

FLOU

UNE HISTOIRE PHOTOGRAPHIQUE

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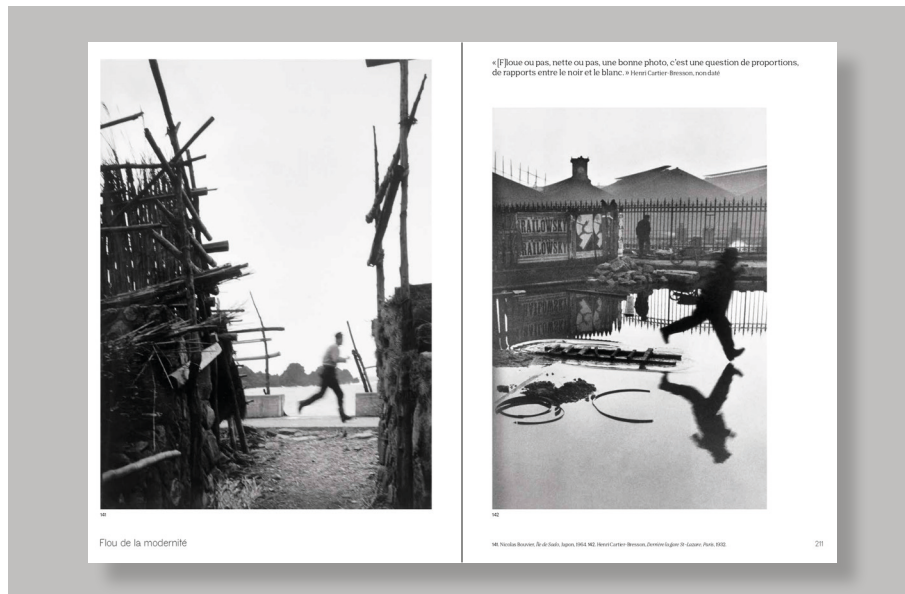


Is a blurry photo a bad photo?

In photography, blur is both the most basic mistake to avoid and an extremely difficult form to achieve — between technical error and artistic ambition.

LANGUAGE: FRENCH

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FLOU

Une histoire photographique

Pauline Martin had the excellent idea of taking us through the history of photography through the prism of blur, from the invention of the process to the present day. We discover that, depending on the period, blur is sometimes considered a positive value, sometimes a negative one. In a historical and thematic development, the works presented tell the story of the evolution of this form, whose uses have constantly changed according to the times and practices, whether they were amateur, artistic, scientific, or used for report.

Punctuated by quotations, the book creates a dialogue between the images and the way in which the blur has been described by authors and artists as diverse as Charles Baudelaire, Julia Margaret Cameron and Pierre Bourdieu, thus highlighting the issues of blur in the world's perception. For as Serge Tisseron points out in his text, "If the rapid evolution of the world makes us anxious, we will probably prefer clear, stable images. If, on the other hand, we are distressed by a certain rigidity around us (...), we will favor movement, the aspiration towards the future".

As a preamble, Pauline Martin's text tells the story of blur, a term originally dedicated to a certain pictorial practice before taking on the meaning we know. Her expertise is complemented by four texts: Martin Barnes looks at the valorisation of blur in 19th century Britain; Martine Beugnet looks at the beginnings of cinema; while Florian Ebner and Michel Poivert focus respectively on the 1980s in Germany

Exhibition at
Photo Elysée,
Lausanne, from 3
March to 21 May
2023

"Only in Paris do people know how to do what I want, that is to say, an exact portrait, but with the blur of a drawing."

Charles Baudelaire, 1865

(Translated from the book)

"An image can be seen as a thought, as it is an abrupt perception of reality."

Bernard Plossu, 2006

(Translated from the book)

and on contemporary practice. A personal contribution by Sébastien Lifshitz and an interview with Serge Tisseron complete this reference work.

THE AUTHOR

Doctor of art history and curator in charge of exhibitions at Photo Elysée (Lausanne), Pauline Martin has published *L'Évidence, le vide, la vie. La photographie face à ses lacunes* (Ithaque, 2017) and *L'Œil photographique de Daniel Arasse. Théories et pratiques d'un regard* (Fage éditions, 2012). She has also curated the exhibitions "reGeneration4. The challenges for photography and its museum of tomorrow" (2020) and "Anonymous: Urban life in contemporary photography" (2016).

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"Another aesthetic may intentionally seek out blurred or shifted images that the popular aesthetic rejects as clumsy or missed."

