

Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther und Franz König

**PONTUS
HULTÉN'S
COLLECTION
OF BOOKS**



Marcel Duchamp. Catalogue Raisonné, ed. Jean Clair, Paris:
Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, 1977

Pontus Hultén's Collection of Books.
Books as Art and Art in Book Format

Annika Gunnarsson

Pontus Hultén presented himself as being free and radical in interviews and conversations. His honed understanding of contemporary society and new developments in art is also well documented, but the fact that he was also a traditionalist is not highlighted as frequently. Hultén's library is an example of the latter quality. It reveals his social position and academic background. With his library, Hultén joins the ranks of illustrious people who have collected books as signs of erudition and influence.¹ As a means of keeping up with international events, and to build their own knowledge, these people simply collected printed material. Some would claim that Hultén manifested his legitimacy as a museum director by donating his archives, his books and his art collection to Moderna Museet, and thereby having a room dedicated to him, the Pontus Hultén Study Gallery.²

Pontus Hultén also followed the beaten track by participating in designing the catalogues that accompanied the exhibitions he produced.³ The catalogues, he said, should be visual and tactile in addition to their educational and informative content.⁴ With regard to the former, he adopted contemporary ideas of the book as a medium for performative purposes, as demonstrated also by his own book about Jean Tinguely from 1972.⁵ A few of the book productions with which Hultén was closely associated are undoubtedly based on *book art* and *art in book form*. Lutz Jahre, for instance, writes that Hultén said that a good, fine book had a non-commercial side, a generous side that is *Art Extra*.⁶ Hultén himself wrote that he read a great deal about different artistic disciplines, both to relax and for inspiration, stating that, "A catalogue is a book, and a book is an object, an object that has character and individuality in its own right."⁷

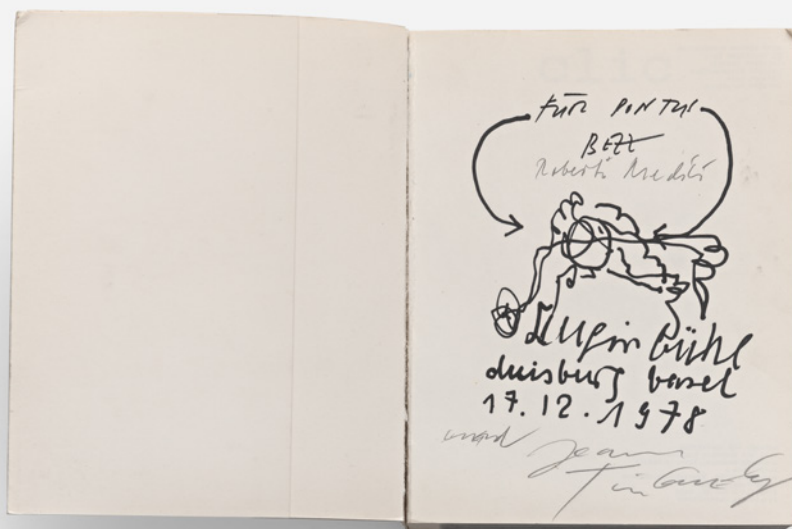
This essay is based on the books that Pontus Hultén donated to Moderna Museet in 2005. The purpose is to identify a few of the influences and themes that have been significant to Hultén's practice as a museum director, catalogue producer and book collector. The following subjects will be highlighted: art historian Alfred

H. Barr, the first director of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) between 1929 and 1943; the Dada and Surrealist interest in combining image and language in various publications, including books, periodicals and pamphlets; the obvious references to Marcel Duchamp's practice and his collaboration with Mary Reynolds; the Fluxus movement and Concrete Poetry in the 1960s.

The library

Pontus Hultén donated his library, comprising some 137 shelf metres, or some 7,000 books, to Moderna Museet, to make it accessible to the public in a suitable way and to be used for education and research.⁸ The donation was accompanied by an inventory list of titles, under the following headings: Artist Biographies, General/Survey Exhibition Catalogues, Artists' Books, Photography, Museum Handbooks, Design, Typography, Music, Museum as Subject, Machine as Art, Exposition Catalogues, Architecture, Cinema, Art Reference, Art General: Geographic, Miscellaneous, and Art History: Chronological, Criticism.⁹ This list gives a good idea of Pontus Hultén's overall fields of interest as a museum director, as we know them today. In his library, more established art history vied for space with new developments in visual and book arts taking place during his lifetime.¹⁰

Several volumes in the book collection are exhibition catalogues from museums where Hultén had worked, or gifts from institutions and individuals he knew or had collaborated with. As for the artists represented, three general groups could be distinguished. The first consists of older practices that were canonised in the 20th century and were considered to have developed new movements in art, such as Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Piero della Francesca, Francisco de Goya and Johannes Vermeer.¹¹ The latter was also the subject for Hultén's licentiate degree paper, *Vermeer och Spinoza* in 1951.¹² The second category consists of artists with whom Hultén had a more personal relationship or close friendship, and whom he helped establish in one way or another, including Sam Francis, Claes Oldenburg, Niki de Saint Phalle, Robert Rauschenberg, Jean Tinguely and Andy Warhol.¹³ The third group is artists who were either prominent at the time the books were published, or who have become more or less famous later on, including Jean-Paul Riopelle, the pioneer of Spontaneism in the 1950s, and the artist duo Gilbert & George.¹⁴



Above: Cover of *Clic*, 688 photographs by Leonardo Bezzola, Solothurn: Edition mb&t, 1978. Below: Dedication from Bernhard Luginbühl and Jean Tinguely to Pontus Hultén in *Clic*, 1978

In addition, there are a few books that can be classified as both literature and art objects. The inventory lists some 340 book covers and first pages under the Artists' Books heading, copied and arranged in alphabetical order by surname.¹⁵ Some of the books in this category could be regarded both as being about or by an artist, and artists' books, which Leif Eriksson, the Swedish doyen in this field, translated as *konst i bokform* ("art in the form of a book" in Swedish).¹⁶ Several of the artists' books in Pontus Hultén's donation are linked to artists who pioneered conceptual art and art in a broader sense. The medium itself and its usually smaller format offered artists new potential to interact more directly with viewers. In their various practices, the artists created unique objects, one-offs or editions, working both with traditional methods and with new materials and printing techniques. Eriksson, for instance, relates the book's design and contents, but not necessarily its lexicality, to a visual, artistic style that encompasses both a conceptual and idea-based practice. Hultén was strongly influenced by Duchamp's views on the creative act as taking place in the context of the spectator.¹⁷ In his own practice, Hultén participated in producing objects that position themselves in the field between the concepts of artists' books and book art which is a broader term for book design.¹⁸

