HON-EN KATEDRAL:

THE MECHANICAL BRIDE STRIPPED BARE IN STOCKHOLM, EVEN

by

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Abstract

This thesis aims to uncover an intricate relationship between Cold War politics and culture in Sweden during the mid-sixties by examining discourses surrounding a sculptural assemblage entitled Hon-en katedral [She-a Cathedral]. Hon was a 23 meter long, 6 meter high, and 10 meter wide sculptural assemblage in the form of a giant and pregnant female figure. It was constructed during the summer of 1966 at Stockholm’s Moderna Museet by the American born Niki de Saint-Phalle, Jean Tinguely of Switzerland, and the Swedish artist Per-Olof Ultvedt, and was entered for a period of three months by a continuous crowd that lined up to see and experience the spectacle She embodied. Once inside this three-story building the visitor encountered a Coca-Cola bar, planetarium, lookout tower, slide, tunnel of love, several “Fake Paintings” in an art gallery, a number of automatic vendors for various kinds of goods, service personnel, a small plant for the production of broken glass, a public telephone, a gold-fish pond, a movie theatre showing a soundless Greta Garbo movie, and much, much more. I argue that this work occupied a central position in debates over art and technology. I also consider how and why a small museum located in the relatively marginal city of Stockholm became an important centre for international avant-garde art during the 1960’s. Hon, I argue, represents a shift within the Swedish museum’s exhibition and collecting activities away from an American Neo-Dada and Pop Art that was understood in relation to American foreign politics. In an attempt to reveal constructions of identities on personal, national and international levels, this thesis also seeks to understand the gendered and sexualized landscape on which these political and cultural discourses were played out.
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Patrik Andersson
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Introduction

In 1967 Niki de Saint-Phalle and Jean Tinguely accepted an official invitation from the French government to construct an art work for the roof-top of the French Pavillion at Expo '67, the World's Fair in Montreal. The large sculptural group produced by the two artists was given the name *Le Paradis fantastique* and was erected in March of that year [fig.1]. Consisting of nine of Saint-Phalle's brightly coloured polystyrene and polyester sculptures “attacked” by six of Tinguely's black painted metal machine sculptures, the work was hailed by one reporter as “a breath of fresh air” for those who “get fed up with all that greatness” of a World’s Fair. From Montreal the work travelled to the Albright Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo before being placed in New York's Central Park near the border of Harlem. In 1968, due to indecision from New York's board of parks as to where the permanent resting place for the sculptural group should be, Saint-Phalle and Tinguely decided to donate the work to the city of Stockholm with the explanation that the machines and sculptures in *Le Paradis fantastique* are the sons and daughters of a different, now destroyed, sculptural assemblage entitled *Hon-en katedral* (or, *She-a Cathedral*), shown in Stockholm in 1966.

*Hon* [fig.2] was a 23 meter long, 6 meter high, and 10 meter wide sculptural assemblage in the form of a giant and pregnant female figure, and is the central figure of this thesis. It was constructed during the summer of 1966 at Stockholm’s Moderna Museet by the American born Niki de Saint-Phalle, Jean Tinguely of Switzerland, and the Swedish artist Per-Olof Ultvedt, and was entered for a period of three months by a continuous crowd that lined up to see and experience the spectacle *She* embodied. Once inside this three-story building the visitor

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2According to Pontus Hulten, the “people who came to this part of the immense park, mostly inhabitants of the slums to the north, liked Paradise. The small sinewy, aggressive, black sculptures attacking the large, healthy, strong “Nanas” could be construed as a comment on the situation in New York.” This may partially explain why the work was eventually removed from Central Park. Hulten, Pontus. *Jean Tinguely: A Magic Stronger than Death*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1987, p.173.
3The work was finally installed in Stockholm in 1971.
encountered a Coca-Cola bar, planetarium, lookout tower, slide, tunnel of love, several “Fake Paintings” in an art gallery, a number of automatic vendors for various kinds of goods, service personnel, a small plant for the production of broken glass, a public telephone, a gold-fish pond, a movie theatre showing a soundless Greta Garbo movie, and much, much more. To complete the exhibition, a three day destruction period was announced and executed.4

It may interest the reader to know that I was born in 1966 only a few miles west of Stockholm and moved to Canada in 1978.5 Although my original aim was not to find a topic cathartically related to my own life, I have to admit that my chosen topic and the questions raised therein are related to me. Frequent visits to Stockholm’s Moderna Museet on my working holidays to Sweden during the past few years sparked an interest in the museum’s vast collection of avant-garde art from the 1960’s. Each time before entering the museum, located on Skeppsholmen in central Stockholm, I was confronted by Le Paradis fantastique located in a park opposite the entrance. The prominence of this work fascinated me -- the violent gestures it playfully presented disturbed me, and I questioned the meaning of the work. It was while researching the origins of this sculpture that I was led to the "mother" of these "children" and there I would find the roots to a history of how the museum had become internationally acclaimed in the 1960’s but had since the early seventies gradually diminished on the international art scene.

Although my work focuses on an exhibition that took place in 1966, the reader should be aware of a contemporary project to rebuild Moderna Museet. In 1992, the City of Stockholm announced that the Spanish architect Rafael Moneo had won a competition to build a new museum of modern art to replace the old Moderna Museet where Hon was shown. The main argument behind this 350 million crown rebuilding project, a proposal that hit many Swedes as hard to swallow at a time of a major national recession, has been to combat the presently unfavourable

4The destruction was not conducted in front of a public but was carefully documented with photographs and moving film.

5It could also be added that I was conceived in New York the year before.
conditions in which “Pontus Hulten’s world renowned collection” is housed. The most important work in this astonishing collection of twentieth century art has been, since the early sixties, the numerous signed replicas and originals by Marcel Duchamp. By looking back at the events of the sixties, in particular the exhibition Hon-en katedral, we can better understand what it means to make sure that Duchamp remains a central figure in their version of the history of the avant-garde. Although Duchamp did not participate in this exhibition, the discourse surrounding his work occupied a central role in Hon’s construction.

In 1961, Duchamp had visited Stockholm’s Moderna Museet in connection with the exhibition Movement in Art. For this exhibition the Swedish art critic Ulf Linde, with the help of Per-Olof Ultvedt, made a replica of The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even, which was completed by Duchamp himself and signed “Certifie pour copie conforme Marcel Duchamp Stockholm 1961” [fig.3]. It could be argued that The Large Glass (its shorter title) is the single most important piece in the Museum’s vast collection. In May of 1992 a new and “more precise” replica of this work was revealed. This copy has since travelled to Bonn, Germany where it is on loan for five years before returning to Stockholm which by then hopes to have completed its new museum to house its collection of modern art. Largely responsible for both the 1961 and 1992 replicas is Pontus Hulten; in 1961 a young curator with the Moderna Museet, presently positioned as “artistic director” at Bonn’s new Kunst und Ausstellungshalle.

This thesis is concerned with constructions of identities on personal, national and international levels that involve micro- as well as macro-politics. By understanding Hon as having played a part

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6The quote is Moneo’s..., by calling the Modern Museum’s collection “Pontus Hulten’s,” Moneo makes reference to the important role Hulten has had in forming that collection. See Rebecka Tarschys’ interview with Rafael Moneo: “Fullträffar för Moneo.” [Bull’s Eye for Moneo] Dagens Nyheter (June 25, 1992), p.1. My Translation of title. Further translations made by the author will simply be marked “MT.”

7This Large Glass was also produced by Linde, but this time authorized by Mrs. Tini Duchamp who was flown in on the occasion of its unveiling

8It is noteworthy that a large Niki de Saint-Phalle retrospective was organized for this museum’s inception in 1992.
in the construction of a political position not only for the artists involved, but for a museum that stood to represent Swedish culture during the mid-sixties, we can better understand why the present debate around the re-establishment of an international cultural position in Sweden is so heavily dependent on its historical roots. An attempt is made to critically reevaluate some of Moderna Museet’s activities during the early to mid-sixties in order to consider issues such as gender politics that have not yet been examined in given histories of Moderna Museet. The histories that emerge from this study will jar against the definitive history provided by Swedish art historians who in their contemporary attempt to reconstruct this past eminence rely on a selected history provided by key participants in their chronicle. Conversely, this paper emphasizes the significant contribution Stockholm’s Moderna Museet provided for an international avant-garde art scene during the sixties. The dual aim of this paper is thus to suture significant gaps in Swedish and international histories of modern art.

*Hon-en katedral* is considered as a distinctly European ‘happening’ and viewed in relation to Pop Art and experiments in art and technology occurring in New York during the early to mid-1960’s. *Hon* encapsulates a shift within Moderna Museet’s exhibition strategy toward showing European work in favour of American Pop Art. I argue that the Europeans in question were carving out a similar position strongly opposed to American happenings and an American avant-garde increasingly absorbed into mass culture. Furthermore, the location of this exhibition must also be read in relation to the isolationist policies Charles De Gaulle promoted in his attempt to counter Americanism in France at this time. Considering this context, we can see how the constraints put on artists such as Saint-Phalle and Tinguely allowed Stockholm to become a viable alternative to New York and Paris and how *Hon* could only have been produced in Stockholm. *Hon* coincided with Stockholm’s and Sweden’s attempt to re-define itself in relation to center and margin, nationalism and internationalism.
In the April 1965 issue of the Swedish art journal *Konstrevy*, an issue devoted entirely to the artistic phenomena that had come to bear Allan Kaprow's label "happenings," the journal's chief editor, Olle Granath, wrote a four page introduction that outlined what he and others saw as a major problem with the use of this term:

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There is something of a sleep-walker’s security in the way that the American artists with their happenings step right into the picture of modern society.... The level at which this timely engagement plays itself out is what happenings and pop art have in common with each other.... It is of course easy to view happenings as nothing but a nihilistic gesture, a freedom that has run its course and makes every argument for an artistic statement meaningless. But maybe this number of *Konstrevy* can show that this is not quite the way it is.9
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Granath observed two major events that could not be pigeonholed into the category of happenings while they "still engage in these, beyond the genre active, artworks."10 One of these events was Jean Tinguely’s self-destroying machine *Hommage à New York* assembled on March 17, 1960, and the second took place the same year at exactly midnight on Sunday November 27th when Yves Klein declared all of Paris a "Théâtre Collectif" or a "Théâtre du Vide." As I will show, the artists, curators and critics involved in the construction of *Hon-en katedral* took part in discourses directly related to the happenings that Granath outlines. Aligning themselves to these two previous events, this collective sought to mark out a critical edge for their avant-garde

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10Ibid., p.110.
position in order to differentiate their work from that of other artists whom they feared were misguided and whose work was ultimately homogenized under the label Pop Art via happenings. What interests me, and what I see as a contributing factor to both the production and the critical reception of Hon, is the socio-political context within which this distinctly European happening finally took place. Defining this cultural climate by looking at Sweden’s attempt to stake out an independent role within international politics provides some reasons why Saint-Phalle, Tinguely, and Ultvedt were led to locate their artistic production in Stockholm. Understanding this artistic event will in turn shed some light on the role European and American Pop culture played in Swedish domestic and foreign policy.

Re-defining the Middle-Way: the Swedish-American Conflict

Sweden has until recently largely been ignored in the diplomatic as well as cultural history of this period. With a small population of approximately 8 million, but covering the fourth largest land area in Europe, Sweden occupied an interesting position within a post-war political terrain. Although relatively isolated geographically, and claiming neutrality status politically, Sweden was nonetheless an active player in international politics and played a special role in foreign relations. By the early 1960’s, Sweden was applauded by many countries, including the United States, for the high standard of living it had achieved and the "middle-way" it had successfully forged. While being governed by a Socialist government since 1932, Sweden had become one the most Americanized countries in Europe, and had according to Lyndon Johnson, achieved "happy and honourable bonds" with the United States.11

The apparently comfortable relationship that literature has constructed of this time and place, would however soon be put into question, for there were significant underlying tensions which would lead to heated controversy by the summer of 1965. Sweden’s public refusal to join defence

pacts such as the Brussels Treaty Organization, and its later version NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), coupled with its attempts to set up independent defence pacts with other Scandinavian countries, had irritated the United States for a number of years. What undercut this irritation was a secret alliance forged between NATO and the Swedish government. Geopolitically caught between the two superpowers of Russia and the United States and recognising its limited sovereignty in this context, the Swedish government increasingly realized its role within international politics as that of a buffer state. In this balancing act, the Social Democratic government, led by Prime Minister Tage Erlander, was publically firm in its stand that Sweden could only remain neutral by avoiding explicit ties to the West, while top secret cooperations with NATO were carried out.

These and other tensions would, however, not erupt to an alarming scale until America was fully engaged in the Vietnam War. Speaking at a July 30 meeting of the Christian Democrats in 1965, Olof Palme, then Minister of Transport and Communications, declared his objections to American involvement in Vietnam by stating that "it is illusory to believe that demands for social justice can be met with violence and military force." The Social Democrat’s basic moral

12 This was revealed during the summer of 1992 when the newly elected conservative government, in an attempt to strengthen its relations with the European Union (EG), admitted to Sweden’s ties to NATO during the 1950’s and 60’s. This “secret” appeared in documents related to the trial of the Swedish General Stig Wenneström who was revealed to have been a Cold War spy for Russia while simultaneously being involved in linking the Swedish War Intelligence Centre (Svenska stridledningscentralen) with NATO centres in Norway and Denmark. See "Hyckleri?" [Hypocrisy?] in Expressen (May 27, 1992), p.2; and Dagens Nyheter, "Spionförhör bekräftar NATO kontakten." [Spy Interrogations Prove Contact with NATO] (May 27, 1992), p.1 & 6; also observe the Parliamentary debates regarding Swedish Neutrality: Riksdagen, Protokol (1991/92, May 25, 1992), in answer to interpellations, p.2-16. MT
13 My use of the term “buffer state” is in reference to the study Buffer States in World Politics, eds. John Chay and Thomas E. Ross. Colorado: Westview Press, 1986 in which a buffer area is defined as “an area ... controlled by one or more small states and located between two opposing-and much greater-powers.... The buffer system dictates that neither (great power) can dominate the system.” p.90.
value," he continued, "forces us at each turn to stand on the side of the oppressed against oppressors, on a miserable and poor peoples side against their users and lords." Palme's cutting remarks did not go unnoticed by American Embassy officials who were quick to voice their objections. Following suit, the State Department in Washington demanded "clarification" from the Swedish Government as to whether or not they supported Palme's statements. Although Swedish opinion was not one sided, Tage Erlander and foreign minister Torsten Nilsson publicly supported Palme's position.17

In the spring of 1966 further irritation would be added to the wound caused by Sweden's position regarding Vietnam when Erlander decided to allow the Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal to be held in Stockholm the following year. The tribunal, which included celebrated opponents to the Vietnam War such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Isaac Deutscher, and others, had been banned from Paris by de Gaulle. Responding to this decision, the Swedes were informed by the Swedish Embassy that President Johnson was "disappointed and disturbed."18 As historian Fredrik Logevall and others have shown, the summer of 1965 was to be a turning point marking a new direction for Swedish foreign policy, embodying a more activist approach to international issues and a greater determination to stake out a position between the superpowers.19 This new direction by Sweden, which sought to forge a more sovereign path for itself, ultimately strained Swedish-American relations to the point where both

16 Ibid., p. 38-39.
17 See Dagens Nyheter "Vi Står Fast om Vietnam" [We Remain Firm about Vietnam] (August 3, 1965), p.5. Prime Minister Tage Erlander is quoted as saying: "I have nothing more to say today. The Government's view regarding the Vietnam conflict has been criticized in America. We have had our say. And that we stand by." MT The intense Swedish press debate concerning American involvement in Vietnam during the summer of 1965 has been the focus for a doctoral dissertation from the University of Lund. See Queckfeldt, Eva. 'Vietnam: Tre svenska tidningars syn på vietnam frågan. ['Vietnam: Three Swedish Newspaper's Opinions regarding the Vietnam Question. Ph.D. Lund Universitet: Bibliotheca Historica Lundensis, 1981. The articles from this press debate have also been collected in book form under the title: Vietnam i svensk press debatt Sommaren 1965 [Vietnam in Swedish Press Debate during the summer of 1965].

