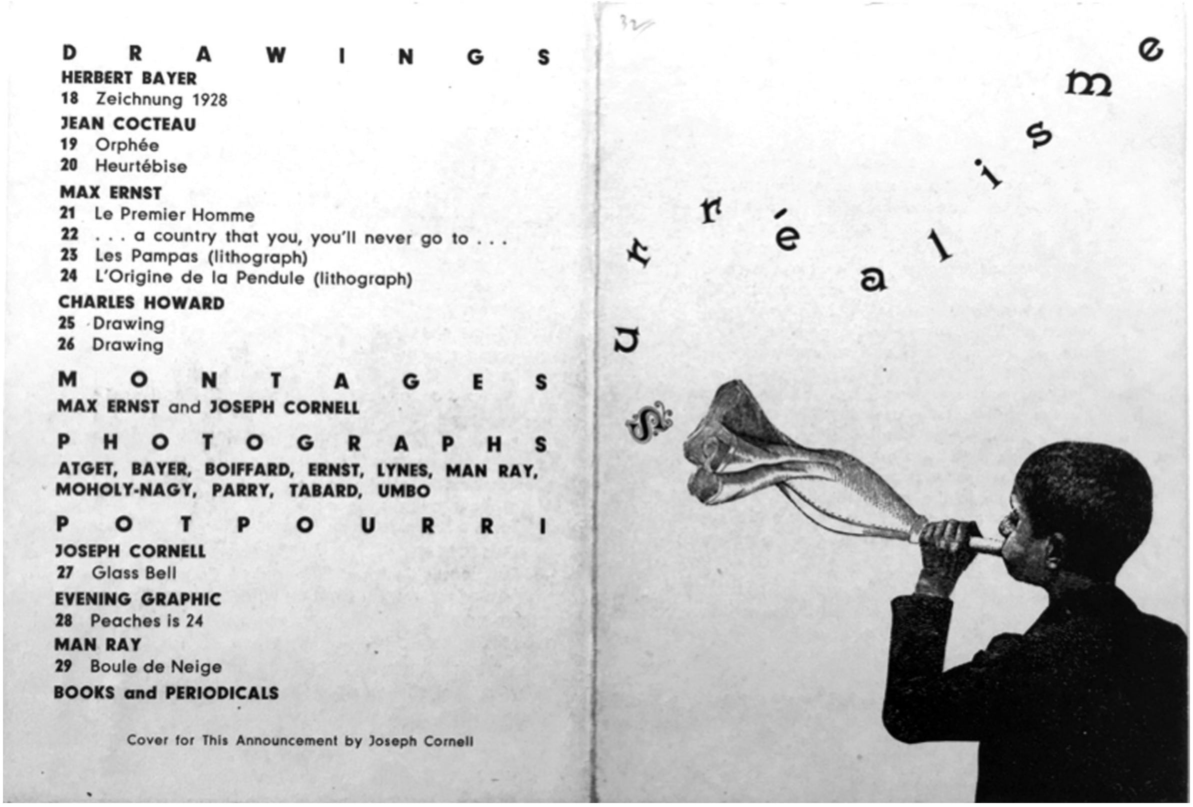

DRAWINGS

HERBERT BAYER
18 Zeichnung 1928

JEAN COCTEAU
19 Orphée
20 Heurtébise

MAX ERNST
21 Le Premier Homme
22 . . . a country that you, you'll never go to . . .
23 Les Pampas (lithograph)
24 L'Origine de la Pendule (lithograph)

CHARLES HOWARD
25 Drawing
26 Drawing

MONTAGES

MAX ERNST and JOSEPH CORNELL

PHOTOGRAPHS

ATGET, BAYER, BOIFFARD, ERNST, LYNES, MAN RAY, MOHOLY-NAGY, PARRY, TABARD, UMBO

POTPOURRI

JOSEPH CORNELL
27 Glass Bell

EVENING GRAPHIC
28 Peaches is 24

MAN RAY
29 Boule de Neige

BOOKS and PERIODICALS

Cover for This Announcement by Joseph Cornell

118 Announcement for the surrealist exhibition at the Julien Levy Gallery in 1932, cover illustration by Joseph Cornell. Mr. and Mrs. Allan C. Balch Art Research Library, Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Julien Levy: Progressive Dealer or Dealer of Progressives?

Anne Helmreich

This essay investigates whether Julien Levy, the gallerist responsible for many of the initial commercial exhibitions of surrealist artists in the United States, was a progressive dealer—that is, a dealer who created new strategies and practices to bring modern art to the marketplace—or whether he was a dealer who used well-established strategies and practices to bring new forms of art forward. The binary embedded in this question is both false, in that rarely do a dealer's identity and practices occupy just one end of the continuum described here, and necessary, as a means by which to critically approach the roles taken by Levy and to resist the hagiography that so often surrounds dealers who have championed avant-garde art well ahead of broader market trends.[1] This question is significant not only for the study of Levy and surrealism, but also for advancing our understanding of the historical formation of the art market, which has often been occluded by myths and other decoys, many of which have been generated by actors within the market themselves. Here, I am concerned with Levy's tenure as the owner and director of an art gallery that carried his name, making the man synonymous with his business—a conflation that Levy eagerly facilitated.

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[1] This tendency emerges from two trends in secondary literature—first, a preoccupation with retelling intriguing "stories" associated with the art market, recounted in texts such as Laura de Coppet and Alan Jones, *The Art Dealers* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1984), which includes the following observation: "Dealing art requires an engaging personality as well as instinct, and we found personality in abundance" (see p. 12); and second, that much of the history of art dealers has been written by dealers themselves, with all the biases that come from firsthand narration and a lack of critical perspective as to causality, as in the case of Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, who explained to the interviewer Francis Crémieux, "I recently realized that, fundamentally, it is great painters who create great art dealers. Each great period of painting has had its dealer. There was Durand-Ruel for the impressionists. There was Vollard for those who came afterwards." Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler with Francis Crémieux, *My Galleries and Painters*, trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Viking Press, 1961), p. 32.

The dealer and the gallery

Julien Levy is of central concern to a project addressing how surrealism unfolded in the United States, given the significant leverage that mediating agents such as dealers, collectors, and museum professionals and their boards deployed in introducing the artists and the aesthetics associated with this movement into a North American context. Levy was a key node in a network that connected many European artists to opportunities in the United States and bound together many US-based supporters of the movement, including curators and patrons.[2] Architect Philip Johnson, who first met Levy through the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art, recalled that "Julien went on to Surrealism, and he carried the flag until the Museum of Modern Art caught on."[3] Levy founded the Julien Levy Gallery at 602 Madison Avenue, New York City, in 1931. In January 1932, immediately on the heels of the surrealist display "Newer Super-Realism" held at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut, the young dealer staged an exhibition titled "Surréalisme," featuring work by Joseph Cornell (who designed the exhibition announcement), Salvador Dalí, and Max Ernst, as well as Eugène Atget, Herbert Bayer, Man Ray, and Lászlό Moholy-Nagy (fig. 118).[4] This show not only defined a constellation of artists who would henceforth carry the label of "surrealist" in the US context, but also laid the foundation for ongoing relationships for the dealer. Levy continued to show many of these artists in group and solo shows, and also organized the first New York presentations of artists such as Leonor

