

# the something else NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Number 4

August, 1966

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## Serious Gabcard

§1. The **Dada Almanach**, edited by RICHARD HUELSENBECK, is the most important primary source for the entire movement, since it antedates the great feuds that sapped the vitality of the movement and submerged the actual materials in a mire of legal problems for half a century. Since what we know about Dada is based on a vague image of iconoclastic behavior, charming anecdotes and manifestos unbacked up by work, it comes as a shock to find how modern and pertinent the actual materials are. The facsimile edition (German with French) we have now completed (hardcover only, \$4.50), and we will do the BENJAMIN AND PYLA PATTERSON translation into English some time next year.

§2. It's been a mad and marvelous Spring, and the summer's starting well too, with HAROLDO DE CAMPOS of the Noigandres Group (Concrete Poetry) here from São Paulo, telling us in Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, French, Japanese and German (not to mention excellent English) about marvelous Happenings taking place in that city of nearly five million inhabitants, of which we know so little. DECIO PIGNATARI, also of the Noigandres Group, appears to be the ringleader in this phase of activity in Brazil.

§3. In the late 1920's BÉLA BARTÓK went to Turkey as a guest of KEMAL ATTATÜRK to spend two years recording the already then disappearing masters of Turkish folk music. This collection is now turning to dust

at the Conservatory at Ankara because the Turkish government, with its rather complex foreign exchange problems, has been unable to allocate funds to dub the collection onto tape and make it available. In another few years the acetates will be unplayable. Please note.

§4. GERTRUDE STEIN's **The Making of Americans**, one of the landmarks of American Literature, has been out of print, in the complete version, since the late 1920's. Our edition (\$10.95) will change all that, about September 6. It's the largest book we've done to date, and the production problems have been enormous, but what a monsterpiece!

§5. ERIC ANDERSEN of Copenhagen—composer, film-maker and, like CORNER, VOSTELL, WILLIAMS, KNOWLES, PAIK, FILLIOU, HIGGINS, etc., a veteran Fluxman, is publishing a collection of his performance pieces in Denmark in the Fall. We hope parts of it, at least, will be in English or some other familiar language. But in any case, we'll spread the word.

§6. Needed: somebody to write a good article on how, looking at formal works, one becomes bored and looks for subject matter. Concentrating on subject matter one becomes bored and wishes for a little more formal invention. Finally, it's only the interplay and intertwining that allows the mind to experience the work, without becoming conscious of too much pre-classification and pre-conceptualizing.

§7. Back in the fall of 1961, when HIGGINS and LANDOW, who knew neither each other nor each other's work, separately discovered that the film loop and moebius strip of film, stock devices in animating, were not just technical devices but art forms, it was a bold departure from the style of the time, which was characterized by endless variation. Today, just five years later, a forthcoming anthology for this fall is going to consist of loops by twenty completely new people, not including either originator of the form. So quickly these formal conceptions become cliches! Which brings us back to the old truism that ultimately the only thing that means anything is meaning.

§8. We're worried about some of the information media giants buying into the large publishing houses. We're afraid it will discourage them even more from doing controversial manuscripts of any kind, and in any case from reviewing the sharper tongued or problematic kind of books that somehow find their way into print. Why doesn't somebody do a serious article on the situation?

§9. In Stockholm, September 18-25, KNUT WIGGEN of the Fylkingen Society, Prästgatan 28, Stockholm C and BILLY KLÜVER of Bell Laboratories, Murray Hill, New Jersey (he's a key Telstar scientist and a developer of lasers and masers) have organized a mad and marvelous Festival for Art and Technology, which will include ROBERT WHITMAN, JOHN CAGE, BUCKMINSTER FULLER, DR. JOHN PIERCE and others from the United States and OYVIND FAHLSTRÖM from Sweden. This will coincide with an exhibition of CLAES OLDENBURG at the Moderna Museet, so Stockholm should be a very interesting place in September. For further information, write to KLÜVER or WIGGEN.

