

REPORT: Library and Archive Fellowship (Short-Term), Stiftung Arp, e.V.,

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I used the one-month period of my ARP-fellowship in June-July 2017 to conduct research for my book project, *Definite Means: Modernism's Cut-Outs*. *Definite Means* focuses on the "cut-out" practices of three major modernist sculptors: Auguste Rodin, Hans Arp, and Henri Matisse. The book constitutes a significant revision and expansion of my dissertation on Arp, which situates Arp as a central and pivotal figure within a longer story of the cut-out in the twentieth century. Thus, it requires me to renew and deepen my engagement with the archival materials relating to Hans Arp and his life and oeuvre held by the Stiftung.

This was not my first visit to the Stiftung, but this was my first time visiting the Stiftung in its new permanent home in Berlin. I have previously visited the Stiftung in its former homes in Rolandseck (in 2011) and in Kaiserdamm locations (in 2013). The most valuable thing that this fellowship offered me, which made this visit different from my prior two and which really benefitted my research, was the luxury of a month-long stay. On prior visits, I had by necessity of time constraints focused on collecting scans and images of materials to review once I returned home. My month-long stay at the Stiftung, by contrast, allowed me not only to take the time to sit and read correspondence and books while in the archives, but also to follow my nose and pursue leads as I worked.

In my application, I stated that I had three main purposes for my research at the Stiftung: to deepen my research into Arp's wood reliefs, which are the focus of the book's second chapter; to solidify and substantiate connections between Arp's cut-out practice and the hundreds of cut-outs of female nudes that Rodin made and kept in his studio around 1900; and to find evidence for my intuition that Arp's biomorphic abstractions and cut-outs played an important but overlooked role in Matisse's earliest conceptions of and experiments with cut-outs.

In the end, two main pathways of research proved the most productive during my time at the Stiftung: First, I firmed up my understanding of the sources about Arp's relationships with Ivo Hauptmann and Auguste Rodin, as a way of learning more about the object I consider Arp's first cut-out, *Female Nude* (1911). Second, I gathered materials that will help me to gain a better grasp on Arp's relationship to the medium and practice of photomontage.

I first set out in search of documentation that would help me to solidify and substantiate connections I make in the first chapter of *Definite Means* between Arp and Rodin. This chapter argues that Rodin's hundreds of cut-outs, which have received little to no scholarly attention in the English-speaking world, formed the basis for a proto-sculptural drawing practice and a related notion of the erotic that was central to Rodin's thinking and work. Upon arriving at the Stiftung, I went in search of additional support for my claim in that chapter that Arp's encounter with the controversial exhibition of Rodin's erotic watercolors in Weimar in 1906, while an art student, may have had a greater impact on the young Arp's abstract approach to the figure than has heretofore been recognized. My discussion of Rodin's cut-outs sets the stage and the terms for a discussion of Arp's decision, in 1911, to cut out his own drawing of a *Female Nude*—importantly, one year before the "invention" of *collage* in Paris by Picasso and Braque.

In spite of all I have written about Arp's first cut-out, a number of questions lingered around this object. *Female Nude* is an object that took shape in stages: there is the moment of Arp's drawing, which I estimate to have occurred around 1907; the moment of cutting out the figure; and the moment(s) of mounting that cut-out on not just one but two quadrangular supports. Can we be certain that the cutting out and mounting of *Female Nude* happened at the same moment, by Arp, or might Hauptmann have made alterations to the object in the several decades it remained in his possession? Moreover, did Arp consider *Female Nude* a finished work or a study? While I didn't find answers to all of my questions about *Female Nude*, a letter I found in the archives helped me get closer: in a letter to Stefanie Poley, Marguerite Hagenbach confirms (citing a conversation with François Arp) that Arp did indeed have a practice "already at that time" of cutting out his own drawings and making collages from them. In the letter, which concerns the dating of two early works by Arp from 1903 and 1908, respectively, Marguerite remarks: "Interessant ist, dass Arp *schon damals* Zeichnungen von seiner Hand ausgeschnitten hat, um sie als Collage neu zusammensetzen. Diese Technik hat er ja bis ans Ende seines Lebens ausgeübt." (Marguerite Hagenbach to Stefanie Poley, 14. Oktober 1975, P5/43(1), emphasis added).

