
About the Cover



Cover image: Elizabeth 'Lee' Miller, © Man Ray Trust/ADAGP. Licensed by Miscopy 2016.

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Man Ray's photographic portrait of Elizabeth 'Lee' Miller, in 1930, visually sums up our theme. Miller's dynamic 'facing up' shows us a body in motion, its expressions captured by the camera at a single moment in time. Her face, seen only in profile, is almost *without* expression – as though oblivious or impervious to an outside gaze – and yet the long line of her exposed neck and chest suggests the vulnerability of the female subject. In this special issue, in which we are 'Facing Up to the History of Emotions,' a number of essays treat women's faces. Although only some of our authors take up the question of gender and the emotional history of the face, nevertheless, gender, race, equality and inequality, sameness and difference, are crucial in an understanding of the role of the face – and of the privileged position of certain faces – in western history. We have



chosen this image as representative of the powerful and long history of women's faces, which, all throughout and well beyond the Middle Ages, have served as mirrors and triggers for human feeling.

Miller, also a photographer, travelled from New York to Paris in 1929. She met and fell in love with Man Ray, becoming his model and muse, before setting up her own photographic studio. Miller was the only female combatant photographer in World War II; the images she took for *Vogue* of war-torn London, of concentration camps in Germany, and of Paris during the Liberation made her famous. Many of these images concentrate on faces: men's faces, individual faces, crowds of faces. A sufferer of post-traumatic stress after the war, Miller died of cancer thirty years later, in Sussex, England, at the age of 70.

The face was a source of fascination and inspiration for Man Ray throughout his long career as a visual artist. His famous 'Larmes' ('Tears,' c. 1930–32), which shows his interest in contemporary cinema, might have been a more obvious choice for the cover of this special issue, with its intense close-up of the model's upturned face; mascara-clad lashes; glassy, perfectly circular tear drops; concentrated brows, and intensely focused, glistening eyes, fixed on a point outside the frame. Yet we felt that Man Ray's portrait of Miller gestured to a more evocative sense of the bodily experience of emotion: of the face as sharing a line with the body and forming part of a moving, changing surface for the expression of feeling. The image starkly contrasts those favoured in some psychological studies of facial expression, which defer to static, black-and-white images of mostly Caucasian faces as indexes of so-called 'universal' expressions of emotions such as joy and anger.

In this special issue, we aim to diversify modern cultural understandings of the face and its expressive range. We follow a long cultural history of fascination with the human facial expressivity, and we try to relate the face, as a critical object, to its role in histories of emotion, experienced or invoked.

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