

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

CS 178, Spring 2009

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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

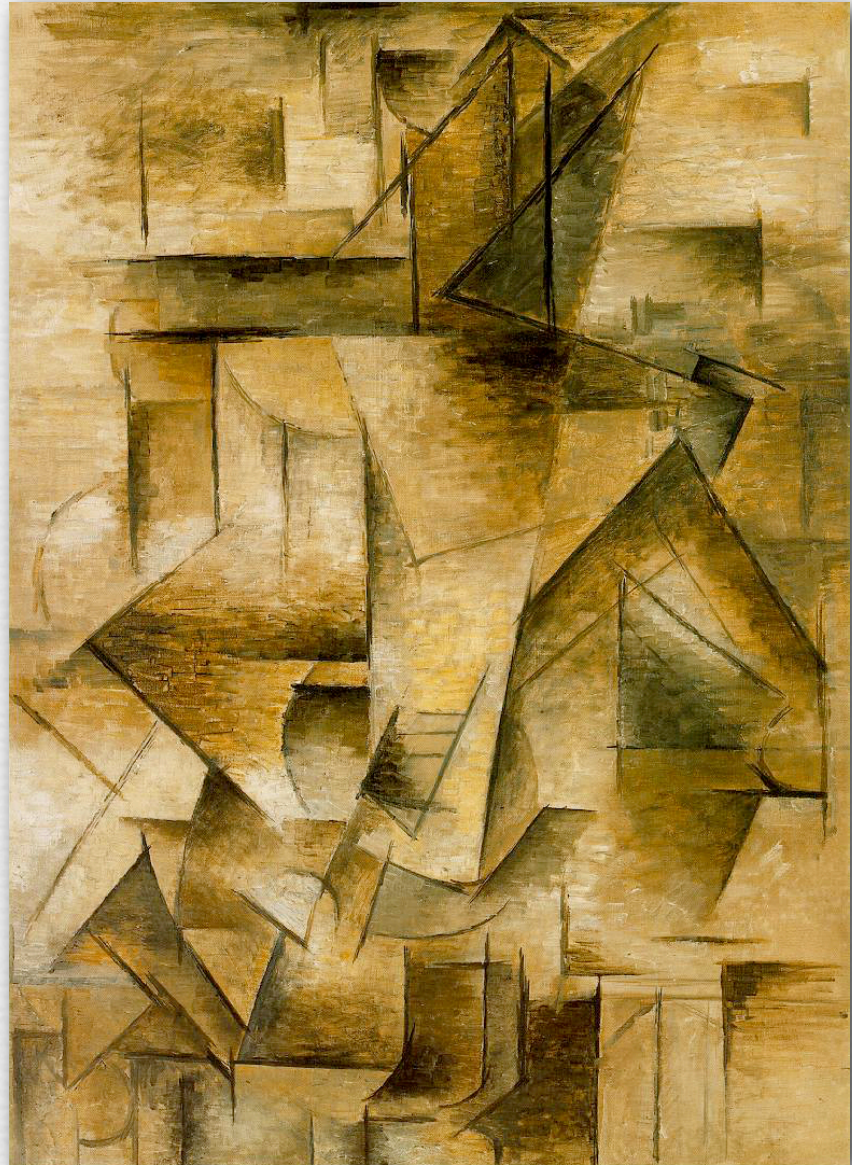


# 1900-1920s - the age of ism's

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## ◆ Cubism

Pablo Picasso,  
Le Guitariste, 1910





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

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## ◆ Cubism

Le Corbusier,  
Still Life, 1920





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

- ◆ Cubism
- ◆ Constructivism



Soviet propaganda poster, 1941



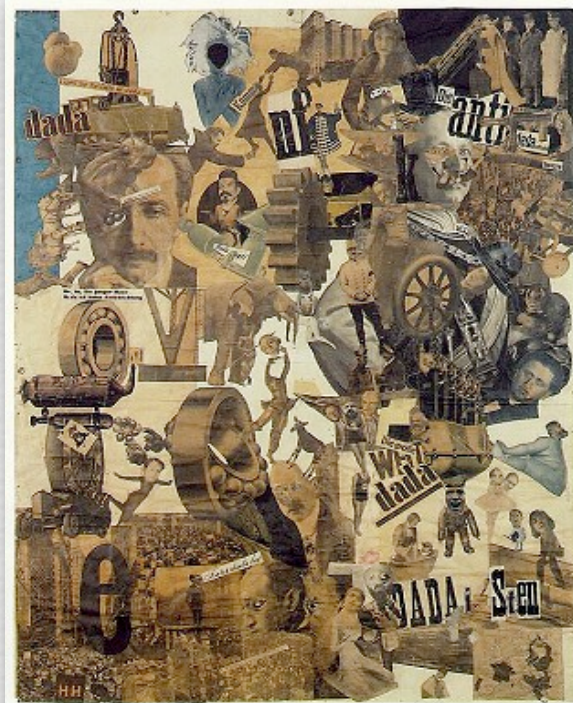
Vladimir Tatlin, model for monument to the Third International, 1920



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

- ◆ 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

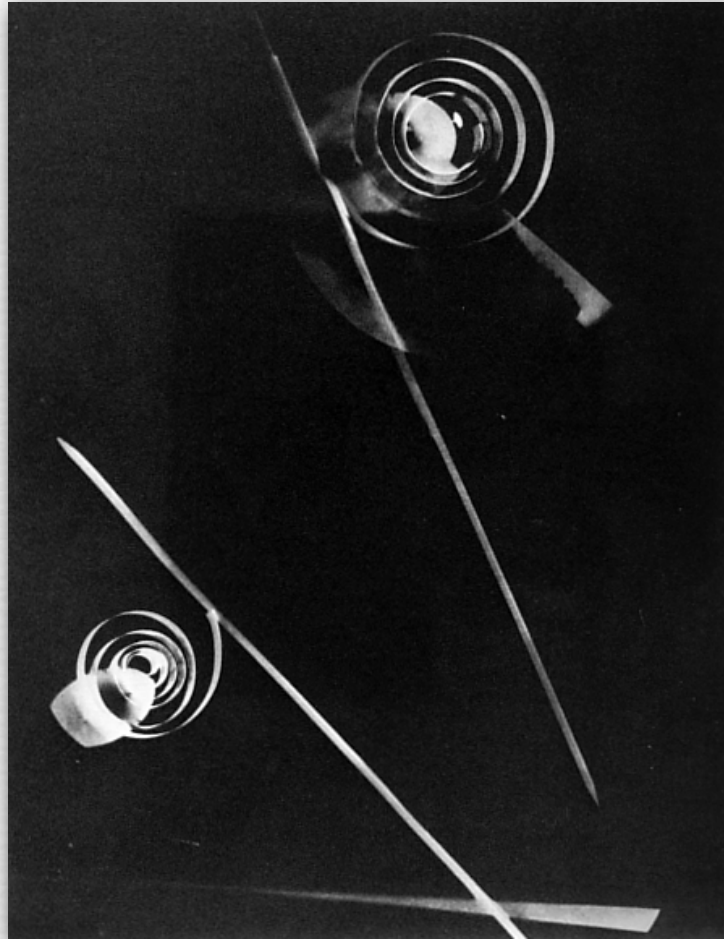
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- ◆ Cubism
- ◆ Constructivism
- ◆ Dada(ism)
- ◆ revolutionary uprisings
  - Russian Revolution, Communism, Socialism, Fascism
- ◆ age of experimentation
  - the moribund art of the old needs to be jettisoned
  - down with tradition, up with the avante-garde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

