

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Born in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1899, Ilse Bing was one of the most inventive photographers of the early twentieth century. She experimented with photographic tools and techniques of the time and was well-known for her use of the handheld Leica camera. The portability of the camera allowed Bing to photograph both moving and outdoor subjects with ease.

During the 1930s, Bing worked as a fashion photographer in Paris, France. Due to Nazi occupation, she was forced to flee to New York City in the early 1940s. Like many artists of the time, Bing was interested in finding new ways to represent reality. One method she often utilized was the Surrealist concept of “doubling,” which references the act of representing the same object in two or more ways. “Doubling” also refers to the relationship between the conscious and unconscious mind, or rather, the thoughts and feelings we are aware of and those that we are not.

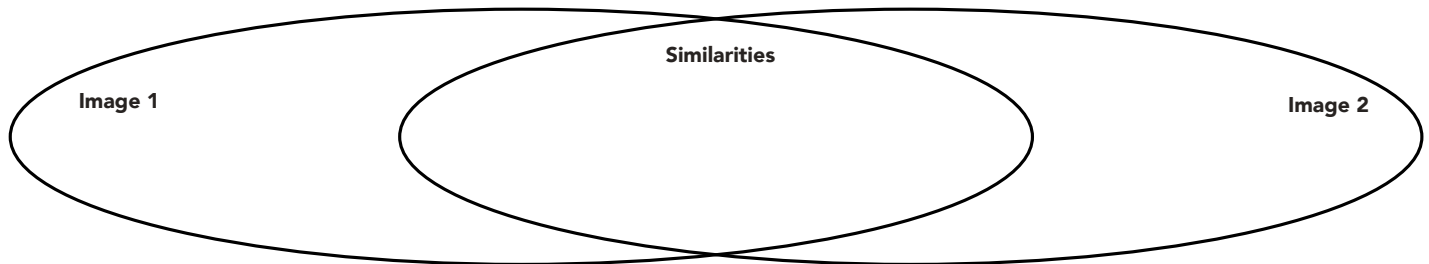


Left: Ilse Bing, *Lamp Post, the Old State Department, Washington, D.C.*, 1952. Vintage gelatin silver print. 20 x 16 inches. Right: Ilse Bing, *Lamp Post, the Old State Department, Washington, D.C.*, 1953. Vintage gelatin silver print. 17.5 x 16 inches. Both: Collection of University Galleries, Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts, Illinois State University. Gifts of Yuri and Zoe Gurevich, in honor of their daughter Hava Gurevich, 2017.

[Ilse Bing: Doublings](#) brings together photographs Bing took of people, places, and things from different perspectives and in different settings. In the two photographs pictured above, the same lamp post is shown from two different perspectives. The photographs were taken a year apart. With the images placed side-by-side, the viewer is granted access to details of the lamp post and its surroundings that would not be possible with a single image. Studying the lamp post from multiple angles allows for a greater understanding of the subject, as well as the time and place in which it existed.

RESPONDING TO THE EXHIBITION

- **Select** a pairing of photographs in the exhibition to focus on. **Look** closely at the details in both images. **Write** the similarities and differences in the Venn diagram below.



- **Find** the photograph that is not paired. This work illustrates Bing’s use of doubling in a single image.
- Closely **compare** the scene above the water with the reflection below. What details are visible? What is obscured from view? What feelings are evoked by looking only at the reflection instead of at the house?
- **Photograph** an isolated section of the image. What do you **notice** in the image you took that you did not notice when looking at Bing’s photograph?

- **Look** for the two portraits in the exhibition. What thoughts or feelings are evoked by these images? **Consider** the subject’s body language as well as the compositions of the photographs.

Ilse Bing: Doublings was curated by Troy Sherman, curator at University Galleries.

[University Galleries](#), a unit in the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts, is located at 11 Uptown Circle, Suite 103, at the corner of Beaufort and Broadway streets. Parking is available in the Uptown Station parking deck located directly above University Galleries—the first hour is free, as well as any time after 5:01 p.m.