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SPRING 1986
VOLUME III NUMBER 4

MEXICO
WITH JO BRENZO

4 AUGUST — 13 AUGUST 1986

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That we know not how to name what awakens us is the sure sign that it awakens us.

(IIan-Frangois Lyotard)

Let me begin.

One editor does not replace another — each has his own agenda. The finely crafted sense of language and design that distinguished SPOT under the editorial guidance of David Crossley now changes with the introduction of a different ideology to be applied to the meaning and value of photography. In a note to Mr. Crossley before I came to Houston, I wrote: "to do for SPOT, I find a stimulating and visually attractive, I expect the Messages column and your harrowing commentary on Avedon's Western Sideshow, look at his portraits, even in the form of reproductions, puts a great burden on the viewer's critical intelligence. The burden is made heavier by the aura of Avedon's reputation. Filled with great cinematic skills, Avedon casts his subjects within a framework derived from commercial origin and art world shrewdness.

Avedon's success is mostly a symbol of the economic celebrating itself as art. The identity of the subjects have been appropriated more for their exchange value as photo objects than for any higher purposes. There is a formalized look encoded in these social portraits that gives Avedon's public the imaginary thrill of participating in the myth of the Great American West. This look obscures the repressive function of the portraits by uniting subject and spectator in a passive spectacle.

Before photography is an art, it is first a system of representation, a coded view of the world. The construct behind the photograph is difficult to see because of the photographer's sovereign analogical connection to the world it displays. Nevertheless, the photograph reflects the self-interests of the photographer more than it serves any truth about the subject regardless of the analogue present in the frame. We see only what is seen by the photographer and in the form sealed off from the subject of the view. In classical photography, "no reverse shot is possible." (Jean-Luc Godard)

Whenever the opportunity arises to publish theoretical writings examining representational issues of war, of the presentation of violence, and the cult value of the photographic object, this material will present essays that simply canonize the formal values of photography.

As a newcomer from California, I have chosen to devote my initial editing of the spring issue of SPOT to articles focusing on the state of photography in Houston and in Texas. Because of April Rajar's extensive writing on the subject of photography, she has consented to do an article in two parts on the broad context of photography in Texas, and the problems facing individuals within a regional support system. In a conversation months ago when the regional issue was presented to her, she rejoined unhesitatingly, "you mean, why local photographers don't take themselves seriously". Was this a statement of fact or a question of psychology?

"Hester in Houston" is another exploration of the regional dilemma from the perspective of the subject. I asked Paul Hester to compare and analyze his experiences of working in both fields of commercial and creative photography. How does one affect the other without exhausting the desire and personal commitment necessary to succeed in either? As Warhol says, "if you look at something long enough, I've discovered that the meaning goes away."

Reese Williams' essay, "House of Cards," elegantly reconcile certain books whose subject matter brings together ideas about the 'ecosystems' governing art. Without knowing one another, Reese Williams and Paul Hester, coincidentally quote not only from the same author, Martha Rosler, but from the same essay. I like to think that this kind of conceptual resonance is manifested structurally throughout the spring issue of SPOT.

It was David Porta's idea to interview Wendy Watriss and Fred Baldwin, social documentary photographers, whose work with people in the German Hill Country of Texas has occupied them for several years. The interview raises specific questions concerning the value of the still photograph as a visual and emotional record whose inscription on human memory may be deeper than the transient immediacy of video.

It is also due to the arrival of Foto Fest, "Houston's Month of Photography," for which Fred Baldwin and Petra Benleiler are singularly responsible. Foto Fest is a monumental undertaking that will radically enhance Houston as a center for the international exchange of ideas affecting cultural communications and photography.

This is also the first issue of SPOT in which artists have been invited to create a unique image for the centerpiece of the journal. Manual, (Susanna Bloom and Ed Hill), have produced the digital image, "Temptation (Drama of Signs)" to spatially fit the scale of the two pages.

Photography and art that explores the conflicts of cultural differences in an attempt to "unite art with social need" (Wendy Watriss) will be given ample space such as Ann Walton Sieber's review of Diverse Worlds multilacated exhibition. Architecture and Culture: The Fourth Ward. It's my belief that the nature of this issue is now more important than whether there is a "Houston School of Photography and/or Art."

We live in an age of economic fetishism and technological complexity. The "terrain of the sign" is rapidly fading in the abundance of information that constitutes our period of change from an analogically directed society to an electronic environment of simulated experiences. The electronic world is notably lauded — primarily the language of artificial intelligence.

(Lyotard)

Art remains one of the basic forms of individual expression strong enough to loosen the bondage of mass media and its totalitarian impact on culture. However, the history of photography is itself dominated by the "good intentions" of photographers from Western culture who homogenize the differences of "the other," whether they are Women, Hispanic, Oriental or Black. The critiquing of an "over-determined" history involves the reversal of our pictorial gaze and its concomitant discourse so that desire of the "other," can be seen and heard without risking the panoply of the dominant culture.

Constructing picturesque spectacles out of the misery of the unfortunate may relieve the guilt of the photographer, but it does little or nothing to change the conditions of life. Critical theory is one of the directions a serious journal must follow while continuing to provide the basic coverage of "mainstream" photography in all its richness of history.

Given the extraordinary events surrounding Foto Fest, and the quality and quantity of exhibitions and programs, which are equivalent to a year's worth of shows in New York, we plan to invite Houston writers to review most of the major exhibits for the summer issue of SPOT. In this way SPOT will not only serve the vital functions of a critical review, it will also serve as a record for the future exchange of cultural views on photography.

I, must confess that I find it ironic (outside my personal practice as an artist) that this issue of SPOT is predominately concerned with the "documentary." You can't always get what you want, but if you try sometime, you will find what you need. (Jagger)

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PHOTOGRAPHY IN MEXICO
SUMMER 1986

Rice University will offer during the summer of 1986 a two-week guided excursion through central and southwestern Mexico for intermediate and advanced photography students. The dates of the trip are June 29 to July 13, 1986. Guide and instructor for the trip will be Geoff Winthrop. Academic credits are available for qualified students. The itinerary will include: San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Morelia, Patzcuaro, Plaza Ardi, Acapulco, Mexico City. There will be a limit of 10 students.

For full details write: Geoff Winthrop, Rice University, Media Center, P.O. Box 7047, Houston, Texas 77251. Or call (713) 527-8984 or 527-8301, extension 2609 or 3344.
REPORT ON AWE

AWE: The Comet Project will be a series of color photographs recording the emotional, spiritual, and scientific fascination with the return of Halley's Comet.

By Igor Alexander
January 13, 1986

Awe is a word describing a mixed emotion of fear, respect, and wonder. According to the ethnographer and paleohistorian Joseph Campbell, the "Birth of Awe" was the key incident in the psychological development of the human race: the moment people became consciously different from animals.

As with other highly internalized emotions, we may know the moment it happens or in retrospect that we have felt awe. It is much harder to perceive the state in others. Actors may be able to mime a feeling and find a way to depict it through external gestures. A gifted painter may be able to remember all the details of a particular moment and then reproduce it on the canvas. A writer can create the feeling in the reader with the right selection and arrangement of words.

All these situations require a skilled artist. The camera, on the other hand, exactly reproduces what is placed in front of it. With a camera, the fleeting gesture, the passing glint, the unique moment can be recorded exactly and reproduced endlessly. Or can it?

The AWE project is an attempt to create a series of images of the emotion. The trigger for that emotion is the once-in-a-lifetime, historically resonant return of Halley's Comet, Kevin Clarke, the photographer engaged in this quest, and I developed the idea in the early part of 1983 and are currently engaged in traveling around the world in the pursuit of people under the influence of awe. The first image was made on December 7, 1983, another historically resonant date, at the Griffith Park Observatory in Los Angeles.

Since then, we have traveled to Japan twice, passed through Hong Kong and Macau and traveled across the People's Republic of China. I am writing this in London on the morning we depart for Moscow and Samarkand in the Soviet Union.

In the process, we have become the first Westerners allowed to make formal photographs at the Beijing Ancient Observatory since 1949. We have photographed the heads of the Japanese space science effort and will do the same in the Soviet Union, and have made a portrait of a Chinese peasant looking up into the evening sky. It is our feeling that the project is moving ahead splendidly.

It should perhaps be explained that Kevin Clarke is the sculptor turned photographer, who, along with West German photographer Horst Wackenbath and the writer William Least Heat Moon, produced the 1984 photo book The Red Couch—A Portrait of America. The hundreds of images in the book all contained one element in common: a red velvet sofa which once graced an suburban Long Island living room. The people on or near the sofa range from former President Jimmy Carter to a group of dentists waiting for breakfast at a Catholic relief mission in Philadelphia. The photographs themselves were all made using a 3" x 7" large monorail view camera on...
HOUSE OF CARDS

By Reese Williams

Beginning with language, as a
doorway.
Consider for a moment the cur-
rent rhetoric of the "art community," that amorphous group of people who work or practice art or service, champion or sell it. Words in common practice, like abstraction, deconstruction, neo, post, and a number of others that begin with the pre fixing prefix ne-. Once inside the house, a rather melancholy mood, if the words are anything to go by, "It's all over." The motivation behind the words has to do with follow-up work, categorizing, measuring, posi-
tioning, formalizing — i.e., pure logos.
If one accepts the premise that the basic currency of language is fashion connection (eros), then how does one connect to magically position one self outside the art community. In some other cultural sub-groups and then track back, what would it be?
In New York, not too many people want to take about it, it's bad for business, and the art community is now a special interest group like any other. But the news has leaked out, you can read about it in Time, Newsweek, the New York Times Sunday Magazine or even your local newspaper. The art world is in trou-
ble. The art world is in distress, a time of entropy. The art world is run-
ning out. Better get while the get's good. No one can afford to spend time reflecting on the possibilities of their art. This scarcity mentality is breeding two offspring (which also happen to be time-tested business strategies): the recycling of previous styles and "formula art." Once an artist has experienced financial suc-
cess with one piece of work, there is tremendous pressure so repr
oduction work again, and for several years. Nor is a market position for this already given. The political and social context of the U.S. is such that the currency of art is no longer used to cover basic living ex-
penditures. The art world is in a state of crisis (20 years ago the pressure is a very real one, with the alternative often being a dry spell). The dynamics I have touched upon in the preceding few paragraphs have been described in detail by others. I pass over them only to set the stage for questions to follow. For more reading in this area, try Robert Hughes who writes regularly for Time Magazine, a publication which does not sell advertising to galleries (one of his essays was reprinted recen-
tly in the anthology, Art after Modernism: Rethinking Represen-
tation, and for a wider view, the Post-
Modern Aura by Charles Newman, which offers some of the best writing on contemporary arts culture in the U.S. (focusing more on literature). In any period a certain percentage of individuals flourish, regardless of economic conditions. Needless to say there are many artists who are shining, and the generalities in this article do not apply to their work. But if one looks at the attention to which the whole is out of balance, for in dividu-al-mindedness of the culture, the need to make art, it is an often alienating en-
vironment, rather than a nourishing one. We have arrived to a very narrow idea of what art can be or do. There appears to be a large scale rhythm at work, a cycle of expansion and contraction, with the art com-
munity waxing and waning with the larger culture. While the six-
ties and seventies were a period of experimentation and change, the
eighties are about contraction. In
twenty years we may look back at much of the art being produced in lower Manhattan and call it "Reagan Art." This art, like a Reagan political strategy is obsessively preoccupied with surface, with appearances, and like a Reagan speech, it has a hollow quality. We are a culture that has mastered the art of self deception. Let's hope it doesn't take twenty years to acknowledge what's going on. How does one give perception and attention to the art community without making matters worse (the inherent danger of articles like this)? A number of writers and artists have made the dynamics of the art world transparent. It is an ecosystem, a web of interconnections and inter-
dependencies (a good essay on this is Martin Roizman's "Lockeys, Buyers, Dealers, and Makers: Thoughts on Audience" in the same anthology as the Hughes articles). Some basic ques-
tions, How are you giving and rece
iving art in the ecosystem? Do you feel connection or alienation? How is art moving and where to? And money, is it being used to gen-
erate art, or is it being used to gener-
ate money? Are the institutions and formalized behavior patterns that make up the ecosystem really serving us?
In his book, The Turning Point, one of Ifor Ff.Ofcapa's main themes is that the various ongoing world crises, the threat of nuclear war, pollution of the environment, widespread poverty, rampant inflation and viol-
ence etc., are all really different facets of the same crises. He pro-
poses that it is a crisis of perception which derives from the fact that most of us subscribe to the concepts and values of an outdated world view, viewing the idea of the hu-
man body as a machine, the view of life as a competitive struggle, the be-
ief in unlimited material progress and a patriarchal social system. Although the stakes are not so high within the art community, Capra's theme can easily apply here too. At the peak of the neo-expressionist selling craze a couple of years ago, Soho had a sort of medieval quality to it. A blatant, parade-around-in-your-imior reminder that the gallery/museum/collector structure and the art patronage poli-
cies of the major corporations are based on models first developed in the middle ages. Perhaps there would be a certain humor to all this except that the use of these models in the late 20th century leads from mindless competition to envy to
greed to alienation to waste.
One new model did enter the ecosystem in the sixties, public fund-
ing for the arts, and its impact is not to be discounted. But by large, we continue to accept the status quo: gross maldistribution of wealth with the community, and systematic max-
imalization of the many diverse aes-
thetics which happen to be out of synch with the New York power structure. What a loss! Who's ben-
efitting from the use of conceptual models that allow this loss?
Most of the critique on socio-
economic aspects of the art com-
munity has taken the form of a de-
bate between an "individualist-
spiritualist" position and a 'socialist-
Marxist' position. This debate has served to expose the dualizing forces of the situation, but to continue on with it is just to spin round and round. It's a dead end. In his book, The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property, Lewis Hyde offers a new language and new thinking on the practice of art with an intensely market-oriented society. Further, he sets up a context to allow spiritual and emotional desires to enter the discourse on socio-economic issues. The ideas are not "new," some are ancient, and they don't belong to Hyde, his contribution is synthesis and articulation. The Gift is one of those titles that appears every now and then bringing together ideas that seem to be "in the air" with many people. Hyde ranges across anthro-
pology, art, literature, economics and
color

