

EURO-POP:
THE MECHANICAL BRIDE STRIPPED BARE IN STOCKHOLM, EVEN

by

PATRIK LARS ANDERSSON

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Department of FINE ARTS

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date April 5, 2001

ABSTRACT

The following dissertation concerns the emergence of a new 'open art' in New York, Paris and Stockholm between the years 1954 and 1966. I look at three artists in particular; Niki de Saint-Phalle, Jean Tinguely and Per-Olof Ultvedt, whose work has variously been categorized as Neo-Dada, Assemblage Art, New Realism, Nouveau Réalisme and Pop Art. In my reconsideration of these movements, a number of 'different' interests emerge which challenge existing histories of this period. By opening up an international perspective from the margin of this cultural discourse — specifically the fraught position of a museum of modern art in Sweden — I show that by 1962 a number of European and American artists and intellectuals had not only managed to construct a collaborative environment for international avant-garde art, but some had also begun to reject this institutionalization on the grounds of difference. By focusing on the dynamic curatorial strategies of Pontus Hulten at Stockholm's Moderna Museet, I explore the difficulties inherent in the institutionalization of Pop Art. In this process, the reintroduction of Marcel Duchamp played a crucial role in establishing a new canon of modern art in both Europe and the United States. As I reveal, it was in Stockholm — what many considered the periphery of the art world — where Duchamp's work was most clearly and rigorously articulated for a larger discursive realm in Paris and New York. Tracing a range of philosophical and political differences between artists, critics and curators, I show how the activities initiated at Moderna Museet were central in rearticulating the postwar avant-garde for the centre.

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INTRODUCTION

Let us consider two important factors, the two poles of the creation of art: the artist on the one hand, and on the other the spectator who later becomes the posterity. To all appearances, the artist acts like a mediumistic being who, from the labyrinth beyond time and space, seeks his way out to a clearing. (Marcel Duchamp *The Creative Act*, 1957)

In 1914, Marcel Duchamp completed *Three Standard Stoppages* [fig. 1], a 'readymade' art work which came to function as his own measuring system for future work — in particular *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* (1915-23). By holding a one meter long thread in a straight horizontal line at the height of one meter, and allowing it to freefall three times onto canvas, each time producing a slightly differently swerving line, Duchamp illustrated his understanding of the 'creative act' which he called "the coefficient of art" — an arithmetical relation between the unexpressed but intended and the unintentionally expressed. Metaphorically speaking, the thread 'falls' into the world of representation much as speech falls into language. Producing three chance configurations, *Three Standard Stoppages* afforded Duchamp the tension necessary to build a bridge between the rational world of scientific methods and the poetic accidents of everyday life. It is not by accident, however, that Duchamp *chose* to repeat this creative operation three separate times. As Duchamp once explained, "For me the number three is important" ... "one is unity, two is double, duality, and three is the rest."¹ Or put another way: "1 a unit / 2 opposition / 3 a series."²

¹Francis M. Naumann "Marcel Duchamp: A Reconciliation of Opposites" in De Duve, Thierry *The Definitively Unfinished Marcel Duchamp* Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991, p.55.

²Ibid..

The following dissertation is also built around the number three. This is partly intended, partly by accident. Just as Duchamp chose three threads in order to question the accepted authority of the meter, my three chapters act as threads that run parallel to accepted standard accounts of the emergence of a new 'open art' in New York, Paris and Stockholm between the years 1954 and 1966. I look at three artists in particular: Niki de Saint-Phalle, Jean Tinguely and Per-Olof Ultvedt, all of whose work has variously been categorized as Neo-Dada, Assemblage Art, New Realism, Nouveau Réalisme and Pop Art. These artists and movements have, of course, been discussed by a plethora of art historians and biographers whose vocations range from connoisseurship to social criticism. While my three chapters weave their way through many of these accounts, in the end, they arrive at a different historical understanding. In fact, some of my readers may want to argue that I haven't got the story 'straight.'

By rearranging the material found in the archives of this history of art, as well as introducing new material, my account challenges existing histories of this period by opening up an international perspective from the edge of this cultural discourse. By stressing the centrality of the margin in the formation of the center, this narrative reintroduces philosophical and political tensions which have, up until now, been reduced, covered up, or simply ignored.

At the center of my thesis is Stockholm's Moderna Museet, an institution which, soon after opening its doors in 1958 to its Swedish public, found itself at the center of a highly-charged contemporary debate about the post-war position of the avant-garde. By fostering an 'open art' distinctly

modern and international in character, the museum found itself flying straight into the bright spotlight of international recognition only to find out, like Icarus, that the sun can burn like napalm. By piecing together the historical fragments this passage left behind, I show how and why Moderna Museet, during the early sixties, was transformed into a tightrope suspended between European and American cultural institutions. It was on this precarious 'string' that a European and American postwar avant-garde would find an early meeting place but also discover its differences.

In order to set the stage for the sudden institutionalization of international avant-garde art in Stockholm during the early sixties, my first chapter, entitled "Intending Utopia or Expressing Depression: How to Find Movement in Art," brings to the surface a thick discursive context which had, by the early fifties, allowed numerous intellectuals in Sweden to enter into a cultural dialogue with continental Europe — in particular the Parisian art world. The central issue in this exchange was art's ability to either be integrated into a collective social environment or withdrawn into an expression of the individual psyche. Following this debate in Sweden directly before and after World War II, the first part of this chapter gives an overview of the provincial isolation which Swedish as well as other disenfranchised intellectuals in Paris were forced to confront. But it was also within this polemical context that independent positions were broken free. By the mid-fifties, the activities of Swedish art historian and curator Pontus Hulten stood out as an exception. In fact, by the early sixties Hulten, as director of a new and highly visible museum of modern art in Stockholm, managed to turn the Swedish art world 'upside down' and open the door for anarchic artistic

practices that quickly spilled over into an international public arena of modern art.

Starting with Hulten's small but significant 1954 exhibition *Le Mouvement* at Galerie Denise René in Paris, and ending with his first large-scale blockbuster exhibition *Movement in Art* at Moderna Museet in 1961, the second part of my first chapter explains how and why an independent space managed to be carved out *in between* the art world's centre and periphery. In this process, the reintroduction of Marcel Duchamp's particular form of Dada would serve as a genre-breaking tool box. His interest in machines, movement, irony and chance encouraged not only Hulten, but artists such as Tinguely, Saint-Phalle and Ultvedt, to develop a dialectical framework in which their own individual identities could emerge *against* the state of modern art. This posturing, I propose, was historically grounded in the writings of Max Stirner, a mid-19th century radical individualist whose obscure and only book *The Ego and His Own* (1845) was an early and powerful anarchist critique of representation. Just as this work had become a stumbling block for 19th century social utopian thinkers such as Marx and Engels, I show how Stirner's rejection of *revolution* in favour of *rebellion* became the link between Duchamp and a number of his 'bachelors.'

My second chapter, entitled *Movement in Art Goes Pop*, opens with a comparison of two 1961 exhibitions: *Movement in Art*, at Stockholm's Moderna Museet, and *The Art of Assemblage*, at New York's Museum of Modern Art. *Movement in Art* will be looked at as Hulten's first major attempt at making public individual forms of cultural production previously located in the 'gap' between art and life. This exhibition was vital to bringing

the private discourse of a small marginalized postwar avant-garde into the broader cultural arena of international art. Of specific interest to me is the way this new 'open' art was defined and argued over in Sweden among an 'old guard' at the Swedish Royal Academy of Art, an emerging youth culture informed by the popular press, and an increasingly vocal New Left. Contrasting this Swedish institutionalization of open art with New York's Museum of Modern Art's *Art of Assemblage* exhibition, I show how these two pivotal events, despite their similarities, were motivated by different political and philosophical agendas. While exhibitions such as these brought Americans like Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg and John Cage into collaboration with Europeans such as Saint-Phalle, Tinguely and Ultvedt, it also led to unresolvable conflicts which were rooted in social, philosophical and sexual differences. Just as Moderna Museet and The Museum of Modern Art could be said to have entered into a battle over the 'gap' in modern art, the aforementioned artists would find their individual and collective identities contested. At the center of this chapter is the role these various forms of open art had in the sudden institutionalization of a distinctly American Pop Art in 1962.

My third chapter, *The Mechanical Bride Stripped Bare in Stockholm, Even*, brings into clear relief the connection between this aforementioned Open Art and Cold War politics in Sweden between the years 1962 and 1966. For artists like Saint-Phalle, Tinguely and Ultvedt, to balance on the tightrope that had been suspended between European and American cultural institutions in 1961 would by 1962 have become a highly precarious act. Just as these artists were forced to retreat back to their European roots as a response to seeing their individual identities falling into collective positions 'fixed' by

an increasingly New York centred art world, Moderna Museet, under the leadership of Pontus Hulten, was pressured to change direction. While this institution appeared to have achieved reputable international attention and strong public support from its Swedish audience, the optimism that had surrounded initial exhibitions such as *Rörelse i konsten* and *Four Americans* would soon be understood by insiders as a false start. As we will see, as the Swedish-American conflict over Vietnam began to heat up in 1965, Moderna Museet found itself forced to reconcile its artistic activities with the political reality outside its own doors. Taking a particularly close look at four articles published in the Swedish press in opposition to the New York avant-garde by art critic and Duchamp historian Ulf Linde, I show how significantly different and strenuous the personal, political and philosophical interests in the avant-garde had become by the spring of 1965.

The second half of this chapter considers two exhibitions: *Inner and Outer Space: An Exhibition Devoted to Universal Art* and *She - a Cathedral*. As I will show, the former exhibition served as an attempt to 'clean house' after the false start Hulten recognized Moderna Museet to have taken between 1961 and 1965. *She - a Cathedral* returns us to the collaborative work of Saint-Phalle, Tinguely and Ultvedt who in 1966 constructed their monumental, albeit tongue-in-cheek, attack against collective American experiments in art and technology. Measuring 23.5 x 6 x 10 meters, "She" [*Hon*] was a giant female figure that lay headless on her back inside Moderna Museet. With her legs spread and knees pointed upwards, *She* was entered for a period of three months by a continuous crowd that lined up to see and experience the 'spectacle' she embodied in the form of a three-storied amusement park.

Central to this discussion is the sexual politics *She* embodied. I use this sculpture not only to show how these three artists, along with Moderna Museet, had engaged in a critical masquerade in order to reorient their individual identities, but also to show how Sweden had, in embracing a new set of sexual politics, by the mid-sixties managed to reconstruct its 'inner and outer spaces' towards a new sexualized cultural image that made it distinct from an American liberal ideology. In other words, this dissertation is as much about sex and politics as it is about art.

CHAPTER I

INTENDING UTOPIA OR EXPRESSING DEPRESSION: HOW TO FIND MOVEMENT IN ART

To set the stage for the sudden institutionalization of international avant-garde art in Stockholm during the early sixties, I need to bring to the surface parts of the thick discursive context which, by the early fifties, allowed numerous Swedish intellectuals to enter into dialogue with others from continental Europe and the United States. While the idea of modern art may have been stolen by New York after the Second World War, Paris remained for Europe the proud centre for an art tied to both historical avant-gardism and political resistance. Sweden may not have had such a grand part in either this historical or heroic history, but by the fifties it was being upheld as a model by many on the Left for having established a strong economy and international perspective under a Socialist government and it was also recognized for a modern art and architecture representing a functioning collective space. Using my own critical searchlight, I illuminate a history which will show that there were intellectuals in Sweden who were part of this dialogue, but who also put into question this colourful picture.

Outer Spaces: Dreams of Collectivity in Paris and Stockholm

As early as 1949 Alva Myrdal, one of the more influential social engineers of *folkhemmet* (*The Peoples' Home*), went so far as to argue that Sweden had, since the late-nineteenth century, always improved its "culture and education before ... [it] improved ...[its] industrial methods."³ Although

³Alva Myrdal, "Development of Population and Social Reform in Sweden" in Th.Plaenge Jacobson and Sven Silow (Eds.) *Ten Lectures on Swedish Architecture*, Stockholm: Victor Petterson's Bokindustriaktiebolag, p.19. During the 1930s, under the Social Democratic

this might be a rather extreme argument, slogans such as *vackrare vardagsvara* (more beautiful things for every day use) had by the late forties been inscribed into a national mythology that was historically grounded and internationally revealed in such welfare state rhetorical gestures as the 1930 Stockholm exhibition. Here, under the leadership of Gregory Paulsson, the Swedish Arts and Crafts Association *Svensk Form* had provided international modernism with an architectural breakthrough by producing a functionalist fairground designed by Gunnar Asplund [fig. 2]. A large part of this exhibition was devoted to an exploration and experimentation in such social aspects as full sized apartment solutions designed by numerous Swedish architects. As one architect put it, "From having been generally looking backward and socially passive, architecture in Sweden looked to the future and looked socially forward."⁴

leadership of Per Albin Hansson, the term 'folkhemmet' was used to express a future vision of social democracy and became synonymous with national social reforms in Sweden which sought to create equality through a social security system and better housing accommodations. Alva and Gunnar Myrdal became the main spokesmen for this utopic vision with books such as *Kris i befolkningsfrågan* [*Crisis in the Population Question*] (1934) in which they addressed Sweden's low population. A better society, they proposed, could only be formed by increasing the national birth rate and establishing a modern socially engineered collective living environment. The central place where these reforms could take place was the 'home.' There was a dark subtext to this optimistic vision of collectivity. In the last few years, critics of this social democratic legacy have gone back to the writings of the Myrdals and looked at the consequences of the collectivism and social engineering that manifested itself. For example, numerous historians point at the eugenics practiced and espoused by this idea of folkhemmet. In these inflammatory studies, the Left is shown to have practiced eugenics on a scale matched only by the Fascists in Germany. For a cursory overview of this issue, see Samuel Siren's web article "Konsekvenser av social ingenjörskonst" [The Consequences of the Art of Social Engineering] at www.algonet.se/~stampede/socing.html. For a more detailed analysis, see Maija Runci's doctoral dissertation *Sterilization Policy in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland* Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1996 and Gunnar Broberg och Mattias Tydén's *Oönskade i folkhemmet* Stockholm: Gidlunds, 1991.

⁴Håkan Ahlberg quoted in G.E. Kidder Smith *Sweden Builds* London: The Architectural Press, 1957 (2nd edition), p.16. As Eric Hobsbawm has stressed, after the Socialists came to power in 1932, Sweden's economy "roared ahead" and reached almost twice the pre-slump level of production by the end of the 1930s. See Eric Hobsbawm *The Age of Extremes: The Short History of the Twentieth Century*. London: Abacus, 1995, pp.101-104. It should also be mentioned that

Partly as a result of Sweden's ability to sustain social and economic optimism throughout the depression and Second World War, its welfare state architecture could be upheld to the external world as an image of a functioning socialist utopia and thereby would remain *the* international architectural and social paradigm well into the fifties.⁵ The Finnish architect Alvar Aalto described this optimism in rather purifying terms, saying that Sweden's image at the Stockholm Exhibition was:

...not a composition in stone, glass and steel as the Functionalist-hating exhibition visitor might imagine, but rather a composition in—houses, flags, searchlights, flowers, fireworks, happy people and clean tablecloths—a whole new kind of joy.⁶

In other words, the fair stood as an announcement for a new type of International Style architecture that presented itself as social rather than technocratic.

While architectural modernism stood relatively triumphant at the 1930 Stockholm Exhibition, the attempt to catapult Swedish modernist art alongside it left a more shattered and embarrassing legacy. The year prior to the exhibition, the Swedish painter Otto G. Carlsund, together with the Dutch Theo van Doesburg and French Héliou, founded "Art Concret," a modernist

the Stockholm Exhibition was the first of a series of major international expositions during the Depression years that, as Susan Buck-Morss has noted, was "seen as a means of enhancing business, creating jobs for the unemployed, and providing state-subsidized, mass entertainment that was at the same time public 'education.'" Susan Buck-Morss *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1989, p.323.

⁵Richard Weston. *Modernism* London: Phaidon, 1996, pp.183-184. Sweden was the first country to work itself out of economic depression in the 1930s. This achievement, largely attributed to the Social Democrat's willingness to embrace the large social reforms associated with folkhemmet, provided the Social Democratic government with a legacy that helped keep them in power until the 1970.

⁶Ibid..

project aimed at pushing painting past the ontological confines of Neo-Plasticism and purism in order to integrate *pure abstraction* with architecture [fig. 3]. As art historian and critic Hans L.C. Jaffe has pointed out, the importance of the *Manifeste de l'art concret*, was its pronounced rejection of dominant forms of new nationalism and the idolization of blood and soil which expressionist and figurative art frequently represented.⁷ With its roots in Malevich's Suprematism and Mondrian's Neo-Plasticism, a "social" contract was understood to be inherent in Geometric Abstraction. Because of his considerable reputation within these types of avant-garde circles, and the promise of a somewhat more international and Bauhaus style fair, Carlsund managed to convince some of Europe's most renowned contemporary artists to send their work to an *International Exhibition of Post-Cubist Art* that was to be held at Asplund's fairground. Without consulting the artists, who included Léger, Arp, Ozenfant, Mondrian, Pevsner, Moholy-Nagy, van Doesburg, Héliou, Täuber-Arp and Vantongerloo, Carlsund used their artwork as collateral for loans necessary to fund the event.⁸ Things did not fare well for Carlsund. In the words of the art critic Eugen Wretholm, when the creditors came around, "Carlsund was a dead man in Paris."⁹ While the larger circumstances for this failure of collective unity of artistic creation were financial, for Sweden the devastating consequence of this fiasco was that its

⁷Hans L.C. Jaffé "Geometric Abstraction: its Origin, Principles and Evolution" in *Art Since Mid-Century: The New Internationalism Vol.1 Abstract Art*; Greenwich, Connecticut: New York Graphic Society, 1971.

⁸The one artist who seemed to forgive Carlsund was his former teacher and friend Fernand Léger who in 1934 spent considerable time with Carlsund during his visit to Stockholm for his exhibition at Galerie Moderne. Along with Andre Lhote's school of cubist painting, Léger's school became a very popular educational retreat for Swedish modern artists. Karin Bergqvist Lindegren, Carlo Derkert, K.G. Hultén *Léger*. Stockholm: Tryckeri AB Björkmans Eftr, 1964.

⁹Eugen Wretholm *Svenska konstnärer från 1940, 50 och 60-talet* Uddevalla: Bokförlaget Forum AB, 1969, pp.4-5.

artists would again find themselves marginalized from international debates and exposure.

With the exception of a few small exhibitions such as *Ferdinand Léger* at Galerie Moderne and the more significant showing of Picasso's *Guernica* and graphic works in 1938, it was not until after the second world war that Swedes re-emerged in the modernist discourses centralized around Paris. With Mondrian's death in 1944, Carlsund felt it necessary (and possible) to come out of hiding and present in 1947 a series of compositions intended as mural designs for restaurants and bars which inspired a number of younger Swedish artists to pick up geometric abstraction as a viable modern expression of a social view of the postwar world. As was the case in continental European discourses, in the context of Swedish Socialism, Geometric Abstraction, like Bauhaus architecture, meant a possibility to reorganize Europe on a non-individual foundation based on Socialism rather than American liberalism.¹⁰ In the fall of 1947, the contemporary exhibition space *Färg och Form* presented *Ung Konst (Young Art)*, an exhibition which critics were quick to hail as a turning point in Swedish art. As the daily newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet* reported:

¹⁰After the war, as a result of its role in the resistance movement against Fascism, Socialism and Communism had a very different popular appeal in Europe than in the United States where it was socially and politically suppressed. An insightful discussion of the economic, military and diplomatic tensions between the United States and Europe directly after the Second World War is found in Pascaline Winand's *Eisenhower, Kennedy and the United States of Europe* New York: Saint Martin's Press, 1993. In particular Winand considers the idea of a 'united Europe' which was started under the Roosevelt administration and continued by Truman as a means to develop a multilateral economic plan to pave the way for liberalized trade which favoured the United States. The most visible outcome from these plans were the 1947 Truman Doctrine, which provided economic and financial aid to Europe, the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Pact. Both these helped to establish a divided Europe.

What strikes us when standing in front of this first group gathering is that we stand in front of a new generation.... A feeling we haven't had as strong since the early thirties...."¹¹

At this time, the dominant discussion around non-figurative geometric abstraction would also become localized around a small group of artists who, despite their differences, shared a preoccupation with issues of space, movement and the perception of time. Increasingly referred to as *Konkretisterna* (The Concretists), the painters and sculptors in this group, who included Olle Bonniér, Lage Lindell, Egon Möller Nielsen, Pierre Olofsson and Lennart Rodhe, sought to make art a part of the living environment, or as the Functionalists would say, "adapt art to the room."¹² It was to be an objective art subjectively created for a collective environment that was international in character. This latter aspect was crucial in order to break the isolation in which they saw regional expressionist and figurative art to be.

In 1949, it was a number of these artists' turn to collaborate with architects to construct an exposition ground, this time for the Stockholm World Sport Exhibition [fig. 4] which, architect Erik Thelaus succinctly described in the Labour organ *Byggmästaren* :

The World Sports Exhibition ... with its happy color scheme and its playful symbols ... returns, just as the Stockholm Exhibition, directly to international sources of inspiration, and in that sense they are very closely related despite the time gap.... The Sport Exposition is especially noteworthy for its collaboration between architecture, sculpture and painting... It is the first time that a more or less all embracing and all

¹¹Ibid., p.6.

¹²Louise Lyberg *A History of Swedish Art: 1880-1980* Uddevalla: Bohusläningens Boktryckeri AB, 1987 p.229.

encompassing collaboration of this kind has taken place... One would like to see these collaborations between different artists, that have been tried with fluctuating but considerably good results within the experimental frame of an exhibition, continue in less temporal circumstances..."¹³

With this optimistic appraisal of the exhibition, Thelaus also outlined some of the tendencies which he understood would make or break this interdisciplinary environment:

...profitable collaboration is always going to be dependent on the willingness among individual practices to try new working methods and treat all artistic problems. Among many of the leading artists in question exists certain paradoxical inhibitions and rejections of the artistic field of vision such as material judgments and a dogmatic embrace of the "picturesque," even when it is inappropriate. It is at the very least a living interest in the medium ranging from colour pigment to the unbound medium of sculpture and the artworks' new roles and functions which is necessary for a successful collaboration with architecture.¹⁴

In other words, Thelaus was not naive enough to ignore the conflicts that would arise in this type of *gesamtkunstwerk*. Nonetheless, for Concretist artists such as Olle Bonniér, the possibility of working in public spaces meant a chance to set in motion a relationship between the picture plane's stable surface (form and movement set in a state of equilibrium) and the perceptive vision of social beings. In his murals, as well as canvases such as *1950 Theme* (1950), Bonniér set up a dynamic prismatic intersection for the street-like forms of Mondrian's *Boogie-woogie* paintings and the kinetic plasticity of Moholy-Nagy's constructions [fig. 5]. Asked to define the purpose of this artistic project, Bonniér responded similarly to other Concretists by stating that

¹³"10 års konstliv i Stockholm" *Konstrevy* 1 (1957), p.7.

¹⁴*Ibid.*

“there can be no other way to understand this type of picture than as a creation of time.”¹⁵ By pictorially and verbally breaking up the concrete surface of the canvas to introduce the more metaphysical aspect of time, these artists met fierce opposition. After all, geometrical abstraction favored universalized concepts such as time and space over chance and individual circumstances.

One of the critics of this “cold” abstraction was Gotthard Johansson whose article *Ren och oren konst (Pure and Impure Art)* in *Svenska Dagbladet* (a liberal/conservative Swedish daily) warned that these artists “want to rid art of individuality and replace it with a language that is reduced, objective and geometrical....”¹⁶ In other words, they wanted to “replace [art] with a mystical vision based in the phenomenology of time.”¹⁷ In a way, this argument was nothing new or surprising as it had previously been leveled internationally against Mondrian and nationally against modernist artists such as GAN (Gösta Adrian-Nilsson).¹⁸ But it was insistent. During that same year, the liberal left daily *Dagens Nyheter* published its criticism, simultaneously denouncing and defending the Concretists under the same rubric of “Ren och oren konst.” In this exchange, Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen, himself a Swedish Concretist painter, argued with Torsten Bergmark, the editor of the Göteborg based art journal *Paletten*, who had accused these “young” artists of being nothing more than “pretentious mystics” espousing

¹⁵Sydhoff, Beatte *Bildkonsten i Norden: Vår Egen Tid* Lund: Berglingsta Boktryckeriet, 1973, p.84.

¹⁶Ibid..

¹⁷Ibid..

¹⁸In 1921 GAN had encouraged this link between geometric abstraction and mysticism in his book *Den Gudomliga Geometrin*. His paintings of this period can be said to be typical of Swedish modernist painting in that it mixed Cubism and Futurism. What made GAN's work rather surreal was his interest in Kandinsky's writings on the spiritual in art. See Louise Lyberg's *A History of Swedish Art* Uddevalla: Bokförlaget Signum, 1987, p.209.

universal values associated with the cold rationalism of Swedish social engineering.¹⁹ To some extent these critics were right. Concretist art was increasingly used as if it was *the* 'modern' look. By the fifties, Concretist murals were spread all over Sweden in places as diverse as factory lunch rooms, post offices, schools and apartment houses [fig.6]. This was an aesthetic which increasingly signified the social and collective vision of Sweden's People's Home (*Folkhemmet*).²⁰

While being criticized in the press, these artists not only discovered their brand of Modernism forefronted in public debates about art, but they also received approval from a number of art critics and historians such as Rolf Söderberg, Bo Wennberg, and the freelance writer Ulf Linde who must have figured that a 'public' art that could generate a debate about international issues to this degree and still be labeled mystic and pretentious could not be all that bad for Sweden's cultural life. In fact, this new work seemed to break through the involuntary isolation from the continent that Swedes had found themselves in during the Second World War.²¹

In 1951, in an attempt to strengthen the Concretists' link to continental aesthetic discourses and make a pitch for geometric abstraction at home, a number of Swedish architects, artists, curators and professors organized a

¹⁹Sydhoff, p.85. Like Gotthard Johansson's article, this one was also titled "Ren och oren konst."

²⁰As Olle Granath has pointed out, Folkhemmet's vision was partly spread by the distribution of cheap 'quality art' affordable to most people. The most common media was lithography and the most common artists were those who had made a name for themselves between the wars. In return, Concretists who were asked to produce murals received one percent of the cost of their projects. See Olle Granath *Another Light: Swedish Art Since 1945* Malmö: Svenska Institutet, 1975, p.14.

²¹During the forties and fifties, Paris was a pilgrimage site for a large number of Swedish artists trying to learn contemporary techniques. Going to study with modern masters such as Fernand Léger or Andre Lhote became, as in other countries, *the* thing to do. See Granath, p.10.

committee to produce a contemporary survey of modern art to be held in Stockholm at Liljevalchs konsthall. *Klar Form*, (*Clear or Pure Form*), as it was named, opened in March of 1952 with Parisian support from Galerie Denise René and the magazines *Art d'Aujourd'hui* and *XX:e Siècle*. With critical texts written by the French art historians and critics Léon Degand and R.V. Gindertael, *Klar Form* introduced work by an international array of artists including Hans Arp, André Bloc, Alexander Calder, J.Dewasne, Cicero Dias, Auguste Herbin, Robert Jacobsen, Le Corbusier, Fernand Léger, A. Magnelli, Robert Mortensen, Serge Poliakoff, Marie Raymond, Sophie Taeuber-Arp, and Victor Vasarely. Despite the lukewarm reception at home, the exhibition was extremely important in providing inroads into continental debates for Swedish artists.²²

Klar Form also represented a glimpse of new hope, a "northern light," for someone like Léon Degand whose attempts at spreading the gospel of International style geometric abstraction had since 1946 consistently been short circuited. For example, Degand's distancing from Socialist Realism and the School of Paris in favour of contemporary forms of abstraction by writing numerous articles arguing against what he viewed as an anemic crisis in both camps, had as early as 1947 left him sacked from the Communist Party journal *Lettres françaises*.²³ Serge Guilbaut has described in detail the pathetic nature of Degand's attempt to bring modern art to Brazil in 1947. If his cultural invasion into South America had the look of a "failed firecracker," then his support of *Klar Form* represented one of his last attempts at

²²This less optimistic response from gallery goers has been noted by Teddy Brunius in *Baertling: mannen, verket* Uddevalla: Bohuslänningens boktryckeri, 1990, p.87.

²³Serge Guilbaut *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984, pp.131-132.

providing a spark for geometric abstraction and the collective vision it stood to represent.²⁴

In his catalogue text for *Klar Form*, Degand took the opportunity to pronounce that the "crisis in belief, of a plastic conception and of language from which it is appropriated" stemmed from a lack of participation in "a larger creative birth process."²⁵ Here, Sweden could heroically represent a new frontier for the kind of "conquering art," as he called it, that would ultimately redirect preoccupations with the past and the stasis of "laboratory art" toward a contemporary "acceptable formal language."²⁶

Degand's optimistic and militant sounding appraisal of Swedish geometric abstraction should not only be read against the Communist Party's support of Socialist Realism. By the time Degand had vacated his office at the Communist press, a larger threat to his position had emerged in the form of gestural abstraction. As early as 1947 while Degand was busy sending his "conquering art" to Brazil, a series of groundbreaking exhibitions had taken place in Paris which proved the arrival of "informal" painting in close connection with existentialist literary movements.²⁷ By the late forties the Parisian art scene resembled more of a battlefield than a unified center for modern art. By the early fifties, "cold" geometric abstraction was not only a

²⁴Guilbaut, Serge "Dripping on the modernist parade: The failed invasion of abstract art in Brazil, 1947-1948" in *Patrocinio, coleccion y circulacion de las artes*, XX coloquio Internacional de Historia del Arte, UNAM, Instituto de Investigaciones Esteticas, 1997, pp. 807-817.

²⁵The catalogue for *Klar Form* came in the form of an entire issue of *Art d'aujourd'hui* devoted to it. This was published a few months prior to the exhibition opening in Sweden. See Léon Degand "Klar Form" *Art d'aujourd'hui* no.1 (December 1951), p.2.

²⁶*Ibid.*.

²⁷See Guilbaut, Serge "Postwar Painting Games: The Rough and the Slick" in *Reconstructing Modernism: Art in New York, Paris, and Montreal 1945-1964* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1990, pp.30-79.

stance against the "hot" gestural abstraction and the somewhat luke warm École de Paris, but it had to contend with an Abstract Expressionist push from across the Atlantic.²⁸

Familiar with this polemical atmosphere and particularly aware of the contemporary state of Swedish art, curator and art historian Pontus Hulten was quick to nurture a potential sud-nord alliance. Having recently finished his graduate studies in art history with a thesis on Vermeer and Spinoza, Hulten was spending as much time in Paris as he was in Stockholm during the early fifties. Aware of the Parisian art scene centred around its annual Salon des Réalités, and perhaps recognizing attempts by Degand and René to promote a Geometric International Style abstraction in Paris by tying it to remote exotic locales such as Latin America and Scandinavia, Hulten managed to find his way into the inner circle of Galerie Denise René. This kind of connection was indeed important for anyone interested in non-figurative abstraction. The American painter John-Franklin Koenig, who was an intimate part of this scene, describes it thus:

The gallery scene, in the early 1950s, was virtually closed to nonfigurative art and especially to younger artists doing this type of art.... Denise René was certainly the most important nonfigurative gallery. As early as 1946 she had a show entitled *La Jeune Peinture Abstraite* with Hartung, Schneider, Deyrolle, Dewasne, Jacobsen, and Marie Raymond (mother of Yves Klein). In 1948 she showed Max Bill, Gorin, Magnelli, Schneider, Dewasne, Jacobsen, Herbin, Mondrian, Kandinsky, Mortensen, and Marcelle Cahn. Victor Vaserey was her

²⁸By 1954 it was particularly Sam Francis and Jean-Paul Riopelle who dominated this discussion. According to Hulten, Pollock was not really known outside very specific circles until later. See Pontus Hulten *Jean Tinguely: A Magic Stronger than Death* New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1987, p.27.

chief advisor. André Bloc, the editor of *Architecture d'aujourd'hui* and *Art d'aujourd'hui*, was a powerful ally of Denise René.²⁹

Himself, Koenig was closely connected to this scene as he helped edit the increasingly important art journal *Cimaise* which was started by the bibliophile Jean-Robert Arnaud whose aim was to maintain an organ through which artists on the fringes of this scene could become known. Not only did Hulten become familiar with this crowd, but by 1953, together with Rolf Söderberg and the artist/critic Oscar Reutersvärd, Hulten had managed to be on friendly enough terms with Denise René to suggest a follow-up exhibition to *Klar Form. Exposition d'Art Suédois Cubiste, Futuriste, Constructiviste*, as it became known, opened at Galérie Denise René in the fall of 1953 with each of the three curators contributing substantial texts to a special Scandinavian issue of *Art d'aujourd'hui*, the gallery's unofficial mouthpiece [fig. 7]. With a "hard edge" composition by Olle Baertling on its cover, the magazine directed the reader through a history of Swedish abstraction starting with first and second generation Swedish Futurists and Cubists such as GAN, Siri Derkert, Otte Sköld and Otto G. Carlsund leading to a younger generation of contemporary artists such as Rodhe, Bonnier, and Baertling. While the texts by Söderberg and Reutersvärd rationalized contemporary geometric abstraction via the purist tendencies of Cubism and Futurism, Hulten discerned a less obvious heritage in the work of painter and filmmaker Viking Eggeling who, before his death in 1925, managed to produce his own revolution within the Dada movement:

²⁹John-Franklin Koenig "Abstraction chaude" in Guilbaut, Serge Ed. *Reconstructing Modernism: Art in New York, Paris, and Montreal 1945-1964* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1990, p.8 (pp.1-16)

It seems that Viking Eggeling would be the first representative of modern art to consciously put his images in direct relationship with time.... the first artist of images in the history of film..., Eggeling broke with the tradition of the image limited by the rectangle.³⁰

As Hulten's exposé made clear, with film rolls such as *Diagonal Symphony* (1921) [fig. 8], Eggeling had realized his idea of *moving images* by using images non-figuratively and with real movement:

By methodical work, he tried to free the rules of plastic counterpoint from an abstract syntax. His film rolls are composed like pieces of music, isolated images resemble measures, variants on a theme, multiple measures constitute a phrase in which certain parts can be found in other phrases.... By the gradual transformation of different figures he arrived at creating an uninterrupted movement and a continuous transformation of stages of non-figurative movements. The film made the beauty of individual images disappear, to be replaced by those of real movement in a living form.³¹

While pointing to Eggeling's attack on the cult of 'beauty,' it was Hulten's ability to foreground Eggeling's kinetic sensibility as an early example of both Swedish and international abstraction that must have pleased Denise René as well as her advisor Victor Vaserey whose own interests in movement needed historical grounding and contemporary currency. Although Eggeling's commitment and experimentation with a new visual syntax had in many ways been as strict as Mondrian's or Malevich's, his work also broke down this structure with an obsession with movement. As we will see, this dialectical position of flux would become a central aspect of Hulten's *movement*.

³⁰Karl G. [Pontus] Hulten "Viking Eggeling" *Art d'Aujourd'hui* série 4, no.7 (Oct-Nov, 1953), p.3.

³¹Ibid..

A picture from 1954 of Denise René smiling and pointing enthusiastically at a tension point in one of Olle Baertling's compositions characterizes the general excitement mounting in 1954 toward Scandinavia, where non-objective art was increasingly supported by the state.³² Making an even stronger caricature of these Franco-Swedish relations, Michel Ragon, in an article published in *Cimaise* entitled "Aesthetique actuelle du timbre-poste," described France as retrograde in its "official" reluctance to integrate non-figurative abstract art into utilitarian objects such as money and stamps [fig. 9]. Comparing the conservative figurative representations on three French stamps with three futuristic designs on Swedish stamps (produced to celebrate the national telegraph company's communication capabilities), Ragon observes that the electro-geometric abstractions on the latter stamps can be referenced to Swedish Concretist artists such as Bonniér or Rhode:

...we salute with pleasure the stamp series put out by the Swedish post system. If two of them are content to make telephone lines and lightning bolts look abstract, then the [third] is by contrast authentically composed of abstract forms [reminicent] of a truer expression of Scandinavian non-figurative art.³³

It seems ironic that while Scandinavian artists and curators were desperately looking south to Paris for approval and stimulus, a part of Paris was projecting its desires north toward Sweden (as well as the rest of Scandinavia) as an assurance that socialism and non-figurative art could function in a collective state. For defenders of geometric abstraction such as Denise René,

³²This abstract art's tie to a social democratic architecture was noted in both *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* and *Art d'Aujourd'hui*. See the section on Sweden in the special nordic issue "Pays Nordiques" *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* 54 (May - June 1954), pp18-37. Also, "Synthèse des Arts: L'art est un service social" *Art d'Aujourd'hui* no.4-5 serie 5 (June 1954), pp.19-31.

³³Michel Ragon "Esthétique actuelle du Timbre-Poste" *Cimaise* (March 1955), p.25. It should be mentioned that Ragon was by this time also a main supporter of gestural abstraction.

the ability to stay "cool" despite the onslaught of gestural abstraction was becoming difficult enough that she saw the need to open up new curatorial possibilities for someone like Hulten.

Inner Spaces: Individual Expressions and the Ideology of Preparedness

Not only would Hulten take advantage of this precarious situation in Paris, but he may very well have filtered his own socio-political ideas about art through the concerns of another Swedish intellectual. Challenging the utopianism of a socialist collective culture that was increasingly being read in the majority of non-figurative abstractions, the surrealist poet and critic Ilmar Laaban had, since 1952, written a series of articles published in the Swedish popular press and leftist journals, arguing for an artistic position not only distinct from the dogmatism of Social Realism, but also from the three potential "traps" he saw in the geometric (non-organic abstraction that is calculated: eg. Malevich, Mondrian), the non-geometric (organic, instinctual and chance ridden: eg. Arp, Brancusi) and the emotive (emotional expressions: eg. Kandinsky). In his 1952 articles "Abstract or Concrete" and "Analysis and Synthesis in Modern Art" Laaban observes that artists involved in neo-plastic abstraction have painted themselves into a *cul de sac*, and the best that the post-war school of neo-expressionism can do is "run around in a snowy landscape."³⁴ Warning that even surrealist and anarchist dynamism can turn as cold and calculated as abstraction was becoming mechanized, Laaban points toward a potential art able to speak about both an *inner* and *outer* reality which constantly interpenetrate, re-form and inform each other.

³⁴Ilmar Laaban "Analys och syntes i modern konst" *Samtid och Framtid* (August 1952), p. 49.

According to Laaban's prognosis, artists needed to produce a "psycho-physical" space of resistance by returning to the "chance-ridden dynamics" of Duchamp's readymades and Surrealism's found objects, where the form found in the everyday, he felt, had been "undressed" of its functional qualities. For Laaban, an intellectual *choice* connected to *chance* could offer a dynamic position that would push beyond the immobility he saw facing artists. Challenging the abstract geometric exhibition *Klar Form*, Laaban observed that "the Concretist's sole interest appears to be in concretizing something which is by nature not concrete," a fact that he found paradoxically located next to their claim to "purity, integrity, logic, etc. which ... depends and plays on the fancy of the beholder through its 'decorative' qualities."³⁵ Artists such as Baertling, he continues, who resist a direct link with architecture in favour of something more 'pure,' consciously or unconsciously produce decorative work that is in the end technically tied to the very technocratic society from which their constructive "open" forms claim to escape:

Just as the technocratic world does not only organize work camps and construct atom bombs, but also attracts people with its evangelical chrome and soft plastic, so does the technocratic art have both its aggressive and comfortable side. If at times it does not accept this type of abstraction it is because it reveals its logic much too clearly.³⁶

If Laaban's argument maintained that the language of geometric abstraction was being turned into a technocratic language of industry, the Funktionalist architects' claim had always been not to forefront specific aesthetic agendas or

³⁵Ilmar Laaban "Abstrakt eller konkret" *Samtid och Framtid* (August 1952), p.42.

³⁶Ibid., p.46.

artistic problems in their modernist drive to produce 'machines to live in.' Likewise, Laaban observed, most of the Concretist artists refused to discuss a move towards the 'zero degree' (*noll läget*) and discuss a future. Artists like Jacobsen and Dewasne (both represented by Denise Réne) refused to talk about a future 'move.' To Laaban, this suggested that art was in need of a major catharsis.

But despite Laaban's warnings, by the mid-fifties, a fertile meeting ground between geometric abstraction and modernist architecture had been established both physically and intellectually in Sweden.³⁷ To a large extent this was the result of the construction of Folkhemmet under the country's Social Democratic government. In 1954 the art journal *Konstrevy* published "Färg över stan—en enkät," a series of articles set up as a forum to address the sudden, and what some considered "shocking," interest in geometric abstraction by government authorities, large industrial corporations and "daring private businesses." Here, seven artists and architects were asked to present their views on the subject of the painted facade.

Commenting on this relationship between mural painting and architecture, Erik and Tore Ahlsén, two architects known for combining their functionalism with decorative mural experiments at suburban shopping centres such as Årsta outside of Stockholm, suggested that painting could indeed function within the psychological area that the technological and economic side of functionalist architecture had so far failed to address: "Where as in past epochs of Stockholm, red or yellow colour functioned

³⁷Staffan Högberg. *Stockholms Historia: Småstaden, Fabrikstaden, Storstaden*. Stockholm: Bonniers, 1987, pp.267-268.

architecturally, nowadays the murky gray has become the worthlessly depressing *whatever*.”³⁸ Rejecting what they saw as a bourgeois tradition of “detalj-kritik utan helhetssyn” (detail criticism without oversight), the Ahlséns argued for a total architecture built on an understanding of technology, economy and psychology. As a response to this integrational optimism (gesamptkunstverk), architect and professor Sven Ivar Lind began his argument by accusing the Ahlséns of being caught up in romantic enlightenment ideals. Lind proposed that, like the purist tendencies found in the *Klar Form* exhibition, the attempt to integrate geometric abstraction into architecture could be nothing more than “an international fashion phenomena:”

Many seem to be completely accepting of the “söderortsarkitekternas” ways of using the painterly medium as a way to kill boredom with an artificial recyclable material which is a kind of aesthetic drug like music [by a] conveyor belt. This function is “purist” paintings currently big chance, which the Concretists have not been late to pick up on....³⁹

Although Lind did not see a problem with the integration of the arts as a means towards a functional end, he did fear architecture might fall into the service of art rather than vice versa. The conclusion drawn from this became that the goal itself “should not be to integrate the seven arts with each other and certainly not to have aesthetic judgment dominate the theoretical or rational as in a kind of unrealistic romantic enlightenment.”⁴⁰ Balancing these two architects’ opinions, four artists responded with three distinct positions on the subject. Pierre Olafsson who had just finished an 8 metre

³⁸Erik and Tore Ahlsén “Färg över stan—en enkät” *Konstrevy* nr.2 (1958), p.78.

³⁹Sven Ivar Lind “Färg över stan—en enkät” *Konstrevy* nr.2 (1958), p.77. (pp.77-81)

⁴⁰Ibid..

mural for Sandvikens Läroverk (Sandviken's School Board) argued that the artist should subordinate him/herself to the form of the building:

Collaboration between architects and artists should naturally not begin until the building has taken form.... If the artist has based his composition on the architecture's rhythm and construction he will be able to play more with line and colour without an effect that is worrisome or anti-architecture.⁴¹

Olle Bonnier, on the other hand, was more optimistic about collaboration based on equal status and proposed a combined effort by aesthetic and architectural specialists. The most vehemently opposed to this integration of the arts, as Laaban noted in 1952, was Olle Baertling. Taking a high modernist stand, Baertling argued that the different arts must first meet on a "spiritual" level which only then would have the potential to eventually lead to the kind of integration he saw being espoused by the Belgian Groupe Espace.⁴² While he was not necessarily excited about a general 'popularization' of geometric abstraction, he did consider its potential in reaching a broader public. It was this optimism that he, perhaps more than any other Swedish Concretist, shared with Denise René and the group around *Art d'Aujourd'hui*.

⁴¹Pierre Olafsson "Färg över stan—en enkät" *Konstrevy* nr.2 (1958), p.79.

⁴²André Bloc, director of *Art d'Aujourd'hui* and *Édition de l'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, urged painters like Baertling to take serious Group Espace's attempts to set up collaborations between specialists in architecture and art: "If painting and sculpture often suffer from a complex of inadaptability in the face of architecture, it is also true that architecture is often handicapped by a terrible misunderstanding of the plastic arts." In this debate, Bloc, with his journals and connections to architecture and art, had put himself in the positioned of advisor and assessor for this 'synthesis.' See, E. Pillet "Groupe Espace" *Art d'Aujourd'hui* no.8 serie 4 (December 1953), p.18; and Pierre Guéguen "Une démonstration du Groupe Espace: l'exposition 'architecture couleur formes' à Biot (Côte d'Azur) *Art d'Aujourd'hui* no.6 serie 5 (September 1954), p.18.

If *Klar Form* had provided Swedish Concretists with a Cartesian overview and context in which to appear contemporary and *continental* in 1952, the following year *12 Contemporary American Painters and Sculptors* (also held at Liljevalchs konsthall) would help Swedish Neo-Expressionists legitimize a more psychoanalytically grounded international art. The loss of subjectivity and techno-optimism, that both Johansson and Laaban had accused hard edge abstraction of having fallen victim to, now found its expression in an art that was figurative and often *informel* as the French art critic Michel Tapié would say. One of the strengths behind this 'neo-expressionism' (*nyexpressionism*) was that it was not all that new but had strong roots in the work from the 30s of Swedish artists such as Siri Derkert and Vera Nilsson as well as more obvious ties to individualist forms of abstraction abroad ranging from Fautrier, Pollock, Wols, Kline, Dubuffet and the various artists tied to CoBrA.

In fact, it was upon his return from Denmark, where he had been loosely involved with CoBrA, that a young Swedish painter by the name of Torsten Renqvist would trigger the anti-Concretist debate to which I have alluded. Paintings such as *Windswept Bush* (1950) [fig. 10] were read as both aggressive, subjective and introspective.⁴³ It seemed to connect more with the angst and anger found in the existentialist writings of a group of writers known as *Fyrtiotalisterna* (The Men of the Forties) than with the constructive optimism found in architectural circles. In fact, the utopian social welfare state that was being concretized both as surface and structure was to find its counter culture in expressionist painting, existentialist writing and film

⁴³Torsten Bergmark, editor of *Paletten* up until 1954, was the most voiciferous supporter of neo-expressionism. He credited Torsten Renqvist with having created work with both "originality" and "individuality." See his review of Renqvist's work in *Paletten* Nr.2 (1954), p.60-62.

which revealed itself as weeds growing through the concrete cracks of these collective spaces.

Just as Stockholm and Paris were both anchoring geometric abstraction in each other's image, nordic existentialism found its way south via Kierkegaard's religious overtones and north via Sartre's more Cartesian rationalism and philosophy of resistance. One could say that existentialism returned to Sweden in the forties as a spreading virus germinating as a guilt ridden complex associated with the country's so called neutrality status during the war and the new forms of alienation accompanying a structural transformation of Sweden into a colder, more rational living and working environment. As Thure Stenström has suggested in his survey of existentialist writing in Sweden, *Existentialismen i Sverige: mottagande och inflytande 1900-1950* (1984), having been cut off to a large degree from contact with continental thought during the second world war, many Swedes felt a need to "take-back" the lost years after the borders reopened for cultural exchange. The rigor with which this "engagement" took place was often fueled by the guilt of having to owe up to the compromises made during the war while claiming neutrality. Herein lies the attempt to mark out an adherence with the Resistance in the winning democracies:

To play Sartre in a Swedish theatre could in this situation become a way to ease one's conscience, a sign that despite German-Swedish trade to Nazi weapons factories in the Ruhr—one could nevertheless stand on the righteous side.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Thure Stenström *Existentialismen i Sverige: mottagande och inflytande 1900-1950* Uppsala: University of Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell international, 1984, p.15-16.

One of the writers who projected this feeling of Swedish neutrality guilt was Stig Dagerman who expressed pessimism and skepticism through his discovery and engagement in the writings of Sartre and Kierkegaard. His 1945 debut novel *Ormen* (The Snake) struck a nerve with many Swedes who read it as a critique of the "ideology of preparedness" (*beredskapsideologi*) wherein the country's social body was understood as circumscribed by an idealization of bravery and harmony of the soul in an attempt to account for the moral and psychological fiber of neutrality politics. The major tenor of works such as *Ormen* and *Dom dödas ö* was motivated by the existentialist claustrophobia he shared with authors such as Lars Ahlin.⁴⁵ Drawing from the *Fyrtotalisterna*, Ingmar Bergman would produce existentialist films which indeed gained currency outside of Sweden. One aspect of this success was the pushing of nudity and sex boundaries. Despite their 'artistic intentions' and lack of complaints from the Swedish board of censors, films such as *Summer with Monica* (1953) helped spread the rumour of Sweden as a society not only intellectually forward, but sexually liberalized.⁴⁶ As will be shown, in the sixties, this new image of Sweden would be fully exploited on various social, political and artistic fronts. But most important to remember about the fifties is that Sweden was becoming envied abroad because of its open embrace of both Capitalist and Socialist collectivity. For Bergman this social democratic milieu bred films which sought to provide an outlet for a

⁴⁵Lars Ahlin's book title *Om (If)* most literally calls up this psycho-social idea of 'preparedness.' See also Stig Dagerman's *Ormen* Stockholm: Vingförlaget, 1964.

⁴⁶By 1961 Bergman had won two Oscars for best foreign film and established his international reputation. Despite these credentials, films such as *The Silence* (1961) were cut in several countries. But it was not until 1967, with films such as Vilgot Sjöman's *I'm Curious - Yellow*, that Sweden's sexualized liberal identity was in full bloom. See Henrik Emilson's "Full Frontal Nudity" *Merge* No.9 (Summer 2000), pp.19-22.

more individual, reclusive and repressed social psyche.⁴⁷ In the process he managed to create a stereo-typed Swedish existentialist. While there is always a portrayal of class differences in his films, there is never 'productive' class conflict depicted. As Bergman would comment in the seventies when asked about his relationship to social democracy:

Our social behaviour pattern — both outward and inwards — has proved a fiasco. The tragic thing is that we have neither the ability nor the will, nor the energy to change direction. It is too late for revolutions, and in my heart I no longer believe in their beneficial effects. Around the corner there is an insect world waiting, and one day it will wash in over our highly individualized existence. Otherwise I'm a good social democrat.⁴⁸

Dagerman would not be catapulted out of obscurity and into the dark collective psyche of Swedish culture and international acclaim to the same extent as Bergman, but he would become nationally recognized after his suicide in 1954. As a fragment from his last written words announce, not everyone was riding the optimistic wave of technology, industry and socialism:

I leave solid dreams and loose connections. I leave a promising path that has offered me self-despise and common recognition. I leave a poor reputation and the promise of an even worse. I leave a few hundred thousand words, some written in rapture, most written in boredom and for money. I leave a lousy economy, a wavering stand towards the questions of the day, a better used doubt and a hope of liberation.⁴⁹

⁴⁷As Leif Furhammar has observed: "It is amazing to see how almost every meaningful film produced in the post-war period in Sweden has to do with the individual in conflict with the collective (family, class, gangs or society). Leif Furhammar *Filmen i Sverige* Stockholm: Wiken, 1993, p.229.

⁴⁸Quoted in Maria Bergom-Larsson *Film in Sweden: Ingmar Bergman and Society* trans. by Barrie Selman London: The Tantivy Press, 1978, p.8.

⁴⁹<http://hem.passagen.se/iblis/dagerman.html>

Shortly after his death, the Swedish government, through the traffic commission, would help canonize Dagerman and capitalize on this individual angst in as socialist and collective a manner as possible by publishing his short story *Att döda ett barn* (*To Kill a Child*) in highschool text books. Meant as a campaign against reckless driving, *To Kill a Child* urges people to “slow down” by telling three parallel stories set in the context of a sunny Sunday morning in three villages. The three narratives tragically meet when a man from the first village goes for an innocent drive to the seaside when he by chance meets a child in the third village who has been asked by its mother to run across the street to borrow sugar from a neighbour. Dripping with emphatic realism, the story is as powerful as any Expressionist or Social Realist painting could hope to become at this moment, and poetically cries out for a collective social conscience:

Afterwards it is all too late. Afterwards a blue car stands on the road and a screaming woman removes her hand from her mouth and the hand is bleeding. Afterwards a man opens a car door and tries to stand upright although he has a pit of horror within himself. Afterwards a few lumps of sugar lie randomly scattered in blood and gravel and a child lies unmoving on its belly with its face tightly pressed against the ground. Afterwards two pale-faced people who have not yet had their coffee run out of a gate and see a sight on the road that they shall never forget. For it is not true that time heals all wounds. Time does not heal a dead child's wound and it heals very poorly the pain of a mother who has forgotten to buy sugar and sends her child across the road to borrow some and just as poorly does it heal the grief of the once happy man who has killed it.

For he who has killed a child does not go to the sea. He who has killed a child goes quietly home and beside him he has a silent woman with her hand bandaged and in all the villages they pass they see not one happy person. All the shadows are very dark and when they part it is still under silence and the man who has killed the child knows that this silence is his enemy and that he will need years of his life to defeat it by shouting that it wasn't his fault. But he knows that is a lie and in

his nights' dreams he shall instead wish his life back so he could make this single minute different. But so uncaring is life against the man who has killed a child that everything after is too late.⁵⁰

A year after this story was published nationwide, Picasso's *Guernica* returned to Stockholm for a second time in two decades. To be sure, *Guernica* could be read as a reminder and counterpoint to Sweden's supposedly passive neutrality during the war which had left Swedish intellectuals out in the cold, while the 'popular front' fought a hot resistance battle; visually, verbally and literally. And just as surely, one child run over by a car could not compare to the death of an entire village in Spain (not to speak of the atrocities of World War II). But this time, Swedes had at least some kind of claim of their own to existentialism. In its call for 'preparadness,' a short story like Dagerman's *To Kill a Child* could, after all, also be read as an attempt of a nation to band together against social 'accidents.' While informed by both Sartre and Kierkegaard, this stance would be marked by a difference that replaced *resistance* with a socio-individual *responsibility*. It was the responsibility of the citizen in this social welfare state to be constantly prepared. After all, if one could have asked "what if?" before the child ran across the street to be killed by a car, then the accident may not have happened. By slowing down, rational behavior may have defeated chance.

The idea of defeating chance is of course ridiculous. Accidents do happen. A fitting image for this new Swedish social-psyche would therefore be the Rodin-and-Giacometti inspired bronze sculpture by Martin Holmberg, exhaustibly titled *Trafikmiljö. människan nära vidsträkt boulevard med tung*

⁵⁰<http://hem.passagen.se/iblis/dagerman.html>

trafik [*Traffic Milieu: Human Near a Wide Stretching Boulevard with Heavy Traffic*] (1952-53).⁵¹ Like its title, the work is in the end laboriously overworked [fig. 11], a kitschy attempt to make visual a socio-individual angst that makes us responsible *if* something happens. Devoid of utopian spirit and lacking any sense of self-conscious irony, there is no room for the kind of energetic movement Hulten was looking for — a movement reliant on chance. Despite the failure of Holmberg's sculpture to "move" us, the new social psyche it tried to express would nonetheless become appropriate for a socialist country increasingly asked to define itself between Capitalism and Communism.⁵² As we will see in Chapter three, just as Picasso had been asked if he was a card-carrying Communist in the forties, the Swedish state would soon be asked by its public to declare its allegiances within international politics and be forced to define its own position between the superpowers of the Cold War.

⁵¹See Lars-Erik Åström "Människan i nuet" *Konstrevy* Nr.2 (1957), pp.60-62. As Åström's article points out, Holmberg was mainly concerned with the human subject's predicament in a mechanized urban environment, depicting automobile and vespa drivers as "human beings caught up in hard machine-forms made of glass and metal" pointing to a "new vital contact between abstract and human forms." p.60.

⁵²Already in 1948, in an article entitled "Sartre and the Concept of Responsibility," literary critic Östen Sjöstrand argued in the Western daily *Göteborgs Morgonpost* that Sartre's attempt to link individualism with a concept of responsibility fails as it miss uses the word 'tradition': "Tradition is not only that which is orally passed from generation to generation. It is also the deep under currencies of blood relations which are to a large part unconscious. It is in the now that we are united with past and future generations. The feeling of responsibility which comes out of this human experience is a completely different one from Sartre's. The responsibility which tradition determines, allows the individual to realize that culture's essential sacrifice is not the obstacle *for* his ability to live, but on the contrary, the condition *why*; the sacrifice of culture, what is it other than a consideration of our fellow-being! This responsibility is capable of realizing people and thereby culture, it is a responsibility which in most cases makes a person conservative. This is after all the goal to make the sacrifices of culture connect with tradition. It is this tradition which must be delivered and carried on if culture shall survive. But just as much as this culture can be misused by individuals, it can also be missused by a power hungry state. In this sense, to be conservative is foremost to be conscious of the personal responsibility over the protection of culture. And it is here where where we distance ourselves as far as possible from Sartre." Östen Sjöstrand "Sartre och ansvarsbegreppet *Göteborgs morgonpost* (February 14, 1948), p.4.

In terms of visual art, what we see slowly developing in Sweden by the mid-fifties is a set of attitudes towards the inner and outer spaces of a "new city" which ranged from expressed depression to a belief in a concretized utopia. As alluded to earlier, for Ilmar Laaban, the psycho-physical space of resistance to both these "traps" was to be found outside the partisan polemic. In 1952, the artist who Laaban saw come closest to his own interest in everyday life, space and mass culture was the Chilean Surrealist Sebastian Roberto Matta Echaurren who by 1954 would become involved with the International Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus together with the Danish CoBrA artist Asger Jorn [fig. 12]. Here, some felt, the struggle between aesthetics and politics were carefully elaborated. In an interview for the New York based magazine *Reality* that year, Matta defined his own collective anarchism:

Art serves to arouse one's intuition to the emotion latent in everything around one, and to show up the emotional architecture which people need in order to be and to live together. Important emotion is a menace to those who live for their own selfish interest; so they have invented the philanthropic lie, and with that philanthropic lie have reduced the artist to the condition of a hostage. They have instituted an "Art Police," a police which operates against deep-rooted human emotion. I identify myself with this hostage. The philanthropist-masters' comfort is menaced and they "shoot" the hostage. This new poet-hostage is always conspiring against their selfishness. To be this hostage one must put poetry at the center of one's life. True poetry is deeply human. And the true poet is stubborn about not forgetting that "man" is at the center of everything and that all deviation towards anti-human action should be denounced. To revive the kind of man that a poet always was. (Byron died for the liberty of the Greeks.) I know that an artist will only be actual if his work enters the two-way traffic of receiving from his people the consciousness of needs they have detected in themselves, and, as an artist, charges this consciousness with an intuition of important emotion, thus sending it back to widen their picture of reality. For the

conscious painter the "subject" is the same as for Cimabue—to make the man of his time think with sentiment.⁵³

For Laaban, Matta's paintings represented a progressive step out of Fautrier's heavy *informel* lead-clad hostages [fig. 13] but not necessarily into the seductive coloured structures of technocratic urban environments. Instead he saw in them a responsive dialectical play between an *inner* and *outer* architecture — a hint of "movement" that could represent an escape from philanthropic prisons in Art and life.

Hulten's Anarchist Thread: Stirner, Duchamp and Tinguely

Laaban's cry for an art able to set free this "hostage" and put in motion dialectical play must have been heard by Pontus Hulten who was finding his way out of a similarly perceived cultural crisis. Like Laaban, Hulten was attempting to stay out of the cross-fire between communists and anti-communists. But unlike him, Hulten would down play Surrealist and CoBrA inspired interest in folk and popular traditions. Hulten instead energetically focused his attention on a more pop oriented critique of contemporary life's throw-away culture and machines as well as locating "movement" in an art intellectually and aesthetically situated *between* the social(ist) utopian ideals of Art Concrete (and its Bauhaus variants) and the more romantic individualist positions found in Neo-expressionism. In the fall of 1954 Hulten organized *Le Mouvement* at Gallérie Denise René, an exhibition

⁵³Echaurren (also known as Sebastian or Roberto) Matta "On Emotion" *Reality* No.2 New York (Spring 1954), p.12. The fact that Matta published this statement in the New York based journal *Reality* is noteworthy as it positions his paintings in an awkward relation to both 'Realism' (his work is abstract), and Abstract Expressionism (this journal stood in opposition to Gestural Abstraction).

which was to show both an aggressive, dynamic and ironic side of contemporary art that refused to "slow down." Rather than be bogged down by peasant culture and/or internal existential conflicts, Hulten appropriated the dynamic side of Futurism as a springboard for his own ideas which, unlike CoBra, for example, showed a renewed interest in modern urban culture — the future is in the city!

Hulten was by no means the only curator attempting to establish his own post-war canon. Michel Tapié's *Art Autre* and Charles Estienne's *Tachisme* were but a few of the "movements" working alongside Hulten's trajectory. A photograph taken of Hulten in Paris during the mid-fifties shows him precariously balanced on a chair as if to metaphorically hint at his carefully staged curatorial activities [fig. 14] which aimed to support an art tied to an historical avant-garde that was neither nihilistic nor naively optimistic about an engagement with popular culture and/or high art. It also points to his resistance to being represented as a "fixed" identity. As Hulten himself would later comment:

What distinguished *Le Mouvement* from other exhibitions and earned it widespread publicity was its presentation of a new outlook in art. A great deal of the art of the 1950s had been pessimistic, defeatist and passive. A lot of people were surprised to learn that there was another kind of 'modern' art, dynamic, constructive, joyful, deliberately bewildering, ironic, critical, teasing and aggressive.⁵⁴

⁵⁴Pontus Hulten *Jean Tinguely: Méta*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972, p.35. Hulten has also described the art situation at the time as "still dominated by the opposition between abstract and naturalistic art, figurative and non-figurative. Along with this antagonism came the constructive, abstract art and the 'informel.'" This 'unformed' art was at this time a mainly American product. Although it did exist in Paris, Sam Francis and Jean Paul Riopelle were the most discussed 'drip painters' (peintres dégoulinants). Pollock was still relatively unknown except inside a very small circle of people. Fautrier and Dubuffet seem to have received more attention in New York than Paris at this time. This was probably because they were still considered 'figurative,' which was seen as old and traditional. *Ibid.*, p.28.

This "play" which Hulten claims was initiated by *Le Mouvement*, was carefully orchestrated. The exhibition consisted of three elements: an historical section with moving sculptures by Alexander Calder and Marcel Duchamp, contemporary work by Victor Vasarely and Robert Jacobsen, and work by four younger artists [fig. 15].⁵⁵ As anchors in Denise René's elegant stable of international kinetic art, Calder and Vasarely were no doubt included as much for their experiments with movement as they were included to massage René's ego. But Calder and Vasarely's work hardly offered Hulten much conceptual weight. Sandwiched between Calder's child-like naivité and Vasarely's pseudo-scientific arrogance, Hulten included Duchamp with his *Rotary Demisphere* (1925), an optical experiment which allowed him to open up an intellectual avant-garde direction rooted in the anarchism of Dada. If Calder's and Vasarely's organic and geometric abstractions set in motion the viewer's body (either with physical or visual tricks), Duchamp's optical work destabilized the mind in order to activate the intellect.

From an array of international backgrounds came some of the younger artists in the exhibition such as Yaacov Agam (Israel), Pol Bury (Belgium), Jesus-Rafael Soto (Venezuela) and Jean Tinguely (Switzerland). For someone like Bury, who had exhibited with CoBrA up until that group's breakup earlier in that same year, Hulten's new "movement" was distinctly more international than the School of Paris. This was no doubt the case for the rest of them. More than Vasarely and the other household names at Galérie Denise René, these four young artists seemed to push kineticism past the

⁵⁵A.J. Arnaud "Le Mouvement" *Cimaise* (May 1955), pp.17-18.

confined borders of painting and sculpture into a more ambiguous realm of sound and movement as perceived by the spectator.⁵⁶ Agam went as far as to try to dissolve form and matter altogether by setting up a series of visible stages for the viewer that led to an optical effect similar to Duchamp's *Rotary Demisphere*. While the effects of these "metapolyphonic paintings" are in many ways comparable with both Bury and Soto's kinetic reliefs included in the show, it was Tinguely's work which Hulten would find most "free" in its particular embrace of Dada's ability to sustain a critical edge through humour and irony. Unlike the pseudo-scientific seriousness exhibited by the majority of the artists at Denise René, Tinguely seemed to share Duchamp's pataphysical playfulness.

While exhibiting in Milan at Studio d'architettura b.24 in December of 1954, Tinguely encountered the Futurist designer and artist Bruno Munari who appears to have provided him with an early vision of how he could direct his own art away from functionalism towards movement. Since the early thirties, Munari had been producing what he described as "theoretical constructions of imaginary objects" and *Useless Machines* [fig. 16].⁵⁷ In 1952, Munari had published a whole series of manifestos such as *Macchina-arte*, *Macchinismo*, *Arte Organica*, *Disintegrismo*, *arte totale*, which argued that:

artists are the only ones who can be truly interested in machines; ... they have to learn to know the mechanical anatomy, the mechanical language, must understand the nature of the machines and preoccupy themselves with machines by making them function in an irregular

⁵⁶Some of these younger artists would remain tied to the circles around Denise René's gallery. For example, Soto would have his first solo show in Paris in 1956 for which Léon Degand would write a catalogue introduction. See Léon Degand *Mouvement, Nouvelle Conception de la plastique, Aujourd'hui*, Paris, 1956.

⁵⁷Tanchis, Aldo Bruno Munari: *Design as Art* Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1987, p. 35.

manner. Thereby creating with these same machines and with their own methods an art work.⁵⁸

Appropriating both the anarchic aesthetic and propagandistic language he found in Munari, Tinguely's activities were met with enthusiasm by Hulten who quickly realized how similar their individual practices were in relation to the long-standing conflict between idealists and materialists in philosophy as well as politics. For both, this translated into a contemporary polemic about intentionality and spontaneity in art which Hulten would later reflect upon:

Anarchist theory had to face [this] dialectic. The assumption that human beings freed from the constraints of a rigid system possessed enough judgment and insight to choose what is right contradicts Christian teaching, founded on the principle of original sin. Wasn't it absurd, moreover, to deny the value of any intentional expression of the will whatsoever, the way Pollock had done, equating morality with life and making chance the only valid form of behavior?⁵⁹

Although Hulten's dialectical understanding of a crisis in modern art would be particular, it was by no means unique. As the historian of the Left, Mark Poster has commented, the immediate post-war years in France were a kind of "Hegel Renaissance." Whereas only off-beat intellectuals like the surrealists and young Marxists appear to have been interested in Hegel before the war, post-war France was revitalized by a reintroduction of Hegel by such individuals as Alexander Kojève and Jean Hyppolite who translated, published and lectured on Hegel. Whereas for many Marxists Hegel represented a renewed position able to fight Stalinism, Existentialists found

⁵⁸Hulten (1972), p.16.

⁵⁹Pontus Hulten "The Man and His Work" Museum *Jean Tinguely*, Basel. Berne: Basel and Benteli Publishers Ltd., 1996, p.36. If this reading of Pollock's work as lacking intention appears naive, it should be remembered that the myth constructed around Pollock was that his work represented a 'freedom of expression' that relied on his individual relation to chance.

Hegelian dialectics a means by which to fight Neo-Kantianism. Ironically, theologians such as M.A. Couturier in France and Reverend Walter Hussey in England would also use Hegel's dialectic to set up a mystical union between man and the absolute.⁶⁰ Reading Hegel not only provided a philosophy of alienation in history, but a dialectical phenomenology of consciousness. By understanding history as a continually unfolding dialectic meant that one could not only ask 'Who is man?,' but 'How did man become social?'⁶¹

Since Hegel, many conflicting attempts had been developed to answer questions about the relation of the individual to society. For Sigmund Freud, such questions could only be answered through a consideration of his proposition that civilization is based on the permanent repression of human instincts. By stressing the importance of the *pleasure principle* (pleasure, joy, the absence of repression), the Surrealists had since the 1920s tried to release the individual from this 'cage' which Freud had called the *reality principle* (restraint of pleasure, toil, productiveness, security...). Arguing against this "permanent repression," by the 1950s Neo-Freudians such as Herbert Marcuse and Norman O. Brown, would for different reasons, approach the relationship between these two principles by focusing on Freud's *meta-psychology*, the dynamic struggle between biological and sociological

⁶⁰Rev. Hussey was the first commissioner in England to recruit contemporary avant-garde artists into English Church services. In France, there was a modernist movement within the Dominican Church led primarily by M.A. Couturier who commissioned artists such as Fernand Léger, Le Corbusier, Henri Matisse, and others. These commissions took place as a result of the Church's post-war rebuilding programs. See M.A.A. Couturier's *Sacred Art* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989) and Patrik Andersson's "The Dialectical Cross: Graham Sutherland, Herbert Read and *The Modern Churchman*" *Collapse* no.1 (1995), pp.37-57.

⁶¹For a historical and philosophical overview of the French Communist Party, see David Caute's *Communism and the French Intellectuals: 1914-1960* New York: Macmillan, 1964, and Mark Poster's *Existential Marxism in Postwar France: from Sartre to Althusser* Irvine: University of California Press, 1975.

instincts.⁶² Parallel to these projects, a disenfranchised member of the Left, Henri Lefebvre, would develop his concept of everyday life through a *meta-philosophy* of linking theory and practice. Interestingly enough, it was in this context of 'meta-languages' that Hulten was pondering his own way out of the polemical spell he understood contemporary art to be under. But for Hulten it was Marcel Duchamp who was the central philosophical figure who allowed him to break free a flexible avant-garde position from art world polemics. The central artist he found able to activate this new dynamic position was Jean Tinguely.

In Tinguely's 'moving machines,' which by 1955 included a large body of mechanically and hand-driven reliefs, sculptures and paintings, Hulten saw what seemed like a perfect union of the different artistic positions available. On Hulten's recommendation, Tinguely, from this point forward, decided to name his sculptural machines "meta-mechanics" analogous to metaphysics, metaphor and metamorphosis.⁶³ A work such as *Meta-Malevich* [fig. 17] put constructive open forms in a movement unpredictably determined by a motor driven cycle of cogs and wheels hidden behind the surface of the wooden stretcher. Embracing chance (something which was not readily embraced by the rationalism of Bauhaus pedagogy), Tinguely produced works with similar ironic gestures as Duchamp's assisted readymades and mobilized the mechanomorphic language of the Dada painter Francis Picabia. In all of Tinguely's work, the viewer was asked to participate by activating or freezing the abstract compositions and resulting

⁶²See in particular Herbert Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* New York: Vintage Books, 1955 and Norman O. Brown *Life Against Death* New York: Vintage Books, 1959.

⁶³Hulten (1972), p.16.

concrete music. By pushing a button or simply moving around the work, the viewer became part of the creative process in a more literal way than both Picabia and Duchamp's works afforded.

By putting chance-ridden mechanical movement into works such as *Meta-Malevich* (1954) and *Meta-Kandinsky* (1956), this early work by Tinguely set in motion geometric and gestural abstraction, activating a dialogue that could be read against the grain of Bauhaus rhetoric. As early as 1938, László Moholy-Nagy, in his book *The New Vision*, had set forth to "work out an educational principle which strives for the closest connection between art, science, and technology."⁶⁴ Continuing this project after the war with renewed rigor, and concentrating on the work produced at the new Bauhaus Institute of Art in Chicago, Moholy-Nagy published *Vision in Motion*, a survey of modern art's ties to industrial motion which served both as an argument for kineticism in contemporary art and a way to centralize Russian constructivism and Bauhaus pedagogy within a history of the avant-garde.⁶⁵ Read by Hulten, as well as a number of younger artists such as Tinguely, *Vision in Motion* opened up an important alternative history to the School of Paris while at the same time it "whetted" their curiosity for Duchamp, whose work was more or less trivialized by Moholy-Nagy with what Hulten recently described as "the nastiest [of] remarks."⁶⁶

⁶⁴Quoted from Benjamin H.D. Buchloh "Cold War Constructivism" in Serge Guilbaut, ed. *Reconstructing Modernism: Art in New York, Paris, and Montreal 1945-1964* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1990, p.85.

⁶⁵László Moholy-Nagy *Vision in Motion* Chicago: Paul Theobald, id Book, 1947.

⁶⁶Pontus Hulten "The Blind Lottery of Reputation: or The Duchamp Effect" *Marcel Duchamp: Works and Life* Cambridge Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1993, p.14.

How nasty Moholy-Nagy's remarks were can be debated, but he did downplay Duchamp's central role in debates about the creative act by only briefly mentioning his name and referring to his ready-made objects through the voices of critics who saw them as "debasing" and "trivial."⁶⁷ As he made clear in his foreword, Moholy-Nagy was foremost interested in presenting his own 'standards' with which to measure and balance "the interrelatedness of art and life."⁶⁸ The main thrust of his argument was that since the industrial revolution, civilization had not managed to cultivate intellectual and emotional standards to the same degree as its technological progress. As a result, divisions of labour and general alienation had steadily been on the increase and was leading to the decline of civilization:

These ills, with their resultant monopolistic and fascist tendencies, finally led to repeated world wars which were cruel attempts to win capitalistic competition and to check the upward spiral of the social progress so vigorously undertaken by the American and French revolutions. Our generation must stop the recurrence of these wars by understanding the hazards of a planlessly expanding industry which, by the blind dynamics of competition and profit, automatically leads to conflicts on a world scale.⁶⁹

Just as someone like Piet Mondrian had developed a pseudo-scientific pictorial blue-print from which to envision a more balanced society, Moholy-Nagy saw a potential reduction of conflict and equilibrium reached by reconnecting intellectual and emotional spheres with industry's technological and economic developments. The artist, he argued, should stand at the crossroad

⁶⁷Quoted from footnote in Moholy-Nagy, p.58. Surprisingly, in this book which emphasized experimentation in all mediums, but especially film, there was no discussion of Duchamp's filmic experiments such as *Rotary Relief* or *Anémic Cinema*.

⁶⁸Moholy-Nagy, p.5.

