BOLTON'S PRODUCTION OF THE IMAGE/HEINECKEN'S NEO-PHYSIOGNOMY/FREELAND'S SCENES FROM A SIMULATED SEDUCTION/SPACE INFORMATION & BEAUTY/READING MANUAL/ON THE ROAD WITH JOEL STERNFELD/VIEW FROM THE CENTER/PICTURES ON WORDS/THE MALE TRAJECTORY/OPPRESSION IN THE USSR
The appearance of Jean Baudrillard at the University of Houston to discuss "the black mark of mediaevalism's style" amased so much interest in the city's intellectual community that one could look upon it as a minor spectacle in its own right. He spoke in the Phillips-Johnson-designed School of Architecture Building on the campus of the University of Houston. "It's funny," he commented, on seeing where he was to speak. In a packed auditorium where the audience was standing-room only, even Mrs. Dominique De Menil had to scrabble for floor space.

A short, unpretentious man with thick neck and strong shoulders, Baudrillard seemed out of the mold of the walkings-lies rather than from the ranks of the elite French thinkers whose theories have come to dominate the affairs of American culture and thought.

Regardless of where he was speaking, in lunchroom conversation, in a colloquium, or the lecture itself, the tone of his voice was the same: soft, calm, interested, underscoring the power of his presence. He answered all questions in an unassuming good-natured manner aimed at full comprehension. At the colloquium he incessantly fashioned cigarettes from tiny papers and lit, so as to not annoy the listeners and responded: "It was a question of arrogance in his attitude—unless it was protected by fraternized listeners who could not follow the coup of language forming the spirit of his thought processes. In asses, the master of the codex was too strong to be addressed to preference for handwriting or the typewriter over computer-based word processing, for the magnificence of classical cinema over the induced hyperrality of SKY blueblocker movies. He seemed uninterested in discussing the values of art, if it too had succumbed to the "liquification of meaning." In the "designer" culture of the postmodern R.A. as Cynthia Freeland comments in her article in this issue. "Despite his influence on work by many current artists and critics, he remains a cool observer of contradictions in the art scene." Modern art wishes to be negative, critical, innovative and a perpetual surpassing, as well as immediately or almost assimilated, accepted, integrated consumed.

On the heels of Baudrillard came another distinguished visitor, Octavio Paz, poet, philosopher, and diplomat extraordinaried, to open the exhibit, Hispania: Art in the United States, at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. He spoke in Spanish to another full, but linguistically divided gathering, in the Brown Auditorium in the Museum. Upstairs in a large gallery, video monitors and speakers transmitted a simultaneous English translation and single camera coverage of Paz to those people seated in folding chairs who spoke English. "This seating arrangement produced one of those furrowseems in lasting it how it gets to be positioned outside the presence of honor—how it feels, if only momentarily, to lack language—to be the Other.

Despite claims made in a recent issue of Art in America that Texas art is only "nominally political," and that "neither abstract thinking nor abstract art are Texas pastimes," this issue of SPOT is dominated by a burgeoning Houston interest in "the code."

Not long ago Charles Schreier, one of Houston's most incisive and hard-working artists, exhibited at Meredith Long and Company photo-collages and paintings which formalized the confusion between paint and photography tangibly marked combinations with analogous snapshots, in what Samuel Beckett would call a creative mess.

What I am saying does not mean that there will be no art in an art. It only means that there will be the new forms, and that this form will be of a size to admit the chaos and does not try to say that the chaos is something else. The form and the chaos remain separate. The latter is not reduced to the former. That is why the form itself becomes a presupposition. Because it exists as a presupposition from the material it is a presupposition. It is a form that automates the mess. That is the role of the artist now.

Schoen exists in mixing signifiers from dissimilar mediums in order to bridge the chaos between personal expression and the distance of the abstract—in the kind of messy design that is threatening to the painter's sense of "truth to material."

Frank Gehry spoke from an elevated position in his lecture at the Brown Auditorium of the MFAH, Houston sponsored by the Contemporary Arts Museum in conjunction with an exhibition of Gehry's architectural models and drawings. His talk demonstrated how a career in architecture could be advanced by applying contradictory ideas processed from other art forms, in particular, Pop art sculpture.

Where Gehry's architectural collages of building materials echo the combination between high and low forms of culture, Schoen's photo-collages "appropriate" from his own staid projects which he returns to work-in-progress in the present.

At Moody Gallery this spring, MANUAL (Ed Hill & Sazanne Bloom) displayed a series of computer generated color photographs. The show emphasized the problem of selling with language. By reducing an assortment of "coded" metonymic images via captions meant to open up the way of the work, they diminish the complexity of representation in their program to motivate new meaning. And yet, Baudrillard's critical vision might reveal paradoxes lurking beneath the surface of such postmodern critiques of representation. In perceiving this work aimed at "false consciousness" we the viewers, who stand in unwittingly for the consuming public, regard the issues as the responsibility of the Other. We figure ourselves out of the "mediations" under criticism by our superiorities as witnesses—by being present at the gallery. Neither the aesthetics of "deconstruction" nor the metonymic nature of processes of representation can alter the underlying paradox of capitalist space, where everything precisely is motivated by the "deconstruction" of the code and the reproduction of the system. Their need to make sense out of the mental dilemmas of violence and sexism appears arbitrary. As images that critique seduction, they themselves evidence of misrecognition and the reversal of what they appear to be.

The "mid-career" retrospective of New York photographer Joel Sternfeld at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, would seem at opposite ends of the photo spectrum from MANUAL. Where MANUAL subverts the system by revealing it as a world of codes (subversive) mass media films, Sternfeld's best images give us entry into a world of spectacle, where everything is turned into an image for the alienated to consume (jet) a runaway elephant collapsed on a country road, of dozens of dying beached whales bloodying the waters, or of a fireman purchasing a pumpkin at the scene of a blazing house fire. Sternfeld functions here (as the viewer also does) as an eager spectator experiencing reality at the same secure distance as in scenes from a motion picture. Ironically through becoming spectators we experience the loss of the real, and its replacement in processed imagery, even more so than we do while contemplating MANUAL's deconstructive signifiers. Baudrillard speaks of this spectator's attitude of passivity in the face of the world as a subjective "irrelevance," or a strategy of non-response. It undermines the System, in a sort of ironic reversal of the active strategy of deconstruction adopted by artists such as MANUAL, or this writer.
What does *advertising* promise us for our money? Faithful objects? *Terra firma*? An increase in power through sheer accumulation? Yes, all of these; but these gains pale before the greater prize: the territory of the image world. For the object is no longer a sufficient end; it has been superseded by the production of the image. The object is but an echo—an interior reproduction of the image. **Object to image: a carefully regulated exchange! The marketplace: working with us daily to relate objects to their promotional settings!** The lucky purchaser receives not only the object but also its photogenic reality. Of course, the object can never leave this mythic territory. It can never be seen without makeup and proper dress. It must always be accompanied by *advertising*. Once introduced on television or in magazines, the commodity must be packaged in promotion, artfully displayed in the store, wrapped for the happy voyage home. At the end of this voyage, the commodity is swaddled again in the glowing message of its television commercial. *Advertising* does not just sell the object; it is joined to the object—it *is* the object. The world fills with magical image objects: objects born whole in myth! **The new object! Without history or context! In a postindustrial world, vague commodities are fleshed out by rampant *advertising*. Investment services! Credit cards! Tourist services! Style production!** All existence is perfect, glowing, and weightless, wedded to intangible objects. But it is not this simple. **We also are taught by *advertising*! to translate intangible existence into objects; to satisfy desires through consumption; to form our needs within the logic of the commodity system.**
ROBERT HEINECKEN’S “NEO-PHYSIOGNOMY”


By James R. Hugunin

The wordiness of the title to Robert Heinecken’s latest artist’s book carries over into the main body of his text. In his lengthy narrative (set in the Orwellian year of 1984) Heinecken is imaginatively and sometimes explicitly using his own “Big Brother”-like stories to create a sense of the cold, rational, and unfeeling world that has been the result of corporate media. He gives the narrative a kind of Corbynean style that is both entertaining and disturbing. The author uses the medium of photography to explore these themes, creating a sense of disorientation and disconnection.

Heinecken is a master of the critical essay, and his exploration of the relationship between media and society is both illuminating and thought-provoking. He describes the process of creating a photo book, and how this process reflects the larger social context in which it is produced. The text is interspersed with images that help to illustrate the author’s points, creating a rich and engaging visual experience.

The book is a powerful commentary on the role of media in society, and how it can shape our perceptions of the world. Heinecken’s approach is both analytical and imaginative, and the book is a must-read for anyone interested in the intersection of art and media.


By Bryant Gumbel (NBC) and David Novotny (Lunden of ABC). Set of vertical columns of three images each define each text. Reproduced on each end of the vertical column is a shot of each newscaster alone, the middle image being the composite print superimposing the male and female faces onto each other. The result is often humorous, or malevolent, but always androgynous. Here Heinecken, like Galton before him, elevates the ideological photographic composite to the level of the symbolic. Unlike Galton, Heinecken willfully caricatures industrial reason in his tongue-in-cheek accretion of contingent instances. This slickly printed book has the feel of a corporate annual report. It presents a “polar face” toward the reader, a physiognomy liable to fool a reader not conversant with Heinecken’s orchestrated “guerrilla war” against the conventions of mass-mediated image into taking this story literally. The immediate precursors for the material in this book can be found in Heinecken’s Cibachrome photographs of President Reagan’s 1981 Inaugural Address; his Archibald-inspired superimposition portrait of John Nashkowsky, his room installation Valley Oak in a Nail Amoret, and the piece titled TV Network News On-Camera Censorship: Barbara Walters/Frank Davis. (Another American artist, Nancy Buetin, has also explored the fusion of physiognomies, not by
The notion of physiognomy (the art of judging temperament and character from outward appearances) emerges in England in the late 1880s along with phrenology, photography, and other pseudo-sciences. The accelerating tendency to accept the basic physiognomical premise is predictable in technologically jaded cultures. This phenomenon parallels and is inexorably bound to the belief systems about photography—and to all its commercial media step-children.
PHIL osophy

SCENES FROM A SIMULATED SEDUCTION

By Cynthia Freeland

Radical thinkers often singe themselves. They twist or toy with words in attempts to evoke new visions (Nietzsche: “Facts is precisely what there is, not only interpretations”) or to challenge our commitments to language itself (Wittgenstein: “My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands them eventually recognizes them as such.”). Jean Baudrillard is a radical thinker whose books are stuffed with provocations. Who can resist such attention-grabbing phrases as: “Our is a culture of premature ejaculation”? His style seduces with its glossy surface of slogans. But like any seducer, Baudrillard prompts suspicion. He may even count it after describing his own writing as a “discourse of seduction” he admits “It’s a perverse discourse, more as it’s hard to criticize.” His writing also studies excess. Since he seeks to express the postmodern loss of meaning and being, he cannot take for granted any straightforward referential use of language. His books have been called “a mirrored reflection of the sign-systems they seek to describe... Everywhere... are traces of... disintegration, decimation, decay, exhaustion, and brilliance.”2 In playfulness, Baudrillard’s apocalyptic and allusive style recalls Nietzsche’s—surprising, since he did his early scholarly work on Nietzsche. “I haven’t written anything on him since,” he says, “but he is in my unconscious.”3 Nietzsche must lurk in his unconscious as Father provoking the sons’ rebellion. Baudrillard readily writes as an anti-Nietzsche—or better, an anti-Zenothusian. Nietzsche’s prophet was the great sea-sayer who embraced life. Baudrillard recreates the Eternal Recurrence, the creation of meaning, and the rationalization of values in the Overman. His tone laments that he was not available today. His tone that men were not yet ready for his message. Baudrillard is the great non-person; a self-professed “misanthropohilly”4 who writes as if he has come too late after his time. Indeed, after everything: “Today especially the real is no more than a stockbroker’s image, a dead bodies and dead language.”