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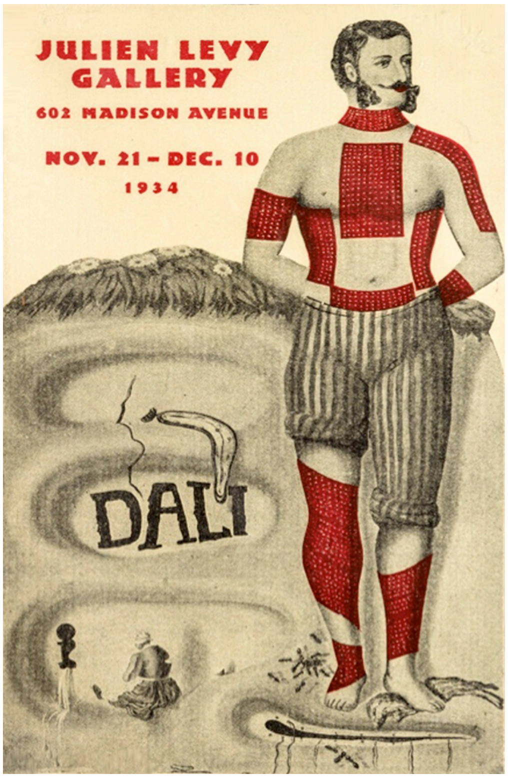
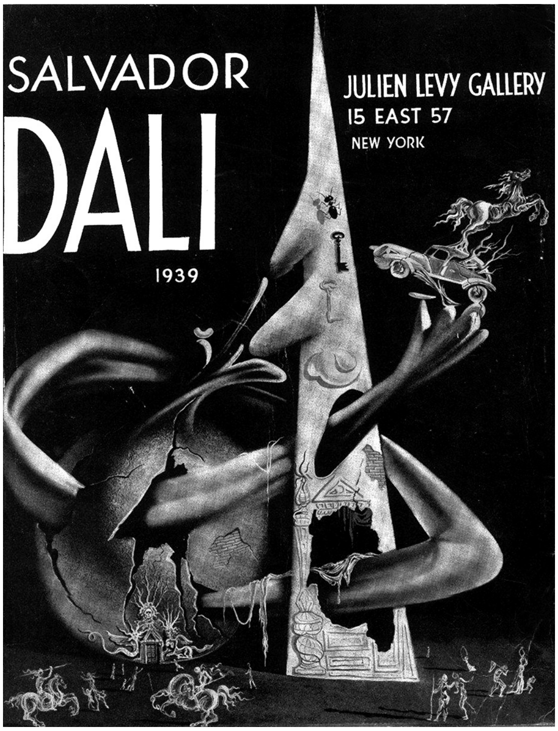
[2] The biography presented here is drawn largely from Levy's autobiography, Julien Levy, *Memoir of an Art Gallery* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1977); Levy's interview with Paul Cummings (May 30, 1975), transcribed by Deborah M. Gill, held in the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution; and the recent studies, Ingrid Schaffner and Lisa Jacobs, eds., *Julien Levy: Portrait of an Art Gallery* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998); Katherine Ware and Peter Barberie, eds., *Dreaming in Black and White. Photography at the Julien Levy Gallery* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); and Gaëlle Morel, "Julien Levy. A Market-Maker, and Photography," *Études photographiques*, no. 21 (December 2007), pp. 6–29. For a timeline of key exhibitions associated with surrealism in the United States, see Marshall N. Price, "Chronology of Surrealism in the United States," in Isabelle Dervaux, ed., *Surrealism USA* (New York: National Academy Museum, 2005), pp. 172–185.

[3] Lisa Jacobs, "Reminiscences," in Schaffner and Jacobs, *Julien Levy* (note 2), p. 172.

[4] In a letter of December 28, 1931, to Herbert Bayer, Levy explained his initial intentions: "I had planned an exhibition of paintings and montages by Max Ernst for January, but after receiving your letter I have decided to rearrange this and put on a group show illustrating the modern tendancies [*sic*] in the 'surrealiste' manner and including some of your drawings and watercolors in the front room. The group will be Max Ernst, Picasso, Bayer, and probably an American named Charles Howard. In the back room will be a group of modern photographs illustrating the same tendancy [*sic*]. I think this will make one of the most exciting shows in New York this season, and I hope it will make sales in spite of bad times. My gallery is so much larger than I originally planned that there will be plenty of room for a big exhibition." Box 3, Folder 8 (Herbert Bayer), Julien Levy Gallery Records, Philadelphia Museum of Art Archives (hereafter cited as Levy Gallery Records, PMAA).



119 Announcement for an exhibition of paintings by Salvador Dalí at the Julien Levy Gallery, 1934. Mr. and Mrs. Allan C. Balch Art Research Library, Los Angeles, Los Angeles Museum of Art.



120 Cover of the catalogue for the Salvador Dalí exhibition, 1939. Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute.

Fini, Frida Kahlo, and René Magritte. For example, in November 1932 he organized Max Ernst's first solo exhibition in the United States, during which he held a screening of Dalí and Luis Buñuel's film *Un Chien andalou* (1929) as part of his project to promote photography and cinema as fine art. In 1934 and 1939 he held exhibitions of the work of Dalí; the latter show was accompanied by a catalogue that provided a platform for the artist to explain (or obscure) his paranoiac pictures (figs. 119 and 120).

In 1937 Levy moved to 15 East Fifty-Seventh Street and restructured the finances of the gallery, while continuing his program of contemporary American and European art that encompassed the surrealist circle as well as artists he dubbed "modern Romantics," who included Eugene Berman, Pavel Tchelitchew, and Leonid Berman. In parallel, he advanced his project to introduce new media into the fine arts context and to explore whether film could become a commodity in the gallery context—at the same time that MoMA was putting together its

Film Library (founded in 1935) and, as noted by media historian Bill Mikulak, was beginning to consider cartoons as worthy of being taken "seriously as an art form," and also that Walt Disney was facilitating the sale of cels used to produce animated films.[5] In March 1939 Levy staged simultaneous exhibitions of works by Dalí and original watercolors used for Disney's cartoon *Ferdinand the Bull*, which was released in 1938.

In 1941, Levy explored the market on the West Coast, working in collaboration with dealer Howard Putzel, who had become affiliated with Peggy Guggenheim in the late 1930s. The archive of Levy's correspondence held by the Philadelphia Museum of Art suggests that the two men began corresponding in 1934.[6] Putzel shared Levy's enthusiasm for the art of Dalí and Ernst, and persuaded the New York dealer of the potential of first San Francisco, then Los Angeles, as promising markets.[7] As a result, Putzel organized an exhibition of Ernst's work on behalf of Levy at the Stanley Rose Bookshop and Gallery in Hollywood in 1935.[8] Six years later, Levy took his exhibitions to the West Coast, presenting a surrealist show followed by a neo-Romantic collection at the Courvoisier Galleries in San Francisco, which had built a reputation for showing original artworks from Disney animations. In Los Angeles, he briefly assembled a series of exhibitions featuring the surrealists, including Dalí and Tamara de Lempicka, whose husband Baron Kuffner financed the West Coast venture.

Back in New York, Levy relocated the gallery to 11 East Fifty-Seventh Street in 1942 and, during his brief military service, formed a partnership with the Durlacher Brothers firm, whose director Kirk Askew, a former Harvard classmate, managed his gallery for him.[9] After a year, Levy took up the reins of the business again, moving to 42 East Fifty-Seventh Street and continuing his focus on contemporary American and European art, and his interest in surrealist artists. His exhibitions included "Through the Big End of the Opera Glass," held in December 1943, featuring works by Joseph Cornell and Marcel Duchamp, and the first solo show of Dorothea Tanning in April 1944. The gallery closed in 1949; the last recorded exhibition was devoted to the work of American artist David Hare, whose sculptures had also been shown at Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century and the Hugo Gallery in New York.

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[5] Bill Mikulak, "Mickey Meets Mondrian. Cartoons Enter the Museum of Modern Art," *Cinema Journal*, no. 3 (Spring 1997), pp. 56, 57, 66. See also Bill Mikulak, "Disney and the Art World. The Early Years," in Maureen Furniss, ed., *Animation. Art and Industry* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), pp. 111–130.