psychology, discusses the old gift-giving cultures, provides a history of sur
"gifts" inspired readings of Whitman and Pound, and many more alliances in relation to the practice of art in our market culture. To quote one paragraph from the intro-
duction: "It is the assumption of this book that a work of art is a gift, not commodity. Or, to state the modern case with more precision, that works of art exist simultaneously in two 'economies,' a market econo-
mic and a gift economy. Only one of these is essential, however, work of art can survive without the mar-
ket, but where there is no gift there is no art." (I promise the "gift" to refer to the experi-
ences we receive when we have been touched or moved by a work of art, call it inspiration, delight or whatever, this experience then circulates to be-
come the source of new works of art. (The gift must always move)).
In the art community of the 1980's, the "market economy" has overrun the "gift" economy with the result that many people have been pulled away from the source and the destination of their art. Our institutions are oriented around converting gift wealth into market wealth. For ex-
ample, if a young artist does manage to make a great painting, during the pricing dulls, it will be put into the ecosystem generating money for various individuals at each step along the process. It is the assumption that the choice has come back to the artist or to the gallery owner.
To establish a new balance, clearly, our work must involve new ways for saving the "gift" economy, but we would not lose the source and the destination of your art. The book ends with a chapter on the ways we can use to hold on to the old world view.
The Books:
The Gift by Lewis Hyde, Random House 1983
The Turning Point by Ifor Ff.Ofcapa, Simon & Shuster 1982
The Postmodern Aura by Charles Newman, Northw
_ter University Press, 1985
Reese Williams is a writer and publisher of The Xanom Press from 1980-83.

TEMPETATION: ◆ DRAMA OF SIGNS

By MANUAL (Hill Bloom)

It no longer makes sense to talk
about the future of photography per
se. Which is not at all the same as
saying photography has no future. The
fact is, its future has been pur-
chased wholesale by the digital age.
For good and/or ill, that ineluctable
dimension structures our present reality. Still, many of us are merely super-
fluous, for example, we hear increasingly expressions such as, "digital photography" or "para-
"art." The pertinent issue now is the
future of the person who embraced it — or a being — by the latter. The optical
world of the 19th Century (the auth-
orum and the visual perception) has been ful-
ly computed and simulated by the binary code.
By Paul Hester

"As a matter of fact, economic gain per se defines neither amateur nor professional. Certainly professionals can live their work and in that sense also be amateurs—in which case the most important thing about them is their amateurship. Conversely the amateur can be a professional, but in a different sense: one who is ethically or politically motivated, one which has to communicate rather than simply earn a living in communications.

The relevant distinction between the professional and the amateur then, how to do with commitment, values, and ethics..."


"How's your business? ... Do you have any time for your personal work?" This greeting which confronts me and other photographe who flock to the margins of the art scene, generates a living from self-expression. The assumption is that somewhere in the future, if I'm lucky and work hard, it will be possible to live off my art. In the meantime, it's necessary to turn a few tricks, publish technology, techniques, or trivia.

The Question: How much money are you making? The second is: Have you sold out yet?

As a college-educated photographer who learned my trade in an ad department, I find it difficult to escape the class prejudice against using photography to make money. This attitude is not new, but is another way of making money or go to graduate school and teach.

In school, I learned that to be a photographer, you must be useless. I pursued images that were restricted to an esthetic purpose. A photograph made for utilitarian purposes could, of course, be appreciated for its formal or surreal qualities, provided it was removed from the context of its production.

Bartholomew observed that the doctrine of art's uselessness was the result of the fear of the upper classes afraid that the liberation that they would lose control over.

Tradition elevates art to a sacred plane, above utilitarian imagery. It is fine to be a masterless artist, free of the conditions which influence commercial work. By appealing to our higher, spiritual nature, it is above market determinants. As long as genius or divine inspiration is the source for art, any questioning of the conditions of art's production is sacrilege.

Fundamentally, however, the worlds of art and commerce are one. Art is a business. It has its market strategies, targeted audiences, investment consideration, promotions, and advertising. Perhaps the only thing missing is a Consumer Reports for art, although numerous buying guides exist. Ironically, when we discuss questions of art, we use the term "work" to imply spontaneity. Work is hard, noble, and manual. We are referring to what a person does for "pay" or "call" it work makes it legitimate by conferring the status of remunerative employment.

Books about art photographers rarely show pictures made for utilitarian purposes. Only much later can photographers that once performed "work" be stripped of their usefulness and enter the pantheon of art. There is a long list of photographers whose museum careers were supported by their commercial photography. Such economic determinants are denied in the art history of photography. Imagine, for example, the influence that traveling for assignments had on Friedlander's stock of self-portraits, where we see his shadow walking the street or his reflection sitting in motel rooms.

Many of the choices made by photographers can be seen as efforts to distinguish serious work from its commercial counterpart. Consider use of large-format camera, or the rejection of the 35mm. When the 4x5 was only commercially acceptable format. Techniques are used to make photographs appear unprofes- sional such as gum bichromate or toned gelatin. I thought the obscure use of black and white avoided the vulgar commercial of work.

The intermingling of art and commerce to validate each other is pervasive. Art is used within the commercial world to add status to a product, as in advertising which dis- plays art in the homes of consumers depicted on television. We know immediately these are cultured, sophisticated rich people. The practice of attaching signatures to fashion photographs attributes a status of art to the products being sold. Corporate approval in the form of collection, display, and exhibition support of the visual arts and artists is the indication of legitimacy and lends authority to an artist's growing career. The corporation enhances its own image by rubbing shoulders with King Tut, Picasso, and other brand- names in the art world.

Objects of high culture are used in the photography of interiors to signi- fic wealth and status. An open book is placed on the guest room table filled with the intelligentsia of the owner, who appears to have just momentarily stepped away. The viewer is allowed to see the space only in the way the designer intended it. The meaning of the space is limited to that of form. The space is not a means to an end. The viewer with control, either the judge of a design competition looking for a con- trolled space, or a client in need of a controllable space.

Another reason to do buildings without people and cars is to not date the photographs. The absence of people has remained a convention in architectural photography since the absence of people in the photograph becomes a stylistic way to ensure that the building will not change, deteriorate, require mainte- nance, or outgrow its design. I started shooting nudes with this same illusion toward creating a sense of timeless by removing not only their clothes but all other clues to the historical time and place. The absence of people is a universal expression that can be used to convey universal feelings related to the form of the human body. I try to anticipate that women looking at these pictures would not respond "universally" to the way I treated female subjects.

I enrolled in a workshop at the Houston Center for Photography (HCP) and took one photograph in particular that encompassed feelings of attraction and hostility. By proposing itself as the context of an exhibition for Amnesty International I wanted to disrupt the ambiguous reading. I had located an audience that determined its own reading of the photograph. A picture of a woman wrapped in toilet paper with only her breasts exposed was accepted as a symbolic of torture in Central Ameri-
ca. Another woman told me that it was so strange of the way she was feeling. Outside of this forum, I was criticized for my anti-woman activities. After working in this manner for over a year in my spare time from commercial assignments, I became involved in the anti-nuclear movement and organized an exhibition at the HCP open, and injured, for personal responses to the threat of nuclear war. My piece consisted of a revolving postcard rack in the shape of a missile. Appropriated images and various quotes were offered in multiple copies and in exchange for donations to the Freeze Campaign. Under the pretense that I was threatening our non-profit status by soliciting funds for another organization, an attempt was made to censor my piece. As a compromise, I covered the solicitation and donation box with a rubber Ronald Reagan mask. The HCP was trying to be an institution with a high art audience, a kind of minor league for the bigtime museums and galleries. This direction involved showing the kind of images that meshed with the assumption that photography looked like art, could be bought and resold, and in fact was art. This distinction between high photography and low photography had to be maintained: the exhibition of commercial, amateur and political production was limited. Big names and big prints from the art world had to be deferred in order to attract big money. The more institutional it became, the more its expenditures grew, and the less brave its policies became.

During the nuclear war exhibition, I exhibited a Barbara Kruger postcard in a local card store. These two events began for me a process which I define in the work of John Heartfield as a “progression from privatized to socialized culture practice, progressing from biographically centered to broad societal consideration.”

Fred Leider was in Houston to participate in a seminar at HCP concurrent with an exhibition of his work. He asked me in person to combine pictures of union members in their jobs with their statements about their unions, and addressed the public perception of unions. He asked me if I had any audience for my pictures combining nodes with Reagan’s mask; did I think I was going to convert them or merely reinforce their opinions? It was a question I had never considered. I had assumed that other photographers and slightly non-political urban sophisticates might be amused by them and perhaps be reminded to vote in spite of their indifference.

As long as I pursued the idea of success in the gallery market, my audience was one of high culture. The removal of photography from its social context into the hushed trench of the museum involved an illusion on the private nature of photographic meaning (its ineffable mystery) and the art world audience, the knowledge that advertisers taste recycled into unimportance compared with the compliment to their inborn sensibilities that it is an appreciation of high art.”

Further reading of Martha Rosler, Allan Sekula, Victor Burgin, Peter Wollen and Doigen Kahn expanded my awareness of audience considerations and the political implications of photography. I understood the conclusion that I wasn’t going to support myself by producing the kinds of photographs exhibited in galleries. The commercial market with its less ambiguous criteria became more visible as a means to escape the repression of an art world in which artists are kept in their place through the tyranny of the prevailing publication and distribution system. The dominant myth is the artist “as utterly alone, unassailable within bourgeois social order, and, finally, uncomfortable in his own existence. This image has endured the folklore of advanced capitalism and is responsible for the unempathetic mass-view of the average artist as a joke and a miss, or at best a lucky (because financially successful) fraud. This mutual dislike has effectively reinforced the confinement of a positive relation to high art to the socially elite. Consequently the artist is romantically appealing but politically ineffectual.”

What kind of art would I make if I had to give up my alienation and sexual repression? I’ve always relied on these as proof of my intelligence and sophistication. Can I still be a relevant contemporary photographer without detachment? Another exhibition became the third challenge to my questions about audience. I was asked to participate in the diverse works exhibition about the Fourth Ward as an architectural photographer. Collaboration on a series of street scenes was in a sense a surrender of my traditional attitude toward authorship and authority. It was also a good lesson in the possibilities and responsibilities of working within the dynamics of a group. In addition I wanted to contribute some photographs of people within the ward. I emphatically did not want to illustrate my liberal, middle-class stereotypes nor did I want to use the Fourth Ward residents as models for my private symbols. I began by offering my services to one of the activists in Allen Parkwage Village. My intention was to photograph what I thought should be pictured. He would be the client and I the camera operator. He introduced me to several residents and I took a few pictures but we were all nervous. They were accustomed to press photographers coming in for a few quick shots, and I sensed a mistrust that limited their behavior to a kind of performance. I made prints of all the people and returned with copies for them. In later visits I was more relaxed, offering something in return seemed to indicate that I wasn’t there for personal gain. I wasn’t sure what the pictures would look like, and occasionally taped into a conventional approach when I was frustrated with the uncertainty. When it came time to prepare these images for exhibition, it was so hard not to edit for “the most interesting pictures.” Because they would be shown in an art space to an art audience, my pride wanted to treat them as individual moments of art; but my intent was to communi- cate the predicament of people struggling to keep their homes. So much information was needed to transform the audience about the misdeeds of public officials that I chose a poster format, indicating an educational stance. I stopped work on the piece without including all the descriptive text that I felt would be necessary to complete it. At this point I intend to return to the people with the posters to find out how they react to the presentation.

