SAMPLER

THREE

HUGE

NOVELS
Also in this series *

Selected Poems

Adam / Adán
Square Horizon / Horizon carré
Equatorial & other poems
Arctic Poems / Poemas árticos
Paris 1925: Ordinary Autumn & All of a Sudden / Automne régulier & Tout à coup
Skyquake / Temblor de cielo
Citizen of Oblivion / El ciudadano del olvido
Seeing and feeling / Ver y palpar
Last Poems / Últimos poemas
Uncollected Poems / Poemas inéditos

El Cid / Mío Cid Campeador
Cagliostro

Manifestos / Manifétes
Adverse Winds / Vientos contrarios

* Not all of these titles are available at the time of publication.
Huge Novels

Vicente Huidobro & Hans Arp

translated from Spanish by Tony Frazer

Shearsman Books
First published in the United Kingdom in 2020 by
Shearsman Books Ltd
PO Box 4239
Swindon
SN3 9FN
Shearsman Books Ltd Registered Office
30–31 St. James Place, Mangotsfield, Bristol BS16 9JB
(this address not for correspondence)


Translation copyright © 2020 by Tony Frazer
Editorial matter copyright © Shearsman Books, 2020

First published with these contents, in Spanish, as *Tres inmensas novelas*
by Ediciones Zig Zag, Santiago, 1934.
A French translation of the first three stories, by Rilka Walter,
appeared in Paris in 1946 under the title *Trois nouvelles exemplaires*.

**Acknowledgements**
We are grateful to the Stiftung Arp, e.V., Remagen and Berlin,
for permission to publish the three jointly-authored stories in this volume.
CONTENTS

Introduction 10

Vicente Huidobro & Hans Arp

Tres novelas ejemplares / Three Exemplary Novels

16 Salvad vuestros ojos / Save Your Eyes 17
28 El jardinero del Castillo de Medianoche / The Gardener from the Castle of Midnight 29
40 La cigüeña encadenada / The Stork in Chains 41

Vicente Huidobro

Dos ejemplares de novela / Two Examples of Novels

58 Carta a Hans Arp / Letter to Hans Arp 59
62 El gato con botas y Simbad el marino o Badsim el marrano / Puss in Boots and Sinbad the Sailor, or Badsin the Tailor 63
80 La misión del gangster o La lámpara maravillosa / The Gangster’s Mission, or The Magic Lamp 81

Glossary 96
The first three stories in this volume – the *Tres novelas ejemplares* – were written in French by Huidobro and Arp while on holiday with their families in Arcachon (in the Gironde, south of Bordeaux) in 1931, French being the only language the two had in common. There is very little information in the public domain about the original manuscript of the book but it must have been lost before the end of World War II. The stories remained unpublished until 1935, when Huidobro placed his Spanish translation of the originals (together with two additional stories of his own, the book otherwise not being long enough) with ZigZag, a Santiago publisher. Those translations appear to date from 1932, judging by the letter to Arp included here as a prelude to the second half of the book. The original book – that is, the jointly-authored stories only – finally appeared in France in 1946 with the Parisian publisher, Fontaine, in their ‘Collection “L’age d’or” dirigée par Henri Parisot’, a series devoted to surrealist books, in a re-translation from Huidobro’s Spanish text by Rilka Walter, as the original text was by then no longer extant.

Thus, we present our translation here of, and together with, the 1935 Spanish text, although the latter has also been compared to later reprintings, in the 1966 *Obras completas*, and the 2007 edition of the two-handed stories by Abada Editores, Madrid. There appear to be two previous translations into English, one from the French by Joachim Neugroschel (in *Arp on Arp*; Viking, Documents of 20th Century Art, 1972; 2nd edition, as *Collected French Writings*, MIT Press, 1980), and one from the Spanish by Tom Raworth. However, this latter version – which covered all five stories, unlike the Neugroschel translation – appeared only in a very limited edition issued by Face Press in 2017, under the title *Save Your Eyes*, where the author is listed as Raworth rather than Huidobro / Arp, even though the book’s blurb clearly states that it is a translation.

