

Notes on the Exhibition

Passage One

DIANE ARBUS

Self-Portrait with Camera

February 1945

[Figures 1.11 – 1.13]

Diane Arbus, in this small photograph, is a woman of twenty-two years old. She was born in 1923 in New York City, to an upper-middle-class Jewish family, and died by her own hand in 1971.¹ The picture, though taken ten years before she studied photography with Lisette Model (from 1955 to 1957), clearly identifies her as a photographer. Arbus ultimately became a pivotal person in the history of twentieth-century documentary photography. In this photograph, she has made a composition of herself in partnership with her large Deardorff & Sons camera, a gift from her husband, Allan Arbus. Arbus has used her camera to capture the moment of looking at herself in the mirror of her parents' bathroom. She is not peering into the camera's lens but rather at her reflection.

The picture is one of several photographs Arbus took of herself in order to stay connected to her husband once he had been sent to Burma during World War II. The photograph documents yet another bond. On April 3, 1945, Doon, the first of two daughters, was born. Since 1971, Doon has administered the rights to her mother's work.

There is an additional historical connection, by virtue of coinciding dates, which suggests a link of two Jewish lives in contrasting circumstances. Across the Atlantic, Anne Frank, a Jewish child born in 1929 in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, fled with her family to the Netherlands in 1933, when she was four years old. Until she was eleven she grew up in Holland. In 1940, the Netherlands was occupied by Germany. When, in 1942, the deportations to the "work camps" began, Anne's parents hid in the attic annex of the building that housed the business of her father, Otto. For the next two years, Anne wrote a diary of her life. In August 1944,

¹ Roegiers 1985: 7.

the people in hiding were arrested and deported. Via the transit camp Westerbork and then Auschwitz, Anne was taken to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where she died in March 1945. This is a widely recognized date of the death of someone known the world over for her diary and her death. It is therefore of note that this passing took place one month after Arbus took the photograph of herself, and one month before the birth of her daughter, Doon. Had Arbus, a Jew, been living in Europe, she and her child might have had a completely different fate.

The connection of Arbus to Frank emerges from the context in which the picture is placed. *Partners* has been presented in three passages for the viewer to progress narratively and cumulatively, landing in cul-de-sacs, as pauses for thought, before continuing by retracing the route and revisiting the works. Each work frames the following work, first upon entering and later upon returning back through the works already seen. The return trip recontextualizes the works for the viewer, enabling them to be perceived differently than when first encountered. It is after seeing the exhibits in the subsequent galleries that this picture's implications expand to embrace the life of Anne Frank.

To construct these passages, some entrances to galleries have been closed off. Faux doors replicating Paul Ludwig Troost's original, multi-paned pairs of doors are used to maintain an appearance compatible with his architecture for the Haus der Kunst.

Partners is a composition made of metaphors. Like a tapestry, it provides a picture woven with threads of themes, but is ultimately not thematic, illustrative or didactic. *Partners* offers a contemporary-art experience to individuals where they can transcend the literal to search for new insights and reflections of themselves—particularly how their identities are formed, by virtue of their personal histories and those they inherit.

JOHN SWARTZ
The Wild Bunch
ca. 1900
[Figures 1.14 – 1.16]

The Wild Bunch was a gang of outlaws who, from about 1895–1902, robbed banks and trains in the Rocky Mountain area of America. Their notorious acts extended the era of the Wild West into the twentieth century.

Pictured here, seated left to right, are Harry Longbaugh (alias the “Sundance Kid”), Ben Kilpatrick (the “Tall Texan”) and George Leroy Parker (alias “Butch Cassidy”). Standing are Wm. Carver and Harvey Logan (a.k.a. “Kid Curry”).