18 Logevall [1993], p.429.
19 Ibid., p.427.
the Johnson and Nixon administrations issued numerous threats of impending economic sanctions.20

Although Yngve Möller, in his study Sverige och Vietnam Kriget [Sweden and the Vietnam War] (1992), stresses the important role played by Swedish intellectuals in forging a national opinion by voicing their strong objections to American involvement in Vietnam, he, like other historians, fails to discuss the cultural image that Sweden wanted to project at this time. A strong cultural facade, I am arguing, was necessary to mask any trace that may have revealed cooperations with NATO to the Swedish voting public.21 Official opposition to American involvement in Vietnam certainly provided some visible distancing from a Western Alliance, but the consumer economy and culture that had come to exist in Sweden by the 1960’s was increasingly suggesting an American cultural alliance. While wishing to remain on the economically profitable road to democracy that an American based consumer culture provided, Swedish liberalism under a Socialist government had to find some way to mark out its cultural differences to American liberalism while at the same time making sure that the existing consumer culture was not discarded. As evidenced by mass media, advertising campaigns, the movie industry, and general consumption trends, Swedish culture was more or less indistinguishable from an American consumer culture with one exception. By the 1960’s, the one image that did distinguish Swedish democracy from others was the liberal sexual politics it espoused.22 The image of sexual

20Ibid., p.444.
21When cooperation with NATO was revealed in 1992, the Swedish government defended its public secrecy by arguing that “It was a very cold war and Russia had shown itself to be very aggressive.... We wanted to have a second option in case our neutrality politics failed. We had to be able to protect ourselves in case we were attacked.” Hellberg, Anders. “Natosamarbete avslutar.” [NATO Alliance Completed] Dagens Nyheter (May 27, 1992), p.6. MT
22In 1974 the Swedish Health Education Committee observed the down side of the liberalization process in the early to mid-sixties that had introduced the Pill, legalized abortion, the IUD, the sex-role equality campaign, the women’s movement, etc.: "(The) liberalization in the 60’s has been overtaken by an increasingly raw commercial exploitation of sexuality with emphasis on consumption, performance and depersonification.... Development in recent years presents the paradox of a society that increasingly stands up for equality between the sexes in various fields at the same time as the sexual exploitation of women becomes more and more brazen in, for instance, the mass media and advertising. The anti-human and, in the deepest sense, anti-sexual attitudes that youth encounter today in commercial messages cannot be over
freedom Sweden presented to the outside world and which stereo-typed its culture was embraced by post-war youth in Sweden to whom sexual freedom was equated with political emancipation. It was this generation of Swedes that Hon-en katedral was presented to.

Considering the importance culture played in shaping a national identity and the passifying role it could play within domestic and foreign relations, provides this paper with an important access point into the art world I want to discuss. This coordinated effort by Sweden to consolidate an independent position within international politics was also paralleled by an increased spending on certain cultural programs. As we shall see, a large part of these funds would be funnelled into Moderna Museet in such a way that by 1966 Stockholm would find itself spotlighted on the international art scene.

**Moderna Museet: the Centrality of the Margin**

During the 1930's a large sum of money was donated to the National Museum in Stockholm by an Emma Spitzer in order for a modern (modernt) museum to be built.\(^\text{23}\) The reason given for this donation was not that she appreciated modern art work but that she wished to see it removed from the National Museum.\(^\text{24}\) Throughout the 1930's and 40's nothing was done with the money, or the idea. But by the mid-50's the National Museum was running out of storage space for incoming art. At this time, a reorganization of the Swedish military system began a process of decentralization: whereby its training grounds, previously located inside the capital city, were relocated to the outskirts of Stockholm. In this process, a former naval gymnasium, built in the middle of the nineteenth century and located on Skeppsholmen in the central part of Stockholm,


\(^{24}\)Ibid., p.30.
was made available to house modern art [fig.4&5]. In 1956, while still in the process of renovation, the museum's first exhibit took place with a two month showing of Picasso's Guernica [fig.6] and 93 related drawings. The official opening of the museum was not to occur until May 1958.

Functioning as an extension of the National Museum and operating on a shoe string budget, emphasis was placed on showing modern and contemporary Swedish art. But it was the museum's inclusion of such internationally acclaimed modernists as Le Corbusier, Jacques Villon and Sam Francis which proved itself most effective in gaining public recognition. Decisive in the direction the museum would take was the decision in 1960 by the Swedish Institute to turn to Moderna Museet for help in breaking the isolated position of Swedish contemporary art. Sponsoring a collection of swedish works to be sent to the Sao Paulo Biennale, the Swedish Institute put their trust and money in Pontus Hulten, an associate curator with Moderna Museet [fig.7]. This trip enabled Hulten to make a stop in New York where he made a number of significant connections. While living in Paris in the mid-50's, Hulten had become close friends with Jean Tinguely and Niki de Saint-Phalle. In New York he got to know Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Richard Stankiewicz, Alfred Leslie and many other contemporary American artists.

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25If we consider the attempts by the Swedish state to make what the Swedish army were up to invisible, then we can see how the construction of this new museum paved the way for the making visible of culture. A building once used to house the bodies of soldiers, would now be used to house the minds and tastes of the new consumer culture for modern art. However, I do not think that this was a conscious strategy from the start but as we shall see, it would take on this role by 1965.

26At this time the annual purchasing budget granted the museum was 30 000 crowns. See Linde, Ulf. "Memoarer." [Memoirs] in Granath, et al., p.65.

27After the Le Corbusier exhibition which followed an avant-garde film festival, Moderna Museet could boast that 41,000 visitors had found their way through their doors. In 1960 paintings by Jaques Villon (Duchamp's brother) had been viewed by 14,000 people and a Sam Francis exhibition was seen by 15,000. Ibid., p.76-78.

28Ibid., p.35. The definition of its activities provided by the Swedish Institute is as follows: "the S.I. promotes Sweden's international contacts through information on Swedish social and cultural life, exchange of culture and experience, ....cooperates closely with Swedish overseas authorities and... institutions, as well as with private persons in Sweden and other countries." Source: Scholarships and Fellowships for Study and Research in Sweden. Stockholm: Svenska Institutet, 1991.

through his friendship to the Swedish engineer Billy Klüver who was working for Bell Laboratories during the day and collaborating with artists on art work during the evenings. 

These friendships were to be crucial in the future that lay ahead for the young Swedish curator and Moderna Museet. Back in Sweden in 1961, Hulten curated his first major exhibition entitled *Rörelse i konsten* (Movement in Art) which was shown first at the Stedelijk in Amsterdam, then at Stockholm's Moderna Museet, and finally at the Louisiana outside of Copenhagen. 

Besides the artists Hulten had met in New York, the exhibition included works by Duchamp, El Lissitsky, Moholy-Nagy, Man Ray, Tatlin, Albers, Gabo, Arp, Tinguely, Saint-Phalle, and many others whose work was meant to represent a survey of 20th century Western art. Inserted into this international frame were a number of Swedish artists, one of whom was Per-Olof Ultvedt.

With this exhibition, the person who was constructed as the ideal modern artist to link the European and American avant-garde at this early stage of Moderna Museet's history was Marcel Duchamp. In 1961, Duchamp was still relatively unknown to the general art public when he

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30 Tomkins, Calvin. *Off the Wall: Robert Rauschenberg and the Art World of Our Time*. New York: Penguin Books, 1982. pp. 251-2. Klüver collaborated on art work with, amongst others, Robert Rauschenberg. In 1965 the two of them formed a collective workshop called Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.) which at its height in the late '60's had a membership list of over 6,000. Already by the mid-60's, E.A.T. was receiving funding from A.T.&T. and other large corporations, as well as the A.F.of L.- C.I.O.. Amongst it's biggest projects was a commission received in 1970 to design the Pepsi-Cola pavilion at Expo 70. It is also interesting to note that between 1930 and 1960, the greatest growth in Swedish export took place within the engineering industry (from 18% in 1930 to ca. 45% in 1960). For a good overview of Swedish internationalization and industrial growth, see Olsson, Ulf. "Sweden and Europe in the Twentieth Century." *Scandinavian Journal of History* vol.18 no.1 (1993), p.7-36.

31 Hulten has later stated that the reason why the "Movement in Art" exhibition was shown in Amsterdam first rather than Stockholm was that they thought the Swedish public may not readily accept the legitimacy of a show of this kind owing to its being a product of its own museum. Therefore, Hulten arranged to have the exhibition first held at the established and reputable European Stedelijk Museum which would allow the Swedish art work to appear more authentic, and Moderna Museet's organizers the appearance of working with a European center of modern and contemporary art. See Hulten (1983), p.36.

32 All in all, the exhibition included 233 works by 80 artists from 19 countries. For a more complete description, see the exhibition catalogue: *Rörelse konsten*. [Movement in Art] Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1961. Besides Hulten, the working committee for the exhibition included Carlo Derkert, Daniel Spoerri, and Billy Klüver.
visited Moderna Museet in connection with the *Movement in Art* exhibition.\(^{33}\) A photograph [fig. 8] showing Duchamp comfortably seated and surrounded by standing representatives from the Swedish art community suggests that Duchamp was willing to play the role of king in the international chess game Moderna Museet attempted to master.\(^{34}\)

*Movement in Art* was received with unheralded success. Once this exhibition was presented, a lively public debate (radio, newspapers, journals, etc.) on Sweden's role in the contemporary international art world began. Lasting four months, the exhibition was seen by seventy-thousand visitors.\(^{35}\) The young museum had definitely found an audience.

As a chronological history of the museum's activities between 1960 and 1965 shows, the importing of European and American art was at the center of Moderna Museet's agenda.\(^{36}\) By incorporating the art of European modernists (historical and contemporary) along with the latest trends of a particular American avant-garde, the young museum, along with numerous Swedish artists, could construct an identity for itself on the the margins (Stockholm), which was nonetheless intricately connected to the historical avant-garde center of Paris and the new dominant artistic production site located in New York. What is interesting for the purpose of my argument is that the Swedish state's attempt to produce a suitable international Swedish foreign policy coincided with a successful attempt by Moderna Museet to construct a venue for an international avant-garde art. Marcel Duchamp, with his past artistic involvement in both Europe

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33 As already mentioned, during that visit, the art critic Ulf Linde made a replica of Duchamp's *Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even*, which, along with other ready-made objects and replicas, Duchamp himself completed and signed "Certifie pour copie conforme Marcel Duchamp Stockholm 1961." Duchamp's visit to Stockholm and Linde's replica of Duchamp's *Large Glass* is well documented in Linde, Ulf. "Framför och bakom glaset [Infront and Behind of the glass] *Konstrev* 5-6 (1961), pp.161-165.

34 The individuals surrounding Duchamp stand to represent the Swedish art community: Oscar Reutersvärd on the far left is an artist, Ulf Linde an art critic, Carlo Derkert the museum director and Pontus Hulten the curator. Overall then, a rather male defined representation.

35 Granath, et al., p.80.

36 This chronology can be found in Granath, et al.
and America, provided the stem from which this internationalist venture could branch out. Furthermore, the sexual vocabulary Duchamp utilized in his work was well received by a Swedish audience whose own individual and national identity was sexualized.

By 1962 the museum began a series of exhibitions that highlighted Hultén's fascination with the work he had found in the United States. Between March and May of that year, paintings, sculptures, and *combines* by Jasper Johns, Alfred Leslie, Robert Rauschenberg, and Richard Stankiewicz were shown together in an exhibition titled *4 Americans* [fig.9]. Again, Moderna Museet had produced a much discussed and well attended art event that had been complimented with two parallel events at the museum: a film series called *The New American Cinema: New York Film*, which included films by Alfred Leslie, Robert Frank, Jonas Mekas, John Cassavetes, Shirley Clarke, and others; and *New American Music and Poetry* in which John Cage delivered a talk entitled "Where are we going? and what are we doing?" Although the majority of public feedback from these activities was positive, this was not unanimous. Professor Aron Borelius from the University of Lund, for example, protested against the museum's management with the thrust of his argument directed towards the inclusion of a live goat in the *4 Americans* exhibition.37 Although one could trivialize this critique on the basic premise that if the professor had actually seen the exhibition he would have known that the goat in question was not a living, but a stuffed one which had been made part of Robert Rauschenberg's large combine painting *Monogram* (1956-59) [fig.10], one must remember that this work was still highly contentious and "avant-garde" at the time (and still is to many). The successful public relations campaigns organized by museum staff that could prepare its audience for the radical agenda it had in mind must therefore also be acknowledged. As art historian Karin Lindegren who worked for Moderna Museet at the time later commented, this was not always an easy task as: "Pontus always wanted to 'épater le bourgeois,' and the bourgeois always let themselves be irritated [sic]."38 As could be expected,

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37Ibid., p.83.  
38Ibid., p.154.
part of the reason for the museum's success was that the majority of gallery goers were young people in their twenties and thirties whose tastes were increasingly shaped by the contemporary consumer culture which the activities and works inside this institution relied on (amongst other discourses) for their meaning.39

It was not enough to hang the works in front of this young and eager audience, however. The work by the four Americans, like the work by the young European artists exhibited at the museum, had to be given a substantial art historical context from which their meaning could be grasped by the Swedish public. Between February and April of 1963 a large Jackson Pollock retrospective, featuring hundreds of works produced between 1933-1956, was shown for the first time in Northern Europe. Concurrently displayed, and complementing this exhibit, was a smaller, although by no means insignificant, display of works by the American artist and social commentator Ben Shahn. Both these exhibitions served to give the more contemporary work the needed historical background.

As can be imagined, exhibitions of this size and character (the majority of work had to be imported from other countries) could not be organized without a substantial amount of funding. Considering the insignificant amount of funds made available by the Swedish state at the early stage of the museum's history, money had to be acquired from other sources. As Roland Pålsson, then cultural advisor for the government’s Ecclesiastical Department at that time has noted, "With Hulten, the Swedish cultural life had gained an unusual character. He brought together a deep trust from the cultural life of international metropolises and artists with an administrative talent that is usually able to give multinational companies a kick-start."40 Hulten's acute business


40 Pålsson, Roland. "60-talet 'in nostalgiarn.'" in Granath, et al., p.141. MT
sense, coupled with his broad network of friends and his relatively small but hardworking staff, were together able to generate enough interest in their activities to inspire large and small corporations to donate the money necessary to insure the art work lent by collectors and dealers.

The public attention gained (both positive and negative) as a result of Moderna Museet's self-acclaimed radical activities did not occur without interest by the Swedish state however. Between the 26th of December 1963 and the 16th of February the following year, an exhibition was organized under the title Önskemuseet (The Museum of Our Wishes). Borrowed from an international range of collectors and dealers, a wide assortment of 20th century Western art work (available for sale) was borrowed to show the Swedish audience what the museum could look like if only it had the sufficient funds to fill the perceived "gaps" in its collection [fig.11]. A donation box was set up inside the museum to allow the gallery goer to help invest in this venture which hoped to raise enough funds to purchase a number of the items on display. Explanations of these optimistic purchases were also supplied in a lengthy catalogue with an introduction written by Hulten:

"...The role of Art is increasingly becoming larger as the content of our times is becoming incomprehensible, confused, and frightening. A country must have a place to store this myth carrying material, one has to produce a reference system and a source of inspiration. Especially in a land on the periphery, where major art events are rare and the import of foreign art is limited, where one risks being placed outside what happens in the center. Only through knowledge about what is happening can one produce one's own contribution."  

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The exhibition catalogue placed each of the specifically chosen art works within an historical lineage that Ulf Linde had written for the catalogue. Eight categories were defined to contextualize the work: 1. Fauvism and Expressionism; 2. Cubism; 3. Futurism; 4. Dada; 5. Abstract Art: Suprematism, Constructivism, De Stijl; 6. Classicism and Objectivity; 7. "Minotaure:" Around Surrealism; and 8. Post-War Art. At the end of two pages of reasons why an up-to-date museum collection is necessary, Hulten concludes with the following call to arms:

The time has come for Moderna Museet to make a serious commitment to building a representative collection of international art. Let us wish each other success in this project.42

At the time Hulten wrote these words, the museum received an annual purchasing fund of 100,000 crowns (approx. 20,000 U.S. dollars) from the state with which to buy Swedish art.43 This exhibition not only raised a substantial amount of money from donations by the 55,000 visitors who saw Önskemuseet, but an additional five million crown grant from the Swedish government helped purchase the "wished" for works that helped to catapult the status and recognition of the museum’s collection to, if not beyond, the international level the project had hoped to achieve.