To add one further wrinkle to the story, in 2005 or thereabouts, Tom Raworth and I discussed the possibility of including at least some of that translation – although at that stage, he did not possess a copy of it – in a book to be published here. The Huidobro volume that I then envisaged did not come together, however, until 2019 – and by then it had turned into a large *Selected Poems*, with two manifestos thrown in
Introduction

for good measure; not, then, a book that could easily have encompassed these stories as well.

The original title of the work, and here the title of the first section, which contains the jointly-authored stories, was *Tres novelas ejemplares* [Three Exemplary Novels], which one must assume to be a playful reference to Cervantes (*Novelas ejemplares*, published 1613) and perhaps also to Miguel de Unamuno’s *Tres novelas ejemplares y un prólogo* (1920), the title of which was certainly a deliberate echo of Cervantes. The Unamuno was available in French translation by 1925, and thus could possibly have been known to Arp also. The fact that the stories themselves show no trace of influence from Cervantes or Unamuno is presumably part of the joke. One should also clarify that *novela* means both “novel” and “novella” in Spanish, although the latter is more often referred to as “novela corta” (short novel). The title of the 1946 French edition has it as “novellas”, because the French word *nouvelles* is used, rather than *romans*.

*Ejemplar*, as an adjective, means “exemplary”, and that is how the Cervantes title is always translated. Huidobro plays with the word in his solo contribution to the book, titling his pair of stories collectively as *Dos ejemplares de novela*, using the fact that the noun, *el ejemplar*, means “specimen”, or a “copy” (as in “a copy of a book”). I have translated it as “example” here, which is slightly less accurate than some other possibilities, but which affords a useful echo of the first subtitle.

The stories themselves, and especially the jointly-authored ones, are almost textbook examples of Surrealism: whimsical stories with echoes of fairytales, and what looks at times like a kind of chain composition, where each author writes a line, or sentence (or part thereof) and hands the text back to his partner, who then does likewise. In any event, they are splendidly silly, and I hope that they will be of interest to anglophone readers. The text here follows the 1935 edition, albeit corrected in places where the original had obvious typographic errors or failed to get French accents right – the Chilean typesetters seem to have been confused by grave accents in particular. A few errant spellings have been left as such and are explained in the Glossary at the end of the volume. In perhaps a dozen cases I have departed from the strict sense of the original text, where I have tried to replicate, as well as I could, the wordplay in which Huidobro indulged.
Huidobro had arrived in Europe from Chile in late 1916 and promptly made a name for himself in vanguard circles in Paris, mixing with the leaders of the new movement in poetry (Apollinaire, Jacob, Reverdy, Tzara), befriending many of the following wave (Cocteau, Cézanne among the French, Gerardo Diego, Juan Larrea and others in Spain), mixing with the most forward-thinking artists (Picasso, Gris, Picabia, Arp, Delaunay, Lipchitz) and composers (above all, Edgard Varèse who set Huidobro’s words to music). In a bewildering period of 24 months – the calendar years 1917–18 – he published two full collections, Horizon carré [Square Horizon; in French] and Poemas árticos [Arctic Poems; in Spanish], as well as four chapbooks, two in Spanish, and two in French.

In the aftermath of the war, Huidobro calmed down a little, although he remained busy writing, publishing poems in magazines, editing magazines, writing polemics and manifestos and turning his hand to prose and to screenplays for silent films. He published a short selected poems in French in 1921, Saisons choisies [Selected Seasons], and travelled throughout Europe giving readings and lectures.

1925 saw the publication of two books of poems in French, Automne régulier [Ordinary Autumn] and Tout à coup [All of a Sudden], along with a volume of manifestos (Manifestes), and a year later, when the author was back in his native Chile, there followed a volume of essays and aphorisms, Vientos contrarios [Adverse Winds]. The 1920s also saw the publication of two novels, one play, and an anti-British diatribe, Finis Britanniae; in 1931 Huidobro published the books I consider to be his masterpieces, Altazor and Temblor de cielo [Skyquake] in Madrid. Although he often railed against Surrealism in manifestos and essays, his work from 1925 onwards is indelibly marked by it, and Hans Arp, his partner in this volume, was very much part of the movement, as well as its forerunner, Dada.

