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PhotoResearcher



Private Photo Collecting

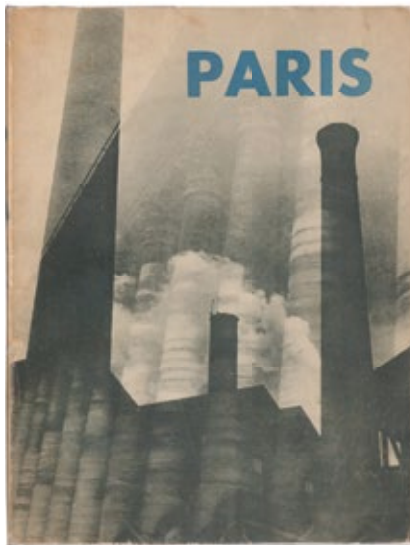
Edited by Uwe Schögl



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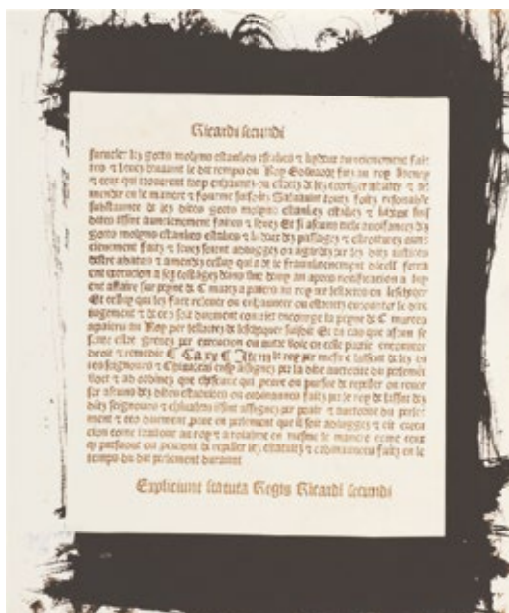
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Editorial

Today, cultural and socio-political communications are more intricately linked than ever before. These mainly take place through the digital networks and function as a multifaceted system of productive and creative interests, with cyber-attacks as the downside. In the global world, old systems of order are successively losing their canonical status, and political and economic interactions are becoming less transparent. Unexpected occurrences, such as the current pandemic, or changes like global warming, are seen as burdens – although both have been caused by human activity – and considered paradoxical and as not fitting in with the global model of a linear optimistic future-oriented mindset in any way at all. Today's world is faced with numerous challenges that will become even greater in the future.

The concept for *PhotoResearcher* no. 36 was developed during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic and against the backdrop of these volatile perspectives for the future. The premise was to document the effects of this traumatic turning point from the personal perspective of those persons who are so decisively involved in this cultural context. We are talking about the private photo collectors who use the holdings of their important collections to both initiate and participate in international exhibitions and research projects, as well as promote the discipline, and are also a significant factor on the art market and in cultural politics.

Nine internationally renowned photo collectors – *Frédérique Destribats, Manfred Heiting, Judy Hochberg & Michael G. Mattis, Serge Kakou, Michael Loulakis, Anna Morelli, Christian Skrein*, and last but not least *Michael G. Wilson* – accepted our invitation to be interviewed for this edition of our journal and pass on their knowledge and experience, as well as describe their successful projects. All of the interviews are included in this extensive volume.

The interviews took place in the form of e-mail correspondence or as tele-conferences in the period between January and July 2021. The results of the conversations held with the (photo)-historians *Roberto Caccialanza, Delphine Desveaux, Vreni Hockenjos, Simone Klein, Kristina Lemke Moritz Neumüller, Thorsten Sadowsky, Miriam Szwest and Katrin Unterreiner*, are a series of distinctive statements made at the interface between the private and public sphere that provide us with previously unknown insights into the individual concepts of collecting and its genesis, structures, and strategies.

A fundamental question dealt with the understanding of “private collecting”, which was often described as an attempt to bring order into a chaotic world. On the one hand, collecting can represent self-reflection and, on the other, be more of a game, or a path to communication.

Each interview begins with an entrée – a personal statement, of varying length, by the interviewer. An exception was made in connection with the “photo collector” Empress Elisabeth of Austria (1837–1898). For the first time, the personal photo albums she assembled in the brief period between 1860 and ca. 1865 are investigated going beyond the photo-historical perspective to include a study of the development of her personality that occurred during the same period.

Uwe Schögl

Vienna, October 2021