Given the provenance of *Female Nude*, I also read the correspondence between Hauptmann and Arp (Hauptmann, Ivo, H 4 (1-16); 1055-1967) from the 1950s, most of which concerned Arp's contribution to a book on Hauptmann being prepared by Rolf Italiaander. I was able to quickly locate Italiaander's volume, a completely new research find for me, in the Stiftung's library. Besides containing an essay of Arp's recollections of his Weimar days with

Hauptmann, which contributed to my understanding of their friendship, the book also reprints invaluable correspondence documenting Hauptmann's connections before 1910 with Rilke, Henry Van de Velde, and Harry Graf von Kessler. The correspondence with Rilke in particular confirmed that, not only did Hauptmann visit Rilke at the Hotel Biron in 1903 (when he was Rodin's secretary and writing his book on Rodin) and view some "Rodin-Blättern" there, but furthermore that, from about 1909 to 1911, Hauptmann and his soon-to-be wife, the ceramist Erica von Scheel, had studios in the Palais Biron and grew quite close with Rilke during that time. ("Freundschaft mit Rainer Maria Rilke, der mit uns, Erica von Scheel und mir, im selben Haus wohnt, einem Nebenhaus des Palais Biron in dem Rodin damals sein Atelier hatte, das später Musée Rodin geworden ist," Italiaander, 9; "Es blieb nicht aus, daß man sich täglich sprach," Italiaander, 15;). Further letters published in Italiaander confirm that the couple stayed in touch with Rilke once they returned to Germany around 1911.

The fact that Hauptmann owned *Female Nude* from the time of its execution has always raised the alluring possibility that Arp executed it and cut it out while visiting Rodin in Paris. So, I also used my time in the archives to try to pin down with greater specificity the date(s) and details of Arp's visit(s) to Rodin's studio in Paris, in order to ascertain at what points in time Arp could have seen or became aware of Rodin's studio cut-outs. Much secondary literature on Arp agrees that Arp visited Rodin's studio, but differ on the date and location of the visit. Robertson holds that Arp visited Rodin's studio in the suburb of Meudon as early as 1905. Andreotti follows Poley's suggestion that Arp visited Rodin's Paris studio in the Hotel Biron in 1910 or 1911, possibly while visiting Hauptmann, who also had a studio in the Hotel Biron. according to both Andreotti and Poley, Arp visited Hauptmann there "repeatedly" (Robertson, 16; Andreotti 14, 37n18; Poley, 24). Given Rodin's prominence and Hauptmann's enduring friendship with Rilke (who worked as Rodin's secretary and published a monograph on him in those years), it is difficult to imagine that the two aspiring artists would not have paid the older sculptor a visit.

In a letter to Poley I found on this visit, Hagenbach asserts that Arp met Rodin at the Hotel Biron and was introduced to Rodin by Rilke ("Arp hat damals Rilkes Bekanntschaft gemacht und würde von ihm bei Rodin eingeführt.") Poley also must have raised the possibility with Hagenbach that Hauptmann may have acted as an intermediary or catalyst of this meeting, since Hagenbach writes in the same letter: "Arp war einige Male vor seinem Besuch des Ateliers Julien kurz in Paris. Er ist viel herumgereist und ich weiss, dass er Rilke und Rodin

besucht hat. Dass damals Ivo Hauptmann auch in Paris war, war mir nicht bekannt.”
(Hagenbach to Poley, 28.2.76, Stefanie Poley P5/62(2))

I also found some other leads about Arp’s relationship to Rodin and his 1906 exhibition in Weimar that merit further research. From the biographical timeline in Pech, I learned that Arp published an exhibition review in *Der Elsässer* around 1907 regarding at least one of the exhibitions organized by Harry Graf Kessler in Weimar in his student years. I was also able to view for the first time an intriguing envelope among Arp’s possessions—possibly used to store drawings—on which Arp scrawled the label “*Rodin Rodin*.” This homemade envelope, combined with the information that Arp purchased two drawings by Rodin that formed the basis of his collection, makes me more curious than ever about which drawings by Rodin, if any, Arp may have owned, and what became of them. I was also able to acquire a copy, from the Stiftung’s files, of an article about Arp and Rodin by Christian Derouet and I learned from Maike Steinkamp of an exhibition on Arp and Rodin, slated for 2019-20 at the Fondation Beyeler, being developed by Raphaël Bouvier.

