



Paula Goldman


SAM SAMORE: ART TERRORIST
WILLIAM EGGLESTON: RECENT WORK
CHARLES SCHORRE'S HANDBOOK
MAIL ART: POST DADA
BOOKS: MINOR WHITE, WEEGEE

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CONTENTS

SUMMER 1985
VOLUME III NUMBER 2

COVER

From the series **Soul Food and Still Life** 1985, by Paula Goldman. More on page 15.

FEATURES

- Charles Schorre: Artists' Handbook**, by Dave Crossley. For 16 years, Schorre has been telling artists to stick up their hands. Some of the results.
- The Samore Gallery Ten Years Later**, by Sam Samore. An art sniper comes clean.
- HCP Members' Show: Diversity**, by Lynn Foster. A look at some of Houston's emerging — and emerged — photographers.
- Paris, Part II**, by Dave Crossley, Lynn McLanahan, and Ruth Schilling. Further notes and comments on last fall's *Le Mois de la Photo*, in Paris.
- 7
- 10
- 13
- 16

EXHIBITIONS

- Chuck Close: Research into Illusion** A discussion of Close's work shown at Houston's Contemporary Arts Museum.
- Eggleston: Inconclusive** William Eggleston's new work is shown at Allen Street Gallery in Dallas.
- The Self as Subject** A few photographers look at themselves.
- The Panorama: Magnificent Obsession** Benteler Gallery in Houston shows some long pictures.
- Mail Art: Post Dada** A look at the work of artists who think small, but long range.
- French Exhibit: Devalued Art?** An ambitious exhibition of contemporary French photography at Houston's Diverse Works.
- Joan Myers: Fresh Landscapes** Kudos for a show tucked into the Dallas Public Library.
- Three Annalists of the Movement for Civil Rights** The Houston Public Library hosts a brief study of black photographers who covered the changes.
- Points of View: All-Star Lineup, Almost** Houston's Benteler Gallery breaks out of the European mold.
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21

BOOKS

- Minor White: Many Roles, Many Friends** *Minor White: A Living Remembrance.* A new book for and about the Guru of Experience.
- Burk Uzzle: The Actors All American.** A people waiting to be photographed.
- Weegee: The First Paparazzi** *Weegee's New York, Photographs 1935-1960.* The collected works of the man who was always on the spot.
- Lou Stoumen's Times Square** *Times Square: 45 Years of Photography.* The aging of the center of the "City of hurried and sparkling waters."
- 22
- 23

DEPARTMENTS

- MESSAGES**
Looking for an answer to a rude question.
- LETTERS**
Still more on nudes in Paris.
- SNAP JUDGMENTS**
Visionary Joe explains.
- NOTES**
News, tidbits, and unsubstantiated rumors.
- CALENDAR**
Events of all sorts.
- 3
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6

STAFF

Editor: Dave Crossley

Senior Editor: David Portz

Contributing Editors: Lisa Bertelsen, Lynn McLanahan, Becky Ross, Sharon Stewart

Writers: Lisa Bertelsen, Debra Martin Chase, Dave Crossley, Lynn Foster, Lynn McLanahan, David Portz, April Rapier, Becky Ross, Sam Samore, Ruth Schilling, Visionary Joe

Production: Karen Sadoff Long, Barry Morrison, Debra Rueb, Michael Thomas

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WHY PHOTOGRAPHY?

What is the value of all this effort, all this expense, all these demands?

Many months ago, I was rehearsing in my mind a trip to the offices of a corporation to request financial assistance for the Houston Center for Photography. In this daydream, I saw myself sitting there with the officer in charge of corporate gifts, who suddenly asked "What exactly is the value of the Houston Center for Photography, or of photography itself?" It wasn't exactly the same as putting a bullet through my brain, but it had that effect on my speech and my powers of reason. Value?

Many of us had worked ferociously to bring the Center into existence and to devise schemes to raise the money for support of the extensive program of exhibitions, publications, lectures, workshops, and fellowships that almost immediately made the Center an organizational model in Texas and elsewhere. While our experience was clearly no match for many similar, older American organizations, we were up to speed and learning fast. With this magazine, we joined the national discourse, and with our exhibitions we helped build a substantial new local audience for photography. Our educational programs gave Houston's photographers a crash course in contemporary work as well as a look at all the aesthetic, social, and psychological problems that trouble photographers elsewhere.

All of these programs welcomed an expanding membership, which grew from 30 to 670 in three years. We were like a mob. We threw accomplished photographers, historians, educators, and critics up against the podium hoping for images, answers, questions. Thousands and thousands of people swarmed through the gallery, studying, wanting more explanations, more involvement. For some of our original members, it was too much, too great a departure from the slow and quiet environment of understanding they had hoped for. There were small battles, and some took umbrage at particular decisions, or left worrying about cliques. For others, the effort was just too crazed or unfocused, and we watched good people turn away, or burn up from their own enthusiasm and the lack of reward.

But the bodies were carried outside the hive and still we swarmed and our numbers grew, and here suddenly was someone in a daydream asking me, What value? What for? I realized I hadn't the slightest idea.

So I called the Guru and made an appointment and sat in his lair amid the color and asked him the same questions. "You know," he said, "I was reading in a magazine about this bus sign project in New York where photographers put images inside the buses, where the advertising cards usually go, and the magazine published all these comments from people who rode the buses all the time. They kept saying that they had looked at the pictures and talked to other people on the bus about them and many of these people realized they had never talked to anyone on the bus before and they were just filled with this exuberance about the pictures and the conversation and the revelation that there was this common thing all these strangers could cluster around and decry or defend or ask questions about. One woman said she saw a picture of the sky and realized that she never looked at the real sky and now she was doing it all the time. Boy, that's something, that's really something."

So here we are at the Houston Center for Photography, looking at the pictures and talking to each other. Sometimes the talk is intellectual, formal, and many of us walk off into corners by ourselves, needing more. Sometimes the talk is about the poor, or the rich, or the harmed, and the discussion is heated and powerfully felt. Sometimes the words deal with feelings, helplessly, and we wonder how the other can feel a certain way when we feel nothing. We are grateful for the

smallest goosebump, especially if the reaction is mutual.

Always there are conversions, and always losses. Mostly there is confusion, when our easy understanding of things is shaken by images we had never imagined. Sometimes there is dismay, when we see spread across those sheets of paper some terrible genius whose capacity for evil seems unbounded. The more difficult, even impenetrable, the work is, the more the searching parts of the mind seem to be energized, to find new clarity somewhere else. The original questions always remain unanswered, but many others are suggested, and they slowly give way to knowledge.

I don't worry now about answering that question about the value of photography, or of the Center. I know that sometimes when I give my answer there will be understanding and an effort to know more, and sometimes I will think I am talking down a hole that has no end.

David Crossley

LETTERS

NAKED IN PARIS: PART III

Felicitations, as they say on the Rive Gauche. I nearly wrote to you offering a sterner opening following a moderately close read of SPOT winter 1984, but held my tongue and placed my judgement in escrow — the only way to keep it down — in case my inability to perceive the insistence of thought and movement were what actually kept me one step from the realm of empathy, and a complex and thorough understanding of your intentions and conclusions.

Allow me to join the discussion of nakedness in Paris (France) which will no doubt multiply (if not divide) following this issue. As a connoisseur of breasts, voracious addict of boobs and all-round promoter of the female form, I take exception with the thoughts of both Ms. Schilling (SPOT, spring 1985) and Mr. Crossley (SPOT, winter 1984). Both misinterpret the French obsession with the female form.

Crossley combined his south Texas urbanity with general (whoops) Maerican (say that loud, son) lightheadedness to unload ill founded scorn on the seen female form. And Ms. Schilling, who ought to be an aspiring academic if she taint one already, also missed the boat by applying American criteria to French culture, insisting in several places that the Francs "accept" the nude. NO. They adore the female nude, they crave the press of heated skin, they want to suck errantly on those breasts and they'll walk a mile to worship a well-shown mound of venus.

All praise to Visionary Joe.

Better lock him up before he hurts someone. His prose combines the best aspects a writer can bring to words: it is sleek and tight, amusing, unforgiving and true. Viva la Vision.

[Rude and outrageous insults deleted — Editor]

Praise for the worthy; scorn for the undeserving. Sway not from these criteria. All power to he who creates.

Yours in proper use of pronouns,
John Crapper
Los Angeles

Ms. Schilling replies:
Mr., ah, Crapper may lust after breasts. I don't. My article was about our response to nudity, not that of the French. I am disappointed that such a lusty gentlemen would hide behind what is surely a *nom de plume*.

Mr. Crossley replies:
Well, Mr. Crapper, you've pretty much caught me with my pants down. What can I say? God knows I never intended to denigrate breasts and certainly not to unload scorn on the female form itself. After all, I have a wife, and a mother, and a sister — all women — as well as a lot of women friends, and all these people have breasts, and female forms and if I'd been going around gnawing on their very forms, so to speak, I don't believe I'd have lasted the day. The whole misunderstanding was just the result of my spending that week in Paris literally awash in images of female parts and when I got back to my trusty word processor my brain was addled and it appears that I went too far. I won't do that again.

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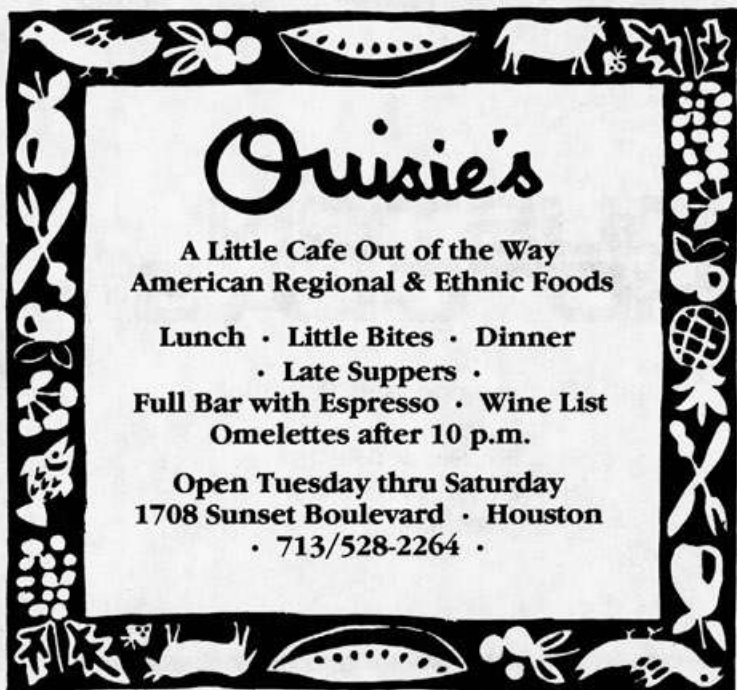
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OF DREAMS

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SNAP JUDGMENTS

Joe turns his penetrating vision on a wall of silliness to see what's behind it.

By Visionary Joe

To date, photographers have not been very silly in their work. This is true because (1) photography has not been art, (2) photography tends to attract only serious people, and (3) silliness has not, until recently, been a noble emotion.

A surge of photographic silliness is developing, however. Reports from Sodaville, Oregon; Nome, Alaska; and Bird City, Kansas, barometers of silliness, have indicated spectacular bursts of foolishness. The underfeathers of ducks are turning blue. And we are again at the auspicious point in the thirty-year cycle of silliness which brought us the 1920s and 1950s. The impending round of silliness promises to be the most profound, however, and can be expected to affect photographers.

A precocious few photographers are silly already. Kevin Clark's Red Couch has cushioned token Americans with ridiculous frequency. William Wegman exhibits his often-cross-dressed dog, and has twiggled its genitalia via video. Dianne Blell's plastic cupids in fake-o classic atmospheres represent the High Silly, with Peter McClennan's watertowers, while David Portz's painted fish undoubtedly represent the Low. The persons in Nic Nicosia's Modern Disasters react to cardboard problems, while Bernard Faucon's real situations plague plaster-of-paris boys. Paul Hester's muscular nudes, dressed only in our President's latex face, are an adulterated silliness, also erotic and rude. In fact, most of the seminally silly photographers fortify their foolishness with beauty, design, culture, or trauma.

So purely silly work is yet to emerge. Classifications of silliness will be worked out, separating the absurd silly-incomprehensible from silly-funny and silly-dumb. The most successful achievers of the purely silly have been the postcard artists, who must nevertheless be discounted because they lack the traditional motivations of persons who produce Fine Art: fame and sales. Among the latter sort of photographer, why is silliness so conspicuously lacking?

Part of the problem has been that photographers have always made such serious efforts to produce art. Photography only became art with Cindy Sherman. Before Cindy Sherman, photographers thought they had to be seventeenth century Dutch painters, behaving realistically and celebrating this or that. Meanwhile the current century's painters grew silly: Pollock, Rauschenberg, Oldenburg, Klee, Dubuffet, Ernst, Warhol, to name a few of the masters. The Abstracts, Beats, Pops, and Waves all saw the potential in doing ridiculous work, and then providing their projects with serious-sounding rationales.

Silly work with a serious explanation is now the best Fine Art. Consider it this way. Fine Art is pur-

chased to make its owners feel fine. Our society's favorite way of feeling fine is feeling smarter than anyone else. Purely silly art is too embarrassing for anyone to enjoy except the ones who know its official explanation. Silly art makes a person feel enlightened. Photographers were very slow to pick up on this. If they had modelled their art on the theatre instead of painting they would have started out silly and perhaps been artists all along. In sixteenth-century Europe, dramas with funny faces, foolish names, and infantile behavior were all the rage.

Even with its celebration in theatre and later opera, silliness has waited a long time to be acknowledged as part of daily life. Historians have suppressed the silly outbursts. It was not known until recently that Rome fell because its subjects were worried silly over the invading hordes. The English rarely mention that the British naval hero Viscount Nelson was singing "I'm a Little Teapot" in the battle of Trafalgar, when he caught a French musketball in his spine. Likewise American historians neglect to note that Edison was seeking to invent the electric eggplant when he invented the incandescent bulb, and was utterly disappointed that the light wasn't purple. Such silly notions would not be neglected today. The novelty of bringing silliness out in the open makes it the ripest subject for art.

Even though photographers have now become artists and success of silly art seems assured, photographers will nevertheless have a hard time obtaining the giddiness that marks a serious fool. Photographers are matter-of-fact people. They don't dress strangely. They believe what other persons tell them, and particularly what they see. To succeed in becoming silly, photographers will need to practice: making faces in their mirrors, doing little songs and dances, eating spaghetti by sucking up the strands. They will have to fall in love with adolescents, and fight with sailors over nothing.

By getting on the goofy bandwagon, photographers assure themselves success. They will be exploring a deep-sounding modern trait. The importance of silliness to mental health has now been recognized. Silly persons are loveable: their personalities are not suppressed. Perhaps the respectability of being silly is nowhere shown more clearly than in the large number of Fortune 500 CEOs who admit to being called 'Huggy Bear' by their wives. Whereas traditional virtues (heroics and lovers' constancy, the desires for justice and truth) have been disparaged, silliness, by default, has gained exalted status. It takes its place with other modern standards of behavior, with smug complacency and morbid fascination. Photographers will soon feel silliness deep in their hearts, and then be daffy in droves.

Visionary Joe, ready for the future. Photo by Paula Goldman.



NOTES

ANNE NOGGLE:
FEW SECRETS

Anne Noggle spoke at the Houston Center for Photography, on April 10, 1985.

Anne Noggle's commitment to photography is longstanding, having come after an adventurous career as a pilot. She is an adjunct professor of art at the University of New Mexico, and is the recipient of both Guggenheim and NEA grants. One imagines her to be an insightful guide, a delight to study with. Her book, *Silver Lining* is highly recommended as a document of a careful, caring vision, one concerned with small details too important to forget.

At the HCP, Ms. Noggle spoke warmly and freely, again laying open the wounds that she either won't acknowledge or will not let heal. Unwilling to bury her dead, she conjures up the past, keeping it active. She says much about the structure of her life but salient details are missing. This leaves one hungry for deeper truths, some of which can be found in her words and images. One of the most striking things about her work is what appears to be an absolute absence of fear. She confronts aging and dying with reverence — almost celebrating the inevitable; there are no whimpers or bargains with the devil in evidence.

Her style is low-key, confident, and she alludes broadly to strong matriarchal influences. Clearly, gender boundaries are not for her. Yet, as is the case with many women in areas of heretofore unrelenting male domination, taking her own ideas seriously came after the technical expertise was well established. Then she began to believe in her ideas, and there was no stopping their development and evolution. Without a trace of self-consciousness, Noggle presents her pictures and thoughts, confident of an audience that will extricate much from these deceptively simple, meditative, utterly disarming photographs. She openly displays her physical self (one example being photographs of her face-lift from start to finish). She speaks in riddles woven of emotion, memory, self-examination; the clues seem straight-forward, yet are carefully meted out. Often, the portraits and self-portraits are brutal, unkind (in the interest of honesty and revelation, not cruelty), as if inclined to claw away the surface to uncover the essential self. Humor runs deep, necessary as catalyst and relief.

A.R.

ANNE TUCKER
ON RECENT WORK

Anne Tucker, the Curator of Photography at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, delivered a slide presentation entitled Contemporary Photography — Pluralism in the 80s at the Houston Center for Photography on April 17, 1985.

Anne Tucker selected examples of the recent work of twenty-nine photographers born after 1945 and not

generally exhibited in Houston. She expressed mild embarrassment at using the term "pluralism" to describe the various tendencies of these artists, in view of *The New York Times'* critic Andy Grundberg's recent comment that pluralism was an art-term of the 1970s representing an effort to categorize the last gasps of Modernism. Ms. Tucker explained that while critics such as Mr. Grundberg are engaged in naming movements, she — as a curator and art historian — takes note of the differences among artists, rather than their similarities. Ms. Tucker said she concentrates on discovering unique obsessions in the imagery of each photographer, the "touchstones" in subject matter or technique to which they often return during their careers.

The slides exhibited by Ms. Tucker were grouped in such a way as to display together photographers with similar concerns. She was careful to inform her listeners of the city in which each photographer currently works and the physical dimensions and technique of each photographer's work. Photographers concerned with landscapes included Stuart Klipper (ends of the earth), Steven Foster (collaged shoreline views with multiple horizons), Wanda Hammerbeck (color prints of the Great West), and William Christenberry (who obsessively photographs certain locations in Martine Springs, Alabama year after year). Photographers concerned with the human artifacts of buildings and interiors included Lewis Baltz (tract houses, industrial parks), Nicholas Nixon (inhabitants in an old folks home, snapshot style with 8x10 camera), Catherine Wagner (American classrooms), Judy Fiskin (flower arrangements in various settings), and Joel Sternfeld (Tin City, Canyon City, Studio City: scenes with quirks). From the street photographer tradition she presented new work by Robert Frank (personal pictures with poetic text, high emotional content), John Harding (color street photographer, with layering of persons), Alex Webb (color prints of exotic places such as Haiti and India, without clear informational content). Rephotographers and image appropriaters included Steven Fraley (popular objects made surreal, bowling ball, paint roller), Ruth Thorn-Thomsen (fake travelogues staged with cut-outs in front of a pinhole camera), Nic Nicosia (staged "Modern Disasters," one-point perspective on frenetic actions), Sandra Schwimmer (gender stereotyping explored with appropriated images and etiquette column texts), Jeff Gates (promotional language of Gettysburg tract developers making the American dream ironic), and Dave Freund (directly appropriated postcards). Two photographers using stagecraft are Tamara Akaida (staged pieces and text, not necessarily reporting truth but conveying an idea) and Cindy Sherman (self-portraits, adopting a garish, Hollywood style). Photographic painters include Duane Michals (various projects in an unabashedly personal and romantic style: poems scrawled on photographs, painted flowers), Holly Roberts (photographs disappearing under opaque paint), and Dennis Tauber (painting over building scapes, so that only particular buildings emerge, concerns with the sensual surface.) A single photographer with clearly political concerns was presented: Esther Parada, whose installations chronicle the history of U.S. meddling in Central America.

D.P.

SILVERTHORNE:
TEXAS TIME

Jeffrey Silverthorne is completing a year on the faculty of the University of Houston, before his return to Boston. His *Silent Fires* series will be displayed

at the Houston Center for Photography in July of 1985. In a slide presentation at the Center on May 1, he reviewed his work of the last eight years, including last year's experiments in Mexico, New Mexico, and Texas.

Early work discussed by Jeffrey Silverthorne dealt with formal explorations of shape and line, using nude figures. Increasingly, he came to use props with these nude figures, producing illogical, intuitively disturbing juxtapositions, such as a nude woman posed with an animal bone carrying dessicated skin. The *Silent Fires* series (*SPOT*, fall 1984) was intended by Silverthorne to evoke the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, portraying hellish surroundings as well as certain strong emotions of modern life. The photographs of other contemporaneous but uncompleted series, *Whispering* and *Waiting Room*, also utilize human figures coated with cornstarch and baby powder in underwordly settings, to create semi-morbid associations with life and life-after-death. The blurry appearance of the figures' movements adds to the expressive affect.

Since his arrival in Texas, Silverthorne has used his 35mm as an autobiographical tool, concentrating less on studio work and more on the Great Out-of-Doors. One group of photos records the appearance of reflections in the windows of downtown stores, studios of interpenetrating space, neither new nor exciting. Other photos seem to confirm his beginner's conceptions of this part of the world, pictures that will get a laugh back home. In one group he concentrates on closeups of smashed and broken roadside animals — an adjunct to the Texas myth of wide open spaces with a highway through the middle. He has also portrayed the squalor and delapidation of Mexico and the depopulation of Southwestern downtowns. Silverthorne in a new situation has relied on photographic traditions to carry him through. He keeps the deep focus, intense black and white printing style, and he maintains the emotional tenor so well explored by the persons he refers to and whose works he sometimes echoes: Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, Eugene Atget, Mario Giacomelli.

D.P.

KIDS AT WORK

For two weeks last December the Houston Center for Photography gallery was swarming with children who had come with their classes, scout troops, and families to see what photography is all about. HCP Director Lynn McLanahan gave them a brief illustrated history of the medium (camera obscura to NASA) and then each child learned how to use a Polaroid camera. Amidst the wildly excited giggles, shuffling of props and costumes, and jumping up and down as the images appeared, some interesting photographs were taken. Children, it seems, instinctively work in the "directorial mode" and each child made several images. Then the children wrote down their thoughts about photography and hung in the front window one of their pictures next to their words (they took their other pictures home). Some of their thoughts on the medium included:

"I think photography is art work without painting a picture: you can act crazy in a picture if you want to. The world wouldn't be the same without photography."

"Photography really bonks me out."

"I think photography is something to share with someone."

"I think photography is important because if we didn't have photography we wouldn't have pictures of our trips or the police wouldn't have mug shots. We definitely need photography."

"Photography is taking pictures for fun or for serious thoughts."

"Photography is like a quick and easy way to draw."

"I like photography because I like it."