Though he has been said to have a “magic card” which “derives directly from his reflections on our human relationship to the non-human world of abstract power,” Baudrillard wishes to be neither tragic hero nor sinister social critic. He walks a tightrope between romantic despair over loss of meaning and preachers revolutionary utopianism. Often he appears to pose as pure cynic. “Disneyland is there to conceal the fact that it is the ‘real’ country all of America, which is Disneyland.”5 He has focused on his critical eye on vapors of the contemporary art market, on Warhol and Raucholdberg, on “deconstruction everything from skyscrapers to refrigerators.” And despite his influence on work by many current artists and critics, he remains a cool observer of contradictions in the art scene: “Modern art wishes to be negative, critical, revolutionary and in a perpetual surpassing; as well as immediately or almost assimilated accepted, integrated, consumed.”6 As a theorist, he says, his goal is to make “theory disappear” in this he adds, “There has to be some pleasure at stake, if you can’t do it for the pleasure of preening oneself, to attain dedication (an attack on destruction’s sale). A pleasure, as in short.”7

As a theorist as he adopts a more “positive” theoretical aim. It is to word processes of the loss of meaning. The art strategy is a catastrophic one and not at all disastrous. “Things must be pushed to their limits, where crude naturally they marry themselves, and sublime.”8

During his visit to Houston Baudrillard spoke in a public lecture at the University of Houston, about postmodern strategies of the masses in response to media manipulation. He now sees these masses (described earlier in his lie le Glaive of the Silent Majority, as occupying a strategic position he calls “active indifference.” His lecture set out this current historical situation in some detail. Baudrillard also participated in a colloquium with faculty and responded to questions on a wide range of topics from his writings. He sampled Houston's cultural offerings, from downtown skyscrapers to the Ship Channel, and from the Orange Show to the new I.M. Pei Museum, with evident attentive curiosity. Expecting to find that his intellectual balancing act had produced a sort of grim tension in the artwork, he was surprised by the man himself. In person he seems almost more gentle than going, and he responds to questions about his (often difficult) ideas with patience and yet seductive wit.

SIMULATION

In an open forum at the University of Houston, Baudrillard answered questions from the audience and a panel of five faculty members. What follows is a selection from the discussion.8

What is simulation?

The loss of the object into all its multiplications, so that no longer exists: this means that the model is always here before the event. Simulation brings an end to the opposition between truth and falsehood. Why is simulation become our mode of reality? It’s not a question of cause and effect: the actual world is a simulation of the transhistorical one—and we must try to analyze the actual one. From the beginning, the history of the world is a simulation. Can you clarify what you mean by the “hyperreality”?

It is what is more real than reality—it has more potentiality. It what replaces reality and puts a neutral, indifferent order in its place. Something that establishes itself through excess. For example, fashion is the hyperreal which brings to an end the opposition between beautiful and ugly. Fashion is what’s more beautiful than beauty.

Why did you write in “What Are You Doing after the Orgy?” I just women watching a movie star who wear more than mere femininity. There’s a seduction that happens in front of the perfect body, and the male look regards the female body as perfect. I’m trying to say that the male look didn’t carry the hypothesis of ornamentation. But if the female body is perfect then castrated, then the male body has something in excess and needs to be seduced but “reduced” or castrated. The female gaze shows an obsession with castration and this is obscene. But perhaps I’m wrong—it’s what I’ve observed. You criticize the excess of progress and history. How do you see processes of change, or what comes after it? There are two tracks of history: life, history and fantasy. History is the chronological order of events, which ends in death. On the other track, events occur and recur and so its a spiral, not a line. The terms of opposition might change—masculine/feminine— or product/consumption, but at the end one realization is that it’s always the same opposition. Life is living this dual track. Sometimes the two tracks cross, and it’s either tragic or sublime.

You criticized the University as a place where students and students exchange simulations of similarity. Are you at a university how do you see your role? I single teaching! Simulation doesn’t mean “disimulation” but re-enacting—a game with nothing at stake. In the 60’s, the strategic place of knowledge was no longer there. The object of knowledge disappeared, and there was a psychodrama of learning. Then there was a period of giving. Even that’s over now; it’s uncontrollable now. My position is desperate. But it’s better than that of someone who’s not aware— their position is worse and ambiguous. We can’t anticipate, but we can hope that there’s something beyond this knowledge—but not something within the institution. It’s hard to hold this critical position today, unless we try a new strategy of inertia. How would you describe your own discourse and how should we hear it? Well, I don’t provide an instruction manual: it’s not a logical or dialectical discourse, but a fiction. It could be read as a science fiction novel. It’s not a representative discourse. It started as a critical discourse. It searches for the coherence between the discourse and the object. Is it a parody of the world? No, it’s not critical. The discourse is itself an object among other objects. It proliferates. If it’s discussing seduction, it’s redundant. Seduction is a simulation, it is a simulation as it is. It simulates to replicate the nature of ordinary objects. There’s no stable position; it’s off balance. At best it could be a discourse that moves between the traditional Western philosophical critical discourse and an ironic discourse. It’s moving toward non-reference. It’s not a tool; it’s closer to what it is not being taken as a pure aesthetic object and read for the pleasure of it. Can you say more about your view of simulation? It’s broader than the simulacrum. It’s a primitive strategy of power and magic. Seduction doesn’t attempt to change the world. It talks things away from their origin and identity. In Western culture we have always profaned the world. In
almost every other culture the world has had to deal with oppositions between masculinized/feminine, or parental/cultural roles that were conceived with simulation, but there is no red. Seduction brings in a world of emblems of desire that are not oppositional.

What art makes visible are dialectics of Western cultures and the rule of the law. It is a whole. Together. Simulation implies dissolution which has the goal of putting everything into neutral. In other words, the degree of violence, and the process repeats itself, circulate until the degree of illness is infinite. Alienation was very important, but the subject is estranged with a culture that has crossed itself by indifference. Now they're in a world where there is a subject who has alienated a role to play, its own identity before the Other. The subject is estranged. There's something no Other, nothing.

There are two possible strategies. One way is to go in the same direction but more alienated, in hope of a thesis catastrophe. This is the ironic strategy of the subject—no submission—catching the system in its own trap. The other strategy is resistance to submission, but the passive resistance of objects. The two strategies combine, they play on hyperreality. They look gnostic in relation to simulation, but they are working silently between the desiring machine and our being conscious of them.

STRATEGIES

In 1975, Baudrillard again described strategies of response to the unanswerable, ideally dominating power of the media. He contrasted on an "optimistic" suppression to submission and the dialectic of production. By obeying the dialectic of production, to a "possibilistic" approach, which sees the media as a power with no chance for a real negation or change. Formerly, he explained, he had adopted the pessimistic view that the subject is alienated, and after that he shifted to a strategy of submission. Now, however, he discerns in the masses a "mechanism of resistance—active indifference". This new view sees the silence of the masses as a strategy of resistance but as an "ironic original strategy". In the past, philosophically convincing is the submission of the masses. But this only showed the absence of the philosophes, who presumed to speak for the masses and to know what they "really want", without free exercise of choice and will.

Baudrillard now views the masses as "tabouli". What they seek to be subjects but to become objects to be "impossible". The aim of becoming objects is a paradoxical clever strategy. All along, he has been treating the masses as objects, conceiving them to what they seem to see, by the monitoring media, to want. This is a crucial characteristic of the media—media shows mass objectivity. Through the media, the masses are seen as subjects of who they are and of what they prefer. Among TV shots of light beers, Americans show the candidates or coders. In this "voyeurism of the social", the social keeps "checking up on itself in its own repletion". There is a resituation of information which informs no one — because no one accepts a statistical evaluation of himself. As Baudrillard notes, "The wonder of statistics is not their objectivity but their incapacity to interpret at all. By letting statistics speak for them, without believing in them at all, they are playing with an abstract collective icon game. People allow their subjects to be displaced onto other shoulders. Now the subject becomes objects. Individuals' parody the media's treatment of them—non-chalantly, under an imperceptible surface. They keep it up in the revisions and paradox."

Active indifference, the strategy of... (Continuation...)
SPACE PHOTOGRAPHY

MASTER EXHIBIT OF INFORMATION AND BEAUTY

Presented by HCP for NASA/Versailles Space Center, in SPACE: A Photographic Journey May 12–June 17, 1966. At the Versailles, Hentai, Japan and to travel.

By April Regler

"This is not a story about art. This is serious." - Dave Crossley

Definitions of art notwithstanding, science, technology, and exploration in equal measure have resulted in an overwhelmingly beautiful and profound exhibition, created by Multha F. McClean and Dave Crossley. Space exploration exists for the whole of humanity; without photography we would never certainly nor in our lifetime see what is presented in these images. The primary function of both the concept of space travel and the exhibition of images made in space is to show us what we have never seen before, and to live and die. Crossley relates an anecdote: as a scriptwriter for the Burke Baker Planetarium 20 years ago, he was asked to write about the fact that the earth, in a few million years, would be destroyed by the sun as it becomes a red giant. He thought, "How vast a view. Nobody would believe me about this." Millions of years in the future, yes, but even so— it makes space exploration the money involved and the risks: what are we, in mass, have to do? "It is all about being a visionary and discovering," he says.

A second half went into the culling of this vast and dramatic show. Thousands and thousands of images were viewed, and some are being shown in the show for the first time. The group both political and financial was led by McClean, as were the plans for an attention-grabbing and complete with the original Apollo astronauts. McClean and Crossley began the project by researching via books and magazines, the only possible way to find up photographs made of in space. This led to individuals and agencies, such as the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, NASA/Johnson Space Center, the Atoms and the Lunar and Planetary Institute. Any projects funded by the government and associated that are in the public domain, meaning that citizens have full access to view and use their resources. Proceedings, however, were a different matter. The group at first seemed overwhelming but generosity was the order of the day—HCP paid no money for printing fees whatsoever. The Lunar and Planetary Institute in Clear Lake is an abundant data bank and image resource. Once the images were selected, however, it became necessary to find the creators. They turned to Barry Schroeder of TGS Technology Inc., a photography consultant with this corporation; not only did he locate the negatives, but he assembled the majority of the famous composers that accompany the exhibition.