Alfred H. Barr and the Museum of Modern Art

A few of the seminal influences behind Pontus Hultén's directorship came from across the Atlantic, from the United States. Alfred H. Barr has most probably impacted on Hultén's notions of what a modern art museum should be.¹⁹ Barr's ideas served as a matrix for how many modern museums were organised in the post-war era, along with his views on the exhibition as a medium, as exemplified by his exhibitions *Cubism and Abstract Art* (1936), and *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* (1936–37).²⁰ The artists Barr presented in the catalogues have subsequently been featured regularly by museum directors and curators all over the world, in both monographic and thematic shows. Despite being somewhat critical of MoMA in the catalogue for the exhibition *Stedelijk Meets Moderna Museet* (1962), Barr's exhibition catalogues indicated an art historic pathway that Hultén subsequently kept to throughout his career.²¹

Barr's exhibition *Machine Art* in 1934 clearly sparked Hultén's penchant for art and technology. This was expressed, for instance

in *Movement in Art* (1961) at the Stedelijk Museum and Moderna Museet, *The Machine as Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age* (1968) at MoMA, and *New York Collection for Stockholm* (1973), where a special committee within *Experiments in Art and Technology* (E.A.T.), decided to put together a portfolio of prints to finance the Moderna Museet project.²² The first two exhibitions were accompanied by a catalogue each. Both were unique in their own way – one with its tall, oblong format, the other with its metal-plated covers with relief print.

Pontus Hultén's library includes two copies of Barr's catalogue *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism*. One is a first edition from 1936. Its green covers are rather faded and worn.²³ The other, a third edition from 1968 with brown-beige covers, is practically in mint condition. In the foreword to the first edition, Barr states that Surrealism is much more than an art movement. It is a serious matter, a philosophy, a way of life, embraced by several of the most brilliant painters and poets of the time.²⁴ When Hultén was the editor of *The Surrealists Look At Art* (1990), published by Sam Francis' company Lapis Press, with essays by such Surrealist trailblazers as Paul Éluard, Louis Aragon, Philippe Soupault, André Breton and Tristan Tzara, he ended his preface with the words: "Where do we find such passion, such poetic beauty of language? The reasoning might seem biased and out of fashion, and it sometimes is, but it is never journalistic, constipated, shallow or dull."²⁵ It is reasonable to assume that the first edition of Barr's catalogue served as an encyclopaedia for Hultén as a young art historian who was keen to keep up with the latest in art, and also a guide that he referred to regularly throughout his later career. When Hultén began studying art history in 1945, the catalogue and exhibition were only ten years old. The concept of linking historic and contemporary material, as Hultén did in the first exhibition he curated himself, *Movement in Art*, had been formulated already in the preface to the Surrealist and Dada catalogue. Barr wrote that even the incidental spectator will notice similarities between the older material presented and certain works in Dada and Surrealism.

The catalogue included works by Jean Arp. One of these works is created by an underlying page being visible through an opening in the covering sheet.²⁶ In this way, two works become three, or, alternatively, one. This design principle is repeated in the cover for Emmett Williams' *Material 3. Konkretionen* (1958), edited by Daniel Spoerri, who was involved in *Movement in Art*. Spoerri was also the



Cover for Bruno Munari, *Good Design*, Milan:
All'Insegna del Pesce d'Oro (Vanni Scheiwiller), 1963

founder of Edition MAT in 1959, whose mission was to produce series of objects as affordably as possible, so-called multiples. The same solution, with a hole punched in the page so that the viewer can see the next page, recurs in the catalogue cover for the exhibition *New York Collection for Stockholm* in 1973. Three years earlier, the curator and artist Ragnar von Holten and the artist José Pierre, the unofficial historiographer of Surrealism, had used this device when designing the catalogue for the *Surrealism* exhibition in 1970, produced by Riksställningar – the Swedish Exhibition Agency – and shown at Moderna Museet. A rectangle is cut out of the right-hand corner of the front cover. The page behind it bears the word *sur-rea-lism*.²⁷

Dada, Surrealism and Marcel Duchamp

Dada and Surrealist play with images, words, sounds, typography and all matter of paraphernalia feature consistently also in the catalogues Pontus Hultén produced. The Dadaists and Surrealists often made a virtue of necessity, using the materials available to them, since they were active during and between the two world wars. This eventually became a design ideology, demonstrating the importance of adapting aesthetic styles to technical and material resources. The Dada exhibition at Moderna Museet in 1966 was organised by the Friends of Moderna Museet. Newsletter number 19 from the Friends contains a documentation of the birthday party, a poetry reading on the evening of 3 February, held in memory of the founding of Cabaret Voltaire in 1916, the club in Zürich where Dadaism began. Pontus Hultén concluded his introduction in the newsletter:

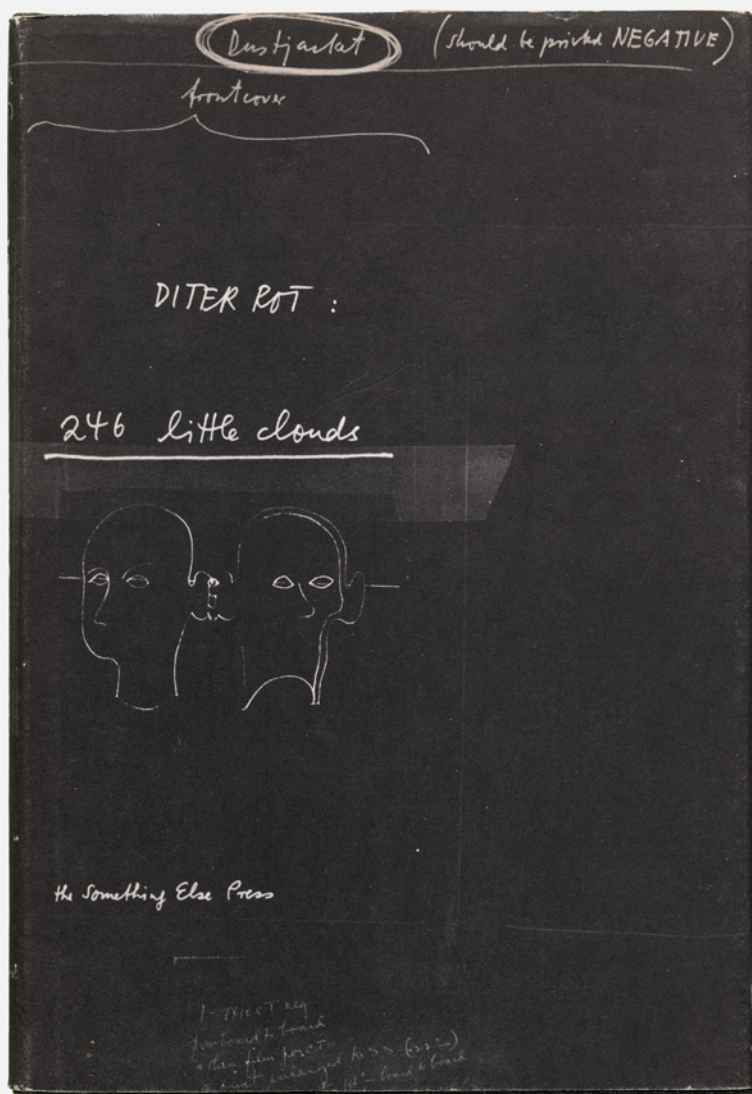
How liberating it is to look at a Dada work of art or read Dada texts, what purity and intelligence is radiated by most of what was written and made in the Dada circles! To experience the Dada clarity inspires an intellectual rush of joy. And nothing could be more inspiring.²⁸

