Out of Field (Fuera de campo)
Marcel Duchamp in Buenos Aires

Graciela Speranza

Although the reasons for his unexpected decision remain unclear, on August 14, 1918, Marcel Duchamp, accompanied by his friend Yvonne Chastel, boarded the *SS Crofton Hall* bound for Buenos Aires. The specter of war, which three years earlier had swept him from Paris to New York, had come back to haunt him, and this time he chose a more remote destination. Fifty years later, Duchamp confided to Pierre Cabanne: "Since 1917 America had been in the war, and I had left France basically for lack of militarism. For lack of patriotism, if you wish. [And] I had fallen into American patriotism, which certainly was worse." If what Duchamp was seeking, as he explained to his friend Jean Crotti, was "to make a clean break with this part of the world," the choice had its logic. For a good part of the century, Buenos Aires was, unequivocally, synonymous with an arcane and exotic destination. Witness all the references to the city in classic Hollywood films, for example. But even so, it is hard to imagine the reasons for a choice that at first sight seemed so risky: Duchamp did not speak a word of Spanish; he didn't know anyone in the city; the journey was long and costly. There were many neutral cities where he could have sought refuge. Why, then, Buenos Aires?

As a parting gift, Duchamp gave his friend Florine Stettheimer a drawing dated the day before boarding ship [Fig. 1]. Judging by that drawing, Duchamp himself could not imagine what might be awaiting him at the end of his journey, but he resolutely took the plunge. Although in the drawing—a map of the Americas—he marked an itinerary that starts in New York and ends in Buenos Aires with an enormous question mark, uncertainty did not affect his plans; next to the itinerary's dotted line, between arrows pointing in opposite directions, he records, with mathemati-

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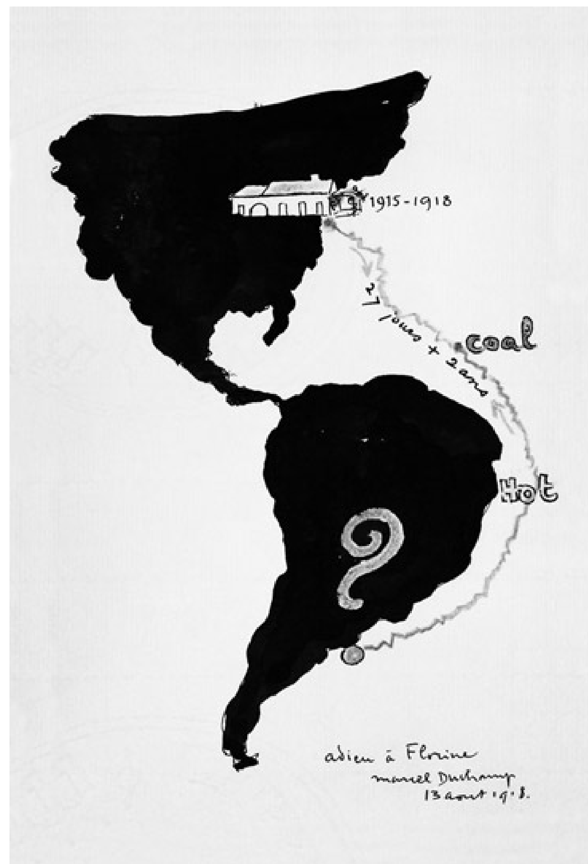

Fig. 1. Marcel Duchamp, *Adieu à Florine* (Farewell to Florine), August 1918, Ex coll: Florine Stettheimer, New York, Collection Mme Maracel Duchamp, Villiers sous-Grez © 2011 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris / Succession Marcel Duchamp

cal precision, the time he expects his absence to last: "27 days + 2 years." Duchamp did not know what he would find in the southernmost capital of South America, but he planned to remain there for a long while and to be unrecognizable by the time he returned ("The next time you see me," he assured Crotti, "I will have changed a lot"). The rest are vague intuitions: he imagines a city sunnier than New York; he figures he can make a living giving private lessons in French; and, although he suspects that he will not find modern art lovers in Buenos Aires and has no intention to exhibit his work there, he takes with him all his notes for *Large Glass* in order to further the design of the work on paper, with the idea of completing it upon his return to New York.

