NEW YORK, June 7, 2016—Dadaglobe Reconstructed, on view at The Museum of Modern Art from June 12 through September 18, 2016, will reunite over 100 works by more than 40 artists that were submitted to Tristan Tzara for his planned but unrealized 1921 anthology Dadaglobe. In Paris in late 1920, Tzara, a poet and a co-founder of Dada, drew up a proposal for an ambitious anthology to document the movement’s artistic and literary production. Along with artist Francis Picabia, Tzara sent solicitation letters to 50 artists and writers in 10 countries, requesting four categories of artworks—photographic self-portraits, photographs of artworks, original drawings, and designs for book pages—along with prose, poetry, or other verbal “inventions.” While some artists submitted existing works, many created new ones for the volume, making Dadaglobe one of the period’s most generative catalysts for the production of new Dada works. Due to financial and interpersonal difficulties, Dadaglobe was never realized, and while many of the works submitted are well-known today, their origin in this project has long been forgotten.

The result of six years of intensive archival research by Dada scholar Adrian Sudhalter that began with her examination of works in MoMA’s collection, Dadaglobe Reconstructed resituates iconic works of Dada in the original circumstances of their making. Tzara retained most of the contributions to Dadaglobe during his lifetime, but following his death in 1963 they were dispersed in public and private collections worldwide. This exhibition reunites for the first time the photographs, drawings, photomontages, collages, and manuscripts that were sent to Tzara through the mail for reproduction on Dadaglobe’s pages, along with related archival material. Dadaglobe Reconstructed explores how artists recognized the potential of artwork in reproduction as a new artistic field, the cross-disciplinarity of their efforts, and their creation of works in dialogue with one another despite geopolitical boundaries, and demonstrates the resonance of those ideas today. The exhibition is organized by Kunsthau Zürich in collaboration with MoMA, with the special participation of the Bibliothèque littéraire Jacques Doucet. It is organized at MoMA by Adrian Sudhalter, guest curator, and Samantha Friedman, Assistant Curator, Department of Drawings and Prints.

The exhibition is organized according to the four categories of works requested by Tzara. Of these categories, the prompt for self-portraits proved to be particularly generative for the
creation of new works. "Please send a clear photo of your head (not body)," the invitation read, "you can alter it freely, but it should retain clarity." While some contributors submitted straightforward headshots, others took Tzara up on his challenge to "alter" one's photo "freely," presenting cut-and-pasted, overdrawn, or otherwise manipulated portraits. Echoing the two components of an official bureaucratic form of identification, Picabia's self-portrait for Dadaglobe, for example, is composed of two parts: a demonstratively handmade photomontage featuring his smiling visage—Tableau Rastadada (1920; a recent MoMA acquisition)—and the artist's landmark drawing consisting of a signature, which he then signed: Francis Picabia by Francis Picabia (1920). Artists posed themselves amidst a range of milieus, from the intimate space of the studio to the dense stage of a cityscape; measured themselves in relation to artistic forebears; blurred traditional gender boundaries; and embraced myriad alter egos. Some even defied Tzara's call for "clarity," radically undermining the genre of portraiture by obscuring their faces or excising them altogether. For example, Sophie Taeuber staged a highly constructed self-portrait that was shot by Zurich studio photographer Nic Aluf. In this well-known Photograph of Sophie Taeuber with her Dada Head (1920), which was submitted to Tzara, her face is half-concealed by her polychrome, turned wood sculpture Dada Head (1920). That photograph is intimately related to another she submitted in the category "photographs of artworks"—the image of her painting Dada Head (flat) (1920), which compressed the sculpture onto the plane of the canvas. All four of these works—the two photographs, the sculpture, and the painting—are brought together in the exhibition.

