

*Press Release, March 2026*

# **D** is for **DUCHAMP** the **DEEP DYED DECEIVER**

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## **Arsenale Institute for Politics of Representation - Venice**

CURATED BY: WOLFGANG SCHEPPE  
*with* BASTIAAN VAN DER VELDEN, ZOË WISMETH, MAX GLADER

PUBLIC OPENING: Saturday, May 9, 2026 17:00 - 20:00 (5pm - 8pm)

PRESS PREVIEW: Tuesday, May 6 - Friday, May 8, 2026  
*Personal tours and interviews can be arranged on request.*

OPENING TIMES: Sunday, May 10 – Sunday, November 22, 2026  
*Tuesday – Sunday / 11:00 - 19:30 (11am - 7:30pm), free entry*

LOCATION: Arsenale Institute for Politics of Representation  
Riva dei Sette Martiri, Castello, 1430/A, Venice

The Arsenale Institute for Politics of Representation is pleased to announce *D is for Duchamp the Deep Dyed Deceiver*, an exhibition dedicated to Marcel Duchamp curated by Wolfgang Scheppe with Bastiaan van der Velden, Zoë Wismeth, Max Glader.

The exhibition brings together the largest body of material assembled to date on the reception of Duchamp's work, presenting an extraordinary group of previously unknown sources and documents alongside the most influential publications issued during his lifetime. Taken together, the objects on view map what was seen, narrated, and reproduced in Duchamp's lifetime. They trace how the reception of Duchamp's *oeuvre* evolved across different social and public contexts.

Alongside this documentation, the exhibition features more than twenty original works by Duchamp, together with an ordinary mass-produced object, a "coat rack." An item from the same production run that served in 1917 as the point of departure for the readymade *Trébuchet*, whose French title alludes both to a chess "trap" move and to the act of stumbling, turning the work into a visual pun with multiple resonances.

For Duchamp, the work becomes an epistemological trap, while the public record of its reception unfolds into an expanding field of meaning.

*D is for Duchamp the Deep Dyed Deceiver* reflects the artist's conviction that the viewer's judgment is a primary component of the work itself. In the presentation of Duchamp's work, this approach marks a paradigm shift, setting this exhibition apart from all those previously devoted to him.

Developed over nearly three decades of research, the project takes its point of departure from Duchamp's conception of the work of art, articulated in his 1957 lecture *The Creative Act*, as the outcome of a complicity between artist and viewer, thereby assigning the latter an authorial role.

*"The artist acts like a mediumistic being. [...] We must then deny him the state of consciousness on the esthetic plane about what he is doing or why he is doing it. [...] The spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deciphering and interpreting its inner qualifications and thus adds his contribution to the creative act."*

The exhibition includes an intervention by the German artist Olaf Nicolai, specially developed for this occasion. Executed in neon script, it is based on a sentence by Duchamp found in a recently discovered correspondence, which is presented within the exhibition. The statement underpins the project's central idea by returning to Duchamp's own words and offering insight into the trap he set for his audience.

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*Olaf Nicolai's work is supported by Eigen+Art Gallery, Berlin, and Stiftung Federkiel, Munich. The Arsenale Institute for Politics of Representation is an independent international institution for cultural studies and philosophical research based in Venice, Italy.*