

# History of photography (part 5): the modern era

CS 178, Spring 2010

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# Outline

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- ◆ 1900-1920s - the age of ism's
- ◆ photojournalism in the snapshot age
- ◆ 1920s-1940s - modernism
- ◆ World War II
- ◆ Pulitzer Prize photographs
- ◆ LIFE magazine
- ◆ post-1940s - post-modernism



# 1900-1920s - the age of ism's

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## ◆ Cubism

Pablo Picasso,  
Le Guitariste, 1910

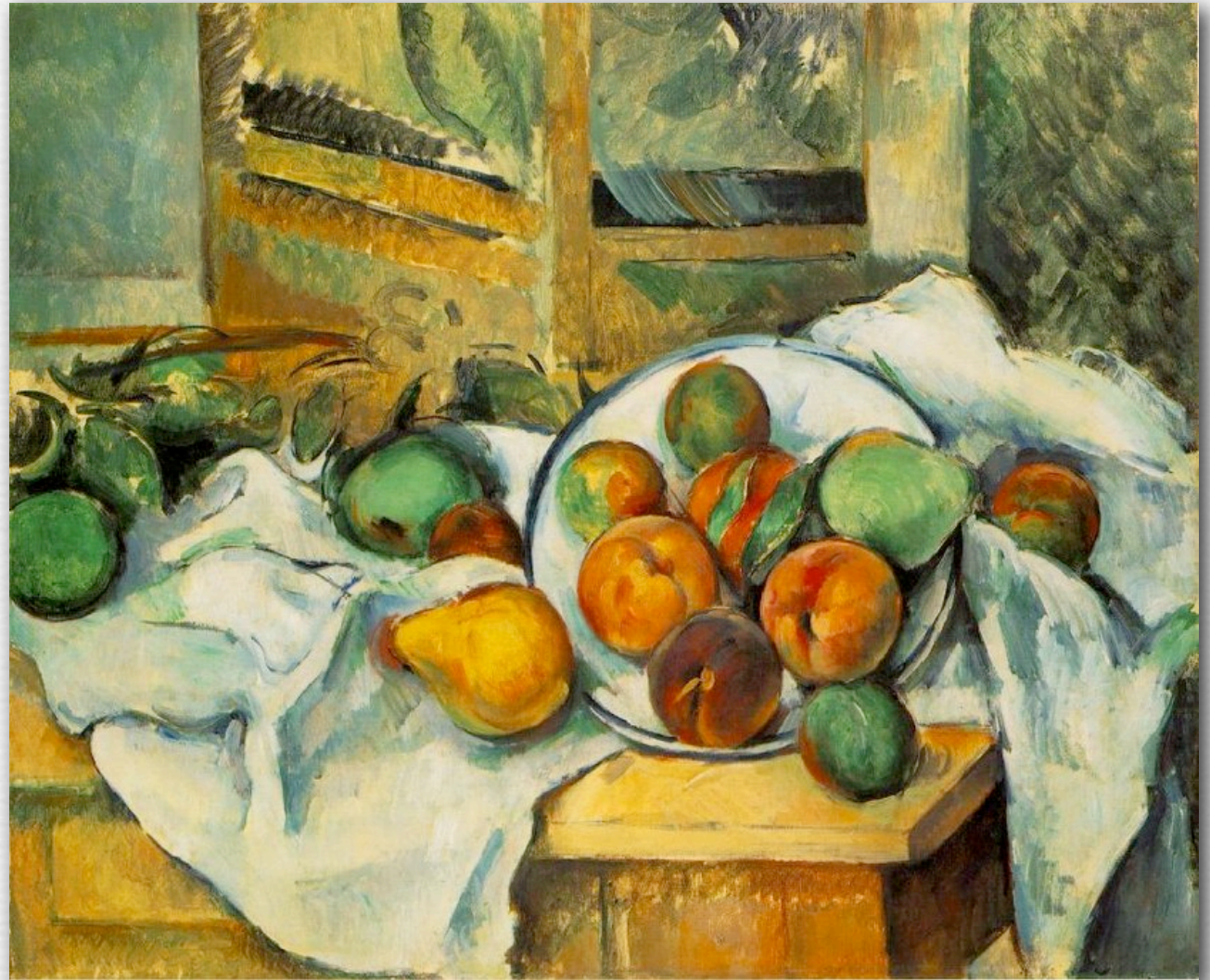




# 1900-1920s - the age of ism's

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## ◆ Cubism



Paul Cézanne,  
Table, Napkin, Fruit,  
1900



# 1900-1920s - the age of ism's

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## ◆ Cubism



Le Corbusier,  
Still Life, 1920

# 1900-1920s - the age of ism's

- ◆ Cubism
- ◆ Constructivism



Soviet propaganda poster, 1941



Vladimir Tatlin, model for monument to the Third International, 1920



# 1900-1920s - the age of ism's

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- ◆ Cubism
- ◆ Constructivism
- ◆ Dada(ism)
  - chaos, irrationality, anti-art

Hannah Höch,  
Cut with the Dada  
Kitchen Knife  
through the Last  
Weimar Beer-Belly  
Cultural Epoch in  
Germany, 1919



Marcel Duchamp,  
Fountain, 1917  
(photograph by  
Alfred Stieglitz)

# 1900-1920s - the age of ism's

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- ◆ Cubism
- ◆ Constructivism
- ◆ Dada(ism)
- ◆ revolutionary uprisings
  - Russian Revolution, Communism, Socialism, Fascism
- ◆ age of experimentation
  - the moribund art of the old needs to be jettisoned
  - down with tradition, up with the avante-garde
  - embrace the chaos of war and revolution
- ◆ photographer as ideologue

