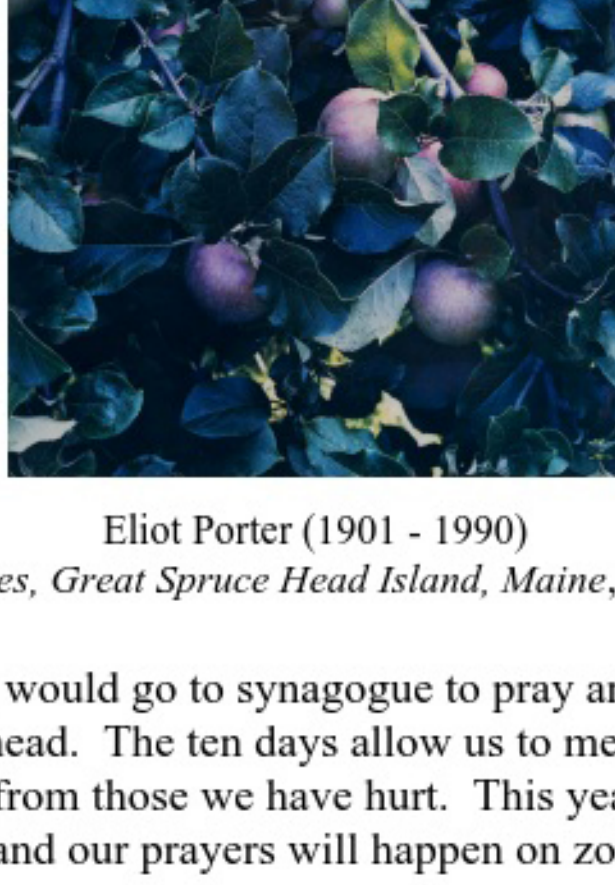


Equivalents

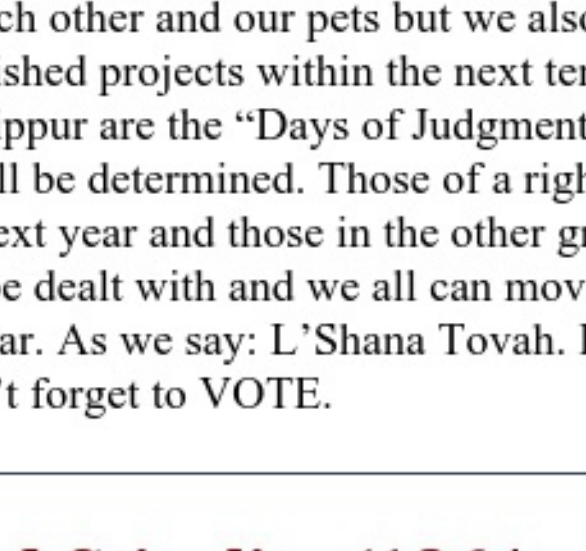
Tonight begins the Jewish holiday of Rosh Hashanah, the holiday that celebrates and welcomes in a New Year, year 5781. Rosh Hashanah begins a ten-day celebration ending in the holiest day of the year, Yom Kippur. Tonight Jews will share a traditional festive meal and the tradition of dipping apples in honey to evoke a sweet new year.



Eliot Porter (1901 - 1990)
Apples, Great Spruce Head Island, Maine, 1942

Usually after dinner, many would go to synagogue to pray and reflect on the year past and set goals for the year ahead. The ten days allow us to meditate on what we could do better, and ask forgiveness from those we have hurt. This year, however, I expect that both our family gatherings and our prayers will happen on zoom.

Probably the best-known ritual of Rosh Hashanah is the blowing of the Shofar, a ram's horn. The Shofar is blown at numerous instances during the ten days of Rosh Hashanah prayers. The blowing of the Shofar is a symbolic "wake up call" stirring us to think about our ways and mend them where necessary.

