

Cecil Beaton

(British, 1904-1980)

***Eileen Dunne in the Hospital for Sick Children (Air-Raid Victim)*, 1940**

Gelatin silver print

Museum purchase with funds provided by Susan and Bruce Worster,
2018.5

Cecil Beaton is famous for his fashion and society photography as well as his movie and stage costumes. This poignant portrait, depicting a three-year-old survivor of a September 1940 Nazi bombing attack in London, belongs to a large body of work that Beaton created throughout World War II. This includes 15 photographs of bombed buildings in central London in SBMA's collection. With its powerful pathos of an injured child holding onto its toy animal, a variant of this photograph appeared on the September 23, 1940, *Life* magazine cover, which has been recognized as turning U.S. public sentiment toward supporting Britain as it faced Nazi Germany alone in the early stages of World War II.

Kwame Brathwaite

(American, b. 1938)

Untitled (Self-Portrait)

1964, printed 2018

Archival pigment print, ed. 2/5

Museum purchase with funds provided by PhotoFutures, 2018.23

This captivating self-portrait portrays the artist Kwame Brathwaite during the early 1960s when he, his family and colleagues were popularizing the still-influential phrase, “Black is Beautiful.” The immediacy of the image—reinforced by its square format, the artist’s hand gesture, intent gaze and strategic placement of the camera—suggests that Brathwaite is just about to speak to the viewer who is perhaps having their own portrait taken.

Kwame Brathwaite

(American, b. 1938)

Untitled (Cannonball Adderley, Great Northern Hotel, Listening to Playback)

ca. early 1960s, printed 2020

Archival pigment print, ed. 2/5

Museum purchase with funds provided by the Eric A. Skipsey Acquisition Fund, 2020.17

Kwame Brathwaite's earliest photographs are those he took in jazz clubs in New York City that he and his friends and family founded and frequented. Here Brathwaite depicts the great jazz alto saxophonist Julian Edward "Cannonball" Adderley (1928-1975) contemplating a recent performance in an extraordinarily intimate instance of a great artist experiencing their own art.

Kwame Brathwaite

(American, b. 1938)

Untitled (Patrons at an AJASS concert, Club 845, Bronx)

ca. 1956-57, printed 2019

Archival pigment print, ed. 1/5

Museum purchase with funds provided by the Eric A. Skipsey
Acquisition Fund, 2020.23.3

In contrast to the single figures to the left, this engaging photograph demonstrates Kwame Brathwaite's talent in depicting people in groups. In New York in 1956, Brathwaite and his brother, Elombe Brath, founded the African Jazz Arts Society and Studios (AJASS), whose concerts became the subject of many of Brathwaite's earliest works such as this image. Here Brathwaite creates a composition of balance and depth within his preferred square format, while also sensitively reflecting each sitter's individual expression and pose. Visually absorbing, the photograph also acts as a historical record of the New York jazz world in the 1950s to which Brathwaite and his family and friends were so deeply committed.

Manuel Álvarez Bravo

(Mexican, 1902-2002)

Niño Maya de Tulum ***(Mayan Boy from Tulum)***

1942, printed 1981

Platinum print, ed. 11/25

Gift of Joan Almond, 2017.21.1.5

Manuel Álvarez Bravo is one of the great photographers of the 20th century and among the most important artists in the history of Mexican art. Bravo focused on Mexican life and subject matter—its landscape, people, history and traditions—in the face of the century’s dramatic changes. Capturing the sometimes strange yet subtle aspects of everyday life, his art was described by Mexican muralist Diego Rivera as “profound and discreet poetry.” This powerful portrait of a young boy at an ancient Mayan site resonates with Bravo’s unique ability to reveal how Mexico’s earlier civilizations have persisted through the centuries.

Judy Dater

(American, b. 1941)

***Kathleen Kelly*, 1972**

Gelatin silver print

Museum purchase, funds provided by the National Endowment for the Arts and matching gifts, 1980.44.2

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Judy Dater moved to San Francisco in the early 1960s to study photography. There she came to know many in San Francisco's established circle of photographers, among them Imogen Cunningham, whose portraiture was particularly important to Dater. This portrait, one of Dater's signature works, is emblematic of the newly bold styles of the 1970s in clothing and self-presentation. Here the artist heightened the charismatic stature of this woman by placing her at the top of the picture plane, so that her confident presence fills the entire space of the photograph.

