Often Neglected – But One of the Greats
Interview with Jean Tinguely and Dieter Daniels[1]

Jean Tinguely: Can I ask you how you became interested in Duchamp?
Dieter Daniels: During my studies I simply chose him for an exam topic because he interested me and because I never quite understood what he was all about. So I created a situation in which I would have to deal with him. I said to myself, "Now you're going to take this exam on Duchamp" – I simply took on the risk – and that has had an effect on my entire life.
J. T.: And he was accepted in Germany as a topic for an exam?
D. D.: Yes, in the meantime he has become one of the greats in art history.
J. T.: That's true, he is one of the greats, but he is often neglected; it happens again and again.
D. D.: Every ten years ...
J. T.: Every ten years he is rediscovered.
D. D.: Now I'd like to ask you the same question you asked me: how did you become interested in Duchamp?
J. T.: Because I was studying the movement, people immediately began asking me, "Do you know Duchamp?" And Julia Ris had already introduced me to Duchamp at the school of industrial arts in Basle. She told me about an artist who makes *Rotoreliefs*; she had one of those boxes and gave me some literature on it. She – Julia Ris – was always a thorn in my side, she knew everything. It was back in 1941/42 when I first heard the name Duchamp. Julia Ris had studied at the Bauhaus, just like her husband, the painter Theo Eble. Numerous people, such as Max Bill and Johannes Itten, came to Switzerland from the Bauhaus. They brought Schwitters and the De Stijl group with them, and they carried their knowledge of Marcel Duchamp along with them in their suitcases. It was all quite clear, in Switzerland you simply knew who the Futurists and the Russian Constructivists were. We knew everything because Switzerland had become a gathering-place, just like New York.
D. D.: Because of the emigrants who came here from all over the world.
J. T.: At least at the school of industrial arts we profited from them. New York profited even more. Not necessarily from more money, but the New York Jews, the young emigrants, had to work much harder there and thus became intelligent more quickly than elsewhere and at the same time keen on the arts. As a result they were soon caught up in the Duchamp fever, because Duchamp was there in New York. The greatest part about Duchamp is his work, but the second greatest is the human aspect. For example, Duchamp supported such astonishingly good artists as Piet Mondrian, who was leading a lonely and isolated life in Montparnasse. Every year Duchamp sold one of Mondrian's pictures to the Arensberg Collection. Every time

he wrote Arensberg, he would say: “And don’t forget to buy a Mondrian”, and he would just send over the Mondrians. I saw them myself with Duchamp in Philadelphia. The Mondrians he sold to Arensberg were in the museum there – four of them were hung directly above the central heating. That was in 1961 – a great place to keep Mondrian pictures when you consider that they’re painted with the cheapest olive oil. He never had the money to buy artist’s paints. I mean Mondrian, of course. Duchamp was always rich, he lived like a prince, just like Max Ernst.

D. D.: Was he really rich? I thought that there were times when he didn’t have much money.

J. T.: He never told me that. He didn’t need any money, he didn’t care about it, and so he must have been rich. Not once did he say anything that would have led me to believe that he was poor. He was always well dressed, a gentleman like Picabia. That he didn’t have any Bugattis is pure coincidence.

D. D.: I don’t even think he had a driver’s license, assuming that one needed one in those days. When you heard his name for the first time in 1941/42, was that in connection with his work on rotation?

J. T.: No, at the time I was deeply into Schwitters. He was my man and Arp as well, because Arp was in Switzerland. For all of us, including our teachers, Hans Arp was a phenomenon. Above all, he was an Alsatian and we Baslers are particularly fond of Alsatians. The similarity in dialects is a form of semantic affinity that you can play with. My encounter with Arp, when I first met him in 1959, began in our dialect. To return to Duchamp: in 1955 there was an exhibition, organized by Pontus Hulten und Denise René, entitled *Le Mouvement.* And I put in a good word for the *Rotoreliefs* that Hulten had given me. It was a kind of game, a set. That was the first time I heard the word “Dada” again. I was in favour of exhibiting it, and so I set up six little motors on a long black board. They rotated at a speed of seventy-eight revolutions per minute because these *Rotoreliefs* were adjusted to the phonographs of the day that turned at exactly that speed. And then Denise René said, “Mais écoutez, mais c’est Dada!” [Stefanie Poley shows him the exhibition catalogue.][2] Yes, but the book didn’t appear until later. At the time there was only this piece of paper. [Takes it in his hand.] Vasarely’s manifesto was on it. He had done that without showing us, and we were so angry at him! Vasarely was a good painter, but in this exhibition nothing of his moved yet. The people who really moved something were Soto, Agam and Pol Bury, and me. And, of course, Duchamp, we fought for Duchamp.