Legend has it that, on September 19, 1900, after the Winnemucca, Nevada robbery, the gang got into a playful scuffle at Fanny Porter's Sporting House. According to James D. Horan's book, *The American West: The Outlaws*, they “repaired to a hat store” and, seeing some derby hats in the window, “decided as a jest to attire

themselves in this headgear, which was unusual in the West at the time.” Then, as a joke, they went to have their portrait taken by photographer John Swartz, posed with their new hats in front of a feminine floral background.²

Until this time, the gang members’ faces were not known, which protected them from being apprehended. However, this photograph provided detectives of the Pinkerton Detective Agency with a document with which they could pursue them more ardently. By 1906, copies were posted liberally, even in South America, where the gang was thought to have fled.

Historians believe that, after robbing the Aramayo Mining Co. payroll, Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid found themselves in a shoot-out in San Vicente, a town in southern Bolivia. Wounded and unwilling to allow themselves to be captured, the two committed suicide by shooting themselves in the head.³

By virtue of their mythologization in American movies such as *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, this photograph of a gang of outlaws invites us to consider the extent of our affinity with those who transgress. At the time and through the century, popular culture has supported these renegades as both bad guys and good guys. At what point do villains who break the law and even commit murder, as these men had done, become perceived as evil? This question is posed more directly as the passage progresses.

The portrait dramatizes the power of a photograph and articulates the historical point at which it became a force. These men were, in effect, shot by a photograph.

R.S. (LA ISLA TOYS)

Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages

ca. 1926–36

[Figures 1.14, 1.17–1.21]

R.S. were the initials of Rogelio Sanchis, founder of the company and the toy’s designer. La Isla was the name of his castle, where the toys were manufactured. The company made toys only from 1926 to 1936. It closed when Sanchis went off to fight on the side of Francisco Franco in the Spanish Civil War in which he was killed.

Felix the Cat first appeared on November 9, 1919, the creation of Otto Messmer (1892–1983) for the Pat Sullivan Studio. Felix, the first cartoon character developed for the film screen, was also the first intelligent animated figure, resolving problems in ways that were unique to the world of animation. Felix became the first licensed, mass-merchandised cartoon star.

Minnie Mouse, the girlfriend of Mickey Mouse, made her film debut, together with Mickey, on November 19, 1928, in the animated cartoon *Steamboat Willie* by Walt Disney Studios, the first cartoon

² Horan 1976: 256-257.

³ Patterson 1998: 214-226.

that successfully synchronized sound with moving pictures. By 1931, the talking Mickey Mouse replaced the silent Felix as the new leader in cartoons and character licensing.⁴

Minnie Mouse Carrying Felix in Cages was issued without licensing permission from the two trademark-holders of Minnie Mouse and Felix the Cat. Bypassing these legal restrictions allowed the depiction of Minnie not with Mickey but rather with Felix, who is portrayed as both captive and elusive.

Indeed, though Felix has been captured in a caged suitcase, what Minnie Mouse possesses is questionable. The same image of Felix is portrayed graphically on each side of the suitcase. However, when viewing the toy from the front or the back, Felix is nowhere to be seen. He is seemingly embedded in the toy, located somewhere within suitcases that are open and therefore cannot actually contain anything. Notwithstanding Felix's capacity in film to make imaginative escapes from predicaments, the simultaneous presence and absence of Felix in this toy introduces a duality that links it to the dualities inherent in subsequent items on display, like the teddy bears, the dead dog and the Christ-like Hitler figure.

In addition to referencing the belief system that allows us to animate inanimate objects with our imagination (as with the bears), the toy also raises the question of what one really has when one captures something. What is at the heart of collecting? What is it that makes someone desire something and acquire it? Taking a photograph, by capturing a moment in time, is an act of collecting. Adolf Hitler was a collector, not only of objects and lands but also entire races, for which he planned commemorative museums.

A collection of anything, and particularly of art, has a place in our culture that is both enabling and baggage. In the Minnie Mouse/Felix toy, it is physically enabling, since the suitcase halves carried by Minnie, one in each hand, have wheels, allowing her to walk, step by step, without falling. A collection is both a physical burden and a precious reservoir of information, providing a resource for scholarship. A coherently curated collection suggests the universe has an inherent order that can be discovered, based on a belief that order can be made out of chaos. However, a collection can also be baggage, insofar as a system can distort reality.