“...We must simultaneously widen our opportunities to work with and for people outside the audiences for high art, not as condescending angels bearing the way of thought of the haute monde, but, to rupture the false boundaries between ways of thinking about art and ways of actively changing the world.”

Footnotes
2. Ibid., p. 24
4. Rosler, Ibid., p. 21
5. Ibid., p. 24
6. Ibid., p. 25
WHY REGIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS DON'T TAKE THEIR WORK SERIOUSLY (ENOUGH)

By April Rapier

The innocence! The obviousness that dominates visibly and viciously. Up through the (mostly) social ranks we march, pandering and pandering, the work wars, while many other things—jobs, family, exercise—assuage priority. Some of us say the work is everything, yet that doesn’t seem to help. The most possessed are often the most derivative. No one is inclined to impose a different hierarchy, based on artistic purities or new ways of seeing. The spaces and systems touted as alternatives seem corrupt, false. Art has been in a constant state of decline in direct proportion to its over-production. Is it possible to detail the growth of defeatism? It has reigned, unchecked, amid the once-bright and brightest, since the demise of merit (art for art versus saibility via the money network). That the local market is so problematic makes it seem all the more important and dearable, the larger picture (the nation, the world) looms dimly in the distance, unanswerable. Thus does local recognition become prosaic. Everyone wishes to gloss. Appalling, risome fear presides at every off-the-record remark. Generalizations are sweeping, and serve to caricature, not illuminate. Imaginative matures differently now, based on economics from an idea’s inception.

OUTLINE

I. I do not know what percentage of this information I believe to be true.
A. It all seems to be true.
B. The work confirms it.
C. The expectations can be called upon.
D. Disagreement is encouraged and assumed.

II. The local economic climate stinks, although it used to be better.
A. Things weren’t appreciably better in the good days.
B. The politics of hunger dominate our nations; hungry artists (be that hunger spiritual, physical) aren’t above catering to base interests for some (ostensibly) honorable reasons.
C. Resulting success is normally marginal.

III. Our town has been accused of being backwater.
A. In the aforementioned good old days, taste didn’t run higher minded. When Houstonians wanted a little culture, they went out and bought it, not above catering to base interests for some (ostensibly) honorable reasons.
B. Soft-scaled paintings (or photographs) and coffee table art books were not inherited here, but elsewhere.
C. Tortured souls fare no better or worse than whitefly, free-spirits (or intelligent business people posing as artists, or vice-versa, or dictators, or rich artists who, if only they were poorer could be better artists — in everyone else’s estimation, anyway.

A. No cold-water walk-ups remain; various coalitions exist to exist upon industrial-sized elevators and splendid quarters for all. Demands have been met for the most part, although unscrupulous anti-art landlords raise rents without regard to practical concerns (other than their own).
B. Where are the communal darkrooms, communicative spirit?
1. Darkrooms for rent fare poorly.
2. Some institutions have so little they have to keep supplies under lock and key.
3. Others suggest one not use too much all at once, although one is perfectly within one’s rights to do so. This suggests disequilibrium right off the bat. Mean spiritualism is often a consequence.

V. The spirit of sharing — one’s ideas, work, blockades, misery — isn’t practiced regularly in this region, a useful option sorely lacking.
A. The element of surprising one’s contemporaries does come into play, often with sad results.
B. Commercial opportunities, strangely, are networked (a looseharm term, indeed).
C. Whereas it was once considered a mark of great distinction to be in a collection (of any sort); it now has all the honor of a booty prize. A book deal is where it’s at.
D. Ooz lies in the holy museums, where funds either (a) lie in waiting available but never instantly accessible or (b) instantly dry up when a regrettable unsalable or imminently forgettable portfolio walks in the door.

VI. Unlikely heroes emerge from the most reluctant debts.
A. The above-mentioned are pure-of-heart; they abandon their art from time to time, but only as necessary, and thus, with pride and vigor, elsewhere.
1. They re-emerge unscathed, and resume the making of art, renewed. Or
2. They return to lip-service, bitterer than before, some are represented by gallery or two, while others proffer to teach. The latter groups curiously, continue to be given jobs, often grants are forthcoming. Those who make commercial photography their business risk diluting energy and creativity.
3. Notable exceptions exist in both creativity and re-ветuance to think (imagine) the unthinkable.

A. Myth: The South is populated by overly polite gentility, we can’t concern ourselves without proceeding the inadequate.
B. The above is hogwash: however, people believe and do what they are told, which affects and imposes severe limitations upon creativity.
C. Childhood is a dangerous and infinitely important period of time, measured in increments of goodness and commission of will.

END

These themes are illustrative of the regional malaise, although many variations suggest themselves when people work all day at jobs they despise. They begin to imagine night life of inflated importance. Fantasy is, at this point, hand pressed to take a back seat to a more organized, less perplexed sensibility. Perhaps this isn’t exclusive to our region. Anyway, most artists are commercial entities, instantaneously new now.

New Yorkers (among others) love to admit to seeking fame as well as fortune through the making of art. We are of loftier notions here; that we sell secondary to being seen, (by peers, anonymous but appreciative audiences, critics alike). Local priorities, although noble, seem backward.

There exists a very tangible difference in work being produced in NYC and work produced in other regions. Of course, NYC is an obviously significant part of the world with regard to creativity, associated with risk taking (by both artists and galleries alike). The indictment against the local populace falls on all sectors; everything here reeks of false humility based on faithlessness in the work itself.

It is often mentioned that the work that sells best here isn’t very good. One is loathe to address the implications of this, or form a conclusion. In the New England context, the effort of self-sustenance and growth through mutual support at least partially justifies itself.

There seems to exist very little rational reasoning for doing one’s work. The logic of making images occasionally or half heartedly, with the knowledge that emission potentials are minimal and audiences disinterested, esudes understanding. One is hard pressed to name more than a handful of individuals who continue to work obsessively and hopefully. A conclusion of sorts leads to the business aspect of art: those who make it don’t see it as much of a business venture, whereas those who collect it. Collections purchased for decoration, corporate investment (art portfolios, selected by art consultants) exist. Behavior is infinitely admirable in any quarter. The spirit of private collecting filters in one direction, but not in the reverse — the artists who fatter are out of the running.
CULTURAL MEMORY

Interview with Wendy Wolters and Fred Baldwin: December 15, 1985

Wendy Wolters, formerly a newspaper writer and producer of television documentaries in New York and Europe, is a freelance photographer, writer, and photomontagist. Fred Baldwin, formerly a Peace Corps Director in Bolivia and leader of a photocommunications expedition to the Arctic, is a photomontagist, director of the Photo Communications Program at the University of Houston, and co-founder of Houston Foto Fest. Together and individually they have published in Life, Geo, The National Geographic, The Smithsonian, The New York Times, SPOT, and other respected periodicals. Numerous books feature their work, including We Ain't What We Used to Be, Africa: Images and Reality, Contemporary Texas: A Photographic Portrait, and This Favorable Place. Their recent exhibition at the Benicia Gallery December 11 through February 1, was comprised of photographs selected from those to be included in Coming to Terms, published by Shearman Publishing, and expected to be available later this year.

By David Porch

DP: Wendy, why did you go from being a producer for public television to being a free-lance photographer and writer?

WW: I wanted to work more independently than is possible in television and film. There was so much team work involved in television that I found it confusing, actually. And when I was in television, because of the nature of the cameras, physically, it was very difficult for a woman to become a camera person. The unions weren't accepting them, and there were very few within the television networks either for public television or the commercial networks. And I wanted, I liked, that sort of "hands on" feeling. I didn't want to become an editor because I didn't want to be locked up for days in the editing room, which was the most creative role available to women in television. Now it has completely changed. I taught myself photography and then studied with a Photographic photographer, Harold Feinstein, in New York, while I was still working for television. Then I took a summer and went to a technical school in New York, which Fred always laughs and kids me for. Then I started to freelance. The journalistic background probably was my greatest help in terms of contacts and knowing how to put together a story. I was lucky in that a family friend was going on a trip to Africa and was married to the then head of the Yankees, and Signature magazine was interested in having her write a story, so I took a small portfolio. Today it would be laughable, but they liked it. That was my first assignment.

DP: And after you came back from Africa you met Fred in New York. Is that how that happened?

WW: Yes, accidentally.

DP: How was that? Just out of curiosity.

WW: At a party. We started talking about photography and traveling and he had done a lot of traveling. He had a career doing the kind of photography that I wanted to do. He was one of the first still photographers that I had met.

DP: Fred, you had already done civil rights work when you met Wendy. Was the civil rights work an assignment or was it done on your own initiative?

FB: It was by accident. I happened to come back from Europe and was living in Savannah, Georgia — that's where my home was, originally—and I observed it. Then I got involved out of curiosity. I hadn't been particularly involved in any social activity, and as I followed and photographed I became involved in a little bit of organizing and fund raising for these people, and then became involved on another level, which was documentary photography.

DP: You concentrated primarily in the area of civil rights.

FB: Civil rights, poverty things that I felt needed correcting. Our society was beginning to take note of the problems, and by making the photographs, my intent was to help document the change. Some of the poverty work I did was used by the McGovern Committee to raise money for clinics in very poor areas. The photographs showed the terrible conditions, and we raised about $600,000. My photographs were part of the testimony.

DP: And then you and Fred met, then you just naturally started talking about projects which you would be interested in doing together?

WW: We talked about Chad, going to Africa, but the one project that seemed to strike a note with both of us was to do something called "Back roads of America" because both of us had been out of the country a lot and covering major kinds of issues. Both of us felt the need to become more experientially acquainted with the nature of our own country. We felt that you had to do that away from the major urban centers because of the impact of the media on those centers. We felt that in smaller towns, and along the backroads, you would find three and four generations still in place, so there would be a kind of continuity of consciousness that could be traced. We had both been with our work before we met, very politically involved in many ways, a long time. And really the idea of trying to become better acquainted with what made this country what it is was part of that whole interest.

DP: It does seem like the Texas work is more a historical inquiry than a subject so political as the Agent Orange story or civil rights.

WW: Well, except I think that kind of inquiry is just as political.

DP: How so?

WW: Because I think it has to do with the concept of ourselves as a country and a nation. The Texas work, very much in terms of the text, focuses on the kinds of political, economic and social forces at work in these various places. The East Texas work, shown at the Rice Museum here in 1977, goes very very heavily into the whole question of Black history and Black-White relations and the political activism of Blacks through the 19th century — a history which really has not been told very much in Texas.

FB: Also, the combination of using oral history and researching the records, and going deeply into one place had not been done very much, if at all. Methodologically, hadn't been done.

WW: Even in terms of subject matter...

FB: Yes. Although I thought I knew what was going on during the civil rights movement, I in fact had never heard in heart of some rural culture and seen how it really worked on a day-to-day basis. During the civil rights movement everything was highly polarized and you were one of the groups, in a sense, and rode on this kind of optimism and hope — that there was going to be change and that this work would lead the change and so forth. It is impossible to understand where all that came from unless you go back and examine the detail over a long period of time in a totally unrelated way, just the normal rhythms of southern life. We went to Grimes County, we lived on a Black farm in a small trailer and were able to observe first hand how things worked. That was very important to a basic understanding.

WW: What we had originally wanted to do, "Back Roads of America," became, we decided, too amorphous and too broad. We had gone to several places in the South and then ended or began in Texas because Texas is mythically or literally an apotheosis of a certain American view of itself. It has been an expression of the American dream, its success story...

FB: "Super America."

WW: In the stereotype, it's still, from white cowboy to white olman, predominantly white and Anglo-American. We decided what would be really interesting would be to look at the state which in a sense symbolizes all the mono-ethnicism of America, and examine those elements which came together in the state. It just so happens that there are major 19th century frontiers in Texas of very vastly different cultural origins. So we decided we were going to look at four of these frontiers, now three, of which two are finished somewhat. One is Black and one was German and one was Hispanic.

FB: ... It was Southern, it wasn't just Black...

