



ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ ON READING

CURATORIAL ASSISTANCE

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New York (girls in fairy costumes), April 19, 1938
Front cover: *Carnival, Paris* (woman reading behind stage), 1926

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Henri Cartier-Bresson once stated on behalf of himself, Robert Capa, and Brassai, that, “Whatever we have done, Kertész did first.” He referred to the concentrated community of innovative artists in Paris of the 1920s. Kertész's influence would continue well into the 1970s, affecting another generation that included Lisette Model, Berenice Abbott, Helen Levitt, Roert Frank, Garry Winogrand, and Lee Fiedlander, among many others.

On Reading, a series of photographs made by Kertész in Hungary, France, Asia, and the United States over a fifty year period, illustrates his penchant for the poetry and choreography of life in public and also private moments at home, tapping the absorptive power of reading as a universal pleasure. Sturdily balanced between geometric composition and playful observation, it is easy to understand how these glimpses of everyday people and places would come to heavily influence photography as an art form.

André Kertész (American, born Austria-Hungary, 1894-1985) began taking photographs in Budapest in 1912. He was drafted into the Austro-Hungarian Army where he volunteered for the Polish and Russian fronts. Wounded in 1915, Kertész returned to Budapest before moving to Paris in 1925. Kertész circulated among avant-garde literary and artistic groups and embraced the deep culture of Paris between the World Wars. He also participated in the New Vision movement, based on the quick facility of the new small Leicas as well as the demand by László Moholy-Nagy of the progressive German Bauhaus school for a new visual literacy based on photography. With the rise of Hitler and the Nazis, many from the Parisian community took their discoveries to America. Kertész moved with his wife to New York in 1936 and worked there as an artist and commercial photographer for the rest of his life, with little recognition of his contributions until shortly before he died.

The 104 photographs in the exhibition are drawn from the collection of Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College, Chicago. Approximately half were published in the book *On Reading* (Grossman, New York) in 1971.



New York (fruit bowl and painting), February 25, 1951

EXHIBITION INFORMATION

Number of works:

104

Frame sizes:

16 x 20; 20 x 16 inches

Space requirements:

Approximately 350 linear feet

Tour dates:

Fall 2008 through 2010

Participation fee:

\$12,500 for a 6 to 8 week booking, plus prorated shipping fee

Educational support:

André Kertész: On Reading, W.W. Norton, 2008

(6 1/8" x 8", 68 duotone photographs, 80 pages)

André Kertész: On Reading is organized by The Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College, Chicago. The exhibition is toured by Curatorial Assistance, Pasadena, California.

All images © courtesy the Estate of André Kertész/Higher Pictures 2007

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Medici Fountain, Paris (couple on folding chairs), 1948



New York (boy at newsstand), November 1950



New York (boy eating icecream on pile of newspapers), October 12, 1944



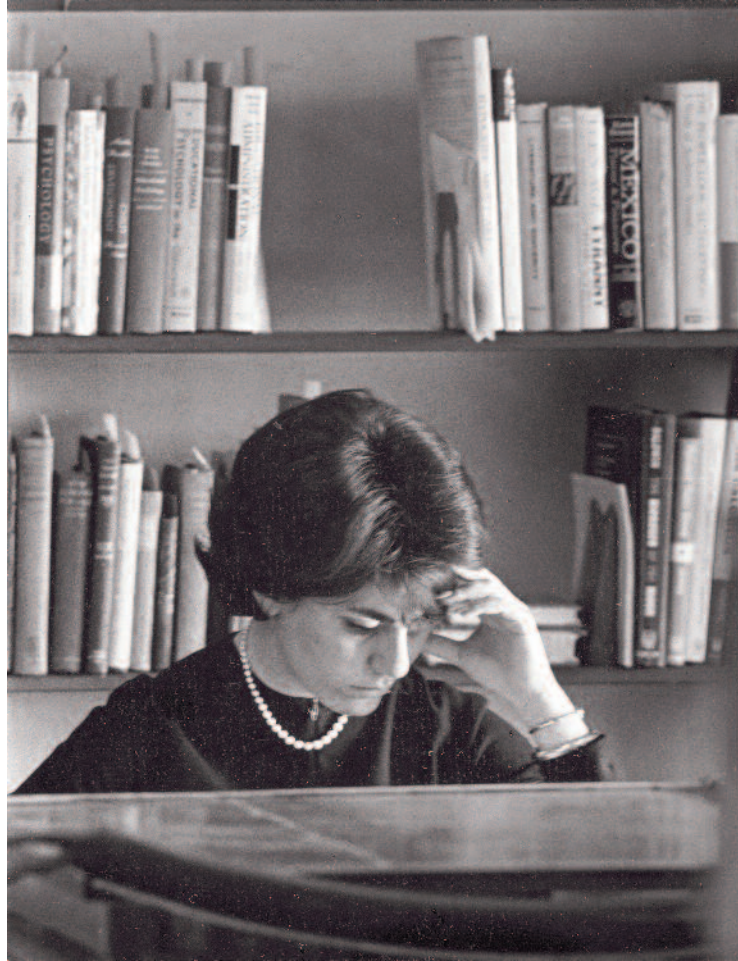
Academie Française, Paris (man on ladder reading). 1929



