

**MIT MUSEUM PRESENTS NEW BERENICE ABBOTT PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION**  
***So Easy To See: Berenice Abbott's Super Sight***  
**On view October 27, 2023 - March 2024**



Cambridge, MA, October 26, 2023 -- The MIT Museum announces [\*So Easy to See: Berenice Abbott's Super Sight\*](#), a new exhibition featuring the work of acclaimed photographer Berenice Abbott (1898-1991) in its Ronald A. (1954) and Carol S. Kurtz Photography Gallery, on view October 27, 2023 through March 2024. The exhibition is the first historically focused on her photographs from the 1940s created using her innovative Super Sight method that pushed the boundaries of existing photographic practice. With 62 works, including photographs and archival materials from the MIT Museum collection, along with works on loan, the exhibition is curated by Gary Van Zante, Curator of Architecture and Design.

The exhibition includes many photographs from the museum's collection of Abbott's work gifted by Ronald and Carol Kurtz such as *Fish Head, Eye [Muriel Rukeyser's Eye], Moth Wing*, and others. Among the photographs newly printed for this exhibition from Abbott's original negatives are *Light Bulb, Grass Roots, Magnetic Field, Electrical Relay, and Doll*, alongside an additional 23 objects on loan. Archival materials from the MIT Museum collection will accompany the photographs.

A relentless experimenter and inventor, Berenice Abbott found a natural affinity with scientific inquiry and recognized in photography a largely unrealized potential to communicate scientific truth to the public. In March 1942, she developed a method to produce large photographs of small objects without the intervention of a photographic enlarger. Her technique of direct image capture, which she called the “Abbott Process,” or “Super Sight,” was loosely based on the ancient camera obscura and produced images of definition and transparency that were astonishing in their realism. Her ambitions for Super Sight as a means of communicating science reached across decades.

Although Abbott’s artistic legacy as an acknowledged master of twentieth century photography was secure long before her death in 1991, her science work has only recently gained full recognition. In her own vision of artistic practice, science was most closely aligned with photographic realism, and she never lost confidence in Super Sight as an innovative solution to producing the most real photographs imaginable.

“In this new exhibition in our new building’s Kurtz Gallery we are revisiting Abbott’s artistic legacy by focusing on a different and little-known aspect of her science work, her Super Sight photography,” says Gary Van Zante.

*This exhibition was organized in collaboration with The Image Centre at Toronto Metropolitan University.*

### **ABOUT THE MIT MUSEUM**

In October 2022, a reinvented [MIT Museum](#) opened in a new location in the heart of the Kendall Square Gateway of MIT’s campus at 314 Main Street in Cambridge, MA. The museum aims to make innovation and research available to all by presenting the best of STEAM, and to “turn MIT inside-out,” inviting visitors to take part in on-going research while demonstrating how science and innovation will shape the future of society.

Highlights include freshly conceived exhibitions featuring objects from the Museum’s prodigious collections of over 1.5 million objects, along with loans of art and artifacts; the Lee Family Exchange event space for public dialogue and conversation; a hands-on Heide Maker Hub, where audiences can experiment with putting scientific ideas into action; and an enlarged Store.

The MIT Museum is open daily 10 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. For more information, including accessibility and amenities, please visit [mitmuseum.mit.edu](https://mitmuseum.mit.edu).

Address: 314 Mass Ave, MIT Building E28, Gambrill Center, Cambridge, MA 02142.

Located next to the Kendall/MIT MBTA Red Line stop at the new Kendall Gateway to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Campus.

*Image: Fish Head, 1946. Gelatin silver print. Berenice Abbott Collection, MIT Museum. Gift of Ron and Carol Kurtz.*

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