Hans Arp was born in Strasbourg, Alsace, the son of a French mother and a German father, during the period following the Franco-Prussian War when Alsace was part of the German Empire, France having ceded it after defeat in 1871. Alsace returned to France in 1918 as part of the reparations after World War I, was again swallowed up by the Third Reich in 1940, and returned finally to France in 1945 after a public plebiscite. Arp referred to himself as Jean in France and Hans in German-speaking countries.

After leaving the École des Arts et Métiers [School of Arts and Crafts] in Strasbourg in 1904, he went to Paris where he published his first
Introduction

poems. From 1905–1907, Arp studied at the Weimar Kunsthalle [Art School] in Germany, and returned to Paris in 1908, where he attended the Académie Julian. Arp was a founder-member of the Moderne Bund [Modern Alliance] in Lucerne, participating in their exhibitions from 1911 to 1913. In 1912, he met Vasily Kandinsky in Munich, and exhibited with Kandinsky’s influential Blaue Reiter [Blue Rider] group. Later that year, he took part in a major exhibition in Zurich, with Matisse, Delaunay and Kandinsky. In 1913, his work was taken up by Herwarth Walden, the Berlin dealer and magazine editor who at the time was one of the most significant arbiters of taste in the European avant-garde.

In order to escape from the war (and presumably also to avoid any complications caused by his double nationality) Arp moved to Switzerland in 1915. It transpired that Zurich was the place to be in 1915–16. Hugo Ball opened the Cabaret Voltaire in 1916, where the future Dada group came together: Arp, Richard Huelsenbeck, Hans Richter, Tristan Tzara, among others. In 1920, Arp set up the Cologne Dada group with Max Ernst and Alfred Grünwald. In 1925, his work also appeared in the first Surrealist exhibition at the Galerie Pierre in Paris, thus ensuring that Arp formed a bridge between the two groups. In 1926, Arp relocated to Meudon, near Paris. In 1931, he left the Surrealists to join the Paris-based constructivist group Abstraction-Création with their associated journal transition, edited by Eugène Jolas, and in which Huidobro also published. His work began to change around this time from collages and bas-reliefs to include bronze and stone sculptures, and he also produced several small works made from multiple elements that the viewer could rearrange into new configurations, thus ensuring that Dada chance operations continued to play a role in his work. For the rest of of his life he was regarded as a major figure in contemporary sculpture, his biomorphic forms exerting considerable influence on both sides of the Atlantic.

He wrote poetry and essays throughout his life, both in French and in German, much of which has been translated into English, although more so from French than from German.

Tony Frazer
June 2020
HANS ARP y VICENTE HUIDOBRO

TRES NOVELAS EJEMPLARES

(Arcachón 1931)
HANS ARP and
VICENTE HUIDOBRO

THREE EXEMPLARY NOVELS

(Arcachon 1931)
SALVAD VUESTROS OJOS

(Novela posthistórica)

Era el día de Navidad, el 1º de mayo. Del cielo caían hombres de nieve y toneles llenos de truenos. Sobre el mundo flotaban los tres últimos corazones calafateados: la Libertad, la Igualdad, la Fraternidad. Era el último día del nuevo año. El árbol del idealismo, ese árbol sentimental en el cual se mecían los nidos de los filósofos materialistas, fue abatido de golpe por un solo trueno de helium.

Los hombres se habían convertido en cebollas cocidas, con un palillo de dientes entre los dedos de los pies y una bandera de colores sagrados en el ojal derecho del pantalón izquierdo. Diez minutos más tarde, los hombres habían desaparecido y la última mujer masticaba sus píldoras orientales, sentada sobre las teclas de la más alta montaña de la tierra. Tenía un cierto parecido con el Arca de Noé, aunque su barba era un poco más larga y su palomo un poco más corto.