Of all the speculations by admirers and biographers about the reasons for

Duchamp's decision to exile himself in Buenos Aires, the most attractive—precisely because it is not demonstrable—is the one proposed by the Argentine writer Julio Cortázar. In *Around the Day in Eighty Worlds*, Cortázar suggests that Duchamp's voyage may have obeyed the laws of arbitrariness and that, in his view, *Impressions of Africa* by the French writer Raymond Roussel contains proof that the trip had been determined by fate. Cortázar quotes Roussel: "On march 15th, 19…, with the intention of making a long trip through the intriguing regions of South America, I boarded the *Lyncée*, a large and fast ship bound from Marseille to Buenos Aires." The passage comes from the beginning of Chapter Ten of *Impressions*, where Roussel describes in maddening detail the highly sophisticated "machinic" celebrations that the shipwrecked passengers of the *Lyncée* have prepared for the coronation of the African king who has captured them. Immediately after this, Roussel recapitulates the origins of the adventure and introduces the passengers who performed at the ceremonies. Driven by the suspension points—indefinite year—and by his penchant for the fantastic, Cortázar imagines that Duchamp himself was travelling incognito on the *Lyncée*, that he had thus had opportunity to play chess with Roussel before the shipwreck and that, without a doubt, had made friends with the most conspicuous characters among the passengers: the Russian prima ballerina, the Parisian pyrotechnician, the French constructor of precision objects who had invented an amazing mechanical fencing foil.

If we omit Cortázar's poetic license, this impossible but interesting imaginary encounter aboard the *Lyncée* has its practical efficacy. The reference to Buenos Aires in Roussel's work may not have been insignificant in setting Duchamp's course in 1918. The "madness of the unexpected" that he had discovered in the performance of *Impressions* in Paris in 1911, and the combination of "mechanism and delirium, insanity and method" (as Octavio Paz puts it) transformed Roussel into Duchamp's guiding beacon, prime mover in the pivotal turn his artistic career took in 1912, and secret inspiration for his own machines. "Roussel was mainly responsible for my glass," Duchamp declared in 1946. "From his *Impressions of Africa* I borrowed my general approach . . . and Roussel showed me the way." Later on, referring to his mysterious two-month sojourn in Munich, which he undertook prompted by Roussel's work, Duchamp said: "In 1912 I decided to be alone and move forward without destination. The artist must be alone with himself, as in a shipwreck." Cortázar's conjecture has its own logic: if, with the hilarious consequences of the shipwreck of a boat bound for Buenos Aires, Roussel had signaled a direction, why not follow the fiction of the master to the letter and board a ship to Buenos Aires?

Encouraged by Roussel, Duchamp began his journey. Or, maybe, he had more prosaic reasons (though it may not be true, he once said that the relative of

a Parisian friend was the manager of a brothel in Buenos Aires). In any case, after three weeks aboard the *Crofton Hall*, Duchamp arrived at the Argentine capital on September 9, 1918. We know very little about what happened from then on, as if the question mark that he had drawn on the map were the chosen cipher of his South American sojourn. If it weren't for the ten letters he sent to some of his friends, we could reconstruct very little of what took place during his stay in Buenos Aires and even less of what his daily life was like in the turbulent months he spent in the city—an enigmatic interval between two pivotal works, *Tu m'*, his last painting on canvas, finished on July, 1918, and his famous "rectification" of the *Mona Lisa, L.H.O.O.Q.*, of 1919. By then, Duchamp had already shaken the art of the century with works that were unique and impossible to classify, but he was secretly imagining even more radical projects. He had already painted *Nude Descending a Staircase* (1912), which awakened little interest in France but was welcomed with avant-garde enthusiasm in the 1913 Armory Show in New York City. This is one of the first works that, anticipating Futurism, explicitly shows movement in a static figure ("That piece of work," say Paz, "is one of the fundamental axes of modern painting: the end of Cubism and the beginning of something that is not yet finished"). Duchamp had already asked a crucial question for the future of art—"Is it possible to make works of art that are not works of art?"—and had found a practical answer in 1913 with his *Bicycle Wheel*, the first in a varied series of ready-mades that are his most decisive attack on the institutions of art and on "retinal art." Once established in New York, he had shocked the Society of Independent Artists in 1913 with the most controversial object in the history of art, a urinal signed by R. Mutt and entitled *Fountain*. But it is in the notes that he brought in his luggage where a most important project was taking shape: his *Large Glass*, which had obsessed him since his stay in Munich and was destined to be his magnum opus.

