

Press release

A life after the Bauhaus:

Unknown works by the Bauhaus photographer Lucia Moholy at the Bauhaus Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung

This exhibition will be the first to provide an extensive presentation of Lucia Moholy's work from the 1930s to the 1950s.

4 October 2016: Beginning tomorrow the Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung will be showing the exhibition "Lucia Moholy: The English Years", presenting for the first time largely unknown works taken between the 1930s and 1950s by the artist Lucia Moholy, who gained fame as a Bauhaus photographer. The focus is on portrait, landscape and architectural photographs that Lucia Moholy created in England from 1934 onwards, following her emigration from Nazi Germany. Images from her journeys to the Balkan countries and the Middle East can additionally be seen. The photographs are from the estate of Lucia Moholy (1894–1989), which is a part of the Bauhaus-Archiv's collection. They include numerous photographs that have never been shown before. "A Hundred Years of Photography 1839–1939", the standard work on the history of photography published by Lucia Moholy in 1939, has been republished and translated into German. The exhibition runs until 27 February 2017 and will be accompanied by a programme of events. It is a part of EMOP Berlin – European Month of Photography 2016.

Dr Annemarie Jaeggi, director of the Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung, explains: "Lucia Moholy lived at the Bauhaus for five years and she decisively shaped and still continues to shape the image of the Bauhaus through the documentary photographs that she took there. She became famous through these works. Now we would like to draw attention to her life and work after the Bauhaus, which is familiar only to a few experts."

Lucia Moholy was born in Karlín (now a part of Prague) on 18 January 1894; she gained her qualified teacher status for German and English in 1912 and then attended classes in art history and philosophy at the University of Prague. In a journal entry of 1915 we already find her proclaiming her "interest in photography", which would remain with her throughout her life: "I am a passive artist, I can capture impressions and would surely become able to photograph these from the best side ...". At first, however, Schulz worked as an editor and copy-editor for several publishing houses and wrote reviews and criticism; she became an editor at Berlin's Rowohlt Verlag in 1920 and met her future husband, László Moholy-Nagy, in 1921. They worked together in the area of experimental photography in 1922 and 1923 and Lucia Moholy additionally played a substantial part in her husband's theoretical writings. She went with him to the Bauhaus from 1923 to 1928. Initially she completed an apprenticeship at a photo studio not affiliated with the school and attended technical classes on photography and printing at the Akademie für Graphische Künste und Buchgewerbe (now HGB) in Leipzig. At the Bauhaus Moholy created portraits of students and teachers in a seminally objective style. Her photographs of architecture and products were used extensively in the institution's self-presentation. Together with Moholy-Nagy she also edited the highly esteemed Bauhaus Books, among other things. Already separated from her hus-

band, Lucia Moholy succeeded Umbo as head of the photography class at Johannes Itten's school from 1930 to 1933 and also travelled to Yugoslavia and other destinations. A selection of her early travel photographs can be seen in the exhibition. After the surrender of power to the Nazis and the arrest of Theodor Neubauer – her partner at that time and a member of the German Communist Party – Lucia Moholy emigrated to London by way of Prague, Vienna and Paris.

From 1934 to 1958 Lucia Moholy lived primarily in London. Until 1938 her activity there was focused on portrait photography, which is how she supported herself. During that period she gained a strong reputation as a portraitist of celebrities, intellectuals, scholars and authors. The spectrum of her commissioned works ranges from traditional portraits in the style of the turn of the century to visual compositions in the objective tradition of her Bauhaus photographs. At the same time, she created landscape and architectural photographs in London and Cambridge, among other places. These likewise display a formal diversity and they testify to Moholy's technical expertise.

In 1938 a decline in commissions led her to shift her professional focus in the theoretical direction for which Lucia Moholy had already shown an intense interest during her collaboration with László Moholy-Nagy. She wrote "A hundred years of photography", a seminal work on photography's history, in which she explores the medium's societal significance and the social conditions forming its framework. The exhibition will present the photographic material that she used along with the original publication. Subsequently Moholy increasingly occupied herself with microfilming and would finally become the head of the UNESCO's filming of the cultural heritage of the lands of the Middle East. While working abroad in Turkey she travelled to Cyprus, Jordan, Israel, Greece, Syria and Lebanon, among other places, and she took numerous photos there – shot primarily for private purposes, they provide insights into each of these cultures.

Publication

Lucia Moholy (2016), A hundred years of photography, 220 pages, featuring 35 black-and-white photographs (volume 4 of the series "Bauhäusler: Dokumente aus dem Bauhaus-Archiv"), Germ./Engl., museum edition, Bauhaus-Archiv / Museum für Gestaltung, Berlin, ISBN: 9783922613589, price: 27,50 euro (at the museum), 39,90 euro (book-trade)

Programme of events (in German)

Every Sunday, 2pm: guided tour of the "The Bauhaus Collection" and the special exhibition "Lucia Moholy: The English Years", free with museum admission.

Sunday, 16 Oct, 20 Nov, 18 Dec, 11am – 2pm: Family workshop, ages 5 and up: children €6, adults €9, material €3, reservations: info@jugend-im-museum.de

Sunday, 23 Oct, 4 Dec, 11am: Brunch, admission and guided tour through the exhibition "Lucia Moholy: The English Years", €20, members €16, reservations: visit@bauhaus.de

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