

TEMPO RUBATO

Xanti Schawinsky

Biography

(Based on material from "Xanti Schawinsky Foto")

- 1904 Alexander "Xanti" Schawinsky is born in Basel on March 26 as the second child of Regina Schawinsky nee Bielawska and of Benjamin Schawinsky, a Polish-Jewish fabric merchant.
- 1910-14 Attends school in Basel.
- 1915-1921 Attends the secondary school in Zurich and successfully graduates.
- 1921-23 Undergoes training at the Theodor Merrill architect's office in Cologne.
- 1923-24 College of Commercial Art in Berlin.
- 1924 Enters the state Bauhaus school of design in Weimar.
Studies with Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Lazlo Moholy-Nagy and Walter Gropius.
Helps form Bauhaus Band – radical dance/music with multi-media performance
Lighting & costume
After political attacks and financial difficulties the Weimar Bauhaus school is dissolved effective April 1st, 1925.
- 1924 Schawinsky moves to the new Bauhaus, in Dessau.
Travels to Paris and Spain. In Paris he meets Le Corbusier and Fernand Leger among others.
Graphic design becomes increasingly important aspect of his work.
Begins experimental photography.
- 1927 Neue Reklame ("New Advertising") exhibition at the Jena Art Association.
Graphic Advertising Art international exhibition as a "Bauhauser"
Stadtische Kunsthalle, Mannheim.
- 1928 Young Bauhaus Painters. One of 11 "Bauhausers" Halle Art Association.
- 1929 Metallisches Fest ("metallic party") poster design for the legendary Bauhaus Carnival
Junkers & Co., Dessau, advertising art
Gas and Water exhibition design, Berlin, industrial exhibition .
Magdeburg Municipal Architectural Engineering Authority. Head of the graphic department
- 1927-1931
Magdeburg Theatre -photo series.
- 1931 German Construction Exhibition. Invitation to cooperate in the design by Gropius.
Berlin; Persecuted as a Jew and foreigner, leaves Magdeburg for Berlin at the end of the year.
- 1932 Free-lance advertising & design projects.

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Political hostility forces Bauhaus Dessau to close.
Wohnbedarf Company, Zurich several months design work.

- 1933 Persecuted in Germany, moves to Italy.
- 1934 Advertising art for tourism and for various companies such as Motta, Illy Caffè, Cinzano. For Olivetti he creates a poster and brochure for the «M 40» typewriter as well as a shop design in Turin.
October - Invited to work with noted graphic artist and photographer Antonio Boggeri, the head of the Italian advertising Studio Boggeri, Milan, established in 1933.
On the occasion of the 12th anniversary of the Fascist revolution in Italy Schawinsky creates a propaganda poster showing Mussolini as the head of the masses.
December - Father dies of heart attack. His mother and brother Arnold move to Milan.
- 1934-35 Galleria Del Milione, Milan. X.S. exhibits paintings and organizes shows for Albers, Kandinsky, Klee & Moholy-Nagy.
Introduces Gropius to Modernist Milanese architects.
- 1935 Work with Boggeri studio and other customers.
Co-designs the Studio 42 Olivetti typewriter.
- 1936 Visits relocated brother Arnold and his mother in Paris.
London - marries Irene von Debschitz, the daughter of the co-founder and director of the teaching and experimental studio for applied and free art in Munich, the so-called Debschitz school.
Hired by Josef Albers to teach at Black Mountain College in North Carolina.
Teaches Drawing, Color Theory, Stage Studies Creates Spectrodrama: Play, Life, Illusion and Danse Macabre, experimental multi-media events, experimental photography - particularly abstract photo-grams with screens.
Creates abstract sculptures from wood and glass which describe space.
- 1938 Political discord among Black Mountain faculty leads XS to leave.
Moholy-Nagy offers teaching job at ("New Bauhaus") Institute for Design, Chicago
Moves to New York to work as exhibition and advertising artist, painter, sculptor and photographer.
- 1939 Design the Pennsylvania Pavilion with Gropius and Breuer for the New York World's Fair.
Designed North Carolina Pavilion, solo pioneers use of large photo walls and oversized figures.
Becomes a U.S. citizen.
Son Ben is born on December 28.
- 1938-39 Represented with a large number of works at the important exhibition Bauhaus 1919-1928, the Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Decides to settle in New York.
- 1940's-50's
"MAN" – in his deformation and fantastic transformation becomes his major topic in drawing, graphics, painting, and sculpture.

