

# OBJECT: PHOTO

**Modern Photographs**  
The Thomas Walther Collection  
1909-1949

MITRA ABBASPOUR | LEE ANN DAFFNER | MARIA MORRIS HAMBOURG



**НОВЫЙ**

**1928**

**РЕВОЛЮЦИЯ**

**В НОМЕРЕ: с НОВЫМ ГОДОМ! с „НОВЫМ ЛЕФОМ“! — С. ТРЕТЬЯКОВ.  
ШУМ УНТЕРГРУНДЕНА — Н. АСЕЕВ. КУЛЬТ ПРЕДКОВ  
И СОВРЕМЕННОСТЬ — В. ПЕРЦОВ.**

**МЫ ПОЛАГАЕМ — ЛЕФ. „ВОЙНА И МИР“ Л. ТОЛСТОГО —  
В. ШКЛОВСКИЙ. „ВАС НЕ ПОНИМАЮТ РАБОЧИЕ И КРЕСТЬ-  
ЯНЕ“ — В. МАЯКОВСКИЙ. ФОТО. — А. РОДЧЕНКО.**

**ГОСИЗДАТ**



# The Language of Vision: A Discourse on Photography in the Interwar Years

MITRA ABBASPOUR

*There are infinite worlds hidden from our view in photographic matter. It is necessary to extract from the inherent laws of the medium a corresponding result: an exact language of photography.*

—László Moholy-Nagy, 1927

At the close of World War I, photography was almost a century old, and its technological possibilities were expanding greatly. Thus far, though, the medium had been used primarily for its documentary capacity or as a creative alternative to established genres of painting. In the years after the war, many artists became interested in the potential of photography to transform vision and with it the experience of the world. Across the cultural centers of Europe, Russia, and North America, the unifying thread of photographic practice in the interwar years was a desire to rupture traditional viewpoints and to create literally fresh perspectives. So prevalent was the idea that photography could transform the way people saw the world that the term “New Vision”—in French *La Nouvelle Vision*, in German *Das neue Sehen*—became synonymous with the most novel and experimental forms of photographic modernism.<sup>1</sup> “New Vision” described an aesthetic program that shunned prescriptions of technique or subject and delighted in experiment and variety. As articulated not only in increasing volumes of writing in magazines and books but through the photographs that filled them, a central focus of this discourse was the use of photography to revitalize sight in response to the modern era.

The photographs in the Thomas Walther Collection neither constitute a comprehensive survey of the photography of the period nor focus on a particular style or genre of practice; yet their diversity and multiplicity, and the aggregate of their themes, accurately reflect the expansive approach to photography in the interwar years.<sup>2</sup> When The Museum of Modern Art acquired the Collection, in 2001, Peter Galassi, then the Museum’s Chief Curator of Photography, said that it “splendidly demonstrates the importance of photographic modernism and simultaneously encourages us to rewrite its history.”<sup>3</sup> This essay does not attempt a comprehensive rewriting; instead, it takes one viewpoint, approaching the Walther pictures through a series of publications from the 1920s that advanced the period’s discourse on photography, and that therefore offer a lens on photographic modernism. Indeed, many of the pictures in the Walther Collection, or close variants of them, were reproduced in these journals and books.

Aleksandr Rodchenko. Cover of *Novyi Lef. Zhurnal levogo fronta iskusstv* 1. 1928. Letterpress, 8<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 5<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" (22.7 × 15.1 cm). The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. Gift of The Judith Rothschild Foundation

## SETTING THE STAGE

The poet Ezra Pound once called 1922 “year one,” the beginning of a new era of literary modernism.<sup>4</sup> That year and the years immediately surrounding it might be considered similarly crucial for the New Vision. The intersections among artists of the period generated a wide number of avant-garde publications that unfolded the idea of a modern language of vision. Photography would soon become a touchstone of this international discussion.

Multiple in its styles, photographic modernism also had many points of origin. The war had reshuffled the deck of Europe’s nations, and its aftermath brought members and associates of various prewar avant-gardes together in urban centers such as Berlin, Paris, and Prague. The intellectuals who met in these international cities brought with them the trainings, aesthetics, and ideologies of their points of origin. Many were active artists, and ran studios or taught in art schools; few had any formal training in photography, yet in the dynamic interactions of their meetings, a discourse on the medium’s language developed as integral to the progressive ideals of a modern art.

In 1920, the Hungarian artist László Moholy-Nagy moved to Berlin, where he met Theo van Doesburg, a leading member of Holland’s De Stijl movement. Van Doesburg published De Stijl’s eponymous journal, which promoted a reduction of artistic expression to the essential elements of form and color. It was in the pages of *De Stijl*, in July 1922, that Moholy published “*Produktion-Reproduktion*,” one of his first treatises to address photography’s potential. If form and color were to be seen as the primary compositional elements of painting, in this essay Moholy offered analogues for sound, photography, and film. In all media, Moholy emphasized, “*Creative endeavors are only valid if they produce new, as yet unfamiliar relationships.*”<sup>5</sup>

The year after Moholy moved to Berlin, the Russian artist El Lissitzky arrived there too, infusing the city’s aesthetic conversation with the ideas of Suprematism. Lissitzky had spent the previous two years in Vitebsk teaching alongside Kazimir Malevich, around whom the artists’ association Unovis (Utverditeli novogo iskusstva, or Champions of new art) had formed to promote the ideals of Suprematism. The group had set strict formal standards based on the belief that elemental colors and shapes could communicate universally and could be translated from painting into posters, books, and photography. Once in Berlin, Lissitzky became an influential bridge between Russian and international debates on avant-garde art. With the writer Ilya Ehrenburg, he edited *Veshch/Gegenstand/Objet*, published in Russian, German, and French; although the magazine was short-lived—it lasted for two issues in the spring of 1922—it reflected a determination to open up contacts between Russian and Western European artists. Contemporary Russian art made its full international debut when the *Erste Russische Kunstausstellung (First Russian Art Exhibition)* opened in Berlin in October of 1922. Hosted by the

Russian ministry of information, the exhibition featured over 1,800 works by 180 artists. Lissitzky designed the catalogue.

If Berlin was the urban center that drew these figures together, the Bauhaus, which opened in 1919 in Weimar, was the workshop where their ideas were explored. Among the school’s early students was Werner Gräff, who would later edit one of the crucial photography books of Germany’s interwar years, *Es Kommt der neue Fotograf!* (Here comes the new photographer!, 1929). By 1923, Gräff was collaborating with Lissitzky and Hans Richter on the first issue of *G: Material zur Elementaren Gestaltung (G: Materials for Elemental Form-Creation)*. These artists had not yet come to focus on photography as they would in the years to come, but the idea that modern art should produce a new perceptual experience was already emerging in their discourse and would soon be intimately linked to the medium.

Meanwhile, in Paris in 1921, the American Dadaist Man Ray set up a studio that would become another center of photographic modernism. The following year he would publish *Les Champs délicieux (Delicious Fields)*, a groundbreaking portfolio of twelve photograms with a preface by the Dadaist Tristan Tzara. Also in 1921, in Prague, Karel Teige, a leader of the Czech avant-garde, established the group Devětsil to provide a forum for international modernism in the city. In 1922, along with the architect Jaroslav Krejcar, he took over editorial duties of the avant-garde journal *Život (Life)*, where in 1922 his influential essay “Foto-Kino-Film” would include an analysis of Man Ray’s portfolio. In Moscow, the progressive art journal *Lef* launched in 1923, appeared monthly until 1925, and was resurrected from 1927 to 1929 as *Novy Lef (New left)*. Edited by the critic Osip Brik and the poet Vladimir Mayakovsky, the journal featured covers showing photomontages and, later, photographs by Rodchenko (frontispiece). The flourishing body of avant-garde journals that emerged in these years was essential to fostering international discourse on photography and to its integration into avant-garde art.

## LANGUAGE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

The New Vision was associated with Moholy long before he put the phrase in writing:<sup>6</sup> as the director of the Bauhaus foundation course, a position he took in 1923, he became an influential voice on photography, and his dedication to the medium was explicit in his book *Malerei, Fotografie, Film (Painting, Photography, Film)*, published in 1925.<sup>7</sup> By 1927, when he wrote that “the illiteracy of the future will be ignorance of photography,” his authority was such that the statement would become one of the most often paraphrased and discussed ideas in the period’s literature on the medium.<sup>8</sup> The writers who took up this refrain in Germany included the cultural theorist Walter Benjamin and the art historian Franz Roh, editor of the 1929 book *Foto-Auge (Photo-Eye)*. In 1928, when Benjamin wrote that “the illiterates of the future will be the people who



**fig. 1** Alfred Stieglitz. *Equivalent*. 1925. Gelatin silver print,  $4\frac{5}{8} \times 3\frac{5}{8}$ " (11.7 × 9.2 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Given anonymously

**fig. 2** Alfred Stieglitz. *Equivalent*. 1929. Gelatin silver print,  $4\frac{11}{16} \times 3\frac{11}{16}$ " (11.9 × 9.3 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Alfred Stieglitz Collection. Gift of Georgia O'Keeffe

**fig. 3** Alfred Stieglitz. *Equivalent*. 1929. Gelatin silver print,  $4\frac{11}{16} \times 3\frac{5}{8}$ " (11.9 × 9.2 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Alfred Stieglitz Collection. Gift of Georgia O'Keeffe

know nothing of photography rather than those who are ignorant of the art of writing," he was paraphrasing Moholy;<sup>9</sup> a year later, Roh similarly asserted, "The statement is right that not to be able to handle a camera will soon be looked upon as equal to illiteracy."<sup>10</sup> Significantly, both authors emphasized the importance of the practitioner; to be literate in photography was not just to look at photographs but to make them and communicate through them.

The Dutch artist César Domela Nieuwenhuis emphasized the relevance of photographic language for the communities of the world's cultural hubs when he wrote in 1931, "Photography has more and more become an international means of communication and a particularly powerful one since, owing to language barriers, an image is more easily comprehended everywhere than a text."<sup>11</sup> Artists and writers in other countries translated the message for their own regional circles. In his 1931 treatise "*Úkoly moderni fotografie*" (The tasks of modern photography), for example, Teige gave the idea a pedagogical charge: "It has been pointed out several times that in the near future people ignorant of photography will be considered illiterate. It is necessary for the teaching of photography to be included in the syllabus of general and secondary schools."<sup>12</sup> And there are still more voices in the chorus, a litany underscoring the idea of photography as essential to the literacy of the modern citizen. Seeing the medium as popularly accessible, these authors believed that the use of its technical, material,

and formal qualities to create a visual language would extend the capacity of human sight, allowing people to become more aware of and engaged with their world.

#### COLLECTIVE VISION

As the practices of modern photography matured and thrived, photographic artworks increasingly embraced the medium's inherently serial structure and moved toward a reliance on collective vision—the idea that an essential element of photography was its multiplicity of viewpoints, that the reader of photographs looked not only at the picture within a single frame but at its relationship to neighboring views. That the medium generated a profusion of pictures, which could be ordered by subject but also by criteria such as technique, genre, nationality, and more—this was a core principle of the period's photography exhibitions and of its emerging body of photography books. At its foundation, this idea was rooted in photography's ability to rapidly capture many variations on a subject and to present these views as a single composite artwork. Alfred Stieglitz was among the first to recognize multiple views as an essential characteristic of photographic aesthetics; the idea that modern vision was rooted in relationships among a sum of parts took clear form in artworks such as his *Georgia O'Keeffe: A Portrait* (1918; cat. 286), one of over 350 photographs he took of his fellow artist and muse, a group of images that he explained as a structure in

which all the pictures together represented a single portrait.<sup>13</sup> Seeing a number of these images at the Anderson Galleries in 1921, Paul Strand, Stieglitz's disciple and closest colleague at the time, saw the significance of the approach, stating that it "makes the painted portrait an absurdity . . . a reversal of the era of [the nineteenth-century photographer] D.[avid] O.[ctavius] Hill."<sup>14</sup> Though Strand saw Hill and Stieglitz as the master portrait photographers of their respective eras, he elevated Stieglitz for the modern, uniquely photographic nature of his serial work.

In 1922, Stieglitz made a series that extended the idea of the collective work: with *Music: A Sequence of Ten Cloud Photographs* (cat. 287) he began a long exploration of cloud formations that would culminate in the horizonless compositions of the *Equivalents* (1925–31; figs. 1–3), which he considered abstractions since they emphasized tonal compositions of light over illusionistic description of their subject.<sup>15</sup> Essential to this approach was the understanding that neither the sequence nor the set was fixed; Stieglitz's many photographs of O'Keeffe may constitute a single portrait, but in that they can appear in any arrangement or number, they are non-narrative. The idea of the adaptable aggregate was fundamental to the concept of photographic literacy in these years—presentations of photographs were designed to train vision to see variations, relationships, and details that might pass unseen until frozen, framed, and focused by the mechanisms of photography. In opening up photography's metaphorical possibilities through a composite series of views, Stieglitz pointed toward much work to come.

