

## ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: DADA EXHIBITIONS: A SURVEY AND ANALYSIS

Emily Rachel Grey, Master of Arts, 2006

Thesis directed by: Professor Steven A. Mansbach  
Department of Art History and Archaeology

Exhibitions are an ideal means by which to approach Dadaism from an international perspective, and to consider how dadaists sought to relate to their audience. This thesis argues that while each was unique in character, Dada exhibitions often functioned similarly; as a demonstration of internationalism, as the realization of a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and as a subversion of artistic traditions. Currently, such a comparative approach to Dada exhibitions is limited by uneven scholarship; the *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe* is the only exhibition to have been studied comprehensively. This disparity is not due to a lack of material evidence, however. For example, the *Salon Dada* catalogue reveals much about a little studied, large scale, international exhibition no less significant than the *Dada-Messe*. This thesis establishes the primary importance of exhibitions to the Dada movement, and will serve as the groundwork for future inquiries into Dada influence on subsequent art exhibitions.

DADA EXHIBITIONS:  
A SURVEY AND ANALYSIS

by

Emily Rachel Grey

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
2006

Advisory Committee:

Professor Steven A. Mansbach, Chair  
Professor Renée Ater  
Professor Joshua A. Shannon

© Copyright by  
Emily Rachel Grey  
2006

The thesis that follows has had referenced material removed in respect for the owner's copyright. A complete version of this document, which includes said referenced material, resides in the University of Maryland, College Park's library collection.

## Table of Contents

<b>List of Figures</b>	iii
<b>Introduction</b>	1
<b>Chapter I: A Survey of Exhibitions</b>	5
<b>Chapter II: The Role of Exhibitions</b>	23
<b>Chapter III: The <i>Salon Dada</i> Catalogue</b>	41
<b>Conclusion</b>	56
<b>Appendix</b>	58
<b>Bibliography</b>	70

## List of Figures

**Fig. 1** Marcel Slodki. Poster for the opening of the Kunstlerkneipe Voltaire, later known as the Cabaret Voltaire, 1916. Lithograph. Kunsthaus, Zurich.

**Fig. 2** Photograph of lost painting, *Cabaret Voltaire*, by Marcel Janco, 1916. Oil on canvas. Kunsthaus Zurich.

**Fig. 3** Marcel Janco. Poster for the 1<sup>re</sup> Exposition Dada at the Galerie Corray, Zurich, 1917. Linoleum cut, 42.5 x 26.4 cm. Collection Merrill C. Berman.

**Fig. 4** Johannes Baargeld and Max Ernst (eds.) *Bulletin D* catalog (cover), November 1919. Each page: 31.5 x 24 cm. Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

**Fig. 5** Johannes Baargeld and Max Ernst (eds.) *Bulletin D* catalog (page 7), November 1919. Each page: 31.5 x 24 cm. Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

**Fig. 6** Johannes Baargeld and Max Ernst (eds.) *Dada Vorfrühling* (Dada Early Spring) catalog (cover), April 1920. Special Collections Department of the University of Iowa Libraries.

**Fig. 7** Johannes Baargeld and Max Ernst (eds.) *Dada Vorfrühling* (Dada Early Spring) catalog (back page), April 1920. Special Collections Department of the University of Iowa Libraries.

**Fig. 8** Johannes Baargeld and Max Ernst (eds.) *Dada Vorfrühling* (Dada Early Spring) catalog, April 1920. (Inside pages) Special Collections Department of the University of Iowa Libraries.

**Fig. 9** Photograph of Luise Straus-Ernst, Max Ernst, Jimmy Ernst, and Gala and Paul Eluard in Ernst's studio. Musée d'art et d'histoire, Saint-Denis.

**Fig. 10** *Dada Siegt!* (Dada Triumphs), poster for the exhibition *Dada-Vorfrühling* (Dada Early Spring), 1920. Letterpress, 43.2 x 63.5 cm. Elaine Lustig Cohen Dada Collection, The New York Public Library.

**Fig. 11** Dada Program, Berlin, April 30, 1919. Reproduced in Hanne Bergius, "*Dada Triumphs!*" *Dada Berlin, 1917-1923 Artistry of Polarities*.

**Fig. 12** Photograph of first room of the *Erste Internationale Dada Messe* (First International Dada-Fair), with view through door into the second room. Bildarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin.

**Fig. 13** Photograph of wall to the left of the entrance of the first room of the *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe* (First International Dada-Fair). Berlinische Galerie, Hannah-Höch-Archive.

**Fig. 14** Photograph of *Dada-Messe* participants standing in the first room of the exhibition. From left to right: Hannah Höch, Otto Schmalhausen, Raoul Hausmann, John Heartfield with child, Otto Burchard, Margarete and Wieland Hezfelde, Rudolf Schlichter, two figures with backs turned, Johannes Baader. Berlinische Galerie, Hannah-Höch-Archive.

**Fig. 15** Photograph of lost painting, *45% Erwebsfähig* (45% Fit for Work), by Otto Dix, 1920. Oil on canvas, ca. 165 x 245 cm. Formerly City Museum, Dresden. Reproduced in Hanne Bergius, “*Dada Triumphs!*” *Dada Berlin, 1917-1923 Artistry of Polarities*.

**Fig. 16** George Grosz. *God mit Uns* (God with Us) portfolio (cover). Berlin, Malik-Verlag, 1920. 49.2 x 39.8 cm. Berlinische Galerie, Berlin.

**Fig. 17** Photograph of *Preußischer Erzengel* (Prussian Archangel) by John Heartfield and Rudolf Schlichter. 1988 Reconstruction of lost 1920 original. Reproduced in Raimund Meyer, *Dada Global*.

**Fig. 18** Marcel Duchamp’s membership card to the Société Anonyme with logo depicting a laughing ass. Katherine S. Dreier Papers/Société Anonyme Archive. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

**Fig. 19** Marcel Duchamp. Postcard showing Jacques Villon, *In Memoriam*, 1919, with lace frame. Photograph by Man Ray, 1920. Katherine S. Dreier Papers/Société Anonyme Archive. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

**Fig. 20** Man Ray. Photograph of *Lampshade*, 1921. Possibly the original. Black and white negative. Katherine S. Dreier papers / Société Anonyme archive, 1818-1952. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

**Fig. 21** Marcel Duchamp. *A Regarder d’un oeil, de près, pendant presque une heure*. Photographic postcard made by Man Ray for the Société Anonyme. 14 x 8.8 cm. Katherine S. Dreier papers / Société Anonyme archive, 1818-1952. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

**Fig. 22** Invitation to a lecture accompanying the eighth exhibition at the Société Anonyme. Katherine S. Dreier Papers/ Société Anonyme Archive. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

**Fig. 23** Photograph of interior of *Au Sans Pareil* Gallery, Paris. Reproduced in Raimund Meyer, *Dada Global*.

**Fig. 24** Catalog cover, *Exposition Dada Max Ernst*. Bibliothèque Doucet, Paris.

**Fig. 25** Invitation to the *Exposition Dada Max Ernst*, May 1921. 7.7 x 12.5 cm. Centre Pompidou, Mnam, Bibliothèque Kandinsky, Paris.

**Fig. 26** Tristan Tzara. Poster for *Salon Dada, Exposition Internationale*, 1921, lithograph, Collection Merrill C. Berman.

**Fig. 27** Photograph of the *Salon Dada* exhibition, Galerie Montaigne, 1921. Roger-Viollet photo archives.

**Fig. 28** Photograph of the *Salon Dada* exhibition, Galerie Montaigne, 1921. Roger-Viollet photo archives.

**Fig. 29** Photograph of the interior of the *Salon Dada* exhibition, Galerie Montaigne, 1921. Roger-Viollet photo archives.

**Fig. 30** Max Ernst. *La bicyclette graminée garnie de grelots* (The graminaceous bicycle garnished with bells), 1921. Gouache and ink on chromolithographic chart, 74.3 x 99.7 cm. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

**Fig. 31** Max Ernst. *Paysage en ferraille erreur de ceux qui préfèrent la navigation sur l'herbe à un bust de femme*. (Landscape in scrap iron mistake of those who prefer sailing on the grass rather than a woman's chest). Gouache and ink on printed reproduction, 77 x 67 cm. Private Collection.

**Fig. 32** Man Ray. *L'Homme* (Man), 1918. Gelatin silver print, 48.3 x 36.8 cm. Private Collection.

**Figs. 33** Man Ray. *La Femme* (Woman), 1918. Gelatin silver print, 43.7 x 33.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gilman Collection.

**Fig. 34** Man Ray. *Cadeau* (Gift). c. 1958 (replica of 1921 original). Flatiron with tacks. 15.3 x 9 x 11.4 cm Museum of Modern Art

**Fig. 35** George Grosz. *Missachtung eines Meisterwerkes von Botticelli* (Disregard of a Masterwork by Botticelli) 1988 Reconstruction of lost 1920 original.

**Fig. 36** Photograph of Johannes Baader's lost assemblage, *Das grosse Plasto-Dio-dada-drama: DEUTSCHLANDS GRÖSSE UND UNTERGANG durch Lehrer Hagendorf oder Die phantastische Lebensgeschichte des Oberdada*. (The Great Plasto-Dio-dada-drama: Germany's Greatness and Fall at the Hands of Schoolmaster



Hagendorf, or: the Fantastic Life Story of the Superdada), 1920. Reproduced in Hanne Bergius, “*Dada Triumphs!*” *Dada Berlin, 1917-1923, Artistry of Polarities*.

**Fig. 37** *Soirée Dada* Program. 27 x 21 cm. Centre Pompidou, Bibliothèque Kandinsky.

**Fig. 38** Photograph of Wieland Herzfelde manipulating Otto Dix’s *Bewegliches Figurenbild* (Montage of Movable Figures). Berlinische Galerie, Landesmuseum für Moderne Kunst, Fotografie und Architektur.

**Fig. 39** Tristan Tzara. Prospectus for the mock guided tour *Excursions et visites Dada : 1<sup>ère</sup> Visite: Eglise Saint Julien Le Pauvre*, April 14, 1921, Paris. Letterpress, 27.5 x 22 cm. National Gallery of Art, Library. Washington D.C.

**Fig. 40** Tristan Tzara. *Bulletin, Dada #3*, 1918, Zurich. Reproduced in Johanna Drucker, *The Visible Word*.

**Fig. 41** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (cover page) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 42** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 1) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 43** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 2) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 44** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 3) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 45** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 4) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 46** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 5) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 47** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 6) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 48** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 7) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 49** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 8) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 50** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 9) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 51** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 10) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 52** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 11) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 53** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 12) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 54** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 13) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 55** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 14) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 56** *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* exhibition catalog, 1921. Galerie Montaigne. (page 15) Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin.

**Fig. 57** Photograph of Philippe Soupault's now lost, *Cité du Retiro* (City of Leisure), 1921. Roger-Viollet photo archive.

**Fig. 58** Photograph of René Hilsum, Benjamin Péret, Serge Charchoune, Philippe Soupault, Jacques Rigaut, and André Breton at the opening of *Exposition Dada Max Ernst*, 1921. Bibliothèque Doucet, Paris.

**Fig. 59** Hans Arp. *Portrait de Tristan Tzara*, c.1917. Painted wood relief. 40 x 32.5 x 9.5 cm. Kunsthhaus Zurich.

**Fig. 60** Max Ernst. *Les Cormorans* (The Cormorants), 1920. Private Collection, Paris.

**Fig. 61** Marcel Duchamp. *La Mariée* (The Bride), 1912. Oil on canvas, 89.5 x 55.6 cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

**Fig. 62** Théodore Fraenkel. *La mort du Pape au pays du patinage* (The death of the Pope in the country of ice skating). Newspaper collage, 11.4 x 14.7cm. Private Collection.

**Fig. 63** Théodore Fraenkel. *Excursion Dada St. Julien Le Pauvre*, 1921. Pen and ink, 24x14cm. Private Collection.

**Fig. 64** Louis Aragon. *La femme enceinte dort...*(The Pregnant woman sleeps). Bibliothèque Doucet, Paris.

**Fig. 65** Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes. *L'arbre à violon* (Violin tree). Pen and ink. 46 x 59.5 cm. Private Collection.

**Fig. 66** Louis Aragon. *Jacques Vaché*, 1921. Private Collection.

**Fig. 67** Philippe Soupault. Illustration for poem, "Westwego." Centre Pompidou, Paris.

**Fig. 68** Philippe Soupault. *Portrait d'un imbécile* (Portrait of an Imbecile), 1921. Roger-Viollet photo archives.

**Fig. 69** Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes. *Soleils étranges* (Strange Suns), 1921. Goauche and india ink on paper. 60 x 46 cm. Private Collection.

## **Introduction**

For all the variety in Dada's global manifestations, historical accounts have not been particularly innovative in their exploration of this movement. Typically monographic in approach, or treated as a prelude to Surrealism, the current history of Dada fails to emphasize the communal aspect of the movement, which this thesis will highlight through a discussion of predominantly group exhibitions that dadaists organized in Western Europe and the United States. While Dada exhibitions have been mined for information, they are rarely the focus of inquiry, and although some have been considered in isolation, there have been no collective studies of Dada exhibitions. This thesis aims to trace the history of Dada exhibitions with special consideration given to their internationalism.

Dada exhibitions differed from traditional art exhibitions in many important ways. While they were a space for display, they did not always show art. Although many were held in private galleries the work was not always for sale, and while dadaists exerted great effort in the organization of their exhibitions, the result was not always intended to be welcoming or attractive. Therefore, while the word "exhibition" has a broad range of meaning, it will be narrowly defined for the purpose of this thesis to refer to the intentional display of objects in a space for a determined period of time, with the purpose of making these objects available, in one way or another, to viewers. The exhibition format was consciously chosen, and carefully manipulated. For the dadaists, exhibitions were a tool, used unconventionally, but effectively, to convey a Dada message.

Close inquiry of individual exhibitions is crucial to the understanding of Dada in a particular locale, and this thesis will, in part, focus on one important, yet understudied exhibition. However, in order to appreciate the great variety of exhibitions, the first chapter will broadly survey ten major Dada exhibitions in Zurich, Cologne, Berlin, Paris and New York. Such a review will raise important questions regarding the role of these exhibitions: Why did dadaists choose to express themselves through the exhibition format? For what audiences were these exhibitions designed? What were their goals? How can the success of these exhibitions be evaluated? How did they relate to the art world? How did they relate to each other? Are there any characteristics shared by all Dada exhibitions? These questions will be engaged in the second chapter of this thesis, which will focus particularly on how exhibitions subverted artistic tradition, realized the concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or total work of art, and embraced internationalism as a means by which to express the strength of the movement, and as a response to the nationalistic motivations for World War I.

Berlin's *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe* (First International Dada-Fair) of 1920 is arguably the best known Dada exhibition; its fame due largely to the great effort its organizers put into publicity. The detailed photographs, the catalogue, and the international press coverage have allowed scholars, notably Helen Adkins and Hanne Bergius, to study the exhibition in depth.<sup>1</sup> Bergius' essay, "First International Dada-Fair': Saturnalia of Art" is a multi layered and comprehensive analysis of a

---

<sup>1</sup> Helen Adkins discusses the *Dada-Messe* in *Stationen der Moderne*, published by the Berlinische Galerie in 1988. Hanne Bergius' book, *Montage und Metamechanik: Dada Berlin – Artistik von Polaritäten*, is the most comprehensive source for the *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe*. It has been partly translated in "Dada Triumphs! Dada Berlin 1917-1923, Artistry of Polarities."

Dada exhibition, something of an anomaly in the scope of Dada publications. Modeled in part on Bergius' scholarship, this thesis will explore the *Salon Dada* exhibition held in Paris in 1921 in close detail by means of the exhibition catalogue. This exhibition is important to the Dada movement in Paris, and yet it has received far less scholarly consideration than Dada exhibitions of similar size and scope. The third chapter of this thesis will both argue for a more prominent place for this exhibition in the history of Dada, and demonstrate the value of the exhibition catalogue for reconstructing and understanding the *Salon Dada* exhibition.

