

Perspectival Difference in *Untitled 1972*:
A Parallel Evaluation of Duchampian Philosophy

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ARTH 763: History of Prints
2 March 2006

The confluence of abstract expressionism and modernism in the 1960s sparked a revolution in the application and consequence of modern philosophy, reinserting decontextualized approaches and methods utilized in previous artistic movements. Jasper Johns practiced his early art in a reactionary stance, emphasizing the shortcomings of gestural abstract paintings, while searching for a solution that was, according to a leading expert—Kirk Varnedoe, “less airy, more concrete, and more in touch with quotidian realities.”¹ Although Johns is regarded by some as the “father of Pop”; his early Flag series commenced a journey combining the iconography of abstract expressionism with the pop implication of Dada, producing a unique synthesis in his utilization of the American flag in his early *oeuvre*.² Although Johns’ art began in the iconic world of pop art, it quickly evolved into a unique and personal implementation of Dada philosophy in combination with essential emphasis on the pictorial prominence of the Pop art and Abstract Expressionist movements.³ The art world existed in a state of flux during this period, its original practitioners unsure of the legacy of Abstract Expressionism. Johns chose his own path of production, blending the rich vocabulary and heritage of the Abstract Expressionist movement with the wider subject and medium appropriateness of the Dada.⁴ Johns enjoyed the company of a wide variety of contemporary artists, who, according to a leading art historian, “have...changed the history of American art.”⁵ The influence of artistic icons such as Ellsworth Kelly, Robert Rauschenberg, Claes Oldenburg, and Andy Warhol are evident in the wide variety and progression of Johns’ artistic production.⁶ Johns worked in a variety of media, experimenting with mixed media

variations including oil, encaustic, dimensional materials, and a variety of printmaking processes, including lithography and silkscreen, often explored in a sequential exploratory method.

A relationary knowledge of the influence of Marcel Duchamp is vital in a philosophical discussion of Johns' work, both in content and production. Duchamp is also important in a broader context because of his shaping effect on many important art movements of the twentieth century. He was a leader in the confusing and contradictory field of Dada philosophy and art. Duchamp provided a vast resource of philosophical thought and discourse through his varied writings and sketchbooks. Duchamp's sketchbook *The Green Box* was published and reviewed by Jasper Johns in 1960, exposing the philosophy of the Dada style in the context of modernist thought.⁷ Johns paraphrased Duchamp in his own sketchbook writings, utilizing Duchampian philosophy in rationalizing the application of concepts and ideas in his own work.⁸ *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* (also known as *The Large Glass*) enjoys a foundational position in modernist art and philosophical thought, both in the context of Duchamp's career and the broadening of artistic expression and boundaries of appropriateness.⁹ In this context of changing artistic movements and the foundational impact of previous artistic philosophy, Jasper Johns reinforces and reaffirms his Duchampian heritage in the act of creation and repetition through the production of the *Untitled 1972* series, in all of its implementations, communicating a unique synthesis of modernist philosophical thought and creative execution.¹⁰

The inception of Jasper Johns' *Untitled 1972* references the philosophical roots of Marcel Duchamp in vital combination with Johns' natural progression toward a synthesis of abstract expressionism and Dada. Johns' incipient thought began with his exposure to Dada philosophy through Marcel Duchamp's exhibition at Arensberg in 1959.¹¹ Johns' work prior to his first encounter to Duchamp contained Dada ideology and imagery, his meeting and exposure merely confirmed and labeled the connection.¹² Johns embodies the "idea-carrying" and image bearing values of Duchamp's art, while synthesizing these concepts in his own way, not blindly identifying and molding his work based on historical philosophy.¹³ Johns began his exceptional career through the tactful and insightful progression established through his *ad hoc* Flag series. This series spanned over fifteen years, beginning with his iconic *Flag* in 1955, and developed through several defined stages including utilization of such visual metaphors as repetition, color field, and found objects. This series reached a philosophical zenith in the context of Duchampian philosophy in the production of *White Flag*, also in 1955. This iteration of the prodigious flag series realigned the viewer's conception and perception of the American flag, stripping it of color, and presenting an artistic vision through the absent elements rather than the present.¹⁴

