

"Cal ignorar a quin sexe es pertany; jo no m'ocupo pas de saber si soc del gènere masculí o femení, no estimo pas més els homes que les dones".  
Francis Picabia



Thanks to: C. d'Afflitto Collection.

Marcel Duchamp. Pistons de courant d'air. 1965. Milan: Galleria Schwarz, 1965. 34 x 24 cm. Collection Fundació Vallpalou, Lleida

# POETIC MACHINES. DUCHAMP, MAN RAY, PICABIA



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 **FUNDACIÓ  
Vallpalou**

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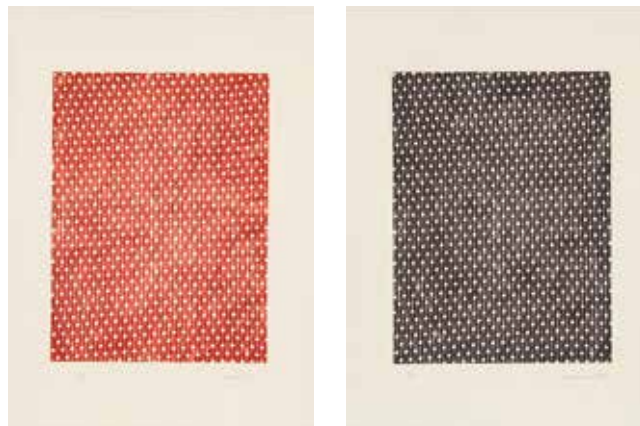
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This exhibition comes with the incorporation of seven works by Marcel Duchamp and one by Man Ray, to the Vallpalou Foundation collection. These authors, together with Francis Picabia, articulated a new vision of art, revolutionary and disruptive, that we understand as the artistic machinism in the historical avant-garde movements.

In the 20th century, the appearance of the machine reproduction changed the concept of beauty and eroticism. Duchamp, Man Ray and Picabia opened the doors of art history to artistic machinism, with the celibate machine or single machine of art. Picabia made drawings and machinist paintings and one of them is titled *Fille née sans mère*, a machinist repertoire published in the magazines 291 and 391. Duchamp identified woman and machine as a new vision of beauty in art that moved away from the naturalistic model and, created *la Mariée mise à nu par ses célibataires, même* or, *The Large Glass* (1915-1923), an erotic-desire-machine accompanied by the *Green Box* (1934), the box with its instructions. Man Ray participated poetically in the machinism with his camera. Duchamp and Man Ray played optical illusionism and anticipated kinetic art with experiences such as *Rotoreliefs* (1935) or *Rotary Glass Plates* (1920). All three played with their female alter egos, the most famous *Rose Sélavy*, from Duchamp.

In 1913, Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase*, which had been exhibited in the Dalmau galleries of Barcelona a year earlier at the Cubist Art Exhibition, had been a success in the Armory Show in New York. Man Ray and Duchamp met in New York in 1915, met with the photographer Alfred Stieglitz,

**Marcel Duchamp.** *La Mariée mise à nu par ses célibataires / Green Box*, 1934  
Collection Fundació Vallpalou, Lleida



**Teresa Vall Palou.** Homage to the "Draft Pistons" of *The Large Glass*, by Marcel Duchamp, 2020

founder of *Camera Work* magazine and 291 gallery. Picabia exhibited in New York and together they were the protagonists of the Dada movement in New York, from 1915 to 1923.

These years corresponded with the elaboration of *The Large Glass* (1915-1923), by Marcel Duchamp, the work that opened the doors to a machinist vision of eroticism in the twentieth century, today in the Philadelphia Museum. A work that, to explain it, Duchamp published the so-called *Green Box* (1934), an artist's book that with 93 documents is his instruction booklet, containing all the keys to understand the enigma of a masterpiece.

*The Large Glass* is made up of two parts, the masculine or lower part, and the feminine or upper part, which puts into operation several elements that transport the gas from the single males to the bride. A complex work, in which Duchamp never stopped working conceptually. In the 60s he made a series of engravings on Japanese paper, recreating these various elements: the chocolate mill, the single males, the mill and the waterfall, the sieves, the eye witnesses, the bride with draft pistons. A machine that explores the male desire for the female and the frustration of a loving machine.

In this decade, Duchamp also explored the love wish in art history and produced nine prints from the series *The Lovers* (1965), with revisions by Cranach, Ingres, Courbet and Rodin.

The world of chess was very popular in the first decades of the 20th century and was considered a game that reveals a machine of love and death. Duchamp identified himself with the horse and considered his artistic career as the movements of the horse on the board. Man Ray, as his name

says, looked like the King inside the chessboard. Some photographs and artist books explore this area in the exhibition.

Picabia, after a cubist and futurist pictorial period, led the Dada movement and published magazines such as *Cannibale* (1920) and collaborated with his drawings in the magazine *Littérature, nouvelle série*, directed by André Breton from 1922 to 1924. In 1917 he published the first issue of the Dada magazine 391 in Barcelona. The cover is a machine that titled NOVIA [Bride]. In 1922 he exhibited in the Dalmau galleries of Barcelona an exhibition of *Máquinas y Españolas* [Machines and Spanish Women] and the catalog includes a preface by André Breton.



**Man Ray.**  
*Cela vit*, c. 1923  
Silver gelatin  
20 x 16 cm  
Collection Fundació Vallpalou, Lleida

The Vallpalou Foundation have added to its collection five engravings by Marcel Duchamp's *The Large Glass* and the *Green Box* (1934), a numbered edition of Duchamp's *Draft Piston* (1914) published by Arturo Schwarz in 1965 and the photography *Cela vit* (1923), by Man Ray. This is a picture of a Marcel Duchamp's portrait in a lost painting by Man Ray. These recent acquisitions make up the historical core of the Vallpalou Foundation Collection.

Teresa Vall Palou pays homage to the *Draft Piston* by Marcel Duchamp with two lithographs, one black and the other in minium color, that "non-color" so loved by Marcel Duchamp and his poetics of indifference.

**Pilar Parcerisas** | Curator of the exhibition