1)-Who is Duchamp? A great liberator of art through the idea's power or the art genius' killer?

Art is idea?

Marcel Duchamp made "A Guest + A Host = A Ghost. 1953." for William Copley, the artist who started the first edition/assembling: SMS.

This wordplay reminds me of the playfulness of Duchamp, like an artist/poet not a genius who needed "inspiration". So yes, art is idea. But what lacks me in Duchamp: his connection with "social" reality. He connects life to art through his ready mades because they give banal objects an art status. Which I think was a kind of attack to the bourgeois society but no political art. But only after Duchamp, modern art thus largely found in these human and social experiments the forces and the reasons to resound with the world by deconstructing the symbolic forms of representation, in particular that of the perspective, and by inventing new nonfigurative artistic protocols such as appropriation, or of new practices, new devices, new materials of non representative expressions. And for me key figures are Schwitters, Filliou, Ray Johnson, Ulisses Carrion.

2)-In which sense art is a "semologic warfare"? I think in the early 60's when we first talked about mass-media, very quickly artists connected media with art because they needed "cheap" materials to work with to react against the classic academic artsytem which only produced paintings, etchings and sculptures. Even Duchamp and Surrealism was part of the official artsystem. Only some surrealists connected artists and poets. Always it are the poets who drive "movements,manifestos" (cfr. Sarenco) And then Pop Art gained a high status because of the american imperialism. Many italian artists and poets* found in newspapers: found texts and images etc to dialogue with a social reality. Also back up by researchers like U.Eco ** and Marshall McLuhan *** These artists became culture actors, with a real possibility to comment on society. They could unmask the strategies of mass-media by detourning the signs, to make new messages. And therefor Poesia Visiva is both literature & art which makes it the first avant-garde which did combine word/image so directly. This movement connected with similar experiments: Fluxus, Situationism, Provo and Mail-Art. When Art comments on society and uses to change the signs/messages then we can speak of semologic warfare.
* "It is a moment of open collision, when Visual Poetry acts a real semiotic guerilla war: it uproots messages and meanings, overturns them, changes their signs. In practice it dissociates their verbal-iconic materials to rearrange them in opposite meanings and message


*** Millions of "global villagers" connected by the communications revolution Marshall McLuhan foresaw, have never read the most influential, prophetic, and entertaining book ever written on the subject--The Medium is the Message (originally published in 1967)

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3)- Georges Mauciunas was used to send his works because he got army's mailing discount. How your art is related to fluxus away forthy years? Which role has randomness in your work? My art is still connected to Fluxus because of the term "intermedia" that Dick Higgins used. We are producers, performers, publishers, etc. And for me the DIY attitude of the 80's (punk/hometappingscene) was very useful to connect. It's no "real" fluxus compared with the basic works the fluxuspioneers did. Nam in June Paik in video, Alison Knowles in scores, Charlotte Moorman in festivals, Ray Johnson in mail-art/correspondence art. To "classify" a work in the "tradition" of fluxus we can look back at a few criteria which Higgins & Friedman summed *. Randomness , also connected to "chance" , i guess .. Through mail-art i connected (as an experimental poet" with a growing community of artists who didn't want to stay in the system of juried art (academy,museum, gallery..) so they made their own rituals : gatherings, performances, assemblings, publications etc.. For me "chance", they way we connect is not like the networking of a gallerist for a "career" but to reach out to see with whom you can work/ connect/ exchange i guess.
This is what Fluxus is today. It is pretty much the same as what Fluxus was, but the old actors have been replaced by new ones. And behind our generation Fluxus artists there is already a new generation ready to displace us. We welcome them.

FLUXUS TODAY:

Fluxus today is built on the solid foundations of Fluxus yesterday. The artists may be new, but the work they are making is as much a part of Fluxus tradition as the work that came before.

Here is what Ken Friedman wrote in 2002. It was first published in 1989 by the Emily Harvey Gallery as "Fluxus and Company".

"...Emmett Williams once wrote, "Fluxus is what Fluxus does - but no one knows whodunit." This concise description makes two radical statements. The statement that no one knows "who done" Fluxus rejects the idea of Fluxus as a specific group of people. It identifies Fluxus with a frame of action and defines Fluxus as a cumulative, aggregate of Fluxus activities over the past forty years or so. While Emmett is famous for playful conundrums, he may not agree with this reading of his text. Dick Higgins did."
Dick explicitly rejected a notion that limited Fluxus to a specific group of people who came together at a specific time and place. Dick wrote, "Fluxus is not a moment in history, or an art movement. Fluxus is a way of doing things, a tradition, and a way of life and death."