Because Dadaglobe depended on contributions sent through the mail, artists could not send large-scale paintings or sculptures. Tzara therefore invited them to represent their works photographically, with an instruction to "Please send...2 or 3 photos of your works." Even in the most straightforward responses to this call—photographs taken by the artists or hired studio photographers that document artworks with relative objectivity—the selection of works is noteworthy, revealing how artists chose to represent their work to far-flung, international audiences. One criterion seems to have been the artwork's photogenic qualities: the degree to which the original object would translate to a legible, visually striking black-and-white photograph. Emphasizing this transformation, several key original artworks, including MoMA's own sculpture by Marcel Duchamp, To Be Looked At (from the Other Side of the Glass) with One Eye, Close to, for Almost an Hour (1918), are shown alongside the photographs that would have represented them in Dadaglobe. In addition to divesting color from works, photography could transform artworks in other ways: confound a sense of scale; compress three dimensions into two; eliminate material distinctions; isolate an object from its surrounding space; and extend its circulation beyond the unique original. Some contributors not only anticipated, but embraced and exploited these transformations when conceiving their contributions. Max Ernst submitted the iconic photomontage Chinese Nightingale (1920) with a caption that intentionally misidentified it as a sculpture of monumental proportions, aware that it would resemble a photograph of a sculpture when reproduced on Dadaglobe's pages. And Man Ray—who reveled in subverting the traditional documentary role of photography—selected and temporarily assembled found materials for the
purpose of photographing them. His photographs *L’Homme* and *La Femme* (c. 1918–1920) reenvision Tzara’s call for photographs of artworks as artworks for photography.

The open-ended nature of the request for original drawings yielded a wide variety of works on paper, from diagrammatic ink drawings to enigmatic collages. “Please send 3 or 4 black and white drawings,” Tzara wrote, “One drawing can be colorful, but containing no more than 2 to 3 colors.” The only constraint was the palette, put forth because of the practical considerations of printing at the time. Artists adopted impersonal approaches to drawing including tracing and collage; turned to mechanical instruments such as the ruler, compass, and even the typewriter; and ceded artistic agency to automatic procedures. Such methods reveal the desire of these artists to renounce individual authority in their work—a concept key to Dada. A group of drawings by Cologne-based Dadaists Max Ernst and Johannes Baargeld are shown for the first time alongside examples of the “caption cards” that originally accompanied them, and which indicate their intended titles. Boldly graphic drawings by Jean (Hans) Arp and the lesser-known Italian artists Julius Evola and Aldo Fiozzi employ varying degrees of abstraction, reflecting a universal artistic language that could resonate across national and cultural borders.

While the *Dadaglobe* solicitation letter’s first three prompts elicited discrete works to be laid out by the editors alongside other images or texts, the final directive asked artists to consider the composition of an entire page—to act as book designers themselves. “In place of the color drawing, you can design a book page with or without text,” Tzara instructed. Though Tzara leaves the choice of whether or not to include text up to the contributor, the very suggestion encouraged artists to continue the disruptive practice of combining word and image that Dada had embraced since its inception. Whether handwritten or typed, meant to be legible or functioning principally as a graphic element, the inclusion of language in these works—such as Johannes Baader’s two *Dada Milky Way* collages—challenges the traditional distinction between seeing and reading, a practice emblematic of Dada’s disregard for boundaries in all domains.

**SPONSORSHIP:**
The presentation at MoMA is supported by the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia.

**PUBLICATION:**
The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue edited by Adrian Sudhalter, with a preface by the renowned Dada scholar Michel Sanouillet. It is published by Kunsthaus Zürich and Scheidegger & Spiess, and designed by the Zurich-based graphic designers NORM. In addition to a 160 page reconstruction of *Dadaglobe*, it includes an overarching scholarly essay by Adrian Sudhalter (guest curator), texts on the reception of *Dadaglobe* works in Zurich and New York, respectively, by Cathérine Hug (Curator, Kunsthaus Zürich) and Samantha Friedman (Assistant Curator, Department of Drawings and Prints, The Museum of Modern Art), a technical note by MoMA conservators Lee Ann Daffner and Karl Buchberg, and a fully illustrated checklist. 8 x 10”, 304 pages, 390 illustrations. Hardcover, $59

**PUBLIC PROGRAMS:**
*Lost Chapters of Modernism: Case Studies in Reconstruction*
**Tuesday, September 13, 6:00 p.m.**
Beginning with *Dadaglobe Reconstructed* guest curator Adrian Sudhalter’s own research on Tristan Tzara’s unrealized Dadaglobe anthology, this program features several case studies that explore
the reconstruction of modernist works that were either never realized, lost, destroyed, or inherently ephemeral. Other participants include ballet reconstructionists Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer; artist Josiah McElheny; and William Whitaker, Curator and Collections Manager, Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania School of Design. Maria Gough, Joseph Pulitzer, Jr. Professor of Modern Art, Department of the History of Art and Architecture, Harvard University, moderates.

Tickets for this program will be available beginning August 13. Tickets ($15; $10 members and corporate members; $5 students, seniors, and staff of other museums) can be purchased online or at the information desk, at the Film desk after 4:00 p.m., or at the Education and Research Building reception desk on the day of the program.

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