

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **NEW WAYS OF SEEING THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE 1920s AND '30s**

**30 JUNE TO 24 OCTOBER 2021**

**Exhibition Hall of the Department of Prints and Drawings**

**Frankfurt am Main, 29 June 2021.** The Weimar Republic (1918–1933) was an era of great innovation in modern photography. There was a growing demand for press and advertising images—and numerous photographers to cater to it. Their works also appeared in elaborate photo books they published on their own initiative. One catalyst for these developments was the advent of the 35mm camera in the 1920s, an invention permitting unprecedented freedom of movement. Unusual perspectives, steep-angled views from above and below, and close-ups of details testify to a new enthusiasm for photographic experimentation. This modern aesthetic came to be known as *Neues Sehen* (New Ways of Seeing), a catchword that can be understood as a call for a new visual approach on the part of the photographer and the viewer alike. Pictorial language now became clearer, more direct, and in many cases more linear. In its matter-of-fact rigour it corresponded to the needs of a society that, after the disaster of World War I, had come to favour realistic depiction.

From 30 June to 24 October 2021, the Städel Museum will shed light on modern photography's wide-ranging trends. In an introduction and seven theme-oriented sections, the exhibition "New Ways of Seeing: The Photography of the 1920s and '30s" will convey an impression of the medium's various uses in the interwar period. Some of the works on view will also offer visual presentiments of the 1930s, in which the Nazis increasingly instrumentalized photography as a means of communication for political propaganda purposes. The show's themes will encompass photography's establishment at vocational training institutes and art academies, photographic illustration and photojournalism, the employment of photography in science and research, portrait photography, and the use of the medium in advertising, industry, and political propaganda. Historical magazines, photo books, and posters will supplement the works on view.

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The featured works, numbering over a hundred, will include examples by prominent exponents of the medium such as Alfred Ehrhardt, Hans Finsler, Lotte Jacobi, Felix H. Man, Albert Renger-Patzsch, Erich Salomon, August Sander, Umbo, Paul Wolff, and Yva, as well as several of their little-known colleagues, among them Carl Albiker, Karl Theodor Gremmler, and Paul W. John. Apart from a small number of loans, these works all belong to the Städel Museum's holdings of more than 5,000 photographs.

“The Städel Museum succeeded in amassing a photo collection of international stature within just a few years. A special focus of these holdings is the photography of the Weimar Republic, an era of epochal transformation for this image medium. The Städel exhibition ‘New Ways of Seeing’ will present a panoramic overview of the manifold trends in modern photography of the 1920s and ‘30s”, commented Städel director Philipp Demandt.

“Present-day photography exhibitions rarely show the works in the context in which they were made. Instead the focus is on the images as artworks in their own right, and on the aesthetic appreciation of the original print. Most photos, however, were taken for a specific purpose—for newspapers, posters, magazines, or advertisements—or assigned a purpose after the fact. The exhibition will shed light on photography's original contexts and utilizations”, added Kristina Lemke, the head of the Städel's photography collection and curator of the exhibition.

The exhibition “New Ways of Seeing: The Photography of the 1920s and ‘30s” will provide well-founded insights into innovative trends in photography as a whole, while also highlighting the function and impact of the individual works. It will moreover introduce the widely differing and chequered biographies of the individual photographers to convey a better understanding of how they were perceived by the public in their day.

**The photographers represented in the exhibition:**

Carl Albiker, Gertrud Arndt, Atelier Manassé, Ilse Bing, Karl Blossfeldt, Margaret Bourke-White, Walter Dixel, Hugo Erfurth, Alfred Erhardt, T. Lux Feininger, Hans Finsler, Trude Fleischmann, Max Göllner, Hein Gorny, Karl Theodor Gremmler, Elisabeth Hase, Walter Hege, Heinrich Hoffmann, Lotte Jacobi, Paul W. John, Fred Koch, Max Krajewski, Stefan Kruckenhauser, Karl Krüger, Adolf Lazi, Erna Lendvai-Dirksen, Helmar Lerski, Madame d'Ora, Felix H. Man, Lucia Moholy, Martin Munkácsi, Max Peiffer Watenphul, Georgi Petrusov, Albert Renger-Patzsch, Hans Retzlaff, Hans Robertson, Aleksandr Rodchenko, Werner Rohde, Lothar Rübelt,

Erich Salomon, August Sander, Arkady Shaikhet, Max Schirner, Hugo Schmölz, Fritz Schreiber, Herbert Schürmann, Friedrich Seidenstücker, Anton Stankowski, Sasha and Cami Stone, Wolf Strache, Carl Strüwe, Umbo (Otto Umbehr), Hans Volger, Kurt Warnekros, Paul Wolff, Yva, Hannelore Ziegler, Willi Zielke

**NEW WAYS OF SEEING: THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE 1920s AND '30s**

**Exhibition dates:** 30 June to 24 October 2021

**Curator:** Kristina Lemke (Head of the Photography Collection)

**Location:** Städel Museum, Schaumainkai 63, 60596 Frankfurt am Main

**Information:** [www.staedelmuseum.de](http://www.staedelmuseum.de)

**Visitor services:** +49(0)69-605098-200, [info@staedelmuseum.de](mailto:info@staedelmuseum.de)

**Opening hours:** Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun + holidays 10.00 am–6.00 pm, Thu 10.00 am–9.00 pm

**Admission:** 14 EUR; free for children under 12

**Advance ticket sales:** [shop.staedelmuseum.de](http://shop.staedelmuseum.de)

**Catalogue:** An accompanying exhibition catalogue is being published by the Kerber Verlag, edited by Kristina Lemke, with a foreword by Philipp Demandt and contributions by Anne Vitten, Patrick Rössler, Birgit Schillak-Hammers, Wolfgang Brückle, Rolf Sachsse, Jens Bove, and Steffen Siegel, 260 pages, in German and English, 39.90 EUR (museum edition).

**Sponsored by:** FAZIT-STIFTUNG, Alfred Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung, Dr. Hans Feith und Dr. Elisabeth Feith-Stiftung

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