The children's installation filled the front windows of the gallery and remained up through the holidays. This event was made possible through the generosity of a number of organizations and people, including the Polaroid Corporation, Southside Camera, Skylark Camera, United Jewelers and Distributors, and Clare Glassell, who managed the whole affair.

FOTO FEST:
GATHERING SPEED

Houston's month of photography, called Foto Fest, is beginning to take shape for February 22 through April 1, 1986. There are commitments for at least 50 exhibitions, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston's big Robert Frank retrospective. The Association of International Photographic Art Dealers has agreed to hold its fair in Houston during the Fest. The Texas Commission on the Arts has kicked in \$15,000, the Wortham Foundation \$12,000, and the Cultural Arts Council of Houston \$5,000. Following a substantial article on the Fest in *American Photographer*, the event's organizers received calls from a few big camera and film manufacturers, and the Warwick Hotel has offered its lobby as a meeting place for conversation and looking at portfolios. Van Deren Coke will talk on *Four Forms of Modernism in the 20th Century* and there will be a three-day conference on 19th-century photography as well as many other lectures and workshops. It is being touted as the biggest photographic event in America and plans are under way for another in 1988.

VARIOUS DATA &
UNSUBSTANTIATED
RUMORS

Visual arts organizations received \$1.95 million of the \$144,760,569 awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts during Fiscal 1985. Grants ranged in size from \$5,000 to \$50,000. Among the photography-related organizations receiving grants were the following: Catskill Center for Photography, \$17,000; Film in the Cities, \$22,500; The Houston Center for Photography, \$15,000; Los Angeles Center for Photographic Studies, \$20,000; Oregon Center for the Photographic Arts (Blue Sky), \$18,000; Photographic Resource Center, \$25,000; San Francisco Camerawork, \$25,000; Society for Photographic Education, \$10,000; and Visual Studies Workshop, \$47,500.

New York got 29% of the total 760,569 awarded to all institutions and individuals. The next nine, in order, were California, 10%; Washington, D.C., 5.6%; Massachusetts, 3.9%; Illinois, 3.3%; Pennsylvania, 2.9%; Minnesota, 2.5%; Ohio, 2.4%; Missouri, 2.4%, and Texas, 2%.

Applications from New York had a 32 percent success rate, compared to Texas with a ratio of 25 percent.

Max Yavno died on April 4 at the age of 74. Yavno was known for his direct and unpretentious depictions of people and their environments throughout the world.

The world record price of \$104,500 was paid at a Sotheby auction in March for an Anthony Berger photograph of Abraham Lincoln and his youngest son Tad, taken at the Brady Studio in Washington. The previous record was \$67,100 for Sheeler's "Wheels."

Kodak has given Eastman House a \$12-\$15 million building in San Francisco to sell to enable Eastman House to keep its photo archives in Rochester, and has also agreed to continue its annual donations in the neighborhood of \$1 million.

Austin's PhotoWork Gallery in the Arts Warehouse closed at the end of March, but the Texas Photographic Society succeeded in finding a new home in the Vogue Restaurant.

Suspended Animation, an exhibition of contemporary and historical photographs of Houston architecture will be open from May 23 through September 2, at 1600 Smith in Cullen Center. The exhibition is presented by the Houston Center for Photography and was curated by Elizabeth Glassman of Glassman & Lorenzo.

Photographer Hiroshi Suga and 27 assistants, using 100 Olympus OM-4 cameras, produced a 950-foot-long photograph of 1,284 people seated on a 1,300-foot bench in the city of Obihiro, Japan (pop. 144,118).

The photograph was displayed along the city's main street and then sold as a multiple fold-out book.

The Photographic Collector

The Rights of Authors and Artists, published by Bantam Books by arrangement with the American Civil Liberties Union, copyright 1984, discusses the visual artist's dealings with galleries, collaborators, publishers, and agents, and the laws of libel, obscenity, and copyright protection. The book can be obtained through your local ACLU office, or in quantity, by contacting the Direct Response Department, Bantam Books, 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10103.

The magazine *Vanity Fair* is touring an exhibition of classic and contemporary portraits. Older works by Stieglitz, Man Ray, and others are paired with new portraits by Richard Avedon, Annie Leibovitz, and so on. In Houston, the exhibition was shown at Marshall Field's, the department store, where a spokesman assured this was "not a promotional gimmick," but rather "a cultural gimmick."

Richard's Avedon's exhibition *In the American West*, will open at the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth September 14, and will run through November 17 before going on a nationwide tour. The exhibition is the result of a commission from the Amon Carter, which sent Avedon into small western towns to photograph the people for five years.

Casey Williams and Nic Nicosia have been selected to participate in *Texas Currents*, an exhibition of 16 Texas artists at the San Antonio Art Institute in the fall.

Pinhole enthusiasts will be pleased to know that one of the Shuttle missions will carry a 38,000-hole pinhole camera to photograph the galaxies. If you're curious about pinholes, write Eric Renner, The Pinhole Resource, Star Route 15, Box 1655, San Lorenzo New Mexico 88057.

TERRIBLE
OVERSIGHTS

The following people were angry at the editors of *SPOT* after the spring issue: Debra Rueb, Steve Caravello, C. Leigh Farmer, and Bernard Faucon. Rueb's photo of the HCP auction on page 5 was not credited, nor was Caravello's of the Art in Space launch on the same page. Farmer was foolishly left out of the list of photographers chosen for the HCP's Annual Juried Exhibition. Faucon was touted as having a retrospective at the HCP beginning April 6, 1985, and that should have said 1986.



Garry Winogrand

All photographs by Charles Schorre

CHARLES SCHORRE: ARTISTS' HANDBOOK

A fifteen-year project goes on, as do all the artist's other works, proving that nice guys don't finish at all.

By Dave Crossley

Charles Schorre's resumé has near the beginning the words "Considers himself reclusive . . . lives and works in Houston, Texas." Is he saying that he's reclusive because he lives and works there? Or that he lives and works there because he's reclusive? Or, if asked, would he say, as he so often does, "I don't know, I never thought about that before."

Schorre defines himself as a painter and insists he is not a very good photographer. He also insists that he's a hermit, that he's old (he's 60), that he's still a child, and that he really doesn't know what he's doing until he's done it. He uses photography extensively in his paintings, affixing his photographs to the surface of the work where it seems they were always meant to be. The process he uses requires some serendipity: paintings are painted and photographs are photographed and later, while looking at a painting he'll remember a photograph that is stored away somewhere in his studio (which should be a national treasure and open to the public) and soon he's leaning over the work carefully positioning the print, which now looks, miraculously, as though it had been made precisely to fit in that place on that painting.

Schorre calls his manner of working intuitive. He goes into the studio each day without a plan and begins to paint and to scabble around and observe as things begin to come together. He always has five or six projects going on at the same time. When one fails of solution he moves to another "station" in the studio. He loves scratches and marks, fossils and shapes, and he notes them everywhere, then gives himself over to his memory while he works.

One of his memories is of time he spent as a designer in advertising. He did a lot of photography then and learned how to make work that was simple and communicated fast. That experience has left him with a love of printing and publishing. In conjunction with his painting, he has steadily worked

on two series since 1969: *Artists' Handbook* (selections of which are published here) and *Pages from Books Unpublished*, some of which have used pictures from the handbook. He is now working with Houston designer Jerry Herring to publish the *Artists' Handbook*.

What follows is his side of a conversation about the *Artists' Handbook*:

"I started out photographing people who use their hands to make their livelihood and then I focused just on artists and then I returned to everyman, realizing that there were a lot of people I wanted to photograph who didn't call themselves artists. Basically, *Artists' Handbook* is a silent, visual answer to the question, How do you do it? It started out as a polemic against how to paint or how to photograph or how to do anything books. I never taught technique or anything like that because if you came to me to learn how to do it and in a year you learned, it would take you ten years to forget about it. All that time you're standing in the wing waiting to come on stage and by the time you come on you're all dried up, gone. I'm against all how to do it. You have to learn, but as soon as that's over, you have to forget it.

"Once I was asked by a publisher to do a how to paint book, and the more I got into it I realized I didn't believe what I was attempting to do; it was a sacrilegious brainwash. That's when I realized that my how to book, the *Artists' Handbook* would have no words except their signatures and their birthdates and maybe a foreword or afterword.

"Another realization came to me with the *Pages from Books Unpublished* series. I like to make books but at that time — fifteen years ago — there seemed to be no publishers in this part of the country. I was frustrated and the answer to this frustration became a series of unpublished spreads that are now a big part of my art. The

spread is the art. The pages inform my paintings and the paintings inform the pages.

"The first *Artists' Handbook* photographs were part of the first *Pages*. The first complete hand thing had two 8x10 images, one of Aaron Siskind and one of Georgi Kepes, and about 60 face/palm pictures that were contact prints with written notations to me about their future use. It was a sort of notebook of process, to myself.

"I have pictures of approximately 50-60 painters and sculptors, 10 writers, 12 graphic designers, 20 photographers. Over 100 in all. It's getting to be a problem because I'm trying to get model releases from everybody now and some people aren't cooperating and some are dead and their estates aren't cooperating. A guy like Robert Motherwell, whom I didn't get one from at the time, is now so cloistered and surrounded by people that I can't get to him. He's seen the little booklet I've printed and he likes it but he lost it, and then when I sent a model release people were afraid to get him to sign it. I just can't get to him. I don't know his phone number, it's unlisted. After a day and a half of trying I realized I had to start painting. I was tired of this stuff. When it becomes a hassle I stop.

"I like to boil things down to their essential elements, like the silhouette of a hand. What I need is the man or woman's face and their hands. That's all I want. I first ask them to do a certain thing: hold your hands up by your ears, palms facing me. I shoot that and then I say 'Do you want to vary that in any way?' and sometimes when they get into these variations it's very interesting.

"Usually, I use the controlled picture, but if a variation is so important I use it in juxtaposition with the control, and sometimes eliminate the control entirely. When I shot Barbara Rose, for her variation she chose almost a judo stance, and I like it better than the control, because that's almost the

way she was when she was here at the Museum of Fine Arts.

"I don't worry about the background. I've stripped it down and if the background interferes, that's a problem. I want to get a sort of a straight mug shot, police lineup thing. It's just a common photograph, so the only thing of real interest there intellectually or artistically would be this face and these hands. I'm not really interested in the connection with the background, but when it happens, as in the Witkin picture, that is very interesting.

"These photographs are anti-design. I like to design, so I decided to boil these things down and not have any design, boil it down to what I want. I don't want that guy to comb his hair. I don't want that girl to put her dress on in a certain way. I'm not going to just shoot her in her bedroom. I want it to just happen to be.

"On the surface, the thing I'm asking people to do for these pictures is silly. Some sophisticated people don't care to do it. There was one German photographer who first rejected the idea, then begged me to shoot him after he realized that I had photographed several of his gods. I shot him to make him feel good, but I shot him out of focus, which is not at all hard for me to do, but I did that on purpose.

"When you ask some people it's almost as if you said 'Take your clothes off for a minute.' People like Jim Dine and Lee Friedlander — who are friends and both rejected me at different times although they didn't know it. Lee spent about three hours coming over here and visiting and talking and finally I said 'You're here to tell me you don't want to do it, aren't you?' and he said yeah. It's odd, because he's a sort of invader of privacy too. I had a violent argument with Garry Winogrand, but he finally wanted me to do it. I said it didn't matter to me, and as soon as I said that, it was his turn, and he agreed. It's like a bull fight



Laura Gilpin



Andre Kertész

sometimes.

"Sometimes they backfire. I was at a conference and ran into former Governor Jerry Brown of California and I showed him my little booklet and asked if he would let me photograph him in that manner. Well, all that time I should have known he wasn't listening, he was looking over my shoulder. But he said 'Yeah, I'll do it, but we have to hurry, we have to hurry, where do you want me?' I said 'Just stand there and put your hands up by your ears' and he said 'I'm not going to do that' so I said 'Well, forget it, that's okay, go about your business.' He's like the German: if he finally caught on to what I was doing, he might be interested in it, but I don't have time to fool around. I have to do it fast, I have to explain fast what I'm doing.

"I approached William Wegman the night of his opening at Texas Gallery in Houston and he asked me 'What are you doing this for? How did you start?' I told him and I thought he was listening but he wasn't. The next morning when I came to shoot him he asked the same questions that he asked me the night before. It's not very hard to catch on to. I'm not going to dress the dog up and have him eat cake or anything. But a lot of people have such a hard time getting into it it's pitiful. Some people get it fast. Some people think it's a riot. Some people are just suspicious.

"Sometimes I scare the hell out of them. I dominate them and scare them off. I can identify the ego immediately. As soon as I explain the thing, that's one of the things that comes out. The ego is identified fast. It's revealed. If it's someone who's on stage all the time, someone who thinks he's the greatest artist, it comes out real fast. That might be why some of them are really embarrassed; the greatest artist in his own mind might have a hard time doing this humbling thing. It's not a normal position to put your hands in.

"The hands are very important. Robert Motherwell, when he walked out of the room after I shot his photograph, mumbled something and I said 'What did you say?' and he said 'My hands are so small.' I said 'What difference does that make?' And he said, 'They're so small, for what I do.' Things like that are really interesting.

"Sometimes the hands play almost as big a part as the face. It's a real identification tag, and I haven't even thought about what a palmist might say.

"Sometimes I'll go to hear someone speak and not take my camera because I don't shoot photographs at night, so I'm hampered by my

manner, my technique. When it becomes any kind of a hassle, I don't do it. I do it mostly with grace when people come by the studio. I can just say, 'Let's go outside and shoot your photograph.'

"Once when I had a show in New York, I walked out of the gallery just to get away for a moment and I saw a policeman there with white gloves on. I asked him to do it, but to leave his gloves on and he held his hands a little away from his head and I backed him up against the building right next to Parke Bernet. I didn't realize how intense I was being and I was back by the garbage can and people were walking around us because they thought I was holding him up with a camera gun of some sort. It was weird, and I didn't know it until after it was over.

"They actually stood around kind of watching, waiting for something to go off. No one touched me. A guy told me he couldn't figure out how I was holding this cop up with a camera.

"It's such an antithesis of the way I go about things. I work in an intuitive manner as an artist, and then when I'm working on this series as a photographer, I ask them to do this particular thing, the same thing of everyone, and so that's a control thing, which leaves me on a kind of a see-saw.

"I don't want to get too far into photography because I'm really not a photographer. But I always heralded photography as art before people in this town even saw the *Family of Man* show.

"There's lots of things I've tried to do for photography and I still do. But now it's a contagious disease, it's almost gotten out of hand. But I still use it in my work and it informs my paintings.

"It's a way of notetaking that I consider very valuable.

"It's fun to do it when I feel like it. I'm not stalking people, so I miss a lot of people I really want and perhaps will never see again, but I'm not in the mood that day or I'm without a camera or film. Since I'm a painter, I fail to realize that being ready is part of it. It can be joyful, meeting people for only a few seconds that I would not otherwise meet, since I'm not a very social person. I have a good time when I go to a party, but it's hard for me to get there. This project is an excuse for me to say hello to someone for an intense minute. It's amazing what people say and do in these moments.

"It appears to be foolish but I don't look upon this endeavor as foolish. I sometimes feel it is the essence of the person I photograph and this always gives me a feeling of deep respect for the human being and what he or she is doing. It's an intense experience and one that I appreciate very much. I'll probably do it as long as I live."



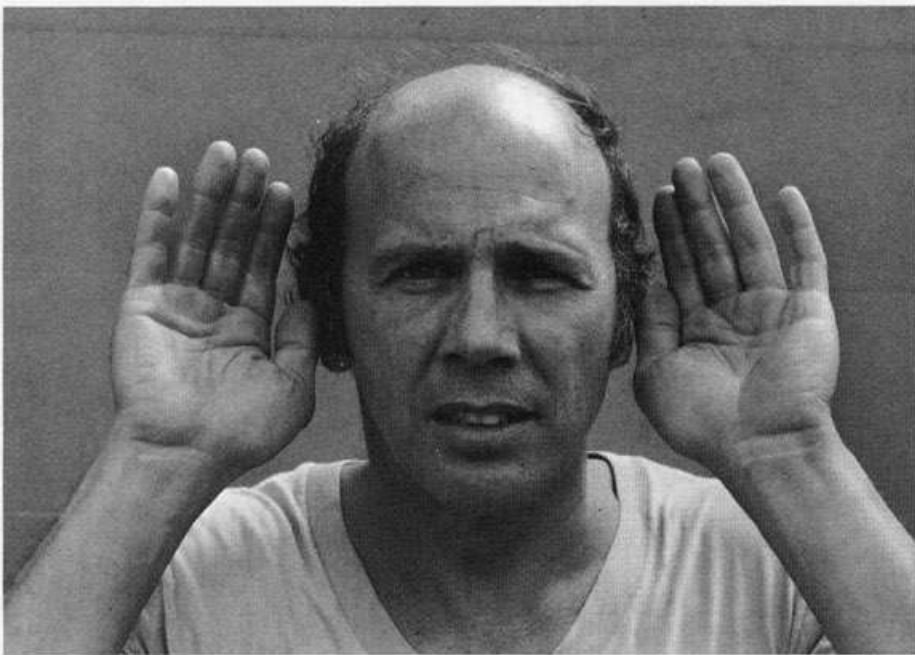
Aaron Siskind



Ray Metzker

Anne Noggle

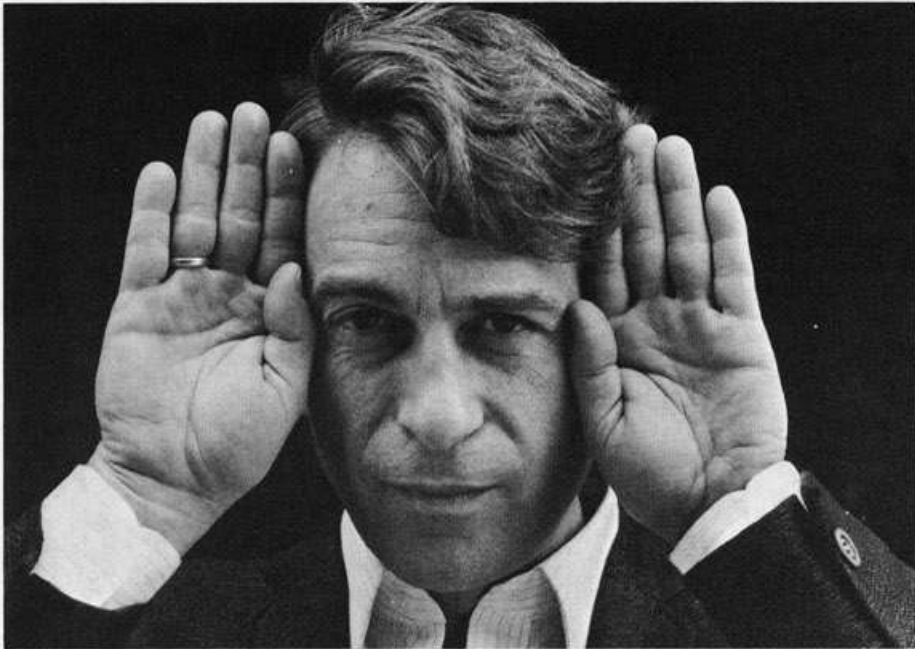




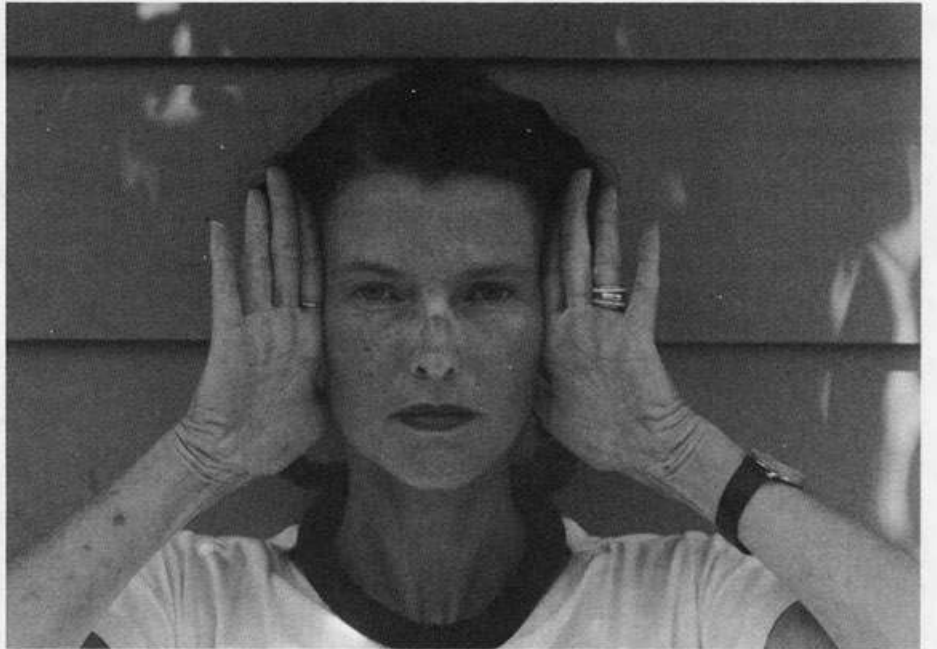
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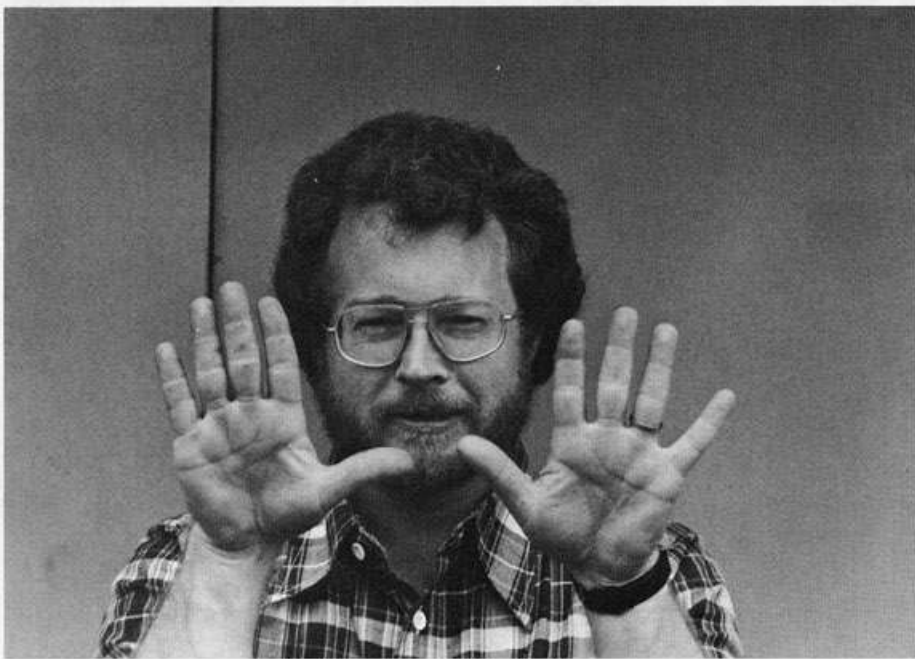
Robert Mapplethorpe



William Wegman



Judy Coleman



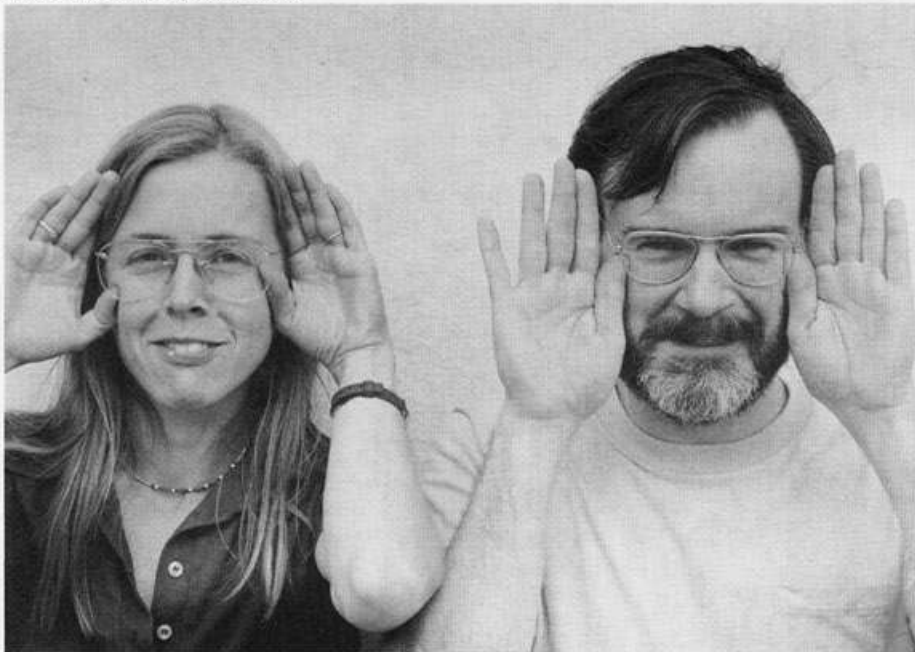
Geoff Winningham

MANUAL (Ed Hill & Suzanne Bloom)



Betty Hahn

Joel Peter Witkin





Installation view of The Samore Gallery at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. © 1981 Joe Schopplein.