[6] Box 21, Folder 33 (Howard Putzel), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[7] Letter from Howard Putzel to Julien Levy, January 7, 1935, and May 7, 1935, Box 21, Folder 33 (Howard Putzel), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[8] Letter from Putzel to Levy, May 31, 1935 (written on "Stanley Rose Bookshop and Gallery" stationery), Box 21, Folder 33 (Howard Putzel), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[9] Letter from Levy to R. Kirk Askew, August 8, 1942, Box 2, F. 10 (Correspondence File L), Durlacher Bros. Records, Getty Research Institute, Getty Center, Los Angeles.

Julien Levy's reputation and formation

While this range of activities gives some sense of Julien Levy's profile, we can gain more insight into his reputation by reviewing how he was regarded by his peers. Particularly revelatory is a letter written to Levy by the American collector Duncan Phillips in 1932, one year after Levy opened his gallery. In it, Phillips expresses his thanks to Levy for lending a painting by Eugene Berman to his museum, and recalls with pleasure a recent visit to Levy's gallery during which he was able to see works by Salvador Dalí and other surrealists. Phillips ends by complimenting Levy: "[W]hat a fortunate thing that men of your culture and artistic sensibilities are now dealers instead of the older commercial type."[10]

Phillips appears to be pointing to Levy's training and artistic formation which contrasted with the way in which many dealers of the previous generation, such as Roland Knoedler, had mastered the business through on-the-job training with mentors (fostered by family connections) that led to positions of increasing responsibility. Levy, born in New York, had studied at Harvard University in the mid-1920s, focusing first on literature, then art, with the encouragement of Paul J. Sachs, an investment banker and collector turned museum professional.[11] Steve Watson, in his contribution to Schaffner's and Jacobs's study of Levy's gallery, underscores the links between Levy's aesthetics and accomplishments and this Harvard circle, which also included A. Everett "Chick" Austin Jr., who went on to become the director of the Wadsworth Atheneum.[12]

Central to Levy's Harvard experience was his participation in Sachs's pioneering "museum course," which nurtured a notable list of protégés, including Alfred H. Barr Jr., Richard Howland, and John Walker. As part of his teaching program, Sachs encouraged his students to learn from art dealers, as well as collectors, scholars, and museum professionals. As Sachs's assistant Agnes Mongan recalled, "Sachs made us understand very clearly that [dealers] were people to be respected."[13] Art historian and museum professional Richard Howland, in his class notes from 1932, transcribed Sachs's description of art dealer Joseph Brummer as a "man of integrity, knowledge … [who] above all has the ability to see through an object and recognize what is underneath … a great connoisseur, the type of dealer who is extremely rare, from whom one can learn a great deal."[14] The same year, in 1932, students in the program visited the dealers/commercial firms Duveen Brothers and Wildenstein & Co. as part of a class tour of important museums and collectors in Philadelphia and New York.

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[10] Letter from Duncan Phillips to Levy, February 23, 1932, Box 21, Folder 18 (Phillips Memorial Gallery), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[11] Levy, *Memoir of an Art Gallery* (note 2), pp. 9–11.

[12] Steve Watson, "Julien Levy. Exhibitionist and Harvard Modernist," in Schaffner and Jacobs, *Julien Levy* (note 2), pp. 80–95.

[13] Sally Anne Duncan, "Harvard's 'Museum Course' and the Making of America's Museum Profession," in *Archives of American Art Journal*, no. 1/2 (2002), p. 12. See also Sally Anne Duncan and Andrew McClellan, *The Art of Curating. Paul J. Sachs and the Museum Course at Harvard* (Los

Another distinctive aspect of this course was its object-based approach, which included a hands-on component designed to help the young scholars recognize the role and significance of medium. This approach suited Levy, who was also deeply engaged with photography, experimenting with the medium in a research laboratory at Harvard.[15] While a student, Levy also developed an interest in film, fostered by art historian Chandler Post. The Harvard network sustained Levy throughout his career—for example, he assisted Chick Austin in organizing the 1931 surrealist exhibition at the Wadsworth Atheneum, which preceded his own commercial gallery show on the same theme. After closing in New York, Levy's surrealist exhibition traveled to Harvard, where it was shown at the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art, which had been founded in 1929 by Lincoln Kirstein, Edward Warburg, and John Walker. Warburg was also a patron of Levy's gallery, purchasing books on photography, including two that Levy described as "copies of the *La revue surréaliste* reproducing photographs by Atget, without an article, yet proving he was discovered and adopted by the Surréalistes [*sic*] and his influence on them."[16] Levy, looking back on his career in a 1975 interview, acknowledged that by the time he opened his gallery, "I knew a whole crowd of museum directors … which may have been a help."[17]

As Levy's biographer Carolyn Burke also points out, another important network that served his professional development was located in Paris.[18] Julien Levy was introduced to this network through a sequence of relationships triggered by his father Edgar A. Levy. Levy senior was a real estate developer in New York and an occasional art collector. The dealer, in his autobiography, claims that in 1927 he persuaded his father to acquire Brancusi's marble *Bird in Space* then on display at the

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Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2018).

[14] Duncan, "Harvard's 'Museum Course'" (note 13), p. 12.

[15] Levy, *Memoir of an Art Gallery* (note 2), p. 11.

[16] Letters from Levy to Edward Warburg, January 28, 1932, and February 25, 1932, Box 26, Folder 24 (Edward Warburg), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[17] Cummings interview with Levy, 1975 (note 2), p. 4.

[18] Carolyn Burke, "Loy-alism. Julien Levy's Kinship with Mina Loy," in Schaffner and Jacobs, *Julien Levy* (note 2), pp. 61–79.

Brummer Galleries in New York in an exhibition curated by Marcel Duchamp.[19] Through this intervention Levy became acquainted with Duchamp, who went on to invite the young man to come to Paris to meet with Man Ray because of Julien's interest in experimental film, which had been nurtured at Harvard. This trip to Paris was decisive for Levy as there he met the avant-garde figure Mina Loy, who at the time was being subsidized by Peggy Guggenheim to operate a lampshade and novelty business, as well as Loy's daughter and business manager Joella, whom he married the same year. When Levy decided to open an art gallery four years later, he would activate and reinvest in the social and artistic network formed on that first visit to Paris; the ties fostered through Loy and her circle would remain a pivotal node in his network.

Upon Levy's return to the United States, he initially worked in his father's business, then took a position with the Weyhe Gallery and Bookstore, which had been founded in 1919 by German book dealer Erhard Weyhe. The gallery focused on modern and contemporary prints and drawings. While with Weyhe, Levy organized photography exhibitions, including a 1930 show of the work of Eugène Atget, whom he had met earlier in Paris through Man Ray. The exhibition was coordinated to coincide with the release of the monograph *Atget, Photographe de Paris* (1930), which Levy had persuaded Weyhe to publish. Levy also assembled an exhibition of the work of Berenice Abbott, who had rescued Atget's archive after his death in 1927.

In 1931, Julien and Joella Levy decided to establish an art gallery using funds left to him from his mother. In his autobiography, Levy described it as an opportunity to bring together his interests in "art, cinema, and photography."[20] The press release announcing the gallery's opening explained that "[T]he gallery plans to present a series of interesting exhibitions of paintings, drawings, and sculpture, but, believing it to be high time that photography as an art be given the sanction of a gallery, will in particular devote itself to and specialise in photography."[21] Through this same vehicle, Levy also explained that the inaugural exhibition "American Photography Retrospective" had been put together "in cooperation with Alfred Stieglitz."[22] By this time, Stieglitz had closed his Gallery 291; in 1925 he opened a new venture, The Intimate Gallery, which brought forward the work of a small circle of contemporary American painters and photographers, including Georgia O'Keeffe, Arthur Dove, and Paul Strand. Levy visited The Intimate Gallery as well as its successor space, An American Place, which Stieglitz opened in 1929, and in his autobiography went as far as to describe Stieglitz as his self-assigned "godfather."[23] As recent scholarship has clearly established, Levy played a critically important role in promoting photography as a fine art, even though his photographic sales were meager.[24]

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[19] Levy, *Memoir of an Art Gallery* (note 2), pp. 18–19. The Brancusi sculpture was first owned by the modernist collector John Quinn, who purchased it directly from the artist; upon Quinn's death, it was acquired by the Brummer Gallery. Levy was cognizant of the significance of this provenance. The work is now held in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Accession no. 1996.403.7ab).

