

Publications:

By MÜLLER-POHLE: books—*Dumont Foto 4: Fotografie in Europa heute*, editor, Cologne 1982; *Transformation*, Göttingen 1983; articles—"Was ist Fotografie?" in *Fotografie* (Göttingen), no. 5, 1978; "Die Zweite Avantgarde der Fotografie" in *Fotografie* (Göttingen), no. 7, 1978; "Andreas Müller-Pohle: About Visual-Questioning," interview with Marco Misani, in *Printletter* (Zurich), no. 23, 1979; "Serie—Zyklus—Sequenz—Tableau" in *European Photography* (Göttingen), no. 1, 1980; "Über das Licht: Aspekte einer fotografischen Lichtästhetik" in *Dumont Foto 2*, edited by Hugo Schöttle, Cologne 1980; "Visualismus" in *European Photography* (Göttingen), no. 3, 1980; "Project Photography" in *European Photography* (Göttingen), no. 13, 1983; "Information Strategies" in *European Photography* (Göttingen), no. 21, 1985.

On MÜLLER-POHLE: books—*Vorstellungen und Wirklichkeit: 7 Aspekte Subjektiver Fotografie*, edited by Rolf Wedewer, Cologne 1980; *Die Geschichte der Fotografie im 20. Jahrhundert* | *History of Photography in the 20th Century* by Petr Tausk, Cologne 1977, London 1980; *Ist Fotografie Kunst? Gehört Fotografie ins Museum?*, edited by Erika Kiffl, Munich 1982; *Fotografia Europea Contemporanea*, edited by Giovanni Chiaramonte, Milan 1983; *La Photographie Créative* by Jean-Claude Lemagny, Paris 1984; article—"Fotografie—ein gedanklicher Prozess" by Jörg Krichbaum in *Fotografie* (Göttingen), no. 6, 1978.

What I can't see, I photograph. What I don't wish to photograph, I see.

—Andreas Müller-Pohle

They are the result of a theoretical reflection. Müller-Pohle's theory of photography, as expressed in various writings and lectures, needs to be stated, before the pictures themselves are to be considered. There is nothing empirical, naive, about them, and if they seem to be the results of spontaneous motions, this is due to disciplined deliberation. The theory which sustains the photos may be resumed this way:

The camera is an apparatus which was programmed to make pictures. The photographer is expected to act within that program. If he does so, he will be making pictures of the outside world. That world reflects rays which the camera captures on sensitive surfaces, and the photographer who acts within the camera program will "document" the outside world as captured by the camera. But the photographer may refuse to act within the camera program. He may transfer his interest from the outside world toward the camera interior. He may concentrate upon what happens to the rays which come into the camera from the outside world. The pictures which such a photographer will produce will no longer "document" the outside world, but rather the camera program. They will render visible the hidden program, and they will thus whiten the black box. Such pictures are important, because the camera program which they show is one among the many apparatus programs which are about to structure our perceptions, desires, feelings, our knowledges and our actions. In fact: such a photographer who refuses to go by the camera program is committed to showing the hidden programs of the emerging society of automatic apparatus.

In his book *Transformation* Andreas Müller-Pohle presents the result of such an effort to photograph the inside of the camera, instead of photographing the outside world. His strategy to escape from the camera program is deceptively simple. The camera prescribes a specific sequence of gestures for the photographer to execute: (1) take hold of the camera. (2) look through it toward

the outside world. (3) choose one among the visions you have seen. (4) press upon the releaser. Müller-Pohle inverts this sequence thus: (1) take hold of the camera. (2) press upon the releaser. (3) look at the pictures that result. (4) choose one. What happens through this inversion is a true revolution of photographic vision. The outside world disappears from it. The freedom of choice is transferred from the decision to press upon the releaser toward the decision to select one among numerous pictures taken by chance. This freedom is exercised, not within the camera program, but after the camera function, and it acts upon the automatically produced pictures. And the criteria of choice are no longer imposed by the dubious relation between the picture and the outside world, but have become purely formal, (esthetic).

If one looks upon the photos presented, one is impressed by their elegance and their "abstractness". The elegance is due to the photographers criteria of choice: he has selected his photos from among a multitude of automatically produced pictures. Their "abstractness" is due to our difficulty to establish a link between them and the objects of the outside world: since the photos were taken blindly, they do not show the photographer's vision of the outside world, but they show what the moving camera does to the rays it captures. However, this elegance and abstractness of the photos should not divert the observer's attention from the basic message they carry. Which is this: It is possible to escape from the camera program. Left to itself, the camera will photograph blindly, by pure chance, absurdly, without any purpose. And man can then step in, and he can give a meaning to this absurd automatic function, by exercising his freedom of choice. Thus man may use chance as a strategy for freedom.