The Malin and Malin surfaced again and again in conjunction with technological photography, and his interest in the project and conceptual solicitude led to the decision to rely on these alone for the majority of the images. The (Royal Observatory) in Edinburgh, Scotland, and the Anglo-Australian Telescope and the same mountain in Australia, the former being a wide-angle telescope, the latter a telephoto lens. Malin was brought in to speak, and his lecture were magnificent, truly a high-light of the event. The topics ranged from the technical aspects of space photography to the heavens themselves. This is to say, "They are not lonely, which may or may not have origins in scientific terminology, was used more than once, called up bright visions hereafter unforeseen in this wholly new vocabulary, and were a perfect balance of the theoretical and the technological. He declared it was impossible to divorce his astrological sign from, however.

The exhibition itself, 173 pieces, which is to transport around the country, duties referencing, in standard terminology, the fact of photography makes them utterly unique. That they are so new, vibrant, plentiful, lends a universal air to their viewing. The lofty and elegant lobby of the Frankfurt Towers, the perfect setting for them, are huge not only in dimension, but in their ability to stimulate imagination. As McClean put it, "It doesn't take a great deal of preparation to understand the pictures—people can easily relate to their beauty." It provides one with the joyous opportunity of a starting canvass experience; little effort is made to contain spontaneous gaps and comments of pleasure and awe. The composition of our planet—scale, elements, terrains both populated and desolate—is translated to feature, color, pattern and stewardly perspective. Imaging and enhancement are so advanced, the visual experience, Photography is once again rendered mysterious and unattainable, its advanced usage here so different from one's ordinary understanding of the medium. Often, the images remind one of photomontage, introducing the fragility of our endangered planet. But, the sight of the Malin is in direct awe: he feels strongly that it is resilient, and will live on, a most encouraging point of view. Other images seem familiar, recalling the view from an airplane: at 35,000 feet, superpositions of infrastructure completely a real and easily identifiable gridwork. Unseen populated spaces remind one that nature prevails, and humans, although not completely concentrated are merely a minority in comparison. The various techniques of scanning, affording astonishing clarity, resolution, and color (although color is a relative term), other systems of reference being used for identification and determination. The more monochromatic the hues, the more subtle or sublime the landscapes contained therein, some of the black and white images of Venus (of Mars and Mars, notably) are indistinguishable from landscapes made on earth is delightful connection, returning one to photography's origins within a traceable frame of reference. Traditional portraiture is brought in mind to images such as one of Walt Cunningham, looking extremely exhausted and introspective on the last day of his flight in 1968. Another amazing aspect is the naming of things in space— descriptive and fanciful. The Horsehead Nebula, for one, conjuring up especially magical images. The most popular and often-requested images from the exhibition, the Landart Earths are especially available to the public. The elemental dissection visible via these images of our planet is quite powerful: photographs of space are another experience altogether. An immediate shift in emotional perspective is brought about by the inclusion of a portion of any space vehicle in the photograph. The vastness of this one place is incredible and intriguing when a human is placed in its context. The facts and figures, part of the exhibit available to the willing reader. Inform on one level, but the vision of space penetrates a new and highly charged emotional place of consciousness. Distances charted on Mars, for example, become delightfully real when compared to the mileage between New York and San Francisco. Saturn's rings and moons look as artificial as they do actual, their myth being far stronger credibility. Malin and Malin's technological photographs show the various planets and formations in revolutionary new ways, never before seen or imagined. So many of the predictions that were once made into science fiction are being proven true, when asked whether he felt as though life existed elsewhere in the universe. Malin responded without hesitation in the affirmative. These modern-day cartographers use real film and cameras; their results are as seemingly implausible, on the surface of things and to the layman, as the
In the West today where we are surrounded by a vast array of visible and readable productions, "legen-"(stories for the edification of our fallible proclivity in representation as fact. Narrative models drawn up by mass entertainment, advertising, and political representations imprint our behavior so that we may acquire the kind of character which makes us want to act as we must act to ensure the status quo. The tables of advertising and information "give to be seen what must be believed." We are obliged then to believe what we see (what we are shown). Simultaneously framed on our enlightened, positive belief that the real is visible and that what is visible is real. To an unprecedented degree our"perception of the "real" is mediated today by culture, by our cultural artifacts, language, representation, and products. The ideology of a society is imprinted in its production and consumption of material objects and in those forms used to communicate its ideology (language, representation). Hegemony operates as much through cultural sublimation as it does through economic exploitation. Culture is a resource for social control and the status of representation within it is not neutral.

MANUAL (Hill & Halsey) investigation into cultural signs is not limited to the mechanics of signification; the signifier and the signified but extends through deconstruction to question our assumed unipolar ("natural") relationships to language, representation, and to expose the processes at work with images. The work, a series of computer-generated color photographs employing collage/montage techniques to layer imagery and language, provides a model through which the viewer may reappropriate the complexities of experience from the over-simplified conditionings. These short, pithy statements work to programmatically represent and reading in order to center the viewer on the main logic of concern, the reading of images (not just their images but all images high and low, composed in the pictorial and the literary in one work undermines distinctions between visual and non-visual codes of communication). By approaching the images as visual and verbal devices the viewer finds that the visual and the nonvisual interpret each other in a variety of ways. When read, visual images may be called to mind; when we look at an image we may "make sense of it" with words. The combining of the pictorial and literary is a strategy to engage the viewer on more than one level.

MANUAL states that they "do not construe fixed meanings," preferring that viewers create their own meanings. The possibility is present for the viewer to play (if you will) at constructing for him/herself the meaning of the work as it occurs through the conflation of words and images. Left in an undefined state the spectator can "read" the text according to what it tells him/herself about his/herself situation. Through questioning, a variety of meanings"(green, revolutionary ones) may be read into the image, not all of which will be verifiable and valid on different levels of the work. The image is placed as a complex utopian means to be read as an interruption of the inertia introduced to be seen narratively of our social discourse, in which both objects and words have been hollowed out to hold our dreams and desires in suspended anticipation. The work is a site of contestations, situated as it is on an intersection of languages, of the sell, art of society, interpretations proliferate. The audience is seen as not simple. Images are used as an trope and varied ways. MANUAL appropriates imagery and representational technology from the culture at large in order to critique representation from within. Culture's codes of transmission—the pixels of the computer screen, the scan lines of the television set, half-tone dots, and the less apparent grain structure of the photograph—are the determining conditions for the perception of the image. Technology surrounds us with its presence which is in turn represented in the work. The use of appropriated imagery both high and popular formal and collage/montage methods function as a counter practice to the reigning ideology (mythology of still photography, which coauthors aesthetic misformation in moments of photographic truth, notions of autonomous creativity and the resultant line print. Appropriational tactics ensure that the crux of the work will reflect on discourses both inside and outside the art world. Representation is used against itself to deconstruct, to undermine its authority to articulate its unverisity. Is lack in turn to representation is being called into question. Faith the image of the word, appears like a mirage in the photograph in front of us. The word writes, waving slightly a fugitive likely to disappear. We read the work, Faith, which once resided in the unseen, has now been colored up, a hallucinatory sign of its own presence in the image. The word is composed as a color field of black and white, black, opaque letters against a stark background of alternating magenta-colored силы. As "as you see it, now you don't," the satirical backdoor act as a veil to both reveal and conceal from our view the book of a book. This time through the person pulling the string has been let down halfway through the act. The veil of pleasure has been dropped to reveal what is behind the illusion. The tank sits quietly, unconcerned, an instrument of baldness. Its position secure in our capacity for forgetting. Faith, that little ground for uncritical belief in representation relies on widespread acceptance of the objectivity of the image, its transparency, its innocence, its innocuousness. We are the faithful, ready to believe full of faith, in the declarations and the promises, who, held in the sway of the image, have acquired to its power, its authority its credibility. Seeing is believing faith materialized in representation poste several religions. Beloved of doubt, we are also relieved of responsibility. Does blind faith lead to blind submission? Does the image denote the terms of a surrender? Or does deconstruction in alerting us to the fact that the images do things—deceive, operate, read interests etc.—reveal the smoking gun and in doing so allow us to withdraw our belief from the myth of representation, leaving it dis-armed?

One subcultural strategy for interference with the deployment of representational myths is demonstra-
orientations and to reaffirm the basic inequities of industrial capitalism and its class relationships in the concepts of private property, the accumulation of capital and the specialization of sexual roles. The commodity-sign speaks: "To all in order to better return each one to his place." In a society organized for profit, representation serves the forces of capital. In the circularity of this system the words which frame the image have become interchangeable and we are not sure which is the true and which is the false.

The closed circle of commodity and sign are united together in a cultural sphere of domination where images function as ideological tools of cultural persuasion. Signs play an all-powerful role today as an instrument of manipulation used to create needs; sell goods, mold minds and discipline bodies. Just how susceptible to the pressures of conformity the individual has become through representation's persuasive powers is addressed in ORIENTATION. The work is divided into three sections. The left section is a line drawing of a woman's face. The right section is a line drawing of a woman's face oriented on the page in such a way as to appear flat, as if we could peel her up from the page like a leaf. The center image depicts a roomful of young, attractive women seated at tables all looking in one direction (off camera) and all powdered their noses in the same way (the image is a reproduction of a photograph picturing a makeup class from the 1950's era). The image is a model of contagion—the implication being that everyone of the type depicted is powdered their nose in this way. Post-World War II is the period in which the main agencies for social domination became the "other directed agencies" of peer groups, schooling, the corporate bureaucracy and finally the mass media. Reality is now insinuated as what is other than the assumed to be believable and do being. The image acts as a social referent made factual by its visibility, which in turn multiplies the modes of behavior in social life by virtue of its model, which in turn reproduces what is being multiplied in the image as reality and so on. Socialization today is achieved through media enthusiasm for cultural reinforcement in the quotation and recitation of images. In DOGMA ideology is implicated in a clandestine system of domination and subjection where images function as operatives of cultural enforcement. A series of six ambiguous image fragments are brought together in an unwavering mixture (with faucets, faucets overtones) that never quite coalesces. In one image a rough, insipid mask hovers ominously in an undefined space (as if made only by the pixels of the computer screen). In another a woman is depicted floating nude in the spectator's space of simulation, a sight for all eyes to feast on. To yet another image silverware has been thoughtfully laid out. In still another the looming shadow of a man falls across our path and angles dramatically back into the image. In the last image a man obscures his face from the camera with his hand which is further obscured by a line drawing of a military jet fighter. The specter of representation haunts us authoritatively. It propagandizes (spoon-feeds), sets up boundaries (limits thought), objectifies (invades) commodifies (makes productive) and regulates from afar where its affinities can remain obscure, cloaked in mystery.

