

Emmy Hennings and the Emergence of Zurich Dada

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Impulsive, enigmatic, creative, and at odds with her materialistic culture, Emmy Hennings personifies the Dada movement with which she was so intimately involved. A complex and restless person, she wrote poetry and novels, made dolls and puppets, and helped establish the Cabaret Voltaire which launched the movement. She was a primary contributor to the sensual display of bombast at the cabaret, and became its star performer. Dada, as it emerged in Zurich in 1916, was a collaboration of poets, painters, musicians, and entertainers working together to produce, not a timeless work of art but a "gesture." According to Hugo Ball, with Dada "every word that is spoken and sung says at least this one thing: that this humiliating age has not succeeded in winning our respect."¹

Despite Hennings's close involvement with the movement, her unique contributions have yet to be analyzed apart from her association with Hugo Ball, the writer and philosopher, who was her long-time companion. Although she wrote several books about herself and her life with Ball (they have yet to be translated from German), the only record of her contributions to the Dada movement is scattered throughout Gerhard Steinke's book, *The Life and Works of Hugo Ball*.² Steinke's primary interest is in showing how her personality influenced Ball's ideology and artistic development, and consequently (and without justification) he never evaluates Hennings's contributions to Dadaism.

Born in the northern German coastal city of Flensburg in 1885, Hennings described herself as a seaman's child in *Ruf und Echo: Mein Leben mit Hugo Ball*, and summarized her life using a metaphor of the sea:

Because I am a seaman's child, stem from the sea, life itself is to me a journey over the sea, and I never see the shores, as if the land, which I don't know yet and which awaits me, were sleeping in peace. It might be my homeland or a strange land that I will love, I don't know. Always it was the adventure which I did not seek and which befell me, and each journey was called "Call and Response."³

After the death of her first child and the desertion of her first husband in 1906, Hennings joined a traveling theatrical troupe and lived a gypsy-like existence for nearly nine months until the birth of a second child. She returned home to Flensburg, left the child with her mother, and embarked on a career as a vagabond performing artist. She appeared in roadshows, operettas, and nightclubs in such cities as Moscow, Budapest, and Cologne. At times she earned barely enough to eat, and at one point sold bathroom supplies door to door.⁴ She met Ball while performing at the Cafe Simplizissimus in Munich in 1913.

In the spring of 1914, shortly after the advent of World War I, Hennings was arrested and imprisoned for forging passports. She was released, and the charges were dropped after six weeks of questioning; she always claimed her innocence.⁵ The circumstances of her arrest have never been clear, though it was apparent she opposed the Kaiser's government and the war from the beginning. Although many Expressionists (including Ball) had initially welcomed the war because they saw it as the final destruction of Wilhelminian materialistic society and the beginning of a spiritual awakening,⁶ Hennings rejected the utopian ideal of a *novus universum* and identified with the pacifists.⁷

Following her imprisonment, Hennings returned to sing at the Cafe Simplizissimus. When her engagement was terminated in November 1914, she joined Ball in Berlin where she sang in a variety of restaurants and worked as an artist's model. Because of their opposition to the war, the oppressiveness of the war effort, and the likelihood of Ball's induction, the couple fled to Switzerland in May, 1915.⁸

The near destitution they faced when they arrived in Zurich was relieved by Hennings's sporadic employment in variety shows. Once Ball discovered the Swiss police had no interest in extraditing him, the couple worked together in a vaudeville troupe: he played the piano; she sang. Hennings and Ball were deeply attached to the theater; it was their livelihood, their peace of mind, and their common bond. In January 1916, they opened their own place, the Cabaret

Voltaire. An account of the cabaret's beginnings in a small inn in the old quarter of Zurich appeared as the frontispiece in the first Dada publication, *Cabaret Voltaire*.⁹

Framed within the upper half of the narrative is the face of Emmy Hennings. Her portrait, with raised head and confident gaze, suggests her importance to the Cabaret Voltaire and the promulgation of Dada. However, descriptions of Hennings usually focus on her personality. Although the accounts differ widely in specifics, she is described as nonintellectual, detached from reality, naive and childlike, or visionary and aloof, and as continually seeking escape.¹⁰ Whatever the characterization, her subordination to Ball is reiterated. For instance, Richard Huelsenbeck, founder in 1917 of the Berlin Dada group, while recognizing Hennings's importance to the movement, perpetuated the subordinate role: "It is impossible to measure the influence this frail girl had on Hugo Ball. . . . Hugo was so strongly influenced by Emmy that one cannot love his writings unless one fully and deeply understands her influence."¹¹