# Camera-less images

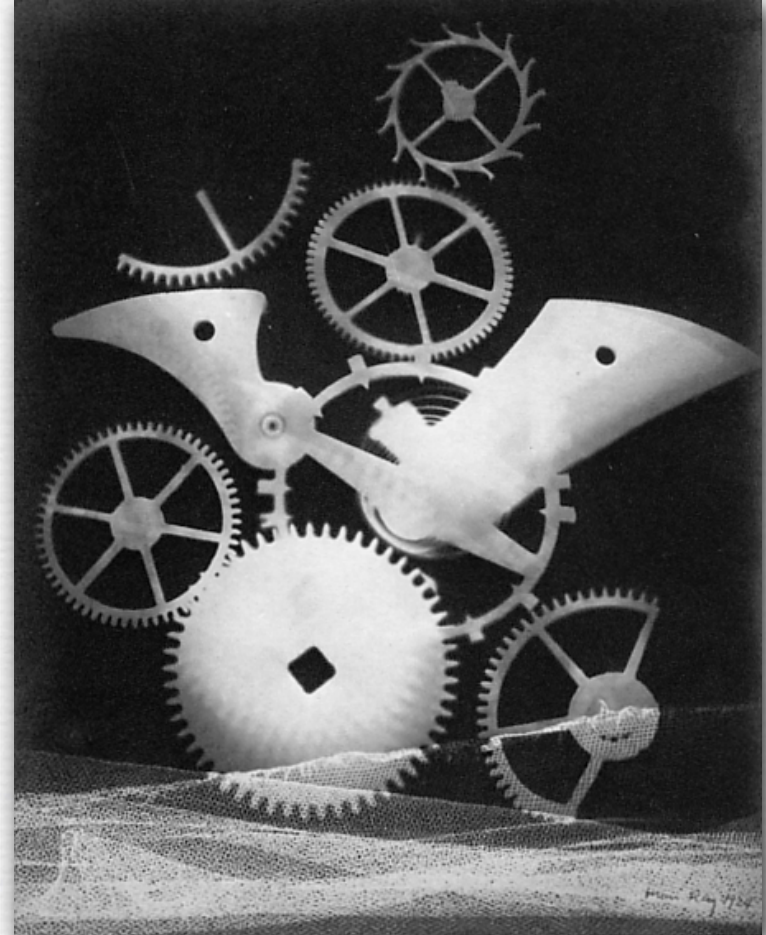
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(Newhall)



Laszlo Moholy-Nagy,  
Photogram, 1925

(Newhall)



Man Ray,  
Rayograph, 1922



# Photomontage

(Newhall)



Paul Citroen, Metropolis, 1925

(Rosenblum)



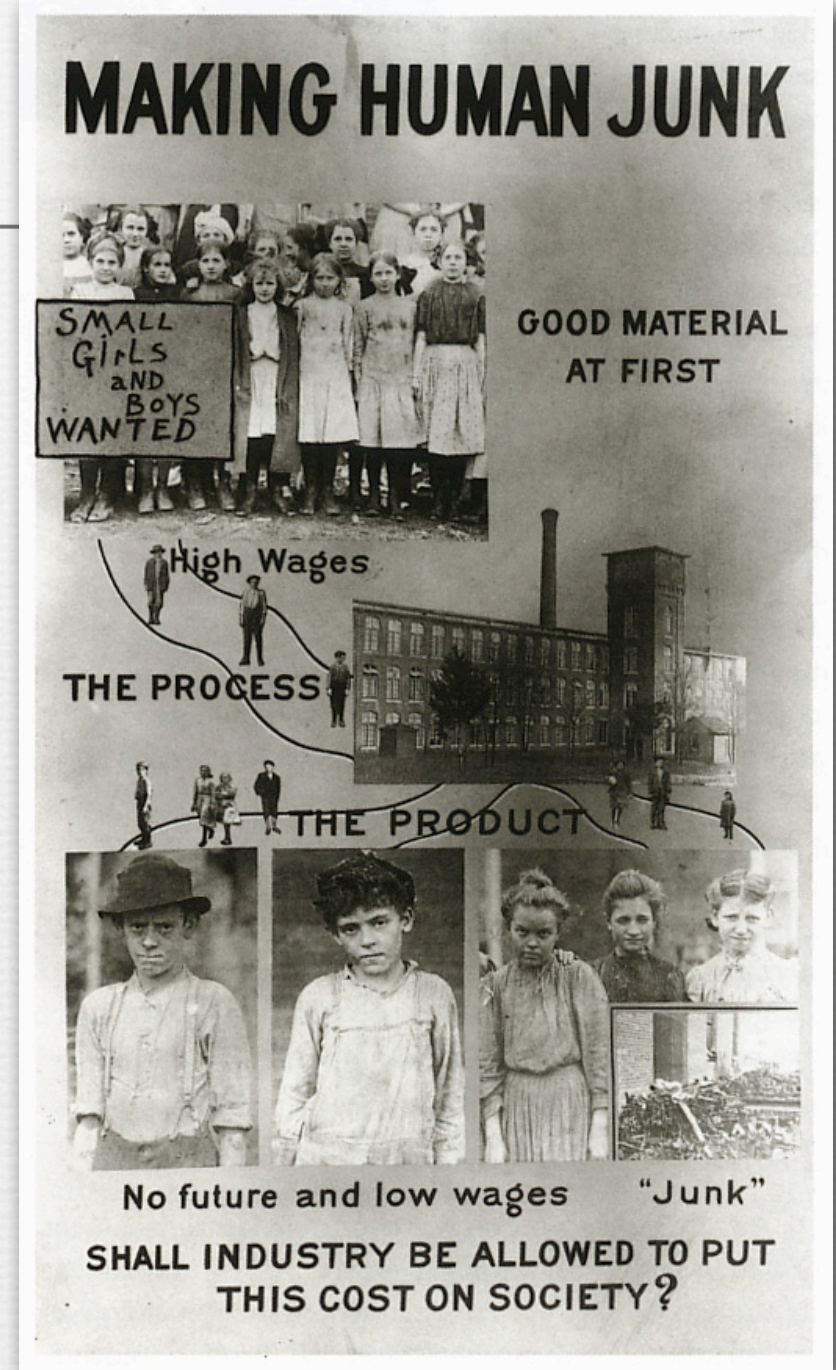
John Heartfield, Adolf the Superman; He Eats Gold and Spews Idiocies, 1932