Along the way, I also collected textual sources that will add a new dimension to my analysis of Arp’s reproductive rhetoric in this opening chapter of the book. While I have written at length in my dissertation about Arp’s rhetoric of sexual and asexual reproduction, I noticed on this visit a motif of breastfeeding in Arp’s writings about his youth. From Rudolf Suter’s biography, I learned of a “legend” Arp told “about his childhood” in his poem *Alter Fischmarkt*: following the birth of his younger brother, Arp recalls entering his room to peek at him, only to find a “mighty Alsatian wet nurse, with even more immense monstrous breasts” who, when Arp tried to get a peek at his brother, “laughed and screamed / took a breast in her hand and splashed me / with a ray of her milk in the face. / I fled horrified out of the room.” (Suter, 18n4, my translation). Curiously, Arp also uses a metaphor of breastfeeding to convey his resigned condition upon arriving in Weimar to take up his studies, after leaving Paris abruptly at his father’s insistence: “Verzweifelt, hoffnungslos, todestrunken kam ich in Weimar an. Ich wollte, wenn nicht meinem Leben ein Ende setzen, so doch etwas ähnliches unternehmen, um mich in einen dem Tode verwandten Dauerschlaf zurückzuziehen. Ich wollte Schlaf saugen und saugen. Ich saugte und schmatzte Schlaf, so wie ein Kind am Busen einer guten Amme Milch saugt.” (Italiaander, 21). These textual sources will, I think, help to provide context for an analysis in my book of the fascinating *Objet à traire* (Object to milk, 1925), which I was able to study for the first time in the Otterlo exhibition.

The secondary focus of my time at the Stiftung was to collect any information and documentation I could find that would help me to better understand Arp's relationship to photography and photomontage. I intended for this research to inform my revisions of the catalogue essay I provided for the Nasher in November, in which I argue that Arp mobilizes the cardboard cut-out as a "sur-real" layer that he can layer upon the "real" in a manner akin to photomontage superpositioning. While some of this research did make it into that essay, I realized since my visit that the subject merits further exploration and may constitute an article or a new section in *Definite Means*. I spent time brushing up on Arp's important moment of collaboration with Max Ernst on the *Fatagaga* collages/montages in Cologne in 1920-21. Maike Steinkamp pointed me toward Pech's catalogue for the collaborative exhibition between the Ernst Museum in Brühl and the Arp Museum in Rolandseck, in particular Adrian Sudhalter's essay about the *Fatagaga* period in that volume ("Arp, Ernst, und das Phantom der Photographie.") Sudhalter's argument that "Ernst chose a distinctly different approach and opposed the syntax of the fragmentation of the Berlin Dadaists with an aesthetics of unity, of the seamlessness of the visual field" will be important for me to consider as I write about the relationship between Arp's cut-out practice – which, I argue similarly, also eschew the Cubist and the Berlin Dadaist emphasis on fragmentation – and photomontage (Pech, 133). I was had the opportunity to study the fascinating *Fatagaga* photomontages and collages by Ernst and Arp in the Stiftung's collection, including *Die Anatomie*. And, in the Stiftung's library, I was able to consult Carl-Albrecht Haienlein's very thorough *Dada Photographie und Photocollage*.

My intention, stated in my application, to deepen my research on Arp's wood reliefs took somewhat of a backseat to these other research avenues, partly because so many of the wood reliefs in the Stiftung's collection were on loan to the exhibition *Arp: The Poetry of Forms* at the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo. I did, however, travel to Otterlo, where I had the opportunity to view several important wood reliefs that I have never had the opportunity to see in person, including *Oiseau hippique* (1923) and *Handfrucht* (1929). In the archives, I also had the chance to pore over the very important new materials that came out of from Maike Steinkamp's "Oral History Project" with Marcel Schneider in 2016, which I am still working through, but I know will be invaluable to the second chapter of my book. In the course of my research, I also came across an image of an early wooden relief by Arp that I had never seen before, as it is not included in the Rau catalogue raisonné and only survives through the photograph (Sudhalter, 68).