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“MAN” is also the object in his renewed photographic experimentation.

- 1941 The graphic series The Faces of War.
- 1942-44 Colors black-and- white photographs and uses collage techniques in a sequence of women's heads.
- 1943 Theme and Variation on a Face series of 14 works with Walter Gropius face as central motif.
- 1944 The Head Series – 15 graphite drawings of heads composed from assembled images of objects
Member of ex-patriot arts community, chess partner of Duchamp, contributes Chess Table.
Assemblage and photos to The Imagery of Chess exhibition,
Julien Levy Gallery December 1944 – January 1945
“New York” becomes a subject of his photography for the first time.
- 1943-46 Teaches graphic design at the City College of New York.
- 1950 Now active chiefly as a painter, his work moves toward an abstract form language.
- 1950-54 Teaches various art classes at New York University.
During the next years exhibitions in New York and across the U.S. follow.
- 1961 Exhibits widely in central Europe.
- 1962 Designs stage sets and costumes for Serge Prokowjefs ballet The Flower of Stone produced and choreographed by Wazlaw Orli kowsky at the Stadttheater Basel.
Is divorced from Irene.
- 1963 Starts the Eclipse painting series in which pictorial ideas of 1937/41 are explored in a new medium.
Marries Gisela Hatzky on December 6 in New York.
- 1964 Produces Smoke pictures and books by letting smoke act on photosensitive paper.
Retrospective of Painting: 1954 to 1964. La Galleria Colonna, Florence Nov. 14 – Dec. 14.
- 1966 Builds studio - home on the Italian side of Lake Maggiore in Oggebbio/Lusio.
- 1968 Represented at the Stuttgart exhibition 50 Years Bauhaus.
- 1971 Schawinsky:Bauhaus Master. Galleria Blu, Milan.
- 1972 Schawinsky:Bauhaus Master. Galleria Corsini.
- 1973 Xanti Schawinsky. Galleria Spazzapan. Stresa, Italy
- 1974 Xanti Schawinsky. Galleria Spazzapan. Stresa, Italy.

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- 1975 Major Schawinsky exhibiton in the Galleria d'arte moderna in Bologna.
- 1978 Represented at the exhibition The Experimental Photo in Germany 1918-1940, Munich and other photography exhibitions.
- 1979 Dies on September 11 in Locarno.

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Exhibition History

(Compiled from various exhibition catalogues and brochures)

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 1926 Kunsthalle, Dessau
- 1935 Galleria del Milione, Milan
- 1936 Black Mountain College, North Carolina
- 1942 Harvard University, Cambridge
Institute of Design, Chicago
A-D Gallery, New York
- 1953 Aspen International Design Conference, Colorado
Hugo Gallery, New York
- 1954 Paintings by Xanti Schawinsky. The Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield, Massachusetts. April 1- 30,
(Brochure with essay by Alexander Dorner)
Xanti Schawinsky. Raymond & Raymond Galleries. Beverly Hills, California, October 14 - 30.
(Brochure with essay by Alexander Dorner)
Symington Art Galleries, Hamilton, Massachusetts
- 1955 Moskin Gallery, New York
Todes Gallery, Hubbard Woods
- 1956 Gallerie Don Hatch, Caracas
- 1957 The Saginaw Museum, Michigan
The Sandoz Show, Dallas, TX & Boston
- 1958 Bodley Gallery, New York
Herman Miller, New York
Wittenborn Gallery, New York
Highgate Gallery, Montclair, NJ
- 1959 Woodward Gallery, New York

