



**School: Bath School of Design**

**Researcher: Paul Minott**

**Project Title: Fountain 17**

**UOA: 32 - Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory**

## 300-Word Statement

Celebrating the centenary of Duchamp's *Fountain* (1917) and bicentenary of Armitage Shanks (1817), *Fountain 17* was a touring exhibition of works by artists invited to respond to Duchamp's iconic readymade, at Hull's Humber Street Gallery in 2017.

An advisor on *Fountain 17*, Minott was also invited by Association Duchamp to contribute 4 works: 2 artworks, an essay, *Marcel Duchamp and Graphic Design* for the accompanying publication, and the opening lecture entitled *Fountain: A Delay in Porcelain*, which was also given at the Gladstone Museum, alongside Minott's film *The Oculist's Dentist* as part of the Stoke Biennial.

Stemming from a decade's research into the accepted view of Duchamp's approach, these works ask:

1. How can design be used to explain episodes in Duchamp's life in a way which doesn't diminish his enigma?
2. Might Duchamp be regarded as a proto graphic designer?
3. Is the widely held view of *Fountain* 1917 as a milestone in avant garde art a misconception?

Minott's 2 exhibited artworks include: *The Bride Stripped Barr* (2016), a mixed-media sculpture superimposing a scaled redrawing of Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even* (1915-1923) against Alfred Barr Jr.'s *Cubism and Abstract Art diagram* (1936), playfully illustrating their visual and conceptual similarity. Secondly, *The Genuine Bears This Signature (More Sustaining Than Meat)* (2016): a sequence of seven facsimile chocolate bars in mixed media, alongside extracts from Duchamp's *White Box* notes (1912-20) regarding *Appearance and Apparition*, which uses the moulding of chocolate as a metaphorical device. By substituting 'Hershey' with 'Duchamp', the artist becomes an American brand whose infrathin alterations over time mirror his transatlantic crossings.

Minott's ongoing academic research challenges the mythology of *Fountain*, contributing new perspectives on the enduring legacy of Duchamp.

*Fountain 17* was sponsored by Arts Council England and Hull UK City of Culture 2017.