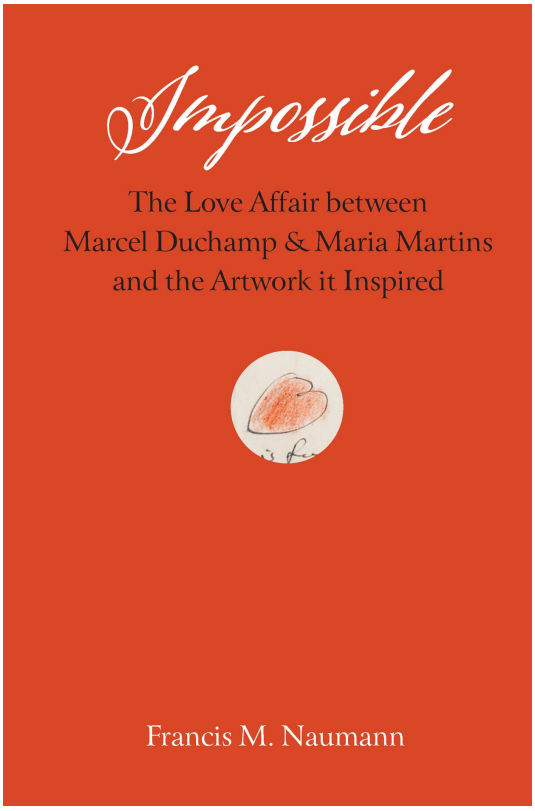
TITLE INFORMATION
Tel: +44 (0) 1394 389950
Email: uksales@accartbooks.com
Web: https://www.accartbooks.com/uk



Impossible

The Love Affair between Marcel Duchamp and Maria Martins, and the Artwork it Inspired

Francis M. Naumann

ISBN	9780789215291
Publisher	Abbeville Press
Binding	Hardback
Territory	World excluding USA, Canada, Puerto Rico, and Australia
Size	216 mm x 140 mm
Pages	192 Pages
Price	£24.95

- The gripping story of the clandestine romance, begun in 1943, between two great modern artists—and how it affected their work
- Sculptor Maria Martins, an important figure of Brazilian modernism, created her masterwork *Impossible* in response to her affair with Duchamp
- In turn, she influenced Duchamp's astonishing final work, *Étant donnés*, and modelled for the startlingly realistic nude at its centre
- Abundantly illustrated with works by both artists, as well as archival images
- Author Francis M. Naumann is one of the leading experts on Marcel Duchamp

The true story of a secret romance that changed the course of modern art—told in full for the first time.

"Tell me who your enemies are, so that I can help you to hate them." This was a favourite line of the Brazilian sculptor Maria Martins (1894–1973), and likely how she greeted Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968) at their first meeting, at the opening of an exhibition of her work in 1943.The clandestine love affair that burned between these two artists for the remainder of the decade was fuelled not only by romantic passion but also by a deep appreciation of each other's work. Some of the greatest of Martins's Surrealist sculptures were inspired by her relationship with Duchamp—including *Impossible*, whose title perhaps refers to their situation. (Martins was married to the Brazilian ambassador to the United States.) And it was during their affair that Duchamp—widely believed to have "retired" from art—secretly began his astonishing final work, which would be revealed only after his death. This work, the sculptural tableau *Étant donnés*, was heavily influenced by Martins: it takes formal cues from her work, and it was she who modelled for the startlingly realistic nude at its centre. This surprising story—highly readable yet meticulously researched, and abundantly illustrated with artworks and archival images—will affirm the importance of Maria Martins's tropically inflected Surrealism and challenge the perception of Duchamp as a purely cool and cerebral artist.

Francis M. Naumann is an art historian, curator, and former art dealer, specialising in Dada and Surrealism and, in particular, the work of Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray. He is the author of numerous books and exhibition catalogues, including *New York Dada 1915–23* and *Marcel Duchamp: The Art of Making Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Naumann was the first to write about the importance of Duchamp and Martins's love affair, more than 30 years ago.

Published 15th May 2026