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# The Importance of making Art : A Reply to the Institutionalists

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In his excellent book, *Definitions of Art*, Stephen Davies presents an important and original objection to what he calls the functionalist definition of art. The objection is intended to show the falsity of the doctrine that our concept of art may be defined primarily in terms of an aesthetic function, and one of the main targets is Monroe Beardsley, who has done more than most to explain and popularize this traditional view. It would be wrong to think, however, that Davies wishes merely to attack what he takes to be a false doctrine, for he wishes to advance the claims of an institutional or proceduralist definition of art and thereby demonstrate its greater cogency, especially in the light of modern-day developments in the visual arts such as Duchamp's Readymades and conceptual art. This objection of Davies' goes to the heart of the matter, and touches upon some of the fundamental differences between a functionalist and an institutional approach to art, and is worthy of the closest attention.

In this paper, I will argue that the objection in question does not establish the falsity of the functionalist definition of art. I hope to turn the objection round and by means of a detailed discussion of Davies' arguments expose the methodological flaws in the institutionalist's own approach to art. In particular, I shall argue that where the institutionalist feels himself to be strongest, namely in his philosophical dealings with the avant-garde, he is in fact at his most susceptible and weakest.

## 1 Use of Terms

It would be as well to begin with an explanation of how the terms 'functionalist' and 'proceduralist' are to be understood. Davies defines the first term in the following way : 'where it is the case that what makes a thing an X is its functional efficacy in promoting the point of the concept in question... then...X is to be defined *functionally*'.<sup>1</sup> He is not interested in just any kind of functionalism, however. His objection, as I have said, is directed at a particular brand of functionalism, namely that which defines art in terms of a primary aesthetic function. (This does not, of course, rule out the possibility that art has other significant, though secondary, functions). In its most basic form, functionalism of this variety classifies artefacts (understood in an extended sense of the term) as artworks on the grounds that they provide aesthetic satisfaction. However, this is rather too basic on a number of counts. It might be objected, for instance,

that we treat some paintings and sculptures as art despite the fact that they are not aesthetically rewarding. With this and other considerations in mind, some functionalists, including Beardsley, have produced more sophisticated versions which by alluding to the maker's intentions allow for the possibility of artistic failure. In his later writings, Beardsley characterized an artwork, as Davies puts it, as 'either an arrangement of conditions *intended* to be capable of affording an aesthetic experience with marked aesthetic character, or (incidentally) an arrangement belonging to a class or type of arrangement that is typically intended to have this capacity' (my italics).<sup>2</sup> Hence a bad painting could be classified as a work of art. It is this more sophisticated view that I wish to defend against the objection Davies puts below (see section 2).

The best known example of a proceduralist theory is George Dickie's institutional theory of art, which Davies himself supports, though not without qualification. Although a proceduralist would agree that the concept of art has a point, he or she would not define the concept in terms of its function. It is the procedures intimately associated with the concept that are thought to be of crucial importance. As Davies puts it: 'if the concept is essentially procedural, then all those things produced in accordance with the given procedure instantiate the concept, whether or not they also serve the function that those procedures originally were set up to meet'.<sup>3</sup> On this view not only bad paintings could count as art but also things that were not intended to meet the point of art and which may even have been designed to undermine its function.

It should be plain from even these brief remarks how much functionalism and proceduralism differ. What may be less clear is how these competing definitions of art raise issues that are important both within and without philosophy. This should become clearer as our discussion unfolds, but what I wish to do next is to outline Davies' objection, which is derived from the writings of Arthur Danto. Danto's witty though sometimes-obscure writings deal with the ontological status of objects having visually indistinguishable counterparts. After looking at Davies' useful summary of Danto, I shall set out the anti-functionalist objection as a formal argument so that it may more easily be assessed.

