A Map of Surrealist Paris: Places

(Page numbers reference *Guide du Paris Surréaliste*)

Surrealist Research headquarters   
15, rue de Grenelle, 7e

When the Surrealists gathered here [in the 1920s], the walls were covered with the works of Giorgio De Chirico, Robert Desnos and Man Ray. Guests compiled their own library of Surrealist books. Robert Desnos’s *Fantomas* and André Breton’s S*urrealism Manifesto* were tacked to the wall with forks, and a plaster model of a woman’s bust hung from the ceiling.

(*Guide* 192)

Metro:

Cimetière de Montmartre  
20, avenue Rachel, 18e

Here lie Romanian artist Victor Brauner (1903-1966) and Surrealist writers Philippe Soupault (1897-1990) and Jacques Rigaut. The two heads on top of Brauner’s tomb were carved by the artist himself, while the verses are by Surrealist Writer Paul Eluard.

Soupault was the last living Surrealist. Though he helped found the Surrealist movement, Soupault was ostracized from the group in 1926, having indicated an interest in the novel [explain why this is anti-surrealist in intro] and an interest in journalism. His grave is an ironic one to include on this virtual map, as Soupault wrote in *Story of a White Man,* “Neither flowers, nor crown, nor cross, nor statue. I believe neither in God nor in glory,” as is evident in the minimalism of his grave. Nonetheless, death played a significant role in the life of Soupault, who was deeply affected by the death of his father when he was seven, and was plagued by thoughts of suicide.

Metro: Place de Clichy

Bus : 95 74 80 54 30

Directions to Soupault’s grave: Immediately after the Welcome booth, ascend the stairs leading to l’avenue des Polonais. Soupault’s tomb is in division 17, lot 4, in one of the first alleys on the left.

Marché aux Puces  
109 avenue Michelet, 93 Saint Ouen, 18e

André Breton was fascinated by « objets trouvés, » or « found objects. » He writes in *Nadja,* “I am often there [at the Saint Ouen flea market], looking for objects one cannot find anywhere else—out of fashion, broken, useless, almost incomprehensible” (62). According to Breton, the selection of the object was indicative of latent desires, as he explains in *Mad Love* (1937).

When shopping with artist Alberto Giacometti one day, Breton buys a wooden spoon which, when resting on its handle, looks like a shoe. Breton later realizes that he chose the shoe-like spoon because he had been wanting Giacometti to sculpt a shoe-shaped ashtray (an allusion to Cinderella’s slipper) for him, and Giacometti had never gotten around to it. Given the surrealists’ desire to access the subconscious, Breton’s affinity for found objects is not surprising. The readymade art of Breton’s contemporaries, Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray, elicits similar psychological experiences.

Source: Nadja, *L’Amour Fou* (49), *Crise de l’Objet* (359)

Tour Saint-Jacques  
Square Saint-Jacques, 4e

Metro : Hôtel de Ville

This tower is all that remains of Church Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie (constructed 1509-1523). \*\*add MORE ABOUT WHY IT’S CONNECTED TO ALCHEMY.\*\*

Given the Surrealists’ affinity for the occult, irrationality, and symbols, their interest in alchemy is natural. André Breton and Robert Desnos in particular were fascinated by fifteenth-century alchemist Nicolas Flamel, who according to legend, was given a code revealing the secrets of transmutation by a Jewish man named Abraham. Desnos, who grew up in the neighborhood with the tower, wrote the article “The Mystery of Abraham the Jew.” The Surrealists would study the tower for alchemical signs.

(*Guide* 77-80, 116, 194isinfo.com)23). rch Saint-Jacques de lahe secrets of itled "ury alchemist Nicolas Flamel. . by thoughts of suicide and; parisinfo.com)

[tournesol- 194]

Buttes-Chaumont (Park)  
rue Manin and rue Botzaris, 19e

Many of the aspects of Buttes-Chaumont described by Louis Aragon in his 1927 book *Paris Peasant*, such as the bronze column and obelisk,no longer exist. Not to mention, the park is closed at night. Because it was largely ignored by the bourgeois, Aragon called the park a “seedy” “oasis in a popular neighborhood.”

