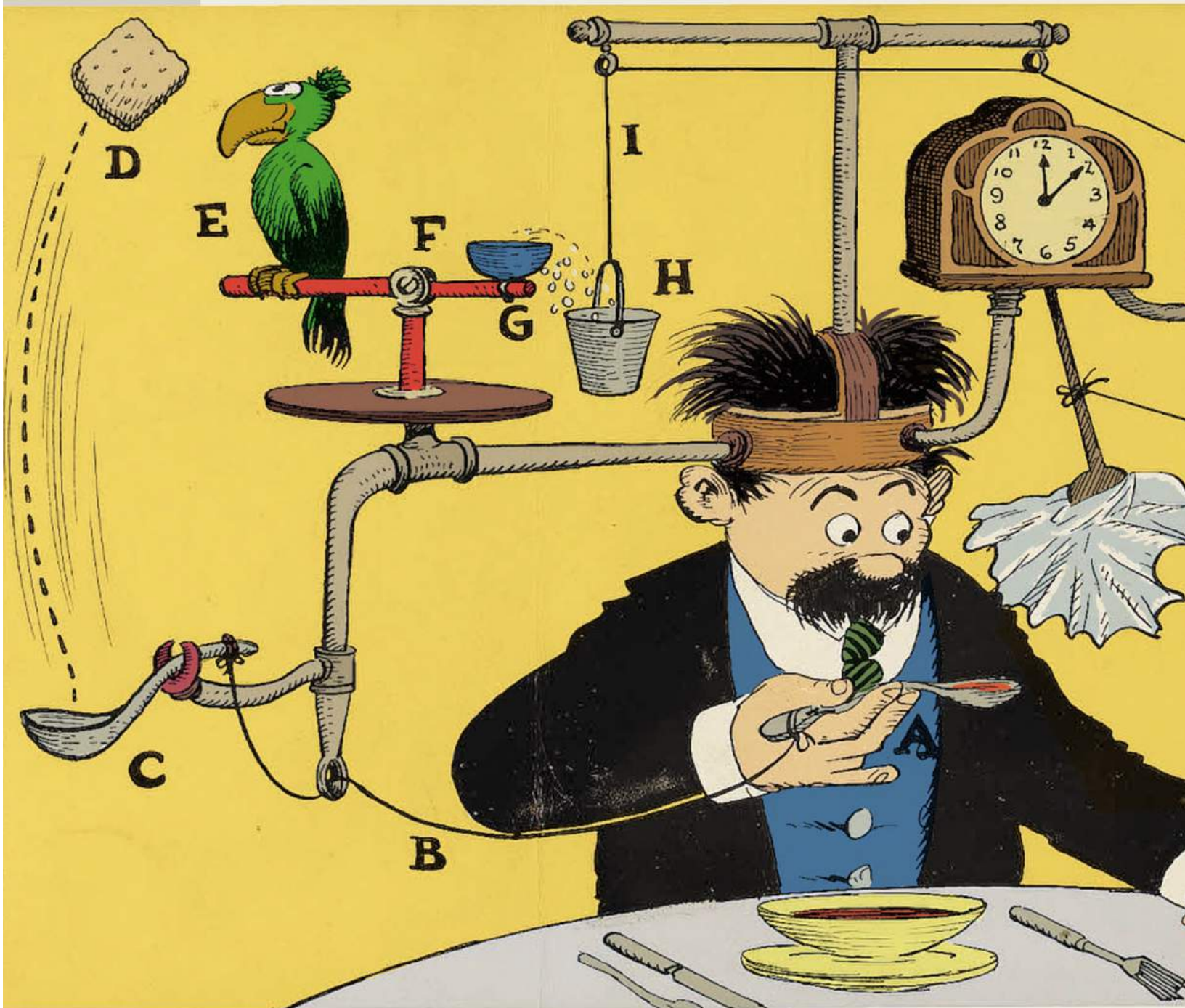


The Art of

RUBE GOLDBERG



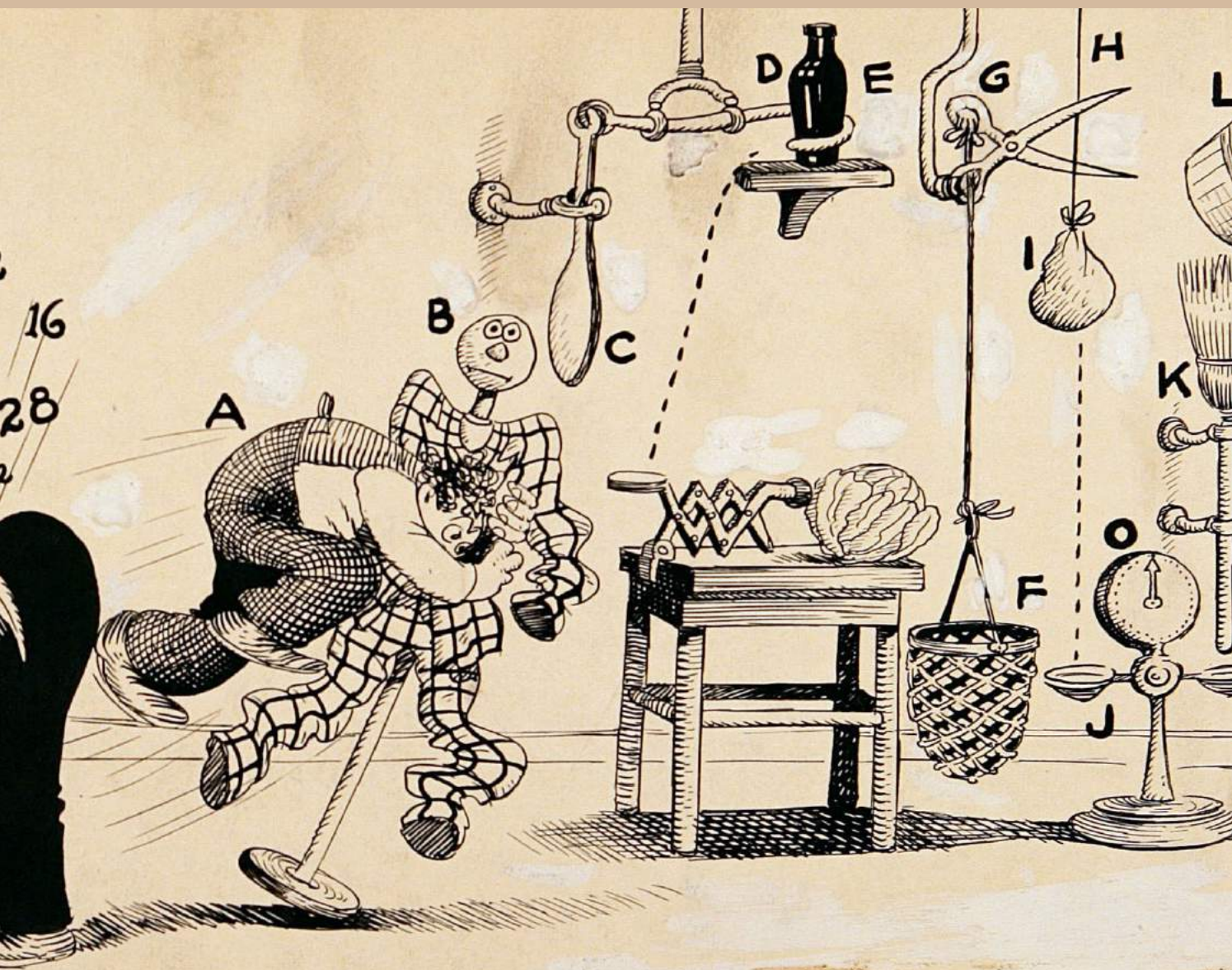
PROFESSOR BUTTS MISTAKES A LOT OF BROKEN GLASS FOR BATH SALTS AND WHEN THEY PULL HIM OUT OF THE TUB HE MUMBLES AN IDEA FOR DODGING BILL COLLECTORS.

AS TAILOR (A) FITS CUSTOMER (B) AND CALLS OUT MEASUREMENTS, COLLEGE BOY (C) MISTAKES THEM FOR FOOTBALL SIGNALS AND MAKES A FLYING TACKLE AT CLOTHING DUMMY (D). DUMMY BUMPS HEAD AGAINST PADDLE (E) CAUSING IT TO PULL HOOK (F) AND THROW BOTTLE (G) ON END OF FOLDING HATRACK (H) WHICH SPREADS AND PUSHES HEAD OF CABBAGE (I) INTO NET (J). WEIGHT OF CABBAGE PULLS CORD (K) CAUSING SHEARS (L) TO CUT STRING (M). BAG OF SAND (N) DROPS ON SCALE (O) AND PUSHES BROOM (P) AGAINST PAIL OF WHITEWASH (Q) WHICH UPSETS ALL OVER YOU CAUSING YOU TO LOOK LIKE A MARBLE STATUE AND MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO BE RECOGNIZED BY BILL COLLECTORS.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT POSING AS ANY PARTICULAR HISTORICAL STATUE BECAUSE BILL COLLECTORS DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT ART.