Like the *Dada-Messe* in Berlin, *Salon Dada* was a large scale, well publicized exhibition that emphasized its internationalism, and tested the limits of what an exhibition could be at that time. Although it was the largest Dada exhibition mounted in Paris, like the *Dada-Messe* it preceded the demise of the movement in that city. Curiously, *Salon Dada* has received far less scholarly attention than the *Dada-Messe*. The best source for information on the Paris exhibition remains Michel Sanouillet's *Dada à Paris*, in which he describes the interior of the exhibition, albeit without illustrations.<sup>2</sup> Photographs, which have proved so essential to understanding the *Dada-Messe*, are limited for *Salon Dada*. The few that do exist are published regularly, but are typically accompanied by little more than superficial information about the exhibition. The substantial catalogue, which contains poetry, essays, illustrations, and a checklist of the exhibition, is also frequently mentioned, but has never been studied in depth. Unlike the *Dada-Messe* which is typically featured in

---

<sup>2</sup> Michel Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris*, ed. Ann Sanouillet (Paris : CNRS, 2005).

any discussion of Berlin Dada,<sup>3</sup> past scholarship has underestimated the importance of *Salon Dada* for the Dada movement in Paris.<sup>4</sup>

This thesis will bring all major Dada exhibitions into consideration, but due to the limitations of the thesis format, there are numerous exhibitions that will not be addressed.<sup>5</sup> The aim of this thesis is not for a comprehensive study of certain Dada exhibitions, however. Rather, it endeavors to engage Dada exhibitions in conversation, and to focus on those Dada exhibitions which are rich in material, and which raise questions that further complicate and enrich the discussion of what Dada is, how it functioned, and how it communicated with its audiences.

---

<sup>3</sup> “With this fair, Berlin became the focal point of Dadaism from July 1 to August 25, 1920.” Hanne Bergius, “‘Dada Triumphs!’ Dada Berlin, 1917-1923, *Artistry of Polarities* (New York: G.K. Hall & Company, 1996), 231.

<sup>4</sup> The exhibition is typically mentioned, but rarely discussed in detail. Hans Richter uses the *Salon Dada* poster as an illustration in his book of 1965, *Dada Art and Anti-Art* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), yet fails to even mention the exhibition in his chapter on Paris. In its 1982 exhibition catalogue, *Paul Eluard et ses amis peintres* (Paris: Centre Pompidou, 1982), the Centre Pompidou stressed the poet’s connection with the visual arts and his friendships with many dadaists, yet failed to mention the *Salon Dada* exhibition, in which Eluard participated both as artist and poet. Additionally, Stephen Foster’s *Paris Dada: The Barbarians Storm the Gates* (Detroit: G.K. Hall & Company, 1996) mentions *Salon Dada* only briefly, in Elmer Peterson’s “Paris Dada: Publications and Provocations,” and focuses not on the exhibition itself, but on the spectacle of the *Soirée* associated with it.

<sup>5</sup> For example, this thesis will not discuss Dada exhibitions at Salon Neri in Geneva in 1920, Georges Ribemont-Dessaigne’s solo exhibition at Au Sans Pareil in 1920, the Italian Dada exhibition at the Casa d’art Bragaglia in Rome, in 1921, or Francis Picabia’s exhibition at the Galerie Dalmau in Barcelona, in 1922.

## Chapter 1: A Survey of Exhibitions

Dada was an international art movement, with leaders and followers in most areas of the world. The internationalism of Dada becomes most vivid, however, by approaching it not through an individual, or a nation, but through exhibitions, which many times connected the Dada community across borders and continents.<sup>6</sup> The following survey will consider, chronologically, several major Dada exhibitions and exhibition venues, and analyze the relationship of Dada exhibitions internationally. This approach will make it possible to consider the roles of these exhibitions.

From the very beginning, Dada exhibitions broke from the mold. In addition to being spaces for the contemplation of works of art, they became sites and centers of confrontational and flamboyant Dada activity. First organized in Zurich at the Cabaret Voltaire in 1916, exhibitions functioned as part of a greater aesthetic enterprise.<sup>7</sup> Richard Huelsenbeck described the Cabaret as “a combination artists’ club, exhibition hall, pub, and cabaret...”<sup>8</sup> effectively a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or total work of art, which was an idea that interested Ball greatly.<sup>9</sup> Artwork was central to the Cabaret Voltaire from the moment that Tristan Tzara, and Marcel and Jules Janco arrived “with portfolios and pictures under their arms.”<sup>10</sup> In fact, Hugo Ball

---

<sup>6</sup> For example, Tristan Tzara, a Romanian, and Max Ernst, a German, came to Paris from Zürich and Cologne respectively. Duchamp came from Paris to New York, and Man Ray left New York for Paris.

<sup>7</sup> The Cabaret Voltaire was located on Spiegelgasse I, in the former Holländische Meierei Café, owned by Jan Ephraim.

<sup>8</sup> Huelsenbeck, Richard, 1920, *Memoirs of a Dada Drummer*, Translated by Joachim Neugroschel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 9.

<sup>9</sup> The meaning of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* for dadaists will be further discussed in the second chapter.

<sup>10</sup> Ball, *Flight out of Time*, ed. John Elderfield, trans. Ann Raimés (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 50.



conceived of the space as an exhibition hall, writing in the sole issue of the *Cabaret Voltaire* that prior to opening the Cabaret he asked several artists; "Please give me a picture, or a drawing, or an engraving. I should like to put on an exhibition in my night-club."<sup>11</sup> In February of 1916, Tzara described the work on the walls as including art and artifacts by Otto van Rees, Hans Arp, Pablo Picasso, Viking Eggeling, Arthur Segal, Marcel Janco, Marcel Slodki, and Elie Nadelman, along with "colored papers...and geographic futurist map-poems,"<sup>12</sup> while Richard Huelsenbeck described "a series of extremely beautiful blood-red masks" by Janco "that now adorned the walls of the cabaret."<sup>13</sup> Ball himself recalls hanging "futuristic posters" for the opening night; one of these was likely Marcel Slodki's opening poster, the *Kunstlerkneipe Voltaire* (Fig. 1). Indeed, paintings, posters, and a mask can be seen on the walls in Marcel Janco's now lost oil painting, *Cabaret Voltaire*, of 1916 (Fig. 2).<sup>14</sup>

Internationalism was an essential quality of the Cabaret Voltaire as Zurich became a refuge for citizens throughout Europe during the war. Ball was particularly focused on international exhibitions, mentioning plans for them twice in his diary,

---

<sup>11</sup> "Bitte geben Sie mir ein Bild, eine Zeichnung, eine Gravüre. Ich möchte eine kleine Ausstellung mit meinem Cabaret verbinden." Hugo Ball, "Als ich das Cabaret Voltaire gründete..." (When I founded the Cabaret Voltaire) *Cabaret Voltaire* (Zürich: Meierei, 1916), 1. Reprinted in *Dada Zeitschriften* (Hamburg : Edition Nautilus, Verlag Lutz Schulenberg, 1978).

<sup>12</sup> Tzara, Tristan, "Zürich Chronicle, 1915-1919" in *Dada Almanach*, 1920, ed. Richard Huelsenbeck, Trans., Malcom Green (London: Atlas Press, 1998), 15.

<sup>13</sup> Huelsenbeck, *Memoirs of a Dada Drummer*, 22.

<sup>14</sup> Janco explained that the painting depicts a soirée at the Cabaret Voltaire. Hugo Ball is at the piano, the figure with crossed arms is Tristan Tzara, Richard Huelsenbeck stands to the right of Tzara, and Emmy Hennings dances at the far right. The mask on the wall was made by Marcel Janco. Francis Naumann, "Janco/Dada, An Interview with Marcel Janco," *Arts Magazine* 57 (1982): 84.

and he intentionally steered away from exhibitions that might be perceived as nationalistic, writing at one point that “a specifically German one does not make much sense. As things are now, it would be classed as cultural propaganda.”<sup>15</sup> Indeed exhibitions at the Cabaret Voltaire were international from the start, with Pablo Picasso, Marcel Slodki, Eli Nadelman, the Janco brothers, and Viking Eggeling representing Spain, Poland, Romania, and Sweden respectively. The range of styles employed by these artists made it impossible to identify the exhibition as nationalistic.

After the closure of the Cabaret Voltaire, the Galerie Corray (soon to be renamed the Galerie Dada) became the new center for international Dada activity in Zurich,<sup>16</sup> and in 1917 Tzara and Ball organized the *1<sup>re</sup> Exposition Dada* (Fig. 3).<sup>17</sup> Tzara described the exhibition in his *Zurich Chronicles (1915-1919)*; “Van Rees, Arp, Janco, Tschärner, Mme van Rees, Lüthy, Richter, Helbig, Negro art, brilliant success: the new art.”<sup>18</sup> Whereas the Cabaret Voltaire had “drunken students” and “thick clouds of smoke,” the Galerie Corray provided art lectures and the Kandinsky café.<sup>19</sup> However, Ball felt that the spirit of the Cabaret Voltaire lived on at the Gallery, explaining that

---

<sup>15</sup> Ball, *Flight out of Time*, 54.

<sup>16</sup> In an interview with Francis Naumann, Marcel Janco said that “The Galerie Dada began to be an international center of culture and art.” Francis Naumann, “Janco/Dada, An Interview with Marcel Janco,” 84.

<sup>17</sup> The Cabaret Voltaire closed due to lack of funds. It was with the help of Hans Corray, a Swiss teacher who had participated in performances at the Cabaret, that they were able to open the Galerie Corray in the center of Zürich. Francis Naumann. *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Tzara, “Zürich Chronicle, 1915-1919,” in *Dada Almanach*, 22.

<sup>19</sup> Huelsenbeck, *Memoirs of a Dada Drummer*, 9-10.

The gallery has three faces. By day it is a kind of teaching body for schoolgirls and upper-class ladies. In the evenings the candlelit Kandinsky room is a club for the most esoteric philosophies. At the soirées, however, the parties have a brilliance and a frenzy such as Zurich has never seen before.<sup>20</sup>

The Galerie Corray/ Galerie Dada reveals not only a return to a more conventional approach to exhibitions, but also an effort to educate the public and to promote Dada as a movement. Ball records that approximately ninety people attended the Gallery opening, and wrote that “in spite of a high admission fee, the gallery was too small for the number of visitors.”<sup>21</sup> Subsequent exhibitions continued to feature, in addition to the dadaists, the work of Kandinsky, Klee, and other artists who typically showed at the Sturm Gallery in Berlin. At the third Galerie Dada exposition Tzara and Ball organized a series of lectures, including one entitled “Alte und Neue Kunst,” (The Old and New Art) which was intended to educate the public on the history of art in order to defend abstraction and artistic freedom.<sup>22</sup> The complete lack of information on the appearance of these exhibitions suggests that the dadaists did not yet treat their exhibitions as installations, or a collective whole, as they would later, such as at the *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe* in Berlin in 1920. Paintings were most likely framed and hung in rows, and at even intervals, on the walls. It is significant to note also that in these early exhibitions in Zurich, at the Cabaret Voltaire and the Galerie Dada, “Dada art” was broadly defined, and embraced the work of a variety of progressive artists. In *Dada: Monograph of a Movement*, Willy

---

<sup>20</sup> Ball, *Flight out of Time*, 112.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>22</sup> The other lectures were entitled “Cubism,” and “Art of the Present.” Tzara, “Zürich Chronicle, 1915-1919,” in *Dada Almanach*, 22..

Verkauf has aptly stated that “dada art was a synthesis of all the trends in art until then existing and it used them for the expression of whatever it had to say.”<sup>23</sup>

After the war, in Cologne, Max Ernst and Johannes Baargeld became aware of Dada activities in Zurich through Dada publications, as well as through an encounter with Hugo Ball and Emmy Hennings. Through Paul Klee, from whom Ernst was collecting paintings for a Kunstverein exhibition, Ernst learned that his pre-war friend, Hans Arp, was still alive, and was involved in the Dada movement. As a result of these encounters, Ernst and Baargeld brought Dada to Cologne in the form of an exhibition at the Kölner Kunstverein, or Cologne Art Association in 1919, known as the *Gruppe D* exhibition.<sup>24</sup> At this time, the situation in Cologne was tense. The city was under British occupation, thousands of people were unemployed, and curfews and censorship severely restricted the freedom of the German population.<sup>25</sup> Max Ernst wrote of this period, saying

For us, at that time in Cologne in 1919, Dada was first and foremost an attitude of mind. . . a rebellious upsurge of vital energy and rage; it resulted from the absurdity, the whole immense stupidity of that imbecilic war. We young people came back from the war in a state of stupefaction, and our rage had to find expression somehow or other. This it did quite naturally through attacks on the foundations of the civilization responsible for the war. Attacks on speech, syntax, logic, literature, painting and so on.”<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Verkauf, Willy, *Dada Monograph of a Movement* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1975), 18.

<sup>24</sup> Ernst was introduced to Dada during a vacation in the Bavarian Alps. While passing through Munich, he met Hugo Ball and Emmy Hennings, heard that his friend Hans Arp was involved in Dada, and first saw Dada publications in the Hans Goltz gallery/bookstore. William Camfield, *Max Ernst: Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism* (Munich: Prestal, 1993), 57.

<sup>25</sup> Charlotte Stokes and Stephen Foster, Eds. *Dada, Cologne, Hanover* (New York: G.K. Hall, 1997), 17.

<sup>26</sup> Lothar Fischer, *Max Ernst: In Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1969), 35. Translated in Stokes, 21.



Expressionist photography, children's drawings, and African sculpture.<sup>28</sup> Max Ernst recalled the exhibition as consisting of, in addition to works by himself, Johannes Baargeld and Otto Freundlich, "Sunday painters, the mentally ill, and dilettantes," and he remembered including objects such as "*des galets*, umbrellas, a piano hammer, empty flower pots, etc."<sup>29</sup> *Gruppe D* traveled the following year to Düsseldorf, where it was heavily criticized in the press.<sup>30</sup> Otto Albert Schneider wrote "The impertinence with which a 'tendency' like that of the dadaists scorns every traditional form and slaps the public in the face is sufficiently documented by the present exhibition at the Graphic Cabinet."<sup>31</sup>

Like *Gruppe D*, the motivation for the following Cologne Dada exhibition was also fueled by rejection. In April of 1920, Baargeld and Ernst's submissions to the supposedly jury-free Kölner Kunstgewerbemuseum (Applied Arts museum) were turned down.<sup>32</sup> In response, they arranged their own exhibition, with a catalogue (Fig. 6-8), in a glassed in courtyard (partially open to the elements) adjacent to a tavern called the Brauhaus Winter, on Schildergasse 37, calling it *Dada-Vorfrühling* (Dada Early Spring).<sup>33</sup> The exhibition was unconventional and provocative in both its organization and its content. Visitors were forced to enter through a men's toilet where a young girl stood on the opening day, wearing a communion dress and

---

<sup>28</sup> *Bulletin D*, Max Ernst and Johannes Baargeld, Eds., 1919: 7.

<sup>29</sup> (author's translation) " (« peintres du dimanche »), de « maladies mentaux » et de dilettantes...des galets, des parapluies, un marteau de piano, des pots de fleurs vides, etc." Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Stokes, 43.

<sup>31</sup> Albert Schneider in *Düsseldorfer Nachrichten* (12 February 1920). Translated in Camfield, 63.

<sup>32</sup> Ernst, *Écritures*, 41.

<sup>33</sup> Stokes, 52.

reciting lewd poetry. Of the more than thirty works on display, many displayed violent imagery, or incited the visitor to commit acts of violence against the work itself. For example, visitors were encouraged to destroy one of Ernst's sculptures, to which he attached a hatchet. One of Baargeld's contributions, "Fluidoskeprik der Rotzwitha von gandersheim," was also violent, and perhaps more disturbing. The piece consisted of an aquarium filled with water dyed red to look like blood. Floating in the water was human hair, a replica of a human hand, and an alarm clock.<sup>34</sup> While the majority of the works in the exhibition were created by Germans, and in response to a German exhibition, some work, such as Baargeld and Ernst's "simultantriptychon; die dadaisten und dadaistinnen" (Simultaneous Triptych by Male and Female Dadaists), which was a list of dadaists and their friends, emphasized the importance of internationalism to the Dada movement at this time in Cologne.<sup>35</sup>

Despite its provocations, and the reactions of both the public and the police, the exhibition was reviewed only once by the press. William Camfield has suggested that it might have been boycotted, or simply judged as unworthy of attention as art. The single review is valuable, nonetheless, for its description of visitors at the exhibition:

It is almost touching to see the way people walk around in it [the exhibition], desperately attempting, though sadly in vain, to find some relationship to this Dadaist art... The audience, by the way, provides a barometer of human temperament. While some get angry at being hoaxed, others laugh it off, and still others leave, shaking their heads.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> This list was similar to a list of presidents that Tzara published in *Bulletin Dada* 6 (February, 1920). Camfield, 71.

<sup>36</sup> Unsigned review, "Der Letzte Schrei," *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, May 1, 1920. Translated in Camfield, 70.

