make the body function properly and stay alive. However, none of these pieces exhibit a realistic body of a human, instead, they portray the most useful and important parts of the human body.

Without the colorful and creative hands, no art would exist. Just as without eyes or a mouth, no art could ever be seen or critiqued. These are ways that the viewer might see an overlap within these pieces. When these pieces are combined, they create the perfect creative human, it would not be a human any more because it would be perfect. The meaning of these pieces is to show the perfection through the perfection through the struggle, and to make the viewer believe that anything is possible if you can be a creative individual.

Hard work is another theme that possesses the meaning of these pieces, by showing the viewer the amount of care that it took them to create these pieces, the artists were able to show that persistence does make meaning appear more prominent.

The mediums for these pieces are all different, however, they all add up to have somewhat the same meaning and an overlapping theme. Without the use of these objects and tools, there would not be any art to look at, these artists wanted the viewer to visualize how grateful they should be about their lives and bodies.

Lois Ehlert, Manpower Temporary Services, 1979. Lithograph on paper. Cooper Hewitt Gallery.

Francis Picabia. Untitled (Match-Woman I), 1920. Art Institute of Chicago

# Formal Introduction to Own Works

I created the first work title, *Just Number Two*, which was clearly inspired by the poster that Ehlert designed. I decided to keep the vibrant colors and the expressive hands to represent a hard working women. These are gloves that have soil on them which give them form and Ehlert always used indigenous materials to create her piece, so I decided to give the metaphor of life and growth to the hands.

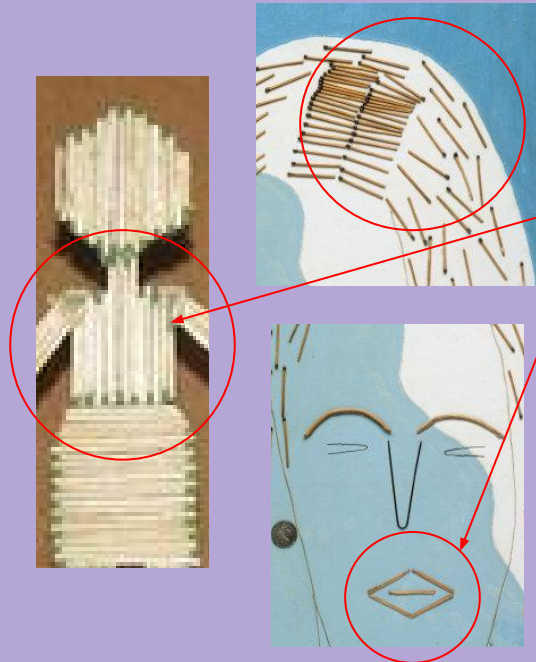
For the second piece title, *Deterioration*, I decided to bring the thought of making an individual out of matches to reality. Using Picabia as an inspiration I was able to use a manufactured element of household and create an actual human, which I then decided to burn and represent the decay that humans cause upon themselves and the world, at the end there was some residue left, symbolizing that there is no such thing as never and the humankind will always leave a print on the the world, even if the print is made out of chaos.





# Comparing and Contrasting Mediums

The use of mediums for my work are very significant, not only because of the aesthetics but also because of the meaning it provides to the artwork itself.



The use of common household materials is an ongoing theme, Picabia and myself use this as an opportunity to represent a “common” or “normal” human, someone just like everyone else. Hence, the use of matches.

Matches is a material used to create a feature on a human body. For my own work I decided to create an entire human figure using only matches, because my goal was to emphasize the amount of danger and protection that a human body could hold. On the other hand, Picabia used matches to create some parts of the figure of a woman; using matches to represent her hair and some facial features, to show the world how advanced and delicate a woman could be.

A human body is one of the most precious things, by using matches this meaning changes, now the human body becomes daring and interesting, which was the main focus of these two pieces.

Francis Picabia. Untitled (Match-Woman I), 1920.  
Art Institute of Chicago

# Comparing and Contrasting Own Artistic Styles to Ehlert

## Ehlert

- Works are inspired by personal experiences
- Makes an statement for people to see since it is displayed on a wall.
- Works with non-household materials
- Digital Piece
- Use of little details that are simple but have complexity
- Emphasis on arms

## Both

- Both include some type of element that is 3D
- Work can be interpreted in a number of ways
- Usage of vibrant hues
- Usage of contrast between colors within the piece
- Not realistic
- These two pieces are interactive and directed for the public

## Garzon-Torres

- Works are inspired by more universal themes
- Usage of negative and opposite space
- Simplistic
- Usage of household materials, including paint
- Sculpture to make the piece more interactive
- Use of household materials

Lois Ehlert, Manpower Temporary Services, 1979. Lithograph on paper. Cooper Hewitt Gallery.

# Comparing and Contrasting Own Artistic Styles to Picabia



Picabia

- Usage of household items to incorporate into the painting
- Simplicity including a variety of household items
- Make the background interfere with the central image

Both

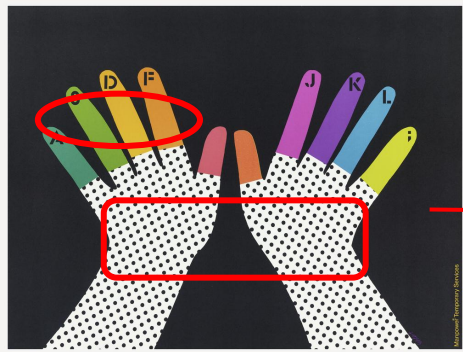
- Usage of household items
- Create humans
- Focus around themes related/caused by humans
- Have plain backgrounds to draw focus to the central image
- Have a personal connection to the piece

Garzon-Torres

- Usage of household items to create a form
- Changes the states of the piece, ephemeral, it will always change
- Patterns and repetition to build the human with matches

# Comparing and Contrasting Own Use of Emotions to Ehlert

Ehlert	Both	Garzon-Torres
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main audience are children</li> <li>• Graphic illustrator</li> <li>• Wants viewer to enjoy the piece and not reflect on the piece</li> <li>• Wants viewer to interact with the piece</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usage of colors to give the viewer contrast of emotions</li> <li>• Intend to elicit an emotional reaction from the audience</li> <li>• Use simple images</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main audience is everyone</li> <li>• Use obvious ways to exhibit meaning</li> <li>• Wants the viewer to reflect on the piece</li> <li>• An interactive piece</li> </ul>



These two artworks have a similar meaning, the main difference between them is their medium. This experience was very significant for my growth as an artist, this journey helped me strengthen my research and knowledge skills. I truly believe that in every piece I leave a little bit of this wealth of knowledge and share it with others, so that perhaps in the future they are encouraged to also pursue this road and work hard to achieve the IB requirements, this is something similar to what these two artist wanted to pursue people into thinking, and eventually change their lives for the better. . These pieces show the amount of work done and how the inspiration for each piece was influential to some extent.



Lois Ehlert, Manpower Temporary Services, 1979. Lithograph on paper. Cooper Hewitt Gallery