

# PONTUS HULTÉN AND MODERNA MUSEET

## THE FORMATIVE YEARS

MODERNA MUSEET

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Pontus Hultén and Moderna Museet.  
The Formative Years

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## Preface

Daniel Birnbaum

Pontus Hultén's years at the Moderna Museet were formative. For most of the art world, it is probably his work at the Centre Pompidou in Paris that defines him. Swedes, however, will always remember Hultén, first and foremost, as the inventive director in Stockholm. He arrived at the fledgling institution in 1958 – having spent the previous seven years shuttling between his native city and Paris, curating gallery shows and forging connections with artists like Jean Tinguely and Robert Breer – and took the helm in 1960. In the ensuing decade, he made the museum famous. One of his greatest gifts was his sense of timing, his ability to be at the right place at the right moment and to home in on the most interesting things going on. It's a talent apparent in the list of groundbreaking shows he organised at Moderna Museet: *Movement in Art* (1961), one of the first exhibitions of kinetic art; two of Europe's first surveys of American Pop art (in 1962 and 1964) and its first Andy Warhol retrospective (1968); and experimental initiatives like *Poetry Must Be Made By All! Transform the World!* (1969), a show about radical politics that, in lieu of artworks, presented documentation and progressive activities, including visits from American draft dodgers and Black Panthers.

But he made perhaps the biggest impression with the startling collaborative installation *She – A Cathedral*, 1966 (conceived by Niki de Saint Phalle, Jean Tinguely, and Per Olov Ultvedt, with significant input from Hultén): a gigantic, lurid cathedral in the form of a supine woman that viewers could walk into, the entry being between her legs. Inside, visitors found a pond, full of goldfish, a love seat for couples, a bar, a small cinema showing a Greta Garbo movie, a playground with a slide and many other surprises. Green and red lights controlled the traffic through the vaginal entrance. It was sexual liberation for the entire family, something that, at the time, was probably conceivable only in Sweden, and it was an instant sensation. With such efforts throughout his career it was clear that Hultén was quite willing to privilege the creative side of his institutional role and that he, as Saint Phalle once claimed, had the soul of an artist.

Another of Hultén's talents was his ability to act as a social fulcrum, to surround himself with people who could work fruitfully with him and with each other. In 1960, for instance, he introduced Billy Klüver to Tinguely, instigating the visionary engineer's entrance into the art world. Hultén's circle in Stockholm included Peter Weiss, the polymath best known for authoring *Marat/Sade* (1964), and artist Öyvind Fahlström. On the museum's staff, he had Ulf Linde – writer, Duchamp expert and leading jazz musician – and Carlo Derkert, a quirky genius who turned the museum's educational programme into a kind of ongoing happening.

Compared to today's Moderna Museet, the institution that Hultén directed half a century ago was small and intimate, and even the most publicly successful exhibitions in those days had an audience that from today's perspective would be considered modest in size. And yet much of what Hultén realised and what he wanted his institution to represent remains valid today, and some of his fundamental beliefs continue to influence the museum's programmes and exhibitions to this day. What no doubt still animates the institution is the internationalism and a will toward experimentation as well as an awareness that art lives in a lively dialogue with other disciplines, such as film, dance, music and literature. The expansive geographies of today's art world of course make most European institutions in the 1960s appear limited in their outlook. Paris and New York were the dominating centres, and yet there were exceptions to the rule – occasionally works by artists from Latin America and Asia were included in the exhibitions of the 1960s. Today Moderna Museet famously exhibits more woman artists than any other comparable institution in the world. That was not the case during Hultén's years as director. But there were exceptions here too: a number of Scandinavian textile artists, Hannah Ryggen among them, were given important solo exhibitions during the museum's first decade.

At the very heart of today's Moderna Museet a curatorial laboratory has been created in which Hultén's spirit is very much alive. The machinery is quite loud, and that is something that the architect Renzo Piano, its designer, likes. In fact, as he explained during the premiere at Moderna Museet in Stockholm in 2008 – where his contraption makes walls of artworks descend from the ceiling along metal tracks – he would not have minded it being even noisier. However cool his architecture, Piano has a taste for extravagant machines, something he shared with his longtime friend Hultén, at

whose behest and in whose spirit the unique apparatus was created. In 2005, Hultén donated his roughly eight-hundred-piece art collection to the museum, but only on the condition that the works would still be available to the public in an open-storage warehouse designed by Renzo Piano (who had, of course, already been Hultén's partner in creating the Centre Pompidou in Paris). Curator Anna Tellgren, who directs the Moderna Museet's research programmes, has turned this experimental site into a constantly changing modernist *wunderkammer*, a key location for anyone interested in curatorial practices. The Pontus Hultén Study Gallery is perhaps the best testament – and a permanent one at that – to the playfulness and democratic ambition of the early years of this museum, as well as to the man who put it on the international map.





Pontus Hultén and Moderna Museet.  
Research and learning based on an art collection,  
an archive and a library

Anna Tellgren

Pontus Hultén (1924–2006) worked at Moderna Museet between 1958 and 1973. As its director, he built the collection and the Museum's international reputation, with exhibitions such as *Movement in Art* (1961), *American Pop Art*, *106 Forms of Love and Despair* (1964), *She – A Cathedral* (1966), and *Andy Warhol* (1968). In 2005 he donated his private art collection, his library, and his archives to Moderna Museet. Research relating to Pontus Hultén has now entered a new phase, focusing especially on his practice as an exhibition curator and museum director. In the 1990s, curatorship became increasingly professionalised, as major international exhibitions and art biennials gained more prominence, along with the emergence of numerous specialised study programmes.<sup>1</sup> Several long, retrospective interviews with Pontus Hultén about his life and profession were made around that time.<sup>2</sup> One of these was carried out by the Stockholm-based contemporary art magazine *Material*, which interviewed Hultén in 1994 as part of its series on curators.<sup>3</sup> A few years later, Hans-Ulrich Obrist conducted an interview with Hultén for *Artforum*, which is included in his book *A Brief History of Curating* (2008) and frequently quoted and referenced.<sup>4</sup> This, and later interviews highlight more or less the same aspects: Pontus Hultén's own practice as an artist and filmmaker, and the early exhibitions in the 1950s in Stockholm and Paris, Marcel Duchamp, the first years at Moderna Museet, collaborations with Jean Tinguely, Willem Sandberg and the Stedelijk Museum, *The Machine* (1968) at the Museum of Modern Art, the years with Centre Pompidou, and, finally, his ideas for the Institut des hautes études en arts plastiques (IHEAP).<sup>5</sup> In a number of these interviews, Pontus Hultén comments and reflects on the term *curator*, and his perception of this role after many years as a director and manager of various museums. It is also noteworthy that the book and exhibition at Moderna Museet in 2004 featuring his collection point out that he operated as an international curator before the word had been established in the Swedish language.<sup>6</sup>

