

Introduction

From Dada to Infra-noir: Dada, Surrealism, and Romania

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This special issue of *Dada/Surrealism*, the second since the rebirth of the journal as an open-access online publication, grew out of a rather modest bibliographic research project on Francophone avant-garde writers from Romania that was undertaken with the assistance of a WESS Coutts-Nijhoff travel grant. As the general editor was preparing to travel to Bucharest, a fortuitous encounter with the future guest co-editor at a meeting of the Association for the Study of Dada and Surrealism launched us on the journey to what became a much more ambitious project: the first book-length collection in English on the subject of Dada, surrealism, and Romania. Aiming to provide a broad vision not only of the Dada and surrealist movements within Romania, but also of the activities of the Romanian dadaists and surrealists abroad (with special emphasis on their crucial relationship with France and with the French language), this project, long in gestation, has been a labor of love for its editors as well as its contributors.

The focus of the articles that follow is primarily on the first half of the twentieth century. In keeping with the aims of a peer-reviewed journal, the bulk of the contributions take a scholarly approach, but we have also included a few more personal treatments by important poet-critics from France and Romania. In an edited work of this nature, it is inevitable that some figures will receive more attention than others. While not every significant artist and writer is the subject of a separate article, we have attempted to remedy some of these omissions in the "Documents" section through a selection of key poems, essays, and manifestos, most of them translated into English for the first time, as well as in the general bibliography that concludes the thematic portion of this issue.

For the benefit of researchers, we have endeavored to render all titles of works and all quotations in the original language as well as in translation. However, the Romanian language has undergone several spelling reforms and some changes in grammatical usage since the early twentieth century. Some of our authors have silently corrected or updated these forms in quoting Romanian texts; we have not enforced editorial uniformity on the quotations in this respect. Similarly, many of the writers and artists presented here used one or more pseudonyms in the course

of their careers. We indicate the variant forms of names in the bibliography, but did not attempt to impose uniform usage in the individual articles.

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