#### POETIC VISION

When Man Ray published his experiments with the photogram technique in *Les Champs délicieux*, in 1922, the work quickly gained international attention: a selection of the pictures appeared that spring in the Paris journal *Les Feuilles libres*, to be followed in New York in the fall in *Vanity Fair* (fig. 4), on both occasions with commentary by the poet and later filmmaker Jean Cocteau. Images were also published in the American magazine *The Little Review* that fall, and in the Berlin-based review *Broom* the following spring.<sup>16</sup> Critics were captivated by the pictures: each photogram was simultaneously a documentary record—a physical trace of the interaction between light and an object or group of objects set on photosensitive paper—and an abstraction, in which silhouette effects, the different opacities of the objects' materials, and distortions arising from the angle of the light as it shone on the paper transformed these things into graphic apparitions. The photogram technique had been among the very earliest photographic processes—Nicéphore Niépce, William Henry Fox Talbot, and others had made photograms in the first half of the nineteenth century—but the method was seen anew in the context of Surrealism and Man Ray's images were lauded as the epitome of poetic vision. Having previewed an album of

eighty of the artist's photograms, Cocteau wrote in his commentary, which was phrased as an open letter to the artist, "Your prints . . . are the very objects themselves, not photographed through a lens but by your poet's hand directly interposed between the light and the sensitive paper."<sup>17</sup> Robert Desnos, himself a poet, wrote similarly, "Man Ray derives neither from artistic deformation, nor from servile reproduction of 'nature' . . . Man Ray derives from poetry."<sup>18</sup> Since poets use words for both their literal and their metaphoric meanings, poetry became a metaphor for the artistic desire to surpass the literal, documentary capacity of photography, a desire these commentators saw epitomized in the photogram.

Man Ray's experiments with photograms won him international attention and made his Paris studio a center of avant-garde photography. Among those who worked there were Jacques-André Boiffard, Bill Brandt, and Lee Miller, whose photographs of, respectively, a haystack emerging like an apparition from a sea of black; an eye peering out from behind a biomorphic white form on a stony beach; and a pair of feet examining their trace in a puddle of tar (cats. 36, 41, 186) well illustrate the tension between document and allegory. In these pictures

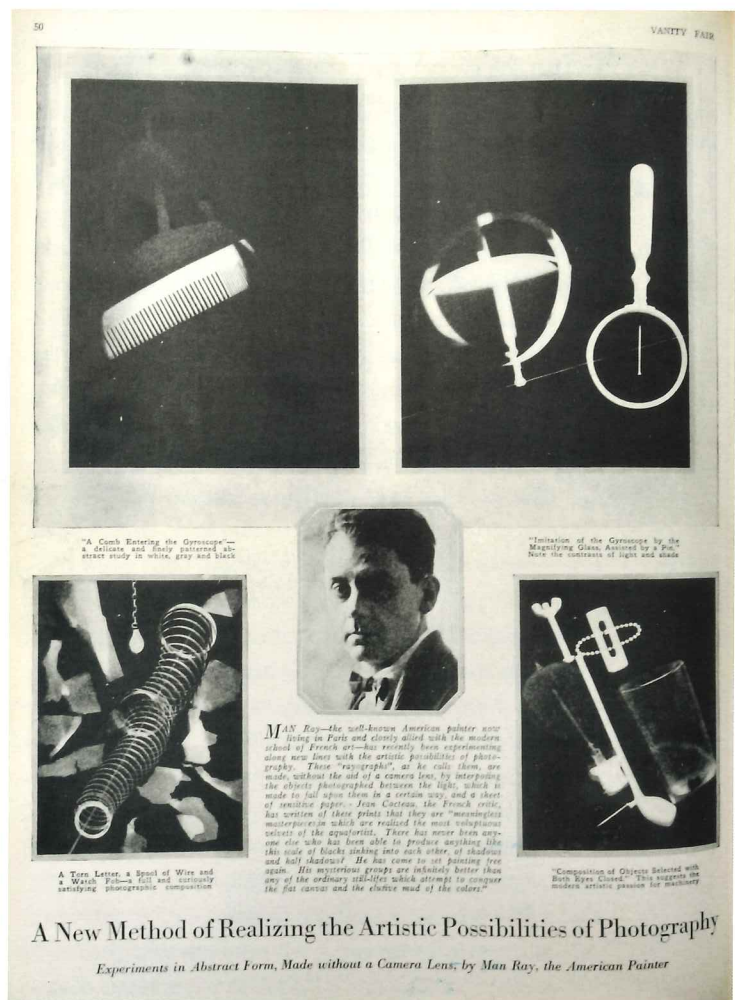
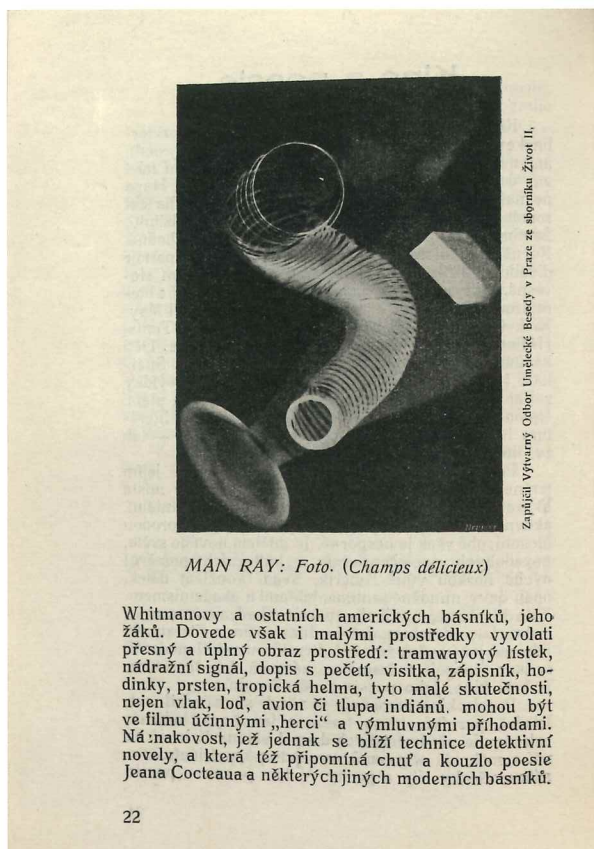


fig. 4 Jean Cocteau. "A New Method of Realizing the Artistic Possibilities of Photography: Experiments in Abstract Form, Made without a Camera Lens, by Man Ray, the American Painter." *Vanity Fair*, November 1922. Special Collections, Gladys Marcus Library, Fashion Institute of Technology-SUNY, New York



MAN RAY: Foto. (*Champs délicieux*)

Whitmanovy a ostatních amerických básníků, jeho žáků. Dovede však i malými prostředky vyvolati přesný a úplný obraz prostředí: tramwayový lístek, nádražní signál, dopis s pečeti, visítka, zápisník, hodinky, prsten, tropická helma, tyto malé skutečnosti, nejen vlak, loď, avion či tlupa indiánů, mohou být ve filmu účinnými „herci“ a výmluvnými příhodami. Ná:navost, jež jednak se blíží technice detektivní novely, a která též připomíná chuť a kouzlo poesie Jeana Cocteua a některých jiných moderních básníků.

22

fig. 5 Page from Karel Teige. *Film*. Prague: Nakl. V. Petra, 1925. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. Man Ray. *Rayograph*. 1922. Photogram from *Les Champs délicieux* (*Delicious Fields*)

the setting is obscured and the subject is isolated, so that what is seen resonates with the mystery of what is out of view.

Man Ray's model of the poetic power of the photogram carried well beyond Paris and New York. In Czechoslovakia, writing in *Život* in 1922, Teige recognized the metaphorical quality of Man Ray's portfolio: "Photography acquires here its own, self-determining, autonomous speech... photography can never leave reality, not even here, but it can become *surrealistic*."<sup>19</sup> In 1925, this essay would become the basis for Teige's book *Film*, which would give his ideas even greater reach among the Czech avant-garde; and here he again turned to Man Ray's photograms as succinct articulations of the transformation of an everyday object into a symbolic abstraction (fig. 5).<sup>20</sup> Alexander Hackenschmied unspooled a different sort of surreality in his 1930 film *Bezúčelná procházka* (*Aimless walk*, 1930; cat. 84), which drifts through Prague in a sequence of views that play shadow against light and disrupt the urban scene with bisecting frames and angled perspectives. Poetry was an important analogue for works like this one, since it demonstrated the potential for a photograph's subject to be metaphor. As Moholy had advocated, the new perspectives and the play of one scene against another refresh one's vision, lifting the quotidian into another zone where purpose slips away and associations, rhythms, and images become primary, as in music or poetry.

## MATERIAL VISION

At the same time that Man Ray was experimenting with photograms in 1922, so too was Moholy, but in works with a different valence: if in the milieu of French Surrealism the response to the photogram focused on transcending reality through poetics, in Germany the focus shifted to the technical possibilities of the medium. From "*Produktion-Reproduktion*" onward, in essays, lectures, and as an instructor, Moholy argued that myriad new visual forms, and an expansion of visual literacy, would be achieved through a systematic exploration of the elemental attributes embedded in photography's materials: its light-sensitive surfaces (glass, metal, paper, celluloid), camera equipment, and modes of presentation.

In "*Produktion-Reproduktion*," Moholy differentiated between creative applications of photography—applications producing "new, as yet unfamiliar relationships" that fostered the senses—and images in which photographic technology was used merely to reproduce elements of the external world.<sup>21</sup> He went on to suggest methods that would direct these reproductive mediums toward creative output. Rather than establishing a clear aesthetic doctrine, he issued a call for experiment. In this same year of 1922, with technical assistance from his wife, Lucia Moholy, he began work on a series of photograms.

When Moholy joined the faculty of the Bauhaus, he expanded his studies of photography, and in 1925 he published *Malerei, Fotografie, Film*, the eighth volume of the school's *Bauhausbücher* (Bauhaus books) series. This seminal treatise included an extensive group of photographs—either chosen or created by Moholy—representing innovative techniques, perspectives, and structures of display. Effectively reversing the hierarchy of text over illustration that was typical at the time, pictures dominated the content; as Moholy had promised, visual statements made through relationships of photographs largely replaced prose.

Foregrounding the idea of a language in photographs, Moholy opened the plate section with the statement "Continuity in the illustrations will make the problems raised in the text *visually* clear."<sup>22</sup> He sequenced the ensuing photographs to reveal their interconnections, as in a spread where he placed one of his own photograms—a graphic abstraction—across from an X-ray of a shell. The pairing juxtaposed an easy, even rudimentary photographic process, needing no more than light-sensitive paper (not even a camera), and a technologically complex one demanding sophisticated equipment, yet each image abstracts its subject while making a contact print, a direct, one-to-one-scale record of it that reflects its relative sensitivity to a particular form of light. A few pages later, warped reflections transform the proportions of each subject in a spread: the three-faced, four-eyed man seen in a photograph by Moholy's Hungarian compatriot István Kerny confronts the long-legged figures floating within the world of a mirrored ball inside

a Bauhaus studio in a photograph by George Mucbe (fig. 6).<sup>23</sup> (Cats. 117 and 198 in the present volume are variants of these images.)

As Moholy's plates continue, the pictures reveal ever greater pictorial interventions. The photograms with which they start are direct records, made simply by setting objects on photosensitive paper and exposing them to light. Following these in *Malerei, Fotografie, Film* are oblique-angled views, distorted reflections, montages of multiple views, "typo-photography" (graphic combinations of typography and images), and film images, a succession designed to demonstrate photography's role in extending the capacity of natural sight. Moholy sometimes combines subjects to add an element of social commentary to his photographic documents, as when he pairs Hannah Höch's photomontage *The Multi-Millionaire* (1923), a biting critique of the mechanisms of wealth, with Paul Citroen's *Metropolis (City of My Birth)* (1923; cat. 54), a photomontage aggregate of the definitive industrial metropolis, the engine that sustains that wealth (fig. 7). Finally, parallel rows of contact-printed film strips from an animated cartoon by Lotte Reiniger (1926; Walther variant cat. 185) expose the mechanism

of cinema's illusion of motion as a series of subtly morphing still photographs.

In revealing the panoply of available processes and strategies, Moholy's picture sequence dismantles the notion of photography as a document or reflection of the natural world. It demonstrates rather how photography can "either complete or supplement our optical instrument, the eye," representing the world from perspectives inaccessible to unaided sight but discoverable by the artist through the inherent qualities of photographic vision.<sup>24</sup> *Malerei, Fotografie, Film* embodied a philosophy of art that Moholy would elaborate throughout his career. In 1927, he published a second, expanded version of the book; in 1929, *Sovetskoe Foto* published a Russian edition. The text had a wide audience in the European avant-garde, and its process-oriented approach inspired essays and debates in response.