Pontus Hultén has impacted on Moderna Museet in a variety of ways, since he was involved in the Museum from the start and

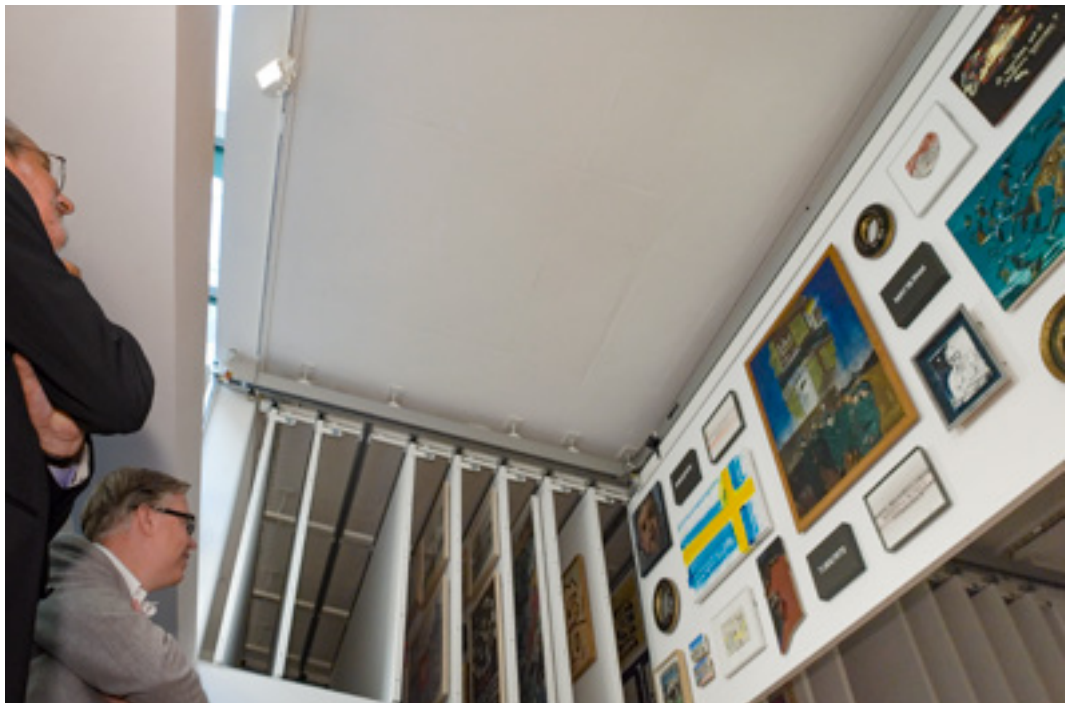


Intallations in the Pontus Hultén Study Gallery,  
Moderna Museet, 2008



was appointed its director in 1960.<sup>7</sup> Many of the artists he invited are still represented with key works in the collection, including Robert Rauschenberg and his *Monogram* (1955–59) – also known as “The Goat” – which was acquired after close contacts with the artist in connection with several early exhibitions at the Museum.<sup>8</sup> The purpose of our current research project *Pontus Hultén and Moderna Museet. Research and learning based on an art collection, an archive and a library*, is to perform an inventory and to process material in the Museum archives and collection with links to Pontus Hultén, and to explore the legacy of the legendary 1960s and its implications for the Museum today. By letting researchers analyse this material, we can deepen and expand our understanding of the period. Our method is based on keeping close to the archive and making a more thorough analysis of the exhibitions and projects that Pontus Hultén was involved in. Our main sources are Moderna Museet’s public archives (MMA MA), Pontus Hultén’s archive (MMA PHA), and the Nationalmuseum archive (NMA), since Moderna Museet did not become a separate government agency until 1999. A comment heard frequently among colleagues and journalists in Sweden is that this is yet another of the Museum’s studies of Pontus Hultén, but our international contacts and collaborations have revealed that the knowledge about Moderna Museet and its history is not particularly widespread. For instance, there is still a common misconception that the exhibition *Bewogen Beweging* (1961) was initiated by Willem Sandberg and produced for and by the Stedelijk Museum. Further studies of the Swedish material are needed in multiple languages, as many Nordic researchers have found. The project is a continuation of the long-term initiative for research on Moderna Museet’s collection and history, and to present the results to the Museum’s large audience, through exhibitions, catalogues, articles, symposiums and various events.

The project is financed by the Swedish Arts Council’s funding for research on Central Museums, and is expected to run for just over two years, ending in 2018 when the Museum celebrates its 60th anniversary. The research team includes in-house researchers Annika Gunnarsson, Ph.D. and curator of prints and drawings, Ylva Hillström, M.Phil. and curator education, and Anna Tellgren, Ph.D., curator of photography and research leader. Anna Lundström, Ph.D., Stockholm University, is the external researcher on the team, which also includes Susana Mendoza Brackenhoff, registrar and archive manager at Moderna Museet. Linda Andersson has been the archive



Above: The Pontus Hultén Study Gallery, Moderna Museet, 2008. Below: Lars Nittve and Renzo Piano at the opening of the Study Gallery 30 May, 2008

assistant for the project, engaged especially in cataloguing the library. For two articles in the prospective book, we invited the external scholars Patrik Andersson, Ph.D. and associate professor at the Emily Carr University of Art and Design, Vancouver, and Jimmy Pettersson, M.Phil. and doctoral student in Art History at Stockholm University.

