
**Finding aid for the Raoul Hausmann correspondence, 1909-1971, bulk
1960-1970**

Finding aid prepared by Scott Wolf.

Descriptive Summary

Title: Raoul Hausmann correspondence

Date (inclusive): 1909-1971 (bulk 1960-1970)

Number: 850994

Creator/Collector: Hausmann, Raoul, 1886-1971

Physical Description: 0.5 linear feet(1 box)

Repository:

The Getty Research Institute

Special Collections

1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 1100

Los Angeles, California, 90049-1688

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Abstract: Austrian artist, one of the founders of the Dada movement; active in Berlin 1912-1933. Collection details Hausmann's life in exile and chronicles his professional activities from 1945 to 1971. Letters to and from artists, writers, dealers, critics, and publishers contain detailed accounts of the original artists of Berlin Dada.

Request Materials: Request access to the physical materials described in this inventory through the [catalog record](#) for this collection. Click here for the [access policy](#).

Language: Collection material is in German and French.

Biographical/Historical Note

1886: Born on June 12th in Wein; trains with his father Viktor Hausmann, an academic painter.

1900: Moves with his parents to Berlin where he dedicates himself to the study of painting and assists his father with the Hamburg City Hall murals.

1912: Takes part in the first German Herbstsalon des Sturm and begins working for the Expressionist newspaper *Der Sturm*.

1917-1918: Is employed by the leftist-pacifist newspapers *Die Freie StraÙs* and *Die Aktion*. Co-founds Club Dada, Berlin; invents the optophonetic poem and photomontage; publishes his first Dada Manifesto; organizes the first Dada Soireen in Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, and Prague, with Huelsenbeck, Heartfield, Grosz, Jung, Höch.

1919-1920: Edits volume No.3 of the journal *Dada* (Malik-Verlag) with Grosz and Heartfield and organizes the Große Internationale Dada-Messe at the Galerie Nierendorf, Berlin. Breaks with Grosz and Heartfield after they join the Communist Party, effectively ending Club Dada.

1921: Holds an Anti-Dada Abend in Prague with Kurt Schwitters; formulates his article "Presentismus gegen den Puffkeismus der teuschen Seele," and signs the Aufruf zur Elementaren Kunst with Arp, Maholy-Nagy and Istvan.

1922: Establishes close contact with the Constructivists and circle of the Hungarian exile newspaper *MA* (Lajos Kassak). Takes part in activities of Progressive Artists in Düsseldorf and Köln. Relinquishes painting and dedicates himself to the technical investigation of electro-acoustical optics; invents the "optophone," a device that synchronizes sound and light waves (this invention was rejected in Berlin but patented in London, 1935).

1923-1930: Publishes articles investigating the organic conception of art and social science; works for the satirical newspaper *Die Pleite*; begins his novel *Hyle* and undertakes systematic work in photography.

1931-1932: Delivers the opening lecture at the photographic exhibition in the Kunstbibliothek, Berlin; publishes several articles on the subject of photographic theory, most notably "Wie sieht der Fotograf? -Gespräch zwischen Raoul Hausmann und Werner Gräff," *Das Deutsche Lichtbild* (Berlin, 1932).

1933-1936: Flees Germany on March 1st to the island of Ibiza, where he undertakes intensive photographic analysis of ethnological themes, archeology and indigenous architecture. Completes *Hyle* and begins publishing photographs in the Swiss journal *Camera* and in Man Ray's album *Nus*.

1936: Flees Spain for Zürich and later immigrates to Prague, establishing contact with the Czech avantgarde and exiled Germans; experiments with infrared photography.

1938: Returns to Paris; continues publishing his photographs, and establishes contact with Moholy-Nagy to arrange a publication of his photos in the US.

1939: Upon outbreak of war, flees to Peyrat-le-Château (Haute-Vienne) where he teaches languages and eventually finds refuge in the French town of Limoges (1944).