## 2. Danto's Ontology and the Anti-Functionalist Objection

Davies introduces his summary of Danto's complicated argument by pointing out that 'the aesthetic properties of pieces are affected by their being given art status. Hence such properties are said to depend on 'the categorization of the objects in which they are instantiated as art or nonart'.<sup>4</sup> Although something may already possess aesthetic properties before attaining art status, it will acquire additional ones as a consequence of acquiring that status. These new aesthetic

properties may be 'of a quite different order' from any the piece already possesses; in such cases where there is a visually indistinguishable counterpart, the newly-acquired properties will, certainly, be unique. It is the aesthetic properties the piece acquires upon *attaining* art status that enable it to fulfil art's function rather than any such properties it possessed *prior* to its becoming an artwork.

The objection that Davies derives from the above argument is stated with admirable clarity. 'The functional view of the definition of art', he writes, 'holds that aesthetic properties exist mainly prior to, and provide the basis for, a piece's attaining the status of art. It is apparent, however, that it is art status that is prior to, and a determinant of those aesthetic properties of artworks by virtue of which they serve the function of art'.<sup>5</sup> With this objection firmly planted in the reader's mind, Davies develops the points made by Danto in greater detail. Although we do not have space to examine many of these points, we shall look (through Davies' eyes) at a few of Danto's more important examples.

The first example Davies discusses is Duchamp's *Fountain*, which has bedevilled philosophical literature. Danto thinks that though the urinal shares its properties with other porcelainery the artwork *Fountain* shares *its* properties with marble statues and especially its aesthetic properties. The Readymade owes its existence as an artwork to interpretation, and insofar as it meets the point of art it does so by virtue of the aesthetic properties and meaning it acquired upon becoming an artwork, i.e., properties that identical looking urinals lack. The point that may be drawn from this case, Davies claims, is that 'taste is not a matter of discerning aesthetic properties that were always present, since learning that a piece is a work of art entails recognizing that the piece has properties its untransfigured counterparts lack'.<sup>6</sup> Danto makes much the same point, using a hypothetical example, *Can Opener*. We are asked to imagine that at the very moment when a sculptor independently and for the first time brings into existence a purely abstract object having this particular form, his next door neighbour, coincidentally, designs the world's first utilitarian can opener and opens up a can of beans with it. We are told that the objects would have quite different aesthetic properties and the difference, in Davies' words, 'would depend upon the status as art of the one piece and, hence, its location within an art-historical tradition of sculpture'.<sup>7</sup>

We are now in a position to state the anti-functional objection in a more formal manner. For convenience, I shall present Danto's argument and the objection derived from it separately.

### **Danto's Ontological Argument**

(P1) 'Aesthetic properties [henceforth APs] depend on the categorization of the objects in which they are substantiated as art or nonart (and within those categorized as art, on the genres, periods and so forth to which they belong)'

(P2) A piece acquires new APs upon attaining art status, in addition to any it may already possess.

(P3) The newly-acquired APs of a piece are different from the properties, including APs, of the piece's visually indistinguishable counterparts, and may be of 'a quite different order'.

(C) Therefore 'the APs by virtue of which the piece meets the point of art are those it acquires on attaining the status of art rather than those it possesses prior to its attaining that status'.<sup>8</sup>

The above conclusion serves as the premise of Davies' objection to functionalism.

### **Davies' Anti-Functionalist Argument**

(P1) The APs of a piece 'by virtue of which it meets the point of art are those it acquires on attaining the status of art rather than those it possesses prior to its attaining that status'.

(C) Therefore the functionalist doctrine, 'which holds that APs exist mainly prior to, and provide the basis for, a piece's attaining the status of art'.<sup>9</sup> is false.

Before we begin to discuss the arguments we should establish how broad their scope is intended to be. I think it is safe to assume that Danto's argument, despite (P3), is supposed to accommodate development in the visual arts from post-impressionism onwards.<sup>10</sup> If this is correct, then Davies' anti-functional argument must have the same scope. Were we to shrink that scope to hard cases only, the argument's force and interest would be correspondingly diminished. Let us assume, then, that the arguments are intended to cover modern art in its entirety, and assess them accordingly.