Our research focuses on Pontus Hultén's early museum work, but our point of departure is the archive, which includes material from many of his subsequent projects after he had left Moderna Museet. This first book looks specifically at the years from 1956 to the mid-1960s and presents five recent articles, in addition to a preface by Daniel Birnbaum, director, and this introduction. Patrik Andersson's opening study takes the previously rather neglected exhibition *The Inner and the Outer Space. An Exhibition on Universal Art* (1965–66) as the starting point for a discussion of Pontus Hultén's international role, and his relationship to Swedish criticism of the Museum's programme. This is followed by Anna Lundström's close scrutiny of the comparatively much more widely acknowledged exhibition *Movement in Art* (1961). Using archive material and photographs, she has reconstructed the exhibition and offers an alternative interpretation of the concept of "movement" to the one presented in previous research based mainly on the catalogue texts. Jimmy Pettersson takes a closer look at the avant-garde film festival *Apropos Eggeling*, which was held at Moderna Museet in 1958, partly as an attempt to attract a broader audience to the Museum. Annika Gunnarsson's study highlights Pontus Hultén's close friendship with the artists Sam Francis and Claes Oldenburg, based on the solo exhibitions at the Museum in 1960 and 1966, and the subsequent development of their collaborations. Finally, Ylva Hillström writes about the pedagogical activities at the Museum in the early years, illustrating various approaches to art and the public with three case studies. The articles complement one another, using partly the same references, but giving different perspectives on the activities and exhibitions. In particular, *Movement in Art* is explored by several of the authors, rendering new insights into the contemporary tendencies and this now legendary exhibition.

In addition to these five articles, we have included a previously unpublished text from 1962 by Pontus Hultén himself, outlining his ideas on how a modern art museum should be run.<sup>9</sup> The text was written in English, as part of the application process initiated to make

Hultén Willem Sandberg's successor at the Stedelijk Museum. Here, Hultén touches on modern art in relation to society, and its history. A modern museum should side with the artists, not the audience. The museum's role is to provide information on tendencies in the field of art, and to show what is original, personal and unknown. Hultén writes that the boundaries between artistic disciplines were becoming increasingly flexible, meaning that it was natural to include films, music, architecture, poetry and ballet in the activities to attract a large and diverse audience. Combining temporary exhibitions with a permanent collection is the ideal form and the basis for the programme at a modern museum.<sup>10</sup> The text is a kind of manifesto, or a summary of his practice after nearly six years at Moderna Museet in Stockholm.

Internationally, there is a growing trend for research in exhibition history and curatorial practices, and the Museum archives are receiving more and more requests from researchers in Sweden and abroad.<sup>11</sup> In the previous research project, *The History of Moderna Museet 1958–2008*, we studied fields such as exhibitions, funding, collection history, children's pedagogy, and catalogues, building a solid platform for further studies on the Museum's impact on the Swedish and international arts scene.<sup>12</sup> In this context, we also published an edited and commented interview with Billy Klüver, in which Pontus Hultén's own accounts of the early years were contrasted with another person's memories and myths.<sup>13</sup> At Södertörn University, a project, *Living Archive. Pontus Hultén at Moderna Museet and Centre Pompidou in 1957–81*, is currently under way, led by Charlotte Bydler.<sup>14</sup> In addition to the projects mentioned above, Moderna Museet as an institution has previously been the subject of a number of historical and biographical presentations and research studies.<sup>15</sup> Several dissertation projects relating to the Museum's activities are currently in progress. As *The History Book. On Moderna Museet 1958–2008* (2008) was written in the hopes that it would inspire further research on the Museum's history and collection, it is now our wish that this anthology will spark further studies in, and increased use of, the rich material in the Museum archives.

### A biography of the archive creator Pontus Hultén

Carl Gunnar Pontus Vougt Hultén was born in Stockholm in 1924.<sup>16</sup> He studied art in Copenhagen in 1945, but also began studying art history and ethnography that same year at Stockholm University.<sup>17</sup>



In 1951, he took his Licentiate degree with a dissertation on *Vermeer and Spinoza*.<sup>18</sup> From 1949 to 1957, he worked with various amanuensis duties in the paintings department of the Nationalmuseum. During this time, he also organised several small exhibitions in Paris and Stockholm, including *Le Mouvement* (1955) at Galerie Denise René in Paris. He was active as an artist and filmmaker and was also on the editorial team of the magazine *Blandaren*, founded by students at the KTH – Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. In 1957, he was recruited as an amanuensis at the Nationalmuseum; from 1958, he worked intermittently as a curator and supervisor at Moderna Museet. The Museum opened on 9 May, 1958, and Hultén was appointed its supervisor in 1960.

Pontus Hultén was promoted to director on 1 May, 1963, and the Museum organised more than 30 exhibitions during his directorship. He curated Sweden's contribution to the São Paulo Biennale in 1959, and for the Venice Biennale in 1962, 1964 and 1966, when the artist Öyvind Fahlström represented Sweden. The last exhibition in which he was involved at Moderna Museet was *Synligt och osynligt. Vetenskapens nya bilder* (Visible and Invisible. The New Images of Science) in spring 1973. In September that year, he was appointed director of Musée national d'art moderne (MNAM) at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. The first exhibition after it opened in 1977 was about Marcel Duchamp. This was followed by his acclaimed city exhibitions, *Paris–New York* (1977), *Paris–Berlin* (1978), *Paris–Moscow* (1979), and *Paris–Paris* (1981).<sup>19</sup> He was the director of Centre Pompidou until 1981, when he went on to direct the planning of the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in Los Angeles, where he remained for only two years, before becoming the artistic director of Palazzo Grassi in Venice.

During this period, he was also responsible for a study commissioned by the mayor of Paris, Jacques Chirac, for the founding of the Institut des hautes études en arts plastiques (IHEAP), of which he was later appointed director.<sup>20</sup> The art school, which operated from 1988 to 1995, granted degrees to some one hundred students, including the Swedish artists Anna Selander, Jan Svenungsson and Sophie Tottie. After Venice, Hultén became the artistic director of the Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in Bonn, while continuing to take assignments and produce exhibitions for Palazzo Grassi and other museums. In 1995, Hultén became the director of the Museum Tinguely in Basel, which he founded together with Niki



de Saint Phalle. From 1997, he was engaged in planning the museum Vandalorum in Värnamo, and produced the exhibition *Den sanna historien om Vandalerna* (The True Story of the Vandals, 2001) in conjunction with this. Moderna Museet reopened after refurbishment in February 2004 with the exhibition *Pontus Hultén's Collection...*, which toured to several other venues.<sup>21</sup> The following year, he donated his art collection and library, along with his private archive, to the Museum. Pontus Hultén died on 26 October, 2006, at Lidingö in Stockholm.