Roy Decarava

(American, 1919-2009)

Coltrane and Elvin, New York, 1960

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Arthur and Yolanda Steinman, 1983.69.52

An influential multi-faceted artist, Roy Decarava was one of the great chroniclers of the vibrancy of Harlem and greater New York in the 20th century. A painter by early training, Decarava approached photography with a heightened sensibility for tone and light. Among his best-known works are his beautifully-registered photographs of jazz musicians such as this one. Here Decarava portrays John Coltrane and Elvin Ray Jones, members of a famous jazz quartet that included McCoy Tiner and Jimmy Garrison, nearly disappearing into a composition that—save for the electric gleam of Coltrane’s saxophone—borders on the entirely abstract.

Trude Fleischmann

(American, born Austria, 1895-1990)

Portrait of Marion and Helen Post, Vienna, Austria, 1933

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Joan Almond, 2016.37.11

A pioneering figure, Trude Fleischmann founded a photographic studio in Vienna in the 1920s and became among the city's most noted and successful photographers. In the fraught year of 1933, Fleischmann portrayed the American sisters Marion and Helen Post (then studying in Vienna) in a riveting composition that interlocks their faces with a rare intensity and psychological depth. As a Jewish artist and intellectual, Fleischmann fled the Nazi onslaught for the United States, where she continued her artistic practice for the next six decades.

Paul Strand

(American, 1890-1976)

Young Boy, Gondeville, Charente, France, 1951

Gelatin silver print

Museum purchase with funds provided by the Wallis Foundation,
2003.39

One of Paul Strand's most famous works, this portrait of a boy in post-World War II western France challenges its viewers still with the intensity of the sitter's gaze and overall drama of his facial features. Strand traveled through Europe after the war, creating memorable portraits of individuals and families that were reflective of their particular society and place. By this time, Strand had worked through many aesthetic turns to arrive at a straightforward use of the camera lens that came to define High Modernism in the history of photography.

George Hoyningen-Huene

(American, born Russia, 1900-1968)

***Greta Garbo*, 1948**

Gelatin silver print

Museum purchase with funds provided by PhotoFutures, 2005.31

The legendary Hollywood star Greta Garbo is portrayed here not in a couture gown but a simple turtleneck as she faces the camera in a direct, even slightly confrontational way. Along with Cecil Beaton and Horst. P. Horst, Hoyningen-Huene was one of the photographic legend-makers of the 20th century whose unerring eye for style and glamor helped define his era. Shot slightly from below eye-level, Garbo's character as a person radiates from the sheet, yet she fully retains the regal qualities with which she achieved her international and enduring fame.

Hyo-Jin In

(Korean, b. 1975)

Stiletto #07, 2007

from the series, “High School Lovers”

Inkjet print

Museum Purchase, 2009.30

This much larger-than-life color photograph depicts a young couple engaged in an intimate yet ambiguous embrace. The work is part of a series in which Hyo-Jin In staged high school-aged characters involved in psychologically-charged tableaux. She titled each work in the series “Stiletto” to refer to a sense of something alluring yet unstable in relation to young people experiencing relationships for the first time. The young woman here gazes directly out toward the viewer from the depths of her partner’s arms, a moment that in real life would perhaps be too private to comfortably witness.

Graciela Iturbide

(Mexican, b. 1942)

***Jano, Ocumicho, Michoacán*, 1979**

Photogravure, ed. 1/30

Gift of Joan Almond, 2016.37.17

One of today's most honored photographers and among Mexico's most prominent artists, Graciela Iturbide studied filmmaking before turning to photography while working for the Mexican photographer, Manuel Álvarez Bravo. Like Bravo, Iturbide focused on Mexico in its many traditional and modern facets, but then widened her sites and subjects to locations across Latin America and the United States. Iturbide's work often features signs, symbols and characters suggestive of ancient mythology, traditional religion and private spirituality, as seen in this striking masked figure whose story, costume and place remain tantalizingly ambiguous.