Pierre Bourdieu, 1965

(Translated from the book)

Flou. Une histoire photographique
By Pauline Martin
Texts and contributions by Martin Barnes, Martine Beugnet, Florian Ebner, Sébastien Lifshitz, Pauline Martin, Michel Poivert and Serge Tisseron, afterword by Nathalie Herschdorfer
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« Mes premières réussites avec des clichés flous furent des coups de chance. En d'autres termes, lorsque je faisais la mise au point et que j'arrivais à quelque chose qui, à mes yeux, était très beau, je m'arrêtais là plutôt que de manipuler l'objectif pour obtenir cette mise au point plus précise que tous les autres photographes cherchent tant. » Julia Margaret Cameron, 1874



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Flou ambivalent au XIX^e siècle



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36. Julia Margaret Cameron, *My Herbert Duckworth*, 1872. 37. Julia Margaret Cameron, *Amnis*, 1864.

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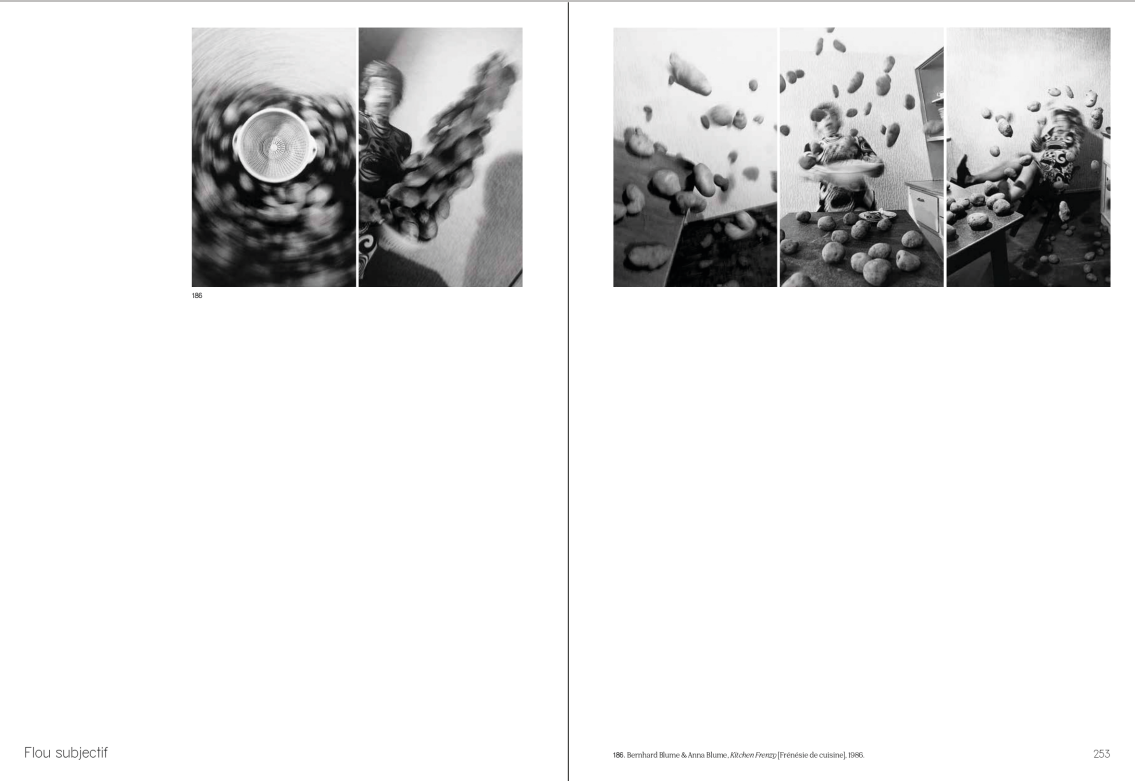
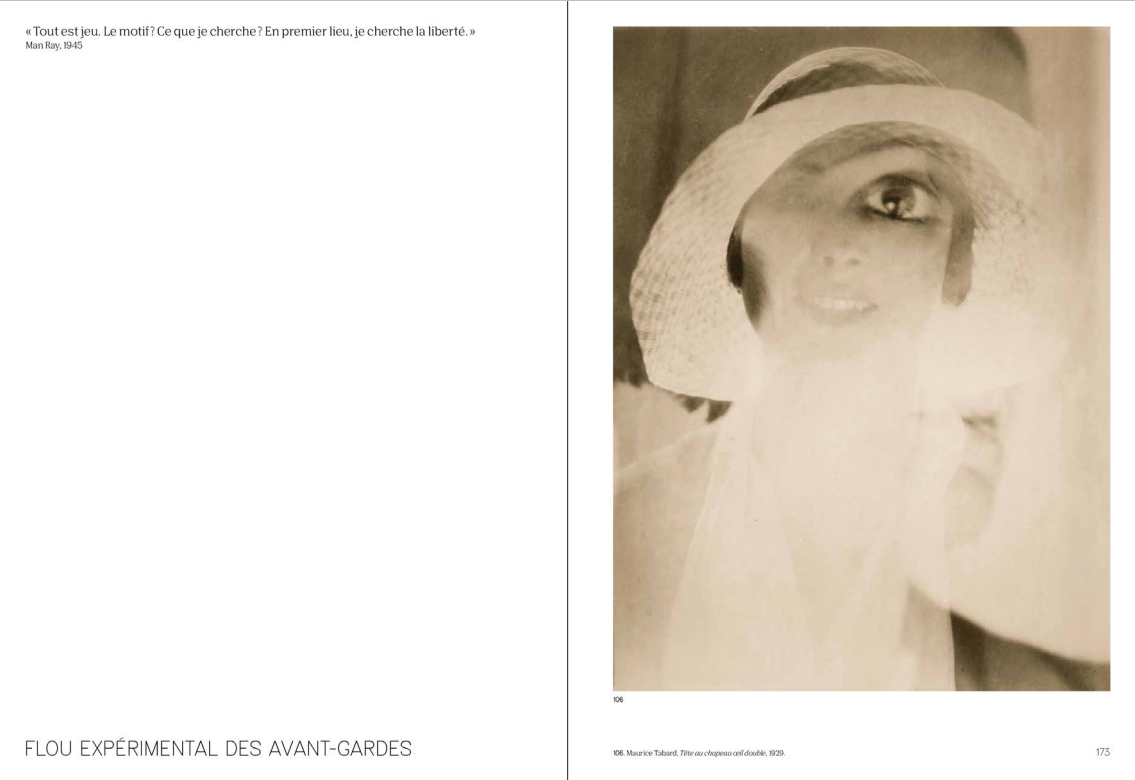


