

Comments on the *Mexico as Muse* Exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

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Abstract

This article considers the Tina Modotti and Edward Weston photography exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) from 2006-2007. The inclusion of Weston's work problematizes, but also invites a critical viewing of the exhibition as it relates to issues of gender and the Other. Additionally, the exhibition prompts a consideration of the decision to personalize the art of Modotti by displaying it in the context of her relationship with Weston.

The exhibition *Mexico as Muse: Tina Modotti and Edward Weston* at the SFMOMA on display from September 2006 through January 2007, showcased works by photographers Tina Modotti and Edward Weston taken between 1923 and 1929 when they lived and worked together in Mexico. There were nearly eighty photographs in the two-room exhibition of which approximately two thirds were Modotti's. Other documents were also included, the majority of which related more to Modotti's life than to Weston's. The story the exhibition portrayed invites a discussion of the exhibition and the ways in which the SFMOMA constructed a traditional message of gender and the Other¹. The discussion seems especially pertinent in light of the 2006 to 2007 feminist art exhibitions at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art and the Brooklyn Museum in New York State. As institutions that construct dominant master narratives, museums ought to be particularly aware of the histories they portray. For example, the 1984 *Primitivism* exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York was a troubling mediation between African Art and so-called « primitive » art. The master narrative expressed in that case was an outdated perceived truth of the Western world in which, according to Rasheed Araeen, a combination of prejudice and fascination with the exotic was portrayed². In their comprehensive study of the concept of the museum, Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago state,

The beliefs that have constituted the core of 'modernity' rest upon certain assumptions about the nature of meaningful relationships between subjects and objects,

between individuals or communities and the worlds they weave about themselves. It is our contention that the institution of the museum has for some time been essential to the fabrication and sustenance of this system of beliefs³.

Thus, the master narrative provided by the museum is on some level responsible for the ways in which viewers perceive of themselves in relation to the rest of the world.

Defining Modotti's Work in Mexico

Edward Weston is a highly regarded American modern artist and is considered a master in his field. The lesser-known Tina Modotti was an Italian-American photographer whose most significant works were created almost entirely during the six-year period spent in Mexico. Modotti likely met Weston in 1919 in California through mutual friends, and included his works in the 1922 exhibition *Pictorialist and Modernist Art from America* she staged at the National Academy of Fine Arts in Mexico City⁴. Partly due to the success of the exhibition, the two moved to Mexico together and Modotti began her own practice of photography, having acquired her photography skills from Weston. By 1923, Weston had largely veered away from pictorial images to work in a modernist style initially influenced by Cubism⁵. Modotti's early work at this time demonstrates a modernist influence as well. Her *Experiment in Related Form* or *Glasses* from 1924 is a flattened image of clear glasses exposed in such a way that the mouths of the glasses become abstracted and appear to overlap. The image reminds one of modernist works such as Sonia Delaunay's painting *Prismé électrique* (1913), a composition incorporating dynamic overlapping circles and the play of light to replicate the rhythms of modern urban life⁶. *Glasses* is representative of Modotti's early modernist concerns with composition, form, and light.

Shortly after the two arrived in Mexico, Modotti's style began to diverge from Weston's and she took photographs after the manner of the Estridentistas, a group of artists in Mexico who modeled themselves formally after the Italian Futurists. The Estridentistas were interested in portraying a Mexico struggling to be technologically modern⁷. Modotti's Estridentista works such as *Telegraph Wires* (1925) convey her interest in the progress of Mexico and mark the beginning of her transformation into a photographer with a social agenda. Modotti was also involved in organizations with a special interest in improving the lives of workers in Mexico such as Red Aid. She also joined the Communist Party in 1927⁸. Modotti published photographs as well as editorial work in *El Machete*, the Communist periodical dedicated to improving the lives of workers and peasants⁹. Modotti saw photography as a way to objectively and graphically describe social injustice and she depicted working class Mexicans in two veins. One referenced *Mexicanidad*, the celebration of Mexican cultural renewal that began after the revolution of 1910, while the other depicted

Mexicans in an ethnographic yet pictorial manner to initiate social change for the poor¹⁰.