D. D.: That’s interesting that at the time you had to fight for Duchamp.

J. T.: Yes, and how, just to have him included in the exhibition! Hulten and I put up a front against Vasarely and Denise René. The great movement artists that was around then was Calder. Hulten and I also wanted to show Moholy-Nagy, but we couldn’t find any of his works

in France. There were other people who worked with movement as well –Vantongerloo and Pevsner – but Denise René was primarily interested in showing her Vasarely and Jacobsen. She alone was intelligent and opportunistic enough to do an exhibition of that kind as it was still very early on. The exhibition was a smashing success, and suddenly a door opened. Duchamp, however, did not really profit from this success. He had been around for a while and still made a very strange impression.

That was when Duchamp was associated with Dada, at least if we believe Denise René. I didn't know Duchamp personally at the time. He was in New York and did not come to the exhibition. I met him later, in 1959. On rue Vaugirard – the longest street in Paris – there is a little brasserie. One day around twelve-thirty in the little narrow garden of the brasserie, a man – a refined and wonderful man whose head I recognized – was eating a pork knuckle, a really large one. He was eating pork knuckle – the most dreadful thing I can imagine people eating! And for me Duchamp was the most refined, ethereal, marvellous, intellectual, wonderful, and dreamy creature in the world – and there he sat eating pork knuckle. It was under these hard conditions that I met Duchamp. And then I said to him, "Cher maître!" – not "Duchamp", but "Cher maître!" And he reacted just as quickly as I did. He didn't have anything in his mouth at that moment, and so he said, "Eh, Tinguely viens t'asseoir là."

D. D.: He knew who you were?

J. T.: He already knew me because of the painting machines. He probably also knew that I had been influential in having his *Rotoreliefs* shown in the exhibition.

D. D.: He knew what you looked like?

J. T.: Yes, from the catalogues ...

D. D.: That's funny. Stauffer tells the same story about Duchamp eating pork knuckle when he met him.[3]

J. T.: That's not possible. [Laughs.] Stauffer must have stolen the story from me. I can't believe that two people met him for the first time while he was eating pork knuckle!

D. D.: That's not so improbable. After all, Duchamp had been in Munich for some time and also wrote a postcard from the Hofbräuhaus.[4] Perhaps he acquired a taste for pork knuckle there. In Munich he also drew *The Bride* – also a piece of meat – the way it just hangs there. Perhaps it was the pork knuckle that inspired him, who knows. That would be a new theory, anyway.

J. T.: Yes, that would be possible. If Serge Stauffer – you'll have to check that – really met up with him while he was eating pork knuckle, then there must be something to the pork knuckle.

D. D.: With Duchamp everything has meaning ...

J. T.: Maybe he carried the pork knuckle around with him in a plastic bag and when someone approached him, out it came. [Thumps on the table.]