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- 1961 Suzanne Bollag Galerie, Zurich
- 1962 Galerie Muensterberg, Basel
Interior Galerie, Frankfurt
- 1963 Alexander Lolas Gallery, New York
Bollag Galerie, Zurich
Messelhaus, Darmstadt
Landesmuseum, Wiesbaden
Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zurich
- 1964 Retrospective of Painting: 1954 to 1964. La Galleria Colonna, Florence, Nov. 14 – Dec. 14.
Distelheim Galleries, Chicago
Haus der Guten Form, Stuttgart
- 1968 Herman Miller, Basel
Ireland House, New York
- 1969 Galleria Blu, Milan
- 1971 Schawinsky: Bauhaus Master. Galleria Blu, Milan
Galleria Jole Mazzontani, Cenero, Italy
- 1972 Schawinsky: Bauhaus Master. Galleria Corsini.
Galerie Luise. Cologne
- 1973 Xanti Schawinsky. Galleria Spazzapan. Stresa, Italy
Suzanne Bollag Galerie, Zurich
Benevy Gallery, New York
- 1974 Xanti Schawinsky. Galleria Spazzapan. Stresa, Italy
Galerie Muensterberg, Basel
Suzanne Bollag Galerie, Zurich
- 1975 Schawinsky, Galleria d'arte moderna, Bologna
- 2010 Xanti Schawinsky, Beyond Bauhaus, Faces of War, Broadway 1602, New York,
January 9 – February 19, 2010
- 2014 Xanti Schawinsky: Eclipse, Broadway 1602, New York, September 16 – December 20, 2014
Xanti Schawinsky: Head Drawings and Faces of War, The Drawing Center, New York,
September 19 – December 14, 2014 (curated by Brett Littman)
- 2015 Xanti Schawinsky, Retrospective, Migros Museum, Zurich, Switzerland
(Curated by Raphael Gygax), cat.

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Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1923 Preassische Kunst-Academie, Berlin
- 1925 Staatliche Kunsthalle, Mannheim
- 1927 Neue Reklame ("New Advertising") Jena Art Association
Graphic Advertising Art Stadtische Kunsthalle, Mannheim
International Theater Aussellung, Madgeburg
- 1928 Young Bauhaus Painters. Halle Art Association
Kunsthalle, Basel
Kunstmuseum, Stuttgart
Hallescher, Kunstverein
- 1929 Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin
Anhalt Landesmuseum, Dessau
- 1938 Rockefeller Center, New York
Plexiglas Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art, New York ("award" cited in Galerie Blu catalog)
Bauhaus 1919-1928, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1941 Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1943 Julien Levy Gallery. New York
- 1944-45 The Imagery of Chess, Julien Levy Gallery
Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1951 Albright Gallery, Buffalo, NY
Bennington College, Vermont
Pratt Institute, New York
- 1953 The Whitney Museum of Art, New York
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1954 Knoll Associates, New York, Chicago, Dallas, Toronto, San Francisco, Miami, Washington, D.C.
- 1956 Berkshire Art Association, Great Barrington, Massachusetts
- 1957 Biennial San Paulo, Brazil
Museo di Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro
- 1960 Helmhaus, Zurich
P.S. 57, New York
- 1961 Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zurich
Jewish Welfare Fund, New York

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- Highgate Gallery, Montclair, NJ
- 1962 Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zurich
- 1963 P.V.I. Gallery, New York
- 1965 Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1968 50 Years of the Bauhaus, National Gallery, London;
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Kunstverein, Stuttgart
- 1969 Rose Fried Gallery. New York.
Museum of the Art Institute of Chicago
Museum of Arte Moderne, Paris
- 1970-71 Bauhaus Survey. Pasadena, CA., Buenos Aires, Tokyo
- 1971 Museo Poldi Pezzoi, Milan
- 1974 Galleria Pourquoi Pas. Torino
- 1978 The Experimental Photo in Germany 1918-1940, Munich
- 2010 Room Divider, Wilkinson Gallery, London, July 2 – August 15, 2010 (curated by Michael Bracewell)
- 2011 Germany Is Your America, Broadway 1602, New York, September 13 – December 15, 2011
(curated by Anke Kempkes and Michael Bracewell)
- 2014 Human Space-Machine. Stage Experiments at the Bauhaus, December 6, 2013 – April 21, 2014,
Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau, Dessau, Germany (curated by Torsten Blume and Christian Hiller;
International curators: Milena Hoegsberg, and Lars Morch Finborud (Oslo); Jienne Liu (Korea))
travelled to, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Høvikodden, Norway (May 22 – August
31, 2014)
- 2015 Human Space-Machine. Stage Experiments at the Bauhaus, National Museum of Contemporary
Art, Seoul, Korea, November 11, 2014 – February 2015
- Leap Before You Look: Black Mountain College 1933-1957, ICA Boston, Massachusetts (curated
by Helen Molesworth); travelling to the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA (2016) and the
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX (2016), cat.

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