Hands Washing (Figure 1) is an example of the photographs Modotti took of members of the working class poor. Modotti said of these images:

I consider myself a photographer, nothing more. I try to produce not art but honest photographs, without distortions or manipulations. Photography takes its place as the most satisfactory medium for registering objective life and from this comes its documental value. If to this is added sensibility and understanding and, above all, a clear orientation as to the place it should have in the field of historical development, I believe the result is something worthy of a place in social production, to which we should all contribute¹¹.

While the SFMOMA exhibition included statements about Modotti that reflected her concerns regarding social injustice, the curator, Sandra Phillips, fell into the common trap of distorting Modotti's history with the use of gendered language and portraying her photographic output as an extension of Weston's. Indeed, it is a convention secured in Weston's account of Mexico in his *Daybooks*, parts of which were published as two volumes in 1927. As Carol Armstrong points out in her essay, these journals « construct the myth of Weston as Grand Master of the Photographic Beautiful » and of Modotti as « the voice of [...] all that is sublimated in his photography: the Oracle of the Other¹². » Describing Modotti's work not in terms of her political views but through her relationship with Weston and subordinate to her « passionate personality » is a view initiated by Weston and perpetuated with few exceptions by curators and writers thereafter¹³.

What, one is compelled to ask, is the function of including Weston in the exhibition to such a large extent? In the spring of 1926 the great muralist Diego Rivera contributed an article to the bilingual Mexican journal *Mexican Folkways*, praising photographs by Weston and Modotti, whom Rivera describes as Weston's pupil¹⁴. Sixty-six years later a Sotheby's catalogue quoted Rivera's endorsement, but omitted all reference to Weston: « Tina Modotti has done marvels in sensibility on plane, perhaps more abstract, perhaps more aerial, even more intellectual, as is natural for an Italian temperament. Her work flowers perfectly in Mexico and harmonizes with our passion¹⁵. » As is indicated by its more recent usage, this statement is illustrative of the perpetuating descriptions of Modotti that privilege her passion over her photographic skills. In her book *Tina Modotti: Image, Texture, Photography*, Andrea Noble points out the layers of problems that arise with the omission of Weston as well as Modotti's North American connections and background from Rivera's quote. Noble argues omitting Weston may appear to be liberating from a feminist perspective because « his presence problematizes any critical approach to Modotti's photographs informed by an interest in issues of gender¹⁶. » She further argues the omission aligns Modotti not only with Rivera, but also with the Otherness of the mythical and

exotic space of Mexico as it was described at the time¹⁷. This persistent description of Mexico and Modotti mingled with the *inclusion* of Weston and a traditionally gendered description of Modotti complicate and invite a critical viewing of the exhibition. While the exhibition curators attempted to show Modotti as independent from Weston and portrayed her photographs within a semblance of their original context, they ultimately included stereotyping modes of description and display, a point that will be developed in following sections.

Exhibiting Modotti as Muse

As stated on its website, the SFMOMA's overall mission is to « engage and inspire a diverse range of audiences by pursuing an innovative program of exhibitions, education, publications, and collections activities. » The museum also aims to address the « larger issues and personalities that define modern and contemporary art¹⁸. » Thus, the curators of the *Mexico as Muse* exhibition might have been exploring the personal aspects of Modotti's life to define her art. However, it is then important to analyze how the SFMOMA explained her personality and how that affects viewers' interpretations of her photographs.

The exhibition began in the mezzanine just outside of the entrance to the third floor galleries housing the photographs. A desk stood in the mezzanine with two computer monitors set to an interactive program in which museum patrons could choose to watch two movies, one on Weston, the other on Modotti. The Weston film made no mention of Modotti or Mexico, but instead discussed how Weston was inspired by nature. The second film was narrated by Patricia Albers, an important biographer of Modotti, who discussed Modotti and Weston's relationship in Mexico as one in which she was his assistant, muse and pupil. Albers also said the two often worked together and inspired one another, as is often the case when two artists choose to develop something in tandem, a phenomenon that has been exemplified by the collaborations of Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse and André Derain and many others. But the overall result of the films was that Modotti appeared to have had minimal effect on Weston's creative life, while he was shown as central to hers.

