

13 THE CLASSIC

SPRING 2025

A print and digital magazine about classic photography

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Irving Penn. *Girl in Bed* (Jean Patchett), New York, 1949/1970. Platinum-palladium print, flush-mounted on aluminum.



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at AIPAD's NY Photography Show (Booth D5)

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Paolo Pellegrin Beirut, Lebanon (from the series: Double Blind), 2006. Gelatin silver print on aluminium composite panel, printed 2011. 105.5 x 158 cm (109 x 162 cm frame). Estimate € 6,000 – 8,000. Photography Sale, 30 May

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Fine Photographs

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& publisher of *The Classic*

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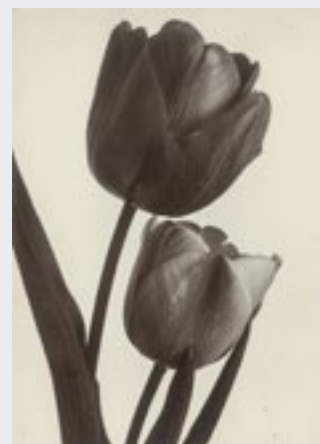
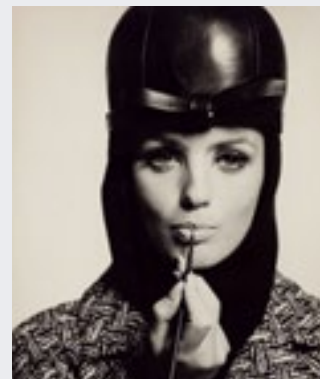
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Cover: Marion Wulz. Portrait of Wanda Wulz in motorcycle goggles, gelatin silver print, 1928 - 1930. Collezione: Archivi Alinari-archivio Studio Wulz, Firenze.



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Celebrating the Negative

Photographs by John Loengard

Published by Etherton Gallery, the portfolio *Celebrating the Negative* presents a curated selection of John Loengard's photographs of iconic negatives, drawn from his 1994 book. The edition is limited to 15 copies and housed in a custom clamshell box, which includes eighteen 11 x 14-inch gelatin silver prints, a colophon, image descriptions, a first edition of Loengard's book, and an updated essay.



André Kertész, *Satiric Dancer*, 1926



Richard Avedon, *Ronald Fischer, Beekeeper*, 1981



Aaron Siskind, *Pleasures and Terrors of Levitation, (#63)*, 1956



Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Behind the Gare St. Lazare*, 1932

All photographs ©John Loengard, Courtesy Etherton Gallery

In a world increasingly defined by social media and digital imagery, *Celebrating the Negative* offers a rare, tangible connection to photography's origins. Loengard's lens illuminates the enduring legacy of legendary negatives, preserving moments that transcend today's ephemeral image culture.

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From the editor

Once again, our team has been hard at work. In addition to issue 13, we have also created a boxset, containing the first 12 issues of *The Classic*, plus a special 48-page supplement, entitled *Through a Glass, Darkly*. The phrase is from 1 Corinthians 13:12. The comma doesn't appear in the 1560 Geneva Bible, "For now we see through a glass darkly" but was added in the 1611 King James Bible.

The boxset is limited to 250 numbered copies and unlike the regular issues of *The Classic*, *Through a Glass, Darkly* won't be made available as free download, nor will the articles be published anywhere else. In short, if you want to read the articles in the supplement, you'll have to buy the boxset. Inside, you will find a two-page advert for the boxset, listing the articles in the supplement.

And there's another reason to buy the boxset. *The Classic* is a free magazine but it's not free to produce, print and ship. Despite advertising, it's nowhere close to breaking even. The boxset is a way to recoup some of the now considerable costs that have been incurred. Your support would be appreciated.

And issue 13? Our publisher Bruno Tartarin is interviewed and we welcome Laura Leonelli to the team. I'm very grateful to her for the in-depth interview with Claudia Baroncini, director of the Alinari Foundation. The foundation has been on my must-cover list for a long time, as has Stephen Daiter, interviewed in this issue by Mary Pelletier. I also wish to thank Michael S. Sachs, Nick Warr, Les EpouxP, Sean Sexton, and finally, our director Mike Derez and graphic designer Jasmine Durand.

Michael Diemar
Editor-in-chief

THE CLASSIC Boxset

of the first 12 issues of *The Classic*



Limited edition of 250 numbered copies.

www.theclassicphotomag.com/boxset



With a special supplement
Through a Glass, Darkly

The articles in the 48-page supplement *Through a Glass, Darkly*, look back at the history of the photography market. Unlike the back issues of *The Classic*, the articles in the supplement won't be made available as free downloads and won't be published elsewhere.

À la recherche du temps perdu

Researching the birth of the modern photography market.
With Isabella Seniuta

The Road to the 21 December 1971 Auction at Sotheby's Belgravia

The auction that established photography in the auction world. And how it may not have happened if the timeline had been different. With Howard Ricketts

Something about Harry

Harry Lunn remembered, with Christophe Lunn, Robert Hershkowitz, Hank O'Neal, Manfred Heiting, Martin Mago, Philippe Garner and Robert Mann.

The Jammes Auctions

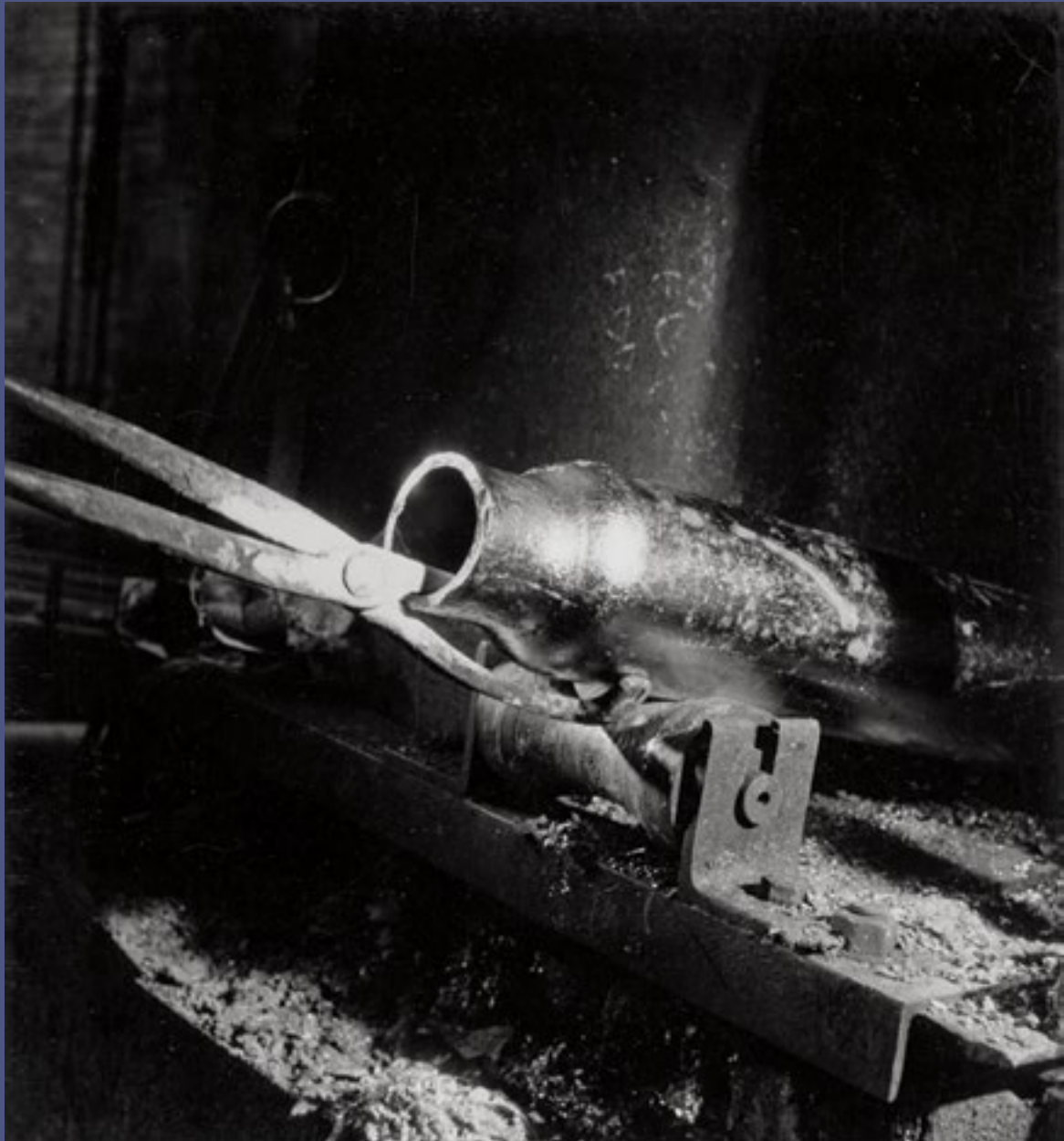
With Philippe Garner

The 2002 Jammes auction panorama revisited

With Dr Juliet Hacking, Christopher Mahoney, Lee Marks, Baudoin Lebon, Alex Novak, Adnan Sezer, Michael Hoppen, Daniella Dangoor, Simone Klein, Paul Hertzman, Sean Sexton, Jean-Jacques Naudet, Christophe Goeury and others.

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Weegee, Kettle of Fish, c. 1956, vintage silver gelatin print, Artist and ICP Ex-Collection wet stamp verso, titled and annotated by artist in ink recto margin

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An online resource



Recent uploads include

Fabricated Dreams – Joel-Peter Witkin's Contact Sheets

By Daphne Srinivasan

Felice Beato – The Road to Mandalay

By Matthew Butson

The Next Generation in Classic Photography – Mila Palm

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Images courtesy of Phillips, Christie's, Paris Photo and Photo London.



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JULIA MARGARET CAMERON (1815–1879). Three Kings' Daughters Fair. 1873.

Albumen print mounted to board. 33,2 x 27,8 cm.

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London... at Photo London

The capital is the official focus at the tenth edition of Photo London, held as in previous years at Somerset House. Robert Hershkowitz Ltd is devoting a section of its presentation to London studies, such as Hyde Park Corner and Isambard Brunel's Thames suspension bridge by Fox Talbot, studies of Westminster Abbey by Nicolaas Henneman and Frederick Evans, and Claude-Marie Ferrier's image of the Crystal Palace Exhibition in 1851. Also on view will be masterpieces of 19th century photography, as well as the industrial photography of Walter Nurnberg, whose cinematographic lighting techniques created dramatic scenes of British factory life in the 1940s.

14 – 18 May

Photo London
Somerset House
London WCR2 1LA.

William Henry Fox Talbot. *Wellington Arch Hyde Park Corner*, calotype, 1846.

Susan Sontag at Bundeskunsthalle

On Photography, Susan Sontag's 1977 collection of essays quickly became one of the medium's standard works. Sontag is the subject of the latest in the series of exhibitions about influential personalities at Bundeskunsthalle, following Hannah Arendt, Simone de Beauvoir and Josephine Baker. *Susan Sontag. Seeing and Being Seen* is dedicated to the author, critic and public intellectual. The exhibition traces her theories and thoughts on photography and shows Sontag in her role as a film enthusiast and director, not least in order to portray her as an independent woman who has given herself a voice and was a power of speech throughout her life.

Runs until 28 September

Bundeskunsthalle
Helmut-Kohl-Allee 4
53113 Bonn

Susan Sontag during filming of *Duet for Cannibals*.

©AB Svensk Filmindustri (1969) photo by Peder Björkgren.



American Photography in Amsterdam

Over the past decade, the Rijksmuseum has built an extensive collection of American Photography. This exhibition is the first ever presentation of the collection, shown together with loans from over 30 collections in the United States, the Netherlands and other European countries. Works by Sally Mann, Robert Frank, Lisette Model, Nan Goldin, Richard Avedon, Andy Warhol, Paul Strand, Diane Arbus and James Van Der Zee are shown alongside photographs by unknown photographers. *American Photography* gives a picture of the country through the eyes of American photographers, showing the country in all its complexity. The exhibition takes themes such as the American dream, landscapes and portraiture to trace how photographers increasingly reflected on changes and events. A major topic of the show is photography's evolution as an art form, from 19th-century daguerreotypes of frost flowers on a window to the work of Paul Strand, Charles Sheeler, Sally Mann, Irving Penn, Dawoud Bey and Sarah Sense. Another important theme is how photography has grown to be a part of everyday life, which is demonstrated by family portraits, advertisements, postcards, record covers and more.

Runs until 8 June

Rijksmuseum
Museumstraat 1
1071 XX Amsterdam



Irene Poon. *Virginia, 1965*, gelatin silver print. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Gik of Charles Wong. © Irene Poon Photography Archive, Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries.



Weegee Society of the Spectacle

Coinciding with the final stop of the Weegee at ICP in New York, Thames & Hudson publishes *Weegee: The Society of the Spectacle*. Weegee's macabre tabloid photographs of murdered gangsters, bodies trapped in crashed cars, slums consumed by fire, and other poignant records of New York's nocturnal low life in the 1930s and 40s are the stuff of legend. Less known, however, is the work he created in his later years, when he satirized Hollywood, mocking its fleeting glory, jubilant crowds, and social scenes, and created celebrity portraits that he delighted in distorting using a palette of technical tricks. Offering the first evaluation of the famed photographer's career in its entirety, the exhibition and book reconcile the two sides of Weegee by showing how the "spectacle" was the unifying theme of his work.

Runs until 5 May

ICP
84 Ludlow Street
New York, NY 10002

Weegee. *Man arrested for cross-dressing, New York*, gelatin silver print, circa 1939, International Center of Photography. Purchase, with funds provided by Lois and Bruce Zenkel Purchase Fund, 1982.

© International Center of Photography/Getty Images



The Face at National Portrait Gallery, London

Launched in the UK in 1981 by Nick Logan, *The Face* soon proclaimed itself “The World’s Best Dressed Magazine”. Logan, former editor of *New Musical Express*, spotted a gap in the market for a monthly title aimed at a youth audience interested in a broad range of subjects that weren’t being featured in glossy fashion publications, teen magazines or the music weeklies. *The Face* launched the careers of numerous photographers and models, including Nick Knight, Corrine Day, Jamie Morgan, Juergen Teller, Nick Kamen and Kate Moss. The magazine ceased publication in 2004, but returned in 2019 to a radically different publishing landscape. *The Face: Culture Shift*, is the first major museum exhibition to focus on the portraiture and fashion photography captured for the magazine.

Runs until 18 May

The National Portrait Gallery
St Martin’s Place
London WC2H 0HE

The Face, April 1984. Sade, by Jamie Morgan.
©Photography Jamie Morgan.

Studio Stone at Musée de la Photographie

In the artistic effervescence of the 1920s-1930s, between Berlin and Brussels, photographers Cami and Sasha Stone occupy a special place. As their period advertisements make clear, the “Studio Stone” produced advertising, industrial and artistic photography. The Musée de la Photographie in Charleroi and the Amsab-Institute of Social History in Ghent joined their forces to present their photographic work in a historical, artistic and political study. Studio Stone, or Atelier Stone, was born of the photographic partnership of the couple made up of the Belgian Wilhelmine Camille Honorine Schammelhout, aka Cami Stone, and the Russian Aleksander Serge Steinsapir, aka Sasha Stone. They met in Berlin, where they founded a studio in 1924.

Runs until 18 May

Musée de la Photographie
1 avenue Paul Pastur
6032 Charleroi

Sasha Stone. S.K.F. Roulements à billes,
gelatin silver print, 1924-1929. Courtesy of Amsab.



Medardo Rosso at Kunstmuseum, Basel

Sculptor, photographer, and master of artistic staging, rival to Auguste Rodin and a role model for numerous artists: around 1900, Medardo Rosso (1858 - 1928) revolutionized sculpture. Although exceptionally influential, the Italian- French artist remains too little-known today. *Medardo Rosso: Inventing Modern Sculpture* aims to change this. Featuring around fifty of his sculptures and two hundred and fifty photographs and drawings, the exhibition at the Kunstmuseum Basel offers a rare opportunity to discover Rosso's oeuvre in a comprehensive retrospective.

Rosso is regarded as a forerunner to Arte Povera. Instead of marble, he opted for the poverty and impermanence of wax and plaster, creating sculptures that seemed to disintegrate. He often invited audiences to watch as he performed the role of "artist-labourer", expanding the notion of a work of art to include the act of creation itself, and the circumstances of its reception.

Runs until 10 August

Kunstmuseum Basel
St. Alban-Graben 16
4051 Basel

Medardo Rosso. *Ecce Puer* photographed in the studio on Boulevard des Batignolles, Paris, Print from glass negative. Private collection.



Detail of military group portrait including Capt. Stracey (centre) from the album of Sir William John Ridley, circa 1855–1867

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Joseph Sterling, *Untitled (Age of Adolescence)*, 1959-63.
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Ksenia Malafeeva,
Untitled (son), 2021.
© Ksenia Malafeeva |
Courtesy Form Gallery

THE PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW

PRESENTED BY AIPAD

The Photography Show – Presented by AIPAD, the world's longest-running photography fair, last year made a welcome return to its previous home, the Park Avenue Armory. And now it's back for the 2025 edition of the fair. The VIP preview takes place on 23 April and the public hours run from 24 to 27 April.

The fair showcases 67 exceptional presentations by existing members of the prestigious Association of International Photography Art Dealers (AIPAD) and by galleries new to the fair. AIPAD will debut its re-envisioned Discovery Sector, reflecting a renewed commitment to platforming new and emerging galleries. The fair will utilize a new layout and floor plan, bringing publishers into the main exhibition space, the Wade Thompson Drill Hall, highlighting the importance of book publishing within the landscape of contemporary photography.

The programme includes panels hosted by thought leaders in the arts and culture space and insightful walkthroughs and educational events, in addition to the celebration of the prestigious annual AIPAD Award. Once again, *The Classic* is partnering with the fair and you can pick up additional copies of the new issue at several distribution points.

APRIL 24 – 27

VIP PREVIEW APRIL 23, 2025

**RETURNS TO
THE PARK AVENUE ARMORY
NEW YORK CITY
WWW.AIPAD.COM**



Paul M. Hertzmann, Inc.

Paul M. Hertzmann, Inc, San Francisco, is showing masterpieces from the history of photography, by Robert Frank, Arthur Siegel, Floris Neusüss and many others. Neusüss' most famous works are the *Nudogramms* from the late 1960s, in which he exposed a nude figure directly onto photographic paper. As he put it, "the real fascination of photograms [is] the tension between the hidden and the revealed."

Floris Neusüss. *Barbie # 4*, photogram on autoreversal paper, 1996.

Miyako Yoshinaga

Miyako Yoshinaga, New York, highlights two contemporary Japanese female photographers, Emi Anrakuji and Mikiko Hara, along with the late American photographer Melissa Shook. Hara, a single mother of three sons living in Japan, is renowned for her improvisational style, soft contrasts, and fusions of colours in her square-format photography. Without relying on the viewfinder, she photographs passers-by, including children, adolescents, and women, extracting the aura of her subjects and creating a pathway for a viewer to empathise with them.

Mikiko Hara. *Untitled* (from the series *Agnus Dei*), Chromogenic print, 1998. © Mikiko Hara. Courtesy: Osiris, Tokyo and MIYAKO YOSHINAGA, New York.

Keith de Lellis Gallery

Keith de Lellis Gallery, New York, is showing a painting of George Platt Lynes by Pavel Tchelitchew alongside a set of 18 Platt Lynes images called *The Lovers*, a photographic storyboard of a seduction. Also on show are early portraits of dancer/choreographer Martha Graham by Soichi Sunami, as well as African-American photographers, portraits of artists and dancers and a group of pictures of performers in Warhol films: Candy Darling, Jackie Curtis, Holly Woodlawn, Sylvia Miles and Joe D'Allesandro.

Pavel Tchelitchew. *Portrait of George Platt Lynes*, oil on canvas, 1937-1942.



Johannes Faber

Viennese dealer Johannes Faber is putting emphasis on fashion photography this year and is showing a large group of works by Cathleen Naundorf, alongside earlier masters, including Richard Avedon, Irving Penn, Horst P. Horst and Martin Munkácsi.

Cathleen Naundorf. *La Parisienne III*, Paris 2010, gelatin silver print.

Contemporary Works / Vintage Works

Contemporary Works/Vintage Works, Chalfont, is featuring "The Female Gaze: Women Photographers" with works as Julia M. Cameron, Barbara Morgan, Lisa Holden, Paula Chamlee, Ilse Bing, Betty Hahn, Helen Levitt, Imogen Cunningham, Sheila Metzner, Laure Albin-Guillot, Dorothy Norman, Tina Barney, Marsha Burns, Consuelo Kanaga, Germaine Krull, Edith Gerin, Marcia Lippman, among others, will be exhibited. Portfolios by Ruth Bernhard and Olivia Parker will also be available. The section "Women in Classic Photographs" includes works by Irving Penn, Man Ray, André Kertész, George Seeley, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Arthur Tress, Baron Adolf De Meyer and others.

Barbara Morgan. *City Shell (Photomontage)*, gelatin silver print, 1938/1938.

Deborah Bell Photographs

Deborah Bell Photographs, New York, is showing works by Vito Acconci, the American performance, video and installation artist whose practice eventually included sculpture, architecture and landscape. Also on show are works by Marcia Resnick, Christo & Jean-Claude, Laura Gilpin and Alma Levenson.

Vito Acconci. *Adaptation Study: Blindfolded Catching*, June 1970 (Film), vintage collage of three gelatin silver prints.



Hans Kraus Jr. Inc.

Hans Kraus Jr. Inc., New York, is showing a selection of masterpieces of 19th century including Julia Margaret Cameron's *The Kiss of Peace*, Nadar's portrait of Alexandre Dumas père, Eugène Atget's *Rue Asselin 19th*, *La Vilette* and Fox Talbot's *Articles of China*.

Julia Margaret Cameron. *The Kiss of Peace*, albumen print from collodion negative, 1869.

Stephen Daiter Gallery

Stephen Daiter Gallery, Chicago, is showing a selection of works by gallery artists, including Elliott Erwitt, Barbara Blondeau, Peter Hujar and many more.

Elliott Erwitt, *Gdańsk, Poland*, gelatin silver print, 1964.

Michael Hoppen

Michael Hoppen, London, has opted for a particular quality in the works in the presentation. "I have chosen pictures that glow and I don't mean a physical quality. It's about the emotional response, whether it's the images by Araki, Masahisa Fukase, the wonderful Danish photographer Krass Clement, Weegee or the 19th-century pictures by Dr Joseph Montano."

Nobuyoshi Araki, *Tokyo Nouvelle*, gelatin silver print, 1995 / 202. 5



The 19th Century Rare Book & Photograph Shop

The 19th Century Rare Book & Photograph Shop, New York, is showing important photographic portraits and significant 19th-century photographs, including unique, original Edward Sheriff Curtis interpositive glass plates from his celebrated *The North American Indian*, photographs of the U. S. Civil War by its most famous photographers, Gardner and Brady, 20th-century portraits include Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, and Albert Einstein by Marcel Sternberger and Imogen Cunningham, as well as 19th-century images of China and the American West.

Edward S. Curtis. *Portrait of a Woman (Cheyenne, Dog Woman)*, Original glass plate photograph, prepared by Curtis for the printing of *The North American Indian*, Plate 686.

Galeria Alta

Galeria Alta, Andorra's only photography gallery, makes its debut at The Photography Show this year, with a solo exhibition with Txema Yeste. Entitled *Needles*, the images of delicately composed structures of pine needles invite the viewer to look closer at the surrounding natural world.

Txema Yeste. *Needles, 2019-2024*, gelatin silver print.

Joseph Bellows Gallery

Joseph Bellows Gallery, La Jolla, is showing vintage and contemporary photographs of the American vernacular landscape as represented through varying architectural motifs and roadside sites by a roster of artists that include: Bevan Davies, Jim Dow, Steve Fitch, John Humble, Grant Mudford, George Tice, Roger Vail, and Wayne Sorce. Accompanying this work, the gallery is also featuring a compelling collection of intimate environmental portraits by Baldwin Lee, Sage Sohler, Mark Steinmetz, and Bill Yates. Additionally, vintage experimental works by Scott Hyde and floral X-ray images by Dain L. Tasker will be exhibited.

Jim Dow, *Rear of Screen, Star-Vue Theater*, US 11 and 64, Cleveland, TN, gelatin silver print, 1973.



Stephen Bulger Gallery

Stephen Bulger Gallery, Toronto, presents a solo show with the acclaimed multimedia artist Shelley Niro, concentrating on her photographic practice. Presented as single panels, diptychs and triptychs, the individual series offer insights into Niro's Indigenous heritage, as well as the concerns and fascinations shared with contemporary citizens of planet Earth. Her highly empathetic approach moves viewers to understand the issues at hand through her visually impactful and politically powerful manner.

Shelley Niro. *North America*, 1996.
© Shelley Niro / Courtesy Stephen Bulger Gallery.

Monroe Gallery of Photography

Monroe Gallery of Photography, Santa Fe, focuses on 20th and 21st century photojournalism. The presentation has two distinct exhibits that illustrate the importance of photography at the intersection of art and journalism. The first features Ron Haviv's images of young, displaced girls from Darfur, Sudan, and Eugene Tapahe, a Diné (Navajo) contemporary artist and fine art photographer whose series *Art Heals: The Jingle Dress Project* dream during the COVID-19 pandemic. The second exhibit focuses on last year's presidential election in the US.

Ron Havid. *Kamala Harris Election Night Watch Party* Supporters of Vice President Kamala Harris react to results on election night November 5, 2024, in Washington, D.C., Harris conceded the election the next day.

Peter Fetterman

Peter Fetterman Gallery, Santa Monica, is showing a curated selection of works by iconic masters and contemporary visionaries, featuring timeless landscapes by Ansel Adams, rare works by Diane Arbus, and decisive moments captured by Henri Cartier-Bresson, alongside the evocative fashion images of Sarah Moon, the poetic elegance of Paul Cupido, and the serene beauty of Jeffrey Conley.

Sarah Moon. *Suzanne aux Tuileries*, gelatin silver print, 1974.