In a continuation of this artistic progression, Johns imprinted his imprimature of style, his unique blending of Dada philosophy and Duchampian influence, on his watershed *Untitled 1972* series.¹⁵ This informed vision prompted the production of the polyptych painting series *Untitled 1972*. The polyptych series, executed in oil, encaustic, and collage

with objects, consisted of four panels, including unique abstract forms unlike other subject matter or representation common during the time period. The first panel (hereafter, A/D) consisted of a multi-colored hatching pattern, reputedly originally visualized on a vehicle in Brooklyn, reproduced in a non-representational form against a white ground. This unique pattern originated in this panel, and became the preferred vehicle for exploration and allegorical thought through the remainder of the 1970s. The conception of pattern in the hatched strokes was executed in the secondary colors, purple, orange, and green, and demonstrated the force of directionality and compositional theory.¹⁶ The demonstrated effect of a flat canvas in contrast to the visual movement of color and hatching verified the underlying Cubist aesthetic of space reborn under the guise of pop art.¹⁷ These hatching serve as an important visual reminder of the flag series, both in structure and overall solidity of form, but with a renewed interest in the “lively tension” created by the juxtaposition of color and modified space.¹⁸ The second panel (hereafter, B/D) and third panel (hereafter, C/D) both utilized a “flagstone” visual metaphor, possibly in combination or comparison to the hatching motif in the previous panel.¹⁹ Although panels A/D and B/D may have been placed in a reactionary or symbiotic way, the flagstone visual metaphor had been created several years earlier for inclusion in a more obscure work, *Wall Piece*, in 1968.²⁰ These flagstones had an unstable intellectual foundation, relying on their tangential meaning as juxtaposed to the surrounding content and the actual creation of the art rather than a clearly defined intrinsic meaning.²¹ The fourth panel (hereafter, D/D) is contrary, almost in a violent sense, to the minimalist

motif of the other three panels, relying on a remarkably Duchampian quote of body casts and realistic, yet disjointed imagery. The panel included eight mounted boards, each with an associated attached cast of a body part. These casts, although understood in a contemporary evaluation of *Untitled 1972* in the context of Duchamp's casts and philosophical influence, are more likely a modified quotation of Johns' *Target* series, specifically *Target with Plaster Casts*, c. 1955. Formally, the casts are integrated and married to the panel in a different, more emotional way, layered onto the canvas and wooden bars in an increasingly sophisticated way, strikingly different from the harshly segregated approach in the original *Target*.²² In explanation of the panel's inclusion, Johns noted that the "size of the body fragments is related to the size of the flagstones as well as echoing their placement on the canvas," thus connecting the fourth panel to the more similar former panels.²³ The four panels in combination represent a dominant statement of visual and philosophical reorientation, deriving from the approachability of the Flag series, while moving to the more obtuse and personal statement of an abstract and fragmented textual nature.

Untitled 1972 was replicated as a subsequent lithographic series pursuant to enunciating a new *oeuvre* and an unconventional amalgamation of disparate modernist thought. The chromolithographic reproduction of the original *Untitled 1972* series recapitulated and redefined the expressive metaphor of the original. *Four Panels from Untitled 1972* was produced as a reaction to the original painting series, attempting to redefine and reshape the identity and metaphor of the original series.²⁴ The series

changed various segments of the panels in the repurposing to a new medium; Johns' scholar Field reveals that "what [Johns] has changed—added and subtracted—helps to clarify his central preoccupation."²⁵ The creation of an "underlying structure that is quite hidden from the viewer" provides a firm foundation for lithography in general, exploiting the drawing opportunities in the medium, adding background plates of "brush strokes,...complex structure of bold drawing tusche,...and brushed and ruled areas of white...that create a relatively geometric matrix for the casts."²⁶ The following stages "focus on basic image-making components and complete the essential fabric of color," reproducing most of the notable color and form present in the original paintings.²⁷ The next stage includes "accents of local color, many of which refer to adjacent panels," enhancing the cohesiveness and unity of the four panels as a whole.²⁸ The final stage represents the greatest departure from the original paintings, imprinting an "inkless image of the previous panel" on the next panel in series, resulting in a perceptible textural and related philosophical meaning. The additions and subtractions evident in the production of the chromolithographic version of *Untitled 1972* demonstrates the effectiveness of presenting "one structure...in terms of another," presenting the original meaning intended through the context of the primary medium, but also communicating the nuance inherent to the production of the former medium in the context and language of the secondary medium.²⁹

