

#06
THE

CLASSIC

AUTUMN 2021

A free magazine about classic photography

In this issue

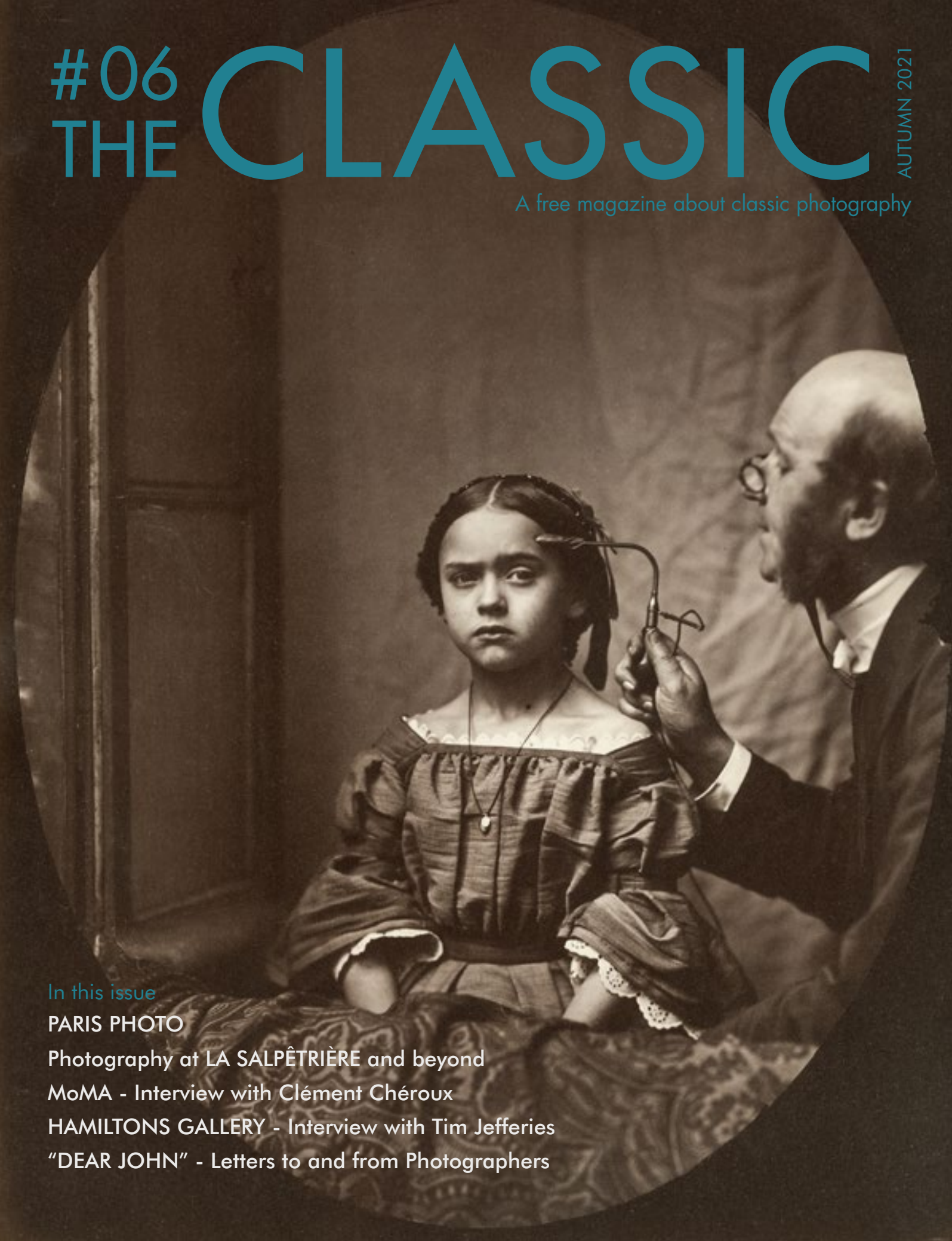
PARIS PHOTO

Photography at LA SALPÊTRIÈRE and beyond

MoMA - Interview with Clément Chéroux

HAMILTONS GALLERY - Interview with Tim Jefferies

"DEAR JOHN" - Letters to and from Photographers



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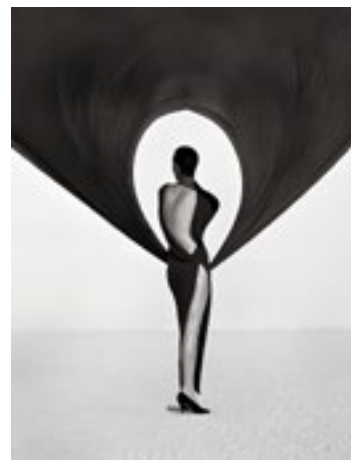
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Cover: Duchenne de Boulogne. Study of the expressive lines of the frontal muscle in a 6-year old girl. To the left, elevation and curve of the eyebrow without frontal creases. Right, lowering of the eyebrow caused by the impression of too bright a light. Albumen print on mount, 1855-1856. Courtesy of Christophe Goeury.



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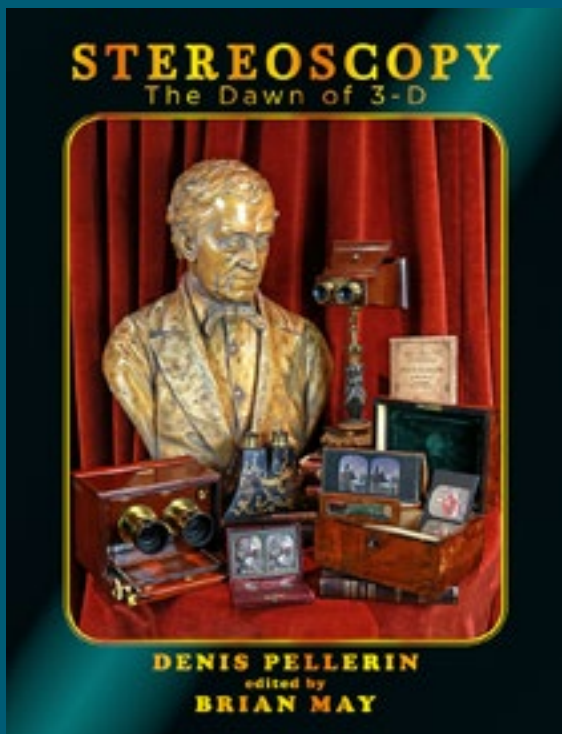
From the editor

The *Classic* doesn't have a complaints department. But maybe we should. "Calls answered 24/7". Because I did receive a complaint recently, that our magazine focuses too much on "expensive things". Do we? While there are indeed some expensive things in our pages, there is usually a fair amount at the other end. This time, we feature Melbourne-based artist and collector Patrick Pound, whose purchases are usually "well under \$20".

Once again, we spill over from the magazine onto our online resource, *The Classic Platform*, where you will find more on Patrick Pound, Blanche Wittmann and La Salpêtrière, plus letters, including a rare letter from the collection of Stephen White, from Joseph Cundall to Alfred Swaine Taylor, describing the historic night Herschel shared his discovery of the cyanotype process with the world.

There are many other new articles on the platform and our most industrious contributor Denis Pellerin starts a new series called *A Second Lease of Life: Sitters and Photographers*. Part 1 focuses on Mrs. Alfred de Beauchesne (sitter) and Savary (photographer). Pellerin has been busy elsewhere, and hot off the presses is his new book, *Stereoscopy: the Dawn of 3-D*, edited by Dr. Brian May. It's a fascinating story, the birth and first steps of an astounding discovery, which led in just a few years to the original Golden Age of Stereoscopy, the amazingly inventive and prolific first thirty years, from 1832 to 1862, of what we now call "3-D".

Michael Diemar
Editor-in-chief





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By Stephen White

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The Democratic Picture: Grace McCann Morley
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By Alexandra Moschovi

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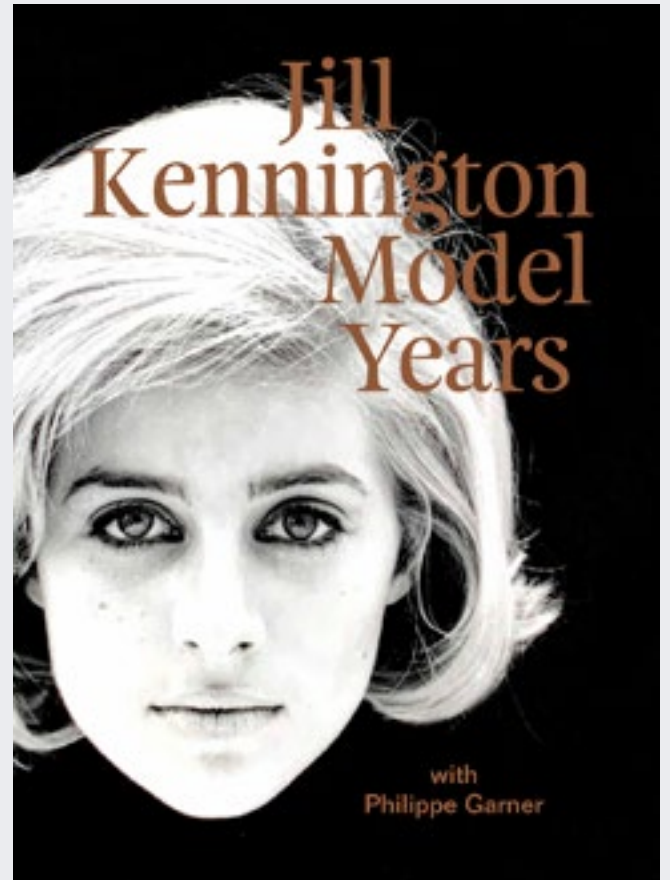
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FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CAMERA

Jill Kennington was among the most successful models of her generation, embodying a fresh, youthful, and dynamic ideal of beauty that came to define the Sixties. Her memoir takes the form of an extended interview in which she responds vividly and with disarming frankness to questions from historian Philippe Garner, who initiated and shaped the project.

Chapter titles such as “To Turkey for Elle”, “To the Arctic for American Vogue”, “To Kenya with Peter Beard”, and “Cast for Antonioni’s Blow-Up” give the flavour of Jill’s professional experiences through those heady years. She describes her collaboration with some of the greatest photographers of the era, including Richard Avedon, William Klein, Saul Leiter, Helmut Newton, and Norman Parkinson; and she shares her memories of a remarkable cast of characters that includes Federico Fellini, Norman Hartnell, David Lean, Mary Quant, Vidal Sassoon, Terence Stamp, and Veruschka. You can read more about the making of the book on *The Classic Platform*.

Jill Kennington Model Years
is published by Unicorn Publishing Group



GOING BACK IN TIME

Santa Monica-based Peter Fetterman Gallery is best known for its very large inventory of interwar, post-war and contemporary photography, but recently Fetterman has begun focusing on earlier periods as well. “I have acquired two large holdings of works by Edward S. Curtis (1868-1952) and Samuel Bourne (1832-1912). Curtis’ 20-volume *The North American Indian*, published in 1907, never ceases to amaze me with its beauty and humanity. British photographer Samuel Bourne may have had more humble ambitions but his years in India, 1863-1870, resulted in 2200 images of extraordinary and timeless beauty.”

www.peterfetterman.com

Edward S. Curtis. *A Hopi Man*, platinum print, 1904.

WESTLICHT / OSTLICHT INTERVIEW WITH PETER COELN

By Mary Pelleier

Twenty years ago, a space dedicated to photography and camera history popped up at Westbahnstrasse 40 in Vienna. Westlicht was the city's first museum to focus solely on photography, founded by Peter Coeln, one of the best-known names in European camera dealing. In the years since 2001, Coeln expanded the Westlicht family to include Ostlicht Gallery, a commercial space located about 5 kilometres southeast of its west side counterpart. While Westlicht and Ostlicht's programmes operate independently, having two spaces in the same city can also be fruitful – this summer, the museum's Nobuyoshi Araki retrospective, *Arakiss*, spilled over into Ostlicht, where prints were also available for purchase.

Coeln, who was experienced in organising camera auctions, decided to expand Ostlicht's programme to include photography sales in 2009. Ostlicht now holds two photo auctions per year, and invites buyers and photography lovers alike to visit their pre-sale exhibition. The goal, Coeln says, is educating the community about photography as art no matter what form that takes. As Ostlicht geared up for its Autumn auction, taking place on 19 November, Coeln took some time to speak to *The Classic* about how Westlicht got its start, and how the programme has expanded over the past 20 years.



PETER COELN

All images © OstLicht Photo Auction.



Installation view of the recent Westlicht/Ostlicht exhibition *Arakiss*.

What was your motivation for founding Westlicht and Ostlicht Galleries in Vienna?

– It started exactly 20 years ago. Westlicht's space is in my former photo studio for advertising and fashion photography. At the end of 1999, early 2000, I got fed up with photography, because everything went to digital, which I didn't like. I decided to use this location for a photo museum because I thought, "There's nothing like that in Vienna." We have a lot of museums, but none of them are really focused on photography. I also had the idea to have a camera museum at the same place, meaning hard and software together. When we opened Westlicht, we started to build up a very big photo collection – now it contains around 200 000 artworks and 35 000 books. This was always a very big goal for us, to establish a collection for research and also to keep cultural material together. As I was in the position with Leica shops, we made quite a lot of money, and we invested everything in photography.

It's worked really well, because I saw that there was a big demand for photography in Vienna. We were quite underdeveloped, as I usually say, regarding photography, and it's a long story that photography was not so recognised as a kind of art, especially in Austria. We immediately started getting a lot of visitors and just before coronavirus, and have ended up with 80-90 000 visitors per year – the hotspots for photography in Vienna.

Ostlicht is in a different location to Westlicht. How do the spaces differ?

– Westlicht is to the west in Vienna, and "licht" is light. And if you have a Westlicht, you need an Ostlicht of course, which is more in the east of Vienna. We began Ostlicht about eight years ago. The difference is that Westlicht is a museum – there's nothing for sale, only a little museum shop. But I also wanted to make a nice photo gallery. We found Ostlicht's location, which is more than 1000 square metres, and established the photo gallery. The idea was to show more contemporary photography in order to promote young Austrian photographers, but it's quite difficult, especially if photography is not recognised as art as it would be in America or in France. We need a Nordlicht and Sudlicht now!

Ostlicht has been holding twice-yearly photography sales in Vienna since 2009. How did these sales begin, and what is their relationship to the galleries themselves?

– I was deep in the camera auction business, which we started in 2001, and they were very successful. I also had a camera shop and I found out there's a certain group of people that are much more interested to buy at auctions. There's the thrill of auction



Theodore Lux Feininger. *Gret Palucca at the home of Lyonel Feininger*, 1928, vintage silver print, 24 x 18 cm. Ostlicht Photo Auction 9 March 2018. Result 24 000 € (Starting price 2 800 €)



Robert Capa. *The Falling Soldier* (Loyalist Militiaman at the Moment of Death), Córdoba front, September 5th, 1936, vintage silver print, 12,4 x 18,6 cm. Photographer's "Black Star" credit stamp and handwritten notation "Death suddenly comes to a soldier" in pencil on the reverse. Ostlicht Photo Auction 23 November 2018. Result 120 000 € (Starting price: 60 000 €)



Jaroslav Rössler. *Untitled (Still life with small bowl)*, Prague 1923-25, vintage silver print, 22,6 x 23,4 cm. Ostlicht Photo Auction 8 May 2020. Result 28 000 € (Starting price: 12 000 €)

Gjon Mili. *Pablo Picasso drawing a centaur in the air with light and other light drawings*, 1949, 5 Vintage silver prints, each c. 34 x 26 cm. Ostlicht Photo Auction 16 April 2021. Result 38 000 € (Starting price: 12 000 €)

– I know it because I love auctions myself and I love to buy in auctions. Of course we could reach a much wider range of buyers doing an auction because you can easily reach an international base. For a gallery, it's quite difficult if you don't go to camera and photo fairs every few weeks, which I don't like very much. With auctions, you can reach the world, and build on the possibilities of the internet as well.

What kind of imagery does Ostlicht specialize in?

– We cover the whole range, from early 19th-century photography to contemporary. One of the biggest things for me, which I like very much, and I think is kind of the really true photography, is photojournalism, which I'm very, very fond of myself as a collector. With prices, I've always wanted to be in the middle, between the really big players like Sotheby's or Christie's and the smaller auction houses. I'm happy to



Bernd Becher / Hilla Becher. *Ansichten eines Wohnhauses in Birken bei Siegen*, 1971, 8 Vintage silver prints, mounted and framed all together, each c. 24 x 18 cm. Ostlicht Photo Auction 16 April 2021. Result 75 000 € (Starting price: 30 000 €)

sell “in-between” photographs with the starting price of a few hundred euros to give access to people and collectors with limited budgets. If you want to promote photography as a kind of art, you can't only have starting prices at 5000 euros. So it's a balance – of course, there are more expensive items, but also photographs we like, and our curators like, which are not blue chip.

I'm very happy to promote Austrian photographers, who are not so well known, especially in foreign countries. A photographer we've supported for ages has been Franz Hubman – I think 20 years ago, nobody knew him, and now his photographs sell really well, especially in America. But it has to be a balance that the catalogue is a commercial success, and a balance that I like to promote photographs which we believe are worth showing or selling which are not famous.

How have you seen your client base evolve in the past decade? What are people looking for these days?

– I'm quite happy that we have more and more Austrian buyers – we want to promote photography in Austria. It's a kind of mission. Westlicht has a mission to promote photography, and in some ways we do it also with Ostlicht and the Ostlicht Auctions. But I must say most of them are international buyers, and we do sell quite a lot to dealers as well. The important thing is to get the right material to attract people, and quite unfortunately I see a trend to the more expensive it is, the easier it is to sell. In Austria, I would say the really serious photo collectors you can count on both of your hands. I'm happy if I go into a house and see photographs, even if the guy's not really a photo collector. But really serious collectors – there are very few in Austria.

What are some of your most memorable sale moments?

– I'm not so focused on single moments – I want to see it as a whole thing. Our auctioneer is a dear friend of mine, and he's very professional, but also very funny. Buying has to be fun, and you have to enjoy it. Before the sale, we also always exhibit the whole catalogue, like a museum collection. We frame all the photographs and put them on the wall and describe them for three weeks. This



Wanda Wulz. *Io + Gatto* (Self-portrait), 1932, gelatin silver print, printed in the early 1950s 29,4 x 23,5 cm. Ostlicht Photo Auction 23 March 2014. Result 85 000 € (Starting price: 55 000 €)

is also a kind of education. And even if people don't buy things in the auction, they can see the whole spectrum of photography in an exhibition, which is part of the idea.

What kind of imagery are you personally interested in, both personally and for the museum? Do you collect prints yourself?

– The Westlicht collection and my private collection are stored together. There are some special fields we collect very intensively, such as daguerreotypes, or

stereotype daguerreotypes; we have a very big collection of Cuba material. Vienna Actionism is also a major part of our collection. It's quite a wide field we cover and I'm not so much collecting contemporary photography. My whole life, I've always wanted to establish a really large photographic museum in Vienna, a public museum and government museum. My idea was always to donate the whole collection to such a project, and this is one thing I would love to promote for the future – this is the goal of my collecting.



Mike Seaborne,
Derelict Millwall
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south west towards
the McDougall's
grain silos, 1982

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Stephen Shore, *2nd St., Ashland, WI*, chromogenic print, 1973. Estimate \$12,000 to \$18,000.

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All images courtesy Patrick Pound.



Installation view, Patrick Pound: *On Reflection*, City Gallery Wellington.

In 2014, Patrick Pound filled Australia's National Gallery of Victoria with...air. Photographs of air, that is. The Melbourne-based artist took his collection of vernacular photographs as the starting point for his exhibition *The Gallery of Air* – press images of air conditioners, a snapshot of a tie blowing over a shoulder in the wind – anything that expressed the idea of this ever-present classical element. From the photographs, Pound's exhibition grew to include all kinds of works from the National Gallery's own collection, as well as everyday objects, like an asthma inhaler – an “exhibition run amok”, filled to the brim with imagery and objects playing off each other in every direction.

“My work got a lot more interesting when I stopped taking photos and started buying them,” Pound told *The Classic* when we asked him about his collecting habits. His photography collections – the plural is necessary – function as the foundation of his practice. In fact, the *act* of finding and organising photographs is just as integral to Pound as the images themselves, as he explains below with the same zesty sense of excitement and humour that can be found in his image juxtapositions. “Museums often bureaucratise aesthetics, and archiving artists tend to aestheticize bureaucracy. I'm stuck filing away in between.”



When did you become interested in photography?

– My dad was a great one for slide nights, and unlike the cliché around such events I recall these as being magical. His amusing commentary along with the projections had me spellbound. He also used to paste magazine cuttings on his files, his folders, and his drawers, and eventually the bedroom walls and ceiling, and without thinking, I followed suit (laughs).

For me, photographs are deeply sentimental and melancholy things. They are so personal, direct, and relatable. They are evidentiary yet unreliable. I'm drawn to so-called vernacular photographs with their indexical relationship to the world and, paradoxically, to their subsequent status as little lost ruins. They are like rubbings of light. But that light is always fading. The camera is an idling hearse.

The internet is now overflowing with a world of discarded photographs and eBay is a vast unhinged album just waiting to be reassembled (laughs).

What came first: your collecting, or your art practice?

– Like most artists I started by collecting things to inform the work and what gradually happened was the collections

became the work. The collection became the medium if you will. You might say I segued a pathology into an art practice. Collecting is an open, pliable, way of making. Everybody also relates to things so directly. To collect is to gather your thoughts through things. I didn't think through the storage implications though (laughs).



Patrick Pound. *The Museum of Holes* (detail), 2010 - ongoing.

What kind of imagery can be found in your collection(s)?

– It might seem as if I collect photographs and objects as if on a dare, but there are limits (laughs). I collect under a little over 150 category 'subjects' or 'thematic' constraints ranging from 'Leaning left' and 'Leaning right' to 'People holding a single thing'. Then, there are three main physical types of photographs I collect. Discarded family or amateur snaps,

photographs from defunct newspaper archives and promotional photographs from cinema. I collect from the early days of the medium right up to digital snaps that have been printed out. I'm interested in the photographs as material objects, as *things*.

There are a lot of so-called vernacular photography collectors who are after inadvertent artworks, those unintentional 'master-pieces'. I love those too

of course, but they aren't my focus. I'm more interested in photographs that fall in an interesting way under one of my constraints, and then become a contributing participant of a collection-based artwork. There's also the fact that photographs record things that are unrelated to both my very particular constraints and sometimes even to the intentions of their usually anonymous photographers.



Where/how do you acquire photos? Is there a sense of 'the chase' that you have when you are looking out for imagery?

– I get most of my photos on eBay. The search is a central part of the work. I spend hours online every day. I'm very interested in how the search algorithms work from 'near neighbors' to the poetry of the amusing missteps and productive fails of the 'logic-gates'. The genius of the internet is that it shows us what it thinks we will like, based on what we have liked before (laughs). Each of my collection-based works retains something of the patina of the search. I have made several works that are completely dependent on the suggestions of the algorithm and her logic gates filtered through my taste profile, my previous search and purchasing history and that of my friends, and so on.

Patrick Pound. Studio Collection (detail), 2021.

What kind of quality do you look for in prints? Are there any qualities you keep an eye out for?

– I have too many! Within my existing collection constraints, I try and get a little history of photography as it were. I love the range from the purposely or accidentally damaged print to the perfect amateur snap with an exquisite, patterned border. I have everything from Daguerreotypes and tin types to Kodak number ones to Polaroids to snaps from the chemist.

I am very keen on newspaper photographs that have been painted for press. I have a special interest in mistakes: from photographers' thumbs to camera straps in shot to absent mothers to interruptions. I love images that are in themselves a palindrome, or a *mise en abyme*. I'm collecting certain forms of photograph in an attempt to get an example of each of my 100 or so collection constraints. So, I am trying to find an example of each category in what was widely known as either a 'wallet print' or 'bonus print' where an extra print came in two convenient sizes.

I also collect some photographs for their own sake – rather than as primary material for my collection-based artworks. I'm



Patrick Pound. Damaged (detail), Collection Art Gallery of South Australia.

collecting the 80 Atget *petits métiers* that were made into a series of picture postcards in the early 1900s. I have 79 and am going crazy looking for the last one!

I'm very interested in Atget and have collected accordingly, but also in photographs that come in various states, what

you might call photographs in transmission, from a Woodbury type of a painting to an engraving to a reproduction in a book for example. I also collect early novels that are illustrated with or by photographs. I hold Carol Armstrong's beautiful book 'Scenes in the Library' responsible for that expensive folly.

On the subject of pricing – how much does the market ‘value’ play into your decision making?

– I try not to spend too much on a single image. The majority of what I buy is well under \$20 a photo, but each of the collections have some examples that I have had to stretch for. Some of the personal interest material is more expensive of course, so I am more restricted there!

How large is the collection?

– I haven’t ever counted the photographs, but it is getting quite substantial I suppose. It has crept up on me. I imagine there are more than 50 000 photographs, but I really don’t want to know (laughs).