In a decidedly Dada conclusion, *Dada-Vorfrühling* was temporarily closed on obscenity charges, but was later reopened when it was found that it was the nudity in a print of Albrecht Durer's "Adam and Eve" that Ernst had incorporated into one of his sculptures that brought the charge. William Camfield has described the sculpture, which was titled "ein lustgreis vor gewehr schützt die museale frühlingstoilette vor dadaistischen eingriffen (l'état c'est MOI)," (An Old Lecher in Front of a Gun Shields the Museum's Spring Toilet from Dada's Interferences (The State, It is Me!)) and which can be seen in the far right of a group photo taken in Max Ernst's studio, including Luise Straus-Ernst, Max Ernst and his son Jimmy, and Gala and Paul Eluard (Fig. 9):

It is a life sized sculpture composed of hat forms, wooden rods, and other items, assembled in an upright, anthropomorphic configuration. Hanging under the genitals of this figure was a waiter's tray, on which Ernst had spilled red paint, and, topping off the decoration, was Dürer's engraving of Adam and Eve.<sup>37</sup>

In celebration of the reopening of the exhibition, Ernst designed a poster, "Dada Siegt!," (Dada Triumphs) (Fig. 10), which announced the reopening of the exhibit. It exclaimed that "Dada ist für Ruhe und Orden (Dada is for peace and medals!)", and "Dada ruht nie -Dada vermehrt sich" (Dada doesn't rest – Dada reproduces itself)." This poster would later make its way to Paris, where it would hang high on the wall in the *Salon Dada* exhibition in 1921.

---

<sup>37</sup> Camfield, 71-2.



Just prior to the *Dada-Vorfrühling* exhibition, in 1919, the Berlin dadaists opened their first exhibition in Berlin at the Graphische Kabinett of I.B. Neumann.<sup>38</sup> In the *Freie Zeitung*, Udo Rukser (the sympathetic brother-in-law of Hans Richter) described the exhibition as presenting works by Walter Mehring, George Grosz, Johannes Baader, Jefim Golyscheff, Raoul Hausmann, and Hannah Höch.<sup>39</sup> The April 30<sup>th</sup> Dada-evening that accompanied the exhibition is detailed in the program distributed to advertise the event (Fig. 11). While this exhibition was important in establishing a Dada presence in Berlin, the other major Berlin Dada exhibition was more carefully documented, is better known today, and is ultimately more representative of Dada in Berlin. Called the *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe* (First International Dada-Fair), and organized by George Grosz, John Heartfield, and Raoul Hausmann, this exhibition opened in July 1920, and was accompanied by a catalogue and documented by professional photographers (See Figs. 12-14). While the Cologne Dada exhibitions were rather exclusive, and no Berlin dadaists participated, both Max Ernst and Johannes Baargeld were invited to submit work to the *Dada-Messe*, and they did.<sup>40</sup> Like the *I<sup>re</sup> Exposition Dada* at the Galerie Corray, the *Dada-Messe* was held in a private art gallery.<sup>41</sup> At both exhibitions, a high entry fee was charged, but there was a great deal to distinguish the two exhibits. The *Dada-Messe* may have

---

<sup>38</sup> I.B. Neumann's gallery had been a site for Dada activity as early as 1918, when Richard Huelsenbeck, who functioned as the head of the group that called itself "Club Dada," arranged a Dada reading there on January 22, 1918. The exact dates of the Dada exhibition are not known, but they were approximately April 28<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup> 1919. Hanne Bergius, "*Dada Triumphs!*" *Dada Berlin, 1917-1923, Artistry of Polarities*, 55.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ernst submitted nine works and Baargeld four.

<sup>41</sup> The gallery was owned by Otto Burchard, an Asian pottery dealer who contributed work to the show. It consisted of two rooms on the ground floor of an apartment building at Lützow Ufer 13.

sought to educate the public, like the *1<sup>re</sup> Exposition Dada* three years before, but it did not accommodate its visitors with cafés and educational lectures. Dada in Berlin, as exemplified by the exhibition, set out to blast bourgeois expectations of the art world. Shattering hierarchies, the dadaists exhibited the work of well-known artists alongside that of enthusiastic high school students who contributed to the show.<sup>42</sup> Confronting the preference for originality in art, some artists worked collaboratively; George Grosz called himself not an artist, but an assembly man, and ceased signing his works, replacing his signature with a rubber stamp of his name.<sup>43</sup> The Dadaists also challenged sale and ownership. There is little indication that any works were for sale, and both John Heartfield and George Grosz had previously criticized the tradition of art objects being owned only by the rich.<sup>44</sup> Indeed the title of the whole production, a *Dada-fair* rather than an exhibition, suggested a trade fair, rather than an art show, and further challenged viewer's expectations.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, the show, which purported to be Dada in content, did not adhere to a single style, and was not contained to certain media. Posters, photomontage, assemblages, oil paintings, puppets, and dummies were all Dada, existing together, as Odo Marquardt described, as "a directly negative *Gesamtkunstwerk*."<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> Paul Citroën's brother, Hans Citroën, contributed sculpture and photomontage, and was only fourteen years old at the time of the exhibition. Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, who was nineteen, contributed several collages. Hanne Bergius, "*Dada Triumphs!*" *Dada Berlin, 1917-1923, Artistry of Polarities*, 257-259.

<sup>43</sup> Eberhard Roters, *Berlin 1910-1933* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982), 84.

<sup>44</sup> Stokes, 41.

<sup>45</sup> Bergius, "*Dada Triumphs!*" *Dada Berlin, 1917-1923, Artistry of Polarities*, 232.

<sup>46</sup> Odo Marquardt, "Gesamtkunstwerk und Identitätssystem" in *Der Hang Zum Gesamtkunstwerk. Europäische Utopien seit 1800*, ed. Harald Szeemann (Aarau: Verlag Sauerländer, 1983). Translated in Camfield, 237.

Not only was the *Dada-Messe* different from the exhibitions of other art movements, it was unlike any Dada exhibition that came before, because while it was reacting to the art world, it was also highly politicized, as can be seen by one poster in the show, which proclaimed “Dada ist Politisch” (Fig. 12).<sup>47</sup> While World War I colored, if not motivated every Dada action since the Cabaret Voltaire, its association with the movement was now made explicit. Otto Burchard’s gallery was very close to the offices of the Reichswehr, which brought a lawsuit against the organizers.<sup>48</sup> Throughout the exhibition there were provocative and disturbing works addressing the horror of war, which many dadaists had experienced first hand.<sup>49</sup> Otto Dix had served in the military and experienced first hand fellow soldiers ravaged by war. His commanding paintings exposed war’s brutality. One of the largest, “45% Erwerbsfähig” (45% Fit for Work) (Fig. 15), shows crippled veterans making their way along the street, demonstrating with great sarcasm the impossibility of resuming a normal life after the war. The military took offense at many of the works in the exhibition, Grosz’s “Gott mit Uns” (God with Us) (Fig 16) portfolio in particular. The portfolio, which was published by Malik-Verlag in 1920, contained nine lithographs with titles printed in three languages, all of which mocked the German army. The military also took offense at John Heartfield and Rudolf Schlichter’s

---

<sup>47</sup> The poster is visible in the lower right of the photograph.

<sup>48</sup> Helen Adkins, “Erste Internationale Dada-Messe,” in *Stationen Der Moderne: die Bedeutenden Kunstaussstellungen des 20. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland*, Eds. Michel Bollé and Eva Züchner (Berlin: Berlinische Galerie, 1988), 158.

<sup>49</sup> For example, Otto Dix enrolled voluntarily, fought in several major battles, and was wounded several times. Max Ernst enlisted in the Twenty-third Field Artillery Regiment in Koblenz, George Grosz served for six months before he was released for medical reasons, John Heartfield served as a guard in Berlin until he faked mental illness in order to be discharged, and Wieland Herzfelde served as a medical orderly, and protested the war through a hunger strike.

“Preussischer Erzengel” (Fig. 17), a dummy dressed in military uniform with the head of a pig. This would later be used as evidence in the trial initiated by the Reichswehrministerium (Ministry of the German Military) against the organizers of the exhibition. Like the premature closing of *Dada-Vorfrühling* in Cologne, the legal charges brought against the dadaists attracted a great deal of publicity, and relatively few consequences.<sup>50</sup>

Through its title, and its attempt to represent an international array of dadaists, the *Dada-Messe*, like the Cabaret Voltaire before it, conveyed its opposition to the nationalistic tendencies of the European nations while at war. Demonstrating the internationalist intentions of the Dada movement, the catalogue indicated that the show would travel to the newly formed American-based Société Anonyme upon its completion in Berlin.<sup>51</sup>

The *Dada-Messe* seems to have incorporated something of all the previous Dada exhibits. It was reactionary and violent, like the *Dada-Vorfrühling*, yet it was held in a respectable art gallery and charged an entrance fee, like the Galerie Corray. With its title, emphasizing that it was the first of its kind, and its great size, the *Dada-Messe* established both its place, as well as its primacy, in Berlin.<sup>52</sup>

At the same time that the *Dada-Messe* was provoking the bourgeois and the military in Berlin, Dada was institutionalized in New York City through Katharine Dreier’s newly founded Société Anonyme. From its inception, the Société Anonyme

---

<sup>50</sup> Ultimately, Grosz paid a fine of 300 marks for “Entgleisung” (moral derailment), while Herzfelde, as the publisher, was sentenced and fined 600 marks for insulting the Reichswehr. Bergius, 279.

<sup>51</sup> This exhibition never occurred.

<sup>52</sup> Bergius, “*Dada Triumphs!*” *Dada Berlin, 1917-1923, Artistry of Polarities*, 231.

was closely tied to the Dada movement, yet its relationship to the Dada movement has not been fully considered. Dreier, who conceived of the institution with the help of Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray just a month prior to Berlin's *Dada-Messe*, was making contacts with artists throughout Europe with the hope that she could acquire works for her newly established museum. Prior to the *Dada-Messe*, she was in contact with Max Ernst, who recalled that she had wandered into the *Gruppe D* gallery space during the installation of that exhibition.<sup>53</sup> The impetus for the Société Anonyme came in part as a reaction to the supposedly jury-free *First Annual Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists* of 1917, which rejected Duchamp's *Fountain*.<sup>54</sup> In this way, the Société was similar to *Gruppe D*, which reacted against the Cologne Kunstverein, as well as *Dada-Vorfrühling*, which reacted against the supposedly jury-free exhibition at the Kunstgewerbe Museum in Cologne. Much like Otto Burchard, the art dealer who provided gallery space for the *Dada-Messe*, Katharine Dreier was sympathetic to and supportive of the Dada movement, if she wasn't a whole-hearted participant. Providing funds and enthusiasm, she established the Société as a museum of modern art that aimed to educate the American public. In the first year, Société Anonyme exhibitions paralleled Zurich's *I<sup>re</sup> Exposition*

---

<sup>53</sup> Ernst recalled that he was initially perturbed by Dreier when she interrupted the installation of the exhibition. However, once she introduced herself and expressed her desire to bring the exhibition to New York, he warmed to her instantly. Max Ernst, *Écritures*, 38-9.

<sup>54</sup> Dreier actually voted against including *Fountain* in the exhibition. However, she wrote a letter to Duchamp in which she admired his originality, saying "It is a rare combination to have originality of so high a grade as yours...combined with such strength of character and spiritual sensitiveness." Dreier to Duchamp, April 13, 1917 Katherine S. Dreier Papers / Société Anonyme Archive. Yale University Library, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Unlike the Independents Salon, Dreier explained that "one of the chief aims of the Directors of the Société Anonyme, Inc, is to rise above personal taste and to conduct a gallery free from prejudice." Katharine Dreier, "Its Why and Wherefore," in *Société Anonyme (the first museum of modern art, 1920-1944): selected publications. Documents, vol. 1* (New York: Arno Press, 1972), 4.

*Dada* in many ways. The institution's name was Dada in spirit, as was Duchamp's absurd logo of a laughing ass (Fig. 18). The inaugural exhibition was designed by Duchamp and Man Ray, who transformed the gallery space from ceiling to floor into an ethereal environment where paintings by artists from Vincent Van Gogh to Joseph Stella<sup>55</sup> were trimmed in lace (Fig. 19), hung against shiny white oil cloth, and lit with blue day lightbulbs.<sup>56</sup> Even the wood floors were covered with gray rubber matting. Like many Dada exhibitions in Europe, not all of the participating artists could be considered Dada, yet many were sympathetic to the movement. Despite the unusual decorations, and the inclusion of Man Ray's *Lampshade* (Fig. 20) and Duchamp's *A Regarder (l'autre côté du verre) d'un oeil, de près, pendant presque une heure* (To Be Looked at (from the Other Side of the Glass) with One Eye, Close to, for Almost an Hour) (Fig. 21), Henry McBride described the show as "a shrine of cubism."<sup>57</sup> It wasn't until the eighth exhibition, held the following year from March 15<sup>th</sup>-April 12<sup>th</sup> 1921 that the press recognized Dada as the prevailing theme. In the *Evening World*, a columnist declared that "the Dadas have come to town."<sup>58</sup> Ironically, that exhibition had fewer Dada participants than the first, although it did have a formal session entitled "What is Dada," which like the lecture "Alte und Neue

---

<sup>55</sup> The exhibitors were listed as Vincent Van Gogh, Jacques Villon, Heinrich Vogeler, Joseph Stella, Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes, Francis Picabia, Man Ray, Henry Patrick Bruce, Morton Schamberg, Juan Gris, Marcel Duchamp James Daugherty, and Constantin Brancusi. Dreier, 15.

<sup>56</sup> Man Ray, *Self Portrait* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1988), 79.

<sup>57</sup> Henry McBride, "News and Views of Art, Including the Clearing House for Works of the Cubists," *The Sun and New York Herald*, May 16, 1920.

<sup>58</sup> Bowdoin, W.G., "The Dadas Have Come to Town at Société Anonyme," *Evening World*, March 22, 1921.

Kunst” at the *Premier Exposition Dada* in Zurich was intended to educate the public about contemporary art (Fig. 22).

In 1920, at almost the same moment that Dada became institutionalized at the Société Anonyme, Tristan Tzara arrived in Paris to kick off an active and intense Dada season.<sup>59</sup> While Berlin Dada is remembered for its politics, and New York Dada for its often playful confrontations with the art world, Paris Dada has often been described as literary, due to the fact that many of its main participants were writers, and not visual artists. Perhaps appropriately, the first Paris Dada exhibitions were held at a bookstore owned by Renée Hilsum, called *Au Sans Pareil* (Fig. 23).<sup>60</sup> The best known is the *Exposition Dada Max Ernst* of 1921. Ernst was unable to attend due to difficulty obtaining a visa, but the mood was celebratory even in his absence (Fig. 58). André Breton, Louis Aragon, Simone Kahn, Benjamin Péret, and Jacques Rigaut were instrumental in the preparations, along with Ernst’s close cooperation.<sup>61</sup> There was a catalogue, a poster (Fig. 24), and an invitation describing the opening events, which included such Dada nonsense as “The Kangaroo” at 10 p.m., “High Frequency” at 10:30, and “intimacies” after 11:30 (Fig. 25). Asté d’Esparbès, a reporter for the *Comoedia*, described the show as follows.

The Dadas, without ties and white gloves, paced back and forth. Andre Breton broke matches, Georges Ribbement [sic] Dessaignes yelled repeatedly : « Its raining on a crane ». Aragon meowed, Philippe Soupault played hide and seek with Tristan Tzara, while Benjamin Peret and

---

<sup>59</sup> Tzara arrived in Paris in January 1920, and made his first Dada appearance on January 23<sup>rd</sup> at a gathering organized by editors of *Littérature*: Louis Aragon, André Breton, and Philippe Soupault. The Société Anonyme was founded in the spring of 1920.

<sup>60</sup> These included exhibitions of the work of Francis Picabia, Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes, Jean Crotti, and Suzanne Duchamp.

<sup>61</sup> Sanouillet, 217.

Chachourne [sic] shook hands repeatedly. On the threshold [where there was a mannequin with an enigmatic smile] Jacques Rigaut counted with a loud voice the visitors pearls and automobiles.<sup>62</sup>

Immediately following Ernst's exhibition, Tzara organized the *Salon Dada* exhibition, which was held in the Galerie Montaigne at the Théâtre des Champs Élysées (Fig. 26). Like *Gruppe D*, and *Dada Vorfrühling*, *Salon Dada* was organized in reaction to another exhibition, the *Exposition des Indépendents*.<sup>63</sup> This exhibition also had many parallels with the Berlin's *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe*. It was large, produced a catalogue, openly discouraged visitors from attending, and emphasized its internationalism. One intriguing difference, however, was that although most of its participants were writers, rather than visual artists, the few photos of the exhibition reveal that the show was visually oriented, with an installation similar to the *Dada-Messe* (Figs. 27-29). A cello hung from the ceiling, ties created a fringe on the balcony overlooking the gallery, and posters were interspersed with paintings hung both high and low on the walls. Some of the work was collaborative, and much of the work has since been lost. Often cited are the few works for which the location is still known, including Max Ernst's painted collages, *La bicyclette graminée..* (The Graminaceous Bicycle) (Fig. 30) and *Paysage en ferraille..* (Landscape in scrap iron) (Fig. 31)<sup>64</sup>, as well as Man Ray's photographs,

---

<sup>62</sup> Asté d'Esparbès, "Un vernissage mouvementé," *Comoedia*, May 7, 1921, 2. (translation by author) Quoted in Sanouillet, 218. « Les *dadass*, sans cravate et gantés de blanc, passaient et repassaient. André Breton croquait des allumettes, Georges Ribbement [sic]-Dessaignes criait à chaque instant : 'Il pleut sur un crâne.' Aragon miaulait, Philippe Soupault jouait à cache-cache avec Tristan Tzara, tandis que Benjamin Péret et Chachourne [sic] se serraient la main à chaque instant. Sur le seuil [où se tenait un mannequin au sourire énigmatique] Jacques Rigaut comptait à voix haute les automobiles et les perles des visiteuses. »

<sup>63</sup> Sanouillet, 240.