[20] Levy, *Memoir of an Art Gallery* (note 2), p. 46.

[21] Box 33, Folder 8 (Press Releases), *ca.* November 1931, Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[22] Ibid.

For his second exhibition, Levy turned to painting, specifically the work of Italian artist Massimo Campigli, presenting his first solo show in the United States. To organize the exhibition, Levy returned to Paris. In his autobiography he claims that when he and Joella sailed to Europe in summer 1931, "[W]e had no notion of where to buy paintings. An advertisement in a magazine led me to the gallery of Jeanne Bucher."[25] Levy's anecdote warrants further scrutiny, and may be an example of the dealer's own mythmaking, for although Bucher did not make her first visit to the United States until 1935, she had already established a connection, via the journal *Cahiers d'art*, to the Weyhe bookstore where Levy had worked.[26] Bucher had launched her art business in 1925 with a library/gallery installed in Pierre Chareau's interior design store. Bucher represented many of the artists associated with cubism, including Picasso. She was also an art publisher, and in 1926 issued Max Ernst's portfolio of collotypes after frottage, titled *Natural History*. In 1929, she opened her own space next door at 5 rue du Cherche-Midi, where she continued to promote artists such as Picasso, Braque, Gris, and Léger, until the Depression finally forced her to sell the gallery in 1932. She went on to open a second gallery, on the boulevard du Montparnasse in 1935 in collaboration with Marie Cuttoli, which lasted until 1939 when France was drawn into war with Nazi Germany.

For this first painting show, Bucher consigned Campigli's work to the American dealer, and Levy also sought out works by the painter in American collections, such as that of Maude and Chester Dale—a strategic means of reassuring potential buyers of the validity of their choice, as it was shared by prominent collectors. The Levy archive at the Philadelphia Museum of Art shows that Bucher and Levy continued to work together throughout the 1930s.[27] In addition, according to Levy,

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[23] Levy, *Memoir of an Art Gallery* (note 2), p. 17. For more on Stieglitz's galleries, see Sarah Greenough, *Modern Art and America. Alfred Stieglitz and His New York Galleries* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 2000).

[24] Morel, "Julien Levy" (note 2).

[25] Levy, *Memoir of an Art Gallery* (note 2), p. 59.

[26] Christian Derouet, "A New York," in Christian Derouet, ed., *Jeanne Bucher, Une galerie d'avant-garde 1925–1946. De Max Ernest à de Staël* (Strasbourg: Musées de la Ville de Strasbourg, 1994), p. 160.

[27] Box 14, Folder 2 (Galerie Jeanne Bucher), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

Bucher "furnished us with an introduction to Max Ernst," which would become a relationship of key importance given that Ernst's first solo show in the United States was held at Levy's gallery.[28]

On this same trip to Europe in 1931, Levy met dealer Pierre Colle, who had opened the Galerie Pierre Colle the previous year. In his autobiography, Levy describes Colle as "a close associate of mine, quite like a Paris partner, as I was to be his unofficial partner in New York."[29] At this time, Colle was working closely with Salvador Dalí, and at the Parisian gallery Levy saw his painting *The Persistence of Memory* (1931), which he acquired. This painting went on to play a starring role in the Wadsworth Atheneum surrealist exhibition as well as Levy's own surrealist show.

Even though Levy occasionally reached out to other dealers, as in the case of Bucher, Colle, and Stieglitz, who clearly had a desirable genealogy as well as access to key artists, in his writings he generally takes the position of a self-made man, striking out on his own or relying on his personal ties to artists, including a good-natured willingness to drink and carouse alongside them. In his memoirs he recounts that photographer Lee Miller "introduced me to the salons of what was then *tout Paris* [and] showed no hesitation when I led her into some of the toughest night dives."[30] He states that when making the Atlantic crossing to Europe in 1936, he shocked his fellow dealer Étienne Bignou by choosing not to travel first class, like their clients. In this passage, Levy further burnishes his legend as a solo operator with a tendency toward bohemianism by asking himself why he did not avail himself of first class travel: "[W]hy did I not stay in this friendly and upholstered atmosphere? Why did I negate all the connections and advantages that should have kept me safe? I thought, 'I must change patterns, find new patterns for the gallery—go far afield.'"[31] This mythmaking, which largely places Levy as the central character in his own narrative, is shorn of context and the ways in which he was able to leverage a succession of networks.

While the field would benefit from further research into Levy's roster of exhibitions and the relationships with artists, collectors, and other dealers he drew upon to realize them, at this juncture in my argument I will return instead to perceptions of the dealer held by his contemporaries, focusing on Duncan Phillips' description of the dealer, written one year after the gallery had opened: "What a fortunate thing that men of your culture and artistic sensibilities are now dealers instead of the older commercial type."[32] Levy's embeddedness within what cultural historian Steve Watson has described as the circle of the "Harvard Modernists,"[33] allied with his family's connections, bolstered his reputation as a cultured man with an artistic sensibility. But Levy's commercial ties should not be overlooked. His gallery project grew directly out of his work for the Weyhe Gallery and relied heavily on his business ties and agreements forged with other dealers, as evidenced in his gallery inventories and correspondence. Therefore, rather than perceive Levy as anti-commercial—that is, as repudiating the marketplace and the commodification of art, as Phillips' quote might suggest—we should see him as part of a wave of dealers that dates back to at least the end of the nineteenth century, who integrated the selling of art with the cultivation of expertise and whose possession of specialized knowledge allowed, and indeed encouraged, them to frequently cross over between the commercial art world, the scholarly world of the emerging discipline of art history, and the museum world.[34]

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[28] Levy, *Memoir of an Art Gallery* (note 2), p. 64.

[29] Ibid., p. 70. Further research is needed on the history of Pierre Colle as a dealer. For a brief overview, see *Dior. Le Bal des artistes*, Musée Christian Dior, ed., exh. cat., Granville Musée Christian Dior (Versailles: Artlys, 2011), pp. 32–33. Further research is also needed to ascertain how and why Levy relied so heavily on Bucher and Colle, and did not turn to other potential Paris-based dealers, such as Pierre Loeb (Galerie Pierre), Camille Goemans (Galerie Goemans), and Christian Zervos (Galerie des Cahiers d'Art), whose names are not indexed in the Levy correspondence held at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

[30] Levy, *Memoir of an Art Gallery* (note 2), p. 122.

[31] Ibid., p. 161.

Levy cemented his reputation as an expert in surrealism by publishing a monograph on the subject in 1936, written very much in the style of a surrealist manifesto.[35] This was a striking way for the dealer to establish his bona fides—for the artists, it demonstrated a sympathetic understanding of, and even participation in, their circle by adopting their complex visual and rhetorical tactics; for those outside this circle, it positioned the dealer as a unique interlocutor.

