

# From Cabaret Voltaire - Issue 1

- Hugo Ball

When I founded the Cavaret Voltaire, I was sure that there must be a few young people in Switzerland who like me were interested not only in enjoying their independence but also in giving proof of it. I went to Herr Ephraim, the owner of the Meierei, and said, "Herr Ephraim, please let me have your room. I want to start a night-club." Herr Ephraim agreed and gave me the room. And I went to some people I knew and said, "Please give me a picture, or a drawing, or an engraving. I should like to put on an exhibition in my night-club." I went to the friendly Zürich press and said, "Put in some announcements. There is going to be an international cabaret. We shall do great things." And they gave me pictures and they put in my announcements. So on 5th February we had a cabaret. Mademoiselle Hennings and Mademoiselle Leconte sang French and Danish chansons. Herr Tristan Tzara recited Rumanian poetry. A balalaika orchestra played delightful folk-songs and dances.

I received much support and encouragement from

Herr M. Slodki, who designed the poster, and from Herr Hans Arp, who supplied some Picassos, as well as works of his own, and obtained for me pictures by his friends O. van Rees and Artur Segall. Much support also from Messrs. Tristan Tzara, Marcel Janco and Max Oppenheimer, who readily agreed to take part in the cabaret. We organized a Russian evening and, a little later, a French one (works by Apollinaire, Max Jacob, André Salmon, A. Jarry, Laforgue and Rimbaud). On 26th February Richard Huelsenbeck arrived from Berlin and on 30th March we performed some stupendous Negro music (toujours avec la grosse caisse: boum boum boum boum - drabatja mo gere drabatja mo bonooooooooo - ). Monsieur Laban was present at the performance and was very enthusiastic. Herr Tristan Tzara was the initiator of a performance by Messrs. Tzara, Huelsenbeck and Janco (the first in Zürich and in the world) of simultaneist verse by Messrs. Henri Barzun and Fernand Divoire, as well as a poème simultané of his own composition, which is reproduced on pages six and seven. The present booklet is published by us with the support of our friends in France, Italy and Russia. It is intended to present to the Public the activities and interests of the Cabaret Voltaire, which has as its sole purpose to draw attention, across the barriers of war and nationalism, to the few independent spirits who live for other ideals. The next

objective of the artists who are assembled here is the publication of a revue internationale. La revue paraîtra à Zurich et portera le nom "Dada" ("Dada").  
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Zürich, 15th May 1916