THE SAMORE GALLERY TEN YEARS LATER

After ten, or eleven, years of relentless subversion of the art world, the director of the Samore Gallery comes clean.

By Sam Samore

In the recent history of art, only a small number of artists' spaces can claim to have survived for over a decade. The Samore Gallery is one of those few, having been established in February of 1974. However, 1985 marks the official ten-year anniversary of the Samore Gallery's grand opening on May 5, 1975, in San Francisco.

Several intentions were announced in early press releases, but one of the most important functions of the Gallery was to serve as a (store)front for my "guerrilla art" activities, for

which the imprimatur of the gallery structure confers legitimacy and lays down a smokescreen. The Samore Gallery has lived up to all of its promises, generating and supporting an enormous amount of work. As founder and co-director of the Samore Gallery I will detail some of its important undertakings.

A basic philosophy of the Samore Gallery has always been subversion, sabotage, and upheaval.

In this regard, one of its most significant achievements was a performance/installation piece entitled, *Oakland Museum Independence Day*. On July 4, 1974, I walked into the

Oakland Museum dressed as a preparator and, without notifying the museum of my intentions, removed two photographs, by Minor White and Edward Weston, from the photography permanent collection corridor, and placed them in the painting and sculpture permanent collection galleries.

The Oakland Museum had established separate viewing spaces for "art" and "photography." The performance/installation *Oakland Museum Independence Day* attempted to tamper with this division, which the museum still maintains.

A letter explaining the Samore Gallery's actions was posted next to the Minor White photograph, which was placed between paintings by Barnett Newman and Frank Stella. There is no photographic documentation of this event, only a drawing which I drafted on the spot. Unlike most performance, conceptual, and earth works, where photographic documentation is a major, often the sole, representation of the work, the Samore Gallery has always chosen to use painting, sculpture, and drawing. Since photographs purportedly tell the "truth," (accurately conveying the look of a performance event, thereby consecrating it for all time as having been done, having a "really real" existence) the Samore Gallery's insistence on drawing to "document" an event situates the work on the level of rumor. The Oakland performance's existence was not predicated on "reality" but on the establishment of myth.

Oakland Museum Independence Day mirrored the curatorial selection process, commenting on the imposition of taste (Why Minor White and Edward Weston? Why next to Barnett Newman and Stella?) and under-

mined the arbitrary hierarchical order of art history itself.

On one level, the action symbolized and parodied photography's desire to rest in the "judgment seat" of art. On another level, the Samore Gallery, by stealing the White and Weston photographs into the painting and sculpture galleries, appropriated all of photography into the discourse of "Art," thereby setting up the conditions by which the post-modern incursion of photography into the "artworld" would take place.

Throughout the spring and fall of 1974, the Gallery established an ambitious "parasite" exhibition schedule which included shows at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Art Institute of Chicago; and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, among others.

The Samore Gallery sent announcements advertising its shows, which were hidden throughout each of these institutions. The title of each "fake" exhibition started with *Behind Painting and Sculpture . . .* at the Museum of Modern Art or the Art Institute of Chicago or wherever. The Gallery's activity was to place photographs behind the works on display, thereby challenging the museum's ability to cannibalize all "avant garde" art. As uninvited guests, the photographs I installed acted outside the parameters of the museum's discourse, immune to its curatorial tastemaking.

Of course, placing photographs behind the paintings and sculptures was a gesture signifying photography's second-place status as an art form. The idea was not to break into the "art club" but to set forth how photographic post-modernist prac-

Sam Samore, from *The Sky is Falling*, 1976, San Francisco. © Judy Dater.



tice has surrounded the museum (the "fort of modernism").

The Samore Gallery's first co-sponsored exhibition of static works, titled *Xerox Prints*, took place in September, 1974, at the Art Co-op, an artists' space located in Berkeley, California. I hung on the walls Xerox prints of all the 100 pictures in John Szarkowski's book *Looking at Photographs*, published that year by the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

A week after the opening, the gallery director informed me that a friend of Lee Friedlander, whose photograph is included in the Szarkowski book, had threatened to have Mr. Friedlander sue the gallery for copyright violation. All the Xerox prints were removed and replaced for the duration of the exhibition by this note: "To avoid possible legal complications the series of Xerox prints shown has been replaced."

The Samore Gallery had successfully raised the issue of reproductions and originals by appropriating the whole of modernist photography (Szarkowski is the high priest of modernist photography and *Looking at Photographs* serves as the apotheosis of his theories), and sealed in the post-modernist era.

While the idea of appropriation is now quite fashionable, the Samore Gallery's goal was not to make a career out of such activity, unlike Sherrie Levine, who continues to purloin others' work. (It is of historical note that Ms. Levine was teaching at the University of California, Berkeley, in the fall of 1974 and perhaps viewed the exhibition during the first week it was up.)

It was not until sometime around 1979 that she began her process of rephotographing Weston (the Neil torso that she has used is in *Looking at Photographs*), Evans, Porter, and others.

The Samore Gallery's next piece, titled *Original/Reproduction*, demonstrated in another way how art history's codes of signification can be deconstructed. On January 31, 1975, at the San Francisco Art Institute, a group of women in the Bay Area presented a slide lecture called *Northern California Women Artists*. Any woman living in Northern California would be included in the slide presentation if she submitted slides and registration fee. I entered original 35mm slides of Berkeley street scenes as reproductions of acrylic paintings, under the pseudonym Janine Boudreau. Using my own checkbook I enclosed a check for \$3, attaching a letter stating that Ms. Boudreau was out of town and had asked me to submit

her slides for the lecture.

Janine Boudreau's slides were included as the last images of the lecture, but while the narrator described the works as 3-foot by 5-foot acrylic paintings on canvas, the audience became extremely agitated and disbelieving. The lecturer herself expressed doubts about the pictures — she couldn't believe they were paintings either.

Immediately after the hall lights were turned on, I rushed up to the narrator and informed her that she had just ruined the career of Janine Boudreau by casting aspersions on her paintings' validity and meaning. I explained that Ms. Boudreau was going to have an exhibition at San Francisco's Hansen-Fuller Gallery (one of the uptown blue chip galleries) within the next few months and demanded that she publicly apologize.

While the audience was still leaving the auditorium, the lecturer quickly grabbed the microphone and informed everyone of her mistake. She compounded the illusion by stating that she had just spoken with Janine

Boudreau, who had confirmed that the slides were in fact of paintings, and broadcast news of her upcoming Hansen-Fuller exhibition.

Sometime afterward, a friend and I talked about the slide registry show. I mentioned that of the some 100 artists screened, only about three or four were photographers. The person I was talking with was one of them. She agreed with my observation, then added, "I thought those paintings of Janine Boudreau's were incredible!" I nodded my head in agreement.

So the camouflaging was complete. By utilizing a legitimate slide lecture, combined with the implication of a Hansen-Fuller Gallery exhibition, I was able to launch the career of a new artist and suspend disbelief in the audience's mind about what constitutes a painting and what a photograph.

For the San Francisco Art Institute audience, the reproductions of Janine Boudreau's paintings would function as stand-ins. They would never have to see the originals. Art history was

dismantled — paintings, photographs, sculpture could now exist unanchored to their "objectness." I had entered these "paintings" into Malraux's "Museum without Walls."

In *Original/Reproduction*, the Samore Gallery had pointed to Walter Benjamin's essay, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, annihilating once and for all the need for the work of art to have an "aura," while structuring in a new way the discourse about originals, reproductions, authenticity, and self-referentiality.

An early press release stated that "The Samore Gallery's . . . official exhibits will reside solely in the form of mailed announcements. Any remaining announcements will be collected by the gallery and sold to interested individuals." This documentation has been mailed since 1974 to a list of "100 Artworld Notables." Becoming an Artworld Notable means joining the Samore/Doesmore Foundation by donating \$5. For this financial support, each person receives a "Cult of the Whammy" me-

dallion (Whammy is my middle name) and a Lifetime-Deathtime Membership Card with all the rights and privileges thereof. There are over 200 individuals who belong to the "100 Artworld Notables" mailing list.

The Samore Gallery hosted its first official showing of mailed announcements in May of 1975, highlighting a piece by San Francisco artist A.W. Bannowsky. Since 1975, the Samore Gallery, instead of attacking from outside the system as a "sniper," has been a sugar-coated placebo, burying itself as a "mole".

Of the numerous proposals for installations I have devised for museum/gallery walls, few have been realized. In 1975, I outlined to Henry Hopkins, Director of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), a piece entitled *Contemporary Photograph* — an 8-foot by 10-foot Magic Marker drawing to be executed directly on the wall. A year earlier, I had proposed an installation entitled *Myopia*, which could only be viewed legitimately by near-sighted people. After removing their glasses

BARNETT
NEWMAN



MINOR
WHITE

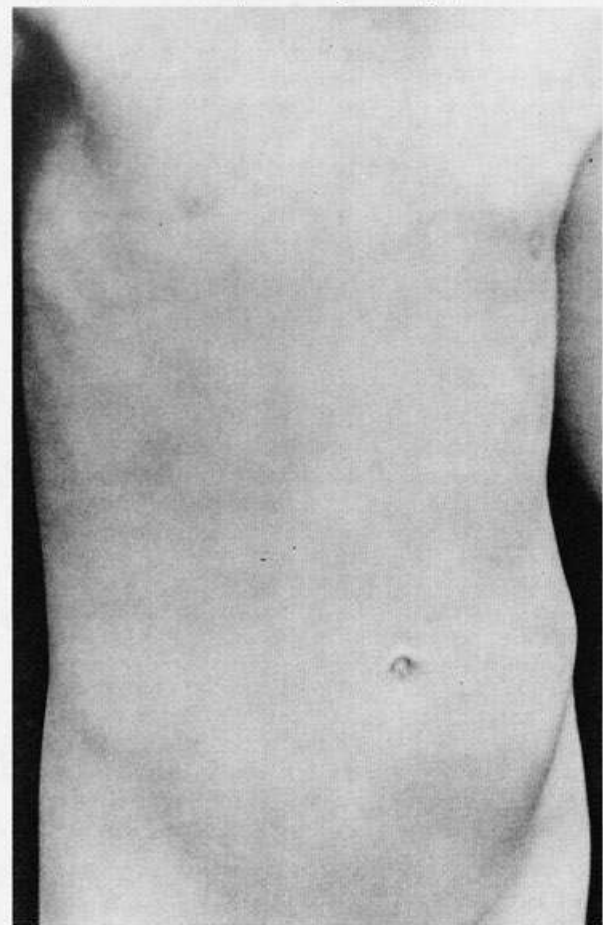
FRANK
STELLA

100

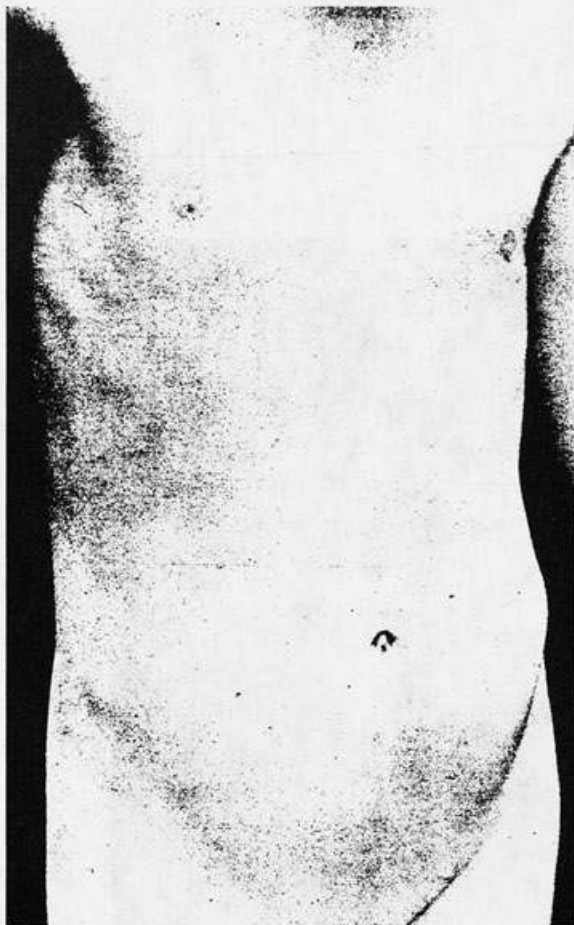
"Oakland Museum Independence Day" July 4, 1974

Documentation of installation Oakland Museum Independence Day, July 4, 1974.

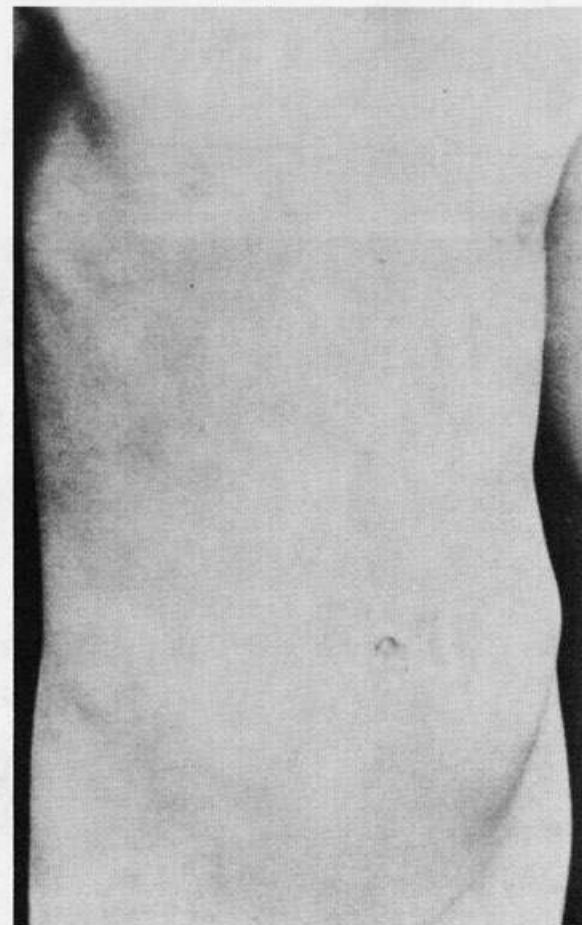
"Nude" by Edward Weston, from *Looking at Photographs*.



From *Xerox Prints*, ©1974 Sam Samore.



After Edward Weston by Sherry Levine.





Print from original 35mm slide for Original/Reproduction ©1975 Sam Samore. Entered in San Francisco Art Institute slide show under name Janine Boudreau.

or contact lenses, individuals would enter a space containing artwork, but would have to stay behind a white line painted on the floor exactly three feet from the wall. The perceptions of the artworks by far-sighted people, those with normal vision, and all others would not be considered valid. In 1974 I mapped out a proposal called *The Sky is Falling*, which entailed printing three million photographs of the sky and dropping these images into the city of San Francisco.

In 1974 and again in 1979, an exhibition called *Nameplate* was proposed to the Oakland Museum and the University Art Museum in Berkeley. After being turned down

by both institutions, I installed the work myself. In *Nameplate*, I duplicated each museum's framing device for listing the artists and their work on display. For example, next to a water fountain installed in an open foyer which led directly into the UAM-Berkeley's permanent collection galleries, I placed a label with the following information:

Sam Samore
b. 1953 American
'Water fountain'
metal, plastic, motors, water
Lent by the Artist
1976-03304

Since the museum eventually recuperates all incursions by the "avant garde" into its domain, why not start from the inside and include the objects (exit signs, water fountains, plants, electrical outlets, air vents and so on) that help make the museum a comfortable and efficient "fort for art?" The wall labels I constructed for the Oakland Museum's sculpture garden remained there for years, reinforcing the notion that aesthetic and cultural confusion can and should be the norm.

These humble gestures were but a coda to Duchamp's readymades and carried his idea full circle. Duchamp took the functional object and made it aesthetic.³ I took the aesthetic ob-

ject (anything in a museum is by definition aestheticized) and made it functional.⁴

More recent installations include *The Samore Gallery* at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1981 and *The Samore Gallery* at the University Art Museum, Albuquerque in 1982.

The installation at SF-MOMA combined the Samore Gallery's new approaches with a mini-retrospective of past activities. The major thrust of the installation was the deconstruction and subversion of our consumer society, particularly involving tourism. After many Tex-Mex border town excursions, I had collected a plethora of tourist items which had roots in ritual and play activities of Mexican culture, but now had become "non-symbolic" prettified things for the (typically) American tourist. I installed many of these objects on the back wall of the gallery with adjoining still-life photographs "selling" the objects in the most seductive fashion.

The photographs are evidence of the dissemination of mass culture throughout the world. It is the triumph of advertising. Traditional and modern cultures alike may be losing their identities to industrialization because it has threatened us with, as Claude Levi-Strauss has said, "The prospect of our being only consumers able to consume anything from any point in the world and from every culture . . ." Levi-Strauss contends that this loss of "all originality" will limit the earth to one culture.⁵

In other words, our "consumer society" has created a population of passive citizens incapable of meaningful action. Jacques Ellul has pointed out that the modern individual has become a spectator: "Everything is supplied to him as a spectacle, including the things he believes he is most deeply contributing to or participating in."⁶

Continuing with the description of the installation, I had a commercial artist paint the phrases, "Consumed Society" and "Desirable Things" on the walls, echoing a billboard-like text and message. Bright bands of red, orange, and pink strips of paper were festooned along the concave ceiling walls, emphasizing the carnival atmosphere.

On a table in the middle of the room were artist's books from Doesmore Press, such as *The Invasion from Mars Chronicles* (1973) and *My Homage to That Weirdo Diane Arbus* (1974) and "Black Books" (1976) describing proposed and completed projects in painting, sculpture, and performance.

The books were attached to the table by very heavy chains, mimicking the paranoid security measures museums employ to protect works of art from damage and theft.

Ideally, the weight of the chains would make it difficult if not impossible to lift the book.

There was a locked door with the word 'OPEN,' beckoning the viewer to enter another room, which would always remain inaccessible. Finally, on the two walls opposite the wall where I arranged the tourist objects were basic texts presenting Samore Gallery activities such as the proposals for *Myopia* and *Contemporary Photograph*.

At the University Art Museum, Albuquerque, I created an installation revolving around the idea of the "Day of the Dead," contrasting the American fear of death with the joyful Mexican celebration on November 2 each year. In "La Dia de Los Muertos" skeletons populate the countryside and children eat candy skulls. Graveyards are filled with flowers and food for the buried dead. The roots of this festival are Indian, but it has been tampered with by the Spanish.

On the back wall of the room, I installed ten rows of "violent tools" — saws, screwdrivers, hammers — hiding their functional meaning, painting them over with silver, revealing their symbolic force.

The ceiling or upper walls of the room were surrounded by the very same tourist items I had used at SF-MOMA. Below, still life photographs depicted the confrontation between Mexican and American concepts about death. In the middle of the floor rested a coffin containing a skeleton.

Rather than placing it on a pedestal, I created the potential for the viewer to stumble into the coffin.

Besides static and performance works, the Samore Gallery under the auspices of Doesmore Productions has produced a considerable number of videotapes. *On Fame*, completed in 1979, is a half hour "new documentary" featuring five artists (Richard Misrach, Judy Dater, Steve Fitch, Jack Fulton, and Susan Felter), each on a different step of the "ladder to success," which explores how they grapple with the pursuit and problems of fame.

The late Thomas Albright, critic for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, commented that the whole idea of a videotape about fame was folly. "If 200 people on Market Street [in San Francisco] were asked to name the artists featured in *On Fame*, none would have ever heard of them or ever will," he said.

So in 1979 I hired Judy Dater to poll 200 people on Market Street. She used a list of ten names which included all of the people from *On Fame* as well as Ansel Adams, Judy Chicago, Imogen Cunningham, Pablo Picasso, and Georgia O'Keeffe. The resulting videotape called *Who's Famous?* highlights the best of the interviews and proved Mr. Albright's thesis. The best-known artist turned out to be Picasso, followed by Adams, O'Keeffe, Cunningham, and Chicago. No one had ever heard of any of the five artists featured in *On Fame*.

Recently completed videotapes include "Funk Lessons," a deconstruction of Funk Dancing and Culture through a "Funk Lessons" performance taught at the UC Berkeley campus by Adrian Piper; and *What's a Matter Jay, You Jealous?*, a tightly edited collage of scenes from such soap operas as *All My Children* and *General Hospital*.

