

Ramona Fabregas, Alive with Pleasure, 1986

**HOUSTON'S NEGLECT OF AIDS/BLOCK ON L.A. PHOTOGRAPHY/FOTOFEST '88/NOSTALGIA
AND FAMILY SNAPS/PRINT COLLECTIONS AT THE MFA AND MENIL/ELEANOR ANTIN/
REVIEWS: IS HCP "GOING COMMERCIAL"?/WARHOL/BEUYS/POLKE AT CAM/"ONE EYE"/
SQUEAMISH FLESH/JOURNALISTIC SCHLOCK/NICOSIA AS AUTEUR/GEORGE TICE**

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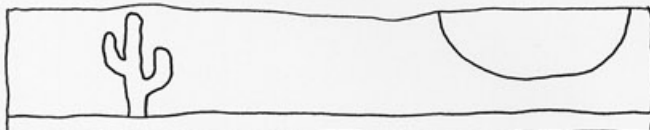
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CONTENTS

COVER

"Alive with Pleasure," 1986, by Ramona Fábregas.

FEATURES

High Risk Behavior: Houston's Neglect of AIDS, by Doug Ischar. Artistic activism is a small step, but it leaves larger issues untackled. **4**

Los Angeles: Two Tales of One City, by Gay Block. While the LA Center for Photographic Studies has temporarily closed its doors, Twelvvetrees Press flourishes and makes beautiful books. **5**

Family Snaps, by David Lazar. What if Diane Arbus had done the snapshots in *your* family album? **12**

From the Catacombs, by Maggie Olvey. The basement of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, will house a new Print Room for works on paper, including photographs. **17**

In the Aerie, by David Gresham. The Menil Museum's second-story Photography Collection will be represented in a future exhibit of works by Cartier-Bresson and Walker Evans. **17**

COMMENTARY

From Boots to Ballerinas, by Edie Scott. Performance artist Eleanor Antin lectures at Lawndale and traces her own history. **6**

EXHIBITIONS

Icons and Talismans, by Bill Frazier. Warhol/Beuys/Polke deliver their own versions of social critique. **7**

Challenging Corporate Comfort, by Paul Hester. HCP's "Commercial" Show misses an educational opportunity. **8**

George Tice Photographs, by Christina West. A master craftsman runs the risk of sentimentalizing his subjects. **9**

Risks While Writing in the Dark, by Joan Seeman Robinson. Painting and photography interact once again in HCP's "One Eye" exhibit. **10**

Two at Diverse Works, by Julie Lee. The squeamish must face their fleshy fears, while photographers create claustrophobia. **11**

Relentless Guile, by April Rapier. Surreal night meets ordinary day in Lewis Koch's sequences. **14**

Drama and Justice in the Tableau Vivant, by T.R. Mackin. Casey Williams continues his foreground/background play, while Nic Nicosia continues as *auteur*. **15**

A Questionable Culling, by April Rapier. Missouri Journalism Show specializes in schlock and sensationalism. **16**

Sense and Sensibility in Heath, by T.R. Mackin. Color images by Peter Brown evoke quiet moments of family life. **20**

Personal Terrains, by Anne Roberts. April Rapier and George O. Jackson cover diverse textures and territories in work shown at the Victoria Museum. **21**

EVENTS

FotoFest '88: Plans and Exhibition Schedules **18**

BOOKS

Artifice is self-consciously explored in Richard Schickel's *Striking Poses*, Eve Arnold's *Marilyn Monroe: An Appreciation*, and Cecil Beaton's *A Retrospective*; reviewed by Ed Osowski. **22**

DEPARTMENTS

Messages: Mission Control, by Cynthia Freeland. **3**

Calendar **23**

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MESSAGES MISSION CONTROL

This October, as part of a continuing investigation of the city I recently adopted as home, I drove down to Clear Lake to visit NASA. It was a splendid day. Like spring up north, autumn here is an invigorating time. Windows can once again be opened, and people venture to enjoy outdoor activities. We had a small picnic beneath the shiny behemoths of Saturn V, Redstone, and "Little Joe" ranged on the lawn. Out of their proper element like beached whales, nose cones no longer pointing skyward, these space-ships were dauntingly—yet satisfyingly—huge. The same was not true of that inner sanctum, Mission Control itself. Sensing our dismay, the tour guide explained what should have been obvious: we've grown accustomed to plugging into this room on TV via its own Securicam. The wide-angle lens distorts everything, presenting a Mission Control with miles of desks and spacious aisles. Somehow I felt that this visual distortion was a hood-winking, that we'd been encouraged to believe in this large room where clever scientists strolled or raced, where all was well and (so we thought) Under Control.

