A book engaging work by artist William Anastasi in relation to literary and artistic predecessors and contemporaries including Jarry, Joyce, Duchamp and Cage

With contributions by Thomas McEvilley, Steve McCaffery, Joseph Masheck, and William Anastasi and an introduction by Osvaldo Romberg

William Anastasi’s Pataphysical Society:
Jarry, Joyce, Duchamp and Cage

Edited by Aaron Levy and Jean-Michel Rabaté

"If it should happen that [William Anastasi’s] hypothesis proves untestable, it will hang in the air as a living web of thought that waits tantalizingly for a resolution that never comes—a ghostly presence of the avant-garde of the twentieth century, a haunting memory that seems both ancient and somehow still alive in its appeal." — Thomas McEvilley

"The more I remedially review the contribution of William Anastasi to art and the general morale of art in his generation... the more fully I comprehend an uncommonly perspicacious neo-Duchampianism that now in a surprisingly Joycean way, with Jarry as provocateur to both, persists in sustaining the great game that is art." — Joseph Masheck
William Anastasi’s Pataphysical Society:  
*Jarry, Joyce, Duchamp, and Cage*  

Edited by Aaron Levy and Jean-Michel Rabaté  
With an introduction by Osvaldo Romberg  

Philadelphia: Slought Books  
Contemporary Artist Series, No. 3
Biographies vii

Preface xi

Jean-Michel Rabaté and Aaron Levy

Introducing William Anastasi 2

Osvaldo Romberg

Art and Cognition 4

Thomas McEvilley

Jarry-Joyce-Duchamp in an Anastasian Illumination 12

Joseph Masheck

The *Pataphysics of Auschwitz 24

Steve McCaffery

Jarry in Duchamp 32

Jarry and Joyce 44

Cage Chance 54

William Anastasi

me altar's egos 64

Selections from me innerman monophone and du jarry 66

Selected works from 1961-69 98

William Anastasi

Aaron Levy is the Executive Director of and a Senior Curator at Slought Foundation. Since 1999, he has organized around 200 live events and exhibitions with artists and theorists critically engaging contemporary life. In 2004 he edited, with Eduardo Cadava, Cities Without Citizens, adapted from his Rosenbach Museum installation revisiting discussions about human rights and cities in early America. In 2005 he organized The Revolt of the Bees, Wherein the Future of the Paper-Hive is Declared, an exhibition addressing beehives as metaphors for archives and collectivities. He recently completed his first film, “in which the thinking man finds himself...” exploring an archive in disarray from the perspective of a man lamenting his orphan status (shot on location in historic Founder’s Hall at Girard College). He lectures on contemporary art and curatorial practice at the University of Pennsylvania.

Joseph Masheck, FRSA, studied art history under Meyer Schapiro at Columbia University and proceeded to the doctorate under Rudolf Wittkower and Dorothea Nyberg. A member of the Society of Fellows in the Humanities there, and sometime editor-in-chief of Artforum (1977-80), he taught at Barnard and went on to Harvard and Hofstra. Books include a new edition of his Marcel Duchamp in Perspective (Da Capo) and a centenary reprint, with essays, of Arthur Wesley Dow’s Composition (University of California Press), in addition to collections of his essays on architecture (Building-Art: Modern Architecture Under Cultural Construction, Cambridge) and art (Modernites: Art-Matters in the Present, Penn State). A lecture comprising part of a forthcoming book on Adolf Loos is available online in audio format at http://Slought.org

Steve McCaffery is the David Gray Professor of Poetry and Letters and Director of the Poetics program at SUNY Buffalo. He is the author of fifteen books of poetry and one novel, and has twice received the Gertrude Stein Award for Innovative American Poetry, in 1983-84 and 1994-95. In 1973 he co-founded with the late bp Nichol the Toronto Research Group. He has performed his poetry world-wide and his work has been translated into French, Spanish, Chinese, and Hungarian.

Thomas McEvilley is Distinguished Lecturer in Art History at Rice University, where he has been on the faculty since 1969. He holds a Ph.D. in classical philology. He has been a visiting professor at Yale University and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and was the recipient of a Fulbright Grant, an NEA critic’s grant, and the Frank Jewett Mather Award for Distinction in Art Criticism by the College Art Association. McEvilley is a contributing editor at Artforum and has published hundreds of articles, catalogue essays, and reviews in the field of contemporary art, as well as monographs on Yves Klein, Jannis Kounellis, and Pat Steir. His recent books include Art and Discontent, Art and Otherwise, and The Exile’s Return: Toward a Redefinition of Painting for the Post-Modern Era.


Osvaldo Romberg was born in Buenos Aires. He is a Professor at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and a Senior Curator at Slought Foundation. Select exhibition venues include: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Kunstmuseum, Bonn, Ludwig Museum, Cologne, Sudo Museum, Tokyo, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, The Jewish Museum, New York, and the XLV Venice Biennial, Israel Pavilion. He recently curated shows on Faith at the Aldrich Museum and on Urbanism at White Box, New York. At Slought Foundation, he has organized exhibitions on a variety of artists and themes including William Anastasi and Hermann Nitsch.

Biographies
For more than forty years, William Anastasi has been actively changing the way we perceive art, interpret the world and construct our lives. His work contains a theoretical project of such magnitude that it can only send to the public a few postcards attesting that it is still there (as Mallarmé once said), perhaps also in order to remind us that crucial questions are still awaiting resolution. Anastasi has been presented as a pioneer more than once, but here, in his native Philadelphia, we are pleased to provide an environment that shows the full scale of his radical interpretive endeavor.

This hermeneutic exercise takes three names as a point of departure, Jarry, Duchamp, Joyce. Jarry in Joyce, Joyce in Duchamp, Joyce, Jarry and Duchamp in Anastasi. Anastasi in us. That we can hide in Jarry as much as Jarry's jar would ideally reshape Tennessee. Move from Stevens's Tennessee to Pennsylvania and everything begins again. For those who do not know who Jarry is, let us just echo the splendidly shocking first word of his ground-breaking Ubu play: "Merdre!" A word that Joyce probably translated into the Anglo-Irish of Ulysses as "Shite!"

Here, the texts of Joyce, Jarry and Duchamp have turned into closed sets yet open to a wider encyclopedia. By superposing them systematically or randomly (the example set by Cage tends to prove that utter randomness is identical with pure systematicity), one will find exponentially multiplying networks of correspondences, echoes, allusions, quotations, borrowings. If Jarry is shown to be somewhere in Joyce's texts, how can we be sure that he is not everywhere? Reading becomes a special case of over-reading, just like understanding implies a rigorously parallel model of over-standing. By showing concretely, with the inflexible patience of a demented archivist who would follow the meandering twists of the text's half illegible script, that many passages in Finnegans Wake contain buried allusions to Jarry's characters and vocabulary and personality, Anastasi is not simply annotating Joyce's masterpiece; he provides a new way of reading all avant-garde literature.

Here art becomes interpretation as much as interpretation becomes art. Our modernity would not be comprehensible without the bold explorers Anastasi has caught in the loop of his lenses or lasso, those inspired augurs who made interpretation, be it of a deliberately calculated paranoid type, a key to a new vision while moreover abolishing all the boundaries separating art from life. The invention of "pataphysics" by Jarry at the turn of the last century, this "science of imaginary solutions," can turn into a shorthand device through which the hitherto separated fields of the hard sciences and art merge or at least converge.

An artist is not a "naïve" creator expressing a hidden personality as in the Romantic model, but an astute reader entranced by one special type of epistemological obsession. It is this obsession and the way it desperately clings to truth which saves us from the lure of Romantic expressivity. Thus, whenever we interpret with such a seriousness that fun becomes a modality of the true, we become artists. Let us open these texts, yet again, since the ready-made is now the most powerful reading tool.

Preface: Interpretation Becomes Art
Jean-Michel Rabaté and Aaron Levy
Introducing William Anastasi
Osvaldo Romberg

My first encounter with the work of William Anastasi was in Argentina at the end of the 60s. One of the artists in a show in which I participated exhibited a plagiarized version of Anastasi's now historical *Installation view,* West Wall, Dwan Main Gallery (1966; first exhibited April 1967). When I saw that work in Argentina, I found it remarkably clever and striking. Years later, in an exhibition catalogue, I discovered that *Installation view* was the work of William Anastasi, and had been completed far earlier than the Argentina show in which I had encountered the plagiarized version. My second encounter with Anastasi's work was in the 90s in Germany. Following that, Juan Puntes (when I was advising him to create White Box in New York) enthusiastically told me about Anastasi and his work. As it turned out, he and I didn't meet until a few months later in a show in which we both participated, Typologies; he gave me the impression of a priest, a kind of zealot, in the sense of maintaining conceptual clarity.

From then on, our meetings were sporadic and by chance. At that point, I was already familiar with his catalogues and with all of his works. By the beginning of 2002, when I was curating exhibitions at Slought Foundation in Philadelphia, my proposal for Slought's opening exhibition was work by Anastasi, although it didn't happen because of a misunderstanding. Finally we met again and continue to meet frequently, developing and sustaining an incredible conversation about art in which each interaction becomes more surprising than the previous one.

The man epitomizes the avant-garde–he is the kind of solitary cowboy who runs alone in the desert. He embodies all that we, in my native Argentina, imagined an artist to be. After several meetings with Anastasi in cafes and in his studio, what comes to mind is the figure of Diogenes, the ancient Greek philosopher who faced Alexander with a simplicity and integrity of someone who had nothing to lose. I realized then that

William is clearly one of the few Americans who has not betrayed Marcel Duchamp's spirit and meaning. He has never made signature works, he has never been tempted by the art market, he addresses problems, not images, and he has reinvented himself repeatedly. In the end, his presence in New York, walking the streets, is an ecological cleansing of the New York art scene.

The works I decided to curate for the exhibition at Slought Foundation were primarily from the series *me innerman monophone,* which is an extraordinarily sophisticated commentary on the work of James Joyce (through reference to Alfred Jarry) as well as an obsessed environment in which our own cognition is invited to interact with the spirit of Joyce. The way the work was presented in the exhibition gives the viewer an opportunity to approach Anastasi's ideas in an aleatory manner without programmatic sequency. (Documentation of the exhibition and selected commentary is included in this publication.) This approach, I feel, delivers a rare insight into the mind and character of the artist. One can enter and exit the work at any point in the gallery installation with a displaced perspective that will yield thousands of possible readings...a kind of kaleidoscopic view of Anastasi's own thinking.
To me this gathering seems like a meaningful event. It is wonderfully responsive and sensitive that scholars and others should come together to celebrate this remarkable body of writings, this vast web of thought, composed on a scholarly theme by an artist.

I imagine the reason I was asked to speak first is that I have a long history with Bill Anastasi and with the work he has done on Joyce, Jarry, and Duchamp. In 1989 Anastasi and I made a little book together which contained a long text called “A Conversation,” which I think remains the principal text about his work. Some years later, I wrote an essay for the catalogue of his retrospective in Copenhagen, and again something for a print magazine about his print works.

A couple of years after the first piece, the “Conversation,” Anastasi began working on a philological analysis of texts by Duchamp and Jarry. This was not simply a philological analysis for it had a specific agenda. The physicist John Wheeler, once when asked what he was looking for in certain research, said, “Why, whatever I would find.” But Anastasi was looking for something in particular: for reasons to think Duchamp’s writings may contain concealed references to Jarry’s. As Anastasi himself describes it: “I put forth evidence supporting my belief...” The essay came out in the September 1991 issue of Artforum under the title “Duchamp on the Jarry Road.” Anastasi continued to work on related lines of thought about Duchamp, Jarry, and Joyce, producing six other texts—five essays and one interview—over about fifteen years. These were remarkable pieces of thought and writing and have had a slowly growing readership that has culminated, so far anyway, in this event today.

But it’s not just a question of readership, since two of these texts have been exhibited as visual objects at the Sandra Gering Gallery in New York City in 1995 and subsequently at three other venues, including here at Slought Foundation. The first of these texts is the first essay dealing with the secret presence of Jarry in Duchamp’s work, the second a later text that deals with the secret presence of Jarry in Joyce’s work. Anastasi, in other words, has presented the manuscript of his comparative text as a work of art, and specifically, judging from the manner and places in which it’s exhibited, as a work of visual art.

I am going to talk about the two aspects of these events—first the aspect as art and then the aspect as scholarship.

Anastasi is the kind of artist for whom theory itself is a material from which he makes works. As a youngster he inherited the 18th century aesthetic theory of art which held until around the mid-20th century. This was based on Aristotle’s idea in the Nicomachean Ethics that human nature breaks down into three faculties: the cognitive, the ethical, and the aesthetic. In Kant’s version of this doctrine the faculties were mostly separated from one another on the model of the five senses, which do not intrude into one another’s domains. This separation meant that each faculty takes care of its own aspect of reality. Since, as Kant saw it, the experience of art is basically an aesthetic experience, there is no faculty except the aesthetic that is relevant to it. Thus the cognitive and the ethical faculties are both excluded from the experience of art. This was one of the central pillars of Modernism and is one of the central tenets that post-Modernism has attempted to seriously revise. To put it differently: the post-Modern project was to expand art discourse so that all three faculties would have a part in it. In brief, the outcome was the appearance of two new genres which, in the crucial decade 1965-75, were basically anti-aesthetic, as they tried to promote the previously neglected faculties: these new genres were conceptual art and performance art. Conceptual art championed the cognitive faculty, and performance art the ethical. The aesthetic faculty was for a while in eclipse, or on leave as Arthur Danto once remarked, until the mix started to balance out in the late 1970s and after.

At first it seemed heretical to many to think that there could be an art that was cognitively based rather than aesthetically based. But in fact this idea has been taken for granted in cognitive disciplines such as science and mathematics since the time of Pythagoras. Here is a passage from the New York Times, January 25, 2000:

In The Artful Universe (Oxford, 1995), the astronomer John D. Barrow argues that “the arts and the sciences flow from a single source...” The geneticist Enrico Coen, who has just written The Art of Genes (Oxford University Press, 1999), uses painting as a metaphor to describe how organisms generate themselves. Beautiful natural patterns...and their mathematic origins are explored in Philip Ball’s The Self-Made Tapestry:

It is also not hard to see that philosophical ideas exercise an aesthetic appeal, as Rudolf Carnap observed early in the 20th century. Zeno’s “Paradoxes” provide an obvious example, embodying the infinite regress aesthetic of Bachian/Escherian labyrinths of orderly thought. There are other less mathematically ordered areas of philosophy that exercise different but still artistic appeals: the down-to-earth, still-life effect of an analytic argument based on Ordinary Language philosophy, or the symphonic grandeur of a Hegelian text, or the lyrical spareness of an argument by Wittgenstein.

Duchamp was the first artist to explicitly and completely devote himself to a cognitively based art comparable to that remarked on by scientists and mathematicians. It was like a declaration of secession when he said that he wanted to put art back into the service of the mind—that is, of cognition—and that he didn’t want to be stupid as a painter: meaning that in the aesthetic era painters, by rejecting cognition, had chosen to be stupid. He proceeded in a number of ways to put the idea into action. We all know what they were: mechanical drawing, the introduction of language into the work, and, in the ready-mades, the presentation of a thing just as itself, a thing that declared itself to be itself and nothing more, a thing onto which no projections of aesthetic or religious values could effectively be made. This theme, which has been called tautology, became basic to Conceptual art in its day, and Anastasi’s own work must be seen as continuing, extending, and ramifying Duchamp’s project of making art cognitive, and doing so by following much the same elementary path Duchamp had followed. Rather than extrapolate, ramify, and exfoliate ornate and complex chains of cognition in some way that could be understood as cognitively artistic, he, like Duchamp, emphasized the pure primal concentration of cognition that is suggested by Aristotle’s Thought that Thinks Itself—cognitive consciousness in and of itself, autonomous to the point where it involves no object, nothing outside itself—a tautology.

I will mention four pieces of Anastasi’s work to illustrate this:

1) In the 1963 piece Microphone, a tape recorder played back a loop on which the sound of its own mechanism had been recorded, creating a counterpoint with the living sound as it played. I think this was the first piece of Conceptual art that perfectly illustrated the theme of tautology or solipsism—the consciousness that is conscious only of itself.

2) The Wall on the Wall, as it’s colloquially called, is actually a detail of a work called Six Sites, 1966, in which each of the six walls of the Dwan Gallery had hung upon it a silkscreen of itself at about 90% scale. The theme of tautology is taking different forms. If you listen to the tape recorder you hear the tape recorder; if you look at the wall you see the wall. That’s all there is. Everything is exactly itself and nothing more.