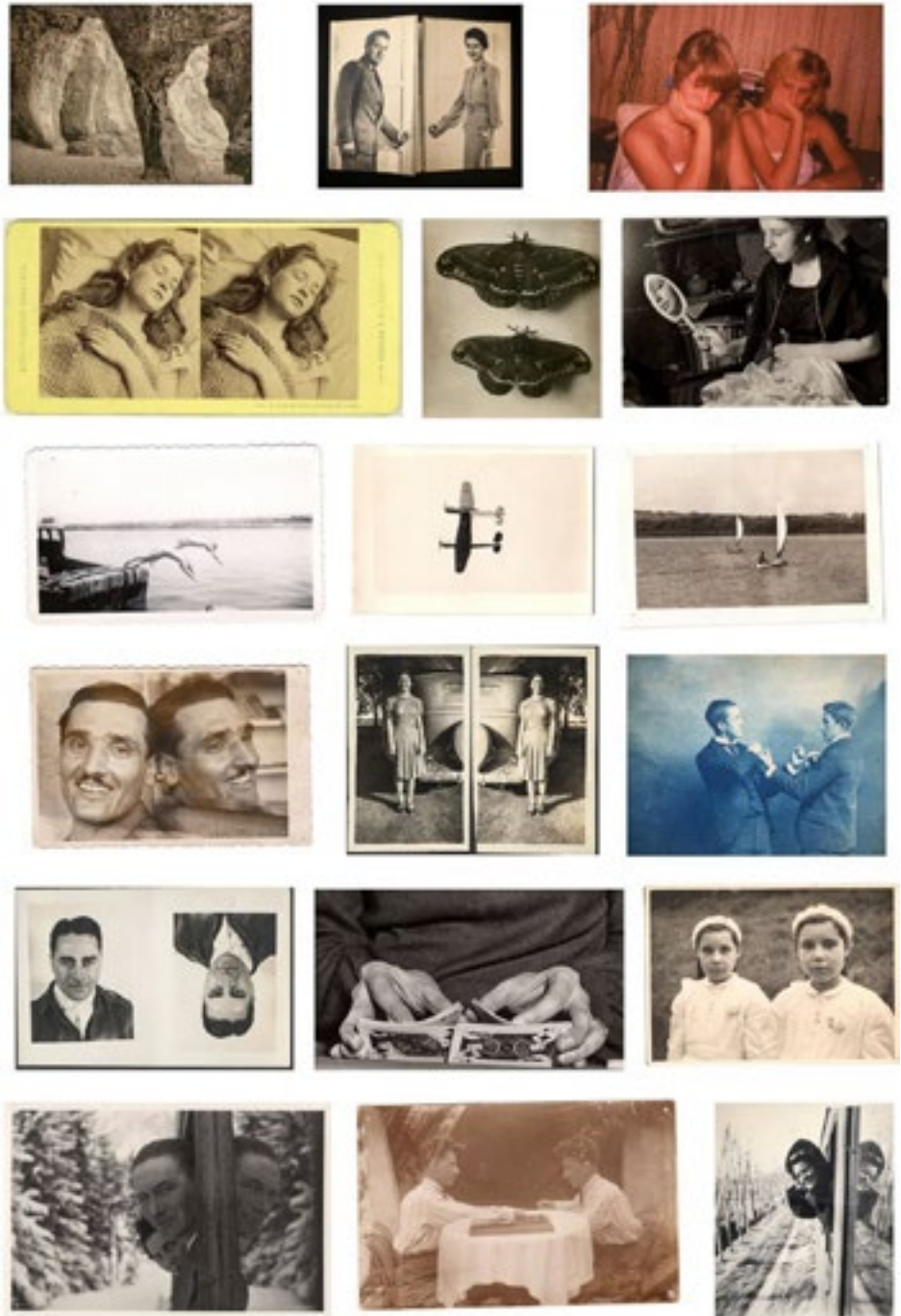
How are you able to organise your collection – physically, and digitally?

– I arrange them in several ways. I began by putting the photographs in lovely archival boxes, but this became too expensive an option. I then shifted to basic black steel drawers. These are more versatile too. I can add to them and move them about in the stack, so one collection can speak to another more closely. I also have numerous folders full of possible photographic combinations. So, there are folders full of possible pairings. I am very interested in the ways in which photographs can be put together, whereby two images seem to make up a third force if you will. Some things appear to have nothing in common until they meet. I love the ideas of the portmanteau and the palindrome. I have many folders of images that might be found – and made to physically, or formally or conceptually, align. I do also occasionally make collages with the photographs, and these are kept separately in drawers as well.

Of course, many of the photographs could equally fit in other collection categories. That is both a joy and a curse for me. But what I find even more interesting in this, is that when one collects in categories – or under specific constraints – the rest of the world always sneaks in.

What are some of the plans you have coming up for exhibiting the collection(s)?

– My next exhibition in Melbourne is at the Heide Museum of Modern Art. I will be exhibiting a series of 1940s



Patrick Pound. *Doubles and Pairs*, ongoing collection.

paintings by the Australian modernist Albert Tucker that are dramatic nocturnes, and all ‘powered’ by electric light. I am placing these within a large blackened-room full of my collected photographs that either feature lamps or a range of subjects that all together will add up to a vast crime scene. The ruse will be that the exhibition is somehow ‘lit’ by Tucker’s paintings and the photographs themselves. Well, that’s the idea.

Our conversation with Patrick Pound continues on *The Classic Platform*, where he tells us about his prior exhibitions and installation methods, including *The Gallery of Air* and *Patrick Pound: The Great Exhibition*, held at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne in 2017.



PARIS PHOTO

BARBARA MORGAN, MARTHA GRAHAM, AMERICAN DOCUMENT (TRIO), 1938; BARBARA AND WILLARD MORGAN
PHOTOGRAPHS AND PAPERS, LIBRARY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, CHARLES E. YOUNG RESEARCH LIBRARY, UCLA.

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PARIS PHOTO

PARIS PHOTO, the world's leading art fair dedicated to photography, returns for its 24th edition, but this year the fair is held in Grand Palais Éphémère, an elegant temporary structure, while the Grand Palais is undergoing refurbishment.

It's an impressive programme as always, with altogether 177 exhibitors from 25 countries, hosting 148 galleries and 30 publishers and booksellers.

The Classic is an official media partner with Paris Photo, so in case you need more copies of the new issue, you will find them in the magazine racks or the kiosk, which also has a comfortable lounge area.

The fair welcomes 29 new main sector galleries, including Afronova (Johannesburg), Loft Art (Morocco), Christian Berst Art Brut (Paris) and Marlborough (New York), which will show rare images by Bill Brandt, Brassai, and Irving Penn, presented for the first time in 40 years. Among the many returning galleries are Hans Kraus Jr., Hamiltons Gallery and Howard Greenberg Gallery.

The **Curiosa** sector, inaugurated in 2018 and dedicated to emerging artists, presents a selection of 20 projects curated by Shoair Mavlian, director of Photoworks and former assistant curator of photography at the Tate Modern.

Paris Photo continues its commitment to women in photography with **Elles x Paris Photo**, a programme initiated in 2019 in partnership with the French Ministry of Culture and supported by Kering / *Women in Motion* to promote the visibility of women artists and their contribution to the history of photography. For this 2021 edition, Nathalie Herschdorfer, an art historian specializing in photography and director of the Musée du Locle, Switzerland, presents a selection of works chosen from the galleries' proposals.

If you can't travel to Paris this year, Paris Photo launches its first-ever **Online Viewing Room**, which opens to the public November 11-17th. The new online platform offers Paris Photo galleries and book dealers additional exposure to expand upon their artistic programmes presented at the fair. For collectors and enthusiasts, it is an opportunity to easily acquire artworks, list favorites, discover new talent, peruse curator picks and forge new connections with galleries and art book dealers from anywhere in the world. Visitors will also have access to digital programming and live content developed exclusively for Paris Photo.

As usual, there is much else going on in Paris. Photos Discovery, the satellite fair for Classic photography, returns to Pavillion Wagram on 13 November; for more details, see: fair.photo-discovery.fr

And the photography auction calendar is busy as always. You can keep yourself updated with our auction calendar, theclassicphotomag.com/the-classic-auction-calendar

GRAND PALAIS ÉPHÉMÈRE

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Michael Hoppen Gallery

will bring a key group of its Japanese artists, plus one surprise: Tetsuya Ichimura. Hoppen explains, "Tetsuya Ichimura is often included in the key post-war photography reviews of books etc. – but never exhibited, that we could find. We managed to track him down, or rather a relative. He is still alive but hard to speak to as he is now very old. We have managed to get 12 vintage prints. Probably the only prints there are as no other galleries have him and never had. His work shares an ethereal quality with Aikira Sato, but Ichimura focused on the landscape as well as the female form, creating unique juxtapositions."

Tetsuya Ichimura. Untitled from *Come Up*, gelatin silver print, circa 1969.

London-based **England & Co** specialises in conceptual and performance-related photography from 1960 onwards and will show a selection of works by gallery artists, with particular focus on Anne Bean and Rose Boyt, with the latter's black and white photographs she took in 1978, while posing nude for a portrait by her father, Lucian Freud. Also on show will be an image of Boyt holding up her hand, with a ring drawn on her finger and signed by Andy Warhol, following his proposal to her after the two met in New York, taken in a Polaroid photo booth at the top of the World Trade Center.

Rose Boyt. *Self-Portrait with ring by Andy Warhol*, polaroid, 1978. Courtesy of England & Co.

Expect the unexpected at the stand of Montreuil-based **Galerie Lumière des Roses**. The gallery specialises in striking images by unknown photographers. They are hard to find, Philippe Jacquier explains: "The average is one great image per month." And if you visit the stand on the opening day, be sure to come back, as works sell quickly and are replaced with new ones.

Unknown photographer. *Mrs Glover*, gelatin silver print, circa 1928.



Galerie Françoise Paviot

will present masterpieces by, among others, Charles Nègre, Man Ray, Ansel Adams, Walker Evans, Berenice Abbott, including a rare movement study by Étienne-Jules Marey. The gallery will also show a selection contemporary works by Alain Fleischer, Anna et Bernhard Blume, Aki Lumi and Juliette Agnel.

Étienne-Jules Marey. *Movement study of a jumper*, five images per second, gelatin silver print, circa 1890. Courtesy of Galerie Françoise Paviot.

Budapest-based Vintage Gallery

has selected works by artists representing different positions in Hungarian modernist photography and the post-war neo-avant-garde art scene. The comparison of pre-war works by internationally-recognised artists like André Kertész and Imre Kinszki and their post-war followers lightens the breaks in the history of progressive Hungarian art. The presentation will have a special focus on Dóra Maurer's early work, following her solo exhibition at Tate Modern 2019-2021.

Gyula Holics. *Still-Life*, gelatin silver print, 1950s.

Nailya Alexander Gallery

will present a solo exhibition with Alexey Titarenko, curated by Gabriel Bauret, featuring Titarenko's groundbreaking work *Nomenclatura of Signs* (1986-91), a series of photomontages and collages inspired by the Russian avant-garde that describes the absurd and darkly comic Soviet reality; and *City of Shadows* (1991-94), in which he unleashed the expressive potential of long exposure in depicting the suffering and anxiety that followed the fall of the USSR, transforming signs of happy workers into ghostlike phantoms.

Alexey Titarenko. *Vasileostrovskaya Metro Station (Crowd 1)*, St. Petersburg, unique toned gelatin silver print, 1991-1992.

© Alexey Titarenko. courtesy Nailya Alexander Gallery.



Antwerp-based **Gallery FIFTY ONE** will show works by Harry Gruyaert, Stephan Vanfleteren, William Klein, Katrien De Blauwer, Sandro Miller, Malick Sidibe, JD Ohkai Ojeikere, as well as recent works by Bruno V. Roels. Roels photographs almost nonstop, documenting his entire life, building a sizable archive. In his dark room he uses that archive to explore the analogue photographic process. Rather than trying to make “the perfect gelatin silver print” he assumes that all prints are perfect and gives all variations equal attention. Roels is looking for poetry, and photographic truth, in sequences and fluctuations. Details in his photographs may become lead motives in bigger compositions, and obvious subject matter is reduced to abstract information through numerous reiterations.

Bruno V. Roels. *Many Moons Ago #1*, gelatin silver print, 2021.



Kicken Berlin will present a dialogue among various artists from the 1850s to today with an emphasis on modernism from the interwar years, and a particular focus on “sheroes of photography”. The presentation will highlight the esteem for women photography artists, as multifaceted as they are diverse. Unified in the joint practice of the most modern medium of their time are, among others, Hanna Höch, Sibylle Bergemann, Helga Paris, Ute Mahler, Diane Arbus, Sibylle Bergemann, Florence Henri, Jitka Hanzlová, Marta Hoepffner, Lucia Moholy, Tata Ronkholz and Monika von Boch.

Hannah Höch (1889-1978) *Über dem Wasser / Over the Water*, 1943, collage of paper and offset prints on cardboard
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn, 2021 / Courtesy Kicken Berlin



Galerie Johannes Faber of Vienna will show a selection of vintage photography, Austrian, Czech, as well as works by the international masters. Highlights include a nude study by Heinrich Kühn, Man Ray’s *Érotique voilée*, Paris 1933, *Javier* by Robert Mapplethorpe and Moriz Nähr’s portrait of Gustav Klimt with Cat.

Moriz Nähr. *Gustav Klimt with Cat, Vienna 1911*
Vintage silver print.



Robert Mann Gallery, New York, will present a group important vintage prints by Doug Biggert, as well works by Julie Blackmon, Joe Deal, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Cig Harvey, Maroesjka Lavigne, Aaron Siskind, Thomas Struth and Weegee. Also included in the presentation is Herman Leonard's classic portrait of Charlie Parker, captured in full flight at Birdland in 1949.

Herman Leonard. *Charlie Parker, New York, 1949*, gelatin silver print. © Herman Leonard Photography, LLC, Courtesy Robert Mann Gallery.



Grégory Leroy and **Charles Isaacs**

have teamed up again for a joint presentation, this time solely of Mexican photographers; Lola Alvarez Bravo, Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Kati Horna, Armando Salas Portugal, and Yolanda Andrade. It's the first time that Andrade's work has been exhibited in Paris; she documented 1980s LGBT life in Mexico.

Yolanda Andrade. Untitled, from the *Strip Club* series, gelatin silver print, 1981.



Galerie Julian Sander, Cologne,

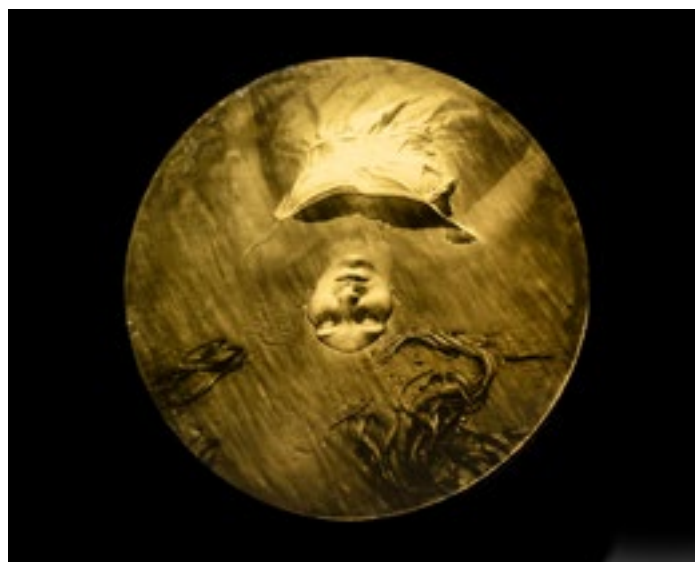
will present a selection of works in honour of Julian Sander's father, Gerd Sander, who sadly passed away earlier this year. Gerd Sander was the grandson of August Sander and a towering figure in the photography world. Julian Sander explains, "The exhibition presented at this year's Paris Photo is a reminiscence of Gerd Sander's life. It is also a platform to talk to the photo community about him and give people an opportunity to exchange ideas. The works shown represent a careful selection across all genres of Gerd Sander's collection. In a way, it is also a reckoning with a changing cultural landscape and a reminder that we, as viewers, have just as much responsibility for the arts as the artists who produce it."

Ed van der Elsken. *Saint-Germain-des Prés*, gelatin silver print, 1953.



Bruce Silverstein Gallery, New York, will focus on leading female Modernist photographers this year, with a presentation of rare, vintage masterpieces by Berenice Abbott, Germaine Krull, Helen Levitt, Ilse Bing and others.

Germaine Krull. *Advertisement for the Six Peugeot 12-cylinder*, gelatin silver print, mounted on original blue cardboard, circa 1930. Courtesy of Bruce Silverstein Gallery.



Hans Kraus Jr. will present 19th- and early 20th-century photographs as "Pairs", whose elements may stand in contrast to one another (negative/positive) but sometimes complement each other (similar images made using different processes). Works by Charles Nègre, William Henry Fox Talbot, Anna Atkins, Frederick H. Evans, Gustave Le Gray, Roger Fenton, Ernst Heeger, Étienne Carjat, Henri Le Secq and Henry White, and others will be shown as paired juxtapositions. One of the works, a waxed Calotype negative by Benjamin Brecknell Turner, has an unusual provenance – it once belonged to an unknown British collector and was rescued during the Blitz.

Benjamin Brecknell Turner. *Bust of Dionysus*, Calotype negative, waxed, early 1850s.

Parisian **Galerie Vu'** will show a presentation underlining the gallery's commitment to the fine print as well as experimental techniques, including works by Juanan Requena who uses coffee in the printing process, Magali Lambert, who as a meditation on the mourning of love, made a silver print of a portrait of a loved one on a glass globe, and photographed the 30 different stages of degradation of the print until it almost disappeared, and works by Juan Manuel Castro Prieto, who during the lockdown developed a new technique of silver printing on glass plates, with gold leaf.

Juan Manuel Castro Prieto. *Ofelia*, silver gelatin print on a glass plate, covered with gold leaf, 2020.

PARIS PHOTO

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Interior of the Hamiltons Gallery
stand at Paris Photo Los Angeles, 2013

BY MICHAEL DIEMAR

HAMILTONS GALLERY

INTERVIEW WITH **TIM JEFFERIES**

Those who attended openings at Hamiltons Gallery during the '80s and '90s are not likely to have forgotten them. They weren't like other gallery openings. When I meet up with gallery owner Tim Jefferies, he describes them as "happenings". And they got pretty wild at times, with anywhere up to 500 people, actors, models, rock stars, celebrities, paparazzi, TV crews, and when Helmut Newton and Herb Ritts were on show, desperate, young fashionistas would clamour outside, some offering guests money for their invites. The gallery was huge back then, the back of it, with its high ceiling, resembling nothing less than a medieval hall. It has since been transformed into Jefferies' office, probably one of the largest and most elegant in the London art world.

This year marks 37 years of Hamiltons as a photography gallery. There are still those who tag it as a "glam gallery", overlooking all the other photography it has shown over the years; Don McCullin, Robert Frank, Tomio Seike, Daido Moriyama, Murray Fredericks and Roger Ballen to name just a few, and overlooking its role in establishing photography in London.

If I remember correctly, Hamiltons started as an Impressionist gallery before it became a photography gallery.

– Hamiltons Gallery was incorporated in 1977 and was at that point a gallery, and a venue that artists could rent. Andrew Cowan was its managing director. I got involved in 1984, when I was in my early 20s. Andrew and I met socially one evening and struck up a conversation. He told me that the

TIM JEFFERIES



Portrait by Sarah Weal

people who owned the business were done with it and had offered him the opportunity to raise some money and take it off their hands. So Andy asked me, would I have any interest in that? It was as simple and as unexpected as that. It wasn't a great life plan of mine to get involved in the arts or photography, or indeed, in a gallery. It just happened, as the result of a chance meeting at a drinks party. So, Andy, myself and four other people put money in and took on the business as a going concern. I didn't take it terribly seriously at first. I thought it was just a bit of fun. After about a year, it became apparent that there were too many people involved. Andy and I discussed the potential of the gallery and what we



Horst P. Horst. *Round the Clock* 1987, platinum palladium print.
 © The Horst Estate, courtesy of Condé Nast.

should do. Andy was the driver behind photography. His then-wife, Fiona, was a photographers' agent who represented Norman Parkinson among others, so we had this readymade set of connections. Neither Andy nor I knew anything about the art world, the world of painting and sculpture, but the world of photography was in its infancy, and it was obvious that it had real potential.

It's worth reminding ourselves of what the photography world in London consisted of at that point. The Photographers' Gallery had opened in 1971, and would a few years later open a small room for print sales. Also in 1971, Philippe Garner instigated a programme of regular photography auctions at Sotheby's, followed within six months by Christie's, though both would for the foreseeable future focus on 19th-century material. Canon had a gallery off Regent Street. Contrasts Gallery, London's first fully-fledged commercial gallery had opened in Dover Street in 1980, and then closed three years later.

– There weren't many photography galleries, and certainly none anywhere in the world with a space like this. The space we're sitting in now was the main exhibition space. There were established galleries in the US

– Fraenkel Gallery, Fahey/Klein, Peter MacGill, Light Gallery – but our space was something else. It was very extravagant, and very surprising, for “just photography”. The space was actually very helpful for getting some traction. We kicked off with shows with Norman Parkinson, David Bailey, Terry O'Neill, Bob Carlos Clarke, a very London-centric, fashion-focused group of people. They were all superstars, despite having very little in terms of a market for their prints. They were very, very famous, with many books already published. It helped to explain, perhaps seduce people into the world of buying photographs, as we were able to back up our claims by showing books. And at the time, those photographers' prints were around 150-200 pounds. When their prices got into 4 figures, we were thinking, “How are we going to pull this off?” But slowly, slowly, we gained momentum, through the space and the buzz we created.

And the openings were a big part of that?

– The openings at Hamiltons were “happenings”. There were paparazzi, TV crews, we had 400-500 people, and they would spill out into the street, and sometimes the police came and moved people on. It was wild! And Andy and I were into all that. It was fun! There was no master plan at that point. We simply asked ourselves, “What can we do? What's fun? What's good? What's interesting? What can we sell?”

In Issue #4 of *The Classic*, Philippe Garner discussed just how long it took for fashion photography to be accepted by the photography world. And Hamiltons Gallery was branded as “Glam”?

– When we started in the '80s, we erred on the side of the most obvious path, with fashion and well-known, living, celebrated photographers. The truth is, we cut our teeth and gained a foothold in the world of photography through fashion. Nearly everything we showed early on was fashion or sexy pictures, beautiful girls and handsome boys. That was what the '80s and the '90s were about. In the early '90s, we had the supermodel phenomenon. It was a fantastically exciting time. After a while it slightly jarred with Andy and I that Hamiltons was talked about in terms of, “Oh yeah, they're the guys who do fashion photographs”, and we were dismissed by many. But let's not forget, Irving Penn, Richard Avedon, William Klein, all really great names, all made fashion pictures, as well as brilliant portraits or still lifes. Having said that, we definitely had a hand in bringing fashion photography into the firmament of the collectors' market.

You said that the exhibition programme was London-centric early on, but you began showing Helmut Newton in 1984 and Horst in 1986?

– We did the first Newton show in September 1984. He was already very famous, but it was quite difficult at the time, as people were quite disparaging about his “girlie pictures”. Anna Wintour famously referred to him as “The King of Kink”. Newton was not taken seriously at all in the US at that time. He was irreverent, funny, had a wicked sense of humour. He sent a postcard to Philippe Garner asking about the gallery, and Philippe helped make it happen. We showed three suites from *Private Property*. There were 45 prints in the set, priced 5 000 or 7 500 dollars, huge money then. I don’t think we sold any, perhaps one at the most.

And Horst?

–Yes, and it seems almost strange, but Horst was here! You know, I have become a bit of a dinosaur. I have been at it now for 37 years, but each and every one of all those photographers we worked with back then was still alive. Norman Parkinson, Irving Penn, Richard Avedon, Herb Ritts, Robert Mapplethorpe. We collaborated face-to-face, in person, on exhibitions. Having Horst in the gallery was such a treat. A fabulous gentleman, a man from a different era. He came from the roaring ’20s, lived an extraordinary life and saw amazing things and documented them. He was a great, great photographer and a fabulous human being, mischievous and fun. I think Andy realised the full scope of his importance before I did. But one of the things that Hamiltons Gallery did was to introduce platinum printing into Horst’s vernacular. That was a result of having been introduced to the fabulous platinum prints of Robert Mapplethorpe. We worked with some of the great platinum printers, Sal Lopes and Martin Axom, and we borrowed the idea of platinum printing on linen from Robert. We created the editions of the best images. It was super exciting, super lucrative, they were very beautiful. Divine objects.

Was there a typical buyer at that point? Media people? Advertising people?

– Yes, there was. They were from advertising, media, fashion, music, all visually literate people. It sounds so strange today, in the 21st century, when we are completely bombarded with images. We are much more visually literate now than most people were in the ’80s, so those people understood the value of strong images and had



Herb Ritts. *Versace Dress, Back View, El Mirage, 1990*, gelatin silver print mounted to board.
© The Herb Ritts Foundation.

grown up with those images. But there were also people from the business world who were always looking for something interesting to collect, and hopefully make money from it. And remember, back in the day, we were selling the best of the best Irving Penn prints for 2 000 dollars. Pictures that went on to be worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. So we brought significant works, to London, and to the market as a whole.

Hamiltons Gallery didn’t invent the limited-edition photograph, wasn’t the first to show and sell it in London, but it did establish it in London as something serious to buy. And confidence that the editions were indeed limited was crucial to get the market going. As photography expanded in the ’90s and 2000s, with new galleries on both sides of the Atlantic, there were some who opted to sell posthumous prints, and some who sold, in essence, “posters”, not even printed from original negatives. You were quite vocal about this on occasion?

