



Figaro Fandango, Glyndebourne

Date

June 8, 1937 (printed 1984)

Primary Maker

Ilse Bing

Medium

Gelatin silver print

Description

Ilse Bing attended the University of Frankfurt, originally intending to study mathematics and physics but subsequently pursuing a doctorate in art history. She began making photographs for her dissertation on the German architect Friedrich Gilly, which she curtailed in 1929 to embark on a career as an artist and a photojournalist. The following year, she moved to Paris, where she remained for the next decade. Bing eagerly embraced new technology in the field of photography, including the 35-millimeter Leica camera (released in 1926)—she became known as the “Queen of the Leica”—as well as new models of telephoto and wide-angle lenses, flashbulbs (introduced in 1927), and high-speed film. She also experimented in the darkroom with extreme cropping and enlarging sections of her negatives. The artist made many photographs of dancers in motion, including cancan dancers at the infamous Moulin Rouge nightclub. “Movement is so

important,” the artist stated. “Nothing rests in our compositions, even if it seemingly rests, there is a dynamic of movement which you feel.” Her 1933 photographs of the ballet *L'Errante* (The Wanderer) at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, with sets by the Russian artist Pavel Tchelitchew, were technically virtuosic, having been shot with only available light. In 1937, Bing was commissioned by the Glyndebourne Festival Opera in East Sussex, England, to photograph the performances—one of the few assignments she accepted in the late 1930s. This print depicts a moment in the third act of Mozart’s comic opera *Le nozze di Figaro* (The Marriage of Figaro), performed at the festival on June 8, 1937. (SOURCE: Alcauskas, *INNOVATIVE APPROACHES, HONORED TRADITIONS*, 2017)

Dimensions

Image: 13 3/8 × 10 3/16 in. (34 × 25.9 cm) Sheet: 14 × 10 15/16 in. (35.6 × 27.8 cm)