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Goldberg's cartoons touch the edge of modern art.

—Adam Gopnik, New Yorker Magazine



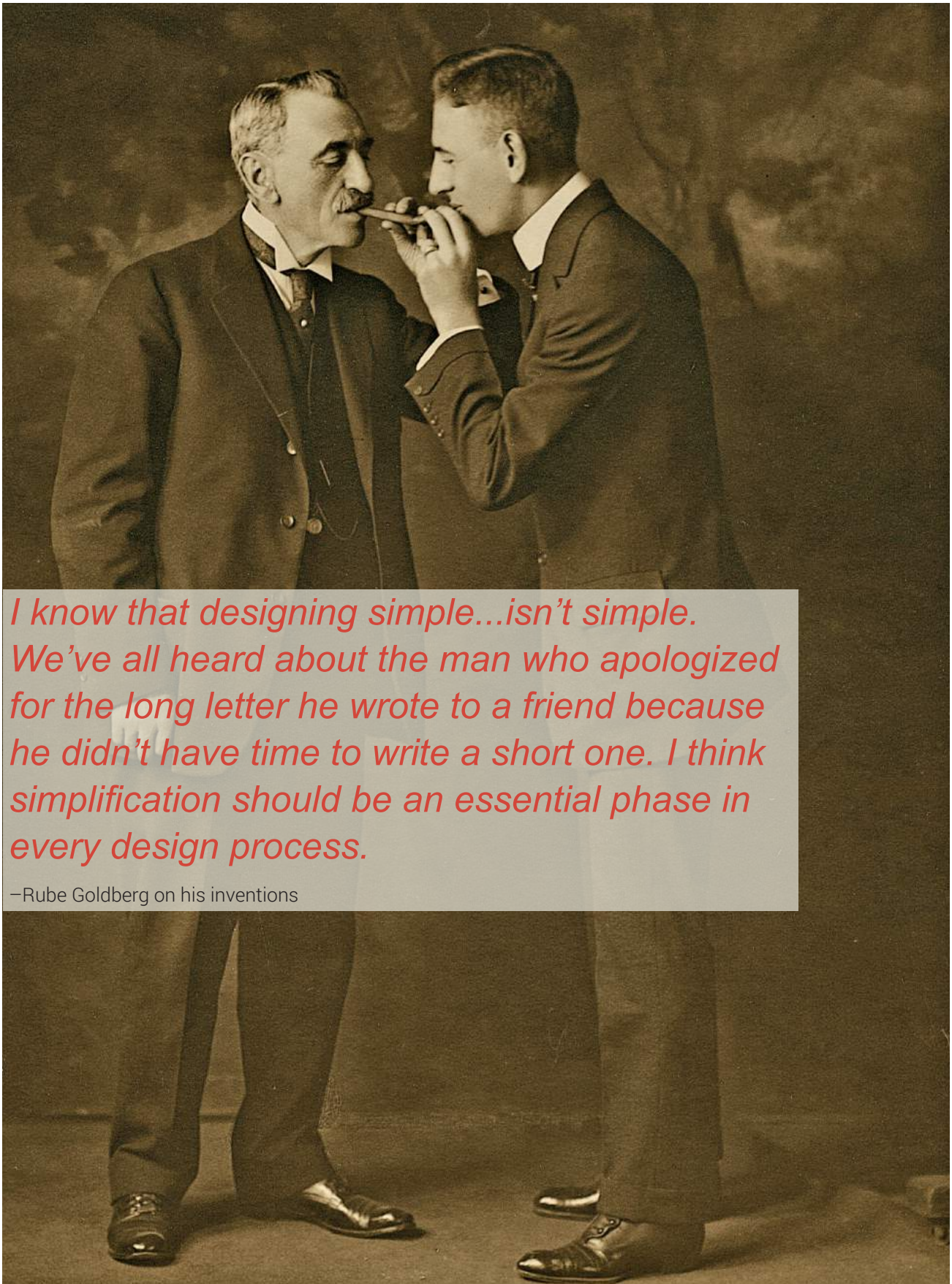
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The Art of Rube Goldberg explores the legendary career of Rube Goldberg (1883-1970), one of the most celebrated and influential cartoonists of all time. Marking the first comprehensive retrospective exhibition of Goldberg's work since 1970, *The Art of Rube Goldberg* chronicles all aspects of the artist's seventy-two year career, from his earliest published drawings and iconic inventions to his Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoons and beyond. Bringing together never-before-exhibited original drawings and preparatory sketches alongside rare photographs, films, letters and memorabilia from the Goldberg family archives, this exhibition offers an intimate and unprecedented look into the singular contributions and enduring legacy of one of America's most famous illustrators.