Gallery practice: Spaces, exhibitions, and networks supporting surrealism

Launching an art gallery in 1931 was an act of bravery considering the context of the Great Depression, which had been triggered in part by Black Tuesday, the crash of the United States Stock Market on October 29, 1929. By 1931, the crisis had become international, precipitated by the declining productivity of the American economy and waves of bank failures that extended from the United States to Europe. Levy complained about market conditions to Jeanne Bucher in February 1932, "I will never make money on Campigli in such a bad year. Really, you have no idea how things are going wrong here. We cannot seem to get started."[36] The same month he wrote to Herbert Bayer, "[O]ur Surréaliste Exhibition was a great success, the most successful of all our exhibitions. There were crowds of people here every day. The notices in the press were both numerous and laudatory."[37] Here, Levy equates success with attendance figures and critical reception. Yet he also notes in his letter to Bayer, "Unfortunately, even though people came in large numbers, they felt, in this terrible season, unable to spend anything. From the show I sold practically nothing, merely some photographs, and a great many of the Surréaliste magazines."[38] This report would have come as no surprise to Bayer, for Levy, when describing his plans in November, had already asked Bayer to drop the price of his works, suggesting to offer "the watercolors from fifty to seventy-five dollars each, and the drawings at thirty-five dollars each,"[39] adding in a December letter that "times are so confused and depressed here, and getting worse every day, that it is difficult to know how to handle pictures, and the more expensive the more difficult."[40] It is clear from this letter that Levy believed that "a group show illustrating the modern tendancies [*sic*] in the 'surrealiste' manner" would be more successful than his original plans for a solo show by Max Ernst.[41] His intent appears to have been to create a sensation, which was more achievable through a group effort.

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[32] Letter from Duncan Phillips to Levy, 23 February 23, 1932 (note 10).

[33] Watson, "Julien Levy" (note 12), p. 80.

[34] For more on the professionalization of art dealing, see Anne Helmreich, "David Croal Thomson. The Professionalization of Art Dealing in an Expanding Field," The Getty Research Journal, no. 5 (2013), pp. 89–100.

[35] Julien Levy, *Surrealism* (New York: Black Sun Press), 1936.

It did not help that Levy faced considerable competition in the New York market for modern European and American art. Several firms that had been founded in the nineteenth century to promote American art, such as the American Art Association, the Babcock Galleries, and the Macbeth Galleries, were still quite robust. As already noted, the Weyhe Gallery focused on prints and drawings, as did Kennedy & Company. A number of Paris-based firms also had branches in New York City, including the Bignou Gallery, founded by Étienne Bignou, who served as the agent for American collectors Chester Dale and Albert Barnes; the Brummer Gallery, which handled a wide range of material from medieval to modern art; the Durand-Ruel Gallery, founded by Paul Durand-Ruel;

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[36] Letter from Levy to Jeanne Bucher, February 10, 1932, Box 14, Folder 2 (Galerie Jeanne Bucher), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[37] Letter from Levy to Herbert Bayer, February 12, 1932, Box 3, Folder 8 (Herbert Bayer), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Letter from Levy to Bayer, November 21, 1931, Box 3, Folder 8 (Herbert Bayer), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[40] Levy to Bayer, December 28, 1931, Box 3, Folder 8 (Herbert Bayer), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[41] Ibid.

and the Jacques Seligmann Gallery, which had added contemporary European painting to its stock to meet the tastes of the New York art scene (the firm was responsible for bringing Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon* to New York in 1937). The American dealer Valentine Dudensing had likewise sought to bring contemporary European art into the New York market and arranged for Pierre Matisse, son of the painter, to act as his agent in the mid-1920s. By 1931, Pierre Matisse struck out on his own. The firm Knoedler & Company, which was established as a branch of the Paris-based house of Goupil in the mid-nineteenth century, also handled contemporary American and European art although they sought to build a reputation as specialists in old masters in the early twentieth century. A number of "homegrown" businesses were also devoted to the contemporary scene, including the previously mentioned An American Place run by Stieglitz; Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century; Edith Halpert's Downtown Gallery, dedicated to the promotion of modern American art and American folk art; the Marie Harriman Gallery, focusing primarily on French post-impressionism and the School of Paris; and the Midtown Galleries, founded in 1932 to specialize in contemporary American Art.

How, in this context, could an art dealer carve out a niche for a new business? As suggested, Levy turned to the well-developed strategy of dealer expertise, becoming a spokesperson for surrealism—a role he continued to hone well after the demise of his gallery through lectures, ongoing involvement in exhibitions, and the publication of his autobiography. Ingrid Schaffner argues that Levy's other methods of cultivating the market warrant a reputation for prescience, stating that "Levy's enterprise during the 1930s and early 1940s can be seen to anticipate the great New York art galleries of the late 1940s and the 1950s, those under the direction of such dealers as Sidney Janis, Sam Kootz, and Betty Parsons."[42] Schaffner continues:

> "Levy codified the rituals of contemporary gallery commerce, from sending out press releases and snappy announcement cards to throwing opening-night cocktail parties. The gallery regularly published brochures with essays by famous writers and critics, who established an instant context for an artist's works. Levy created a buzz that attracted the smart set, collectors, curators, press, other artists, who then generated reviews, gossip, speculation, and—most significant for the artists whose works were on view—interest and sales."[43]

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[42] Ibid.

[43] Ingrid Schaffner, "Alchemy of the Gallery," in Schaffner and Jacobs, *Julien Levy* (note 2), pp. 21–22. Levy, in his interview with Paul Cummings in 1975, credits himself with several

However, if these practices are examined from the vantage point of the 1880s and 1890s rather than the 1940s and 1950s, we can see that they were not new at all, but in fact well-established, having evolved alongside the use of rotating exhibitions as the primary sales vehicle for commercial art galleries. Specially designed invitation cards, private viewing parties, press events, exhibition catalogues penned by leading critics, the cultivation of critics, the careful placement of articles and gossip, and even uniquely designed spaces, were strategies already put in place by the end of the nineteenth century.[44] James McNeill Whistler, for example, for his retrospective exhibition held at the Goupil Galleries in London in 1892, designed the invitations, posters, and sandwich boards, as well as overseeing the production of the catalogue, which assembled quotes about his work from prominent critics. He worked closely with the gallery manager David Croal Thomson to select not only the works for the exhibition but also the members of society to be invited to the opening.[45] The result, as reported by Whistler's colleague Joseph Pennell, was a popular success: "Some hundreds of cards of invitation were issued, and it really seemed as if every recipient had accepted the call. Literally, crowds thronged the galleries all day, and it is quite impossible to describe the excitement produced."[46] In other instances, Whistler designed his exhibition spaces to ensure that his works were displayed to their best advantage.[47]

The answer to the question regarding the progressive nature of Levy's profile and reputation is therefore not an origin story, but rather one of shaping well-rehearsed strategies to suit his particular context. In other words, while heroic narratives of modern art may imply that dealers of progressive art should be as original as the artists they represent, historical perspective reveals that dealers like Levy did not so much invent as adopt and adapt to trends around them.

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inventions, including the curved wall in his gallery (p. 13), writing reviews of his gallery on behalf of critics (p. 15), and "then I invented another thing which was the cause of my downfall. I invented the cocktail opening." (p. 15).

[44] For more on the rise of the commercial art gallery and the use of these strategies, see Pamela Fletcher, "Shopping for Art. The Rise of the Commercial Art Gallery, 1850s–90s," in Pamela Fletcher and Anne Helmreich, eds., *The Rise of the Modern Art Market in London, 1950–1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), pp. 47–64.

[45] See, for example, "David Croal Thomson to James McNeill Whistler, February 24, 1892"; "Whistler to Thomson, 1/14 March 1892"; "Thomson to Whistler, March 4, 1892"; "Whistler to Thomson, March 5, 1892"; and "Thomson to Whistler, March 8, 1892," in Margaret F. MacDonald, Patricia de Montfort, and Nigel Thorp, eds., *The Correspondence of James McNeill Whistler, 1955–1903*, online edition, University of Glasgow. See also Georgia Toutziari, ed., *The Correspondence of Anna McNeill Whistler, 1855–1880*, online edition, Centre for Whistler Studies, University of Glasgow, 2003, http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence, accessed July 4, 2018.

[46] Joseph Pennell, The Life of James McNeill Whistler (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1908), p. 121.

[47] David Park Curry, "Total Control. Whistler at an Exhibition," in Ruth Fine, ed., *Studies in the History of Art. James McNeill Whistler, A Reexamination* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1987), pp. 67–82.