# Photographer as ideologue



Lewis Hine, Addie Card, Spinner, Vermont, 1915



Lewis Hine, poster, 1915



# Photographer as ideologue

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during the Blitz, 1940

Bill Brandt,  
Halifax, 1936

(Rosenblum)





# Photojournalism

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Arnold Genthe,  
The San Francisco Fire,  
1906

(Rosenblum)





# Photojournalism

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First Flight, Kitty Hawk, 1903,  
photographed by John Daniels



# World War I

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23rd infantry fighting in Europe, photographer unknown, 1918

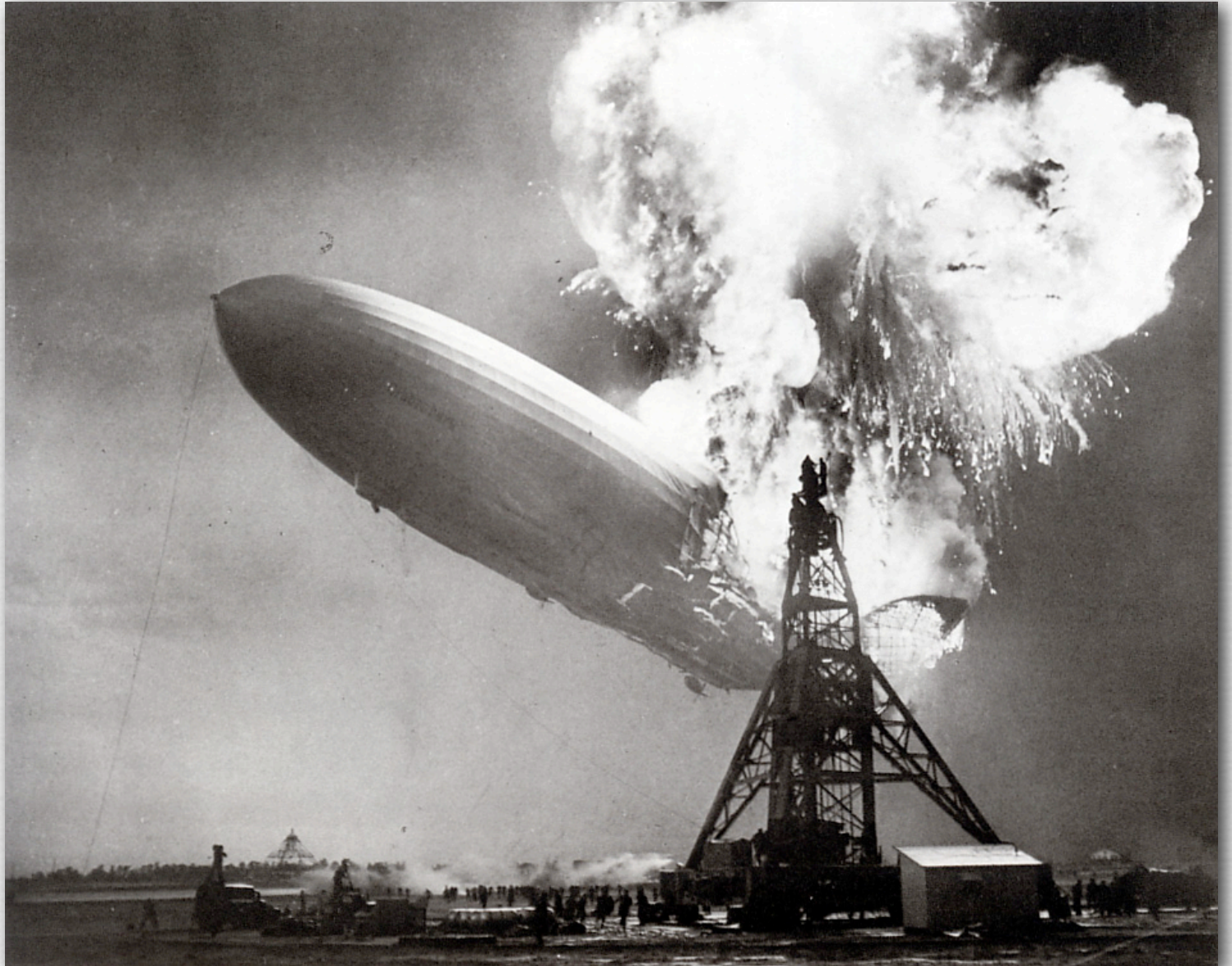


# Other catastrophes

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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)