⁶⁹Ibid., p.14.

of the different disciplines — experimenting until a "sociobiological synthesis" is reached.⁷⁰

On the one hand, Moholy-Nagy's interest in modern culture and enthusiastic support for the contemporary artist must have appealed to individuals such as Hulten and Tinguely, who were trying to define their own dialectical positions within the same post-war terrain. On the other hand, the rigid planning of Moholy-Nagy's new society and the mythic role the artist played in this planned social utopia must have appeared rather doctrinal to them as it was increasingly becoming an academic formula in rationalized social welfare states such as Switzerland and Sweden:

It is the artist's duty today to penetrate yet-unseen ranges of the biological functions, to search the new dimensions of the industrial society and to translate the new findings into emotional orientation. The artist unconsciously disentangles the most essential strands of existence from the contorted and chaotic complexities of actuality, and weaves them into an emotional fabric of compelling validity, characteristic of himself as well as of his epoch. This ability of selection is an outstanding gift based upon intuitive power and insight, upon judgement and knowledge, and upon inner responsibility to fundamental biological and social laws which provoke a reinterpretation in every civilization. This intuitive power is present in other creative workers, too, in philosophers, poets, scientists, technologists. They pursue the same hopes, seek the same meanings, and — although the content of their work appears to be different — the trends of their approach and the background of their activity are identical. They all must draw from the same source, which is life in a certain society, in a certain civilization. This basic identity is the common denominator, the desire today to find and investigate the fundamentals in every field so that they can become constructive parts of a new civilization. The problem of our generation is to bring the intellectual and emotional, the social and technological components into balanced play; to learn to see and feel them in relationship.⁷¹

⁷⁰Ibid., p.31.

⁷¹Ibid., pp.11-12.

As anarchists, not only would Hulten and Tinguely have reacted against this idea of the artist being used as a "tool" to normalize society, but noticing Moholy-Nagy's subtle exclusions of pataphysical strands within avant-garde history, they must also have wanted to rebel against his reconstruction of a new civilization based on the homogenizing notion of "balanced play." Attempting to distance his own project from this deterministic *Vision in Motion*, Hulten would shift the terms of the discussion ever so slightly from *motion* to the more metaphorical possibilities of *movement*. Slowly developing his own concept of "movement in art," Hulten distinguished the difference between the two words in his own limited edition anarchist journal *Kasark* published in Stockholm in 1955.

When you want to talk about movement, Swedish is an unpractical language. English is much more convenient since it distinguishes between *motion* and *movement*. *Motion* appears to imply movement in general; for example a body's transfer from one place to the next, *movement* implies movement itself; for example the movement of the fingers in relation to each other when using a type writer. This belongs to this century's big events to allow an art work to move within itself like a motor or the way a tree moves in the wind.⁷²

Developing his own history of "movement art" parallel to Moholy-Nagy's history "motion art," Hulten increasingly understood Marcel Duchamp's visual and conceptual experiments to function as a genre-breaking toolbox which "messed up" the rational and technocratic optimism of Bauhaus rhetoric.⁷³ For this reason, as Tinguely would later recall, Hulten

⁷²Hulten, Pontus "Den ställföreträdande friheten" ["The Substitutive Freedom"] *Kasark* Nr.2 (October 1955), p.1.

⁷³Hulten drew a curious historical lineage starting with the turn of the century Italian Ettore Bugatti's automobile to the Futurists' interest in speed, Duchamp and Alexander Calder's kinetic experiments, the constructivist tendencies of Gabo, Pevsner, Tatlin and the early work of

“had to fight for Duchamp at Denise René” as his tongue-in-cheek critique of scientific rationalism was read, if not always appreciated or understood.⁷⁴ Perhaps it was this resistance from René, Vasarely, Degand and others which made Hulten realize that his interest in Duchamp could be used to define his own position as both different and powerful. After all, with the help of intellect and humour, Duchamp forged a path between naive optimism and expressed depression; a road less travelled but full of opportunity.

As mentioned, during preparations for *Le Mouvement*, Hulten had discovered that his interest in Duchamp was shared by the Swiss kinetic sculptor Tinguely. While working in Zürich directly after the war, Tinguely had been intensely involved in the anarchist circle around Heiner Koechlin whose dissertation on the Paris Commune he designed a cover for (this was published by the Koechlin's private publishing house, Don Quichotte).⁷⁵ Not only was he living in the city known for its historical connection to Dada, but he, like Hulten in Sweden, began to formulate his own political position by reading an array of philosophical tracts:

I read Stirner, Marx, Bachofen, Hegel, Kropotkin, Bakunin, Proudhon and others; I pondered certain questions and discussed them with friends who were political refugees and others who were students of Karl Jaspers.⁷⁶

Moholy-Nagy, to the Italian Bruno Munari to finally arrived at Tinguely's metamechanical sculptures.

⁷⁴Quoted from a 1988 interview with Dieter Daniels in Violand-Hobi, p.41.

⁷⁵Hulten (1996), p.262.

⁷⁶Tinguely quoted in Heidi E.Violand-Hobi *Jean Tinguely: Life and Work*. New York: Prestel, 1995. Niki de Saint Phalle has also referred to Tinguely's interest in Max Stirner: “At that time you were reading Max Stirner's *The Individual and His Property*[sic]. You wanted me to read it too... You were also influenced by the Austrian philosopher Wittgenstein. You told me about his life. He was the richest man in town. He decided he didn't want to be rich anymore and thought a long time about what he should do with his money. He decided to give it to the next richest man of the city, because he didn't want to disturb the lives of the poor. He then

By the fifties it was Max Stirner's writing in particular that fascinated Tinguely, and most likely Hulten who would have appreciated his emphasis on a freedom tied to both will and instinct rather than reason. As a Young Hegelian during the mid-19th century, Stirner had advocated a radical individualism based on the principle of rebellion rather than revolution. As a subjectivist defense against the power of state authority, *The Ego and His Own* (1845), Stirner's only major published work, is an early formulation of an attack on *representation* which anticipates not just Freud's stress on the force of the desires to influence the intellect, but also the challenges to Enlightenment epistemology offered up by the poststructuralist.⁷⁷ Putting forward the idea that the individual loses uniqueness in the face of being understood within a generalized and fixed concept of "Man," Stirner argued against the kind of ontological culture of "being" proposed by other anarchists and young Hegelians where *human nature* was idealized.⁷⁸ For example, whereas Peter Kropotkin attacked the idea of the nation state and the economic logic of capitalism through an evolutionary understanding of

went penniless and installed himself in Sweden as a gardener." quoted in Niki de Saint Phalle. "A Little of My Story with You, Jean" in Hulten (1996), p.25.

⁷⁷For a close study of the relationship between Poststructuralism and the anarchist attack on representation offered up by Stirner's *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (the German title of Stirner's book), see Andrew M. Koch's "Poststructuralism and the Epistemological Basis of Anarchism" *Philosophy of Social Sciences* Vol.23, No.3 (September 1993), pp.327-351: "Rather than focus on a competing model of human nature, Stirner was concerned with showing the linkage between ideas and the context in which they are generated. This method is similar to that labeled "genealogy" by Nietzsche and the poststructuralists." p.333.

⁷⁸In one of the most comprehensive accounts of anarchist thought, Peter Marshall has discussed Stirner as "the conscious egoist" who "offered a root-and-branch attack on existing values and institutions. Like Kierkegaard, he celebrated the unique truth of the individual and sought to liberate him from the great barrel organ of Hegelian metaphysics. In his attack on Christian morality and his call for the self-exaltation of the whole individual, he anticipated Nietzsche and atheistic existentialism. But while there are nihilistic and existentialist elements to his work, Stirner is not merely a nihilist, for he does not set out to destroy all moral and social values. Neither is he, strictly speaking, a proto-existentialist, for he rejects any attempt to create a higher or better individual." See Peter Marshall's *Demanding the Impossible: a History of Anarchism* London: Fontana Press, 1993, p.220.

cooperation rather than a Darwinian model of *competition*, and Proudhon proposed *liberty*, as a form of social organization to be constructed out of a rational scientific inquiry, Stirner rejected all forms of social organization and revolutionary processes for their ability to "bring up against us a whole army of *fixed ideas* such as morals, Christendom and nationalism" which he referred to as "spectres:"

Man, your head is haunted; *you have wheels in your head!* You imagine great things, and depict to yourself a whole world of gods that has an existence for you, a spirit realm to which you suppose yourself to be called, an ideal that beckons to you. You have a fixed idea! (my italics)⁷⁹

For Stirner, if the world as we know it (representation, thought, and ideas) is in a constant state of flux due to its constructed *aspect* (as Ludwig Wittgenstein would later name it), *truth* has to be understood as nothing more than a fleeting moment. Showing the link between ideas and the context in which ideas are generated, Stirner's project rejects all grand narratives of his day and is at the very heart of later attempts by philosophers to formulate what Nietzsche (and post-structuralists after him) would label a "genealogy." As Roberto Calasso has proposed in his anarchic fiction *The Ruin of Kasch*:

They [the universities] pay no attention to these facts. They have forgotten that it was Stirner who disfigured them once and for all with his strokes. They consider his work a good dissertation topic. But to treat Max Stirner only within one of the countless histories of the neo-Hegelians or of anarchism is already an invitation to the writer to avoid this monstrosity. Stirner then becomes a "position," always an

⁷⁹Stirner, p.45. This quote is taken from a section in *The Ego and His Own* entitled "Wheels in the Head." Not only is this visually literalized in Tinguely's machines, but we can also think of the mechanomorphic wheels in Francis Picabia's work and Marcel Duchamp's readymades. Both these artists had been introduced to Stirner's writings as early as 1912.

extreme one, the ultimate of something.... Stirner announces them, explains them. And immediately he becomes ghostly. Stirner's presence is thus clearest in two authors, the first of whom does not mention him at all and the second of whom speaks of him in a text he will never publish: Nietzsche and Marx.⁸⁰

While Nietzsche carefully employed *silence* to avoid being accused of having plagiarized Stirner, Marx and Engels, in the first draft of *The German Ideology*, spent two-thirds of their thesis tackling the problem of "Saint Max" whose argument against revolutionary socialism was decisively based in a critique of language.⁸¹ In a private letter to Marx dated November 19, 1844, Engels went as far as to admit that:

what is true in his principles we, too, must accept. And what is true is that before we can be active in any cause we must make it our own, egoistic cause — and that in this sense, quite aside from any expectations, we are communists in virtue of our egoism, that out of egoism we want to be human beings and not merely individuals.⁸²

⁸⁰Roberto Calasso *The Ruin of Kasch*. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1994, pp. 259.

⁸¹Apropos Nietzsche's silence, Calasso quotes Ida Overbeck, a close friend of Nietzsche: "Once, when my husband was out, Nietzsche stayed and talked to me for a while, telling me about two strange characters he was dealing with at that time—people with whom he felt a certain kinship. As is always the case when one finds some internal rapport, he was animated and happy. Some time later he found a book by Klinger in our house. My husband had not found Stirner in the library. 'Ah,' said Nietzsche, 'I was mistaken about Klinger. He was a Philistine; I feel no affinity at all with him. But Stirner—with him, yes.' A grave expression darkened his face. And as I looked attentively at his features, they changed again. He waved his hand, as if to drive away or repel something, and murmured: 'Now I've told you, and I didn't want to speak of it. Forget it all. They will talk of plagiarism, but I know you won't.'" quoted in Calasso, p.278. For Duchamp, Hulthen and Tinguely, Stirner must have appeared as an alternative to the Nietzschean 'superman' Picasso (for example) had embraced. This different genealogy allowed them to embrace Alfred Jarry's 'supermale' instead. See Alfred Jarry's *The Supermale* Cambridge, MA: New Directions Publishing Corp., 1999. I would argue that this text was the basic inspiration for Duchamp's mechano-sexual readymade, the *Bicycle Wheel* (1913).

⁸²Quoted from Sidney Hook's *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx* Ann Arbor: Ann Arbor Paperbacks, 1961 (orig. pub. 1950), p.173-174.

Although "Saint Max" would be edited out of the popularized versions of *The German Ideology*, Stirner's impact on its conception can not go unmentioned in my study as a specific group of individuals in the 1950s attempted to find a similar philosophical mobility. In Stirner, Tinguely would find a way towards auto-critique in the most mechanical sense of that word.

In works such as *Meta-Malevich* an attempt is made to avoid 'fixed' readings by continuously creating uncertainties. These machine-driven forms move repetitively (like the wheels Stirner describes), albeit inconsistently, striving continuously to communicate, to *become*. The moment their verblativity cease and their forms are *announced* as signs, symbols, shapes and objects, these beings fall into the very language trap Stirner had discovered a century before:

If the point is to have myself understood and to make communications, then assuredly I can make use only of *human* means, which are at my command because I am at the same time *man*. And really I have thoughts only as man; as I, I am at the same time *thoughtless*. He who cannot get rid of a thought is so far only man, is a thrall of *language*, this human institution, this treasury of human thoughts. Language or "the word" tyrannizes hardest over us, because it brings up against us a whole army of *fixed ideas*. Just observe yourself in the act of reflection, right now, and you will find how you make progress only by becoming thoughtless and speechless every moment. You are not thoughtless and speechless merely in (say) sleep, but even in the deepest reflection; yes precisely then most so. And only by this thoughtlessness, this unrecognized "freedom of thought" or freedom from the thought, are you your own. Only from it do you arrive at putting language to use as your *property*.⁸³

We can hereby look at Tinguely's meta-mechanical sculptures built like entropic industrial ruins out of the throw-away excesses of an automated

⁸³Stirner, p.364-65.

universe, as rationally constructed attempts to produce portraits of "man," or perhaps more accurately, as different versions of "modern man." If, as Nietzsche had suggested, "truth is a mobile army of tropes," by 1955, Tinguely had assembled his own mechanomorphic troops constructed out of the shadows cast by Calder's organic mobiles, Malevich's geometric Suprematism [fig. 18], as well as Henri Michaux's gestural 'diagrams of the soul' [fig. 19]. Risking to remain an outsider in a Parisian art world looking for solid or gestural 'truths,' Tinguely would go on creating and parading his parodies like Duchampian bachelors set free from the *Large Glass* or the spectres of truth Stirner had once confronted:

Truths are phrases, ways of speaking, words; brought into connection, or into an articulate series, they form logic, science, philosophy. For thinking and speaking I need truths and words, as I do foods for eating; without them I cannot think nor speak. Truths are men's thoughts, set down in words and therefore just as extant as other things, although extant only for the mind or for thinking. They are human institutions and human creatures, and, even if they are given out for divine revelations, there still remains in them the quality of alienness for me; yes, as my own creatures they are already alienated from me after the act of *creation*.⁸⁴

Tinguely found a brief escape from the confined space of this Parisian art world in the fall of 1955 by traveling north with Hulten to Stockholm where he was invited to set up a workshop in the office of *Blandaren*, an anarchist journal published by architecture students at Stockholm's Royal Institute of Technology.⁸⁵ Stirner's individualist brand of anarchism had been introduced into Sweden through the Young Socialist Party (Ungsocialistiska Partiet) as early as 1908 but had soon come into conflict with socialists and

⁸⁴Ibid., p.367.

⁸⁵*Blandaren* was produced by students as a response to the Institute's pedagogical focus on Bauhaus thinking.

communist anarchists who understood this radical individualist stance to represent a threat to state development.⁸⁶ As a result of the success of socialism, by the fifties, radical individualism had to a large extent gone underground with a few exceptions, such as Hulten.⁸⁷ Ironically, Tinguely's increasingly self-destructive machines were now truly playing around with base and superstructure as they were being constructed in the basement of the Swedish Bauhaus.

By this time, Tinguely had fully developed his meta-mechanic drawing machines which would act as geometric robotizations of abstract painters [fig. 20]. By the push of a button, the artist or audience could set in motion a never predictable, always original, production of abstract drawings. Understanding both geometric abstraction and abstract expressionism as a decorative and mechanized extension of a technocratic world, Hulten provided Tinguely with an exhibition at the small, but noteworthy, Galleri Samlaren owned and operated by Agnes Widlund. For the occasion, Hulten contributed a lengthy critical text in his limited circulation journal *Kasark*, which carefully outlined Tinguely's ties to both an historical avant-garde (by way of Dada and Duchamp) and the sustained critique of rationalism offered through anarchism.

⁸⁶<http://www.gro.o.se/arkiv/ana/sti/stirner2.html> "Egoister: Max Stirner och individualanarkism i den ungsocialistiska rörelsen. The most contemporary history of the Young Socialist Party and Stirner published at the time of Tinguely's stay in Stockholm was Tage Lindbom's *Den socialdemokratiska ungdomsrörelsen i Sverige*. Stockholm: Tidens förlag, 1952.

⁸⁷In an interview conducted on May 18, 1999, Ulf Linde confirmed my suggestion that Stirner was a powerful philosophical figure in Sweden for individuals like himself and Hulten who were interested in defending individuality without falling into the trap of "individualism." In fact, in this interview, Stirner functioned as a 'key' to open up a dialogue about Duchamp's relationship with Linde.

Realizing the potential connection between Tinguely's art and his own reading of the history of ideas, Hulten formulated his own Stirner-inspired individual freedom via Duchamp:

Jean Tinguely's art is built around the idea of the wheel. The wheel's circular movement is in its continuity an eternal repetition. But it is also an eternal renewal.... In practical machines the goal is to reduce irregularities as much as possible. Tinguely seeks the opposite. He seeks mechanical disorder. The cogs in his wheels are made as to constantly produce inconsistent chance ridden movement. His connections lack all precision except that of chance, his wheels have kept their character as symbols for an eternal transformation. They are chance in function. They are a new and original formulation of Marcel Duchamp's idea to use chance intentionally.... These new creatures of the art world live in an enviable freedom. They stand outside all laws and are not bound by systems. This art exemplifies pure anarchy when it is most beautiful. It is an art which is thoroughly revolutionary, thoroughly dynamic, freer than we could ourselves ever hope to become.... It is a piece of pure existence, forever changing, that doesn't need to mean or hint at something just as a flower or a rat doesn't have to mean.. But one is mistaken to believe that their artistic message is innocent or harmless. It is, actually, loaded with a freedom like a bomb with trotyl. It is a small latent attack against all established order, it is a symbol for an enormous freedom and should scare all righteous thinkers if they could understand its power. It is a symbol for an absolute, dizzying and unbelievable freedom. It personifies a freedom which otherwise would not exist, and therein lies its value.

These machines are more anti-machines than machines.... Military technology and scientific knowledge is constantly a direct threat against our individual existence.... Already with Dada we saw a clear skepticism against the technological world. Duchamp's ready-made, the artwork chosen from mass reproduction, contains much irony against machines, and gets its potency not until it is paradoxically freed from its function. As I see it, [Tinguely's work] represents one of the most conscious expressions for a new type of modern art.... *This art is an anti-social expression.* One has to attack machines in their own territory[my italics].... The weapon of Tinguely's machines is irony.⁸⁸

⁸⁸Pontus Hulten "Den ställföreträdande friheten eller om Rörelse i konsten och Tinguely's Metamekanik" ("Vicarious Freedom: or Movement in Art and Tinguely's Metamatics") *Kasark* #2 (October 1955), pp.26-31. In a 1982 interview on Belgian radio, Tinguely would clarify his own position by saying that: With Dada I ... have in common a certain mistrust toward power. We don't like authority, we don't like power. To me art is a form of manifest revolt, total and complete. It's a political attitude which doesn't need to found a political party. It's not a

In this rather lengthy quote it is clear that Hulten had enough "wheels" in his own head to understand Tinguely's work as a tongue-in-cheek gesture against the constructive social goals of Art Concrete, but in more general terms representing a Stirnean attack on "established order."

As Francis M. Naumann has significantly suggested, during a stay in Munich in 1912 Duchamp had also discovered Max Stirner's writings. Naumann goes as far as to propose that Stirner's writings "may have provided the most extensive theoretical basis for his newfound artistic freedom."⁸⁹ In a Museum of Modern Art questionnaire filled out in the late fifties regarding his *Three Standard Stoppages* [fig. 1], Duchamp recalled Stirner's book as having specifically influenced its production. Just as Stirner's work can provide significant inroads into Duchamp's thinking, *Three Standard Stoppages* is central to unlocking key aspects of Duchamp's oeuvre as it functioned as a measuring device in his systematic formulation of an "art coefficient" — the arithmetical relationship between the intentionally unexpressed and expressed unintentionality. For Duchamp, the "creative act" existed in this 'gap' or 'difference' between a rational and irrational side of the equation. This was the abstract reality of movement, chance and irony. In this sense, Duchamp creative act took into account the accidental chance encounters which dominant artistic and scientific 'reason'

matter of taking power; when you are against it, you can't take it. We're against all forms of force which aggregate and crystallize an authority that oppresses people. Obviously this is not a characteristic of my art alone—it's much more general, a basic political attitude. It's a clear intention, more necessary today than ever, to oppose all forms of force emanating from a managing, centralising political power." Violand-Hobi, p.16.

⁸⁹Francis M. Naumann "Marcel Duchamp: A Reconciliation of Opposites" in Thierry de Duve, ed., *The Definitively Unfinished Marcel Duchamp*. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992, pp. 54.

refused to acknowledge.⁹⁰ Coming from Sweden and Switzerland, two exemplary rational societies, Hulten and Tinguely no doubt appreciated Duchamp's "standard joke." Commenting on the individual artists role in relation to this type of collective society, Duchamp would in 1963 say that:

...Much as he would like to, the artist cannot help another man. It's each one for himself, for I don't agree at all with the anthill that waits for us in a few hundred years. I still believe in the individual and every man for himself, like in a shipwreck.⁹¹

Viewing themselves as shipwrecked outsiders in a Paris, Hulten and Tinguely were busy building a raft of their own in Stockholm on which they sought to escape the polemical, and often generic, debates in contemporary art. As it turned out, by the early sixties, the seeds planted in Stockholm in the form of exhibitions, debates and contacts would soon become a part of an internationally recognized cultural phenomenon known as Neo-Dada and Pop Art.

In Stockholm Tinguely was given a number of opportunities to poke fun at myths about the creative artist. Besides exhibiting his meta-matics at Galleri Samlaren, Tinguely would also contribute 40,000 "original paintings" to a special box edition of *Blandaren*. Produced by pouring and spurting paint over a printing press running at top speed, each published print was individually treated with hands and feet and placed in a kind of *Boîte en*

⁹⁰According to Jacques Derrida, this is exactly the arithmetical series of oppositions Marx had reproached Stirner for. See Jacques Derrida *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. London: Routledge University Press, 1994, p.134.

⁹¹Duchamp quoted in Jean-Marie Drot's film *Jeu d'échecs avec Marcel Duchamp* (1963) which contains interviews given in New York and Pasadena on the occasion of Duchamp's retrospective. I have taken this quote from Molly Nesbit's "Last Words (Rilke, Wittgenstein) (Duchamp)" in *Art History* Vol.21 No.4 (December 1998), pp.556-557 (546-564).

Valise.⁹² While art historian and critic Olle Granath has pointed out its Duchampian reference, I propose that it was also a direct response to the "nasty remarks" Moholy-Nagy slipped into *Vision in Motion*. Referring to Duchamp's box of notes, Moholy-Nagy brushed it off as a "typical" Dadaist gesture in which Duchamp had "emptied the contents of his desk — notes, drawings and photographs of the last twenty-five years — into a cardboard box.... Leaving the 'mess' to be disentangled by the reader."⁹³ While Moholy-Nagy seemed uninterested in this process, Hulten, Tinguely, and a few others, understood this reconstructive act as a means to a new end. The notes, in other words, were 'open' for individual, rather than collective, interpretation.

But perhaps the most ambitious project Tinguely would become involved in during this Stockholm residency was the making of *En dag i staden* [A Day in the City], a film produced by Pontus Hulten and Hans Nordenström in which Tinguely played the role of police officer [fig. 21]. While Nordenström has ascribed the title to the Marx Brothers, one may more poignantly describe it as a lyrical sabotage of Arne Suckdorff's 1946 documentary *Människor i stad* (*People in the City*) which presents a "city symphony" picturing Stockholm street life in a hybrid of post-war angst and visual impressionism.⁹⁴ In fact, at the very same time and place that *En dag i staden* was being montaged together as a dadaistic travelogue of Stockholm (ending in total destruction), Suckdorff was editing a nature documentary

⁹²Granath (1975), p.50.

⁹³Moholy-Nagy, p.338.

⁹⁴Siegfried Kracauer *Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997 (originally published 1960), p.246. See also Leif Furhammar *Filmen: Sverige* Stockholm: Wiken, 1993, p.229: "It is mindboggling to see how almost every considerable film during the post-war era deals with the individual in conflict with the collective (family, class, gangs, or society), p.229.

next door.⁹⁵ Included in the Brussels World's Fair film festival in 1958, *En dag i staden* gained a substantial amount of notoriety from critics such as Amos Vogel who, writing in *Evergreen Review*, noted:

The Angry Young Film Makers: Hulten-Nordenström's *A Day in Town* (winner of the 1958 Creative Film Foundation Award for exceptional merit) is a wild, dadaist explosion that starts as a typical Fitzpatrick travelogue of Stockholm and ends in the city's total destruction by fire and dynamite in one of the most hilarious and anarchic film experiments of record.⁹⁶

What these critics may also have recognized was the close proximity this film had to Dziga Vertov's 1929 *Man with a Movie Camera* which also presents a day in the city. Redirecting Vertov's productivist montage techniques away from narrative towards a more fractured Dadaist picture, *En Dag i Staden* shows an acute awareness of the historical, conceptual and aesthetic playing field into which its key participants were entering in their specifically urban dialogue about modernity.

Playing the central character in *En dag i staden* was the Finish born Swede Per-Olof Ultvedt, an artist whose own work embraced *sabotage* as a starting point for creation. Producing geometric mobile ballet décor such as *Spiralen* (1954) [fig. 22] and individual art work such as *Collage* (1957), Ultvedt, through various dysfunctional methods of movement, dissolved more or less all of his work into a territory of total formal anarchy. Having met Tinguely in Paris at Hulten's *Le Mouvement* exhibition, Ultvedt found both the *chance* and working class sensibility he was looking for in Tinguely's technically crude meta-mechanic embrace of movement. By 1957 Ultvedt had

⁹⁵Hans Nordenström "Preluder på 50-talet" in *Moderna Museet 1958-1983*, p.26.

⁹⁶Amos Vogel "A Day in Town" *Evergreen Review* nr 6 (1958).

fully developed his own formal vocabulary not simply out of Tinguely's meta-matics and Duchamp's coefficient of art, but also Soto's mobile reliefs, Eggeling's symphonies and his own *barn* mentality.⁹⁷ As Sandro Key-Åberg was to describe Ultvedt's practice in 1958:

P.O. [Per-Olof] has learned from many and does not try to deny it—it would not be a good idea. His ability to learn is great but so is his ability to place all forms of knowledge under a new light. Everything which is vital and moving, that fight in time and the world, interests him. Futurism's celebration of speed and movement and whole hearted suspicion against all institutions and authorities interests him. Dadaism and surrealism is for him a huge joy as well. But what he has appropriated is not the angst and suicidal thoughts from the dead nor the grotesque and literary of Surrealism. Their attempt to *gestalt* the unconscious is for him estranged. It is their revolt, mockery and grimace against the accepted, against social and artistic conventions and judgments which engages him most.⁹⁸

In Lucretian fashion similar to Duchamp and Tinguely, Ultvedt's "freedom" was founded on an artistic misprision.⁹⁹ His 1957 short film *Nära ögat* (literally "close to the eye" but also meaning "to have just missed the target") [fig. 23] is a perfect example of how Ultvedt tackled the formal influence of Eggeling's redemption driven "communication machines" with irony, wit and entropic constructions.¹⁰⁰ Here, geometric forms are brought together not so much as a symphony, but to fall into a playful formal chaos. By the late

⁹⁷I use the word "barn" as it means "child" in Swedish but also references Ultvedt's 'farmhand' vernacular in English.

⁹⁸Sandro Key-Åberg "P.O. Ultvedt" *Konstrevy* Nr.4 (1958)

⁹⁹Harold Bloom book *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973 outlines a theory of misprision that can be applied to artistic practice. Calling up the Atomistic model of Lucretius' "clinamen principle," Bloom embraces influence and misreading so as to clear an imaginative space for the poet/artist.

¹⁰⁰This "communication machines" were meant to make visible a transcendental, metaphysical state of existence through a dialectically structured composition. A most comprehensive study of Viking Eggeling is Louise O'Konor *Viking Eggeling 1880-1925: Artist and Film-maker, Life and Work*. Stockholm: Tryckeri AB Björkmans Efterträdare, 1971.

fifties then, Ultvedt had developed an artistic vocabulary of his own which brought him into a particularly close working relationship with Hulten and Tinguely. By the early sixties, this relationship would propel him into the international arena of contemporary art.

In 1958, *Nära ögat*, *Diagonal Symphony* and *En dag i staden* were all included in *Apropå Eggeling: Avant-Garde Film-Festival*, an event conceptualized by Hulten, Nordenström and the American artist/filmmaker Robert Breer for the opening of a new museum of modern art in Stockholm.¹⁰¹ Using his curatorial reputation at home and abroad, and opening a door into Moderna Museet by organizing this film festival, Hulten would find himself in a position to start filling the intellectual cultural gap he had perceived in Stockholm and Paris as early as 1954 with artists such as Tinguely and Ultvedt. While interested in the ephemeral side of collage, montage and the readymade, as an art historian Hulten also saw the need for a new kind of museum able to retain and maintain a dynamic sense of play and anarchic vitality. The important thing was to make this public museum *his own property*.

While Hulten managed to convert Moderna Museet into a vital center of his own, he and his artists would, in the end, find their work plunged into the center of discourses on contemporary international art in which Duchamp's work and legacy was increasingly becoming "invaded, colonized

¹⁰¹Over forty films were screened at *Avant-Garde Film Festival* and included work by an international array of artists such as Jean Epstein, Germaine Dulac, René Clair, Peter Weiss, Marcel Duchamp, Hans Richter, Robert Breer, Bruno Munari, Jean Cocteau, Fernand Léger, Norman MacLaren, Luis Buñuel, and others. For more details, see Pontus Hulten *Apropå Eggeling: Avant-garde film festival*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1958. This catalogue was designed and edited by Hulten.

and exploited" (to quote American critic Hilton Kramer).¹⁰² As Hulten and these artists would find out, they were by no means the only ones discovering Duchamp at this time.¹⁰³

A New Museum and a New Realism

During the 1930s, a large sum of money was donated to the National Museum in Stockholm by philanthropist Emma Spitzer in order for a modern museum to be built. The reason given for this donation was not that she appreciated modern art, but that she wanted to see it removed from the National Museum.¹⁰⁴ Throughout the 1930s and 40s nothing was done with the money, or the idea. But by the mid-50s the National Museum was running out of storage space for incoming art. At this time, a reorganization of the Swedish military system began a process of decentralization whereby its training grounds, previously located inside the capital city, were relocated to the outskirts of Stockholm. In this process, a former naval gymnasium, built in the middle of the nineteenth century and located on the island of Skeppsholmen in the central part of Stockholm, was made available to house modern art [fig. 24]. Although the museum's first exhibition took place under construction in 1956 with a two month showing of Picasso's *Guernica*, the official opening would not occur until May of 1958 with King Gustav VI Adolf in ceremonious attendance. Moderna Museet, as it was named, hereby

¹⁰²Hilton Kramer "Pop Art Symposium" *Arts* (April 1963), pp, 35-45.

¹⁰³In 1959 Ultvedt would even travel to Paris where he would be further acquainted with Duchamp through Robert Lebel's Duchamp exhibition at La Hune Bookstore. He would also help introduce Duchamp's work to a Swedish public via exhibitions and lectures. Along with Ulf Linde he would also begin to produce replicas of Duchamp's work.

¹⁰⁴Pontus Hulten "Fem fragment ur moderna museets historia" in Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983, p.30.

restocked its former army barracks with an increasingly powerful arsenal of contemporary art [fig. 25].

The museum's early form took shape under the supervision of the aging cubist painter Otte Sköld. While the inaugural exhibition lacked the contemporary direction that the museum would become known for by the sixties, showing only Nordic and international work transferred over from the National Museum's collection, Hulten's avant-garde film festival *Apropå Eggeling* made an important connection with Stockholm's non-commercial film club which since the mid fifties had grown into a few thousand members.¹⁰⁵ The first large exhibition of international modern art, however, opened in August, 1958 with a large retrospective of Le Corbusier's work as architect, painter and sculptor. Unlike the museum's film festival, the exhibition did not show much initiative from the part of the museum as it was purchased readymade from a Swiss architecture firm. It was, nonetheless, an important success in that it gained a substantial number of visitors and a great deal of attention in the popular press.¹⁰⁶ A big asset was the fact that Corbusier himself came to Stockholm for the occasion, seduced north by the promise of a life-time achievement medal awarded by the King of Sweden.¹⁰⁷

When Sköld died a few months later, his widow Arna Sköld, along with Pontus Hulten, was given the task of organizing a retrospective of her husband's work to open in January, 1959. By the end of that year, having showed his skill for curating exhibitions at commercial galleries throughout

¹⁰⁵Hulten (1983), p.35.

¹⁰⁶After the Le Corbusier exhibition, Moderna Museet could boast that 41,000 visitors had found their way through their doors. See Linde, Ulf "Memoarer" in Granath, et al., p.76-78.

¹⁰⁷Pontus Hulten "Fem fragment ur moderna museets historia" in Granath, Nieckels, et al. eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983, p.32.

the fifties, Hulten was hired on a shoe-string budget as the first director of Moderna Museet. On the advice of the National Museum's director Carl Nordenfalk, Hulten was sent to Paris to find out from its galleries which direction contemporary art was taking. Knowing full well that Paris was no longer the centre it once had been, Hulten would instead find out where and how to acquire his own place in the history of modern art.

In October 1959, Stockholm was given a taste of Hulten's history and the museum was provided with a new trajectory. Interestingly it was to be the "psycho-physical" spaces Illmar Laaban had described earlier in that decade which Hulten used to put the Museum back on course. *Sebastian Matta: Fifteen Forms of Doubt* was the Chilean artist's first large solo exhibition and showed commitment and initiative on the part of Moderna Museet to redirect itself away from Paris-centered discourses (represented by Le Corbusier) towards an art that suggested the centrality of the margin [fig. 26]. It is noteworthy that Matta had worked for Le Corbusier in the 1930s before rejecting architecture in favour of his painted psychological morphologies, or "inscapes," as he called them. During the thirties he had also discovered Duchamp whose work he was obsessed with to the point of publishing with Duchamp's philanthropic friend and collector Katherine Dreier an "Analytical Reflection" on the *Large Glass*.¹⁰⁸ By 1959, Matta's work must have represented an important post-war intersection for Hulten — a site situated somewhere just outside the collective movements developing out of CoBrA and the Movement Towards an Imaginiste Bauhaus. As we will see,

¹⁰⁸Katherine S. Dreier and Matta Echaurren, *Duchamp's Glass: La Mariée mise à nu par ses célibataires, meme. An Analytical Reflection*. New York: Société Anonyme, Inc., 1944. See also John Tancock's "The Influence of Marcel Duchamp" in D'Harnoncourt, Anne and McShine, Kynaston, Eds., *Marcel Duchamp*. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Modern Art, 1973, pp.160-178.

Hulten and others would end up favouring collaborative experiments that stopped short of the collective revolutionary Situationist dreams.

While there would be compromises and confusion in their early agenda, Moderna Museet did produce throughout 1959 and 1960 a series of exhibitions which further articulated the institution's foundation and direction. Along with retrospective exhibitions of Siri Derkert and Anna Kasparsson (two Swedish women with ties to continental as well as local modernism but who had remained marginalized within a male dominated art world abroad and at home), Hulten utilized his friendships from Paris to produce large scale exhibitions of Robert Jacobsen as well as Sam Francis, whose work was shown alongside musical performances by John Cage, Karl Heinz Stockhausen, and David Tudor [fig. 27]. This aggressive move towards a contemporary avant-garde focus secured an important audience for the museum with the help of the experimental music society Fylklingen, which included such important members as poet/painter Öyvind Fahlström. In many ways, Fylklingen provided Hulten with a ready-made audience for avant-garde activities. In turn, Moderna Museet provided avant-garde art to an entirely new generation of museum-goers whose interests were rooted in art as well as popular culture. It was this enthusiastic youth audience who would eventually convince funding agencies to sponsor Hulten's museum.¹⁰⁹

An early example of how the new activities of the museum were catching the attention of funding agencies was the decision in 1960 by the

¹⁰⁹I refer to Moderna Museet as 'Hulten's museum' in order to emphasize how much the museum had become associated with his vision.

Swedish Institute to turn to Moderna Museet for help in breaking the isolated position in which it saw Swedish contemporary art to be caught. Sponsoring a collection of Swedish works to be sent to the São Paulo Biennale, the Swedish Institute put their trust and money in Hulten who used this trip not only to exhibit works by Fahlström and others, but also to make an important stop-over in New York. Here he made a number of significant connections with New York artists such as Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Alfred Leslie and Richard Stankiewicz and others through his friendship to the Swedish engineer Billy Klüver. At this stage of his career, the ideas of the New York avant-garde Klüver introduced him to must have represented an interesting alternative to the stagnating debates Hulten had confronted in Europe. Working for Bell Laboratories during the day and collaborating with artists on art work during the evenings, Klüver provided Hulten with an 'inside' view into an art world that could balance that of Continental European discourses. With this knowledge, Hulten could turn Stockholm's Moderna Museet into a centre on the margins where a cross-Atlantic avant-garde could emerge out of collaborations.

For Tinguely, Hulten's connection with Klüver turned out to be crucial, as he was invited to New York in January of 1960 for a solo exhibition at the Staempfli Gallery. In New York Tinguely was reacquainted with Marcel Duchamp (whom he had previously met in Paris) and travelled with him to the Philadelphia Museum of Modern Art to look at and discuss the works in its Duchamp collection.¹¹⁰ He also introduced himself to Klüver, who had previously helped Johns and Rauschenberg realize works and now offered to help Tinguely construct his largest assemblage to that date. Tinguely had been

¹¹⁰Hulten (1972), p.126.

approached by Sam Hunter from the Museum of Modern Art in New York to build an assemblage in their sculpture garden. This provided Tinguely with an opportunity to produce his first monumental auto-destructive meta-mechanic — *Homage à New York* [fig. 28].¹¹¹

While Klüver offered Tinguely technical advice on constructing his destruction, his largest contributions were the visits to the dumps of New Jersey to pick up bicycle wheels; for Tinguely a strikingly Stirnian and Duchampian motif. *Homage à New York*, as the seven by eight meter giant sculpture would become known, was assembled out of everything from a bathtub to a piano to Robert Rauschenberg's *Money-thrower* that released and scattered silver dollars.¹¹² As Rauschenberg would later recall, he felt “privileged to be able to hand [Tinguely] a screwdriver. There were so many different aspects of life involved in the big piece. It was as real, as interesting, as complicated, as vulnerable, and as gay as life itself.”¹¹³ While the irony in this statement will become increasingly apparent, at this point in my narrative the important thing to note is the collaborative atmosphere Tinguely was afforded in New York, because of the connections that Hulten was establishing through the Moderna Museet in Stockholm. As we will see, by 1962 the perspective artists such as Tinguely thought they had on this collaborative international scene would turn out to be a devastating illusion.

Between 7:30 and 8:00 pm on March 17th, *Homage à New York* made the transformation from an assembled heap of rubbish to an entropic suicide machine desperately struggling to produce abstract paintings by the metre, but

¹¹¹Ibid..

¹¹²Billy Klüver "Garden Party" in Hulten (1972), p.130-143.

¹¹³Violand-Hobi, p.37.

falling short. Painted white to stand out against the night sky like a mechanical ghost, Tinguely's *magnum opus* became, for a brief moment, a spectacularized meditation on a circumscribed spectre that would come back to haunt modernist and avant-garde artists alike throughout the sixties' many failed revolutionary moments.¹¹⁴ As a lively, ephemeral, and pathetic monument to this *spirit* in the form of an industrial ruin, *Homage à New York* returned, unlike Raushenberg's work, to the garbage dump from which it had materialized. While dematerialized through engineered chance, loud noise, smoke and movement, *Homage à New York* collapsed into an allegorical state(ment) of its Self, but also larger Cold War anxieties and abstract expressions. In this act, New York's new found cultural and political identity and power is stripped bare to reveal its internal hubris.

Recalling his homage to New York in 1971, Tinguely concluded that the assemblage:

remained a good thing because it was purely ideological, without commerce. The only memory is the photo, but the picture guarantees another transformation, because...there is also the myth, what people tell who saw it or who didn't see it, or who read and think they saw it or who see the photos and imagine having seen it. There are inevitable transformations. It's a form of treason which takes place, and that's all right.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴In his 1968 essay, "The Death of the Author," Roland Barthes critiques representation on the basis of a refusal of authorship and originality. As Abigail Solomon-Godeau has pointed out: "For Barthes, the refusal of authorship and originality was an innately revolutionary stance 'since to refuse to fix meaning is, in the end, to refuse God and his hypostases—reason, science, law.' Similarly, the dismantling of the notion of unique subjectivity Barthes understood as a salutary blow struck against an ossified and essentially retrograde bourgeois humanism." My suggestion is that Tinguely had by this time formulated a similar critique of representation while salvaging "his own" to use a Stirnean phrase. After all, Tinguely, with his *proper* name, keeps his own career "moving" within his dialectically formulated *construction-destruction*. Abigail Solomon-Godeau "Photography After Art Photography" pp.75-87 in Brian Wallis, ed. *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation*. New York: David R. Godine, Publishers, 1984. p.81.

¹¹⁵Quoted from a 1971 lecture at the Georges Pompidou Centre, Paris. See Violand-Hobi, p.40.

With *Homage à New York*, Tinguely had not only gained a great deal of international press but had also actualized auto-destruction on a new monstrous scale.¹¹⁶

Returning to Paris, Tinguely was as obsessed as ever with Duchamp, producing, among other works, his *Homage à Marcel Duchamp*, a kind of updated version of Munari's *Useless Machines*. But by this time, Tinguely was not alone in his Duchampian obsession. Nor was Hulten the only curator who had seen the appropriation of Duchampian strategies as carrying with it a potential for opening up a conceptual space out of the cultural stalemate perceived by many in the late fifties. With the help of Robert Lebel's *catalogue raisonné* published on Duchamp in 1959, access into the logic of this previously obscure figure was made more accessible.¹¹⁷ By the late fifties a small number of galleries had begun showing Duchamp as well as a younger generation of artists working within this intellectual 'gap.'¹¹⁸ One of the most energetic and dramatic figures to pick up on this Duchampian renaissance was Pierre Restany, a Frenchman who emerged on the curatorial scene in the early sixties to embrace this new attitude many labelled "Neo-Dada."

Working out of Paris, Restany had spent the latter half of the fifties searching for his own position from which to establish "the next big

¹¹⁶As Allan Kaprow has noted, while this work could be read as a critique of MoMA's activities, "Homage to New York, a marvelous contraption of junk that partially and intentionally destroyed itself in performance, was, besides being a work of art by a known innovator, a publicity gesture on the part of the Museum of Modern Art that benefited both parties." Allan Kaprow "The Artist as a Man of the World" (1964) published in Allan Kaprow *Essays on The Blurring of Art and Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

¹¹⁷See Robert Lebel *Marcel Duchamp* New York: Grove Press, 1959.

¹¹⁸For example, a gallery such as Galerie Rive Droite was by 1959 showing Jasper Johns alongside Jackson Pollock, Sam Francis, and Marcel Duchamp.

movement" not too dissimilar from Hulten's. By the late fifties, Restany had established himself as a kind of provocateur within the French art scene, writing articles such as "U.S. go home and come back later" for *Cimaise*, which precariously encouraged the radical individual gestures of Abstract Expressionists such as Jackson Pollock and the 'spirituality and mysterious inwardness' of someone like Mark Tobey, while trying to avoid a wholesale support of a distinctly Americanized form of modern art. In a dual attempt at criticizing America's reluctance to acknowledge Paris as an artistic centre and Europe's stubborn refusal to recognize that New York had managed to steal the idea of modern art from Paris, Restany reviewed the travelling exhibition *Jackson Pollock and the New American Painting*:

...from here on, how can we help but to repeat along with Pollock that 'the fundamental problems of contemporary painting are not the prerogative of one single country.' This Yankee rendez-vous was not useless. It gave proof to those who didn't know or who didn't want to know, that from now on there exists on the other side of the Atlantic a spiritual climate that is capable of bringing some original solutions to the essential necessities of Art. So go back home, Americans, and come back to see us when you have something new to astonish us with: for instance, a second Pollock.¹¹⁹

With a "Don King" curatorial attitude and support of an internationally-reconfigured post-war avant-garde, Restany's support of cross-Atlantic projects such as Tinguely's *Homage à New York* was welcomed by a broad range of otherwise ignored artists. Returning from New York to Paris after having taken the piss (as Duchamp might say) out of American Abstract Expressionism, Tinguely was now widely embraced by artists and critics who saw a wider, more open, arena available to them.

¹¹⁹Pierre Restany "U.S. Go back home and come back later" *Cimaise* VI no.3 (March 1959), pp.37.

The collaborative spirit Tinguely had encountered in New York was now more than ever before evident upon his return to Paris. With encouragement from Restany, a number of previously disenfranchised members of the Paris art scene would get together to sign a manifesto which at the time must have read as a 'collaborative' act. Whereas Hulten had been careful to 'choose' artists that could support his own interests, Restany would briefly overshadow his activities by quickly assembling as many of these artists as possible under one roof.

In the fall of 1960, the "Nouveau Réaliste Manifesto" was signed by Restany and the artists Arman, Dufrêne, Raymond Hains, Yves Klein, Martial Raysse, Daniel Spoerri, Tinguely, and Jaques de la Villeglé, with the joint, but ambiguous, declaration that "Thursday, October 27, 1960 The Nouveaux Réalistes became conscious of their collective singularity. Nouveau Realisme = new approaches to the perception of the real." [fig. 29] Although the group was centered in Paris and was predominantly made up of French (Klein, Raysse, Dufrene, Villeglé, and of course, Restany himself), the group soon became more international in character. The Bulgarian Christo, Italian Mimmo Rotella and Franco-American Niki de Saint-Phalle were soon added to the roster. Arman, Dufrêne, Hains, Klein, Tinguely and Villeglé had already in May of that year participated in an exhibition curated by Restany under the title of *Les Nouveaux Réalistes*, and were now being 'packaged' as a distinctly new European art movement. For Restany, these artists, joined by association with Duchampian wit and a Dadaist anti-art attitude, represented a third generation School of Paris striving to be released from the confined

problematics of hot and cold abstraction.¹²⁰ What I do not think many of them realized at the time of signing the manifesto, was how homogenized and fixed their identities would become under the 'collective singularity' (rather than collaborative diversity) Restany had labelled Nouveau Réalisme. In this regard, Hulten would have the upper hand in securing a working relationship with Tinguely and Saint-Phalle by affording a space where individual desires could be accommodated without a collective goal.

As we have seen with the case of Tinguely, many of these artists had, despite Restany's claim to having 'discovered' them, been producing and exhibiting work for quite some time. To discern just how problematic this 'naming' would become for artists like Tinguely and others, it is necessary to consider just how differently individual artists were working. Villeglé, Hains and Dufrene, for example, had, since the late forties, been evolving their own form of dialectical attacks on both high art and mass culture. Their acts of artistic intervention of lacerating advertisements to produce *décollages* brought attention to the seemingly endless *urlandscape* made up of the debris of a commercial spectacle that enveloped quotidian life [fig. 30]. Benjamin Buchloh has argued that these lacerated billboards were embraced in a surrealist attraction to the outmoded.¹²¹ In reading these decollages as originating in urban spaces left open as ruins as a result of the arrival of a new, Americanized, commodity spectacle, Buchloh fails, despite his insightfulness, to account for their political effectiveness as open rebellion. As Thomas McDonough has noted, these spaces were not fully evacuated and

¹²⁰Susan Hapgood *Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1958-62* New York: The American Federation of Arts in association with Universe Publishing, 1994, p.49.

¹²¹See Benjamin Buchloh's "From Detail to Fragment: Decollage Affichiste" *October* (1988), pp.99-110.

were open to "ludic-constructive behaviours" such as those of Villeglé and Hains.¹²² As a deconstructive 'gesture,' these décollages did map the city in a new allegorical manner. As Walter Benjamin had understood the process of collage earlier in the century:

The memory of the ponderer holds sway over the disordered mass of dead knowledge. Human knowledge is piecework to it in a particularly pregnant sense: namely as the heaping up of arbitrarily cut up pieces, out of which one puts together a puzzle.... The allegorist reaches now here, now there, into the chaotic depths that his knowledge places at his disposal, grabs an item out, holds it next to another, and sees whether they fit: that meaning to this image, or this image to that meaning. The result never lets itself be predicted; for there is no natural mediation between the two.¹²³

In this sense, just as by the late fifties Roland Barthes, with his *Mythologies*, had developed a semiotics able to deconstruct French colonialism in Algeria, the *decolagistes* were able to militarily, through language, take-back the streets. Unlike the Situationists who would attack the streets with collective zeal, these artists, working *collaboratively* with anonymous vandals, would wait until later in their studios to sign their fragments of "dead knowledge." As it often turned out, these trapped compositions revealed a most immediate history of subjective and collective fantasies. One of the most dramatic (and dangerous) of these archeological 'openings' took place in 1961 at Galerie J. in Paris under the name of *Affiches lacérées marouflées sur toile*. Here, Hains' strategically returned his décollages to public walls where they became unified by references to Algeria. At a moment when bombs planted by the O.A.S. could be heard exploding in the washrooms of the Paris Stock

¹²²Thomas McDonough "Situationist Space" *October* 67 (Winter 1994), pp. 59-77.

¹²³Susan Buck-Morss *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1989, pp.240-241.

Exchange, a decollage such as *Paix en Algérie* — which title derives from the torn out remains of graffiti — could semiotically turn typographic fragments into hand-grenades.¹²⁴

Even more involved in language games played out in the urban streets, the Rumanian artist Daniel Spoerri turned his attention toward the debris of Capitalism's throw-away culture which he used to construct typographies of chance. Initially trained as a classical dancer in Zürich before arriving in Paris in the early fifties, Spoerri concocted quotidian "traps" that would interest both Hulten and Restany. By the late fifties Spoerri was making what he termed "tableaux-pièges" (snare-pictures) which in Rousselian fashion turned *tables* into *tableaux*, trapping found debris with fixatives and cutting the legs off the tables before hanging them on the wall [fig. 31]. As psycho-geographical mappings of the everyday, these assisted readymades engaged indifferently in a meta-philosophy of everyday life similar to that argued for by Henri Lefebvre. If Marx, through Hegel, had focused on the mastery of nature and the external world (which for them defined the human being), and Nietzsche had turned inwards to the transformation of self through desire and 'jouissance,' then Lefebvre was by the sixties arguing for a combination of Marxist and Nietzschean construction of knowledge in order to promote a "connaissance" that implicated agency and reflexivity in the production of knowledge by the subject.¹²⁵ Via these *Trappings* of the lived, phenomenological traces, Spoerri managed to

¹²⁴As Hulten has discussed in reference to Tinguely's *Baluba* sculptures, during 1960 Africa gained seventeen new independent states through the process of decolonization. In response, the right-wing terrorist organization O.A.S. (Organisation armée secrète) began to explode bombs all over the country. See Hulten (1972), p.231.

¹²⁵See Introduction by Elenore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas, Trans. and Eds. in *Henri Lefebvre: Writings on Cities* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996.

produce a public image through *anon-fixed* and highly self-reflexive system of knowledge. By the early sixties, Spoerri would collaborate on various projects with Hulten, Saint-Phalle, Tinguely and Ultvedt.

Commenting on the New Realist label that Restany had placed on this diverse group of artists, Tinguely would later distance it from his own practice by suggesting that "the true New Realists are Daniel Spoerri and Arman. Even Yves Klein did not really belong there."¹²⁶ For Arman, accumulation had become a serious strategy as he produced archeological displays of people's daily dying, in the form of vitrines filled with consumer trash [fig. 32]. Meeting Yves Klein in Nice in the early fifties, Arman had mustered up his own mythology in which the universe was divided between himself and Klein. Yves supposedly looked into the blue void of the Mediterranean sky and took possession of an immaterial world, while Arman was to embrace a material one through a process of accumulation and destruction. The strategic reference point here seems to once again have been Duchamp as they each took positions within the larger picture — *The Large Glass*.¹²⁷

This new generation of artists became mainly supported by an intimate and new gallery scene in Paris centered around Galerie J. (owned and operated by Restany's partner Jeanine Goldschmidt) as well as the Iris Clert Galerie which exhibited some of the more 'difficult' work by the younger generation of artists. In April of 1960 she helped Arman install *Le Plein (Full*

¹²⁶Violand-Hobi, p.43.

¹²⁷*The Large Glass*, or *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* is divided in two halves: the bottom representing the material realm of the bachelors, and the immaterial realm of the bride.

Up), an exhibition which consisted of garbage accumulated from a one block radius of Iris Clert's gallery [fig. 33]. Filled wall to wall, floor to ceiling, this materialist excrement filled the gallery to the point of keeping visitors from being able to enter the gallery. *Le Plein* was presented in dialectical opposition with Yves Klein's *Le Vide: La sensibilité picturale a l'état de matière première*, an exhibition two years prior in which Klein presented nothing but "immaterial space" [fig. 34]. As Tinguely would report the event to Hulten in a letter sent to Stockholm, the event was an enormous media stunt:

Yves Klein had an enormous opening at Iris Clert between 21:00 and 24:00. The republican garde—firebrigade, thousands of people (entrance fee of 1.500 franc) and all white walls! It was very beautiful and will continue for fifteen days. People drank a "cocktail" and tomorrow morning will piss blue!!! Yves also wanted to illuminate the Obelisk but due to its announcement leaking out on radio and in newspapers it didn't work out. The first opening I have enjoyed.¹²⁸

What Tinguely and Klein shared with each other (perhaps more than with the other Nouveaux Réaliste artists) was an interest in the dematerialization of the object to such a degree that it went against the optimism of Constructivism and the Bauhaus school. If Antoine Pevsner and Naum Gabo had in the twenties claimed to have freed themselves from the idea of art as "static rhythms," and the Bauhaus teacher Moholy-Nagy had wanted to "put in the place of the static principle of classical art the dynamic principle of universal life," then Tinguely would twist their tongues, so to speak, and introduce his own understanding of movement and "static." Writing against the grain of these past manifestos, Tinguely wrote his own manifesto *Für Statik* [*For Statics*] which was disseminated by being thrown out of an airplane high above Düsseldorf to announce his exhibition in 1959 [fig. 35]:

¹²⁸Letter quoted in Hulten (1972), p.63.

Everything moves continuously. Immobility does not exist. Don't be dominated by out-of-date concepts of time. Get rid of hours, seconds and minutes. Stop resisting change. LIVE IN TIME — BE STATIC — BE STATIC WITH MOVEMENT. For Statics, for a present taking place in the Present. Resist anxious spells of weakness to halt moving things, to petrify moments and to kill what is alive. Stop continuously setting up 'values' which cannot but break down. Be free, live!¹²⁹

This gesture of dropping the manifesto from an airplane was no doubt an exaggerated homage to Duchamp's *Three Standard Stoppages*. After all, he had no idea who their audience would be. This spectacular self-advertisement was also something that interested Yves Klein. Having collaborated with Tinguely on the exhibition *Vitesse pure et stabilité monochrome* [Pure Speed and Monochrome Stability] a year prior, Klein gave a lecture in Düsseldorf in which he stressed the importance of their "collaboration" and rejection of the utopian goals set forth by the Bauhaus:

I wish to propose to those who wish to hear: COLLABORATION. Consider the etymology of the word. To collaborate is to work in common on the same project. The project for which I propose collaboration is Art....This evening, I am proposing collaboration to artists who already know about it, and who perhaps already know that they should mock their possessive, egotistical, egocentric personalities by the aggravation of the Me in all their 'portrayals' in the theater — like the world (the tangible, physical, ephemeral world) where they know very well how to exist by playing a part. I propose to them to continue to say 'my work,' each separately, when speaking to the living dead (who surrounds us in everyday life) of the communal work which was realized through collaboration. I propose that they continue joyously to say Me, I, My, Mine, not the hypocritical Us, Our — but only after solemnly signing the pact of COLLABORATION.... I push the point to this perhaps eccentric extreme to make it clear that the collaboration which I am proposing means playing your way out of the psychological world in order to make yourself really free. I do not speak as a Utopian this evening in proposing this new form of collaboration and trying to get a new and perfect 'BAUHAUS' underway in 1959;

¹²⁹Hulten (1972), p.112.

rather, I speak from experience.... Jean Tinguely and I, working together for the last six months, have mined a constantly new and wonderful thing, the commotion of 'the fundamental static movement of the universe.' In conclusion, in proposing Collaboration in art to artists of the heart and head, I am in fact proposing that they bypass art altogether and work individually on the return to real life, the life in which a man no longer feels that he is the center of the universe, but where the universe is the center of every man. We will then know a magical honor [*prestige*] where in the past we knew only vertigo [*vertige*]. In this way, we will become aerial men; we will know the force of upward attraction toward space, toward nothing and everything at the same time; the force of terrestrial attraction having been mastered, we will literally levitate in total physical and spiritual freedom.¹³⁰

Attempting to suspend themselves between the past and the future, the material and the immaterial, Klein and Tinguely concocted this "hyper-Futurist" language as a rhetorical gesture to counter both the optimism and pessimism of the post-war world. Considering Franco-German relations at this time, the speech reads as a reactionary return to the conservatism of the Futurists. Along with their similar interest in machines, movement, and destruction, Klein and Tinguely saw in the Futurists an unremitting defence of the Ego. Klein was, perhaps even more than Tinguely, obsessed with "his own," as Stirner would say. If Freud had located human consciousness in a state of vertigo due to a dialectical struggle between Eros, the life force, and Thanatos, the death wish, then Klein proposed to suspend his own Ego with the help of "magical honor [*prestige*]."

Despite the fact that Klein had, like Tinguely, tried to balance his ego-maniacal approach with the introduction of chance and irony, even his

¹³⁰Yves Klein "Discourse on the Occasion of Tinguely's Exhibition in Düsseldorf, January 1959" in *Yves Klein 1928-1962 A Retrospective* Houston: Institute for the Arts, Rice University, 1982, p.233-234.

closest friends often failed to see the humour in his work. This was something which was much more apparent in Tinguely's work. Duchamp would later comment on Tinguely's humour: "I feel with him a closeness and a rapport that I have felt with few other artists.... He has this great thing, a sense of humor — something I have been preaching for artists all my life. Painters usually think they are the last word in divinity; they become like *grands prêtres*. I believe in humor as a thing of great dignity, and so does Tinguely."¹³¹ Tinguely and Klein were in the end quite different as Klein in many ways took on this 'divine' role of a painter to the nth degree. For many of the other Nouveaux Realistes, Klein's "extreme" radical individualism became almost unbearable as he even went so far as to declare himself leader of their group.¹³² As Restany would say, "he didn't paint to paint, but to reveal his truth....To grasp it, one has to ...enter into his game."¹³³ For the most part, Klein's game involved an embrace of all of the art world's inner truisms. Although this game was usually played with a Duchampian *tongue-in-cheek* attitude, by the late-fifties it had developed into an intricate labyrinth of myths tied not only to the art world but also to associations with

¹³¹Calvin Tomkins *The Bride and the Bachelors: Five Masters of the Avant-Garde: Duchamp, Tinguely, Cage, Rauschenberg, Cunningham* New York: Penguin Books, 1981 (orig. 1965), p. 168.

¹³²Arman has commented on Yves Klein's "big ego" did get in the way of a unified movement, but this was not the only problem keeping them together: "Klein excommunicated Restany in the same Surrealist manner experienced earlier by André Breton by his peers. Now, remember, the New Realists was made up of three groups of artists: the Parisians, or poster artists; the Swiss, including Jean Tinguely, Daniel Spoerri, and by association to Tinguely, Niki de Saint Phalle; and the Niçois, to which Klein tacked on Martial Raysee. Raysse did not really fit in with the group at the beginning. There was a big brouhaha about him. The poster artists, especially Raymond Hains, did not want to accept Raysse because they were not familiar with his work. They went to the attic of the house where Martial lived to see his work and they shouted, 'This is Surrealism not New Realism. We do not accept it!' This turned into a heated discussion and Klein struck Hains. The movement was dissolved twenty minutes later, after everyone had signed the manifest by Restany stating New Realism equals new perspectives and approaches to the real." Interview with Arman in Hapgood, Susan *Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1958-62* New York: The American Federation of Arts in association with Universe Publishing, 1994, p.108.

¹³³Quoted in Thomas McEvilley "Yves Klein: Conquistador of the Void" *Yves Klein 1928-1962 A Retrospective*: Houston: Institute for the Arts, Rice University, 1982, p.20.

the Masonic Rosicrucian Order of Saint Sebastian — only by dying (and with a lot of help from the art market) in 1962 would Klein be elevated into the position of Sainthood.

Despite expected questions and quarrels within a group of diverse "individuals" such as these, and despite his willingness to let Klein play their "leader," Restany's salesman-like approach to the art world did hold them together to some degree by providing a significant international platform and exposure. On February 12, 1961, Restany incorporated the Franco-American artist Niki de Saint-Phalle into the group [fig. 36]. As the first and only woman in the group, the 'gun carrying' member Saint-Phalle must have had a difficult time putting up with the general patriarchal structure of the group, and the misogynist activities of Klein in particular.

By this time Saint-Phalle was living with Tinguely whom she first met in 1956. The occasion that triggered her inclusion into the Nouveaux Réalistes was her spectacular production of new work involving embedding cans of spray paint and small pop or soup containers (filled with liquid paint) into plaster on wood which would subsequently be fired at with a rifle, either by herself or an invited audience member, producing the effect of a bleeding or an abstract expressionist painting [fig. 37]. If before the shooting these unexpressed assemblages resembled Jean Fautrier's informel *Hostages*, afterwards, they made a striking reference to New York school abstraction à la Jackson Pollock. Through the ritual act of shooting these *figures*, throw-away consumer culture was transformed into the latest high art currency. Masquerading as a tomboy within Restany's arsenal of Duchampian bachelors, Niki aimed her phallic gun at her own abstracted forms of Self.

Through this transformative act, Saint-Phalle not only staged her own *passage* from her previous career as a model to artist, but catapulted herself into the international art world of the 1960s.

As early as 1959, Saint-Phalle had been introduced to work by Jasper Johns, Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock and Robert Rauschenberg at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. Amalgamating these different approaches into her own hybrid iconography consisting of targets, drips, discarded objects and rhetorical 'actions,' Saint-Phalle set up a representational dialogue in which her own gendered and sexualized identity could challenge the myth of masculinity dominant not only in Abstract Expressionism but also in Restany's army of artists. Like Johns and Rauschenberg, Saint-Phalle would arm herself not only with artistic tropes, but also with a Duchampian tongue-in-cheek wit.

Pontus Hulten seems to have appreciated Saint-Phalle's strategy considerably more than Restany did. Introduced to her by Tinguely in 1960, Hulten decided to include Saint-Phalle in the most significant exhibition he was working on to that date. Since being hired on the staff of Moderna Museet, Hulten had been busy planning a large scale 'thematic' exhibition of contemporary international art to follow the form and function of his 1954 exhibition *Le Mouvement* at Galerie Denise René. This larger exhibition was going to give Stockholm's new museum its real kick-start. *Rörelse i konsten (Movement in Art)* opened in Stockholm in May of 1961 with a working committee consisting of the museum's energetic docent Carlo Derkert, Daniel

Spoerri, and Billy Klüver who under Hulten's supervision organized 230 art works by 72 artists to be included in Moderna Museet's first blockbuster.¹³⁴

As this first chapter has shown, by 1961 Moderna Museet had been equipped with a director deeply entrenched in continental philosophical and aesthetic discourses, allowing Swedish art and its public to confidently engage with a broader international art scene. If Sweden had in the fifties been *looked up to* for its rationalist and socialist embrace of time and space through art and architecture, in the sixties we see a shift toward a vision of Sweden as an open space for an avant-garde art not only tied to a consumer culture but a new sexualized liberal identity. The alternative artistic positions which defined themselves through anarchism and avant-gardism in the fifties, will in the sixties merge with larger institutional and political attempts to define culture. In this new context, Moderna Museet played an important role as it not only pushed definitions and public boundaries of contemporary art, but also created a forum which highlighted a vital dialogue between the centre and the periphery. Of the ups and downs to follow for Moderna Museet and the artists in question, Hulten's *Movement in Art* was to be the most optimistic sign of this newfound collaborative environment.

¹³⁴As in Amsterdam, the exhibition in Stockholm broke attendance records with seventy-thousand visitors. Derkert, the museum's docent, would from this point forward become a crucial and popular mediator between the museum and its public; known for his oddball tactics of teaching and hanging exhibitions such as hanging soft works to the left and hard works to the right as a subliminal association with left and right wing politics.

CHAPTER II

MOVEMENT IN ART GOES POP

Contemporary art is often pessimistic, defeatist and passive; quite a natural phenomena, one could argue. But there is also another type of modern art. It is some of this that [the *Movement in Art Exhibition*] wants to show (dynamic, constructive, exciting, confusing, ironic, critical, joking, aggressive...). It is also definitely of our time. During the 19th century, art exhibitions were visited by the same curious and interested mass audience who are now going to automobile expos. But can they in the end find what they seek? Apollinaire wrote in 1913 in regards to Marcel Duchamp that only an art which is freed from being viewed aesthetically and which is involved with energy as a pictorial material can stand a chance to 'reunite art with people.' The camera is a picture-making machine within everyone's reach. But there are also other art machines, more independent perhaps, which also speak to us and tells us who we are. They appear in many forms and material; sometimes they come close to science or disguise themselves as toys. Kinetic art has during the 20th century developed in many different directions, taking at least as many varying forms as static art. To use physical movement as a means of expression provides an unbound freedom (*obundenhet*) which art has long strived for.

*Pontus Hulten introduction to Movement in Art Exhibition, 1961*¹³⁵

Let us consider that some opinionated persons, whose interests are in fine peculiarities, agree to make some public exhibitions. Besides people who can afford the expenses, there is also a need for those who can constantly come up with new inventions. But since too many people in charge would without doubt create chaos, I think it would be best to only have two or three conspirators given special priveleges, and that the others are paid by them or are received against certain conditions, or were designated certain assignments for a certain time, or for as long as their supervisors find fit, or until one had satisfied them according to their investment. The people who would be engaged should be painters, sculptors, clockmakers, etc.. Moreover, one could assign mathematicians, engineers, jugglers, charlatans, musicians, poets, book sellers, typographers, etchers and others, all eventually in due time.

¹³⁵ Pontus Hulten "Introduction" *Rörelse i konsten* Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1961, p.1.

The exhibitions should, for example, include magic lanterns...fireworks, water arts, ships in strange forms,... rare plants. Odd and rare animals... Cavalry Excercises. Miniature sea battles in a canal. Rarely seen concerts. Unusual instruments. Speaking trumpets. A hunt... One could have marching figures, illuminated from inside, too be able to see what they became... Art machines, such as the ones I have seen in Germany. Demonstrations of burning mirrors. Gregois de Callinicus fire. A new kind of chess game with men on a theatre... Flying fire dragons, etc. They would consist of oiled and painted paper. Windmills which rotate with all winds. Boats which cruise against the wind... Attempts to make a glass crack by screaming... The use one could have of this kind of company is much greater than one imagines, both for the general audience and the individual... Anyone who had made an invention or a thoughtful construction would come there to earn their keep, make their invention known, profit from it; the whole would be a public address administration for inventors... All curious would come there... distinguished ladies would ask to be taken there (more than one time)... I almost forgot one last thing: one could also establish the Academy of Play there. Or more generally, a Pleasure Academy....¹³⁶
Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz, 1675

Art in Movement and Hulten's Academy of Play

For Pontus Hulten, what better text could there have been than Leibniz's description of an Academy of Play to philosophically ground *Movement in Art*, his own large scale anarchic exhibition? Together, Hulten's and Leibniz's texts read to sanction historically the embrace of a discursive chaos into the public realms of Amsterdam, Stockholm and Humlebaek. Along with its unusual and impressive catalogue, the exhibition's inauguration at Willem Sandberg's Stedelijk Museum had a twofold function. First of all, it anchored Hulten's vision of a triangular institutional liaison between Moderna Museet, the Stedelijk, and Knud

¹³⁶Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz in "Drole de pensée touchant une nouvelle Sorte de representation" [An Unusual Idea Regarding a New Form of Representation] published in *Journal des Scavans* 25 Oct. 1675 and quoted in Hulten, et al. *Rörelse i konsten* Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1961, p.2.

Jensen's newly opened Louisiana Museum. Secondly, it allowed Hulten to introduce his individualistic anarchist convictions into a status quo liberal public sphere in Sweden. As Hulten would later comment, "to show it to an unprepared Swedish public at Stockholm's Moderna Museet as its own product would have been too shocking."¹³⁷

Another fact why the connection with Sandberg's anarchic museum was so important was that it stood out as a particularly powerful counter model to New York's Museum of Modern Art. As Hulten pointed out in his catalogue *Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam besöker Moderna Museet Stockholm*, a collection exchange between the two museums in 1962, MoMA "may have come to existence before Sandberg arrived at the Stedelijk, but did not manage before the war to completely break down the wall of money, elitism and great deal of snobbery which it has to thank its existence for."¹³⁸

Since becoming director of the museum in 1945, Sandberg, trained as a typographer and graphic designer, had established a vital discursive space for experimental music, dance, cinema, discussion, readings, demonstrations, and art in which emphasis was placed on the contemporary rather than the past.¹³⁹ His strong support of CoBrA, for example, emphasized for Hulten the possibility to mobilize rather than paralyze radical anarchist expressions within an institution that had an international scope.¹⁴⁰ Similarly, Knud

¹³⁷Pontus Hulten "Fem fragment ur Moderna Museets historia" in Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983, p.p.36. The risk factor in showing this radically individualist work in the context of a museum located in a country known for its social democratic embrace of collectivism.

¹³⁸Pontus Hulten *Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam besöker Moderna Museet Stockholm*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1962, p.5.

¹³⁹Mafalda Spencer "Willem Sandberg: Warm Printing" *Eye* Vo.7 (Summer 1997), pp.70-77.

¹⁴⁰Per-Olof Ulvedt has confirmed and emphasized the important role played by Sandberg as a model for Hulten. Like Sandberg, Hulten would stress the importance of good catalogue designs

Jensen had initiated an ambitious contemporary museum in Humblebaek, Denmark, which opened in 1958 with a similar artistic vision. In a collaborative spirit, Stedelijk and the Louisiana invited Hulten to organize *Movement in Art*.

In Amsterdam *Bewogen Beweging* (as *Movement in Art* was translated) broke attendance records with an audience all too happy to be physically able to participate in much of the art [fig. 38]. As the first large scale international historical survey of kinetic art, the exhibition brought into contact a broad range of artistic values.¹⁴¹ As Tinguely biographer Heidi E. Violand-Hobi has noted, this range was so broad that a "serious division occurred among the contemporary artists included in the show."¹⁴² Most noteworthy was the conflict "between the neo-dadaists and those inclined to Constructivism. Tinguely's status as *primus inter pares* was a thorn in the side of the Constructivist faction."¹⁴³ What must have stood out as a distinct

and posters to function as a communicative expansion of the museum's activities. Interview with Per-Olof Ultvedt. Lidingö, Sweden, June 10, 1992.

¹⁴¹Works by the following artists were represented (number of works in brackets): Yaacov Agam (12), Giovanni Anceschi (1), Jon Gunnar Arnason (1), Roy Ascott (1), Giacomo Balla (1), Hans Bellmer (2), Harry Bertoia (1), Davide Boriani (1), George Brecht (1), Robert Breer (3), Camille Bryen (1), John Burnside II (1), Pol Bury (5), Alexander Calder (32), Gianni Colombo (1), William N. Copley (1), Siegfried Cremer (1), Carlo Cruz Diez (1), Narciso Debourg (1), Gabriele Devecchi (1), Marcel Duchamp (10), Raymond Duchamp-Villon (1), Viking Eggeling (2), Enguerrand (2), Yolande Fievre (2), Naum Gabo (1), Herbert Gesner (1), Alberto Giacometti (3), Rube Goldberg (4), Gloria Graves (1), Raymond Hains (1), Hans Hellström (1), Philippe Hiquily (1), Einar Höste (1), Robert Jacobsen (1), Jasper Johns (1), Allan Kaprow (1), Yasuhide Kobashi (1), Gyula Kosice (1), Harry Kramer (3), Alfred Leslie (1), Walter Linck (3), El Lissitsky (1), Len Lye (1), Heinz Mack (1), Kasimir Malevich (1), Franck J. Malina (3), Enzo Mari (1), Marisol (1), Kenneth Martin (2), Lazlo Moholy-Nagy (1), Ira Moldow (1), Robert Müller (4), Bruno Munari (7), Jack Nelson (1), Erik-H. Olson (3), Julio Le Parc (1), Francis Picabia (3), Otto Piene (1), Robert Rauschenberg (1), Man Ray (10), George Rickey (1), Jose de Rivera (1), Diter Rot (7), Niki de Saint Phalle (1), Nicolas Schöffer (7), Jesus Raphael Soto (11), Richard Stankiewicz (1), Shinkichi Tajiri (2), Takis (4), Paul Talman (1), A. Van Tienen (1), Jean Tinguely (27), Luis Tomasello (1), Günter Uecker (1), Per-Olof Ultvedt (4), Isabelle Waldberg (1), Stan Vanderbeck (1), Grazia Varisco (1), Robert Watts (2), Mary Vieira (1), Thomas Wilfred (1), Yvaral (1).

¹⁴²Violand-Hobi, p.50.

¹⁴³Ibid..

canonical reframing at the time, was Hulten's decision to insert a twenty-eight piece retrospective of Tinguely's work which not only dominated the museum entrance and its interior exhibition halls, but was matched only in numbers by veteran artist Alexander Calder's thirty-two works on display. In contrast to Calder's quietly playful mobiles, Tinguely's machines, along with large wooden contraptions by Ultvedt, produced, through the participation and movement of the spectators, concrete music that was vexing in contrast to the more 'pure' or 'constructive' work in the show.

The most insightful, although at times too literal, critique of the exhibition came from American art critic George Rickey writing for *Arts Magazine*. For him, Hulten's *succés de scandale* had managed to trick not just the exhibitions artists, but also its audience:

Instead of the comprehensive and objective survey one might fairly expect of a famous museum in such an international exhibition, what met the eye outside the front door in Amsterdam was a fifty-foot machine by Tinguely, in the pool outside the back door, a twenty-five foot fountain by Tinguely, and on the title page of the catalogue... none other than — you guessed it — Tinguely. Nor is that all: inside was a complete gallery of Tinguely pure, and another gallery of Tinguely mixed half-and-half with others. The catalogue listed twenty-eight Tinguely's and — noble gesture! — twenty-nine Calder's (out of which twenty were very small)... Of seventy-five contemporary exhibitors, forty-five, some of whom are world-famous, were represented by one work each.... The fraudulent conversion of this international to a virtual one-man show is scandalous enough. But worse yet is the highhanded and erroneous implication that neo-Dada works (which happen sometimes also to move, though many in the exhibition emphatically do not!) must be accepted as the characteristic and important aspect of contemporary kinetic art.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴George Rickey "The Kinetic International" *Arts Magazine* (September 1961), p.16 (16-21).