From Pop to Philosophy: Reclaiming (or White-Washing) History

The next major event to follow Önskemuseet was Amerikansk Pop-Konst: 106 former av kärlek och försvan (American Pop Art: 106 Forms of Love and Despair) that took place between February 29 and April 12 that same year. This was the first time in Europe that an entire exhibition had been organized to deal exclusively with Pop Art [fig.12]. The 106 art objects that were included

42Ibid., p.9. MT
were produced by Jim Dine, Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg, James Rosenquist, George Segal, Andy Warhol, and Tom Wesselman. In the accompanying catalogue, Hulten agrees with Harold Salomon's essay which attempts to clarify why Pop Art does not have a social critique built into its selection of images:

It is a common mistake to believe that there exists great irony aimed towards mass culture manifested in Lichtenstein's or Warhol's imagery.... These artists come from middle-class families. They are not bohemians. They have never experienced hard external pressures. Most of them are too young to have fought in the war. As artists they have achieved economic prosperity faster than any artists before them. They are not especially intellectual, and do not really have any interest in anything but their immediate personal surroundings.44

He concludes his introductory essay by asking if Pop Art will "be able to fill that vacuum of our inner-feelings that is the very reason for the atomic bomb's existence?"

The pessimism that resounds in every sentence of this essay might seem peculiar. Why organize a major exhibition only to criticize its content? I would argue that there were two main reasons for this apparent paradox. Plans for the exhibition were already under way for some years and Hulten's understanding and opinion of this work had considerable amount of time to change. Originally the exhibition had been scheduled for 1963, but according to Hulten, it was "'delayed'... in consideration of the expected conservative critique."45 As we shall see in the following two chapters, opinions regarding Pop Art changed for a number of Europeans during the early to mid-sixties at which time they saw individualism threatened by an increasingly

45Granath, e. al., p.40. MT
commercialized Pop culture in the United States. Another reason must have been that the exhibition's working committee that consisted not only of Hulten, but also of Carlo Derkert, Billy Klüver, Louise O'Donor, and Anna-Lena Wibom, realized the significance this work had for a contemporary art collection and the relevance it had to contemporary European art such as that produced by members of Nouveau Réalisme as well as a number of Swedish artists. Already by 1964, anti-American sentiment within Swedish intellectual circles was running high. As chapter three will outline, this "new" American work was understood as representing not only the United States, but by 1964 its attachment to American consumer culture was also read as an affirmation of an American pragmatic liberalism. This work was thus simultaneously able to offend the conservative tastes of the Right as well as activists on the Left side of the political spectrum.

Nonetheless, in the fall of 1964 yet another engagement with the New York art world would take place inside the Swedish museum. This time it was not the pop-artists, but their supposed Neo-Dadaist precursors who had by this time become fully involved with happenings. Merce Cunningham was doing a world tour with his "Dance Company" and Moderna Museet invited him to come to Stockholm for a holiday but also to do something at the museum. While the New Yorkers, who included Rauschenberg, Steve Paxton, John Cage, David Tudor, Caroline Brown, Alex Hay, Debora Hay, Robert Morris, Yvonne Rainer, and Trisha Brown, spent their vacation at Ulvedt's country house just outside of Stockholm, a so called "happening" was organized and held at the museum titled 5 New York Evenings.46 Included in this five-evening event was Rauschenberg's The Elgin Tie—a performance in which he climbed down a rope ladder that was tied to the ceiling and into an empty gasoline container [fig.13].47

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46 As we shall see in chapter three, the fact that the New Yorkers stayed with Ulvedt is an ironic fact since their actual working relationship would have come to an end by that time.

47 This performance also included a live cow who, frightened by the audience and the slippery floor, left behind a pile of manure. If this wasn't a Duchampian gesture, it was at least in unison with Rauschenberg's submerging into the round, anal like, container. Rauschenberg's interest in anality and the significance thereof will be discussed in the following chapters.
On March 19th, 1965, an exhibition of 34 illustrations for Dante's *Divine Comedy* by Rauschenberg were shown at Moderna Museet. As discussed earlier in this chapter, it was precisely at this moment that American involvement in Vietnam escalated and what has been called the Swedish-American conflict intensified. On the 26th of March, at the very moment Swedish political commentators began attacking America's role in Vietnam, and only days after Rauschenberg's vernisage, art critic Ulf Linde wrote the first of four articles denouncing the New York avant-garde in the liberal daily *Dagens Nyheter*.48

In the first article entitled "The Open Art: the Inheritance from Munich," Linde opened with a quote from the "Pop Art defender" Alan R Solomon who argued that the Europeans are "troubled by the multiple views and obvious lack of ordinary order" presented by American artists.49 This, he claimed, was because they were "caught in the long and rich tradition of Cartesian rationalism." Salomon maintained that "rather than occupying themselves with protests or satires, Pop artists claim that anything is allowable and that art does not depend on pre-set conditions." The new "open art," he continued, "depends on a longing for a new aesthetic and a new morals." To Linde, Salomon's suggestion that the Europeans' were caught in the past rather than attempting to find a new aesthetic and moral outlook, inscribed a threat to his own (European) intellectual circle.

Questioning the originality which American as well as European art critics granted artists such as Rauschenberg, Linde blamed John Cage for neglecting to confess to historical ties to German expressionism, and more specifically, the writings of Kandinsky.50 Tracing this past through

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49Linde (March 26, 1965), p.4. MT
50Ibid.. MT
Cage's early mentor Arnold Schönberg, Linde claimed that the American's use of terms such as "openness" can be compared to Kandinsky's reluctance to separate "art" from "nature." What Linde saw as a "confused understanding" was the way John Cage and Marcel Duchamp were concurrently spoken of as the forerunners of the "new open art." Positioning himself against Cage, Linde defended Duchamp whose work he did not see advocating a "total" openness. Duchamp's ready-mades, he continued, are always part of a "social dialogue" rather than the "dialogue with nature" that he saw Cage and his followers advocating. By separating the European Duchamp from the American Cage, Linde indirectly disassociates a certain European avant-garde from an American one.

It may appear a coincidence that Linde's critique of Rauschenberg and the New York avant-garde occurred at the very moment that criticism was levelled at America's involvement in Vietnam. However, if we consider Moderna Museet's decision to present a one-painting show with James Rosenquist’s 28 meter long F III (1965) [fig.14] painting in September of that year, the connection between American consumer culture and American foreign policy becomes crystal clear at the time. Rosenquist's huge painting on canvas and aluminium sections, presents a billboard size collage made up of images of canned spaghetti, an umbrella, an atomic bomb's mushroom cloud, etc., all superimposed on the side of an American bomber plane which stretches the full twenty eight meters and whose logo reads: "U.S.AIR FORCE." Behind the glossy "pop" surface of this painting, as Eugen Wretholm commented in his review for Konstrevy, the visitor to Moderna Museet must have had flash backs to the first art exhibition held on the former naval base island Skeppsholmen when Picasso's Guernica was exhibited in 1956. Wretholm also

51 Ibid.. MT
52 Linde (May 13, 1965), p.4. MT
53 F-III resembled Guernica both in size and content. Just as Guernica acted to inaugurate the new museum in 1956, Rosenquist's one painting exhibition, as we shall see, would act as a wedge to forge a new direction in Moderna Museet's activities. Wretholm, Eugen. "Utställningsrund" Konstrevy 6 (1965), p.223-224. MT Before being displayed at Moderna Museet, F III was shown at Leo Castelli in April that same year. In an interview with Partisan Review in the fall of 1965 Rosenquist himself commented that: "The picture is my personal reaction as an individual to the heavy ideas of mass media and communication and to other ideas that affect artists... I wanted to relate the idea of the new man, the
points out that the F-111 bomber plane, model 1965, represents many millions of dollars in taxes paid by the American public: "Every American is that way part owner and partly responsible for its horrible existence." 54

Another "coincidence" in this telling chronology was the decision by the Swedish state in 1965 to introduce a national committee to organize Swedish exhibitions abroad. Developed as an independent but official organ of the Swedish state, NUNSKU (Nämnden För Utställningar av Nutida Svensk Konst i Utländet or: The Swedish National Committee for Contemporary Art Abroad), not surprisingly, chose Hultén to be its first president. 55 This did not mean that Hultén gave up his role at Moderna Museet. In fact, he continued to produce what he himself has considered the two most representative exhibitions for the museum: Den inre och den yttre rymden (Inner and the Outer Space) and Hon-en katedral. 56

The Inner and Outer Space: An Exhibition Devoted to Universal Art was the first of these two noted events and did not include amongst its thirty-eight chosen artists any member of the "new" New York avant-garde with the exception of Frank Stella who was represented by one painting (Claroquesi, 1964), and Rauschenberg whose 1951 White Painting was shown. In order to give a good idea of what this exhibition was all about I will quote Hultén’s catalogue essay at length:

In our time, art is allotted a great deal of significance and is made subject to the state’s interest at the same time that it completely lacks a place in our society and nation.... Art

new person who appreciates things, to this painting vision. One piece of this painting would have been a fragment of a machine the collector was already mixed up with, involved in whether he knew it or not. The person has already bought these airplanes by paying income taxes or being part of the community and the economy. The present men participate in the world whether it’s good or not and they may physically have bought parts of what this image represents many times." Rosenquist, James. “The F111: an Interview with James Rosenquist by G.R. Swenson.” Partisan Review (Fall, 1965), pp.590-595. (pp.589-561)

54Wretholm. MT
55I would here like to acknowledge the help and information provided by NUNSKU’s secretary and curator Mikael Adsenius during an interview held May 18, 1993.
56Granath, et al., p.40.
has a purely decorative function. The programatically anti-decorative art we are talking about here suggests an unwillingness to let itself be caught in this unclear situation. By producing pictures that are so big, so empty, or so boring that they hardly ever can be put up in a home, a museum or anywhere else, the artists show an unwillingness to contribute to the decorative and extroverted "artist's life" and even that commercialisation (to that mundane cocktail-atmosphere) that in some cases highlight modern art's appearance, and one also avoids doing anything about this detachment.57

With these words, Hulten suggested that the art and artists included in this exhibition countered the work produced by Pop artists whom he had earlier described as non-intellectual middle-class Americans. *Inner and Outer Space* was meant to provide an autonomous position for Moderna Museet by distinguishing between its elected representatives (artists whose work was contemplative and based in a European philosophical tradition) and the "commercial" and "decorative function" of their counter-part. To the Europeans, the processes of mechanical reproduction employed by Pop artists left the producer/consumer alienated. As if to counter this, the lengthy catalogue for this exhibition appears to have been produced to emphasize craftsmanship over kitsch while still using modern material. It was composed of a variety of materials: white, blue, and gold paper, transparent and white plastics, and cardboard which was held together on one side by large screws and bolts and then placed in a white box with the title of the exhibition written in a number of different languages. This emphasis on production and universality appears to have been taken straight out of Russian constructivist strategies and complement the impressive biography of Kasimir Malevich, who, along with Naum Gabo and Yves Klein, made up one of the three corner stones of this exhibition -- each with approximately fifty works shown [fig.15].58 After these essays and numerous illustrations which situate these

58Producing a lineage between Malevich, Gabo and Klein and in turn linking all three of them to constructivism must be considered an historical fallacy. However, for the organizers of this exhibition, these three artists could best serve to
three artists as historically avant-garde, the final section of the catalogue includes a short write-up on the additional thirty-five artists, each represented by one work.  The four essays attached to this final section of the catalogue all emphasize the philosophical nature embodied in these works. In essence, the works presented and the texts written were meant to provide their audience with a contemplative space that allowed for individual interpretation. As the title of Ulf Linde’s accompanying essay suggests, these works offered its viewers a "Fourth Dimension."

By replacing its interest in an American art increasingly categorized as kitsch with Klein's "Le Vide," the museum could now shift its focus from an art form which was increasingly becoming unavoidably associated with American foreign politics, to an avant-garde constructed as being part of a European philosophical tradition. With Klein representing the most contemporary "genius" in art, Moderna Museet, in a sense, white-washed (or more literally, blue-washed) its past engagement with Pop. Moderna Museet was now born again.

This shift of interest that I have so far located in Moderna Museet’s exhibition schedule is one aspect that is crucial to an understanding of the 1966 exhibition Hon-en katedral. Adding complexity to this shift, the next two chapters will look at Niki de Saint-Phalle, Jean Tinguely, and Per-Olof Ultvedt’s artistic production and consider some of the issues they were faced with in constructing their own identities within an international art world. The final chapter will then act as an informed reading of and around the event in question.

represent the necessary death and renewal that Moderna Museet needed for its repositioning within the international art world. In a reconstruction that led from Malevich’s symbolic death of painting (the Black Square) to the voids and transparencies in Gabo’s work, Yves Klein’s monochrome blue (his invention) could represent renewal.

59These artists were: Joseph Albers, Martin Barré, Olle Baertling, Max Bill, Robert Breer, Enrico Castellani, Albert Contreras, Piero Dorazio, Lars Englund, Eddie Figge, Sam Francis, Lucio Fontana, Kasper Heiberg, Einar Höste, Donald Judd, Akira Kanayama, Yayoi Kusama, Heinz Mack, Piero Manzoni, Robert Morris, Barnett Newman, Kenneth Noland, Eric H. Olson, Otto Piene, Robert Rauschenberg, Ad Reinhardt, Jean Paul Riopelle, Mark Rothko, Jesus Rafael Soto, Frank Stella, Władysław Strzeminski, Mark Tobey, Günther Uecker, Georges Vantongerloo, and Herman de Vries.

60The essays included were: Pontus Hulten’s "A Conclusive Beginning"; Ulf Linde’s "The Fourth Dimension"; Joost Baljeu’s "The Hegalian Romantic Negation in Modern Representation"; and György Ligeti’s "The Future of Music."
Chapter 2

The Limited Possibilities of Nouveau Réalisme:

The Escape from Paris

Le Mouvement: Toward a Movement

In order to understand Hon-en katedral, this chapter will consider how Saint-Phalle, Tinguely and Ultvedt’s artistic vocabulary developed in the 1950’s and resulted in a number of collaborations. Partly responsible for these artists meeting was Pontus Hulten. Having completed a dissertation on Spinoza and Vermeer, Hulten left Sweden in 1953 and spent two years travelling in Europe with the Swedish artist Hans Nordenström. Besides producing decollages and accumulating material to be brought back to Stockholm and used for articles and films, Hulten also spent a considerable amount of his time in Paris. Here he took an active part in organizing exhibitions for Gallerie Denise René.61

In April, 1955, Per-Olof Ultvedt travelled to Paris where he visited the gallery and saw Le Mouvement, an exhibition partly organized by Hulten and the kinetic painter and theorist Victor Vasarely.62 Here Ultvedt was introduced to the Swiss sculptor Jean Tinguely who, along with Yaacov Agam, Pol Bury, and Jesus-Rafael Soto was one of four young artists represented. The work by these “avant-garde” kinetic artists was show-cased next to that of Vasarely as well as a historical section made up of work by Marcel Duchamp and Alexander Calder. The importance of these established artists to the younger creators was noted in a pamphlet written by Hulten

which included an essay on the theory of kinetic art and a chronological survey of its history. As
Hulten himself has commented:

What distinguished 'Le Mouvement' from other exhibitions and earned it widespread publicity was its presentation of a new outlook in art. A great deal of the art of the 1950's had been pessimistic, defeatist and passive. A lot of people were surprised to learn that there was another kind of 'modern' art, dynamic, constructive, joyful, deliberately bewildering, ironic, critical, teasing and aggressive.63

The playful anarchism described by Hulten no doubt differentiated the younger artists in this exhibition from artists associated with more established and institutionalized art movements. Like the work described as "Art Autre" by the French art critic Michel Tapié, Le Mouvement offered a counterpoint to the academic and claustrophobic School of Paris by presenting an international avant-garde. Furthermore, in remaining non-figurative, the art in this exhibition simultaneously launched an aggressive attack on the heroic individualism and expressionism of L'Art Autre as well as Informel art and American Abstract Expressionism.64 While always relying on the artistic vocabulary provided by these and other "movements," Tinguely, in particular, sought to question their formal values. An example of this "anarchist gesture" was his meta-matic drawing machines [fig.16]. Their constructivist and Calder-like forms endlessly produced abstract expressionist-looking drawings at the gallery goer's own push of a button and in this way satarized the alleged authenticity of automaticism which by the late fifties had become highly formalized.

