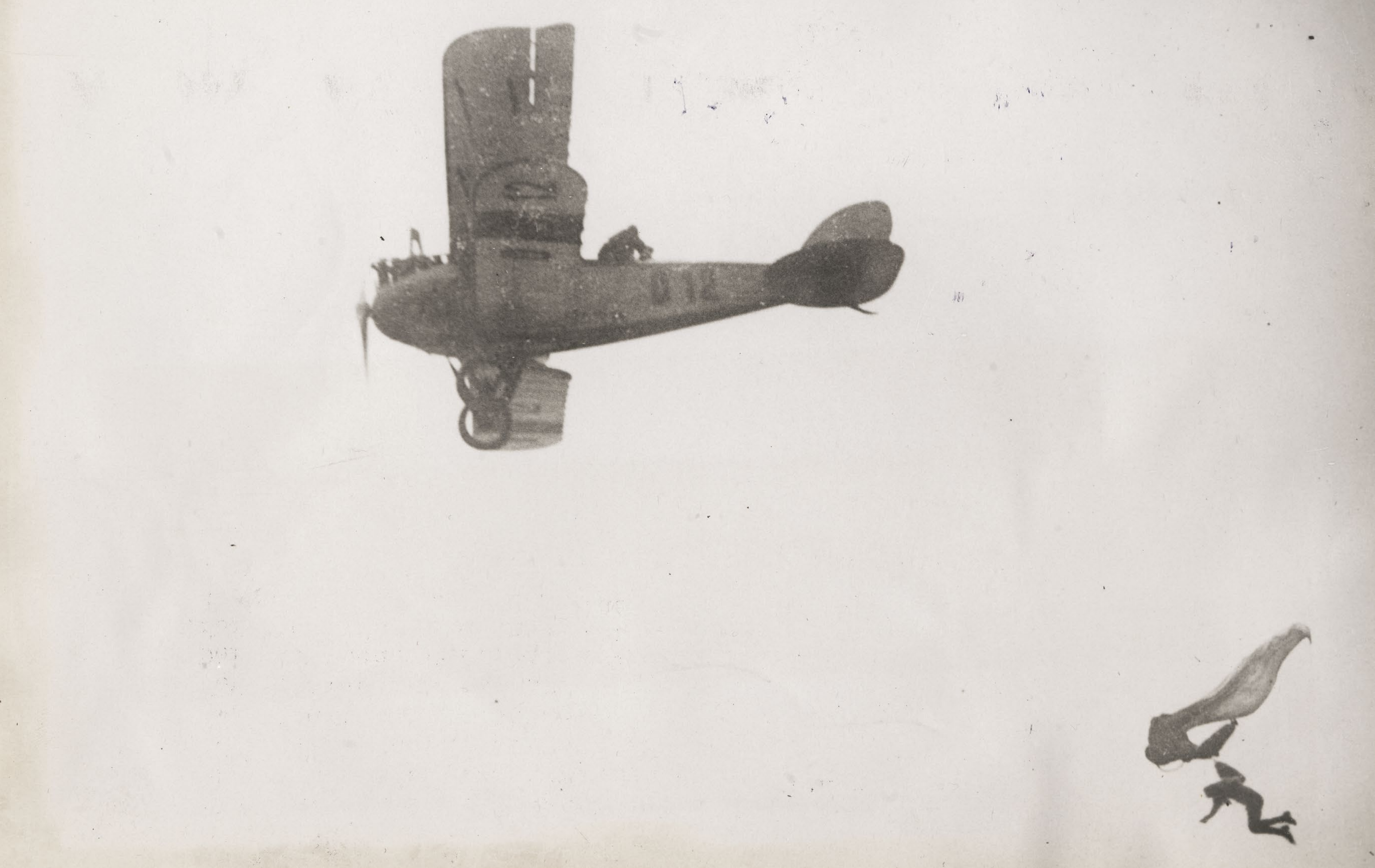
OBJECT:PHOTO

Modern Photographs
The Thomas Walther Collection 1909–1949

MoMA



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Modern Photographs
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MITRA ABBASPOUR | LEE ANN DAFFNER | MARIA MORRIS HAMBOURG

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

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Lost and Found: The Emergence and Rediscovery of European Avant-Garde Photography

MARIA MORRIS HAMBOURG

Nobody is the slightest bit concerned where works of art land up today . . . One should keep them safely stowed away: for the things which are coming to life now will have their day.
—El Lissitzky, 1925[1]

Cologne, 1968: Fritz Gruber, the charismatic director of exhibitions at the Photokina fair, asks his assistant to open a half dozen cases sent from Munich. Amid a bewildering abundance of nineteenth-century photographs and albums emerge photograms by László Moholy-Nagy, striking close-ups of plants, body parts, animals, and other objects by Aenne Biermann, Hans Finsler, and Albert Renger-Patzsch, a maquette of a book by "Moï Wer," and still more by artists whose names were on the cusp of oblivion. This trove had been accumulated by Franz Roh, author of *Foto-Auge* (*Photo-Eye*, 1929), one of the most important photo books of the century. Art historian, critic, photographer, and happily something of a hoarder, Roh had been forced to silence by the Nazis for his promotion of avant-garde photography. Aside from his widow, who had shipped the crates, no one had seen Roh's collection since his internment at Dachau more than thirty years before.

The Art Institute of Chicago, 1974: as David Travis, assistant curator in the department of prints and drawings, inspects the contents of a shipment from Connecticut, he is stunned by what he sees: a cache of photographs by Henri Cartier-Bresson, Walker Evans, André Kertész, Man Ray, Moholy-Nagy, and Charles Sheeler, names that were familiar even if some of the images were not. More mysterious were works by names that hardly rang a bell: Ilse Bing, Francis Bruguière, Eli Lotar, Lucia Moholy, Oskar Nerlinger, Roger Parry, Maurice Tabard, and the oddly named "Umbo." The accumulation belonged to Julien Levy, most of it freshly gathered in Paris and Berlin for the opening of his gallery in New York in 1931. A film lover flush with the excitement of the new media in Europe, Levy optimistically staked his gallery on photography and film, but within two years found that dream unsustainable. He stayed afloat mostly by representing Salvador Dalí and other Surrealists until the outbreak of World War II, when he closed shop. His stock was stored in the basement of The Museum of Modern Art for a time, only to end up among the swallows and mice in Levy's Connecticut barn.

These snapshots illustrate how a new generation on the other side of the Great Depression, the dispersions and destructions of World War II, and the dawning of the Cold War began to

Cover of the catalogue for the exhibition *Künstlerische Photographie von Hill bis Moholy-Nagy* (Artistic photography from Hill to Moholy-Nagy), Kunstbibliothek, Berlin, 1971. Image: László Moholy-Nagy, *Strandbild* (*Beach Picture*), 1929, acquired by Curt Glaser for the Kunstbibliothek's collection in 1929.

reconnect with the creative audacity of European avant-garde photographers. These pioneering visionaries had flourished during the interwar years, most especially in Germany, where a young cohort of enthusiasts including art historians and museum directors began publishing, exhibiting, and collecting this groundbreaking work. With the rise of fascism and the outbreak of war, these activities ceased, largely to be forgotten until an entirely different kind of social and political upheaval started to be felt across the world in the late 1960s, when young people began to rediscover the interwar avant-garde and to find particular relevance in that generation's utopian dreams and unconventional perspectives. For an initially small number of cognoscenti, unearthing and reassembling the relatively brief efflorescence of avant-garde photography became a passion. The collection that is the basis for this book was built by Thomas Walther, and like the collections of Frank Kolodny, John Waddell, and Robert Shapazian, which were also initiated in the 1970s, it is part of a much larger story.

To simplify, we have concentrated that story both in terms of time and place. First we address the period from the run-up to World War I until about 1933 in Berlin, Paris, and New York, with the primary focus on Germany, especially Berlin, where revolutionary agitation gave rise to a photographic avant-garde that we locate in Moholy-Nagy and the Bauhaus, but that actually had multiple sources in many German cities, such as Stuttgart, Essen, and Cologne. We then examine how the radical ideas radiating from Germany were received in Paris and New York. Paris in this period was home to many photographers, some practicing in the ambit of Surrealism, others in the service of the press, but we do not survey these activities or the development of the street photography of Kertész, Cartier-Bresson, and Brassaï, which have already received much attention. Instead, our examination centers on how the French dealt with the photographic "New Vision" that was emanating from Germany. In New York, a photographic modernism of a different sort was deeply rooted in Alfred Stieglitz; likewise, much has also been written about his notion of the "straight approach." Our interest here is not to rehearse that history but to see how and at what points it interfaced with the European avant-garde.

The second part of our story focuses on the photography "boom" of the 1970s and the years leading up to it, a phenomenon that occurred in the United States, was paralleled in Germany, and arrived somewhat later in France. This swell of interest in the photographic medium as a whole fueled the recuperation of the evidence—the art and the history—of the European photographic avant-garde.

Admittedly, our condensed version of this story omits much: not only do we ignore the work of photographers from across the rest of Europe and beyond if it does not relate directly to the main story, neither do we dilate on the longer chronological span during which various strands of the story played out. Because these broader narratives are impossible to unspool in a linear skein, we have made them available through interactive maps and timelines at the *Object:Photo* website, www.moma.org/objectphoto.

FROM DADA TO CONSTRUCTIVISM: NEW YORK TO BERLIN

The seed of avant-garde photography was planted in World War I, when the insanity of war combined with horror at the inhuman potential of an increasingly mechanized society to radically alienate many artists. The war boosted industrialization and expanded new technologies such as radio, aerial photography, newsreels, and the illustrated press, and in its aftermath it became clear that the depersonalized organizational systems of the military were destined to permeate civilian life as well. What had been individualized and handcrafted increasingly became corporate, abstract, and machine-made. Moreover, mechanization made what had been slow, such as travel, and distant, such as news, quick and insistently present. In such changed conditions, the mechanical apparatus of the camera seemed a preternaturally apposite tool for capturing and interpreting modern reality, and the films and photographs that emerged—angular, close-up, abstract, and edgy—were as starkly different from the soft-focus scenes prevalent before the war as dynamos from dinosaurs.

The new photography sprang up first in New York, the quintessential modern city, and gathered theoretical

fig. 1 Man Ray (Emmanuel Radnitzky). *Porte-manteau* (*Coat Stand*). 1920. Gelatin silver print, 15 ⅞ × 10 9⁄16" (40.4 × 26.9 cm). Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, Paris. Purchase

strength in Russia and Hungary—locales where cracks in the tectonic oppression of the people exploded in revolution. It flourished in Berlin, where dissidents and refugees from those conflagrations converged. Rooted in the tumult of these overarching disruptions in Europe, the new photography critiqued the sclerotic remnants of the old dispensation, replacing it with the utopian hope of rebuilding society in a positive, collective spirit, thus harnessing the new mechanization to more productive ends. The artists not only yoked their practice to this larger mission, they also peeled the conventions from their practice and critically investigated the very means of photographic production itself.[2]

In 1913, New York was not only abreast of the latest modern technology, it was also a beachhead for progressive European art and, for certain artists, a haven from the war that was soon to erupt. The receptivity of artist-gallerists Stieglitz and Marius De Zayas to the novelties of Cubism, African sculpture, and abstraction opened the way for the even greater upending of traditional values by Marcel Duchamp. In a brilliant sleight-of-mind, Duchamp signed and exhibited an ordinary readymade object, an upside-down urinal, thereby establishing that any such manufactured commodity could serve as a receptacle for an idea and thus could function as art. From 1915 through 1920, Duchamp and the cocky American painter who took the name Man Ray led a small band of artists in playing delightful havoc with old notions. Instead of milkmaids and seascapes, they offered iconoclastic photographs (fig. 1), assemblages (e.g., cat. 113), and diagrams of nonfunctioning machines.

Stieglitz had long welcomed freshly hatched ideas from Europe; Dada was just the most recent. Taking a photograph of Duchamp's urinal (fig. 2), he loaned his stature to the irreverence but was only temporarily entertained by the skepticism and ironies of the Dadaists. Although Stieglitz had supported abstraction and a direct confrontation with the urban, industrial world by championing the work of Paul Strand (cat. 290), Charles Sheeler, and Edward Weston (cat. 325), he had a fundamental need for the spiritual and symbolic, and for most of his career he exercised his art in exquisite service to those values (cat. 287). His version of modernism—a rigorously framed, lushly aesthetic, and transcendent naturalism removed from the grit and din of the city—was the archetype for Strand, Weston, and many other American moderns, including Ansel Adams and his heirs, and it would become the photography of first choice for the young Museum of Modern Art.

The energies of New York Dada dispersed after 1920 when Duchamp left for Paris, followed shortly by Man Ray, and as the two headed east, the fruits of radical artistic exploration in revolutionary Russia were making their way west. The *Erste Russische Kunstausstellung* (*First Russian Art Exhibition*, 1922) in Berlin drew some fifteen thousand visitors, and although the show featured work from the turn of the century to the present, it was the three rooms of the most avant-garde art that made

fig. 2 Alfred Stieglitz. *Fountain, photograph of assisted readymade by Marcel Duchamp*. 1917. Gelatin silver print, 9 ¼ × 7" (23.5 × 17.8 cm). Archives Marcel Duchamp

headlines (fig. 3). Aleksandr Rodchenko's and Naum Gabo's sculptures confirmed the audacity of the Russian Constructivist explorations, but the strident agit-prop motor of this art, which was nothing less than the urgent construction of a wholly modern socialist state from an impoverished feudal base, was somewhat lost in translation: the Marxist ideology and practical context that inspired the art was obscured, leaving only artfulness on display. Thus, avant-garde Russian art was received as an angular, abstract style with groundbreaking spatial dimensions, but its progressive social connotations were only dimly perceived. Its geometric forms, vaguely aspirational qualities, and engineered precision were easily adaptable, producing an International Constructivism that became a lingua franca throughout much of Europe in the 1920s.

Although film and photography were not on display, the exhibition placed modern Russian art at the forefront of cultural discourse, establishing for the country a reputation for innovation that would inform the reception of the exceptional avant-garde film and photography Russian artists would produce. In 1919, Lenin had seized on the new media as useful tools to educate a population that was 80 percent illiterate, decreeing the wide implementation of film and photography in newsreels, reportage, posters, and other propaganda. As the cultural and social programs of the young revolutionary nation were broadly received in the West as a triumphant success, the country's unprecedented support of both media also registered as a stunning endorsement. "An image is not merely a chemically treated plate," Russian cultural

fig. 3 El Lissitzky. *Proun 19D*. c. 1920–21. Gesso, oil, varnish, crayon, colored papers, sandpaper, graph paper, cardboard, metallic paint, and metal foil on plywood, 38 ⅜ × 38 ¼" (97.5 × 97.2 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Bequest of Katherine S. Dreier. Acquired by Dreier from the *Erste Russische Kunstausstellung*, Berlin, 1922

commissar Anatoly Lunacharsky reportedly said, "it is a profound act of social and psychological creation."[3] Had this deep regard for photography's capacity to register significant meaning resulted only in dismal newsreels, it would scarcely have promoted the medium in the West, but the works of genius that Rodchenko, El Lissitzky, Dziga Vertov, and others produced over the ensuing decade were breathtaking proof that such confidence was not misplaced (fig. 4; cats. 166–69, 232–35, 319).

The new media also garnered serious attention simply because they became unavoidable. Movie theaters morphed into movie palaces as the film industry burgeoned, and the picture press exploded exponentially as the increased speed of the rotogravure printing process made the vast multiplication and wide dissemination of photographs possible. For the first time people had photographs before their eyes all the time, everywhere: on posters, in advertisements, in cinema, and in illustrated magazines and the weekly supplements of newspapers. A single newsstand might contain more than 900 different periodicals (fig. 5). Since the imagery from the illustrated press was cheap, expendable, and readily accessible, and it had a direct connection with the real world, the rotogravure photograph became source material for the Dadaists, who found its topicality and low-art status ideal for their purposes. In Berlin just after the war, Hannah Höch, Raoul Hausmann, and John Heartfield scissored up photographic reproductions to create mordant photomontages of censorious intent (fig. 6). In their hands, otherwise negligible photographic scraps became brazenly charged concoctions, and like the trenchant paintings of their colleagues Otto Dix and George Grosz,

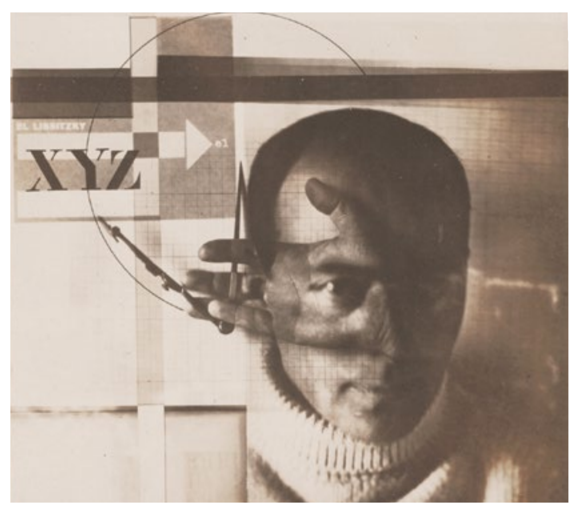


fig. 4 El Lissitzky. *Self-Portrait (The Constructor)* (detail). 1924. Gelatin silver print, 5 ½ × 3 ½" (13.9 × 8.9 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Shirley C. Burden. Cat. 168

equally as impossible to deny. One who immediately saw the brilliance of the photomontages was Moholy-Nagy, who quickly established himself as the principal architect of the photographic avant-garde.

MOHOLY-NAGY AND THE BERLIN AVANT-GARDE

Following the collapse in Hungary of the revolutionary government they had supported, Moholy-Nagy and other members of the artists' group MA fled to Vienna in 1919. After six weeks "decaying" in the old seat of

fig. 5 Friedrich Seidenstücker. *Zeitungskiosk mit 966 Exemplaren in der Kaiserallee* (*Newsstand with 966 Newspapers and Illustrated Magazines in Kaiserallee, Berlin*). 1932. Berlinische Galerie

empire, Moholy decamped for Berlin, where progressive artists and modern technologies commingled in fecund ferment.[4] Jumping into the heady mix, Moholy-Nagy met frequently with Lissitzky, Hausmann, and Hans Richter in the "red corner" of the Romanisches Café or at one of their studios.[5] Among the others who joined them were Theo van Doesburg, leader of Dutch modernism; Swiss/Alsatian Dadaist Hans Arp; Romanian Dadaist Tristan Tzara; Dada collagist Kurt Schwitters, from Hannover; proto–International Style architects Mies van der Rohe and Ludwig Hilberseimer; and a young cultural critic, Walter Benjamin.[6] These extraordinary associates debated the most progressive direction for European art, which, in the wake of the evident shipwreck of the bourgeois capitalist order, required an altogether new basis. Jettisoning the romantic idea of the artist as individual genius, they instead posited the artist as constructor/engineer in the service of a collective society. Wanting to divest artistic practice of the accretions of the ages and get back to the basics, Moholy, Hausmann, Arp, and Russian Suprematist Ivan Puni (Jean Pougny) issued a "Manifesto on Elementary Art" that urged a renewal of perception to create work at once pure and epochal.[7] From the mélange of ideas swirling in the crucible of Berlin of that moment, Moholy-Nagy extracted the tenets of his theory, which he would develop over the next three years, melding a number of precepts: the Dadaist interest in photography as direct evidence; the Russian and Hungarian revolutionary passion for the collective; the dedication to geometric abstraction and elemental universality of Constructivism, Suprematism, and Dutch Neo-plasticism; and a broad-based technological

fig. 6 Raoul Hausmann. *Der Kunstreporter* (*The Art Critic*). 1919–20. Photomontage and collage with ink stamp and crayon on printed poster poem, 12 ½ × 10" (31.8 × 25.4 cm). Tate, London. Purchase

optimism favoring film and other mechanical and industrial arts. This was the foundation from which Moholy developed his all-important advocacy of photography.

Nineteen twenty-two was a phenomenal year of growth for Moholy. In painting and sculpture he leapt ahead, demonstrating a clear debt to Lissitzky and Kazimir Malevich in evolving his own strain of Constructivism; his swift advances earned him a show at Der Sturm, the ground zero of artistic innovation in Berlin. He also created his first revolutionary photograms and authored an important theoretical paper about the new media, "*Produktion-Reproduktion*," with the help of the art historian, editor, and photographer Lucia Schulz, his new wife. In it he began to lay out a distinction between the empty virtuosity of realistic painting and documentary photography ("reproduction"), on the one hand, and the creative necessity of using new technologies to produce unfamiliar relationships to provoke the forward movement of society ("production").[8] The unmoored shapes and impression of infinite space in his photograms were examples of the productive branch of photography, but Moholy would go on to demonstrate that the medium was capable of much more. Since coming to Berlin, Moholy had also become a photo-editor for the revolutionary Hungarian/German periodical *MA*. In sync with the practice of avant-garde journals such as *L'Esprit Nouveau* and *De Stijl* (edited by van Doesburg), Moholy gathered illustrations from the picture press and spread a knowing selection of them across *MA*'s pages. Then he and fellow Hungarian Lajos Kassák published an anthology of those pages in *Buch neuer Kunstler* (*Book of New Artists*, 1922). Matching feats of technology and works of art, Moholy-Nagy posed an Italian racecar opposite a Futurist painting by Umberto Boccioni, paired an airplane hangar with Vladimir Tatlin's *Monument to the Third International* (1921), and juxtaposed propellers and an electric clock with a machine painting by Francis Picabia (fig. 7). The message was clear: modern technologies and modern art were not only commensurate but the one led to and demanded the other, a conclusion underlined by Kassák's feverish account of the progress of modern art from Futurism up to the convergence of science, engineering, and art that was transforming modern life into a Constructivist utopia.[9]

Thus, at the same time that Moholy was working toward that imagined goal in his writing and his two- and three-dimensional art, including his abstract, camera-less photography, he was also pointedly gathering documentary photographs and presenting them as direct evidence of the cutting edge of modernity. His understanding of the capacious potential of photography would therefore ultimately encompass both its inherent plasticity as an expressive visual medium and its agency as reporter of the actual world.

In 1922 Weimar was not only home to the Bauhaus, the school of art, design, and architecture founded by Walter Gropius three years before, it was also the temporary home of Van Doesburg, who was teaching in

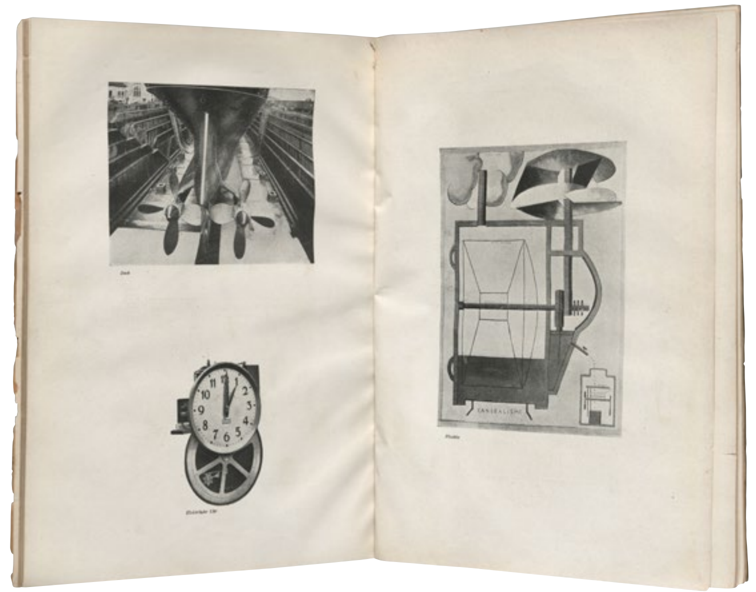


fig. 7 László Moholy-Nagy and Lajos Kassak. Spread from *Buch neuer Künstler* (*Book of New Artists*). Vienna: MK, 1922. The Museum of Modern Art, New York

the city with an eye toward goading the Bauhaus into welcoming the new pan-European conflux of modern arts. Gropius's Bauhaus was founded in Expressionism and handcraft, but Van Doesburg, convinced that the original intention of the school was out of step with the swift changes afoot in Berlin, convened an "International Congress of Constructivists and Dadaists" virtually on the school's doorstep (fig. 8). He invited Moholy and Lucia, Lissitzky, Richter, Arp, Tzara, and Schwitters to attend, as well as his students, among them Max Burchartz (cat. 50) and Werner Gräff. The gathering served to crystallize the situation: Dada having cleaned the slate, a new marriage of art, architecture, and design was being born under the banner of Constructivism and De Stijl, and the Bauhaus seemed an ideal place for it to grow. By the time the Russian exhibition in Berlin closed a few months later, the International Constructivist vision was incontestably the dominant spirit of the times, to which Gropius acceded, inviting Moholy-Nagy to bring it to the Bauhaus.