But as Rickey apparently realized, it was too late to put a stop on Hulten's "trick" as he had already managed to elevate Tinguely and so called "neo-Dada" into the canon of modern art by showing at the reputable Stedelijk museum. As he was even forced to admit, "Hulten is an historian ... and in that role a good one. This shows in the pains he has taken to assemble a thorough documentation of kinetic art over the last half-century."¹⁴⁵

In May of 1961, the same exhibition opened in Stockholm as *Rörelse i konsten*, an event which domestically activated a lively public debate about Sweden's role in contemporary art but also catapulted Moderna Museet into the bright spotlight of the international art world [fig. 39].¹⁴⁶ Helping to initiate this discussion, *Konstrevy*, a month prior to the exhibition, devoted its entire issue to Nouveau Réalisme, inviting Daniel Spoerri to write the introduction:

With this selection of pictures, biographical information and texts, the Swedish public is presented with a group of artists who have existed independently for many years, but have recently produced a more cohesive association through the initiative of Pierre Restany who also named it. Besides the fact that their different experimental forms can be exceptionally distanced from each other, these artists agree on two points: the introduction of raw reality into their work and the avoidance of essentializing individual creation. With reality they mean the world that surrounds us, but instead of copying *à la trompe l'oeil* in two dimensions (ie. an abstraction), they are happy to expose it and have it expose itself. The consequence of this idea is that everything can be viewed as an art work.... The viewer finds himself standing eye to eye with everyday reality which suddenly forces him to discover this through the perspective of an artistic witness.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵Ibid., p.18.

¹⁴⁶This debate extended beyond the museum and art journals and into the pages of New Left literary journals like *Bonniers Litterära Magasin*, newspapers such as *Dagens Nyheter*, *Stockholmstidningen*, *Svenska Dagbladet*, *Aftonbladet*, *Expressen*, as well as radio.

¹⁴⁷Daniel Spoerri "Les Nouveaux Réalistes: En sammanställning av Daniel Spoerri" *Konstrevy* no.2 (1961), p.42.

Spoerri's endorsement of an 'open' objectivity tied to collaborative subjectivities paralleled the structure of the exhibition at the museum. Opening its doors to what would turn out to be a rather naive readymade notion of "everything can be viewed as art," Moderna Museet, under the supervision of Spoerri and Hulten, set out to realize a version of Leibniz's 'academy of play.' Importantly, this academy would not only reorient the history of modern art in Sweden, but it would reconfigure the history of Nouveau Réalisme, as it had previously been defined, to an international audience by Pierre Restany. This was partially achieved by introducing previously marginalized Scandinavian artists such as Per-Olof Ultvedt and Hans Nordenström into his international avant-garde. Another means was to downplay Restany's idea of a 'New Realism' in favour of a broader category of 'open art.'

In a strategic sense, *Rörelse i konsten* presented Hulten with an opportunity to construct his own story of modern art aimed at securing a new contemporary direction centralized and read through a perspective from the margins. In order to 'unfix' existing canons of modern art, and introduce his own ideas concerning individual movements in art, art history and contemporary studio practices, Hulten set out to strip them bare of what he saw as sentimentalizing romanticism and institutionalized bourgeois illusions. As was the case in 1954 in Paris, it was Duchamp who provided the standard measurements necessary to *reinvent the wheel*.

With an invitation from the museum, Duchamp arrived in Stockholm a few days prior to the exhibition opening to put the finishing

touches to a number of replicas produced by art critic Ulf Linde of his readymades and the *Large Glass* [fig. 40].¹⁴⁸ A few weeks later in Paris, Duchamp would praise Linde's effort:

Ulf Linde, an art critic who isn't a painter at all, undertook to make an exact copy of *La Mariée* [*The Large Glass*] ... original size and in color, on two big pieces of glass set one above the other, as in mine, and he copied it exactly (without having seen the *Glass* in Philadelphia), using the same technique that I used. He took three months to do what I had done in eight years. And I think what he did is very good, because the replica is a full-size replica, and it gives enough of an echo of the real thing, very close, to the point that I signed it on the back and added *pour copie conforme*.¹⁴⁹

As the enthusiasm of this quote suggests, and as a photograph [fig. 41] showing Duchamp comfortably seated and surrounded by a committee of Swedish avant-garde "bachelors" confirms, Duchamp was more than willing to play the maternal father figure for this Northern avant-garde.¹⁵⁰ Not only that, Duchamp was also willing to double as a kind of secular messiah — blessing his reproduced Readymades with his signature touch. From this point forward, Moderna Museet became a sanctified avant-garde pilgrimage

¹⁴⁸With Duchamp's permission and the assistance of Per-Olof Ultvedt, Linde had not only produced a replica of *The Large Glass*, but also Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel*, *Fresh Widow*, *Rotary Glass Plates*, *Bottle Rack*, *Fountain*, and more. Perhaps even more than Hulten, Linde had since the late fifties become obsessed with Duchamp's work. Through the initiative of Ultvedt and Hulten, Linde helped introduce Duchamp to Sweden by publishing seminal texts on his work and bringing Robert Lebel's 1959 Duchamp exhibition from La Hune Bookshop in Paris to Stockholm's Bokkonsum bookstore in 1960.

¹⁴⁹Quoted in Francis M. Naumann's *Marcel Duchamp: The Art of Making Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* Amsterdam: Ludion Press, 1999, p.219. The quote originates from Alain Jouffroy "Une révolution due regard: á propos de quelques peintres et sculpteurs contemporains" Paris, 1964.

¹⁵⁰The "bachelors" surrounding Duchamp in this picture represent various strategic positions within Sweden's art scene at the time. Included are the artist Oskar Reutersvärd, the docent Carlo Derkert, the critic Ulf Linde and the curating director Pontus Hulten. No doubt flattered by the serious attention given to his work in Stockholm, and aware of the precariously low budget Hulten had to work with, Duchamp helped defray some of the cost of bringing him to Scandinavia by signing 125 copies of his *Fluttering Hearts*, a limited-edition serigraph issued in commemoration of the exhibition.

site — relics and all.¹⁵¹ For the audience of a small museum in Sweden, this must have seemed like a miracle.

Although Duchamp had by the late fifties achieved cult status within avant-garde circles elsewhere, with his *appearance* in Stockholm he had finally come out in public. This was two years prior to his first retrospective in the United States at the Pasadena Museum of Art in Los Angeles. Thomas Crow, in his West Coast (rather than East Coast) American perspective on the history of Neo-Dada and Pop art, has argued that "nowhere else would the connection linking practice to the scholarly recovery of Duchamp's inheritance be nearly as close" as at Walter Hopps' Los Angeles exhibition. While shedding a new light on California, he unfortunately casts yet another shadow on the activities we have witnessed occurring in Scandinavia. From my perspective, Duchamp had as early as 1961 received close philosophical scrutiny and a considerable artistic following in Stockholm.¹⁵² As we will see, the Pasadena exhibition would in fact benefit greatly from the knowledge and replicas accumulated by Ulf Linde.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹Ulvvedt had already in the fifties made a "reduced" copy of the *Large Glass* for an exhibition in Stockholm. The 1961 copy was signed "Certifie pour copie conforme Marcel Duchamp Stockholm 1961" by Duchamp himself. It could be argued that *The Large Glass* is the single most important piece in the Museum's vast collection of modern art. In May of 1992, I "witnessed" the unveiling of a new, and "more precise" replica of the original copy. This copy was also produced by Linde, but this time it was authorized by Mrs. Tini Duchamp who was flown to Stockholm in place of her late husband. After this unveiling the copy was sent to Bonn, Germany where it was on loan for five years while Moderna Museet in Stockholm was being rebuilt. Thus, today the museum has two copies of the *Large Glass*, one that stays on site and one that travels. Duchamp's aura seems still very much alive and well.

¹⁵²Thomas Crow *The Rise of the Sixties: American and European Art in the Era of Dissent* New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996, p.84. Crow's account of the fifties and sixties is significant in that it shifts the vantage point from which to read this history from New York to Los Angeles. While I find his position interesting and noteworthy, Crow's account is still limited by resources that are in the end very centred in the United States. Working in Vancouver, Canada, and utilizing archives in Stockholm, Sweden, my account aims to strike up a dialogue in tension with writers such as Crow, Benjamin Buchloh, Cecile Whiting, and others.

¹⁵³This is evident by the fact that Linde wrote the major text for Walter Hopps' exhibition catalogue. By 1961 Linde had written a series of interpretive texts on Duchamp's work for

Besides his many articles on Duchamp in the Swedish art press, Linde had in 1960 published a survey of modern art entitled *Spejare* [*Spies*] which sought to define "something other" [något annat] in art than that of pure abstraction:

When one drives the doctrine of pure form to its sharpest edge, one arrives at a critical point where one is either forced to accept that an art work is a pure triviality, or that the form in a picture is never *neutral* [oberoende]. That is, the form is always read as a sign. This latter alternative is the only one acceptable if we want to be able to speak about 'art.'¹⁵⁴

Looking at art as a semiotic system, Linde proposed that by using one's own conventions one can not only alter the meaning of signs, but continue to play a neverending game of representation:

These thoughts come close to [Ludwig] Wittgenstein's analysis of viewing — but we should be aware that this philosopher's argument around 'the dawning of an aspect' already existed long before and was demonstrated by the peculiar Duchamp and his ready-mades — rigorously discussed in *The Green Box*.¹⁵⁵

In *Spejare*, Linde made an argument for an anti-aesthetic view of art which rejects the "pretentiousness" of aesthetic judgment which he felt "risks getting stuck in conventions which threaten to sterilize art today."¹⁵⁶

Considering most modernist traditions "dried up" and artists like Vasarely

Konstrevy, a magazine whose editors supported, to a large degree the activities of Moderna Museet. In the fall of 1961 they published an issue devoted to the art presented in *Rörelse i konsten*. Included was an interview with Duchamp by Linde, texts by John Cage and Öyvind Fahlström on Rauschenberg, and a review of the Museum of Modern Art's *Art of Assemblage* exhibition. As this issue of the magazine, along with every other issue at this time, suggests, there was a great deal of debate about Duchamp specifically, and contemporary international art in general.

¹⁵⁴Ulf Linde *Spejare* Stockholm: Bonniers, 1960, p. 93.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p.94.

¹⁵⁶Ibid..

"too serious," Linde proposed art more open to subjectivity which could escape both 'purism' and 'realism.'¹⁵⁷ Important ingredient in this recipe was the irony, cynicism and silence he claimed to have found in artists like Picasso and Duchamp.

What *Spejare* shows is that by the time Duchamp arrived in Stockholm in 1961, there had developed a substantial interest in and sophisticated discussion about his work. The activities around Duchamp at the *Movement in Art* exhibition not only provided a historical stability and public respectability, but also supplied local and international contingency with an avant-garde license to return to anarchic play.

In as puerile a manner typographically possible, the invitation card for *Rörelse i konsten* set the tone for the exhibition's reception, promising a "colossal party" consisting of anti-fireworks by Tinguely and Ultvedt, a boat cruise, theatre, drama, music, a formal dinner and most prominently, the production of abstract drawings by Tinguely's *Meta-Matic #17*. The exhibition as a whole included works by artists from twenty different countries ranging in scope from turn-of-the-century avant-gardism to contemporary works made on sight by, for example, Rauschenberg, Tinguely, Kaprow, Calder and Spoerri.

For her part, Niki de Saint-Phalle produced the "world's largest abstract painting" by having the visitors dance on top of paint pellets carefully

¹⁵⁷Ibid..

sandwiched between an area rug and a canvas.¹⁵⁸ The following day, artists such as Rauschenberg collaborated in shooting a number of her new paintings at a nearby quarry [fig. 42]. Overall the exhibition projected a great deal of optimism for an international realignment of the post-war avant-garde into a "dynamic understanding of art and life" (as Hulten would recollect).¹⁵⁹ The walls of the traditional museum had been broken down (or at least opened up) with site-specific work produced for public spaces around the city of Stockholm. Tinguely, for example, executed his *Narva* which was installed at the central public square of Nybrokajen. There were also films screened, light plays activated, happenings and concerts performed.

As the visitor approached the museum entrance, he/she was greeted by *The Four Elements*, a monumental mobile by Calder which had originally been designed for the 1939 World's Fair [fig. 43].¹⁶⁰ With its organic metal forms shifting rhythmically against each other, the vertical shapes rotated and broke against the overall horizontality composition. Indeed, like this metaphorical work in metal, the museum was trying to catch a sudden gust of wind to propel its way out of a provincialized cultural maelstrom. As the poet Artur

¹⁵⁸Recounted by Billy Klüver and Robert Rauschenberg in "Rörelse i konsten - en kombinerad minnesbild" in Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983, p.148.

¹⁵⁹Hulten has also pointed out that Moderna Museet had through exhibitions such as *Rörelse i konsten* managed to "develop a new public who wished that the museum would continue in the proposed direction — ie. offer a broad offering of information in regards to contemporary art.... This new public was younger than the traditional museum going public, it was curious, innocent, dynamic, and it represented all the best things from the optimistic side of the sixties." Pontus Hulten "Det lilla museets stora roll" in Granath and Nieckels, eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983, p.39.

¹⁶⁰Billy Klüver and Robert Rauschenberg "Rörelse i konsten—en kombinerad minnesbild" in Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983, p.146. Hulten had been given the miniature model of this a decade earlier and asked Calder for the permission to actualize it in Stockholm. The large-scale sculpture was publically displayed outside the museum entrance until 1997 when questions arose regarding Calder's permission.

Lundkvist would observe in his review of the exhibition for *Bonniers Litterära Magasin (BLM)*, Calder's mobiles stood to represent the meeting place between organic and geometric abstraction in a poetic, passive acceptance of the way interpretive *winds* blow, unlike Tinguely's machines which adhered to:

the child within all of us which plays while it destroys — creates through negation. Or they ignite a spark of indignation from the viewer, wake restricted temptations to erupt and devastate. Perhaps they speak of a secret, stored up hatred against machines, in their misunderstood roles as tyrants and seductive symbols, or of a first seed to those machine storms which in a given situation can break out uncomparably more violent than those which appeared during England's industrial revolution.¹⁶¹

In many ways, *Rörelse i konsten* acted like a sudden gust of wind which broke against the calm which had persisted around the artistic activities in Sweden to date. As a result of this *Movement in Art*, debates would intensify around the new international 'open' art to such a degree that Stockholm found itself centrally located within a cross-Atlantic cultural discourse.

While the vernissage and exhibition broke attendance records and had the effect of successfully establishing a new, younger and energetic audience tied to an emerging international youth culture, not everyone was happy. Hulten has recalled that this Leibnizian orgy of mechanical entropy (many of the events planned for the opening, such as Tinguely's fireworks, failed),

¹⁶¹Artur Lundkvist "Rörelse i konsten" *BLM* no.7 (September 1961), p.539. (pp.538-540). It is also worth noting how close this description sounds to Max Stirner's individual: "In childhood liberation takes the direction of trying to get to the bottom of things, to get at what is 'back of' things; therefore we spy out the weak points of everybody, for which, it is well known, children have a sure instinct; therefore we like to smash things, like to rummage through hidden corners, pry after what is covered up or out of the way, and try what we can do with everything." Stirner, p.9.

brought "thunderous criticism" from the national newspapers.¹⁶² Some of the voices which objected the most came from Swedish modernist artists such as Sven Erixson, an expressionist who felt that the exhibition was derogatory, not only for the museum, but for art in general.¹⁶³ Even more serious was the attempt by the National Museum's chief superintendant Carl Nordenfalk to close down the exhibition altogether. In the end he was satisfied with the removal of a work by Robert Müller's *The Bicyclist's Widow* [fig. 44], a work consisting of a stationary bicycle whose seat is repetitively penetrated by a phallic object when put into use.¹⁶⁴

But the nastiest assault against the Museum was launched at the annual meeting of the Swedish Royal Academy of Art two weeks after the exhibition opening. In a speech delivered by art historian Rabbe Enckell entitled "Icarus and the Tightrope Walker (in defence of classicism)," Moderna Museet was accused of promoting art politics (*konstpolitik*) rather than 'art.' Observing that "today, the artist stands freer than ever before against tradition," Enckell warned that the contemporary artist was also "more dependent on aesthetic judgements which, in the name of progress, demand him to be contemporary and new."¹⁶⁵ For Enckell, this external pressure posed a threat to the artist: "Radicals today have a noticeable

¹⁶²Hulten (1983), p.36.

¹⁶³Ibid..

¹⁶⁴Ibid.. This work had also caused a great deal of trouble in Amsterdam. As George Rickey observed in his review for *Arts Magazine*, "In Amsterdam the vice squad was sent for by an outraged visitor, and, as reported in the city's *Het Vaterland*, 'an obscene instrument was removed from the exhibition.... Civil charges are being brought against the director of the museum, Mr. Sandberg.' The instrument was Robert Mueller's sculpture, *The Widow of the Bicyclist*. A review, headed 'Circus in Arts and Crafts,' said: 'The Stedelijk Museum has finally succeeded in becoming the madhouse it has been called many times before.' Another described the bliss, in a museum, of being allowed at last to touch everything. Attendance exceeded even the record of 'Family of Man.' Rickey, p.16.

¹⁶⁵Rabbe Enckell "Ikaros och lindansaren (ett försvar för klassicismen) *BLM* 31 No.7 (Summer 1962), p.550. (550-554)

position. Connoisseurs and critics are giving advance applause to art work waiting to be executed." While there was some truth to this, Enckell's position failed to acknowledge arguments from the other side of the "open art" debate. In fact, Enckell's reluctance to accept the kind of post-war avant-garde offered up on display by Moderna Museet presents us with a similar, albeit more reactionary, argument to that of future critics of this work, such as Peter Bürger.

In his controversial *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1984), Bürger argues against what he calls the "neo-avant-garde," an artistic phenomena in which he includes artists as diverse as Daniel Spoerri to Andy Warhol. For Bürger, artists working in this neo-avant-garde may have critical intentions, but ultimately their claims do nothing but "institutionalize the *avant-garde as art* and thus negate genuinely avant-gardiste intentions."¹⁶⁶ Holding a rather romanticized notion of an avant-garde, Bürger sets out to pry apart this neo-avant-garde from an historical avant-garde which had the ability to shock through *originality*. While not sharing Bürger's nostalgia for a once critical avant-garde such as Dada, Enckell did differentiate between a *pre* and *post-war* avant-garde:

This understanding and attention [given by an institution such as Moderna Museet] was unthinkable during the twenties when the most radical art still bore the unpretentious, misunderstood, but honest, name "insanity."¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶Peter Bürger *The Theory of the Avant-Garde* trans. Michael Shaw Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984 (originally published in German in 1974), p.58.

¹⁶⁷K.G. Hulten "Enckells förvirringar" *BLM* no.7 (September 1962), p.550 (550-554)

Using the example of Yves Klein's 1960 photomontage *Leap into the Void* [fig. 45], Enckell finds a visual demonstration of the kind of "dynamic levitation" contemporary artists and institutions try to maintain. For him, the hubris represented by the post-war avant-garde is nothing but a misguided optimism in the future; a scenario, he points out, that the classics understood through the story of Icarus which they represented as a 'tragic' fall.

This speech did not go unnoticed or unanswered for long. During the summer of 1962, *Bonniers Litterära Magazine*, the mouthpiece for a growing New Left in Sweden (published by Albert Bonniers Förlag)¹⁶⁸ presented its readers with a translation of Leo Steinberg's defence of "Contemporary Art and the Plight of its Public," followed in the next issue with a transcription of Enckell's speech along with a critical response from Hulten who at this point in time was blindly optimistic about the museum's 'leap' into this new open territory. Asking if art academies must always function as reactionary institutions, Hulten presented his counter-argument:

Can one never change this? This is the second year in a row that dirt has been thrown at modern art from the speaker throne of the Royal Academy's annual meeting. I have read Enckell's speech but not understood much of it. It seems to me to be full of contradictions.... I felt a little sick, perhaps because of my inexperience, this was, after all, not the kind of article one usual bothers to read.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸A great deal of support for the activities in the museum came from the Bonnier family who, it should be mentioned, not only donated a great deal of their own collection of modern art to its permanent collection, but own(ed) the daily newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* and the evening tabloid *Expressen* who gave the it much needed public exposure. The political affiliations between the Swedish press and political affiliations such as the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (L.O.) and the Social Democratic Party is discussed in Stig Hadenius *Swedish Politics During the Twentieth Century: Conflict and Consensus* Stockholm" Svenska Institutet, 1997, p.94.

¹⁶⁹K.G. Hulten "Enckells förvirringar" *BLM* no.7 (September 1962), p.554.

Hulten points out that a central thought in Enckell's speech seems to be "the act of creation and the role of the audience's participation in making the art work appear."¹⁷⁰ If he can claim this, Hulten charged, how can he at the same time entitle his talk "a defense of classicism:"

What does he mean by classicism? He says that 'it is the idea and life decision as to where the essential are to be found which means the most.' It becomes just as clear when one speaks of 'quality.' Is, for example, Ingres 'classic'? Is Rauschenberg 'classic'? Ulf Linde, who Enckell attacks has recently shown in an article how close Ingres and Rauschenberg, the originator of 'The Made Bed,' are to each other and how much they have in common in form, understanding of the human and in their relation to objects in the world. How does Icarus compare to a Sputnik? Does it become 'classic' when one write about Icarus but not when one writes about Sputnik?.... The sentence that surprised me the most reads as follows: 'It is the past, not the contemporary, that creates the largest space.' Isn't it, after all, the future which presents us with the most space?¹⁷¹

By the time this defense was published, Moderna Museet had fortunately managed to secure a young public hungry for change and movement within cultural institutions. After all, in an economically prosperous country whose youth culture was being defined between American consumerism and socialist democracy, Moderna Museet, unlike other state run art institutions at this time, appeared to be vitally engaged in popular culture. Internally, however, Moderna Museet was trying to set in motion a critical awareness of pop culture. It was never interested in a wholesale embrace of it.

Stockholm's New York Connection and The Art of Assemblage

¹⁷⁰Enckell, p.555.

¹⁷¹K.G. Hulten "Enckells förvirringar" *BLM* no.7 (September 1962), p.554.

Not only did *Rörelse i konsten* entice a large young audience to the museum, but the exhibition provided a contemporary position from which Hulten could continue to build bridges. Between March and May 1962, Hulten presented *4 Amerikanare*, an exhibition devoted to paintings, sculptures and *combines* by Jasper Johns, Alfred Leslie, Robert Rauschenberg and Richard Stankiewicz [fig. 46]. Organized alongside this exhibition was *The New American Cinema — New York Film*, featuring contemporary experimental avant-garde films by Leslie, Robert Frank, Jonas Mekas, John Cassavetes, Shirley Clarke, and others. To add to these activities, John Cage was invited to the museum to give a talk ("Where are we going? and what are we doing?") for the presentation of *New American Music and Poetry*. From this itinerary we can see that Moderna Museet had within a very short period of time strengthened its ties to a New York avant-garde. While drawing a large audience, and despite the alternative nature of these activities, for many Swedes these activities read as an invasion of American activities. As could be expected, this would initiate a heated public debate.¹⁷²

In his catalogue essay for *4 Amerikanare*, Hulten once again took aim at Enckell and other critics' attempts to position his post-war avant-garde as a diluted and repetitive form of Dada:

But it is really just as unrealistic to speak of "neo-dada" (nydadaism) as to speak of, for example, "neo-parents" (nyföräldrar). Dada was neither a style nor a sport. Dadaism did not exist on formal grounds, even less so than, for example, cubism; it is a way of seeing, a visuality and for that matter, a visuality on which all current aesthetics is based. One can

¹⁷²Asked by a reporter from *Dagens Nyheter* about the risk to show the public this new work from the United States, Hulten replied that "We think it is unnecessary to wait twenty years. After the second world war the biggest adventures in visual art have played themselves out in the United States; the most interesting painting takes place in New York." Mera Malice "konstigheter: Newyorkare till Moderna museet" *Dagens Nyheter* (13 February, 1962), p.2.

therefore not speak of a "neo-dada" because dada never ceased to function.¹⁷³

But neither did Hulten want to label these contemporary artists "Dada."

Duchamp, he felt, had done away with the "art vs. anti-art" problem which represented a common ground for Dada:

The Dadaists wanted to make anti-art and thereby crush traditional art. Duchamp makes his work necessitate that "everything is art," and hereby dissolves the problem. It is from this new ground that Rauschenberg starts out. Rauschenberg says that he wants his artwork to teach us to view everything around us artistically. But how does this happen? He uses magic like all artists. He takes an object and gives it new meaning, says its something else, and wakes our interest through a slippage. He is a magician who transforms what we see. But he is simultaneously the magician's assistant who comes out of the audience and delivers the utensils. All of which look like the most regular of objects.¹⁷⁴

But not everyone likes a magic trick. Just as *Rörelse i konsten* had been heavily criticized, *4 Amerikanare* did not escape skepticism. While the museum as a whole was accused of wearing the Emperor's new clothes, the work that bore the brunt of criticism and indeed became the "scapegoat" in the exhibition was Rauschenberg's *Monogram* [fig. 47] which a professor Aron Borelius from Lund used publicly on radio as an example of why modern art at the museum should be boycotted.¹⁷⁵ Had he actually visited the exhibition he would have realized that the artwork he had described as a "live goat" was not only taxidermied, but *combined* with other discarded objects in a complex allegorical composition.

¹⁷³Pontus Hulten "Förord" *4 Amerikanare* Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1962, p.6.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., p.7.

¹⁷⁵Hulten (1983), p.40

It was not only the museum staff who was busy defending its institution against these ignorant, but harmful, public attacks. Rauschenberg had already at the opening of *Rörelse i konsten* been confronted by reactions from audience participation in combines such as *Black Market* and *Door* [fig. 48], but he treated this with a great degree of indifference.¹⁷⁶ Billy Klüver described a situation during the opening when Rauschenberg was approached by a young woman who, not knowing which work was his, had pointed to his *Door* and said: "That one could have been done by Ingmar Johansson" As Klüver tells the story:

I saw Bob rush towards the painting with a pen in his hand and he started to write in the middle of the canvas: 'This is Johansson's...' The girl jumped at him and pushed him aside. 'You can't do that!' Bob didn't answer and they continued walking. When I looked at the painting the next day I saw that he had added the word 'painting' with another pen.¹⁷⁷

This Brechtian moment in which the controlled intention of the artist was meant to give way to the participation of the audience was triggered as much by Rauschenberg's 'open' art as by a Swedish-American encounter that had just taken place in the United States. Gaining even greater international publicity than Hulten's exhibition, the Swedish boxer Ingmar Johansson had just failed in his attempt to defend the World Heavy Weight Championship against Floyd Patterson; an event described by *Life Magazine* as a "historic

¹⁷⁶*Black Market* was made especially for the exhibitions in Amsterdam, Stockholm and Humlebaek and consisted of a painting attached to a suitcase lying on the floor. Inside the open suitcase four objects had been placed with four rubber stamps with texts "Rauschenberg 1,2,3,4" and a stamp pad. According to instructions (written in various languages), the audience should/could choose an object and exchange it for an object of their own choosing. By opening night at the Stedelijk all the objects were gone and none replaced.

¹⁷⁷Klüver quoted from a conversation between Billy Klüver and Robert Rauschenberg in "*Rörelse i konsten — en kombinerad minnesbild*, in *Moderna Museet 1958-1983* Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1983, p.148.

thriller" [fig. 49].¹⁷⁸ Like this title bout, *Movement in Art* had engaged in a bout of its own — the battle of the avant-garde. Stepping into center ring of international art from one small corner of the world, Moderna Museet found its anarchic direction challenged by New York's Museum of Modern Art which in October of 1961 opened its doors to *The Art of Assemblage*; a similar looking, but philosophically different, positioning of contemporary art.

Before we get to *The Art of Assemblage*, we should consider a few interesting collaborative off-shoots which had resulted immediately after *Rörelse i konsten*. After their trip to Stockholm, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Saint-Phalle, and Tinguely were asked to take part in a concert/performance by David Tudor of John Cage's *Variations II* at the Théâtre de l'Ambassade des Etats-Unis in Paris [fig. 50].¹⁷⁹ During the event, Saint-Phalle shot her *Tir de l'Ambassade Américaine*, Tinguely constructed a 'striptease machine' which lost all its various parts during the performance until it was stripped bare to reveal the motor; Johns created a target made of roses (no doubt a homage to the Franco-American Gertrude Stein), while Rauschenberg worked on a painting which the audience was kept from seeing. In this loaded context of the American Embassy, each artist realized pictorially, or otherwise, a set of different socio-political attitudes towards the United States' role in Europe.¹⁸⁰ With international economics moving into

¹⁷⁸"Pictures Reveal Fight as a Historic Thriller" *Life Magazine* (March 24, 1961), p.148.

¹⁷⁹See Öyvind Fahlström's New York diary "En gata full av presenter" in *Konstrevy* no. 5-6 (1961), pp.176-181.

¹⁸⁰While all these artists were in some way responding to the latest stage of capitalism (call it American capitalism), they were all negotiating their own very different identities through this socio-political and cultural landscape. Art historians such as Moira Roth and Kenneth Silver, for example, have argued that artists such as Johns, Rauschenberg and Cage were specifically trying to find a representational space in the gap between their own private social and sexual politics and a public life tied to the socio-economic reality of Cold War America. See, Moira Roth's *Difference/Indifference: Musings on Postmodernism, Marcel Duchamp and John Cage* Amsterdam: G+B Arts, 1998; and Kenneth Silver's "Modes of Disclosure: The

a distinctly American capitalist phase, the consumer landscape was increasingly surveyed by different eyes and new intentions.

Ten days after this "diplomatic" staging of avant-garde art, Jeannine de Goldschmidt opened Niki de Saint-Phalle's first one-woman exhibition, curated at her Galerie J. by her husband Pierre Restany. Again, a set of *Tir* paintings were produced by the invited audience which this time included Johns, Rauschenberg, Leo Castelli, Jean Fautrier, Frank Stella, and others [fig. 51]. Saint-Phalle seems to have been particularly amused by Jean Fautrier's interest in her *Tirs* since they, in many ways, re-represented his *Hostage* series from the forties and fifties.¹⁸¹

Even more significant for Saint-Phalle's immediate career was the interest paid to her work by Robert Rauschenberg. By now, Saint-Phalle and Rauschenberg had realized their shared contestation of the twin-towered bourgeois principles of autonomous art and expressive artist which extended into a sense of community and collaboration between other artists and

Construction of Gay Identity and the Rise of Pop Art" in *Hand-Painted Pop: American Art in Transition 1955-1962* Los Angeles: MoCA, 1993, pp.179-203. What is rarely discussed, and what my dissertation in the end touches on, is the very *different* sexual politics espoused by the Europeans involved in this dialogue. This, in the end, would lead to a decisive split in the international art community.

¹⁸¹Saint-Phalle has recalled that: "An hour before the show opened an elderly man with a degenerate face came in and asked, "when can I shoot?" I explained he would have to wait a bit until we had finished hanging the show. "Why don't you come back in a little while?" "No, I'm not going to leave. I'm going to stay right here until I can shoot." Every ten minutes he would ask, "Can I shoot Now?" I finally got annoyed and went over quietly to Jeannine and implored, "Can't you find some nice way of getting rid of that guy. He's a nuisance." Jeannine declared, "Are you kidding? That is Fautrier!" I was a fan of Fautrier's work even though his preoccupation with paint and space were very far from mine. I came back to him and said, "O.K. you can start shooting." Later, when the crowd started arriving, he had difficulty giving up the gun. He kept shooting at the center and was trying to make one of his own paintings out of the shooting. When someone else was taking a shot he would scream, "The center, the center? Shoot at the center!" Saint-Phalle quoted in Pontus Hulten's retrospective exhibition catalogue *Niki de Saint Phalle* Bonn: Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992, p.263.

curators working in New York, Paris and Stockholm. For Saint-Phalle, the *combine* paintings by Robert Rauschenberg must have appeared to involve similar aesthetic indifference toward material drawn from everyday life as her *tir* paintings and/or Tinguely's recycled meta-matics. Conversely, Rauschenberg seemed to have appreciated Saint-Phalle's ironic play with her Self as he went so far as to purchase one of her *Tirs*.¹⁸² One can say that all these artists had put a freeze frame around gestural abstraction while at the same time adding both a Brechtian and kinetic dimension to objective abstraction. Furthermore, they must have thought their interest in Duchamp arrived from a mutual understanding of artistic intentionality. The most direct Duchampian gesture from Rauschenberg had, after all, come during his stay in Stockholm when he sent off a telegram to his Parisian gallerist Iris Clert stating: "This is a portrait of Iris Clert if I say so—Robert Rauschenberg" [fig. 52].¹⁸³ Within two years, it was their individual understandings of humor, play, and intentionality that would separate their projects.

In October of that same year, shortly after their participation in *Bevaegelse i kunsten* at the Louisiana (the final destination for the *Movement in Art* exhibition), these artists met up on the other side of the Atlantic to take part in the *Art of Assemblage* exhibition organized by William Seitz at New York's Museum of Modern Art. Opening in early October with more 'academic' pretenses, this exhibition established an equally extensive history of some 252 heterogeneous works which fell under a

¹⁸²Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint Phalle* Bonn: Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992, p.288.

¹⁸³Susan Hapgood *Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1958-1962* New York: The American Federation of Arts, 1995, p.16. As the title of this book and exhibition suggests, the problem with most accounts of the period and work that I deal with in this dissertation is that they fail to complexify terms such as "Neo-Dada." To give Hapgood some credit, her book does address the problematic nature of this term. Nonetheless she fails to reach a conclusion about the political and philosophical differences that makes it such an awkward label.

general category of assemblage.¹⁸⁴ As art historian Rebecca Solnit has noted, the exhibition attracted considerable attention and controversy either because of its content or lack thereof.¹⁸⁵

As Solnit suggests, Seitz was establishing an extensive history of assemblage techniques used in the history of modern art in order to pave an international and historical path for the distinctly New York phenomenon that was soon to become known as Pop Art. With this agenda in mind, Solnit suggests that the West Coast was relegated to the margins:

Assemblage paved the way for pop, and pop superseded it in the hearts of New York dealers and curators. Casting about for a suitable successor to abstract painting in the late fifties, they flirted with art form all over the world — the Californians, the Nouveaux Réalistes — then settled on pop, which emerged just about the time of the Art of Assemblage exhibition. Pop was a New York phenomenon, with precursors in England, France, and the West Coast, and it seems New York was happy to have the annointed avant-garde in its own back yard again. After 1961, few MoMA curators came to California looking for new talent, and Hedrick, DeFeo, Herms, Kienholz, Jess were left alone again.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴Appropriating the terminology of Roger Shattuck's 1958 book *The Banquet Years*, Seitz described the phenomenon of assemblage as "the mode of juxtaposition" which he felt was an "appropriate vehicle for feelings of disenchantment with the slick international idiom that loosely articulated abstraction has tended to become, and the values that this situation reflects." William C. Seitz *The Art of Assemblage* New York: MoMA, 1961, p.87.

¹⁸⁵Rebecca Solnit *The Secret Exhibition: Six California Artists of the Cold War Era* San Francisco: City Light Books, 1990, pp.83-88.

¹⁸⁶Solnit, p88.

But at least Seitz had showed an interest in California when he was asked to curate his distinctly American survey of contemporary international art. He, like other American curators, never did show up in Stockholm despite Moderna Museet's interest in activities occurring in their back yard. For this reason, geographically marginalized artists such as Ultvedt, Nordenström and Fahlström had to make their pilgrimage to *the* centre which had now shifted from Paris to New York.

In 1961 the concrete poet, painter and performer Öyvind Fahlström had emigrated to New York where he was not only producing work of his own, but participating in Happenings and writing art criticism for Swedish journals and newspapers such as *Konstrevy* and *Dagens Nyheter*.¹⁸⁷ In his review of *The Art of Assemblage* exhibition in *Konstrevy*, Fahlström noted the historicizing and stifling effect the exhibition had in contrast to what he viewed as the "path breaking" potential of the *Movement in Art* exhibition:

What has been presented here is a long way from breaking new paths. The fact that this has not been made apparent is one of the exhibition's weaknesses. It is (like Seitz's book *The Art of Assemblage*) rich in content and therefore important, but it is academic: historical, descriptive, chronological and somewhat meaningless. Radical seekers such as Kaprow, Dine, Whitman and Oldenburg are mentioned in the text but left out of the exhibition. Europe is unevenly represented with small objects by Tinguely and Kalinowski and nothing by Ultvedt. In this light, Moderna Museet's *Rörelse i konsten* surprisingly stands out as initiating and 'up-to-date.'¹⁸⁸

Critical responses to the exhibition were not limited to disenfranchised Swedes writing for marginal art journals in Scandinavia. Writing for *Art*

¹⁸⁷Thomas M. Messer, ed.. *Öyvind Fahlström* New York: The Salomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 1982, p.110.

¹⁸⁸Öyvind Fahlström "Art of Assemblage" *Konstrevy* no.5-6 (1961), p. 227 (224-227).

News in the United States, Thomas B. Hess labeled MoMA a "collector-sanctifying bureaucracy [that] latches on the past with relish, tidies it up, makes a package and covers it with neat gummed labels," and perceived *The Art of Assemblage* exhibition as a clever way for MoMA to legitimate a new vanguard by placing it in context with more canonical art work such as collages by Picasso, Schwitters, Kline, and DeKooning.¹⁸⁹ But in the process, he claimed, "this exhibition seems censored" as the "healthy side of that release which collage triggered from the subconscious---from Ernst and Dali to Rauschenberg to Conner---[was] blanked out."¹⁹⁰ Bruce Conner would later recall that Seitz, who had looked him up before the exhibition to familiarize himself with the Bay Area, did not consider many of the Beat assemblagists he was introduced to, such as Wallace Berman more than "off-beat."¹⁹¹ Traveling south to Los Angeles did, however, allow him to 'discover' artists such as Edward Kienholz making new figurative assemblages such as *The Psycho-Vendetta Case* (1960) [fig. 53] which had a distinct political edge to them.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹Thomas B. Hess "Collage as an Historical Method" *Art News* (Nov. 1961), p.31.

¹⁹⁰*Ibid.*, p.71.

¹⁹¹Solnit, p.83.

¹⁹²As Kienholz has suggested, this political edge was rooted in the very landscape of Los Angeles. "That's one of the reasons I like Los Angeles, because Los Angeles throws away an incredible amount of value every day. I mean, it's just discarded, shitcanned. From automobiles, to clothes, to desks, to paint a — to, you know, half-bags of concrete that are hardened up. I mean, whatever it is, there is an incredible waste in the city of Los Angeles, and if you are living on the edge of the economy like that, all the waste filters through your awareness and you take what you want." 1977 Kienholz interviewed by Lawrence Weschler quoted by Anne Bartlett Ayres in "Berman and Kienholz: Progenitors of Los Angeles Assemblage" Tuchman, Maurice *Art in Los Angeles: Seventeen Artists in the Sixties* Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum, 1981, p. . Work such as *The Psycho-Vendetta Case* point to a shared anarchist interest with Tinguely and Saint-Phalle. The work specifically refers to the 1927 execution of two Italian immigrants who had been wrongly convicted for their anarchist political beliefs. In the fifties and early sixties this particular history could address a contemporary Cold War reality in which individual expression was circumscribed. A good example of the implementation of this threat was the House of UnAmerican Activities Committee which sought to rid the United States of political (as well as socio-sexual) dissent.

The catalogue for the exhibition begins with a careful historical chronicle of "the liberation of words" and "the liberation of the object" that took place prior to World War II. This historical overview is followed by a description of "the collage environment" out of which the work is created. While giving historical credit to the "naturally arrived at... accumulation and agglomeration of materials...[by]...primitives and folk artists" (such as the immigrant tile setter Simon Rodia outside Los Angeles), Seitz suggests that:

nevertheless, from cubism and futurism, Duchamp and Schwitters, to the present, the tradition of assemblage has been predominantly urban in emphasis... The city — New York above all others — has become a symbol of modern existence. The tempo of Manhattan, both as subject and conditioning milieu, has been instrumental in forming the art of our time....¹⁹³

In this formulation, not only is New York upheld as the natural creative environment for contemporary art, but for Seitz, the secret to the success of the best assemblage work of the moment appears to be that it is locked into dialogue with abstract expressionism:

The connection of New York with world art during and after the second World War has become history. New York's vernacular power, its garish affront to tranquillity and taste, was a major component of abstract expressionism.... When he placed a lipsticked mouth clipped from a color advertisement in the center of a sheet that was to become an oil study, de Kooning set the tone of the new collage.... In his totally committed battle between pure art and the street, in his examination of hypnotizing details in tabloid photographs, and in the transfer of newsprint to pigment, de Kooning recorded the impact of commercial culture on postwar art. Although he was surely not an isolated voice, he intensified the interest in "pop culture" — in the expendable art and literature that became so important as a subject matter for Rauschenberg, Johns, Conner, and so many subsequent, but usually less skillful, painters and assemblers. For a new generation and in

¹⁹³Seitz, p.73.

another spirit, de Kooning's adulterative gesture may have had an effect not unlike Picasso's in 1912.¹⁹⁴

Having established this heroic rite of passage for an avant-garde art tied to international trends but grounded in the very "copious waste of an industrial society" which even "non-artists" such as the immigrant tile-maker Simon Rodia had "naturally" discovered in Watts, California, Seitz went on to down play the influence of Europe:

Yet more than forty years after Duchamp's first "readymades" and Schwitter's discovery of the loveliness of refuse, by an unconscious acceptance of the dada proposition of reversibility, the caustic portrayal of the city presented by Henry Miller's *Air Conditioned Nightmare* of 1945, has become, for a new generation of artists, a fulfillment of the glittering MERZ environment of Schwitter's imagination. Such an inversion, from ugliness to beauty, can transpose sociological and utilitarian reformism into complete aesthetic acceptance. The world of artifacts can be seen (as Monet sought to see nature) with a vision freed from conceptual preconditioning. The peeling *décollage* on abandoned billboards in the blighted neighborhoods of Chicago or Jersey City, accented by the singing colors and clean edges of emblems intended to sell cigarettes and beer, or the rubble of fallen New York tenements piled between walls patterned in flowered pinks and blues, can take on an intense beauty more poignant than that of the lacerated posters and graffiti that cover the old walls of Rome and Paris.¹⁹⁵

In this totalizing description, an abstracted taxonomic vision of America as a picturesque, natural, and continuously modern 'décollage' is defined against Europe's ransacked old world ruins aesthetically scavenged by the décollagists. But as we saw earlier on, if Seitz would have looked closer at the 'pictures' by Dufrene, Hains and Villeglé he would have discovered that these spaces represented a new, not an old, reality tied to an international and

¹⁹⁴Seitz, p.74.

¹⁹⁵Seitz, p.76.

domestic touristic gaze.¹⁹⁶ In other words, *Euro-trash* still carried meaning despite the totalizing solicitation by the Museum of Modern Art which sought to vitalize its own hegemonic vision of post-war culture.

Perhaps most surprising, and revealing, is the fact that Seitz turned a blind eye to the obvious connection between Saint-Phalle's new work and his own interest in Abstract Expressionism, "copious waste," Simon Rodia, and other things he had used to justify an art of assemblage. Saint-Phalle would later recall that Seitz had made the comment that her "attitude was harmful to art and that [she] had set back modern art by 30 years!"¹⁹⁷ Seitz appeared to have been slightly more interested in Tinguely's work which he noted as having been "influenced by Rauschenberg and Stankiewicz...."¹⁹⁸

Seitz academic remodeling of the avant-garde would not have been complete without a public forum for discussion. *The Art of Assemblage: A Symposium* opened at MoMA on October 19, 1961 with an impressive list of panelists including Lawrence Alloway, Marcel Duchamp, Richard Huelsenbeck, Robert Rauschenberg, and Roger Shattuck, with William Seitz as the moderator. With the exception of Alloway who would soon join the MoMA staff, all of the participants were at the time living in New York. Shattuck, the author of *The Banquet Years* (1958), would later recall that the symposium had the dual purpose of associating contemporary assemblage with 'the ethos of Dada' before and after the War and reveal a 'coherent

¹⁹⁶This is the line of argument taken by Thomas McDonough writing against Benjamin Buchloh's much more pessimistic account of this avant-garde. See his "Situationist Space" *October* 67 (Winter 1994), pp.59-70.

¹⁹⁷Niki de Saint Phalle Bonn: Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992, p.265.

¹⁹⁸Seitz, *The Art of Assemblage*, p.89

theory' able to rationalize 'new developments' embraced by the museum.¹⁹⁹ These developments, one can argue, were necessarily serving to legitimize New York as the centre for avant-garde experiments and an avant-garde market place for art. With individuals like Seitz and an institution like MoMA strongly believing in this vision, New York would, once again, steal the idea of modern art.

Writing a history from Duchamp and Huelsenbeck to Rauschenberg the Museum of Modern Art produced an opportune environment for a new New York School independent from, but in dialogue with, previously dominant American and European artistic models. This would end up serving the function of a spring board for an emerging American art rooted in its own popular consumer culture. In hindsight, the transcripts from the symposium clearly point to the reluctance of both Huelsenbeck and Rauschenberg to play this game. Unlike Hulten, who in his defense of Rauschenberg against Enckell had argued that "dada never ceased to function," Shattuck considered the shock value that had existed for an historical avant-garde to now be neutralized, a thought which was not favorably received by all symposium participants:

Shattuck: The permanence of art was sacrificed for the excitement of a performance that would either shatter or repulse. It is this aspect of cultural fireworks that cannot be recaptured today, and there are few new sparks to replace the old. To set side by side works which shorted out years ago and works whose tension of forces will not lessen with the years damages both the historic interest of the former and the aesthetic values of the latter. As the Smithsonian Institute houses

¹⁹⁹Roger Shattuck "Introduction: How Collage Became Assemblage" *The Art of Assemblage: A Symposium* New York: MoMA, 1961, p.121.

airplanes that no longer fly, we may soon need a repository for works that have lived for a day. That would be a museum without art.²⁰⁰

Huelsenbeck: Are you against Dada? And against neo-Dada, as far as I understand it?

Shattuck: I'm not trying to be cryptic. I am for the spirit of Dada, but I believe that Dada was principally an historical movement.²⁰¹

With these remarks, Shattuck stood counter to Hulten who understood Dada as maintaining its currency through a Duchampian "way of seeing, a visuality... on which all current aesthetics is based." Just as *Movement in Art* had represented a new start for Moderna Museet, New York's Museum of Modern art was also in need of a renewal. While both exhibitions used Duchamp to link contemporary activities to an historical avant-garde, Seitz focused his attention on Dada's ability to incorporate the throwaway side of consumer culture into individual aesthetic gestures, whereas Hulten was more interested in its ability to rub against bourgeois habits and norms.

During the Art of Assemblage symposium, Duchamp addressed this visuality that Hulten had observed by suggesting that it represented a "choice...based on a reaction of visual indifference with at the same time a total absence of good or bad taste...in fact a complete anesthesia." Art, in other words, remained a matter of individual *choice*, rather than a collective *shock*.²⁰² Opening up "this [self-described] egomaniac's discourse" to the context of MoMA (where the battle was no doubt still between *homo* and *heterogeneous* work), Duchamp concluded that "since the tubes of paint used

²⁰⁰Ibid., p.130.

²⁰¹Ibid..

²⁰²Marcel Duchamp "Apropos of Readymades" in *The Art of Assemblage A Symposium*, pp.135-136.

by the artist are manufactured and readymade products, we must conclude that all the paintings in the world are 'Readymades Aided' — and also works of assemblage."²⁰³ With a Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum exhibition of recent paintings by Arshile Gorky, Adolph Gottlieb, Barnett Newman, Clyfford Still and other abstract painters just a few blocks away, the irony of Duchamp's words could not have been missed by those who realized how closely Duchamp was equating art objects to consumer objects.²⁰⁴

The Art of Assemblage exhibition, as Solnit has suggested, did pave the way in the United States for an emerging post-war avant-garde centred in New York. Whether or not the exhibition was consciously set up to introduce Pop Art specifically is unlikely. But what is important is that it did end up serving this function by 1962. Solnit has also noted that the Nouveaux Réalistes, which included Saint-Phalle and Tinguely, had "a kind of wit and irreverence toward the art world that is reminiscent of the Californians, and their work too tended to consist of unmarketable urban debris, rather than salable representations of it."²⁰⁵ While I would not agree that these artists were attempting to produce 'unmarketable' assemblages — just *difficult* art — I do think Saint-Phalle and Tinguely found their own position as outsiders in New York similar to that of Bruce Conner and Edward Kienholz, to name but a few of the artists they came into contact with through this exhibition.²⁰⁶

²⁰³Ibid..

²⁰⁴We should remember that in the United States, and increasingly in Europe, Abstract Expressionism was the undisputed champion of modern art. Recognizing this, *The Art of Assemblage* represented an attempt to "fix" all those artistic practices which were caught in the gap between "high" modernism and "low" popular culture.

²⁰⁵Ibid., p.87.

²⁰⁶Ibid.. Solnit points out that "Niki de St.Phalle's work from the early sixties... includes triptychs displaying bats and guns and crucifixes, which make an assault on organized religion in a spirit akin to Conner's" who, along with other California artists "in comparison to the eastern artists, seem a hermetic tribe of icon-makers."

Labyrinths or Laboratories: Collaborations and the Dylaby Divide

In February 1962, Saint-Phalle and Tinguely traveled to California to visit Simon Rodia's Watts Towers to which they had been introduced to via the *Art of Assemblage* exhibition. The towers, over ninety feet high, had been erected out of broken plates, bottles, shells and tiles by the immigrant laborer Simon Rodia (1879-1965) as a monument to himself on his own property. For Saint-Phalle and Tinguely, this could just as well have been built by an ego anarchist such as Max Stirner, or artists like themselves. The towers seemed to illustrate the potential of living in the midst of society's copious waste on the edge of the economy.²⁰⁷

While exhibiting at the Everett Ellin Gallery in Los Angeles, Tinguely was asked by a producer for NBC to stage an event for *David Brinkley's Journal*. Just the previous September, Tinguely had staged a large scale pyrotechnical performance entitled *Study for the End of the World* for Louisiana's *Bevaegelse i kunsten*, the third and final venue for the *Movement in Art* exhibition [fig. 54]. This had taken place at the very height of the Cold War arms race between the Soviet Union and the United States. On September 1, the Soviet Union had exploded a nuclear bomb in the atmosphere to end a 34 month interruption of atomic weapons tests by all nuclear powers. While President Kennedy would publically condemn this resumption of testing, underground nuclear testing had begun in the Nevada

²⁰⁷In the seventies both artists would construct their own individual towers to live in and it would spawn inspiration for a monumental sculpture in Stockholm that we will discuss at length in the next chapter.

desert by the middle of that month. Under this atomic light, Tinguely's self-contained destructions participated metaphorically as much in Cold War politics as in a war between hot and cold abstraction. While in California in 1962, both these wars were still on and Tinguely had received the opportunity to execute *Study for the End of the World No.2.*, this time in the Nevada desert, the heartland of nuclear testing [fig. 55]. Asked by William Byron of *The Saturday Evening Post* whether his work could be considered a practical joke on art and life, Tinguely made clear his intentions:

These things are serious for me. Absurdity can be carried a long way, and when it's carried far enough its effect is to make conventional values ridiculous, cut them down to size, cast some badly needed doubt on the "wonderful age" we're living in. "Century of the Common Man!" Man today is ill-treated, humbled as he has never been before. I take the noise and blood and brutality and make a work of art of them. That makes them doubly ironic, to be raised to the level of art. I feel a tremendous relief that the whole thing is going to be destroyed, because it's like a lunatic end to everything monstrous in the world.²⁰⁸

As this quote confirms, if Tinguely's *réalisme* was increasingly taking a turn towards violence and destruction, it corresponded directly with a certain political reality that was facing artists on both sides of the Atlantic.

By early April of 1962, Saint-Phalle's work was also beginning to take on a new form as well. Whereas her work up until that time had incorporated an eclectic mix of consumer waste into indistinct compositional arrangements, by now her works were more sharply defined figurative compositions assembled out of store-bought plastic children's toys such as guns, bats, and dinosaurs. This shift in Saint-Phalle's work can best be seen by

²⁰⁸Tinguely quoted in William R. Byron "Wacky Artist of Destruction" *The Saturday Evening Post* (April 21, 1962) cited in Violand-Hobi, p.52.

comparing her shooting only a month prior outside gallerist Virginia Dwan's beach house in Malibu. During Tinguely's exhibition in Los Angeles, the Everett Ellin Gallery sponsored this first shooting in the United States, witnessed by an impressive audience that included John Cage [fig. 56]. Only a month later, in early April, another shooting event was executed in the hills overlooking Malibu, with assistance from Los Angeles assemblagist Edward Kienholz whose dark social satires appear to have impressed the Europeans [fig. 57]. Not only had interest in Saint-Phalle escalated to being fashionable enough so that the audience included movie personality Jane Fonda, the director John Houseman, and Henry Geldzahler, a representative from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, but more interestingly, we can also see how her compositions were now changing into more clearly articulated forms.

On her return to Europe in early 1962 Saint-Phalle exhibited ten new works in a one-woman show at Paris's Galerie Rive Droite. As mentioned in chapter one, France was at this time not only fraught with cold war tension, but it was also experiencing extreme domestic and colonial conflict related to Algerian independence. On an epic scale (252 x 241 x 41 cm), *O.A.S.* [fig. 58] presented a Nouveau Réaliste version of Picasso's *Guernica*. Here, the black and white cubist comment on universal human injustice, suffering, and death filtered through a contemporary event has been transformed into a tripartite gold assemblage filled with religious icons, bats, boars and guns creating an ambiguous critique of the right wing terrorists, Organisation armée secrète. Unlike her other assemblages such as *Autel du chat mort* (1962) [fig. 59], which deals more specifically with her own Catholic

upbringing, *O.A.S.* remains unshot as if to comment on the inability of France to kill off its colonialist past.

By this time Saint-Phalle and Tinguely were not only revealing a heightened sense of political awareness, but had gained enough connections and currency in the United States, traveling around like a Bonnie and Clyde art team between the East and West Coasts. Earlier that year in New York they met with Rauschenberg to organize another collaborative performance that they named *The Construction of Boston*. This time they appointed a script writer by the name of Kenneth Koch and enlisted an ensemble consisting of Henry Geldzahler, Frank Stella, *Paris Review* writer Maxine Groffsky, and the dancers from the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. As Rauschenberg, Tinguely and Duchamp biographer Calvin Tomkins have recollected, the entire performance, which took place in front of a sold out audience at the "off-broadway" Maidman Playhouse, lasted only fifteen minutes but managed to include a plethora of 'anti-happening' gestures [fig. 60]. In the play, Tinguely was responsible for the architecture while Saint-Phalle was to bring Boston culture and war. Rauschenberg made the set like a furnished apartment which included two dancers going about their banal routines and being rained on occasionally. In an updated Duchampian fashion, Tinguely was dressed up as a 'maid-man' Mae West look-alike and constructed a cinder-block wall across the stage which effectively separated audience and performers. With this company, Saint-Phalle made her entrance striding down the centre aisle through the audience, slim and colourful in the uniform of a Napoleonic artillery officer.²⁰⁹ An assistant wheeled a plaster

²⁰⁹In this context this must have been read as a rather abrasive act "against" the Brechtian Happenings of Kaprow and the activities of Merce Cunningham, John Cage, and others.

copy of the Venus de Milo out on stage, and another assistant handed Mlle. de Saint-Phalle the rifle with which she posed against the kitsch reproduction classically ordered beauty. Tinguely's anti-Brechtian gesture of separating the audience from the stage should have been a sign for the New Yorkers that their attitude towards art and life was indeed different. Despite the different attitudes that became apparent at this event, another major collaboration would soon take place between the Europeans and Americans.

Between the *Bewogen Beweging* exhibition and *The Construction of Boston*, Rauschenberg, Saint-Phalle and Tinguely along with Daniel Spoerri, Martial Raysse and Per-Olof Ultvedt had been invited back to the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam where Willem Sandberg offered them a ready-made setting to produce a 'dynamic labyrinth.' *Dylaby*, as the exhibition would be acronymned, would end up being the last collaboration between Rauschenberg and Tinguely.

On August 30th, just a month after the sudden death of Yves Klein, *Dylaby* opened with seven constructed environments introducing the museum goer to different sensory experiences not unlike that of a funny house at an amusement park. Ultvedt produced a room filled with machines made of wood activated by the audience's movement through the space; Spoerri made an upside-down version of a room; Martial Raysse introduced a *Raysse -Beach*, with neon signs, a jukebox, swimming pool and plastic toys; Saint-Phalle constructed a shooting gallery where opening-night visitors could assassinate her large white relief filled with prehistoric monsters [fig. 61]; Rauschenberg filled a room with caged combines; while Tinguely made

the visitor exit the 'party' through a tunnel filled with balloons. These balloons, as we will see, would soon 'pop.'

By most public accounts the event was a success. Privately, however, *Dylaby* did not result in the kind of utopian collaborative moment some might have expected. As Utvedt recalls, the events leading up to a 'cold war' between the five Europeans and the sole American, Rauschenberg would become frustrated by the reluctance of Tinguely and others to communicate in English.²¹⁰ Rauschenberg would later tell his biographer, Calvin Tomkins, that he had by this time become "irritated and disillusioned by the others' reluctance to collaborate on a single work, and by Tinguely's penchant for giving orders and generally running the show."²¹¹ For Rauschenberg, this exhibition should have represented a collective working environment, but what he found was individual artists willing to work *collaboratively*, but refusing *collectivity*:

Niki, Jean, Ultvedt and I worked individually together as a team. This [*Rörelse i konsten*] was a situation which inspired numerous other collaborative projects.... But the altruistic energy's innocence would not survive *Dylaby*.... Professional maturity triumphed over the collective joy of just making art.²¹²

²¹⁰In an interview conducted on June 10, 1992, Per-Olof Ultvedt recalled Rauschenberg's "irritation:" "I remember sitting at the dinner table. No matter how hard we all tried to speak English, we ended up speaking French which Bob did not understand. I guess he must have felt quite alienated...."

²¹¹Calvin Tomkins *Off the Wall: Robert Rauschenberg and the Art World of Our Time* New York: Doubleday and Co., 1980, p.225.

²¹²Rauschenberg quoted in Billy Klüver and Robert Rauschenberg's "*Rörelse i konsten — en kombinerad minnesbild*, in *Moderna Museet 1958-1983* Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1983, p.148.

With our understanding of the European's anarchist roots in a philosophy of radical individualism, we can surmise that this moment represented a fork in the road leading either to individual collaboration or mutual collectivity.

Interestingly enough, in his historical overview of these events, Calvin Tomkins refers to *Dylaby* as a "dynamic laboratory." The slip from *labyrinth* to *laboratory* is significant. It would not surprise us if Rauschenberg interpreted the acronym differently and thereby pinpointed a major difference between the Americans and Europeans. While the Europeans in question understood "dynamic labyrinth" to reference the Situationist Constant Nieuwenhuys's anarchic constructions such as *Ambiance de Jeu* (Environment for Play) and *New Babylon*; and by extension updating the acronym "CoBrA" to "Dylaby." Rauschenberg, through his correspondence with Tomkins, suggests a collaborative experiment for art and science.²¹³ In other words, the Europeans were proposing a very different model of anarchic play *rebellling against* the optimism and structures of new technologies. Unlike them, Rauschenberg was *optimistically open* to new media as a revolutionary and McLuhanesque extension of life.²¹⁴ As we will see in chapter three, Rauschenberg, with the Swedish Bell Laboratory scientist Billy Klüver, would develop this more optimistic embrace of technology into the laboratory E.A.T. (Experiments in Art and Technology).

²¹³For Spoerri this connection to Constant must have been most relevant. As mentioned in chapter one, Spoerri's ludic constructions were closely related to Henri Lefebvre's writings. In turn, Lefebvre was highly influenced by Constant's writing *Pour une architecture de situation* (1953). Constant had by 1960 left the Situationist International which they found too polemically positioned under Debord's leadership. See Eleonore Kofman's and Elizabeth Lebas's "Introduction" *Henri Lefebvre: Writings on Cities* Blackwell Publishers, 1996, pp.11-12.

²¹⁴For McLuhan, the medium was not only the message, but it could function as the extension of the human nervous system.

At her opening in Paris that spring, Saint-Phalle had been invited by the American art dealer Alexander Iolas to exhibit at his New York gallery in the fall. This would provide Saint-Phalle with an opportunity to clarify her ambivalent position in relation to the United States and the New York art scene. In the brochure for this solo show, Saint-Phalle reprinted her astrologer's findings which points the direction she was determined to take with her work: "You will adorn death with the enchantments of childhood."²¹⁵ Tying rubber lizards to doll-babies' bellies, shooting real .22's at cans, bottles and balloons filled with paint, Saint-Phalle kept playing "Fun House" with the utmost artistic seriousness until her creation/assassination was complete.

In the New York show, Saint-Phalle had exhibited studies towards *King Kong*, [fig. 62] a larger work to be executed in Los Angeles in early '63 with the help of Virginia Dwan's gallery. Writing from L.A., Wholden made the following acute observations:

King Kong, built and bulleted this summer under the aegis of the Dwan Gallery, represents a consolidation of both thematic and pictorial experiences for Niki. It is her largest continuous narrative, a "Tableau Mourant" deliberately engineered for permanence. Because Niki de Saint-Phalle has gained notoriety largely through public acts of destruction, the autonomy of *King Kong* as a finished art object needs to be emphasized. It is a demonstration picture, like Delacroix's *Death of Sardanapalus*.²¹⁶

²¹⁵This was true of her work as Rosalind Wholden pointed out in her review of the exhibition in *Artforum*. See Rosalind G. Wholden "Puerealism: 'The End' With Innocence" *Artforum* Vol.2 No.3 (September 1963), pp,30-33.

²¹⁶*Ibid.*, p.32.

If this can be viewed as a "demonstration picture," then what was Saint-Phalle demonstrating? As Wholden hints near the end of her review, this image, like the *O.A.S.* picture, is a subjective demonstration similar to Picasso's *Guernica*. Arranged around a central sun/god, the black and white *King Kong* is subtly divided into two halves. Read counter-clockwise from its top left hand corner, Saint-Phalle leads the viewer from birth to death. The left side of the composition includes scenes of a mother giving birth, children playing, a heart representing teenage love, a man on a motorcycle, a church, masks representing various political figures, and a married couple standing next to an American flag.²¹⁷ Below the sun, replacing Picasso's twisting horse and bull, a Tyrannosaurus Rex functions as a Godzilla like stand-in for "King Kong" who is not literally included in the picture. This monster, moving from the center to the right side of the composition, appears to be dragging all of Saint-Phalle's personal references towards a New York cityscape located on the far right.

This storyboard can thus be said to divide Europe/Paris (left side) from the United States/New York (right side) to illustrate her own personal experiences through a potent mix of high art and popular culture references. As if to warn the viewer (or artist, monster) against the imminent danger of entering New York. By returning to her own personal mythology, Saint-Phalle shows the city's skyscrapers attacked by fighter planes and missiles conveying as much the fictional story of King Kong as it represents the real hubris of Capitalism, consumerism, and a Cold War culture. As Wholden

²¹⁷Saint-Phalle had been married to the American poet Harry Mathews and in this sense this picture could represent the story of her failed relationship with both him and her former country.

states, this picture, like her other work from this time, is an allegorical representation of death:

As allegories of death the Saint-Phalle constructions are a kind of sideshow. Life is precious, short and irreversible. Sometimes the only way to bear the strain of mortality is to try sampling death, as if practice could make perfect. Romanesque *Last Judgement*, Goya's *Disasters of War*, *Guernica*, even films like *Hiroshima Mon Amour* and *On the Beach* are death shows scaled for the adult world; the price of admission to the Big Top is seriousness. Niki's Punch-and-Judy massacres embody the disbelief of Tom Sawyer, home just in time to stare at his own funeral. She conjures last laughs, not last rites.²¹⁸

And as we will see, "sampling death" is exactly what Saint-Phalle would continue to do until she established a death mask of her own.

Americanizing the New Open Art: Neo-Dada Goes 'Pop'

By the time Wholden's *Artforum* article was published, a number of significant events had just taken place. It was becoming increasingly clear for American critics and curators that a new type of art was being absorbed into the art industry partly as a result of the Seitz assemblage exhibition. Particularly noteworthy was the sudden increase in interest in popular consumer objects as subjects for artists on both the East and West Coasts. In September of '62, The Pasadena Art Museum picked up on what it must have perceived as a possible bridge between the East and West Coast. *New Paintings of Common Objects* included Jim Dine, Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, Edward Ruscha, Robert Dowd, Phillip Hefferton, Joe Goode, and Wayne Thiebaud. Unable to give a coherent group 'name' to these American

²¹⁸Wholden, p.32.

artists, art critic Jules Langsner could nonetheless suggest in his "Los Angeles Letter" to *Art International* that the exhibition brought an emerging new tendency into "sharp focus."²¹⁹

Within the art market, the confirmation of this new trend's passage into the realm of 'high art' came with Sidney Janis' decision at the end of October, 1961, to curate the artists he saw representing the latest avant-garde generation. Up until this time, Janis had been dealing with blue-chip modern artists ranging in generation from Mondrian and Léger to leading Abstract Expressionists such as Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko and Robert Motherwell. Now he was introducing a younger generation of artists who appeared to reject the tradition and seriousness of the modernist avant-garde. On October 31, Janis's two-gallery exhibition *The New Realists* opened to include the *Pop* artists (as they would soon become known as) Warhol, Lichtenstein, and Rosenquist alongside *Nouveaux Réalistes* Yves Klein, Jean Tinguely, Per-Olof Ultvedt, Martial Raysse, and Arman [fig. 63]. Unlike the Pasadena exhibition, this survey was commercial, international, and controversial. As Calvin Tomkin's recalls, a number of the Abstract Expressionists, among them Rothko, Motherwell, Gottlieb, and Baziotes, were so angry with this merger that they resigned from Janis's gallery in protest.²²⁰ Sidney Janis would later recall the irony of this situation:

Here we had been showing Pollock cheek-by-jowl with Léger, and de Kooning with Mondrian, and Kline with Klee, but when we took up the next generation our artists were furious. They didn't want to be associated with these people who became artists overnight.²²¹

²¹⁹Jules Langsner "From Los Angeles Letter" *Art International* (September 1962), p.49.

²²⁰Calvin Tomkins *Off the Wall: The Art World of Our Time* New York: Doubleday & Co., 1980, pp.184-185.

²²¹*Ibid.*, p.185.

In his exhibition catalogue, Janis elaborates its central theme and provides a working definition of the *New Realist*:

City bred, the New Realist is a kind of urban folk artist. Living in New York, Paris, London, Rome, Stockholm, he finds his inspiration in urban culture. He is attracted to abundant everyday ideas and facts which he gathers, for example, from the street, the store counter, the amusement arcade or the home.... In the unplanned transformation the ordinary become extraordinary, the common, uncommon, a transposition in which the spirit of the common object becomes the common subject for these artists. Thus the traditional artist-invented work of art now is supplanted unceremoniously by a true product of mass culture, the *readymade*. Artists working in this direction form the central theme of the exhibition. Also dead center to the idea of the exhibition is work colored by other qualities in mass media. The billboard, magazine, comic strip, daily newspaper, very directly have been the inspiration of a variety of facts and ideas introduced by the new generation.²²²

Sidney suggests in particular that Duchamp's *Readymades* "remain today art works of vision and of particular significance and inspiration to the New Realists."²²³

While giving significant attention to the 'old guard's' disgust, and pin-pointing this exhibition as "the event that capped Pop Art's lightning-like

²²²Janis, *Ibid.*. In his introduction, Janis also makes sure that he sidesteps William Seitz's attempt to define the contemporary art scene in *Art of Assemblage* while at the same time using his achievement to build his own *brand* of avant-garde art: "These are the categories upon which the exhibition concentrates. To avoid confusion, peripheral, or closely related works of quality, but whose techniques are less factual than they are poetic or expressionist, have been omitted as outside the scope of the exhibition. In this sense, the paintings of Rivers and Rauschenberg come to mind. Johns, an established Factualist, also is, unfortunately, not included. To remain within the idea of the exhibition, the important directions of *Collage* and *Assemblage* are omitted." As with both Hulten and (to a lesser degree) Seitz, Duchamp is the central figure in Janis's construction of a *movement*.

²²³*Ibid.*.

triumph," Tomkins, in his historical account, manages to ignore the fact that this exhibition could also be rendered problematic for artists in the show.

For Niki de Saint-Phalle who was not included in the show, and for Jean Tinguely and Per-Olof Ultvedt who were included, the fallout of the exhibition would be devastating. The public success of the exhibition took on the most poisoned form in Brian O'Doherty's enthusiastic review for *The New York Times*:

It's mad, mad, wonderfully mad. It's also (at different times) glad, bad and sad, and it may be a fad. But it's welcome. It is called *New Realists*, and it opens today at 4pm in the Sidney Janis Gallery (N.Y.) ... Although the standard vocabulary of such antique art movements as surrealism and dada is used, the intent is entirely different; a fresh wind is blowing across the vast billboard wasteland, and anarchy is out.²²⁴

Although this statement could have been read as a witty announcement that anarchy had come "out" of obscurity, for the foreign artists that concern us here, it was more likely read literally as a declaration that anarchy was "out." After all, O'Doherty also announced that "with this show, 'pop' art is officially here."²²⁵ For O'Doherty and other defenders of American modernist abstraction, the critique of mass culture which an historical avant-garde had leveled against the bourgeois with shock had now been turned back on itself:

He [Janis] has provided what must be the year's most entertaining show.... America has been a pioneer in throwaway cups and saucers, milk containers and tablecloths. Now it is a pioneer in throwaway art.... Since the very essence of [New Realism] is compounded lightness, irreverence and wit, it would be ridiculous to take it with deep philosophical seriousness. This would perform the nice trick of

²²⁴Brian O'Doherty *The New York Times* (October 31, 1962), p.

²²⁵*Ibid.*.

making mass culture esoteric.... It is, of course, founded on the premise that mass culture is bad, an expression of spiritual poverty. So perhaps this is the old story of the avant-garde given the opportunity to seize on the bourgeois again, this time through its packaged products. Or, more amusingly, things may have reversed themselves, and now it may be the bourgeois that shocks the avant-garde.²²⁶

It was under these awkward circumstances that the term "Pop Art" gained recognizable currency. Inflated with some Duchampian *Paris Air*, Pop had popped.

On the 13 of December 1962, the Museum of Modern Art announced *A Symposium on Pop Art* which came at the heel of not only the Sidney Janis exhibition, but also the *Art of Assemblage* Symposium the previous year. In an attempt to justify the phenomenon of Pop art within a context which to this point had predominantly represented modernist high art practices, Henry Geldzahler argued that Pop did not "fall from the heavens" but had grown "naturally out of the art of the recent past." It should be looked at as "two-dimensional landscape painting" and was not a threat to the idea of the 'individual' or Individualism. Instead it was to be understood as a natural response to the artist's visual environment which did not forego the idea of art for art's sake:

Both Greenberg and Harold Rosenberg have written that increasingly in the twentieth century, art has carried on a dialogue with itself, art leads to art, and with internal sequence. This is true still, even with the external references pop art makes to the observed world.²²⁷

²²⁶Ibid..

²²⁷Henry Geldzahler quoted in *A Symposium on Pop Art* with Peter Selz, Henry Geldzahler, Dore Ashton, Leo Steinberg, and Stanley Kunitz at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Published in *Arts* (April 1963), pp.35-45. Reprinted in Steven Henry Madoff (Ed.) *Pop Art: A Critical History* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, p.66 (pp.65-81).

While these artists may draw on a "common body," he suggests that their:

...style and decisions...are unmistakable. The choice of color, composition, the brush stroke, the hardness of edge, all these are personal no matter how close to anonymity the artist may aspire in his desire to emulate the material of his inspiration, the anonymous mass media. [In the end] the pop artists remain individual.²²⁸

New York Times critic Hilton Kramer, a supporter of American abstraction, was outraged. To Kramer, Pop art represented nothing more than a "charade" dependent on the juxtaposition of *clichés*:

Pop art carries out a moderately successful charade — but a charade only — of the two kinds of significance we are particularly suckers for at the present moment: the Real and the Historical. Pop art seems to be about the real world, yet it appears to its audience to be sanctified by tradition, the tradition of Dada. Which is to say, it makes itself dependent upon something outside art for its expressive meaning, and at the same time makes itself dependent upon the myths of art history for his aesthetic integrity. In my opinion, both appeals are fraudulent.²²⁹

For Kramer, the main threat Pop art carried was the reconciliation of art and what he called "the dishonesties of contrived public symbols and pretentious commerce."²³⁰ Its social effect, he continued, "is simply to reconcile us to a world of commodities, banalities and vulgarities — which is to say, an effect indistinguishable from advertising art."²³¹ Pop art, then, represented more than a bridge built between art and life, it represented a highway filled with masses of consumers in their style-obsolent cars who couldn't care less

²²⁸Ibid..

²²⁹Ibid., p.68-69.

²³⁰Ibid., 68.

²³¹Ibid..

about the individual as they were collectively joined by 'Individualism.' Ironically, this threat was also taken seriously by artists like Tinguely, Saint-Phalle and Ultvedt who all of a sudden were labeled Pop artists. The difference, however, between Kramer and the Europeans was in their individual defenses.