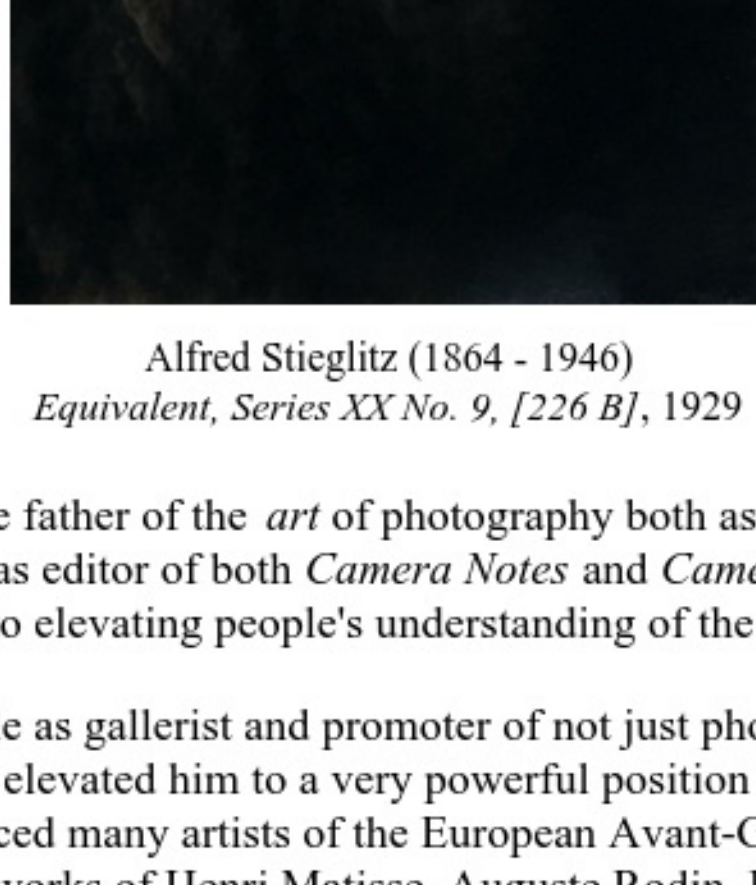


It is written that the New Year is for people, animals, and contracts, which imply that we do not just celebrate with each other and our pets but we also try to tie up loose ends and settle all accounts and unfinished projects within the next ten days. It is also written that Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are the "Days of Judgment" wherein the fate of the wicked and the righteous will be determined. Those of a righteous life will be inscribed in the "Book of Life" for the next year and those in the other group will not. Let's hope those "wicked" in our midst will be dealt with and we all can move on and together celebrate a Happy and Healthy New Year. As we say: L'Shana Tovah. Happy New Year from our family to all of you and don't forget to VOTE.

Alfred Stieglitz (1864 - 1946)

While we are looking upward towards the heavens today we will discuss a remarkable body of work within the oeuvre of Alfred Stieglitz's photographs, his Equivalents.

"Through clouds I wanted to put down my philosophy of life - to show that my photographs were not due to subject matter - not to special trees, or faces, or interiors, to special privileges, clouds were there for everyone - no tax as yet on them - free."