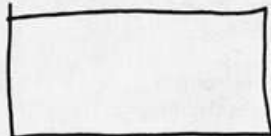
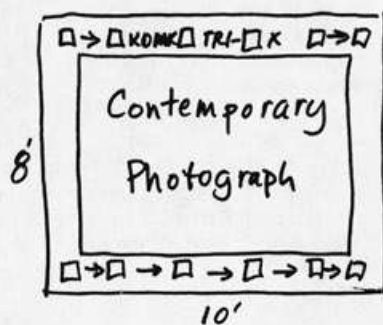
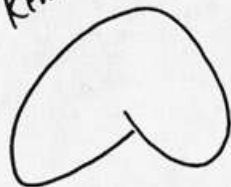
The 1980s promise to be a most exciting decade for the Samore Gallery. There are future activities too numerous to mention in any detail. However, here is a sampling: (1) Continuation of the collaboration performance, *Space: The Frontier Gallery* (with Aron Ranen, Mike Mages, and Ginny Lloyd); this summer the Art in Space Center will hold an open invitational rocket launch celebration; any artist wishing to launch a rocket of his or her own design is invited to participate) and (2) continuation of the videotape soap opera *As the Artworld Turns*, (each week a new episode explores the steamy, dicy life of glamorous art-world intrigue).

I have outlined a brief survey of the Samore Gallery activities, highlighting only a few of the major undertakings. Doesmore Press will soon publish a more comprehensive listing entitled *Samore Gallery: The Restless Decade 1974-1984*.

Notes

1. Christopher Phillips "The Judgment Seat of Photography" October 22, Fall 1982, pp. 27-61.
2. Lew Thomas, "What was/is NFS Press" *Exposure* 23.1, Spring 1985, p. 33.
3. Hans Richter, *Dada: Art and Anti-Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., Publishers, 1965), p. 89.
4. In a letter I wrote to Gregory Battcock, January 1975.
5. Claude Levi-Strauss, *Myth and Meaning* (New York: Schocken Books, 1979), p. 20.
6. Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society* (New York: The Continuum Publishing Corp., 1980), p. 8.

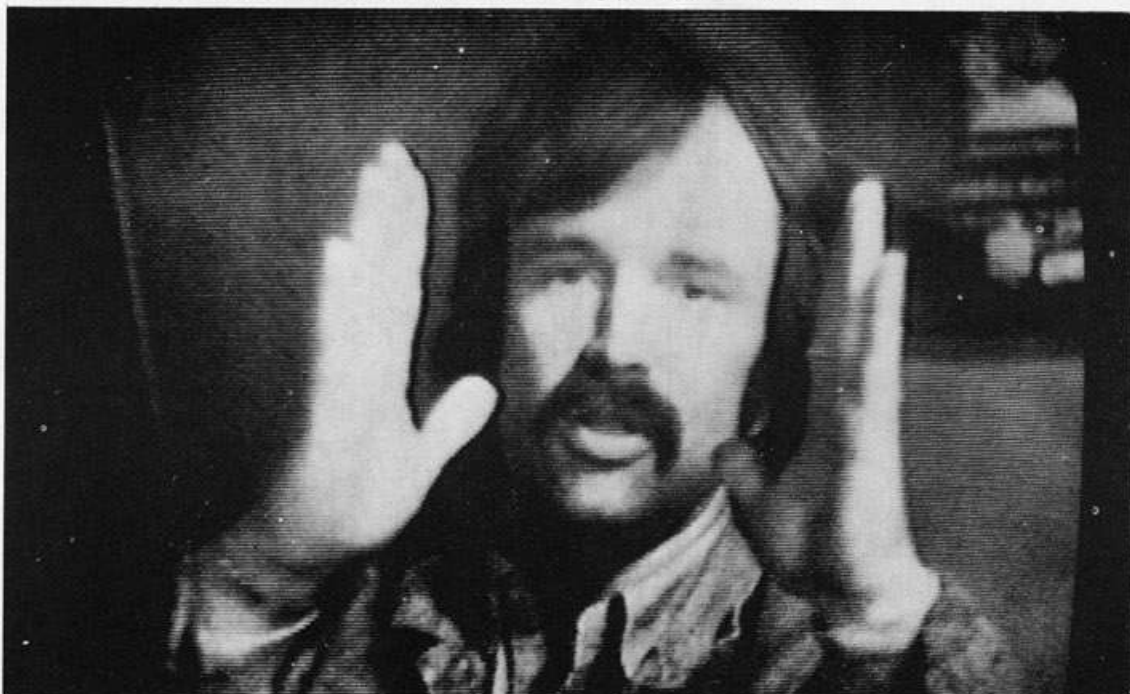
Kenneth Noland



Jules Olitski

Proposal for Contemporary Photograph. ©1975 Sam Samore.

Jack Fulton from videotape *On Fame: Conversations with Some Photographers* ©Doesmore Productions.



HCP MEMBERS: DIVERSITY

Expose: Fourth Annual Members' Exhibition. Houston Center for Photography, April 4-May 12. Portfolios by Gay Block, Peter Brown, Doe Doherty, Jim Elmore, Gary Faye, Annette Fournet, Paula Goldman, Paul Hester, Sam McColloch, Pam Pitt, David Portz, Charles Schorre, and Barry Sturrock. Miscellaneous prints by Fred Baldwin, Jim Caldwell, Keith Carter, David Crossley, Paula Fridkin, Sally Gall, Philip Holland, Ron Jones, Robert King, Margaret Moore, Wayne Narr, and Wendy Watriss.



Reunion I, by Peter Brown

By Lynn Foster

When close to one hundred photographers of widely different levels of accomplishment get together with portfolios of their work, then vote on which groups of pictures should be included in an exhibition, we can expect some inconsistency, and, of course, the absence of any central theme. But the HCP's Fourth Annual Members' Exhibition is perhaps the most successful one to date (after a great deal of moaning and groaning over last year's because of the very small number of entries).

There is a tremendous diversity in the current show. We find the work of established artists hanging along with those still attempting to express themselves clearly. There's a mixture of 35mm and large format, color and black and white, hand colored photographs and collages, and various multiple images. There is also a variety of subject matter: portraits, landscapes, documentary, and still lifes. I think anyone viewing the show — and certainly the artists who participated — could learn a lot from this exhibit.

Peter Brown has taken the snapshot to a sophisticated level. His images seem very personal; Brown is showing us his family album.

Looking at the pictures, I feel like a voyeur allowed into his world: I'm in Jill's bedroom where she's taking a nap; I watch a stranger getting his hair cut; I'm in the middle of a family reunion. I feel the intruder, a little uncomfortable, but I can't resist looking around before someone asks me to leave. Brown's use of light, shadow, and color along with his willingness to share his personal involvement with us make the images strongly engaging.

David Portz's series *Fresh Fish: The Houston School* pretends to be an amusing commentary on the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston's recent show, *Fresh Paint: The Houston School*, which has provoked much discussion about the whole question of the existence of a Houston "school." Portz has used brightly painted fish placed in various ridiculous environments (trees, cars, mailboxes) coupled with titles such as "Narcissistic Intercoastal Pike," "Pollockfish," and "Rothko Grouper." My fear is that *Fresh Fish* might suffer the same fate as any other good joke: a week later you

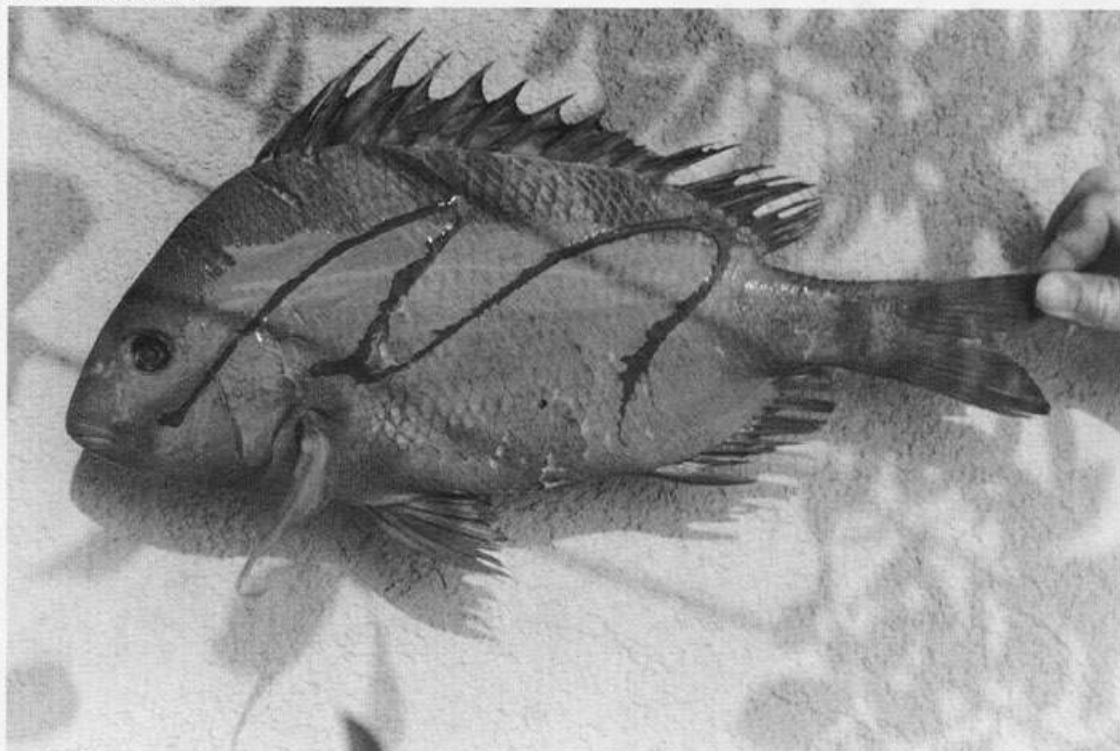
can't remember the punchline. But it's Portz's first portfolio exhibition, and it's clear that a devious and witty intelligence has entered the arena.

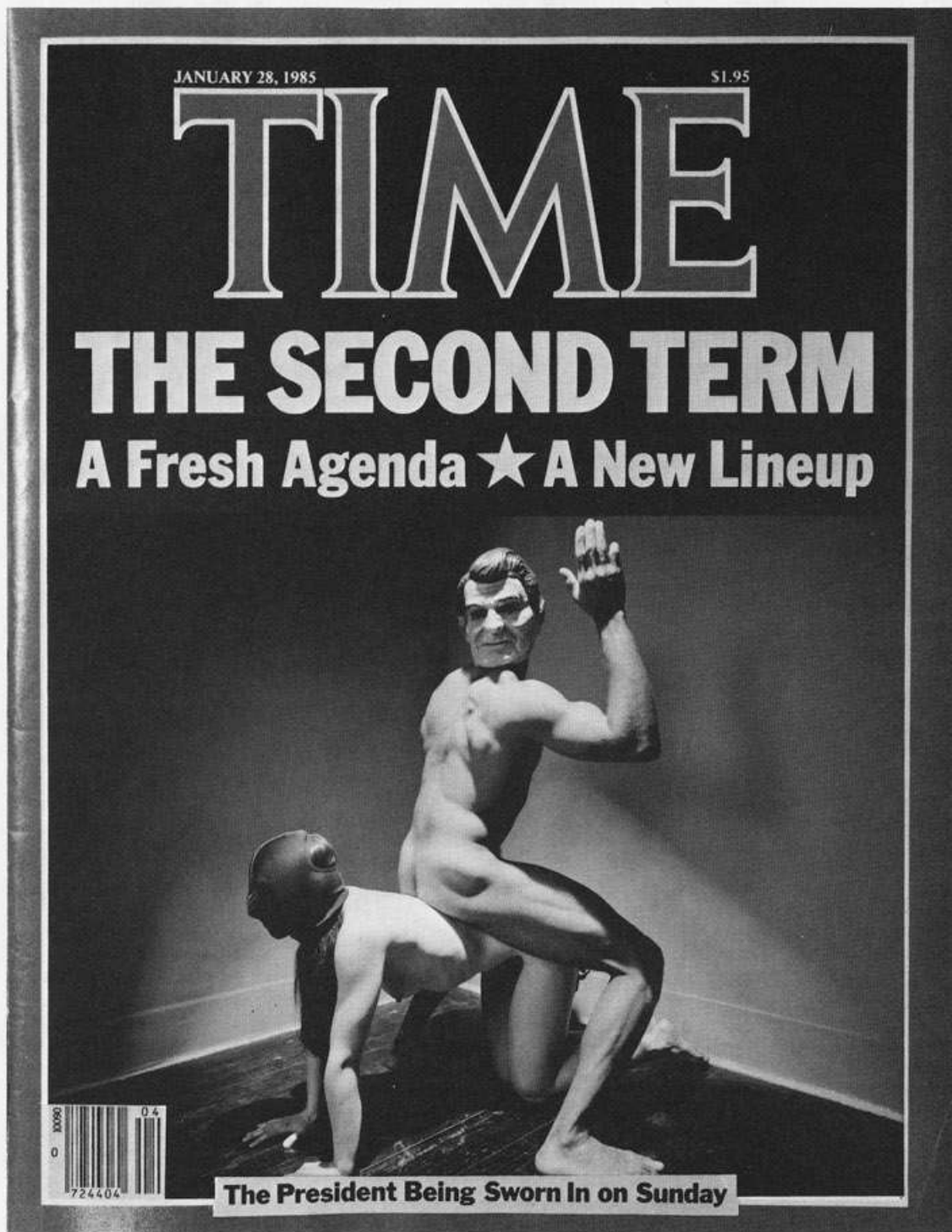
In portraiture, getting the sitters to reveal themselves in a clear and simple manner is the most difficult challenge. Gay Block has collaborated well with her subjects to create a series of clearly seen, large portraits. With but one exception, Block has chosen to photograph older men and women who have been around long enough to have earned their faces. She's framed them so the environment is of minimal interest and

the people all make eye contact with the viewer. Block has found a sensitivity, a vulnerability in these people, particularly the women. Her subjects confront us so strongly, we're hesitant to walk away from their pictures.

Paula Goldman has taken art as her subject, using still lifes by the seventeenth-century Dutch painters as her inspiration. She has constructed very formal still lifes with the traditional elements — fresh fruit, plates, drapery, table surfaces — and introduced common contemporary elements including Twinkies, Spam, Velveeta cheese, white bread, and plastic

Pollock Fish, by David Portz





Cover, Pages of Time, by Paul Hester.

Gay Black



grapes. In one of the photographs, there is a peeled lemon taken directly from Willem Kalf's *Still Life* 1659, but as we look closer we also see part of a Twinkie and its wrapper, a partially eaten orange and banana, and crumbs lying about. The visual games go on in each of the images. We're allowed to see the push pins holding up the drapery, Velveeta cheese in a sort of cornucopia arrangement, a 1950s formica table top showing through. The prints themselves become art about art. Goldman masked off areas of the print, then bleached and toned the rest of the image with sepia and finally soaked the whole print in selenium, which gave a pinkish tone to the sepia areas. As a result, Goldman is also speaking of the technical and material process of photography.

Annette Fournet's hand-colored images reveal deft workmanship. The already romantic black-and-white images of gardens and landscapes around Europe become even more romanticized by the coloring. They somehow make us think of Atget — albeit with hand coloring — but not felt as intensely at the inception. Fournet's work seems to be more about process and craft than anything else.

Jim Elmore showed a portfolio of color photographs from English seaside resorts, a continuation of a series he has been working on for many years. I found myself drawn into the densely populated beach scenes. In one, two young women in the foreground walk diagonally across the frame. They are seen first, but the compelling action is behind them, deeper into the picture. The background appears painted in, so when we come back to the two women, they now seem to be on a stage. In another image of a fairly large crowd, I found myself examining each individual because they are so oblivious to the crowd surrounding them. Slowly we discover a yellow truck, donkeys, a woman stretching, none of which is seen at first, when the pictures seem to be brightly colored mosaics. It's Elmore's handling of

information in the middle and background that makes his work so interesting. Unfortunately, the continuity of the portfolio is broken by the inclusion of photographs of storefronts, which might be interesting because of the curious signs and so forth, but only minimally and only briefly.

Sam McColloch has produced a series of black-and-white diptychs, images of the Houston skyline juxtaposed with megaliths from Callanish, Scotland. McColloch is exploring the continuity of the need to create monumental structures, the glass curtain structures of the 20th century contrasting against the assembled giant stones from a primitive past. The six diptychs were very similar in their approach so the idea seemed a bit overstated but nonetheless well done.

One recurring aesthetic that always seems to appear in these group shows is about F/64 and the never-ending search for more and sharper detail. Minor White and others attempted to use the large-format techniques to transform banal reality into abstractions. Gary Faye's prints of light on sandstone formations, done with a large-format camera, are in the best F/64 tradition, but I think we need not plow that same field in 1985.

Pam Pitt's infrared photographs of landscapes, old buildings, and trees all seem lost in space and time but still reflect that traditional photographic way of seeing, as do Barry Sturrock's color prints of Mexican door fronts and street scenes. Sturrock's pictures seem so similar to Geoff Winingham's pictures of the same subject, shown not long ago at Harris Gallery, that it's hard to imagine there's no connection.

On my first trip to see the show I asked the person I was with what he thought of Paul Hester's work. "Well, I'm pretty sure he's not a Republican" was the response. Hester continues to make biting social and political comments, this time using collages of his photos and the pages of *Time* magazine covering the Presidential inauguration. The work is constructed around the use of nudes with the

Standing Stones, Callanish, Scotland/Houston, by Sam McColloch.

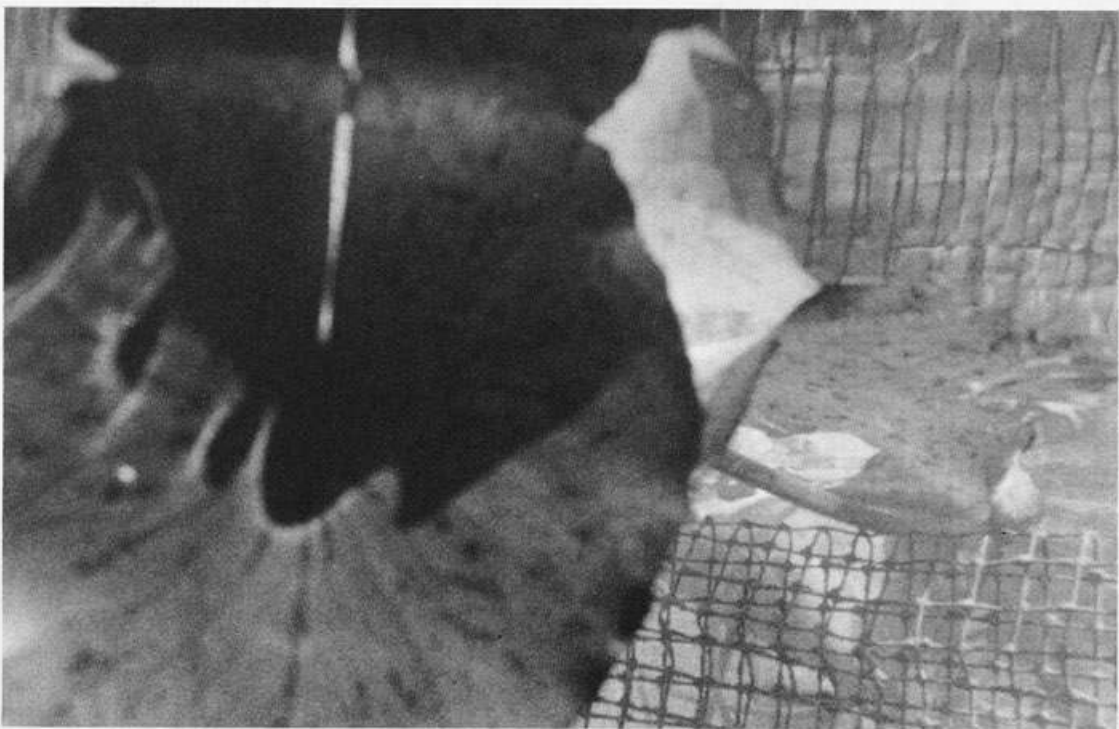


central character in a Ronald Reagan mask. The photographs are then stripped into the magazine pages and rephotographed. We see in one photo the cover of *Time* with the words "The Second Term," "A Fresh Agenda," "A New Lineup," and "The President Being Sworn in on Sunday." The accompanying photograph is of a nude male in a Reagan mask seated on the back of a nude female down on all fours and wearing a black hood. Because the images are rather small in relation to the total print area, the viewer is physically drawn closer to the work, which demands that the "message" be read. Hester's strong and most obvious message is that behind the media hype there's something very wrong in Washington. But what else is he trying to say? Some of the pictures are pretty raw ("Reagan" masturbating) and it seems Hester is simply trying to be offensive. The series comprise a strong personal statement, strongly felt.

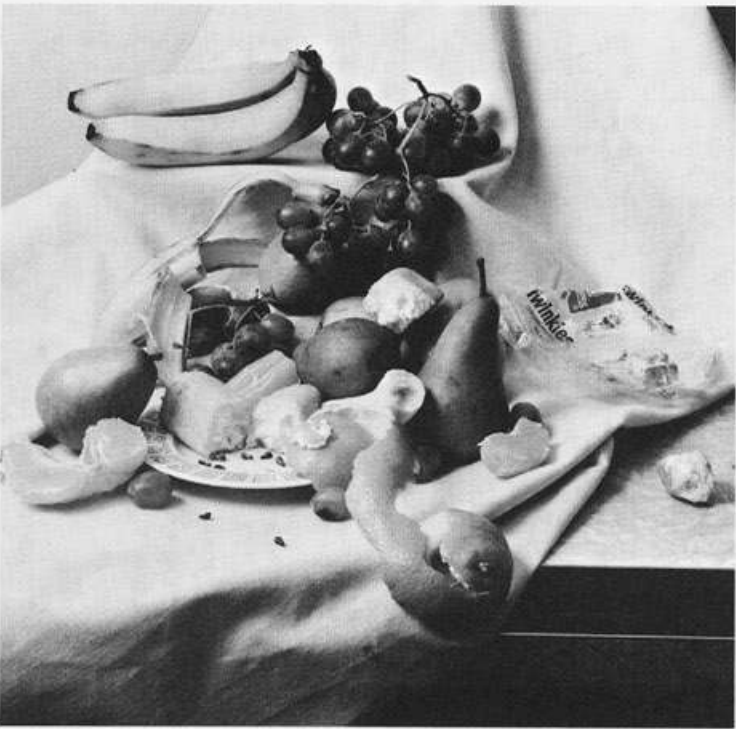
Looking at Doe Doherty's large color prints of plants and objects under water, I felt like I was standing before nineteenth-century impressionist paintings; that same visual stimulus to the retina. The film grain is allowed to show, and the prints are soft and warm, making them see more like lithographs than photographs. Rather than comment on art, as Goldman does, Doherty seems to copy art from another medium, another time. Still, what they are about is photographic seeing.

