

Chapter 1 : 16 best Tina Modotti images on Pinterest | Tina modotti, Art photography and Edward weston

Masters of Photography features the greatest practitioners of the camera. Over photos, along with extensive essays and biographies, make this an indispensable resource for the casual or professional student of photography.

One of several close-up portraits of Modotti that Hagemeyer made during her visit to her family in At this time Modotti was working in Hollywood. It is a classic facial portrait, lit to emphasise her strong features: The mood Hagemeyer creates is one of contemplation, possibly slightly sad. She looks down, but she is not really looking: This photograph positions Tina in time and place: It is a deliberately unglamorous portrait: A tree casts dappled shadows over the whole frame. We are walking past, seeing this woman at her front door. She could be anyone. This close up still life of two calla lilies against a wall is symmetrical almost to the point of being stylised; the lilies seem almost non-natural, non-organic, as though they are sculpted or constructed. This photo contrasts interestingly with the next - Mexico - which shows full blown roses, heads crushed together, petals at the point of bruising. Unlike the callas, this is an intimate portrait, close up. The flowers take on an sexual, clitoral quality, swollen and soft, infinite layers or labia of petals curling back to reveal their infinity. Seen from a darkened foreground, the series of arched doorways open up, but only to reveal the next one. A staircase leads up back into darkness. It is a photograph of absences, with the hint of impending presences. Mexico This is an interesting photograph which is worth looking at for a while. The cooling tank is shown only in detail, a small section of its vastness. It takes up nearly the whole frame, eradicating the landscape and surroundings. A perfect triangle is formed by the ladder and the pipe, at the top of which perches a man, a worker. He is dwarfed by the structure. The composition is not beautiful nor interesting in the sense of providing information, but its stillness and the looming dominance of the tank give it an eerie dreamlike quality, like an image you pass by without noticing, but then it sticks in your mind for no apparent reason. With these pictures the hands act as a synecdoche - parts standing in for the whole, the whole body, the face, the life, the history. The hands, disembodied, are beautiful. And we are forced to look, really look, at the hands of working people. With these photographs Modotti seems to move onto new ground: Interestingly though, the subject is a woman; not a symbolic Delacroix-type woman, breasts bare and lips red and glistening, but a real woman, noble and stern-faced, bearing the flag with pride, sombreness and dignity. Tina Modotti Woman of Tehuantepec Mexico Modotti made the pictures of the people of rural Mexico shortly before the scandals and troubles that ultimately forced her to leave for Europe. Her images of the Mexican peasantry are arguably her finest works: Laura Mulvey in her film *Frida Kahlo and Tina Modotti* notes the way Modotti was able to turn the camera that had been turned so often on herself, upon these beautiful Mexican women, and create photographs of them that are not voyeuristic or objectivizing in any way, but instead acknowledge their dignity and suffering. Modotti, on the other hand, lived a very public private life, at the forefront of movements, openly taking lovers, acting on the screen and posing for numerous pictures. Yet in her creative work she herself disappears: They note her Communism, but not why she might have been drawn so fervently to it, and what intellectual appeal it may have had. Nor do they discuss the intellectual circle that Modotti and Kahlo moved in, indeed that was how they met. This technique is a bit shaky at times, but is not ineffective. She draws on strong academic support, by including interviews with a number of scholars who have researched Modotti. The problem is that these art historians, and by extension Higgins herself, want to look at Modotti largely in psychoanalytic terms, making much of her relationships with men like Weston, Mella, Vidali, without considering other factors which may have motivated Modotti. And what surroundings these were:

Chapter 2 : Tina Modotti | MoMA

We used machine learning to identify this work in photos from our exhibition history.