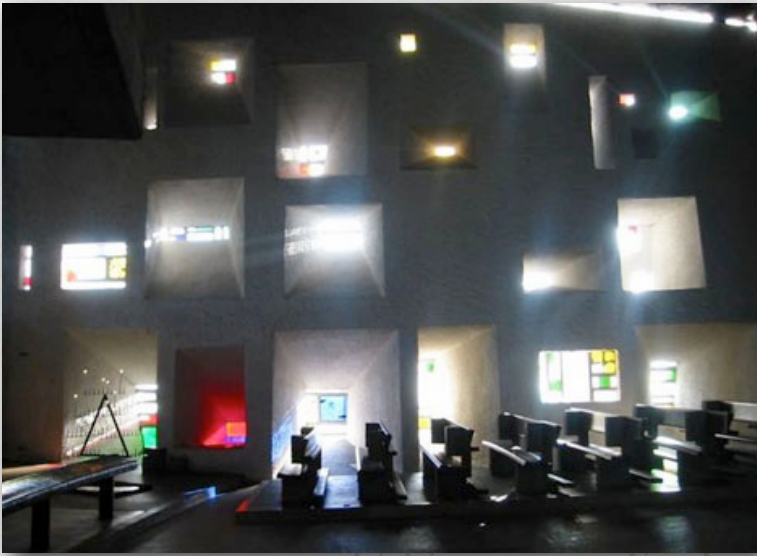
Le Corbusier,  
Villa Savoye, 1929



Mies van der Rohe,  
Barcelona Pavillion, 1929



# modernism



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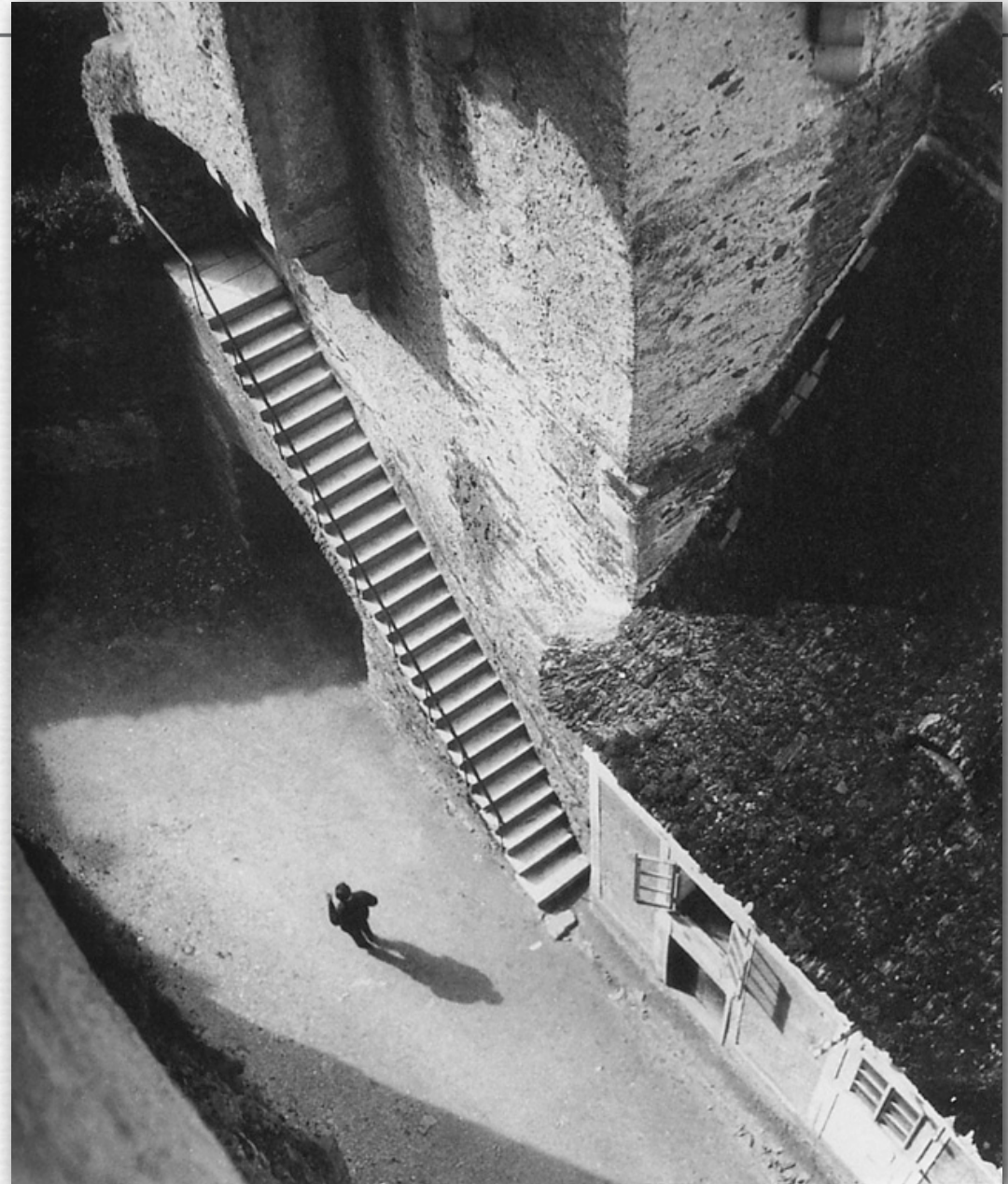
- ◆ modern architecture (a.k.a. International Style)
  - spare design, no decoration
  - strong geometry, primary colors (or white)
- ◆ modern furniture
- ◆ the “straight photograph”
  - unhackneyed themes
  - strong geometry
  - unconventional viewpoints
  - sharp definition - the f/64 club
  - the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



# The straight photograph

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Jan Lauschmann,  
Castle Staircase, 1927



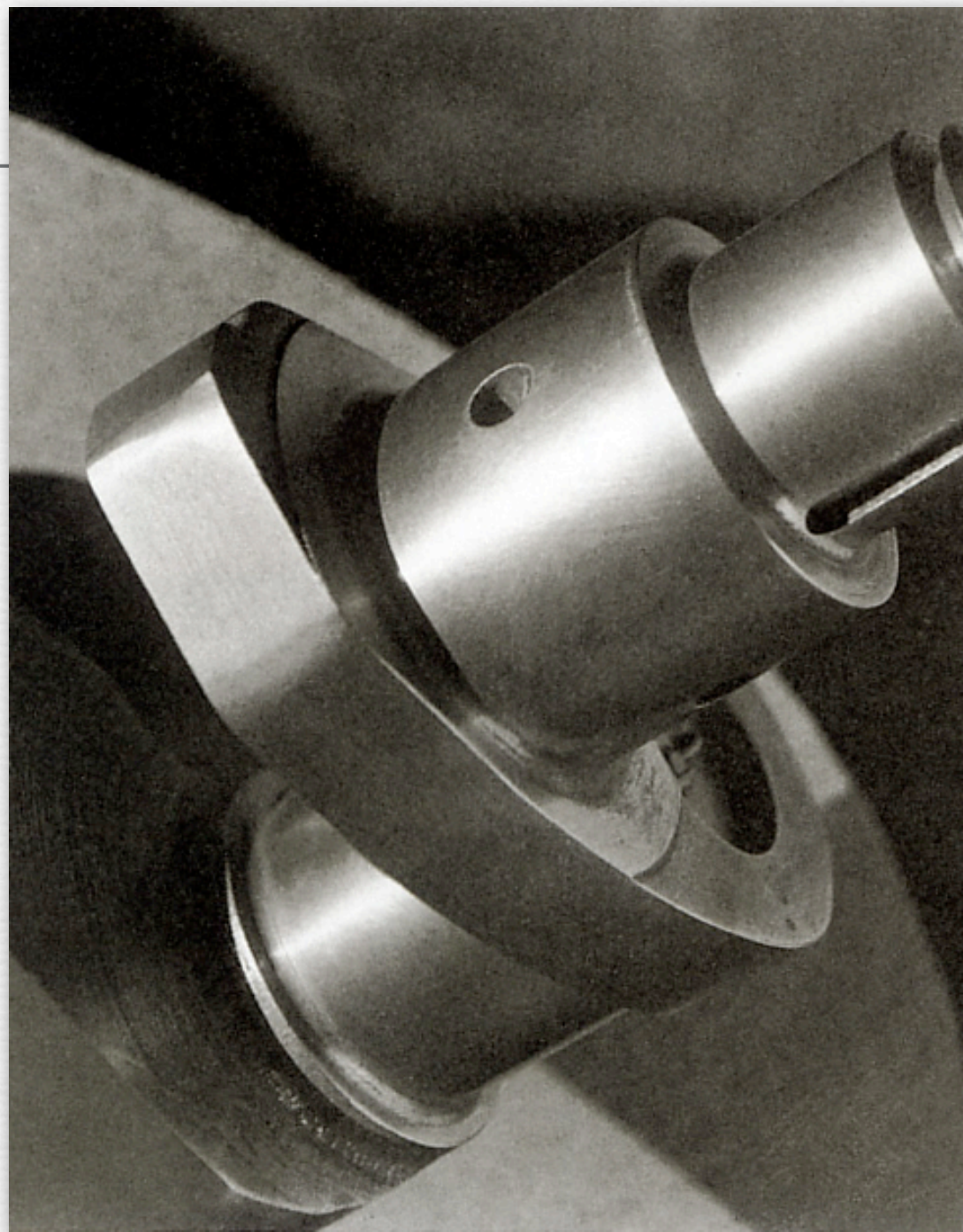
(Rosenblum)