Tatiana Parcerero

(Mexican, b. 1967)

Ojos

1995-96, printed 2013

Transparency print overlaid on a gelatin silver print, ed. 3/10

Gift of Martha and Jorge Schneider in memory of Karen Sinsheimer,
2015.54

Tatiana Parcerero has stated that the human form in her art acts as “a map that I can relate to concepts as different as identity, memory, territory and time,” and that her focus has been on “reinventing and recreating personal or collective experiences and visual metaphors.” Here a set of arresting eyes surrounded or overlaid by numbers and symbols less easily identified creates a sense of passing time and intensely subjective experience. Parcerero’s educational background in psychology perhaps explains her art’s concern with the mind-body dichotomy as seen here so suggestively.

Tomoko Sawada

(Japanese, b. 1977)

ID400, #301-400, 1998

100 gelatin silver prints, ed. 1/15

Museum purchase with funds provided by the Wallis Foundation,
2003.67

In an equal measure of photography and performance art, Tomoko Sawada used a photo booth in Kobe, Japan, to create these hundreds of photographs of herself in an astonishing variety of clothing, accessories and hairstyles. She then brought these ID-like images together into a strictly ordered geometric grid. Sawada's art challenges viewers to reconcile how the same individual can appear as hundreds of different kinds of persons, while raising questions about the essential nature of the self in contemporary life.

Weegee (Arthur Fellig)

(American, born Poland, 1899-1968)

***Listening to Frank Sinatra*, 1944**

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Wolcott, 1986.64.5

Weegee was the great street photographer of New York City whose influence on subsequent generations of artists has been profound. Considering the entire urban experience as his canvas and subject, Weegee was famous for photographing at crime scenes and had no hesitation in showing people at their brutal and lurid worst. He also captured more satirical and even gentler sides of humanity as seen in this wry view of a teenager tearing up at hearing the strains of a young Frank Sinatra's voice.

Pat Ward Williams

(American, b. 1948)

***Jeremiah Wife's*, 1996**

Chromogenic print, ed. 3/10

Gift of Dan and Jeanne Fauci, 2000.65.6

Pat Ward Williams juxtaposes prior photographs with text to focus on how Black lives and experience have been ignored and even erased in American culture. Here Williams has reproduced an image of a stylish Black woman, likely taken in the 1940s or 50s, seen seated and smiling in bright sunshine on the steps of a house. Around this image is a crossed-out text with “Jeremiah,” “wife’s,” and “14” as its only legible elements, which may refer to the Bible’s Book of Jeremiah, chapter 14, that is full of dashed hopes and forbidding loss. The contradiction between this stern source and upbeat portrait challenges viewers to imagine for themselves the personal circumstances in the life of this person, one whom they can see, but will never know.

Lee Wolcott

(American, 1905-1997)

***Portrait of Marion Post Wolcott*, 1971**

Gelatin silver print, ed. 2/5

Gift of the Artist in Memory of Marion Post Wolcott, 1991.101.4

This unpretentious portrait of Marion Post Wolcott depicts the artist roughly 40 years after the portrait of her and her sister Helen Post to the right. Her husband, Lee Wolcott, was also a photographer and here presents the artist—well-known for her Depression-era photographs—in a candid and lively moment many years after creating the work that gained her lasting renown. Both lived in Santa Barbara in their later decades and gave the Santa Barbara Museum of Art many works of art, including the Weegee in this exhibition.

Tseng Kwong Chi

(American, born Hong Kong, 1950-1990)

LEFT:

Puerto Rico

from the series, “Expeditionary Self-Portrait”

1987, printed 2012

Gelatin silver print, ed. 1/25

Museum Purchase with funds provided by PhotoFutures, 2012.18.1

RIGHT:

Grand Canyon, Arizona

from the series, “Expeditionary Self-Portrait”

1987, printed 2006

Gelatin silver print, ed. 1/25

Museum Purchase with funds provided by PhotoFutures, 2012.18.1

In his “Expeditionary Self-Portrait” series (also known as “East Meets West”), Tseng Kwong Chi photographed himself dressed in a “Mao suit” at iconic sites across the globe. Described by the artist as an “Ambiguous Ambassador,” Tseng’s character appears as a dispassionate observer of places of outstanding natural beauty, tourist attractions and those deemed important by popular culture media. A wry comment on tourism, international relations and constructed identity, Tseng’s photographs parallel many artists’ work in photography that raises the notion that the contemporary self can be viewed as a perpetual performance.