D. D.: In 1960 you were with Duchamp in Philadelphia and he showed you his work.[5]
J. T.: Yes, he took me along. Teeny Duchamp wanted to visit Cornell to buy a box from him. Teeny loved Cornell and wanted to help him – he wasn't very successful at the time, although later on his luck turned a bit. She wanted me and Duchamp to come along. But Duchamp was afraid of Cornell's brother, who was a cripple, and Duchamp was uncomfortable with that. I didn't want to visit Cornell either. So Duchamp and I took the train to Philadelphia. It was wonderful! And he explained everything to me. For example, those sugar cubes in the cage – *Why Not Sneeze?* – were funny. I'll never forget how he talked my head off. Unfortunately, I didn't have a tape recorder with me. The irony, the breezy manner in which he touched on the past, on his own previous work – it was even more ironic than the pieces standing around.
D. D.: What did he say about *Why Not Sneeze Rrose Sélavy?*
J. T.: I'm afraid you can't ask me that now, it was twenty-six years ago. It's the atmosphere that stands out in my memory – the brightness and that splendid palace, the museum in Philadelphia is built like a Greek temple. By the way, you can see it in *Rocky,* the boxing film – you see him – Sylvester Stallone as the boxer – training on the staircase. You see him running along the avenue and then into the museum where Duchamp's works are. And then there are all the Brancusis, which Duchamp also arranged. Duchamp was funny – he loved Brancusi as well. When he asked Niki[6] and me if we could do something for Salvador Dalí's sixtieth birthday, I was surprised because I didn't realize that he liked Dalí as well. Marcel Duchamp could feel so much love for other artists! And it went a long way; the range of artists was quite large. Despite all the irony and maliciousness, the clarity of vision, the impudence that he had. He was impudent because he was truthful – if you're truthful, you're automatically impudent. But he possessed a great capacity for love. I think that Hulten learned a lot from him. And that was good for me too because I know how many artists I can love, young artists too, whether it's Keith Haring or Julian Schnabel, whose work I really enjoy. But, Dieter, ask me more, otherwise I'll start talking about other things. So now the difficult and profound questions, please.
D. D.: I'd like to go back to 1942. When you heard the name Duchamp for the first time, did you have a concrete idea of what his work was like?
J. T.: No, not at all, and if you saw any of his work, such as the picture of Duchamp with the shaving cream, you couldn't understand it.[7]
Stefanie Poley: What was your idea of him at the time?
J. T.: Well, very inexact, very strange.
S. P.: Someone who works with movement?
J. T.: That was not the most dominant aspect about his work. There were these incredible photos that he did together with Man Ray – the dust collecting on *The Large Glass*.[8] That

wasn't easy to understand, even a Rayograph by Man Ray was much easier to fathom. In 1955–56 Hulten and I started looking for *Anémic Cinema*. Hulten finally found it by contacting Mary Meerson and Langlois, the founders of the French film archive. But it took weeks, even months.

D. D.: Up to now I had the impression that Pontus Hulten did his part in fostering the Tinguely-Duchamp relationship.

J. T.: I wouldn't dispute that. Yes, it's true.

D. D.: In our discussion so far I have the impression that you developed an interest in Duchamp independently of Hulten?

J. T.: In the meantime I had forgotten Duchamp – he wasn't really essential for me. My approach to art is not from above, as an intellectually mature artist. I had to pull myself out of the mire, from below. And I have to say in all modesty that the Dadaists patted me on the back. Tristan Tzara came to an exhibition at Galerie Rive Droite. I soon met people like Huelsenbeck, Arp, and also Duchamp. I even met old Marcel Janco in Paris. The old circle were keen on me. They were happy that young artists were contributing something – and we did indeed contribute – to revitalize the interest in the old Dadaists. Duchamp was also pleased about that.

D. D.: When I asked you for this interview, you used the word "Duchampesque", which has a negative connotation for me.

J. T.: We look for the fathers of every astonishing development in art, and Duchamp is always among them. He is Dada, he is also the father of certain forms of Realism, certainly of *Nouveau Réalism*. He is always difficult to pigeonhole, and there is a great deal that he foreshadowed.

D. D.: What I find interesting is the question of popularity – to what extent can and should an important artist be popular? You are quite popular. When people see the fountain at the Centre Beaubourg, they enjoy it and don't even ask who made it, they simply like it. Duchamp, on the other hand, was never popular in this sense.

J. T.: But his work is too difficult, you can't approach it that way. A fountain with splashing water creates a relationship. With the fountain at Centre Pompidou, Niki and I consciously retreat into the background with our names because we hope that it will become a Stravinsky Fountain. That's what it's supposed to be; the square is named Stravinsky Fountain Square. In Basle the situation was quite different. Ten years ago I created a fountain that functions as a connecting element within the context of "the work and an artist". Wherever I go in Basle, I receive special treatment. That is to say people pat me on the back, in Basle I'm someone special. But in Paris everyone is a nobody – who is somebody in Paris?