Levy located his gallery, when it opened in 1931, in the heart of the emerging mid-town gallery district, in close proximity to many of the galleries already mentioned. Midtown Manhattan became a thriving commercial and entertainment district in the 1920s and 1930s, and despite the Depression major construction took place in the neighborhood, including Radio City Music Hall (opened in 1932) and the RCA building (1933).

Visitors to Levy's first gallery on Madison Avenue would have arrived via an elevator to the third-floor space, which included a front showroom (painted white), a center showroom (in Harvard red), and a small office and storeroom at the rear.[48] Using his father's contractors, Levy invested considerable funds and attention to the physical environment.[49] Work orders document that Levy requested "absolutely perfect" walls, which were curved.[50] He later noted that the curved walls "led the traffic of the gallery. … You had to move and see each [painting] individually. To some extent the others were there but they faded in the curve."[51] He devised an innovative system that combined the framing and hanging of photographs, and commissioned custom-designed display cases to exhibit books, magazines, and portfolios.

The fashionability of Levy's gallery was underscored by a 1938 article in *Vogue* featuring several leading commercial dealers—Knoedler's, Valentine Dudensing, Marie Harriman, Carroll Carstairs, Felix Wildenstein, Durand-Ruel, and Levy. The article, echoing Duncan Phillips's impression of the dealer, implicitly contrasted Levy with the older generation of dealers, such as Durand-Ruel. It opened with a description of Durand-Ruel's premises "The walls of the Durand-Ruel Gallery are covered with dull brown velvet, the lighting is not good, and if the place is crowded as it frequently is, there is really little chance to see the pictures."[52] The next paragraph, devoted to Levy's gallery, depicted "a gallery principally for the sophisticated and for the young. The newly planned walls are broken up artfully, dipping and waving and straightening out again. The rug is dark wine, the walls white, the effect is naked and modern."[53] When Levy moved to 15 East Fifty-Seventh Street in 1937, he retained the curved wall, and his press release called attention to what he described as "a startling innovation in gallery design—the walls are curved, the curves deriving from the shape of a painter's pal-

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[48] Cummings interview with Levy, 1975 (note 2), p. 14.

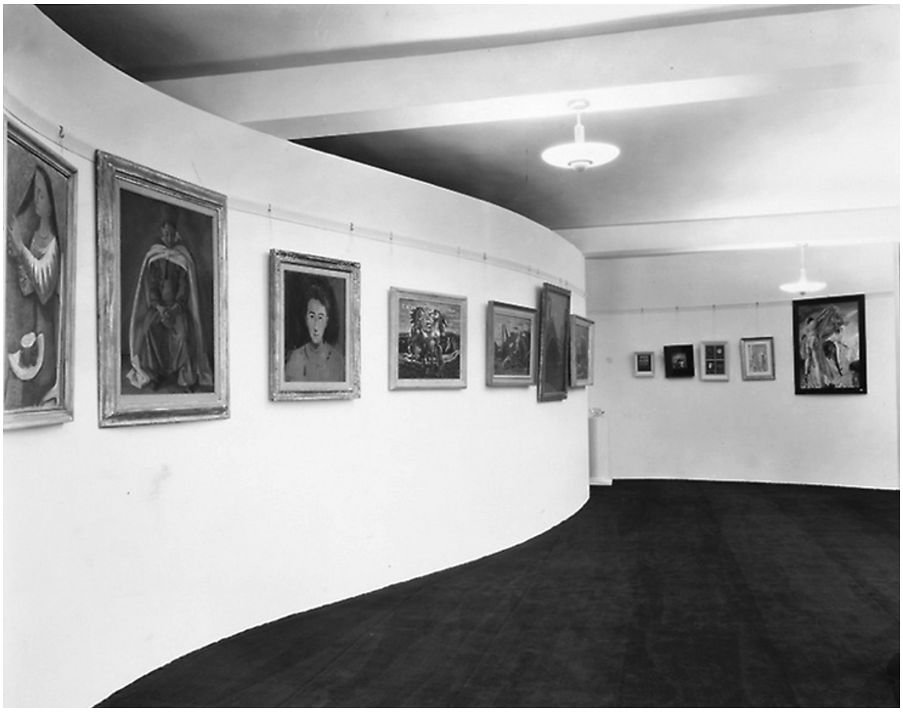
[49] Julien Levy Gallery, Time and Material Order, Edgar A. Levy Construction Co., September 8,1931, Box 33, Folder 1 (Julien Levy Gallery "1930s"), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[50] Time and Material Order, Order 3871, Edgar A. Levy Construction Co., Julien Levy Gallery, September 8, 1931 Box 33, Folder 1 (Julien Levy Gallery "1930s"), *ca.* October 1937, Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[51] Cummings interview with Levy, 1975 (note 2), pp. 13–14.

[52] Sallie Saunders, "Middle Men of Art," *Vogue* New York, vol. 91, iss. 6 (March 15, 1938), p. 102.

[53] Ibid.



121 F. M. Demarest, *Curved walls in the Julien Levy Gallery at 15 East 57th St.*, *ca.* 1937/1942, gelatin silver print, 19.2 × 24.4 cm. Chicago, Art Institute of Chicago.

ette. This shape appears not only decoratively effective, but practical too."[54] (figs. 121 and 122)

Levy clearly wanted to retain these physical features of his gallery, which the *Vogue* author had seen as "modern."[55] As art historian Nancy Troy has made clear in her book *Modernism and the Decorative Arts in France* (1991), over the course of the early decades of the twentieth century modern art and modern design became closely intertwined, as exemplified by the "Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau" organized by Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret for the Exposition of Decorative Arts in Paris in 1925.[56] Marilyn Friedman's study *Selling Good Design: Promoting the Early Modern Interior* (2003) continues the narrative in the context of the United States. In 1928, for example, Macy's department store, in collaboration with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, held the International Exposition of Art in Industry, which promoted the new aesthetic. The same year Lord & Taylor held a similar exhibition that sought to

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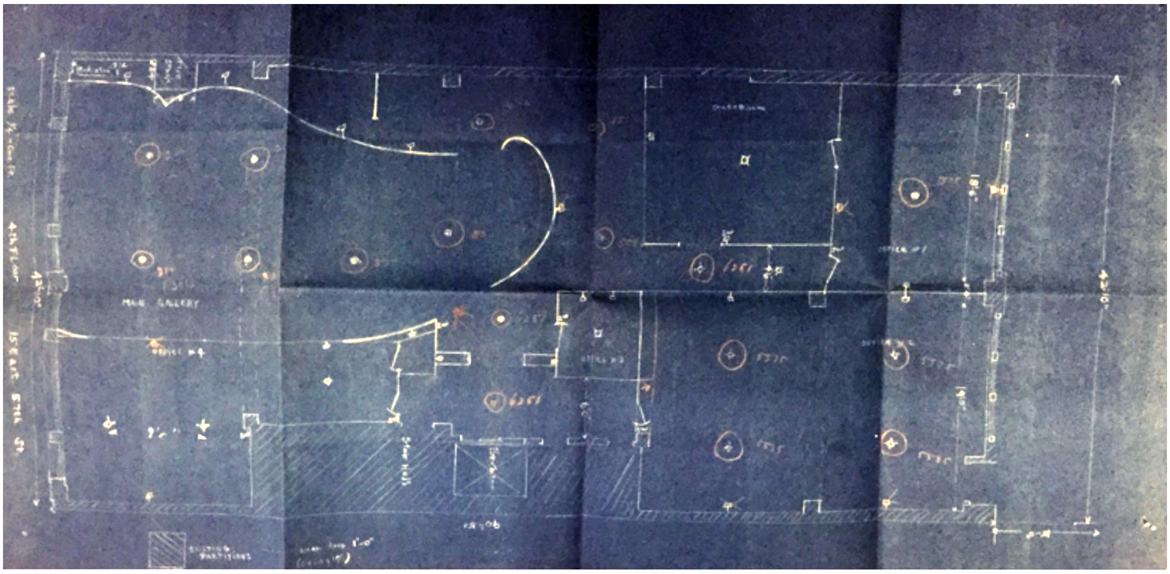
[54] Box 33, Folder 8 (Press Releases), *ca.* October 1937, Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[55] Saunders, "Middle Men of Art" (note 52).