By Michael Diemar

Bruno Tartarin

Photography dealer & publisher of *The Classic*

AT THE PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW



He is the publisher of *The Classic* and has over the last decades been a key player in the international world. Last year, Bruno Tartarin exhibited at The Photography Show and Paris Photo for the first time. A couple of months before the 2025 edition of the New York fair, we spoke about his career.

It's fair to say that you were born and raised in a world of photography.

– My father, Jean Luc Tartarin, is a photographer. He was also a photography teacher at Beaux Arts, the Art School in Metz, in fact the youngest teacher ever in the

art department. At the age of 20, he was awarded the Prix Niépce. When I was 10, my parents started organising big exhibitions in Metz, with accompanying catalogues and books. One of the exhibitions, *Théâtre des Réalités*, was also shown at Palais de Tokyo in Paris, at the time managed by Robert Delpire. The artists my parents worked with, John Coplans, Sandy Skoglund, Joel-Peter Witkin and others, would visit us in Metz. In the early '80s, when I was still quite young, I framed photographs, helped hang them at exhibitions and I loved to be part of the whole process. I also travelled a lot with my parents to visit photographers and galleries abroad, Brussels, Amsterdam and other places.

I recall you telling me that they also took you to antique fairs and flea markets.

– Yes, and that was totally different from the contemporary scene. They loved going to flea markets and buying things for the home. I think I was 14 when I bought my first Daguerreotype. Later, in my student years, I would go to the flea market every weekend. I started buying and selling and also helped some of the dealers to make a little money. After I finished art school in 96, I moved to Paris and did my civil service with Agnès de Gouvion Saint-Cyr at Délégations aux arts plastiques. There were quite a few of us doing the civil service and she used to call us “les petits Kikis”, after Kiki, the Japanese toy monkey. It was a great experience because I dealt with a lot of contemporary photography, framing prints for exhibitions, photographing them for catalogues. A lot of interesting people stopped by, including Rik Gadella who was then preparing the very first edition of Paris Photo in 1997. And that year, I helped Arnaud Delas frame photographs and hang them at the fair. I just loved the fair atmosphere and that love has stayed with me. What I particularly love about fairs is to offer the best selection of photographs to the public, a gaze reflecting the gallery's spirit, and working on the installation, getting everything absolutely right before the doors open.

Anton Orlov. Bruno Tartarin, Ferrotypes, New York, 2019.



Photo Discovery – The Place

You studied art. Was it a big decision to choose whether to become an artist or a dealer?

– I loved creating art and taking photographs. When I finished the art school, I received a prize called Les Moins Trente, for photographers under 30, created by Robert Delpire at Centre national de la photographie. The committee couldn't choose between four nominees that year so in the end, we all got the prize. There was a beautiful catalogue and an exhibition at Hôtel Salomon de Rothschild in Paris. In the end, it was a financial decision. I had to support myself. As I said, I started buying and selling very early, loved flea markets and fairs and I was fascinated by the photography business, especially the 19th century. There was a lot of activity in Paris at that time, a great many dealers and collectors. I met Harry Lunn, Pierre-Marc Richard, Christophe Goeury and others. I had discovered the wonders of 19th century photography as a child, when a friend of my parents, Joachim Bonnemaïson, came to visit. He had built big collection of panoramas and he always had some albums or panoramas in his car. Once he had a complete album of Charles Nègre's *Sud de la France*. I remember being very impressed by it.

How did you establish yourself as a dealer?

– I was very active, buying and selling, at auctions as well, and I was building relationships. Then in 1998, I found a complete album of Désiré Charnay's images of Mexico and that was a real step up for me. In 2001, I was the first photography dealer to exhibit at a fair called Pavillon des antiquaires, high quality and quite chic, in the garden of Tuileries. I met Daniel Blau there, and some important collectors. Then I started a collaboration with Régis Besse, the owner of Photo Verdeau, a shop near Drouot. He was focused on cameras and I suggested adding photographs. He was reluctant at first but I gave him a big folder of prints and said, "See what you can do with that." It worked well, and we built a business selling photographs on the web. We moved to Passage Jouffroy, one of the beautiful arcades in Paris. I was buying a lot of stock and then I started selling on eBay. In 2012, we decided to split the business. I moved to Arnville in the countryside, where I had ample room for my growing stock. Initially, I called my business Photo Vintage but later changed it to Photo Discovery.

Bruno Tartarin

In 1984, in 1994, in 1996 and in 2019, with the first issue of *The Classic*.



kept changing, causing confusion, and most visitors were well, “insiders”. I felt that it would be possible for a tabletop fair to reach a much wider audience and that it should be held during Paris Photo. In 2017, I held the first edition at Pavillon Wagram. We had 100 tables, a lot of visitors, curators and collectors and it was a big success. It was also evident that the market needed this kind of fair. It wasn't a competitor to Paris Photo. The fair was a different way to see and buy photographs, in a price range from 5 euros to 10 000 euros. Small fairs are very important, I think. They attract real aficionados, collectors and curators and I regard the latter as indirect collectors. They're all addicted. But the small fairs also give people who aren't established collectors to make their first purchases and that's crucial to help grow the market.

In 2017, you launched Photo Discovery – The Fair.

– There had been a small tabletop fair, organised by Joseph Delarue in collaboration with Serge Plantureux. The problem, as I saw it, was that the venues and dates

In summer of 2024, it was announced that you were handing over the reins of the fair to the young Parisian dealer Barnabé Moinard.

– It's a lot of work to do a fair, promoting it, dealing with exhibitors, making sure that everything runs smoothly. I decided it was time to hand over to somebody else. Barnabé put his own stamp on the fair, changing its name to 24.39. His first edition worked out really well. But the main reason for the handover was that in 2024, I exhibited at AIPAD's The Photography Show in New York and Paris Photo for the first time.

Why did you decide to take that step in 2024? You had been in the business for many years.

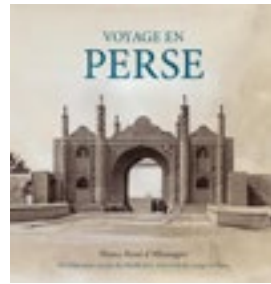
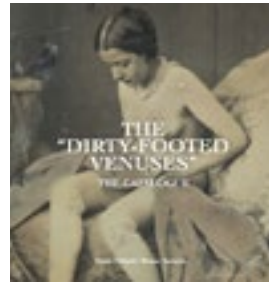
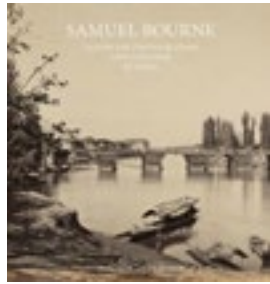
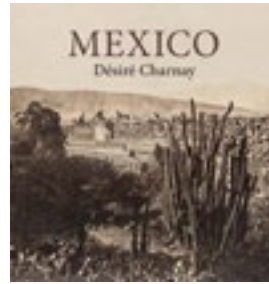
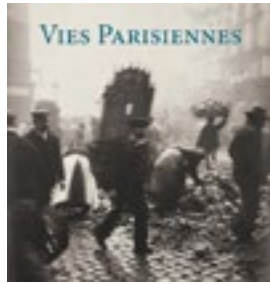
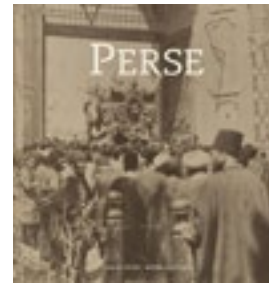
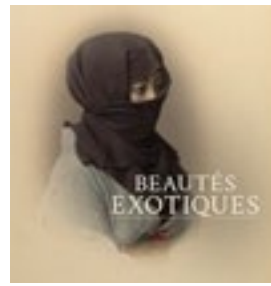
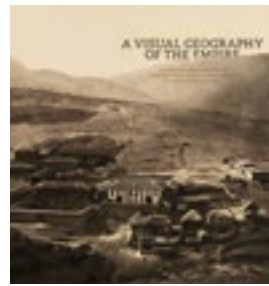
– I had wanted to show at the two fairs for many, many years but the timing had to be absolutely right. In the life of a dealer, sometimes things take time. You need to have the right material, create the right presentation. In 2024, all those pieces came together. I planned the booths for the fairs meticulously and built walls to exact scale in my office, hung the works and tried different solutions. Creating mock-ups in computers or on paper just doesn't give you a real impression of how it will look in real.

Your booths at both fairs received a lot of praise. At Paris Photo, there was a wide range of material, from different periods. How did you plan it?

– It's a long process. I select the material, see how it works together. I mix periods, look at works as images, without thinking that much of whether a name is famous or not. And then I live with those ideas for a long time, I adjust, add, remove, etc. For me, it's really important to surprise people with what you show. I have never limited myself to a period. I always consider photographs as images. The presentation in New York was more classic but in Paris, the range was much wider and it worked really well. We achieved strong sales but the biggest success for me was the reaction of the public, not just from the established collectors but also the general public.

People also know you as the publisher of *The Classic*. In late November 2018, you sent me an email, requesting a meeting in London the following week. You told me that you had an idea for a magazine to be focused on classic photography. Why did you feel that it was important that classic photography should have its own magazine?

– The idea was in the same spirit that I built the fair. The market needed a fair. It also needed a magazine, and by



At The Photography Show



extension, I needed it. At the time, if you wanted to get information on classic photography, be it galleries, dealers, collectors, curators or auction house specialists, you had to go 20 different places and read different newsletters. It needed to have it all in one place. I also felt it should be a magazine on paper, this in order to make it special.

A string of photography magazines had closed down recently and you were talking about a free magazine, to be distributed at fairs and galleries. I said I'd think about it. Around 18 December, we spoke again and made an agreement. You were going to take on the role as publisher, while I took on the role as editor-in-chief and main writer. You had one condition. The magazine had to be ready in order to be launched at AIPAD in April 2019. That meant it had to be printed in late February. Looking back on it, the timeline strikes me as insane. I had Christmas and the New Year holidays to come up with a complete concept for the magazine, plus its

Man Ray. Performer on stage, gelatin silver print, circa 1925.

Richard Avedon. Dorothy McGowan, gelatin silver print, 1963.

name. I came up with the name a few days later, then decided that the magazine should be interview-based. Luckily, in early January, Alex Novak, Martin Barnes, Robert Hershkowitz and David Fahey all agreed to be interviewed. Miraculously, it was ready for the fair.

– It was a challenge but it worked out well and we are now at issue 13. To be honest, I was surprised by the quality, and art director Mike Derez and later, graphic designer, Jasmine Durand, played important parts in this. And we survived the pandemic. Galleries and museums were closed. That was when we launched the digital version of the magazine, available as a free download from the website, giving it a global reach. *The Classic* grew and grew with each issue.

You alone chose the paper, praised by many people.

– I chose it with great care and felt that this particular paper in was tune with fine photographs, especially 19th century photographs. It's very expensive but it has to be right. I have always loved beautifully printed publications. Alongside the magazine, I also produce printed catalogues, mostly in small editions, 100 copies or so. By now, I have produced around 30 and they have since become collector's



items. In general, catalogues are now only available digitally but paper makes something feel special. It's not the same on a screen. In some ways, it goes back to my early days in Paris. I was always fascinated by the catalogues Serge Plantureux used to print, back in the day when he had his shop at 4 Galerie Vivienne. In 2021, I started a new series of catalogues, on different themes such as portraits and Persia.

On the subject of Serge Plantureux's shop. In 2023, you opened a shop/gallery in the very same premises, Photo Discovery – The Place.

– After so many years spent building a inventory of nearly half million items, from documentary to topographic, from 1850 to 1950, I wanted to be back in a physical place. I had only one space in mind because 4 Galerie Vivienne had a long history of photography, first with Serge Plantureux and then Joseph Delarue. We opened in July 2023. The first year was pretty difficult financially but it gradually got better and better. We get established collectors and people who have never bought a photograph before come in and are amazed that they can handle the photographs.



What do you have planned for The Photography Show?

– The selection for New York will be along the same line as my booth at Paris Photo last year, mixing 19th and 20th century, jumping from salt prints to silver and C-prints. The presentation includes rare works by Franck Chauvassaigne, such as a 1855 salt print nude, and a great still life by Achille Bonnuit from 1860, a previously unknown portrait by Man Ray from the early period. Later works include a great series taken in the early '70s for the architectural firm of Minoru Yamasaki and Associates and a fantastic vintage fashion portrait of Dorothy McGowan by Richard Avedon.

Unknown photographer. Theme Towers, Los Angeles, taken for Minoru Yamasaki and Associates, Chromogenic print, 1971.

Franck Chauvassaigne. Female nude, salt print, circa 1855.

Achille Bonnuit. Still life, albumen print, circa 1860.



BY MICHAEL DIEMAR

CHARLES JONES

He was a true master of photography. The achievement of Charles Jones (1866-1959), gardener and horticultural photographer, could, however, so easily have slipped out of history, had it not been for Sean Sexton's sensational discovery of a large collection of his prints in 1981. The subject matter; vegetables, fruit and flowers.

While relating to earlier traditions of natural history paintings and drawings by Leonardo da Vinci, Albrecht Dürer and others, as well as photographic studies by Anna Atkins, Charles Aubry and Roger Fenton, Jones' images, shot against monochrome backgrounds, in close-up, using long exposures to achieve tonal range and depth-in-field, strikes one as forerunners to the Modernist images of Edward Weston, Karl Blossfeldt, Edward Steichen to name a few. Indeed, the images are often compared to those of Edward Weston, of peppers, cabbage leaf and fungus but Weston was above all concerned with form, whereas Jones was focused on his subject matter as plants, sprung from nature, having grown the very specimens he photographed himself.

Left: **Charles Jones.** Bean Longpod, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.

Right: Unknown photographer. Charles Jones, albumen print, circa 1904. Collection of Shirley Sadler.



“Charles Jones’ images aren’t still lifes, they’re portraits.” Sexton told me when we met at his home in North London. He has a vast collection of images of Ireland, his country of birth. He is the recognised authority on the subject and has published several books. Add to that all manner of vernacular images, cameras and much else. But back to Charles Jones. In the years since Sexton’s discovery there have been numerous museum exhibitions, at SFMOMA, Hasselblad Center, Photo Elysée, Dulwich Picture Gallery, Tate Britain and other museums, as well as commercial galleries. 1998 saw the publication of *The Plant Kingdoms of Charles Jones*, with an essay by Robert Flynn Johnson. But as the essay made



clear, Charles Jones himself remains an enigma. He left no diaries, journals or notes of any kind, and was described by his granddaughter Shirley Sadler as “an intensely private person and quite uncommunicative.”

Sexton acquired the Charles Jones collection at Bermondsey Market in London. It's the oldest antiques market in the UK, held every Friday.

– I was a regular there and would usually get there at opening time, 4.30 in morning. That day, however, I was a few hours late. It was quite common for the dealers to turn up with a whole load of specific wares, like 2000 comics. One of the dealers had a big leather trunk, with some smaller boxes, all containing photographs. They were mostly of vegetables

Top: **Charles Jones.** Vegetable Marrow Long White, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.

Right: **Charles Jones.** Brussels Sprouts, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.

and fruit but there were also flowers and a few other subjects. As I went through the photographs, I could scarcely believe what I saw. These were obviously true works of art.

Weren't there other people hunting for photographs at the market?

– There were and several people had looked at the collection before me, including someone who's now a top dealer in New York. He was young then and I'm surprised he didn't see the links to Modernism in the images. I was told he had declined because “The name Charles Jones isn't in the books. And who wants pictures of vegetables anyway?” I was absolutely gripped and bought the whole collection, for not a huge amount of money. A friend of mine, David Robinson, helped me get it home in his car. I carefully went through it all, looking at one amazing image after another. They were signed on the backs but only one print was dated and it showed the aftermath of the train crash at Wivelsfield Station in 1899, and as I later found out, Jones had worked close by at the time, at Ote Hall.





His name wasn't in the books. What were the first steps in your research?

– The first piece of the puzzle was an article published in the 20 September 1905 issue of *The Gardener's Chronicle*. It deals with his work as gardener at Ote Hall, a grand house in the heart of Sussex, and states “The present gardener, Charles Jones, has had a large share in the modelling of the gardens as they now appear for on all sides can be seen evidences of his work in the making of the flowerbeds and borders and in the planting of fruit trees, etc.” There was no mention of photography in the article so all I knew was that I owned a collection of extraordinary photographs by a gardener named Charles Jones. But photography was evidently extremely important to him. When I found his death certificate much later on, it didn't state his profession as gardener but as “Horticultural photographer”.

Charles Jones. Iris Germania, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.

Charles Jones is a common name. How did you manage to find out more about him?

– About 30 years ago, BBC Television did a 30-minute programme about photography collectors. Robert Hershkowitz was in it. I had a three-minute segment and talked about Charles Jones. After it had been shown, one of Charles Jones' grandchildren, Shirley Sadler, contacted me. She told me that Charles Jones had been born in 1866 in Wolverhampton, that his father had been a master butcher, that he had married at the age of 27 and that he and his wife had had five children, Nelly, Arthur, Leonard, Eric and Kathleen. He had worked at several big estates and later on, the family settled in Lincolnshire. In her possession was an album of his photographs. There were images of him and his cameras and about 15 photographs of fruit. The images were good but the prints weren't of the same high quality as mine. I offered, not to buy the album, but to advise her, should she ever want to sell. I later found out that it had been sold to the Victoria & Albert Museum. In the meantime, I happened to meet his granddaughter, Barbara Lunderstädt, when I stopped by Michael Hoppen Gallery one day. I also came across his grandson, purely by chance, when I ventured into a bike shop in London to buy a lamp. I chatted to the owner. He asked me what I did and I told him I was a collector of photographs, “Are you Sean Sexton?” I said yes and he invited me into his office, and hanging over it was an enlargement of the portrait of Charles Jones.

Charles Jones entered the auction and gallery worlds in the 1980s but his work reached a much wider audience with the publication of *The Plant Kingdoms of Charles Jones* in 1998. How did the book come about?

– I was walking down Portobello Road one day and my friend John Benjafield said, “Sean, there's a guy who's looking for you. He wants to know about your collection.” It turned out to be Robert Flynn Johnson, then Curator-in-charge of the Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. He said “We'd be interested in putting on an exhibition of your collection at the Museum.” I thought he meant my Irish collection. In 1994, I published a book, *Ireland; Photographs 1840-1930* but he was talking about Charles Jones. Robert put the show together and we published the book. It was translated into several languages and was a great success.

Did other information emerge after the book had been published?

– On 13 October 1999, my friend Steffen Wolff and I went to interview Charles Jones’ daughter, Kathleen Andrew. She had just turned 90 and lived in a retirement home in Worthing on the south coast of England. Kathleen was quite introverted so we were very gentle with her. She was able to provide more information about him. We found out that he had done an apprenticeship at Kew Gardens but she didn’t know for how long. She described him as a very a silent and tidy person and said that he never talked about himself. The plants in the photographs were grown especially to be photographed and he did so in open-air. He knew all the plants by their Latin names. Later on, he would use photographic plates to build little houses to protect his plants against the cold wind. She also said that he developed the negatives in the space underneath the stairwell in the family home. There was no photography literature in the home. In the evenings, he would go to the so-called Institute in Bourne, to read the newspaper and he was very interested in world affairs. The Institute had a library and she thought he may have studied the books there. He put small advertisements in the magazine *Popular Gardening* but didn’t have a formal agreement with any seed company. She also told us that he never went anywhere. He took long walks by himself but she didn’t remember him having close friends, nor of him having been a member of any photographic society.

Let’s turn to the photographs.

– They were made 1895-1910, when he was gardener at Ote Hall. It’s a magical place, built in the 16th century, and straight out of Harry Potter. When he worked at Ote Hall, there were about 30 staff, including his wife who was a cook. In my collection, there are images taken at other grand houses but there are no indications as to where they were taken. I think he was completely focused on the plants and that the locations weren’t really very important to him. The photographs are close-ups, taken outside, mostly against backdrops, almost Irving Penn-like backdrops. In some images you can see a pair of hands holding them up. In others, he used some kind of stand. He liked the light outside but you rarely see any shade in the images so I suspect he took them on dull days, in the morning or early evening.



He printed his photographs in three sizes, 6 x 4¼, 8½ x 6½ and 8 x 10. The quality of the prints is extraordinary.

– There are only a few prints of each image. The prints are on gold toned, gelatin silver printing-out-paper, the most permanent process after platinum. Conservator Nicholas Burnett of Museum Conservation Services Ltd in Cambridge analysed a group of the prints and he wrote this, “The prints I examined were produced using gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper. The paper is probably of the self-toning variety where the gold compound is incorporated into the photographic paper during manufacture. This means a separate toning bath is not needed. The gold toning alters the image colour, giving it a rich purple shade but also dramatically improves the image stability. In consequence all the Charles Jones photographs examined were in excellent condition. X-Ray fluorescence analysis of one

Charles Jones. Darwin Tulips, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.



of the photographs gave strong peaks for gold and barium. Interestingly, the gold toning is so thorough that it completely masks the signal from the silver. The barium is of course from the white barium sulphate coating on the paper beneath the photographic emulsion. The paper was popular from the 1890s and on into the 20th century. The positive prints can also tell us something about Jones' negatives. On images of flowers, some areas appear unnaturally dark. The negatives Jones was using were not sensitive to the full visible spectrum. For example, where parts of the flowers are red or orange the photographic emulsion does not record much image. This results in almost clear areas of negative which of course then print as very dark areas on the photographic print. This is why the image of Pheasant's Eye narcissus which I saw showed the inner part of the flowers as being rather dark, whereas in real life they are a light orange shade. Negatives that were sensitive to the full spectrum of visible light were not produced commercially until 1907."

Charles Jones. Putting up wheat in Stook, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.

Charles Jones died in 1959. Have you been able to ascertain as to when and how the family disposed of the photographs?

– No, that's shrouded in mystery and I never found out where the dealer at Bermondsey Market got them from. As for the negatives, none of them have survived it seems.

Have you had any indications if he ever tried to exhibit or publish his photographs?

– None whatsoever. But I felt pretty sure early on as to the purpose of the photographs. As a young boy back in County Clare in Ireland, my father and mother would send me to buy seed packets, to plant flowers in the garden at the end of our house. The seed packets were always the same size, and they are to this day. It's a huge industry. As I found out, Jones sold photographs to Elphick & Co, a seed company that was founded in 1823 in Lewes and was in operation until 2003. The Garden Museum, based near Lambert Palace in London, holds the company archives. They were the focus of Garden Museum Journal No. 38, published in 2020. and it included three images by Charles Jones. I would surmise that he made quite a bit of money from selling his photographs.



1.



2.



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1. **Charles Jones.** Wheat Stacks, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.
 2. **Charles Jones.** Farmhand at Ote Hall, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.
 3. **Charles Jones.** Storing mangolds, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.
 4. **Charles Jones.** Stacking wheat, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.

Most people in the photography world are familiar with Charles Jones' images of plants. I was surprised when you showed me the small group of images of men working in the fields at Ote Hall, hitherto, never exhibited nor published. All magical I would say.

– There are about 200 photographs of day-to-day life at Ote Hall, some of men working in the corn fields or making hay, others with horse and cart loading hay up on cart. Charles Jones, just like the farmers, was totally tuned into nature, the soil, the seasons and the changing weather. The images remind me of my own childhood in the 1950s, making hay with

my father at Moyglass House, the family farm in County Clare. And to think that Charles Jones was still alive at that point.

It strikes me that you strategized Charles Jones' entry into market with great care. Rather than selling prints through a multitude of galleries, you work with Michael Hoppen for the UK and the European continent, and Howard Greenberg Gallery for the US. Did you have a clear plan from the start?

– I knew right away that these were wonderful works of art but Charles Jones was completely unknown.



1.



2.



3.

1. **Charles Jones.** Globe Beet, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.

2. **Charles Jones.** Pea Duke of Albany, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.

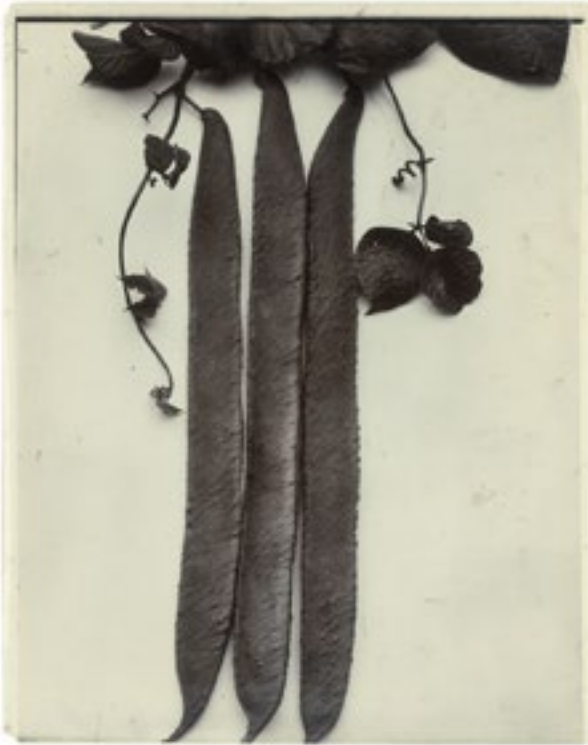
3. **Charles Jones.** Celery Wright's White, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.

A few days after I bought them, I selected half a dozen prints and went to see Philippe Garner at Sotheby's Belgravia because I knew he had the eye. He looked at them, immediately got very excited and suggested putting three of them into auction, with a high estimate. Back then, auction catalogues were pretty basic compared to now. He gave one of the images its own page, to underline that here was something very special. One went for 70 pounds I recall. Only a few would go into each auction. Then one went for 700 pounds and I thought, "Now they're taking off!". After that, Michael

Wilson bought for his collection, as did Elton John. Peter Marino, a high-profile collector who has his own art foundation, bought a large group and published a book in 2022, *Charles; Gardener and Photographer*. Charles Jones is now firmly established in the market.

Are you planning another book yourself?

– Michael Hoppen and I talked about doing a book on his flowers. They're not sweet, beautiful, nice, lovely or any of that. They are simply exquisite. There should also be a book on his vegetables. The remarkable thing



4.

4. **Charles Jones.** Bean Runner, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.