– Water finds the path of the least resistance. Some of the people who deal in what I call posters, or posthumous material, as well as estates that start printing, they weren’t there in



Albert Watson. *Gabrielle Reece, Vivienne Westwood, Comédie Française*, 1989, vintage gelatin silver print. © Albert Watson.

the beginning. Because it was impossible to sell something without giving some kind of indication or assurance as to how many there were going to be, whether it was 10, 50 or 1000, at least you were able to say that there's a finite number. And then no more will be printed. People were happy to know that because photography is an infinitely reproducible medium, to know that it was a sensible medium to place money in. I didn't agree with the Norman Parkinson estate printing posthumous editions. It put us in a very awkward position. You sell prints in editions of 10 or 25, then suddenly someone thinks, "Well, screw that, we are going sell posthumous editions, clearly marked and they're going to be less expensive." There is a market for it but it's not for me. One sets a standard of excellence.

I knew all the photographers we worked with back then personally. Mapplethorpe could find fault in a picture that you and I would think was perfect. And

once he had pointed that out, you couldn't unsee it. If there are prints that Mapplethorpe approved but didn't get to sign, then they are valid. There are many photographers who passed away and left behind prints that they approved but didn't sign. There's a place for that, you stamp it as a lifetime print. But as time passes, those who control the estates may think, "This is a great image, let's make an edition of it." First of all, the image wasn't approved by the artist to print any format or as an edition. So it's now the executor of an estate making decisions. I don't think those prints have a place in the world, They're not at the level that we have brought photography to. And I have stuck to my guns.

I have heard from a number of gallerists who started up during the '70s and '80s that Harry Lunn, who had crucial role in building the infrastructure of the market, would turn up, as a self-appointed policeman, to make sure they were doing things right, adhering to the editions, that the vintage prints they sold were indeed vintage.

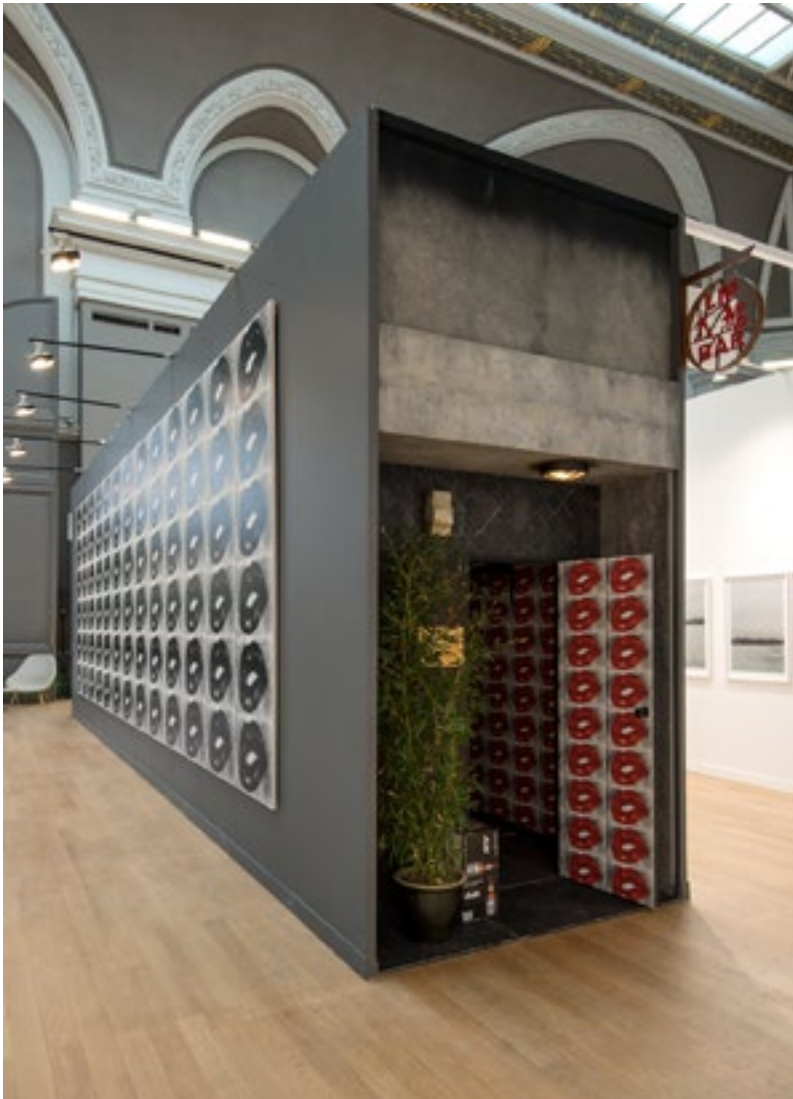
– Yes, Harry was a bit of a policeman. He was very much a mentor for Andy and me. He liked me. And he particularly liked going for lunches, and they lasted from 12.30 until 5. They were long affairs, with a lot of wine! He took a shine to the gallery. He was smart, and saw it as a place where he could funnel some of his inventory, and indeed he did. He championed us and was very supportive when we were talking to Robert Mapplethorpe. He was an extraordinary person in the field and there's been nobody like him since. He had a big, booming voice and would sit at the front at the auctions, and if people were bidding against him, he'd turn around and stare them down. Give them the death stare! He was fantastic. The photography market owes Harry a huge debt. He was helpful to us, and so many others. He saw potential and nurtured it, helped it along.

Hamiltons' first Mapplethorpe show was in 1988, and in retrospect, it strikes me as an important milestone for the gallery.

– It was a major coup for us. I had struck up a friendship and relationship with Howard Read, then at the Robert Miller Gallery, who represented him. At that point, Mapplethorpe prints were 1500 dollars for silver prints, 2500 for dye transfers. I had gone to see Mapplethorpe in New York, as a sort of ambassador for Hamiltons and as I realised later, as bait!

Horst P. Horst. *Costumes by Salvador Dali for Leonid Massine's ballet, Bacchanale, Paris, 1939*, platinum print on long staple cotton. © The Horst Estate, courtesy of Condé Nast.





Daido Moriyama's Lip Bar, installed at Paris Photo's *PRISMES* where he received the honour of a *Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres* in 2018.

I met with Howard, told him we'd love to do a show, that we'd be so honoured, mentioning what we had done. Up until then our programme had been very London-centric and it wasn't lighting up Howard's eyes. But he was a businessman and wanted to get material into the market. So he said, "You need to go and meet Robert." "Great, I'm happy to do that." So off I went. I had a very, very unnerving, and fun, meeting with Robert Mapplethorpe in his studio. We sat like we're sitting here, close, face-to-face. He was sick but it wasn't that visible, though his face was a little gaunt. He was very good-looking and had a sparkle in his eye. I was a handsome young boy back then and he was looking at me like he wanted to eat me! Which was very disconcerting! And then he said, "What do you know of my work?" and I said, "We love the flowers, we love the female nudes", and he said, "Well, I'll show you a group of pictures that would make a great show" and he took me to an area of the studio where he had laid out pictures of the *hardest* homoerotic pornography I have ever seen. It was shocking! But he was fucking with me. He wanted to see me squirm. He was having fun with this young kid who had come from London. I was getting hotter and hotter under the collar; my voice went up. I was trying to be cool, but this was a subject I knew nothing about, one I wasn't particularly interested in, and I certainly didn't want to have a gallery full of it! But it became apparent that he was joshing, and it was fun, and he said, "Look, Tim, Howard has told me great things about the gallery space, that it's really beautiful" and that was partly what sealed the deal. He had only had one show in London before that, at the ICA, in 1983. So I thought it would be great to bring Mapplethorpe to London. And that was part of the deal. Howard said that Mapplethorpe required two return tickets on the Concorde, for himself and Dimitri Levas, and to put them up at the Connaught Hotel. "Sure! No problem, we can do that!" Then he told me the prices, "1500 and 2500, a bit more if they're in special frames. Do you think you can sell them?" And I thought to myself, "How the hell are we going to pull this off?" 500 pounds was the highest price we had charged for a print until then. But I said, "Of course, no problem, we have clients lining up for them."

But it worked?

– Yes, and it was a spectacular show, and a milestone in several ways. Mapplethorpe was the first photographer we showed who also had a foot firmly in the contemporary art world, as the Robert Miller gallery showed Modern and Contemporary Art as well as photography. Mapplethorpe liked being shown by painting dealers instead of dusty old photography dealers. It marked a turning point, in our confidence, in our reputation. And after that it became much, much easier to approach the other American greats: Penn, Avedon, and Robert Rauschenberg.

I know that you and Andy both appreciated 19th-century photography but you never really got involved in it.

– You're right, we did appreciate it, though I didn't really understand it at first. We did a show with Robert Hershkowitz and worked with Hans Kraus on a couple of things but it requires a different connoisseurship and I feel that Hamiltons, which let's face it, has some flash and bang to it, doesn't really serve 19th-century terribly well.

1999 saw a big change, when Andy left and you took over the gallery on your own.

– Yes, and it was quite scary when Andy said, "Look, I've had enough, I'm done." And I thought, "What am going to do?" I had been doing it for 15 years, which is a long time to be doing anything. But nothing else came to mind. For a while I thought about getting a job with a hedge fund. But I'm glad I stuck with this. I closed the gallery and refurbished it, the office on the mezzanine disappeared, the big gallery space in the back became my office. And with refurbishment, came a new approach to how we did things.



And then came a period when you presented painting and sculpture as well as photography.

– The first three or four years as "New Look Hamiltons Gallery", I started working with great friends of mine, Paul Kasmin, Howard Read at Cheim & Read, the Mugar family in New York, doing exhibitions of paintings. I thought that since I knew a lot of painting collectors, knew a lot of people, that I could make it work, but I was wrong. It was hard. The painting dealers were disparaging about a photography dealer becoming a painting dealer. We did some amazing shows, we re-opened with a black and white Andy Warhol show, called *Black-and-white*, and the show was spectacular. I had the best from Mugar's holdings. It was super strong. My pals all came, Simon Le Bon, George Michael, but the paintings were expensive and the people I thought would come running, support and buy, well, they didn't. I suspect they asked their friends, the more established painting dealers, and I suspect, were told, "What does he know about paintings?" It was difficult. We did a great Jean-Michel Basquiat show, which included a painting with a price tag of 2.5 million dollars, which I subsequently sold, about 10 years ago, for 18 million. But at the time I struggled to get a single painting sold. So I thought, "I have confused everybody, confused my loyal collector base in photography, the world of paintings, I have confused myself." So I sort of withdrew from doing

exhibitions of paintings. But having created this huge office space, I decided to sell paintings here, privately, and I have been quite successful in secondary market dealing. I would like to mount more painting shows, and the gallery is so beautiful, so it may happen.

There was another big change, from having done "just" beautiful hangings at the big fairs, you started doing designed environments, and others have followed your lead, making their booths a little more "Hamiltonesque".

– We have always worked with the best but however hard Andy and I had tried, photography was still, and still is, seen as "a poor relation" in the art world. Once I had created this environment I focused more and more on presentation. I had always been interested in framing. I don't think there's another gallery in the world that spends as much time and money on the presentation of its photographs. And that's what I enjoy, it's so much fun. I would say we were among the first galleries to do a "super curated room" setup. We did Masterpiece one year and won the prize for best stand, with an incredibly sexy, den-type environment. It really blew people's minds, and it was done to the nth degree. This was before Helly Nahmad did his much talked about installation *The Collector* at Frieze. We continued, at PAD in London, at Maastricht. All killer installations,

Roger Ballen.
Discussion, archival pigment print, 2018.
© Roger Ballen.

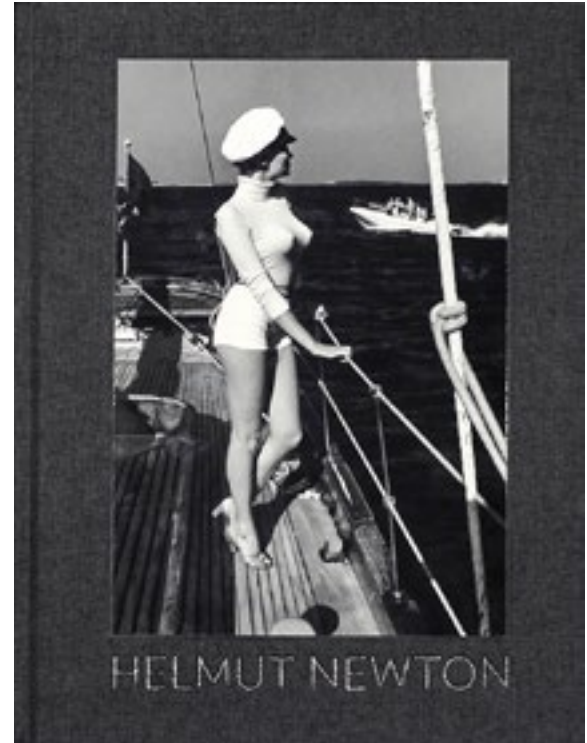


Hiro. Tilly Tizzani with Blue Scarf, Antigua, West Indies, 1963, dye transfer print mounted to linen. © HIRO.

framing, lighting, wow! The fully functional Daido Moriyama Lip Bar at Photo London, I mean, who else does that? It is very time-consuming, it's very expensive, and sometimes it pays off, sometimes it doesn't. There are other galleries in London, they all do great things, but nobody does it the way I do it. Some people don't appreciate it, some people laugh at it, but it's the way Hamiltons does it – where the pictures come alive in a different way. For a moment you are transported out of your normal world. All you can do is look at the pictures. Appreciate them fully.

And they are some pictures. I'm thinking for instance of the three Irving Penn shows you did.

– I have done many shows with Penn, but I did three museum-quality shows, starting with the cigarette stubs, then the animal skulls and then the flowers. I chose those three bodies of work because Penn hadn't made many prints of them. He made prints of only 26 images in the case of the stubs, and in another, he made a unique print of a single image within that series which



Helmut Newton, *High Gloss*. Published by Hamiltons Gallery, 2020. Essays by Philippe Garner and Vasilios Zatsé.

I managed to borrow from New York just to present the complete body of work in the gallery. It took me years to plan and gather the entire series of each, and I produced what was in effect, a Catalogue Raisonné of each. You have to be a bit mad to make these commitments, so I guess I'm mad.

They were fantastic shows, museum-quality, but not enough people came to see them. This is super frustrating for me. We do really, really great things here. That's not me being Donald Trump and bashing my own drum, but we do great, great shows. The Helmut Newton show we just did, *High Gloss*, with incredibly rare Ferrotyped prints from the '70s, and a lavish book, was another museum class presentation. It took me 12 years to put those prints together. Many hours were spent designing and producing the book. We got one single review. It's frustrating, trying to get reviewed and contextualised. It's not a sob story but I would love for what we do to be more widely appreciated and to have more people see these presentations in person.

Publishing is also part of your programme?

– I have published some outstanding books on the work of Irving Penn, Horst, and as mentioned Newton. I have also produced specially bound, limited edition, versions of Don McCullin's Tate Britain and Tate Liverpool catalogues as well a specially bound and limited-edition version of the Horst V&A catalogue. I would love to make more books but the production values that I insist upon make these projects cost-prohibitive!



Horst P. Horst, *Platinum*. Published by Jefferies Cowan, 2006. Foreword by Tom Ford, introduction by Andy Cowan, essay by Philippe Garner.



Irving Penn, *Cigarettes*. Special edition published by Hamiltons Gallery in collaboration with The Irving Penn Foundation, 2012.

Those keen to tag the gallery with “Glam” forget the dozens of other shows you have done: Don McCullin, Daido Moriyama, Robert Frank, Joel-Peter Witkin, and in more recent years, Roger Ballen.

– I really like Roger’s pictures, they are challenging, weird, surreal, just as he is. He’s an extraordinary person. I have really put the shoulder to his work. We have done several shows, but it’s been hard. There is a big audience for his work but not as many collectors. We are about to take some new colour work from him that is really cool. The good thing about me being the sole owner of the gallery is that I can run it like a benevolent dictatorship. I get to do what I want, and I wanted to work with Roger, to introduce that aesthetic. I’m still open to suggestions, but it’s rare that I find a young talent that I want to get behind. We are not the gallery to come to and see the latest, the coolest, youngest thing. We have stuck to the people we championed back in the day and I don’t really have the energy needed to get behind the young photographers.

Hiro sadly passed away in August this year. Of the greats from the post-war era that you have shown, he was not as well-known as he should have been.

– Yes, it was very sad. We showed Hiro here in the ’90s and that was something that Andy drove. Hiro was presented by Pace/MacGill Gallery in New York, and I may have seen a show there to reignite my interest. And because we had history, I was able to pick up where we had left off and present shows with him. He was an extraordinary man, one of the great, old-school giants, like you say, not as appreciated as



Hiro. *Marisa Berenson, Hat by Halston*, (*Harper's Bazaar*), New York, 1969, dye transfer print. © HIRO.



Don McCullin. *Shell Shocked Marine, Vietnam, Hué, 1968*, gelatin silver print mounted to aluminium. © Sir Don McCullin.

he should have been. He came to the US from Japan, studied under Alexey Brodovitch, worked as Avedon's assistant and then Avedon said, "Look you can't be my assistant anymore, you're too good. Would you like to share my studio?" Which he did. Talking about Hiro makes me think of photography in a wider perspective. My bet is – with the barrage of images that wash over us, the "Instagramification" of the world – that a small group of people will question, "Where does photography come from? It can't all be on a screen. There must be something more."

Then, to come here and see a certain type of photography, beautifully presented, beautifully cared for...

Traditional photography – film, prints, Polaroids – doesn't really exist anymore. It's one of the shortest-lived expressions in art. It lasted less than 200 years. It was like a firework, and then it was gone. And I have always been enamoured with that period after WWII, when those photographers were making the most incredible images, like the ones we have in front of the gallery right now, Richard's Avedon's portrait of Marilyn Monroe, next to Don McCullin's *Shell-shocked US Marine*.

You're on the Paris Photo selection committee.

– I have been on the committee for decades and we are one of the cornerstones of the fair. As a result of all the work we have done, I think we have changed the way galleries and auction houses present photographs. Presentation is really, really important. My booth at Paris Photo is always dark and sexy, and it's always packed. People can't believe how good things look. We have influenced a whole generation of dealers in terms of upping their game; and at Paris Photo, there's been a group of dealers who have held the bar high, wanting people to come and be seduced by photography.

Have you decided what will you show at Paris Photo?

– Last year, I wanted to do something major with Newton as he would have been 100 but then Paris Photo was cancelled because of the virus. We were, however, able to honour him through our exhibition at the gallery. I have earmarked a few things I intend to show in Paris but there will always be something unexpected and exceptional that gets included.



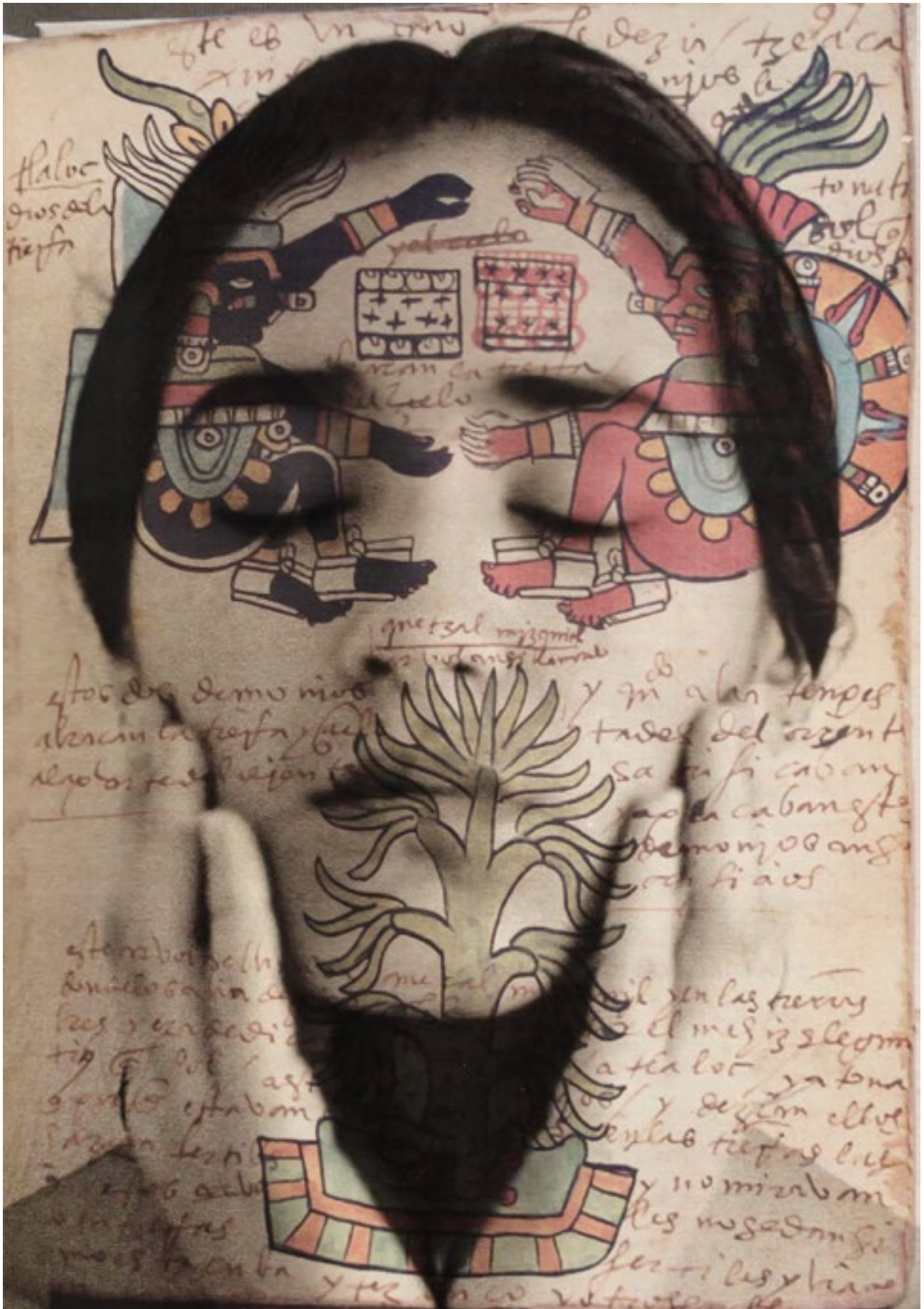
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Edward Curtis. Chief of the Desert, 1904
Vintage Platinum/palladium print



Tatiana Parceró. *Interior Cartography #35*, chromogenic color print and acetate, 1996. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Gift of Helen Kornblum in honour of Roxana Marcoi. © 2021 Tatiana Parceró.

BY MARY PELLETIER

PHOTOGRAPHY AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

INTERVIEW WITH **CLÉMENT CHÉROUX**

In 1933, four years after the Museum of Modern Art was founded in New York City, eight photographers found their way onto the new museum's walls in a show dedicated to mural painting. Among them were Berenice Abbott, Edward Steichen, and Charles Sheeler – all experimenting in the art of the photo-mural, which, as the press release stated, was “a comparatively new one.” Despite the new techniques and “interesting features” to be displayed, photography was still on the outside looking in, even at the Museum of Modern Art; the last line of the description reads perfunctorily: “These exhibits will be hung in a room to themselves so as not to compete unnecessarily with the actual mural paintings.”

Not so today, or for much of the rest of the 20th century. Since the '30s, MoMA has become a guidepost for photography's place in the museum, setting and unsettling trends as the curatorial department changed hands between Beaumont Newhall and Edward Steichen, John Szarkowski and Peter Galassi. Clément Chéroux is the latest in MoMA's line of photography curators. In February 2020, it was announced that the then-Senior Curator of SFMOMA's Pritzker Center for Photography would be trading the West Coast for the East. Prior to his role at SFMOMA, Chéroux was the Chief Curator of Photography at the Centre Pompidou, Paris, and in coming to MoMA, succeeded Quentin Bajac (who, incidentally, was his former colleague at the Pompidou – Chéroux took over Bajac's position as Chief Curator there in 2013).



CLÉMENT CHÉROUX

© Frederic Neema

One year after starting his new position, Chéroux spoke to *The Classic* about his experience as MoMA's Joel and Anne Ehrenkranz Chief Curator of Photography. Despite the coronavirus pandemic, which slightly disrupted Chéroux's move, the department has had a busy year. Last July, MoMA announced a gift of more than 300 photographs from the Gayle Greenhill Collection, and earlier this year, revealed a gift from the Helen Kornblum Collection of 100 photographs by women artists. Oluremi C. Onabanjo has been appointed the department's



André Carneiro. *Rails (Trilhos)*, gelatin silver print, 1951. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Acquired through the generosity of José Olympio da Veiga Pereira through the Latin American and Caribbean Fund. © 2020 Estate of André Carneiro.

newest associate curator, after the departure of long-time curator Sarah Meister for Aperture. In this extensive interview, we discuss Chéroux's own evolving relationship with the medium, hidden facets of the famous department's history, and what photography, new and old, can be when it isn't confined to old definitions – all while keeping a close eye on how we got from photos “hung in a room unto themselves” to where we are today.

You arrived in New York last year to begin your post as MoMA's Chief Curator of Photography. What was it like settling into New York & MoMA during the uncertainty of the pandemic?