3) In Statue of a Tube of Titanium White, 1969, the act of representation represents the representational material: representation, in a sense, represents itself. At the same time, painting is elided into sculpture, as representation is confounded with presence, another classical Conceptual theme. The presence however is elusive, as it is the presence of a trick or illusion: it is the presence of a representation that is represented.

4) Finally I will mention a performance concept from the 1960s, never actually realized. Two people are on the stage, one holding a measuring tape, the other a stop watch. The measurer of space begins to measure a dimension of the stage; the measurer of time begins to time his measuring activity, clicking on the stop watch. When the space measurer finishes and calls out, say, 13 feet 6 inches, the time measurer stops the watch and calls out, 1 minute 13 seconds. Measuring itself is measured. (To employ one of Anastasi’s own scholarly tropes, I wonder if this piece was derived somehow from a passage in Jarry, who says: “To explore the universe by seeking knowledge of points in space can be accomplished only through time, and in order to measure time quantitatively we refer to space intervals on the dial of a chronometer.” [How to Build a Time Machine].)

The basic theme of these and many other Anastasi works is tautology or self-sameness or self-reference, the primal stage of consciousness as in the Thought that Thinks Itself. The subject is cognition at its most elementary, essential, and stripped-down.
After about thirty years of making art that isolated cognition and pointed at it with startling clarity from a number of directions, Anastasi began to write scholarly essays about art which he then proceeded to display as art. In a way I think he took permission for this from Duchamp’s act of declaring that the Notes in the Green Box were a part of the Large Glass. But in Anastasi’s case there was no supposedly primary physical artwork of which the manuscript was declared to be a part. How does it work?

One way it might work is this: many scientists have regarded science as having an aesthetic or artistic quality, and science and scholarship are part of the same category in that both are based on the scientific method. If there is what might be called an aesthetic (or artistic) presence in science, is there similarly one in scholarship? Does scholarship also participate in the aesthetics of thought, or the type of cognitive presence that might be regarded or experienced as an analogue to the aesthetic experience? And how could you tell? On the one hand, the question might have to do with the type of material to which the scientific method is being applied. Mathematics has a notoriously aesthetic presence, as demonstrated from the mathematical conundra of Zeno of Elea to the works of Goedel and others in modern times. The aesthetic or aesthetic-like presence of mathematics is often described as analogous to that of certain forms of music, as in the famous popularizing book of twenty years ago, Goedel/Escher/Bach. But that title also assumes a visual correlate in the implications of infinite regresses and perspectival contradictions in the works of Escher.

Does scholarship have the same or similar tropes and formal thematics? In particular, the type of scholarship that Anastasi has been practising in these seven texts is what is called philology—which consists of the analysis of texts and their comparison with one another in an attempt to arrive at conclusions about their original forms and purposes. What if any innate qualities does philology have that might compare to Bachian/Escherian artiness or perhaps some other type of artiness?

Perhaps the art-like resonances of philology are similar to those that Rudolf Carnap and others have seen in philosophy. Carnap’s suggestion that philosophical arguments have an aesthetic type of appeal seems also to be based on the analogy with music and on the implications of infinity theory as in Zeno’s “Paradoxes.” The rhythmical recurrence of themes and motifs in the prolonged argumentation of Sextus Empiricus, for example, may be seen as not unlike the recurrences of leitmotifs in Wagner. In general such comparisons are based on music rather than the visual arts, perhaps because both music and text reveal themselves through an unfolding in time rather than space.

Anastasi’s classic visual works such as The Wall on the Wall suggest rather a comparison with Minimal music; Philip Glass, for example, once told me that a very repetitive and uninflected work of his related to what American Buddhists of that time called the Void doctrine. Indeed there is a statement about mere and absolute self-sameness in such work, along with a lack of detailed articulation and emotional nuance, and The Wall on the Wall could be described with similar terms.

Now to return to the point where we began—in 1995 when Anastasi exhibited two texts in the Sandra Gering Gallery in NYC. One was the text he calls Me innerman monophone (which is based on or derived from his essay “Jarry in Joyce”; the second text pinned up on the walls was a version of the essay “Du-Jarry,” a later development of “Duchamp on the Jarry Road,” in which traces of Jarry are sought, and claimed to be found, in the writings of Duchamp.

Here the situation becomes ambiguous because of the physical surface of the manuscript, in which for convenience Anastasi encoded his quotations from the various authors in different colored inks. A heliotrope red is Jarry; Joyce is green; Duchamp is black; Anastasi’s own connective observations and so on are blue. The intent, I think, was not to be symbolic, yet I seem to feel an elementary symbolism at work. Heliotrope Jarry is the wild, flamboyant imagination; green Joyce is Irish and a child of nature; black ink reveals Duchamp as just plain fact; and the blue of Anastasi’s own pen was that of the school boy assiduously doing his homework.

So the question has to arise, did he exhibit the pages of these manuscripts like pictures on the wall because they are in effect pictures, with different colors, compositions, and so on? Anastasi declared, when I asked him about the colors, that they were “not for decorative purposes but purely functional.” Yet I doubt if he would have exhibited a printout like pictures on the wall.

A printout would not only lack the aesthetic qualities of color, rhythmic recurrence, and complexity of visual structure; it would also lack the presence of the touch that is treated so reverentially in the formalist tradition, like the touch of a saint on a relic. It seems that sensual or aesthetic qualities are being invoked by this mode of exhibiting the text, and also...
that traditional religio-aesthetic ideas like the holy touch are creeping back in. I think the reason they are creeping in is because these texts are as close as Anastasi gets to devotional religious practice. At the very least he has produced a unique and highly personal new vision of the avant-garde of the last century—from Jarry in the 1890s to Cage in the 1990s. This would seem to be the lineage in which Anastasi feels his own work to belong, so there might be a bit of ancestor worship involved.

But such a reductivist approach is too simple. Something not unlike three- or four-voiced polyphony is going on among the voices of Jarry, Duchamp, and Anastasi; in these texts occur the continually flowing repetition, modulation, variation, rerepetition, and so on, of motifs as moments of attention are directed back and forth from one voice to another. And in the pictures, so to call them, the same rhythmic interplay and recurrence is seen as the colors come and go, and return and recombine, like voices in a polyphonic structure. I wonder if the content of the text is carried strongly enough by the image-flow of the pictures, so as to render the two aspects as one work appearing in two forms or modalities.

*  

Now, let’s turn from the artistic aspect of the exhibited pages to a scholarly type of question that is purely cognitive: Is Anastasi right, in a factual sense, about the complex set of interconnections he has hypothesized between the works of Jarry, Joyce, and Duchamp, and secondarily Cage (for Cage comes into the constellation a generation later and as a symbol of historical closure in a way, after the main troika of interconnections had taken hold.)

Amateur scholarship has had high moments, of which the great analogy to what Anastasi has done was the Second World War codebreaker Michael Ventris’s decipherment of Linear B, the script in which the Greek language was written in the Bronze Age. But would we still honor the memory of Michael Ventris if his proposed decipherment had turned out to be wrong? From one point of view its whole value would have changed.

In relation to Anastasi’s theories about Jarry, Duchamp, and Joyce and the hidden references by the latter two to the former and to each other, there are two types of attack which this complexity and carefully wrought network of argumentation invites. The first is the question of whether he is right, detail by detail, in the claimed echoes and references he has written about; are they really there in the conventional sense that they were to some degree intended by the subjects, or are they figments of his devotion to three artists whose work seems to have been formative on his own?

So one ends up looking through his arguments, searching among the many detailed comparisons for a smoking gun—a connection that cannot reasonably be denied—or hopefully more than one. I read all the essays again the other day and I still think a pretty good smoking gun is the image of having sex through a pane of glass that is shared by Jarry and Duchamp. And of course Duchamp’s use of Jarry’s word merdre is pretty ironclad. In addition to a few positives one must consider the accumulated weight of many plausibles. I find no weight in the arguments about Duchamp’s and Joyce’s Shem, for example, so a vaguer sense of rightness or probability will have to do. So much for the truth of details.

Even if one agreed that Duchamp and Joyce both picked details out of their memories of Jarry’s writings and obliquely brushed by them in their own texts, the question remains whether this amounts to a demonstration that these later authors used Jarry’s texts as the “armature” or “basis” or “general outline” (all terms Anastasi has used) of their own works. In other words, the many slight correspondences Anastasi has gathered, even if some of them are individually correct, may just be part of what Linda Henderson, speaking of Duchamp, calls his smorgasbord of references to many sources. Anastasi himself comments on the complexity of Joycean references especially; they don’t all have a simple one-to-one meaning, like x or y = Duchamp or Jarry, but often point in several directions at once. Do the arguments account in a way for some details in Duchamp’s and Joyce’s smorgasbords but still fail to explain the major themes or structures or intentions, which may be more powerfully accounted for in other ways? Or, if it should happen that Anastasi’s hypothesis proves untestable, it will hang in the air as a living web of thought that waits tantalizingly for a resolution that never comes—a ghostly presence of the avant-garde of the 20th century, a haunting memory that seems both ancient and somehow still alive in its appeal.

Notes

1. I am referring to the symposium on William Anastasi at Slought Foundation on Saturday, December 11, 2004, that featured presentations by critics and academics including Jean-Michel Rabaté, Steve McCaffery, Joseph Masheck, Ian Hays, Alison Armstrong, William Anastasi, and myself.
Jarry-Joyce-Duchamp in an Anastasian Illumination
Joseph Masheck

William Anastasi showed hundreds of photocopies of his manuscript Jarry-Joyce notes in February and March of 2004 here at Slought Foundation, in an exhibition curated by Osvaldo Romberg under the Joycean title me altar’s egoes, these consisting of Du Jarry sheets from 1991-94, and me innerman monophone sheets of 1991-96. The display was reinstalled in the late spring in observance, through the summer, of the hundredth Joycean Bloomsday, in a comprehensive Joyce in Art exhibition at the Royal Hibernian Academy, in Dublin.

Anastasi also generated curious offshoots of some of these in the form of twice-Xeroxed monotypes; and as it was still available, I purchased the one derived from sheet number 701, signed and dated February 15th, during the Philadelphia show, which Aaron Levy also liked for the publicity for this conference. Intrigued by the image’s defetishized, dubiously autographic status, I wanted to catch glimpses of it off-guard and think about it, especially for its prominent textual illumination, uncommon though not unique among Anastasi’s original 2000 or so sheets, which seemed to hold intriguing reverberations that I can now attempt to “illuminate” myself.

First, let us affirm in passing that Anastasi’s overall installational format, neither scroll nor codex, with rank on rank of manuscript sheets papering the walls, itself partook of a canonical format of conceptual art of the mid-1970s as well as looking severally like so many Duchampian notes. One thinks of Hanne Darboven’s lining of entire gallery interiors with handwritten, run-on numerical tabulations inscribed on separately framed sheets, rank upon rank, as well as her published holographic writings-out, in artist’s-book editions, of extended texts by the likes of Heine, Baudelaire and Karl Kraus. For Anastasi’s part, we know that for over a decade he has concerned himself with excavating more or less obscure yet amazingly proliferous connections between Alfred Jarry, the proto-dadaist of the 1890s and “aughts,” and both Joyce, on one hand, and Marcel Duchamp on the other.

Here I can take advantage of my status as simple Gastarbeiter in the literary realm to make certain Anastasian observations, possibly somewhat “crosswise,” between Jarry-Duchamp and Jarry-Joyce, that I can only hope are considered neither erroneous nor, possibly worse, commonplace. My encouragement to write out of blessed ignorance is that so much of what Anastasi has been tracking in his thousands of notes concerns Finnegans Wake that in ignorance of specifically that most formidable work I am moved by creative desperation to take advantage of what firsthand connaissance I may retain of Joyce’s earlier (not to say simpler) texts.

The Duchampian motif which the illumination at hand most closely resembles is an element projected for, but not eventually incorporated into, the Large Glass, namely, a conical “Sex Cylinder,” a.k.a. “Wasp,” for the Bride. Resemblance here concerns not only the respective conical forms per se but also their “illuminational” embeddedness in respective holographic con-texts of writing. This is more obvious in Duchamp’s unfolded double-leaved format as originally reproduced by Lebel in 1959, whereas Schwarz’s new standard catalogue gives only the righthand leaf to illustrate the drawing, which is in the Pompidou Centre (S 276).

Duchamp’s drawing is one of three showing the funneling, downward-pointing conical form of the Wasp, all done at Herne Bay, in Kent, in July of 1913. It seems that during the summer after the Armory Show, Duchamp, himself planning to make his living as a librarian, had gone with his sister Yvonne to this seaside town, not far from the Dover ferry, where she was to study English. (And wouldn’t it have been Huysmanesque of him to get that far and never bother to go into London.) Schwarz’s 1997 catalogue (The Complete Works) offers three “Wasp or Sex Cylinder” studies—manuscript notes with sketches—of which he identifies two as “project(s) for an unrealized detail of the Bride’s Domain in the Large Glass” (S 274, Wasp, and S 275, Properties of the Wasp) and the third as an “unrealized project for the Bride’s domain of the Large Glass” also “reproduced in facsimile in the Green Box, 1934.” This last design, Wasp, or Sex Cylinder, which is the one in the Pompidou Centre, was not only illustrated in Robert Lebel’s foundational 1959 monograph Sur
Marcel Duchamp; it also appears in the decorative endpaper graphics of the original edition, of which William Anastasi has a copy inscribed by Duchamp. Here the graphic layout itself is catalogued as a work by Schwarz for involving Duchamp’s personal intervention (S 563), presumably between November 1958 and May 1959, as well as the recycling of already facsimile notes and sketches from The Green Box, of 1934 (S 435). And just in case this seems too simple: Anastasi reports that in his copy of the first edition the cone points downward, not up, as in the Lebel endpapers as illustrated by Schwarz.

The only significant discrepancy I find between Anastasi’s illumination of his written-out text and the Duchampian prototype concerns the loopy little curved feature atop the cone: what Anastasi shows and verbally describes as a “phallic...protrusion” that is “limp” in comparison with a comparable form in a drawing by Alfred Jarry, is actually a bit of a misprision, based on reading the swelling inside shadow of a thin little semi-hemispheric domical form as something like a fat worm or a little snail, and consequently phallic—perhaps by induction from the “Necktie” (or “Cravate”; S 259) of the “Chocolate Grinder,” drawn earlier in the same year. Otherwise, Anastasi’s cone points downward, like the Wasp prototype, penetrated by a right-angled tube up through its narrow base and then topped by a thick curved spout spilling back into its wide top like a filter or a percolator coffee pot.

—Speaking of which: while taking the textual source as Jarryesque and the image as basically Duchampian, I want also to suggest on the visual side a painting by Man Ray, The Filter (Percolator), of 1917, exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy in 1921 before being shown in Paris, but itself related to Duchamp’s two Chocolate Grinder paintings, of 1913-14 (S 264, S 289-91), those dry-runs for the Large Glass. Other works of Man Ray also seem to take on retroactive influence, as I like to say, in light of Anastasi. In one of the most famous, Lampshade, 1919, re-produced—which is not the same as reproduced—by Arturo Schwarz, the re-doer of Duchamp’s readymades, in 1959, a single unfurled conical spiral, non-formal in its deterministic inevitability, evokes the carefully stacked, fanning out Three Conic Sections, which Anastasi worked on in 1968 and showed at the Dwan Gallery in 1970. Otherwise, perhaps nothing by any other artist now seems as retroactively Anastasian to me as Man Ray’s Obstruction, of 1920, that memorable mobile of ordinary household hangars hanging upon hangars, re-produced by Schwarz in 1964.

Now the absurdist iconography of the Duchampian Wasp is curiously non-absurdly akin to Duchamp’s sometimes posited first readymade, the practically forgotten rotating chimney cowl or ventilator bought in 1915 in a New York hardware store and given to, only to be lost by, Louise Varèse (née Norton) and her husband Edgard (S 331). That piece was titled Pulled at 4 Pins, literally translating “tiré à quatre épingles,” a French figure of speech that finds its equivalent in “dressed to the nines” (though then what should not be overlooked is a potential extra tinge in English of being “at sixes and sevens,” i.e., at loose ends or frazzled). Notwithstanding both André Breton and Gabrielle Buffet-Picabia’s later referring to the object as a “weather vane,” and as Duchamp himself said in a letter of 1964, Edgard Varèse managed at that time to recall: “This Readymade was in gray (unpainted) tin and it was not a weather vane but one of those round ventilators which are put on chimneys to make them draw better.”