The voice of subjection is everywhere and nowhere, narrating incoherently. "I'm sorry! I'm sorry!" The question is imperative: the tone accusatory. The voice is the law. We are compelled to search for a telephone. In But Will There Ever Be News? the voice is urgent. We are only too familiar with the sales pitch. As Marshall Bionsky states in the introduction to his book On Signs, "You will find little in America today that isn't a substance manifesting someone, or apparatus, or code intending you." The image acts as a procticle. We are the receptors. The world is a network of signs in which we are all implicated. In consuming the code we reprogram the system. MANUALS work seeks to expose our cultural agenda as a corpus of myths with its flaws and affiliations, its cliches and complexities, and in doing so shatter as from our unquestioning reception of representation and its messages, which traverse and position us. Signs manufacture reality out of simulacra, change sight into belief, fold legend into fact, but we are not entirely powerless over these acts of mythical speech. In altering us to the voices of subjection, MANUAL attempts with their art to subvert the one-way process of culture and ideology that Baudrillard has called "speech without response." 

Footnotes

7. Jean Baudrillard, notes from a lecture given at the University of Houston in April, 1987.
8. Marge Rose is a photographer and printmaker teaching at the Art Institute of Houston.
PHOTO-technology

CURATING IN CRISIS

By James Bell

Just outside the long shadow offakeo Tower and the spectacular exhibition there in BIMNE, A Fleas-Deated journey rejuvenated by INC, the Houston Center for PHOTO-ography is also presenting an exhibit. PHOTO-TECHNOLOGY which, should someone care to make the comparison, would rate as one of the more unique in the organization's history. A list of observations to support this position might read as follows.

The show is unique in that;

1) Actual costs of producing the entire exhibit remained less than what HOW used to spend on openin-
glocations alone.
2) The Center's conference room has been totally dedicated to use as a gallery space—an inspired move to a work-
room where those brave enough to exhibit their work in progress often see it burned under bulk mail or hid-
den behind projection screens.
3) A conscious effort was made to eliminate any image that was considered "straight", that is one that did not enter or involve some electronic medium.
4) The exhibition, through the efforts of Jeff DeBevec, takes a seri-
ous look at holography as a photographic art form.
5) A corporate tech-type (Allan Maxwell from the National Aeronautics Inc.) was invited to demonstrate a product (Canon's Video Still Camera) which represents the lead-
ing technology on which the exhibit was based.

PHOTO-TECHNOLOGY: An exhibi-
tion by artists working with high technol-
gy: video, computer generated, synthetic, or instant images. An exhibition created on the basis of the process rather than aesthetic con-
tent. With the budget constraints placed on this exhibition by the board members it became a challenge and a pleasure to curate. The challenge was obvious, almost a direct and the pleasure comes from the form of the educational experiences of knowing, with one exception artists in Houston who could more than adequately meet the require-
ments.

Dean Chacher is a student, new age disco lover and party organizer who happens to produce very interesting video portraits of his friends. Dean uses video as a tool to pretend to address any theoretical or techni-
elasticity that is necessary. In his work, transformations of Polaroid images made through soft focus video and Chloromorphic processes are contrasted. I first saw Andy Mann and his "Video Masks" at Lawzelle Annex of the fall '86 season. From the same people showed up to see a video presenta-
tion there. Andy commentators his eight, eight video monitors, a VCR and camera to HOW for the duration of the exhibition. His own installation and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to show his work to a broader audience. Andy's videos are designed for playback on four monitors which are electronically switched to reverse and insert the image. When viewed they combine to produce a constantly changing single image which is haphazardly kaleidoscopic and which stripped people in their tracks on opening night.

The collaborative team of Donna Byrd and Lew Thomas utilize video to facilitate expression of a number of concerns dealing with objectification, appropriation, and the relationship between viewer and viewed subject. Lew Thomas has incorporated video into several bodies of work but the new work is more personal, perhaps less access-
ible than his more still works with its impressional reading. The images here have more depth and require more of the viewer than is a mere glance. MANUAL (Ed Hill and Suzanne

Rae Stull Watch with Geoff Ball WATBALL 1987

Rae Stull Watch with Geoff Ball WATBALL 1987

(Boom) has been for years an amaz-
ing work in the area of computer-
manipulated images. They combine pu-
rpose-designed layering and juxtaposi-
tion of images. The images are pho-
tographed from a flat screen scan-
ning monitor using filters to re-create the color image on negative film. It is interesting to note the similarities in the earlier works of Thomas, and Lew Thomas and their present com-

Michael Brodsky sent work to HOW in response to an invitation published in AFTERMAGE—an invi-
tation (after reading his bio and artistic tract record) must have seemed written for him. Brodsky has been experimenting with electronic digitized images and their transformation. A no surprise that upon continued examination it remains one of the strongest images in the exhibit. Michael combines fragmented media images ranging from the nightly news to video games to simulate in a single image the complete assault of electronic media. The meaning of Brodsky's work is reinforced by his use of the very media he loves. His raw materials from as he manipu-
lates the images with a computer and transmits them via modem to have them electronically printed. In addition to the visual artists mentioned, performance artists Guillermo Padilla and Edie Looz contributed to opening night with their work titled "Two Petri Dishes In 8' Flat. This event was a first for HOW unless you count last year's performance by Tremental

Scrap at the Parking Lot Pettitcy, Eddy and Guillermo incorporated live action, video, laser show, film, and video where it is the language of images. The language of the image is the language of the people. The people are the language of the image.

NEW LIGHT: THE HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGE

By Jeff DeBevec

Holograms are made by illuminat-
ing a subject with laser light. Image focusing lenses are not used. The reflected light waves are incident on a two-dimensional photoreceptor plate which records an interference pattern. INTERF from the hologram. If the inter-
ference pattern, processed with a special optical table, is made to order as an optical glass plates and film. The inter-
frequency, pattern, processed with a special optical table, is made to order as an optical table. The laser exposure must be made on an opti-
cal table to realize the entire setup from external vibration.

Holography was theorized in 1942 by physicist Dennis Gabor as a high-resolution scientific imaging tool. The technique was fleshed out in the 1960's with the development of the laser and through the work of scientists in the U.S. and the U.K. Applications for holography have developed slowly. Since the late 1960's it has been used as a tool in science, engineering and medicine. Current uses include laser cutout re-
s which use a form of holographic technology and the holographic security imprint, now seen on credit cards. It is a recent development that is expected to be incorporated as a protection of currencies against counterfeiting.

Holography's area of widest appeal has been as a display medi-
un. National Geographic has featured embossed mylar reproductions of holographic masters or two of their magazine covers, employing its massive publicity power to show-
case this new imagery to the world. Manufacturers are now testing the marketing appeal of holograms, which can be seen on a variety of products. Readability and brilli-

eas of mass-produced holograms is currently handled as an extra charge.

As an art form, holography is in its infancy. There are only a handful of master holograms in the world (250 worldwide) and only a fraction of those will find an audience as an art form. Traditional gallery have been wary of exhibiting holography because of technical requirements and a general uncer-

One of the few new holograms that the eye can detect is the "Turtle Stump" by James Bell. This hologram, created by the artist, incorporates a "turtle" element into the image, creating a form of optical illusion. The use of holograms in art provides a unique opportunity to explore the relationship between the viewer and the artwork.
who have figured in the development of the medium from the outset. Margaret Beason, well-known for her pulsed laser pieces, is considered to be the first artist to use holography in her work (1971). Steve Smith and Tom Czeskowich worked together during the 1970s to develop many of the technical procedures used today by holographers. Melissa Crenshaw is a master of color processing techniques. Ed Welty is respected as an educator and a champion of small system beginning holography.

Frank Davis and Robin Song are Houston holographers who, in association with the Anthony Foundation, have developed a facility to teach holography.

Houston photographer Jeff Delene created the exhibit, New Light: The Holographic Image. See HCR.

Margaret Beason: Cat's Cradle (pulsed reflection hologram), 1983

Photos by Jeff Delene: New Light: The Holographic Image
By Jill A. Kyle

Lew Thomas' recent exhibit in Dallas, Pictures as Words, was a survey of his photographic work over the past 15 years. It makes clear the fact that he has always seen his art as both bound to its historical moment and as an instrument for countermovement beyond that antithetic message. Photography, which has come to mediate, to fully represent in fact, the historical world for most postmodern cultures, offers a deeper medley for an artist like Thomas. He uses it as a tool or scope for expanding philosophical investigations of larger contexts in which he sees artistic content embedded.

During the 70's in photography, Thomas' genre was essentially an elegant, formalism conceived within tight, dry ideological frames. Movement and multiple perspectives in "Throwing-Nikon," (1971) and "Jumping-with-Nikon," (1973), are related to Cubist experiments of visual and tactile effects produced by objects extending space. (1972), an austere enactment of real-time, real-space, has affinities to Minimalism thinking in the sequential repetition of an everyday item, the absence of self and the apparent cherishment of too-ready-compartment enjoyment.

By 1976 Thomas' perspective was fully structuralist. His concerns centered on the applicability of linguistic, visual art and other forms of cultural expression. The theme of the meaning of an art work in relation to broader contexts of social signification, and, of course, doing so through photography, it was Thomas in his most resolute, highly intellectualized phase. He edited two books—Photography and Language, 1976, the catalog for an exhibit of the same name which Thomas curated along with Carl Loeffler and John Lankin, and Structures and Photography, 1979—both containing essays and photography and representation of trends in contemporary photography and in the critical theory of photography. (1978). A black and white photo silhouette of the original book list and an altered version. "Photography" is an example of Thomas' insistance on the use of photographic imagery to convey information. "Photography and Language," 1979, takes on the role of an essay, which comments on the work of others, as representing new ways of looking at photography. This text is followed by a further text, "The Future of Photography," a critical essay, in which Thomas argues for a new kind of photography.

All of the VCR still photograph are of films. The most intense image, "The Vision of Eyes," 1986, is a close range, frontal view of Thomas' semi-erotic, semi-cultural and artistic ideas. Acting as self-critic in the work, Thomas freely draws from the world of photography to produce new images. His work is a testament to the power of imagination. He is a master of the medium.

What Thomas is investigating is not only Duchamp's defiance of a "cultural" acceptance that draws art out of its force for change; nor just the wider idea of the camera as instrument of function but, the timeless of that conceptual influence. Thomas theory on this score has never wavered, but by the mid-80's, his methodology indicates a fissure in his previous adherence to the flattening structuralist insistance of larger social trends i.e., the maintained transcendence of rules at the expense of imagination. In the 1985 VCR art series, a Thomas finally retreats from the idea that once you have gotten the message you no longer need the art. Where before the vagaries of Individual interpretations, and reaction, they are new trends.