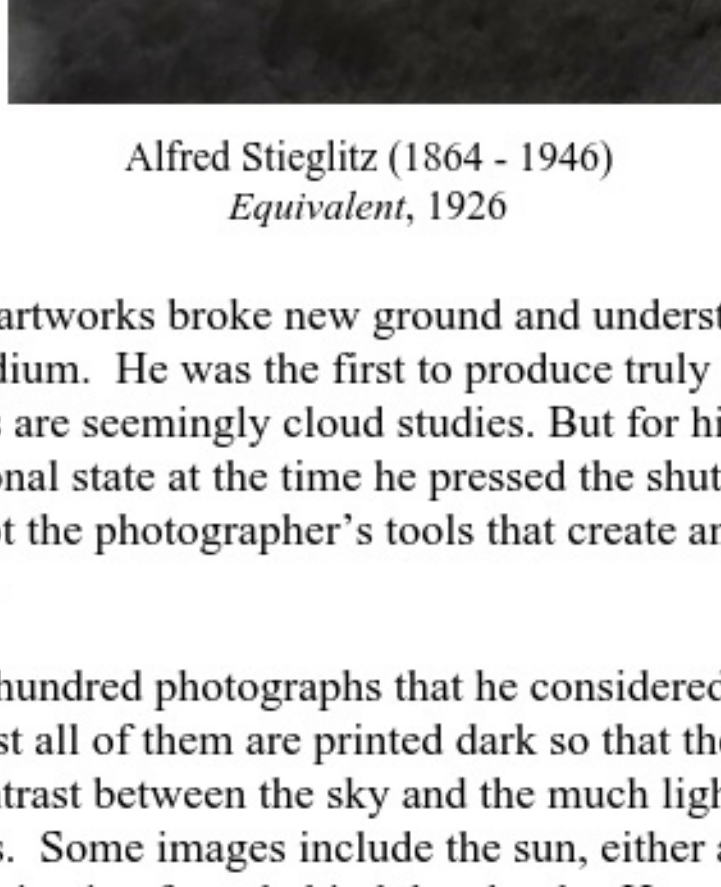


Alfred Stieglitz (1864 - 1946)
Equivalent, Series XX No. 9, [226 B], 1929

Considered by many the father of the *art* of photography both as a noted gallerist, artist, and through his efforts as editor of both *Camera Notes* and *Camera Work*, two publications dedicated to elevating people's understanding of the photographic medium.

Stieglitz's important role as gallerist and promoter of not just photography, but also modern art in America, elevated him to a very powerful position in the art world. In his 291 Gallery, he introduced many artists of the European Avant-Garde to an American audience including the works of Henri Matisse, Auguste Rodin, Paul Cezanne, Pablo Picasso, Constantine Brancusi, Marcel Duchamp, to name a few. Amongst the photographers he exhibited were Edward Steichen, Alvin Langdon Coburn, Gertrude Käsebier, and Clarence White. Needless to say, he made reputations and careers to those who exhibited on his gallery walls, which practically guaranteed a cherished position in the art world. Unfortunately, his powerful position within the art world precluded a number of folks from taking Stieglitz's photography seriously. Many feared him thus preventing truly honest appraisals of his own photography and his contributions to the medium as an artist himself.

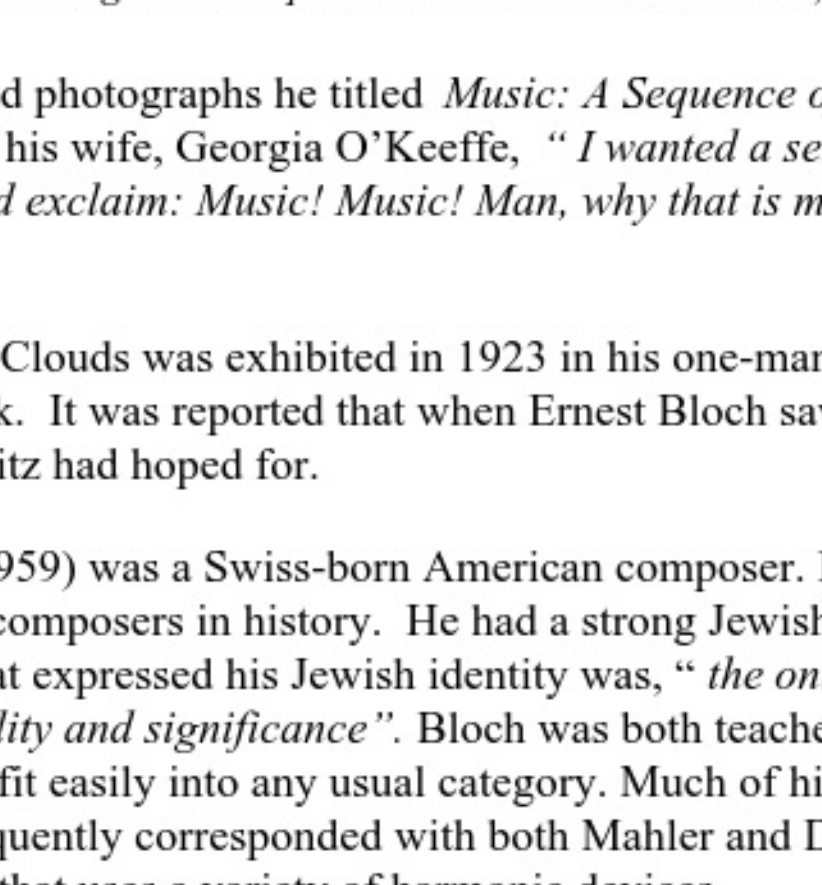
Possibly frustrated with the art world when it came to his photographic work he chose a subject matter that was there for everyone. No one could accuse him of having special powers over his subject, or special equipment. No one could claim that his success in photography was due to the position he held. In 1922 Stieglitz read a commentary about his photography by Waldo Frank that suggested the strength of his imagery was in the power of the individuals he photographed. Stieglitz was outraged; it was then that he began to turn his camera upwards towards the sky.



