

The Art of Hitler*

STEVEN KASHER

This project presents a sampling of artifacts from a collection metonymically entitled “The Art of Hitler.” Assembled in Manhattan over the last several years, the collection contains several hundred items. It was exhibited at Rutgers University in early 1991. This photo/text essay follows in large part the structure of that exhibition: Part One documents Nazi visual culture; Part Two demonstrates some ways that Nazi culture has surfaced in recent years.

Only a few of the documents from each of the various sections have been selected for reproduction here because of space constraints. Footnotes and most citations have also been omitted; they are available from the artist upon request.

Part One

Hitler Designs the Swastika Flag

The swastika, though ancient in origin and found in many cultures worldwide, was no longer merely a benign symbol of life and sun in the Germany of 1920. Since the turn of the century the swastika had been appropriated by various *völkisch*, anti-Semitic, and reactionary groups. It had achieved widespread currency as a symbol of these groups by the time Hitler in turn appropriated it.

It is little appreciated that the Nazi swastika flag was designed by Hitler himself—in Munich in 1920. He describes its origin and meaning in *Mein Kampf* (vol. 2, chap. 7), explaining how each color and shape was selected, and con-

* I would like to acknowledge the generous help I have received from dozens of people over the last several years in collecting, researching, writing, editing, and mounting “The Art of Hitler” in its various formats. For invaluable suggestions and constructive criticisms, I thank Martha Buskirk, Hal Foster, Atina Grossman, Hans Haacke, Andy Miller, Diane Neumaier, Christopher Phillips, Anson Rabinbach, Martha Rosler, Sally Stein, Yocheved Weinfeld, and, particularly, Benjamin Buchloh.



Two Jewish schoolgirls, Frankfurt am Main, 1938. The artist's mother and aunt. Display of German flags. (Photographer unknown.)



cluding: “[We see] in the swastika the mission of struggle for the victory of the Aryan man, and, by the same token, the victory of the idea of creative work, which as such always has been and always will be anti-Semitic.”

Three “struggles,” three “victories,” are equated in Hitler’s explanation of the meaning of the swastika: that of “the Aryan man,” anti-Semitism, and “the idea of creative work.” The latter refers to the notion of an aestheticization of labor and social relations that would negate class conflicts and unite the *Volk*. To Hitler, the swastika symbolized the struggle for a totalized society rigidly stratified along sexual, racial, and class lines. It stood for a program of aggressive racial, sexual, and cultural purification, a struggle toward a single transcendent culture. Nazism called for the imposition of this culture across Europe and the world. Whatever lesser cultures stood in the way were to be expunged.

On September 15, 1935, Hitler convened a special session of the Reichstag in Nuremberg to mark the closing of the annual party congress. Among the “Nuremberg Laws” promulgated that day were: a law proclaiming the swastika flag the sole state flag of Germany; a law depriving those subjects not of “German or cognate blood” of citizenship; and the Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor, which forbade marriage between Jews and Germans, sexual relations between Jews and Germans, the employment by Jews of German female domestic servants under forty-five years of age, and the flying of the German national flag by Jews.

Detail of book jacket. Robert Harris, Selling Hitler (New York: Pantheon, 1986). (Illustration: Susannah Kelly; design: Louise Fili.)

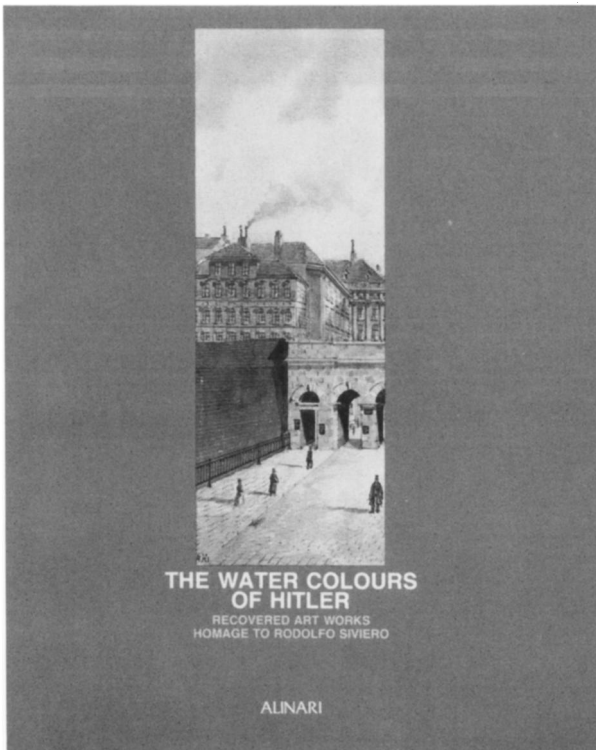
The Art of Adolf Hitler

Between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five Adolf Hitler worked as an artist. He painted and sold watercolors of views of Vienna and Munich. He produced several commercial advertisement and poster designs.

Hitler continued to produce art and design in his years as a soldier (1914–18), as propaganda head of the Nazi party (1920–22), as leader of the Nazi party (1923–33), and as Führer (Leader) of national socialist Germany (1933–45).

Hitler's drawings and paintings depict architectural monuments and ruins in an amalgam of conventional styles. Human figures are awkwardly rendered, diminutive, and scarce.

No other modern person has exercised the same degree of personal control over the visual culture of his nation as did Hitler. He did not, however, control all aspects of the visual arts under the Third Reich; other separate interests were also at work.



A watercolor by Hitler as reproduced on the 1984 catalog jacket for The Water Colours of Hitler, ed., Amilcare Bardi (Florence: Fratelli Alinari, 1984).



The Day of German Art, the House of German Art, and the Great German Art Exhibitions, 1937–45

In 1937 the Nazis consummated their takeover of the visual arts in Germany. Various factions—those for and against the incorporation of German Expressionism, for instance—had been brought into consensus. A period of relative cultural liberality instituted to impress foreign visitors to the 1936 Olympic Games was terminated. A demonstrable Nazi style was compounded for display at the German Pavilion of the 1937 Paris International Exposition.

1937 was the year that the Nazis inaugurated their major representative art institutions, foremost among them the House of German Art, a new national museum of contemporary German art, located in Munich. The building itself had been the first official architectural project initiated by the new Nazi state, commissioned by Hitler in 1933 from his favorite architect, Paul Ludwig Troost. It was designed to hold two annual juried exhibitions: the Great German Art Exhibition (of new painting, sculpture, and graphics) and the German Architecture and Crafts Exhibition.

July 16 was proclaimed the Day of German Art, a yearly holiday and parade planned to coincide with the openings of the Great German Art annuals. Hitler presided over the opening festivities, as he did over the juries that selected the exhibited artworks. The annual party/state line on acceptable art practices was in large part communicated through these selections. The placement of the works within the major or lesser galleries, their prices, whether or not they were purchased by the state, which official or office made the purchase: all of these practices were used to establish a hierarchy of favor.

Die Kunst im Dritten Reich (Art in the Third Reich), an official national magazine devoted to contemporary art, was also founded in 1937; Albert Speer, Richard Klein, and other associates of Hitler were appointed as editors.

Two Emblems: Nazi Art and the Day of Labor

An emblem of Nazi art was designed to symbolize and advertise the new art institutions. This emblem was utilized on the cover of catalogs and magazines and was issued on medals and postcards to accompany the Day of German Art holidays. It was designed by Richard Klein, a painter of high standing in the Nazi art world.

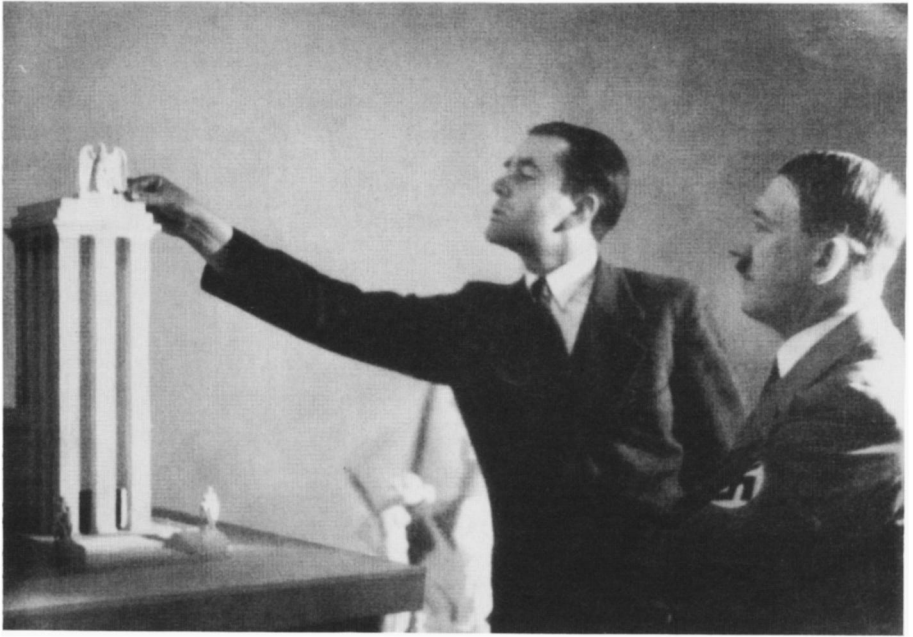
The logo of Nazi art combines three symbols: a burning torch, the helmeted head of Athena/Minerva, and the imperial eagle bearing a swastika wrapped in an oak wreath. The torch stands for Promethean creativity; Athena represents the continuity of Aryan culture; the eagle with swastika signifies the imperial anti-Semitic state. Except for the swastika, which now had become specifically German, these symbols were widely employed, with varying connotations, throughout Europe and the U.S. in the 1930s.