The exhibition begins with Goldberg's groundbreaking early work, with original drawings revealing the development of his comic style from the beginning of his extraordinary career to his rise to prominence as a nationally syndicated presence in the 1920s and 1930s. Highlights include one of Goldberg's earliest existing drawings, "The Old Violinist," from 1895, an original concept drawing of Boob McNutt and Bertha from the 1920s, as well as original artwork for such daily and weekly comic strip series as *Foolish Questions*, *Mike and Ike—They Look Alike*, *Lala Palooza* and *Boob McNutt* from the 1910s and 1920s. The influence of vaudeville, jazz and early film on Goldberg's art is explored while his satirical take on fashion, sports, politics, gender roles, and other aspects of modern life is celebrated. Rare family photographs and early films provide period detail and essential context.



I know that designing simple...isn't simple. We've all heard about the man who apologized for the long letter he wrote to a friend because he didn't have time to write a short one. I think simplification should be an essential phase in every design process.

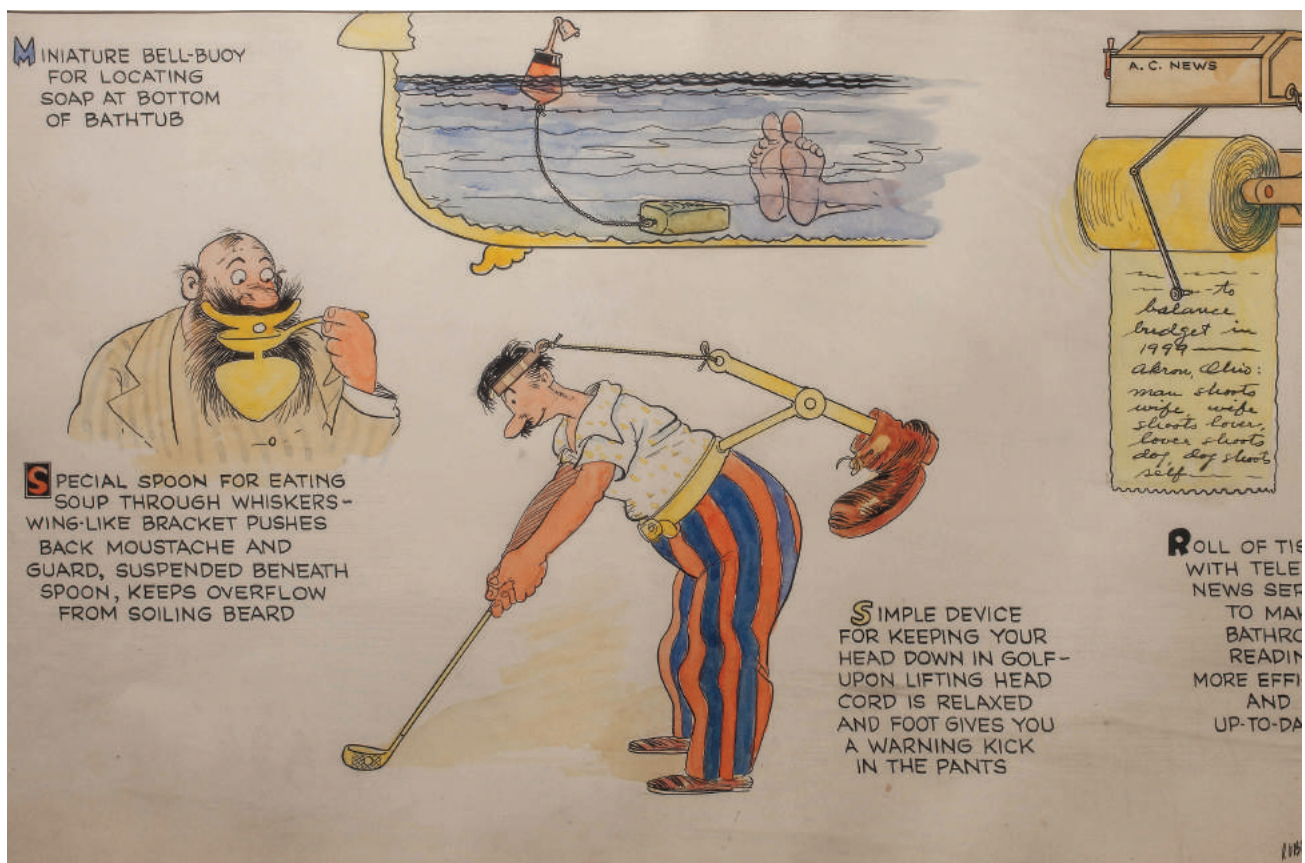
—Rube Goldberg on his inventions

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A special segment dedicated to Goldberg's character layout drawings, concept sketches and model sheets takes an in-depth look at how he brought his characters to life. The techniques Goldberg used to communicate character and story are revealed through rare sketches and a remarkable group of illustrations published for the book series "The Famous Artists Cartoon Course," in which Goldberg offers instructive lessons on mastering the art of cartooning—including line drawing lessons on how to compose characters, tell a story and other fundamentals. Reproduced for this exhibition, these illustrations further demonstrate Goldberg's creative process and comic invention. Included in this section are three full-page comics from the color supplements of Sunday newspapers (featuring "Bill and Boob McNutt's Ark") shown alongside the original artwork.