Basically what Thomas does in this series, in terms of intellectual content, is to decompose by registering so that Thomas had to rethink his analyses of texts and the hand-painting over them. Thomas may have fostered the self-artifice of interpreting, lighted planes, and materialize as signs of presence so much as acts of absence—meditations of the artist, the subject, of the real. The theme for a series of black and white halftone screens, texture, is represented by an unstated or, not just a reaction against the work of others. In an abstract way, he is in a sense making the image from black and white halftone negatives, not through license in surface-frustrating the before the print was copied. In these pictures, Thomas' vision detached stance that is resistant to personal subjectivity gives ground.

The woman's body language has references too well understood—even the words are incidental text to the message. "I H.O.O.D. (Look)," is the best example of Thomas thinking about making an object that has adequate status as an artwork and a remnant of the history of ideas. The pivotal principle in this tripartite scheme of images is the relationship of the two images or, narrative, being the driving force of the text that otherwise cannot be conveyed. The idea of the text is to force the viewer to scrutinize the signs—of words, images, or whatever—that have no ontological logic. Thomas is well aware of this. "Separate Signs," 1986, a color photograph of two video images transformed into large black and white fragments (distinct sequences), on the top is a butcher block, crowned with five knife handles, and below is the image of Gasparin's T'Yerwall Black Christ. Because of the strong colors, the title words "I H.O.O.D. (Look)" were克拉格en over the body of Christ were flagrantly

archetypal barrier covers part of a book. It is as if the abstract hand is equal to a pronounced criticism of the center. It is related classic sense of representation, and the major violations of it in "I.H.O.O.D. (Look)." In the triptych, the parts, more important than the whole, literally fight their enclosures in two of the panels, and thereby assert that the work itself, besides being a repository of elements, has more meaning as a systems of functions. Thomas has made an abstract statement with images that consist of pure visualization, in another art form. John Ashbery does the same thing with words—From Self-Portrait in A Common Mirror—How many people come and stay a certain time.

Tinted light or dark speak that become a part of you. Like light behind windows or rain and snow. And influenced by it, until no part. Remarks that is never sure.慢
ON THE ROAD WITH
JOEL STERNFELD

Joel Sternfeld, American Prospects, a major exhibition curated by Anne W. Tucker, was shown at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, April 7-June 7, 1987. The exhibition will travel to the Corcoran Gallery of Art and the Baltimore Museum of Art.

By Bill Freivel

Joel Sternfeld first received national recognition for his daytime flash color photographs which were taken in the 1970s of crowded streets, they presented the paradox of psychic isolation within the urban environment. Since 1978 he has worked with large format 8 by 10 equipment to make images of various subjects such as portraiture, urban clothes, or formalist landscapes. This work of the past nine years is the subject of an exhibition and catalog entitled American Propects which has been organized by Anne Tucker and presented at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Identification with the landscape is something to which we, as Americans, are particularly susceptible. In his essay for the catalog, New York Times Photography Critic Andy Grundberg argues forcefully that Joel Sternfeld’s American Prospects should be considered within the American landscape tradition. In the United States, photography has played a significant role in shaping that tradition and the ideas which we have of our territory. Nineteenth century explorer photographers such as Timothy O’Sullivan and William Henry Jackson made images which recorded the terrain and literally created an inventory of what existed west of the Mississippi River. These vast, distinctly American efforts in landscape photography must also be seen in the context of the first American school of landscape painting. The artists of the Hudson River School, some of whom accompanied the same exploratory expeditions that employed O’Sullivan and Jackson, were active from about 1825-1870. They impressed their Romantic vision upon the beautiful and at times terrifying natural forces found on the North American Continent. Citings this tradition from the nineteenth century, and adding twentieth century parallels from Henri and Robert Frank, Grundberg tries to establish Sternfeld’s place in the pantheon of Great Observers of the American Scene. A second essay in the catalog by Anne Tucker, the Curator of Photography at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, has aptly located Sternfeld in the company of more contemporary photographic practitioners who, in the 1970s, pictured the environment in a impassioned manner, eschewing the specific in favor of the general. These artists, Robert Adams, Lewis Baltz and others are frequently referred to as New Topographic photographers. Sternfeld is cited by the title which included their work. It is they who, according to Tucker, set the tone of objective distance in much of contemporary landscape photography. While Sternfeld maintains the objective distance she states that he is less detached and has chosen to work in color rather than white. Sternfeld came to age as an artist in the 1970s when color received its first significant exposure in museums and publishing houses. It is probable that his choice of color materials seemed a bold step within that environment. While working within the rather conservative confines of color photographic formalism, Sternfeld has produced a document which, though it is certainly less boldly detached than say, work by Robert Adams or William Eggleston, fails to make any significant new contribution to either of the genres of landscape photography or color photographic formalism. At his best, he presents curiosities of nature or juxtapositions within our culture which underscore the absurd in contemporary life. But such images comprise only a small part of his work. Some of Sternfeld’s best work seems closely aligned with the notions of the sublime. This concept which originated in the late eighteenth century writings of Edmund Burke was popular in the nineteenth century and informed many artists’ approaches to depicting nature. The sublime is defined, the sublime in nature is that which confronts human mortality with awesome natural forces, which command reverence and respect by virtue of their sheer power. We can see the sublime in images of the aftermath of a flash flood in Rancho Mirage, California, in which the ground, rent by a flood, has swallowed an automobile and threatens a house which sits precariously off the raw edge of a huge crevasse. In another image, the serenity of an ocean view is slowly disturbed by the gradual realization that a pool of whales have beached themselves and died. In recording such events, Sternfeld acknowledges our very limited role in the natural order. His strengths as a color formalist may be seen in a few images in the show. A photograph of a basketball backboard set before a panoramic backdrop of a vast mountain range is among the most beautiful works in the exhibition. The colors of his materials, and his sensitivity to them may be seen at their best in this lovely, quietly ironic work. When the artist turns his attention to social landscape however, the beauty of his photographs gets in his way. The Sunday afternoon following the opening of the exhibition, he spoke of a genuine concern for societal problems and pointed to images of a lido in a field in Maine, a red industrial town in Pennsylvania, and people in a tent outside of Houston, as photographic statements in support of worthy causes. But if social commentary is his purpose his methods are working against his intentions. His photographs are not richly beautiful and the formal qualities of his images are very strong. It would appear however that the large format camera has its limitations here. These big negatives are rich in their detail and color but the 8 by 10 esthetic has trapped him. He has been seduced by the beauty of his work at the expense of more pressing concerns. Sternfeld states that the three aforementioned images are about the plight of the family farm, the crisis in the steel industry, and unemployment— but when viewing the work, such pressing concerns are not conveyed. Likewise the photographs of the Mamiya Corporation World Headquarters in Colorado, which is currently under the siege of Litigation related to its manufacture of asbestos, is hardly a biting critical indictment of their corporate policies. On the contrary, it looks like a publicity piece for an Annual Report to the Stockholders. While making photographs of the American scene, Joel Sternfeld has attempted to reconcile the diversity of our culture and our terrain. The dictates of his approach however, preclude his making a coherent document. Sternfeld merely shows us how parts of America look. It is rare for him to introduce subtexts in his work which allude to meaning. Bill Freivel is a Houston artist who recently received a M.A.A.A.N.A.L. Fellowship Award in Photography. His work will be included in an HCP exhibition this fall.
EXHIBITIONS

A NOTICEABLE TREND

By Lew Thomas

Rube and Hardcastle explain in their curatorial statement for the exhibition "The Manipulated Environment" that the work being shown at HCR is "an overview of the current state of the art of the photographic image," with the emphasis on "the manipulation of the photographic image for the sole purpose of changing the way we view the world." In this way, they posit that the "Manipulated Environment" exhibition is a "manifestation of the new possibilities for the photographic image." The exhibition features works by artists such as Sally Mann, Robert Gauthier, and Robert Frank, among others. The exhibition is presented in a series of "environments," each of which is designed to create a specific atmosphere or mood. The works on display range from traditional photographic prints to more experimental pieces, such as digital images and installations. The exhibition is a testament to the continued evolution of the photographic medium and its ability to influence and shape our perception of the world.
when art has become increasingly bound with various critical discourses. It may be a relief for some to view a contemplation of photographs as a matter of formal issues than with the elaboration of an idea to be illustrated. For those who enjoy a challenge, it is there in Castillo's work. More than in the other examples, he is revealing an awareness of complexity, technical, functional, and poet of philosophy that characterizes the thrust of contemporary photography. Castillo is one in a growing pack of visual artists who use their medium to stimulate a critical awareness to advertisers that prey on consumers in today's post-modern culture. The juxtaposition of synthetic images with video- images makes how males and females, dissimilated from the resident meanings associated with them, are easily co-opted into commodities no different from inanimate objects. The women in the piece: Cafe Tiwa McWay (which includes an advertisement for Cafe Tiwa, Café Mac), is no more than a stereotypical image with an artificial ambience of product set against each other. For a G Lori献血, soldiers in combat are being used, in order to create these expressions and reaffirm of bravo, and recoered as undifferentiated icons of sexuality, a traditional representation of women, as scored by an adventitious textbook, illustration on animal excavation. Some of the images are humorous; yet, none imply that Castillo is anything like then due exactly about interpreting how easily consumer cultures can be manipulated by adversity among more serious questions. Other fund on the exhibit, revealing little dissatisfaction with contemporary life (or information about any of his recent art) in the artist's generation. Do exhibit some artist ambition as well as you see: there was somewhere in several instances. Romantic is probably the best word to describe Paula Friedkin's vaporous female forms because it suggests that her sensibilities, rooted in a concern for light as it touches objects and surfaces, is the picture's color scheme, platinum, decorative with threads of silver glitter on the surface. Friedkin's manipulation of light is so good, it is almost a reliest. The figures themelves within delimited mirrors like Friedkin, Debby White's figures do little to invite interpretation, at least not at first. Her figure subjects are black and white characters. Carefully positioned and centered in well-appropriate frames, several of the little girls are dressed in face and white clothes. They occupy an odd. A world with no boundary to any world beyond. Too strong to relate to any actual corner of experience, which would call for some immediacy and a little distortion, there is something vaguely coherent beneath the curtain of White's vignetted Expressions on the face of a few children's hint at an almost insubstantial incorporation into the world of otherwise picturesque pre-adulthood. Their representations of personal photography are the sepa- tioned landscapes in Bambi Strickland's Super-Fusion Series. She creates a subtle counterpose with her wide skyline and low view: trees, bushes and fences project toward the viewers in comes arrangements, but the lateral spread of a circular, though shallow, space is merged into the eye images into the inverse. Strongly compelling, the pictures are surrealistic to the extent that they contain some suggestion of mystery beyond the external reality in place scenes. There is a played, ironic aspect to the conjuration of images, and three different scenes, but the seen called upon by Strickland's knowingness of how a particular configuration will link the work to her own personality and emotions. Another group of landscape photos are seen in the work of James Bell. His work is seen as a reworking of the same. His use of inter-red black and white images creates pictorial effects, such as the external reality, the silence, and the mysterious contour which may be personal, but primarily the insistent repetition on his image of the nature of the investigation in the registration of invisible infra-red radiation. The most interesting thing about them is that they raise, how should we appropriate abstraction in the registration reality between black and white and the nature and intensity of black and white film? Since inter-red eliminates atmospheric haze; makes small objects appear black and white, there tends to be more sensitivity of composition and abstraction, since the film registers another reality, heat intensity as well as tone intensity. Pictures by Geoffrey Bruce and Pam Pitt need to be carefully looked at: neither achieves a couple of getting on in them. Both woods to photographies are too close by their bizzare arrangements. Pitt's are ren- donantly constructed, Bruce's orderly and with a strong sense of design (Bruce teaches first year and fifth years at Design School and the University of N. Carolina.) In the work of both, atten- tion is drawn to the subject in contrast with the foreground, and presented to the viewer. Especially with Bruce, whose 'ideal' spaces--the metaphor of architectural embasures--surreal much more than the temple sites and test in registers below, the aspect of display and coaction are more relevant to the composition than to the context. In '𝑠𝑒� in the book of Ritual', an arrangement of stacked forms is accompanied by a phrase that humanizes the scene. Pitt, there is at the top: "I had thought that this kind of living, this kind of living on the surface of my reality. But the new lease-purchase plan here is the same you at the word 'Visionic'." Pitt's shopping malls, sprūrmid with pavers, and tomatoes, balconies with sunsets, a romance among the desire and light intensity of time. They are not a desert of light, it is a band of relations between foreground and background objects, an unexpected tension occurs. Our own relations with each other, destroying perspec- tive clues and confusing identity of forms. By creating these gaps, Pitt eliminate any indication of space or scale for the different roles. For instance, like exercises in the formation of abstract patterns on a two- dimensional surface. On the "Members' Wall" two pieces stand out. Edward Scöhne's flag from Banks (Unfused is a work charged with a kind of optical sensi- tivity), it is a line among these other. It looks, however, like Scöhne composed it acting as a true Jesus Christ, a postcard from the term for the first man who takes pieces of wood, it is a piece that materializes a new and free-standing structure. In this case, an artwork. Whatever it is, the work is, in this aspect, though, is the hint that those objects, except for the small color print, are actually visual metaphors deduced from signs and situations in the history of the human experience. Kathryn Reiser's installation, One Day Is the Ideal of Ros (Ridiculous Time), is an in- clusive combination of a public stat- ement on the gravity of time and the velocity, puzzle and mystery expressed through Léos collaborative imaging. Jokingly, I ask questions about a real-life event, the city. It is moving as a reflex from some idea that comes unpre- dicted. Bill Kylo is a frequent contributor to SPOT.
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HCP MEMBERS' EXHIBITION

