



61. The First International Dada Fair, Berlin, 1920. (Photographer unknown; Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin).

versions of events are on what they chose to tell' (p.26). White's attentiveness to these accounts' constructed nature and their persistence beyond the Dada era is an important contribution, for, perhaps alone among modern movements, Dada had a persistent afterlife, principally in the mid-century phenomenon of 'Neo-Dada'. Yet following the Dadaists' lead has its drawbacks. While White offers deeply researched accounts of his subjects' personal histories and dealings with each other, this occasionally results in a haze of detail obscuring his larger argument. Although he writes lucidly, and individual chapters read as fascinating case studies, it can be difficult to follow his trajectory, which often backtracks to previously discussed events. A reader who is not already familiar with the history of Berlin Dada may have difficulty following his burgeoning cast of characters as they intersect at cafés and collaborate on montages. Likewise, White's treatment of these montages skews to examples that embody representations of Dada selves and relationships, without providing a larger understanding of the technique's practice.

Nonetheless, White's approach restores to Berlin Dada's orbit remarkable individuals who have previously been neglected, especially in art-historical studies. The most important of these is undoubtedly Wieland Herzfelde, Heartfield's brother, a publisher, writer and key figure in the movement. Others include the trio of Blumenfeld, Mehring and Paul Citroen; Otto Schmalhausen, a close friend of Grosz; and Hausmann's ally Johannes Baader. But even with more familiar figures, White provides a fresh perspective revealing unexpected connections: for example, Grosz and Höch attended the same art school, sharing (and vying for attention from) the same teacher, Emil Orlik. A deftly presented subtheme of the book which certainly begs for deeper future consideration is Jewish life and anti-Semitism in wartime

and Weimar Germany; as White observes, a substantial number of Berlin Dadaists – Hausmann, Mehring, Blumenfeld, Citroen, plus the Berlin-bred Zürich Dadaist Hans Richter – were Jewish, and the exploration, obfuscation, and fabrication of identity central to White's understanding of Berlin Dada appears intimately related to this fact. With *Generation Dada*, White has presented readers with a powerful new portrait of an avant-garde that flourished in one of the most fraught cities of the early twentieth century.

¹ C. Craft: 'Dada: Paris, Washington and New York', *THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE* 148 (2006), pp.505–06.

Bernard Berenson: A Life in the Picture Trade. By Rachel Cohen. 344 pp. incl. 23 b. & w. ills. (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2013), £18.99. ISBN 978-0-30014-942-5.

Reviewed by ROBERT B. SIMON

THE AUTHOR OF a concise biography of Bernard Berenson could well be mired by the immensity of available primary and secondary sources. In addition to Berenson's own writings, including diaries and memoirs, and his voluminous correspondence across a ninety-four year lifetime (much published, but most in manuscript, with over forty thousand letters remaining at his former home, I Tatti), there exist numerous reminiscences by associates, students, friends and lovers, as well as several articles and biographies, ranging from the scholarly to the sensational. That Berenson's circle included distinguished figures in a variety of fields, many of whom have been the object of their own biographical scrutiny, presents further challenges. Perspective and

selection are therefore paramount. The subtitle 'A Life in the Picture Trade' and book series (Jewish Lives) of Rachel Cohen's recent biography suggest commercial and religious emphases, but this book proves to be a remarkably balanced treatment of a profoundly complicated and compelling life.

It should be said at the outset that this is not an exhaustive biography, nor one that reveals overlooked documentation or hidden aspects of Berenson's life: in the author's words it is 'more distillation than excavation'. And here Cohen is adroit in conveying the qualities of the man by presenting not only significant events in his life, but unusual episodes that give depth and perspective to Berenson's character.

Cohen follows Berenson's life chronologically, and from the beginning his natal religion (he later converted from Judaism to Episcopalianism, then to Catholicism) is examined, less as an indicator of his personal beliefs than as a social determinant in his education, career and relationship to others over nearly a century of both benign and virulent anti-Semitism, tolerance and nuanced respect. (Nor are Berenson's own intermittent expressions of anti-Semitism neglected – one of the many inconsistencies that comprise his personality.)

Cohen approaches her subject critically but sympathetically. The figure that emerges from this book is one of a powerful intellect with an unquestioned seriousness of purpose, passionate in his devotion to art and ambitious in his quest to become a significant man-of-letters. But his self-doubts and conflicted responses to his successes were life-long, and cast an air of melancholy over his extraordinary career. Berenson lived with an eye to posterity, and his personal reflections suggest both confession and posturing. If he regretted his involvement in the art trade as adviser, consultant and quasi-dealer, it was not for the wealth that it brought him, nor out of any ethical misgivings, but that it took him away from what he had envisaged as a life of pure intellectual pursuits devoted to exploring the inner experiences and responses to works of art. While he enjoyed his recognition as the greatest connoisseur of Italian painting of his time and embraced the popular celebrity that accompanied it, Berenson was forever tortured by his inability to fulfil his youthful ambitions to be a writer-philosopher in the mould of Walter Pater. His long struggles to establish I Tatti, 'his library with living rooms attached', as a Harvard research institute, demonstrated profound gratitude to the college that was crucial in his formation, but also suggested personal expiation.