Klein designed other emblems, including several for the Day of Labor, a holiday the Nazis devised to replace May Day. Several Day of Labor emblems appropriate the socialist hammer and sickle; in one example they are conjoined to a bust of Goethe and the Nazi eagle-and-swastika. The holiday and the emblem were parts of an energetic campaign to win over to Nazism its opponents among the German workers.



Above: Medal for the Tag der Arbeit (Day of Labor), 1934. (Design: Richard Klein.)

Left: Official catalog of the first Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung (Great German Art Exhibit) (Munich: Knorr und Hirth, 1937). (Design and illustration: Richard Klein.)



Ein neues Denkmal nationalsozialistischer Baugesinnung ist nach dem Willen des Führers errichtet worden. So wie die Schöpfungen des verstorbenen Baumeisters Professor Troost in München und die Aufbauten des Reichsparteitaggeländes in Nürnberg, so soll auch dieser Bau ein Wegweiser für das künftige Bauen in Deutschland sein. Wir Bauleute sind stolz darauf, daß wir die Ideen des Führers verwirklichen dürfen.

Un nouveau monument, conception d'architecture nationale-socialiste, a été érigé selon la volonté du « Führer ». Ainsi que les créations à Munich et les constructions du « Reichsparteitag » à Nuremberg de feu l'architecte professeur Troost, cette construction doit être un indicateur pour l'architecture future en Allemagne. Nous, les exécuteurs, nous sommes fiers que nous puissions réaliser les idées du « Führer ».

By will of the "Führer", a new monument in the National-Socialistic architectural sense has been erected. Even as the creations of the late master-builder Professor Troost in Munich and the erections of the National Party Day Field in Nuremberg, so too shall this building be a guide for the future construction in Germany. We construction people are proud to be permitted to bring about the realization of the ideas of our "Führer".

Un nuovo monumento improntato al carattere costruttivo nazionalsocialistica è stato elevato secondo la volontà del Führer. Come le creazioni del compianto architetto, il Professor Troost, a Monaco e gli edifici dell'Assemblea del Partito a Norimberga, questa costruzione deve essere una guida per la futura architettura tedesca. Noi costruttori siamo fieri di aver potuto realizzare le idee del Führer.

Albert Speer

The frontispiece of an unofficial catalog of the German Pavilion of the 1937 Paris International Exposition showing Speer and Hitler admiring a model of the pavilion. From Heinrich Hoffman, Deutschland in Paris (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1937). Speer won the Grand Prix in architecture at the Exposition for his design of the Nuremberg Reichsparteitaggelände (State Party-Day Field).

The Architecture of Albert Speer

Albert Speer was the leading architect in Nazi Germany. The son and grandson of successful architects, Speer studied architecture at the Institute of Technology in Berlin under Heinrich Tessenow, becoming one of Tessenow's teaching assistants. Tessenow was a leading proponent, as architect, writer, and teacher, of a radically simplified but still traditionalist architecture. (Playing Tessenow with flamboyant intensity in the 1982 made-for-television movie *Inside the Third Reich*, Trevor Howard steals all his scenes from Rutger Hauer's stolid Speer.)

In 1931 Speer joined the Nazi party and received his first Nazi commission: to redecorate the interiors of the district headquarters in the Grunewald section of Berlin. After the Nazi seizure of the German state in 1933, Speer went to work first for Goebbels, the minister of propaganda, and then for Hitler, who was by then involved in numerous architectural projects. When Troost, Hitler's favorite architect, died in 1934, Speer took his place and remained close to Hitler ever after.

Speer became the chief architect in the Third Reich, occupying several official posts. He was a major proponent of the resurgent state-sponsored neoclassicisms of the industrialized nations in the 1930s and '40s. In his hands the authoritarian and racist components of this tradition were exacerbated.

While retaining his posts as chief architect, Speer was also appointed by Hitler in the midst of the war as minister of armaments and munitions. His zeal in this critical office earned Speer such epithets as "the second man in the Reich" (Eugene Davidson) and the "real criminal of Nazi Germany" (Hugh Trevor-Roper). In his dual offices Speer supervised a wide range of state architectural and construction projects, including the reconstruction of the capital city of Berlin. The New Berlin was being rebuilt as the capital not only of Germany but also of the Nazi world empire. Speer projected the expenses in tens of billions of Reichsmarks. Gargantuan monumental structures were to be constructed from extra-thick stone walls, according to the "theory of ruin-value," which mandated that the eventual ruins of the thousand-year Nazi Reich would be as impressive as the Roman ruins that Speer and Hitler admired.

At the same time, Speer oversaw the construction of the concentration, slave-labor, and elimination camps, such as the one at Auschwitz. In March of 1943, after a personal visit to the Mauthausen camp, he initiated an extensive review of construction procedures at all concentration camps as part of an effort to conserve scarce materials. In response to the review Speer ordered the erection of thinner plank walls for prisoners' housing units. On May 30, 1943, however, Speer authorized a special allocation of metal pipe for construction and sanitation at the Auschwitz camp. He concluded this order with the following handwritten remarks: "I am delighted that the inspection of the other concentration camps resulted in a highly positive picture."

DER REICHSMINISTER
für
BEWAFNUNG UND MUNITION
GB 26/1-10027 g

Deutscher Stahl Reichsbahn
Sonder-Nr. 100
Nat. Nr. Öch. 100/123
Berlin-Charlottenburg 2
Kaiserstraße, Dep. 30, 545
Kaiserstraße 1. Jochenstr.

Geheim

An den
Herrn Reichsführer H und Chef
der Deutschen Polizei H i m m l e r

B e r l i n SW 68
Prinz-Albrecht-Str. 8

Betr.: Baueisenkontingent für H, insbesondere KZ-
Lager Auschwitz.

Lieber Parteigenosse H i m m l e r !

Auf Grund der vorliegenden Berichte und der
Besichtigung des KZ-Lagers Auschwitz durch meine Herren
Desch und Sander bin ich bereit, über die im III/43
zur Verfügung gestellte Baueisenmenge in Höhe von
450 t für den Bedarf im Reichsgebiet und 180 t
für den Bedarf in den angeschlossenen und besetzten Ge-
bieten einmalig folgende Mengen zuzuteilen:

- 1.) 1 000 t Baueisenbezugsrechte.
- 2.) 1 000 t Gußrohre, für die die H aus ihrem
Gesamtkontingent 500 t Eisenbezugsrechte zur
Verfügung stellt.
- 3.) Rd. 100 t Wasserleitungsröhre 1/2 " aus
dem Verfügungslager des GB-Bau in Hamm.
- 4.) Rundstahl 8 - 20 mm aus Hartstahl in der
erforderlichen Menge.

- 2 -

Deutscher Stahl Reichsbahn
Sonder-Nr. 100
Nat. Nr. Öch. 100/123

Diese Baueisenmengen sind nur für den Ausbau
der KZ-Lager, insbesondere Auschwitz, zu verwenden.
Für zusätzliche Behelfsbaumaßnahmen für die Aufstel-
lung neuer Divisionen der Waffen-H kann ich leider
keine weitere Baueisenmengen zuteilen. Der Bedarf
aus den im Rahmen des Gesamtbauisenkontingentes
des GB-Bau an die H zugewiesenen Mengen entnommen wer-
den. Die Einzelfragen der Zuteilung werden zwischen
Ihren Dienststellen und meiner Rohstoffstelle gere-
gelt. Die Beschaffung der Besuchsleine für 1 000 t
Gußrohre, sowie der Versand der Wasserleitungsröhre
ist bereits in die Wege geleitet.

H i m m l e r !