Minnie Mouse is included in this show not only for the metaphorical interpretation that can be made of her partnership with Felix in this toy but also for her power as a popular icon in the twentieth century. Minnie and Mickey Mouse have endured in the imagination of the public—the result of promotion and culture. The German people were captivated by Mickey Mouse. German companies responded to the demand and fostered further engagement by producing high-quality toys, china and many other items that featured him. Indeed, it was not uncommon to see a picture of Mickey Mouse located below a Nazi Luftwaffe pilot's window as a talisman of good luck. However, when Hitler saw Mickey on the side of the plane also identified with a swastika

⁴ Canemaker 1991: 3-7.

and an Iron Cross, he found the symbol of the mouse offensive. Ultimately he declared war on the beloved character by banning his image in any form. Mickey's presence became an absence.

YDESSA HENDELES

Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)

2002

[Figures 1.22 – 1.94]

Partners (The Teddy Bear Project) includes an archive of found family-album photographs determined by a single motif: a toy teddy bear. Every photograph includes the image of a bear. The pictures are arranged in over one hundred typologies that are presented in a series of interlocking narratives so they can be read by approaches from either end of each wall.

Bears have played an important role in the legends and folklore of countries around the world for thousands of years. Possibly these creatures were of interest because they were plantigrade animals, like humans —capable of walking upright, with heel and toes making contact with the ground. The bear is central to the shamanistic rituals of North American Indians, the Inuit and the Ainu of Japan, and played a particularly significant role in Celtic cultures as well as in European and Russian myths. Bears were always powerful adversaries that humans respected.⁵

The story of the birth of the teddy bear, which occurred between 1902 and 1904, differs, depending on whether it is told from a German or an American perspective. The debate in the teddy-bear world over who wins credit for making the first teddy bear is as fierce as the one in the boxing world over who won the world-title boxing match in 1927 between American boxer Gene Tunney and Irish boxer Jack Dempsey, an event that is central to the metaphorical work by James Coleman in this exhibition.

Like Pat Sullivan and Disney, the original patent-holders of Felix the Cat and Minnie Mouse, brought together in the creation of a toy, Germany and America were also unwilling partners in the creation of the toy teddy bear. Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt, an American born in New York (1858–1919), and Appollonia Margarete Steiff, a German born in Giengen (1847–1909), are both responsible for the birth of the teddy bear. They had little else in common except for childhood illness. Steiff contracted polio in 1849, which left her bound to a wheelchair, unable to walk and with a weakened right arm. Roosevelt suffered from debilitating asthma, which may have encouraged him to cultivate a macho image by becoming a big-game hunter who went on expeditions to shoot bears.

In November 1902, Roosevelt, as the 26th president of the United States, travelled to Louisiana and Mississippi to settle a border dispute. During the trip, he went bear-hunting. After four days without success,

⁵ Maniera 2001: 8-19.

his hosts tried to help by tying an elderly bear to a tree, but Roosevelt refused to shoot the tethered target (though he did have it killed with a hunter's knife).

The press reported the incident, and, two days later, on November 16, 1902, a cartoon by Clifford K. Berryman (1869–1949), head political cartoonist for *The Washington Post*, ran on the front page of the newspaper with the caption “Drawing the Line in Mississippi.”⁶ In the drawing, Roosevelt was posed with his hand raised in a gesture of refusal. (How effective a hand gesture can be. One has only to think of Hitler's use of a hand gesture for propagandistic purposes, and Jeff Wall's effective use of an expressive hand gesture in his work, *Mimic* [Figures 3.2, 3.3], included in this exhibition.)

At the end of November, Berryman drew a pen portrait of Roosevelt with a small bear and titled it “Teddy Bear Nov. 1902.” This is likely the first appearance of the name for what was about to emerge as a new icon.⁷

Earlier toy bears were made to ride on wheels, with unmovable limbs and head. The first version of a toy bear with arms, legs and a head that could all be moved seems to have been introduced by Morris and Rose Michtom, immigrants from Russia who had a novelty and stationery shop on Thompson Avenue in Brooklyn, New York. As the story is told, Rose capitalized on the publicity of the cartoon and made a plush bear, which she displayed in the Michtoms' store window with a card labelling the item “Teddy's Bear.” This bear, and other doll-like bears Rose made, sold quickly.