§10. The first publicity for the Stockholm Art and Technology Festival emphasized that a series of Happenings would take place, which was apparently never intended. Since none of the original Happenings people were included (both OLDENBURG and WHITMAN have, wherever possible—and it's not always possible—dissociated themselves since the beginning from the term), some people felt rather badly about this, and DICK HIGGINS went so far as to write several letters about this, some of which the producers circulated around, to his great embarrass-

ment. But we now have it on the authority of the press release that the performances will consist of "Theatre, Dance and Music," which leaves the situation, for the moment, at least, clear. But some day wouldn't it be great if a similar situation could be created for Happenings and Technology, to be realized by Happenings artists who specialize in performance imagery and are not primarily known for their paintings or collage work.

§11. ROBERT FILLIOU, probably the most original of contemporary French artists, is visiting America for the Summer and early Fall. Persons interested in contacting him can do so through this Press. So far FILLIOU's only major work available in this country is our own *Ample Food for Stupid Thought*, a unique poem consisting of isolated questions (Book Edition, \$5.00, Postcard Edition—mail 'em away—\$9.00), but there are rumors of the imminent appearance of some of his marvelous children's books. When we know of something more specific, we will be sure to let our readers know.

§12. Why has Paris art been reduced to provincial avant-snobism from its recent heights? According to a recent article by PIERRE CABANNE, in Sweden, with a population of 7 million, the Moderna Museet gets a 4 million franc subsidy. The new Rheinland-Westphalia Museum at Düsseldorf, in an area with 5½ million, gets 3 million francs. But Paris's famed Musée National d'Art Moderne, in a nation of 50 million and a city of 3 million, gets only 350 thousand francs a year. Not even a million. How can one even pay the maintenance on the beautiful building from a subsidy like that, let alone acquire major works by major artists? No wonder they have to depend on the generosity of a few people, rather than being able to concentrate on the mass educational functions of a museum, without which a cultural city cannot long preserve its life. It would appear that MALRAUX can better afford sending Frenchmen into orbit than French Art. Even the Estate tax situation is absurd. GEORGES BRAQUE gave many of his works to museums: on his death MME. BRAQUE was presented with a colossal bill for death duties. No wonder the best French artists of recent years, except for SPOERRI who is a Swiss Roumanian, have fled in terror from Paris to Nice or even New York. In connection with this, please note that our contact for France is no longer in

Paris but in Villefranche-sur-Mer, a little village not far from Nice.

§13. WOLF VOSTELL is planning Happenings at Frankfurt in the Fall and Moscow in the early Spring, in addition to collaborating on a Tri-Continental Happening with ALLAN KAPROW in New York and MARTA MINUJIN in Buenos Aires. Last—but not least—he plans what he describes as a “Technological Happening” in Berlin at the end of September, by which time we hope to have his book, *Dé-coll/age-Happenings*, ready.

§14. The Something Else Gallery has now completed its program of four shows, to show the kind of work that the 77th Street Mafia doesn't dare handle. VOSTELL's show, in particular, was a spectacular beauty. So now the Gallery can adjourn until some time next year, when once again we will take up our shillelaghs on behalf of the best work being overlooked.

§15. RAY JOHNSON, whom we have consistently described as America's greatest collagist, was recently honored by a grant from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Something Else Press has a book out, *The Paper Snake* (\$3.47), of things which he sent to DICK HIGGINS over a period of years—small collages, playlets, poems, poetic postcards, et cetera.

§16. It's incredible how the cultural outlook of this city has improved since we got rid of that WAGNER person. With the blessing of our city fathers, the 4th Annual New York Avant Garde Festival will take place in Central Park on Saturday, August 20th, 1966, between 7:00 AM and 12:00 Midnight. ~~Persons interested in more details should~~ write to CHARLOTTE MOORMAN, at the Paris Hotel, West End Avenue and 97th Street, New York, NY 10025 *after* August 8th, when MISS MOORMAN will return from Europe, where she is on tour with NAM JUNE PAIK.

