

Droitcour, Brian. "Bruce Conner," *Art in America*. 11 July, 2016.



EXHIBITIONS THE LOOKOUT

Bruce Conner

at the Museum of Modern Art,
through Oct. 2
11 West 53rd Street



Bruce Conner: *BREAKAWAY*, 1966, 16mm film (black and white, sound), 5 minutes. Digitally restored 2016. Courtesy Conner Family Trust. © 2016 Bruce Conner.

“Bruce Conner: It’s All True” is a generous tour of through the work of one of the most fascinating figures of postwar American art. Working at the fringes of the institutional art world, Conner was constantly in pursuit of new modes of expressing the passage of objects and images through everyday life into memory. One of the standout works in the retrospective is the film *Breakaway* (1966), a brief and riveting meditation on the seductive properties of the moving image. A model vamps, seminude, as a pop song plays, but she moves less than the cuts that make the film swirl around her. Halfway through, the song starts to play backward, as if the lyrics and music

Droitcour, Brian. "Bruce Conner," *Art in America*. 11 July, 2016.

are being sucked into a void, and the montage becomes more manic. Conner exposes the underbelly of the apparatus in sharp proximity to the gloss of the surface, revealing their reliance on each other. But the most evocative part of the show is the opening galleries, which are rich with assemblages from the late 1950s and early '60s. These works are about movement, too, albeit temporal rather than spatial. Dolls, pieces of furniture, bits of clothes, and costume jewelry make lengths of nylon stockings bulge, as if swollen with the weight of time and decay. They're studies in the beauty and horror of entropy. —*Brian Droitcour*