She, like many other surrealist women artists, deserves her place in art historical records at the same level as her male contemporaries. Tina was raised in a working-class family that immigrated to Austria in 1881, where her father, Giuseppe, found work on a bicycle factory. Her family returned to Italy shortly after in 1883; the same year in which Giuseppe immigrated to the United States to join his brother in Pennsylvania. Tina Modotti remained in Italy with her mother and her siblings until the family became gradually reunited with her father in California. In 1891, Tina joined her father and her sister, Mercedes, who had moved to the United States two years earlier. Upon her arrival, she worked as a seamstress and doll maker. In 1894, Tina Modotti made, arguably, the first of her pivotal artistic encounters. In 1895, she married him. Together, they moved to Los Angeles where Modotti found work as an actress in silent movies in Hollywood. During this time period, Tina met the North American photographer Edward Weston [], whom she later fell in love with and began an affair with. Edward Weston was an acquaintance of Roubaix and often visited his studio, which had become a popular gathering point for a bohemian circle of artists and writers. While Modotti was on her way to join her husband in Mexico in 1904, she received the news that he had died from a sudden illness. A year later, Modotti and Weston traveled to Mexico City together and they set up a studio there. It is during this time in Mexico, that Modotti became acquainted with the art of photography. Mexico was also the place where she became involved in radical politics and where she struggled to reconcile her photography with her politics. Not only I cannot do that but I even feel that the problem of life hinders my problem of art. He strongly felt that teaching her photography was a way in which to grant her autonomy. She has no wish to return to the stage and photography would make her to some extent independent. In the years that followed, the couple undertook numerous collaborative projects, and in the year 1907, they both exhibited prints at a group show at the Palacio de Minería in Mexico City. Their first joint exhibition took place a year later at the State Museum in Guadalajara, where a number of their prints were purchased for the Jalisco State Museum. Her work flowers perfectly in Mexico and harmonizes exactly with our passion. For example, she photographed the frescoes of Rivera and Siqueiros and published photographs in the journal Mexican Folkways. It is his series of nudes of Tina that allowed him to evolve into a mythical artist figure. Modotti remained in Mexico and the two of them corresponded until 1911, according to records. Her political affirmations, however early they were sparked, were much more defined and highlighted during her stay in Mexico. At the same time, her photographs began to appear in international political journals, magazines, and newspapers. After her rupture with Weston, she began an affair with the artist and political activist Xavier Guerrero, whom she had met in the United States in 1911. In the same year that they met, Guerrero was sent to the Soviet Union and received a letter from Modotti breaking off their relationship. In December of the same year, Modotti held her first solo exhibition at the Universidad Autónoma in Mexico City, which was received as a revolutionary exhibit in Mexico. She was offered the position of official photographer of the Museo Nacional in Mexico City, even if she turned the post down for political reasons. Her commitment was rewarded with utmost respect in cultural circles, though her activism was becoming increasingly threatening to the Mexican government. In 1913, the newly elected President, Pascual Ortiz Rubio, was nearly assassinated. Tina was suspected and falsely accused of participation, which led to her deportation from Mexico under article 33 of the Mexican constitution. Modotti returned to Europe aboard a ship named the Edam, where Modotti met her new Italian lover and political activist, Vittorio Vidali. Once in Europe, Modotti settled briefly in Berlin; a time of despair and creative frustration where she wrote to Weston after undergoing technical difficulties and not knowing which path to take. She appears to have maintained a low profile in order to take part in secret political missions in the name of fighting fascism. Towards the end of 1914, Vidali joined Modotti in Berlin and persuaded her to follow him to Moscow. From there, she wrote Weston a final letter [dated January 12, 1915] in which she announces a new found direction in life and art. She pursued her activism in Russia and her photographic career started to slowly wind down. She declined an offer to work as the official photographer for the Soviet Communist Party in order to devote herself to

working with the International Red Aid. In time, she ran her own Red Aid center in Paris with the help of Vidali. There, she worked on the Spanish Red Aid Newspaper entitled *Ayuda*, gathering information on political prisoners. After the Republicans were defeated in , Modotti and Vidali were forced to return to Mexico, where they lived together. Modotti ended her life by helping Republican exiles in Mexico and she was successful in annulling her deportation decree by President Lazaro Cardenas. Modotti remained very low profile up to her final moments, although she maintained her political activities. Her birth certificate states that she died on January 5, from a heart attack in the back of a taxi. Tina Modotti was a photographer, model, actress, and revolutionary political activist. Needless to say, her influences were numerous and varied from one vocation to the other. Mexico, however, is undoubtedly the most influential country in shaping Modotti into a fine female Surrealist artist. After having met the photographer Edward Weston, Modotti quickly became his lover and favorite photographic model throughout Modotti was a model at heart, who took the vocation very seriously, one which she pursued alongside her career as an actress. Her relationship with Edward Weston is also what sparked her photographic career. Although she was introduced to photography as a young girl in Italy where her uncle, Pietro Modotti, maintained a photography studio, it is only after Weston started teaching Tina Modotti the art of photography that she began to take it seriously. It was through her relationship with Edward Weston that Modotti developed as an important fine art photographer and documentarian. It was about that arts and culture of Mexico. Weston was moved by the landscape and folk art of Mexico with which he created abstract works. Modotti, on the other hand, was captivated by the everyday people of Mexico and blended this human interest with a modernist aesthetic. Modotti became independent when she found a community of cultural and political avant-gardists in Mexico and became the photographer of choice for the blossoming Mexican mural movement. During this time, Tina Modotti blossomed as an artist and her works became much more informed in regards to architectural interiors, flowers, and urban landscapes. Her strongest works, however, continued to be her highly expressive images of peasants and workers. But Tina Modotti was a Mexican photographer, in the sense that she found her style, themes, subjects, and calling in Mexico; leaving Mexico in , she left photography too. A few years later, however, Tina Modotti met a new man, the Cuban political activist Julio Antonio Mella and this marked a new era in her life: During this time, economic and political contradictions within Mexico and much of Central and South America were intensifying. On January 10, , agents of the Cuban government assassinated Mella. In regards to artistic criticism, Tina Modotti was rarely placed under a harsh spotlight. Rather, artistic circles and intellectual circles of the time admired her work and her solo exhibitions as revolutionary acts for a woman artist. Pure your gentle name, pure your fragile life, bees, shadows, fire, snow, silence and foam, combined with steel and wire and pollen to make up your firm and delicate being. Tina Modotti photographed mostly from 1932, but her work is relatively scarce. Her early platinum prints were close-up photographs of still-lives such as wine glasses, folds of fabric or flowers, as in *Calla Lillie* and *Rosas*. Among her other subject interests, Modotti made prints of finely composed architectural spaces. By 1932, when she joined the Mexican Communist Party, she was starting to incorporate more explicit social content in her work. At this time, she gave up making expensive and time-consuming platinum prints and worked with silver gelatin prints instead. Modotti photographed political events, such as *Diego Rivera Addressing a Meeting of the International Red Aid, Mexico*, as well as more communal events [bullfights and the circus]. She focused on the proud faces and hands of mothers, children, artisans and laborers, as seen in *Baby Nursing*, *Mother and Child*, or *Campesino con Pala*. She was deported from Mexico for her political activities in and during the next decade she dedicated herself to revolutionary and anti-fascist activities in Russia and Spain. Due to her packed schedule and periodic creative blocks, she took very few photographs during this period. We will begin by observing the contents of the photograph. Here, we can see a pair of cracked, coarse, and possibly soiled hands; obviously those of a hard worker. One hand is folded over the other, the lower hand reposing on the well-used handle of a tool [a spade or shovel]. The fabric is crisp, rough, worn, and also stained with what could be dirt or grease. In terms of photographic style and technique, Modotti has used a Gelatin silver print for this piece, which produces a fairly high-contrast image. She has framed her composition in a zoomed, up-close fashion, which allows for extreme detail. There is a clear black and a clear white, mostly highlighted in the creases of

