

# Alec Soth's Archived Blog

September 19, 2006

## LA POUPÉE

Filed under: [books](#), [sculpture](#) — alecsothblog @ 9:14 pm

I lust after this book by Hans Bellmer. It is being sold by [Andrew Cahan](#).



Bellmer, Hans. LA POUPÉE. Traduit par Robert Valency. Paris: GLM, 1936. Small 4to., (13) pp., with two

illustrations from drawings by the artist and ten mounted silver gelatin photographs. Original printed wrappers, with a small tear to the paper wrappers at the spine, expertly restored. Housed in a newly made clamshell box of cloth and morocco, with paper labels of the spine and upper cover. A fine copy with the photographs showing full and rich tonal quality, and measuring approximately 31/8 x 4 5/8 inches, or the reverse. This copy is number thirty-seven of eighty copies with the text printed on rose paper, from a total edition of one hundred and five copies. This copy bears a contemporary ownership signature in pencil on the front blank endpaper dated 1937, Paris. One of the landmark Surrealist books, and one of the very few to be illustrated with original silver gelatin photographs. This is considered Bellmer's most important and influential work. Therese Lichtenstein, (guest curator for the International Center for Photography 2001 exhibition "Behind Closed Doors: The Art of Hans Bellmer") writes: "Although Bellmer is generally classified as a Surrealist, he actually initiated his doll project with a specific political purpose: to oppose the fascism of the National Socialist (Nazi) Party in Germany in the 1930s. After the rise to power of the Nazi Party in 1933, Bellmer, an established painter and graphic designer, declared that he would make no work that would support the German state. The unconventional or "degenerate" poses of his dolls were directed specifically at the cult of the perfect body then prominent in Germany. The dolls are represented in a constant state of mutation, multiplication, and recombination, often appearing contorted or bound, and occasionally lacking body parts or sprouting extra sets of limbs. These permutations echo autoerotic sensations rooted in the body. Bellmer's work was also an attempt to destabilize representations of gender being widely circulated in contemporary mass culture." **\$55,000.00**

## 6 Comments

1. Bellmer show has just opened at the Whitechapel in London:  
[http://www.whitechapel.org/content.php?page\\_id=2672](http://www.whitechapel.org/content.php?page_id=2672)

*Comment by [Gary](#) — September 20, 2006 @ [1:39 am](#)*

2. Time to get another McKnight!!

*Comment by [Brian](#) — September 20, 2006 @ [1:59 pm](#)*

3. I remember the first time I met his puppet-work, I was scared to death ...

*Comment by [creezy](#) — September 21, 2006 @ [3:35 am](#)*

4. I have lusted (in vain) after this book too.

You may or may not be satisfied with a Japanese knockoff:  
<http://www.botzilla.com/blog/archives/000393.html> has a couple of tangential links

*Comment by [Kevin Bjorke](#) — September 21, 2006 @ [2:57 pm](#)*

5. these are extraordinary pieces, did Cindy Sherman know about them before she started her work in the 90s?

*Comment by [michael](#) — September 25, 2006 @ [7:02 am](#)*

6. [...] (Gezocht: La Poupée) [...]

*Pingback by [free antilles](#) » [Enartete Kunst von Hans Bellmer? Mozart? Aida? Verboten!](#) — October 7, 2006 @ [11:11 am](#)*