But Hennings does speak to us through her own work. "After the Cabaret" reveals the sympathy and affection she felt for all types of people:

I go home in the morning light.
The clock strikes five, the sky grows pale,
A light still burns in the hotel;
The cabaret shuts for the night.
In a corner children hide,
To the market farmers ride,
Silently churchward go the old.
Bells ring in the silent air,
And a whore with tousled hair
Still wanders, sleepless and cold.¹²

Steinke claims that Hennings was a "thorough romanticist by temperament."¹³ Yet these few lines reveal her insight into the life of people around her outside the cabaret, especially the whore estranged from society. Hennings's empathy for the alienated and outcast is a personal declaration of her own existence, and occurs frequently in her poetry.

Hennings's objective at the Cabaret Voltaire was to attack society vehemently. According to Huelsenbeck, Hennings "sang Hugo Ball's aggressive songs with anger we had to credit her with although we scarcely thought her capable of it."¹⁴ In a 1965 study of Dada, Hans Richter described the Cabaret Voltaire as "a six-piece band. Each played his instrument, i.e. himself, passionately and with all his soul."¹⁵ But a reviewer in the *Zurcher Post* declared Hennings' performance the highlight of the evening:

The star of the cabaret, however, is Mrs. Emmy Hennings. Star of many nights of cabarets and poems. Years ago she stood by the rustling yellow curtain of a Berlin cabaret, hands on hips, as exuberant as a flowering shrub; today too she presents the same bold front and performs the same songs with a body that has since been only slightly ravaged by grief.¹⁶

The program (Fig. 1) distributed at the first Dada evening on July 14, 1916, lists the names of the participants

in alphabetical order, indicating that no performer was more important than another. Hennings read prose and verse (including her own),¹⁷ performed three dances wearing a mask designed by Marcel Janco,¹⁸ and participated in the finale, dancing to music from "Leben des Menschen."

According to contemporary descriptions, Hennings gave dionysiac performances:

For who can stop this girl who possesses the hysteria, the charm, the mind of searing intensity of literaries from snowballing into an avalanche and from turning herself even against the parliamentary system—the only institution where the despair and destructive madness of the depressed makes no impression—promoting her business without danger and without leaving any traces.¹⁹

The artists of the Dada movement attempted to undermine traditional notions of culture through an aesthetic of reduction, contradiction and chance. They were recoiling from and reacting to what they felt to be the madness of society and the arbitrariness of human experience, especially war. Hennings gave voice to their collective despair. According to Huelsenbeck: "When Emmy Hennings sang 'They kill one another with steam and with knives' in Switzerland, which was encircled by fighting armies, she was voicing our collective hatred of the inhumanity of war."²⁰

Her poem "Gefängnis" ("Prison"), which she read at the first Dada evening, contributed to the prevailing anxiety:

AUTOREN-ABEND

Hans Arp, Hugo Ball, Emmy Hennings, Hans Heusser, Richard Huelsenbeck,
Marcel Janco, Tristan Tzara.

Freitag, den 14. Juli 1916, abends 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ Uhr

Zunfthaus zur Waag

I. DADA - ABEND

(Musik. Tanz. Theorie. Manifeste. Verse. Bilder. Kostüme. Masken)

PROGRAMM

I.

Hans Heusser „Prelude“, „Wakaubluete“, exotische Tanzrytmen.
„Eine Wüstenskizze“ (eigene Kompositionen)

Emmy Hennings: „Zwei Frauen“ (Prosa)
Verse („Makrele“, „Aether“, „Gefängnis“, „Jötland“.)

Hans Arp: Erläuterungen zu eigenen Bildern (Papierbilder I – V)

Hugo Ball: „Gadji Beri Bimba“ (Verse ohne Worte, in eigenen Kostüme).

Tristan Tzara: „La fièvre puererale“ (Poème simultan, interprété par Ball, Huelsenbeck,
Janco, Tzara.)

Chant nègre I (nach eigenen Motiven aufgeführt von Ball, Huelsenbeck, Janco, Tzara.)

Chant nègre II (nach Motiven aus dem Sudan, gesungen von Huelsenbeck und Janco.)

II.

Marcel Janco: Präsentation seiner eigenen Masken.