Whereas Kramer argued for a retreat into an ivory tower based on an art for art's sake, Saint-Phalle, Tinguely, and Ultvedt, I suggest, were retreating into a tower built on Duchampian irony and silence. Whether Kramer saw this is beside the point. His main concern was keeping American institutions like the Museum of Modern Art from negotiating a deal with a new 'popular front' aesthetics. To kill off Pop, Kramer knew very well that he had to kill off its father figure — Marcel Duchamp:

Behind its pretensions looms the legendary presence of the most overrated figure in modern art: Mr. Marcel Duchamp. It is Duchamp's celebrated silence, his disavowal, his abandonment of art, which has here — in pop art — been invaded, colonized and exploited. For this was never a real silence. Among the majority of men who produced no art, and experienced little or none, Duchamp's disavowal was devoid of all meaning... it is only in the context of a school of painting which has radically deprived art of significant visual events that pop art has a meaning.²³²

More diplomatic, but still critical of the Pop artists, was Dore Ashton, a critic who understood the movement to represent a polemical rejection of Abstract Expressionism. For Ashton, this new contemporary artist was "weary and perplexed by the ambiguities of idealism" that Abstraction represented. As a supporter of 'Neo-Dada' artists like Rauschenberg, the problem with the

²³²Ibid..

new 'Pop' art was its seeming dismissal of metaphor, which she suggested was "necessarily a complicating device, one which insists on the play of more than one element in order to effect an image."²³³ The Pop artist, she observed, "wants no such elaborate and oblique obligation. He is engaged in an elementary game of naming things."²³⁴ Unlike Duchamp who equated chance with the distance between intention and expression, the Pop artists, Ashton felt, relinquished responsibility:

In the emphasis on randomness and chance, on the virtual object divested of associations, on the audience as participant, and in his rebellion against metaphor, the pop artist generally begs the question of reality. He refuses to take the responsibility of his choices.²³⁵

While adding that she considered Pop art to be an important sociological phenomenon that responded to contemporary life, she nonetheless concluded that "to the extent that it shuns metaphor, or any deep analysis of complex relations, it is an impoverished genre and an imperfect instrument of art."²³⁶ But as I have tried to suggest, certain artists were weary of Pop Art's leap into the giant ballroom of consumerism and were pushed into new strategic territory.

Observing with great interest the formation of an art movement to which he was being credited the seminal father figure, Duchamp made the following observation about the phenomenon as a whole and Tinguely in particular:

²³³Ibid., p.70.

²³⁴Ibid..

²³⁵Ibid..

²³⁶Ibid..

I'll tell you what's going to happen... The public will keep on buying more and more art, and husbands will start bringing home little paintings to their wives on their way home from work, and we're all going to drown in a sea of mediocrity. Maybe Tinguely and a few others sense this and are trying to destroy art before it's too late.²³⁷

Understanding, as Duchamp obviously did, the conflicting views about this sudden institutionalization of Pop Art in the United States is crucial to understanding the direction the Europeans (and certain Americans)²³⁸ would take from this moment forward. It also provides us with greater insight into the conflict at Stedelijk's *Dylaby* exhibition which had ultimately resulted in Ultvedt, Saint-Phalle, Tinguely and Raysse discussing a new collaborative project — this time *without* Rauschenberg and with the help of Pontus Hulten in Stockholm. Although this new monumental exhibition would have to wait until 1966 to take place at the Moderna Museet (chapter three will deal with this in detail), this time the object of the exhibition would be more strategically executed. Letters written between 1963 and 1966 from Saint-Phalle and Tinguely to Ultvedt and Hutlen stress the importance of not turning this exhibition into a 'Pop' event [fig. 64]:

Saint-Phalle:

²³⁷Duchamp quoted in Calvin Tomkins *The Bride and the Bachelors: Five Masters of the Avant-Garde* New York: Penguin Books, 1981 (originally published 1965), p.15.

²³⁸Asked by Susan Hapgood in 1993 if he fled New York in 1963 to Los Angeles because of "the effects of the burgeoning art market around 1962 ...," Claes Oldenburg answered that he felt the New York scene was "exhausted by '62." Hapgood: "Which is just the point when the media picked up on it?" Oldenburg: "Yeah, that's always a sign that it's over. Then I went to Los Angeles where things started all over again; it was like virgin territory. It was cool, and New York was hot. The period from the end of '59 until '62 was so intense in New York, so complicated, that I just wanted to get away from it. But after a while you run out of places to go." "Claes Oldenburg" Interview conducted by Susan Hapgood, New York City, March 1, 1993 published in Susan Hapgood's *Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1958-62* New York: The American Federation of Arts, 1994, p.129 (123-129). As we will see in chapter three he, like Tinguely and Saint-Phalle, would see Stockholm as one of these places to run to.

I'm glad that you like the idea of an enormous collaboration. But there are problems.... it would have to be an enormous Castle. Jean and I both feel that this collaboration would be something sufficient in itself.

Tinguely:

What's the use in a large Pop hot dog? Don't you feel the four of us would be enough since the castle would become a unity. Why have an enormous hamburger next to it?

Saint-Phalle:

Rauschenberg also may be unnecessary.²³⁹

Another letter from Tinguely and Saint-Phalle suggests to Ultvedt that it would be best to keep Billy Klüver uninformed of their plans. What will be revealed to be significant in my next chapter, this friendship between Klüver and Rauschenberg would by 1966 result in the Experiments in Art and Technology.

Spaces of Masquerade: Getting the Story 'Straight'

In establishing an international name for himself, this conflict could not have come at a worse time for Ultvedt. Throughout *Dylaby*, Ultvedt had tried to find a 'neutral' position. Prior to *Dylaby* Ultvedt had become quite a close friend of Rauschenberg with whom he traded works as late as the 1962 Venice Biennale where he was represented at the Nordic Pavillion. While having a solo exhibition at Alexander Iolas New York Gallery the following Spring, Ultvedt produced the installation *Manhattan*, his own playful environment akin to Jacques Tati's critical comedies. This was constructed with assistance from Klüver and Rauschenberg who "supported with

²³⁹Translation of these "coded" letters were provided by Per-Olof Ultvedt during an interview conducted on June 10, 1992 at Lidingö, Sweden. Although undated, Ultvedt confirmed that they were all written between 1963 and 1966.

addresses and helpful advice."²⁴⁰ *Manhattan* 'trapped' the viewer into participation by rigging doors, chairs, lamps and utensils in such a way that they were compositionally rearranged by the audience [fig. 65]. As he would soon realize, Ultvedt was himself trapped between his old and new friends. Not only had Ultvedt been asked by Illena Sonnabend (Rauschenberg's New York art dealer) to join her gallery, but the camaraderie between Ultvedt and Rauschenberg was by this time good enough that Ultvedt accepted a request by Rauschenberg to perform with Carolyn Brown and himself in the ballet *Pelican* to take place that May. As a part of Washington's Gallery of Modern Art's *Concert of Dance Number Five, Pelican* took place at America on Wheels skating rink. Ultvedt and Rauschenberg, with roller-skates on their feet and large circular parachute contraptions on their backs, performed a dance with Brown that resembled something between astronauts landing on the moon and recreational sports. All this was accompanied by a collage of music by Handel, Hayden and light entertainment music [fig. 66].²⁴¹

After this performance on May 9th, Ultvedt would also withdraw from further participation with the Americans.²⁴² Having written to Sweden describing his activities to close friend and art critic Ulf Linde, Ultvedt received an acidic letter back a short while later which again points to a fear of Pop. Having up to this point defended Rauschenberg's work publically in the

²⁴⁰Ultvedt in *P.O. Ultvedt: Tvivel och övermod: Arbeten från 1945 till 1988* Malmö: Malmö Konsthall, 1988, p.48.

²⁴¹As Ultvedt claims in my interview with him in 1992, he was in the end not interested in being "boxed in" by Sonnabend and to this day does not consider himself a "Pop Star who travels around to play popular music." Not unnoteworthy, Ultvedt is often shown in photographs of this performance but is very rarely mentioned.

²⁴²When Rauschenberg repeated the *Pelican* performance at the First New York Theater Rally in 1965, Ultvedt was replaced by Alex Hay.

Swedish popular press, Linde, like Hilton Kramer at the *Pop Art Symposium*, privately defined him as fraudulent.

After your description of the Wall Street dominance I have been convinced that a socialism must take over everywhere (sarcasm). This is the only way to end "new realism," since this movement obviously has to do with artists having a hard time getting rid of their garbage.... The fact that Rauschenberg has begun working with silk-screen stuff I find upsetting. It is, after all, Andy Warhol who has the patent on silkscreening. Is there no Restany over there to keep an eye on what artists are doing? [my bracket]²⁴³

Showing an acute awareness of recent activities concerning New Realism and Pop Art, Linde, unlike Kramer, shows continued interest in Duchamp. But like Kramer he sounds worried, even scared, and presents Rauschenberg and the new Pop artists in extremely negative and homophobic terms:

You [Ultvedt] have written about New York in a strange way in the letter I received today. You almost sound like a new being — and to think that I still like the old one so much.... I have been smearing oil on canvas for the 'stoppages' [replica's of Duchamp's Standard Stoppages]. I have messed and smeared, stroked and rubbed — I'm beginning to understand those *homo-painters* (målarbögarna). It's wonderful, the head is completely emptied.... I promise you, as much work as I have put into this exhibition (The Pasadena Duchamp retrospective), no damn homo-painter would bother to do. ... [By the way], the only thing I'm reading right now ... is Leonardo [Da Vinci]. He is fantastic. This is what he writes: 'One shall not use the brush unless sitting in front of nature and feeling as though you have created it yourself.' I think this is damn good — and it is exactly the shit of art today: Those who work with 'pop' are too precious (fina om nyporna) — you can't tell me that Lichtenstein feels like he drew those cartoons. I'm tired of this "ironic distance."²⁴⁴

²⁴³P.O. Ultvedt: *Tvivel och övermod: Arbeten från 1945 till 1988* Malmö: Malmö Konsthall, 1988, p.53.

²⁴⁴Ibid..

The reference to Duchamp's *Standard Stoppages* helps us determine that this undated letter was written shortly before the Pasadena Museum's Duchamp retrospective which opened on October 8, 1963. Linde, who contributed with a major catalogue text and numerous replica's of Duchamp's work, was from this time forward so 'anti-American' that he avoided traveling to Los Angeles for the vernissage.²⁴⁵ The letter is particularly interesting in that it reveals a clear understanding of the sexual differences at play between artists such as Ultvedt and Rauschenberg and suggests an attempt to distance one project from the other by emasculating the New York artists and labeling their 'openness' homosexual.

Linde's references to messing, smearing, stroking and rubbing should have been understood by Ultvedt as relating to an "excremental vision" apparent in Americans' such as Rauschenberg's work. Widely circulated by the early sixties, Norman O. Brown's *Life Against Death* was enthusiastically read by artists such as Rauschenberg who found in it a social pathology of everyday life related to his artistic vision.

While Linde and Ultvedt may not have been familiar with Norman O. Brown (who was most readily available within New York's intellectual underground), they were, via a Freudian psychoanalytical model, familiar enough with Rauschenberg's work to be able to interpret his combines and prints as signs and gestures related to an interest in a different erotic 'instinct.'

²⁴⁵In an interview with Linde on May 18, 1999, I asked Linde if he had ever made the pilgrimage to Philadelphia to see the Duchamp collection and, in particular, Duchamp's *Etant Donnés*. To this he responded that he had never been to the States and would never go: "Why should I go to see work when Duchamp left perfect instructions on how to make on my own?" He then proceeded to show me his recently completed, fully functioning, scaled replica of *Etant Donnés* constructed in his living room.

As early as 1918, Freud's biographer Ernest Jones had described this anal-erotic character traits as:

...any dirty material, street-filth (including of course dung), soiled linen and other things, dust, coal, house or garden refuse, waste-paper, and, indeed, waste material of all descriptions, for in the unconscious the ideas denoted by the words 'waste' and 'dirty' seem to be synonymous — the *tertium comparationis* doubtless being that of 'refuse.' Either disgusting or waste matter relating to the body is especially apt to become thus associated. The former of these may be illustrated by the material of loathsome diseases — e.g., purulent and other secretions — and this is also the reason why a corpse is often a symbol of feces. Examples of the latter one are hair and nails, parts of the body that are apt to get dirty and which are periodically cast off. Books and other printed matter are a curious symbol of feces, presumably through the association with paper and the idea of pressing (smearing, imprinting).²⁴⁶

At this moment when the New York avant-garde's institutionalized position needed to be questioned, a work such as Rauschenberg's *Monogram* [fig. 47] could function as a scapegoat not just by the popular press (as mentioned earlier), but by someone like Linde who turned these scatological signs into a distancing device between artists like Ultvedt and Rauschenberg. Jonathan Weinberg, in his study of Jasper Johns provides a useful Freudian screen through which to read *Monogram* as an emblem, or indeed a 'monogram,' of Rauschenberg's gay identity:

The connection between excrement and money to which psychoanalysis gives such weight is dependent on the idea that the young child, knowing nothing of the genital functions and of the womb and having only the experience of his own body, initially believes that he was born out of his mother's stomach through the anal canal. In this process, excrement, which in [Norman] O. Brown's words 'incorporates the body's daily dying,' is transformed from dead

²⁴⁶This quote is taken from, and is discussed in, Jonathan Wienberg's article "It's In the Can: Jasper Johns and the Anal Society" *Genders* 1 (Spring 1988), p.42.

matter into something of value, the living, breathing entity of the self's own body.²⁴⁷

Monogram, whose very title is a reference to a sign of identity for Rauschenberg, can accordingly be interpreted: the tire around the stuffed goat (literally a dead body standing on the discarded or excremental signs and materials from pop-consumer culture) is deciphered as a ring (the word 'anus' derives from the Latin word *anus* meaning ring) through which the 'dead' goat penetrates and is transformed into the commodity Art object (represented by the abstract *drips* on the goats face).

By 1963, Linde, Ultvedt, Tinguely, and Saint-Phalle would all turn their attention *away* from this 'death defying act' which was increasingly read as an uncritical embrace of an increasingly American consumer culture and avant-garde. Instead their interest in the act of destruction and death would become pronounced.

Whether Rauschenberg's roller-skate dance performance *Pelican* had been planned as early as 1962 is uncertain, but in hindsight, Niki de Saint-Phalle's 1962 assemblage *Pirodactyl de New York* (also referred to as *The New York Alp*) [fig. 67] can be read as a hubris warning for Ultvedt. In this 250 x 310 cm large diptych, a half-child/half-pirodactyl on roller-skates is flying over/towards New York's cityscape.²⁴⁸ Trying to escape the burdens of

²⁴⁷Jonathan Weinberg "It's In the Can: Jasper Johns and the Anal Society" *Genders* 1 (Spring 1988), p.47.

²⁴⁸As Nancy Spector has described the costumes Ultvedt and Rauschenberg were wearing in the *Pelican* performance: "Strapped to their backs, these parachute forms looked at once like prehistoric wings and futuristic, aerodynamic extensions of the body." Her summary, which is interesting here only so far as it makes the connection between Saint-Phalle's pirodactyl and Ultvedt, is partly derived from Erica Abeel's account "Daedalus at the Rollerdrone" in *Saturday Review* (New York) Vol. 48 No.35 (Aug. 28, 1965), p.53. This helps strengthen my

European tradition, history and religion (represented by kitsch religious icons on the left panel), the Icarus-like figure has been set up to be shot at by Saint-Phalle's spectators. When hit, the sun, located above the Empire State Building in the upper right hand corner, bleeds black. Considering its production at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis, this cross-Atlantic scene looks more like a nuclear holocaust than a pop-oriented artistic exchange.

Saint-Phalle's work began to take new form and subject matter by 1963. During what she has called her 'white period' between 1963 and 1964, Saint-Phalle created a large body of work devoted to brides, mothers giving birth, heads and hearts, but also devouring mothers, witches and whores. By this time, she had moved in with Jean Tinguely at a former auberge, the 'Auberge du cheval blanc,' at Soisy-sur-École near Essonne. This new focus on female stereotypes went hand-in-hand with a new masculinized 'black-period' in Tinguely's work which consisted of painting all his work matte black and exaggerating their violent characteristics. Read together, as they often would through their collaborations from now on, Saint-Phalle and Tinguely had joined individual forces in order to masquerade their carefully engineered working relationship.²⁴⁹

Icarus reading of both Saint-Phalle's *Tir* and the *Pelican* performance — a particularly striking motif used both in the States and Europe to discuss the new "open" art. See Nancy Spector "Rauschenberg and Performance, 1963-67: A Poetry of Infinite Possibilities" *Robert Rauschenberg Retrospective* New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., p.234-235 (226-245). Note: Not knowing what to do with Ultvedt who has since the sixties become marginalized within international art histories, Spector makes the very common mistake of naming him a Fluxus artist — a "label" which Ultvedt told me he never associated with himself, despite having participated in a few Fluxus events.

²⁴⁹Even when Saint-Phalle and Tinguely were producing separate work they would often be in dialogue. Tinguely's *Hannibal* (1963) which appears to respond to Saint-Phalle's reference to Hannibal crossing the Alps in her *New York Alps*; and Tinguely's *Hong Kong* is a follow up to Saint-Phalle's *King Kong*(1963). In both cases we have the stories of great mythological figures reenacted, brought from one world to another only to become fugitives.

I suggest that a masquerade and 'playful repetition' was increasingly employed by Saint-Phalle and Tinguely to expose the construction of both masculinity and femininity in their critique of Pop Art. This critical strategy is not far removed from the feminist arguments made later by Luce Irigaray. In her book *This Sex Which is Not One* (1985), Irigaray discusses the transgressive possibilities within the spaces of the masquerade. For her, the act of mimesis in these spaces carries with it the possibility for women to make visible constructions of a masculine logic:

To play with mimesis is thus, for a woman, to try to recover the place of her exploitation by discourse, without allowing herself to be simply reduced to it. It means to resubmit herself... to ideas about herself, that are elaborated in/by a masculine logic, but so as to make 'visible,' by an effect of playful repetition what was supposed to remain invisible: the cover-up of a possible operation of the feminine in language.²⁵⁰

Much has been made in recent art history of the fact that Andy Warhol's ability to mimic the world of advertising, fashion and art came from his background in graphic design. What historians have failed to recognize in Saint-Phalle's case is her similar ability turn this masquerade into a critical tool to reveal the patriarchal, misogynist, and masculinist side of culture. By the time Saint-Phalle entered into her 'public' role as artist, she had already had lots of experience in *dressing up*. This experience can be traced back to her early years as a top international model. By the age of 19 she had graced the covers of not only *Vogue* magazine, but also *Life* [fig. 68] where she obviously learned the art of objectification and what it meant to 'pose' for an

²⁵⁰Lucy Irigaray *This Sex Which is Not One* (1977) trans. Catherine Porter Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985. I would like to acknowledge Cécil Whiting's useful discussion of gender constructions when applying Irigaray's understanding of mimesis to the work of Marisol.

anonymous public that is in many ways parallel to that of the art world.²⁵¹ By the time she was 30 she had not only divorced her first husband (the American writer Harry Mathews), but developed an artistic practice centred on 'her own' public execution of the Self.

In a similar way to my own understanding of Niki de Saint-Phalle's masquerade, historian of Pop Art Cécile Whiting has located mimetic strategies in the work of Marisol Escobar:

...between 1961 and 1966 ... Marisol assumed in this manner different roles of women primarily of the middle and upper-middle classes.... Her figures — her selves — portray brides, mothers, and wives; these women promenade with their families or socialize with other women. In these sculptures, Marisol appropriated and played with various female identities, including her own.²⁵²

Rereading Marisol's work after decades of neglect by art historians and feminist historians alike, Whiting proposes that Marisol should be "reread ... as a feminine subject in control of the processes of representation and self-representation, rather than as entirely determined by them."²⁵³ While I would want to agree with Whiting, I would hesitate to argue that Marisol, or Saint-Phalle, were fully in 'control' of these defining processes. As we have seen in the case of Saint-Phalle, these self-representational strategies were partly determined by a highly charged socio-political context.

²⁵¹Not the fitting byline on the *Life* cover which by chance points at her later embrace of ambiguity.

²⁵²Cécile Whiting "Figuring Marisol's Femininities" in *A Taste For Pop: Pop Art, Gender and Consumer Culture* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p.188.

²⁵³*Ibid.* 189.

A majority of critiques of Pop Art have ignored its potential to be read as critical since its superficial 'look' appears to go hand-in-hand with a vision tied to consumer culture. In a more interesting way, Irigaray has opened up a critical understanding of this issue of visibility by illuminating the patriarchal nature of this appearance:

In our culture, the predominance of the look over smell, taste, touch, hearing has brought an impoverishment of bodily relations. It has contributed to disembodiment of sexuality. The moment the look dominates, the body loses in materiality....The male sex becomes the sex because it is very visible, the erection is spectacular.²⁵⁴

While Duchamp had obliquely tried to illustrate the workings of this erotically charged visual culture through an anti-retinal art tied to the language of industry, Tinguely and Saint-Phalle would, through acts of mimesis, make visible this phallic spectacle.²⁵⁵ Just as Arman and Klein had divided up the universe into material and immaterial space, Tinguely and Saint-Phalle would divide up Duchamp's *Large Glass*. In this reading, Tinguely's moving machines occupied the lower *material* region of Duchamp's masculinized construction, while Saint-Phalle's increasingly feminized forms and actions would respond to *The Bride's* immaterial upper-region of "fantasy."

As we have now seen, the events related to the emergence of Pop Art in 1962 had serious consequences for the survival of an avant-garde tied to anarchist politics rooted in a radical form of individualism. If this moment

²⁵⁴Luce Irigaray *Les Femmes, la pornographie, l'érotisme* ed. Marie-Françoise Hans and Gilles Lapouge (Paris: Seuil, 1978), p.50 cited in Jones, p.285.

²⁵⁵See Molly Nesbitt's "The Language of Industry" in Thierry de Duve, ed.. *The Definitively Unfinished Marcel Duchamp*. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992, pp. 351-384.

has previously been celebrated as the emergence of an international Pop Art connected via the seminal influence of Marcel Duchamp, I suggest that it was also at this moment that collaborative experiments initiated by artists, critics and curators in France, Sweden and the United States collapsed. Rather than seeing individual forms of expressions united as one institutionalized happy family, we can now see the dysfunctional side of this union which forced various individuals into compromised positions and new aesthetic territory. Turning back to consider the awkward position Stockholm's Moderna Museet found itself in between 1963 and 1966, we will now consider how this awkwardness was not only in response to debates within the art world, but must also be read against the precarious position Sweden found itself in within international politics. It seems to me that just as Sweden would be asked to define its neutrality politics between the Cold War's superpowers, Moderna Museet found itself forced to address its relation to an American avant-garde. As I suggest, the direction Moderna Museet had taken since *Movement in Art* in 1961 must increasingly after 1963 have been understood as a 'false start' by Hulten and others. The following discussion sets out to provide a discursive link between art and politics. Central to this inquiry will be the role of sexual politics in allowing these independent attempts to surface and declare the centrality of the margins.

CHAPTER III

THE MECHANICAL BRIDE STRIPPED BARE IN STOCKHOLM, EVEN

By reading the history of the post-war avant-garde from the margins (Stockholm) rather than the centre (New York and Paris), my first two chapters expose a crisis in representation which by the mid-sixties had led to splintered relations between artists, curators, and critics engaged in cross-Atlantic cultural collaborations. If, by 1962, the meeting place for this international exchange can be described as having occurred on a tightrope suspended between European and American cultural institutions, by 1963, individual artists such as Niki de Saint-Phalle, Jean Tinguely, and Per-Olof Ultvedt found their identities falling into 'fixed' positions defined within an increasingly dominant New York centred art world. As this third chapter will show, at the moment these artists were forced to regroup and redefine their individual and collaborative artistic projects, Moderna Museet, under the leadership of Pontus Hulten, would also be forced to re-negotiate its position. While on the outside Moderna Museet appeared to have achieved reputable international attention and strong public support from its Swedish audience, the optimism that had surrounded initial exhibitions such as *Rörelse i konsten* and *Four Americans* would soon be understood by insiders as an abortive beginning. As the Swedish-American conflict over Vietnam began to heat up in 1965, Moderna Museet found itself forced to reconcile its artistic activities with the political reality outside its own doors. This last Chapter will show just how deeply involved Moderna Museet had become in a love affair with America. By 1966 the Swedish museum had managed to withdraw its affection and found its own identity. But as we know, breaking up is hard to do.

Love and Despair: The Compromising Success of Moderna Museet 1961 - 1965

Functioning as an extension of the National Museum, the Moderna Museet had, by 1958, managed to introduce contemporary international art to over 40,000 visitors on a shoestring budget.²⁵⁶ If these attendance figures were not impressive enough to convince state funding agencies of the public demand for modern art, the exhibitions produced under Hulten's direction between 1961 and 1964 would arrest their attention. Not only did *Movement in Art* bring in over 70,000 visitors, but the exhibition also initiated a lively public debate about the social role of the museum [see chapter two]. Between 1962 and 1964 the museum continued to attract attention with an extensive host of artists to whom Hulten had been introduced in New York by Bell Laboratory engineer Billy Klüver and the concrete poet and artist Öyvind Fahlström. Fahlström had been particularly important in bringing awareness of New York's art scene and underground culture to a Swedish public. A regular contributor throughout the sixties to the daily *Dagens Nyheter*, Fahlström managed to produce a vivid picture of an alternative lifestyle and experimental cultural events.²⁵⁷ Exhibitions such as *4 Amerikanare*, *The New American Cinema: New York Film*, and *New American Music and Poetry*, *Ben Shahn*, and *Jackson Pollock*, not only brought these experimental and exciting events to Stockholm, but they helped redirect discussion of contemporary art away from a previously Eurocentric Paris towards a more

²⁵⁶In 1958 the Museum had a budget of 30,000 Swedish Crowns [approx. 6,000 Cdn Dollars] to buy art with. Ulf Linde "Memoarer" in Granath, et. al., p.65.

²⁵⁷See for example Fahlström's "Orgiernas Brooklyn" [The Brooklyn of Orgies] in *Dagens Nyheter* (April 17, 1965), p.4 which reviews the American author Hubert Selby's *Last Exit to Brooklyn*. The detailed description of existence in Brooklyn's slum district includes discussion of prostitution, homosexuality, alcoholism and drugs.

'popular' New York. In this exchange, Stockholm's museum came to play a mediating role.

Perhaps this exhibition program was not so much a shift in attention from Europe to the United States as it was a diplomatic move to balance Hulten's interest in transcontinental discourses. Whatever the case may have been, the activities were considered successful by Swedish funding agencies who increased Moderna Museet's purchasing budget to 100.000 Crowns by 1964, and significantly granted a one time sum of 5,000,000 Crowns [1 million Dollars] to help purchase new work for its collection.²⁵⁸ It appears that the government was finally starting to realize the role the museum could play in cultural diplomacy.

This extraordinary amount of money handed down from the state was a direct response to *The Museum of Our Wishes*, an exhibition organized between December of 1963 and February 1964 by Hulten and Moderna Museets Vänner [fig. 69].²⁵⁹ Borrowing from an international range of collectors and dealers, a wide assortment of 20th Century Western artwork (available for purchase) was presented to the museum's newfound public as a visible proposal of what the museum could look like if only it had sufficient funds to fill perceived 'gaps' in its collection. A donation box was set up inside the museum to allow the gallery visitor to feel a part of this cultural investment. An outline and explanation of its avant-garde history was

²⁵⁸Ulf Linde "Memoarer" in Granath, et. al., p.60.

²⁵⁹A membership club initiated in 1953 as an extension of Nutida Konst [Contemporary Art], a club which had been existence since 1925. See Gerard Bonnier "Företal" Moderna Museet's Vänner *Önskemuseet* Stockholm: Tryckeri AB Björkmans Eftr., 1963, p.1. whose name translates to "Friends of Moderna Museet." The initial idea came from Östen Fagerlind, one of the board members, who with Linde expanded the idea into a large scale exhibition.

provided in the form of a lengthy catalogue written by Ulf Linde (who had by this time established himself as a well-known art critic for *Dagens Nyheter*, the largest of the Swedish dailies). This was accompanied by reproductions of the art work and the introduction "Artwork Has No Price" by Hulten. In his text, Hulten stressed the democratic nature of modern art by proposing that despite the monetary value society has placed on art, "that which is meaningful in art [still] belongs to all."²⁶⁰ This said, Hulten urged the reader to support their museum in its attempt to wrestle some of the most innovative modern art away from private collectors:

Even if prices for art are high, one has to attempt to bring together a collection of art by the innovators of modern art before it is too late. It is legitimate for a museum to pay a high price for an art work. Since art in a museum will belong to all, it can never be said to be too expensive. If integrated into the museum collection the art work gets rid of its resale value since it will not be sold.²⁶¹

Having morally positioned the economic side of the museum's collecting activities outside — yet at an arms-length distance from — the private interests of the art market, Hulten continued to offer reasons why it was necessary for a Swedish public institution to have an international art collection:

...The role of art is increasingly becoming larger as the content of our times is becoming incomprehensible, confused, and frightening. A country must have a place to store this myth-inspiring material, one has to produce a reference system and a source of inspiration. Especially in a land on the periphery, where major art events are rare and the import of foreign art is limited, where one risks being placed outside what happens in the centre. Only through knowledge about what is

²⁶⁰Pontus Hulten "Konstverk har inget pris" Moderna Museet's *Vänner Önskemuseet* Stockholm: Tryckeri AB Björkmans Eft., 1963, p.8.

²⁶¹*Ibid.*, pp.8-9.

happening can one produce one's own contribution.... The time has come to make a serious commitment to building a representative collection of international art. Let us wish each other success in this project.²⁶²

Backing up Hulten's plea for a collaborative purchase of history, Ulf Linde offered his historical account of the different movements in modern art represented in the exhibition. Seven categories of pre-World War II art were defined: Fauvism and Expressionism, Cubism, Futurism, Dada, Abstract Art, Classicism and Objectivity, Surrealism. Connected to these "roots in modernism's past," but moving beyond them, four general categories of post-1945 art were distinguished: Peintres de Tradition Francaise, Cold [Sträng] Abstraction, The Unformed, and finally New Realism represented by Tinguely, Klein, Rauschenberg and Johns. In Linde's account, the latter two movements aim to dissolve certain aspects of modernism:

[For these post-war artists] the beliefs held by the pioneers [of modern art] in formalist magic appears to have dissipated, and neither can [today's] youth understand art as a tool to reach bourgeois truths. Least of all can they accept that art should function like a stock market certificate. But what purpose does art have then? This question can lead to despair — but it does not necessarily do so. It can also be used as a searchlight to explore unknown territories where new values are beginning to grow.²⁶³

Reading this, it appears that Linde, like Hulten, wanted to sever the umbilical cord of gold tied to a bourgeois elite and replace it with a more egalitarian cultural life-support system that ran *parallel* to social democracy. As anticipated, this apparently 'collective' mandate appealed to the Socialist

²⁶²Ibid., p.8.

²⁶³Ulf Linde "Efter Kriget" Moderna Museet's Vänner *Önskemuseet* Stockholm: Tryckeri AB Björkmans Eftr., 1963, p.63.

government's Department of Culture who responded generously.²⁶⁴ Moderna Museet had thus by 1964 not only managed to maintain an active space for contemporary art, but had also established a strong historical collection on which they could build their own contemporary tradition.²⁶⁵

In his description of New Realism, Ulf Linde proposed that while one may despair of the complicit role artists explicitly play in the art market (and we can only presume that he is referring to the Pop artist), this 'other' new realism or 'unformed' art could function as a searchlight to explore unknown territories where new values were growing. By 1964, Moderna Museet had discovered a new path *away* from Pop art, but because of earlier commitments its public introduction would have to wait another year. Before this avenue could actively be explored, the museum had to fulfil its earlier commitments to a New York centred avant-garde.

Between February 29 and April 12, 1964, Moderna Museet presented the first large-scale Pop Art exhibition in Europe. Aptly titled *American Pop Art: 106 Forms of Love and Despair*, the exhibition included a wide selection of work by New York artists Jim Dine, Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg, James Rosenquist, George Segal, Andy Warhol, and Tom Wesselman [fig. 70]. For the catalogue cover and exhibition poster, Lichtenstein designed one of his

²⁶⁴For more information on the government's funding of Modern Museet, see Roland Pålsson's article "60-talet 'in nostalgiam'" in Granath and Niekels, pp.141-142. Pålsson took over as head for the Department of Ecclesiastik's newly formed Department of Culture in 1961 and remained a vital supporter of Hulthen's activities throughout the sixties.

²⁶⁵It should not go unmentioned that *Önskemuseet* did, despite its public success, receive criticism. Reviewing the exhibition in *Konstrevy*, Eugen Wretholm made clear that it "reflects a 'Paris centred overview'" that did not include work by pioneers of the *informel* such as Hans Hartung, Englishmen such as Ben Nicholson and Graham Sutherland, the Portugese Vieira da Silva, nor any abstract German paintings. Wretholm, Eugen "Utställningar i Stockholm: Hösten 1963" *Konstrevy* No. 1 (1964), p.32.

signature graphic images of a salesman's hand pointing directly at the viewer in the manner of "Uncle Sam Wants You!" [figs. 71] A fitting image at a moment when some artists and intellectuals felt that they were being drafted against their own will into the wrong aesthetic camp.

What must have read as an odd introduction to the exhibition, Hulten's text did not provide the usual enthusiastic sales pitch one would have expected to read in a museum catalogue. In fact, considering how much time and effort Hulten had invested in promoting an art tied to irony and humor, this introduction casts a rather dark shadow on an otherwise eye-popping experience:

It is a common mistake to believe that there is a great irony pointed at mass culture embedded in Lichtenstein's or Warhol's pictures.... This is in many ways a new art created from a different point of origin. It is the creation of a generation who feels powerless to transform the world ... and in order to survive is forced to accept it.... They partake in much of the world around them in a meaningless, unengaged manner. In relation to society and its problems they stand passive. Politics do not interest them.²⁶⁶

Hulten's description of these artists' 'apolitical' attitude and lack of irony may be an outrageously false accusation. Nevertheless, it did serve to distance Pop Art from a more apparently engaged and historical European avant-garde. By pointing to the former artists' "middle-class upbringing" in the United States, Hulten positioned them squarely in the lap (it is tempting to say "shopping cart") of a consumer-based mass culture:

²⁶⁶Pontus Hulten "Förord" *Amerikansk pop-konst: 106 former av kärlek och förtoiolan* Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1964, p.15 (pp.15-16).

They are not bohemians. They have never had to confront real external pressures. Most of them are too young to have participated in the war. As artists they have reached success and economic security with a speed rarely seen before. This economic success is what they strive for. They are not especially intellectual, nor do they have a deep interest in anything but pure personal experience.... Their way to respond to society is personal, not social.²⁶⁷

Despite his own distinct interest in radical individualism, Hulten had never advocated an anti-social position. After all, even if he did not see himself as a socialist, it was within social spaces such as Moderna Museet where anarchist 'play' could be activated. With this in mind, Hulten's image of Pop Art reads as one of *despair* — a position to be avoided. Scrambling to make something positive of the exhibition, Hulten, without suggesting that the work was socially critical, proposed that the 106 forms of love and despair on display were desperate attempts at obtaining the freedom to experience life:

Pop Art is not social criticism. Instead one can say that it shows a longing for relaxation. It is desperately taking part in an unavoidable environment, and being subtly optimistic about the power of vulgarity and banality. On a personal level, one object is not better than the next. If there is something of interest one can manage to find in these often similar copies of objects, it is the triumph of feelings. The Pop artists do not ask any questions and have no agendas. What they want to offer us, is by all accounts, a new way of feeling.²⁶⁸

Withholding a public judgment of Pop art, Hulten concluded his introduction with the rhetorical question in brackets: "Will [these artists] be

²⁶⁷Ibid..

²⁶⁸Ibid..

successful in fulfilling that part of the experiential vacuum which is the bomb's ultimate reason?"²⁶⁹

If Hulten's text could function as a means to distance the irony and social critique of a European avant-garde from the individualism he felt was part and parcel with a New York vanguard, then the American art critic Alan R. Solomon's accompanying essay "The New American Art" achieved the same separation but with opposite intentions. Countering Hulten's image of "despair," Solomon suggests that these artists managed to work their way out of the confined historical circumstances faced by both the Abstract Expressionists and Neo-Dadaists. Aware of the activities of artists like Rauschenberg and Johns, and free from a dependence on the European avant-garde's roots, the new generation of American Pop artists approached their environment "spontaneously" and "independent from each other."²⁷⁰ According to Solomon, Pop art had not been seriously considered by critics who fundamentally misread the work as either a form of social protest or cynicism:

I have argued elsewhere how extremely wrong this understanding is by showing how these artists are all working from personal experiences which have no interest or connection to social or political manifestations. It is with great regret that one has put the label Pop Art on this group's work. Regretful, since this has created such great confusion amongst its public. The term Pop Art was coined in England amongst a group of artists who were most interested in expressing their social dissatisfaction and felt a strong need to change established standards. These problems carry no interest for the American painters who accept life as it is and instead of downplaying and dumping on our

²⁶⁹Ibid..

²⁷⁰Alan R. Solomon "Den Nya amerikanska konsten" *Amerikansk pop-konst: 106 former av kärlek och förtvivlan* Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1964, p.19 (pp.17-23).

vulgar civilization, they celebrate it optimistically with new standard measures they themselves have invented.²⁷¹

In Solomon's construction, the Pop artist was uniquely American precisely because he refused to acknowledge his work in an historical continuum. Read against Hulten's understanding of Pop art as a movement rooted in despair, Solomon's text detects an American love affair free from a European historical consciousness. This nicely explains the title of the exhibition and points to the former's fear of losing irony and the latter's celebration of its loss.

During the fall of 1964, Moderna Museet would once again play host to New Yorkers. This time it was Merce Cunningham's Dance Company who, during its world tour, received an invitation to visit Stockholm for a summer vacation. Put up at Ultvedt's country house just outside Stockholm, the performers (who included Rauschenberg, Steve Paxton, John Cage, David Tudor, Caroline Brown, Alex and Deborah Hay, Robert Morris, Yvonne Rainer, and Trisha Brown) were also invited to organize at the museum a series of "happenings" at the museum which became known as *5 New York Evenings*.²⁷² In Hulten's words, this would be "the last big organized event in what had been the springtime of collaborations with the New York artists...."²⁷³

²⁷¹Ibid., p.23.

²⁷²In light of what we know from the private correspondence between Linde and Ultvedt, the fact that they stayed at Ultvedt's place seems awkward.

²⁷³Hulten "The New York Connection" Granath, et. al., p.56.

Among the many performances, *5 New York Evenings* included Merce Cunningham's *Summerspace* [fig. 72], Robert Morris and Yvonne Rainer's *Olympia and Check*, Steve Paxton's *Jag vill gärna telefonera* [*I Would Gladly Make a Phone Call*], and Rauschenberg's *The Elgin Tie* [fig. 73]. For Hulten this must have been an awkward moment. As an early avant-garde matchmaker, Hulten was now witnessing "the end of a long beautiful summer" of collaborations which had started off as an anarchist's collaborative affair but was now ending in collective despair.

Despite this apparent conflict, in March of 1965 Rauschenberg's *Illustrations to Dante's Divine Comedy* were presented with much public attention. For Hulten and the museum, a Rauschenberg exhibition shortly after his international success at the Venice Biennale in the summer of 1964 (he was the first American to win the Lion d'Or) was no doubt an important feather in their respective caps. But this engagement must also have been an extremely uncomfortable compromise for someone in Hulten's shoes as he attempted not to fall from the tightrope he himself had helped to stretch between various individual factions.

By the spring of 1965, Pontus Hulten would be "grounded;" forced into a position where he could not do another New York event without fearing public and private execution. With its new found public visibility, Moderna Museet was now not only being pressured by a small group of intellectuals to sever ties with the United States, but was increasingly attracting criticism from a broader public responding to politics related to American military interventions in Vietnam. By February of 1965, anti-American sentiments were reaching a peak. To understand what this escalation meant for the

museum, as well as the country as a whole, we have to position Swedish foreign politics next to the history of the post-war avant-garde in the first chapters.

Neutrality, Independence and Internationalism:

The Cultural Formation of Cold War Politics in Sweden, 1958-65.

Parallel to Hulten's attempt to forge an independent cultural position between Paris and New York in Stockholm, Sweden was by the late fifties struggling to define its identity between the Cold War superpowers. Just as we have seen in the cultural history of this period, Sweden has also, until recently, largely been ignored in diplomatic history. With a population of only approximately 8 million, but covering the fourth largest land area in Europe, Sweden occupied an interesting position within a post-war political terrain. Although relatively isolated geographically, and claiming political neutrality, Sweden was nonetheless an active player in international politics and played an important role in foreign relations. We have seen in the first chapter how Sweden was considered a model society by many on the Left in the early fifties. By the early 1960s, Sweden was still lauded by many countries, including the United States, for the high standard of living it had achieved and the "middle-way" it had successfully forged. While being governed by a Socialist government since 1932, Sweden had become one of the most Americanized countries in Europe, and had, even according to Lyndon Johnson, achieved "happy and honorable bonds" with the United States."²⁷⁴

²⁷⁴Fredrik Logevall "The Swedish-American Conflict Over Vietnam" *Diplomatic History* (Summer 1993), p.424.

The apparently comfortable relationship that literature has constructed of this time and place, would however soon be put into question, for there were significant underlying tensions which would lead to heated controversy by the summer of 1965. Sweden's *public* refusal to join defense pacts such as the Brussels Treaty Organization, and its later version North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), coupled with its attempt to set up independent defense pacts with other Scandinavian countries, had irritated the United States for a number of years. What undercut this irritation was a *secret* alliance forged between NATO and the Swedish government.²⁷⁵ Geopolitically caught between the two superpowers of the Soviet Union and The United States and recognizing its limited sovereignty in this context, the Swedish government increasingly realized its role within international politics as that of a buffer state.²⁷⁶ In this balancing act, which is paralleled in Hulten's museum activities, the Social Democratic government, led by Prime Minister Tage Erlander, was *publicly* firm in its stand that Sweden could only remain neutral by avoiding explicit ties to the West.

By the mid-sixties, just as the Moderna Museet had become intimately connected and associated with an American form of art, avoiding explicit ties

²⁷⁵This was revealed during the summer of 1992 when the newly elected conservative government, in an attempt to strengthen its relations with the European Union (EG), admitted to Sweden's ties to NATO during the 1950s and '60s. This "secret" appeared in documents related to the trial of the Swedish general Stig Wennerström who was revealed to have been a Cold War spy for Russia while simultaneously being involved in linking the Swedish War Intelligence Centre (Svenska stridsledningscentralen) with NATO centres in Norway and Denmark. See "Hyckleri?" in *Expressen* (May 27, 1992), p.2; and "Spionförhör bekräftar NATO kontakten" *Dagens Nyheter* (May 27, 1992), p.1&6; These issues can also be followed in the Parliamentary debates regarding Swedish Neutrality. See *Riksdagen Protokoll* (1991-1992, May 25, 1992), in answer to interpellations, p.2-16.

²⁷⁶My use of the term "buffer state" is in reference to a study edited by John Chay and Thomas E. Ross entitled *Buffer States in World Politics* Colorado: Westview Press, 1986 in which a *buffer area* is defined as "an area...controlled by one or more small states and located between two opposing — and much greater — powers... The buffer system dictates that neither (great power) can dominate the system." p.90.

to the West was becoming increasingly difficult for a country trying to remain on the economically profitable road to democracy that an American-based consumer culture provided. Increasingly, Sweden was beginning to look 'explicitly' Americanized, an uncomfortable fact for many on the Left in Sweden and abroad. In the spring of 1965, at a moment when Swedish liberalism under a Socialist government was being pressured to find some way to mark out its political differences from American liberalism, an escalation of major American ground forces into Vietnam would provide Sweden with an opportunity to reposition and redefine its neutrality politics.

By February of 1965, American bombing of North Vietnam had begun. Not only did it push the war into a new phase, but it shifted much international opinion against the United States' involvement.²⁷⁷ This was particularly the case in Sweden where diplomatic tensions mounted rapidly and had erupted on an alarming scale by June when a series of public demonstrations took place in the streets of Stockholm [fig. 74], putting pressure on the government to respond. Speaking at a July 30 meeting of the Christian Democrats in 1965, Olof Palme, then Minister of Transport and Communications, declared his objections to American involvement in Vietnam by stating that "it is illusory to believe that demands for social justice can be met with violence and military force."²⁷⁸ "The Social Democrat's basic moral value," he continued, "forces us at each turn to stand on the side of the repressed against oppressors, on a miserable and poor

²⁷⁷An escalation of major American ground forces into Vietnam took place during the spring of 1965. See Fredrik Logevall's "De Gaulle, Neutralization, and American Involvement in Vietnam, 1963-1964" *Pacific Historical Review* (February 1992), pp.69-102.

²⁷⁸Yngve Möller *Sverige och Vietnam: ett unikt kapitel i svensk utrikespolitik* Stockholm: Tidens Förlag, 1992, p.39. Möller's book is the most thorough discussion of Palme's speech and along with Logevall's article gives an excellent overview of the Swedish-American conflict over Vietnam.

peoples side against their users and lords."²⁷⁹ Palme's cutting remarks did not go unnoticed by American Embassy officials who were quick to voice their objections to what they understood as a direct attack on U.S. foreign politics. Following suit, the State Department in Washington demanded "clarification" from the Swedish Government as to whether or not they supported Palme's statements. Although Swedish opinion was not uniform, Erlander and foreign minister Torsten Nilsson publicly supported Palme's position.²⁸⁰

In the spring of 1966 further irritation for the United States would be added to the wound caused by Sweden's position regarding Vietnam when Erlander decided to allow the Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal to be held in Stockholm the following year. The tribunal, which included celebrated opponents to the Vietnam War such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Isaac Deutscher, and others, had been banned from Paris by Charles de Gaulle. Responding to this decision, the Swedes were informed by the Swedish Embassy that President Johnson was "disappointed and disturbed."²⁸¹ As historian Frederik Logevall and others have shown, the summer of 1965 had been the turning point marking a new direction in Swedish foreign policy, embodying a more activist approach to international issues and a greater determination to stake out a position between the

²⁷⁹Ibid., p.38-39.

²⁸⁰See *Dagens Nyheter* "Vi står fast om Vietnam" (August 3, 1965), p.5. Erlander is quoted as saying that "I have nothing more to say today. The Government's view regarding the Vietnam conflict has been criticized by America. We have had our say. And this we stand by." The intense Swedish press debate concerning American involvement in Vietnam during the summer of 1965 has been the focus for a doctoral dissertation from the University of Lund. See Eva Queckfeldt '*Vietnam*': *Tre svenska tidnignars syn på vienam frågan* Phd. Lund Universitet: Bibliotheca Histroica Lundensis, 1981. The articles from this press debate have also been collected in book form under the title *Vietnam i svensk press debatt Sommaren 1965*. Stockholms Universitet.

²⁸¹Logevall (1993), p.429.

superpowers.²⁸² This new direction by Sweden, which sought to forge a more sovereign path for itself, ultimately strained Swedish-American relations to the point where both the Johnson and Nixon administrations issued numerous threats of impending economic sanctions.²⁸³

Although Yngve Möller, former Swedish ambassador to the United States, in his impressive study *Sverige och Vietnam Kriget* (1992) has stressed the important role played by Swedish intellectuals in forging national opinion by voicing their strong objections to American involvement in Vietnam, he, like other historians, fails to discuss the intense cultural politics that were being played out next to these so called 'hard' politics.

In my reconstruction of this time and place, these two parallel histories must both be recognized in order to account for the cultural politics at play [see figs. 73 and 75]. As described earlier, on March 19, 1965, precisely when American involvement in Vietnam escalated and what has been called the "Swedish-American conflict" intensified, Moderna Museet opened its exhibition of 34 illustrations for Dante's *Divine Comedy* by Robert Rauschenberg. A week later, at the very moment Swedish political commentators began attacking America's role in Vietnam in the daily press, art critic Ulf Linde wrote the first of what would become four 'seminal' articles denouncing the New York avant-garde in the liberal daily *Dagens Nyheter*.²⁸⁴

²⁸²Ibid., p.427.

²⁸³Ibid., p.444.

²⁸⁴There are four articles in total. See Ulf Linde's "Den Öppna konsten: Arvet från Munchen" *Dagens Nyheter* (March 26, 1965), p.4; "Den Öppna konsten: Myten om den historielösa formen" *Dagens Nyheter* (March 30, 1965), p.4; "Den Öppna konsten: Den bild 'man' har" *Dagens Nyheter* (April 4, 1965), p.4; "Den Öppna konsten: Dialogue utan slut" *Dagens Nyheter* (May 13, 1965), p.4.

Four Articles: Ulf Linde's Critique of Open Art

Having for years supported Moderna Museet and having been one of the earliest defenders of the new "open art" from New York in the popular press, Linde's first article "Den Öppna konsten: Arvet från Munchen" (The Open Art: the Inheritance from Munich) shifts his support of the American vanguard to a critique of it without contradicting his past judgments in the process [fig. 76]. To achieve this, Linde focused his attention on the 'Pop Art phenomenon' not by dealing directly with the artists and their work, but by showing how the 'meaning' of the work has been created "outside the studio" to produce a series of misunderstandings. He finds the best example of this external corruption in an article by Alan R. Solomon, published only a few months earlier in *Art International*. It should be pointed out that Solomon had just served as the U.S. Commissioner for the Venice Biennale, an event in which Rauschenberg had 'stolen' the international prize from the Europeans for an unprecedented first time.²⁸⁵ "Jim Dine and the Psychology of the New Art" was published in October, 1964, and as in his essay for Moderna Museet's Pop Art exhibition earlier that year, Solomon aimed to secure a distinctly American interpretation of Pop:

A series of exhibitions in Europe during the past twelve months, first in London and Stockholm..., has only succeeded in extending the confusion abroad, since European critics have consistently

²⁸⁵Laurie Monahan has revealed the cultural engineering that took place behind the scenes of Rauschenberg's victory at the Venice Biennale. Contextualizing this art in relation to the Kennedy Administration's rhetoric of the New Frontier, Monahan links the rise of Neo-Dada and Pop Art in the United States to American cultural and political expansionism. See Laurie Monahan's "Cultural Cartography: American Designs at the 1964 Venice Biennale" in Guilbaut, Serge Ed. *Reconstructing Modernism: Art in New York, Paris and Montreal 1945-1964* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1990, pp. 369-416.

misunderstood the work. The American exhibition at the Venice Biennale has been described in the European press as an invasion of Pop, and Rauschenberg, the International Prize winner, has been crowned King of Pop Art, despite the fact that none of the artists in the exhibition regards himself, or should be regarded, as a Pop Artist."²⁸⁶

As he had argued in his earlier text for Moderna Museet's Pop Art exhibition, Solomon maintained that Pop was distinct from the assemblage art of someone like Rauschenberg. This enabled him to sever any potential ties to European art and make the argument that Pop artists responded to their immediate lived environment in a natural and "original" way. Reacting to the anti-European thrust of Solomon's article, Linde, while choosing not to quote the above paragraph as an example of Solomon's pro-Americanism, picked the following few sentences as a "typical" example of the attitude adopted by American critics — as well as the Pop artists themselves:

Instead of protesting, or satirizing, they are telling us that anything goes, and that the mystery of art does not depend on *any* imaginable preconception. This openness, so much a determinant in the attitude of the new American generation, comes not from indifference, but from a desire for a new esthetic and a new morality. Such a point of view is absolutely incomprehensible to Europeans, except for a few who have had some taste of contemporary American life. Oriented toward Cartesian rationalism by a long and rich tradition, the ambiguity of attitude and the apparent absence of familiar disciplines (there is, of course, a new discipline) annoy and distract them.²⁸⁷

For Linde, the first and last sentence in this quote sufficed to illustrate what he saw as an inherent contradiction in Solomon's thinking. If a new discipline is established, he asked, "doesn't this prevent a series of things

²⁸⁶Alan R. Solomon "Jim Dine and Psychology of the New Art" *Art International* (October 1964), p.52 (52-56).

²⁸⁷Solomon quoted in Linde Linde's "Den Öppna konsten: Arvet från München" *Dagens Nyheter* (March 26, 1965), p.4.

from happening which would have been possible prior to the establishment of the discipline?" In other words, can "anything" still happen in the new order of an "open" art?

Understood as a major contradiction, this was an aspect of his own writing that Solomon must have understood and tried to cover up. Linde found proof of this awareness (what he referred to as his "slightly larger intelligence") in a text by Solomon from 1963 on Rauschenberg's *Monogram* in which he distinguished between a "rational" and "utterly unexplainable" level of meaning:

Its [*Monogram's*] "rightness" and clarity can not be denied, and yet the goat absolutely defies any kind of rational explanation; it has no meaning, in the conventional sense. Yet there is a certain justness in the illogical association of the two elements which makes the object eminently satisfying to us, on a purely intuitive and utterly inexplicable plane.²⁸⁸

This passage for Linde was a clear example of Solomon's many contradictions. In his former argument, Solomon had proposed that "a

²⁸⁸Quoted in Linde's article but here sited from the original text (for translation purposes): Alan R. Solomon *Robert Rauschenberg* New York: The Jewish Museum, 1963 reprinted in Steven Henry Madoff (Ed.) *Pop Art: A Critical History* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, pp.22 (19-24). In this longer text, Solomon describes Rauschenberg as "a kind of esthetic tightropewalker." Continuing he proposes that Rauschenberg is "easing his way along with a solid sense of balance above the pitfalls of ugliness, vulgarity or slickness. The sureness of his performance depends on taking chances; his absolute tact and his impeccable taste are concealed beneath the facility and the abandon of the performance.... He might seem to depend too much on the bizarre encounter and the happy accident, on excessive statements and outlandish propositions. *However, a more careful look at his intentions and at his way of working makes the absolute refinement of his position clear enough.*" (my italics). Solomon adds that Rauschenberg's ideas "have widely influenced the new generation of artists, as well as some of Rauschenberg's contemporaries, so that Tinguely's constructions with radios [for example]... have become almost commonplace." p.24. The concluding paragraph is completely devoted to separating Rauschenberg from the European representative in New York, Marcel Duchamp: "Rauschenberg has often been compared with Duchamp.... The fact is that Rauschenberg was not particularly conscious of Duchamp until quite late, until his own position had been for the most part defined." *Ibid.*.

certain relationship between the parts of an artwork, a certain structure" can through *intuition* prepare the viewer for an "unexpected satisfaction." Agreeing with Solomon on the order of things up to this point, Linde however observed that since writing this in 1963, the word *intuition* had been subtly replaced with *instinct*. More precisely, Solomon was now arguing for "an unchanging instinct, grounded in human nature," something distinctly different from intuition tied to an intentional will.²⁸⁹

Here we have the crux of the problem for Linde. After all, if all of "us" (to use Solomon's word) have instinctual capabilities of understanding something (such as Rauschenberg's *Monogram*), but not all of us understand things the same way, would this not suggest that some viewers (perhaps the Europeans in question) were responding to the work in an "unnatural" way? For Linde, this was indeed Solomon's argument and it hinged on a proposition wherein:

...some people have had their aesthetic sensibilities ruined. By insisting on unnatural value systems in their thought processes, they have managed to repress their instincts — they quite simply suffer from psychological conflicts.... The person who does not share Solomon's value system is in this sense an unnatural individual and a neurotic. This is undoubtedly a curious conclusion — considering that it was reached with an argument defending total openness!²⁹⁰

This said, Pop Art, despite its declared "openness," had subtly (through the writings of someone like Solomon) introduced a 'fully developed doctrine' defining Pop Art as a natural cultural phenomena:

²⁸⁹Linde "Den Öppna konsten: Arvet från Munchen" *Dagens Nyheter* (March 26, 1965), p.4.

²⁹⁰Ibid..

Solomon's opinions are shared by most writers dealing with the new American painting — one meets almost everywhere opinions marked by an anti-intellectual position coupled with a belief in some mystical quality in the work, an 'order' which releases instinctual — and therefore 'correct' — feelings in the beholder.²⁹¹

The dominant source for this 'anti-intellectual' and 'mystical' argument for instinct was to be found in John Cage's book *Silence* (1961), a text familiar to American artists as well as to Swedish readers of *Konstrevy* who had read it translated by Öyvind Fahlström as early as 1961.²⁹² For readers of *Art International*, the seminal influence of Cage (rather than Duchamp) had also been promoted by numerous influential writers in addition to Solomon.

For example, in a text from 1963, Barbara Rose suggests that John Cage had been one of the first to "understand the deadness of Europe, and [had tried] to find some way out of it."²⁹³ Like Solomon, Rose had ambitiously constructed a distinctly American origin for what she called the "New Dada," a construction which separated these artists from the historical burden of Europe:

²⁹¹Ibid..

²⁹²See Cage, John "Om Robert Rauschenberg, konstnär, och hans arbete" Translated by Öyvind Fahlström. *Konstrevy* No.5-6, 1961, pp.166-174.

In this text, Linde finds a clear example of why John Cage had become known as the 'mentor of the pops': "People's feelings are constantly woken up in confrontation with nature. Doesn't a big mountain evoke a feeling of wonder — whether we want it to or not? — ... What is more tremendous than lightning and sound of thunder? These reactions in response to nature are mine... — feelings exist amongst those who have them. And sounds, if you let them be themselves, do not demand that those who hear them do so without feeling something. — Not an attempt to understand something which has been said, because if something had been said, the sounds would have been formed into words. Only an awareness of the activity of sound." [sic], Ibid..

²⁹³Barbara Rose "Dada, Then and Now" *Art International* (January, 1963), pp. 23-28 reprinted in Steven Henry Madoff's *Pop Art: A Critical History* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, p.63.

That European Dada did not bear root in America, and that the American experience was not describable in Dada terms, is illustrated by the fate of the Dadaists who came to settle in this country: Duchamp, still the revered pontiff of the avant-garde, paints no more; Grosz, the fervent 'Propagandada' experienced a breakdown in America and returned to Germany to spend his last days: Hülsenbeck, credited with bringing Dada from Zürich to Berlin, is a psychiatrist in New York.... We must therefore try to find an American and not a European source for new Dada.... [The] common origin... is in the ideas and experiments of the avant-garde composer, John Cage. Cage ... evolved theories about music that were very original, very American and very adaptable to the visual arts.... In *Silence*, his recently published lectures and papers, we find the seeds of many, if not all, new Dada concepts — the use of the ordinary and the commonplace, the familiar and the banal in art, the consecration of the unique, unrepeatable moment, the juxtaposition of anomalies.²⁹⁴

Unlike Solomon, Rose admitted that "New Dada was often a peculiarly and often chauvinistically American solution to the problem of where to go...."²⁹⁵ Despite this admission, Rose's position represented the same chauvinism as William Seitz had before her (in the *Art of Assemblage* catalogue) and Solomon thereafter. To contradict all of them, Linde needed to answer a question of his own: if Cage, rather than Duchamp, was being constructed in American art criticism as the original "father" of these ideas, "just how original were these views on art; had there really been no one to think like Cage before Cage?"²⁹⁶

It didn't take much effort for Linde to answer his own question. Cage himself, he observes, had admitted that he had outside influences. But while Cage sometimes referred to Dada, Erik Satie, and occasionally Arnold Schönberg, he more often played out Eastern and Zen influences against his

²⁹⁴Ibid., 62.

²⁹⁵Ibid., p.63

²⁹⁶Ibid..

European ties. Linde believed that this revealed a reluctance by Cage to acknowledge his connection to Schönberg. After all,

...during the thirties Cage was a student of Schönberg who was at the time living in Los Angeles. It is of course difficult to know exactly what was said during these lessons — but one thing is for sure: nothing that Cage would ever write would mean something new for Arnold Schönberg!²⁹⁷

To link Cage historically to Schönberg was no doubt a clever attempt at contradicting writers like Solomon and Rose, but Linde dug an even deeper historical hole for the American avant-garde by providing Schönberg with roots in the mystical 'spirituality' of Kandinsky's expressionist paintings and writings.

Just as Cage had begun to know (and understand) Schönberg in Los Angeles during the thirties, Schönberg, he notes, had befriended Kandinsky in Munich around 1916. Since Rauschenberg was taught by Cage at Black Mountain, Linde could see a clear historical lineage originating in European Expressionism. Considering this Kandinsky—Schönberg—Cage—Rauschenberg historiography, Linde suggests that the similarity between Cage's writings in *Silence* and Kandinsky's writing *On the Spiritual in Art* are unavoidable:

Both get their examples from nature, from *everything* which surrounds humans when they want to describe how feelings arise. It is this total awareness, or openness, that both understand as a kind of deep innocence... It is in people's *nature* where the saving powers are hidden — in that which is spontaneous, irrational, and instinctive in her. (Far away in the labyrinth of the history of ideas one can imagine Rousseau being brought to tears)... Cage often demands that sound

²⁹⁷Linde, p.4.

should just be itself. Kandinsky demands the same of colour and form. In his *Über das Geistige in der Kunst*, he says that they should not represent anything.... While Cage's *Silence...* is vital and full of humour in almost every way, I think it is pointless to try to find a single original thought in the book. Considering the ideas in it, it is clear that they could have been written by any old subscriber to *Der Sturm*.²⁹⁸

Having thus grounded the Pop Art phenomenon in early 20th century Expressionist doctrines, Linde concludes his first of four articles by making it clear that he is not interested in debunking individual artwork, but rather anxious to question the 'direction' certain interpretations have taken due to "doctrines" in art history. These directions, he admits, are necessary to define what art is, "and give art new life when the old meaning seems dead." But one should also realize that "every definition is doomed to be provisional."²⁹⁹

For a Eurocentric individualist such as Linde, Solomon's arguments must have read as an attempt to "fix" individual creations within a larger "open" terrain tied to a defense of American individualism rather than the radical individual position which Linde understood the European artists to be striving for via Duchamp and Stirner. Just as Solomon was distancing his avant-garde from Europe in order to argue for a collective American art movement, Linde was distancing his army of artists from the United States in order to protect them from falling out of individual collaboration into more 'popular' and "open" forms of collectivity. In order to return intentionality to artistic practices, Linde had to retreat into a philosophical game of wit and

²⁹⁸Ibid.. It is worth noting that Linde feminizes the instinctual side of human nature by referring to "her." We will see in his later articles that he masculinizes reason and intellect.

²⁹⁹Ibid..

irony just as we have seen Saint-Phalle, Tinguely, and Ultvedt play in the previous chapter. Unlike the arguments which developed in the United States, the Swedish counter-arguments had a very different "public" form as it was not just disseminated in art journals, but discussed very seriously in the popular press. This was no doubt a crucial ingredient to Moderna Museet's impressive attendance records and success. I would suggest that by 1965 it had also been provided with a highly informed public opinion that could turn against the museum.

At the end of March, the second of the four articles appeared under the title "Den Öppna konsten: Myten om den historielösa formen" ("The Open Art: The Myth Surrounding the Ahistorical Form"). Here Linde builds on his previous argument which suggested that through an expressionist tradition, artists as diverse as Cage, Rauschenberg and the Pop artists had been unwilling to differentiate between art and nature. Quoting T.S. Eliot's anti-expressionist sentiment from 1917, Linde agreed that:

no art can exist without a dialogue with the past — nor can any artist exist. One can only create an artwork through the conscious energy that is released by the actual word art; something else is not possible. This is why the thought of an art which relies only on instinct is in itself a lie.³⁰⁰

To simplify this point to the lay reader, and simultaneously to make a Duchampian pun to a more informed audience, Linde suggests that Kandinsky (and by extension Schönberg, Cage and Rauschenberg) was wrong to suggest that you need to empty out meaning from colour in order to achieve an instinctual response. After all, wasn't Kandinsky "forced to steal"

³⁰⁰Ibid., p.4.

from each coloured form its *history*? "The way he wrote about it suggests that it doesn't matter if he painted the form with a brush and water colour, or a dog happened to have let go of his urine. What purpose would be served to call the spot made by a dog *art*?" Continuing to poke away at the American vanguard, Linde created both a formal and a historical link between Rauschenberg's and Dada artist Kurt Schwitters' work. The purpose for all this, he declared, was to show that the American critics "myth of an ahistorical form — with all its anti-intellectualism — is in itself as much an intellectual construction" as it is an historically given theory like any other artistic program in the twentieth century.³⁰¹ This said, Linde concluded that "despite its claims of lacking preconditioned direction, this [myth] is in fact one of the most absolutist theories."³⁰²

What Linde constructed with these first two articles is a rather questionable picture of a New York avant-garde tradition which he argued had emerged as a fully developed doctrine by the mid-sixties. In his following two articles Linde developed the other, European, side of this picture. As a counter-image to an emasculated American avant-garde tied to concepts of *nature* and *instinct*, Linde now masculinized a contemporary European avant-garde position by tying it to a *social* tradition and the more intellectual concept of *intuition*. If the former avant-garde was understood to be historically 'locked' into an Expressionist tradition via John Cage, the latter was conceptually 'free' via the seminal influence of Marcel Duchamp.

³⁰¹Ibid..

³⁰²Ibid..

"Den Öppna konsten: Den bild 'man' har" ("The Open Art: The Picture 'One/Man' Has"*), was published on April 4, 1965, and began Linde's reconstruction of an avant-garde position that could recover tradition by putting emphasis on intuition rather than instinct. This distinction would become crucial for Linde in his attempt to salvage an *intentional* moral position for the individual in society. This critical play between an inner and outer space (as Wittgenstein had put it), would in many ways echo the preparedness ideology of Swedish Existentialists (who as we saw in chapter 1 had formulated their own socio-individual *responsibility* to replace a *resistance* leveled into a popular front mentality).

In formulating this distinction, Linde understood well that a defense of intentionality against the 'openness' of interpretation could be in the end read as a return to the *archism* which Rabbe Enckell had lamented in his "Defence of Classicism" a few years earlier. What Linde needed to preserve in his own argument for 'competence' and responsibility was a *self-conscious individual expression* that could reject the *collective consciousness* which he saw argued for in the new open art, the latter representing a fall into a state of false consciousness.

For Linde, this self-conscious position depended on a play between the individual and society. Situated in this *in between* space, art, for Linde, produced language problems similar to what Ludwig Wittgenstein in his *Philosophical Investigations* called 'language-games.' Relying heavily on

* Although the subtitle to this article appears simple enough in English: "The Picture 'One' Has," the title is much more ambiguous and loaded in Swedish. The Swedish word "man" can mean "one" (as in "The Picture 'One' Has"), or it could mean "Man" (As in "The Picture 'Man' Has"), and being aware of Linde's interest in Max Stirner, "Man" can also read as the "fixed" concept of "Man" described in *The Ego and His Own*.

Wittgenstein's late theories, Linde understood words and pictures (*bilder*) of language as having meaning only insofar as there exists some public criteria for their proper use. In this line of reasoning, a completely private language (one would only be used to speak of one's own inner experience) was not possible. Wittgenstein, however, did not dismiss inner experiences. Having been skeptical of both the idea of an art completely 'open' or 'closed' to interpretation, the last two articles precariously set out to balance Linde's own position. To do this he would have to keep his line of argument *straight*.

With a reproduction of an abstract drawing by the French Expressionist Henri Michaux (an artist who had declared that his pictures were "diagrams of his soul") contrasted with a picture of similar *appearance* drawn by one of Jean Tinguely's *Meta-matic* machines, Linde illustrated that while the two images "looked" the same, it would of course be absurd to suggest that both works looked the way they did because of an expression of their "soul" intentions [fig. 77]. After all, the energy necessary for Tinguely's machine came from a motor, not some kind of inner soul.

Linde admitted that his skepticism toward complete artistic autonomy was not something new. He suggested that Paul Valéry, in a text on Leonardo da Vinci, had revealed a similar skepticism towards the idea that the artist could convey his 'inner life.' Particularly interesting for Linde was Valéry's use of the term 'l'esprit du publique,' rather than 'spectator' as the former describes a less determined individual, a less determined subject. For Linde, determination risked becoming too subjective:

I do not think that there can be an isolated subject who interprets the picture, the mark — or whatever is being interpreted. The act of

understanding something *as* something, to understand a meaning in some kind of physical way (factum), is an act which as far as I can understand takes place above the individual.... I can perhaps put it this way: There can not be an 'I understand' that is not at the same time 'this is how *one/man* can understand' — and in this case 'man' suggests other people: living, dead, or not yet born. To interpret a symbol — such as a symbol for a feeling, or a plastic symbol — is a social activity. It is not a unique subject who finds meaning, but it is 'man' in yourself — 'the generalized other,' to borrow a wonderful expression from the turn of the century American philosopher George H. Mead.³⁰³

Having made his argument against the idea of an individual so unique as to be able to create meaning in isolation from the social world, Linde would now dialectically shift his position to show that this unavoidable "openness" of representation should not be read as a critique of the unique individual. There exists after all, "that which has 'a part in others,' but also something which addresses itself as 'I.'"

If Valéry provided Linde with an historical understanding of an "l'esprit du publique," T.S. Eliot would provide him with an extreme counterpoint to balance this understanding of intentionality. "I wonder what is meant by intention?" Eliot had once pondered, "One tries to express something, but you never know what it is until it is expressed."³⁰⁴ For Linde, T.S. Eliot was not the only artist or writer in the twentieth century to have been forced to come to terms with the "unique I's" role in the artistic process. Henri Matisse, for example, was another. By acknowledging and laying claim to both the historical avant-garde and modernist traditions, Linde was attempting to attain a levitated position *between* high art and mass culture.

³⁰³Ulf Linde "Den Öppna konsten: Den bild 'man' har" ("The Open Art: The Picture 'One/Man' Has"), was published on April 4, 1965, p.4.

³⁰⁴Ibid..

As cultural historian Andreas Huyssen has noted about this 'high/low' relationship, "in relation to gender and sexuality, the historical avant-garde was by-and-large as patriarchal, misogynist, and masculinist as the major trends of modernism."³⁰⁵ As Linde's following line of argument makes clear, in constructing his defense of intentionality, he would explicitly rely on gendered psychoanalytical tropes:

Thought, like the thought process — this includes the plastic or musical formulation — *builds its self* in the darkness of one's Self like an unborn child in a womb. The blood which fills the child is a different one from that which pulsates through the muscles and veins of the womb. For the 'I' in an artwork to become, the same rules apply — with the important difference being that the artist's offspring can never survive on its own. Its life depends every second on a blood transfusion — on that blood from "man." ... From these thoughts one can reason that an artist can only control his own work to the extent that he controls the language of *others*; and only so far as he stands within a tradition.³⁰⁶

What Linde was attempting to suture was, of course, a vital connection between public and private — an attempt to salvage for the artist an unfixed position *between* an 'impure' mass culture and a 'pure' Art. If the debate in Sweden over open art had initially (1961-62) been understood as a political fight between the Left and the Right, by 1965 these polemics could no longer make the same sense to Linde. As he would later admit:

I felt partially split; above all because — as I saw it — a number of the views I had seen to my 'right' in the 1962 controversy [over open art] now seemed to be appearing on the left instead — ie., among the

³⁰⁵Andreas Huyssen *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1986. pp.60-61.

³⁰⁶*Ibid.*.

'radicals.' If you can't differentiate between the right and the left it is obviously difficult to orient yourself....³⁰⁷

While defenders of a *pure* art maintained that an artwork should not necessarily mean anything but just 'be,' and supporters of an *impure* art insisted on being open to any meaning ("anything goes!"), both, Linde argued, had refused to acknowledge the vital tension that exists between intention (the private/inner space) and expression (public/outer space). Observing that both camps claimed to find in art "its own life" or a certain "magical quality," Linde concluded that an embrace of either position could be "nothing but a confused mirror gesticulation" of each other.³⁰⁸

What I want to suggest is that despite this valiant attempt by Linde to figure out the "right" from "left," and despite his strenuous effort to keep the tightrope between meaning and interpretation taut, Linde was himself trapped in a Wittgenstinian language-game characterized by one-dimensional gender inscriptions. A clear example of this is Linde's concluding paragraph in his third article:

The human becomes what she becomes through her culture; she carries with her the mark of solidarity. It is true that her complicity must always be partial — no single being can, after all, contain the extensive experiences of a family. But still, it is only through what she shares with others that she is able to express herself; through that which is 'man' within her.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁷Ulf Linde *Fyra artiklar* Stockholm: Bonniers, 1965. This confusion was also commented on in relation to Linde's four articles by fellow art critic Olle Granath writing for *Dagens Nyheter* later that year. See Olle Granath "Ulf Linde: Kritikerns korrelat" *Dagens Nyheter* (June 16, 1965).

³⁰⁸Ibid..

³⁰⁹Linde "Den Öppna konsten: Den bild 'man' har" ("The Open Art: The Picture 'One/Man' Has"), was published on April 4, 1965, p.4.

Despite how conservative this statement may sound, what Linde had managed to do was to connect *meaning* to key participants and defenders of an America open art. Despite what critics like Solomon claimed, Linde showed that these artists were tied to tradition and politics. They had intentions. If Linde had been able to show how their 'anti-intellectual' claims were fraudulent, he had also, in the process, constructed a devirilized position for them by showing how their intention depended on a concept of instinct tied to nature, rather than an intuition tied to intellect and social praxis.

The distinction between instinct and intuition was crucial for Linde if he was to be able to salvage a European avant-garde position from being absorbed into the Americanized liberal politics in which he understood Pop Art to be participating. In "Den Öppna konsten: Dialogue utan slut" (The Open Art: A Dialogue Without an End"), his last of the four articles, Linde addresses the confusion between the different terms as evidenced in the way Duchamp and Cage had become almost interchangeable in the written history of Pop Art:

Cage's work has correctly been considered one of the most essential influences on today's "open" art. But on the list erected to the progenitors of ideas one can also find another name, almost as often as Cage — Marcel Duchamp. That Duchamp has been given this role to share seems almost incomprehensible; as far as I can see, this must have occurred because of some kind of deep and broad confusion.³¹⁰

³¹⁰"Den Öppna konsten: Dialogue utan slut" *Dagens Nyheter* (May 13, 1965), p.4

Yes, how could these two "fathers" of modern art be married? How could they possibly have given birth to the same avant-garde when their intentions were so different? What Linde needed to do was to rescue his European avant-garde heritage by divorcing Duchamp from Cage. Duchamp, he needed to show, was not the same "feminized" father that Pop Art sprang from; Duchamp was a father with clear intentions:

If one wants to show how incompatible Cage's and Duchamp's positions are, it's enough to read Duchamp's short reply to the jury who in 1917 refused his *Fountain* — one of his most famous ready-mades, the signed urinal:

*Whether Mr. Mutt with his own hands made the fountain or not has no importance. He CHOSE it. He took an ordinary article of life, placed it so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view — created a new thought for that object.*³¹¹

Not only had Duchamp stressed his interest in artistic intentionality by capitalizing 'CHOSE,' but the last sentence in this apparent defense for an 'open' art — where a urinal could be transformed into an art object — sounded very similar to Wittgenstein's late theories on meaning.³¹² In both cases the object in question (a urinal, a word...) was 'open' to 'a new thought.' But as Linde understood Duchamp, this was not to be *any* new thought. It was to be a thought dependent on a relationship between an intending private subject who 'chose' the object/form and an interpretive public spectator who in turn chose to create a new thought. As Linde would make even clearer in a speech at the Royal Academy of Art the following year, he had never

³¹¹Ibid..