*Es freut mich, daß die Beschaffung
der andern K.Z.-Lager ein dankbar
sind.*

31/10/43

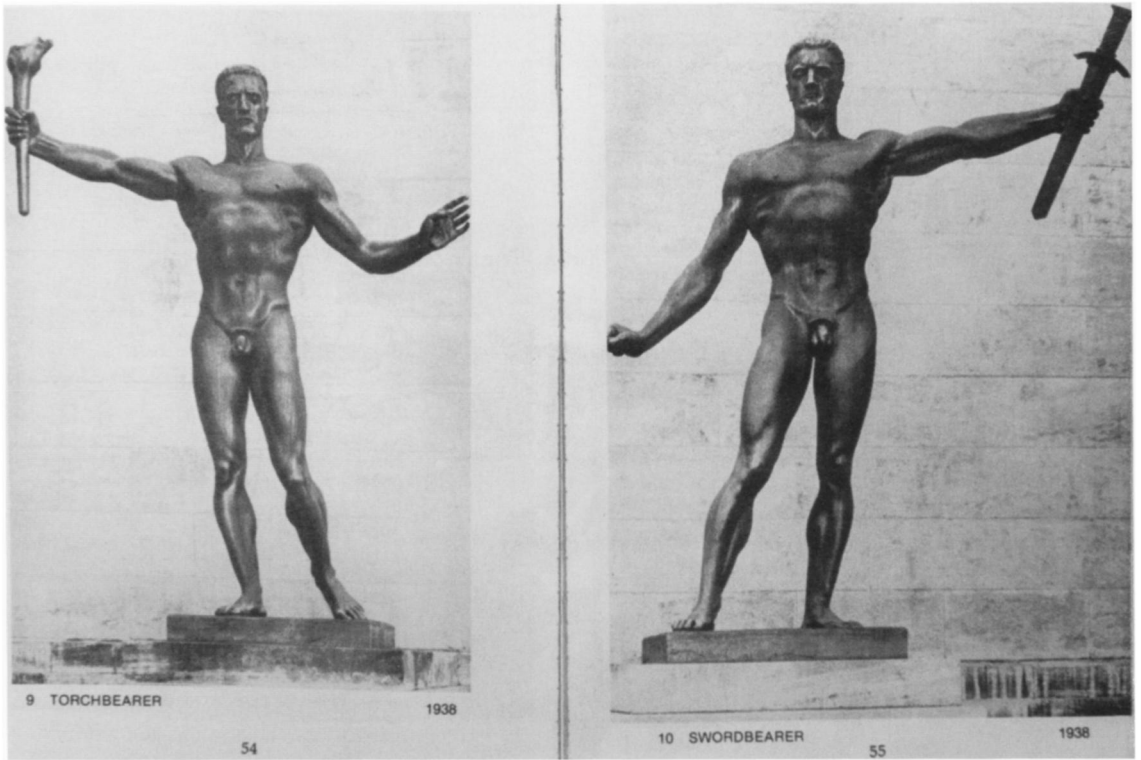
The Sculpture of Arno Breker

Arno Breker, the premier sculptor of the Third Reich, had studied sculpture in Paris and Berlin. His early work, in an expressionist-classicist style, was influenced by Maillol, Despiau, Kolbe, and others. Breker came to the attention of the Nazi hierarchy after his statue *Decathlete* won second prize in the sculpture competition of the 1936 Olympics held in Berlin.

After 1938, sponsored by his friend Albert Speer, Breker was awarded the majority of the major state sculpture commissions—for the Zeppelinfeld in Nuremberg and for the Reichschancellery and the Arch of Triumph in Berlin. These statues by Breker were, and still are, considered the most typical Nazi art and have been widely reproduced both then and now.

Breker's best-known works belong to a nineteenth-century European tradition of sculpting a "decent and respectable" (George Mosse) male nudity as a symbol of national strength and purity. These monuments featuring male nudes were erected to symbolize a nation young, natural, healthy, and moral: the Nation Before the Fall. Such statues were designed to convey the "natural" harmoniousness of nationhood and of the bourgeois family. They were images of chaste and self-controlled virility: their sexuality is never that of passionate love; rather, it is sublimated in a desexualized male bonding, in sport, or in martial posturing.

Memo from Speer to Himmler approving a requisition of building materials for Auschwitz. From Matthias Schmidt, Albert Speer, The End of a Myth (New York: Collier, 1982).



Between these earlier monuments and those of Breker, expressionism and Aryanism had intervened. Breker portrays a new passion, a resexualization through his characteristic swelling and tightening of body parts—but not of the uncircumcised one. It is as if sexual excitation has been drained from the genitals and used to pump up the limbs and torso: the whole figure becomes tumescent. As before, this energy suggests no outlet in love. Rather, as has been often observed, these are musclemen who are acting as guards; they are cocked, primed to release a potential blow. What they guard is *Führer, Reich, and Volk*—and Manhood itself. They are projections of an Aryan masculinity that is equated with power.

Breker's statues can be understood as antitypes, purposive negations of certain preexisting stereotypes. They were erected to stand ready to fight the whole array of those defined by the Nazis as *Untermenschen*, including Jews, Negroes, women, homosexuals, moderns, Bolsheviks, and urban degenerates.

Using renowned athletes for models, Breker helped to disseminate a body type that is an antecedent of the "fascist body" (Hilton Als) built today at the gym.

A pair of statues by Breker: Partei (Party) and Wehrmacht (Armed Forces), the most important sculptural commission installed during the Nazi dictatorship. From B. John Zavrel, Arno Breker His Art and Life (Amherst: West-Art, 1983). The statues were renamed Swordbearer and Torchbearer for this American promotional publication.



Das Fernsehen

Am 1. März 1936 eröffnete die Deutsche Reichspost das Fernsehgespräch auf der Strecke Berlin—Leipzig. Dies ist die erste und einzige Betriebs-einrichtung dieser Art in der Welt.

Nach dem Erlaß des Führers wurde der Fernseh-rundfunk im Jahre 1935 eingeführt. Für den technischen Ausbau des Fernsehens ist die Deutsche Reichspost zuständig; den Programm-betrieb nimmt die Reichs-Rundfunk-Gesellschaft wahr.

In 12 öffentlichen Fernsehstellen Berlins wird den deutschen Volksgenossen unentgeltlich der Fernseh-rundfunk vorgeführt. Bei den Olympischen Spielen im Jahre 1936 wurden die sportlichen Kämpfe durch den Fernseh-sender übertragen.

Für die Fortentwicklung des Fernsehens ist am 1. Januar 1937 die Forschungsanstalt der Deutschen Reichspost in Berlin gegründet worden.



La télévision

Le premier mars 1936, la poste de l'Etat allemand inaugurerait sur la ligne Berlin—Leipzig la télévision téléphonique. C'est la première et la seule installation de ce genre dans le monde.

La radio-télévision fut introduite en 1935, à la suite du décret du « Führer ». La poste de l'Etat allemand est compétente pour la construction technique de la télévision; la « Reichs-Rundfunk-Gesellschaft » établit le programme.

Dans 12 stations publiques de télévision de Berlin, la radio-télévision est présentée gratuitement aux citoyens allemands. Lors des Jeux Olympiques de 1936 les luttes sportives furent retransmises par télévision. On a fondé à Berlin, le premier janvier 1937, une institution de recherches de la Poste de l'Etat allemand pour le développement de la télévision.

Television

On March 1st 1936 the Deutsche Reichspost opened the television-telephone-service on the line Berlin—Leipzig. This is the first and only service of its kind in the world.

According to the decree of the Führer the television-broadcast was introduced in 1935. The competent authority for the technical development of television is the Deutsche Reichspost; the programme is being taken care of by the Reichs-Rundfunk-Gesellschaft.

In twelve public television-stations television-broadcast is performed for German citizens free of charge. On the occasion of the Olympic Games 1936 the sportive contests were transmitted by the television-transmitter.

For the further development of television the research institute of the Deutsche Reichspost was founded in Berlin on January 1st 1937.

La televisione

Il 1° Marzo 1936 la Deutsche Reichspost inaugurò le comunicazioni telefoniche con televisione sulla linea Berlino—Lipsia. È questa la prima e sola installazione del genere in tutto il mondo.

La televisione per radio fu introdotta nel 1935 con decreto del Führer. Essa è di competenza della Deutsche Reichspost; i programmi sono regolati dalla Reichs-Rundfunk-Gesellschaft.

A Berlino, in 12 stazioni pubbliche di televisione vengono gratuitamente presentate trasmissioni di televisione. Durante i Giuochi Olimpici nell'anno 1936 le lotte sportive furono trasmesse con questo mezzo. — A fine di sviluppare la trasmissione dell'immagine a distanza fu fondato il 1° Gennaio 1937 a Berlino l'Istituto di ricerche della Deutsche Reichspost.

A photomontage purporting to represent a working videophone system. From Heinrich Hoffman, Deutschland in Paris (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1937).

Nazi Media

The expanding Nazi party of the 1920s and early '30s had developed extremely effective propaganda techniques operative in the public sphere. These were low-budget and improvisational; they were centrally organized but locally tailored and funded; and they were based on the convening of meetings ranging from the very small to the very large and spectacular.

A critical element of the Nazi seizure of power in 1933 was the programmatic *Gleichschaltung* (coordination) of the communications media. The press and radio, the film and photo industries were mobilized in order to reproduce, expand, and institutionalize the earlier forms of Nazi propaganda.

Radio broadcasting was organized as an efficient means of garnering obedience and consent. Inexpensive receivers, the *Volksempfänger*, were developed, manufactured, and marketed under an intensive effort initiated by the Ministry of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment.

Under the Nazis, the German film studios produced large numbers of films featuring various combinations of entertainment and propaganda. Beginning in 1934, Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels, and Speer were closely involved in the production of *The Triumph of the Will*, which was directed by Leni Riefenstahl.

The world's first multiline public television broadcast was organized by the Propaganda Ministry to televise the closing festivities of the 1936 Berlin Olympics. In 1937 the German state apparently exhibited a videophone in their pavilion at the Paris International Exposition. "On March 1st 1936 the Deutsche Reichspost opened the television-telephone-service on the line Berlin-Leipzig. This is the first and only service of its kind in the world." It is not clear whether this service was ever more than a propagandistic fantasy.