WW: It was, but the point is that what we were looking at was the interaction of non-Anglo-American groups to the majority group which was Anglo-American — the majority in terms of who dominated the economic and political structures, locally and statewide. The kinds of things that happened to the Germans were different certainly in degree from what happened to Blacks and Hispanics, but similar things, in fact, did happen in terms of their inter-relationship with the majority Anglo culture.
DP: Your methodology included even before you took photos, a concentration on the oral history, is that right?

FB: First the research, then photography and then the oral history. The first thing we did in Austin when we came to Texas was to spend time in the library reading about Texas.

DP: And in terms of oral history you went around with a tape recorder and talked to people on their porches? Did you use video too?

WW: Not very much on their porches. In their houses mostly. I feel I want to make this point. I don't know if Fred agrees with me or not.

I spent three or four intense years working with film and in television, and I am not particularly enamored of film and video. Personally, I like the fact that still photography creates an image that is accessible and permanent and over and over again. It makes sense, I think that is important in terms of culture and our time in history where so much of our information is transient and transitory. The still photograph freezes something in a very, very important way. As powerful as film and video can be, and they can be much more powerful in certain ways than a still photograph can, they cannot compete with the still photograph in terms of capturing a moment of history. When I organized that news photography show for the HCFA, I thought for the last 20 years of major issues in my lifetime. What did I remember? Irrelevancy they were photographs. I had seen reams and reams of film on Viet Nam because I was in the business. We were making films on Viet Nam. We were seeing everything that was being done. But the pictures that I remember are still the photographs, and the same is true of the civil rights movement. ... That's why I have no particular interest in doing film or video myself.

DP: It's interesting that in your method of recording this, acting as historians, you feel you don't need to use video.

WW: Well it's not a question of feeling that you don't need to ... I know in some ways video is the thing that people like to see today. But in terms of my personal kind of expressions, to me, it's something that is too inaccessible, it's nothing that one can go back to all the time and contemplate. Now with the VCR's that may change, but people aren't looking at documentary kinds of things. I think that if you want to make something that people have to stop and look at, and can look at over and over again, then it really has to be a still photo.

FB: I was just looking at the picture of that old Indian guy over there. And that was not a still photo, but a tube which gave you that amount of quality and resolutio, it would be nice to be able to go up and push a button and have the thing begin to move. Say you have 50 feet of sound and you hear the voices, and when you turned it off it would pop right back to that image again. That would be sort of a fascinating piece of tech. But I don't particularly care about something that requires that much apparatus and that much technology to orchestrate. But if it could just be in a box and come out and then regain its life without a machine to bring it to life, that would be very nice.

DP: You like low fuss or no fuss information ...

WW: I think for me it's more than that. Though, I don't mind the tech- nology, that doesn't bother me so much. But a photograph, you can hold it, you can put in a book, you can put your nose up to it. You can feel it, see it, and it requires you to stop.

FB: Also, from a practical standpoint it is something that the person whom you photographed can also share with you in exactly the same way.

WW: It's like its proximity, too. You hear the kind of debate now that goes on about video. Those of us who worked in the medium in the mid-60's debated these same ques- tions over and over and over again. It was a constant debate of how you did film and video in a way that's really experimental and gets out there and gets forth.

DP: In a way, the show at the Ben- ter Gallery seems to be a sepa- rate from the way you usually see photographs, as information giving documents. What is hard to put this show together?

WW: We talked a lot about what we thought were going to be the problems of this show versus our in- tent about the work. Whether to do a gallery show or not ...

FB: Well, we did a gallery show ...

WW: In that sense it was difficult to do because of the requirements of the formal versus what we feel is the purpose of the work. And the pur- pose of the work is not as completely revealed by the exhibit as it will be by the book.

WW: You didn't put captions with your photos in the show. Beaumont Newhall says you're not documenta- ry photographers if you're not us- ing text ...

FB: Oh good. We can be art pho- tographers, (laughs) It's my biggest dream. (laughs)

WW: Well, I think captions are very often as misleading as no captions, or as difficult to read as no captions. In the Agent Orange show I had para- graphs because there was a very specific amount of information that felt people needed, in order to look at those photographs. In the Rice Museum show, we created a narrative through a dense grouping of images, over three hundred im- ages. But we didn't use text there either ...

FB: If captions are very, very short, you tease them. If they're longer, they can be hard to read ... they cannot be long enough to make it worthwhile using them. Because what you often have is another cliché being set in place with the caption. You say 'German Dressed as Indian at Bunny Rabbit festival' or '... the Easter Fires, A Tradition Since Its Inception in 1947' ... Where do you stop ...

"And Written by Someone Who Thought It Would Be Fun To Do This" We would have to do this for every photograph in this show. We just felt that it was better to err on the side of perpliy than didacti- cism. It's too boring, too obvious to everybody. God. Leading people around by the nose. The essay in the catalogue accompanying the exhibi- tion is a little obvious, but it does serve over the points of the show.

FB: But the one thing we should have done was more clearly indicate the relationship between the three rooms or sections, Survival, transi- tion, and myth. Your work is labeled with both of your names and seldom with one or the other person's name. Can you nevertheless indicate aspects of one another's style? Does a difference show up?

WW: Actually, a lot of times it doesn't show up. I think there are certain things that Fred is better at than I am ...

DP: Such as ...

WW: Certain action things. DP: Getting in close to people? FB: No, we both do that. No, sim- ply I can hold a long lens long lens a little bit more easily than Wendy sometimes. I'm not sure that's even true. That could be the kind of difference.

WW: Yes. I don't hand hold a 400 mm lens very well. Fred can hold it pretty well. DP: But in terms of the design of the visuals, or formal qualities in the photographs, you don't see any difference in approach ...

FB: I don't, do you?

DP: I don't think I have isolated separate concerns particularly ...

FB: There are some personal con- cerns that are very similar which bind the thing together. I think we're both extremely concerned about the dignity of the people in these photo- graphs. And our work has a certain warmth and a certain humor. We share those three things.

WW: Where you say 'Concerned with Intimacy' I would think I am extremely conscious of trying to minimize the inevitable exploitation.

FB: Yes. By doing what, for example? WW: By not making a mockery of your subjects. It's very easy to take mocking pictures of the human con- dition, I mean, we probably ac- cepted and saw them. But for one I take our mutual condition seriously. I don't even in caricaturing. I think it is too serious, and sometimes too trag- ically, I feel I'm in it, those things that I am photographing and myself, we are all in it.

DP: From most of the portraits in Coming To Terms I have the feeling you have already broken with these people a long time and gained their consent and then nevertheless you achieve a very natural way with the people. They are outgoing toward the photograph ...

WW: Actually, it's not the case ...

DP: Sometimes it is and sometimes it isn't ...

FB: However, I think there exists something that is strong in the appearance, and that is that we usually spent enough time and know enough about the people, it's not that we don't know the particular individual. But we have daily contact with them, therefore probably don't project any unnecessary barriers between our- selves and the people. We are probably 80% (of the people we photograph, we don't know, but we know a lot about them, and they probably ac- cept us as part of the things that are going on. We are probably a part in these places long enough. We don't project any kind of familiarity, even though we always keep it.

WW: Maybe fifteen people at the opening made some comment, even news photographers, about the in- visibility of the photographer. But a lot of them who already knew the gallery are used to looking at photo- graphs made for the art audience where in fact, I think a photog- phographer becomes a very important part. But here, the photographer style comes out of a different sort of genre. As a photojournalist, you at least have the feeling that the photo has been taken for the viewer your own impression. It's always in the back of your mind to minimize it. That doesn't seem to me that we are particularly invisible, but I was really surprised by the reaction of people that said that.

DP: I actually read a rapport between your photographic subjects and yourselves.

FB: Yes, I think even more rapport than invisibility.

DP: I couldn't see much German- ness in the people when the photos at the Ben- ter Gallery. What does the Germanness show up?

WW: Well, actually we are correct. It is us, it is more than the photographer to visually distinguish their Germanness. Actually, I think Germany is hard to see. But in the first room in the show, most of the people in those photographs were probably generation immigrants and they show a direct kind of continuity of life style with the German culture. But ...

FB: But there are visual clues in the show about the style, the look of card games the men are playing, the target rifle event (a Schutzenfest), the two mules.

WW: It's important to know we are not trying to make a statement. No should the work be interpreted as some kind of expression of nostalgia for the lack of preservation of ethnic
Wendy Watson/Fredrick Bolden/Fredericksburg Easter Pageant

were you talking about.

We'll know it, not right away.

it's a German! Right.

I believe it.

All that.

them, the second world war.

and the victors.

of our access to...
might have been, but David Douglas Duncan — I remember him particul-
larly well — was always on his back as being all that wonderful. Of course, there have been several very prominent and very seri-
ously important to photographers who were getting started in the 50s. And Carol 
Sellers,photographers in those days had a special 
paranoid, I think it was the idea of being big and being much as anything. 

FP: I see traces of that in 
fluence in the way you work now! 

FB: No, it doesn't 

FP: It has to do more now with the position of the photographer — I think I take references from some 
art fine photographers. Like Carolee Schneemann or that 
sort of imagery so beautifully — Well. And I can't 
paradoxically be one of the 
Starry Fishy for life. These are the kinds of pictures I really enjoy the de-
 tails — the focus of the light on 
black kid being interrogated by the 
quon people. I like the kind of feel-

FP: I think that the use of light is one of the first impressions for a viewer of 
The Rosell in the 

FW: Curious. I hadn't really thought of that. I'm not sure about be-
ing, I've always been attracted to the 
¬

FW: Yes, I think the 

FB: Artic. Artic. Those im-

FP: DP: 

FB: DP: 

FW: I'm not interested in 

FW: Yupp, yupp, yupp 

DP: Is there a subject - - 

FP: I'm not interested in 

FB: Yes, I make an effort to 

FP: DP: 

FB: DP: 

FB: DP: 

FW: The following essay is based on a 

BY MAGGIE OLIVEY 

"THE PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINT" 

Just 250 miles from the caves of Lascaux and 2500 miles from the first means of artistic efforts are recorded, 
but twelve to seventeen millennia 
many photographs have been produced the first successful photo-
graphic image. A relatively simple ac-
cumulation of technical standards, which 
photographic, representations of the edible, represented absolute veracity — 

THE PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINT 

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston 

A Catalogue of an Unmounted 

DESCRIBED CATALOGUE.
Paul Otterburn, a perfectionist of extraordinary intensity, found that the only color process which merited his attention was the tri-color carbro—"a laborious undertaking whose endproduct was capable of remarkably faithful color rendition. On the other hand, absolute color fidelity is sometimes not at issue, or even desirable. The soft pastels of the autochrome possess the painterly qualities sought by the Pictorialists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. And not only the quality of the tonal reproduction, but also the intensity of its hue needs to be considered. Indeed, the process is not, to 20th-century eyes, anachronistic, if not altogether a richer, more vivid color provided by advertising to attract and hold the viewer's attention (usually produced from transparency negatives by the Cibachrome method) is more widely used than additional transitions appertaining to most landscape photography. Not that termed the "photographic discovery a heliogravure [lit. sun engraving]. Somewhat later in the 20th century, the Louvre reproduced its major print holdings using this process. The resulting heliogravure photographs resemble the original engravings or etchings so closely that they are almost impossible to differentiate. Two relatively young printing processes—lithography (introduced early in the 19th century) and screenprinting (patented in 1907)—owe their commercial existence to principles of photography. And it is not accidental that 20th-century documentation of graphic process is referred to as a "printmaking". The photograph, like all photographic reproductions, share many attributes, not the least of which is the ability to produce multiple copies of a single image without destroying the negative, plate or screen. This particular aspect common to both media has caused a great deal of controversy and discussion as to their relative positions in the hierarchy of fine art. Whether it is a mat or edition (historically, both have been referred to as "artistic"), or "decorative" arts: prints because of their relative affordability, photographs because of their accessibility to the general public, or something as simplistic as the notion that the individualistic statement conveyed by the stroke of the brush is somewhat more aesthetically valid than the apparently mechanical, impersonal print, the argument will go on. As an example, the relatively new and very popular photographic landscape by Ansel Adams is as capable of exciting the imagination and stirring the emotions as a 19th-century landscape painting by Constable or Turner. A "sized" canvas suffers from the same relative status borne by an object (or photographic reproduction) of an Old Master painting. It is true that the goal of the artist is expression, or communication of an idea, a concept, or a way of seeing, these modern or medium which is capable of conveying that message to the viewer. Just as there is more than one literary form for verbalization, the expressive choises available to the photographer are manifold. The precise selection depends on the message and on the peculiar viewpoint. Historical considerations, the content that enter into the choice of process: at any given time materials and/or technology for a specific medium may be unavailable. Someone context also plays a part. The insatiable desire for photographic graphics of distant and exotic lands and scenes from the far-off-far-away directly influenced the development of the infinitesimally reproducible photographic print: from fox Talbot's unique and intimate photographs of drawings to albums of album prints photographs by masters such as Francis Frith and then from books containing platinum prints and photographic emulsions by Peter Henry Emerson and Edward Curtis—both of whom effectively documented regional empires of their respective homelands—into half-tone plates which can provide unlimited accessibility to virtually any visual record. But the choice of technique is usually a very personal matter depending on individual needs as much or even more than it does on external influences.