³¹²It should be mentioned that Linde was not the only intellectual in Sweden whose concerns were centered on intentionality. The abstract artist Ulrik Samuelson had as early as 1962 written an article outlining the difference between instinct and intuition as it relates to the creative gap between intension and expression. This, however, was not published until the Spring of 1966 in *Konstrevy*. See Ulrik Samuelson's "Den skapande processen" [The Creative Act] *Konstrevy* Nr.2 (1966), pp.50-52.

intended to claim that there existed an essential opposition between the artist and spectator (the inner and outer spaces). Instead he was interested in an endless play between them:

I have never — in spoken or written form — claimed that there is a spectator-artist opposition; so that the spectators can only be found on the side of critics and the public. Even less have I claimed that all public reaction has the same worth. The opposite — such attempts to democratize the concept of art appear irresponsible to me. I have a difficult time understanding those attempts as anything but reactionary pranks; since — if they are in fact seriously intended — they must in the end lead to a legitimation of incompetence, and its consequences; to the shallow sensations, whims and superficiality of the *status quo*.³¹³

As previously noted, by the end of 1965, Linde would himself admit that positions he had previously considered to be politically situated on the political left were now appearing on the right (close to the position that Enckell had argued from at the Royal Academy in 1961). As he understood it, a certain *aspect* had changed. In light of the socio-political context of the mid-sixties and the controversial circumstances under which Pop Art emerged in relation to a European avant-garde tradition rooted in specific anarchist politics, we can see how Linde must have felt a certain vertigo (in the most Freudian sense of that word) as he tried to achieve his own physical, intellectual and spiritual equilibrium. In a way, Linde had been forced, despite his earlier embrace of chaos and 'movement in art,' back in 1961, to return to order. It now seems ironic that he, rather than Rabbe Enckell, would take to the podium of the annual meeting of the Swedish Royal Academy of Art. Whether he liked it or not, Linde was now forced to be 'right' as it was his

³¹³Ulf Linde "Form som socialitet i praxis" *BLM* Vo.35 No.6 (Summer 1966), pp.435-438.

turn to question the openness of art. As we will see, he would accept this new position by turning it into an 'ironic order.'

Icarus and Fighter Planes: Towards an Inner and Outer Space.

At the same time as Linde's four 'seminal' articles were being published in the daily press, and at a time when anti-American sentiments were growing stronger in Sweden each day, Moderna Museet found itself in the spotlight nationally and internationally as a site where American pop culture was advocated. Representing this type of art was not only an awkward activity for individuals outside the United States. In April of 1965, Hulten found out that James Rosenquist, one of the most prominent American Pop artists, had just produced an epic scale painting that clearly articulated a critique of both America's consumer culture and foreign politics. Could it be, that despite Hulten's claim in '64 that "Pop Art is not social criticism," a few of its artists were critically engaged in their culture after all? This would certainly help Hulten save his own face in light of public anti-American sentiments. *F-111*, as Rosenquist's painting was called, was a 28 meter-long painting on canvas and aluminum which was first shown in April of 1965 at Leo Castelli Gallery in New York [fig. 78].³¹⁴ In the fall of 1965, Rosenquist would make his own public statement about the work's political message in an interview with *Partisan Review*:

³¹⁴A number of the American events at Moderna Museet such as *4 Americans* had been made possible with the help of Leo Castelli Gallery in New York. The *F-111* was bought from Castelli by the New York collector Robert Scull who in turn lent it to Moderna Museet. For a description of the controversy it caused in New York, see Robert C. Scull "Re The *F-111*: A Collector's Notes" in Metropolitan Museum of Art *Bulletin* (March 1968), p.282-283; and in turn, Hilton Kramer "Art: A New Hangar for Rosenquist's Jet-Pop *F-111*" *New York Times* (February 17, 1968), p.25.

The picture is my personal reaction as an individual to the heavy ideas of mass media and communication and to other ideas that affect artists.... [With *F-111*] I wanted to relate the idea of the new man, the new person who appreciates things, to this painting vision. One piece of this painting would have been a fragment of a machine the collector was already mixed up with, involved in whether he knew it or not. The person has already bought these airplanes by paying income taxes or being part of the community and the economy. The present men participate in the world whether it's good or not and they may physically have bought parts of what this image represents many times.³¹⁵

Not wasting a second, Hulten arranged for the painting to be shown at Moderna Museet in September that same year. As art critic Eugen Wretholm noted in his review of the one painting exhibition in *Konstrevy*, behind the glossy "pop" surface of the painting, frequent visitors to the museum must have had flashbacks to the first art exhibition held on the former naval base island Skeppsholmen when Picasso's *Guernica* [fig. 79] was exhibited exactly ten years earlier.³¹⁶ In Rosenquist's updated version, the bombing of *Guernica* is replaced by the *F-111* American fighter plane responsible for bombing Vietnam. Divided into sections (which enveloped the viewer in the Leo Castelli Gallery, *F-111* presented a billboard-size painted collage made up of images of canned spaghetti, an umbrella, an atomic bomb's mushroom cloud, and more. All this was superimposed on the side of an American fighter-bomber which stretched the full twenty-eight meters. With a logo on its side which clearly read "U.S. AIR FORCE," in *F-111* the American viewer was meant to be reminded of the many millions of U.S. tax dollars this plane

³¹⁵James Rosenquist "The *F-111* : an Interview with James Rosenquist by G.R. Swenson" *Partisan Review* (Fall 1965), pp.590-595 (589-561).

³¹⁶*F-111* resembled *Guernica* both in size and content. Just as *Guernica* acted to inaugurate the new museum in 1956, Rosenquist's one painting exhibition, as we shall see, would act as a wedge to forge a new direction in Moderna Museet's activities. Eugen Wretholm "Utställningsrond" *Konstrevy* 6 (1965), P.223-224.

(which was introduced in 1965 under much heated controversy) represented. "Every American," as Wretholm suggested in his review, is in that way part owner and partly responsible for its horrible existence.³¹⁷

Having recognized his museum's 'false start,' Hulten had momentarily managed to distract his critics of American Pop by playing the socio-political wild card of Rosenquist's *F-111*. But something more dramatic was needed to stay ahead in this game. What Hulten needed to do was to clean house and re-suspend his museum along a slightly reoriented international avant-garde art world. While state funding for Moderna Museet dropped substantially in 1965 (perhaps as a direct result of the tensions inside and outside the museum) as suddenly as it had been gained, Hulten organized what he would later refer to as the two most representative exhibitions for the museum: *Den inre och yttre rymden (The Inner and Outer Space)* and *Hon - en katedral (She - a Cathedral)*.

The Inner and Outer Space: an Exhibition Devoted to Universal Art was the first of these two events [fig. 80]. While introducing artists from a broad range of countries on an epic scale similar to *Movement in Art*, this exhibition was formulated very differently. Unlike Modern Museet's recent blockbusters, this one was less visibly chaotic. With the exception of a *White Painting* from 1951 by Rauschenberg, it was also notably void of any so called Neo-Dada or Pop Art. Even the production of the catalogue can be understood as rejection of the machine sensibility associated with Pop Art as it was quite literally made to look 'out of this world.' Made with various types of cardboard and paper, the catalogue was laboriously 'constructed' with

³¹⁷Wretholm.

individual elements which were hand stamped and 'bolted' together before being packaged into a square box). In his introductory essay, awkwardly but accurately titled "A Concluding Beginning," Hulten made his intentions even clearer by announcing that this exhibition was meant to reorient the history of modern art in such a way as to redirect the museum:

The motive behind this exhibition is ... to draw a historical line through the history of modern art, from the second decade of the 20th century and forward, which has not previously been noted. This type of art uses negation as a mode of expression. It is an art whose motif is emptiness, space, spaciousness, quietness, uniformity, atonality, stillness, contemplation, supersensually simple. It is an art which is easier to define by saying what it is not, rather than what it is: This art is not constructivist — that is to say, its pictures are not composed as a collaborative play between weighed tensions in which things are brought together to form a common good. It does not very often express itself with the help of composition — if by that we mean collaboration between opposites, and it also does not in any way take a moral position. But this art can sometimes come close to the emotive qualities of Constructivism. Its general state is closer to something religious, if we accept this word in its broadest meaning. It has a strong tendency towards a transcendental mystic side. This art has very little to do with the optimistic, worldly, factual, and concrete type of art which was made during the thirties at the Bauhaus. Nor does it have much to do with the Concretism of the forties and fifties. It has very little to do with optical art (Op art) which in most cases does nothing more than entertain the slimy surface of the retina. Instead it is an art which puts people's ability to feel, imagine, and their ability to live, at the absolute center — to such a degree that the actual art work has at times the tendency to disappear. This is partly because the desire for purity can become so strong that the material substance burns away, is consumed. The actual decision about the art work is the artistic work, the creative act. The simple act of manual execution decides a part of the object's magnificence. The *decision* is thus what the work is; in a similar way as when Marcel Duchamp chose a factory made object to be an artwork, a "ready-made."³¹⁸

³¹⁸Pontus Hulten "Avslutande inledning" *Den innre och yttre rymden: en utställning rörande en universiell konst* Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1965 (pages not numbered)

This 'negation,' or turn away from the street-smart realism of Pop Art towards a more contemplative 'minimal' and 'mystical' abstraction, was, it seems to me, a strategic return to order, necessary to start over. Carefully organized around three separate sections devoted to the work of Kasimir Malevich, Naum Gabo, and Yves Klein, *The Inner and Outer Space* presented work by thirty-six post-war artists who had in different ways visibly demonstrated a return to "degree 0." This return was a necessary move on the part of Hulten in order to protect the dialectic play he had helped to set in motion as early as 1954. By turning back to a Hegelian tradition of negative dialectics, Hulten was hoping to salvage art's 'social' responsibility without being tied down by its politics.

As the catalogue essay by Joost Baljeu entitled "The Hegelian Romantic Negation in Modern Picture Making" made clear, the exhibition's three pillar artists were chosen for their three different types of utopian impulses, as well as their ability to illustrate a Hegelian philosophy of art.³¹⁹ While all three artists "dreamed of a better world — Utopia," their romantic negation of the world around them were differently manifested. While Malevich had attempted to escape what he viewed as the confines of space (rummet) and time through a spiritual understanding of symbols, Naum Gabo had clung to the material world through a "constructive principle" closely related to the Bauhaus. Understanding these two conflicting philosophies of art, Yves Klein, Joost argues, had tried to suspend himself *in between* these two romantic approaches towards abstraction by making himself and his art the *synthesis* of the material and immaterial world. This is the levitated position

³¹⁹Joost Baljeu "Den hegelianska romantiska negationen i den moderna bildkonsten" *Den innre och yttre rymden: en utställning rörande en universiell konst* Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1965 (pages not numbered)

that his blue monochrome paintings sought to achieve and his *Leap Into the Void* illustrated. Neither soaring towards the heavens nor crashing to earth, Klein represented that "magical" position between heaven and earth, reality and fiction.

By positioning Yves Klein as the central post-war artist able to reach a synthesis between the inner and outer space, Hulten had in effect white washed (or more literally *blue washed*) his recent engagement with Pop Art. Considering Klein's extreme conservatism, it appears that Hulten, like Linde, was also reorienting his political position with a new posture. If Hulten's museum had momentarily let Duchamp's *Air de Paris* escape during its maiden voyage across the Atlantic, it was now given back some of this aura in the form of Yves the Monochrome. For Hulten, this extremely conservative, but nonetheless intellectual, 'copy-cat' could still represent a rebellious spirit in art which remained both social and individual:

Art in this day and age has an important part to play and is often made into an object of interest to the state. At the same time, our society and nation lacks a place for it and shows little interest in finding a place for it. While art may have a purely decorative role to play, the programatically anti-decorative art we are talking about here suggests an unwillingness to let itself be caught in this unclear situation. By producing pictures that are so big, or so boring, that they hardly ever can be put up in a home, a museum, or anywhere else, the artists show an unwillingness to contribute to the decorative and extroverted 'artist's life' and even that commercialization (to that mundane cocktail-like atmosphere) that in some cases highlight modern art's appearance. Consequently, one often avoids considering this detachment. The picture of space (*rymdens bild*) in art is a picture of our ability to use fantasy to penetrate the universe. Since each and every one carries with us our own universe within ourselves, these images also become images by/of (av) ourselves.³²⁰

³²⁰Pontus Hulten "Avslutande inledning" *Den innre och yttre rymden: en utställning rörande en universiell konst* Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1965 (pages not numbered)

Following Hegel's example, Hulten argued for an art bound as much by the social as it was made free by the individual. This had been what Linde argued for at the end of his four articles earlier that year. With this in mind, it should come as no surprise to find in the catalogue an essay provided by Linde which furthered the idea of a dialectical "fourth dimension." In this dimension, where three-dimensional objects could metaphorically and metaphysically become the shadows of a mystic fourth dimension, the individual was formulated as the synthesis of inner and outer space. Here, in this reformulated space, Linde suggested that movement would always be possible: "If you can even just move a millimeter in a direction, the whole universe has been left behind you!"³²¹ In many ways, this last quote by Linde gave Moderna Museet a kind of renewed license to move forward. Considering the mystical, even spiritual, side of this move towards an unknown fourth dimension, we can say that Moderna Museet found itself *born again*.

She: a Cathedral: The Strip Tease Begins

By the end of 1965, through *The Inner and Outer Space* exhibition, Hulten had managed to clear a space at Moderna Museet for the return of Niki de Saint-Phalle, Jean Tinguely and Per-Olof Ultvedt to Stockholm. In the spring of 1966 they began collaboration on a single sculptural assemblage which became known as *Hon - en katedral* [*She - a Cathedral*]. By as early as 1963, then these three artists had, in their own ways, re-oriented their artistic

³²¹Linde, Ulf "Den fjärde dimensionen" in *Den inre och yttre rymden: en utställning rörande en universiell konst* Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1965 (pages not numbered)

production away from collective projects with members of the New York avant-garde and were looking at alternative collaborations.

By 1965, the work of all three artists had taken on strikingly new and exaggerated forms. Niki de Saint-Phalle, for example, was by this time almost exclusively producing what she called her *Nanas* — larger than life-size representations of "every woman" which differed from her past figurative sculptures in that they were increasingly becoming decorative and colourful. On the advice of her dealer Alexander Iolas, she was now also following the steps of the Pop artists by making hard-edged figurative screen prints [fig. 81].³²² Playing off stereotypes of fertility goddesses through the ages, sculptures such as *Clarice, La Waldaff, Bénédicte, Black Rosy, and Black Venus*, used roles ranging from Venus of Willendorf to contemporary bathing beauties [fig. 82].

As discussed in Chapter Two, the forms of Tinguely's work were also exaggerated. By painting his machine sculptures matte black, he presented his work as the masculine counterpart to Saint-Phalle's increasingly soft and colourful figures. In 1963 he began work on *Eureka* (1964), a monumental sized sculpture for the Swiss National Exhibition in Lausanne [fig. 83]. As its title suggests, and the commission confirms, Tinguely had not only discovered his own private identity, but he had also managed to turn his dysfunctional scrap-metal machines into Swiss 'gold.' Cashing in on his success, Tinguely managed to return to Switzerland for five exhibitions in 1964. While a work such as *Eureka* was monumental in size, the most

³²²Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1992, p.289.

extreme of his masculinized matte-black painted metal machines was produced for a two-man exhibition in New York called *Two Kinetic Sculptors* held at the Jewish Museum. Organized by Sam Hunter, *Two Kinetic Sculptors* took the form of a retrospective for Tinguely and the Hungarian Nicolas Schöffer who both showed old and new work.

The catalogue for *Two Kinetic Sculptors* included an essay by Hulten which emphasized the recent changes in Tinguely's work. To distinguish his sculptures from Schöffer's (which Hunter described as taking "the engineer's optimistic view of the possibilities of a technological society... for a more rational future"³²³), Hulten returned to the ideas regarding movement and freedom that he had presented in his anarchist journal *Kasark* a decade earlier:

Tinguely's point of departure is mechanical disorder. In his early works change and movement obeyed only the law of chance. He pitted the emancipated machine against the functional one, and conferred on his creations a glorious life of improvisation, happy inefficiency and shabbiness, expressing through his inspired inventions an indestructible freedom. His sculptures of later years convey the meaninglessness of utilitarian mechanical function more ponderously and with sharper definition. The movements of his structures have become more deliberate and dramatic: their different parts are more clearly differentiated and personified. They seem condemned to a prisoner's life, always operating in the same place and repeating the same movements. As did Sisyphus, they strenuously lift a heavy weight which must inevitably be returned to its original position. The behaviour and deportment of these sculptures possess a traumatic fatality. The sense of the absurdity of the mechanical environment which expressed itself comically in the past has now taken on sober and even tragic overtones. Also the movements of man, even his more intimate operations and performances would seem sometime to be parodied, held up for ridicule and at the same time made more monumental....

³²³Sam Hunter *Two Kinetic Sculptors* New York: The Jewish Museum, 1965, p.11.

Tinguely's works today express great pessimism regarding the machine's actual efficiency and worth. At the same time, however, they are basically optimistic with regard to the machine's irrational and religious potential. Indeed, his art radiates an optimism which is unusual in contemporary art, an optimism directed toward man, the creator of machines.³²⁴

While the monumental and religious side of this creative act would soon be visualized in Stockholm, the most conspicuous example of this "deliberate and dramatic" shift was *The Dissecting Machine* (1965) which brought special attention from the audience and press [fig. 84. As Hulten has described the work, it "cuts, saws, and drills holes in a woman (a shop window dummy), who retains its affected smile throughout."³²⁵ As a wry comment on the optimism surrounding audience participation in so called 'open art,' this extremely violent and misogynist machine was activated by the viewers themselves who had the opportunity to set in motion this public execution with a push of a button. Asked by *The New York Times* to comment on this particular work, Tinguely suggested that it had "started out as a ball-playing machine for the ladies who come here... but when I saw them they didn't quite look as if they'd stop to pick up a ball. So I turned it into this, to scare them."³²⁶

A week after this interview with Tinguely, Hilton Kramer wrote a follow up article in the same newspaper. Remembering Kramer's anti-

³²⁴Pontus Hulten "Jean Tinguely" in *Two Kinetic Sculptors* New York: The Jewish Museum, 1965, p.12.

³²⁵Hulten (1972), p.282.

³²⁶Tinguely quoted in *The New York Times* (Nov. 21, 1965), p.25.

Duchampian lambastations at MoMA's Pop Art symposium, his interest in debunking Tinguely should come as no surprise:

Between the computerized constructions of Mr. Schöffer — all light, movement, and infinities of illusionistic space — and the mechanized sculptures of Mr. Tinguely — which simply animate the neo-Dada imagery of junk-constructions already familiar to any observer of the art scene during the last two decades — there yawns something more than a gap in theory. There is the fundamental difference between an inventive intelligence exploring untried ideas and a gadgeteer manipulating the materials of accepted esthetic practice. Mr. Schöffer is a true original.... Mr. Tinguely is the expression of a minor pasticheur rummaging around the debris of fashionable ideas.... To this pastiche of contemporary forms, Mr. Tinguely brings — what? His little motors, and the mechanical ingenuity required to make all the separate parts of these constructions function more or less according to plan. He brings also a certain humor — amusing when one first encountered it a few years ago, but now already dated and tiresome. For even visual humour requires some individual formal invention to sustain itself, and Mr. Tinguely deals entirely with a second-hand sculptural vocabulary.³²⁷

As close as Kramer comes to accurately describing Tinguely's work, he neglected (or perhaps avoided) to note the shift in Tinguely's humour towards a darker critique of the kind of technological optimism Schöffer's work stood for. The interesting thing about this exhibition was the ability of Sam Hunter to curate a show which outlined kineticism as a new polemic in the art world, replacing geometric and gestural abstraction. With this in mind, it is not surprising that he asked Hulten (with his own investments in 'movement') to provide one of the two catalogue essays.

Just as Tinguely had ironically managed to establish a reputation in his very rational home country of Switzerland by becoming famous elsewhere,

³²⁷Hilton Kramer "One Inventor, One Pasticheur" *New York Times* (November 28, 1965).

Ultvedt had by 1965 established his status at home by exhibiting abroad. Not only would he receive numerous public commissions in Stockholm, including a collaboration with Ulf Linde on *En tidnings ansikte* [*The Face of a Magazine*] (1964) and a neon sign for the Swedish candy manufacturer Marabou (1965), but he would also be invited by Stedelijk's former director Willem Sandberg to travel to Amsterdam to construct *Hommage à Christopher Polhem* (1965) for an exhibition of monumental sculpture held at the city's Vondelpark [fig. 85]. In its size and striking form, *Polhem* was in many ways in dialogue with Tinguely's *Eureka*. While Tinguely's metal construction can be read *against* the clockwork of Swiss rationalism, Ultvedt's wooden assemblage was devoted to Polhem, an early 18th century Swedish inventor known as much for his practical inventions as for his ability to invent useless machines and brew beer.³²⁸ Considering that Polhem's most famous invention was the 'Scandinavian padlock,' we can read Ultvedt's sculpture as a significant reminder of the doors that were being locked, separating artists such as himself and Rauschenberg.

For those outside this metalanguage, these references to Ultvedt's disengagement from collaborations with New York's avant-garde were not so obvious. At the end of 1965, Ultvedt received an invitation from Rauschenberg and Billy Klüver to participate in a symposium on art and technology. Organized by Fylklingen, the Swedish society for experimental music, *Nine Evenings* — as the event was called — was initially going to take

³²⁸In 1962 Ultvedt had been involved in a minor controversy at the Venice Biennale where he represented Sweden. In his assemblage *Signal*, which was installed just outside the entrance to the newly constructed Bauhaus inspired Nordic Pavillion, Ultvedt included a number of beer bottles that functioned as chimes when viewers neared the sculpture. In a similar way to Tinguely, Ultvedt's sculptures always have a certain 'working class' vocabulary attached to them.

place in Stockholm.³²⁹ While the project would in the end be relocated to New York because of a lack of interest from Swedish sponsors and artists such as Ultvedt ("I didn't want to be some kind of 'waffle maker'"), initial optimism around the event was tied to the Swedish-American duo of Klüver and Rauschenberg.³³⁰ Since 1963, Klüver had collaborated on *Oracle*, a large scale multi-media installation by Rauschenberg [fig. 86]. Through this major investment of time, money and effort, the collaboration between artist and scientist had by 1966 evolved into E.A.T., the organization whose acronym stood for Experiments in Art and Technology.

In March of 1966, *Konstrevy* published "Technology for Life," a lengthy article written by Klüver describing the virtues of his collaboration with Rauschenberg on the multi-media installation *Oracle*.³³¹ This project, he proposed, served to show what role the artist could serve in a society that "shall survive thanks to — not inspite of — technology."³³² What was necessary, he argued, was an unlimited exchange of ideas between artists and technicians in order to produce a "medium" capable of carrying the "message" needed to stimulate not just technological progress, but social progress. Klüver's text, which in many ways reads as a manifesto for E.A.T., is

³²⁹For a brief history and lengthy inventory of events related to *Nine Evenings*, see the "Inventory of the Experiments in Art and Technology Records 1966-1993" compiled by Lynda Bunting for The Ghetty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities web site <http://www.getty.edu/gri/research/main.htm>.

³³⁰In the program suggested for *Nine Evenings*, Ultvedt was asked to acquire, and be in charge of, a large number of waffle makers that would, one presumes, represent the democratic nature of the planned 'happening.' Considering his disillusionment with Pop art, the symbolic value of waffle making must have appeared too close to the symbolic value of hamburgers and hot dogs.

³³¹*Oracle* is more an installation than a specific medium. Filling an entire room, its five free-standing parts are each mobile, but does not move. Each piece contains a radio and speaker operated by remote control from a main console.

³³²Billy Klüver "Teknologi för livet" [Technology for Life] *Konstrevy* 2 (1966), p.56. (pp.56-61)

directly modeled after Marshall McLuhan's *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964) in which McLuhan presented a very optimistic 'pop' interpretation of the process of communication from the "Gutenberg Galaxy" to the electronic age.³³³ To make this point clear, Klüver based the structure of his essay on McLuhan's first Chapter, "The Medium is the Message."

Describing the physical details of *Oracle* under the subheading "The Medium," Klüver explained how artistic and technological mediums had, in this new collective working environment, managed to merge into a hybrid form that opened itself up to new sensory experiences. Grounding his argument not only in McLuhan's claim that technology is "an expansion of our nervous system," but also in the psychoanalytic readings of history provided by Norman O. Brown, Klüver saw a link between a "*mechanical* and *organic* stand point," respectively characterized as "for death" and "for life."³³⁴ For O. Brown, the "hard truth" that psychoanalysts needed to deal with was :

the acceptance of death, its reunification in consciousness with life, cannot be accomplished by the discipline of philosophy or the seduction of art, but only by the abolition of repression. Man, who is born a woman and destined to die, is a body, with bodily instincts. Only if Eros — the life instinct — can affirm the life of the body can the death instinct affirm death, and in affirming death magnify life.³³⁵

³³³Marshall McLuhan *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* Toronto: McGraw-Hill Paperbacks (first paperback edition), 1965, pp.7-21.

³³⁴Klüver here quotes Norman O. Brown from his 1959 book *Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History* New York: Vintage Book, 1959.

³³⁵O. Brown, pp.108-109.

This argument for "life against death," as the title of his book declared, in many ways stood counter to the arguments *for death* that Saint-Phalle, Tinguely, and Ultvedt had by now embraced.³³⁶ One could say that while Klüver and Rauschenberg were affirming Eros by exploring new sensory experiences through collective experiments with art and technology, the former artists were less optimistic about collaborations and technological progress and hard at work creating their own death masks in a ritualistic 'dance of death.'

From the perspective we have established to view these private discourses, we can see that both sides of the 'open art' debate were at work to reveal the logic of their age of mechanical reproduction. But while the Europeans in question were doing so by 'dressing up,' Klüver, in his article, argued that technology needed a very different sort of artist: "an analyst, a stimulant, a provoker, and an undresser."³³⁷ For Klüver, Rauschenberg was increasingly willing to take on this task as evident in work such as *Oracle*:

Oracle shows that a completely new relationship between the artist and engineer (and perhaps even between the artist and scientist) is a possibility. [This is a] relationship in which the artist seeks to take advantage of the incredible resources offered up by technology and science in order to reach his goals... [which] should lie within areas that technology and science have not yet explored: in order to create new sensual experiences, new enjoyments, new ways to relate to each other, new ways to experience light, darkness, cold and heat, as well as new ways to sleep, to be, to eat. Every engineer today is well aware of the fact that technology has unimaginable capacities. But at the same time, the engineer's ability to invent new ways to use technology is limited by his own comfort, one-sidedness and psychological determinations....

³³⁶Norman O. Brown suggests that this embrace is a very common trope in Hegel's writings as well as Existentialist philosophy in general: "It takes the greatest strength to accept death, says Hegel. Following Hegel, the existentialist philosophers have returned to the wisdom of Montaigne, that to learn philosophy is to learn how to die." O'Brown, p.108.

³³⁷Klüver, p.61.

Engineers have a difficult time imagining that technology can be used to create disorder. But this is something that the artist can imagine. The artist, and only the artist, can show engineers how technology can be used to its full capacity....³³⁸

For Klüver, *Oracle* had managed to present this mediumistic "message."

Constructed in five parts (like an opera or a play), *Oracle* consisted of movable parts on wheels allowing the composition to change in relation to the room it occupied. From each of the five sections, medium wave radio signaled report sound from different parts of the city where it was located — ranging from the voice of a rock-and-roll DJ to the news announcer to advertisement.³³⁹

The central images in the five parts also relate to the city: a car door connected to a typewriter table; a tub with an air-ventilation shaft; a window frame with another ventilation shaft; a ventilation pipe on top of pram wheels; an enlarged staircase in aluminum. While the overall effect is that of a rather nostalgic looking 'scrap-assemblage,' as some critics noted, Klüver points out that the medium was taken from the immediate urban environment: "It is impossible to find something nostalgic or precious in the different parts. They were torn out of the city yesterday."³⁴⁰ Not only that, but the radio transmission ensures that the work is kept up-to-date. In its manifold aspects, *Oracle* can be said to be an inverted *gesamptkunstwerk*, opening up an interdisciplinary space for art and technology as well as for burgeoning new subjectivities.

As an engineer with an interest in making a link between the psychoanalytic realm of art and technology, Klüver rejected the idea of

³³⁸Ibid., p. 60.

³³⁹Ibid., p.58.

³⁴⁰Ibid., p.57.

turning away from science; particularly at a time when "our lives have become tied to technology" and he recognized how unavoidable this meeting place was:

There is not a country on earth who has raised its voice against this 'development.' Technology is an 'extension of our nervous system' as Marshall McLuhan suggests.... John Cage [has made] us aware that technology has a quality which allows people to come into agreement. The fact is that amongst all the many agreements that are made between different countries ... the ones concerning technical areas, more than often, override all other agreements within politics, commerce, etc. Technology forces us to eliminate personal feelings. When experiences from space research approach our society's needs, we will be gifted with a whole new type of work leader and worker — someone who is totally responsible for his work. President Johnson has given the assignment of solving the problem of poverty in certain areas of America to the electronic industry. As a matter of fact, these are the same companies that take care of the space program.... With the computer it is no longer a question of what we can make a computer do, but how our unconscious decides to use it. It is a question of synthesis and not the use value.³⁴¹

In many ways this argument for bridging not just art and life, but more specifically the 'mechanical' and the 'instinctual' side of existence, is reminiscent of the more constructivist arguments of the Bauhaus school of art and architecture wherein the individual optimistically hoped to be collectively synthesized into a democratic public sphere. As we will now see, shortly after Klüver's article was published, a sculptural monument to this idea of unification would be constructed at Moderna Museet — but for reasons we have just seen, its creators did this with a great deal of irony.

In the late spring of 1966, the "Mechanical Bride," as McLuhan named the desired mechanisms of the 20th century [fig. 87], would be stripped bare in

³⁴¹Ibid., p. 60-61.

Stockholm.³⁴² On the 27th of April, Tinguely and Saint-Phalle arrived in Stockholm where they began an intense period of discussion together with Ultvedt and Hulten regarding the collaborative project that had initially been discussed at *Dylaby*.³⁴³ If we consider Klüver's optimistic appraisal of Rauschenberg's *Oracle*, the initial titles for this European assemblage hint at its direct relationship with the former work. Tinguely, for example, suggested an opera or a kind of mechanical theatre which would have involved a number of episodes such as: *Woman Seizes Power*, *A Public Relations Man Commits Suicide Because of a Failure*, *The Assassination of LBJ*, *The Pope in New York*, *An Airplane Crash in the Jungle*....³⁴⁴ Saint-Phalle maintained that the work should be a giant cathedral, and finally Hulten proposed "a giant supine figure, on the lines of Niki de Saint-Phalle's *Nanas*, which was at once called *Hon - en katedral* [*She - A Cathedral*]." ³⁴⁵

On the third of June, Moderna Museet opened its ticket gate to reveal *Hon*, a giant female figure whose production had been kept secret during five weeks of planning, construction, and painting [fig. 88]. Measuring 23.5 x 6 x 10 meters, 'She' lay headless on her back inside Moderna Museet, with her legs spread and knees pointed upwards. Upon entering through the vagina of this giant Nana, built and painted like an Easter egg by Niki de Saint-Phalle, the visitor encountered a plethora of amusements similar to that of an amusement park: a Coca-Cola bar, lookout tower, slide, tunnel of love, several "Fake Paintings" in an art gallery, a number of automatic vendors for

³⁴²See Marshal McLuhan's *The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man* New York: Vanguard Press, 1951.

³⁴³Due to an unexpected invitation to participate in the Venice Biennale, Martial Raysse, who had also been considered for the project, was forced to cancel.

³⁴⁴Hulten (1972), p.289.

³⁴⁵*Ibid.*.

various kinds of goods, service personnel, a small plant for the production of broken glass, a public telephone, a gold-fish pond, a movie theater showing a soundless Greta Garbo movie, and much more.

Entering through her 'gate of life,' one was first confronted with a large, grinding, black and white wheel [fig. 89]. This was one of Tinguely's dark contributions to the 'amusements' that *She* embodied. Standing on a foam floor, the visitor was led to question its function as the sound of crushing glass could be heard from inside. The function became more apparent when visiting the Coca-Cola bar in one of her breasts. Standing at this bar, one could not only listen to lovers' secrets transmitted through speakers from a hidden microphone in the 'love seat' installed in *Hon's* left leg, but having consumed your 'pop,' the phallic nature of this American consumer icon was effectively castrated by being discarded into a shoot leading down to Tinguely's machine for the production of broken glass. In this gesture, the technological optimism that defined itself as masculine through a variety of consumer icons, was here symbolically emptied and broken down.

Along the lines of Tinguely's Duchampian castration, Ultvedt produced a mobile piece in *Hon's* stomach which featured a man being massaged by numerous hands while seated precariously on a chair as he watches a television screen projecting images of waves on a stormy ocean [fig. 90]. In Ultvedt's absurdist contribution to this pop cathedral, the motif of the 'oceanic' Freud had once described as the 'primitive pleasure-ego' utilized by religions, became linked to the *massage* of consumer culture and technology.

as McLuhan had analyzed.³⁴⁶ While McLuhan may not have been aware of the critical irony the three artists were playing with, he did find out about *Hon* and responded with a four page spread in his 1967 book *The Medium is the Massage* [fig. 91].³⁴⁷

McLuhan probably understood *Hon* to represent a good example of the new open art of the sixties where art could be "anything you can get away with."³⁴⁸ In a display of self-conscious humour, the art critic Linde ended up taking a jab at the idea of originality in art by contributing a series of "Fake Paintings" which were hung in an art gallery located in one of *Hon*'s legs and could only be viewed superficially as one flew by them on the way down a children's slide [fig. 92].

Along with all these contraptions, assemblages, and happenings, there was also a film screening of Greta Garbo's first silent movie *Luffar-Petter* from 1922 in which Swedish women are shown bathing in a Nordic landscape. In the context of *Hon*, Garbo represented the commodification of the sexualized Swedish woman who had been exported to the United States where she had

³⁴⁶"The true source of religious sentiment... consists of a peculiar feeling... present in millions of people.... This feeling which he [a patient] would like to call a sensation of 'eternity,' a feeling as of something limitless, unbounded — as it were, 'oceanic.' This feeling, he adds, is a purely subjective fact, not an article of faith; ... it is the source of the religious energy which is seized upon by various religious systems, directed by them into particular channels, and doubtless also exhausted by them." Sigmund Freud *Civilization and its Discontents* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1961, pp.11-12. For the makers of *Hon*, Freud's concept of an oceanic feeling that can control masses of people must have been considered a perfect analogy to the blind optimism they understood members of the New York avant-garde to be investing in art and technology.

³⁴⁷McLuhan's inclusion of a four page section on *Hon* in his 1967 book *The Medium is the Massage* is an incredible irony in the history of this exhibition if we consider what I would describe as Saint-Phalle's, Tinguely's, and Ultvedt's 'anti-McLuhanesque' position. Typographically and pictorially spaced out, the pages read "Art — is anything — you can get away with." Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore *The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects* New York: Bantam Books, 1967, pp.132-136.

³⁴⁸*Ibid.*.

become a sex symbol in American popular culture. By the sixties this woman had been given an existentialist twist by Ingemar Bergman whose films were now popular enough to win Oscars at the Academy Awards. By 1966, Sweden had established an international reputation for having an abundance of sexually 'liberated' women. By the 1960s, the one image that distinguished Swedish democracy from others was the liberal sexual politics it espoused. For example, by the mid-sixties, Sweden had among other things introduced the Pill, legalized abortion, the IUD, and the sex-role equality campaign.³⁴⁹ Partly due to Europe's and the United States' reticence when it came to these issues, Sweden managed to develop its own mythology tied to this image of sexual freedom. This image that was presented to the outside world and which increasingly stereotyped Swedish culture was embraced by domestic and foreign post-war youth alike to whom sexual freedom was equated with political emancipation. It was to this generation of Swedes that *Hon-en katedral* was presented .

Suprisingly, critics and reporters did not pick-up on the most obvious literary and filmic reference. In 1965, a seventh filmic version of *She* had been released by Hammer-Seven Arts starring Ursula Andress as 'She-who-must-be-obeyed.' Based on Rider Haggard's sixth novel (published in 1887), *She* is the story of a 2,000 year old white queen who reigns over her people while

³⁴⁹In 1974 the Swedish Health Education Committee observed the down side of this liberalization process by noticing that it "has been overtaken by an increasingly raw commercial exploitation of sexuality with emphasis on consumption, performance and depersonification.... Development in recent years presents the paradox of a society that increasingly stands up for equality between the sexes in various fields at the same time as the sexual exploitation of women becomes more and more brazen in, for example, the mass media and advertising. The anti-human and, in the deepest sense, anti-sexual attitudes that youth encounter today in commercial messages cannot be over emphasized." Scott, Hilda *Sweden's 'Right to be Human': Sex-Role Equality: The Goal and the Reality* New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1982, p.86.

waiting for the reincarnation of her Egyptian lover.³⁵⁰ Her youth is renewed by 'bathing' in a magical flame, but when she tries to make her lover immortal, she goes to the flame of eternal youth once too often and ends up shrinking and shriveling to death. In this way, Haggard's *She* must have functioned as alternative myth to that of Icarus. But as the Swedish evening paper *Expressen* reported, to most Swedes, *Hon* resembled nothing more than an art work masquerading as the Funny House at Gröna Lund (Stockholm's amusement park).³⁵¹

In this same newspaper article it was reported with astonishment that the exhibition had:

...opened on Saturday and there is already a rush of people to get there. On opening day there were 2,000 visitors, the next day 1,500, and each following day another 2,000. This is the exceptional part: Not one person has been shocked (unless we count an American tourist who dropped in by accident and thought that this was the way Swedes celebrated their memory of Queen Christina [that exhibition was on simultaneously at Nationalmuseet]). Without finding the large female figure (honan) in good order or morals, we report that six to seven thousand people, half of them young, have now entered between HER thighs and in through HER wide open sex.³⁵²

As this quote attests, *Hon* was also a box-office success along the lines of 'The Blonde Venus' in Emile Zola's novel *Nana*.³⁵³ The event was not only noted in the Swedish popular press and journals. *Time Magazine* cited *Hon* as "one

³⁵⁰Philip Leibfred's article "H.Rider Haggard on the Screen" in *Films in Review* (September/October 1995) Vol. XLVI No. 7/8 Issue 5, pp.20-29.

³⁵¹"Hon: skötte-synd på Moderna" *Expressen* June 8, 1966).

³⁵²Ibid..

³⁵³In Zola's novel, *Nana* represented the desires and threats of an increasingly ephemeral class structure. Starting out as a clandestine prostitute, *Nana* slept her way up the social ladder. Emile Zola *Nana* New York: The Modern Library, 1955 (orig. 1880).

of the most uproarious, outrageous — and incredibly popular — exhibits to make its debut in Sweden's capital in years."³⁵⁴

As informed spectators, however, we can now look behind this seemingly frivolous pop surface to see that everything in the presentation of *Hon* was been carefully planned and executed. The references to Haggard's *She* and Zola's *Nana* were by no means the only historical reference points. Picasso's classical *Bathers* from the 1920s also come to mind. Just as Picasso's painted women had signified 'Mother France,' *Hon* could here be seen to represent a fashionable and sexy 'Swedish Mamma.' But along with this hip and comforting new look, this female figure is also clearly raped by the culture which surrounds her.

The paying visitor to this enormous pop culture courtesan was also supplied with an exhibition guide (a newspaper including chronological histories of each artist), as well as documentation of *Hon*'s construction. Just as Picasso and other 20th century avant-gardists had used Stephen Mallarmé's contempt for popular culture to position their own ambiguous practices, the makers of *Hon* played upon his dislike of the newsprint medium which he had likened to a clandestine prostitute. Produced with the same anti-aesthetic obsolescence as a Cubist or Dadaist collage, the handout's cover showed a drawing of *Hon*'s inner and outer spaces in the very architectural language of industry that Duchamp had used when preparing his *Bride Stripped Bare* [figs. 93 and 94].

³⁵⁴*Time Magazine* (June 17, 1966).

Just as this newspaper would gradually be destroyed, the life of *Hon* would also come to an end. After two months of "fun-filled action," a three day destruction period was scheduled, announced and executed [fig. 95]. *She* apparently withered away and died. To emphasize the importance of this final act, a film was produced documenting the very violent and misogynist act of destruction. Accompanied by carnivalesque music, the film not only serves as an archival reminder of *Hon's* inner spaces where we find, for example, Tinguely's *Radio Stockholm* [fig. 96] (a sculpture which can refer to the radio transmitters in Rauschenberg's *Oracle*), but we also get a vivid picture of the darker side of *Hon* as Coca-Cola bottles are repeatedly seen being crushed, followed by scenes of her final destruction. The violence of this latter part is particularly disturbing and I would say that it is not by accident that particular scenes are shown. For example, scenes such as the removal of one of *Hon's* breasts by an all male crew, force the viewer to address how gender has been constructed and addressed.³⁵⁵ Just as in Tinguely's earlier work such as *The End of the World*, and *Hommage à New York*, and *Dissecting Machine*, celebration was followed by very deliberate destruction. Through this "creative act," as Duchamp called it, the European bachelors had hereby stripped the mechanical bride of its "article of dress," to re-quote McLuhan, and revealed an image similar to the contemporary disaster series by Andy Warhol.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of *Hon* is that it provided its audience with an early view of Duchamp's last work *Given: 1. The Waterfall*,

³⁵⁵The destruction of *Hon* is well documented not only in the Nationalmuseum's 1967 catalogue of the exhibit and in numerous books about Saint-Phalle and Tinguely, but also in a 16 mm film entitled *Hon* by Magnus Wibom produced in 1966. This film is the best document available of the activities that occurred inside *Hon*. I would like to acknowledge Monica Nickels effort at Moderna Museet for finding the film in its archives and screening it for me on August 18, 1992.

2. *The Illuminating Gas* (1946-66), the finished work which would not be seen until his death two years later, but had been 'given' away in the form of a 'sketch' [fig. 97]. As would become clear much later, Duchamp had here revealed the 'social realism' behind his 'abstract' art [fig. 98]. Anxious to realize Duchamp's "delay in glass," these bachelors managed to see the mechanical bride stripped bare in Stockholm — even before Philadelphia. As would be the case in the United States when *Etand Donne* was finally revealed, the work did produce some "shock" in Sweden as well. As Niki de Saint-Phalle recalled the event:

There was nothing pornographic about the *Hon*. She was painted like an Easter egg with the very bright colours I have always used and loved. She was like a grand fertility goddess reclining comfortably in her immensity and generously receiving thousands of visitors which she absorbed, devoured, and gave birth to again. The shock of *Hon* was so enormous that we got away with it. Also one must remember that this was Sweden, where there had been for some time an atmosphere of sexual liberty. This joyous huge creature represented for many people the dream of the return to the great Mother Goddess.... The birth rate of Stockholm went up the year of the *Hon*, and this was attributed to her.³⁵⁶

While Saint-Phalle's recollection carefully sidesteps any mention of the darker side of *Hon* which we have just seen, we should, I propose, read her second from last sentence in this quote in unison with someone like T.S. Eliot who had remarked earlier in the century that: "Totalitarianism appeals to the desire to return to the womb."³⁵⁷ If this was the global game being played, these artists wanted to make sure that they got to play the part of

³⁵⁶Saint-Phalle quoted in Hulten (1972), p.168.

³⁵⁷Quoted in Andreas Huyssen *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1986, p.58.

Machiavelli. Democracy was for them perhaps too fraught with illusions and compromises.

One part of Saint-Phalle's quote that we can perhaps read more literally is her reference to Sweden's liberal attitude towards sexuality during the sixties. This exhibition, I would agree, could not have taken place anywhere but at a museum like Hulten's in Sweden. Just as individuals like Hulten, Linde, and Ultvedt were attempting to carve out a socio-individual position parallel to (but crucially different from) Swedish and American ideals of collectivity and individualism, the Swedish state, as we have seen with regard to the Vietnam War, was attempting to differentiate its image from that of an Americanized liberal democracy. A liberal attitude towards sexuality did in the end provide Sweden with at least an image of a new type of democratic "freedom."

But what kind of image of sexual and democratic freedom could be read into this giant female Gulliver lying on the floor of Moderna Museet? Despite its playful scale, colour, and content, *Hon* was after all an enormous prostitute used and abused by the visitors who entered her. Refusing to skirt around this issue, Claes Oldenburg, the Swedish-born Pop artist whose solo exhibition was to follow *Hon* at Moderna Museet, made the following aggressive connection between the pornographic side of *Hon* and Sweden's 'new look:'

I, a passionate anti-American, think it's good to accept and to look closely at the Cunt, an entrance, an exit. In the smallish magazines in Sweden, focus falls upon the Cunt. In the U.S.A., there is always something in the way, the Cunt is obstructed. From my studio in the

M.M., I looked straight up *Hon's* Cunt. Every day, very clearly, I saw the citizens go in and come out....³⁵⁸

As Oldenburg observed, there was a distinct difference between American and Swedish liberal attitudes toward sexuality. Since play with ambiguity is often employed by Oldenburg, the exaggerated vulgarity of his description makes one question whether he is in fact painting a positive picture of 'her' emancipation. Like Oldenburg, a number of commentators saw *Hon* as representative of the new emancipated woman of the sixties.³⁵⁹ "She" was, after all, seen everywhere by this time. Martial Raysse, who we will remember having been forced to drop out of the collaboration on *Hon*, had treated this subject matter with a similar ambiguous 'pop' surface in his 1962 *Elle* — a work whose title referred to the French fashion magazine by the same name which had successfully cashed in on this image of a sexually liberated 'new woman' [fig. x]. In Raysse's work, it is hard to tell if 'She' is a beautifully made-up model or a brutally bruised housewife. In this sense we can read his work as raising questions about this new *popularized* image of woman. Read alongside Raysse's work, *Hon* presents us with a similarly ambiguous gender construction which through an act of mimesis and sacrifice *reveals* the violent and patriarchal logic behind consumer driven democratic freedom.

But not all critics saw *Hon* as a gender or cultural critique. Critics like Gudrun Ekeflo and Barbro Backberger read the sculpture as taking a very

³⁵⁸Oldenburg quoted in Barbro Sylvan, Pontus Hulten and John Melin eds. *Hon-en katedral/historia* Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1967, p.167.

³⁵⁹See for example Bengt Olvång's article "Hon" in the socialist evening paper *Aftonbladet* (June 9, 1966).

"traditional" and "reactionary" position against the liberated female subject.³⁶⁰ Setting up an imaginary two-page dialogue presumably between Ulf Linde (using Linde's description of *Hon* from *Dagens Nyheter*) and herself in *Bonniers Litterära Magasin*, Backberger set out to reveal the male chauvinist side of *Hon* :

voice I: She billows in front of you like a washed up whale on the beach. You stand below — in front of her like Gulliver in the land of Giants. She is a cathedral. All cathedrals ought to be like this....

Voice II: Oh, I see — a cathedral this time. It doesn't matter what we call it, it's the same old passive woman anyway.

Voice I: She is the sister of Venus of Willendorff and Lorenzon's cosmic mother. Requests and censorship buzzes about her like insignificant mosquitoes. Their tiny voices are overpowered by the life machinery that chews, beats, creeks, squeaks, and turns and toss inside of her.

Voice II: As expected! We are back to the thirties again. Primitivism's view on woman.... A woman who wholeheartedly identifies herself with her own sexuality. A pleasant and warm lover....³⁶¹

The dialogue continues at length until Voice II (Backberger) asks: "Is there never anything new in art? For example, a woman who stands on her own two legs?"³⁶² Not only was *Hon* offensive to many because of her reclining pose, but the fact that her head was constructed as nothing more than a tiny extension of her enormous body was more than some could tolerate [fig. 100]. Ekeflo, in an article for the Leftist's daily *Stockholms Tidningen* proposed that:

³⁶⁰Gudrun Ekeflo "Varför är Hon en katedral?" *Stockholms Tidningen*. A response to Olvång's article reproduced in in the catalogue *Hon-en katedral/historia* Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1967, p.155.

³⁶¹Barbro Backberger "Hon" *Ord & Bild* 4 (Summer, 1966), pp.324-325. *Ord & Bild* is a literary journal that during the sixties positioned itself with the New Left.

³⁶²*Ibid.*, p.325.

If one is to interpret this monumental work symbolically... [*Hon*] is an enormous swelling, a sensual female body topped off with a tiny bulb for a head. One can stroll around in this body, but after having had some refreshments at the bar underneath the breasts you don't get any farther — the head is apparently totally uninteresting and contains, according to the handout, an 'inferno machine.'³⁶³

While Ekeflo's critique is entirely justified, I suggest that *Hon*'s head was not entirely uninteresting to the producers of the work. On the contrary, the size, shape, and function of the head appears intentionally stunted as if to suggest that 'intellect,' that very necessary part of intentions, could not fully be developed under circumstances where the rest of the *social body* is left wide open for interpretation. As long as visitors could be kept from seeing what was in her head (what Linde had patriarchally referred to in his four articles as "what is *him* in *her*), the *intentionality* of the individual artist could be protected. One of the strangest and most interesting events to occur during *Hon*'s destruction was the careful severing of the head from the rest of her body. In the end, the head, which Ekeflo had referred to as a tiny bulb, would remain the only part saved from total destruction [fig. 101]. Removed from the museum, the head was transported to an abandoned old prison at Östermalm in Stockholm.³⁶⁴ Just as the marble sugar cubes in Duchamp's *Why Not Sneeze Rose Sélavy?* (1921) were cooped up in a bird cage, the interior motifs of Duchamp's ready "maids" in Stockholm would be locked up and protected from public consumption [fig. 102].³⁶⁵

³⁶³Ekeflo, p.155. I would venture to suggest that this 'inferno machine' refers to Rauschenberg's prints of *Dante's Inferno* shown at Moderna Museet in 1965.

³⁶⁴An interesting prison location for this decapitated Pop star as Östermalm is one of Stockholm's oldest, and snobbiest, upper-class neighbourhoods.

³⁶⁵Discuss *Why Not Sneeze Rose Sélavy?* from 1921.

As we have seen, while Moderna Museet by 1961 had managed to position itself at the center of post-war avant-garde discourses by opening its doors to a variety of anarchistic forms of freedom, by the mid-sixties this flight into the bright light of international success would be recognized as premature. While Moderna Museet's cross-Atlantic connections had opened up new avenues for artists, critics and curators to celebrate difference publicly, privately artists such as Saint-Phalle, Tinguely, and Ultvedt understood their individual identities compromised as if in a Tower of Babel. With exhibitions such as *The Inner and Outer Space*, Moderna Museet cleared a space for an art of enlightened false consciousness. By erecting a colossal monument to the increasingly technological world order they sought to critique, Saint-Phalle, Tinguely and Ultvedt produced an art work which was directly engaged with socio, psycho, and political representation of everyday life. In Duchampian fashion, *Hon* was a tongue-in-cheek critique of both an American and Swedish consumer culture that despite its liberal 'look' was technocratically totalitarian. As Brian O'Doherty described the new artistic environment at the moment Pop Art 'popped' in 1962, "a fresh wind is blowing accross the vast billboard wasteland, and anarchy is out."³⁶⁶ What was 'given' to their audience was the sexualized social body Duchamp's *Large Glass* had always referred to through the language of industry and which Marshall McLuhan had named "the mechanical bride." A year after *Hon*, McLuhan, in *The Medium is the Massage*, would also call for new approaches to expressing technological modernity. While his call was for the creation of contemporary myths related to the machinery of consumer culture, he did ground himself in Medieval art where he "saw the fear of the new print technology expressed

³⁶⁶Brian O'Doherty *The New York Times* (October 31, 1962), p.

in the theme *The Dance of Death*." What I have shown in this last chapter is that this dance of death was still happening in 1966 at Moderna Museet.

EPILOGUE

Connections, Rejections, and Moderna Museet's Collection

In the preceding three chapters I have outlined something of the history of the post-war avant-garde, and in the process disentangled some of the conceptual confusion which took place around the issue of a so called 'Open Art' between the years 1954 and 1966. What I have found is an intricate and significant history surrounding Moderna Museet's activities during this time which has since been obscured by a number of myth-making factors. Between 1966 and 1973 (the year Hulten left Moderna Museet to become the first artistic director of the Centre Pompidou/Beaubourg in Paris), the museum continued to produce large-scale exhibitions with both American and European artists. It could be said that Moderna Museet had become known as a site for 'Euro-Pop' in the international artistic arena. Despite the great efforts we have seen that went into separating individual collaborations from collective identities and interests in rebellion versus revolution, large scale exhibitions of American artists such as *Claes Oldenburg* (1966) and *Andy Warhol* (1968) were increasingly organized alongside a European avant-garde tradition represented by exhibitions such as *John Heartfield* (1967), *The Language of Revolution* (1968) and *Poetry Must Be Made By All* (1969). If, as we have seen, exhibitions such as *Inner and Outer Space* and *She - a Cathedral* had been aimed at avoiding polemics by engaging in either a critical philosophy or tongue-in-cheek irony, the following events had a decidedly more cynical twist. Just as Saint-Phalle and Tinguely had embraced failure by becoming what they rejected and despised, Hulten would, after 1966, embrace the very art he had previously rejected.

Just prior to leaving Moderna Museet in 1973, Hulten made a last desperate attempt to 'fix' the history of Moderna Museet as the most 'open' and progressive site for contemporary art in the sixties — leaving a heroic (albeit questionable) legacy in place for generations to come. Working with Billy Klüver and E.A.T., Hulten helped purchase *The New York Collection* for Moderna Museet with the help of state funding. Consisting of thirty works of art by 29 artists,³⁶⁷ *The New York Collection* not only filled gaps in the collection from the sixties, but it helped seal the idea that Moderna Museet, during the sixties, not only had a dynamic relationship with the New York art scene, but also a comfortable one.³⁶⁸

Since the early seventies, Moderna Museet and its collection have acquired a powerful mythology which depends on a nostalgic longing for a time when individuals in Stockholm found themselves at the centre of artistic discourses. Simultaneously, artists working from the centre found a discourse and 'edge' on the margins. More recently, people have come to reject this history as part of the shift away from a patriarchal and canonical tradition of Western art. By shifting my attention away from questions about this art's postwar status as either a heroic Avant-Garde or failed Neo-Avant-Garde, my text utilizes a perspective from the margin of this cultural discourse in order to re-surface tensions which made this moment in history

³⁶⁷Lee Bontecou, Robert Breer, John Chamberlain, Walter de Maria, Mark di Suvero, Jim Dine, Öyvind Fahlström, Dan Flavin, Red Grooms, Hans Haacke, Alex Hay, Elsworth Kelly, Donald Judd, Sol LeWitt, Roy Lichtenstein, Robert Morris, Louise Nevelson, Kenneth Noland, Claes Oldenburg, Nam June Paik, Robert Rauschenberg, Larry Rivers, James Rosenquist, George Segal, Richard Serra, Keith Sonnier, Richard Stankiewicz, Frank Stella, Cy Twombly, Andy Warhol and Robert Whitman.

³⁶⁸In Barbro Schultz Lundestam's 1998 documentary *Amerikanarna och Pontus Hulten*, Hulten jokes about the fact that the museum was during the sixties accused of being 'leftist' when they in fact "avoided politics." As we have seen, the politics of this time and place could not be avoided and Hulten, Linde and the artists in question were highly motivated and aware (although not always in control) of their political positions.

so important. By centering my discussion on the activities of a few individuals and a particular institution, I hope to have revealed the precarious side of the historical make up of Nouveau Realisme, Neo-Dada and Pop Art. By pinpointing specific social, philosophical and sexual interests, a picture of this history emerges that is not necessarily 'fixed,' but takes into account conflicting attempts at colonizing the 'gap' between art and life.

So why privilege Stockholm as the place where this alternate view of art history has been constructed? I was born a few miles outside of Stockholm in March of 1966 (the year of *Hon*) after having been conceived in New York. I suppose this risks making my dissertation appear either cathartic or ironic. My intention is neither. Despite the disclaimer, I have to admit that my interest in this subject stems from my frequent visits to Stockholm's Moderna Museet on working holidays to Sweden over the past fifteen years. Each time before entering the museum on the island of Skeppsholmen, I have been confronted by *Le Paradise fantastique*, a collaborative work by Saint-Phalle and Tinguely produced for the 1967 World Exposition in Montreal [fig. 103]. Relocated to a park opposite the entrance to Moderna Museet, the prominence of this work fascinated me — the violent gestures it playfully presented disturbed me, and I began to question the meaning of this work which continues to annoy Sweden's King and Queen in their castle across the water. It was while researching the origins of this sculpture that I was led to the 'mother' of these mechanomorphic 'children' and there I discovered the roots of a history of how the museum had become internationally acclaimed in the sixties, but had since the mid-seventies gradually diminished on the international art scene.

Claes Britton, writing for the magazine *Stockholm New*, has described Moderna Museet's recent dilemma:

Since Pontus Hulten left in 1973 to become the first director of the Centre Pompidou in Paris, Moderna Museet hasn't come anywhere near the astonishing achievements of the '60s. The museum's daily operations ... [have] settled down to a slower-paced trot, with the international collection glimmering like a set of crazy jewels around the neck of a weary mule....³⁶⁹

Since my own interest in the history of these 'jewels' began, the City of Stockholm announced in 1992 that the Spanish architect Rafael Moneo had won a competition to rebuild Moderna Museet. The main argument behind this 350 million kr. rebuilding project — a proposal that hit many Swedes as hard to swallow at a time of a major national recession in the early nineties — has been to combat the presently unfavorable conditions which "Pontus Hulten's world renowned collection" is housed.³⁷⁰ The larger subplot, of course, was to establish Stockholm as a major European cultural tourist centre.

With Hulten gone from the Swedish art scene, the plan was to hire a new director who would be able to return the museum to the center of avant-garde discourses in time for 1998 when it was Stockholm's turn to be the "Cultural Capital of Europe," a dubious, but clever, title offered to help boost tourism in Europe. Until this cultural magician was found (the English curator David Elliott was eventually hired) and the new museum was

³⁶⁹Claes Britton "The Second Coming of Moderna Museet" *Stockholm New* No.5 (1997), p.54 (54-104).

³⁷⁰The quote is Raphael Moneo's..., by calling the Moderna Museet's collection "Pontus Hulten's," Moneo acknowledges the important role Hulten is recognized for having played in forming that collection. See Rebecka Tarschys' interview with Moneo: Fullträffar för Moneo." *Dagens Nyheter* (June 25, 1992), p.1.

completed, a new and "more precise" replica of Duchamp's *Large Glass* was constructed under the direction of Ulf Linde. In May of 1992, I 'witnessed' its unveiling in front of Mrs. Teeny Duchamp who was flown to Stockholm from New York to authorize it in Duchamp's absence. This copy, made for travel, was then transported to Bonn, Germany where it was on loan for five years at Hulten's Kunst und Ausstellungshalle.³⁷¹ Today Moderna Museet has two *Large Glasses* in its collection, ensuring that their Duchamp can both travel and stay at home. While *She* has been destroyed, '*He*' has been kept alive for posterity by a culture industry still clinging to its origins. The question is, *who* knows *why*?

³⁷¹Hulten's first exhibition at this new museum was a large Niki de Saint-Phalle retrospective.

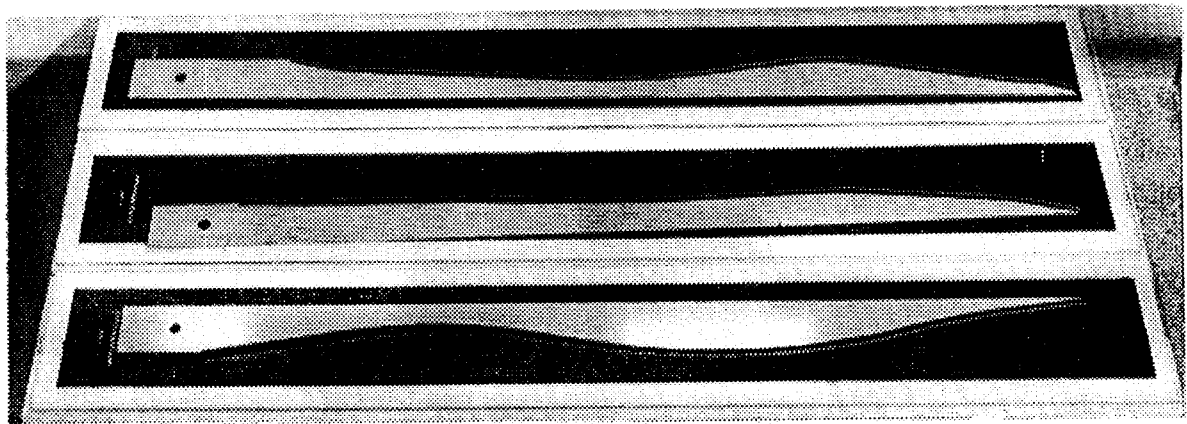


Fig. 1 Marcel Duchamp, *Three Standard Stoppages*, 1913 Mixed media assemblage (Source: Hopps, Walter, et al. *Marcel Duchamp Ready-Mades, etc. (1913-1964)*, Milano, Galleria Schwarz, 1964).

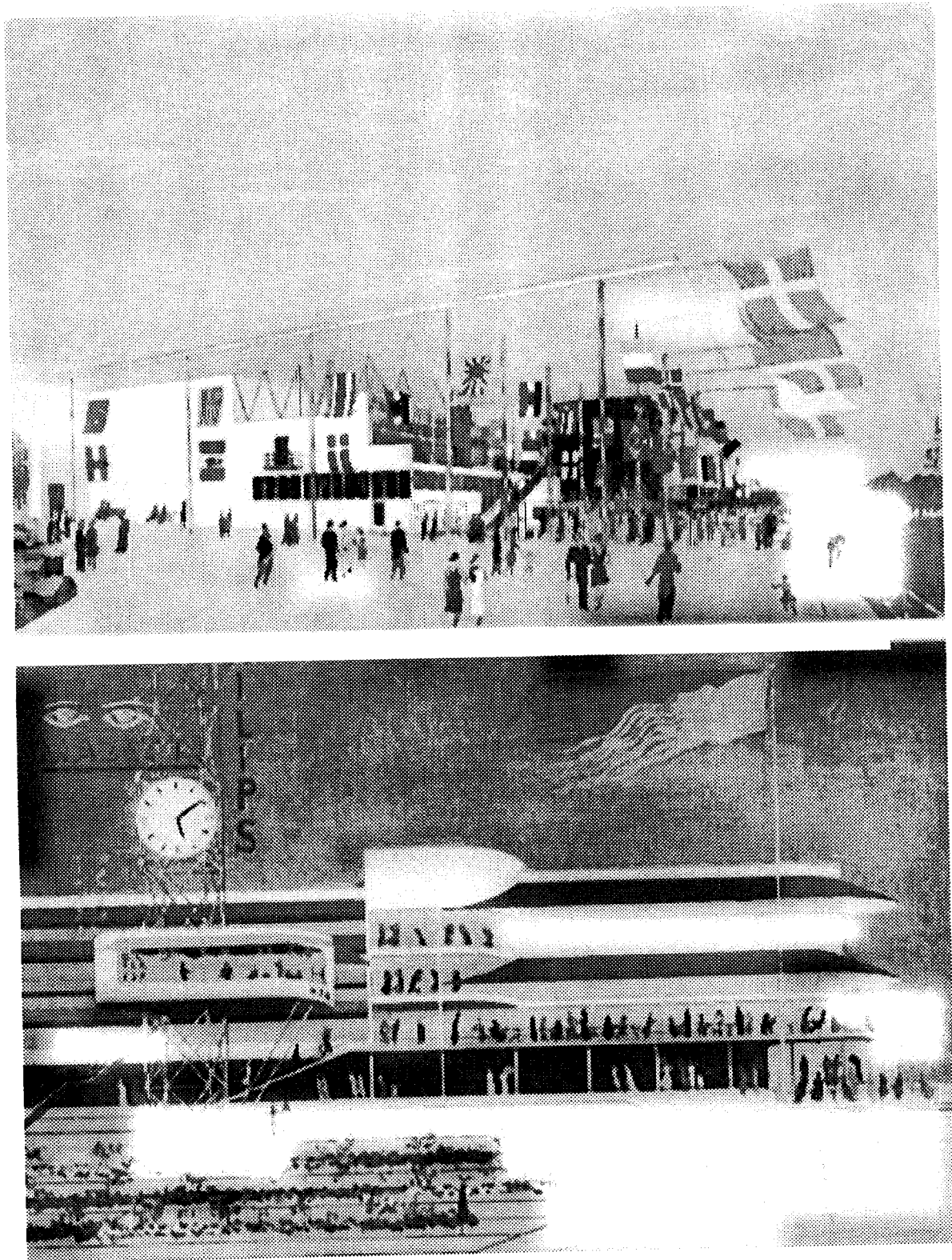


Fig. 2 Gouache renditions by Rudolf Persson of Gunnar Asplund's Fairground at the 1930 Stockholm Exhibition, 1929 (Source: Rudberg, Eva Stockholmsutställningen 1930: Stockholm: Arkitekturmuseet, 1999).

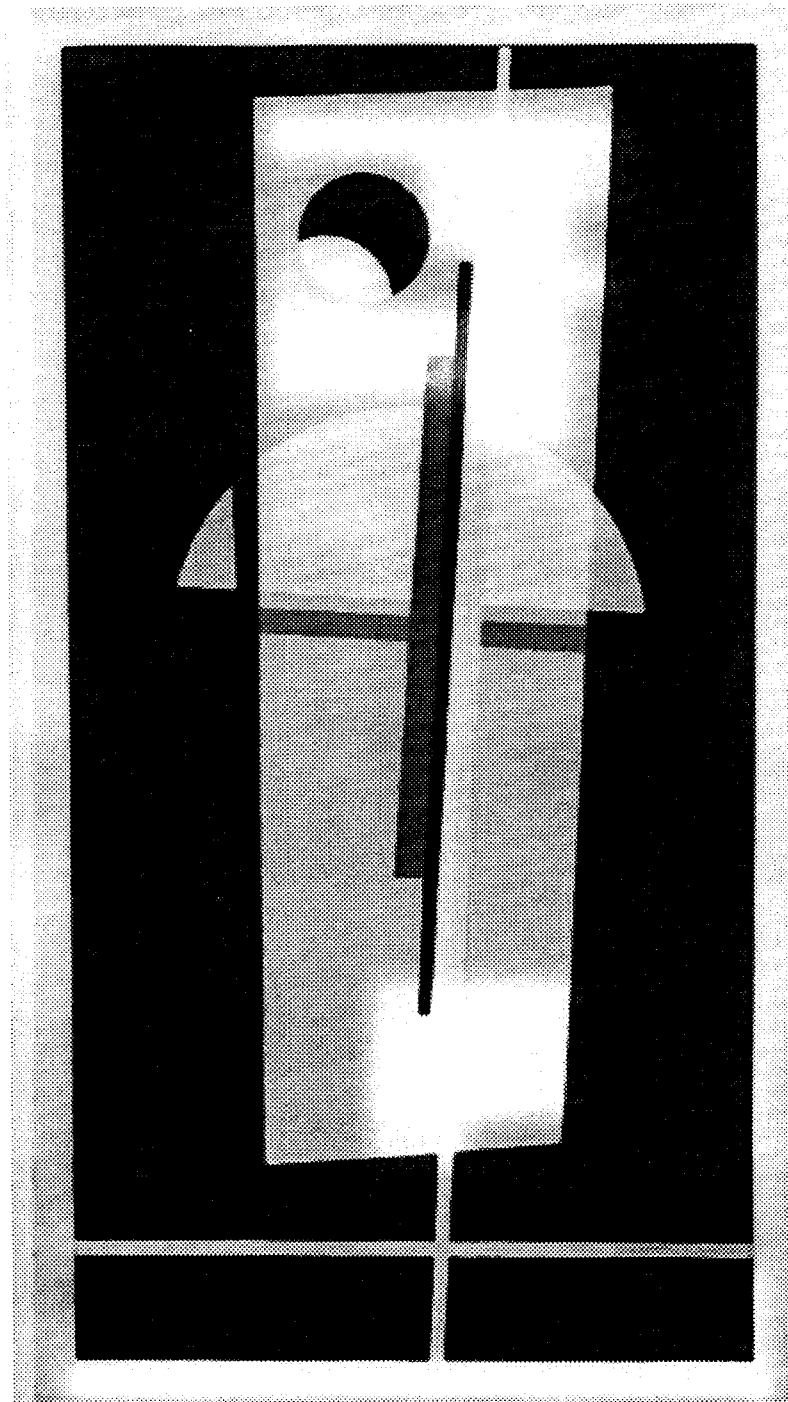


Fig. 3 Otto Carlsund, *Composition for the Einstein Observatory in Potsdam*, 1924-25 Oil on Canvas 141x75 cm (Source: Lyberg, Louise *A History of Swedish Art: 1880-1980* Uddevalla: Bohusläningens Boktryckeri AB, 1987).

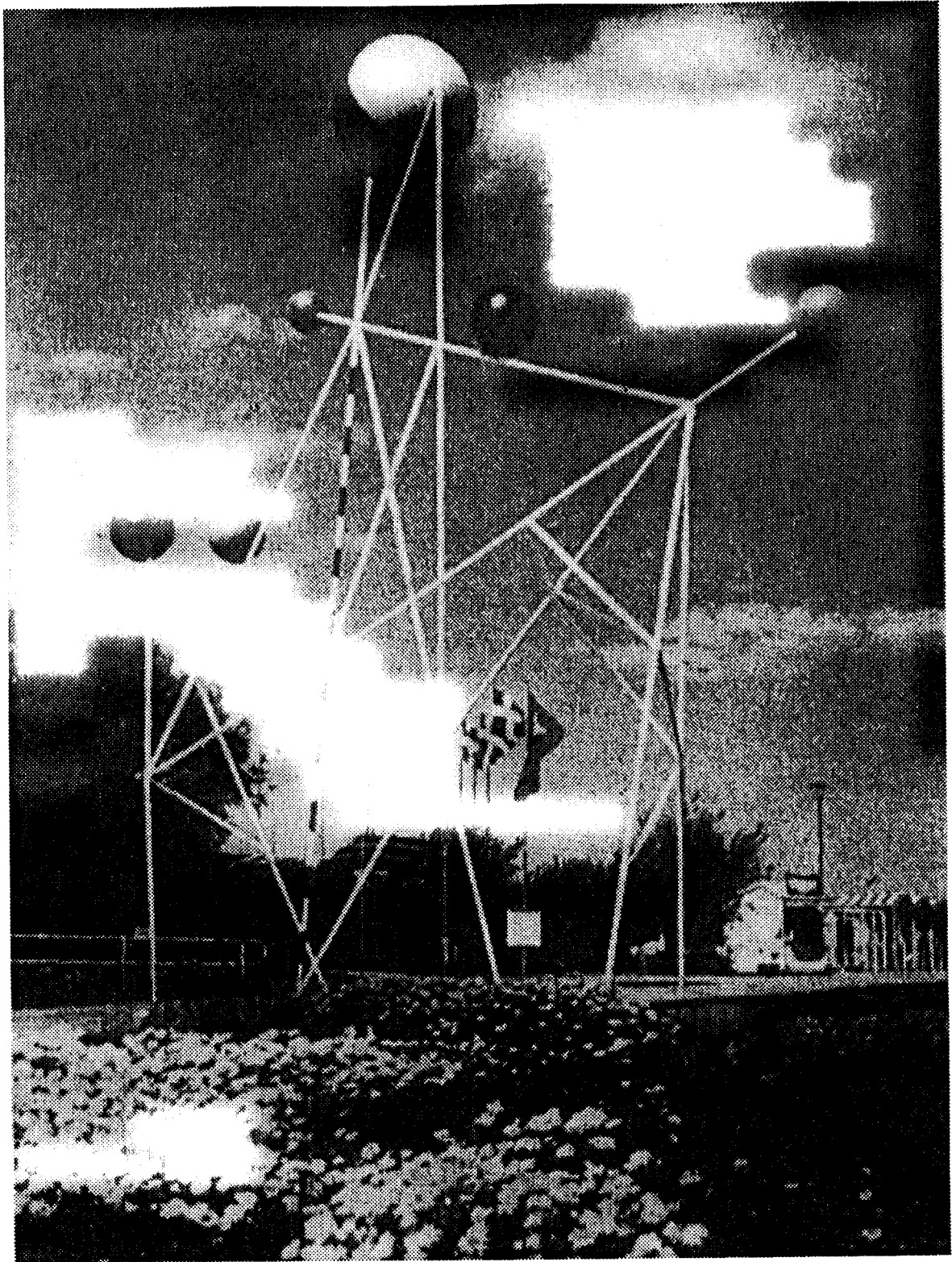


Fig.4 World Sports Exhibition, Stockholm, 1949 (Source: *Konstrevy*, Nr.1, 1957).

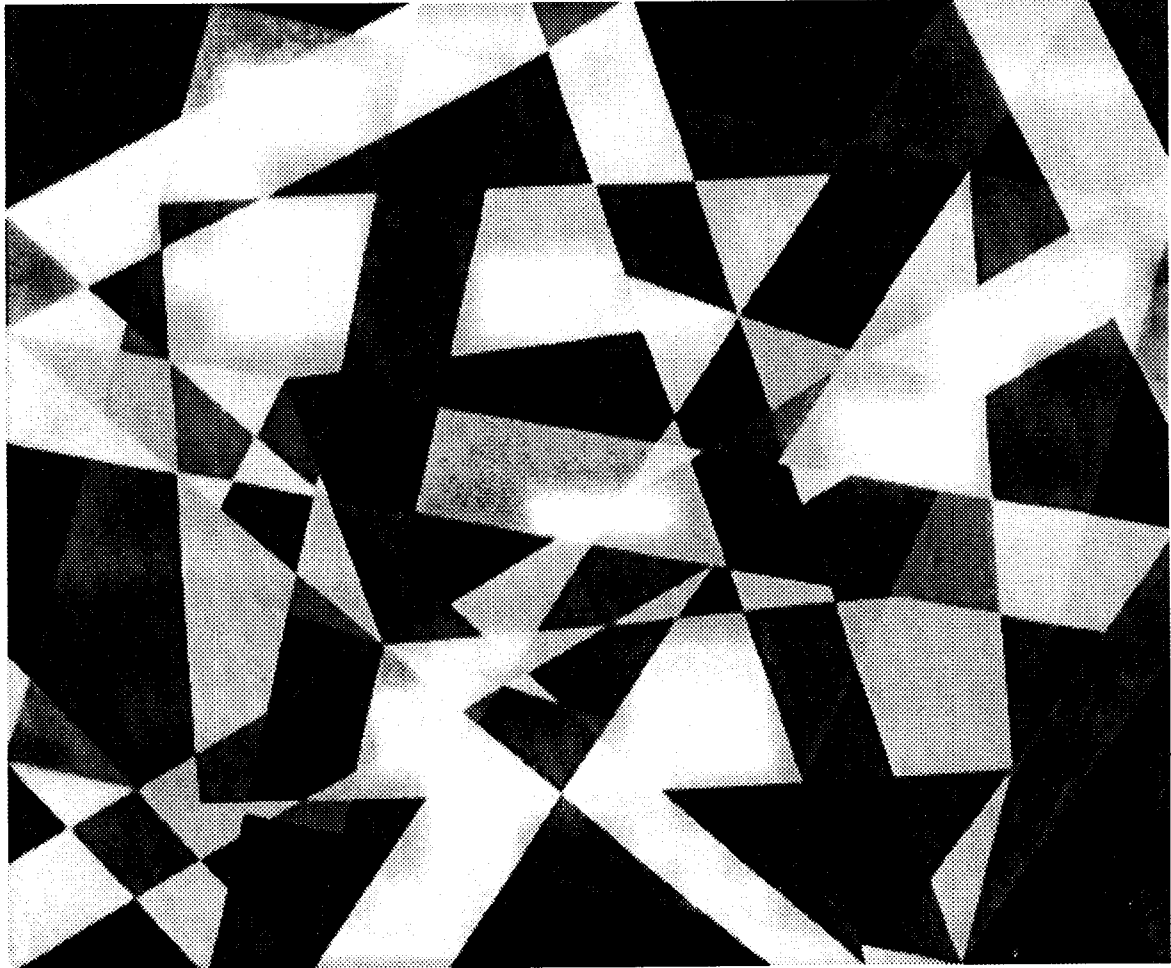


Fig. 5 Olle Bonnier, *Theme*, 1949 Oil on Canvas 120x150 cm (Source: Granath, *Olle Another Light: Swedish Art Since 1945* Malmö: Svenska Institutet, 1975).