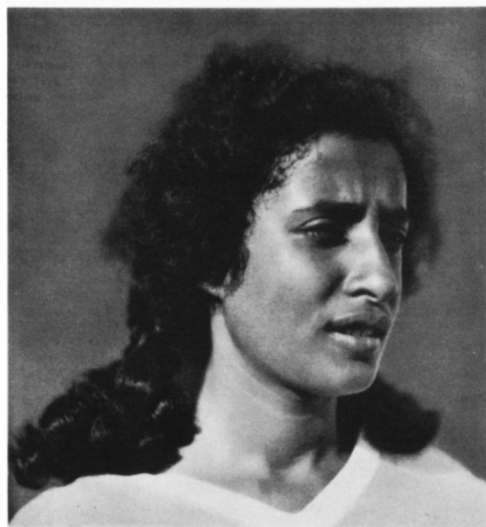
The national socialist party/state eventually achieved control of all media activities in Germany.

Nazi Photography

The transition from Weimar to Nazi photography entailed a complex mixture of continuity, change, and rupture. Many German photographers of the pre-Nazi era participated in an antisocialist, racist, misogynist, and nationalist ideology. Their views and practices were readily incorporated into Nazi photography. Other photographers who had been active in Weimar Germany did not cooperate with the new regime. These photographers were not allowed to publish or exhibit their work; they were driven out of business and into seclusion or exile, or they were imprisoned or murdered.

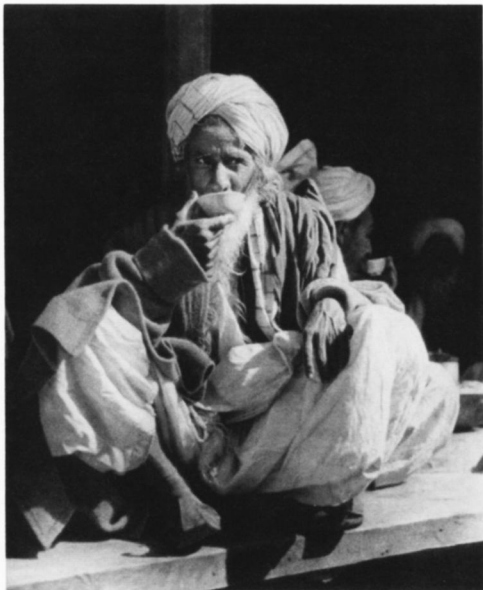
A particular Nazi style of photography was developed, as evidenced in the successive issues of the photographic annual *Das Deutsche Lichtbild*. This style was characterized by a special blend of monumentalism and threat. The overriding theme of this photography was the resolution of social conflicts through the nation, through "creative work," and through war.

Pages from the photographic annual Das Deutsche Lichtbild (German photography), published in Berlin from 1927 through 1938. Displayed here is a chronological sampling of representative images of men and women.



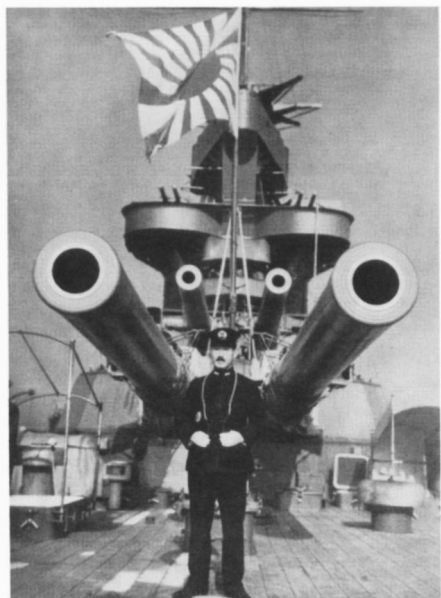
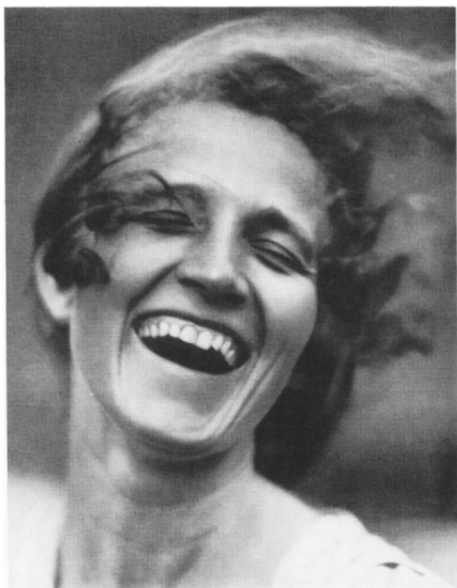
Das Deutsche Lichtbild 1930. Above: *Eduard Schlochauer, Gas.* Below: *Hannes Flach, In the Studio.*

Das Deutsche Lichtbild 1931. Above: *Geiringer-Horowitz, Carry Hauser.* Below: *Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, South Arabian Jew.*



Das Deutsche Lichtbild 1932. Above: *Elsbeth Gropp*, Bookworm. Below: *Martin Hürlimann*, Elderly Indian in the Peschawar Bazaar.

Das Deutsche Lichtbild 1934. Above: *Heinrich Hoffman*, Hermann Goering. Below: *Emil Kiesel*, Portrait of a Lady.



Das Deutsche Lichtbild 1936. Above: *Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss*, Frisian Peasant. Below: *Anonymous*, Untitled.

Das Deutsche Lichtbild 1938. Above: *Hannes Schmitt*, Sculptor. Below: *Georg Ludwig Hahn-Hahn*, Pimpfe.

Heinrich Hoffman, the Leading Nazi Photographer I

Heinrich Hoffman, born in 1885, was a Munich photographer. During the Munich revolutions of 1919–20, when a Workers' and Soldiers' Soviet took power only to be soon repressed by the Weimar Republic and its *Freikorps* mercenaries, Hoffman went into business selling photographs of the historic events and their protagonists. He began a photo service to distribute the pictures, and he published them as postcards and booklets.

In the 1920s Hoffman was drawn to Hitler and became his friend and associate. He documented the rise of the Nazi party. In 1933 he was appointed by Hitler as the first and only *Reichsbildberichterstatter* (national photojournalist). He had the exclusive right to issue photographs of Hitler. Hoffman ran an enormous photo business, employing numerous photographers (who remained anonymous), publishing many photo books, and distributing his pictures to the press through his own agency. He became very wealthy.

Besides his duties as official photographer, Hoffman performed many other functions for Hitler as well. He arranged for Hitler to be paid royalties for each use of his image on postage stamps, which became a main source of Hitler's immense personal wealth. Hoffman introduced Hitler to one of his studio assistants, Eva Braun, who became Hitler's mistress. He helped Hitler select the art works to be exhibited in the annuals held at the House of German Art. Hoffman acted as an art dealer, selling Hitler many paintings for his collection, which was meant to become the basis of the world's greatest art museum.



20 pfennig postage stamps.



Heinrich Hoffman: Portrait of Marcel Duchamp. From Rudolf Herz and Dirk Halbrodt, Revolution Und Fotografie: Munchen 1918–19 (Munich: Munchner Stadtmuseum, 1988).



The inscription reads: "To the battles: Munich. A loyal East-African fighter. Freikorps Letow-Vorbeck. May, 1919. (Photo: Heinrich Hoffman.)"



Eva Braun, one of Hoffman's studio assistants, later Hitler's mistress. (Photo: Heinrich Hoffman.)

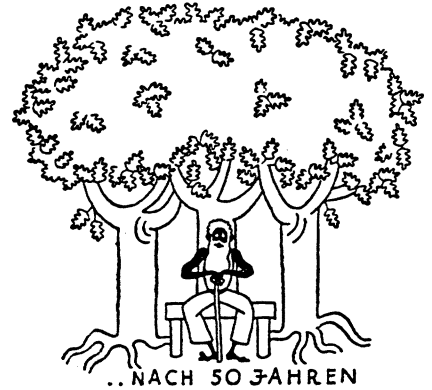
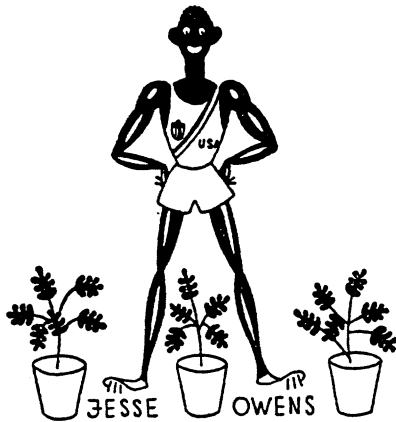
Museology, Archaeology, Art History, and Art Collecting in the Third Reich

The study, collection, dissemination, and display of cultural artifacts were all controlled from the highest levels during the Third Reich. Hitler, Goebbels, Goering, Himmler, and other leading Nazis directed these activities.

Plunder for personal or party/state enrichment played a significant role. Of greater importance was the use of cultural institutions in promoting the key Nazi doctrine of German racial and cultural superiority. Artifacts, and the peoples that produced them, were continually reclassified in a convoluted effort to establish a pellucid racial hierarchy topped by the Aryan.