There is a handful of books about Dada in Pontus Hultén's library. In *The Dada Painters and Poets. An Anthology* (1951), someone has written "Hultén's". Two-hundred and sixty-six pages later, the following passage has been circled and marked with an asterisk in the margin:

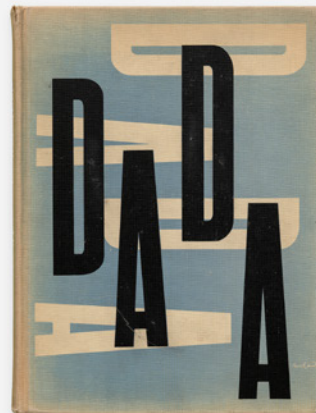
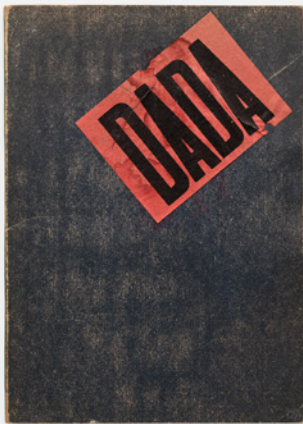
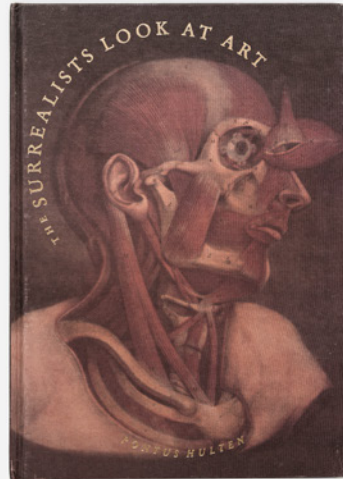
The meeting of 391 and Dada was celebrated in new issues of 391 and of *The Dada Review*. 391 appeared on bright pink paper. Arp, Tzara, Picabia and myself [Hans Richter] contributed to the two magazines, not only with individual work but by the execution in common of an illustration for Dada Nos. 3 and 4. Every detail of this illustration is still fresh in my mind. The medium was an old alarm clock which we bought for a few cents and took apart. The detached pieces were bathed in ink and then imprinted on random paper. All of us watched over the execution of this automatic masterpiece.²⁹

Regardless of who highlighted the above passage, it points at ways of collaborating where coincidence and collective artistic work are the guiding factors for producing a book, a magazine or work of art. It also distinctly suggests an expanded use of different kinds of paper: coloured, irregularly cut, folded and punched in various ways, as in the catalogue for *American Pop Art. 106 Forms of Love and Despair* (1964). Paper, for instance, is the fundamental principle of the artists' books by Bruno Munari and Richard Long, which Pontus Hultén donated to the collection.³⁰ Hultén mentions Munari in *Kasark* (1955), referring to his *proiezioni dirette*, breathtakingly simple moving images without being film, which Hultén had noted at MoMA.³¹

Coloured prints of various kinds, along with a mixture of typefaces were standard features in several of the catalogues Hultén participated in producing in the 1960s. The initials and type area are sometimes redolent of the days when each page was cut in wood and printed like a stamp, before Johannes Gutenberg introduced his revolutionary invention of reusable types. For the 500th anniversary of Gutenberg's invention, Hans Nordenström embarked on a four-minute film titled *Det tryckta ordet, 500 år med Gutenberg* (The Printed Word, 500 years with Gutenberg, 1949), with Hultén assisting him.³² Hultén's interest in printing and books was manifested early in his career. His association with Bok Konsum (bookshop and gallery space in Stockholm during the 1960s), *Galleri Samlaren*, *Kasark* (magazine) and *Blandaren* (a magazine produced by students at KTH, the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm), which were all considered more radical platforms on the alternative art scene, have rendered him a place in the avant-garde in Swedish contemporary art historiography.³³ From the perspective of youthful opposition to the bourgeoisie, Hultén adheres to a given tradition



Cover of Diter Rot, *246 Little Clouds*, New York: Something Else Press, 1965



Above: Edward Hugh and Marcel Duchamp, *Surrealism and Its Affinities*. Mary Reynolds Collection, Chicago: Art Institute Chicago, 1956. *The Surrealists Look at Art*, ed. Pontus Hultén, Culver City: Lapis Press, 1990. Below: Karl-Heinz Hering, *DADA. Dokumente eine Bewegung*, Düsseldorf: Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, 1958. *The Dada Painters and Poets. An Anthology*, ed. Robert Motherwell, New York: Wittenborn, Schultz Inc., 1951

of pamphlets and manifestos with roots in the 19th century.³⁴ Willem Sandberg, director of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam between 1945 and 1963, was also a graphic designer. In Vienna, he had studied the philosopher and sociologist Otto Neurath's picture language Iso-type. This is a theme that runs through Sandberg's entire publication *NU*.³⁵ Hultén's more explicit choice of Sandberg as his mentor, rather than Barr, is more in line with the existing exchange of experiences between the Nationalmuseum in Sweden and the Rijksmuseum in the Netherlands.³⁶ Hultén took after Sandberg's practice and took part in the process of producing the museum's publications, in close collaboration with the editor Georg Svensson and the printer Gösta Svensson (they were not related), the designer John Melin, and the advertising executive Anders Österlin, among others.

Pontus Hultén's interest in book design can also be related to the bookbinder Mary Reynolds' works, which were presented in an exhibition catalogue in 1956, six years after her death.³⁷ Marcel Duchamp, who lived with Reynolds for many years, begins his preface by describing how she had witnessed the Dada manifestations and the birth of Surrealism in 1924. Duchamp ends his tribute to Reynolds by writing that her book bindings were original and unlike classical techniques. Mary Reynolds' collaboration with Marcel Duchamp between 1924 and 1935 on Alfred Jarry's drama *Ubu Roi* from 1896 is a typical example of approaching a book as an object. Pontus Hultén's various catalogue productions, such as the above-mentioned metal-covered catalogue for *The Machine as Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age* (1968), is a logical part of a tradition of more experimental book design, and artistic collaboration.³⁸