More recently I experienced another example of skewed vision when I heard Mayor Kathy Whitmire speak about a Houston where all remains well and Under Control, despite setbacks in the oil-based (she said "energy sector-based") economy. The Mayor gave greetings to a small conference at the University of Houston entitled "Houston in Search of Vision." She proudly listed such boons as the new superconductivity research, expansion in medical technology, increased tourism and a new convention center, and the arts growth indicated by a new museum and performing arts center. Regrettably, Mayor Whitmire had to leave before the scheduled speakers, representing Houston arts and humanities, offered up their perspectives on the city (it was, after all, just four days before the election). So she missed novelist Phillip Lopate's particularly pungent response to her snappy slogan "Reaching The Future First." Admitting that he was if not "Houston Proud" then "Houston Fond," Lopate spoke of the city's peculiar appeal, with unzoned accidents of contiguity producing a "funky and moody" geography. But he lamented the developers' zealous razing of such landmarks as the old Shamrock Hotel, emphasizing that a city, like a person, cannot conceive its own identity without coming to terms with its past. I suppose he has in mind a complex process of review, rearrangement and re-presentation, much like the one writer David Lazar puzzles over in reaching into his "grab bag" in "Family Snaps."

The Mayor was of course right to be proud of Houston's new growth in the arts. We can read in this issue about the ambitious plans for FotoFest '88, as well as about new study opportunities in the renovated Museum of Fine Arts Print Room and the Menil Collection. There are reviews of rich and varied offerings in photography, from the finely-printed, acutely-perceived works of George Tice and Peter Brown to the manipulated, multimedia images on display at Diverse Works and the Contemporary Arts Museum; from the commercial photography shown in September at HCP to the anti-product performance works of Eleanor Antin. But it is a peculiar lens which focuses clearly on strong and lovely features without revealing anything small, weak, or ugly. And, as Doug Ischar's article on AIDS in this issue shows, all is not Under Control in Mayor Whitmire's Houston. Like many other large American cities, Houston is blinding itself to the ever-increasing problems of AIDS, rendering its low-profile victims positively invisible. The raw data quoted by Ischar in this article are horrifying, and they speak of an extraordinary callous indifference. Though there is a promising mini-trend of artistic activism in Houston in the face of general governmental neglect, even this may not portend any serious change in attitude toward true caring. Perhaps (alas) if Ischar's analysis of the factor of homophobia is right, then attitudes simply may not alter here until AIDS is no longer perceived as "the gay disease." Yet we are increasingly warned about its nature as an epidemic, about African statistics showing equal rates among heterosexual men and women. At the Montrose Clinic, which offers counselling along with low-cost anonymous testing and support services, a volunteer told me that women are of special concern now because of growing rates of infection among infants and children. Women should also take note of the observations in Chris Norwood's new book *Advice for Life: A Woman's Guide to AIDS* (Pantheon, 1987):

Women everywhere will be profoundly affected by AIDS. It will change their lives and their relationships with men. It will demand their attention and their sacrifice whether or not they have even the slightest risk of infection. As the traditional nurses of the sick, it is women who will largely end up taking care of a husband, son, or daughter who gets AIDS. And as the protectors of family health, mothers will bear most of the responsibility for educating children about the disease.

