
Finding aid prepared by Scott Wolf.
Descriptive Summary
Title: Raoul Hausmann correspondence
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
(310) 440-7390
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 Straß 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 Düsselsdorf 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 Kunsthbibliothek, 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 Steinhart.

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


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


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Preferred Citation
http://hdl.handle.net/10020/cifa850994

Acquisition Information

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.


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-Lieuouss 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.


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

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

*Physical Description:* 0.5 linear feet 1 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 excentrinque," 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 “cinétique poésie semántique” 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.
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**


Box 1, Folder 19  
1 clipping, "En Dadist i Berlin," by Stig Johansson, . 1967

Box 1, Folder 19  
**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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1, Folder 22</th>
<th><strong>Letter to anonymous, 1920</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1, Folder 23</th>
<th><strong>Ephemera separated from Sulzbach correspondence, 1967-1971</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>10 items, including note, exhibition and book announcements, reviews, publishers' brochures, poster.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>