1945: Re-establishes contact and correspondence with his close friends (Moholy-Nagy, Schwitters, Hans Richter, Richard Huelsenbeck); plans with Schwitters to establish an avantgarde journal called *PIN*; returns to painting and the production of

abstract photograms and photo-pictograms.

1948: Begins the publication of numerous articles on the subject of modern poetry in French literary journals.

1953: Exhibits his abstract photo-experiments in the Kunstschule Saarbrücken with the assistance of Otto Steinert.

1958: Takes part in the famous Dada exhibition in Frankfurt-Düsseldorf which instigated the Fluxus movement.

1967: First large retrospective of his artwork, in the Modern Museum, Stockholm.

1969: Publishes *MELANOgraphie*, a collection of photographic light experiments from 1931; publishes *Hyle*.

1970: Publishes a series of articles from 1920-1970 under the title *Sensorialité excentrique* in cooperation with Henri Chopin.

1971: Publishes his final book *Sagemorim*. Dies on February 1st in Limoges, France.

Access

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Preferred Citation

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Acquisition Information

Acquired in 1985, 1990-1991, and 1993-1994

Processing History

This integrated finding aid was first written by Scott C. Wolf in 1995. The collection combines 9 separate acquisitions: 850994 (Hausmann Correspondence); 900199 (Pierre Garnier Correspondence); 910155 (Reichardt and Themerson Correspondence); 930001 (Fritz Picard Correspondence); 930020 (Henri Chopin Correspondence); 930041 (Georges Hugnet Correspondence); 940045 (Renée Sulzbach Correspondence); 930048 (Elfriede Hausmann Correspondence); and 940066 (Paul Citroen Correspondence). The finding aid was extensively edited by Annette Leddy with Scott Wolf in January 1996.

Separated Materials

The following items were removed from the Hausmann papers and placed in the Getty Research Library's general collection.

Raoul Hausmann, *Traité de questions sans solutions importantes* (Bale, 1957). "Exemplar No.22" of 350 printed copies with autograph signature by the author and dedication from Hausmann to Jasia Reichardt dated Nov 4, 1965.

90-B29558-3Raoul Hausmann, *Courrier Dada suivi d'une Bio-Bibliographie de l'Auteur par Poupard-Lieussou* (Paris, 1958). Exemplar No.2 of 50 printed copies with an extensive (poetic) autograph dedication from Hausmann to Poupard-Lieussou signed 11/7/1959. Accompanying the text is 1 phonographic recording of Hausmann's Sound Poetry; 1 audio cassette tape of the same; and 1 autographed water color sketch.

88-B24319-4Raoul Hausmann, *Poèmes et Bois. Cinq poèmes précédés d'un hommage par Iliazd* (Paris, 1961). Exemplar No.4 of 50 printed copies, signed by Hausmann and Iliazd.

Special Oversized 93-B10345 (N 7433.4 H376 A1 1961)Raoul Hausmann, *Siebensachen* (Stuttgart, 1961). Exemplar No. 33 of 90 signed copies with autograph dedication from Hausmann to Poupard-Lieussou dated 2/18/62.

Special 93-B11187 *Affiche für Raoul Hausmann in Limoges anlässlich seines 75. Geburtstages*. (Stuttgart, 1961). 1 poster (1 of 250 exemplars) with printed poems by Hausmann and autograph dedication from Hausmann to Poupard-Lieussou dated 5/25/61.

Special 93-B11484Raoul Hausmann, *Sprechspäne* (Flensburg, 1962). Exemplar No.376 of 700 printed copies with an autograph dedication from Hausmann to Poupard-Lieussou dated ().

Special 89-B14587-2Raoul Hausmann, *Mélanographie* (Paris, 1968). Exemplar No.23 of 61 signed copies, with 6 original photographs (initialed and numbered "RH 31"), an original photomontaged cover, and autograph dedication by Hausmann to Poupard-Lieussou dated 3/12/69.