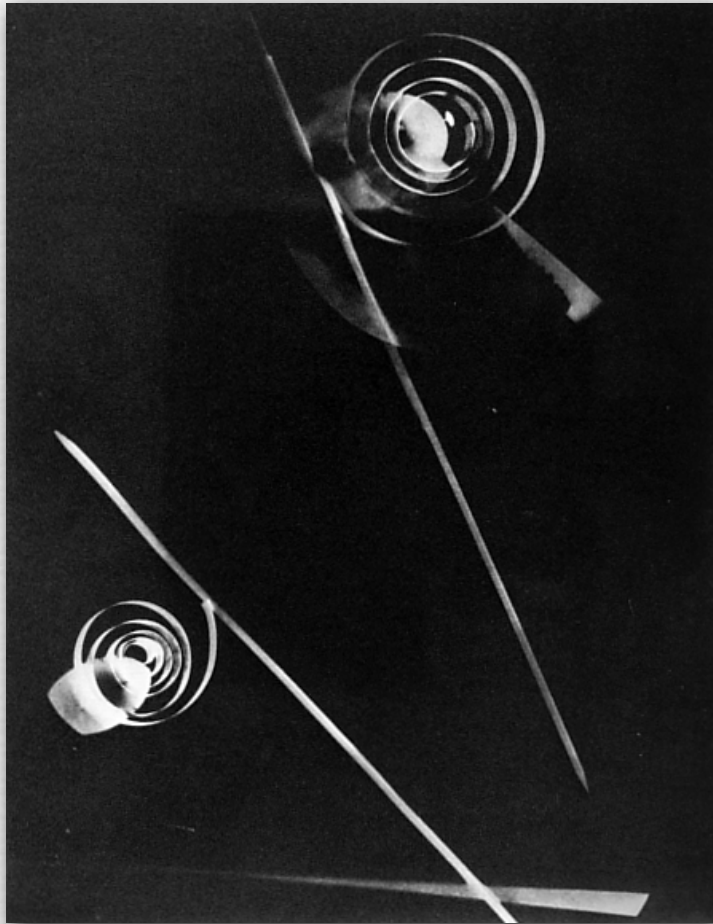


# Camera-less images

William Henry  
Fox Talbot,  
1839

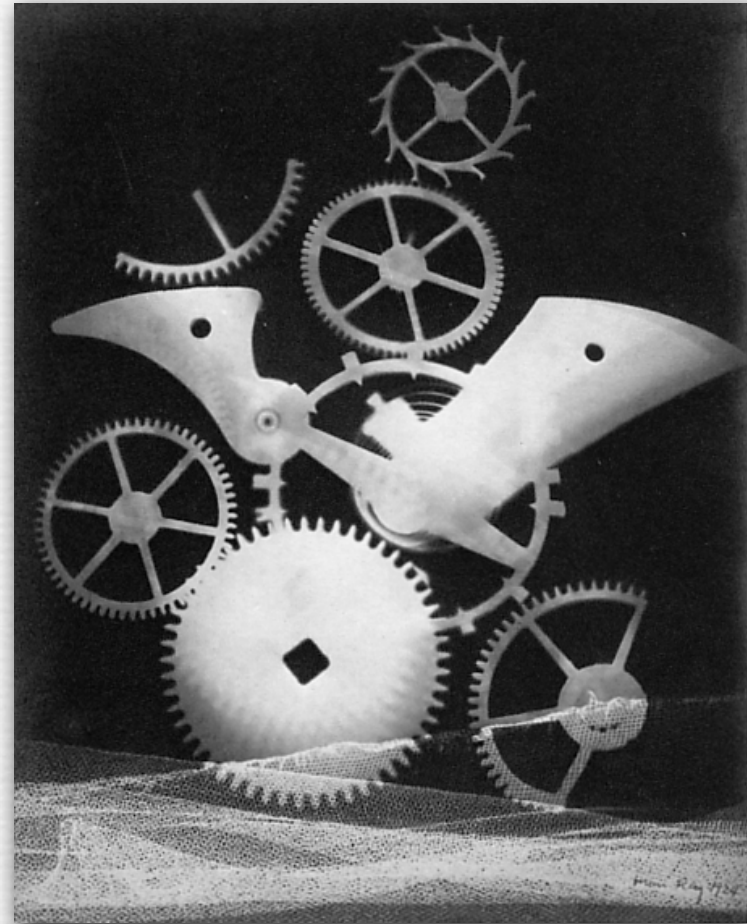


(Newhall)



Laszlo Moholy-Nagy,  
Photogram, 1925

(Newhall)



Man Ray,  
Rayograph, 1922



# Photomontage

(Newhall)



Paul Citroen, Metropolis, 1925

(Rosenblum)



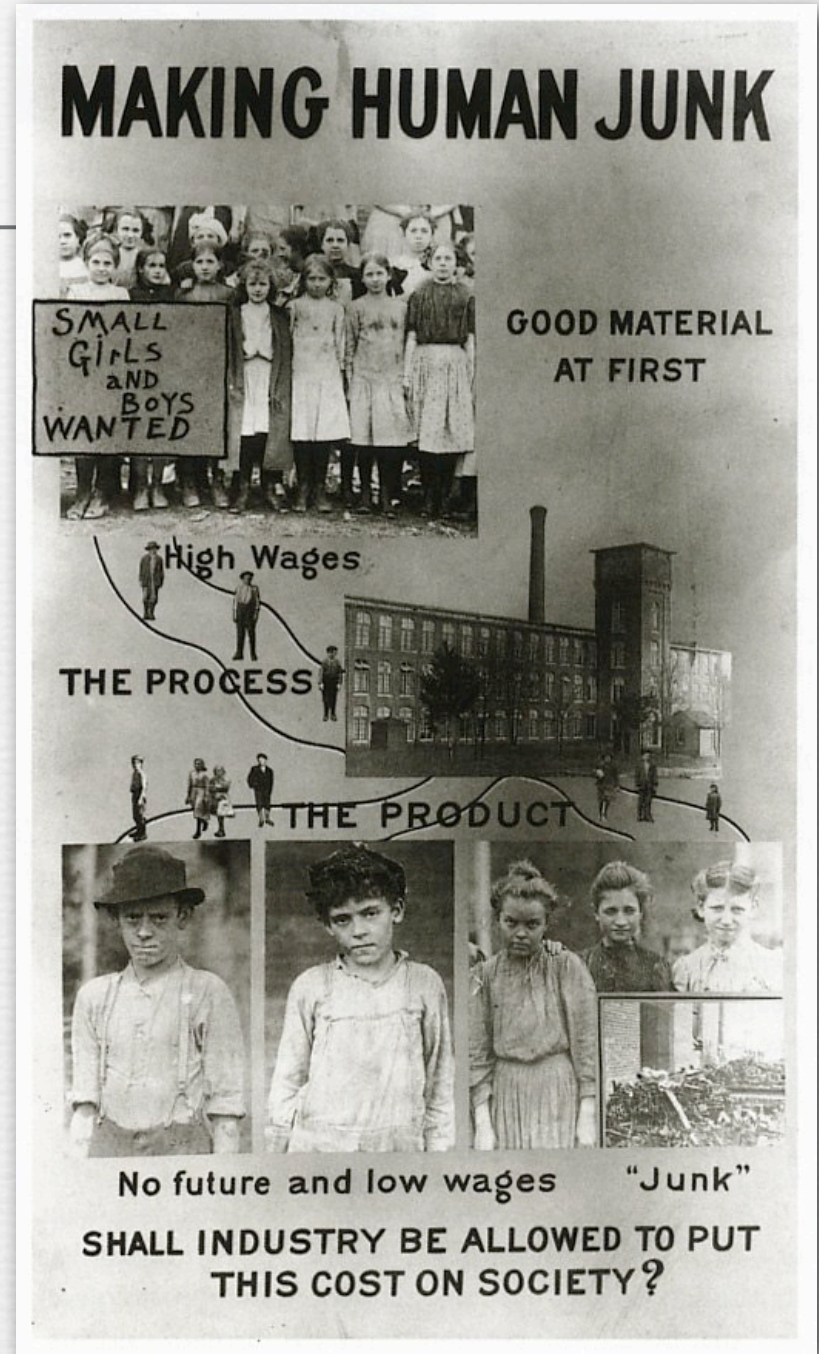
John Heartfield, Adolf the Superman; He Eats Gold and Spews Idiocracies, 1932



# Photographer as ideologue



Lewis Hine, Addie Card, Spinner, Vermont, 1915



Lewis Hine, poster, 1915



# Photographer as ideologue

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Bill Brandt,  
Halifax, 1936



Rainswept Roofs, 1930s



(Rosenblum)



# Photojournalism

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Arnold Genthe,  
The San Francisco Fire,  
1906

(Rosenblum)





# World War I

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23rd infantry fighting in Europe, photographer unknown, 1918



# World War I

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- ◆ mustard gas, machine guns, trench warfare, 37 million casualties
- ◆ cameras and film allowed photographers to shoot on the front lines