In addition to redesigning the preliminary course and redirecting the school toward abstraction, technology, and practical, engineered results that could be mass produced for the new society, Moholy worked with Gropius to publish the *Bauhausbücher* (*Bauhaus Books*), a series of influential illustrated books, including Moholy's own *Malerei, Fotografie, Film* (*Painting, Photography, Film*) in 1925.[10] Since representation had been taken over by photography, Moholy argued, painting should be abstract. But what quickly established the book as the foundational treatise of avant-garde photography was Moholy's enthusiastic endorsement and illustration of the myriad ways in which the elemental components of photographic media—of light especially, but also of optics, point of view, and motion—could be exploited to reveal new ways of relating to the world. Mechanically reproduced, new images would be available to all, expanding awareness and helping to create the enlightened, collective society that was Moholy-Nagy's dream. The book's hundred plates demonstrated this encompassing "New Vision": photo-technology (X-rays, microphotography, astronomical photography) intermingled with photomontage, photograms, and other experimental shots by Moholy and other artists, including hyperreal, close-up details of plants and animals, along with surprising images culled from photo agencies and news services (fig. 9). A sui generis primer of the new photography, the book was widely inclusive, novel, and radiated its author's optimism and conviction—and it quickly sold out, only to be reprinted in 1927 with more of Moholy-Nagy's own questing, exploratory photographs, many taken from bird's-eye and worm's-eye perspectives. Together with the theoretical articles he was publishing in *De Stijl*, *i10*, and other avant-garde journals, *Malerei, Fotografie, Film* established Moholy-Nagy as the outspoken ideologue and arbiter of the vanguard of photographic aesthetics. It also set forth new parameters for contemporary assemblies of photography in which authorial identity was of slight importance—any maker or source, be it professional or amateur, artistic, journalistic, or anonymous, was admissible. What mattered most was the surprising, revelatory image that would awaken the public to the promise of the new technological world.

Although Moholy-Nagy was certainly the key visionary, others who used photographs daily—graphic designers and typographers especially—also helped to disseminate and enhance the power of the New Vision. Jan Tschichold collected photographs and wrote knowingly of the demand for good photography.[11] Burchartz, Van Doesburg, and Roh, along with Willi Baumeister, Theo Ballmer, Herbert Bayer, Hermann Eidenbenz, Herbert Matter, Paul Renner, Piet Zwart, and many other designers, editors, critics, and teachers, amassed archives of the new photography, made photographs themselves, and engaged in the presentation of photographs not only in books, catalogues, posters, and magazines but also as the designers of displays in exhibitions.[12]

The late 1920s saw an astounding spate of large multivenue photography exhibitions that reflected the medium's accelerated rise in Weimar culture, shows that were encouraged by the sophisticated and powerful German photographic industry and the activities of the Deutscher Werkbund (German arts association), a group

fig. 8 Unknown photographer. International Congress of Constructivists and Dadaists, Weimar. Summer 1922. Gelatin silver print, 6 ½ × 8 ¾" (16.6 × 22.2 cm). Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin. Top row, from left: Lucia Moholy, Alfred Kemeny, László Moholy-Nagy. Second row from top: Lotte Burchartz, El Lissitzky, Cornelis van Eesteren, Sturtzkopf. Third row from top: Max Burchartz (with child on shoulders), Harry Scheibe, Theo van Doesburg, Vogel, Peter Röhl. Front row standing: Alexa Röhl, Nelly van Doesburg, Tristan Tzara, Nini Smit, Hans Arp. Front: (left) Werner Gräff, (lying) Hans Richter

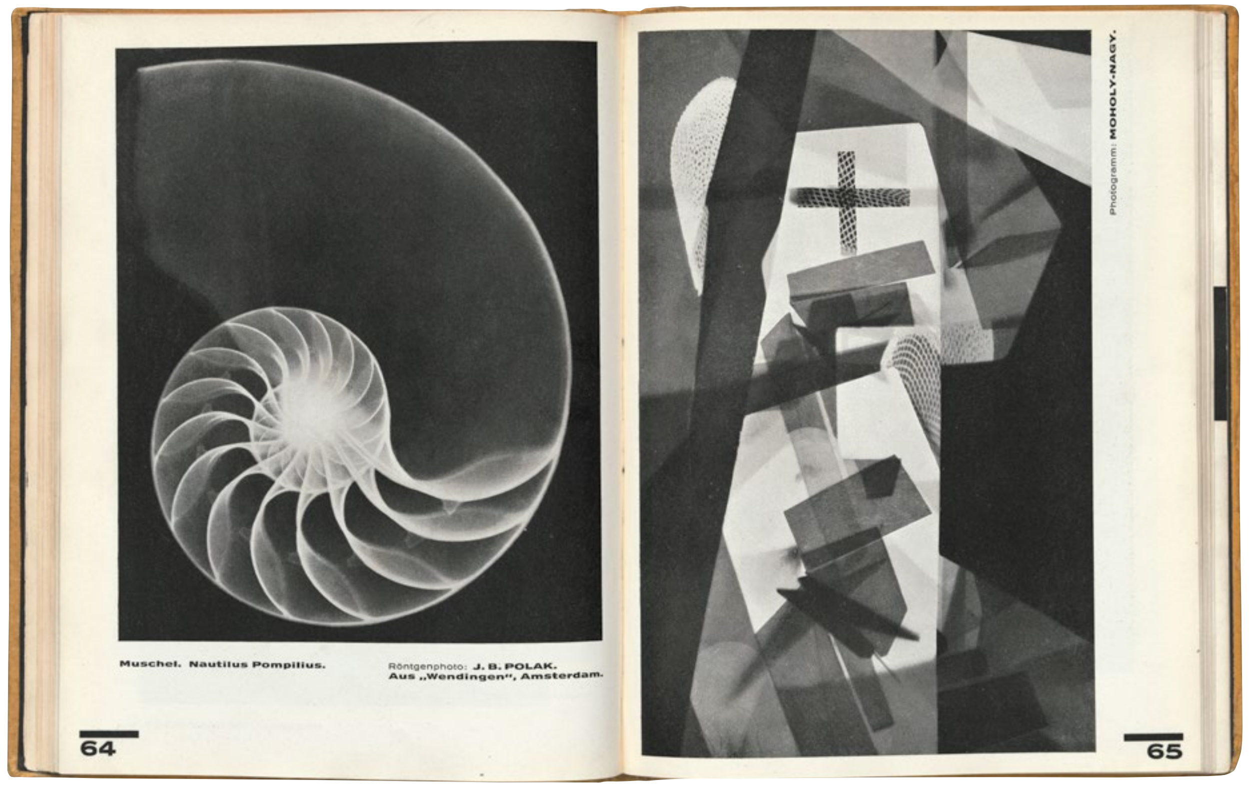


fig. 9 Spread from László Moholy-Nagy. *Malerei, Fotografie, Film* (*Painting, Photography, Film*). Munich: Albert Langen, 1925. Left: J. B. Polak. *Muschel. Nautilus Pompilius* (*Mussel. Nautilus Pompilius*). X-Ray photograph. Right: Moholy-Nagy. *Kameralose aufnahme* (*Cameraless Picture*). Photogram

of designers and artists whose goal was to facilitate relations between art and industry (among them Burchartz, Gropius, Mies, and Albert Renger-Patzsch). These sprawling exhibitions included *Neue Wege der Photographie* (*New Paths in Photography*, Jena, 1928), *Pressa* (Cologne, 1928), *Fotografie der Gegenwart* (*Contemporary Photography*, Essen, 1929), and *Das Lichtbild* (*The Photograph*, Munich, 1930, and Essen, 1931), but it was the Werkbund's 1929 international *Film und Foto* (*Film and Photo*) exhibition, known as *Fifo*, that overshadowed all the others. Its massive initial installation in Stuttgart, the eight traveling versions, the catalogues for the first three venues, and the two books that accompanied the exhibition (*Foto-Auge* by Roh and Tschichold and *Es Kommt die Neue Fotograf!* [*Here Comes the New Photographer!*], a remarkable "how-to" guide by Gräff)—taken together, the *Fifo* phenomenon constituted the largest assembly of modernist and avant-garde photography of the period, bringing to a crest the swell of growing public interest in film and photography.[13]

GERMAN ART HISTORIANS AND COLLECTORS

The remarkable increase in the presence of photographic media in exhibitions and books during the Weimar period depended upon the emergence of a network of German art historians who helped to organize and interpret it. The generation that came of age in Germany around World War I was formed in a time of trouble, not only during the war but also in its aftermath in the 1918 November Revolution, a burst of idealistic insurrections that were brutally suppressed. The youth whose revolutionary zeal was squelched had to divert their energies to other causes, and the art historians among them quite naturally became passionate advocates for the revolutions of modern German art—for art by the groups Die Brücke and Der Blaue Reiter and by Grosz, Dix, Max Beckmann, and other postwar artists whose expressive or caustic work spoke to their experience. By the mid-1920s, these men had become curators and directors of numerous museums around the country, and they reoriented their institutions to endorse modern art through acquisitions, exhibitions, and publications, with some even refurbishing galleries along principles of Bauhaus design. Prominent among them were several who became interested in photography: Alexander Dorner in Hannover; Walter Dexel in Jena, then Magdeburg; Curt Glaser in Berlin; Hildebrand Gurlitt in Zwickau, then Hamburg; Carl Georg Heise in Lübeck; Kurt Wilhelm-Kästner in Essen; and Hans Hildebrandt and Franz Roh, the latter two without binding institutional affiliations.

Many of these men had studied in Berlin or Munich under the legendary art historian Heinrich Wölfflin, absorbing Wölfflin's nonjudgmental view of divergent formal qualities as well as the dissolution of the distinction between high art and craft, an approach pioneered by Aloïs Riegl. As a result, they did not look down on photography and film; instead, they saw these new media as vital facets of contemporary culture—indeed, among the most indicative and avant-garde. Building on the surge of activity in film and photography in Russia and Germany and on the impact of Moholy-Nagy's advocacy, coupled with the implicit endorsement of the Bauhaus, this group of progressive art historians moved the new media from the camera clubs, newsstands, and movie palaces of Weimar Germany to the center of its art establishment.

This migration took place in the context of the spread of International Constructivism and also the growth of a new down-to-earth realism. Roh isolated this latter tendency in a classic Wölfflinian treatment and dubbed it "Post-Expressionism"; simultaneously, the director of the Kunsthalle in Mannheim, Gustav Hartlaub, another former Wölfflin student, named it *Neue Sachlichkeit* ("New Objectivity").[14] Hartlaub's nomenclature prevailed. Within this style, Hartlaub identified both a left wing that was engaged in social criticism (e.g., Dix, Grosz, Beckmann) and a right wing that was seeking to sanctify what was timeless, earthy, and salubrious in German culture (e.g., Georg Schrimpf, Carlo Mense).[15] Objective renderings of the tangible world also characterized reproductive photographs, exemplified by the work of Renger-Patzsch, whom Carl Georg Heise aligned with New Objectivity. In fact, Renger became so identified with sharp-focus realism that his name became a verb: one could learn to "renger," which meant to create accurate reproductions with attention to surface detail in a cool, crisp light and with a crop so tight it implied the whole while excising it from all context. From his perspective as a meticulous craftsman, Renger regarded the photograms, angled shots, and negative prints of Moholy's Constructivist approach as an affront—even a heresy—to proper photographic practice. But the two positions were not at odds as far as Moholy was concerned; if smartly seen, reproductions of the world could be as revelatory as the novelties issuing from the Bauhaus, as he demonstrated in his book with two of Renger's arresting close-ups. Through whichever lens one viewed them, as antagonists or simply as two poles on the continuum of photography's wide capacities, the objective and the experimental tendencies were stark advances over Wilhelmine Pictorialism; together they constituted a "New Vision."

Of the art historians/museum directors involved with photography, Dorner was the most radical, commissioning both Lissitzky and Moholy-Nagy to create full-scale environments in Hannover museums. Lissitzky's room was built in 1928; Moholy's "Room of the Present," which was to include film projections, was unfortunately never realized.[16] Dexel, Heise, Glaser, Gurlitt, Roh, and Wilhelm-Kästner, meanwhile, all curated influential exhibitions or assembled important catalogues and books promoting the New Vision. In addition, Heise and Glaser formed the first permanent collections of modern photography in German institutions, and Gurlitt followed their lead but curated a private collection instead, that of Dresden industrialist Kurt Kirchbach.

Heise (fig. 10), one of the younger historians, directed the St. Annen Museum in Lübeck from 1920 to 1933. When the local preservation society proposed the publication of forty postcards depicting the city's art and architecture, the little project and the larger exhibition that grew from it ignited Heise's interest in documentary photography, and when he was introduced to the work of Renger-Patzsch, he was immediately persuaded; he wrote to the photographer pledging his ardent support and proposed an exhibition.[17] Heise also arranged a commission for Renger to document the city, cajoling local bankers to back a book of the photographs, and then went on to convince Kurt Wolff to publish an additional volume, *Die Welt ist Schön* (*The World Is Beautiful*, 1928). With its clarion title and sharply resolved images of machine-made objects and nature studies whose patterns and structures are made to rhyme and to progress from the banal to the spiritually symbolic (through Heise's own judicious cropping and sequencing), the book became an icon of New Objectivity. Admittedly in the grip of "Renger fever," Heise continued his intense personal campaign, wrangling sales from local patrons and mailing missives to fifteen colleagues at other museums, asking for good reviews for the book or interest in mounting their own exhibitions.[18] From the museum's first Renger exhibition, in December 1927, Heise acquired ten images for the museum's collection, followed by 160 more from the Lübeck commission the next year; he also collected Renger's prints for himself.

fig. 10 Oskar Kokoschka. *Double Portrait of Hans Mardersteig and Carl Georg Heise* (right panel, showing Heise). 1919. Oil on canvas, 39 5/16 × 28 1/2" (100 × 72.3 cm). Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam. Acquired Fonds W. van Rede

With the passion of the recently converted, Heise now sought to expand the museum's collection beyond Renger, visiting *Fotografie der Gegenwart* in Essen in January 1929 and in June, *Fifo* in Stuttgart. He deplored the surplus of fashionable experiments and wondered why "the exhibition excludes[s] almost completely the exact opposite to these irreverent fantasies, that is, sound reproductions of works of sculpture and architecture?"[19] He did, however, manage to find much to like in the objective work of Finsler, Helmar Lerski, Robert Petschow, and Umbo (cats. 73, 161–64, 218–21, 304–10), and he arranged to collect their photographs for the museum. It's perhaps no surprise that Renger also hated the Bauhaus "school," and he wrote a scathing review of *Fifo* for *bauhaus* magazine, where it was sure to provoke.[20] His intolerance was more immoderate than Heise's, but it sprang from the same right-thinking, rightwing conservatism born of respect for tradition, the sanctity of craft, and the authority of the archive.

Renger's narrow idea of good photography lay heavily on the Lübeck collection. Heise included two artists of the previous generation whom Renger admired—Hugo Erfurth, a fine portraitist from turn-of-the-century Dresden who made superb but old-fashioned bromoil prints, and E. O. Hoppé, a British Pictorialist known for his attractive portraits and picturesque views; both artists served as high-quality, soft-focus antecedents against whom Renger emerged in sharp, modern relief.[21] From his Viennese colleague Heinrich Schwarz, Heise added another earlier artist who also helped make Renger's clear vision look like a distinct advance: D. O. Hill, the Edinburgh photographer of the 1840s, whose atmospherics were produced by the fibers of his paper negatives and the long exposures they required.[22] In all, the Lübeck museum's "exemplary collection" contained some 300 prints, more than half by Renger, plus a large group of amateur images, the photographs acquired through *Fifo*, and a few more sourced from photo agencies, all gathered with the same eye for objective documentation.[23]

Curt Glaser (fig. 11), director of the Kunstbibliothek in Berlin from 1924 to 1933, made a substantially different collection of photographs, small but select and not as narrow as Heise's. A former medical doctor turned specialist in East Asian art, the cosmopolitan Glaser was a wealthy patron and private collector of Henri Matisse, Edvard Munch, Beckmann, and many other modern German painters. He was a full generation older than the other art historians in the group, and as the weekly art critic at the *Berliner-Börsin Courier*, he was in the catbird seat to view the scores of photography exhibits mounted in Berlin in the 1920s, starting with his predecessor's annual presentation of the local amateur photography club.[24] Glaser carried on the tradition with an exhibition of the union of German photo clubs in 1925, a show that seemed to signal an overdue need for some new perspectives. "The war opened the eyes of a good portion of the German people," wrote one critic, "why not photographers among them?"[25] Glaser agreed and moved a half step toward the New Vision with an exhibition in 1927 of Hoppé, whose book *Das Romantische Amerika* (*Romantic America*) had just appeared. Hoppé's picturesque views of American cities flirted with modernism: when their subject was heroic and industrial, they seemed au courant to German eyes, even though the luscious, velvety prints conveying the subjects harked back to the pictorial efforts of the turn of the century (fig. 12).

Educating himself and the larger public through his weekly art reviews and articles, Glaser sensitively evaluated various photographic exhibits and debated the merits of photographic renderings versus those made with other graphic media. He was likely aware of the growth of a more modern photography by 1927, for, in concert with the publication of the second edition of *Malerei, Fotografie, Film*, Moholy's influence began to be felt. That year Moholy inserted his revolutionary abstract photograms and his program for the reeducation of photographers into amateur photography exhibitions and publications. In a show at Lehrter Station in Berlin, he showed fifteen photograms, and in the catalogue for another amateur exhibition, the professor laid out his nine-step program for the renewal of vision with and without a camera, a wholly serious effort to convince participating photographers to see the light through his revolutionary lens.[26] Although the article was illustrated with a photogram, it was not clear if it was actually displayed in the otherwise retardataire exhibit, which Glaser roundly dismissed as "stuck behind the misty veil of painterly conceptions."[27] As if seconding Moholy's program, he concluded, "We want nothing else from photography than that it admit itself to itself. The less it pretends to be artistic, the more it will be able to be an art."[28]

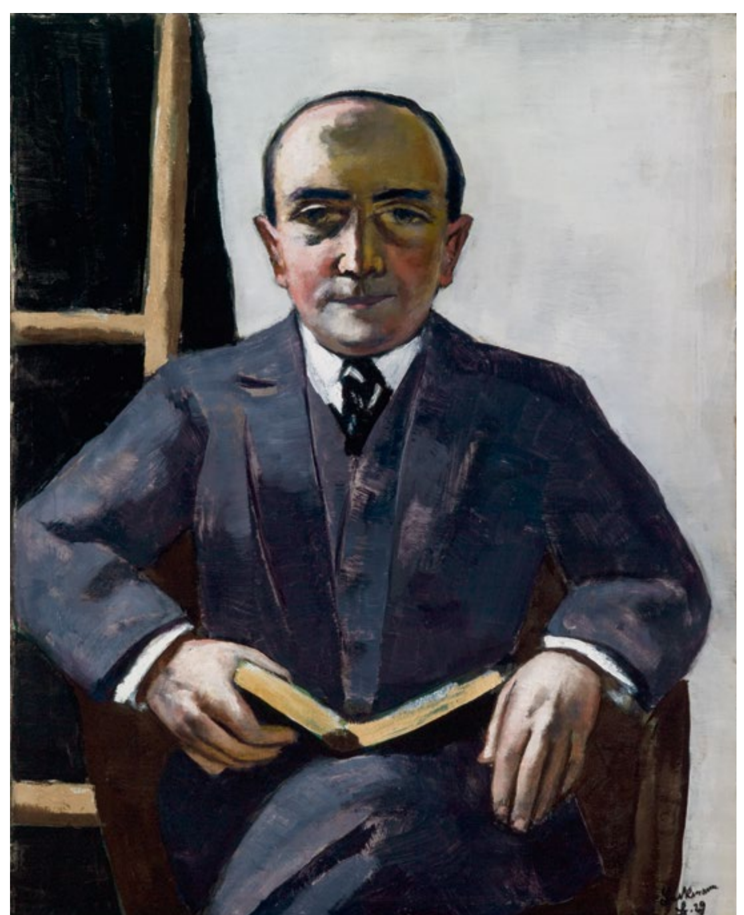


fig. 11 Max Beckmann. *Portrait of Curt Glaser*. 1929. Oil on canvas, 37 × 29 ¼" (94 × 74.3 cm). Saint Louis Art Museum. Bequest of Morton D. May

By the time Glaser visited Kurt Wilhelm-Kästner's *Fotografie der Gegenwart*, the first international exhibition of modern photography in Weimar Germany, he was well aware of the expanded parameters of the field.[29] Displayed in its third venue at the Galerie Neumann-Nierendorf in Berlin, famous for its advocacy of New Objectivity artists, the exhibition featured a smart selection of "artistic seeing" by Biermann, Burchartz, Erfurth, Finsler, Kertész, Man Ray, Moholy-Nagy, Renger-Patzsch, Karl Blossfeldt, Florence Henri, Charlotte Rudolph, Sasha Stone, and Umbo, which drove home the power of the new photography. In addition to those examples of "the beautiful photographic picture," there were four additional rubrics: photograms, photomontage, photographs in the service of science and research, and photographs for advertising, theater, and film.[30] Ranging over much of photography's terrain with the exception of reportage and personal snapshots, the exhibition covered the same territory Moholy had presented in his book, and in fact, Moholy himself lectured at the close of the initial showing at the Museum Folkwang in Essen. In his review of the exhibition, Glaser noted that the cinema had awakened still photographers to the potential of their medium. Mentioning Renger-Patzsch's "objective" still lifes, he slighted them for a style too easily imitated: "It is a bit like the new architecture and the new typography: one can learn it. It is not too hard. And it always has an effect. But there are differences. And that is exactly what this exhibit shows. Even in photography, talent is decisive. Sasha Stone and Umbo stand out. They have a feel for the material . . . Burchartz, with his students in Essen, has also achieved first-rate work. The large photographs of plant fragments by Blossfeldt turn over a completely new leaf. They continue to amaze because they unlock an entire kingdom of unknown and unimagined natural beauty. The exhibit is serviceable, but not comprehensive enough. It will be completed by a large exhibit now in preparation in Stuttgart, likely also to be shown in Berlin in the fall."[31]

Indeed, *Fifo* would land at the Kunstbibliothek, its third venue, in October. Although Glaser was already clearly convinced of the validity of the art of photography, it was through his close study of the actual prints and the hanging of the show that he became motivated to collect such photographs. Between 1929 and 1932, he selected 114 images by Burchartz, Henri, Kertész, Moholy-Nagy, Oskar Nerlinger, Werner Rhode, Sasha Stone, and Umbo, among others, and ordered new and often large prints made for the library's permanent collection.[32] For a national institution of this stature to form a considered collection of avant-garde photographs was unprecedented. Although both the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York had accessioned photographs by Stieglitz in 1924 and 1928, respectively, those acquisitions, which Glaser certainly knew about, were donations that did little to stimulate an active collection policy.[33] But at the Kunstbibliothek, Glaser brought the courage of his convictions and a highly refined eye to the task of representing the best of contemporary photography. Unlike Heise, who conflated the archive and the collection, thereby imposing the documentary notions of the one upon the other and unduly restricting the scope of his acquisitions, Glaser had an ecumenical vision and saw photography as an artistic medium of variable syntax that could be utilized in myriad ways. Because documentary photography was kept in a different section of the Kunstbibliothek—including first-rate images by Édouard Baldus, Eugène Atget, and Walter Hege—the concerns of record-making neither limited Glaser's notion of photography's purpose nor confused him about the relation of artistic photography to reality. "The secret of a genuinely artistic interpretation of reality," Glaser wrote, "is that it is as memorable as a line of poetry which seemingly has everything in common with ordinary prose but in reality could not be more different."[34]

Having embraced the new photography for the Kunstbibliothek, Glaser sought to enlarge the scope of its exhibitions. In addition to opening his doors to *Fifo*, he welcomed and organized numerous photography shows,

fig. 12 E. O. (Emil Otto) Hoppé. *Michigan. Detroit. Gefähren der Industrie* (*Michigan. Detroit. Confederates of Commerce*). Reproduced in E. O. Hoppé. *Das Romantische Amerika: Baukunst, Landschaft und Volksleben*. Berlin: Wasmuth, 1927. The Museum of Modern Art, New York

among them *An der Front des Fünfjahrplans* (*At the Front of the Five-Year Plans*) from the artist group October in 1930; Helmar Lerski's *Köpfe des Alltags* (*Everyday Heads*) in 1930–31; and *Fotomontage* (*Photomontage*), organized in 1931 by the photographer César Domela-Nieuwenhuis (cat. 69). These exhibitions brought the socially engaged documentation and photomontages of Worker's Photography and the dynamic Russian posters and graphics to Berlin's center stage.[35] Under Glaser's inspired leadership, the Kunstbibliothek and the atrium of the former Kunstgewerbe Museum, where many of the large exhibitions were shown under the library's sponsorship, became the most vital centers for photography in Germany from 1929 to 1933—and given Berlin's position as the nexus for the most advanced tendencies, this is to say, perhaps the most important in the world.