Although scant, brief and sporadic, the letters Duchamp wrote to his friends from Buenos Aires give a summary view of his sojourn and offer, especially to an Argentine reader, a caustic view of the city's society at the beginning of the twentieth century. Shortly after his arrival, Duchamp's sense of being a foreigner was mixed with an unexpected familiarity that was directly related to Europe and completely uninflected by America. "Black men and black women" made him think that he was very far away from New York, but the narrow streets reminded him of Paris (in particular, the Madeleine quarters), as did the general European style of the city and its food, "wonderful food and butter like you can't get on Columbus Avenue." Two months after his arrival, he already felt like a true "Buenos Airean" and knew the city like the back of his hand. But his enthusiasm dwindled as the strangeness of the "new" revealed itself to be simple provincial dullness. Not much could be ex-

pected beyond a rather insular sociability and a "casino"—a sort of Arcade Building Theatre—where only men were admitted. Yvonne Chastel, his travelling companion, and Katherine Dreier, who was visiting Buenos Aires, suffered the consequences of an indescribable machismo. "It is crazy, the insolence and stupidity of men here," Duchamp summed up in a letter. As months went by, the mediocrity of Buenos Aires' upper middle class had drained all the substance from the city until it turned into a kind of nothing, a slavish copy of degraded European models. "Buenos Aires does not exist," he declared in November, "it is just a big provincial town full of rich people with absolutely no taste, and everything bought in Europe, right down to the stone they build their houses with." Everything was a kind of replica of something from somewhere else (there was an English community, an American one, an Italian one, all very insular; there were many French nationals—more than in New York—all "revolting"), and even toothpaste was imported; people had little curiosity but a lot of arrogance. With the exception of a few tango bars, some movie houses and some French theater companies, there wasn't much nightlife, and Duchamp's humor grew increasingly acid. "The butter is still very good," he wrote in January 1919, "but one gets used to it."

If social and cultural life was meager and dull, the art scene was equally poor, with no more than a couple of out-of-date galleries and poorly executed vernacular versions of popular Spanish painters: "The 'species painter' is of no interest whatsoever: Zuloagas and Anglada Camarosas (sic). All students more or less. One or two galleries of significance with sure sales and with high prices. The few people I have met have 'heard of' Cubism, but have no idea of the meaning of the modern movement." And yet, for some reason, the city awakened in Duchamp the impulse to go on a crusade to "cubify." He volunteered to act as intermediary and organizer for a Cubist exhibit that, "because of its novelty," would probably be sponsored, free of charge, by some local art gallery. He asked his friend Henri-Martin Barzun to select some thirty works for the exhibit; he asked Crotti to send him the pertinent bibliography; later on he talked enthusiastically about the project to his New York friends. But there were persistent delays and, shortly before leaving for France, in June 1919, Duchamp definitely gave up, not without deploring the project's failure, especially in its financial aspects. He eloquently explained: "I decided to give up on this project, which was in fact nothing but trouble for me. That was a mistake, from the financial point of view. *B. A. is a city where anything that is new (to them) is a financial success*. And even in modern painting, there is a market to be made" (the emphasis is mine).

Duchamp's characterization of Buenos Aires' cultural landscape had become increasingly fine-tuned as the months went by: there was the anachronism of the periphery, its parochial mediocrity, its dependent mimicry, the poor taste of the upper

middle classes and, on top of all that, there was a certain snobbism that compelled people to "buy" any new import with a diligent and ostentatious cheap taste. His diagnostic of the art landscape in Argentina didn't differ that much, in fact, from the view of the *Martinfierristas* who were budding at the time. And we may well conjecture, for instance, that Duchamp's encounter with the poet Oliverio Girondo might have anticipated, by at least five years, the landing of the European avant-garde on the banks of the Río de la Plata. "While in Europe, art, poetry, artistic questions descend to the streets, here, nothing happens," said Girondo, reminiscing about the pre-history of the magazine *Martín Fierro*, which was the avant-garde platform in the 1920s. Córdova-Iturburu, another *Martinfierrista*, declared: "As a consequence of this appalling backwardness, of this being out of step with the times, the landscape of our artistic and literary life languished in the moribund grey of a tedious repetition of worn out formulas."