5. **Charles Jones.** Ailsa Craig Onions, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.

6. **Charles Jones.** Lettuce Cos, gold toned, gelatine silver printing-out-paper.



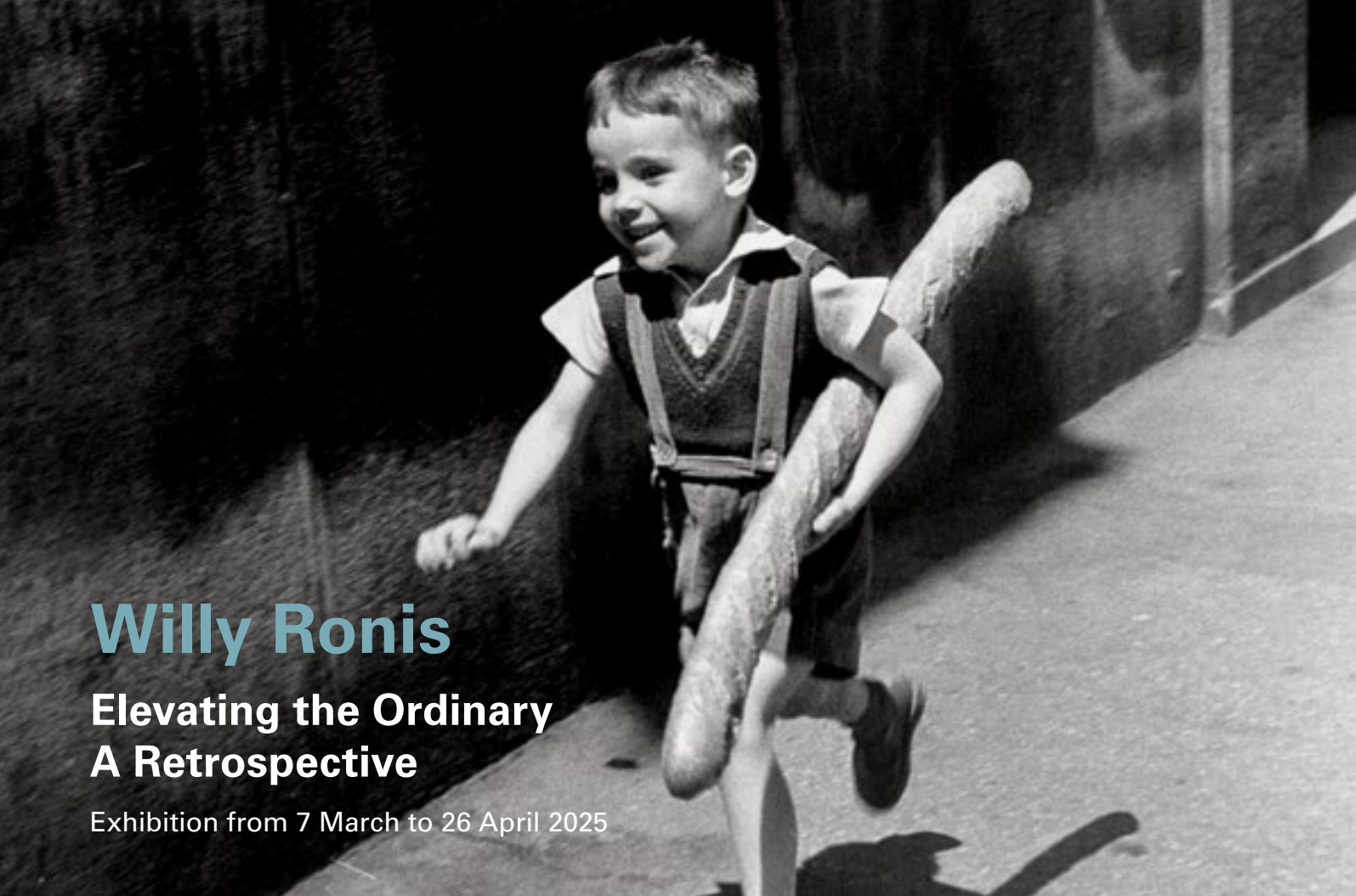
5.



6.

is, he photographed some of the ugliest vegetables, like sugar beets, and still managed to make them beautiful. To find equivalents in art history, we would have to go back to the Golden Age of Dutch painting. The other thing that strikes me is that the images would probably be of great interest to horticulturalists today, as I suspect that many of the varieties of vegetables and fruit have simply disappeared, become extinct in the last 100 years. I'd like to do more books because Charles Jones should be better known. Consider all the adulation that is heaped on American photographers

like Edward Weston. When I did the exhibition at the Dulwich Picture Gallery, the curator said to me, "I'd rather have a bad Charles Jones than a good Edward Weston." And I couldn't agree more. It's all very well comparing him to Karl Blossfeldt, Weston, Anna Atkins etc. But what's the point? Charles Jones stands alone. His photographs are pure poetic visual realism.



Willy Ronis

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Nicéphore Niépce

La jeune fille filant sa quenouille,
photo-etching, 1825

The French optician Charles Chevalier recounted the visit of Colonel David Niépce, acting on behalf of his cousin Nicéphore Niépce, to purchase a new lens from his optical shop in Paris in early January 1826. After conversations with Isidore Niépce, Nicéphore's son, Victor Fouque wrote about this significant visit and specified that when the colonel visited Chevalier on January 12, 1826, he brought with him a print of *La Jeune Fille Filant sa Quenouille*.

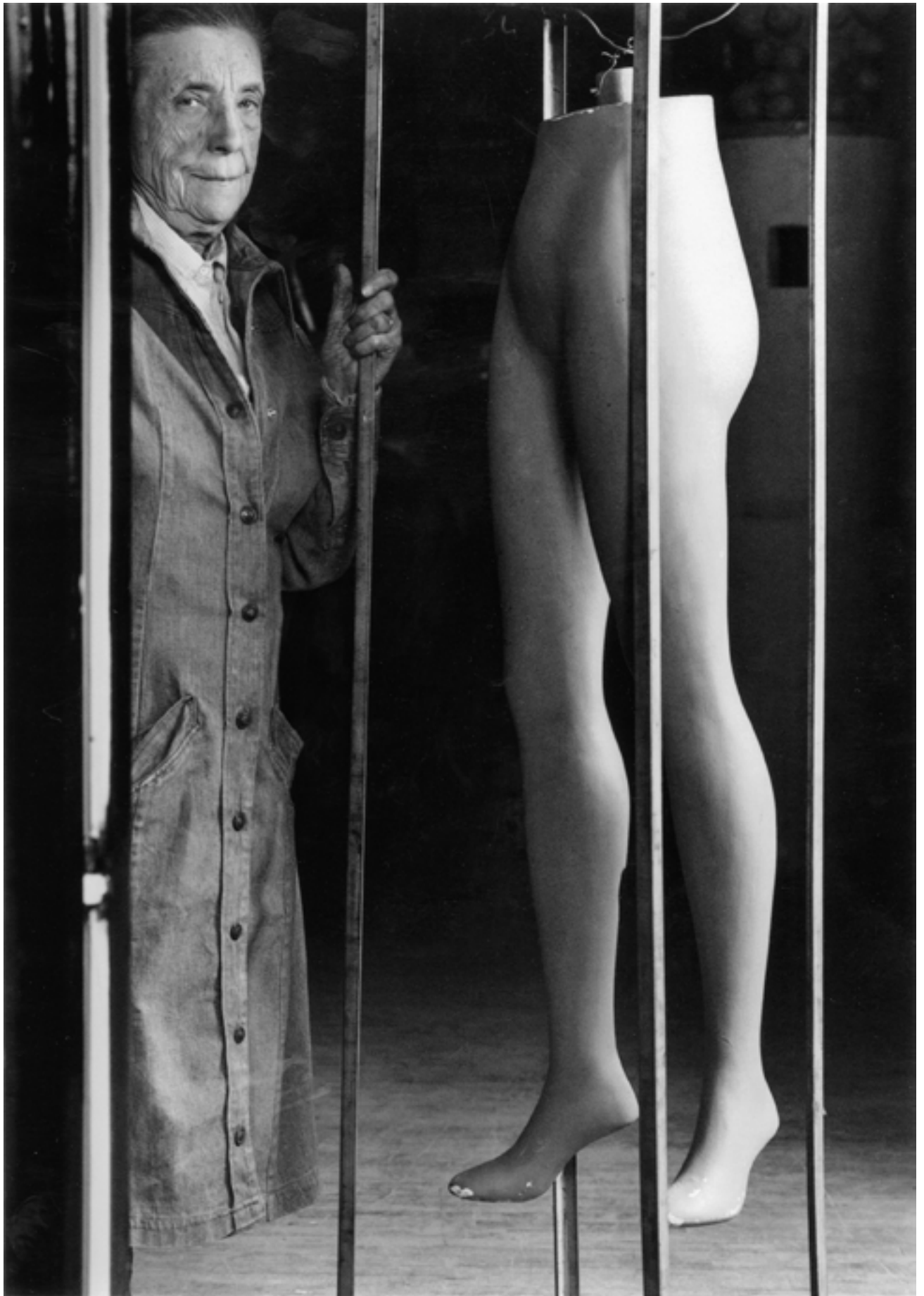
A few days later, Chevalier mentioned Niépce's experiments with image fixation to Daguerre and showed him the photo-etching. Daguerre then wrote to Niépce, initiating their famous correspondence. It appears therefore that this printed image played a role in introducing Niépce to Daguerre.

The only other known examples of Niépce's photo-etchings from 1825 are a second print of this image, without annotations, and one depicting a man leading a horse. The latter was gifted by Niépce to his cousin, Dubard de Curley, in March 1826 and is now held by La Bibliothèque nationale de France. These three objects are the earliest surviving works on paper that evidence a photographic process.

I would be grateful for any information regarding the original subject that Niépce photographed, which may have been a drawing or an etching.

Michael S. Sachs / sachs@optonline.net





NANCY'S PANTHEON

All images are by Nancy Lee Katz.

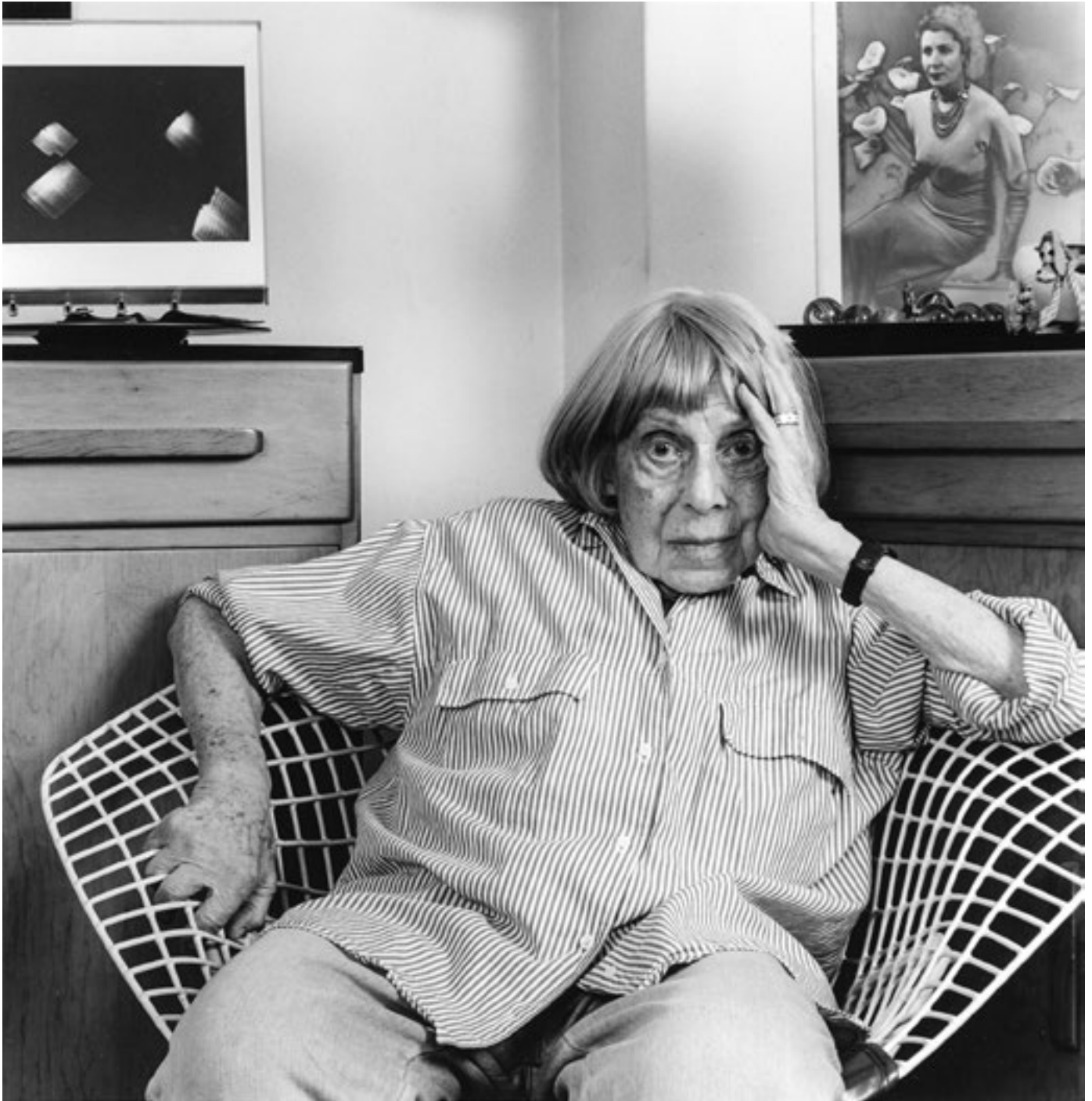
On 26 May 1986, Nancy Lee Katz photographed Louise Bourgeois. The image, which fuses the artist and her work, manifests Nancy's collaborative process. It came at the beginning of a very private project that occupied her for twenty-five years: working with painters, sculptors, photographers, composers, performing musicians, architects, writers, and Supreme Court justices. The resultant body of work remained with Nancy aside from portraits given to her subjects, unseen by others, until her death in 2018. Only then did the images emerge from obscurity.

Nancy Lee Katz was born on 12 June 1947, to Babette and Sidney Katz. Babs was an elegant lady, a skilled bridge player and golfer. Sid was a film editor who won an Emmy and was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the American Cinema Editors. After a year and a half at college in West Virginia, Nancy took off to Europe and Morocco for as long as her thousand dollars lasted, which turned out to be a year and a day. Upon her return to the United States, she worked with her father as an assistant film editor, then as a still photographer for films, and then, privately, as a portrait photographer. Always visual, Nancy coexisted with a camera from childhood.

During the course of this project, Nancy did not have ready access to her subjects. She wrote simple letters along the lines of; I am a portrait photographer with a project of photographing people whose work I respect. Maybe there will be a book sometime. If you will give me an hour of your time, I will give you a good portrait. And they responded, perhaps in part because they understood that the photographs would not appear in the next issue of *Vogue*. She never asked a subject to help her approach another. Most responses were affirmative. A nice rejection letter was from Justice Antonin Scalia, who wrote, "Not only will I not pose for you, but when I see a photographer I run in the opposite direction."

Nancy was a mensch, totally lacking in malice and infinitely forgiving. She was ferociously independent, considerate and respectful of others, but impervious to social pressure. Her need for independence was extreme. Even when we drove to a photo shoot, she would not disclose whom she was going to meet. She was superstitious and would tell me the identity of the subject only after the negatives had been printed, and only so that I could update her list of subjects, which is in an archaic Excel format that she could not handle. She worked alone, and no one else was admitted to a shoot. The relationships with her subjects were sacred to her. It was a three-way relationship: Nancy, the subject, and the portrait, an epiphany of creative collaboration. She never dropped names, even in her later years

Left: Louise Bourgeois, 26 May 1986.



Ilse Bing, 8 December 1993.

when she knew everyone. Nancy interacted intensely with everyone. Communication was always about the other person; she disclosed little about herself. Perhaps that was the key that enabled her subjects to reveal themselves through her lens, contextualized by her composition and expressively unveiled by an understood collaboration.

Nancy was secretive about her work. She did not exhibit or publish these portraits, nor did she show

them to others or even tell anyone about the project. Shortly before she died, and with the awareness of her pending demise, I proposed that her work be exposed to the light of day, and asked for her thoughts about the photographs. She went through the boxes that were piled high in her bedroom, selected the best image from each of the 192 shoots, and rated them good, maybe, or forget it. After she passed away, I assembled what I took the liberty of terming her “Pantheon,” which consists of all of her



Richard Serra, 28 September 1987.

first choices, almost all of the maybes, and one of her rejects, the depressed ninety-five-year-old Ilse Bing: 133 portraits of 128 subjects in all.

The journey of Nancy's work to museum collections began with her donation to the Bibliothèque nationale de France, followed by my offer of her work to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, which was inspired by my respect for curator Malcolm Daniel. He chose forty-six images not because they were

of artists represented in the museum's collection, but rather on the basis of their quality. A few years later, he wrote an essay about Nancy, comparing her Pantheon to that of Nadar:

"Where Nadar's best portraits often relied on a collaboration born of long-standing friendship, Katz knew her subjects in a different way, not *personally* but rather from deep familiarity and appreciation of their accomplishment... Katz focused exclusively on her pantheon. She never ran a portrait

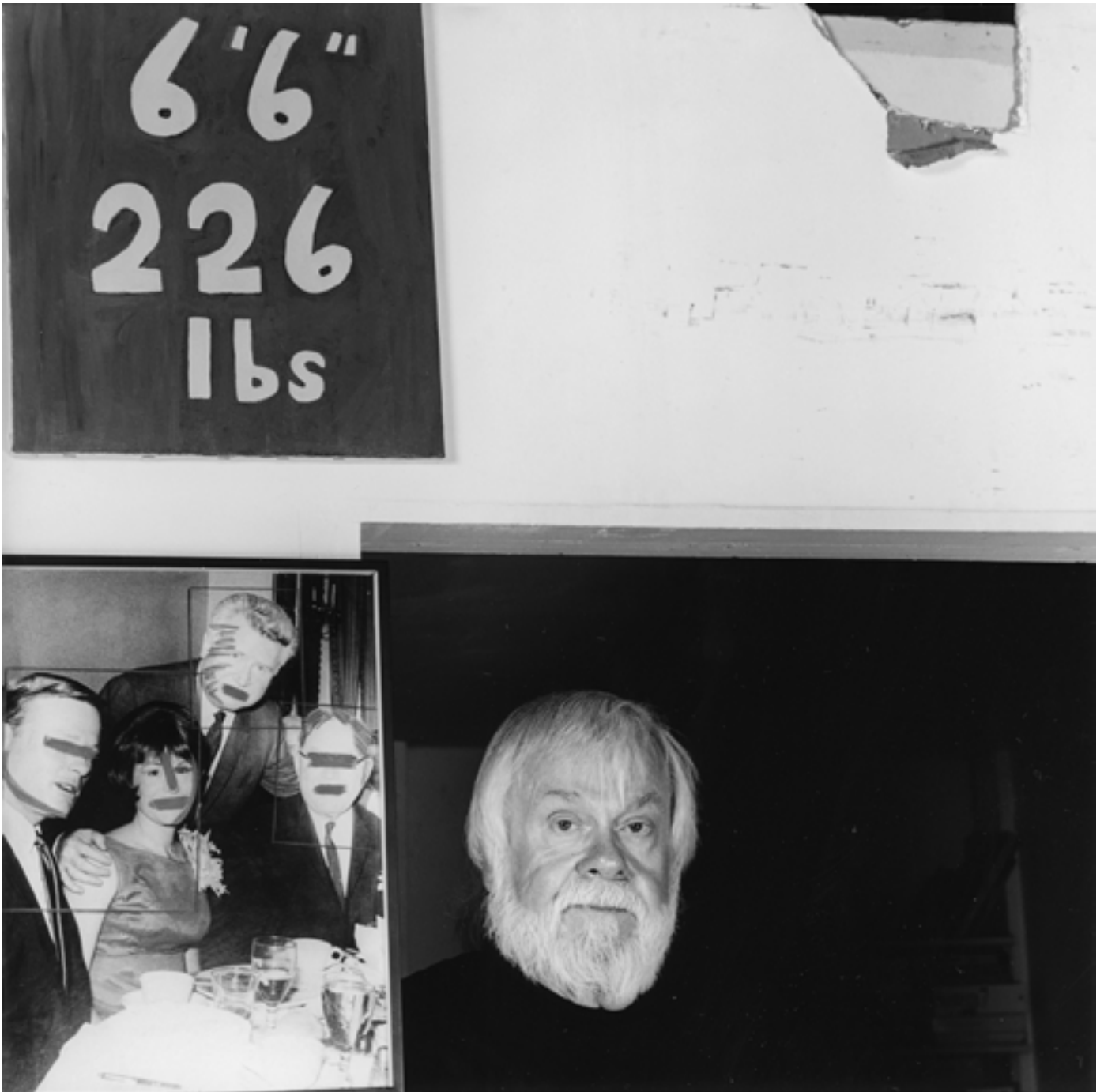


Fernando Botero, 23 October 1987.

studio; never photographed subjects who did not fascinate her for the brilliance of their art, jurisprudence, musical composition, or performance; and was never guided by the fame of her subjects or marketability of their images since none were intended to be offered for sale or distribution... her motivation was neither fame nor fortune, but rather the personal satisfaction that came from having produced these portraits as a purely creative endeavor and as a respectful act of homage. And perhaps most important, as the intensely private person that she

was, she must surely have wanted to avoid being defined by the celebrity of others.”

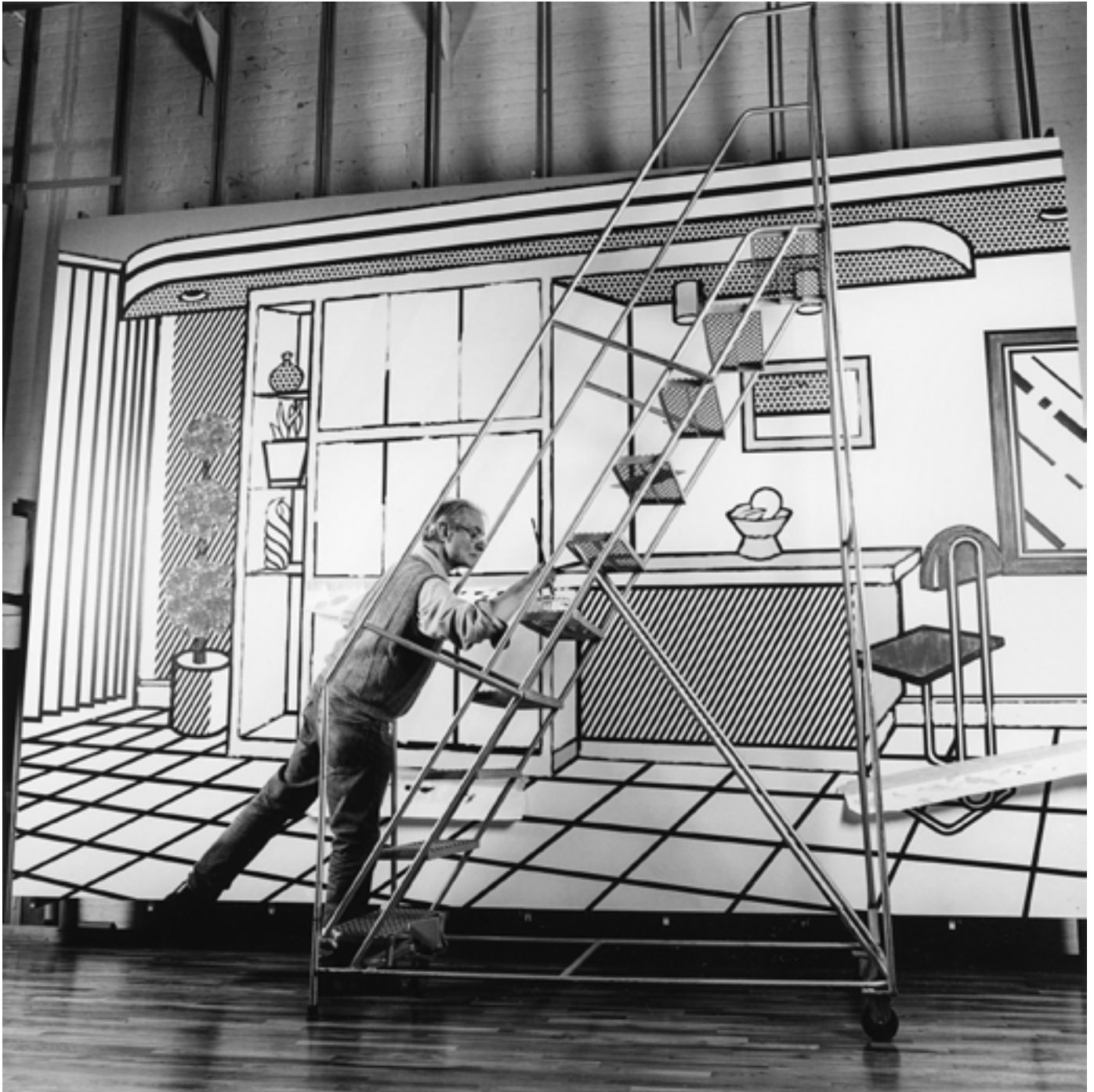
My goal is to preserve Nancy’s legacy for future generations. Over the past six years, forty-two institutions with significant collections of photographs have acquired by donation an average of forty-eight gelatin silver prints by her, almost all of which were printed in his darkroom by Brian Young, Nancy’s printer for decades. Among these are the Albertina, Art Institute of Chicago, Museum Boijmans Van



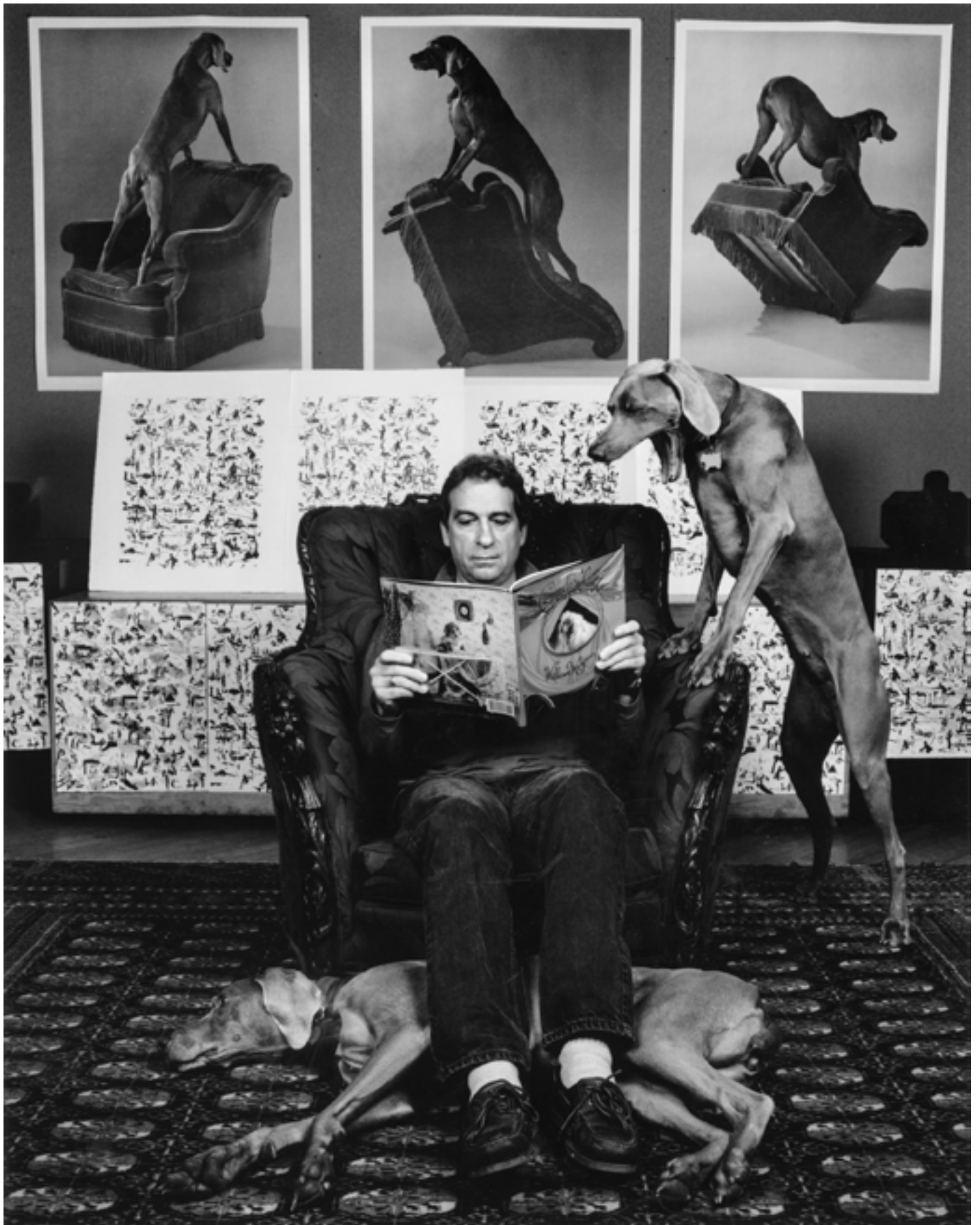
John Baldessari, 28 March 1993.