the cuffs and knuckles. Shadow is most reflective in the sleeves and hands; both of which are closest to the camera. It is now time to discuss the historical and social implications of such a work of art. This photograph was taken while Modotti was staying with Weston in Mexico, a time where Tina Modotti became involved with political radicals and communists and when much of her photographic work started to evolve towards expressing political messages. In *Campesino con Pala*, Modotti seems to be raising attention to the hard work portrayed by the working individual. Because of the juxtaposition of high contrast and close focus, Modotti has chosen to have her viewers focus on the small details in order to better comprehend that the hands belong to someone who has worked very hard for their living. The state and texture of the hands and the clothes as well as the working utensil makes it clear that the person is not wealthy and must be making very little money for their labor. Tina Modotti has, with this photograph, romanticized the idea of labor and hard work by aestheticizing the subject and rendering something rough into something beautiful. Though the subject is not one naturally seen as reposeful, the position of the hands and the oneness of the clothes, hands, and tool all seem to suggest a certain peace and tranquility in regards to the work that must be done; a certain honor, even. A piece that would be interesting to juxtapose with *Campesino con Pala* would be *Hands of the Puppeteer* from She did, however, produce pieces that dealt with femininity, nature, and composition. Her flower photographs all seem to address the fragility and fleeting beauty of nature, although one should not forget that flowers often symbolize women. While this is a more non-objective way of discussing femininity and the role of women in society, Modotti has done more literal works by photographing women and children during her many travels. In these works, she focuses on the faces and interaction that exists between a mother and her child; the pride and compassion. In a sense, Modotti is eliminating any unnecessary aesthetic detail in order to capture human expression in its purest form. This same focus and theme resurges in her Tehuantepec series of women portraits. Modotti offers insight into what it meant to be a woman, what Mexican private and public life resembled, societal and political injustices, as well as aesthetical theories of the time.

Chapter 3 : The Neglected Career of Tina Modotti () | peel slowly & see

Tina Modotti (August 16 (or 17) - January 5,) was an Italian photographer, model, actress, and revolutionary political activist for the Comintern. She left Italy in and moved to the USA, where she worked as a model and subsequently as a photographer. In she moved to Mexico.

