

# Georges Hugnet:

## An Inventory of His Papers in the Carlton Lake Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

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### Descriptive Summary

<b>Creator:</b>	Hugnet, Georges, 1906-1974
<b>Title:</b>	Carlton Lake Collection of Georges Hugnet Papers
<b>Dates:</b>	1920-1971
<b>Extent:</b>	18.5 boxes (7.77 linear feet).
<b>Abstract:</b>	Composed largely of letters received from prominent French artists of the 20th century, the papers of French poet and critic Georges Hugnet document his career and personal life. One notable work contained in these papers is a manuscript of <i>Non vouloir</i> , one of the earliest French Resistance publications.
<b>Call Number:</b>	Manuscript Collection MS-04960
<b>Languages</b>	Material written in French and English.
<b>Note:</b>	We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which provided funds for the processing and cataloging of this collection.
<b>Access</b>	Open for research

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### Administrative Information

<b>Acquisition</b>	Purchases and gifts of Carlton Lake 1973, 1974, 1985, 1987, 2002 (R6840, R6841, G2284, R11331, G12083)
<b>Processed by</b>	Monique Daviau, Richard Workman, and Catherine Stollar, 2004
<b>Repository:</b>	<a href="#">Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin</a>

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## Biographical Sketch

Georges Hugnet, French poet and critic, was born in Paris in 1906. He spent most of his early childhood in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and in 1913 returned to Paris to attend boarding school at Saint-Louis-de-Gonazgue. He later attended collège at Janson-de-Sailly in Saint-Malo, the childhood home of his mother and favorite vacation spot during his youth. Youthful exuberance and a penchant for pranks often caused trouble for young Georges, including an incident when he is said to have played *Le Pélican*, a fox-trot, during one of the religious services at his collège in Saint-Malo. Hugnet's early rebelliousness eventually developed into a combative, stubborn nature causing quarrels with publishers, other artists, poets, friends, and family throughout his life.

Hugnet was a man of many talents and dabbled in a variety of artistic pursuits including poetry, editing, publishing, translating, film and play writing, acting, rare book collecting, and book binding design until his death in 1974.

Influential friends and mentors played an important role in Hugnet's career. In 1920, he developed a friendship with his downstairs neighbor Marcel Jouhandeau. Jouhandeau influenced the young poet Hugnet and introduced Hugnet to his hero Max Jacob. During this time, Hugnet was also befriended by a number of other influential artists of the early 20th century, namely Joan Miró, Marcel Duchamp, Pablo Picasso, Tristan Tzara, Man Ray, and Jean Cocteau. With financial backing from his father, a furniture manufacturer, Hugnet established the publishing company Les Editions de la Montagne with the intent of publishing his own works and the work of his close friends including Tristan Tzara, Pierre de Massot, and Gertrude Stein.

It was Virgil Thomson who introduced Gertrude Stein and Hugnet in 1926. Stein and Hugnet's short-lived, intense relationship, lasting until 1930, ended in a quarrel over the title page of *Enfances*, a collaborative project between the two authors. Hugnet originally wrote the poems of *Enfances* in French and Stein intended to translate the poems into English. The partnership failed when Stein's "translations" became "reflections" and she demanded equal billing on the title page. Hugnet refused and the partnership, as well as the friendship, ended. In 1931, Stein published *Before the Flowers of Friendship Faded Friendship Faded*, her response to Hugnet's then unpublished *Enfances*.

In the 1930s Hugnet became involved with the Surrealist movement. André Breton, the self-declared "Pope" of the Surrealist movement, became interested in Hugnet after reading an article titled "Spirit of Dada in Painting" that Hugnet had written. When a mutual friend of both men, Tristan Tzara, introduced them, Hugnet became one of the Surrealists. He continued contributing to the Surrealist movement until 1939 when Breton "excommunicated" Hugnet for his failure to cease his friendship with former surrealist Paul Éluard.

The 1940s brought much change to Hugnet's life. Germany occupied France early in the decade prompting Hugnet to join the French Resistance. He put his intellectual efforts towards the Resistance and published *Non vouloir*, one of the first Resistance pieces published in France. In 1940, Hugnet also married his first wife Germaine Pied; their marriage would last for ten years.

In 1950, Hugnet married Myrtille Hubert, a young woman of seventeen. The following year, Hugnet and Myrtille's first and only son Nicolas Hugnet was born.