Passage de l’Opera  
boulevard des Italiens (disparu), 9e?

This passage no longer exists. When Louis Aragon wrote about its mysterious potential in his 1924 commentary “Le Passage de l’Opéra” (for the book *Paris Peasant*), he lamented the imminent loss of the passage to *l’haussmannisation*, the urban planning process (commissioned by Napoleon III) during Parisian streets were transformed into the wide, straight boulevards it is known for today. For Aragon, walking through this passage at night was a way of escaping “public morals.” Many prostitutes lived there. “All of the nightlife of imaginations . . . the way in which a small shadow is lost and perpetuates in the poorly-lit zones of human activity. It’s there that the spiritual beacons appear . . . The door of mystery, a human slipup opens it, and there we are in the realm of shadow” (Aragon 25).

Place Blanche  
82 boulevard de Clichy, 9e

Here once stood le café Cyrano. Beginning in 1925, after the destruction of passage de l’Opéra and café Certa, café Cyrano became the regular meeting place for the Surrealists. There they drank mandarin curaçao cocktails and shared their findings and planned projects.

(*guide* 66)

Place Franz-Liszt  
rue de La Fayette, 10e

It was here, in 1926, that André Breton met Nadja, his first wife (??), about whom he wrote the book *Nadja.*

“Last October 4, on one of the idle and dreary afternoons I am wont to have, I found myself rue Lafayette: after having stopped a few minutes in front of the window of the l’Humanité bookstore, I continued on my path toward the Opera . . . I was just crossing the intersection whose name I don’t remember or ignore, the one in front of a church. All of a sudden, although she may have been ten feet in front of me, coming from the opposite direction, I see a young woman, very poorly dressed, who, also, sees me or saw me. She continues with her head held high, unlike all the other passersby. So frail her feet barely touch the ground when she walks. An imperceptible smile perhaps crosses her face.”

Nadja has chosen this name for herself because in Russian it is the beginning of the word for “hope.” Breton saw Nadja as a way of accessing the mysterious, the occult. Her mental illness gradually became apparent, and she died alone in an insane asylum. in Russian it is the beginning of the word for "om the opposite direction, I see

(*Guide* 69-70)

Metro:

Porte Saint-Denis  
rue Saint-Denis et boulevard Saint-Denis, 2e/3e/10e

Breton described Porte Saint-Denis as « very beautiful and very useless. » It was built in 1672 as a symbol of the door in the outer wall of Charles V’s castle. A celebration of French victories, it was the entryway for royalty.

“Yielding to the attraction that the Saint-Denis neighborhood has had on me for so many years—an attraction I understand only in terms of the isolation of two gates one comes across and that undoubtedly owe their moving quality to the fact that they were recently part of the wall surrounding Paris, which gives these vessels, as if carried away by the centrifugal force of the city, an aspect which is completely boundless, which I find elsewhere only in the brilliant Tour Saint-Jacques—I wandered around rue de Paradis for around six hours.” –André Breton, *Les Vases communicants* (1932)

*Guide* 110, 71, 93

Marché aux Fleurs de l’Ile de la Cité

Place Louis Lepine, 1er

Surrealist Poet André Breton walked here with Nadja on a fall night [1920s], and with Jacqueline Lamba one night in the spring of 1934. “Is it finally you, this woman, did you just arrive today, between the meadows. While, as if in a dream, there are always flower beds before us, you lean toward these flowers surrounded by shadow as if it were less to smell them than to abduct their secrets—and such a gesture, in itself, is the most moving response you could give to the question I do not ask you.”

Place Louis Lepine, 4e  
Métro : Line 4-Cité

Bus : 21, 38, 47, 85, 96 

\*See parisinfo website for location on map !!!

Place Dauphine et Pont-Neuf  
[See page 72], 1er

Two

André Breton meets Nadja here for dinner two days after meeting her. At their table at 15 Place Dauphine, Nadja continuously makes uncannily accurate predictions, as in: “You see that window over there? It’s black like all the others. Look closely. In a minute it will light up. It will be red.”