Esztergom, Hungary (three boys reading), 1915



Nara (readers on cummuter trains), 1968



Untitled (woman in library), November 4, 1963



Pont des Arts, Paris (man reading between trees), 1963



Second Avenue, New York (man reading in antique store), June 1969



Fourth Avenue, New York (men reading at outdoor book stall), June 4, 1959



Latin Quarter, Paris (man on rooftop balcony), 1926



Untitled (woman sunbathing on roof reading), September 21, 1964



Venice (young man reading on canal side), September 10, 1963



Venice (man reading on steps), September 21, 1963



Untitled (woman reading behind deck chairs), c. 1970



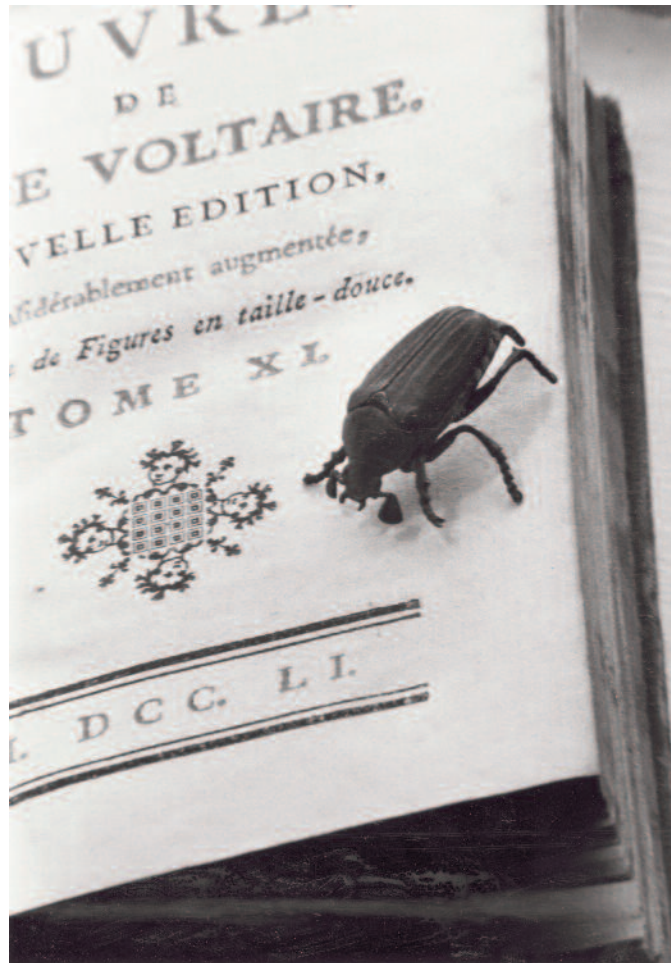
L.I. Train (woman reading newspaper), September 4, 1965



Greenwich Village, New York (book lined window), June 19, 1966



Le Havre, France (woman in window), September 1948



New York (bug and book), July 30, 1969