Beuningen, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Museum Folkwang, George Eastman Museum, Hirshhorn Museum, Jewish Museum (New York), Los Angeles County Museum of Art, National Gallery of Art (Washington), National Gallery of Ireland, National Gallery of Victoria, Princeton University Art Museum, Royal Collection Trust, and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Groups of her portraits were included in the 2022 exhibition *The Face* at Albertina Modern, the 2021-2022 Barbara Kruger installation at Art Institute of Chicago, *Personas* at Jewish

Museum (New York) 2023-2024, and in the anteroom to the Trustee Conference Room at Museum of Fine Arts, Houston during 2022-2024. In accordance with Nancy's deep reluctance to share possession of her work, even with friends and family, prints are not offered for sale, though they are available for exhibition and publication.



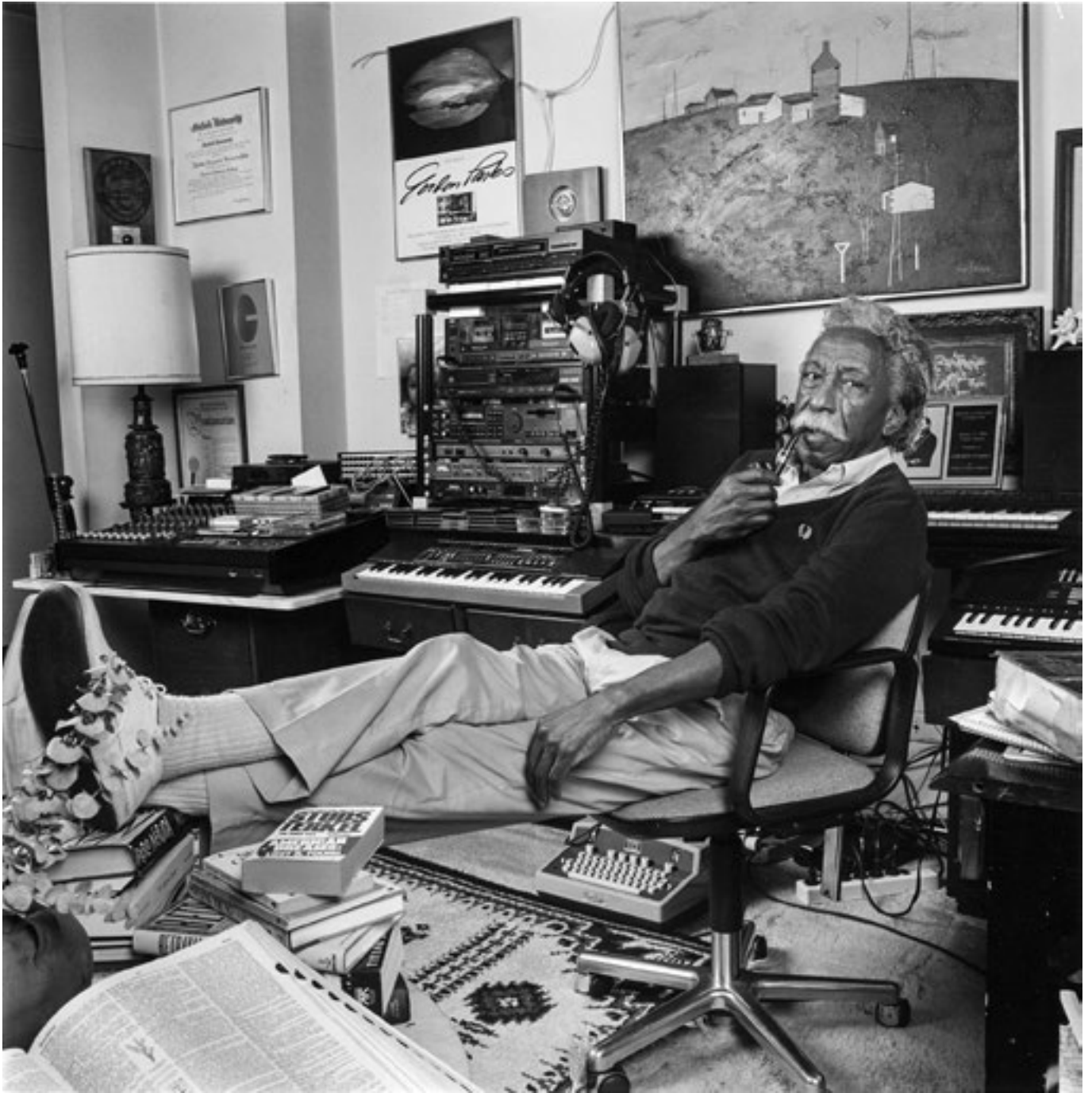
Roy Lichtenstein, 14 January 1986.



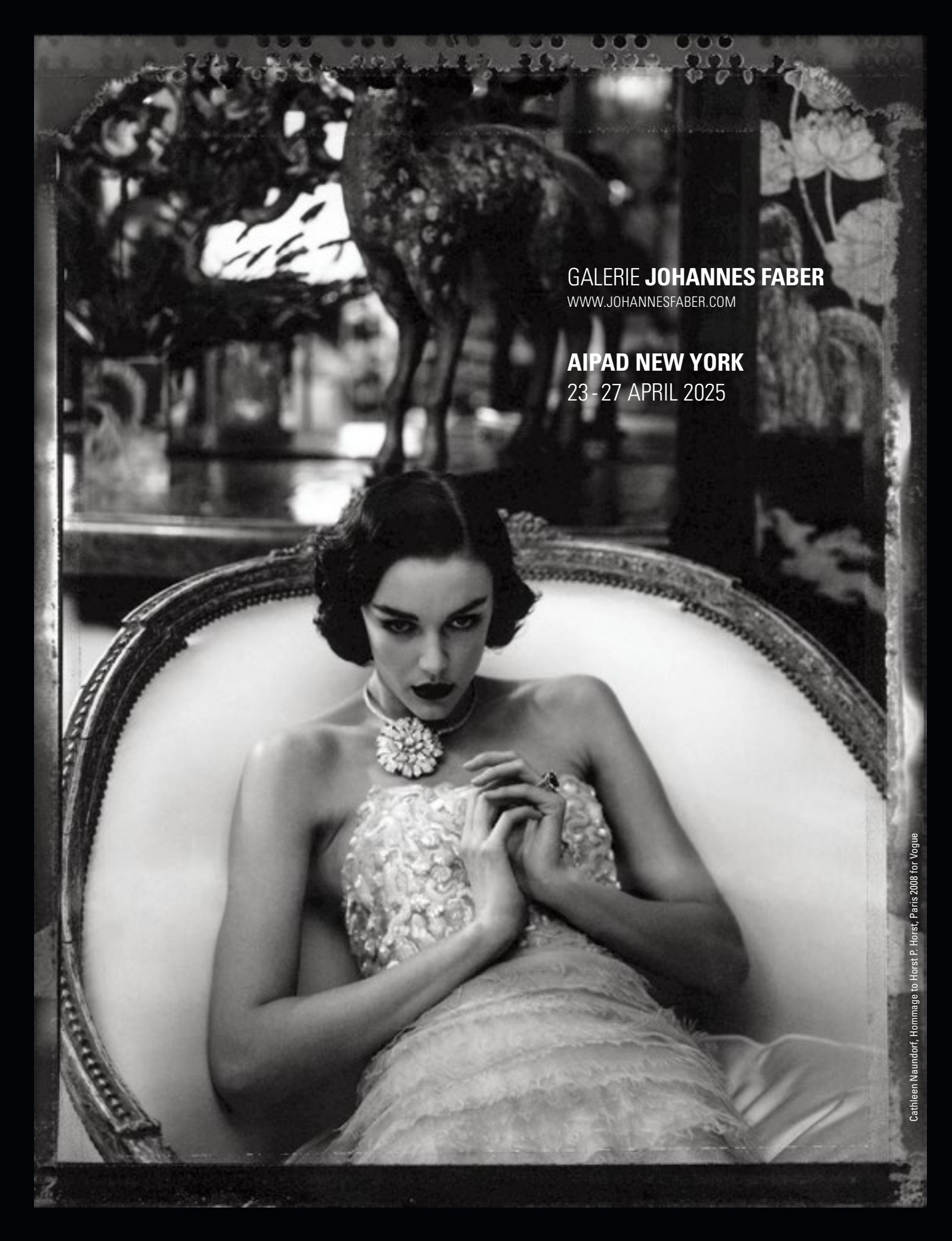
William Wegman, 19 May 1993.



Maya Lin, May 1998.



Gordon Parks, October 1991.



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BY MARY PELLETIER

STEPHEN DAITER Gallery

All images are courtesy of Stephen Daiter Gallery.

He started his career in photography as a book dealer. In December 1997, Stephen Daiter opened his gallery in Chicago. And along the way, he collected the most important historical archive of New Bauhaus/Institute of Design material in private hands.

Your name and gallery are synonymous with Chicago but you were born and grew up in Philadelphia. How did you come to establish yourself and your business in Illinois?

– I first became interested in photography as a high school student in Philadelphia. I set up a darkroom in my parents' laundry room and taught myself how to print black and white photographs. This was in the late 1960s when all the great Kodak, Dupont & Agfa papers were still available and priced so a student could still buy them. It turns out that I have a very good memory for photographs I have seen and the papers they were printed on, especially for papers from the '50s and '60s. This came in very handy later when I became a collector and then a dealer! In the later 1970s, I went to graduate school at the University of Chicago, studying social psychology and anthropology. It was there I rekindled my



STEPHEN DAITER

interest in photography, mostly through photography books. Back then, very few collectors were interested in photo books and this was Chicago, a major centre for photography education. I was able to collect great books at modest prices. One day in about 1980, I called Henry Feldstein, then a photography book dealer, to try to purchase something which happened to have already sold. Before getting off the phone, Henry asked me if I had any good photography books that I would be willing to sell. I had recently purchased a copy of Gernsheim's History of Photography for about \$20, he offered me \$175 for it. This was what started an avocation as a photography book dealer while still a graduate student.

György Kepes. *Self-portrait*, gelatin silver print, 1931.



Who were some of the people you met in those early years of dealing? Where did you meet them?

– I took trips to the New York Photo History Shows at the Penta Hotel to sell out-of-print photography books and occasionally some photographs. Doing these shows in New York helped fund visits to Philadelphia to see family and friends. At that time, Philadelphia had excellent photography galleries: David Mancini/Photopia, Stephen Williams – The Photographer’s Place, Doug Mellor – Photographer’s Gallery and a bit later Paul Cava Gallery. I learned a lot from Douglas Mellor and going to Photopia. The New York Photo Historic Society shows were semi-annual, and there were a lot of interesting people in and out of there. I started doing the show with Henry Feldstein and Richard Rosenthal, and it was a lot of fun. I met photographers – Morris Engel, Walter Rosenblum and a number of other Photo League members. I also met Howard Greenberg in 1983 when he had just done his first catalogue and exhibition on the Photo League. The personal contact with the photographers and Howard enabled me to start a collection of works from the Photo League – my first focused collecting interest. I started to teach at Northwestern in 1988 and like many graduate students, I had completed my research for the PhD and written a little over half of my dissertation. Three years later I was given the option to continue in the psychology department, but only if I finished the dissertation. By that time, I was making nearly

the same amount of money in photography dealing as teaching full time, so I chose photography.

Your gallery opened in 1997. What was the gallery’s mission in the early years?

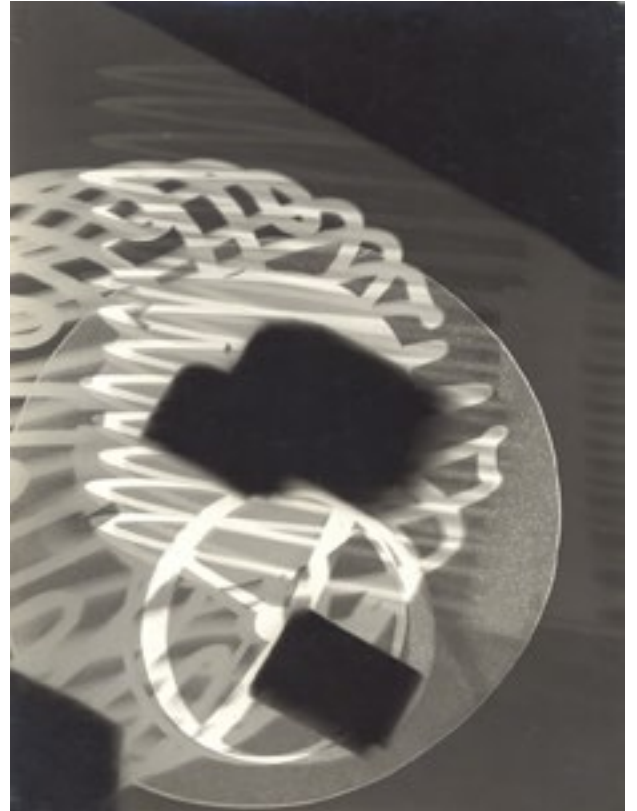
– I was doing most of my dealing out of our basement and in 1997 when we were expecting our daughter, it was both out of necessity and to take the risk that we opened a public gallery. It was opened in December 1997, one month before our daughter was born. I’d say that our initial mission was to promote classic photography and photography books with a specific interest in two areas of 20th century American and European photography: experimental work and work in the documentary tradition. From the get-go, documenting the history of our offerings was very important to us. We were also very focused on acquiring and promoting photographs that had strong object quality. For instance, as I continued to develop the Photo League collection, I realized that there was little information on the League and that it was important to preserve a good record of the history of it while many members were available to recount it. This eventually led to my doing the first book on the Photo League. At the time, we didn’t have much money, and it was pretty seam of the pants

Joseph Sterling. Untitled (heads of women), gelatin silver print, 1959-1963.



György Kepes. Untitled (Portrait of Moholy-Nagy), watercolour drawing, 1937.

László Moholy-Nagy. Untitled (Photogram with loops and small black squares), gelatin silver print, unknown date.



for a couple of years. And about a year into opening the gallery, I realised I had to sell the Photo League collection that I had compiled. If I didn't, I couldn't stay in business. We had done the research, and it was coherent, and it had been something I intended to do; it led to the gallery selling two distinct collections on the League: one to Columbus Museum of Art and a second to the Library of Congress two decades later. We also hoped to be able to stay open for a few years!

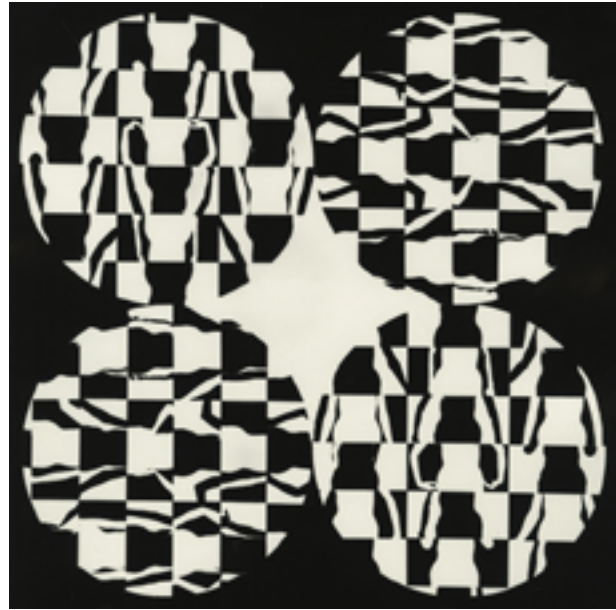
In those early years, what drew you to the work that had been made at the Institute of Design?

– During the later 1980s, I found myself responding to both the experimental and sensitive documentary photography I saw by teachers & students from the New Bauhaus/Institute of Design. The collegial relations between them and their sense of community were refreshing and inspiring. By the early 1990s, I had met a good number of 1940s and 1950s Institute of Design photographers and realised that little was known about this institution outside of Chicago and another history was in danger of

disappearing. Long-term relationships with Wayne Miller, Marvin Newman and Franz Altschuler were especially important to my developing an understanding of the post-war ID. This heightened my interest in experimental photography, and from that a show and catalogue, *Light and Vision* in 1994, resulted, covering the early years of photography at the school.

The transmission of knowledge was key to the New Bauhaus ethos, e.g., practical education. How did this expand on the way practical arts had been taught in the earlier years?

– Photography was initially taught at the school as an essential component of training the total designer in the Light Workshop, rather than as an independent photography programme, from 1937-45. The creative synergy of teaching photography along with painting and design led to work that combined these media in new and important ways. The result was two generations of photographic art and design distinguished by a visual sophistication, creativity, and complexity rarely seen in the United States



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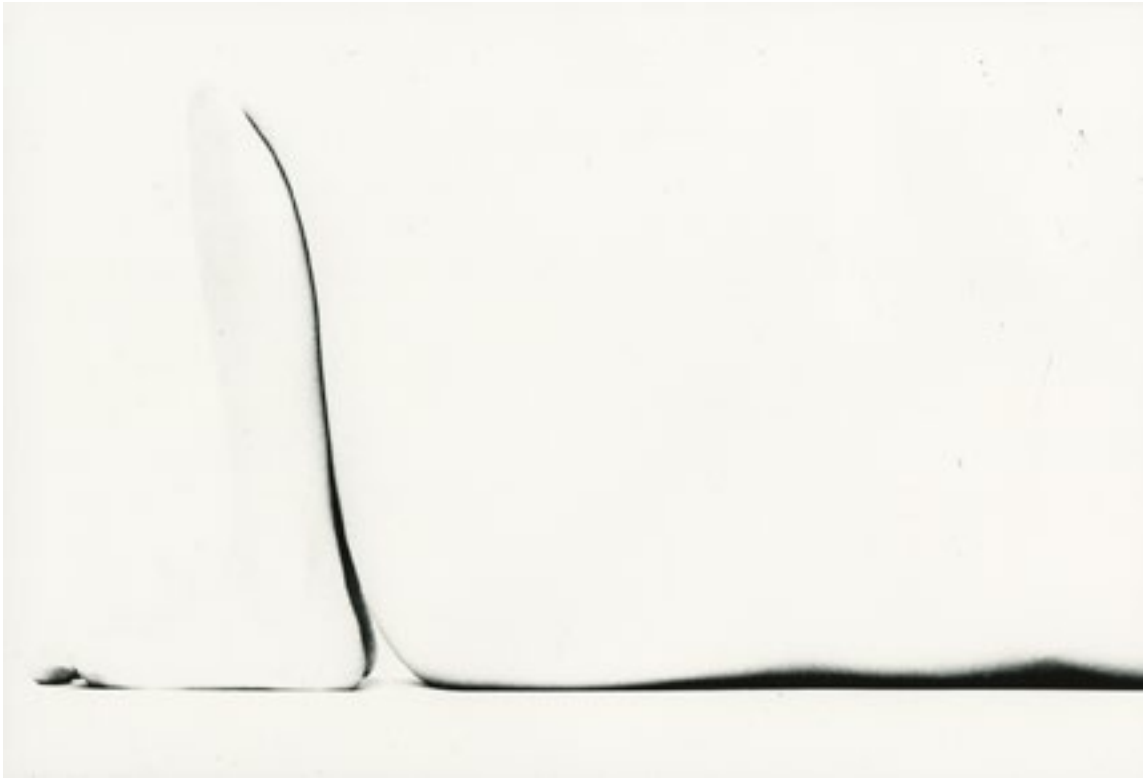
3.

during this period. László Moholy-Nagy, György Kepes, Nathan Lerner and Henry Holmes Smith led the way during the early years with Harry Callahan and Aaron Siskind doing the same in the two decades following World War II.

How would you characterise the influence of the new Bauhaus on American photography? Who were some of the key players that helped to influence the trajectory of photography there, after Moholy Nagy founded it in 1937?

– The New Bauhaus/School of Design/Institute of Design in Chicago offered the most important academic photography programming in the United States and was the seminal place for the education of the modern artist-photographer from 1937 through the

1960s. Several things took place in 1946 – the death of Moholy-Nagy, a summer seminar initiating a bachelor's degree in photography, and the hiring of Harry Callahan – which marked a shift from training multifaceted designers for whom photography was an important component in artistic production toward the training of artist-photographers. The creation of a graduate degree in photography in 1950 and the hiring of Aaron Siskind in 1951 created a centre unparalleled in America for training the artist-photographer and photographic educator.



4.

The Institute of Design Photography Department was the first university-level training programme in the US for photographic artist-educators both at an undergraduate and graduate level.

Keith Davis summarizes the influence of the Institute of Design on the field of photography beautifully when he says, “It seems clear that the years between 1946 and 1971 were something special at the ID. More noteworthy photographers came out of this programme than any comparable school. The influence of these graduates on subsequent generations of photographers has been profound. Decades later, a remarkable percentage of the photography field still carries some ID blood in its veins. The ID was both a magnet and an accelerator. It attracted many of ‘the best and brightest’ at a crucial time in the growth of the field and it motivated students to high levels of achievement. The ID provided an environment in which photography was valued in a deep and abiding way.”

And so the Institute of Design really was the birthplace of photography education in the US, and its influence spread throughout the country with each new graduating class.

– Prior to the 1960s, photography was taught primarily in departments of journalism at American universities. During the post-war years and through much of the 1960s, there were only about a half

dozen degree-granting photography programmes in the US, with the ID being the most prominent among them. By 1970, there were dozens, and by 1980 there were hundreds. Pretty much every photography programme in the country could trace a connection back to Chicago – I would say that about 80-85% of people who got a photography education in the US until the end of the 20th century had a connection in some way with ID.

