



The Art of Lee Miller

15 September 2007 – 6 January 2008

Sponsored by Olympus

On the 100th anniversary of the birth of the remarkable photographer Lee Miller on 23 April 1907 and 30 years after her death, the V&A announced that it will stage an extensive tribute to her this autumn. **The Art of Lee Miller** will celebrate the life and career of one of the most original and creative photographic artists of the 20th century.

The Art of Lee Miller will bring together the greatest images of and by Lee Miller and will feature works never before exhibited or published, including satirical drawings and some of the most disturbing photographs ever taken. It will also explore Lee Miller's other talents as model, Surrealist muse and journalist, charting her unconventional and eventful life.

Lee Miller excelled at many kinds of photography in her extraordinary career and the exhibition will show how multi-faceted her work was. It will include striking Surrealist images and portraits of celebrated figures of her time including Charlie Chaplin and Picasso. It will cover her fashion and advertising work, travel and documentary photography of Egypt and Romania, and her photojournalism in the Second World War as the only official female photojournalist in combat areas. With over 140 works, including drawings, a rare collage, film extracts and magazine pages, the exhibition will represent the entire range of Miller's astonishing oeuvre.

All her most outstanding photographs will be brought together: the avant-garde *Exploding Hand* (c.1930) and her series of nudes; the shocking *Severed Breast* (c.1930) will be exhibited for the first time; her haunting photograph of the Egyptian desert, *Portrait of Space* (1937); *Women with Fire Masks* (1941), which captures in unmistakable Lee Miller-style the surreal quality of life during the Blitz; the moving, posthumous war portraits, *Bürgermeister of Leipzig's Daughter Suicided* (1945) and *Dead SS Guard in Canal* (1945); and the witty portraiture of

'Working Guests', her final series for *Vogue*, including her memorable image of Alfred H. Barr Jr, the first director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, feeding the pigs while at Miller's family home in Sussex.

One section in the exhibition will reveal Miller's skill in front of the camera and will bring together studies of her by many of the era's greatest fashion and art photographers including George Hoyningen-Huené, Edward Steichen and Man Ray.

The Art of Lee Miller will also show drawings by Miller, revealing her unease with her role as a model, and extracts from Jean Cocteau's 1930 avant-garde film *The Blood of a Poet* in which Miller stars. Miller's work as accredited freelance war correspondent for *Vogue* during the Second World War will be shown through original magazine spreads, and will attest to both the power of her images and her eloquent reporting.

Mark Haworth-Booth, curator of **The Art of Lee Miller**, said: "Lee Miller's life has been described as a 'jig-saw puzzle'. Now, 100 years after her birth, this exhibition finally weaves together her many arts and tells the tale of one of the 20th-century's most creative women."

Antony Penrose, director of the Lee Miller Archives and Lee Miller's son, said: "It's wonderful that the V&A is holding an exhibition of such breadth to mark the centenary of my mother's birth."

The exhibition will consist of six main chronological sections.

- ***The Art of the Model*** begins with Miller's debut as a 1927 *Vogue* cover-girl and charts her role as muse to many of the period's greatest photographers – including Edward Steichen, George Hoyningen-Huené and, above all, Man Ray.
- ***Paris 1929-32*** reveals Miller as one of the most remarkable Surrealist photographers of that time.
- In 1932, Miller left Paris (and her lover Man Ray) and returned to New York where she established her own photographic studio. ***New York 1932-34*** explores the portraiture, fashion and advertising works she produced during her time there.

- Miller's marriage to engineer Aziz Aloui Bey saw her move to Cairo. *Egypt 1934-39* includes photographs of the country's landscape and ruins. The section also features her portraits of the Surrealists at play, including Roland Penrose for whom Miller would leave Egypt and her husband.
- **War:** as a freelance war correspondent for *Vogue*, Miller captured in words and pictures, the liberation of Paris, the siege of St Malo, the Buchenwald and Dachau death camps, and the kitsch banality of Adolf Hitler's Munich flat.
- **Post-war:** Miller concluded her photographic career capturing her renowned friends – including Pablo Picasso, Max Ernst and Saul Steinberg – in a humorous series called 'Working Guests' at her family farm in Sussex.

The Art of Lee Miller is the result of a close collaboration between the V&A, Antony Penrose and the Lee Miller Archives. After the V&A, the exhibition will travel to the Philadelphia Museum of Art (26 January – 27 April 2008), then onto the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1 July – 21 September 2008), and finally to Jeu de Paume in Paris (13 October 2008 – 11 January 2009).

To accompany the exhibition, the V&A has published *The Art of Lee Miller* (£35 Hardback). Written by the exhibition curator Mark Haworth-Booth, the book is the definitive account of the relationship between Miller's eventful life and her art.

Notes to Editors:

- **The Art of Lee Miller** is at the V&A from Saturday 15 September 2007 – Sunday 6 January 2008.
- The V&A is holding a Lee Miller symposium on 7 December 2007.
- For further information of the book accompanying the exhibition, please contact Julie Chan on 020 7942 2701 or email j.chan@vam.ac.uk
- For further information on the Lee Miller-related merchandise (excluding the book) accompanying the exhibition, please contact Lee Kendall at V&A Enterprises on 020 7942 2681 or l.kendall@vam.ac.uk (not for publication).
- General enquiries: 020 7942 2000 or visit www.vam.ac.uk
- For further information on the Lee Miller Archives visit www.leemiller.co.uk or call 01825 872 691.

Ticket Information:

- Tickets in person at the V&A – in advance or on day of visit – £6 (concessions: senior citizens and students – £4).
- For advance telephone and online booking (booking fees applies), call 0870 906 3883 or visit www.vam.ac.uk
- A joint ticket with the V&A exhibition, **The Golden Age of Couture: Paris and London 1947 – 1957** (opens 22 September 2007) is available – £12 (senior citizens – £9, students – £7).

For further PRESS information on the exhibition, please contact Olivia Colling or Frankie Arnold in the V&A press office on 020 7942 2502 or email press.office@vam.ac.uk (not for publication).

A selection of images is available on www.image.net

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