[56] Nancy J. Troy, *Modernism and the Decorative Arts in France, Art Nouveau to Le Corbusier* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 193–196.



122 Julien Levy Gallery, East Fifty-Seventh Street, blueprint. Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Library and Archives, Julien Levy Gallery records.

"determine the reaction of the American public to modern art in all its developments and to ascertain whether there is sufficient interest here to justify activity on the part of American artists, manufacturers, and merchants in the production and presentation of such merchandise as a business venture."[57] More than 300,000 people viewed its displays, which included a study designed by Pierre Chareau.[58] It was also at this time that Saks Fifth Avenue's department store hired Frederick Kiesler to dress their windows, and that Norman Bel Geddes designed the Franklin Simon store window displays.[59] Geddes was sympathetic to Levy's enterprise, writing to the dealer in 1932 to apologize for having missed the screening of *Le Chien andalou*, adding, "I am most interested in everything you are doing. You have one of the few fresh points of view regarding galleries and what they can accomplish."[60]

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[57] Emily Orr, "Beautiful Objects for General Consumption. The New York Department Store and Modern Design in the 1920s," *Cooper Hewitt*, June 2, 2017, https://www.cooperhewitt.org/2017/06/02/beautiful-objects-for-general-consumption-the-new-york-department-store-and-modern-design-in-the-1920s/, accessed July 4, 2018.

[58] Marilyn F. Friedman, *Selling Good Design, Promoting the Early Modern Interior* (New York: Rizzoli, 2003), pp. 61–62, 70.

[59] For more on Kiesler's work and, in particular, his collaboration with Peggy Guggenheim on the creation of the gallery Art of This Century, see Don Quaintance, "Modern Art in a Modern Setting. Frederick Kiesler's Design of the Art of This Century," in Susan Davidson and Philip Rylands, eds., *Peggy Guggenheim and Frederick Kiesler. The Story of Art of This Century* (New York: Guggenheim Museum Publications, 2004), pp. 206–273.

[60] Letter from Norman Bel Geddes to Levy, November 29, 1932, Box 3, Folder 17 (Bes), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

Levy's desire to interject his business into the project to integrate modern art and modern design in contemporary living is exemplified by his attempt to sell ornamental articles. When he launched his gallery in 1931, he worked with manufacturers to produce decorative objects featuring photographs, such as cigarette cases and lamps.[61] He explained to the editor of *House & Garden* that "as my place is an Art Gallery and not the shop of a decorator I don't plan to execute orders myself, but will introduce and display models and suggestions, and act as an agency for decorators."[62] In short, Levy's practices and the aesthetic they embodied were consonant with this new movement uniting modern design with high-end commercialism and reflected his wish to target a specific audience, described by *Vogue* as the "sophisticated" and "young."[63] Geddes, and Duncan Phillips before him, confirm that this tactic allowed Levy to set himself apart from other gallerists.

As the articles in *Vogue* and *House & Garden* might suggest, Levy also turned to the modern world of advertising to advance his cause. Both these magazines were Condé Nast publications, and Levy maintained regular correspondence with *Vogue*'s inventive art director M. F. Agha; Levy lent Agha a copy of the magazine *La Révolution surréaliste* and exhibited Agha's photographs.[64] Agha and Condé Nast were also on Herbert Bayer's invitation list for Levy's January 1932 surrealist exhibition.[65] Bayer, then working as the director of a Berlin advertising agency with offices in New York, also used his press connections to secure notices of the exhibition.[66] To attract further attention to the artists he represented, Levy also forged contacts with specialist art journals, such as *Creative Arts*, as well as more general readership publications like *Vanity Fair*.[67]

In the early 1940s Levy became the secretary for a new publication, *View*—a literary and art magazine founded by Charles Henri Ford and a vehicle that was highly sympathetic to his project. The October-November 1941 issue, for example, was an "All-Surrealist Number" edited by Nicolas Calas, and several issues were dedicated to artists represented by Levy, including Max Ernst, who was featured in April 1942 through illustrated essays about the artist by André Breton, Leonora Carrington, Sidney Janis, Parker Tyler, Henry Miller, and Nicolas Calas, as well as Levy and Ernst himself. Levy, in his role as interlocutor, contributed a note about Ernst's creative process, specifically the artist's Freudian memories of children that he had metaphorically locked away when faced with the destruction of war, and had later drawn upon when, "hungry and disheartened in Paris, and wondering what more of his lean resources might be tapped, he was to remember those secret places in his head, and the children, and was to find the true material for his painting."[68] Fittingly, original collages by Ernst for sale at the Julien Levy Gallery were advertised on the first page of this special issue. The May 1942 issue of *View* was partly dedicated to Pavel Tchelitchew and timed to coincide with the Levy Gallery's exhibition of the artist's work held from April 21 to May 18. But Levy's relationship to *View* was not exclusive. His was one of many galleries advertising in the pages of the magazine; his notice for Ernst collages appeared alongside advertisements for the Bignou, Pierre Matisse, and Nierendorf galleries, and the catalogue for Ernst's exhibition at the Valentine Gallery featured as the journal's centerfold. The issue concerning Tchelitchew was also partitioned to include a section about Yves Tanguy, who was then being exhibited at the Pierre Matisse Gallery.

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[61] See Invoices from George Henne, Box 14, Folder 8 (George Henne), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[62] Letter from Levy to Margaret McElroy, November 12, 1931, Box 15, Folder 23 (House and Garden), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[63] Saunders, "Middle Men of Art" (note 52).

[64] Box 1, Folder 7 (M. F. Agha), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA, see letter of December 18, 1932, regarding the loan of the magazine *La Revolution Surrealiste*; letters of October 8, 1932, and April 4, 1933, refer to the preparations for showing Agha's photographs at Levy's gallery.

[65] Letter from Herbert Bayer to Levy, January 14, 1932, Box 3, Folder 8 (Herbert Bayer), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[66] Ibid.

[67] For the *Vanity Fair* correspondence, see Box 26, Folder 12, Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

In 1944, Levy resigned from *View* after his colleagues complained of his "complete, and apparently uncompromising, disinterest,"[69] stating that he could no longer afford the advertising fees.[70] Perhaps tellingly, the first advertisements in *View*'s October and November 1945 issues were for the Hugo Gallery, which was at the time hosting "The Fantastic in Modern Art," an exhibition presented by *View*.[71]

Accounting records for the Julien Levy Gallery, which start from 1937, suggest that Levy did not invest a great deal in paid advertising.[72] Instead, he cultivated relationships with the press and issued his own press releases, a skill he had acquired while working at Weyhe's gallery. Moreover, he regarded his exhibitions as advertising in and of themselves, as implied in a letter to Jeanne Bucher describing the success of his surrealist exhibition: "It was written about nearly every day. And then the crowds in the gallery. Of course we only sold photos and magazines, but as advertising, it was more than excellent."[73]

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[68] Julien Levy, "The Children Inside and the Children Outside," *View*, no. 1 (April 1942), p. 31.

[69] Letter from Parker Tyler to Levy, February 21, 1944, Box 26, Folder 16, Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[70] Letter from Levy to Tyler, February 23, 1944, Box 26, Folder 16, Levy Gallery Records, PMAA. Levy was still listed as a sponsor for the New Jazz concert presented by *View* in December 1944, and the December 1944 issue included a photo-essay by Man Ray, who was described as having a "retrospective exhibition of his work, paintings, drawings, rayograms, at Julien Levy's early next year." See "Table of Contents," *View*, no. 4 (December 1944), p. 109.

[71] *View*, no. 3 (October 1945); *View*, no. 4 (November 1945).

