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| **Ghosts Before Breakfast** |
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| [Enter an **abstract** for your article] |
| *Ghosts Before Breakfast* (German title: *Vormittagsspuk*) is a short, experimental, avant-garde animated film from 1928 by Hans Richter. The film, coming almost four years after the dissolution of the Dada movement in Europe, was undoubtedly influenced by Richter’s involvement with Dadaism and its attack on the rational order of bourgeois society. A mixture of live action and stop motion animation, the film clearly displays the absurdist tone and influence of the newly emergent Surrealist movement where contradictions both collapse and are brought into conflict.  Taking place during the ten-minute time period between 11:50 and noon, the film plays with real and diegetic time. The plot involves the short-lived and irrational rebellion of everyday objects, resisting not only their original use-value, but also their insertion into the regimented rhythm and time systems of modern European capitalism. Bowler hats fly around residential neighbourhoods, fending off attempts by humans to place them on their heads; bowties unravel and resist their owner’s attempt to fasten them; and fire hoses unravel to playfully spray the flying hats. Richter’s film also explores the possibility of using the camera to play with time and to manipulate and transform visual reality through such techniques as negative-positive reversals, split screens, the speeding up and reversal of time, and the ‘stop trick’. When the Nazis came to power, they destroyed the soundtrack version of the film, composed by Paul Hindemith, as an example of “degenerate art”. |
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