– I started working remotely for MoMA in July, from France, and I arrived at MoMA in September. It was still the middle of the pandemic, and that was, of course, a very strange moment. One of the first things that I did when I arrived at the museum was to look at the Eugène Atget photograph collection. I have a particular interest in the window shop series in Paris at the beginning of the 20th century. And

what was a strange feeling is that, a few weeks after I looked at these photographs, during the election in November, all of the storefronts in New York were covered with plywood. That was very interesting for me because most of Atget's window photographs were made in the '20s, so that's a century ago. During that century, in a way, shop windows were the visible face of capitalism. Because all of these shop windows were covered with plywood, I had the feeling that something has changed, a kind of symbol is gone. Of course, today, we have a different relation to the merchandise. Merchandise is mostly stored in large warehouses out of sight, and we have a different approach to this idea of showing the merchandise. And what is interesting is that the shop window in itself has become more and more fragile. When there is a demonstration, these shop windows are the first things people are destroying. I had the feeling that I was witnessing the end of an era, as if I was seeing the symbolic death of a very visible and aggressive form of capitalism, through the photographs of Atget and also by seeing all these



Julio Agostinelli. *Circus (Circense)*, gelatin silver print, 1951. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Acquired through the generosity of Richard O. Rieger. © 2020 Estate of Julio Agostinelli.

vitrynes covered with plywood. Looking at the Atget photographs in the storage and going out of the museum and seeing all these shop windows closed was quite a strange experience.

To start, I thought we might speak a bit about your photography “origin story”. What was it like attending the National School of Photography in Arles?

– I met photography on a train. It was in the mid-’80s. I was something like 16 years old, and I was going to the south of France during the summer. And suddenly I heard a voice on the loudspeaker announcing an exhibition in Car 14. I went to that car, and they had emptied the whole car, removed the seats and replaced the window with walls. And in the train, at high speed, it was as if the photographs on display were like windows open to another world. Three artists were presented in that exhibition. One of them was Pierre Molinier, a very subversive artist close to the Surrealist group well known for dressing himself as a woman in a kind of sadomasochistic

self-portrait. The other one was Michel Journiac, an important French performer in the ’70s, known for making black sausage with his own blood.

So it was quite an edgy show for a train!

– Completely edgy. The third artists were Minot-Gormezano, and they were known for making nudes while in a mud bath. Still today I don’t understand how these subversive artists could have been on view in a train, heading to the Cote d’Azur during the summer holidays with family and children. Probably with the help of some public funds that but you know, that’s France! I was 16, and for me at that time, photography was just a matter of advertising or what I would see in magazines. I had no idea that photography could be also an art form, and that people could create with a camera. That was the true beginning of my interest in photography. I was completely shocked and mesmerised by this exhibition. And since then, I haven’t stopped. I’ve never quit photography or gone a day without thinking, writing, looking at photographs.



Dorothea Lange. *Black Maria, Oakland*, gelatin silver print, 1957.
The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

I started buying books, and I was involved in the photo club in my school. And then I started studying photography at the French National High School for Photography in Arles, and at university. I've had kind of a double education. One education as a photographer – I perfectly know what it means to make or to take a photograph. And on the other side, I have also had an education as a scholar in the history of photography, and it has always been very important for me to have “both sides” of photography – the knowledge but also the practice. I know that it's more common in the US but in France, it's very, very rare. You have to choose if you are a photographer, or if you are a historian or a curator, but you never do the education on both sides. And for me, that defines the way I'm interested in photography, because other historians or other curators are quite usually interested in texts or the reception of photography. What interests me the most is how one takes or makes a photograph, and I truly believe that it's due to the fact that I have a background as a photographer.

And then you went on to the Pompidou?

– I was at the Pompidou for 10 years – six years as a curator and four years as the chief curator of the department. That was a great experience, and I learned a lot at the Pompidou. I was able to curate some very large shows – that's also a big difference. The shows are usually much bigger in France than they are in the US. If you want to do, for example, the Cartier-Bresson retrospective or the Walker Evans retrospective that I curated at the Pompidou, they were between 400 and 500 images. In the US, a big exhibition is usually around 200, or even less than that.

After 10 years at the Pompidou, I felt that I wanted to have a new experience. And when the director and the deputy director of SFMOMA asked me if I was interested in the position of senior director, I accepted it. I'd already lived for a year in the US between 2004 and 2005, when I had the chance to get a postdoctoral fellowship at Princeton University. And since then, I had always wanted to have a working, professional experience in the US.

What differences do you see between curatorial approaches in the US and Europe?

– I must say that I'm very interested in the way that we work in France and the way we work in the US. For me, the biggest difference is related to the question of the processes. Here in the US, everybody's completely obsessed with the process, always trying to understand how we work. It's all about trying to improve the processes. This is a capitalist thing – in order to get things done better and faster, you need to understand them to improve the process. When I was working on the Walker Evans retrospective, I read a lot of John Atlee Kouwenhoven, an American cultural historian that is completely forgotten today. He was very close to Walker Evans, and John Szarkowski was also very interested in the writing of John Atlee Kouwenhoven. In one of his books, Kouwenhoven talks about this American obsession for processes. And he explained, for example, the idea of a car with a transparent hood – it's something that is typically American. He also talked about the invention of chewing gum, which could only be invented in the United States, because chewing gum is completely useless, but it shows the process of chewing.

In the US, there is always some point in the day where you say: How can we do this better? More efficiently? In France, it's never about the process. We have less meetings, and it's always about having intuitions, having gut feelings, having hunches. Sometimes in France, we like to take some side ways and not follow the straight line. This doesn't mean that one way is better than the other. Probably the most difficult thing that I learned during my years at SFMOMA and MoMA is that I had to rationalise

my intuitions to be able to explain them to my team. If you want to bring your team with you, you have to explain things. But it's a learning process, and I'm happy to learn all these things.

One undeniable exhibition touchstone in the history of photography is MoMA's Photography 1839 – 1937, conceived and curated by Beaumont Newhall in 1937. But how did photography figure into the museum programme before this point?

– The beginning of photography at MoMA was closely linked to Walker Evans. MoMA was created in 1929. And the first photograph that entered the collection in 1930, a year after the opening, was a group of photographs by Walker Evans. They were photographic reproductions of sculptures made by the German expressionist sculptor Wilhelm Lehmbruck, and these were the five first photographs that entered the collection. The first exhibition including photographs was organised in 1932 by a friend of Walker Evans, Lincoln Kirstein, and the show was called *Murals by American Painters and Photographers*. It contained photographs by Berenice Abbott, Charles Sheeler, Edward Steichen, and a few others. The following year, in 1933, Kirstein organised the first exhibition of Walker Evans, photographs of the famous 19th-century houses series, where Walker Evans is photographing vernacular architecture. There was no photography department, and it was held in a place that was more dedicated to architecture. After the show, Kirstein, who commissioned the photographs, gave them to the MoMA collection.

What is also important to consider is that at that time Beaumont Newhall was the librarian. He was not the photography curator, and of course, in 1937, he organised the seminal exhibition, *Photography 1839-1937*, and the book that accompanied the exhibition has been reprinted and reprinted. The next year in '38, Walker Evans' second exhibition, *American Photographs*, was the first one-man show for a photographer and it took place between September and November. And here it was, again, Evans with Kirstein – Beaumont Newhall was not involved in that show. In 1940, Beaumont Newhall created the department, and usually we completely forget that Newhall stayed only two years, because he went to war. His wife, Nancy Newhall, took responsibility for the department and remained quite active. But of course, she was a woman, and her role in the development of the department was not as considered as important as her husband's, but she was really instrumental in organising a lot of important exhibitions. It's never simple. When you look at the story of the department at the beginning, Kirstein was highly involved in everything at the museum, and Ansel Adams was also deeply involved in the creation of the department. The story is very complex, and everybody involved had their own interests.

When Newhall's mammoth survey of over 800 photographs and objects was exhibited in 1937, ideas of "pure" photography took hold, and so-called straight photography aesthetics. How do you think this moment at MoMA, from 1937 through the early 1940s, transformed the way the public digested photographic imagery?

– In a way, Ansel Adams acted like a mentor to Newhall when the department was founded. We have to remember that Adams was obsessed with the idea of the print. The print was in the centre of what MoMA was doing for so many years. Adams considered the print as, and I'm quoting him here,



Gordon Parks. *Untitled*, Chicago, Illinois, pigmented inkjet print, 1957. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The Gordon Parks Foundation.



Robert Frank. *New York City*, gelatin silver print, 1951. The Gayle Greenhill Collection.
 Gift of Robert F. Greenhill © 2020 The Andrea Frank Foundation.

“the final expression of the photographer’s visualisation”. It explains how and why the print has been so important in the idea of photography that is being defined by the museum. Steichen moved away from that, with his idea of the exhibition as a kind of magazine layout, and in a way John Szarkowski came back to the idea of the print. I think what is important today is that photography exists in many other forms – there’s the beautiful framed print, but photography also exists in public spaces, it exists on screens, in the form of installations and books. The photo book today is more important than it has ever been in the photo field. Of course, we are going to continue to collect prints. But it’s very important for the photography department to consider what the art historian George Baker called in 2005 “photography’s extended field”. For me, that is very important to defend – I’m not talking about reinventing

the wheel, and the curators in the department have already approached or developed that idea through exhibitions that were made in the past, but I think it’s something really important for the future.

I think many people think of MoMA historically as a place where photography’s curatorial direction is established, and then seeps into the broader museum world – but this direction has changed over the years. Can you tell me about some of the pushback that resulted from Newhall’s point of view, and how curatorial direction changed in the successive years?

– If you look at the history of MoMA in the 20th century, there is a permanent back and forth between two ideas of photography: on one side there is photography as a medium, and on the other side, photography as fine art. It’s like a kind of ping-pong game, or a push-pull. First, we had Lincoln Kirstein organising an exhibition that was about photography as murals. That was a democratic approach, a very popular form of photography, something that can live in the street or the interior of an apartment. Then we had Beaumont Newhall working closely with Adams between ’40 and ’42, championing the idea of photography as a fine art. And then we had Willard Morgan, who has completely disappeared from history. He was the Director of the Department for something like a year and a half, and is known for organising one of the first exhibitions of amateur photography in a museum context in 1944. It was called *The American Snapshot: An Exhibition of the Folk Art of the Camera*, and it was made in collaboration with Kodak. That was a kind of scandal – people were really reproaching him and he left the museum very quickly because it did not correspond to what the museum was interested in at that time. Edward Steichen arrived and was there between ’47 and ’61. He came to the museum with the idea that the wall of the museum is like the page of the magazine, and that he was going to do these huge exhibitions like *The Road to Victory* and *The Family of Man*. So that was, again, the democratic approach to photography. And then we have Szarkowski, who returns to the idea of photography that was really close to Newhall. But of course, it’s always more complex, because Szarkowski was also interested in the vernacular.

There is a kind of tendency to oppose these two very different conceptions of photography. Usually, when we talk about it, it is Steichen vs. Szarkowski, and you have to choose which side you want to be on. They represent two different poles, or polarities, of photography: one very popular and one that is more conceptual or elaborate. And I truly believe that the right position today is no longer to confront them, but rather to try to reconcile them. Or try to explain that photography can be both at the same time. This

is what I'm interested in defending in my role. It's not a contradiction – it's just a kind of dialectical thing that has defined photography itself.

How is the Photography Department structured? I know that long-time curator Sarah Meister has just concluded her time at the museum with the *Fotoclubismo* exhibition.

– Sarah has been a fantastic colleague during my first month at the museum. She really helped me to understand the whole history of the collection,

and even though it's sad to lose her, I'm so happy for her. I think she's in a moment in her career, where she wants to have responsibilities, and I think she is going to do a great job at Aperture. I'm working with a team of 14 people. We have senior curator Roxana Marcoci, and Sarah Meister will be replaced in October by Oluremi C. Onabanjo, who was the former Director of Exhibitions and Collections for the Artur Walther collection here in New York. She has a great expertise in curating, collection care and a great knowledge in African Photography.



El Lissitzky. *Runner in the City (Experiment for a Fresco for a Sports-Club)*, gelatin silver print, 1926. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Thomas Walther. Digital Image © 2021 The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

We have an associate curator, Lucy Gallun, two curatorial assistants, three fellows, one research assistant, one intern, one collection manager, one department manager, the department coordinator and one registrar.

What is the department's current aim where acquisitions are concerned, or areas you would like to see expand?

– In terms of policies, there is an acquisition process at MoMA and we are going to continue to follow it. It's a very established process, and there is no reason to change it. But what is important to discuss is the content of new acquisitions, and how we should be reflecting on what has happened in the past year in terms of violence. When I'm talking about violence, I'm talking about the violence of the pandemic, and the violence of climate change, in front of which we

are not all equals. But also political violence, and when I'm talking about political violence, I'm talking about violence that builds walls, that does not condemn endemic racism, or police violence. The violence that denies equal rights to the members of the LGBTQ+ community, the violence that refuses to accept the results of a democratic election. In that context, it seems to be more important than ever to strengthen what is at the heart of the Democratic principle, meaning plurality, representativeness and equality of different voices.

In the programme that I've built for the photography department at MoMA, the discussion with my colleagues is completely focused on this question of diversity. We are talking about the plurality of photographers that we are showing at the museum, that we acquire for the collection, and that we invite for discussion forums, public programmes, and so on – a diversity of gender, ethnicity, geography, which is something that I think is quite crucial at the moment. What I would like to add is that when we're talking about diversity, we are talking usually about the diversity of the photographers. But what is important for me is that the diversity of the photographer should go hand in hand with the diversity of photography itself. I was talking before about the idea of the print, which has been at the centre of what we have done in the past. I really think that it's important to articulate the diversity of the photographers with the diversity of photography itself.

How will these ideas of diversity translate into your exhibition programme going forward? What do you have planned?

– I'm deeply interested in future acquisitions, but also in developing an exhibition programme related to diversity. It's already the case with the exhibition we have on at the moment, the *Fotoclubismo* exhibition curated by Sarah Meister, which is a show about resilient modernism, and is rewriting the ideas and models of photographic modernism. We have also an artist's choice exhibition, organised by artist Yto Barada with Lucy Gallun and River Bullock. We are also working on three shows: the Helen Kornblum Collection, which is a major gift of 100 photographs that are all made by women photographers, which we are going to show next year, curated by Roxana Marcoci. Roxana is also working on the first big retrospective of Wolfgang Tillmans in the US. When I was talking about the diversity of photography itself, I think Wolfgang is a great example of an artist who has completely revolutionised the way that photography is presented on the wall. With that Tillmans exhibition, we are going to show a different approach to the installation of photographs.



Claude Cahun (Lucy Schwob). *M.R.M. (Sex)*, gelatin silver print, 1929-30. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of Helen Kornblum in honour of Roxana Marcoci.



Kati Horna. *Doll Parts*, gelatin silver print, circa 1938. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Helen Kornblum in honour of Roxana Marcoci.
© 2021 Kati Horna Estate.

The display *Early Photography and Film* is currently on view through the autumn, and it examines the shifting ideas of time and space in 19th-century image-making. What is your take on the role of 19th-century photography at a museum like MoMA, which was founded to celebrate “the art of our time”?

– I think it’s very important, and my position regarding 19th-century is really related to the situation right now at MoMA, where photography is presented within painting and sculpture. For me, 19th-century photography plays an important role at MoMA, especially at the beginning of the story of modern art. As you know, photography was modern before Modernism. It was, in a way, modern from the start. And I’m working right now, as I said before, with my colleagues from the film department on the lens-based room, which will be at the very beginning of the museum visit.

At the moment, photo and film are in the second gallery. We start with Van Gogh’s *Starry Night*, Rousseau, Cézanne, and other paintings from the

end of the 19th century, beginning of the 20th century. Then we have a room about 19th-century photography, with works from the 1860s - 1870s and film right from the beginning. And so there is a kind of disruption in the chronology that we’re going to correct in the next iteration. The big idea in that gallery is to show how much the industrial revolution had an impact on life and vision, and then art, in the 19th century. For example, we have one chapter that is about how the train completely changed the perception we had of the landscape. Another room will focus on electricity, and how it completely changed the atmosphere and the perception of interiors. We are going to show how artists, painters, photographers, and filmmakers reacted to that.

How do you navigate ideas of media-specificity when working with other departments like Film and Media and Performance?

– That’s a very important question, because MoMA is really interdisciplinary. I’ve never worked so much with my colleagues in the other departments, and it’s fantastic. I think it’s about the story of the modern

era. When you look at a lot of the great artists of the 20th century, they were not only doing paintings, they were not only doing photography, they were always doing a bit of everything. And this is really what we are trying to do in the way we are presenting the collection. This is also the reason why we moved from the model of adding a specific place for painting, or a specific place for film. We are really trying to tell the story of Modernism through an interdisciplinary approach.

That said, I still believe in the question of medium specificity. What is important to understand is that the defence of the specificity of the media was something very important in the 20th century, because that was the main strategy for photography to be recognised as an art form in the 20th century, in the context of Modernism, and particularly in the context of Clement Greenberg's Modernism. The defence of the specificity of the medium was the main strategy to get photography recognised as an art. Or, for photography to be recognised as an art, it was necessary to highlight the qualities of photography that other mediums don't have, for example, the documentary value of photography, the reproductive value of photography. Of course, today photography is considered an art, is no doubt about that. And in a way, this strategy was very successful, but it had a side effect. That side effect was the isolation of photography from the other arts. So the question could be, is medium specificity still legitimate today? To be perfectly honest, I'm still interested in medium specificity. If another Walker Evans, or another Becher couple, or another Wolfgang Tillmans show up in the coming years, I don't want to miss that! And in a way, in the whole 20th century, the specificity of photography was defended by isolating it. I truly believe that in the future, we should continue to defend the specificity of photography, not by isolating it, but by combining it with other mediums.

Can you tell me a bit about the department's *New Photography* series?

– *The New Photography* Series was invented by John Szarkowski in the mid-'80s to respond to an urgent need to give contemporary photographers a greater presence at the museum. At that time, the emergency was in the "new" of New Photography. That's not the situation anymore – first because MoMA is showing more contemporary photography than



Herbert Bayer. *Humanly Impossible (Self-Portrait)*, gelatin silver print, 1932. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Thomas Walther Collection. Acquired through the generosity of Howard Stein © ADAGP, Paris, 2021. © 2021 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn. Digital Image © 2021 The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

before, but also because there are many other spaces in New York, that are showing contemporary photography, and the hegemonic situation of MoMA in the '80s has nothing to do with the situation today. Today MoMA is one voice among many other voices. For me, the urgency is not anymore in the 'new'. The urgency is in this question of diversity. As I said before, this is the reason why I'm interested in new photography that explores art scenes outside

of the US or outside of Europe. And when I say that, I don't think it would make sense to have a *New Photography of Africa*, for example, but instead to have a *New Photography Lagos*, or *New Photography Bogota* or *New Photography Hong Kong*, something very focused on the scene. This is what I'm interested in adding.

Your first year and a half in New York has seen a shift at many institutions to an increased social focus on racial equity in America, and broader ideas of de-colonialism within the art world. How is the Photography Department engaging in these types of discussion, especially concerning representation?

– We're talking about that quite often with my colleagues, and I'm very interested in the idea of de-colonialism, and de-colonising the museum. It means questioning certain foundations of the curatorial profession or practice. I truly believe that it's absolutely necessary. In my opinion, it takes three different forms. First, it means questioning the notion of property. Do we have to own everything? I'm not sure. When, for example, The Metropolitan Museum here in New York has a famous Le Gray seascape, or the complete first series of Sherrie Levine, do we need to do exactly the same? Is that necessary? When I'm thinking about the past decades, I have the feeling that the museum entered into a kind of infertile competition, which has been wildly encouraged by the market, because the market is there to sell. It's important to question that today.

The second point is about making choices, because curating is all about making choices. So very easily, you can consider that curating is about discriminating, and the job of the curator has long consisted of creating hierarchies. I remember around 20 years ago reading books about art historians, who were explaining that the most important thing was to make lists of great masters and masterpieces. The curator was the one saying, "This is more important than that." This is not exactly how I envision my profession. I'm not into that discriminatory approach. For me, the most important thing is to show the great diversity of photography, the great richness of photography in all its fields, in all its geographies. The danger is in creating new hierarchies – for example, by showing vernacular photographs, some people are starting to think that vernacular photography is more important. Sometimes I think that people are shocked by what I'm saying, but I don't think that my job is primarily about judging. It's really about pointing at something and saying, "Hey, look at that. There is something interesting here."

There is also a third thing, which is, for me, very important, and it's about the question of care. The curator is someone who is taking care. I must say

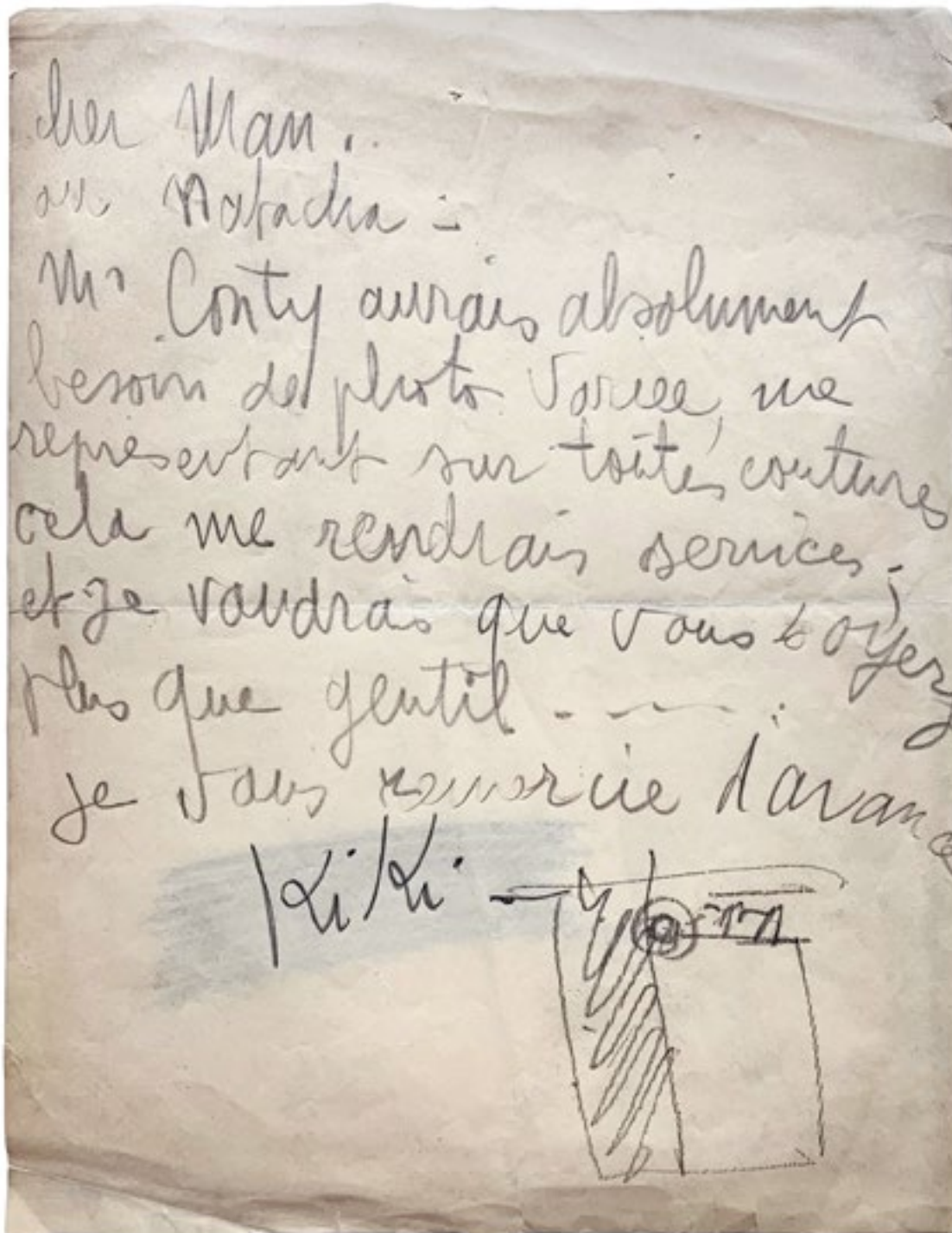


Maurice Tabard. *Test for the Film "Culte Vaudou," Exposition 1937*, gelatin silver print with cellophane sheet, 1936. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Thomas Walther Collection. Gift of Shirley C. Burden, by exchange Digital Image © 2021 The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

that for a very long time, I thought that I was working for photography itself. My mission was photography, and I wanted to defend photography. My attention was completely focused on the object of my discipline, the photographic object. And then a few years ago, I had a kind of eureka moment. I realised that the most important thing was not the object, but the people who came to the museum to look at it. I truly believe today that curators need to shift the notion of care from the object to the public.

EXHIBITION AT JEU DE PAUME

The images on pages 55, 58 and 59 will be on show at Jeu de Paume, Paris, until 13 February 2022. *Masterworks of Modern Photography 1900-1940: The Thomas Walther Collection at The Museum of Modern Art, New York* is organised by The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



**Kiki de Montparnasse to Man Ray
early 1930s**

Dear Man, or Natacha, Mr Conty will absolutely need varied photo, representing me in every angle that would be of service to me. And I would like you to be more than kind Thank you in advance.