#### CULTURAL VISION

In 1928, the Soviet Union was eleven years past the October Revolution of 1917 and at the beginning of the First Five-Year Plan, a program of economic reforms

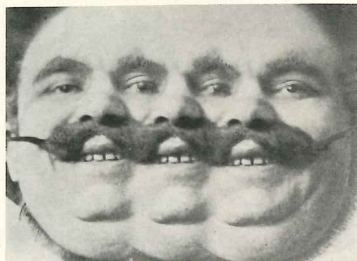


Photo: KEYSTONE VIEW CO., LONDON.  
Aus Hackebeils Illustrierter.

Das fixierte Lachkabinett.

90



Konvexspiegelaufnahme.

Photo: MUCHE / BAUHAUS.

91

fig. 6 Spread from László Moholy-Nagy. *Malerei, Fotografie, Film*. Munich: Albert Langen Verlag, 1925. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. Left: Keystone View Co., London [István Kerny]. *Arrested Laughter in the Distorting Mirror (Das fixierte Lachkabinett)*. From *Hackebeils Illustrierte*. Right: Georg Mucbe. *Convex Mirror (Konvexspiegelaufnahme)*





„Der Milliardär“.

Photomontage: HANNAH HÖCH.



„Die Stadt I“.

Photomontage: CITROEN / BAUHAUS.

fig. 7 Spread from László Moholy-Nagy. *Malerei, Fotografie, Film*. Munich: Albert Langen Verlag, 1925. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. Left: Hannah Höch. *The Multi-Millionaire: The Dual Countenance of the Ruler (Der Milliardär: Das zwiefache Gesicht des Herrschers)*, 1923. Right: Paul Citroen. *Metropolis (City of My Birth)*, 1923 (cat. 54)

and industrial developments in which artists served an essential role in the propaganda arm. Although Rodchenko and his artist community faced intense observation to ensure that their practice was in line with state ideology, he was well established within both state-sponsored institutions and art circles: he was a professor in the Moscow art school Vkhutemas (Higher artistic-technical workshops), an official in the Moscow artists' union, and a cofounder of the Institut khudozhestvennoi kul'tury (Institute for artistic culture). In January of 1928, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., the future founding director of New York's Museum of Modern Art, had visited his studio.

It was a bold strike against an established figure, then, when the photography journal *Sovetskoe Foto* published an anonymous letter arguing that the qualities for which Rodchenko had been given such credit as a photographer—the use of extreme angles and of dramatic upward- or downward-gazing perspectives—were not in fact “his own way, in a new way, from his own point of view” but were derivative of American and German work, as was demonstrated by a series of juxtapositions of Rodchenko's pictures with similar compositions from abroad (fig. 8).<sup>25</sup> In the Soviet context, the

damning part of the accusation was not the claim that the work was derivative but that it was in the manner of “foreign photographers” with “imperialist goals.”<sup>26</sup>

While inflammatory, the letter was brief; it was answered, however, by a series of statements and letters in the journal *Novy Lef*, which together offer a clear understanding of the position of photography in Russian art circles. Rodchenko had written a strong response to the anonymous letter, but, significantly, the editors of *Sovetskoe Foto* had refused to publish it. Only then did he turn to the more artistically avant-garde journal *Novy Lef*, in whose pages an extended debate would unfold over the course of 1928. The key correspondents were Rodchenko, Boris Kushner, and Sergei Tretyakov, all members of the magazine's editorial board, and the issues they addressed ranged from the role of the artist in engaging with industrial society to whether or not the angles of a camera's view could be assigned a political ideology. Rodchenko firmly asserted the impossibility of owning a camera viewpoint, even while implying, through a critique of traditional photographic compositions, that viewpoints do have historical and cultural contexts.<sup>27</sup> He further argued for the value of international influences,



fig. 8 Page from *Sovetskoe Foto* 4 (April 1928). "Illustrated Letter to the Publisher: Ours and Theirs." Productive Arts, Bratenahl, Ohio. Photographs on the right are by Aleksandr Rodchenko; photographs on the left are by, top to bottom, Ira W. Martin, Albert Renger-Patzsch, and László Moholy-Nagy.

stating that the evolution of culture depended upon the "exchange and assimilation of experiences and achievements" and imploring the editors of *Sovetskoe Foto* to join him in expanding its representation of modern photography: "We should acquaint them with modern photography, and show them photographs by the best masters from different countries."<sup>28</sup>

Rodchenko illustrated his responses with photo-spreads of his own design. Alongside his first article he arranged pairs of pictures by Hannes Flach, a German, and Semyon Fridlyand and Arkadii Shaikhet, well-known Soviet press photographers whose work was often published in *Sovetskoe Foto* (fig. 9).<sup>29</sup> Using the comparative methods of the original critique, he showed that angled views were not his alone, nor were they foreign to other established Soviet practitioners. He was careful to express respect for these colleagues even as he lambasted the journal that published them—after all, their pictures made the same departure from traditional, centered, frontal viewpoints that his own did. Viewing the arcade of Moscow's GUM department store in *In the Gallery* (1927; cat. 74), Fridlyand had cropped the ground floor and most of the upper-tier shops out of the frame, allowing the glass-paneled, barrel-vaulted ceiling to consume three-quarters of the picture with soaring drama. The symmetry of the picture had an element of composed formalism, but, Rodchenko argued, this oblique, upward viewpoint represented the true and accurate view

of a visitor to the space, standing on the ground and gazing up at the building.<sup>30</sup>

Throughout, Rodchenko defended his commitment to multivalent viewpoints—with the exception of orthodox views parallel to the ground—in an appeal both to "show the world from all its vantage points" and to show it as we really experience it.<sup>31</sup> We cannot see everything by looking straight ahead; rather, if standing on the street, we crane our necks to view the tall buildings of modernity, and see the street from a bird's-eye view if we are perched on a balcony. *1 May 1928 in Moscow* (1 *maia* 1928 g. v Moskve, 1928; fig. 10), published with Rodchenko's initial response to *Sovetskoe Foto*, represents his ideas on the union of perspective and subject beautifully: the camera's diagonal viewpoint, and the dynamic composition that results—a combination of perspective and subject repeated in *Demonstration* (1932; cat. 232)—promotes the viewer's awareness of his or her role as spectator and subject within the citizen-body of Russia.

#### EXPANDED VISION

If the years around 1922 launched an era of avant-garde discourse on photographic modernism, the many approaches to its development came together in a series of exhibitions and publications that mark 1929 as that era's apex. These events set forth ideas on photography that over the previous decade or so had evolved on a grand scale. Their centerpiece was the exhibition *Internationale Ausstellung des Deutschen Werkbund Film und Foto*, referred to in short as *Film und Foto* and more shortly still as *Fifo*. Directed by Gustaf Stotz, the Deutscher Werkbund's business manager, in consultation with the art historian Hans Hildebrandt and the graphic designer Jan Tschichold, the show debuted in May–July 1929 in Stuttgart before setting out on a long tour. It showcased around 1,000 pictures from Europe, the Soviet Union, and the United States; the photographers Edward Steichen and Edward Weston advised on the American selection and Moholy designed an introductory room surveying the history of photography before the modern era. The show attracted large audiences and received wide attention in the press (all discussed in Olivier Lugon's essay in the present volume). Its influence was greatly extended by the four publications generated in conjunction with it; read as a group, these surveys of contemporary photography function like a multivolume roundtable on the medium.

The exhibition's official catalogue, *Film und Foto*, was edited by Stotz and contains six short essays on photography and film. That three of these deal with the Soviet Union underscores the heavy influence of the Russian avant-garde, and especially of Russian film, in 1920s Germany, while Stotz's own introductory essay in turn reveals the effect of Moholy's *Malerei, Fotografie, Film* in its medium-specific address: Stotz identifies the sharp-focus lens and light-sensitive emulsion as the "foundation of every true photographic achievement."<sup>32</sup>

Innovation through material and technical experiment was the doctrine of *Fifo*. Among the catalogue's plates, Max Burchartz's *Lotte (Eye)* (*Lotte [Auge]*, 1928; cat. 50) exemplifies the graphic strength of photography, its ability—through sharp focus, high contrast, and a cropping frame—to transform a portrait into a composition of planes of layered tones. With only twenty-three plates from a show of over 1,000 pictures, the *Fifo* catalogue worked to highlight pictures from known artists rather than to illustrate the exhibition.

Meanwhile, three more books featuring extended photo-essays were commissioned in conjunction with *Fifo* to celebrate this popular debut of the New Vision and to build on the exhibition's ambitious scale: Gräff's *Es Kommt der neue Fotograf!* addressed photography; his *Filmgegner von heute—Filmfreunde von Morgen* (Film haters today, Film lovers tomorrow), cowritten by himself and Richter, covered avant-garde film; and Roh's *Foto-Auge* considered both mediums.<sup>33</sup> Commissioning Gräff, the Werkbund's press secretary, to create *Es Kommt...* and *Filmgegner...*, each focusing on one of the exhibition's featured mediums, Stotz announced their arrival as "authoritative books" on *Fifo* in a full-page

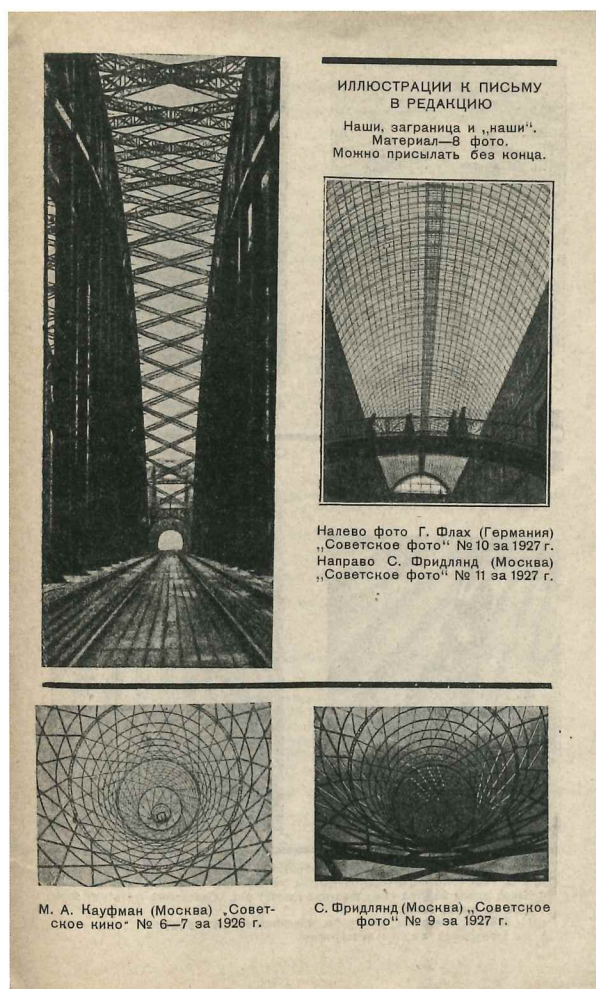


fig. 9 Page from *Novy Lef* no. 6 (June 1928). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of The Judith Rothschild Foundation. Photographs by Hannes Maria Flach (top left), Arkadii Shaiket (bottom left; the caption misidentifies the photographer as Mikhail Kaufman), and Semyon Fridlyand (top and bottom right). Top right: Fridlyand's *In the Gallery* (*GUM, State Department Store, Moscow*, 1927 (cat. 74)



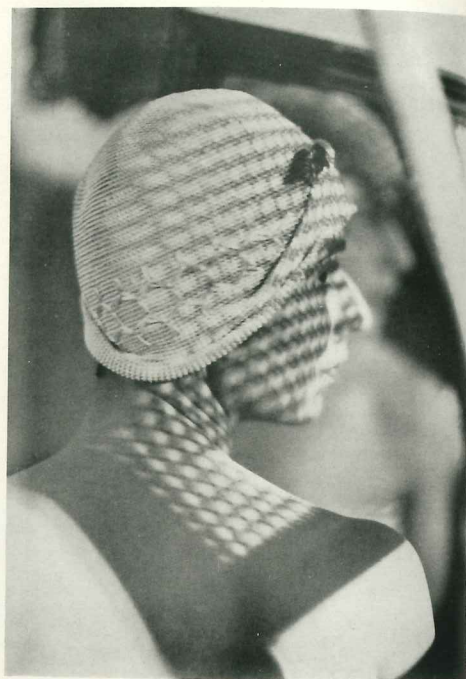
1 мая 1928 г. в Москве — фото А. М. Родченко

fig. 10 Page from *Novy Lef* no. 6 (June 1928). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of The Judith Rothschild Foundation. Aleksandr Rodchenko. 1 May 1928 in Moscow (1 maia 1928 g. v Moskve)

advertisement in his own catalogue.<sup>34</sup> As a former Bauhaus student and coeditor of *G*, Gräff was well established in the German avant-garde and provided the rousing alternative viewpoint of an active artist. His sequencing of photographs in *Es Kommt...* emphasizes photographic processes—technique, equipment, materials. Where some writers debated the definition of art, the role of photography, or the relationship between poetry and fact, Gräff provided a tutorial on becoming the titular "new photographer," using photographs themselves to broaden the reader's visual vocabulary and so to contribute to the development of visual literacy.

