

VAN DOREN WAXTER

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Van Doren Waxter is pleased to present a solo exhibition
Joseph Cornell: A New Surrealism, Works from the 1930's
September 10 – October 31, 2014



Turkish Man, c. 1933, Collage box, 10 3/4 x 8 x 3 1/4 inches (27.3 x 20.3 x 8.3 cm)

Van Doren Waxter is pleased to present *Joseph Cornell: A New Surrealism, Works from the 1930's*. The solo exhibition of early works by Joseph Cornell (1903-1972) will be on view from September 10 – October 31.

The exhibition features small-scale collages of the 1930's, Joseph Cornell's first forays into the found object assemblages for which he became known. Other exhibition highlights include box compositions, whimsical pocket-sized pill box creations from Cornell's initial experimentation with objects and containers that lead to the shadow box. These works give an intimate look into the imaginative vision of this uniquely self-taught American surrealist. Cornell combines and modifies his collected souvenirs into compositions that elevate individual components into artifacts, unified works of unearthly magic and mystery.

Cornell's idiosyncratic method developed as he visited art galleries and second-hand book sellers in Manhattan's mercantile district, where he acquired a collection of materials and ephemera. His early collections of memorabilia and curiosities were integral to his creative process. The cultivated and curated collections, which Cornell would use to compose his assemblages, drew from his eclectic interests that ranged from literature, music and dance, maps and science, to a fascination with Hollywood and Vaudeville and to the spiritual theories of Christian Science, which the artist first embraced in the 1920's. Cornell is widely characterized as reclusive, as he seldom ventured far from the Utopia Parkway, Queens, New York home he shared with his mother and disabled brother. From home Cornell engaged with the New York gallery world and in extensive dialogues and exchanges with his contemporaries, showing an appreciation for foreign places and encounters through his work and correspondence.

Cornell's work debuted in the 1932 exhibition *Surréalisme* at the Julien Levy Gallery, where he had first discovered Surrealist art and literature. That same year marked the first of three solo shows with the gallery. Cornell's work was included in the historic 1936 exhibition *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* at the Museum of Modern Art and retrospective exhibitions at the Pasadena Art Museum (1967) and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (1967). Cornell died in 1972.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated e-catalogue available through our website, vandorenwaxter.com.

Van Doren Waxter is located at 23 East 73rd Street, New York, NY 10021.
Gallery Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 10am - 6pm.