In 1932, Glaser visited the United States, where he found the standards for the art were different. Noting the highest technical precision and resolution as well as an "impeccable relationship between light and dark," he determined: "While we [in Germany] look for an interesting motive and a surprising viewpoint that captures the interest of the viewer through either extravagance or abstraction, in America photography has come to develop into an art for its own sake."[36] Glaser visited Stieglitz's gallery An American Place and almost certainly spent time with Stieglitz himself and his exquisite prints, which the artist had mounted in a major retrospective, followed by an exhibition of Paul Strand's equally exceptional prints. He could also have seen the *International Photographers* show at the Brooklyn Museum, composed of many prints borrowed from Julien Levy's gallery. Visiting Levy, Glaser selected from the gallery stock and from Levy's early summer show *Photographs of New York by New York Photographers* to pull together *Neue Arbeiten amerikanischer Photographen* (*New Work by American Photographers*), which he mounted at the Kunstbibliothek the following year. It was to be the last exhibition of modern photography at the library. The policies of Hitler's increasingly powerful National Socialist party were being felt ever more strongly, pressuring Glaser to steer exhibitions away from the avant-garde and into compliance with the taste of the Führer for realistic art that glorified Germanic lands and people. Tempering his progressive stance, Glaser kept the quality of exhibits high by mounting shows that nonetheless maintained a semblance of his values, such as the Ruhr landscapes of Renger-Patzsch (cat. 225). To leaven the unrelieved pieties of the portraits of Germanic folk by Erna Lendvai-Dircksen, a classic Nazi favorite, he hung them subsequent to Hugo Erfurth's powerful psychological portraits of Weimar artists and intellectuals.

Perceptive, engaged, discriminating, and shrewd, Glaser had the experience, prominence, connections, and easy access to the public and the press to carry photography to extraordinary heights and was well on his way when the Nazis removed him from his job and forcibly liquidated his superb personal collection of what the regime deemed to be largely "degenerate art." In the general house-cleaning of 1933, Glaser's colleagues Dorner, Heise, and Wilhelm-Kästner were also fired for their progressive art politics, while Dexel and Hildebrandt managed to hold on a bit longer before also being forced out.[37]

A third major collection of modern photography was made in Weimar Germany, and it, too, can be traced to *Fifo*; Gurlitt and Kirchbach, who had been neighbors in Dresden, visited the exhibition together in 1929 (figs. 13, 14).[38] Surrounded in Stuttgart by the panoply of photographic brilliance on the gallery walls, Gurlitt seized the opportunity to invite the receptive Kirchbach, an auto-parts magnate, to collect modern photography in consultation with him. The son of an art historian and grandson of a painter, the thirty-four-year-old Gurlitt was the director of the König-Albert-Museum in Zwickau, where he was making waves. He brightened the galleries with new wall colors designed by the Bauhaus painting workshop and Bauhaus-designed furniture, and he put the museum on a modern footing through his nonstop acquisitions of (mostly graphic) works by Dix, Grosz, Klee, Ernst Barlach, Emil Nolde, and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff. Zwickau was a coalmining district famous for its automobile industry; in a letter to Lissitzky in 1926, Gurlitt proudly explained that he was bringing the first abstract art to the region, and among the works he acquired were compositions by Lissitzky and Kandinsky.

Kirchbach shared Gurlitt's passion for German art of the early twentieth century, collecting works by Nolde, Ferdinand Hodler, and Franz Marc, and prints by Lovis Corinth that he took pride in displaying in the paneled print room of his Dresden villa. The two men evidently agreed that the new photography should be housed in the same fashion alongside the prints.[39] Without competition and with wealth derived from the clutch and brake pads Kirchbach's factory turned out for the flourishing automotive industry, the pair grew the collection quickly, starting with ten prints by Renger-Patzsch in June 1929.[40]

Following his departure from Zwickau in 1930 and his appointment as director of the Hamburg Kunstverein the next year, Gurlitt continued to gather works for his friend.[41] His initial plan to exhibit Kirchbach's photographs to the public was to show them "vis-à-vis works by abstract artists."[42] In the exhibition he ultimately mounted at the Kunstverein in 1932, however, he dropped the comparison to abstract art, allowing the photographs to stand alone and fill the building. In a pamphlet he wrote to accompany the show clarifying the rationale for the collection (fig. 15), he said that it

is an attempt to bring together outstanding achievements of the photographic craft from all over the world. . . . Since it has been [in formation] but two years, the desired overview is incomplete, but being continuously built, the collection will eventually represent the history of photography as well as a highly interesting, historical insight into today's culture. . . . It was most important to us to show the impressive unity of contemporary photography, to show its rise as a movement, as a craft. . . . The masses do not see the world with their own eyes, they see it as the artist represents it. . . . One of the most central issues of our times [therefore] is that today's photographer is strongly involved in shaping their world "view." Photography can be a high exertion of the human spirit . . . as long as the person wielding the camera sees the world in a deep and meaningful way; then it can become creative. To show this is the aim of the Kirchbach Collection.[43]

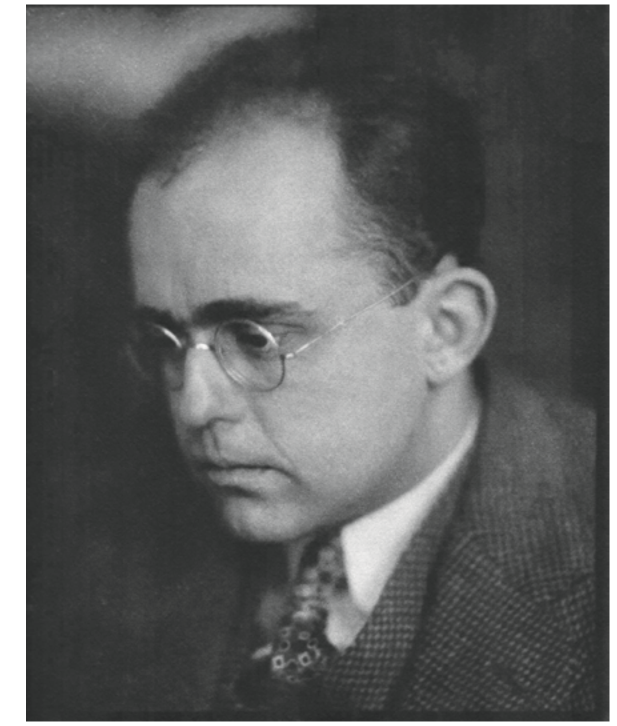


fig. 13 The Dresden art dealer and historian Hildebrand Gurlitt. c. 1930. Kunstsammlungen Zwickau, Max-Pechstein-Museum

fig. 14 The Dresden art collector and industrialist Kurt Kirchbach. c. 1930

How much of this reflected Kirchbach's thinking is debatable; at the time, Gurlitt was clearly a liberal who believed in the good of the collective. He saw photography as a craft positively enmeshed with and reflective of modern life, not an art isolated from it, and his selection of worthy examples was guided not only by a work's authority but by its unity with the vision of the times. He therefore even-handedly included strong work by local amateurs beside images from "the most important international names in photography," which included Blossfeldt, Burchartz, Hausmann, Germaine Krull, Lissitzky, Man Ray, Moholy-Nagy, Renger-Patzsch, Rodchenko, Paul Citroen, Imogen Cunningham, Andreas Feininger, and Brett and Edward Weston.[44] However, these figures were just high points; the focus was not on the maker but, as befitted the progressive Weimar ethos, on the illustration of modernity through the lens of its formal inventions. Gurlitt therefore organized the photographs under rubrics such as "Contemporary Men and Women," "Industry," "Dance," "Urban Views," "Aerial Views," "Abstraction," "Film," and "Montage."

Reviews were generally positive. Heise thought it the best exhibition he had yet seen, perhaps because Renger was handsomely featured, but he could not help remarking on a "major shortcoming," "that simple reproduction photography is entirely missing."[45] The exhibition was "organized like a print show," another reviewer noted. "The original prints are matted, have been catalogued and organized in portfolios—they are handled with care, like works of art or precious documents."[46] This was because, as Gurlitt prognosticated, "at some point in time the Collection will be just as rare, precious, and hard to attain as the esteemed incunabula of early photography."[47]

The sum total of the creativity that had infused photography in Germany during the 1920s and early 1930s, coupled with all the minds that had digested and assembled it, benefitted Gurlitt in his collecting. With relative ease—and very little expense for Kirchbach—he could choose from the works that had recently been gathered, displayed, and interpreted by his peers. The enormous potential that the Gurlitt–Kirchbach partnership represented is suggested by the fact that Gurlitt, like Glaser, had a large vision and was beginning to cast his collecting net even wider. In May 1933, he wrote to Cartier-Bresson seeking prints, and that October he purchased seven photographs that he had seen displayed in the exhibition of American photography at the Kunstbibliothek: two prints each by Ralph Steiner and Thurman Rotan, and three by Sherril Schell.[48] By this point the collection had grown to some 600 works and was poised to keep expanding.[49]

However, the high tide of positive, collective forward thinking that had lifted contemporary art, architecture, design, and photography to prominence in Weimar Germany had already turned, and all enthusiasm for modern art was drowned in the undertow. Gurlitt, who was a quarter Jewish, left the museum in July 1933, while

Kirchbach was evidently losing interest in continuing the campaign.[50] That a collection of such breadth, depth, and potential was brought to a halt after just three years, like the cancellation of the construction of Moholy's "Room of the Present" in Hannover, the cauterization of the collections at the St. Annen-Museum in Lübeck and the Kunstbibliothek in Berlin, and many another untold initiative, is altogether tragic.

When Hitler secured his position in January 1933 and swiftly moved to realign German culture, all those who had been associated with progressive art were considered unpatriotic and thenceforth barred from their jobs for lack of "necessary reliability."[51] Being an industrialist was different, however. Kirchbach joined the party and profited from his association: by 1944, he had a workforce of two thousand in his busy factory.[52] But when the Russian army advanced on Dresden the following year, he was forced to flee, abandoning his collection. Although he was able to reclaim some of it after the war, this portion remained hidden until after his wife's death in 1995, whereupon the photographs, sporting questionable provenance, came to auction (fig. 16).[53] Gurlitt stayed on in Hamburg and became a private dealer. He kept contact with Kirchbach and eventually was one of the four dealers tapped to sell "degenerate art" confiscated by the Reich and to procure "approved" old and modern masterpieces for the Führer's planned museum in Linz, activities that substantially—and perhaps damningly—complicate his legacy.[54]

The galvanic current of radical photographic exploration that swept from Russia and across Europe during the 1920s had been transmitted through myriad exchanges among artists and critics, writers, printers, and editors. The New Vision produced excited manifestos, picture books, and an amazing spate of exhibitions, which in turn elicited untold numbers of newspaper accounts, journal articles, and reviews in a free and lively intercourse of images and ideas. Photographs that evinced the new perspectives began to be regarded as objects of cultural value and even to be collected as art. But when the current was cut, the transmissions ceased. A curtain dropped over the memory of these events, which were, for the most part, all but forgotten for decades.

THE NEW VISION IN FRANCE

While Paris was a significant center of photographic activity during the interwar era, becoming increasingly so as politics in Germany careened right, the menu there had a distinctly different flavor from Berlin. The centralization of curatorial functions in large, traditional national institutions such as the Louvre and the Bibliothèque Nationale, the concomitant paucity of vital, smaller museums directed by a younger generation dedicated to the art of their own era, and the fact that Paris was neither as industrialized nor as media-drenched as Berlin braked the development of a machine-related contemporary photographic response to the modern world. The underlying reason the New Vision was not embraced, however, was that it was perceived as distinctly German, France's all-too-recent foe. Not only were the French hostile to Germany, they were also ambivalent about crass, newfangled America. And unlike Germany, whose

Fig. 15 Cover of the pamphlet for the exhibition *International Foto Austellung*, Hamburg Kunstverein, 1932, organized by Hildebrand Gurlitt and featuring the Kirchbach collection. Courtesy Manfred Heiting, Santa Monica, Calif.

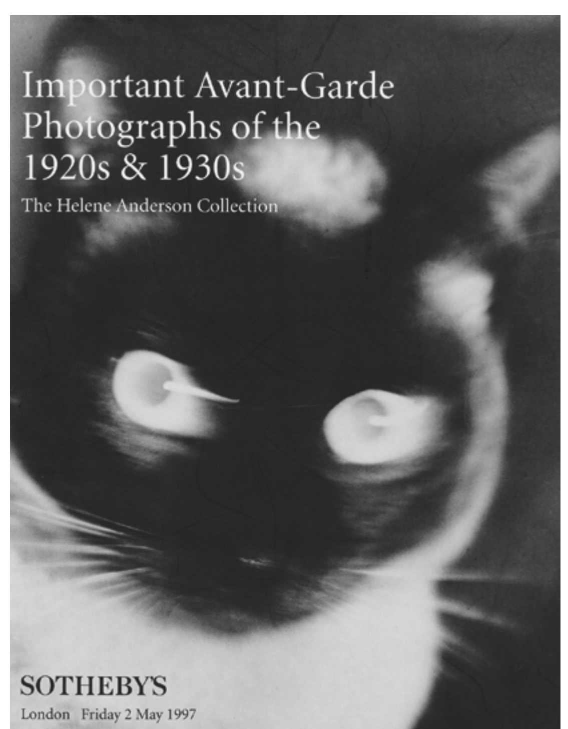


fig. 16 Cover of the auction catalogue *Important Avant-Garde Photographs of the 1920s & 1930s: The Helene Anderson Collection* (actually Kirchbach Collection). Sale LN7267. (London: Sotheby's, May 2, 1997). Cover image: Umbo (Otto Umbehr). *Katz* (*Cat*). 1927

vanquished past spurred an urgency to build anew, France had "won" the war; the French felt no need to clean their slate. The national tendency, therefore, was to return to an idealized past, to the comfort of French pictorial traditions and to rural values.

Although there were some French enthusiasts of the machine aesthetic, notably Robert and Sonia Delaunay, Fernand Léger, Amédée Ozenfant, and Le Corbusier, they began to retreat from their embrace by 1927.[55] Instead, the French dealt with the modern primarily through a set of inventive evasions, recreations, excavations, and manipulations that appealed to the imagination. Surrealism, the mindset that brewed up these parries and feints, favored the literary, the private, the morbid, and the erotic; it was not only *not* collective and objective, but in certain quarters it was openly hostile to the "fastidious, acrobatic techniques" coming from Germany.[56] Quentin Bajac has neatly summarized the course of photographic modernism in Paris, and he and numerous others have dealt extensively with the Surrealists' fascinating, multilayered involvement with photography from Atget to Ubac (cat. 303), including the diverse works of such estimable artists as Jacques-André Boiffard (cat. 36), Lotar (cats. 173, 174), and Dora Maar.[57] We accordingly treat here only the relation of the French avant-garde to the tendencies and developments in Germany.

The artist who stands historically at the center of French practice, who contributed inventively, substantially, and procedurally to avant-garde photography in Paris in the 1920s, was the American Man Ray. Embraced by fellow Dadaists upon his arrival in Paris in 1921 and given an exhibition of his paintings the same year, Man Ray accidentally discovered the photogram soon thereafter. The camera-less technique actually dates to photography's invention, but Man Ray dubbed it a "Rayograph" and published a dozen in a limited-edition portfolio, *Les Champs Délicieux* (*Delicious Fields*) in 1922 (fig. 17). The new image worlds blooming in these spatially ambiguous pictures, coupled with Man Ray's general conviviality, endeared the artist to the Dada-Surrealist group and others of the fashionable art set; he was popular with many more artists and writers, too, as well as with American ex-pats and tourists, for whom it was considered a badge of status to sit for a portrait by Man Ray. When very few French photographs traversed the Rhine or the Atlantic, Man Ray's photograms were often the exception: they appeared in *Vanity Fair*, the *Little Review*, *Broom*, and *Das Kunstblatt*, and even though Moholy also "discovered" photograms in 1922, he included Man Ray's versions in *Malerei, Fotografie, Film* and in *Fifo*.[58]

Like the photogram, Man Ray's other darkroom invention, solarization, was also the accidental rediscovery of a known technique: it is the chemical reaction that occurs when a print or a negative receives a flash of light during its development. This reverses the tones especially at the edges of forms, allowing things to melt visually and to seem to defy physical limits; thus boundaries

fig. 17 Man Ray (Emmanuel Radnitzky). *Rayograph*. 1922. Gelatin silver print, 8¾ × 6⅝" (22.2 × 16.9 cm). Plate 3 of Man Ray. *Les Champs Délicieux* (*Delicious Fields*), 1/40. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Purchase

are transgressed and things exude auras or appear to wear halos. As the process is whimsical and difficult to control, it played into the Surrealists' game plan of courting chance to help them subvert or devise latent alternatives to objective reality.

As central as Man Ray was, he was no Moholy-Nagy, for he was the opposite of an ideologue. Immensely talented but essentially ludic, he was not one to take on the crucial job of explaining a new way of photographic seeing through exhibit, lesson, and lecture, as Moholy did so ably. Although Man Ray taught Boiffard, Abbott, Bill Brandt, and Lee Miller the craft, they were successive "assistants" who learned through demonstration and practice; his studio was hardly a school. The darkroom inventions that issued from it served as lodestars for Tabard (cats. 293–301) and Parry (cats. 210, 211), who turned Man Ray's practices to marvelous account in their work at the Deberny & Peignot studios. Yet without an intelligible theoretical basis, a bandleader, and house organs, Man Ray's fecund fantasy could not inspire a movement or style, and there seemed no one in Paris who wished to take up the flag. André Breton, a preacher par excellence, never addressed the subject in his many writings on Surrealism; rather, he and his colleagues co-opted photography to illustrate their imaginative

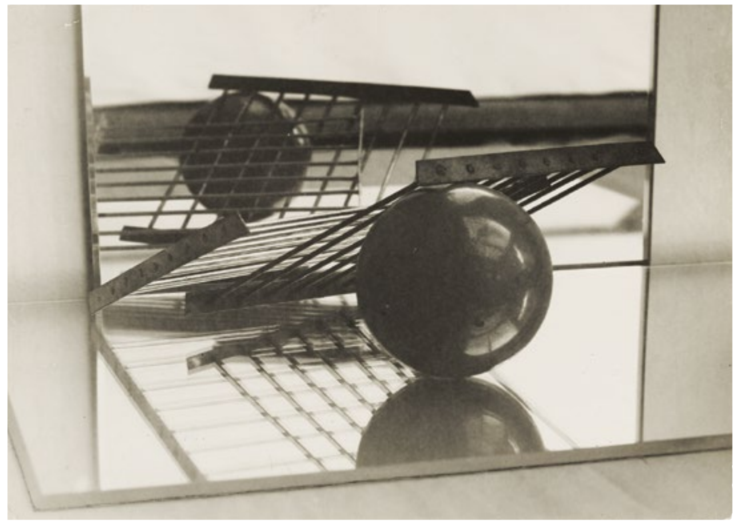


fig. 18 Florence Henri. *Composition No. 19*. 1928–30. Gelatin silver print, 10 5⁄16 × 14 3⁄8" (26.2 × 36.5 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Shirley C. Burden, by exchange. Cat. 99

excursions. The medium served their cause superbly, but they did not give it a voice.

Aside from the Surrealists, who understood the lyrical and metaphorical power of photography, the French did not comprehend that contemporary photography could be, in and of itself, an art. Though the medium had been invented in France and practiced brilliantly by a first generation of artists in the 1850s, on the upward slope of popularity thereafter it slid into a swale of low- or no-art, featuring routine carte-de-visite portraits, utilitarian documents, and Impressionist-inspired Pictorialist pastiches. In the country where painting and literature were the *Grande Tradition*, photography was most definitely *not* considered an art; it was a reproductive technique and a feather of pride in the nationalistic cap, of deep interest primarily to the French photographic industry, to amateurs, and to collectors of "old paper." When the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratives (International Exposition of the Decorative Arts) took place in 1925, the French government celebrated the centenary of photography's birth with a show of some 500 exhibits, but they were all historical or technical. No modern photographs were to be seen.[59]

Artists in photography had to make their way individually and through small venues. The relatively few exhibitions were often in bookstores and lasted only two weeks. There were a few more significant group showings, the first and most important of which was the *Premier Salon Indépendent de la Photographie* (*First Independent Salon of Photography*) in 1928, but it was on a theater stairway and, again, ran only for two weeks. There, the historic work of Nadar and Atget introduced some of the best talent in France: Kertész, Germaine Krull, and Man Ray, among others. Kertész, a Hungarian émigré whose early association with the MA group influenced his economical style, had further refined his technique upon arriving in Paris through his studies of Piet Mondrian's studio in 1926–27 (cats. 120, 123, 124). Krull, a German photographer influenced by her experiences with avant-garde film and photography in Holland and with the Constructivist journal *i10*, for which Moholy-Nagy was the film and photography editor, took bold, abstracting photographs of the Eiffel Tower (cat. 151) and other industrial forms, which were published in her book *Métal* (1928). Yet when her friend the painter Robert Delaunay, also a fan of the tower, advised her to show this dizzying avant-garde work to members of the Société Française de la Photographie, they only noted that she had not leveled her camera.[60] Also in the "Staircase Salon," as it was dubbed, were two Americans: Abbott, who at the time was a portraitist in the Man Ray mold (cat. 1), and Paul Outerbridge, a creator of formalist still lifes. The fashion photographer George Hoyningen-Huene, the portraitist Madame d'Ora, and Laure Albin-Guillot, a jack-of-all-trades professional representing the Société, filled out the show with handsome images that obliged modern taste. Like most French photographers, they were not avant-garde; they were not radically investigating or deconstructing their medium or their perceptions. From moribund pictorialism, utilitarianism, and *mondaine* good taste, only a handful escaped.