The great American photographers of the 20th century such as Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Strand and Edward Weston have been prolifically written about, exhibited world wide and become integral to the establishment of photography as an art form within the art historical canon. So who is Tina Modotti? Stated on her death certificate was, Occupation: Housewife, but she was so much more – an actress, model, political activist, writer and photographer who was fundamental to the establishment of modernism in Mexico. I want to uncover her prolific career and the social taboo of the female artist. I recently begun researching the photography of Paul Strand during his Mexican travels in the 30s and discovered the work of Modotti who produced similar visions of the Mexican scape. Tina Modotti was a pioneering force of communism within post-revolutionary Mexico, depicting the struggles of the indigenous poor who suffered due to the governmental regime. She produced haunting, socially poignant photographs and was taught her technique by the master of photography, Edward Weston. Portrait of Modotti, Edward Weston, Modotti was a native Italian who grew up in a radical leaning family in the North. She moved to San Francisco aged 16 and begun a career as an actress. She proved successful, ending up in Hollywood and starring in many silent movies, typecast as the Italian femme fatale. She became part of a bohemian elite, engaging in intellectual love affairs and liaising with artists, musicians and revolutionaries. It is unclear how she met Weston, who was married, but it was most probably at a soiree in the Hollywood Hills. They begun an illicit love affair and eventually moved to Mexico for artistic creative renewal in . They established a studio there and Weston taught Modotti the basics of photography. *Roses*, Tina Modotti, However after becoming intoxicated with the Mexican way of life and befriending communist revolutionaries, Modotti realised that her calling was to focus on the social strife of the indigenous people – known as the concept of *indigenismo*. She became part of the Mexican movement known as *Mexicanidad* which focused on themes of the Mexican past and present and its national struggle. Artists wanted to forge a national identity rooted in the ancient past. *Elisa Kneeling*, , is a captivating image of the oppressed. She depicts her live-in housekeeper in an intimate view – capturing the anguish and suffering of the poor. She acts as an emblem for national identity within Mexico. *Elisa Kneeling*, Tina Modotti, Her relationship with Weston began to deteriorate in and Weston returned to California, leaving Modotti to run their photographic studio. She then became a contributor to the Mexican art and culture magazine, *Mexican Folkways*, producing Communist propaganda images which coincided with her fully fledged allegiance to the party in . She produced her most influential and memorable photographs within this time period, capturing the modernization of Mexico and the continual political uncertainty. She focused on the role of women in her penultimate years in Mexico and was moved by the women of Tehuantepec, who had political and economic freedom and were not seen as subordinate to the male. They were one of the first and only matrilineal societies within Mexico. Her most poignant photographs focus on hands which was a key theme in modernist Mexican photography. The attention to detail through her lens captures the strife of the workers due to the coarse lines and intense grip on the tools. Is Modotti commenting on gender roles within Mexico? Are the hands seen as a coded symbol of the domesticated woman who is perceived fit for household labour chores? He was tragically assassinated in and the Mexican government arrested Modotti for his murder as a scapegoat to improve relations with Cuba. Luckily she was acquitted a week later but understandably she felt threatened for her security. It has been debated by art historians as to whether she gave up photography at this point. She was expelled from Mexico in and travelled throughout Europe, eventually settling in Moscow in . It is believed that she returned to Mexico in under a pseudonym. Her death is shrouded in mystery. She died from a heart attack but Diego Rivera believed she was suspiciously killed due to her involvement in the Spanish Civil War during her time in Europe. Ultimately, her photographs from Mexico are her most compelling and beautiful works from her interdisciplinary career. Her work is beginning to be exhibited more within modern art galleries. In ,

the Barbican held an exhibition on Modotti and Weston and their time in Mexico. Also last summer, the Royal Academy held *Mexico: A Revolution in Art*, and included her work. Hopefully as more women artists are being discovered and investigated by art historians, Modotti will get the recognition she deserves as a true modernist photographer.

CutBank Volume 1 Issue 74CutBank 74 Article 45 Spring Tina Modotti 'Roses' () Kiik Araki-Kawaguchi Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

The photographs that changed photography 13 Sep There are varying accounts as to how Modotti came to meet the married photographer Edward Weston â€” some suggest it was at one of the infamous weekly parties she and Robo threw â€” but what is known is that by April the pair had embarked on a passionate affair. Modotti modelled for Weston often â€” and his portraits of her are round-cheeked, plump-lipped and blurry with sensuality. The country had just emerged from civil war, and was on the brink of a cultural and intellectual revolution. In the bohemian circles in which Modotti and Robo moved, it was a tantalisingly exotic destination. Modotti agreed to go, but delayed her trip â€” and by the time she arrived in Mexico, Robo had contracted smallpox. A few days later, on 9 February , he died, aged After his funeral Modotti went back to America but, with little to hold her there, returned to her original plan to settle in Mexico City. In she set off again â€” this time with Weston who left his wife and children behind in tow. The plan was to open a portrait studio, and the couple made a deal: Modotti, who spoke Spanish, would look after the administrative side of things, while Weston would, in return, teach her photography. In reality, Mexico was a period of experimentation for them both; he moved away from the dreamy, pictorialist portraits that were popular at the time and focused on evocative nudes mostly of Modotti and stilllives. In those early years Mexico was everything the couple had hoped. The city was alive â€” and thanks to public art and education programmes â€” artists were flocking home to Mexico from Europe. They both had affairs including Modotti with Rivera, then married to his first wife, Lupe , and by the mids their approach to photography had diverged as well. While Weston continued to see himself as an artist, whose sole purpose was to create beautiful imagery from even the most ordinary of objects, Modotti saw it differently; to her, photography was a means to document social change. When Weston left Mexico in , Modotti became even more politicised, joining the Communist party and working for El Machete. She established herself as the official photographer of the muralist movement often featuring in murals, too , which also had links to the party. One of her most famous works, Workers Reading El Machete, was taken about this time. But in her political activities came to an abrupt halt when she was implicated in the murder of her lover, the Cuban revolutionary and communist writer Julio Antoni0 Mella. The pair had been in a relationship for about a year, and on 8 January they were walking home together when Mella was shot twice by an unknown assailant. For the next decade Modotti drifted between Berlin, Moscow and Paris, becoming more involved in politics and less in photography. She fell in love with another revolutionary, Vittorio Vidali, and worked for Red Aid as a nurse â€” and possibly as a spy. In after the fall of Madrid, she boarded a ship to New York, where â€” in a happy twist of fate â€” officials, unconvinced by her fake documentation, put her on a ship bound for Mexico. Back in the country she loved, Modotti returned briefly to photography. But her second Mexican sojourn was short-lived. But today, with work hanging in museums and galleries around the world, there can be little doubt: Tina Modotti may have once been a mistress, model, muse, silent-film actress â€” even a spy â€” but, above all, she was an artist.