There is a risk in any process oriented discussion of photography to tout the considerations of technique above more aesthetic attributes, just as there is a tendency on the part of the individual photographer to fall into the technique-for-technique's-sake trap. The photographic print has suffered from a long-standing derangement in the eyes of the art community for its combined lack of subtlety on one hand and its seemingly impersonal, overly mechanized, and multiple image-producing nature on the other. This view of the medium is not unfounded. As in other art forms, the craft and tools of the trade can often seduce the technically oriented practitioner into a formulaic mode, a photograph-by-the-number, to speak. But for the photographer who happens to use the medium merely as a tool, and not as an end in itself, it is the content as support- ed by the medium which is ascen- dant. Rather than choose a process unrelated to the medium, the success of the photograph is more likely to use the process with which he or she is most familiar and push it to the limits. Or failing to arive at the desired effect with the techniques at hand, the artist can make his own medium, an idea which is generally its master. Very much the same sensibility of the artist-photographer to use the most appropriate means in order to give form to the objects in the visual field is the responsibility of the viewer to respect that choice of process. The viewer who will not even perceive the eye and wherefore of the medium, the message and their interrelationships, will, in the end, only formulate an opinion. It is not enough simply to understand the process which produced the artwork at hand. The viewer may be misguided into thinking the artist has deliberately concealed the why. The successful use of process manages to stir a balance between materialism and abstraction, and the artist's belief is that the viewer will be able to deduce the story of the artist's working through his own mind. Art is not dead as some have declared it may be. The artist is more alive than ever and what he or she really needs is an audience for his art.

When photographic processes are considered more or less chronologi- cally an interesting phenomenon may be observed: the techniques are not necessarily discrete, unrelated entities. Rather, they tend to form a con- tinuum where certain aspects of one method may be used in the development of another to obtain a subtle, or perhaps even a distinct alteration in appearance. Just as Talbot's calotype is the progenitor of today's gelatin silver photographs, the silver print has served as the chemical basis for the color coupler process. The light-sensitivity demonstrated by potassium dichromate is the point of departure common to the production of the seemingly gum bichromate, collotype and carbon photographs.

The latitude afforded by a given photographic technique is liberal: in the hands of imaginative photog- raphers, the same process can give rise to widely divergent imagery. A combination of photography and printmaking made possible by drawing directly onto a coated glass plate attracted the 19th-century painters Camille Corot and Charles Daubigny to the cliché-verre process. A print of great tonal range and fidelity could be produced, and both men experimented with every conceivable modification permitted by the process. The scratched and mar- rupated negatives used to produce cliché-verre by Brassai in the 1930s, and by Joel Peter Witkin today are variations on the same technical theme. The essential differences between the resulting prints lie in the context and intended message of the respective images as defined by the choice of technique rather than in the specific alterations applied to the process.

The introduction of color into a common usage around the turn of the century put a new kink into an already tangled situation. Photographers who already had to define their personal stylistic identities by their choice from among the black and white photographic techniques (Pictorialism, Objectivity, and the like) were confronted with the possibility of making their photograph graphic prints "naturalistic" by adding the element of color. Now to catch on, color processes were at first largely relegated to commercial applications such as portraiture, advertising, and news reporting. This is not to say that photographers pur- suit artistic concerns had no in- terest in color; in fact, over the years many have experimented with non-black and white photography. How- ever, for most of the 20th century it has been generally accepted that photography rendered in shades of black, gray, and white is more "artistic" than its color counterpart. This attitude derives from the limitation of color processes. They were arduous and difficult to control in an individual photographer's darkroom, and their ephemeral nature made them impractical for enduring art applications. Recent advances in the stability of the more commonly used color coupler (Sixcolor, type C), silver dye bleach (Cibachrome, type R), and dye transfer prints have made color more appealing as an alterna- tive to the gelatin silver photograph. In addition, color photography has been increasingly recognized as a valid art form by curators, critics, and collectors, though it has not yet attained widespread acceptance in the marketplace.

While discussions relating one monochromatic process to another are concerned with facility and generative problems, the relevant is- sues with respect to color technology are not about the methodology per se, but about the nature of the color that is produced. After several years of research and experimenta- tion conducted during the 1930s,
APPROACHING THE FOURTH WARD

By Ann Walton Sieber

Diverse Works has taken on a "hot potato." Taking a left turn from their usual function as incubator and display-case for alternative art, they are extending their realm of influence into the civic and sociological with their January 25-March 1 exhibition. Architecture and Culture: The Fourth Ward. As Project Director Caroline Huber told me, "The idea of doing a show that deals with larger issues than just art issues is compelling."

Although all of Houston was originally divided into wards, the only area which still popularly retain their ward designation are the inner-loop Black ghettos. Fourth Ward is the oldest of these ghettos. It used to be the largest Black community in Houston, extending east all the way to Milam. Many of the original inhabitants were recently freed slaves, and they called their neighborhood Freedman's Town — an appellation which is enjoying a come-back.

Architecture and Culture: The Fourth Ward starts with an exploration of the Ward's early history. One of thephotographers exhibited in the show, Rob Ziebel, is a relative newcomer to Houston; he told me that when he first saw some of the Fourth Ward historic photos "it suddenly dawned on me that this wasn't an insta-town, they didn't drop a pill in a bucket around 1950 and start building — they really did have quite a number of nice old treasures around here. You get this weird perspective living here as short as I have that Houston's history started around 1950."

"Much of the Ward has already been lost. With the construction of the Gulf Freeway and Allen Center, its boundaries were pushed back to W. Gray, Taft, Allen Parkway, and I-45. W. Dallas divides the Ward into Freedman's Town to the south, and Allen Parkway Village to the north. One significant cut-back came with the construction in 1942 of San Felipe Courts, now called Allen Parkway Village, a 1000-unit wartime housing project originally built for white defense workers."

Curator Neil Prinzip and Project Director Caroline Huber chose the Fourth Ward as a focus because they hoped not only to confront Houston's lack of historic preservation, but also what they both referred to as "a homogenizing tendency" in Houston. Caroline said, "Neil grew up in New York and I've lived in cities on the East Coast since 1970; there's a very different sort of urban quality there from that in Houston. For us, the idea of a city with a lot of texture, variations, and ethnic qualities is an essential part of the make-up of urban life."

"Most of the time, in an urban area or a downtown area everybody mingles together, you have a lot of overlapping — that's what makes city life exciting. In Houston I find there's not that much of that." Fourth Ward's cultural texture is presented at Diverse Works through a veritable barrage of approaches. Oral Histories with Ward residents are shown on video. The Mount Horeb gospel choir performed at the opening. Fried chicken was catered from This is It Soul Food on W. Gray. An entire evening is designated for "A Celebration Of Churches," show-casing a sampling of different Ward choirs. An actual concrete stoop was transplanted into the center of the downstairs space, as well as a Ward porch bracket.

Eight local photographers — Rob Ziebel, Geoff Winningham, Phylis Moore, Earle Hudnall, Paul Hester, Sally Gall, Jans Fowers, and Alan Clement — and one non-local, Sylvia Plachy, presented their personal visions of the Ward, gathered under such labels as "Interiors," "Portraits," and "Orchids." Three of the photographers put together albums, allowing them to present a greater amount of their work, and in a narrative context. Several paintings and sculptures were included, most notably the "naive" paintings of life-time Ward resident, Naomi Polk. She incorporates writing and dialogue into many of her paintings, such as her series of variations on "going down that lonesome road."

As the title indicates, architecture was a major focus of the exhibition, done largely with an eye to preservation. Both Freedman's Town and Allen Parkway Village are in imminent danger. APV in particular has been the subject of major controversy. The Housing Authority of the City of Houston (HACH) has submitted a request that the project be torn down, for remodeling costs are too high. Many accuse HACH of inflating renovation costs and squandering funds. For example, Paul Hester's strident photo essay with incredulat- ed facts says that "Painting at APV was estimated at $90 to $160 per apartment. Although the housing officials noted that Kelly Village and Clayton Homes (other Houston projects) were in severe need of painting, they estimated the cost at $300 per unit."

The Diverse Works show includes a schemata of a Public Housing Rehabilitation done in Dallas, as well as several APV rehabilitation proposals drafted in April 1984 by the Rice School of Architecture. Other architectural activities include a lecture by Renzo Piano (co-designer of the Menil Museum under construction, as well as the Ren- pidou Center in Paris) and a week-end chorette with the emphasis on immediately implementable "nuts-and-bolts" proposals.

So, in a departure from traditional self-contained exhibitions, "Architecture and Culture" was intended to be an exhibition that raised some questions, "as curator Neil Prinzip expressed it, "I wanted the show to be a chance, at least," stressed Caroline Huber, "for people to see tangible issues and make a decision for them- selves in an intelligent way and not be beholden to the media."

"We want people to be able to see what they might be losing before, too late too — we wanted them to think about what it means to have it any more."

Although I'm Houston born and bred, when I first started researching this article, I had but a dim image of the Fourth Ward. As my first re- search, I rode my bicycle over to the Ward one sunny Saturday, a penciled street map of its boundaries in my pocket. I thought I was going to familiar territory — after all, I go down W. Gray and Taft all the time. However, as I pedaled up W. Dallas, coming from my Heights home, I
realized that although I've often been adjacent to the Ward, I've never been in it. Glancing down the first forbidding narrow side street after I crossed Taft, realized that this was unfamiliar territory. The next block I glanced down was the same, as was the third, so, without some trepidation, I turned down it. The atmosphere immediately changed. It felt like a street festival, there were so many people out—sitting on the porches, standing on the street corners, kids out playing, couples taking walks. I saw more people out on the streets than I'd ever seen in a Houston neighborhood. Everything was condensed: the houses very close together, the streets narrow. The poetry was bad, making W. Dallas seem sanitized by comparison. Houses were boarded up or partly burned. I turned down a quiet block and passed an old woman and a dog as they walked past a church. The woman had curlicues on and seemed supremely apathetic. The dog was covered with sores — one whole cheek was raw and his hide was mangy. I admit it — I had never seen anything like that before. I was taken aback. Overwhelmed, after no more than fifteen blocks, I had to head out — my senses were overloaded. And what startled me the most was that this intensely unfamiliar community was in such close proximity to my long time haunts. Why was I so totally ignorant of the existence of this tiny area? I'd worked in a restaurant that was less than ten blocks away to the south; downtown was within two blocks to the east; I'd frequented a club that was on the southern boundary — yet I'd never actually been in the Ward. I was shocked that there was such an ellipsis in the middle of my mental map of Houston.

That night I wrote in my journal, "Fury was not a dominant emotion just sense of neighborhood. Even envy, a little, or at least Outsiderness. How can I be so different so close?" As I rode slowly around, I had trouble meeting peoples eyes because I felt through I was "peeking." On a return trip, I met one young man's eyes and he called out, "Looking for the Astrodom?" Another man yelled out, "Checking out the little black culture?" When I stopped and talked to him, after a little while the group of people whom held been standing went back and sat away from us. "They think you're a threat," he said.

This seems like the first problem in approaching the Fourth Ward — be it as an injured Houstonian, a documentary photographer, or a current organizing a show — how to get past this distance? How to make Fourth Ward feel less like a foreign country and more like a neighborhood in my city with which I have some connection? My ignorance of the Fourth Ward's existence is indicative of the insularity of middle-class Houston. Because Houston is so decentralized and freeway-bound, one can spend one's life in Houston and scarcely have ventured into any of the ghettos. However, approaching the Fourth Ward is difficult. When one is an outsider approaching an impoverished area, the difference between oneself and the subject can be intriguing, but misleading. One must have wary of unintentionally becoming a racial tourist — in taking pictures, is one unconsciously making oneself the subject? This is not going to give an accurate portrait, and it certainly will not help diminish that feeling of outsidership and ignorant bafflement. To be some of the difference is not bad — as long as they are viewed against the backdrop of the familiar. Art has both classiness and dis-sonance; when too distant and unfamiliar, the artist does not care because it can't relate; when too close, it has no perspective. Most art makes up the same of the familiar by introducing an element of unfamiliarity. Documentation art lets you notice the unfamiliar, by pointing out what is familiar in it. Over-documentation is another potential pitfall. Architecture and Culture has both documentary interest and aesthetic interest, and the "double-life" is what makes the show exciting. Although the aesthetic side of the exhibition is in service to the documentary, it is vital. Facts are not enough — facts are easily ignored, they are alienating. One hears facts about Ethiopia, yet one doesn't un- derstand the country. More docu- mentation and facts produce library display cases. The artistic element makes us notice the documentary. What approach did the photogra phers take to the Ward?