SUMMER 1987
HCP MEMBERS’ EXHIBITION

Debbie Wake, Stowell Series #3

Barnett Shinnick, Untitled, 1987

David E. Wilborn, Turquoise Pot, 1985

Rob Kradnick, KKK Series
PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE MALE TRAJECTORY

Photographs by R. Lynn Foster were shown at HCP January 30—March 15, 1987

By Lew Thomas

Since September 1986, HCP members have been invited to submit proposals for presenting "work in progress" in HCP’s conference room. Though this program was advertised in the Center’s newsletter, it was not until January 87 that R. Lynn Foster came forth to test its latest possibilities.

The ground rules are simple—show the work in such a way as to provoke questions and discussion.

Formal decisions about matting frames, archival quality prints rest with the photographer alone. For Foster, the purpose of the exhibit was the search for new relationships among groups of work which he had been exploring for the last couple of years—to look for similarities or contradictions in subject matter and presentation. How to use the space was his business—"he was free to seek advice and assistance from whoever he thought could be useful."

Foster’s venture into the space of "work in progress"—a space of multiple decisions and calculated risks—a psychological as well as a physical space—resulted in one of the more controversial exhibits shown at HCP. He responded to the role of self-curating his own work in an open and critical frame of mind. Rather than plan a show to seduce the viewer, he sacrificed the utility of a formal installation by presenting photographs of various sizes, some taken as single images, some as sequences, a few photos taped and referenced to drawings on brown paper, even in a few instances photographs collaged with felt-tip wood sculptures carved or found by the photographer.

Foster, who is a large man, went about the organizing of his show with an alarming intensity. Given all the recent obsessions with photography and postmodern issues of culture, the "code," and the end of representation, his intensely personal and autobiographical approach to photography appeared alien to his display of a trajectory through male cultural rites toward a visual climax.

The photographer and hunter are revealed as one in a series of Oedipal photographic rituals visualizing the sacrificial spot of killing animals. Here is depicted the pleasure and release of an unbound urge to return to a mythical state of the primordial Father: before the construction of Culture. One triptych displays the process of killing an antelope: slitting its throat, pumping the legs to drain its blood, and finally, cutting off the testicles. In the castration image we see the antelope displayed, legs spread, before the attentive efforts and gazes of four male viewers. A boy stands in the background watching with nervous interest. That the photographs express the conditions of anxiety related to the fantasies of violence and sexuality creates a strangely moving narrative of man’s frustration and lack, the least of which resides in the psyche of the photographer himself. These are the most affecting images done by Foster.

In another series based on the "nuisance" the photographer begins to show the stress of art, taken as they are in what appears to be one of those "workshops" for the education and liberation of vision. His sensitive rendition of the textures of bodies covered with mud in a non-threatening landscape with a horse and a dog and dog’s large head, returning the gaze of the photographer, is a comic example of the photographer caught in the act of "a visual crime" replicates stereotypes. This is so in spite of the fact that in some of the images there is an equality of sexual representation, objectifying both female and male in the display and distribution of their genitalia.

The most problematic of the series has to do with photographs of prostitutes in the border towns of Mexico. Predictably recontextualized as "the other," the women (including some imposters) are pathetically posed as seductive objects without any desire of their own. Here in the whorehouses of Mexico the stereotypical woman’s body is identified with sexuality and economics—flesh and currency, the marketplace and the bordello/room—the exchange system. The signifier of the whore’s body circulates without emotion or personal identity; without names or subjectivity in short; without language. These images raised the greatest amount of protest by women viewers who were justifiably angry about the doubling of the male construct, the whore who is there as a stage for positioning the body as a lure and then as a photograph, disguised as a transparent document of the "real," Yet, these clamant attempts to aestheticize "the other" ironically express the hopelessness of bridging differences between male and female, the inequality of expectations, the male with his need, the woman with her victim’s series. Is the whorehouse the unconscious model of mass media? Is it the classical underground agency of broadcast and satellite communications—given that they too convert sexuality into an exchange system of signs, the psyche penetrated by capital? If these photographs of "the other" in the land of "the other" had been presented more consciously as clues—turned into still lifes or tableaux, enlarged to a confrontational scale, and relieved of their artistic self-consciousness, then Foster, who is one of those rare photographers with something to say, would have said it.
PHOTOGRAPHS OF C. LEIGH FARMER & CHARLOTTE LAND
By Muriel Scharberg

Photographs by C. Leigh Farmer were exhibited at Queen's Table through March 28th. The images produce an anthropomorphic vision of human reality by putting animals into a human context. The French novelist Honore de Balzac used the term 'unamurale' to describe his own novels dealing with the foibles of human existence and the term works well with the contents of Farmer's imagery. The cats, dogs, and raccoons found in the photographs are actors mimicking humanity.

In some of the images the animals interact with humans. In these images the animal retains some of its own identity. 'Commuter' features a train of commuters on their way to or from work. In the midst of these disinterested humans sits a Great Dane. The Great Dane is seated looking over the heads of his fellow commuters. In 'Crushing the Sexuality' a dog is peering out from the window of a moving car. There is only the briefestsilver of a human face visible to let the viewer know that the dog is not in control of the car. The two dogs are in different circumstances and yet there are similarities. Both dogs are paying attention to their surroundings and displaying curiosity and enjoyment. Unfortunately the humans do not seem to be doing either.

In other images there is no human interaction taking place. In these images the anthropomorphic qualities are more apparent. 'Sunday Morning After Saturday Night' depicts a hangover after a hard night's partying. 'But Appetit, Mon Ami' features two raccoons sharing a bowl of food. There is a strong sense of amicability and social grace between the two diners. A feeling of curiosity and anticipa-
tion is apparent as young raccoons lean into the lens in 'Are You My Mother?'. The animals in their semi-
comic poses show both good and bad aspects of human behavior.

Also on display were four images from Farmer's Freedom Series. This powerful series utilizes juxtaposition of black and white images of raccoons in cages against color images of raccoons roaming free. The contrast between the natural environment of trees and water and the artificial and imposed environment of small dark cages provokes sympathetic response and anger at forced confinement. The work of Charlotte Land and '...and the snow melts' was displayed at Butler's on Montrose. The images were made in the spring of 1968 in the high country of Colorado and Wyoming. The imagery has the documentary quality found in the work of the western expansionist photographers of the 19th century and the heroic sense of scale that can be found in the landscapes of Ansel Adams. The content of Land's imagery varies from the drifts of snow before the melt to the torrents pouring off the faces of the mountains, etching the landscape as they ran. Charlotte Land explains in her statement, 'The effects of the snow were very peculiar throughout the landscape. It was not just another day, it was region or a very fine. The land was transformed. Landscape itself just seemed to change the experience of the place. The water carves through the landscape changing it each year as the cycle repeats.'

The grandeur of the images relies on two factors, the heroic scale of the landscape and the power of the water to change the landscape. The scale of the landscape encompasses sections of mountains and sky. The images have little evidence of human presence to reduce the scale. The lack of these strong qualities allows the viewer to remember personal travels through mountainous regions and the sheer mass of the mountain sides. The power of water adds to the grandeur of the imagery. In that water is an incalculable element. Man has little control over the flow of water. The water in the images falls and crashes through the landscape. Water has a strange connectivity. It is pleasing to watch and the sound of falling water is soothing to the psyche. The viewer can also have unpleasant connections. If there has been too much snow or snow too fast the water can lead to destructive flooding. Land has captured a very vivid image of all there be enough water for the land to thrive or will the water gather with destructive force?

Muriel Scharberg is a photographer currently studying design at the University of Houston.

LIFE'S FAMILIAR CEREMONIES
The documentary photography of Martin Parr were shown at the Benton-Morgan Galleries, Houston, Texas, March 19-May 1, 1987.

