



THE NEW YORKER

September 23, 2013

JOSEF BREITENBACH

The German photographer escaped to Paris and then to New York during the Second World War, establishing himself along the way as one of the period's cleverest and most versatile avant-gardists. The pictures here include landscapes, portraits, and nudes, often printed in unusual tones or textures or double-exposed with other material (a Parisian streetscape overlays the portrait of Max Ernst and his vigilant wife). But the real attractions are a series of process-oriented abstractions that make Man Ray look tame. Conjured up in the darkroom, these images combine photograms, chemical manipulation, and unusual passages of color for surreal and psychedelic results that look startlingly contemporary. — Vince Aletti