*In the Karl May Museum, near Dresden, after 1933. The sign by the window reads: "Dogs and Niggers not allowed." From John Toland, *Hitler: The Pictorial Documentary of His Life* (New York: Ballantine, 1976).*



Part Two

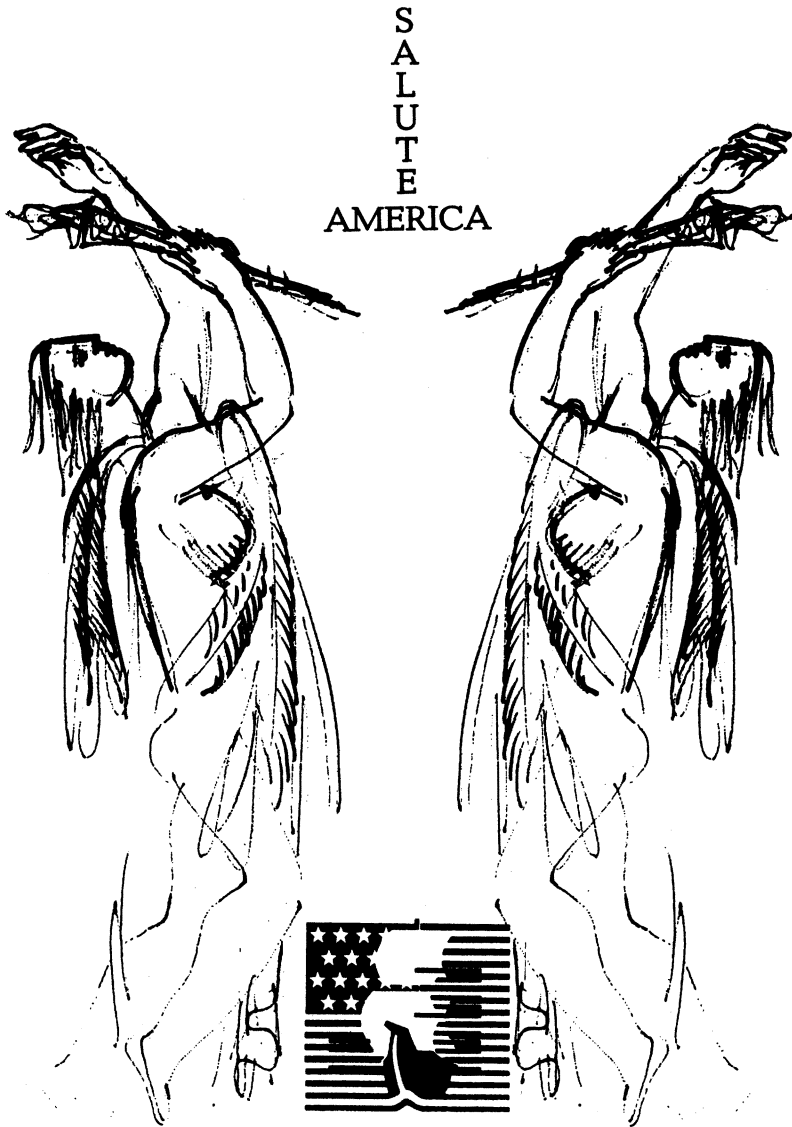
The Taboo Against Nazi Art I

In Germany since 1974, Nazi art has frequently been displayed in museums in the context of antifascist historical exhibitions. Germans have been discussing Nazi art and what to do with it. This widespread public discussion has been explicitly and complexly related to the struggle of Germans of the various generations to deal with their past and to forge a new national identity. Still, Nazi art has not yet been publicly exhibited as art even in Germany.

In the United States the taboo against exhibiting Nazi art is even stricter. An exhibition entitled “‘Degenerate Art’: The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany” was recently shown at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. It was an ambitious, informative re-creation of the infamous 1937 Munich show of banned modern art, a show that the Nazis mounted to counterpoint the opening of the first Great German Art Exhibition at the House of German Art. As “‘Degenerate Art’” demonstrated, the fate of the avant-garde in Nazi Germany was to be mocked, hounded out, and replaced. Yet the replacement, Nazi art, though repeatedly invoked, was but negligibly represented in the recent exhibition, with only some ephemera on display and a half dozen small photographs in the extensive catalog. The sole full-page reproduction of a Nazi work in the catalog, a photograph of Breker’s *Readiness*, is misdated to 1937 rather than 1939. This is a crucial misrepresentation of Breker’s work and of Nazi art in general in respect to its iconography of war, revealing a strange inattention on the part of the curators to the brief chronology of Nazi art.

A taboo against the exhibition of Nazi art as such remains in force throughout the world. Yet there is a continuous return of the repressed: the following sections will offer some further examples, reflecting a variety of national, institutional, and personal histories.

*Jesse Owens receiving oak-sapling trophies and “50 years later.”
A cartoon from an album on the 1936 Olympic Games, Die Olympischen
Spiele 1936 (Hamburg: Cigaretten-Bilderdienst, 1936).*



1 The Angels of Light
57x39 cm

1983

SALUTE AMERICA has been published on the occasion of the 300th Anniversary of German immigration to America.

The original lithographs were created by Arno Breker. The text was written by President Ronald Reagan, Vice President George Bush, West German President Prof. Dr. Karl Carstens and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

“The Water Colours of Hitler,” Florence, 1984

In 1984 the city of Florence mounted an exhibition in the Palazzo Vecchio entitled “The Water Colours of Hitler.” In the accompanying catalog (which was issued in separate Italian and English editions) a politician writes that the show was mounted “on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the liberation of the city from the Nazi-fascists. . . . The presence of Hitler’s paintings is a symbol of the defeat of Nazism.” No mention is made in this preface, or in any of the six texts in the catalog, of the collaboration of Italians with the “Nazi-fascists.” Rather, Hitler’s watercolors are presented as spoils captured from the evil Nazis over whom the Florentines eventually triumphed.

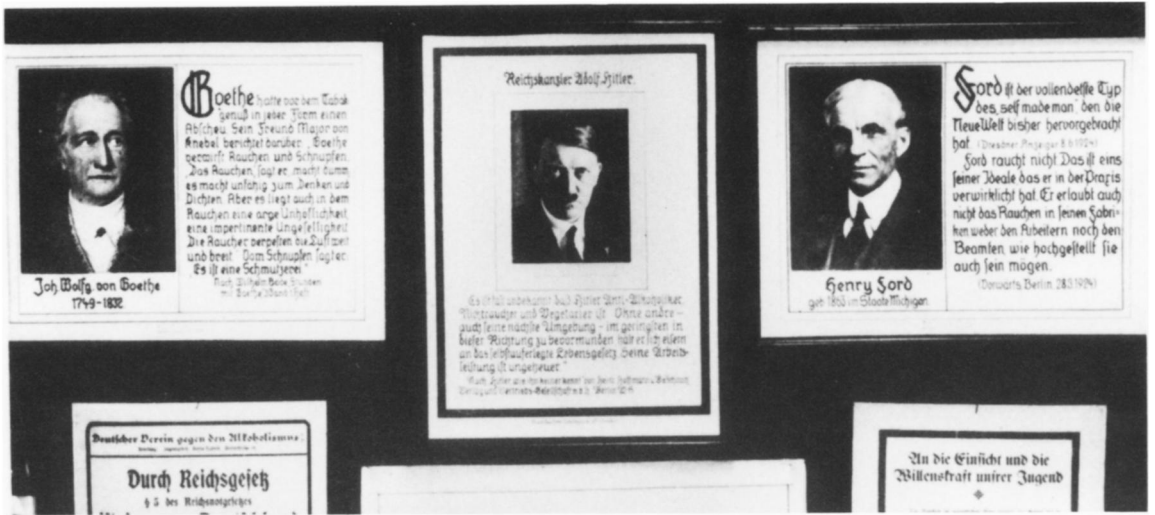
In another prefatory text, a curator writes: “One could . . . credit Hitler with being a precursor of the type of painting, fashionable today and not without a certain curious validity, known as ‘anachronism,’ ‘hypermannerism,’ or ‘quotationi.’” In other words, Hitler the painter is being presented here as a proto-postmodernist.

In a third text, a critic writes: “Hitler’s water colours are . . . in fact, lightweight works which any young art student could have produced. Any young art student, that is, who was devoid of any exceptional gifts or any artistic talent. Thus may the matter be quickly disposed of. Nor, on the other hand, could it be otherwise: Hitler is what he is, as we all know him. Anything further such as we are about to say is idle reflection, ‘degenerate’ fantasy.”

In all three of these descriptions, Hitler’s watercolors are used to cast blame or to expiate guilt. These texts from “The Water Colours of Hitler” exemplify ways that certain people—people from Western European countries that colluded with the Nazis—have used Nazi art to distance their own histories rather than to examine them.



Piazza della Repubblica, Florence, 1984: banner advertising “Gli Acquarelli di Hitler” (the watercolors of Hitler). (Photo: Steven Kasher.)



Ford—Ford—Kiefer

Henry Ford was the one American that Hitler professed to admire; he was impressed with Ford's productive-technological achievements and with his anti-Semitism. Hitler seems to have derived sections of *Mein Kampf* from Ford's writings. On July 30, 1938, his seventy-fifth birthday, Ford was presented with the Grand Cross of the German Eagle, the highest award that Hitler could grant.

Ford admired Hitler as well. According to one of Ford's biographers, David L. Lewis, "if any one American were to be singled out for his contribution to the evils of Nazism, it would have to be Henry Ford." Ford continued to support the Nazis even after the outbreak of war in 1939.

After the war, the Ford Motor Company, under Henry's son Edsel, undertook a well-publicized espousal of liberal causes, particularly civil rights. The Ford Foundation has contributed to numerous progressive projects.

Yet, as late as 1989, the public relations arm of the Ford Motor Company was still involved with some sort of correction of the notorious anti-Semitic and pro-Nazi activities of the company's founder. Ford's sponsorship of the Anselm Kiefer exhibition, undertaken in partnership with the West German government, must be considered in this light (notwithstanding other motivations that were, of course, involved).