Publishing *Boulevardkartongen Tvångsblandaren* (1955–56), also known as *Kartongblandaren*, as a cardboard box with loose pages rather than as a stapled magazine was also a sign of the times. In the 1950s, Hans Nordenström was the editor and primary driving force of *Blandaren*. In his preface to Nordenström's book *Brul: Svart-Vit Magi* (2002), Hultén writes that Marcel Duchamp's *La Boîte-en-valise* (1935–41) provided the inspiration for *Boulevardkartongen*, which was "an expression of enormous admiration for Duchamp".³⁹ It is well-known that Duchamp was especially significant in Hultén's version of art history. The terse, witty correspondence between the two gentlemen bears witness of this, as do the many exhibitions in which Hultén presented Duchamp, and the 86 books relating directly to Duchamp in Hultén's library.⁴⁰ These include a first

edition of Wassily Kandinsky's *Über das Geistige in der Kunst* (Concerning the Spiritual in Art, 1911), in which a young Duchamp has attempted to translate various passages from German into French. In his preface to the Nordenström book, Hultén emphasises the similarities with the famous Dada method 30 years previously; unlike Dada, however, the Blandaren team simply wanted to get the issue done on time, according to Hultén. *Kartongblandaren* also has references to an era when royalty and other wealthy collectors kept loose prints, drawings, drafts and sketches in albums, cassettes and boxes made of various materials, similar to the E.A.T. portfolio discussed above.

In the case of *Tvångsblandaren*, there are several versions regarding who inspired whom and what. The journalist and artist Leif Nylén writes:

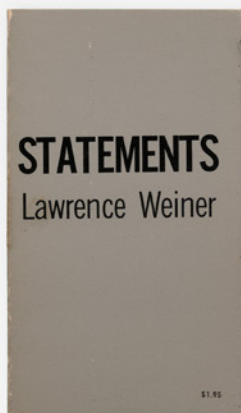
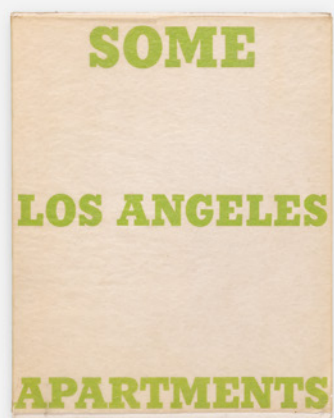
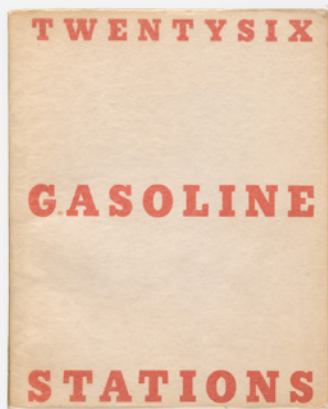
George Maciunas later tried to recruit Hans Nordenström to Fluxus. The reason may have been *Boulevardkartongen Tvångsblandaren*, the 1955 issue of the student magazine Blandaren and something of a precursor to the Fluxus boxes. Nordenström, aka “Brul”, was a legendary contributor to *Blandaren* – as its editor, he commissioned work from friends who were artists, writers and art historians, especially Per Olof Ultvedt and Pontus Hultén.⁴¹

The ethnologist and Fluxus artist Bengt af Klintberg claims:

It is most likely that it was Duchamp who gave [George] Maciunas the idea for the Fluxboxes that were mass-produced a few years later in his New York loft, but he may also have been inspired by *Tvångsblandaren*. If so, *Tvångsblandaren* is worth a footnote in art history for pioneering a phenomenon that now goes by the name of multiple.⁴²

With regard to *Tvångsblandaren*, there are also references to a new edition of André Breton's *Surrealist Manifesto* (1924). In the version published in 1955, a magnifying glass is included in a punched recess in the pages.⁴³ The picture of Duchamp's *Why Not Sneeze, Rose Sélavy?* (1921) is accompanied by the text “PARENTS! racontez vos rêves à vos enfants, 45, rue de Grenelle. Paris-7^e” in white against a black square. It is placed diagonally across the page, corresponding to the reproduction in black and white of Duchamp's work. The interest in Duchamp was also promoted at this time by a younger





Above: Edward Ruscha, *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*, Los Angeles, 1963. Edward Ruscha, *Some Los Angeles Apartments*, Los Angeles, 1963. Below: Lawrence Weiner, *Statements*, New York: The Louis Kellner Foundation, 1968. Emmett Williams, *Sweethearts*, New York: Something Else Press, 1967

generation of artists, including John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg, who all looked up to Marcel Duchamp as the origin of modern art.⁴⁴ That Duchamp became fashionable in the 1950s and onwards is a typical and traditional case of circular reasoning, where masters are said to generate masters, and followers themselves name their predecessors.

Fluxus and Concrete Poetry

In 1966, Dick Higgins, founder of the Something Else Press (1963–74), reissued a facsimile of Richard Huelsenbeck's *Dada Almanach*, first published in 1920. On the brown front cover, Higgins had written in yellow, "Dada is like the weather. Everybody talks about it, but nobody does anything about it."⁴⁵ Higgins wanted to change that. He wanted to demonstrate that the Dada approach *is always* contemporary. Otherwise, he said, it would be impossible to correctly evaluate most tendencies in philosophy and art at the time. Something Else Press also published intermedia works by a few Fluxus artists. Even before the term *conceptualism* was coined, many small publishers were presenting art in the form of publications, pamphlets and books, with design as a conceptual element in its own right. Some Fluxus pieces are represented in Hultén's library, including the above-mentioned *Material 3. Konkretionen* (1958). Another work is *246 Little Clouds* (1965) by Dieter Roth (also Diter Rot), with a foreword by Emmett Williams.⁴⁶ Roth, in turn, was the artist who designed the poster for *Movement in Art*. Its characteristic look, with punched holes, is repeated in Roth's *Bok 3b* (1961), which consists of cropped images from comics with holes punched in them.⁴⁷ These holes also refer, in some way, to the nine cannonball holes in Marcel Duchamp's work *La Mariée mis à nu par ses célibataires, même (Le Grand Verre)* from 1915–23.