*Es Kommt...* opens with the declaration, "The purpose of this book is to break down barriers, not create them. Useful though manuals of photography are so long as they describe the technique of the negative and positive process, they are positively harmful when they set limits based on aesthetic or artistic rules."<sup>35</sup> Having asserted that the book will impose no restrictions,

Er läßt die Linsen blank oder betupft sie matt  
 Er reguliert das Licht in jeder nur denkbaren Art — und gäbe es die ur-  
 natürlichste Beleuchtung



Umbo, Dephot, Berlin

54



Umbo, Dephot, Berlin

55

fig. 11 Spread from Werner Gräff. *Es Kommt der neue Fotograf!* Berlin: H. Reckendorf, 1929. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. Two photographs by Umbo. Right: Ruth Landshoff (*The Hand*) (Ruth Landshoff [*Die Hand*]). 1927 (cat. 305).

accepting ordinary and experimental photographs alike so long as photography remains “a free, independent art,” Gräff devotes the rest of his foreword to a detailed, carefully reasoned appeal to camera manufacturers to produce new equipment—bellows cameras, portable Leica-like cameras, tripods designed for angled views, supplementary lenses, and finally color filters. This is a book of and for the modern practitioner.

The body of the book comprises a long sequence of photographs interspersed with short written statements that guide us through the diverse approaches to picture-making in the photography of the time. The images are not the full-page plates of the *Fifo* catalogue; rather, they are to be read in relationship to their context. Chapter 3, for example, opens with a photogram by Oscar Nerlinger (1925-30; cat. 202) and the statement, “In practice, limits result solely from the material.”<sup>36</sup> This tight interdependence of picture and prose is typical of Gräff’s approach, and as he rejects pictorial limitations, he at the same time succinctly dictates a set of materials-based guidelines. Nerlinger’s picture, which was made without a camera and whose only represented subjects are light and motion, represents a stripped-down approach to photography, which Gräff

explains as another mandate of the “new photographer”: “He draws tracks over the plate with a light source.”<sup>37</sup> The text provides just enough information to suggest Nerlinger’s method without setting any technical or aesthetic parameters.

Gräff keeps to this tenor in discussing how the photographer can regulate light to transform the subject, as in a pair of portraits by Umbo (fig. 11).<sup>38</sup> The use of the same model in both pictures emphasizes the modulating effects of light and composition: in the photograph on the left, the shadow of a screen leaves the woman’s neck, straw hat, and face a mid-tone gray. Only the profile of her nose and chin fall in bright sunlight, combining with the bar cutting across the image’s upper corner and the frame of shadows on her shoulders to become graphic elements in a rhythmic pattern. In the photograph on the right, meanwhile (cat. 305), a strong frontal light source throws the entire picture into such high contrast that the woman’s nose and chin and the curves of her face become a flat, graphic white shape. In both images the portrait is less an expression of an individual than a demonstration of the creative possibilities of photographic vision on a form traditional to the medium and familiar to all readers.

Other pictures employ more complex techniques to manipulate natural vision. A spread of photographs on light, motion, and the layering of time opens with the frenetic scene of electrically illuminated night that is the backdrop to Lissitzky's *Runner in the City* (*Experiment for a Fresco for a Sports Club*) (1926; fig. 12; cat. 169). Gräff uses the spread to turn attention to darkroom techniques, assuring us that the new photographer is "not afraid of multiple exposures" (but uses them "with calculation!"), knows how to manipulate the negative and later on the print, and chooses paper qualities in the service of his art.<sup>39</sup>

*Filmgegner*... has a similar organization, albeit one somewhat limited by the tension between the static form of the book and the moving medium of film.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, spreads of contact-printed filmstrips illustrate how photographic techniques such as multiple exposures and cropping can be applied to film stills, transforming the medium, as in Richter's film *Film Study* (*Filmstudie*, 1927; cat. 226). Neither of these companion photo essays is an exhibition catalogue, yet both select and order a diverse selection of contemporary photographs in a careful didactic sequence that cuts across processes, techniques, perspectives, and subjects just as the *Fifo* installation did. Stotz's own catalogue

was sparsely illustrated, presenting a small sample of photographs as highlights of the exhibition. As a result, *Es Kommt...*, *Filmgegner*..., and, also, *Foto-Auge* became the publications through which the ideas of *Fifo* best circulated and are best preserved.

*Foto-Auge* is a markedly more academic book than *Es Kommt...* During the brief period when Roh was writing on photography, from 1928 to 1933, he was also making pictures that employed the techniques of New Vision: negative prints, multiple exposures, photograms, montage (cats. 236-45). Nevertheless, *Foto-Auge* (a trilingual volume, in German, French, and English) is above all a product of his formal education in art history. Roh had been a student of the esteemed art historian Heinrich Wölfflin, who established the practice of side-by-side comparison of pictures as a foundational technique of art-historical methodology. The approach was perfectly suited to Moholy's mandate that the new language of photography was to be found through interrelationships of pictures.<sup>41</sup> Roh's training also matched the format of the two-page spread of a book, and his work with Tschichold on *Foto-Auge*, and on monographs they edited later, demonstrates the sophistication of this art historian/graphic designer pair.

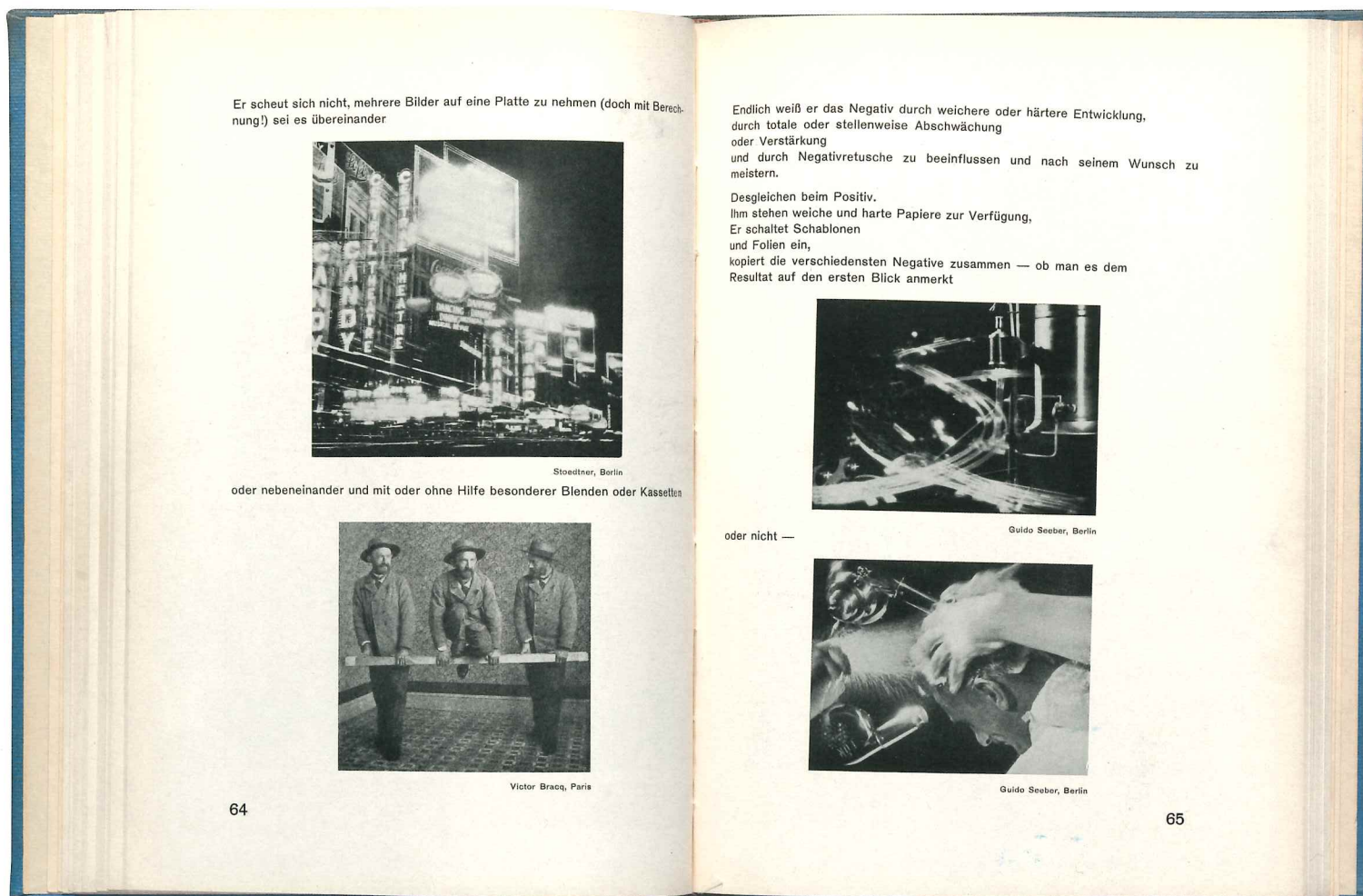


fig. 12 Spread from Werner Gräff. *Es Kommt der neue Fotograf!* Berlin: H. Reckendorf, 1929. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. Photographs by Knud Lönberg-Holm (top left), Victor Bracq (bottom left), and Guido Seeber (top and bottom right)

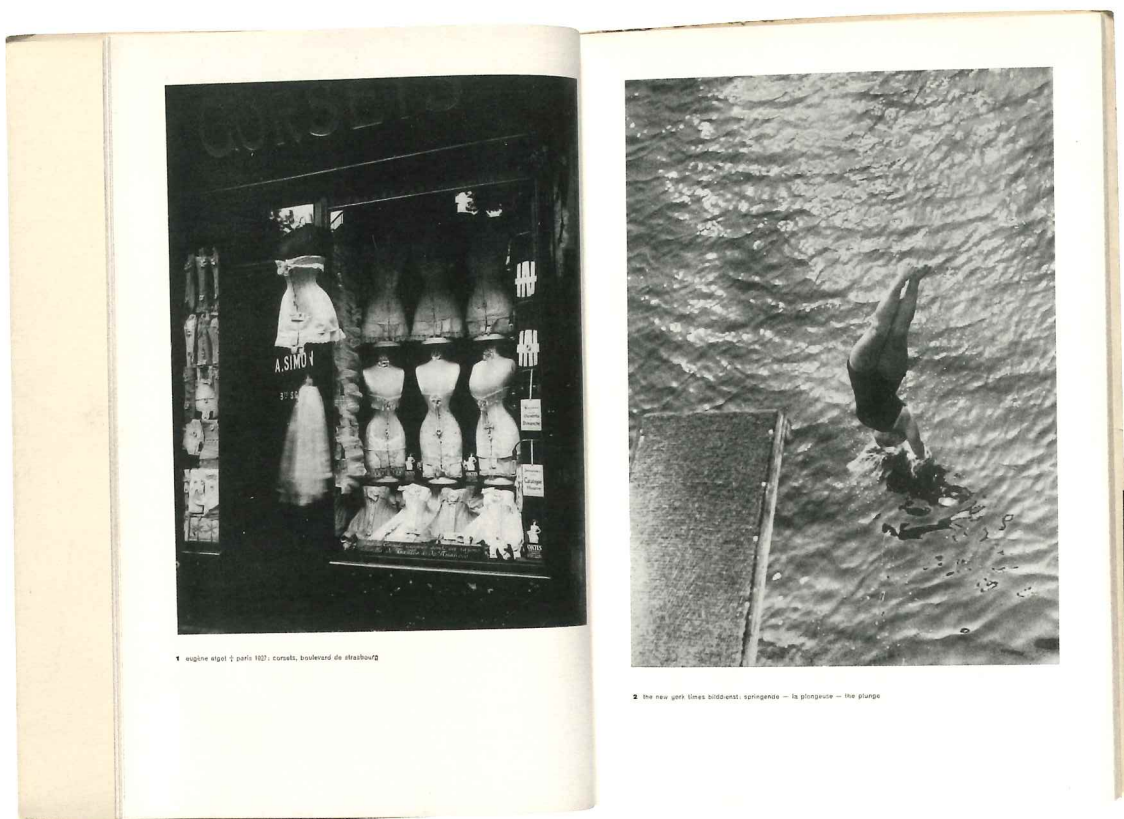


fig. 13 Spread from Franz Roh and Jan Tschichold. *Foto-Auge: 76 Fotos der Zeit*. Stuttgart: F. Wedekind, 1929. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. Left: Eugène Atget. *Corsets, Boulevard de Strasbourg*. 1912. Right: unidentified *New York Times* image service photographer. *The Plunge*



fig. 14 Spread from Franz Roh and Jan Tschichold. *Foto-Auge: 76 Fotos der Zeit*. Stuttgart: F. Wedekind, 1929. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. Left: Hans Finsler. *Woven Material (Stoff)*. Right: Hans Finsler. *Incandescent Lamp (Glühbirne)*. 1928 (cat. 73)

