

Taschen
DUCHAMP (I)

Janis Mink

KA

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DUCHAMP (I)

Readymade man

The anticonformist visionary

Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968), revolutionary artist, inventor of readymades, obsessive chess player, and master of the silent statement, succeeded at the beginning of the 20th century to query art in its traditional form. His creations, not least his readymades such as the famous *Fountain* (a "reclaimed" urinal) or the *Bottle Rack*, are subversive and radical upshots of a critical confrontation with the production and marketing of art in the industrial age. While the young Duchamp still admired Monet, Fauvism, and Cubism, and for a while was quite closely aligned with the Dadaists and Surrealists, before long his work broke new ground and helped redefine art as we know it today.

The fact that Duchamp wanted to ensure that the self-irony and doubt, particularly in his own works, were constructively understood is best shown in one of his few statements on the subject: "I force myself to contradict myself in order to avoid conforming to my own taste." Duchamp has long been an enigma to art historians while a great source of inspiration to other artists. This study addresses the myth and the reality, revealing a compelling portrait of Marcel Duchamp, the man and the artist.

About the Series:

Each book in TASCHEN's Basic Art series features:

- a detailed chronological summary of the life and oeuvre of the artist, covering his or her cultural and historical importance
- a concise biography
- approximately 100 illustrations with explanatory captions

The author:

Janis Mink studied art history at Smith College and gained her doctorate in Hamburg under Martin Warnke. She is presently a writer and curator.

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