The *Four Panels from Untitled 1972 (Grays and Black)*³⁰ translation rendered and communicated a metaphor consistent to the chromatic version, yet antithetical in display

and tone. The recasting of the original print and painting series in grays and black represents a strong shift in the representation of the former subject matter, changing the viewers' perception of the original metaphor into a vastly different monochromatic vision. The modified series displays a harsher, highly textured variant of the former print series, resulting in a product where "space and illusion are modulated downward" and drawing takes an even more important role than in the former series.³¹ The paper used in the previous series was "soft, smooth" paper, and was consciously replaced by "medium gray paper of considerable granular texture."³² The reductionist view of this modified series in the elimination of color and embossing reduces the viewer's comprehension or vision of depth, resulting in a unique view and rereading of the former series based on the latter.³³ The modified monochromatic prints also take advantage of a more blatant imprinting device, through the "printing of fragments of adjacent panels...on the side margins of each print," thus contributing to the unity of the overall polyptych structure and horizontal stress.³⁴ This imprinted further solidifies the need to understand each panel in terms of each other, cognitively disassembling not only a panel in isolation, but understanding the necessary metaphorical and metonymical ramifications of viewing one panel through another. *Four Panels* takes advantage of the unique strengths of the black and white reproductive medium, creating an alternate viewpoint utilizing a modified chiaroscuro approach resulting in an indistinct dimensional form, further obscured by grainy texture and value.³⁵ This chiaroscuro view of familiar content in a different medium and visual context validates the illogical nature of cognitive compartmentalizing, and the

necessity of viewing multiple perspectival statements in terms of one another to the desired result of finding their differences. Two other works were produced in 1975 and 1976 that explored additional themes in medium and reorganization of panels, in ink in 1975, and in powder, acrylic, and collage on paper in 1976; because of the lack of scholarship on these obscure works and the complexity inherent in their inclusion to this analysis, they will not be discussed in detail, although their existence does fit neatly into the conclusion.

The *Untitled 1972* series, viewed in a triptych of perspectival statements, communicates a unified conception and vision while presenting similar metonymical vocabulary. The perspectival differences evident in a parallel analysis of the *Untitled 1972* series are established through a tacit implementation of the Duchampian Wilson-Lincoln System.³⁶ A brief discussion of Duchampian philosophy is necessary to fully understand and appreciate the varied mechanisms inherent in the system. The concept of the machine is vital to an understanding of Duchamp's art and philosophy. Duchamp ascribes to a machinist view that results in a purely reductionistic view of life and humanity, resulting in a philosophical context that ascribes each action and process, animate or inanimate, a machinistic undercurrent of intent and execution.³⁷ In this way, Duchamp approaches his art in the same way he approaches humanity, resulting in a convoluted machinistic view of distinctly human processes. The climax of this machinistic worldview is asserted in the *Large Glass*, where Duchamp reduces the entire understanding of love and humanity to a terse, yet complex fantastical machine. Duchamp's goal in this work is not the adulation or comprehension of viewers, rather it is merely a visual representation of his philosophical

work, by nature a closed system immune to the feelings or opinions foreign to the work. The work revolves around the vital interaction between a metaphorical Bride and her associated Bachelors, following along a natural chain of machines that link communication and feeling. In Duchamp's system, every element is equally machine-like, working in a predictable manner toward a defined goal, that of an inherently sexual nature. The Wilson-Lincoln system is presented as the final vital stage of translation that allows the flow of information to pass from the Bachelors to the Bride in a translation machine.³⁸ The Wilson-Lincoln system was originally conceived as a parlor-trick of sorts, operating on the principle of image fluidity based on perspectival relationship. This system appears as one of the final stages of this Goldbergian machine, responsible for the success of each intervening micro-machine through its vital translation role. It is through this system of translation that the essence of perspective becomes evident. Although the functional purpose of the Wilson-Lincoln system in the *Large Glass* is defined as purely mirrorial, intending to reverse the provided image to allow comprehension by the Bride, the actual purpose is more accurately encompassed by a comprehension of the entire machine through the mechanism of perspective. In this context, the most direct meaning can be obtained by an accurate reading of the mechanism that allows the perspectival or mirrorial distortion to function, not merely evaluating the end result of the machine itself.