The demand for Teddy's Bears soon exceeded the Michtoms' capabilities, and so a company by the name of Butler Brothers, a wholesaler in Brooklyn that also owned mills that produced plush, partnered with the Michtoms. This ultimately led to the establishment of the Ideal Novelty and Toy Co., which became the first major manufacturer of the teddy bear in America.

The German version of the story is that in 1902, the Steiff family, after years of research, made a plush bear-doll with a pointed nose, a hump on its back, and legs and arms that were all the same size so the bear could both sit and stand. A system of joining the legs and arms with strings enabled the bear's head and limbs to move. It was designed to have mohair for fur, boot buttons for eyes and a nose made of sealing wax with nostrils carved into it. The toy, *Bär* 55 PB, was introduced at the Leipzig Toy Fair in March 1903, where it was not received with much enthusiasm. In Steiff's cataloguing system, the 55 after *Bär* (bear) means he was 55 cm (22 in.) tall when seated. The “P” meant it was *Plüsch* (plush) and the “B” meant it was *Beweglich* (movable). It was not until the last day of the fair that Hermann Berg, the head buyer for the toy department of George Borgfeldt & Co., a New York wholesaler, saw the toy bear (which was reportedly described as a “stuffed misfit”) and immediately ordered three thousand. The bear was

⁶ Berryman 1902.

⁷ Maniera 2001: 26-29.

named Petsy, based on an old-fashioned German name for a bruin, Meister Petz.⁸

Meanwhile, in America, the teddy-bear motif was further utilized by Berryman in subsequent political cartoons throughout the Roosevelt presidency. In fact, the president and his supporters exploited what had become known as teddy's bear as a potent political mascot. By 1904, the link between the man and the bear proved very effective in the election campaign. Toy teddy bears, made by the Ideal Novelty and Toy Co., were given out as promotional items. By the time of Roosevelt's second term in office, 1905–1909, a huge market had developed for teddy bears.

But there was something special about the characteristics of the teddy bear, over and above the effective marketing of the toy. William Taft, Roosevelt's successor, tried to find a comparably popular mascot for his presidential campaign of 1909, but his attempt failed. As Leyla Maniera put it in her book, *Christie's Century of Teddy Bears*, "The teddy bear had captured the public's heart and was not to be ousted by an upstart marsupial called Billy Possum."⁹

In 1904, Steiff created a metal-rod-jointed bear, but, by 1905, the design had been changed to disc joints. The appearance of the bear was also altered. It started to look more as it would appear for some time to come, with very long limbs, oversized paws and feet, a hump on its back, a head with a long snout, sewn nose and mouth, and boot buttons for eyes. The new design was a huge success, resulting in 400,000 teddy-bear toys sold, and the company, Margarete Steiff GmbH, was formed.

By 1906, the U.S. toy-trade journal *Plaything*, rather than use the name "teddy's bear," called the toy a teddy bear. As the craze gathered force, the competition between the companies and the countries increased. Steiff, watching copies of its toys being manufactured in America, started to patent its designs. According to Steiff's records, by 1907 it had made and sold 975,000 bears. By 1908, Steiff finally accepted the American name for its bears. The toy was called a teddy bear. The partnership between the countries became permanent.

Both America and Germany celebrated the birth of the teddy bear, starting in 2002 on the hundred-year anniversary of the cartoon and continuing this year, 2003, with the centenary celebration of the anniversary of the first jointed teddy bear.

One of the reasons the teddy bear was chosen as a determinant of *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)* is that a photograph that includes a jointed teddy bear clearly dates it as a picture from the twentieth century, the time frame spanned by this show. It thus defines the parameter of the archive as well as that of the exhibition in which it is a component.