<sup>64</sup> Also visible in Fig. 30, hanging on the wall in the exhibition.



entitled *L'Homme* (Man) and *La Femme* (Woman) (Figs. 32 and 33).<sup>65</sup> Like the *Dada-Messe*, which was forcibly closed early, the owner of the Galerie Montaigne closed *Salon Dada* early, before the first of its planned Matinées. The most intriguing similarity, perhaps, is that while both the *Dada-Messe* and *Salon Dada* demonstrated great energy and enthusiasm for Dada in Berlin and Paris, they ultimately mark the end of the movements in both countries. *Salon Dada* will be considered more fully in the third chapter of this thesis, which will focus on the exhibition catalogue.

*Salon Dada* was followed by an exhibition of Man Ray's work at Philippe Soupault's recently opened bookshop near Les Invalides, called *Librarie Six*. This would be the last major Dada exhibition in Paris. Less provocative than *Salon Dada*, the exhibition was nonetheless Dada in spirit. Soupault filled the ceiling with red balloons for the opening, which Jacques Rigaut and other Dadas exploded with lit matches. No works were sold, but Man Ray's *Cadeau* (Gift) (Fig. 34), which he created during the opening, was stolen.

Surveying Dada exhibitions internationally reveals how much an exploration of one exhibition can be enriched by considering another simultaneously. Although there are numerous similarities to be noted among exhibitions, each one had a unique character that reflected both the interests of the organizers across Europe and in the United States. Once equipped with even a summary understanding of these exhibitions, it becomes possible to scrutinize both how they functioned, and whether they met their goals, as the following chapter will explore.

---

<sup>65</sup> These submissions served as Man Ray's introduction to the Paris Dada scene, and likely influenced fellow *Salon Dada* participant, Philippe Soupault to organize a solo exhibition for Man Ray later that year at his bookstore, *Librarie Six*.

## Chapter II: The Role of Exhibitions

It should not be taken for granted that dadaists organized exhibitions. Historically, art exhibitions, such as the government sponsored Paris Salon, functioned to expose artists to possible patrons, and to secure an artist's status. They provided a passive environment in which art could be displayed for an audience that moved through the controlled spaces. By contrast, dadaists celebrated a dynamic relationship with their audience. They rejected passivity on the part of the viewer and produced confrontational art. Moreover, they rejected commercialism and artistic hierarchy. Dadaists might have abandoned the exhibition entirely, but saw the value in subverting this traditional institution.

By reinventing the exhibition, dadaists created a shocking contrast between their work and the work of previous art movements. Their exhibitions challenged and engaged the audience, and defied the prevailing cultural and/or political establishments. Whereas previous exhibitions were limited to the display of art, Dada exhibitions functioned more freely as sites for all kinds of Dada expression. Dadaists were willing to offend the audience, and make them uncomfortable. Not merely offering their point of view, dadaists forced their audience to confront it. By considering Dada exhibitions collectively it becomes clear that despite their many apparent differences, they functioned in similar ways. Specifically, these exhibitions illustrate the dadaists' rejection of the art establishment, emphasize the movement's internationalism, and demonstrate the effectiveness of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or synthesis of the arts, as a means by which to convey the Dada spirit. Before

considering the role of these exhibitions, however, it is essential to identify the audience at which these aggressive and often offensive statements were directed.

Dada exhibitions were, in theory, open to the public. They were never held at private clubs, and while some, such as the *Exposition Max Ernst*, and *Salon Dada* issued invitations, it is nowhere suggested that invitations were required for admission. Dadaists were hoping for a crowd, and they welcomed, if not invited a negative response. The entrance fees and catalogue prices (which in war-torn Europe would have prohibited many people from attending the exhibitions) and the locations of the exhibitions (often in affluent parts of the cities) determined, to a certain extent, the type of visitor that would come through the door.<sup>66</sup> In fact, by adopting the exhibition format, they limited their audience to those affluent individuals who had enough free time to visit a gallery. Consider also the *Dada-Messe*, which was held in a gallery that typically displayed Sung Dynasty ceramics. Due to its location the exhibition was inevitably, if inadvertently attended by some of the same conservative, wealthy collectors who were interested in Chinese art. Similarly, the *Gruppe D* exhibition, which separated from the *Gesellschaft der Künste* but still exhibited in the same building, would draw those who had come to see a much less controversial group of artists, a group of artists who believed that their work should be “the visible expression of the people’s will.”<sup>67</sup> It is unclear whether the *Salon Dada* exhibition

---

<sup>66</sup> For example, it cost 3 Mks. to enter the *Dada-Messe*, and another 1,70 Mk. to purchase the catalogue. The *Salon Dada* exhibition catalogue was 5 francs. Both exhibitions were located in affluent neighborhoods, the *Schönenberger Ufer*, and the *Champs Élysées*. In New York, exhibitions at the *Société Anonyme* might have been less dear, at 25 cents a head, but they too were located in affluent midtown Manhattan, across the street from the Ritz Hotel. *Making Mischief: Dada Invades New York*, Francis Naumann and Beth Venn, Eds. (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1996), 132.

<sup>67</sup> *Der Strom*, no.2, ca. May-June 1919. Translated in Camfield, 49.

charged an entrance fee, but its location on the Champs Élysées also implies that it was available mostly to more affluent members of the society.

While Dada exhibitions were well situated to attract a certain stratum of society, they were not intended to cater to the interests of the audience. In his “Lecture on Dada” of 1922 Tzara explained that “nothing is more delightful than to confuse and upset people. People one doesn’t like.”<sup>68</sup> Dadaists were not always seeking a positive reception, rather they anticipated, and enjoyed the negative reaction of their largely bourgeois audience. While exhibitions proved to be ideal for provocation, it should not be taken for granted that dadaists would have organized art exhibitions. Considering how dadaists rejected previous art movements and were critical of other art exhibitions, they might have easily rejected the traditional means by which previous artists and movements presented their work. Perhaps, though, dadaists intentionally retained the exhibition format, not out of a lack of innovation, but as a strategy to lure in a traditionally minded, bourgeois audience which they would be otherwise unlikely to reach.

Non-conforming, innovative, and provocative, Dada exhibitions were effective because they contrasted so dramatically with prevailing practices, which mostly established neutral environments for the displayed artworks, and were passive in their engagement with the audience. However they may best be understood not as wholly exceptional in the history of art exhibitions, but rather as a culmination of several decades of protest against the censorship of artists who did not conform with

---

<sup>68</sup> Tristan Tzara, “Lecture on Dada, 1922” in *The Dada Painters and Poets: The Documents of Twentieth Century Art*, ed. Robert Motherwell (New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., 1951), 247.

the major institutions of the art establishment. As early as the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, certain progressive artists began to distance themselves from juried and government-sponsored exhibitions such as the French Salon.<sup>69</sup> In 1874, Impressionists organized independent exhibitions as the Société Anonyme des Artistes Peintres, Sculpteurs, Graveurs, etc., and in 1884, the jury-free Salon des Indépendents was established. In the 1890s numerous secessionist groups sprung up in major cities across Europe such as Berlin, Munich, and Vienna, asserting their independence from the established, generally conservative and academic art organizations.<sup>70</sup> Dadaists were also independent, but their exhibitions were more innovative than those organized by previous art organizations, for they challenged their audience not only through the content of their work, but through the function and structure of the exhibition itself, thus changing the relationship of the audience to the work, and reinterpreting the value of art.<sup>71</sup>

Dada exhibitions did not function primarily, or even secondarily, as venues for selling art. While Hugo Ball and Tristan Tzara documented the happenings at the

---

<sup>69</sup> Courbet first refused to exhibit at the Salon, and in 1851 submitted three paintings that challenged the conventions of the Salon with their unidealized depictions of rural life. In 1855, when one of his works was rejected from the Exposition Universelle, he funded an independent exhibition nearby the main exposition, and showed his painting there.

<sup>70</sup> In Munich, artists seceded from the Munchner Kunstlergenossenschaft in 1892, while in Berlin, artists seceded from the Verein Berlin Kunstler in 1898. The Vienna secession was established in opposition to the Kunstlerhaus in 1897. Secessions also occurred in Prague, Krakow, Budapest and Rome.

<sup>71</sup> Although it is beyond the scope of this paper, it would be worthwhile to consider the innovations of Dada exhibitions with Futurist exhibitions from approximately the same time. In 1914, for example, Futurists combined performance and exhibition in the Spovieri Gallery in Rome during an evening of what they described as “dynamic and synoptic declamation.” Dressed in lavish costumes, and surrounded by Futurist paintings, which were bathed in a dim light created by covering the lights with red paper, the artists gave a poetry reading, accompanied by many voices and the sounds from homemade instruments. See Christiana J. Taylor, *Futurism: Politics, Painting and Performance* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1974), 41.

Cabaret Voltaire in their writings, they didn't indicate sales, and none of the exhibition catalogues list prices. This was also true of the *Dada-Messe*, with one exception. The *Dada-Messe* catalogue listed Otto Schmalhausen's "High School Course in Dada" as sold. Also, works were sold at the *Exposition Dada Max Ernst*, but not to the public. The catalogue indicates that certain works were purchased by dadaists who helped to organize the exhibition, such as Louis Aragon, André Breton, and Jacques Rigaut. Even the Société Anonyme did not sell works in exhibitions, but rather put visitors in touch with artists directly, minimizing any dealings in art. Emphasizing the sale of artwork would have forced dadaists into a position of trying to appeal to the visitor, which they were loathe to do. In 1919, Raoul Hausmann angrily accused Expressionists of catering to the bourgeois, and "fashioning a profitable little war business out of a decent movement started by Frenchmen, Russians, and Italians." He argued that dadaists would not "tolerate the bourgeois who hangs his money bags over life's possibilities."<sup>72</sup>

On the contrary, dadaists often assaulted the audiences of their exhibitions with aggressive paintings, posters, and sculptural assemblages. Dada openings and soirées also took control from the viewer. The dadaists came as neither onlookers nor salesmen, but as colorful representatives of the ideas conveyed by their work. Their unpredictable behavior must have been intimidating to visitors, who became more like victims of the Dada message, than interpreters. While previous art movements

---

<sup>72</sup> Raoul Hausmann, "Der deutsche Spiesser ärgert sich" (The German Philistine is Annoyed,) *Der Dada*, December 1919: 1. Reprinted in *Dada Zeitschriften*, (Hamburg : Edition Nautilus, Verlag Lutz Schulenberg, 1978). Translated in Rose-Carol Washton Long, ed. *German Expressionism : Documents of the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism* (New York : G.K. Hall & Company, 1993), 270-1.

such as Impressionism and Fauvism had been defined by critics who saw and judged their works, dadaists took control by naming their movement. Dada exhibitions placed the viewer in a new role, that of being judged, rather than judging the work they saw.

The *Salon Dada*, the *Exposition Max Ernst*, and the *Dada-Messe*, leveled even more vigorous attacks. At the *Salon Dada* opening, dadaists hung a mirror which insulted visitors with the following text, “Si vous voulez être dégoûtés, regardez-vous dans ce miroir” (If you want to be disgusted, look at yourself in this mirror).<sup>73</sup> Similarly, Jacques Rigaut stood at the threshold of the *Exposition Max Ernst* and announced what type of automobiles visitors arrived in, and how many pearls the women were wearing.<sup>74</sup> At the *Dada-Messe*, both posters and paintings were critical of the bourgeois. They attacked them with such obscure and aggressive statements as, “Nieder die bürgerliche Geistigkeit”(Down with bourgeois spirituality) and, “Dada ist die willentliche Zersetzung der bürgerlichen Begriffswelt” (Dada is the deliberate subversion of bourgeois ideology).

Dadaists not only upset the traditional role of the visitor as judge and/or potential patron of the arts, they also called into question the value of the works they displayed through the way in which works were prepared for exhibition, and the manner in which they were arranged in the exhibition space. Dadaists challenged the importance of originality and professionalism in the arts. The ephemeral nature of many works in the exhibitions suggests that they were created specifically for the

---

<sup>73</sup> Sanouillet, 242.

<sup>74</sup> *Comoedia*, May 7, 1922, 2. Quoted in Sanouillet, 218. “Sur le seuil [où se tenait un mannequin au sourire énigmatique] Jacques Rigaut comptait à voix haute les automobiles et les perles des visiteuses.”

exhibitions, and that the materiality of works in Dada exhibitions was of a lesser importance than the message those works conveyed.

There are many examples of this emphasis on message over materiality. For example, George Grosz contributed a work to the *Dada-Messe* entitled “Missachtung eines Meisterwerkes von Botticelli” (Disregard of a Masterwork by Botticelli) (Fig. 35) which consisted solely of a reproduction of *La Primavera* obscured by a large x. Additionally, Grosz’s “Galerie deutscher Manneschönheit, Preisfrage ‘Wer ist der Schönste.’” (Gallery of German Manly Beauty, Prize Question “Who is the Most Beautiful?”) was mounted on top of Otto Dix’s painting, *45% Fit for Work*, (Fig 15) thus challenging the inherent value of the painting itself. Works were similarly treated at the *Salon Dada* exhibition. Close examination of the exhibition photos reveals that many works were not framed, but simply tacked to the wall (Fig 29).

The commercial value of art was further called into question by the inclusion, in numerous exhibitions, of objects, which were displayed alongside paintings and posters. The first recorded instance of this was at the *Gruppe D* exhibition, in which flower pots and piano hammers were displayed alongside paintings. It was seen again at the *Salon Dada* exhibition, where an umbrella and a cello were hung from the ceiling, and Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes submitted a sculpture entitled *Penser* (To Think) (Fig. 28), which was no more than a glass cylinder, placed unceremoniously on the floor of the gallery next to a table.<sup>75</sup>

Dadaists also questioned the inherent value of originality and professionalism in the arts by working in collaboration on many of their exhibition entries, by signing

---

<sup>75</sup> Marc Dachy. *Archives Dada, Chronique* (Paris: Hazan, 2005), 511. The inclusion of such objects in an art exhibition of course recalls Duchamp’s ready-mades of 1913, and his submission of *Fountain* to the *First Annual Exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists* in 1917.



their works under false names, and by encouraging non-professional artists, and even children, to submit art to the exhibitions. For example, the catalogue of the *Gruppe D* exhibition listed four children's drawings, and the *Dada-Messe* included the works of Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt and Hans Citroën, who were only teenagers at the time of the show. Although no photographs document the actual location of Citroën and Stuckenschmidt's work, it is almost certain that they were hung on equal footing with other works in the exhibition. For example, Herzfelde showed his respect for Citroën's work by singling out "Das Netz" (The Net) for praise in the exhibition catalogue:

A collection of different odds and ends as they fill a young man's brain; unburdened by problems, his attitude to the world is perceptive, collecting, hardly registering. Among these odds and ends are concepts playing a great role for perception but which essentially have not formed ideas; these are, therefore, represented in the way they were first picked up, for example, as newspaper headlines. The whole is spanned by a net, symbolizing the passion with which all these impressions were collected. At its center hangs a coral, which might be looked at as the brain that, like a spider, wishes to wrap the world in its threads.<sup>76</sup>

In addition to challenging the art establishment, dadaists used exhibitions to demonstrate the internationalism of their movement.<sup>77</sup> This internationalism began with the Cabaret Voltaire, in reaction against war time nationalism. In post-war Europe, large exhibitions continued to promote international solidarity, but with the intention of showing the strength of the movement. Smaller, one-man exhibitions,

---

<sup>76</sup> *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe Katalog*, John Heartfield and Wieland Herzfelde, Eds., (Berlin: Malik-Verlag, 1920), 2. Translation in Bergius, "Dada Triumphs!" *Dada Berlin 1917-1923, Artistry of Polarities*, 257. This work was not photographed, and is now missing.