Alfred Stieglitz (1864 - 1946)
Equivalent, 1926

Stieglitz's photographic artworks broke new ground and understanding of the potential for the photographic medium. He was the first to produce truly abstract imagery with the camera. His Equivalents are seemingly cloud studies. But for him, they served as metaphors for his emotional state at the time he pressed the shutter. His work demonstrates that it is not the photographer's tools that create an image, but rather an artist's vision and intent.

Stieglitz made over 200 hundred photographs that he considered Equivalents. All feature clouds in the sky. Almost all of them are printed dark so that the sky often appears black or nearly black. The contrast between the sky and the much lighter clouds is striking in all but a few of the prints. Some images include the sun, either as a distant element in the photograph or as an illuminating force behind the clouds. He wrote, *"I wanted to photograph clouds to find out what I had learned in 40 years about photography. Through clouds to put down my philosophy of life - ... my aim is increasingly to make my photographs look so much like photographs that unless one has eyes and sees, they won't be seen - and still everyone will never forget them having once looked at them."*

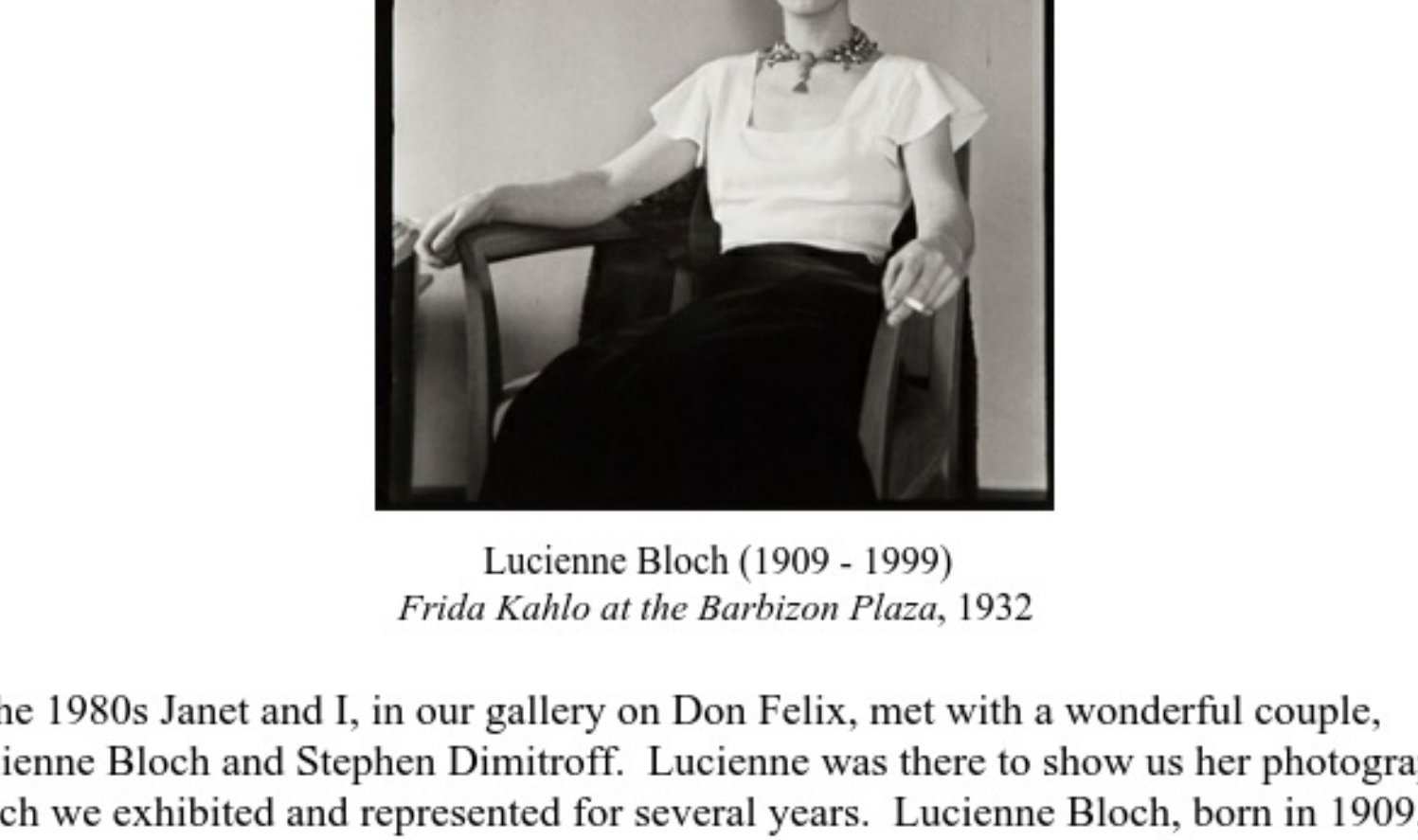


Nancy Newhall (1908 - 1974)
Alfred Stieglitz and Equivalents at an American Place, 1943

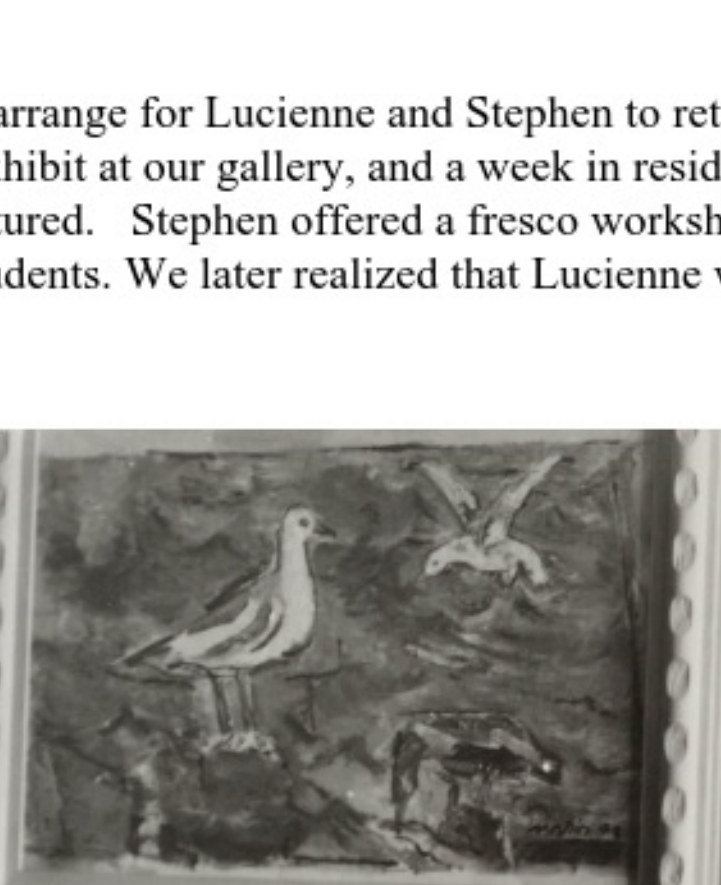
The first of these cloud photographs he titled *Music: A Sequence of Ten Cloud Photographs*. He told his wife, Georgia O'Keeffe, *"I wanted a series that when seen by Ernest Bloch he would exclaim: Music! Music! Man, why that is music! How did you ever do that?..."*