# Precisionists

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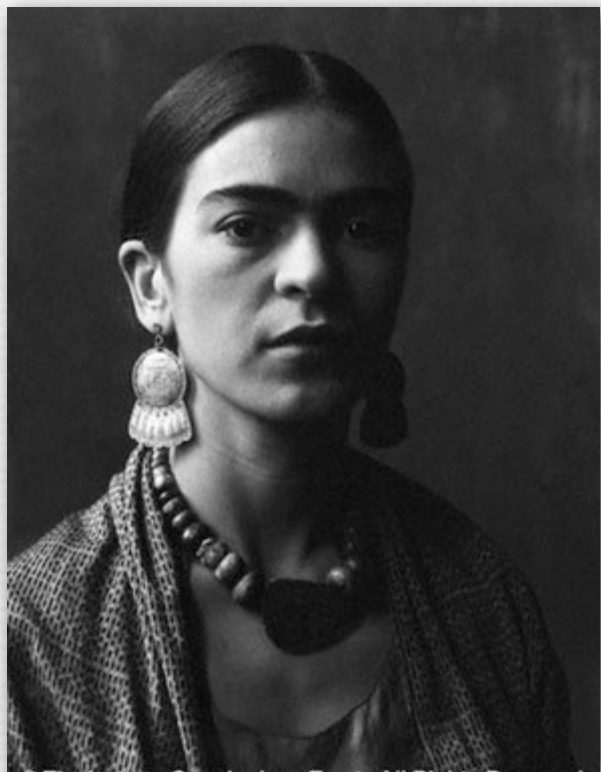
Paul Outerbridge,  
Marmon Crankshaft, 1923





# Precisionists

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portrait of Frida Kahlo

Imogen Cunningham,  
Two Callas, 1929





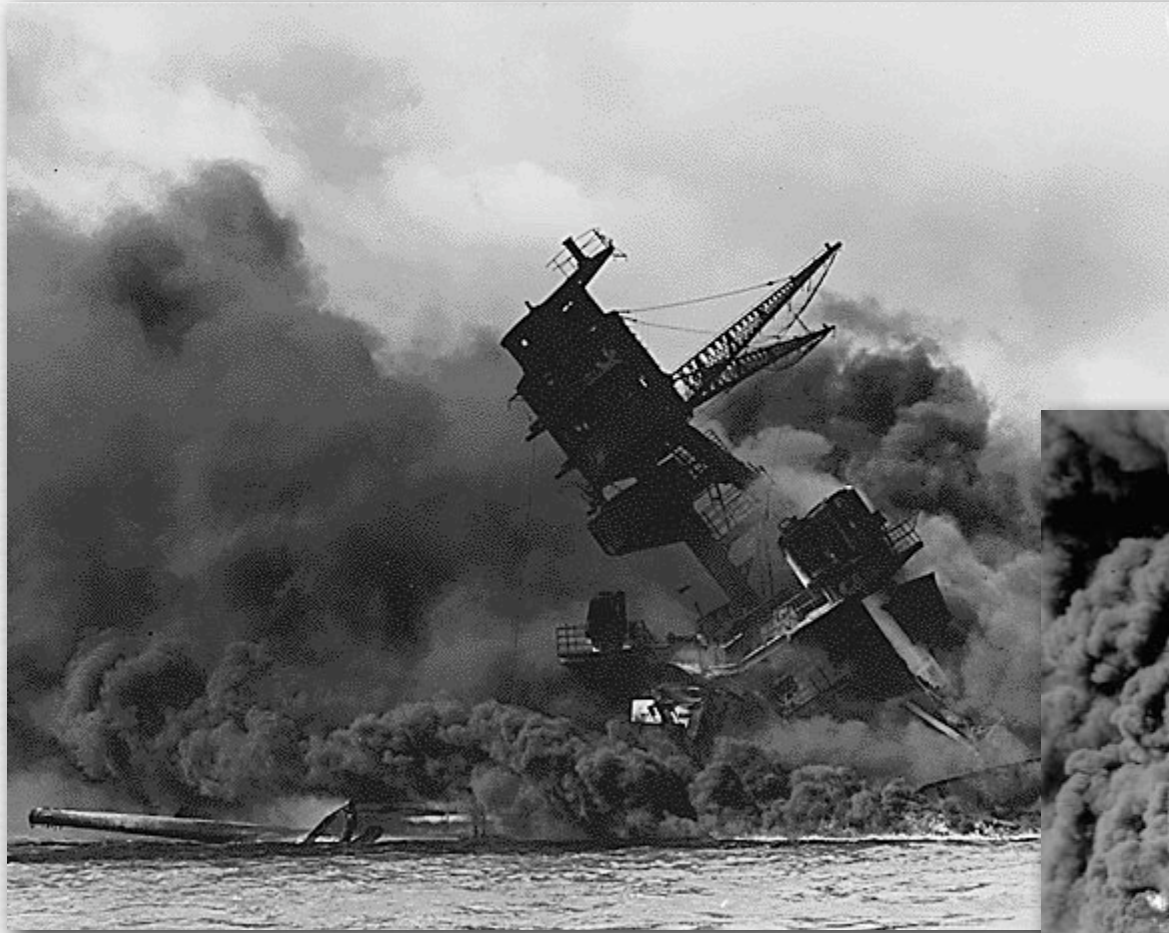


Barbara Morgan, Martha Graham: Letter to the World, 1940



# 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

(Archives)