Special 93-B10331Raoul Hausmann, *La sensorialité excentrique 1968/69 précédé de: optophonétique 1922*, French and English texts (Cambridge, 1970). Exemplar No. 197 of 440 printed copies with autograph dedication from Hausmann to Poupard-Lieussou dated 1/20/71. Also included are 2 photocopies of advertisements for the book.

Special 90-B5161-2Raoul Hausmann, *Sagemorcim* (Bruxelles, 1971). Exemplar No. XXVI of 340 printed copies.

Special 90-B11214-2Raoul Hausmann, *Am Anfang war Dada* (Steinbach/Giessen, 1972).

Special 89-B7888-2 *Mostra personale di Raoul Hausmann* (Milano: Galleria Pagani, 1963).

Special 93-B10265 *Raoul Hausmann* (Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 1967). With autograph dedication from Hausmann to Poupard-Lieussou dated 11/15/67.

Special 85-B15350-4 *Raoul Hausmann disegni e collages 1960-1970*, text by Jean-François Bory and Claude Viallat (Brescia, 1972).

Special 90-B29779 *Raoul Hausmann autour de L'Espirt de notre temps. assemblages, collages, photomontages* (Paris: Musée National d'Art Moderne, 1974/75).

Special 89-B7738 Hans Arp, *Muscheln und Schirme* (Meudon-Val-Fleury, 1939). This item is signed "Hausmann Paris 1939" and contains an autograph dedication to Poupard dated (7/18/56).

Special 89-B 23430-2

Scope and Content of Collection

This collection contains Raoul Hausmann correspondence (ca. 420 letters), and a few manuscripts and clippings, acquired in several separate acquisitions. Groups of letters are arranged alphabetically by correspondent. Letters and the occasional manuscript in each correspondent group are arranged chronologically. These materials date from the immediate post-war period to 1971, the bulk of material being from the 1960s.

Most of the letters are from Hausmann and record the exiled author's successful attempts first to secure his material existence in post-war France and then to re-establish contact with avantgarde artists, publishers and art dealers. They tacitly document the recognition Hausmann received during the latter half of his life, and that which was accorded Dada through Hausmann's vigilance. Some letters contain detailed historical accounts of the original artists of Berlin Dada as well as precise definitions of their artistic inventions and techniques. There is a great deal of information about optophoneticism and the optophone, Hausmann's invention. The letters also comment critically on a broad array of political events, including the Cold War, the Indochina conflict, 1968 student demonstrations, labor strikes, and deaths of leading political figures, though Hausmann was apparently reticent to commit to any ideological position or direct engagement with political groups. Moreover, he repeatedly denies Berlin Dada's political content, revising events in terms of his own apolitical perspective and distancing himself from his early association with George Grosz, John Heartfield and Wieland Herzfelde.

Arrangement note

The material is arranged in one series, with the bulk of the letters being to and from Henri Chopin, Pierre Garnier, Jasia Reichardt, Kurt Schwitters and Renée Sulzbach.

Subjects - Names

Chopin, Henri

Garnier, Pierre

Hausmann, Raoul, 1886-1971

Heartfield, John, 1891-1968

Höch, Hannah, 1889-1978

Reichardt, Jasia

Schwitters, Kurt, 1887-1948

Sulzbach, Renée

Subjects - Topics

Art, Modern--20th century

Assemblage (Art)

Avant-garde (Aesthetics)

Concrete poetry--England--Exhibitions

Dadaism

Exiles

Expatriate artists

Fluxus (Group of artists)

Photomontage

Sound poetry

Genres and Forms of Material

Correspondence

Contributors

Chopin, Henri

Garnier, Pierre
Hausmann, Elfriede
Hausmann, Vera
Karpel, Bernard, 1911-
Maciunas, George, 1931-1978
Reichardt, Jasia
Schwitters, Kurt, 1887-1948
Sulzbach, Renée
Themerson, Stefan

Series I. **Correspondence, 1901-1971**

Physical Description: 0.5 linear feet1 box

Scope and Content Note

The single box of correspondence that constitutes the Hausmann correspondence is organized alphabetically by correspondent. Letters and the occasional manuscript in each correspondent group are organized chronologically.