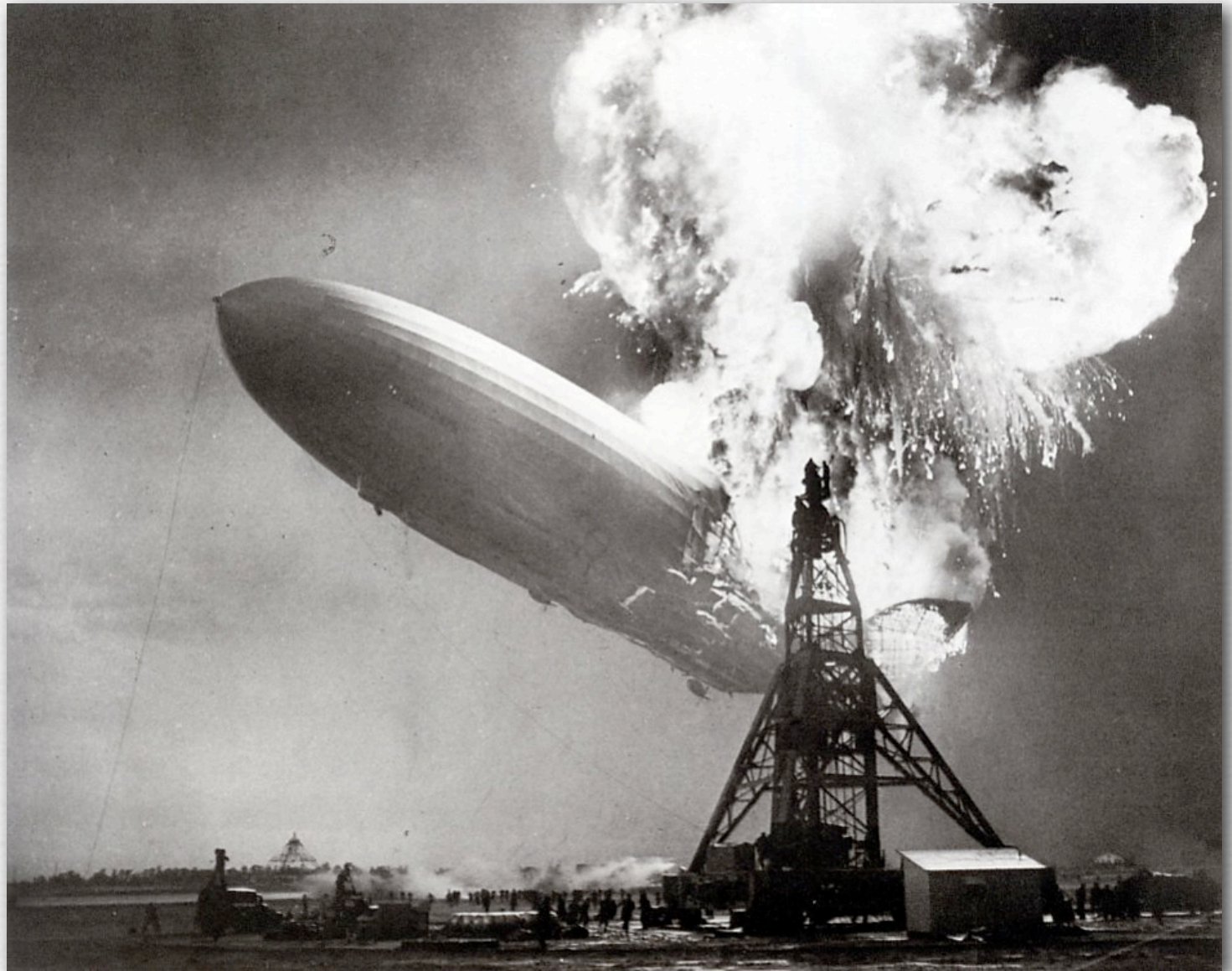


# Other catastrophes

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Sam Shere,  
Explosion of the  
Hindenburg,  
1937

(Newhall)





# 1920s-1940s - modernism

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- ◆ modern architecture (a.k.a. International Style)
  - spare design, no decoration
  - strong geometry, primary colors (or white)



Le Corbusier,  
Villa Savoye, 1929



Mies van der Rohe,  
Barcelona Pavillion, 1929

# modernism

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(a.k.a. International  
Style)  
Primary colors



Le Corbusier,  
Chapel at Ronchamps, 1954



Mies van der Rohe,  
Seagram Building, 1958



# 1920s-1940s - modernism

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- ◆ modern architecture (a.k.a. International Style)
  - spare design, no decoration
  - strong geometry, primary colors (or white)
- ◆ modern furniture

Marcel  
Breuer,  
chair, 1928



Charles  
Eames,  
chair, 1940





# 1920s-1940s - modernism

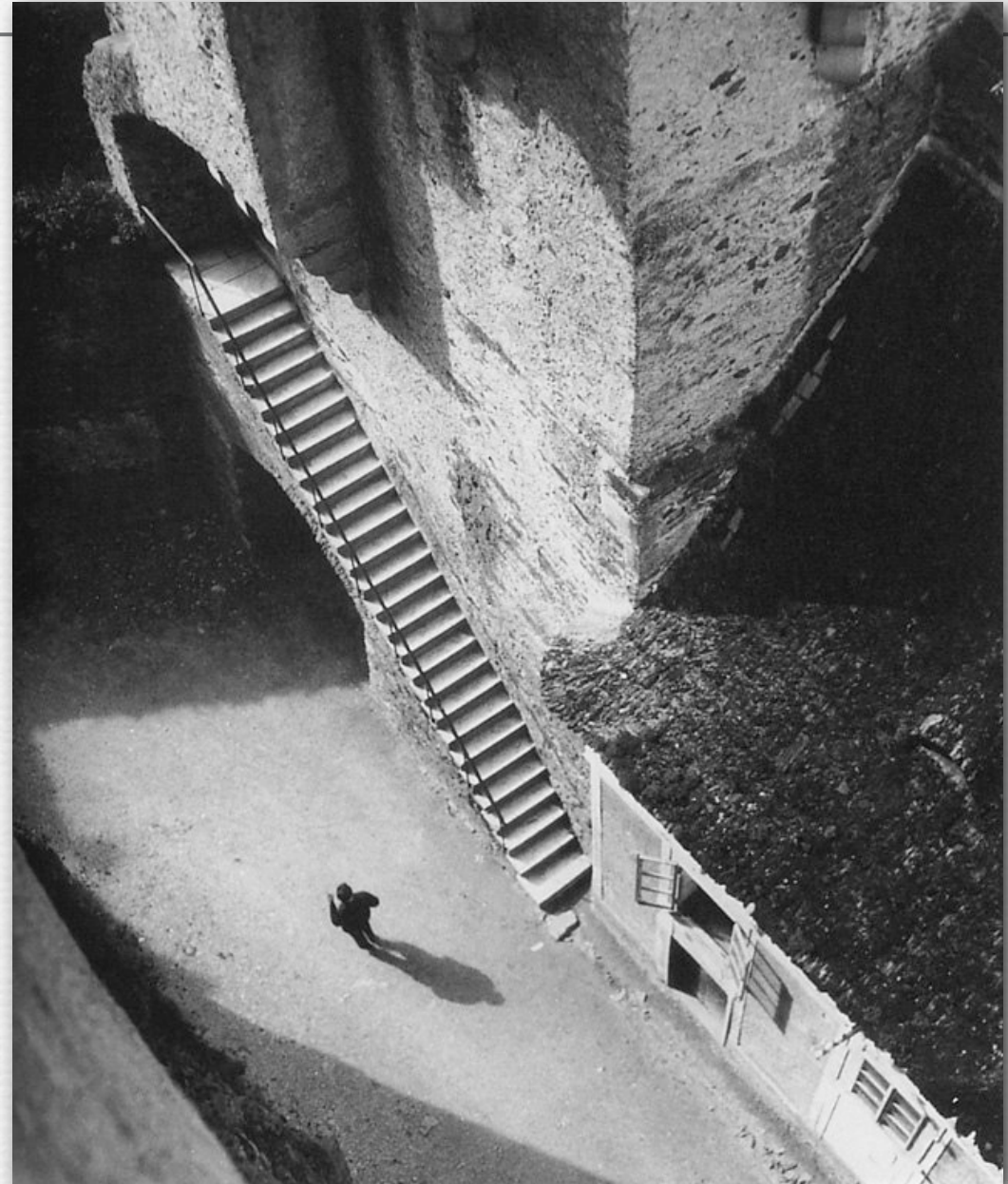
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- ◆ modern architecture (a.k.a. International Style)
  - spare design, no decoration
  - strong geometry, primary colors (or white)
- ◆ modern furniture
- ◆ the “straight photograph”
  - unhackneyed themes
  - strong geometry
  - unconventional viewpoints
  - sharp definition - the f/64 club
  - the industrial aesthetic - New Objectivity, Precisionists



