

A publication of the Houston Center for Photography

Issue 2. September, 1983

**GEORGE KRAUSE ON NUDES • NEW MEXICO PHOTOGRAPHY
IMAGE ORIGINS • BOOKS • HOUSTON PANORAMAS • CALENDAR**

George Krause.



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HOUSTON Center for Photography currently has about 200 members, who meet twice monthly for discussions, lectures and print critiques. In addition, the Center organizes exhibitions and workshops — to which members are admitted at reduced rates. Present membership categories are: Individual, \$30; Family, \$45; Contributor, \$60; Friend, \$120. For further details contact Beth Schlanger, Membership Secretary, at HCP, P.O. Box 66394, Houston, TX 77266. Telephone: (713) 529-4755.

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THERE are sometimes great rewards for getting organized. In my own lifetime I have seen little rows of plastic tabs stretching back the length of my file cabinet, all with little typed words in them, all alphabetical, all the result of constant diligence. Surely others have similar experiences to report.

I am particularly pleased to report to the world at large that the Houston Center for Photography has been acting in such an organized way that it has found a new home and a way to pay for it. By the time you read this we will have moved into what is the former ShopKwik at the corner of Alabama and Mulberry.

Of course this new building will require big rent checks and somewhere in the neighborhood of \$20,000 for renovation. The costs of doing the kind of business we're involved in will seem to shoot up for a few years as every part-time salary represents a major addition to what remains a very small budget for an organization with the kinds of services and programs the Center is engaged in.

Still, we've got a great new space with a parking lot, in a high traffic location smack dab on Alabama, just a couple of hundred feet from the new Menil Collection museum, which will house the largest art collection in the city.

In this space, we have three galleries, the old main gallery and the members' gallery, and the new alternatives gallery. We have room for our meetings and many of our workshops. We have a classroom so we can begin to conduct courses in photography.

Mostly, we've got something we didn't have at all two years ago. We've got a Houston Center for Photography. That's a fact.

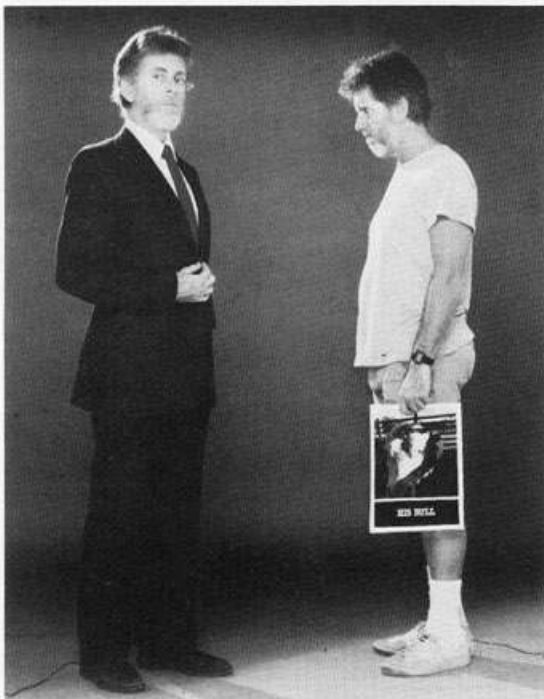
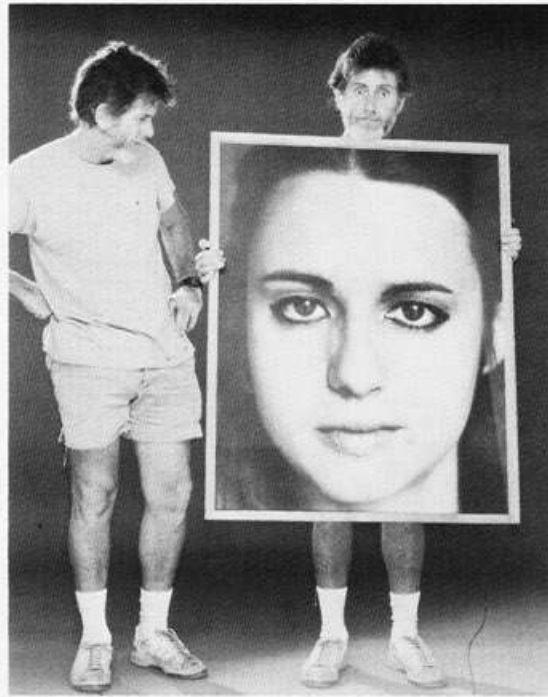
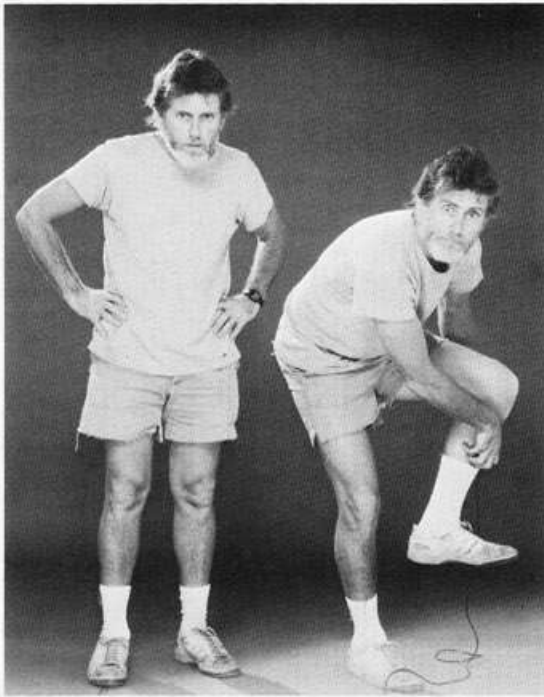
THE business of the Houston Center for Photography goes from September to September, and so another year is done. Last September the HCP had \$294.30 in the bank; at this writing, we have just under \$30,000. We've started a fund drive which is headed for \$180,000, and has already garnered about \$60,000 in pledges over three years and \$15,000 in hard, cold cash. And we've just moved into a new home.

No question it's been a successful year. The Center sponsored 11 lectures and six workshops and co-sponsored two lectures with Rice University, the University of Houston, and the Glassell School of Art. We sponsored 16 photographic exhibitions of which two are currently on tour in the United States. The Center's first national juried competition drew 84 entries from photographers across the country. Three \$1000 Documentary Fellowships were awarded to local photographers.

Ten thousand copies of this magazine have been distributed free in schools, museums, galleries, photolabs, camera stores, and other public places where people interested in photography might congregate.

We held an auction of prints donated by more than 100 leading American photographers which netted \$19,000, and we gained an unusually large first time grant of \$12,590 from the Cultural Arts Council of Houston.

All told we raised about \$53,000 (not including the fund drive) from memberships, donations, grants, the auction, lectures,



Presidential dilemmas. Crossley by Crossley, from members' show.

State of (part of) the nation

A Presidential address by Dave Crossley

workshops, and the magazine. We spent just over \$41,000 of that. IT'S easy to measure things like that. Not so easy, however, to measure whether we're doing what we set out to do. No question we've formed a community of photographers that didn't exist before. But are we getting what we really needed as photographers, as artists? Nearly 200 more people have drifted into membership in the Center, but a few of the early members have drifted out. Why is that?

For the most part, I've been get-

ting what I wanted two years ago. I wanted to see a lot more pictures from here as well as out there; I wanted workshops, lectures, opportunities to learn. I wanted a place to make contact with other photographers, to try to understand what they were doing and to try to explain what I was doing.

Almost every goal I set for my year as president of HCP has been reached and then some. I should be just wild with success and optimism.

But I'm not quite. Now that the major programs and systems are

underway, I'm beginning to have a nagging feeling that we might be developing soul problems. Is the HCP already too slick? Can it stick to a real purpose besides raising money and coming in under budget? We're looking for substantial gifts from established sources, and we're beginning to play the game in a way that will make that kind of activity successful.

But we're not creating much of a fuss about the art we show, or in any way giving anybody reason to take issue with our programs.

We're safe, and we're becoming famous for being an exemplary organization, one that's pushing all the right buttons, making all the right contacts.

It's a good position to be in, of course. To think that our structural and financial problems are coming under control and that the path to the future is clearly marked is quite something. To think that our only really serious problems are artistic ones, aesthetic ones, even moral ones, well, that's the kind of problems we wanted to be confronted with, right?

The fact that our main gallery has exhibitions scheduled in it through April, 1985, isn't all bad, is it? We've introduced a new alternative gallery to enable us to do the things many of us wanted the Center to do, so we can have our cake and eat it too.

The fact that we're looking around for famous photographers to come give lectures and workshops, basing that search on the draw we can expect from those people, isn't all bad. After all, that will give us credibility, they say, and enable us to do as we please with the rest of our lectures and workshops money.

The fact that we now look at programs with an eye to their ability to produce revenue isn't all bad, either. That means most of the programs will wind up paying for themselves as well as for those activities that can't.

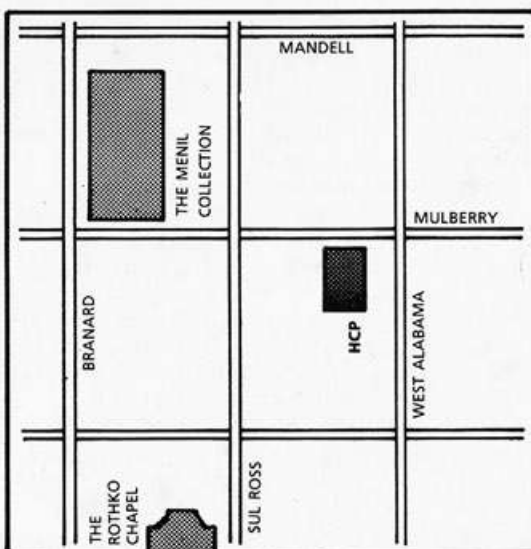
I suppose the clearest example of what's troubling me here in the midst of all this plenty is my own frustration about the way I have to write this article. I had written several pages of wild gibberish, wonderful stuff, before I realized that the time had come: I wasn't speaking as myself. I was speaking as the PRESIDENT of the ORGANIZATION and that whatever I wrote would wind up in the hands of people from whom we were going to be asking a lot. I couldn't say what I really thought. Just like that I realized what changes the Center has gone through.

So I didn't say quite what I wanted to, I didn't express what I really feel, the picture isn't quite true.

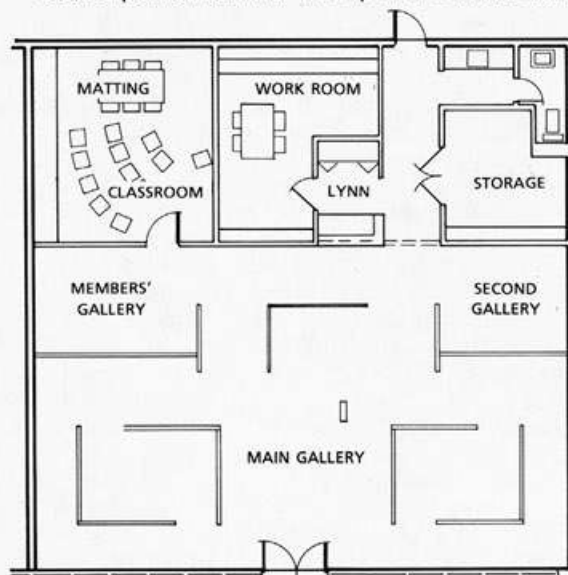
But it'll probably sell, and that's really what worries me about what we're up to here as we start the third year.

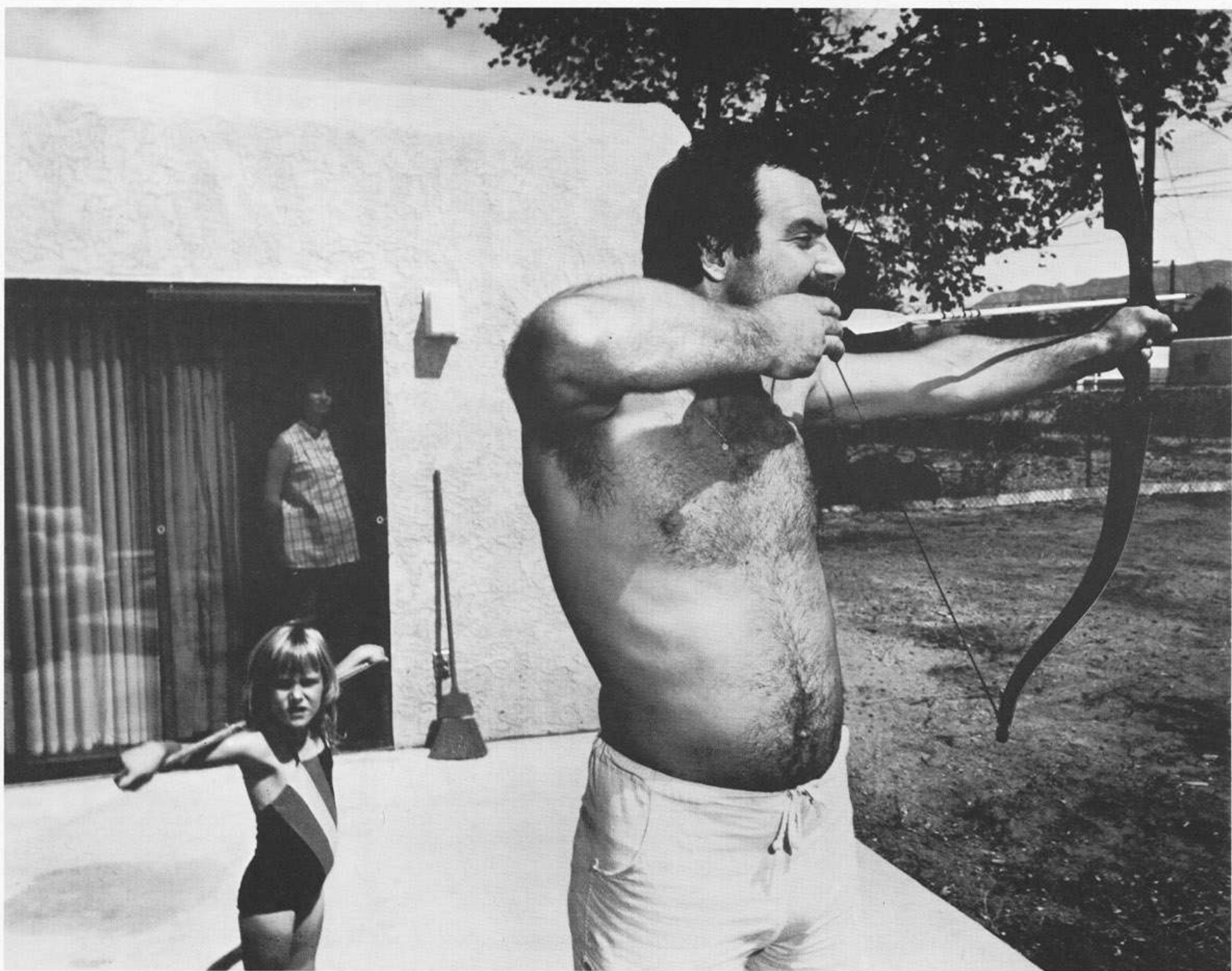
ONE of the first things we decided to do at the Center was give away money to photographers. Now we have done so. In July, Naomi Bullock, Martin Harris, and Pamela Morris became the first winners of the HCP Fellowships. Each has earned a nearly-no-strings attached check for \$1000. The only catch is that they finish the projects they are in the middle of and that they allow the Center to exhibit the work which we'll do in October. The next deadline is in the Spring. Get ready.

