The Magic Number

Tom Girst, Editor in Chief:

Have been greatly enjoying latest issue of *Tout Fait*, after noting not once, but twice you brought attention to Duchamp's 1964 Readymades edition. In the Barns interview it was surrounded by the usual dismay this edition brings, fair enough. Then, in the corespondence with Hirschhorn you appeared to have taken a decidedly heavy hand in reference to this edition, using it as a form of entrapment to elicit a responce from Hirschhorn in regards to his own recent works potential "commercial" value. It was to Hirschhorn's credit that he did not "trip" on this edition or reference it to his own works, but he clearly rebuked any notion that Duchamp ever compromised his own works, Bravo, Hirschhorn. I believe I can shed some light around the "dismay" of this Duchamp/Schwarz venture. First, in the Barnes interview he preferences his concern by stating that at least in regards to *Etant donnés* the work appears "to flesh out the Bride" placing it full cycle in relation to the *Large Glass*. The very same statement can be said of the Ready-mades edition, as usual with Duchamp the "shock" is hidden in plain sight. The answer, Dear Tom, is in the exact number of the editions "8".

Does this number ring any bells? As *Etant Donnés* belongs to the realm of the Bride, so the Ready-mades belong to the realm of the Bachelors. Return to the notes in the *Green Box*, where Marcel lets us know that the Bachelors were conceived as a game of 8!, only changed to 9 with the addition of himself, a reluctant station master (in an non-autobiographic way as possible). As reluctant as the "lost" original Ready-made brings the number 8 to 9! In fact seen from this angle the Ready-mades appear as a collective form of "portraiture", a sort of Bachelors composite (although non-auto, you understand). Keep up the great work.

Sincerely,

John Mcnamara
mac2u22@hotmail.com