In reference to Johns' work, each variant of the *Untitled 1972* series communicates a unique focus and metaphorical emphasis through its perspectival mechanism. Each perspectival view, represented by a specific print series, divulges a different view of the

artist's intent, while still maintaining the continuity of form and general meaning. The machinist flow of the system is established parallel to Duchamp's *Large Glass*, but with extensive modifications in terms of scope and nature. While the *Large Glass* represents a closed system, devoid of human interaction, Johns presents a system in which the viewer is a vital force in the success of the machine in macrocosm.³⁹ The Bride represents the viewer in Johns' implementation, thus firmly establishing the viewer as the beginning and terminus of machine's function. The viewer fuels the production of the Bachelors, representing the artistic and creative production of Johns in a parallel reading. In this construct, the viewer becomes an integral force, defining and fueling the production of art. The communication flow moves back to the Wilson-Lincoln system of translation, representing the viewer's interaction to the art of the Bachelor. The Wilson-Lincoln system in Johns' work is defined through its purpose and function as a metaphor in the machinistic translation of optical purpose, further delineated through the overlap of multiple media in *Untitled 1972*. In the *Large Glass*, the translation of a predefined flow of information allows the flow of communication to continue uninterrupted to the Bride; Johns utilizes this same vital translation force to discover, not the overall substance or body of work as defined in the Duchampian inclusive machine of the *Large Glass* but the difference inherent in thematic repetition, to enunciate the communication embedded in each part of the triptych.⁴⁰ This revelatory translation machine only allows this level of visual accessibility through the proper viewing of the *Untitled 1972* components in series and parallel. The flow of communication thus continues uninterrupted, demonstrating the necessity of inorganic segments of the machine, allowing for human interaction in the

organic processes of viewing and interpreting, as well as producing the art. Although the art flows along an inorganic machine of communication, these crucial lapses into inorganic thought define the essence of human interaction on both ends of the creative process. This natural flow, beginning and ending with the Bride or viewer, naturally progresses into a machine or process of cyclical nature, evolving into an object or method of repetition or series in the production of art.⁴¹ It is this cyclical nature, driven by the viewer that defines Johns' natural proclivity toward repetition of theme and series. Each portion of the triptych maintains a necessary sequence in the machine of viewer cognition that, if eliminated or left incomplete, would result in an inadequate or defective image of the artists' intended purpose.

The artistic philosophy and dimensional mathematics of the *Large Glass* redefine the relative worth of the art within the context of higher mathematics and natural flow of machinist thought. Duchamp presented his Bride as hurtling and transforming through a philosophical and metaphysical four-dimensional space, thus presenting a fragmented and distorted view of the characters in his interactive play.⁴² Four-dimensional space was an idea inaccessible intellectually to the general population during Duchamp's primary artistic production, but was no less enigmatic as an artistic vehicle to his naturally philosophical and questioning mind. He often noted in his research and collaboration with noted theoretical mathematicians his desire to transform the elemental three-dimensional space into a richer, more complex four-dimensional space.⁴³ The production of the *Large Glass* was the pinnacle of these efforts to expand the meaning and depth of

content in the visual arts in this uniquely mathematical way, unusual in the context of Dada philosophy.

Duchamp constructed the *Large Glass* in an artistic context and medium that, by nature, obscured the natural progression of time, and blurred the sequence of events in his complex, endlessly repetitive visual and philosophical machine.⁴⁴ It is through the implementation and inclusion of the *Large Glass* machine in a closed system that the necessary transformation from three to four dimensions can accurately take place.⁴⁵ The closed system necessarily encapsulates the visual system represented; Duchamp utilizes this byproduct of reproduction to visually present his machine in four dimensions, including the implicit mechanism of time.⁴⁶ The reproduction of time can most easily be illustrated through the representation of multiple stages or processes of a dependent machine simultaneously; the Bride coexists with the Bachelors and all of the dependent linking actions—the shots and creation of the Milky Way, the active Chocolate Grinder, and the vital translation device, the Wilson-Lincoln System. Duchamp represents this four-dimensional view of his machine as an inversion of traditional three-dimensional space, indicated by his use of negative coded carbon for transference of form, and the reverse translation provided by the Wilson-Lincoln System.⁴⁷ These translatory elements allow a correct reading of the closed system by allowing translation from three-dimensional viewer perception to understanding of a four-dimensional paradigm, and then subsequently translated inversely back into the natural three-dimensional space of the viewer.