Florence Henri was one of them. A painter and student of Léger and Ozenfant, Henri attended the Bauhaus for a season and became close to both Moholy-Nagy and Lucia Moholy. Utilizing mirrors and windows and playing with positive and negative fields, she made photographs and photomontages that confound conventional vision, hypothesize new pictorial spaces, and continue even today to puzzle and captivate (fig. 18). Likewise Moï Wer. A painter from Lithuania who also studied at the Bauhaus and was influenced by Moholy, he took up photography when he moved to Paris in 1928. His *Paris* (1931; fig. 19), one of the most radical volumes of the period, is a fast-paced sequence of disorienting montages and multinegative sandwiches that resembles the cinematic intercutting of Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera*.[61]

If the new photography failed to find a champion in France on par with Moholy-Nagy, it fared better in the French press, where novelty and surprise spurred newsstand sales and which, in the absence of significant collection activity either on behalf of public institutions or privately, has served to help chart the course of the new photography's progress in France. From the organs of Surrealism to cultural journals such as *L'Art Vivant*, many French periodicals printed photographs among their illustrations, but for the weekly news magazine *VU*, launched in 1928 by former art director of French *Vogue* Lucien Vogel, himself a photographer, photography was the principal resource and inspiration. Like the German illustrated newspapers, *VU* was a grand fusion of the dynamics of Moholy's vision and a kaleidoscope of vignetted and overlapping images from photo agencies and such émigrés as Kertész, Krull, and Lotar, the whole wrapped in brilliant photomontage covers, but it did not enshrine photography as an autonomous art.[62] However, in response to the overwhelming swell of enthusiasm for the New Vision evinced by *Fifo*, *Fotografie der Gegenwart*, and their international roster of photographers (including French), Vogel suggested to Charles Peignot, the suave publisher of *Arts et Métiers Graphiques* and director of Deberny & Peignot's type foundry and advertising agency, that a photography annual on the model of *Das Lichtbild* in Germany might be worth a gamble.[63] The first volume of *Photographie* in 1930 was effectively a beautifully printed conspectus of Moholy's "Room One" at *Fifo*, with French practitioners privileged and the historical section omitted. A whole page was devoted to each photograph. Opening with an ensemble of microphotographs, nebulae, X-rays, and Burchartz's *Lotte (Eye)* (cat. 50), the poster image for *Fotografie der Gegenwart*, the volume proceeded to showcase the top Parisian contingent—Henri, Man Ray, Tabard, and Lotar—followed by Herbert Bayer and Moholy-Nagy in a full demonstration of the hallmarks of the New Vision: technical plasticity, smart framing, disorienting spatial orientation, and mechanical analogy. After an injection of aerial shots and close-ups of insects came a sequence of strong work by Kertész, Krull, Parry, and René Zuber, and closing the book was a suite of French advertising and fashion work. While this initial number was a high-water mark for assemblies of progressive photography in France, the avant-garde elements in subsequent annuals of *Photographie* gradually fell away as *Fifo* receded and French modernism became increasingly stylized and compliant, according to Peignot's dictum, "modern but not *too* modern."[64]

If, as was trumpeted, photography was à la mode in Paris in 1936, this was due to the largest exhibition of photographs during the interwar era in France.[65] More than a thousand works were displayed at the Louvre under the patronage of the Ministère des Beaux-Arts. The Exposition Internationale de la Photographie Contemporaine (International Exposition of Contemporary Photography) demonstrated an advance over the 1925 exhibition: following the recent pattern of German exhibitions, scientific photographs were now included, plus a large, heteroclite assortment of contemporary work.[66] The international representation was patchy: Steichen and Man Ray got good billing, but no Russians were shown and few Germans; missing were Moholy, Burchartz, Lissitzky, Rodchenko, and scores of others who had advanced the art so strikingly in Germany and Russia in the 1920s but now were unavailable due to the politics of the day. Although much of the French contingent was lackluster and forgettable, there were some progressive talents, notably Henri, Kertész, Lotar, and Tabard. And yet, for all their momentary glory at being displayed at the Louvre, these photographers were never truly embraced as veritable artists in their own right by the French.[67] Editors and designers might value their images, but the collectors of photography, of whom there were several, were gathering nineteenth-century scenes and portraits of celebrities, not modern photographs. Museums made no gesture to acquire this work, and if there were private collectors of the avant-garde, they remain elusive.[68]

fig. 19 Spread from Moï Ver. *Paris: 80 Photographies* (*Paris: 80 Photographs*). Paris: J. Walter, 1931. The Museum of Modern Art, New York

Because photography was only liminally and conditionally accepted by French society, an antiquarian chauvinism long persisted. When the Bibliothèque Nationale mounted *Un Siècle de Vision Nouvelle* (*A Century of New Vision*) in 1955, it aimed to correct the overwhelmingly technocentric histories of the past and to highlight photography's links to painting instead. (The "new vision" titularly advertised referred to the effect of photography on nineteenth-century French painterly perceptions.) Of contemporary photography, there was only a coda: two images by Man Ray, and one each by Cartier-Bresson and "Weston."[69]

THE NEW VISION IN AMERICA

Because photography was reproduced so widely by the mid-1920s, the look of the New Vision spread easily, filtering into the United States around 1930 through magazines such as *Vanity Fair*, *Das Lichtbild*, and *Photographie* and the volumes by Moholy, Roh, Gräff, Blossfeldt, and Renger. The New Vision also stowed away in the mind's eye of artists such as Berenice Abbott and Lee Miller (cats. 186, 187), both returning from Paris, and Paul Grotz, the German roommate of Walker Evans, who brought with him one of the new little 35mm Leica cameras that so neatly facilitated shots from unusual perspectives. Many others emigrated during the next few years, fleeing the deteriorating situation in Europe, including Kertész (cats. 118–37), John Gutmann (cats. 80–82), and Martin Munkácsi (cat. 199).

Also interfacing with the avant-garde European tendencies were two groups of American photographers: those in the Stieglitz circle and graduates of the Clarence White School. In the years leading up to World War I, the White school trained amateurs in Pictorialist craft and Cubist-derived abstraction. Students such as John Heins (cats. 97, 98), Bernard Horne (cats. 106–9), and Walter Latimer (cat. 159) learned how to create simplified and coherently organized still-life compositions, which they usually printed in platinum. After World War I, the school joined other organizations, among them the Art Director's Club and the American Institute of Graphic Arts, to form The Art Center, which trained and exhibited professional artists such as Margaret Bourke-White (cats. 37, 38), Anton Bruehl (cats. 45–47), Outerbridge, and Steiner. Their polished technique and clear-sighted focus on objects directly fed the demands of advertisers and others for limpid illustration. When Steichen selected a contingent of American works to be shown at *Fifo*, he included examples by Breuhl, Outerbridge, Steiner, and also Sheeler (cats. 277, 278).

Sheeler had roots in the group assembled around Stieglitz, the major domo of artistic photography in America since the 1890s. Stieglitz's gradual conversion from soft-focus painterly effects to sharply focused photographic vision, accompanied by his migration from platinum (cat. 285) and palladium papers (cat. 286) to the cooler tones and stronger contrasts of gaslight papers (cat. 287), occurred just after World War I. The "straight approach," as he termed it, was as deeply imbedded in the craft of the print as had been the earlier artistic approach, but it seemed more transparent because the obfuscating mists of painterly atmospherics and velvety matte papers had been swept aside. Similarly, he updated his subjects: instead of symbolic homilies on "the hand of man" and other themes, he vested his sentiment in starker confrontations with objective facts—with a face, a poplar tree, or a skyscraper, elegantly seen. This more direct approach to "the thing itself" became a central tenet of American modernism, which Stieglitz and his younger colleague Paul Strand advocated almost as a religion, making converts out of photographers such as Weston and Adams. Admittance was only for the few, however, because if one served commercial interests—exemplified by Steichen, who worked for Condé Nast's publications, but a necessity as well for many other photographers—one was serving not "Art" but commerce. This credo allowed Stieglitz to create great art, but it also isolated him; he and Strand famously refused to lend their fine prints to group exhibitions, which excluded them from much, including *Fifo*, and ultimately embittered them.

The representation of the European avant-garde in America was at its height in 1931–32, a delayed echo of *Fifo* and, closer to home, of Lincoln Kirstein's small but pioneering exhibition *Photography at the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art* (1930), which had included mostly prints by American photographers but also books and magazines with reproductions of photographs by Moholy, Man Ray, Hoyningen-Huene, and Cecil Beaton. The spike in interest was also spurred by the enthusiastic advocacy of Levy, another Harvard alum, who had traveled to Paris with Duchamp in 1927 and lived between Paris and New York for the next three years. With prints he had gathered from most of the major avant-garde talents in Paris and Berlin, he had opened his gallery for photography in New York in the fall of 1931. Prior to that, the exhibition *Foreign Advertising and Industrial Photographs* was seen at The Art Center featuring work by Henri, Krull, Moholy, Vertov, and Beaton, and there was even a solo show of Moholy's work (conveyed from Berlin by the filmmaker Harry Alan Potamkin) at the Delphic Gallery in October. In 1932, Levy's *Modern European Photography* opened, followed by his exhibition of Man Ray's photographs.[70] In addition, there were two larger group exhibitions borrowed primarily from Levy: *Modern Photography at Home and Abroad* at the Albright Gallery in Buffalo, New York, and *International Photography* at the Brooklyn Museum. Reviewers generally found the Europeans odd, and American efforts were deemed largely superior; one even maintained that New Objectivity was a transplant of American realism to Germany.[71]

Despite this spate of exhibitions and Levy's best efforts, there was insufficient interest in collecting photography to keep his gallery afloat. Unlike the events in Germany culminating with *Fifo*, the avant-garde European vision was of serious interest only to the tiniest circle in the United States. When Beaumont Newhall, soon to become director of MoMA's new department of photography, looked for acquisitions for the museum's collection in 1939, he found that the entire 1931 exhibition of Moholy-Nagy's photographs at the Delphic Gallery was still there in a box gathering dust. (He wisely acquired the lot.)[72] Certainly the worsening economic situation following the stock-market crash in 1929 was partly to blame for the poor reception of European photography, yet its rejection was also of a piece with the thin appreciation that German Expressionism and the Russian avant-garde had achieved in New York during the same period. Neither art gained much of a toehold on the prevailing conservative American taste, for which French art was still the preferred standard.[73]

Another reason the New Vision did not catch fire in New York resulted from the successful propagation of the indigenous modernism that had developed under Stieglitz's tutelage and was popularly conveyed by The Art Center. In addition, another strain was growing in the so-called documentary style of Walker Evans, rooted in the nineteenth-century American tradition of straightforward reporting that stretched back to Mathew Brady. These tendencies not only had all the advantages of being homegrown and available, but by the early 1930s, they all were practiced with the clarity and incisiveness of the New Objectivity without the increasingly negative political overtones of imports from Germany. The urges that shaped the novel viewpoints and recombinant techniques of the Russian and German avant-garde were lost on the Americans. Weston, upon seeing reproductions of Moholy's work, wrote in his daybook a single question: "why?"[74]

The ever more fraught political situation in Europe provoked a reverberating if unavoidable lapse in the most important American photographic exhibition of the period, *Photography 1839–1937* (1937), which filled The Museum of Modern Art from top to bottom and garnered large audiences and much positive press. Newhall, a photographer himself and, at the time, the Museum's librarian, served as its curator. When he went to Europe to gather photographs in 1936, he did not visit Russia or Germany, where the progressive vision of the avant-garde had been replaced by retrograde socialist realism; he focused on England and France instead. In London he met Moholy-Nagy, who had emigrated from Berlin and would shortly arrive in Chicago; Moholy loaned his photographs but evidently did not inform Newhall of the enormity of the avant-garde movement or its range, the fruits of which were inaccessible to him in any case. Upon arriving in Paris, Newhall essentially walked into a vast array of contemporary trends that seemed as if laid out for him at the Exposition Internationale de la Photographie Contemporaine, that patchwork survey of scientific images, photographic illustration, and photo-club conventions discussed prior. What must have seemed like good fortune was, in fact, bad luck. The cultural climate in France was extremely polarized, and Newhall had stepped into a largely conservative encampment from which he, with the assistance of André Lejard, an editor at *Arts et Metiers Graphiques*, picked those to exhibit at MoMA.

Given that the Russian and German avant-gardes were largely missing from the French show and the critical, formative shape of their originating contribution was so atomized and dilute as to be virtually invisible, Newhall could not conceivably have reconstructed it. Thus, it comes as little surprise that he misconstrued the Stieglitz–Ansel Adams axis as the origin and main thrust of modern photography. Of the Russian and German avant-garde, Newhall said nothing, and to illustrate this chapter of the history he had but few examples: Moholy's prints, a few by Lux Feininger, and some Christian Schad photograms. The rest of the European contemporary selection was heavily loaded with photographers living in London, Paris, or the United States, some notable, such as Kertész, Henri, and Brassaï, but many not.

Had the 1937 exhibition come and gone, the lacunae and glosses would not have mattered much, but the omission of the Russians as well as of most of the German avant-garde was handed down for decades through the exhibition's catalogue, which was channeled into the five editions of the perennially popular textbook, *The History of Photography*. Newhall's book mapped that history with such clarity and concision that it covered the territory like mental wallpaper or, as Douglas Nickel neatly described its pervasive quality, "It became something like the field's subconscious, so invariably did its ideas, directly or otherwise, remain before us."[75] Moreover, as the success of the show naturally led to the founding of MoMA's photography department in 1940, its collections would reflect Newhall's original bias for years to come.

Which was odd, because the museum's first three departments—painting and sculpture, architecture, and film—had all been rooted in founding director Alfred Barr's appreciation of Russian and European avant-garde and modernist art. Barr's sojourns in Russia and Germany and his visit to the Bauhaus informed three major exhibitions that reflected his ecumenical foundational aesthetic—*Cubism and Abstract Art* (1936), *Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism* (1936–37), and *Bauhaus (1919–1928)* (1938)—but neither Barr, whose knowledge of photography hailed from his graduate-school days, when he often dipped into Stieglitz's gallery, nor Newhall questioned Stieglitz's hegemony in the field. By 1936, Stieglitz had been the authoritative voice of progressive photography on this side of the Atlantic for more than forty years. And as neither Barr nor Newhall had witnessed the remarkable efflorescence of photography in Germany, and Levy's offerings had not won over American collectors and museums, there was little reason to think that Stieglitz's primacy was not the whole story.

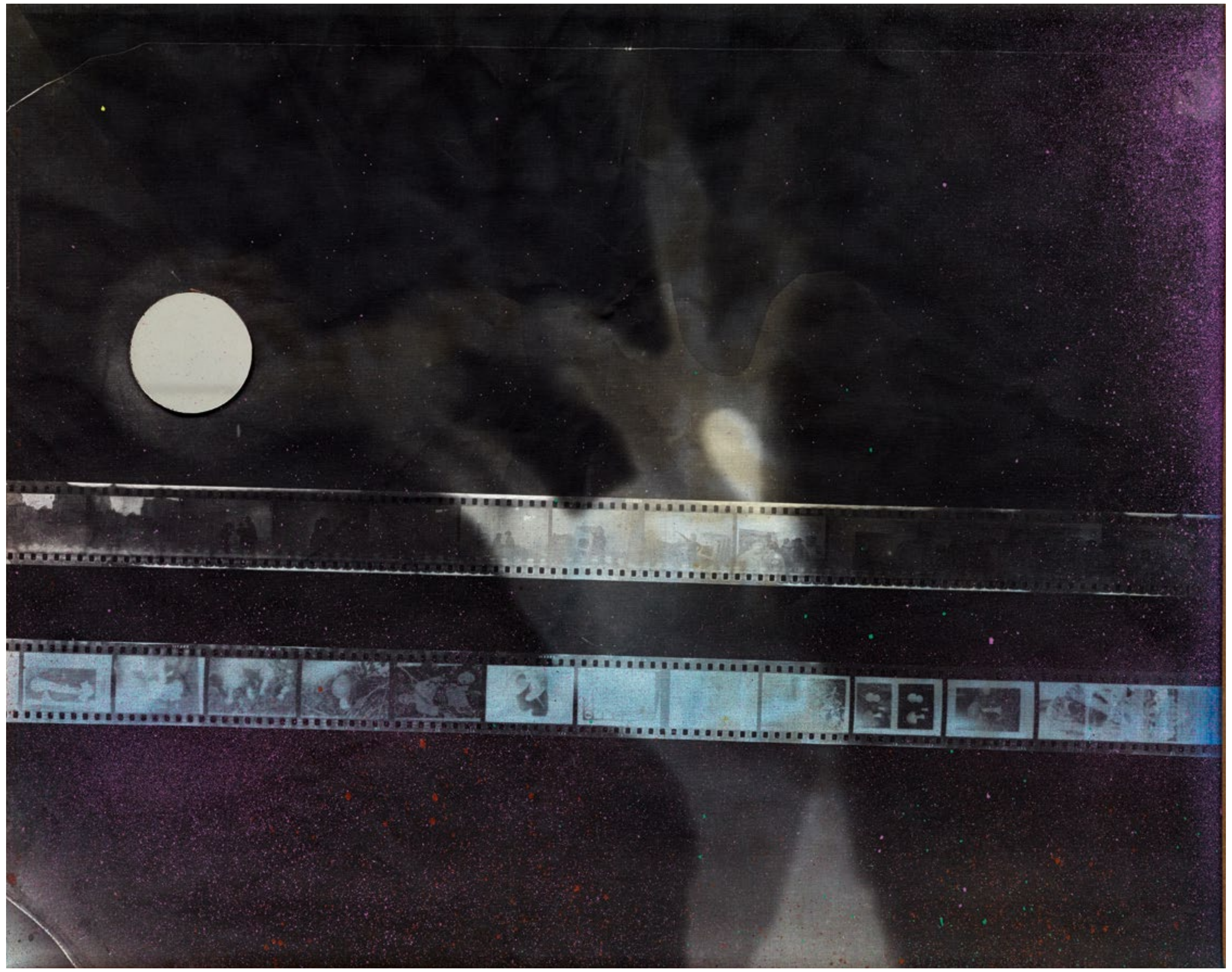


fig. 20 Sigmar Polke. *Untitled*. 1975. Gelatin silver print with mirror, 15¾ × 19 ¹¹⁄₁₆" (40 × 50 cm). Collection Lergon, Rheinbach

We'll have to go back and rewrite the history of photography. It's that simple.

—Van Deren Coke, 1981[76]

In 1965, a young art-lover and poet named Timothy Baum wanted an image for the cover of the little Dada magazine he episodically published in New York, so he looked up Man Ray's address in the French phonebook and wrote to him.[77] Although the seventy-five-year-old artist was still represented as a painter by galleries in New York and in Los Angeles, where he had lived during the 1940s, his photographs, like those of many who had achieved some degree of prominence in Europe prior to World War II, had fallen into a kind of semiobscurity. He was surprised that a young person should be interested. Three years later, in "Mai '68," with the tear gas scarcely cleared from the students' barricades, he was again surprised, this time by Arnold Crane, a brash young collector from Chicago fresh from the auction of Tzara's collection, knocking on his door. Fueled by their passion for Dada and for photography, Baum and Crane had independently become enchanted by Man Ray's early photographs: while Crane latched onto dozens of prints and soon came back for more, Baum worked to arrange the first exhibition of the photographs in New York since Levy's show in 1932. He was assisted by Harry H. Lunn, a deep-voiced lion of a man with an expansive spirit and good business sense, a former CIA agent in Paris and currently a print dealer in Washington, D.C. He had just decided to move into photography, a field that had begun to blip across the radar screens of art-world insiders. Having discovered the landscapes of Ansel Adams, which he extolled as "the greatest thing since Moses and the Tabernacle," Lunn saw Adams's prints fly off the walls when he exhibited them in January 1971.[78] It would take a little more time for Man Ray's photograms and Parisian portraits to be so eagerly received. When Baum and Lunn exhibited them at the Noah Goldowsky gallery in New York in late 1970, only two sold; yet by the end of the decade, Man Ray had become an international art star.[79]

The rediscovery of European avant-garde photography took place within the context of a much broader embrace of photography beginning around 1970, when galleries devoted exclusively to the medium took root and actually prospered, and museums as well as private collectors became committed. The first photography gallery that would thrive for more than a few years, The Witkin Gallery, opened in New York in 1970, followed by Light Gallery, which remains strong today as Pace/MacGill. Philippe Garner inaugurated regular photography sales at Sotheby's London in 1971; Christie's followed suit the next year. In Cologne, Jürgen and Ann Wilde launched the first German gallery exclusively for photographs in 1972, while Rudolph Kicken established another two years later in Aachen, now a thriving concern in Berlin. The Galerie des Quatre Mouvements launched in Paris with a show of Rayographs in 1972, but excepting Man Ray, modern French photographs were more likely to be found by the occasional luck of the flaneur in the bookstalls along the Seine or in the print shops of Saint-Germain.[80]

To the public at large, the new interest in photography was a "boom" that came out of the blue. The medium suddenly seemed chic, and sales became conspicuous as rising prices flushed masterpieces out of hiding: nineteenth-century caches buried in British libraries and forgotten in French attics appeared on the auction block, and authorities in London and Paris had to forestall exports to save what were now being hailed as national treasures. Such events made news, but in the United States, the turn to photography was not actually new; it had been well above the visible threshold for more than a decade in New York. Audiences had been primed by the popular picture magazines and the work of a number of ardent champions of the medium, chief among them Edward Steichen, who as director of the photography department at The Museum of Modern Art from 1947 to 1962 brought large swaths of the medium under art's tent and kept it in the public eye. Among the scores of exhibitions of contemporary photography that he mounted and circulated, his grand and hugely popular exhibition *The Family of Man* (1955) stands out. Steichen's successor at MoMA was no less influential. Assuming the reins in 1962, John Szarkowski immediately set about explaining how photographs work as no one had since Moholy. In *The Photographer's Eye* (1964), he deconstructed subject, frame, time, and viewpoint to show how the camera inscribes the world and how photographs capture meanings. He gathered up major talents—Cartier-Bresson, Brandt, Brassaï, Kertész, Dorothea Lange, Aaron Siskind, and Walker Evans—and gave them each winning solo exhibitions, and he championed the work of emerging photographers, among them Diane Arbus, Lee Friedlander, and Garry Winogrand in the watershed exhibition *New Documents* (1967). A light-handed but deeply perceptive lay philosopher whose subject was seeing, Szarkowski taught the public in succinct and eloquent prose the value of photographic vision. Even though he himself evinced little enthusiasm for the work of the European avant-garde, the force of his energy and intellect rallied a discerning public to attention and deeply connected with a new generation.[81]

Interest in photography during the late 1960s married into the ethos of the youth of that moment. Like the generation that had emerged from the chaos of World War I, this postwar generation saw their world contaminated by the structures of the previous generation's beliefs, and they revolted against militarism, racism, misogyny, materialism, and corporatism to pursue alternative interpretations of the American Dream. In art schools and studios, they stopped painting and took up photography instead; they mixed it with printmaking and sculpture and used it in site installations, process art, and conceptual art. Easy, cheap, portable, personal, and minimal, photography looked like the raw material of the world, anonymously conveyed. Neither hidebound nor high art, it seemed blissfully free of restrictions: photography could be anything one wished. Just as the artists of the 1920s had sought fresh freedoms through Dada, Constructivism, and photography, the artistic insurgents of the 1960s mined photography for its mesh with the mess of the actual world, its direct reflection of popular life. Not only did artists such as Andy Warhol, Sigmar Polke (fig. 20), and Robert Rauschenberg embrace the photographic image, photography became a kind of lingua franca tool of various post-Pop trends for many artists, such as Vito Acconci, Jan Dibbets, VALIE EXPORT, Giuseppe Penone, Bruce Nauman, and Robert Smithson.