# The straight photograph

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Jan Lauschmann,  
Castle Staircase, 1927

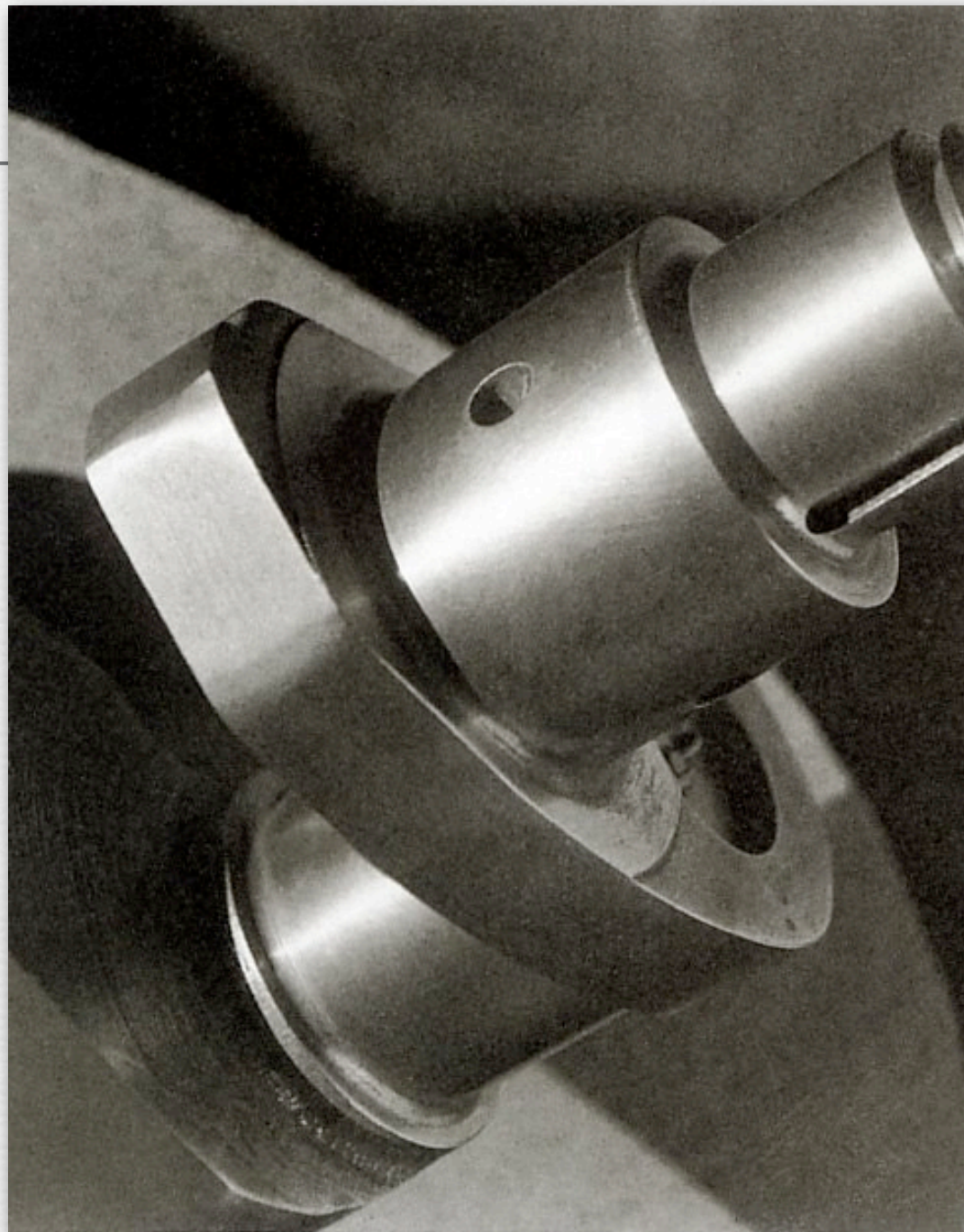
(Rosenblum)



# Precisionists

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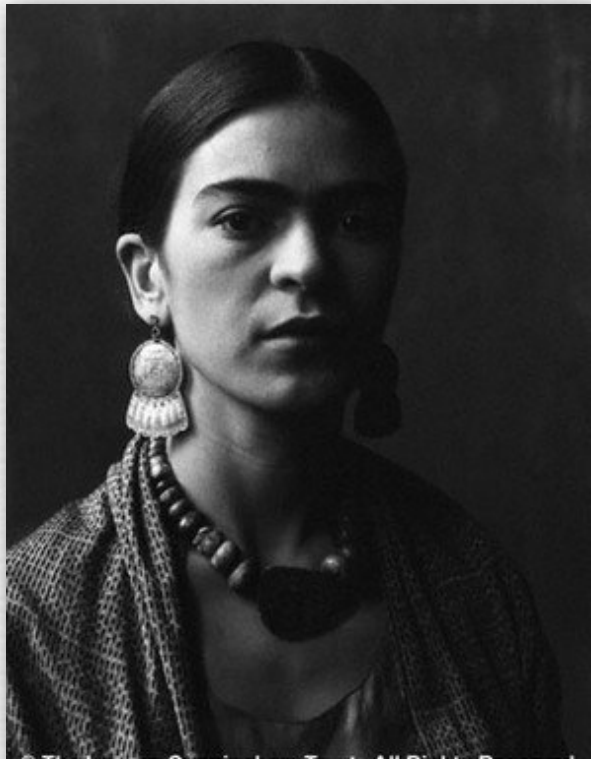
Paul Outerbridge,  
Marmon Crankshaft, 1923