By Patsy Cveen

The first thing to strike you when you enter Benton-Morgan Galleries and see the photographs of Martin Parr is the very 'Britishness' of them. The ruddy faces, the tweed caps and plus-fours, the fields of heather, the four old ladies packed side by side in an almost empty church wearing their Queen Mother hats and sensible shoes, the odd couple seen on a sidewalk, one a dairy cow peering in an open doorway, the other a plump lady pecking into a window, both rear end to the camera, all seem so wonderfully rural England. They are so evocative. You know immediately where they were taken and you sense that they are the work of someone with an intimate knowledge and love of the place.

These are appealing images, executed with a gentle sense of irony and a keen, humorous eye. Martin Parr, native of Surrey, England, seems to enjoy his profession. He calls himself a social documentary photographer and does most of his work in series of images to which he has given such descriptive names as 'The Last Resort' and 'The Chimney Pot Show.' He has published several books.

Documentary photography of course is about the documentation of an event or place. But some rare individuals such as Carter-Bresson or Dorothy Lange have been able to go beyond the mere recording of information and grace their work with some other special qualities. This work will have an added aesthetic beauty or will elicit from us an unexpected 'ahh!' or will give us new recognition of some universal human truth. This is difficult to do but it lifts the imagery to another plane.

Martin Parr brings to his best work a whimsy that strikes a humorous chord in his viewers as he makes his way commentary on life familiar ceremonies. A horse makes a dropping on the sidewalk at the feet of two men who are boshly occupied in talk and gestualization of the溶液 social commentary, what? A tweedy man in a very proper hunt ing outfit some wonders if his labels read 'Commissioned by Her Royal Highness' as gazes with dreamy haz- eur upward as his dog, a proper hunting-sporting suit, sits at his feet gazing into the opposite direction in imitation of his master. A lady in a boring glasses, rhinestone brooch, and sweep-liminated hat casts her eyes dreamily down toward the coffee cup into which she is formal- ly sipping some sugar while her husband, in a mural of the Last Supper, Christ sits, eyes cast down at a very differ- ent type of dinner table.

There are two particularly delightful images from the 'Abandoned Morris Minor' series. The first shows two chickens huddled happily behind the windshield of a discarded car, making the car look like a cozy home. Indeed, the other shows a moose and verdant shrubaerie, a flock of ducks wagging blandly tails in the water while a Morris Minor peeps out from the grasses at water's edge. You fully expect a laughing couple to pop from the back seat at any moment.

The 'Bad Weather' series consists largely of flash pictures of snow and rain. They are not the most interesting. At its worst Parr's show is only fair: at its best, it is delightful.

Patsy Cveen: photographs have been exhibited recently at the Laguna Gloria Museum, Austin, and The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

C. Leigh Farmer: Commmutes

C. Leigh Farmer: Commmutes

Charlotte Land: ...and the snow melts

Martin Parr: Westport Horse Fair, County Mayo

SPOT

SUMMER 1987

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SPOT SUMMER 1987

PHOTOGRAPHS OF OPPRESSION IN THE USSR


By April Reap

12,000 Jews, citizens of the USSR, have applied for exit visas and have been denied. Another 380,000 have expressed a desire to emigrate. The word “refusenik” is first at a bit disheartening the uninformative—corporate red tape and paper work that have to participate in a society imposed upon individual choices or one who created a vacuum in a new language to be learned. The people that Janice Rubin and Nim McMillan sought out during an extended journey of discovery through the Soviet Union actively participate to Jewishness in the open. The refusal is those who have applied for permits to leave to only have them declined. They do so at great risk, and suffer degradation and fear in exchange for the illicit right to worship as they choose. The agenda that controls their release, one feels, has little to do with religion. It is all too obvious, as Morris states, that their fate is tied to superpower relations, their lives used as a pawn in arms control negotiations.” Between 1971 and 1980, 260,000 Jews were allowed to leave the Soviet Union; doubtless, there are others who have assimilated or denied their Jewishness. Those who continue trying to leave will endure great losses of all country possessions and loved ones they leave behind—if they are successful in their attempts. For those who have taken the step toward emigration, the alternative—staying behind—offers far worse consequences.

The finely crafted photographs and text in this book offer a more alert and intelligent, moving, deeply disturbing, and attractively beautiful book. The various statements and letters of appeal reach international levels swiftly, as they trickle past with handfuls of brave visitors willing to smuggle them, spreading words of awful truth. The text and captions vibrate with concern, proclaim accomplishments, describing the authorities who actively fight against the flow of knowledge, with the purpose of suppressing it, with the purpose of suppressing it, with the purpose of suppressing it.

The exhibition, mounted through the month of May and into the fall, is in a comfortable and welcoming venue, and deserves to be seen again and again.

DIVERSE TEACHERS PRODUCE UNIQUE SHOW OF STUDENT PHOTOS

Student Photographs 1986-87, Rice University Media Center, April 21–October 1, 1987.

By April Reap

The informally typed and modestly titled exhibition at the Media Center is the result of an advanced photography course taught by Peter Brown and Geoff Winningham. The show would indicate that this course was a success: a strong case could be made in favor of two somewhat divergent attitude acting as counterparts to each other's style, allowing a unique student vision.

one that might not have emerged at all to triumph. Not all the participants are photography majors, an unremarkable fact until the quality of the work is considered. An enormous amount of effort, creativity, and craft are evident, underlying a firm commitment to concept and inspiration. H.L. Goodman creates systems of reference from non-sequence, using the elements of a whole to allude to an ephemeral reality. One sees lives of ordinary and sometimes unrecongizable objects, fit and shot against crumpled seamless paper. Color and shape are less important to these monochromatic color photographs than the connections that illusion transfers.

Dena Edgerton's diaristic black and white images are an exercism of sorrow and joy, their vague glimpse of Intention a summary of the paralyzing malaise of introspection that cuts too close. A woman is seen at her dressing table and is wearing a dress cut low in the back. Present is the threat of seduction, imagination the dominant resource. Her other images are more concrete and less intriguing, the contradictions all too apparent. Pink Isaac's portrait of a psychic is both fascinating and frustrating. One feels left out of the story: the snippet of text attached is a poignant but intellectual disclaimer. The only clue that refers to the language—a candle and orth—are clichés. This man looks like an ex-convict, wearing reptile cowboy boots: his gaze is blank, but this draws the viewer into the details of the picture, themselves puzzling. I feel certain that the series gathers strength from the contrast of her images discussed here.

Mark Neff's photographs are picturesque and unlikely color signposts from the bayou, an ongoing project. (Many of the artists represented here are involved in this sort of documentary visualization, which may be responsible for the maturity and clarity of the work.) Osama Ayyash has printed portrait with different color filtration and density, and cut and repositioned them slightly out of register. That the close-ups almost match creates a kaleidoscope of peripheral shifts repetition and intensity its strong point.

The strongest evidence of homogeny and influence is seen in the work of Amy Hackett and Ron McHenry. (Mr. Winningham is being paid trib- side here) Halilka's black-and-white photo of a sky scraper in the background. Ole-like in stature and dimension, and the shabbily dirt street and run-down buildings that lead to it is a masterful and carefully sought study. Robertson Clofes's soft and blurry color images of animals define visually the way one feels about a treasured pet. Relationships between animals and humans are an aspect of the moment, but the animals steal the show. Clofes's one page text of definitions, matted and framed, that accompanies the pictures, makes little sense in the scheme of things, and provides a healthy measure of disinterest, the visual of underlying messages being far more interesting. In a sequence of events, one bird sits atop another; elsewhere, another bird lies on its back, performing deep sleep. The images seem to have been made from an outside's vantage point, cage bars becoming into the intimacy. Color plays a disconcerting role, highlighting the wonder of nature.

Charles Krusekff's study of rural life demonstrates an act of faith and giving; so warm and engaging is the relationship between subjects, and subject and photographer. Marc Butcher operates in a similar vein, documenting the family farm, but from a more objective stance. Butcher's images are illustrative of an idea, in that they are a purposeful reduction, as a result, they fail to ring bells of recognition or understanding the way Krusekff's empathetic sublimation does.

The most impressive work is that of John Dyes, who operates from a traditional position—relying on technical perfection and relentless observation to create found studies from the beach. They have the look of sand-cast Photograms, the icons of architectural abstraction, and permanence. The subject matter (dead birds, fossil-like trees, sand) is utterly transformed, its expressive power due to a fusion of technical and emotional expertise and intentionality.

The exhibition, mounted through the month of May and into the fall, is in a comfortable and welcoming venue, and deserve to be seen again and again.
security for it is clear that danger lurks all around. The world seems oblivious for the time being in great numbers, they swell and wait, individuals identifiable. A wider angle shot of this interior reinforces a sense of old-world elegance which suffused in spite of incredible hardships and primitive conditions. Grace is ever present. A remarkable image made from overhead, of men dancing with arms linked, their bodies bathed in a wash of light and hands reaching toward them and their spontaneous but clear-lived joy is structured emotionally penetrate the threat from both outside the synagoga, the crowd is overwhelming, yet no panic exists, nor is there a sense of claustrophobia. Questions start to accrue to the surface of consciousness, triggered by subtle cues, was this structure always a meme, and just how dangerous is it to worship?

Hoping to have been adequately prepared, an abrupt surge now transpires. Rubin begins an intense examination of the individuals, their lives and details. In portraits, some faces are hopeful, others resigned. Most display an in excruciating mixture of emotions; a great gift to Rubin and Morris, it is clear that they are truly welcome and trusted, and the intrusiveness is one might expect in such close and frightened quarters. He is not. The portrait of Netzah Sharr, alone in her kitchen, shows her in a reflective state, having just returned from visiting her imprisoned husband in Siberia. She looks away from the camera, lost in private thoughts. Compact neatness prevails over fear, sorrow, loneliness, uncertainty. Space, a premium, is referred to repeatedly as overcrowding and its immediate solution, the imposition of order. One sees as subject a 1950's style in much of the content of the rooms, including aspects of clothing and design. Another image of Mrs. Rainer removes her momentarily from past; now fully a participant, she holds her exuberant baby, who is clearly unaffected. In ways that show, by the events and losses that dominate their family. These joyful moments echo endless reserves of human strength and determination.

The portrait of Igor Gavrilov, a former physicist who now does mental labor, places him at the painting done in children in his illegible, makeshift school. A dark sweater and coat offer his face and hands. His eyes are Emily serene, a slight smile reassuring the viewer. This is one of many moments spent with strangers one will likely never meet but will certainly never forget. One is called to action, even an action as small as understanding. Mr. Gavrilov's sons are seen in the next image, playing on a climbing gym built in an impossibly small room. Maps and pictures adorn the wall behind, and the boys are energetic and playful—normal activity and exhilaration, again, in spite of absurd impossions and sanctions. One gradually redefine normacy in this context.