The evening quickly takes a turn from romantic to tragic as Nadja is overcome by visions of dead people and blue wind. Breton escorts her away, toward the quai de l’Horloge, then back toward Place Dauphine, across Pont-Neuf and through the Tuileries Gardens.

Metro : Pont Neuf, Cité   
[Walking directions : p. 72]

rue Meslay  
[see 113 for address], 3e

The humorous reflections of poet Robert Desnos on wandering this street are indicative of the ways in which he and his fellow surrealists (all males) idolized women, particularly women whose seeming non-attainability made them more mysterious and therefore, more desirable.

“No wax museum can compete with these quasi-living statues . . . In certain windows for lingerie shops, half-naked women contemplate, with the shamelessness of pure souls, preoccupied passersby. On the new Haussmann-style boulevard, this is a wonder. Naked, but surrounded like a mummy in is bandages, but a multitude of mirrors, barely covered in a silk scarf, a mannequin turns her barely-sketched face.”

Centre Pompidou  
Place Georges Pompidou, 4e

Although pieces are rotated out occasionally, this museum of modern art has showcased several Surrealist works of art, including Max Ernst’s *Ubu Imperator* (1923) and *Chimeras* (1929), Salvador Dalí’s *Sometimes I Spit with Pleasure on the Portrait of my Mother* (1929) and *William Tell* (1930), Girgio de Chirico’s *Premonitory Portrait of Guillaume Apollinaire* (1919), and several works by Paul Klee.

Surrealist writer René Crevel, author of the first French monograph on Salvador Dalí, noted that De Chirico’s paintings were evocative of “the streets of some noumenal city,” and that a Paul Klee piece was “a museum full of dreams.”

M : Hôtel de Ville  
RER : Châtelet-Les Halles  
Bus : 21, 29, 38, 47, 58, 69, 70, 72, 74, 75, 76, 81, 85, 96

(*Guide* 93)

Le Source Café

[Give excerpt—animals, rain.]

[Where Breton shopped with Giacometti]

Musée Gustave Moreau

Studio 28

Studio des Ursulines

André Breton’s Place

Jacques Prévert’s Place

Victor Brauner’s House

Soupault’s Place

Theatre Michel

Gradiva

Introduction

**A brief intro to Surrealism :**

* Pull quote: from Breton’s manifesto about how we blindly go through life..

The writers/ key members : Robert Desnos, René Crevel, Jacques Baron, Roger Vitrac, Max Morise, Benjamin Péret, Soupault (165). (Separate Desnos, Soupault, maybe Crevel fr. others.

-Paul Eluard

-Pierre Naville

-Liked Westerns, other low-brow things. (vampires.)

-Anti-morality. (Pushed against the bourgeois.)

-Romance, wandering the streets at night. (Breton- Guide p. 75)

-works referenced: *Mad Love/ L’Amour Fou* (about JL, pub. 1937), *Nadja* (about …published ..), *Paysan de Paris.* credit *Guide du Paris Surrealiste* or w/e it’s called.

**How to Use this Website:**

Map at [right]: hover over things. [Color-coded?] Click to arrive at pages with more info, metro stops (and lines?).

**Question-Using Social media?**

To Do

1. Write descriptions (pages ) for all locations
   1. Insert links into descriptions (for now, mark with highlighting—this won’t transfer into Notepad.) OR: consider tagging (v. links…)
   2. Write Home page
2. Find exact addresses, metro (or walking) info
3. ~~Find pictures. Mark which pictures I’ll need to scan.~~
4. Trace/ upload/ use Adobe Illustrator for the map
5. Scan pics
6. Make slide show for pics? (= could have same size for all pages..)
7. Write HTML
8. Write CSS for Design #2
9. Insert Navigation (Map, Etc.)
10. Java
11. Create a mobile version
12. Add citations from book, texts?

*Design ideas?*

-Having the words spell something?

-color code or symbols for: museum, house, street, place that no longer exists, etc.