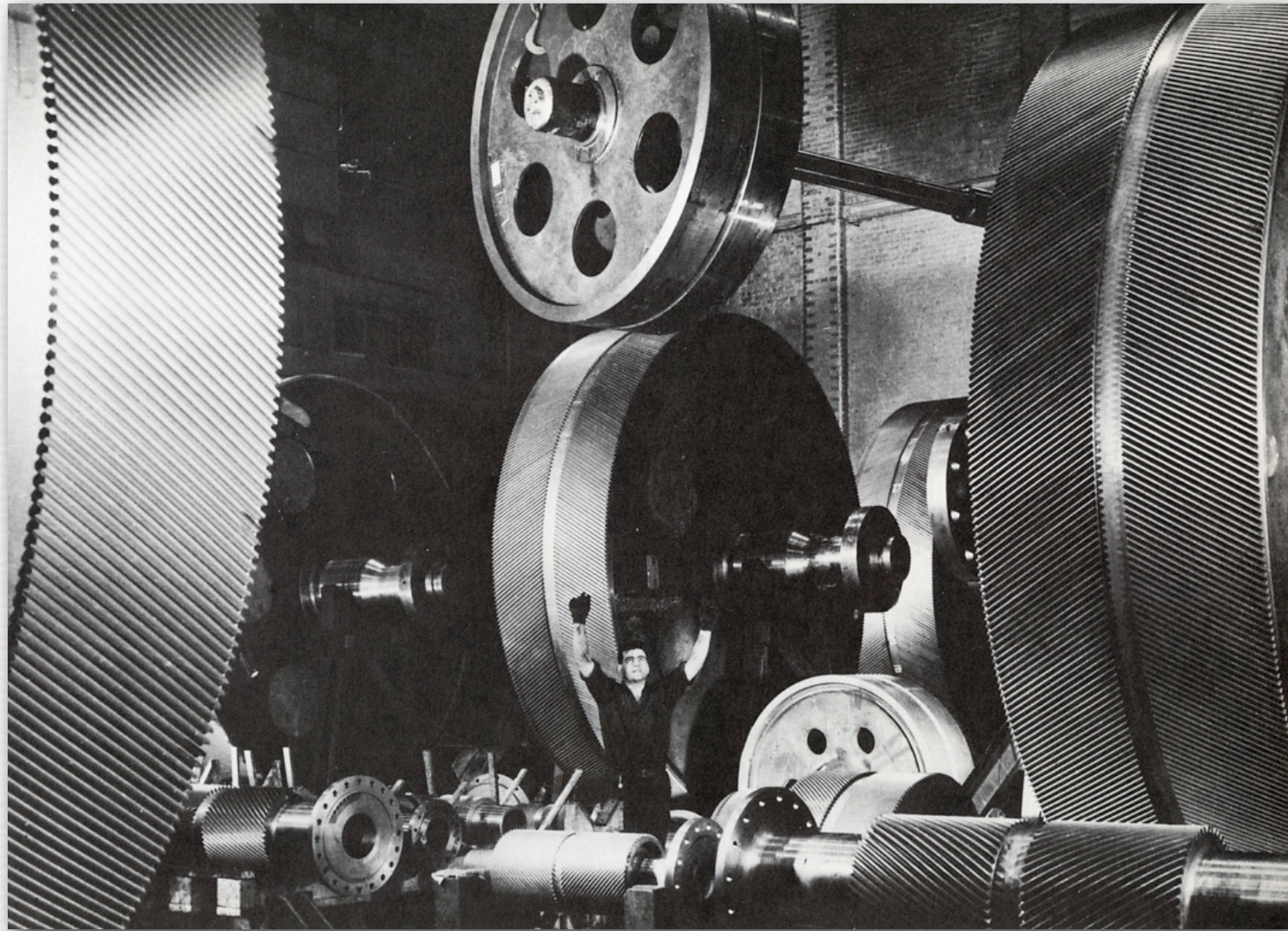
“Stars over Berlin and Tokyo will soon replace these factory lights reflected in the noses of America’s fighting planes at Douglas Aircraft’s Long Beach, California plant.” (photographer unknown)



# Photographer as propagandist

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(Archives)

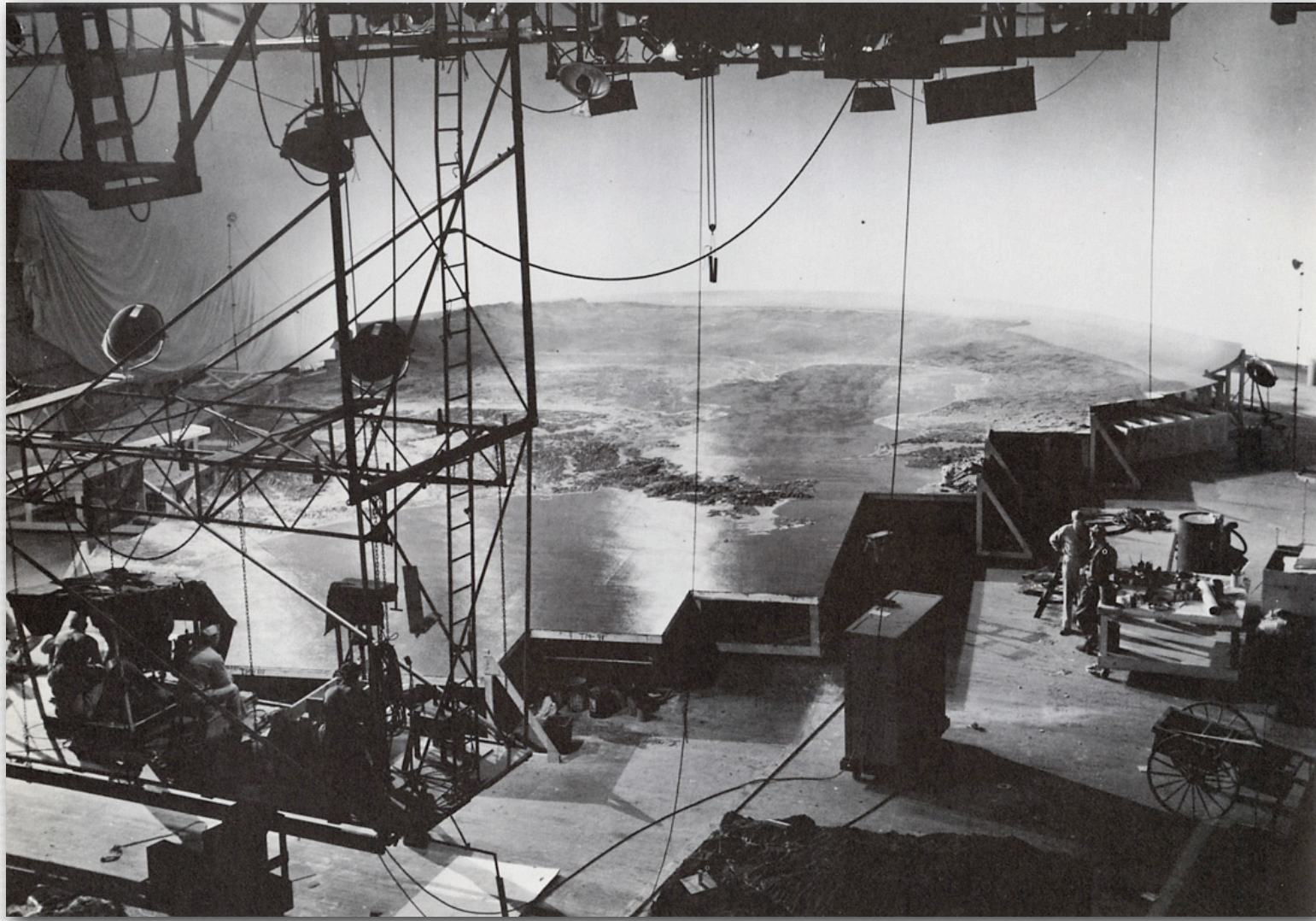


Dimitri Kessel (?), "Giant Gears in a shop in Massachusetts will become parts of U.S. warships", 1943