The touring Kiefer exhibition was the most grandiose and expensive showing of any living European artist produced since the end of the Second World War. Kiefer is an artist known for his attempts to exorcise Germany's Nazi past with aesthetic resolutions. He has received exorbitant accolades, primarily from the United States. For instance: "Kiefer's imagination reunited Germany before

the fact. . . . Kiefer made Germanness available again to the imagination. He took the taboo off it. Kiefer's work embodied a consciousness true to the best and chastened by the worst of the German past and therefore fit for an integral future. Kiefer may not have changed the world, but . . ." (Peter Schjeldahl, *Art in America*, September 1991).

Kiefer creates monumental icons that incorporate images drawn from the German Romantic-Nazi tradition; he treats these images with an ambiguous awe that suggests both dread and admiration. In their mythification and lack of concrete historicity, they offer little space for working through, as opposed to magically resolving, the German historic burden.



Something big is happening at The Museum of Modern Art.

But the huge scale of Anselm Kiefer's work is only a small part of his art. Kiefer paints public memories mixed with private dreams—as he shuns the comfort of custom and fashion. Only 43 years old, he has already challenged Europe's ideas of what an artist is and does. Now New York can join in the discovery.

"ANSELM KIEFER: A RETROSPECTIVE" is the artist's first comprehensive exhibition in the United States. And The Museum of Modern Art is the final stop on its American tour. Kiefer's work demonstrates that boundaries of time and place need not be barriers to creativity. That is why Ford Motor Company is proud to sponsor this exhibition.

ANSELM KIEFER: A RETROSPECTIVE
The Museum of Modern Art, October 16, 1988–January 3, 1989
11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y.
For information call: 212 708-9480

GERMANY'S SPIRITUAL HEROES, 1972
oil and charcoal on canvas 100 1/2" x 258 1/2"
© Anselm Kiefer 1972
Collection of the Eli Broad Family Foundation

This exhibition is sponsored by



THE NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE OCTOBER 16, 1988 43

Advertisement for Anselm Kiefer exhibition and Ford Motor Company. New York Times Magazine, October 16, 1988.



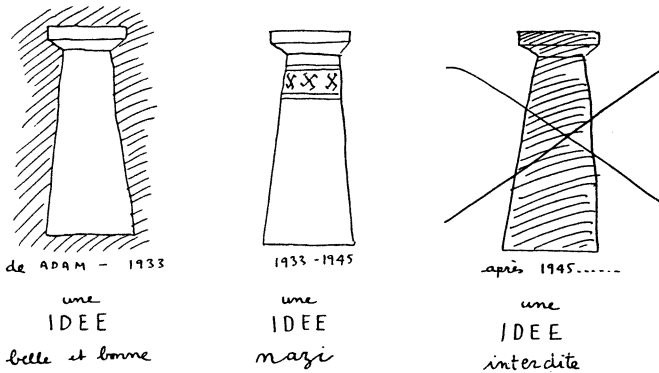
Speer—Krier—Prince Charles

Leon Krier is an influential theoretician of architecture. He is guide and ghostwriter to Prince Charles in the prince's campaign against modernist architecture and for traditionalist architecture in Britain, and he has worked for the prince on several highly publicized projects.

Krier's most important influence, self-confessed, has been the architecture of Albert Speer. Krier has portrayed Speer as the spiritual forefather of a postmodern classicism that he promotes as a cure-all not only for modernist architecture but also for the social ills of modernity. Krier believes that Speer's architecture was produced in spite of any Nazi ideology to which it may be linked, rather than as a reflection or promotion of that ideology. (In 1984 Speer took occasion to disagree with this contention of Krier's.)

Two images from Leon Krier, *Albert Speer Architecture 1932–1942* (Brussels: Aux Archives d'Architectures Modernes, 1984). Opposite: the frontispiece, depicting Speer and Hitler reviewing architectural plans (cropping and book design by Krier). Below: "Architecture and destiny," an illustration by Krier.

ARCHITECTURE + DESTIN



Designers for Dorset

The Prince of Wales meets Leon Krier and John Thompson at last weekend's planning think-in in Dorset. More than 1,200 people saw Leon Krier's masterplan for the expansion of Dorchester, the county town, by the close of the two-day public exhibition at the County Museum on Monday night.

The scheme, for four model villages to the west of the town, is intended to house 8,000 people over the next 15 to 20 years, on Duchy of Cornwall land. Prince Charles, who as Duke of Cornwall commissioned Krier last year, made a surprise visit by helicopter to the Poundbury Planning Weekend, organised by Hunt Thompson as community development consultants, last Friday. He spent 90 minutes taking

part in working party discussions.

An exhibition exit poll by User Research, a Hunt Thompson subsidiary, disclosed that 67 per cent thought the public participation exercise had been useful, while another 16 per cent thought it worthwhile. More than 90 per cent said they wanted to see further consultation.

Full report and pictures, back page



From an article about a development project of Krier and Prince Charles, *Building Design*, June 23, 1989.



Hitler, Speer, Breker, and a cameraman in front of the Eiffel Tower, June 1940, several days after the surrender of France to the German armies. Hitler celebrated his greatest military victory with an “art tour” of Paris and invited three of his favorite cultural practitioners to accompany him. The tour was widely publicized in Germany. From Robert Wernick, Blitzkrieg (Alexandria: Time-Life, 1977).

Breker—Ludwig

Peter Ludwig is the most powerful private art patron in Germany. He has directorial positions in at least seventeen museums worldwide, extensive loans in over thirty, and at least two bear his name.

In the 1940s, while a teenager, Ludwig was, according to his biographer, Reiner Speck, “a sort of cultural official of the Hitler Youth and, in this capacity, was sent to a conference in Berlin.” There, presumably, he saw Breker’s statues installed at the Ministry of Propaganda or at the Reichschancellery.

Ludwig has sought to include Breker in the canon of great Western artists. In 1984 Ludwig commissioned from Breker marble portrait busts of himself and his wife. During their public unveiling at the opening of the Museum Ludwig in Cologne, he called Breker a “great artist” and linked him to a desirable postmodernism, claiming: “Certainly, all over the world there is a conservative trend. . . . Postmodern—what else does that mean but to be traditional?” Ludwig has also purchased earlier works by Breker for his collection in the Museum Ludwig, though these remain unexhibited.



Ludwig, Breker, and Breker's busts of Mr. and Mrs. Ludwig, Art News, April 1988. (Photo: Sven Simon.)

Thyssen—Thyssen

Fritz Thyssen, a leading German industrialist, was the most important early financial supporter of Hitler and the Nazi party, donating large sums of money himself and persuading other major industrialists to do the same. He has been called “the most important single figure behind Hitler’s struggle for power” (*Current Biography* 1940).

In 1928, after a Nazi electoral success, Thyssen gave Hitler a special grant to renovate new party offices. Hitler and Troost decorated in a heavy, anti-modern style; the resulting headquarters came to be known as the “Brown House” and set precedents for certain later developments in Nazi art, architecture, and design.

Fritz Thyssen’s nephew, the primary heir to the Thyssen fortune, is the Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza. Baron Thyssen is one of the world’s wealthiest individuals and is the owner of the most important art collection in private hands. He has a large collection of paintings by the German expressionists, “which he particularly likes, he says, because the Nazis banned them as ‘degenerate.’”

In 1988 *Der Spiegel* revealed that the baron had commissioned portrait busts of himself and his wife from Arno Breker, whose work he particularly likes even though Breker was not banned by the Nazis.



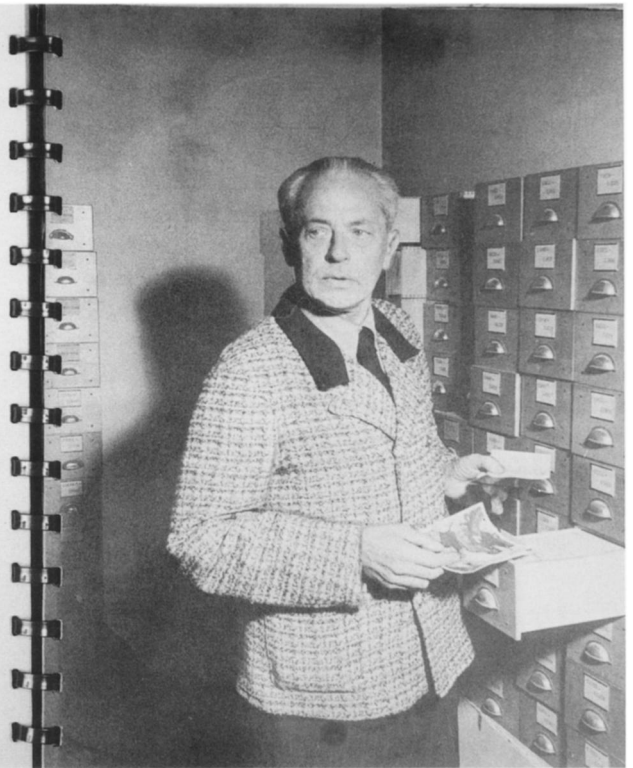
Left: Photomontage representing the importance of Fritz Thyssen in the Nazi hierarchy. From M. Lincoln Schuster, ed., *Eyes on the World* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935). Right: Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza. From *Architectural Digest*, October 1987.