Many of the great world religions began in the desert, a place for soul searching, for deeper understanding, for mirages and mystery and visions. Charles Schorre has captured all of that in his six collages from a series entitled *Pages from Books Unpublished*. He has mounted photographs and parts of photographs onto paper subtly covered with acrylic washes, symbols, and brush strokes.

There's enough left in all of us from our ancestral days on the savanna, our wandering the canyons of our earliest beginnings, that allow us to identify with Schorre's images. There's still that little genetic memo-



Houston Zoo #2, by Doe Doherty



From the series "Soul Food & Still Life," by Paula Goldman (also see Cover)

ry in us that knows about ant hills and caves and clouds and sky, and magic symbols.

There were several artists who were not represented by complete portfolios, and I think we would have been well served to see more of their work. Wendy Watriss's four images entitled "Interrogation" go far beyond the simple recording of an event. A black youth is being interrogated by a policeman. Watriss has caught the two men in gesture, and light, and shadow, and given us the feeling of tension, fear, and apprehension of this encounter.

David Crossley had four large black-and-white prints of children posing with an enormous Smith & Wesson .357 magnum pistol. Because of the scale of the pistol in relationship to the children a very disturbing psychological circumstance gets set up. I was very uncomfortable looking at a little girl cradling the big pistol as she would a doll. The young boy looking directly at me while holding

the gun disturbed me. What seemed to let me off the hook, however, is the awareness that the photos were staged (although, apparently no instructions were given to the children), and that even though danger is implied, no immediate threat is apparent or intended.

The show was well worth the effort. If it was lacking in any area it would be that the selection seemed a little too safe, perhaps a little easy. But the diversity of work being done, the variety of approaches to the medium, suggest that there is strong and serious photography being done in Houston.

Jim Elmore





People in Fog, by Marie-Paule Nègre

PARIS, PART II

In the last issue of SPOT, we presented reviews and comments about last fall's Le Mois de la Photo in Paris, a month of photography exhibitions. This section concludes those comments.

Leica loves . . . Photographs by Patrick de Mervelec, Raymond Depardon, Robert Doisneau, Harry Gruyaert, Elke Hindemith, Marcel, Lionel and Cyril Isy-Schwartz, William Klein, Guy Le Guerrec, Christian Maury, Marie-Paule Nègre, Gilles Peress, Hans Silvester, Denis Vicherat. Metro Saint-Augustin.

This exhibition won the prize for original location hands down: the platform of a Metro station. The photographs were hung on two zig-zag rows of partitions that ran the length of the platform. The partitions were tastefully done, each photograph was in a handsome wooden frame and had a spotlight. I shuddered to think of what would happen to such an installation on a subway platform in New York. Talk about photography for the people; I sat and watched people climb the steps to the platform and not catch the next train at all, because they became engrossed in the exhibit.

Not a bad surprise for the people getting off the train at Saint-Augustin either.

Each photographer was introduced by a portrait of him or herself holding the Leica of their choice, with biographical text and a description of the Leica equipment

being used — certainly a commercial plug for Leica, but as those things go, not too badly done. Wandering up, down, and around the zig-zagging walls, one was greeted with all kinds of subjects: portraits, landscapes, fashion, and travel photographs among them. Both the color and the black and white work were of top quality; I say this to emphasize that his was not work you would expect to find in the bowels of a subway station, but rather in a gallery or museum.

Included were both well known and lesser known photographers, and the portraits and bits of biographical material made the work that much more accessible to someone stepping off or onto a train. Judging by the "attendance" at this exhibition while I was there, I would say that more people saw this exhibition than any other in the Month of Photography.

Lynn McLanahan

Lucien Clergue: 30 Years of Photographs (1950-1980).

Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. 11 Avenue du Président-Wilson.

Lucien Clergue. So many sand ripples and beautiful nude bodies with goosebumps and great breasts and water rushing all around and dead pelicans and dead cats and four pictures of the sad little Sallimbanque violinist and dead bulls and brave bullfighters and something in color, Fressons badly printed. To walk around this exhibition, the thirty-year retrospective of one of France's most revered photographers, is to sigh. True, I had just seen the astonishing Bruce Davidson retrospective in the same building, so the frivolity of much of Clergue's work was annoying.

Clergue is a sort of God in France, largely due to his efforts over the years to give birth to the photography festival at Arles and then to nurture its growth for so long. Apparently, his photographs sell pretty well, and his services as a teacher of nude photography are sought all over the world. I confess that by the time I saw Clergue's exhibition, I had seen so many nudes in so many places in Paris that upon entering this gallery half-full of freezing wet female bodies, crotches shot from below, I just started to laugh. Instead of trying to determine Clergue's place in the great parade of Atget and Weston and the others, all I could think of was Peter Gowland.

Dave Crossley

30 Years of Publicity Photographs from Japan. Musée de la Publicité, 18 rue de Paradis.

Being a fan of all those coffee table books on Japanese design and advertising, I looked forward to this exhibition. However, I was to be disappointed. The photographs and posters selected for the show were not always of the best quality and were poorly displayed. The work was made either for magazine reproduction or television, and tended to look best in the catalogue.

Somehow the prints lost their verve in the large exhibition space. A TV monitor showing Shiseido ads seemed like a good idea, but watching thirty of these ads, which tended to be soft and lyrical with only slight variations, was more than I could sit through.

Ruth Schilling

Carte Blanche to Love Me Tender, photographs of Isabelle Adjani by Jean-Francois Lepage, and Eaux Douces et Cruelles, by Jacques et Anne Six. Espace Canon, 117 rue Saint-Martin.

Two things — we determined after looking at the huge prints of the actress Isabelle Adjani that there was no excuse for prints being smaller than these, unless they were very very small, or just being preserved as sketches.

We also had been concerned about whether we'd see a truly exhaustive exhibit of bugs in color. Canon proved to be up to that challenge.

DC.

Michel Saint Jean: The Pink Flamingo. Centre Culturel Canadien, 5 rue de Constantine.

No telling what kind of photographer the Canadian Michel Saint Jean would be if he could clear his system of whatever has enveloped his brain and clouded his eye.

Apparently beginning with a fierce determination to make no

Imprisoned Realities. Centre d'Animation du Forum des Halles.

Not an official part of Le Mois de la Photo, this little exhibition was



From "Imprisoned Realities"

squirreled away in a storefront in the basement of the Forum des Halles. It was a show with a purpose, to bring attention to the conditions of life in French jails, and to enlist support for change.

There were photographs by Pépo Angel of the prisons of Paris, as well as paintings, photographs, and other objects made by prisoners. But the photographs that hurt were x-rays of inmates who had swallowed objects in attempts to commit suicide or to be sent to a hospital, or had been subjected to terrible treatment by other prisoners. One x-ray showed a fork inside a stomach, another showed a huge nail inside a stomach, and in yet another a drinking glass was wedged inside a vagina. Next to these x-rays was a photograph of a pile of cutlery stacked on a table, with the notation that it had all been removed from prisoners.

DC.

vertical pictures, Saint Jean prowled the streets and beaches of the much-photographed French city of Arles, photographing everything in sight — shepherds, streets, architecture, gypsies on the beach, beggars, an achingly beautiful woman quickly photographed in bad light. Then he went into the darkroom and printed and printed and printed. The photographs were mounted two to a mat (one above the other) without any discernible relation between the two, then 54 of them were crammed into this gallery space with nothing to unify the shepherd, the buildings, and the gypsies except Saint Jean's irritating printing style. Some of these photographs are very good, and 20 or so of the gypsy pictures might have made a nice series. Instead, he's presented a pointless, excessive, incoherent pastiche of seemingly unrelated images, many of them not very well made and most printed in a nasty black style that obscures just when

From "The Pink Flamingo," by Michel Saint Jean



Gitans Goyesos, Saintes-Maries 1955, Lucien Clergue



you want clarity. Saint Jean is a photographer in need of a vision and a good editor.

D.C.

The Photographs of Helga Cappellman.

Accent, 27 Rue Rousselet.

Helga Cappellman works in rich colors and has prints made by the Fresson laboratory in their old and secret process that often results in beautiful and tightly controlled prints. For a subject like water, with all its reflections and refractions, the printing method seems perfect. I've no idea what it means to



Helga Cappellman

show hands in conjunction with blue and green water in pools, but the results are striking. Cappellman makes strong images clearly seen, with a sensuousness that just feels good.

D.C.

Fredrich Cantor/Nicholas Nixon.

American Center, 261 Boulevard Raspail.

I'd been looking forward to seeing this show all week. What a disappointment. Nicholas Nixon's work was good enough, but the effort to put some of it together into an exhibition seemed half-hearted. The series of pictures he's made of his wife and her sisters every year since 1975 is an interesting idea, and I was glad to see the small group of prints from his last book; but these two series weren't enough.

Maybe I was just rooting for him so enthusiastically that I expected to see Great New Stuff and felt let

Marchand d'Abat Jour, by Eugene Atget



down by this replay in this dreary space. More was wanted. After all, Nicholas Nixon in Paris! There should have been more effort.

Of course, putting him in the same room with Frederick Cantor's very ordinary black and white wide-angle documentary photographs didn't help. One's not likely to get very excited about such pictures even if some of them are tinted blue and brown and so forth.

D.C.

Geniaux, Atget, Vert: Workers and Parisians Around 1900.

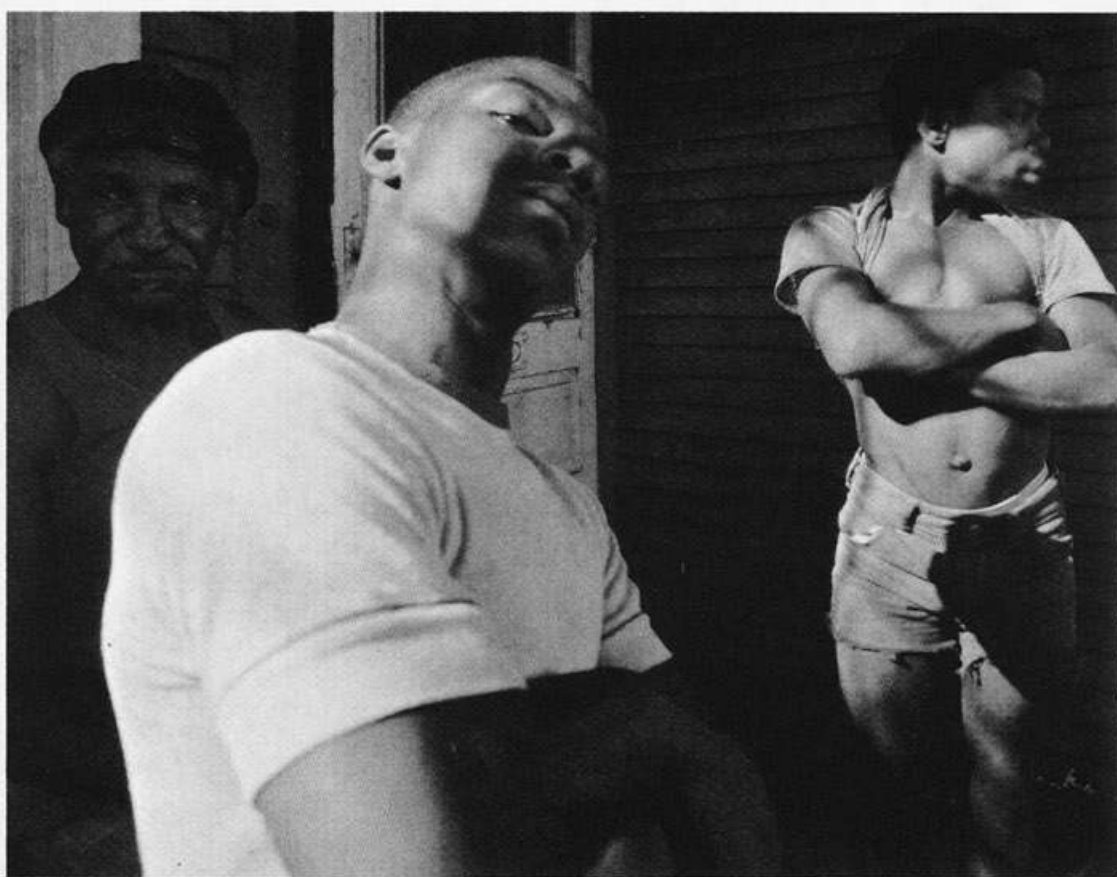
Musée Carnavalet, 23 rue de Sévigné.

This exhibition is a document of life in turn-of-the-century Paris that is the equivalent of a Dickens novel for London. There are people on the street, vendors selling flowers and umbrellas and birds, drunks asleep, nannies and kids, horses, street cleaners, people dancing and playing boules in the park, art students sculpting at the zoo, acrobats, and lots of by-standers.

There are people making mattresses, cleaning a fountain, butchers working, booksellers.

Within all the hundreds of pictures there is that exhilarating sense of peering into other lives in other times. For some reason, I have developed a real soft spot for this experience and with it has come gratitude for photography and human beings like Atget. Looking into these pictures I can feel a continuity, even evolution, from those lives to mine and those of my family and friends and people unknown. At the same time there is often a feeling of loss about past styles and activities. And always there is that little trigger of sorrow that dinosaurs, early humanoids, algae, had no cameras, could leave only the occasional fossilized shadows of their existence. Even when history produced drawing, and then writing, the records seem abstract for beings who crave visceral connection. We want pictures, lots of them. People like Atget, Geniaux, and Vert gave them to us in full measure.

D.C.



West Canfield Avenue, Detroit 1982 by Nicholas Nixon

Henri Cartier-Bresson: Paris a Vue d'Oeil.

Musée Carnavalet, 23 rue de Sévigné.

After seeing the work of Atget et al, to look at the records left by Cartier-Bresson of the same subject — Paris and its people — is to look through quite another window, with the veils swept aside and all the soot removed. We see the results of raw human speed, controlled by almost perfect technical facility. There are several dozens of pictures in the exhibition that have not been seen before, and maybe that hints that when historians (hopefully) go through his contacts and negatives they will find many more treasures about which we currently know nothing.

Cartier-Bresson somehow knew that his pictures had little to do with hanging on the walls. They were made for publication and wide dissemination. He was a founder of the photo agency Magnum, he operated as a journalist in the finest sense of the word, and he adhered to the traveling photo-journalist's habit of not printing his own pictures. He was ahead of time; in 1987 or so, he would use a camera as small and simple as his Leica, but his images would be recorded electronically in digital form and transmitted directly to photo-engraving devices, without resort to the cumbersome middle-

man called the print. Then — as in the past — his images would be seen by millions of people, and understanding, or at least knowledge, would occur. Later, there would be high quality book reproductions, computer-enhanced until they were at least as good as the reproductions he is currently getting in books such as the terrific catalog that was published for the recent exhibition in Paris.

After all, perhaps it is the catalog that is of interest, and not the exhibition. It's a little fella, about 9 inches by 9 inches. On most pages there are three or four images, usually seven to a spread, all fairly small; there are over 100 of them in all. Is it the images themselves that provide such startling clarity, or is it some laser miracle in the making of the halftones for the book? Some of the familiar pictures — the leap across the water at Gare St. Lazar, Giacometti in the rain, the boy with the wine bottles — seem more interesting in this size, sharper, cleaner, more descriptive of the light. Perhaps that is the beauty of the book: it has pointed at Cartier-Bresson's facility with light in a way that the prints rarely do.

This sort of work asks more than fast conceptual stuff which is fresh, interesting, and different but doesn't carry very well in the heart, doesn't go on noticeably even in the mind, and seems to close

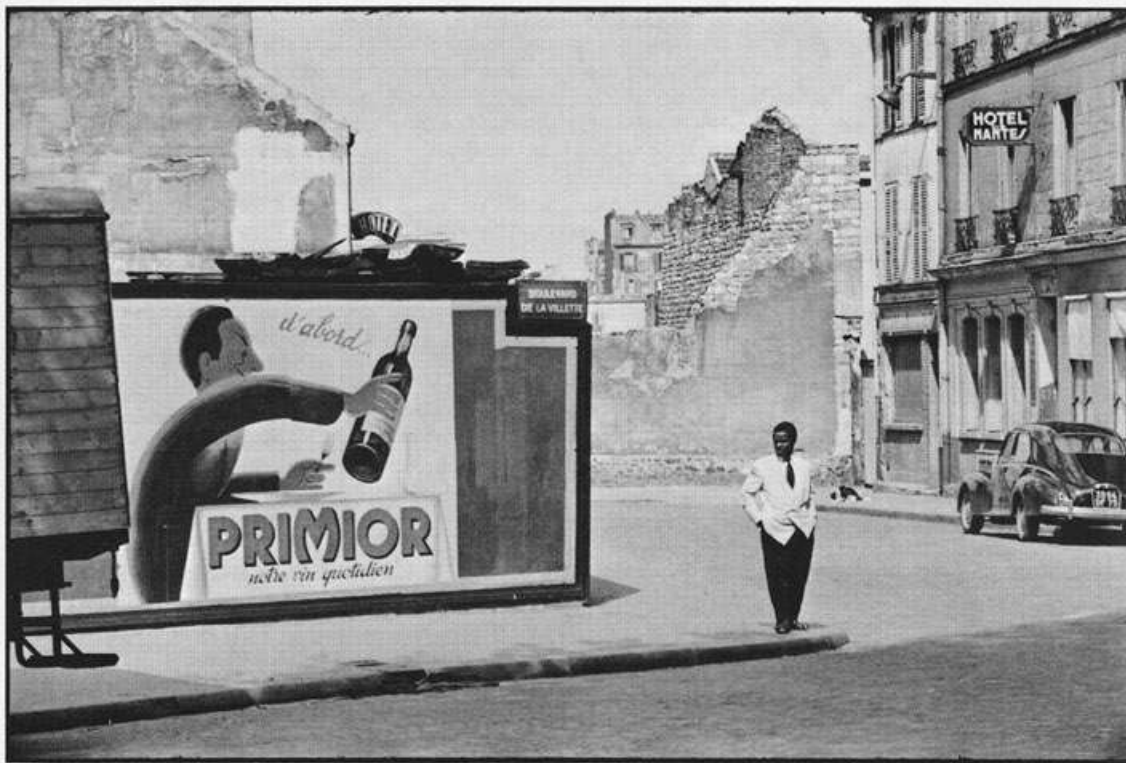
doors against involvement. Cartier-Bresson has always produced photographs that have the potential to suggest kinship between the subjects and the viewer, essentially to draw people together. He is, through his work, a champion of the concept of the Family of Man, and the problem lies there, in a time when that concept is widely viewed as unrelentingly soft, even dead wrong. It's a shame that today's fashion — born of disappointment about wars and starvation and the success of greed — is treating Cartier-Bresson so badly.

D.C.



Paris 1955, Henri Cartier-Bresson

Paris 1955, Henri Cartier-Bresson



EXHIBITIONS

CHUCK CLOSE: RESEARCH INTO ILLUSION

Chuck Close: Works on Paper was an exhibition at Houston's Contemporary Arts Museum from February 9-April 21, 1985.

By David Portz

Since 1968, Chuck Close has been producing huge views of deadpan faces, transcribed from one or another of fifteen photographs the size of his hand. This spring, the Contemporary Arts Museum presented an exhibition that gave special emphasis to images composed by Close in handmade paper, which he has produced since 1981 with the help of Joseph Wilfer.

Different shades of liquefied paper pulp were squirted onto a gridded pattern atop a background paper sheet to duplicate the tones of a black-and-white photographic original. The technique represents one of Close's most recent explorations of the requisites of a photographic image.

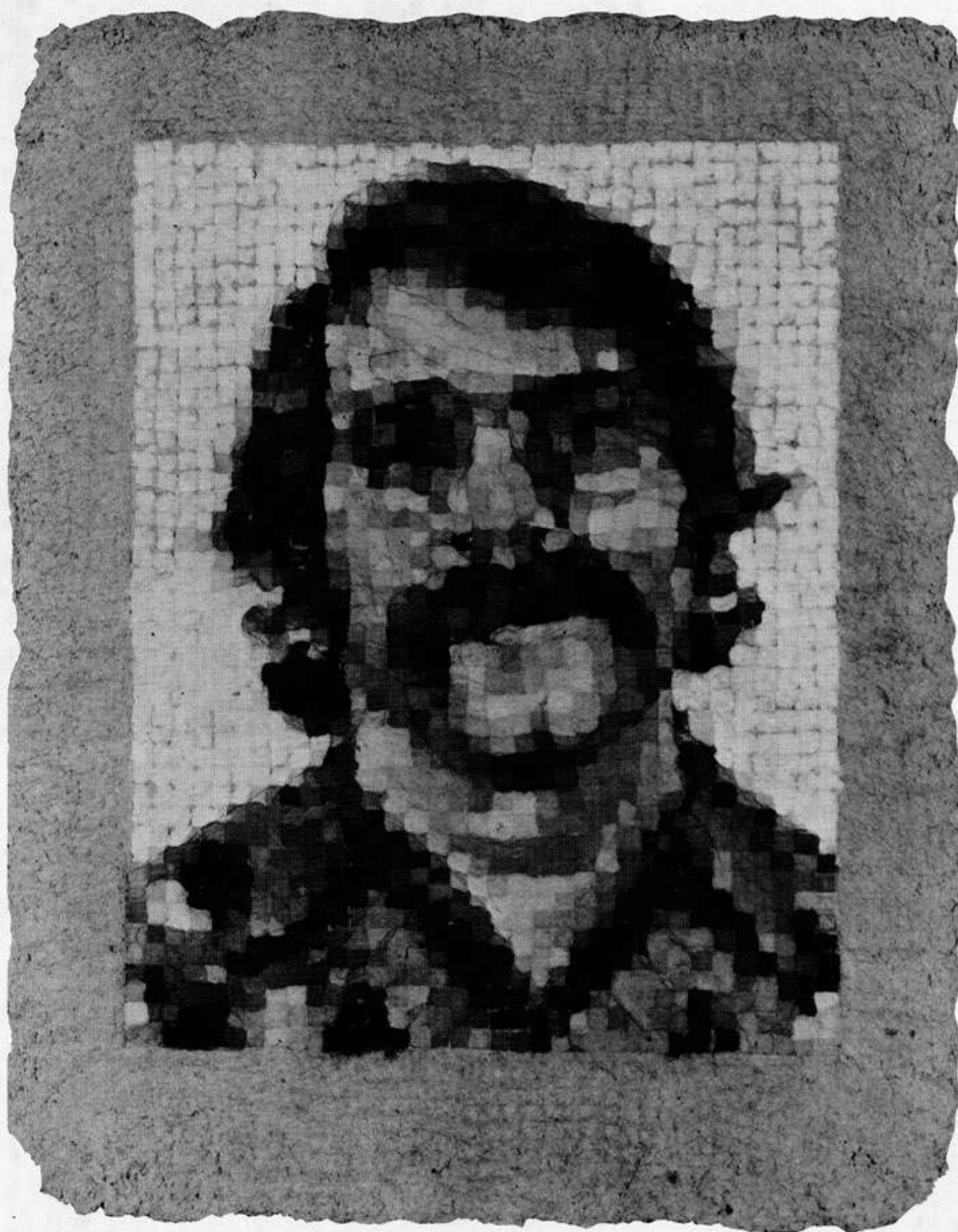
Close is grouped with artists called Photo-Realists because of their use of photographs to fix the content of their images. Instead of blocking out their works from sketches or studies from life, the Photo-Realists transferred photographic information directly to canvas or paper by mechanical techniques. Some used slide projectors to guide their tracing. Others printed images on photo-sensitized canvas, which could then be painted. Certain Photo-Realists, including Close, transferred information from the squares of a grid on a photo to a similar grid imposed upon their work. The grid technique is organic to Close's work.