§17. On the evening of June 14th Channel 13 broadcast a juxtaposition of interviews with CAGE, KAPROW and others on the one hand and WUORINEN and others of the Columbia University school of post-Babbittists, including performances of CHARLOTTE MOORMAN playing CAGE and WUORINEN and one of his flautist friends doing one of their pieces. It was interesting to note how MOORMAN, for all her flying chickens, whistles, strange cello effects, bowing of PAIK

as an instrument, etc., registered as much more exciting, even more rational than the very excited (as opposed to exciting) grimaces of WUORINEN and his be-moustached colleague. Which brings one to reflect that being rational and logical is not so much a question of composing as of performance and perception. Just as one would not cook with iodine in order to keep too much juice from coming out of a steak, perhaps the *kind* of mathematical logic the post-Babbittists use isn't altogether appropriate. Project: why not see what happens when one composes, not by applying

A spiritual blast-off—

**A Primer of Happenings  
& Time / Space Art  
by Al Hansen**

160 pages, with over 100 illustrations: \$4.50

A collection of intermedial art—

**The Four Suits  
by Philip Corner, Alison Knowles,  
Benjamin Patterson and Tomas Schmit**

208 pages, with graphics and notations: \$5.00

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logic only to the compositional act, but with a view to being perceptually, obviously and simply logical. Perhaps this would lead to some very interesting aesthetic experiences.

§18. We'd love to receive small and marvelous facts, remarks, enigmas, proverbs, family and regional traditions, birthday news and so on for a Diary we're thinking of putting out for 1968.

§19. Sometime in the Fall of 1966, MILAN KNIZAK will become the first Happenings person from the socialist countries to visit the USA. We look forward to hearing him, and to finding out what's going on there away from official circles.

§20. Rumor has it that ICHIYANAGI and TAKEMITSU are coming from Japan this com-

# The new and dazzling post-McLuhan jokes! Introducing Coptic Humor!

*(turn page upside down for answers)*

1. What is the difference between a man in agony  
and a chortling woman?
2. How far should you go before marriage?
3. Should you try?
4. What is the difference between Capitalism and Communism?
5. What is the answer to religion?
6. What is a Happening?
7. What is Zen?
8. What is the difference between love and hate?
9. Why not?

1. Harold Iggys surfboard.  
2. Harold Iggys surfboard.  
3. Harold Iggys surfboard.  
4. Harold Iggys surfboard.  
5. Harold Iggys surfboard.  
6. Harold Iggys surfboard.  
7. Harold Iggys surfboard.  
8. Harold Iggys surfboard.  
9. Harold Iggys surfboard.



ing winter. If so, let's hope a good concert hall can be found, so we can hear what the best new music is like from Japan.

§21. **DICK HIGGINS' Freaked Out Electronic Wizards and Other Marvelous Bartenders Who Have No Wings** is being planned for the Summer of 1967. It will look like a prayer book.

In memoriam Camille Gordon  
1940-1966

§22. **Notations**, edited by JOHN CAGE, has had to be put off till Autumn 1967, due to difficulties scheduling the exhibition for which it is to serve as catalogue. But EMMETT WILLIAMS, our translator for SPOERRI's **Anecdoted Topography of Chance** (which is now being hailed in Paris as one of the greatest of the New Novels), is hard at work on CLAES OLDENBURG's notes and drawings for **Store Days**, and on a **Selected Writings of Diter Rot**, the Icelandic designer and kamakazee. We hope to have these two projects bound around Christmas time, by which time EMMETT will be at work on what we tentatively call **The Ultimate Anthology of Concrete Poetry**, an enormous and in-depth study and collection by EMMETT, who is a founder of the movement and veteran of its Darmstadt phase of 1957-1959.

§23. ALISON KNOWLES' **The Big Book** is going to Europe to the Frankfurt International Book Fair in the autumn of 1967. It is four feet by eight feet, is fully automated, furnished and electrified, and must be finished once it is begun. Actually, it's only a study for the **Big Big Book**, an architectural phenomenon forty feet wide and eighty feet high.

§24. Of the contributors to our **Manifestos Great Bear** (see listing on this page), two have been selected to represent their countries at this year's Venice Biennale. OYVIND FAHLSTRÖM is representing Sweden, and AY-o has built a huge environment for the Japanese pavilion. AY-o is planning a major exhibition for the Galerie Zwirner at Cologne. Though AY-o is one of Japan's best-known artists and has lived in New York for seven years, like VOSTELL, FILLIOU, SPOERRI and most other famous but non-U.S. artists, he is up against 77th Street cultural chauvinism and is,

thus, without formal gallery representation in this country.

§25. The ten Great Bear Pamphlets, which are now all available (see the checklist on this page), complete the first series. Next year the Great Bear will reappear as something else. The concept of the first series was that it should present short but important works, without regard to medium, by the major artists of our time, in an inexpensive form which could go places our more elaborate books could not, and thus to serve the educational function of helping to create an informed mass audience of cultural flexibility, which is, after all, the purpose of the press.