Modotti, too, filled her portfolio with still lifes (including the now famous Roses), but her images were subtly different; soft and textured, where Weston's were sleek, stark and modernist.

See Article History Alternative Title: Modotti spent most of her childhood in Austria , where her parents were migrant labourers. The family returned to Udine , Italy , where the young Modotti worked in a textile factory. She traveled to the United States in and joined her father and sister in San Francisco. There she became a popular actress on the Italian-language stage. In Los Angeles Modotti acted in three silent films and modeled for photographer Edward Weston , with whom she became romantically involved. In she and Weston moved to Mexico City and opened a portrait studio. Modotti first served as the studio manager, but after learning photography from Weston she became a full partner. Her meticulously composed and finely detailed images of decontextualized objects, places, and people attest to his influence. The couple moved in the same circles as artists Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros , writer Anita Brenner, and other cultural figures. The Story of the Mexican Spirit From on, Modotti was active in leftist politics. Her pivotal photograph Workers Parade reflects her concern for class solidarity among Mexican workers. After joining the Communist Party in , she made images such as Mexican Sombrero with Hammer and Sickle, symbolizing communist ideology and marrying formal elegance with highly charged political content. She collaborated with working-class people to create photographs intended to enhance their class consciousness and convey their dignity and worth. Her photographs for the communist newspaper El Machete were among the earliest examples of critical photojournalism in Mexico. Though she was acquitted of the murder, Modotti was caught in a web of political intrigue. In she was jailed for her alleged participation in an attempted assassination of Mexican Pres. Pascual Ortiz Rubio and was then deported from Mexico. She photographed briefly and without distinction in Berlin before moving to Moscow. After the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in , Modotti traveled to Spain , where she undertook humanitarian and political work for International Red Aid in support of the Republican cause. Upon the fascist victory in , she fled to France and then to Mexico, where she lived semiclandestinely. She died unexpectedly in Although her photographic career spanned only about seven years, she developed an original approach to political photography. Her images remain emblematic of postrevolutionary Mexico.

Chapter 6 : Concha Michel - Wikipedia

Roses, Tina Modotti, However after becoming intoxicated with the Mexican way of life and befriending communist revolutionaries, Modotti realised that her calling was to focus on the social strife of the indigenous people - known as the concept of indiginismo.