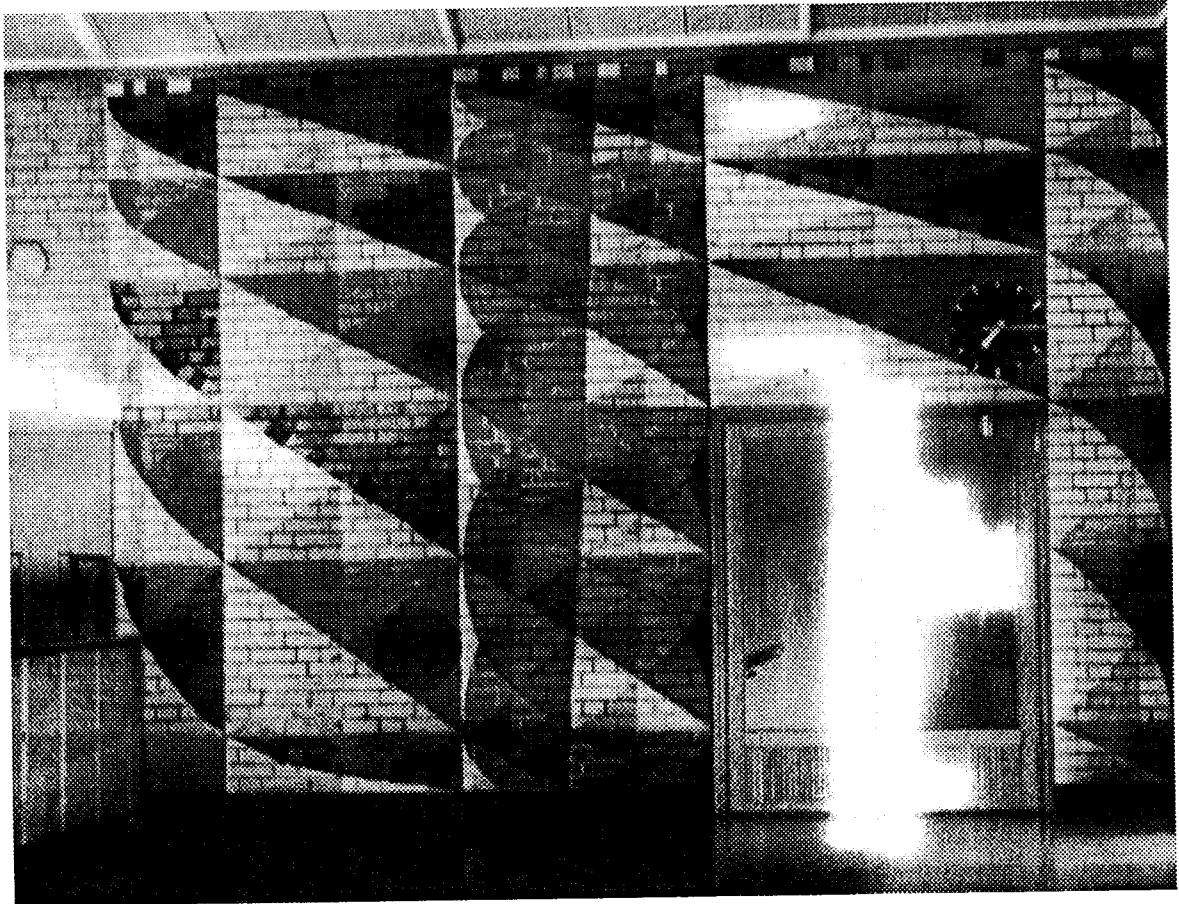


Fig. 6 Lennart Rodhe *Paket i långa banor* The Postal Office, Östersund, 1952
(Source: *Palleten*, Nr1, 1954).



Fig. 7 Cover Design of *Art d'aujourd'hui* by Olle Baertling (Source: *Art d'aujourd'hui* Serie 4 No.7 Oct - Nov 1953).

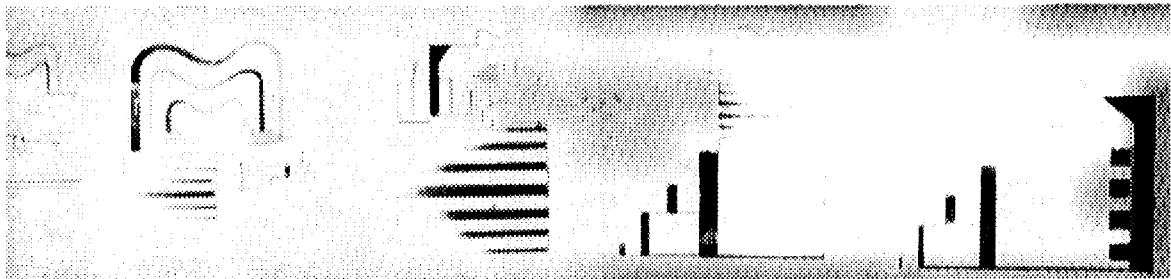


Fig. 8 Vikking Eggeling, *Diagonal Symphony*, [detail] 1921, film-roll (Source: *Art d'Aujourd'hui* série 4, no.7 Oct-Nov, 1953).

**Esthétique
actuelle
du Timbre-Poste**

par Michel Ragon

Mars 1955

En haut :
Trois timbres français
En bas :
Trois timbres suédois



Ainsi que l'effluve, l'étoile, le miroir en page de journaux anglo-saxons, ont subi l'influence des grands courants esthétiques, le message et le timbre ont conservé, par contre, une figuration étonnamment restreinte.

La France s'abstient à proposer comme emblèmes ses idées d'illustration commerciale ou ses messages qui se rappellent quelquefois à l'insu des artistes de l'Art. Mais dans ses séries « littéraires » sportives ou paysannes, elle dépeint le triste record de l'académisme le plus plat, quand il n'est pas tout simplement arriéré.

La grande vague actuelle dans la figuration philatélique, c'est le « timbre vignette ». Les séries de vignettes s'étendent de genre de celles que l'on trouve dans les tabaceries de choc et font fuir le Yaguap, l'ivoire, les Colombes portugaises et la beauté viciante de cette ligne de figuration qui, en la voir, affecte les régimes philatéliques les plus différents.

Autre symphonie philatélique contemporaine : le regard sur Coléus, effort surtout les jeunes républicains qui souhaitent voir en notre pays le voir. Les timbres suédois, par exemple, ont un caractère entre le billet de banque et la carte postale. Mais que dire de cette esthétique du timbre actuel

peut-être le même académisme exist aussi bien en regard qu'en Chine, en U.R.S.S., qu'en Viet-Nam, en Irlande qu'en Albanie. L.U.R.S.S. est en des rares pays à faire figurer sur ses timbres des tableaux de ses artistes, mais ce sont les tableaux d'histoire.

Il est habituel aux détracteurs de l'art abstrait de dire que ce mouvement pictural tend à une meilleure réalisation de l'art dans laquelle disparaissent les particularités artistiques ethniques. Il nous serait aisé de répondre le contraire en citant des exemples. Mais nous sommes en ce moment, le timbre-poste et il est curieux de remarquer à quel point les vignettes chinoises, françaises, anglaises, suédoises ou de quelque autre pays, se ressemblent. Cette incapacité de distinction de l'académisme et de l'académisme occidental, est chose faite.

Aussi seules-elles avec plaisir la suite de timbre-poste dessinée par les postes suédoises. Si deux d'entre eux se contentent d'extraire des lignes télégraphiques et un dessin, le timbre voit cet, par contre, constamment composé de formes abstraites. Mais, ces formes nous rappellent une expression donnée à l'art non-figuratif suédois.

Michel

Fig. 9 Michel Ragon's article on Swedish and French Stamps in *Cimaise* (Source: Ragon, Michel "Esthétique actuelle du Timbre-Poste *Cimaise* March 1955).

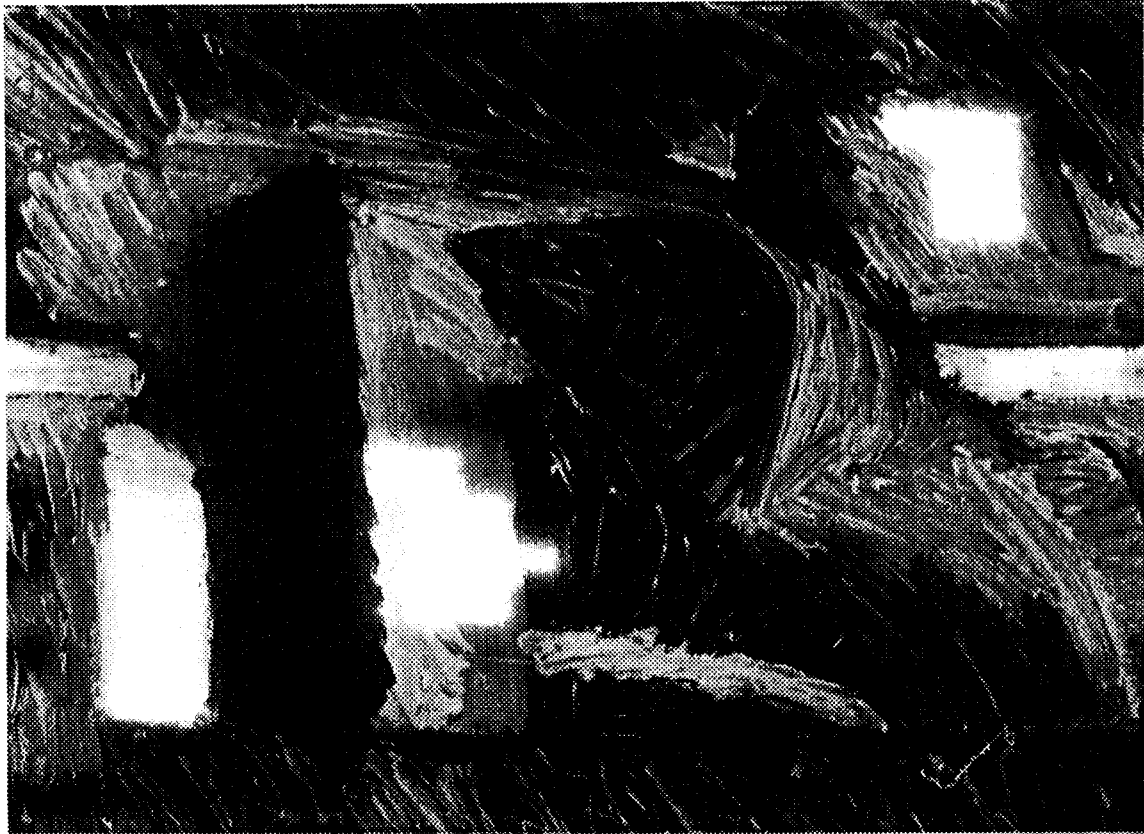


Fig. 10 Torsten Renqvist, *Windswept Bush*, Oil on Canvas 31x51 cm (Source: Lyberg, Louise *A History of Swedish Art: 1880-1980* Uddevalla: Bohusläningens Boktryckeri AB, 1987).

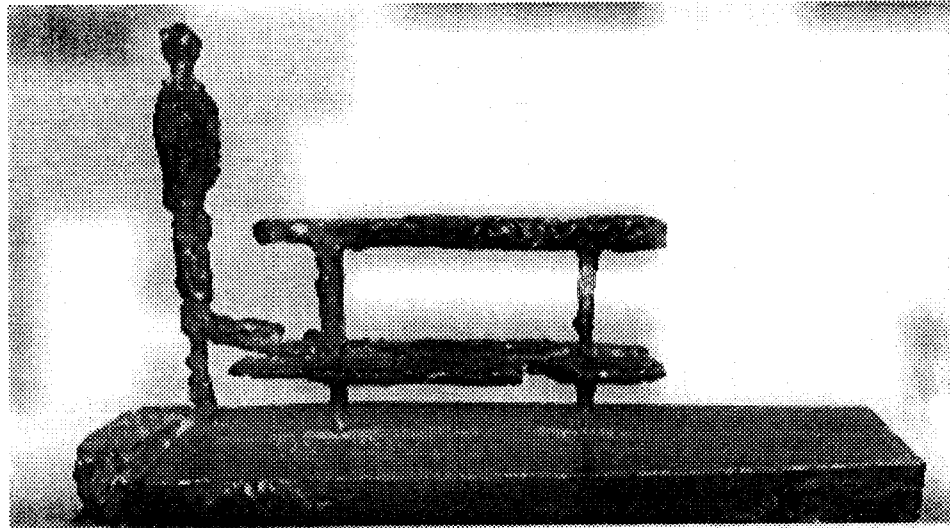


Fig. 11 Martin Holmberg, *Traffic Milieu: Human Near a Wide Stretching Boulevard with Heavy Traffic*, 1952, Bronze Sculpture (Source: Lars-Erik Åström "Människan i nuet" *Konstrevy* Nr. 2 (1957).

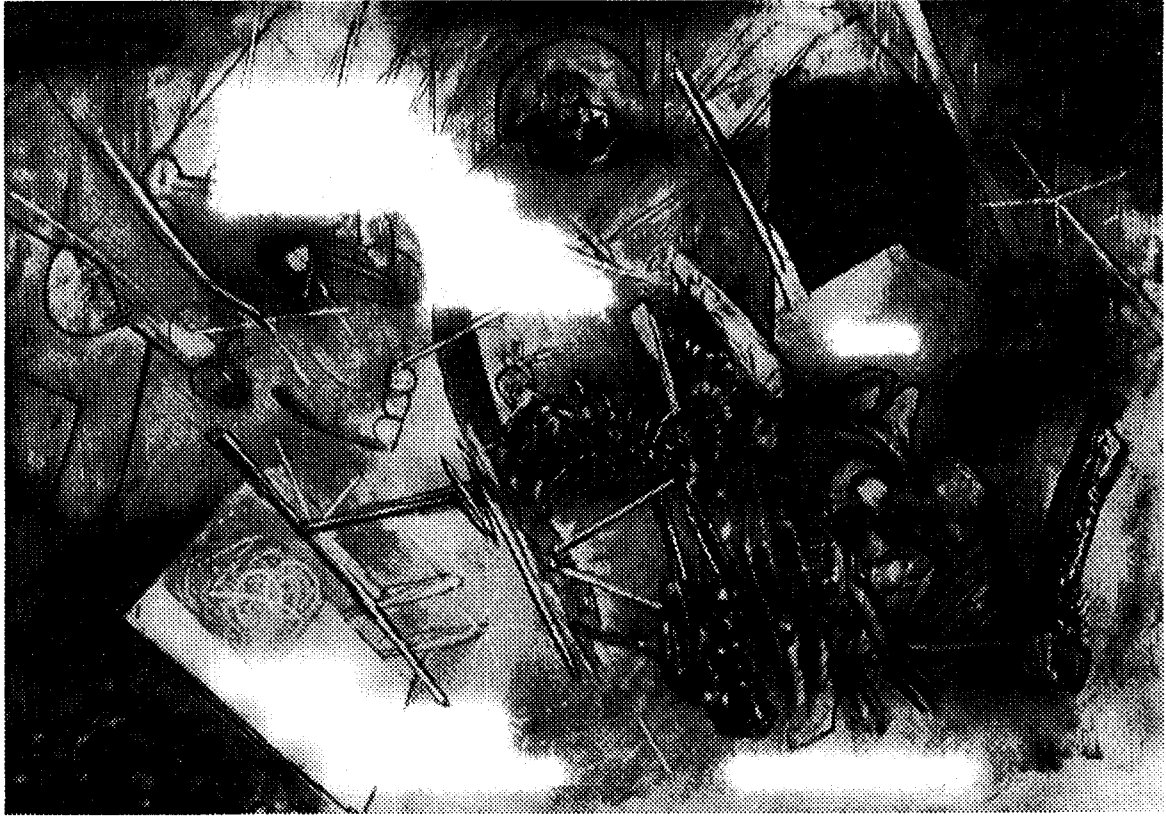


Fig. 12 Sebastian Roberto Matta Echaurren, *The Being Opens Itself*, 203x295 cm
Oil on Canvas (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna
Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

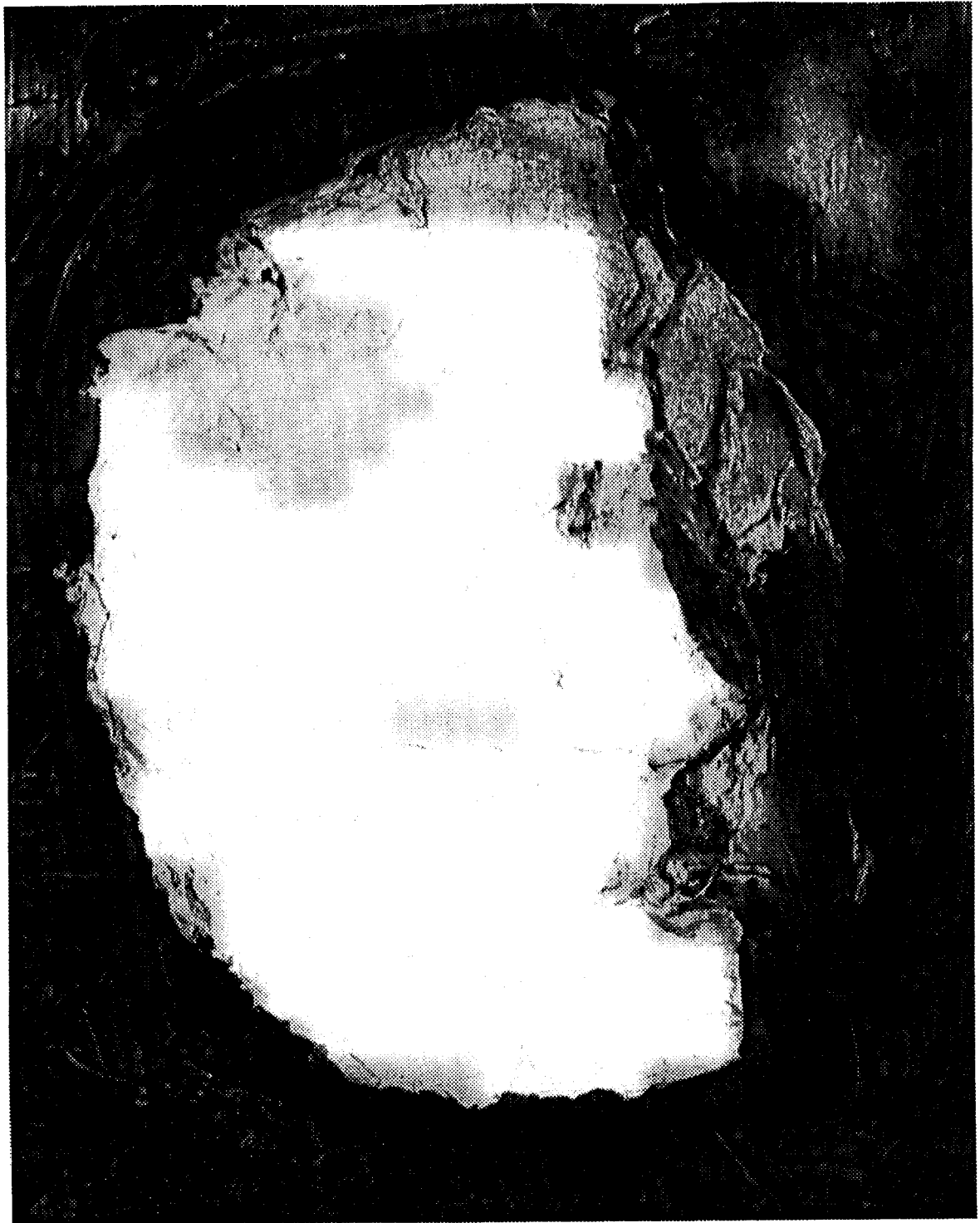


Fig. 13 Jean Fautrier, *Otage*, 1944 Oil and Mixed Media on Canvas (Source: *Jean Fautrier: Gemälde, Skulpturen und Handzeichnungen*, Cologne: Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle, 1980).



Fig. 14 Pontus Hulten's balancing act (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

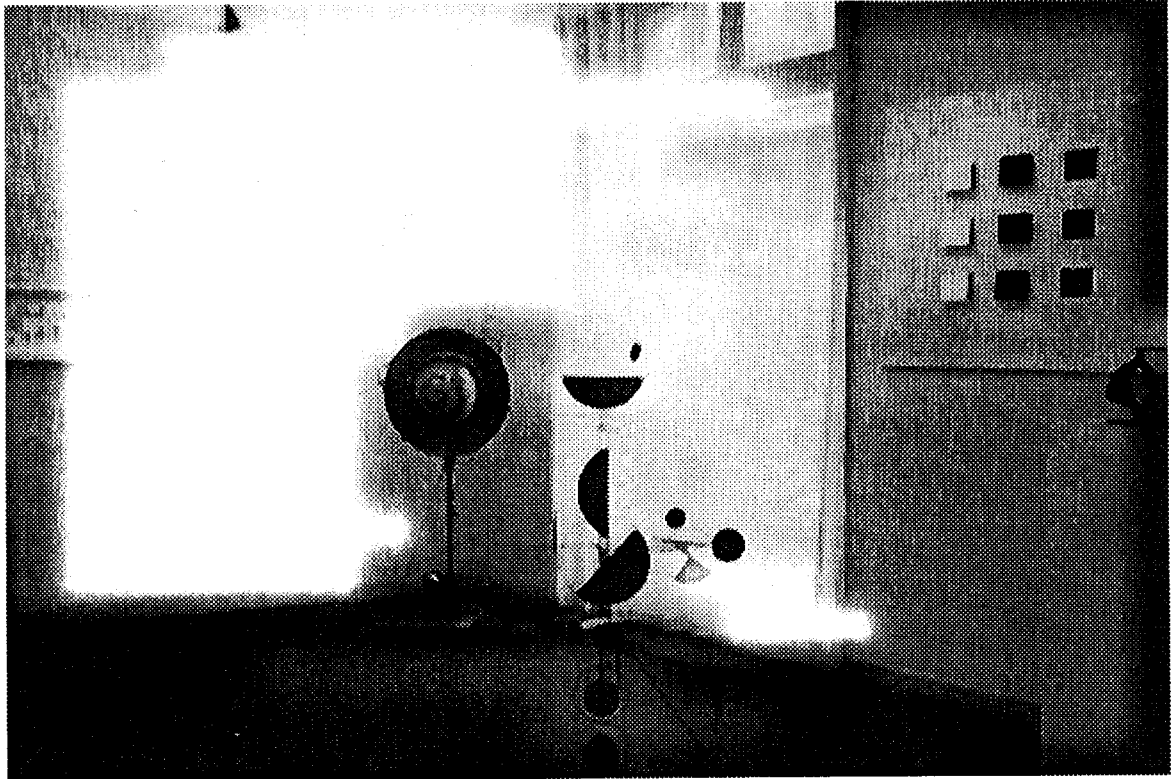


Fig. 15 *Le Mouvement*, Galerie Denise Réne (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Jean Tinguely: Méta*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972).

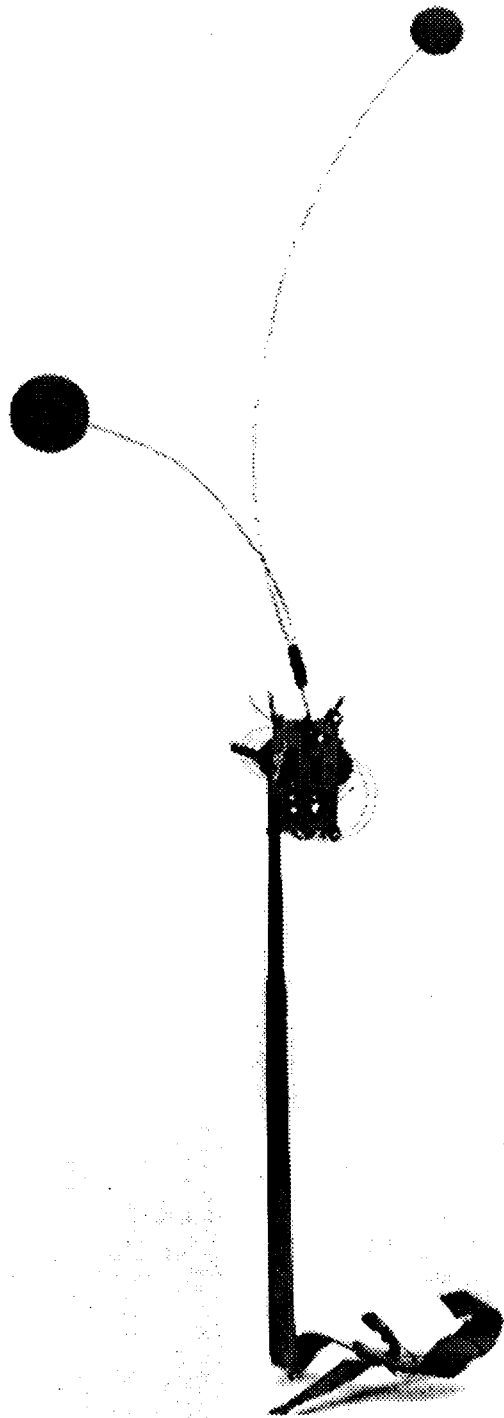


Fig. 16 Bruno Munari, *Useless Machine*, 1951 Mixed Media (Source: Tanchis, Aldo Bruno Munari: *Design as Art* Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1987).

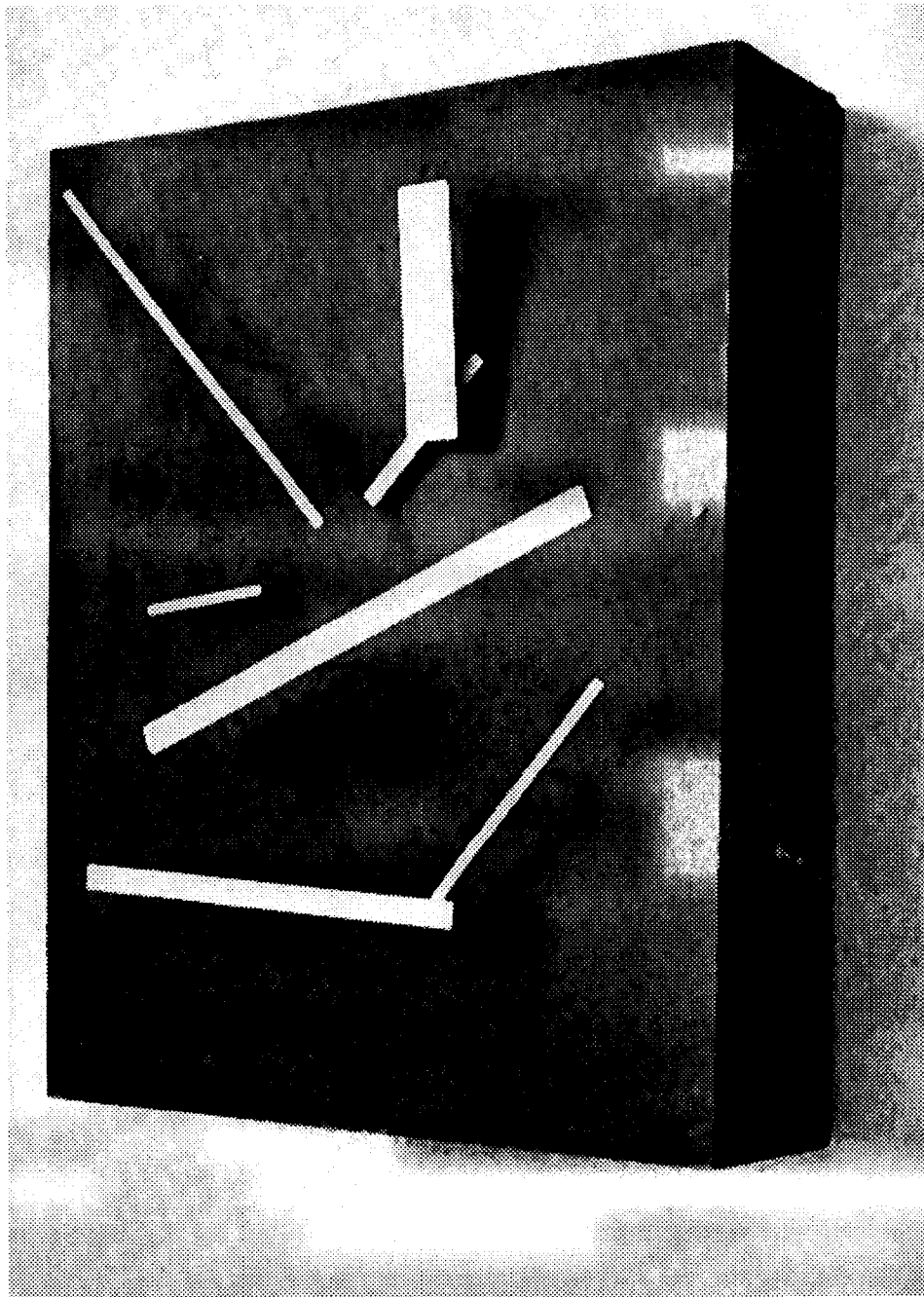


Fig. 17 Jean Tinguely, *Meta-Malevich*, 1955 (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Jean Tinguely: Méta*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972).

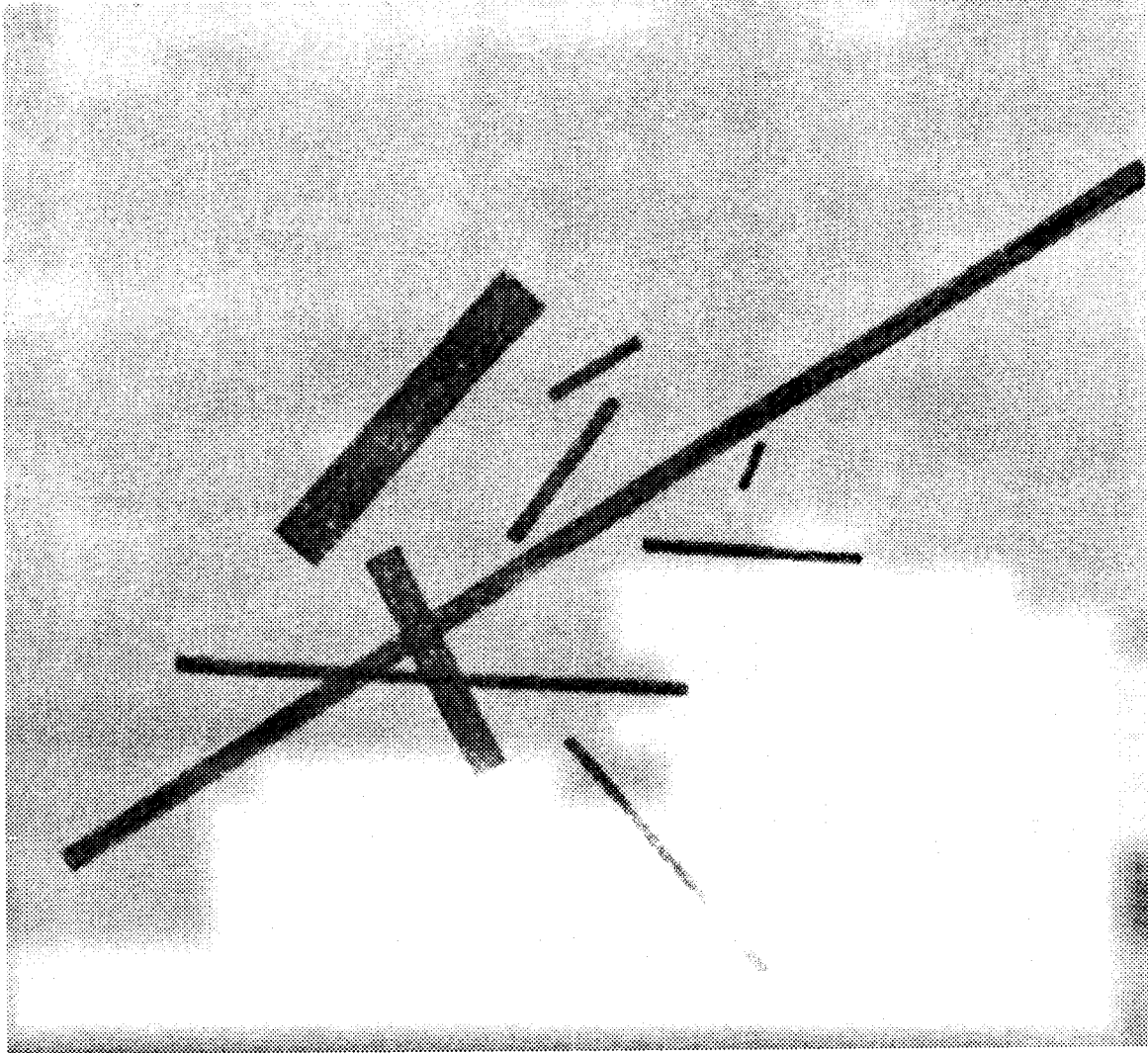


Fig. 18 Kasimir Malevich, *Suprematist Composition*, (Source: Hulten, Pontus Jean Tinguely: *Méta*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972).



Fig. 19 Henri Michaux *Bataille*, 1952 (Source: Agnes Angliviel de La Beaumelle and Alfred Pacquement, eds. *Henri Michaux*, New York: The Solomon, R. Guggenheim Foundation, 1978).

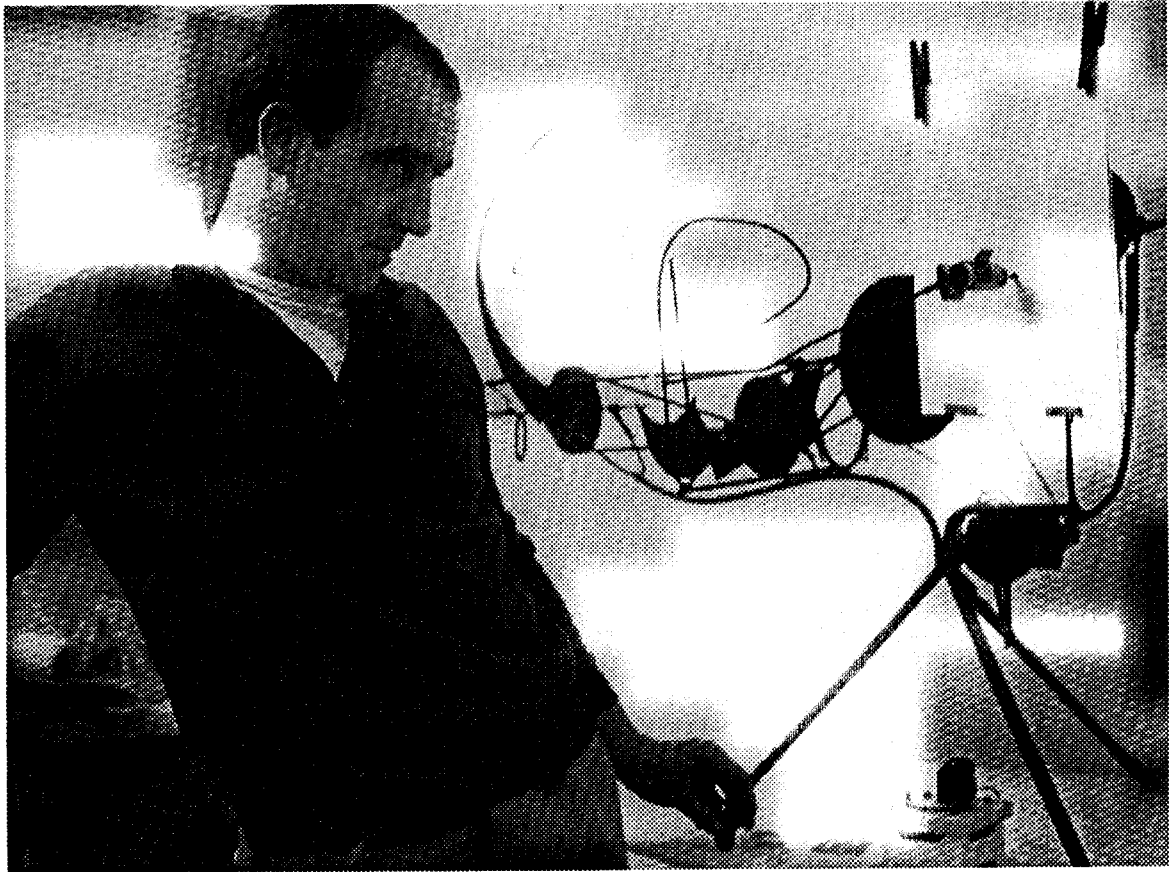


Fig. 20 Jean Tinguely, *Meta-matic Drawing Machine*, 1955 (Source: Hulthen, Pontus *Jean Tinguely: Méta*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972).

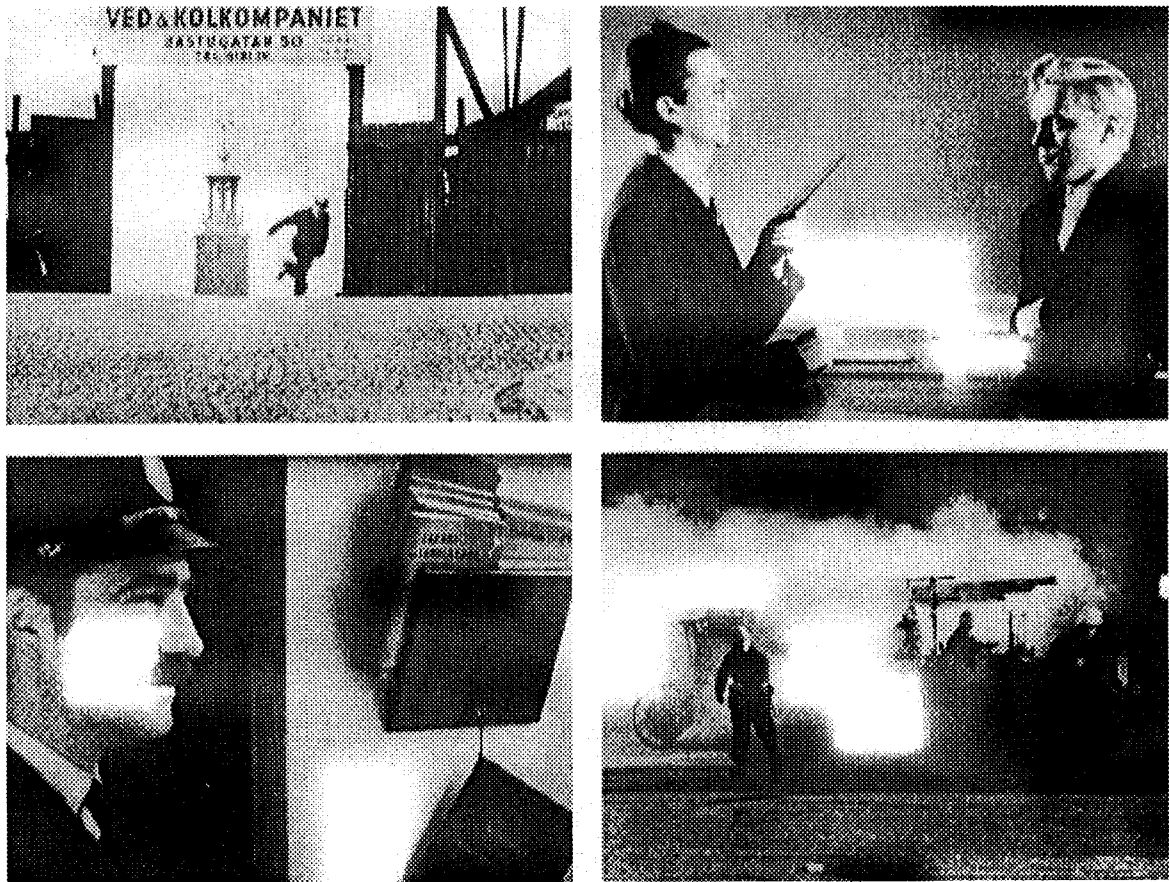


Fig. 21 Pontus Hulten and Hans Nordenström, Scenes from *En Dag i Staden*, 1955-58, Figures at top-right and bottom-left are P.O. Ultvedt and J. Tinguely. (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).



Fig. 22 Per-Olof Utvedt, Geometric Mobile Ballet Décor, *Spiralen*, 1954
(Source: Springfieldt, Björn P.O. Utvedt: *Tvivel och övermod: Arbeten från 1945 till 1988* Malmö: Malmö Konsthall, 1988).



Fig. 23 Per-Olof Ultvedt, *Nära Ögat*, Stills from film (Source: Springfieldt, Björn P.O. *Ultvedt: Tvivel och övermod: Arbeten från 1945 till 1988* Malmö: Malmö Konsthall, 1988).

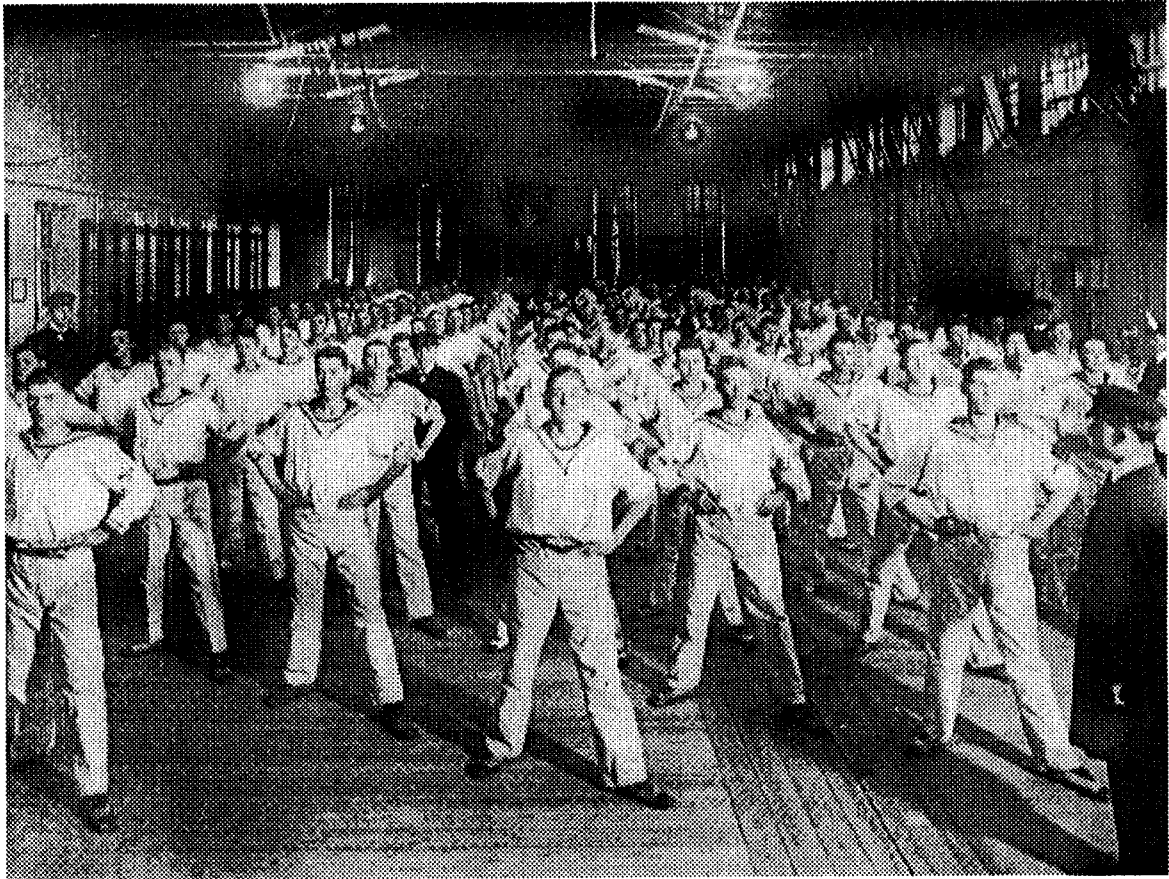


Fig. 24 The Exercise House, interior of Moderna Museet prior to 1956 (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).



Fig. 25 Moderna Museet, front facade (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

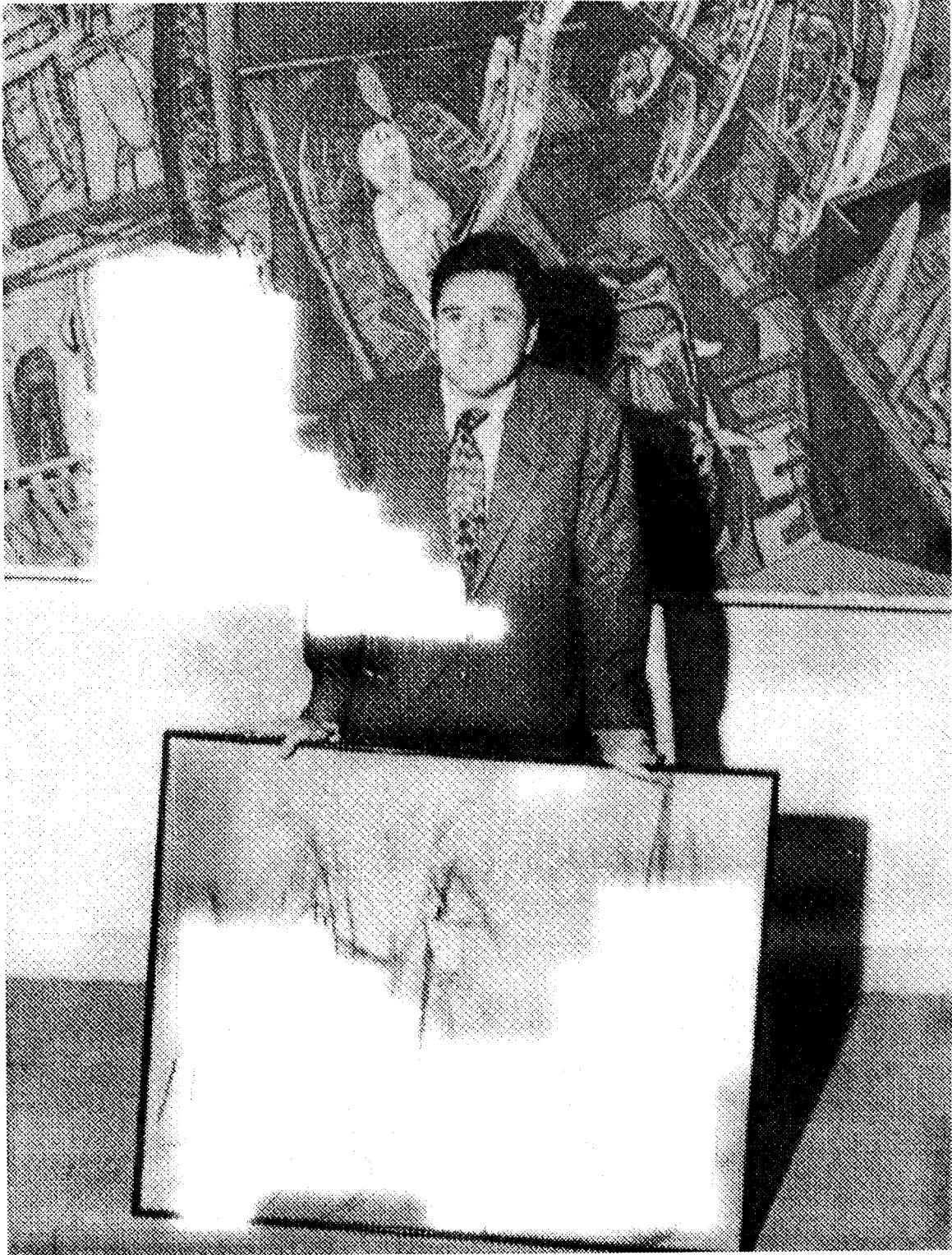


Fig. 26 Sebastian Matta at Moderna Museet (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

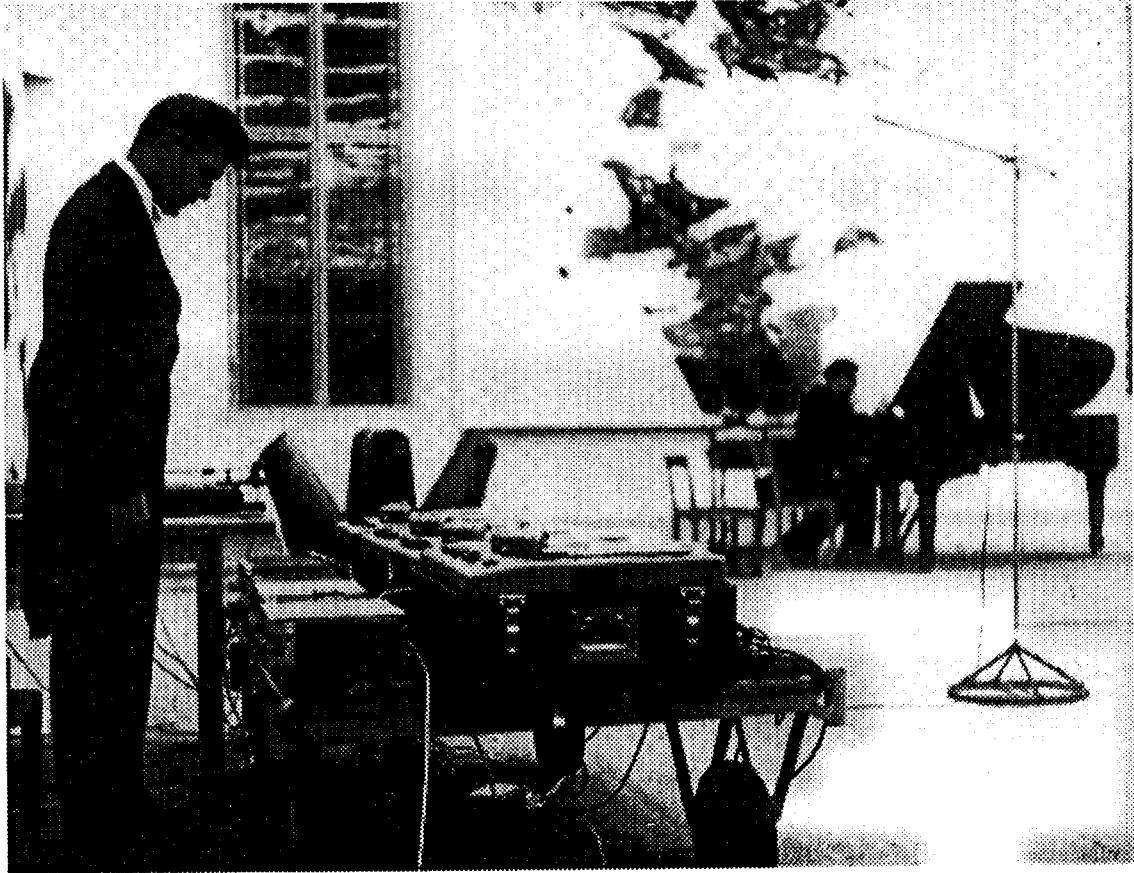


Fig. 27 John Cage performing at Moderna Museet, 1960 (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

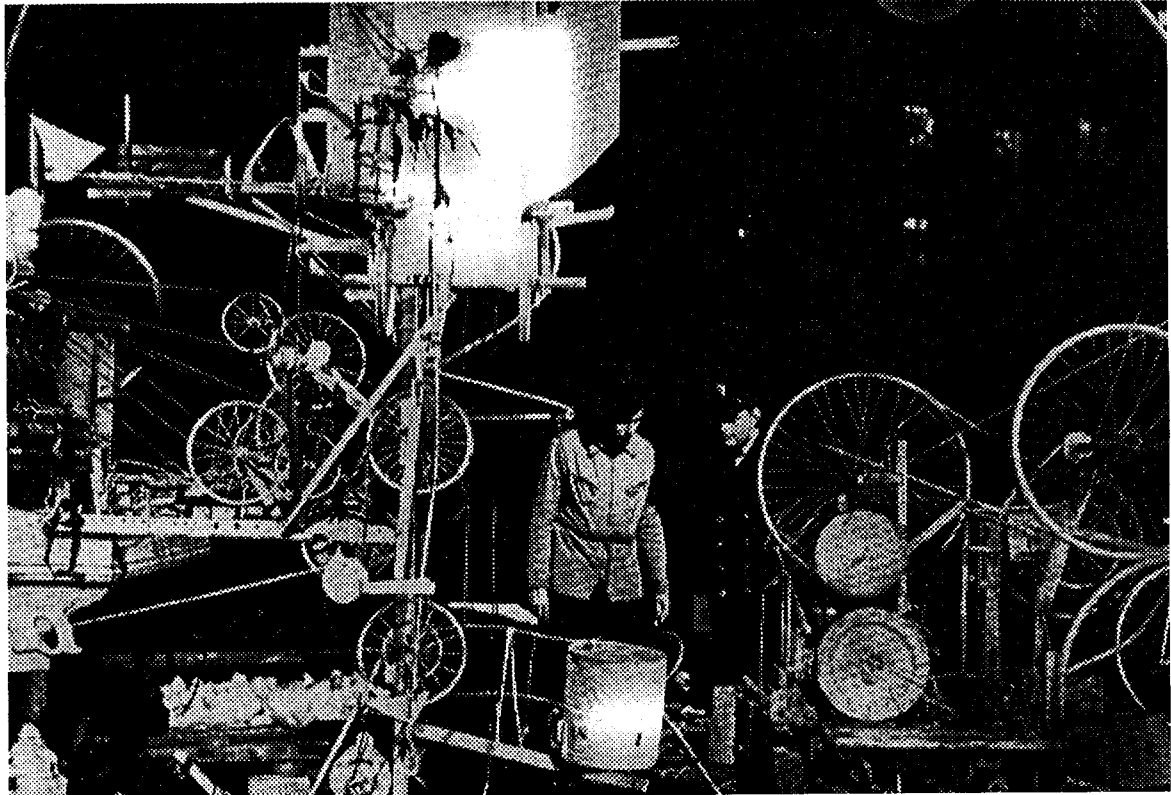


Fig. 28 Jean Tinguely, *Homage à New York*, 1960 Mixed Assemblage (Source: *Konstrevy* Nr.3, 1966).

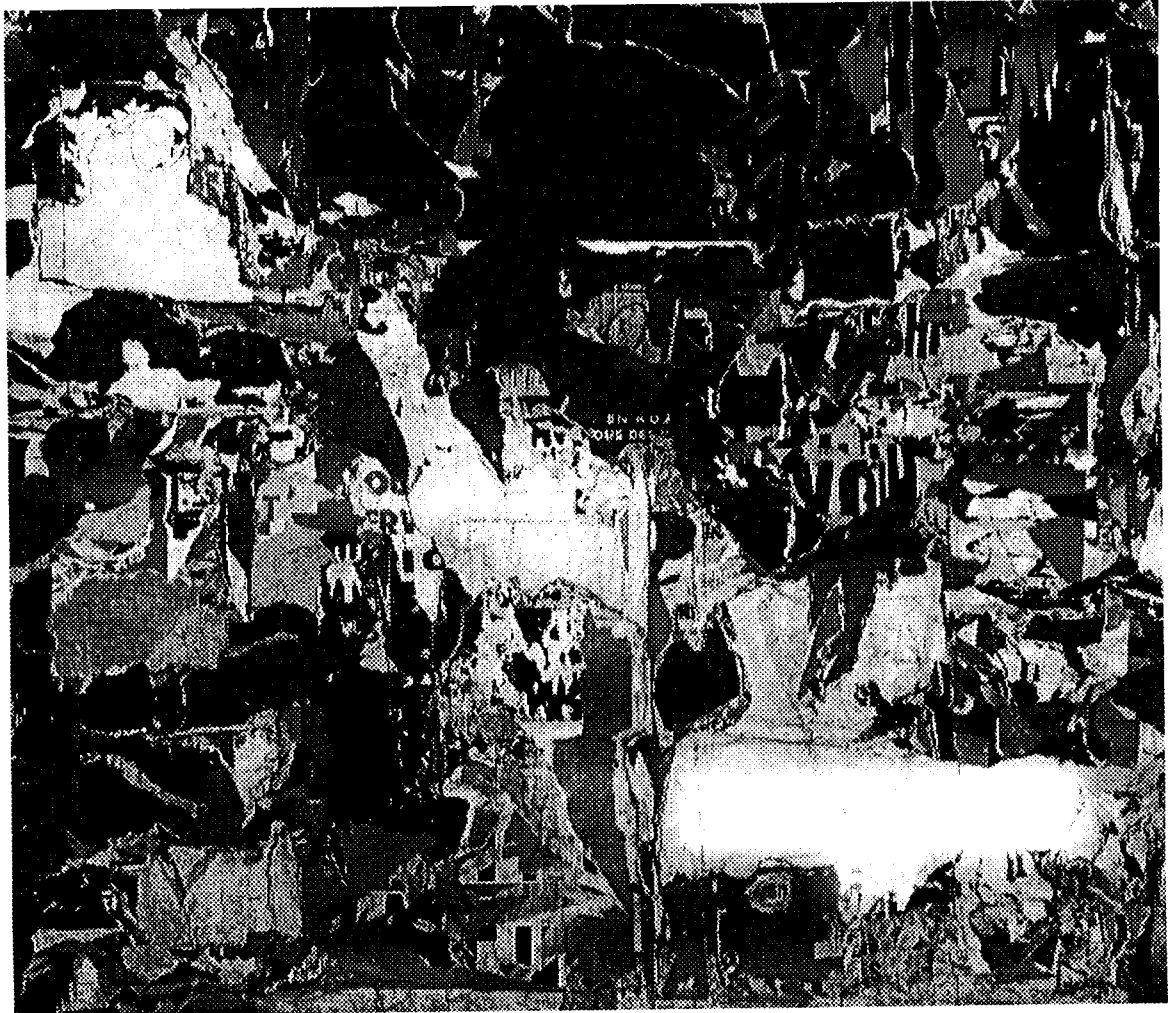


Fig. 30 Jacques de la Villeglé *Boulevard St Martin*, 1959 Decollage (Source: Hapgood, Susan *Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1958-62* New York: The American Federation of Arts in association with Universe Publishing, 1994).

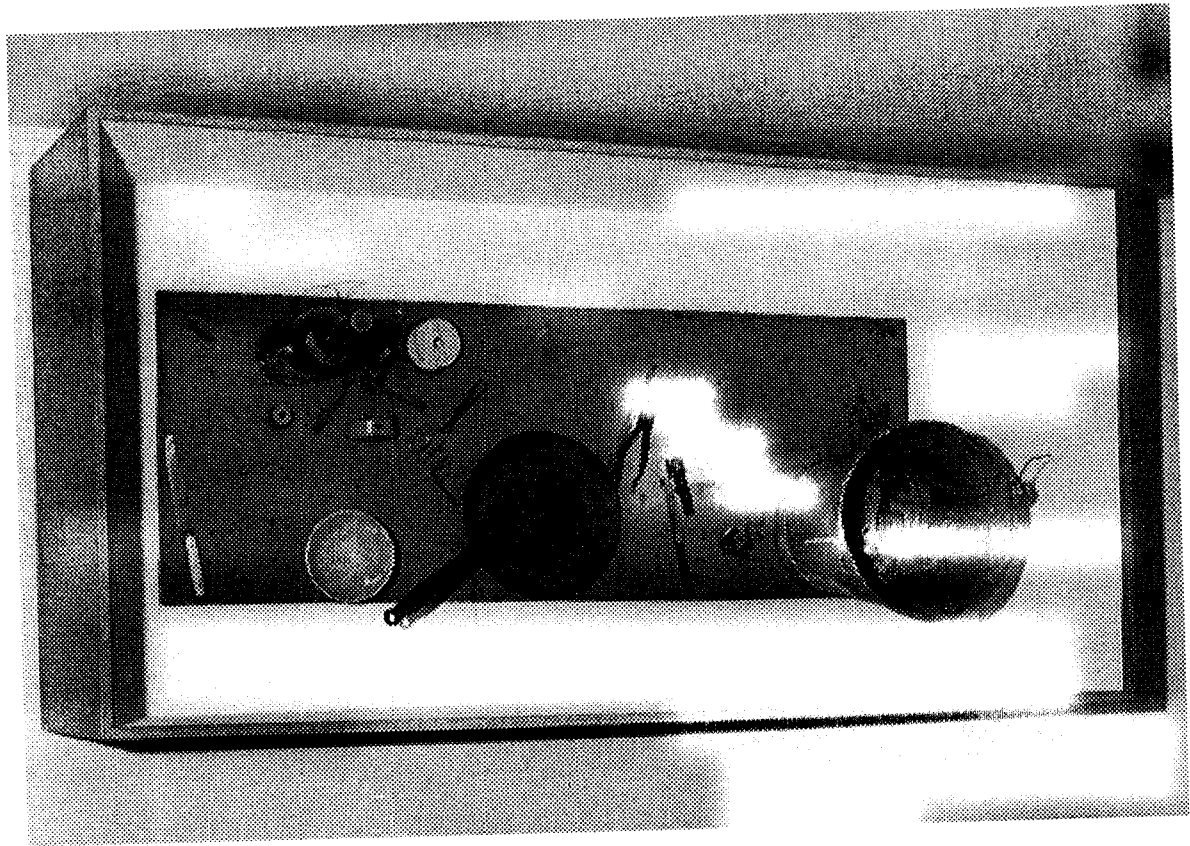


Fig. 31 Daniel Spoerri, *The Trash Basket is Not Arman's* 1961, Mixed Media Assemblage (Source: Hapgood, Susan *Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1958-62* New York: The American Federation of Arts in association with Universe Publishing, 1994).

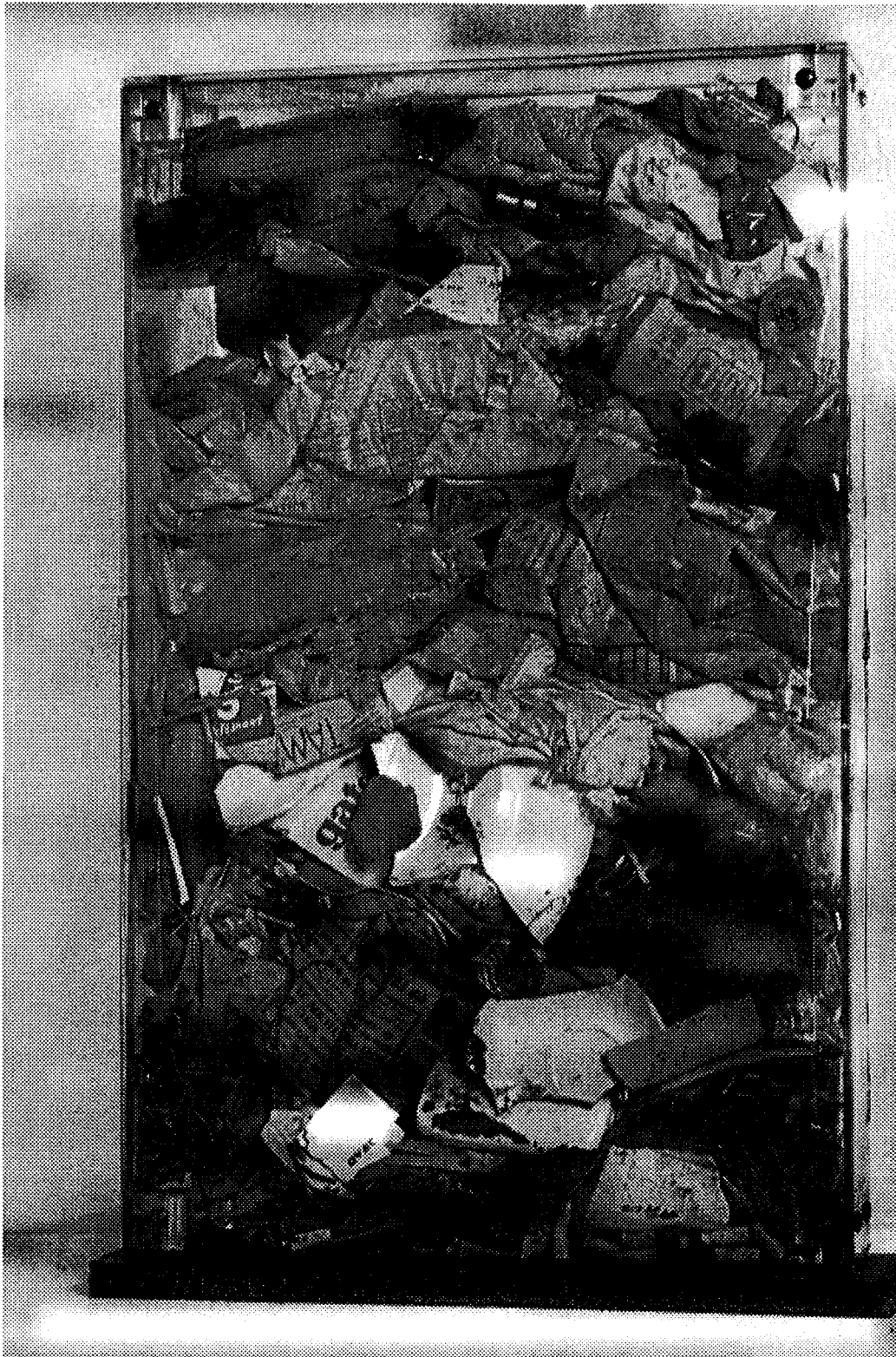


Fig. 32 Arman, *Large Bourgeois Trash*, 1960, Mixed Media Assemblage (Source: Hapgood, *Susan Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1958-62* New York: The American Federation of Arts in association with Universe Publishing, 1994).

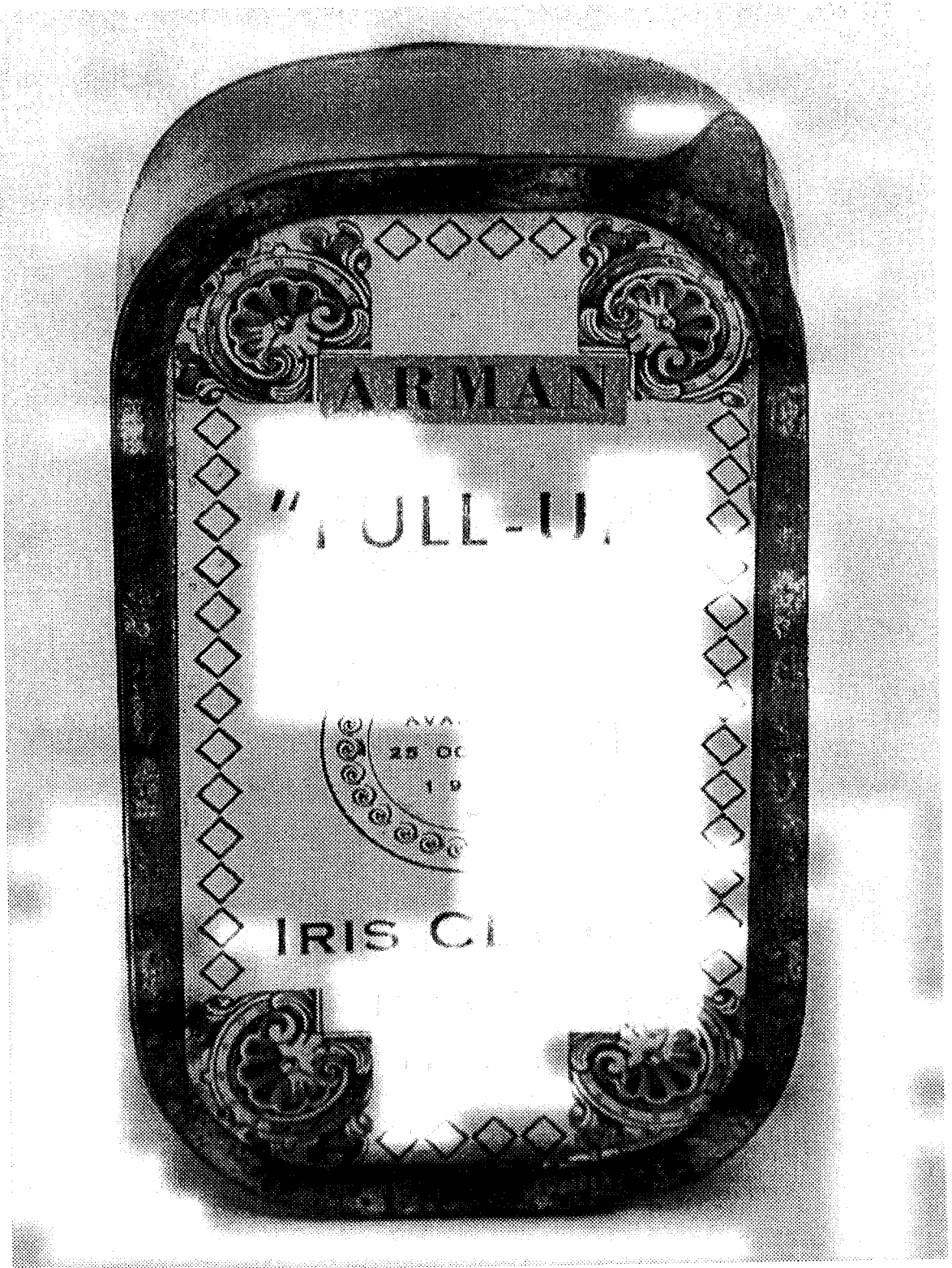


Fig. 33 Invitation Card/Can for Arman's exhibition *Full-Up* at Iris Clert Galerie
(Source: Hapgood, Susan *Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1958-62* New York: The American Federation of Arts in association with Universe Publishing, 1994).

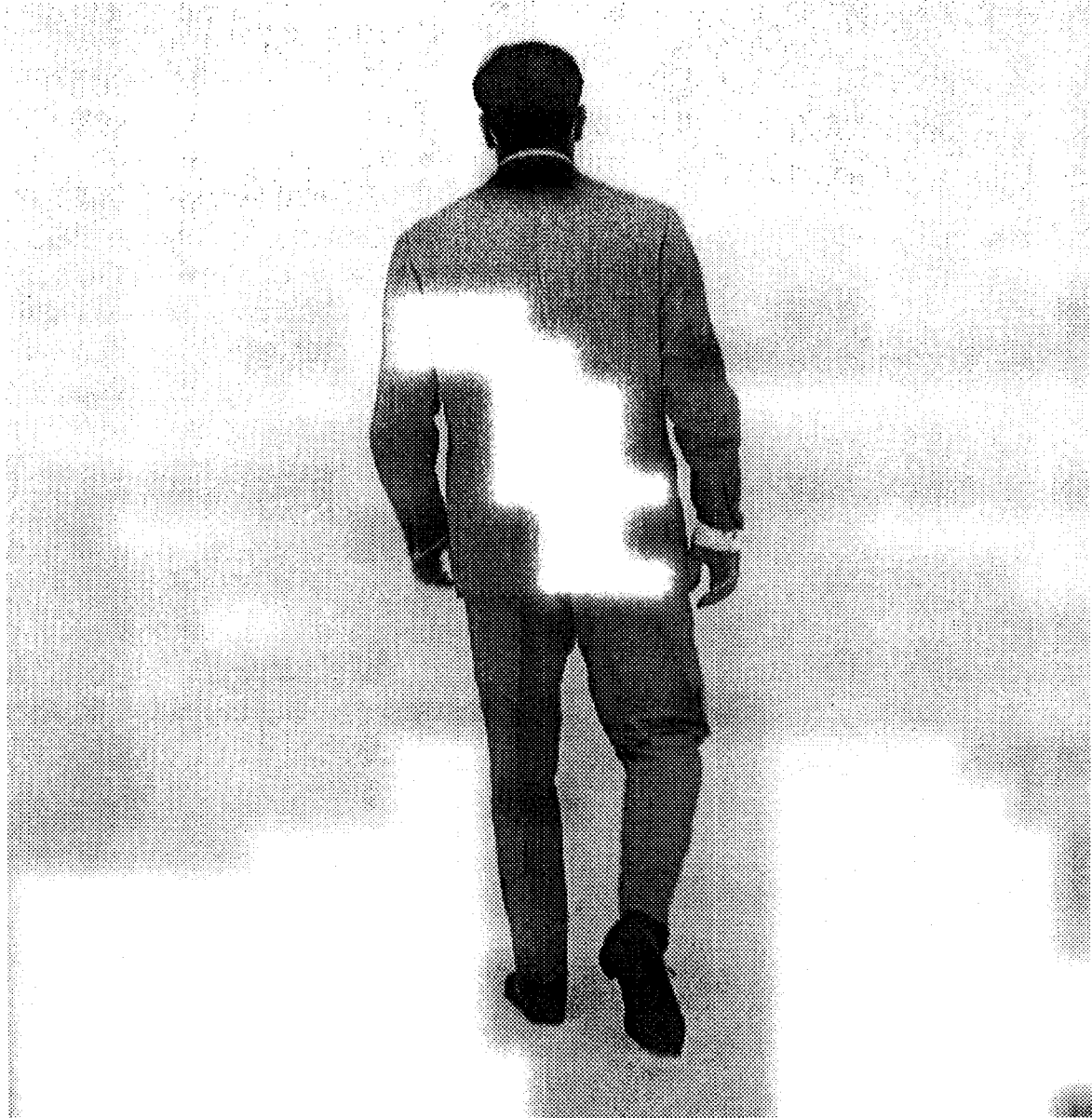


Fig. 34 Yves Klein walking in *Le Vide* at Iris Clert Galerie (Source: Hapgood, Susan *Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1958-62* New York: The American Federation of Arts in association with Universe Publishing, 1994).