Photo-Realist art is said to take for its subject the photograph itself, and to preserve the qualities of a photo. One can observe in Photo-Realist paintings a photographic clarity and flatness of surface, and a duplication of photographic focus, perspective, and depth of field. The Photo-Realists were considered unprecedented in their success at capturing exact instants in paint, for example, the appearance of reflections in shop windows. Photographs captured for these artists certain visual data which was subject to change with the painter's shift of position or the passage of time.

Close's huge works, often taking several months to complete, depended on the photographic isolation of a face's age and appearance.

Though many artists use Photo-Realist methods today, the initiators of Photo-Realism were using the techniques in the late 1960s and early 1970s. There was still at that time a significant prejudice against painting from or using photographs, even as studies for a work. Artists generally credited with initiating Photo-Realism include, in addition to Close, Malcolm Morley, Audrey Flack, Richard Estes, Don Eddy, Robert Bechtle, Ron Kleeman, Ralph Goings, Tom Blackwell, Leland Bell, Richard McClean, and John Satt. Other principals in the Photo-Realist shows and catalogs were Joseph Raffael, Ben Schonezeit, Lowell Nesbitt, Jack Mendenhall, Howard Kanowitz, James Valerio, and Robert Kottingham, though these tended to soften the photographic qualities.

These artists gravitated to realism from the Abstract Expressionism they were taught, preserving often some visual affinities with Pop Art. The Pop predilections show up in their choices of photo-



Robert/Manipulated, by Chuck Close.

graphic subject matter, i.e. gleaming dragsters and motorcycles, wrecked cars, small town diners, window signs, and neon marquees.

Chuck Close's works are closer to Minimalist influences than to Pop. The grid technique demystifies the image and makes every section of the canvas equally important, particularly when the grid remains visible in the completed work.

Minimalists endeavored, as does Close, to produce an image solely by mechanical means — by simple repetitive operations used to transfer the image to the canvas and minimize the artist's special discretion.

Close's first paintings were done with an airbrush. These were very close duplications of black-and-white photographs using only one or two tablespoons of paint. In the early seventies he completed several exacting transcriptions of color photographs, using watercolors or pastels. The bulk of his work, however, has emphasized the presence of the grid, and has employed a variety of marking techniques to transfer the images with a vague tonal longhand. The compositions in different tones of paper pulp ignore photographic focus. The faces slide in and out of recognizability, becoming sometimes mottled squares of gray. Close achieves different surfaces on his paper works by drying some of them in a press, while air-drying others for a more dramatic surface. In his "manipulated" images, he blends the moist pulp with his fingers to contort the tones and grid. Most disconcerting perhaps is the face of his daughter, composed of pulp which dripped to the floor and dried into chips while he was completing other work.

Close has concentrated on photographs of expressionless faces, invariably those of his family and friends. The large scale and anonymity of these persons tend to prevent a superficial recognition of the individual, which would allow one to ignore the image and technique. Several of the faces have now gained their own iconographic status because of the wide exposure Close's works have received. (Ironically, one face is famous not only because of Close's image, but because it belongs to a major composer: "Phil" is Phillip Glass). Rather than switching from image to image, or visage to visage, he has worked the same faces with different techniques, including the air brush and bristle brush, etching tools, pastels, watercolors, his own fingerprints, and now the handmade paper. "Close owns the photo-derived, deadpan face with all the variations he can muster," wrote John Perrault in a recent essay, "On Chuck Close," published in *Chuck Close* by Pace Gallery Publications in 1983.

If Chuck Close owns all the photo-derived deadpan faces, we may well ask what sort of faces fall out of his domain. He has sometimes departed his mimicry of photographic images to do large photographs themselves, large Polaroids. Though somewhat out of his avowed thesis, perhaps he owns large photographs of faces, too. But he does doesn't yet own portraits. Or at least he doesn't think of his images as portraits, according to his own comments published in the May 1984 issue of *Artforum*. I believe this means he isn't really attempting to reveal character or personality in the faces he depicts.

Close's various statements in that

same issue of *Artforum* particularly manifest this intellectual interest in how an image is built. "There is no device that one can rely on to make an illusion. It's only the way those clusters of marks begin to build a 'situation' that stands for hair Part of what I've done here is break down the steps necessary to build an illusion." The notion that Close's painstaking efforts relate to a larger question of how photographic images are transmitted has been advanced throughout his career by various advocates. Yet the actual revelations are never discussed.

One must be suspicious of pseudo-scientific rationales garnered to bequile the viewer's respect. The synthesis of a picture's information pertains more to the brain's perceptual operation than with manner of execution of the picture itself. Regardless of the high-sounding toot behind Chuck Close's work, I respect his diligence and enjoy his techniques.

I find his images memorable too.

EGGLESTON: INCONCLUSIVE

William Eggleston. *Allen Street Gallery, Dallas, April 2-May 12.*

By April Rapier

The Allen Street Gallery was quite fortunate to present the debut of a major portion of William Eggleston's work from the new series *Democratic Forest*. The color photographs, made between September, 1984, and

January, 1985, are part of a book that will cover Tennessee, Berlin, Japan, Pittsburg, and other American cities (it is not yet clear what ties this disparate group together). The title of the series is cryptic: it is explained in a press release that it refers to "a method of photographing rather than social implications." It may be titled thusly because of his respectful attention to all details, not just the "interesting" ones, irony unintended. Perhaps when seen in its entirety, this peculiar group of photographs will form a cohesive whole; until seen in that context, they are a bit sketchy and unbalanced, the very excellent pictures isolated from the sullen, over-ambitious ones that create but do not fulfill grand expectations.

Eggleston is well known for having been the first photographer working in color to have a one-person exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1976. His use of color has remarkable power, much enriched by its subtlety and reality. He has been the recipient of awards (NEA, Guggenheim) and survey grants, and his excellent reputation is well-deserved.

However, although these current images are not under the auspices of a grant, they have that too-orderly feel associated with such survey documentation — one of not wanting to miss any pertinent elements or topics or connections. Some of the images seem generic, obligatory. One also begins to feel aware of a loss of sweetness or tongue-in-cheek affection — in spite of subject matter.

His snapshot style, so often discussed by critics, is inconclusively resolved in this new series. *William Eggleston's Guide*, published in conjunction with the MOMA exhibit, was the result of a more personal, if eccentric thought process; the photographs were more decisive and assured. They revolved around a subject matter similar to that pursued in *Democratic Forest*; whereas now the treatment is sometimes overworked, or worse, resigned, it was previously out of reach in its ordinariness. The Berlin series, done in the same period as the Graceland pictures, seems equally preoccupied with conjunctive details — the placement of objects in relation to each other. Here the audience is primed differently because of the meticulously authoritative resemblance to grant-sponsored survey thoroughness. A final assessment of the *Democratic Forest* must be postponed in anticipation of the completed oeuvre, because there are dynamic images in this current offering that foresee a return to more exciting days.

There is great relief when turning from the terribly sedate, serious treatments (magnolia leaves and crystal candlesticks on a dark wood table, a chandelier overhead) to a more alive vision (same dark wood and expensive accoutrements — flowers in a silver bowl, candelabra to the side, but also stacks of 3-1/2 x 5 color snapshots scattered about, and a convergent view into other similarly elegant rooms). Contrasts are refreshing when in context and understated (on a porch, one sees a lovely shaker-style bench adjacent to a modern 'toob' handrail, leading down the steps.) There is also an obligatory recording of oddities of antiquity — street iconography specifically — that by someone's grace or oversight have remained, or the all-too-familiar and uninteresting town square/courthouse/shade-tree picture.

But Eggleston's past ability to trap details and manifest a fascinating juxtaposition fails him here as often as it succeeds. The successful pictures now seem less sought-after, as though more readily available to him. He examines clichés (statuary, log cabins with geraniums in bloom, reflections in storefront windows) without innovation. Perhaps Eggleston's ability is sometimes overwhelmed by a sense of futility at all the blandness, ugliness, and silliness

there is to disarm.

The most frustrating recurrence in Eggleston's work in general is that one is given potent clues with no opportunity for resolution. The clues are indecisive, misleading, much more so than before. In an image that bears this out, one sees a cart on bicycle wheels, holding a metal tool box. One is expected to extract some reason from the relation between the tools, a hurricane fence, a few trucks and cars, a patch of grass. Nothing particularly mystifying about it, it is merely meaningless, undirected. Neither can one find a rhythm or cadence to invite involvement. Even the elaborate meals and picnics, once so rich in symbol, so sumptuous, now seem belittled and spare — parodies of all that is implied.

Two images in particular retain a marvelous eccentricity reminiscent of the earlier pictures. In one, dried Indian corn hangs on a spiral rack (like sunglasses in a drugstore). New potatoes sit like half-moons in plastic bags. The light is blinding, the colors faded. The other picture revolves around two gravemarkers — one tall, the other short — a telephone pole, and a garden with a scarecrow that mimics the other crosses. These images maintain the high level of spontaneity that surely prompted them.

In spite of the complaints, there is much to be anticipated in the book project. The momentum these pictures receive from one another gives them the quiet, cumulative strength that is Eggleston's alone among a large field of contenders.

THE PANORAMA: MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION

Panorama Exhibition: E.O. Goldbeck, Mary Peck, Jiri Polacek, Michael Ruetz. *Benteler Gallery, Houston, April 17-May 1.*

There is something to be found in a grand vista, an enormous expanse of uninterrupted space that creates obsessive, repetitive behavior in landscape photographers. Michael A. Smith comes immediately to mind, yet he is only following the footsteps of other like-minded wanderers who have similarly experienced magnificence and who wish to share it.

The panoramic photography exhibit at the Benteler Gallery contained fine examples of this tradition, as well as imitative, adoring gestures — honorable, beautiful, but empty. The images that endure give one an eloquent feel of the land, without resorting to sensationalism.

While looking at Mary Peck's quiet images of West Texas, one has a clearer sense of things — the way the hot, dry air feels blowing across the parched earth, the distant sounds that become recognizable after

they're gone, the flatness that seems to have no end. Peck does not intellectualize or anguish over her vision — she simply knows when a picture is right. She uses a minimalist approach, which implies that every detail in the frame is deliberate, important, to be reckoned with.

Perhaps her movement from 4x5 to Widelux format forced the issue, due to considerable expansion of terrain and information. Signs of man are few, and seem inconsequential in the vastness of nature. She began this work as a participant in a photographic project commissioned for the Texas Sesquicentennial, continuing after the project's end. The pictures enable one to experience, say, a train's enormity as it snakes along, because we see it from beginning to end. One image in particular, "Lesley, Texas, 1984" imparts the subtle thrill of discovering a well-guarded secret. One sees a house in the center of the frame, a utility pole sending wires to the house and into the sky (out of the frame). A patch of light grass surrounds the house, providing a lovely contrast to the dark earth elsewhere. Tire tracks lead from the viewer's vantage point to the house. A small clump of flowers sits right on the edge of the foreground. The background is infinite, isolated. There exists in these landscapes a found iconography of a style encouraged by practicality — wood stacked in a teepee shape, bales of hay, odd shelters. Through Peck's pictures one can experience a part of the country that is otherwise forbidding.

Michael Ruetz, a self-taught freelance photographer born in Berlin, is represented here by images that allow one to see a landscape fully, but not intimately. These large color photographs are distinctly beautiful, but don't speak of much else. Nor is the panoramic effect put to best use. He is published, and would seem to have settled into a stylized vision, in the *National Geographic* tradition of privileged (and magnificent) access. There is, however, a certain humor in "Vanderbilt Estate, Hudson River, New York, 1980" — an exact tribute to the light and color and style of Maxfield Parrish. That a lighter touch is essential to the photographing of monumental space and architecture may or may not be something Ruetz is willing to acknowledge; one hopes he will find it a possibility worth examining.

Jiri Polacek's panoramic images (made with an 1895 Kodak camera for roll film) almost remind one of cleverly printed diptychs, because of the inclusion of the film identification and numbers (a full five frames' worth.) A Czechoslovakian, he spent several years during the late 1960s traveling through the U.S. "Kerouac-style," then returning to Prague. This could be why the images are those of mourning — dirges to the lost potential of freedom. The beauty of his *Prague Series* seems always distracted or intruded upon by a disconsolate sorrow, or so the symbols seem to say (there is calm, but the streets are



By Debra Rueb, from the exhibition *Self Image*.

empty, for example). However, there is a compelling strength, a determination to be found; they are anticipatory of joy, beautiful settings awaiting crowds of the contented.

E. O. Goldbeck (saving the best for last), now in his 94th year, imparts the treasures of history in his always-exciting Cirkut camera images, dating from the 1920s. Events and places spring to life in these photographs, as one searches crowds for a familiar face or location.

Goldbeck seemed to be everywhere, from KKK rallies to "bathing girl" contests, getting it all down for the record and the joy of it. His own history is rich, having never strayed from the dream of being a photographer. His social commentary was profound; in an image entitled "Dallas KKK visiting San Antonio KKK, 1924," no further discourse is necessary — the picture implies what rhetoric cannot. One of the loveliest, most invigorating images in memory is "Rice Terraces of the Philippines, n.d." His work is not to be missed; fortunately, it can be seen in its entirety at the Humanities Resource Center in Austin.

A.R.

THE SELF AS SUBJECT

Self Image: The 1985 Show.
The Firehouse Gallery, Houston,
April 4-May 10.

This small exhibit was part of a larger project of the Houston Women's Caucus for Art. Photographs and video were shown at the Caucus's Firehouse Gallery, and an exhibition of paintings, sculpture, prints, and drawings was presented by the

Caucus, under the same title, at Midtown Art Center.

A self-portrait may be unexciting, introverted, conceptual, or just plain difficult to penetrate as long as it is ultimately honest; unrevealing is unforgivable. The overall weakness of this group of portraits was its evasiveness. However, a few images merit discussion.

George Krause, in a black and white photograph drawn from the *I Nudi* series, seems somewhat befuddled by the disarray and potential chaos of a naked woman sprawled across his lap — almost a gesture of hiding, and peeking around for a look. The setting is a studio space; the table behind the pair is cluttered with photographic paraphernalia. Krause looks puzzled and a bit sheepish. He is fully clothed; his grip on her waist is neither tentative nor aggressive, a further sign of bewilderment. She assumes a classic pose — gaze aloof, away from the camera, as neutral and oblivious as the inflatable "women" which Krause has also photographed. Her arms are behind her (and therefore Krause's) head. Although he looks vaguely ready to take flight, they are entangled. The picture is a great merger between humor and emotional complexity, without a hint of compromise.

Gay Block's piece is two black and white photographs, mounted back to back between sheets of Plexiglass, and hung from the ceiling so that it slowly revolves. One image shows a young girl smiling quite securely, holding (with both her hands) the hand of a man in a suit. It is sweet, but unrecognizable beyond generalities (the piece is untitled). The second ostensibly sweeps us forward in time to a woman (identifiable this time as Ms. Block) in a bedroom, her nude reflection, seen in a mirror on a closet door. The objects in the room are far more revealing than the dis-

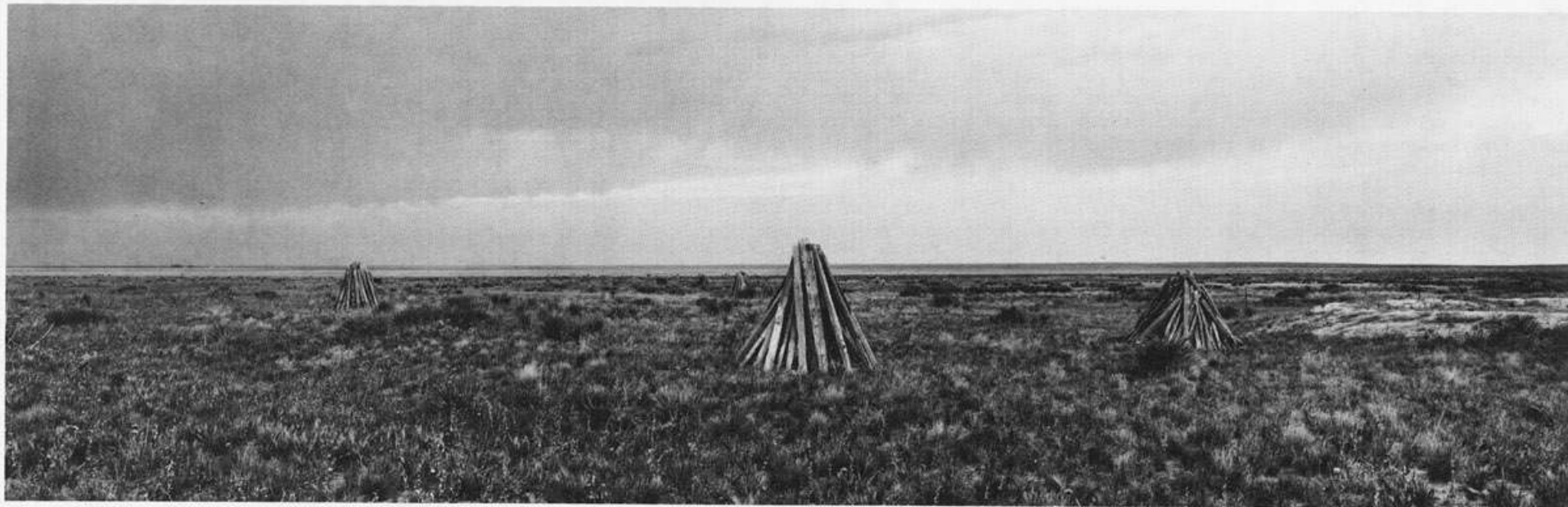
tant (albeit brave) portrait; she doesn't look at herself as the shutter opens. There is a ghostly image, probably a reflection, in the television screen, and the bedcovers are neatly thrown back, as though she's just awakened. Fully one side of the bed is unmade. There is order to the room and powerful implications to be drawn from these references to control. That she is nude almost seems superfluous. Together, the two photographs create strong symbols of love and loss.

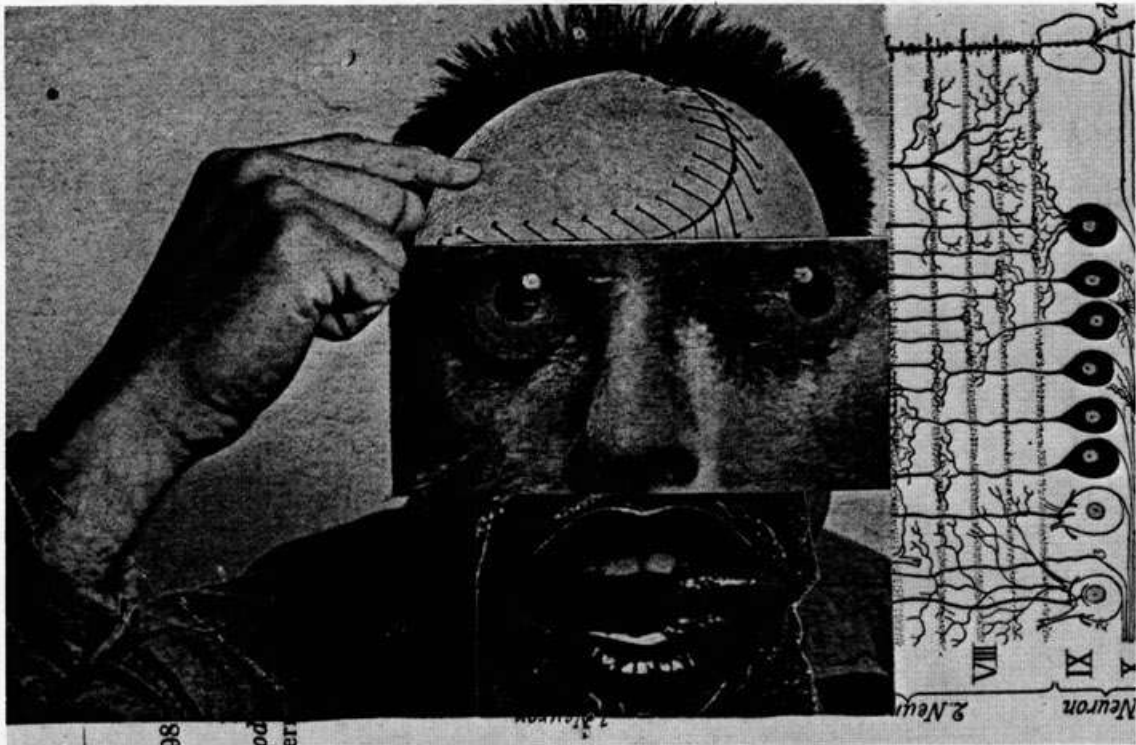
Debra Rueb has undertaken the difficult project of photographing herself every day of her thirtieth year, in an effort to "record, remember, and confront" this major event. Some days are easier than others, but the images here represent a smooth involvement, free of redundancy, a hazard inherent to the project. Some are impassioned and dramatic, others classically stylized. The most compelling image was Rueb reclining nude on a couch, feet to a window. Seen from the waist down, the vantage seems modest and conservative. A beautiful tree fills the window frame, echoing other organic elements; on the upholstered pillows that support her, geese take flight. That elementally it works so well must have been a lovely surprise, for that sort of image is best unplanned.

The photo booth shots that visitors were encouraged to take and leave as part of the exhibit was a great idea, a light-hearted opportunity for some casual to high-camp mugging. Laurie McDonald's very special video installation, "Filling the Boxes of Joseph Cornell" should be noted as well. It is a thoroughly enjoyable and provocative piece that, in addition to being about self-examination, took an incisive look at coping with a modern, not-so-honest world.

A.R.

Rita Blanca Grasslands, Texas, 1984, by Mary Peck.





By Fruit Basket Upset

MAIL ART: POST DADA

Echo: An International Mail Art Show. *Diverse Works, Houston. March 19-April 3, 1985.*

"Mail Artists do not care who did it first
Mail Artists do not care who did it best
Mail Artists do it for each other now
Mail Artists do not accept awards for doing it
Mail Artists build the world network of confidence"
— lala, Berkeley, California

"I'm your lobster!" "You're not a God-damned lobster!"
— Prince Bullion Cube

One of the ways to make yourself famous is to kill Cavellini or have Cavellini kill you. Cavellini has a chain of convenience stores in Italy and may or may not have had a show of mail art at the Palazzo Ducale in Venice. A postcard said he did. Another way to make yourself famous is to organize a Center of the Study of Cavellini. Cavellini is a mail artist whose attempts to self-historicize are succeeding. Cavellini stickers are all over the subway platforms in New York's SOHO district.