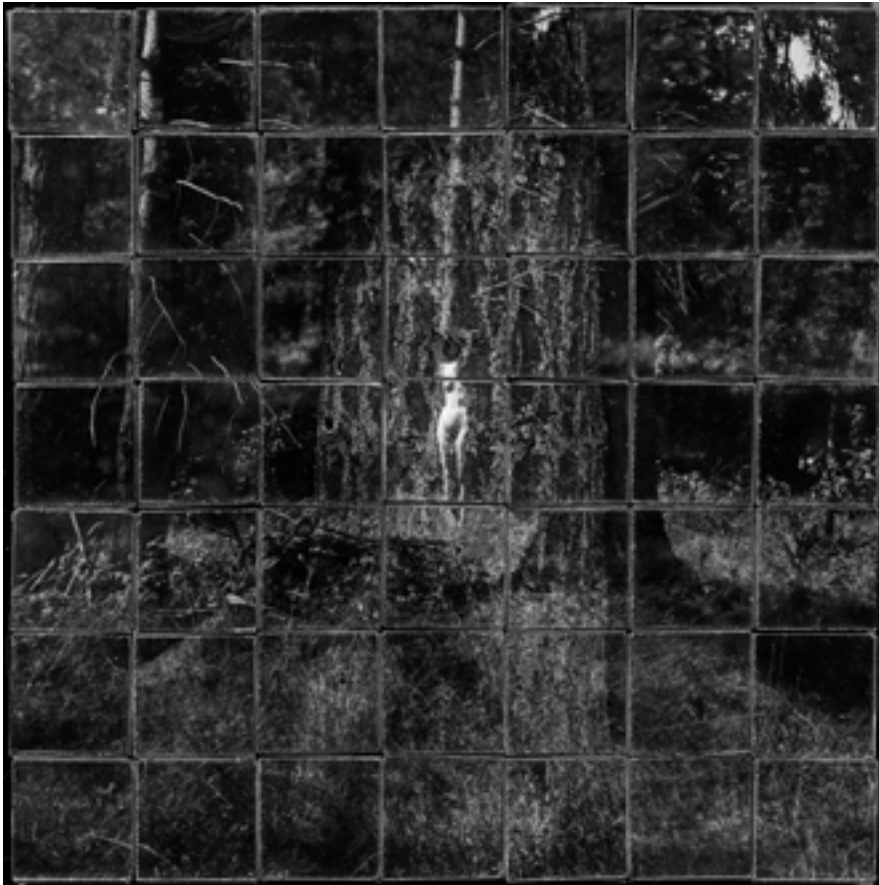
The Society for Photographic Education also emerged in 1963, at a time when art departments were beginning to offer photography in their curriculum. It created a way for photography educators to connect, network, and communicate in ways that they couldn’t have otherwise. It fostered a largely collaborative sense of common mission and community between teachers, which I think is somewhat unique to that period in American photography. Important early schools for photo education that grew out of ID included Indiana University,

1. Arthur Siegel. *Photogram*, gelatin silver print, 1946.

2. Barbara Blondeau. *4 circular nude montages*, gelatin silver print, 1967.

3. Ray Metzker. *Chicago*, gelatin silver print, 1958.

4. Barbara Crane. *Human Form*, 1966, gelatin silver print.



Charles Swedlund. *Photographic Cube (Plus Six Prints)*, gelatin silver print, 1974.

How did some of the other programmes that popped up around the country, like the Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester, New York, and Robert Heinecken’s programme at UCLA, relate to what was being taught at ID?

– There’s a funny story about Nathan Lyons, who founded the Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester, New York, in 1969. Nathan was an undergrad at Alfred University and John Wood was his professor there. John Wood had been an ID graduate of Aaron Siskind and Harry Callahan’s in the early ’50s, and he started the programme at Alfred, which at that point was one of six or seven in the country. John Wood had become good friends with Aaron during his time at ID, and upon Nathan’s graduation, he convinced Nathan to go to

where Henry Holmes Smith, a teacher at the New Bauhaus in 1937, started the second university level programme in the US, shortly after the ID. Many important educators came out of there, including Jack Welpott, Jerry Uelsmann and Van Deren Coke. In 1961, Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) decided to establish a degree in photography. Harry Callahan was hired away from the ID by Malcolm Grear and David Strout to establish an undergraduate photography concentration in the Graphic Design Department and in 1963, establish an MFA degree in photography. In 1971, after Aaron Siskind retired from ID he joined his teaching companion Callahan at RISD. RISD then became arguably the most significant programme for photo education, being joined by several schools in the later part of the century like Yale, SVA, and Bard. During the mid-1960s into early 1970s ID graduates started or co-directed many programmes in Illinois (Art Sinsabaugh, Kenneth Josephson, Charles Swedlund, Joseph Jachna, Barbara Crane & others), Indiana (Henry Holmes Smith, Reginald Heron, George Strimbu), New York City (Charles Traub at School for Visual Arts) & NY State (Nathan Lyons & Keith Smith at VSW), Baltimore (Jack Wilgus, William Larson...), Philadelphia (Ray Metzker, Barbara Blondeau, William Larson, Judith Steinhauser & Tom Porett), in Texas (Carlotta Corpron, James Newberry and Geoff Winningham), and elsewhere.

the Institute of Design. So Nathan was driving to Chicago to meet Aaron, and his car broke down in Rochester. He didn’t have the money to fix the car and ended up getting a job at the George Eastman House. Within six or seven years, he became one of the associate directors and also organized the first major retrospective on Aaron Siskind’s work in 1965. He never ended up going to work with Aaron as a student, but they stayed deeply connected. In 1963 at Aaron’s urging, Nathan taught at ID for a year, and so the whole aesthetic and the way the VSW operated is not dissimilar to the way Siskind and Callahan were operating the ID. If Nathan had been successful in getting his car to Chicago, there never would have been a VSW! It became one of the major places for photography education, and in the first four or five years, a lot of well-known photographers and curators got their start there.

On the other side of the country, Ansel Adams and the West Coast aesthetic of the 1960s and 70s were informed in part by the ID experimentation with new and other media, but were otherwise largely independent of it. Robert Heinecken founded the Photography at UCLA in 1962 and was a prime mover in the Los Angeles art photography scene. He and other teachers at UCLA, including Leland Rice, were

André Kertész. *Grotesque No 1*, gelatin silver print, 1930s.



familiar and influenced by Moholy-Nagy's combining media in new and interesting ways. Heinecken and Kenneth Josephson were friends and both were early conceptual artists using photography. Ed Ruscha was a student of Emerson Woelffer in LA. Woelffer was a painting teacher with Moholy-Nagy at the School of Design in Chicago in the 1940s. The San Francisco Art Institute, a significant school, began offering classes in photography in 1945 but did not offer a degree-granting programme in photography at that time. Linda Connor, an ID alumna, taught there from 1969 until its recent closing.

How did new media impact the ID philosophy in terms of experimental visual culture in the latter half of the 20th century?

– In the 1960s, Aaron Siskind encouraged his students to experiment with photography. He had felt that students had become too complacent and conventional in their practice. He encouraged students to experiment with photography to create work using new media and conventional processes in new ways. Keith Smith, William Larson, Barbara Blondeau and Thomas Barrow were ID students who pushed the medium of photography in the 1960s. He worked with Keith Smith when he was a student at the Art Institute of Chicago and then had him come to the ID to get a master's to help shake up the other students to push the traditional boundaries of photography. William Larson, Barbara Blondeau, Thomas Barrow, Tom Porett and other ID students were leading educators and innovators creating new media that emerged from the 1960s ID and had widespread influence as educators. Until 1970, the film programme at ID was incorporated into Photography. A strong creative group of experimental filmmakers emerged from the school during the sixties, including Wayne Boyer, Robert Stiegler, Larry Janiak, Kurt Heyl, Kenneth Josephson, and others.

We hear a lot about the men at ID. Can you speak a bit about the women who were pushing the boundaries of photographic experimentation?

– During the first 25 years of the school, many women had training in photography there but few had the opportunity to rise to prominence since teaching and commercial work was dominated by men, who were basically only hiring men. Carlotta Corpron in Texas was an exception. A number of women, like Mary Ann Dorr Lea, who exhibited in several Steichen MOMA shows in the 1950s, pursued careers as designers. Earlier, Dina Woelffer was active as a photographer after graduation, and Margaret DePatta, mainly known as a prominent jewelry maker, incorporated her jewelry into her photographs in the 1940s. A small number of other women, including Jean Kendall, ended up teaching university-level photography classes in the 1950s. But it wasn't until the mid-1960s when a core of innovative women fine art photographers and educators emerged at the ID. Barbara Crane, Barbara Blondeau, Laura Volkerding, Judith Steinhauser, Linda Connor, and Roslyn Banish

Stephen Daiter on the gallery archive

We have a great piece of ephemera that belonged to Joe Jachna – a diagram that charts of the circles of influence in American photography. It's from sometime in the 1970s, but we don't know who drew it! This chart shows how ID education influenced all of the photography programmes that began popping up around the country. In Illinois, virtually every new one had an ID person behind it – Charles Swedlund in Southern Illinois, Joe Jachna at UIC, in Indiana it was Henry Holmes Smith, Jeff Winningham started one in Houston, Jim Newberry started a programme in Texas as well, and Carlotta Corpron, who studied with Moholy and Kepes in the '40s, also started one in Texas. Someone should really continue the map!

The archive houses about 500 books and catalogues, 2300+ pieces of ephemera, and 500+ core photographs by 94 photographers. We have letters, postcards, and about 150 photographic postcards by all of the ID people; we have Moholy's first holiday card from 1938, the first year he was in Chicago; we have Kepes's first postcard, which is a silver print photogram he sent to a friend; we probably have the most complete set of programme announcements from the opening of the New Bauhaus, with prospectus into the 1950s.

I credit this, for better or worse, for having gone to the University of Chicago – you retain as much information as you can, about everything! So whenever I saw something, especially from the early days, when everybody was doing paper documentation, I thought it was important to keep that. As a book dealer, I also got interested in maquettes for books and Master's theses – so we also have Marvin Newman's master thesis which was the first master's degree thesis at ID, and probably the first in the country. We have preliminary versions of Barbara Crane's and three or four others, we have one of two silver print copies of a book by Wayne Miller, who documented FDR's funeral, and made a little book for Eleanor Roosevelt – we have Wayne's own copy. In fact, it was this project that inspired Paul Fusco's Funeral Train. There are a bunch of maquettes for books that never happened – one of my favourite things is by Robert Stiegler, who taught at UIC but was an ID graduate. He did a project looking down at people's heads. In 1955, Charles Swedlund spent a couple of months documenting firefighters at night – we have full set of 31 original prints, many unique, essentially a compilation of original prints for a book. We have a bunch of watercolours that Kepes made when he was living in London for a year, working in the design at a department store; from Moholy we have about 20 letters.

It's a hyperfocus of mine; we have it organised now, but it could end up being a 400-500-page book, I would love for a museum to buy the collection! It's been my longest-running personal project to date.



From the beginning, the first-person connection to photographers and broad social context has played a role in your publications and exhibitions.

– Many of the exhibitions and the catalogues that are done in the States are simply batches of pictures. I'm not very interested in 19th century photography, but I really admire Hans Kraus's research – he does beautiful catalogues which provide a whole context for the images he's showing. That's what we are doing as well, and often we are looking for under-appreciated photographers. We don't shy away from selling the great Robert Franks or Walker Evans pictures, but that is not what we are primarily interested in. We are interested in finding the best examples of the most interesting images, and in particular, great vintage prints. We represent the estate of André Kertész, and where we've sold between 300 to 500

Dawoud Bey. *A Young Man Resting on an Exercise Bike*, gelatin silver print, 1988.

Annie Wang. *The Mother as a Creator – My Son's Leg was in a Cast*, gelatin silver print, 2003.



vintage prints, we've probably only sold about 10 modern prints. It's really the objects we're interested in, their history, and the personal touch from the photographer.

What are collectors after when it comes to work that came out of Chicago?

– Generally, work by a few masters: László Moholy-Nagy, Harry Callahan, and Aaron Siskind. More adventurous collectors may consider Frederick Sommer, Yasuhiro Ishimoto, Kenneth Josephson, Art Sinsabaugh, Ray Metzker, and several others. Many collectors in the photography world have little idea of how important this Chicago school has been to photography. This is a major reason that we routinely exhibit and publish work by photographers associated with the Institute of Design.

You exhibit at AIPAD and Paris Photo, but what is the collecting landscape like at home?

– We are a Chicago gallery, and the majority of what we do is showing Chicago work. Chicago was home to that first group of people in the United States who created an environment where photography was



Gary Schneider. *Shirley Soffer*, pigmented ink on paper, 1991.

Lynne Cohen. *Corporate Office*, gelatin silver print, 1975-1976.

Wayne Miller. *Migrant Workers (Out of Gas)*, gelatin silver print, 1950.



treated seriously. But I would say that our reception for this work is much greater internationally than it is locally. Twenty years ago, when the gallery was relatively young, there were groups of people throughout the country that were really serious photography collectors: a San Francisco group, a Boston group. There was a Chicago group, but they weren't as interested in Chicago work, strangely enough. Interestingly, we have a lot of contacts in Europe, perhaps from exhibiting at Basel for quite a long time. But I think that in Europe there is more interest in the experimental work that Chicago is known for, as well as the documentary work. Our aesthetic seems to match up more with European sensibilities.

How has your gallery programme evolved to include contemporary artists over the years?

– We started with selling both books and photographs, concentrating on the Photo League, the Bauhaus, New Bauhaus and School of Design Photographers. Over time we expanded to post immediately post-WWII ID photography and then to the whole period, 1937-67 when the ID was the dominant source of photographic education in the US and an avatar for experimental photography in the US. We represent people now like Susan Meiselas, Alex Webb, Eugene Richards – these are people who come from a documentary tradition, but are more worldly in their subject matter than the Photo League. For contemporary artists who relate to ID, we look to



Kenneth Josephson. *Chicago*,
gelatin silver print, 1961.

work was still kind of unappreciated by the public at large. We thought it would be a great opportunity to get him more traction in the photo world, because he has always teetered on that line between art and photography. His work really merged with our humanist interests here at the gallery, and by the time we did the first show, we sold his collection of Harlem USA to the Art Institute. The work by our contemporary artists all relates in some way to the early subjects and motivations that the gallery was interested in.

What are you working on for 2025?

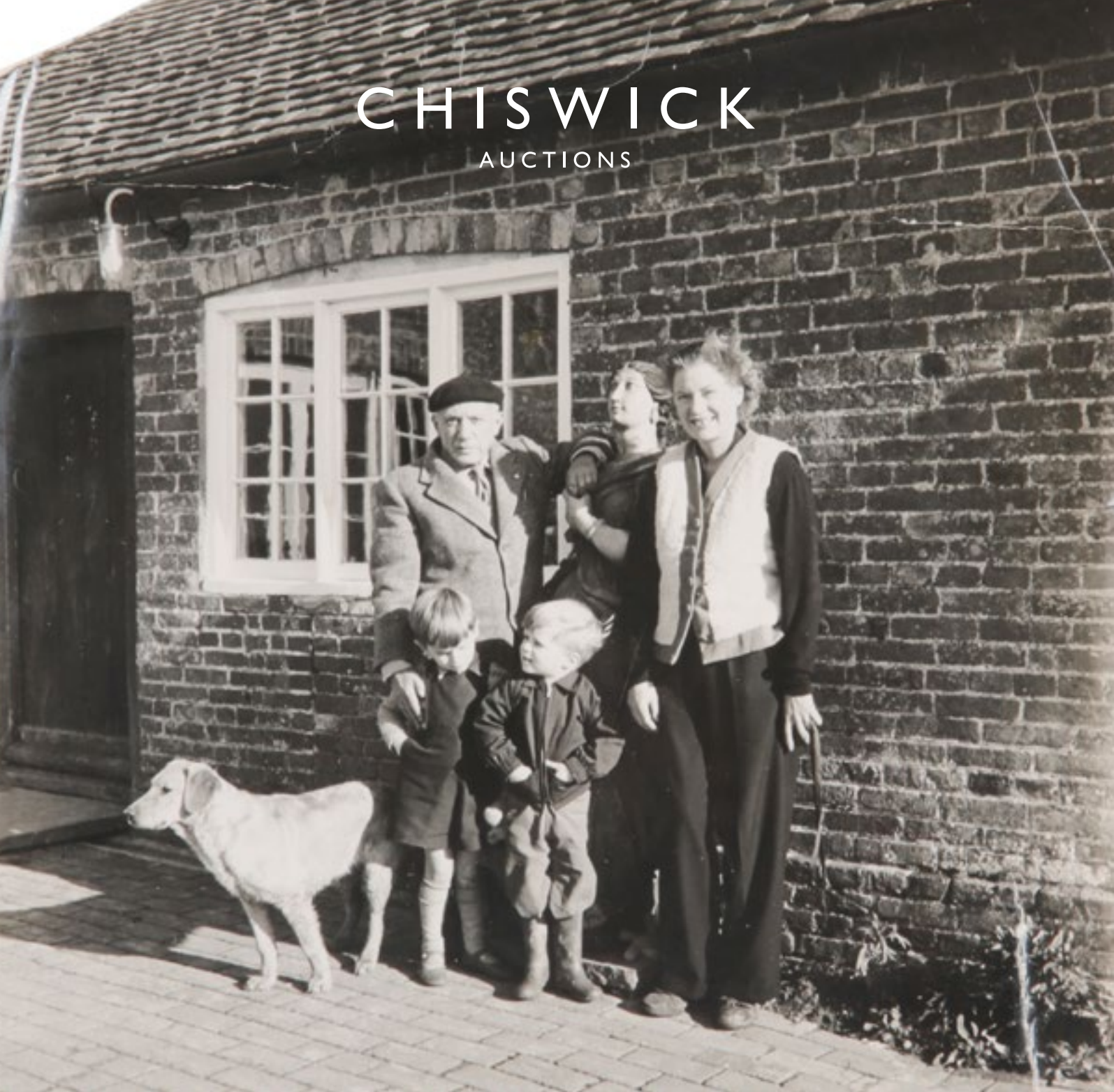
– Right now, the archive project is keeping us very busy – it really is the most important historical archive of

the conceptual, like Lynn Cohen, and Annie Wang, who is an extension of more cerebral photography. We pride ourselves in the unique way we can cover a diverse plane – going from the Photo League to very conceptual work like Ken Josephson on paper may not make sense, but when you see them on the wall of our gallery booth, you see how all the work relates in some way. We also represent Dawoud Bey, whose work has been out there for a long time. But when we started speaking with him around 2007, his

New Bauhaus/ID material in private hands. But we are also focusing on further developing an evolving generative photography collection. We are looking forward to presenting exhibitions of Dawoud Bey, probably something celebrating Charles Swedlund's 90th birthday. And as always, continuing to focus on whatever it is that we find good and interesting!

CHISWICK

AUCTIONS



FINE PHOTOGRAPHS

22 MAY 2025, 13:00

Roland Penrose (1900-1984)
PICASSO, LEE MILLER & ANTONY
PENROSE, FARLEY FARM, 1950.

Vintage silver gelatin print, from the collection
of Dorothy Morland, first female director of the
Institute of Contemporary Arts, London.

Preview and Sales at the Barley Mow Centre, London, W4 4PH, United Kingdom
austin.farahar@chiswickauctions.co.uk | mary.pelletier@chiswickauctions.co.uk | www.chiswickauctions.co.uk



BY LAURA LEONELLI

FONDAZIONE ALINARI

per la FOTOGRAFIA

Unless noted, all images are courtesy of Archivi Alinari, Firenze.

Gracing the cover of this issue of the magazine is a portrait that Marion Wulz took of her sister Wanda sometime 1928-1930. It shows her in the perfect outfit to experience the speed of the era, a cap that protected her now-shortened hair, a pair of motorcycle goggles that sliced through the very air of freedom, a simple but elegant coat. Marion Wulz took many portraits of Wanda during this period, highlighting through her sister's beauty, the beauty of the modern woman and her race towards independence. Wanda and Marion were in their early twenties, grandchildren and daughters of a dynasty of photographers who since 1868 had chronicled the history and protagonists of Trieste, a cosmopolitan and cultured city.

The Wulz family's photographic archive, including the negative of Wanda's famous futurist photomontage *Io + gatto*, has been part of the immense archives of the Fondazione Alinari per la Fotografia for many years. The Fondazione is based in Florence (where Fratelli Alinari was founded in 1853) and is currently presided over by Giorgio van Straten,

Fratelli Alinari. Staircase in Arnolfo's Tower in Palazzo Vecchio, with view of the Cathedral, Florence.

CLAUDIA BARONCINI



© Massimo Sestini

writer, translator and from 2015 to 2019, director of the Italian Cultural Institute in New York. Thanks to the acquisition by the Tuscany Region, this extraordinary treasure trove of five million images, positives and negatives, photographic equipment, books, and magazines that shed light on the history of photography, with particular attention to the Italian chapters, is available to scholars free of charge.

I met up with Claudia Baroncini, director of the Alinari Foundation and expert in museum activities and the management of public archives and collections, to hear about the latest discoveries, including those uncovered during the reorganisation and digitization of the entire Wulz Collection. While awaiting the opening of the new Alinari Museum, which will be inaugurated in Florence at the Santa Maria Novella complex in 2027, the archives are stored in Calenzano, at the Art Defender facility.



The history of Fratelli Alinari spans more than one hundred and fifty years and it has shaped the study of the history of art for at least a century. Can we start with the mission that the Alinari Foundation for Photography, FAF, has embraced since becoming a public heritage?

– The pivotal moment in Alinari’s history and its future lies precisely in its new identity, that of becoming public heritage. In the summer of 2018, the Archival and Bibliographic Superintendence of Tuscany declared the Alinari collection to be of significant historical interest. In December 2019, the Region of Tuscany purchased the archives and in 2020 created the Alinari Foundation for Photography, initiating a series of procedures to preserve and digitise this treasure, thus making it available for consultation and further enhancement. The drive for such a significant financial investment of twelve million euros, was primarily the fear of the dispersion and fragmentation of the collections and their most iconic images.

Can you give me an overview of the archive?

– The Alinari archive holds 5 000 000 items, of which 4 950 000 are photographic materials. However, it is important to emphasise that the original material, tied to the Alinari Establishment from its inception until 1920, when the company ceased to be family-owned, consists of only 117 852 photographs on glass plate negatives. The rest of the Alinari archive consists of other collections which were added to the collection later stage on.

Top. **Fratelli Alinari.** The Fratelli brothers; Giuseppe, Leopoldo and Romualdo, from glass plate negative, 1860.

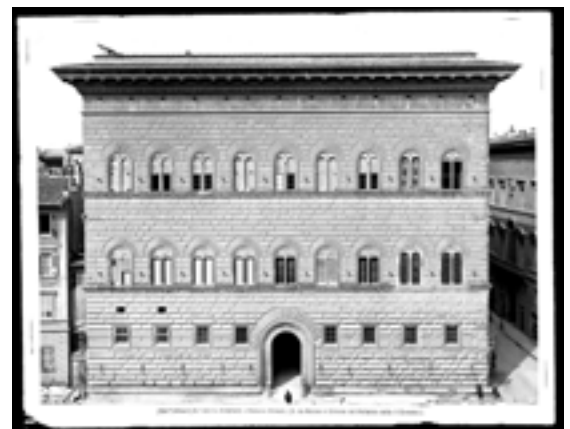
Right. **Fratelli Alinari.** Façade of Palazzo Strozzi, Florence, from glass plate negative, circa 1890.

How big are the other holdings in the archive?

– There are about 3 000 daguerreotypes, ferrotypes and ambrotypes, 6 000 vintage albums, 470 000 glass plate negatives on collodion and gelatine, 1 650 000 black and white film negatives, 450 000 loose or framed photographs, calotypes and autochromes. There is the extraordinary collection of Giorgio Roster, a renowned doctor who graduated from Pisa in 1864. He also applied himself to scientific photography, even experimenting with the hand-colouring of glass slides. We also preserve 400 pieces of photographic equipment, including precious lenses that are still handcrafted, such as the two rare Lerebours & Secretan specimens, Wilhelm von Gloeden’s camera, a large-format wooden device, produced by Voigtlander & Sons and capable of creating 30 x 40 cm glass plates. To make this immense treasure available for consultation, we have launched significant digitisation projects. Among these, in 2024, a major project dedicated to the Alinari and Brogi collections began, supported by the Region of Tuscany, as part of the National Plan for the Digitisation of Cultural Heritage. The goal is to digitise 90 000 negative plates by 2025, with an average of 200-500 plates per day.

This important treasure is kept in Florence, the city that English travellers called “the Athens of Italy”.

– The reference to Athens and to classical culture, to which the Renaissance considered itself the heir, not only explains Florence’s central role in the first decades of the history of Italian photography, but also the Alinari family’s commercial strategy and their extraordinary success. The announcement of Daguerre’s invention was published 15 January 1839 in *Gazzetta Privilegiata* of Milan. Italo Zannier, the formidable historian of photography and for years president of the Alinari scientific committees, noted that the first Italian daguerreotype was made in Florence on 2 September 1839, at 2.45 p.m. “with a mirror equipped with memory” by Tito Puliti, a physicist in the laboratory of the city’s Imperial regio Museo di fisica e storia naturale. Unfortunately, no



trace remains of this incubulum. However, the Alinari archives preserve the daguerreotype that Giovanni Battista Amici, a Florentine scientist, or perhaps his son, took around 1841 from a window of the Demidoff Castle. It is the first photographic view of Florence. Acrobatical, defi-

nitely, since it was snowing that day! Giovanni Battista Amici corresponded with Henry William Fox Talbot and a sister of the English photographer lived in Florence. Above all, Florence was a key stop on the Grand Tour. Art, monuments, beauty everywhere with overwhelming effects, think of Stendhal who experienced “celestial sensations” and nearly died of emotion after leaving Santa Croce. It is no coincidence then that Florence was home to the most important engraving studio in Italy for art reproduction, that of Luigi Bardi, where Leopoldo Alinari (1832-1865), when just a boy, began to work.

Luigi Bardi played a fundamental role in Alinari’s history for at least two reasons, stylistic and strategic.

– In the early stages of his career Leopoldo Alinari followed the same path as his master, photographically reproducing chalcographic and lithographic prints. The choice of monuments and landscapes represented was identical. But soon, the very nature of the photographic medium suggested to Leopoldo a break with the past, at least in terms of the quantity of subjects represented. While in the process of engraving, it was necessary to constantly renew the plates, limiting the number of subjects, the photographic process, especially after the introduction of collodion negatives, allowed for the infinite reproduction of prints from a single plate, and above all, offered the possibility of expanding the iconographic catalogue.



Despite his ties to the past, Luigi Bardi was a man who understood his time and its changes, and photography was one of them.

– He immediately understood that photography guaranteed a precision and veracity that engravings couldn’t offer. He saw in the young Leopoldo the virtuoso of the lens he was looking for. Perhaps Leopoldo had learnt the trade from the Paduan painter-photographer Domenico Bresolin. The apprenticeship was quick and at the age of eighteen, Leopoldo created some calotypes of monuments in Pisa and Florence. Five of these were possibly bought by the French archaeologist Eugène Piot, who passed through Florence while researching for his album *L’Italie monumentale*, one of the very first on Italian architecture. At the time, this publication seemed to inaugurate “une nouvelle branche commerciale”, as *La Lumière*, the leading magazine in international technical and photographic debate from 1851 to 1860, put it. In 1852, buoyed by such results and with the financial support of Bardi, Leopoldo opened a small photographic studio on Via Cornina, today Via del Trebbio, just a few steps from his master’s atelier.