Hans Heusser: „Bacchanale aus der Oper Chrysis“, „Japanisches Theaters“,
„Burlesque“ (eigene Kompositionen)

Rich. Huelsenbeck und Tristan Tzara: Poème mouvementiste (Masques par M. Janco) Concert
voyelle, Poème de voyelle, Poème bruitiste.

Drei Dada-Tänze (getanz von Emmy Hennings. Masques par Marcel Janco. Musik von Hugo
Ball.)

Richard Huelsenbeck: „Mpela Tano“ (Verse)

Colloquialer Tanz (Kostüme und Arrangement von Hugo Ball, Musik aus „Leben des Menschen“
von Andrejew. Aufgeführt von Ball, Hennings, Huelsenbeck, Tzara.)

FIG. 1. Program, First Dada Evening, Zurich, July 14, 1916.

On the cable of hope we pull ourselves toward death.
 Envious of prison yards are the ravens.
 Often quiver our un-kissed lips.
 Swooning loneliness, you are supreme.
 There outside lies the world, there roars life.
 There men may go where they will.
 Once we also belonged to them.
 And now we are forgotten and sunk into oblivion.
 At night we dream miracles on narrow beds.
 By day we go around like frightened animals.
 We peep out sadly through the iron grating.
 And have nothing more to lose
 But our life, which God gave us.
 Only death lies in our hand.
 The freedom no one can take from us:
 To go into the unknown land.²¹



FIG. 2. Emmy Hennings, *Puppen* (Dolls), *Cabaret Voltaire*, Zurich, 1916.

Although probably written during Hennings's prison term (thus antedating the Dada period), "Gefängnis" nevertheless voices the pessimism that the Dadaists felt toward their world in 1916. It is the darker side of a movement that is often remembered only for its buffoonery.²² With the rejection of German idealism,²³ Hennings invokes a vocabulary akin to existentialism to explain in a viable way the depravity of their existence. With loneliness, sadness, and oblivion swooning all around them, there is freedom only in death. The poem emphasizes the collective alienation of the Dada group from the rest of European society.

Two of Hennings's poems—"Morfin" and "Gesang zur Dämmerung"—and a photograph of her dolls and puppets was published in *Cabaret Voltaire*, the first and only issue of a publication that remains a valuable chronicle of the first six months of Dada.

Although puppet and marionette theater was ubiquitous at the time, Hennings's dolls and puppets appeared in unique contexts. The three dolls illustrated in *Cabaret Voltaire* (Fig. 2) slump and hang like marionettes. The doll in the center looms above the other two, its arms outstretched in cruciform shape; the one on the right kneels and gestures toward the central figure, shunning it as if it represented an evil power. The doll slumped in the lower left corner is lifeless and oppressed by the doll above. The faces are gaunt and frowning, their bodies angular. Using ordinary objects and materials, she transformed her dolls and puppets into Dadaist objects.

Like Janco's masks, which hung in the *Cabaret Voltaire*²⁴ and were worn to separate the performers from the audience,²⁵ Hennings's dolls express concern for the fragility of human relationships. Whether the dolls were used to decorate the cabaret or for performances, or both, is not clear, however, their appearance in *Cabaret Voltaire* suggests their symbolic value to the group.

In March 1917, at the opening of the Gallery Dada, a political puppet show was improvised, using Hennings's puppets Czar and Czarina.²⁶ Hennings was evidently the first to initiate the use of puppets within the Dada group (Fig. 3), and as the Dadaists became more politically active (especially in Berlin), puppet shows became integral parts of their soirees. George Grosz produced satirical Dada marionette performances at the Cabaret Schall und Rauch



FIG. 3. Emmy Hennings, c. 1916.

in Berlin, and in Dresden, Otto Griebel created a Dada puppet version of *Lohengrin*.²⁷

Hennings's "Morfin" illustrates a standard Dadaist technique: it undercuts the comfortable expectations viewers bring to a performance or art work;²⁸ it projects certain expectations and then confounds them:

We wait for the last adventure
 What do we care about the sunshine?
 High towered days tumble down
 Into restless nights—Prayer in Purgatory.
 We no longer read the daily mail
 Only occasionally we smile quietly into the pillows,
 Because we know everything, and slyly
 We fly back and forth in a fit of shivering.
 Men may hurry and strive
 Today the rain falls more darkly
 We drive ceaselessly through life
 And in sleep, bewildered, pass away²⁹

The traditional stanzaic form and rhyme patterns suggest a poem with a direct message and simple resolution. Yet even embedded in this seemingly innocuous structure is the promise that the poem will not be resolved without difficulty. In examining the rhyme pattern of the three stanzas we discover that even here DADA finds an inroad: abba, cddc, DADA. More obvious and relevant to the poem, however, is the trochaic rhyme scheme which gives the poem a more halting quality than the traditional iambic. The domination of the four foot line rather than the traditional pentameter also upsets the reader's expectations.

