

Taschen
MAX ERNST

Ulrich Bischoff
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MAX ERNST

Max Ernst (1891-1996) is one of the most important figures of Dadaism and Surrealism. As a student in Bonn, he found himself drawn to the Dada movement that had arisen in counter-reaction to the mass slaughter of World War I.

The closing of the famed Dada exhibit in Cologne for 'obscenity' led Ernst to decide to spend the rest of his life in Paris, where he came in contact with the Surrealists. Above all, Ernst stands out for his varied style and technique, having produced an oeuvre that reaches from paintings, drawings and sculpture, across texts and stage settings to collage-novels and the development of his own 'frottage' technique.

During the World War II, Ernst, like many of his colleagues, became an 'undesirable foreigner' and was forced to emigrate; after the war, however, he returned to his adopted homeland. In 1954 he received the Grand Prize for Painting at the Biennial in Venice and during the 1960s his work was honoured with major retrospectives.

The author:

Ulrich Bischoff is an art historian and writer. From 1994 to 2013, he worked as director of the Gemäldegalerie Neue Meister at the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden. He has published extensively in the areas of classical modernity and contemporary art.

#arte #logosedizioni



The Magic of Slight Changes
1922–1929

Following an invitation extended to him by his friends Paul and Lata Fauch, Tristan Tzara, André Breton and others, Max Ernst finally left the Paris in 1922, spurred on by difficulties he was experiencing in Cologne. In the same year, he immortalized himself and his friends in a picture based on the old motif of the group portrait, "The Bandwagon of Friends" (oil, p. 27), where they are to be seen gesturing to the sign language of the deaf and dumb. The new quality of his work, which had gone through a long period of preparation, taking on more and more form, was now able to develop fully. His stage from accepted theories of art had brought about the creation of a new technique of his own.

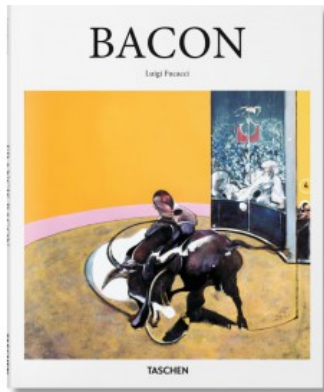
Apart from "The Elephant of the Celebes" (oil, p. 22), which was painted in Cologne in 1921, "Wedding Day" (oil, p. 21) is one of the few paintings in which the artist was able to successfully transfer the techniques of combination, assemblage and collage to large scale painting. However, because the initial content of the picture is only recognizable as mediated as abstract form, the spatial situation remains unclear. Here objects differing in scale are arranged in a setting indicated by archetypal elements. A device for teaching sticks is seen through a hole extended through a window and through the wall in holding. The seat, which has been cracked open, resembles an eye, leading to initial Lata Fauch's film "La Chaise anglaise", which was made in 1928. Two birds are to be seen looking out of a hole in the stage in the foreground, prevented from withdrawing their heads by pulleys and a length of string (or a hook) tied to the horns of one of them. In this picture, the device for forbidden fruit (indicated by the hand which has reached for the red) and rumour (for the birds have put their heads through the opening in order to see something) are immediately parallel. There are numerous allusions to the Dadaist legend of chemical analogy, a myth which has remained its validity throughout the history of mankind. For the motifs of stasis, Madonna and parody are alignment. The picture is given the impression of a collage for the use of hard cotton and for the appearance of the paint. In addition to the collages made of some art materials which had helped him sever ties to accepted



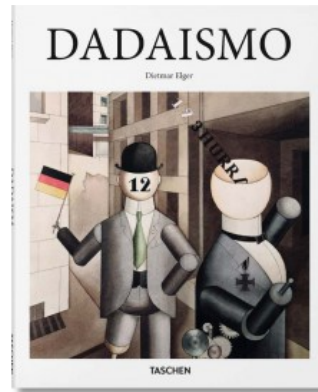
The Bandwagon of Friends or The House of Bismarck at the Street and Bismarck, 1922
The Wedding Day and the Chair and the Bismarck over the Sea
Gunter Rambow
Collage, photograph and gouache
paper, 19 x 13.5 cm
London, Contemporary, 1988

The Elephant of the Celebes, 1921
Copyright Edition
1988 edition, 19 x 13.5 cm
The New Gallery, London

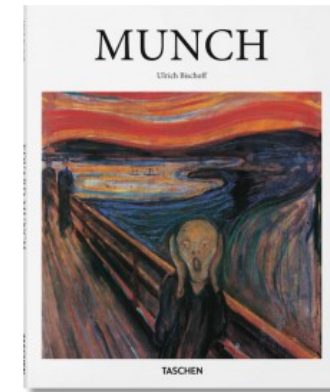
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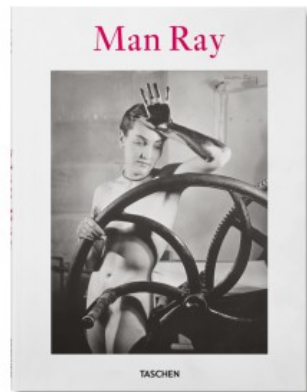
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