The teddy bear's popularity in the twentieth century, and the online access to markets in many countries through eBay auctions, have allowed for an archive to be assembled that portrays a wide range of cultures

⁸ Pfeiffer 2001: 20-25.

⁹ Maniera 2001: 32.

and contexts throughout the century. While a significant number of the teddy-bear photographs in this collection came from Germany (where the bear is featured in Berlin's coat of arms), they are also from the United Kingdom, America, Croatia, Serbia, Samoa, Japan, China, the Czech Republic, Finland, Russia, Bulgaria, Austria, Hungary, New Zealand, Spain, Portugal, Estonia, France, Italy, Israel, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Australia and Canada, the birthplace of Winnie the Pooh.

One important conceptual contribution *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, the installation, makes to *Partners*, the exhibition, is its continuation of the notion of duality introduced by the tin toy displayed in the first gallery. As a mohair-covered, stuffed, jointed toy, with movable arms, legs and head, a teddy bear can be cradled and hugged like a baby. But the wild bear referenced by the toy is an animal that can be threatening to human beings. Having a ferocious guardian at one's side makes the teddy into a symbol of protective aggression, which is why, for the past hundred years, it has provided solace to frightened children and later to adults, who carry that comfort with them as a cherished memory.

Another area of duality is in the display. Because of the relative rarity of photographs that include teddy bears, the resulting multitude of over three thousand pictures provides a curatorial statement that is both true and misleading. Viewers are inclined to trust a curator's presentation of cultural artifacts. While these systems are not necessarily objective, they can be convincing and therefore of comfort. The fact that the photographs are organized in typologies lends *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)* a reassuring aura of scholarship, in the same way that the teddy bear reassures the child. But the scholarship here is deceptive, because the use of documentary materials actually manipulates reality. Creating a world in which everyone had a teddy bear is a fantasy, as well as a commentary on traditional thematic, taxonomic curating.

Partners (The Teddy Bear Project) is structured in the form of a classic, traditional and systematic presentation of natural history or cultural objects, with antique museum-display cases and mezzanines built along the walls to permit close inspection of every photograph. However, unlike an array of arrowheads or African masks displayed for the didactic purpose of comparing and contrasting data, *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)* takes vernacular, mundane, family-album photographs and makes them into a project with meaning that is metaphorical.

The bear's appearance over and over again, in thousands of photographs, not only validates the importance of the image of the teddy bear but also enables it to transcend the literal circumstances of its individual scenarios to become, philosophically, a pure form, the Platonic idea of a teddy bear.

By isolating one component, collections can be persuasive in giving meaning to things that might not otherwise be appreciated as independent objects. For viewers who have looked at more than three thousand photographs with a teddy bear in each, a normal family-album picture, without a teddy bear in it and picturing an unfamiliar person, may seem mundane and less precious.

There is the additional enhancing effect on each individual photograph when co-ordinated into typologies. Taxonomies create contexts of consistencies. The vernacular elements in *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)*, objects that have mostly been discarded (along with the vitrine display cases, which came from architectural salvage houses), when pulled together create a coherence. This allows a once cacophonous chorus of disparate images, culled from places around the world, to sing together in harmony to a theme. Museum exhibitions tend to trace themes as ends in themselves. This presentation, on the other hand, uses themes as a means to further insight. Themes on this occasion are devices that raise issues other than the history of the teddy bear or the conventions of family-album photographs.

The teddy bear here is totemic and emblematic, which invites comparison with other twentieth-century symbols that also serve as identity anchors, such as the fifty stars and stripes of America and the swastika of the Third Reich. *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)* is a construct. Indeed, the project is discriminatory. Like an exclusive club, there were specific qualifications that defined the standards for membership. The inclusion of a teddy bear in a picture identified it as part of a group and became, in effect, a passport to this particular archive.

The teddy-bear was also chosen for what it reveals about the complex partnership of culture and commerce. The teddy bear craze and its continued popularity became a belief system that not only fulfills a human need but has also fuelled a century-long financial phenomenon in the toy marketplace, in America and Germany as well as in England, which, as it did in the wars of the twentieth century, became a central player in the history of the teddy bear. J.K. Farnell, in 1908, made the first British teddy bears, of which Winnie the Pooh (from the book written by A. A. Milne in 1926) is a famous example.

