

# The Experimental

# Self

*A current ASF exhibition provides a look at Edvard Munch's explorations in photography.*



**Self-Portrait on the Beach with Brushes and Palette in Warnemünde, 1907.**  
Original: Collodion contact print.



**Self-Portrait 'à la Marat,' Beside a Bathtub at Dr. Jacobson's Clinic, 1908-1909.**  
Original: Gelatin silver contact print.

THE WORLD CELEBRATES THE NORWEGIAN ARTIST EDVARD Munch, he of the ubiquitous *The Scream*, for his paintings, prints and watercolors. Less is known about his fascination with photography and his experimentation with the camera as an expressive medium. And this is the subject of the current ASF exhibition at Scandinavia House, *The Experimental Self: Edvard Munch's Photography*, which will run through March 5.

With the camera, too, his most consistent theme was self-portraiture. As exhibition curator, Patricia Berman, points out, Munch seems to have been the first artist in history to take “selfies.” Berman is a professor of art history at Wellesley College and a leading specialist in early modern Scandinavian art.

In her introduction to the 60-odd print show, Berman describes how Munch exploited the expressive potential of photographic “mistakes,” such as “faulty” focus, distorted and funneling perspectives, eccentric camera angles and movement during long exposure times that resulted in the

ghosting of his own body. “Such challenges to the camera’s capacity to record material reality extend the artist’s experimentation in his other media,” she explains.

The exhibition, has been organized by ASF in partnership with the Munch Museum in Oslo. It is running concurrently with a complementary exhibition at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art entitled *Edvard Munch: Between the Clock and the Bed*.

Immediately prior to the Munch photography exhibition the Foundation hosted the annual “Munch, Modernism and Modernity” conference entitled *Marketing the North* (co-sponsored by the National Museum of Norway) with Mieki Bal of the University of Amsterdam and Robert Jensen of the University of Kentucky as keynote speakers and panels led by Dr. Berman, Ute Kuhlemann-Falck of the Munch Museum, and Øystein Sjøstad of the University of Oslo.



**Ludvig Ravensberg in Åsgårdstrand.**  
Original: Collodion contact print.



**Bathing Boys**, in the front garden of Munch's house at Åsgårdstrand, 1904. Ludvig Ravensberg can be seen standing at the right of the canvas.



**Munch in a workshop shirt**, in the front garden of the house at Åsgårdstrand. Ludvig Ravensberg may have held the camera in which case it is his shadow on Munch's shirt.



**Self-Portrait in Profile Indoors in Åsgårdstrand**, ca 1904.  
Original: Gelatin silver contact print.



**Self-Portrait at the Breakfast Table at Dr. Jacobson's Clinic,**  
1908-1909. Original: Gelatin silver contact print.



**Self-Portrait in the Studio at Ekely, 1932**  
Original: a gelatin silver print.



**Self-Portraits from the garden of Ekely,**  
taken by Munch holding the camera  
in his outstretched arm.  
Original: Gelatin silver contact print.