Johns utilized this same four-dimensional space in his artistic endeavors in a more visually accessible and readable way, choosing to represent the arcane fourth dimension as the important conditioner of time in his art and series repetition. Through Johns' delicate and thoughtful reinterpretation of the *Large Glass*, his *Untitled 1972* series visually stimulates the imagination, asking and answering questions with deep Duchampian roots, but in a sequenced, less comprehensive way. Although many of Johns' series were marked by exploration of a singular object or artistic idiom, such as his hatching or numeral series, *Untitled 1972* represents an important philosophical leap in the production of four parallel visual themes across multiple repetitions in time. It is only through the conditioner of time and the essential interaction of the viewer in the art production machine that this series was effective in repeating four parallel themes in a way that communicated and recapitulated their inner meaning and theme progression.

The inherent openness of Johns' machine of artistic production is essential to the proper understanding and communication of the underlying four-dimensional properties of the art. Conveniently, Johns chose to communicate his fourth dimension through the natural viewer interpretation machine, not relying on complex mathematical and visual translations of time and space to allow an accurate reading. By stretching his *Untitled 1972* series along the natural continuum of time rather than a philosophical construct of time dimensionality, the resulting artistic variance between repetitions can be more easily studied and compared, resulting in a more coherent and complete interpretation of the whole. The role of the viewer in the multiple iterations of *Untitled 1972* also becomes more vital. Through the Duchampian production of art, the viewer is only allowed to

interpret the end product of the machinist process; Johns' system allows a critical viewer role intertwined with the creation process. The viewer interaction and commentary provides the necessary impetus to drive the repetitive process of artistic production through current and subsequent variations of a similar theme. This interaction allows a unique encounter and insight into the production of Johns' series work. The viewer becomes the organic beginning and end of the creative process, and when combined in a continuous swirl of creative activity and iteration, communicates the feelings of the viewer in similar depth to the artist's own inspiration and subsequent impression. The process of varying and refining the hidden meaning through contextual secondary information is a necessary segment of the repetitive creation process. The artist unintentionally integrates the related viewer perception of the work into the natural iteration of a theme, often strengthening or refining the appearance of the initial hidden meaning intended by the artist. Over multiple iterations, the confluence of viewer perception varies, and through the variances, the constancy of the singular intended meaning is revealed.⁴⁸

The difference of artistic intent often results in modified viewer impression, but the multiplicity of form, manifested by the multiple series iterations, can obscure the subtle differences between the perspectives, resulting in the obfuscation of the intended embedded meaning. The metonymical vocabulary adjusts along a natural continuum as a logical consequence of the perspectival variation. The object of metaphor or metonymy is utilized "consciously or unconsciously...to resist, evade, or control the interpretations or meanings that can be produced for them," obscuring the true meaning of the work.⁴⁹ The methods used to communicate metonymy are purposely ambiguous, revealed in the

“significance of crosshatchings [and] flagstones,” resulting in further definition and clarification through the multiple viewpoints provided of a single metonymical construct.⁵⁰ It is through the differences in these multiple variations of a single construct that the viewer can construct the purest meaning and obtain the closest access to the original intent and thought of the artist.

The prominent influence of modernist Duchampian theory on the artistic production of Jasper Johns precipitated the convergence of perspective and metaphor in the perspectival variations of *Untitled 1972*. Through the production of the *Untitled 1972* series, and subsequent works along similar visual themes, Johns reinvented his position in the context of surrounding artistic movements and redefined his stylistic direction and philosophy. Johns’ exploration of multiple media, particularly in the production of a singular visual theme, resulted in a variety of themes and series produced at length through multiple media and multiple works of art, including the hatching and numeral series later in his career. Johns left a heritage of insight and artistic vision, influenced by the competing artistic theories of Dada and Abstract Expressionism, resulting in an effective synthesis of modernist thought shared by countless artists and printmakers in the contemporary art world.