Any clarity as to whether the bears' popularity resulted from their appeal as a symbol of goodwill or from the manufacturers' successful marketing of teddies is complicated by the activities of ardent arctophiles in England, such as British actor Peter Bull (1912–1984), whose 1907 American bear, Delicatessen, starred as Aloysius in the television adaptation of Evelyn Waugh's novel *Brideshead Revisited*,¹⁰ and Colonel T. Robert "Bob" Henderson (1904–1990), an army officer in World War II under Field Marshall Montgomery, who promoted the psychological, spiritual and philosophical benefits of the teddy bear. Henderson founded the British branch of the charity Good Bears of the World, which gives teddy bears to sick and disadvantaged children. Innumerable toy companies rose to the occasion to produce teddy bears, but the public's enthusiastic response was not solely the result of commercial promotion. There were many non-commercial players who promoted the history of the teddy bear.

This complexity became apparent once the doll industry tried to capitalize on the appeal of the teddy

¹⁰ See also his book: Bull 1987 (1969).

bear by creating Billikens, hybrid teddy-dolls with porcelain or celluloid faces but with teddy bear bodies covered with mohair, felt hands and feet, excelsior stuffing and containing bear “growlers” inside their bodies. The teddy bear prevailed, however, and continues to be part of the culture of childhood, in Western and Eastern cultures. Japanese people, for example, have adopted teddy bears as beloved toys and there is now a sanctuary devoted to them, the Izu Teddy Bear Museum, yet another affirmation of the value of these toys, both emotionally and commercially.

The teddy bear has appealed not only to children as playthings and as surrogate playmates but also to adults as props to express whimsical fantasies at parties, in the workplace, at sports events and in sexual play. In fact, teddy bears have attended every social function in society. They have been photographed at weddings, in schools, in hospitals, on battlefields, at births, deaths and memorials.

Red Cross workers and police forces regularly distribute them to children in distress. Indeed, English children in World War II, who, when evacuated to the country for greater safety, were permitted to bring few possessions, were allowed to take teddy bears, as these were considered to be necessities and not luxuries. The teddy bear has also been a symbol of solace on occasions such as the mourning of lives lost in the Oklahoma bombing, and they were manufactured to commemorate disasters such as the sinking of the “Titanic.”

In fact, included in this exhibition’s inventory of antique teddy bears displayed alongside photographs of their original owners is a very rare black bear, made especially for the British market by Steiff in 1912 and 1913 to commemorate the passengers lost on the “Titanic” on April 14, 1912 [Figures 1.36, 1.37]. Four hundred and ninety-four bears were delivered to England. All of England had gone into mourning because of the disaster, in which more than fifteen hundred people perished at sea. Everything and everyone was in black. Though a prototype black bear proposed by Steiff had been rejected five years earlier, the grieving gave this bear a new purpose.¹¹ The disaster symbolized by the bear sets up a distinction between tragedies that befall people living their lives, as happened with the explosion of the “Hindenburg” zeppelin (photographs of which are also included in *Partners*), and those that come as the result of the deliberate aggression of other human beings.

This black memorial bear was chosen by the young Hester Drew as a Christmas gift in 1913. She named him Teddy Bear Black. Accompanying the bear is a photograph of Hester [Figure 1.38], standing behind a chair on which her bear is seated, taken at her grandparents’ home in Bournemouth two weeks after her mother’s death. The bear spent most of his existence attired in Hester’s father’s christening gown, which had also been Hester’s christening gown. Teddy Bear Black’s jacket acted as a protection against the fading of his black mohair. By dressing him in it in this display, it also becomes a symbol of his survival and rebirth into a new century.

¹¹ Maniera 2001: 52-53.

