Chronology

**1898**

Born Anna Sibilla Sternefeld on 3 March in Goch on the Lower Rhine as the fourth child of Alphons Sternefeld and his wife Julie, née Mack. While her brothers Fritz (b. 1893) and Otto (b. 1895) – Ernst (b. 1891) died at the age of 7 – attend secondary school, Anna is given piano lessons.

**1920**

Marries Herbert Biermann (1890-1962), a textile merchant, on 19 January. Takes his family name, and around that time changes her first name to Aenne. Moves to Gera, where the couple lives in the family villa. Together with Siegfried Schießer, the two Biermann brothers, Herbert and Erich, run a clothing department store in Gera, the largest of its kind in Thuringia at that time.

Birth of her daughter, Helga (died 1987, UK).

**1923**

Birth of her son, Gerd (Gershon) (died 2017, Israel).

Begins to document her children’s early progress with her camera.

**1926**

Takes her first photographs of plants, including house plants fashionable in Germany at the time, such as the Ficus elastica.

**1927**

Shows an interest in minerals and collects them. At the suggestion of the Gera geologist Rudolf Hundt, takes pictures of rock samples that are then published that same year in the magazine *Der Naturforscher* to illustrate Hundt’s geological studies.

**1928**

First solo exhibition, with large-format photographs of plants, at the Graphisches Kabinett Günther Franke, Munich.

In October, first publication of five photographic works in the magazine *Das Kunstblatt*, with an accompanying text on her work by the important art historian and critic Franz Roh, who had coined the term “magical realism” in the context of New Objectivism currents in art.

Participates in the exhibition “Une Exposition de Photographie” atGallerie L’Époque, Brussels.

**1929**

Participates in the exhibition “Fotografie der Gegenwart” at the Museum Folkwang in Essen (traveling to other venues in Germany until 1930) and in the international exhibition “Film und Foto” organized by the Deutscher Werkbund in Stuttgart (traveling to other international venues until 1931).

Through the mediation of the modernist architect Thilo Schoder, who designed the interior of the family’s apartment, has a solo exhibition at the Modern Gallery in the Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte in Oldenburg. The exhibition then traveled to the Focke Museum in Bremen.

Participates in photography competitions, among others one by the company Krauss, Schwarzenberg (2nd prize) and one by the magazine *Die Woche* (3rd prize).

**1930**

Her only known essay on photography, “On Photography in General and on Photography Lessons in Particular,” appears in the February issue of the magazine *Thüringen*: *Monthly for Old and New Culture*.

Solo exhibition at the Kunstverein Jena.

Participates in the international exhibition “Das Lichtbild” by the Münchner Bund on the exhibition site on Theresienhöhe in Munich.

Travels to Hiddensee (an island located on the German coast in the Baltic Sea) and Paris.

The volume *Aenne Biermann: 60 Fotos* appears in October in the Fototek series edited by Franz Roh, innovatively designed by Jan Tschichold and published by Klinkhardt & Biermann, Berlin.

**1931**

Participates in the international traveling exhibition “Die Neue Fotografie” organized by the Deutscher Werkbund and the Münchner Bund at the Gewerbemuseum Basel.

**1932**

Participates in the exhibitions “Das Meisterphoto” at Haus der Juryfreien Berlin; “Gestaltende Arbeit der Frau” at the Verein für Kunst und Kunstgewerbe Erfurt; “Salon de Photographie” at the Théâtre Royal du Parc, Brussels; “Exposition Internationale de la Photographie” at the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels.

**1933**

Participates in the exhibition “The Modern Spirit in Photography” at the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain in London.

Aenne Biermann dies on 14 January in Gera of a liver disease.

An honorary certificate is posthumously awarded to Aenne Biermann at the 5th Triennale in Milan.

**1935–40**

Following the seizure of power by the Nazis, the Biermann department store is aryanized in 1938. Aenne’s family members emigrate to Palestine.

A shipment of family’s belongings sent to Palestine, including Aenne Biermann’s photographic archive, is confiscated by the German Wehrmacht. The whereabouts of the archive remain unknown to this day.

**1949**

The Cultural Office in Gera organizes the exhibition “The Photo: Nature, People, Technology, Science,” with a special section devoted to Aenne Biermann, in the Stadthalle in Gera.

**1987**

The Museum Folkwang in Essen stages a comprehensive solo exhibition of work by Aenne Biermann, which leads to a rediscovery of the photographer’s oeuvre (traveling to Hamburg, Goch, and Gera, Germany; Odense, Denmark; and Edinburgh, Scotland). Since then, Biermann’s photographs have been displayed in museums around the world.

**1992**

The city of Gera introduces the Aenne Biermann Prize for Contemporary German Photography, which has been awarded every two years since then.