The boom in photography was abetted by activities at MoMA that were timely and pertinent. In 1970–71 alone, Szarkowski and his able lieutenants organized exhibitions that addressed many of the most provocative issues of the day: there were photographs of political protests, of women, of Harlem, and of artists as adversaries; there were photographs made into sculpture, snapshots from automatic cameras of bank robberies, and portraits of prostitutes. Work from the interwar years also began to creep into the mix. In 1969, the Museum showed some photographs given to it by Sander, and 1970 saw the first American exhibition of Rodchenko. There was also a large show of Evans, as well as *Photo-Eye of the Twenties*, a major loan exhibition organized by guest curator Beaumont Newhall. Although Newhall included a slide projection of pages from *Malerei, Fotografie, Film*, *Foto-Auge*, and other seminal European books, the bias was decidedly American: most of the avant-garde photographers from Germany and Russia were absent, and Newhall maintained in the accompanying pamphlet that Stieglitz, Coburn, Strand, and Weston had already established the main directions of photography in the 1920s when the decade opened.[82]

The swelling number of photography exhibitions coupled with the press reports of the increasingly hot auctions of the 1970s made the excitement surrounding photography beckon like a sweet scent from the oven.[83] Catching a whiff, new collectors followed pioneers Crane, George Rinhart, and Sam Wagstaff to the auctions and to the galleries, antique emporiums, flea markets, and bins of used bookstores to burrow for undiscovered treasures.[84] To be involved with photography in the early 1970s was to be part of an adventure—a hunt, a rescue, and a gamble. More than any other medium, photography was pushing the boundaries and expanding consciousness, disclosing surprising new perspectives on the overlooked present while at the same time opening doors backward into the sources of the modern world. It was unprecedented that a medium so quotidian, with a past so casually discarded, should come so far and rise so fast.

fig. 21 Robert Smithson. *Island of Coal*. 1969. Gelatin silver print, 7⅛ × 9⅜" (18.1 × 23.8 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Gift, through Joyce and Robert Menschel. Courtesy James Cohan Gallery, New York

fig. 22 Bruce Nauman. *Finger Touch with Mirrors*. 1966–67. Chromogenic print, 1970, 19⅞ × 23⅝" (50.5 × 60 cm). From the suite *Eleven Color Photographs*. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Purchase

In Germany something similar was taking place, also preceded by spadework in the 1950s and 1960s. To counteract the deadening effects of the "Nazification" of photography, which had reduced the medium to propaganda and mug shots, Otto Steinert, a professor in Saarbrücken, had taught modes of personal experimentation sourced in the New Vision. Calling his movement *Subjective Fotografie* (Subjective photography), he hosted three large international exhibitions in the 1950s that kept the flame of 1920s photography alive before moving to the Folkwang school in Essen, where he continued well into the 1970s.[85] Steinert gathered exemplary photographs by earlier photographers, including Moholy, Henri, and Biermann, to use as teaching aids, which became the bases for the collections at the Saarland and Folkwang museums. Another advocate for modern photography was Fritz Gruber, who from 1950 on organized the photographic exhibitions at Photokina, the important biannual photo-industry expositions in Cologne that brought many photographers to wider European attention, notably Sander, Irving Penn, and Man Ray. Not only ringmaster of the fairs but also secretary of the society of German photographers, Gruber was a highly visible rainmaker on the European scene.

Consequently, when Juliane Roh wished to liquidate her late husband's garage full of prewar German photography in 1968, she naturally offered the hoard to Gruber; but as neither the fair nor the society were then collecting institutions, he had to turn it down. Sensing the immense historic and artistic value of the collection, however, Gruber's assistant Jürgen Wilde was unable to let the opportunity go. Leaving aside the eleven prints by Moholy-Nagy, which were too costly and were acquired by Hans Klihm for his Munich gallery, and Roh's own images, Wilde and his wife, Ann, acquired a stash of nineteenth-century images, prints by Biermann, Renger, Piet Zwart, the contents of *Foto-Auge*, and much more.

The recovery of Roh's collection was a signal event in the reassembly of European avant-garde photography, a piecemeal process of rediscovery that was typically governed by serendipity. In 1965, for example, another young art lover named Egidio Marzona went to Hannover for the vernissage of *Marcel Duchamp, Même* at the Kestner Society. His friendly chat with the uniformed ticket-taker at the door turned out to be as critical a juncture for him as meeting the uber-artist of the century: the doorman was none other than the photographer Otto Umbehr, famous before the war as the Bauhaus artist and Berlin reporter "Umbo." Marzona went on to work closely with Konrad Fischer, who was fighting German provincialism in the late 1960s by featuring the work of Carl Andre, Richard Long, Mario Merz, Bernd and Hilla Becher, and other Arte Povera, Conceptual, Minimal, and Earth artists in his Düsseldorf gallery. By the early 1970s, Marzona would open his own gallery for this art, but his curiosity had meanwhile circled back to Umbo, who introduced Marzona to his fellow "*Bauhausler*" Citroen, who in turn introduced him to Breslauer, and so on. The relay wended from photographer to photographer, men and women who had been integral to the flourishing of the New Vision but were now largely forgotten. Marzona gathered up their photographs and began publishing *Retrospektive Fotografie*, a series of books that, together with his *Bauhaus Fotografie* (1982), went far toward recovering their legacies.[86]

Having matured with the art of the 1960s, Marzona came to photography through the portals of the contemporary art of that moment, through movements that were to some degree protests against the commodification of painting and the rule of the art gallery. Instead of saleable canvases, artists sought liberty to explore, and they privileged experimentation and their own process and experience, favoring simple materials, the earth, human scale, and provisional truths. For antecedents, many of them looked to the irreverence of Duchamp and Man Ray, and to the conceptual purity and minimalism of de Stijl and Suprematism, where the innovation or rigor of the principal idea trumped the, for them, discredited skills of the art academy. Photography entered into many of their works as simple, straightforward documents—of an earthwork, for example, such as Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* (1970), or as a sketch of an idea, such as the mundane shot of a manicured park that inspired Smithson to re-imagine its picturesque vista with a large dump of coal blocking the view (fig. 21). Photographs were also virtually the only records of evanescent art forms, whether public happenings and performances, such as Yves Klein's *Leap into the Void* (1960), or private, such as Nauman's one-act conceptual plays (fig. 22).

Emerging at this time, Bernd and Hilla Becher's clear, unblinking black-and-white photographs of structures from the first industrial age seemed similar to such documents in their objective, declarative posture toward

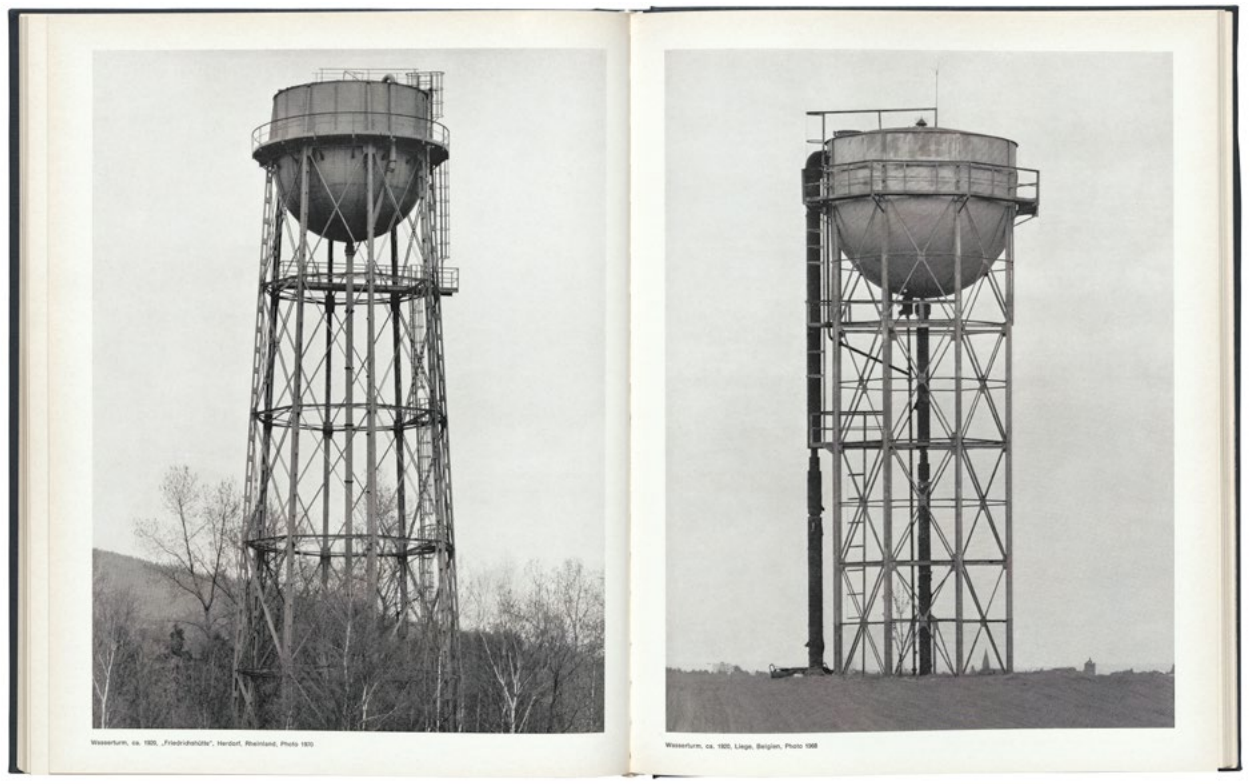


fig. 23 Spread from Bernd and Hilla Becher. *Anonyme Skulpturen. Eine Typologie Technischer Bauten* (*Anonymous Sculptures. A Typology of Technical Constructions*). Düsseldorf: Art-Press-Verlag, 1970. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Left: *Wasserturm, c. 1920, "Friedrichschütte," Herdorf, Rheinland.* 1970. Right: *Wasserturm, c. 1920, Liege, Belgium.* 1968

fig. 24 Page from Karl Blossfeldt. *Urformen der Kunst* (*Art Forms in Nature*). Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1928. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Ford Motor Company Collection. Gift of Ford Motor Company and John C. Waddell. Left: *Papaver (Poppy. Enlarged 6 Times)* (*Papaver [Mohnkapseln. 6fache Vergrößerung]*). Right: *Papaver* (*Poppy. Enlarged 10 Times*) (*Papaver [Mohnkapseln. 10fache Vergrößerung]*)

their subject. Furthermore, their comparative method, resulting in serial groups or typologies (fig. 23), seemed to parallel the process of earlier photographers with similar cataloguing missions, notably Sander, Evans, and Blossfeldt (fig. 24). By the synchronicity of their emergence with the reemergence of New Objectivity photographers, the Bechers' works became yoked to theirs, and both became pillars of artistic photography in the 1970s.[87]

Sander's work, especially, made that bridge. Interestingly, Sander's photographs were not among those that surfaced through Marzona's research nor via the Wildes' excavations of Roh's collection because Sander had not been at the Bauhaus nor in *Foto-Auge*. As a professional portraitist he had worked in relative obscurity until the publication of his book *Antlitz der Zeit* (*Face of Our Time*) in November 1929—too late for his inclusion in *Fifo*.[88] The book caught the eyes of two of photography's sharpest critics, Walter Benjamin and Walker Evans, who simultaneously saw that Sander's penetrating portraits and typological method constituted a trenchant analysis of contemporary German society.[89] The implicit social critique caught the attention of the Nazi censors, too; in 1936 they destroyed the printing plates and forbade distribution of the book. Sander moved his studio from Cologne to the little village of Kuchausen and quietly pressed on making portraits, not only of those sitting pretty—Nazi officials and soldiers—but also of persecuted Jewish neighbors in need of passport photographs.[90]

In 1951, the seventy-five-year-old photographer chanced to meet a former classmate of his son Gunther on the street in Cologne: Fritz Gruber. Gruber rescued Sander from near oblivion with an exhibition that year, and when Steichen toured Europe scouting for *The Family of Man* in 1952, Gruber took him to meet the aging photographer, who gave Steichen more than three dozen prints for MoMA. A further exhibition at the German Photographic Society in Cologne in 1959 brought Sander's project to the attention of Manuel Gasser, editor of *DU*, a handsome oversize Swiss magazine. He gave the November issue over to Sander's powerful portraits, each printed full-page—a stunning salvo that led to the publication of a book and broadcast Sander's genius to a much wider public, which notably included the photographers Diane Arbus and Hilla Becher.[91] A decade later, in January 1972, Jürgen Wilde contacted Gunther Sander to arrange an exhibition of his late father's work timed to overlap with Documenta 5, the international art fair in Kassel. The exhibition poster was spied by Antonio Homem, who recalled the reverberating impact of the special number of *DU* he had seen when studying in Switzerland years earlier, and he accordingly made his way to the Wildes' gallery with his colleague Ileana Sonnabend. Before the end of the year, forty prints by Gunther from his father's negatives and forty of Sander's original prints were displayed in New York at Sonnabend's prestigious gallery in an exhibition the *New York Times* hailed as "at once extremely austere and almost unbearably penetrating."[92]

If happenstance was handmaiden to the reemergence of Sander and his contemporaries, what gave them lasting preeminence was the undeniable quality of their work in the eyes of an audience that had become accustomed to contemporary art practices and well versed in the art of photographic seeing. By the 1970s the public was wholly prepared to receive their rebirth. The rediscovery of Levy's collection is a case in point. When Levy began to compose his memoirs, in the early 1970s, he exhumed his boxes of prints and papers from his Connecticut barn. Frank Kolodny, one of the first American collectors specifically interested in interwar-era photography, who had earned his bona fides by purchasing the only two Man Ray images sold from Baum's exhibit in 1970, had continued his sharp-eyed sleuthing, and he recognized the retiring, unsung Levy as the original ambassador of European photography to the United States. He ferreted out the elderly former gallerist in mid-memoire and convinced him to sell a dozen or more magnificent specimens, which disposed Levy to sell the rest. With the help of Levy's former associate Lotte Drew-Baer, who was a friend of print curator Harold Joachim at The Art Institute of Chicago, roughly a thousand of Levy's photographs were shipped to Chicago in 1974. The project of assessing the collection fell to David Travis, who was stunned by the jaw-dropping contents of Levy's boxes. From the splendid concentration of pictures acquired by the museum, Travis produced an exhibition that was the first to offer a conspectus of avant-garde European photography since *Fifo*, and the first book on the subject in English.[93]

The stock from the Levy Gallery was a singular cache. The prints were old yet pristine and were quite clearly different from prints made in the 1970s. Those from forty years before had been created by sensibilities that had been born, in fact, even before World War I and crafted on papers with complexions still tinged by tastes from that bygone era, while the new prints, even though issuing from the same photographer, had been made by a vision inescapably if subtly altered by war or displacement and shaped to enter an urban world blaring with the bold graphics of urgent media. Comparing, for example, prints Kertész made in Paris in his hotel darkroom on small *carte postale* stock, with its matte surface and slightly soft resolution (cats. 119, 120, 124, 126–31, 133–35), with the larger, more recent prints he produced in America, using modern darkroom equipment on papers with stronger contrasts and harder surfaces, made curators and collectors think twice. The Levy prints seemed to carry the vitality and tone of the artists' original intentions straight from their hands into the light of the present, an experience that was palpably intimate, authentic, and, to cognoscenti, very moving. Borrowing a term from oenophiles, photography dealers began to call these early prints "vintage," and the preference for them, which had been building through the decade, shifted into high gear.

If the early 1970s still rang with the revolutionary sentiments of the 1960s, when engagement with photography was something of a crusade for the new, unfettered, and unconventional, the ensuing decade witnessed the enormous growth and consolidation of the field, which encouraged a broader view as well as a retrospective look at the medium's historical trajectory, an evolution reflected in photography's representation at the Documenta art fairs. No photographs were displayed at the fairs of the 1950s or 1960s. In 1972, a sprinkling of works employed photography, such as those by the Bechers, Christian Boltanski, and Ed Ruscha. Yet by 1977, everything had changed. Documenta 6, known as "the media Documenta," put the whole 150-year span of photography on display, from W. H. Fox Talbot through Stieglitz, Man Ray, and Vertov, to Arbus, Stephen Shore, and Gilbert and George. Similarly, if one compares the availability of photographs in New York in the 1960s and early 1970s with the end of the decade, the same swift shift is seen. Earlier, photography only turned up sporadically in a few enlightened galleries, such as Robert Schoelkopf's, where Evans had several solo shows starting in the 1960s, or it was shown together with selections of American paintings and graphics in the galleries of Virginia Zabriskie and Joan Washburn. But as the decade sped on, photography was seen more frequently: at the new International Center for Photography in New York; in galleries formerly reserved for painting, such as the large, internationally renowned Marlborough Gallery on 57th Street; and in offshoots of established painting galleries, such as Castelli Graphics or Marcuse Pfeiffer. And like mushrooms springing up after the rain, new galleries dedicated solely to photography began to pop up across the United States, many founded with little more than youthful passion, the rising prices as wind in their sails, and some helpful consignments from Harry Lunn.[94]

The transatlantic trade in interwar material that would flourish in the 1980s began to take shape in the late 1970s: Gerd Sander, grandson of August, bought photographs in Europe and sold them through his galleries in Washington and New York. In 1977, Zabriskie opened a second gallery in Paris, this one exclusively for photography, and she ferried images by French artists to the United States and vice versa. Gene Prakapas had an uncanny ability to delve marvels out of hiding on his trips to Europe, treasures that were soon snapped up by savvy American collectors. Lunn, the genial godfather of transatlantic photographic commerce, helped encourage a large group of dealers, curators, and collectors to gather in 1978 at the symposium "Photographic Collecting in the United States, Canada, and Europe," organized by the International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York. An ambitious event that brought together many who had previously not met (including Thomas Walther, recently arrived in the United States), it imparted a new sense of community to the field and spurred the development of the Association of International Photography Art Dealers, which sponsors annual photographic art fairs that remain vital to the field today.

In Germany, the birthplace of the New Vision, those museums with collections began to mine them and those without collections began to form them.[95] The Kunstbibliothek resurrected the photographs collected by Curt Glaser and showed them for the first time in 1971 (frontis).[96] Steinert's successor, Ute Eskildsen, consolidated the collections of the Museum Folkwang and assembled New Objectivity photographs for *Neue Sachlichkeit and German Realism of the Twenties*, a major British Arts Council exhibition in 1978.[97] Simultaneously Emilio Bertonati, whose Galeria del Levante in Munich and Milan specialized in the recovery of the European avant-garde, mounted an eye-opening exhibition in Munich, *Das experimentelle Photo in Deutschland: 1918–1940* (*Experimental German Photography: 1918–1940*).[98] With a long reach and a diplomatic pass that permitted easy travel to East Germany, Bertonati was able to collect prints from many photographers who had not had shown their work in Germany in decades, including Finsler, Haussmann, Lissitzky (fig. 25), Oscar Nerlinger, Grete Stern, and Umbo.[99] Ute Eskildsen culminated her excavation of the period with a fiftieth-anniversary re-creation of *Fifo* in 1979, an exhibition that effectively restored this extraordinary mirror of Weimar culture to German consciousness.[100]

In Paris, too, photography advanced in the 1970s. By the end of the decade there were several galleries devoted to the medium, among them Alain Paviot, Zabriskie, and La Remise du Parc, and when the new Musée National d'Art Moderne opened at the Centre Pompidou in 1977, it put modern art, including photography, on a newly visible footing in France. Although initially possessing only Brancusi's archive of photographs, bequeathed to the state in 1956, and two other photographs (Man Ray's *Woman* [1920] and Maar's *Le Simulateur* [1936]), the museum's collection grew quickly and impressively to include portions of the estates of Man Ray, Lotar, Moholy, and Kertész. Moreover, during its inaugural year the museum exhibited Brancusi's photographs not as collateral documents of the artist's sculptures but as artistic works in their own right, a shift that registered the de facto acceptance of photography as art in France.[101] The trio of special inaugural exhibitions, *Paris–New York* (1977), *Paris–Berlin* (1978), and *Paris–Moscow* (1979), were proof of the pudding as each displayed not only painting and sculpture but also vintage photographs of the highest quality.

In the United States, Travis followed up the Levy exhibition with *Photography Rediscovered: American Photographs 1900–1930* (1979) at the Whitney Museum. Whereas the Levy Collection focused primarily on European work, this exhibit performed a similar function of recovery for vintage prints by known and lesser-known American photographers, such that the authoritative quality of vintage prints was, for most viewers, no longer debatable.[102] Capping the decade, the first exhibition devoted to Weimar photography in America was mounted in 1980 by Van Deren Coke, who had been hired the previous year to create a photography department and collection at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. An art historian and photographer whose early conversion to Weston and Strand was superseded by a love of double exposures and solarization, Coke relished establishing an alternative to the "straight approach" that still reigned at MoMA. Relying heavily on the research of Eskildsen and the connections he had forged in 1975 while traveling in Europe on a Guggenheim grant, he built a collection of German work from the 1920s and 1930s in very short order. Buttressed with loans from the Folkwang and other collections, he organized *Avant-Garde Photography in Germany, 1919–1939*, which had all the verve and energy of its subject and traveled to six venues throughout the United States; such was the demand for the show's slim catalogue that it was expanded into a major trade book.[103] Working extremely fast and with limited funds, Coke had acquired not only vintage prints but also recent ones from limited-edition portfolios by Umbo, Citroen, and others that the Wildes and Kicken had produced—not only to support the artists and more widely circulate their works but also because there were not so many extant originals.

This was not at first apparent. Based on the cascade of nineteenth-century albums and prints that had poured into auction houses in the early 1970s, everyone assumed that the stream of European avant-garde and modernist photographs flowing in the 1980s would be bounteous. Yet this material turned out to be "of the greatest scarcity" because, as auctioneer and expert Philippe Garner succinctly remarked, the "flowering of radical ideas was very brief; there was no market at the time, and of the very few prints that were made for exchange, publication, or exhibition, many were lost due to the political circumstances, war, and the consequent social chaos across Europe."[104]

The Thomas Walther collection thus represents not just one man's passionate attempt to recuperate what was lost but a group effort that combined the insights of many collectors, scholars, dealers, and experts. While lacunae will always persist, thrilling new discoveries continue to be made, filling in pieces of the mosaic. No soothsayer imagined that an "Anderson collection" existed, that it would surface in 1995, or that it would be correctly identified as a major part of the assemblage of Kurt Kirchbach, the most important private collector in prewar Germany. Or take the case of El Lissitsky, who died in 1941 in Stalin's Russia and whose revolutionary work in photography had been of very brief duration. As rare as paintings by Vermeer, Lissitzky's original photographs are as coveted by those in this field. Certainly Priska Pasquer in her Cologne gallery never dreamed that a dozen of them, languishing for decades behind the Iron Curtain at an East German publishing house, would miraculously drop into her lap like Danaë's shower of gold one fine day in 1996 (cat. 169).[105] These and countless other small and large miracles of survival and recovery are salvaging the memory of the European photographic avant-garde. However incomplete, our picture of the past continues to coalesce, and in view of the photographs in this collection and the research inspired by them, the progress of rewriting the history is ongoing and vigorous—a cause for gratitude and, certainly, for celebration.

fig. 25 El Lissitzky. Untitled. 1920–30. Gelatin silver print, 6 ¼ × 4 ⅝" (16.1 × 11.8 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Shirley C. Burden and David H. McAlpin, by exchange. Ex coll. Emilio Bertonati, Robert Shapazian

1. El Lissitzky, quoted in Sophie Lissitzky-Küppers, *Lissitzky: Life, Letters, Texts* (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1968), p. 66

2. For the purposes of this essay, we consider this leading edge as the *avant-garde*, but when photographers practiced the modern idioms as a style removed from the urgency of the original motivation, we use the term *modernist*.

3. Anatoly Lunacharsky, speech at the debate on "The First Foundation Stones of the New Culture," February 9, 1925, typescript, f. 142, op. 1, ed. khr. 321, list 79, Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History, Moscow. See http://Lunacharsky.NewGod.su/lib/russkoe-sovetskoe-iskusstvo/na-vystavkah, note 154. Information kindly supplied by Alexander Lavrentiev via Christina Lodder. English translation quoted in Grigory Shudakov, *Pioneers of Soviet Photography* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1983), p. 10.