*A poor man's keys to the new art*—

a checklist of  
**Great Bear Pamphlets**

- 1—*by Alison Knowles*. All the performance pieces to date by the printer-artist of **Four Suits** fame. \$0.40
- 2—*A Book About Love & War & Death, Canto One*, by Dick Higgins. An intermedial text to be read aloud by at least two people. \$0.60
- 3—*Chance-Imagery*, by George Brecht. A basic document in the technique of the new art and in the thinking behind it. \$0.80
- 4—*Injun & Other Histories*, by Claes Oldenburg. Rabelaisian scenarios for some of Oldenburg's very early Happenings. Two full-page drawings. \$1.00
- 5—*Incomplete Requiem for W. C. Fields*, by Al Hansen. Complete text of the poem declaimed at the old *E-pit'o-me* Coffee House in 1958 while W. C. Fields movies were projected on the chest of the poet, one of the most active of the Happening people. \$0.60
- 6—*Ritual: A Book of Primitive Rites and Events*, by Jerome Rothenberg. An anthology of events and performance pieces from Polynesian, Melanesian, and American Indian sources, selected and adapted by the well-known poet, translator, and editor. \$0.60
- 7—*Some Recent Happenings*, by Allan Kaprow. Four characteristic scenarios by the inventor of the Happening concept. \$0.60
- 8—*Manifestos*. Recent calls-to-arms by Ay-o, Philip Corner, W. E. B. DuBois Clubs, Oyvind Fahlström, Robert Filliou, John Giorno, Al Hansen, Dick Higgins, Allan Kaprow, Alison Knowles, Nam June Paik, Diter Rot, Jerome Rothenberg, Wolf Vostell, Robert Watts, and Emmett Williams. A double pamphlet. \$1.00
- 9—*Berlin and Phenomena*, by Wolf Vostell. Two Dé-coll/age scenarios by Europe's best-known Happer. \$0.80
- 10—*The Twin Plays*, by Jackson Mac Low. Two plays with identical structures but written in different English languages, by a poet who has anticipated nearly everything. \$0.80

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Situation: a man, a famous artist, alone in his Paris room, about to clean up the breakfast table. Idly he begins to think about the histories of the objects, the dishes on the table... Then less idly... Excited by the project, he draws a map of the table, and begins to compose the history of each object—who gave it to him, what it means to him... To his histories he appends delightful footnotes, additional histories, digressions. His friends write footnotes, then the translator, the illustrator, until there is built up a fantastically vivid self-portrait of a man and his friends and his city—

**AN ANECDOTED TOPOGRAPHY OF CHANCE,  
BY DANIEL SPOERRI  
TRANSLATED AND ENLARGED BY EMMETT WILLIAMS**

\$5.00 from Something Else Press, Inc. or from your regular book dealer

# Dada

## Almanach (1920)

*facsimile edition*

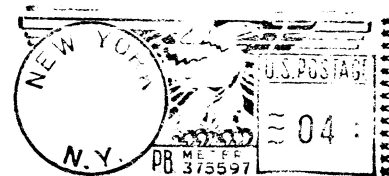
Edited by **Richard Huelsenbeck** and with magnificent typography by **John Heartfield** that established an important style in design, this book is far and away the most important of all the original dada collections, because of its scope and because it was put together at the height of the movement, before the great dissensions of the early 1920's that sapped its vitality. Here reproduced from the original, in German (with some French, Italian and other languages), this is an essential document on the subject. **160 pages, illus. \$4.50.**

§26.

Send a few bucks and your address to Black Thumb Press, c/o Hendricks, 900 West End Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10025. You'll be amazed at what happens.

§27. Daniel Spoerri's *Anecdoted Topography of Chance*, which we mentioned as receiving much acclaim in §23, is to be published in the not-too-distant future by Editions de Minuit. Included in the French edition will be not only the notes written for the U. S. edition by Emmett Williams and others, but new notes by George Brecht, Robert Filliou (who has translated the English language material into French) and, hopefully, readers of the U. S. edition. We will then translate all the new material in the French edition and issue it as a newsletter. So please send in your further notations and contributions to us as soon as you can.

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