

**Fredrick Gifford**  
**Beauty of Indifference (2016)**

**Program Note**

This piece is part of the larger cycle of works *respirateur*, based on Marcel Duchamp's *The Large Glass*. *respirateur* uses incidental features of Duchamp's work as structural elements to create four independent chamber pieces, each with a unique instrumentation. But each part is in some way open, and when combined, these four chamber works become four interconnected panels of the larger work, *respirateur*, for 10 instruments and electronics.

*Beauty of Indifference* contains the following items:

*3 Draft Pistons* [for 2 sopranos]

*The Boxing Match* (2 sopranos; 3'00, in 4, unordered rounds)

*Tongs* (2 sopranos; 2'30, in 3, ordered parts)

*Dust* (soprano solo; 1'00 – performed twice, once by each soprano)

*Fruit Prison* [for 1 percussionist]

*Slope* (for a resonant, metal instrument/s; 3'30)

*Channel* (for a non-resonant, wooden instrument/s; 2'30)

*1st Fall* (for a resonant, instrument/s of indeterminate material; 45")

*2nd Fall* (for a resonant, instrument/s of indeterminate material; 45")

In the Green Box, Duchamp says, "buy a pair of ice-tongs as a readymade." The source text of *Tongs* is the list of kinds of tongs taken from the index of: *Nomenclature 4.0 for Museum Cataloging: Robert G. Chenhall's System for Classifying Cultural Objects*. The source text of *The Boxing Match* is one sentence from the Green Box, "This is, very probably, the only suitable alphabet for the description of this picture." The performers choose their own source texts for each version of *Dust*.

*Beauty of Indifference* was commissioned for Radio Voltaire (Amanda DeBoer Bartlett, soprano, Mabel Kwan, keyboards, Jesse Langen, guitars, and Liz Pearse, soprano & piano) and premiered as *3 Draft Pistons with Graft Blossom and Fruit Prison*, at the Green Mill Cocktail Lounge, Chicago, in October 2016.