We also know what the lost readymade looked like because in 1964, despite calling it a weathervane, Duchamp produced an almost sentimentally lyrical reminiscence of it, the oddly lovely etching Pulled at Four Pins, of 1964 (S 609), based on the readymade and inscribed in French to indicate that the upper part turns while the lower part is fixed; so, as both parts are seen to share a single “axle” (axe), to which the stable cone is “fixed,” the flighty dunce-cap of a top would whirl free in response to the wind.

There may be pataphysical potential in the fact that the most prominent formal feature of Pulled at Four Pins, the curved silhouette of its biretta-like top fin as ending in a knob-shaped terminal form,—potential that though trouvé, this form did manage uncannily to recapitulate, from Marcel’s brother Raymond Duchamp-Villon’s only famous sculpture, the “snout” of the 1914 bronze cubist Horse, while not however influencing the funnel-like form, suggestive of Joyce, that Duchamp conjured up only to omit from the Large Glass and that Anastasi, anyway, reassigns to Jarry.

In the context of the Large Glass the purpose (!) of the Wasp was, by virtue of passing air currents, to guide the vaporous love gasoline upward from a lower to a higher temperature and/or pressure (mais oui!). Schwarz gives the text accompanying Duchamp’s drawing as “Ventilation: [CROSSING-OUT] Start from an interior / draft”;

but as inscribed in Duchamp’s drawing the key statement looks rather diagrammatic, with “Ventilation” over “Inside” at the left and “draft” over nothing at the right:

Ventilation: [CROSSING-OUT] Start from a draft

Inside
The text that Anastasi's drawing at hand actually illuminates, like a drawn or painted figure accompanying text on a medieval manuscript leaf, begins with words of William Anastasi about Alfred Jarry and ends with Jarry's own words, all of course in Anastasi's hand. In fact, as it is Anastasi's custom with these sheets to color-code the authorial words of Jarry, Joyce and Duchamp, with black for his own, one can see here, as in a red-letter New Testament, exactly which words were first written by Jarry himself. The inscription begins in mid-sentence, with Anastasi mentioning one of those children's games of skill with which a ball is to be tossed up from and then caught upon a stick: "...and bears great resemblance to the 'ball-and-chain' drawings given [CROSSING-OUT] by Jarry's translator, which must have been a common toy during Jarry's life and Duchamp's childhood." Then comes the cone drawing, followed thusly: "Note that in Duchamp's drawing, consistent with my observation versus the hapless bachelors, the phallic protrusion is 'limp' compared to the 'erected' version on the drawing of the toy. If the toy was designed like [CROSSING-OUT] Duchamp's drawing, you wouldn't be able to 'play.' And so it often is in life; and so also it is with the 'the bachelors' as Duchamp has designed them. [CROSSING-OUT] Jarry's story ends on a different note from Duchamp's—his Sisyphus is made of sterner stuff than the stuff of Duchamp's bachelors." Beyond this point, the handwriting is Anastasi's but the writing is Jarry's: '...And the Eternal opened his mouth and so did Mr. Sisyphus, and the Eternal listened, and [CROSSING-OUT] Mr. Sisyphus spoke thus: 'Dear Master, ..."'

What Anastasi is talking about here becomes clear when the quoted text is traced to Jarry's *Days and Nights: Novel of a Deserter* (1897), specifically a translation by Alexis Lykiard that includes a pair of explanatory cup-and-ball drawings, in one of which the ball, whether completely free or on a cord (or metaphoric "chain") comes to rest in a hollow at the end of the handle—presumably easier to score but also easier to lose—and the other in which the ball there sockets onto a phallic prong—harder to score but then very much "put away."

In February of 2000, after Anastasi's drawings were done but before they were exhibited in Philadelphia and Dublin, Francis Naumann suggested not only that just such a toy was really the very first Duchampian readymade but that it was inspired by Jarry's (now already Anastasian) text. It seems that in 1910 a certain *bilboquet*, as the toy is called in French, just under a foot in overall length with handle and ball "docked" together, was given by Duchamp to an artist friend, Max Bergmann, as a souvenir of a shared night of erotic adventure in Paris. Naumann offers that the toy ball-cum-handle with naughty little impaling prong, its ball inscribed with the word *bilboquet*, a dedication to Duchamp's friend Bergmann and the year, derives from Jarry, who not only "referred to" a *bilboquet* "in one of his novellas" but in whose 1901 *Almanach illustré*—in the illustration of which (amazingly enough) Pierre Bonnard collaborated—"the character Père Ubu is rendered vigorously playing with a *bilboquet* positioned between his legs (a possible allusion to masturbation, not so farfetched considering that one of the only rules of the game of *bilboquet* is that it be played by a single player)," the vignette in question being captioned "La jubilation de Père Ubu." By one of Jarry's novellas Naumann must mean *Days and Nights*, which we have seen Anastasi quoting. There the character Sengle "rereads" the story of Sisyphus in a mirror with wings, like either a "vanity" mirror or an altarpiece. Yet by a funny loop the matter reverts to the later, much more visually conspicuous device that Duchamp had rejected but that seems to reappear in Anastasi's illumination. For Jarry's "Mr. Sisyphus," whose burdensome rock has been sufficiently worn by wear to suggest a smooth sphere, alludes to the children's toy, *bilboquet* or cup-and-ball: "The Lord of hosts would install all along his porphyry mountain a scenic railway wagon made from the carcass of an enormous ready-eviscerated—what?—a huge [N. B.] wasp (une guêpe énorme desséchée)...," Jarry certainly sounds Duchampian when he proceeds to write, "The Eternal, if Mr. Sisyphus had not 'potted' his ball ("placé enfin sa boule"), would have created perpetual motion, which is no small matter; since then he has sought other inventions so as to fabricate a machine involving man that will last a long time, or at least a century; he's made many attempts yet has come up with nothing presentable to date. That is why he starts over again the whole time—the only real Sisyphus."

In reviewing these interrelations it does seem that the most parsimonious hypothesis would be the Anastasian one, of Jarry as source for the *bilboquet* idea in Duchamp as well as in Anastasi himself. So I can speculate that when Anastasi, reading Jarry, drew the device that recalls Duchamp's rejected Wasp motif (as well, perhaps, as the now unseated "original" readymade), he was, or might as well have been, thinking of both Jarry's equivalent motif and Duchamp's.
Let us, however, turn at a different angle from the funnel-like form of the Wasp to the earlier work of Joyce. Bill Anastasi’s larger project has done much to open up an awareness of the Jarryesque and Duchampian in *Finnegans Wake* that on a modest scale I would like to offer a few observations and speculations in respect to *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses*.

There is a certain linguistic interest in the fact that, apart from the coffee-filter-like sieves, which of course did make it into the bottom, male half of the *Large Glass*, the Duchampian device takes the distinct form of a funnel, however inspired by bilboquet and/or readymade ventilator cap. It seems easy enough to say that the word “funnel” came into Middle English from Medieval Latin through Old Provençal—unless, with Joyce, we want to reckon the Anglo-Norman “British” effacement of Celtic forms. In a remarkable dialogue in the fifth and last chapter of Joyce’s *Portrait* an undergraduate Stephen finds himself at loggerheads with his English Jesuit dean—or, should we say, Jesuit but English dean, because the governing theme is the, so to speak, “black-man’s burden” of having to put twice as much into being good at somebody else’s thing. Today, one may think of the conflicted sense of inferiority/superiority of the schoolmaster teaching Latin to Irish-speaking children even as British forces execute the task of Englishing Irish place-names, in Brian Friel’s play *Translations* (1980).

At this point Stephen Dedalus, whose competition paper in all too art-for-art’s-sake aesthetics he will not be permitted to present, is challenging the dean’s views but getting nowhere. Discussion turns from the metaphorical light of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas to the literal oil lamp by which Epictetus, the first-century Stoic, wrote:

—To return to the lamp, he said, the feeding of it is also a nice problem. You must choose the pure oil and you must be careful when you pour it in to not to overflow it, not to pour in more than the funnel can hold.


—The funnel through which you pour the oil into your lamp.

—That? said Stephen. Is that called a funnel? Is it not a tundish?

—What is a tundish?

—That. The...funnel.

—Is that called a tundish in Ireland? asked the dean. I never heard the word in my life.

—It is called a tundish in Lower Drumcondra, said Stephen, laughing, where they speak the best English.

—A tundish, said the dean reflectively. That is a most interesting word. I must look that word up. Upon my word I must.

His courtesy of manner rang a little false, and Stephen looked at the English convert with the same eyes as the elder brother in the parable may have turned on the prodigal....

—Tundish! Well now, that is interesting!

—The question you asked me a moment ago seems to me more interesting. What is that beauty which the artist struggles to express from lumps of earth, said Stephen coldly.

The little word seemed to have turned a rapier point of his sensitiveness against this courteous and vigilant foe....He thought:

—The language which we are speaking is his before it is mine....His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words. My voice holds them at bay. My soul frets in the shadow of his language....

Stephen, disheartened suddenly by the dean’s firm dry tone, was silent...

In the corresponding episode of the *Stephen Hero* text, which about a decade earlier—or just about a hundred years ago right now—produced pre-processed *matériel* for the *Portrait*, the question of the lamp, hence of the funnel, hence in turn of *tundish*, does not yet arise. Ethnic nationalism is not yet articulated either, perhaps, in view of the dating of the manuscript “Dublin, 1904” and “Trieste, 1914,” because Joyce had in a sense got out of the imperial frying pan and into the fire, Trieste being then a center of resistance against Austrian rule that after World War I would become Italian. In the earlier version the aesthetic discussion more simply concerns representation, in a way that implicates the impact of photography though it could also be said almost to open a space for the readymade with a problematic remark, slashed for striking out by Joyce, on the artist as “a mediator, consequently gifted with twin faculties, a selective faculty and a reproductive faculty”; and in
something like Kandinsky’s notion of the artist as apex of a triangle of fore-thrusting spiritual awareness, in Concerning the Spiritual in Art (1911), Joyce adds that the “perfect coincidence of the two artistic faculties Stephen called poetry and he imagined the domain of art to be cone-shaped.” A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man itself was first published as a book in New York, in 1916, while Duchamp lived there: although by then he had already drawn the relevant Wasp drawing in England, the discussion of the funnel would at least have appealed to his sense of linguistic charm.

IV

Apropos of William Anastasi’s extensive trackings of a specter of Duchamp in Finnegans Wake, we are aware that the writer and the artist lived quite near one another for a time in Paris; but I want to play a hunch that I have had about Joyce’s earlier masterpiece and New York, where the readymades were initiated. It is well into Ulysses, in the so-called Circe episode, in “Nighttown,” soon after midnight, that, in one of those italicized Joycean stage-directions of sorts, Bloom passes in the hallway of the bordello a man’s raincoat and rain-hat hanging on an “antlered rack.” The rather punningly redundant phrase—since in American English, at least, a “rack” is also a pair of antlers—calls to mind one of Duchamp’s less notorious readymades, the lost Hat Rack, of 1917 (S 351; re-done in 1964), which one of the surviving photographs of the lost original readymades shows hanging in Duchamp’s early New York studio.

Accompanied by Zoe Higgins, Bloom enters the music room, meeting there two other bawds named Kitty Ricketts and Florry Talbot. After a definite whiff of New York with the mention of Coney Island—to which John Quinn, for one, the well-heeled Irish-American lawyer, had liked to take visiting intellectuals, such as John Butler Yeats, painter father of the poet, and Ezra Pound—in a hallucination of Elijah taking the form of a faith-huckster above a rostrum draped with the American flag (which itself might suggest a Florine Stettheimer painting), the hearty American Elijah gives forth with: “If the second advent came to Coney Island are we ready? Florry Christ, Stephen Christ, Zoe Christ, Bloom Christ, Kitty Christ, Lynch Christ, it’s up to you to sense that cosmic force, and rambling on, American-style, “A. J. Christ Dowie and the harmonical philosophy, have you got that?” And don’t the three women here—Florry, Zoe and Kitty—evoke in carnivalesque recapitulation the trio of art-world sisters with whom, early on in New York, Duchamp was fast friends—not surprisingly, after having grown up with three female siblings himself—that is, the three Stettheimer sisters: Carrie, Florine and the one who took a fancy to Duchamp, Henrietta or Ettie, who wrote fiction under the rather amusing pen name Henrie Waste.

Had Joyce met Duchamp in Paris in 1921, he would long since have left behind the early New York “studio,” which, connected as it was by a corridor to the Arensbergs’ duplex, could have been a servant’s room, where he had lived when “inventing” the hat-rack and other readymades. Well, for many years now it has seemed to me strongly suggestive of Duchamp for Joyce’s American Elijah to proceed just here in Ulysses to say, “O.K. Seventyseven west sixtyninth street. Got me? That’s it. You call me up by sunphone any old time. Bumboosers, save your stamps...” For here Joyce’s charmingly mock-New-York, Upper West Side address, is in fact closely parodic of Marcel Duchamp’s actual address at the Arensbergs’ place, which was 33 West 67th Street.

Much later in the same long episode, a character named Lynch points and says “The mirror up to nature.” Next:—“(Stephen and Bloom gaze in the mirror. The face of William Shakespeare, beardless, appears there, rigid in facial paralysis, crowned by the reflection of the reindeer antlered hatrack in the hall).” And finally, at the very end of the book another, amusingly phallic, mention of a hatrack recurs, almost as a reverberating musical motif. Very well; the photograph of the hat-rack readymade illustrating the lost original in the 1941 Box in a Valise (S 484) and reproduced by Schwarz in place of the lost piece (at S 351), not only shows the original hanging in Duchamp’s studio at 33 West 67th Street—Joyce’s would-be 77 West 69th—but shows it at, that, before either an opening to the hall (such as might be hung with portieres), framed by woodwork, or else a large “hall”-type mirror, as Joyce has it. Might Joyce at some point have seen this very photograph of circa 1917-18?

When Joyce moved to Paris in July of 1920, Duchamp was living in New York, though not on the settled basis of his early times at the “Ulysses” address from where, from mid-1915 until a sojourn of 1918-19 in Buenos Aires, to escape conscription, he had established his avant-garde notoriety. From the summer of 1919, after the brief layover in England, Duchamp was in Paris five months, leaving for New York on December 27, 1919, arriving January 6, 1920 and staying fairly close by one another, and Joyce is known to have augmented the novel with many “last-call” additions.
Joyce could surely have heard of the aesthetic shenanigans of the Frenchman’s definitive, earlier American phase, at the “Ulysses” address—including the readymades—through their mutual American patron, John Quinn. One way or another, it is Bill Anastasi’s “illumination,” from within his larger and evidently ever more fruitful obsession with Jarry and Joyce connections, that leads me to account for the possibility that Joyce could have come to write into Ulysses anything so Duchampian.

Well, I haven’t proposed a theory, or even entered upon an overarching argument, so I suppose I should “fade” into a responsible critical generalization. Then let that be that the more I remedially review the contribution of William Anastasi to art and the general morale of art in his generation—especially to a form of conceptual art at least as seriously impinging on literature as the art of verbal texts with their own entailments as concerning itself with visual embodiment—the more fully I comprehend an uncommonly perspicacious neo-Duchampianism that now in a surprisingly Joycean way, with Jarry as provocateur to both, persists in sustaining the great game that is art.

Notes

1. Robert Lebel, Marcel Duchamp, trans. George Heard Hamilton (New York: Paragorphic Books, 1959), cat. 118(c), with pl. 60. All “S” numbers and volume/page citations here refer to the catalogue of Arturo Schwarz: The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp, 2 vols. (New York: Delano Greenidge Editions, 1997). As a rejected identity for the bride herself the “Wasp” is not to be confused with the one of the “Nine Malic Molds” (or from the reverse side, the “Cemetery of Uniforms and Liveries”) that takes conical form, tapering upward, and is identified as the undertaker.


3. Outright “non-influence” of the same sort might extend not only to Brancusi’s phallo-Duchampian Princess X, 1916, but even to certain knobbed forms in paintings of 1916-18 by Jean Crotti, with whom Duchamp had shared a studio in 1915 and who would become his brother-in-law; perhaps unless the uncanny give some berth to the non-uncanny as well as to the canny, there is no play in the game.


5. Alfred Jarry, Days and Nights: Novel of a Deserter (1897), trans. Alexis Lykiard (London: Atlas, 1989), Bk. V, ch. ii, pp. 133-36, as cited, with notes; in the orig., Les Jours et les nuits, 818. Furthermore, the “Danайдes” are punished for killing off their husbands by being made to draw well-water over and over with sieves.


