HANNAH HÖCH

Berlin photomontage artist who used pop images of the Modern woman in her work, 1889-1978

Sections in italics are quotes from Höch’s writings or are titles of her works.

My mother was an amateur painter. Eventually four siblings were born. I worked in my father’s office, and I was pulled out of the girls’ high school to care for this child from the time she was three days old until she was six. Hair swept softly off the face is the perfect complement to this season’s decidedly romantic turn-of-the-century dresses. The night scene in the woods. Sketch for Memorial to an Important Lace Shirt.

I studied glass design. I did Red Cross work. He leaves purple bruises blooming on my arms. I packed up and went to Italy. Much of the trip to Rome I made by foot. The borders had just reopened. It’s gathered gently high atop the head to expose the sensual taper of the neck, the velvety smoothness of bare shoulders, and to create overall balance. (The Painter) Undated, probably 1920. He thought that the treacherous female soul (treachery no doubt its most important element alongside emptiness) could appear as a cubist lemon-yellow spiral among the green.

Snow and blooms—abortions in January and May. I want to blur the boundaries. Keep the look soft, touchable—not lacquered. They summoned me to a house on the sea. He himself was the most perfect Merz work, a continuum. I met her then. She knew how to put words together, how to look at me.

1933: Hitler. Everyone was suspect. Language was forgotten. We were hermetically sealed off. Carnivorous plants. With Two Faces: Masks, Veils, Make-up. I keep the edges frayed. Be careful to choose a headpiece that accents your hairstyle but doesn’t overpower it.

In the Dolomites at an altitude of two thousand meters where I was supposed to recuperate, I met my future husband. We must be open to the beauties of fortuity. Your stylist can help analyze your hair’s texture and recommend styles that will work with it, not against it. A machine that measures beauty.
He disappeared from my life. I’ve lived alone in a little house with a big garden.

My great loneliness began. A haircut is an expression of yourself. The woman leaps away from her shadow. She leans in at the hip and then against the air, turning and looking up past her wrist, past her hand cupping the shelf’s edge.