Also on view are two of Goldberg's earliest animated films, *Leap Year*, from 1915, and a 1924 animation of his classic characters Boob and Bertha, as well as examples of his published books, rare color postcards, collectibles and memorabilia based on Goldberg's early cartoons. Together, the drawings and supplemental materials offer visitors unique insight into the inventive early phase of Goldberg's career and provides an introduction to many of the artist's most enduring cartoons and characters.

At the center of *The Art of Rube Goldberg* is a section dedicated to Goldberg's crowning artistic achievement: his invention drawings. Showcasing over thirty original drawings, this section explores the development of these iconic inventions—overly complicated chain reaction machines designed to perform simple tasks—from their first appearance in 1912 to the emergence of Goldberg's mature style in "The Inventions of Professor Lucifer G. Butts, A.K.," which appeared in *Collier's* magazine from 1929-1931, and beyond.



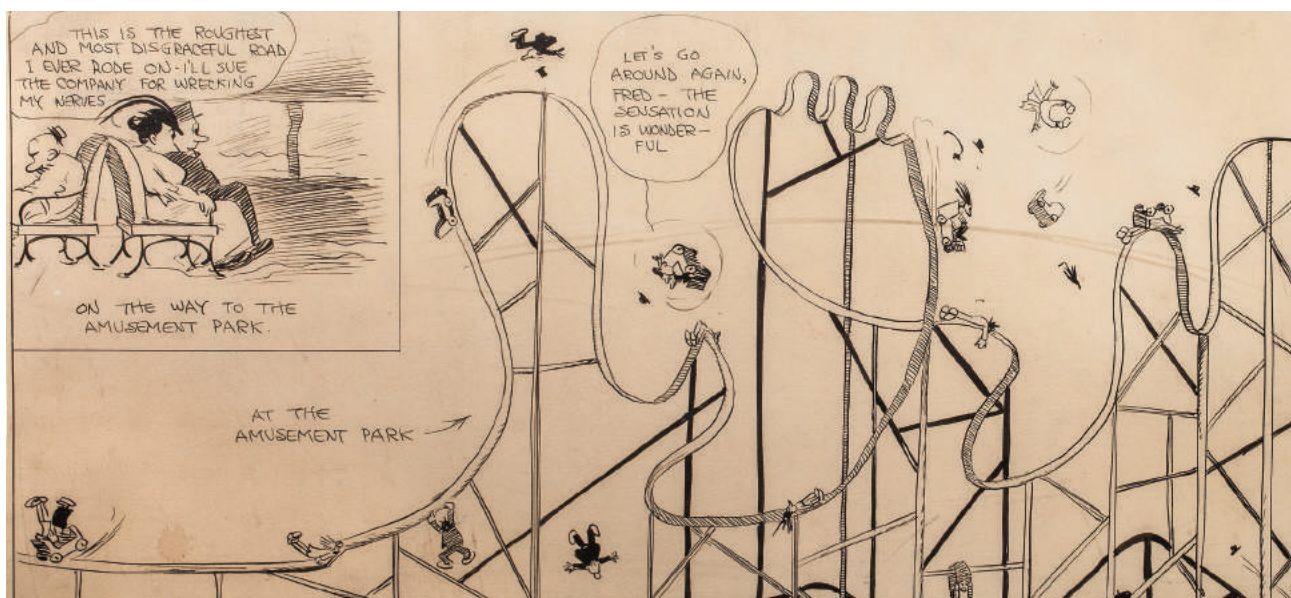
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Fully realized invention drawings displayed alongside preparatory works and concept sketches—many presented here for the first time—allow visitors to trace Goldberg’s creative process as it developed from the first conceptual spark to the published cartoon. Exploring Goldberg’s unique take on the human condition in modern times, this section examines how his zany contraptions function, as he put it, as a “symbol of man’s capacity for exerting maximum effort to achieve minimal results” and made him a popular cultural icon. Examples from Goldberg’s private collection of United States patents issued for unusual contraptions reveal one source of inspiration for his own madcap mechanisms.