H EINRICH HOFFMAN, Hitler's ex-photographer was employed in the Courthouse at Nuernberg. His job was to classify 500,000 captured German negatives. Hoffmann was closely guarded. He was put to work because of his vast knowledge of pictures taken during the Hitler reign.

Hoffmann owned one of the largest photo news agencies in Germany and as early as 1922 tried to get pictures of Hitler. Hitler ignored him then, but after his rise to power, the Fuehrer asked Hoffmann to accompany him on all his trips. In 1938 Hoffmann quarreled with some of the Hitlerites and after that his employees made the trips with Hitler.

When Goering was shown this picture in a U. S. Army Newspaper he said, "The swine made a million marks on my pictures and now he's sorting photographs to hang me."

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Heinrich Hoffman, the Leading Nazi Photographer II

In 1945 Heinrich Hoffman was employed by the International Military Tribunal to catalog photographs for use as evidence in the Nuremberg trials of leading Nazis. Many of Hoffman's negatives and prints were confiscated by the U.S. Army and are held in the U.S. National Archives in Washington. The U.S. government claims the rights to these images, which it generally licenses upon request, free of charge.

Since 1945 Hoffman's photographs of the Nazi era have been reproduced continuously in huge numbers. The legal rights to many of these images have remained the property of Hoffman and his heirs, who have charged market rates for permission to reproduce. Leading publications, such as *Time*, often purchase these rights from the Hoffman agency. Others have opted to pirate or forgo the Hoffman images rather than pay the requisite fees and tributes.

Heinrich Hoffman at work for the International Tribunal at Nuremberg in 1945-46. From Charles W. Alexander and Anne Kesshan, Justice at Nuernberg (U.S.A.: Marvel, 1946).

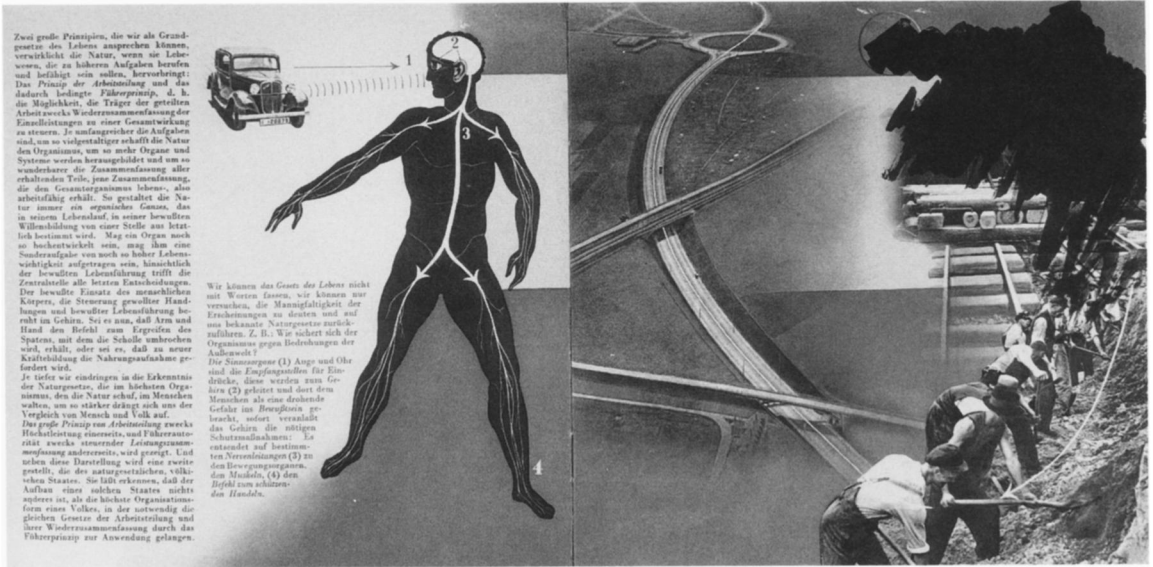
MOMA and the Nazis

Propagandistic projects undertaken by the Museum of Modern Art in conjunction with the Office of War Information, the Office of Inter-American Affairs, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the United States Information Agency have previously been brought to public attention. It is less well recognized that MOMA has repeatedly supported proponents and past proponents of Nazism while occluding their Nazi sympathies. Unlike the work with the above-mentioned governmental agencies, which was deliberate if often secret, the activities and associations listed below have been permitted (perhaps with distaste) as inevitable consequences of the museum's aesthetic and political positionings.

Philip Johnson, the museum's first director of the Department of Architecture (and its *éminence grise* to this day), took leave from his post in December of 1934 to found the National party, modeled after the Nazi party, with which Johnson had become familiar during his several visits to Germany. His partner in this venture was Alan R. Blackburn, Jr., the museum's executive director. They tried to enlist Huey Long, the demagogic governor of Louisiana, but were rebuffed. (See, for instance, *Esquire*, December 1983.)



Montage from the brochure for the exhibition "Das Wunder des Lebens," designed by Herbert Bayer in 1935. (Illustration: Herbert Bayer.) The spread illustrates "the two great principles of life . . . the principle of the division of labor . . . and the Führerprinzip" [the Leader-principle, a key concept in Nazi ideology]. Left: A detail that includes a photo of Hitler. From Herbert Bayer, *Das Künstlerische Werk, 1918–1938* (Berlin: Bauhaus-Archiv, 1982). Opposite: From a copy that belonged to Bayer and was censored by him with black ink.



Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the architect whom Johnson and MOMA have most energetically supported, made repeated efforts between 1933 and 1938 to gain Nazi patronage. In 1933 Mies joined the architects' branch of the *Reichskulturkammer*, the organization established by the Ministry of Propaganda to control arts professionals. Membership required proof of racial purity, which Mies supplied.

Herbert Bayer, after his emigration from Germany in 1938, was hired to work at MOMA. He created the influential exhibition designs for "Road to Victory" (1942) and "Airways to Peace" (1943). Previously, Bayer had contributed to the design of comparable exhibitions for the Nazis: "Deutschland Ausstellung" (1936) and "Wunder des Lebens" (1938).

In 1985, a year after the publication of his elaborate tribute to Speer, Leon Krier was given an important exhibition of his own architectural projects at MOMA.

Two recent historical survey exhibits at MOMA gave surprising prominence to the Weimar-period work of two artists who were soon to become leading Nazi artists. MOMA featured the earlier work with no reference to the later careers. Ludwig Hohlwein (shown in "The Modern Poster") was the leading poster designer of the Third Reich. Hugo Erfurth (in "Photography Until Now") was one of the most celebrated photographic portraitists in Nazi Germany.

Peter Ludwig is a member of the International Council of MOMA and has contributed generously to the museum.



The Modern Poster. MOMA installation, 1988.
(Photo: Steven Kasher.)

The Taboo Against Nazi Art II

What, then, makes Nazi art inadmissible—unmentionable without embarrassment, barely chronicled, unexhibitable—especially in the United States? No doubt this taboo is partly due to a belief in that standard equation in the discourse of modernism, the false syllogism stating that since the Nazis were anti-modernist then modernism must be inherently anti-fascist. The tenacity of this belief is demonstrated when prominent postmodern anti-modernists defend “quality” Nazi art (a stance that remains a profound liability to the holders of these anti-modernist positions).

More profoundly, most contemporary discourse continues to cast Nazi art not only as the antitype of modernism, but also as the antitype of culture itself. We have been brought up to believe that the Nazis were the enemies of real culture, of living culture, of culture as we know it. It can hardly be allowed that there was Nazi culture at all. Over and over our culture reinscribes denials of Nazi culture in the attempt to establish an inherent cultural uprightness of our own.

I am not suggesting that we resolve this dilemma by adjudicating among Nazi art works in order to permit some with aesthetic merit to be exhibited as art. Rather, I am suggesting that an examination of the taboo against Nazi art can reveal the operation of a set of politicized myths. Among those myths is that of the political neutrality of aesthetic canons. Rather than incorporate Nazi art, we might use reconsiderations of Nazi art to increase awareness of the politics of aesthetic judgments and to help dismantle notions of a universal canon.

Dismantling the taboo against Nazi art will also permit us to encounter the virulence, both blatant and subtle, that undergirds the ways in which Nazi art works construct heroes and sub-humans—an encounter that can illuminate parallel constructions in other cultures, including our own. Furthermore, the denial of Nazi art reinforces the popular myth of the Nazi as super-villain, a myth central to our political imaginations in the United States. Nazi metaphors and Hitler analogies are a pervasive everyday expedient in all media, rhetorical weapons always ready at hand. Turning others into Nazis or Hitlers has become a convenient way for the American interlocutor to attribute a surpassing evil to his opponent. Unremitting castigation of the Nazi masks both the historic complicity of the United States with Nazi crimes and our own racist and genocidal histories. Compulsively assigning the labels “Nazi” and “Hitler” serves to reform an image of ourselves as innate anti-fascists—anti-fascists without having to work at it, without having to actively make democracy.