D. D.: But I meant the attitude – to what extent does the artist strive to make himself understood or is he more inclined to be opaque?

J. T.: Yes, that's clear – Duchamp is much too difficult. His work is enigmatic and that is much more difficult to deal with.

D. D.: On the other hand, you could say that the Readymade principle is the simplest in the world.

J. T.: A principle that a lot of people have stolen. And I'm at the top of the list. Actually the first of the younger generation to use the Readymade principle was César. He made things from old iron that he found, some of which were pre-figurative. That is the true Readymade principle, but in the sense of found objects. They can also be objects that were sold, motors, for example, or stolen things. The Readymade principle is very important. That is what Duchamp passed onto us. But it was not his idea alone, it was also Picasso's, Schwitters's – it was a whole movement. It was not simply one man who did it all. Duchamp created something that astonished our imagination. The urinal that he submitted to an exhibition was a sensation. But Duchamp said to me, "Mais vous savez, à l'époque on n'avait pas les moyens comme aujourd'hui", and he was referring above all to the ability to take in a work of art – to the public's limited receptiveness. Of course it is still limited today. I would say that the art world contains no more than twenty thousand people – artists, art dealers, museum directors, art historians, collectors. It's not more than twenty thousand worldwide.

D. D.: You once said to me on another occasion that Duchamp was incorruptible.

J. T.: Yes, that's what I think. But it is a feeling, not information. I was there in 1960 when one of his works – the window – was changing ownership and he had to examine it.[9] George Staempfli had bought it, and he asked Duchamp who might want to buy it. And Duchamp had found a buyer already but had not received the money for it. I had the feeling then – it was 1960/61 – that Duchamp wasn't poor so he wasn't corrupt either. It was below his dignity to want to put another twenty thousand dollars into his pocket. The piece was sold for eighty thousand dollars. I then asked George Staempfli, with whom I got along well, "How will you handle the situation, will you give the artist some money?" And he said, "No, he doesn't want anything."

D. D.: I think that if you look at his oeuvre, you can see that he was incorruptible. He never tried to produce a number of works from one idea that he had, to exploit an idea in order to sell more.

J. T.: Or think of the stand at the Concours Lépine. That was particularly utopian.[10]

D. D.: Yes, outside of the art world.

J. T.: A utopian idea from the start.

Stefanie Poley: Or was it possibly just naive?

J. T.: Difficult to say.
D. D.: That was perhaps his only attempt to be popular outside the world of art, an experiment which did not go well….

D. D.: How did you experience Duchamp in New York in 1960, what role did he play in the art scene then?
J. T.: He was very important as a cultural pioneer in New York.
D. D.: *Un éminence grise*?
J. T.: Well – he wasn't grey, but he was a figure of authority. His terrifically funny wife, Teeny Duchamp, the former wife of Pierre Matisse, accompanied him. The two always caused a stir – first of all they were lively, secondly, they were curious, and they were always there. As soon as someone did something, they appeared on the scene, whether it was Indiana or James Rosenquist. "Oh, let's go to Claes Oldenburg." They were crucial. What did Kaprow and Cage say, do they see it the same way I do? Since the mid-fifties John Cage played a crucial role in setting the stage for Duchamp's appearance on the New York art scene.
D. D.: Now I'd like to ask you about something entirely different. To what extent do you feel an affinity to Duchamp with respect to the ironic treatment of masculinity? I'll give you two examples of what I mean: Duchamp's *Rrose Sélavy* and *La Vittoria.*[11]
J. T.: Of course, he was totally against obsessive masculinity. He certainly knew about the perfect balance of the masculine-feminine, that masculinity alone is completely idiotic and pure femininity equally foolish. The only happy solution is the hermaphrodite, whether it be in a visible or invisible form. That moves in the direction of the transvestite, but I don't mean that. It's necessary to have both elements, both genders, that's clear, isn't it? Otherwise you can't see beyond your own limitations.
D. D.: In your work you've chosen a quite different artistic manner to express yourself. Duchamp was always ambivalent, whereas for you it's a kind of spectacle, the burning phallus, for example.
J. T.: I don't think that you can really compare the two. Everything that Duchamp created seems to be incredibly deliberate and underhand, subliminal. You can look under it or on the back and still find something. That's not true of my work – don't you agree? You can immediately see what my work is about.
D. D.: If you page through the oeuvre catalogue of your work published by the Galerie Bischofberger, you have the impression – in contrast, say to Hulten's book – of a truly classical oeuvre.[12] There are different themes carried out in countless variations. There are so many *Metamatics* and so many *Prayer Wheels*.
Stefanie Poley: An oeuvre catalogue is an oeuvre catalogue – that's why.