# Precisionists

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portrait of Frida Kahlo

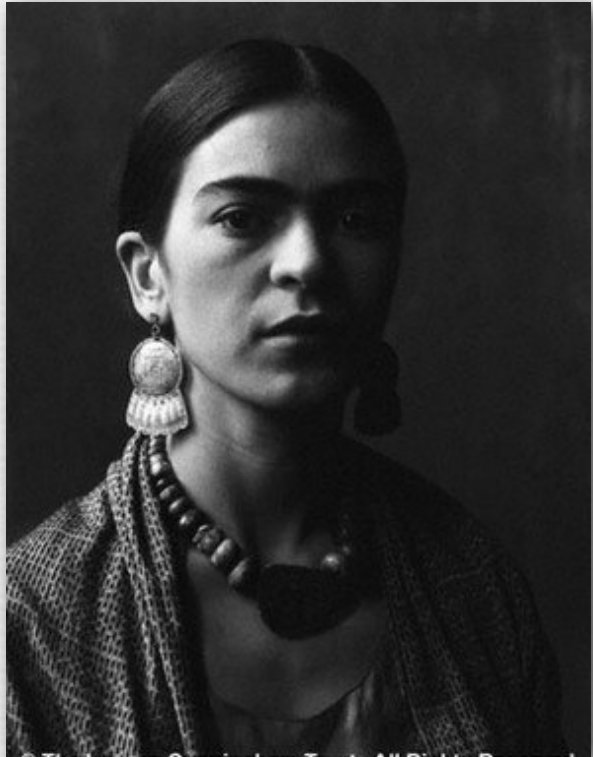


Imogen Cunningham,  
Two Callas, 1929

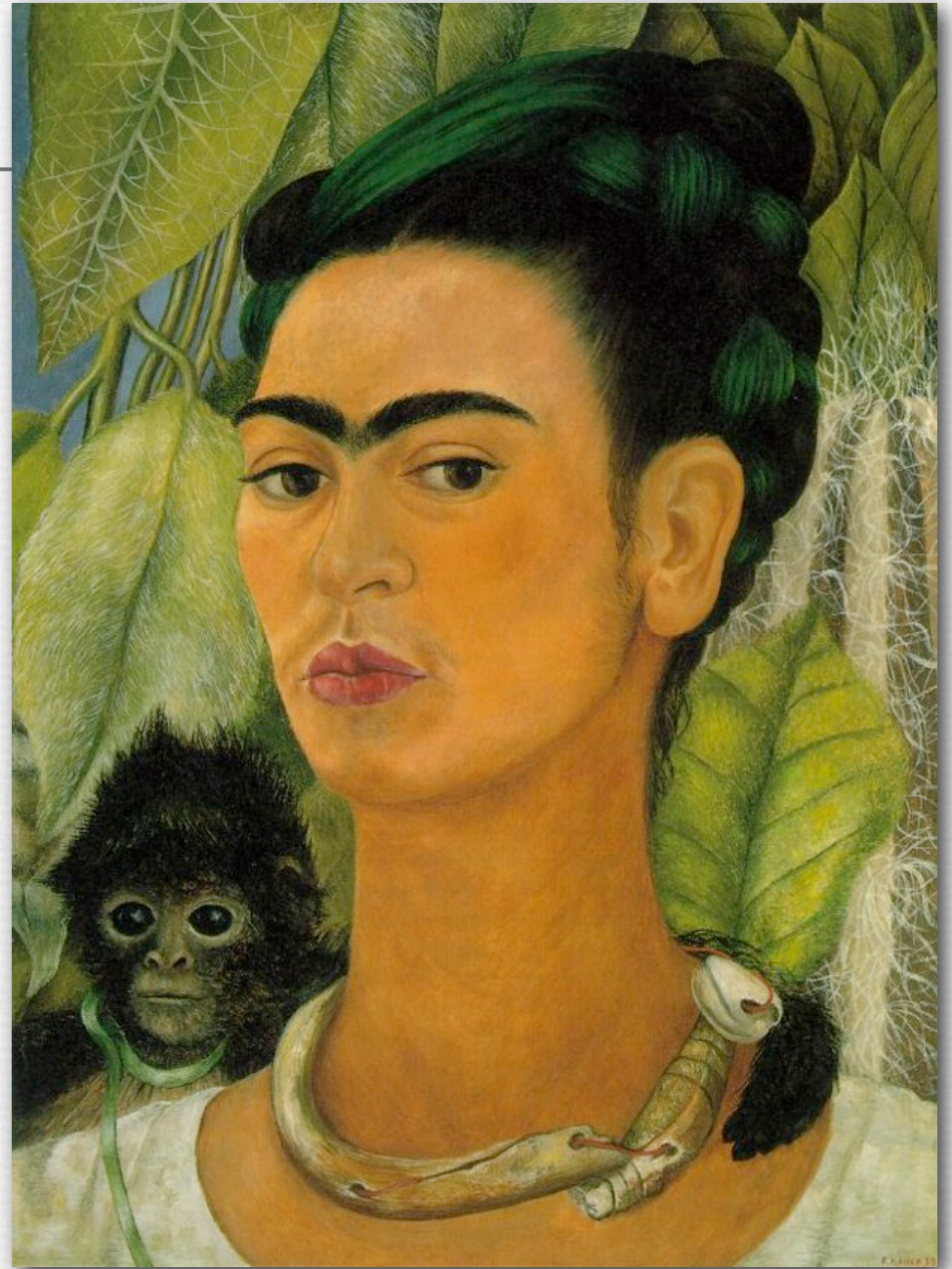


# Precisionists

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portrait of Frida Kahlo



Self-portrait with monkeys, 1938

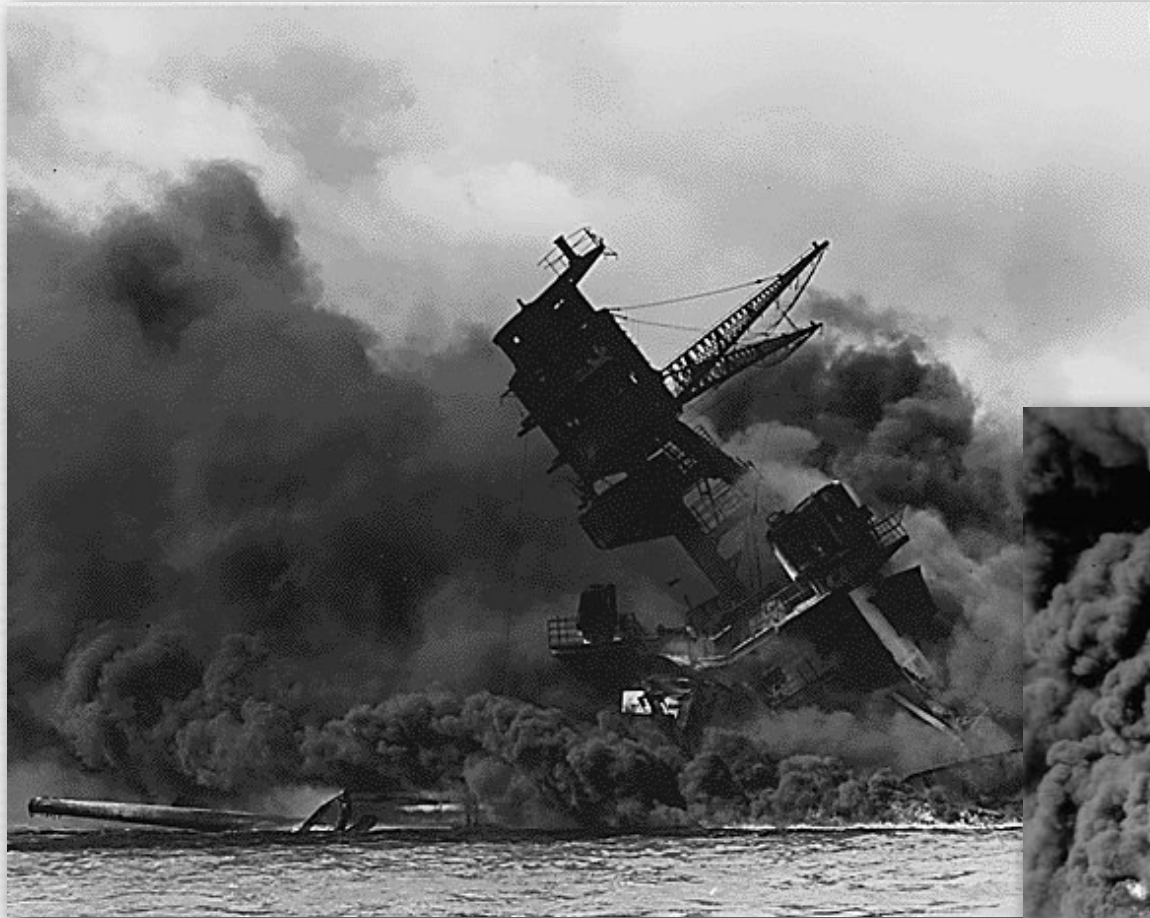




Barbara Morgan, Martha Graham: Letter to the World, 1940

# The attack on Pearl Harbor

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USS Arizona burning

USS West Virginia  
and USS Tennessee







USS Shaw exploding, photographer unknown, 1941





# Photographer as propagandist

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(Archives)