[72] See the Bernard Reis & Company Reports, 1937–1939, Box 33, Folder 1; 1941/Box 33, Folder 2, Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

Levy's press releases have left an important written trace of how he wished to position his roster of artists. The *Vogue* article from 1938 provides an important contextual clue for decoding the rhetorical strategy that Levy deployed in these texts. The article describes the dealer's enthusiasm for surrealism and neo-Romanticism, stating, "His keen and almost glittering eye, focussed on the Parisian scene, may discover this decade's Cezanne [*sic*] at any moment—a possibility that keeps him and his clients slightly feverish at all times."[74] Cézanne had faced an indifferent future until the dealer Ambroise Vollard organized a major exhibition that secured his reputation.[75] Levy's press releases suggest a canny awareness of how he could promote his artists as new to the art scene, while also suggesting that they, like Cézanne, could stand the test of time. In his press release for the surrealist exhibition, for instance, he asserted that "an exhibition of these pictures is sensational, as [was] the showing of the first Cubists"—indirectly pointing to Picasso and Braque, who were by then recognized as modern masters.[76] In the press release for Max Ernst's solo show in November 1932, he observed: "His work is well known throughout Europe and represented in all the important modern collections and in several museums."[77] This was arguably a significant exaggeration given that current records indicate that it was not until 1934 that a European museum—the Kunsthaus Zurich—acquired an artwork by Ernst. Levy's goal was evidently not to accurately represent museum holdings, but to leverage the prestige of permanent collections in order to render the artist collectable and investment-worthy. In one of the press releases for Dalí's 1933 exhibition, he closed with the assertion that Dalí's "mastery of technique and imaginative power ranks him as one of the most significant European painters since Picasso."[78] Note the genealogy Levy is creating here, one that was aided by and mirrored the narrative constructed by Barr at MoMA.

In short, Levy recognized the cultural legitimacy conveyed by the modernist past and contemporary museums. In his 1975 interview, he declared that it was "splendid" that the first surrealist exhibition in the

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[73] Letter from Julien Levy to Jeanne Bucher, February 10, 1932, Box 14, Folder 2 (Galerie Jeanne Bucher), Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[74] Saunders, "Middle Men of Art" (note 52).

[75] For more on Vollard's activities, see Rebecca A. Rabinow, ed., *Cézanne to Picasso. Ambroise Vollard, Patron of the Avant-garde* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2006).

[76] Box 33, Folder 8 (Press Releases), *ca.* January 1932, Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Box 33, Folder 8 (Press Releases), *ca.* November 1933, Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

United States was held at the Wadsworth Atheneum, adding that "commercially speaking, the best idea is to have a museum do it. That gives you prestige and then you try to do the follow-up, the business end."[79] That business end could, in fact, be handled directly in the space of the museum. In a letter to Chick Austin of March 15, 1935, on the subject of Eugene Berman drawings from the gallery then on view at the Wadsworth Atheneum, Levy advised, "Should any likely customers be interested, the prices generally run between forty-five and fifty unless otherwise marked."[80] In Levy's network, the museum and the market were not distantly related, but closely intertwined.

Conclusion

Forming this network between museum and market into which Levy inserted artists associated with surrealism, and establishing and disseminating surrealism's public profile within New York's collector community—thereby linking the "young" and "sophisticated"[81] to surrealism—were the major achievements of the Julien Levy Gallery. Financially, the enterprise was never secure. Launching a luxury retail business in the midst of the Depression was challenging, and much of Levy's stock was on consignment from artists and other dealers, and most of the artists he handled were also represented by other galleries (an exception to this was his contract with Arshile Gorky in 1944 to be his exclusive dealer.[82]). Levy sometimes borrowed from collectors, a strategy that brought audiences and prestige to his exhibitions but did not necessarily translate into ready sales. Accountants' records from the period from 1937 to 1941 reveal that Levy was kept afloat by loans from his father, the critic and patron James Thrall Soby, and Eleanor Howard, who had worked briefly as Levy's assistant before marrying Soby. The Sobys were compensated with shares in the gallery (fig. 123), but when they wanted to cash out their interest in the business, Levy was forced to pay them via art works because he was cash poor.[83]

In sum, Julien Levy was arguably both a progressive dealer and a dealer of progressives. He utilized practices that dealers had developed over the preceding century, such as rotating exhibitions, specially designed

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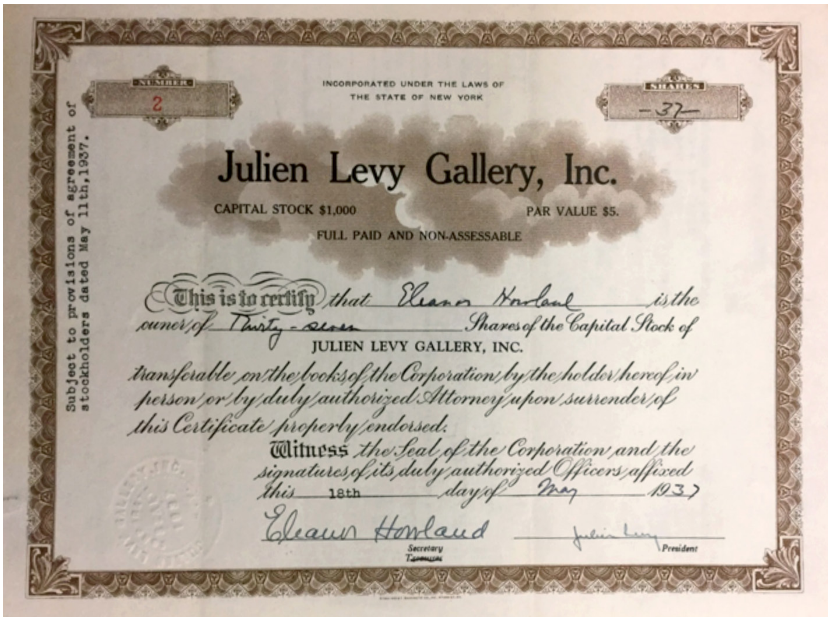
[79] Cummings interview with Levy, 1975 (note 2), p. 17.

[80] Letter from Levy to Mr. A. E. Austin, March 16, 1935, Box 26, Folder 23, Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[81] Saunders, "Middle Men of Art" (note 52).

[82] Letter from Levy to Arshile Gorky, December 20, 1944, Box 14, Folder 19, Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.

[83] JALJAV Inc., December 31, 1942; letter from Jim Soby to Levy, March 14, 1943 (and subsequent correspondence through June 1943), Box 24, Folder 24, Levy Gallery Records, PMAA.



NUMBER 2

INCORPORATED UNDER THE LAWS OF
THE STATE OF NEW YORK

SHARES -37-

Subject to provisions of agreement of stockholders dated May 11th,1937.

Julien Levy Gallery, Inc.

CAPITAL STOCK $1,000 PAR VALUE $5.

FULL PAID AND NON-ASSESSABLE

This is to certify that Eleanor Howland is the owner of Thirty-seven Shares of the Capital Stock of

JULIEN LEVY GALLERY, INC.

transferable on the books of the Corporation by the holder hereof in person or by duly authorized Attorney upon surrender of this Certificate properly endorsed.

Witness the Seal of the Corporation and the signatures of its duly authorized Officers affixed this 18th day of May 1937

Eleanor Howland
Secretary
~~Treasurer~~

Julien Levy
President

123 Stock certificate for the Julien Levy Gallery held by Eleanor Howard Soby. Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Library and Archives, Julien Levy Gallery records.

spaces, cultivated expertise, carefully groomed rhetoric, and collaborations with the press, translating them to the context of 1930s and 1940s New York. But Levy was also inventive and adaptable, strengthening and extending networks he had established in Paris and Harvard, responding to the confluence of modern art and modern design, and recognizing opportunities to collaborate with museums and subsequently building their profiles and collections.