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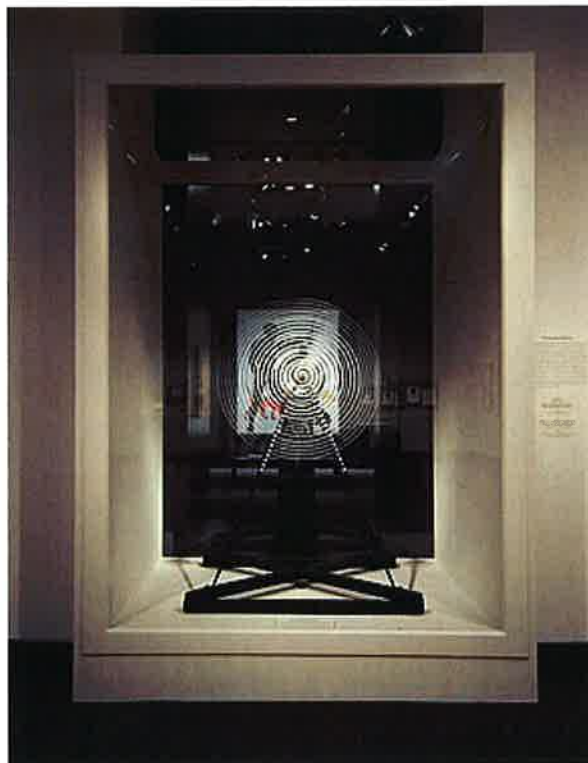
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### THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART INSTALLS DYNAMIC, MULTIMEDIA DADA EXHIBITION, FEBRUARY 19—MAY 14, 2006

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**Francis Picabia's *The Animal Tamer*** is seen through the spinning blades of **Marcel Duchamp's *Rotary Glass Plates*** in the National Gallery of Art's **Dada** exhibition. © 2006 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington. Photo by Rob Shelley.

Washington, DC—The National Gallery of Art, Washington, has designed a dynamic multimedia installation for **Dada**, the first major American museum survey to explore in depth this avant-garde movement. Inspired by historical photographs and the art itself, the exhibition's design employs a strong color scheme, Dada motifs, and changing—at times disorienting—architectural environments to

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dramatically present some 450 paintings, sculptures, photographs, collages, prints, and film and sound recordings by 50 artists. Each section of the show reveals the varied themes within each city-center where Dada flourished: Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, New York, and Paris.

The visitor's experience begins outside the East Building where the giant reproduction of Marcel Duchamp's *L.H.O.O.Q.* (1919) hangs without an exhibition title. Inside large pointing hands, like those seen in some Dada works, direct visitors up the stairs to the mezzanine bridge. Only when visitors ascend the grand marble staircase do they see the letters of Dada in red and black on the front of each step. "Dada" in large letters confronts visitors as they approach the entrance of the exhibition. Once inside the first gallery, visitors learn the historical events out of which Dada evolved in a somber display of archival black and white photos and a film montage showing parades of soldiers and tanks, trench warfare, and examples of the tragic aftermath of World War I.

The Gallery installation differs drastically from the **Dada** installation at the Centre Pompidou in Paris—a co-organizer of the exhibition—where it was on view October 5, 2005 through January 9, 2006. In Paris, 1,900 objects were installed in a huge white grid structure, which evoked a chess game, making the visitor's route intentionally random. In Washington, the objects will be presented in a linear progression through the six city-centers that follow:

**Zurich:** Two mustard-yellow rooms are filled with works such as masks by Marcel Janco and Sophie Taeuber's 12 machine-like marionettes posed in a case with a backdrop inspired by the original. Hans Richter's groundbreaking abstract film *Rhythmus 21*, and abstract collages by Sophie Taeuber and Hans Arp illustrate Zurich Dada's interest in abstraction. Inside a special listening room, visitors will hear recordings of Hugo Ball's sound poem "Karawane" and a simultaneous poem ready by Tristan Tzara, Janco, and Richard Huelsenbeck in three languages- "L'amiral cherche une maison à louer." As visitors climb a spiral staircase they read on every other step instructions by Tristan Tzara on how to create a Dada poem, excerpted from "Seven Dada Manifestos: manifesto on feeble love and bitter love."

**Berlin:** Within oxblood-red walls, works are presented in an installation which recalls the First International Dada Fair, a groundbreaking exhibition of 1920, with slogans interspersed. Included here are John Heartfield and Rudolf Schlichter's scandalous *Prussian Archangel* (suspended from the ceiling), photomontages by Hannah Höch and Raoul Hausmann, and jarring works by Otto Dix and Grosz. In a listening room Hausmann's four sound poems can be heard with such sounds as "bbb," "fmsbw," and "offeah."

**Hannover:** Historical photos were used to create an angular, disorienting construction through which visitors walk that evokes Kurt Schwitters' world of "Merz." The original meandering collage structure was created in his home from the detritus of modern life, such as bus tickets and packaging, which the artist covered with a shell of plywood and plaster shaped in geometric forms and painted white. Passing through the construction, visitors will hear an excerpt of Schwitters' sound poem, "Ursonate."

On the way to Cologne, a special room will showcase a selection of Dada films on a continuous loop. Several prominent Dada artists worked extensively with film in the 1920s, creating experimental works that were sometimes woven into landmark Dada performances.

**Cologne:** In Cologne, Max Ernst and others responded to the artificial calm maintained by British occupying forces in a series of anti-authoritarian publications and artworks. An avid reader of Sigmund Freud, Ernst parodied current events and sentiments with microscopic, whimsical, enigmatic collages made from remnants of newspapers, journals, and other mass media publications.

**New York:** Inspired by photographs of Marcel Duchamp's New York studio the visitor views a display of readymades, including *In Advance of the Broken Arm*, *Bicycle Wheel*, and *Hat Rack*, through a framed domestic doorway. Duchamp's spinning machine (*Rotary Glass Plates*), which moves, and the assisted readymade (*Fresh Widow*) are displayed at ground level. The fifth edition of his upturned urinal (*Fountain*) hangs in the door jamb, as it originally did in his studio.

**Paris:** After the war, travel became easier and several artists returned to Paris. The key figures of the movement—Hans Arp,

Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Francis Picabia, and Tristan Tzara—are reunited in the city of light to create some of their most provocative work. With black walls, large-scale works by Picabia (*The Cacodylic Eye*), Duchamp's pivotal *L.H.O.O.Q.*, and experimental photography by Man Ray are featured amid Jean Crotti's playful paintings, Arp's refined wood collages, Duchamp's spinning optical machine *Rotary Demisphere*, and a projection of the film *Anémic Cinéma*.

### **Exhibition Support and Organization**

Dada is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and the Centre Pompidou, Paris, in collaboration with The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

The exhibition is made possible through the generous support of the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation and the Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation. Additional support for the exhibition has been provided by the Annenberg Foundation and Thomas G. Klarner. The brochure is made possible by Aaron and Barbara Levine and Pro Helvetia Arts Council of Switzerland. The film is made possible by the HRH Foundation. The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

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### **General Information**

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden, located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets at Constitution Ave. NW, are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's Web site at [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov).

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the Fourth Street Entrance of the East or West Building to permit X-

ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. Any items larger than 17 X 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms. For the safety of the art work and visitors, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left at the checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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