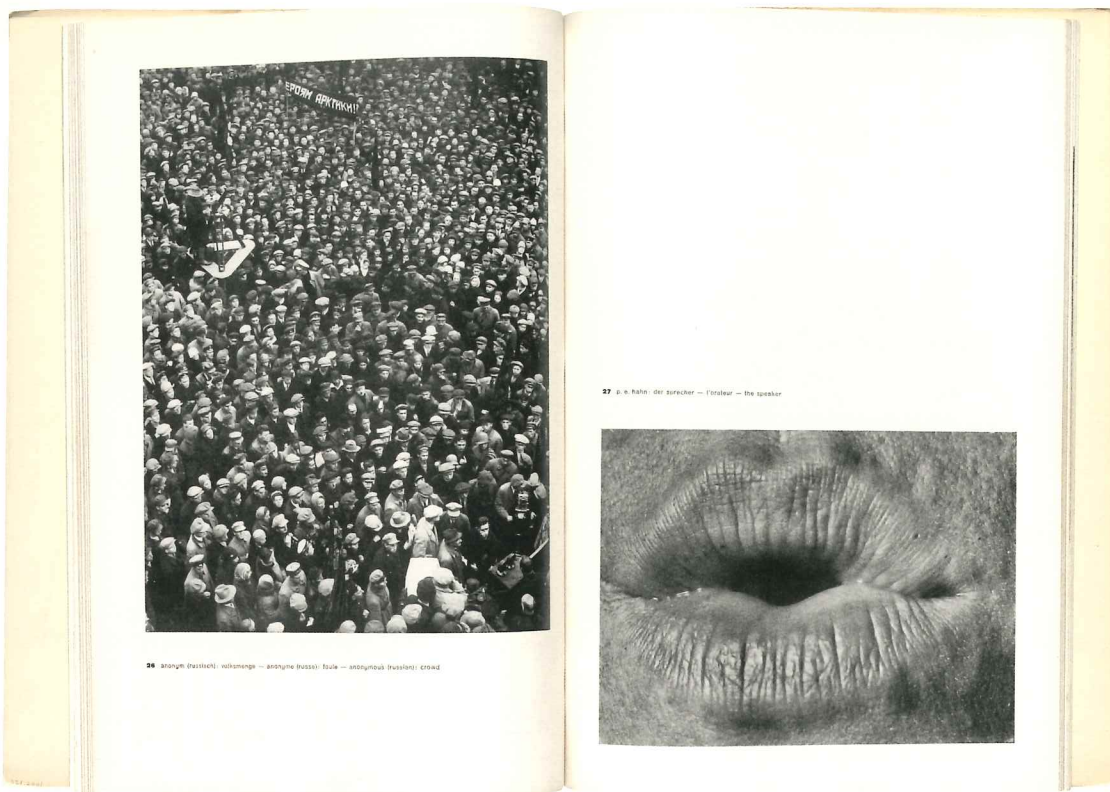


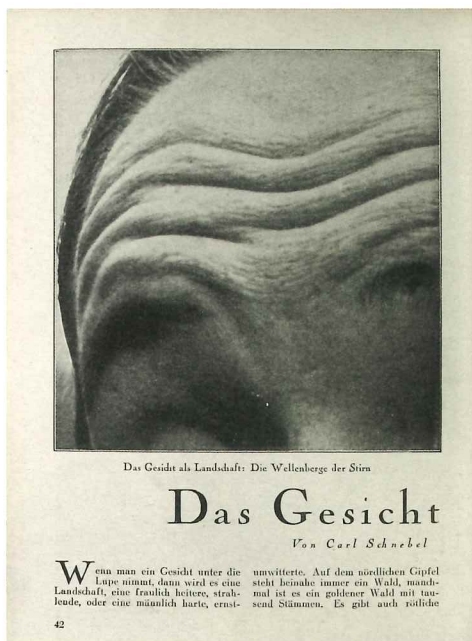
fig. 15 Spread from Franz Roh and Jan Tschichold. *Foto-Auge*. 76 *Fotos der Zeit*. Stuttgart: F. Wedekind, 1929. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. Left: photographer unknown. *Crowd (Volksmenge)*. Right: Paul Edmund Hahn. *The Speaker (Der Sprecher)*. 1928–29 (cat. 88)

Plate 1 of *Foto-Auge* is Eugène Atget's *Corsets, Boulevard de Strasbourg* (1912); plate 2 is a *New York Times* photograph titled *The Plunge*, a shot of a diving woman at the moment she reaches the water (fig. 13). This opening spread makes a stunning case for Roh's approach. As he often does in the book, he pairs a photograph by a known photographer with one by an unknown one, in this case a press photographer, and calls on their visual relationship to suggest a metaphorical dialogue. Here, the old-world sensuality of the corseted torsos that fill Atget's street window is teased out by the curve of the diver's modern, athletic body slicing into the water. The absence of faces, other figures, or exterior context heightens the air of mystery, and the sense that the viewer of these pictures is a voyeur. Both pictures, in another context, could be presented as documents; in this one they call the reader to attention, introducing the idea of visual relation and variation as the principle of Roh's book.

Later spreads add layers to Roh's lessons in visual analysis. Plates 13 and 14, *Woven Material (Stoff)*, c. 1928) and *Incandescent Lamp (Glühbirne)*, 1928; cat. 73), a pair of advertising commissions by Hans Finsler, present a dialogue on tactility, materiality, and the photographic image (fig. 14). Fabric fills the frame of *Woven Material*, so that the surface of the photograph is conflated with that of the cloth; the picture's subject seems less a consumer object than the illusion of texture and form

created through light and tone. The weave of the material plays off the matrix of the printed picture in a conversation between the mediums of textile, photography, and printing. In *Incandescent Lamp*, Finsler works the tension between variant images of a physical object: each element appears twice, first as a part of the lamp and second through its own shadow. This doubled view offers an additional understanding of the picture's subject: the shadow of the bulb reveals the spherical stress-marks of its blown-glass manufacture, as well as a clear reading of the name Osram, the light-bulb company that commissioned the photograph. Meanwhile, shadow, silhouette, and the photograph itself are conflated as simultaneous representations of the lamp. In different ways on each page, then, the spread proposes that a photograph can heighten our awareness of the material nature of its subject, even as it distances that subject from its original form.

Alternately, the pairing of Roh's plate 26, an unknown photographer's image of a Russian crowd, and his plate 27, Paul Edmund Hahn's *The Speaker (Der Sprecher)*, 1928–29; cat. 88), evokes a sociopolitical reading (fig. 15). Again Roh calls on the pictorial principles shared by this pair of photographs—both compositions fill the frame evenly—to draw out a deeper meaning. Russian artists and photojournalists had a mandate to promote an active citizenry in the service of the state. The



Das Gesicht als Landschaft: Die Wellenberge der Stirn

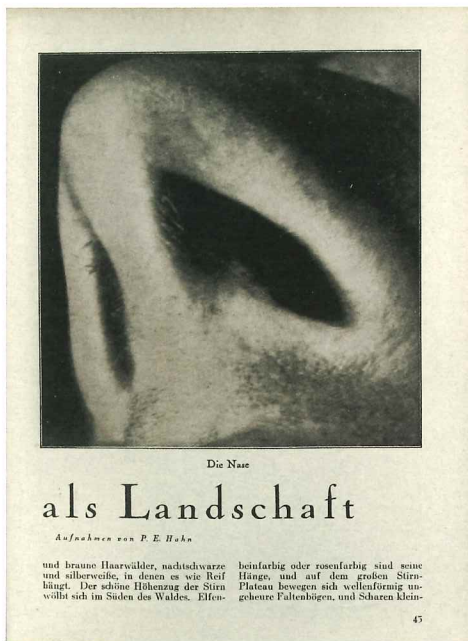
## Das Gesicht

Von Carl Schnebel

Wenn man ein Gesicht unter die Lupe nimmt, dann wird es eine Landschaft, eine freundlich heitere, strahlende, oder eine männlich harte, ernst-

unsvierte. Auf dem nördlichen Gipfel steht beinahe immer ein Wald, manchmal ist es ein goldener Wald mit tausend Stämmen. Es gibt auch rotliche

42



Die Nase

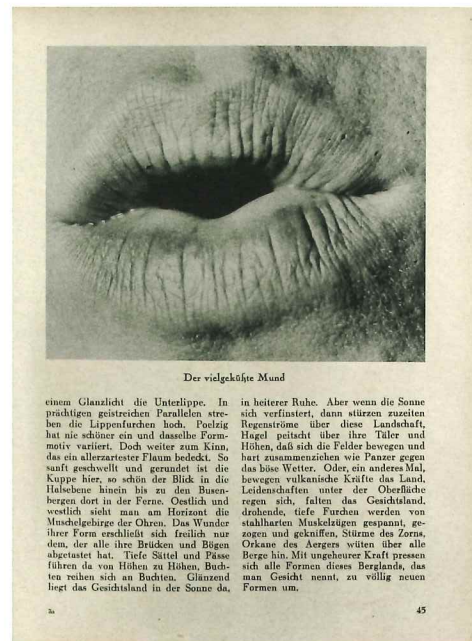
## als Landschaft

Aufnahmen von P. E. Hahn

und braune Haarwälder, nachtschwarze und silberweiße, in denen es wie Reif hängt. Der schöne Höhenzug der Stirn wölbt sich im Süden des Waldes. Elfen-

beinfarbig oder rosenfarbig sind seine Hänge, und auf dem großen Stirn-Plateau bewegen sich wellenförmig ungeheure Faltenbögen, und Scharen klein-

43



Der vielgeküßte Mund

einem Glanzlicht die Unterlippe. In püchligem geistreichen Parallelen streben die Lippenfurchen hoch. Poelzig hat nie schöner ein und dasselbe Formmotiv variiert. Doch weiter zum Kinn, das ein allerzartester Flaum bedeckt. So saft geschwellt und gerundet ist die Kuppe hier, so schön der Blick in die Halbkugel hinten bis zu den Bienenbergen dort in der Ferne. Ostlich und westlich sieht man am Horizont die Muschelgebirge der Ohren. Das Wunder ihrer Form erschließt sich freilich nur dem, der alle ihre Brücken und Bögen abgetastet hat. Tiefe Sättel und Pässe führen da von Höhen zu Höhen. Buchten reihen sich an Buchten. Glänzend liegt das Gesichtsland in der Sonne da,

in heiterer Ruhe. Aber wenn die Sonne sich verfinstert, dann stürzen zuckelnden Regenströme über diese Landschaft, Hagel peitscht über ihre Täler und Höhen, daß sich die Fälder heben und hart zusammenziehen wie Panzer gegen das böse Wetter. Oder, ein anderes Mal, bewegen vulkanische Kräfte das Land. Leidenschaftlich unter der Oberfläche regen sich, falten das Gesichtsland, drohende, tiefe Furchen werden von stahlharten Muskelrügen gespannt, gezogen und gekniffen, Stürme des Zorns, Orkane des Aergers wüten über alle Berge hin. Mit ungeheurer Kraft pressen sich alle Formen dieses Berglands, das man Gesicht nennt, zu völlig neuen Formen um.

45

figs. 16-18 Pages from Carl Schnebel. "Das Gesicht als Landschaft" (The face as landscape). *UHU* 5 (February 1929). Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft e.V. Paul Edmund Hahn. Left to right: *The Waves and Peaks of the Forehead (Die Wellenberge der Stirn)*. *The Nose (Die Nase)*. *The Much-Kissed Mouth (Der vielgeküßte Mund)*; also called *The Speaker [Der Sprecher]*, 1928-29; cat. 88)

juxtaposition of the left-hand photograph's elevated perspective of a Russian crowd with the tightly framed, pursed lips of Hahn's *Speaker* highlights as the central concept of these pictures the theme of the orator (who is called out on the left by the graphic interruption of his triangular white platform). It is a pairing in which each picture activates the other. The significance of the connection Roh makes between them is underscored dramatically by comparison with the general-interest magazine *UHU*, which published *The Speaker* in 1929 as one of a group of photographs of tightly cropped body parts under the heading *Das Gesicht als Landschaft* (The face as landscape; figs. 16-18).<sup>42</sup> Here the photograph is emptied of political overtones and instead enters the realm of poetic vision, the features of the mouth evoking a mountainous landscape, a sandy beach, or whatever the imagination conjures.