The Sequence of Ten Clouds was exhibited in 1923 in his one-man show at the Anderson Galleries in New York. It was reported that when Ernest Bloch saw them there he had the reaction Alfred Stieglitz had hoped for.

Ernest Bloch (1880-1959) was a Swiss-born American composer. He is recognized as one of the greatest Swiss composers in history. He had a strong Jewish upbringing and felt that to write music that expressed his Jewish identity was, *"the only way in which I can produce music of vitality and significance"*. Bloch was both teacher and composer; his musical style doesn't fit easily into any usual category. Much of his works have Hebrew inspired titles. He frequently corresponded with both Mahler and Debussy, which helped form his unique style that uses a variety of harmonic devices.



Lucienne Bloch (1909 - 1999)
Diego Rivera's fresco, Man at the Crossroads, in progress. May 1933. RCA building, Rockefeller Center, New York



Lucienne Bloch (1909 - 1999)
Frida Kahlo at the Barbizon Plaza, 1932

In the 1980s Janet and I, in our gallery on Don Felix, met with a wonderful couple, Lucienne Bloch and Stephen Dimitroff. Lucienne was there to show us her photographs, which we exhibited and represented for several years. Lucienne Bloch, born in 1909, worked as Diego Rivera's chief photographer on the Rockefeller Center mural project. Her husband, Stephen, was Rivera's plasterer for the fresco murals. Lucienne was also a close friend of Diego Rivera's wife, the artist Frida Kahlo, and later became her traveling companion. Her photographs of Frida Kahlo are legendary as are her photographs of the destroyed Rockefeller murals, which were destroyed because Lenin's face was depicted in the mural.

Janet and I were able to arrange for Lucienne and Stephen to return to Santa Fe the following year for her exhibit at our gallery, and a week in lecture at the College of Santa Fe. They both lectured. Stephen offered a fresco workshop and Lucienne worked with my photography students. We later realized that Lucienne was Ernst Bloch's daughter. Small world.



Todd Webb (1905 - 2000)
Alfred Stieglitz at American Place, New York, 1946

We prepared a short three-minute presentation grouping a number of Alfred Stieglitz's Equivalents accompanied to the music of Ernest Bloch, as Stieglitz had hoped. Please take a few minutes to enjoy and reflect on this work. Lower the lights in your room and take a few minutes of introspection and meditation.



Again, please accept our best wishes for a year of Peace, Love and Productivity.
L'Shana Tovah.

We again want to thank you for the feedback. Your emails and calls mean the world to us and continue to motivate. We have had some wonderful responses.

Many of you have also asked about accessing our previous emails. We have added a new page on our website entitled ["History of Photography"](#). All our past and future weekly mailings will be located there for viewing. Please feel free to share them and encourage interested parties to join our mailing list under ["contact"](#).

Thank you, please stay safe, healthy, productive, and involved.

Please visit our website www.photographydealers.com to view our current inventory.