Cohen is not an art historian, yet she has an incisive understanding of Berenson's contributions to scholarship, the history of collecting in America and the practice of connoisseurship. She notes that Berenson's facility in delineating the characteristics of individual painters was methodologically indebted to his predecessors (in particular, Giovanni Morelli), but sees his achievement of a systematic classification of Italian Renaissance

painters and draughtsmen as the consequence of a devotion to accuracy and an exceptional visual memory, abetted by two technological advances of the late nineteenth century: the development of railways, that facilitated rapid travel, and the advent of photography to document works of art, permitting comparisons over distance and time. The results include his Lists, serially revised over his lifetime and still seminal in the field, and many specialised studies. 'Alunno di Domenico', the first article in the first issue of this Magazine, remains a tour de force, brilliant in conception, and, if imperfect in details, the model for more than a century of reconstructions of artistic personalities.¹ Less compelling today is Berenson's aesthetic terminology – 'life-enhancing', 'tactile values', 'space-composition' – which has come to sound dated.

Much attention is given to the women in Berenson's life: to Mary Logan Costelloe, his wife, sometime collaborator, and the evident architect of his professional livelihood; Nicky Mariano, from 1919 his assistant, mistress and companion; and the renowned librarian to J.P. Morgan, Belle da Costa Greene, who was Berenson's partner in the most powerful and intimate relationship of both their lives.

Cohen negotiates the personalities of Berenson's friends, acquaintances, rivals, colleagues and business associates with delicacy and balance, although many episodes, controversies and individuals have necessarily been omitted from the tale. In so doing she is able to describe his overarching evolution from beginnings as a fervent immigrant student to a career as an eminent authority to a finale as a sage – social, intellectual and financial transformations that brought him adulation, criticism and envy. Cohen's Berenson is complex and genuine, self-critical and occasionally self-loathing, a perceptive participant within a rich cultural network and a devoted student of the Italian painters who sustained him professionally and practically throughout his life.

¹ B. Berenson: 'Alunno di Domenico', THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE 1 (1903), pp.6–20.

Publications Received

Kokoschka. Das Ich im Brennpunkt. Edited by Tobias G. Natter and Franz Smola. 364 pp. incl. 340 col. ills. (Leopold Museum, Vienna, 2013), €29.90. ISBN 978-3-85033-785-4.

Oskar Kokoschka. Portraits of People and Animals. Edited by Beatrice von Bormann, with contributions by Régine Bonnefoit and Katharina Erling. 216 pp. incl. numerous b. & w. ills. (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 2013), €35.95. ISBN 978-90-6918-267-4.

It is unusual to find two large exhibitions devoted to the same artist coinciding in different cities. *Oskar Kokoschka: Portraits of People and Animals* (first at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, and now at the Kunstmuseum, Wolfsburg; to 17th August 2014) and *Kokoschka: Das Ich im Brennpunkt* (Leopold Museum, Vienna) both opened last autumn and were accompanied by substantial catalogues, but there the resemblances end. *People and Animals* is a fairly conventional show, concentrating on Kokoschka (1886–1980) as a portraitist, though not much more than half of its

contents are portraits in the strict sense. I would question the decision to include Kokoschka's early life drawings – rapid sketches of the naked model in movement – or similar works in watercolour during his time teaching in Dresden in the 1920s. Even more doubtful in the context of portraiture are his decorations and designs for the Wiener Werkstätte, his illustrations for *Der Sturm*, his allegorical paintings and print portfolios alluding to his fraught relationship with Alma Mahler, his studies for the life-size doll he commissioned in her image, his political pictures made in response to the First and Second World Wars, and so on. However, their inclusion certainly makes for a more interesting exhibition and allows the authors of the catalogue scope to write about genres and media in which Kokoschka produced equally compelling work. If one wanted to stretch the definition of portraiture intelligently, a more legitimate category would have been Kokoschka's landscapes of cities such as Dresden, Prague and London, which have been exhibited in the past under the title 'City Portraits'. But they are excluded.

The exhibition *Das Ich im Brennpunkt* (The 'I' in Focus) was about Kokoschka's relationship to photography. Although he was dismissive of the medium, he was not averse to using photographs and picture postcards as aides-memoire in his paintings. And he was happy to be photographed throughout his long and eventful life by the fashionable portrait photographers of the day – Austrian, German, French, British, American – as well as by press photographers and anonymous 'snappers'. In fact, he skilfully used photography to promote his work and his views, dramatising himself in a variety of roles and situations, and presenting himself to the camera with the often famous subjects of his portraits. He had the advantage of being photogenic, with a strong sense of the theatrical: he wrote and directed his own plays and designed sets and costumes for opera.