### The donation

Discussions had been broached with Pontus Hultén back in 2002 about organising an exhibition of his collection at Moderna Museet in Stockholm, when Hultén was simultaneously writing a book about his collection. Around the same time, the possibility of donating his collection to the Museum was being explored. Iris Müller-Westermann, who was curating the exhibition, made a preparatory visit to Pontus Hultén in his home at La Motte in March 2003, after which the ensuing discussions with Pontus Hultén regarding a donation were pursued primarily by Lars Nittve, former director of Moderna Museet. Hultén had been actively searching for a place for his private art collection for many years, and his involvement with Vandalorum was partly motivated by the idea of donating it to the planned museum in Värnamo.<sup>22</sup> Pontus Hultén had contacted the Italian architect Renzo Piano at an early stage in the process to ask if he would design the Vandalorum museum, which was inaugurated many years later, in 2011.<sup>23</sup> Hultén and Piano had met in the early 1970s in connection with the building of the Centre Pompidou in Paris, which was designed by Piano and his colleague Richard Rogers.

As part of the process of finding a permanent place for the art collection, it had been catalogued and evaluated in the late 1990s.<sup>24</sup> One prominent advocate in the efforts to get the collection to Moderna Museet was Gösta Svensson, a printer who had helped produce the Museum's catalogues together with Pontus Hultén.<sup>25</sup> The process can be traced through an array of correspondence from 2002 to 2006, through lists of artists and works in the collection, packing lists, information about the tour, and the so-called Access project. The donation letter was signed in Stockholm by Pontus Hultén and Lars Nittve on 3 August, 2005.<sup>26</sup> It states, among other things, that: "The donation shall be maintained by the Museum in accordance with

the procedures applying to the Museum's other collections, libraries and archives, so that it can be used for research and education". In other words, Pontus Hultén were aware that the contents of the archive were relevant to future research. The donation was announced at a press conference on the 10 November the same year, at the Swedish Institute in Paris.

In autumn 2005, the government commissioned the Swedish Arts Council to create more jobs in the arts sector.<sup>27</sup> The Access project gave museums and other arts institutions opportunities to request funding for recruitment of staff to preserve, maintain and improve access to the collections. Moderna Museet applied for funding and was granted sufficient means to employ four art historians, an archivist and two conservators to organise Pontus Hultén's donation.<sup>28</sup> The project lasted for four years and ended in 2009.

### The art collection

Pontus Hultén's art collection comprises more than 800 works, the result of a lifetime in art and close collaborations with many artists. Several of the works were dedicated to Pontus Hultén, and a few portraits of him are included, such as the highly stylised one by Siri Derkert from 1963, and more realistic depictions like the composition from 1974 by the Icelandic artist Erró. The donation also contained works by artists who were already represented in the Moderna Museet collection, thus adding to its breadth. *Money Thrower for Tinguely's H.T.N.Y. (Homage to New York)* (1960) by Robert Rauschenberg, and *Painting Made by Dancing* (1961) by Rauschenberg and Niki de Saint Phalle, created on the opening night on 17 May, 1961 of *Movement in Art* at Moderna Museet, were among them. The works by Niki de Saint Phalle include the sculptures *Two Guns and One Knife* (1960), and *Tir de Jasper Johns* (1961), along with numerous drawings, lithographs and watercolours. Jean Tinguely's sculpture *Fiesta Bar* (circa 1975) was in the collection, along with a few of On Kawara's date paintings, his *Today* series and *Postcards* sent to Pontus Hultén in 1972. Sam Francis is richly represented in the collection, for instance with two works titled *Swedish Flag for Pontus* (1987).

The donation complemented the Moderna Museet collection with artists who were not previously represented, such as Thomas Shannon and Tonie Roos. Swedish artists in the donation included Torsten

Andersson, Olle Bærtling, Lars Englund, Öyvind Fahlström, Lars Hillersberg, Arne Jones, Åke Karlung, Jan Svenungsson and Dan Wolgers. The donation also contained a collection of some 400 posters, a number of artists' books and 90 or so films of various kinds.

Most of the texts in the book *Pontus Hultén's Collection...* (2004), which was published in conjunction with the exhibition the same year and preceded the donation, were written by Pontus Hultén himself. They mix short biographical data and descriptions of the works and various art movements with personal memories from his travels and encounters with the artists. It could be called a book about friendships. In the interview with Hans-Ulrich Obrist mentioned above, Hultén hinted that he was writing his memoirs, but nothing of that kind was ever published, and this book could perhaps be read as a brief memoir, in view of the personal comments, biography and the photographs from his private album. The texts offer some insights into his approach to, and views on, art.

### The archive

Pontus Hultén's archive is an integrated part of Moderna Museet's public archives.<sup>29</sup> The material covers Pontus Hultén's entire working life, from the 1940s to the early 2000s.<sup>30</sup> It consists mainly of thousands of letters between him and colleagues, artists and politicians all over the world. The content of the correspondence is professional, but the tone in many of the letters is informal since the writers and recipients were personal friends. One example is his correspondence with Niki de Saint Phalle, which fills nine boxes in the archive. But there is also material about artists such as Eva Aeppli, Alexander Calder, Marcel Duchamp, Kazimir Malevich, Claes Oldenburg, André Raffray, Robert Rauschenberg, Tonie Roos, Thomas Shannon, Daniel Spoerri, Andy Warhol and Dan Wolgers. In the archive we can follow and meet many interesting and seminal figures in the art world who were Pontus Hultén's contemporaries.

The material is highly diverse and contains letters, press cuttings, publications, preview invitations, drafts for texts, interviews, notes and a large number of black and white photographs and large slides.<sup>31</sup> Many of the photographs are press images from Moderna Museet, with a stamp on the reverse side saying they should be returned to the Museum. The photographs include Christer Christian (a pseudonym of Christer Strömholm), Hans Hammarskiöld, Lennart Olson

and Vera Spørri. As mentioned, it also comprises correspondence from 1962 concerning the attempts to make Pontus Hultén Willem Sandberg's successor as director of the Stedelijk Museum. Moreover, there is extensive correspondence relating to the Musée national d'art moderne, Centre George Pompidou. Among this material, we have found documents from his period as director, marked "confidential", indicating that there is material in his personal archive that should perhaps not have ended up there. The boundaries are fluid. There are letters and material about the development and activities at the Institut hautes études en arts plastique (IHEAP) in Paris, and a great deal of papers linked to the press conference held in 1994 to save the institute.<sup>32</sup> There are letters and telegrams with practical information, instructions, questions and specifications that would have been sent digitally today, as e-mails or even as short text messages via mobile phone or social media. Altogether, the archive material is varied, ranging from children's drawings of Pontus Hultén to letters from Marcel Duchamp.

### The library

The library comprises some 7,000 books, mainly artist biographies and exhibition catalogues, but also books about art and art history, photography, design, typography, music, museums, machines, architecture and film. It also included magazines, lists, folders, and several artists' books that were transferred to the art collection when the donation was organised. The library is unique in that many of the books are dedicated to Pontus Hultén by their respective authors and artists, but also because many of the titles exist only in this library or in a small number of libraries outside Sweden.