Tina Modotti and Edward Weston. The exhibition is organized by Sandra S. For five years in the s, two of the major figures in 20th century art, Tina Modotti and Edward Weston, shared a passionate partnership. They also shared a love for Mexico, where they lived and worked together from until , each making pictures of astonishing beauty and ambition. Born in Italy in , Modotti had received little formal education before immigrating to San Francisco to join the rest of her family in . She worked as a seamstress and an actress in the local Italian theater, then moved with her husband, the artist Robo de Richey, to Los Angeles, where they became members of a burgeoning community of bohemian artists, poets, and socialists. In Los Angeles in Modotti met and began a romantic relationship with Weston, a fashionable portrait photographer with an ambition to make art. In December of , inspired by reports of great social change, a newly stable government, and a reverence for artists as catalysts for reform and growth in the wake of the Mexican Revolution, de Richey moved to Mexico City. When Modotti joined him there a few months later, she discovered him dying of smallpox. Determined to return to Mexico, she relocated once again in -- this time with Weston as her companion. He learned about the adventurous avant-garde circles in Mexico through her interest in art and politics, while she learned the craft of photography from him, adapting his large camera and platinum process for her own needs. Photography became her livelihood, and she described it as "the most eloquent, the most direct means for fixing, for registering, the present epoch. Many of the photographs featured in Mexico as Muse are Graflex pictures she sent to her mother-in-law. Weston and Modotti occupy an important place in the history of photography. Both were deeply affected by their life in Mexico, inspired by the artistic activity and social optimism that stemmed from an emphasis on indigenous people and ancient culture as key to the reawakening of the country. Modotti, meanwhile, discovered cubist structure in adobe churches, taut telephone wires, and a stream of peasant sombreros parading beneath a window. She explored the still life as a photographic genre, taking pictures that serve as both documentary records and potent cultural symbols. In Weston returned to California, but Modotti adopted Mexico as her homeland, remaining there until , when her involvement in Communism precipitated her deportation to Berlin. Modotti went back to Mexico in escaping the Spanish Civil War , going first to New York and then to Mexico, under the pseudonym Maria, before gaining political asylum in Mexico in . She died there of a heart attack in . The program is free with gallery admission. Also, throughout the run of the exhibition, Tina in Mexico, a film by Brenda Longfellow, will be shown daily except Wednesdays at 2: It was an intense and fruitful time for both of them, and when they parted they had each made significant photographic work. The two met in in Los Angeles Modotti, born in Italy, had recently moved there from San Francisco , and they soon became lovers. She was young, beautiful, and intelligent, and he, though an established local photographer, was not yet the significant modern artist he would later become. When they moved to Mexico it was with the understanding that Weston would teach her photography and that she would organize and run his portrait-studio business. Mexico was an exciting place to be at that time: Its momentous artistic activity, social reforms, and radical politics were centered on creating an invigorated society that honored indigenous people and their rich, ancient culture. His sharply focused pictures represent monumental pyramids, spiky maguey plants, and worn circus tents as abstract forms. Modotti also found modern forms, but her pictures tend to be more tactile, personal, and socially sensitive. Telephone lines, pulled taut like hair, are geometric but also allude to recent rural electrification. A bouquet of roses, viewed at unabashedly close range, seems less sculptural than fragile, and as vulnerable as skin. By she was using a handheld Graflex camera to take many of the more spontaneous pictures included in this exhibition. The work he made in Mexico informed the rest of his career; the semiabstract forms he later found in peppers and shells certainly derive from his photographs of desert plants and earthenware pots. Modotti stayed in Mexico, and, as her political sensibilities evolved, her work became more exhortative and less spontaneous, though she still

took wonderful pictures of laborers who seem almost magically aligned to the scaffolding on which they stand and the matriarchal community in Tehuantepec. In she joined the Communist Party, and in she was deported from Mexico and ceased making photographs altogether. Weston moves to Los Angeles and begins apprenticing in commercial photography studios. Weston is introduced to avant-garde photography circles in Los Angeles. She begins acting in the Italian theater in San Francisco. Robo contracts smallpox and Modotti hurries to Mexico; he dies days after her arrival. She carries out his planned exhibition. Weston leaves Mexico for good after completing the project. She meets and becomes romantically involved with the exiled Cuban revolutionary Julio Antonio Mella. Mella is assassinated as he walks down a Mexico City street with Modotti. The police name her as a suspect, interrogate her, then release her. At the end of the year Modotti has her first solo exhibition at the National University. The group holds its first exhibition at the de Young Museum in San Francisco. Weston wins a Guggenheim Fellowship for his Western photographs. She then travels to Mexico, where she attempts to live incognito. Readers may also find of interest:

Chapter 7 : Masters of Photography: Tina Modotti

Roses, Mexico City, by Tina Modotti is a Framed Photographic Print expertly set in a CHELSEA Black frame with Crisp - Bright White and Conservation Black matting. High-quality printing gives this beautiful fine art photographic print its vivid and sharp appearance.

