

mysterious corporeality. We should like him pray every day for dreams. The dream, which is Hugo Ball's art, is a magic treasure; it connects man with the life of light and darkness, with real life, the real collectivity.

#### **See reproduction**

The black grows deeper and deeper, darker and darker before me. It menaces me like a black gullet. I can bear it no longer. It is monstrous. It is unfathomable.

As the thought comes to me to exorcise and transform this black with a white drawing, it has already become a surface. Now I have lost all fear, and begin to draw on the black surface. I draw and dance at once, twisting and winding, a winding, twining, soft white flowery round. A round of snakes in a wreath . . . white shoots dart this way and that. Three of them begin to form snakes' heads. Cautiously the two lower ones approach one another. See reproduction. [illustration 11]

#### **The magician**

The sale of my first relief in Paris in 1926 was black magic. The magician was Viot, the art dealer. He had ensnared D., the collector, with promising speeches about indescribable beauty, and lured him to my studio. Looking very unhappy, D. weighed my little relief, first in his left, then in his right hand. He seemed to find no objection to the weight. Around his beautiful miser's neck he wore a still more beautiful necktie.<sup>1</sup> He twisted and fidgeted. He struggled to make up his mind. He opened his eyes wide and then wearily closed them. He opened them again and looked madly for some chance to escape. Now was the time to be on our guard. He really seemed about to seek safety in flight. With ruffled crest, Viot swaggered round his victim. He bragged and boasted of his incomparable knowledge of the arts. D. groaned: "Five hundred francs is a lot of money for a little piece of wood!" Viot did not lessen his efforts. Now it was the dark and mysterious that filled his sails. His eyes gleamed like two magic lanterns. His eloquence became more and more daemonic until at length D. collapsed in a chair and handed Viot the five hundred francs.

1. *Geizhals*, literally "avarice neck," is German for skinflint.