7. Jarry, Days and Nights, 135, with ed. note by Lykiard on bilboquet, 165 n. to p. 135; in the orig., Jarry, Les Jours et les nuits, 818. Furthermore, the “Danайдes” are punished for killing off their husbands by being made to draw well-water over and over with sieves.

8. Ibid., 136; in the orig., 819.


12. Ibid., 507.


15. Ibid., 508.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., 567.

18. Ibid., 753.

19. After photographically reproducing notes for The Large Glass to be, in Paris, as The Box of 1914 (S285), Duchamp took the actual notes for his projected work to New York, where the Large Glass, or La Mariée Mise à Nu par ses Célibataires, Même, of 1915-23 (S404; Philadelphia Museum of Art), was made during the years in question, despite the stays in Argentina and France. Although he would not return to America until 1914, in Paris in 1934 he produced in an edition of 320 The Green Box, or La Mariée Mise à Nu par ses Célibataires Même (S435). Recently I speculated on the relevance to his Green Box of a late 18th century, quasi-erotic political spoof sending up French sympathy for the American Revolution: Richard Tickell’s The Green Box of Monsieur de Sarthe, Found at Mademoiselle du Thé’s Lodgings (in French, La Cassette verte...), of which it happens that there were several Dublin 1779 English as well as Continental French editions; see “Where Were We,” introd. to my ed., Marcel Duchamp in Perspective (1975), 2nd ed. (New York: Da Capo, 2002), xiii-xxiv, esp. xxi-xxii. Given Franco-American war fervor just as Duchamp fled to Buenos Aires to escape being drafted into the U. S. Army—and no doubt shipped out to France—it is all the more curious to find that in 1916 this old Green Box was reprinted by a New York German-American antiquarian bookseller, C. F. Heartman, contemporaneously, that is, with the first edition as a book of Joyce’s Portrait of the Artist by another New York German-American publisher, B. W. Huebsch. The present circumstances of imperialist war on Iraq now highlight the low-frequency cultural resistance of these avant-garde publications by would-be “enemy aliens.”

20. Dates here derive from Francis M. Nauman and Hector Obálk, eds., Affectationally Matel; The Selected Correspondence of Marcel Duchamp (Ghent: Ludion, 2000). Thanks to Jean-Michel Rabaté for advice on Joyce in Paris.
Jean Baudrillard invokes a millennial ‘pataphysics for the contemporary era, an epoch characterized by the unreality of the real, the disappearance of history and the historical subject, and the emergence of a radical scepticism about the general reality of events.1

The topic of my paper might well touch on millennial history but only by way of a detour back through a middle decade of the 19th century. The paper is also written against the broad background of a single interrogation that is spatial rather than definitional in its nature: not what is but where is ‘Pataphysics? Where are its territorial emergences and historical interventions?

Traditionally Jarry’s minor science has been considered a ludic vacation, the cognitive diversion of adult children, a practice contained within the fiction of Faustroll, and not to be taken seriously, but thanks to William Anastasi’s credible research we are now beginning to understand the profound influence of Jarry’s thoughts and writings on the work of both Duchamp and Joyce.2 It was Gilles Deleuze who first addressed the serious dimension in ‘pataphysics, in a short comparison with Heidegger.3 As a superinducement upon metaphysics, ‘pataphysics yields a ready asymptosis towards the Heideggerian project, and Deleuze focuses on three appositional preoccupations: technology and the machine, the Sign, and their common critique of Metaphysics. Absent in his discussion however, are the precursory reverberations of another key aspect of Jarry’s science of imaginary solutions. Avoiding an outright assertion, Deleuze raises the question of Heidegger’s speculations around the transition of technique into art, “Could one also say that Heidegger sees a transition toward art in the national socialist machine?”4 I intend to pursue this line of thinking indirectly by examining a haunting apposition between the general law of ‘pataphysics and that national socialist “machine” termed der Lager.

The fact that I stand before you as a founding member of the Collegium 'Pataphysicum Canadensis grants no authority to what I am about to say, and what I do say, when I start to say it, should be assessed, and quite brutally assessed, against Jarry’s claim that everything is ‘pataphysics. I’ll need to remark a little later in the paper on the historical confluences at the time of its invention, but let me first present Jarry’s own succinct definition of this science of imaginary solutions and outline its two presidential laws.

‘Pataphysics, whose etymological spelling should be epi (meta ta phusika) and actual orthography ‘pataphysics, preceded by an apostrophe so as to avoid a simple pun [i.e. patte à physique, the foot, paw or flair of physic] is the science of that which is superinduced upon metaphysics, within or beyond the latter’s limitations, extending as far beyond metaphysics as the latter extends beyond physics. Ex: an epiphenomenon being often accidental, ‘Pataphysics will be, above all, the science of the particular, despite the common opinion that the only science is that of the general. ‘Pataphysics will examine the laws which govern exceptions, and will explain the universe supplementary to this one; or, less ambitiously, will describe a universe which can be—and perhaps should be—envisioned in the place of the traditional one, since the laws which are supposed to have been discovered in the traditional universe are also correlations of exceptions, albeit more frequent ones, but in any case accidental data which, reduced to the status of the unexceptional exceptions, possess no longer even the virtue of originality.5

As the science of the particular, examining the laws which govern exceptions, ‘pataphysics operates under the strict aegis of two appropriated laws: the syzygy and of the clinamen. Neither law originates with Jarry, and both pertain to the broad relationship of matter to motion. The former is a mathematical term while the latter derives from Lucretius’ Roman version of classical Greek atomic theory.

CLINAMEN

Lucretius, (ca 95-55CE) describes the phenomenon of the clinamen atomorum in Book II of his scientific poem De Rerum Natura:
so that the mind itself may not be subject
To inner necessity in what it does–
And fetch and carry like a captive slave–
The tiny swerve of atoms plays its part
At unanticipated times and places.

The literary appearance of this term is rare, yet its emergent moments are important. De Quincey overtly attributes the term to Lucretius in his “Letter to a Young Man” (Works, Vol. XIII, 85), and Coleridge speaks of a “lene clinamen, the gentle bias” in his Aids to Reflection. More recently, Harold Bloom adopts it as the first of his six revisionary relations, and Michel Serres describes it as “the minimal angle in a laminar flow” that “initiates a turbulence…the angle interrupts the stoic chain, breaks the foedera fati, the endless series of causes and relations. It disturbs, in fact, the laws of nature.” The clinamen, then, marks an atom’s deviation from its path; its aberration from a stable flow and its consequent collision to produce a new formation. Whereas Science (that “totality of the world’s legends” as Serres so aptly puts it) would harness any deviance to the logical perimeters of its own dyadic ontology, Pataphysics (as the science of imaginary solutions) inscribes and articulates the moment, condition, and the place where the law is insufficient to prevent the clinamen.

The origin of the concept of atomic declension can be traced beyond Lucretius to Greek Epicurean philosophy, a noteworthy fact if for no other reason than it betrays the belatedness of Jarry’s science. Indeed, to a pre-microscopic culture the existence of the atom, let alone an atomic swerve, can only be hypothesized but never proved, hence, this aspect of Epicureanism is patently an imaginary science.

SYZYGY

In its astronomical use the term syzygy refers to a conjunction or opposition of two planets’ systems, in their orbit around a third. In biology it denotes the conjunction of two organisms without the loss of identity. As a governing law of pataphysical methodology, it promotes those momentary oppositions as conjunctions in verbal meanings that always characterize the scientific discourse of imaginary solutions. Jarry’s most famous contribution in this area is the semantic conjunction of space and time, ether and eternity to produce the semantic twin of “ethernity:” a momentary conjunction in a logical space that carries along with it the cataclysmic breakdown of a coupled opposition. Together, the clinamen and syzygy ensure our universe to be pataphysical, a universe in which existence is shattered and constructed by means of the simultaneous agency of declensional and conjunctive forces.

The clinamen was a central preoccupation in the resurgence of interest in Pataphysics (in the writings of Serres, Nancy, Derrida and Baudrillard for instance). My own argument focuses on Jarry’s second law of declension: the syzygy. If the clinamen disturbs the laws of nature, then the syzygy reinforces those laws pertaining to exceptions, for the syzygy effects a confraternity of two anomalies. Moreover, the fusion and disappearance of oppositions are brought about not by way of a concordat but a sacrificial conjunction. Both the economy and outcomes of a syzygy are profoundly chiasmic, producing simultaneously a conjunction of opposites: affirmation and negation, truth and untruth, “the possibility of the incommunicable.” Jarry’s pataphysical theory of gravity obtains by way of syzygy so that “the fall of a body towards a center” is exactly the same as “the ascension of a vacuum towards a periphery.” Are we passing into night or retreating out of day is a question that expurgates the festive and lethal simultaneity of pataphysical syzygy.

Jarry himself describes a practical inducement of syzygia in the form of a mundane toilet brush he calls the physic-stick which, in its pataphysical reincarnation, serves as an efficient agent of revolution. Spinning around its axis induces a heraldic, paralogical choreography whereby “in each quarter of every one rotation…you form a cross with yourself.” Whether Jarry’s physic-stick inspired Duchamp’s ready-made remains a moot point. However, it may be fruitful to rethink the objet-trouvé through the paralogical kinetics of the syzygy. Does not the act of appropriating, re-naming, and recontextualizing a bottle-rack or a snow shovel both effect an oppositional conjunction of art and utility and at the same time effectively demolish the bar which separates equipment from aesthetic object? Moreover, the rationale for the ready-made is inherent in the notorious postulate of Pataphysical Equivalence as I. L. Sandomir explains:

There is thus no difference whatsoever, either of nature or degree, between different minds, any more than there is any difference between their products, or indeed between one thing or another. For the Complete Pataphysician the most banal graffito equals the most consummate book, even the Exploits and Opinions of Dr. Faustroll themselves, and the humblest mass-produced saucepan equals the Nativity of Altdorfer.

The syzygy, of course, enjoys an esteemed lineage. It is latent in Aristotle’s claim “that
Contraries, when set beside each other, make the strongest appearance" and reappears throughout history: in the coniunctio oppositorum of Avicenna, for instance, and the concordant discord that structured much of 17th century aesthetics. There is also a marked similarity between the syzygy and the Stoic conception of lived temporality as cairos. The latter relates to syzygy not as its conceptual enantiomorph but as a practical development out of the latter. Cairo remarks “the abrupt and sudden conjunction where decision grasps opportunity and life is fulfilled in the moment.” This would appear to endorse the spontaneous social assemblages of the Situationists, the later Happenings, and a broader poetics of bricolage that operates as a superinducement upon what is at hand. It is the syzygy moreover, as a momentary conjunction of opposites, that superinduces temporality and motion into the surreal image. Through a ‘pataphysical redaction those famous definitions of the surreal image emerge slightly modified. It is as “Beautiful as the chance and fleeting encounter on a dissection table of a sewing machine and an umbrella” (Lautréamont) and “a momentary bringing together of two more or less distant realities” (Reverdy) and yet again “The transitory joining of two apparently unjoinable realities” (Ernst).

Ever since the mind developed as a machine to think without fingers, ‘pataphysics has been around as a renegade rationality, whose project has been the ludic anamorphosization of Truth, Science and their reactionary structures, regulatory ideals and compromise formations. Ludic? By all means ludic. Yet a strict tenet of imperturbability is fundamental to all ‘pataphysical endeavours. ‘Pataphysics is serious, for to effectively debunk the serious it must itself be taken seriously. Neither parodic, nor partaking of the logic of the absurd, ‘Pataphysics operates as a decidedly unofficial contaminant, generated within, and as a part of, all or any scientific production. Installing itself within those rational endeavors of syllogism, rationcination, and truth production, it asserts its own status as an essential and part-constitutitional contaminant. Operating within patriarchal term(s), ‘pataphysics eludes the power of both the scientific and the rational; it subverts their scope, problematizes the limits of their dominance, subjects them to a festive pulverization that opens up the implications of their discourse and thereby relativizes their dispensations. The syzygy and cinamen together strategize ‘pataphysics’ relation to the dominant space of logic. By abolishing rational gaps and demarcations, suspending (or ignoring) the law of the excluded middle, by reversing the movement of syllogistic difference and integration, these two laws (operating as discursive tools) inaugurate conjunctions, oppositions, laminations, and inclinations. Locating its main activity in the membranous space between scientific and artistic spheres, ‘pataphysics continuously resuscitates a rational impertinence, a fulguration against the cogito.

‘Pataphysics does not describe an historic moment (commencing with the birth of Alfred Jarry) but rather marks a trans-historic state of mind. The covering law of ‘pataphysics is totality. Everything is ‘pataphysics; either conscious ‘pataphysics or else unconscious and the presidential choreography is incline, for the ‘pataphysical is the cinamen of the scientific.

Let me revisit Jarry’s definition. “‘Pataphysics will be, above all, the science of the particular, despite the common opinion that the only science is that of the general. ‘Pataphysics will examine the laws which govern exceptions … [.]” “Auschwitz,” avers Georgio Agamben, “marks the end and the ruin of every ethics of dignity and conformity to a norm” but does this make it ‘pataphysical? Like National Socialism, ‘pataphysics is less the repudiation than the culmination of a project called reason; both encounter the condition of the exception, and both respond with solutions—the one imaginary the other “final.” It is surely coincidental, in the specific form of coincidence that is syzygy, that Jarry’s science, launched in a novel and a cycle of plays, emerges at the same historical period as the concentration camp, whose origin remains contested between British and Spanish Imperialism at the end of the 19th century, and whose prevalent employment dates from World War I. To argue a causal link between ‘pataphysics and the camp would be laughingly impertinent, but the rule of chance, of l’accidence, allows this conjunction of opposites to settle in a world whose very essence and cultural memory is, to say the least and the most, ‘pataphysical.

Agamben’s inestimable value in Homo Sacer is to have examined the juridico-political structure that made—and makes—an Auschwitz possible. Not born of orthodox law the camp emerges from the substitution of martial law to cover a state deemed to be an exception. In Prussia both protective custody or Schutzhaft, and the “protection of private freedom” (Schutz der persönlichen Freiheit), are legally implemented at the beginning of the 1850s, a measure designed to meet a state of emergency and such a degree of social unrest as to be declared Ausnahmezustand, that is, a state of exception.

The novelty within the Nazi resuscitation of this already trenchant institution within the governments of the Weimar lies in a subtly nuanced rewording of the German Constitution. No mention is made of a “state of exception”, and the previously “provisional suspension of the Constitutional articles protecting personal rights” is now rendered “suspended until further notice.” Agamben notes the chilling consequences: “The state of exception thus ceases to be referred to as an external and provisional state of factual danger and comes to be confused with juridical rule itself.” One Nazi jurist, Werner Sphör, called this new state of immanent exception as a “state of willed exception,” an aptly paradoxical phrase that equally describes the atomic cinamen. That ‘pataphysical origins of the camp...
can be readily inferred from Agamben’s own chilling analysis:

The camp is the space that is opened when the state of exception begins to become the rule.... What is excluded in the camp is, according to the etymological sense of the term “exception” (ex-capere), taken outside, included through its own exclusion. But what is first of all taken into the juridical order is the state of exception itself. Insofar as the state of exception is “willed,” it inaugurates a new juridico-political paradigm in which the norm becomes indistinguishable from the exception.19

As a superinducement of ‘pataphysics into the space of the camp, this remarks both the culmination and the disinvagination of a juridico-‘pataphysical dimension. For the law that governs the exception disappears precisely because a state of exception becomes the law outside the law.

Agamben offers a sober analysis of the syzygial, and arguably post-modern, nature of life in the camp as a complex, moebial conjunction of opposites. “Whoever entered the camp moved in a zone of indistinction between outside and inside, exception and rule, licit and illicit, in which the very concepts of subjective right and juridical protection no longer make any sense.”20

Despite the grand ‘pataphysician I. L. Sandomir’s assurance that “The World is one great aberrance which, additionally, universally, is based upon an infinity of other aberrations” 21, the dimensions, and dilations of the ‘pataphysical aberration still remain. This paper does not seek to explain a Nazi Final Solution via the science of imaginary solutions, yet it does attempt to expose a ‘pataphysical dimension within a part of its practical execution. And if Agamben’s postulate that the camp is central to the project of biopolitics, indeed, that “the camp is the new biopolitical nomos of the planet”22 then this paper could have been titled The ‘Pataphysics of Guantanamo Bay. Alfred Jarry left ‘pataphysics behind in his novel The Supermale, to pursue the open vista of possibilities beyond Being, a pursuit of great intrigue to Deleuze. Yet ‘pataphysics is not over, its mission not accomplished, its imaginary desires still not fulfilled, and its fourth-dimensional historiography is still to be written.