### **3 The Functionalist's Counter-Objection**

Although the functionalist would want to object to several of Danto's premises, the most important objection of all hinges on how we conceive artistic creation. The functionalist and the proceduralist picture this in very different ways, and Davies himself identifies this as the main issue at stake. He rightly says that the functionalist can concede, without compromising his basic doctrines,

that art-making takes place within an institutional setting and can, moreover, allow that aesthetic properties may sometimes be dependent upon this context. But what the functionalist cannot accept is the conclusion of Danto's argument and its implicit model of art creation.<sup>11</sup> Let us, then, tease out the implications of the latter.

We may begin with Davies' own characterization of the art creation model. 'A piece that is not an artwork exists with some aesthetic properties', he writes. 'Without modifying it in any other way, an artist confers art status on the piece. This conferral of art status alters the work's aesthetic properties, so that it now has aesthetic properties it previously lacked. The piece serves the function of art by virtue of its possessing these new properties'.<sup>12</sup> He remarks that this 'chronological' model of art creation is derived from such cases as the Readymades but adds the important rider that it is 'intended in some nonchronological version to cover also the orthodox case of art creation'.<sup>13</sup> (In the light of this it seems reasonable to suppose that orthodox cases of art creation are covered by the anti-functional argument.)

With typical acuity, Davies has anticipated the functionalist's objection to the above account. He illustrates the form such an objection might take by using Danto's example of *Can Opener*. The objection is essentially that '*Can Opener* is made by the artist to have those aesthetic properties, and there is no sense in which its acquiring art status predates its acquiring those properties. Its achievement of art status coincides with its gaining those properties, and had the generated properties not merited art status, *Can Opener* would not be a work of art, despite its creation within the Artworld and the dependence of its properties upon its creation within that setting... the setting alone does not guarantee the creation of aesthetic properties that merit art status'.<sup>14</sup> Having so clearly stated the functionalist's position, Davies might be expected to have a forceful reply to it up his sleeve. If so, it is still to be found there, for he does not spell out what is wrong with the functionalist's counter-objection. Immediately after putting the objection, he mounts the proceduralist's hobby-horse—the Readymades—and digresses from the main point by discussing these non-standard cases of art creation. But what is required is a detailed rebuttal of the functionalist's account of *Can Opener*, i.e., the *standard* case, where a work is made to have aesthetic properties. To talk about the Readymades, hard cases if ever there were ones, at this juncture is beside the point.

Perhaps owing to this *idée fixe*, Davies fails to explain how the proceduralist's model derived from the Readymades and the like can be adapted so as to cover orthodox cases of art creation, i.e., the remaining 99% or so of artworks. He

criticizes functionalists for having rejected 'out of hand the proceduralist's approach of showing how Duchamp's actions are continuous with the use of the institutionalized conventions by which art status has been conferred in the past'.<sup>15</sup> However, he does not show *how* those actions are supposedly continuous with traditional practice. Revealingly, he takes it for granted as a proceduralist that there must be such a continuity and that it would be a simple thing to demonstrate. In the absence of such a demonstration, however, the functionalist is entitled to remain sceptical. Since this is such an important matter, let me elaborate upon it.

What I think the functionalist finds most puzzling is why it should be thought that there is more to be said than has been said in the above account of *Can Opener*. Once we have said that an artwork in the standard case is something made by an artist to have rewarding aesthetic properties, what else do we need to add? A number of things, it might be retorted. For a start, the proceduralist would insist that many instances of aesthetic properties are context-dependent. As Davies remarked, however, the functionalist can happily accept this point. Indeed, the functionalist might argue that concepts of genre, medium, and style do not merely have a bearing on the interpretation of a work but also play an important role in the making of a work. That is to say, the very process of art-making is informed by such considerations. It would be absurd to suppose that an artist creates a work *ex nihilo*, however much a conceptual artist might wish it were so. The particular medium, style and artistic form in which the artist is working will affect the aesthetic character of what is produced. To give a simple example, composers need to make an initial decision as to whether they are going to write a string quartet or piano quartet, a concerto or symphony, and such a decision is likely to affect the aesthetic character of what is produced, even where the musical ideas exist in embryonic form. (And it is interesting in this regard to compare works that have been adapted to meet the requirements of different musical forms or different instruments.) It is true also that a modern artist's work is likely to be informed by an understanding of art history. The sort of things that Danto mentions, then, enter into the making of the work, and not merely the interpretation of it.