64 Besides Marcel Duchamp who was french, the exhibition included a Swiss artist (Tinguely), an American (Calder), Israeliite (Agam), Belgian (Bury) and a Venuzuelan (Soto).
Along with these punches thrown at the reigning champions of modern art, the fact that Tinguely was Swiss did not improve his relations with "official" French culture. For Tinguely, the real possibilities for showing his work could be found outside of France. Hulten provided a way out of this confined space. In 1955, Tinguely travelled to Stockholm where he was invited to set up a work-shop in the office of Blandaren, an anarchist journal published by students at Stockholm's Royal Institute of Technology. With Nordenström as responsible editor, and Hulten and Ultvedt as contributors, Tinguely produced and published 40,000 "original paintings" by pouring and squirting paint over a printing press running at top speed, and thereafter treating the prints with his hands and feet.65 This Dadaistic aesthetic was well received by a group of Swedish intellectuals whose artistic output was represented at Stockholm's Samlaren Gallery. Along with an exhibition at this gallery, Tinguely participated in the production of a film called En dag i staden [One Day in Town] (Fig.17).66 Another actor in this "lyrical act of sabotage against a peaceful rusticating Stockholm" was Ultvedt whose own aesthetic and anarchist convictions were manifested in wooden mobiles that resembled those produced by Tinguely. As we shall see in chapters three and four, collaboration between Tinguely and Ultvedt would resume a few years later.

At the invitation of the Staempfli Gallery in New York, Jean Tinguely made his first North American trip in January of 1960. His gallery showing, which included a number of meta-matics, was relatively well received by the New York press.67 More importantly, Tinguely was introduced to a number of artists in the New York scene including Robert Rauschenberg, Louise Nevelson, Frank Stella, Richard Stankiewicz, John Chamberlain and Bruce Conner. He was also

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66This film was later shown at the film festival that accompanied Brussel's World Exposition in 1958 and was the winner of the 1958 Creative Film Foundation Award for exceptional merit. Evergreen Review commented that "A Day in Town is a wild, dadaist explosion that starts as a typical Fitzpatrick travelogue of Stockholm and ends in the city's total destruction by fire and dynamite in one of the most hilarious and anarchic film experiments of record. See, Vogel, Amos. Evergreen Review 6 (1958).
67Hulten (1972), p.128.
able to re-acquaint himself with Marcel Duchamp who one year prior had seen Tinguely's work at Gallerie Iris Clert in Paris. His encounter with Billy Klüver, a Swedish scientist working for Bell Laboratories during the day and solving technical problems for artists during the evenings, turned out to be extremely important. Klüver worked especially closely with Rauschenberg who in turn became involved with Tinguely on a project entitled Hommage à New York.

In New York, Tinguely began working on ideas for a sculptural machine that would symbolically attack one of the institutionalized corner-stone of the Museum of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism. Ironically, while planning to rent a hall or a parking lot in the center of New York where he could produce a self-destroying machine, Tinguely was invited by the Museum of Modern Art to use their sculpture garden. With Klüver assisting him, Tinguely spent days scavenging New York City's dump for materials to be used in his large assemblage that soon became titled Hommage à New York. During the day of March seventeenth, different constructed parts of the large sculpture arrived at MoMA to be assembled underneath the garden's Buckminster Fuller dome before being placed in the outdoor part of the garden. The fact that the self-destroying machine was produced underneath Buckminster Fuller's dome is especially ironic. This dome represented a social utopia which, as Fuller himself stated, has as its goal "the total use of total technology for total population at the maximum feasible rate of acceleration." The means Fuller saw necessary to fulfil this goal was mass production and mass consumption. The dome would thus have represented a technochratically controlled consumer society. Besides Tinguely's own constructions, made up of junk ranging from baby carriages, sinks, to an old piano, the Hommage included an object entitled The Money Thrower by Rauschenberg who, as we shall see in chapter three, was more optimistic about technology.

68Ibid.
The self-destroying machine was set in motion that evening in front of a large audience which included, as well as the European and American reporters, art critics such as Dore Ashton, John Canaday and Calvin Tomkins [fig.18]. Also present were many artists including the German Dadaist Richard Huelsenbeck, Mark Rothko, Philip Guston and John Cage. As Tomkins described the work in the New Yorker shortly thereafter, "The end of the construction and the beginning of its destruction were indistinguishable." For Tinguely, the process of construction and destruction were two factors meant to ensure that the work could not become a static and collectifiable object incorporated into MoMA's institutionalized agenda. Instead, the machine symbolized a terrorist act by an anarchist artist against an institution and its art that for many Europeans had come to represent American Cold War politics by 1960.

Returning to his studio in Paris with new technical skills and with a broader perspective overlooking the international art scene, Tinguely worked on a series of large sculptures made up of bicycle wheels and other refuse material. A number of these assemblages, such as the series titled L'art fonctionnel which was paraded around the streets of Paris, included classical motifs on plaster reliefs which were gradually sawed or chiselled to pieces by their own mobile machinery.

Along with these attacks on the cultural relics and values, Tinguely's production was also related to contemporary political discourses. Perhaps most interesting to him were subjects related to the revolutionary activities of freedom fighters. Tinguely's topics were often chosen from an international array of political events. For example, his Baluba series made at this time was

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71 Tomkins, p.80.
72 By 1960, the Museum of Modern Art had established itself as the dominant cultural institution in America and was firmly linked to the Eisenhower administration's foreign and domestic campaigns of truth. As Serge Guilbaut describes it, after 1951, the "American liberal spotlight now focused on art and intellectuals. They became the storm troopers in what president Dwight D. Eisenhower liked to call 'psychological warfare.' The glamorized and popularized art of abstract expressionism became the avant-garde wedge used to pierce the European suspicion that Americans were only capable of producing kitsch." Guilbaut, pp.204-205. In this scheme of things, the Museum of Modern Art became the main institutional organ promoting American Abstract Expressionism.
produced in support of the freedom fighter Patrice Lumumba of the Baluba tribe in the Belgian colony of Congo. In this way, Tinguely's work intersected with a number of artists working in France who also expressed an interest in events related to decolonisation and liberty. One of these artists was Raymond Hains who between 1950 and 1961 had produced a large number of decollages which made allusions to the Algerian war.74 As Hulten makes reference to in his retrospective catalogue, Meta: Tinguely, producing art work that was directly related to this tense political climate that had resulted from de Gaulle's decision to grant Algeria and other nations independence from French occupation was a risky business.75 At a time when the OAS (Organisation Armée Secrète) was terrorizing the city of Paris daily, planting bombs in such places as the washrooms of the Paris bourse, exhibiting this work was a highly volatile act. This interest in highly politically charged subject matter allied artists such as Hains and Tinguely within the Parisian art community.

Another artist who involved herself with the subject of Algerian independence and who would find herself exhibiting work together with the artists mentioned above was Niki de Saint-Phalle. Her OAS altar piece [fig.19] from 1962 stood as one of the most aggressive demonstration pictures commenting on the Algerian war's effect on the French nation at that time.76 Born in France in 1930 to a French father and an American mother, Niki de Saint-Phalle was brought to the United States at the age of three where she grew up and attended private schools in New York.77 By the age of nineteen she had achieved a successful enough career as a fashion model to be featured on the cover of Life Magazine [fig.20]. At this time, she married the American writer

74Ameline, Jean-Paul. Les Nouveaux Réalisme. Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 1992, p.83. This work was exhibited at Galleri J in Paris under the title La France Dechiree.
Harry Mathews and moved back to Europe to continue a successful modelling career. However, by the time she met Tinguely in 1955, Saint-Phalle's fashion career had come to an abrupt stop as her interests shifted to making art. By 1960 the two artists had engaged in a working as well as personal relationship that led to Saint-Phalle's separation from Mathews. I do not mention this biographical information to add weight to Saint-Phalle's *gestalt* as an artist, but, as we shall see later, her personal history plays an important part in her artistic constructions.

**Nouveau Réalisme**

By the late 1950's, Pierre Restany, a writer for the art journal *Cimaise* since 1956, had begun promoting young artists whom he saw spear-heading a new form of avant-gardism. At first, his articles in *Cimaise* were often paradoxical as he attempted to write about artists such as Tinguely, Arman, Klein and Cesar while also defending the artists of the Ecole de Paris with such articles as "US Go Home and Come Back Later." But by 1960, Restany had found and recruited enough young artists with strong personalities and radical work to fill his own stall and create a movement that he labelled "Nouveau Réalisme." On October 27 of that year, at Yves Klein's Paris apartment, the Nouveau Réaliste manifesto was signed by Klein, Arman, Dufréne, Hains, Raysse, Tinguely, and Villegle, stating that "Nouveau Réalisme=new approaches to the perception of the real." Although the group was predominantly made up of French men (Klein, Raysse, Dufrène, Villegle, and of course Restany himself) and centered in Paris, the group was also international with its Swiss (Tinguely), Rumanian (Spoerri), and in late 1960 Bulgarian (Christo) and Italian (Mimmo Rotella) members. At the end of 1960, the missing ingredient to give the group a truly international character was an American.

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In 1961 Niki de Saint-Phalle was recruited into the movement as the sole American and the only woman artist represented. At this time, Saint-Phalle was producing abstract-looking paintings by shooting with a rifle at canvases built of plastic and metal objects filled with coloured paint pigments and covered with plaster [fig.21]. Although these works functioned for Saint-Phalle as a cutting critique against the male dominated and defined world of painterly abstraction these works also satisfied Restany whose own writing had critiqued both French and American abstract expressionism. While Saint-Phalle and the other "new" artists fit well into Restany's newly defined program, the question still remained whether or not Restany's newly defined "ism" suited all of these artists he had originally attracted.

During an interview with a Belgian radio station in 1982, Tinguely recalled France during the late fifties and early sixties and described De Gaulle's government as "Louis XIV all over again." The constraints put on non-French artists like himself who were attempting to produce an international art at a time of increased nationalism within France must have appeared limiting. Although De Gaulle's cultural minister, Andre Malraux, promoted an art which would compete with international standards, he was vehemently opposed to any signs of provincialism or amateurism leaking into his "Maisons de la Culture" set up throughout France to educate the "masses" in a French high culture. As could be expected, Tinguely's and Saint-Phalle's work which made exhibitionism out of a dadaistic amateurism rooted in, amongst other things, popular culture did not fit well into the Ministry of Culture's official program. A promoter like Pierre Restany, however, willingly swallowed this form of anarchism and offered these artists a rare opportunity to exhibit and be promoted both inside and outside of France.

80 It should be pointed out that Saint-Phalle played up her American identity when she was in Europe, and her French background when she was working in America.
Returning to the question of whether or not artists such as Saint-Phalle and Tinguely were satisfied with the role Restany had defined for them, I argue that they were not. Hulten has pointed out that although Restany’s promotional activities around Nouveau Réalisme offered a highly profiled internationalist platform, “Restany’s neo-realism was a delicate matter.”83 The common factors uniting the Nouveau Réalistes were mainly superficial ones, primarily based on the different artists’ non-commitment to, and/or radical break from, the dominant aesthetic discourses at that time. At its infancy, Nouveau Réalisme’s membership fluctuated outside Restany’s control. Daniel Spoerri, for instance, travelled to Stockholm in 1961 where he helped organize an exhibition at Gallerie Samlaren under the title Nouveau Réalisme. While it included signed members in the movement, this exhibition also included Ultvedt, Nordenström, and other artists whose work agreed to disagree on the role of art.84 In other words, each artist had his or her own very specific agenda that, in the end, did not fit into Restany’s neatly packaged concept of a new realism.

As the only female artist included in the Nouveau Réaliste program, Saint-Phalle must have felt some discomfort with the role Pierre Restany defined for her.85 The misogynist imagery and actions by artists such as Yves Klein are obvious examples of the masculinist positions taken by members of this loosely affiliated group. Portrait of My Lover [fig.22], also referred to as Le Martyr Necessaire, Saint Sebastian, could be read as a work that deals with this relationship, as well as being an early example of the direction Saint-Phalle’s work was taking in terms of her own symbolic language. This target relief was produced in the spring of 1961 when Saint-Phalle participated in Movement in Art. The exhibition, which was shown first at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, then at Stockholm’s Moderna Museet, and finally at Humlebaek’s Louisiana, was


84The wide variety of artists who actively, but unofficially, participated in Nouveau Réaliste exhibitions is discussed by Karin Bergquist Lindegren in the Swedish art journal Konstrevy 2 (1961), p.41.

organized by Hulten with assistance from Spoerri and Klüver. It included a wide range of artists associated with New York Neo-Dada and European Nouveau Réalisme. In many ways similar to the work of Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg, both of whom were participating in the exhibition and had become very close friends with Saint-Phalle, the shot paintings, of which Le Martyr Necessaire is one (also included in the exhibition), aimed to deflate the masculinist myth supporting abstract expressionist art and artists by juxtaposing elements from popular culture with abstract drips. Another common denominator shared between these artists, which Saint-Phalle would develop more strongly in later work such as King Kong, was the layering of personal symbolism within, or on top of, aesthetic and political discourses.

Portrait of My Lover, a work still remaining in Saint-Phalle’s private collection, is an early example of this discursive approach. It consists of a men’s dress shirt, a necktie, a round target filled with darts, and a machine gun held under the right arm. A recent article in Art in America makes mention, in passing, of this work and correctly locates its meaning in relation to the artist’s private life: “She had by this time left Mathews [her former husband] and their two children to concentrate on making art. Portrait of My Lover ...symbolized her emotional disengagement from a new romance turned sour.”86 Like Johns’ and Rauschenberg’s work, Saint-Phalle’s reliefs contain metaphors and concealed tropes that are embedded within the everyday obsolete objects of a contemporary consumer culture, and can thus act on various levels (personal to larger discourses) to produce meaning.

The close affinities Saint-Phalle’s work had with that of Johns and Rauschenberg is not only self evident in work such as Tir de Robert Rauschenberg [fig.23] and Tir de Jasper Johns [fig.24] (both produced in 1961), but the target, dress shirt and tie in Portrait of My Lover can also be read to represent Jasper Johns and refer to the “turbulent final years” of Johns’ and Rauschenberg’s

Saint-Phalle's work is layered with narratives fighting for the viewer's attention. Along with references to the terrorist organization O.A.S. (the machine gun), the work also refers to her own shooting activities and Joan of Arc-like poses.

Art historian Kenneth Silver has recently revealed how in the 1950's and 60's the work of Johns, along with other gay artists in New York, began to "label' something--male homosexuality--that had hitherto been considered too unworthy or too dangerous to name." Johns' and Rauschenberg's work was "labelled," but it was always embedded in a complex formal and referential network of signs and brush strokes that could not be pinned down to a single meaning. Although by 1965 Rosalind Krauss had pointed out that their works: "refer to the myth of masculinity surrounding the central figures of Abstract Expressionism...," Johns' and Rauschenberg's displacement of the violently heterosexual position declared in the work of artists such as Willem de Kooning was always meant to remain ambiguous. Needless to say, for Saint-Phalle, a heterosexual woman living in France, Johns and Rauschenberg's work did not

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88 Ibid. p.179.
89 Ibid. p.181. The large number of bisexual and homosexual artists amongst post-abstract expressionist artists in New York is also noted in Calvin Tomkin's book Off the Wall, p.260. Although Tomkin's acknowledges the sexual differences between these two generations of artists he maintains that the "real irritant" in the Neo-Dadaist's work was publicity. In other words, there were "other elements that clearly had nothing to do with the so-called homosexual sensibility" that made this work avant-garde. That the New York avant-garde emerged to a large extent out of New York's underground homosexual community has also lately been well documented by writers such as Helen Molesworth, Kenneth Silver and Jonathan Wienberg (to name a few). I use these studies in order to open up new readings of work by artists outside the homosexual community whose work nevertheless participated in, and was influenced by, these diverse discourses surrounding sexuality. Although this discourse was mainly private and underground, it was at times acknowledged in the popular press. See for example, Öyvind Fahlström, in a 1965 article published in the Swedish daily Dagens Nyheter entitled "Orgiernas Brooklyn" who points out that "homosexuality is more apparent here (New York) and it is obvious how a majority of the best gifts to theatre, music, pictorial arts, dance, and (underground) film is homosexual." p.4 See, Dagens Nyheter (April 17, 1965), p.4.
90 The ambiguous nature of Rauschenberg and Johns' production allowed the work to be sublimated into dominant art discourses. As Helen Molesworth has discussed at length, "If one of sublimation's definitions is the displacement of the low functions of the body onto its higher faculties, then Rauschenberg [and I would add Johns] radically re-inserts the lower body into art...." Molesworth, Helen. "Before Bed" October 63 (Winter 1993), p.81.
directly correspond to her own work. But for Saint-Phalle, the New York School, along with L'Art Informel in Paris, and even Nouveau Réalisme, represented a male-dominated patriarchal force that she aimed to undercut by shooting at her own constructions. In this deconstructive process, Saint-Phalle, like the New Yorkers, revealed a tenuous relationship between "high art" and popular culture.91

I stress Johns' and Rauschenberg's strategies in order to suggest that Saint-Phalle would have used similar strategies in her own production. One interesting strategy these artists appear to have shared was that of concealment and what can be referred to as masquerading in both their work and public personas.92 While Johns and Rauschenberg always concealed their homosexuality by not dressing and acting "swish" in public (to use Warhol's description), Saint-Phalle, in these early works, took on a transgressive masculine pose that replaced the phallic paint-brush of the traditional heroic male artist with a rifle whose trigger was pulled by a woman. Her ability to perform this transgressive masquerading act was no doubt also owing to the acting lessons she took as a teenager, as well as her acute understanding of the fashion industry she had previously worked and become successful in.