Share via Email Tina Modotti was always rather dismissive of her beauty - as only the very beautiful tend to be. The photographer Edward Weston was famously smitten by her: Diego Rivera immortalised her in his public murals. Pablo Neruda penned her epitaph: She inspired deep infatuation, great art, poignant poetry. Soon after giving up film work, she became the model, lover and apprentice of Weston. A kind of It girl of the avant-garde, Modotti was both celebrated and vilified in her lifetime. She was well known for her grand romances with illustrious men, and for her apparently effortless knack of inspiring others. Add to such high-octane intrigue her political activism in Mexico, Moscow and Europe - not to mention her early and sudden death in , at the age of 46 - and it is easy to see why the Modotti myth has been revisited in recent years. Unsurprisingly, there has been talk of a feature film about her life - she is an immensely versatile icon, representing many things to many people: Then, of course, there is the matter of her photography - ultimately, the only real certainty about her. Whatever the feverish speculation that surrounded the cult of her persona - and surrounds it still - Modotti was a great and visionary photographer. Her gifts and passion were unique, and her skill truly groundbreaking. In a photographic career of less than a decade, she produced work that was so startlingly innovative that she is now widely considered to be an important pioneer of modern photography. Still, such is the melodrama that surrounds her story - a mythology fuelled by the portraits of her as much as by her own images - that it has tended to colour the perception of her work. Recently shown in Arles, and moving next month to Helsinki, is a new exhibition, Tina Modotti And The Mexican Renaissance, which attempts to strip Modotti of the romanticism that surrounds her, and to present her work in a pure form within a strictly historical context. The exhibition was made possible by a surprise discovery. The family directed Albers to their attic, where she found two crates packed with papers, letters, telegrams - and some original photographs and contact sheets that had never before been seen in public. The exhibition is the first showcase in Europe for these photographs, and they will be displayed alongside photographs from the private collection of New York dealer Truck Morton. It is, perhaps, no surprise that Modotti was so drawn to Mexico. She said that it reminded her of her homeland. Born into a working-class family in Udine, northern Italy, in , Modotti had followed her father and sister to California in . She found work as a seamstress, but soon emerged from obscurity when she took to the stage in the theatres of the San Francisco Italian community and, following her marriage to Robo, the Hollywood studio world. She enjoyed some success on the silent-movie screen, although she was always typecast as a gypsy or harem girl. Modotti soon tired of the movie world, however, and - spurred on by her adulterous liaison with Weston - she became increasingly drawn to photography. There is no doubt that she benefited from the tutelage of the brilliant Weston: Photography became her passion, and even when the relationship with Weston foundered, she ensured that the apprenticeship thrived. It was Robo who first left for Mexico, in , and his wife planned to join him later. A couple of months into his stay, however, he became ill with smallpox and, after a violent few days, died. In , the year dictatorship of General Porfirio Diaz had collapsed into a brutal conflict that tore Mexico apart. Modernisation was getting underway, and the arts were, for the first time in living memory, being treated with a new seriousness. An ambitious cultural policy was coming into play, combining social and educational initiatives. Little wonder that intellectuals, writers, poets and artists were drawn to Mexico City, which quickly established itself as the central axis of this cultural renewal and became home to an artistic revolution. It was not only painters such as Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo and David Alfaro Siqueiros who were exponents of the new vision; photographers, too, played a major role. She was especially struck by the work of the muralists, who encapsulated the mood of a country emerging from dictatorship and unrest: So much so, in fact, that Modotti, shocked by what she had heard about her native Italy under fascist rule, joined the Mexican Communist party in . She allied herself to the Estridentista, or Stridentist movement, a circle of writers and artists with internationalist aspirations for

their country. It was a time when many photographers were clinging to a romantic ideal of Mexico, yet Modotti concentrated on the urban reality: Such images were rigorously constructed and, with their bold patterns and vertiginous angles, a million miles from the bucolic sensibility that was the norm at the time. This is not to say that Modotti was immune to "exoticism"; on the contrary, she was equally drawn to the picturesque drama of Mexican life, and her subjects are ennobled in her images. Many of the pictures discovered by Patricia Albers present images of workers as valiant heroes: *Indians Carrying Blocks Of Stone*. Her work also emphasised the shortcomings of government institutions, capturing the stark contrasts between the lives of the rich and the poor by juxtaposing urban squalor with bourgeois scenes. Also among the new finds is an arresting image of a young girl writing. Alongside this picture were found numerous street scenes of women and children going about their daily business in harsh conditions, some of them shot in soft focus. The photographs *Making Tortillas* and *Women With Children Doing Laundry*, along with the images of women carrying heavy loads on their heads, portray stoicism in adversity and a tenderness towards the subjects that stops just short of sentimentality. In the shot of a political rally in , before the murder of Obregon, the bold patterns made by the straw sombreros and draped white cotton clothing seem like symbols of quiet order amid tumult. They make an arresting sight, as does the portrait of Modotti wearing Tehuantepec Indian costume - a self- portrait, and not a particularly accomplished photo, but a telling moment in the life of a woman for whom Mexico had become a kind of spiritual home. She was unable to have children - a string of grand passions transformed her life, but she died alone, with no family. All the more ironic, then, that Rivera miscasts Modotti as an earth mother in one of his murals high above the altar in a Mexican cathedral. She put everything into her photographs. But after just four months together, Mella was assassinated as the couple were walking along a street in Mexico City. In the aftermath of his death, Modotti was arrested and tried for conspiracy in the murder, and the Mexican newspapers made headlines out of the false allegations. At the same time, Modotti was viewed as the official "widow" of the martyred hero, and became a kind of mascot for the international revolutionary movement. Modotti was eventually acquitted, but by all foreign communists were being expelled from Mexico. The authorities were watching Modotti closely, and became convinced - not without cause - that her house had become a base for insurgents. She was implicated, falsely, in a conspiracy to kill the Mexican president, and was deported. She spent the rest of the decade based in Moscow as a Soviet agent and apparatchik, and during the Spanish Civil War acted as an organiser with Red Aid. When the republican cause was dashed, she returned to Mexico, an exile with a false passport, and - together with her new lover, the Spanish Civil War hero Vittorio Vidali - became involved again in political work. She died there from a heart attack, although rumours suggested foul play or even suicide. When she arrived in the US following her deportation from Mexico in , press photographers scrabbled to take her picture. Trying to convince her to pose for them, they promised to make her look pretty. She later described the scene in a letter to Weston, adding, "I could not understand what prettiness had to do with the revolutionary movement. A book of the exhibition, with 80 reproductions, is published by Jean Michel Place and is available from www.