Research on Pontus Hultén's career will reveal that books were an important part of his life. But he was not only interested in producing different and exclusive catalogues.<sup>33</sup> He also collected books. He wanted it to be possible at the Museum to explore and find information and biographical data on contemporary artists and art movements. The activities at the Stedelijk Museum served as inspiration in this respect, as seen in his short introduction to the catalogue for the exhibition *Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam Visits Moderna Museet Stockholm* (1962).<sup>34</sup> One of the fundamental concepts behind Kulturhuset in Stockholm and the Centre Pompidou in Paris, was to combine the art museum with the archive, library, auditorium,

cinema, restaurants and other amenities.<sup>35</sup> While he was at IHEAP, the institute incorporated the Bibliothèque Ernst Goldschmidt, which consisted of a large collection of exhibition catalogues, and also published a list with information on recently published catalogues. Later, this publication was taken over by Musée d'art contemporain (MAC) in Marseille, which also took over parts of IHEAP's archives and its library.

### The Pontus Hultén Study Gallery

In August 2005, Lars Nittve wrote to the government, requesting funds for a so-called study gallery, since this was one of the conditions pertaining to Pontus Hultén's donation of his collection to Moderna Museet.<sup>36</sup> The Pontus Hultén Study Gallery opened on 30 May, 2008, in connection with the Museum's 50th anniversary.<sup>37</sup> The idea behind the Study Gallery was linked at an early stage to Pontus Hultén's practice as a museum director and curator and his approach to the museum as a forum for many activities, including exhibitions, film screenings, concerts, lectures and performance art.<sup>38</sup> He was inspired by the study collection in Moderna Museet's original building, where paintings were hung on steel wire screens that could be pulled out. This system was still in place next to the museum shop until 1994, when the Museum moved to the tram terminal on Birger Jarlsgatan while the new premises were being built.<sup>39</sup> In its first few years, the Centre Pompidou also had an open depot, where visitors could look at works from the collection.

Again, Renzo Piano was asked by Pontus Hultén to design and set up his vision of a study gallery.<sup>40</sup> It would be situated in the middle of the new museum building, where the Photography Library had been located since the reopening in 1998.<sup>41</sup> The Study Gallery consists of 30 screens that are transported by a specially-constructed mechanism from the upper level of the room to the visitors on the lower level, i.e. to the second floor of the museum building. A bookcase covers the entire inner wall of the Study Gallery, reusing the Photography Library's interior. In front of the bookcase is a large table, designed by Renzo Piano, with some 20 Eames chairs in ash around it. The Study Gallery still has a glass wall facing the space outside the exhibition galleries and the cinema on the second floor. A revolving door was fitted, and climate control was installed in the Study Gallery when the premises were rebuilt.

Since it opened in 2008, the location and purpose of the Study Gallery in the Museum has been tested and reconsidered. The ideas and visions of a flexible and open Study Gallery have been hard to implement in practice in a modern 21st-century art museum. Repeated mechanical problems with the wires connected to the screens and the associated software have resulted in the screens being out of order a lot of the time. For safety reasons, it has not been possible for visitors to select and operate the screens themselves. Instead, the Museum's front staff, the hosts, have had to work in the Study Gallery, retrieving the screens visitors have requested. They have also provided information about the works and managed the educational activities. In consequence, the Study Gallery's opening hours have been limited. A few re-hangings have been performed, and now other donations to the Museum are also presented on the screens – in addition to works from the Pontus Hultén collection. In recent years, activities have been more closely tied to research. Smaller, archive-based exhibitions have been installed in the Study Gallery, and it has been used as the obvious place for visiting researchers, and for seminars and workshops.<sup>42</sup> In connection with our research project, we have retrieved material from the archive, films and works from the exhibitions *Movement in Art* and *She – A Cathedral*, and presented it all in newly-made display cases in the Study Gallery (from autumn 2016). Together with archive material from the later exhibitions *Vanishing Points* (1984) and *Implosion* (1987), which has been compiled to put Pontus Hultén's period in perspective, this is a first step towards eventually filling the Study Gallery with historical material about the Museum. This material is intended to spark discussions about the Museum's current and future activities. The research results have also been made accessible to the public in the form of open lectures in association with the Friends of Moderna Museet.

Due to our deliberate focus on visiting researchers in recent years, it has transpired that there is a certain pattern in the requests for material relating to Moderna Museet's history.<sup>43</sup> We receive by far the most requests for material on the exhibitions and events *Movement in Art* (1961), *Five New York Evenings* (1964), and *She – A Cathedral* (1966). For these exhibitions, it is the material in Moderna Museet's public archives that researchers have requested and accessed.<sup>44</sup> Pontus Hultén's private archive still contains some documentation from the first years, but it is dispersed, and material on, say, *Movement in Art* is filed under Museums and Art Galleries, Exhibitions,

and each respective artist in the Artists section. In other words, the material in Pontus Hultén's archive is both harder and more time-consuming to search and access. We also find that from the 1990s and onwards, there was an increase in requests made directly to Pontus Hultén by curators and researchers about artists he knew, works in his collection, and the early exhibitions. There are many faxes from this period in the archive. As mentioned earlier, one of the purposes of our research project has been to highlight interesting material in the Museum's archives, to use and analyse it, and to make it more visible and accessible.

One phenomenon that permeates the archive material and is revealed in all the searches, is the hundreds of contacts that Pontus Hultén had, and the friendships he made over the years, with artists in particular, but also with other people in the arts; collectors, architects, photographers and politicians. To analyse the contents of the archive according to the theories of Pierre Bourdieu on fields, habitus and cultural capital may be one possibility. Another circumstance that is frequently remarked on is that the network he belonged to and operated within was almost exclusively male. When asked to comment on the criticism against his generation for being too male oriented, Pontus Hultén would reply that the male dominance was not total, but we get the impression that he was never really interested in feminism and its advocates.<sup>45</sup> Among the women who are amply represented in the archive, and whom he highlighted in various contexts are the artists Eva Aeppli, Niki de Saint Phalle, and Tonie Roos. All three are also represented with several works in his collection. The material in the packed archive boxes is very similar and consists of a large number of hand-written letters, drawings and photographs. The contents often has a highly personal tone. The one individual who seems especially significant here is Niki de Saint Phalle, through the many collaborations beginning in the 1960s and until her death in 2002. Other women who are mentioned and whom there is a great deal of material on are Dominique de Menil, Jacqueline Monnier, Claude Pompidou, and the gallerist Denise René.