Notes

4. Ibid., 195.
8. Lucrètius’ obvious debt is to the materialist ideas of Epicurus, who speaks of parenklisis of the atom in his Letter to Herodotus. Epicurus himself is indebted to his precursors Leucippus and Democritus.
11. Ibid., 245.
12. Ibid., 111.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., 169.
20. Ibid., 170.
21. Ibid., 178.
quarter amounted to an inversion of Jarry’s.

Duchamp’s wrote: “Rrose Selavy finds that an incesticide must sleep with his mother before killing her; bedbugs are the rule.” In this handful of words Duchamp’s alter ego gives a terse précis of one of Jarry’s most autobiographically informative works, L’Amour Absolu (Absolute Love). This short novel tells of Emmanuel, who sleeps with his mother, then kills her. Duchamp’s pun combines “incest” and “insecticide.” Jarry, in a vivid passage picturing the incestuous joining, gives us the idea of a mirror and of an insect: “If their mouths fastened together like an insect and its peer on the other side of a mirror, it was to hold back—from elsewhere—the swooning of their bodies.” Earlier in the novel, just after the mother first offers herself to her son, she suggests “a hansom to the Bois de Boulogne by the hour, or a private room.” The narrative continues: “These words in no wise conjured up incest to him but rather the immediate reviviscence of the notary’s wife. ‘Be sure,’ he decided to say, ‘to include crabs.’”

Although the reference here seems to the swimming variety of crab, lice occur elsewhere in the novel, as they do, along with other insects and larvae, almost as a leitmotif throughout Jarry’s works, symbolizing at various times decadence, metamorphosis, or renewal. And, by every account, the fictional lice were not without their living counterparts during the poverty-stricken writer’s actual days and nights. “Bedbugs are de rigueur works in more ways than one.

To peer a bit deeper into this “mirror relationship,” consider Duchamp’s proclamation, “Each word I tell you is stupid and false,” a sort of customized version of the classic paradox set forth by Epimenides of Crete: “All Cretans are liars.” If a statement declaring every word is false is itself false, it would mean the opposite. Or would it? Equally paradoxical is Duchamp’s pleading stupid. Was this word thrown in as ironic counterpart of André Breton accusing him of being the most intelligent man of the twentieth century? One of the prime tenets of Jarry’s “pataphysics,” his alternate hypothesis for the workings of the universe, is that opposites are identical. As Roger Shattuck phrases it in his essay “What is Pataphysics,” for Jarry “The idea of ‘truth’ is the most imaginary of all solutions.” Duchamp lines up squarely behind this with another of his confessions, “I don’t believe in truth.” On occasion he could sound almost self-annihilating on the subject: “I am a pseudo, all in all, that’s my characteristic.” Jarry could have been describing Duchamp as well as Emmanuel, his incestuous hero of L’Amour Absolu, when he wrote, “Thus, being certain that in order to be understood, he can only tell lies, any lie is immaterial to him.”

In 1965, three years before Duchamp’s death, the German art historian Serge Stauffer sent the artist a list of questions. Among these we find “Was Alfred Jarry an...
Arrhe est à art que merdre est à merde:

\[ \text{arrhe} = \text{merdre} \]

An English translation might read, “Deposit is to art as shitte is to shit.”

In this art-defining formula, the only word not found in any dictionary is Jarry’s by then famous coinage, Merdre, where he added an “r” to merde, as Duchamp later would to “Rose.” He created a merde with the same number of r’s as in his own name. Again, see “Rose.” If, as Jarry’s ‘pataphysics avows, opposites are identical, a rose could easily equal excrement.) Merdre was the opening word of Ubu Roi, Jarry’s nose-thumbing, map-altering play of 1896, which by 1914 was widely recognized as having marked the end of one epoch in the arts and the beginning of another. Of the three conventional words in the formula, two give no challenge to the translator. Merde means shit in French and art is art in both languages. Only arrhe (which sounds suspiciously close to a carefully mouthed “Jarry” without the “J”) permits a number of distinct possibilities. The most common translation is “deposit.” The erotic was a constant preoccupation with Duchamp, as it certainly had been for Jarry. (Rrose Selavy’s name is a pun on Eros, c’est la vie.) At the age of 72, looking back on his long career, Duchamp said, “Eroticism is a subject very dear to me...In fact, I thought the only excuse for doing anything...or anything like it; it’s an animal thing that has many facets and is pleasing to use, as you would use a tube of paint.”

Given this outlook, one can easily guess that his use of the word “arrhe” points more to the sexual than to any other place on the compass. From a primitive male point of view, a deposit of semen is the goal of each act of sexual intercourse. This could not have been overlooked by Duchamp, the punster responsible for “Have you already put the hilt of the foil in the quilt of the goil?” Duchamp may have noticed in Faustroll that of the 27 volumes listed in the doctor’s library, 26 are individual titles of various authors. Only in Rabelais’s case does a name stand alone, signaling that his entire oeuvre is being so honored. But it is not Rabelais’s imagery that keeps striking us reading Duchamp’s notes, it is Jarry’s. Duchamp probably denies Jarry as a direct influence to one writer, and blurs the issue with another, because he was loathe to publicly hitch his cart to the same genius openly adored by Picasso, Dali, Miró, and Ernst, as well as most of the Futurists and other Surrealists and Dadaists. This is consistent with Duchamp’s “1-stand-alone” posture. By the time of Stauffer’s question he vigorously resisted associating with groups or trends. As he once summed up his view of the scene, “In a shipwreck, it’s every man for himself.” Duchamp’s friend John Cage, in a 1991 conversation we had about the artist’s discrete use of Jarry’s imagery, said, “Well, he was a wonderful man and I was extremely fond of him. But he did love secrets.”

The truth is that Duchamp, in his own words, had clearly pointed to Jarry as a direct influence more than half a century earlier when, in 1914, he wrote:
accomplishes this using the identical graphic device, a circular dotted line moving clockwise and ending just short of twelve o’clock. Jarry’s depiction ends with a blob, Duchamp’s end with an arrow. The print, titled La jubilation du Pere Ubu, depicts Jarry’s anti-hero captured in the unglamorous throes of masturbation, caustically disguised as the popular French diversion of cup and ball—or rather its obscene variant involving a prong and ring. (Jarry, presumably signifying futility, shows a prong and a ball.) His oversized scrotum seems to correspond to the base of the grider, his left hand gripping the phallus shape becomes for Duchamp the gear which encircles the vertical shaft near the top of the base. The thin tip of the prong, or Ubu’s member, is rendered almost exactly in Duchamp’s painting. And Ubu’s right arm and hand prefigures, in angle and position, the dark form which starts large and rectangular near the painting’s left border, becoming thinner and curved as it points to the gear. If we visualize Ubu’s body as box-like instead of spherical and raise the do-it-yourself sketch to face level, the identification is persuasive. In support of this reading recall that within two years Duchamp would paint Chocolate Grinder No. 1, directly associating it with masturbation in his notes: “The bachelor grinds his chocolate himself.” Components of “The Bachelor Machine” section of the Large Glass include “Vicious circle,” “Monotonous fly wheel,” and “Onanism.”

Jarry repeated themes incessantly, and they continually show up in Duchamp’s work. In the Large Glass notes we find that the bride and the bachelors are machines whose only function is sex. There are, before Jarry, two important nineteenth-century precedents for the idea of a machine-woman: The Sandman, a story by E.T.A. Hoffmann of 1817—later dramatized in Offenbach’s opera, The Tales of Hoffmann—and the novel L’Eve future (Eve of
“Compression,” we find: “cones in elastic metal (resembling udders) passing drop by drop the erotic liquid which descends toward the hot chamber, onto the planes of slow flow, to impregnate it with oxygen required for the explosion. the dew of Eros.” (Emphasis and punctuation Duchamp’s.) Back to Jarry: “The nice people of whom we speak are no different from real women, only they suffer more quickly the ravages of time: the rubber cracks and ‘dies’ after about three years. It must be repainted and the epidermis loses its suppleness. But there are so many ‘natural’ women who need to repair themselves everyday! Besides, they [the un-natural spouses] can prolong their duration with some treatments, for example by storing them in a cool place, such as a good cellar.

They are very reserved and docile and apart from their natural elasticity, lack all intitative. One can lead them on in the world without their committing too many absurdities. Any uncalled-for flirtatiousness only opposes the delay of their conquest.”

And they are incomparable honeymooners, “owing to the economy of transport.” Meaning, of course, that among other advantages, they can be carried in a suitcase. See Duchamp’s Box in a Valise. Considering that “box” is common slang for vagina, and that the motorized bride is the star of Duchamp’s opus magnum, the match with Jarry’s honeymooning robot is irresistible.

Jarry begins a 1901 article describing “A very young person, fresh faced, of modest appearance and very likely virgin if we are to believe some dozen aged and respectable men who pleased themselves to verify this virtuous detail.”

Duchamp’s bride motor “must appear as an apotheosis of virginity.” In another article, “Time in Art” from 1902, Jarry describes “The Eternal” as “a true artist [with] the attitude of the woman consumed with curiosity, with timid desire.” Duchamp’s...so far as to help towards complete nudity by developing in a sparkling fashion her intense desire for the orgasm.” In The Supermale, Ellen Elson says, “I’m not naked enough. Couldn’t I take this thing off my face?” The mask to which she refers is the sole stitch preventing complete nudity as she assists Marcueil in reaching his record...surprises her lover with these words: “At last we’re through with the betting to please...Now let’s think of ourselves. We haven’t yet made love...for pleasure!”

In a 1902 article for La Revue Blanche, titled “Wife-beaters,” Jarry tells of a “matrimonial agent who was at the same time a large rubber manufacturer” who made “spouses of elastic rubber available for two thousand francs per specimen, three thousand with a made-to-order head.” We learn that “one enters into communication with them by means of a valve,” (machines have valves) and are told that “honeyymooning in their company is incomparable.” (Another term for a honeymooning wife would be “bride.”) It is ready-made machine-brides that Jarry is depicting.

The machine-bride and the ready-made are arguably the two most entrenched ideas to be found in Duchamp’s entire oeuvre. And, since valves regulate flow, it sounds as though Duchamp’s bride, like Jarry’s counterpart, might be “communicated” with through a similar device. In posthumously published notes for the Large Glass, under the heading “Compression,” we find: “cones in elastic metal (resembling udders) passing drop by drop the erotic liquid which descends toward the hot chamber, onto the planes of slow flow, to impregnate it with oxygen required for the explosion. the dew of Eros.”
it is of further significance that Duchamp’s larger aesthetic credo couples so snugly with Jarry’s world view. The myriad connections between minutiae in the artist’s notes and specifics in Jarry’s works echo in an almost seamless accord of symphonic breadth. The bulk of Duchamp scholarship has concentrated on rehearsing the differences between him and everybody else. Jarry’s works too are different, notwithstanding the army of influences he was in the habit of citing. A close comparison of the products of these two intellectual debtors strongly supports the thesis that, for Marcel Duchamp, the Œuvres complètes of Alfred Jarry was the ultimate ready-made.

Afterword

...we shall not have succeeded in demolishing everything unless we demolish the ruins as well.

But the only way I can see of doing that is to put up a lot of fine, well-designed buildings.

-Alfred Jarry

Assuming any point of view, what Marcel Duchamp did for art is without precedent. Pro: He was a liberator who presided over a needed reordering of aesthetics in our culture. Contra: He was the most abruptly destructive phenomenon in the history of art. Asked about the sources behind his iconoclastic innovations, he would answer that it was all from literature. When pressed for names he often mentioned Jean-Pierre Brisset, Jules Laforgue, Comte de Lautréamont, and Raymond Roussel. On other occasions he brought up Mallarmé and Gaston de Pawlowski. My studying suggests that the use of ideas and imagery from these writers is slight, that they resemble red herrings more than they do muses. I believe that Craig Adcock was on solid ground when he said, “I didn’t see any Duchamp in books like Gaston de Pawlowski’s. I am just curious if casual references on Duchamp’s part to those kinds of mystical sources may have been intended to mislead us a little bit or to put scholars onto the wrong track.”43 Supporting this view, a solid parallel exists in Jarry, whose whole approach delighted in ridiculing literal minded scholars.44

Duchamp not only failed to list Alfred Jarry as one of his direct influences, he went on record denying as much. When Arturo Schwarz suggested obliquely that Jarry may have been the source for a drawing (To Have the Apprentice in the Sun, 1914) the artist did not deny it, but managed to gracefully change the subject without confirming it.45 Yet, he himself would sometimes mention Jarry unbidden. When asked what Même (Even) signified in the title of his “one work,” The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass), he answered, “It’s like Jarry’s ‘ha-ha,’” referring to the one-word vocabulary of Faustroll’s baboon. In a letter published in 1959 Surrealist magazine Medium, Duchamp wrote, “It is a pleasure for me to see that there is more than ‘arassuixiat’ [“art à succès”] in Paris. By plagiarizing Jarry we can put patArt up against the current pomposity.” There are three interviews concerning Dadaduring which Duchamp refers to Jarry as a Dadaist the way Rabelais and Stephophanes are Dadaists. In one of his responses, he adds, “a great man” after mention of Jarry. My view is that Jarry was the great source for Duchamp. Keeping this to himself, while strewing the works and notes with intriguing clues, became a game between us and them which he would pursue to the end with intermittent energy, but consistent amusement.

Notes


11. Tomkins, Marcel Duchamp: A Biography, 73.


15. In Alfred Jarry, The Supermale, first published in 1902, trans. by Ralph Gladstone and Barbara Wright (New York: New Directions, 1964), masses of full blown roses, “as fresh as if they had just been picked,” suddenly, and magically, engulf the speeding railway car carrying the virgin Ellen Elson, full of desire, to her eagerly sought downfall. She will, before this event, tell her lover-to-be that she must have been, in a previous life, “a very, very old courtezan.” Duchamp will call his Rose Selavy an old whore.


17. The first version in French was, “Faut-il mettre la moelle de l’epée dans le poil de l’aimee?”

18. Duchamp to his friend Lebel: “If I have practiced alchemy, it was in the only way it can be done now, that is to say without knowing it.” Robert Lebel, Marcel Duchamp (New York: Grove Press, 1959).


22. Jarry: “Why should anyone claim that the shape of a watch is round...since it appears in profile as a narrow rectangular construction, elliptic, on three sides?” Duchamp: “The clock seen in profile so that time disappears, but which accepts the idea of time other than linear time.” Apropos of this, Keith Beaumont’s biography of Jarry states, “The whole of Jarry’s work...can be seen as the expression of an attempt to ‘deny’ time, and to escape from its eternally revolving wheel.”

23. In The Supermale, 183, General Sider says to Marcueil (the supermale), “I often...unscREW...urinals,” and later, “What are you doing that’s new? Have you stopped wrecking urinals?” Duchamp’s unRAS-aRas-Art inevitably reminds us of Jarry’s remark “Screw good taste.” Jarry, from his adolescence on, was fascinated by the ways and means of sewage. The last two acts of his Ubu Cuckholded actually take place in a lavatory and the cess pool which relieves it of its daily burden. Alfred Jarry, The Ubu Plays, trans. by Cyril Connolly (New York: Grove Press, 1965): 97, 103.

24. Jarry sometimes signed his paintings with the name of his famous alter ego Ubu, as Duchamp would later sign works Rose Selavy.


26. The earliest of these was Etant Donnes le Gaz de’Eclairage et la Chute d’Eau, 1948-49—a figure with one lifted leg, whose upper torso seems half male, half female.

27. The girl who is found “raped to death” in the woods surrounding Marcueil’s estate, and Ellen Elson, the great love of Marcueil’s life. William Anastasi, “Duchamp on the Jarry Road,” Artforum (September 1991).


32. From the Green Box Notes: “The machine with 5 hearts, the pure child of nickel and platinum, must dominate the Jura-Paris road.” Duchamp, 26. Jarry’s same Palotins, in Guignol, carry a nickel-plated pike on which to impale Ubu’s adversaries.


34. Duchamp’s “first sketch” for Nine Malic Moulds (1913) is titled Cemetery of Uniforms and Lirevires. Illustrated in Schwarz, The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp, 440. From the Green Box notes: “Malique moulds. (Malic?) By Eros’ matrix, we understand the group of 8 [sic] uniforms or hollow lirevires.” Duchamp, Salt Seller, 51.

35. Hoffmann’s and de l’Isle-Adam’s machine-women, far from being ready-mades, are meticulously custom-crafted and one of a kind.