"I was beginning to feel like it was very much of an outsiders show." Paul Hester told me " — people looking in at the Fourth Ward. Which is sort of how it's always been treated. If you live in public housing then everyone else does what they want to with it."

"I had done a lot of pictures in Freedman's Town in the past [in particular, for a feature article on the Fourth Ward in the Cle, the Rice Design Alliance's quarterly among others.] But the other thing ..., and I haven't exactly accomplished it, is to go in there and say — what do you want pictures of? What can I take pictures of for you? Sort of hire myself out to them."

Paul walked around with Lenwood Johnson, the president of the Resi- dent's Association, asking people who had a variety of complaints, like a broken stoop on a woman's house who recently had knee surgery. He took pictures of whatever the peo ple wanted him to. After held de veloped them, he returned and asked people which they liked and if they wanted anything else shot. With the second visit, Paul said he felt people relaxed a bit more. Paul showed me a shot of Len wood with a cigarette coolly clenched in his mouth, cap pushed back, commanding a slyly. "From my graduate school training, I'd say this was the most interesting photograph. But I don't know if I'll use it — it might be too ... sterile typical. I want to capture these people ... humanesses."

The newest photographer to the ward is Rob Zebele. Although he had done some more journalistic photos for a brief Houston City article, all his shots used by Diverse Works were shot specifically for the show. Rob also worked in APV with the help of Lenwood Johnson. After a small resident's meeting, Rob had the participants stand one at a time at the end of a long hallway with a bright spot illuminating each subject from the tonus up. (Sounds like a fining squad, doesn't it.) The stark can did portraits which came out are a patient departure from the rest of the show's material. "The thing that struck me when we took a walking tour a couple of times," Rob said to me, "is that these people are kind of deplorable. Not only because of their situation financially, but it's as though they're
the last hang-ins of this doomed village.

"What a load of rubbish," I thought, not knowing much about the current state of affairs, but it certainly appeared as though nothing short of a miracle, the city's going to get what it wants — all these people are really doing is buying time.

"So that's how I tried to set up the photos — just the environment that I picked, and by not really coaching them to do much of anything." Janice Fowlie has been shooting in the Fourth Ward since 1977. At the same time, she was working as a photographer documenting a group called Panel Of American Students. Lincoln High School (at 14th and W/Clark) was one of her target schools, and while working with the kids, she got to be friends with one student in particular, a teenager named Charles, who took her back and introduced her to his family and friends and generally helped her shoot. "The first time I went down with Charles, we had been shooting for a while and there were these little girls watching us, so I turned around and took a couple of shots of them. That endeared me to Charles, because he was impressed that I wasn't trying to exploit Black kids — because I didn't do that kind of photography."

"I wonder what would be the other reason for taking such pictures?"

Earle Hudnall has been shooting in the Ward since the mid-seventies, longer than any other photographer in the show. He's got another edge because he's less of an outsider, since he lives in a Ward himself, the Third Ward. His pictures contained less of that odd edge and more of the personal.

"I mainly use my pictures as a document, because I feel things should be documented. I learned early the importance of recording from my family. I grew up in a Southeast rural area in a little town in Mississippi. My grandmother used to always tell stories about how things used to be in the country — a very detailed description of the way things were..."

"I was shocked by the misery and the condition of life there — just one mile away you have downtown, all marble — and so I wanted to do something on the neighborhood, and I wanted to show the pictures, of course, in a public place."

"I wanted to show the bad condition of life. Not so much in the people, just a few of my pictures are of people, and they are pictures of the houses, the outsiders — I hoped that by showing the houses themselves, people would understand how miserable life there was. That was my main concern, about the condition of living."

"I am doing a document, I am not doing art — and this document is meant to show people a bad condition of life."

"I did not see only unhappiness, but still — just because people get used to it, that doesn't mean it is right — it is an indecent condition of life — some moments may be happy, some aspects, but it is a culture which has been born out of misery and unhappiness. I want to be very hard on this, I will be very happy to talk to any photographer who sees this as a 'nice' sight."

"I mean I don't think anyone else has taken quite his attitude, he said. "Well I wonder what would be the other reason for taking such pictures?"


"I am trying to deal with different aspects of the community — show the elderly, show the very young, the religious aspect — what actually goes on there. To try and show a continuity of what goes on there from day to day. Instead of just taking pictures of the people standing on the street corner. I've shot people working on the streets, women sitting on their porches talking, people moving in and out. I depict a way of life. I'm committed to the documentation of simple things."

Architecture and Culture in the Fourth Ward can be subdivided in many ways, but the most telling division is into (1) a portrait of the Ward, and (2) issues and proposals of preservation. I found that the show's emphasis rested too heavily on the latter without having adequately explored the former."

"When I first went to the Fourth Ward, I was dazzled — both fascinated and uncomfortable in my outsiderness. Economic facts, political proposals, and even architectural design problems do not help me get over this alienation felt with the area."

"The first step in any 'question-raising' exhibit should simply be portrait — recreating the Ward in such a way that it becomes familiar — getting intimate enough so that a outsider will feel a human community with the Ward — not viewing the Ward as a scary other, but as a next-door neighborhood."

"Diverse Works recreate the Fourth Ward, make it accessible! Naomi Pet's folk paintings did, as did the video-taped oral histories, as did the celebratory opening — I was ready to join a gospel choir on the spot that night."

"Earle Hudnall does the best job of the photographers of reducing that distance. Even though his pictures show Ward residents in idiosyncratic moments — an old man sitting on a laundry-laden porch, or two stately matrons showing off their Easter outfits, they are not appropriating the 'Portraits of Black Life.' Other photographers' cameras often betrayed their self-consciousness, or their search for messages."

One of Earle's photos shows two older men laconically sitting on a porch stool while a black camera man with a video cam peers at them through his bulky machine. Captured here is the entire issue of looking at the Fourth Ward — but that the cameraman is Black opens the situation up."

"Despite the show's strengths, it lacked an overall retrospective atmosphere. The first problem was simply with the show's hanging; the photos and documents were all clearly spaced along the walls or in an occasional glass case. Large floor spaces loomed empty in both the first and second floors. How different from the close rite atmosphere of the Ward! I would like to have seem more mundane, more one-item-on-top-of-another. The photographer's albums were in this spirit — more was needed. Neil Prizt admitted that, "perhaps one thing we didn't underline in the exhibit enough is the notion of street life."

Another serious lack is the absence of indigenous photographers. Of the photographs by outsiders, I usually preferred those that were overt about their outsiderness, such as Rob Ziegel's prison-like photos. Liz Ward and Jack Maass's social-political assemblage, or Paul Hester's propagandistic montage. Each was interesting for investigating the position of being outside. However, these should have augmented a basic familiar intimate portrait, rather than vice versa.

All in all, although Architecture and Culture: The Fourth Ward had many vivid moments, I would have liked to have seen the exploration of issues and background take a back seat to cultural evocation and minimization.
TRANSFORMATIVE VISIONS FROM EVERYDAY LIFE

By April Rapier

HCP was fortunate in acquiring, for exhibition, the portfolio of 39 Mexican photographers (125 images), assembled expressly to raise funds for victims of the recent Mexico City earthquake. This exhibit was held in conjunction with two lectures and a workshop; several video pieces by Manuel Pellicer were available for viewing in the gallery. (Photo: Meyer, the organizer of the portfolio, and Graciela Iturbide, one of the photographers whose work was included, were in attendance throughout, and created a powerful representation on behalf of the effort, as well as speaking eloquently for Mexican photography as a whole). The exhibit and concurrent events generated a great deal of interest and support on numerous and varied levels — there existed a grateful, somewhat more festive mood to the audience, the freshness (and excellent intentions) of the work being most welcome. The levels of support are invaluable; one such example being the invaluable service afforded by word-of-mouth networking back into the community at-large. The influx of a new and enthusiastic populace brought energy to the Center; it is fervently hoped that this interest will remain strong. There was also generous private and corporate sponsorship; any portfolio sales have the double bonus of adding to an institution's collection and aiding victims of the tragedy. The inherent risk that a so-called ethnic exhibition will seem a patronizing gesture from a seemingly gentrified organization didn't appear to be a factor, that the Hispanic community rallied around the event's concept is one thing, but that said community actively participated and quite enjoyed the event itself is altogether different (and most heartening).

The lecture by Iturbide and Meyer managed to be somewhat controversial in spite of the level of respect the audience came (and left) with. Meyer's images of the US were thought to be somewhat cynical, presenting an overall negative view; whereas his Mexican counterpart images (several pairs of slides were edited to draw upon certain demonstrable graphic and intellectual similarities between the two countries) were perceived as more magical and lovingly favored (as with special children, often the failings are overlooked or underrated). Yet these pairings, and the other images he showed, were well-received, illustrating the rational insight of a seasoned pro. Iturbide's images held a great deal of emotional captivation, indicating that her stance was more involved, less distanced. Her recent work has centered around a remote and simple yet politically active community; although the images are documentary in their intention, many are lyrical and interpretive as well. Iturbide declined to speak to the audience, claiming her English wasn't comfortable level. Meyer demonstrated a familiarity and understanding of her work, acting as a most qualified spokes-person. When questioned in Spanish, however, her words swam with the beauty (and her enjoyment of) many voyages through central and South America. Her book, entitled Sueños de hielo (this and several fine volumes by other photographers in the exhibition, on display at HCP, afford a rare and valuable opportunity to examine representative fine art photography in Mexico), is filled with treasures — transformative visions from everyday life — indispensable to the understanding and interpretation of several aspects of an enigmatic culture.

The workshop was populated by a diverse cross-section of imagemakers — both the interested and the active — and was intimate in setting and tone. Its drama and success lay in the very real interest Meyer and Iturbide demonstrated in the work of the participants (often a difficult task at best). Foundations of understanding were laid on the basis of exchange of ideas and expectations — even on such a small scale, it is precisely this genre of communication that makes a profound difference in the way one views the world. If the images exhibited can be said to represent current trends (as well as history) in Mexican photography, then one must conclude that pictures of a documentary nature predomi-nate. The layout of the exhibit heightened its overall narrative quality, referring to the culture as a symbolic, storytelling one. There is a straightforward simplicity, an honesty with little reliance on device — that prevails over other concerns, rendering them, when they do emerge, relatively elective. The one example of mixed media, by Arbul Angulo, in incorporating torn and altered photographs with a structurally similar sand and gauze collage, stops short in the face of its seemingly under-evaluated craftsmanship. Neither is landscape photography represented often or well, the exception here being Nacho Lopez's simplistic over-

Graciela Iturbide: Juchitan, 1985

Enrique Burtchman: Autonoma II, 1959
views, which seem almost as though he is a tourist witnessing the concept for the first time. According to Meyer, the sensibility dictating that little energy is accorded so relatively unimportant a subject matter. (Prominent throughout, and thus considered important is the recurring iconography of, for example, religion, poverty, symbol). Just as rarely do transformations take the form of abstractions; when they do, the tendency is toward heavy-handedness. Two exceptional examples are found in the work of Jesus Sanchez Uribé, whose undeniably decadent, dreamlike constructions are beautifully mysterious and refreshingly without message, and Gerardo Sutter's Magritte-like studies in shadows and light, enticingly whimsical.

Carlos Somonte's unique approach to street-theatre (where socializing naturally extends) is playful, more easily accepted. This form is useful because in general so much is offered, yet the end impression is incomplete; in Somonte's and Jitiferides work, the intention is both clear and accessible. That folklore figures so heavily is quite correct; what one expects to see, one sees, in myriad variations. It is this variety, mostly free from artistic or historical influence, that so impresses. Yet again and again, one wishes for the transformative voice to appear more frequently, in order that the generic vision be superceded.

Although Meyer stated emphatically that European and US photographic influence is minimal, some images prove that incorrect. Both Meyer and Adrian Bokel employ a street-shooter's sense of drama and the absurd as they assimilate what unfold before them. Salvador Lutero's portraits recall those of Penn, but comparisons are senseless as similarities of this nature are evolutionary and probably coincidental. Enrique Rocksma's "Automóviles II," 1933, is a synthesis of a traditional sensibility (soft self-portrait in numerous free-standing, so they appear to float, mirror) that stands apart from the very direct communications from the i.e., the trusting faces documented throughout the exhibit. The aspect one misses most, based on the important role color plays in Latin American culture and design, is color photography — its absence is conspicuous, and speaks of the economic and practical hardships involved in making pictures in a country where poverty is rampant.