The title "Morfin" is in itself an enigma. There is no such word in German, French, or English, although it suggests "morphine" in all three languages. Even though "morfin" is not repeated in the poem, there are reasons for interpreting it as morphine. Throughout the poem there are signs of physical addiction and the despair that accompanies it. Shivering, bewildered sleep and restless nights, the occasional smile, all are signs of addiction. The darker side of the poem is the helplessness and inaction of the addict waiting for the last adventure, death. The futility of life is seen in the indifference to sunshine—the source of life—and in the loss of interest in the daily mail—the source of encouragement and hope from loved ones, as well as the bearer of news of a world that no longer has meaning.

Each line has an independent force not directly related to the preceding or following lines. And yet the poem does have a sense of narrative wholeness with the lines coalescing into a message of despair and futility. Like the days of the person in the poem, the structure of European society was also tumbling. Hennings does not call for utopian politics: the poem ends with desperation and death. Only the comparison of the addict's existence to a prayer in purgatory suggests that perhaps the world is only in a temporary state of punishment. As in "Gefängnis," death is the only certain resolution in "Morfin."

"Gesang zur Dämmerung" ("Song to the Twilight"), dedicated to Ball, is similar to "Morfin" in tone and style:

Octaves stagger like an echo through grey years.
 Hightowered days tumble down.
 Yours will I be—
 In the grave grows my yellow hair
 And in the eldertrees live a strange folk.
 A pale curtain whispers of a murder
 Two eyes wander restlessly through the room
 Ghosts go around the rim of the kitchen.
 And little fir trees are dead children

Ancient oaks are the souls of tired old men
 Who whisper the story of the failed life.
 The Klintekongen Lake sings an old tune.
 I was not charmed before the evil glance
 Negroes crept out of the water jug,
 The gay-colored picture in the fairytale book, the red
 rooster
 Once bewitched me for all eternity.³⁰

The narrative is so fragmented and illogical that the power of each line is determined by the effect of its associations. Although there is not the radical reduction of associations to mere sounds, as in Ball's sound-poems, the story of the failed life that Hennings discloses borders on the nonsensical. Here Hennings relies on the Expressionist technique of undermining the accepted logic in traditional grammatical patterns of verse, although the tone is at variance with the more optimistic Expressionist poetry.

Though called a song to the twilight, the song evaporates immediately into a haunting and macabre echo. A listless gloominess is evoked by the images of ghosts, graves, and dead children. The lack of causal connection between lines emphasizes the association of hopelessness and disconsolation with these images. Even the fairytale books, which at one time bewitched her by offering an escape from the failed life, are now an echo like the octaves of her song. The personification of curtains, trees, and lakes gives the poem a grotesque fairytale quality.

The meaning of the poem clusters around and resonates in the word "Dämmerung," suggesting at once the melancholy period in the evening when light barely prevails, a state of uncertainty, vagueness or gloom, and the terminal period that then descends. The seeming senselessness and obscurity of Hennings's style is also implied in the notion of "twilight." As in "Gefängnis" and "Morfin," Hennings describes a world in disarray, a world of frustrated life, and death.

Shortly following the first Dada evening in July 1916, and less than two months after the publication of *Cabaret Voltaire*, Ball and Hennings left Zurich suddenly, settling in the Swiss village of Vira Magadino for six months. What precipitated their departure is uncertain. Surely an important factor was physical exhaustion,³¹ but only as a symptom of their disaffection.

A religious mysticism began to manifest itself in their work when they returned to Zurich in January 1917. It is evident from Ball's diary and from Hennings's reminiscences that during their separation from the Dada group they discussed the mysteries of Christian religion, including grace, and how these mysteries might provide a source of meaning and method of belief for them.³² This interest is verified in the program of the Fourth Dada-Soiree held in May, 1917. Hennings recited extracts from several medieval texts on the mysteries of God.³³

In June 1917, Hennings and Ball made their final break with the Dada movement. Although her world view had not altered substantially, Hennings had lost faith in the capacity of Dada to be a meaningful counterpoint to a debauched world. In 1918, she published a novel called *Gefängnis* which

she may have begun in Vira Magadino.³⁴ The novel continues the theme of hopelessness, despair, and frustration, yet interjects moments of religious enlightenment—confused but awkward attempts to offer meaning in a hopeless situation.

