Contributor: Alice Heeren

Bravo, Manuel Álvarez

(Born: Mexico City, Mexico, 1902 – Died: Mexico City, Mexico, 2002)



The Daughter of the Dancers (La hija de los danzantes). 1933.

Gelatin-silver print. 9 1/4 x 6 11/16".

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

<http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/1997/alvarezbravo/photos.html>

Manuel Álvarez Bravo is one of the most prominent modern photographers in the world. Born in Mexico City in 1902, his use of everyday scenes transformed into fantastical and monumental images, has marked him as one of the founders of modern photography. Bravo is a key figure of the post-revolutionary period in Mexico, when the Mexican Renaissance movement answered to a concern for the construction of a national identity aligned with an urge for modernization. Bravo’s documental and artistic photography as well as his later experiments with film are marked by the ideals of this period, while also carrying references to music, literature and the arts that make his work relevant outside of its immediate context. He married images of the Mexican working class with his appreciation for **Surrealist** aesthetics. A self-taught photographer, Bravo registered the political changes triggered by the Mexican revolution as well as the indigenous culture of his home country. Bravo started his photographic work in 1923 with excursions into **Pictorialism** and **Cubism**, but it was his encounter with **Tina Modotti** and her documental photographic work that changed his perspective and was the birth moment of his personal aesthetic. After Modotti was deported from Mexico in 1929, Bravo took over her position at the magazine *Mexican Folkways.* The grandson of a painter, Bravo took painting classes at the Academy of San Carlos and in the 1930s documented the work of the Mexican muralists **Diego Rivera**, **José Clemente Orozco** and **David Alfaro Siqueiros**. Bravo exhibited widely during his lifetime totaling over 150 individual exhibitions and his work in part of important collections in museum such as MoMA and MMoCA.

References and Further Reading:

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