One obvious result of these five new studies on the formative years is that many of the activities we have described here point towards another of Pontus Hultén's most acclaimed exhibitions, *She – A Cathedral*. It also emerges that the focus of Hultén's attention was in tune with the times, and that he thus became part of a movement that proposed a more open concept of art. He belonged

to a generation that could travel again after the Second World War, and he simply had the opportunity to see contemporary art, to learn and bring back emerging ideas to a nation that had been isolated for many years. Moderna Museet as an institution was created in the midst of a highly progressive and fortuitous period, and this was crucial to Pontus Hultén's practice. Another circumstance that transpires is that the archive and library complement the art collection and follow a number of artists and projects. Pontus Hultén was active before the internet, which means that it was harder for him and his colleagues to quickly find information about famous or less known artists and keep up with great or small developments on the art scene. To be successful as a curator and director of an art museum, you needed access to a collection, an archive and a library.



1. L'École du Magasin in Grenoble launched its curator course in 1987, followed by the Royal College of Art in London in 1992, and the De Appel Curatorial Programme in Amsterdam in 1994. Examples of other similar studies are the MFA in Curating at Goldsmiths University of London, and the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College in New York. In Stockholm, Konstfack, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, offered curatorial training from 1998, and a few years later, in 2003, the Department of Art History at Stockholm University introduced its International Master Programme in Curating Art, including Management and Law.

2. This includes other influential parties in the art world from the same generation, such as the Swiss curator, artist and art historian Harald Szeemann. See *Harald Szeemann. Individual Methodology*, ed. Florence Derieux, Zurich: JRP/Ringier, 2008. The Harald Szeemann Archive and Library was acquired in 2011 by the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles.

3. "Samtal med intendent (del 4): Pontus Hultén, Kunsthalle Bonn och IHEAP, Paris. Dominans av stjärncurators skadar konstlivet på sikt", *Material*, no. 5 (21), 1994, pp. 8–9. Interviews by Erik van der Heeg, Eva-Lotta Holm and Håkan Nilsson. This was the fourth and final volume in the series "Samtal med intendent". In previous volumes Lars Nittve (Rooseum), Bo Nilsson (Moderna Museet), and Debbie Thompson (Uppsala konstmuseum) had been interviewed.

4. Hans-Ulrich Obrist, "The Hang of It. Hans-Ulrich Obrist talks with Pontus Hultén", *Artforum*, April, 1997, pp. 74–79, 113–114. In his article, Obrist addresses and questions the background to the exhibitions *Poetry Must Be Made By All! Change the World!* (1969), and *Utopias & Visions 1871–1981* (1971). These ideas inspired Obrist, who then took them further in *Poetry Will Be Made By All!*, which was part of the programme around the exhibition *After Babel* at Moderna Museet in summer 2015; see *After Babel. Poetry will be made by all! 89plus*, eds. Daniel Birnbaum and Ann-Sofi Norring, Moderna Museet exhibition catalogue no. 386, Stockholm: Moderna Museet and London: Koenig Books, 2015.

5. Examples of interviews include Yann Pavie, "Entretien avec Pontus Hultén", *OPUS International*, no. 24–25, 1971, pp. 57–63; Helén Hallgren, "Museernas gigant ger Norden en chans", *Dagens Nyheter*, 12 January, 1986; Måten Bouisset, "Les légendes du siècle. Entretien avec Pontus Hultén", *Beaux Arts*, May, 1992, pp. 72–80. A number of interviews with Pontus Hultén have been filed together under Press cuttings. MMA PHA 5.2.2.

6. Lars Nittve, "En curator's book", *Pontus Hulténs samling...*, ed. Iris Müller-Westermann, Moderna Museet exhibition catalogue no. 321, Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 2004, p. 7. The Swedish word "utställningskommissare" (exhibition commissar) was used before the more international "curator" became established in the end of the 1990s in Sweden.

7. Moderna Museet's directors: Otte Sköld (1958), Bo Wennberg (1959–1960), Pontus Hultén (1960–1973), Philip von Schantz (1973–1977), Karin Bergqvist Lindegren (1977–1979), Olle Granath (1980–1989), Björn Springfeldt

- (1989–1996), David Elliott (1996–2001), Lars Nittve (2001–2010), and Daniel Birnbaum (from 2010).
8. On Robert Rauschenberg and Sweden, see a theme issue of *Konsthistorisk tidskrift/Journal of Art History*, vol. 76, issue 1–2, 2007.
  9. This text is attached to a letter to professor Pieter Sanders, 4 December, 1962. MMA PHA 4.1.52.
  10. Originally, there were plans that Moderna Museet would be a transit museum, where parts of the collection would eventually go on to the Nationalmuseum. A model that had been used by Musée du Luxembourg and Musée du Louvre in Paris, see Hans Hayden, *Modernismen som institution. Om etableringen av ett estetiskt och historiografiskt paradigm*, Stockholm, Stehag: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposion, 2006, pp. 184–194.
  11. Examples of literature in this field: *Salon to Biennial. Exhibitions that Made Art History*, vol. 1, 1863–1959, ed. Bruce Altshuler, London: Phaidon, 2008; *Biennials and Beyond. Exhibitions that Made Art History*, vol. 2, 1962–2002, ed. Bruce Altshuler, London: Phaidon, 2013; Charlotte Klonk, *Spaces of Experience. Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009; *Hängda och utställda. Om hängningarnas och utställningarnas historia på Göteborgs konstmuseum*, eds. Kristoffer Arvidsson and Jeff Werner, Skiascope 1, Gothenburg: Göteborgs Konstmuseum, 2009. Also see the series published by Afterall: *Exhibition Histories*.
  12. The project concluded with the publication of *The History Book. On Moderna Museet 1958–2008*, eds. Anna Tellgren and Martin Sundberg, Stockholm: Moderna Museet and Göttingen: Steidl, 2008.
  13. Marianne Hultman, “Our Man in New York. An Interview with Billy Klüver on his Collaboration with Moderna Museet.”, *The History Book*, 2008, pp. 233–256.
  14. The project team consists of Charlotte Bydler, Andreas Gedin and Sinziana Ravini. See Andreas Gedin, *Pontus Hultén, Hon & Moderna*, Stockholm: Bokförlaget Langenskiöld, 2016.
  15. Selected literature on Moderna Museet: *Moderna Museet 1958–1983*, red. Olle Granath and Monica Nickels, Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1983; Per Bjurström, *Nationalmuseum 1792–1992*, Stockholm: Nationalmuseum and Höganäs: Förlags AB Wiken, 1992; Bo Wennberg, ”En berättelse om Moderna Museets tillkomst”, *Konsthistorisk tidskrift/Journal of Art History*, vol. 69, issue 1, 2000, s. 41–48; Patrik Andersson, *Euro-Pop. The Mechanical Bride Stripped Bare in Stockholm, Even* (diss.), Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2001. See also the bibliography in *The History Book*, 2008, p. 461.
  16. Pontus Hultén’s parents were professor Eric Hultén (1894–1981) and Elsie Vougth (1893–1976). During his time at Moderna Museet, he often signed official letters, documents and texts with an abbreviation of his given name: K.G. Hultén. In more familiar and friendly contexts, he used Pontus, as he did consistently later in life. On the name change, see his father Eric Hultén, *Men roligt var det. En forskares memoarer*, Stockholm: Generalstabens litografiska anstalts förlag, 1963, p. 229. He was married to Kerstin Olsson from 1951 to 1966, and they had a son, Felix (born 1951). He started