For Saint-Phalle, whose own work aimed to undercut specific notions of masculinity and patriarchy, the concerns of most of the other Nouveau Réalistes, and especially Restany's conservative entrepreneurial attitude, must have appeared limiting. On the other hand, a

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91 In the two American's work this meant, amongst other things, mimicking the brush strokes of the Abstract Expressionists and juxtaposing imagery and objects from popular culture.

92 Luce Irigaray discusses the transgressive possibilities within the spaces of the masquerade through the act of mimesis which potentially can allow women to make visible constructions of "masculine logic." I would suggest that the masquerade could also provide homosexual artists like Johns and Rauschenberg with the necessary disguise needed to enter the heterosexually, and generally homophobic, international art world and market place they strove for. In the act of mimesis (or, in not acting "swish"), these artists could also make transparent a heterosexual masculine logic to the limited community that understood their discursive origins. See Irigaray, Luce. *This Sex Which is Not One*. Trans. Catherine Porter and Caroline Burke. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.
common thread appeared in the American artists’ work which offered Saint-Phalle a way out of the confined space of Nouveau Réalisme.

In June of 1961, Saint-Phalle and Tinguely took part in an exhibition at Galerie J in Paris where Leo Castelli had arranged to show Johns and Rauschenberg’s work. Later that same month, the Europeans participated with John Cage, David Tudor, Johns, and Rauschenberg in a “concert” held at the American embassy in Paris where they constructed and painted large sculptures on stage while David Tudor played John Cage’s Variation II.93 The interests spawned by this working relationship between Saint-Phalle, Tinguely, and the Americans eventually led the former two artists to travel across the Atlantic to New York where they, along with other Nouveau Réaliste artists were invited to take part in the Museum of Modern Art’s The Art of Assemblage exhibition.

With this last chapter we can see a number of artists developing working relationships as a result of similar interests in avant-garde art production. In particular, Johns’ and Rauschenberg’s layering of personal and other obtuse narratives into their work appear to have had correlation to Saint-Phalle’s artistic output. After considering a number of collaborative events arranged between the Europeans and Americans after 1960, the following chapter will suggest reasons why, in 1962, collaborations came to an abrupt stop.

Chapter 3

Excavating the New Frontier and the Discovery of an Uncompromising Dynamic Labyrinth

The Art of Assemblage

In October 1961, Niki de Saint-Phalle and Jean Tinguely arrived at New York’s Museum of Modern Art where they had been asked to take part in The Art of Assemblage exhibition organized by curator William C. Seitz to incorporate the new trends into modernism. The catalogue, written by Seitz, makes explicit his agenda to insert assemblage work by Nouveau Réalistes, California assemblage artists, and New York Neo-Dadaists into a historically established and legitimated context made up of artists ranging from Picasso, Dalí and Schwitters, to Abstract Expressionists such as Franz Kline and Willem De Kooning.94 In a review of the exhibition published in the Swedish art journal Konstrevy, Öyvind Fahlström commented that:

It (the exhibition) is, like Seitz’s book The Art of Assemblage, significant in content but too academic: historical, descriptive, and somewhat meaningless. The more radical explorers such as Kaprow, Dine, Whitman and Oldenburg are named in the text but not included in the exhibition. Europe is unevenly represented. For example, Tinguely and Kalinowski are only represented by smaller pieces, and Ultvedt not at all.95

Although not as alienated from the exhibition as Ultvedt, but more so than Tinguely who had already established his reputation in New York as an enfant terrible with his Hommage to the city

one year prior, Saint-Phalle received a lukewarm, if not simply cold, reception from the art press. But like Tinguely's work, hers made a considerable impact on a number of participating artists—especially the Beat artists from California such as Bruce Conner and Edward Kienholz.

Invited to install a duo-exhibition at the Everett Ellin Gallery in Los Angeles in February 1962, Niki de Saint-Phalle and Jean Tinguely travelled to California where they would also produce a number of "events." Tinguely constructed his Study for the End of the World, Part 2 in the Nevada desert (the site of the first nuclear tests) which like Hommage à New York was intended to mock the contemporary world's dependency on technology. As could be expected from a self-proclaimed anarchist like Tinguely, the self-destroying machine experienced difficulties and produced a number of unexpected effects. "It's not to be expected," Tinguely commented, "that the end of the world will be exactly as it's been imagined." Saint-Phalle, in turn, executed a series of tirs (shootings) outside Virginia Dwan's Malibu beach-house at which Edward Kienholz, amongst others, were invited to take part. This trip to the West Coast enabled the Europeans to renew their acquaintance with Californian artists whose work they had been introduced to at the Art of Assemblage exhibition. As it turned out, by the end of 1962, despite their involvement in the Seitz exhibition, both the Europeans and Californian artists were to feel disillusioned with their past engagement in New York.

To understand this disillusionment with the activities at MoMA one should turn to a review of the exhibition written by Thomas B. Hess in November 1961 for Art News. Labelling MoMA a "collector-sanctifying bureaucracy [that] latches on the past with relish, tidies it up, makes a package and covers it with neat gummed labels," Hess perceptively saw Seitz's exhibition as a way for MoMA to legitimate a new vanguard by placing it in context with more established artists'

96 Of the many reviews that were written regarding the exhibition, only a hand-full of them mentioned Saint-Phalle's name—and if so, only in passing.
97 Hulten, (1972), p.239.
worksuchascollagesbyPicasso,Schwitters,Kline,andDeKooning. Hess, like Fahlström, felt that in the process of doing this, the "exhibition seems censored" as the "healthy side of that release which collage triggered from the subconscious— from Ernst and Dali to Rauschenberg to Conner— [was] blanked out." Interesting to keep in mind throughout this paper, was the fact that Stockholm's Moderna Museet encouraged this "healthy" expression of sexuality that brought artists like Rauschenberg across the Atlantic and up to Sweden.

As Rebecca Solnit acutely points out in her book Secret Exhibition, the Assemblage show occurred at the precise moment that Pop Art emerged as a dominant artistic force. This coincided with the Kennedy administration's attempt to fill a perceived culture gap with an art that could represent its pragmatic liberalism; a position that was international in character and emphasized style obsolescence. As early as the spring of 1960, in an article published in Daedalus and titled "Notes on a National Cultural Policy," Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Kennedy's "special assistant" and cultural advisor, outlined what he saw as the Eisenhower administration's inability to control mass media and called for a new "affirmative governmental policy" that would take seriously, and "control," popular culture (television etc.). After the Kennedy administration's electoral victory in July of 1960, increased effort was made to secure the mass media and control popular culture. As Schlessinger warned the government in a 1962 speech outlining Kennedy's cultural policy, America faced a "critical moment" in culture. Important to this paper is the way Neo-Dada and Pop Art were to become the new national cultural representatives, replacing Abstract

99Ibid., p.71.
Expressionism which had been the flagship for the Eisenhower administration.\textsuperscript{104} This policy, which Schlesinger had already outlined in his 1960 article, Kennedy would later articulate as being based on “the reflection of a people’s will and desire -- and ultimately their taste.”\textsuperscript{105} This “taste” was fostered by a popular culture whose content was increasingly based on the style obsolescence of a consumer society.

To understand how Pop Art eventually came to represent this pragmatic liberal politic, \textit{The Art of Assemblage} exhibition has to be understood as having traced Pop Art’s roots to an international art of assemblage. This art, historically and canonically legitimated by the MoMA show, conveniently served to define an international art movement with “New York ... happy to have the anointed avant-garde in its own back yard again.”\textsuperscript{106} As Solnit observes, “after 1961, few MoMA curators came to California looking for new talent.”\textsuperscript{107} While Nouveau Réalistes, California artists, and the other international/provincial (West Coast) artists were dropped after 1961, MoMA needed to keep a trace of Pop Art’s historical avant-garde lineage. The New York Neo-Dadaists provided the bridge which would help to subtly replace the Abstract Expressionism that had indirectly served to represent an elite section within the Eisenhower administration’s cultural “campaign of truth” with a newer, younger, and the more attractive realism offered by Pop artists.

Whether or not the aforementioned West Coast and European artists understood these larger political dimensions cannot be proven, but I do think that Saint-Phalle and Tinguely partially perceived the larger politics they had become involved in. This would explain why the disaffected Europeans went to the margins (Stockholm) in 1966 where they articulated a different voice and a different project which could not be pigeon-holed as French or American (New York). \textit{Hon}

\textsuperscript{104}For a closer analysis of this, see: Monahan. As Laurie Monahan has shown, “the government sought to foster a policy particularly American in its approach and content” and had by 1962 gone as far as to sponsor the American exhibition for the 1964 Venice Biennale where Robert Rauschenberg eventually “stole” first prize. Monahan, pp. 373 & 377.

\textsuperscript{105}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{106}Solnit, p.88

\textsuperscript{107}Ibid.
would become both an embracing and rejecting, creation and destruction, of Nouveau Réalisme and American Neo-Dada.

By the summer of 1962 tension was mounting between this group and the New York avant-garde. Returning to New York a few months after arriving on the West Coast, Saint-Phalle and Tinguely resumed their collaboration with Rauschenberg that had begun at the American Embassy in Paris. An event named *The Construction of Boston* after the script written by Kenneth Koch, was organized and directed by Merce Cunningham and included Öyvind Fahlström, Billy Klüver, Henry Geldzahler, Frank Stella and others. Although Tinguely was, according to Hulten, “going through a phase of dissatisfaction,” the performance was successful enough that another event in the form of a "happening" was organized.  

This time the collaboration was to take place on European soil at the Stedelijk museum in Amsterdam and was named *Dylaby* (short for Dynamic Labyrinth). Included in this event, as well as Saint-Phalle, Tinguely, and Rauschenberg, were Martial Raysse, Daniel Spoerri, and Per-Olof Ultvedt. Here, the artists had been invited to construct a single collaborative piece, or environment, in which the public would be a participant rather than just a spectator. As it turned out, Rauschenberg was “irritated and disillusioned by the others reluctance to collaborate on a single work, and by Tinguely’s penchant for giving orders and generally running the show.” After *Dylaby*, Tinguely and Saint-Phalle would not collaborate or show together with the New York artists. It seems to me that on returning to the United States shortly after Dylaby, a decision was made to align themselves with the Californians, as they would have viewed with

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108 Hulten (1972), p.241. This dissatisfaction, Hulten continues, had to do with an increased dissolution with producing ephemeral art work.
109 The name “Dylaby” derived from the contraction of “Dynamic Labyrinth” and the last two letters of Dylaby spell "by" which is swedish for “village.” In other words, a dynamic village as well as labyrinth. For an overview of the events and constructions that took place at Dylaby, see: Buffington, Chell. "Dylaby." *Kongreven* 4 (1962), p.148-149.
110 Tomkins (1983), p.225. In an interview conducted on June 10, 1992, Per-Olof Ultvedt recalled Rauschenberg’s "irritation": "I remember sitting at the dinner table. No matter how hard we all tried to speak English, we ended up speaking French which Bob [Robert] did not understand. I guess he must have felt quite alienated...." MT
suspicion the absorption of New York artists such as Rauschenberg and Johns into what Thomas Hess had labelled the "collector-sanctifying bureaucracy" of MoMA and the particular liberal politics that this represented.111

Los Angeles: the Margin as Observatory

David Howard has analysed the political, economic and cultural rise of California in the early 1960's,112 and describes the challenge posed by Californian political and economic elites who were opposed to the pragmatic liberalism and Cold War agenda that was being pushed by Kennedy's New Frontier strategies. Howard notes that this Northeast/Southwest political battle was largely a result of a "conflict over regional allotment of military spending." These regional tensions, Howard continues,

overflowed into the cultural realm. Between Kennedy's liberal New Frontier and the rise of conservative Republican forces in Southern California, New York's most important economic rival, the internal tensions of the military-industrial complex indirectly and directly influenced the debate over the culture gap.113

Indeed, the increased interest in culture resulting from this economic rivalry did shed some national and international light on the West Coast art scene. To use Art in America's critic Jules Langsner's words, by 1962 California emerged as "America's Second Art City."114 I cannot successfully argue that Saint-Phalle and Tinguely understood the political battles being fought out

111Part of what must have appeared interesting at MoMA for artists like Rauschenberg and especially Johns was the curatorial staff which included the gay poet Frank O'Hara whose work figures largely in Johns' work.
113Ibid., p.232.
114Ibid., p.232.
between the Northeastern and Southwestern states. However, I do think that their distancing from Neo-Dada in New York, apparently in sympathy with artists like Kienholz in Los Angeles, is revealing. Discussions spurred on by the encounters and friendships made in California would more than likely have made them aware of their subsidiary role in MoMA’s plans to use New York Neo-Dada to bridge Abstract Expressionism with the up and coming Pop artists.115 While careful not to suggest that assemblage artists such as Kienholz were aligned with West Coast Republicans, I do think that the West Coast/Northeastern rivalry helped stage Los Angeles as a visible challenge in 1962 to New York’s cultural domination. If nothing else, artists such as Kienholz understood Los Angeles to be on “the edge of the economy,” a kind of banlieu for a twentieth century nation:

That’s one of the reasons I like Los Angeles, because Los Angeles throws away an incredible amount of value everyday. I mean, it’s just discarded, shit canned. From automobiles to desks, to clothes, to paint, to—you know, half-bags of concrete that are hardened up. I mean, whatever it is, there is an incredible waste in the city of Los Angeles, and if you’re living on the edge of the economy like that, all the waste filters through your awareness and you take what you want.116

For Saint-Phalle and Tinguely, the incredible amount of consumer waste that Kienholz observed in Los Angeles and absorbed into his work in order to talk about “living and dying [and] our human fear of death”117 corresponded to some degree with their own interests in creation and destruction.

115By December of 1962 MoMA’s interest in Pop Art led it to organize a symposium on Pop Art.
117Ibid..
Culture's role in Cold War politics could not have gone completely ignored, however, as Saint-
Phalle and Tinguely arrived back in New York for separate shows at the Alexandre Iolas Gallery at
the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The work Saint-Phalle produced for her October
exhibition could easily be read as dealing with the new relationship she had with the New Yorkers
and as describing the Cold War atmosphere she experienced upon arrival. A work such as New
York Alp [fig.25] includes a male figure holding on to, or dressed up as, a winged bird-like
creature with roller skates who soars toward and above the city-scape of New York which lies
ominously below an acid yellow sun. In one reading of this image, like Icarus flying too close to
the sun as a result of his blind optimism (the figure's eyes are closed), the Neo-Dada artists
working in New York may also be blinded by the utopia offered by technology and the art
market of their city. This reading of the image can just as easily be replaced by a self-
representational narrative in which Icarus translates as Saint-Phalle who attempts to escape the
prison-like situation she found herself in with Nouveau Réalisme in Paris as well as the art world in
general.

