

Manuel Alvarez Bravo
at one hundred
February 9 - April 6, 2002
Press Release

All the pathos of Mexico is placed by him within our reach: where Alvarez Bravo stopped, where he paused to capture a light, a sign, a silence, is not merely where the heart of Mexico beats but also where the artist could present, with a unique discernment, the plainly objective value of his emotion. Served in the great movements of his inspiration by the rarest sense of quality as well as an infallible technique, Manuel Alvarez Bravo... has elevated himself to that which Baudelaire called the eternal style. --
André Breton

RoseGallery commemorates the one-hundredth birthday of Manuel Alvarez Bravo with a collection of his silver and platinum prints, encompassing many of his most celebrated images as well as previously unpublished photographs. As inspiration, contemporary, and pupil to many of the past century's most prominent artists, Alvarez Bravo can lay claim, as few artists can, to the modern period in its entirety, with which his longevous oeuvre is inextricably bound. Bravo's photographs are not surreal: they do not rely on the disjunction of image or subject for their provocation; rather they are a natural, elegant confluence of personal symbols and cultural perspicacity arranged under his intuitive skill and inimitable aesthetic. Thus enfolded within his self-described and perfectly realized "fantasy" rather than a specific location or time, Bravo's images today retain the expressive wit with which they were first imbued.

Born in 1902, the fifth of eight children, Manuel Alvarez Bravo left school at thirteen to work. In 1917 he began a study of painting and seven years later he bought his first camera. Enscoced in the burgeoning art world of Mexico City, Alvarez Bravo worked contemporaneously with artists such as Diego Rivera, Rufino Tamayo, Frida Kahlo, and Tina Modotti. By 1931 he was working full time as a photographer, and in subsequent years his ascending fame as one of the prominent photographers of his time won him international exposure and renown. He is the subject of many books and countless individual as well as group exhibitions. An exhibition of his work, "Manuel Alvarez Bravo - Optical Parables" is on view at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles until February 17. He currently lives and works in Coyoacán, an historic district near Mexico.

Manuel Alvarez Bravo at one hundred, an exhibition of black-and-white photographs, will be on view from February 9, 2002 through April 6, 2002 at RoseGallery. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, February 9, from 6 to 8 pm. The gallery is located in the Bergamot Station Art Center, 2525 Michigan Avenue, Building G-5, Santa Monica, CA 90404. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am to 6 pm. For more information, call (310) 264-8440.