For Dick, for George Maciunas, and for me, Fluxus is more valuable as an idea and a potential for social change than as a specific group of people or a collection of objects."

We, the Fluxus artists of the 21st century have taken these words to heart. We are Fluxus and we are making Fluxus work. Friedman, building on previous work by Dick Higgins, described Fluxus as a "laboratory characterized by twelve ideas".

1. globalism,

2. the unity of art and life,

3. intermedia,

4. experimentalism,

5. chance,

6. playfulness,

7. simplicity,

8. implicativeness,

9. exemplativism,

10. specificity,

11. presence in time, and

12. musicality
We live and work under the umbrella of these twelve ideas.

FOUR FLUXUS PRINCIPLES

Ideas from Ken Friedman, Owen Smith, George Maciunas, and Dick Higgins along with direct observation of Fluxus work past and present, can be synthesized to create an even more concise set of Four Fluxus Principles:

1. Fluxus is an attitude. It is not a movement or a style.

2. Fluxus is intermedia. Fluxus creators like to see what happens when different media intersect. They use found and everyday objects, sounds, images, and texts to create new combinations of objects, sounds, images, and texts.

3. Fluxus works are simple. The art is small, the texts are short, and the performances are brief.

4. Fluxus should be fun. Humor has always been an important element in Fluxus.

As with Friedman’s 12 ideas, these four principles are flexible guidelines, not commandments carved in stone. They are meant to help people understand and work with Fluxus. Not to confine them or restrain their creativity.

We, the Fluxus artists of the 21st century, know that we owe George Maciunas, Dick Higgins, Ken Friedman, and all of the original Fluxus artists a debt of gratitude for building the ship that we are now sailing on. Anyone, anywhere, is welcome aboard. Just remember that the ship has already started to sail.
4)-Collage: Dada, Surrealism, Situationism, Fluxus. What is collage today in the Photoshop's age?

Collage is a technique which has survived because some artists really wanna go to the bottom of the possibilities. See Jiri Kolar's book ("1986"Giancarlo Politi Editore). The Photoshop artists treat reality as a surface to present it as a new beauty so they only make it prettier. They do not connect, they isolate, they fake.

Collagists do the reverse, they go back to the origins of the image, the photography. I use old b&w photos of the 60's -70's which are forgotten to connect the past,present.. in layers through my juxtapositions. See the text of Pavel Zoubok, NY gallerist who defends ray johnson, john evans, all collagists connected with mail-art. Collage engages us with an immediacy that is distinct from other mediums. The artist confronts us with a vision of the world that is literally constructed from the physical context of his/her own experience. Found images and objects function as signifiers of both individual and collective experience. By incorporating materials that are inextricably linked to the realities of daily life, the artist establishes an immediate identification, both real and imagined, between the viewer and the work of art. The simplicity of the collage process adds to the sense of immediacy and spontaneity. The basic principle of juxtaposition forms the foundation for an art of limitless associative possibilities. Collage allows the artist to explore simultaneously the mysterious spaces between high art and popular culture, text and image, figuration and abstraction, past and present, two and three-dimensional space. (http://pavelzoubok.com/about-us#)
5) Maciunas didn't sell his works no more than three or four dollars. Are you used to sell your work or only exchange them? Why (in both cases)

Yes, also Mail-art wanted to be democratic art so no expensive books/catalogues but mostly based on exchange. In some cases impossible because some artists/organizers invested all their money to make a good catalogue so people had to pay a bit more. I sell my work (not frequently) but i also make a lot of exchanges because since the 70's the community of Artists'books, Fluxism, Mail-art & Visual Poetry grew through these exchanges. Some people build archives which are now shown and hardly sold.

For me one of the most touching experiences was the artists'books collection of Paolo Della Grazia in the MaRtlibreria. In 2004, i had an exhibition in Brescia with spanish visual poet Calleja and we visited the MaRt. When we entered the libreria we found books we knew of but never seen, we were so excited that we made too much noise and the curator came to see us and so started my relation with MaRt. One of the archivist who works there: Duccio Dogheria wrote an essay on my work.

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/sc56a92oikb9xgx/TNUXQNVA1a