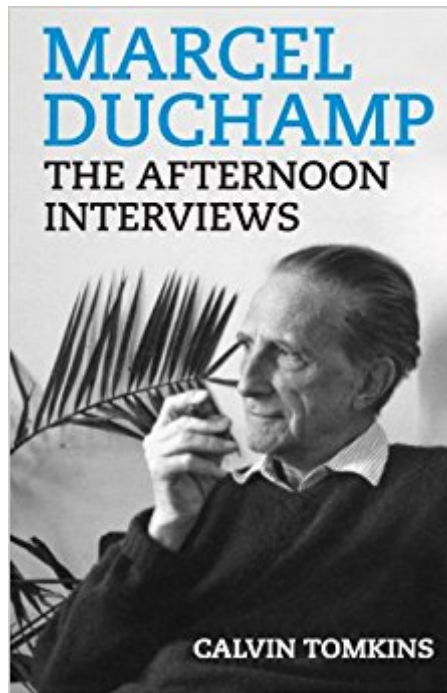




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# Marcel Duchamp: The Afternoon Interviews



## Synopsis

In 1964, Calvin Tomkins spent a number of afternoons interviewing Marcel Duchamp in his apartment on West 10th Street in New York. Casual yet insightful, Duchamp reveals himself as a man and an artist whose playful principles toward living freed him to make art that was as unpredictable, complex, and surprising as life itself. Those interviews have never been edited and made public, until now. *The Afternoon Interviews*, which includes an introductory interview with Tomkins reflecting on Duchamp as an artist, guide and friend, reintroduces the reader to key ideas of his artistic world and renews Duchamp as a vital model for a new generation of artists. Calvin Tomkins was born in 1925 in Orange, New Jersey. He joined the *New Yorker* as a staff writer in 1960. His many profiles include John Cage, Robert Rauschenberg, Merce Cunningham, Leo Castelli, Damien Hirst, Richard Serra, Bruce Nauman, Cindy Sherman and Jasper Johns. Tomkins is the author of 12 books, including *The Bride and the Bachelors* (1965), *Living Well Is the Best Revenge* (1971), *Lives of the Artists* (2008) and *Duchamp: A Biography* (1996).

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

These previously unreleased interviews, conducted in Duchamp's New York home in 1964, reveal the master at his playful, ever-provocative ease. (Sue Taylor *Art in America*) A forthcoming book presents previously unpublished interviews with Marcel Duchamp from 1964 by longtime *New Yorker* contributor Calvin Tompkins. Adding to the veritable industry of publications devoted to the artist.' (Brian Boucher *Art in America*)

I just had a most rewarding experience reading and listening to a book. The volume in question is Marcel Duchamp: The Afternoon Interviews, by Calvin Tomkins, published earlier this past year by Badlands Unlimited. The text is entirely comprised of transcribed conversations that took place between Duchamp and Tomkins fifty years ago. In addition to the text the enhanced e-book includes four audio clips, including three from the original 1964 recording of the interview and a never before heard clip of Tomkins in 2012 telling a short story about Duchamp. "Oddly, the three audio clips featuring Duchamp reveal sizeable discrepancies between his recorded remarks and the versions that appear on the screen. The most significant difference occurs on page 36 (page 45 in the ebook) in a passage about the formation of the Société Anonyme. In the audio clip, Duchamp remarks on what it means to be a museum of modern art. His observations on this subject have not been transcribed. These discrepancies between text and audio are by no means minor the meaning of everything in the book is altered through misrepresentation, especially since there is no introduction, let alone footnotes no warning that cuts or changes have been made and what they might be. I purchased the print version just to make sure that this is the case with both. The book and the ebook don't vary in any way, (except that there are no sound files included with the former). It's too easy to point to this as a weakness in the publication. However, I don't want to, since, for one thing, it's obvious. For another, it gives one pause to ponder how often this happens in editing, regardless of the medium. For whatever reason (space, relevancy) the author/editor made the kinds of decisions that take place all the time. The good news, if there is any, is that now we have a way, as never before, to compare a transcribed text with the original audio record (assuming that too hasn't been edited). No, I actually want to praise this project for presenting me with possibility. To be able to encounter significant discrepancies between the text and the sound files opens up enormous potential for interpretation (assuming one pays attention) that would not have presented itself if we were reading text in print alone. My only regret is that I can't hear the whole thing.

Thoroughly enjoyed this peek into the mind of a great maker of change. Excellent interview skills from a strong base of knowledge. I will re-read this occasionally to stay grounded.

I had known Duchamp only from his artwork. It was a wonderful experience to get to look at his words as well. rationality and systematization are the Scylla and Charybdis of our modern

civilization. Duchamp sails home with his ears well plugged.

As we know Marcel quit painting and moved on beyond art where it was going during his time. Listening to him talk about it, is quite enlightning

very interesting interviews with one of the most important artists. A good read in that you get to feel his personality and how his mind worked. Books about Duchamp often render him opaque and impersonal.

if only i would have learned from marcel, instead of wasting my time with all those gurus. i learned about art and life from this book. fine interviews with an artist-philosopher who knew when to quit.

DuChamp talks about his work and mind set in an interesting interview.

A short but fascinating interview with one of the 20th centuries great art minds. I've been a long time fan of Duchamp,his work and his creative spirit. This was a welcome summertime read.

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