<sup>77</sup> In 1916 Hugo Ball wrote in his journal that "an international exhibition would be wonderful," and during his involvement in both the Cabaret Voltaire and the Galerie Dada, exhibitions emphasized the international array of participants. Ball, *Flight out of Time*, 54.

such as the *Exposition Max Ernst* could serve as an entrée for a foreign dadaist into a new Dada scene. In some ways, Dada exhibitions were similar to publications, such as *Dada* and *Dadaphone*, which allowed dadaists to collaborate internationally, and to make their work known abroad.<sup>78</sup> However, with their enticing posters and press announcements promising entertainment, exhibitions may have been better able than journals to attract the public to the international Dada cause. Also, while journals established international communication, exhibitions gave dadaists the opportunity to establish a more concrete presence in foreign countries, even if they themselves were unable to attend the exhibitions. This was the case for Max Ernst, who, due to difficulties obtaining a visa, was unable to attend the opening of his own exhibition at Au Sans Pareil in 1921.

Additionally, the gathering together of works from across Europe and from New York at the *Salon Dada* and *Dada-Messe* made it less possible to view Dada as an isolated or inconsequential movement. This may have been the justification for the *Salon Dada* exhibition posters, which featured the names of many foreign dadaists, and may also in part explain the title of the *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe*. There were even plans to exhibit many of the works from the *Erste Internationale Dada-Messe* in New York at the Société Anonyme, demonstrating the artists' desire to establish an international Dada presence. Although this never took place, the indications in the catalogue represent, nonetheless, the international aspirations of the movement.

---

<sup>78</sup> For example, *Dada No. 4/5*, produced in May 1919, represented French, German, Swiss, and Russian artists. *Dadaphone* represented Italian, Romanian, and French artists.

While Dada exhibitions shared aspirations of internationalism, it would be disingenuous to suggest that a shared desire indicated a shared success. For example, both the *Dada-Messe* and *Salon Dada* appeared to be more international than they actually were. In his close analysis of the *Dada-Messe*, Hanne Bergius revealed that only 7% of the participants were foreigners. Although a larger percentage of foreign artists participated in *Salon Dada*, still more than half of the participants were French. Given that the majority of participants were citizens of the country in which the exhibitions were held, it becomes valid to explore how place shaped the character of the exhibitions. In what way did Germany shape the *Dada-Messe*? In what ways was *Salon Dada* French? What was American about the Société Anonyme?

Of all Dada exhibitions the Berlin *Dada-Messe* was perhaps the most firmly rooted in place. While Richard Huelsenbeck wrote in 1920 that, “Dada is the international expression of the times.”<sup>79</sup> Wieland Herzfelde explained in the same year that “The Dadaists acknowledge as their sole program the obligation to make what is happening here and now – temporally as well as spatially – the content of their pictures.”<sup>80</sup> Thus the work in the *Dada-Messe* was largely focused on the unstable political situation in Berlin. As was described in the first chapter, paintings by Otto Dix and prints by George Grosz visualized the brutal effects of the war on German citizens, and numerous artists incorporated clippings from current newspapers into their collage, photomontage, and other assemblages, such as

---

<sup>79</sup> Richard Huelsenbeck, “Dada Manifesto,” [1918], in *Dada Almanach*, 47.

<sup>80</sup> Wieland Herzfelde, “Zur Einführung,” *First International Dada-Fair* (Berlin: Malik-Verlag 1920), 1. Translated in Brigid Doherty, “Introduction to the First International Dada Fair,” *October* 105 (2003):102.

Johannes Baader's "Das grosse Plasto-Dio-dada-drama" (The great Plasto-Dio-dada-drama)(Fig 36).<sup>81</sup>

*Salon Dada*, on the other hand did not respond as directly to the impact of the war on French citizens, but functioned more as a means by which to establish Dada's presence and strength in Paris. Although many of the artworks are now missing, the titles indicate that many were portraits that dadaists made of each other, as though to demonstrate their camaraderie. Some of the titles are playful such as three pieces submitted by Jacques Rigaut entitled *Quoi, Qui, Quand*, and three submitted by Tzara entitled *Mon, Cher, and Ami*.<sup>82</sup> While this sort of solidarity may also be seen at the *Dada-Messe* in the form of collaborative works, it is the literary aspect of *Salon Dada* that makes it particularly French. From the beginning, Dada in Paris was promoted by writers, and this remained the predominant form of Dada communication in France. The *Salon Dada* exhibition is exceptional because these same writers created visual art for the show. Some of the works created by visual artists reflected the literary nature of Paris Dada as well. Cino Cantarelli, for example, contributed two pastels after Tzara's poems. Additionally, the *Salon Dada*

---

<sup>81</sup> The full title of the assemblage reads as follows: *Das grosse Plasto-Dio-dada-drama: DEUTSCHLANDS GRÖSSE UND UNTERGANG durch Lehrer Hagendorf oder Die phantastische Lebensgeschichte des Oberdada*. (The Great Plasto-Dio-dada-drama; Germany's Greatness and Fall at the Hands of Schoolmaster Hagendorf, or: the Fantastic Life Story of the Superdada.) For a close analysis of this work see Michael White, "Johannes Baader's Plasto-dio-dada-drama: the mysticism of the mass media," *Modernism/Modernity* 8 no. 4 (2001):583-602.

<sup>82</sup> Rigaut and Tzara may have approached their creation of visual art lightheartedly because they were poets, and only created visual art for the *Salon Dada* exhibition.

catalogue featured poetry and creative short essays along with illustrations and the list of works in the exhibition.<sup>83</sup>

Despite international participation, the comparison of *Salon Dada* and the *Dada-Messe* reveal that the exhibitions were by no means interchangeable, and that dadaists were not entirely unified in their message. The internationalism of Dada seemed to be largely a means by which to strengthen the movement, and to add credibility and force to their message.

Dada exhibitions were unified not only by their internationalism, but through their installation as well. At the time of the Cabaret Voltaire, Hugo Ball expressed interest in the Wagnerian concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or synthesis of the arts, and worked to achieve this both at the Cabaret and at the Galerie Dada.<sup>84</sup> This concept remained a driving force in later exhibitions in Cologne, Berlin, and Paris. Ball's understanding of this concept was near to the composer and writer Richard Wagner's, who first used the term in relation to art for the theatre. The Cabaret Voltaire resembled late 19<sup>th</sup> century cabarets such as Le Chat Noir, and Le Moulin Rouge in so far as it was a nightclub, providing a space for artists to share visual arts, music, theatre, dance, and poetry. Although the Cabaret Voltaire was perhaps the purest achievement of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, Ball wrote in his journal that it was later, at the Galerie Dada, that he achieved a synthesis of the arts: "I have realized a

---

<sup>83</sup> The catalogue for the *Dada-Messe* was also filled with text, but it was more propagandistic and journalistic than literary.

<sup>84</sup> Ball became interested in the idea of a *Gesamtkunstwerk* through Kandinsky, who conceived of a monumental work of art which would be "a counterpositioning of the individual arts, a symphonic composition in which every art, reduced to its essentials, provides as an elementary form no more than the score for a construction or composition on stage." Ball, *Flight out of Time*, 233.

favorite old plan of mine. Total art: pictures, music, dances, poems – now we have that.”<sup>85</sup>

Dada exhibitions were organized around a principle of multiplicity, in which the exhibition served not as a quiet environment in which to contemplate artwork, but as a center for many kinds of Dada activities, and an environment in which to incite a response from visitors to the exhibition. The Dada *Gesamtkunstwerk* took place at the site of the exhibition, and could be composed of many elements, including performance, lectures, dance, and music, always in the company of the artwork, posters, sculptures, and objects displayed in the gallery space. The activities through which the Dada *Gesamtkunstwerk* was realized occurred during exhibition openings and soirées; events which are often better documented than the content of the exhibitions. These performative events were not supplemental, rather they were fundamental to the experience and success of these exhibitions.

For example, the opening events of the *Exposition Dada Max Ernst* in 1921 attracted a large number of people to the exhibition. Like the Cabaret Voltaire, this exhibition embraced the concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*; the dadaists gathered together, surrounded by Ernst’s work, and embodied Dadaism through theatrical performances. René Hilsum’s Au Sans Pareil was twice transformed, from bookstore to gallery, and from gallery to theatre. Exhibitions prior to Dada were much more passive. The message was communicated through the art, which was neatly contained in frames and arranged in an orderly manner. The viewer controlled the extent to which he or she might be involved in the artwork. It would have been easy to walk by one piece in favor of another, and the viewer could feel free to judge the

---

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.,104.

works with no fear of reprisal. By organizing exhibitions under the principle of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the audience was subjected to a much more intense experience over which they had much less control.

Clearly pleased with the results of this exhibition, the dadaists arranged a soirée for the following *Salon Dada* exhibition at the Galerie Montaigne. The *Soirée Dada* (Fig. 37) which was advertised with a poster detailing the events, was held in the rooms of the *Salon Dada* exhibition on June 10, 1921 at 9 p.m. Hundreds of people, paying 10 francs each, came to see the events. At the soirée, the participants again transformed themselves and created a Dada spectacle within the space of the exhibition. The evening began with a singer putting the catalogue of the exhibition to music. In this way, the exhibition was incorporated into the spectacle, and was more than just a decorative backdrop for the activities. The following spectacle, a mock appearance of the President of Liberia (actually Philippe Soupault) entitled “La Boite d’Allumettes” also interacted with the exhibition. Accompanied by dadaists, the “president” toured the exhibition, and congratulated the participants, presenting each of them with a match.<sup>86</sup>

While the *Dada-Messe* was one of the best publicized and documented Dada exhibitions, it was poorly attended. This may have been due to the high cost of admission, but might also have been related to the gallery’s location. One of the more sympathetic critics wrote of the show:

If I had had to arrange this exhibition, I would not have opted for the Burchard Gallery and its idyllic surroundings under the chestnut trees on Schönenberger Ufer. I would have chosen a fairground, as noisy as possible....I would have placed both Herzfeldes on the right with bass drum and triangle, George

---

<sup>86</sup> Philippe Soupault, *Mémoires de l’Oubli 1914-1923 vol. 2*. (Paris : Lachenal & Ritter, 1981), 158.

Grosz with a long trombone on the left, and I would have shouted, “Come in, dear un-respected audience...Here you’ll see genuine art, an anatomical museum in which you can see yourself dissected, not only arms and legs, but also heads and hearts.”<sup>87</sup>

Concerned about poor attendance at the exhibition, Johannes Baader wrote that “The exhibition keeps dragging on; we have somewhat managed to increase the number of visitors through the poster, but after all it is not very great either.”<sup>88</sup> To increase attendance, he put out a notice in the press advertising a day of Dada attractions at the exhibition.

The Oberdada and the Empress Dada are inviting the public of Berlin to come to the Dada exhibition at 13 Lützow-Ufer on July 29. All day long, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 6:30 p.m., one attraction will follow the next. At 4 p.m. the Oberdada will give a lecture on the theory of Dadaism. The Empress Dada will do the honors. There will be no additional charge.<sup>89</sup>

Unfortunately, the details of Baader’s lecture have been lost, and the attractions do not seem to have increased the attendance. However, they at least reveal that at the *Dada-Messe*, the accompanying events were conceived expressly to attract visitors to see the paintings, assemblages, and posters displayed in the rooms of the exhibition.

Additionally, dadaists encouraged viewers to interact with certain works of art in the exhibition. At *Dada-Vorfrühling*, Ernst attached a hatchet to one of his sculptures and it was destroyed several times by audience members. In another piece, a drawing described by a reviewer of the exhibition, “there was a lot of white paper left over, and beneath it was written, “Every visitor to this exhibition is entitled to

---

<sup>87</sup> Ernst Cohn-Wiener, *Neue Berliner (12 Uhr mittags)* July 6, 1920. Translated in Bergius, “*Dada Triumphs!*” *Dada Berlin, 1917-1923, Artistry of Polarities*, 273.

<sup>88</sup> Baader, Letter to Hausmann and Höch, Berlin, July 16, 1920. Translated in Bergius, *Dada Berlin, 1917-1923 Artistry of Polarities*, 272-3.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.



enter a dadaist or anti-dadaist motto on this drawing. Trespassers will not be prosecuted.”<sup>90</sup> Similarly, Otto Dix submitted a piece entitled *Bewegliches Figurenbild* (Montage of Movable Figures) to the *Dada-Messe*, and it was installed beneath a poster ordering the viewer “Nur zupacken und festhalten” (Just grab it and hold onto it). One photograph from the exhibition shows Wieland Herzfelde manipulating the figures (Fig. 38). By following instructions and engaging physically with the works of art, visitors became participants, and were perhaps more likely to achieve, through their actions, a Dada state of mind. Even the dadaists engaged with their art. While Marcel Janco’s masks sometimes hung on the walls of the Cabaret Voltaire, as can be seen in Janco’s painting of 1916 (Fig. 2), Ball recalled that they were worn during performances in order to transform the performers into “characters and passions that were larger than life.”<sup>91</sup>

Dadaists were able to unify the many diverse elements of their exhibitions by organizing them as installations that emphasized the whole over individual parts, but how were visitors to understand this synthesis? What was Dada about these collections of so many different styles and types of work? Dada exhibitions demonstrate, through their inclusion of multiple styles, various mediums, and through international participation, that Dada was not a style, or a school. This was further emphasized in Dada writings. Tzara wrote that “the foundation of dadaism is represented not as the foundation of a new school but as the repudiation of all

---

<sup>90</sup> Unsigned review, “Der Letzte Schrei,” *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, May 1, 1920. Translated in Camfield, 70.

<sup>91</sup> Ball, *Flight out of Time*, 64.

schools...”<sup>92</sup> and Georges Hugnet wrote that “if [Dada] has a face, it secretly loses it and recovers it unmetamorphosed..it makes no distinction between what is and what isn’t...it negates itself and replenishes its strength from its negated negation..Dada is a state of mind.”<sup>93</sup> André Breton explained further that “Cubism was a school of painting, futurism a political movement: DADA is a state of mind...DADA is artistic free thinking.”<sup>94</sup> Richard Huelsenbeck echoed this in his Collective Dada manifesto of 1920, in which he wrote “Dada is a state of mind that can be revealed in any conversation whatever, so that you are compelled to say: this man is a DADAIST – that man is not; the Dada Club consequently has members all over the world.”<sup>95</sup>

Exhibitions are of particular importance to the study of Dadaism. As international *Gesamtkunstwerks* containing almost every element of Dada activities, they are rich sources for the understanding of the movement. Dadaists turned the exhibition upside down and reinvented, or liberated it so that it accommodated the Dada state of mind. At the same time, however, they retained enough of the traditional exhibition format so as to both attract an exhibition going audience, and ultimately to fit comfortably within a greater narrative of art exhibitions. While they are incomplete sources of evidence - many exhibitions were not photographed, and many works have since been lost - there is still a great deal of material to explore. The following chapter will narrow the discussion of Dada exhibitions to the *Salon*

---

<sup>92</sup> Tristan Tzara quoted in André Breton, “For Dada, etc.,” translated in Motherwell, 202.

<sup>93</sup> Georges Hugnet, “The Dada Spirit in Painting,” translated in Motherwell, 125.

<sup>94</sup> André Breton, “For Dada, etc.,” translated in Motherwell, 203.

<sup>95</sup> Tristan Tzara, “Lecture on Dada (1922),” translated in Motherwell, 246.

*Dada* exhibition in order to consider evidence which thus far has been overlooked, yet further aids in the understanding of these exhibitions.

### Chapter Three: The *Salon Dada* Catalogue

In order to establish exhibitions as a critical site of Dada activity it has been useful to gather them into a loose chronology, and analyze them comparatively in order to tease out common themes, such as the rejection of the traditional art world, the desire for internationalism, and the pursuit of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Such a broad approach would be enriched, however, by in depth studies on individual Dada exhibitions, which, with the exception of the *Dada-Messe*, have not yet been pursued in the scholarship.

It is only logical to follow the study of the *Dada-Messe* with a comprehensive analysis of the *Salon Dada* exhibition of 1921, because the latter exemplifies Dada exhibitions through its internationalism, its achievement of a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and its rejection and subversion of artistic traditions. At the same time, however, its unique, literary character distinguishes it among Dada exhibitions. While Michel Sanouillet and others have used the photographs, catalogue, and other ephemera related to the show to describe it with greater accuracy than has yet been possible with most exhibitions, their analysis of these sources is hardly exhaustive.<sup>96</sup> *Salon Dada* has always been presented as part of a chronology of Dada activity in Paris, and has never been singled out as an event of particular importance in that history. One possible explanation for the lack of rigorous, focused scholarship on *Salon Dada* is that if it is not closely examined it might be easily, although falsely, perceived as

---

<sup>96</sup> Sanouillet's is by far the most thorough analysis of the exhibition, due largely to the fact that he consulted with many former dadaists associated with the exhibition; Tristan Tzara, and Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes in particular.

having failed as a Dada exhibition.<sup>97</sup> Rather than spur the growth of the movement, it marked the beginning of disagreements that would, in the next few years, lead to the dissolution of Dada in Paris.<sup>98</sup> Additionally, much has been made of the fact that Duchamp refused to submit paintings to the exhibition, and of the early closure of the exhibition due to the dadaists' disruption of a Bruitist concert taking place in the same building as the exhibition. The dadaists themselves wrote very little of the exhibition retrospectively. For example, Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes mentioned the exhibition, but described it ambiguously; "What can one say about this *Salon Dada*? A successful attempt? Ill-fated? Who knows?"<sup>99</sup> Skirting any evaluation, or description of the exhibition itself, he only recalled that it was closed early by the owner of the gallery. Far from being evidence of *Salon Dada*'s failure, the early closure of the exhibition, and the visible absence of certain artists can be shown to have actually contributed to the exhibition's success. Dada exhibitions cannot be judged according to the criteria used to evaluate traditional exhibitions.