a relationship with the film producer Anna-Lena Wibom in 1958, and they had a daughter, Klara (1960–1998). They remained close friends throughout life. From 1988, he lived with Marie-Louise von Plessen at La Motte in Saint-Firmin-Sur-Loire in France, before returning to Stockholm in 2005, where he lived until his death.

17. An attested Curriculum Vitae for Pontus Hultén's early career, from 1945 to 1960, is among the documents concerning his childhood, student years, finances and family. MMA PHA 1.3.4. For an overview of Hultén's career at the Nationalmuseum and Moderna Museet, see also Anna Lundström, *Former av politik. Tre utställningssituationer på Moderna Museet 1998–2008* (diss.), Göteborg, Stockholm: Makadam Förlag, 2015, p. 14, footnote 6.

18. The manuscript can be found in the archive under his own works. MMA PHA 2.10–12. The book was later published in French: Pontus Hultén, *Vermeer et Spinoza*, introduction Bernadette and Thierry Dufrêne, trans. Lydie Rousseau, Paris: L'Échoppe, 2002.

19. Pontus Hultén was awarded the French Legion of Honour, first the class of Chevalier (1980) and later the class of Officier (1992).

20. For a documentation of this activity: *Quand les artistes font école. Vingt-quatre journées de l'Institut des hautes études en arts plastique 1988–1990, Tome I*, ed. Pontus Hultén, Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 2004, and *Quand les artistes font école. Vingt-quatre journées de l'Institut des hautes études en arts plastique 1991–1992, Tome II*, ed. Pontus Hultén, Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 2004.

21. The exhibition toured to Palazzo Franchetti in Venice, Ateneum in Helsinki, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter in Høvikodde, and Hessisches Landesmuseum in Darmstadt.

22. Pontus Hultén also had several meetings with the Vice Chancellor Bo Sundqvist about donating his collection of art to Uppsala University. In June 2004, a team from the Department of Art History at Uppsala University visited Hultén at his home at La Motte for a continued discussion and to look at the collection. The team consisted of professor Jan von Bonsdorff, postdoctoral research fellow Hans Hayden, doctoral student Annika Öhrner, and Johan Cederlund, who was an antiquarian at the University and in charge of its art collection. Telephone conversation with Jan von Bonsdorff, 7 October, 2016.

23. The name of the museum today is Vandalorum – Centrum för konst och design. Document on Vandalorum. MMA PHA 4.1.55.

24. Pontus Hultén's art collection was inventoried and evaluated by Jan Runnqvist at Galerie Bonnier in Geneva. See letter from Jan Runnqvist to Pontus Hultén, 1 November, 1999. MMA PHA 4.1.4.

25. On the collaboration with Gösta Svensson, see Martin Sundberg, "Between Experiment and Everyday Life. The Exhibition Catalogues of Moderna Museet", *The History Book*, 2008, p. 320.

26. Deed of gift, Reg. no. 2005-23-105, 3 August, 2005. MMA MA F2d:35.

27. See *Uppföljning av Access*, Kulturrådets Skriftserie 2010:1, Stockholm: Swedish Arts Council, 2010.

28. For a presentation of the Access project at Moderna Museet, see

*Pontus Hulténs donation*, ed. Ylva Hillström, Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 2008. Project manager: Ylva Hillström. Project team: My Bundgaard (conservator), Jessica Höglund (art historian), Evelina Jansson (art historian), Audrey Lebioda (archivist), Ellen Magnusson (conservator), Joanna Persman (art historian), and Klara Rudebeck (art historian).

29. In 2015, the Museum also acquired Ulf Linde's archive (MMA ULA), which includes letters, material and photographs around the work on Moderna Museet's replicas of Marcel Duchamp's works. This, however, is a private archive. For an in-depth analysis of Marcel Duchamp and his contacts with Sweden, see the publication *Étant donné Marcel Duchamp*, no. 11, ed. Paul B. Franklin, Paris: Association pour l'Étude de Marcel Duchamp, 2016.

30. See Arkivbeskrivning (description of the archive) by Audrey Lebioda from 2008.

31. Nathalie Meneau started working for Pontus Hultén in 1976 and was his assistant from 1988 until the end. All the documents in the archive were filed by her, and she claims not to have thrown anything away. Certain private documents were removed by the family in connection with the donation. Interview with Nathalie Meneau by Audrey Lebioda, 11 January, 2007. Notes from the interview can be found in MMA PHA 6.

32. Press conference, 11 October, 1994. MMA PHA 4.3.3.

33. See *Das gedruckte Museum von Pontus Hultén. Kunstaussstellungen und ihre Bücher*, Ostfildern-Ruit: Cantz-Verlag, 1996.

34. K.G. Hultén, "Sandberg och Stedelijk Museum", *Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam besöker Moderna Museet Stockholm*, Moderna Museet exhibition catalogue no. 19, Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1962, pp. 4–9.

35. A presentation of the plans and vision for a potential transfer of Moderna Museet to Sergels torg can be found in an article by Bo Andersson, Carlo Derkert, Pontus Hultén, Li Lind, Per Stolpe and Anna-Lena Thorsell, "Ett kulturhusprogram: Experiment i social samverkan", *Dagens Nyheter*, 9 September, 1969.