I'M tempted to start thanking people, but the list gets too long. However, there's one thank you that's got to be expressed, and that's to Reverend Ronald Pogue and the board and congregation of Bering Memorial United Methodist Church. They gave us the space we spent the last year in. All that came to pass, came to pass there. Bering did a lot for the HCP. It's part of our history now; the first part.



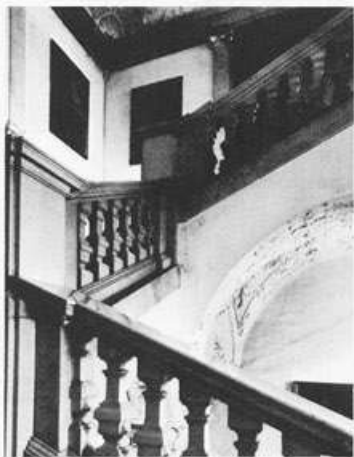
Ground plan of new HCP headquarters on Alabama.





The view from N.Mexico

Lynn McLanahan writes about the ten intensely personal and meditative visions' represented in HCP's current show, Ten Photographers in New Mexico.



THE photographs in this exhibition have been brought together to illustrate ten intensely personal and meditative visions. New Mexico . . . the name calls to mind images of dramatic sunsets in the desert, noble mountains, and Indian pueblos. It is no small wonder that photographers have been drawn to the "land of enchantment" for decades. Yet, as the work presented in this exhibition illustrates, not all photography coming out of New Mexico is what one might expect. With so much interest in photography in one place, it is natural that critical, historical, and technical ideas about photography fill the air. The artists presented here represent this lively exchange.

The exhibition includes "straight" prints, manipulated prints, and prints where you're lucky if you see the image at all; color prints, black and white prints, collages, and non-silver prints; prints from large format cameras, small format cameras, and no camera at all.

Perhaps the only safe thing to say in common is their area code.

Tom Barrow's photographs challenge our acceptance of what photography is on many levels, be it by cancelling a landscape with an

"x" across the image, or tearing prints up and caulking them back together in a new way. Some may try to dismiss these images as too intellectual but Barrow comes back at you with a visceral punch; you look again and are drawn in by the detail and attention that went into making the finished print.

Anne Noggle speaks through portraits. Her compelling self portraits and portraits of others contain an honesty so sincere that you feel you know these people. Yet, the portraits are heightened with an intriguing touch of the surreal, and much as you want to know, or think you know these people, do you really know them at all?

Dan Peebles' sitters take on the role of characters in a drama. In each image the characters are engaged in seemingly normal everyday activities, yet running throughout these scenes are subtle emotional currents.

One person's facial expression or another's particular location in a room suggest that all is not what it seems on the surface of these photographs.

Beaumont Newhall needs no introduction to photo enthusiasts, yet only in the past few years has his own work been widely exhibited. Newhall's portraits of friends offer

interesting compositional structures and insights into the personalities of famous photographers. His architectural studies range from abstractions of New York skyscrapers to quiet yet heroic details of Austrian interiors.

Jim Jacob's cyanotype collages offer the viewer a wealth of figures, words, phrases, and pastel enhancements much in the dada and surrealist spirit. Rather than addressing a specific subject, the unpredictable juxtapositions invite the imagination to try multiple interpretations.

Looking at Rod Lazorick's nude studies, one is struck by the beautiful classical calm and the inevitable sensuality one can achieve with an eight by ten camera. The occasional intruding knick-knack of modern reality and provocative curves keep the viewer from simply lifting the subjects out of the studio and placing them high on a pedestal among the clouds.

The cast of characters which appear in Larry Borgeson's photographs are none of them real, yet he gives them life. Discarded toys, masks, and faces from centuries of art history make appearances in Borgeson's collages and tableaux and seem to inhabit a special world all their own.

The characters in Joel Witkin's

tableaux are all of them real, an aspect of his photographs which is often hard to swallow as your eye is drawn into the veiled and shadowy recesses of his images. Witkin skillfully takes photography into a realm not unlike that of Hieronymus Bosch.

Betty Hahn's "scene of the crime" photographs challenge the mystique which hangs over detective photos. Equipped with such tools as chalk, print dusters, measuring instruments, and a sense of humor, Hahn presents clues to crimes ranging from international espionage to the simple whodunnit which involve the viewer as a sleuth.

Holly Roberts proves that even a photograph can have a rich surface. impulsive and gestural applications of paint alter and partially obscure the image below. A fear of the unknown is raised and the viewer is confronted with phantoms of the people, horses, dogs, and iguanas which seem to be trapped below.

These ten artists represent some of the many directions photography is travelling in today in New Mexico. A strong force of artists there is working with photography, and resolutely pushing and testing the boundaries of the medium.



Opposite page top:
 Dan Peebles;
 centre; Beaumont Newhall;
 bottom: Larry Borgeson;
 this page, top: Rod Lazorick;
 left: Jim Jacob;
 below right: Holly Roberts.



THE Spring lecture series of the Houston Center for Photography asked nineteen photographers, painters, printmakers, psychiatrists and curators to consider the question: Where do images come from?

The series (conceived by Barbara Ginsburg and organized by Janet Caldwell) directed its question toward images of high art, forgetting all the images that affect us at a much greater frequency. Television, billboards and magazines were off-limits. The choice of psychiatrists, painters and gallery-exhibited photographers as speakers indicated a belief in the self as the primary source of images. Social conditions or historical perspectives that might be provided by historians, sociologists or anthropologists were out of the question. Instead, this emphasis on the self was a confirmation of our existing work habits. It asserted the subjective, personalized aspects of image-making; it perpetuated the myth of art as self-expression.

The artist functions in our society without a clearly defined position as in older, traditional cultures. His options appear to be either those of the superstar entertainer or the alienated rebel, with most of his income being produced by teaching. Images can function alternately as decoration, inspiration, commodity, investment and information. Each function defines the tradition from which an image maker receives ideas, with creative cross-dressing being an accepted form of innovation. The dominant concern appears to be production of one-of-a-kind objects to certify individual status.

Individuals might assume that in meeting the needs of the self, only the most direct, innovative, and provocative images will appear. But the needs for identity, attention and uniqueness are balanced by needs for acceptance, security and comfort. In posing our question to the self, we ignored concerns about audience, and its monetary equivalent, the marketplace.

If we start out wanting our images to be art, and discuss our sources in terms of other art images, then the goal of photography becomes equated with the museum. Think of the Farm Security Administration photographs. They began as documents, to be used in publicizing certain accomplishments of the New Deal; now they hang in museums of fine art. The source was a need to generate support for those government programs. The value of the images is greater than their source.

Historians of photography have produced several books recently that describe the practical pressures of 19th and 20th century photographers. The discovery that Eugene Atget and Carlton Watkins, among many others, struggled with commissions and commercial ventures comes as a surprise, accustomed as we are to artistic photographers untainted by business. But writers on photography who hide Walker Evans' work for *Fortune* magazine and Ansel Adams' Polaroid assignments contribute to our confusion about the reality of money and the myth of a photographer's life. If we are going to understand where images come from,



"Mother and Daughters", by Gay Block.

Myth managed

*A critique of HCP's lecture series on the origins of imagery
by Paul Hester, a participant*

we have to consider the influence of these operating myths.

(The growing number of photographic historians are providing new research into the lives of photographers that tell us a great deal about the sources of images. See the May 1983 issue of *Afterimage*, "Making Connections with the Camera: Photography and Social Mobility in the Career of Jacob Riis", by Sally Stein, for an excellent analysis of the social and personal factors in photography.)

But rather than discuss these issues of context for the reception of images as being a determinant factor, all discussion in the HCP lectures returned to the self. Our vocabulary indicated a strong preference for the self as the important source. As an upper middle-class leisure activity, image-making is burdened with personal ambitions of self-discovery (or self-entertainment). The series became a collective effort at introspection. Why do I make images? What do they mean? And the more pressing question: Are they worth making? The sharing of these ideas involved a ceremonial reaffirmation of the validity of images. These individuals, having gained attention for their work, gave testimonials for their way of image-making. It was never important to come up with the source of images; what was important was our belief in them. We asked the question to participate in a community.

Did our original question subconsciously refer to the image of the artist rather than the image made by the artist? Are we more interested in the life of the artist than in the images? Was the purpose to make these artists more accessible to us, so that we could identify with them more easily?

In the absence of a more carefully detailed analysis of image-making, the myth of gifted individuals in the throes

of ecstasy celebrates the irrational within a severely rational, logical culture. The myth concentrates vision on innate talent, rather than the process of growth involved in a give-and-take with experience.

We want the hero-artist to redeem the activity of image-making, increasing its importance in society. As image-makers ourselves, we want to know that these heroes have feet of clay, that the ways and means for making images are both historically conditioned and personally motivated: that we can do it, too. (Highly recommended along these lines of changing attitudes toward artists and the subsequent aesthetic fall-out is found in *Legend, Myth, and Magic in the Image of the Artist*, by Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz.

Two primary sources of imagery escaped mention: the subject and the camera. As image-makers we have chosen each for specific reasons. The fidelity of image to reality indicates a belief in appearances (in things as they are), unless we have chosen to undermine this relationship by distortion, indicating an impatience with reality. Use of the camera in both instances is a statement of our modernity. Otherwise we would paint or draw.

What are we to make of our choice of subject? Efforts to elevate photography to the status of art have always suppressed the significance of subject because modern painting had no readily identifiable subject. A photograph's ability to convince an audience of what was there and what it looked like is exactly the quality that the myth of artistic expression has tried to overcome.

In a photograph we can't avoid the subject; seeing is believing. The authority of a photograph is this special relation with the subject; it is the source of the photographic image.

THE opening session, moderated by George Krause, made a valiant effort to address the question of primary sources. After an hour and a half, the lack of consensus about the appropriate vocabulary with which to discuss the issue was apparent. The tone of the mailed announcement promised theoretical analysis on the level of the subconscious, but even the presence of Dr. Glenn C. Cambor was insufficient to lure the artists into revealing the hidden drives behind their personal imagery.

George Krause and Derek Bosier were able to remember specific events connected to certain appearances in their work, and Gael Stack was particularly helpful in understanding the relation of her pictures to the details of life. But the frustration of the audience was evident in the numbers that gradually slipped away; we were all impatient with the slowness of their discoveries.

Photographers at the second session were ambitious in their delineation of family trees, tracing influences from Atget, Frederick and Walker Evans, Vermeer and Pirenesi. What was most significant in these discussions by Casey Williams and Peter Brown was not the reference to form and light through which they chose to interpret their ancestors, but the claims of legitimacy for photographic images based on their similarities to paintings. Williams complimented one of his photographic forefathers by claiming that the photograph was "as good as a lot of modern paintings."

Artist Karin Broker dismissed all influences; she doesn't look at other peoples' art anymore, and isn't interested in what other artists are doing right now. Her artistic quotes are from the masters she has already memorized. These quotations of style appear on the corners of her chairs and other three-dimensional drawings of which she showed several slides. Her most refreshing contribution was her willingness to describe the autobiographical connections. "I am bored of drawing what I see; I want to be a little more personal, to go into my head, to draw what I felt — to remember what it was like."

The third group wanted to present a coherent statement on the individual's stance toward technology and reality. Sally Gall minimized the importance of the Diana camera, stressing her desire for travel and the possibilities of transcendence and timelessness. Eduardo Robles uses the camera as a tool in copying drawings, collages and snapshots that accompany his literary performances. Paul Hester's fascination with panoramas is dependent upon the technology of the Cirkut camera to describe a particular point of space and history. The clarity of the comparison was diffused somewhat by the addition of recent nudes which he talked about on a more personal level of fear and desire.

Charles Shorre is an extremely dedicated and prolific artist whose example has been very important for those aware of his processes. His presentation on the fourth evening was an example of his working methods; he showed lots of

(Continued on page 23).

CONTEMPORARY European photography is not only the result of artistic influences; World War II had effects on the direction and rate of its development. Though many historical achievements in photography came from Europe, its development was crucially hindered in much of Europe by the National Socialism of the thirties. It was during this era that American photography began to flourish.

Art photography was strong in all parts of Europe before the war, and after the war there was a "rediscovery" of photography as an art form. In the 50's, the development mainly took place in the fields of photojournalism and advertising. There were several small groups (like Fotoform of Germany), experimenting with photography at this time.