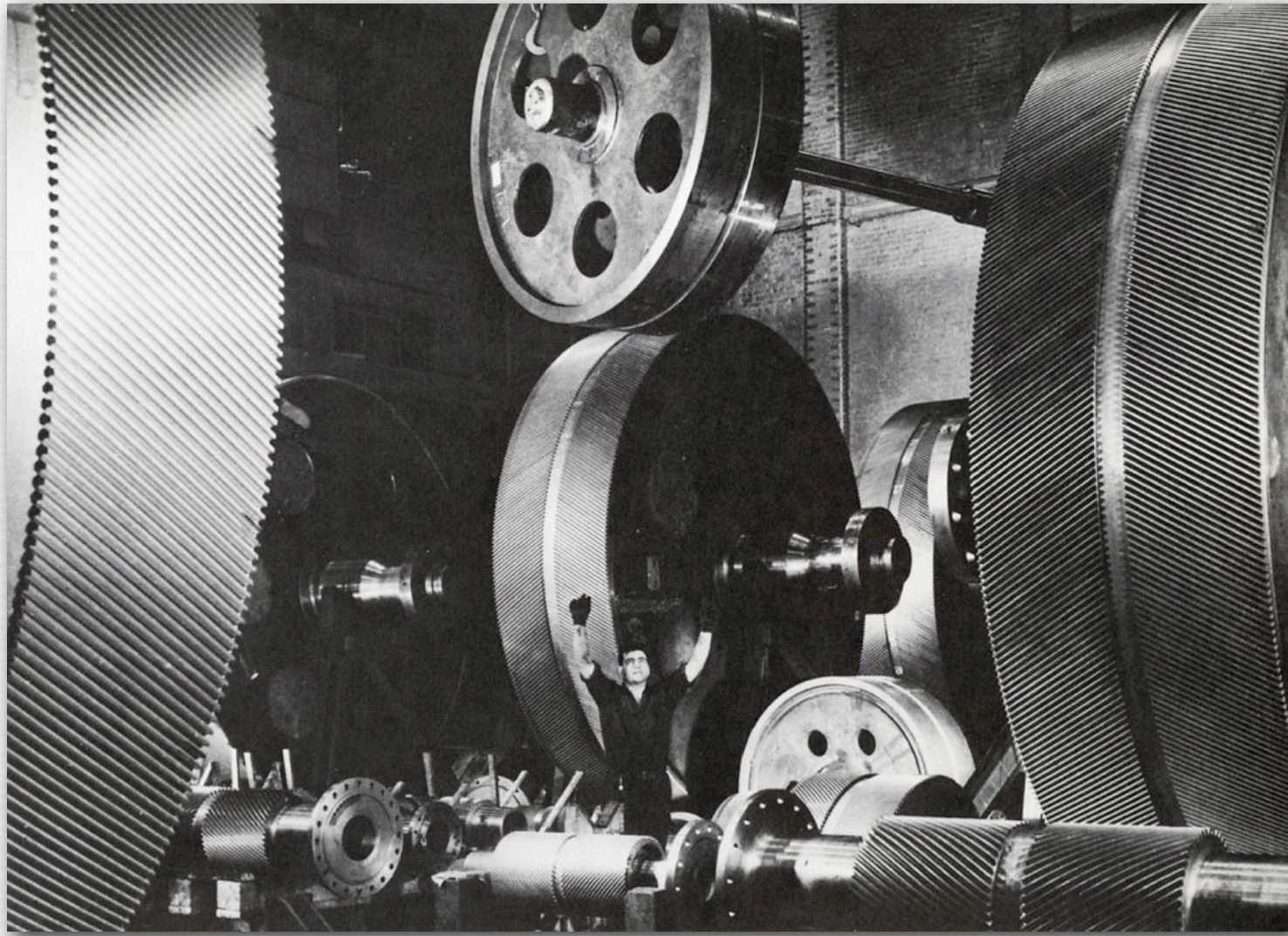
“Stars over Berlin and Tokyo will soon replace these factory lights reflected in the noses of America’s fighting planes at Douglas Aircraft’s Long Beach, California plant.” (photographer unknown)



# Photographer as propagandist

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(Archives)