As Helen Adkins and Hanne Bergius have demonstrated in their analyses of the *Dada-Messe*, a comprehensive study is no small undertaking, and given the limited scope of the present thesis, it will not be possible to pursue such an extensive project here. Therefore the following discussion will focus particularly on the *Salon*

---

<sup>97</sup> Soupault wrote that Tzara, the "infatigable organizer," had "never appeared so active and dynamic in his arrangement of the exhibition," and that the exhibition participants "went to a lot of trouble to ensure that this exhibition would be a success." (author's translation) Soupault, 155.

<sup>98</sup> Tzara and Breton fought over the direction Dada should take, and Picabia renounced Dada after tiring of their arguments.

<sup>99</sup> (author's translation) "Que dire de ce Salon Dada? Tentative heureuse, malheureuse ? Qui sait !," Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes, *Déjà Jadis* (Paris: Rene Julliard, 1958), 98.

*Dada* catalogue; a critical, yet generally overlooked document of the exhibition.<sup>100</sup> It is closely related to the exhibition, in both its structure and content, and unlike the photographs, which represent much of the work at a distance, and are difficult to make out, the catalogue is complete, and in precisely the same state as it was at the time of the exhibition. It is the first source to approach for a deeper understanding of the exhibition.

Designed by Tzara, and printed by the Imprimerie Crémieu, the *Salon Dada* catalogue is almost the largest Dada exhibition catalogue ever produced.<sup>101</sup> It includes a list of works in the exhibition, poetry and short essays by several of the participants, as well as several illustrations. Michel Sanouillet is one of the few scholars to have addressed the *Salon Dada* catalogue, and his brief discussion of the exhibition in *Dada à Paris* is more complete than any other.<sup>102</sup> In his chapter entitled “Autour d’un ‘Salon Dada’” he praises the catalogue’s integration of poetry and art in the exhibition as representing “without a doubt one of the moments where Dada was the closest to attaining perfection in its typical mode of expression.”<sup>103</sup> However, he does not go into further depth, due to the nature of his book, which is a broad survey of Dada activities in Paris.

---

<sup>100</sup> See the Appendix for the author’s translation of the *Salon Dada* catalogue.

<sup>101</sup> It is rivaled in size only by the *Cabaret Voltaire* catalogue of 1916, which was thirty-two pages in length.

<sup>102</sup> Georges Hugnet summarized the catalogue’s contents in *L’Aventure Dada*, and more recently, it has been briefly mentioned in the French and American catalogues for the 2005/2006 *Dada* retrospective exhibition. Hugnet, Georges, *L’Aventure Dada* (Vichy: Seghers, 1957), 104. Xavier Rey, “Paris Manifestations 1921,” in *Dada*, ed. Laurent Le Bon (Paris: Centre Pompidou, 2005), 774. Janine Mileaf and Matthew S. Witovsky, “Paris,” in *Dada*, ed. Leah Dickerman (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2005), 355.

<sup>103</sup> “L’ensemble représente sans aucun doute l’un des moments où Dada fut le plus près d’atteindre à la perfection dans son mode d’expression typique.” Sanouillet, 243.

The cover of the *Salon Dada* catalogue (Fig. 41) was designed by Tristan Tzara, and reveals something of the exhibition's character. As a lithograph, it differs from the catalogue's content, which was printed using typeset. The cover is identifiably Dada because of the variety of fonts employed in the signage; the cockeyed lettering of the exhibition title, and particularly because of the content of the signs themselves; a collection of unrelated statements reminiscent of newspaper articles, and classified ads. The cover also served as a poster for the exhibition, containing all of the necessary information concerning the title, place, and time. The complete title of the exhibition, *Salon Dada Exposition Internationale* fills the lower half of the composition. Each letter of *Salon Dada* adopts a different font, and each is set at a slightly opposing angle from its neighbor, lightening the mood and representing the exhibition's playful character. In contrast, the letters of *Exposition Internationale* are completely level, and of a single, compressed font, emphasizing the importance dadaists ascribed to international participation.

Despite the emphasis on the title, the jumble of incoherent signs on the upper half of the *Salon Dada* are the most visually compelling aspect of the composition. At the upper left, a sign, which appears to be screwed into a wall, states that "Nul n'est censé ignorer Dada." (Nobody is expected to ignore Dada). To the right, signs read "A Mort," which might be read as Love, or Death, "Tout à Tout" (All in all), "Pièges a Dada" (Dada trap), "Qui est-ce qui veut une paire de claques" (Who wants a pair of rubber overshoes), "myosotis, s.v.p." (forget-me-not, s.v.p.), "On Cherche des Athlètes" (Athletes Wanted), and "Immobilisation" (Immobilization). The variety of lettering is typical of Tzara's designs for Dada posters, although it is unique for

having been drawn by hand. The absurd content juxtaposed with the necessary factual information can also be found on other posters and flyers of Tzara's design, such as the advertisement for the Dada Visit to Saint Julien Le Pauvre (Fig. 39), which in addition to presenting the necessary information, includes absurd statements such as "On doit couper son nez comme ses cheveux" (One should cut his nose like his hair), and "Lavez vos seins comme vos gants," (Wash your breasts like your gloves). Johanna Drucker has related what she calls Tzara's "eclectic typography" to his famous poem "Pour faire un poème Dada" in which he recommends creating a poem out of the cut up pieces of a newspaper article, pulled at random out of a hat.<sup>104</sup> Citing Tzara's poem, "Bulletin" (Fig. 40) as an example, she explains that because each line employed a different typeset,

...they seemed to have been cut from a number of articles rather than just one and the typographic treatment of each was preserved, phrase to phrase. The simple effect was that of disjunction, an emphasized and underscored disjunction, which continually posed the problem of the relation of the elements within the "poem" line to line.<sup>105</sup>

Considered in light of Drucker's remarks, the collection of signs can be read as a Dada poem. At the same time, however, each statement is framed, which refers to the art exhibition, in which numerous framed works were hung on the walls. That the cover is a lithograph, and not typography, is also significant. By doing the lettering by hand, Tzara was straddling the visual and literary arts, thus illustrating the fact that *Salon Dada* was an exhibition of both artists and poets.

---

<sup>104</sup> Tristan Tzara, "Pour faire un poème dadaïste," *Littérature*, no. 15 (1920), 18.

<sup>105</sup> Johanna Drucker, *The Visible Word: Experimental Typography and Modern Art, 1909-1923* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 206.



As was mentioned earlier, there is a stark contrast between the cover and the content of the *Salon Dada* catalogue. The informality and playfulness of the hand drawn signs and off-kilter lettering on the cover is replaced with a highly formal and traditional arrangement of text throughout the content of the catalogue (Fig. 42-56). Each page has a decorative border running across the top of the page, and poems, essays, and illustrations are conservatively arranged so that they are squared to the page, and are given plenty of space, with no more than two selections per page. The catalogue contains four painting reproductions as well, which like the poems, are centered on the page. In contrast with the cover, the typography remains consistent throughout the catalogue, unifying the poems visually, even though further examination will reveal that they differ greatly in content.

The formal structure of the catalogue is not so different from the underlying formality of the exhibition itself. Held in a gallery at Le Théâtre des Champs Élysées photographs reveal that paintings were displayed in a formal environment replete with polished, refined wooden furniture, and sumptuous Middle Eastern rugs (Figs. 29-30). While the dadaists hung posters, banners, and artwork throughout the gallery, they did not completely transform the environment. How then, should these formal elements of both the catalogue and the exhibition be interpreted? If they were intentional, then perhaps the formality served as an effective juxtaposition with the artwork and poetry, heightening the shock value of the Dada content. One example of this would be Philippe Soupault's "Cité de Retiro," (City of Leisure) (Fig. 57) in which a chunk of asphalt is suspended within an ornate, gilded frame. Alternately, and less charitably, it might be interpreted as the exhibition's failure to fully embrace

Dadaism, or effectively to transform the publication and the gallery into a Dada environment. While the lack of scholarship devoted to this exhibition might suggest that the latter interpretation has been more popular, in fact the juxtaposition was intentional, and effective. Dadaists regularly parodied the bourgeois, as can be seen from photographs in which they engage in all types of buffoonery while dressed in suits and sporting monocles (Fig. 58). Just as they intended their formal attire to conflict with their actions, the formal elements of their exhibitions and catalogues should also be understood as intentional juxtapositions with the Dada content.

One of the most striking juxtapositions can be found on the first page of the catalogue, which indicates the price, and the fact that it was printed as a limited edition of six hundred copies. Because of these decisions, the dadaists artificially increased the value of the catalogue, which contrasts with the general disregard for the value of works considering the haphazard way they were displayed throughout the exhibition. Additionally, the first page remarks that “Le Théâtre des Champs Élysées est le Plus Beau Théâtre du Monde” (The Champs Élysées theatre is the most beautiful theatre in the world) (Fig. 42). This can only possibly be interpreted as sarcastic and insincere since *Salon Dada* sought, like many Dada exhibitions, to overturn the art establishment. In fact, *Salon Dada* was closed early because the dadaists sabotaged a Bruitist concert held in the same building. This contradiction was by no means unique. It may even have been intentional, in order to heighten the absurdity of the Dada content of the catalogue. The catalogue ends with a similarly non-Dada statement. Below the list of works in the exhibition is written “Tapis des Grands Magasins de la Place Clichy” (Carpets supplied by the Great Stores of La

Place Clichy). By including the origin of the gallery's furnishings, the catalogue equated the carpeting with the art, suggesting that both were interchangeable commodities; yet another juxtaposition of traditional bourgeois taste and irreverent Dada art.

The headings at the top of each page of the *Salon Dada* catalogue complement Tzara's cover design of nonsensical, disjointed, and playful phrases. The headings take the form of a series of absurd phrases that bear no relation to the Dada poetry and illustrations below them:

The Impossible isn't Dada-Continue if you want to die-A state in the dada state is dada in dada- Identity is a lower case belt – Garçon!! A homeland and an outburst of nerves – Conforming vigorously to the rules love is outlawed to the plants in the squares – Be completely stupid –Allow the beautiful collections of iron and copper beds tomorrow – Jesus (56x76) is a grape (50x65) he is very pretty –Luck is ingenious (Mr.-Aa) –Dada is the coat rack of the nervous system.

Like the cover, these headings relate to the exhibition itself, resembling as they do the banner like signs mounted on the walls and balcony of the exhibition, such as the inscription along the wall of the balcony, above an installation of twenty or more ties: “Vous voyez ici des cravates et non des violins vous voyez ici des bonbons et non des mariages” (Here you see ties and not violins here you see candies and not marriages) (Fig. 27).<sup>106</sup> Similarly absurd phrases lined the stairway up to the gallery, such as « Vous êtes-vous regardez [sic] dans la glace?” and « N'oubliez pas vos poumons. Merci ». <sup>107</sup> Like the juxtaposition of art and writing in the catalogue,

---

<sup>106</sup> Sanouillet mentions others: “Cet été les éléphants porteront des moustaches..Et vous ?” (This summer the elephants wear mustaches..and you ?) and “Dada est la plus grande escroquerie du siècle” (Dada is the greatest swindle of the century) Sanouillet, 243.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 242.

these nonsensical statements mounted throughout the exhibition frustrated any attempt at a rational viewing experience.

With its combination of art and poetry, the *Salon Dada* catalogue represented the unification of the visual and literary arts, in the spirit of the Dada ideal of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Additionally, the great variety of stylistic approaches in both the poetry and the catalogue illustrations demonstrate that the exhibition represented the unification of a great variety of literary and artistic styles. Arp's *Portrait de Tristan Tzara* (Portrait of Tristan Tzara) (Fig. 59) is completely abstract, while Ernst's *Les Cormorans* (The Cormorants) (Fig. 60) is a photomontage of numerous objects superimposed to create an alternate reality. Duchamp's *Mariée* (Bride)<sup>108</sup> (Fig. 61), from 1912, is painted in a cubist style, while Ribemont-Dessaignes untitled drawing (Fig. 53) juxtaposes lines and numbers without revealing any logical connection between them. There is also enormous stylistic variety in the poetry.

The catalogue begins, appropriately, with Soupault's, "Le Profil de Dada," in which he describes Dada through many contradictory and opposing statements, such as "Dada makes mistakes but is infallible," and "Dada is excited when it is calm," as well as with many absurdities, such as "Dada is cumbersome like an umbrella, funny like a star and stupid like a goose – Dada smells as bad as a French rose and looks like a Turk; it is red like a cock, ugly like Dada, big like a pig." The imagery is relatively harmless, and represents the more light hearted nature of the exhibition on a whole. Unlike the *Dada-Messe* which was filled with violent images of war, and a pig headed effigy of a German soldier, the contents of the *Salon Dada* exhibition,

---

<sup>108</sup> The catalogue incorrectly dates *Mariée* to 1914; it was painted in 1912. Tzara noted, and corrected this error in the publication, *Dada in Tyrol* (Paris: Sans Pareil, 1921).

such as the umbrella and cello which hung from the ceiling, and the mannequin leaning on the balcony, were less overt in their meaning.

This is not to suggest, however, that the content of *Salon Dada* was not reflective of the war. In 1921, Paris was recovering from the war, and many of the participants, such as Aragon and Soupault had enlisted, and experienced its horror and absurdity.<sup>109</sup> The catalogue, for example, refers to war in two of the literary contributions. An essay on the third page, by Stanislas Margarine,<sup>110</sup> purports to catalogue those regions affected by the war, but it dissolves into a nonsensical string of words. The seventh page includes a poem by Walther Mehring, entitled “Les Vraies Causes de la Grande Guerre” (The True Causes of the Great War), which takes the form of an outline, but is utterly nonsensical. Reasons include ancient historical events, such as “Nebuchodonor prend Jérusalem” (Nebuchadnazzar takes Jerusalem), and a parody of a mathematic equation.<sup>111</sup> Like the poetry in the catalogue, a poster attached to a sculpture in the exhibition also made reference to war (Fig. 29). Below the angry face of a masked man the text read “Dada fait plus de victimes dans une année que la plus sanglante des batailles.” (In one year Dada makes more victims than the bloodiest of battles). Similar to the poetry in the catalogue, this poster refers to the war obliquely, without taking a political or moral stance. Unlike the *Dada-*

---

<sup>109</sup> Aragon, for example, served as a medical orderly, and on three occasions was buried by exploding shells while rescuing injured soldiers. Soupault was also enlisted, and while he didn’t actually experience the brutality of actual warfare, he was injured by his own army, which administered an experimental vaccine for typhoid which almost killed him.

<sup>110</sup> This is most likely a pseudonym.

<sup>111</sup> It would be worthwhile to explore the relationship between Mehring’s equation and the formulae of El Lissitzky, who saw parallels between art and mathematics.

*Messe, Salon Dada* exploited the war for its absurdities, without stating an opinion, or conveying a rational idea.

The poems in the *Salon Dada* catalogue function as a textual collage of visual imagery. For example, George Ribemont-Dessaigne's "Secret Pleasure" is a grafting of unrelated imagery, such as "Mais la mouche n'a pas lissé ses yeux que le monde est le gant d'une autre main." (But the fly hasn't smoothed its eyes that the world is the glove of another hand), and Tzara's "Épiderme de la Nuit Croissance," (Skin of the Night Growth) mixes equally disparate images:

walkway of our water  
I've left in branches of wilting gloves phosphorus  
mercurial eagle flour that sours my muscles  
I am service to shaking if one pushes on the cell  
what a pretty picture I will make flattened against the grill like a cake  
I was with you and your eyes came with us.  
let's arrive by intermission limb after limb and organ after organ.

Each poem, then, might be understood as a type of collage, in the same way as the exhibition itself was a collage presenting an enormous variety of Dada production.