Roh had gained stature as an art historian with his 1925 book *Nach Expressionismus: magischer Realismus* (After Expressionism: magic realism), a discursive analysis of contemporary *Neue Sachlichkeit* painting that, significantly, contained a chapter on the relevance of photography. His introductory essay in *Foto-Auge*, "Mechanism and Expressionism," relates photography to strategies of representation and the production of meaning in the art of the time. The image on the cover of *Foto-Auge* is one of the most iconic photomontages of the era, El Lissitzky's *Self-Portrait (The Constructor)* (1924; cat. 168)—a picture embodying the kind of assembling of photographic vision to be emphasized in the book that follows. The camera trick performed for the popular press in J. Jay Hirz's *Brooklyn Bridge in Rainy Weather*

(1927; cat. 104), and the enigmatic hand-composed montage of Roh's own *Under Water (Unter Wasser, 1928-29; cat. 236)* point to the variety of approaches and contexts that *Fifo* embraced equally as experiments in New Vision.

As different as Gräff and Roh were in methodology, both offered engaging surveys of the breadth of interwar avant-garde photography, and both worked to train the reader's visual acuity by placing pictures in dialogue with one another. These books largely treated each photograph not through its subject matter but as a visual image. The pictures—press, studio, sporting, artistic, commercial—presented themselves as manifestations of modern vision, a more elegant, more succinct version of so many words.

### SERIAL VISION

By the late 1920s, modernist photography had become a vital part of the cultural landscape, whether it appeared as news, entertainment, or advertising in the illustrated press or contributed to the intellectual pursuit of visual literacy in large-scale international exhibitions and in books like *Foto-Auge*. A counterpart to both the random displays of the former and the more focused but still various arrays of the latter was the monograph, a format that increasingly flourished as photography gained recognition in art venues.<sup>43</sup> In presenting a cohesive body of work, the monograph offered an alternate form of visual training, asking readers to find meaning in specific artistic choices that it communicated not through text but by showing a practice repeated again and again. At this point many photographers had been working serially



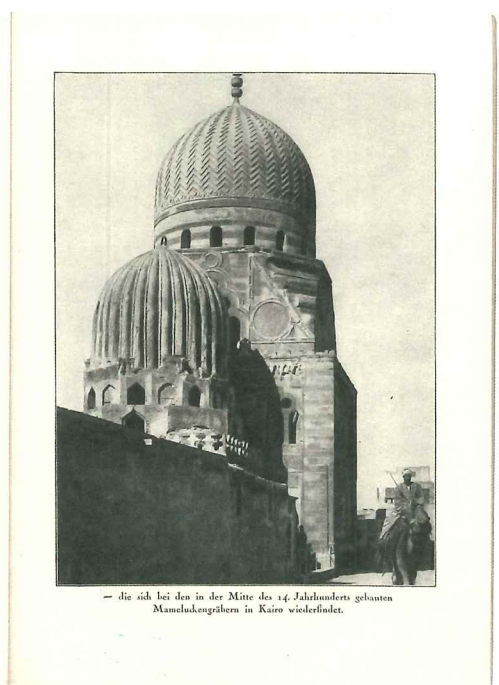
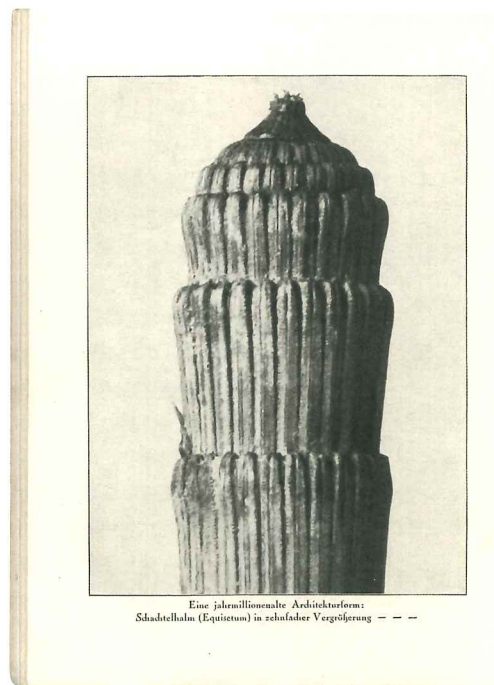
for years, and the book format ratified their practice, partly by bringing them into collaboration with an editor, art dealer, art historian, or publisher.

In 1926, Karl Nierendorf, a Berlin gallerist dealing in both Expressionist and *Neue Sachlichkeit* art, presented an exhibition of the work of Karl Blossfeldt, a photographer who also taught sculpture in a well-known art school in the city. Nierendorf's show, which for many in photography's avant-garde was their first introduction to Blossfeldt's work, juxtaposed a group of his photographs of plants (1898–1932; cats. 29–35) with African tribal objects, and its enthusiastic reception gave a boost to this mode of comparison: that same year, *UHU* ran a feature combining Blossfeldt's plant pictures with photographs of buildings (figs. 19, 20), and the architect Werner Lindner followed suit in his book *Bauten der Technik* (1927), setting Blossfeldt's photographs alongside both medieval and modern architectural forms.<sup>44</sup> In 1928, when Nierendorf and the publisher Günther Wasmuth, known for richly illustrated books, produced Blossfeldt's first monograph, the book was poised for success.<sup>45</sup> The German edition sold out in eight months, and plans began for French and English editions.

Nierendorf's introductory essay takes a philosophical approach, comparing the timelessness of forms in nature to the historical specificity of forms in art. For Nierendorf, Blossfeldt's plant studies demonstrated that with "the help of photographic apparatus, ... a link may be detected between Art and Nature, a link of more striking immediacy than has ever been seen before."<sup>46</sup> The book, however, contains no comparative images; rather, readers must discern Nierendorf's argument

from the 120 plates themselves, full of the clarity of Blossfeldt's photographic magnifications and thoughtfully sequenced to draw attention to the details of each plant form. In one sequence, for example, *Scabiosa columbaria* is followed on the next spread by *Acanthus mollis* (1898–1928; cat. 29); both plants show many finely pointed extensions, lending their distinctive forms contour and texture, but beyond this resemblance the acanthus has a delicate translucence, exposing the veins within the leaves, whereas the many small flowers of the scabious are arranged in a tight ball, making the plant form a dense mass. The acanthus in turn is followed by *Symphytum officinale* (*Wellwurz*, or comfrey), its symmetrical fan of leaves covered with a fine furry texture that only heightens the sharp, architectural appearance of the acanthus. The sequence continues thusly, unfolding a visual melody of plant forms. Precision is central to these studies; Blossfeldt would etch and paint in the contours of the plants' details to heighten their visual presence (as Hanako Murata describes in her essay later in this volume). To extend and heighten vision, Blossfeldt combined magnification, lighting, and retouching—devices made possible by photography.<sup>47</sup>

Published in the same year as Blossfeldt's *Urformen der Kunst* was Albert Renger-Patzsch's *Die Welt ist Schön* (*The world is beautiful*), a monograph that followed on the heels of the artist's first major solo exhibition, at the Behnhaus, Lübeck, in December 1927. The 100 photographs were selected and sequenced by the German art historian Carl Heise, who had also organized the exhibition. Unlike Moholy and Gräff, who arranged pictures based on technique, Heise grouped the plates into



figs. 19, 20 Pages from Robert Breuer. "Grüne Architektur" (Green architecture). *UHU* 9 (June 1926). Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft e.V. Photographs of plants by Karl Blossfeldt (fig. 19, fig. 20 left) paired with architectural photographs, including a fourteenth-century Mameluke tomb in Cairo (fig. 20 right)

categories based on their subjects, and his introductory essay praised Renger's compositional skill in capturing each subject's essence (fig. 21). Renger's work can be read as purely formalist when he crops in closely on the towers of a blast furnace, but his approach becomes more politically charged when he turns to a "little Somali girl" or a Maori mummy. Indeed, Benjamin argued that Renger failed to use photography to extend our understanding of its subjects, which he divorced from their social, economic, and human contexts. By comparison, Benjamin greatly admired Blossfeldt's magnified plant photographs.<sup>48</sup>

The critical responses to *Urformen der Kunst* and *Die Welt ist Schön* are instructive in reading a pair of monographs edited by Roh in 1930. Inspired by the success of *Foto-Auge*, he and Tschichold had joined with the Berlin publisher Klinkhardt & Biermann to develop a series of photography books they called the Fototek series.<sup>49</sup> (Only two were ultimately published; the unrealized books would have focused on thematic genres of photography.) One of the two monographs was on Moholy,

by this point an acknowledged master, and the Fototek book, *Moholy-Nagy: 60 Fotos*, adds little to the discourse on his work through either its text or its pictures. Rather, it is a concise summary tribute to him as a leader of the New Vision.<sup>50</sup> The other book, though, was on Aenne Biermann, who in 1930 was relatively unknown. Having studied photography, she had been commissioned to take magnified pictures of rocks and minerals for a geologist friend of her family's, and had gone on to apply the same direct, close-up method to other subjects as well: her children, plants, everyday objects. One of her plant studies had appeared in the *Fifo* exhibition, bringing her into the discourse on modern photography as a fresh face and, thus, a model of the new photographer. Biermann's photographs were closely comparable to those of Blossfeldt and Renger-Patzsch, but, as a younger, rising practitioner she had yet to be saddled with a critical ideology. That made her an ideal candidate to showcase as the visual companion to a statement on photography.

In this context Roh positioned his introduction to the Biermann monograph, an essay titled "The Literary Dispute about Photography: Theses and Antitheses to the Theme 'Mechanism and Expression,'" as a response to criticism of the New Vision, of the *Fifo* exhibition, and of his book *Foto-Auge*. Without a word on Biermann herself, the essay lists a series of general complaints about the new photography and systematically responds to them, mirroring the dialogic structure also used in the sequence of photographs.<sup>51</sup> Plates 1 and 2, for example, *Ficus elastic* (1926; cat. 21) and *Nadelhozzweig* (*Conifer Branch*), together heighten viewers' attention to the expressive potential of organic forms in nature (fig. 22). Photographed so closely that each fills the frame of its picture, the flat, smooth leaves of the ficus cascade downward in waves while the spiked tendrils of the conifer create a staccato pattern arching upward across the frame; the pairing of the two plants accentuates their contrasts in movement and form. Such compositions elevate their subjects, making visual partners for Roh's rebuttal, in his introductory essay, of the complaint that "important objects are seldom photographed nowadays."<sup>52</sup> He responds, "If a 'section of a puddle close by' appears as expressive as the 'Atlantic Ocean from an airplane view,' it is the puddle which—from the point of functional vitality—is to be preferred. Because it shows us optical significance in places that are usually overlooked by conventional people. (The world can become optically significant *everywhere*.)"<sup>53</sup>

In an alternate approach to the serial vision of the monograph, the typological survey, an approach in heavy circulation since the invention of photography (in the Earl of Caithness and Mr. Bembridge's mid-nineteenth-century photographs of trees, for example), was reinvented in this period by artists such as Sander in his series *Menschen des 20. Jahrhunderts* (*People of the Twentieth Century*).<sup>54</sup> Around 1910, Sander began a lifelong project to photograph "all the citizens of the twentieth century," naming them not as individuals but by profession: *Farmer*



91

fig. 21 Page from Albert Renger-Patzsch. *Die Welt ist Schön. Einhundert Photographische Aufnahmen*. Munich: Einhorn-Verl, 1928. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. Albert Renger-Patzsch. Cowper, seen from below. Blast furnace plant. Herrenwyk (*Kauper, von unten gesehen. Hochofenwerk. Herrenwyk*)