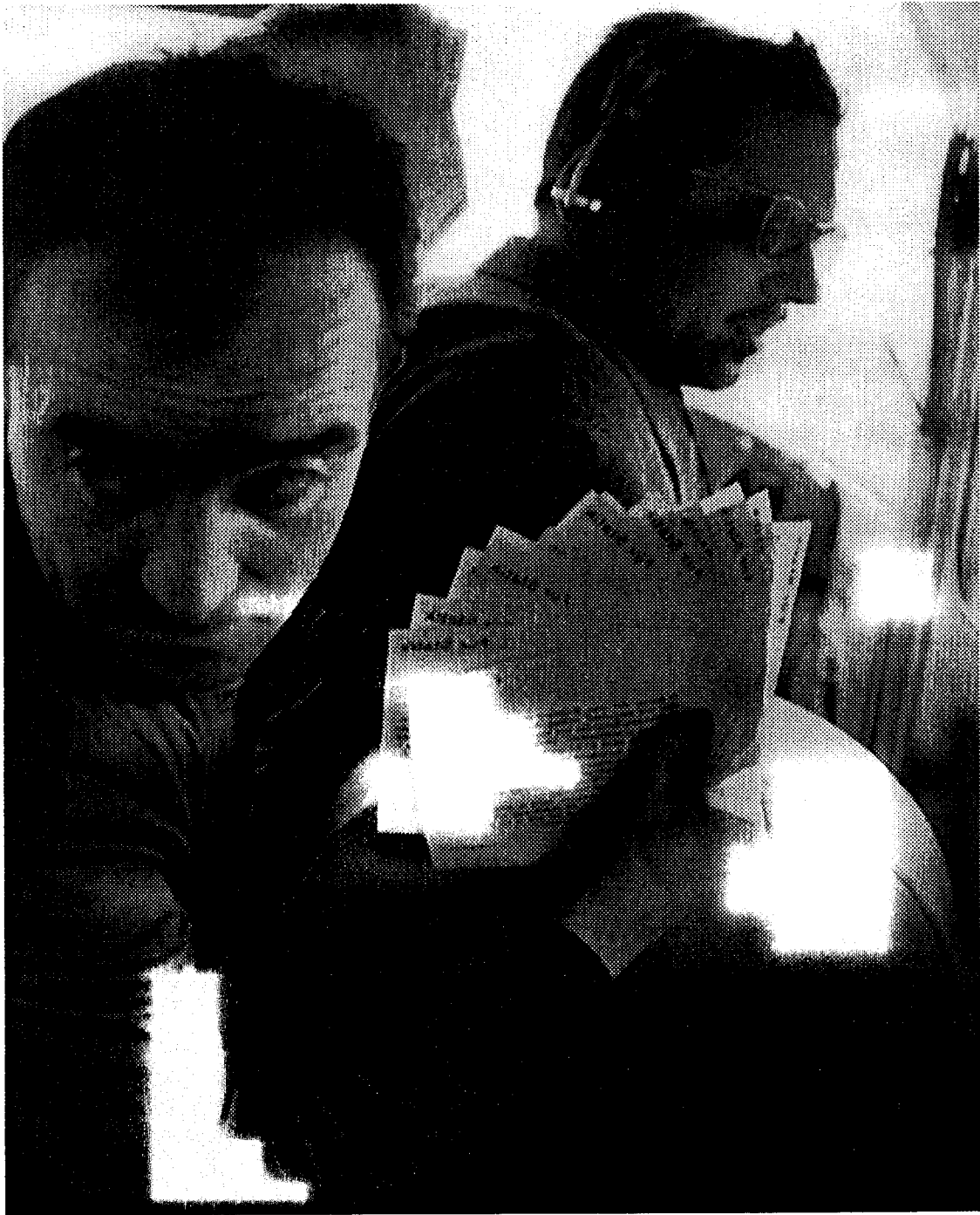


Fig. 35 Jean Tinguely throwing his manifesto *Für Statik* out an airplane window (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Jean Tinguely: Méta*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972).



Fig. 36 Niki de Saint-Phalle shooting/creating one of her paintings (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).

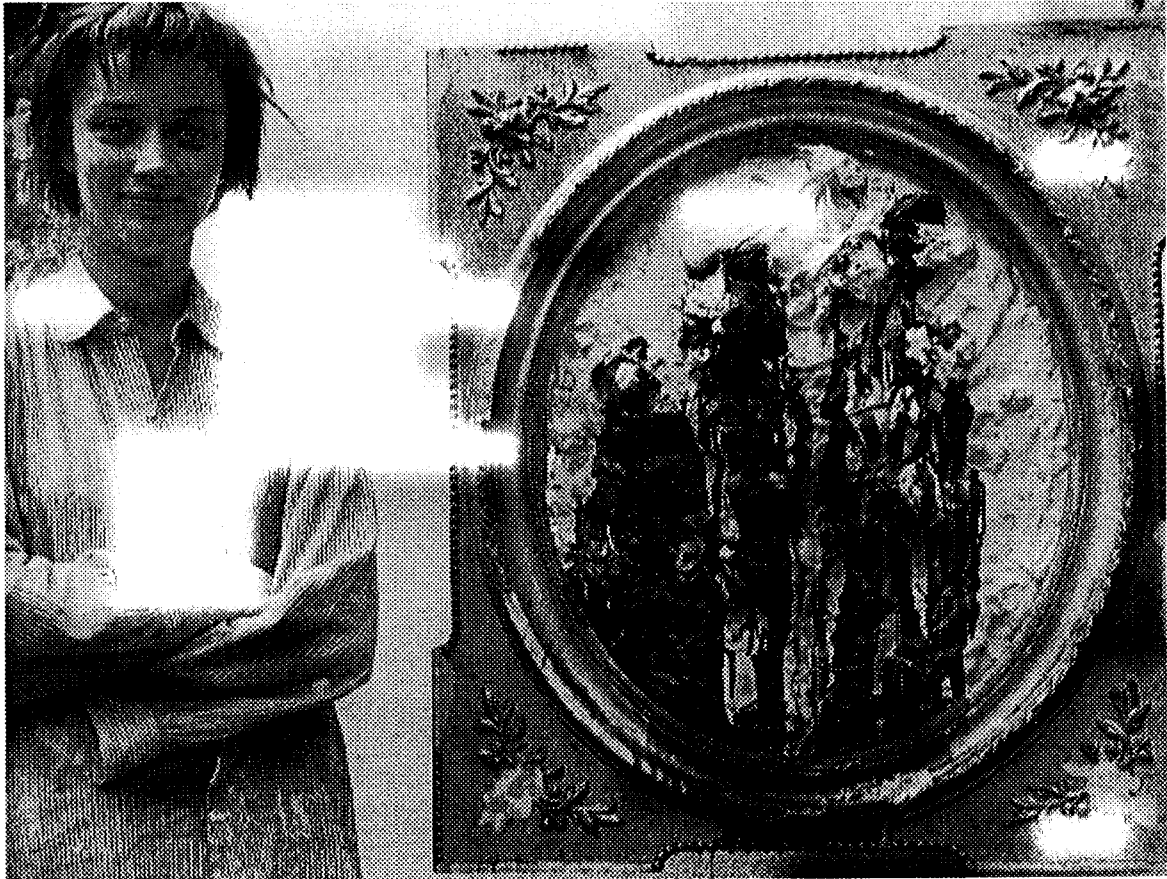


Fig. 37 Niki de Saint-Phalle *Tir* Mixed Media Assemblage Painting (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).



Fig. 38 *Bewogen Beweging* at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1961 (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).

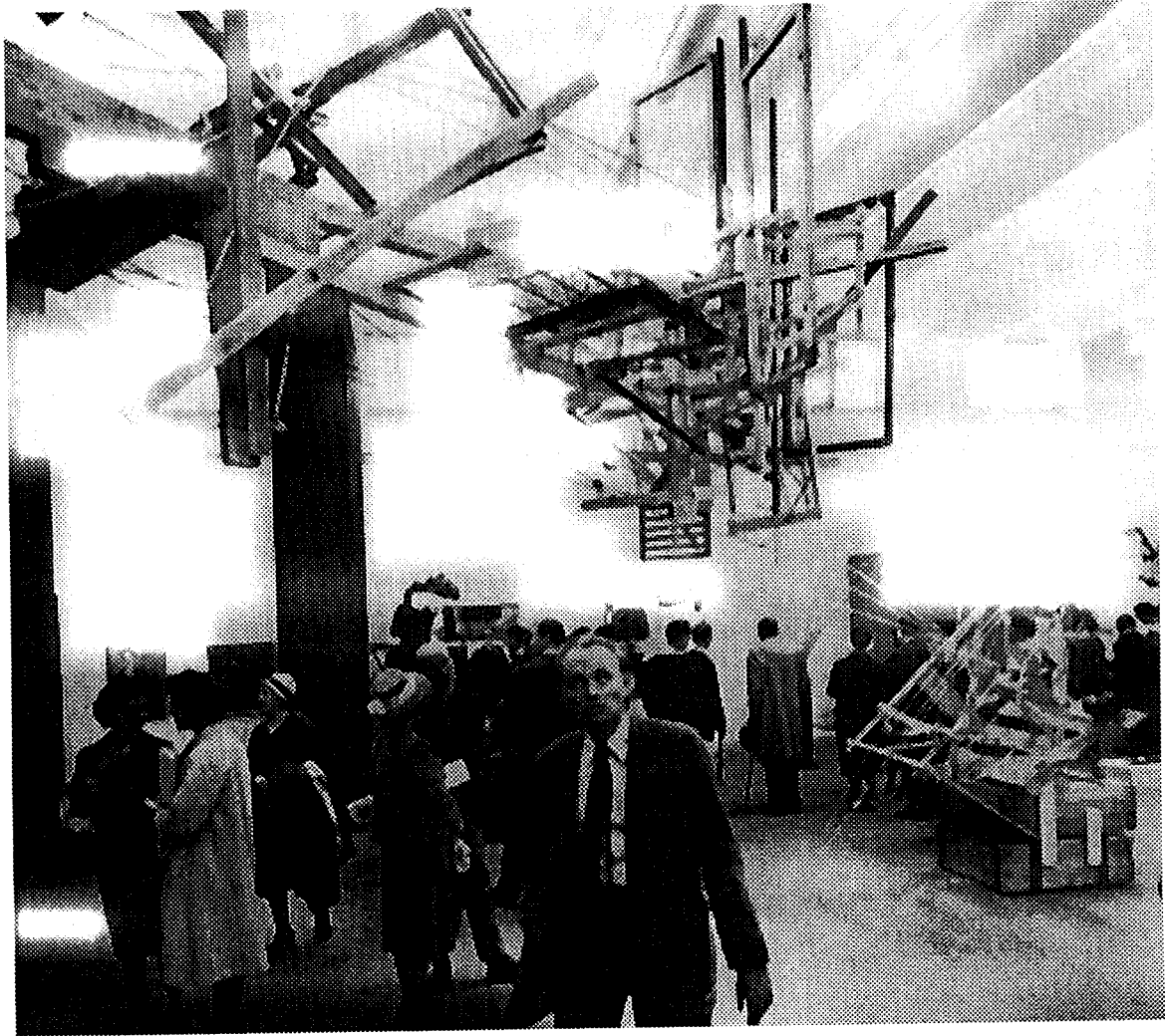


Fig. 39 *Rörelse i konsten* at Moderna Museet, 1961 (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).



Fig. 40 Ulf Linde and Marcel Duchamp putting the finishing touches to *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even*, 1961 (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).



Fig. 41 Oscar Reutersvärd, Ulf Linde, Carlo Derkert, Pontus Hulten and Marcel Duchamp (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).



Fig. 42 Robert Rauschenberg shooting one of Niki de Saint-Phalle's *Tir* paintings in Stockholm, 1961 (Source: Hapgood, Susan *Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1958-62* New York: The American Federation of Arts in association with Universe Publishing, 1994).

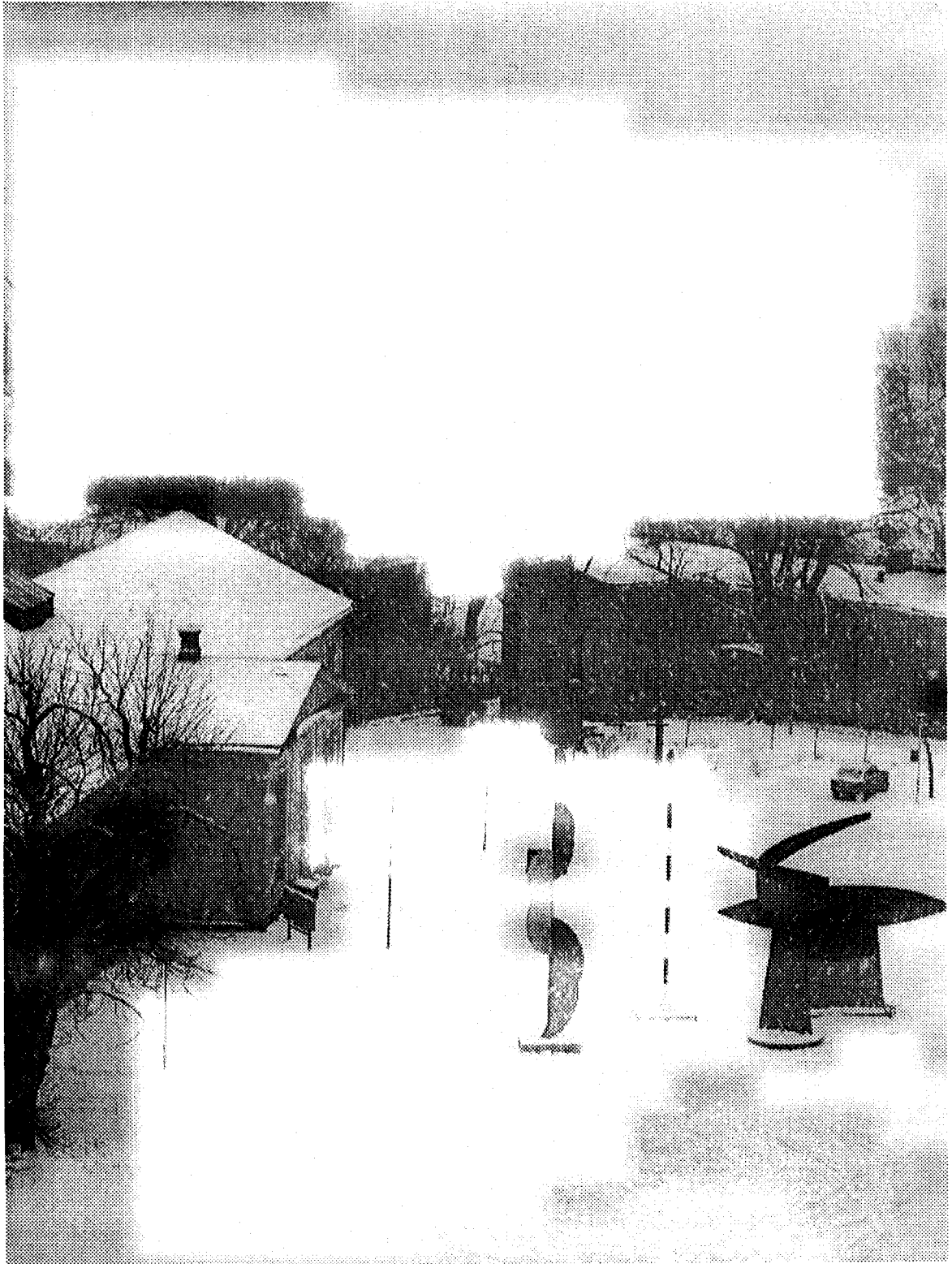


Fig. 43 Alexander Calder's giant mobile outside the entrance of Moderna Museet (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

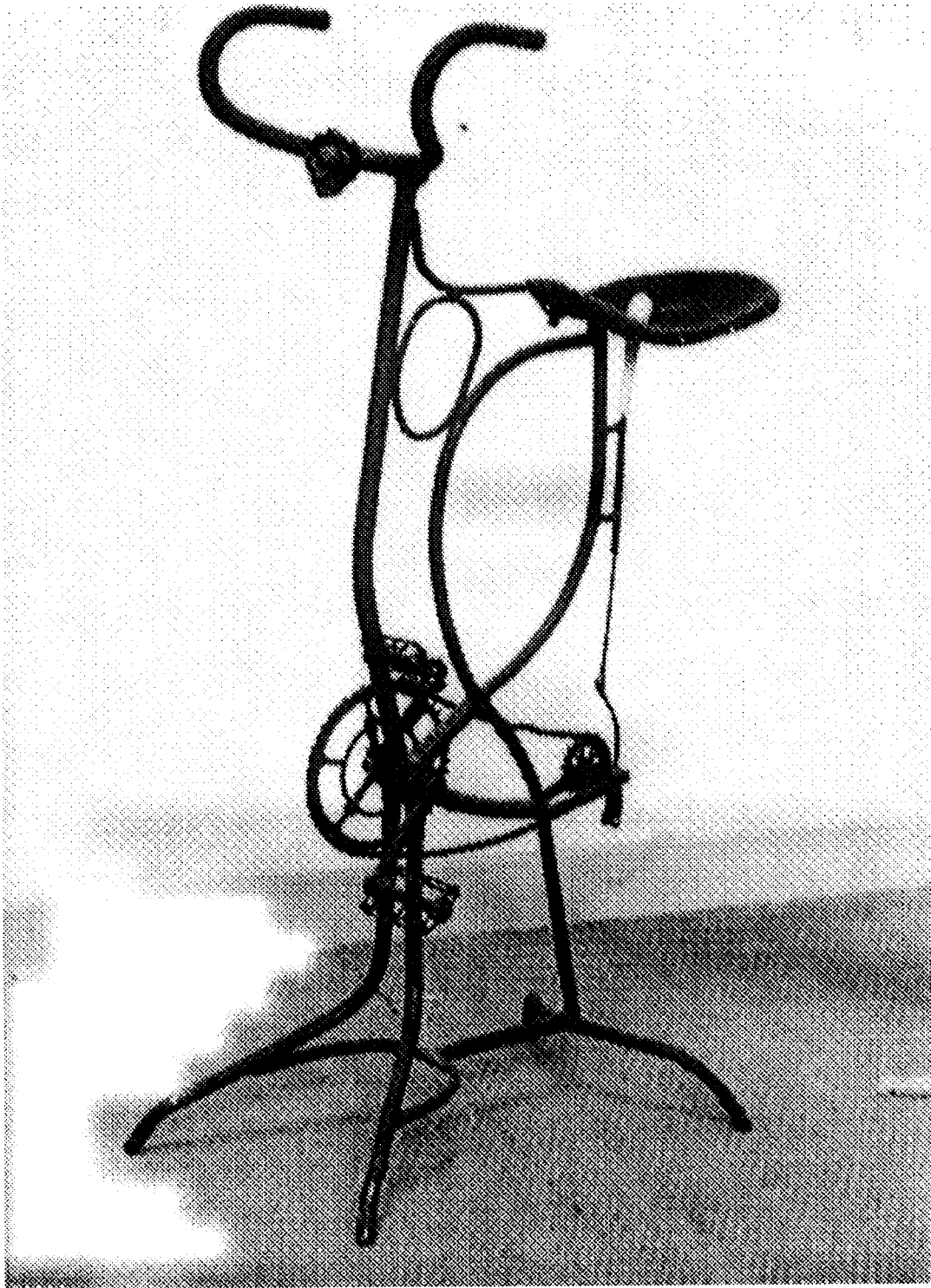


Fig. 44 Robert Müller, *The Bicyclist's Widow* Mixed Media Assemblage
(Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*.
Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

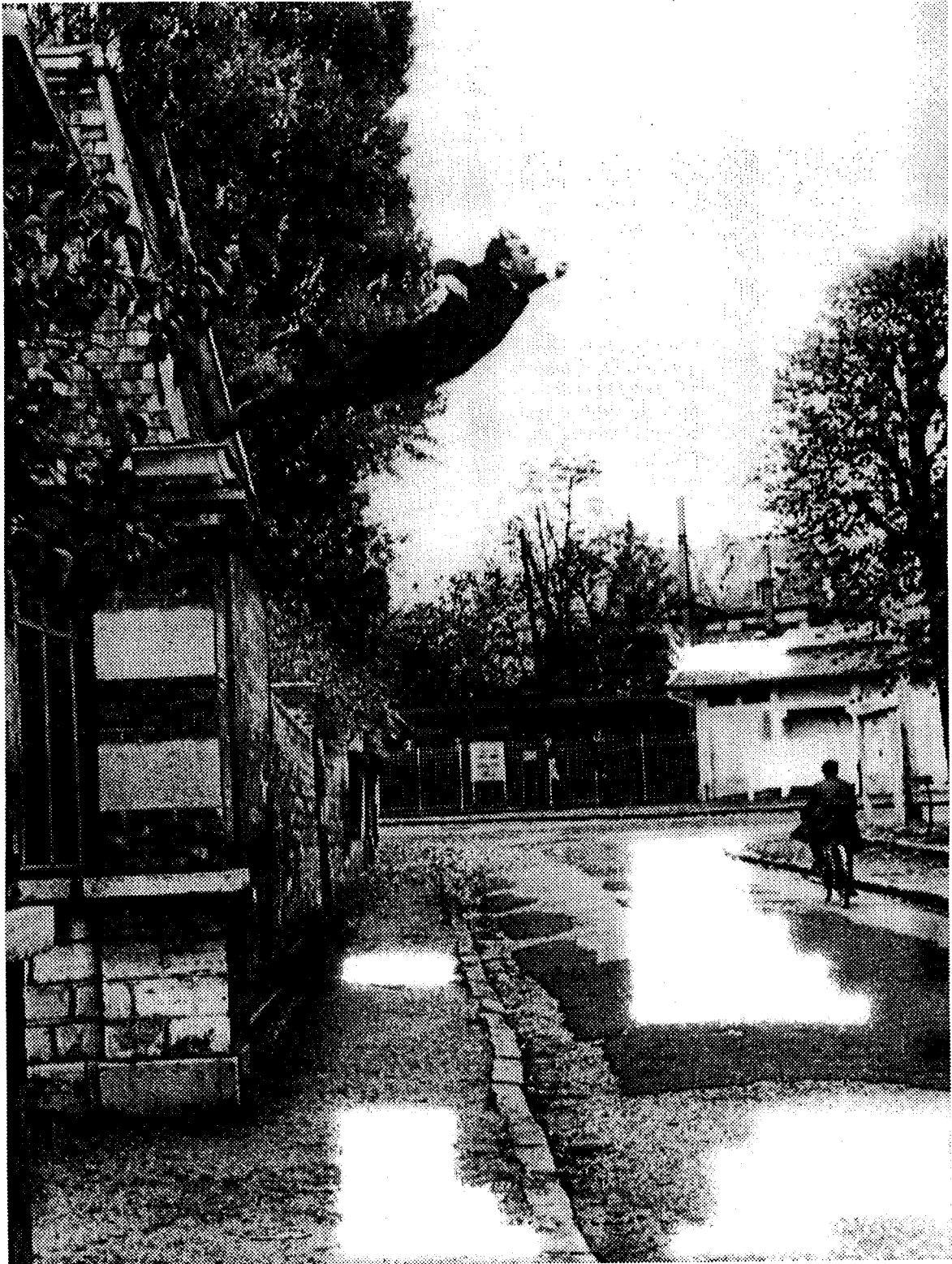


Fig. 45 Harry Shunk Yves Klein, *The Painter of Space Throws Himself into the Void*, 1960 photomontage (Source: *Den innre och yttre rymden: en utställning rörande en universiell konst* Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1965).



Fig. 46 Museum goes looking baffled at the opening of *4 Amerikanare* at Moderna Museet, 1962 (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

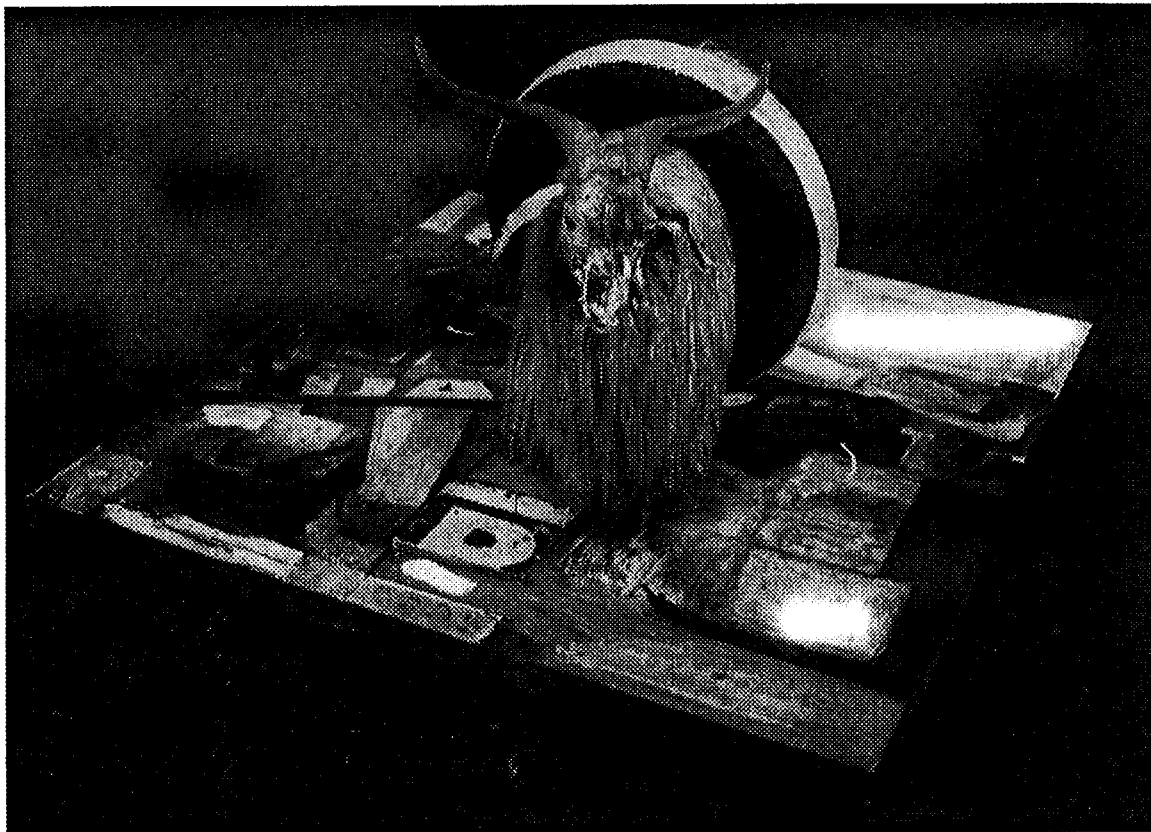


Fig. 47 Robert Rauschenberg, *Monogram*, 1955-58 (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

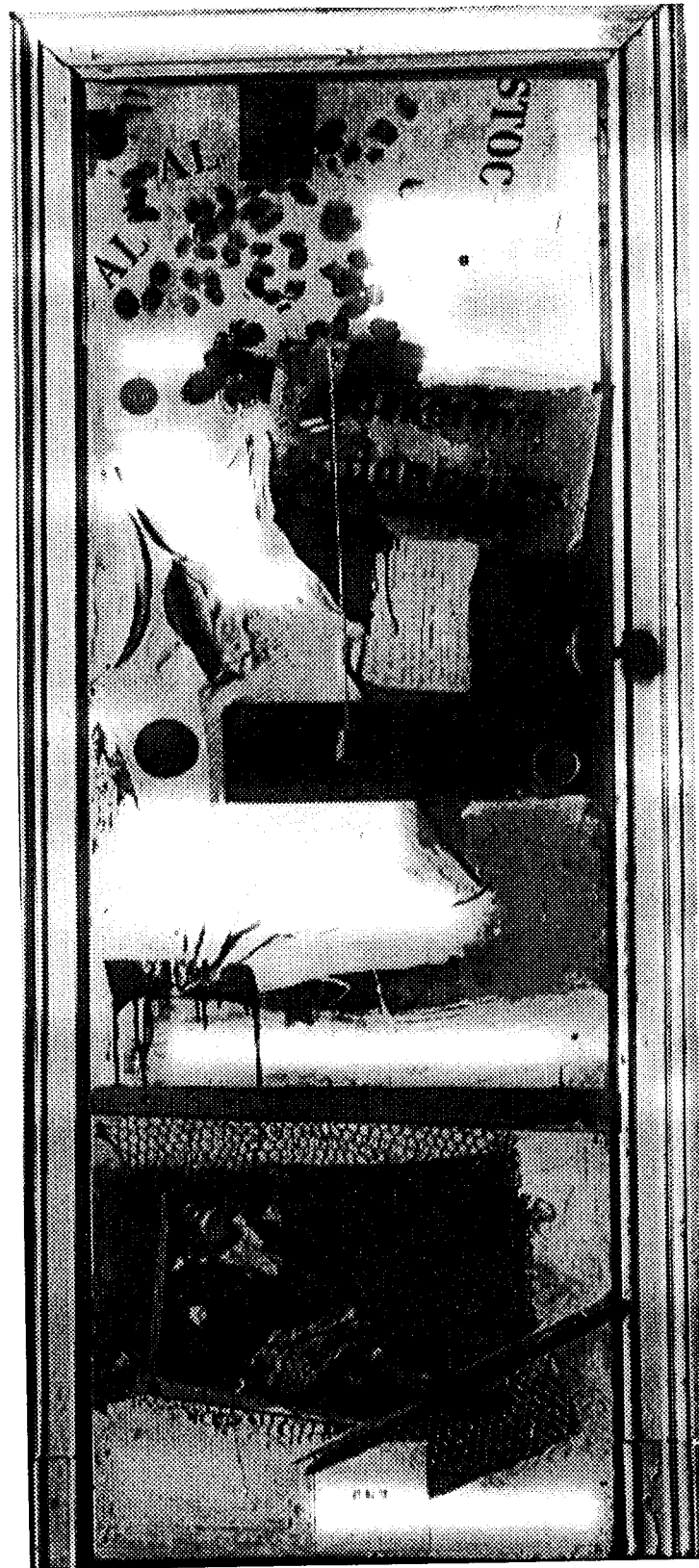
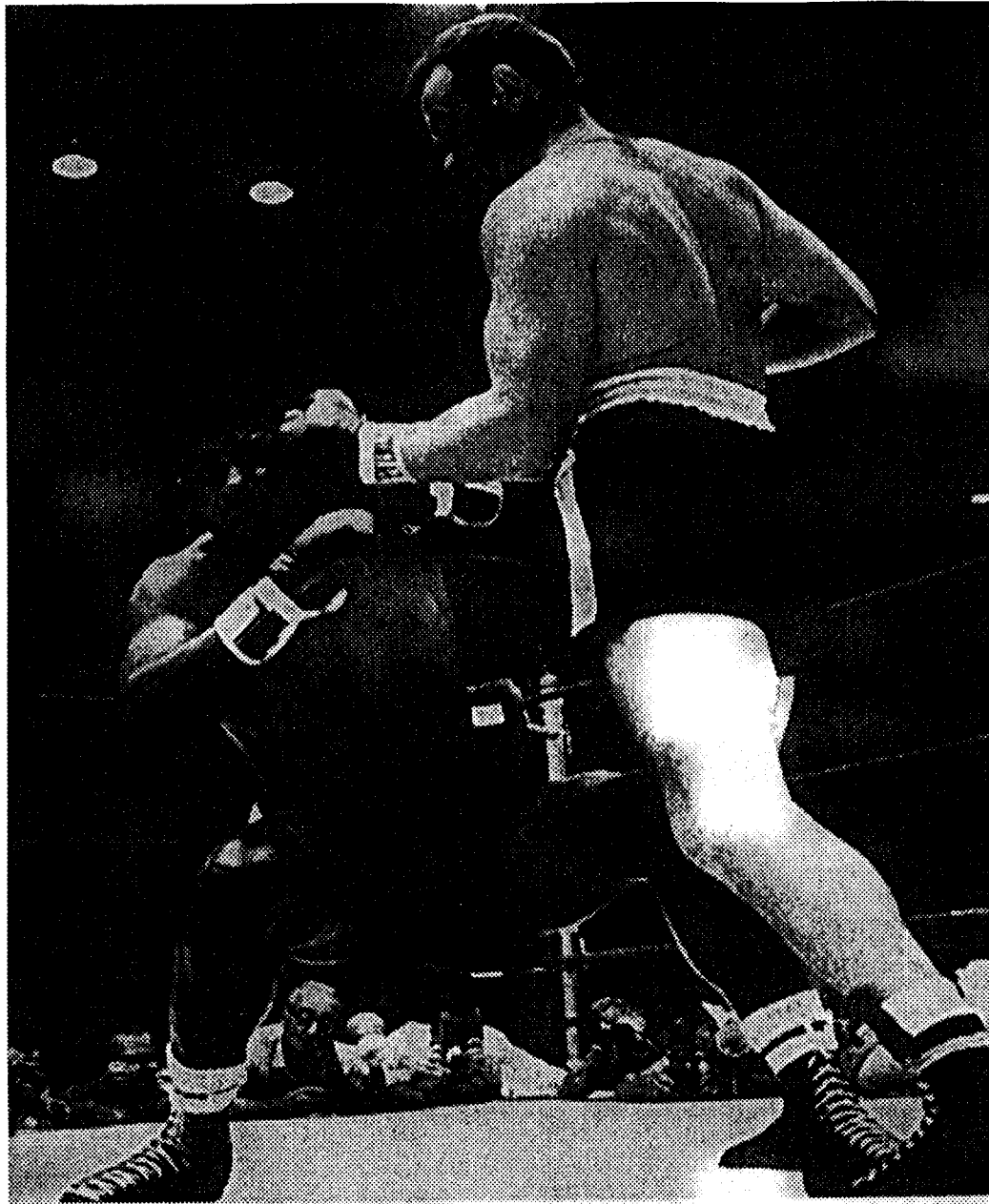


Fig. 48 Robert Rauschenberg, *Door*, 1961 (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds., *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).



HALFWAY TO THE CANVAS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN FIRST ROUND. BY ... A LEFT

Sportswriters called Floyd-Ingo dull but . . .

PICTURES REVEAL FIGHT AS A HISTORIC THRILLER

Fig. 49 Ingemar Johansson and Floyd Patterson (Source: "Pictures Reveal Fight as a Historic Thriller" *Life Magazine* March 24, 1961, p.148).

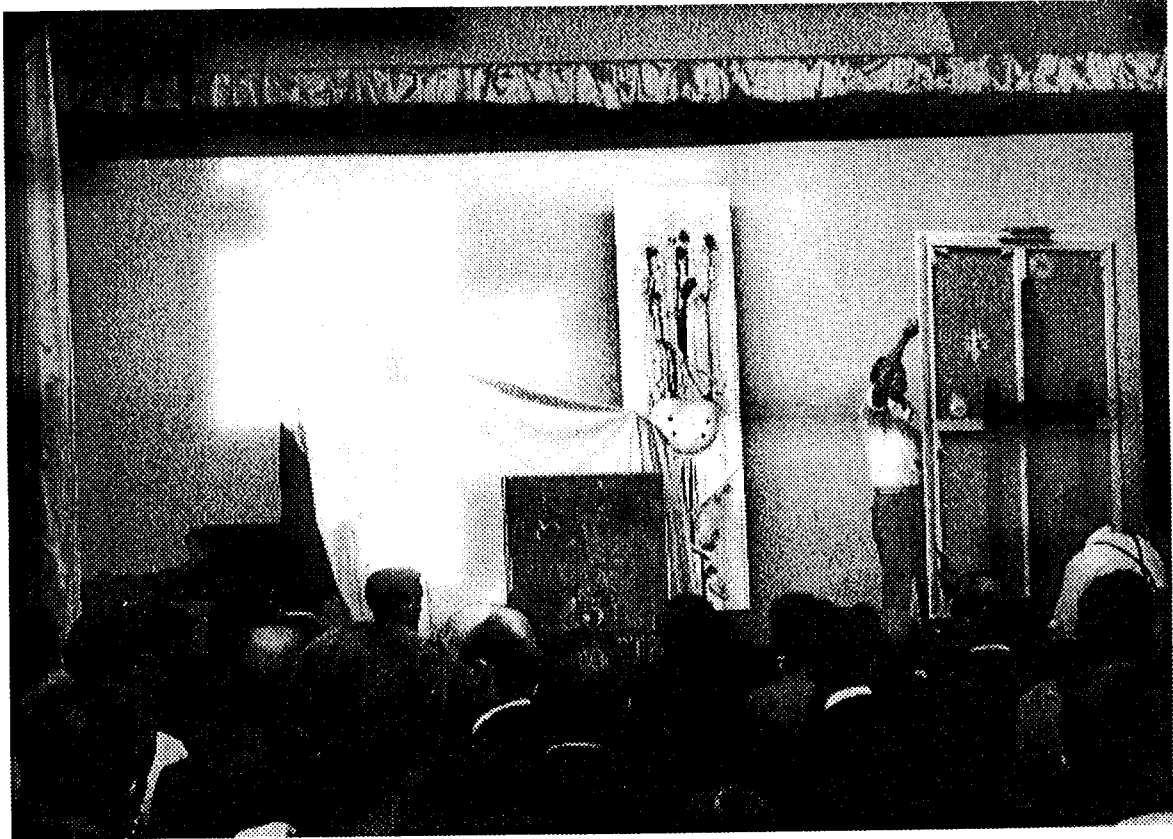


Fig. 50 Concert/Performance at the Théâtre de l'Ambassade des États-Unis, Paris, 1962. (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und-Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).



Fig. 51 Niki de Saint-Phalle and Jasper Johns at Saint-Phalle's opening at Galerie J., Paris, 1962 (Source: Hulten, *Pontus Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst- und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).

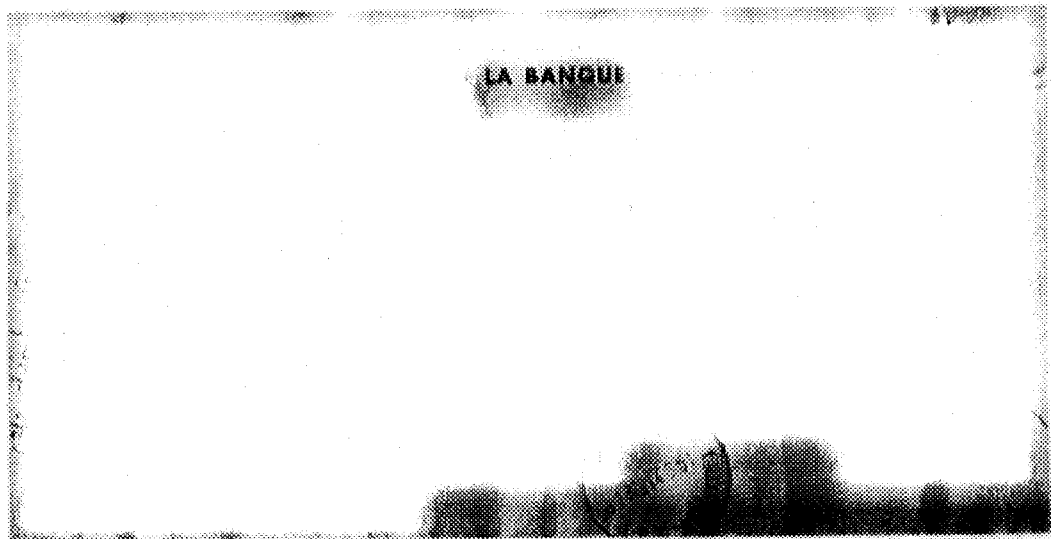
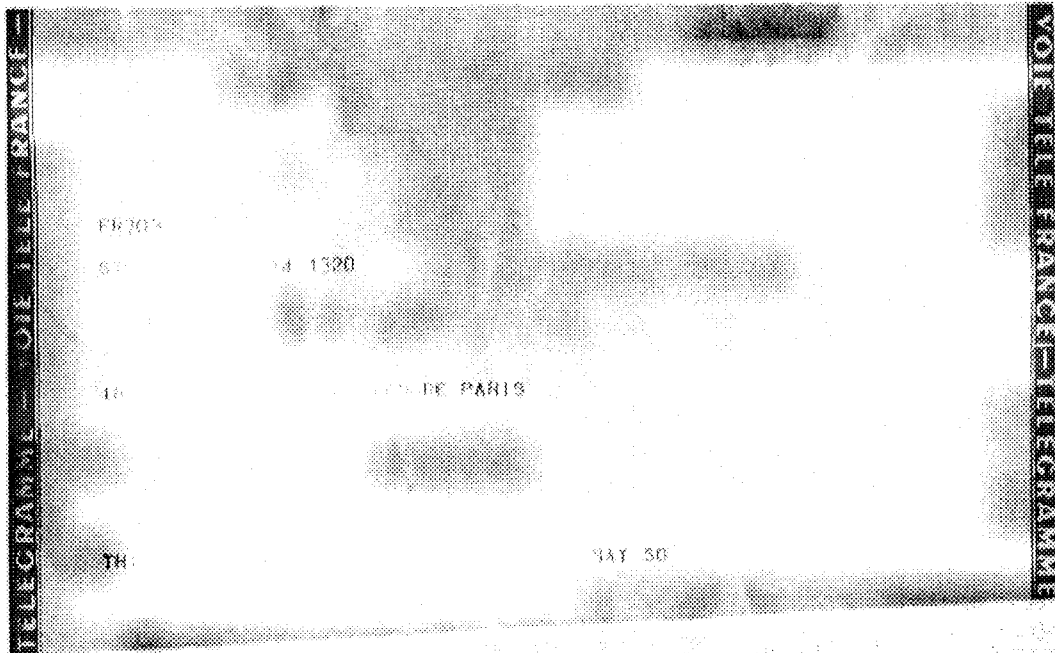


Fig. 52 Robert Rauschenberg, *This is a Portrait of Iris Clert if I Say So*, 1961
(Source: Hapgood, Susan *Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1958-62* New York: The American Federation of Arts in association with Universe Publishing, 1994).

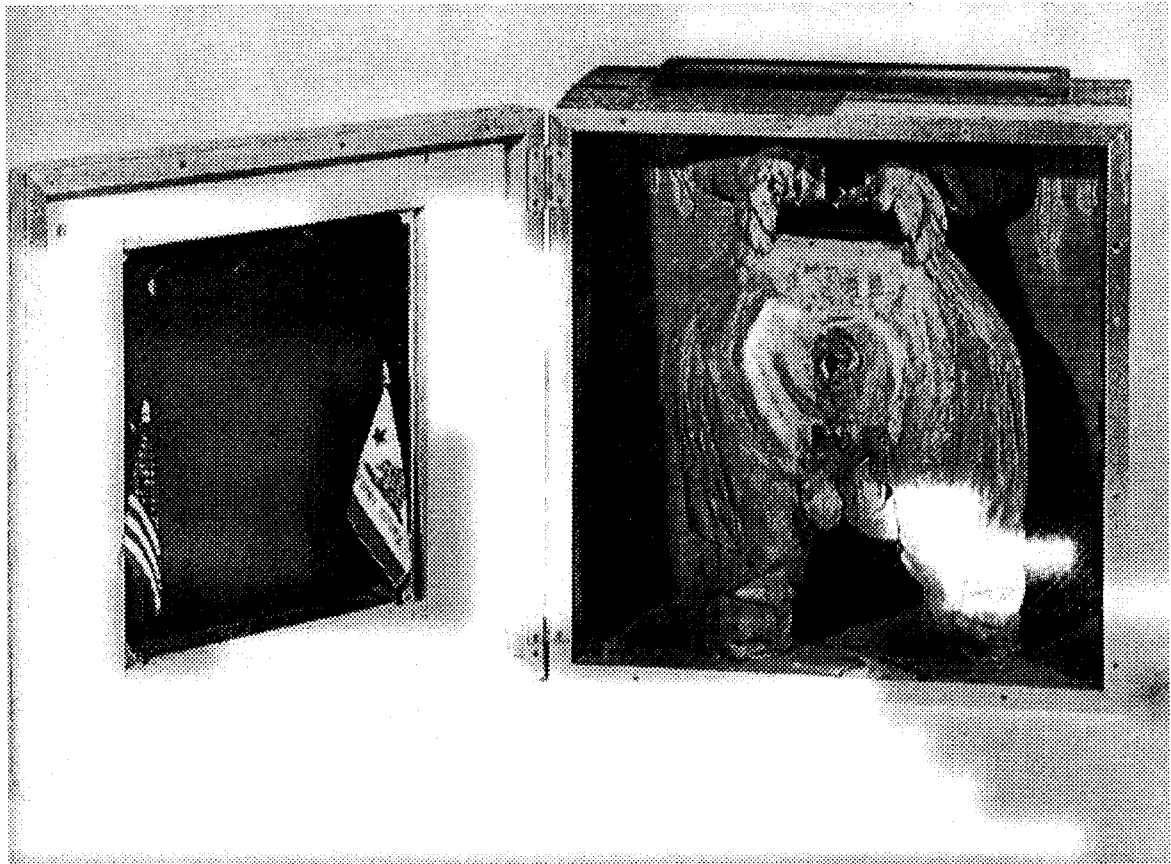


Fig. 53 Edward Kienholz, *The Psycho-Vendetta Case*, 1960 Mixed Media
58.5x56.5x43 cm (Source: Thomas Crow *The Rise of the Sixties: American and
European Art in the Era of Dissent* New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996).

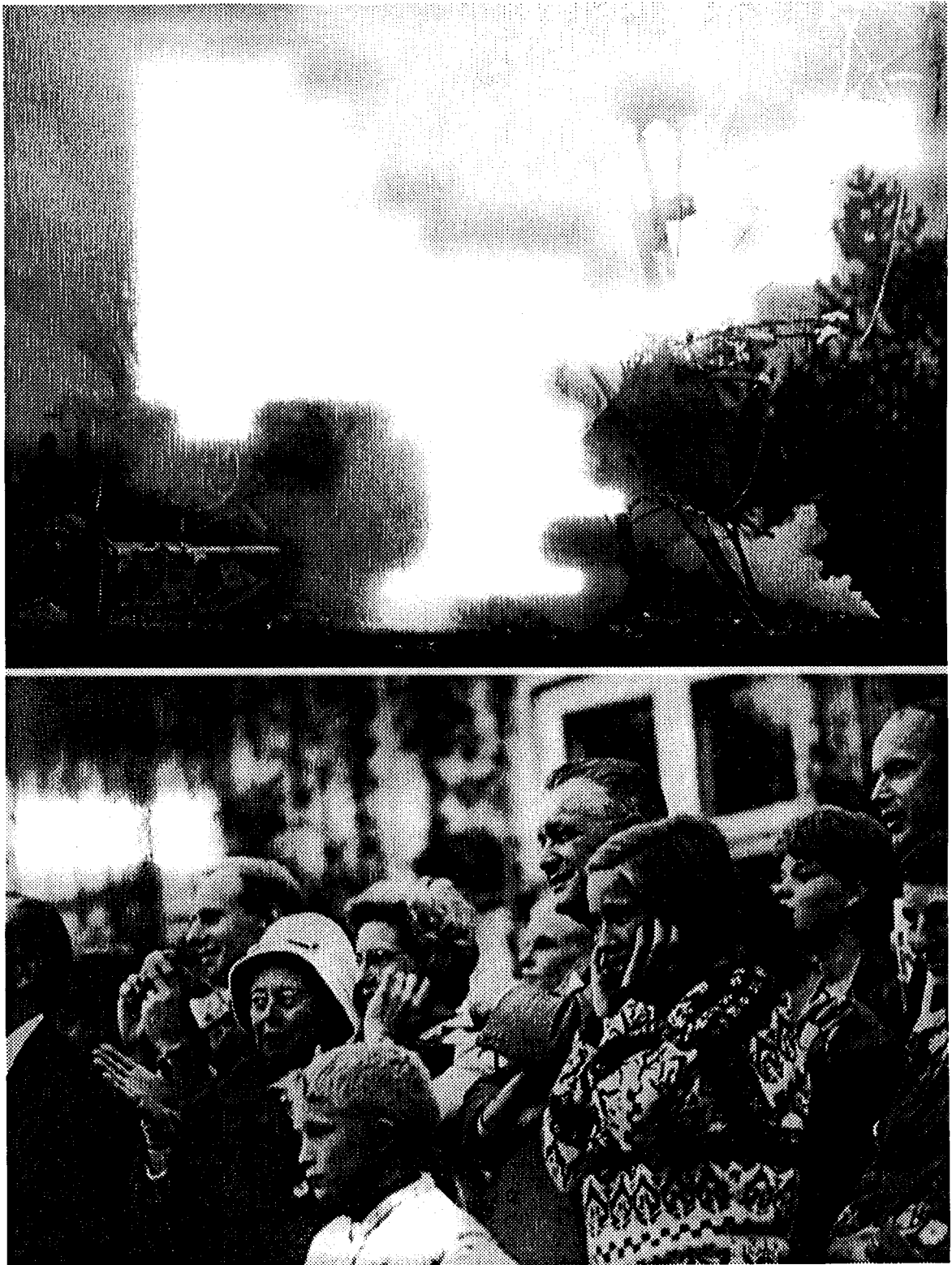


Fig. 54 Jean Tinguely, *Study for the End of the World*, No.1, Performance/spectacle at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, 1962 (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Jean Tinguely: Méta*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972).

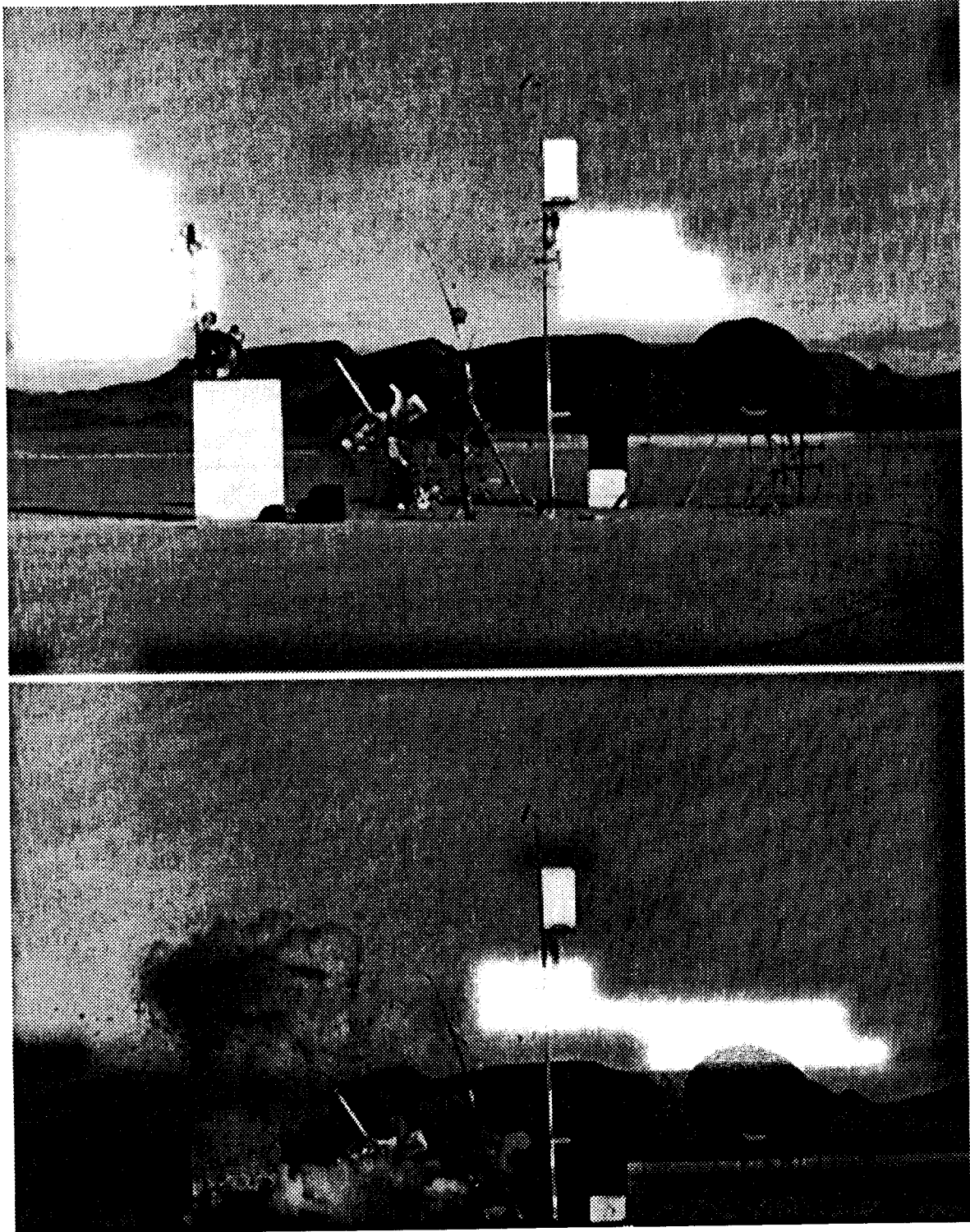


Fig. 55 Jean Tinguely, *Study for the End of the World, No. 2*, in the Nevada Desert, 1962 (Source: Hulten, *Pontus Jean Tinguely: Méta*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972).



Fig. 56 Niki de Saint-Phalle, Jean Tinguely, and John Cage exchanging pleasantries before Saint-Phalle's shooting performance, Malibu, California, 1962 (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und-Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).

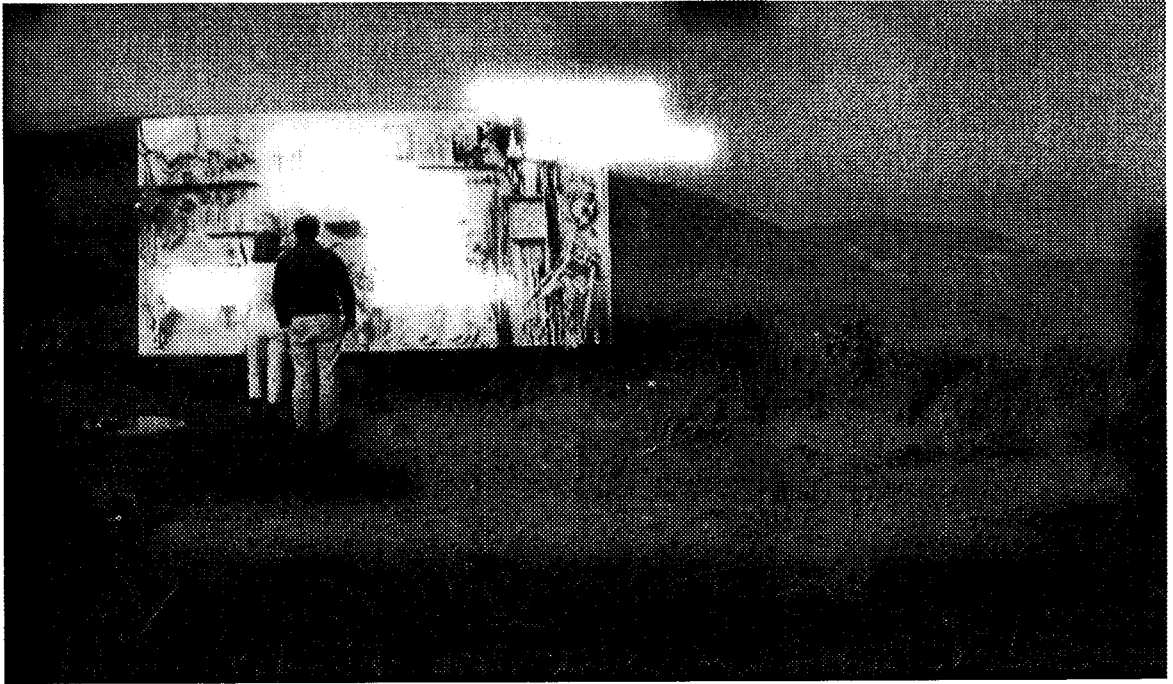


Fig. 57 Niki de Saint-Phalle and Edward Kienholz, Malibu, California, 1962
(Source: Hulthen, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).



Fig. 58 Niki de Saint-Phalle, *O.A.S.*, 1962, Mixed Media Assemblage (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).



Fig. 59 Niki de Saint-Phalle, *Autel du chat mort*, 1962, Mixed Media
Assemblage (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und-
Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).



Fig. 60 Participants in *The Construction of Boston* (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).



Fig. 61 Saint-Phalle, Tinguely and assistant inside Saint-Phalle's shooting gallery at Dylaby, Stedelijk, Amsterdam, 1962 (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).



Fig. 62 Niki de Saint-Phalle, *King Kong*, 1962, Mixed Media Assemblage
(Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und-
Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).



Fig. 63 *The New Realists* exhibition at Sydney Janis (Source: Livingstone, Marco, *Pop Art: an International Perspective* New York: Rizzoli, 1991).



Fig. 64 Letter from Saint-Phalle and Tinguely to Ultvedt (Source: Hulten, Pontus Jean Tinguely: Méta. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972).

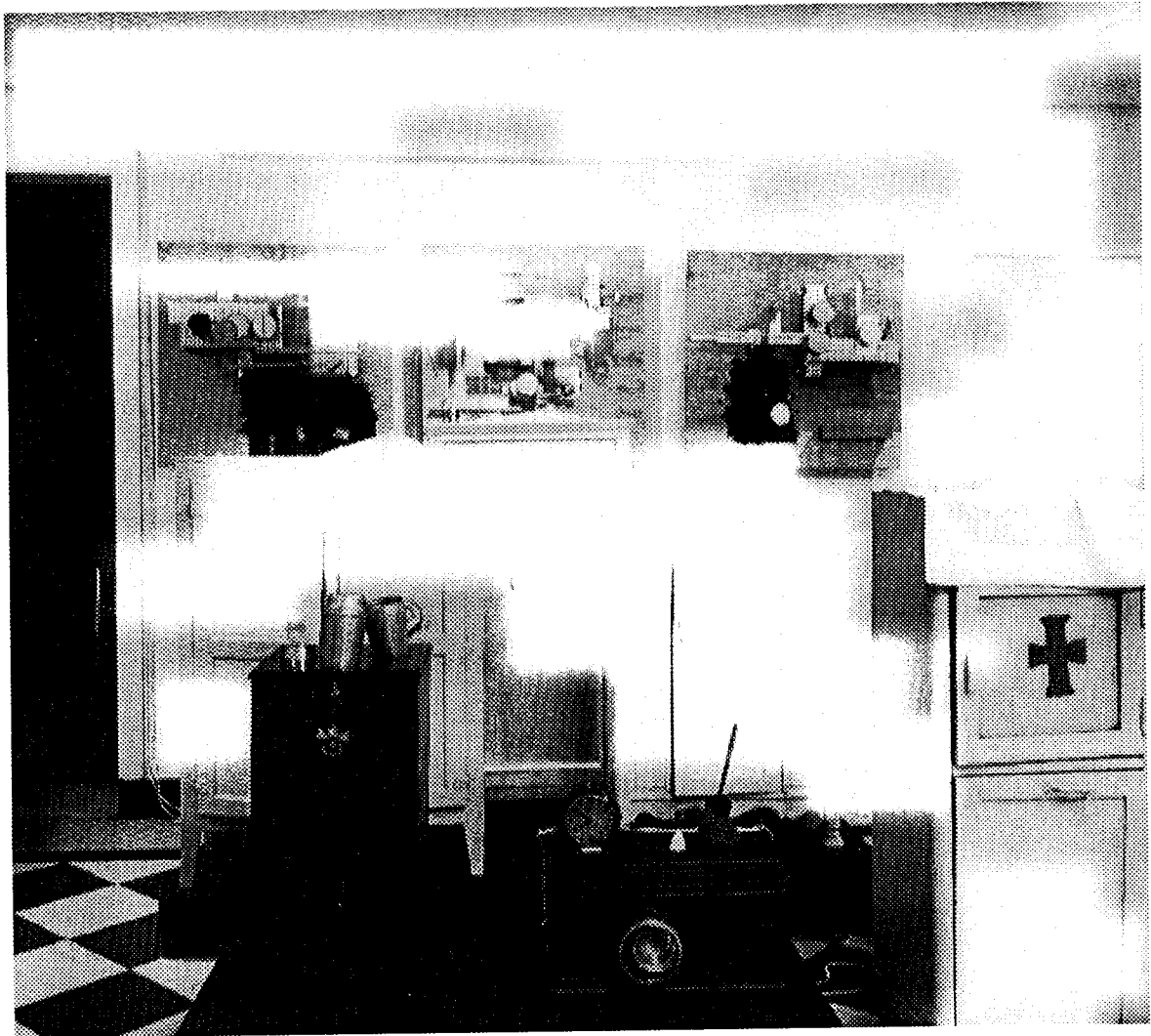


Fig. 65 Per-Olof Ultvedt, *Manhattan*, 1962 (Source: Springfieldt, Björn P.O. *Ultvedt: Tvivel och övermod: Arbeten från 1945 till 1988* Malmö: Malmö Konsthall, 1988).

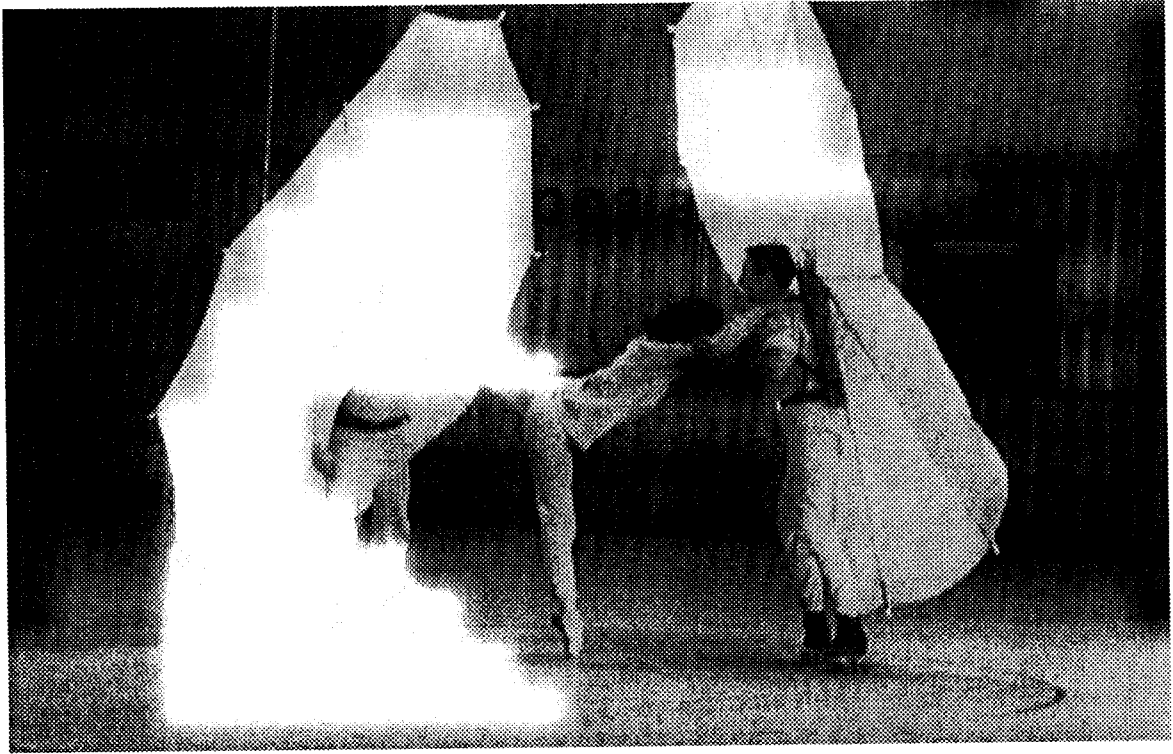


Fig. 66 Per-Olof Ultvedt, Carolyn Brown and Robert Rauschenberg in *Pelican*, 1962 (Source: Springfieldt, Björn P.O. *Ultvedt: Tvivel och övermod: Arbeten från 1945 till 1988* Malmö: Malmö Konsthall, 1988).



Fig. 67 Niki de Saint-Phalle, *Pirodactyl de New York (New York Alp)*, 1962, Mixed Media Assemblage (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).



Fig. 68 Niki de Saint-Phalle on the cover of *Life Magazine* (Source: *Life Magazine* September 26, 1949).

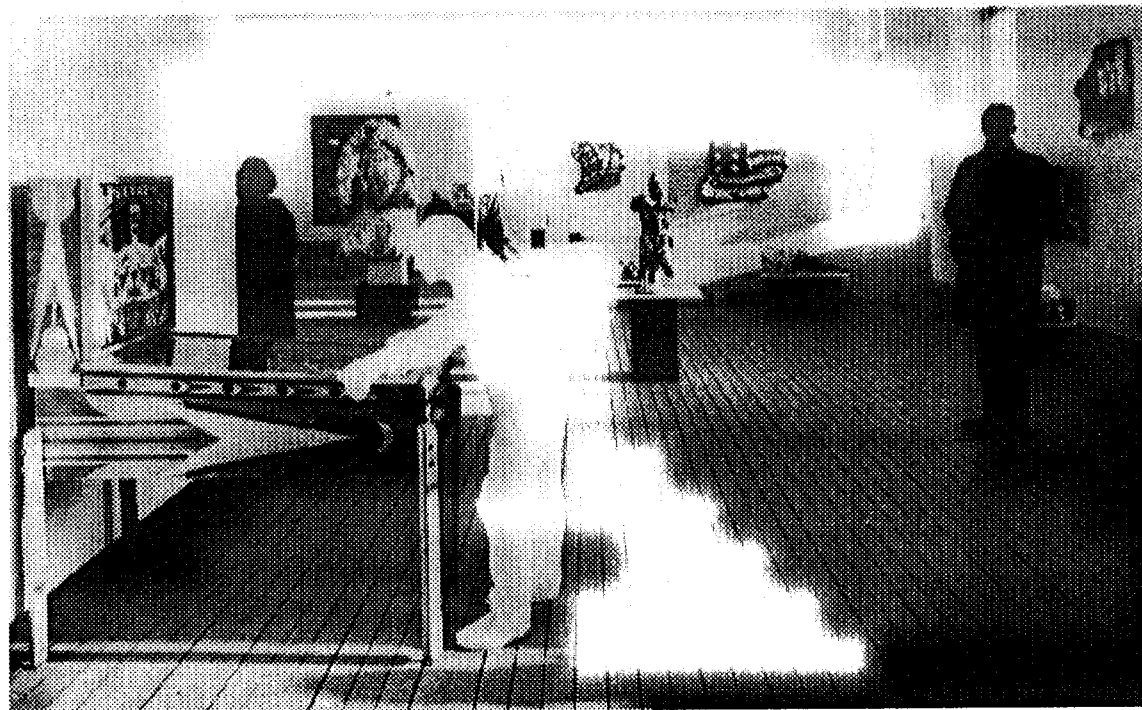
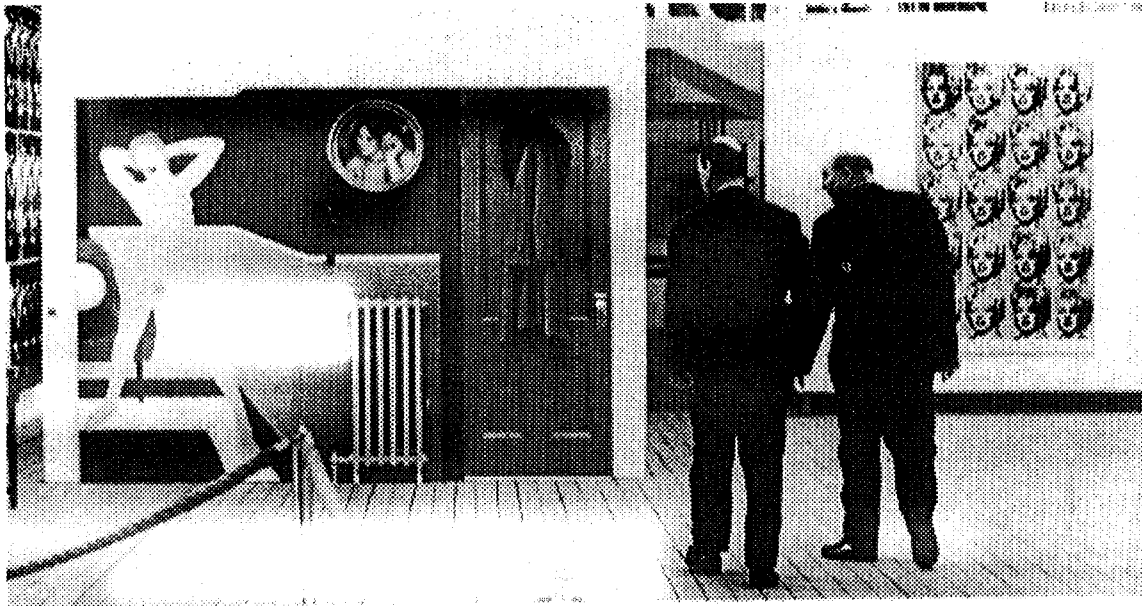


Fig. 70 *American Pop Art: 106 Forms of Love and Despair*, Moderna Museet, 1964 (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

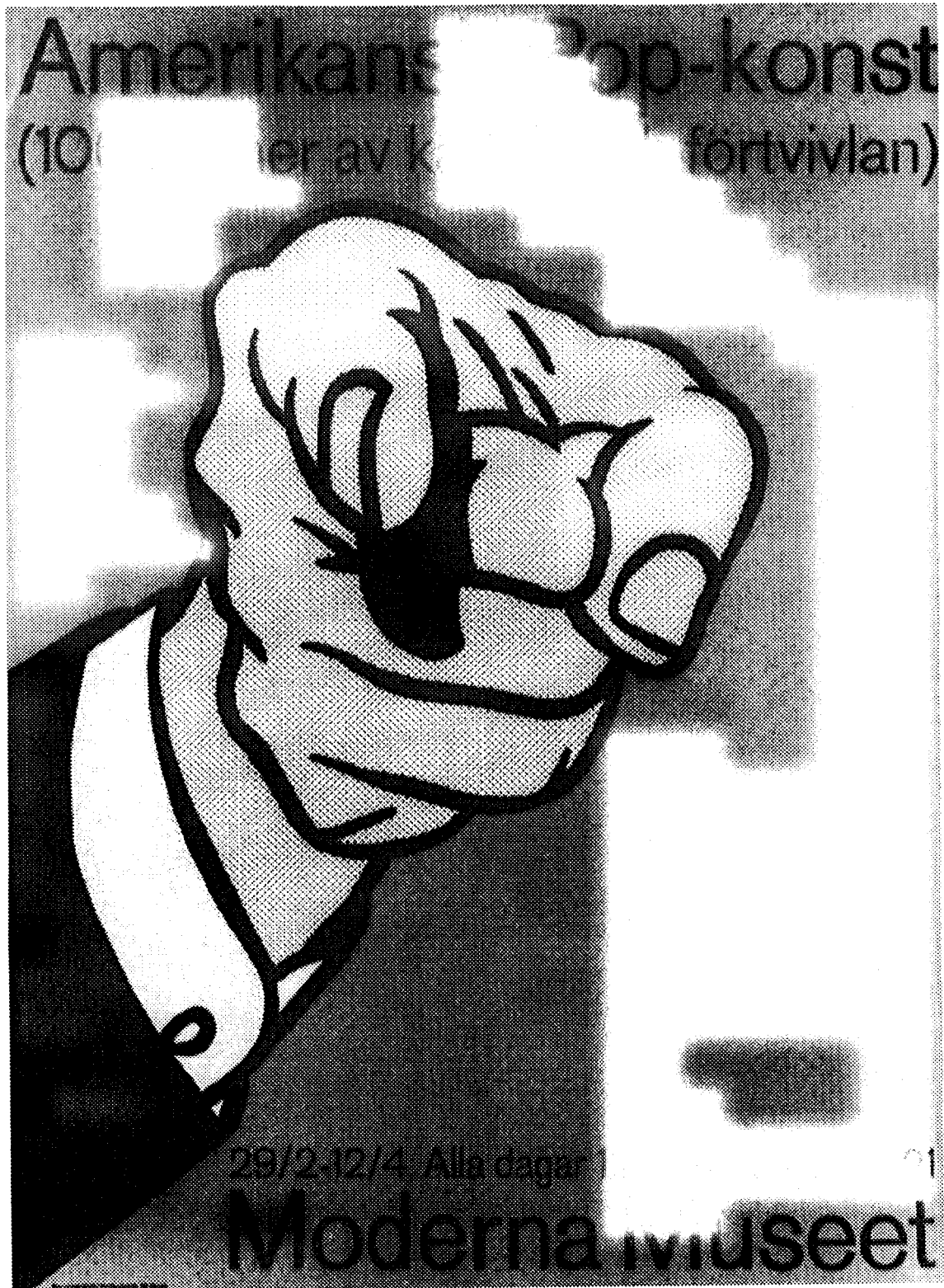


Fig. 71 Poster for *American Pop Art: 106 Forms of Love and Despair*, 1964
(Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*.
Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

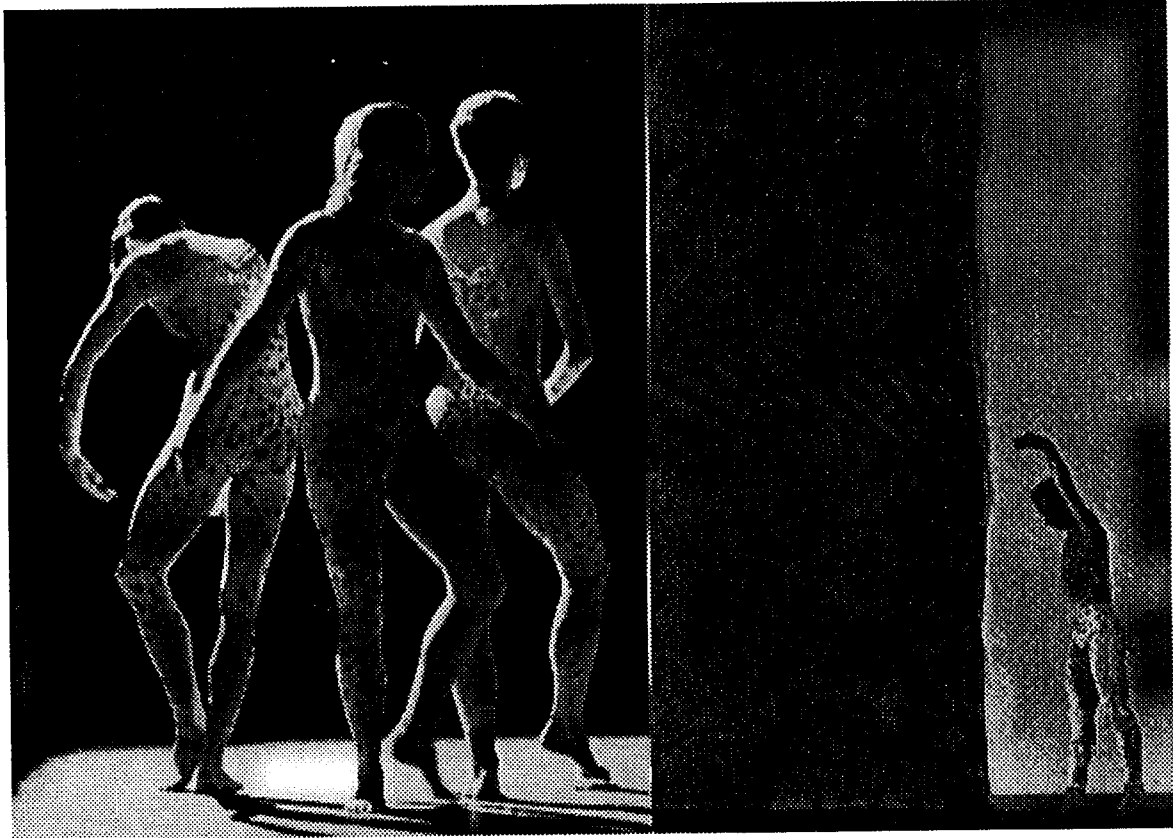


Fig. 72 Merce Cunningham's Dance Company performing *Summerspace* at Moderna Museet, 1964. Decor by Robert Rauschenberg (Source: *Konstrevy*, Nr. 1, 1966).

