

LE CYCLOP



EDITOR(S): Aude Bodet, Béatrice Salmon, Clément Dirié

AUTHOR(S): Aude Bodet, Baptiste Brun, Camille Paulhan, Denys Riout, Dominik Müller, Jill Carrick

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A MONUMENTAL FOLLY BY TINGUELY, SAINT PHALLE, AND THEIR FRIENDS (1969-2024)

22.5 meters high and 350 tons of steel! Created by Jean Tinguely in collaboration with Niki de Saint Phalle and their artist friends—Bernhard Luginbühl, Larry Rivers, Jesús Rafael Soto, and Daniel Spoerri among others—*Le Cyclop* is a monumental sculptural work that inhabits the forest of Milly-la-Forêt near Fontainebleau, just outside Paris. It is one of the most challenging artworks in a public space, here in a natural setting that offers a unique framing and underlines its dramatic presence. The sculpture is an immense head almost entirely built from found and industrial materials and covered in sparkling mirrors. Its interior houses a surprising universe that can be discovered through a labyrinthine route punctuated with artworks and curiosities both humorous and somber: sound sculptures, a small automatic theater, machinery with scrap-metal gears, homages to Duchamp, Klein, and Schwitters, among others. The fruit of a collective adventure, *Le Cyclop* is also a utopia almost clandestinely forged over numerous years (1970–1994) by a team characterized by Tinguely as "mad sculptors."

Introduced by Béatrice Salmon and Aude Bodet, this definitive publication tells the story of *Le Cyclop* in detail, bringing together new essays and perspectives by an international array of art historians and scholars (Baptiste Brun, Jill Carrick, Dominik Müller, Camille Paulhan, and Denys Riout), an extensive chronology, as well as remarkable documentation and archive material drawn from international sources. It also reveals the current state of *Le Cyclop*

after its recent complete restoration by the Centre National des Arts Plastiques (Cnap), the national French institution in charge of the conservation of the work, which was donated to the French state in 1987.

Evaluating *Le Cyclop* in relation to the work of Tinguely and his fellow artists, as well as to the history of contemporary art, from Land art and Dada to Art Brut, the volume offers an in-depth case study of a key creation in 20th-century art history, which still provides an unparalleled experience to visitors today.