That so many of these photographs have been preserved in one place is entirely due to the foresight, dedication and generosity of the late Olda Kokoschka, the artist's widow, who donated five thousand prints to the Oskar Kokoschka-Zentrum der Universität für angewandte Kunst, Vienna (Oskar Kokoschka Centre of the University of Applied Arts), which she helped establish in the former School of Applied Arts where Kokoschka had studied as a young man. Further gifts and acquisitions have increased this number to some six thousand items – a unique resource for scholars run by Patrick Werkner and Bernadette Reinhold, who have both contributed to the catalogue of *Das Ich im Brennpunkt*. What they and their colleagues at the Leopold Museum have given us is a rich pictorial biography, in which photographs are cross-referenced to Kokoschka's paintings and works on paper, as well as to the artist's correspondence and manuscripts bequeathed by Olda Kokoschka to the Central Library in Zürich. It is of lasting value.

RICHARD CALVOCORESSI

Lateral Inversions: The Prints of Barry Cleavin. By Melinda Johnston, with a contribution by Rodney Wilson. 288 pp. incl. 125 col. + b. & w. ills. (Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 2013), \$NZ55. ISBN 978-1-927145-47-0.

Over the past half-century, Barry Cleavin (b.1939) has emerged as New Zealand's foremost printmaker, a powerful and compelling complement to the more mainstream talent of John Drawbridge (1930–2005), who studied in Paris with S.W. Hayter and Johnny Friedlaender. Cleavin's lengthy career has witnessed both the rise and fall of the medium itself. The latter boomed in the affordable and democratic New Zealand art world of the 1970s, when Cleavin began a twelve-year teaching stint at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts. Now, however, printmaking is in tragic free fall: a damning managerial review recommended its discontinuation at that institution in the very week this book was published. Yet it would be otiose to praise or blame Cleavin for circumstances that are quite beyond his control: he is *sui generis*, a unique,

idiosyncratic, solitary and obsessive perfectionist, dedicated to his craft and vision. His work stands mercifully aloof from art that clamorously aspires to a New Zealand (or, in its Maori counterpart, Aotearoa) identity. Subtly, Cleavin's iconography nevertheless does on occasion allude to his – and his country's – place in the world, apparent in the etching *Anatomy of A(NZUS) predator – from Triad '84* (1984), where a bird's skull neatly fits the profile of an RNZAF Skyhawk, thereby creating a witty but menacing presence. It dates from the height of the debate over New Zealand's future commitment to ANZUS, the Australia, New Zealand and United States military alliance, which was provoked by 'our nuclear free stance', as Melinda Johnston, the author of this book, states. The near contemporaneous etching and aquatint *Childsplay I* (1984) provides a novel twist to the adage 'Drop babies not bombs', where a Stuka aircraft drops the babies as bombs. Cleavin's vision shares not a few characteristics of the 'Cold War' art of his British near contemporary Colin Self: fastidious drawing, impassioned political conviction and – evident rather more in Cleavin than in Self – a macabre and barbed sense of humour aimed at human folly.

What emerges from this beautifully produced book is Cleavin's consistency and inexhaustible productivity, without it ever becoming a clichéd imitation of his earlier self. Although his work is sometimes grotesque and frequently satirical – spanning an unlovely Adam and Eve in *The garden* (1966) and the Photoshopped mug shots of a clutch of finance company fraudsters *The Lombard four* (2012), Cleavin 'enjoys the fact that he isn't tied into being a satirist'. As a printmaker Cleavin has remained something of a cult figure. This reviewer hopes that the overdue publication of Johnston's intelligently observed monograph will redress the situation; without doubt the artist has met his match in the scholar and it is hoped that the book will secure Cleavin his rightful place in antipodean art history.

MARK STOCKER

Alexander Calder – Avant-Garde in Motion. Edited by Susanne Meyer-Büser, with texts by Daniela Hahn, Susanne Meyer-Büser and Gryphon Rue Rower-Upjohn. 143 pp. incl. numerous col. + b. & w. ills. (Hirmer Verlag, Munich, 2013), €29.95. ISBN 978-3-7774-2117-9 (German edition); 978-3-7774-2060-8 (English edition).

Large-scale, well-designed catalogue to a loan exhibition at the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf (7th September 2013 to 12th January), which concentrated on Calder's works with sound such as the Museum's own work of 1936, the inspiration for the exhibition.

Chagall. Love, War, and Exile. By Susan Tumarkin Goodman, with an essay by Kenneth E. Silver. 147 pp. incl. 72 col. + 27 b. & w. ills. (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2013), €30. ISBN 978-0-300-18734-2.

This publication accompanied an exhibition at the Jewish Museum, New York (15th September 2013 to 2nd February), exploring the middle period of Chagall's career, the 1930s and 1940s, which included many versions of Crucifixions and politically motivated paintings. Eleven poems by the artist are also reproduced.

Jennifer Bartlett: History of the Universe. Works 1970–2011.

By Klaus Ottmann and Terrie Sultan. 104 pp. incl. 50 col. + 110 b. & w. ills. (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2013), £30. ISBN 978-0-300-19735-8.

Catalogue of an exhibition of a trim selection of works by Bartlett (b.1941) held last year at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and now on show at the Parrish Art Museum, Water Mill NY (to 13th July). Writings by the artist are included.

R.S.