At the beginning of the sixties, pop-artists and performance artists had used photography for documentation. A new direction in art emerged in America at the end of the 60's — "conceptual art" — and from this developed concept-photography in Europe. The concept-artists undertook photography to examine the media thematically. Also by the end of the 60's came the culmination of the long-term build-up of artists who were experimenting with photography on a technical basis.

Generally, these were the two main connections, aside from commissioned photography, between photography and art — one coming from the fine arts and the other from the technical field of photography. At this time these lines of communion never met.

The 70's were the decade of complete change for photography in Europe. As a result of a major war, there was almost as entire generation of photographers missing. Therefore, young photographers in Europe, who were looking for new manners of expression, sought role-models among photographers in America, where a generation of workers already represented an expansive spectrum of artistic starting points.

It took several years for the European photographers to find a new self-assurance, though by now European photography has become an established entity and has developed its own dynamic vision and character. Though the concept of photography as an art form had been in existence since the origin of photography, this new generation conceived a modern-day terminology for it — author photography — intended to indicate a genre concerned with the personal vision of the author, rather than assigned work.

While we will not find national "individualities" in European photography, certain characteristics are prominent in some countries. In Germany, for example, work is presented much more systematically than in Spain; concept photography is much stronger in Poland and Czechoslovakia than in Greece; color photography is more prominent in Italy than in Great Britain. These factors do not, however, create definitions by which to categorize German, Spanish, or Polish photography.

Eastern Europe, of course, has no infra-structure of galleries, schools for



Pictures by Diana Blok and Marlo Broekmans (above), and Jashi Klein (below), from exhibit due at HCP in November.

Euro check

Petra Benteler reviews trends in European photography

photography or independent communications organizations comparable with those of the West. Photography there is primarily a tool of the government. It is, therefore, a more suppressed form of art — with limited means of support. Many of the art-photographers of eastern Europe have other unrelated occupations in order to exist. Western Europe, having a strong and supportive infra-structure, developed the photo-art market. Briefly, here are some of the trends seen there:

- The young generation of German photographers was looking toward the American photo scene for creative guidelines in the early seventies, but soon developed its own style and created new directions that ultimately influenced the development of photography in other European countries. Today in West Germany fine art photography is prominent, the categories of strong development being documentary, straight, fantastic and concept photography.

- The photography of Austria and Switzerland is going through a fundamental change. Both are trying to break away from the old traditional forms, to cross the borders of the

media and to include other media. This is typical not only of Austria and Switzerland, but of all European countries. They are trying to overcome the classical format, directing focus to series, sequences, compositions and installations.

- Photography was invented in France, and since then France has had many famous photographers with strong inclinations toward photojournalism. Since the seventies there has been an evolution of a type of photographer — the picture-maker — who does not see himself exclusively as a photographer, but uses photography as a manner of expression.

- Most of the young photographers in Italy today prefer working with color, a preference which can be dated from 1980 and 1981. Though there are recognizable distinctions between individual artists, there is an overall tendency to dispense with the traditional harmony rules of primary and secondary color compositions. Photographers experiment with new techniques to find their own palette of colors, without being tied to the use of color in customary or realistic ways, some photographers using color in a brutal and deliberately trashy way to declare their independence from traditional practices.

- After the death of Franco in 1975, a fundamental change occurred not only in the Spanish political environment, but also in the cultural and artistic spheres. Today we can find a strong leaning toward documentary photography, the origin of its influence coming from the American and German documentarists. Though they attempt to be absolutely neutral, the result is actually subjective. The term "Mediterranean temper" suggests the emotionality of the people, and this mentality could be the reason behind the fact that concept-photography never really blossomed in Spain. Their mentality yearns more for poetry and sensuousness than for rigid experimentation.

- British photography appears very vital and takes many forms. There is an expansive movement away from the conventional framework. "While social documentary and documentary photography continue to be of major importance in Britain today, there is a tendency among some of the younger generation to work in a more experimental, imaginative way. Rather than depict and document the outside world, they have developed certain strategies of estrangement whereby the viewer is disturbed both visually and intellectually" (Rupert Martin).





CENTER SHOW

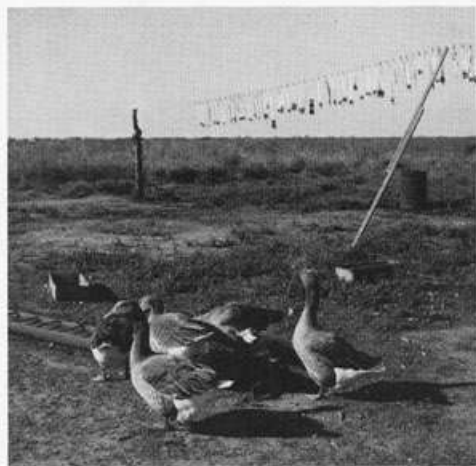
IMAGES on the following four pages are taken from HCP's second annual members' exhibition, which took place in May and June after a highly competitive selection process from an extensive field of entries. Portfolios of ten prints each were shown in the main gallery by Dave Crossley, Paul Hester, Gary Fay, Patsy Arcidiacono, Gay Block, Julia Milazzo, Jim Caldwell, Muffy McLanahan, Sally Horrigan and Sharon Stewart.

In the members' gallery, individual images were shown by Peter McClenan, Maud Lipscomb, Bill Adams, Grace Malone, Martha Armstrong, Herman Detering, Gerald Moorehead, Jim Elmore, Barbara Ginsburg, Ron Jones, Burton Anes, Lynn Trafton, Cathy Gubin, Paula Goldman, David Portz and Frank McGinnis.



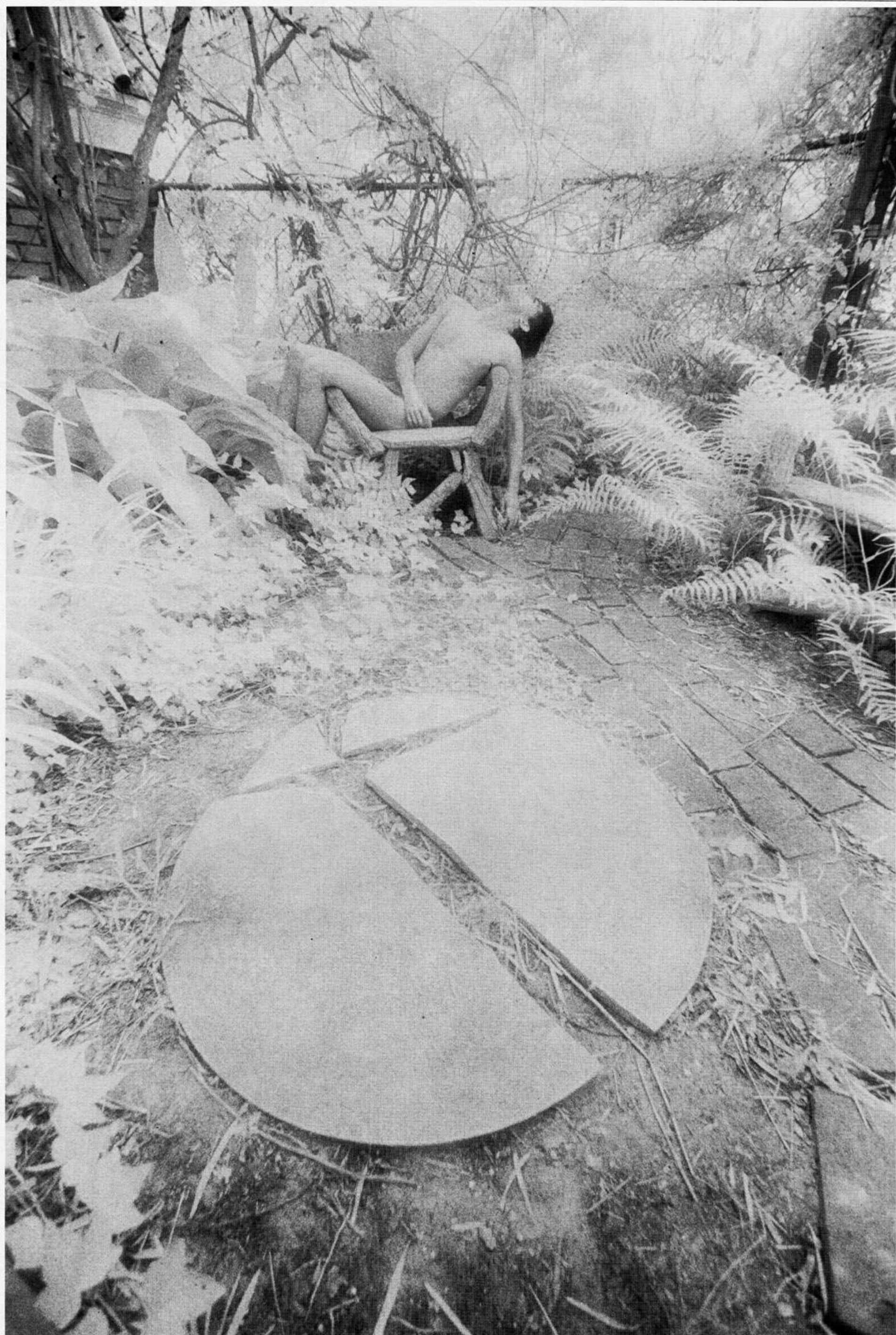


Opposite page, top: "South Miami Beach", by Gay Block; bottom: "Waiting for Cancer", by Paula Goldman. Above: Debra Rueb (untitled); below: "Change of Habits", by Herman Detering.



Opposite page: Jim Caldwell (no title); top of this column: "Geese and Socks", by Sally Horrigan; centre: "Edith age 12", by Maud Lipscomb; above: "Palm", by Julia Milazzo. Top right: "Wrestlers", by Cathy Gubin; centre: "Bridge at Quinn Abbey", by Muffy McLanahan; bottom right: "Tralene", by Sharon Stewart.





WIDE WORLD

Lynn Trafton reports on a photo project inspired by the past

HOUSTON photographers Curtis Bean and Paul Hester and writer Doug Milburn are all involved in "Houston of Panoramic Proportions", a project over one and a half years that will culminate in an exhibit at the Houston Public Library this month.

Using negatives of Houston photographers, Frank Schlueter, 1876-1972, and Litterst, and a unique Cirkut camera, they are creating a contemporary archive to be added to the collections of historical negative and photographs at the Houston Public Library and the Harris County Heritage Society.

Schlueter, who photographed for over 75 years, accumulated an unbelievable number of images estimated at over a million. A commercial photographer, much of his work included events, personalities and architecture of Houston and Harris County.