This show of mail art was organized by Tom Packlick, also known as Tom Pack. The gallery walls were covered with pieces sent from all over the world by over 550 mail artists, responding to the theme of *Echo*. Or not responding. Most mail art shows have a theme or parameter — for example, send only aerograms, send only maps no larger than ten by eighteen inches, send only envelopes, send only tickets. Mail artists often ignore these themes and send what they like.

Mail art shows adhere to three basic rules. (1) All work submitted will be shown, (2) no entry fee is charged, and (3) no work will be returned to the artist. An informal fourth parameter is that acknowledgment will be given the artist — a list of participating artists, or perhaps, if there's money enough, a show catalog. These rules developed because mail art was a reaction to the artists' frustrations over submitting work to juried shows at considerable expense, and then having their work rejected. Although anything goes, very little is particularly obscene.

Mail art is heavy into hand-made; heavy into color and black-and-white photographics, photoduplication, color Xerox, collage, computer graphics, sketches, small paintings, hand-made papers and books, and personally composed poems and prose. A large proportion of the mail artists use rubber stamps for a return ad-

dress or part of the imagery, and Tom Pack says that many mail artists were rubber stampers first.

Mail artists sometimes go by funny names: Beef Tabloid, from Omaha, Nebraska; We Never Sleep, from Olympia, Washington; Fatal Neon, from St. Petersburg, Florida; Plasticannedishes, from O'Connor, Australia; F. Stop Fitzgerald and No More Tears, both from San Francisco. It's hard to tell whether Ivo Antic is a real name, but his mail comes from Yugoslavia. The Latgailis Triplets correspond with, and from, Seattle. Leavenworth Jackson derived

shows, because they reproduce so poorly. But he carefully keeps everything that's sent to him, and he gets something every day.

Among the participants are famous artists, for example, Christo, Carl Andre, Claes Oldenburg, and Robert Rauschenburg, although the latter two are not so active any more. Ray Johnson started the New York School of Correspondence Art, and has had a show at the Whitney Museum of American Art

Michael Voo Doo from Washington, D.C., made a bid for stardom in the *Echo* show. He was prolific enough to fill a whole wall with themes such as "The Fat Jesus," "Being a Policewoman," and "The Dark Side of Prison Life," though the works in the aggregate weren't very clever. Artists' names on the different cuts of beef is a common mail motif. On the other hand, Chris Cook submitted an ink-sketch abstraction drawn on a cotton swab.

American mail artists are most numerous, followed by those from Italy and France. Mail artists operate in Western Europe out of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, East Germany, and Greece, though some of them doubt that they're receiving all of their return mail. Nothing comes out of the U.S.S.R. or mainland China. Five or six regulars hail from Australia, several from Japan, one from Thailand, and from South and Central America, a bunch. The Central and South Americans seem to be the most politically minded, the Europeans second and North Americans last. U.S. mail artists are more absorbed with visual puns, and Californians are the most influenced by punk and camp fashions.

A book called *Correspondence Art*, published in 1984, is available in Houston through the store Iconography, which also sells rubber stamps. The shows are advertised in *Artweek*, *Rubber Stamp Madness*, and *TAM (Traveling Mail Art)*, which is published in Holland. A catalog of shows will often serve as a mailing list, so that each show updates the network. *Diverse Works* had another mail art show called *Maps* in December, 1983, also curated by Tom Pack, and mail art was in last year's Fluxus show at the Contemporary Arts Museum. A show of postage stamp creations by the late Donald Evans toured the U.S., sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution. Large mail art shows have taken place in many major cities of the U.S. and Europe. Tom Pack says mail art is growing, but he doesn't think it's going to sweep the nation. "I don't see it as a moving force in the art world, but I might be wrong."

— D P



Photo by Antonella Lualdi

her name from the streets of the San Francisco intersection where she lives. This is perhaps the ultimate statement that a mail artist can make.

Mail artists send much that isn't paper. The *Echo* show received a soda can from Shawnee, Kansas, a two-foot diameter film reel from North Carolina (\$2.90 postage), and a pair of Extra Large Oscar Meyer Weinie boxer shorts, the legs stamped with red running pigs. A fake mustache and beard, surprisingly similar to Anton Chekhov's, came glued to a picture of midget wrestlers, collaged with the quote "Our team captain addressed us through a thick veil of wool."

"If mail art owes its existence to anything, it's Dada," says Tom Pack, "taking ordinary objects and saying they're art. [The work submitted is] not self-conscious, not all that interested with the final product, not expecting to be taken seriously. "Tom Pack expects never to see his work again after he mails it. For about a year, he's sandwiched tickets, stamps, and dots from three-hole punches between translucent sheets of tracing paper — a unique style. Sometimes he doesn't recognize his pieces in catalogs of other

FRENCH EXHIBIT: DEVALUED ART?

Sans Titre: Contemporary Photography and Video from France. *Diverse Works, Houston, April 5-May 1.*

Any attempt to view these images in comparison to American photography will fall short, for the two share few if any concerns. One is told outright in the catalog of the inherent differences, the uniqueness of French photography. M.E. Simmons-Sorrell, the curator of the photography portion of the exhibition, tells us that, in France, great emphasis is placed on the difference between photography — documentary and reportage, mainly — and art that manipulates photography in a manner after the "traditional fine arts, painting and sculpture." The idea that photographers (and film-makers) are officially classed with writers by the government is suspect; that such an official (and binding) category exists at all is an onus almost too great to overcome.

There apparently exists a self-imposed rule whereby "most French artists will make no more than three prints from each negative." Pondering the logic of this "rule," one can suppose that economics are a factor. Yet one has the nagging suspicion that this too is a contrivance, designed to add value to ideas that are precocious but ill-considered. Other differences exist as well, barriers that would be meaningless if the work was successful, but these "limitations" (Simmons-Sorrell's term) simply cannot be held accountable for the eccentric and contrived manipulations that recur throughout the exhibit.

Perhaps a too-forgiving curatorial vision in conjunction with what could be considered effete, self-aggrandizing restraints must be examined as responsible for the blaring inconsistencies here. One simply cannot envision an audience to whom this level of communication would speak. The constraints do not add to the pictures that are (for the most part) so desperately modelled after other media.

The most evident (and consistent) homage throughout the exhibit is about dimension and stature. Simmons-Sorrell says "these artists often choose to make prints as large as the largest rolls of paper permit, . . ." an imitative gesture that often doesn't best suit photography's limitations or purposes. The delivery rarely measures up to the ideas touched upon. It seemed as though one piece per artist was successful, complete; the rest was more filler than first-choice — ambitious, energetic, but distressingly uninteresting. In the curator's statement, one is told that "many artists who use photography exclusively are quite proud of not being

concerned with image quality," leading one to anticipate a conceptual breakthrough. In fact, quite the opposite is true. A good idea is rarely able to transcend bad technique; a bad idea is magnified by it. As a whole, this survey is silly. The best that can be said is that there are exceptional images in it that deserve careful scrutiny.

Antoine Bootz's three black-and-white murals resemble handsome architectural renderings seen through a sandstorm. They are abstract to the barely readable limit, yet their confusion elicits a strong reaction that is far more satisfying. In one of the images, "Untitled 1984," a ball sits precipitously on a ledge, with, for all we know, the world's end at its back. A miniature sci-fi world takes shape upon examination, as though seen through a microscope. Proportions seem magnified and exaggerated, details purposefully hazy. Of course, this is all conjecture, encouraged by the imagery, the planar flexibility that this kind of close-up view affords. There seems to be, for example, glass, and it seems to reflect, but one cannot be sure.

This picture is more physically, elementally complex than "Untitled 1983," which looks for all the world like the ocean rushing up to a pyramid, a distant moon backlighting it with a luminous wash. This is perhaps a romantic interpretation, but one inspired by the beauty of simplicity, of imaginative ideas.

In a series entitled *Fiction Coloreé*, Pascal Kern plays with notions of reality, testing what one can and cannot assimilate visually, then accept as real (or even possible). The images are technically proficient: sharp, well-lit, beautifully printed Cibachromes. One is at first tempted to believe that they are hand-colored, or toned, or black and white negatives printed monochromatically on color paper.

The subject matter and intensity of spatial usage suggest photo-realist painting. In one, film strips hang, tumble against fiberglass fabric; selective areas of the film are hand-colored, as are sections of the other pieces. If only metal would rust in colors like candy! It is an appealing act that makes little sense, its whimsy all that is necessary. A few "hot spots" from the lighting cement the reality of the still-life, take away the animated quality found in the center of the image (where most of the coloring takes place). In another, the entire image seems to have rusted — headless statuette, hardware in various states of decline, a bucket, endless clutter.

Because of the overall color (except a few brightly hand-colored nails that take up very little space), the objects have a forlorn look. One expects, a la Nutcracker Suite, for them to animate, with gestures of their own, when no one is watching. The frames

Climbing Library Shelves, 1984 by Philippe and Sylvain Soussan





Fiction Coloree, 1984 by Pascal Kern

used on Kern's pieces, roughly hewn, bulky metal whose welded joints were sanded but not polished, are as lovely as the images.

The Freres Soussan's (brothers Philippe and Maurice Sylvain) large Cibachrome, "Climbing Library Shelves, 1984" is an enticing bit of light play, at once interesting and very beautiful. A person is seen with one foot on a stool, the other on a lower shelf, his hands half-heartedly supporting him. He is going nowhere, a complex web of flashlight-drawn light strands holding him captive. The room is dark, lending power to the silvery graffiti marks that fill the frame. The books on the shelves assume a minimal role, tokens to the concept. "Personnage assis sur . . . 1984" is second-rate in comparison, a crude caricature in which the joke is easily lost. A person sits in a cartoon chair, drawn in, again, with a point-source light.

One does not await the fall with nearly the anticipation implicit to the set-up. "Ironing Board, 1984" features both a cloth and a person draped over an ironing board. The green cloth (colors are important here, because of the overall darkness of the environment) hangs to the floor, where the man irons it. The gesture is touching, futile, funny. Red shirt, yellow iron — the colors are rich, but not garish. This use of "photographos" (light-writing) serves the same purpose as in "Climbing Shelves 1984" — it binds him to his circumstances irrevocably, yet painlessly. The light never strays — it hits its mark every time.

A.R.

JOAN MYERS: FRESH LANDSCAPES

Joan Myers. Dallas Public Library, April 3-May 24, 1985.

For two years, Joan Myers traveled in excess of 10,000 miles photographing the Santa Fe Trail with a 4x5 camera, funded by an NEA Survey Grant. The pictures form a becoming memory of what used to be an active commercial trade route from Missouri to New Mexico until the railroad took its place in 1880. Its history was rich and vibrant, and the pictures leave an impression of more than a few ghosts rattling about, nodding their approval. With the exception of the portraits of people along the trail, which are comparatively uninspired, the images are fresh, not reliant on traditional concepts of beauty indigenous to desolate landscapes. There are even one or two atypical uses of a large format cam-

era, its righteous sharpness blissfully marred by an unsharp mid- and background ("Wagon Mound, New Mexico, 1982"). The photographs are well-considered, but still manage to maintain an edge of spontaneity. For example, in "Tecolote, New Mexico, 1982", the subjects of the image, an old house, shed, and car, are viewed through an unwieldy tangle of old fence posts and wire, a visual judgment that could have led, with the exclusion of the foreground layering, to a much more ordinary image. The images are, to a certain extent, graphic and contrasty, a welcome relief from the lyrical perfection usually associated with 4x5 landscape photography. "Round Mound, New Mexico, 1982" is a good example: that it is not so beautiful encourages one to explore it further.

Another interesting aspect of the series is a peculiar division of plane. In "Canoncito, New Mexico, 1981," the foreground is dominated by an adobe wall that forms a partial triangle shape; a large, rough-hewn cross rests inside, shaded. One also has visual access to the land beyond — crosses, telephone poles and trees — finite but quite imposing. Details echo back and forth between planes (tree limbs, a crack in the wall).

In the image entitled "Doxey Mansion, New Mexico, 1983," one sees part of an oddly misplaced Greek temple-like structure. It is a rich and decadent place, with gnomes and a huge, empty fountain (particularly out of place in this desolate land of tumbleweeds and scrub brush). In the distance, tiny rows of determined fences keep the mountains at bay. An orderly storm approaches. Surely the places visited are somehow as changed — perhaps a bit more permanent — by Myers's way of seeing as she was exhilarated by them.

A.R.

THREE ANNALISTS OF THE MOVEMENT FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

Black Art and the Civil Rights Movement: Challenge to the Mainstream. Julia Ideson Building, The Houston Public Library, April 4-30, 1985.

By Debra Martin Chase

The 1960s was the decade of the individual. The lone voice provoked the political imagination of the common man, demanded that listeners cast aside passivity, and shattered many established societal institutions. Millions of men and women believed that the mountains of injustice which obstructed their paths to fulfillment

could be leveled by the sheer strength of their personal commitment and tenacity.

The Black civil rights movement was, in its essence, a collective of individuals steeped in such beliefs. We are poignantly reminded of this by the photographic exhibit *Black Art and the Civil Rights Movement: Challenge to the Mainstream*, which was part of *After the Avant Garde: A City-Wide Symposium*, sponsored by the University of Houston.

Challenge to the Mainstream features the work of three distinguished Black American photographers, Doug Harris, Roy Lewis, and Jack Harris.

Doug Harris began his career with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which arranged for him a six-month apprenticeship with Richard Avedon. Roy Lewis, a recent recipient of a Visual Arts Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, was a staff photographer for *Jet* and *Ebony* magazines.

Jack Harris, a photographer and cinematographer, has worked as a free lance for *Black Enterprise*, *Ebony*, and *Time* magazines and is currently the director of the Langston Hughes Cultural Center of the Queensborough Public Library in New York City.

Exhibit coordinator and poet Lorenzo Thomas offers the viewer a telling glimpse of many of the individuals, both famous and not, who comprised the movement. In "Word Warrior," Lewis starkly captures the haughty intelligence edged by tempered practicality of Gwendolyn Brooks. "We Want Black Power" catches the quintessential Stokely Carmichael of SNCC straining at the confines of the podium, entranced by his own revolutionary ideals, his eyes concealed behind jet black sunglasses.

Jack Harris brings the late New York Congressman, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., momentarily back to life. Surrounded by the press microphones that besieged his flamboyant career, we can feel him deftly maneuver around the piercing questions about his politics and personal affairs.

All three photographers offer the viewer moments of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life: on courthouse steps, entreating the crowd to persevere with dignity and pride, one can almost hear his rich baritone; leading the march on Jackson, Mississippi, while unflinchingly meeting the challenge of the hot Southern sun; and relaxing in a church with the joy of serenity shining from his eyes.

These photographs remind us that he was a ubiquitous force in this social and political metamorphosis.

Challenge to the Mainstream is a small fistful of powerful images, a

tribute to the progenitors and perpetuators of the Black civil rights movement.

POINTS OF VIEW: ALL-STAR LINEUP, ALMOST

Points of View: Ference Berko, Franco Fontana, Joel Meyerowitz, Nicholas Nixon, Stephen Shore, and George Tice. Benteler Gallery, Houston, February 27-April 13.

Much of this work, whether color or black and white, had a timeless quality, which made this grouping rather intriguing. Both Tice and Berko exhibited older images (1950s and 1960s); the only pictures that had a dated feel to them were Fontana's pop color landscapes. Meyerowitz's images are from the book *Cape Light*, published in 1978.

Although the pictures are stunning, they have been much-written about, and need no further discussion here. (It is of interest, however, that the images selected from that particular group are homogeneous, excluding the more eccentric in favor of the more beautifully neutral.) Berko's images should be excluded, because they were decrepit, ferrotyped, unspotted, and in general of little interest, even as "vintage" imagery. One wonders why he was so poorly represented in this otherwise all-star lineup.

George Tice's images are meditative reflections about the presence of a place; usually the inclusion of people is supplemental. This grouping deals mostly with farmland around the Pennsylvania countryside, the land of the Amish. The pictures are not impelled by a need to mitigate or instruct, nor do they alter one's impression (in the way that a Shore image might hope to do) of a situation and its principals. Tice seems historically to be project-oriented, his ideas and opportunities extensive and varied.

Like that of his mentor Steichen, his vision is quiet and self-assured, involving, eternal.

Franco Fontana, a well-known Italian commercial photographer, relies on the artifice of false light and film's capacity for trickery to create a newish landscape with huge splashes of loud color. When he isn't misrepresenting terrain, he is graphically portraying fields ("Landscape, 1978") in the manner of Mario Giacomelli (Gia-

comelli, of course, being the master). The pictures are smug and self-satisfied, and very much the same.

Stephen Shore's portfolios have become increasingly similar, formulaic over the years. Although they are beautiful, and use color nearly perfectly (with regard to temperature and ambient feel), their beauty is light-headed, giddy. They are reminiscent of musical movements; these passages do not lead beyond their immediate space and time. One longs for more of the "Presidio, Texas, 1975" or "Maw Street, Gull Lake, Saskatchewan, 1974" imagery — lovely and commonplace, with dirt roads, dirty colors, the haze that hangs over small, forgotten towns — less a ritual of precision than a moving and powerful record of passage to the next place.

Nicholas Nixon's work, dating from 1975-77, documents the little miracles that turn life upside down and make it worthwhile. For example, "Marsh Hill, Pennsylvania, 1977" is a simple but thoroughly compelling wonder of ordinary life. In a suburban backyard, a child examines a huge snowball: nothing special or dramatic, just this giant snowball, some trees and shrubs, fences and houses, and more snow on the ground. The sky is overcast but bright, and the light is very nice. As the magic of the image starts to sink in, one wonders how the snowball got so big, and why. There is no indication whatsoever of Nixon's presence or influence, the essence of all his work. No matter that kids may be smiling right at the camera — the situation seems to create itself, unfold at its own pace. One doesn't sense any rush or directorial attempt, and this absolute reality is devastating and wonderful.

"Charlevoix, Michigan, 1977" is another amazing moment, non-invasive, graced with anonymity, and very revealing. Two kids are swimming in a creek behind a dense covering of limbs and leaves; a towel hangs on a limb in the foreground, as does a bandana, mysteriously full and tied around a branch. One is immediately curious about its contents, the journey that would precipitate its need; in the background, a house slowly enters the viewer's awareness, implying that safety, after all, isn't so far away. These images speak about privacy. The thoughts people have at the moment the shutter snaps are almost visible, palpable. Nixon moves through areas that have been traveled before, but the results are brand-new.

— A.R.

Two Amish Boys, Lancaster, Pa. 1962, by George Tice.





Road and Poplar Trees, by Minor White

MINOR WHITE: MANY ROLES, MANY FRIENDS

Minor White: A Living Remembrance. Aperture, Millerton, N.Y.

By Becky Ross

"Minor, for all his human weaknesses and confusions . . . had attained to a degree of art . . . that could move, delight, and teach — an art that makes a difference." — Roger Lipsey

Minor White: A Living Remembrance gives us the man — teacher, philosopher, photographer — in a sensitive collection of writings by colleagues, students, and friends whose lives were altered by knowing him and experiencing his thinking.

We see White through an array of mirrors; every image is the same man, but each angle is slightly different, unique to the perceptions of each writer. They share a respect for White, a closeness, a kinship. Their intimate reflections pull us in, involving us in White's growth, changes, failings, his becoming. We join in conversations, experiences, travels, excitement, work.

The energetic pace of the book complements the sense of intensity and life found in the writings, while "equivalent" photographs generate emotional tones. There is the roughness of rocks and cracked earth represented by Aaron Siskind, Brett Weston, and William LaRue, followed by the simple elegance of Imogen Cunningham's "Magnolia Bud, 1925," the grace of Harry Callahan's single stalk of grass, "Aix-en-Provence, 1958," intricate textural patterns by Frederick Sommer, and exciting birth-like images by Barbara Morgan. We see White's meditative photographs of the surf and the cosmic "Bullet Holes, Capitol Reef, Utah, 1961," abstracted landscapes by Edward Ranney, the tapestry-like work of Robert Bourdeau and an other-worldly image by Jerry Uelsmann. A similar psychological pace is set by the text's combinations of philosophy, dreams, realities, energy, and several writers' reflections on White's death. The mix of personal stories, quotations, and poems combined with White's own perceptions creates a dialogue, borrowing and lending meanings, enriching new understandings. This blending incorporates the thrill of discovery with learning and con-

tinually piques new curiosity.

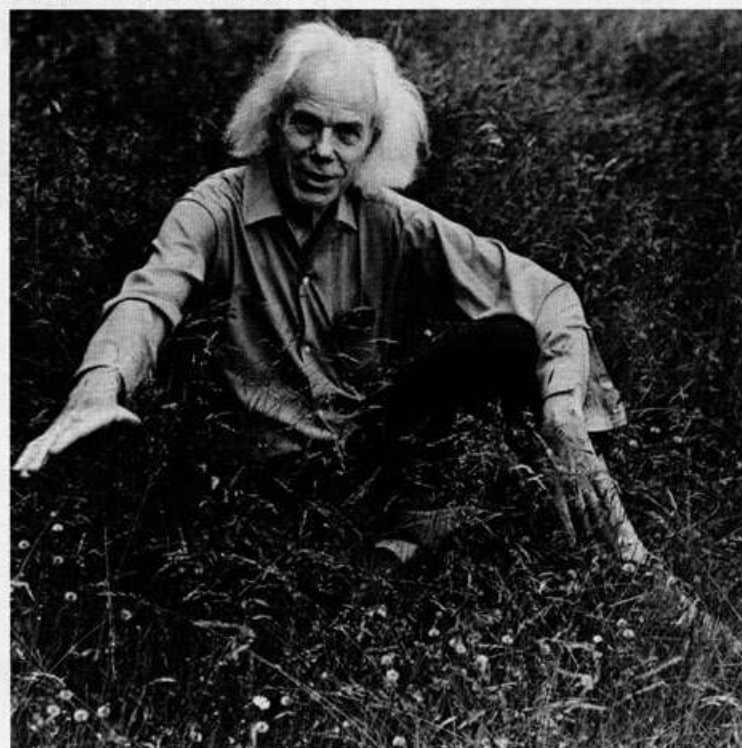
White is remembered as an extraordinary man of heart and energy and soul dedicated to learning, experiencing, teaching, and expressing. Shirley Paukulis writes of a meeting with White shortly before his death: "He spoke excitedly of his future years of teaching, of joining together in the fall to work on a new manuscript of *Creative Audience*. His old manuscript was outdated, he said. He'd learned so much while lying there in the hospital! "White had a true thirst for knowledge and an effervescent energy. "He worked like a horse day after day, . . . a monument to the values of the practice of art," writes Drid Williams. "An artist like Minor doesn't think of creating artifacts or art." He just does it.