The last two pages of the *Salon Dada* catalogue list the works in the exhibition, and are particularly valuable for reconstructing the gallery. While many of the works were never reproduced and are now missing, much can be learned simply from studying the titles of the works, and the number of works submitted by each contributor.

The catalogue lists twenty-three participants. Eight were foreigners, hailing from Alsace (the disputed region between France and Germany), Germany, Italy, Romania, and the United States, making *Salon Dada* one of the most international

Dada exhibitions. Nine of the participants were recognized primarily for their poetry, yet they contributed almost half of the works for the show. While it was perhaps unusual that their artwork should be featured in an exhibition, not all of them were producing art for the first time. Although the actual works they hung in the exhibition have yet to all be identified, there are several examples of the type of visual art they were making around 1921. Théodore Fraenkel, for example, created numerous collages and drawings. In *La mort du Pape au pays du patinage* (The death of the Pope in the country of ice skating) (Fig. 62) he created a collage based on newspaper articles and illustrations, and in *Excursion Dada St. Julien Le Pauvre* (Fig. 63) he created a record of the excursion with a list of the Dada participants, and a drawing of a religious figure and a Dada cross. Although only one of his works, the sculpture, *Procédé à Fils* (Thread Process) can be identified in the photographs (Fig. 28) it is likely that *L'Arétin moderne*, (Modern Aretino), *L'envers d'une sainte*, (A saint's backside) and *Crise du palmier*, (Attack of the palm tree) are similar collages or drawings of text and image. Louis Aragon was also comfortable integrating word and image, as can be seen in some of his illustrated poetry, such as *La femme enceinte dort* (The Pregnant woman sleeps) (Fig. 64). Currently, only one work from the exhibition can be positively identified as a collage of writing and imagery. Ribemont-Dessaignes *L'arbre à violon* (Violin Tree) (Fig. 65), depicts a tree sprouting from a button, its leaves replaced with letters from the alphabet.

Portraiture was the most common pictorial genre in the exhibition, although the few that can be identified suggest that most of the portraits were not realistic renderings of their subjects. There was a life size portrait of Tzara by Arp, and

portraits of Jacques Rigaut, Jacques Vaché (Fig. 66), Théodore Fraenkel, and a Dada character known as Mr. Aa. by Aragon. Johannes Baargeld, Philippe Soupault (Fig. 67),<sup>112</sup> and Paul Eluard (with Gala Eluard) all submitted self portraits, and Soupault additionally contributed a portrait of Mlle Clara Tambour, which was actually a painting from the Second Empire that he purchased on the banks of the Seine, and a work titled *Portrait d'un inconnu* which he described as an empty frame to which he attached red balloons.<sup>113</sup> This portraiture provides some unity to the exhibition, and suggests that one of its main goals was to emphasize group solidarity. The friendship of these artists was also highlighted by the collaborative works in the exhibition. The catalogue indicates that Ribemont-Dessaignes and Tristan Tzara produced a sculpture entitled *L'ex-assassin à tête d'épingle*, and close friends Théodore Fraenkel and André Breton collaborated on *L'étrange suicide de M. Siber* under the names "Franton et Brekel."

The greatest contribution to the *Salon Dada* exhibition came as a result of Duchamp's refusal to participate in it. When Duchamp was asked to send paintings from New York, where he was living at the time, he sent a telegram that read "PODE BAL," (Bugger-all). Tzara, however, included him in the catalogue with four blank spaces left for paintings he never submitted, and four empty frames, numbered 28-31, were hung in the gallery.<sup>114</sup> By Sanouillet's account, the decision to leave blank spaces in the catalogue, and to hang empty frames on the wall, was quite rational;

---

<sup>112</sup> This particular handprint may not be the one displayed in the exhibition, but it is likely quite similar. Soupault wrote that his *Portrait de Philippe Soupault* was "l'empreinte de ma main préalablement enduite d'encre noire" (the print of my hand, coated with ink). Lachenal, 344.

<sup>113</sup> Philippe Soupault, *Mémoires de l'Oubli, 1914-1923 vol.2* (Paris : Lachenal & Ritter, 1981), 157.

<sup>114</sup> Sanouillet, 244.



when Tzara received notice that Duchamp would not participate there was simply no time to alter the design of the catalogue and the exhibition in order to account for Duchamp's absence. However, an alternative explanation might be more plausible. Given that Duchamp gave up painting in 1921, how better to represent this than through empty frames hung in a gallery? This clever interpretation of Duchamp's absence was in itself a major contribution to the exhibition, and representative of the Dada spirit. In fact, Soupault recalled that Tzara was thrilled by Duchamp's rejection, and displayed the telegram in the exhibition.<sup>115</sup>

The *Salon Dada* catalogue can only yield so much information before it becomes necessary to engage in more extensive research. Only nine of the works exist in reproduction and even some of those identifications are tentative. Additionally, the catalogue doesn't account for all of the material displayed in the exhibition, such as the objects suspended from the ceiling, and the posters of past exhibitions such as "Dada Siegt" (Dada Triumphs), and the invitation to the Maurice Barrès trial. Additionally, Soupault recalled submitting *Portrait d'un imbecile* (Portrait of an Imbecile) (Fig. 68), which he described as a mirror with an 18<sup>th</sup> century frame before which he placed a lit candle,<sup>116</sup> and Ribemont-Dessaignes *Soleils étranges* (Strange Suns) (Fig. 69), although not included in the catalogue, is visible in one of the photos of the exhibition (Fig. 29) The best hope for identifying more works in this exhibition may be by combing through the participants writings for descriptions of their submissions, and by visiting archives in search of more

---

<sup>115</sup> Soupault, 158.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 157.

photographs of works in the show.<sup>117</sup> Considering how little work has been done on this exhibition, it is quite possible that not all relevant information has been found.

While the above study of the *Salon Dada* catalogue was intended to demonstrate the need for more comprehensive studies of Dada exhibitions, it could also be expanded into a rewarding comparative study of exhibition catalogues and their relationship to the exhibitions. Like many aspects of Dada exhibitions, catalogues seem to have fallen through the cracks in the study of Dadaism.<sup>118</sup> This is just one of the countless avenues through which Dada exhibitions might be explored; possibilities that only present themselves when exhibitions are singled out, and not taken for granted in the history of Dadaism.

---

<sup>117</sup> In particular, the Roger-Viollet photo archives, and the Bibliothèque Littéraire Jacques Doucet.

<sup>118</sup> For example, *Bulletin D*, one of the best sources for the *Gruppe D* exhibition, has never been fully analyzed.

## Conclusion

Exhibitions played an important role in the manifestation of Dada internationally, and are crucial sites in the study of the movement. By studying them collectively, they can be understood as a recurring form of Dada expression, rather than as isolated events. Beginning with the Cabaret Voltaire, exhibitions functioned not simply as spaces for the display of art, but were designed to engage, frustrate, and entertain the audience. For instance, in Cologne and Berlin, the audience was invited to interact physically, and sometimes violently with works in the exhibitions. In Paris, too, performance brought the audience closer to the works in the exhibition during theatrical evenings.

Exhibitions functioned as centers of Dada activity, and represented the Dada ideal of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or synthesis of the arts. Through exhibitions dadaists strove for internationalism as a demonstration against war-motivated nationalism, but also as a means by which to strengthen the movement. Moreover, dadaists adopted and subverted the exhibition, a traditional format for artistic presentation, in order to challenge the commercialism and hierarchies of the art establishment.

The comparative study of Dada exhibitions relies on comprehensive investigations of individual exhibitions, but these exhibitions themselves require further study. As the third chapter has demonstrated, through the consideration of *Salon Dada* with an emphasis on the catalogue, it is not due to lack of evidence that such studies have not been undertaken. No less intriguing than a comparative approach, the study of single exhibitions encourages the study of relationships, between works of art in the show, and between participants.

It is not entirely surprising that so little scholarly attention has been devoted to Dada exhibitions. Exhibitions are rarely the focus of book length studies, or even articles. Bruce Althuser's survey, *The Avant-Garde Exhibition*, and the Berlinische Galerie's *Stationen der Moderne*, which covers the history of avant-garde exhibitions in Germany, essentially represent the extent to which modern exhibitions have been collectively studied. Dada exhibitions were innovative, so it would be fruitful to explore ways in which they influenced future exhibitions. Such studies might begin by asking how Dada exhibitions impacted the display of art by artists in future movements, and might lead to more specific projects; for example a comparative study of group Dada exhibitions and the Surrealist exhibition of 1938.<sup>119</sup>

The study of Dada exhibitions is not without its challenges. Exhibitions were rarely well documented; the meticulously photographed *Dada-Messe* being an exceptional case. Additionally, many works on display are now lost, either discarded by dadaists who devalued their materiality, or destroyed by the Nazis for their perceived degeneracy. Thus scholars must fully exploit existing material, such as catalogues, which often provide the most complete record of the exhibition available.

Despite the challenges, there is enormous potential in Dada exhibitions as a new direction for Dada scholarship. The renewed interest in Dadaism, sparked by last year's seminars and this year's traveling exhibition in Paris, Washington D.C. and New York, would be well directed towards Dada exhibitions, for, as this thesis hopes to have demonstrated, they are a rewarding way to explore the internationalism, communalism, and innovations of the Dada movement.

---

<sup>119</sup> This exhibition has been reconstructed by Lewis Kachur, in his *Displaying the Marvelous: Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dali, and Surrealist Exhibition Installations* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001).

## Appendix: The Salon Dada Catalogue (author's translation)

### Cover:

No one is supposed to ignore Dada  
To death (love)  
All in all  
Dada trap  
Who wants a pair of rubber overshoes  
Forget-me-not, s.v.p.  
Looking for Athletes  
Immobilization  
Salon Dada  
International Exhibition

### Page One:

The present catalogue, one of 600 copies numbered 1 to 600, costs 5 francs.  
Copy number 111

The Champs-Élysées theatre is the most beautiful theatre in the world

### Page Two:

**Heading:** The Impossible isn't Dada

Dada Profile

Dada doesn't have a memory. One day it is blue,  
another day it is gay. – Dada forgets his watch every  
morning and swallows it in the evening. He confuses the tenths  
of seconds with bank bills – He digests his  
food without swallowing – He blushes without shame is  
assassinated and sleeps well none the less. Dada is excited  
when it is calm – Dada is alive like blotting paper.  
Dada is a wolf, Dada is a stamp. One  
can safely exchange God for Dada because  
Dada has blue eyes like the moon. Dada is strong like  
an idiot, Dada is meek like a soup plate,  
Dada walks, runs, flies, lives like a moron, like a  
fishing rod. Dada makes mistakes but is infallible.  
Dada plays clarinet instead of doing tapestry.  
Dada is cumbersome like an umbrella, funny like  
a star and stupid like a goose – Dada smells as bad  
as a French rose and looks like a Turk; it is red

like a cock, ugly like Dada, big like a pig.  
Dada is colorless, odorless, without flavor. Notwithstanding  
Dada doesn't like intelligence and compares advantageously to it.

Intelligence clarifies everything, says Dada.  
Dada burns everything.  
Intelligence gives itself air.  
Dada asphyxiates.  
Intelligence is deadly  
Dada is a tomato  
Intelligence grips.  
Dada bounces.  
Intelligence brings clarity.  
Dada brings nothing.  
Intelligence has a future  
Dada has no future.  
Intelligence is a bad habit  
Dada is Dada

Philippe Soupault

**Page Three:**

**Heading:** Continue if you want to die

The Shadow of Yearnings

Light sleep, little propeller,  
Small, lukewarm, heart bared.  
Magician's love,  
The heavy sky of hands, flashing veins.  
Running in the colorless street,  
Stuck in the train of the pavement,  
He frees the last bird  
Of yesterday's hat.  
In each pit, a lone snake.

Better to dream of opening the doors of the sea.

Paul Eluard

**Illustration:** Portrait de Tristan Tzara (relief)

**Page Four:**

**Heading:** A state in the dada state is dada in dada

In an attempt to provide our readers with as precise information as possible we have proceeded for the current booklet a thorough census of the regions that know the horrors of war.

The difficulties that we have encountered in the execution of this delicate and laborious project have been numerous, but we hope that happy events (the plague, bankruptcy, eclipses) will aid our future work and that our next atlas will give information of an absolute exactitude and fidelity.

Concerning telegraph offices, art ambulances, rings and pulleys, train stations, plumbing installation, sirup apparatus, circumcision, telephone booths, consuls, the member of the chamber of commerce, high tension, Epiphany Zachary and Cyriaque, filters, delirious interpretations, the highest awards, the highest courts, registered trademarks, migraines, Banabe Olympe Antoine and the frictions, detonators, sieges, bark, traps, control specialization, and the golden breath of antimony who make normal animals walk.

Stanislas Margarine

Anxiety

1 “ 23456789 10 11 12 : : : : : -TTTTTTT- Qh

Dragnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnn

!

(Petite) \$!Drooooooooooooooooooooo.

!

PI!TY

I'll see you again soon, yes, soon.

Thought : (sooner than you think) soune or suun !

Collender 1920

Wetch by time

. . . . .  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 S M T W T F S

Man Ray

**Page Five:**

**Heading:** Identity is a lower case belt

Fable

In this passage, between the positive and the negative, a phlegmatic steam masked the zero. Lancefur knew well, there is no such thing as zero. From which this roundtrip promenade from which not only the violets shivered. The flags of personified vowels waved with their webbed scales. In the margins, a hanged prospectus called him out.

I'm going to one hundred, Lancefroid responded.

By distilling the eyes of French women, he obtains petrol for his moped and takes off. A pretty blond consultant, Couragette, who was of the period, livened up crazy women's children. Around her, the synchronism of beating hearts was such that people opposed that she should stay on the bridges, "danger, no trespassing". She played fresh in the company of several young suburban rags, when a man, in numbers and letters, came forward: Lancetard was already recognized. Her eyes in quincunx, Couragette, girl without punctuation – there was no more finally, - sheltered in her armpits the seed of dynamite while Lancelance trapped himself in an astrakhan of death.

Early or sad, the conjunctions take him away.

Jacques Rigaut

Galerie Montaigne:

Soirée: 10 Juin à 9 heures

Matinée : 18 Juin à 3 h. 30

Matinée : 30 Juin à 3 h. 30

**Page Six :**

**Heading :** Garçon !!! A homeland and an outburst of nerves !

Secret Pleasure

There is a pleasure that we only know by the stars sparkle or the sounds of voices. It is without duration and is maybe worth a year. But the fly hasn't smoothed its eyes that the world is the glove of another hand. I too would be able to speak with a nightingale, an accordion and a cricket in my throat. I prefer to sneeze. And when that goes well, wipe your face.

I too would sneeze and when it goes well you wipe your face. There is a joy that dances heads or tails and in the best case gives diamonds that we sculpt with butter and of which one makes very beautiful rivers. The breast meat seems more spiritual, but I prefer the vitriolic chain. There is nothing that can't be destroyed.

Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes

**Illustration :** The Cormorants, by Max Ernst

**Page Seven:**

**Heading (going across to the eighth page):** Conforming to the present rules love is outlawed to the plants in the squares.



## Art and the Hunt

The manhunt drags the roots and sources of its topographical map to the discount bank – its clear for the gentle and subtle hallucination - man. It is normal, is well enough - crazy enough in the repetition that always hangs a new importance on its most recent appearance. But the results of the manhunt, that one buys at the Stock exchange are to expose. With sparkle and framework. It is here that a thick beard grows around the clear idea I've had, it still doesn't have 40 years of existence and honest work. I'm afraid of the madness and its platonic form that is the absurd and poetry "I'm afraid" no longer has the disagreeable salt it used to, that means now I smoke a cigarette.

Men are impenetrable – those who think that men can interpenetrate like two hands clasped on a stomach, are wrong, lie and make bad business. Values are as elastic as bronze laws. Conflicts no longer exist because we are in the pocket of summer. The bad speculation about the Institute that once expressed an insult, brought us to see things on the same level – the Place Vendôme that couldn't contain the derogatory mustard isn't but a purely verbal fact.

Our ideas are clear and don't need to be expressed - the sport consists of making people leave, parallel to ideas, the breath that runs and converses, is known by our greatest dialecticians. They want to dominate and to have reason. But even the most beautiful French women haven't succeeded to more than present themselves at the Paris Casino.

The language is well worn, however it fills, by itself, the life of most men. They only know what life told them. The funniness and the slight derogatory air are for them the taste of the language – the salt of life. Dada interjects brutally in this cerebral domestic argument. But the most important inventions of the century passed unnoticed: the toothbrush, God, aluminum. So Madame, watch out and understand that a true Dada product is something other than a shiny label.

Dada has eliminated subtleties. Subtleties don't exist in words but in the crowded brains of atrophied people. Simple notions serving as signs for deafs and mutes, are sufficient to explain the 4-5 mysteries that we have discovered. The active influences are again felt in politics, in commerce, in language. The whole world and everything in it slipped a little to the left with us. Dada sticks the cannula in the hot bread. Little by little, large by large it destroys. And we will also see certain liberties that we take each day towards the sentiment the social and moral life, again become communal measures. Already liberties aren't considered crimes, but like itches.