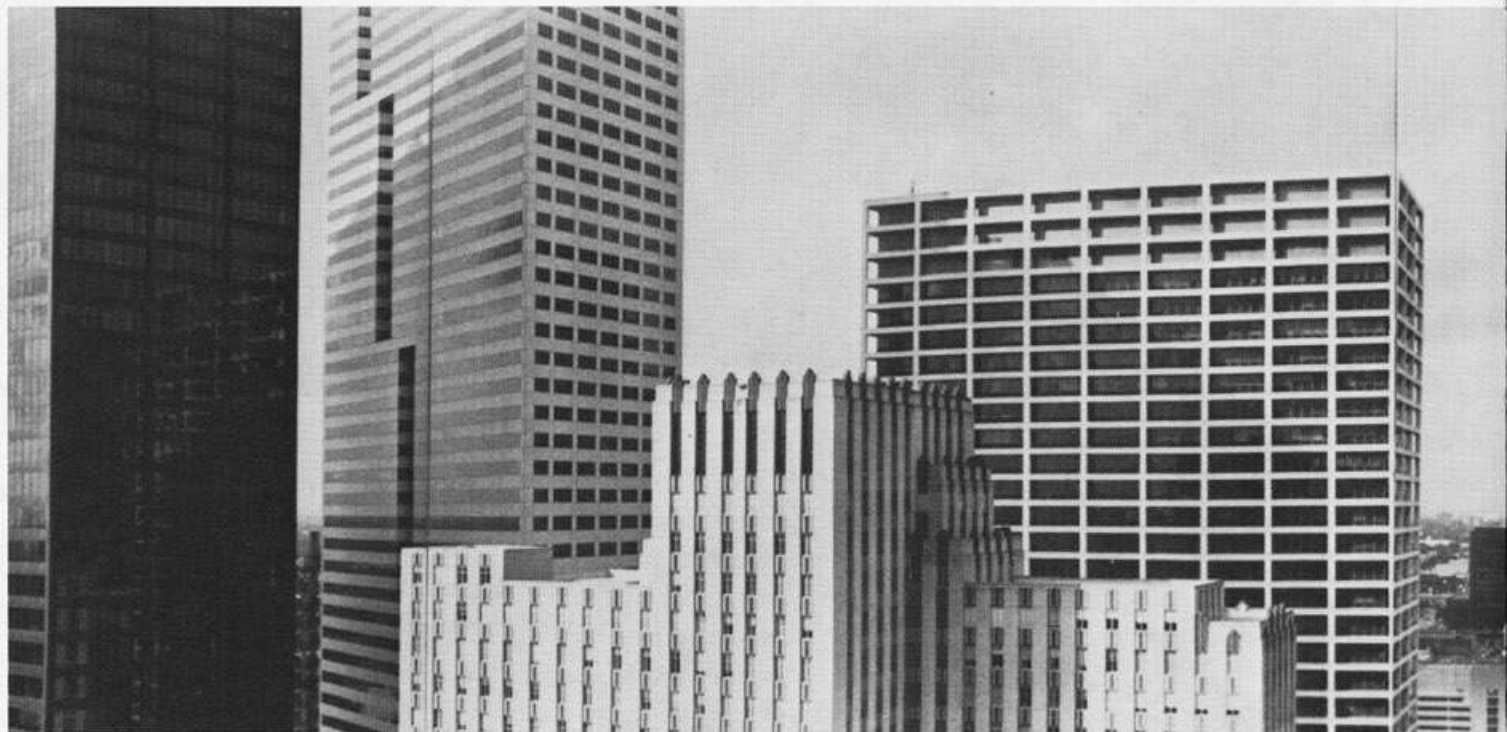
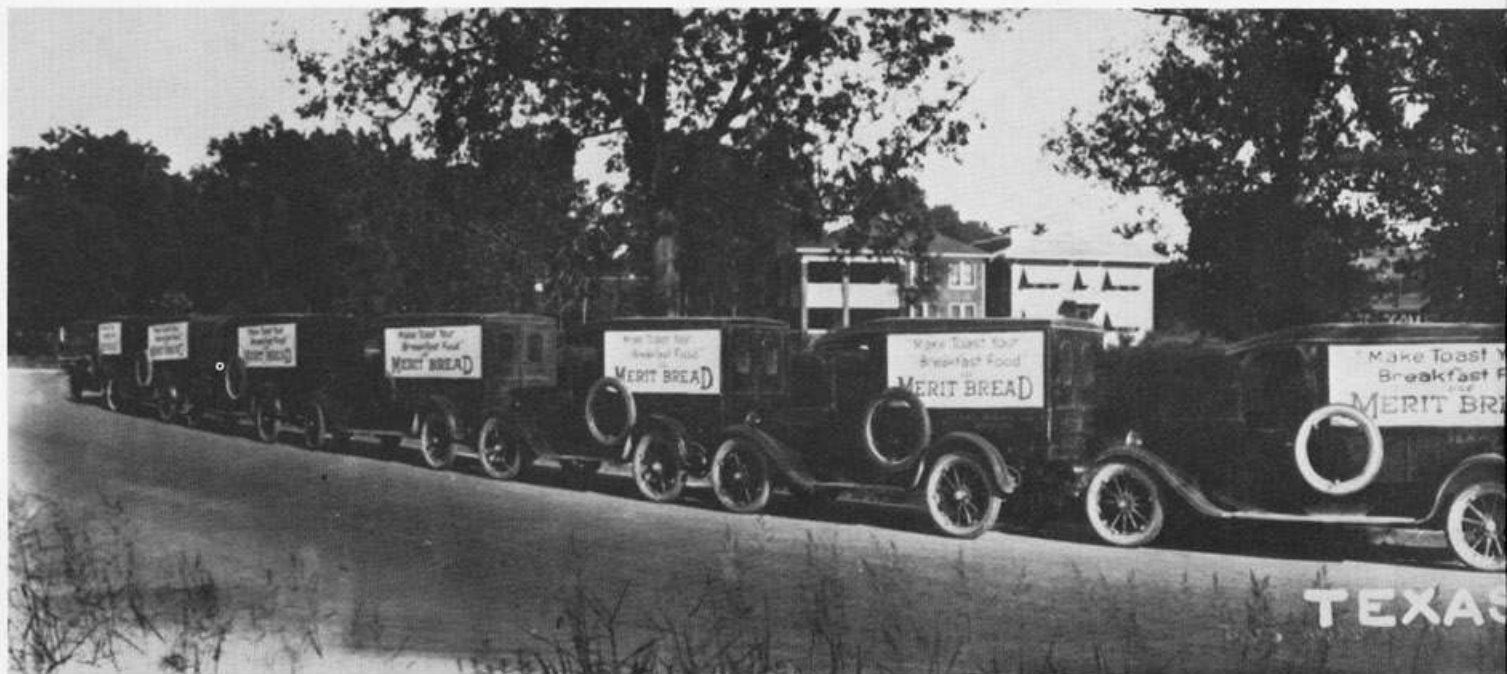
"We selected and cataloged 800 of the negatives so that exact geographical and cultural comparisons between the past and modern day images could be made," says Hester. "Since there were no prints available the work was entirely with negatives. A written description was made of each one, and National Photographic Laboratories, Inc. printed 100 of the negatives.

When Hester, who is noted for his architectural photography, takes Schlueter's old Cirkut camera on location, he knows that he is setting his camera in the exact spot that Schlueter placed it 70 years ago.

The Cirkut camera is a panorama camera which moves with the aid of a battery and can cover a 360 degree angle. It produces a three to six foot by eight inch negative, and uses special film and paper from Kodak.

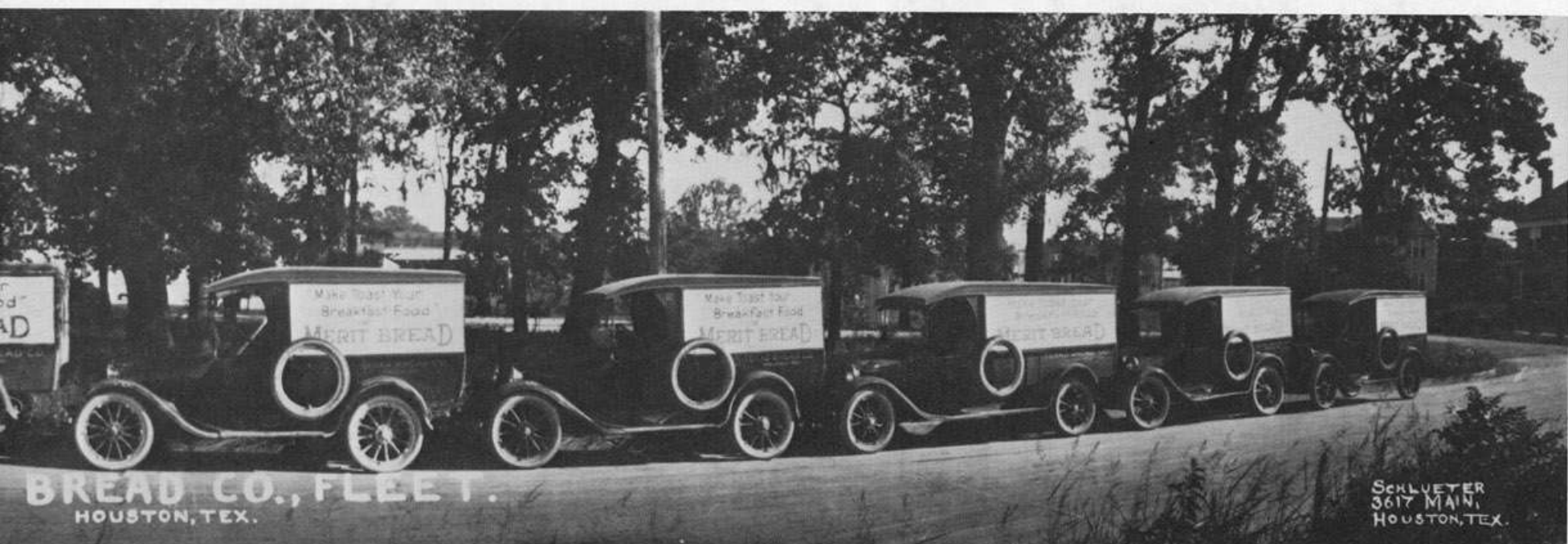
"Actually, we are using a Cirkut camera 'outfit'," explains Bean, "which means that it can use sheet film as a field view camera or a roll film back can be added turning it into a Cirkut camera. The battery voltage determines the shutter speed, and we use only one shutter speed, 1/12 second. It is quite an experience to photograph with the Cirkut camera. Everytime we work with it something different happens. Sometimes the wind will affect the bellows as the camera turns, or uneven movement of the gears will cause streaks on the film as it passes behind the opening."

The images are printed as contact prints without an enlarger or lens. The old printer was found at the Heritage Society. It has rows and rows of light bulbs which make it look more like an egg hatcher than a piece of photographic equipment, and the amount of light falling on the paper can be regulated by reaching in through doors in the rectangular printer and unscrewing individual lights. The process of printing is slightly reversed. Since the lights are on the bottom, the negative is placed on the glass above, the printing paper on top of the negative. The hatches are closed, the lights turned on and history is repeated some 70 years later.

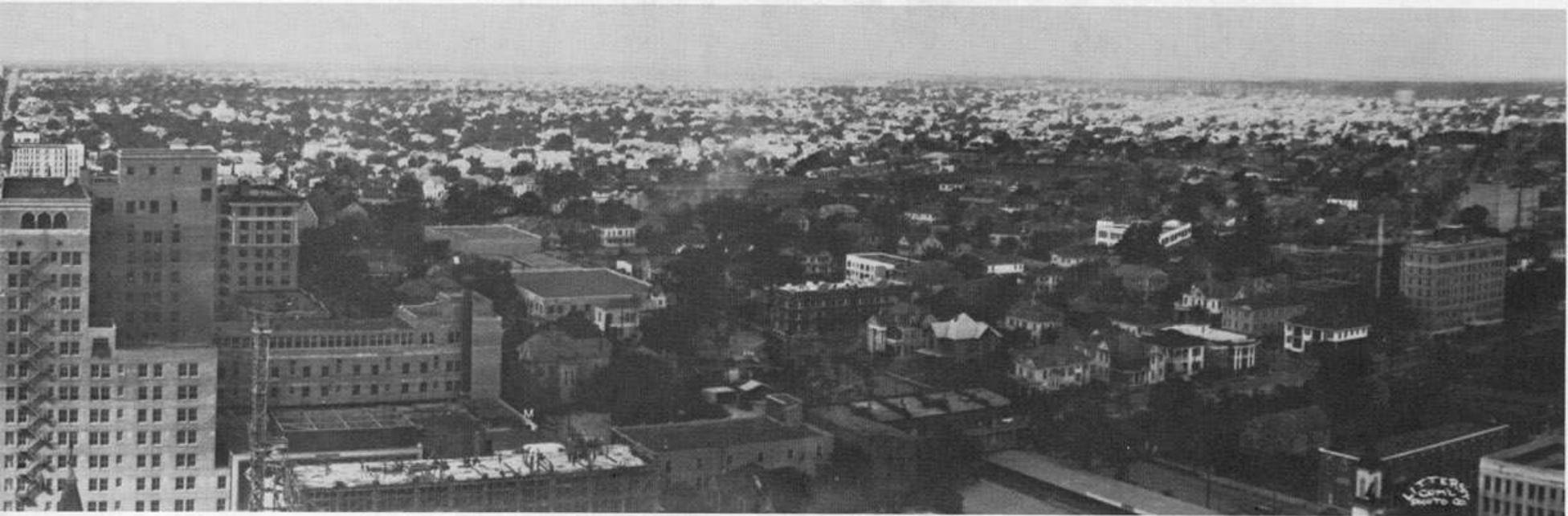




Nurses pose for a group portrait, by Schlueter.



Texas Bread Co. fleet, by Schlueter.



Above and below, two views of Main Street, Houston, 50 years apart. Above, by Litterst; below, by Paul Hester.



WHAT makes these photographs suitable messages to be launched into cosmic space from Planet Earth? This problem was dealt with previously on a serious scale by Carl Sagan and his associates when they chose 118 images for inclusion in NASA's 1977 Voyager project. At the time, artist John Lomborg was given the specific assignment to construct a pictorial message, or "picture package," for extraterrestrials.

The problem, of course, was which pictures of Earth and humanity should be sent. In determining the final selection Lomborg was guided by two criteria: first, the images had to contain as much information as possible; second, they had to be easily understood, i.e., unambiguous.

Messages from Earth, a competition exhibited at HCP last spring, invited photographers across the nation to present an alternative, unofficial view of the terrestrial scene. The show could be thought about in two ways. In the first case it could be considered as a collection of heterogeneous photographs, each piece appreciated independently of the others. The second approach would be to allow oneself to be guided by the extraterrestrial theme and to assume that photographers chose the work they submitted with such a hypothetical purpose in mind.

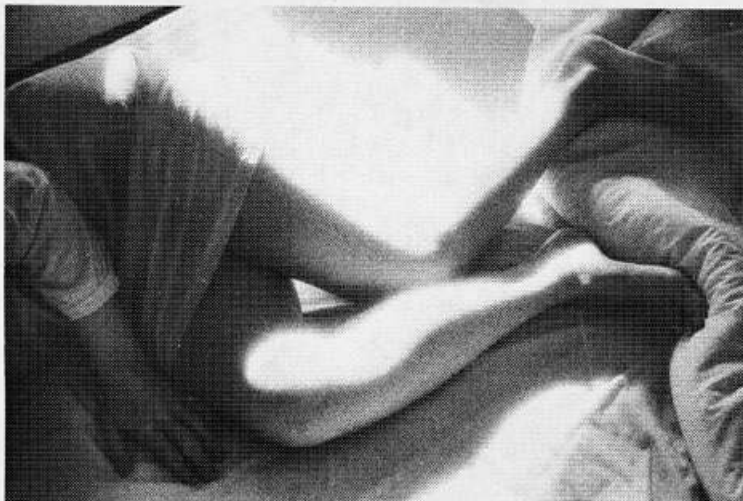
Certainly the second approach is the more interesting because it provokes greater response from the viewer's imagination and simultaneously raises several difficult issues.

Anyone who has contemplated the epistemology of photographs will immediately recognize the complications involved in "reading" photographs, especially if the anticipated audience happens to be an alien intelligence (ETI). We take so much for granted in the highly developed pictorial language of photography, that it is nearly impossible to imagine ourselves outside the realm of photographic intelligibility or, for instance, unable to make sense of a familiar photograph such as Ansel Adams' *Snake River and Grand Tetons*, 1942 (one of Lomborg's selections).

The NASA photographs were chosen quite didactically not only to tell Others about our human world, but to be self-instructing insofar as possible; what might be learned from one image would then make the next more understandable. Lomborg, Sagan *et al.*, in their final selection, adopted a "family of man" model which tended toward the reductive, bland, and non-controversial — ultimately producing a highly ambiguous (or should we say, one-sided) construct of Planet Earth for the unknowing alien.

Would the 68 photographs in the HCP exhibit offer a less representative picture of our world? Would they be any less accessible or intelligible? Is it not, indeed, possible that they might convey a stronger sense of our world rather than communicating the ostensive "facts" of human existence?