Even so, Buenos Aires was for Duchamp a good place to concentrate and work: "You can smell peace here, and it is a joy to breathe it." And later on, he said: "I am very happy to have found such a different way of life—I feel a bit like being back in the countryside where it is enjoyable to work." In his studio on 1507 Sarmiento Street, a few blocks away from the apartment on 1745 Alsina Street that he shared with Yvonne Chastel, Duchamp organized his notes and advanced his work—two optical experiments, in fact, that examined the relation between vision, materiality and desire. Judging by the eye chart he sent to his friend Walter Arensberg together with one of his letters, this preoccupation with optics and perception arose, for some reason, in Buenos Aires; it would be with him until his very last work. In the dull atmosphere of inferior imitation that surrounded Duchamp, it is hard to imagine him, locked up in his studio on Sarmiento Street, refining his notion of "delay" in his notes and his glass, as he concentrates on two works that remain enigmatic until today.

The first one, *Hand Stereoscopy*, consists of a pair of sea photographs on which he has drawn two identical polyhedrons. When inserted in a stereoscope, the two pyramids converge into a single one, floating on the sea, or perhaps on the Río de la Plata. And we can infer that here Duchamp examines optical illusions, capable of producing visual images in the brain without any material object present. The second piece, known as the *Small Glass*, is more complex and hermetic. It is a preliminary study for the lower section of the *Large Glass*, known as the "Oculist Witnesses," that closes the circular thrust of its upper panel, *The Bride Stripped Naked by her Bachelors, Even*, involving the viewer in the work as a machinic voyeur. Although some of the elements of *Small Glass* will reappear in *Large Glass*—the tip of the scissors, the circle at the center and one of the eye charts—others equally cryptic are

discarded: the column supporting the circle at the center (an actual magnifier glued to the glass); the circles at the edges; and the tricolor pyramid that occupies the upper part. Starting with the instruction in its title—*To be Looked at (from the Other Side of the Glass) with One Eye, Close to, for Almost an Hour*— *Small Glass* recovers one of the propositions of Leonardo's *Treatise on Painting* on the way vision operates, puts the proposition to the test in a flat (two-dimensional) machine and complicates it with the duplicity (transparency and opacity) of a painting done on glass. For Leonardo, the spatial illusion of painting derives from monocular vision—"seen up close and with one eye only," Leonardo explains, three-dimensional objects are perceived as the flat objects of painting. In *Small Glass*, Leonardo's proposition is made literal with an ironic twist: the viewer who follows the title's instruction is turned into a spectacle, as he sees himself looking at himself through the glass.

The reference to Leonardo is not accidental. The year 1919 is the four-hundredth anniversary of Leonardo's death. His figure is revived and his works are reread from quite varied perspectives (from Freud to Gabriel D'Annunzio or Paul Valéry). But Duchamp's take is programmatic. Like Leonardo, Duchamp is interested in science, machines, mathematics, optics, perspective, experimentation, chance, and above all, *la cosa mentale*—the "mental thing"—of art, which is the condition of possibility for the extension of art's limits beyond its conventional definitions. *To be Looked at. . .* returns obsessively to Leonardo's speculations and attempts to find a way to embody a mental process into something visible through a "delay" in glass. Isolated in Buenos Aires, we could say forced to focus again on his work, Duchamp turns upon himself and unravels his own vision of painting, as he questions merely retinal art as well as the disembodied gaze of Cartesian perspectivism. He advances towards *Given: 1. The Waterfall, 2. The Illuminating Gas*, his deliberately posthumous work which, through two peepholes, allows the viewer to observe a scene on the other side of a gate. With an echo of the instructions in *Small Glass*' title, *Given* turns its viewer into a *voyeur* of a woman lying with her legs opened next to a waterfall, holding in one hand a glass lamp that illuminates her naked body.

But the simple optical experiment with the stereoscope applied to erotic operations in the *Small Glass* (looking towards the *Large Glass* and *Given*) acquires new meaning if we think of it within the context of Duchamp's exile in Argentina. The freedom and lack of prejudice of some American women—especially the suffragists, including his friend Katherine Dreier—had surprised Duchamp in New York; the "insolence and stupidity" of men in Buenos Aires, which infuriated him and sent Yvonne Chastel and Katherine Dreier back to New York, must have certainly appeared to him as a sign of provincial primitivism. The recalcitrant machismo of Buenos Aires culture, which gave rise to some of the most corrosive poetics of art

in Argentina in the second half of the twentieth century, encouraged Duchamp's ludicrous embodiment of the male gaze in the machines for watching naked women that he would complete in the future.