Having a teddy bear has become a cultural convention of childhood. As a result, teddies entered the arsenal of photographers' props. From studio to studio, from country to country, the pictures generated with teddy bears in them are surprisingly similar. The snapshots made by family members using hand-held cameras also fall into identifiable conventions, many of which are displayed on the sixteen walls of this part of the exhibition. The conventions that make up the typologies in *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)* not only connect photographers as unwittingly complicit partners but also all of twentieth-century humankind.

Like the belief in the comforting power of teddy bears, people also believe in the ability of family photographs to depict reality. Indeed, they trust these truths more than they do the reality of pictures by photojournalists, who attempt to capture events as facts, despite the way in which the resulting photos are captioned and contextualized by the news agencies that use them.

However, the primary factual evidence in family-album photographs is the way in which people want to be seen and remembered. The photographs reflect the subjects' values and aspirations, and are not at all objective representations. They reveal how important it is for people both to feel they belong to a group and also to have a special place within that group—but always within limits defined by society.¹² Hence the collection is a reflection of the values of society at the time of the photographs. It is notable not only for what it includes but also for what is absent. Only one child with Down Syndrome was discovered, and only one portrait of a child with a cleft palate. It is clear what society designates as acceptable (or not) to keep in a family album at different times in history, as well as what pictures are deemed marketable. Some of the most difficult photographs to locate were photographs of families with Nazi-uniformed fathers and mothers. While the uniforms were previously a source of pride, with men dressed in them for Christmas pictures, they are now as hard as hen's teeth to find.

Ultimately, what surfaces from this visual thesis on the history of the teddy bear and the conventions of family-album photographs is the human desire to conform to the expectations of others in order to fit in. While there is an instinctual social desire to belong, there is also a competitive instinct to stand out as separate and above others. Parents who dress up their children for a studio photo-shoot hope they will appear not only as appealing as all the other children but perhaps even a bit better. The desire to provide a pleasing public face belies the private truths these pictures conceal and will never reveal. They form a façade to protect the secret stories behind the pictures.

¹² Marianne Hirsch in her research on the connections between postmemory and family-album photography stresses the artificial and conventional character of these images. She argues: "Now, more than a hundred years later, photography's social functions are integrally tied to the ideology of the modern family. The family photo both displays the cohesion of the family and is an instrument of its togetherness; it both chronicles family rituals and constitutes a prime objective of those rituals. Because the photograph gives the illusion of being a simple transcription of the real, a trace touched directly by the events it records, it has the effect of *naturalizing cultural practices and of disguising their stereotyped and coded characteristics*. As photography immobilizes the flow of family life into a series of snapshots, it perpetuates familial myths while seeming merely to record actual moments in family history..." (my emphasis). Hirsch 1997: 7.

They also form tableaux. The tableau is a fundamental format in this show, introduced not only in the individual photographs but also by the form of their presentation. Indeed, the architectural context of mezzanines, spiral staircases and vitrines provides an elaborate tableau for the taxidermied dog [Figures 1.95, 1.96], setting up a dialogue between a stuffed toy and a stuffed dog.

The teddy bear plays a particularly useful role in a tableau. It is an object, but even as a photographer's prop, it adds another presence to the photograph, as if another living being were also in the picture. Because teddies stay still for the camera, they can be animated in a photograph to activate the picture's narrative. In fact, the teddy bears in many of the pictures look as alive, if not more alive, than the human sitters, at least in part because the photographer could more easily control the poses of the bears than the people. The teddy bear does not characterize the sitter as much as it animates pictures in ways that would otherwise not be possible.

The teddy bear, with its arms and legs and upright, seated position, has semi-human attributes, which invite the projections of people's imaginations. It falls somewhere between a pet and a person—a silent comrade, and, like the photographs, the bearer of confidences.

Photographs, because they are images of people captured in the past, are actually as much about absence as about presence. This links *Partners (The Teddy Bear Project)* to Felix the Cat, who is both present and absent, and in fact to all recorded images. The display of bears with photographs of their original owners identifies that person's existence at a point in time in history, reminiscent of the date paintings from the *TODAY* series made by On Kawara [Figure 2.73].