For example, David Kelly's wonderfully absurd and subtle photographs of measuring — a zucchini, a dogwood blossom, and plumbing a sapling — not only demonstrate the concept of calculation, they also comment on the extreme value we place upon quantitative science and, like so



Searching for signs of intelligent life

Suzanne Bloom and Ed Hill, jurors in a recent HCP contest to provide significant images of life on Earth, for alien consumption, discuss their criteria

many other photographs in the HCP show, they revealed a gentle sense of humor that is completely lacking in the NASA photographs. Shouldn't we inform Others about the capacity humans have to laugh at themselves, to recognize (on occasion) the mythology of their everyday lives?

Jake Seniuk's three photographs from the *Sniper* series point out (through an extreme telescopic perspective) the anxieties, vulnerabilities and paranoia present in our modern civilization and its paradoxical condition of an atomized society in which our individuality persists in an unsteady state riddled with contradictory meanings.

Seniuk engages the negative/positive tension of our situation whereas NASA consciously attempted to suppress it. Shouldn't our messages from Earth, if we are to be honest, contain implicitly both an invitation and a warning, as it were? Or, to put it another way, doesn't the dialectic of positivity and negativity give a truer diagram of human history?

This last remark may lay a much heavier Hegelian purpose on these works than they should be asked to bear. We are trying to suggest that there were qualities in the 68 HCP photographs which displayed aspects of human life no less real, no less significant than those so predictably emphasized by Sagan-NASA. It might also be said that these "alternative messages" were not simply a compensation for the aesthetic interest seemingly deferred by NASA. In fact, there were very clear aesthetic values at work in the NASA choices, the standard aesthetics of middle-class order. This is not at all surprising.

It is our view, however, that many of the photographs submitted to HCP's *Messages* revealed more directly our collective aesthetic values and in much more insightful ways.

To take seriously the task of determining appropriate pictorial messages for other worlds is accepting an extremely demanding set of problems. We do not mean to be glib in our comparison with

NASA's efforts; neither do we mean to be satisfied with their solution, which ultimately was bolted, in the form of a photograph record, onto the spacecraft and presently is travelling through interstellar space toward its potential encounter with ETI.

We close with a more disconcerting possibility for your contemplation. Suppose a moment came when we all had to vacate the Earth because its surface was no longer hospitable to life. E. M. Forster wrote a story in 1928 of such a time, *The Machine Stops*. His displaced society found its new home within the interior of the Planet Earth, and among some of its citizens there grew a painful and potentially deadly nostalgia for the surface of their former world.

Can you imagine yourself in this situation? Can you further imagine that in departing you are restricted to taking with you only a handful of photographs? Of what would your photographic *Memories of Earth* consist? Do you think these photographs would be significantly

different from those you would consider worthy of sending off to other worlds?

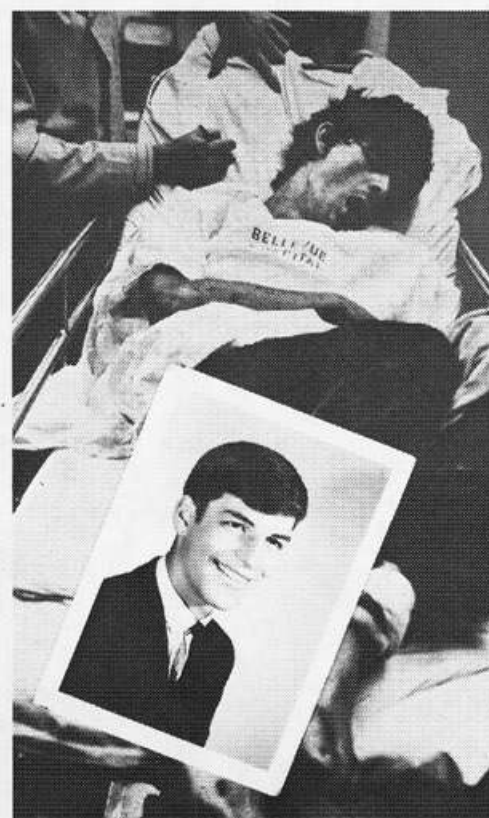
It is a curious fact that the origins of HCP's *Messages from Earth* lie in a photographic assignment not unlike what we have just described. Paul Hester, the person principally responsible for the HCP exhibition, has related how the idea evolved from a similar problem given to him by an imaginative teacher at Rhode Island School of Design long before Voyager was launched.

What sort of exhibition would have resulted, we might wonder, if the theme had remained in its original form?

In any case, jurying *Messages from Earth* has given us the opportunity to consider certain issues of photographic intention from an extraterrestrial perspective, to try to imagine what such a mode of perception might be, and to speculate about the difference between sending pictorial messages into the cosmic unknown and taking with us photographs of an Earth we were about to depart forever.



Opposite page: Dave Devries, "Untitled number ten"; left: "Love Tap", by Mark Clark; below: "Bellevue Totem", by Alma Davenport; bottom: "Quinalt", by Richard Albright.





"Street fight", by Fred Bunch.

VIRTUALLY everyone has snapshots of close friends stashed away in photo albums or scrapbooks. But what is it that makes us fill our albums with shot after shot of a certain very special "friend"? What is it that endears a dog (but not just *any* dog) so closely to us for what may be all of our lives? So much so that an acquaintance of mine once told me that when her Labrador retriever died, she would have it — pardon the pronoun — stuffed and mounted on wheels so that she could tow it behind her wherever she went. So closely that I once watched a redneck farmer break down, weeping uncontrollably, as a veterinarian put his dog to sleep because he was just too old and hurt too much to go on. So closely that some owners refuse to part with their companions until the last possible moment, choosing instead to have their friend's infected leg amputated rather than having their comrade laid to rest ("Here, Tripod!" "Here, boy!").

So what is it about a poor dumb animal that allows it to become such an integral part of our lives? Perhaps it is because each animal can give so willingly the love, companionship, fidelity (and obedience?) that many of us long for but often find lacking in members of our own species. A dog just doesn't know any better.

Perhaps, also, it is because they reward so little affection and attention with so much love and loyalty that they easily become an extension of the master's self. We come to attribute human traits (although not too many or we will corrupt the thing) to each one and so each becomes a personal friend or family member, loved, respect-

Best friends

Ron Martin's reflections on doggie pictures, inspired by a show to honour a late, great Weimeraner

Henry Mitchell.



ed, and unique from all the others (ask any veterinarian). Have you ever heard an owner refer to his dog by that owner's surname? Has the family dog ever sent you a Christmas present? Have you ever given your dog a Christmas bone or a "toy"? The birth of a puppy comes to be second only to the birth of a baby. The extension of master into dog consciousness even permeates our culture as comic strip, television and movie stars who come to be adored.

Certainly, William Wegman's Weimeraner, Man Ray, must have possessed those canine traits common of all members of his species, but Man Ray was truly exceptional. He raised the doggie picture from scorn and obscurity to new artistic heights, rivalling King, Rin Tin Tin and even Lassie.

Hence, his death has been commemorated with a photographic exhibition. Doggie pictures were resurrected from the obscurity and scorn of the portfolio buried deep in the closet and became, temporarily, "artsy" because they were nailed to a wall.

Photographs like those of a pit bull fight, of a mouth about to devour the camera lens, of dog and nude, and the carcass crucified on a barn door may startle us, but they also remind us of what we want of a dog. We want to view photographs of dogs as doggie pictures because we want to regard dogs as "doggies", just as we see them in the other extreme, in doggie "portraits", loyal and true blue.

But no amount of doggie pictures will ever serve to eulogize Man Ray because Man Ray was more than just a doggie. Man Ray was an artist.

EXCLUDING HCP activities, there are now three juried photography shows each year in Houston — the Jewish Community Center show, the Boulevard Gallery show and a “food photography” show jointly sponsored by the Glassell School and Butera’s Delicatessen.

The oldest of these three is the Jewish Community Center show. It is now in its fifteenth year, and the plan and format for the show have remained remarkably similar throughout its history. Photographers are asked to submit up to five photographs to be judged by a prominent photographer, photographic curator or gallery owner. A show is curated by the juror, and prizes are awarded. Jurors are given free reign: the photographs, the numbers in the show and how prizes are, or are not awarded are questions left to their discretion.

The shows, as a result, represent individual tastes and seem to have a curatorial integrity that shifts with the changing jurors. Shirley Chaskin, Director of the show, says that early in the show’s history, more than one juror was sometimes used. This had the effect of creating a show that was perhaps more eclectic, but one that also included more compromises.

Local jurors initially were used as well, and, although shows were strong, it was felt that people from outside Houston could be more objective: the juror would be dealing only with the photographs. Since this decision, a number of eminent photographers and critics have come to Houston — Garry Winogrand, William Eggleston, Cornell Capa, Lee Witkin and David Travis among them.

Mrs. Chaskin and her husband Meyer are very enthusiastic about the future of the show. Entries (up to 1,000 some years) come in from all over the state, and the work seems to improve each year. In the past it was the only opportunity in town for relatively unknown but talented photographers to have their work evaluated by a recognized expert and have it shown to great numbers of people in a gallery. The Chaskins’ work should be applauded.



“Untitled”, by Sarah Lipscomb, Jewish Community Center.

Venues for trial by jury

Peter Brown reports on the annual juried photographic exhibitions at Butera’s restaurant, the Boulevard Gallery and the Jewish Community Center

Responding to the same situation — the lack of forum for the interesting work being produced in Houston — Patty Walker of Boulevard Gallery decided three years ago to put on a juried show as well. She too, is enthusiastic about the quality of work that appears each spring. The show, she says, is extremely well attended and has, for her gallery, one of its biggest openings.

The work is accessible and moderately priced, yet the show is not a money maker. Financial considerations enter into decisions because Boulevard, unlike the JCC, is a commercial space. To a great extent the show is a labor of love. Entry fees had to be raised this year, which she was not pleased about.

Next year she is considering changing the format somewhat, from an open juried show to an invitational in which a more limited number of photographers will be asked to submit work. She will do the jurying, rather than an outside person. Jurors have included Clint Wilour, director of Watson-DeNagy Gallery, Peter Brown and, this year, George Krause.

The most recent entry in the field of juried shows is the food photography show. It obviously is far more specific in intent; all photographs must have something to do with food. This year the first show was juried by David Mancini and Sally Gall. Mancini commented that he was surprised at the limited definition that those entering gave themselves. Any-

thing is all right as long as it is tangentially related to food.

Perhaps partially because of the subject limitation, a strong and interesting show emerged, but it was a show that was very hard to see. The lighting in the restaurant is low and many of the photographs were hung directly over tables. To see the show, it was necessary to go in off hours, and even then, the lack of light was a problem. It will be interesting to see how this show evolves over the years, and to see what effect it has on Houston photography.

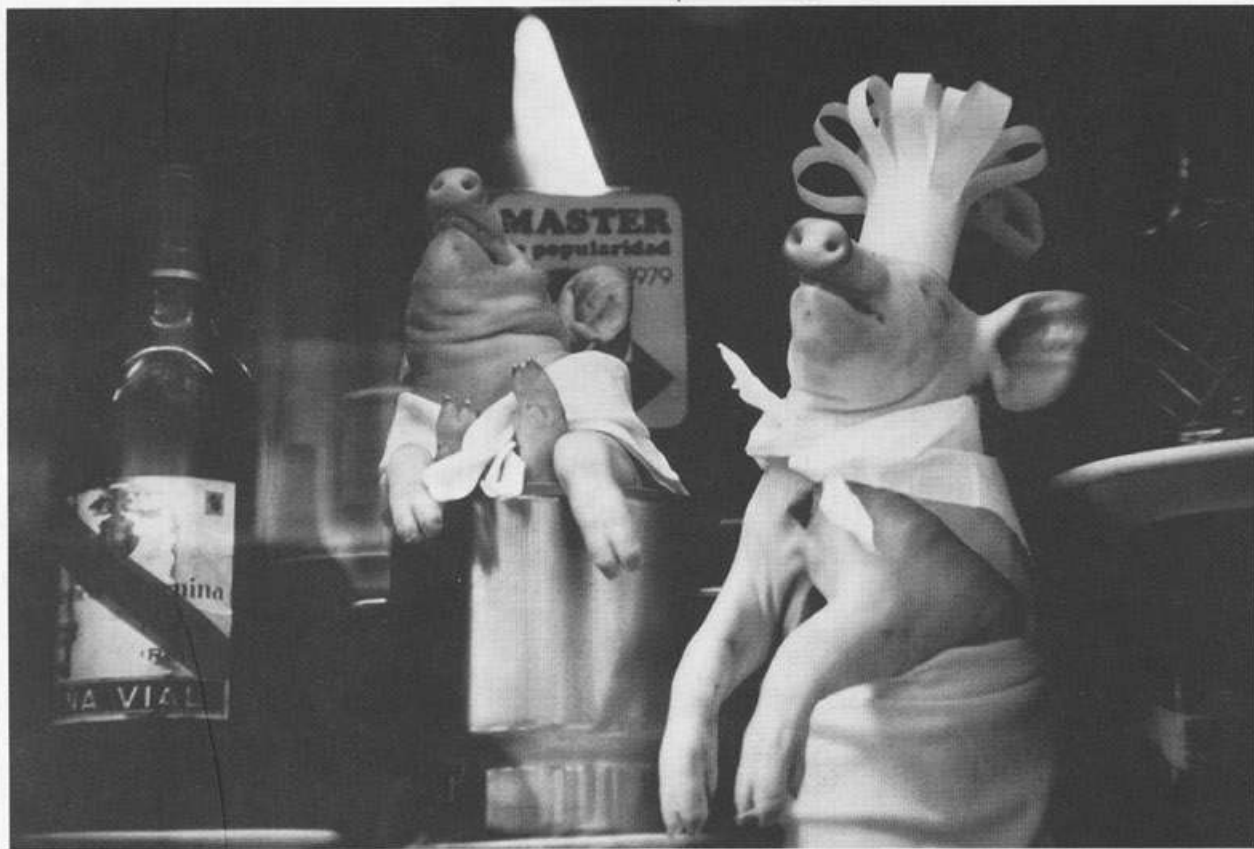
There is a great deal of excitement and a great deal of work that is generated by these shows. A lot of talk about photography that would not otherwise take place occurs, and the shows themselves

are a kind of annual barometer of photographic mood and process. It is interesting to see work grow and change and it is exciting to see new faces and work emerge.

