

ubu

STEFAN THEMERSON

**THE URGE TO CREATE VISIONS EXPERIMENTAL PHOTOGRAPHS,
PHOTOGRAMS & COLLAGES 1928-1937**

March 16 – April 27, 1996

Stefan Themerson: The Urge to Create Visions will open at **Ubu Gallery** on March 16, 1996 and will run through April 27th. The exhibition will consist of virtually all the surviving experimental photographs, photograms and collages from the pre-World War II period which were executed by this extraordinary Polish film-maker, writer, editor and co-founder of the remarkable Gaberbocchus press.

Stephan Themerson (b. Poland 1910 – d. England 1988), in collaboration with his wife, Franciszka, was one of the most influential experimental film makers in Eastern Europe during the 1930s. Between 1930 and 1937, they made five important experimental films incorporating a unique “moving light” technique. For these films, the artist invented an animation stand on which he created photograms by moving light and objects on translucent paper above a glass shelf. Then, lying beneath the shelf, the artist cranked a movie camera frame by frame and was able to record outlines and shadows to create the illusion of movement and abstraction.

In all of their experimental films, the Themersons created visual layering by recording frame by frame “conventional” and “moving light: photograms, photomontages, collages, and even live action. They also employed unexpected shifts in focus, multiple exposures, and contrasts achieved by superimposing positive and negative images. Sadly, due to wars and upheavals, four of the five films which the Themersons made in the 1930s have been lost. The exhibition at Ubu Gallery attempts to convey the brilliance of their pioneering efforts by presenting in depth the innovative photographs, photograms and collages created by Stephan Themerson which related to their collaborative cinematic work.