4. For "decaying," see Peter Weibel, "On the Origins of Hungarian Constructivism in Vienna: MA 1920–25; The Only Instance of Modernism between the Wars," in *Beyond Art: A Third Culture. A Comparative Study in Culture, Art and Science in 20th-Century Austria and Hungary* (Vienna and New York: Springer-Verlag, 2005), p. 64.

5. Lissitzky-Küppers, *Lissitzky: Life, Letters, Texts*, p. 26. For "red corner," see Weibel, "On the Origins of Hungarian Constructivism," p. 64.

6. On the inclusion of Walter Benjamin, see Howard Eiland and Michel W. Jennings, *Walter Benjamin, A Critical Life* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), pp. 171–72. On the new avant-garde forming in Berlin at this time, see Jennings, "Walter Benjamin and the European Avant-Garde," in David Ferris, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Walter Benjamin* (Cambridge: at the University Press, 2004), pp. 18–34.

7. Raoul Hausmann, Hans Arp, Ivan Puni, and László Moholy-Nagy, "Aufruf zur elementaren Kunst—an die Künstler der Welt!," *De Stijl* no. 4 (October 1921):124. For a translation see Andreas Haus, *Moholy-Nagy: Photographs and Photograms*, trans. Frederic Samson (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), p. 46.

8. Moholy-Nagy, "Produktion-Reproduktion," *De Stijl* 5, no. 7 (July 1922), repr. in Christopher Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era: European Documents and Critical Writings, 1913–1940* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989), pp. 79–82.

9. Moholy-Nagy and Lajos Kassák, *Buch neuer Künstler*, 1922 (Baden: Verlag Lars Muller, 1991).

10. See Adrian Sudhalter, "Walter Gropius and László Moholy-Nagy: Bauhaus Book Series, 1925–30," in Barry Bergdoll and Leah Dickerman, *Bauhaus 1919–33: Workshops for Modernity* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2009), pp. 196–99.

11. "The photograph has become such a remarkable characteristic of our age that it is now impossible to imagine its non-existence," Tschichold wrote in a chapter on photography in his 1928 treatise *The New Typography: A Handbook for Modern Typographers*, trans. Ruari McLean (Los Angeles and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p. 87.

12. On the role of graphic designers, see Olivier Lugon, "Neues Sehen, Neue Geschichte: László Moholy-Nagy, Sigfried Giedion und die Austellung Film und Foto," in Werner Ochslin and Gregor Harbusch, eds., *Sigfried Giedion und die Fotografie; Bildinszenierungen der Moderne* (Zurich: gta-verlag, 2010), pp. 90–91.

13. For an extended analysis of Gräff's book see Daniel H. Magilow, *The Photography of Crisis: The Photo Essays of Weimar Germany* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012), pp. 16–33.

14. Franz Roh, *Nach Expressionismus: Magischer Realismus. Probleme der neuesten europaische Malerei* (Leipzig: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1925).

15. Gustav Friedrich Hartlaub, one of several responses to a questionnaire in *Das Kunstblatt* 6 (1922):369–414. This was followed by Hartlaub's exhibition *Neue Sachlichkeit, Deutsche Malerei seit dem Expressionismus* (*New Objectivity: German Painting since Expressionism*), Mannheim, June 14–September 13, 1925. On this exhibit, see Sergiusz Michalski, *New Objectivity: Neue Sachlichkeit Painting in Germany in the 1920s*, trans. Michael Claridge (Cologne: Taschen, 2003), pp. 7–21.

16. See www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/dornera.htm.

17. I am indebted to Virginia Heckert's generous help and analysis in "Albert Renger-Patzsch: Contextualizing the Early Work, 1920–1933" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1999). On Krenz, Heise, and Renger, see p. 314, as well as note 30, and pp. 400–403.

18. For "Renger fever," ibid., p. 346; for Heise's letters to museum directors, ibid., pp. 432–33 n. 148.

19. Ibid., pp. 468–69 n. 72, 73.

20. Ibid., pp. 245–46. Albert Renger-Patzsch, "Boom Times," trans. Joel Agee, in Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era*, p. 141.

21. Heise exhibited precisely this contrast in April–May 1929 as part of *Meisterwerke der Photographie aus alter und neuer Zeit* (*Masterpieces of Historic and Contemporary Photography*) in the Behnhaus building of the Lübeck museum, where the work of Erfurth and Hoppé was included with Renger's images. See Heckert, "Albert Renger-Patzsch," pp. 467–70.

22. Authorship of the oeuvre is usually credited to Hill and his partner, Robert Adamson. Heinrich Schwarz, *David Octavius Hill, Der Meister der Photographie* (Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 1931).

23. Letters between Schwarz and Heise are cited by Heckert, "Albert Renger-Patzsch," p. 509 n. 69. Thorsten Albrecht, "Carl Georg Heises 'Sammlung Vorbildlicher Photographie' im Lübecker St. Annen-Museum," *Die Neue Sicht der Dinge; Carl Georg Heises Lübecker Fotosammlung aus den 20er Jahren* (Lübeck: Museum fur Kunst und Kulturgeschichte der Hansestadt Lübeck, 1995), pp. 15, 17, and notes 45, 47, 48, details the photographs from the exhibition that were acquired and others that Heise tracked down through press agencies. It is curious that when Heise moved to Berlin during the war, he wrote two articles in which he rued his strong endorsement of Renger, whose early work was made rather too much of, he conceded. Heckert, "Albert Renger-Patzsch," pp. 465–66.

24. See Andreas Strobl, *Curt Glaser: Kunsthistoriker, Kunstkritiker, Sammler: eine deutsch-jüdische Biographie* (Cologne: Boehlau, 1996). Accounts of the photography exhibitions in Berlin, and many of Glaser's commentaries about them, are available in Christine Kühn's very thorough study, to which I am much indebted: *Neues Sehen in Berlin: Fotographie der Zwanziger Jahre* (Berlin: Statliche Museen zu Berlin, 2005). On the amateur club exhibition, see p. 12.

25. Ibid., p. 37 n. 21.

26. Moholy's program, "Ein Programmedeutung fuer fotografische Arbeit," is reproduced in Kühn, *Neues Sehen in Berlin*, pp. 145–47.

27. For the *Juryfreie Kunstschau Berlin*, see ibid., p. 13. Moholy also exhibited photograms in 1927 in the exhibition *Lichtbildkunst* (*Art of the Photograph*) with the German Society of Photographers at the Zwickau Art Society, January 16–February 13, 1927. See L. Grimm, "Kunst und Wissenshaft," *Zwickauer Zeitung*, Jan 19, 1927. My thanks to Iris Schmeisser, formerly at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, for her invaluable assistance in researching and translating this as well as a number of other German-language sources here.

28. Curt Glaser, "Die Ausstellung des Amateurphotographen," *Berliner Boersin-Courier* 466 (Oct. 5, 1927), cited in Kühn, *Neues Sehen in Berlin*, p. 148.

29. Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* was shown in Berlin starting in April 1926 (ibid., p. 140). In his review of *Foto-Malerei-Architektur* (*Photo-Painting-Architecture*), an exhibition held at the Johannes Itten school in February–March 1928, which included work by Moholy, Renger, Umbo, and Walter Peterhans, Glaser pointed to Henri Van De Velde's observation that while the machine was initially despised, now it had come to define the style. Similarly, Glaser wrote, "Photography is now being appreciated because, like Russian film, it has learned to master its intrinsic qualities. It has nothing to do with painting, but rather, has taken over an area of painting, which has to reorganize the field remaining to it." These observations clearly reflect Moholy's ideas. Ibid., p. 14–15. In addition, Mendelsohn's *Amerika*, Renger's *Die Welt ist Schön*, and Blossfeldt's *Urformen der Kunst* had all been published, and Glaser had been in touch with Heise about a possible showing of his Renger exhibition, which nevertheless does not appear to have occurred. Ibid., pp. 156–57. Thus, Glaser was clearly up to date and closely following developments in this field.

30. "The Beautiful Photographic Picture (Artistic Seeing)" and the other four rubrics, as well as the exhibiting artists and institutions, were listed in the four-leaf pamphlet accompanying the exhibition. "*Internationale Ausstellung Fotografie der Gegenwart*" (Essen: Museum Folkwang, 1929).

31. Glaser, "Neben der Kunst," *Berliner Börsin-Courier* 191, no. 25.4 (1929), cited in Kühn, *Neues Sehen in Berlin*, pp. 173–74. My thanks to Ariel Pate and Sara Hayat for their translation of this as well as a number of other German-language sources here.

32. Glaser collected 114 photographs (reproduced in Kühn, *Neues Sehen in Berlin*, passim) before his freedom was curtailed by the National Socialists. Unfortunately the acquisition register for these years is missing.

33. The gift to the Boston museum was discussed by Ruth Green Harris, "Die Neue Malerei in Amerika," *Das Kunstblatt* 10 (1926): pp. 418–19.

34. Glaser, "Neben der Kunst," p. 24.

35. These and many other exhibitions are discussed in Kühn, *Neues Sehen in Berlin*, pp. 25–30 and 206.

36. Ibid., p. 36.

37. Dexel, teaching in Magdeburg, was fired in 1935, Hildebrandt in 1937.

38. Herbert Molderings, "Weder ein Speicherfund, noch die 'Helene Anderson Collection.' Es gab einmal …eine Pionier-Sammlung mit meisterlicher Fotografie," *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, October 27, 2005, available online at www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/fotokunst-weder-ein-speicherfund-noch-die-helene-anderson-collection-es-gab-einmal-eine-pionier-sammlung-mit-meisterlicher-fotografie-1277846-p2.html.

39. Molderings provided the details on Kirchbach's villa and viewing room in his interview with Christophe Schaden, *Photo News* 4 (2007):14–15. Kirchbach's prints are in the Kunstmuseum Basel.

40. Molderings states that Hildebrand Gurlitt had exhibited the first portfolio of Renger-Patzsch's work in January–February 1929 and that the acquisition was made from this material. Molderings, "Die international Foto-sammlung Kurt Kirchbach, Dresden" in *Die Moderne der Fotografie* (Hamburg: Philo Fine Arts, 2008), p. 276.

41. Gurlitt was a quarter Jewish, but the reason he lost his job in Zwickau was due to his exhibition of Jewish and "Bolshevist" art. This made him a target of the local anti-Semitic Combat League for German Culture, which tried to unseat him in 1928. However, his colleagues rallied to his defense. In 1930, the local chapter of Alfred Rosenberg's League for German Culture accused him of being a "warrior for the Krikel-Krakel Klee, the scribbler Nolde and the East-Mongolite Barlach." He was fired, officially for "financial reasons." "Three years before the Nazis came to power and the official beginning of the 'degenerate art' campaign, Gurlitt was the first museum director in Germany who would lose his job because of his commitment to modern art." Vanessa-Maria Voigt, *Kunsthändler und Sammler der Moderne im Nationalsozialismus. Die Sammlung Sprengel 1934 bis 1945* (Berlin: Reimer, 2007), p. 136. Research and translation courtesy Iris Schmeisser, MoMA.

42. Gurlitt's announcement for the exhibition was in *Der Kreis* 9 (September 1931):532, per Maike Bruhns, letter to Iris Schmeisser, MoMA, April 1, 2014.

43. Gurlitt, "Fotographie als Handwerk: zur Internationalen Foto-Sammlung Kurt Kirchbach, Dresden," in *Internationale Foto Austellung*, exh. pamphlet (Hamburg: Kunstverein, 1932), p. 5; and E. Wenke, "Der Kamera ihr Recht; zwei Photo-Austellungen," *Altonaer Nachrichten*, January 23, 1932. Originals in the clippings files, Hamburger Kunstverein, courtesy Bettina Steinbruegge.

44. It is possible that some of the prints Gurlitt acquired were transferred to him by the Werkbund when they trimmed down the show from its original size for travel, but this is speculation. As Olivier Lugon states, the prints from the later traveling editions of the show would not have been sufficiently well preserved to serve Gurlitt's purposes. Lugon, "Photography and Exhibition in Germany around 1930," in this volume. We do know that Gurlitt bought directly from Kertész, Edward Weston, Paul Citroen, and Julien Levy.

45. Heise applauded Gurlitt's fight for modern art and came to his defense when he was attacked in Zwickau in 1928. On March 4, 1931, he wrote Gurlitt, "I am perfectly aware that very difficult times lie ahead of us and that we will need to arm ourselves with a great amount of courage to stand up for our beliefs. You are the first one to have paid for his belief with the loss of tenure—we will not forget that." Maike Bruhns, *Kunst in der Krise: Hamburger Kunst im "Dritten Reich"* (Hamburg: Dolling un Galitz, 2001), p. 590.

46. Wenke, "Der Kamera ihr Recht."

47. Gurlitt, "Fotographie als Handwerk."

48. See Françoise Denoyelle, "Les Conditions d'émergence des premières photographies, 1932–1939," *Revoir Henri Cartier-Bresson* (Paris: Editions Textuel, 2009), pp. 302–18, esp. pp. 308, 318 n. 27. I am grateful to Nathaniel Stein, who discovered a postcard from Gurlitt to Levy dated October 16, 1933, in which Gurlitt requests to buy two photographs; from this we know he was continuing his quest for photographs after he was forced to resign. Gurlitt to Julien Levy Gallery, October 16, 1933, box 14, folder 31, Julien Levy Gallery records, 1857–1982, Philadelphia Museum of Art Archives. As Gurlitt gave Kirchbach's for his return address, it is clear that these images were for Kirchbach's collection. Address identification courtesy of Beth Gates Warren and Iris Schmeisser. See the final paragraphs of Gates Warren's case study "Weston and His German Connections" at www.moma.org/objectphoto. Gurlitt was paying 7.50 RM per photograph to Levy.

49. Molderings, "Weder ein Speicherfund."

50. Gurlitt wrote to Levy, "Mehr will der Sammler nicht bezahlen, besonders da ihm in letzter Zeit die Lust am Sammeln verloren gegangen ist." ("The collector is not willing to pay more than this, especially since he has lately lost his interest in collecting.") Gurlitt to Julien Levy Gallery, October 16, 1933. Gurlitt was fired on July 14, 1933. Letter from Bettina Steinbruegge, Kunstverein Hamburg, to Beth Gates Warren, February 4, 2014.

51. From the "Law of the Restoration of Civil Service with Tenure," April 7, 1933.

52. "Kurt Kirchbach," NDB/ADB Deutsche Biographie, http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz41057.html.

53. The controversy was revealed by the tenacious research of Molderings, who remains the expert on the matter. On this and subsequent revelations, see Molderings, "Die Suche geht weiter," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung Feuilleton*, June 9, 2008, http://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/kunstmarkt/fotokunst-die-suche-geht-weiter-1544188.html.

54. See Maike Bruhns, *Kunst in der Krise*, p. 202ff. After the war, Gurlitt defended his role as art dealer for the Reich, saying that he was in no position to refuse the work in light of his partial Jewish ancestry and the fact that he had already been dismissed from two jobs. However, Gurlitt may have profited from the Nazi's plundering: the origins of the works in his collection, which was inherited by his son, Cornelius Gurlitt, currently remain under investigation. The complex issues of Nazi art confiscations and restitutions and the many facets of the political and "legal" build-up to the looting not only of Jewish collections but of state museum collections is detailed by Olaf Peters, ed., *Degenerate Art: The Attack on Modern Art in Nazi Germany, 1937*, exh. cat. (New York: Neue Galerie and Prestel, 2014). See also Jonathan Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain: The Art World in Nazi Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

55. Romy Golan discusses the French "crisis of confidence," its rejection of the industrial and the urban, and its retreat into rural values in *Modernity and Nostalgia: Art and Politics in France between the Wars* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995). On the architects and designers, see especially pp. 85–104.

56. Georges Bataille, quoted in Simon Baker, "The Appearance of Things," in Dawn Ades and Baker, *Undercover Surrealism: Georges Bataille and Documents* (London: Hayward Gallery, 2006), p. 39.

57. Quentin Bajac, "Distorting Mirrors," *Prague, Paris, Barcelona; Photographic Modernity from 1918 to 1948* (Barcelona: Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, 1910), pp. 68–75; see also Christian Bouqueret, *Des Années Folles aux Années Noires: La Nouvelle Vision Photographique en France, 1920–40* (Paris: Marval, 1997). For Surrealist photography, see, for example, Bajac et al., *La Subversion des Images: Surréalisme, Photographie, Film* (Paris: Centre Pompidou, 2009); Ades and Baker, *Undercover Surrealism*; Ian Walker, *City Gorged with Dreams: Surrealism and Documentary Photography in Interwar Paris* (Manchester, UK, and New York: Manchester University Press, 2002); and Rosalind Krauss and Jane Livingston, *L'Amour fou; Photography and Surrealism* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985).

58. Man Ray's photograms appeared in "A New Method of Realizing the Artistic Possibilities of Photography," *Vanity Fair* 19 (November 1922):50; "Rose Sel a Vie," *The Little Review*, Autumn 1922, n.p.; *Broom* 4, no. 4 (March 1923):n.p.; and Will Grohmann, "Zu Man Ray," *Das Kunstblatt* 10 (1926):227–331. *Les Champs Délicieux* was included in a 1928 exhibition at the Museum Folkwang in Essen, *Kunst und Technik, Gesehen Durch das Auge des Kunstlers* (*Art and Technology Seen through the Eyes of Artists*), June 8–July 22, 1928, in which Renger and Hoppé were also shown. Information courtesy Ute Eskildsen, letter to the author, January 21, 2014. It was also among the first photographic acquisitions of the new Museum of Modern Art. Portfolio No. 1/40 of *Les Champs Délicieux* was acquired by MoMA in 1935 (253.35.1–12), perhaps through Alfred Barr, who had visited Man Ray that year in preparation for the exhibition *Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism* (1936).

59. See Bajac, "Nouvelle vision, ancienne photographie," *La Revue du Musée d'Orsay* 48/14, no. 16 (Spring 2003):74–83.

60. Kim Sichel, *Germaine Krull: Photographer of Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: The MIT Press, 1999), p. 84.

61. *Paris: 80 photographies de Moi Ver*, intro. Fernand Léger (Paris: Editions Jeanne Walter, 1931). *Ci-Contre*, Moï Wer's next book, was even more daring; although the artist sent it to Roh for publication, it was not published, due to the rise of the National Socialists. The maquette, acquired from the Roh estate by Ann and Jürgen Wilde, was exhibited by Inka Graeve-Ingelmann and published with an introduction by Hannes Boehringer (Munich: Pinakothek der Moderne, 2004). The artist, born Moshé Raviv-Vorobeichic, evidently changed the orthography of his pseudonym more than once.

62. See Michel Frizot and Cédric de Veigy, *VU: The Story of a Magazine*, trans. Ruth Sharman (London: Thames & Hudson, 2009).

63. Bouqueret, *Des Années Folles aux Années Noires*, p. 163.

64. Charles Peignot, quoted in ibid.

65. Georges Besson, *Photographie française, 1839–1936* (Paris: Braun et Cie, 1936), cited in Bajac, "Nouvelle vision," p. 79 n. 15.

66. See Bajac's analysis of the exhibition in "Nouvelle vision," pp. 80–81.

67. It has been pointed out that most of the photographers in Paris in this period were not French but came from Hungary, Germany, and Austria (Bajac, "Distorting Mirrors," p. 71) and also that many were Jewish, which may have contributed to the paucity of interest in them.

68. The handful of prescient collectors of the period famous today—Sirot, Cromer, Gilles, Barthélemy—concentrated exclusively on nineteenth-century material. See Anne de Mondenard, "La Ronde des Collectionneurs," in *Une Passion Française; Photographies de la Collection Roger Therond* (Paris: Editions Filipacchi, 1999), pp. 17–43.

69. See Dominique de Font-Reaulx, "Les Audaces d'une position française. L'Exposition 'Un Siècle de Vision Nouvelle' à la Bibliothèque Nationale (1955)," in *Études photographiques* 25 (May 2010):70–105.

70. For information on The Art Center show, I am indebted to the work of Bonnie Yochelson, "The Clarence H. White School of Photography," www.moma.org/objectphoto.

71. For a more detailed discussion of the American response to European avant-garde photography from Abbott and Evans to Lincoln Kirstein and his Harvard exhibitions, as well as to these exhibitions in 1931–32, see the author's "From 291 to The Museum of Modern Art: Photography in New York, 1910–37," in Hambourg and Christopher Phillips, *The New Vision: Photography between the World Wars; Ford Motor Company Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989), p. 54. For in-depth treatment of photography at Levy's gallery, see Katherine Ware and Peter Barberie, *Dreaming in Black and White: Photography at the Julien Levy Gallery* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

72. MoMA purchased thirty-eight images for $4 a piece. The lot was received at the Museum on July 13, 1939. "Acquisition Lists 1933–40," Department of Photography files, Museum of Modern Art, New York.

73. J. B. Neumann's difficulty advocating for modern German art after moving to New York from Germany and opening his gallery in 1924 serves as one such example. Despite high expectations based on the warm reception of the art in Germany, only the frailest of markets could be found in America, and Neumann was forced to close his gallery in June 1932. See Penny Bealle, "J. B. Neumann and the Introduction of Modern German Art to New York, 1923–33," *Archives of American Art Journal* 29, no. 1/2 (1989):2–15.

74. In his entry for September 4, 1926, Weston wrote, "Neither do I contact with the photography by Moholy-Nagy—it only brings a question—why?" Two days later, he dismissed the work of Man Ray, too, as "theatrical postures and soft focus 'effects'—Picasso done in a blur." Nancy Newhall, ed., *The Daybooks of Edward Weston* (Millerton, N.Y.: Aperture, 1973), 1:190–91.

75. Douglas R. Nickel, "History of Photography: The State of Research," *The Art Bulletin* 83, no. 3 (September 2001):553.

76. Van Deren Coke, quoted in Tom Kent, "First Sight of New Visions," *Metro* (February–March 1981):30.

77. "He wrote back saying he had no idea young people in America knew who he was," Baum recalled. In conversation with the author, August 14, 2013.

78. Margarett Loke, "Harry Lunn, Jr., 65, Art Dealer who Championed Photography," *New York Times*, August 24, 1998.

79. Lunn mounted virtually the same show in his Washington gallery the following year and produced a catalogue with texts by Baum and Man Ray: *Man Ray: Photographs and Rayographs* (Washington, D.C.: Lunn Gallery, Inc., 1972).

80. Since 1981, the gallery has been named Galerie 1900–2000. See Marcel Fleiss, *Man Ray, Peintures et Dessins provenant de l'Atelier* (Paris: Galerie 1900–2000, 1988). One might find something at the Galerie Nicaise, at Paul Prouté, and also at the flea market, where those who dealt in photographs primarily offered nineteenth-century material.

81. Szarkowski's aesthetic was that of a professional photographer of landscape and architecture, his profession before becoming a curator. He advocated a straight and transparent approach in which the photographer's point of view seemed embedded in his subject; technique served to capture the subject, not to call attention to itself. His standard-bearers were Brady, Stieglitz, Atget, and especially Walker Evans, whose interest in Arbus, Friedlander, and Winogrand inspired Szarkowski's show *New Documents*. Other kinds of photographic seeing held no fascination for him: Man Ray he thought largely vacuous, Moholy only of historical importance. Sander, whose old-fashioned, straightforward technique resembled Brady's and Atget's, was one of the only Europeans of the 1920s whom he endorsed. Szarkowski himself never organized an exhibit of European experimental work, and of Europeans from the 1930s, only of the street photographers Kertész, Cartier-Bresson, and Brassaï.

82. One third of the show came from the George Eastman House, a third from MoMA's collection, and the remaining third were various loans. Newhall borrowed from photographers living in the United States, such as Evans, Kertész, Weston, and from one in France, Florence Henri; from Arnold Crane and Steichen's assistant at MoMA, Grace Mayer; and a few other private collectors. There was also a sprinkling of images from institutional collections, among them the Folkwang school in Cologne and the Exchange National Bank in Chicago. Beaumont Newhall, "*Photo-Eye of the Twenties; An Exhibition Prepared in Collaboration with George Eastman House*," exh. brochure (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1970). Newhall's bias for the Americans would diminish only marginally over the course of the decade. See Beaumont Newhall, "Photo Eye of the 1920s: The Deutsche Werkbund Exhibition of 1929," in David Mellor, ed., *Germany: The New Photography 1927–33. Documents and Essays* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978), pp. 77–86.