The exhibit is groundbreaking, for it dispels the myth that Mexican photography is 1960s-ish and unimportant (Bravo being the well-known exception); herefore the only representation available did leave a rather hollow, or at times even garish impression. This group of images is celebratory in the lack of endless hardship — speaking of hope, not soliciting pity.

Frida Kahlo: The Broken Column, 1944

by Theresa Ward Thomas

Women Artists and the Surrealist Movement by Whitney Chadwick focuses on the binary role of women in the Surrealist milieu. Early in the book, Chadwick cites the difficulties and potential problems of writing (and reading) a book solely devoted to women artists. Despite the risk of "unnecessarily isolating and perpetuating their exile" she has ventured forward to legitimize their position in the history of art.

"The subversive power of art had become one of the most consistent leitmotifs of Surrealism. Surrealism's language of love, a male language, had to be transformed, to object women, and even while proclaiming women's liberty it defined her image in terms of man's desire.

This vision of woman as muse, the image of man's inspiration and solution, is inseparable from the pain and anger that gave birth to Surrealism. The contradictory images inherent in the persona of the femme-enfant, the woman-child, the female "other" is a "peculiarly male invention." This coupling of opposites, a theme close to the heart of Surrealism, would liberate the creativity of the male artist while "suppressing that of his female counterpart."

To establish her autonomy, the woman artist rejected the Surrealist idea of the muse as "other." She rejected the idea of woman as an abstract principle and turned instead to her own images and realities as sources for her work. The "internalization of the muse" was a major step in her search for greater self-awareness.

"The self-portrait became a telling metaphor of the woman artist's
attempt to resolve the Surrealist poten-
tialities of inner and outer reality. Male
Surrealists overcome the polarity by
projecting inner reality, in the form
of desire, onto an external being (the
masculine), women artists turn to the
self-portrait as a device for initiating
the same dialogue between inner and
outer reality.

The author charts the development and
expanding imagery of more than
twenty women artists from the in-
ception of the 1924 Manifesto of Sur-
realism well into the years following
the Second World War. The numer-
ous plates illustrate a wide range of
thematically and stylistically
varied projects that attempted to re-shape the "given" definition of Surrealism to suit its
needs and desires as artists. Neither
completely outside or inside of the
Surrealist "Center" where Andre
Breton, the "architect of Surrealism"
held court, they participated in many
of the group's major exhibitions.

Their work and life along side their
male counterparts, sharing with
them the same interest and fascina-
tion in myth (both invented and
universal), nature and the manifesta-
tion of the conscious and unconscis-
ous mind. The muse, the "femme-enfant',
whose clarity of vision and naivete
led the male artist to the creativity
of the unconscious realm proved to
be a liability for the woman artist.

The introspective nature of their
work placed them in a unique posi-
tion of being simultaneously the ob-
server and observed. In this guise,
the muse was capable of invoking an
"element of instability bordering on
madness." Though intrigued by the
various forms of madness and its
relationship to the unconscious,
the Surrealists went to great lengths
to qualify their leged madness:

"Adopting madness as a creative pose
for men and viewing it is a subject for
scientific and poetic inquiry when it
occurs in women renders simulated
madness a source of man's creativity,
real madness a source of women's.
The man is active, the woman's, pas-
tive, powerless, and at the mercy of
the unconscious." (Andre Breton,
Nagoya)

In defense of their work, women
artists strongly questioned the
dogmatic and pedagogical theories
intoned by Breton by refusing to por-
tray the woman and the idea of
woman as submissive in their art.

The polemics of Leonor Fini asserted
that "My painting has the mechanism of
dreams, but is the opposite of
dream since it involves objectifica-
tion." In her painting, the Alcove: An
Interior with Three Women, she por-
trays her friend and colleague,
Leocora Carrington, as a female
warrior replete with breast plate
and solemn gaze. The painting says
Chadwick, "recalls mannered por-
traits of male figures in battle dress,
many of which commemorate bat-
tled field victories. Here the woman
is the warrior, defended and trium-
phant; she is presented as an image
of power and autonomy."

This enigmatic portrait typifies the
seriousness of commitment with
which Fini and many of her contem-
poraries, such as Frida Kahlo,
Leocora Carrington and Kay Sage,
approached their art. The per-
sonification of the autonomous
woman firmly established in her own
reality presents a strong counter-
point to the seemingly endless oso-
sion for the female form, the female
"other" which dominates the work
of the Surrealist male.

In his review of the exhibit, L'Amour
fou: Photography and Surrealism, Hal
Foster presents the "psychosocial
scandal" of Surrealist photography:
"... so overtly does it fetishize the
female body that, even if the Sur-
realists were so fascinated by fetishism
as to be blind to its causes and conse-
quences, as contemporaries of
feminism cannot be." Chadwick refers
to this subverted image of woman frequently in her
text. She piques our curiosity; but
unfortunately the book contains
limited illustration of work by male
artists that would stand comparison
to the abundance of images pro-
fereed in the defense of the woman
artist. It is for this reason that a
companion text is necessary to il-
umnate Chadwick's thesis on the
drama of the femme-enfant, the
muse as artist. It is appropriate to
turn to L'Amour fou: Photography and
Surrealism, in both its exhibition and
book form, since it is a re-evaluation
of the concerns of Surrealism pro-
duced contemporaneously to the
Chadwick text.

In L'Amour fou we are confronted
with the many guises of woman in
Surrealist photography, e.g.

"Woman as erotic spectacle, wom-
ans as nature, as mystery, as co-creative,
as fetish adornment" ... Rosalind
Krauss has contributed two essays to L'Amour fou: "Photog-
ography in the Service of Surrealism" and "Corpus Delecti." In these cooly
analytical essays, Krauss supplies the
codes necessary to grasp both
the photographic procedures and
psychosocial complexes active in
Surrealist photography. The two es-
says which complete the book, "Men
Ray and Surrealist Photography" and
"Photography and the Surrealist
Text" written by Jane Livingston and
Dawn Ades respectively, accompa-
nied by over two hundred photo-
graphs, support the posture estab-
lished by Krauss that, "photography is
central to Surrealist art and thought.
Whitney Chadwick raises our
consciousness to the plight of wom-
ennartists in Surrealism. Her book fills
a void in Surrealist history that has
been overlooked by many historians,
bth pair and present. Women
Artists and the Surrealist Movement
is recommended reading to anyone
who desires an understanding of Sur-
realism in its totality.

L'Amour fou: Photography and Surr-
elism is the title of a traveling exhib-
tion co-curated by Rosalind Krauss
and Jane Livingston. The exhibition
opened in the Fall of 1985 at the
Corcoran Gallery of Art in Wash-
ington, DC, and is currently housed at
the San Francisco Museum of Mod-
ern Art. Its final destination is the
Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.
A book by the same title has been
published in conjunction with the
exhibit. For a more comprehensive
review of both, see the Winter
1985 edition of SPOT: "Surrealism:
A Photographic Reconstruction."

Notes:
1. Women Artists and the Surrealist
Movement: Whitney Chadwick,
pp.103 and 13 respectively.
2. Ibid., pp.13
3. Art in America: "L'Amour fou"
by Hal Foster, pp.18 January 1986
4. Ibid., pp.130

KILLED BY ROSES

Ronen: Ordered by Roses Photographs
of Yukio Mishima by Elkah Hirsie.
Introduction by Yukio Mishima.
Aperture, New York, $40.00.
By Sharon Stewart

In 1945, Yukio Mishima, Japan’s
creaded novelist and anachronistic
imperialist warrior, requested photo
pride, Elkah Hirsie, to take his portra-
for the book jacket of his
ical essays, The Attack on Beauty. He
knew Hirsie would make an un-
usual portrayal. Mishima, film and No
theater actor, playwright and director,
coffered himself as subject matter to
Hirsie’s interpretation — relinquish-
ing his role as author and, significant-
lly, actor.

The portrait: the revered writer
wrapped in a flexible black garden
hose. The session, Hirsie reve-
lied to his assistant that perhaps
he had been too iconoclastic in his

ENKAI

Eliks Hirsie
approach to photographing Mishima. To the contrary, the author acknowledged his approval of the portrait by agreeing to pose as subject for further studies by House. It was the photographer’s belief that the “look” of A Man was residual in the property, and that his spirit was essentially evident in the art and possessions surrounding Mishima. The resulting desires of this process comprised images of the house (the “Roses,” published in this third manifestation, the first by Aperture). The collaboration’s original publication in 1963 carried the English subtitle: “Killed by Roses,” but when in 1975, House consulted Mishima on a revision, the poet insisted that Ohlrich by Roses was truer to the Japanese meaning of Barakai. And according to House’s notes in the end of the book, the Aperture edition has returned to the original structure, sequence and chapter titles of the first edition.

Yukio Mishima, the student leader of Tanaka’s private army, committed seppuku or hara-kiri, death by disembowelling, on 23 November 1970, in the office of the kidnapped General of Eastern Forces, witnessed by the eager eyes of an alert press. According to an ancient Japanese legend, since 1898 he was often in the entails in the realm. Thus, this ritual suicide was performed at the dining room of Mishima’s residence, the Asakusa Kabuto-kai, on the 14th day of January 1970, in the tradition called “hara-kiri.” Mishima’s spectacular death was the final expression of Mishima’s disdain for the new Japan: a culture whose spiritual tradition had vanished in the “drunkenness of prosperity and consumerism.” This act has been interpreted as the ultimate resolution of the dilemma Mishima faced between the effectiveness of words vis-a-vis the effectiveness of action. The consummate artistic act? Perhaps. Is not the Japanese nation giving American sarcasm a lesson in managerial capitalism and commodity expansion? A brilliant author is dead and Japan has not changed.

Significantly, it was a panting of the marionette of the young, beautiful Saint Sebastian with arrows piercing his flesh, blood spilling, that Mishima, in a fascinated gaze of the replicated image, experienced his first masturbatory orgasm. Later, there would be several images of Saint Sebastian hanging in Mishima’s immediate third story home. Other vestiges of western culture: reproductions of Renaissance paintings by Botticelli and Raphael, Spanish baroque furniture, a black and white marble zodiac, in the garden, brandy and Churchill cigars for dinner guests. House used “whatever Mishima loved or owned to form a document of the writer.” He was concerned with the “destruction of a myth” and the portrayal of a great author in terms that were expressively photographic. This ability to create a myth in this book plays to Mishima’s (and our) fascination with Enzo and Thanatos. House explores life and death through the body and flesh of Mishima photographic and written shot, and through his material possessions. Always present are the Renaissance images of Venus and the Madonna and Child. The division of life and death is used in five parts: creation, individal idiosyncratic action; ide obsevation of human interuence; essential participation in the fantasies of the flesh and spirit; self dissolement with the creator and the created; and the ultimate retribution for the failure to take the difficult path of action against decay and immortality. Thus comes death.

Bara — rape[jap] (Yori: symbol of completion, of consummation between a man and a woman, the garden of Enco, emblem of Venus. The word is symbolic. Ordinal: a primitive means used to determine guilt or innocence by substituting a standard for a pattern or pain tests believed to be under supra mental control with escape from injury only taken as a vir- dication of innocence; a severe trial or experience. Webster’s Third International Dictionary. However, in life death did not choose Mishima. Mishima chose death. Here is the man who would not admit to the decay of the flesh who wrote by night and honored his physical being to perfection by day to deny deaths desperation. There was no retribution of an external rose here, but self-renunciation of the rose of Mishima; self-created who upon self examination, rendered self execution.

