

# cincinnati art museum

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**\*Images Available Upon Request**

## **Cincinnati Art Museum presents *Marcel Duchamp: Boîte-en-valise* “Portable museum” on view through May 6, 2018**

**CINCINNATI** — The Cincinnati Art Museum is pleased to present *Marcel Duchamp: Boîte-en-valise* on view to the public for the first time at the museum, now through May 6, 2018. This free special feature unveils the Art Museum’s acquisition of a rare “portable museum” containing 68 small-scale replicas and models of Marcel Duchamp’s works featuring paintings, drawings, objects and “ready-mades.”

Duchamp was a French-American painter, sculptor, chess player and writer. By World War I, his goal was to “put painting once again in the service of the mind,” which meant abandoning the traditional tools and techniques of painting and questioning every previous assumption about the boundaries of visual art. From that time forward he deliberately worked in a diversity of media and methods without repeating himself.

In 1935 Duchamp began a six-year project assembling miniature reproductions of his work, which he called *Boîte en-Valise* or “Box in a Valise.” He created twenty of these boxes, each in a leather carrying case, but with slight variations in design and content. Each work in *Boîte en-Valise* is labeled with title, medium, date and, in some cases, the owner of the original. This process was an extension of his other “ready-mades,” which challenged the ideas of originality and the value of unique works.

Packing artworks into a suitcase made it possible to smuggle the work out of France during the Nazi occupation. *Boîte-en-valise* was a way of reconstructing Duchamp’s life’s work and circulating it to a wide audience. It contains miniatures of his painting *Nude Descending Staircase, No. 2* (1912), which scandalized Americans when it was exhibited; the construction *The Large Glass*; and *Fountain*, a urinal signed with the pseudonym “R. Mutt.”

Duchamp has been recognized as the single most important historical figure to affect the formation and direction of Dada, Pop Art, Minimalism, and Conceptual Art in the 1960s and 1970s.

In 1954 Duchamp married Alexina “Teeny” Sattler, a Cincinnati native. The *Boîte-en-valise* on view was given to Teeny’s sister Agnes and her husband with a special dedication on the *Coeurs volants (Fluttering Hearts)*. The Anne W. Harrison family donated the artwork to the museum in 2016 in memory of Agnes and her sister Teeny. The museum’s version is one of thirty copies assembled in 1963, designated Edition E.

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“Duchamp is considered one of the most important artists of the twentieth century influencing the development of post-World War I Western art. His “ready-mades” overturned ideas of originality in art, raising questions about authorship, authenticity and the aura of the unique object,” says Kristin Spangenberg, Cincinnati Art Museum Curator of Prints.

The work is on view in Gallery 104 (near the Rosenthal Education Center).

## **About the Cincinnati Art Museum**

The Cincinnati Art Museum is supported by the generosity of individuals and businesses that give annually to Artswave. The Ohio Arts Council helps fund the Cincinnati Art Museum with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. The Cincinnati Art Museum gratefully acknowledges operating support from the City of Cincinnati, as well as our members.

Free general admission to the Cincinnati Art Museum is made possible by a gift from the Rosenthal Family Foundation. Special exhibition pricing may vary. Parking at the Cincinnati Art Museum is free. The museum is open Tuesday – Sunday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m. and Thursday, 11 a.m.–8 p.m.

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