

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Tel. 956-6100 Cable: Modernart

NO. 85
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HERBERT BAYER: PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKS is on view in The Museum of Modern Art's third-floor Edward Steichen Center through January 29, 1978. Selected from the larger exhibition directed by Betty Gold and Leland Rice for the Arco Center for the Visual Arts in Los Angeles, the exhibition offers the first comprehensive view in this country of Bayer's work in this medium. Forty-five photographs, photomontages, and Fotoplastiken, dating from 1925 to 1937, are on view.

The mid-1920's were characterized by an irrepressible optimism centered in the liberating potential of scientific and technological achievements, including the introduction of the miniature hand-camera. Leland Rice comments that "it was during this period that photography gained importance for the Bauhaus artist, Herbert Bayer, and began to influence his work. Bayer's camera vision and imaginative approach to composition partially took rise from the art movement Constructivism, as well as the reasoned and conscious teachings of the Bauhaus.

"As early as 1929," explains Mr. Rice in his introductory text, "Bayer began working with the technique of photomontage. He would cut up photos, reassemble them, sometimes retouch, and finally rephotograph. Photomontage lent itself to an increasing intellectualization as evidenced in this quote: 'We live in a time of the greatest precision and of maximum contrasts: photomontage offers us a means to express this. It shows ideas: photography shows objects...the montage makes images of a surreal character, of the impossible and the invisible possible. It has been compared to a conquest of the irrational, it can express the hallucinations of dreams.'"

"The term photoplastics or Fotoplastiken, the latter term being used by Bayer, was originally coined by Moholy-Nagy to stand for a method of 'simul-

(more)

taneous presentations' of a heterogeneous selection of materials. In constructing the images in this series, Bayer would set up the objects and, after photographing the arrangement from a number of camera positions, would touch out the visible supporting props, sometimes airbrushing to add clouds which realistically appeared as if to be floating in and about the arranged objects. This retouched preliminary art work would then be photographed."

While Bayer is noted for his ingenious photographic collages, he was also active as a painter, graphic designer, and exhibition designer. An Austrian student of painting, Bayer worked under Kandinsky at the Bauhaus School in Weimer, later becoming a Bauhaus master at Dessau in 1925. He designed the exhibition Deutscher Werkbund for the Grand Palais in 1930 with Walter Gropius, Laszlo Maholy-Nagy, and Marcel Breuer. He worked as an exhibition designer in New York City from 1938 to 1946, designing such notable shows as Bauhaus 1919-1928 (1938) and Road to Victory (1942), both for The Museum of Modern Art.

Herbert Bayer: Photographic Works, with an Introduction by Leland Rice and an essay by Beaumont Newhall, was published by the Arco Center for the Visual Arts in conjunction with the exhibition. The 92-page book, containing 74 plates, is available in The Museum of Modern Art Bookstores for \$7.95.

The Museum of Modern Art's exhibition program is made possible in part with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency whose funds are recommended by the Governor and appropriated by the State Legislature, and the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C., a federal agency.

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CHECKLIST

HERBERT BAYER: PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKS

October 31, 1977 - January 29, 1978

Museum No.	Title/date
1. 1977.953	Self-Portrait in Mirror, c. 1928
2. 1977.939	Morning in Paris, 1925
3. 1977.964	Ascona, 1929
4. 1977.965	Castello Sforza, c. 1930
5. 1977.945	Small Harbor, Marseilles, 1928
6. 1977.940	Milan, Piazza del Duomo, 1928
7. 1977.949	Shadow on Steps, 1928
8. 1977.948	Pont Transbordeur, 1928
9. 1977.989	Self-Portrait, 1937
10. 1977.943	View from Pont Transbordeur, 1928
11. 1977.947	Pont Transbordeur, 1928
12. 1977.942	Pont Transbordeur, over Marseilles, 1928
13. 1977.971	Gothic (positive image), 1931
14. 1977.970	Gothic (negative image), 1931
15. 1977.962	Wannsee Beach, Berlin, 1929
16. 1977.957	Boccia, 1928
17. 1977.961	Garden Restaurant, c. 1929
18. 1977.955	Legs in Sand, 1928
19. 206.73	Sundeck, 1928 The Museum of Modern Art, New York David H. McAlpin Fund
20. 1977.963	Glass Eyes, 1929

Museum No.	Title/date
21. 1977.959	Pebble Beach (Positive image), 1928
22. 1977.958	Pebble Beach (Negative image), 1928
23. 1977.975	At the Acropolis, 1934
24. 1977.987	Spoon Sale, 1936
25. 1977.966	Playing Knight, 1930
26. 1977.968	Double Image, 1930
27. 1977.967	Smoking Knight, 1930
28. 1977.969	Knight With Flower, 1930
29. 1977.999	Among Odalisques, c. 1931 (Photomontage)
30. 1977.998	Good Night, Marie, 1932 (Photomontage)
31. 1977.992	Profil en Face, 1929 (Photomontage)
32. 1977.1001	Lonely Metropolitan, 1932 (Photomontage)
33. 1977.995	Look into Life, 1931 (Photomontage)
34. 1977.1003	Self-Portrait, 1932 (Photomontage)
35. 1977.1000	Creation, 1932 (Photomontage)
36. 1977.997	The Kiss, 1932 (Photomontage)
37. 1977.988	My Climbing Boots, 1936
38. 1977.1014	Standing Objects, 1936 (Fotoplastiken)
39. 1977.1011	Wall with Shingles, 1936 (Fotoplastiken)
40. 1977.1010	Stable Wall, 1936 (Fotoplastiken)
41. 1977.990	Shells, n.d.
42. 1977.1006	Metamorphosis, 1936 (Fotoplastiken)
43. 1977.1005	Nature Morte, 1936 (Fotoplastiken)
44. 1977.1015	In Search of Times Past, 1952 (Photomontage)

This exhibition was edited by John Szarkowski from a larger exhibition organized by Leland Rice for the Arco Center for Visual Art, Los Angeles and circulated by E.D.O. Comprehensive Exhibition Services.

All photographs are from the collection of Herbert Bayer except No. 19.