In October 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis threatened to be a world scale repeat of Tinguely's
study in the Nevada Desert earlier that year, as Russia and the United States played their nuclear
game of dare. Remembering the multiple narratives found in work such as Portrait of My Lover,
the figure in New York Alp doubles as a self-portrait of Saint-Phalle who witnesses a future nuclear
destruction of New York from a bird's eye perspective. Considering the emphasis placed on
dividing the work into two halves, the left can be read as representing Europe, while the right side
is clearly America. It thus presents the viewer with a complex narrative that is at the same time
historical (Cuban Missile Crisis), mythological (Icarus), and personal (Saint-Phalle, and perhaps
Rauschenberg).

In the spring of 1963, after Tinguely had travelled to Tokyo for an exhibition at the Minami
Gallery, the two of them would return to Los Angeles to prepare for solo exhibitions organized at
the Dwan Gallery. In Tokyo Tinguely had constructed a series of smaller Baluba sculptures with names like Suzuki and Honda which in a letter to Hulten dated March 10, 1963, Tinguely describes as "influenced by Japanese Ikebana (bungled - vulgar - popular)." 118 Prior to his departure for Japan, Tinguely had made a work whose title Pop, Hop, Op and Company [fig. 26] reads as a comprehensive comment on Pop and Kinetic art in the United States. 119 At the Dwan Gallery in April, Tinguely made some of his first garden sculptures whose attached water-hoses sprayed in the random directions provided by the jerky movements of the machine's cogs and wheels. In an attempt to distance himself from Pop Art as well as Nouveau Réalisme, Tinguely also began painting his sculptures entirely matt black. As Hulten has commented: “For the time being he contented himself with painting his sculptures black, to rid them of their objet-trouvé character. The black paint is also a means of dematerializing the works, a gesture of “anti-Neo-realism.” 120 Accompanying the “dematerializing” effect that black paint offered Tinguely was a change to more solidly constructed pieces. In a paradoxical gesture of anarchism, it seems, Tinguely decided to make permanent work at the very moment that the world looked like it would collapse (height of Cold War). Commenting on this seemingly paradoxical situation, Tinguely has commented that “The tongue, which is soft, usually lasts longer than the teeth, which are hard.” 121

In Saint-Phalle’s exhibition at Dwan Gallery we can also view a change towards work built for permanence. Continuing to work in her multi-narrative mode, Saint-Phalle included a number of small shot-painting reliefs such as New England Church, Small Heart, and The Monster. These works appear as small iconic studies for the large tir tableau King Kong [fig. 27], the work that dominated the exhibition space. This largest work produced to date by Saint-Phalle, was “built

121 Ibid., p.137.
and bulleted," as Rosalind G. Wholden\textsuperscript{122} described in a four page review of the exhibition in \textit{Artforum}, to "represent(s) a consolidation of both thematic and pictorial experiences for Niki. It is her largest continuous narrative, a 'Tableau Mourant' deliberately engineered for permanence."\textsuperscript{123} This permanence, the review points out, is noteworthy: "because Saint-Phalle has gained notoriety largely through public acts of destruction," and therefore, "the autonomy of \textit{King Kong} as a finished art object needs to be emphasized. It is a demonstration picture, like Delacroix's 'Death of Sardanapalus.'"\textsuperscript{124}

The first clue that suggests \textit{King Kong}'s multiple narrative is the title itself. Saint-Phalle has not included an image of King Kong, as the title suggests, instead there is a monster that formally and narratively bridges the two sides of the work, once again representing France and the United States. Saint-Phalle has commented that the monster represents herself.\textsuperscript{125} Taking this into consideration, Saint-Phalle has here named the monster "King Kong" to suggest that she, like the Hollywood creature, was brought across the Atlantic as a curiosity that could be taken advantage of and then discarded. Whereas King Kong was "exhibited" in New York and finally killed by missiles, Saint-Phalle was "exhibited" in \textit{The Art and Assemblage} show as a French exotic woman artist, used by the Museum of Modern Art and eventually made obsolete within its construction of art history. This narrative is intertwined with the political reality of the Cuban Missile Crisis in which New York, the technocratic center of the \textit{Western World}, is threatened by self destruction as illustrated by the incoming missiles from the right (east) side of the panel.

\textit{King Kong} was produced from kitsch objects that serve as signs for a consumer society basing its economic welfare on the ability to produce goods with built-in obsolescence. Saint-Phalle in turn

\textsuperscript{122} Wholden's review is the only critical response I have been able to locate. Although there were earlier reviews of Saint-Phalle's work in magazines such as \textit{Art in America}, these appear to loose interest in her work in 1963.

\textsuperscript{123} Wholden, Rosalind, G. "Puerealism: 'The End' with Innocence." \textit{Artforum} (Summer 1963), p.29.

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{125} Saint-Phalle quoted in \textit{Niki de Saint-Phalle}. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1981, p.34. It should be noted that there are two versions of this catalogue: a Swedish and a French version.
shoots this composition to transform objects from popular and consumer culture into "high art."\textsuperscript{126} The work is divided into two halves. On the left side, as mentioned in my initial description, Saint-Phalle has included imagery that calls up an edenic (tree of Eden), sacred (church), and, as the bright surface suggests, happy time in her life (giving birth, children playing, love, man on motorcycle, and marriage). This side is juxtaposed with the right side, with more profane, hellish, and destructive imagery that ends at the bottom with the figure of Death. If we explore this iconography even further and make the two children in the composition represent Saint-Phalle's own son and daughter, we can say that left side also represents France. But to complicate matters, this very same girl can double as a young Saint-Phalle who in this reading of the narrative falls in love and marries Harry Matthews who stands next to the bride (Saint-Phalle).

Or is this male figure Jean Tinguely as his body is constructed out of the very wheels Tinguely uses in his work? The narrative keeps slipping in and out of focus the more we attempt to read it.

The masks located above an American flag and acting as heads for the figures themselves, call up Saint-Phalle's own game of masquerading within the art world, an act she no doubt learned while working as a model and taking acting lessons in New York, and a strategy shared with Johns and Rauschenberg to hide their gay identities. Do the masks signify political assassinations by Saint-Phalle? Included are Fidel Castro (again calling up Cuba), Abraham Lincoln, and other political figures. But what about Santa Claus or a Halloween witch? As I have argued, Paris and New York are both obtusely represented by the left and right panel. I would also argue that the left side can double with Paris to represent Los Angeles. This is suggested by the sun, motorcycles, green plastic trees and the American flag. To move to the right side of the work, the "Boom" represented in a cartoon bubble is interesting in that it can be read as linking pop art with the self-destroying and obsolete cityscape of New York. This would show an acute awareness of Pop Art's relation to an American culture based on obsolescence that was feeding the military-
industrial system put in motion by the Kennedy administration and exemplified in California as Kienholz described.

By developing a personal mythology around her work and self that relied on abilities to mimic and masquerade the multiple discourses surrounding her life and art, Saint-Phalle was able to distance her own production from the work being produced in Paris, New York, as well as Los Angeles. Los Angeles offered Saint-Phalle a position on the margins where she could objectively view the contemporary artistic and political battles being fought out within high art and popular culture. *King Kong* served as a history painting which, like Delacroix's *Death of Sardanapalus*, represents a corrupt culture whose material hunger will end in an orgy of self-destruction. With an acute awareness of constructions of personal, political and national identities, Saint-Phalle conflates these multiple identities with an auto-biographical narrative account. Although she takes on the role of Saint-Sebastian or Joan of Arc in order to shed light on the surrounding world (political, economic, historical, artistic and personal) which she views as corrupt, Saint-Phalle insists on at least actively taking part in her own inevitable assassination by constructing the sacrificial platform and pulling the trigger to release the fatal bullet.

**Defining a Gendered Politic**

It is at this moment, when Saint-Phalle produces her "permanent demonstration picture" and Tinguely paints his machine sculptures black, that two relatively "stable" identities emerge and complement each other. Saint-Phalle, from this point on, explores the vocabulary developed in her early work in a more permanent form. The imagery used in *King Kong* adds up to a symbolic universe for Saint-Phalle. From this she produces a series of Nanas, Brides, and Monsters which start out as assembled reliefs made to be shot at, but gradually become more decorative as the forms are made more sculptural (not target reliefs) and colourful. Tinguely's black painted sculptures made up of junk metal such as cogs and wheels are read as masculine when contrasted
with Saint-Phalle's “soft” and colourful feminine counterparts. This heterosexual symbolism is an aspect of their work which increasingly becomes obvious and, as we shall see, increasingly violently presented.

I wish to argue that there is a relationship between the fact that these artists decided to define their work along increasingly rigid gender lines and their decision to distance their production from Neo-Dada and Pop art. Andreas Huyssen has suggested that the "early American postmodernists' attempt to open up the realm of high art to the imagery of everyday life and American mass culture are in some ways reminiscent of the historical avantgarde's attempt to do work in the interstices of high art and mass culture."127 However, Huyssen notices a difference between the European and American avant-garde of the early 60's. He suggests that "the attempt by the American postmodernists of the 1960's to re-negotiate the relationship between high art and mass culture gained its own political momentum in the context of the emerging new social movements of those years."128 The most prominent social issues were perhaps those raised by feminists whose agendas circulated around class, race and gender issues. Although the historical avant-garde in Europe had attempted to break down hierarchies of class, it was by-and-large a "patriarchal, misogynist, and masculinist project."129 Huyssen's essay traces this modernist project to the turn of the century and notices how "the political, psychological, and aesthetic discourse...consistently and obsessively genders mass culture and the masses as feminine, while high culture, whether traditional or modern, clearly remains the privileged realm of male activities."130

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127 Although Huyssen's work deals with the gendering of mass culture in a generalized way it remains one of the best discussions of it. See his chapter "Woman as Mass Culture" in Huyssen, Andreas. After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1986. p.60.
128 Ibid.
129 Ibid.
130 Ibid., p.47.
Tinguely and Saint-Phalle's gender constructions may simply be seen as extensions of their work's autobiographical nature -- stressing the heterosexual relationship between the two artists as the work was often produced and shown together. But what may be more interesting to consider is that this strategy becomes a way to stress the difference between their work and that of the New York artists. The New York avant-garde's aesthetic vocabulary is more gender-ambiguous in order to allow the space, however limited and private it might have been, for certain artists to deal with their homosexual identities. While both bodies of work aim to define particular positions and identities through the consumer culture that surrounds them, differences do emerge in the final objects produced. Whereas the Europeans, as Huysen observes, clearly gender mass culture as feminine through a Freudian vocabulary that aims to dialectically negotiate a distancing from mass culture by defining a masculine and feminine position for their own work, the Americans do not draw the same clear gender distinctions. Instead, their work had to become more obtuse in order to hold within them discourses surrounding homosexuality which were by-and-large taboo subject matters. Their trope was an act of concealment which nevertheless was an active affirmation of a large community's identity.

What is disturbing with the gender constructions in Saint-Phalle's and Tinguely's work, as mentioned earlier, is the violent overtones. In November of 1965, Tinguely took part in a large two man exhibition under the title *2 Kinetic Sculptors* with Nicolas Schöffer at the Jewish Museum in New York. Of the sixty-four works by Tinguely there was one work which brought special attention from the audience and press -- *The Dissecting Machine* [fig.28]. As Pontus Hulten describes the work: "*The Dissecting Machine* cuts, saws, and drills holes in a woman (a shop window dummy), which retains its affected smile throughout."131 Commenting on this work in the *New York Times*, Tinguely had this to say:

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It started out as a ball-playing machine for the ladies who come here...but when I saw them they didn't quite look as if they'd stoop to pick up a ball. So I turned it into this, to scare them.132

Owing to the audience's failure to respond to his kinetic sculpture, Tinguely turned his work into the violent and misogynist Dissecting Machine. The audience responded attentively to the new piece, only to see themselves represented as technology and art gone wrong. Reading the mannequin both as a personification of both mass culture and the masses (the audience who in this case was the "ladies"), this work is clearly a cutting critique against Rauschenberg and Klüver who by 1965 had set in motion projects which attempted to bridge art and life through the help of technology.133

Between 1963 and 1965 Saint-Phalle had produced a large body of work that also utilized a heterosexually gendered vocabulary related to mass culture and high culture. Her Red Witch [fig.29] from 1963 is an assemblage made up of a range of plastic kitsch objects forming a Nana figure that appears to be a precursor to Hon. Stuffed with coloured paint pigment and painted white, Saint-Phalle used her phallic rifle to shoot bullets into the woman's body which bleed to produce an colourful and abstract effect. By shooting mass-culture, Saint-Phalle, with her tongue in her cheek I'm sure, turned kitsch into "high" art.

While the aforementioned Americans saw transformative potential in a "popular" culture informed by a joint technological and artistic program, the Europeans would have viewed it as an absorption

133 By 1965 Rauschenberg and Klüver collaborated on art work that were meant to demonstrate the limitless possibilities of art and technology through the joint knowledge of artists and engineer. The following year they would form E.A.T. (Experiments in Art and Technology), an non-profit foundation designed "to catalyze the inevitable active involvement of industry, technology, and the arts." By the late sixties, EAT had enlisted approximately six thousand members and received grants from AT&T, IBM, Xerox, the AFL-CIO, the New York State Council on the Arts, etc.. Tomkins (1982), p.251.
into the non-criticality of kitsch and the mere celebration of American liberalism. Robert
Rauschenberg's "victory" at the Venice Biennale in 1964 had made him an "American
champion,"134 and the success of Johns, Warhol and others did not appear to be read critically
by the popular press or art journals as their work became absorbed in the fabric of "Pop." For
these European artists, American avant-gardism was constructed as a de-virilized version of the
historical avant-garde; too weak to resist the absorption into a populist celebration of
Americanism.

Some Private Matter: Correspondences With Ultvedt

Since Dylaby, correspondence had been maintained between Saint-Phalle, Tinguely, and Per-
Olof Ultvedt.135 Although perhaps in a more discreet way, Ultvedt had also begun to distance
his work from the New York art scene as early as the summer of 1962. Illena Sonnabend,
Rauschenberg's art dealer at the time, had approached Ultvedt at the Venice Biennale to ask if he
was interested in making a smaller copy of Signal, the work produced for the Biennale, to be
exhibited at her gallery in New York. After having been given specific measurements by
Sonnabend as to the size his work had to be in order to fit into a desired cargo box, Ultvedt
finally decided to cancel the "lucrative" offer to join her prestigious artist stable. This decision
not to fit his work around Sonnabend's desired formal agenda was further spurred on, as he
remembers it, after having eaves-dropped on a conversation between Rauschenberg and Sonnabend
a short while later in Amsterdam. According to Ultvedt, the conversation revealed
Rauschenberg's submission to the formal demands placed on his art by Sonnabend's exhibition
strategies. "This," he recalled, "was not what my art was about, it was about breaking down

134See Monahan.
135I would like to thank Per-Olof Ultvedt for allowing me to read and record these letters kept in his private archive
during my visits in 1992 and 1993. MT
conventions, not submitting to them." Adding to this, Ultvedt still maintains that "I do not want to be a 'pop star' that travels around and makes appearances based on demand."

Nevertheless, between April 16 and May 4, 1963 Ultvedt did travel to New York after having been offered travel, accommodation, and studio costs to show at the Alexander Iolas Gallery. Here he produced another labyrinth as well as an elaborate installation entitled *Manhattan*. Having once again met up with Rauschenberg, Ultvedt travelled to Washington D.C. where they collaborated with Carolyn Brown (Merce Cunningham's leading ballerina) on a Merce Cunningham dance piece entitled *Pelican* [fig.30]. Reporting back from the States to his close friend and art critic, Ulf Linde of Sweden, Ultvedt received an acidulous letter back a short while later:

After your descriptions of the Wall Street dominance I have been convinced that a socialism must take over everywhere. This is the only way to end "new realism," since this movement obviously has to do with artists having a hard time getting rid of those kinds of garbage....

The fact that Rauschenberg has begun working with silk-screen stuff I find upsetting. It is, after all, Andy Warhol who has the patent on silkscreening. Is there no Restany over there to keep an eye on what artists are doing?

...You have written about New York in a strange way in the letter I received today. You almost sound like a new being -- and to think that I like the old one so much....