The autobiographical *Gefängnis* is a Kafkaesque tale of a woman named Emmy who is arrested on charges of attempting to flee the country. She never faces her accusers; her case is never resolved. During her confinement she has conversations with the other inmates, which reveal her feelings of being trapped in the world whether in or out of prison. She rails against the system of justice, the evils of money, and the callousness of society generally. Ball described *Gefängnis* as “a reaction against the evils of our civilization.”³⁵

Hennings perceives the world as, indeed, unjust; however, she blames humanity rather than God. God is the source of justice, and even if imprisoned, one must seek to understand the source of justice to endure one’s existence. “Where is the God of justice? I wish to criticize God here in this prison. While perhaps we are all under criticism, humanity well deserving to be ignored all together.”³⁶ She equates justice with “cold love” and in a phrase fraught with mysticism declares ecstatically: “Liebe zur Gerechtigkeit, zurchdringe mich!” (“Love for justice, penetrate me!”). The resolution of her novel is sought in God; she remains bitterly despondent about humanity.

Not until the publication of her collected poems *Helle Nacht (Luminous Night)* in 1922, does Hennings finally seem to escape despair. Most of her poems are devotional and concentrate on experiences associated with her conversion to Catholicism, which became official with her baptism in the summer of 1920 (the same year she and Ball married). She had abandoned Dada for Catholicism, and when she came to write *Ruf und Echo: Mein Leben mit Hugo Ball* she viewed her life in terms of a Christian vocabulary. By the time she died in 1948, she regarded Dada as a harmless and trivial call, in light of her conversion.

Nevertheless, Emmy Hennings was as true as any of her comrades to the underlying concerns of the Dada group in Zurich in those formative months in 1916. She performed passionately for crowded audiences, conveying the spirit of Dada in her shrill voice, evocative gestures, and movements. Her angry voice emphasized the skepticism of a band who perceived themselves collectively as a Voltaire against the times. She was both a collaborator and an individualist. She performed to the tune of Ball’s piano and the beat of Huelsenbeck’s drum, but she also read poetry that was her own creation. In addition to her performances, Hennings’ poetry, dolls and puppets were important contributions to the movement, tangible evidence that Emmy Hennings was indeed central to the Dada movement as it emerged in Zurich.

Hennings’s preoccupation with the “Gefängnis” theme in her poetry and prose, in addition to her actual imprisonment, is symptomatic of her captive existence, and explains to some degree at least, her break with the Dada movement. She lived on the verge of poverty most of her life,

was the victim of male domination (even among some of the Dadaists), was a failure as a mother, and as a stage performer was constantly uprooting and moving without destination or purpose. It is not surprising that she viewed life as senseless and oppressive. She welcomed Dada because it gave her the chance to voice her dissatisfaction. Yet Hennings was not liberated by Dada. As Dada did not provide the sense and meaning she sought, she terminated her affiliation with the group. What remains in the history of Dada, through Emmy Hennings’s works, is the voice of a woman, troubled with her existence, who contributed significantly to the birth of the movement. ●