Como el lector debe haber comprendido, el hombre ha desaparecido de la faz de la tierra, y en su lugar, podemos ver al gloóbulo hermafrotándico, esbelto, y elegante, no más ancho que la mitad de la oreja del Angelus de la tarde, ni más largo que el meridiano de Greenwich a las 6.40 del día.

Este ser, elegante y esbelto, está perfectamente standarizado y se puede comprar por dos francos cincuenta en todos los almacenes bien provistos. Su espacio individual no pasa le 25 centímetros cúbico. Cuando su respiración excede algo más allá de esta medida, él la pliega en dos y aun en tres, según las circunstancias.

Aquí debemos advertir, para la perfecta comprensión de nuestra historia, que estos seres, cuando se encuentran aislados, se llaman Antonio, y cuando se les encuentra en grupos, se llaman José. Sus mujeres, cuando la cantidad de gloóbulos que las forman pasan de un metro de al tura, se llaman Carolina; cuando no llegan a un metro, se llaman Rose Marie.

Los Antonios, que desde hace tanto tiempo han sobreanodo nuestro plano físico de vanguardia colectiva y nos han aniquilado completamente,
SAVE YOUR EYES

(Posthistorical novel)

It was Christmas Day, the 1st of May. Snowmen and barrels full of thunder fell from the sky. Above the world floated the last three caulked hearts: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. It was the last day of the new year. The tree of idealism – that sentimental tree in which the nests of materialist philosophers swayed – was suddenly struck down by a single clap of helium thunder.

Men had turned into boiled onions, with toothpicks between their toes and a flag of sacred colours in the right-hand button-hole of their left trouser leg. Ten minutes later, men had disappeared and the last woman was sitting on the peak of the highest mountain on earth, chewing her oriental pills. She had a certain resemblance to Noah’s Ark, though her beard was a little longer and her cock pigeon a little shorter.

However, she bore at the summit of her perverse gaze a beautiful olive branch. (This olive has today become the preferred tie-pin of specialist circuit-breakers.)

As the reader must have realised, Man has disappeared from the face of the earth and instead what we can see is the hermaphrometallic globule, slender and elegant, no broader than half the ear of the evening Angelus, and no longer than the Greenwich meridian at 6:40 a.m.

This elegant and slender being is perfectly standardised and can be bought for two francs fifty in any well-stocked store. It takes up no more space than 25 cubic centimetres. When its breathing takes it beyond this measure, it folds into two, or even into three, depending on the circumstances.

Here we must make clear, so that our story might be perfectly understood, that these beings are called Antony when they are on their own, and they are called Joseph when found in groups. Their wives are called Caroline when the quantity of their formative globules exceeds one metre in height; if they fail to reach one metre, they are called Rosemary.

The Antonys – that for so long now have surpassed our cutting-edge collective physical plane and have completely annihilated us – the
los Antonios repito, llevan en el sitio en donde nosotros llevábamos los bigotes almidonados, magníficas corrientes alternativas que tienen el gesto altivo del índice que Virgilio dejó olvidado en un tronco de árbol, pocos días antes de su muerte. Esto en cuanto a los bigotes, ahora en cuanto a los otros pelos que a nosotros nos servían para saber la hora precisa en cualquier momento del día o de la noche, ellos no los poseen, pero tienen en su sitio pequeños arco iris cantantes, cubiertos cada uno de hemisferios de aluminio.