¹ Kirk Varnedoe, *Jasper Johns* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1996), 95. Varnedoe further notes that many artists of this period chose this reactionary stance, including Piero Manzoni, Yves Klein, Lucio Fontana, and Cy Twombly. He further notes that these artists the solution to which these artists converged “was monochrome coupled with toughened surface and a more self-consciously impersonal gesture,” demonstrating the shared origins of Johns’ white and gray paintings in the flag genre.

² *Ibid*, 98. Although Johns recognizes the culpability in his production of art leading to the “pop art” movement, but denies a direct link beyond a strictly mediatory role. Varnedoe notes that “where Duchamp had put found things on a pedestal...[Johns and Rauschenberg] took the incidental and the day-to-day world into their art with a striking immediacy...finding new relationships between things and forcing unexpected congruities.”

³ Ibid, 94-95.

⁴ Richard Francis, *Jasper Johns* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1984), 13-14. Francis notes that Johns was "anxious to find a neutral space...one not infected by the second Abstract Expressionist generation." Abstract Expressionism was heralded during this transitional period as the "true" American art, speaking through the "critical vocabulary and eminent apologists" of the movement, particularly Clement Greenberg and Harold Rosenberg.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Kirk Varnedoe, ed., *Jasper Johns: Writings, Sketchbook Notes, Interviews* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1996), 20-21; Jasper Johns. "Duchamp." *Scrap 2* (1960): 4. The review of Duchamp's *The Green Box* appeared to have a profound impact on Johns, already recognizing the appearance of the "chain reaction...fixed by posterity's 'final verdict'" in Duchamp's art. He also recognizes the difficulty in intercepting and interpreting Duchamp's work appropriately, stating "Marcel never gave you the confidence to be sure of any statement you might make about him. He never made the claims that you might make for him."

⁸ Varnedoe, *Jasper Johns*, 19. The *Green Box* was only a small portion of Duchamp's philosophical writings and notes that eventually became part of the modernist vocabulary. Duchamp published additional work in his *1914 Box* and *White Box*. Johns spoke highly of Duchamp's work in the context of the *Large Glass*, noting that it "allowed the changing focus of the eye, of the mind, to place the viewer where he is, not elsewhere."

⁹ Craig Adcock, *Marcel Duchamp's Notes from the Large Glass: An N-Dimensional Analysis* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1983), ill. 1,2. These illustrations detail the installation of *The Large Glass* or *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* by Marcel Duchamp, produced 1915-23.

¹⁰ Kirk Varnedoe, *Jasper Johns* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1996), 283. Slide is illustration 153. Entitled *Untitled 1972* by Jasper Johns, executed in oil, encaustic, and objects on canvas.

¹¹ Varnedoe, *Jasper Johns: Writings, Sketchbook Notes, Interview*, 137; Esther Levinger. "Jasper Johns' Painted Words." *Visible Language* 23 (1989): 281. Oddly enough, Johns, whether through ignorance or otherwise, did not immediately recognize the implications and connections of his work in relation to Dada. He notes in an interview, speaking previous to his first encounter with Duchamp's work at Arensberg, that, "Everyone said my work was Dada so I read up on it, went to Philadelphia to see the Arensberg Duchamp collection, was delighted by it and later met [Duchamp]."

Levinger notes "the result of the encounter with Duchamp...were works such as *False Start* 'which reflect Johns' interest in Duchamp's moving away from work incorporating simply retinal boundaries into a field where language, thought, and vision acted upon one another." Further, the negative aspects of the "presence of words in Johns' work" are used both in the negation of abstract expressionism and the furtherance of "language games" where the words reflect a deeper philosophical meaning.

¹² Ibid. Johns' said "[Duchamp's] idea was that anything could be art by focusing the mind to think of it as art. My images are similar but at the same time my work was first being shown, 1958-59, I was unfamiliar with Duchamp and Dada." Speaking of his integration of Dada thought before he formally knew of its existence, Johns explained that "it was all more a coincidence. Perhaps it's that certain ideas get into the air, ideas that come out of our living and out of the environment automatically."