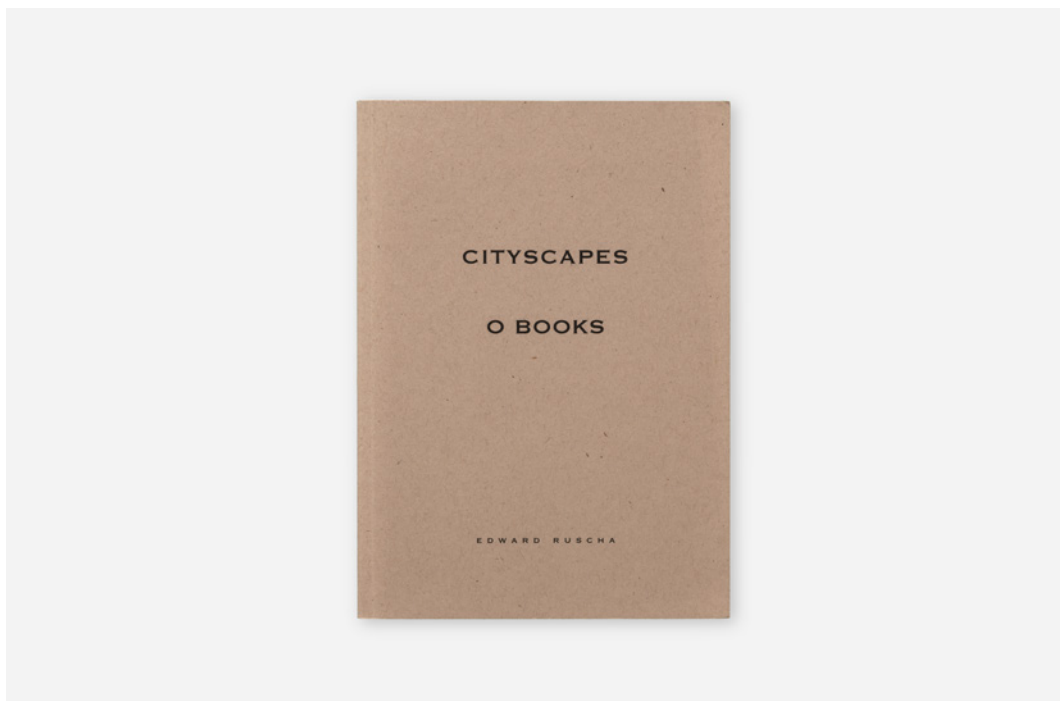
Opinions differ on whether Fluxus existed in Sweden. Leif Nylén, for instance, considers Fluxus as artistic action to include more expressions than Bengt af Klintberg does. Bengt af Klintberg claims that Fluxus never gained a proper foothold in Sweden, as Pontus Hultén and Moderna Museet were more focused on happenings.⁴⁸ Nylén writes that: "Swedish 1960s modernism was more attracted by technology and mass culture than by the poetic, Zen-influenced minimalism of Fluxus."⁴⁹ The Fluxus artists and conceptualists saw books as a democratic art form that could be shared to the masses.

Books could be used to spread their ideas and circumvent the art gallerists.

Galleries were both an obstacle to what the artists and art historians (later defined as curators) perceived as a free market, and a necessary condition for the platforms they used to gain more exposure on the art scene in general.⁵⁰ The gallerists eventually came to embrace the concept of artists' books as publishers. One example of this is the collaboration between artist Ed Ruscha and the gallerist Leo Castelli. Ruscha produced his first artist's book, *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*, on his own in 1962. The same year, Ruscha was featured in a solo exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. Thirty-five years later, Castelli published Ruscha's *Cityscapes O Books* (1997). Annie Cohen-Solal quotes Ruscha in her biography on Leo Castelli (2010), in which Ruscha relates that he met Castelli in Los Angeles in 1961, but that Castelli didn't start showing his works until ten years later.⁵¹

Pontus Hultén's library also includes Ed Ruscha's *Various Small Fires and Milk* (1964), *Some Los Angeles Apartments* (1965), *Records* (1971) and *Colored People* (1972). Two other books that have also achieved cult status today are Lawrence Weiner's *Statements* and *The Xerox Book*, with works by Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, Sol Lewitt, Robert Morris and Lawrence Weiner, both from 1968.⁵² The above works are all examples of artists' books that are found in libraries and museum collections worldwide. They demonstrate that the sibling disciplines of art and literature can treat these objects as literature, artefact or art, but that the artistic practice or the work as a whole is rarely influenced by the place where the book/artwork is stored, collected or shown.

The library includes a copy of Öyvind Fahlström's revised manifesto for Concrete Poetry, first published in 1954, in the journal *Odyssé*, no. 2–3.⁵³ Concrete Poetry had a privileged position at Moderna Museet, and, albeit on a smaller scale, on Hultén's bookshelves. The exhibition *Svisch – En manifestation* took place at Moderna Museet from 26 September to 18 October, 1964. In conjunction with the exhibition, the authors were featured in evenings with image-sound-poetry on 7 and 14 October and 4 November.⁵⁴ A clear example of concrete art in book form is the accordion book *Ett ord på vägen* (1964), published by Åke Hodell's publishing house Kerberos (1963–72) in conjunction with the Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev's visit to Sweden that year.⁵⁵ Åke Hodell, Leif Nylén, Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd, Bengt



Above: Cover of Edward Ruscha, *Cityscapes O Books*, New York: Leo Castelli Gallery, 1997. Below: Dedication from Edward Ruscha to Pontus Hultén and Marie-Louise von Plessen

Emil Johnson, Mats G. Bengtsson, Lars-Gunnar Bodin, Per Olof Ultvedt, Öyvind Fahlström and Elis Eriksson contributed Concrete Poetry and texts for the work. The library also includes a few books by Torsten Ekbom, Jarl Hammarberg, Åke Hodell and Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd. The publishing company Albert Bonniers Förlag published Concrete Poetry by Hammarberg and Reuterswärd, albeit in more traditionally bound volumes.

Innovation or tradition is largely defined by the context. One long continuous *svisch* stretches across the front cover of *Ett ord på vägen*, leading the viewer on to the next page, where Torsten Ekbom quotes John Cage on beauty, as a starting point for a discussion proposing that everyone can learn to see. The same attitude to understanding art is also substantiated by Bror Ejve, the head of Konstfrämjandet, the Swedish organization for promoting art. He begins his preface for one of Konstfrämjandet's catalogues with the words "everybody is taught how to read", and goes on to propose that everyone should also have the opportunity to learn to see.⁵⁶ The visual and verbal expressions of Dada and Concrete Poetry respectively have obvious points in common. However, the similarities between the modernist focus on artistic norm-breaking and the contemporary promotion of art rooted in older learning traditions have not been discussed as thoroughly. For instance, Per Olov Ultvedt had been involved in Konstfrämjandet's art education activities before he began working with Pontus Hultén, a fact that is rarely mentioned in relation to the work they undertook together.⁵⁷

Two sides of the same coin

Throughout most of the 20th century, art history dealt mainly with the time before the beginning of the previous century. It is understandable, therefore, that Pontus Hultén's peers perceived several of his book and exhibition productions as entirely innovative and practically unrelated to what else was going on in the West. Today, we can identify predecessors, references, fashions and trends, and also discuss these on the basis of new research on networks consisting of people, exhibitions and publications. Hultén himself belonged to several predominantly male networks, which reflected one another more or less directly. He migrated continuously between different positions within these networks, which meant that he could both adhere closely to his predecessors and follow his contemporary

colleagues. Sometimes, he would realise ideas that were more his own, and sometimes, he borrowed directly off from others.