36. Green Box Notes: “the fork will penetrate into the basement through two holes.” “The bachelor machine...far from being in direct contact with the Bride. The desire motor is separated by the air cooler...This cooler (graphically) to express the fact that the Bride, instead of being merely an a-sensual icicle, warmly rejects (not chastely) the bachelor’s brusque offer.” Duchamp, The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even, a typographical version by Richard Hamilton of Duchamp’s Green Box Notes. Trans. by George Heard Hamilton (New York: Wittenborn; London: Percy Lund, Humphries, 1969), unpaginated.

37. Ibid.: “The Bride [has a] motor with quite feeble cylinders.” And, of “the glider” we’re told, “by frictions...” and it “responds elastically.”

38. Ibid.: “Kind of Sub-Title/Delay in Glass” “the Bride does not refuse this stripping by the bachelors, even accepts it since she furnishes the love gasoline...”


40. In The Supermale, L’Amour Absolu, and Messalina each heroine is described as a virgin, the first accurately, the second symbolically, the third ironically.

41. Duchamp’s famous remark about posterity “completing” the work of art is anticipated by Jarry’s statement in The Supermale that “[a]rt works must wait for some additional beauty...which the future holds in store. Great works are not created great; they become so.” Jean Clair, present head of the Picasso Museum, Paris, recalled in a symposium (Duchamp: Colloque de Cerisy) cited in the Pleiade Oeuvres Completes of Jarry, that Duchamp, “knew Jarry practically by heart” (Vol II, 786). In the Cabanne interview, granted the year before Duchamp’s death, we find: Duchamp: “You know, people have poor memories.” Cabanne: “Not you. You have a fantastic memory.” Duchamp: “In general, memory of the remote past is quite exact.” Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp, (New York: Viking Press, 1967).

42. “Nous n’aurons point tout demoi si nous ne demissions meme les ruines! Or je n’y vois d’autre moyen.” From the preface to Ubu Enchained.


44. For a clear-cut example, observe the unrelenting scorn heaped on Doctor Bathybius in The Supermale.

An earlier version of this paper was delivered at the XVe Colloque James Joyce at the Université De La Sorbonne Nouvelle (Paris) on May 14, 1994

But we always keep the dearest things to ourselves. — James Joyce, 1901

Less than four pages into Ellman's biography of Joyce we come across a barrage of rhetorical questions designed to impress on the reader the uniqueness of James Joyce among writers of our time. That Joyce was unique no one doubts. But he was not unique in the way that these questions set out to demonstrate.

Ellman's first question is, "What hero in the novel has, like Stephen Dedalus, lice?" Answer: Sengle, hero of Jarry's Days and Nights. He is disinfected along with his entire regiment because of the prevalence of lice. Chapter 33 of Jarry's Faustroll is titled 'Concerning the Termes,' which, we are told, is "comparable to the invisibility of the red louse..." Joyce, on page 10 of Ulysses, quotes a ditty: "I am the boy / That can enjoy / Invisibility." He goes on to describe the mother's "shapely fingernails reddened by the blood of squashed lice..." Jarry, too, uses the words blood, fingernails, and red.

Ellmann goes on to ask, "What other hero defecates...like Bloom before our eyes?" Answer: Jarry's marine bishop Mendacious, hero of chapters 30 and 31 of Faustroll. The attendant circumstances all but assure us that Joyce used the passage as a spur to his imagination. The Bishop not only defecates before our eyes, like Bloom, but, like Bloom, reads while so doing. And just as Bloom is reading a piece by a sentimental scribbler who actually lived, a certain Philip Beaufoy, whom Joyce is clearly lampooning, the Bishop is reading a piece by a sentimental scribbler who actually lived, Pierre Loti, whom Jarry is just as clearly lampooning. Both passages convey the idea that the drivel being read encourages defecation, and both authors give their readers three layers of narrative in these passages. We find fragments of the story the Bishop is reading as they go through his consciousness interspersed with descriptions unconnected with that story of the water-closet, interspersed with a graphically detailed description of the odiferous biological event as it progresses. Where Bloom worries about a recurrence of piles being brought on by constipation and extols the virtues of an oral laxative, the Bishop makes reference to "piles of less efficacious suppositories."

Then there is the hero of chapter 34 of Faustroll, the beast Clinamen, also known as the Painting Machine. Jarry, poking delicious fun at compulsive painters, likens painting to masturbation, finding the former an urge so strong and irrepressible that there will be painting even after the end of the living world. He pictures this anthropomorphic machine "after there was no one left in the world going through its solitary convulsive gyrations before ejaculating onto the wall's canvas the succession of primary colors [from] the tubes of its stomach."

Back to Ellmann on Joyce: "If we go to him to find a defender of the family, he presents his central hero—the cuckold." Jarry's Emperor Claudius, the central male figure in the novel Messalina, is a world-class cuckold, as is Jarry's crucial hero, Pa Ubu, in the second of the Ubu plays, Ubu Cuckolded. Is this what prompts Jarry to picture him masturbating as Joyce shows Bloom masturbating in "Nausicaa"?

Ellmann tells of Joyce's...

...unexpected fusings...between beauty and its opposite. When Livia Svevo heard that Joyce in Finnegans Wake was using her flowing hair as a symbol of the lovely river Liffey, she was flattered, but when she heard that in the river were two washerwomen scrubbing dirty linen, she was disgusted. To Joyce the juxtaposition was easy and natural. The river is lovely and filthy; Dublin is dirty and dear....

Jarry, in Faustroll, talking of "the juxtaposition of the two signs"—minus, ostentative of female, and plus, of male—insists that they are all the more identical because they are contrary. Indeed, "the identity of opposites" plays a critical role in all of Jarry's work, and particularly in "Pataphysics," his alternate hypothesis for the workings of the universe. In one of many statements which sounds like a description of late Joycean practice, Jarry defines "a work of genius" as one that invites endless interpretations:

Every meaning which the reader may find therein is intentional, and he will never find them all; and the author can point them out to him—a victim in a game of intellectual blind man's bluff—unexpected and contradictory meanings.
In another passage relevant to *Finnegans Wake*, Jarry actually denies the diversity of languages that we all take for granted, claiming this diversity to be a myth, that varying languages are all one. He writes,

> Babel is a myth of the common people, and the confusion of tongues exists only in the minds of the common people, which likes to imagine that there are several tongues because it does not even have a thorough knowledge of its own... for anyone who knows how to read there is only one language in the world and... for such a person, Babel never existed.\(^{11}\)

Jarry’s dictum that opposites are identical takes us again to Ellmann who says that Joyce “brings opposite ends of the mind together.” But he also reminds us that “If we go to him thinking he may be the apostle of brotherhood, he shows us brothers in violent quarrel.”\(^{12}\)

The first chapter of Jarry’s *Days and Nights* pictures not a violent quarrel but an outrageous competition between brothers. Valens, with his transient sex-partner Margot, is trying to quite literally out-score Sengle with his transient sex-partner, Ilane. Jarry describes it as a bet, complete with a blackboard on which they keep a running tally.

Ellmann writes: “Joyce is the porcupine of authors,” and, “his heroes are not easy liking, his books are not easy reading.”\(^{13}\) Regarding likeable heroes, we have only to think of Pa Ubu and his murderous better half Ma in the *Ubu Plays*; regarding difficult reading, texts such as *Faustroll* or *Les Minutes de Sable Memorial*, make clear that Jarry and Joyce are peers here as well. Jarry’s *Faustroll* is a work of such difficulty that the author wrote on the completed manuscript: “This book will not be published integrally until the author has acquired sufficient experience to savor all of its beauties in full.”\(^{14}\) Similarly, Ellman writes about Joyce: “He does not wish to conquer us, but have us conquer him.”\(^{15}\)

Ellmann points to “the thousands of phrases garnered mostly from undistinguished friends with which he filled his books.”\(^{16}\) Although Jarry in his philosophical discourses could be very hard on “the common people,” he loved to hang out and drink with fishermen and bargemen, and vernacular phrases are by no means foreign to his works. The *Ubu* plays, in fact, are almost exclusively made up of them. These connections suggest that had Ellmann been familiar with Jarry’s life and oeuvre, he would have had to toss out or rewrite this entire section of his introduction to make room for Jarry.

In October of 1993 I exhibited in a New York Gallery the 1700 page manuscript I had been working on for several years. Its two parts are titled *Du Jarry*, which treats Jarry in Duchamp, and *me innerman monophone*, which treats Jarry in Joyce. The press release for this exhibition was prefaced by an edited quotation from *Finnegans Wake*: “He has novel ideas I know and he’s a jarry queer fish betimes, I grant you [...] but lice and all [...] I’m enormously full of that foreigner, I’ll say I am!”\(^{17}\) The release itself runs:

> Anastasi’s text states that James Joyce used Jarry’s ideas and imagery promiscuously, sans acknowledgement, as a spur to his own genius in *Finnegans Wake* and, to a lesser degree, in *Ulysses*; that he knew that Duchamp was fishing from the same pond; that Duchamp served as model for Burrus in *Finnegans Wake*; that Joyce, in the *Wake*, refers to Jarry as “me innerman monophone, me altar’s ego in miniature, the mightiest penumbrella I ever flourished on behold the shadow of a post, the most omportent debtor (Obbligado)!... Mark my use of you, cog! Take notice how I yemploy, crib! Be ware as you I foil, coppy!”\(^{18}\)

I do not believe now, nor did I then, that Duchamp was necessarily the only model for Burrus. Few characters in *Finnegans Wake* are based on only one individual. I believe that Shem, a.k.a. Jerry, is based mainly on Alfred Jarry, and to a lesser degree on Joyce himself. Joyce often seems to treat Jarry as his own twin, double, alter ego, or even spiritual father. Perhaps picking up on Jarry calling himself God, Joyce on occasion seems to liken Jarry to the deity in *Finnegans Wake*.

I now believe that Jarry’s presence may be as pervasive in *Ulysses* as it is in *Finnegans Wake*. To suggest some of the correspondences between Jarry and *Ulysses*, I have chosen a scene from “Circe”\(^{19}\):

Stephen, half drunk in a brothel, sees an apparition of his dead mother looking just as a cadaver would look after rotting for years in the grave, while being alive and speaking. Stephen, after satisfying himself that this is not a bogeyman’s trick, addresses her (choking with fright, remorse and horror): “They said I killed you, mother…Cancer did it, not I. Destiny.” She responds: “You sang that song to me. Love’s bitter mystery.” Then, eagerly, Stephen says: “Tell me the word, mother, if you know now. The word known to all men.” Instead of answering, she reminds him of the loving care she lavished on him when he was a child, begs him to repent, raises her blackened, withered right arm toward Stephen’s breast with
outstretched fingers, saying: “Beware! God’s hand! (A green crab with malignant red eyes sticks deep its grinning claws in Stephen’s heart.)” Stephen, strangled with rage, shouts “Shite!” Bloom, also in the room, says, “What?” Stephen continues: “Ah, non, par exemple!...With me all or not at all. Non serviam!” The mother continues in the same vein: “Save him from hell...Have mercy on Stephen, Lord, for my sake! Inexpressible was my anguish when expiring with love, grief and agony...” Stephen shouts, “Nothung!” Nothing, with a u instead of i, which is also the German word for “Needful,” is the name of the magic sword in Wagner’s Ring which is shattered, reforged by Siegfried and with which Siegfried unwittingly brings about Götterdämmerung, the end of Valhalla, the gods’ world. As Stephen speaks, he lifts his cane high with both hands and smashes the chandelier. We are told that “Time’s livid final flame leaps and, in the following darkness, ruin of all space, shattered glass and toppling masonry.” (This scene, the pages leading up to it, and the pages immediately following, together have scores of images borrowed from Jarry. 

Stephen asks his mother to tell him “the word [...]. The word known to all men.” When she ignores his question and preaches to him instead, he shouts, “Shite!,” an alternate spelling of “shit” with one additional letter. Alfred Jarry’s play Ubu Roi opens with Ubu shouting “Merdre!, his word for “shit” with one additional letter. First declaimed in 1896, it was the big-bang with which the 20th century avant-garde began. The first line in Jarry’s Ubu Enchained, spoken by Ma Ubu is, “What! You say nothing Pa Ubu! Surely you haven’t forgotten the Word.” The word she means is “Merdre!” by then famous throughout the literary world. There are too many connections for them to all be accidental: nothing/Nothung; Ma Ubu’s and Stephen’s the Word; Merdre/Shite; Ma Ubu’s What/Bloom’s What; Ma Ubu/Stephen’s mother. And finally Stephen’s “Nothung!” is followed by this stage direction: “He lifts his ashpent high with both hands and smashes the chandelier.” Before the actual Ubu Enchained starts, Jarry puts into Pa Ubu’s mouth this introduction: “Hornstrumpet! We shall not have succeeded in demolishing everything unless we demolish the ruins as well.” Joyce has “ruin of all space, shattered glass and toppling masonry.” Like Jarry, one can say that Joyce demolishes everything.

Stephen’s reason for exploding and breaking the chandelier is complex. On the surface, it is a reaction to his mother’s ignoring his passionate question and giving a sermon instead of an answer. But the reader knows that Stephen feels intense guilt about his mother’s death. This theme runs through the book. On only the third page of text appears an exchange between Mulligan and Stephen,
She had double bolted the door. Suddenly, near the ceiling, a windowpane shattered, and the glass showered down on the rug.29

In Jarry, whenever there is sexual intercourse of high relevance to the story, it is accompanied by shattering or cracking glass. Signaling the beginning of the sexual marathon, midnight strikes and strikes again at the end of the 24 hours, as Ellen disappears from the narrative. In “Circe,” the prostitute Zoe seduces Bloom, then disappears, followed by this stage direction: “[Midnight chimes from distant steeple.]” After Marcueil sets his record, Ellen surprises him, and us, by asking for more, and the window pane above the chandelier shatters glass down on the rug, a scene parallel to Stephen’s shattering the chandelier with his cane. A cane in a brothel has clear symbolic connections with an erect penis. Marcueil believes that with his erect penis he has killed Ellen—of course symbolic of Jarry’s mother—fucked her to death. The shattering glass in the two scenes is surrounded by an army of supporting correspondences, suggesting terminal incest with a vengeance.

Stephen’s mother has “smoldering eyes” and a “crab with malignant red eyes sticks deep its grinning claws in Stephen’s heart”30; Ellen stares at her lover with “hostile eyes” in a scene where, enraged, she is trying to stick a long pin into her lover’s eye. Joyce’s “malignant red eyes” echo Jarry’s “hostile eyes”; Joyce’s “sticks deep its claws,” Jarry’s “[She] drew from her hair a long sword-shaped pin and vengeance-bent, aimed it as Marcueil’s eyes, which were shining on a level with her own.”31 Ellen’s pin is trying to stick deep, as Joyce’s crab does. Marcueil’s “shining eyes” also connect with Stephen’s mother’s “smoldering eyes.”

Jarry, describing Ellen when Marcueil believes he has killed her: “...she fell back on the bed. Through her clenched teeth her breath made the same imperceptible bubbling sound that is made by crabs.”32 Joyce’s “crab” looks to Jarry’s “crabs.” Joyce describes “The Mother” with “a green rill of bile trickling from a side of her mouth”33, recalling Jarry’s “imperceptible bubbling sound” coming through Ellen’s clenched teeth. These clenched teeth, by inversion, match the mother’s toothless mouth, just as Joyce’s “distant chimes” match Jarry’s chimes which cause the entire hall to vibrate.

Joyce: “They said I killed you, mother.”34 Jarry: “Ellen was no longer breathing, her heart was no longer beating, her feet and hands were as glacial as the dawn...He would never have seen her if she had not been dead.”35 One might say that Stephen, seeing the ghoulish appariation of his mother before him, is in a way seeing her for the first time.

Joyce deals simultaneously with the small details of his own experience and struggle, especially guilt over his mother’s death, and the large questions of Art, Life and Death which come together in the breaking of the chandelier, followed by images of “Time’s livid final flame, ruin of all space, shattered glass and toppling masonry.”36 He’s talking of the apocalypse. The tie is directly to The Supermale, whose world ends with his belief that he has killed Ellen, his only love, his mother. A little later he is almost literally shattered through his execution by 11,000 volts.

It also ties to Jarry’s introduction to Ubu Enchained. Written in 1900, it is Jarry’s greeting to the 20th century. Before we can move on to a new beauty, a new art, we must demolish the ruins of encrusted traditions and cease worshipping the past. Then we can begin.37 That is exactly what he did in Faustroll and Days and Nights and what Joyce did with Ulysses and Finnegans Wake. When Stephen, instead of kneeling to his mother’s shade, says “Non serviam!” (I will not serve) and proceeds to wreck the place, we see an almost literal acting out of Jarry’s anarchical advice. We are witnessing a scene which represents the primal battle between the two sides of James Joyce: on the one hand, the religious, mother-worshipping son; on the other, the independent genius ready to reject the nostalgia for the past to fulfill his destiny as an artist. Alfred Jarry acted as inspiration and support in that battle.