¹³ Ibid, 100-01, 108-9. Johns spoke of his artistic originality, saying "Picasso used everything from the past and commented on the past; Duchamp has never done so. However, if you say Duchamp is my forerunner, I can't entirely agree with you. Duchamp, who has created those works, is no one else but Duchamp." While enunciating this originality, he agreed with Duchamp's idea of art being essentially "image-carrying," noting that "My idea has always been that in painting the way ideas are conveyed is through the way it looks and I see no way to avoid that, and I don't think Duchamp can either. To say that you don't care how it looks suggests something that I don't think is quite possible, if what you're doing is making something to be looked at. Then, if it looks one way, it's one thing, and if it looks another way, it's another thing. But one thing is not another thing. I understand that if you have an idea for a picture and if you make a picture, and if you take certain characteristics of a picture or whatever and make another picture, that they will share something, there will be some information, perhaps, which is conveyed by either of them. But I think what is more interesting to me is the

particular object encountered at any moment. Oh, that's questionable, but I tend to think that the one object which is being examined is what is important."

¹⁴ Joan Carpenter. "The Infra-Iconography of Jasper Johns." *Art Journal* 36, no.3 (Spring, 1977), 223-24. Carpenter notes "Within a simple given framework, [Johns] saw the possibility of a created complexity." Further, "many of Johns' 'other levels' can be seen to reside, formally and iconographically, within the pictures themselves, in their veiled collages, and not merely upon their textures encaustic surfaces nor in discussions of the 'significance' of flags and targets."

¹⁵ Francis, *Jasper Johns*, 39-41.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 79. Francis notes that "it is difficult to place the edge, and the panel could be imagined to extend in all directions," thus foreshadowing the mirrored and extended versions of this theme executed in the next five years.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 82.

¹⁸ Richard Field, *Jasper Johns: Prints 1970-1977* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1978), 26.

¹⁹ Varnedoe, *Jasper Johns: Writings, Sketchbook Notes, Interview*, 168.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 164. The flagstone motif was reportedly taken through the "observance of a fleeting visual phenomena." "While driving through Harlem, [Johns] spotted out of the corner of his eye a store with a wall painted to resemble flagstones. Later, preparing to paint [the flagstones], [Johns] sent David Whitney to look for and photograph it. Whitney couldn't find it; neither could Johns when he himself went to track it down. But he claimed the image for himself." Johns notes, "what's interesting to me is the fact that it isn't designed, but taken. It's not mine."

²¹ Francis, *Jasper Johns*, 79. Francis notes that "neither flagstones nor crosshatching have significance except in the emotional investment by someone, who was not an artist, in an abstract (or nearly abstract) subject. Given that investment they signify something to both maker and the world outside.

²² *Ibid*, 82.

²³ *Ibid*, 168.

²⁴ Varnedoe, *Jasper Johns*, 286-87; Susan Brundage, ed. *Technique and Collaboration in the Prints of Jasper Johns* (New York: Leo Castelli Gallery, 1996), np. Slide is illustration 156 in *Jasper Johns*. Entitled *Four Panels from Untitled 1972* by Jasper Johns, executed as a registered chromolithograph on four sheets, completed in 1973-74.

According to *Technique and Collaboration*, the four panels were produced as "four lithographs with embossing and debossing, from one stone. 48 Aluminum plates and four reliefs. Panel A/D: 18 colors. B/D: 10 Colors. C/D: 13 Colors. D/D: 15 Colors. 40 x 28 ½ inches each." Printed by Gemini G.E.L. with the assistance of Ron McPherson, Serge Lozingot, Charles Ritt, and James Webb.

²⁵ Field, *Jasper Johns: Prints 1970-1977*, 26. Field further notes that, although the "disjunctiveness of *Four Panels from Untitled*, 1972 would seem to have militated against the unified approach found in previous series of prints...each partakes of a similar process of fabrication." Further, a retrospective undercurrent flows through the four panels, "each [looking to a different part of Johns' artistic life." The "most obvious are the references of the flagstones to the period of openness and experimentation from 1963 until 1972. When the panels are viewed in their normal order, they are enclosed in parenthetical allusions to the past and future. The casts recall the earliest targets of 1955, while the hatchings not only look back to the flags but ahead to a future stylistic departure." He further notes that "to cling to the artistic surface is to come away empty-handed."

²⁶ *Ibid*.

²⁷ *Ibid*.