As we have seen, the functionalist can accept also that art-making takes place within an institutional setting without compromising his or her position. However, the functionalist would not accept that the concept of art should be *defined* in terms of those institutional procedures. (A parallel is to be found in how proceduralist while agreeing that the concept of art has a point does not define the concept in functional terms.)

Let us expand our account of a standard case of art creation in the light of the remarks above. A work of art, typically, is made in an institutional setting with the intention that it should have rewarding aesthetic properties. The way in which it is made is subject to a number of constraints, which include those imposed by the chosen medium, the adopted style, and the genre to which the work belongs or the artistic form in term of which it was conceived. The work's aesthetic character may be shaped by other considerations as well such as the artist's awareness of tradition or allegiance to certain artistic doctrines. Now why should we say of a work that is made to meet the point of art in this way that it is not truly a work of art until art status has been *conferred* upon it? Surely, the notion of conferral has no useful role to play here, and adds nothing to our understanding of what it is to create a work of art in the standard case. In short, it is merely an idle form of words; an empty philosophical formula. But this is hardly surprising, since the proceduralist is trying to apply the wrong model here.

As we have noted, the model was derived from such things as the Readymades and conceptual art. What these examples have in common is a dedication to flouting traditional practices of art-making. Duchamp, for instance, used the Readymade to repudiate a traditional notion of art as artifice, while the conceptualists went one step further and, in a gesture of the utmost economy, attempted to dispense with the art object altogether. If this is correct, then it is paradoxical to look to the Readymades and the like, for a *general* model of art creation when they reject orthodox artistic practices.

Let us sum up how matters stand regarding Davies' objection to functionalism. I would suggest that several of the premises of Danto's ontological argument are false, and that we can find counter-examples to them if we turn to standard cases of art-making and do not confine ourselves to unorthodox cases. In short, the premises are based upon a defective model of art creation, one to which the functionalist has a very powerful (and unanswered) objection. Since some of the premises are false, the conclusion does not obtain. Indeed, as we have seen, the conclusion is false. If so, the premise of Davies' anti-functional argument is itself false and the conclusion is unproven.

I have argued that Davies has failed to produce a strong objection to the functionalist definition of art. But how well does a proceduralist definition of art fare itself in the light of our discussion? Does it emerge as being better equipped to deal with the more extreme manifestations of avant-garde art or modern art generally than its main rival, functionalism? In what follows, I shall argue that the maladroit way in which proceduralism typically handles hard cases such as the Readymades and *objet trouvé* expose it to a number of serious

criticisms in terms of its methodology. In effect, I shall be claiming that proceduralists have been badly misled by certain avant-garde practices and that, consequently, their definition is insecurely based. I shall not, however, attempt to demonstrate the falsity of the definition in the way that Davies attempted to falsify the functionalist definition.

In order to press home the criticisms I wish to make about the proceduralist's handling of hard cases, I must first say something about the way in which Davies characterizes them, and the special meaning he attaches to the term. As we will see, Davies attempts to claim a certain kind of immunity for the Readymades and suchlike.

#### 4 More than a Question of Terminology

To begin with, Davies makes the point that both functionalists and proceduralist are guilty of producing arguments that sometimes beg the question. The functionalist, for example, typically refuses to allow the proceduralist's claim that the Readymades are works of art owing to how they allegedly fail to meet the point of art.<sup>16</sup> Hence the functionalist begs the question against proceduralism, which claims to have explained how something can be art even though, in the extreme case, it may not meet the point of art. On the other hand, a proceduralist may fall into the error of favourably *prejudging* the status of hard cases (in terms of his own theory) and beg the question against functionalism.

