

## **ABY WARBURG'S *BILDERATLAS MNEMOSYNE* AN EXTRA-SPECIAL ILLUSTRATED VOLUME**

In the 1920s, Aby Warburg (1866–1929) developed his *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, a volume of plates that has since become a myth. His approach of collecting and comparing recurring visual themes and motives from antiquity to the present day continues to inspire the visually and digitally dominated world of today. Now, for the first time, illustrations of all the sixty-three panels that have been recreated appear in a large-format folio volume. Due to the current situation, the planned exhibition of the original panels at Haus der Kulturen der Welt has been postponed until autumn 2020.

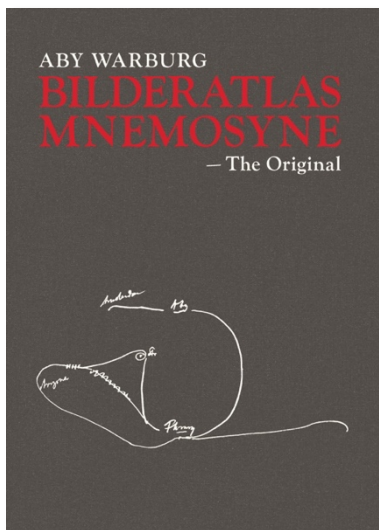
Berlin, 2. April 2020—He is considered one of the fathers of modern visual studies, whose pictorial legacy was long hidden from view: In the late years of his life, the Hamburg art and cultural historian Aby Warburg worked on his *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, with which he created a visual reference system that was ahead of its time. It consisted of sixty-three large panels on which Warburg arranged photographic reproductions of artefacts from the Middle East, European antiquity and the Renaissance, alongside contemporary newspaper clippings and advertisements. A thematically structured, visually arranged system of reference.

Warburg dealt intensively with the interaction of myths, images, and rites from different cultural contexts and set new standards with his method: he rearranged canonical alongside unknown images and considered them across epochs. His atlas thus crossed disciplinary boundaries between art history, philosophy, and anthropology and laid the foundations for today's disciplines of image and media studies.

The large-format illustrated book now being published and the exhibition at Haus der Kulturen der Welt restores the last documented version of the 1929 atlas almost completely with the original illustrations. To this end, the curators Roberto Ohrt and Axel Heil, in cooperation with the Warburg Institute in London, have tracked down the majority of the 971 illustrations in the Institute's Photographic Collection, which comprises 400,000 objects, and are showing his complete unfinished magnum opus for the first time since Warburg's death.

“First and foremost, we wish to pay tribute to a body of work that Warburg sought to shape until the very end of his life, aiming to achieve thematic precision and a certain openness, which he felt was crucial to maintain towards the aesthetic material he explored. He occasionally characterized his method as ‘polyphonic’ and ‘multi-dimensional,’ which is why the *Bilderatlas* was so exceptionally difficult to complete,” say Roberto Ohrt and Axel Heil about the project.

In autumn 2020 a commentary volume with detailed comments by the curators will also be published. The exhibition at Haus der Kulturen der Welt will also follow at the same time.



### **ABY WARBURG: BILDERATLAS MNEMOSYNE THE ORIGINAL**

Ed. Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin and The Warburg Institute, London; Roberto Ohrt, Axel Heil, texts by Roberto Ohrt, Axel Heil, Bernd M. Scherer, Bill Sherman, Claudia Wedepohl, graphic design by Axel Heil, Christian Ertel, fluid editions  
English

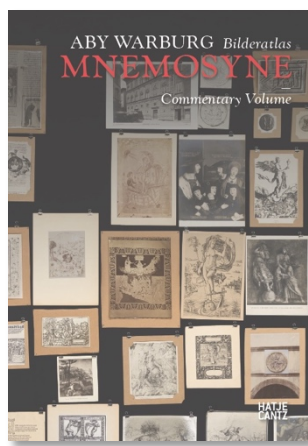
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### **ABY WARBURG: BILDERATLAS MNEMOSYNE COMMENTARY VOLUME**

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Especially in the digital age, Hatje Cantz regards itself an element linking museums, artists, galleries, collectors, and art lovers. Conveying knowledge - in terms of both content and visuals - as well as an enthusiasm for art is always at the heart of our engagement.

In keeping with our ambition to make it possible to experience art beyond the medium of the book, Hatje Cantz has launched the EDITION HATJE CANTZ as we continue to expand our portfolio of strictly limited, signed editions featuring works on paper, photographic works of art, and art objects.

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