The books in Hultén's library are there for reasons we can only speculate about, but they prove that he often had access to the knowledge they contained (even if he did not know what was written in them and/or what had been written about them or used it). They also show that he was not strictly a book collector, but that he collected books and art in the form of books. Hultén and his library are firmly rooted in what was art history then and what has come to be art history today. Hultén the traditional art historian, visible in the art historic references that the library presents, and Hultén the curator, whom art historians today refer to in various texts about the curatorial profession as it is or will become, are two sides of the same coin. In addition to marking social status and manifesting a cultural position, the library is an excellent source for further research into the form and content of books as art and books about art in the second half of the 20th century.

1. Carl Nordenfalk, the director who promoted Hultén to the directorship of Moderna Museet, also had a private library. He had some 200 books in his specialist field, mediaeval manuscripts; they are now in the Art Library. E-mail to the author from Maria Sylvén, Head of the Art Library, 2 August, 2018. See also Carl Nordenfalk, *Mest om konst. Memoarer efter författarens efterlämnade manuskript*, eds. Katarina Nordenfalk and Per Bjurström, Vitterhetsakademiens serie Svenska lärde, Stockholm: Natur & Kultur, 1996.
2. Stuart Burch, *Introducing Mr Moderna Museet: Pontus Hultén and Sweden's Museum of Modern Art*, 2008, http://www.stuartburch.com/uploads/8/1/9/1/8191744/2012_-_introducing_mr_moderna_museet.pdf (23 August, 2022).
3. Lutz Jahre, "Ein Gespräch mit Pontus Hultén", *Das Gedruckte Museum von Pontus Hultén. Kunststellungen und ihre Bücher*, Ostfildern-Ruit: Cantz Verlag, 1996, pp. 11–28 Martin Sundberg, "Between Experiment and Everyday Life. The Exhibition Catalogues of Moderna Museet", *The History Book. On Moderna Museet 1958–2008*, eds. Anna Tellgren and Martin Sundberg, Stockholm: Moderna Museet and Göttingen: Steidl, 2008, pp. 297–328.
4. Lutz Jahre, "Über Ausstellungskataloge", *Das Gedruckte Museum von Pontus Hultén*, 1996, pp. 173–177.
5. K. G. Pontus Hultén, *Jean Tinguely. Méta*, eds. Berit Tärnlund and Katja Waldén, Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1972. The book is designed with a handle on the spine, so it can be carried like a briefcase. It has a small clasp with a key, like a diary used for writing secret thoughts in. The book also contains a vinyl record and a bound drawing made with a *Méta-matic*. Three years after it was published in Swedish, editions of 250 were printed in London by Thames and Hudson (Series A) and in New York by the New York Graphic Society (Series B). This relates, for instance, to the different series that were made of Duchamp's *La Boîte-en-valise*.
6. Lutz Jahre, "Ein Gespräch mit Pontus Hultén", *Das Gedruckte Museum von Pontus Hultén*, 1996, p. 27.
7. Pontus Hultén, "Über Ausstellungskataloge", *Das Gedruckte Museum von Pontus Hultén*, 1996, p. 177. Original text: "Ein Katalog ist ein Buch, und ein Buch ist ein Gegenstand, ein Gegenstand mit seinem eigenen Recht auf Charakter und Individualität."
8. Donation letter dated 3 August, 2005, Reg. no. 2005-23-105. MMA MA F2d:35. Anna Tellgren, "Pontus Hultén and Moderna Museet. Research and learning based on an art collection, an archive and a library", *Pontus Hultén and Moderna Museet. The Formative Years*, ed. Anna Tellgren and Anna Lundström, Stockholm: Moderna Museet and London: Koenig Books, 2017, p. 26. To digitise the library and make it searchable, the archive assistant Linda Andersson worked part-time for two years (2016–2017) on reviewing and cataloguing most of the library. She managed to catalogue 6,821 volumes according to title, artist, author, subject, publisher, publishing date, size and ISBN, and organised the books roughly into three categories: artist, country and general art history. The work to cataloguing the library has continued during 2020–2021, primarily on books from France, Sweden, Germany and

the US. Some volumes with folders and small printed matter remain to be catalogued.

9. Boksamlingen, Book register. MMA PHA 5.3. The archive material does not state who created these categories. Ann Goldstein states that she organised Pontus Hultén's library in 1983–1984, when Hultén was director of MOCA. See Ann Goldstein, "Director of Intelligence: Daniel Birnbaum, Ann Goldstein and Daniel Buren on Pontus Hultén", *Artforum*, vol. 45, no. 6, 2007, pp. 62–65.

10. How, where and when Pontus Hultén acquired all his books has not been ascertained at this time. It is possible to make some (more or less certain) assumptions based on publishing date, type of volume, subject and dedications. Some of the books from Hultén's library mentioned in this essay, for instance, are unopened. Even so, we can assume that Hultén has been able to read the books mentioned, if not his own copies, then at other institutions or on the market.

11. Giuseppe Arcimboldo (2 volumes), Piero della Francesca (3 volumes), Francisco de Goya (5 volumes), Johannes Vermeer (11 volumes). The number of volumes refers to the books about each respective artist included in the donation, not to how many Hultén acquired or was given during his lifetime. Nevertheless, it gives an idea of the reference material Hultén would have had at his disposal.

12. Egna verk, Text, Färdigt manuskript, *Vermeer och Spinoza*, 1951. MMA PHA 2.10–12. The manuscript was later published in French translated by Lydie Rousseau: Pontus Hultén, *Vermeer et Spinoza*, Paris: Échoppe, 2002.

13. Sam Francis (52 volumes), Claes Oldenburg (36 volumes), Niki de Saint Phalle (41 volumes), Robert Rauschenberg (16 volumes), Jean Tinguely (17 volumes), Andy Warhol (32 volumes). There is no absolute correlation between the number of volumes and Hultén's personal or professional involvement with the artist. For instance, Hultén featured works by Rauschenberg in five major exhibitions: *Movement in Art* (1961), *Four Americans* (1962), *Inner and Outer Space* (1965), *New York Collection for Stockholm* (1973), and *Territorium Artis* (1992). He also showed George Brecht, Alexander Calder, Marcel Duchamp, Viking Eggeling, Alberto Giacometti, Kazimir Malevich, Francis Picabia, Man Ray, Niki de Saint Phalle and Jean Tinguely in *Movement in Art* and *Territorium Artis*.

14. Jean-Paul Riopelle (5 volumes), Gilbert & George (2 volumes).

15. Boksamlingen, Book Register, Artists' Books A–Z. MMA PHA 5.3. A consecutive number is hand-written on each photocopy. The numerical series deviates here and there, as more books have been added. When or how this happened cannot be deduced from the numerical order or any other documentation on Hultén's library that I have found so far in his archives. It is possible that some of the books listed as artists' books were not included in the donation. In connection with the donation in 2005, an inventory was made of all the art objects, including 53 books/objects that were classified and registered as artists' books in the Moderna Museet collection. No explanation was noted as to why some of the books in the

donation have inventory numbers and others remained in the library, nor why some of the artists' books in the inventory were not included in the list of artists' books. Therefore, some books/objects may belong in both the library and in Moderna Museet's collection of art. For the time being, we have chosen not to transfer objects/books between the library and object collection, since it is possible to search by either author/artist or title in both the archive and art databases.