If those two optical works—the *Stereoscope* and the *Small Glass*—foreshadow the performative voyeurism of the *Large Glass* and *Given. . .,* the *Unhappy Ready-Made*, the third work from Duchamp's Argentine sojourn and the only ready-made he conceived in Buenos Aires, is even more insidious. It was a present for the wedding of Suzanne, one of his three sisters, who was marrying his intimate friend Jean Crotti, who, in turn, was the ex-husband of Yvonne Chastel, the woman who accompanied Duchamp in Buenos Aires. In a letter he instructs the couple to hang a geometry book on a string from the balcony of their Paris apartment, so that the wind could "choose its own problems, turn the pages and even tear them apart." That's all. Although this was a strange present, the couple not only followed Duchamp's instructions to the letter and mounted the object on their apartment's balcony, but Suzanne also took pictures of it and later painted it in a work entitled *Marcel Duchamp's Unhappy Ready-Made* that, with perhaps unwitting irony, takes "the work of art that is not a work of art" back into the realm of painting. Duly compliant with Duchamp's program, the ready-made was eventually destroyed by time and the elements and has only been preserved in Suzanne's photograph and in her painting; its meaning still remains an enigma. With this play of inverted couples and intentions, an apparently innocent object opens a chain of symmetries and dissymmetries— subtly reconstructed by Thierry de Duve in his *Pictorial Nominalism*—rich in psychological and erotic layers. Arturo Schwartz interprets Duchamp's insistence on courtship and bachelorhood as a repressed incestuous relation with his sister Suzanne. Following Schwartz's interpretation, the already intricate quadrangle involved in this gift gets quite more complicated. But even without Schwartz's psychoanalytic reductionism, the *Unhappy Ready-made* is a nuisance, a useless manual of instructions, a charade, a nothing destined to become nothing. If anything, it is, as Michel Leiris points out, a metaphor "taken literally": a geometry book hung by a string as a materialization of "geometry in space," with an ingenious coda about the traps of language.

Viewed from Buenos Aires, however, the *Unhappy Ready-Made* acquires a meaning that agrees better with those Duchamp will assign to this work long afterwards. Years later, speaking to an interviewer, Duchamp explains: "rain, winds and inclement weather would wipe out the seriousness of a book filled with principles," while the treatise, exposed to the elements, "would thoroughly understand the facts of life." The intervention that Duchamp "signs" in Buenos Aires is embodied in Paris in a European science book; this is therefore his first "distance" ready-made. The key to the gesture is precisely the direction South-North and the distance, which

complements something that has already been made with a new geographical inflection. With his first ready-made, *Bicycle Wheel*, Duchamp showed that it was possible to make works of art that weren't works of art. *Fountain*, the white standard urinal that he presented at the Society of Independent Artists in New York, was in some sense a response to the rejection of *Nude Descending a Staircase* at the Salon of Independent Artists in Paris. With *Fountain*, he showed that it was possible to desacralize the institutions of art and to affect their entire system from a still peripheral center. Very soon after, he launched his attack on the *Mona Lisa*, one of the masterpieces of the Western tradition. The effect of the *Unhappy Ready-Made* is more subtle and metaphorical: in this case, Duchamp seems to say that it is also possible to make a long-distance art "intervention" from "a poor South American outskirt." The "seriousness of a book filled with principles" in Paris is annihilated in writing from Buenos Aires, a Spanish American possibility that very soon afterwards is discovered by the *Martinfierristas* and powerfully rendered by Borges through his invention of an obscure poet from Nimes who re-writes Cervantes' *Don Quixote*; or of an article-writer, banished from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, who devises an analytic language; or of the Chinese author of an encyclopedia who classifies the entire universe with chaotic fancy. When he was in New York Duchamp had already known intuitively that in the Americas the hold of the Grand Tradition gets loosened, and the distance ready-made illustrates that liberating effect in an unusually clever way.