36. Letter to the Government, Ministry of Education and Culture, Reg. no. 2005-21-106, 23 August, 2005. MMA MA F2d:35.

37. The project started in 2006. Project manager for the Pontus Hultén Study Gallery was Cecilia Widenheim (curator for Swedish and Nordic art at Moderna Museet in 1998–2012). Project team members from the Museum were Lars Byström (chief conservator), Agneta Modig Tham (head of administration), Harry Nahkala (head of technician), and Mats Rosvall (head of security and operations), together with staff from the National Property Board Sweden and representatives from the Renzo Piano Building Workshop. The construction of the mechanism for the Study Gallery was commissioned to OCS Overhead Conveyor System AB in Borås. See invitation to tender dossier, Reg. no. 2007-17-48: Förfrågan angående Maskin för konstvisning till Moderna Museet i Stockholm. MMA MA F2bb:66.

38. See e.g. Cecilia Widenheim, "Rörelse i konsten", *Pontus Hulténs donation*, Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 2008, p. 4. For a detailed analysis of Pontus Hultén's Study Gallery, its background and the purpose of this gallery

in the modern art museum in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and the role of the viewer, see Anna Lundström, *Former av politik*, 2015, pp. 49–81.

39. Eva Eriksson, “Transformation and Transit. Moderna Museet and its buildings”, *The History Book*, 2008, pp. 65–96.

40. See an interview with Renzo Piano, where he shares the plans for the study gallery in the film *The Pontus Hultén Study Gallery at Moderna Museet* (2013), produced by Catrin Lundqvist and Stefan Wrenfelt.

41. In 2006, the Photography Library was moved to the second floor in Building 21 (the former Nautical Chart Department) Holmamiralens väg 2 on Skeppsholmen, Stockholm. The Photography Library was then merged with the Art Library in 2013, and the new special library for art, photography and design is operated jointly by Moderna Museet and the Nationalmuseum. It is situated on the third floor of Building 21.

42. The following exhibitions and projects have been presented in the Study Gallery over the past years: *Tryckt omkring 1980-talet* (spring 2011), an exhibition with art-related Swedish magazines and fanzines from the late 1970s to the early 1990s; *Reading the Object. Artist-Made Books from the Collection at Moderna Museet* (summer 2011); *Magritte – Foucault. The Order of Things* (autumn 2011), a one-screen exhibition that was simultaneously published in the new series of essays, Moderna Museet Essä; *Jacqueline de Jong. A Small Modification and Dérive of the Pontus Hultén Collection in the Renzo Piano Grotto* (spring 2012), on a screen as part of the project *All the King's Horses; Marcel Duchamp through Pontus Hultén*, archive material complementing the exhibition *Picasso/Duchamp. “He was Wrong”* (2012–13); *Paul Thek, in Process (Stockholm)* (summer 2013), an archive-based exhibition; *60 years of prosperous friendship* (2013–14), a presentation of works donated by the Friends of Moderna Museet; *A Way of Life. Swedish photography from Christer Strömholm to today* (2014–15), with books of photography and magazines from the Art Library’s collection relating to the photographers featured in the exhibition; *Duchamp and Sweden. On the Reception of Marcel Duchamp after World War II* (spring 2015), material from Pontus Hultén’s and Ulf Linde’s archives, and posters by students attending a university course on Marcel Duchamp in collaboration with Södertörn University and Stockholm University; *A good home for everyone. With Anna Riwkin and Björn Langhammer in the shadow of the welfare state* (2015–16), a presentation of photographs, films, articles, documents and books; *Comparative Vandalism. Photographs from the Asger Jorn archive* (2016–17).

43. Since 2013, all administration and planning of research visits is done at the so-called FAB-meeting. (Research Archive Library). The participants at this meeting are the respective curators, the archive manager, the picture editor and the collection registrar. The meeting is convened by the research leader. Reports on research and collaborations with universities and other museums can be found in Moderna Museet’s annual reports.

44. The most frequently requested material in the archive has been digitalised, and further digitalisation is in progress.

45. See *Material*, no. 5 (21), 1994, p. 9.



## Images:

### Abbreviations

MMA The Moderna Museet archives

MA The Moderna Museet public archive (Myndighetsarkivet)

PHA The Pontus Hultén archive

p. 1–3: Lennart Olson. MMA PHA 5.4.1

p. 4–5: Anders Engman. MMA MA Ö7b:9

p. 6: MMA PHA 5.4.1

p. 7: Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. From contact sheet. MMA MA Ö7a:1

p. 8: Hans Hammarskiöld. MMA MA Ö7b:12

p. 14, 16–17, 19: Albin Dahlström/Moderna Museet

p. 38: Lennart Olson. MMA MA Ö7b:10

p. 44: MMA PHA 2.22

p. 46: MMA MA B6

p. 49: Lennart Olson. MMA MA Ö7b:10

p. 52: MMA MA F1a:30

p. 55–56: Lennart Olson. MMA MA Ö7b:10

p. 66: Lennart Olson. MMA MA Ö7b:4

p. 69: Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. MMA MA Ö7b:4

p. 72–73: MMA PHA 4.2.60

p. 76–77: Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. MMA MA Ö7b:4

p. 80: Per Larsson. MMA MA Ö7b:4

p. 83: MMA PHA 4.2.60

p. 85: MMA PHA 4.2.60

p. 96: Frances Breer. MMA PHA 5.1.3

p. 99: Unknown photographer. MMA PHA 4.2.17

p. 102: MMA PHA 4.4.18

p. 104–105: MMA MA F2aa:1

p. 107: Albin Dahlström/Moderna Museet. Moderna Museets samling, MOMFi 81

p. 109: MMA MA F2aa:4

p. 111: The Pontus Hultén library,

Moderna Museet

p. 120: Hans Hammarskiöld. MMA MA Ö7b:12

p. 123: MMA MA F1a:9

p. 124: Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. MMA MA Ö7b:2

p. 127: MMA MA F1a:9

p. 130: The Pontus Hulténs library, Moderna Museet

p. 135: Hans Hammarskiöld. MMA MA Ö7b:12 (above).

Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. MMA MA Ö7b:12 (below)

p. 148: Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. MMA MA Ö7b:10

p. 152: Klipparkivet, The Art Library (Konstbiblioteket), Stockholm

p. 155: Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet. MMA MA Ö7b:3

p. 157: MMA MA F1:12

p. 159: Unknown photographer. MMA PHA 4.2.60

p. 162: Jan Gustavsson. MMA MA Ö7b:10 (above).

Unknown photographer/Moderna Museet MMA MA Ö7b:10 (below)

p. 176: MMA PHA 4.1.52

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