

Max dupain

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Max Dupain is one of Australia's greatest modernist photographers, when he started photography in 1929 there was an emphasis on painterly, soft-hued romanticism. He was one of the first to break from that tradition and convert to the new photography Movement from Europe, which used sharp focus, strong light and unusual perspectives to capture the modern era. With his interest in the domestic qualities of the Australia environment, Dupain felt like he never need to travel overseas to take his photographs.

He concentrated on working professionally in Australia to build up a distinctive quality and Australian character in his work, which he preferred to do. Although his work was individual, it was predominately formed by the influence of international movements in surrealist and new objective photography. Both shared a passionate exploration of the inner and outer worlds- objective and the subjective. Dupain concentrated on black-and-white photography. He like the dramatic contrasts achieved with this medium and saw its interpretative quality to be superior to that of colour.

He thought that black-and-white photographs allowed the viewer to participate in the enjoyment of the an image and interpret it in his own, individual way. During the 1930s, Dupain created his original Australia style, which was characterised by his outdoor images and bright use of lightening. Some of his most famous works were captured at the beach. Dupain's aims were to break new aesthetic boundaries and make them become famous symbols for the Australian's way of living. Examples of this is the Sunbaker (1937) In the Sunbaker, Dupain has worked in the cultural frame.

We know this because the picture is of a sun baker, which is a reflection of Australian society at this time and still today. Dupain has been influenced by this beach culture simply by living in Australia because this is such a large part of the way Australian's tend to live their lives. The audience who view this artwork might range from consumer and patrons if there was one but more likely to collectors and the general public. The Sunbaker is Australia's most widely reproduced image, which symbolises health, vitality and a celebration of the physical life we lead in Australia.

The Sunbaker is completely relaxed and at one with the land. He lies with his back exposed to the sun, seawater and sweat sparkling on his skin. Dupain used a low-angle shot, which transforms the simple shapes of the man's oval head and triangular torso into a mountain-like outcrop set against the horizon. This simple image of an Australian surfer slumped over on the sand has become a monumental form over the last 20 years and developed in to a national icon. During World War 2, Dupain served in New Guinea with camouflage unit where he would design and apply pattern systems on to aircraft.

He also would have to travel to such places as Darwin, Alice Springs, Stanley Chasm and the Simpson Gap, all of, which were unforgettable experiences, which consequently had a impact on his relationship with Australia's environment and Dupain's surroundings. After the War, Dupain was hired as a photojournalist with the Department of Information. From this he was able to have enough money to travel extensively throughout the country, photographing Australian life to promote immigration.

During this time photographers chose to use photography as a documentation rather than for aesthetic purposes. They tried to capture ordinary subjects as realistic as possible with crisp use of tone. Dupain was apart of this movement and enthusiastically adopted the camera as a device for recording clearly. Meat Queue (1946) was taken during the postwar meat rationing, it is a deliberately unglamorous photograph which was used to illustrate a story for the Department of Information on queues, a common experience for many Australian's at the time.

Coming across a butcher's shop in Pitt Street, Sydney, Dupain hovered around unhappy women, all of whom are dressed in black. Suddenly a woman in the middle decided to break the queue and caused the women around her to be caught in a moment of frustration and tension. It is again clear that Dupain is working in the cultural frame because he is using this photograph to identify the readers of the common hardship which most of the Australian population were facing during this post-war period. Dupain approached his photography with complete honesty.

After his earlier experimentation with solarisation, multi printing or splicing negatives, he produced work with a documentary flavour that arose from taking pictures of actual subjects without manipulating his image. However, underlying meanings are very evident in Dupain's artworks through his personal interest and exploration into areas of identity, belief and passion and his investigation of the pure form of contemporary architecture rather than relating to a particular culture or environment. The direct nature of his

work led him to believe that photography is an isolated medium and that it is not related to art in any form or way.