The fact too, that jurors change from year to year and that the shows and prize winners fluctuate considerably gives individual photographers a greater trust in their own perceptions. It is, after all, finally a matter of doing work that you believe in while learning from what you see. The juried shows are a good opportunity to do both of these things.

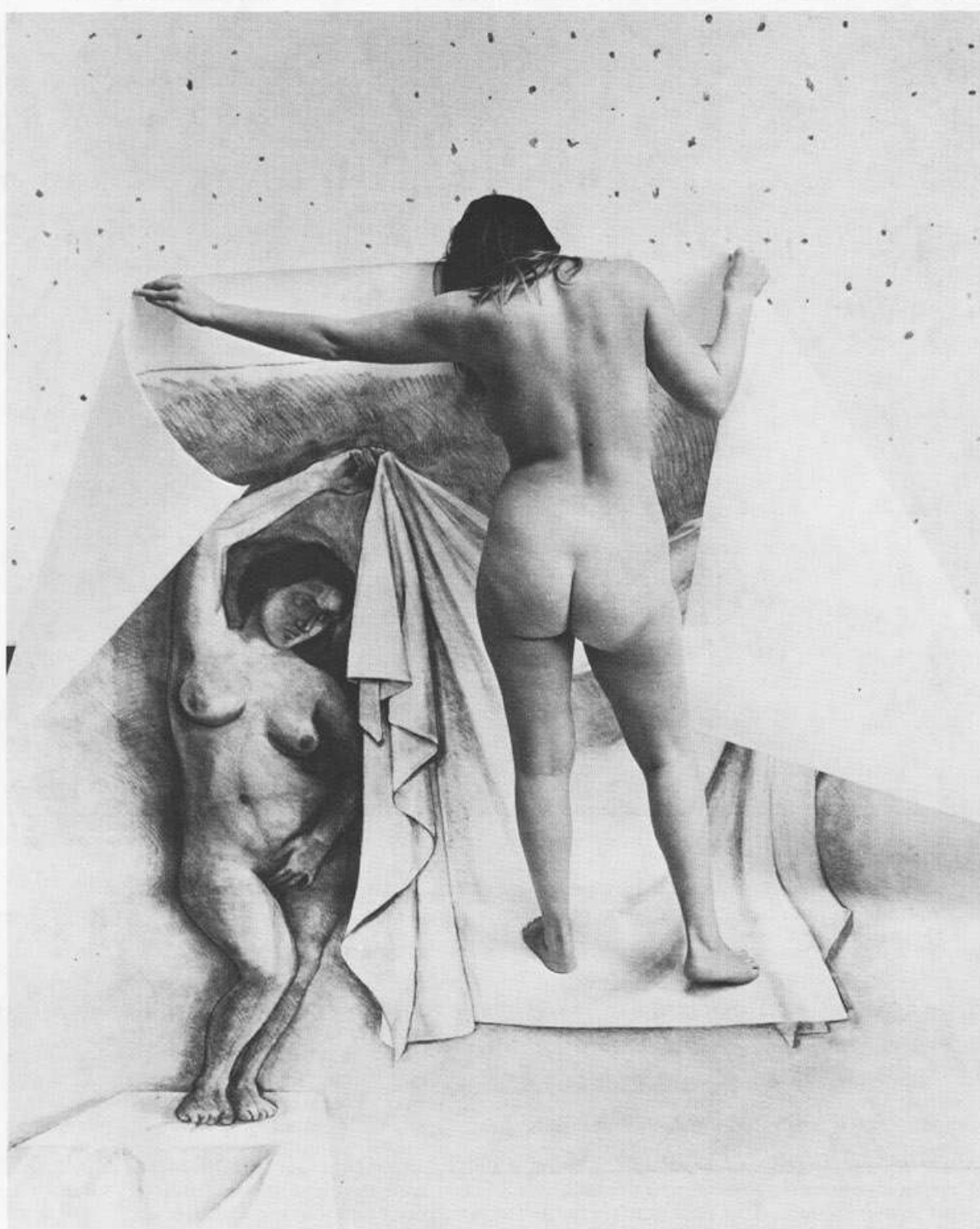
The fact that HCP has a few of its own juried shows each year now simply expands the amount of work that will be done and the amount of photography that will be seen. We all benefit.

“Pigs”, by Sharon Stewart, Butera’s food show.



“Earth Mother”, Boulevard prize-winner, by Debra Rueb.





George Krause.

The naked truth

In a series featuring a member's work, George Krause talks about his nude photography

George Krause.



YEARS ago I was accused by my wife of sleeping with all of the women who posed for me. My photographs suggested to her that I was getting more gratification out of photographing these nudes than just the making of images. This is perhaps the most common conception or misconception of voyeurism. I find it all but impossible to mix lovemaking with the act of making a photograph. But there is in fact a certain amount of seduction inherent, and for me necessary, in the making of a nude image, particularly a photographic image.

Since my work often deals with fantasy I want to create not only an ideal woman but a mythological woman of my dreams. This requires a talent (unfortunately one I've not yet fully developed) to transcend reality, which is helped greatly by encouraging in myself a fictional obsession and passion for the subject. The model in turn can respond with a desire to fulfill the artist's attempt at transcendence or with a baser, narcissistic love for the attention being paid her, making love more to the camera than the photographer.

My wife's accusations were, of course, not true, but when I thought about it I decided that it should be best if the photographer would photograph the woman (women) he was sleeping (in love) with. The accusation does reveal the artist/model fantasies imagined by those outside this collaboration. There is the erotic vulnerability of the undressed model with the dressed photographer (slave/master). At the first photographic session I'm nervous with the responsibility/obligation to the model to create something special, and anxious with the potential fictional passion. In time I realize I can control the situation and the amount of desire needed to create the image I'm after.

The very act of peering through a small window to see a naked woman in the camera's view-finder suggests that of a peeping Tom. There is the cowardice of distancing through the camera's intervention to change the sexual reality of a nude woman into the context of a work of art. This is an attempt to sublimate the voyeuristic nature of the nude.

It is possible to increase the degree of distance in viewing a photograph of a nude by including another subject. This could be the photographer or another photographer(s). I am also thinking of the paintings of Susanna and the Elders. We may find it more acceptable to study the nude's genitalia in the photograph when there are others included in the image.

While an image of a nude may no longer evoke that of a fallen woman, a nude model today is perhaps considered a liberated woman envied by some for her freedom in exposing her genitals and suspect by others for her morality or lack of it. This affects the interpretation of the image.

I have shown my photographs of nudes to many art historians and many of them have admitted difficulty in appreciating the nude in a photograph in contrast to having no problem with the nude in other mediums (painting, sculpture, etc.). This suggests a special qual-



George Krause.

ity of voyeurism inherent in the "real" photographic medium.

Almost everyone approaches a photograph of a nude voyeuristically. We tend to compare our bodies with those in the photograph. There is the vicarious thrill of exposing ourselves in front of a camera. And there is the hint of a more intimate relationship between the model and the photographer. Photographers who place themselves in the image play with this reading.

Photographs of nude models in poses that suggest the erotic demand of more immediate sexual interpretation. We are now back to peeking through the keyhole and there is always the danger of the voyeur being caught, especially when there is no eye-contact between model and camera in the image.

Generally, in viewing photographs of nudes we stand where the camera stood. The photographer has gone and we are left alone with the subject of the image.

In working with the nude we must realize the degree of unnaturalness that takes place. Even in a comfortable environment the camera's presence (and then our own) intrudes upon the nude, and when an awareness of technique (special lighting and camera-effects) are added, along with our unwilling concern for props and costume, the intrusion must be that much greater. This of course can be deadly, or these problems accepted and put to good use. The photographer can guide us as to how we are to react to the genitalia staring at us from the photograph, be it with humor, fear, disgust or even the pleasures of the voyeur.



George Krause.

Carleton E. Watkins, *Photographer of the American West*, by Peter E. Palmquist, with a foreword by Martha A. Sandweiss. Published for the Amon Carter Museum by the University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque. \$50.00 hard cover.

THE Amon Carter Museum of Western Art is the best reason I know for visiting the Dallas-Ft. Worth Metroplex. Two recent publications are excellent reminders that there is much more to Western Art than Remington and Russell.

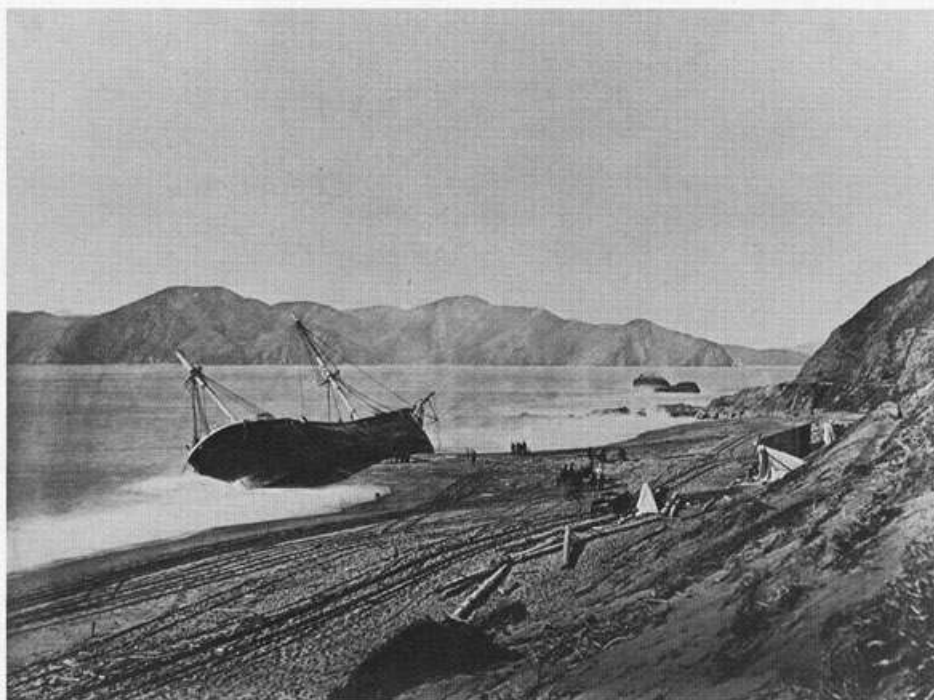
Carleton E. Watkins Photographer of the American West is the catalogue for an exhibition on view at the Amon Carter April 1 - May 22, 1983. It is a detailed biography of the fascinating life of Carleton E. Watkins (1829-1916). No other book with which I am familiar comes close to these vivid descriptions by Peter E. Palmquist about the life of a nineteenth century photographer. His abundant research specifies the experience behind the magnificent views of Yosemite, enumerating the 12 mules, 2000 pounds of equipment, and the 100 eighteen by twenty-two inch glass negatives weighing four pounds each. Letters from Watkins' travels in Southern California and Arizona to his wife in San Francisco offer intimate knowledge of his frustrations with wind, sand and rain in photographing the Spanish Colonial missions.

Most of the attention given to Watkins in the past has focused on his production of the Yosemite views of 1861-1866. Nearly three-fourths of the 113 plates reproduced here have not been published before, and they give ample evidence of his growth as a photographer into the 1870's and 80's. These newly presented images show the changes in his approach to Yosemite and are clearly documented to substantiate this new interpretation by the author.

Watkins began photographing in the service of commerce, to provide evidence in court about boundary disputes for land claims, and to describe landholdings for mining companies to attract foreign investors. It is difficult from our perspective to reconcile the photographer of Yosemite with such commercial activities. Our myths of creative genius demand that inspiration came from within, and collaboration with the enemy is best ignored or denied.

The reality of broken plates bankrupt and betrayed loyalties could contribute to a romantic misunderstanding of the artist's life, but here the factors that influenced his picture-making are each examined outside of mystification and suggest the necessities of the marketplace that were behind his inventiveness. The problems of managing a gallery to distribute his prints are seen next to his efforts to use a wider angle lens in order to produce better legal evidence. The availability of the roads into the high country at Yosemite is discussed in reference to his increasing preference for panoramic overviews.

In spite of all this historical data, the danger still exists of interpreting these photographs through modern eyes, projecting our vision of them onto his in-



"The wreck of the Viscara", from "Carleton Watkins, Photographer of the American West".

Past glories

New books reviewed by Paul Hester

tentions. The book skillfully recreates the context for Watkins' work, but then in an effort to claim the greatness which he clearly deserves, makes reference to his abstract as a way of setting his work apart from that of his contemporaries. His camera placement that so distinctly places these new industrial settlements in the landscapes needs no apologies or comparisons to modern compositions.

The absolute clarity of his descriptions "force us to reconsider any arbitrary division between commercial and artistic photography," as Martha Sandweiss says in her foreword.

His best photographs are capable of producing a terrific awe of the natural forces, evident in the thrust of Half Dome above the valley or in the skeletal erosion of rocks in the Golden Gate Claim. His photographs of the new towns and farms reveal the balance between order and chaos in these new places. His skill in this is most dramatically evident in the work *The wreck of the Viscata*, 1868, beached among the Liliputians as if in a scene from Gulliver's Travels.

Watkins also photographed for geodetic and geological surveys; produced albums for wealthy Californians to display in their mansions; won medals in European expositions; produced photographs of Southern California agriculture that were displayed under the title "Californians, the Cornucopia of the World - Room for Millions of Immigrants - 43,795,000 Acres of Government Lands Untaken, Railroads and Private Lands for a Million Farmers, a Climate for Health and Wealth Without Cyclones or Blizzards"; went blind; Lost everything in the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906; and spent the last six years of his life in the Napa State Hospital for the Insane.