D. D.: Yes, but the feeling with Duchamp's catalogue is completely different. Every piece is strange, so different, heterogeneous that you hardly know how or where it's all going.

J. T.: Yes, much crazier, I agree.

D. D.: Do you see differences, also in the amount you produced?

J. T.: Yes, definitely! Completely different – but in my work the articulation is in a much smaller framework. With Duchamp it can explode in every direction. My work only seems to explode; in reality there is a perfectly functioning thread that runs throughout my work. Even down to the rubbish I built, these totally carbonized machines, it's all the same.

D. D.: Totally carbonized?

J. T.: Yes, from a burnt farmhouse. Using the Readymade principle once again I reanimated the debris of a burnt farmhouse, put new life into it, and created these terrifying ghosts. Ghosts of death, of sadness – but it's all basically the same. As I explained to you, Stefanie: it's playful, there's still life in it that comes through, it's not exclusively sad, not only tragic. That's an example of the thread. You feel as if it's a compact thing, and that's what you meant. With Duchamp there are more possibilities.

D. D.: Let's approach your work using a more or less trivial multiple-choice method taken from art history: you take two artists, assume that they are independent of each other – Jean Tinguely and Marcel Duchamp – and then, taking a series of concepts, determine where the similarities are. When you find something, you put a check next to it. This method actually exists, although I wouldn't really want to use it. The similarities are quite astonishing, even in the details: rotation, water mills, mechanization as a metaphor for mental processes, the use of coincidence and technology in art production, down to minor details such as the *Large Glass* as an agricultural machine and *Plateau agriculturel* by Jean Tinguely.[13] It's like two paths that meet over and over again. And then you ask yourself why: is it the artists, is it coincidence, or are similar thought processes involved?

J. T.: Well, it's not because of the irony and the humour that both artists incorporate, because the humour is different in every work. But in both cases the irony is there, that would be one common element. There is, however, no reason to see parallels between the *Large Glass* and *Plateau agriculturel*. They are quite removed from each other. But keep asking.

Stefanie Poley: Using water, for example – that certainly has a psychological basis – would be a third common element, and automatic art production that Duchamp started before you.

D. D.: There is more, especially literary models that we could mention: Jarry, Roussel. You know who they are.

J. T.: Yes, that's inevitable. But Duchamp was not a Rousselist.

D. D.: He loved Roussel.

J. T.: Yes, but he was different. John Ashbury and Harry Mathews, Niki's first husband, were completely under Roussel's spell. They published a journal that was called *Locus Solus* and I've always wondered why there was never an article about Duchamp in it.

D. D.: Another similarity between you and Duchamp: Max Stirner's *The Ego and His Own.*

J. T.: You're right – but Duchamp wasn't familiar with him.

D. D.: Yes, he was, he thought highly of him and mentioned him several times.[14]

J. T.: I never really talked about him with Duchamp, because Max Stirner is so German. Besides, I had Albert Camus's translation, which was published much later. I never imagined that Marcel Duchamp knew Stirner. And he actually talked about him! Max Stirner is incredibly Duchampesque. *The Ego* – that's Duchamp's state of mind, but I didn't know that he had read Stirner – that's quite funny.

With Yves Klein it will be the same. People will say Klein read Otto von Guericke. Guericke wrote about nothingness, there is only nothingness, nothingness is everything and everywhere.[15]

D. D.: He experimented with vacuums.

J. T.: He also invented the electric motor – something almost no one knows. He built an electrifying machine, the first aggregate that could produce electricity.