Directly behind the table with computer monitors was a wall marking the entrance to the galleries. Here, two signature photographs were displayed that summed up the first portion of the exhibition. To the left was Weston's *Portrait of Tina Modotti* (1921). She is visible from the neck up and faces out of the picture plane but does not confront the viewer. Her hands are raised with her fingers gently grazing her jaw. Her eyes are closed and her lips are slightly parted suggesting the anticipation of a kiss: an expression that implied a sexualized invitation to enter the gallery space. To the right was Modotti's *Portrait of Edward Weston* (1924). He does not look at the viewer but rather is engaged with his camera. His form is turned toward

his own camera, which he appears to be preparing to use. He is working and creating. The placement of the portrait of Modotti figured her as a passive sexually accessible body, whereas Weston was portrayed as « physically and mentally active¹⁹. » While one must acknowledge the presence of Weston taking the portrait of Modotti through her responsive expression, the portrait of Weston served to negate Modotti's presence as a photographer. Weston's nudes, portraits and images of Modotti on another wall inside the gallery compounded this negation. None of the exhibition images represented Modotti as an active creator.

Where Weston is presented through the tropes of the virile creator, Modotti is shown as a sexualized but passive object. The impression generated by the display is reinforced by the SFMOMA's reuse of the exhibition catalogue from a different exhibition titled *Tina Modotti and Edward Weston: The Mexico Years*. Included in the catalogue is a discussion regarding unspecified portraits and nudes by Weston of Modotti. One nude, *Tina on the Azotea* (1924), from the *Mexico as Muse* exhibition also appears in the catalogue. In the image, Modotti lies diagonally across the picture plane on a blanket with her arms raised and her hands placed behind her head. Her head is turned away and her eyes are closed. Her legs are loosely crossed at the calves. Sarah Lowe, author of the catalogue, says these are neither nudes nor portraits and that Modotti is not passive, but rather disengaged²⁰. However, art historian Carol Duncan's seminal feminist essay, « The MOMA's Hot Mamas », suggests the male artist is often seen as the actively engaged creator especially when depicting the female nude²¹. It is a comparison that explicitly continues the conflation of artistic work and a specifically masculine power or force. Indeed, Weston frequently conflated sexual and photographic conquests in his *Daybooks*²². The result is a traditionally gendered message of engaged masculine and disengaged feminine. Other nudes and portraits of Modotti within the exhibition similarly position her as disengaged. Conceptually, the exhibition's placement of photographs posture Weston as creator not only of the portraits and nudes, but of Modotti as an artist as well. Noble posits that, « the female body represents the territory where the male artists jostle to occupy the valorized term of the original²³. » Thus, the images of Modotti were Weston's originals. The placement of any of her work after these insinuated her own photographs are also his originals.

While at first it appears the exhibition's focus on Modotti was a way to continue the discourse of Weston, something different was occurring. Albers originally labeled Modotti as Weston's muse, but emphasized that they inspired one another, and implied the actual space they occupied together in Mexico jointly stimulated them. Thus, the title: *Mexico as Muse*. In this sense Mexico is not an objectified other but rather the space of interaction between two artists. However, the juxtaposition of Modotti and Weston's photographs presents a more complex meaning. Kenneth Baker of the *San Francisco Chronicle* said what came across is a sort of

game. He wrote, « The relative sizes of the prints and their labels make it difficult, and a signature here and there gives the game away, but try guessing who took which pictures in "Mexico as Muse"²⁴. » This game of comparisons reinforces the flaws in the curators' gendered language illustrated visually and verbally in the beginning of the exhibition. Baker described the exhibition as a game that built on the curators' opening wall-text descriptions of Modotti's work as « tactile », « personal » and « socially sensitive » and Weston's work as « monumental », « spiky » and « abstract ». Yet the works are often virtually interchangeable. *Circus Tent* (1924) by Weston and *Stairs, Mexico City* (1924-26) by Modotti can both be classified as abstract as they depict objects in a flattened manner that emphasizes the geometric shapes created by form and angle of perspective. Modotti's *Roses* (c.1924) and Weston's *Chayotes, Mexico* (1924) are both tactile (Figures 2 and 3). Finally, Modotti's *El Manito* (1924) and Weston's *Maguay Cactus* (1926) are both images of plants highlighting their spiky quality. The curatorial insistence on gendered language to distinguish Modotti's photographs from Weston's can actually be used interchangeably to describe both artists' work.