My only disappointment with this very good book is that it's not big enough. A five-plate panorama of San Francisco in 1864 spread over eight feet on the museum wall offers the luxury both of detail and expanse. To see it reduced in the book is not the same thing. The book is beautifully reproduced and the colors are faithful, but a

seven by nine-inch image cannot offer the details of construction or of stance available in sixteen by twenty-inch contact prints. Nor does it have the same presence; you do not have the experience of the work until you stand in front of that mammoth plate albumen print.

But if you missed the exhibition in Ft. Worth, there are wonderful surprises contained in this catalogue.

MASTERWORKS of American Photography, *The Amon Carter Museum Collection*, by Martha A. Sandweiss. Oxmoor House, Inc., Birmingham. \$49.95.

MASTERWORKS of American Photography presents 155 photographs from the collection of the Amon Carter Museum, which began in 1961 with the acquisition of Dorothea Lange's portrait of the artist Charles Russell.

This is a large, ambitious book; a great deal has gone into the reproduction of the unique colors of different types of prints. The warmth of albumen can be seen in contrast to the cold blue of modern gelatin silver, and the many variations in between, such as platinum, photogravure, and carbon prints.

Collections of this sort can frequently be boring in the sameness of presentation and the awkward weightiness forced equally upon all the pictures. Here, full pages are devoted to the large-scale mammoth plates from the surveys of the West, interspersed among smaller daguerreotypes and tintypes, offering a sense of their relative sizes.

These efforts toward fidelity with the original objects are helpful in understanding the qualities in prints that affect our responses. It is unfortunate that unevenness in the printing has caused strange colors in certain instances.

The layout of the book is unusual in its departure from a highly structured system. Grids usually suppress the individual print in favor of overall appearance. Here a seemingly random relation of one high, one low accommodates larger pictures per page and allows serious and ironic comparisons. "Ranchos De Taos" by Paul Strand is

seen next to "Pennsylvania Station" by Bernice Abbot and "Gulf Oil, Port Arthur" by Edward Weston. We also see a Ben Shahn photograph of a girl hugging her front porch column next to a Walker Evans picture of a woman hugging her child on a New York subway, similar expressions on their faces.

In these ways the book provokes our thinking about photographs. The plates are presented in traditional categories of The Nineteenth-Century Landscape, Nineteenth-Century Portraits, The Pictorial Style, The Straight Photograph and the Documentary Style, and the Twentieth-Century Landscape. While these divisions don't add much, the text is a concise statement of the characteristics of each category, contributing a basic understanding of its development. Included are references to historical events and technical particulars that make the individual photographers within the categories more human. The text avoids theoretical arguments, reads easily, offers several insights into the differences between individual photographers.

The delightful surprise of the book is the richness and vitality of the portraits, both from the nineteenth-century and the portraits of photographers included at the end of the book. *Mrs. Wilson's Nurse* is a modern print from a five by seven-inch dry plate glass negative of a black woman holding on display a fat, naked white baby. This image of c. 1890 calls to mind Robert Frank's photograph of a similar subject, and suggests the ways in which each subject is defined by our attitudes toward race-relations, child-rearing, 35mm street photography, and five by seven studio photography.

Two extraordinary photographs of circus performers by Harrison Putney of Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1885-86 feature the Great Layton balancing three hurricane lamps while he sits on a slack wire, and H. Lissik twirling a blurred baton. Barbara Morgan has caught two other performers in the act, as Beaumont Newhall and Ansel Adams clown around the studio. Walker Evans is shown in a self-portrait of 1928 looking like Merlin the Magician with a "Curtain for Hat."

Martha Sandweiss, Curator of Photographs at the Amon Carter, points out that women began to play a much more active role in photography with the advent of the dry plate negative and the introduction of the Kodak camera with roll film. The point is well-made with the number of images by women both famous and unfamiliar.

The most interesting discussion is contained in the first chapter, "The Photographer as Historian"; it sets the tone of the book and reveals the ideas behind the selection of images. Although the connection between history and photography is not new, the changing attitudes of historians are shown here to parallel the development of photography from an objective truth to metaphor and personal vision. The book reminds us that a photograph can be seen not only for its formal similarities to the concerns of painters, but also for the cultural associations it shares with the rest of us.

TIBET, The Sacred Realm. Photographs, 1880-1950. Preface by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Chronicle by Lobsang P. Lhalungpa. An Aperture Book. \$35.00 hardcover.

THE Western world's image of Tibet had largely been formed through accounts of foreign travelers and writers beginning in the seventeenth century, while Tibet maintained semi-isolation and totally absorbed itself in a spiritual world. Travelogues, personal interpretations, and sensational narratives published on Tibet created a distorted image in the outside world. Although many of the authors were not scholars, but missionaries, trade agents, military officers, and adventurers, their writings are still, even today, considered authentic sources of research and information, much to the chagrin of serious scholars of Tibetan Buddhism and culture. The early travelers had but superficial knowledge of Buddhism in general, no real knowledge of Tibetan Buddhism, and often no knowledge at all of Tibetan language . . . None of these evokes the Tibet that only Tibetans really knew, the Sacred Realm, which is now lost to us.

This critique appears in the chronicles that accompany these photographs, and it is an accurate description of this book. Although a valuable visual record that contains several enchanting images, it is a view from outside, made by visitors. Magnificent landscapes and monasteries are not clues of the Tibetan Buddhist way of life.

The effort is halfway between a history book and a picture book. Captions with each plate are inadequate to explain the significance of what we see; we are treated as tourists, just passing through. The images are not organized in any way toward increasing our knowledge of any particular aspects of Tibetan life.

The most striking photographs are images of the landscape made in 1900-1907 by a Swedish explorer, Sven Hedin. They have a strange resemblance to the photographs produced by 19th century surveys of the American West; the same awesome expanse, the exotic formations, the small scale of human figures. Of course they add little to our understanding of Tibetan culture, but even the photographers that approach the people and their costumes directly seem impersonal and remote. They are like the exotic Kodachromes of National Geographic, without the benefit of color.

A picture that most dramatically places these people in their time shows two dozen robed men sitting on dirt walls, listening to a gramophone. The appearance of the machine and the men places their existence on our Western calendar; in the other pictures they appear timeless, but in this photograph we're reminded that they were living this way in the time of our parents. We more fully recognize our differences.

"It is one of the great differences between your civilization and ours, that you admire the man who achieves worldly success, who pushes his way to the top in any walk of life, while we admire the man who renounces the



"Golok nomads", by Joseph Rock, from "Tibet, The Sacred Realm".

world." A photograph on page 75 shows a hand reaching out through a stone wall, "Mystic walled into cave, about 1930. Hand is extended at opening to receive food."

Twenty photographers over a seventy-year period, each with his own particular reason for being in Tibet, cannot be expected to provide an exceptionally coherent view of such an unusual country. We are faced with the impossibility of describing what is essentially an inner life. The photographs only present

what it looked like, not what it was to practice it.

There is a sufficient reason in the book to visit the Rice Museum in order to see the original prints (sizes, materials, or conditions are not mentioned in the book). Several of the photographs will surely appear quite impressive in the original. I wish they did in the book. It is a subject that arouses my curiosity but I'll have to turn to another source for a stronger feeling of the place.

"Mrs. Wilson's Nurse", from "Masterworks of American Photography".



Received

NICHOLAS Nixon: Photographs from One Year. Untitled 31.

The Friends of Photography, Carmel, in Association with The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. Softcover.

Introduction by Robert Adams, 39 plates, portraits with an 8 x 10 camera.

AARON Siskind: Pleasures and Terrors by Carl Chiarenza. *A New York Graphic Society Book. Little, Brown and Company, Boston in association with the Center for Creative Photography. \$50.00, hardcover, with 74 duotones, 198 halftone illustrations.*

"Here is the critical biography of a leading artist of our time — The man who, in the words of Henry Holmes Smith, 'to a large degree has been responsible for bringing photography into the twentieth century.' Behind the challenging work of Aaron Siskind — in fact, often fueling it — is the fascinating story of a life filled with the terrors of anxiety and mishap." (From the dustjacket).

WILLIAM Christenberry. Southern Photographs.

Aperture, \$30.00, hardcover.

"I want to indulge myself in the truly sensual pleasure of savoring these pictures in their quiet honesty, subtlety, and unrestrained strength and in their refreshing purity. There is something enlightening about them; they seem to write a new little social and architectural history about one regional America (the deep South). In addition to that, each one is a poem." Walker Evans, 1972.

PICTURES from the New World
Danny Lyon. *Aperture. \$17.95, paperback.*
An extraordinary collection of twenty years of living, with photographs.

HALF a Truth Is Better Than None. Some Unsystematic Conjectures about Art, Disorder, and American Experience, by John A. Kouwenhoven. *The University of Chicago Press. \$17.95, hardcover.*

"Kouwenhoven compares the Eiffel Tower and the Ferris Wheel to show that the vernacular developed more uninhibitedly in America than in Europe; takes a look at some dime novels which call in question certain approved generalizations about the American response to the technological elements of the vernacular; and in two complementary essays (*Living in a Snapshot World* and *Photographs as Historical Documents*) considers photography, 'the most important visual art (if art it be) whose roots are wholly in the vernacular.' (From the dustjacket).

C A L E N D A R

EXHIBITIONS

SEPTEMBER

- 1-Oct. 2 Museum of Fine Arts,** 1001 Bissonnet St. "Elliot Porter: Intimate Landscapes." Romansky Gallery. Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Sun. 1-6.
- 1-Oct. 9 Kauffman Galleries,** 2702 West Alabama. "Photographs by Richard Payne" and "Lithographs by Harold Altman." Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
- 9-Oct. 9 Houston Center for Photography,** 1435 West Alabama. "Ten Photographers in New Mexico." Wed.-Fri. 11 a.m.-5, Sat.-Sun. 12-5.
- 11-Oct. 20 Benteler Galleries, Inc.** 2409 Rice Blvd. "European Photography by Toni Schneiders." Tues.-Fri. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
- 12-Oct. 21 Houston Public Library,** Central Branch, Ideson Building, 500 McKinney. "Cirkut Pictures" from the photographic archives (see related story pages 12-13).
- 23 - Dec. 31 Rice Museum.** "Tibet: The Sacred Realm", photographs 1880-1950. University Boulevard at Stockton, entrance 7. Tues. - Sat. 10-5. Sun. 12-6

OCTOBER

- 1-2 Museum of Fine Arts.** Began Sept. 1.
- 1-9 Kauffman Galleries.** Began Sept. 9
- Houston Center for Photography.** Began Sept. 9
- 1-20 Benteler Galleries, Inc.** Began Sept. 11.
- 1-21 Houston Public Library.** Began Sept. 12.
- 1-31 Kingwood Branch Library,** 4102 Rustin Wood Drive, Kingwood. Cibachrome photographs by Burton Anes.
- 3-23 Alfred C. Glassell, Jr. School of Art,** 5101 Montrose Blvd. "Arts Symposium of Houston" 2nd annual juried art competition.
- 7-22 Harris Gallery,** 1100 Bissonnet. "Serge Hamborg, Photographs of Europe." Color Cibachrome. Tues.-Fri. 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sat. 11 a.m.-5 p.m.
- 13-Dec. 18 Museum of Fine Arts,** 1001 Bissonnet St. Wiess Gallery. "Photographs by Eugene Atget: The Ancient Regime." Third in a series of four, from Museum of Modern Art, NYC. Tue.-Sat. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sun. 1-6.
- 14-Nov. 13 Houston Center for Photography,** 1435 West Alabama. "Garry Winogrand: New Works." (Tentative date). Wed.-Fri. 11 a.m.-5, Sat.-Sun. 12-5.
- 1-21 Houston Public Library.** Began Sept. 1.
- 23-Dec. 1 Benteler Galleries, Inc.** 2409 Rice Boulevard. "Contemporary European Photography by Karin Szekessy." Tues.-Fri. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sat. 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

NOVEMBER

- 1-13 Houston Center for Photography.** Began Oct. 14.
- 1-Dec. 15 Houston Public Library,** 500 McKinney, Central Branch, Ideson Building. Drawings and photographs of commercial and residential buildings in Houston and other Texas Cities "From the Alfred Finn Collection."
- 1-Dec. 18 Museum of Fine Art.** Began Oct. 13.
- 1-31 Benteler Galleries, Inc.** Began Oct. 23.
- 5-6 Camera & Photo Show,** sponsored by the *Houston Post*. In-

cludes exhibit of winners 1983 Annual Photography Show. Sat.-Sun. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

- 5-Dec. 18 Blaffer Gallery,** University of Houston Central Campus, "Imogen Cunningham: Centennial Selection." 100 photographs from 1901-1976 originated by American Federation of Arts. Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun. 1-6.
- 18-Dec. 23 Houston Center for Photography,** 1435 West Alabama. "Contemporary European Photography." Wed.-Fri. 11 a.m.-5, Sat.-Sun. 12-5.
- 28-Dec. 16 O'Kane Gallery,** 1 Main Street. University of Houston Downtown. "Photography by Pat Shevlin" and "Sculpture by Lynne Simmons Knippa." Mon.-Fri. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

DECEMBER

- 1 Benteler Galleries, Inc.** Began Oct. 23.
- 1-15 Houston Public Library.** Began Nov. 1.
- 1-16 O-Kane Gallery.** Began Nov. 28.
- 1-18 Museum of Fine Arts.** Began Oct. 13.
- Blaffer Gallery.** Began Nov. 5.
- 1-23 Houston Center for Photography.** Began Nov. 18.
- 3 Houston Center for Photography** 1435 West Alabama. "Christmas Garage Sale," of photos, photo equipment, new, used, donated. 10 a.m. till dark
- 3-Jan. 12. Benteler Galleries, Inc.** 2409 Rice Blvd. "Retrospective Exhibition of Photographs of Ander Kertesz." Tues.-Fri. 11 a.m.-5, Sat. 11 a.m.-4.