Kiki

Emmanuel Lorient at Traces Ecrites in Paris says, "It's one of the most charming letters I have for sale, whimsical spelling and with a little drawing. I'm not sure who Mr. Conty was. Natacha was Man Ray's assistant at the time, as well as his model. Man Ray had of course, photographed Kiki "from every angle" and their collaboration resulted in mythical images such as *Le Violon d'Ingres* and *Noire et Blanche*."

Courtesy of Traces Ecrites.

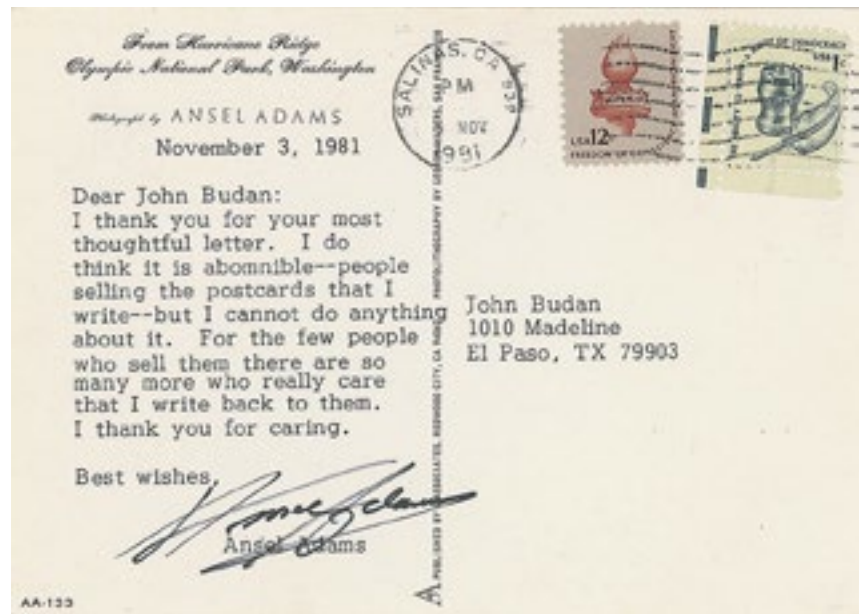
“DEAR JOHN”

LETTERS TO AND FROM PHOTOGRAPHERS

Talking to photography collectors over the years, I have found that many of them have small groups of letters by photographers, anything from discussing their aesthetics or techniques to hastily scribbled notes or Christmas cards. Some letters give insight into personal and professional relationships. Gail Buckland, former curator at the Royal Photographic Society, once told me that the correspondence between Peter Henry Emerson and Henry Peach Robinson, who hated each other more and more as time went on, was almost shocking in its viciousness. The correspondence between Alfred Stieglitz and Georgia O’Keeffe reveals a relationship of great tenderness, though not one without its complications. While there is a market for photographers’ letters, they’re not always so easy to locate. They tend to turn up with manuscript, book and ephemera dealers, and at equivalent auctions, though I’m not aware of dealers specialising in just photographers’ letters.

There are many archives of important correspondence held by estates and institutions. As for the hastily scribbled notes that turn up here and there? Some would probably dismiss collecting such material as “collecting fetish objects”. But perhaps there are other factors that come into play. Today, when most correspondence is electronic, a beautiful hand-written letter, on letter-headed paper, can be an object of beauty in its own right. A letter written on a typewriter will these days take on a certain antiquated charm, as do faxes.

Equally interesting for many are letters written to photographers. At *Traces Ecrites in Paris*, I came across a letter written by Kiki de Montparnasse, addressed to Man Ray, asking him for photographs of her. *Traces Ecrites in Paris* deals in rare material from the Middle Ages to the present day. Owner Emmanuel Lorient explains.



Ansel Adams to John Budan

A different kind of “Dear John”. Ansel Adams had a vast circle of correspondents and would also reply to letters from complete strangers, patiently answer questions about his process and the zone system, give advice and encouragement to students, etc. But as he discovered, some were quick to turn his generosity and kindness into monetary gain. This postcard was sold by RR Auction on 8 July 2020 for \$596.

Courtesy of RR Auction.

Louis J. M. Daguerre
to an unknown recipient
22 July 1839

Sir, I have received your kind letter and I am very grateful for the obliging offer you make me respecting the publication of my discovery in England. The transaction with the french (sic) government being not quite at an end I am still uncertain [sic] according to what I shall do; consequently I am quite unable to give you a positive answer at this moment.

Daguerre

This letter was sold at Heritage Auctions 8 June 2010, for \$11 950. Nigel Russell, photography specialist at Heritage Auctions, comments, "It's an unusual letter, written in English and just seven months after Daguerre presented his famous invention in January 1839. Though he received a patent for his photographic method, he gave the process away in exchange for a pension from the French government."

Courtesy of Heritage Auctions.

written to an English recipient. Photographers' letters usually turn up in our historical manuscripts auctions and I'm often surprised by the high prices they reach. A while back, we sold three letters by Ansel Adams, discussing the zone system and in one he mentions that he doesn't like making large prints because it's too difficult and that often they don't come out very well. The group sold for 4800 dollars, about three times what I expected.

Whole photographers' archives, with correspondence, tend to go museums, Russell says.

– Consequently, letters by them rarely turn up for sale. Most of the correspondence between Alfred Stieglitz and Georgia O'Keeffe is in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library and there is some in the Library of Congress. But other letters by Stieglitz do appear occasionally, and they're usually addressed to a young woman, and are quite flirtatious in tone. While there is a market for photographers' letters, you need a certain mass for auction houses and dealers to get really involved in it. Still, it's a very interesting area to collect and it would probably gather more appreciation if people were aware that this material was around. But you need to look out for it and look hard. The good letters are scarce.

The working title for this article stuck, but I soon realised that the expression "Dear John" is not as well-known as I thought. A "Dear John" is the kind of letter a wife leaves for her husband on the kitchen table, saying basically, "I don't love you anymore so I'm off!" I guess these days it's done by text message or email.

In the following pages you will find a random selection of letters and we have also uploaded other collections on *The Classic Platform*. I extend my deepest gratitude to the owners and contributors, and to Robin Muir, Daniella Dangoor and László Baki, who helped along the way.

– There are relatively few letters by photographers on the market. Though small, it's a pretty good market, quite active and the material sells well. Prices depend on the individual's reputation, scarcity and content. One can easily find letters by Nadar or Carjat. Letters by Man Ray, Hans Bellmer, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Berenice Abbott, Cecil Beaton and Robert Doisneau are harder to find, and rarer still are letters by Daguerre or Atget. Letters by Nicéphore Niépce are practically impossible to find though I do have one in my private collection, but it doesn't discuss his experiments with photography.

So who are the buyers? Photography collectors?

– Not in my experience. People tend to stay in their field. Autograph and manuscript collectors are not photography collectors though they are sometimes bibliophiles. To that should be added museums and institutions that have a fairly active acquisition policy and are always interested in enriching their holdings and adding to their archives.

Nigel Russell, Director of Photography at Heritage Auctions, has had considerable experience in photographers' correspondence over the years. He stresses that the really good material doesn't turn up that often.

– When something by Daguerre turns up, well, ten times out ten, it's a note saying "enclosed are two tickets for the Diorama". Longer letters by him are few and far between, though we did sell a very interesting letter by him in 2010,


Vendredi 15-2-28

Monsieur,

J'espère que les légendes ci-jointes pourront vous agréer ; il me semble que dans la présentation la plus générale de la Daphnie doit passer avant tout par le plan, c'est à dire (2) avant (1). Il n'est très difficile de vous donner actuellement les détails des procédés de prise de vue ; je puis simplement vous dire que pour les animaux marins, je travaille soit en aquarium, soit dans la mer, toujours avec un décor naturel et toujours à la lumière artificielle, avec prise de vue directe ou avec prise de vue périscopique. Pour la microcinématographie, je m'efforce toujours, ce qui est difficile d'utiliser que des animaux aux rythmes rapides, ne permettant pas la lenteur, d'avoir quelque soit le grossissement une grande profondeur de champ, de nombreux détails très nets, de la lumière, - c'est à dire sans que l'animal soit trop vite du champ, ni ne change ^{de} ~~de~~ son comportement normal.

Veuillez croire, Monsieur,
à l'expression de mes sentiments
les plus distingués

Jean Painlevé



Jean Painlevé
to unknown recipient
15 February 1928

Painlevé was a photographer and filmmaker, specialising in marine life. He also exhibited with the Surrealists, created a range of jewellery, made a brief appearance as "chief ant handler" in Buñuel's and Dalí's film *Un Chien Andalou* and took part in several resistance networks during WWII.

Collection of the author.

Sir, I hope you'll find the attached captions satisfactory. It seems to me that in the presentation the background of the Daphnia must come before the foreground, that is to say (2) before (1). It is very difficult for me to give you the details of the shooting procedures at this time; I can simply tell you that, for marine animals, I shoot either in an aquarium or in the sea, always with a natural setting and always in artificial light, with direct shoot/take or through the periscope. For microcinematography I always strive, which is difficult using only animals with fast rhythms, not allowing slow motion, to obtain, whatever the magnification, a great depth of field, many very clear details, light, without the animal leaving the field too quickly, or losing its normal behaviour. Please believe, sir, in the expression of my most distinguished feelings.

Jean Painlevé

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F A X T R A N S M I S S I O N

DATE: 2.4.91
 SHEET No: 1 No OF PAGES - THIS ONE INCLUDED: ATT:
 TO: 44-71-409 3100-PHILIPPE GARNER!!
 FROM: Helmut Newton

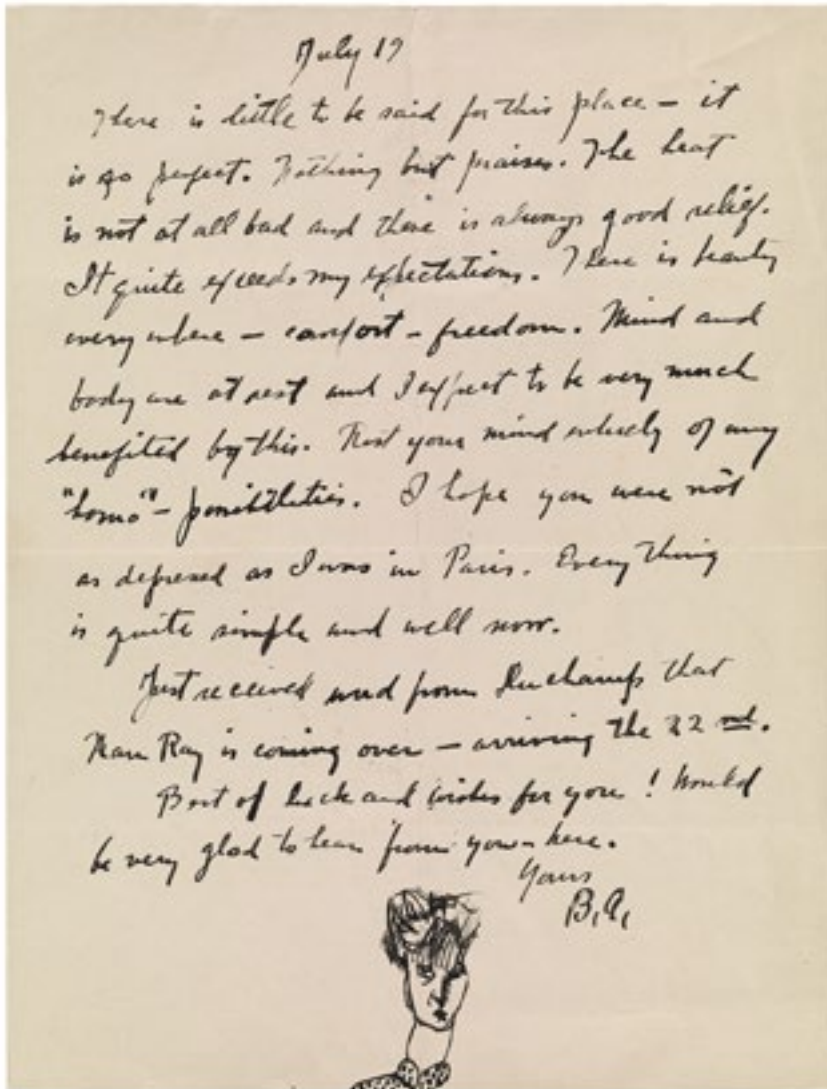
Dear Philippe, a note in a hurry:
 back in the flesh pots of M.-C. Weather
 gorgeous! Thanks for yer fax. But
 if Ticken wants Portfolio he'll
 have to pay for the preparation.
 Maybe you could fax him and
 tell him the cost; his Fax No. 49-
 221-519 858. Ta! When are you com-
 ing here next? Love to you and
 famille. As ever Helmut.

Fax from Helmut Newton to Philippe Garner, 2 April 1991

Garner explains: "I first met Helmut in April 1975. That was the start of a friendship that was to last till his death in 2004. I have kept every postcard, letter, fax and note that he sent me. In the earlier years he favoured postcards, often filling all the available space with his

message, leaving no room for the address, so he would mail them in an envelope. He would type letters, once on the reverse of a proof illustration from one of his books then in production. With the advent of faxes, this new technology became his favoured way of sending a message. The illustrated example tells of the immediacy and individuality that the form allowed."

Courtesy of Philippe Garner.



Berenice Abbott
to John Henry Bradley Storrs
19 July 1921

There is little to be said for this place – it is so perfect. Nothing but praises. The heat is not at all bad and there is always good relief. It quite exceeds my expectations. There is beauty everywhere – comfort – freedom. Mind and body are at rest and I expect to be very much benefited by this. Rest your mind entirely of any “homo”-possibilities. I hope you were not as depressed as I was in Paris. Everything is quite simple and well now.

Just received word from Duchamp that Man Ray is coming over – arriving the 22nd. Best of luck and wishes for you! Would be glad to hear from you here.

Yours
B.A.

Mary Pelletier comments, “American photographer Berenice Abbott was a young sculpture student when she wrote this letter to her friend John Henry Bradley Storrs in the summer of 1921. At 23 years old, Abbott had traded New York for Paris, and then Paris for Brignoles, France, where she writes she had found a comfort and freedom that eluded her in the city. The American sculptor Storrs ran in the same circle as Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray, both of whom Abbott cites in her letter. In 1923, Abbott became Man Ray’s studio assistant, a move that would launch her photographic career; perhaps the drawing at the bottom of her letter to Storrs is a self-portrait, before she discovered the camera.”

Berenice Abbott. Berenice Abbott letter to John Henry Bradley Storrs, 1921 July 19. John Henry Bradley Storrs papers, 1790-2007. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.





VOGUE

CONDÉ NAST PUBLICATIONS LTD
110, GROSVENOR SQUARE · LONDON W.1 GROSVENOR 2080

30th December, 1960.

Esq.,
11 Clapham Road,
London, S.W.9.

Dear Mr. Bailey,

This is just to confirm the agreement we have entered into verbally, that we make you a guarantee of £600 for work done for Conde Nast magazines during the period of one year from November 1st, 1960, terminating on October 31st, 1961. We shall pay you a page rate of £15 and prorata. You will continue to receive payment for your Shophound photographs separately, for which we will pay at the rates already established.

In return for this guarantee, it is understood you will do no editorial work for either Harpers Bazaar or the Queen.

It is further agreed that you will channel all your advertising work through Vogue Studio Ltd. who will provide the necessary film, processing and prints at their expense, and that we will pay you a commission of 33-1/3% on the net sum received for each advertising assignment that we may offer you or you may bring to the Studio. Your commission will be credited to your account monthly. It is further understood that all advertising work will be placed through Vogue Studio Ltd. and that you will not undertake advertising work other than through Vogue Studio Ltd. All prices for advertising sittings must be arranged by the Manager or Assistant Manager of Vogue Studio, and their decision as to the amount charged must be final.

I shall be very glad if you will be kind enough to sign the attached copy of this letter signifying your acceptance of this arrangement, which will then be considered binding on both parties for the length of the agreement.

I am very pleased to have you working for us, and I am sure you will make a very handsome contribution to Vogue pages.

Yours sincerely,

John Parsons
Art Director.

DIRECTORS: H. W. BOXALL (CHAIRMAN), REGINALD A. F. WILLIAMS, AUBREY WITHERS, GERTRUDE PHOENIX, L. F. HARWOOD, J. PERRY, L. S. V. PATCÉVITCH (U.S.A.)

John Parsons, art director at British Vogue, to David Bailey, 30 December 1960

Working for *Vogue* would for most photographers be a dream come true, but David Bailey turned British *Vogue* down at least twice before signing a contract, as *Woman's Own* and *Daily Express* paid better. Just a bit earlier than the British bands, Bailey and his two friends, photographers Brian Duffy and Terence Donovan, kicked off what would become known around the world as "Swinging London", and Bailey became as famous as the celebrities he photographed, portraits he published in the 1964 *Box of Pin-Ups*.

Archives of British Vogue, Unseen Vogue (c) The Condé Nast Publications Ltd.



291 Fifth Ave., New York.
January 20, 1916.

My dear Miss O'Keeffe:

What am I to say? It is impossible for me to put into words what I saw and felt in your drawings. As a matter of fact I would not make any attempt to do so. I might give you what I received from them if you and I were to meet and talk about life. Possibly then through such a conversation I might make you feel what your drawings gave me.

I do want to tell you that they gave me much joy. They were a real surprise and above all I felt that they were a genuine expression of yourself. I do not know what you had in your mind while doing them. But I do feel that they have brought you closer to me. Much closer. If at all possible I would like to show them, but we will see about that. I do not quite know where I am at just at present. The future is rather hazy, but the present is very positive and very delightful.

With greetings,

Cordially,
Alfred Stieglitz

Alfred Stieglitz to Georgia O'Keeffe 20 January 1916

Mary Pelletier writes, "Alfred Stieglitz had not yet met the painter Georgia O'Keeffe when he wrote this letter to her on 20 January 1916. The photographer was only acquainted with her drawings, shown to him a few weeks earlier on New Year's Day. He wrote from 291 Fifth Avenue, home to his famous '291' gallery, which would go on to exhibit O'Keeffe's work that May. This letter marks the beginning of an impassioned 30-year correspondence, the contents of which reflect the highs and lows of their intense love affair. The two married

in 1924, and Stieglitz's photographs of O'Keeffe are among his most celebrated; as she put it, he photographed her with "a kind of heat and excitement". This "heat" is just as evident in their written correspondence – much of which has been compiled in *My Faraway One: Selected Letters of Georgia O'Keeffe and Alfred Stieglitz*, Volume I, 1915-1933, edited and annotated by Sarah Greenough, and published in 2011 by Yale University Press."

Alfred Stieglitz/Georgia O'Keeffe Archive, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

JOHN DEAKIN

PHOTOGRAPHER

8th September 1948.

Dear Audrey,

Thank you for your letter and the cheque for September.

Re. the cheque in the nature of compensation for loss of office. Do you think it would be possible for me to have it now? You see I lost my own camera in Paris last year and have been using the studio cameras ever since. Until I can get another I am rather up a blind alley, and what money I did have has gone into getting this studio ready.

I should be most grateful if it could be arranged.

I did not say goodbye to anybody at the office or the studio, I thought it was better that way.

Yours sincerely,

John D.

*Studio equipment -
(Rolliflex and
Ergosma meter)
Returned -*

67, Egerton Gardens, S.W.3
2, Haker Street S.W.3.

Kensington 2775.
KEN 7968.

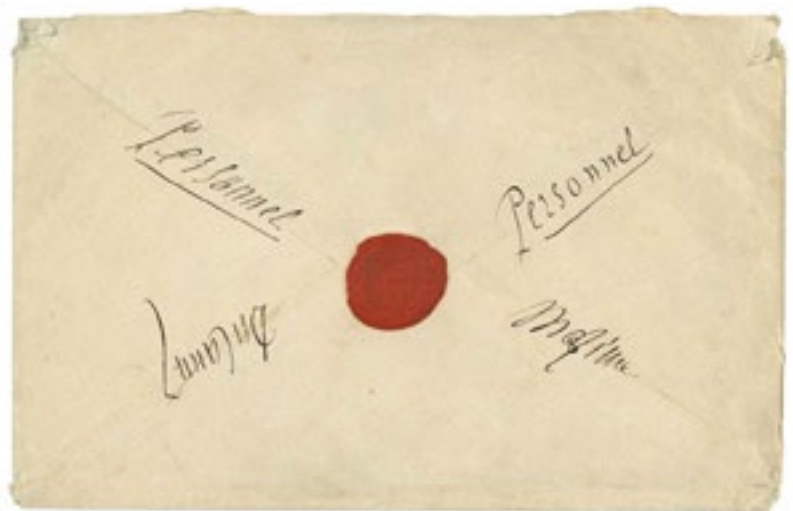
John Deakin to Audrey Withers, editor at British Vogue, 8 September 1948

A member of Soho Bohemia, John Deakin was a close friend of Lucian Freud and Francis Bacon, and the latter would sometimes commission him to take photographs as studies for paintings. Since his death in 1972, when his archive was retrieved from underneath his bed in his flat, the prints torn, some splattered with paint, Deakin has been recognised as one of the most important British photographers of the 20th century. Like Freud and Bacon, "The painters of disgust", his vision was often brutal. To make ends meet, he signed on as staff photographer for *British Vogue*. In addition to portraiture, his contract obliged him to shoot fashion as well, work he didn't much care for. He enjoyed two periods under contract to the magazine and remains the only photographer in its history to have been hired and fired twice by the same editor.

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Maxime Du Camp to Général Chanzy

By definition, this shouldn't be included here. The letter is long gone. It's a large, empty envelope, marked "Personnel - Maxime Du Camp", still sealed and cut open at the top. And I suspect it was sent long after Maxime Du Camp had stopped practising photography. In 1849, Du Camp, accompanied by his friend Gustave Flaubert, set off for Egypt and the Near East, to photograph monuments and sites, using paper negatives. He published the images in 1852 in the album *Égypte, Nubie, Syrie : Paysages et Monuments*. On the return journey to Paris, he sold his photographic equipment in Beirut, and would soon embark on a successful career as an author. Général Chanzy distinguished himself with bravery and skill during the Franco-Prussian war. At the beginning of the



Commune rebellion, he was captured by communards. The government in Versailles paid a high ransom for his release. He was freed, on the condition that he wouldn't take up arms against the communards. He kept his word. Du Camp and Chanzy were on friendly terms. Was the letter sent during the war? Or during Chanzy's imprisonment? Or during Du Camp's research for his four-volume work *Les Convulsions de Paris*? It remains a mystery.

Collection of the author.

Erzsi, kedves, nagyon ültél, hogy
 megörültem; vejem volt, hogy lát-
 tal elfogad. Ha meg tudnád, hogy
 hogy csináltam, hogy Lucianával együtt
 valahol lebhajrák, a nagyon
 elmennek én is Pariza * Sporti
 elcséje ha a staatliche Bauhaus
 munkára vagyok. I totto munk: Fei-
 ninger, Klee, Kandinsky, Schlem-
 mer, Muche - talán hallottál
 a neveikről. Az itteni legneveztebb
 festő. Latod - latod? Professor let-
 tem. De szabállyan meg unnam
 Egy a többi köztük Lucian nem
 szívesen van itt. A nagy város
 csak mai is olyan igazán van. (Gottlieb
 *) az avérésű költőjelek valahogy
 megismerem, ha valaki látsd adna
 vagy vándorj el fogadna benned.



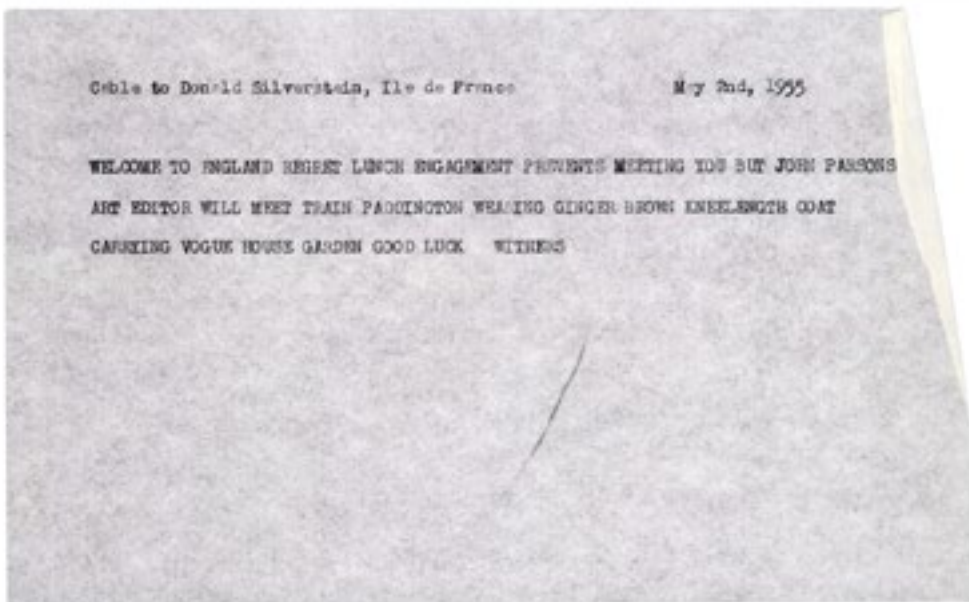
László Moholy-Nagy to Erzsi Landau postmarked 11 October 1923

A few years ago, collector Silard Iszaak acquired six letters and postcards written by Moholy-Nagy between December 1921 and June 1925, addressed to his friend Erzsi Landau, a fellow Hungarian photographer. They have been analysed by historian György Németh who comments. "The two were close friends and some photo historians have speculated that Landau may have been the one who taught Moholy-Nagy the basics of photography. The letters and postcards are impossible to translate accurately. Moholy-Nagy writes in an archaic form of Hungarian, full of subtleties, and there are misspellings, missing and unintelligible words but on this postcard he writes "I have been a master of the Staatliches Bauhaus since April 1. The other masters: Feininger, Klee, Kandinsky, Schlemmer, Muche - you may have heard of them. The most famous painters here. Do you see? I became a professor. But I don't have a beard yet." and "Lucia is not welcome here. Yet the big city is just different and you are right about that. Write! Kisses."

