

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****The Museum of Modern Art****JEAN ARP'S ELEGANT AND BIOMORPHIC ABSTRACTIONS EXAMINED IN FOCUSED EXHIBITION**

Art Is Arp  
 March 16-August 22, 2000  
 Second Floor

"For Arp, art is Arp." -Marcel Duchamp

Jean Arp, poet, painter, sculptor, and printmaker, was a founding member of the Dada movement, frequently exhibited with the Surrealists, and maintained close ties to several Constructivist groups, without ever sacrificing his independence. *Art Is Arp*, organized by Anne Umland, Associate Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, presents over 20 works by Arp from The Museum of Modern Art's holdings that have never been exhibited together as a group before. Included in the exhibition are wood reliefs, string reliefs, cardboard cutouts, prints, illustrated books, collages, and one sculpture-in-the-round. On view from March 16 to August 22, 2000, *Art Is Arp* is one of several monographic installations within *Making Choices*, the second cycle of MoMA2000, which focuses on the years 1920 to 1960.

Arp (French, born Alsace, 1886-1966) moved between seemingly opposite artistic camps, combining elements of punning absurdity, irrational poetry, and purist abstraction with an experimental approach to a wide range of mediums. The focus of the exhibition is on his work of the late teens through the early 1930s, crucial years that marked the first appearance of methods and motifs reiterated throughout his career. *Automatic Drawing* (1917-18) and *Collage Arranged According to the Laws of Chance* (1916-17) characterize Arp's varied interests in organic shapes, simple geometries, and the potential of chance procedures to spark unconventional new works of art.

A selection of work from Arp's Dada years (1916-20) is displayed along with a concentration of work from the 1920s that he described as "Object Language." Included in the exhibition is a group of seven lithographs, published in 1923, titled *Arpaden* (a nonsense word meaning "Arps" or "Arp things"), which provided a vocabulary for his "Object Language," isolating a number of its basic elements. Other pieces include: the cardboard cutout *Mountain, Table, Anchors, Navel* (1925); the painted wood relief *Two Heads* (1929); the string relief *Leaves and Navels* (1929); and the painted wood sculpture *Bell and Navels* (1931). In these works, anatomical fragments, commonplace objects, and organic shapes intermingle. Individual motifs such as the "navel" appear and reappear in Arp's work, inserted into different contexts and transfigured in different mediums.

**SPONSORSHIP**

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