CONTESTS

Houston Post, 4747 Southwest Freeway, 1st floor Advertising Dept. "1983 Annual Photography Show" in conjunction with the Camera and Photo Show. Submit entries through Sept. 30. See Houston Post, local photo labs, camera stores for details. Exhibition Nov. 5-6, Astorhall.

LECTURES

SEPTEMBER

- 10 Kauffman Galleries,** 2702 West Alabama. 528-4229. 11 a.m. Discussion with photographer Richard Payne and lithographer Harold Altman. No charge. Reservations necessary.
- 14 Houston Center for Photography,** 1435 West Alabama. 7:30 p.m. Betty Hahn on "Detective Photography."
- 21 Museum of Fine Arts,** 1001 Bissonnet. Brown Aud. Steven Izenour on "Atlantic City: Beach, Boardwalk & Boulevard." First of 6 lectures sponsored by Rice Design Alliance series "Wish You Were Here: Architecture and America's Great Resorts and Vacation Spots." For prices call 524-6297.

OCTOBER

- 5 Houston Center for Photography,** 1435 West Alabama. 7:30 p.m. "To Put Away the Gods" film by Brian Huberman and Ed Hugetz and anthropologist Michael Rees.
- Museum of Fine Arts,** 1001 Bissonnet. Brown Aud. 8 p.m. Sally Woodbridge on "Recreation and Resorts in the Yosemite Valley." Rice Design Alliance series. See Sept. 21 for details.
- 28 Museum of Fine Arts,** 1001 Bissonnet. Brown Aud. 8 p.m. John Margolies on "The Cat-skills." Rice Design Alliance series. Admission. Details on Sept. 21.

12 Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonnet. Brown Aud. 8 p.m. John Pastier on "Las Vegas." Rice Design Alliance series. Admission. Details on Sept. 21 listing.

14 Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonnet. Brown Aud. 6 p.m. Lecture by Maria Morris Ham-bourg, co-curator of Eugene Atget exhibit. Followed by book signing with co-curator John Szarkowski. Free. Details 526-1361.

19 Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonnet. Brown Aud. 8 p.m. Christina Orr-Cahall on "Palm Beach." Rice Design Alliance series. Admission. Details on Sept. 21.

26 Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonnet. Brown Aud. 8 p.m. David Gebhard on "Santa Barbara: The Voltarian Retreat." Last of Rice Design Alliance series "Wish You Were Here: Architecture and America's Great Resorts and Vacation Spots." Admission. Details on Sept. 21.

NOVEMBER

- 2 Houston Center for Photography** 1435 West Alabama. 7:30 p.m. Documentary Fellowship award winners discuss their work. Pamela Morris, Martin Harris and Naomi Bullock.
- 7 Houston Center for Photography** 1435 West Alabama. 7:30 p.m. Petra Benteler speaking on European Photography.

WORKSHOPS AND CLASSES

AUGUST

30 Houston Community College, 1300 Holman. Late registration Aug. 22-23. Classes begin Aug. 30. \$80-\$100. 16 weeks. Full range of day, evening and weekend photography courses. Call 521-9271 for schedule and information. HCC short, hobby courses. 6 weeks, \$40. Three times yearly. Call 524-3179.

SEPTEMBER

- 3-10 Travel Photography Workshop,** P.O. Box 2847, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501. Instructor Lisl Dennis. Also on Sept. 17-24, and Sept. 24-Oct. 1. \$785. Write for details.
- 7-28 Leisure Learning.** "Basic Photography." 4 Weds. 7 p.m.-9:30 p.m. \$40. Tim Barkin, instructor. Call 721-7299.
- 8 Total Camera.** 6138 Westheimer. Fall classes begin in basic, intermediate and advanced photography. Three two-hour sessions. Call 784-2889 for details.
- 8-29 Leisure Learning.** "Intermediate Photography." Three Thurs. Tim Barkin, instructor. Call 721-7299.
- 9 St. Thomas Courses à la Carte.** Registration for photography classes. Classes begin Sept. 12. Call 520-7000.
- 12-26 Leisure Learning.** "Advanced Photography." 3 Mons. 7 p.m.-10 p.m. \$35 Mike Patrick, instructor.
- 12-Dec. 22 Glassell School of Art,** 5101 Montrose Blvd., Thurs., 1 p.m.-4 p.m. "Idea and Form in Contemporary Photography." Sally Gall, instructor. Details at 529-7659.
- 17-Oct. 22 Glassell School of Art,** 5101 Montrose Blvd. 6 Sat. 9 a.m.-12. "Photographic Portraiture." \$110. No prerequisite. Limited enrollment. Call 529-7659.

19 University of Houston Sundry School. Photography classes begin Sept. 19. Call 749-1284 for pre-registration details.

24 Houston Center for Photography, 1435 West Alabama. 2-5:30 p.m. "Archival Matting and Mounting Workshop." Danny Clayton, instructor. Members \$20. non-members \$25. Limited enrollment. Call 529-4755 for details.

26 Art Institute of Houston. Classes begin on 26th. Full range of day and evening sessions. Late registration fee after Sept. 25. Call 523-2564 for details.

OCTOBER

- 3 Houston Center for Photography,** 1435 West Alabama, 7:30 p.m.. Portfolio critique by Geoff Winningham and Peter Brown. Members \$24, non-members \$30.
- 5-26 Leisure Learning.** "Basic Photography." 4 Weds. \$40. Tim Barkin, instructor. Call 721-7299.
- 13-27 Leisure Learning.** "B & W Darkroom." 3 Thurs. 7-9 p.m. \$30. Tim Barkin, instructor. Call 721-7299 for details.
- 17-31 Leisure Learning.** "Advanced Photography." 3 Mons. 7-10 p.m. \$35. Mike Patrick, instructor. Call 721-7299.
- 22 Houston Center for Photography,** 1435 West Alabama. 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. "Hand Coloring Workshop." Casey Williams, instructor. Introduction to coloring B & W prints. Limit 10. Registration deadline Oct. 3. \$40 members \$50 non-members. Call 529-4755 for details.
- 24 National Press Photographers' Association,** Sheraton-Houston Hotel. "Flying Short Course," a one-day photojournalism seminar featuring award winning author/photographers. Members \$25, Student members \$17, non-members \$40, student non-members \$20. Registration call Sheila Cunningham 780-2667 or Joel Draut 460-1743.
- 29-Dec. 10 Glassell School of Art,** 5101 Montrose Blvd. 6 Sat. 9 a.m.-12. "Cameraless Photography." 1 p.m.-4 p.m. "Photographing Artwork." \$110 each. No prerequisite. Limited enrollment. Call 529-7659.

NOVEMBER

- 12 Houston Center for Photography,** 1435 West Alabama. "Introduction to commercial Photography." Gary Faye, instructor. Subtitled "Everything you've wanted to know but didn't know whom to ask." Members \$40, non-members \$50. Limited enrollment. Registration deadline Nov. 7. Call 529-4755 for details.

VARIOUS

- Friends of Photography,** P.O. Box 500, Carmel, Ca. 93921. Spring & summer workshops.
- Houston Center for Photography,** 1435 West Alabama. Additional workshops and continuing courses planned. Call HCP 529-4755 for full schedule.
- International Photographic Tours,** 2230 North University Parkway, Building 7B, Provo, Utah. 84604. Variety of domestic and foreign tours with photography instruction/workshops. Brochure available.
- Lone Star Photographic Workshops,** 308 1/2 Congress Ave., Austin, Tx. 78701. Tele: (512) 474-8198. Sponsors continuing series of workshops.

Photo World, 10891 Katy Freeway. Houston. Beginning and advanced classes. \$60. Contact Carlos Artaza, 464-4656.

Sundance Photography Workshops. P.O. Box 837, Provo, Utah 84603. Tele: (801) 225-4107.

CLUBS

American Society of Magazine Photographers, (ASMP). Meets 6:30 p.m., 1st Monday of each month in the Graphic Arts Conference Center, 1324 West Clay. An international association whose "members work in every category of published photography." Visitors welcome. Charge for monthly meetings. 521-2090.

Houston Chapter of Association for Multi-Image. Meets 3rd Thurs. monthly. Steve Sandifer 667-9417.

Association of Students in Photography, Houston Community College, 1300 Holman. For HCC students. Meets 8 p.m., 1st Mon. of each month. Call 521-9271, Randy Spalinger for details.

Baytown Camera Club. Meets 7 p.m. 1st and 3rd. Mon. monthly at Baytown Community Center. 2407 Market, Baytown. Vernon Hagan 424-5684.

Brazoria County Camera Club. Meets 7:30 p.m. 2nd. Tues. monthly at Continental Savings & Loan Asso., Lake Jackson, Tx. Don Benton (409) 265-4569.

Houston Center for Photography, 1435 West Alabama. Meets at 7:30 pm on the first Wednesday and third Thursday monthly. Lectures workshops, exhibits, publications. Three galleries. Open to all. 529-4755.

The Houston Camera Club. Meetings 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, three times monthly at Baylor College of Medicine, DeBakey Bldg. Room M-112, Texas Medical Center. Free parking. Meetings Sept. 6, 20, 27; Oct. 4, 18, 25; Nov. 1, 15; and Dec. 6. Competitions, programs, evaluations. Gwen Kunz 665-0639.

The Houston Photochrome Club. Meets 7:30 p.m. the 2nd. & 4th Thurs. monthly at St. Michael's Church, 1801 Sage Road. Room 21. John Patton 453-4167.

The Houston Photographic Society. Meets 8 p.m. on 2nd & 4th Tues. monthly at 2403

Dunston, Houston. Programs and critiques. Tony Martino 827-1159.

The Photographic Collectors of Houston. Meets 7-10 p.m. the 4th Wed. monthly in the basement of the Museum of Science in Hermann Park. Public welcome.

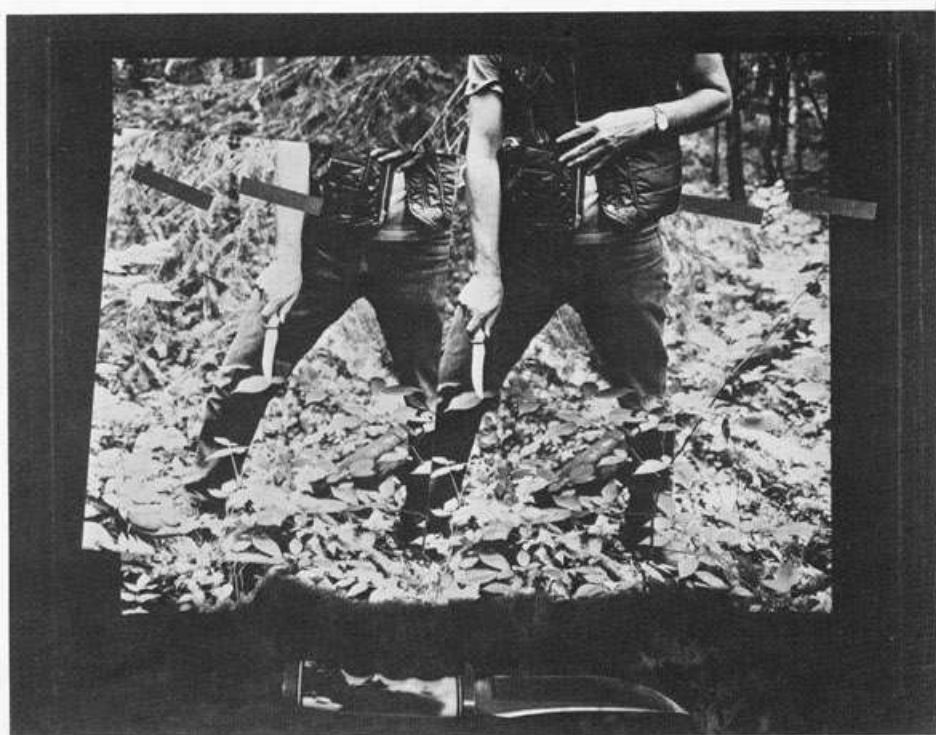
"Meetings feature auctions, buy-sell-trade, show and tell and lectures." Leonard Hart 795-7455.

1960 Photographic Society. Meets 7:30 p.m. 1st and 3rd. Tues. monthly at Cypress Creek Christian Community Center, 6823 Cypress Wood Drive & Stuebner Airline. Dave Mahavier 522-1861 or 353-9604.

Society of Photographers in Industry. Meets 3rd Thurs. monthly. Sonny Looks Restaurant, 9810 So. Main. 6 p.m.-10

Cocktails, dinner, speaker. Visitors welcome. Dave Thompson. 795-8835.

Notices for "Calendar" and for the monthly membership newsletter are welcome and should be sent to: "Calendar," Houston Center for Photography, P.O. Box 66394, Houston 77226.



"Buck Knife", from "13 Ways of Coping with Nature", by Suzanne Bloom and Ed Hill.

Images

(Continued from page 6).

slides and moved very quickly. He pointed to the similarities in his images made over a long period — the way a certain shape in a painting from 1952 might be echoed in a photograph from 1978, which he might have responded to in a drawing done two years later. His belief that images come directly out of working is evident in the freedom with which he combines painting, drawing and photography.

The question of sources had its most direct comparison on the fifth evening with the appearance of Gay Block, Manual (Ed Hill and Suzanne Bloom) and Chris Plowman. Block is most clearly interested in what is in front of

the camera, "what I see and want to understand. I like to be with people," she said, "and have an overwhelming desire to share the experience." She was very specific in her associations with her pictures, identifying with certain people in the portraits.

Manual believes that our ideas of what we *should* take pictures of come from the culture. Their sources are what they think about images; the work functions in a critical rather than passive role. The photograph is not seen as a transparent window onto the world, but as "a window of the artist's consciousness." Their sources are intellectual, cultural, and art historical. In a way their primary source is Plato, believing that art is a poor imitation of nature, preferring ideas over handwork.

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