Chapter 8 : THE DAWN OF MODERNISM: Early Twentieth-Century Mexican Photography | The Brooklyn

Calle - Tina Modotti Though best remembered as Edward Weston's model, Tina Modotti was a fine 20th century photographer and activist who fought on behalf of Mexican peasants in the s. She was a woman who "chose to identify herself with the arts, with the poor, and with the solidarity of the revolution."

In , Modotti began a romantic relationship with him and moved with him to Los Angeles in order to pursue a career in the motion picture industry. She had minor parts in two other films. Another was the photographer, Edward Weston. Photography career[edit] It is supposed[by whom? Later in the U. It was through her relationship with Edward Weston that Modotti developed as an important fine art photographer and documentarian. Robo left for Mexico in December While she was on her way to be with Robo, Modotti received word of his death from smallpox on February 9, She sustained a second loss with the death of her father which forced her return to San Francisco later in March In Modotti and Weston were commissioned by Anita Brenner to travel around Mexico and take photographs for what would become her influential book *Idols Behind Altars*. Starting in , a much more politically active Modotti she joined the Mexican Communist Party that year found her focus shifting and more of her work becoming politically motivated. Her later works were the focus of her one-woman retrospective exhibition at the National Library in December , which was advertised as "The First Revolutionary Photographic Exhibition In Mexico". Life as an activist[edit] In , Modotti began a relationship with Xavier Guerrero , who was a member of the Communist party. Modotti " who was a target of both the Mexican and Italian political police [10] " was questioned about both crimes amidst a concerted anti-communist, anti-immigrant press campaign, that depicted "the fierce and bloody Tina Modotti" as the perpetrator a Catholic zealot, Daniel Luis Flores, was later charged with shooting Rubio. The Italian government made concerted efforts to extradite her as a subversive national, but with the assistance of International Red Aid activists, she evaded detention by the fascist police. She apparently intended to make her way into Italy to join the anti-fascist resistance there. In response to the deteriorating political situation in Germany and her own exhausted resources, however, she followed the advice of Vittorio Vidali and moved to Moscow in Reports of later photographs are unsubstantiated. During the next few years she engaged in various missions on behalf of the Workers International Relief organizations as a Comintern agent in Europe. When the Spanish Civil War erupted in , Vidali then known as "Comandante Carlos" and Modotti using the pseudonym "Maria" left Moscow for Spain , where they stayed and worked until She worked with Canadian Dr. In , following the collapse of the Republican movement in Spain, Modotti left Spain with Vidali and returned to Mexico under a pseudonym. An autopsy showed that she died of natural causes, namely congestive heart failure. Pure your gentle name, pure your fragile life, bees, shadows, fire, snow, silence and foam, combined with steel and wire and pollen to make up your firm and delicate being. Murals by Diego Rivera that include Modotti[edit] This section does not cite any sources. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. The mural depicts Modotti passing out ammunition, perhaps for the revolution of Augusto Sandino in Nicaragua, perhaps for the "invasion" of Cuba that Mella was planning at that time hoping to overthrow the regime of General Gerardo Machado , or perhaps just in support of insurrection against injustice everywhere. She is shown gazing at her then lover Mella while Vidali peers over her shoulder. She wrote to Weston, "Recently Diego has taken to painting details with an exaggerated precision. He leaves nothing to the imagination. The final rift between Modotti on the one hand and Rivera and Kahlo on the other, less than a month later appears to have been political rather than personal. Later, she explained her decision to abandon photography for political work following her expulsion from Mexico thus inverting an outlook stated to her years earlier by Edward Weston: Select photography exhibitions[edit] In the Philadelphia Museum of Art organized a large scale retrospective dedicated to the artist, entitled *Tina Modotti: In order to raise funds for the show, the singer Madonna auctioned off her Mercedes-Benz. Tina Modotti and Edward Weston. In the exhibition Tina Modotti:*

Chapter 9 : Tina Modotti. Roses, Mexico. | MoMA

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Tina Modotti biography - A versatile woman and an expert of photography at her time, Tina Modotti was born in and died in She was an Italian model, a political activist, A recently republished book sorts out the life of Tina Modotti as an artist and activist " and the long shadow of Edward Weston.