I have been smudging oil on canvas for the 'stoppages' [Duchamp replicas]. Messed and smudged, stroked and rubbed -- I'm beginning to understand those fagot painters. It's wonderful, the head is completely emptied....

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136 Interview conducted on June 10, 1992 at Lidingö, Sweden. MT
I promise you, no homo-painters would have bothered with as much work as I have put into this exhibition. I even have muscle cramps -- no doubt! 137

I have cited this letter at length for two reasons. First, the letter shows how much pressure was placed on Ultvedt to distance himself from the New York art scene. Whereas from this time on Ultvedt maintained his working relationship with Tinguely and Saint-Phalle, the Pelican dance performance would be the last time Ultvedt collaborated on work with the Americans. Secondly, Linde’s private correspondence with Ultvedt stresses the relevance of the sexual politics at play.

When asked in an interview conducted in 1992 if the homosexuality of artists such as Rauschenberg, Cage, and Cunningham was ever discussed by Saint-Phalle, Tinguely and himself and if it played a role in ending collaborations between the artists, Ultvedt had this to say:

The homosexuality of these artists was something we all took for granted.... We never discussed their sexuality in a negative way.... In regards to the end of our working relationship it did not have anything to do with it..., but of course, I can only speak for myself and not for Niki or Jean. 138

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137 Springfeldt, p.53. MT I would like to emphasize the fact that Linde uses the words “messed, smudged, stroked, and rubbed” which are direct references to Rauschenberg’s painting technique which in turn relates to what Norman O’Brown interprets as gestures and signs related to an interest in anality. See Brown, Norman O. ‘ Life and Death : The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History. New York: Vintage Books, 1959. Sigmund Freud’s biographer Ernest Jones, in his Papers on Psychoanalysis (London: Balliere, Tindall and Cox, 1918), describes the following “anal-erotic character traits”: “any dirty material, street-filth (including, of course dung), soiled linen and other things, dust, coal, house or garden refuse, waste-paper, and, indeed, waste material of all descriptions, for in the unconscious the ideas denoted by the words ‘waste’ and ‘dirty’ seem to be synonymous — the tertium comparationis doubtless being that of ‘refuse.’ Either disgusting or waste matter relating to the body is especially apt to become thus associated. The former of these may be illustrated by the material of loathsome diseases — e.g., purulent and other secretions — and this is also the reason why a corpse is often a symbol of faeces. Examples of the latter are hair and nails, parts of the body that are apt to get dirty and which are periodically cast off. Books and other printed matter are a curious symbol of faeces, presumably through the association with paper and the idea of pressing (smearing, imprinting).” This quote is discussed in relation to Jasper Johns’ work in Wienberg, Jonathan. “It’s in the Can: Jasper Johns and the Anal Society.” Genders 1 (Spring 1988), p.42. 138 Interview with Ultvedt (1992). The large number of homosexual people involved in the avant-garde art scene in New York was a well known fact. This subject was discussed in an article by Öyvind Fahlstrem in Dagens Nyheter entitled “Orgiernas Brooklyn.” [The Orgies’ Brooklyn] (April 4, 1965), p.4. MT
When considered in relation to Linde's letter however, Ultvedt's dismissal does not hold water and we can clearly see that the sexual differences were not taken for granted.

At Dylaby, discussion had begun regarding a new collaborative project, "without" Rauschenberg. Undated letters written between 1963 and 1966 from Saint-Phalle and Tinguely to Ultvedt stress the importance of not including Rauschenberg in their future collaboration which would eventually be called Hon-en katedral:

Saint-Phalle: I am glad that you like the idea of an enormous collaboration. But there are problems.... it would have to be an enormous Castle. Jean and I both feel that this collaboration would be something sufficient in itself.

Tinguely: What's the use in a large Pop hot dog? Don't you feel the four of us would be enough since the castle would become a unity. Why have an enormous hamburger next to it?

Saint-Phalle: Rauschenberg also may be unnecessary....

One of these letters also suggests that it would be best to keep Billy Klüver uninformed about their plans. As we shall see in chapter four, by 1965 Klüver’s involvement with Rauschenberg in experiments in art and technology was reaching a peak as he was publishing articles that read as manifesto’s for the project that by 1966 would be incorporated under the label E.A.T. (Experiments in Art and Technology). By 1965, with the support of Hulten, Klüver had also established himself as an ambassador of art between New York's avant-garde art scene and Moderna Museet in Stockholm.

139 Undated letter confirmed by Ultvedt to have been written between 1963 and 1966. MT
Chapter 4

Hon-en katedral: The Mechanical Bride Stripped Bare in Stockholm, Even.

I.
I, a passionate anti-American, think it's good to accept and to look closely at the Cunt, an entrance, an exit. In the smallish magazines in Sweden, focus falls upon the Cunt. In the U.S.A., there is always something in the way, the Cunt is obstructed. From my studio in the M.M., I looked straight up Hon's Cunt. Every day, very clearly, I saw the citizens go in and come out. That seemed to me to move things forward a little. More Body-Art always helps.

II.
Art that really means something is always laughed at. So, Gulliver, so Alice. People pay for the funny thing, as they do to buy rubber balls, to knock the girls into the water at Gröna Lund. The King is disgusted, but perhaps he doesn't care one way or the other -- King is a hard part to play these days. Clowns through the Ages. Hon probably paid for me.

III.
I wish that those who saw and enjoyed Hon whole, could have watched her being taken apart. Three months: Birth/Life/Death. One sixteenth of Europe (to exaggerate) and all of Stockholm getting their heads in. What a fast, full life! More action than Christina.

IV.
I didn't like her bathing suit.

Claes Oldenburg.\textsuperscript{140}

The history of Swiftian criticism, like the history of psychoanalysis, shows that repression weighs more heavily on anality than on genitality.

Norman O'Brown\textsuperscript{141}


\textsuperscript{141} O'Brown, p.180.
Refusing Experiments in Art and Technology

At the end of 1965, the president of Fylkingen, the society for experimental music in Stockholm, came to New York to solicit American artists and musicians to take part in a symposium involving art and technology. Öyvind Fahlström, then living in New York, notified Billy Klüver of the possible event, who in turn contacted Rauschenberg, Steve Paxton, Alex and Deborah Hay, Yvonne Rainer, John Cage, David Tudor and others to put in a proposal. The proposed exhibition was to be called Nine Evenings and included a working staff of thirty Bell Laboratory scientists. Interestingly, the proposal was turned down by the Swedish sponsors who were "distinctly unhappy" about the Americans' approach to the project. As Calvin Tomkins has remarked:

Communications between the two groups faltered and then broke down completely in the summer of 1966, at which point Klüver, Rauschenberg, and the other principals made the decision to go ahead on their own, without the Swedes.

Letters from Rauschenberg to Ultvedt regarding Nine Evenings reveal an enthusiasm to collaborate again. In the program suggested by the New Yorkers, Ultvedt was asked to acquire, and be in charge of, a large number of waffle makers that would, one presumes, represent the democratic nature of the planned "happening." As Ultvedt has commented: "I didn't want to be a 'waffle maker.'" Considering his disillusionment with "pop art," the symbolic value of waffle making must have appeared too close to the symbolic value of hamburgers and hot dogs.

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142Tomkins (1982), p.243-244.
143Ibid., p.244.
144Undated letter from Robert Rauschenberg to Per-Olof Ultvedt confirmed to be from 1965. Courtesy P.O. Ultvedt.
145Ibid.
As it turned out, Ultvedt, with the help of technicians from the Fylkingen society amongst others, found himself busy with his own, distinctly European event.146

In March, Konstrevy published a lengthy article written by Billy Klüver entitled “Technology For Life” which describes his three years of work with Rauschenberg producing the sound piece Oracle. This collaborative work, Klüver writes, serves to show what the role of the artist can be in a society that “shall survive thanks to – not despite of -- technology.”147 What is necessary, he argues, is an unlimited exchange of ideas between artists and technicians in order to produce a "medium" capable of carrying the “message” necessary to stimulate not just technological progress, but also social progress. Grounding his argument in Marshall McLuhan’s claim that technology is “an expansion of our nervous system,” Klüver sees a link between the “mechanical and organical stand point” that he paraphrases Norman O’Brown to have respectively characterized as “for death” and “for life.”148 What technology needs, he continues, is “an analyst, a stimulant, a provoker, and an undresser.”149 For Klüver, this was no doubt an artist such as Rauschenberg.

Shortly after this article was published, art and technology would indeed be undressed; but perhaps not quite the way Klüver had imagined and wanted. On the 27th of April, 1966, Tinguely and Saint-Phalle arrived in Stockholm at which point an intense period of discussion began together with Ultvedt and Hulten regarding the collaborative project that had been planned since Dylaby. Due to an unexpected invitation to partake in the Venice Biennale, Martial Raysse, who had also been considered for the project, was forced to cancel. Tinguely

146Staff from Fylkingen contributed their assistance in installing the sound system for Hon. Documented in the exhibitions accompanying newspaper, Hon-en katedral byggd av: Niki de Saint Phalle, Jean Tinguely, Per-Olof Ultvedt. Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1966.
148Klüver here quotes Norman O’Brown from his 1959 book Life and Death. The article also includes suggested readings of McLuhan’s work whose “polemic is that we do not know how much we are influenced by the news media, but it is important to note their existence.” Ibid., p.61. MT
149Ibid.. MT
suggested an opera or a kind of mechanical theatre which would have involved a number of episodes such as: Woman seizes power; A public relations man commits suicide because of a failure; The assassination of LBJ; The Pope in New York; An aeroplane crash in the jungle; and so on. As these themes suggest, the work was to concern international relations, gender politics, as well as the failure of technology. Saint-Phalle maintained that the work should be a giant cathedral, and finally Hulten proposed "a giant supine figure, on the lines of Niki de Saint-Phalle's Nanas, which was at once called She [a Cathedral]."151

Hon-en katedral

On the third of June, Moderna Museet opened its ticket gate to reveal Hon, the giant female figure that had been kept secret during five weeks of planning, construction and painting [fig.31]. Measuring 23.5 x 6 x 10 meters, "She" lay headless on her back, with her legs spread and knees pointed upwards, in the large exhibition space (room 1) of Moderna Museet. Upon entering through the vagina of this giant female figure, built and painted like an Easter egg by Niki de Saint-Phalle, the visitor to Hon first confronted a large, grinding, black and white wheel [fig.32]. This was Tinguely's contribution to the "amusements" that She embodied. Standing on foam floor, the visitor had to question its function as the sound of crushing glass could be heard from inside. The function became more apparent when one visited the Coca-Cola bar in one of the breasts. A hidden microphone in the "love seat" in the left leg reported lover's secrets to "soft" drinkers in the bar who roared with laughter while drinking Coke and sending the empty bottles down a chute into Tinguely's "Machine for the Production of Broken Glass."152 In this gesture,

150 Hulten (1972), p.289.
151 Ibid.
152 The love seat in the left leg references Edward Kienholz's Back Seat Dodge-38 from 1964 where the American car reveals its ultimate function as a bordello. Back Seat Dodge-38 turns the symbol for American freedom (the car) into a surrealist nightmare, and by a subtle implication, Hon can also be read to represent mass culture as woman/prostitute.
the technological optimism that defined itself as masculine and was iconographed in consumer society in the shape of a Coca-Cola bottle, was here symbolically emptied and broken down.

Along the lines of this Duchampian castration, Ultvedt produced a mobile piece in Hon’s stomach which featured a man being massaged by numerous hands while seated precariously on a chair watching a television screen displaying waves on a stormy ocean [fig.33]. In this piece, the “oceanic” Freud describes as the “primitive pleasure-ego” utilized by religions, was here linked to the massage of consumer culture and technology that McLuhan had analysed. This reading becomes even more evident when we consider the subtitle of She: "a Cathedral."

Adding to this spectacular critique, Ulf Linde, whose four articles from 1965 were also positioned in opposition to what had been labelled Neo-Dada or Pop, contributed a series of “Fake Paintings” which hung in the art gallery located in one of Hon’s legs [fig.34] -- a mocking reference to the suggestion that “anything can be art” -- even if its made by an art critic.

Along with a planetarium, lookout tower, slide, tunnel of love, a number of automatic vendors for various kinds of goods, service personnel, public telephone, gold-fish pond and other novelties, the viewer also encountered a movie theatre showing scenes from Greta Garbo’s first movie Luffar-Petter from 1922 in which Swedish women are shown bathing in a Nordic landscape setting. Garbo, in the context of Hon, hereby represented the commodification of the sexualized woman.

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153“The true source of religious sentiment...consists of a peculiar felling... present in millions of people.... This feeling which he [a patient] would like to call a sensation of ‘eternity,’ a feeling as of something limitless, unbounded -- as it were, ‘oceanic.’ This feeling, he adds, is a purely subjective fact, not an article of faith; ... it is the source of the religious energy which is seized upon by the various religious systems, directed by them into particular channels, and doubtless also exhausted by them.” Freud, Sigmund. Civilization and its Discontents. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1961, pp.11-12. For the makers of Hon, Freud’s concept of an oceanic feeling that can control masses of people must have been considered a perfect analogy to the blind optimism they understood members of the New York avant-garde to be investing in art and technology. McLuhan’s inclusion of a four page spread on Hon in his 1967 book The Medium is the Massage is an incredible irony in the history of this exhibition if we consider what I would describe as Saint-Phalle’s, Tinguely’s, and Ultvedt’s “anti-McLuhanesque” position.
that was in a sense exported to the United States where she soon became a sex symbol within Hollywood's star system.

As the Swedish evening paper Expressen reported, Hon, to many, resembled nothing more than an artwork masquerading as the Funny House at Gröna Lund (Stockholm's amusement park). The same article also reports with astonishment that the exhibition:

...opened on Saturday and there is already a rush of people to get there. On opening day there were 2,000 visitors, the next day 1,500, and each following day another 2,000. This is the exceptional part: Not one person has been shocked (unless we count an American tourist who dropped in by accident and thought that this was the way Swedes celebrated their memory of Queen Christina; that exhibit does not begin until July 1 at the Nationalmuseum).

Without finding the large female figure (honan) in good order or morals, we report that six to seven thousand people, half of them young, have now entered between HER thighs and in through HER wide open sex.

As this quote attests, Hon was a box-office success along the lines of The Blonde Venus in Emile Zola's novel Nana. The event was not only noted in the Swedish popular press and journals, Time Magazine cited Hon as one of the most uproarious, outrageous--and incredibly popular--exhibits to make its debut in Sweden's capital in years. The paying visitor to this enormous courtisan of Pop culture was supplied with an exhibition guide in the form of a newspaper that included chronological histories of each artist as well as the construction of Hon. Mimicking the

155 Ibid. MT
156 Time Magazine (June 17, 1966).
obsolescence of the popular culture Hon represented, the low quality paper used for this newspaper guarantied its eventual disintegration and, symbolically, the loss of history.

All in all, Hon was meant to represent the seduction of an "American dream." In his 1965 book, Understanding Media, Marshall McLuhan, one of the main theoretical voices behind Klüver and Rauschenberg's collaborative projects, located the ultimate symbol for this dream -- the automobile.

Although it may be true to say that an American is a creature of four wheels, and to point out that American youth attributes much more importance to arriving at driver's-license age than at voting age, it is also true that the car has become an article of dress without which we feel uncertain, unclad, and incomplete in the urban compound.157

Looking at car advertisement from the 1950's and 60's it is not hard to see that the American automobile with its stream-lined body and generously sized head-lights was meant to give the all-American male his female attribute. McLuhan went as far as to name this "dream mobile" -- The Mechanical Bride. After Hon's two months of "fun-filled action," a three day destruction period was scheduled, announced and executed [fig.35]. Just as in Tinguely's earlier work, Hommage à New York, celebration or hommage was followed by destruction.158 Through the act of creation

158 The destruction of Hon is well documented not only in the Nationalmuseum's 1967 catalogue of the exhibit and in numerous books about Saint-Phalle and Tinguely, but also in a 16mm film entitled Hon by Magnus Wibom from 1966. This film is the best document available of the activities that occurred inside Hon. Throughout the film carnivalesque music plays. Included is a scene of a Coca-Cola bottle being crushed, Tinguely's Radio Stockholm, the rotating snack-bar etc.. Scenes from the destruction are all very violent and include the removal of one of the breasts, etc.. All the figures involved in the destruction are male. I would like acknowledge Monica Nickels effort at Moderna Museet for finding the film in their archives and screening it for me on August 18, 1992.
and destruction, the Europeans in fact stripped this bride of its "article of dress," and in this way revealed an image similar to Andy Warhol's disaster series.