Other textual sources helped me to gain a better understanding of Arp's activity in the 1910s and his relationship to Picasso and Cubism. In one document, Arp sheds light on the timing of his first meeting with Picasso, which he dates to 1914 in a café in Paris. To my knowledge, this is the only source in which Arp addresses meeting or knowing Picasso so directly. Arp also intertwines this meeting in an interesting way with his early (and little-studied) activity making jewelry or "bijoux." In a 1961 letter to *Time-Life International* in Paris, Arp relates the (probably embellished) story of this first meeting, claiming that he gifted Picasso the "bijou" clipped to his tie after the artist complimented it, out of the blue, from his neighboring café table. This was the first time I had come across any reference to a larger practice of jewelry- or brooch-making beginning as early as 1914 (I knew only of Arp making an engagement ring for Sophie Taeuber in 1922). Arp's letters with Hilla von Rebay, which I was able to study in Raoul Schrott's *Dada 15/25*, also provide crucial and rare documentation of Arp's thinking around 1915. (I have viewed the originals in the Guggenheim Museum's collections but, as they are in very difficult handwriting, Schrott's transcriptions are helpful.)

Conducting research with the Stiftung's focused yet comprehensive library close at hand allowed me to bring myself up-to-date with recent European publications on Arp (Suter and Kornhoff, e.g.) and biomorphism (Juler, e.g.), and recent European exhibitions of Arp's work (Guy; Smolinska and Steinkamp; Jach; Pech) and even with the publications for recent exhibitions in the US that I hadn't been able to see (Burchhart; Sudhalter). The Stiftung's library also enabled me to access several European publications difficult or impossible to access in my region of the United States (Bleikasten; Haeinlein; Schrott). Aimé Bleikasten's "Premières Publications d'Arp en Alsace" (in Béhar) helped me get a better handle on the early criticism and poetry Arp published in Strasbourg between 1903 and 1907. While not a new publication, it is a difficult one to find in the US. From the Stiftung's files, I was able to acquire a copy of one of Arp's earliest poems published in *Hazweiss* in 1903, and, from Bleikasten's article, I was able to collect citations that I can use as leads for future research in the archives in Strasbourg.

I benefitted immensely during my visit from the assistance of Maike Steinkamp and Jana Teuscher who proved to be gracious and solicitous hosts. Both Maike and Jana went beyond the call of duty to help me decipher some difficult handwritten correspondence and to consult on translations, including over e-mail since I returned to the US. The ARP-fellowship also enabled me to connect with a network of Arp scholars—not only concurrent fellows Alessandro Ferraro and Cécile, but also past researchers such as Catherine Craft and Robert Wiesenberger.

The new Berlin location of the Stiftung also allowed me to see shows and pursue other aspects of my research at neighboring institutions. I was able to view the substantial collection of Matisse cut-out maquettes at the Museum Berggruen, which certainly merits a return visit for research. I found the large, skylit, warehouse space on Wiebestrasse to be a very hospitable setting for renewing my research on Arp. Having all the Stiftung's library books now catalogued in a database, which I was able to search with the assistance of Jana Teuscher, also allowed for a smoother research process. The addition of wireless internet access at the Stiftung also enhanced my research experience. It helped me to prioritize my time at the Stiftung by allowing me to check the relative availability of books and avant-garde journals in the Stiftung's collection in the US and online. Having internet also helped me to coordinate with my family members who accompanied me on the trip and to plan my side-trip to Otterlo, which also greatly enhanced my research experience.

Best of all, the numerous sculptures in open storage at the Stiftung's new location meant I could roam through and look at the artworks when taking breaks from other research tasks. This allowed works that I had seen before to strike me in new ways and even allowed me to make new discoveries. For instance, I noticed for the first time a plaster from 1966, which Arp appears to have sawn halfway through before abandoning the saw, which remains embedded in the sculpture. Whether the story that Marguerite Hagenbach tells in a letter to Johannes Wasmuth (cited in Poley) – that, upon leaving for his final trip to Basel before his death, Arp instructed his assistant in Locarno to "Leave the plaster with the unused saw in it the studio until I return" ("Lassen Sie den Gips mit der Säge unbenutzt im Atelier, bis ich nach Locarno zurückkomme"), the notion that Arp's final artistic act could have been one of unfinished cutting piqued my interest for future research and writing. The mysterious "Säge-Plastik" compelled me to examine the letters between Marguerite Hagenbach and Stefanie Poley, in order to determine the origin and authenticity of the story Poley relates in her entry on the object (Stefanie Poley P5 (1-71) 1970-77). Unfortunately, I was not able to locate the letter about the "Säge-Plastik" from Hagenbach to Johannes Wasmuth from April 14, 1976 that Poley cites in her catalogue, so this remains a thread for future research.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to access the updated facility and new resources at the Stiftung Arp. I thank Maike and the board of the Stiftung for making it possible through an ARP-fellowship.

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