Fratelli Alinari. The Fratelli Alinari establishment on Via Nazionale, Florence. Studio for toning prints, from glass plate negative, 1899.



How did Leopoldo Alinari present himself on the market?

– The first photographs taken by Leopoldo were signed *Fratelli Alinari, Fotografi Firenze, Presso Luigi Bardi* but two years later, in 1854, the young Alinari became independent and called in his brothers, Romualdo (1830-1890), who was already employed at the Batacchi counter and would become head of administration, and Giuseppe (1836-1890), an expert inlayer and later in charge of the various phases of the photographic process. Together they founded *Fratelli Alinari* and signed their work as *Fratelli Alinari*. It went on to be the oldest and longest-running photography business in the world, operating from 1854 to 1920, when it changed ownership and was acquired by a group of entrepreneurs, many of whom were connected to the Florentine nobility.

What were the subjects of *Fratelli Alinari*?

– In the beginning, the subjects were the monuments and artworks of Florence, Siena, Pisa, then all of Italy and then Europe. Already in 1855, the Alinari brothers

“Vittorio Alinari’s first photographic expedition.”

Vittorio Alinari. “Le Colonne”, trachytic rocks on Isola San Pietro, from glass plate negative, 1913.

established themselves as internationally renowned photographers thanks to their participation in the Paris Exhibition, where they presented a catalogue of eighty-four subjects from various locations in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. A year later they extended the scope of their documentation campaigns and photographed some artistic and architectural landmarks in Perugia, Assisi, Todi and Viterbo, then part of the Papal States. In 1857, the catalogue was further expanded to include numerous subjects from the Uffizi Gallery. This solidified Alinari’s reputation as a firm specialising in reproducing artworks, to the point that, in 1858, Prince Albert of England commissioned a photographic service of Raphael’s drawings at the Accademia in Venice and in the private collection of Archduke Charles of Habsburg in Vienna. This resulted in a collection of three hundred and ten photographs that was published and sold in the same year for 1000 lire, about 5500 euros in today’s money.

In the mid-19th century, Italy was not yet a united country but a constellation of states. Politically, this situation also hindered the spread and recognition of Italian photography. What did foreign observers make of this?

– The articles by Ernest Lacan, editor-in-chief of *La Lumière*, are very interesting. In the early articles, the names of Italian photographers are few and only Domenico Bresolin, Francesco Malacarne, Angelo Secchi, Venanzio Sella and Pietro Semplicini are mentioned, along with the French photographers working in Italy such as Eugène Constant, Alfred-Nicolas Normand and Frédéric Flachéron. However, starting with the 1855 Paris Exposition, the chronicles become richer and the Alinari brothers are mentioned as “among the most skilled photographers in Europe”. Leopoldo followed the Parisian innovations very closely and was probably aware of the work of the greatest names of the time, Gustave Le Gray and Charles Nègre. Italy would become the Kingdom of Italy, a unified state, only in 1861, but in some ways the Alinari campaigns, celebrating art and architecture as heritage, memory, national language, and style, also supported the drive for political unity.

One of the goals of the Italian unification was to create a national market. How did the Alinari images fit into this new reality?

– The Alinari commercial strategy was born in the pre-unification era and paradoxically this was a key factor in their success, as noted in an important study on our archives by Professor Luigi Tomassini. A very heavy system of duties and customs was in force among the pre-unitary Italian states, so 80% of the trade from the individual states was directed abroad. Only 20% of the production remained within the Italian geographical area. The unification abolished these barriers making it possible not only for Alinari’s photographs to spread on the national market but also to conduct photographic campaigns in every region of the Italian Kingdom. In

1864, Leopoldo moved to Naples, then the most populous city in Italy, and started an important documentation work.

At the time, there were other photographic studios in Italy, equally skilled from a technical point of view and appreciated by critics, but none achieved such remarkable success in just a few years. Why?

– The secret was strategy: focusing on the foreign market. The Alinari soon organised a network of agents abroad, who were supplied with large quantities of photographs, stock that could be returned if unsold. Furthermore, the agents were allowed to expand the distribution network on their own initiative, which led, for example, to British agents opening up the American market. In stark contrast was the case of an English photographer like James Anderson, a refined professional active in Rome in the same years. In 1872, during an inquiry into industrial development in Italy, Anderson expressed skepticism about the possibility of exporting images of Italy abroad, stating, that “away from the monuments, public interest is never as vivid”. Clearly, he did not understand that photography cancels the coordinates of time and space preserving memory, desire and curiosity. Not by chance, the Alinari brothers aimed at a particular market sector, the educational field and art history studies. Indeed, Leopoldo and his brothers defined themselves as “photographers and publishers”, not because they were involved in publishing in the traditional sense, at least in the early stages, but because, through photography, they made Italian artistic and monumental heritage accessible, also to a wider audience.



In those same years, foreigners, thanks to an increasingly efficient and widespread railway network, were arriving in Italy in ever greater numbers. The Grand Tour was no longer an elitist experience, but began to attract a new public.

– In 1863, the Alinari family moved the company to a large palace in the new Barbano district, at number 15 Via Nazionale, now Largo Alinari, and not by chance, just a step away from the Santa Maria Novella railway station. It's also no coincidence that the following year, in 1864, the tour operator Thomas Cook organised the first tour to Italy, an extension of a trip to Paris and the Swiss Alps. Also in 1863, the French dictionary *Littre* defined the new figure of the *touriste* as follows: “Foreigners who tour through countries already frequented by fellow countrymen, but who do so out of curiosity and with a carefree attitude”. That curiosity, that joyful travelling would become the lifeblood of Alinari's success.

Another step forward came in 1865 when the capital of Italy moved from Turin to Florence. To celebrate this great event, the Alinari family published the first general catalogue of Italian art.

– Photography allowed scholars and amateurs to create for themselves a collection of reproductions, almost a small museum where they could move easily between its imaginary halls. For the first time, by aligning a series of collodion prints on a table, it was possible to begin comparative studies between works from all over Europe. Alongside their

Top. **Fratelli Alinari.** Portrait of Giuseppe Garibaldi, from glass plate negative, circa 1867.

Left. **Fratelli Alinari.** *The Creation of Adam*, by Michelangelo, Sistine Chapel, from glass plate negative, circa 1890.



campaigns in Italy, the Alinari brothers started to document in Greece, Austria, and France. Thus, the imaginary museum expanded. Leopoldo, Giuseppe and Romualdo were also brilliant at anticipating the requests of scholars, photographing not only the best-known masterpieces, but also undertaking meticulous documentation of the artistic heritage in every corner of Italy. There was also the incredible production of a substantial corpus of giant glass plates, probably attributable to Giuseppe Alinari. We are dedicating a series of studies to this spectacular material, which will culminate in a major exhibition in Florence at the end of 2026.

Can you reveal something about this project?

– The first mention of the plates dates back to 1872, in a report to the Chamber of Commerce and Arts of Florence, describing the honours and medals received by the Fratelli Alinari establishment. It mentions “the splendid reproductions of two paintings by Raphael, the *Madonna della Seggiola* and the *Madonna del Granduca*, in the same size as the originals”, that is, 73 x 74 cm and 55 x 83 cm. Fratelli Alinari had succeeded in making perfectly accurate and life-size portraits, which had never been done

Carlo Naya. *Venice by Moonlight, Piazza San Marco*, from glass plate negative, 1870-1880.

before. We do not know exactly for what particular occasion the plates were produced, but they are absolutely extraordinary and are still in good condition. Among the various subjects we have Donatello’s *St. George* in the Orsanmichele in Florence the Courtyard of the Bargello in Florence and, in this case, we also have the positive print, as well as the Colosseum, and Michelangelo’s *Moses* in San Pietro in Vincoli in Rome.

Who were the clients for these works?

– The whole world of art historians was shaped at the time, and even in the following decades, by Alinari photographs. During his stay in Florence in 1888, when he studied Botticelli’s masterpieces, the *Primavera* and the *Birth of Venus*, Aby Warburg became a regular client of Fratelli Alinari. A few years later, Bernard Berenson, who had moved to Florence in 1890 and afterwards chose Villa I Tatti as his home, began purchasing Alinari reproductions of Italian Renaissance paintings. We must not forget the relationship between the Alinari and John Ruskin, who commissioned them to document the Sistine Chapel, a project published in 1876. Between 1875 and 1877 Ruskin himself had published his very special guide to Florence, *Mornings in Florence*, in which he developed his studies on the city’s art and history through six itineraries that included Santa Croce, Santa Maria Novella, the Duomo and Giotto’s

Campanile. For each masterpiece, Ruskin's readers would find the corresponding Alinari images, as narrated in a beautiful volume edited in 2010 by Italo Zannier and Paolo Costantini. By studying the *Registro numerico nominativo delle commissioni private* (Nominative numerical register of private commissions), the oldest in our collections dating back to January 1893, we also find the name of August Schmarsow, the German art historian who had opened the *Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz* in 1888. There was also Baron Luigi Ricasoli Fridolfi, who would play a crucial role in the Alinari story, and Countess Maddalena Guicciardini, Prince Piero Strozzi, Count Giuseppe Della Gherardesca and many others.

At the height of its international standing, the Alinari firm was hit by the deaths of Giuseppe and Romualdo. What changed?

– There was a generational shift and also a shift in perspective. Leopoldo Alinari died in 1865, followed by Romualdo and Giuseppe in 1890, and responsibility for the laboratories and staff passed to Vittorio Alinari, Leopoldo's son. Vittorio was a highly skilled technician, but also had artistic and literary interests, and was so involved in the cultural climate of his time that he turns his home, the villa of Quarantino in Fiesole, into the Florentine cultural salon, continuing to do so even after the capital was moved to Rome in 1871. Florence remained Italy's intellectual capital, thanks in part to the highly cultured English community, the presence of international institutes and numerous publishing houses.



What was new in Vittorio Alinari's style of management?

– Vittorio was a man who actively participated in the events of his time, or rather, he fully engaged with the climate of his time. He promoted a systematic documentation of the national territory and expanded the iconography, asking his photographers, especially in the southern campaigns of Italy, to take pictures not only of monuments, landscapes and works, as his father and uncles had done, but also to integrate the collections with images related to trades. These are images of common people and poor workers, and according to Arturo Carlo Quintavalle, art and photography historian, these images represent a first realistic portrayal of the working classes. Vittorio adhered to the strongly nationalist vision that characterised the culture of his time, which led him to support the founding of the *Italian Photographic Society*, established in 1889, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the invention of photography. Naturally, when thinking of Italian culture, Vittorio, like many of his contemporaries, considered Dante as a symbol of the unity of culture that anticipates the political unity achieved through the Risorgimento. In 1921, he published *Il paesaggio italico nella Divina Commedia* and this immense volume of five hundred pages and almost two hundred and forty photographs was conceived and produced during the First World War. In the introduction to the volume, Vittorio himself recalled, "Although old and tired, I set out to somehow repeat the peregrinations of the great exile, ready to climb the Apennine ridges to photograph places he mentioned, even though bad weather was chasing me."



Top. **Vincenzo Amici** (attributed). Panorama of Florence during snowfall, view from San Niccolò, Daguerreotype, circa 1841.

Left. **Fratelli Alinari**. Moses by Michelangelo, mammoth glass plate negative, 76 x 55 cm, 1860-1870.



The Great War was a dramatic turning point for Alinari.

– It marked a profound rupture because Alinari's success was primarily based on the international market. The naval blockades imposed by the powers involved in the conflict led to a dramatic reduction in trade, especially in goods related to fashion and luxury products, with culture falling into this category. Vittorio Alinari saw his foreign sales virtually disappear. The cultural climate was also changing with the end of the Belle Époque. These difficulties, these uncertainties continued in the post-war period, so much so that Vittorio, deeply affected by the death of his son Carlo, decided to sell the family business. In 1920 Alinari was taken over, not by another entrepreneur in the sector, but by a joint-stock company formed by aristocrats and notable figures, mostly from Tuscany, led by Baron Luigi Ricasoli Firidolfi. The new company was named Fratelli Alinari - Istituto Di Edizioni Artistiche (I.D.E.A), and was the first public company in the cultural sector in Europe. When Vittorio retired, his company had immortalised over 70 000

subjects in art, architecture, history and nature. And the rescue operation, even back then, was aimed at preventing the dispersion of the photographic heritage.

in 2020, Fratelli Alinari was acquired by the Region of Tuscany. What happened over the preceding 100 years?

–In 1929, the new ownership had to face the financial crisis following the Wall Street crash. Sales declined and in 1933 Ricasoli requested a substantial loan, equivalent to almost 1500 000 euro today, from IRI, the Institute for Industrial Reconstruction. The new capital injection paid off. Alinari regained momentum and developed a series of new commercial and publishing activities. However, the vision was short-sighted in the sense that it lacked the foresight of Vittorio Alinari, who had been able to anticipate market demands. As a result, sales continued to focus on high-quality reproductions, particularly collotype prints of works and drawings by the great masters, which by 1960 still accounted for over 60% of the stock's value. The subsequent change of ownership took place in 1957 when Ricasoli sought a new shareholder to recapitalise the company and soon afterwards acquired the Anderson and Brogi archives.

Luca Comerio. Sleeping in the aftermath of the Messina earthquake, gelatin silver print, 1908.



Who was the key figure at that point?

– It was Count and Senator Vittorio Cini, one of the most influential names in Italian finance. Cini is interested, but only if the acquisition included the entire Alinari shareholding. Ricasoli reluctantly agreed. Under Cini's management, the first phase of acquisitions of other archives began. In 1958 the Brogi Collection with 46 300 plates entered Alinari. In 1960, the Anderson Fund followed with 30 000 plates, in 1961, the Chauffourier Collection with 9 500 plates, and the Fiorentini Collection with 5 300 plates. Business was doing well, the stores were selling, and sales abroad resumed, but technology was advancing while Alinari lagged behind. Faced with the proposal to abandon the historical headquarters in Florence and open a factory dedicated to the production of colour images, and thus begin new colour photographic campaigns, Vittorio Cini took a step backwards and in 1973 sold his shareholding to Renato Zevi, a Milanese entrepreneur, collector and one of the main financiers of the Piccolo, Giorgio Strehler's famous Milanese theatre. But again, despite original projects such as the splendid exhibition *Gli Alinari. Photographers in Florence, 1852-1920*, which opened at Forte Belvedere, hosted 600 000 visitors and sold 100 000 catalogues, and despite the diffusion of the Alinari, Brogi and Anderson Collections on microfiches, the company went into crisis. In 1982, Claudio de Polo, at that time the managing director of Stock, a liquor company founded in Trieste in 1884, entered the scene.



Top. **Giorgio Sommer** Pompeii, plaster cast of a dog caught in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, 79 AD, albumen print, 1873.

Bottom. **Giorgio Roster**. *Eruption of Mount Vesuvius, April 1872*, hand-coloured glass slide.



1.



3.



4.



2.

1. **Bruno Miniati.** *Modern Mummy*, gelatin silver print, circa 1920.

2. **Gustavo Bonaventura.** *Portrait of a woman*, circa 1915.

3. **Wilhelm von Gloeden.** *Self-portrait in Oriental Costume*, albumen silver print, circa 1900.

4. **Mario Nunes Vais.** *Female nude*, from glass plate, 1900-1910, later smashed by his daughter, later reassembled.

With Claudio de Polo, the most effervescent phase of the acquisition of photographic collections began, a phase that came to an end, also due to profound changes in the market, such as the advent of digital technology, with a new crisis and the subsequent sale of the archives to the Tuscany Region.

– Claudio De Polo is rightly to be credited with the most overwhelming period as far as acquisitions are concerned, a remarkable effort that brought the archive from 300 000 items to over 5 000 000 today. Since 1986, the archives of Francesco Paolo Michetti, Wilhelm von Gloeden, Ferruccio Leiss, Giorgio Roster, Vincenzo Balocchi, Bruno Miniati, and Mario Numes Vais among many others, have been acquired. We recently exhibited a group of Mario Numes Vais' nude plates from the early 1900s. They had been destroyed in the 1960s, perhaps out of embarrassment, by the great photographer's daughter, but a family friend had managed to save and reassemble them. There is also the vast archive of Studio Villani, memory and history of Bologna, which we have decided to entrust temporarily to its city of origin, so that the Cineteca di Bologna can digitise it. Then of course there is the archive of Studio Wulz, to which we have dedicated a very important exhibition, *Fotografia Wulz. Trieste, the family, the atelier*, organised together with the Ente Regionale Patrimonio Culturale della Regione Friuli Venezia Giulia, ERPAC, and curators Antonio Giusa and Federica Muzzarelli. The exhibition is open until 27 April at the Magazzino delle Idee in Trieste.

The Alinari archive represents the history of Italian photography but there are very female photographers in it. Wanda and Marion Wulz are extraordinary exceptions. They represent the most original chapter of their family adventure. The dynasty of these photographers began in 1868 with Giuseppe, the founder, and continued with Carlo, his son, but the real spotlight shines on the two granddaughters.

– I agree, although it was necessary to present a complete historical range in this exhibition, which also reflects the reorganisation of the archive and the digitisation of the 8 000 negatives of the Wulz photographic studio, now online. I would like to emphasise that the digitisation of this heritage, which is important for the history of women's emancipation in Italy, was made possible also thanks to the patronage of the Calliope Arts Foundation in London, which is active in supporting the contribution of women in the fields of art and science.

Coming back to Wanda and Marion, let's admit it, our hearts beat for them.

– Yes, that is true, and the sisters are extraordinary for their talent and entrepreneurial spirit. They are among the first female entrepreneurs in Italian photography. After the death of their father Carlo in 1928, Wanda and Marion took over the reins of the atelier, perhaps the most important in Trieste, and steered it towards the future. At the time, in Italy, the future was Futurism, as envisioned by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti. In this race, Wanda and Marion were not alone because alongside them was another exceptional woman, Anita Pittoni, also from Trieste, stylist, intellectual, friend of Gio Ponti and Anton Giulio Bragaglia, and later also a publisher. From 1928 to 1931,



Top. **Wanda Wulz.** Portrait of Neva Lach (Signora Bosutti) with ostrich feathers, gelatin silver print, 1930-1935. Collezione: Archivi Alinari-archivio Studio Wulz, Firenze.

Bottom. **Wanda Wulz.** Portrait of Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, author, poet and leader of the Futurist movement, gelatin silver print, 1932. Collezione: Archivi Alinari-archivio Studio Wulz, Firenze.



Wanda Wark
Trieste



1.



2.



3.

Anita lived with the Wulz sisters and together they designed fabrics, created collections and invented performances. The three friends became models and photographed each other in an original game of mirrors. The coat Wanda is wearing in the portrait with goggles is one of Anita's creations. Then in 1932 Wanda Wulz was invited to take part in the National Futurist Photography exhibition, held in Trieste from 1st to 17th April. She presented six photographs, including the famous *Io + gatto*, a portrait of herself and her beloved cat Mucincina.

In the *Manifesto of Futurist Photography*, signed by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and Tato on 11th April 1930, and published on 11th January 1931 in *Il Futurismo, Rivista Sintetica Illustrata*, we read: "Landscape photography, that of a person or a group of people, obtained with such harmony, minuteness of detail and typicality as to make one say "it looks like a painting", is for us absolutely outdated." It almost seems like an a posteriori reading, in its own polemical way, of the Alinari style, so exact, so detailed, so harmonious, so representative of Renaissance rationality. – I believe the richness and value of the Alinari archives, which house 150 collections, lies precisely in this. Different languages, distant eras and origins, but everywhere there is a search for modernity and, above all, a desire to give photography with a fundamental role: to understand oneself, one's country, and the history of both.

Left page: **Wanda Wulz. *Io + gatto***, gelatin silver print, 1932.

1. "Cat minus me." **Wanda Wulz**. Photograph of her beloved cat Mucincina, used to create *Io + gatto*, gelatin silver print, 1932.

2. **Wanda Wulz**. Self-portrait, used to create *Io + gatto*, gelatin silver print, 1932.

3. **Wanda Wulz. *Io + gatto***. The face of Wanda Wulz superimposed on her cat, glass negative, 1932.

Collezione: Archivi Alinari-archivio Studio Wulz, Firenze.

Richard Meara Fine Photographs

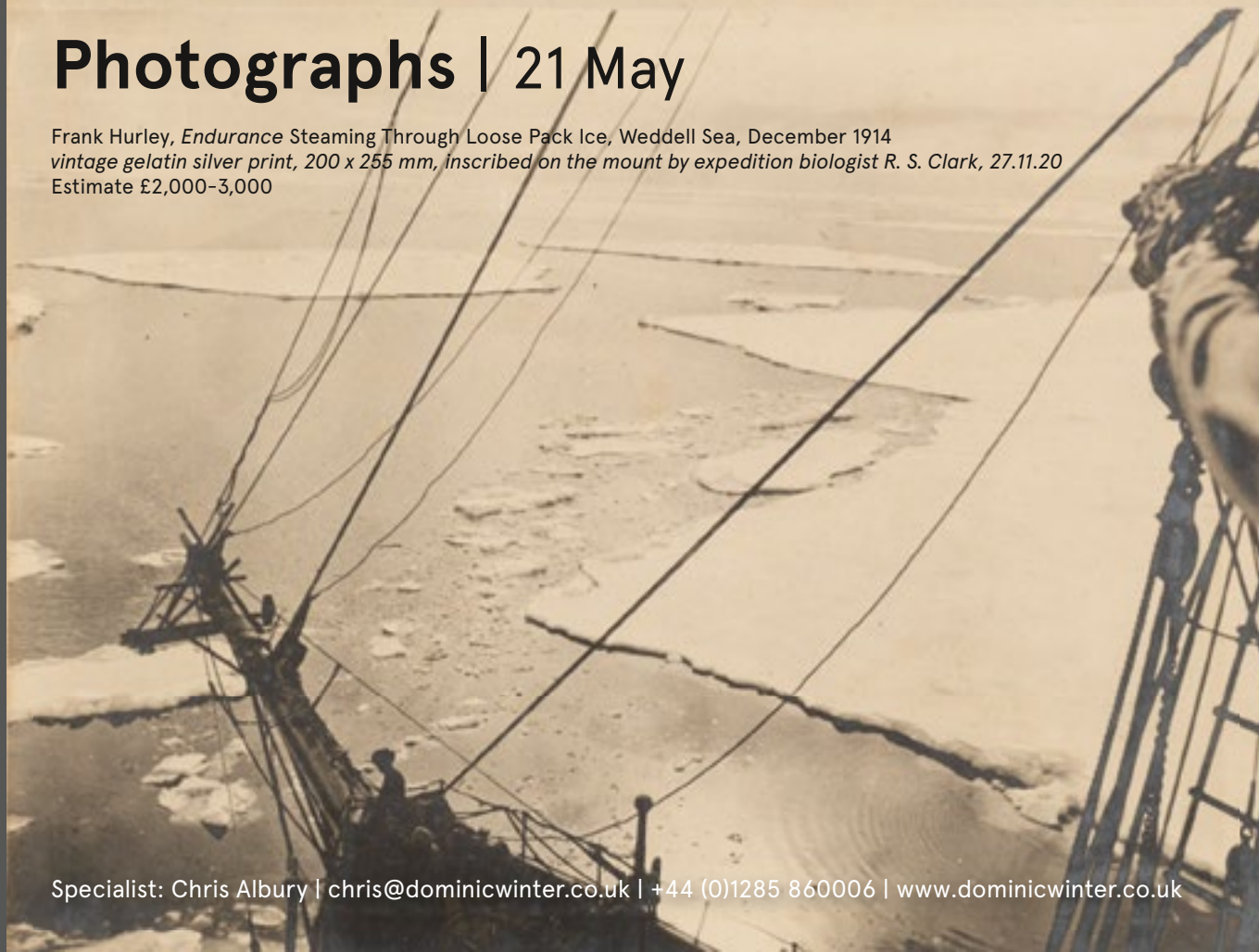


Seaside Snapshot c 1900

Contact:
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Photographs | 21 May

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REDISCOVERED RETHOUGHT REWORKED

— Part 1

W. G. Sebald

His Photographic materials

WITH NICK WARR

“Minutes went by, said Austerlitz, in which I too thought I saw the cloud of snow crashing into the valley, before I heard Věra again, speaking of the mysterious qualities peculiar to such photographs when they surface from oblivion. One has the impression, she said, of something stirring in them, as if one caught small sighs of despair, *gémissements de désespoir* was her expression said Austerlitz, as if the pictures had a memory of their own and remembered us, remembered the roles that we, the survivors, and those no longer among us had played in our lives. Yes, and the small boy in the other photograph said Věra after a while, this is you, Jacquot, in February 1939, about six months before you left Prague.”

W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz*, published 2001, English edition, page 258.

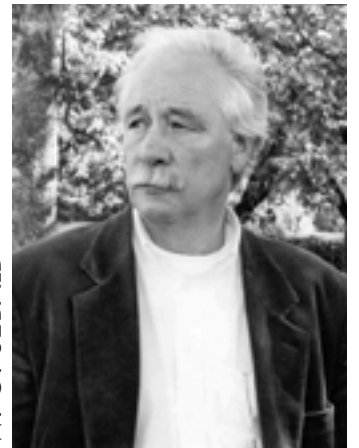
German writer W.G. Sebald (1944-2001), Max to his friends, referred to himself as prose writer as opposed to novelist. His books defied categorisation, blending memoir, travelogue, fiction, biography, history, embedding the texts with photographs, paintings and ephemera.

There were precursors, writers who had influenced him, including Thomas Bernhard, Franz Kafka, Walter Benjamin, Gottfried Keller, Jorge Luis Borges,

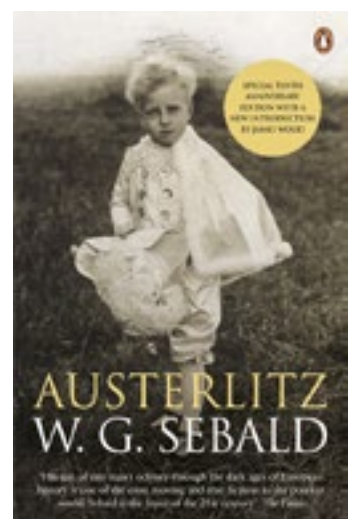
Left page: Jacques “*Jacquot*” Austerlitz, or rather Jackie Grindrod, photographed at a prewar country pageant, somewhere near Rochdale. From negative by Michael Brandon-Jones. Reproduced courtesy of The University of East Anglia.