Notes

3. Ibid., 4.
5. Jarry, Selected Works, 231.
6. Ibid., 238.
7. Ellman, James Joyce, 4.
8. Ibid.
11. Ibid., 307.
12. Ellman, James Joyce, 4.
13. Ibid.
15. Ellman, James Joyce, 4.
16. Ibid., 5.
23. Joyce, Ulysses, 568.
24. Ibid., 7.
25. Ibid., 567.
29. Ibid., 63.
30. Joyce, Ulysses, 567.
32. Ibid.
33. Joyce, Ulysses, 565.
34. Ibid., 565.
The Sound Objects, similarly, were everyday utilitarian objects that “remembered” the last sounds they had made before they were retired and claimed for this exhibit. There was a pick-ax, for example, that had been used to dig up earth from an empty lot on the Lower East Side. I had put the earth into a clear vinyl bag with a speaker resting on it; they both were suspended from the ceiling next to the pick-ax. The same electrical wire that transmitted the recorded sound of the digging to the speaker held the piece up. Cage responded warmly to the works, but had a question: Were the sounds from each work to be heard individually or simultaneously? I told him that when I presented the proposal I had planned to have them playing together continuously, but as the opening date approached, Dwan asked whether I might be persuaded to change this part of it because she was hoping to place the works individually in collections. If the sounds played simultaneously, collectors or curators would get the idea that they were meant as a single environment. She wanted them to think of each piece as an entity. I had reluctantly agreed because her worry seemed valid. As a result, I was working with an electronic engineer to design a switching mechanism that would permit the sounds to go off sequentially. I described to Cage the difficulties I was having with this idea, and he suggested that I go back to my original idea. Since the duration of the various sounds ranged from a few seconds to a few minutes, he was excited about hearing the random mixture that would result. He said, for example, that the sound of a glass jug smashing against a cinderblock—about three seconds in duration—would be an ideal percussive staccato to the sound of a pneumatic drill digging up a section of Broadway, which lasts for several minutes.

During this first meeting Cage asked about other works involving sound. I showed him a series of “blind” drawings, accompanied by the sounds of their making; and he saw and heard Microphone, a work from 1963 in which a tape player plays a recording, made in a soundproof closet, of the sounds of its own mechanism. Cage was enthusiastic and said, “You could call this a recording of the recorder recording the recorder.” He added, smiling, “It sounds like Gertrude Stein, doesn’t it?” Almost twenty years later he would encourage me to exhibit this work at P.S.1 in Queens.

I continued to go to see Cage in performance, but I did not approach him afterwards, on stage or backstage. In fact I did not talk to him again for twelve years.

CAGE CHANCE

William Anastasi

I first met John Cage in 1965. I was readying the exhibition Sound Objects at the recently opened Dwan Gallery, New York. Virginia Dwan telephoned and asked whether I would like to donate a drawing or other small work to the Performance Art Group. I was unfamiliar with the name. She had heard they did excellent work helping forward-looking performance artists get public exposure. Each year they would offer donated art for sale to raise funds. I said I’d be glad to contribute. The following week she called again and asked whether I’d be in my loft a certain afternoon after five—if so, someone from the Performance Art people would come by to pick up my drawing. So it was arranged. When the time came the elevator buzzer sounded. I went down and found that the person who had come for the drawing was John Cage.

I had never met Cage but had seen him on stage at the Town Hall 25-Year Retrospective Concert in 1958. I was also familiar with his appearance from photographs reproduced on the liner of a recording I had of his Fontana Mix. He introduced himself and I learned that he was one of the “Performance Art people,” in fact had been one of the organization’s founders. He said that he had heard from Dwan that I was about to have a show titled Sound Objects. She had told him that these were sculptures that made sounds. He was interested, if there was the time, in seeing and hearing them. We went up and looked and listened.

I was planning to exhibit thirteen works—eleven in the main gallery, two in the back room. The first work Cage looked at was an enormous piece that consisted of a wall with a window that I had taken from my previous apartment on East Eighth Street to my new loft on Greene Street after reconstructing the wall for the owner of the apartment building. There was a soundtrack that had been made there too—a recording of eight hours of New York sounds as they had wafted in through the window.
In late 1977 I had a conversation with Alanna Heiss, the founder of P.S.1 in Queens and before that of The Clocktower, an alternate space for art and performance in Manhattan. I told her of a then unrealized performance work, *You Are*, that I had first proposed to The Museum of Modern Art ten years earlier. It was a companion piece to the exhibition Six Sites, which I had showed at the Dwan Gallery in April of 1967. That show consisted of large silk-screened paintings, each of them a literal rendition, slightly reduced in scale, of the wall on which the painting was hung. *You Are* needs a quartet of participants: a narrator, a court stenographer, a speed typist, and a "page stapler." The recipe reads: *A narrator describes the audience for ninety minutes; a court stenographer takes down the narration; a typist types up a longhand version of this from the shorthand notes; a "page stapler" fastens each page when ready to a wall at eye level.*

The main impulse for the piece had to do with hearing vis-à-vis reading. It gave the audience slightly delayed access to a written version of what they had just heard live. Also, experience had shown that the stenographer, typing at her shorthand machine as fast as the words were spoken, used a phonetic code system. Turning this quickly into English, the typist would have to type out a phonetic version of any unfamiliar word. This added a chance element that enriched the experience. I recall, for instance, a narrator saying "gesticulating" and the longhand version giving us "just tickulating."

Alanna asked if I would do three evenings of *You Are* at The Clocktower. I suggested performances on successive evenings and said I’d like to engage as the narrator on each respective evening an artist, a writer, and a composer. Remembering my meeting with Cage in 1965, I called him, reminded him who I was, and asked whether he would consider being the narrator for the third evening. He recalled our meeting and invited me to his home on Bank Street to discuss particulars. I showed him the recipe for the piece and spoke a bit about its genesis. He said he’d be happy to take part.

The composer’s evening was the last. Both the artist and the writer I had engaged for the first two evenings—Les Levine and Carl Keilblock—had described almost exclusively what their sense of sight had perceived, downplaying their other senses. John and I agreed that he should describe mainly what he heard at the expense of his other senses. Here is the typed version of the first three minutes of Cage’s narration as it appeared on the wall of the gallery. The unfamiliar name belongs to the shorthand typist who arrived a minute late, forcing the speed typist to type directly, as well as she could, the beginning of Cage’s narration:
During that first visit to Bank Street, after we had settled the logistics of You Are, John asked whether I played chess. I said I did, but hadn’t for some time. He said, No matter—would I like to play some time? I said I would.

I called for the first time at noon a few days later. Cage was free at five. I don’t remember who won that first game, but I do remember that we played a second, and that we had each won a game when we quit. Before I left, as we were discussing the game just finished, John’s partner Merce Cunningham returned from holding classes and rehearsing his dance company. We were introduced. I asked him whether he played chess; he did, or at least knew the moves, but he played seldom—John was much the greater enthusiast. We three talked awhile, then Merce went to his bath. John and I parted with no further plans for chess.

A few days later, having errands downtown, I called around noon and asked John if he had time for a game. He did, again at five o’clock. We played again. I would soon become conscious of a hallmark quality in John’s personality: he did not like to say no. If he could, he loved to say yes to whatever he was asked. This seemed almost instinctual, or at least a life position long in place. In a short time I was calling him around noon any day when my schedule was cooperative. Do you have time for a game became a mantra. From the start, with few exceptions, the answer was yes.

He [Duchamp] looked a little bit like a painting by Velazquez; with an almost rouged look that suggested a disappearance of health. So I said to myself, you must hurry up and be with him as much as you possibly can. (laughs) Which I did. I went up to Teeny first—still not wanting to disturb him—and said, Do you think Marcel would teach me chess? And she said, Well, ask him! So I went up to him and said, Would you consider teaching me chess? And he said, Do you know the moves? And I said Yes. He said, Well, come any day you like. (laughs) —John Cage, in Joan Retallack, Musicage, 1996

Friends would beg me to bring a tape recorder to our games. It was unlikely that John would have objected, and I was tempted; but I decided not to, feeling that spontaneity would suffer, at least on my part. I did once make an open-mike audiotape of a four-way conversation between John, Dove Bradshaw, Sandra Gering, and myself, in preparation for an exhibition at Gering’s gallery, William Anastasi, Dove Bradshaw, John Cage, Tom Marioni, Robert Rauschenberg, Mark Tobey, in 1990. The works were all from John’s collection and all chosen by him for the show, and the conversation is about his thoughts on those choices. The publication includes a transcript of a taped conversation between John and Richard Kostelanetz on the same subject.

My studio at that time was in Washington Heights, sometimes spoken of as part of Spanish Harlem—about 150 blocks north of John’s studio/home. But with the art stores and art world mostly downtown, I was often there on business. And even if nothing called me there, if John’s schedule was cooperative I’d make the trip. An important part of the reason for this was that I was in the habit of making “blind” drawings on the subway, and I had long since noticed that a day when I made one of these usually turned out to be a pretty good day across the board. So it was good for me to get on the subway. Just as important, when I visited John I usually felt I was learning, whether or not we were chatting.

John once told me that when he and Duchamp played chess, Duchamp would get angry if John made a beginner’s blunder, saying, “You don’t want to win!” John admitted that this was close to the mark; the truth was, he just wanted to be with Marcel. Certainly there were parallels in my situation with John. The difference was that I did want to win—in fact, introducing me to a visiting friend, John once jokingly remarked, “This is Bill Anastasi—he’s Sicilian, he likes to win.” (I quickly learned that John liked to win too.) Still, whether or not I won, being with him was unquestionably what was important.

What started with those telephone calls in 1977 soon became daily chess at five. It eventually became virtually automatic. One day after our games I said, “John, since we manage to play so regularly, and since the telephone is the bane of your existence, how about if I simply show up at five, unless you call saying that you can’t play?” His immediate response: “Oh, yes, that’s much better.” By that time I had been given a house key in case something kept him out of the studio until after five. On only one occasion did this fail to work out as planned, when Teeny Duchamp, Marcel’s widow and a close friend of John and Merce, had come into New York either unannounced or, through a mixup, unexpected by John that day. He discovered in the early afternoon that he was supposed to be somewhere else at our game time. He had called but I too was out. He left a warm and unnecessarily apologetic note.

*
I also made a videotape of John once, I think in the late 1970s. I asked him if there were authors he found funny; he said there were and mentioned Peter DeVries (1910–93), a writer whose humorous short stories I knew. I next asked if he would sit in a chair reading to himself an unfamiliar story by that writer while I videotaped him head on. He agreed, and this became my favorite tape: John reading and every once in a while smiling or laughing.

Since John and I played virtually every day, the psychological dynamic between us eventually became more important than our relative chess strengths. It didn’t really happen that John would win a game or two and then I would win a game or two; it was a case of streaks. When I was on a winning streak, the longer it went on the more confident I’d become; I would begin to think I “had his number,” as John once put it. Then, usually in a game where my position was strong, I’d make the kind of error that overconfidence brings. The streak would be over. This typically meant the start of a winning streak of John’s. We often joked about this overconfidence phenomenon—we were of course both aware of it. John once told Merce, “Bill and I know each other’s chess game so well that it’s almost obscene!” We intimately knew each other’s strongest line of play, so it often came down to this: Will he play the line that we both know is his strongest, or will he try to confuse me by playing one that we both know is not his strongest?

John was entertaining in chess. When I made a blunder gifting him what should have been a plainly won game, he could be marvelously funny; and he could be even funnier when it was he who had thrown a game away. He also had a habit of blatantly telegraphing what he thought of his position once we had arrived at the mid-game or endgame. If, as I pondered a tough move, he thought his position was solid, he would start uttering exclamations, apparently to himself, in non sequitur German, or pidgin German: “Vos ist dott? Ach tung! Das ist der mond!” On the other hand, if he made a move but then had second thoughts, or if he believed his position hopeless, he’d shake his head and break into fairly correct but questionably pronounced Italian: “Troppo, troppo male!” he would moan, or “Calamitoso! Disastroso!” The matching of language to perception was completely consistent, but the words and phrases had quite a variety. On occasion, pretending to get serious, I’d say, “John, you know you’re telegraphing exactly what you think your position is. If you were a real chess player you’d at least sometimes reverse the procedure just to throw me off.” Of course he never did. But when I sometimes imitated him in this, I would quite obviously reverse the assigned languages from his accustomed signification. Understandably, if I then said “Calamitoso!” he would reply, “Yes, you mean for John!”

Around 1980 Dove and I met up with John in Brussels, at the home of his Belgian friend and supporter Muriel Errera and her teenage daughter. After a couple of days socializing we rented a car and I chauffeured John, Dove, and a tape recorder to the Waterloo battlefield to collect sounds for his Roaratorio: An Irish Circus on Finnegans Wake, a work he was preparing inspired by Joyce’s Finnegans Wake. John’s first extravagantly ambitious idea was to record the normal sounds at every geographical spot mentioned in Finnegans Wake. A student of the book soon told him that there were literally thousands of these. Accepting that his first impulse was impossible he submitted the list to chance operations to whittle it down to a manageable number. Then he made up an itinerary that fitted his existing schedule.

As we approached the site, I found myself wondering how John would decide what sounds to record. Where would he place the microphone? Or where would he ask me to place it, since he had expressed hesitation about how to operate the tape recorder? Would he use chance operations in some way? I visualized him perhaps hanging the microphone on a sign announcing the site. When we arrived, however, we found no sign or monument but only a farm with a barn and farmhouse. I recalled from Stendhal’s chapter “The Guns of Waterloo,” in The Charterhouse of Parma, that the battle actually took place on farmland: Stendhal describes “a piece of tilled land that was being ploughed up in a singular fashion”—that is, by cannonballs landing. John suggested turning in to the farmhouse, so I did and pulled up by the large barn, with open doors. Hardly had we opened the car doors when dogs started barking, goats started bleating, cows started mooing, geese started cackling—a full-throated symphony. The farmer came out and said bonjour. He and John started to talk, John in his serviceable French with its unembarrassed American pronunciation. Meanwhile the mammalian/avian chorus decided that we were okay and gradually piped down. By the time John and the farmer seemed to be winding up their conversation, the background was as peaceful as when we had first pulled in. When this dawned on John, I heard him repeating to the farmer his reason for coming and making clear that he loved the sounds he had heard when we first got out of the car. The farmer in effect said no problem. He disappeared into the
barn, and trudged out seconds later cradling a young calf in his arms. All hell broke loose again, only louder. John turned to me gleefully, practically stepping on his words: “Start the recorder!”

Thinking about this later, it seemed clear that John’s initial decision had stemmed from his reading of *Finnegans Wake* and that his second had been to use chance to delimit the sites to be recorded. When he arrived at the site, though, he acted on personal preference. He may also have been influenced by another consideration. He had often remarked that wherever you went you heard birds and airplanes, an “omnipresence,” in his word, that was evident whenever he set about collecting environmental sounds for a piece. Behind the timing of his “Start the recorder,” then, was his love of aural variety and complexity: he had found something too marvelous to be left in Belgium. Discussing this later with John, I shared with him some lines I had come across in *Finnegans Wake*: “So you did? From the Cat and Cage. O, I see and see! In the ink of his sweat he will find it yet.”

---

**Notes**

me alter’s egos by William Anastasi
Slought Foundation, January 2004
Selections from *me innerman monophone* and *du jarry*


- It seems that Joyce not only refers to Jarry as a source for *Ulysses*, but even includes his own parody of Jarry as a source for *Nausicaa*. Jarry is a parallel for Saramago, *El Infierno*, and the utopian novels of *Ulysses*. Jarry seems to be a character whose ideas are shared among a number of different, diverse, and disjointed concepts that form a world that would not exist without Jarry. Jarry's ideas include the way that the world is divided into different parts, each with its own rules and systems. Jarry's ideas are seen through the eyes of the characters and the world that they inhabit, creating a world that is both real and imaginary.


- In quest of his embryonic tentacle, the configuration *Ad* appears to derive from *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, a probable reference to *Pereloma*. The text, 1918 — is not a painting as such. 

- Jarry, famous as a brilliant judoka, Joyce writes, "He has never heard of Jarry, and he's a Judoka."

- "And so, in accordance with *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*..."

- "Carnalistic... Carnalistic..."

- "Jarry was an expert marksman, carried a revolver, and..."

- "Doomsayers... Doomsayers..."

