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LÁSZLÓ MOHOLY-NAGY

Photograms, Photographs, Prints, Drawings, Collages, Ephemera

October 27 – December 22, 2000

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Reception: Thursday, October 26th, 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Ubu Gallery is pleased to present *László Moholy-Nagy: Photograms, Photographs, Drawings, Prints, Collages, Ephemera*. Moholy (b. Bacsbarsod, Hungary 1895, d. Chicago 1946) was a complex, charismatic and highly influential artist whose multi-faceted career defies classification. The exhibition reflects this through its exploration of a broad variety of the media he worked in, bringing together many rare works which express Moholy's polymath approach to art and life.

Moholy originally became fascinated with the issues posed by light, transparency and kinetics in painting. These issues continued to inform his work across all media, but were distilled to their essence in his photography. Here Moholy recognized the potential for working directly with light, whose manipulation could alter humanity's perception of reality. Moholy described photography as a tool that heightened and increased power of sight in terms of time and space.

The "new vision" espoused by Moholy was a dynamic synthesis of the goals of the Bauhaus, the philosophy of Constructivism and his personal experiences as an artist, educator, designer, filmmaker and writer. His work across a variety of media can be considered the crystallization of attempts to render this new vision concrete – an "experiment in totality." Moholy's new vision was addressed to the emotional and intellectual needs of a modern industrial society. He examined the interrelation of art, science and technology in an interdisciplinary approach which eschewed specialization. For Moholy, specialization and alienation were not the inevitable of the new technology (an advancement which he whole-heartedly embraced), but the result of its misapplication. Through his art and teaching, Moholy fought specialization as the disenfranchisement of the informed, educated, interested person.

Moholy sought to intensify, and to give form and emotional content to, the optical, spatial and material experiences of mankind in order to create an art – both as maker and teacher – which would play a vital role in improving and humanizing modern industrial society. In his highly influential book *Vision in Motion* – a wide-ranging discourse on his philosophies of art, education, design, literature, architecture and society and the summation of the theories and practices that he formalized as the founding director in 1937 of The New Bauhaus in Chicago – Moholy wrote that ultimately all problems of design merge into one great problem: "design for life." ... there is no hierarchy of art, painting, photography, music, poetry, sculpture, architecture, nor any other fields such as industrial design. They are equally valid departures toward the fusion of function and content in "design."