83. Such exhibitions included Weston Naef's *The Painterly Photograph* (1973) and *The Era of Exploration* (1975) at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

84. These individuals became fascinated by the medium early on and became bellwethers for other collectors. Crane's and Wagstaff's collections were acquired by the Getty Museum; Rinhart's collection of mostly American work helped form many public and private collections, including that of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, the Gilman Collection (now at The Metropolitan Museum of Art), and the Hallmark Collection (now at the Nelson-Atkins Museum).

85. Otto Steinert, *Subjective Fotografie. Ein Bildband moderner europishcher Fotografie* (Bonn: Bruder Auer, 1952). In this book, which includes reproductions of images by Man Ray, Moholy, Bayer, and Heinz Hajek-Halke, Steinert and Franz Roh discuss the creative dimensions of photography practiced during the 1920s.

86. Bauhaus photographs first emerged in Stuttgart in 1968 at an exhibition marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Bauhaus, which traveled widely. At the Bauhaus Berlin there was a run of small shows through the 1970s of works by Peterhans, Kepes, Rodchenko, and others. There were no catalogues, but there was a checklist for *László Moholy-Nagy, Ausschnitte aus einem Lebenswerk: Bildnerische Arbeiten, Fotos, Unterricht* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 1978). Information courtesy of Inke Graeve-Ingelmann.

87. An important impetus for this link was Volker Kahmen, whose collection (Sander, Blossfeldt, Renger, Evans, and others, now at the Getty) grew through his early friendship with Bernd Becher, a connection registered in the twining of the Bechers and Sander in Kahmen's 1973 book, *Fotographie als Kunst* (*The Art History of Photography*). Kahmen, in conversation with Ricarda Dick and responding to written questions submitted by the author, Stiftung Insel-Hombroich, Neuss-Holzheim, Germany, March–April 2014. Dick's transcription of Kahmen's responses, letter to the author, April 19, 2014. For a visual of the Becher-Sander pairing, see Kahmen, *The Art History of Photography*, trans. Brian Tubb (New York: Viking Press, 1974), pp. 144–45.

88. From a letter from Eduard Strempel in Berlin to members of August Sander's family, October 26, 1929, as transcribed and translated by Gerd Sander: "[Strempel] is happy to hear that [Sander's] publication is now on the way to the printer, since now is the time for such a book to be available on the market for the Christmas season." Sander, in correspondence with the author, May 3, 2014. The publication date of November 1929 was confirmed by Claudia Shubert, SK-Kultur, letter to the author, May 6, 2014.

89. Walter Benjamin, "Little History of Photography," 1931, in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, vol. II, *1927–34*, trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005), pp. 368–85. Walker Evans, "The Reappearance of Photography," 1931, in Alan Trachtenberg, ed., *Classic Essays on Photography* (Stony Creek, Conn.: Leete's Island Books, 1980), pp. 185–88.

90. See Rose Carol Washton-Long, "August Sander's Portraits of Persecuted Jews," Tate Papers 19, April 4, 2013, online at www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/august-sanders-portraits-persecuted-jews.

91. *Deutschenspiegel-Menschen des 20. Jahrhunderts* (*Mirror Image of the German-People of the Twentieth Century*) (Hamburg: Sigbert Mohn Verlag), with photographs by Sander and an introduction by Heinrich Lutzeler, appeared in 1962. In his review of the book, John Szarkowski concluded, "To almost any serious photographer, this book is more valuable than a second lens. It costs $13.50, less than a carton of Plus-X." "Deutschenspiegel. John Szarkowski reviews August Sander's recently published collection of portraits taken from 1892 to 1955," *Infinity* 12, no. 6 (June 1963):10–11, 23.

92. Hilton Kramer, exhibition review, *The New York Times*, November 25, 1972. Review courtesy Gerd Sander.

93. David Travis, *Photographs from the Julien Levy Collection, Starting with Atget* (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1976).

94. More than any other dealer, Lunn was responsible for the tremendous growth in the photography market from the 1970s through the 1990s. His voluminous papers recording his thousands of transactions are archived at the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

95. Janos Frecot describes how the cultural scene for photography in Germany shifted in the 1970s and how museums progressively accommodated photography beginning in 1967 with the Neue Sammlung in Munich and followed by the galleries at the Sprengel Museum in Hannover, 1972; the formation of a collection in Bonn, 1974; galleries at the Ludwig Museum in Cologne, 1977; at the Folkwang Museum in Essen, 1978; and at the Berlinsche Gallery, 1979. Frecot, "Rediscovering Photography in Postwar Germany," in Annette and Rudolf Kicken and Simone Forster, eds., *Points of View: Masterpieces of Photography and Their Stories* (Göttingen: Steidl, 2007), pp. 9–15.

96. The photographs collected by Glaser for the Kunstbibliothek, together with photographs from the Ernst Juhl and Fritz Matthies-Masuren collections, were part of the 1971 exhibition *Künstlerische Photographie von Hill bis Moholy-Nagy* (*Artistic Photography from Hill to Moholy-Nagy*), which was organized by Marilies von Brevern.

97. Ute Eskildsen assisted Steinert from 1972 to 1976. She notes that Steinert began the collection in 1959; in 1961 he purchased nineteenth-century photographs at the Rauch auction in Geneva, and he went on to buy prints by Man Ray, Moholy, Biermann, Henri, Erfuth, Renger-Patzsch, Felix Man, and Henrich Kühn, often from the artists themselves or their descendants. Eskildsen, email correspondence with the author, January 21, 2014. Eskildsen's 1978 exhibition, which traveled thereafter, was sponsored by the Arts Council of Great Britain and included a catalogue by Wieland Schmeid, *Neue Sachlichkeit and German Realism of the Twenties* (London: Hayward Art Center, 1978). See also Ute Eskildsen, "Photography and the Neue Sachlichkeit Movement," in Mellor, ed., *Germany: The New Photography 1927–33*, pp. 101–12. This compendium of translated German texts was important to advancing British and American understanding of the period.

98. See Emilio Bertonati, *Das experimentelle Photo in Deutschland 1918–1940* (Munich: Galleria del Levante, 1978).

99. Marion Grcic-Zercich, in conversation with the author, September 26, 2013.

100. Ute Eskildsen and Jan-Christopher Horak, *Film und Foto der Zwanziger Jahre* (Stuttgart: Wuerttembergischer Kunstverein, 1979). Ruprecht Skasa-Weisse, *Stuttgarter Zeitung* 114 (May 18, 1979): p. 33.

101. Bajac and Clement Cheroux, *Collection Photographies. Une historie de la photographie a travers les collections du Centre Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne* (Paris: Centre Pompidou and Steidl, 2007).

102. A notable exception was Szarkowski, who maintained that there was nothing inherently superior in an early print over a later one, a position natural to photographers who perceive the negative as a matrix to be interpreted at will by its maker. Szarkowski's was also a protest against what he saw as the runaway inflation of the market. On the usage of the term "vintage," the evidence, kindly collected by Jeff Rosenheim from past Sotheby's catalogues, suggests that the term was being used erratically from 1975 to 1978 but by mid-1979 had become the standard reference for old, original prints. A catalogue accompanied the Whitney exhibition: Travis, *Photography Rediscovered: American Photographs, 1900–1930* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1979).

103. Reviews of the show and book noted that the extraordinarily rich and evocative work was by many unknown artists and that German photography between the wars was effectively a "well-kept secret." Ted Hedgpeth, "*Avant-Garde Photography in Germany, 1919–39*," *San Francisco Review of Books* 7, no. 2 (summer 1982):9. The expanded version of the original 1980 catalogue appeared two years later and was translated into German and French: Coke, *Avant-Garde Photography in Germany 1919–39* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982).

104. Philippe Garner, letter to the author, October 2, 2013.

105. The images were recovered for Jen Lissitzky by art detective Clemens Toussaint from VEB Verlag der Kunst, the Dresden printer of the original German edition of the book written by Jen Lissitzky's mother about his father (see note 1). See Marc Spiegler, "The Devil and the Art Detective," *Art and Auction*, July 2003, p. 98.


PLATES

2 Alvin Langdon Coburn. *The Octopus*. 1909 | catalogue 57

37 Friedrich Seidenstücker. *Puddle Jumper*. 1925 | catalogue 275

38 Umbo. *Mystery of the Street*. 1928 | catalogue 307

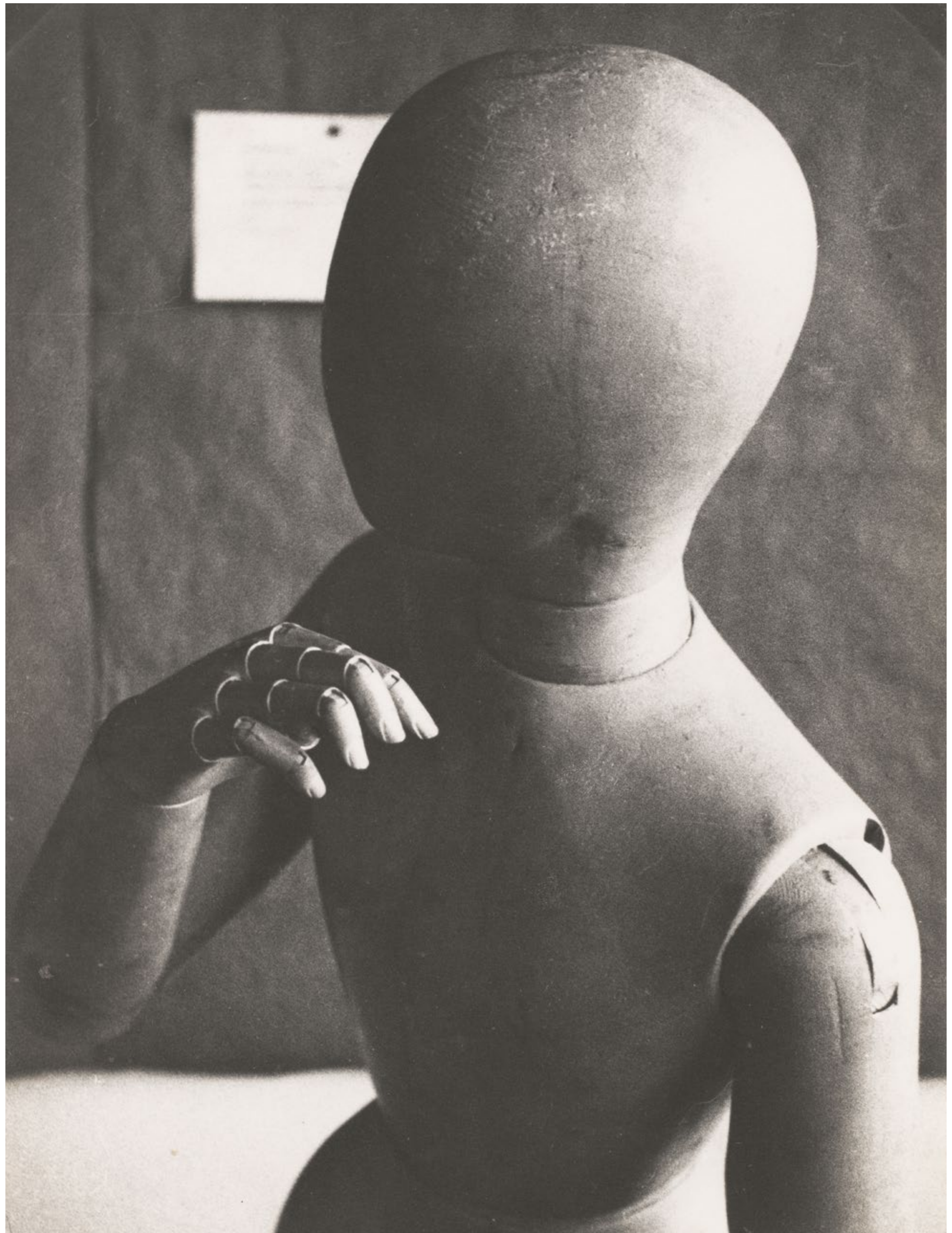
45 Hajo Rose. Untitled (*Self-Portrait*). 1931 | catalogue 249

46 Umbo. *View of Berlin's Department Store Karstadt*. 1929 | catalogue 308

51 Karl Blossfeldt. *Acanthus mollis (Soft Acanthus, Bear's Breeches. Bracteoles with the Flowers Removed, Enlarged 4 Times).* 1898–1928 | catalogue 29

52 Karl Blossfeldt. *Adiantum pedatum (Maidenhair Fern. Young Unfurling Fronds Enlarged 8 Times).* 1898–1928 | catalogue 30

 Max Burchartz. *Lotte (Eye)*. 1928 | catalogue 50



75 Iwao Yamawaki. *Articulated Mannequin*. 1931 | catalogue 334

76 John Gutmann. *Class (High Diver Marjorie Gestring, 1936 Olympics Champion)*. 1935 | catalogue 81

COLLECTION CATALOGUE

NOTES TO THE READER

SCOPE OF THE CATALOGUE AND DEFINITION OF THE THOMAS WALTHER COLLECTION

The Thomas Walther Collection is the group of 341 photographs acquired by The Museum of Modern Art in 2001 from the collector Thomas Walther. The majority but not the entirety of Walther's collection of modern photographs at the time, the pictures—most of them shot between 1909 and 1949—were chosen to complement those in the Museum collection.

REPRODUCTIONS

In keeping with the Walther project's emphasis on the physical properties and material histories of photographic prints, all works have been reproduced here to show the full sheet of paper, including margins outside the picture image, as well as original mounts when present.

CATALOGUE ORDER

Works are listed first alphabetically by the photographers' last names, studio names, or pen names, then chronologically by the date of the negative.

TITLES

Priority has been given to the earliest known title published during the photographer's lifetime, or, where no historical publication was available, to original inscribed titles. All titles are either given as they were first published in English or are translated into English followed by the original foreign-language titles. Many prints and reproductions from the same negative have different titles; in these cases, priority is given to the earliest. Subsequent exhibited and published titles through 1949 are annotated in the "Historical Exhibitions" and "Historical Publications" sections. Where no title was inscribed or is known to have been published, the descriptor "Untitled" has been given in place of nonhistorical descriptive titles.

NEGATIVE DATE

The date of the creation of each photograph's negative is given as closely as possible—when known, down to the exact day. More often the negative date has been narrowed to a single year or a span of several years. These have been determined based on any records available, ranging from the photographer's own journals and notations to earliest-known exhibitions or publications. Some dates have been inferred based on what is known about a photographer's travels to a particular place. For some photographers, for example Karl Blossfeldt and Franz Roh, very little record remains beyond a rough chronology of the years in which he or she was known to be actively photographing.

MEDIUM

Medium was determined through visual examination and technical analysis using X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (XRF) to identify metallic elements, coatings, or binding mediums.

PRINT DATE

Print dates were determined based on two sets of data. First, technical analyses of the material components of the photographs were assessed: the paper support, image material, and binder or emulsion constituents. This data was then evaluated in concert with available publication and exhibition histories, provenance records, and marks and inscriptions on the print. The photographer's biography was consulted to confirm the negative date and narrow the printing-date range whenever possible. Paper-fiber analyses, X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy, paper-thickness measurements, and examinations under ultraviolet illumination were performed. The dates can be as precise as a single year or may span a wide range of years, depending on the documentation and technical data obtained. Print dates are delimited by the negative date and by such information as the date when papers with a particular material makeup began to be manufactured, or the date when the availability of certain kinds of paper changed. The print date 1955 appears often in the Catalogue, for example, because it is currently accepted that the presence of optical brightening agents was standardized after that date; ultraviolet illumination examination was employed to detect the presence or absence of these agents. When possible, analyses of these kinds were bolstered by archival evidence.

DIMENSIONS

All works are measured in inches and centimeters. Dimensions are given for the image and, when they exist and vary, for sheet and mount as well. When the image, sheet, or mount is not an exact rectangle, dimensions are listed as irregular.

MATERIALS

The materials section lists the physical properties of the paper, including its weight, surface sheen, coating, and brand markings. Paper-thickness measurements were made using an electronic micrometer, the L. S. Starrett Company's model number 733FL-1. The thickness was measured to five decimal points by inch unit and divided into four weight classes: light weight, single weight, double weight, and heavy weight. Sheen was assessed through a survey by conservators and sorted into one of 3 categories: glossy, semireflective, and matte. Definitions of these terms appear in the Glossary.

TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES

This section lists the printing technique and any modifications to the paper to create the final work. Definitions of these terms appear in the Glossary.

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS

All stamped, handwritten, or mechanically printed marks and inscriptions on the works have been described in their original alphabets and shapes where possible and distinguished by the use of italics. When non-English marks and inscriptions shed light on the work's creation or subsequent history beyond questions of reproduction, they are translated in footnotes to each entry.

PROVENANCE

The provenance of the works in the Walther Collection has been meticulously reconstructed. Many of these photographs passed through several hands (artists' families and friends, newspapers, exhibitions) before moving to dealers and collectors and ultimately into the Collection. Through much of the history of photography the ownership and exchange of a print has been and for many images remains a casual and rarely recorded event. Much of the information gathered here is therefore based not on records (as in more traditional art mediums) but on interviews with and memories of the many individuals involved in the histories of these objects. Dates are included whenever available, and we have made our best efforts to resolve internal contradictions. We hope that by publishing this information, even when still partial, this effort will bring forth further details, making the history of modern photography more complete.

Provenance is given according to Museum conventions. All information is given chronologically, starting with the photographer, then listing all known subsequent owners. Individuals have been listed when known, along with their locations and dates of ownership. Semicolons are used to indicate a direct transfer from one owner to the next, with precise means of transfer (sale, gift, inheritance) described where known. Periods are used after an owner to indicate a gap in our knowledge.

Further records for the sources of all provenance information can be found in the online publication Object:Photo at www.moma.org/objectphoto.

HISTORICAL EXHIBITIONS

While we have aimed to be as comprehensive as possible, few documents remain to confirm historical exhibition checklists. Many exhibition catalogues of the period list only the photographers' names and omit exact titles of the photographs, making it difficult to confirm the presence of specific pictures. Listings of relevant historical exhibitions have been compiled from catalogues, exhibition installation views, and from stamps and inscriptions on the works themselves or on duplicate prints. Known exhibitions are listed chronologically, then alphabetically for those that share the same date. Traveling exhibitions are indicated by the symbol ⦿; only the first venue in which a particular work is known to have been included is listed. When we know that the Museum's print itself was included in an exhibition, that is indicated by the symbol ▣. The exhibition catalogue number and exhibited titles are listed when known.

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS

Many American, British, German, French, and Austrian journals, books, and exhibition catalogues from the period of the works in the Thomas Walther Collection, approximately 1909 through 1949, were surveyed. While many publications included close variants, alternately cropped pictures from the same negative, and images from the same series as the pictures in the Collection, only reproductions matching the Walther pictures are listed here. They are listed chronologically, and then alphabetically for publications that share the same publication date, with the page or plate number given where known. Unpaginated spreads are designated n.p. Unpaginated inserts are given with facing or nearby pages when possible. All originally published titles are listed with original capitalization and punctuation where possible.

Berenice Abbott
American, 1898–1991

1
James Joyce
1926
Gelatin silver print, 1935–55

IMAGE (IRREG.): 4 3/8 × 3 13/16" (11.1 × 9.7 cm)
SHEET (IRREG.): 4 7/16 × 4 1/8" (11.2 × 10.5 cm)

MATERIALS: double-weight developing-out paper, semireflective
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: contact print

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Stamped in black ink on sheet verso, top center: *PHOTOGRAPH BY BERENICE ABBOTT / ALL RIGHTS RESERVED*. Signed in pencil on sheet verso, center: *Berenice Abbott*. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, bottom-left corner: *James Joyce* [erased]. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, bottom center: *PF 11844* [erased]. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, bottom right: *TW 881202* [erased].

PROVENANCE: The artist, New York; to a private collection; to Delano Greenidge, New York; purchased by Thomas Walther, 1988–89; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS: *Variétés* 1, no. 5 (1928): insert between pp. 162 and 163 (as *L'écrivain James Joyce*).

Thomas Walther Collection. Abbott-Levy Collection funds, by exchange, 1598.2001

Plate 17

2
Daily News Building, 220 East 42nd Street, Manhattan
November 21, 1935
Gelatin silver print, 1935–55

IMAGE: 9 5/8 × 7 1/2" (24.4 × 19.1 cm)
OTHER: 4 5/16 × 7 7/16" (11 × 18.9 cm)

MATERIALS: double-weight developing-out paper, semireflective
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: contact print

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Stamped twice in black ink on sheet verso, top center: *FEDERAL ART PROJECT / "Changing New York" / PHOTOGRAPHS BY BERENICE ABBOTT* [with square outline; second stamp crossed out]. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, center: *93* [circled]. Inscribed in red pencil on sheet verso, center: ←*22* [illegible]→. Inscribed in blue pencil on sheet verso, center right: *12-45*. Stamped in black ink on sheet verso, bottom center: *Title:* [inscribed in pencil on title line inside stamp: *Daily News Building*] / *Place: / Neg. # / Code:* [with square outline] [inscribed in pencil within stamp outline: *42d Street Between 2d and 3rd Avenues, Manhattan*]. Printed in black ink on attached sheet recto, bottom: *DAILY NEWS BUILDING AND ENVIRONS, 1935 / TAKEN WITH CENTURY UNIVERSAL 8 × 10 VIEW CAMERA ON TRIPOD. / THIS PHOTOGRAPH ILLUSTRATES THE IMPORTANCE OF SELECTION / TO MAKE VISUAL THE TRUE CHARACTER OF THE CITY. IF THE CON- / TEMPORARY IS GENERALLY ANARCHISTIC AND WITHOUT PLAN, / NOTHING COULD PROVE THE POINT MORE VIVIDLY THAN THE JUXTA- / POSITION OF THE FUNCTIONAL SKYSCRAPER WITH THE POWER-HOUSE / SMOKESTACKS AND THE BROWNSTONE FRONT DWELLINGS. IT IS IN-*. Inscribed in pencil on attached sheet verso, top right: *H1922-41-29*.

PROVENANCE: The artist, New York; to Robert Self Gallery, London, probably 1979; to Paul Kasmin, London; to Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York; purchased by Thomas Walther, September 29, 1989; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS: "A Woman Photographs the Face of a Changing City." *Life*, January 3, 1938, p. 44 (as *In the Daily News Building Berenice Abbott sees the breath-taking verticalness that makes Manhattan's skyline*); Abbott, Berenice, and Elizabeth McCausland. *Changing New York*, pl. 65 (as *Daily News Building, 220 East 42nd Street, Manhattan*). New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1939.

Thomas Walther Collection. Abbott-Levy Collection funds, by exchange, 1599.2001

3
Fifth Avenue, Nos. 4, 6, 8, Manhattan
March 20, 1936
Gelatin silver print, 1936–55

IMAGE: 15 3/16 × 19 1/2" (38.6 × 49.5 cm)
MOUNT: 15 7/16 × 19 13/16" (39.2 × 50.4 cm)

MATERIALS: developing-out paper, semireflective
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: enlargement, retouching (additive)

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Signed in pencil on mount verso, bottom left: *Berenice Abbott*.

PROVENANCE: The artist, New York; to Ed Landin; to Pauline Strasmich, Somerset, Mass., c. 1970; to Lee Gallery, Winchester, Mass., July 2, 1997; purchased by Thomas Walther, September 1997; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS: "A Woman Photographs the Face of a Changing City." *Life*, January 3, 1938, p. 44 (as *The Vanishing Splendor of Victorian Fifth Avenue Is Preserved by Berenice Abbott's Camera*); Abbott, Berenice, and Elizabeth McCausland. *Changing New York*, pl. 48 (as *Fifth Avenue, Nos. 4, 6, 8, Manhattan*). New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1939.

Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Mr. Robert C. Weinberg, by exchange, 1600.2001

Abbott

1


2


3


4


Álvarez Bravo

5


6


7


4
Cedar Street from William Street, Manhattan
March 26, 1936
Gelatin silver print, 1936–55

IMAGE: 9 1/2 × 7 1/4" (24.1 × 18.4 cm)
MOUNT (IRREG.): 10 13/16 × 7 15/16" (27.4 × 20.1 cm)

MATERIALS: developing-out paper, semireflective
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: contact print

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Signed in pencil on mount recto, bottom-right corner: *BERENICE ABBOTT*. Stamped in red ink on mount verso, bottom-right corner: *FEDERA* [stamp is cut off (for complete stamp see cat. 2)].

PROVENANCE: The artist, New York. Probably Carol Dorsky, New York, or Martina Hamilton, New York, or Harry Lunn; purchased by Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York; purchased by Thomas Walther, July 1995; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

Thomas Walther Collection. Abbott-Levy Collection funds, by exchange, 1601.2001

Manuel Álvarez Bravo
Mexican, 1902–2002

5
The Earth Itself (La tierra misma)
1930s
Gelatin silver print, 1930–50

IMAGE: 9 9/16 × 7 5/8" (24.3 × 19.3 cm)
MOUNT: 17 13/16 × 13 7/8" (45.2 × 35.2 cm)

MATERIALS: coated developing-out paper, semireflective
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: retouching (additive)

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Signed in pencil on mount recto, bottom right: *M. Alvarez Bravo, / México*.

PROVENANCE: The artist, Mexico City; to the Photo League, New York, by 1950;[1] to Jack Lessinger (1911–1987), New York, by 1951;[2] to Photofind Gallery / Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York, 1987; purchased by Thomas Walther, August 11, 1988; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

1. Jack Lessinger organized *Manuel Álvarez Bravo* at the Photo League Gallery in February 1942; it was reinstalled and shown January 10–February 1, 1950.
2. The Photo League closed in 1951.

HISTORICAL EXHIBITIONS: Third exhibition of the Sociedad de Arte Moderno, Mexico City. *Manuel Álvarez Bravo: Fotografías* (no. 97, as *La tierra misma*). July 1945.

Thomas Walther Collection. Grace M. Mayer Fund, 1603.2001

6
Ladder of Ladders (Escala de escalas)
1931
Gelatin silver print, 1931–39

IMAGE: 9 3/8 × 7 5/16" (23.8 × 18.5 cm)
MOUNT (IRREG.): 10 5/8 × 12 7/8" (27 × 32.7 cm)

MATERIALS: developing-out paper, matte
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: retouching (additive)

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Signed in pencil on mount recto, bottom right: *M. Alvarez Bravo*.

PROVENANCE: The artist, Mexico City; given to a writer (possibly Margaret Hooks), Mexico City, possibly 1931–39; purchased by Throckmorton Fine Art, New York, October 14, 1995; purchased by Thomas Walther, June 13, 1996; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

HISTORICAL EXHIBITIONS: Third exhibition of the Sociedad de Arte Moderno, Mexico City. *Manuel Álvarez Bravo: Fotografías* (no. 73, as *Escala de escalas*). July 1945.

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS: Breton, André. "Souvenir du Mexique." *Minotaure* 3, nos. 12–13 (1939): 35.

Thomas Walther Collection. Grace M. Mayer Fund, 1602.2001

7
Day of Glory (Día de gloria)
1940s
Gelatin silver print, 1940–50

IMAGE: 6 3/4 × 9 1/2" (17.2 × 24.2 cm)
MOUNT: 14 × 17 13/16" (35.6 × 45.2 cm)

MATERIALS: developing-out paper, semireflective

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Signed in pencil on mount recto, bottom right: *M. Alvarez Bravo, / México*.

PROVENANCE: The artist, Mexico City; to the Photo League, New York, by 1950;[1] to Jack Lessinger (1911–1987), New York, by 1951;[2] to Photofind Gallery / Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York, 1987; purchased by Thomas Walther, August 11, 1988; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

1. Jack Lessinger organized *Manuel Álvarez Bravo* at the Photo League Gallery in February 1942; it was reinstalled and shown January 10–February 1, 1950.
2. The Photo League closed in 1951.

Thomas Walther Collection. Grace M. Mayer Fund, 1606.2001

8
Somewhat Gay and Graceful
(Un poco alegre y graciosa)
1942
Gelatin silver print, 1942–50

IMAGE: 6⅝ × 9½" (16.9 × 24.2 cm)
MOUNT: 14 × 17 13/16" (35.6 × 45.3 cm)

MATERIALS: developing-out paper, semireflective

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Signed in pencil on mount recto, bottom right: *M. Alvarez Bravo, / México.* Inscribed in pencil on mount verso, bottom left: *322 / 1.*

PROVENANCE: The artist, Mexico City; to the Photo League, New York, by 1950;[1] to Jack Lessinger (1911–1987), New York, by 1951;[2] to Photofind Gallery / Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York, 1987; purchased by Thomas Walther, August 11, 1988; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

1. Jack Lessinger organized *Manuel Álvarez Bravo* at the Photo League Gallery in February 1942; it was reinstalled and shown January 10–February 1, 1950.

2. The Photo League closed in 1951.

HISTORICAL EXHIBITIONS: Third exhibition of the Sociedad de Arte Moderno, Mexico City. *Manuel Álvarez Bravo: Fotografías* (no. 26, as *Un poco alegre y graciosa*). July 1945.

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS: Álvarez Bravo, Manuel. *Manuel Álvarez Bravo: Fotografías*, p. 91 (as *Un poco alegre y graciosa*). Mexico City: Sociedad de Arte Moderno, 1945.

Thomas Walther Collection. Grace M. Mayer Fund, 1604.2001

Plate 105

9
A Fish Called Sierra
(Un pez que llaman sierra)
1944
Gelatin silver print, 1944–50

IMAGE: 9½ × 7¼" (24.1 × 18.4 cm)
MOUNT: 17¾ × 14 1/16" (45.1 × 35.7 cm)

MATERIALS: developing-out paper, semireflective
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: retouching (additive)

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Signed in pencil on mount recto, bottom right: *M. Alvarez Bravo, / México.*

PROVENANCE: The artist, Mexico City; to the Photo League, New York, by 1950;[1] to Jack Lessinger (1911–1987), New York, by 1951;[2] to Photofind Gallery / Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York, 1987; purchased by Thomas Walther, August 11, 1988; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

1. It is likely that this print was included in the second show of the artist's works organized by Jack Lessinger at the Photo League Gallery, January 10–February 1, 1950.

2. The Photo League closed in 1951.

HISTORICAL EXHIBITIONS: Third exhibition of the Sociedad de Arte Moderno, Mexico City. *Manuel Álvarez Bravo: Fotografías* (no. 33, as *Un pez que llaman sierra*). July 1945.

Thomas Walther Collection. Edward Steichen Estate and gift of Mrs. Flora S. Straus, by exchange, 1605.2001

Gertrud Arndt
German, 1903–2000

10
At the Masters' Houses
(An den Meisterhäusern)
1929–30
Gelatin silver print, 1929–39

IMAGE: 8⅞ × 6¼" (22.6 × 15.8 cm)

MATERIALS: double-weight baryta-less developing-out paper, matte

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Signed in pencil on sheet verso, bottom center: *An den Meisterhäusern / G. Arndt 1930.* Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, bottom center: *RK 11082-1ÜHSZ8.*

PROVENANCE: The artist; to Alexa Bormann-Arndt, Darmstadt, Germany; probably to Egidio Marzona, Berlin / Bielefeld; to Galerie Rudolf Kicken, Cologne, 1982; purchased by Thomas Walther, 1984; given to The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Thomas Walther, 1607.2001

Plate 42

Aurel Bauh
French, born Romania. 1900–1964

11
Untitled
1929–32
Gelatin silver print, 1929–39

IMAGE: 11 9/16 × 9 3/16" (29.4 × 23.3 cm)

MATERIALS: double-weight developing-out paper (*Agfa-Brovira*), matte
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: enlargement, photogram

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, center: *sus* ↑. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, center: [illegible] *15* [underlined].

PROVENANCE: The artist; by inheritance to the artist's daughter, Paris, 1964; to Herbert Molderings, Paris, 1979–80; purchased by Thomas Walther; given to The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Thomas Walther, 1608.2001

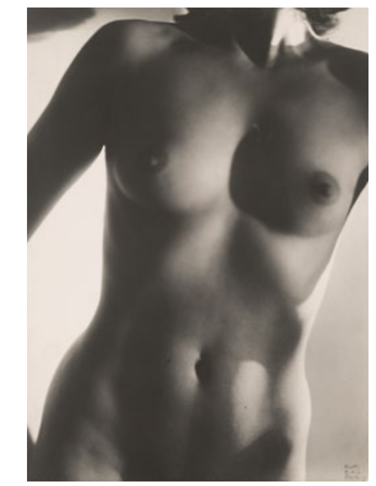
8

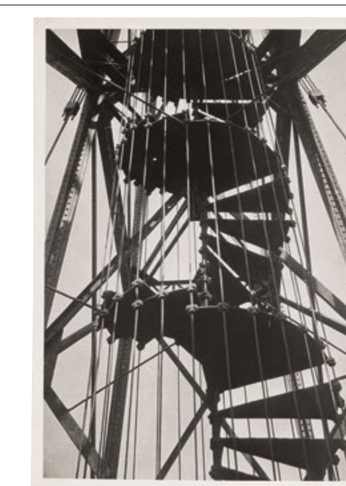

9


Arndt
10


Bauh
11


12


13


Bayer
14


15


12
Untitled
1929–32
Gelatin silver print, 1929–35

IMAGE: 11 × 9 1/16" (27.9 × 23 cm)

MATERIALS: double-weight baryta-less developing-out paper (*Agfa-Brovira*), matte
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: photogram

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, top center: *sus* ↑.

PROVENANCE: The artist; by inheritance to the artist's daughter, Paris, 1964; to Herbert Molderings, Paris, 1979–80; purchased by Thomas Walther; given to The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Thomas Walther, 1609.2001

13
Untitled
1930–32
Gelatin silver print, 1930–55

IMAGE: 15⅜ × 11¼" (39 × 28.5 cm)

MATERIALS: baryta-less developing-out paper, matte
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: enlargement, retouching (additive)

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Signed in pencil on sheet recto, bottom right: *AUREL / BAUH / PARIS.* Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, bottom right: *TW 770720.*

PROVENANCE: The artist; by inheritance to the artist's daughter, Paris, 1964; to Herbert Molderings, Paris, 1979–80; purchased by Thomas Walther; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

Thomas Walther Collection. Abbott-Levy Collection funds, by exchange, 1610.2001

Herbert Bayer
American, born Austria. 1900–1985

14
Iron Winding Stair (Pont transbordeur, Marseille)
(Eiserne Wendeltreppe [Pont transbordeur, Marseille])
1928
Gelatin silver print, 1928–32

IMAGE: 14 × 9⅝" (35.6 × 24.4 cm)
SHEET: 14⅝ × 10⅜" (37.2 × 26.3 cm)

MATERIALS: single-weight developing-out paper, glossy
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: copy print, ferrotyping, enlargement

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: White label affixed to sheet verso, bottom left, with text printed in black ink: *Foto Herbert Bayer.* White label affixed to sheet verso, bottom left, with text printed in black ink: *Eiserne Wendeltreppe.* White label affixed to sheet verso, bottom left, with text printed in black ink: *Winding-stair.* Inscribed in blue ink on sheet verso, bottom right: *foto herbert bayer 1928 / Pont transbordeur, Marseille / vintage print 1928 neg. available.*

PROVENANCE: The artist, Aspen, Colo., or Montecito, Calif.; probably by consignment to Prakapas Gallery, Bronxville, N.Y.; purchased by Thomas Walther, November 8, 1984; given to The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Thomas Walther, 1612.2001

15
Humanly Impossible (Self-Portrait)
(Menschen unmöglich [Selbst-Porträt])
1932
Gelatin silver print, 1932–37

IMAGE: 15 5/16 × 11 9/16" (38.9 × 29.3 cm)
SHEET: 20 1/16 × 14" (51 × 35.5 cm)

MATERIALS: double-weight paper, semireflective
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: enlargement, photomontage, retouching (additive), retouching in negative

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Signed on penultimate-generation print, appears on image, bottom right: *herbert bayer 32.* Inscribed in pencil on sheet recto, bottom left: *menschen ünmöglich.* Inscribed in pencil on sheet recto, bottom left: *erschreckendste vorstellung* [erased].[1]

1. "most frightening concept."

PROVENANCE: The artist; given to Allen Porter (1902–1987), Rhinebeck, N.Y., 1939–51; given to R. Sebastian Eggert, Port Townsend, Wash., 1983–84; sold through Christie's East, New York (sale 6135, lot 27), to Thomas Walther, May 13, 1986; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

HISTORICAL EXHIBITIONS: ▣ London Gallery Ltd. *Herbert Bayer* (nos. 16–23, as untitled photograph in the series *8 Photomontages* [1932]). April 8–May 1, 1937; Staatliche Schule für Kunst und Handwerk, Saarbrücken, Germany. *subjektive fotografie 1* (no. 632). 1949.

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS: Steinert, Otto. *Subjektive Fotografie: A Collection of Modern European Photography*, pl. 7 (as *Menschen-unmöglich [Fotomontage]*). Bonn: Brüder Auer Verlag, 1952.

Thomas Walther Collection. Acquired through the generosity of Howard Stein, 1611.2001

Plate 100

Irene Bayer-Hecht
American, 1898–1991

16
Untitled (*Bauhaus Theater*)
March 16, 1927
Gelatin silver print, 1927–35

IMAGE: 3 × $4\frac{1}{8}$" (7.6 × 10.5 cm)
SHEET: $3\frac{1}{8}$ × $4\frac{1}{4}$" (7.9 × 10.8 cm)

MATERIALS: single-weight developing-out paper, semireflective
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: contact print

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, center: *IRENE BAYER* [oriented upside down with respect to image]. Inscribed in blue ink on sheet verso, bottom left: *foto: irene bayer-hecht* [oriented upside down with respect to image]. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, bottom right: *TW 840302* [oriented upside down with respect to image]. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, bottom right: *oR* [oriented upside down with respect to image].

PROVENANCE: The artist; to Alma Siedhoff-Buscher (1899–1944), Frankfurt; by inheritance to the estate of Alma Siedhoff-Buscher (Joost and Lore Siedhoff), Frankfurt, 1944; purchased by Egidio Marzona, Berlin/Bielefeld, 1978–79; purchased by Ex Libris (Arthur Cohen and Elaine Lustig Cohen), New York, c. 1980;[1] purchased by Thomas Walther, March 1984; given to The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

1. Arthur Cohen and Elaine Lustig Cohen mounted an exhibition of *Foto-Auge* photographs at Ex Libris, in New York, c. 1980.

Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Thomas Walther, 1613.2001

Lotte (Charlotte) Beese
German, 1903–1988

17
Untitled
1926–28
Gelatin silver print, 1926–39

IMAGE: $4\frac{7}{16}$ × $3\frac{5}{16}$" (11.3 × 8.4 cm)
SHEET: $4\frac{3}{4}$ × $3\frac{1}{2}$" (12 × 8.9 cm)

MATERIALS: single-weight developing-out paper, semireflective
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: contact print, retouching (additive)

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Signed in blue ink on sheet verso, top center: *lotte beese.*

PROVENANCE: The artist; to Alma Siedhoff-Buscher (1899–1944), Frankfurt; by inheritance to the estate of Alma Siedhoff-Buscher (Joost and Lore Siedhoff), Frankfurt, 1944; to Egidio Marzona, Berlin/Bielefeld, 1978–79;[1] purchased by Ex Libris (Arthur Cohen and Elaine Lustig Cohen), New York, c. 1980;[2] purchased by Jill Quasha, New York, 1981; to Edwynn Houk Gallery, Chicago, 1989; purchased by Thomas Walther, October 24, 1990 ; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

1. The image was published in Egidio Marzona, *Bauhaus Photography* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1987), pl. 7 (as *L. Beyer [-Volger] in the studio, 1927/28*) and attributed to Margit Kallin.

2. Arthur Cohen and Elaine Lustig Cohen mounted an exhibition of *Foto-Auge* photographs at Ex Libris, in New York, c. 1980.

Thomas Walther Collection. Abbott-Levy Collection funds, by exchange, 1614.2001

Plate 43

18
Untitled (*Bauhaus Weavers [Bauhaus Weberinnen]*)
1928
Gelatin silver print, 1928–44

IMAGE (DIAM.): $3\frac{5}{16}$" (8.4 cm)
MOUNT: $5\frac{13}{16}$ × $5\frac{1}{2}$" (14.8 × 14 cm)

MATERIALS: gaslight developing-out paper, semireflective
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: contact print

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Inscribed in pencil on mount verso, bottom left: *CEO 348*. Inscribed in pencil on mount verso, bottom right: *Tondo Beese*. Inscribed in pencil on mount verso, bottom right: *52*.

PROVENANCE: The artist; to Alma Siedhoff-Buscher (1899–1944), Frankfurt; by inheritance to the estate of Alma Siedhoff-Buscher (Joost and Lore Siedhoff), Frankfurt, 1944; purchased by Egidio Marzona, Berlin/Bielefeld, 1978–79;[1] possibly to Galerie Berinson, Berlin;[2] to Thomas Walther; given to The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

1. The image was published in Egidio Marzona, *Bauhaus Photography* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1987), pl. 113 (as *Bauhaus weavers, 1928*).

2. This direct transfer is questionable: a print of the same size sold at an auction at Christie's East, New York (lot 139), May 26, 1982.

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS: *bauhaus* 2, no. 4 (1928): cover (as *bauhausfoto lotte beese*, with cover headline "junge menschen kommt ans bauhaus!").

Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Thomas Walther, 1615.2001

Plate 41

Aenne Biermann
German, 1898–1933

19
***Summer Swimming* (*Sommerbad*)**
1925–30
Gelatin silver print, 1925–30

IMAGE: 7 × $7\frac{7}{8}$" (17.8 × 20 cm)

MATERIALS: double-weight developing-out paper, glossy
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: enlargement, ferrotyping, retouching (additive)

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, top center: *000*. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, center: *1* and *1*. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, center: *Sommerbad*. Stamped in black ink on sheet verso, center: *aenne biermann, gera, d.w.b./nr.* [inscribed in pencil on number line inside artist's stamp: *000*]. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, bottom right: *W* [circled] and *121*.

PROVENANCE: The artist, Gera, Germany; to Franz Roh (1890–1965), Munich, by 1930; by inheritance to the estate of Franz Roh (Juliane Roh, 1909–1987), Munich, 1965; to Galerie Wilde (Ann and Jürgen Wilde), Cologne, 1968; purchased by Thomas Walther, 1991; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

Thomas Walther Collection. Bequest of Ilse Bing, by exchange, 1621.2001

Plate 61

Bayer-Hecht
16

Beese
17

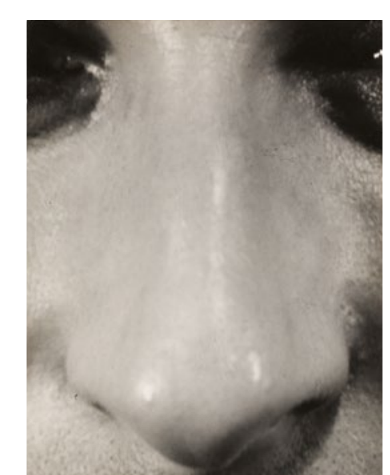
18

Biermann
19

20

21

22



20
Funkia
1926
Gelatin silver print, 1926–30

IMAGE: 9 × $6\frac{3}{4}$" (22.9 × 17.1 cm)

MATERIALS: double-weight developing-out paper, semireflective
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: enlargement, ferrotyping, retouching (additive)

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, top center: *Fungia*. Stamped in black ink on sheet verso, top center: *aenne biermann, gera, d.w.b./nr.* Inscribed in pencil on number line inside artist's stamp: *143*]. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, center: *143*. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, center: *1+* [erased]. Inscribed in black ink on sheet verso, center: *S*. Inscribed in black ink on sheet verso, bottom center: *143*.

PROVENANCE: The artist, Gera, Germany; to Franz Roh (1890–1965), Munich, by 1930; by inheritance to the estate of Franz Roh (Juliane Roh, 1909–1987), Munich, 1965; to Galerie Wilde (Ann and Jürgen Wilde), Cologne, 1968; purchased by Thomas Walther, November 1979; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

HISTORICAL EXHIBITIONS: ⦿ Städtische Ausstellungshallen, Stuttgart. *Internationale Ausstellung des Deutschen Werkbunds Film und Foto* (*Fifo*) (no. 123, as *Funkie*). Organized by Deutscher Werkbund. May 18–July 7, 1929.

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS: Roh, Franz. *Aenne Biermann: 60 Fotos*, pl. 40 (as *Funkia*). Berlin: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1930.

Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Arthur M. Bullowa, by exchange, 1616.2001

21
***Ficus elastica* (*Gummibaum*)**
1926
Gelatin silver print, 1926–27

IMAGE: $14\frac{3}{4}$ × $11\frac{1}{8}$" (37.5 × 28.2 cm)
MOUNT: $19\frac{5}{16}$ × $14\frac{11}{16}$" (49 × 37.3 cm)

MATERIALS: baryta-less developing-out paper, matte
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: enlargement, retouching (additive, reductive)

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Signed in pencil on mount recto, bottom right: *Aenne Biermann/* [two illegible letters or numbers]. Stamped in black ink on mount verso, top center: *AENNE BIERMANN, GERA/Nr.* [inscribed in pencil on number line inside artist's stamp: *2148*] [with rectangular outline]. Inscribed in pencil on mount verso, bottom left: *Gummibaum 1926*. Stamped in black ink on mount verso, bottom center: *Galerie Wilde Köln*.

PROVENANCE: The artist, Gera, Germany; to Thilo Schoder (1888–1979), Gera/Norway, c. 1927; to Galerie Wilde (Ann and Jürgen Wilde), Cologne, 1973; purchased by Thomas Walther, 1982; given to The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

HISTORICAL EXHIBITIONS: ⦿ Museum Folkwang, Essen. *Internationale Ausstellung Fotografie der Gegenwart*. Organized by Kurt-Wilhelm Kästner. January 20–February17, 1929; ⦿ Städtische Ausstellungshallen, Stuttgart. *Internationale Ausstellung des Deutschen Werkbunds Film und Foto* (*Fifo*) (no. 132, as *Gummibaum*). Organized by Deutscher Werkbund. May 18–July 7, 1929.

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS: Roh, Franz. *Aenne Biermann: 60 Fotos*, pl. 1 (as *Ficus elastica*). Berlin: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1930.

Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Thomas Walther, 1617.2001

22
***Nose* (*Nase*)**
1929
Gelatin silver print, 1929–33

IMAGE: $9\frac{3}{8}$ × $6\frac{15}{16}$" (23.8 × 17.7 cm)

MATERIALS: double-weight developing-out paper, glossy
TECHNICAL ATTRIBUTES: enlargement, ferrotyping, retouching (additive), retouching in negative

MARKS AND INSCRIPTIONS: Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, top: *Nase*. Stamped in black ink on sheet verso, top: *Linden-Verlag/München*. Stamped in black ink on sheet verso, center: *aenne biermann, gera, d.w.b./nr.* [inscribed in pencil on number line inside artist's stamp: *1929e*]. Stamped in black ink on sheet verso, right: *Edition "Tilleul"/Paris*. Stamped in black ink on sheet verso, right: *6. DEC. 1933*. Inscribed in pencil on sheet verso, center: *1929/e*.

PROVENANCE: The artist, Gera, Germany. Willem Diepraam, Amsterdam; sold through Sotheby's New York (sale 6599, lot 268) to Thomas Walther, October 6, 1994; purchased by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2001.

Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Mrs. Flora S. Straus, by exchange, 1618.2001

Plate 69

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