Further, in the same opening wall text the curators told us that Mexico was Weston's Paris and he was not yet the « important modern artist he would later become. » Wouldn't Mexico qualify as Modotti's Paris as well? After all, the inclusion of her work at the SFMOMA insinuated that she was also an important modern artist. However, in the same wall text the curators chose instead to describe Modotti as « young », « beautiful » and « intelligent ». One wonders if Weston was young, beautiful and intelligent as well. But more importantly, one wonders how this sort of description helps us to understand an artist's work. Phillips cannot be entirely blamed for perpetuating this typecasting; indeed, most scholarly and popular writings on Modotti draw attention to her striking good looks. But, again, Weston and Modotti's relationship might be viewed more fully and appropriately as collaboration. As Albers pointed out, Modotti and Weston inspired and influenced one another and Weston began doing still lifes as a result of working side by side with Modotti²⁵. To be sure, Carol Armstrong even suggests a kind of appropriation of Modotti's techniques occurred in her discussion of Weston's shell prints, which she says were « produced and received three years after Modotti opened up this close-up vein [with *Roses*] and Weston began to mine it²⁶. » Thus, there are rather compelling reasons to curate an exhibition which portrays a collaborative spirit between two important modern artists rather than one in which Modotti is seen as a product of Weston.

It is true that an exhibition such as this may serve to springboard Modotti into her own space as an important artist. However, a less obvious motive of the SFMOMA may have been to court local collectors²⁷, especially Susie Tompkins Buell, who owns ten of the photographs by Modotti and Weston in the show²⁸. Admittedly, Buell's ownership may not have preceded the idea to exhibit the two artists together,

but it certainly may have strengthened any reasons the curators may have had for exhibiting the joint show. Yet, one still wishes the museum had been more aware of its descriptions and what they could convey to the viewing public, as it has been pointed out that museums supply dominant master narratives and affect individual's perspectives of the world.

Exhibiting Mexico as Muse

The second half of the SFMOMA exhibition was dedicated to Modotti's photographs of the people of Mexico. According to Albers, these photographs demonstrate that Modotti turned « her back on photographic traditions that viewed Indians as specimens to be catalogued or as accessories to a bucolic landscape, [and] took a keen interest in how indigenous Mexico dressed and worked, what it created, and how it lived²⁹. » The SFMOMA handled their descriptions of these works slightly differently. The curators wrote that Mexican artists usually portrayed the women of Tehuantepec, a region of Mexico where Modotti photographed, in an idealistic fashion but go on to say that Modotti acknowledges their « physical reality » while celebrating their « monumental grace³⁰. » The phrase « monumental grace » conflicts with the phrase « physical reality. » It seems the curators wanted us to view the photographs in the way that Modotti intended as tools of social change and documentation, but were unable to divorce themselves completely from the persistent romantic concept of the noble savage. In other words, the term monumental grace suggested a god-like, mythic and normally unattainable quality far from physical reality and further served to stereotype each Mexican individual. Preziosi and Farago say it is assumed that museums frame « historical truth or consensus³¹. » This assumption in combination with the museum visitors who are largely unprepared to analyze the framework of the museum leads to the continuation of intended and unintended stereotypes alike³². One can easily see the danger of this perpetuation resulting from the SFMOMA curators' language.

Many of Modotti's other photographs in the room were more explicit in their depictions of the working poor, yet there was still difficulty in seeing these as she originally intended them, as objects of sensitive yet documental value able to influence historical development. One of the effects the museum has on photographs created for documentary purposes is to alter one's perception of them so they are seen predominantly as aesthetic objects. In response to object aestheticism in museums, Susan Vogel has said,

Museum professionals must be conscious about what they do and why, and they should inform the public that what it sees is not material that 'speaks for itself' but material filtered through the tastes, interests, politics, and state of knowledge of particular presenters at a particular moment in time³³.

Further, the homogeneous display tactics employed by museums like the SFMOMA contribute to a uniform and aesthetic interpretation³⁴. Because this is a symptom of museums in general, the SFMOMA has perhaps done as well as it could in representing some of Modotti's political photographs. Yet there is arguably room for improvement in the illustration of Modotti's original intentions to aid the working poor.