²⁸ *Ibid*.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 27; Marcel Duchamp *The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even: A Typographic Version by Richard Hamilton of Marcel Duchamp's Green Box*, trans. George Heard Hamilton (New York: George Wittenborn, Inc., 1960), np. Duchamp notes that (emphasis and structure original):
"To lose the possibility of identifying (recognizing)
2 similar objects –
 2 colors, 2 laces
2 hats, 2 forms whatsoever

to reach the Impossibility of
sufficient visual memory,
to transfer
from one
like object to another
the memory imprint
--same possibility
with sounds; with brain facts."

³⁰ Varnedoe, *Jasper Johns*, 286-87. Slide is illustration 157. Entitled Four Panels from Untitled 1972 (Grays and Black) by Jasper Johns, executed as a registered lithograph on four sheets, completed in 1973-75.

³¹ Ibid, 29.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Varnedoe *Jasper Johns*, 19.

³⁷ Ronald Bogue, "The Cosmic Art Machine: Deleuze, Goldberg, Duchamp" (lecture, Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, GA, February 16, 2006). The entire explanation of the mechanics of Deluezian and Duchampian machines in this introductory segment are derived from this lecture. Although much of this material may be established as "common knowledge," this lecture was beneficial in shaping the synthesis of Duchamp and Johns, though implicitly.

³⁸ Craig Adcock. *Marcel Duchamp's Notes from the Large Glass: An N-Dimensional Analysis* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1983), 172-73.

³⁹ Bogue.

⁴⁰ Ibid. The analysis of the Duchampian machine and its derivatives were explained by Bogue; the implications as reflected in Johns' work were connected and substantiated through my own work.

⁴¹ Barbara Rose. *Autocritique: Essays on Art and Anti-art 1963-1987* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1988), 108-11. Johns adds two types of representation to Duchamp's ideal of four. According to Rose, Duchamp ascribed to representation through literal objects, shadows of objects, depicted images, and reflected objects. "Johns adds two more possibilities: reproduction and replication."

⁴² Adcock, 173.

⁴³ Ibid, 172.

⁴⁴ Bogue.

⁴⁵ Adcock, 173. "Duchamp took what was inside out and put what was outside in."

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Duchamp, np. A description of the Wilson-Lincoln system in relation to the Oculist drops follows from *The Green Box* (emphasis and structure original):

"Mirroral return--Each drop [of the oculist chart]
will pass the 3 planes at the horizon
between the perspective and the geometrical drawing of w figures which will be
indicated on these 3 planes by the Wilson-Lincoln system (i.e.
like the portraits which seen from the left show
Wilson seen from the right show Lincoln --)

seen from the right the figure may give a square for example
from the front and seen from the right it could give the same
square seen in perspective. --

The mirroral drops not the drops themselves
but their image pass between these 2 states
of the same figure (square in this example)
(Perhaps use prisms stuck behind the glass.)
to obtain the desired effect)"

Duchamp regards perspective in an interesting way, as described by his artistic “becoming” that results from the application of perspective (emphasis and structure original):

“By perspective (or any other conventional means...) the lines, the drawings are ‘strained.’ and lose the nearly of the ‘always possible’

with moreover the irony to have chosen the body or original object which inevitably becomes according to this perspective (or other convention)”

⁴⁸ Varnedoe, *Jasper Johns: Writings, Sketchbook Notes, Interview*, 61. Although Johns would never write a complete analysis of his work in the context of Duchamp’s system as I have compiled, he did derive knowledge and inspiration from the philosophy of Duchamp’s writings. This quote from Johns’ sketchbook reveals his thoughts about colliding space and dimensionality in visual communication (emphasis and structure original):

“2 kinds of ‘space’

one on top of the other

and/or

side by side

and/or

one ‘inside’ the other (is one a detail of the other?)

“ ‘around’ ” “ ”

What can one do with ‘one includes the other?’”

Further, a discussion of like objects describes the connection of objects that approach the identical state.

(emphasis and structure original):

“Distinguishing one thing from another

(Duchamp’s ‘2 like objects’)

Making distinctions where

{ none has existed

{ none has been said to exist

{ none has been made

?

How does the (eye) make such distinctions

Linguistically, perhaps, the verb is important.

But what about such a case in painting?”

⁴⁹ Fred Orton, *Figuring Jasper Johns* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1994), 41.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 45.

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