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Flou subjectif

171. Pierre Belzeaux, *Sans titre*, vers 1950.

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Loïe Fuller en robe
phosphorescente pour sa danse
du radium
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Alvin Langdon Coburn,
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Jan Groover, *Sans titre*
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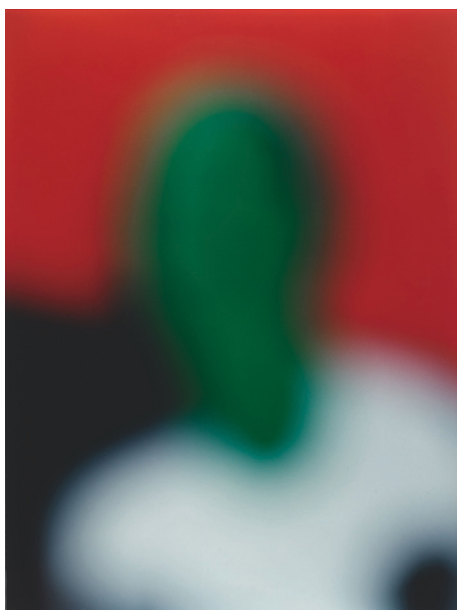
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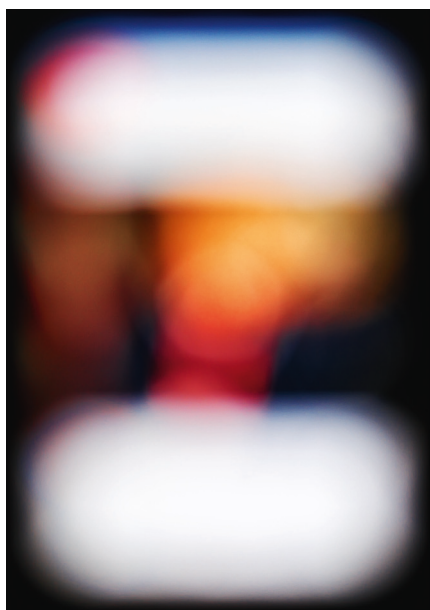
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