Davies believes that owing to a fundamental divergence in how the two parties define art, they think of hard cases in quite different ways. For the functionalist, a hard case is one where it is not clear whether it can truly be said to meet the point of art; it is, at best, a borderline candidate. But such perplexities do not beset the proceduralist, who is prepared to accept such things as driftwood and conceptual art without further ado. Hard cases for the proceduralist are 'artworks that in one way or another fall into the gap left by the separation of the function of artworks from the procedures used in their creation'.<sup>17</sup> For the proceduralist, then, a hard case is not one whose status as art is ever in doubt but rather one which sets up 'a tension between the point of the concept of art and actual instances of art'.<sup>18</sup>

This is an ingenious move on Davies' part. The very way in which he characterizes hard cases puts the onus on the functionalist to produce an argument to show that a given piece cannot be counted as art *without* arguing that it is dysfunctional. i.e., fails to meet the point of art. According to Davies, the functionalist would be guilty of begging the question if he or she appealed to such functional considerations in framing the argument. Were this move to



succeed, the ground would be cut from under the functionalist's feet. However, the move is open to challenge.

To begin with, we should ask how Davies reaches the conclusion that hard cases are valid works of art without prejudging the matter himself. He remarks that it is 'beyond question' that hard cases, such as the Readymades, are *bona fide* works of art owing to the fact that

*Fountain* is generally credited as being Duchamp's work, even if he did not make the urinal he appropriated in creating that work. Art historians and critics talk about the piece; it is constantly pictured and referred to in books on the history of modern art and in courses on recent art history. Moreover, artists have been influenced by Duchamp's Readymades and frequently allude to them, not only in their manifestos but also in their own artworks. In brief, *Fountain* and its kin are treated as artworks (indeed, as important artworks).<sup>19</sup>

I would suggest that Davies is mistaken when he claims that the Readymades are generally credited as being artworks by members of the Artworld. If we examine the matter more closely, we find that critics and art historians are divided on this issue in much the same way that philosophers are. The late Harold Rosenberg, a distinguished art critic, remarked of Duchamp that 'since their first public appearance, his creations have possessed an inherent capacity to stir up conflict. Sixty years ago, he entered the art world by splitting it, and he still stands in the cleft, wearing a grim smile...'<sup>20</sup> This judgement still holds good. In a recent overview of *Fountain*'s history and aesthetics, the art historian, William A. Camfield, neatly summed matters up: 'Some deny that *Fountain* is art but believe it is significant for the history of art and aesthetics. Others accept it grudgingly as art but deny that it is significant. To complete the circle, some insist *Fountain* is neither art nor an object of historical consequence, while a few assert it is both art and significant—though for utterly incompatible reasons'.<sup>21</sup> So much for consensus.

Davies is right, of course, that many artists have been influenced by Duchamp's work, including the Readymades. (Whether they have understood Duchamp's work is a different matter.) However, this in itself does not have a direct bearing on whether we can justifiably assume that *Fountain* is a work of art. Let us suppose that Picasso's 'assisted' Readymades, *Bull's Head*, which is generally credited as an artwork, was directly influenced by Duchamp's example. Obviously, it would be wrong to infer from this that Duchamp's Readymades are works of art.

Similarly, we are not entitled to infer from the fact that Duchamp's Readymades have very recently become part of art historical discourse<sup>22</sup> that they are art. There are many things that figure in that discourse besides artworks.

It is true, then, that we treat *Fountain* in some of the ways we treat paradigm works of art. That is to say, it is put on display in art museums, it is discussed by art critics, etc., etc. But there are many other significant ways in which the Readymade does not resemble the paradigm, as soon becomes evident when we look more deeply into the different discourses of art criticism and art history. What we find therein is a deep-seated disagreement about *Fountain's* meaning, value and status. In short, the Readymades are hard cases in the normal sense of the term and not in some special philosophical sense.