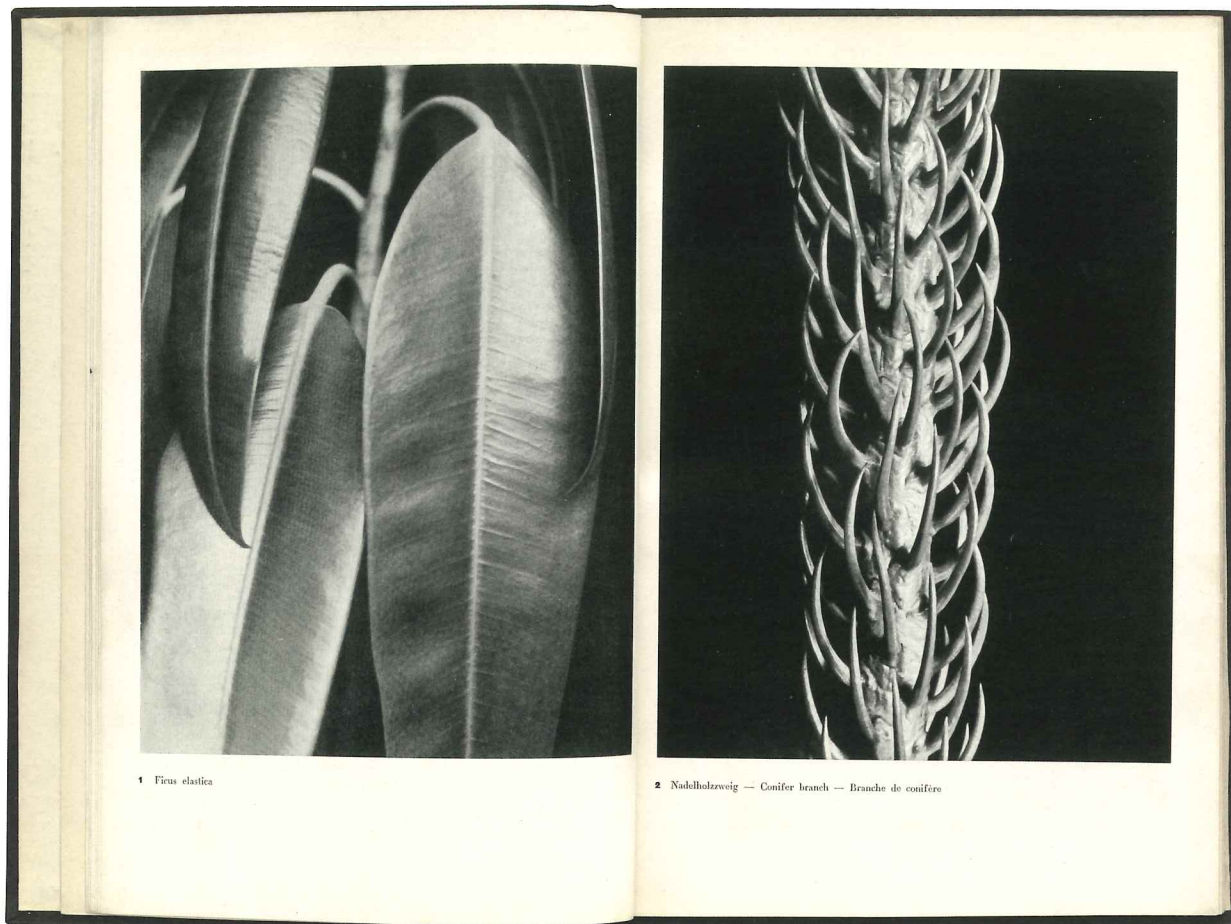


fig. 22 Spread from Aenne Biermann and Franz Roh. *Aenne Biermann: 60 Fotos*. Berlin: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1930. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. Left: Aenne Biermann. *Ficus elastica*. Cat. 21. Right: Aenne Biermann. *Conifer Branch (Nadelholzweig)*

(*Paysan*, 1913), *High School Student (Gymnasiast*, 1926; fig. 23, cat. 272), *Mother and Daughter (Mutter und Tochter*, 1912; fig. 24), *Art Dealer (Kunsthändler*, 1928; cat. 273). Unlike the ethnographic and phrenological studies of the time, Sander's portraits made no claim to uncover some essential form, nor did they impose any hierarchy on the people they documented, from farmer to industrialist. The egalitarianism of his approach was essential to the idea that no matter how celebrated any one picture might be, it gained its meaning only in relationship to the series as a whole. In 1929, Sander designed a seven-volume book of these works (only a more manageable, sixty-portrait version, *Antlitz der Zeit [Face of Our Time]*, was published at the time) as their primary means of exhibition.<sup>55</sup> He made his intentions clear: for him, the significance of this artwork lay in its overall portrait of the interrelated circles of society at large, rather than in its individual images. In the introductory essay to *Antlitz der Zeit*, the novelist Alfred Döblin positioned the series as an academic study in pictures, stating, "You have in front of you a . . . sociology of the last thirty years. How to write a sociology without writing, but presenting photographs instead."<sup>56</sup> And while a sociology might be academic or theoretical, "he who knows how to look will be enlightened more effectively than through lectures

and theories. Through these clear and conclusive photographs he will discover something of himself and others."<sup>57</sup> No matter how diverse the subjects and styles, from photograms to magnified plants to cultural documents of the modern citizen, the discourse on modern photography emphasized the importance of photographic literacy.

Where Sander's survey of the German public was explicitly invested in the social infrastructure, Helmar Lerski, in his series *Metamorphoses* (1936; cats. 161-64), took a more expressive approach. Photographs of a man's face that are something other than portraits, Lerski's pictures explore the dramatic, transformative power of light—an idea only really perceptible when each picture is seen alongside others from the series. These 140 closely shot and tightly cropped views all show the same man; more like Stieglitz's *Equivalents* than like his *Georgia O'Keeffe: A Portrait*, though, they are less interested in their subject than in its transformation through light. Lerski's intention is clear from his public presentations of his photographs in good-sized groups, for example in *Fifo*, whose Essen version opened with a grid of prints from one of his earlier series of similarly lit heads. Meanwhile, writers took even expressive, theatrically lit portraits as opportunities to expand the vocabulary of



Gymnasiast. 1926

40

**fig. 23** Page from August Sander. *Antlitz der Zeit. Sechzig Aufnahmen Deutscher Menschen des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Munich: Transmare Verlag, 1929. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. August Sander. *High School Student (Gymnasiast)*. 1926. Cat. 272

vision: in his introduction to Lerski's book *Köpfe des Alltags*, the art historian Curt Glaser wrote that the photographer's heads "increase our visual knowledge" (figs. 25, 26).<sup>58</sup> Lighting and framing—elements of photographic vision—lifted the working man out of the street, while the book's sequencing transformed a cast of laborers into a heroic pantheon of modern society.

#### A LEGACY FOR THE LANGUAGE OF VISION

The optimism, debate, and flurry of publications that were launched in the years around 1922 flourished for a decade before political events drew the curtain on the era. In 1932, Joseph Stalin closed Russia's artist unions and imposed further restrictions on producers of visual culture. The attacks on Rodchenko that had begun in *Sovetskoe Foto* in 1928 continued, forcing him to revert to traditional viewpoints; by 1942, he had abandoned photography. Meanwhile, in January 1933, Adolf Hitler was sworn in as the head of the German state, and artists

whose aesthetic program was inconsistent with his politics began to face severe persecution. That year, Roh and Tschichold were arrested, held, and interrogated. On Roh's release, he ended his work in photography and abandoned his and Tschichold's ambitious plans for the Fototek series. He would spend the war years in seclusion, writing a book on the unrecognized artist and cultural misunderstanding.<sup>59</sup> In August of 1933, Tschichold emigrated to Switzerland, where Gräff too would seek refuge during World War II. Moholy for his part left Germany in 1935, first for Amsterdam, then for London, and finally for Chicago. These and a host of similar shifts effectively ended the era of confident treatises on the potential of photographic vision.

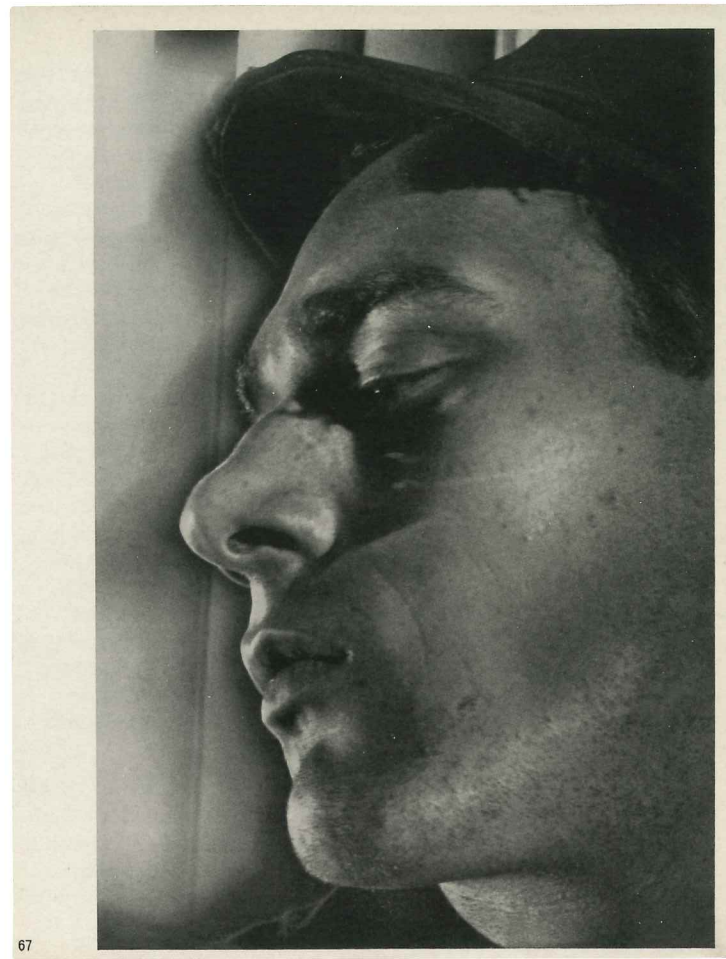
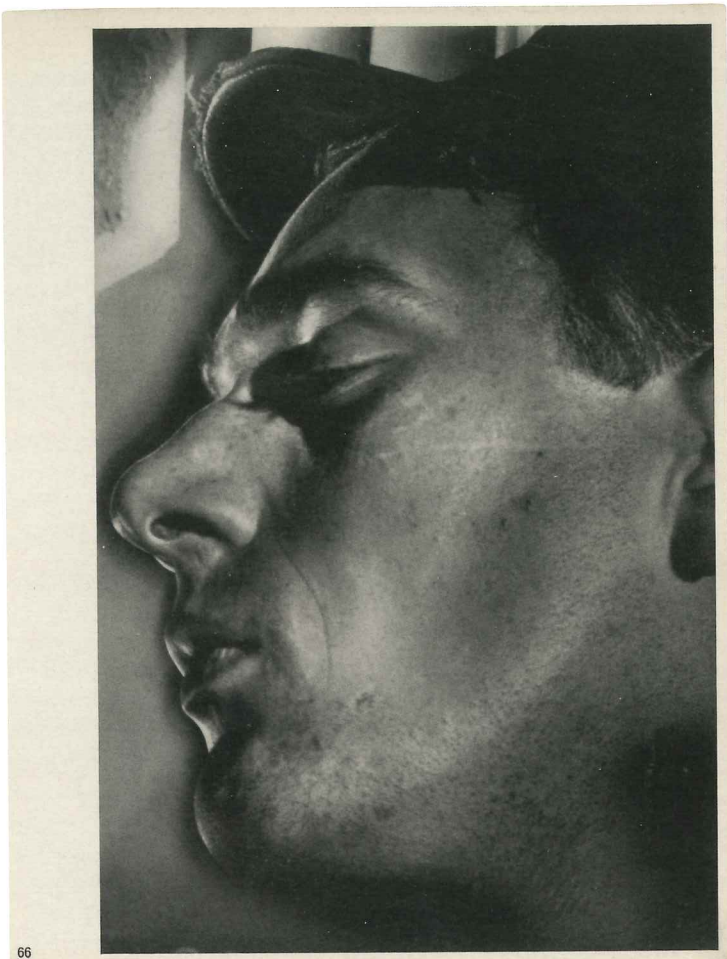
The legacy of this dynamic discourse was perpetuated in the United States, at a few schools and institutions, including The Museum of Modern Art, that welcomed leading figures of the European avant-garde. The Hungarian design professor György Kepes, for example, wrote an influential treatise, *Language of Vision* (1944), that integrates a philosophy of seeing with an illustrated



Mutter und Tochter, Bauern- und Bergmannsfrau. 1912

17

**fig. 24** Page from August Sander. *Antlitz der Zeit. Sechzig Aufnahmen Deutscher Menschen Des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Munich: Transmare Verlag, 1929. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. August Sander. *Mother and Daughter (Mutter und Tochter)*. 1912



figs. 25, 26 Pages from Helmar Lerski. *Köpfe des Alltags: Unbekannte Menschen*. Berlin: Verlag H. Reckendorf, 1931. The Museum of Modern Art Library, New York. Helmar Lerski. *Stoker (Heizer)*

textbook on art fundamentals such that the author's concepts could be applied in artistic practice.<sup>60</sup> Kepes had been a longtime disciple and colleague of Moholy's, and his book stands as a kind of a capstone on the discussions and debates around photography through the previous two decades, usefully highlighting concepts central to the discourse of that era. In 1937, when Moholy had accepted an invitation to be the director of the School of Design in Chicago, he had asked Kepes to join him there. Both men seized the opportunity to continue developing the Bauhaus principles of artistic experimentation, functional design, and integrated media, and the presence of this Hungarian pair at the School of Design had earned it the moniker the "New Bauhaus." The path of Moholy and Kepes symbolizes both the continuation and the end of the discourse on photography in the interwar years. After World War II, the New Vision discussion would carry on—in the courses of the New Bauhaus, in books like Kepes's, in centers such as the Center for Advanced Visual Studies (which Kepes established in 1967 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology), and elsewhere—but it was permanently altered in nature.

The Walther Collection, in gathering exceptional prints of pictures that circulated widely in the documents in which the idea of modern photography was debated,

represents its own version of the New Vision. The pictures in *Object:Photo* steep us in the vernacular new language that the authors of these treatises firmly believed would be the means of communication in the future: modernism's language of vision.