The broad reach and popular appeal of Goldberg’s inventions is featured through the presentation of footage from the Goldberg scripted film, *Soup to Nuts*, from 1930 starring the Three Stooges, the classic self-operating napkin sequence from Charlie Chaplin’s *Modern Times* (1936), and from a rare interview of Goldberg by legendary broadcaster Edward R. Murrow. The popularity of Goldberg’s drawings and the artist himself is also explored through period examples of children’s toys, hobby kits and board games directly inspired by the invention drawings, as well as by examples of Goldberg’s related advertising work for such international brands as PennZoil Motor Oil, Goodrich tires and Volkswagen.

The concluding section of the exhibition looks at the work from the final decades of Goldberg’s legendary career and celebrates his lasting influence on popular culture. A selection of Goldberg’s political cartoons, including nine original drawings and an example of his Pulitzer Prize-winning 1947 editorial cartoon, “Peace Today”, trace the final years of Goldberg’s artistic production, while his lasting influence and popularity is revealed through such items as the 1995 Rube Goldberg U.S. postage stamp exhibited alongside the original 1931 invention drawing upon which it was based.

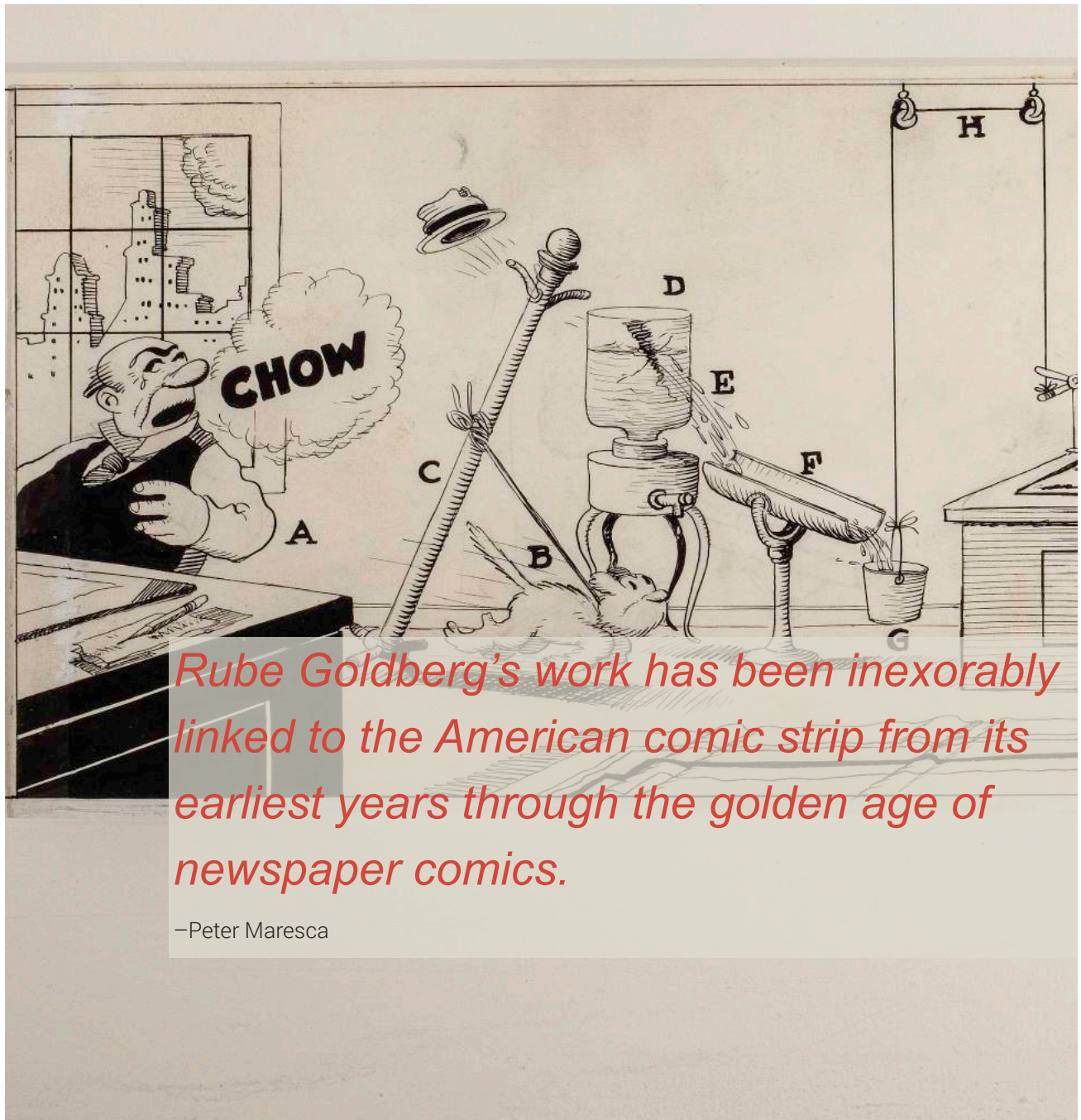
The extraordinary degree to which Goldberg continues to engage the popular imagination is on display at video viewing stations showcasing a selection of more recent artistic and commercial projects indebted to Goldberg, including a screening of Peter Fischli and David Weiss’s 1987 film *The Way Things Go*, GoldieBlox’s advertisement *GoldieBlox & Rube Goldberg “Princess Machine”* (which has been viewed online over 1.5 million times), as well as, the band OK Go’s music video *This Too Shall Pass - Rube Goldberg Machine Version* (which has over 42 million views online). Highlights from the 2009 documentary film *Mousetrap to Mars* profiles the annual Rube Goldberg Machine Building Contest.