Cover of the 10th anniversary edition of *Austerlitz*, published by Penguin Books.

W. G. SEBALD



© Jerry Bauer





Johann Peter Hebel, Adalbert Stifter and Robert Walser but the process he developed to create his hybrid books; *Vertigo*, *The Emigrants*, *The Rings of Saturn* and *Austerlitz*, was his own. Sebald wrote in an even tone, in long sentences and in a style that was more akin to historical literature than the present, giving his works an almost posthumous quality. It created a hypnotic effect, and it enabled him to hide the seams between fact and fiction. He also used photographs, sometimes to emphasise facts, sometimes to illustrate fictional characters. In an interview conducted in June 1998 for Dutch broadcaster VPRO, Sebald told Michaël Zeeman, “The photograph is meant to get lost, somewhere in a box, in an attic. A nomadic thing that has only a small chance to survive. And I think we all know that feeling when we come accidentally across a photographic document being one of our lost relatives, being of a totally unknown person. We get this sense of appeal. They’re stepping out, having been found by somebody after decades or half centuries, having been found by somebody, all of a sudden, they come stepping back over the threshold and they say, ‘We were here too once and please take care of us for a while.’ But two months ago, in a junk shop in Bungay, the nearest small town to where I live, I fished out of a box of cheap prints, a little card which had a lichen on it, a dried lichen and underneath it said, in very neat handwriting, ‘Gathered from the tomb

of Marshal Ney, Paris 7th of July 1833.’ And something like this, totally valueless as such, somehow gets me going.”

Sebald would approach his main subjects, the Nazi era and the horrors of the concentration camps, obliquely. He told Zeeman, “I have always felt that it was necessary above all to write about the history of persecution, the vilification of minorities, the attempt, wellnigh achieved, to eradicate a whole people. I was in pursuing these ideas, at the same conscious that it’s practically impossible to do this. To write about concentration camps in my view is practically impossible so you need to ways of convincing the reader that this is something on your mind but that you don not necessarily roll out on every other page. But the reader needs to be prompted that the narrator has a conscience and that he is and has been perhaps for a long time engaged with these questions and that’s why the main scenes of horror are never directly addressed. I think it is sufficient to remind people because we’ve all seen images but these images militate against our capacity for discursive thinking, for reflecting upon these things and also paralyse as it were, our moral capacity so the only way one can approach these things in my view, is obliquely, tangentially, by reference rather than by direct confrontation.”

He would, however, apply a more direct approach, with eye witness accounts, to another subject that was surrounded by silence in Germany, the devastation and loss of life wrought by the Allied bombing of Germany during WWII. *On the Natural History*

“His photographic materials”. Storage boxes at The University of East Anglia. Photo by Nick Warr. Reproduced courtesy of The University of East Anglia.

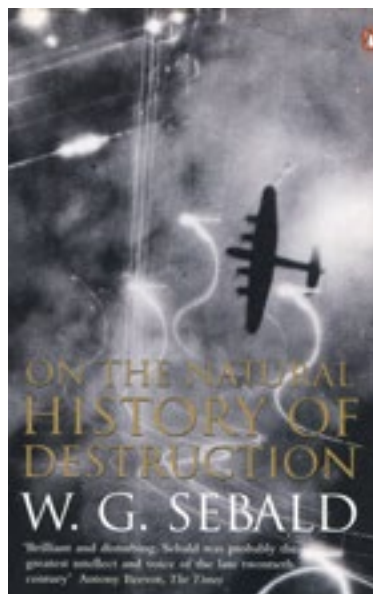
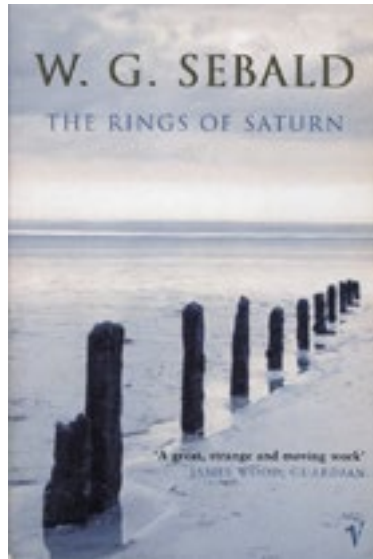
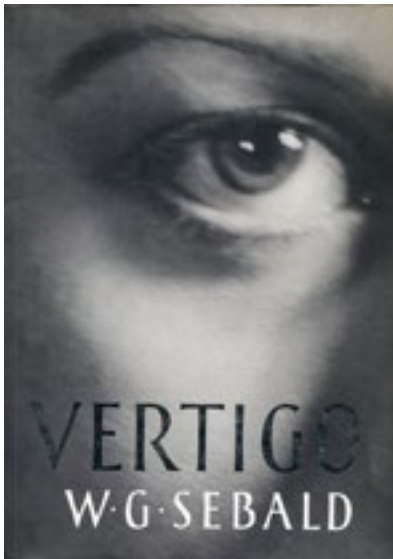


Destruction (2003), first published as *Luftkrieg und Literatur* in 1999, sparked a wide-ranging debate in Germany.

Winfried Georg Sebald was born on 18 May 1944 in Wertach, the Oberallgäu district of Southern Bavaria, as the second of three children. His father, Georg Sebald had joined the army in 1929 and served in the Wehrmacht during the Nazi era. As a prisoner of war, he wasn't released until 1947, when he returned to the family home, and a son who had never seen him. In 1948, the family moved to the town of Sonthofen. Father and son would have an uneasy relationship, the son becoming increasingly hostile towards his father, accusing him being part

of the machine that had been responsible for the Holocaust. Winfried had a much closer with his maternal grandfather, Josef Engelhofer who became a father figure to him. Josef's death in April 1956 was a blow that he never quite recovered from.

Shadows of Reality. The photograph on the cover was taken by Sebald during a visit to Terezin, Czech Republic, location of the Nazi's notorious Theresienstadt Ghetto. The image is included in *Austerlitz*. In Terezin, Sebald came across a closed antiques shop, Antikos Bazar, and has Austerlitz reflecting, "these ornaments, utensils and mementoes stranded in the Terezin bazaar, objects that for reasons one could never know had outlived their former owners and survived the process of destruction, so that I could now see my own faint image barely perceptible among them." Reproduced courtesy of The University of East Anglia.



He went on to study German and English literature, first at the university in Freiburg, then at the university in the Swiss city of Fribourg. In 1965, he was employed as lector at University of Manchester, and apart from year in St Gallen, Switzerland, remained there until 1969. The following year, he was employed as a lecturer at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, and was appointed to a chair of

Vertigo, English edition, published by The Harvill Press, 1999.
First German edition, *Schwindel. Gefühle*, published in 1990.

2002 paperback edition of *The Rings of Saturn*, Vintage Books.
First German edition, *Die Ringe des Saturn*, published in 1995.

2002 paperback edition of *The Emigrants*, Vintage Books.
First German edition, *Die Ausgewanderten*, published in 1993.

2004 paperback edition of *The Natural History of Destruction*, Penguin Books. First German edition, *Luftkrieg und Literatur*, published in 1999.

European literature in 1989. He died on 14 December 2001, having suffered a heart attack while driving with his daughter Anna, dying before the car collided with a lorry.

Austerlitz, regarded by many as Sebald's masterpiece, was published just over a month before his death. The main character is Jacques Austerlitz, an architectural historian whom the narrator befriends in Antwerp. In the summer of 1939, he arrives in the UK as infant refugee on a Kindertransport from Czechoslovakia, and is adopted by an elderly couple in Bala Gwynedd in Wales, where he grows up as Dafydd Elias, being told nothing of his early years in Prague. It's only when he passes his exams that he finds out that his real name is Jacques Austerlitz. He becomes an architectural historian, has a nervous breakdown and goes in search of his own past and that of his real family, in Prague, Theresienstadt and Paris.

As in Sebald's other hybrid books, time and memory become something different. Sebald sometimes mentioned Rupert Sheldrake, best known for his theory of Morphic Resonance, proposing that memory is inherent in nature, with similar patterns influencing subsequent ones across time and space.

On page 261 in *Austerlitz* Sebald wrote, "It does not seem to me, Austerlitz added, that we understand the laws governing the return of the past, but I feel more and more as if time did not exist at all, only various spaces interlocking according to the rules of a higher stereometry, between which the living and the dead can move back and forth as they like, and the longer I think about it the more it seems to me that we who are still alive are unreal in the eyes of the dead, that only occasionally, in certain lights and atmospheric conditions, do we appear in their field of vision."

Several books were published posthumously, including *Campo Santo* and *Across the Land and the Water: Selected Poems, 1964-2001*. Sebald has been the focus of intense study over the years, including several books by Uwe Schütte and Carole Angier's biography *Speak, Silence: In Search of W. G. Sebald*. 2023 saw the publication of *Shadows of Reality – A Catalogue of W. G. Sebald's Photographic Materials*, edited by Nick Warr and Clive Scott and published by Boiler House Press.

Nick Warr is Associate Professor in Art History and Curator of Photographic Collections in the Department of Art History and World Art Studies at the University of East Anglia. It took a long time to put the book together he tells me.

– It started off as just being a slim volume and it gradually grew into a telephone directory, which I'm sure gave our incredibly supportive publisher more than a few sleepless nights. It was a joy to assemble it with his colleagues and to have access

Stefan Muthesius' office in the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, chosen by Sebald as the model for Austerlitz's office and photographed by Michael Brandon-Jones in the summer of 2000.

Reproduced courtesy of The University of East Anglia.

German language version of *Austerlitz*, published in 1995. Courtesy of Eichborn Verlag – The Sebald Estate.



to the material. Going through some of the envelopes, I sometimes pictured him, standing in a queue at a chemist in Norwich, behind somebody who was there to pick up their holiday snaps, him waiting for the images that would find their way into *Vertigo* or *The Rings of Saturn*.

In an interview for German TV, Sebald stated, “Writing starts with a photograph”. It’s an interesting statement by an author.

– Sebald was filmed a couple of times for German TV, in his home, the old rectory in Poringland. Once

for *The Emigrants*, once for *The Rings of Saturn*. In the film for *The Emigrants*, he’s sitting at his desk in his study and has all kinds of found photographs alongside ones that he and photographer Michael Brandon-Jones had made, all spread out. You can see him mapping out the terrain of certain narratives he’s thinking about, offering a glimpse into his working process. What was surprising to me as the book project developed was just how much of his poetry came from specific images, either found or ones he was compelled to make. His initial impulses came from a very visual place.



When and how did the *Shadows of Reality* book project start?

– It was serendipity. My office is in the Sainsbury Centre on the UEA campus. I took it over from Michael Brandon-Jones who had just retired. The building was being refurbished and you get to know a collection when you have to move it from one part of the campus to another. One day, I came across a very small packet, a box of Ilford photographic paper that had “Sebald” written on it in pencil. I had seen some of the images in his books but I thought they were just teaching aids, for a lecture on Sebald so I put the packet to one side. A few years later, I bumped into Clive Scott, who was a friend and colleague of Sebald. I mentioned the photographs to him and he stopped by to see them. It then became clear that they were a collection of prints and notes put together by Michael Brandon-Jones, to work out how to find other prints and negatives in the collection that he and Sebald had put together, which to use for publication and which images to keep back. After that Michael came back in and we gradually started to find out how everything was connected.

In addition to the images that he worked on with Michael Brandon-Jones, he also collected and used found photographs, cabinet cards, CDVs, snapshots and so forth that he picked up in junk shops and other places. Was that material with his wife?

– A lot of that material was transferred with his papers to the Deutsches Literaturarchiv in Marbach, Germany, but his wife kept the family-related material.

“How do they see us?” German language version of *Austerlitz*, published in 1995. Courtesy of Eichborn Verlag – The Sebald Estate.

How much material was there in total?

– A lot! And that has enabled us and other scholars to do research. Sebald left a very good archive. It’s a reflection of how he worked and used archives and collections. He collected a lot of material but that’s also part of being a working academic. His office was filled with teaching materials as well as other research materials, and they intertwined and tangled together. It wasn’t just in his office at UEA. There was material in his study at home, in other people’s offices, in Michael Brandon-Jones’ dark room, in the library, all over the place. It turned into a treasure hunt. He left a considerable legacy with the people he worked with and that’s what enabled us to piece it all together. Had he worked entirely on his own, everything would simply have been transferred to Germany. His materials still have a presence at UEA and that’s typical of academia of that period. Some people never really leave. Their presence is always felt.

The photographs in his books can’t really be described as illustrations. How would you describe his use of photographs?

– It’s worth pointing out that some of his first forays into creative writing were screenplays. I think he was very influenced by the new wave of German literature and cinema of the 70s and 80s, and he constructed his ideas in prose primarily through images. The images pre-existed the text to a certain degree and then he wrote some of the images away. There were many more images in Michael’s working materials for each book than were published. Sebald is describing images that then don’t feature, which account for a lot of the visually descriptive passages. The whole process is kind of inverted in terms of it being an illustration. With Sebald, text and images have a parallel existence. There are initial stories that he maps out visually with images, and then he writes alongside that. The images that remain in the books are those that can’t be written away, or they bring something to what he’s trying to do that the text can’t do on its own. Some shift and alter each other but they don’t even modify each other in an obvious way. They work as pathways that sometimes cross, rather than being explicitly one thing.

How did his collaboration with Michael Brandon-Jones come about?

– It happened because of the way the UEA campus is set up. Michael was part of the Art History Department. All art history departments have books, articles and journals, all geared towards images and he was the photographer. Students and academics take photographs so there was a very active way of working with images. Clive Scott was writing a lot about photography and perhaps introduced Sebald to Michael. Stefan Muthesius, an architectural historian who was a close friend of Sebald, also worked a lot with Michael. It was in fact Stefan’s office, right

opposite Michael's, that was used for the image for Austerlitz's office, a typically Sebaldian way of mapping his fictional story with his own relationships. It had a lot to do with him being surrounded by images in the Sainsbury Centre, as well as the photography exhibitions that were shown in the art gallery. I think the gallery environment prompted him to think more deeply about using images in the texts. The UEA had the technical darkroom facilities and a professional photographer, a rich interdisciplinary culture between art history, history and literature. All of this combined to provide Sebald with a fertile working environment in which to experiment.

I went through the book and I saw a parallel with Francis Bacon, who would let two or three image sources "crash" into each other to create a kind of intensity. I often feel that Sebald used images to increase the imaginative intensity for himself.

– Absolutely. Sebald was a regular visitor to the art gallery. He was based at the Department for European Languages and they often had their meetings in the Sainsbury Centre. He intentionally sought out these spaces to think about art and what images could do to his process. I think that's why those moments of those encounters with painting and photography within his books are so vivid.

Sometimes he would rework images by using a photocopier, turning them dark, ominous and brooding.

– There's now a whole mythology surrounding his use of photocopiers. There are some examples in the books and sometimes he would alter images using his daughter's paint set. Most of the manipulation, however, was carried out through dialogue with Michael, and it was Michael who would achieve the desired effects. Most of the experimental photocopying was done in the earlier phase, from *Vertigo* until *The Rings of Saturn* and the imagery changes after that. The mythology surrounding photocopying is partly to do with the printing of the paperbacks, making the images darker and brooding. I suspect Sebald appreciated how that made them look different.

There are certain differences between the German and the English language editions.

– Sebald wrote in German and regarded the German first versions as the source books and it's those you have to go back to in order to understand his thinking. Still, with regards to images, he and Michael had more control over the English editions. He took meticulous care over the English translations and reworked the texts considerably. Michael produced images to a very high technical standard, he's a perfectionist and some of the images look degraded because that was what Sebald required. When photocopiers were used, it was often to obscure the image



Michael Brandon-Jones, negatives for *Austerlitz*, including images of Ludwig Wittgenstein, Fort Breendonk in Belgium, used as a Nazi prison camp and the glass dome at the Great Eastern Hotel, situated just south of Liverpool Station in London, the gateway to the UK for the children who arrived with the Kindertransport.

Reproduced courtesy of The University of East Anglia.

Images of Orford Ness. German language version of *The Rings of Saturn*, published 1995. Courtesy of Eichborn Verlag– The Sebald Estate.



sources, sometimes context, as can be seen in some of the images of Manchester. I think the aim was to make them look as miserable as possible, reflecting his own experience of being there in the 60s.

I have always found the cover image of *Austerlitz* particularly haunting but Jacques Austerlitz is a fictitious character. Later, I found out that the photograph on the cover is not of a Middle-European Jewish child, shortly to be sent to the UK with the Kindertransport. It's of an English boy by the name of Jackie Grindrod, photographed at a prewar country pageant, somewhere near Rochdale. It is a vintage picture postcard that Sebald bought in a junk shop for 30p, the price written on the back.

– It's an image he had for a long time. It really spoke to him, kept calling him. It's an iconic example of how he would work with found images. He found it in one of those little shops that are scattered throughout Norfolk and Suffolk. They always used to have cardboard boxes full of old photographs. The boy's strangely angelic appearance and his weird costume

From negative by Michael Brandon-Jones. Portrait on cabinet card by Ch. Raad who established his studio in Jerusalem in 1895 and was known as "Palestine's first Arab photographer". Sebald used it in *The Emigrants*, describing it as a portrait of Ambros Adelwarth in Arab costume. Reproduced courtesy of The University of East Anglia.

just resonated with Sebald. By all accounts his house was full of boxes of found photographs. He would buy them compulsively and would spend a lot of time looking at them. What's interesting about that photograph is that you can see evidence of him slightly retouching it. The hair is highlighted and some areas are slightly darkened around the boy's head.

Sebald took a lot of photographs himself for his books.

– Most of the time he handed in his films to the local chemist. He wasn't concerned about the prints he got back and was quite happy to draw and write instructions on them for Michael, how to crop them, what to use, etc. They were just working components of the finished photograph that Michael would then print from his negatives.

He was writing and working at a different time. Since then, the question of appropriation has become a lot more sensitive. He not only invented stories around found photographs but often used real people's stories as inspiration. Non-Jews became Jews, as was the case with Rhoades Buckton, who became Henry Selden in *The Emigrants*. The story of *Austerlitz* was based on that of Susi Bechhöfer, who had arrived in the UK as a three-year-old with her twin sister Lotte, with the *Kindertransport*, the rescue operation that saved nearly 10 000 Jewish children from Nazi-occupied territories in 1938-1939. Sebald had seen *Kind*, the 1991 documentary about her and read her 1996 book about her experiences, and turned her experiences into those of Jacques Austerlitz. His biographer, Carole Angier, sought out many of these people, including the now deceased painter Frank Auerbach. She claimed that "They were all furious". Was that something that gradually got to him?

– After the publication of *Austerlitz*, it was something that certainly he had to respond to but I'm not sure if he was able to properly enter into that dialogue. In terms of the appropriation and reuse of images, at the moment of their making, the 80s and 90s, photographs had a different, more physical status and that had an impact on how he used them and wove them together with the texts. But at times how they relate to biographical and autobiographical elements is going to be problematic. It's a very complicated subject. Recounting stories changes them, and the person doing the retelling might not necessarily put a lot of pressure on themselves to be explicit about those changes. I'm being intentionally vague here because that's not really my area. I think it's interesting when you consider Sebald's stories as these peculiar things that exist apart from the people involved in them. A photograph of someone is related to that person but is at the same time something else. If you're assembling,



rather than creating linear narratives, the status of some of those elements is going to change according to what they share the space on the page with.

Do you think he felt that the subject matter that he was dealing with, especially the Holocaust, which he always approached obliquely, overruled such considerations? That the overall story was too important?

– I think he was sensitive to the notions of appropriation in terms of property but it's a question of the trauma of the whole century, the Holocaust being the absolute expression of a systematic violence that starts with the enlightenment and

Die Ausgewanderten/The Emigrants Brandon Jones negatives for Max Aurach in the original German Language version. Sebald based the character on painter Frank Auerbach (1931-2024). Born in Berlin in to Jewish parents, he was sent to Britain in 1939. His parents were murdered in Auschwitz in 1942. The original German version, published in 1992, also included a drawing by Auerbach and a close-up of his eye. According to Sebald's biographer, Carole Angier, the British publisher The Harvill Press four years later double-checked if permission had been granted for use of the drawing when the English language version was due to be sent to the printer. They discovered that it hadn't. Auerbach found out and, according to one version, threatened to sue. As a result, the drawing and all references to him were removed, and Max Auer became Max Ferber, also in subsequent German editions. Reproduced courtesy of The University of East Anglia.

historically work on Sebald has been a hard sell in Germany and that until very recently it's been difficult to convey that he's a significant writer to the extent that he is appreciated in America.

Did your own perspective on him and his work change as you were working on the project?

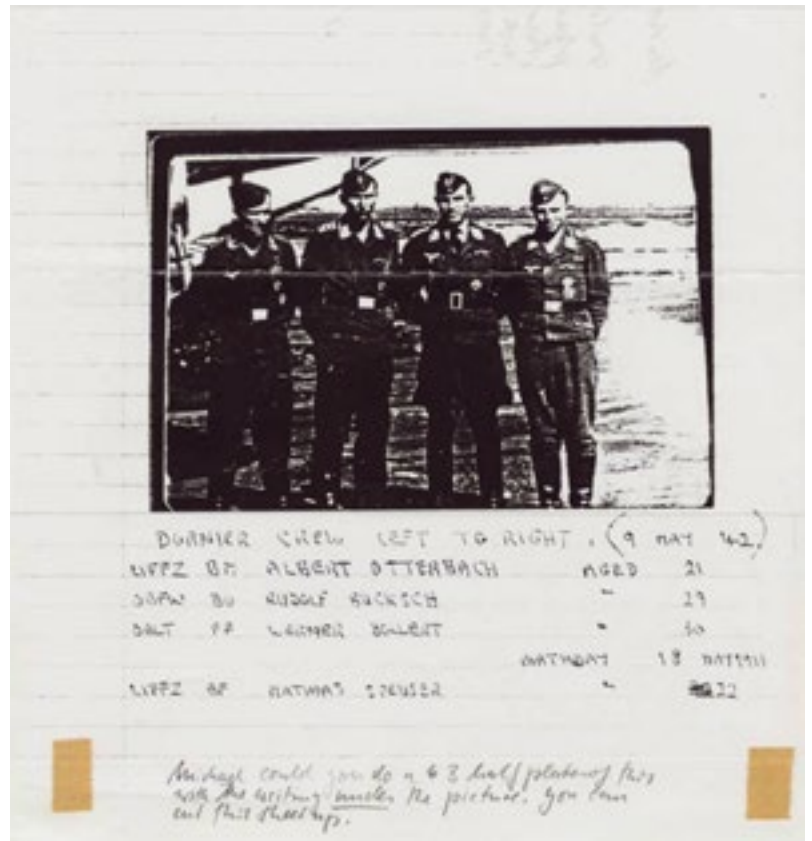
– Yes, it was because I gained a real insight into the sheer amount of thinking and preparation that was his working process. Particularly his way of working with photographs was really eye-opening. It wasn't a case of "Here are some images I'm going to write around", or "I'm going to do something like this to fit that". What came across was that none of it came easily to him, that he had to work very hard at it. He didn't sit down and just write *Vertigo* or *The Rings of Saturn*. They had sections that had been written and rewritten decades before, starting possibly even as poems, and then became bits of text. You get a sense that he was never entirely finished with a book, even after it was published. I think the English translations allowed him to rework them again – and, as you can imagine, this must have an exhausting process.

Writing them could have gone forever.

– Well, they were never finished as such. I also began to understand that the books themselves aren't discrete works but are part of a larger project, of creating himself as an individual. Putting together the identity that we refer to as W. G. Sebald. There is the person, Max Sebald – who does the physical writing, finds the photographs and so on and then there's the professional academic. It's all intricately woven together. There were things we discovered when editing *Shadows of Reality* – that you would never discover by just reading the published books. An image or a reference to something in another part of the text or in another book altogether. It often felt like we were discovering some hidden machinery that I think would only really ever be known by him. That's probably why he's so popular with academic researchers. They can pick one single bit and pull out 1000s of threads. Behind it all is the intention of weaving threads together into a text even though an audience would only be able to appreciate a percentage of it. Which makes you wonder who exactly they're written for.

He also appeals strongly to visual artists.

– His way of starting the process with images and corresponds with visual art. He never stopped writing poetry. It was a way to think and explore his various themes and to make connections. Having done



books, articles and exhibitions about his work, what strikes me the most is how the photography and even the process of taking walks enabled him to inhabit another perspective and to be somebody else. The process of taking photographs enabled him to shift his point of view. When you take a photograph of a scene and then look at it later it somehow looks different from how you remember it. That shift was very important to him and he talks about it in the books, especially in the sections about animals and how they see us. It's that experience of being perceived by another consciousness, and photography enabled him in a way, to mediate between the self and the other, in a way that is endlessly fascinating for visual artists.

“I live very close to the Seething airfield. I sometimes walk my dog there and I imagine what the place was like when the aircraft took off with their heavy freight and flew out over the sea, making for Germany. Two years before these flights began, a Luftwaffe Dornier plane crashed not far from my house during a raid on Norwich. One of the crew members who lost their lives, Lieutenant Bollert, shared a birthday with me and was the same age as my father.”
On the Natural History of Destruction, pp. 77-78. Photocopy with attached instructions to Michael Brandon-Jones. The image was used in *On the Natural History of Destruction*.
 Reproduced courtesy of The University of East Anglia.



— Part 2

Les EpouxP

On 31 July 1944, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry took off in an unarmed Lockheed P-38 Lightning from an airbase on Corsica, his mission, to collect intelligence on German troop movements in and around the Rhone Valley preceding Operation Dragoon, the Allied invasion of southern France.

He had become a legend, not just as an aviator but also as a writer and poet, whose works were the unique testimony of a pilot/warrior who looked at danger and adventure with a poet's eyes. In 1943, he published *Le Petit Prince*, with his own illustrations, a book that would go on to become one of the best-selling titles of all time.