The epigraph to this essay is from László Moholy-Nagy, "Die Photographie in der Reklame," *Photographische Korrespondenz* (Vienna) no. 9 (September 1927), Eng. trans. in Christopher Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era: European Documents and Critical Writings, 1913–1940* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989), pp. 89–90. The primary documents of published writing on photography from the 1920s and '30s are the essay's focus. In addition to the original publications, the following anthologies of English translations have been useful: Phillips's *Photography in the Modern Era*, cited above; David Mellor, ed., *Germany: The New Photography 1927–33* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978); Vicki Goldberg, ed., *Photography in Print: Writings from 1816 to the Present* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981); Alan Trachtenberg, ed., *Classic Essays on Photography* (New Haven: Leete's Island Books, 1980); and Timothy Benson and Eva Forgacs, *Between Worlds: A Sourcebook of Central European Avant-gardes 1910–1930* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2002).

1. The phrase "New Vision" was not coined as a formal term for modernist photography, nor did it name a specific style or group of artists. When Moholy's book *Von Material zu Architektur* (1929), a summary of his foundation course at the Bauhaus, was published in an English edition in 1930, its title was *The New Vision* (*The New Vision: From Material to Architecture*, Eng. trans. Daphne M. Hoffman, New York: Brewer, Warren & Putnam, Inc., 1930). A number of recent overviews of modernist photography have used the phrase: see, e.g., Maria Morris Hambourg, *The New Vision* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989); Christian Bouqueret, *Des années folles aux années noires. La Nouvelle Vision photographique en France—1920–1940* (Paris: Marval, 1997); and Rainer K. Wick, ed., *Das Neue Sehen. Von der Fotografie am Bauhaus zur Subjektiven Fotografie* (Munich: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1991).

2. Many scholars have discussed the development of modernist photography, its historical context, and its regional variants with insight and depth. See, e.g., Matthew Witkovsky, *Foto: Modernity in Central Europe* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2007), and Quentin Bajac and Clément Chéroux, *Voici Paris. Modernités photographiques, 1920–1950* (Paris: Centre Pompidou, 2012), as well as selected surveys in this volume's Bibliography.

3. Peter Galassi, quoted in Philip Gafter, "What 8,500 Pictures Are Worth," *New York Times*, January 1, 2006. Available online at [www.nytimes.com/2006/01/01/arts/design/01geft.html?pagewanted=print&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/01/arts/design/01geft.html?pagewanted=print&_r=0) (accessed August 19, 2014). The statement carries particular weight coming from the head of a curatorial department that played such an influential role in defining photographic modernism and writing its history. The founding, early programs and influence of MoMA's Department of Photography has been the subject of insightful analysis by many scholars: see, e.g., Phillips. "The Judgment Seat of Photography," in Richard Bolton, ed., *Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1992), and Erin O'Toole, "No Democracy in Quality: Ansel Adams, Beaumont and Nancy Newhall, and the Founding of the Department of Photographs at The Museum of Modern Art," PhD thesis, University of Arizona, Tucson, 2010.

4. Ezra Pound, quoted in Kevin Jackson, *Constellation of Genius. 1922: Modernism Year One* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013), p. 3. Pound based this opinion on the transformative influence of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, published respectively in January and October of 1922. He was so committed to the idea of "year one" that he dated his correspondence "1 a.u." (1 after *Ulysses*) for a period.

5. Moholy-Nagy, "Produktion-Reproduktion," *De Stijl* (Leiden) 5, no. 7 (July 1922), Eng. trans. as "Production-Reproduction" in Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era*, p. 80.

6. On the earliest use of the phrase "New Vision," see note 1 above.

7. Moholy-Nagy, *Malerei, Fotografie, Film*, vol. 8 in the Bauhausbücher series (Munich: Albert Langen Verlag, 1925).

8. Moholy-Nagy, "Photography in Advertising," 1927, Eng. trans. in Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era*, p. 90.

9. Walter Benjamin, "Neues von Blumen," 1928, in Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften* 3, ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1972), Eng. trans. as "New Things about Plants" in Mellor, ed., *Germany: The New Photography 1927–33*, pp. 20–21.

10. Franz Roh, "Mechanism and Expression," *Foto-Auge/Oeil et Photo/Photo-Eye* (Stuttgart: Akademischer Verlag F. Wedekind, 1929), p. 14.

11. César Domela Nieuwenhuis, "Fotomontage," *De Reclame* (Amsterdam), May 1931, p. 212, Eng. trans. as "Photomontage" in Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era*, p. 306.

12. Karel Teige, "Úkoly moderní fotografie," *Moderná tvorba úžitková* (Bratislava: Svaz cs. Diela, 1931), pp. 77–78, Eng. trans. in Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era*, p. 320.

13. See Georgia O'Keeffe, "Introduction," *Georgia O'Keeffe, a Portrait by Alfred Stieglitz* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1978), p. 16.

14. Paul Strand, "Alfred Stieglitz and a Machine," printed privately in New York, February 14, 1921, reprinted in *MSS* no. 2 (March 1922):6. David Octavius Hill had been among the earliest photographers to develop a professional portrait business—it began in the mid-1840s—and he is credited with creating many of the conventions of photographic portraiture. As early-twentieth-century photographers worked to position themselves within art institutions and discourse, he became an important early example of a photographer who had transformed the medium to meet aesthetic ends as well as documentary ones. Heinrich Schwartz's book *David Octavius Hill. Der Meister der Photographie* (Leipzig: Insel, 1931), Eng. trans. as *David Octavius Hill: Master of Photography* (New York: The Viking Press, 1931) is considered the first art-historical treatment of any photographer's work. Since Hill had an established practice within the first decade after the announcement of the process's invention, artists such as Stieglitz and Strand, who wanted to make a case for photography as art, saw Schwartz's book as an important model.

15. See Alfred Stieglitz, "Letter to Hart Crane," in *Alfred Stieglitz: Photographs and Writings*, ed. Sarah Greenough and Juan Hamilton (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1983), p. 208.

16. See Jean Cocteau, "Lettre ouverte à M. Man Ray, photographe américain," *Les Feuilles libres* (Paris) no. 26 (April/May 1922):134–35; "A New Method of Realizing the Artistic Possibilities of Photography," *Vanity Fair*, November 1922, p. 50; "Rose Sel a Vie," *The Little Review*, Autumn 1922, n.p.; and *Broom* 4, no. 4 (March 1923):n.p.

17. Cocteau, "Lettre ouverte à M. Man Ray, photographe américain," Eng. trans. in Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era*, p. 2.

18. Robert Desnos, "Man Ray," *Le Journal* (Paris), December 14, 1923, Eng. trans. first in *Transition* (Paris) no. 15 (February 1929) and in Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era*, pp. 8, 10.

19. Teige, "Foto Kino Film," *Život* (Prague) no. 2 (1922):74, quoted in Witkovsky, "Surrealism in the Plural: Guillaume Apollinaire, Ivan Goll and Devětsil in the 1920s," *Papers of Surrealism* no. 2 (Manchester: Centre for the Study of Surrealism and Its Legacies, 2004), p. 9.

20. Teige, *Film*, from the series *Radosti ze Života* 1 (Prague: Nakl. V. Petra, 1925).

21. Moholy-Nagy, "Production-Reproduction," p. 80.

22. Moholy-Nagy, *Malerei, Fotografie, Film*, second ed. 1927, Eng. trans. as *Painting, Photography, Film*, trans. Janet Seligman (London: Lund Humphries, 1969), p. 47.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 102. Moholy's text credits this photograph to the commercial Keystone agency, which represented István Kerny and many other professional photographers. It was common for photographs to be credited to their studio or distribution agency even when the artist was known.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

25. "A Photographer," "Illustrirovannoe pismo v redaktsiiu: nashi i za granitsa," *Sovetskoe Foto* no. 4 (April 1928):n.p., Eng. trans. in Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era*, pp. 243–44.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 244.

27. Rodchenko, "Krupnaia bezgramotnost ili melkaia gadost?," *Novy Lef* no. 6 (June 1928):42–48, and "Puti sovremennoi fotografii," *Novy Lef* no. 9 (September 1928):31–39, Eng. trans. as "Downright Ignorance or a Mean Trick?" and "The Paths of Modern Photography," trans. John E. Bowlit, in Phillips, ed., *Photography in the Modern Era*, pp. 245–48, 256–63.

28. Rodchenko, "Downright Ignorance or a Mean Trick?," p. 246.

29. Rodchenko, "Krupnaia bezgramotnost ili melkaia gadost?," p. 45.

30. Rodchenko, "Downright Ignorance or a Mean Trick?," p. 246, and "The Paths of Modern Photography," p. 259.

31. Rodchenko, "The Paths of Modern Photography," p. 262.

32. Gustaf Stotz, ed., *Film und Foto: Internationale Ausstellung des Deutschen Werkbundes* (Stuttgart: Deutscher Werkbund, 1929).

33. Recent scholarship has offered new insights into these publications. See, e.g., Andrea Nelson, "Reading Photobooks: Narrative Montage and the Construction of Modern Visual Literacy," PhD thesis, University of Minnesota, 2007, and Daniel Magilow, *The Photography of Crisis: The Photo Essays of Weimar Germany* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012).

34. Stotz, *Film und Foto*, n.p. (facing p. 25). Author's trans.
35. Werner Gräff, *Es Kommt der neue Fotograf!* (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1929), p. 5. Eng. trans. P. S. Falla in Mellor, ed., *Germany: The New Photography 1927-33*, p. 25.
36. Gräff, *Es Kommt der neue Fotograf!*, p. 47. Author's trans.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., pp. 54-55.
39. Ibid., pp. 64-65.
40. Hans Richter and Gräff, *Filmgegner von Heute—Filmfreunde von Morgen* (Berlin: Herman Reckendorf, 1929).
41. Moholy often emphasizes the importance of interrelationships of pictures in his writing on photography; see, for example, *Malerei, Fotografie, Film*, p. 28.
42. Carl Schnebel, "Das Gesicht als Landschaft," *UHU* no. 5 (February 1929).
43. Olivier Lugon has argued that these monographs were a reactionary response to the "photo-inflation" of the years preceding. See his "'Photo-Inflation': Image Profusion in German Photography, 1925-1945," *History of Photography* 32, no. 3 (Autumn 2008):219-34.
44. Robert Breuer, "Grüne Architektur." *UHU* 9 (June 1926):n.p.; Werner Lindner, *Bauten der Technik. Ihre Form und Wirkung. Werkanlagen* (Berlin: Wasmuth, 1927).
45. Karl Blossfeldt, *Urformen der Kunst* (Tübingen: Verlag Ernst Wasmuth, 1928).
46. Karl Nierendorf, "Vorwort," in *ibid.*, Eng. trans. Jill Hollis in *Karl Blossfeldt Photographs* (Oxford: Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, 1978), repr. in Mellor, ed., *Germany: The New Photography 1927-33*, p. 17.
47. Reviews of *Urformen der Kunst* recognized these devices as photographic. Benjamin, for example, described Blossfeldt's pictures as visual prostheses: "only photography is capable of revealing [an unsuspected wealth of forms and analogies] because the veil drawn over these mysteries by our own indolence is only pulled back by means of multiple magnification." Benjamin, "New Things about Plants," p. 20.
48. Benjamin, "A Short History of Photography," 1931, Eng. trans. Phil Patton in *Artforum* 15, no. 6 (February 1977), repr. in Trachtenberg, ed., *Classic Essays on Photography*, p. 213.
49. Klinkhardt & Biermann had previously published Roh's *Nach Expressionismus: magischer Realismus*, making this a natural partnership.
50. *Moholy-Nagy: 60 Fotos* (Berlin: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1930).
51. *Aenne Biermann: 60 Fotos* (Berlin: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1930). Aenne Biermann was married to Herbert Joseph Biermann, one half of the publishing partnership of Klinkhardt & Biermann. It was through her husband's social network that she met Roh.
52. Roh, "The Literary Dispute about Photography," in *ibid.*, p. 7.
53. Ibid.
54. August Sander's typology is unique in many ways, not least its scale, but there were other engaged in creative typologies. See, e.g., Blossfeldt's plant studies or Jaromir Funke's survey of churches in rural Czechoslovakia.
55. Sander, *Antlitz der Zeit* (Munich: Kurt Wolff/Transmare Verlag, 1929).
56. Alfred Döblin, "Einleitung," in Sander, *Antlitz der Zeit*, Eng. trans. as "About Faces, Portraits and Their Reality," trans. Marion Schneider, in Mellor, *Germany: The New Photography 1927-33*, p. 58.
57. Ibid., p. 59.
58. Curt Glaser, "Einleitung," in Helmar Lerski, *Köpfe des Alltags* (Berlin: Hermann Reckendorf Verlag, 1931), Eng. trans. as "Introduction to Helmar Lerski, *Köpfe des Alltags*," trans. P. S. Falla, in Mellor, ed., *Germany: The New Photography 1927-33*, p. 64.
59. Roh, *Das Verkannte Künstler. Geschichte und Theorie des kulturellen Mißverstehens* (Munich: Heimeran, 1948).
60. György Kepes. *Language of Vision* (Chicago: Paul Theobald, 1944).