Courtesy of Silard Iszaak.

Audrey Withers, editor at British Vogue, to Donald Silverstein

American photographer Donald Silverstein made a name for himself in his late teens, shooting editorial for the Condé Nast magazine *Glamour*. At the age of 20, legendary art director Alexander Liberman sent him to London on a one-year contract for *British Vogue*, arriving at Paddington Station where evidently the editor was unable to meet him. Silverstein ended up staying four years in Europe, two in London, two in Paris where he befriended Guy Bourdin and bought some of his drawings. He left *Vogue*, returned to the US and shot covers for the West Coast jazz albums. Missing Europe, he returned to London, shot advertising and editorial for magazines and newspapers, as well as an iconic shoot with the Jimi Hendrix Experience in 1967. He died by his own hand in 1975.



Archives of British Vogue, *Unseen Vogue* (c) The Condé Nast Publications Ltd.

PETER HENRY EMERSON'S *LIFE AND LANDSCAPE ON THE NORFOLK BROADS* "A BOOK OF ART FOR LOVERS OF ART"

By Robert Hershkowitz



Peter Henry Emerson. *Gathering Water-lilies*, platinotype, 1886.

All images courtesy of Robert Hershkowitz.

In a surprisingly short career of nine years, Peter Henry Emerson (1856-1936) produced eight photographically illustrated works. His first, *Life and Landscape on the Norfolk Broads*, illustrated with forty platinum prints, was published in 1886, four years after he acquired his first camera. All the others contained photogravures; his last book, *Marsh Leaves*, was published in 1895, forty years before his death. 1889 saw the arrival of Emerson's non-illustrated educational guide and polemic, *Naturalistic Photography for Students of the Art*, a conflation which fuses two ideas, the naturalistic aesthetic and the idea of photography as an independent fine art. One contemporary critic characterized the book as "a bombshell dropped at a tea party".

The subject matter of *Life and Landscape* is the documentation of the everyday unadorned working life of the marshland peasants and the environment in which they lived. This presents the greatest aesthetic and technical challenge as "the most difficult branch of photography is that in which figures occur in landscapes". Emerson expressed an empathetic attitude to the figures in plate one, *Coming Home from the Marshes*, "typical specimens", and "a naturalist in his own way each and every one of them". Perhaps as a surrogate signature, the otherwise meticulous Emerson included distinct fingerprints in plate one. An article in the 1880 issue of the journal *Nature*, which the recently qualified Dr. Emerson would have undoubtedly read, discussed fingerprints as a means of personal identification.

The iconic *Gathering Water-lilies*, deservedly Emerson's most celebrated image, is the only landscape photograph to be honoured as a royal mail postage stamp. The photographer and the subject couple share in that idyllic, transcendent moment when the experience of nature becomes seriously spiritual. The foliage on the left and the reeds above and on the right create the rowboat's enclosed, secluded space. The surface of the water is absolutely still and holds the complex reflection of shadows which lies at the heart of the image. The boundary of the reflection is an amazing wandering line of singular beauty, which includes the woman's hat and torso, the man's hat and neck, the rowboat itself, an oar and two flowers visible mainly in their reflection. At the extreme ends of the tonal scale are the whiteness of the gathered flower, and the solid black of the boat's shadow. The balanced distribution of values also includes the off-white of the lily pads, the silvery grey of the water and various shades of grey. Tonal fidelity is a fundamental plank in Emerson's naturalistic aesthetic. "Strength in a photograph is to be judged by its subtlety of tone, its truthful relative values." (A measured appreciation of tonal structure was formally formulated by Ansel Adams in his "zone system".)



"The true mission of the artist is to awaken man to a sense of beauty in the life and landscape of today. The world around him and the people in it should inspire all his work."
Peter Henry Emerson. *Coming home from the marshes*, platinotype, 1886.

Emerson was the first photographer of note to employ the platinotype, a paper invented by Willis twelve years earlier. After experimenting with and rejecting other papers, Emerson championed platinum paper as the only one acceptable for a photograph aspiring to be considered a work of art. Other papers "give false tonality as compared with platinotype"; albumen paper also had an "unpleasant glare" and "gloss". "For low toned effects and for grey day landscapes the platinum print is unequalled" in recording "the luminous diffusion of light creeping through a moist grey sky". Emerson strove to find "beautiful pictures on the grey dull days of November".



Peter Henry Emerson. *A Reed Boat-House*, platinotype, 1886.

A Reed Boat-House, a prime example of a grey day landscape, is the only image Emerson described at any length in the text. Accompanying the forty plates in *Life and Landscape on the Norfolk Broads*, there are twelve mini-essays by Emerson and nine by his friend and colleague, the painter, Thomas Goodall.

The sun was passing behind a cloud as we first came upon this picture, and the lighting was beautifully soft and subdued, as it fell upon the reed walls and thatched roof, throwing at the same time a reflection of the most tender delicacy and grace. In the foreground were some withered stalks...behind lay the softened background of the Broad, and on the right grew two trees – the wispy trees beloved of Corot.



The two prints of *An Eel-catcher's Home* are revealing: one is a decent print, the sky cloudless, adequate for purpose, but inherently forgettable and the other is richly nuanced, significant, memorable.

Peter Henry Emerson.
An Eel-catcher's Home,
 platinotypes, 1886.



The most idiosyncratic aspect of Emerson's naturalistic aesthetics is his insistence on differential focusing, to make camera vision, as closely as manageable, to replicate retinal vision. "To produce a picture the photographer must select a lens and adjust his focus to get an impression as nearly identical with the visual one as possible"... "The image which we receive by the eye is like a picture finished in the centre, but roughly sketched at the boundaries"... "The principal object in the picture must be fairly sharp, just as the eye sees it, and no sharper."

Gunner Working up to Fowl is clearly differentially focused, with the rowboat at the centre of vision. It is also a dark image, an Emersonian invention, of low contrast and with all values towards the dark end of the tonal scale, a visual theme later adopted by the Photo-Secession.

Here a faceless figure is lying down in a rowboat in an expanse of near black water before a featureless horizon. The starkness of the scene and unrelenting dark tonality impart an existential gravitas to the image.

Emerson commissioned a commercial firm to produce the eight thousand prints for the edition of two hundred copies. "To Messrs. Valentine and Son of Dundee our thanks are due for the care and trouble they have taken in executing the prints to our satisfaction." However, it must be noted there is often a vast difference in quality between the most

robust and decidedly weakest print made from the same negative. Emerson was well aware of this variance. Prints "developed by the same hand all differ in quality, each one has physical characteristics of its own". It is likely that any given copy of *Life and Landscape* will have three exceptional prints and four weak ones. The distribution of the prints was random, and so no two copies of the book are identical. The two prints of *An Eel-catcher's Home* are revealing: one is a decent print, the sky cloudless, adequate for purpose, but inherently forgettable and the other is richly nuanced, significant, memorable.



“Each picture is a problem in itself, and needs different management from beginning to end.”

Peter Henry Emerson.
Gunner Working up to Fowl,
 platinotype, 1886.

A Sailing Match at Horning is his only vignetted image, a practice he criticised three years later “as useless, very inartistic and false, as it destroys all tonality”. The four prints reproduced here are all different in mood, even suggesting various times of day and/or differing weather conditions. Weather, season and time of day, naturalistic considerations, were featured throughout Emerson’s career, from *Evening, An Autumn Morning* and *The First Frost in Life and Landscape* to fifteen of the thirty one images in his last two books, *On English Lagoons* and *Marsh Leaves*, both illustrated with gravures etched by the artist.

A Sailing Match at Horning is made from two negatives. Emerson loathed photographs constructed from multiple negatives, especially those produced by his archenemy, Henry Peach Robinson. The use of a secondary cloud negative was the singular exception when Emerson knowingly broke his own rules, (apparently Peter Henry took on board his cousin Ralph Waldo’s aphorism – “a foolish consistency is the hob goblin of little minds”). “Cloud printing...the simplest form of combination printing and the only one admissible when we are considering artistic work” because “if well done a truer impression of the scene is rendered”. “An impression demands

expression that which is capable of showing it most clearly and strongly.” Emerson realised that a landscape image with clouds is inherently more engaging than the same landscape under a blank sky, and if this meant adding physically unrelated clouds to a landscape, so be it. Emerson as practitioner, theoretician and critic promoted photography as an independent fine art and he

was the undeniable bridge between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He railed against the art photography of his day as “puerile”, meaninglessly sentimental, with overly detailed, hard-edged images that imitated bad painting. He believed in straight, honest work like that he found in a young photographer to whom he awarded a first prize medal, Alfred Stieglitz.



Peter Henry Emerson. *A Sailing Match at Horning*, platinotypes, 1886.



BY MICHAEL DIEMAR

PHOTOGRAPHY AT LA SALPÊTRIÈRE AND BEYOND

As I passed La Salpêtrière late one evening, the dark shadows seemed to imbue its ancient walls with a somewhat forbidding air. Located in the 13th Arrondissement of Paris, Hôpital universitaire la Pitié-Salpêtrière, to give it its full name, was once the dumping ground for the city's mentally ill and dispossessed women, but later transformed into one of Europe's largest and foremost teaching hospitals. Philosopher Michel Foucault ended his days there, as did the former French president François Mitterand. It was where Diana, Princess of Wales, was brought after the crash in the Pont de l'Alma tunnel. In the second half of the 19th century, La Salpêtrière wrote itself into the history of photography, with the images that Duchenne de Boulogne took for the album *Mécanisme de la physionomie humaine*, and that Paul Regnard and Albert Londe, under the auspices of Dr. Jean-Martin Charcot, took of hysterics and other patients and published in two journals, *Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière* and *Nouvelle Iconographie de la Salpêtrière*.

Regnard's and Londe's images of hysterics are still surrounded by a great deal of mystery. Hysteria gripped 19th-century Paris. Novelist and playwright Jules Claretie described hysteria as "the illness of our age" and despite being mostly regarded as a sexualised, female madness, author Guy de Maupassant claimed, "We are all hysterics".

Duchenne de Boulogne. *Simulation of natural laughter.*
Albumen print on mount, 1855-1856.
Courtesy of Christophe Goeury.

But what was hysteria? Charcot, "The Father of Modern Neurology", was convinced that hysteria, with its bewildering array of symptoms, had pathological, not psychological, causes, but could find no proof to back up his theory. Charles Laségue, a physician contemporary with Charcot, sarcastically described hysteria as "the wastepaper basket of otherwise unemployed medical symptoms".



La Salpêtrière, from the cover of vol. 1 of *Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière*, 1877.

After Charcot's death in 1893, his theory left in tatters, many would call hysteria "the illness that never was". Which then leaves the question concerning Regnard's and Londe's images of hysterics, striking and dramatic. What exactly are we looking at? Delusion? Simulacrum? Staged theatre? And then there's the impact that those very same images would have on the arts in the 20th century, on Expressionism, Surrealism and beyond.

The name La Salpêtrière is derived from the factory that once stood there, for the manufacture of gunpowder, saltpetre being one of the ingredients. In 1656, King Louis XIV ordered a hospital to be built on the grounds. La Salpêtrière was an "Hôpital Général de la Ville de Paris" but the word "hospital" should be seen in the context of the time. They did not provide medical treatment. They were in effect prisons, for the poor, the undesirable. La Salpêtrière housed destitute women, prostitutes, the mentally ill, social outcasts, petty criminals. Conditions improved when Philippe Pinel was made chief physician in 1795. He made important contributions to the classification of mental disorders, abolished the use of chains, and developed a more humane approach to the care of psychiatric patients.

Guillaume-Benjamin-Amand Duchenne, better known as Duchenne de Boulogne, first ventured into La Salpêtrière sometime in the 1840s. The son of a fisherman, he was born 1806 in Boulogne-sur-Mer. He studied medicine under leading physicians in Paris but having failed to secure an academic post in the capital, returned to his hometown and set up his own practice. In 1835, he became aware of the work of François Magendie and Jean-Baptiste Sarlandière, who had recently pioneered "Électropuncture", a therapeutic technique whereby an electric shock, Faradisation, was administered with electrodes inserted beneath the skin to stimulate the muscles. It was used in the treatment of respiratory and rheumatic disorders, as well as some forms of paralysis. Duchenne decided to conduct his own experiments, though not primarily for therapeutic purposes but to create a physiological investigation tool for the study of the anatomy of the living body, resulting in the construction of his "Appareil Volta-Électrique".

In 1842, Duchenne returned to Paris. He set up a small practice as a general practitioner to support himself and equipped with his apparatus, spent the evenings looking for subjects with neuromuscular disorders for his experiments among the patients at La Salpêtrière, where evidently, there must have been something of an open-door policy, as he wasn't employed there. Unlike "Électropuncture", Duchenne's technique, "Électrisation localisée", was non-invasive, using Faradic shock to the surface of the skin. The doctors at La Salpêtrière regarded

Duchenne as an oddball from the provinces and made him the butt of their jokes. He referred to them as "The Monarchs". The oddball would, however, prove himself to be a meticulous and ingenious researcher and observer, enabling him to give accurate descriptions of several neuromuscular disorders, including pseudohypertrophic muscular dystrophy, also called Duchenne muscular dystrophy.



Duchenne de Boulogne. *Head of the Arrotino side view*, albumen print on mount, 1855-1856. Courtesy of Christophe Goeury.



Duchenne de Boulogne. *Molding of the head of the Arrotino, corrected by Duchenne*, albumen print on mount, 1855-1856. Courtesy of Christophe Goeury.

His first experiments were published in *De l'Électrisation localisée et de son application à la physiologie, à la pathologie et à la thérapeutique* in 1855. By that time, he had already begun to practice photography, this in order to create records of the faradisations he was carrying out on facial muscles. His was an ambitious undertaking. As he stated in *Album de Photographies Pathologiques*, published in 1862, "From 1852 onwards, I had the idea of illustrating, with the help of this wonderful procedure, the specific action of individual muscles through electrical faradisation" adding, "This convinced me to learn and study the art of photography from the point of view of its application to physiology and pathology." But Duchenne's work wasn't solely scientific. He also had aesthetic, artistic and religious concerns, believing that mankind and its facial expressions had been created by God.

Duchenne both built on, and reacted against, earlier traditions. Physiognomy, the practice of assessing personality from outer appearance, particularly the face, went back to ancient Greece. It regained new force in the 18th century through Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741-1801), whose essays and theory that faces could express moral character gained wide popularity. Duchenne, however, did not believe that faces could express moral character. He drew more inspiration from the Scottish anatomist, neurologist, artist and theologian Sir Charles Bell (1774-1842), and his work on facial muscles, and shared Bell's opinion about the importance of anatomical observation for artists, though he did not share Bell's interest in depicting the expressions of the insane, regarding them as too individual to be of clinical value.

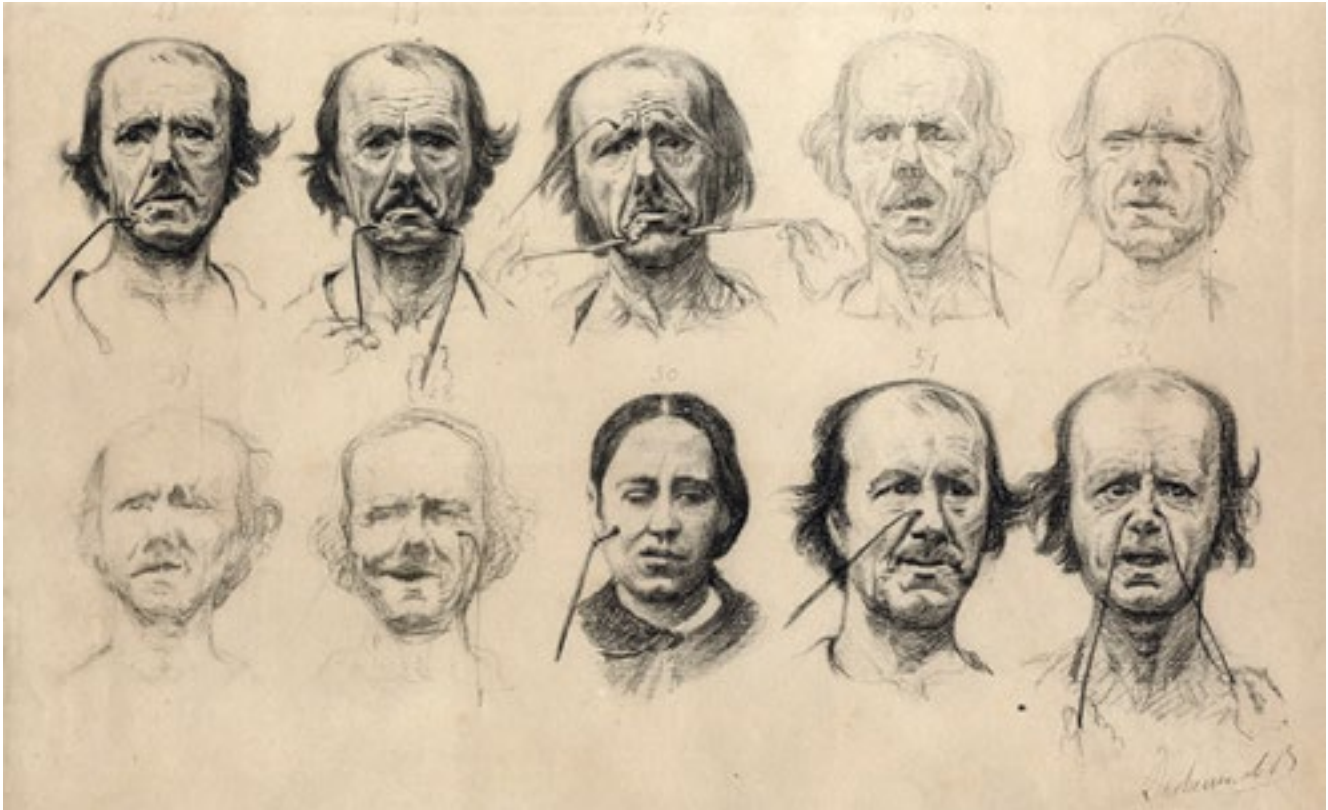
Duchenne states in *Mécanisme de la physiologie humaine* that he has sought to capture "conditions that aesthetically constitute beauty" and to prove every human face, of whatever shape and despite lack of plastic beauty, could be made "morally beautiful" through "the accurate rendering of the soul's emotions". Accuracy was all-important for Duchenne, which led him to photograph three masterpieces of Greek and Roman sculpture, stating that their expressions did not reflect nature as it had been revealed in his electrophysiological studies. He therefore remodelled plaster casts of them, to correct them according to observable truth, and photographed them.

The first edition of *Mécanisme*, published in 1862, included a text, and three sections; General Considerations, a Scientific section and an Aesthetic Section. He carefully explained his research, linking fundamental expressions with specific muscles or groups of muscles, identifying thirteen primary emotions: attention, reflection, aggression, pain,



Duchenne de Boulogne. Study of the fundamental expressive lines, produced by the slight contraction of the eyebrow in a 6-year-old girl. On the right, pain. On the left, spasmodic lowering of the eyebrow en masse, caused by light. Albumen print on mount, 1855-1856. Courtesy of Christophe Goeury.

joy and benevolence, lasciviousness, sadness, weeping and whimpering, surprise, fright and terror. He described the exact contractions behind each expression, separating them into two categories, partial or combined. To underline this, he would in some images stimulate different muscles or groups on the left and right-hand side of the face. The result: a scientific atlas of human facial expressions. Duchenne photographed various subjects but most of the images in *Mécanisme* depict a toothless old man, being administered Faradisation. At first glance they resemble nothing less than scenes of torture. But the man suffered from facial anaesthesia, resulting in much-reduced sensation, enabling Duchenne to "experiment on his face without causing him pain, to the extent that I could stimulate his individual muscles with as much precision and accuracy as if I were working with a still irritable cadaver."



Courtesy of Dr. Drouin.

Duchenne de Boulogne was also a draughtsman though few of his drawings have survived. Some ten years ago, four drawings, believed to be the first to be found after his death, were sold by a Parisian antiquarian to Dr. Emmanuel Drouin at Université de Nantes. In the four drawings, Duchenne revisits the photographs in *Mécanisme*. In an article by Dr. Drouin and Professor Yann Péréon, published in the British Medical Journal *The Lancet*, they note a statement Duchenne made in the second edition of *De l'Électrisation Localisée*, published in 1862, taking it as an indication that he was not completely satisfied with photography, "with my photographs, I showed the way but I am afraid of reaching for perfection". Drouin and Péréon speculate that he later realised the advantages of drawing over photography, that it lets the draughtsman emphasise some essential lines of the face to better make a point. In the early 1870s, when the four drawings are thought to have been made, Duchenne was preparing the second edition of *Mécanisme*. The pair speculate that he might have preferred to use his own drawings for this upcoming edition, but Duchenne died in 1875, a year before it was published. The signatures on the drawings were authenticated by Marc Smith, palaeographer at L'École des Chartes in Paris.

Duchenne de Boulogne. Albumen print on mount, 1855-1856. Courtesy of Christophe Goeury.

1. Study of the expressive lines, primary and secondary, of an old man.
2. True laughter is formed by the association of the zygomatic major and the inferior palpebral orbicularis.
3. The combination of the joy and pain muscle, to some degree of contraction, is expressionless or only produces a grimace.
4. Study of the lines which characterize crying with tenderness in an old man. Rather strong electrical excitation of the small left zygomatic; cry tears of affection.
5. Voluntary and moderate lowering of the lower jaw, and proportional electrical contraction of the frontal: surprise.
6. Voluntary lowering, to the maximum, of the lower jaw, and electric, energetic contraction of the frontal, astonishment, amazement.
7. Combined electrical contraction of the skin and the frontal, associated with the voluntary lowering of the lower jaw; dread. Subject seen from the front.
8. Dread, same muscular contraction as in previous image, subject in profile.
9. Dread, same muscular combination as in the previous two images.



Among those who took note of Duchenne's research was Charles Darwin, with whom he also corresponded. Darwin owned two copies of *Mécanisme* and included a number of Duchenne's images in *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872). For Darwin, Duchenne's work supported his own theory of human evolution. If all expressions had the same physiological mechanisms, this would be further evidence that human beings had the same ancestors, opposing not only the theory of Creationism but also racism, as Darwin stated, "I have endeavoured to show in considerable detail that all the chief expressions exhibited by man are the same throughout the world."

The French independent photography specialist Christophe Goeury has long experience of the market for prints and albums by Duchenne de Boulogne. In 2004, he organised an auction of a magnificent set of 72 prints from a *Mécanisme* album at the Parisian auction house Gafferri. And Goeury explains, the auction house was initially not aware of just how special the album was.

– The album was part of a sale of the library from the estate of a doctor that had been consigned to the auction house. I looked at the books and then I spotted the album. I asked the auctioneer what estimate he had put on it, "250 euros" he answered! So I explained to him just how important it was and offered to make an auction with just the album. The conditions of sale with the consignor made it possible to take the risk. I prepared the sale, with a printed catalogue, and decided to offer the 72 prints individually. In the end, one bidder bought the whole set for 240 800 euros including commission. If the images came up for sale today, in such good condition, I would expect the most iconic to sell for 20 000 - 30 000 euros each, minimum.

The *Mécanisme* was published by Duchenne himself. – He published it in two formats, a luxury edition of 100 copies in Quarto, with 74 or 84 photographs in the 18 x 24 format. But no copy from the luxury edition is identical to another, they all have slightly different photographs. In addition, he published an edition in Octavo format, and also sold individual prints. The second edition of *Mécanisme* was published in 1876, a year after Duchenne's death.

Duchenne took up photography in 1852 but at some stage he also enlisted the services of Adrien Tournachon, younger brother of Nadar.

– The photographs in *Mécanisme* were taken in 1855 and 1856 at the Salpêtrière and in another unknown location. If some photographs were taken by Adrien Tournachon, such as the ones of Duchenne administering Faradisation on a subject, others are undoubtedly by Duchenne. And the compositions, the staging, are all by Duchenne. Then in 1862, after the publication of *Mécanisme*, Duchenne began practising

microphotography of the nervous system and the structure of the human bulb, that is, rounded dilations or expansions of blood vessels and organs, but most of these later photographs have never been edited and so are far less known. They are part of the collection that he donated to L'École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts where he also lectured for many years.



Jean-Martin Charcot wearing Legion of Honour "Officier" medal, with rosette. Unknown photographer, albumen print, 1880. National Library of Medicine.

In 1862, Duchenne's fortunes changed, when Jean-Martin Charcot (1825-1893) took up his post as Chief of Medical Services at La Salpêtrière. Unlike "The Monarchs", Charcot was quick to recognise the importance of Duchenne's research, and would hail him as "my master in neurology." The two became firm friends. They would dine every week and after Duchenne suffered a stroke, Charcot cared for him in his own home until his death in 1875. Though Charcot was a confirmed atheist they had much in common. Both came from humble beginnings, shared a love of art and literature and a firm belief in the importance of observation. Sigmund Freud, who would study under Charcot during four months in 1885-1886, later wrote, "he had the nature of an artist", that he was not a thinker but "a *visuel*, a man who sees."

