THE SURREALIST BOOK: TOMORROW LIVES IN MIRRORS
THE HELEN AND SAM ZELL COLLECTION

A book bound with panes of shattered glass. A manifesto enshrined in metal. Love poems merging with luminous photographs. Pocket-size pamphlets of antiwar poetry. For the artists and poets associated with Surrealism, the book was the perfect vehicle to unleash the mysteries of the unconscious mind and to disseminate the movement's revolutionary, antiestablishment tenets. Through their passionate engagement as readers, bookmakers, and book collectors, Surrealists transformed the bound volume into a provocative new art form—an enchanted portal to the unexpected, the irrational, and the marvelous.

Often working collaboratively, Surrealist artists and poets reimagined the book's conventional formats and materials, tested new forms of image making and approaches to writing, and combined text and image in evocative ways, altering the relationship between books and readers. They recognized that these handheld objects were incomparably intimate and immersive artworks that could also be easily circulated, ensuring that their radical experiments would reverberate across time and space. Surprising encounters, the illogic of dreams, unsettling expressions of desire and longing—all central to Surrealism—are experienced profoundly in the Surrealist book.

This exhibition, which showcases an extraordinary gift of rare volumes from the Helen and Sam Zell Collection, traces the Surrealist book from its beginnings in the 1920s through its convention-defying influence in the 1930s and '40s. It also explores the persistent presence of a Surrealist sensibility in books created well into the 1960s. Representing landmark examples among the thousands of artists' books produced by the Surrealists and their successors, the works featured here include rare special editions; unique maquettes and sketchbooks; sculptural bindings that turn books into hybrid, interactive artworks; and much more. Whether sparking disquiet or delight, books, the Surrealists insisted, "are doors." Whoever "opens them is immediately thrown into a higher realm."

Organized by Jodi Hauptman, The Robert Lehman Foundation Chief Curator of Drawings and Prints, and Starr Figura, Senior Curator, with Kolleen Ku, Curatorial Assistant, and Emma Kang, Brooke Alexander Fellow, Department of Drawings and Prints.

In collaboration with Annie Wilker, Paper Conservator, Lee Ann Daffner, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Conservator of Photographs, and Caitlin Gozo Richeson, Assistant Objects Conservator, The David Booth Conservation Department.

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We invite you to explore the accompanying publication, *The Surrealist Book: Tomorrow Lives in Mirrors*, which is available in the Museum Store.

For more content and programs, visit moma.org/surrealistbook.