Los Josés tienen un carácter que se asemeja al paladium 36, que es más ligero que el agua y sus lebreles. Los Josés son transparentes como la estratósfera antes del descubrimiento de América. Van rodeados de un círculo de humo que les confiere un aire coqueto, gracioso e higiénico. Poseen un talento especial para descifrar los jeroglíficos del tiempo de los hombres. Ellos descifraron el magnífico himno religioso que aquí incluimos para solaz y meditación de nuestros cultos lectores:

*Cuando vosotros hayáis empleado los anteojos eternos con perfume de meteoros para vuestra T8 o vuestra M15, vosotros no rascaréis jamás el infinito ni la tormenta de la elite del mundo elegante, ni el lagarto africano sobre todas las grandes marcas.*

*Buena suerte, el día de gloria ha llegado con el big Satán desnudo, sólo después de medianoche, cuyo renombre mundial de vías urinarias va creciendo siempre.*

*Cualquiera que sea vuestro nuevo cuadro de adherencias, no agravéis el mal rascándooos el marinero, pues el órgano excepcional os da absoluta seguridad.*

*Si tortugas voladoras obscurecen vuestra vista, si vuestra nariz aparece lacrimosa y pegada en las mananas contra los muros y vuestros labios son rápidos, como los servicios de la muerte o las preparadoras y picadoras de tallos, no os asustéis. Ello significa siempre la esencia de las más altas temperaturas.*

“Allons enfants de la patrie, salvad los ojos de los marineros.”

Para la perfecta comprensión de nuestra historia, debemos ahora dar algunos detalles sobre las Carolinas y también sobre las Rose Maries. Las Carolinas son glóbulos hermafroditas con un talle permanente de películas protectoras sobre las piezas movibles. Cuando empiezan a girar están frías y dan un mejor funcionamiento. Su temperatura es considerable cuando la presión influye sobre sus cualidades lubricantes, pero las impurezas que se deslizan no perjudican a su dicacidad. Ellas absorben el calor, y es de suma importancia el vaciarlas a menudo.
Antonys, I repeat, wear in place of the waxed moustaches we used to wear, magnificent alternating currents that bear the haughty index-finger gesture that Virgil left behind in a tree trunk a few days before his death. So much for the whiskers; as for the other hairs which we employed to tell the exact time at any point of the day or night, they do not have them; in their place however they have little singing rainbows, each covered with an aluminium hemisphere.

The Josephs have a character that resembles Palladium 36, which is lighter than water and their greyhounds. The Josephs are transparent like the stratosphere before the discovery of America. They walk enveloped in rings of smoke which lends them a flirtatious, witty and hygienic air. They have a special talent for deciphering hieroglyphics from the Age of Man. They deciphered the magnificent religious hymn that we include here for the solace and meditation of our learned readers:

"When you have used eternal eyeglasses with the scent of meteors for your T8 or your M15, you will never again scratch against the edge of infinity, nor the storm of the elegant world’s elite, nor the African lizard on all the great labels.

Good luck, the day of glory has arrived with the great naked Satan, only after midnight, the fame of whose urinary tract just keeps on growing throughout the world.

Regardless of who sees your new adhesion chart, do not aggravate the evil by scratching the sailor, for this exceptional organ offers you complete safety.

If flying turtles obscure your view, if your nose appears tear-stained and stuck to the walls in the morning, and if your lips are quick as the services of death or those who prepare and grind stalks, do not be afraid. This always indicates the essence of the highest temperatures.

“Allons enfants de la patrie, save the sailors’ eyes.”

So that our story might be perfectly understood, we must now give some details concerning the Carolines, and the Rosemarys too. The Carolines are hermaphrometallic globules with a one-size-fits-all protective film covering their moving parts. When they start spinning they are cold and offer better performance. Their temperature is considerable when the pressure influences their lubricating qualities, but impurities that slip in do not harm their efficiency. They absorb heat, and it is crucial that they be emptied often.
Las Rose Maries son perversas. En su trayecto a través del mundo absorbén y evacúan una gran cantidad de vitaminas celestes. Esta participación a la vida, sólo puede ser asegurada por un magnetismo de primera clase en venta en bidones sellados. Ello es una garantía para vuestra vida privada y económica.

Estos seres han transformado el mundo, han barrido los continentes y los mares de la tierra. La Australia se ha convertido en un ruido colectivo, Europa es un ojal para las legiones de nebulosas y las condecoraciones de danzas postparanóyicas. Del África hicieron un estercolero tricolor para la electricidad arcaica de los aeroplanos sentimentales o venecianos, perfumados de jazmín y los altoparlantes de la sabiduría.