- "Jarry, *Ad*..."
“Joyce’s next lines seem to jump back to the other big event in J. Suriname - the passionate love-feast between Marchuel and Ellen - but was it? Did it happen? It must have been sung by Wagner’s Tristan: Was it? Is it still? The Tristan and Isolde are enemies, when these words are spoken in the opera - but they will become the greatest lovers in all literature. Marchuel’s last words in J. Suriname seem very connected to the kind of passion exemplified by Tristan and Isolde: "Ellen, Ellen, Ellen, Ellen."

The India on the Indian, or will the Indian themselves be celebrated by one of the Indian? Was there? What memories of her? Which memories of her? The memory of her grace, her flight, delicate, and perfumed memory,
72


---

Considering all the recent connections with Ellen Elcock’s 24-hour sexual marathon with Marcel, the following seems true. This imaging

[27] Women, (left hand) 2 holes, holding the thing in the hand, 2 short 2 drop off, and put it mostly into her mouth. She don’t know to put it into her mouth. . . . Don’t chew it, only swallow. (dropping) 2 short 2 shut your eyes, and open your mouth. . . . Shut your mouth and shut your eyes. I won’t give you something to make you sure. I am fully diagnosed double 

[28] elongated, elongated, elongated for fallacies, to see the following from The Supemale During the Male. More is . . . Here she said the sentence that is permitted only to sovereigns: she could not before the man. Only those girls who are born to be

[29] The president of the club. (right hand) 2 holes, holding the thing in her mouth. "milk jugs," the following from The Supemale During the Male. More is . . . Here she said the sentence that is permitted only to sovereigns: she could not before the man. Only those girls who are born to be

[30] The president of the club. (right hand) 2 holes, holding the thing in her mouth. "milk jugs," the following from The Supemale During the Male. More is . . . Here she said the sentence that is permitted only to sovereigns: she could not before the man. Only those girls who are born to be

[31] The president of the club. (right hand) 2 holes, holding the thing in her mouth. "milk jugs," the following from The Supemale During the Male. More is . . . Here she said the sentence that is permitted only to sovereigns: she could not before the man. Only those girls who are born to be

---

73
and or consumed by fire < connects quite literally to Joyce's: 2: St. Clares. 2: Mary's. 2: the city. 1: may be in with Joyce's 2: the moralistic 1: and Joyce's 2: death. 2: relates to Joyce's 2: white still cool. 2: Joyce's 2: wrong. 2: Joyce's 2: may connect (in addition to the other connections suggested earlier) with James's line on the same page of Chapter 35: "the foot from the side of Sandfords snapped up the sun for its supper." 2: Joyce's line on the same page of Chapter 35: "the foot from the side of Sandfords snapped up the sun for its supper."

There seems to be connections with the foregoing to image 3 found in the closing passage of Ulysses and Ulysses Enchanted.


I note that Bloom's last speech in which he is promising programs for a better future.

A single hour ago, reading the chapter of Zoroastrianism (Second Book) titled “On Great Events” I realized that it
may not have been subdued by the opening paragraphs of “Alice in Wonderland,” and that it
would not be enough to think about the meaning of "me innerman" in this twenty-first century
philosophical order of procedure.

The first part of the chapter is concerned with a theme concerning a "me innerman" which is not adequate to
the second part of the chapter. It seems that in this chapter, the concept of "me innerman" is not
adjacent to the concept of "me innerman monophone." It is more appropriate to think of "me innerman"
in terms of the visual and auditory qualities of the text. However, the relationship between "me innerman"
and "me innerman monophone" is not immediately obvious.


In the twenty-first century, there is a need to grapple with the concept of "me innerman monophone." It seems
that the notion of "me innerman" is not directly related to the visual and auditory qualities of the text. However,
the relationship between "me innerman" and "me innerman monophone" is not immediately obvious.

In the twenty-first century, there is a need to grapple with the concept of "me innerman monophone." It seems
that the notion of "me innerman" is not directly related to the visual and auditory qualities of the text. However,
the relationship between "me innerman" and "me innerman monophone" is not immediately obvious.

In the twenty-first century, there is a need to grapple with the concept of "me innerman monophone." It seems
that the notion of "me innerman" is not directly related to the visual and auditory qualities of the text. However,
the relationship between "me innerman" and "me innerman monophone" is not immediately obvious.

In the twenty-first century, there is a need to grapple with the concept of "me innerman monophone." It seems
that the notion of "me innerman" is not directly related to the visual and auditory qualities of the text. However,
the relationship between "me innerman" and "me innerman monophone" is not immediately obvious.

In the twenty-first century, there is a need to grapple with the concept of "me innerman monophone." It seems
that the notion of "me innerman" is not directly related to the visual and auditory qualities of the text. However,
the relationship between "me innerman" and "me innerman monophone" is not immediately obvious.

Every night I stand naked against the glass wall and gaze at my mirror glued close.

The one, standing in the Ethereal Area, 22 D-10

Contacts. Correspondences

1. Serendipum

- The face of the ocean: river
- I have a story throughout the entire island
- Possessor does not, however, belong

2. "Eve and Adam"

- Little chapel, that they named after me.
- Catholic CATHOLIC MAXIMUM

- The new church on the island, 22 d-30
- The glow surrounding it is red

- The shell that is the sea's mouth: 22 d-10

3. "Adam and Eve in a Church"

- A view of a circumscribed church
- A church, 77 d-30
- Who then turned around to the opposite direction of the bubble, 77 d-30

- The ocean and the sea: 77 d-30
- At the end of the lighthouse, 77 d-30

- The shell of the man, a 22 d-10


May 31, 1971

Harbor a brute secret. My tongue won’t loosen to afford me a relief. As the ocean, present accumulates an inner vice says, “Why not surge?” (Walt Whitman)

The secreted harbor is what I am a brute.

Surely not to say that a brute may build, he had not said—

...The secreted harbor is what I am a brute.

Jarry, often reading Ulysses, said, “As Joyce could have you Bruno who led not toward the destiny, I was not present to his interior, perhaps the extremely that can be said about every great work of art: it is only that great work of art that can create a new universe. It is the medium for the work of this universe, it is the playing with its inner, it is the playing with its turning.

How do you keep love new? How do you keep art new? A flight is not new by consulting an almost inexhaustible source. After 1912, the aesthetics of the last half of his life, the Jarry adaptation, the aesthetic adaptation, the aesthetic adaptation, the aesthetic adaptation. How he must have loved Jarry! It is easy to love someone who is dead. We overlook that Jarry was what you would call impossible in life. Impossible to live with, or even, impossible to love. But that he was that way of knowing everything existed, and yet almost never predictable. His relationship with the impossible mother was similar to Duchamp’s.
Here's a painting - a singing telegram - being delivered to Duchamp's studio, which we find him sitting contortedly on his stool, smoking a cigarette. Suddenly, the scene changes, and you see him in mid-fuck.

A painting which doesn't show ain't worth painting no.

You had help!!

...in the center was a burst of the great circle of hell. A painting which doesn't show ain't worth painting no.

I was telling him how to do a painting which doesn't show ain't worth painting no.

He's become liquid and arrived at the bottom of the slope. I told him how to do a painting which doesn't show ain't worth painting no.

...in the form of a Toogic (aren't more of a Toogic). Splash, and not vertical channeling of the liquid at the bottom of the slope. I told him how to do a painting which doesn't show ain't worth painting no.


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---


87

In the essay, the puzzle remains unsolved.
Dissolutely, the puzzle - given as a task with a bit of disdain - an understandable skepticism, regarding the intelligence of the audience.

I think that the "Wanted $20,000 Reward" 1973 and the "Monte Carlo Bond, 1924" speak to our distaste, and, of this distaste.

7:25 A


86

The timing of "Wanted $20,000 Reward" 1973 seems to reinforce the earlier observation about 5-year intervals playing a part in the game. Duchamp's connection.

De Saris, published 1902. (Duchamp 115)

Garry dies in 1907. (Duchamp 120)

The earliest dated note in the green box, which signals the beginning of Garry's name, 1912. (Duchamp 125)

"Duchamp". Duchamp had clearly intended to call it a day with his Garry-like, 1918. Duchamp's approach, perhaps started in 1917, the same year as "Duchamp", a milestone of Garry's move, as literally derived from Garry's instruction.

That Duchamp never definitely turned up to authorship (Duchamp 125) and the "Wanted $20,000 Reward, 1973" (Duchamp 125).

We see by this that inadvertently or otherwise, starting with the publication of 15 Sarrai in 1982, there are 5 conjectural relevant events occurring at 5-year intervals.

9:50 A

In "Journey Absolute", "enigmatic attraction", 1971.

Journey ultimately to hatred... leading finally.

12:45 A

At the murder of the mother, 1943. (Kenneth's murder of Varini.)

Note how literally M.D. seems to follow Garry's instructions.

3:17 P

Another example of how M.D. sees the pattern or literal "penmanship" from Garry. The first line of the earliest dated note in the green box.

8. The linking of 3 boxes, as pure choral of Michel and platinum must dominate the game.

"So at the end of my research, seeing how..."
Du Jarry

According to K. B. Danby, the poem, ‘poem in prose’, (clip & tape),

M. de - a ‘delay in glass’ as you would say a ‘poem in prose’... #88

LOUOII

[1858-1918]

S. Josephine Balaban (1858-1918) who was at that time the authorizing translator of Leonardo’s writings, wrote: ‘The Mona Lisa, we look at never existed: that historical lady was only a pretext for Leonardo to painting himself under that mask. If we compare this portrait with his self-portrait, we see that Leonardo dressed and smiled with the eyes and lips of the Virgin. The intellectual power of the man, in genius, merges into the voluptuousness of the seductive woman: this in moral hermaphroditism.

Jerry was a homosexual who sometimes dressed as a woman, dressing as a woman, putting on a woman’s suit, and getting on a portrait of a homosexual getting which may have been in good part a self-portrait, and telling it ‘she had a hat on’... #88


In 1961 Duchamp wrote: “I want to think for myself.” What I sense upon starting around 1912, an attempt to find that art... the work, or at least, give it an excuse. I believe that I am capable of making fibres the broken by Swift: Yard and Trollop, and Trollop and Swift... the broken, or April. 1912, the broken, or April. 1912, the broken... these observations intended to go on for no interval of time...

Part of a letter from Duchamp which was published in the surrealist magazine ‘Médium’ in 1917. Duchamp: ‘I feel a pleasure for me to see that there is more than “archaicism”...” The successful art in Paris, by plagiarizing Jerry, we can put together the new and the current concept. Jerry also was saying “current art is full of shit”... it means that Jerry was a man who was famous for the depicting word of ‘Oui, de, et, Mendele, Vu, and Composed word based on Mendele’s shit...’ and in the 1947 he wrote: ‘Art work, et, art sans muraille, et muraille...’ (is it is to art as money is to art?)

Since archeology means ‘disjoint’, he may be suggesting say here: ‘facturing is to art as Jerry’s shit is to...”


And for a more secret refuge, he finds the woman with the tattered back—word. Victor noted, "It was really pretty. I saw him repeated. Messala, obstinately. Of for me, however, according to the most individualistic labeling, the projection concluded. Phaire is a "windman."

Sculpture of drops (points) which the splash for each after being dashed across the locust's chart. Each drop acting as a point and went back successively to the high part of the glass. Each drop. Each drop will pass the 3 times at the horizon between the spigot and the geometrical drawing of a figure which would be indicated on the spigot by the Wilson-process system, i.e. the letter process, which seen from the left, show Wilson seen from the right does follow—

seen from the right the figure may give a square for a hole from the front and seen from the left it would give the same square seen by perspective. The geometrical drawing not the projected shape but their image pass between them. The 2 squares.

In his green eye notecase, on the same page on which he used the word “Pullley,” he has written, “Pullley:” followed by “Pullley” + 22. The diagram accompanying the words is clearly a mechanical drawing of a hanging pulley, substituting a bottle for a method. MD > instead of a single weight, several in the form of inverted bottles, stopped quickly and falling from the top of the Pullley Machine (pullley attaches to the 5th isolating plate).  


The text continues with the notations and diagrams, discussing the concept of “Uncontrollable” and its implications on the character and process of art. The text includes references to Pullley and the concept of weight and balance, as seen in the diagram and notations on the page.
chapter 2, Book 5 of Days and Nights. In the word [illegible] occurs in the sentence:
> The slough, in the forest, is covered with brush, x x x x x. The slough is supported by runners which slide x x x x x. The slough moves on runners, embedded into the earth, and ax x x x x x. The runners are embedded in the earth, while the runners are drawn on the surface. The runners are driven with the runners, driving the runners of the slough on two red tracks or rails.

The chapter in Days and Nights tells of Jerry's version of the Scandinavian legend of Anastasia N. [illegible] holds his moccasins and never changes the story of Symph. The runners were constructed with great care.

The shape of a stiletto, or pyramidal form, by these runners [illegible] degree, according to the runners became proportionately deeper as they moved towards the surface. Symph.: AS: "Am. each day & shall give you."

Such a drawing on the page in the green area titled "Sea Cylinder." (Symph.) has appeared and captured in this admission about the love of gasoline: 200 B.
and bears a great resemblance to the "bell-and-chain"
drawings given by Jarry's translator which must have
been a common toy during George's life and Duchamp's
childhood.

Note that in Duchamp's drawing, connected with my
observation of the top of his chair, the bell-like
form makes a "chime" to the "ringing" of the bell in the
drawing of the top. If the top were designed like
Duchamp's drawing you wouldn't be able to
"play" and so it is not the bell, as Duchamp had designed them.

Jarry's story ends on a different note from Duchamp's.
- The bell-like form is made of glass, while the stuff of
  Duchamp's chair is.
- With the Eternal figure, his month end as did
  Mr. Snuphru and the Eternal historian, and Mr. Mr.
  Sureau.

Dear Master,

...
William Anastasi | Selected works from 1961-69

Six Sites, 1966, Photo silkscreen painting on canvas
Installation view, West Wall, Dwan Gallery, New York, 1967

Diptych, 1967, Polaroids
4.25 x 3.25 inches; John Cage Estate

Untitled (pocket drawing), 1969, pencil on vellum
11 X 14 inches; Collection: Museum of Modern Art, New York

Untitled (subway drawing), 1968, pencil on vellum
8 x 11 inches; John Cage Estate

Untitled (pocket drawing), 1969, pencil on vellum
11 X 14 inches; Collection: Museum of Modern Art, New York
Sink, 1963, Hot-rolled steel and water
1 x 18 x 18 inches; John Cage Estate

Displaced Site, 1966, Corrugated cardboard and plaster
3 x 4.5 x 8 inches

Three Conic Sections, 1968, Steel
Installation view, Dwan Gallery, New York, 1970

Twelve Ounces of Tap Water on a Floor, 1966
One Gallon Industrial High Gloss Enamel, Poured, 1966

One Gallon Industrial High Gloss Enamel, Thrown, 1966
Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, 1965, magnetic analog tape

Untitled (three Polaroid photographs on a blind drawing), 1964
11 x 8.5 inches; Collection: Museum of Modern Art, New York
What Was Real In The World, 1964, bricks
21 x 16 x 18 inches

Free Will, 1968, video camera and monitor
Issue, 1966, wall displacement
Collection: Philadelphia Museum of Art

Statue of Titanium White, 1969, limestone
3.75 x 3 x 8 inches

READING A LINE ON A WALL

Untitled, 1967, word mural
4.25 x 80 inches
Papering, 1967
The installation before the performance

Papering, 1967
The installation after the performance

whowasit youwasit propped (originally without title), 1965, pine
A book engaging work by artist William Anastasi in relation to literary and artistic predecessors and contemporaries including Jarry, Joyce, Duchamp and Cage

With contributions by Thomas McEvilley, Steve McCaffery, Joseph Masheck, and William Anastasi and an introduction by Osvaldo Romberg

"If it should happen that [William Anastasi’s] hypothesis proves untestable, it will hang in the air as a living web of thought that waits tantalizingly for a resolution that never comes—a ghostly presence of the avant-garde of the twentieth century, a haunting memory that seems both ancient and somehow still alive in its appeal.” — Thomas McEvilley

"The more I remedially review the contribution of William Anastasi to art and the general moral of art in his generation...the more fully I comprehend an uncommonly perspicacious neo-Duchampianism that now in a surprisingly Joycean way, with Jarry as provocateur to both, persists in sustaining the great game that is art.” — Joseph Masheck

William Anastasi’s Pataphysical Society: Jarry, Joyce, Duchamp and Cage

Edited by Aaron Levy and Jean-Michel Rabaté