TOP:

Michael Disfarmer

(American, 1884-1959)

Mama and Papa, ca. 1930-1952

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Michael Yanover and Rhonda Milrad in memory of Philip Yanover, 2016.32.2

BOTTOM:

Frederick Detlefsen

(American, born Germany, 1861-1945)

Self Portrait, ca. 1900

Toned gelatin silver print

Gift of Glen and Susan Serbin, 1999.71.2

Michael Disfarmer founded a photographic portrait studio in a small town pre-World War II Arkansas and created the portraits of hundreds of its residents. Unknown to the outside world until the 1970s, Disfarmer's photographs bear a striking Modernist quality of presenting subjects face-forward with little to no background to distract from their inherent human qualities.

Frederick Detlefsen practiced medicine in Chicago and was also a gifted photographer whose work appeared in Pictorialist journals and in exhibitions at the Art Institute of Chicago. These two artists' bodies of work demonstrate how by the early 20th century photography had become a business and avocation in both rural and urban places.

TOP:

Max Yavno

(American, 1911-1985)

Wallace Putnam

1941, printed ca. 1980

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Marjorie and Leonard Vernon, 1994.55.1

BOTTOM:

Hansel Mieth

(German, active in USA, 1909-1998)

Boys on the Road

1936, printed 1995

Platinum print

Gift of David and Julia Nelson-Gal, San Francisco, 1996.68

Max Yavno is well-known for iconic images of California such as a view of a crowded Muscle Beach in Venice and a conductor guiding a turning streetcar in San Francisco. He was also a gifted portraitist as seen in this sensitively composed work. A close friend of American artist Milton Avery, Wallace Putnam (1899-1989) was an American painter who combined figurative and abstract elements in a highly individual way.

Hansel Mieth came to the United States from her native Germany with her husband, Otto Hagel, also a photographer. Living most of her life in northern California, she focused her lens on workers' rights, poverty and strife, making this gently jovial moment of a pair of train-riding young men looking in opposite directions somewhat unusual in her career.

Genevieve Gaignard

(American, b. 1981)

LEFT:

***Ascension (New Extensions)*, 2017**

Chromogenic print, ed. 2/3

Museum purchase with Funds Provided by The Dana & Albert R. Broccoli Charitable Foundation, 2020.19.1

RIGHT:

***Hidden Fences*, 2017**

Chromogenic print, ed. 3/3

Museum purchase with Funds Provided by The Dana & Albert R. Broccoli Charitable Foundation, 2020.19.2

Genevieve Gaignard deals with ideas of race, gender, sexuality and performance in large-scale color photographs rich in narrative possibilities. Gaignard's art stems in many ways from her life story, as stated on the artist's website:

The daughter of a black father and white mother, Gaignard's youth was marked by a strong sense of invisibility. Was her family white enough to be white? Black enough to be black? Gaignard interrogates notions of 'passing' in an effort to address these questions. She positions her own female body as the chief site of exploration—challenging viewers to navigate the powers and anxieties of intersectional identity...

In both these works Gaignard ingeniously unites clothing, pose, site and title to suggest the interior and exterior lives of her characters. *Ascension (New Extensions)* depicts a meditative closed-eyes woman in a garden seemingly intent on lifting into a real or imagined space—a quest perhaps aided by the accessories in the work's title.

In contrast, in *Hidden Fences* Gaignard's character gazes directly at the viewer. This work's title raises the idea of "passing" mentioned above: is this person trying to "fit in" to this setting—the well-ordered front yard of a house—inaccessible due to invisible and pernicious barriers of race, sexuality or gender expression? With such visually compelling images, Gaignard acutely addresses the texture, vulnerability and resilience of contemporary intersectional lives stemming from her own experience as an African-American biracial woman.