Given that many members of the Artworld and the public at large continue to find such things as conceptual art, *objet trouvés*, and the Readymades perplexing and disconcerting, the functionalist is right to ask whether such things can be classified as art. It is not simply a matter of dispute among philosophers—a purely local dispute - as Davies would have us believe. I would suggest, then, that the burden of proof lies with the proceduralist, who has to show how such problematic cases can be claimed for art and how they can be reconciled with traditional practices of art-making.

## 5 A Flawed Methodology?

This brings me to the criticisms I wish to make of the proceduralist's own philosophical procedures. The first error, which I believe the proceduralist has made, is to draw upon a very one-sided diet of examples. The diet consists almost entirely of one kind of example. Wittgenstein described such an error as a 'main cause of philosophical disease'.<sup>23</sup> Since I have written about unhealthy philosophical diets elsewhere<sup>24</sup>, let me pass onto what I see as a second, more grievous error. This is to do with the highly idiosyncratic nature of the examples upon which proceduralists base their theories. And anyone who alights on the writings of Danto, Dickie, *et al*, for the first time is likely to be struck by a curious obsession with urinals, brillo boxes and pieces of driftwood - in short, the *bric-à-brac* of the avant-garde..

Given that all of these things raise difficulties of one kind or another, we should begin by asking whether we can treat them as art rather than assume that they are 'beyond doubt' works of art. This would involve a careful, case by case discussion of the various ways in which a given piece both resembles and differs from a paradigm work of art. The crucial point is that we should

be guided in our deliberations by such a paradigm. Let me enlarge on the importance of this.

In *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein invites us to consider whether 'it would be imaginable' for someone to learn to do sums in the head without ever doing them aloud or writing them down. He comes up with what he calls 'a limiting case', and poses the question whether there could be a tribe who knew only of calculation in the head and no other kind. In this way, he gets us to reflect on whether we would be prepared 'to use the concept of "calculating in the head" here - or 'whether in such circumstances it has lost its purpose, because the phenomena gravitate towards another paradigm'.<sup>25</sup>

It seems to me that some of the hard cases with which the aesthetician has to deal are rather like Wittgenstein's 'limiting case' insofar as they appear to gravitate toward some alien paradigm. The closest parallel is to be found in conceptual art, where it is sometimes claimed that a work of art is, strictly speaking, a concept or proposition as opposed to a physical object, least of all one having aesthetic properties. The conceptualist, Robert Barry, specified as one of his pieces the non-conscious contents of his mind at a particular moment in time. Such a case requires us to consider whether it could possibly fall under the concept of art. This question becomes even more pertinent when we take into account how the significance of Barry's piece lies in its playful refusal to provide a spectator with the customary aesthetic satisfaction. In other words, the piece sets itself up in *opposition* to the paradigm. This would be rather like Wittgenstein's tribe claiming that not only do they do all their calculating in the head but that they have invented also a new kind of arithmetic in which the sums are not supposed to add up. Here we have surely reached a point where we have to ask whether the concept has any possible application. (And if we were to use the concept quite freely in such cases, then the concept might eventually cease to be of use itself.)

For the most part, proceduralists do not discuss puzzling cases in the context of a paradigm. They rarely stop to consider whether such pieces can be claimed for art, and often they treat the hard case *as if it were* a new kind of paradigm. By a strange inversion, the inscribed urinal not the painted canvas becomes the standard case for an institutional theory of art. Hence Dickie's oft-repeated view<sup>26</sup> that the Readymades and the like most clearly reveal the institutional nature of art. Hence Binkley's claim<sup>27</sup> that Duchamp demonstrated with the Readymades how art could be severed from aesthetics. And hence Danto's doctrine<sup>28</sup> that artworks owe their existence to interpretation. The pro-

ceduralists have invented their own canon of works, a small but colourful one, to which they return over and over again in their writings.