# 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

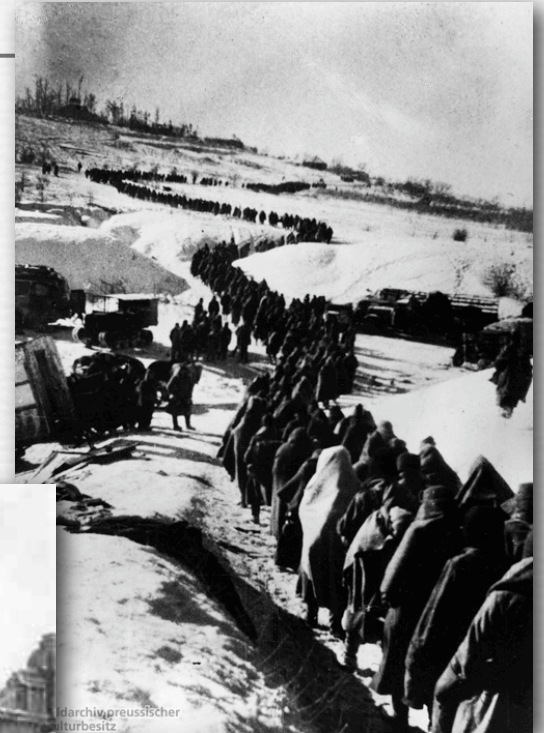
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George Strock,  
Three Dead Americans, 1943  
(first photograph of dead soldiers  
allowed published by U.S. censors)





# 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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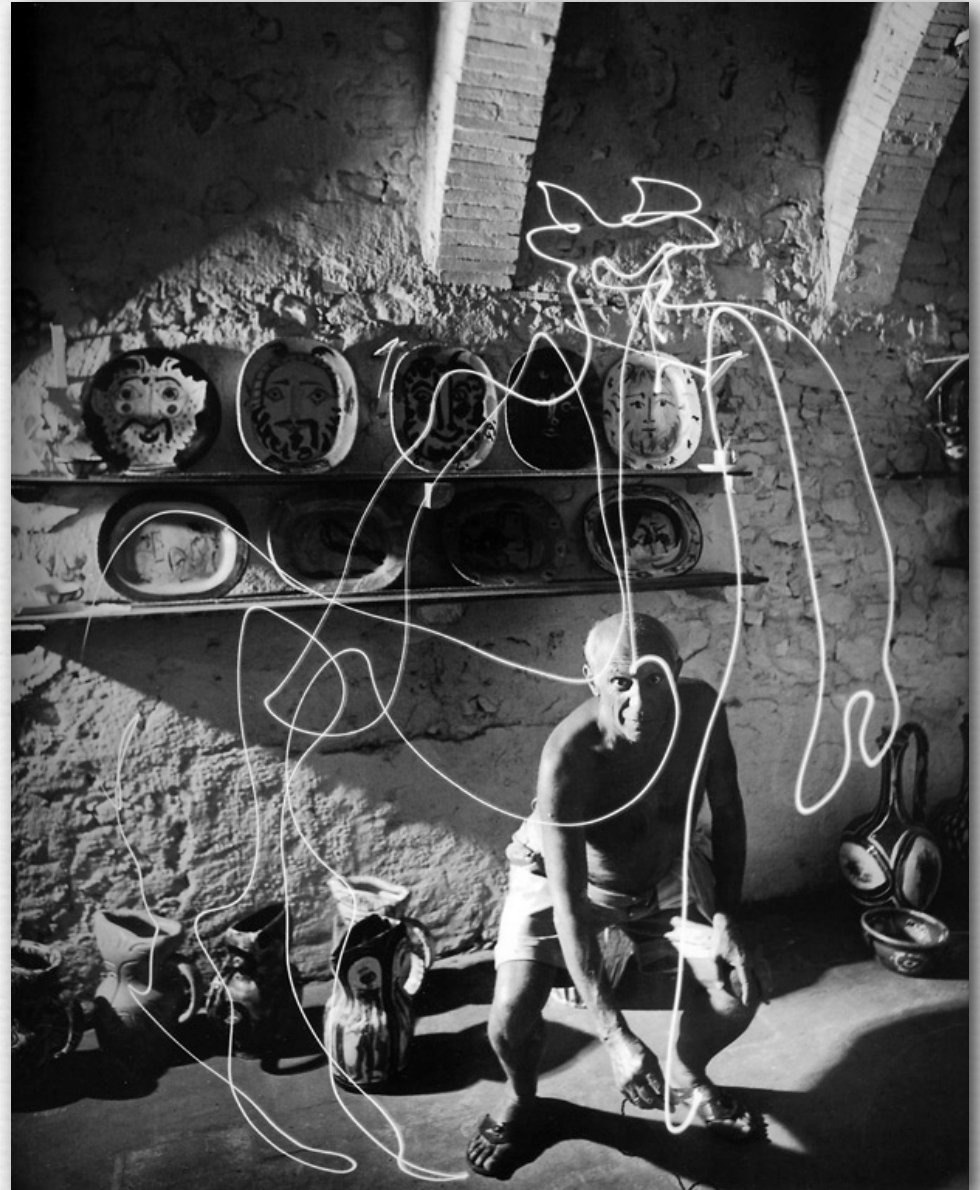
Edward Clark, Among the Mourners, 1945