This is an important message. It goes far beyond the realm of photography, and it concerns a possible attitude in the face of every automatic apparatus. It suggests that freedom, in the immediate future, may not demand from us that we fight apparatus, but that we let it function blindly, and then choose from what the apparatus has produced. Andreas Müller-Pohle's photos say this, in effect: do not photograph as you are supposed to, but let the camera do it. You will then be free to select the pictures you prefer according to criteria which are yours, and not those imposed by the camera program. Andreas Müller-Pohle's photos are proclamations of freedom in the face of automatic apparatus.

—Vilém Flusser.

MUNKACSI, Martin.

American. Born Martin Marmorstein, in Kolozsvár, district of Munkacs, Hungary, now Cluj-Napoca, Rumania, 18 May 1896; family name changed to Munkacs, c. 1902; emigrated to the United States, 1934, subsequently naturalized. Educated in Dicső-Szent-Marton, Hungary, until 1907; mainly self-taught in photography. Served in Austro-Hungarian Army, 1915-18. Married 3 times; daughter: Joan. Worked as apprentice house-painter, Budapest, 1911-13; writer-reporter for *Az Est*, *Pesti Napló*, *Szinhazi Elet* newspapers and magazines, Budapest, 1914-21; sports photographer-editor. *Az Est* newspaper and *Theatre Life* weekly review, Budapest, 1921-27; Contract Photographer, Ullstein Verlag publishers, working for *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, *Die Dame*, *Koralle* and *Uhu* magazines, Berlin, 1927-30; freelance magazine and press photographer, contributing to *The Studio*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Das Deutsche Lichtbild*, *Photographie*, *Modern Photography*, etc., Berlin and New York, 1930-33; Contract Fashion Photographer, Hearst News-

papers Inc., working for *Harper's Bazaar*, *Town and Country*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Pictorial Review*, *Life*, etc., New York, 1934-40; Contract Photographer, *Ladies' Home Journal*, New York, 1940-46; freelance photographer, working for King Features, Henry Ford, Reynolds Company, and film cameraman and lighting designer for television films, New York, 1946 until his death, 1963. Estate: Joan Munkacs, Woodstock, New York. Died (in New York) 14 July 1963.

Individual Exhibitions:

- 1978 *Spontaneity and Style*, International Center of Photography, New York (toured the United States and Europe)
- 1985 Photofind Gallery, Woodstock, New York

Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 1937 *Photography 1839-1937*, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1940 *Tudor City Artist and Photographers*, Tudor City, New York
- 1965 *Glamour Portraits*, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1975 *Fashion 1900-1939*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London (toured Britain)
- 1977 *Fashion Photography*, International Museum of Photography, Rochester, New York (travelled to Brooklyn Museum, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Cincinnati Art Institute, Ohio; and Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida)
- 1979 *Life: The First Decade*, Grey Art Gallery, New York University (toured the United States)
- Fleeting Gestures: Dance Photographs*, International Center of Photography, New York (travelled to The Photographers' Gallery, London, and Venezia 79)
- 1980 *Avant-Garde Photography in Germany 1919-1939*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (toured the United States)
- 1982 *Lichtbildnisse: Das Porträt in der Fotografie*, Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn
- 1985 *Shots of Style*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London (toured Britain)

Collections:

Joan Munkacs, Woodstock, New York; Harper's Bazaar, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; International Center of Photography, New York; International Museum of Photography, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Museum Ludwig, Cologne.

Publications:

By MUNKACSI: books—*How America Lives*, New York 1941; *Fool's Apprentice*, autobiography, New York 1945; *Munkacs: Nudes*, New York 1951; *Style in Motion: Munkacs Photographs of the 20's and 30's*, edited by Nancy White and John Esten, New York 1979; articles—"Think While You Shoot" in *Harper's Bazaar* (New York), November 1935; "Must They Be Sharp" in *Photography* (New York), Fall 1947; "Light Up Your Darkroom" in *Universal Photo Almanac*, New York 1951; untitled article in *Popular Photography* (New York), November 1963; film—*Bob's Declaration of Independence*, 1954.

On MUNKACSI: books—*Words and Pictures: An Introduction to Photojournalism* by Wilson Hicks, New York 1952; *Beauty: Variations on the Theme*