



UMBO. PHOTOGRAPHER.

9.2. TO 12.5.19

With a selection of around 200 works and numerous documents from the estate of the Bauhaus photographer Umbo, born Otto Maximilian Umbuhr in Düsseldorf in 1902, the Sprengel Museum Hannover is presenting the artist's first major retrospective in 24 years. With his remarkable ingenuity and his love of experimentation, Umbo shaped the photography of "New Vision" in the 1920s, and the photographer's works figured in all the major exhibitions of the avant-garde of his time. Umbo's studio and archive were destroyed during the Second World War. After the war he found himself - like many others - back at square one. It was not until the 1970s that he experienced a solo exhibition at the Spectrum Photogalerie in the Kunstmuseum Hannover with the Sprengel Collection, today's Sprengel Museum Hannover. The retrospective now dedicated to Umbo in Bauhaus year 2019 enables us to rediscover one of the great photographers of the 20th century and a multi-faceted artist biography. The exhibition also celebrates our acquisition of the Umbo estate in 2016 in cooperation with the partner institutions Berlinische Galerie - Landesmuseum für Fotografie und Architektur and Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau thanks to the support of numerous partners.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Umbo - ever since the retrospective organised by Herbert Molderings in 1995, if not earlier, this name has been synonymous with a kind of "Big Bang" in modern photography in the mid-1920s. Umbo, born Otto Maximilian Umbuhr in Düsseldorf in 1902, the second of six children of a structural engineer and a teacher, is considered the inventor of the image of the "New Woman", the new conception of the street and of photographic reporting per se. His name stands for the youth-driven departure of the "Wandervogel" movement of the Wilhelminian era towards early Bauhaus. It also stands for the media city of Berlin of the 1920s strongly influenced by Eastern European immigrants, for a rapidly developing film, music, theatre and cabaret scene, and for glimpses inside the courtyards and kitchen-living rooms of overpopulated tenement blocks. Umbo was also the self-doubting young artist who, thanks to the encouragement of his Bauhaus teacher Johannes Itten and artist friend Paul Citroen, became famous as a photographer practically overnight and figured in all major avant-garde exhibitions of 1928 and 1929 - yet always remained bohemian, an eternal "Wandervogel". UMBO who, so the story goes, survived National Socialism despite being "anti", whose Berlin studio and archive were fully destroyed by bombing in 1943 and whose attempts to revive his earlier status as an avant-garde photographer proved fruitless in the post-war period of the Federal German Economic Miracle in Hannover. His expressive early work that matured into New Objectivity was rediscovered in the 1970s. Finally, the Spectrum Photogalerie at Kunstmuseum Hannover with the Sprengel Collection, which opened in 1979, staged Umbo's first post-war retrospective, accompanied by a book publication. Umbo died on 13.05.1980. Another 15 years were to elapse until Herbert Molderings' monograph and the exhibitions organised by him made Umbo's multi-faceted work known to a broad public.

THE EXHIBITION

With a selection of around 200 works and numerous documents from the estate of the photographer Umbo, the Sprengel Museum Hannover, in cooperation with Berlinische Galerie and with the support of Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, is presenting the first major retrospective of the artist in 24 years as part of BAUHAUS 100, sponsored by Kulturstiftung des Bundes (Germany's Cultural Foundation) and the Land of Lower Saxony.



BACKGROUND

The exhibition draws on more than 600 photographs and extensive source material – in the case of the Sprengel Museum Hannover, from the REPORT post-war archive/Simon Guttmann, London, supplemented by earlier acquisitions by the partner institutions Berlinische Galerie and Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau. Guarded over a period of decades by his daughter Phyllis Umbehrr and Rudolf Kicken (Galerie Kicken), Umbo's estate was jointly acquired by the three institutions as a complete collection in 2016.

The estate comprises 604 works from 26 years as well as extensive archive material donated by Phyllis Umbehrr and Manfred Veith-Umbehrr.

The acquisition was made possible thanks to the support of the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, Minister of State for Culture Monika Grütters, the Kulturstiftung der Länder (Germany's Cultural Foundation of its Länder (federal states)), Ernst von Siemens Kunststiftung, and Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau: the Ministry of Culture of the Land of Saxony-Anhalt, HERMANN REEMTSMA STIFTUNG, the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, Wüstenrot Stiftung, Lotto Sachsen-Anhalt; additionally for Berlinische Galerie - Landesmuseum für Moderne Kunst, Architektur und Fotografie: Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin; additionally for the Sprengel Museum Hannover: the City of Hannover, the Land of Lower Saxony, Fritz-Behrens-Stiftung, Stiftung Niedersachsen and Verein der Freunde des Sprengel Museum Hannover e. V.

For the publication and the exhibition at the Sprengel Museum Hannover as part of the BAUHAUS 100 programme, we would like to thank Kulturstiftung des Bundes (Germany's National Cultural Foundation), the State of Lower Saxony and Galerie Kicken, Berlin for their kind support. This is a project in cooperation with Berlinische Galerie, Landesmuseum für Moderne Kunst, Fotografie und Architektur, with the kind support of Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau.

CATALOGUE

Being issued on the occasion of the exhibition is **Umbo. PHOTOGRAPH** edited by Inka Schube, 336 pages, approx. 230 illustrations and texts by Umbo, Michael Glasmeier, Stella Jaeger, Anthea Kennedy & Ian Wiblin, Angela Lammert, Annelie Lütgens, Sabrina Mandanici, Patrick Rössler, Inka Schube, Bernd Stiegler, Christoph Wagner and Georg Wiesing-Brandes; Snoeck, EUR 48,-.

COLLOQUIUM

Saturday, 9.2.: "Über Fotografie sprechen: Umbo – eine exemplarische Bauhaus-Biografie?"

Information and registration at <https://www.sprengel-museum.de/ausstellungen/umbo-fotograf.php>

PRESS RELEASE

3/4



PRESS CONFERENCE

Thursday, 7.2.19, 11.00 am

Welcome address:

Dr Reinhard Spieler, Director of the Sprengel Museum Hannover

Speakers:

Veronika Olbrich, Consultant for the Visual Arts, Lower Saxon Ministry for Science and Culture

Dr Britta Kaiser-Schuster, Department Head, Kulturstiftung der Länder

Matthias Fontaine, Board Chairman, Fritz-Behrens-Stiftung

Inka Schube, curator of the exhibition

Phyllis Umbehr, the artist's daughter, is attending.

OPENING

Friday, 8.2.19, 7.00 pm

ACCOMPANYING EVENT

Colloquium:

Über Fotografie sprechen: Umbo – eine exemplarische Bauhaus-Biografie

Saturday, 9.2.19, 7.00 pm

Registrations to fotografie.smh@hannover-stadt.de

EXHIBITION DURATION

9.2. to 12.5.19

PRESS INQUIRIES

presse.smh@hannover-stadt.de

T +49-(0)511 168 4 39 24

F +49-(0)511 168 4 50 93

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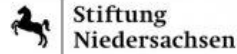


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**SPRENGEL
MUSEUM HANNOVER**
KURT-SCHWITERS-PLATZ
30169 HANNOVER
+49 511 168 43875
SPRENGEL-MUSEUM@
HANNOVER-STADT.DE
WWW.SPENGEI-MUSEUM.DE

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