Other factors contribute to an exhibition as well. Noble, who raised the problematic of Sotheby's omission of Weston, also says the identification between Modotti's works and collector Susie Tompkins Buell should not be overlooked. Buell is the former owner of the San Francisco based clothing company *Esprit*, « a company with a social conscience [that] has made a commitment to support causes and speak out on issues that are of global concern³⁵. » The company values are clearly resonate with Modotti's stated social concerns for the working poor in Mexico, and many Bay Area exhibition visitors would have been aware of Buell's dedication to social causes when they read the display labels identifying her as a collector of some of the works. *The San Francisco Bay Guardian* review of the exhibition focused predominantly on Modotti's political views recorded in her photographs of the working poor. It stated,

Additionally, "Mexico as Muse" documents Modotti's growing political views — her images are particularly preoccupied with the work of hands. Dark hands washing white linens against a frothing riverbed show her fascination with and appreciation for the working poor. Phantom hands controlling a crudely fashioned marionette demonstrate the artist's developing views on government. Modotti became a photographer for the revolutionary paper *el Machete* and a communist spy and was ultimately found dead in the back of a Mexican taxi. The lady has a story. "Mexico as Muse" will leave you captivated with Modotti. The curators must have expected this³⁶.

The review is significant in omitting most of Weston's work and doing what the SFMOMA exhibition largely did not. Namely, discussing the photographs as the honest and objective documents Modotti intended them to be. Here, the captivation arises not from Modotti but from the beauty and intelligence of her photography. Additionally the review indicated what an exhibition of Modotti's photos as she fully intended *could* be: one separate from the attention to her love life.

Patricia Albers and Sam Stourdzé curated the Modotti show *Tina Modotti: The Mexican Renaissance*, which ran in Stockholm, Arles, and Helsinki in the Spring and Summer of 2000. Albers stated that they saw no need to include Weston, as one of their objectives was to allow Modotti's work to stand alone³⁷. Further, the catalogue published in conjunction with the exhibition addressed the established gendered approach of exhibiting Modotti's work, noting,

While Modotti's romantic life has become something of a myth, one fed by por-

traits of her as much as by her own images, her reputation as a photographer must stand or fall by the intrinsic quality of her work, nothing else. We have therefore avoided entering into the vicissitudes of her life. Similarly, we have tried to bring her out of the shadow of Weston, notably by excluding his nude photographs of Modotti³⁸.

Thus, Albers and Stourdzé saw the importance of curating a show in which the story of Modotti was portrayed in a manner that did not highlight her passionate personality or portray her photography as an extension of Weston.

In conclusion, it is time that Tina Modotti be portrayed as a significant artist in her own right. This includes being represented as a creator actively engaged in political and social issues that she clearly and honestly depicted, with the importance long given to Edward Weston ideally receding into the background of her history. In addition, one would hope future exhibitions of Modotti's photographs of the working poor would refrain from the use of stereotyping descriptions. As pointed out in Preziosi and Farago's collection of essays on the museum, it is the responsibility of institutions to avoid representing narratives distorted by stereotypes as they have historically done and continue to do. Taking on this responsibility will enable museums to better present the objective histories and larger issues of women and the Other in the arts. Further, The Association of Art Museum Curators website has a long list of curatorial positions, which either require or prefer applicants with doctorates in Art History³⁹. Thus, the leading curators at most museums do indeed have an art historical background, which means they are aware of issues museums have confronted in the past due to any tendency to exhibit narratives distorted by stereotypes. Exhibition curators possess the required knowledge to create a more appropriate and honest master narrative.