The Reception

Niki de Saint-Phalle has described the work as follows:

There was nothing pornographic about the Hon. She was painted like an Easter egg with the very bright colours I have always used and loved. She was like a grand fertility goddess reclining comfortably in her immensity and generously receiving thousands of visitors which she absorbed, devoured, and gave birth to again. The shock of Hon was so enormous that we got away with it. Also one must remember that this was Sweden, where there had been for some time an atmosphere of sexual liberty. This joyous huge creature represented for many people the dream of the return to the great Mother Goddess.... The birth rate of Stockholm went up the year of the Hon, and this was attributed to her.  

Sweden's liberal attitudes towards sexuality are important to the understanding of the chosen location for this exhibition. It was partly through this cultural image that Sweden could separate its own "liberal" position from America's "vital center." As Claus Oldenburg so vividly described it, "in Sweden, focus falls upon the Cunt. In the U.S.A., there is always something in the way, the Cunt is obstructed." To many, this liberal attitude towards sexuality in Sweden represented a new democratic "freedom." Most critics writing about the exhibition, including women, viewed

160An interesting web is spun between the Swedish government's censorship policies, Pop culture, and pornography in an article by Lars Bjurman entitled "Pop och Pornografi" [Pop and Pornography] in Ord och Bild nc.3 (1965), pp.261-267. Bjurman here claims that the pornography industry's entry into popular culture is partly a result of that industry's ability to use Sweden's liberal sexual policies and laws. This particular issue of Ord och Bild focuses entirely on Consumer culture and sexuality.
Hon as representative of the emancipated woman. But a few contemporary commentators like Gudrun Ekeflo, and Barbro Backberger read the piece as a "traditional" and "reactionary" position against the liberated female subject. In a two page dialogue presumably written using Ulf Linde’s description of Hon from Dagens Nyheter and inserting her own response to counter what she viewed as a male chauvinist perspective, Backberger had this to write:

Voice I: She billows in front of you like a washed up whale on the beach. You stand below - in front of her like Gulliver in the land of Giants. She is a cathedral. All cathedrals ought to be like this....

Voice II: Oh, I see--- a cathedral this time. It doesn't matter what we call it, it's the same old passive woman anyway.

Voice I: She is sister to Venus of Willendorff and Lorenzon's cosmic mother. Requests and censorship buzzes about her like insignificant mosquitos. Their tiny voices are overpowered by the life machinery that chews, beat, creek, squeak and turn and toss inside of her.

Voice II: As expected! We are back to the thirties again. Primitivism's view on woman .... A woman who whole heartedly identifies herself with her sexuality. A pleasant and warm lover.... 

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161See for example Bengt Ölvang's article "Hon" in the socialist evening paper Aftonbladet (June 9, 1966).
The dialogue continues at length until the woman (voice II) asks: "Is there never anything new in art? For example, a woman who stands on her own two legs?"¹⁶⁴ Not only was Hon upsetting to many because of her reclining pose, but the fact that her head was constructed as nothing more than a tiny extension of the enormous body was more than some could swallow. Ekeflo, in an article for Stockholm's *Tidningen* had this to say:

> If one is to interpret this monumental work symbolically... (Hon) is an enormous, swelling, sensual female body who is topped off with a tiny bulb for a head. One can stroll around in this body, but after having had some refreshments at the bar underneath the breasts you don't get any farther --- the head is apparently totally uninteresting and contains, according to the handout, an "inferno machine."¹⁶⁵

The critiques made by writers from within the women's movement against the exhibition and the writers that celebrated Hon have to be considered just. However, Hon should also be seen as a critique against the hyped optimism surrounding "the new woman;" or as a French fashion magazine would call her and their product: *Elle*. The playful facade surrounding Hon was after all abused to the point of destruction. In this sense Saint-Phalle's *Nana* engages in a similar critique against the hyped and *popularized* image of the new woman as Martial Raysse whom we remember was to have contributed on this work but had to cancel. Similar to Raysse's *Elle* [fig.36] from 1962, Hon (or *Elle*) relies on a Duchampian ambiguity that simultaneously attracts and repels the viewer. The inviting colourful pop surface and the wide open legs attract the

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¹⁶⁴Ibid., p.325.

¹⁶⁵It should be noted that a critique against Freudian psychoanalysis was well under way by the 1960's in Sweden as elsewhere. An important writer within the women's movement treating this subject was Betty Friedan whose 1963 book *The Feminine Mystique* was widely circulated in Sweden and finally translated into Swedish in 1968. Karin Widerberg's study *Kvinnor, Klasser, och Lagar 1750-1980*. [Women, Classes, and Laws 1750-1980] Stockholm: LiberFörlag, 1980, deals in detail with the sexual politics in Sweden during the 1960's. She finds that the sexual revolution that took place in Sweden at this time was discussed and spurred on by mass media more frequently than in other countries. She also discusses the way in which this changing view on women followed the advanced capitalist society's development which gave the female sexuality of those years specific consequences that relate to a still male dominated social system. See Widerberg, p.89-93.
audience to take part in an event that leads to a violent destruction. *Hon* was an art object used and abused. If we consider that Saint-Phalle's work is always partially a self-representation this may appear to be an act of sadomasochism. However, I would argue that Saint-Phalle participates in what Luce Irigaray calls a "masquerade" where the act of mimesis can transform subordination into an affirmation:

To play with mimesis is thus, for a woman, to try to recover the place of her exploitation by discourse, without allowing herself to be simply reduced to it. It means to resubmit herself...to ideas about herself, that are elaborated in/by a masculine logic, but so as to make "visible," by an effect of playful repetition what was supposed to remain invisible: the cover-up of a possible operation of the feminine in language. It also means "to unveil" the fact that, if women are such good mimics, it is because they are not simply resorbed in this function. *They also remain elsewhere:* another case of the persistence of "matter," but also of "sexual pleasure."166

In other words, Saint-Phalle uses the feminine body as a sign on which she can reveal the masculine logic of the world that surrounds her.

Returning to Ekeflo's statement that "the head [of *Hon*] is apparently totally uninteresting," I argue the contrary; that its size, shape and function were of interest to the artists. Studying *Hon*'s form and content carefully, we notice another reading of the work. The earlier described heterosexual polarity that was developed in Saint-Phalle's and Tinguely's oeuvre is not only present in the juxtaposition of *Hon*'s female exterior form with its masculine defined interior machinery and objects (inserted by the male participants), but the actual body also emphasizes this duality.

166Irigaray, p.76. I would like to acknowledge the unpublished work on Marisol by Cécile Whiting which uses Irigaray's ideas on mimesis to deal with gender constructions in Marisol's work. Whiting, Cecile. *Figuring Marisol's Femininities*. 1992.
Hon's head, or what Ekeflo described as the "inferno machine" because of the grinding noise that was heard from inside, combined with the breasts, double as male genitalia [fig.37]. In this way, Hon obtains an alter-ego not dissimilar to Duchamp's female alter-ego RRose Sélayv which can be translated as "Eros is Life" — or even, "Eros is the Phallus." This aspect of the assemblage appears to have escaped the reviewers and critics of Hon. It is my understanding that this sexual ambiguity played an important part within a particular discursive framework that aimed to criticize certain art work produced in New York, especially that of Rauschenberg.

**Monogram: the Other Sign of Identity**

For a Swedish audience whose identity at home and abroad was constructed in terms of a liberal sexual politic, the central location of the entrance between Hon's spread legs represented a seductive vision of their social body in which the sexualized woman had literally reached a scale of gigantic proportion. Along with the emphasis on the reproductive organs, Hon's bellowing pregnant stomach obscured the sexually ambiguous head discussed earlier. Having interpreted the head as a phallus, Hon's seductive female attributes contributed to produce a female alter-ego along the lines of Duchamp's Rrose Sélayv. In other words, the male attributes are disguised underneath a feminine facade in order to lure the audience into Hon. Not aware of the planned destruction, the mass audience unknowingly participated in a symbolic death ritual to their own popular culture which Hon represented. Just as in Saint-Phalle and Tinguely's masculine and feminine gender constructions, a fundamentally patriarchal logic is revealed through a process of mimicry. In this way, this collaboration ultimately reveals the underlying (or hidden) agent behind this destruction: patriarchy (the phallus).

The emphasis on Hon's female attributes (to the point where she is named Hon), along with her sexual duality (female and male sexual organs) is especially important if we read it in relation to Rauschenberg's work. Whereas the Europeans stressed heterosexuality by inserting male
produced and defined objects into a pregnant female figure, Rauschenberg’s work was scatological in its emphasis on “societal excrement.” To put it crudely, but more literally, the respective focuses fell upon the vagina rather than the anus.

Jonathan Weinberg tells us in his study of Jasper Johns that:

The connection between excrement and money to which psychoanalysis gives such weight is dependent on the idea that the young child, knowing nothing of the genital functions and of the womb and having only the experience of his own body, initially believes that he was born out of his mother’s stomach through the anal canal. In this process, excrement, which in [Norman] O’Brien’s words “incorporates the body’s daily dying,” is transformed from dead matter into something of value, the living, breathing entity of the self’s own body.

Applying this to Rauschenberg’s Monogram (fig. 10) (produced between 1955-59), a work undoubtedly well known to the participants of Hon and a prominent discussion piece in Linde’s four articles, the tire around the stuffed goat (standing on discarded signs and materials from pop-culture—excrement) is deciphered as a ring (the word "anus" derives from the Latin word anus meaning ring) through which the "dead" goat penetrates and is transformed into a valued

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169 Rauschenberg’s Monogram was included in Moderna Museet’s 1962 exhibition Four Americans and was then bought by the museum for its permanent collection in 1965. It should perhaps be emphasized that the word "monogram" refers to a sign of identity. In this way, Monogram is in an obvious way claiming to be a sign for Rauschenberg’s identity.
commodity (Art). The difference with *Hon*, to refer back to Saint-Phalle’s re-description, is that the dominant focus is on a reproductive process, which although it ends up critiquing consumer society (production to the point of excess and destruction), over-rides this obtuse reading of Rauschenberg’s work. What *Hon* attempted to define for the artists involved was an avant-garde position that avoided consumerist co-option into mass culture. While both the Americans and Europeans in question attempted to define themselves through a contemporary language related to the mass culture that surrounded them (affirming or disaffirming this culture), their representational strategies eventually stood in opposition as a result of their different views regarding this mass culture. As I have illustrated, these discrepancies were in turn articulated through a language whose politics were grounded in sexual differences.

One curious fact remains to be told about *Hon-en katedral*. During its destruction, the head was carefully severed from the rest of the body, removed from the museum and transported to an abandoned old prison located in Stockholm [fig. 38]. Whereas, on the one side, critics such as Ekeflo would have understood this act as a metaphor pertaining to the containment and control of an increasingly emancipated woman, the artists in question must have meant this to be a symbolic containment of patriarchy. In the same breath, this act could also represent a salvaging of a masculine/potentially virile avant-garde position that the three artists distinguished from a New Yorker avant-garde position whose identity they constructed as de-virilized partially as a result of their homosexuality. In this reading, the head (phallus) was placed in safe keeping from a death and destruction which the Europeans ultimately saw their American counterparts participating in as a result of their optimism in art and technology. If we consider the above mentioned sexual politics at play between the Europeans and Americans in question, *Hon*, ironically assumes a patriarchal position that is homophobic.

**Conclusion**
*Hon-en katedral* must be understood as a sign affirming a dialectical position for its three producers. In producing this assemblage, Saint-Phalle, Tinguely and Ultvedt understood the signification *Hon* would have on the social psyche of its Swedish audience. To a large number of its visitors, *Hon* represented a liberal social body that defined a post-war/Cold War Swedish culture. While the lure of this exhibition can be located in its playful celebration of sexuality, technology and mass culture, the dialectic was located in the eventual destruction (death) of this productive (pregnant) body. In this way, Hon represented the failure of technology and thus opposed the Americans' optimism in their contemporary technocratic society.

While Hulten and Moderna Museet were intricately catering to the contentious politics involved in the making of *Hon-en katedral*, I hope to have shown that theirs was in many ways a paradoxical position in relation to the museum's collection which had acquired a large amount of American Neo-Dada and Pop art. However, I would suggest that Hulten, Linde, and others affiliated with Moderna Museet, were beginning, by the spring of 1966, to view their own activities as having over-saturated the museum with an art symbolic of American popular culture. Speculating that these individuals must have been aware of the increased attempts by the Swedish state to regain the sovereignty it had lost through its ties to the West and the effect this had on their own constructions of identity, it is interesting to examine the museum's schedule between the summer of 1966 and the spring of 1968. With the exception of a Claes Oldenburg (born in Stockholm) exhibition during the fall of 1966, this schedule does not include a single exhibition of American work. Although a large Warhol exhibition was presented in 1968, the post-summer '66 calendar was to focus on European and Scandinavian art.

While Pontus Hulten was constructing an avant-garde position for Moderna Museet by "risk[ing] his job as director of the Museum not only by allowing such a mad, controversial project, but by

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170 It should also be emphasized that Oldenburg, by 1966, was working in his "Water Phase" which he distinguished from his earlier involvement with happenings.
participating in it," Tinguely, Saint-Phalle and Ultvedt could each define their work as operating on the margins (Stockholm) in opposition to Paris and New York while at the same time engaging fully in a dialogue with those two centers.\footnote{Hulten, 1987, p.167.} Per-Olof Ultvedt was thus aligning his work to that of Tinguely and Saint-Phalle and thereby constructed his position as different from that of Swedes working in New York (such as Billy Klüver and Öyvind Fahlström) as well as artists working in Sweden.

Along with Niki de Saint-Phalle, Jean Tinguely positioned himself in defence of a particular French avant-garde which was international in character and therefore did not fit into Malraux’s cultural program during a time of increased economic and cultural confrontation with the United States. By producing Hon-en katedral in Stockholm, these artists, through perverse parody, helped to construct a central role for Stockholm’s modern museum and simultaneously questioned the optimism of their American counter-parts while rejecting the continued influence of the Paris School, thus creating a position which discourse was enacted through the body politic and made possible in the cultural context provided by Sweden’s shifting role within international Cold War politics.
Since the seventies, many of the issues discussed in this paper have been lost in the museum's collecting activities which have to be understood as paradoxical in relation to events surrounding Hon-en katedral. The purchase by Moderna Museet of "the New York Collection" in 1973 is one contributing factor to a white-washing of the historical conflicts that are the focus of this thesis. 

172 Largely responsible for Moderna Museet's purchase of the New York Collection was Pontus Hulten who since 1971 had left Sweden and worked as the Director for the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. The New York Collection was organized by E.A.T. (Experiments in Art and Technology) and included the following artists: Bontecou, Breer, Chamberlain, de Maria, di Suvero, Dine, Fahlström, Flavin, Grooms, Haacke, Hay, Kelly, Judd, LeWitt, Lichtenstein, Morris, Nevelson, Noland, Oldenburg, Paik, Rauschenberg, Rivers, Rosenquist, Segal, Sonnier, Stankiewicz, Twombly, Warhol, and Whitman. The exhibition and purchase was controversial for a number of reasons which will become apparent in this thesis.
14. James Rosenquist, *F-111*, 1965, 28x2.5 m., oil on canvas and sheet metal. (Source: *Konstrevy* 4-5 (1965).)
22. Niki de Saint-Phalle, *Saint-Sébastien or Portrait of My Lover*, 1961, 72x55x7cm, Mixed media
(Source: Hulten, Pontus ed.. *Niki de Saint-Phalle*. Paris: Centre Georges Pomidou, 1980.)

Bibliography


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Rauschenberg, Robert. Undated letter to Per-Olof Ultvedt confirmed by Ultvedt to be from 1965-66. Courtesy Ultvedt.


Saint-Phalle. Undated letter confirmed by Ultvedt to have been written between 1963 and 1966.


Time Magazine (June 17, 1966).


Interviews


------------------------. Lidingö, Sweden, June 2, 1993.