16. Leif Eriksson, *Konst i bokform*, Stockholm: Föreningen Svenska Tecknare, 1998. For further discussions on the concept of artists' books and their history, see: *Artists' Books: A Critical Anthology and Sourcebook*, ed. Joan Lyons, New York: Visual Studies Workshop Press, 1985; Johanna Drucker, *The Century of Artists' Books*, New York: Granary Books, 1994/2004; Stefan Klima, *Artists' Books: A Critical Survey of the Literature*, New York: Granary Books, 1998; Sune Nordgren, "Konstnärsböcker, Artists' Books", *Kalejdoskop*, no. 1–2, 1980; Germano Celant, *Book as Artwork 1960/1970*, London: Nigel Greenwood Inc. Ltd., 1972. See also Thomas Millroth, *Artists' Books from a Swedish Point of View with Special Attention Paid to the Contributions of Denmark and GDR*, Lund: Ellerströms and Stockholm: Tragus, 2021.

17. Marcel Duchamp, "The Creative Act", *Marcel Duchamp. Salt Seller*, eds. Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson, New York: Oxford University Press, 1973, or listen to Marcel Duchamp reading *The Creative Act*: <http://www.openculture.com/2015/10/hear-marcel-duchamp-read-the-creative-act.html> (23 August, 2022).

18. Today, researchers and artists pay equal attention to the actual publishing process and the object that it produces when addressing what is art. See, for instance: *Publishing as Artistic Practice*, ed. Annette Gilbert, London: Sternberg Press Ltd, 2016.

19. Bernadette Dufrêne, "La muséologie selon Pontus Hultén", *Les Cahiers du Musée national d'art moderne*, Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, no. 141, autumn 2017, p. 61.

20. *Cubism and Abstract Art* (2 March–19 April, 1936) and *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* (9 December, 1936–17 January, 1937). Sybil Gordon Kantor, Alfred H. Barr Jr. *Intellectual Origins of the Museum of Modern Art*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: MIT Press, 2002.

21. Hultén writes that Barr was at MoMA before Willem Sandberg came to the Stedelijk, but that MoMA "maybe never managed to break through that wall of money, nobility and snobbery which they have to thank for their existence", K.G. Hultén, "Sandberg och Stedelijk Museum", *Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam besöker Moderna Museet, Stockholm*, ed. Pontus Hultén, Moderna Museet exhibition catalogue no. 19, Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1962, p. 5.

22. Annika Gunnarsson, "Sidetrack – Robert Rauschenberg", *Konst-historisk tidskrift/Journal of Art History*, vol. 76, häfte 1–2, 2007, pp. 67–69.

23. The catalogue is available at: <https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/2823> (23 August, 2022).

24. Alfred H. Barr, *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* (exh. cat.), ed. Alfred H. Barr, New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1936, unpaginated preface.
25. Pontus Hultén, *The Surrealists Look at Art*, ed. Pontus Hultén, Culver City: Lapis Press, 1990, unpaginated preface.
26. *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism*, 1936, pp. 276–277.
27. There are further parallels between this particular catalogue and Pontus Hultén's own catalogue production. The cover for Riksställningarnas Surrealism catalogue is adorned with the portrait of *The Librarian* (1566) by Giuseppe Arcimboldo. Hultén's catalogue for the exhibition *The Arcimboldo Effect: Transformations of the Face from the 16th to the 20th Century* (1987) has on the cover Arcimboldo's *Vertumnus* (c. 1590–91), an allegorical portrait of Rudolf II, Holy Roman Emperor. This painting is in the collection of Skokloster Castle. Olle Granath mentions that he assisted Pontus Hultén in borrowing this work for the exhibition. See *Pontus Hultén på Moderna Museet. Vittnesseminarium, Södertörns högskola, 26 april 2017*, eds. Charlotte Bydler, Andreas Gedin and Johanna Ringarp, Samtidshistoriska frågor 38, Huddinge: Södertörn University, 2018, p. 25.
28. Karl Gunnar Hultén, "Introduktion", *Meddelande från Moderna Museet till Moderna Museets Vänner*, eds. Thomas Hall and Ingrid Svensson, no. 19, March 1966, p. 2.
29. Hans Richter, "Dada X Y Z", *The Dada Painters and Poets. An Anthology*, ed. Robert Motherwell, New York: Wittenborn, Schultz Inc., 1951, p. 266.
30. Bruno Munari, *The Quadrata-Prints*, 1953 (MOM/2005/548), *The Quadrata-Prints*, 1959 (MOM/2005/549), *The Quadrata-Prints*, 1959 (MOM/2005/550), and Richard Long, *Nile Papers of River Muds*, 1968–88 (MOM/2005/844).
31. Pontus Hultén, "Den ställföreträdande Friheten eller Om Rörelse i Konsten och Tinguelys metamekanik", *Kasark*, no. 2, October 1955, p. 24.
32. *Moderna Museet 1958–1983*, eds. Olle Granath and Monica Niecekels, Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1983, p. 26. Johan Sundholm, professor of film studies at Stockholm University, confirms that the film has not been preserved. E-mail to the author from Andreas Bertman, Filmform, 21 August, 2018.
33. Andreas Gedin, *Pontus Hultén, Hon & Moderna*, Stockholm: Bokförlaget Langenskiöld, 2016, pp. 102–104. See also Patrik Andersson, "The Inner and the Outer Space. Rethinking movement in art", and Anna Lundström, "Movement in Art. The layers of an exhibition", *Pontus Hultén and Moderna Museet. The Formative Years*, 2017, p. 44, and pp. 71–74.
34. Janet Lyon, *Manifestos. Provocations of the Modern*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1999.
35. Ank Leuwen Marcan, *Willem Sandberg. Portrait of an Artist*, Amsterdam: Valiz, 2013. Pontus Hultén's library included seven books relating to Willem Sandberg's typographic practice.
36. NM museum minutes, Statens Konstmuseer and predecessors. Nationalmuseum's Central Administration (NMCK). NMA MA A 2:76–83.