Considering that Duchamp lived in Buenos Aires for nine months, the list of works he produced there is quite short. And this is perhaps one of the weightiest arguments in favor of the widespread account that he spent most of his stay in the city playing chess ("I have been told," notes Octavio Paz, "that he spent his nights playing chess and slept during the day"). In fact, the first to encourage the theory of a progressive maniacal reclusion into chess is Duchamp himself. "I play chess alone for the time being," he writes to the Arensbergs in January 1919; "I came across some magazines and cut out 40 Capablanca games that I'm going to play over. I will probably also join the Chess Club here, to try my hand again. I've had a "set" of rubber stamps made (which I designed) that I mark games with. I'm sending a copy to Walter with this letter." Shortly thereafter he tells them that he has made great "theoretical" progress, thanks to the private lessons he is taking with the best player in the club, and that he plans to play by mail with Arensberg. Two months later, he apologizes for not writing often enough, because he is completely absorbed in chess. "I play night and day, and nothing in the whole world interests me more than finding the right move," he says, and he immediately adds: "Painting interests me less and less." And in his last letter to them, he says: "I am all set to become a chess maniac. I find all around me transformed into knight or queen, and the outside world holds

no other interest to me than in its transposition into winning or losing scenarios." A few days before sailing back to France, his conversion is complete. Duchamp pushes his situation of exile and distance to the extreme: he withdraws from the world and from the Grand Game of art in order to enter into a more congenial realm where people are completely nebulous and blind, "mad in some sense, as artists are supposed to be but generally aren't." Duchamp abandons art, it would be said, and gives himself entirely to the purely abstract and silent beauty of the process of thought.

The Duchamp Effect

At some point, in Duchamp's long conversations with Pierre Cabanne shortly before his death, Cabanne asks him about his time in Buenos Aires and reminds him that it was during those nine months that he heard the news of the deaths of his brother Raymond and his friend Apollinaire. Duchamp admits that those deaths affected him greatly and that from that moment on he longed to return to France as soon as possible. "So I came back in 1918," he says. Cabanne corrects him and Duchamp immediately takes it back; in effect, he acknowledges that he returned much later, in July 1919. But the error is kept in the published text of the conversations, as if that minor slip in the precise reconstruction of the past that Duchamp undertook with Cabanne deserved to be recorded. He just remembered the date of his arrival in Buenos Aires ("I left in June-July 1918, to find a neutral country called Argentina", he says) and also the dates of the deaths of Raymond and Apollinaire (he altered, by just one month, the date of his brother's death). And yet he changed the date of his return, erasing with his mistake the entire duration of his stay in Buenos Aires. True, Duchamp is at the time eighty years old, and it could be a simple lapse; but the interviewer, with eloquent distrust, does not omit the stumble. If it were such a lapse, the exile in Argentina would be reduced to a blank, a void or, to use Duchamp's terminology, a mere "delay."

In any case, as an epilogue to Duchamp's passage through Buenos Aires, the void suggested by his lapse is not entirely off the mark. No matter how much effort is made to reconstruct his nine months in Argentina, what is left is very little: a few letters, a few works—one of which is programmatically destroyed on a balcony in Paris—and the imaginary echoes of his hypothetical conversations with a friend who accompanied him during a part of his journey and who, in her scrupulous chronicle, only alludes to him in her dedication without naming him. Some photographs remain in Dreier's archives that could have been taken in Buenos Aires, but they carry no precise indication of date or place, as if in order to safeguard Duchamp's misty, mythical figure, his passage through the city refused to be fixed in a record. Of the two Buenos Aires buildings whose addresses appear in Duchamp's correspondence,

Fig. 2. Duchamp's residence in Buenos Aires, Alsina 1743, photo courtesy of the author

Fig. 3. Duchamp's studio in Buenos Aires, Sarmiento 1507 (now demolished); photo courtesy of Leone Sonnino

Fig. 4. Duchamp's former studio in Buenos Aires, Centro Cultural San Martín (ex Sarmiento 1507), photo courtesy of the author

only one has escaped demolition as the city modernizes. Apartment number 2 in the building on 1743 Alsina Street is still standing but bears no sign of his passage and, as it is to be expected, none of the current neighbors has ever heard of Marcel Duchamp [Fig. 2]. The fate of the studio he rented on 1507 Sarmiento Street is stranger [Fig. 3]. The building was torn down several decades ago when an extension was built to the San Martín Cultural Center. Precisely at the street corner of its former site a small dry square now sits across the street from—irony of all ironies—a poor and rather dull art gallery [Fig. 4]. The old buildings on the three other corners, one of them from 1902, let you imagine the view from the window of Duchamp's study, but the very space where he completed his *Small Glass*, revised his notes, and played chess is a literal void; a whiff of air blackened by the traffic of Sarmiento Street.