D. D.: While we are talking about inventions: you had a patent approved for a painting machine – which once again makes me think of Duchamp and the Concours Lépine.

J. T.: No, that was entirely different. It was Iris Clert's idea. She had a friend who was a patent lawyer. Iris was the one who insisted on a patent: "Mais c'est génial, Jean!" she said and thought it would be profitable.

D. D.: How would you describe the relationship between Yves Klein and Marcel Duchamp?

J. T.: Yves Klein and Marcel Duchamp – yes, we had difficulties there because Yves was terribly afraid of not being taken seriously, but both Duchamp and I were working at not being taken seriously. When a man like Pierre Loeb ran to Iris Clert and ranted, "How dare you exhibit these painting machines, they'll ruin the market – have you gone mad!" I split my sides laughing.[16] As did Arp. We – the Arpists, Duchampists, Ironists, and Dadaists – we had something that Klein didn't. He was profound and serious, a fantastic pal, but he wanted to be taken seriously. You had to believe in his painting, his words – they were the words of God – and that was a far cry from Duchamp.

D. D.: Although there are many detailed parallels, perhaps more details than the general attitude – for example the idea with the checks.[17]

J. T.: Yes, specifically the check, and I think Duchamp's check got on Klein's nerves. But then he met Duchamp. And Duchamp was simply a gentleman, he didn't have difficulties getting on with anyone. Without a moment's hesitation he was able to invite someone like Yves Klein

to his home. Duchamp was able to seduce people and Yves Klein, who was also a good seducer, was seduced by Duchamp. Duchamp was simply generous and not as involved in the daily struggles as Klein. Yves didn't have this natural, built-in self-ironical attitude. He had to be taken seriously. But that didn't stop him from being strongly taken by Duchamp. In later years he became more relaxed and was not so anxious about the word "Dada".

D. D.: Restany also mentioned that especially Yves Klein had fought against being associated with Duchamp. Restany, on the other hand, was famous for referring to Duchamp as his source of inspiration.

J. T.: I don't think Restany had a natural relationship to Duchamp. Hulten, for example, I met one time with a case full of material on Duchamp. He wanted to write a doctoral thesis on him but then left it all to Ulf Linde. That wasn't the way it was with Restany. Duchamp's approach wasn't easily accessible to him, he had to ingest it in small doses at first and I helped him along too.

D. D.: What do you think about the lifespan of art? Duchamp always said that a picture lives for about forty to fifty years and then it dies.

J. T.: Well, at the moment it seems that way – there are waves of interest and waves of forgetting, and the more we forget, the faster it comes back. It's a struggle, of course, everyone wants to move forward, and artists elbow their fellow artists along the way. This is true for gallery owners as well. Some are loyal and others want to get ahead and look for new, cheap painters, just like new, cheaper racing drivers, but faster ones. You historians are the observers, now more than ever. From your position you have more patience and don't need to respond as quickly. But if you get caught in the battle, things change for you as well. From history we know that artists have to use their elbows, the young ones have to step over the old and push them aside. In that respect Duchamp was entirely different, he did not get involved in the struggle to compete and was particularly open to new art.

D. D.: Even if Duchamp was so very communicative and open and brought people together as you described him, there is one area that he kept out of – politics.

J. T.: Yes, he was conservative. In that respect he reminded me of Arp. Denise René pointed out to me once how conservative Arp was – even reactionary. And Duchamp was the same, but without being enthused about anything in particular. He was a very pleasant person, in some respects the exact opposite of myself. What I said to Yves Klein, he would never have said in that way. *Il a parlé d'une façon hésitante.* If Duchamp had something to say, he took you out for a walk and at the same time took you for a ride. His agreeable physical appearance played a role as well, in contrast to Yves Klein, for example, who was always floating thirty centimetres over the ground, or my tendency to create some sort of frenzy and enthuse someone in the process. And Duchamp brought people together. He introduced John Cage and

Edgar Varèse. He connected people. Teeny Duchamp was always organizing dinners, that was her game, and Duchamp played along and also decided who would be invited. For example, Peggy Guggenheim and Max Ernst together, after not seeing each other for six years. That was typical for Duchamp. That's how I met Edward G. Robinson – a well-known American actor, a classic of the film industry. He played gangster roles and was also an art collector. Duchamp invited people like that together with young artists – that's the way he helped them.