Charcot, the son of a Parisian carriage builder, was the most academically gifted of four sons. As a child, he spent much time on his own, reading and drawing and even considered becoming an artist before entering medical school. For the remainder of his life, he would draw constantly, sharpening his powers of

observation. And observation would serve him well. His discoveries and accomplishments had a profound effect on neurology and pathology. There are some 15 eponyms associated with his name. Charcot named and was the first to describe multiple sclerosis, the first to describe a joint disorder known as Charcot joint or Charcot arthropathy and among the first to describe Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease. His studies contributed greatly to the understanding of epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, muscular atrophy, cerebral haemorrhage, the brain, spinal cord and peripheral nerves, and advanced research on cerebral localisation. At the time, many doctors believed that the brain was an unvaried organ, but Charcot's research led him to argue that it was, "not a single homogenous organ, but rather a group, or if you wish, a confederation composed of a number of different organs."

La Salpêtrière wasn't a prestigious post but for Charcot, it represented rich possibilities, enabling him to make advances using "the anatomo-clinical method", first presented by the Italian pathologist Giovanni Battista Morgagni (1682-1771). It was different from the "anatomo-pathological method" that was practiced in Germany and Austria. While both methods made use of analysis based on autopsy, for the anatomo-pathologists, microscopic studies were all-important, while the anatomo-clinical method was based on first creating symptomatic models through extensive observation of living patients, then looking for pathological evidence during the autopsies. That was how Charcot had been able to describe multiple sclerosis and to describe it as different from Parkinson's disease. As he wrote at the time, "It is a new means to bring together organic illnesses which are similar and to distinguish those



"The male gaze". **André Brouillet**. *A Clinical Lesson at the Salpêtrière*, oil painting, 1886-1887. Wikimedia Commons.

Brouillet's painting was an enormous success when it was shown at the Salon in 1887. Blanche Wittmann is seen to Charcot's left, partially undressed, in a state of hypnotically induced lethargy, held by Joseph Babinski, with chief nurse Marguerite Bottard and nurse Mademoiselle Ecaray in attendance. Seated at the table, with Duchenne's Faradisation apparatus in front of him, is Paul Richer.

To the lower left, wearing an apron, is Albert Londe. To the lower right, also wearing an apron, is Georges Gilles de la Tourette, the first to describe the syndrome that bears his name. On the wall to the far left, is a drawing of the arched body of a hysteric by Richer. Freud owned a lithograph of Brouillet's painting. It now hangs over his famous couch at the Freud Museum in North London.

which in spite of sharing similarities are of a nature altogether different and which therefore belong to another order of illnesses.” And La Salpêtrière was perfect for the method, as most patients who were admitted would also die there.

Initially, Charcot showed little interest in hysteria. It landed on his desk, so to speak, in 1872, when around 150 sane epileptics and hysterics, previously housed in a dilapidated building with the insane, were transferred to his ward. The hysterics displayed a wide range of symptoms, paralysis, loss of sensation on one side of the body, lethargic apathy, sobbing, excessive sensitivity, emotional storms, feelings of suffocation, stigmatic haemorrhages, functional



Paul Regnard. Hystero-epileptic attack, “Grands Mouvements”, patient with arched body.
Volume 3, *Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière*.

blindness, nausea, multiple personalities, anorexia, vomiting. Research into hysteria was being conducted in other hospitals, including Hôpital de la Charité where the disorder was thought to have psychological causes. Charcot however, became convinced that the causes were neurological, and that he could, as he had with multiple sclerosis, through keen observation and autopsies, distinguish hysteria as a distinct neurological disorder.

Charcot was, as they say, “an operator”. He grasped the importance of publicity and position in society and this was no doubt why he chose the 28-year old Desiré-Magloire Bourneville as an intern. Bourneville had done little to distinguish himself as a student but he had other talents on offer. He had established himself not only as a journalist, writing for leading medical journals, but had also started two of his own, *Le Mouvement Médical* and *La Réforme Médical*, and later, *Le Progrès Médical*. He was also elected as a member to several committees and boards, and as budget commissioner for Assistance Publique. Bourneville would use all these to the benefit of Charcot and La Salpêtrière.

When Charcot arrived at the hospital there wasn't even a lab. Bourneville arranged funds for the grand amphitheatre where Charcot would hold his demonstrations, a research lab, a museum, an artists' studio and at Bourneville's suggestion, a well-equipped photography studio.

While hysteria was claimed by Claretie to be “the illness of our age”, it wasn't a new one. It was first described in antiquity, and was thought to be caused by “the wandering womb”, the displacement of the uterus, hystera being the Greek word for the uterus. During the Middle Ages it was thought to be the result of demonic possession. In the 17th century “the wandering womb” made its return and the most drastic treatment was the removal of the uterus. Such operations were performed throughout the 19th century, though Charcot would advocate strongly against them, having found no physiological evidence of “the wandering womb”, and having observed hysteria in males.

Charcot's studies of hysterics began with intense observation. The patients would seem perfectly normal and then suddenly have a hysterical attack. Gradually, he felt himself able to designate some symptoms as peripheral and to distinguish a pattern in the attacks of hystero-epilepsy, as he called the disorder, resulting in his theory of *La Grande Attaque Hystérique*, or *La Grande Hystérie*. According to Charcot, the attack had four phases. In the first phase, the epileptoid phase, the hysteric would make faces and spasmodic gestures, in the second, make “grands mouvements”, contort the body, arch the back; “clownism”, as he called it. Charcot dubbed the third phase “attitudes passionnelles”, in which the hysteric would act out private, hallucinatory scenes, sometimes of a sexual nature. In the fourth and final phase, the “terminal delirium”, the hysteric would descend into melancholy. Charcot observed that not all attacks followed the pattern exactly and in addition to “La Grande Hystérie” there was the “petite hystérie” and “hystérie ordinaire” but the patterns in these were much less regular and more difficult to distinguish and therefore of less interest to him.

Charcot concluded that hysterics entered a state of hypnosis during their attacks, that hypnosis was indeed a symptom of hysteria, and that only hysterics could truly enter the hypnotic state. And so in 1878, Charcot began hypnotising hysterics. This was a bold move. Hypnotism was generally regarded as quackery in the medical world. Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815), who claimed that hypnosis was mediated by “animal magnetism”, had been forced to flee Vienna, settling in Paris where a Royal Commission concluded that he was a fraudster. So why did Charcot begin using hypnosis? The main reason was that it was difficult to predict when a hysteric might

have an attack. With hypnotism, Charcot was able to induce an attack, observe and document it, and control it.

Charcot divided the hypnotic phenomena into three categories, Catalepsy, Lethargy and Somnambulism. The cataleptic state could be triggered by making a sound, with a drum or a gong for instance, or by shining a bright light into the patient's eyes. The body would lose sensation, go limp and numb, and would hold whatever

cut them, prick them, and burn them, and they feel nothing." The hysteric was, "an actual automaton." feeling none of the expressions she or he was given.

The second state, Lethargy, was triggered by closing the patient's eyes, after which, she would fall into a deep sleep. If lifted, limbs would simply fall back, but if pressure was applied to specific

muscles, they would contract with incredible rigidity, mirroring those that would occur during a hysterical attack, such as arching the body. The patient could be brought out of this state by blowing into face her eyes or opening her eyes, applying pressure to the ovaries and then shining a bright light into them. Somnambulism, the third state, was triggered by staring straight into the patient's eyes or by pressing on top of her head. It was also called "the suggestible state", as the patient could be ordered to hallucinate, whereupon the hypnotist could put them in different scenarios, told that they were men, surrounded by rats or snakes, that they were generals leading battles or upper-class women in elegant clothes.

As stated, Charcot did not believe that hysteria was exclusively a female disorder

and from 1888, would receive male hysterics, though only as outpatients. Still, his main focus was the female hysterical body, and just as Duchenne had produced an atlas of facial expressions, Charcot created an atlas of the female hysterical body, with "hystero-genic zones". These were according to Charcot located in the trunk, the ovaries and the breasts, and a hysterical attack could be triggered, or arrested, simply by pressing them. It did require considerable force so Charcot had a device developed, an "ovary compressor", equipped with a knob and a screw mechanism to adjust the pressure to the ovaries.

At no point in the proceedings did Charcot attempt to get to the roots of the individual patient's psychological trauma (painful, repressed memories, etc.) to cure them, as he was convinced that hysteria was a neurological disorder. Whatever the hysterics said during attacks or hypnosis was for him "words, just words". Nevertheless, the case notes he wrote for each patient were extremely detailed, to search for clues that could give insight



Normal state, before hypnosis.



Cataleptic state, suggestion.



Lethargy, Zygomatic contraction.

Blanche Wittmann. She was the "the perfect hysteric". Photographs by Paul Regnard. Volume 3, *Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière*. Private collection.

position it was moulded into, becoming as Charcot described them, "Living Statues". Duchenne had died in 1875 but his apparatus continued to be put to use. Whatever expression the face was given with the help of electricity, it would retain, until ordered by the hypnotist. Throughout the Cataleptic state, the patient's eyes would remain wide open. The body was completely numb. As Paul Regnard wrote, "We can



Somnambulism, muscular hyperexcitability.



Hystero-epilepsy, normal state



Epileptoid phase, making faces



Attitudes passionnelles, menace



Attitudes passionnelles, auditory hallucinations



Onset of the attack: cry



Attitudes passionnelles, amorous supplication



Attitudes passionnelles, crucifixion



Tetanism

Augustine Gleizes. *La Grande Attaque Hystérique,*
Photographs by Paul Regnard. Volume 2, *Iconographie*
Photographique de la Salpêtrière. Private collection.



Attitudes passionnelles, ecstas

into the condition. And the case notes made for grim reading: stories of poverty, deprivation, neglect, violence and rape. The two most famous hysterics at La Salpêtrière were Blanche Wittmann, “The Queen of the Hysterics” as she was called, immortalised in the famous painting, *A Clinical Lesson at La Salpêtrière*, executed in 1886-1887 by André Brouillet, and Augustine Gleizes, these days sometimes referred to as “Paul Regnard’s Supermodel”. Their cases were described in *Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière* and Paul Richer’s *Études Cliniques sur l’hystéro-épilepsie*.



Paul Regnard. Augustine Gleizes under hypnosis, lethargic state, muscular hyperexcitability. If pressure was applied to specific muscles, they would contract with incredible rigidity. Volume 2, *Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière*. Private collection.

Marie Wittmann was somehow renamed “Blanche” at La Salpêtrière where she was admitted in 1877, possibly because she kept repeating the name during an attack. Just 18 years old, she had grown up in squalor. Her father, an unemployed carpenter, was violent, psychotic. He once tried to throw her out of a window, and would end his days in an asylum. Five of her eight siblings died, four from convulsions, one from suspected epilepsy. She often had convulsions, angry outbursts, and extreme mood swings, which stopped her from attending school. Instead she was sent as an apprentice to a furrier, who tried to rape her, then beat her. After returning to her home, her mother suddenly died. Too old to be taken into an orphanage, she saw no other option but to return to the furrier who insisted on having intercourse with her. Eventually she fled. She had a brief relationship with a young man, after which she was employed as a “ward girl” at Hôpital Temporaire. The hours were long, the pay was low, but for impoverished, unmarried women, working as a ward girl was one of few available options. She left the hospital when she started another brief relationship. When it ended, her convulsions and violent behaviour returned and she was admitted to the Saint Mandé hospital, where after two months, upon her release, she took another job as a ward girl. After a severe hysterical attack, she was admitted to La Salpêtrière.

Augustine Gleizes’ background was at least on paper marginally better. Born in 1861, she was admitted to La Salpêtrière when she was just 14. Her parents worked as servants, for a man named in her case notes as “Monsieur C”. Five of her siblings died and she saw very little of her parents. After her birth, she was sent to a wet nurse, then to live with relatives in Bordeaux, and then to a convent school. When she and two other students were caught masturbating, their hands were tied down at bedtime. The nuns, suspecting demonic possession, had a priest perform an exorcism on her. During a visit to the country, the husband of a friend tried to rape her, a scene she would later revisit during her hysterical attacks. At the age of 13, she returned home, to the parents she barely knew. They sent her to work for “Monsieur C”, who when his wife was away, threatened her with a razor and raped her. Shortly thereafter, she had her first hysterical attack and continued to have them every day for six weeks. The severity of her attacks diminished when she was sent to work for an old woman. She then found out that her mother had in effect sold her to “Monsieur C” as a sexual favour, and that her brother was possibly his son. Augustine’s attacks now became more severe, with convulsive attacks and paralysis that would shift from the left side of her body to the right. Her mother took her to a children’s hospital. The attacks became less severe, but after she was discharged five months later they became even more severe and so she was admitted to La Salpêtrière.

The hospital they came to was “a city within a city”, housing around 5 000 patients. There were roughly 100 buildings, a Catholic and a Protestant church, bakery, laundry, shops selling food, wine, tobacco, a post office, a gymnasium, gardens, and the aforementioned facilities that Bourneville helped finance. There was a strict hierarchy among the patients. The hysterics were “the upper class”. They were better looked after, had freedom to move around the hospital, its grounds and gardens, had better living quarters and better food. Below them were the epileptics and at the bottom, the mentally ill, housed in the worst buildings in the hospital, neglected and left to fend for themselves in environments that could turn violent. Drugs were administered in large quantities: morphine, amyl nitrate, chloroform, ether, ethyl valerate, and most patients would become addicted to one or several substances. Case notes also reveal that it was quite common for interns to have sexual liaisons with patients and that this raised no ethical concerns.

Then as now, there was much debate if the hysterics were faking it, and some medical observers who visited the hospital claimed to have observed it, though Charcot insisted that he was extremely careful in his initial observations, to reveal those who were merely pretending, but he also stated that propensities for drama, theatre and deception were symptoms of hysteria. The vast majority of the patients at the hospital were described as “of the lower class” and it is I think difficult

to overestimate how vulnerable and trapped they must have felt, not only by their personal circumstances but in wider society. French women didn't get the right to vote until General de Gaulle, then head of the provisional government, signed it into law on 21 April 1944. If some were faking it to get slightly better living conditions, it would hardly have been surprising; perhaps even deriving satisfaction from it – "You may be in charge, but I'm playing you."

Blanche Wittmann would initially spend seven and a half months among the mentally ill, having been sent there by Charcot soon after her arrival to his ward, where she had a series of violent outbursts. Returning to his ward, she was like a different person. Wittmann became the star of Charcot's famous demonstrations, held on Tuesdays in the newly built amphitheatre. Unlike the lectures he held for smaller groups of students, and other interested parties (authors, artists etc.), these were open to the general public and always packed. Wittmann was "the perfect hysteric". Unlike other hysterics, who would sometimes skip a state during hypnosis, Wittmann was entirely predictable. One doctor compared her to "a music box" that would play different tunes according to which button the operator pushed. Wittmann became noted for her acting abilities. Actresses, including Sarah Bernhardt, would come to the demonstrations and study her when they were given roles as hysterics. Wittmann became famous, was written about in the press and would on occasion "perform" at other hospitals. And Charcot would often invite members of the audience to give Wittmann instructions during the somnambulist stage, to act as a donkey or a society lady on a stroll through the park. Today, most would find demonstrations of patients as a form of entertainment utterly reprehensible. But the amphitheatre at La Salpêtrière wasn't the only show in town.

In 1804, the authorities opened the doors to what Emile Zola would later describe as "the spectacle that was affordable to all." It was the Paris Morgue. The reason for opening it to the public was to enlist its assistance in identifying the bodies that had been found in the streets or fished out of the Seine. But while some would come, desperately searching for their loved ones, most came for the spectacle. It became one of the city's main tourist attractions, listed in every guidebook. The bodies were washed, frozen, laid out on black marble slabs, their clothes on hangers behind them, displayed behind glass. Murder victims, rich fodder for gruesome speculations in the tabloid press, could draw up to 50 000 visitors a day. The morgue was closed to the public in 1907, after complaints from local residents and shopkeepers. Over the years, more than one observer had compared the display of dead bodies to luxury goods on display in the windows of upmarket department stores, echoing Charcot's descriptions of La Salpêtrière as "a vast emporium of human suffering" and "a living museum of pathology".

Charcot had a considerable amount of critics, both in and outside the medical world, the most vocal being the doctors at the university in Nancy, particularly Hippolyte



"It's written on her body." An example of "dermographism", where a doctor at La Salpêtrière has inscribed his diagnosis on the back of a patient suffering from catatonic schizophrenia. Schizophrenia was previously known as dementia praecox. Volume 18, *Nouvelle Iconographie de la Salpêtrière*, 1905.

Bernheim. He had been unable to replicate Charcot's results in the study of hysterics and had also found that the ability to be hypnotised was universal, not exclusive to hysterics. He accused Charcot of having created "a hystero-culture" at La Salpêtrière, an elaborate hoax, with doctors and patients as willing participants. But Charcot had through his social circle, which included the rich and the powerful, made himself "untouchable".

Charcot's continued failure to find the pathological evidence for hysteria left him with no other option than to continue focusing on the manifestations of the hysterical body. And his investigations would lead him along some strange paths, including "dermographism". Charcot found that many hysterics had extremely sensitive skin, that it would become reddened and raised when touched with a blunt object. So Charcot and the other doctors would "inscribe" the skin of the hysterics with their names, with dates, with their diagnosis, decorative patterns or simply "La Salpêtrière". But the disorder, dermatographic urticaria, wasn't unique to hysterics. Today, it affects 2-5 % of the general population. While the underlying causes are unknown, it can be triggered by heat, poor diet, or infection but most often, by stress.

Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière was founded on the initiative of Bourneville. It was published in three volumes, 1877-1880, with texts by Bourneville, Paul Richer and Paul Regnard, with photographs by the latter, a doctor and an accomplished photographer. Regnard left the hospital to take up a post at the Sorbonne in 1879 and though



Albert Londe. Male patient with hysterical contraction, albumen print, circa 1882.
Formerly Galerie Texbraun.

the photography studio was used occasionally, a new head for the studio wasn't found until 1882 when Albert Londe, photographer, chemist and medical researcher, took up his post. He was also the first photographer for the new journal, *Nouvelle Iconographie de la Salpêtrière*, published 1888-1918.

While volumes of the two journals turn up at auctions and with booksellers, prints of the images that Regnard and Londe took at the hospital are exceedingly rare explains Denis Canguilhem, collector and author of *Le Merveilleux Scientifique - Photographie du Monde Savant en France 1844-1918*, published by Gallimard in 2004.

– Regnard and Londe didn't make prints of those images to sell so very few prints were made and only for scientific purposes. Many years ago, I was lucky enough to come across a book, not by Regnard, but published under his auspices, in which somebody had pasted in four albumen prints by him. One would perhaps expect there to be prints in the library at La Salpêtrière but as I sadly discovered during the research for my book, there is a huge hole in its collections. A long time ago, it's not known exactly when, somebody stole two or three albums, and perhaps more photographic material from the library, and it's impossible to say exactly what and how much was lost. Some of that material eventually found its way to Galerie Texbraun who did a show with it in 1984 and some of it was reproduced in the little monograph on Londe, published by Photo Poche in 1999.

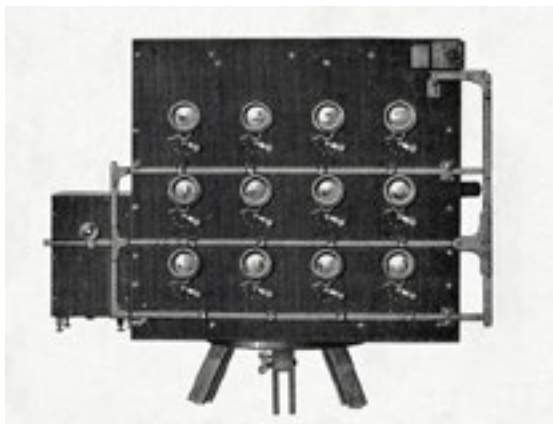
Some of the images Regnard took for the first volume of *Iconographie* are slightly blurry, indicating that the patients were moving during attacks. The images of Augustine Gleizes, in the second volume, are apart from one, perfectly sharp, leading some to speculate that she posed for them, simulating an attack. Taken against a black background, they have often been described as "artful". Londe's images of hysterics and patients with other disorders are very different but then he also had a different aim: to introduce standardisation in medical photography, says Canguilhem. – Londe wasn't only a photographer but also a chemist, a scientist and an inventor. He was an associate of Étienne-Jules Marey and introduced several technical important innovations in photography – he constructed one of the first instant shutters, the first reflex and portable camera, and a photoelectric camera, which had nine lenses arranged in a circle, and he designed this camera specifically to capture the movements of patients during epileptic and hysterical attacks. In 1891, he designed a 12-lens camera and in 1893, he built an outdoor studio at La Salpêtrière, for the purpose of making movement studies. That same year, he also published *La Photographie Médicale*, the first substantial textbook on medical photography, which laid the foundations for its standardisation in France. In 1896, just a year after Roentgen presented his discovery, Londe was made head of the newly installed X-ray department at La Salpêtrière, but then he left the hospital in 1903, with his assistant Charles Infroit taking over his post.

Charcot died suddenly in 1893 after which his theory on hysteria came crashing down. He had been determined to unravel the mysteries of hysteria. Instead, it ended up unravelling his reputation. While Bourneville remained loyal until the end, others were very quick to disassociate themselves from Charcot. Within a few years, almost all who had been close to him had left La Salpêtrière. But there remained one link to Charcot. It was Blanche Wittmann. No longer

in demand for demonstrations, it is likely that she initially worked as a ward girl. Some time later, she became an assistant to Albert Londe in the X-ray department, staying on when Charles Infroit took over his post in 1903. The dangers of radiation were unknown in the early days of radiology. Infroit died in 1920. He had over the years undergone 22 operations because of damage from radiation, the last one in 1918, when his right arm and part of his left wrist were amputated. He was hailed as a hero, who had sacrificed his life to science and humanity. There had been no such accolades for Blanche Wittmann. “The Queen of the Hysterics” died, largely forgotten, in 1909.

One of those who disassociated himself from Charcot was Sigmund Freud, who when he left La Salpêtrière in 1886, was fully signed up to “The School of La Salpêtrière”, and also translated several books by Charcot into German. But in 1895, two years after Charcot’s death, Freud and Josef Breuer published *Studies on Hysteria*, refuting Charcot’s theories, claiming that hysteria was not caused by neurological abnormalities but by repressed memories and ideas, psychological trauma manifesting themselves in the body, and in 1896, Freud coined the term to describe his new treatment method: psychoanalysis.

While his influence on Freud would have been enough to secure Charcot a place in current debate, it is I suspect Brouillett’s painting and Regnard’s and Londe’s photographs that have made it quite so prominent. Forgotten now are the names of the surgeons who for over 200 years, to cure hysteria, performed hysterectomies, some making their fortunes by butchering women of the upper class, the class that could afford such operations.



Albert’s Londe’s 12-lens camera. Illustration from *La Photographie Médicale*, 1893. Collection of the author.

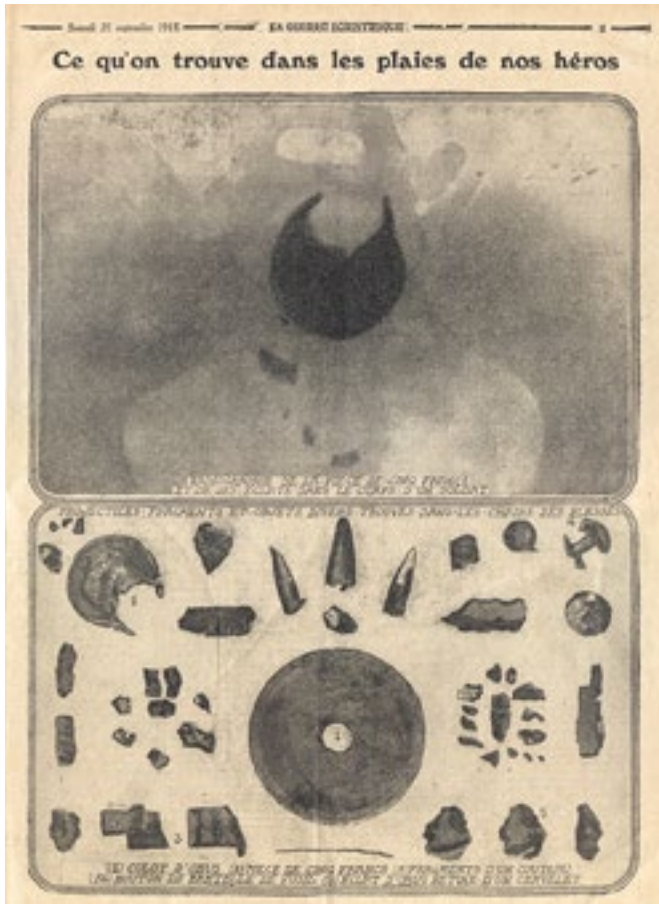
Most present-day texts about Charcot are written by non-clinicians, whether they come from a background of art history, cultural studies or gender studies. And many will boldly state that hysteria



Albert Londe. Hysterical hemiplegia. *Nouvelle Iconographie de la Salpêtrière*, volume 1, 1888. Collection of the author.

simply disappeared, often pointing to the third edition of *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, published in 1980, where the word hysteria was finally removed. But the disorder known as dementia praecox didn’t disappear into thin air. It’s known today as schizophrenia. Manic depression has been renamed bipolar disorder.