Viewed in perspective, however, the Buenos Aires *blank* is nothing other than a variation of the many forms of the void, beginning with his first ready-made, the *Bicycle Wheel*, that Duchamp left behind in the art of the twentieth century and devised so that they could have an effect. This work is a perfect figure of the void, which not only gives pride of place to an air chamber—placed on top of a little kitchen bench—but which also, as a work of art, gives pride of place to an artless object, an art of the void. At its most extreme, summarizes Gérard Wajcman, the art

of Duchamp is nothing but a pure device, an optical instrument with which to look again at art, a machine that produces visible questions and answers, objects that don't add (like painting) or subtract (like sculpture) anything, but rather *introduce the void* in order to make visible that which we cannot see.

We could, hence, put a spin—*impart an effect*—on the void of Duchamp in Buenos Aires, as if it were a ball to which we add a special spin that then throws it off its normal course. In this case, what would be Duchamp's *Argentine effect*? What would we see of Argentine art that we haven't been able to look in the face until now? We need only to wear the lens Duchamp left us as a fleeting legacy of his passage through Buenos Aires, and look again.

Translated by Inés Azar

Previously published in Graciela Speranza, *Fuera de campo: Literatura y arte argentinos después de Duchamp* (Barcelona: Editorial Anagrama, 2006). The editors also thank Vanessa Fonseca for her assistance.

The most important sources of information about Duchamp's stay in Buenos Aires are his biography, *Duchamp*, by Calvin Tomkins (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996), Duchamp's own correspondence from Buenos Aires, which is included in Francis M. Naumann and Hector Obalk (Eds.), *Affect. Marcel. The Selected Correspondence of Marcel Duchamp* (London, Thames & Hudson, 2000), and Pierre Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp* (New York: Viking, 1971; Barcelona: Anagrama, 1972), abundantly cited here.

Julio Cortázar speculates on the possibility that Roussel inspired Duchamp's trip to Argentina in "De otra máquina célibe"—"Of Another Celibate Machine"—included in *La vuelta al día en ochenta mundos* (Around the World in Eighty Days, Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 1967). All quotations from Octavio Paz are from his *Marcel Duchamp o el castillo de la pureza* (Marcel Duchamp or the Castle of Purity, Mexico City: Era, 1968). Duchamp's comments on the influence of Raymond Roussel appear in "Declarations" gathered by James Johnson Sweeney in *The Bulletin of the Museum of Modern Art* (Vol. XIII, New York, 1946). The retrospective reflections of Oliverio Girondo and Córdova Iturburu appear in *El periódico Martín Fierro (1924-1949), Memoria de sus antiguos directores* (The Journal Martín Fierro (1924-1949), A Report from its Former Editors, Buenos Aires, 1949), and in Córdova Iturburu, *La revolución martinfierrista* (The Martinfierrista Revolution, Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1962), respectively.

For Duchamp's "Argentine" works, see Francis Naumann, *Marcel Duchamp. The Art of Making Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999); Thierry De Duve, *Pictorial Nominalism* (Oxford: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), an inescapable text in any reading of Duchamp; as well as his *Kant After Duchamp* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996); Arturo Schwartz, *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp* (New York: Abrams, 1970); David Joselit, *Infinite*

Regress, Marcel Duchamp 1910-1941 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998). As for Duchamp's relation to Leonardo da Vinci, see Donald Shambroom, "Leonardo's Optics Through the Eyes of Duchamp: A Note on the *Small Glass*", in *tout-fait* (Vol. 1, Issue 2, 2000); and Calvin Tomkins's biography cited above. The quotation from Michel Leiris comes from his "On Duchamp," included in *October* 112 (Spring 2005).

Finally, Duchamp's dialogue with Pierre Cabanne about his sojourn in Buenos Aires appears in Cabanne's *Dialogues*, mentioned above. Gérard Wajcman has developed his reading of Duchamp's work as a twentieth-century object and as a revealing void in his stimulating essay *El objeto del siglo* (The Object of the Century, Buenos Aires: Amorrortu Editores, 2001).