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As the first comprehensive exhibition since the 1970 retrospective at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of History and Technology, *The Art of Rube Goldberg* offers visitors an intimate look at the life and legacy of one of the keenest and wittiest observers of modern times, whose name has entered the cultural lexicon and whose influence continues to reverberate into the twenty-first century.

The content of *The Art of Rube Goldberg* is based on the book of the same title, published by Abrams ComicArts, and includes over 75 original drawings and sketches, 3-4 video stations screening Goldberg's films and taped interviews, as well as photographs, books, magazines and other materials. The exhibition consists of expandable or contractible environments and an adjustable range of original art and supporting material. The companion book, *The Art of Rube Goldberg*, accompanies the exhibition.



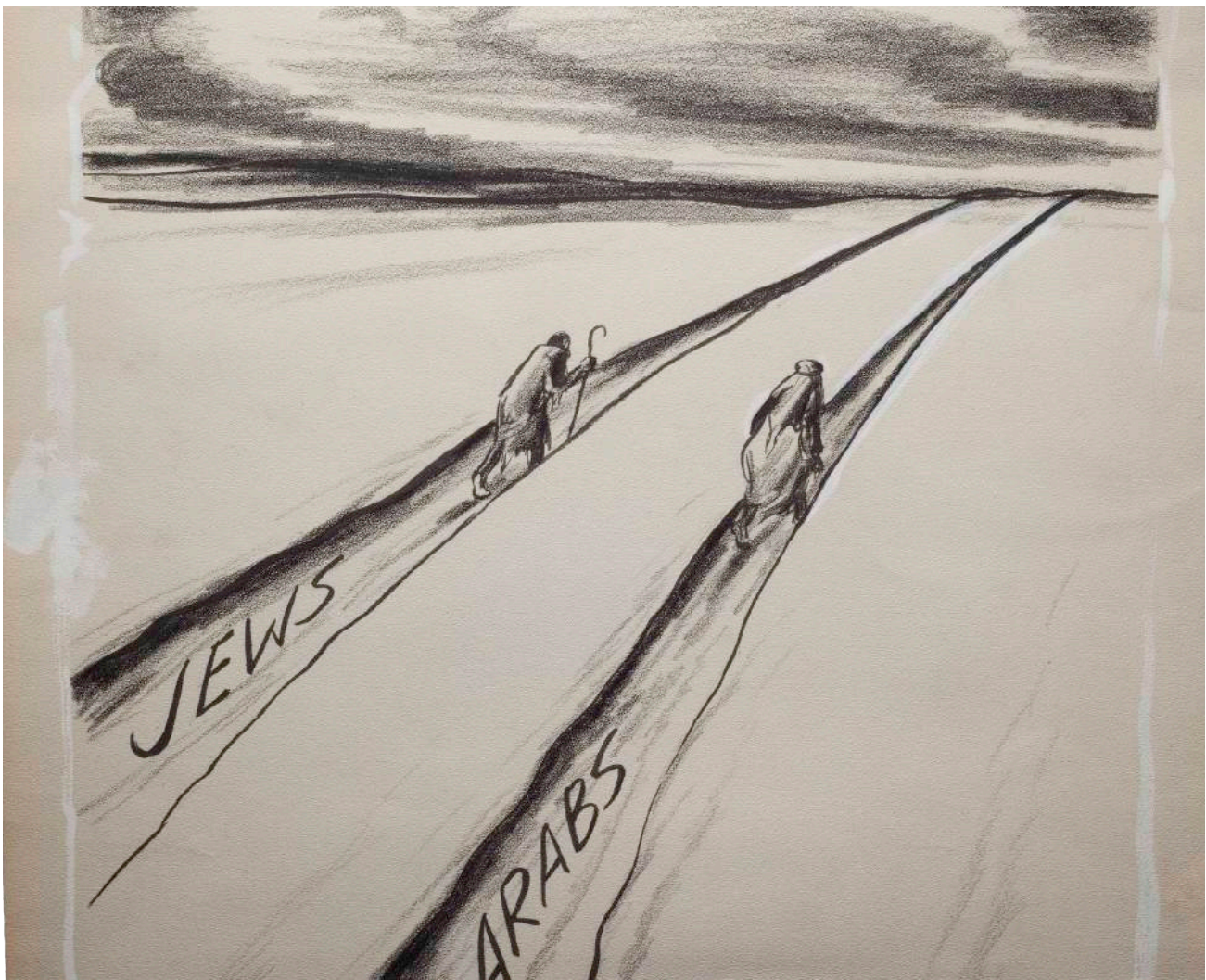
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About the Curator

Max Weintraub is Visiting Assistant Professor at Hunter College in New York City. Max holds a PhD in modern and contemporary art from Bryn Mawr College, and has worked in curatorial and educational departments at the Denver Art Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Museum of Modern Art. Prior to working at Hunter College, Max was curator of the Reis Collection of Modern & Contemporary Art in New York City. Max's essays on Bruce Nauman, Robert