Handout Study Guide: Session 9

**ART, PHOTOGRAPHY, & MODERNISM 1920-1945  *possible essay question**

- What were the earliest examples of cameraless images by German artist, Christian Schad, called, made in 1918 that used a variety of substances, such as found objects and waste materials (torn tickets, receipts, rags) and light sources to create nonrepresentational images which expressed the Dadaist interest in making art from junk materials, and the irrational nature of society?

-What were the cameraless images called that Man Ray produced, incorporating both his name and a reference to their source in light?

-What were the cameraless images, later referred to as “light graphics” called that Bauhaus artists Lucia Moholy and Laszlo-Moholy-Nagy developed into a technique together, believing that, like other products produced by machine, photographic images-cameraless and other, should not deal with conventional sentiments or personal feelings but should be concerned with light and form?

- Artists Raoul Hausmann, George Grosz, John Heartfield and Hannah Hoch, used what word to describe an image that is “engineered”, rather than “created”, a process that involved a picture being made out of cut up photographs?

- Explain the difference between collage and montage, and why these new photographic techniques appealed to avant-garde artists?

-Photographers in Italy used montage as a technique to express “spiritual dynamism”, a term used to describe an interest in urbanism, energy, and movement, and later incorporating the scientific experiments of Marey, to suggest a world in flux, making multiple exposures on a single plate, as well as combining printed and pasted materials in 2d and 3d with multiple exposures. What did they call these creations?

- In the 1920’s, in the Soviet Union, how and why did constructivist photographers, especially Lissitzky and Rodchenko, use montage and photography to communicate their viewpoint?

- What were the three themes seen repeatedly by many photographers of this period, in montage and straight images, and especially their combined emphasis of all three of these elements that suggested that camera work was the result of both craft and vision, a concept embodied in the theories of Constructivism, the Bauhaus, and the Werkbund?

- The “New Vision” invigorated straight photography in Europe by showing the known world in uncharacteristic ways. What kind of techniques were used by photographers to express social and psychological attitudes and explore aesthetic ideas?

- What were Alvin Langdon Coburn’s abstract photographs in the period of his involvement in Vorticism, about 1917, the English variant of Cubism, taken through a kaleidoscope device consisting of three mirrors dubbed?

- What was the name of the American Precisionist photographer/painter who collaborated with Paul Strand on a short expressive film about New York City based on portions of Whitman’s Leaves of Grass, in 1920, and in 1927, photographed the Ford Motor Works at River Rouge?

- What was the name of the photographic group, established in 1930, in San Francisco, that promoted Precisionism through its advocacy of the large format view camera, small lens aperture, and printing by contact rather than enlarging?

**Images to remember for identification:** Photographer, Title, Date, Process that could appear on quizzes or final exam.

Clarence John Laughlin, The Ego-Centricals, 1940  gelatin silver
Clarence John Laughlin, The Masks Grow to Us, 1947, gelatin silver
Man Ray, Tears, 1930 gelatin silver
Man Ray, Portrait of a tearful woman, 1936
Man Ray, Le Violon d’Ingres, 1924
Herbert Bayer, Lonely Metropolitan, 1932
Florence Henri, Still life with Lemon and Pear, 1929
Hans Bellmer, Doll (La Poupee), 1937
El Lissitzky, The Constructor (Self-portrait), 1924
Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Jealousy, 1927, Photomontage and ink
Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Leda and the Swan, 1925, Photomontage and ink
Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Boats in the old Port of Marseilles, 1929
Important Quotes: Be able to identify to whom these quotes are attributed.

-“The limits of photography are incalculable. Everything here is so new that the mere act of seeking leads by itself to creative results”. Laszlo Moholy-Nagy

-“The illiterate of the future will not be the one who cannot write but who does not know photography”. -Laszlo Moholy-Nagy

-“The photographer is a manipulator of light; photography is manipulation of light”. -Laszlo Moholy-Nagy

-“Of course, there will always be those who look only at technique, who ask "how," while others of a more curious nature will ask "why." Personally, I have always preferred inspiration to information.” -Man Ray

General concepts to remember:

*-1920-1945 the Modernist period, referred to as “The New Vision”, encompassed the full potential of photography. Discovery of new forms and uses for camera images imbued them with exceptional inventiveness and immediacy, and except for Holography, all later directions were foretold during this era.

*-Distinguishing feature of 1920’s photography was the emergence of a wide variety of techniques, styles and approaches, all displaying unusual vitality. Photographers were influenced by the effects of technology, urbanization, cinema, and graphic art on camera expression. Cubism, and the aesthetic concepts associated with Constructivism, Dadaism, and Surrealism inspired a climate of experimentation, with photo collage, montage, camerless images (photograms), nonobjective forms, unusual angles, and extreme close-ups. Photographer’s like other visual artists, explored ideas of Freudian, and related theories of the psyche, and how images might function in the social and political struggles of the times.

*-In Europe, embodied in Russian Constructivism, the German Bauhaus—a school of architecture and design, and the German Work Alliance, were movements and organizations that viewed artistic expression as concerned with the analysis and rational reconstruction of industrial society rather than as a means of producing unique decorative objects based on personal feelings or experiences for an elite class. They wanted to merge art and technology, and conceived of art activity as a means of improving the lives of ordinary people through the redesign of their physical and mental environments, and the artist as an individual who remained true to reality in order to reveal the true face of their time. They regarded the applied arts as important as the “fine arts”, and not separate entities. Their respect for machine technology led to a high regard for both printing press and camera as the most effective visual instruments of the age. One of the great developments of the 1920’s was the combining of typography and photography, it changed advertising, publishing, and the poster.

-The influence of Cubism, Constructivism, Surrealism, Precisionism, are visible in the work of virtually all photographers of The New Vision.