

GALERIE EDWYNN HOUK  
ZUR STOCKEREKG

Contact: Daniel Blochwitz  
41 44 202 69 25  
daniel@houkgallery.com

PRESS RELEASE

**DIANE ARBUS  
AUGUST SANDER**

17 November 2011 – 14 January 2012

Vernissage | Thursday | 17 November | 18 – 20 Uhr

Edwynn Houk Gallery is pleased to announce the representation of the Estate of August Sander. To mark this occasion and in light of the Diane Arbus retrospective currently on view at the *Jeu de Paume* in Paris (and traveling to the Fotomuseum Winterthur in March 2012), Galerie Edwynn Houk will present a remarkable selection of photographs by two of the most recognizable photographers of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: August Sander (German, 1876-1964) and Diane Arbus (American, 1923-1971). The exhibition will take place from 17 November 2011 through 14 January 2012.

Exhibiting Diane Arbus' photographs for the first time since 1982, Edwynn Houk Gallery premieres her work in Zurich by pairing a selection of rare, vintage prints of her oeuvre with the artist she credits as her greatest influence, August Sander. Arbus first encountered Sander's work in the Swiss magazine *DU* in 1960. Although both photographers achieved widespread recognition only after their deaths, they are by now firmly positioned as seminal and canonical artists within the history of photography.

Displaying their photographs side by side reveals an obsessive and systematic search for truth in the human condition. Both Sander and Arbus sought to capture identity and difference by way of direct observation and comparison and yet arrived at two different forms of representation, one decidedly more objective than the other. While Sander's aim was to document a cross-section of Weimar Germany by portraying select archetypes, Arbus focused her camera on the margins of post-war American society (or alternatively, on a normality that may seem off-centered and surreal). Dress, even in its absence, becomes an important prop to define and contextualize their subjects. And Arbus "would have understood from Sander how a person can conceal and reveal himself at once, but where this matter was subtle for him, (she) put it right at the front of her art" (Leo Rubinfien, 2005).

Sander's sociological approach allows us to see the person behind his or her occupation, while it simultaneously creates a typology of professions beyond the image of the portrayed person. In other words, we can look at the print of a man who happens to be a banker, and look again and see a depiction of his trade. Diane Arbus, on the other hand, viewed each person as a manifestation of individuality and portrayed her subjects in a way that made them exceptional.

What ultimately links Diane Arbus and August Sander is a deep and lifelong commitment to making portraits that aimed to depict identity and difference as ideals and were often outside of accepted societal norms. These photographs of publishers, farm children, tradesmen, teenage couples, artists, soldiers, twins, triplets, politicians, nudists, families, or customs officers are fascinating and important documents of their time. These are simply some of the best portraits of the past century.