Barry, William Anastasi, William Kentridge, Giambattista Tiepolo, and others have appeared in academic journals, scholarly volumes, and exhibition catalogs, and he has contributed to a number of publications including *ARTnews*, *Art: 21*, *Saatchi Online* and the *Routledge Press Encyclopedia of Photography*. His recent curatorial projects include surveys of Robert Barry's work and of William Anastasi's sound based art.

A political cartoon is a pictorial metaphor. You must take a drawing that is like the thought you want to express. And this drawing must not be merely an illustration but a symbol or group of symbols.

—Rube Goldberg



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Specifications

Number of Works

More than 75 works, video, ephemera and wall graphics

Curator

Maxim Weintraub Ph.D., Visiting Assistant Professor at Hunter College

Organized by

Heirs of Rube Goldberg, LLC, New York, New York

Conceived by

Creighton Michael

Security

Moderate

Shipping

IA&A makes all arrangements; exhibitors pay outgoing shipping costs within the contiguous U.S.

Booking Period

12 weeks

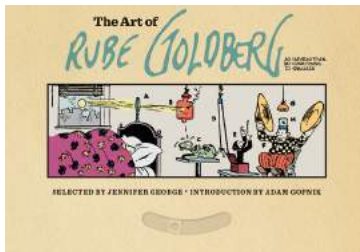
Tour

Begins spring 2016

Availability

May 2016 - December 2019

Publication



Companion book

The Art of Rube Goldberg: (A) Inventive (B) Cartoon (C) Genius (Abrams)

Selected by Jennifer George, Introduction by Adam Gopnik

Contact

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Associate Exhibition Project Manager

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