

HUXLEY – PARLOUR

45 MADDOX ST/
3–5 SWALLOW ST

Dora Maar

Contact Prints

15 October - 19 November 2022



AUTO PORTRAIT À LA FENÊTRE - PARIS, C. 1935
DORA MAAR

Huxley-Parlour are delighted to present an exhibition of contact prints by surrealist photographer, Dora Maar. Taken throughout the 1930s, the works in the exhibition provide an intimate encounter with Maar's early photographic interests and her preoccupation with the subtle and uncanny. The exhibition anticipates her later foray into surrealism for which she is renowned today. *Contact Prints* is testament to her position as both an innovative photographer and important figure in twentieth-century Modernism.

Maar took pictures using a handheld, rolleiflex camera, the portability of which allowed her to take photographs quickly and with ease. Whilst surrealist photographers such as Eugène Atget and later, Brassai, capitalised on the eeriness of empty, parisian streets to create surreal compositions, thinkers such as André Breton wrote surrealist texts exploring the uncanny quality of cosmopolitan living and its relationship to the psychogeographies of the mind. Similarly, the works in *Contact Prints* belie a perambulatory preoccupation with the city and the people that inhabited it.

Contact Prints demonstrates the beginnings of a surrealist oscillation between the banal and the

absurd. Spanning unpeopled parisian rooftops, off-guard acquaintances, and sun-dappled bodies of open water, Maar's photography is indiscriminate, capitalising on quiet, unseen detail. Her work displays a surrealist magnetism towards found objects and compelling juxtapositions in the everyday that would inform her later more experimental photomontage. Creating sheets of contact prints was how Dora Maar and her contemporaries previewed film negatives before deciding which photographs to print in the dark room. Conceptually, the contact print provides an intimate insight into Maar's working process at an interim stage of the editing, selection, and printing process. The works are also materially immediate, each two by two inch print being the same size as the film negative itself.

Notable works in *Contact Prints* include *Autoportrait à la Fenêtre, c. 1935* a self portrait of Maar in a Parisian window, and two works of Pablo Picasso painting - once in his studio in the Rue des Grands-Augustins, Paris, and once more informally, at the Hôtel Vaste Horizon, Mougins. During their relationship, Maar often documented Picasso at work - most significantly during the initial stages of Picasso's renowned 1937 painting, *Guernica*. She went on to educate Picasso in key photographic methods, such as the cliché verre, or glass plate, technique.

Born Henriette Theodora Markovitch, Dora Maar (b.1907-1997) was a French photographer, poet and painter. She studied at the École des Beaux-Arts and then the Académie Julian in Paris, and went on to become important in surrealist cafe circles: she had her first publication in the magazine *Art et Métiers Graphiques* in 1932, and presented her first solo exhibition at the Galerie Vanderberg in Paris. Though Maar is often remembered as Picasso's romantic partner and muse, her work has recently received renewed critical attention. Her work has been posthumously exhibited at the Haus der Kunst, Munich, the Centre de la Vieille Charité, Marseille, the Centre Cultural Tecla Sala, Barcelona, Centre Pompidou, Paris, and most recently at Tate Modern, in London.

Notes to Editors

Dora Maar

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Huxley-Parlour, 45 Maddox St, W1S 2PE

Opening hours Monday-Friday, 10:00am - 5:30pm and Saturdays 10:00am - 1:00pm

Additional information can be found online at www.huxleyparlour.com

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