Until his death in 1974, Hugnet continued to publish a few new works and republish new editions of his former works. But mostly he concentrated on trading and collecting rare books and manuscripts from his friends in the French literary world.

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## Sources:

Lake, Carlton. *Confessions of a Literary Archaeologist*. New York: New Directions, 1990.

Mellow, James R. *Charmed Circle: Gertrude Stein and Company*. New York: Praeger, 1974.

Phillips, J. *Georges Hugnet, 1906-1974: "le pantalon de la fauvette" du Dictionnaire abrégé du Surréalisme: étude et choix de texts*. Paris: Letters Modernes. 1991.

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## Scope and Contents

Handwritten and typed manuscripts, correspondence, printed material, photos, collages, and artwork document Georges Hugnet's life and work from 1920-1971. The papers are organized into four series: I. Works, 1929-1954 (0.5 boxes), II. Letters, 1931-1971 (1 box), III. Recipient, 1920-1970 (15 boxes), and IV. Other Papers, 1929-1967 (2 boxes).

The Works series is composed of original works by Georges Hugnet. Included in this series is the handwritten manuscript for *Non vouloir*.

Letters written by Hugnet in Series II. are dominated by those to Germaine (Pied) Hugnet, his first wife.

The Recipient series, forming the bulk of the papers, includes letters from Paul Éluard, Marcelle Ferry, Valentine Hugo, Man Ray, Virgil Thomson, and Alice B. Toklas, and richly demonstrates the friendships and business acquaintances of George Hugnet.

The final series, Other Papers, contains artwork, building plans, personal documents, printed materials, and documents written by other individuals, either as works or correspondence.

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## Related Material

Other Georges Hugnet materials are available at the Ransom Center. Letters between Georges Hugnet and Gertrude Stein are found in the Gertrude Stein segment of the Carlton Lake Collection as well as proofs for Stein and Hugnet's attempted collaboration *Enfances*. Valentine Hugo's papers, also in the Carlton Lake Collection, contain correspondence between Hugnet and Hugo. The Photography Collection has an exhibition guide from the Galerie Zabriskie titled "Georges Hugnet, artist, poet, critic: an exhibition of surrealist collages including original works". An audio recording of Hugnet reading *Tout beau mon coeur* was transferred to the Sound Recordings Collection. Additionally, multiple books were transferred from the Georges Hugnet Papers to the Ransom Center Library. Most of the transferred books contain autographed inscriptions for Georges or Germaine Hugnet.

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## Index Terms

### Correspondents

Eluard, Paul, 1895-1952.  
Ferry, Marcelle.  
Hugo, Valentine, 1887-1968.  
Man Ray, 1890-1976.  
Picabia, Francis, 1879-1953.  
Queneau, Raymond, 1903-1976.  
Toklas, Alice B.  
Thomson, Virgil, 1896- .  
Tzara, Tristan, 1896-1963.

### Subjects

French poetry.  
Surrealism--France.  
World War, 1939-1945--Underground literature--France.

### Document Types

Photographs.  
Collages.



**Series I. Works, 1929-1954**

A-Z	<b>Box-Folder 94.4</b>
<i>Ici la voix</i> (1954)	
Page proofs	<b>Box-Folder 94.5</b>
Galley proofs	<b>Galley g4</b>
<i>Jean Arp</i> handwritten manuscript with autograph revisions	<b>Box-Folder 94.6</b>
<i>Oiseaux ne copiez personne</i> (1946), handwritten and typed manuscripts and drafts with corrections	<b>Box-Folder 94.7</b>
<i>Tout beau mon coeur</i> (1952), handwritten and typed manuscripts, carbon copies, corrected page proofs, and printed books	<b>Box-Folder 94.8-9</b>

**Series II. Letters, 1931-1971**

H-R	<b>Box-Folder 94.10</b>
Hugnet, Germaine	
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1941-1949	<b>Box-Folder 95.2</b>
1950-1954	<b>Box-Folder 95.3</b>
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1961	<b>Box-Folder 95.8</b>
1962	<b>Box-Folder 95.9</b>
1963-1971	<b>Box-Folder 95.10</b>
Lévesque, Jacques Henry, 1931-1933, nd	<b>Box-Folder 95.11</b>

**Series III. Recipient, 1920-1970**

A-Allan, Blaise	<b>Box-Folder 96.1</b>
Alq-Ana	<b>Box-Folder 96.2</b>
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Bou-Bre	<b>Box-Folder 97.3</b>
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Various authors, *L'Usage de la parole*

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