

The exhibition *Petite Fontaine* presents a small plastic facsimile of Marcel Duchamp's readymade *Fountain*.

The object is one of the miniature works contained inside *Marcel Duchamp: Boîte-en-valise (or of Marcel Duchamp or Rose Selavy)*, a reproduction of Duchamp's 'Series G' *de ou par Marcel Duchamp ou Rose Sélavy (La Boîte-en-valise)*, published by Walther König, with the full approval of the Estate of Marcel Duchamp.

In the mid 1930s, Duchamp began work on his *Boîte-en-valise*, a museum in a box that collates 69 of the artist's works for portable display. The collection includes miniature reproductions of various paintings and two-dimensional works, as well as replicas of select readymades, including *Fountain*. More than twenty years after Duchamp's selection and presentation of the store-bought urinal, the artist returned to the object for inclusion in the *Boîte*, reproducing the curved industrial form by hand using a wire armature and papier-mâché. Duchamp brought his model to a ceramicist (one of several artisans he would employ for the *Boîte-en-valise* project) who then produced a mould and porcelain casts for inclusion in his portable museum.

Between 1941 and 1971, various adaptations and editions of the *Boîte-en-valise* project continued to be produced, totalling approximately 300 copies over seven series, titled A through G*. With the full approval of the Duchamp Estate, a 'facsimile' of the 'Series G' *Boîte-en-valise* was released by Walther König in 2016, followed by a 'technically optimised new edition' in 2020. This version of the work marks a strong break with the materiality of the previous editions: The original green canvas of the box's exterior, as well as its wooden display stand and brass fittings have been replaced with laminated cardboard, and the miniature readymades, originally produced in porcelain and glass, have been cast in plastic.

Curated by David Attwood and Matthew Brown, the exhibition sees the miniature facsimile of Duchamp's duplicated *Fountain* extracted from the Walther König 2020 publication and presented in isolation on the gallery wall.

The show marks the 56th anniversary of Duchamp's touring exhibition *Marcel Duchamp. The Mary Sisler Collection. 78 Works 1904–1963*. Having toured various public institutions in New Zealand, Victoria and New South Wales, the exhibition was on display at the Art Gallery of Western Australia when Duchamp passed away on October 2, 1968. Following the artist's death, his works were rumoured to have been stored in a container at the Grace Brothers warehouse on Scarborough Beach Road, where they remained in limbo for over a year.

- * The *Boîte-en-valise* was released in seven series, A through G, between 1941 and 1971, with a total of more than 300 copies;
- Series A, is numbered I/XX though XX/XX and is a deluxe edition containing an original work of art, mounted in the lid of the box. It was sold between 1941 and 1949.
 - Series B comprised 60 to 75 boxes sold between 1941 and 1954.
 - Series C, of 30 boxes, was produced in 1958 in Paris, assembled by Ilia Zdanevich.
 - Series D and E, with 30 boxes each, were produced in 1961 and 1963, respectively, by Jacqueline Matisse Monnier, Duchamp's stepdaughter, in Paris.
 - Series F was produced in Milan by Arturo Schwarz in 1966, with 75 copies in a red leather valise. In addition to the standard 68 works in the previous series, the F series contains 12 additional works, including the *Wedge of Chastity* and *Objet-dart*.
 - Schwarz produced 47 boxes for Series G from 1966 to 1971, continuing even after Duchamp's death in 1968.

Petite Fontaine

Marcel Duchamp

July 21 – August 3, 2024

Fountain

2020

Plastic miniature, extracted from *Marcel Duchamp: Boîte-en-valise (or of Marcel Duchamp or Rose Selavy)*, published by Walther König.

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