The book, Bara: Ordinal by Roses, creates the power of this story. Take it out into the sun light and view all 12 layers of imagery that prime the pages side to side. The images storm, fade and dissipate into the psyche in a morbid and erotic malaise akin to Mishima’s writings. Let the radiant energy of the colors and images be absorbed by the reader’s body. Contemplate the various texts from the Koran, Coda of Manu, Upavishal, Pammenera: “The dainty seen within the eye is the self.” (Up- avishal)

By April Rapier

Stan Brakhage speaks with great authority and conviction, whether through the vehicle of his films and books or in public or personal commentaries on his subject of personal and physical magic. A great and somewhat rare voice that do not allow straying, a teller of marvellous tales, a limitless creator who can only create to compel and potent magic. One insists admirers his being in the world — the gentleness and sometimes sorrows and unbearability, dignified place in the hearts and minds of those who’ve watched him. In town to teach a film course at Rice Media Center as the 3rd Melies Lecturer (a month seems much too short, considering the volume of knowledge he chooses to impart in any given lecture), he wrestles rap- tures and deeply happy thoughts over such disparate matters as nitrate film stock, an appallingly distorted (but black) and the nature of applause ("the most beautiful applause in the world one person’s reaction to a crowd"). His appeal is broad — a typical audience is comprised of film scholars, students, and general public in general, as well as those who are interested or are interested in art, the people of the cinema, the filmmakers. In fact, at times which he has his relatively little to do with film, something literal-minded film aficionados might find confusing. Tampers from the in side out with films that appeal to all the senses — films that create such a wicked sense of wonder. Brakhage brings to film an interdisciplinarity: a poet until the age of 24, he immersed himself as seriously as music as a child, with prodigious success. His departures from both were abrupt and less graceful (he tries to structure what he calls an "image" as a pastime to which he then instigate arrest). Brakhage’s definition of things places music and film as the closest of artforms, still pho- tography and film the least kind of spirits. The “music” of his films — rather, any sound at all — has to do with ongers: the earliest creations sharing the poundings of their hearts by way of physical demonstration. He studied and collaborated with Edgar Varese, but the process of Cage, and the two were among the first to incorporate electronic music into a sound film track. After a certain period, the films became silent.

The magic in Brakhage’s films is what he refers to as “movings visual thinking” — a metaphor for the hypnagogic synthesis of a vast collec- tive consciousness and unconsciousness forming quality of light at all the times. (If not recording events, run it like a nature) One is able to feel that can be seen. Seeing what Brakhage film is a challenge, for the visual is as much without film as an image — from which Brakhage’s challenge. He is about to be so quickly — he over-read it a time, on the edge of hand- ing it over; yet never giving it away. His identifiable signature of hand- holding the camera is in no way camera — he is completely without film beforehand, in order to "express feeling viscerally." The most recent work incorporates hand-painting each frame of film to create swimming tableaux. When Brakhage was in this 30’s, he was locked to "the grand old man of the mountains" (of Colorado, where he has resided for years); as difficult and financially unproductive as his own career has been, he stands in solid support of young independent filmmakers, and has remained an im- pressed teacher/spokesperson for historical or obscure films. Much of what’s taken for granted in advertis- ing film and video today can be credited to Brakhage. For example, he created the first use of slow motion to demonstrate fabric softness. The list of his accomplishments is endless, as is his ability to tie ideas together to form new ones. He is the first recipient of the American Film Institute Maya Deren Award: "having 'sprung from the head of Do- ren' (and Kenneth Anger), with regard to references, this must be terribly encouraging and heartening, for Brakhage awaits a renaissance (hopefully in this country, long overdue. He has fought the imposition of constraints upon his filmmaking (money being the crux of this issue), drawing a distinction between those who do for money and those who do it out of obsession, inspiration, gift of guidance from "God, muse, angels, demons"). (It puts it rather succinctly: "not adjusting investiga- tions to studio whims.") Another stance Brakhage assumes regards the collaborative practicality of filmmakers (a notion unusual to the artists).— "If you say someone is a poet, normally he or she will write the whole poem," although he uses peo- ple in his films. They are uniquely and unashamedly that which are not the same. He feels that his sensibilities applies to children — at that stage in development, "the brain needs to imagine the worst possible thing that could happen. Thus he is unsatisfied in any way, regardless of its appropriate- ness or suitability or popularity. (Perhaps, in Brakhage’s mind, Peckin- paugh’s The Wild Bunch could deal with Khadija, his wife, and some Denver colleagues were "feeling im- pulsions related to the bestakt move- ment, in our own way"; in this manner of synonymous thought and conclusion was existentism su- perceded and “Desert Film” born. In the face of the unevaluable state the world is in, Brakhage is hopeful and forgiving, again referring to the im- pending renaissance (“people are ar- chetypal when they’re willing to go to the outside limits of their dreams.”) Brakhage has a hard but fair critic: of the madness that abounds, distracting the world from appeasing its muse. Some of the hopefakers refers to the “larger cosmos” — the unresolved revolutionary movements, has thought found a perfectable vehicle in film, and he loves all aspects of it equally.

Brakhage edits in the camera for the most part, having upon the parallel between this and a rapid, spontaneous sketch — much of the ephemerasness inherent is uncover- able. He changes the grammar of film, far for the better, laying, as Philip Lasache did in his introduction to the film irrespective at the Me- dia Center, the "mythic groundwork," “All-American, in the tradition of Moby Dick.” It is my belief that Brakhage feels more deeply than most; it doesn’t seem to him as though he belongs on this planet. But he decided to stop his work, some of us.

Notes:

The photograph Brakhage shot after his return from New York (where he received the Maya Deren Award), he asked me to guess what the most important part of the trip was; it turned out to be the opportunity to say a live broadcast that watch- ing television is dangerous to one’s health because of the radiation produced. It was this (and probably, based on the interviewer’s reaction time) bore to be on live TV.
LECTURES/EVENTS

MARCH
1 Robert Frank Symposium: Philip Brockman, Dr. George Cotkin, Ian Jeffrey, Anne Tucker, MFA, 8 a.m., tickets through MFA.
2 French Slides and Lecture: Sherry Barbar Thievery/Elles Moras/Chris Cauquil/François Hers, MFA, Brown Auditorium, 1 p.m.
3 Adam Weinberg Lecture, University of St. Thomas, Jones Hall, 7 p.m.
4 Lithuanian Slides and Lecture: Lorenzo Merlo, Rice Media Center, 7 p.m.
5 British Slides and Lecture: Sue Davies, Rice Media Center, 8 p.m.
6 Bernard Fauchon Lecture, HCP, 7:30 p.m.
7 "Coming of Age" lecture on British photography: Martin Parr/Chris Killip/Paul Graham/John Davies/Brian Griffin/Graham Smith, Wilhelm Gallery 5 p.m.
8 Swedish Slides and Lecture: Birgitta Forsell/Anders Petersen, Transco Tower Auditorium, 7 p.m.
9 Van Deren Coke Lecture, University of St. Thomas, Jones Hall 7 p.m.
10 Latin American Slides and Lecture: Pedro Meyer, University of St. Thomas, Jones Hall, 8 p.m.
11 Spanish Slides and Lecture: Joan Fontcuberta, MFA, Brown Auditorium, 7 p.m.
12 Association for International Art Dealers, photographic for: Warwick Hotel, Ballroom, 10:30 a.m.
13 Dutch Slides and Lecture: Elis Barents, Transco Tower Auditorium, 8 p.m.
14 Anthony Girl author event, "Photographic Collector of Houston Camera Show," Saturday, 8 p.m.
15 Photographic Collector of Houston Camera Show, Saturday, 8 p.m.
16 Photographic Collector of Houston Camera Show, Saturday, 8 p.m.
17 Symposium: "The Insignificance of the Self: Multiple Perspectives," Blaffer Gallery, Houston, 2.5 p.m.

FOOT FEST LECTURE AND EVENT LOCATIONS

Blaffer Gallery: University of Houston, 4000 Calhoun, CAM (Contemporary Arts Museum), 5216 Montrose, HCP (Houston Center for Photography), 1441 West Alabama, MFA (Museum of Fine Arts), 1010 Bissonnet, Rice Media Center, University of St. Thomas, 5000 Main St., at Rice, Warwick Hotel, 200 Post Oak Blvd., University of St. Thomas, 5000 Main St., at Rice, Warwick Hotel, 200 Post Oak Blvd.

Workshops/Classes

MARCH

EXHIBITIONS

MARCH
18 Art League of Houston, 5132 Main St., "Time Frame: A Major Photographic Competition," Tue-Fri 10-1, Sat 1-5, $5, 527-0772
19 Dastar Gallery, 231 Bissonnet, "The World of Reading," Sat-Sun 1-5, call for details, 526-6974
29 Phillips/Cowen Gallery, 1720 Bissonnet, "Rousseau/Sickman: Mirror," Mon-Sat 10-5, Sun 1-4, 523-558
13 April 12 Art League of Houston, 5132 Main St., "Time Frame: A Major Photographic Competition," Tue-Fri 10-1, Sat 1-5, $5, 527-0772
22 Dastar Gallery, 231 Bissonnet, "The World of Reading," Sat-Sun 1-5, call for details, 526-6974
30 Phillips/Cowen Gallery, 1720 Bissonnet, "Rousseau/Sickman: Mirror," Mon-Sat 10-5, Sun 1-4, 523-558

15 April 19 Jewish Community

Through April 8 Allied Bank Plaza, 1000 Louisiana, "Color and the Italians." Mon-Thu


Through April 12 Benetier Galleries. 2854 Colquitt. "Benetier Galleries Horizons." Tues-Sat 10-5, Mon-Fri 1-4 on March 2 and 9. 522-8228


1-14 Davis McClain Gallery. 2627 Colquitt. "Vera Lethndorf Holger Trubsch. Overstudies." Mon-Fri 10-5:30, Sat 11-5, 1st March 2 and 9. 520-0200


1-28 The Drawing Room, 3209 Montrose. Tues-Fri 10-5:30, Sat-Sun 1-5.

1-29 Texas Gallery. 201 Peden. "Close, Maplethorpe, Nicosia, McCollum, Friedlander." Mon-Sat 10-5:30, Sun 1-6. 524-593


1-29 McDermott Gallery. 3508 Lake St. "Local Focus. Armstrong, Cozemy, Crawford." Thurs-Sat 10-5:30, Sun 1-6. 522-8238

1-29 Watson Gallery. 150 Lake St. Colquitt. "Twelve Canadian Photographers." Tues-Sat 10-5:30, 1st on March 2 and 9. 526-9883

1-29 Butler Gallery. 2318 Post office. "Ira Peter Witten. "Tues-Sat 10-5. 522-4532


3-1 Houston Post, 4747 South-
CALENDAR

SPRING 1986

EXHIBITIONS
APRIL


Through April 5 | Pembroke Gallery, 1837 Bissonnet, "Ben Shahn: Photographs," Tue-Sat 10-5.

Through April 5 | Rice University Media Center, University at Stockton, Entrance "7: Interims," Mon-Fri 9-5, Sat 9-5.

Through April 6 & 12 | Housman Art Center, 1419 Holman, "Painted Pictures," Tue-Fri 9-5, Sat 9-5.


EXHIBITIONS ELSEWHERE IN TEXAS

MARCH

Through March 29 | Afterimage, 2980 North St., Dallas, "Morley Bailey," Mon-Sat 10-5, Sun 1-5 (214) 940-4330.

Through March 30 | 500X Gallery, 300 Exposition Avenue, 1st Floor, Houston Museum District, Mon-Sat 10-5, Sun 1-5 (713) 223-3114.


Through April 6 | Asten Street Gallery, 1402 Commerce St., Dallas, "New Faces, also Associates Exhibition, curated, "Interior Spaces," Wed-Fri 9-5, Sat 10-5, Sun (214) 828-8260.


March 23 through April 19 | Arie Warehouse, Austin, "Eight Annual Juried Spring Exhibition," (512) 451-9990.

APRIL


LECTURES/EVENTS

APRIL
22, HCP, 7:30 p.m., Elizabeth Glassman, curator and author, slide presentation of emerging photographers who have studied and continue to work in Houston: "Photography in Texas." Lecture series.

MAY
20, HCP, 7:30 p.m., Sleeth McAlary, Assistant Professor at North Texas State University since 1981, slide presentation of the current work in photography in the Dallas area: "Photography in Texas." Lecture series.

JUNE
18, HCP, 7:30 p.m., Roy Flukinger, Curator of the Garnheim Collection, will present examples of current photography by Austin artists. "Photography in Texas." Lecture series.

LECTURES/EVENTS ELSEWHERE

MARCH
7 Galveston Arts Center, Galveston. Southwest Film/Video Tour, for info contact Southwest Alternate Media Project (SWAMP) at (713) 522-0665.

APRIL
12 Allen Street Gallery, 401 Commerce, Dallas, Joel Meyerowitz lecture, for info call (214) 82-8260.
12 Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches. "Southwest Film/Video Tour," for info contact Southwest Alternate Media Project (SWAMP) at (713) 522-0656.

WORKSHOPS/CLASSES

APRIL
5, 12, 19, 26, May 3, 10 HCP. "Exploring Landscape," instructor Sally Gall, 568 members, $180 nonmembers, info: 529-4755.

MAY
5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 17, Southwest Alternate Media Project, 192 W. Main, "Introduction to Video," instructor Tom George. $105 HCP and SWAMP members, $130 nonmembers, info: 529-4755.

JUNE
DETERING BOOK GALLERY

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