Another portrait shows a man surrounded by the elements of his surroundings—posters and such—a gentle hand resting on his car. An indecipherable look fills his face, and emotions merge so that they no longer operate individually, but on masse. He is reserved, the poignancy strongest in the emotional connection to his pet. Families are traced through various groupings: an image of two sisters, holding hands across a table, would indicate that one woman is more forthcoming—she grasps both hands, and extends farther toward her sister and nearer to the camera. The sister on the left would seem to have secrets, yet in a subsequent image, she holds her husband protectively, as they and their son confront the camera directly and comfortably. Elements in the background—in this case, an Eames-like painting, a taste for modernism, again referring to the symbolisms and foreshadowing of art and accoutrements. These elements are hard to overlook, yet remain a quiet presence. That many of the portraits are shot tight in alludes to close quarters, and a stifling lack of privacy.

Some families look more untouched than others. A portrait of Nettie and Yori Sharr, the latter dying of cancer at the time, speaks of sorrow and resignation. The picture hanging overhead a bitter reminder of family closeness and unknowable. The patterns, memories, photographs, and the like that cover walls and tables and curios serve, in one sense, as reminder to maintain constant vigil, guard up at all times. Spatial serenity is at a premium, although religious activities prevail.

Children play a critical role, perhaps the most moving images are those showing them as both future and reason to remain present. One image shows a boy studying at his desk, concentrating unwavering. The contents of his desk seem mature far beyond his years. Another, of a young man at a piano, completely absorbed, tells a story of overcoming impossible odds to pursue one's art. As he is a celebrated pianist, one whole future as a performer is uncertain at best. In another portrait of him and his family, he demonstrates a similar focus elsewhere. His mother's expression of passivity means not to disturb or change anything at all. He is in a portrait of his and his family. He demonstrates a similar focus elsewhere. His mother's expression of passivity means not to disturb or change anything at all. The father is further more expansive, his young daughter holds his hands as if to ground or contain him, conforming to the mother's demeanor. Only two portraits seem to be perceived by more helplessness with hope; in one a couple is separated by a few feet, but the distance is enormous. Their thoughts are blank, their expressions echoing despair. Another, of a woman once imprisoned and tortured, shows a smile that is numb and desperate, resignation warranting in favor of a continued struggle. Desire for independence, in her case, forces a redefinition of reality.

Many of the images define the fitting in of worship and tradition that must be endured in order to carry on. The subtleties with which Rubin imparts information, such as a Rabbinic text for a celebratory feast, but planted in the middle of a room that doesn't normally contain such a table of festivities, bring to light greater truths. Need and fear of loss are dealt with in a similar manner. Undercurrents speaking clearly. Rage is by necessity quiet; greatest effectiveness dictating. Rubin and Morris understood what they heard and saw and provide the perfect translation.

JANIS RALIS, BORIS FRIEDMAN, FAMILY. Leningrad. 1986
HCP's CHANGE OF OFFICERS

In May the Houston Center for Photography held its annual election of the Executive Board which resulted in a new slate of officers: April Rupiner, President; David Crossland, President-Elect; and Denise Dacosta, Secretary. The Executive Board recently elected: Richard Duncan, Treasurer; Cathy Reiser, Parliamentarian; Gloria D. Van Curen, Exhibitions Chair; Paisley Cramers, Education Chair; George Krause, Charles Schurr, and Amy Watts, Members at Large.

Congratulations to those announcing their newly elected positions, and special thanks to those leaving the board to devote their time to other important interests.

Leaf Kurt, Herman Dentinger

Subject: Capanigo Plays the Piano

Date/time: March 27, Austin, Texas

Carol Cohen Burton and Amos Burton gave a party for Paul Capanigo, who had come to Austin to judge the Texas Photographic Society's Annual Members Only Juried Exhibition, and to give a workshop. Unbeknownst to the populace at large, however, he had also come to play the piano.

I began writing things down soon upon arrival, the kind of nervous overwriting prompted by a new crowd, a luminous presence with a particular repulsion, and hungers. I realized soon after that what was really motivating the scribbling was Capanigo off the cuff: the stuff, the facts, responses spoken to no one in particular as he'd done one too many of these workshops and dinners answered too many astounding faux-obscur or well-meaning questions. When we were first introduced, he was impressively swelling sweet coffee and smoking thin cigars, and it seemed that he was being invited to the guests only by force of sheer sill. When I remarked that he seemed distant, perhaps the self-effacing mission of being in demand, he answered very slowly, "No, like people, I really don't do it. As it turns out, ironically he is quite sincere.

Over the next four months on the road—one month his reward of major piano classes in Italy—and was regularly heard in private, from his home. What he seems to lack was the occasional piece of picture-making. He takes his regular vacations away from photography—a practice which seems to me eminently sensible, yet which caused one "established" photographer to eliminate him from a recent tome. His piano technique, in contrast, suffers for days should be taken "two weeks off." This line of questioning led him to say that he "lives his life in spans": a reference to the discretization of time. After a magnificent dinner ofbaum and much good conversation among an enthusiastic and supportive crowd, he sat down at a piano, and before his condition (it sounded fine to the rest of us) and, with far lighter hands and busier profile, played with the kind of romantic sympathy which inspires unshakable thoughts. The audience thrilled in short, between the short and the tall, he was a self-assured, self-sustaining maestro. The moment where music stood in relation to photography he answered: "In the back of my mind and the rest of my heart." His favorite composers are all of them, if they write well. His workshop was referring to all in glowing terms. We discussed his project and his personal work, and he was reticent to acknowledge other influences than those of which I had heard. I wanted to hear more about his color work, which has received wistfully little exposure compared to the classic black and white. His answers weren't intentional, but they were telling. Perhaps the most interesting revelation of all was made much later, when he said, out of the blue, that he was "concentrating on floating fire." A.R.

LETTERS

Professor Arthur Danto accused to publish this notice in Cynthia Freedland's "artistic news" column at an open letter to AFIP's readers. March 29, 1987

Dear Cynthia,

Thanks for giving me a glimpse of the tabloid on photography, which I thought pretty impressive. I also enjoyed your article, though I was not in the least persuaded by it. You used to be argument about critical theory, roughly to the effect that if they elected that cert. Case having it had that the tone alone entails what they had to be wrong. I tend to think a parallel argument easily apply in aesthetics: any argument that entails that Rembrandt's image of Saskia as a virtuoso is the dead portrait of Helene Fourment are pornographic, has to be wrong. I tend to think that the whole concept of objectification is the wrong way to think about pornography, and that there is something wrong with pornography, but it can't be the trouble. Or, if you wish, if the theory of objectification conversion us to saying that "the point of view and perhaps Rubens' portrait of the home: are examples of pornogra-

Cynthia Freedland

Texas photographers capture ten awards in six-state Fellowship competition

Texas photographers have won 10 of the 15 $3,500 grants in a fellowship competition involving six states mid-American Arts Alliance (M-AAA).

Winners were announced recently by John E. Edson, the arts, and John E. Edson Martin. The competition is coproduced by the Texas Arts Alliance and the Foundation for the Arts, which funds the awards.

The winners are: Cindy Sieg, Arlington; Bill Kennedy and David Winitz, Austin; David Decker, Dallas; Bill Fizer, Frisco; Lyme Gavriel; Jim Sabin, Wayne West and Rod Zeff; Houston; Phillip Ross Daupe, Lubbock; and Steve Goff, Odessa.

Their works, ranging from documentary essays to constructions and photodrawings, have been represented in numerous exhibitions and private collections, as well as in private collections.

Also selected for awards were: Missouri photographers: John E. Gavriel; Kansas City; Rosalind Kaye, Austin; and Steve Goff, Odessa. .

Serving as jurors were nationally-recognized photographers: John Klett, Tempe; Arizona; Arne Noggle, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Rosamond Purcell, Boston, Massachusetts, and Barbara Scoulthorpe, photography at the Specter Museum of Art, Lawrence, Kansas.

For the winners "represent the great diversity of concerns explored by photographers in this region," according to Purcell, who described the grant recipient's selection process.

"We were impressed by the emotional approach—both in portraits and manipulated still life works—evidenced by many of the entries. "Regrettably, much elegant work had to be cut," said Klett.

M-AAA has awarded grants to a total of 92 artists since 1976 and now is the country's first regional fellowship program in 1983. In addition to photographic artists, other artists were included those working in the fields of sculpture, crafts painting, drawing, and printmaking.
CALENDAR

SUMMER 1987

EXHIBITIONS

JUNE

Stanton-Morgan Galleries, through June 30 Photographs by Paula Freiden and other gallery artists. Mon-Thurs 10-5, Fri-Sat 10-5, Sun 1-5. 522-8282.


Butera's on Montrose, through July 31 Photographs from Texas by Joe Dominick. 461 Montrose. Mon-Fri 10-7, Sat 10-6, Sun 1-6.

Diverse Works, through July 11 Found works by Texas artists who work with found materials. 214 Travis. Tues-Sun 11-5. 522-8282.

Houston Center for Photography, July 3 through August 3 1986 Houston Fellowship Women's Exhibit: Photographs by Roz Ellis. 4401 Bissonnet. Tues-Sat 10-5. 522-8282.


WORKSHOPS ELSEWHERE IN TEXAS

San Antonio: San Antonio Art Institute, June 13-Aug 6 (Section A), June 15-Aug 3 (Section B). Beginning Photography. (non-credit intro) 401 Commerce St., Mon-Thurs 10-5. 522-8282.

Godard Films at Rice Media Center

The Rice University Media Center, which screens a series of major films by the controversial French director Jean-Luc Godard.

A Woman is a Woman June 6-7 10-5 6 1/2

Vive Le Vent June 13 7 10-6 9 1/2

Ergo June 20 7 30-6 9 1/2

A Man and a Woman July 11 7 10-6 9 1/2

Kampf im Herr im Herr July 18 7 10-6 9

Hail Mary July 29 7 30-6 9 1/2

*A Salute to the Soviet Republic* is scheduled on Thursday nights, with films beginning on Sunday nights, as follows:

- *Revolution in the Caucasus* in Luigi Barzini June 18 & 21 7:15
- *The Mau-Mau* June 25-26 7:15
- *Legend of Santi Esfer* July 1-2 7:30
- *Crip and Saw* July 6-7 12:30
- *Blu-Moscow* July 16 6:15
- *Document of the Dance* July 23 6:30

HAPPENINGS

Especially for the ecclectic. Antiques, jewelry, art and many unusual one of a kind items.

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WORKSHOPS
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John Holland, NASA/GSFC
Barry B. Schmelz, RS Technology, Inc.
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Max Miller, Earth Science Corp.
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Gerald McManus, Architect
Mary Ann Major, Lunar and Planetary Institute
David Marin, Anglo-Australian Telescope Board
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Museum of Natural Science and Burke Baker Planetarium
Jim Van der Woerde, Jet Propulsion Laboratory
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Beth Colwell, Publicity
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