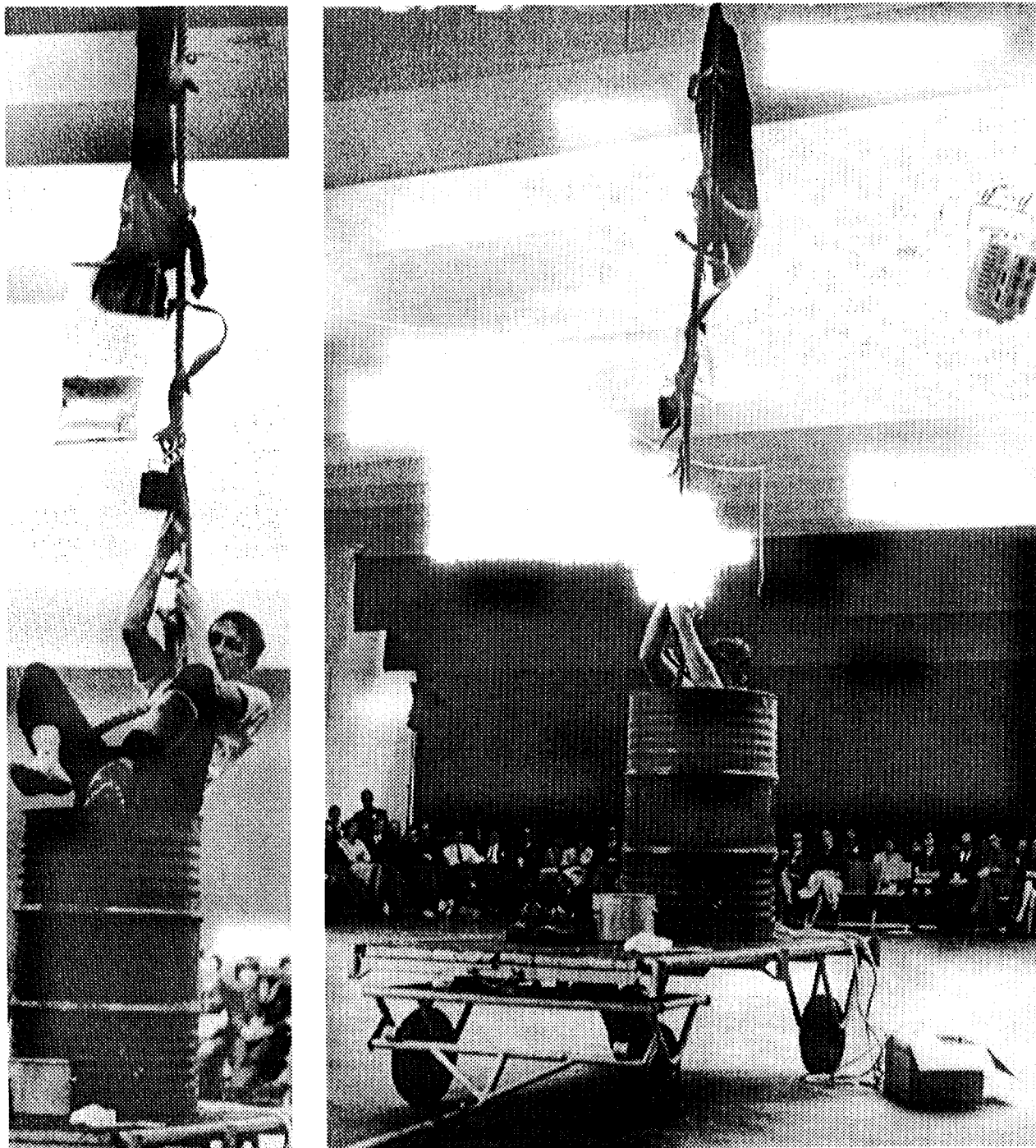


Fig. 73 Rauschenberg performing in *The Elgin Tie* at Moderna Museet, 1964
(Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*.
Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).



Fig. 74 Demonstration against American involvement in Vietnam, Stockholm, 1965 (Source: Yngve Möller *Sverige och Vietnam: ett unikt kapitel i svensk utrikespolitik* Stockholm: Tidens Förlag, 1992).



Fig. 75 American Helicopter Landing in Vietnam, 1966 (Source: Yngve Möller *Sverige och Vietnam: ett unikt kapitel i svensk utrikespolitik* Stockholm: Tidens Förlag, 1992).

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Den öppna konsten

ARVET FRÅN MÜNCHEN



Ulf Linde

...och den öppna konsten...
 ...och den öppna konsten...
 ...och den öppna konsten...



Schonberg och Kandinsky

...och den öppna konsten...
 ...och den öppna konsten...
 ...och den öppna konsten...



John Cage

...och den öppna konsten...
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Fig. 76 Detail from Ulf Linde's first article in Dagens Nyheter against the new 'Open Art.' Linde is pictures on the left, Schonberg and Kandinsky in the middle, and Cage on the far right (Source: Linde, Ulf "Den Öppna konsten: Arvet från Munchen" Dagens Nyheter (March 26, 1965), p.4).

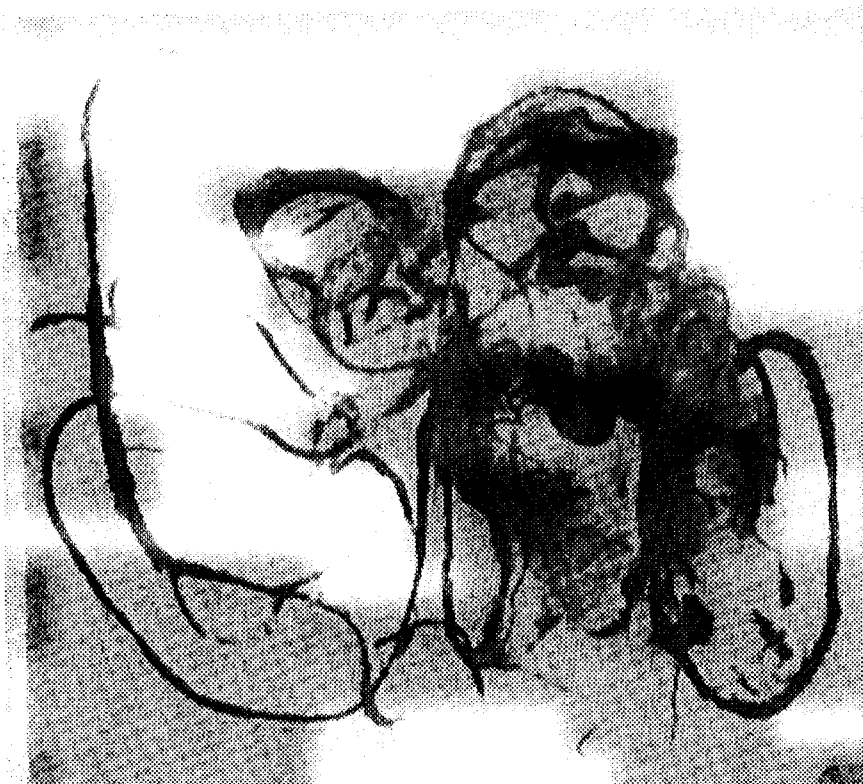
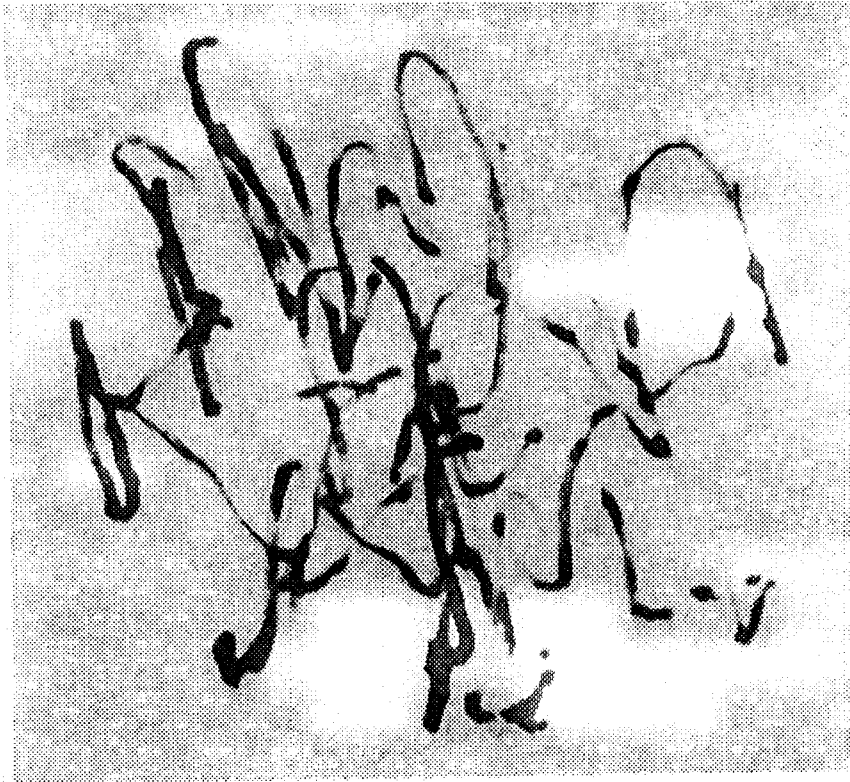


Fig. 77 Abstract drawings by Jean Tinguely [top] and Yves Michaux [bottom] used to illustrate Ulf Linde's article on "Open Art" (Source: Linde, Ulf Fyra artiklar Stockholm: *BLM*, 1965).

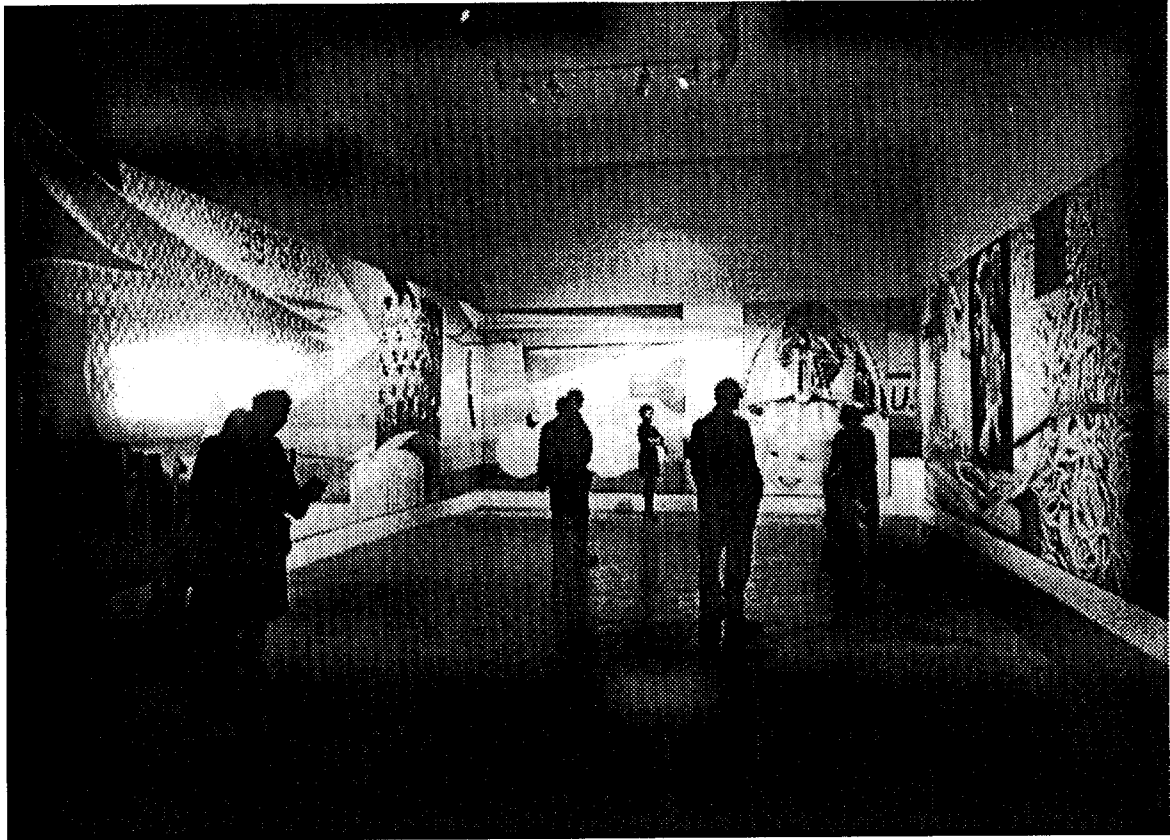


Fig. 78 James Rosenquist, *F-111*, 1965 28 x 2.5 m., oil on canvas and sheet metal (Source: Madoff, Steven, H. *Pop Art: A Critical History* Berkley: California Press, 1997).



Fig. 79 *Guernica* at Moderna Museet, 1956 (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

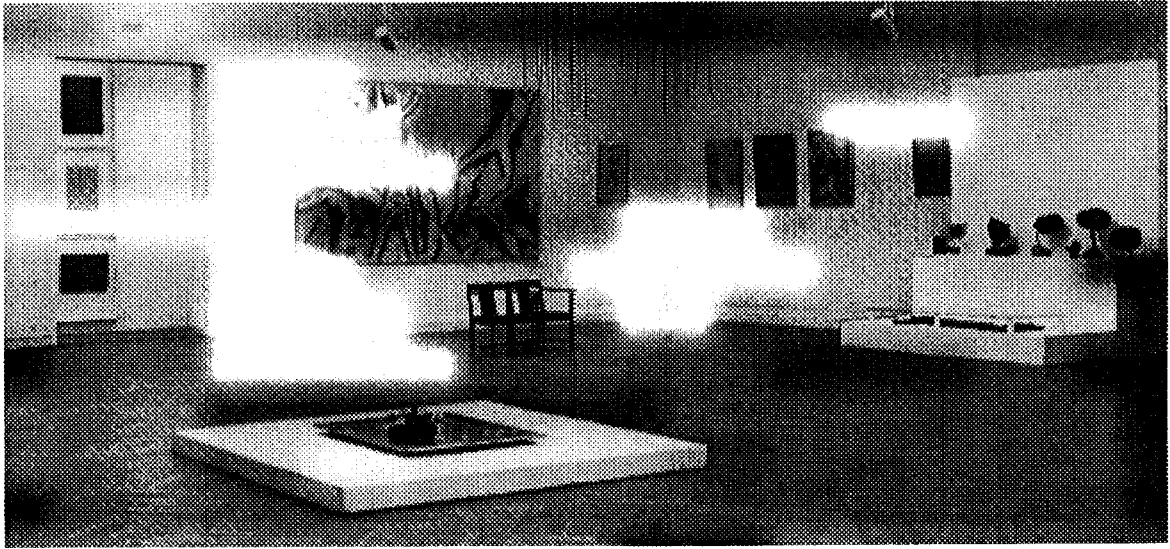


Fig. 80 *The Inner and Outer Space: an Exhibition Devoted to Universal Art, 1965*
(Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*.
Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

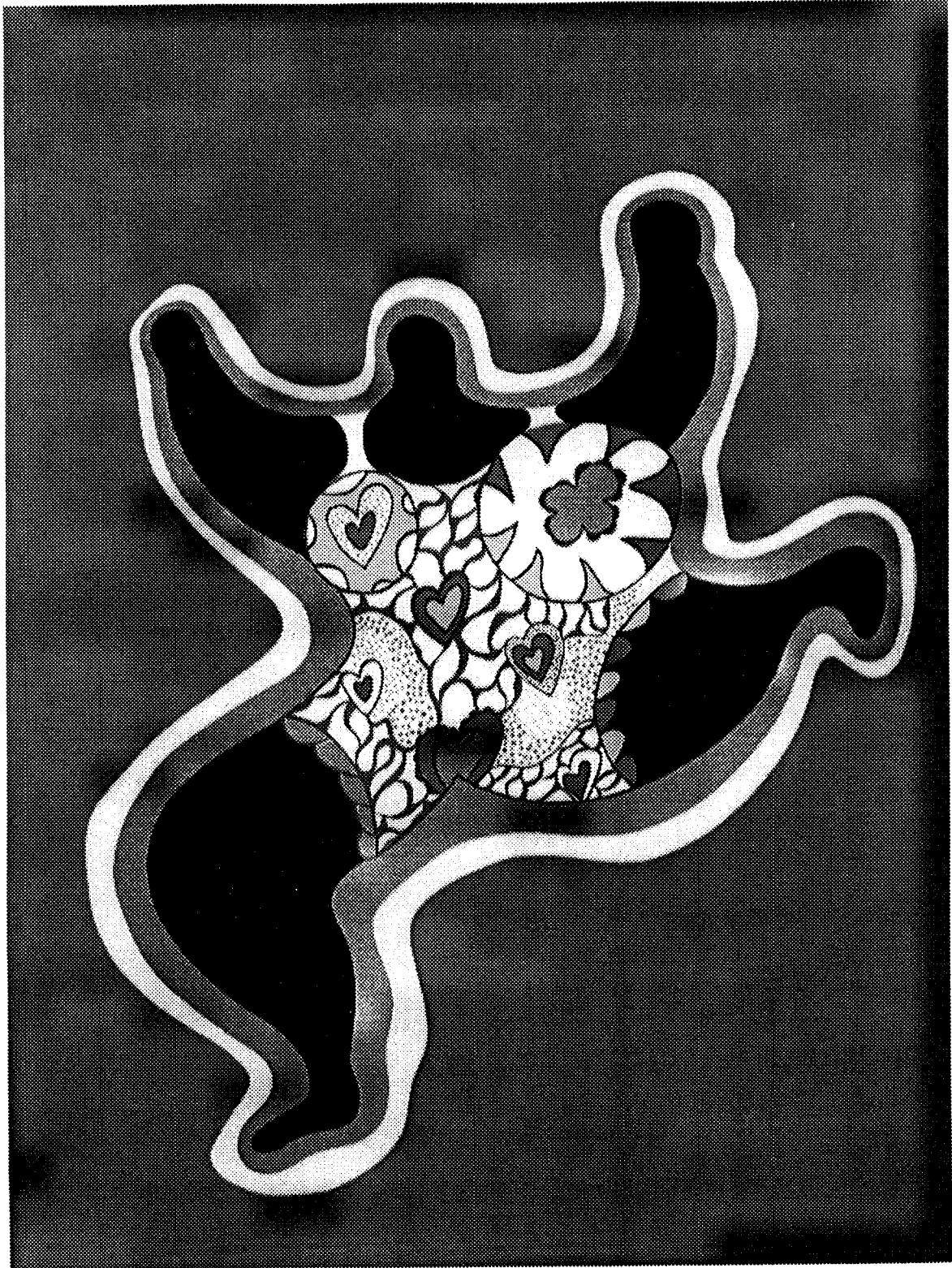


Fig. 81 Niki de Saint-Phalle *Nana Power* serigraph, 1970 (Source: Nouvelles Images S.A. éditeurs / 45700 Lombreuil, France, 1995).

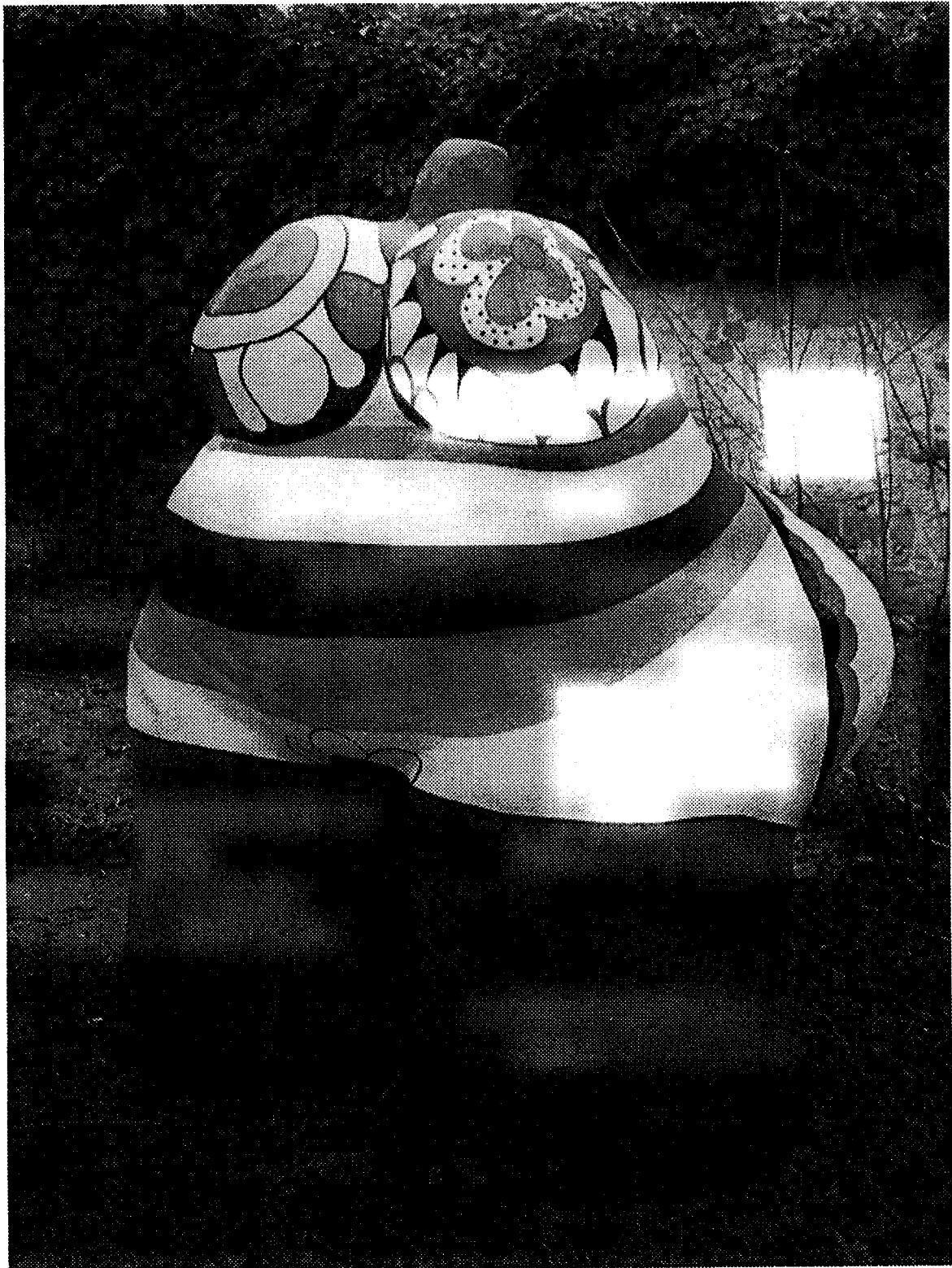


Fig. 82 Niki de Saint-Phalle, *Clarice*, 1965, (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).

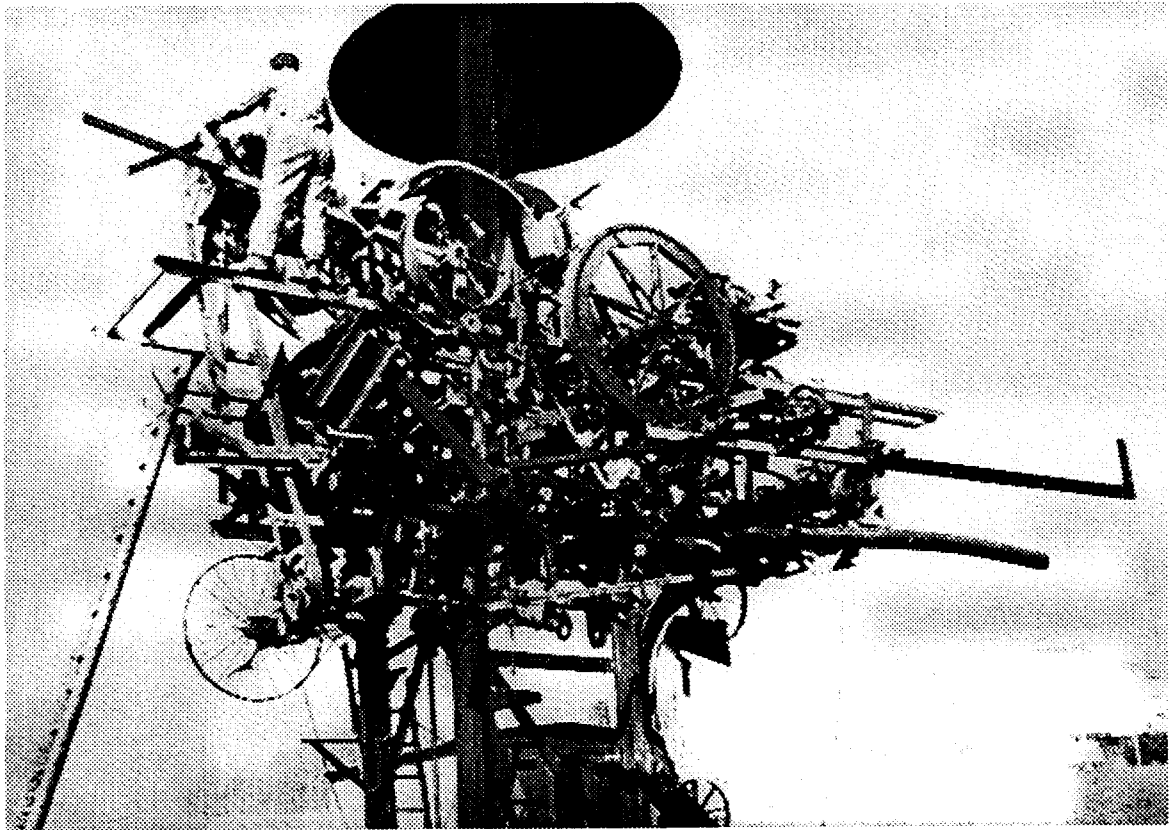


Fig. 83 Jean Tinguely at work on *Eureka* 1964 (Source: *Konstrevo*, Nr.3, 1966).

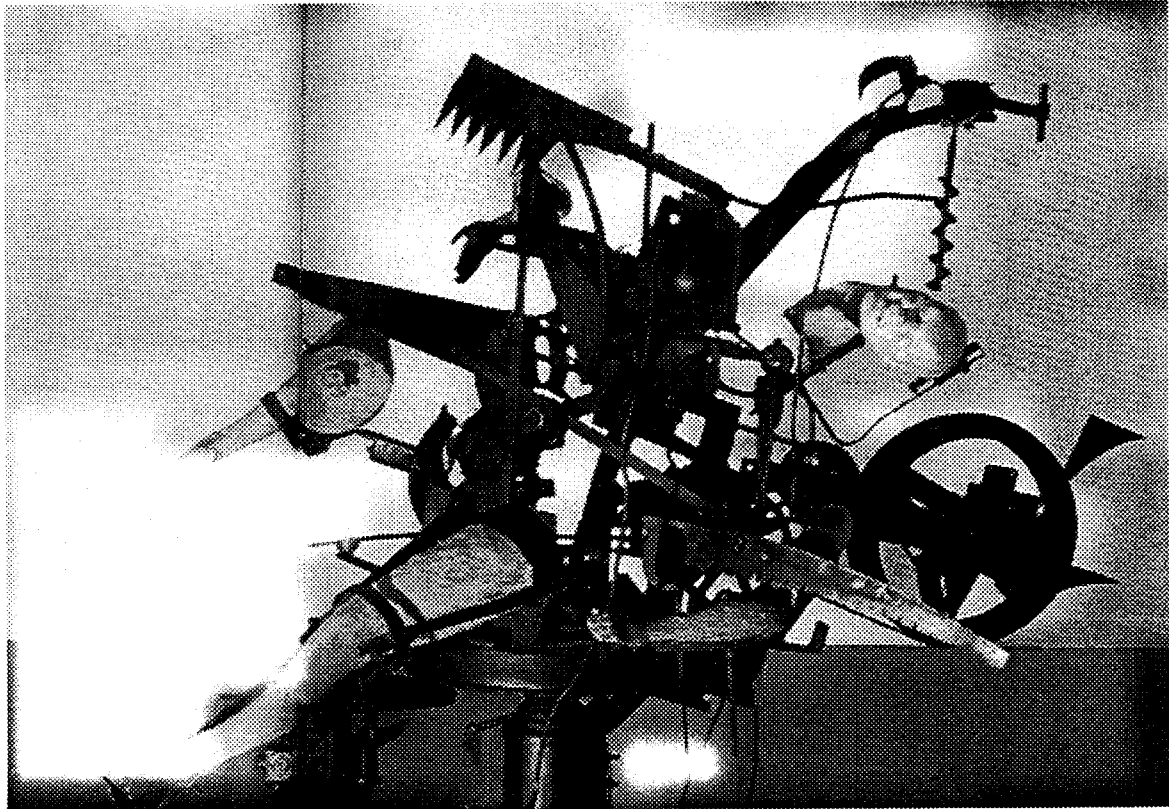


Fig. 84 Jean Tinguely, *Dissecting Machine* 1965 (Source: Violand-Hobi, Heidi, E. *Jean Tinguely: Life and Work* Munich: Prstel, 1995).

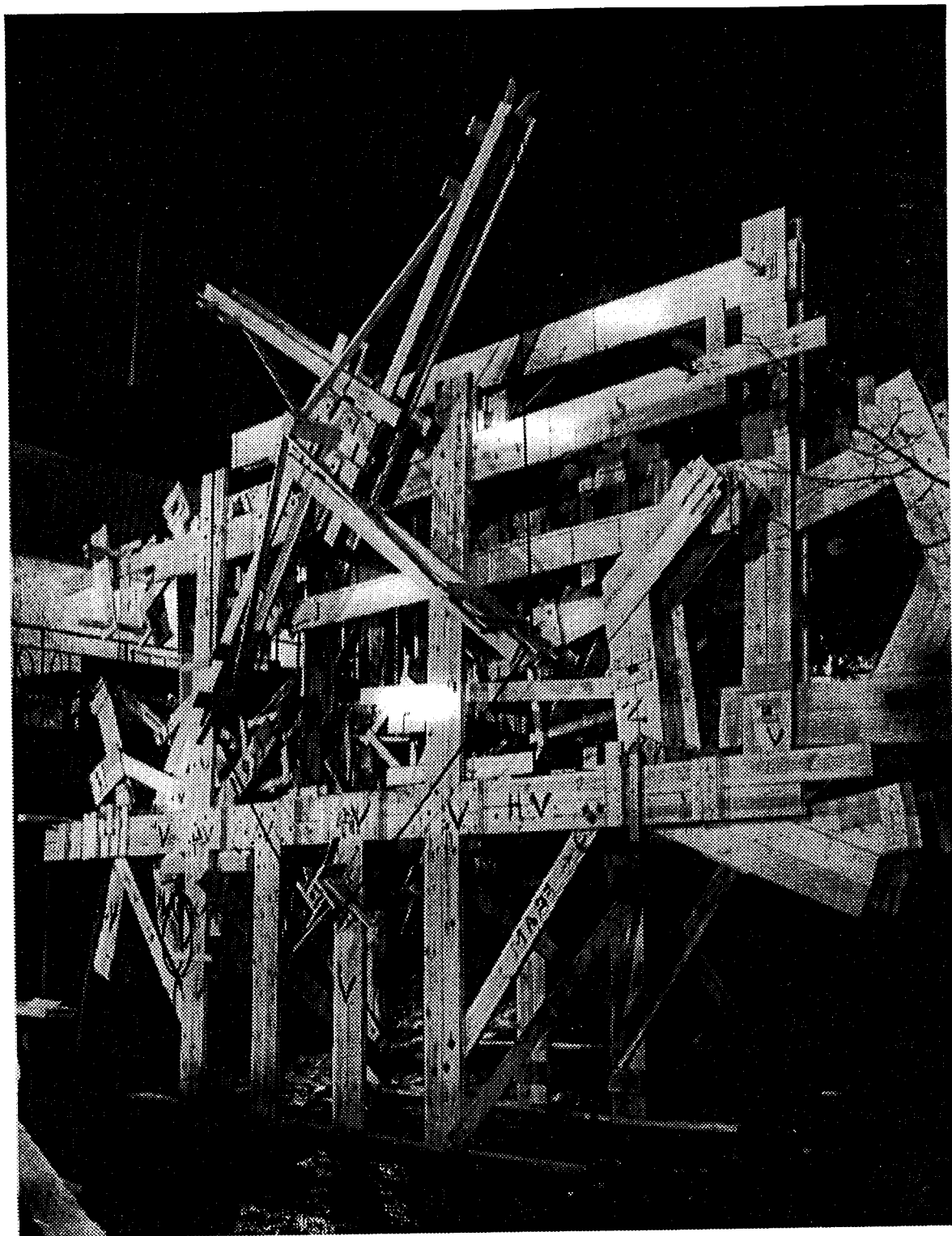


Fig. 85 Per-Olof Ultvedt, *Hommage à Christopher Polhelm* , 1965 (Source: Springfieldt, Björn P.O. Ultvedt: *Tvivel och övermod: Arbeten från 1945 till 1988* Malmö: Malmö Konsthall, 1988).



Fig. 86 mit Robert Rauschenberg (1966) (Quelle: *Konstrevy*, Nr.2, 1966).

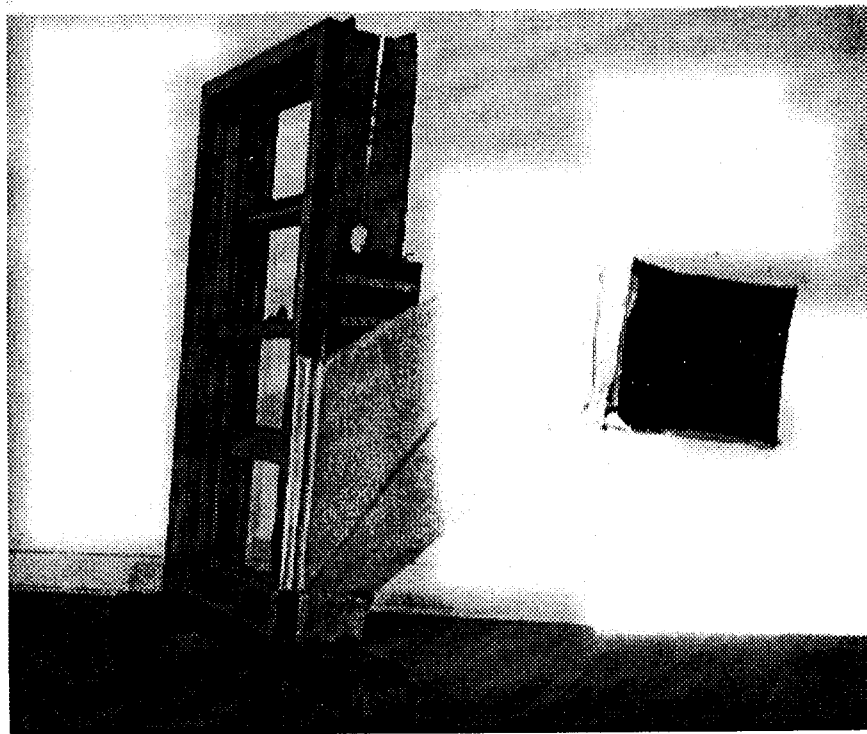


Fig. 86 Robert Rauschenberg and two of the five parts that make up *Oracle*, 1963-66. *Oracle* was constructed in collaboration with Billy Klüver and Bell Laboratories [E.A.T.: Experiments in Art and Technology], 1963-66 (Source: *Konstrevy*, Nr.2, 1966).

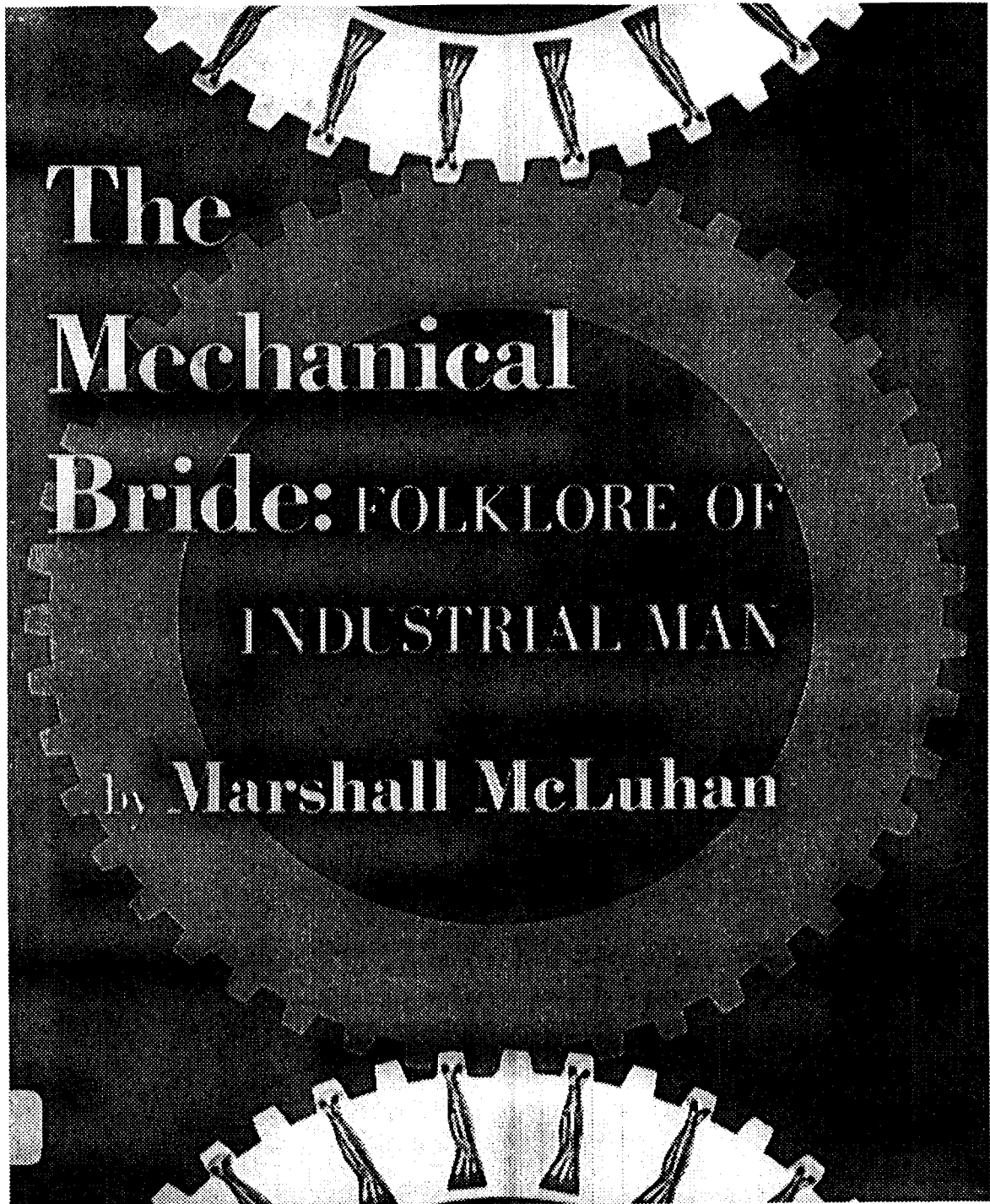


Fig. 87 Cover of Marshall McLuhan's *The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man* New York: Vanguard Press, 1951.



Fig. 88 Niki de Saint-Phalle, Jean Tinguely, Per-Olof Ultvedt, *Hon-en katedral*, 1966 Mixed Media Assemblage (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

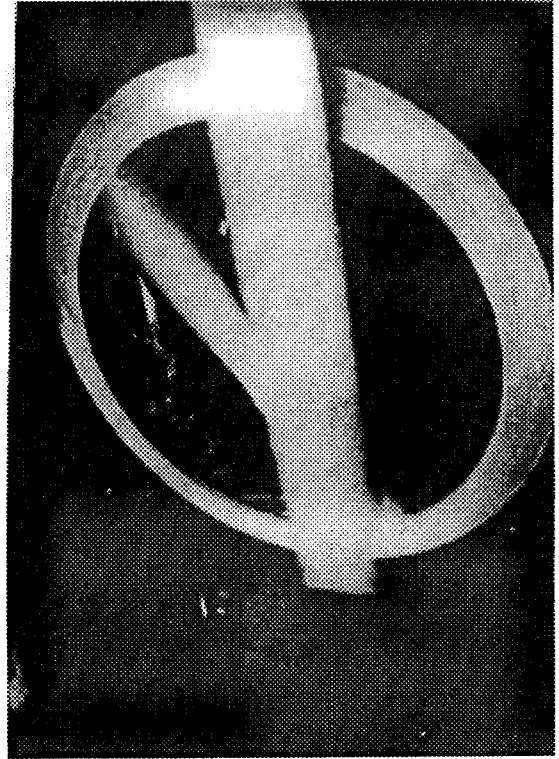


Fig. 89 Jean Tinguely, *Machine for the Production of Broken Glass*, 1966 Mixed Media Assemblage (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst- und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).



Fig. 90 Utlvedt working inside of *Hon-en katedral* (Source: Springfieldt, Björn P.O. *Utlvedt: Tvivel och övermod: Arbeten från 1945 till 1988* Malmö: Malmö Konsthall, 1988)

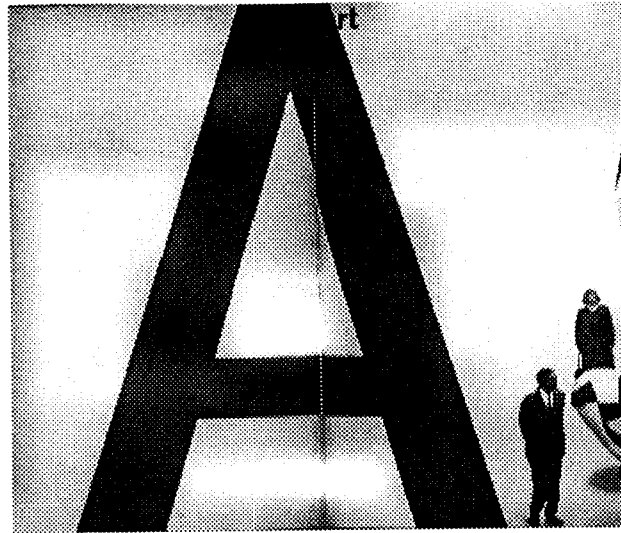


Fig. 91 Three Spreads from Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore *The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects* New York: Bantam Books, 1967.

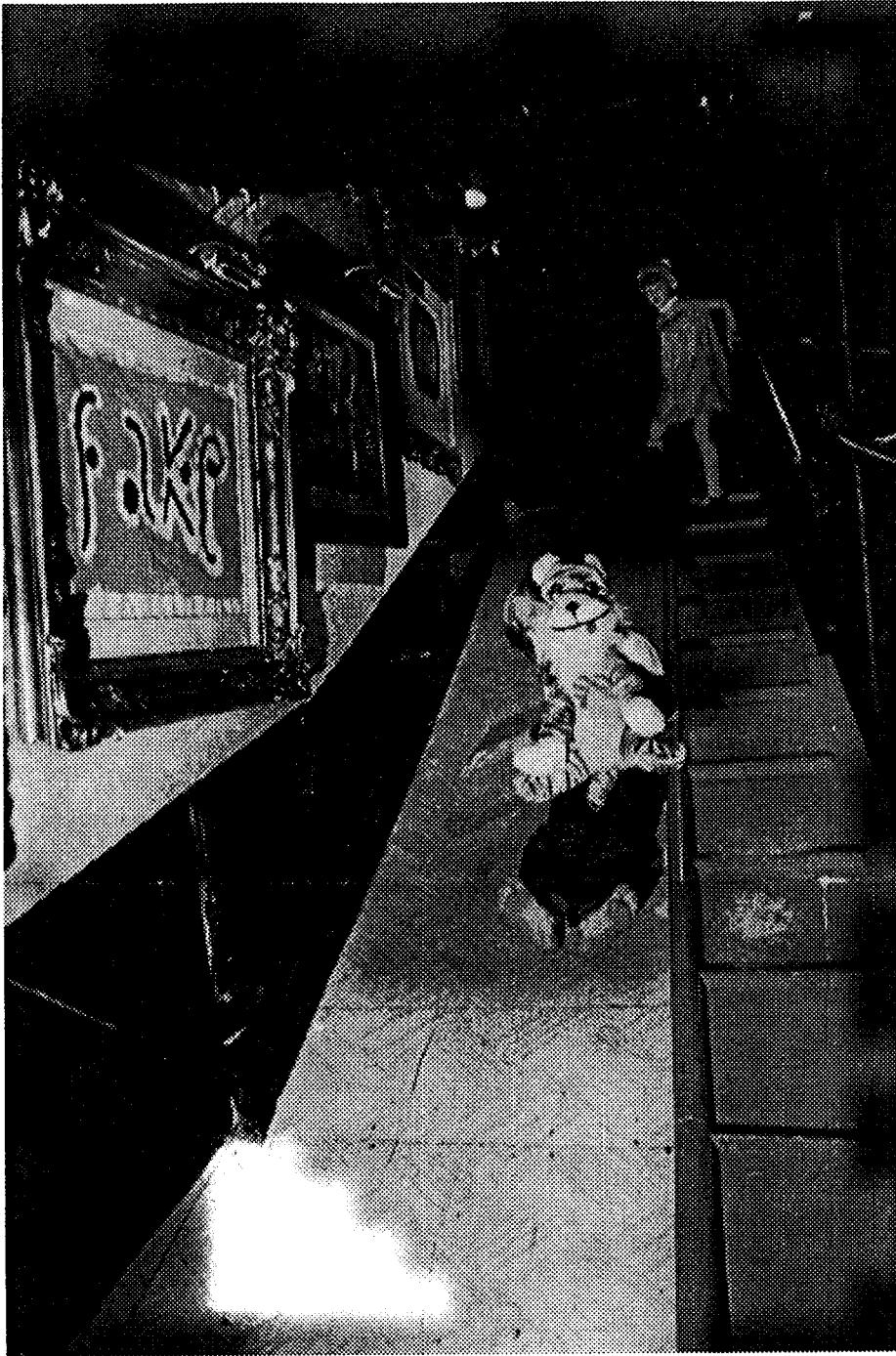


Fig. 92 Ulf Linde's *Fake Paintings* and art gallery inside *Hon's* leg (Source: Barbro Sylvan, Pontus Hulten and John Melin eds. *Hon-en katedral/historia* Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1967).

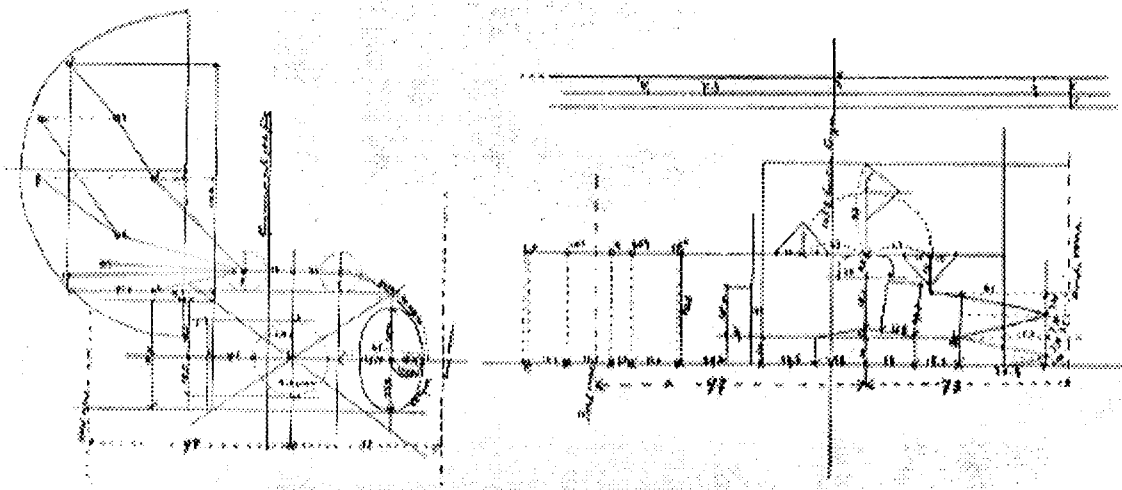


Fig. 94 Duchamp's *Plan and Elevation* for *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even*, 1913 (Konstrevy, Nr.1, 1963).



Fig. 95 Destruction of *Hon-en katedral*, 1966 (Source: Hulten, Pontus Jean Tinguely: *Méta*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972).

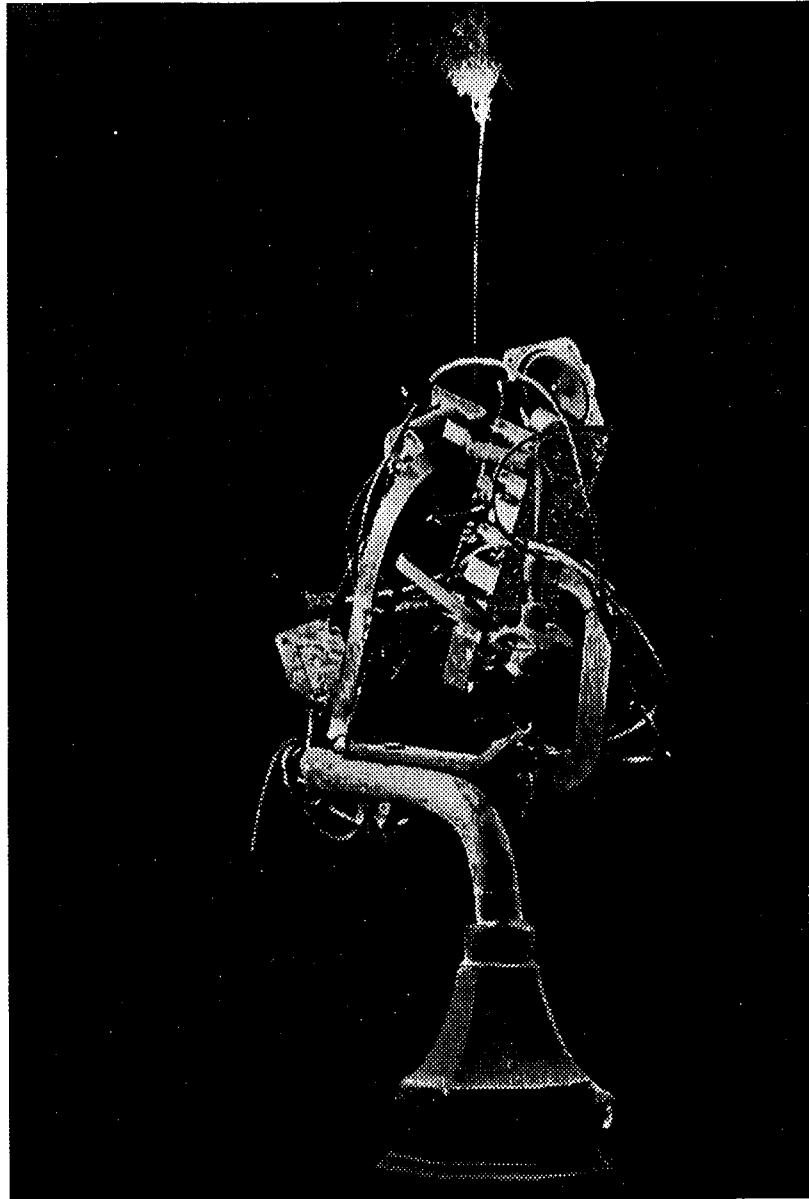


Fig. 96 Jean Tinguely, *Radio Stockholm* 1966 Mixed Media Assemblage
(Source: Hulten, Pontus *Jean Tinguely: Méta*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972).

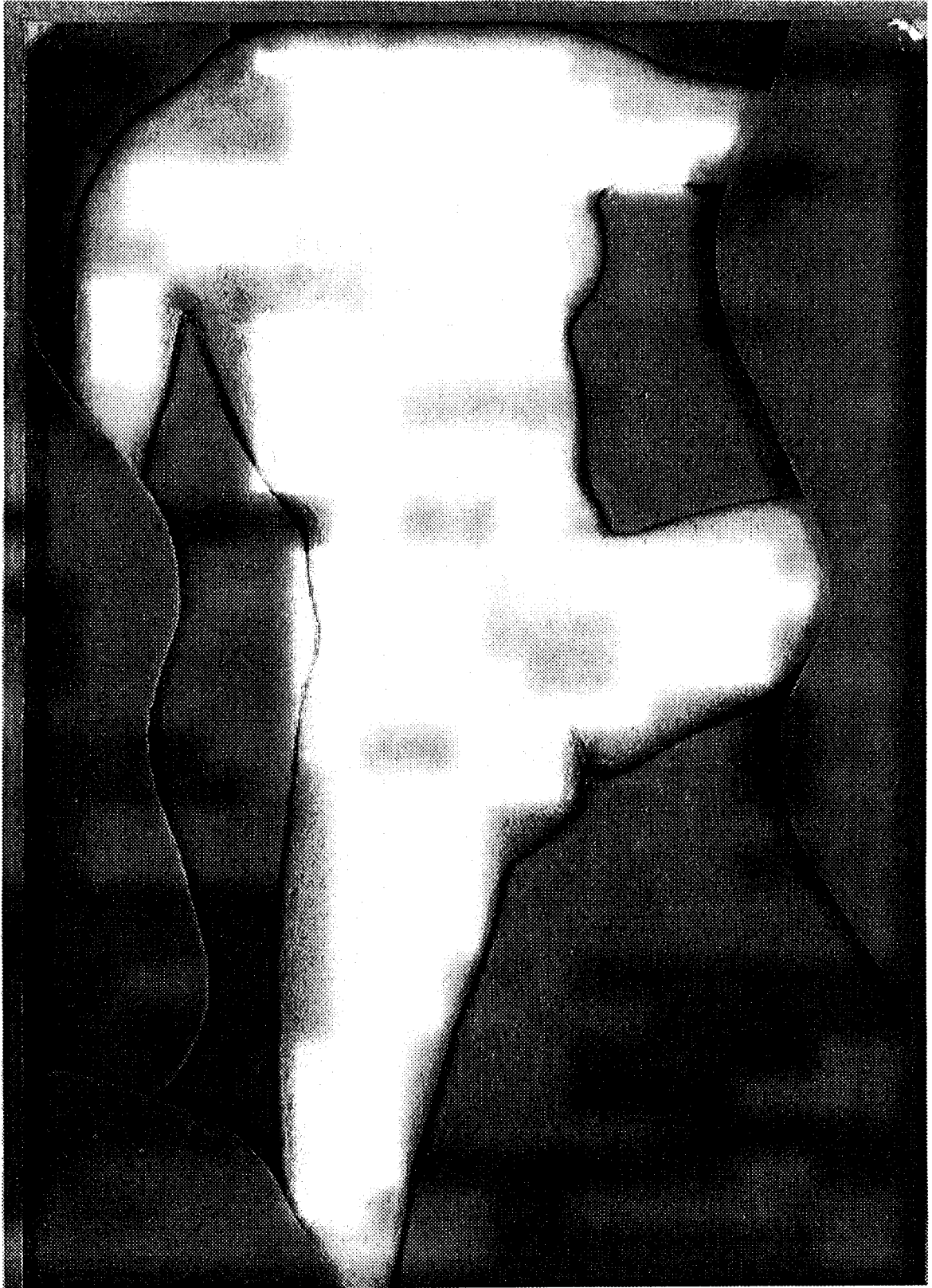


Fig. 97 Marcel Duchamp *Given: 1. The Waterfall, 2. The Illuminating Gas*, 1948-49, Painted Leather on plaster relief 50x31 cm Collection of the Moderna Museet, Stockholm (Source: Mink, Janis *Marcel Duchamp: Art as Anti-Art* Cologne: Taschen, 1995).



Fig. 98 Marcel Duchamp *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* [reconstructed copy by Ulf Linde, 1961 (Source: Granath, Olle and Nieckels, Monica eds.. *Moderna Museet 1958-83*. Stockholm: Moderna Museets Press, 1983).

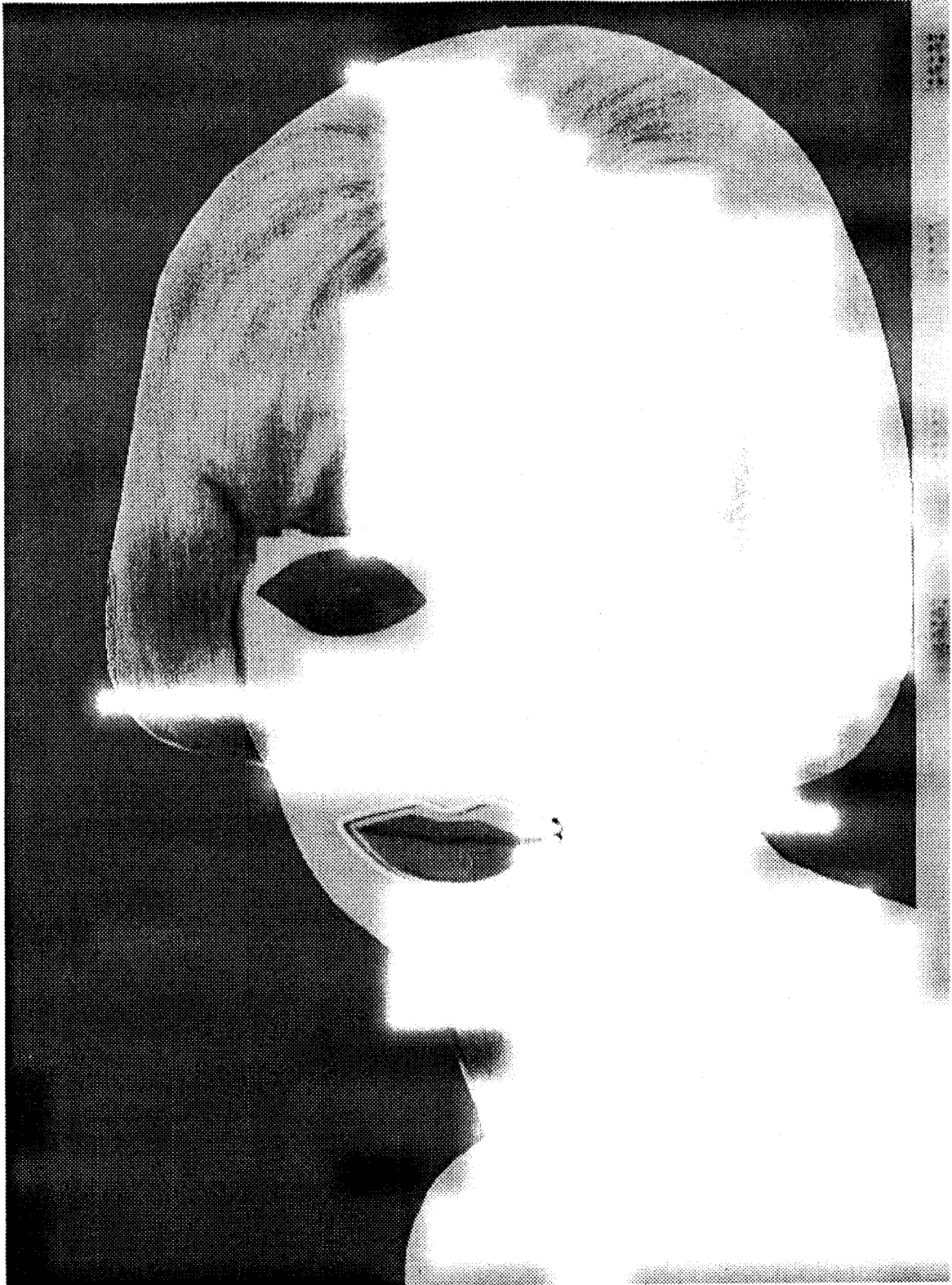


Fig. 99 Martial Raysse *Elle*, 1962 (Source: Livingstone, Marco, *Pop Art: an International Perspective* New York: Rizzoli, 1991).

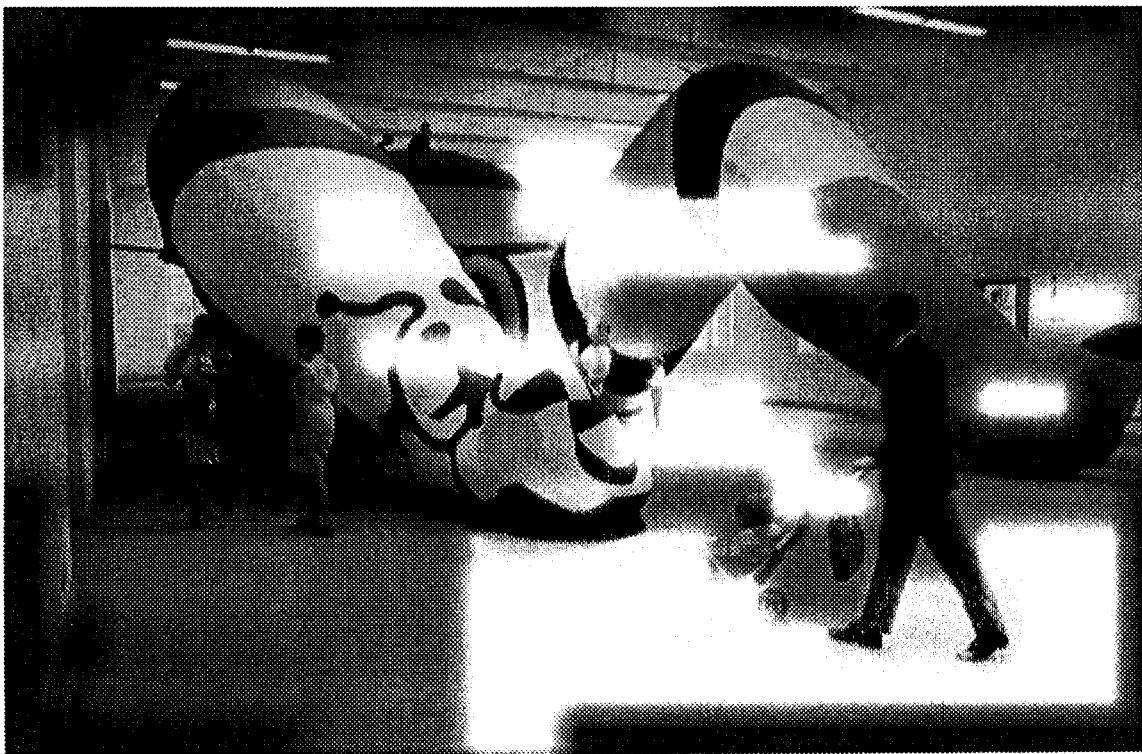
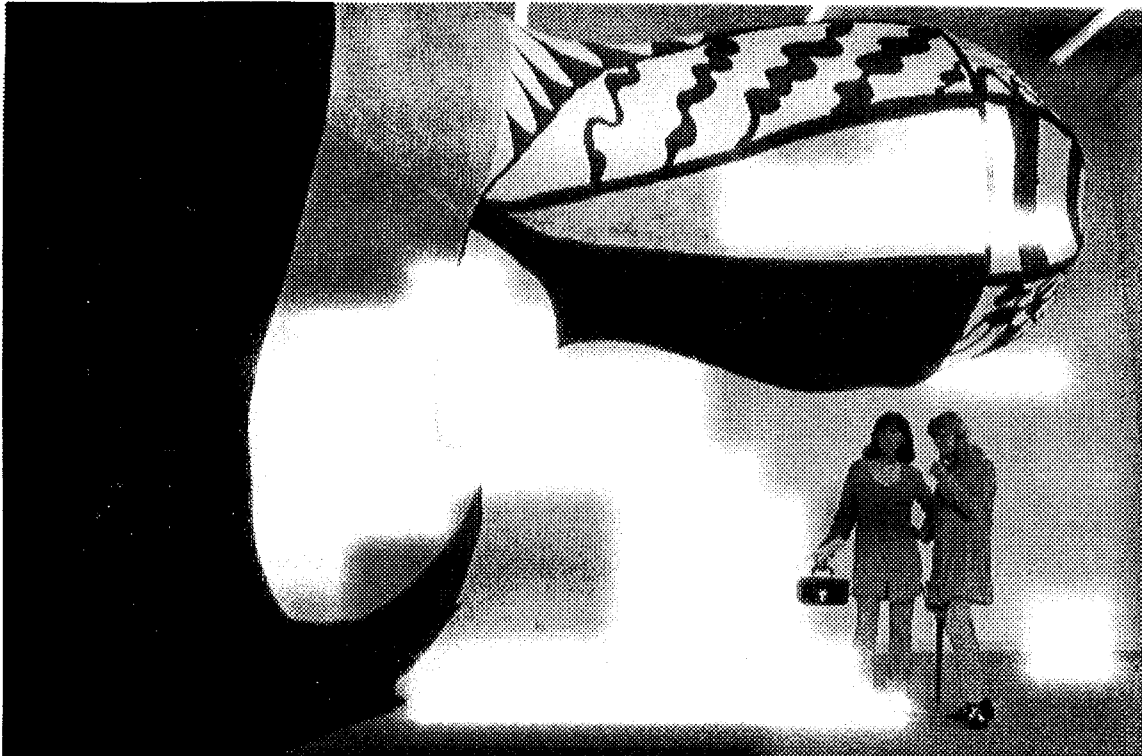


Fig. 100 Niki de Saint-Phalle, Jean Tinguely and Per-Olof Ultvedt *Hon - en katedral*, 1966, (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und-Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).

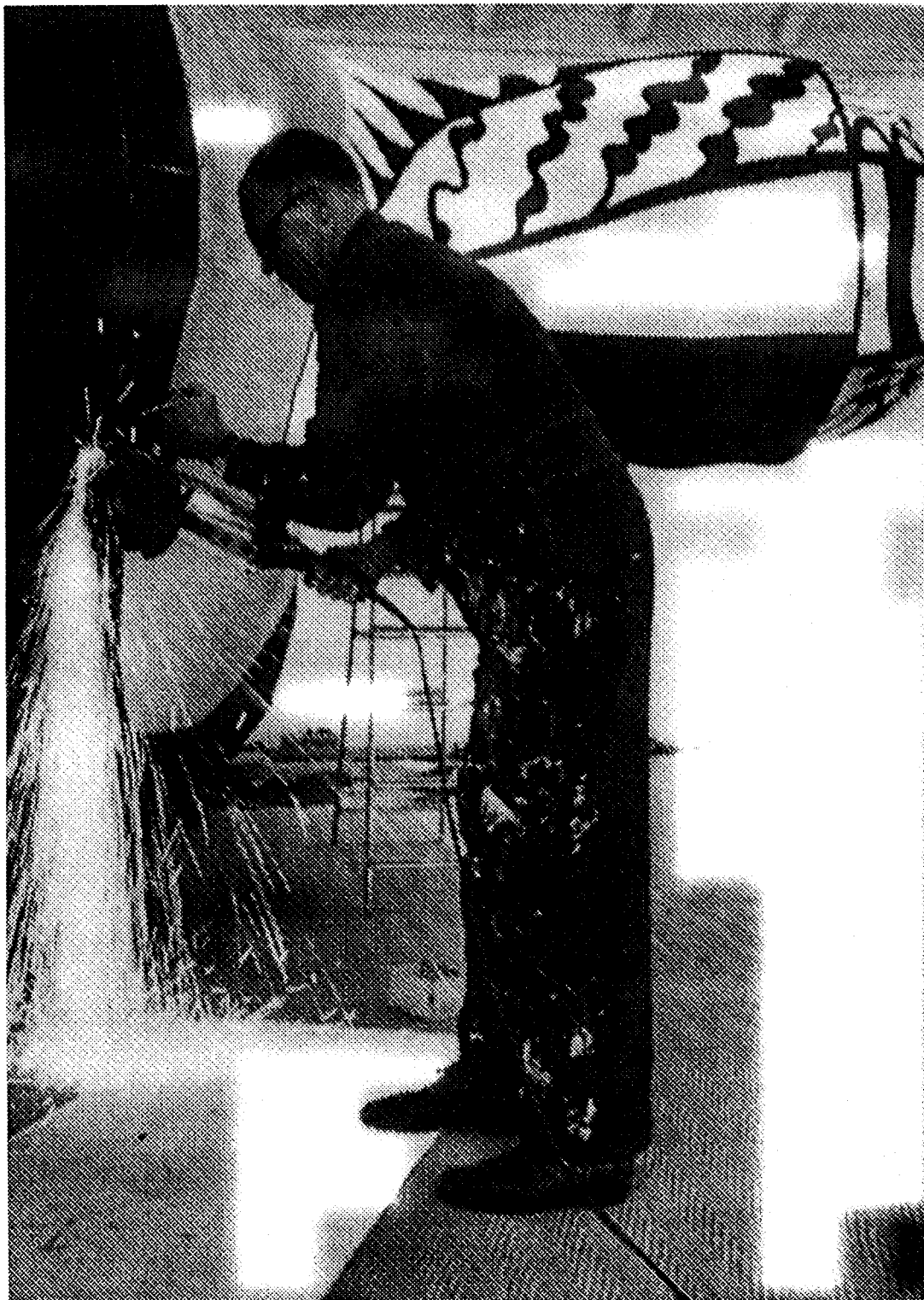


Fig. 101 Hulten removing *Hon's* head, 1966 (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Jean Tinguely: Méta*. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972).



Fig. 102 Marcel Duchamp, *Why Not Sneeze*, 1921 (Hopps, Walter, et al. *Marcel Duchamp Ready-Mades, etc. (1913-1964)*, Milano, Galleria Schwarz, 1964).

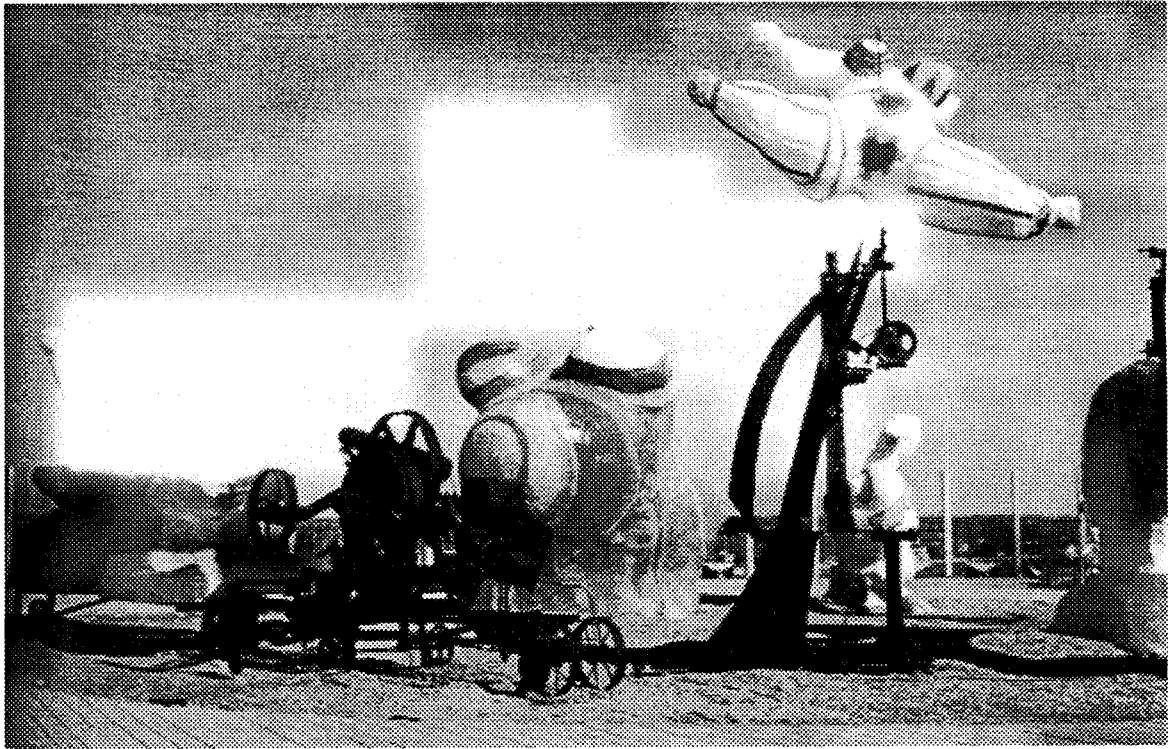


Fig. 103 Niki de Saint-Phalle and Jean Tinguely, *Le Paradise fantastique* on the roof-top of the French Pavillion at Expo '67 in Montreal, Canada, Mixed Media Assemblage, Stockholm (Source: Hulten, Pontus *Niki de Saint-Phalle* Bonn: Kunst-und- Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1992).

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