D. D.: I would like to talk about two of your works. In one of them you used a refrigerator which Duchamp had given to you.

J. T.: That's right. First of all I made a refrigerator, which was exhibited in Krefeld in 1960 and the people nearly died of shock. The built-in, high-revolution engines – 4,800 revolutions per minute – started up with a dreadful clatter as soon as the doors opened. At first Wember kept the refrigerator as it was, but then he had to turn it off because a man had a heart attack. Duchamp heard about the refrigerator, he knew all about it. Later he then said to me, "Si tu as besoin d'un réfrigérateur" – he spoke perfectly and didn't say *frigo*, "prends le mien là." And of course that was just what I wanted – to use Duchamp's refrigerator in my next piece. I built New York fire sirens into it, everything inside was red. It was in Larry River's garden in Long Island for some twenty years, but I don't know where it is now.[18]

D. D.: I heard that Duchamp gave you the refrigerator and then was angry that you had turned it into art.

J. T.: No, I don't think so. I didn't have any financial difficulties then. It was different when I was in Paris and Auguste Herbin gave me a cooker that I was very happy to have. I was as poor as a church mouse then, but in New York you can't be poor.

D. D.: And your *Hommage à Duchamp,* with the wheel that jumps up and down on the stand, does the stand have any meaning?[19]

J. T.: That was a stone lying around in Brancusi's studio. I occasionally repaired things for him. He had made this fish that turned on a plate and asked me to come repair it. I looked under it and there was an old motor that moved the fish using a rubber band from a piece of women's underwear. That was quite a surprise with Brancusi – on top this fine sculpture and down below the rubber band with a past.

D. D.: I always thought of this base as the pedestal on which Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel* now stands.

J. T.: Yes, that's right. I just wanted to say that it was Brancusi's stone.

((Bitte in kleinerer Schrift setzen.))

The text of this interview relates the most important parts of a long interview held on 12 January 1987 in Stefanie Poley's flat in Cologne. It was interrupted several times by a bottle of 1969 Saint Émilion, goose liver pâté, coffee, and the cat, and also touched on other topics ranging from the role of the Jews in the success of abstract painting in New York to the development of patent rights.

Notes

1 First published in German in *Übrigens sterben immer die anderen: Marcel Duchamp und die Avantgarde seit 1950*, exh. cat., Museum Ludwig, Cologne 1988, pp. 129–142.

2 *Le Mouvement/The Movement, Paris, Avril 1955: Agam, Bury, Calder, Duchamp, Jacobsen, Soto, Tinguely, Vasarely*, exh. cat. Galerie Denise René, Paris et al. 1975.

3 Serge Stauffer reported that when he first met Duchamp in Paris in 1960 they had dinner at the restaurant *La Coupole*, where Duchamp ordered pork knuckle with salad and a beer, although Stauffer had recommended oysters (Serge Stauffer, *Marcel Duchamp: Die Schriften*, Zurich 1981, p. 300). On page 305, Tinguely's encounter with Duchamp is also described. Stauffer noted that it was Tinguely – which was not clarified in this interview – who had pointed out Duchamp's "strange side" to him. For the sake of completeness, we include the following references to other comments that document Duchamp's eating habits and his considerable reservations concerning food: Man Ray, in Stauffer 1981, p. 304; John Cage in an interview with Moira and William Roth, *Art in America* (November/December 1973), p. 72; Denis de Rougemont, "Marcel Duchamp mine de rien", *Preuves* 204 (February 1968), p. 45.

4 The postcard from the Hofbräuhaus, dated 10 July 1912, is reproduced on page 74 of Jennifer Gough-Cooper and Jacques Caumont's biography "Plan pour écrire: Une Vie de Marcel Duchamp" in *L'Œuvre de Marcel Duchamp,* vol. 1, exh. cat. Musée national d'art moderne Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris 1977.