White sought out interesting people and philosophies, studied them, and allowed them to influence him. He studied Taoism, the I Ching, and Gurdjieff. His identification with Alfred Stieglitz and great respect for Edward Weston and Ansel Adams is evident in his philosophy, imagery, and craft.

The importance White placed on experiencing may have been a strong motivation behind his desire for continuing Stieglitz's Equivalent tradition in his photography. In "Equivalence: The Perennial Trend," White stated, "When a photographer presents us with what to him is an Equivalent, he is

telling us in effect, 'I had a feeling about something and here is my metaphor of that feeling.' . . . What really happened is that he recognized an object or series of forms that, when photographed, would yield an image with specific suggestive powers that can direct the viewer into a specific and known feeling, state, or place within himself." This idea is one that White pushed and worked in his own photography. He delighted in searching nature for these equivalents, saying the "camera has a positive genius for turning the effects of weathering into beauty and equivalence: wood, stone, faces, ice." But White achieved more than equivalence; he made photographs that had a quality of otherness that could point beyond themselves. He introduced elements in explosive combinations, provoking the viewer to question the world of appearances. Of his own work, he said hopefully, "the spring-tight line between reality and photograph has been stretched relentlessly, but it has not been broken. These abstractions of nature have not left the world of appearances; for to do so is to break the camera's strongest point — its authenticity." Photographs such as "Bullet Holes, Capitol Reef, Utah, 1961" and "Birdlime & Surf, 1951" (from *Mirrors, Messages, Manifestations*) illustrate this, giving other meanings to our known world while leaving

Minor White 1973, by Robert Haiko



us familiar references.

Although the writers almost unanimously agree about White's ability to create profound images, we also find some criticisms of his work and methods. Robert Adams, citing White's "problem of an art in flight from 'the world of appearances,'" deems some of his photographs "unsuccessful because they fail to convey a clear indication of scale and are thus not identifiably of the world we know." However, Adams also notes that "because his [White's] goals were major, even the failures are not entirely failures: they have value as they are instructive."

A surprising change in tone comes in Paul Caponigro's recollection of White. Attractive compliments, immediately nullified, result in an overall sense more devastating than the detractions alone. Caponigro's negativism, sandwiched between countless positive remembrances, raises questions and makes even seemingly sincere compliments appear patronizing.

In a more positive recollection, Robert Bourdeau describes the influence that White, the teacher, had over the many who knew him. "What he gave me was a way of looking at things rather than a way of working — an incentive to put down in pictorial form that thing that I loved However, I knew from the start I had to find my own vision." Eugene Richards recalls, "Minor taught by experiences and ideas rather than by exterior materials and information. He talked about a total creative process. This meant you had to live the life of what you were going to become rather than simply adopt a certain style of photography." To "live the life . . ." means you must fit it like your skin, carefully integrating into yourself bits of people and experience without becoming a blind disciple. Peter Laytin continues, "It is we who must judge how we question the decision process in ourselves."

White's belief in photography "as a way to know" colored all his roles as photographer, philosopher, student, teacher, and publisher.

"He provided support for a belief in the photograph as an object worthy of intense effort in the making, and in the photograph as object in and of itself, . . . that could be as expressive as music, poetry, or painting in relating the individual to the world." His life, surrounded by these convictions, is what Aperture and White's colleagues, students, and friends have shared with us in *A Living Remembrance*.

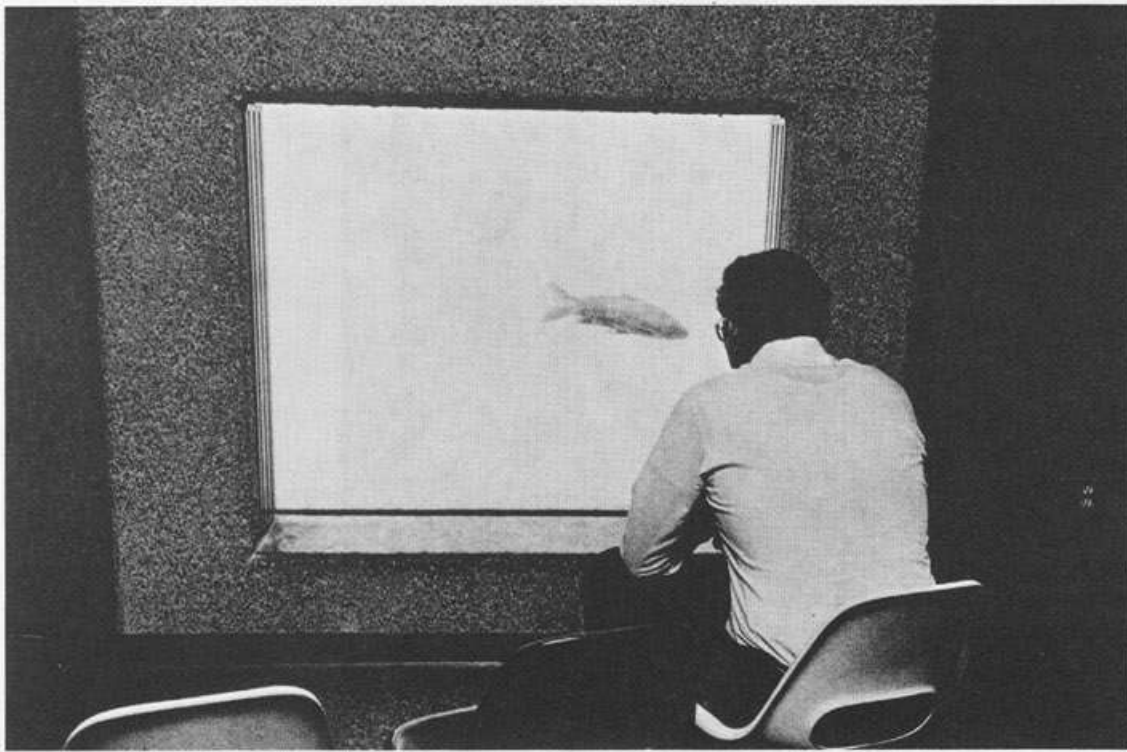
BURK UZZLE: THE ACTORS

All American. By Burk Uzzle. Aperture, Millerton, N.Y.

By Ruth Schilling

Burk Uzzle is a Magnum photographer whose new book is described as the culmination of "10 years of looking at, and looking for, America." The result is a work that invites comparison to the whole genre of street photography and more specifically that work which has examined America's soul by photographing her public facade. There are the requisite parades, bikers, beach scenes, and odd roadside attractions. In style as well as subject matter the work of many others comes to mind — Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Garry Winogrand, Lee Friedlander, and William Klein, to name just a few.

The cover design, layout, and text attempt to make the book upbeat



Burk Uzzle

and humorous. The text is sprinkled with such words and phrases as "hope," "exuberance," "silliness," and "the great turbulent spirit of America." In her introduction, Martha Chahroudi likens Uzzle to a modern day Huck Finn on a motorcycle. Uzzle hopes that the book reflects his feelings for the "structure" of America that "evokes a 'melody' of movement and collage." The book designer tries to do this by varying image size and placement. It comes off stilted, though, and certainly doesn't have the rigor and vitality of Klein's books. Nor is the printing of the usual Aperture quality. While its metallic feel may match the metallic paint that the parading Mummers wear and the chrome of the bikes, it weighs heavily on other images and contradicts their spirit.

So why should we pay attention to yet another book of American street photographs? Uzzle is a good photographer and there are some strong images. Some of the more interesting ones do resemble collages in that the information lacks spatial clues and the effect is a scene that appears pasted together. Uzzle, more than many of his predecessors, has a good feeling for the theatricality of public America. His people are more often than not in costume, from the Mummers on parade to the Daytona family dressed in matching Mickey Mouse sweat shirts. Martha Chahroudi notes the interesting contrast between Frank's Americans and Uzzle's. For her, Frank's people are "more

anonymous, passive, frightened, and defensive," while Uzzle's "rarely recede even in their moments of aloneness." I can't conclude, as she does, that Uzzle's Americans possess "hope and exuberance," but rather, that in the 27 years which separate the two artists' books, Americans have learned to pose and dress for a presumed camera. I am reminded of Andy Warhol's "prophecy" that in the future everyone will be famous for fifteen seconds. What Uzzle has captured in his book is some of us out there auditioning.

WEEGEE: THE FIRST PAPARRAZZI

Weegee's New York, Photographs 1935-1960. Grove Press, New York, N.Y.

By Barry Morrison

Weegee, also known as Arthur Fellig, was the origin of the archetype of the photojournalist who was always on the scene of the crime, often before the police arrived. Weegee, what an unusual name for a photographer. Weegee the Famous, as he liked to call himself later in his career, fashioned his name after the

"Ouija", a game board which supposedly can be used to make predictions. His ability to predict where the action was, especially at night, may not seem all that supernatural; after all, he had a police radio in his car and could hear what was going on in the city.

His motto was "F/I/I and be there."

This book is a compilation of 35 years of photographing New York City. The pictures cover everything from fires to murders to strippers to you name it. Weegee shows us the seamy side of life. We see drunks sleeping on the street in the Bowery, and the aftermath of murders. A photograph entitled "Their first murder" is not of the victim lying in a pool of his own blood, but of a group of onlookers, children gazing at the scene of the crime with a look of strange fascination in their eyes. It is a most unsettling photograph, to say the least.

Weegee was always looking for the scoop, looking at the life of New York, people at work, at play, at love, and at death. He claimed to have covered 5,000 murders in ten years of photographing from police headquarters. The man clearly had a fascination with death, the bizarre, the unusual.

Weegee covered a wide range of subjects, but the photographs as a body point back to one thing: the man was merciless in his portrayal of people, catching them with their pants down, as it were. He did that quite literally in some of his photo-

graphs of people escaping from flaming buildings. In one shot, we see a man climbing down a fire escape wearing an overcoat, hat, and shoes, but no pants. Another photograph shows an old man coming down a hallway with no pants on. If Weegee saw it, he shot it. One of his most famous images, "The Critic," appears to show us the striking difference between the rich and the poor, recording an encounter between two heavily jeweled women on the way to the opera and a poorly dressed, shoddy-looking woman who angrily looks at them and seems to be giving them a piece of her mind. Weegee exploited everybody.

When he was refused permission to photograph or wanted not to be seen, he used infrared film and flash and photographed on the sly. Many of his pictures are taken at theatres, at the beach, in exclusive nightclubs, all with the subjects totally unaware of his presence. "Lovers at the Movies I" is a striking image of a young couple at a 3-D movie, oblivious to those seated around them, and the rest of the audience is just as unaware of their actions.

Weegee got a thrill out of showing the horror during the strange adventure of New York nightlife. He uncovers people as they really are, he removes the masks that people hide behind. Many times he deliberately spied on people, always after the photograph that unmasks, that fascinates. The photographs of the murders horrify, the lovers at the beach show private moments that Weegee spied upon. A picture of a fat man sleeping on a tenement fire escape during the summer shows how merciless Weegee could be. He didn't care about portaying his subjects in a flattering manner. He got what was really there.

LOU STOUMEN'S TIMES SQUARE

Times Square: 45 Years of Photography. Photographs and text by Lou Stoumen. Aperture, Millerton, N.Y.

By Barry Morrison

Lou Stoumen began photographing Times Square in 1939, having come from Springtown, Pennsylvania. One can see his wonder at the energy,

the intensity, the power that surges in and around Times Square. At times, the pictures reflect that intensity and at other times there is a sense of a quiet moment, a lull in the continually moving throngs of people who frequent Times Square.

Stoumen says he began photographing Times Square "as a love letter to my adopted city." His affection for the Big Apple shows clearly in his photographs.

Throughout the book we are confronted with the juxtaposition of the old and the new. Since 1940, Times Square has undergone many changes in appearance. In one very striking comparison, "Sunrise, The New York Times Building 1949" is on the page opposite "Sunrise, Number one Times Square 1982." Forty-two years pass and we are looking at the same building from almost exactly the same spot. By 1982, the ornate facade of the New York Times Building has been replaced by a more modern white stone. The change revealed by the photograph serves to remind us that progress in America consists of sometimes destroying beauty and replacing it with something plainer, less beautiful, even if we dislike the change.

The people change in the photographs over the years, too. In the forties, it seems that most men—at least the ones that Stoumen photographed—wore hats, suits, and ties. In his notes, Stoumen says, "They all looked like George Raft or FBI agents." The people of the forties not only look different in dress, the feelings they carry on their faces are remindful of a time more simple, perhaps more innocent.

Lou Stoumen calls his book a paper movie. In it, we see the passing of fashion, and advertising billboards change from Camel cigarettes to sexy ads for Calvin Klein jeans. The times they have indeed changed. This book is a wonderful chronicle of the various incarnations Times Square has undergone from past to present.

Stoumen has shown himself to be a prolific artist with a sensitive heart (quite unlike the cynic Weegee). He has written, produced, and directed more than 100 motion pictures, including two Oscar winners (*The True Story of the Civil War* and *Black Fox*). Stoumen has been on the film faculty of UCLA since 1966, teaching film production, screenwriting, and aspects of photography. His work was also included in the Museum of Modern Art, New York's *The Family of Man* exhibition. If you want to see how America has changed over the years, look at *Times Square*.

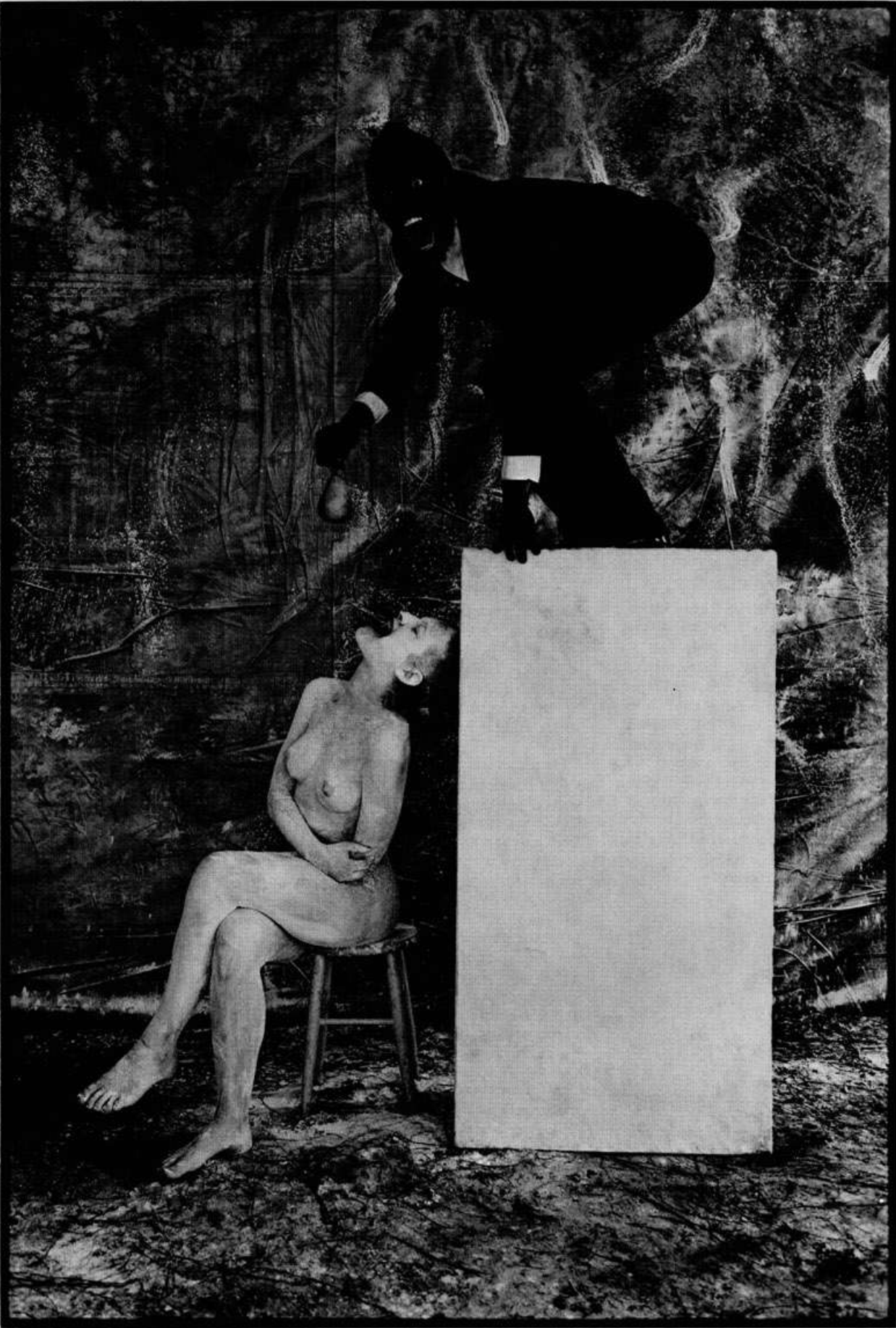
Singers Rehearsing at the Met. 1943, by Weegee



Shore Leave, by Lou Stoumen.



Ansel Adams
Robert Adams
William Adams
Richard Albright
Judy Allen
R. Andelman
Diane Arbus
Eugene Atget
Richard Avedon
Bob Bailey
Fred Baldwin
Judy Bankhead
George Beach
Amy Blakemore
Dianne Blell
Gay Block
Diana Blok
Erwin Blumenfeld
Ave Bonar
Larry Borgeson
Ned Bosnick
Janine Boudreau
Bill Brandt
Marlo Broekmans
Drex Brooks
Peter Brown
Esther Bubley
Timothy Bullard
Naomi Bullock
Fred Bunch
Larry Burrows
Gordon Bushaw
Jim Caldwell
Ginny Camfield
Steve Campbell
Robert Capa
Helga Cappelman
David Cardenas
Keith Carter
Henri Cartier-Bresson
Philippe Chauveau
Seana Church
Mark Clark
Lucien Clergue
William Clift
Chuck Close
Linda Connor
David Cornue
Patsy Cravens
Dave Crossley
Elizabeth Culwell
Imogene Cunningham
Wu Dahlen
Keith Dannemiller
Dennis Darling
Alma Davenport
Bruce Davidson
Steve Dennie
Herman Detering
Dan Devries
Doe Doherty
Robert Doisneau
Rafael Doniz
Paul Dorsey
Joel Draut
Steve Earley
MaryLee Edwards
William Eggleston
Jim Elmore
Peter Henry Emerson
Hugo Erfurth
Ron Evans
Walker Evans
John Everett
C. Leigh Farmer
Bernard Faucon
Gary Faye
Li Feng
Larry Fink
Linda Finnel
Alan Fleischer
Annette Fournet
Robert Frank
Paula Frickin
Lee Friedlander
Sally Gall
Hector Garcia
Grover V. Gatewood
Gilbert & George
E.O. Goldbeck
Jim Goldberg
Paula Goldman
Mike Goldwater
Alair Gomes
M.A. Gonzalez
Emmet Gowin
Paul Greenberg
Philip Jones Griffiths
Cathy Gubin
Harper-Leiper
Martin Harris
Craig H. Hartley
Connie Hatch
William Heimanson
Steve Hellars
Paul Hester
Lewis Hine
David Hockney
Martha Hoepffner
Dave Hoffman
Philip Holland
Noelle Hoppe
Dennis Hopper
Sally Horrigan
Sandy Hume
Jim Jacob
Ron Jones
Celia Jordan
Dan Jury
Mark Jury
Pascal Kern
Andre Kertesz
Alan Kikuchi-Yngojo



by Jeff Silverthorne

RIGHT BEFORE YOUR EYES

This long list isn't just a bunch of names. These are the artists — some young, some old, some passed on through that tiny aperture in the sky — whose works have been published in the pages of SPOT. Not bad for a magazine that's only been around for two and a half years. Of course, we're aware of our omissions and of the future. We're working on that.

With the number of photographic artists increasing so quickly, it's not easy to keep up with all the streams. That's what SPOT is for. To sort it out a little, and to do it with pictures, to show the work, not just to talk about it.

That doesn't mean the writing in SPOT is neglected. We've worked hard to find knowledgeable writers like Paul Hester, David Portz, April Rapier, Ruth Schilling, Visionary Joe, and many others. Writers so different from one another

they can hardly sit in the same room together.

For writers like these, and for photographers who never thought twice about whether photography has anything to do with art, SPOT is the center.

For our readers, SPOT is a guide to what's going on in the volatile word of drawing with light. Don't miss an issue. Subscribe now.

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NAME _____
STREET _____
CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

Robert King
Jashi Klein
Mark Klett
George Krause
Philip Lamb
Xavier Lambours
Dorothea Lange
Gilles Larrain
Rod Lazorick
Russell Lee
Lynn Lennon
Cynthia Gano Lewis
O. Winston Link
Maud Lipscomb
Sarah Lipscomb
Litterst-Dixon
Kinney Littlefield
Fred Lonidier
MANUAL
Man Ray
Paul Martin
Ron Martin
Harry Mattison
Neil Maurer
Maira McCarthy
Peter McClennan
Sam McColloch
Muffy McLanahan
Susan Meiselas
Ray Metzker
Pedro Meyer
Judy Miller
Henry Mitchell
Arthur S. Mole
Margaret Moore
Pamela Morris
Goro Nakamura
Wayne Narr
Marie Paule Negre
Mario Cravo Neto
Floris Neususs
Beaumont Newhall
Nic Nicosia
Nicholas Nixon
Anne Noggle
Barbara Norfleet
North & Lenny
Maureen O'Malley
Alice Odilon
Orlan
Gordon Parks
Renger Patzsch
Henry G Peabody
Mary Peck
Dan Peebles
Claire Peeps
Irving Penn
Gilles Peress
Stephen Petagorsky
Pierre et Gilles
Pam Pitt
Eliot Porter
David Portz
April Rapier
Larry Reese
Linda Robbenolt
Holly Roberts
Joseph Rock
Rebecca Ross
Richard Ross
Edwin & Louise Rosskay
Jeff Rowe
Janice Rubin
Debra Rueb
Robin Sachs
Sam Samore
Beth Schlanger
Linda Schleeh
Frank Schlueter
Charles Schorre
Sandra Schwimmer
Sandra Semchuk
Susan Shaw
Shaw & Sons
Cindy Sherman
Jeff Silverthorne
Aaron Siskind
Luther Smith
Frederick Sommer
Philippe Soussain
Sylvain Soussain
Edward Steichen
Sharon Stewart
Lou Stoumen
Ira Strickstein
Barry Sturrock
Maurice Tabard
Brian Taylor
John D. Thomas
Otmar Thorman
George Tice
Jim Tiebout
Carrie Tucker
Bela Ugrin
Burke Uzzle
Pedro Valtierra
Visionary Joe
Christian Vogt
Trina von Roserving
Ellen Wallenstein
C.E. Watkins
Wendy Watriss
Delmar Watson
Todd Webb
Weegee
Minor White
Wichert
Casey Williams
John Wimberley
Geoff Winningham
Garry Winogrand
Marion Post Wolcott
Ann Wulff