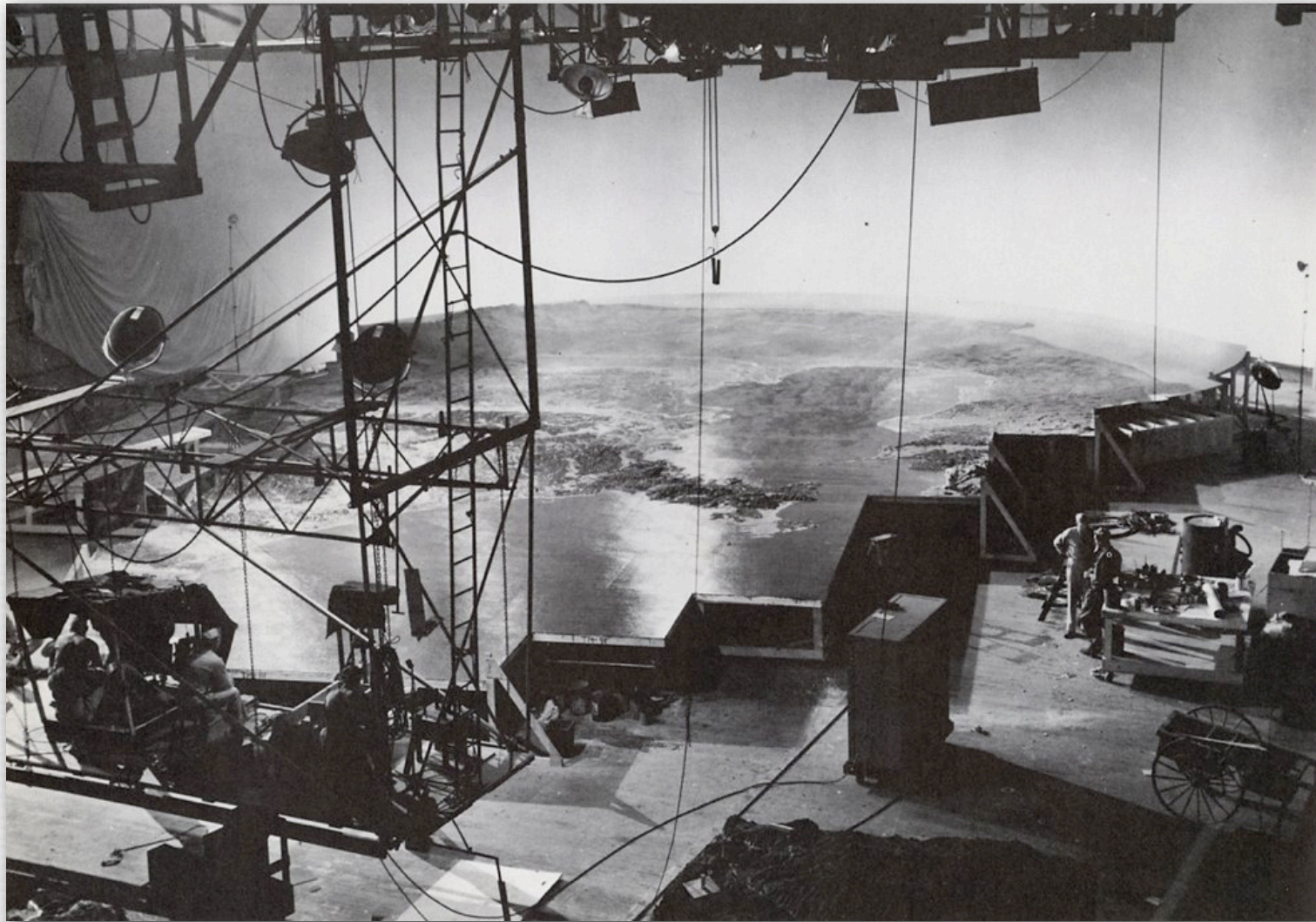


Dimitri Kessel (?), "Giant Gears in a shop in Massachusetts will become parts of U.S. warships", 1943



# Hollywood during the war

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Large miniature model of Tokyo Bay,  
to make training films for bombing crews, c. 1943



# Photojournalism in World War II

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Robert Capa, Loyalist Militiaman at the Moment of Death, 1936



# Photojournalism in World War II

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Robert Capa, D-Day Landings in Normandy, 1944



# Photojournalism in World War II

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Dorothea Lange, Dust Storm at Mazanar Relocation Center, 1942



# Showing casualties

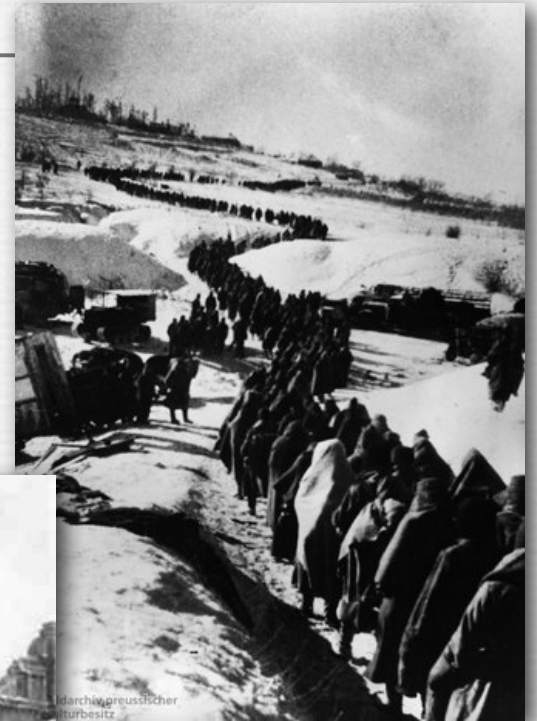
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George Strock,  
Three Dead Americans, 1943  
(first photograph of dead soldiers  
allowed published by U.S. censors)





# The decisive battle of World War II



Stalingrad, July 1942 - February 1943





Dmitri Baltermants, Identifying the Dead, Russian Front, 1942





Margaret Bourke-White, Liberation of Buchenwald, 1945



# The Pulitzer Prize Photographs

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Joe Rosenthal,  
Raising the Flag  
on Iwo Jima,  
1943





# The Pulitzer Prize Photographs

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Eddie Adams,  
Executing a  
Vietcong Officer,  
1968





# The Pulitzer Prize Photographs

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John Filo,  
Kent State  
Shootings, 1970





# The Pulitzer Prize Photographs

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Huynh Cong Ut,  
Children fleeing  
a “friendly fire”  
napalm attack,  
1973



# LIFE magazine

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(Rosenblum)

Andreas Feininger  
(LIFE photographer),  
The Photojournalist,  
1955





# LIFE magazine photographs

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Alfred Eisenstadt,  
V-J Day, 1945





# LIFE magazine photographs

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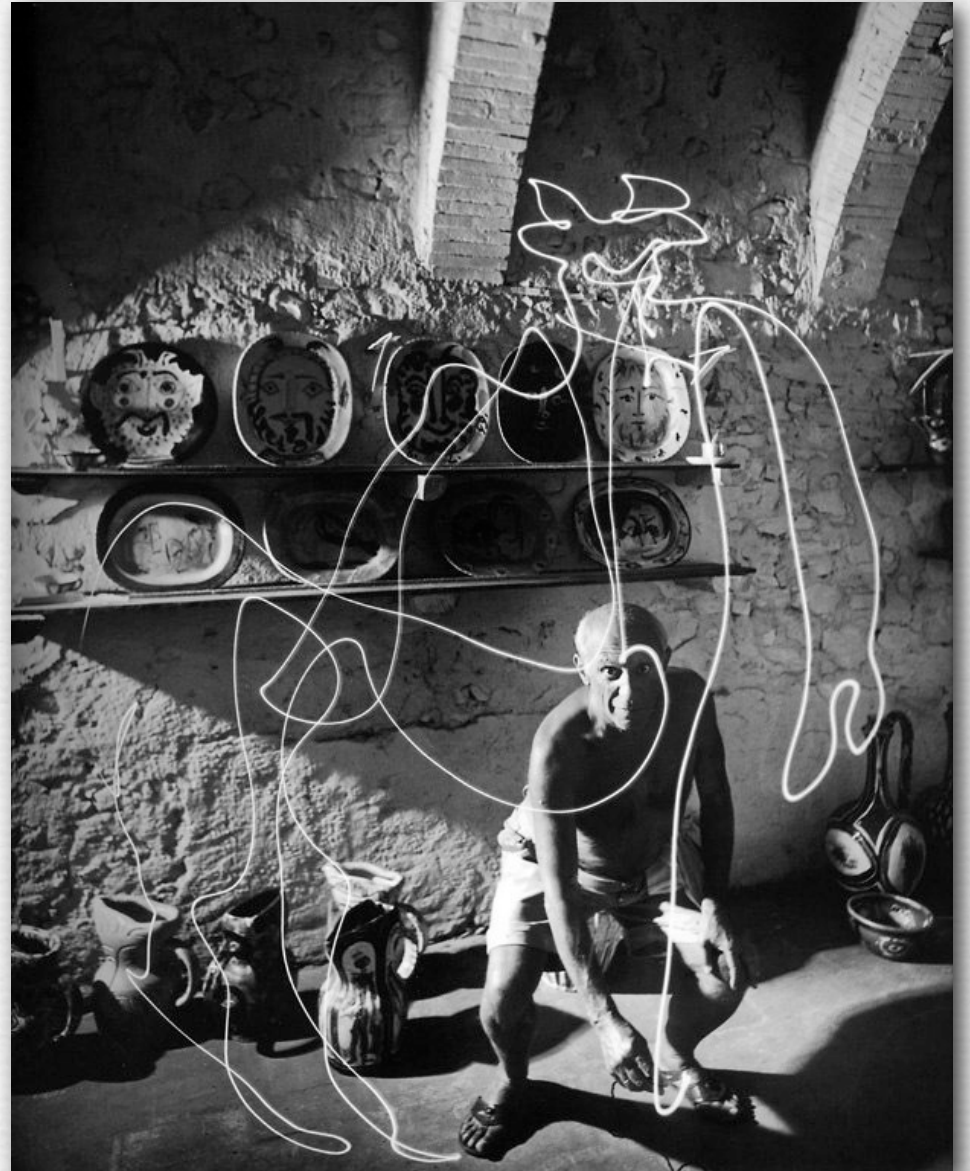
Edward Clark, *Among the Mourners*, 1945