He was never to return. He vanished without a trace, sparking speculations that his plane had been shot down but with no indications as to where. In September 1998, a discovery was made just south of Marseille by a fisherman, a silver bracelet bearing the names of Saint-Exupéry, his wife Consuela and his American publisher Reynal & Hitchcock. In May 2000, a diver made a second discovery, not far from where the bracelet had been found, debris from a Lockheed P-38 Lightning. It caused headlines around the world. The debris bore no signs of gunfire. In 2004, French officials opened an investigation and later confirmed that the debris was indeed from Saint-Exupéry's plane. And then the debris was promptly placed under lock and key and stored out of sight from prying eyes.

In 2015, husband and wife team Damien and Pascale Peyret, who work together under the name Les EpouxP, were invited to do a six-month residency at Musée de l'Air et de l'Espace on the outskirts of Paris.

Damien. – Most of our projects are carried out within museum collections and archives. We worked closely with the curator at the museum who knew the collection in depth. One day he opened a hangar we hadn't investigated. Inside were a few wooden boxes. We asked him about the contents and he said, "They contain the remains of the plane of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry." We were surprised. We thought

Les EpouxP. *Relique Saint-Exupéry*, Cyanotype, 2017.
Project at Musée de l'Air et de l'Espace.



PASCALE & DAMIEN PEYRET

© Mad Paule

they had been returned to the bottom of the sea but were told, "No, his family wanted them to remain there but legally, they belonged to DRASSM, the government agency tasked with underwater cultural heritage and they decided to salvage what was left of it." The remains had never been shown publicly at that point so we asked if we could use them in some way for our project. We were allowed to do so and decided to create a large Cyanotype in a scale 1:1.

Les EpouxP's exhibition, presented in 2017 as part Mois de la Photo Grand Paris, covered altogether 400 square metres, with each element approaching the collection in a subtle, thought-provoking way. More of the exhibition later.

I met Damien and Pascale at Galerie Le Reservoir in the Marais district in Paris and started out by asking them about their backgrounds and how they started working together.

Damien. – I spent 10 years in the advertising industry as a creative director before I left to make documentaries, mostly anthropological, including five for the TV channel ARTE. Alongside, I made Polaroid Polachrome portraits and included some of them in my films. I then decided to make a longer film, focused on shamans in China. Shamanism had been forbidden during Mao's Cultural Revolution so the old shamans had to introduce the ancient knowledge and practices to a younger generation. Following that, I made films in Iceland, Istanbul and Riga and showed several exhibitions of my Polaroid portraits at museums and festivals.

Musée de l'Air et de l'Espace

Cibille Latitude 48.9333 – Chantier photographique sur le territoire d'un rêve, Paris Le Bourget 2017.



Pascale. – My practice was focused on old techniques, using pinhole cameras, making Cyanotypes and Cliché Verre and creating installations but I also used newer techniques. I did a project called *Green Memory*, using computer memory cards to grow wheat inside them. We both participated in a residency in Iceland with several other artists, and we observed that our works were very close so we decided to start working together. Our very first joint project was focused on the area around Le Bourget, before the old industrial buildings were torn down to make room for redevelopment. Le Bourget was the very first airport in Paris, where Charles Lindbergh landed with Spirit of St. Louis in 1927. It's still in operation, for business flights and such, and comes under the auspices of Musée de l'Air et de l'Espace. That was the start of our collaboration with the museum.

While the museum was carrying restoration work on the airport's former departure hall, designed in 1934 by Camille Sauvageot, they invited artist Medhi Cibille to wander around the building, wearing



“Multiplying”. *Zeer Part II*. Medhi Cibille in the white costume of his avatar character Zeer. © Mehdi Cibille, Mathieu Gardes, Les EpouxP- Pascale & Damien Peyret

Les EpouxP. *L'Angleterre n'est plus une île*, video and sound installation with Google Earth images, showing Louis Blériot's flight across the English Channel in 1909, with boxes containing material, including an album, that had belonged to Blériot.



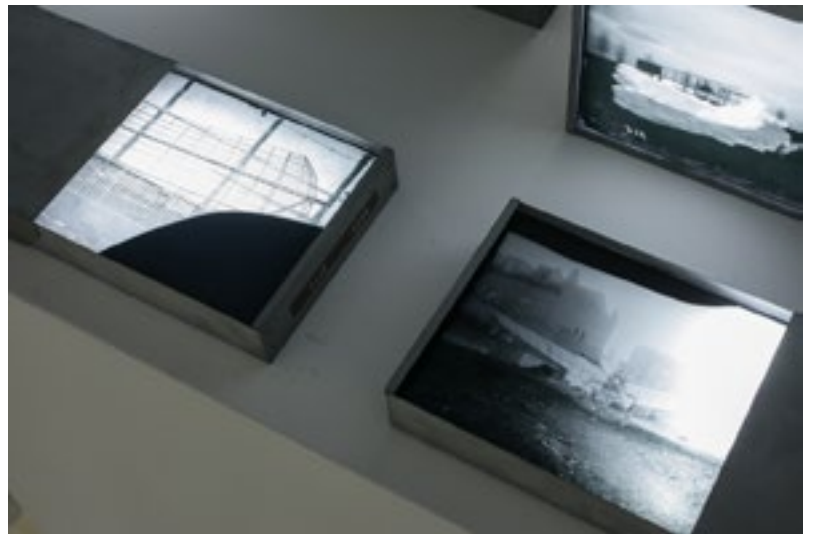
Les EpouxP. *Dispositif Mémoire*, installation of archival zinc boxes with screens.

the white costume of his avatar character Zeer. It resulted in a video, *Zeer Part II*, with Zeer, seemingly multiplying as he went along.

Damien. – We had done a video with Mehdi Cibille as Zeer once before. With this video we wanted to create a space experimentation zone, a clash between past and future and keep a trace of the building within a new scenography of the place. Martin Wheeler’s created music, inspired by the sounds of the universe.

But the duo came across other mysterious boxes, resulting in another element in the exhibition *L’Angleterre n’est plus une île* (England is no longer an island).

Damien. – The curator told us that the boxes contained material, including an album, that had belonged to the French aviator and engineer Louis Blériot, who in 1909 carried out the first flight between continental Europe and England. It was fascinating material but we weren’t allowed to show any of it! The curator told us, “We can’t display it yet



because there’s a problem with one member of the family.” In the end, we found a solution to present what was hidden. We invited a journalist, an expert on Blériot, and recorded him as he went through the album, describing the images. In addition, using Google Earth, we created a chart of Blériot’s route, piecing the images together. We presented the montage and the recording together with the closed boxes. The montage is inspired by the “fan” articulation of the aerial reconnaissance views kept in the museum’s archives and evokes the profound changes in the perception of physical space since the beginnings of aerial imagery.

Concordance

Musée départemental Albert-Kahn.



Pascale. – The English Channel is a highway for cargo ships but while browsing on Google Earth it looked deserted, making us think that the ships are simply erased. The virtual flyover via Google Earth begins above Calais and the so-called Calais Jungle where exiles gather waiting for a perilous journey to England. The title of this part of the exhibition is taken from the report on Blériot's flight in *Daily Mail* on 26 July 1909. After Brexit, England has once again become an island that strengthens its maritime borders against asylum seekers.

Dispositif Mémoire was another element.

Damien. – We went through absolutely everything in the collection and we came across some very unusual archival boxes. They were made of zinc and not very practical. You had to pull them open

from the side and they had springs so they would slam shut. Over time, there had been a chemical reaction between the zinc and the silver in the photographs. Things like that happen in archival collections and we wanted to express the fragility of the images. This triggered the idea of showing 16 of the boxes and scans of the photographs that were inside them. They were 13x18 cm on glass, some of them broken, and many were retouched. We created an installation with eight screens. A line of light went across each photograph on the screens, like a scanner, pointing to the immense task of preserving and digitizing the 65 000 glass plates in the collection.

They come up with a lot of ideas for each project. I ask how they edit them and decide which to use, which to discard.

Pascale. – We have long discussions and we read, research, document and make drawings. Mind Map has become a useful tool for us, to get an overview of everything. Eventually, we reach a point where it becomes evident if an idea is strong enough and if it should be a video, photography, an object or an

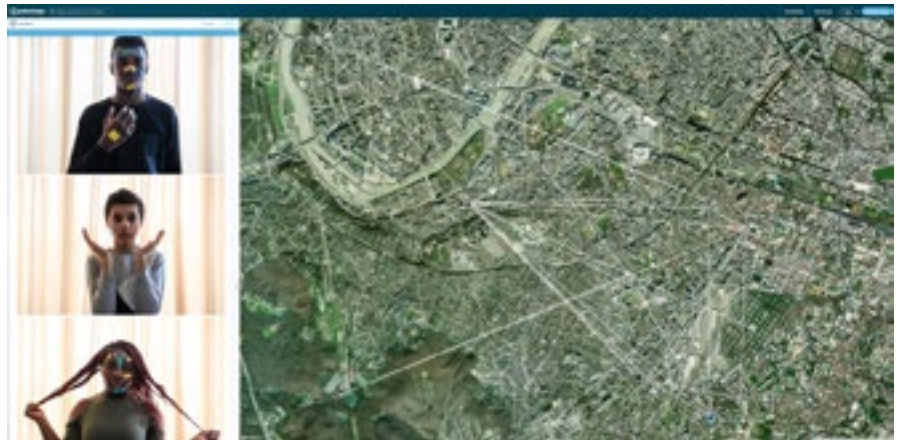
Frame from the video *Concordance*. The Balkan War in 1913, with photographer Stéphane Passet's shadow on the ground. Thessalonique, Grèce. Musée départemental Albert-Kahn, département des Hauts-de-Seine.



installation. With archive collections, there are always so many interesting things to discover but for us, it's very important to connect what we find with what is going on in the world today.

Concordance, was carried out as the result of a residency at Musée Albert Kahn. The museum holds *Les Archives de la Planète*, the vast project that Kahn, a wealthy banker, instigated in 1909 to photograph and film cultures around the world, resulting in 72 000 Autochromes and 183 000 metres of film. The project ground to a halt following Kahn's bankruptcy in 1931. But the museum holds other material.

Damien. – Sometimes we embark on a project with a specific intention, only to encounter unexpected obstacles. For the project at Musée Albert Kahn, we were particularly interested in the films the museum holds by Jean Comandon (1877-1970), the earliest and the most important maker of scientific films in France. He was the first to make microfilms for instance. We explained our idea to the director and the team but it was turned down. They wanted a project that gave an overall vision of the archive. We had to rethink and instead, as a start, we created a 13-minute film. It included a sequence with a series of autochromes and a panoramic shot of the refugees during the Balkan War in 1913. This photographic mission was initiated by Albert Kahn and the Carnegie Foundation, to document the war



and verify the facts. It was carried out by photographer Stéphane Passet and you can see his shadow on the ground in the images, this to verify their authenticity.

Pascale. – Albert Kahn's aim for *Les Archives de la Planète* was to promote world peace and to bring understanding between different cultures. He was very interested in education and also started a forerunner to the Erasmus programme, *Les bourses autour du monde*. He observed that the world was changing very fast and he wanted to document cultures before they disappeared and sent

Les EpouxP. *Coucher de soleil universel*, cropped scans of Autochrome sunsets, between five layers of glass. 2022.

Concordance - Voyage au cœur des Archives de la Planète create a dialogue between the collection and students and communities in the cities of Bagneux, Châtillon, Malakoff, and Vanves.

Foujita *La ligne rêve*

Les EpouxP. *Livre d'artiste*, with photographs by Foujita, printed on Japanese paper, with silk threads running through the pages.



photographers all over the world, instructing them to also shoot film. Our film reflects that, interspersing film with Autochromes, thereby giving the rhythm of the archive. We invited composer Martin Wheeler to improvise music to the film. The museum wasn't open so the film was projected outside in the beautiful garden. That was our first statement. After that, we made *Coucher de soleil universel*. Kahn used to invite important people for projections. He always finished the projections with images of sunsets that had been taken all over the world and there are about 1000 sunsets in the collection. The installation is a

tribute to Albert Kahn. It consists of cropped scans of Autochrome sunsets from more than 50 countries, shown between five layers of glass.

The Musée Albert Kahn also included *Concordance - Voyage au cœur des Archives de la Planète*.

Pascale. – The aim was to create a dialogue between the collection and students and communities in the cities of Bagneux, Châtillon, Malakoff, and Vanves. We used a mobile application to report on the collaboration, uploaded to Polarsteps. It became a very



complex project, taking in Albert Kahn's affinity with Stefan Zweig, both were pacifists, and a debate, "Why the rich?", questioning philanthropy and delving into the making of Kahn's fortune, in banking and speculation in gold mines in South Africa, before instigating his utopian project. Another project, *Where is my friend's house?* dealt with the contemporary arts scene in Malakoff, with focus on Syrian exiles. The artist Ola Abdallah had vivid memories of the light in her home country and translated cropped scans from Autochromes of sunsets in the Middle East into an abstract composition, with coloured and luminous bands.

In 2021, Les EpouxP presented *La ligne rêve*, a book and an installation, following a residency at Maison-atelier Foujita, the house and workshop of French-Japanese painter Tsugouharu Foujita (1886-1968), located in Villiers-le-Bâcle, just outside Paris.

Damien. – Everything in the house had been kept as it was during Foujita's lifetime, even the curtains. What especially caught our interest were the boxes of photographs that he had taken throughout his life, all private, and they had never been exhibited or published. There were some small contact prints but most were negatives so we scanned them, carefully



noting dates and places. Foujita was famous for his line, and it inspired the direction of the project *La ligne rêve*, with lines and ribbons.

Pascale. – We were particularly moved by the photographs Foujita took during his travels with his girlfriend Madeleine Lequeux in South America. They left Paris at the end of 1931 and spent 2 years there, arriving in Argentina and making their way up to Mexico. There were of course a lot of images of Madeleine on her own but there were also a lot of staged photographs, which struck us as pretty strange, troubling even. They showed Madeleine together with some very handsome men and they created such staged photographs in every country they went. In 1933, they went to Japan but Madeleine found the transition to Japanese culture difficult. In 1935, she returned to Paris but went back to Japan

Musée de la Poste

Exhibition Post(e) Photographie – 2024



1.

1. "Gradually disappearing". A photograph of a letter written in 1458.

2. "Homage to Anna Atkins." Cyanotype on gold leaf, showing a telegraph cable with unfurling copper wires.

3. Archival images of "charming offices" were scanned and put through AI, with some strange results.

Marcel Maury. *Bureau de poste de Saint-Tropez, vue intérieure*, août 1970, gelatin silver print. SIRP/PTT

© Musée de la Poste. Marcel Maury, 2025.



2.



3.

the following year and then suddenly died. It was very sad, very moving. We decided to make a book of these photographs, a sort of travel diary, printed on Japanese paper, photographs of their time in South America and of ships leaving Japan. In Japan, there's a tradition of throwing silk ribbons into the air just before a ship leaves. We wanted to connect to this tradition so we punched holes in the pages, with silk threads running through them, like ropes being pulled on a ship, making the book like an imaginary ship.

The idea of ribbons was carried through to the outdoor installation.

Pascale. – This was just after the COVID lockdowns and Anne Lediberder, the director of Maison-atelier Foujita, requested we do something outside, in the garden. We decided to create ribbons, made from paper rolls used to print receipts in supermarkets. We created various kinds of imagery on the rolls, not by printing photographs on them but with heat. We collected flowers from Foujita's garden and pressed them against the paper, applying heat. With the help of a big fan, the ribbons were flowing between trees in the garden. In the day time, the trees cast shadows on the ribbons, created a dialogue with the heat imprinted images. The final part was some recordings of Foujita in the archive, that we set to music.

Before my meeting with Damien and Pascale, I went to Musée de la Poste to see their latest project, *Carte Blanche*, on view until 25 April this year.

Damien. – The collection is absolutely enormous. For many years, the French Postal Service, which was national, with its own ministry, had a Photothèque. Whenever photographs were needed for communication, marketing or internal communication, the Photothèque supplied them. The collection is of immense historical value, part of the country's heritage, and as plans for the museum got underway, absolutely everything was photographed and documented, every piece of equipment, advertising poster, van, uniform, building and post office.

Postriders were introduced in France in 1465, under the reign of Louis XI. The amount of mail grew and grew over the years, until 2018 when 18 billion pieces of mail were sent. Since then, numbers have fallen, and forecasts for 2025 are under 5 billion.

Pascale. – We wanted to express the gradual disappearance of paper mail. Among the earliest letters in the collection is one that was sent from Milan in 1458. It gave us the idea for *La Disparition*. We took

a photograph of the letter and handed it to a master printer at Laboratoire Diamantino, with a request, not to fix it and to print it in such a way that the image would gradually disappear, and hopefully completely, when the exhibition closes in April.

Close by is a Cyanotype on gold leaf, *L'algue au cœur empli d'or*, a homage to Anna Atkins. The history of La Poste and French telecommunications has always been a race against time, to deliver mail and messages as fast as possible. With the invention of the electric telegraph, the idea of crossing seas and oceans quickly took hold. In 1850, the first cable was laid under the English Channel but it was snapped soon after, by a fisherman from Boulogne, who thought he had made a miraculous catch, "seaweed with a golden core".

Pascale. – The fisherman's description of his catch inspired us to create the Cyanotype on gold leaf. Anna Atkins used the Cyanotype process to produce an inventory of algae and seaweeds in the British coastline. But it also alludes to our own time. Historically, the big networks were owned by nation-states. Today, the networks, which are worth "gold", are owned by companies and corporations and it's a very dangerous situation, an example of how we tap into the present. The image itself shows a section of cable with an almost coral-like tree structure of copper wires unfurling at one end and it was taken in 1928 at the École Supérieure des Postes et Télégraphe. Despite the collection being huge, there are not that many albums. We decided to show the album that had been made during the voyage of the cable-laying ship François Arago during its voyage to the Antilles in 1892. The images in the album show not only the technical complexities of cable-laying, almost like a manual. They are interspersed with portraits of local people and landscapes and a Cyanotype of a grapnel. It's a curious album. From then on, the ship was sent to roam the world until 1914, to New Caledonia, the North Atlantic and the China Sea.

Damien. – The next section of *Carte Blanche* deals with post offices. In the early 20th century, there was a policy to make post office counters more open and decorative and in then 1951, the administration launched a competition called "Charming Office". Decoration was very important in the competition, plants, paintings, trinkets, etc. What struck us as the images moved into the 1960s, was that they seemed to merge together into an almost generic image of a completely unrealistic reflection of uninterrupted peace. This gave us an idea. We fed several sets of

Rotorama

Rotorama – Mécanique de l'accélération

questions the mechanics of acceleration in the work environment and highlights the role of women in this evolution.



Frame of the film *PHI 002*
Impression ou l'art du timbre-poste
by Jacques Gommy, 1974. SAE/PTT
© Musée de la Poste.



Pascale. – Women played a big part in the service and the percentage of female employees grew from 15 to 38 between 1920 and 1960. They worked on the switchboards and were in

charge of postal cheques. Then came the computer age and most of the photographs of the early period show women, not men, working on computers. It was only over time that women were able to reach higher levels in the service. Today 52% of the workforce is female.

these images into AI, to see how the technology interpreted the codes and styles. The results were intriguing. Strange, hybrid plants that had no biological reality, unusual placements of furniture and subjects, not to mention clothes. From this, we created a diorama, like a digital chimera, with AI-generated plant silhouettes, outlined and propped up on the floor, in front of the translucent surface where the images are projected. We also included some bugs in the flow of images and in the soundtrack, to underline that these are not archival images, that they are part of a culture of deepfakes and generative AI.

Damien. – The idea was to mix mechanisation and women. We went through films that had been made by La Poste between 1976 and 1993, and noted the machine-like movements of the female controllers, checking stamps and watching the hypnotic flow of envelopes on the indexing machines with fixed gazes. The installation is a sound and video creation, displayed on a horizontal platform, in front of a wall used as a projection screen. On the platform, is a network of silver film spools tied together with reflective tape, inspired by the sorting-indexing devices used in mail sorting devices. In a window of iridescent light, is a

Rotorama – Mécanique de l'accélération forms the final part of *Carte Blanche*. It once again deals with the race for speed within the service, now in the 1970s, with the introduction of automated sorting platforms, alongside optimisation of every single task.



Bruitage. A collaboration with the women who work at Musée de La Poste to create sound effects to a film based on archival films.



video edited from five archival films. Opposite, is another video, *Bruitage* (sound effects). It was made in collaboration with the women who work at the museum. With ordinary office supplies, they created a synchronised soundtrack to the video shown on the horizontal platform.

Pascale. – The film questions the mechanics of acceleration in the work environment and highlights the role of women in this evolution. It takes its title from a presentation produced by PTT, the Swiss Postal Telegraph and Telephone Agency and presented at a trade fair in Lausanne in 1964. It was a fully automated presentation, in which the projection of slides and films was coordinated with televised colour transmissions, animated models, mobile graphs, clocks, and machines at work.

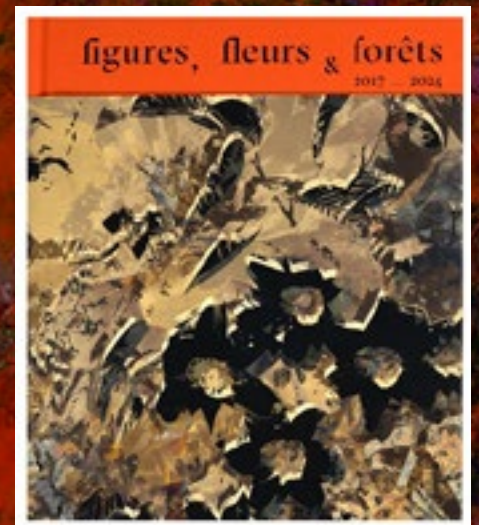
Les EpouxP spent about six months on the project.

Pascale. – That's the average time for us. Sometimes we have to ask for a bit longer. It's easier for us to find suitable archives and museums these days as we have quite a few projects to show. Rather than send proposals, we try whenever possible, to meet the directors and curators to explain how we work and what we would like to do.

Damien. – Our next project isn't based on an archive. We are working with an open-air museum in the south of France, in Cuzals, on the subject of water. There is no water on the ground, it's all underground, much of it in prehistorical caves. Right now, we are going through all the ideas we have. It will be something quite different.

Figures, Fleurs & Forêts

Jean Luc Tartarin
Photographies
2017...2024



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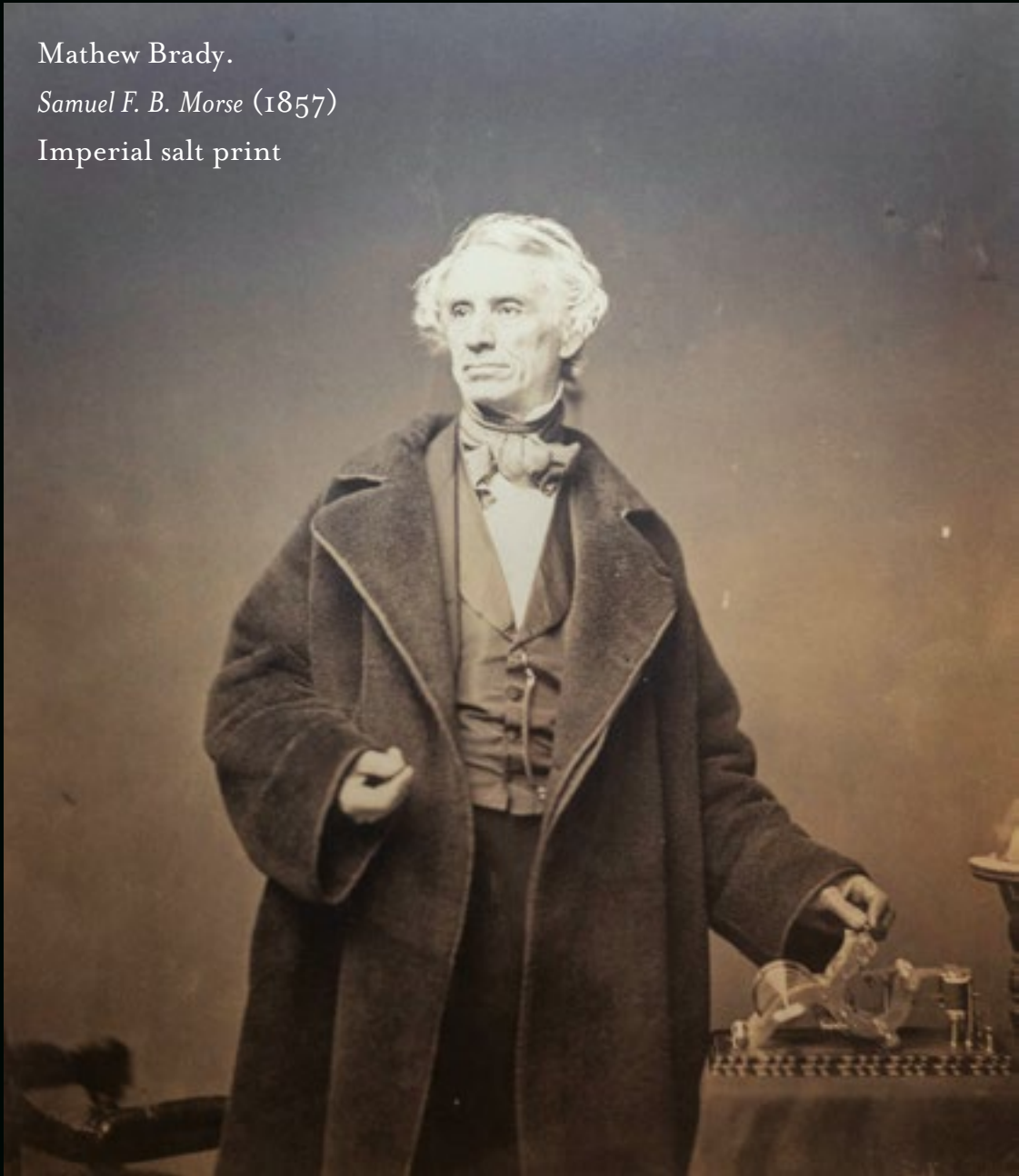


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