Charles Laségue’s description of hysteria as “the wastepaper basket of otherwise unemployed medical symptoms” seems to me an apt one but while the wastepaper basket has disappeared, the symptoms it contained haven’t and they have since Charcot’s time been ascribed to various disorders. The most immediate candidate for the most common group of hysterical symptoms is conversion disorder, usually emerging suddenly after a period of emotional or physical distress or psychological conflict, with symptoms including blindness, weakness, paralysis, abnormal movements, non-epileptic seizures with loss of consciousness. Medical historians have suggested other diagnoses for some of the patients at La Salpêtrière including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, epilepsy, PTSD, multiple personality disorder and that these would have been exacerbated by their life experiences before and at Salpêtrière. Some 150 years on, any attempt to establish precise diagnoses would in many cases seem to be “a quest for the unknowable”.



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1. "What one finds in the wounds of our heroes". Page from *Exelsior - La Guerre Scientifique*, 25 September 1915. At the beginning of WWI, Charles Infroit invented an apparatus called "Compas de Profondeur", making it possible to precisely locate projectiles in the bodies of wounded soldiers, thus saving many lives. On top is an x-ray of a soldier, showing a five-franc coin and some broken pieces and below, various projectiles Infroit had located using his apparatus. Collection of the author.

3. **Charles Infroit**. Spinal x-ray, gelatin silver print, circa 1910. Courtesy of Keith de Lellis Gallery. Some ten years ago, New York gallerist Keith de Lellis acquired three albums of x-rays. de Lellis says, "The albums are identical in design. Two contain x-ray photos of elbows and knee joints, the third contains spinal x-rays and some of them are signed by Infroit, as if they were works of art and they have a wonderful abstract quality."

2. "The martyrdom of a scientist." Front cover of *Le Petit Journal*, 12 December 1920. Charles Infroit died in 1920. He had over the years undergone 22 operations because of damage from radiation, the last one in 1918, when his right arm and part of his left wrist were amputated. Collection of the author.

4. **Charles Infroit**. X-ray of the foetus of a dolphin, connected to its plasma, gelatin silver print, circa 1905. Courtesy of Bernard Garrett. Canguilhem published this image in his 2004 book. Other x-rays of animals by Infroit turn up now and again on the market. They are blind-stamped and the care with which they are printed would indicate that they weren't primarily used for clinical purposes. Canguilhem says, "The Infroit x-rays of animals all came from the same source originally but it's not known why they were made, if it was for educational purposes for instance. When I was researching my book, I looked in vain for any writings by Infroit. He is something of an enigma."

Though Charcot's theory on hysteria was discredited, Regnard's and Londe's photographs would continue to resonate and connect, in Vienna, with Egon Schiele. Gemma Blackshaw, art historian, curator and Professor of Art History at the Royal College of Art, has been researching what she calls "Clinical Modernism" since 2003.

– Egon Schiele used the La Salpêtrière journals as source books, to push his art in a new direction. In 1910, he broke free from Art Nouveau and the decorative influence of Gustav Klimt, and embarked on a project of self-portraiture that championed a new aesthetic of the pathological body. The two journals were widely disseminated, available not only in university and hospital libraries in Vienna, but also in the city's public libraries. The images, as well as images from other medical journals, including images of the insane, were reproduced in newspapers and magazines and so were very much part of visual culture in Vienna at the time.

And Vienna wasn't like the other art centres in Europe.

– It was the European capital for clinical medicine, and there was a really interesting community of medics who were also art collectors, patrons and to an extent, art agents. When you look through Schiele's address book, it's remarkable how many medics are listed there. What's unusual about Vienna compared to the other art centres is that artists there were really locked on to two things; figuration and portraiture, and they remained extremely important as genres for innovation in a way that they didn't elsewhere, where the avant-garde was moving towards landscape, still life, assemblages, abstraction. In Vienna, the connection with the human body and associated ideas about subjectivity remained. I think that was because of the city's emphasis on clinical medicine and the relationships between artists and doctors, and how so many artists had personal experience of clinical regimes. They were patients as well as bedside companions. They were asked to come in and draw patients but were also patients themselves.

Blackshaw is not the only art historian to trace a connection between Schiele's art and the La Salpêtrière journals. Others include Klaus-Albrecht Schröder, who has characterised their role for Schiele as "a quarry of motives which do not symbolise rationality, arrangement and control, but expressiveness and authenticity of the psyche and of the emotions." Others have pointed to the similarities between Schiele's art and the images of hysterics and patients with various disorders in the two journals: his way of angling his head in many self-portraits as if suffering from dystonia, and the portraits of his friend Erwin Osen, his fingers enlarged, a symptom of macrodactyly, the mannered, awkward poses. But there is no hard evidence that Schiele studied the two journals and the connection to his art has been disputed, Blackshaw explains.

– There are generations of art historians and there are great differences between them. There are those who are invested in heroic stories of artistic genius, who believe in the divine power and individual creative brilliance of the artist. Then there are those of us who emphasize gender, sexuality, class and race. To my mind, using the two journals as source books doesn't detract from his brilliance as a draughtsman or his originality at all. He wasn't copying.

Photography was an important influence on Schiele, Blackshaw explains.

– In 1910, he started thinking about how the body, on its own and its entirety, could communicate something. And that the body had no need of a setting, of clothing, or relations to other bodies. He was thinking about line and form and figuration as the only thing that could really communicate any truth about humanity. He broke through to a very pornographic drawing style so it's highly likely that he was looking at pornography as well as the two La Salpêtrière journals. Photography, monochrome, simplified the body, making it very graphic, so it was hugely important for his drawing style.



"The new modern artist as brilliantly diseased." **Egon Schiele**. *Semi-Nude (Self-Portrait)* 1911, Pencil, gouache on paper. Leopold Museum, Vienna.
Photo: Leopold Museum, Vienna/Manfred Thumberger.

This year, Leopold Museum in Vienna, showed an exhibition, curated by Blackshaw and Verena Gamper, called *The Body Electric*, with drawings by Schiele and Erwin Osen. Osen's drawings, made in 1915 and recently discovered in an attic, show patients at the 2nd Garrison Hospital on Rennweg in Vienna where they, and Osen himself, underwent Electrotherapy. Juxtaposed were drawings Osen made two years earlier, of patients at the psychiatric hospital Am Steinhof, and Schiele's portraits of Osen, as well as self-portraits and depictions of pregnant women and



Egon Schiele. *Erwin Dominik Osen, Nude with Crossed Arms, 1910*, black chalk, watercolour, gouache on paper. Leopold Museum, Vienna.
Photo: Leopold Museum, Vienna/Manfred Thumberger.

babies that Schiele made in 1910 at the 2nd Gynaecological Hospital, having been permitted to do so by his friend, the pathological anatomist and gynaecologist Dr. Erwin Graff.

Osen was a mime artist, stage painter and painter. The oft-repeated story is that there was a falling-out between the friends after Osen had gathered a group of drawings that Schiele had discarded and sold them as his own. But Blackshaw suspects there's more to the story.

– It was told by Arthur Roessler, who was Schiele's first patron and the first to document his contribution. But the only evidence we have is Roessler's claim and he wasn't neutral. Partly, I think it's a way of pitting artists against each other, lionising one as having genius and originality at the expense of the other. But I also think that the homoeroticism that is present in Schiele's drawings of Osen was deeply troubling for Roessler, reflecting how homosexuality was regarded at the time. Did Osen test the limits of what art history could and couldn't speak about? Does Osen's work point to really troubled sexual politics in art history in Vienna at that point? Personally, I think it does. There was a period during those months when the two of them were really pushing drawing of male bodies. You can read those in terms of homosexual desire and speculate if it was a time of sexual experimentation for the two. We know that they did in the drawings of women so why not in drawings

of men? There just aren't enough queer readings of Schiele's work and I hope the show will generate those.

Schiele was no stranger to mental illness and instability. His father, having become psychotic from syphilis, died when he was 14. His letters to his mother are evidence of a fractured personality. But Blackshaw thinks that Schiele's pathological body interpretation was not primarily an inward-looking art practice but a calculated strategy.

– Schiele had a very sharpened sense of what would and wouldn't sell. I think the path he embarked on was a canny strategy geared towards the commercial local art market. The thin, angular bodies, the mannered, awkward poses, provided him with a new vocabulary, which could be used to underscore his suffering and his genius, disseminating a notion of the new modern artist as brilliantly diseased.

Schiele's use of medical imagery broke an impasse for him. There is perhaps a parallel to be drawn with what had happened in Paris only a few years earlier, when African art had opened new possibilities for Matisse and Picasso; for the latter, leading him to *Les Femmes d'Alger* and beyond. But hysteria wasn't forgotten in the Paris art world.



Erwin Dominik Osen. *Portrait of a Patient, 1915*, Watercolour, pencil on paper. Leopold Museum, Vienna.
Photo: Leopold Museum, Vienna/Manfred Thumberger.



1938 Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme in Paris where Héléne Vanel performed as a hysteric.
Photo by Keystone-France/Gamma-Keystone via Getty Images.



Henri Manuel. Portrait of André Breton, gelatin silver print, 1927. Private collection.

In 1928, André Breton and Louis Aragon published a manifesto in the 11th issue of the magazine *La Révolution Surréaliste*, celebrating “the fiftieth anniversary of the invention of hysteria”, that is, not 50 years from when Charcot first started working with hysterics but from when he started using hypnosis. The pair declared hysteria “the greatest poetic discovery of the latter part of the century”, and stated “we do this at a time when the dismemberment of the concept of hysteria seems to be complete”, adding, “Hysteria is not a pathological phenomenon and can in every respect be considered a supreme vehicle of expression.” The manifesto was illustrated with Regnard’s images of Augustine Gleizes, described by the pair as “delicious”.

Practically every survey of 20th-century art will describe Surrealism as having sprung from Dada and the writings of Sigmund Freud. Apollinaire is given credit for coining the term, Marquis de Sade is usually mentioned, as is Arthur Rimbaud’s statement “a poet makes himself a visionary through a long, boundless, and systemised derangement of all the senses.” And the famous line from Lautréamont’s *Les Chants de Maldoror*: “Beautiful as the accidental encounter, on a dissecting table, of a sewing machine and an umbrella.” the line that would become a blueprint for the unexpected juxtapositions in so much of Surrealist art and photography.

But Breton’s forays into derangement and fractured psyches had come much earlier. And they had by all accounts been a profound shock. Though passionate about poetry, in 1913, he began to study medicine. After WWI broke out, he was, as he would later state, “flung into a cesspool of blood, mud and idiocy.” In 1916, he was first sent to the hospital in Nantes, then to the neuro-psychiatric centre in Saint Dizier, where the patients were soldiers who had been sent from the front due to shell-shock, mental illness, including some who were acutely insane. Breton worked under doctor Raoul-Achille Leroy, who introduced him to the writings of Charcot, Magnan, Freud and others. Breton would later state in an interview, “The time I spent there and what I saw was of signal importance in my life and had a decisive influence in the development of my thought. That is where I could experiment on patients, seeing the nature of diagnosis and psychoanalysis, and in particular, the recording of dreams and free association. These materials were from the beginning at the heart of Surrealism.” But Breton’s encounters with the patients had been both more exhilarating and shocking than the statement implies, as he divulged in letters to his friend Théodore Fraenkel. The patients’ words, streaming, uncontrollable, defied all logic, a jumble of emotions and images that were frightening, fantastical, astonishing. In comparison, his own poems seemed laboured and superficial. Fraenkel noted in his diary that Breton “in his nut-case hospital is moved and horrified to see patients who are better poets than he is.”

Breton encountered a patient, a shell-shocked soldier, whose coping mechanism was to believe that the battle he had participated in hadn't actually happened, that it was a simulacrum, an illusion manipulated by occult powers. Breton wrote down the man's words and turned them into his first prose poem, *Subject*. But there was no way for Breton himself to access the mental state that had produced the man's words. But he did find a different mechanism, automatism. In 1919, he and Philippe Soupault, produced *Les Champs Mécanique*, in effect, the first Surrealist publication, where each wrote any thought that came into his mind, in sentences or part of sentences that would then be completed by the other, this in order to produce texts unfettered by conscious censorship. Automatism had been used in psychiatry since the 1850s, first by Jules Baillarger, then by Pierre Janet in Charcot's laboratory, as a way of curing subconscious fixed ideas. It had also been used in literature, by Thomas Carlyle, Gérard de Nerval and others, though in his letters to Fraenkel, Breton mostly referred to Freud in relation to automatism. He also sent an inscribed copy of the book to Freud. Breton even went to see Freud at his practice in Vienna, in 1921, with the hope of interviewing him. But the meeting would prove a disappointment. They were talking at cross-purposes. For Freud, psychoanalysis was a method to cure mental disorders, for Breton, a method for creative exploration. Freud saw him as a poet who could add nothing to the field of psychoanalysis, a nuisance, and quickly ended their meeting. Breton afterwards dismissed Freud as "an old man".

Breton's and Aragon's manifesto on hysteria would entice others in the Surrealist group, including Max Ernst and Salvador Dalí, who would both make use of images of hysterics in artworks. Hysteria was for Breton ultimately a poetic concept, a voyeuristic exercise, a creative tool to play around with, and at no cost to himself. The opening of the Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme in 1938 is a case in point. "*L'Hystérie*" was part of the evening's entertainment, a performance by dancer and artist Hélène Vanel who had been given instructions on how to act as a hysteric by Max Ernst, Salvador Dalí and Wolfgang Paalen. Vanel "jumped out of a stack of pillows, with chains wrapped around her naked body, then splashing in a puddle Paalen had installed, then disappeared to reappear shortly afterwards, in a tattered dress and gave a very realistic performance of a hysterical attack." And that is perhaps the truest example of how the surrealists saw hysteria, a woman out of control, a muse, a deranged Delphic oracle, and sexually enticing.

While the Surrealists were completely focused on female hysterics, elsewhere it was the male hysteric who was of interest. To the uninitiated, the small

upstairs room in 7 Reece Mews, South Kensington, London, would have resembled nothing less than the squalor of a hoarder, albeit one with an artistic bent. A chaos of paints, brushes, the floor strewn with layers of pages torn from newspapers, art books, photographs and empty champagne bottles. And yet it was from here, his studio, that Francis Bacon would emerge in the evenings, immaculately dressed, heading off to Soho, The French House or The Colony Room or various gambling dens, before heading east in search of rough trade, on occasion so rough he would need stitches.

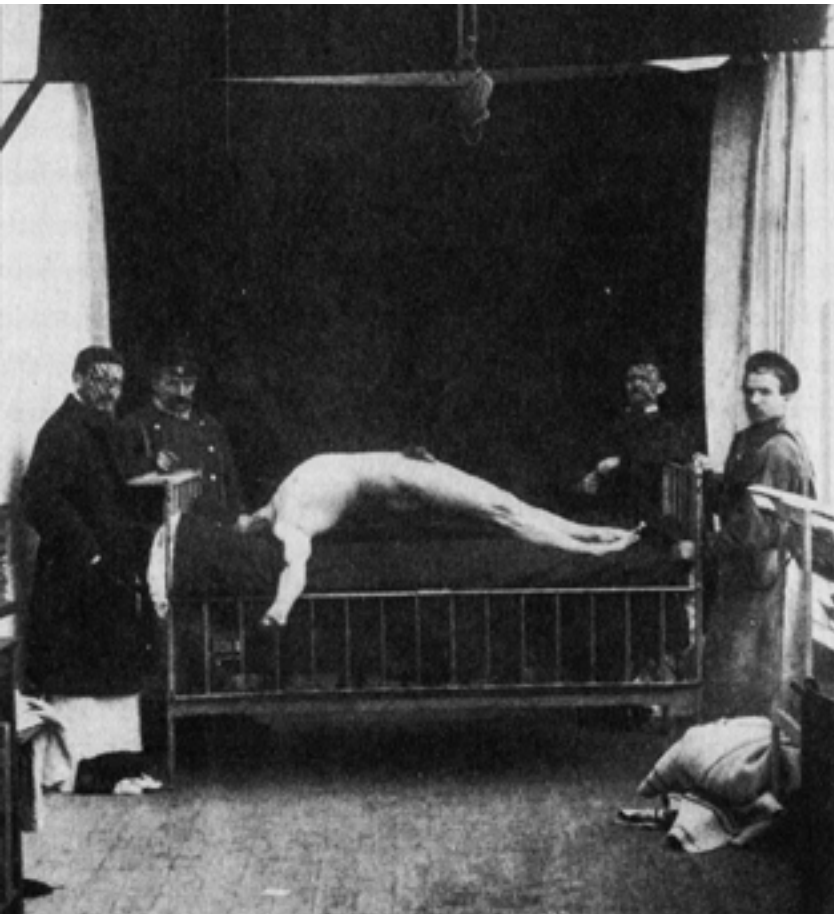
It was at The French House where Michael Peppiatt first met Bacon. He has written several books about him, including the biography *Anatomy of an Enigma* and the memoir *Francis Bacon in Your Blood*. He is also the curator of *Francis Bacon: Man and Beast*, a major exhibition which will be shown at the Royal Academy in London from 29 January - 17 April 2022. In 1963, as a 21-year old student, he sought out Bacon at The French House in Soho, to secure an interview for the student paper *Cambridge Opinion*. It was the beginning of a lifelong friendship.

Photographs were important source material for Bacon. He was an admirer of Eadweard Muybridge's movement studies, but was as Peppiatt tells me "a magpie" when it came to images, and among the chaos in the studio was also a stack of reproductions of Albert Londe's images of male hysterics.

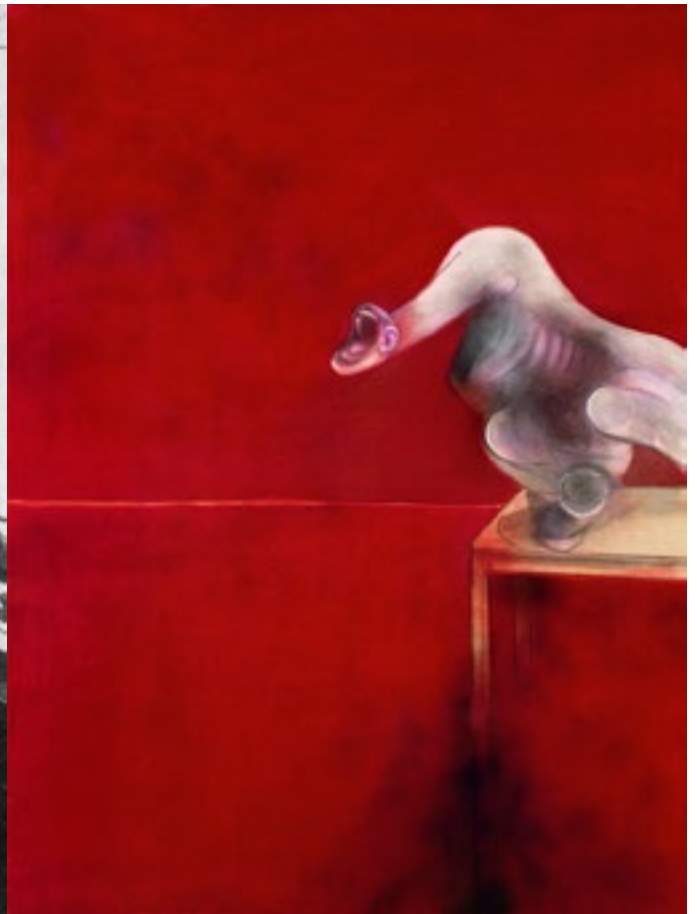
Bacon often talked about wanting to give a shock to the nervous system. Did he ever show an interest in exploring neurology more in-depth?

– No, I don't think so. It was sort of pseudo-scientific. What he was doing was at least partly scientific in that he was exploring certain kinds of imagery and the human reaction to seeing it. As a very young man he had bought some medical journals in Paris and they had made a deep, deep impression on him. He found a certain beauty in those very distressing conditions. He used to subscribe to *The British Medical Journal*. He liked extreme things because they gave him a jolt. The shocking imagery cleansed the eye, so to speak, forced you to wake up. Bacon liked "tough pictures". He was always fascinated by the slicing of the eye in Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí's film *Un Chien Andalou* which made others look away. He wasn't squeamish and he looked at some very tough photographs, illness, murder, violence, medical. And there were a lot of things that he didn't talk about or show. He kept them in a big trunk and nobody ever saw what was in it.

I suggest to Peppiatt that there may have been several reasons why Londe's images of male hysterics would have appealed to Bacon. He was attracted to extreme bodies and his paintings often show bodies



Albert Londe. The patient named “Guinin” in the throes of a hysterical attack. 1885. Francis Bacon collected reproductions of Londe’s photographs, as well as other medical imagery.



Francis Bacon. The right panel of the second Version of Triptych 1944, 1988. Oil paint and acrylic paint on 3 canvases, 198 x 147.5 cm (each). Tate: Presented by the artist 1991 © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved, DACS/Artimage 2020. Photo: Prudence Cuming Associates Ltd.

in some sort of arena. In Londe’s images, the hysterics are photographed in a bed in the studio, a kind of arena, surrounded by staff.

– I think that’s true but there may have been more personal reasons why Bacon was interested in Londe’s images. He had lived with Peter Lacy and their relationship was often extremely violent. Bacon described Lacy to me as always being in an extremely nervous state, hysterical much of the time, and he might have been interested in looking at hysteria in its most extreme manifestation. Perhaps he looked at Londe’s images when he was doing a portrait of Lacy or a sex scene, where the two of them were coupled, locked together with an intensity bordering on hysteria. Bacon got up to all sorts of sexual behaviour. I included one of Londe’s images in *Anatomy of an Enigma*, a hysteric with his body arched. It could be seen as the climax during sex.

It is difficult to point to specific paintings where Bacon used Londe’s images but then he often used a method that could be described as “mash-up”, letting two or several images collide, as he did with *Portrait of Innocent X* by Diego Velasquez and a still

of the screaming woman in Sergei Eisenstein’s film *Battleship Potemkin*, for his series of paintings of the screaming Pope.

– He used several images in order to reach maximum intensity, to give that shock to the nervous system. He looked at hundreds of thousands of images and he had an absolutely incredible knack for finding the imagery that he needed. I went to his studio quite often and was amazed by the variety of images that were lying about on the floor, painted on, trampled on, torn, it was like an enormous image bank. He was a magpie, and one image sparked another, and then another, and they were then translated onto the canvas, to an image that marked him.

I would suggest that Bacon’s use of “tough pictures” went beyond mere voyeurism. That he had an instinctual recognition as he had so often put himself in extreme situations. In an exchange with Bacon, art critic and curator David Sylvester commented “As you’re painting a figure you feel its gesture in your own body”, and Bacon replied, “Yes I do.”

The triptych is included in the exhibition *Francis Bacon : Man and Beast* at the Royal Academy in London 29 January - 17 April 2022.



Louise Bourgeois. *Arch of Hysteria*, Bronze, polished patina, hanging piece, 1993. Photo: Allan Finkelman, © The Easton Foundation / VAGA at ARS and DACS, London 2021.

The arched body of the male hysteric would turn up in the late work of Louise Bourgeois, *Cell (Arch of Hysteria)*, 1992-1993 and *Arch of Hysteria*, 1993. Bourgeois was a self-confessed hysteric. She was in psychoanalysis for over 30 years. Her work was deeply confessional, and she would return again and again to the traumas of her childhood, the treacherous father who had a ten-year relationship with her governess, and the death of her invalid mother when she was 21, leaving her feeling betrayed and abandoned. But the years in analysis would be unfruitful. In her 1962 essay *Freud's Toys* she wrote, "The truth is that Freud did nothing for artists, or for the artist's problem, the artist's torment." adding, "To be an artist involves some suffering. That's why artists repeat themselves - because they have no access to a cure." She traced her first hysterical symptoms back to 1944, when she thought she couldn't have children, "The fear of not having children made me hysterical, it made me emotionally upset. This is tangible proof that I am a normal person."

In an interview with Pat Steir, published in ARTFORUM in 1993, she stated, "I find this period of the end of the 19th century – the period of Charcot, the Salpêtrière, you know – mysterious." Asked

by Steir, why the figure is male, Bourgeois replies, "The fact that it is a man is not terribly important. It is a remark about the hysterical, and in the time of Jean Martin Charcot, any ill, any disease, was attributed to hysteria, to be precise, and hysteria was attributed to women, which was absurd. This is all it means."

Though inspired by Regnard's and Londe's photographs, the two sculptures were created by casting the body of her assistant, Jerry Gorovoy. A few years later, she returned to hysteria, but focusing on female hysterics. While the headless sculptures of Gorovoy are elegant, they are also mute. Her sculptures of female hysterics have heads, and are executed in cloth, without the elegance of the headless males, but imbued with lived experience and memory. In *Louise Bourgeois* (2007), edited by Frances Morris, Bourgeois stated, "With *The Arch of Hysteria*, I thought I could become a Charcot and make a beautiful young man exhibit himself in torsade." And perhaps she came closer to Charcot with the headless, mute males than she realised, as Charcot regarded any utterance by a hysteric during an attack as "words, just words."

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Jakob von Narkiewicz-Jodko, 1896.

*Electrographie de l'électricité Atmosphérique,
Système Jodko, sans objectif ni recherche.*