In fact, the material survival of the bear, changed but recognizable over the years, makes it into a memento mori. Twenty other teddy bears in the exhibition are shown with photographs and ephemera from their original owners [Figures 1.28–1.73, 1.81–1.83]. The subject of death is an inevitable part of any discourse on photography since the relationship of photography to time and memory is pivotal.¹³ The notion of death and the connection of photography to death are dramatized by the image of the teddy bear. A teddy bear sits in a place between life and death as a trope, in a way that a toy truck and a doll don't. The latter are both literal representations. But a teddy bear bypasses this limitation and seems to be alive by virtue of the ease with which it accepts projections. It transcends the literality of the object. Like art, the teddy bear is not consumed by the viewer's comprehension. Indeed, when included in a photograph, it leads to a suspension of disbelief.

¹³ For an expansion of the theme of photography and memento mori see, for example: Batchen 2004.

MAURIZIO CATTELAN

Untitled

1998

taxidermied dog

[Figures 1.95, 1.96]

Most viewers are initially shocked when they realize the dog is not sleeping but dead. Maurizio Cattelan's taxidermied dog from a Paris pound is a sculpture that can only be displayed persuasively alive in a gallery context if it is an intervention. The sculpture on the floor has the opportunity to be convincing because it is contextualized by the vast teddy-bear display. The sculpture is not an adjunct to the teddy-bear vitrines and photographs — but is rather the inspiration and catalyst for the project that surrounds it, framing it as the focus for the viewer.

Cattelan's dog allows the exhibition to explore in more depth the human urge to project life onto both dogs and teddy bears. Each embodies a belief system. The mohair-covered plush toys, stuffed with wood excelsior, their faces articulated with boot-button eyes and thread-sewn noses and mouths, became objects of meaning to those who developed attachments to them. Animation is projected onto them, in the form of imagined personalities and power.

Both dogs and teddy bears are receptacles for people's projections. Neither are what we think they are, but we believe them to be how we imagine them—even though the dog is dead and the teddy bear was never alive in the first place. The bears gaze at us, appearing to be full of life. We look at the dog, believing him to be asleep, but in the end are left to imagine the dead dog alive.

MAURIZIO CATTELAN

Him

2001

[Figures 1.97–1.99]

Him by Maurizio Cattelan is positioned in order that the viewer first encounters the diminutive, clothed, child-like figure from behind, unaware of its identity. When the viewer gets to the other side of the sculpture, the face of Hitler comes as a shock.

The sculpture is also placed in the centre of a large, empty gallery with pairs of tall doors, original to the Paul Ludwig Troost architecture of the Haus der Kunst, on the walls that flank each side of the figure's face.

The image of Hitler is a powerful symbol. Indeed, the German government has forbidden the use of images from the Third Reich for the purposes of glorifying the Nazi regime in an attempt to dissuade subsequent followers from their political philosophy. This may have had the unintended effect of making the images more appealing. For example, Third Reich symbols have entered the realm of rebellious teenagers as well as the repertoire of sexual fantasies practised by some homosexual men, a group Hitler sought to eliminate.

Still, over time, the image of Hitler has changed in meaning and is now about to be consumed by history. The people who have actual memories of him and were affected by his harm are now aged and dramatically diminished in number. Hitler and the teddy bear, both indelible icons that define the twentieth century, are proposed in this exhibition as sharing some basic dynamics.

The system of the teddy-bear archive raises the notion of other systems created with strict stipulations, and how they can, because they appear to make sense, persuasively manipulate reality. The purity of race to which Hitler aspired was the application of a system of rules. Like the teddy bear, Hitler shares a duality of origin, where danger is domesticated. Indeed, the benign belief system of the myth of a protective teddy bear (based on the image of what is actually a wild and often dangerous creature) can be compared in function to the image of Hitler for the German people, as their partner, offering a deceptive source of safety.

More pertinent is the fact that Hitler is an inherent part of both the identity of the German people and the Jewish people. Those who have inherited the legacies of the perpetrators and their victims have become, historically, partners.