Figure 1



Tina Modotti

Hands Washing, 1927

Figure 2



Tina Modotti

Roses, c. 1924

Figure 3



Edward Weston

Chayotes Mexico, 1924

Notes

- 1 My discussion will focus more on the message of gender than the Other as there was more material in the exhibition that related to the gender topic.
- 2 Aeraeën, Rasheed, « From Primitivism to Ethnic Art » in Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago (dir.), *Grasping the World: The Idea of the Museum*, London, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004, p. 668.
- 3 Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago, « General Introduction: What are Museums For? » in Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago (dir.), *Grasping the World: The Idea of the Museum*, London, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004, p. 1.
- 4 Sarah M. Lowe, *Tina Modotti and Edward Weston: The Mexico Years*, London, Merrell, 2004, p. 15.
- 5 Patricia Albers, *Shadows, Fire, Snow: The Life of Tina Modotti*, New York, Clarkson Potter Publishers, 1999, p. 74.
- 6 Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society*, Third Edition, London, Thames and Hudson, 2002 (1990), p. 260-261.
- 7 Lowe, *op. cit.*, p. 26
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 33. Modotti officially joined the Communist Party in Mexico in 1927.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- 10 Sam Stourdézé, Patricia Albers and Karen Cordero Reiman, *Tina Modotti: the Mexican Renaissance*, Paris, Jean-Michel Place Editions, 2000, p. 10-22.
- 11 Amy Start, *The Archive: The Letters From Tina Modotti to Edward Weston*, Arizona, Center For Creative Photography, University of Arizona, Research Series, number 22, Arizona Board of Regents, January 1986, p. 62.
- 12 Carol Armstrong, « The Photography Which Is Not One: In the Gray Zone with Tina Modotti », *October*, vol. 101, Summer, 2002, p. 20.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 19-52.
- 14 Margaret Hooks, *Tina Modotti: Radical Photographer*, New York, Perseus Books, 2000, p. 120.
- 15 Andrea Noble, *Tina Modotti: Image, Texture, Photography*, Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 2000, p. 38.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Information Page, *San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Website*, http://www.SFMOMA.org/info/director_overview.html, (Page Consulted December 4, 2006).
- 19 Carol Duncan, « The MoMA's Hot Mamas », *Art Journal: Images of Rule: Issues of Interpretation*, vol. 48, number 2, Summer, 1989, p. 171-178.
- 20 Lowe, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
- 21 Duncan, *loc. cit.*, p. 171-178.
- 22 Armstrong, *loc. cit.*, p. 19-52, see notes, p. 26.
- 23 Noble, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
- 24 Kenneth Baker, « Southern Exposure: SFMOMA show captures Mexico in differing lights », *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 2, 2006, p. E-1.
- 25 Patricia Albers, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art September 2006 SFMOMA Artcast, *San Francisco Museum of Modern Art website*, http://www.SFMOMA.org/exhibitions/exhib_detail.asp?id=240,

(Page Consulted December 4, 2006).

- 26 Armstrong, *loc. cit.*, p. 24.
- 27 Patricia Albers made this statement in an e-mail correspondence with me on December 2, 2006.
- 28 Lowe, *op. cit.*, p. 153-157.
- 29 Albers, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
- 30 This appeared on a wall didactic in the second gallery of the exhibition at the SFMOMA.
- 31 Preziosi and Farago, *loc. cit.*, p. 2.
- 32 *Ibid.*
- 33 Vogel, Susan, « Always True to the Object, in Our Fashion » in Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago (dir.), *Grasping the World: The Idea of the Museum*, p. 661.
- 34 Allan Sekula writes a nice discussion of this phenomenon. (cf. « Photography Between Labor and Capital », *Mining Photographs and Other Pictures: A Selection of the Negative Archives of Sheddens Studio, Glace Bay, Cape Breton. 1948-1968* in Benjamin H.D. Buchloh and Robert Wilkie (dir.), Nova Scotia, Canada, *The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design*, 1983, p.193-202.
- 35 Noble, *op. cit.*, p. 35. Noble's information comes from an Esprit publicity blurb, which she received from them in June 1995.
- 36 San Francisco Bay Guardian, « Review of "Mexico as Muse Exhibition" », *San Francisco Bay Guardian Website*, www.sfbg.com/printable_entry.php?entry_id=1621, (Page Consulted November 24, 2006). It is important to point out here that there is a further juxtaposition created with the importance places on hands with Modotti's *Hands Washing* and Weston's *Portrait of Tina Modotti*. Modotti's hands in the photograph, and thus in the exhibition as there are no images of her as an active creator, possess a quality of passivity.
- 37 Patricia Albers made this statement in an email correspondence with me on December 2, 2006.
- 38 Stourdzé, Albers and Cordero Reiman, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
- 39 Association of Art Museum Curators, Curatorial Employment page, <http://www.artcurators.org/classifieds.asp?c=1&s=5>, (Page Consulted October 13, 2008)