1. Hugo Ball, *Flight Out of Time: A Dada Diary*, trans. Ann Raimés (New York: Viking, 1973), 61.
2. Gerhardt Steinke, *The Life and Works of Hugo Ball* (Paris: Mouton, 1967). Steinke dismisses Emmy Hennings’ “eulogistic” works on Ball: “Emmy Hennings-Ball can hardly be made responsible for her apotheosis of Ball because she was a thorough romanticist by temperament,” 10.
3. Emmy Ball-Hennings, *Ruf und Echo: Mein Leben mit Hugo Ball* (Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1953), 7.
4. Emmy Ball-Hennings, *Das Fluchtige Spiel* (Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1942), 107-27.
5. See *Ruf und Echo*, 54, for Hennings’ account of this event.
6. Peter Selz, *German Expressionist Painting* (Berkeley: University of California, 1957), 24.
7. *Ruf und Echo*, 54-5.
8. Steinke, 118.
9. Hugo Ball, ed., *Cabaret Voltaire* (Zurich, 1916), frontispiece.
10. See Richard Huelsenbeck, *Memoirs of a Dada Drummer* (New York: Viking 1974), 19; and Steinke, 234-39. Steinke stresses the surrogate mother role that Hennings played in Ball’s life because Ball’s mother had never recognized his talent.
11. Huelsenbeck, 17.
12. Quoted in Hans Richter, *Dada: Art and Anti-art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965), 27.
13. Steinke, 10.
14. Huelsenbeck, 16.
15. Richter, 27.
16. Cited in Ball, 63.
17. Hennings’ poems are scattered throughout her writing. *Helle Nacht* (1922) is the main volume of her poetry. She records in *Ruf und Echo* that in 1913 she published her own poems by handwriting them and then fashioning her own silk covers. Ball owned a complete set. *Ruf und Echo*, 38-9.
18. Richter, 23.
19. Ravien Siurlai, “Emmy Hennings,” *Die Aktion: Wochenschrift für Politik, Literatur, und Kunst* (number 23, 1912) 726-27.
20. Huelsenbeck, 16.
21. Emmy Hennings, *Helle Nacht: Gedichte* (Berlin: E. Reiss, 1922), 18. All translations are by the author.
 Am Seil der Hoffnung ziehn wir uns zu Tode.
 Beneidet auf Gefängnishöfen sind die Raben.
 Oft zucken unser nie geküssten Lippen.
 Ohnmächtige Einsamkeit, du bist erhaben.
 Da dürfen Menschen gehen, wohin sie wollen.
 Einmal gehörten wir doch auch zu denen,
 Und jetzt sind wir vergessen und verschollen.
 Nachts traumen wir Wunder auf schmalen Pritschen.
 Tags gehn wir einer gleich scheuen Tieren.
 Wir lugen traurig durchs Eisengitter
 Und haben nichts mehr zu verlieren
 Als unser Leben, das Gott uns gab.
 Der Tod nur liegt in unser Hand.
 Die Freiheit kann uns niemand nehmen:
 Zu gehen in das unbekannte Land.

22. See Ball, 56, where he says: "What we are celebrating is both buffoonery and a requiem mass."
23. *Ibid.*, 28. Ball says: "We will not be able to use the old idealistic Germany as a basis any more either, so we will be completely without any basis."
24. See illustration of Janco's picture *Cabaret Voltaire*, 1916, in Robert Motherwell, *Dada Painters and Poets* (New York: Wittenborn Schultz, 1951), 50. A mask is hanging on the wall.
25. Richter, 27.
26. Ball, 102.
27. Bill Baird, *The Art of the Puppet* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 185.
28. Ball, 61.
29. *Cabaret Voltaire*, 12.
 Wir warten auf ein letztes Aubeuteuer
 Was kümmert uns der Sonnenschein?
 Hochaufgetürmte Tage stürmen ein
 Unruhige Nächte—Beget im Fegefeuer.
 Wir lesen auch nich mehr die Tagespost
 Nur manchmal lächeln wir still in die Kissen,
 Weil wir alles wissen, und gerissen
 Fliegen wir hin und her im Fieberfrost.
 Mögen Menschen eilen und streben
 Heut fällt der Regen noch trüber
 Wir treiben haltlos durchs Leben
 Und schlafen, verwirrt, hinüber . . .
30. *Ibid.*
 Oktaven taumeln Echo nach durch graue Jahre,
 Hochaufgetürmte Tage stürzen ein.
 Dein will ich sein—
 Im Grabe waschsen meine gelben Haare

- Und in Hollunderbäumen leben fremde Völker
 Ein blasser Vorhang raunt von einem Mord
 Zwei Augen irren ruhelos durchs Zimmer
 Gespenster gehen um beim Küchenbord.
 Und kleine Tannen sind verstorbene Kinder.
 Uralte Eichen sind die Seelen müder Greise
 Die flüstern die Geschichte des verfehlten Leben.
 Der Klintekongensee singt eine alte Weise.
 Ich war nicht vor dem bosen Blick gefeit
 Da krochen Neger aus der Wasserkanne,
 Das bunte Bild im Märchenburch, die rote Hanne
 Hat einst versaubert mich für alle Ewigkeit.
31. Steinke, 217-39. Steinke suggests Ball had suffered a nervous breakdown, while John Elderfield (introduction to *Flight Out of Time*) says Ball was only tired.
32. See Ball, 80; and *Ruf und Echo*, 96-7.
33. Richard Sheppard, "Dada and Mysticism: Influences and Affinities," *Dada Spectrum* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1979), 94-5.
34. Emmy Hennings, *Gefängnis* (Berlin: E. Reiss, 1918).
35. Ball, 84.
36. *Gefängnis*, 155.