Aquí debemos advertir, para la perfecta comprensión de nuestra historia, que los únicos seres que no pudieron ser barridos por los glóbulos hermafroemetálicos fueron las ardillas. Estas pequeñas snobs de los pinos, estas comedoras de luto, estas fabricantes de motores a corazón, estas paladeadoras del dolor, estas decapitadoras de las hermanas de los incas, estas inventoras del viento norte, se pasaban sobre los desiertos del racionalismo, burlándose de los glóbulos hermafroemetálicos. Les hacían sentir el aroma de lavanda e imitaban los gritos y los cantos de los búhos, de los relojes y de los curas, de tal modo que los glóbulos temblaban como nosotros ante los espectros. Servían salchichas descentradas y mostraban imágenes vergonzosas del tiempo de las revoluciones cuando los burgueses se empecinaban en defender y propagar su lepra ultravioleta. Entonces los glóbulos enrojecían y los coladores que las protegían contra toda metafísica empezaban a estornudar como cuentos de hada. ¿Quién podía garantizar a los glóbulos hermafroemetálicos que las ardillas no poseían un poder cabalístico y que de un instante al otro no harían surgir praderas materialistas llenas de miosotis y de confesonarios? ¡Ah! Estas pequeñas vengadoras y revendedoras de la melancolía, estos sacerdotes del buen comer, eran enemigos encarnizados del Antonismo y del Josefismo, de la higiene y de las matemáticas.

¿Por qué razón hemos olvidado hablar de América y de Asia? Debía de haber alguna razón para semejante olvido. No había razón alguna para tal olvido. América se convirtió en un suspiro perforado. El Asia se convirtió en un fuego fatuo sutil y prestidigitador. Así, pues, los cinco continentes no ladraban más en las noches de luna.

Para la perfecta comprensión de nuestra historia, debemos contar al lector lo que sucedió una tarde del año O³ Z⁷.
The Rosemarys are perverse. In their passage through the world they absorb and evacuate a large quantity of celestial vitamins. This participation in life can only be assured by top-class magnetism which is sold in sealed barrels. This is a guarantee for your private life and your economic life too.

These beings have transformed the world: they have swept the continents and the seas from the earth. Australia has been turned into a collective noise; Europe is a buttonhole for legions of nebulae and the insignia of post-paranoiac dances. Out of Africa they made a tricoloured dunghill for the archaic electricity from sentimental or Venetian aeroplanes, scented with jasmine and loudspeakers of wisdom.

Here we should make clear, so that our story might be perfectly understood, that the only beings which could not be swept away by hermaphrometallic globules were squirrels. These little snobs from the pine-trees, these consumers of grief, these manufacturers of heart engines, these relishers of suffering, these decimators of the Incas’ sisters, these inventors of the North Wind, strolled across the deserts of rationalism, mocking the hermaphrometallic globules. They made them smell the aroma of lavender and imitated the cries and songs of owls, clocks and curates, so that the globules trembled as we do when we see apparitions. They served maladjusted sausages and displayed shameful images from the revolutionary era, when the bourgeois insisted on defending and propagating their ultraviolet leprosy. Then the globules blushed and the sieves that protected them against all metaphysics began to sneeze as if in a fairy tale. Who could guarantee the hermaphrometallic globules that the squirrels did not possess kabbalistic powers and that from one moment to the next they would not give rise to materialistic meadows filled with forget-me-nots and confessionals? Ah! These little avengers and retailers of melancholy, these priests of fine dining, were ferocious enemies of Antonyism and Josephism, of hygiene and mathematics.

Why have we neglected to mention America and Asia? There must have been some reason for such an omission. There was no reason at all for such an omission. America turned into a perforated sigh; Asia turned into a subtle and magical will ’o the wisp. That is why the five continents no longer barked on moonlit nights.

So that our story might be perfectly understood, we must relate to the reader what happened one afternoon in the year O^3Z^7.