37. Edward Hugh and Marcel Duchamp, *Surrealism and Its Affinities. Mary Reynolds Collection*, Chicago: Art Institute Chicago, 1956.
38. The Machine (MoMA). MMA PHA 4.2.52–55.
39. Pontus Hultén, “Blandaren” in Hans Nordenström, *Brul: Svart-Vit Magi*, Stockholm: Schultz Förlag, 2002, unpaginated preface.
40. Some of the correspondence is reproduced in *Meddelande från Moderna Museet till Moderna Museets Vänner*, eds. Thomas Hall and Ingrid Svensson, no. 19, March 1966.
41. Leif Nylén, *Den öppna konsten. Happenings, instrumental teater, konkret poesi och andra gränsöverskridningar i det svenska 60-talet*, Publication 107, Stockholm: Sveriges Allmänna Konstförening, 1998, pp. 45–46.
42. Bengt af Klintberg, *Svensk Fluxus = Swedish Fluxus*, Stockholm: Rönnells Antikvariat, 2006, p. 93.
43. André Breton, *Les Manifestes du surréalisme suivis de prolégomènes à un troisième manifeste du surréalisme ou non du surréalisme en ses œuvres vives et d'éphémérides surréalistes*, Paris: Le Sagittaire, 1955.
44. *Dancing around the Bride: Cage, Cunningham, Johns, Rauschenberg, and Duchamp* (exh. cat.), ed. Carlos Basualdo, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.
45. *Dada Almanach*, New York: Something Else Press, 1966, facsimile of Richard Huelsenbeck, *Dada Almanach*, Berlin: Erich Reiss Verlag, 1920.
46. Dieter Roth, *246 Little Clouds*, New York: Something Else Press, 1965.
47. Dieter Roth, *Bok 3b*, 1961 (MOM/2005/864).
48. Bengt af Klintberg, *Svensk Fluxus*, 2006, p. 94.
49. Leif Nylén, *Den öppna konsten*, 1998, p. 37.
50. The market is often referred to as an obstacle preventing independent curators from working with art. See, for instance, *Pontus Hultén på Moderna Museet*, 2018, p. 101–103.
51. Annie Cohen-Solal, *Leo and His Circle. The Life of Leo Castelli*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010, p. 342.
52. Lawrence Weiner, *Statements*, New York: The Louis Kellner Foundation, 1968, and *The Xerox Book*, New York: Seth Siegelau, 1968. Sara Mottalini, writes that *Statements*: “wonderfully fulfilled the artist’s original intent for art to bypass the elitist model of the gallery, upend society’s pre-conceived notions of what constitutes art, and both be available and accessible to the masses” in Sarah Mottalini, *Artists’ Books: Where to Put the Apostrophe?*, January–April, 2015, Lally Reading Room at Schaffer Library, Union College, 2015, p. 2.
53. Öyvind Fahlström “Manifest”, *Odyssé*, no. 2–3, spring 1954, unpaginated. Contributors were Öyvind Fahlström, Alfred Jarry, Gösta Kriland, Ilmar Laaban, Francis Picabia, Markis de Sade and Pär Wistrand. See Per Bäckström, “Öyvind Fahlströms konkreta poesi: Materialitet och performance”, *Aiolos*, no. 42, 2011, pp. 75–82.
54. Leif Nylén, *Den öppna konsten*, 1998, p. 84.
55. *Svisch. Ett ord på vägen*, Stockholm: Kerberos, 1964.
56. Bror Ejve, “Förord”, *Folkrörelsernas Konstfrämjande, utställning av*

originallitografier i färg, Stockholm, 1948, unpaginated. See Annika Gunnarsson, “Konstförståelse eller konstförströelse”, *Konstfrämjandet 70 år*, ed. Niklas Östholm, Stockholm: Folkrörelsernas Konstfrämjande, 2017, p. 88.

57. Sandro Key Åberg, “Med konstfrämjandet för konsten”, ed. Elisabeth Lidén, *Konst för alla? Konstfrämjandet 40 år*, Stockholm: Prins Eugens Waldemarsudde, 1987, and Annika Gunnarsson, “Konstförståelse eller konstförströelse”, *Konstfrämjandet 70 år*, 2017, pp. 80 and 105.

Images:

Abbreviations

MMA The Moderna Museet archives

MA The Moderna Museet public archive (Myndighetsarkivet)

PHA The Pontus Hultén archive

p. 1: Magnus Wibom. MMA MA Ö7a:1

pp. 2–3: Hans Hammarskiöld. MMA

pp. 4–5: Hans Hammarskiöld. MMA

pp. 6–7: Nils-Göran Hökby. MMA

pp. 8–9: Erik Cornelius. MMA MA

Ö7a:2

pp. 10–11: Ad Petersen. MMA PHA

4.2.58

pp. 12–13: Hickey & Robertson.

MMA PHA 4.2.58

pp. 14–15: Erik Cornelius. MMA MA

Ö7a:5

p. 16: Benno Movin-Hermes. The

Moderna Museet Collection,

FM 1974 020 081. Repro photo:

Albin Dahlström/Moderna Museet

pp. 22, 26–27: Åsa Lundén/

Moderna Museet

pp. 30–31: Erik Cornelius. MMA MA

Ö7a:2

p. 34: Albin Dahlström/Moderna

Museet. MMA MA B5:2

p. 37: Nils-Göran Hökby. MMA

(above). Nils-Göran Hökby. MMA

MA Ö7a:2 (below)

p. 38: Tobias Fischer/Moderna

Museet. The Moderna Museet

Collection, FM 1968 004 001,

FM 1968 004 002

p. 41: Nils-Göran Hökby. MMA

p. 43: Erik Cornelius. MMA

p. 44: Okänd fotograf. MMA

p. 46: Erik Cornelius. MMA MA Ö7a:4

p. 49: Erik Cornelius. MMA MA

Ö7a:5

p. 62: Hans Hammarskiöld. MMA

p. 65: Albin Dahlström/Moderna

Museet. The Moderna Museet

Collection, MOM/2005/935

p. 66: Magnus Wibom. MMA MA

Ö7a:1

p. 69: Hans Hammarskiöld. MMA

(above). Magnus Wibom. MMA MA

Ö7a:1 (below)

pp. 72–73: Albin Dahlström/Mod-

erna Museet. The Moderna Museet

Collection, MOM/2005/716

p. 77: Albin Dahlström/Moderna

Museet. F1a:32

p. 78: Hans Hammarskiöld. MMA

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Museum of Modern Art. MMA PHA

4.2.58

p. 102: Albin Dahlström/Moderna

Museet. MMA PHA 4.2.55

p. 105: Ad Petersen. MMA PHA 4.2.58

(above). James Mathews/The

Museum of Modern Art. MMA PHA

4.2.58 (below)

p. 108: James Mathews/The

Museum of Modern Art. MMA PHA

4.2.58

pp. 120, 123, 126, 129, 130, 133, 134,

137: Albin Dahlström/Moderna

Museet. Pontus Hultén's Collection

of Books, Moderna Museet

p. 148: Unknown photographer.

MMA PHA 4.2.40

p. 151: Albin Dahlström/Moderna

Museet. MMA PHA 4.3.3

p. 154: Albin Dahlström/Moderna

Museet. MMA PHA 4.3.1

p. 159: Albin Dahlström/Moderna

Museet. MMA PHA 4.3.1

pp. 168, 173, 176–177, 179: Albin

Dahlström/Moderna Museet

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