There is more at stake here than the question of faulty methodology, for some proceduralists are prepared to entertain as art that which they think may well undermine the institution of art. To his credit Davies makes this clear, when he remarks that the 'readymades and their avant-garde equivalents in the other forms and categories of art' are hard cases precisely because they challenge and *perhaps even undermine the function of art*'. (my italics)<sup>29</sup> However, as we have seen, Davies believes that such things are unquestionably works of art and pose no philosophical difficulties in this respect.

For my own part, I think that works that seek to undermine the place of art in our culture raise questions of the deepest and most urgent philosophical importance. I hope to have shown that Davies is wrong to claim that those who are engaged in the task of definition can justifiably put aside such questions in the belief that they have somehow been settled by members of the Artworld. These are not matters the philosopher can shrug off or delegate to others; they are, quintessentially, philosophical questions. If philosophical aesthetics is not to be allowed to degenerate into the worst kind of scholasticism, we should ask more searching questions of what we expect of both art and philosophy.

#### Notes and References

- 1 Stephen Davies, *Definitions of Art* (Cornell University Press, 1991), p.27.
- 2 Davies, *ibid*, p. 52. Davies has reservations about whether functionalism can be qualified in this way without being seriously compromised. For the purposes of this paper, I shall assume that a reference to intentions does not involve inconsistency.
- 3 Davies, *ibid*, p.37
- 4 Both quotations are from Davies, *ibid*, p.66
- 5 Davies, *ibid*, p.67.
- 6 Davies, *ibid*, p.67
7. Davies, *ibid*, p.68
- 8 Davies, *ibid*, p.66.
- 9 Davies, *ibid*, p.67.
- 10 The arguments in Danto's famous paper, 'The Artworld', seem to be concerned with the whole of modern art and not just a small part of the avant-garde.
- 11 See Davies, *ibid*, pp. 70-71, for a discussion of these matters.
- 12 Davies, *ibid*, pp.70-71.
- 13 Davies, *ibid*, p.71.
- 14 Davies, *ibid*, p.71.
- 15 Davies, *ibid*, p.73.
- 16 Davies inaccurately cites my writings as an example of such a functionalist view. In fact, I argue that the Readymades defy simple classification and that while some may be claimed for art

- others, including *Fountain*, belong not to art but rather anti- art. Owing to their intrinsic complexity and ambiguity, the Readymades are likely to trip the unwary and especially the theorist. See my paper, 'Duchamp's Readymades: Art and Anti-Art', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol.22, No., 1982.
- 17 Davies, *ibid*, p.39.
- 18 Davies, *ibid*, p.40.
- 19 Davies, *ibid*, p.74.
- 20 Harold Rosenberg, 'Duchamp: Private and Public' in his *Art on the Edge* (Secker and Warburg, 1976), p.17.
- 21 William Camfield, 'Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain*: Its History and Aesthetics in the Context of 1917' in Rudolf Kuenzli and Francis Nauman (eds.), *Marcel Duchamp: Artist of the Century* (MIT Press, 1990), p.64.
- 22 Owing to the recent upsurge of interest in Duchamp, it can easily be forgotten how for most of his life he was ignored by art historians, who attached little importance to the Readymades.
- 23 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. F. Anscombe (Blackwell, 1968), p.155e.
- 24 See my 'Marcel Duchamp : "Chess Aestheta and Anaartist Unreconcited", *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Yorthesing.
- 25 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. Anscombe (Blackwell, 1968), p.118e.
- 26 For example, see George Dickie, *Art and the Aesthetic* (Cornell University Press, 1974), pp. 32-33.
- 27 See Timothy Binkley, 'Deciding About Art: A Polemic Against Aesthetics' in Lars Aagaard-Mogensen ed.), *Culture and art* (Humanities press, 1976), p.92.
- 28 For example, see Arthur Danto, 'The Artworld', *The Journal of Philosophy*, LXI (1964).
- 29 Davies, *ibid*, p.75 for the first part of the quotation, and p. 76 for the second part. See also p.41 for an elaboration of this point.

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