5 Tinguely's action, *Homage to New York,* took place in the sculpture garden of the Museum of Modern Art in 1960. Duchamp was one of the spectators and his handwritten text appeared on the invitation card (Michel Sanoulliet, *Duchamp du signe,* Paris 1975, p. 251).

6 The artist Niki de Saint Phalle was Jean Tinguely's partner for many years.

7 A photo by Man Ray showing Duchamp with horns made of shaving cream. It can be found in the *Obligations pour la Roulette de Monte Carlo* (Monte Carlo Bonds) of 1924 (see fig. xxx).

8 *Élevage de poussière* (Dust Breeding), 1920, a photo which shows the collection of dust on the *Large Glass* (see fig. xxx).

9 The “window” refers to Duchamp’s work entitled *La Bagarre d’Austerlitz* (The Brawl at Austerlitz), 1921. The buyer was William Copley.

10 Duchamp rented a stand at the Paris inventors’ fair Concours Lépine in 1935, in order to sell his *Rotoreliefs.* They were produced in an edition of five hundred, of which only one was sold, however. Duchamp’s comments on this are to be found in Pierre Cabanne’s *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, New York 1987, p. 80, and in H. P. Roché, “Diskoptics de Marcel Duchamp”, *Phases* (Paris), no. 1 (January 1954), p. 14 (reprinted in Robert Lebel, *Sur Marcel Duchamp,* Paris 1959, p. 121).

11 *La Vittoria*: Action on Cathedral Square, Milan in 1970, on the occasion of the ten-year anniversary of the founding of Le Nouveau Réalisme, in which Tinguely set fire to a giant phallus measuring several metres high.

12 Pontus Hulten, *Jean Tinguely: Meta,* Berlin 1972. Christina Bischofberger, *Jean Tinguely: Werkkatalog,* vol.1: *Skulpturen und Reliefs 1954–1968,* Küssnacht and Zürich 1982.

13 *Plateau agriculturel,* 1978, Museum Jean Tinguely, Basle. Ten machines on a supporting base.

14 Jean Tinguely provided the following explanatory note: “I first read Max Stirner in Basle around 1948 and Camus’s translation came later.” As Tinguely emphasized on several occasions, he thought highly of Max Stirner’s book, which was originally published in 1845 as *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum*. Duchamp commented on Stirner in his lecture “Should the Artist Go to College?”, as well as in his correspondence with Serge Stauffer (Stauffer 1981 [see note 3], p. 240, 290, and 301). A French translation of Stirner appeared in 1899.

15 Otto von Guericke can also be found in Tinguely’s compilation “Engineers = Artists”, his “little, personal encyclopaedia of technical pioneers”. See *du* (April 1977), pp. 48–49.

16 Hans Arp was a member of the jury, which on the occasion of Tinguely’s exhibition (1–31 July 1959) in the Galerie Iris Clert awarded a prize to the most beautiful drawing made by a visitor to the exhibition with a *Metamatic*. At the opening of the exhibition a photo was made showing Duchamp with one of the painting machines (see fig. xxx).

17 Marcel Duchamp’s *Chèque Tzanck* (Tzanck Check) of 1919. Yves Klein began using checks for a *Zone de Sensibilité Picturale Immaterielle* in 1959.

18 The refrigerator shown in Krefeld bore the title *Le Frigo* (1960, Museum Jean Tinguely, Basle). It was part of the exhibition *Maschinenbilder und Maschinen* (Machine Images and Machines) at the Museum Haus Lange. In an interview, Duchamp commented on the refrigerator which Tinguely received from him: “When I left my old studio on 14th Street I sold my icebox to Tinguely. What has Tinguely done with it? He’s wired it for sound, and it was in the ‘New Realists’ show at Sidney Janis’. It’s the appeal my old Readymades have for young people. They love me as providing a kind of *raison d’être* for their own ejaculations.”

From “Duchamp: Fifty Years Later”, interview by Francis Stegmüller, *Show* (New York) 3, no. 2 (February 1963).

19 *Hommage à Duchamp*, Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach, 1960.