# LIFE magazine photographs

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Gjon Mili,  
Pablo Picasso sketching with  
a penlight, 1949





# LIFE magazine photographs

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Hank Walker,  
Jack and Bobbie  
(John and Robert Kennedy),  
1960





# Miscellany

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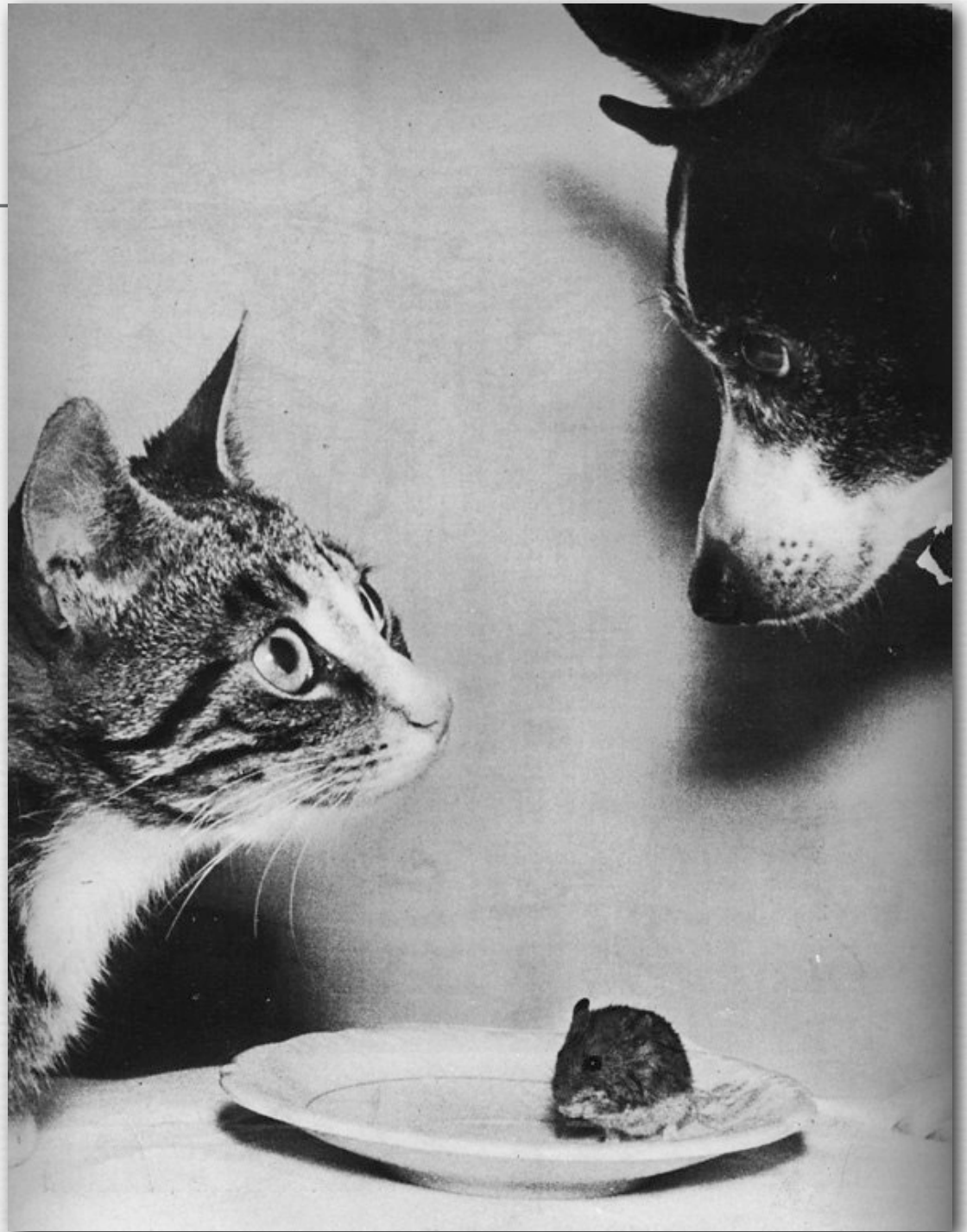
J.R. Eyerman,  
3-D Movie, 1952



# Miscellany

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Jytte Bjerregaard,  
Guess who's coming to  
dinner?, 1955







Atomic bomb test at Bikini Atoll, photographer unknown, 1946

# Post-1940s - post-modernism

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- ◆ disillusionment with modernism after WWII
- ◆ photography dominated by photojournalism, television, and advertising, or trivialized by Kodak Instamatics



- ◆ artists return to experimentation
  - straight, stark, discordant, alienated, grotesque, ambiguous, pathetic, misfit



# The Decisive Moment, a book of photographs by Henri Cartier-Bresson

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(Rosenblum)



Valencia, 1933

Chosen by TIME as  
Best Picture of 20th century

Paris, 1932



# Echoes of Surrealism

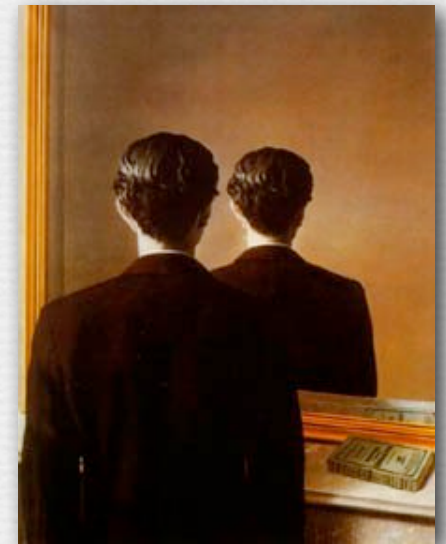
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Henri Cartier-Bresson  
Muslim women praying, Kashmir, 1948



Salvatore Dali,  
The Persistence of Memory,  
1931



Rene Magritte,  
Not to be Reproduced,  
1937



# Social caricature

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Weegee,  
The Critic,  
1943

(Newhall)

# On the edge of pathetic

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Diane Arbus,  
Identical Twins,  
1966



# On the edge of pathetic

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Diane Arbus,  
Mother Holding  
Her Child,  
1967

# Character study

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Mary Ellen Mark,  
“Tiny” in Her  
Halloween Costume,  
1983

(Rosenblum)





# Ambiguity

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Pedro Meyer,  
The Unmasking  
in the Square,  
1981

(Rosenblum)



# And further experimentation

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David Hockney,  
Place Furstenberg, Paris, 1985



# Slide credits

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- ◆ Newhall, B., *The History of Photography*, Little, Brown & Co., 1982.
- ◆ Rosenblum, N., *A World History of Photography* (4th ed.), Abbeville Press, 2007.
- ◆ National Archives, *The American Image: Photographs from the National Archives, 1860-1960*, Pantheon Books, 1979.