# 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

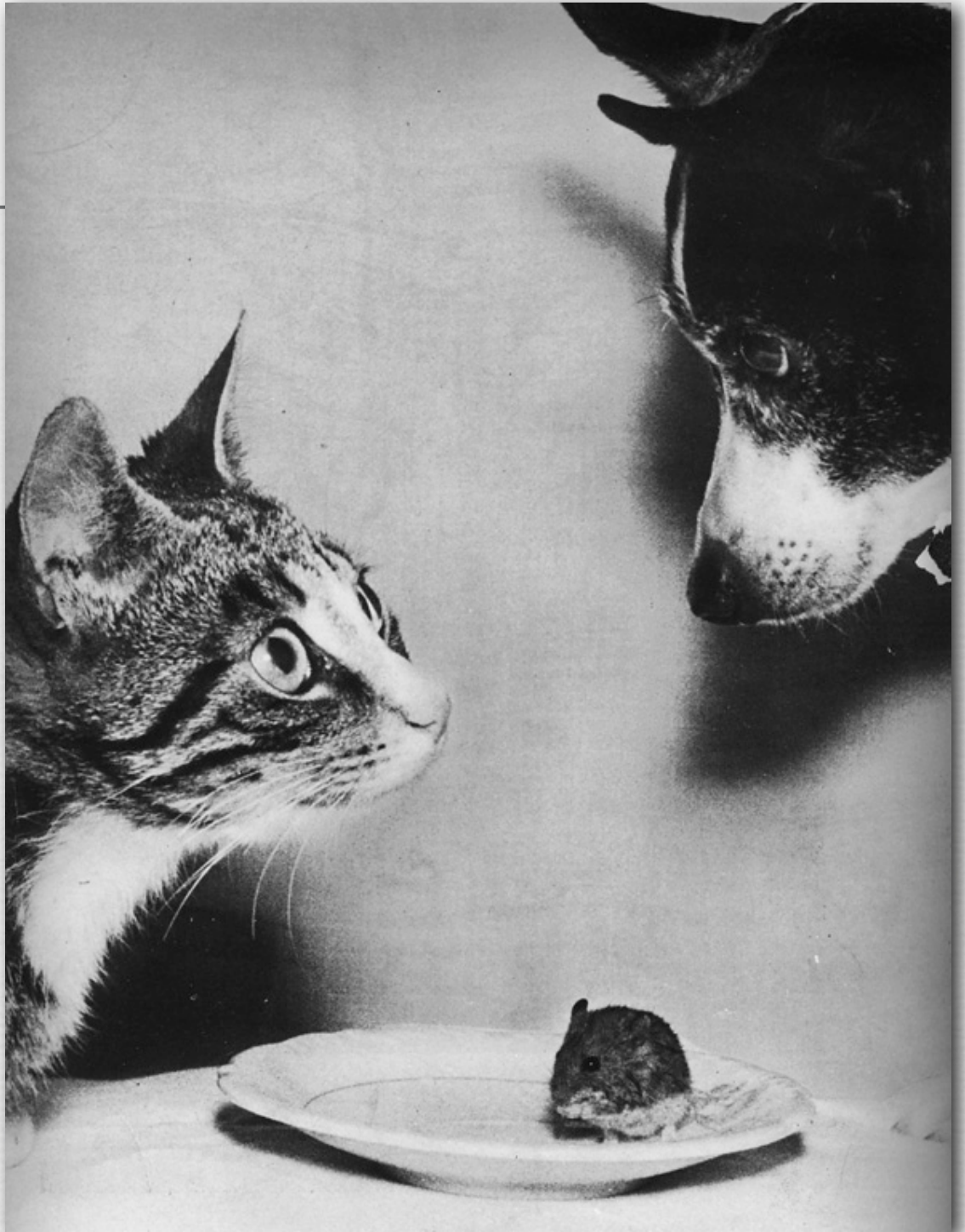




# Miscellany

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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



# 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



(Newhall)

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# On the edge of pathetic

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Diane Arbus,  
Mother Holding  
Her Child,  
1967



(Rosenblum)

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# Character study

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

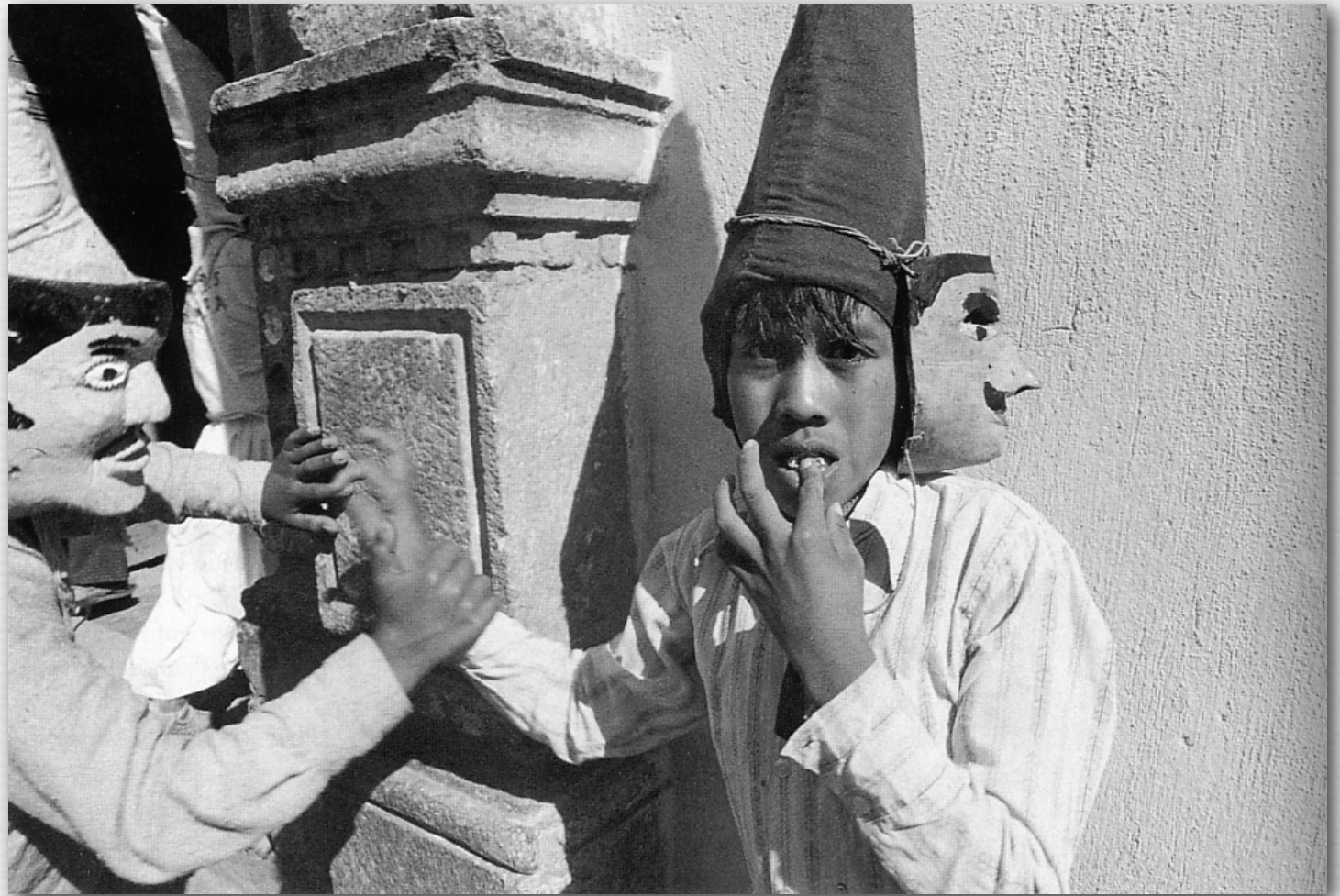
(Rosenblum)





# 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.