Box 1, Folder 1

Letters to Herr Buchner, 1909

Scope and Content Note

2 handwritten, concerning Raoul Hausmann's disagreement with Johannes Baader.

Box 1, Folder 2

Letters to Henri Chopin, , 1963-1964

Scope and Content Note

39 typewritten, concerning optophonic and phonetic poetry, criticisms of Neodada, Raoul Hausmann's radio, television and LP recordings.

Box 1, Folder 3

Letters to Henri Chopin, 1964-1966

Scope and Content Note

32 typewritten, concerning the sale and exhibition of Raoul Hausmann's artwork, for which he requested Chopin's assistance.

Box 1, Folder 4

Letters to Henri Chopin, 1966-1967

Scope and Content Note

34 typewritten, concerning Raoul Hausmann's broadcast recordings, artwork, views on Dada and other cultural topics, and the history of phonetic poetry.

Box 1, Folder 5

Letters to Henri Chopin, 1968-1971

Scope and Content Note

37 typewritten, 1 handwritten, concerning the 1968 French student uprising, Chopin's plan for a new journal in response to it, and the life and work of Jefim Golyscheff.

Box 1, Folder 5

Manuscripts, and 1970 n.d.

Scope and Content Note

2 typewritten: Raoul Hausmann's essays "La Sensorialité excentrique," and "On the Optophone."

Box 1, Folder 6

Letter to Citroen, 1957

Scope and Content Note

1 typewritten, criticizing Citroen's research on Dada and offering assistance.