Tristan Tzara

**Page Eight:**

**Illustration:** Bride, 1914 by Marcel Duchamp

**Page Nine:**

**Heading:** One must be completely stupid

Skin of the Night Growth

walkway of our water  
I've left in branches of wilting gloves phosphorus  
mercurial eagle flour that sours my muscles  
I am service to shaking if one pushes on the cell  
what a pretty picture I will make flattened against the grill like a cake  
I was with you and your eyes came with us  
let's arrive by intermission, limb after limb and organ after organ

Tristan Tzara

The True Reasons for the Great War  
discovered by WALTHER MEHRING

Where  
The Tower of Babel  
or  
tomorrow's duty

I.

550 at Centre Hopital Regional n. Cambyse defeats Psametic II. at Pelusium  
722 Sargon takes Samara  
Sanherib lays siege to Jerusalem  
607 Destruction of Ninivia by the Babylonians and the Medeans  
Nebuchadnazzar takes Jerusalem  
Cyrus takes Babylon

II.

see ( § 21, 4-6)  
Which king of Prussia introduced the culture of potatoes in its states – What do you call artists who paint paintings? – Translate in German the following words – “too much talking harms. (good night!) – The stars gleam. An emerging state.”

III.

Translate in German or French: incidere in hostes-invadere in Galliam-inferre alicui bellum-Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori-Exercitus fame interiit – Principibus placuisse viris non ultima laus est –homini cum deo similitude est

IV.

$(5-\sqrt{(2X+)^2} - 5\sqrt{(2X+3)+25}=0$

**Page Ten:**

**Heading:** Allow the future beautiful collection of iron and copper beds

Benjamin Péret's Memories

A bear eats a bed  
The bed eats the bear, spits out the breasts  
From the breast comes a cow  
The cow pissed cats  
The cats made a ladder  
The cow climbed the ladder  
The cats climbed the ladder  
The ladder broke up at the top  
The ladder became a large mailman  
The cow tumbled in the circuit court  
The cats played the Madelon  
And the rest made a journal for pregnant maidens

The Mystery of my Birth

And when I responded 19  
He responded 19  
22, if you have the time to be rich  
30 and 40 for the comedy in two time  
50 on your dirty anniversary  
100 for the spring conveniences  
For the rest I am pale and hypnotic  
But busy yourself with your roads dear doctor  
and let clean water become dirty water.

Benjamin Péret

**Page Eleven:**

**Heading:** Jesus (56x76) is a grape (50x65) he is very pretty

Other Verbal Process

Monday December 27, 1920 at 9:45 am, at the Brasserie Excelsior, having moved the sugar at the bottom of my black coffee, I declared that I was an imbecile. After having weighed my options, I decided not to talk about it to anyone. Do I love a single thought of men, my small contemporaries or predecessors? No, without a ballet.

Do I expect something from someone? No, no and no.  
Do I remember an instant of well being, and instant of misery? The question is the answer.  
Are any of my gestures words ideas intolerable? No  
Can I laugh, scream, weep, speak, move? No  
Do I live? No.  
what forces me to question myself? No  
A great discouragement takes hold of me at this moment  
In front of the table where I am sitting. I see myself in the mirror, obliterated by a poster for the episodic documentary, *Les Cannibales*; a negresse holds her naked baby against a blue sky, future cannibal like everyone. There you are, idiot, Ssch. Pain is an automobile, the sky a manner of speaking. Am I thinking of thinking? I don't think so.  
There is no way to go from one idea to the next. All forms of reasoning are lies. All is the same idea; that is why logic is logic. I can come and go by the same door. Therefore I have but to lie across the threshold, and to say No.  
Can I say no? Sssch Sssch Sssch Sssch  
I am 23, 2 months and 24 days. I am emaciated. I don't know the names of those who surround me. In the glass I see a beautiful woman in a yellow automobile, the auto leaves automatically. It is gorgeous, the cold stopped suddenly. It is an illusion. The cracked houses of the view mark it, the view. Am I a chariot? Sssch no, Sssch no, Sssch non, Sssch.  
Useless, immobile, virtuous with rattles. Sssch ME, seen and approved:

Louis Aragon

**Page Twelve:**

**Heading:** Chance is ingenious (Mr. Aa)

**Illustration:** Georges Ribemont-Dessaigues

**Page Thirteen:**

**Heading:** Dada is the coat rack of the nervous system

The Cloud's Pump

in front of the spinner's room the lions hunt  
the spiders and the princes  
the monsters of salt and flowers  
The spiders hunt the princes  
the princes escape the hunting lions in the flowers  
the spiders chase the spinners

the lions are monsters  
the spiders are made of salt  
the princes are flowers

## ARP

### Yellow Cross

aaaa in sinusoidal form  
They fill the atmosphere swallow you up to your  
eyes but don't try to deliver yourself because the roses you  
kiss you on the eyelids and you feel hot mercury  
desperate passion bubbles of bloom the breasts  
sémiramis you feel the hot mercury run and then die  
until I do not fall atrocious sultan to the abomin  
ation        You feel the blood it is  
yours you have more in the metallic forests  
marching away from children trembling little flowers  
the passenger wobbles and all the passions interlace  
the sails balance and the lights but the loose hairs  
stay late and suck your soul  
the little frosts on the green intoxicate to the syntax uselessly  
(or) samsara  
until when until when  
a dance handle loosens on Bladlaglabla because family  
of cunning perfumes all become delirium and the waves.  
I adore you

J. Evola

### Page Fourteen

#### CATALOGUE

##### ARP

1. Hypoglosse.
2. Lifesize portrait of Tristan Tzara.
1. Drawing.
2. Drawing.
3. Drawing.

##### LOUIS ARAGON

*Moving jewels, virtues of the fingers :*

4. Portrait of Mr. Aa.
5. The traveler.
6. The leper of houses.

7. The well-loved.
8. The happy island.
9. The Netherlands.
10. 20 years of experience.
11. Charles Baudelaire's Indictment.
12. Dada-fairy.
13. Portrait of T. Fraenkel.

*Paintings :*

14. Young man.
15. Portrait of Jacques Rigaut.
16. Portrait of Jacques Vaché.
17. The little Vinci of mystery.
- 19-*bis* The Seductress.

BAARGELD

20. Self-portrait.
21. The kings.

CINO CANTARELLI

22. Pastel after a poem by Tristan Tzara.
23. Pastel after a poem by Tristan Tzara.

SERGE CHARCHOUNE

24. The tree of life and liberty.
25. Harmonious song.
26. Fisherman in the electric river.
27. Mortal danger.

MARCEL DUCHAMP

- 28.
- 29.
- 30.
- 31.

PAUL ELUARD

32. The most ancient hopes.
33. Theatre of misery.

MAX ERNST

34. The graminous bicycle garnished with bells.
35. Landscape in scrap iron mistake of those who prefer sailing on the grass rather than a woman's chest.

J. EVOLA

36. Quadro n° 69.
37. Quadro n° 70.

38. Quadro n° 71.  
39. Quadro n° 72.

ALDO FIOZZI

40. Ceralacca 1.  
41. Ceralacca 2.  
42. Ceralacca 3.

**Page Fifteen**

(Continuation of the Catalogue)

THÉODORE FRAENKEL

43. A modern Aretino.  
44. The saint's rear end.  
45. Attack of the palm tree.  
46. Thread process.  
47. Incredible failure.

FRANTON ET BREKEL

48. The strange suicide of M. Siber.

W. MEHRING

49. The song.

BENJAMIN PÉRET

50. The sky has its image.  
51. A beautiful dead woman.  
52. My life in two colors.

MAN RAY

53. Woman.  
54. Man.

GEORGES RIBEMONT-DESSAIGNES

55. Violin tree.  
56. Heads or tails.  
57. Yes.  
58. Good evening.  
59. The weddings of Cana.  
60. To think (*sculpture*).

G. RIBEMONT-DESSAIGNES ET TRISTAN TZARA

61. The pin-head ex-assassin (*sculpture*).

JACQUES RIGAUT

62. What.

63. Who.

64. When.

PHILIPPE SOUPAULT

65. Portrait of an unknown.

66. Statistic.

67. Portrait of Ph. Soupault.

68. The Chesnut seller.

69. Portrait of Mademoiselle. Clara Tambour.

70. The Garden of my hat.

71. Oxygenated sympathy.

72. Hello, sir.

73. City of Leisure.

JOSEPH STELLA

74. Coney Island (*pastel*).

TRISTAN TZARA

75. My.

76. Dear.

77. Friend.

JACQUES VACHÉ

78. My brother the priest, my sister the sweet whore.

79. Battle of the Sum and the difference.

GALA ET PAUL ELUARD.

80. Portrait of P.E.

UN AMI DE St-BRICE.

81. Loss of style.



## Bibliography

- Adkins, Helene. "Erste Internationale Dada-Messe." In *Stationen der Moderne : die bedeutenden Kunstaussstellungen des 20. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland*, Michael Bollé and Eva Züchner, Eds., 156-183. Berlin: Berlinische Galerie, 1988.
- Altshuler, Bruce. *The Avant-Garde in Exhibition*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1994.
- Baader, Johannes. Letter to Hausmann and Höch, Berlin, July 16, 1920. In Hannah Höch. *Eine Lebenscollage 1889-1920*, ed. Berlinische Galerie, in collaboration with Cornelia Thater-Schulz, vol. 1, 1<sup>st</sup> part. 1889-1918; 2<sup>nd</sup> part. 1919-1920. Berlin: Argon, 1989.
- Ball, Hugo. 1931. *Flight out of Time*. Edited by John Elderfield. Translated by Ann Raimes. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- Barr, Alfred H. *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1936.
- Bergius, Hanne. "Dada Triumphs!" *Dada Berlin, 1917-1923, Artistry of Polarities*. New York: G.K. Hall & Company, 1996.
- . *Montage und Metamechanik: Dada Berlin – Artistik von Polaritäten*. Berlin: Mann, 2000.
- Bohan, Ruth. "The Société Anonyme's Brooklyn Exhibition, 1926-1927, Katherine Sophie Dreier and the Promotion of Modern Art in America." PhD diss., University of Maryland, 1980.

- Bowdoin, W.G., "The Dadas Have Come to Town at Société Anonyme," *Evening World*, March 22, 1921.
- Breton, André. 1924. *Les Pas Perdus*. Paris: Gallimard, 1979.
- Bulletin D*, Max Ernst and Johannes Baargeld, Eds., 1919.
- Cabaret Voltaire*. Edited by Hugo Ball. Zurich: Meierei, 1916.
- Camfield, William. *Max Ernst: Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism*. Munich: Prestal, 1993.
- Cohn-Wiener, Ernst. *Neue Berliner (12 Uhr mittags)* July 6, 1920.
- Comoedia*, May 7, 1922: 2.
- Dachy, Marc. *Archives Dada, Chronique*. Paris: Hazan, 2005.
- . *Dada, The Dada Movement 1915-1923*. New York: Rizzoli, 1990.
- Dada*. Laurent Le Bon, ed. Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 2005.
- Dada in Tyrol*. Paris: Sans Pareil, 1921.
- Dada: Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, New York, Paris*. Edited by Leah Dickerman. Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2005.
- Dada Zeitschriften*. Hamburg : Edition Nautilus, Verlag Lutz Schulenberg, 1978.
- "Der Letzte Schrei," *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, May 1, 1920.
- Der Strom*, no.2, ca. May-June 1919.
- Doherty, Brigid. "Introduction to the First International Dada Fair," *October 105* (2003): 93-104.
- Dreier, Katherine. *Société Anonyme (the first museum of modern art, 1920-1944) : selected publications*. New York: Arno Press, 1972.

- Drucker, Johanna. *The Visible Word: Experimental Typography and Modern Art, 1909-1923*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Ernst, Max. *Écritures*. Paris : Gallimard, 1970.
- Erste Internationale Dada Messe*. John Heartfield and Wieland Herzfelde, Eds. Berlin: Der Malik-Verlag, 1920.
- d'Esparbès Asté. "Un vernissage mouvementé." *Comoedia*. May 7, 1921 : 2.
- Fischer, Lothar. *Max Ernst: In Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten*. Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1969.
- Gale, Matthew. *Dada & Surrealism*. London: Phaidon Press Unlimited, 1997.
- Raoul Hausmann, "The German Philistine is Annoyed," *Der Dada* 2 (1919): 1.
- Herbert, Robert L., Eleanor S. Apter, and Elise K. Kenney, eds. *The Société Anonyme and the Dreier Bequest at Yale University: A Catalogue Raisonné*. New York: Yale University Press, 1984.
- Huelsenbeck, Richard, ed. 1920. *Dada Almanach*. Translated by Malcom Green. London: Atlas Press, 1998.
- . *Memoirs of a Dada Drummer*. Edited by Hans J. Kleinschmidt. Translated by Joachim Neugroschel. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.
- Hugnet, Georges. 1957. *L'Aventure Dada*. Paris: P. Seghers, 1971.
- Kachur, Lewis. *Displaying the Marvelous: Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dali, and Surrealist Exhibition Installations*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001.
- Lippard, Lucy R. *Dadas on Art*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1971.
- Making Mischief: Dada Invades New York*. Edited by Francis Naumann with Beth Venn. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1996.

- Marquard, Odo. "Gesamtkunstwerk und Identitätssystem" in *Der Hang Zum Gesamtkunstwerk. Europäische Utopien seit 1800*. Edited by Harald Szeemann, Aarau: Verlag Sauerländer, 1983.
- McBride, Henry. "News and Views of Art, Including the Clearing House for Works of the Cubists." *The Sun and New York Herald*, May 16, 1920.
- Meyer, Raimund, Judith Hossli, Guido Magnaguagno, Juri Steiner, and Hans Bollinger, eds. *Dada Global*. Zurich: Limmat Verlag, 1994.
- Motherwell, Robert. *The Dada Painters and Poets: The Documents of Twentieth Century Art*. New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., 1951.
- Naumann, Francis. "Janco/Dada, An Interview with Marcel Janco." *Arts Magazine* 57 (1982): 80-6.
- . *New York Dada 1915-1923*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994.
- Paul Eluard et ses amis peintres 1895-1952: Centre Georges Pompidou 4 novembre 1982 – 17 janvier 1983*. Edited by Lionel-Marie Annick. Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 1982.
- Peterson, Elmer, ed. *Paris Dada : The Barbarians Storm the Gates*. New York: G.K. Hall & Company, 1996.
- Pierre, Arnauld. "The "Confrontation of Modern Values": A Moral History of Dada in Paris" In *The Dada Seminars*. Edited by Leah Dickerman with Matthew S. Witkovsky, 241-269. Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2005.
- Ray, Man. *Self Portrait*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1988.
- Ribemont-Dessaignes, Georges. *Déjà Jadis*. Paris: Rene Julliard, 1958.

- Richter, Hans. *Dada: Art and Anti-Art*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965.
- Roters, Eberhard. *Berlin 1910-1933*. New York: Rizzoli, 1982.
- Sanouillet, Michel. *Dada à Paris*. Edited by Ann Sanouillet. Paris : CNRS, 2005.
- Schneider, Albert. Exhibition Review. *Düsseldorfer Nachrichten* (12 February 1920).
- Simmons, Sherwin. "Advertising Seizes Control of Life: Berlin Dada and the Power of Advertising," *Oxford Art Journal* 22, no.1 (1999): 121-146.
- The Société Anonyme, Modernism for America*. Edited by Jennifer R. Gross. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Soupault, Philippe. *Mémoires de l'Oubli 1914-1923 vol. 2*. Paris : Lachenal & Ritter, 1981.
- Spies, Werner and Sabine Rewald, eds. *Max Ernst: A Retrospective*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2005.
- Stokes, Charlotte and Stephen C. Foster, eds. *Dada, Cologne, Hanover*. New York: G.K. Hall & Company, 1997.
- Taylor, Christiana J. *Futurism: Politics, Painting and Performance*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1974.
- Tzara, Tristan. "Pour faire un poème dadaïste," *Littérature*, no. 15 (1920) : 18.
- Verkauf, Willy. *Dada: Monograph of a Movement*. Teufen: Arthur Niggli Ltd., 1957.
- Washton Long, Rose-Carol. *German Expressionism: Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism*. New York: G.K. Hall & Company, 1993.
- Watts, Harriett, ed. *Dada and the Press*. Farmington Hills: G.K. Hall & Co., 2004.

White, Michael. "Johannes Baader's Plasto-Dio-Dada-Drama : the Mysticism of the Mass Media" *Modernism/modernity* 8, no.4 (2001): 583-602.