Helms and the Arts: Some Nazi Analogies

tions on the NEA, he has now edged back | we have to be the art police?" | works, even the "Tits and Ass" song and the

The Right Wing's Cultural Warrior

When Sen. Jesse Helms invites you to see his etchings, he's not kidding. As Capitol Hill's point man against obscenity, he keeps a small stash of Robert Mapplethorpe's homoerotic photographs in his office. He often makes viewing them a condition for news interviews. When a television station refused his request that they air the pictures, Helms had made his point. If showing Mapplethorpe's work on television could cost a broadcaster his license, he argued, why should the NEA get a free ride? Helms insists he is not a prude or a censor. He just doesn't want the NEA spending tax money to offend God-fearing Americans. "If America persists in the way it's going, and the Lord doesn't strike us down," he says, "he ought to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah."



No subtlety: *Protesting against Helms, the senator*

nothing subtle about a Helms campaign. When his opponent, Harvey Gant, recently made history as the first black to win a Democratic senatorial nomination, Helms strategist Carter Wrenn declared

tions from across the country. One appeal said that when Mrs. Helms saw some of the pictures, she cried, "Lord have mercy, Jesse, I'm not believing this"—and slammed the book shut.



AL STEPHENSON—PICTURE GROUP

lar. Democrats also question whether Helms can make Mapplethorpe a metaphor for discontent about cultural values. "People are concerned about the state of American morality, but Hollywood gets a lot more blame than the NEA," says Democratic pollster Geoffrey Garin.

A Jesse Helms Citizenship Center is scheduled to open

JESSE HELMS' VALIANT WAR AGAINST FILTH IN THE ARTS

THE "Senate's most persistent yahoo," belittled Tom Wicker in the *New York Times*.

"As wily and contemptible a character as one could hope to meet," bayed Jonathan Yardley in the *Washington Post*.

What's got the boys bananas is an amendment by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) to ban federal funding, through the National Endowment for the Arts, for "obscene or indecent materials, including . . . depictions of sadomasochism, the exploitation, the exploitation of children, or individuals engaged in sex acts."

Whistled through without dissent, the amendment will become law if a conference committee does not peel it off the \$10.9 billion Interior bill.

Propulsion for Helms' amendment comes from the now-famous photographic exhibit by the late Robert Mapplethorpe, tossed out of the Corcoran Gallery, which features a little girl with her dress up, one man about to urinate in the mouth of another, an elephantine penis hanging out of a pair of pants, and the "artist's" nude photo of himself, with a bullwhip sticking out of his rectum.

"The artistry is trans-

DIVIDING LINE



PATRICK J. BUCHANAN

parent," coos Hank Burchard of the *Washington Post*: "His eye for the human figure, male and female, is superb, but what is most compelling about his nude studies is the lack of any suggestion that the models are being manipulated."

(Query: If Mapplethorpe's photos are that good, why doesn't the *Washington Post* publish them?)

Jeffrey Tucker of the Ludwig Von Mises Institute, however, was revolted, especially by "The

Rack," an icon of the Virgin Mary, desecrated and constructed to hold neckties.

"Marty's hands were pierced with pins and strung between them was a crucifix. Her mouth was bleeding from both sides. And her halo was changed so that it stabbed her on the side of her bleeding neck."

"The photos would be great stuff for any Bible-belt yahoo to wave in front of the folks back home," mocks Burchard. But Swift's "Gulliver's Travels," where the squalid creatures first appear, reveals yahoos to be moral twins of the dead pervert with the bullwhip whose work so enthralled Hank Burchard.

Excuse me, but God bless Jesse Helms!

His retabling of this issue, after the House thought it had sidetracked it with a tiny nick in the NEA budget, is a deliverance.

For the Mapplethorpe exhibit, along with the NEA-underwritten "Piss Christ" (Andreas Serrano's self-titled photo of a crucifix in a vat of his own urine, and the paralysis

that has gripped the "arts" crowd as decent folks demand they condemn such filth, is raising America's consciousness to the moral squalor of so much modern art, and the amorality and cowardice of art "critics" whose duty it presumably was to maintain some standards.

This episode is going to do for the "arts community" what the cave-in to the Filthy Speech Movement

religious fervor of the Middle Ages, the humanism of the Renaissance or the romanticism of the 19th Century, the visual artist is the medium who most faithfully reflects the spirit of the age.

"The 'Art' of the 20th Century is a fearful indictment of our culture. It is the fruitless art of 'liberated man,' disunited from the cause of his being. . . The 'artist' of today 'fulfills himself' as does the cancerous cell, in total disregard of the life of the organism which feeds and nourishes it."

T.S. Eliot saw it coming. Culture, he wrote, 50 years ago, is the "incarnation of the religion of a people."

"If Christianity goes, the whole of our culture goes. Then you must start painfully again, and you cannot put on a new culture ready-made. You must wait for the grass to grow to feed the sheep to give the wool out of which your new coat will be made. You must pass through many centuries of barbarism."

. . . But we can at least try to save something of those goods of which we

are the common trustees: the legacy of Greece, Rome and Israel, and the legacy of Europe throughout the last 2,000 years.

"In a world which has seen such material devastation as ours, these spiritual possessions are in imminent peril."

Barbarism! The precise word, as we observe journalistic yahoos hail poor, pathetic Robert Mapplethorpe for having photographed, for their amusement, the degraded acts by which he killed himself.

What's to be done?

We can defund the poisoners of culture, the polluters of art; we can sweep up the debris that passes for modern art outside so many public buildings; we can discredit self-anointed critics who have forfeited our trust. America is not yet Weimar.

"A whole paradigm shift to New Age paganism has taken over the arts," Reed Armstrong wrote me recently. "Conservatives had best become interested in art if they wish to see civilization survive into the 21st Century."

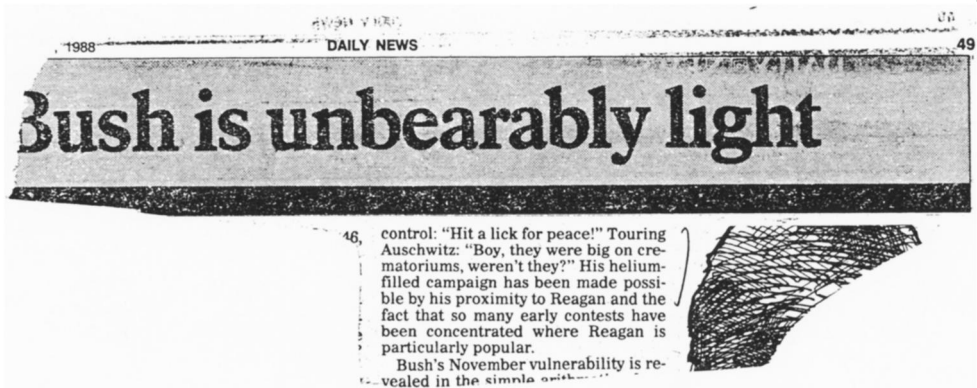
This is all-important: Not simply to cut out the rot, but to seek out, to find, to celebrate the good, the true, the beautiful. But first, tell Jesse to hold the fort; help is on the way.

America's self-anointed art critics have forfeited the public's trust

and student riots did for the academic community in the '60s, i.e., strip them of respect and make them objects of ridicule.

"Art is the signature of man," said G.K. Chesterton; sculptor and art historian H. Reed Armstrong adds: "Whether it be the

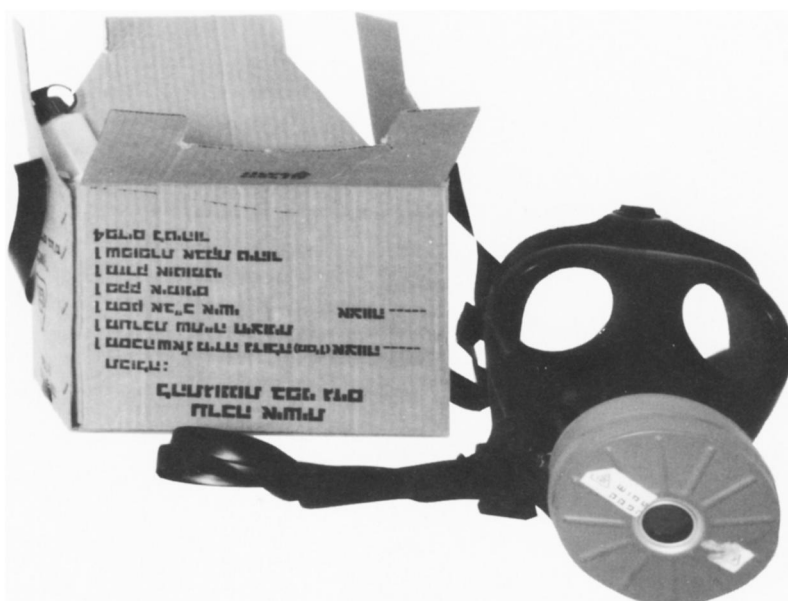
Bush on Auschwitz



Above: fragment of Daily News column. Bush's comment was made during his tour of Auschwitz on September 29, 1987.

Opposite top: section from "The Right Wing's Cultural Warrior," Newsweek, July 2, 1990. (Photos: Nancy Pierce — Black Star; Al Stephenson — Picture Group.)
Opposite bottom: syndicated column by Patrick J. Buchanan. From the New York Post, August 2, 1989.

Saddam Hussein: The Hitler Analogy
(Civil Defense Kit, Israel, 1991)



(Photo: Steven Kasher.)

Half-Time



U.S. Athletes at the 1936 Olympic Games. From Die Olympischen Spiele 1936 (Hamburg: Cigaretten-Bilderdienst, 1936).