- Box 1, Folder 7 **Letters to Pierre Garnier, 1963-1967**
Scope and Content Note
27 typewritten, concerning Garnier's journal *Les Lettres* and articles Raoul Hausmann submitted to it, Hausmann's invention of "cinématique poésie sémantique" and its derivation from his study of folk speech in Béarn and Gomero, and phonetic poetry.
- Box 1, Folder 8 **Letters to Elfriede Hausmann, , 1922 1934-1937**
Scope and Content Note
4 handwritten, from Spain and Czechoslovakia, concerning the exile existence, photographs for *Studio Jahrbuch*, and writing and research projects; 1 postcard, 1922.
- Box 1, Folder 9 **Letters to Vera Hausmann, 1960-1961**
Scope and Content Note
4 typewritten, discussing the sale of Raoul Hausmann's artworks to the Austrian Ministry of Education, financial difficulties, and publications.
- Box 1, Folder 10 **Letters to Dom Sylvester Houédard, 1964-1966**
Scope and Content Note
11 typewritten, about contemporary poetry, including his own.
- Box 1, Folder 11 **Letters to Georges Hugnet, 1947-1969**
Scope and Content Note
2 typewritten, in which Raoul Hausmann explains his perspective on photomontage in relation to Hugnet's essay "L'esprit dada à Berlin," (1932).
- Box 1, Folder 11 **Manuscript, "The History of Photomontage"**
Scope and Content Note
4 typewritten pp., excerpt from *Courier Dada*.
- Box 1, Folder 12 **Letters to Bernard Karpel, 1964**
Scope and Content Note
3 typewritten, criticizing the bibliography Karpel wrote for Huelsenbeck book.
- Box 1, Folder 13 **Letters to George Maciunas, 1962-1963**
Scope and Content Note
6 typewritten, concerning Fluxus publications, Raoul Hausmann's publications, and Neodada.
- Box 1, Folder 14 **Letters to Fritz Picard, 1961-1970**
Scope and Content Note
7 typewritten and 3 handwritten, concerning Raoul Hausmann's Berlin citizenship and the publication of his books.
- Box 1, Folder 15 **Correspondence with Reichardt and Themerson, 1959-1968**
Scope and Content Note
34 letters from Raoul Hausmann, 10 from Reichardt, concerning the publication of Reichardt's book *PIN: Raoul Hausmann and Kurt Schwitters* (London, 1962), about which Hausmann offers advice and criticism. Reichardt discusses the possibility of a retrospective of Hausmann's work at the Grabowski Gallery, London.
- Box 1, Folder 15 **Personal items**
Scope and Content Note
Raoul Hausmann's obituary, 6 New Year's cards, 4 photographs, 1 exhibition announcement.
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- Box 1, Folder 16 **Correspondence with Kurt Schwitters, 1946-1947**
Scope and Content Note
10 typewritten letters from Schwitters, 5 from Raoul Hausmann (copies Hausmann transcribed and perhaps altered), recounting their respective wartime experiences, the state of the arts after the war, and their idea for a journal (PIN). Includes several short poems within letters.
- Box 1, Folder 17 **Correspondence with Kurt Schwitters, 1946-1947**
Scope and Content Note
12 typewritten letters from Schwitters (originals?), 4 from Raoul Hausmann, concerning Hausmann's publication of "Courier Dada" in the journal *Arts-Lettres*, the possibility of inviting Hans Arp and Mesens to co-edit a journal, Schwitter's illness, and recollections of early Dada performances and pieces.
- Box 1, Folder 18 **Correspondence with Renée Sulzbach, 1966-1967**
Scope and Content Note
21 typewritten letters from Raoul Hausmann, 7 from Sulzbach, concerning exhibitions of Hausmann's work at museums in Stuttgart and Stockholm, a Dada retrospective in Paris, and the English publication of Hausmann's correspondence with Schwitters.
- Box 1, Folder 18 **1 clipping of an article on Raoul Hausmann by Erich Burger**
Box 1, Folder 19 **Correspondence with Renée Sulzbach, 1967-1968**
Scope and Content Note
22 typewritten letters (some carbon copies) from Raoul Hausmann, 14 from Sulzbach.
- Box 1, Folder 19 **Manuscripts**
Scope and Content Note
2 chapters from Raoul Hausmann's book on Hans Arp; 1 press release for Hausmann retrospective in Stockholm; 1 printed copy of Hausmann's article "Aussichten oder Ende des Neodadismus;" 1 p. biography of Raoul Hausmann.
- Box 1, Folder 19 **1 clipping, "En Dadist I Berlin," by Stig Johansson, . 1967**
Box 1, Folder 20 **Correspondence with Renée Sulzbach, 1968-1970**
Scope and Content Note
38 typewritten letters from Raoul Hausmann, 25 from Sulzbach, concerning recent cultural and political events, exhibitions, journals, and the publication of Hausmann's *Im Anfang was Dada*.
- Box 1, Folder 20 **Manuscript, 1 typewritten outline of Raoul Hausmann's book *Sensorialité excentrique*, 1969**
- Box 1, Folder 21 **Correspondence with Renée Sulzbach, 1970-1971**
Scope and Content Note
8 typewritten letters from Raoul Hausmann, 5 from Sulzbach, concerning publishers, Indian and Chinese philosophy, recent publications about Dada, and popular science.
- Box 1, Folder 21 **Manuscript**
Scope and Content Note
1 typewritten carbon copy of Raoul Hausmann's review of Werner Schalenbach's book on Schwitters.

Box 1, Folder 22

Letter to anonymous, 1920

Scope and Content Note

1 typewritten, concerning the purchase of an artwork through Professor Oskar Moll and informing the buyer of the Dada Exhibition in Berlin planned for Jun 20, 1920.

Box 1, Folder 23

Ephemera separated from Sulzbach correspondence, 1967-1971

Scope and Content Note

10 items, including note, exhibition and book announcements, reviews, publishers' brochures, poster.