Within this context Ramona Fábregas' cover photo acquires a new and special significance. Her image of a nude man who is "alive with pleasure" was conceived and exhibited (in HCP's "One Eye" show) as part of a group which reviewer Joan Seeman Robinson sees as a "secular altar-piece...presenting a pantomime of faith in which the celebrants are preoccupied with self-justification." He is no more "alive with pleasure" than are the joyous smokers decoratively displayed in the cigarette ads from which he borrows his slogan. We could not see a better depiction of what Michel Foucault calls "bio-power," the actual inscription upon the body of social units of significance and control. Walking slowly away from us, he belies his label; we expect a carefree dancer, but he wears his words like a painful tattoo or a medieval hair shirt. In other images he is "perforated" (to use Robinson's words) by large black polka-dots. These are ominously ambiguous. Is he some sort of jester/clown? Who's the butt of the joke? Can the leopard change his spots? Wearing his seductive banner like the burden that it is, the man turns his back on us. Perhaps he has been depressed by the diverse nay-sayers on today's best-seller lists, Allan Bloom, Shere Hite, and Randy Shilts, each proclaiming the demise of love in today's world.

The final entry on Mayor Whitmire's cheery list of anticipated boosts to the Houston economic scene was the planned new theme park at NASA, where Disney, Inc. will take over and redevelop the existing Visitors Center. I have every reason to expect that in the Disney version, Mission Control will be bigger, brighter, better—more like the real thing.

Cynthia Freeland

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HIGH RISK BEHAVIOR: HOUSTON'S NEGLECT OF AIDS

By Doug Ischar

In the city that has done less than any other in America to combat AIDS or to assist its victims¹, the private sector—that capriciously applied Band-Aid for all manner of Reagan Era ills and needs—is finally beginning to act. Although local gays have done a fair amount of grass-roots organizing, wealthy Houstonians, with their traditional machinery for charitable fundraising, have been reluctant to engage the cause of AIDS. While this is perhaps not surprising in view of local city government's own dismal lack of initiative, it does suggest a lack of charity and compassion when compared with examples set by wealthy citizens in other cities (or by media stars such as Elizabeth Taylor and Joan Rivers—neither of whom, by the way, has lost face or fans by going to bat for people with AIDS).

But as suggested above, there are encouraging signs of change within Houston's wealthy private sector. The ice-breaker seems to have been Caroline Farb's vigorous support of the Alley Theater's "Night of Hope" benefit, which raised in excess of \$100,000. Her involvement was apparently decisive in light of the fact that last year's attempt by the Houston AIDS Foundation to mount a fundraiser without the benefit of a high-profile spokesperson met with disappointing failure. Ms. Farb deserves credit for embracing the locally unpopular cause of AIDS, and one hopes that her example will help reduce the stigma attached to it as a charitable cause among Houston's monied elite.

In the meantime, Attorney Robert Rosenberg and curator Michael Peranteau of Diverse Works are planning a month-long "Art Against AIDS" benefit for September of 1988. A wide variety of activities are to be included. Eight artists (Eric Avery, James Bettison, Derek Boshier, Karen Broker, Dorothy Hood, William Steen and Michael Tracy) are donating prints which will be reproduced and sold in an editions of fifty. There will be a sale of original artwork on September 30th, preceded by dinner parties in private homes, a large preview party, and a ball. Tickets will be available at various prices for various combinations of events. Mainstreet Theater (and hopefully others) will donate one night's gate to the drive. All the money raised will be used to provide social services for local people with AIDS and for local research.

One can only wish the planners luck in this ambitious and much-needed project, and hope that oth-



Doug Ischar, Graffiti on Wall, Harrison Street, San Francisco, 1987 (original in color)

ers (including professions outside the arts!) will be emboldened to follow suit. But the fact remains that private sector efforts (however admirable) are doomed to inadequacy in the face of a disastrous epidemic which requires not only vast amounts of money but also compassionate and coherent government policy at all levels. For Houstonians with AIDS, however, the responsibility abdicated at the level of city government is not assumed at either the county, state, or national levels.

It is, in fact, at the highest level of government in the United States—in the Reagan White House—that the most egregious example on AIDS has been set². After apathetic (some say genocidal) footdragging in the early stages of the epidemic, followed by groundless claims of an imminent vaccine (remember Margaret Heckler?), AIDS has become primarily an ideological ruse with which to re-establish a Puritanical sexual "morality" by strategically separating the "innocent" victims of AIDS (children, transfusion recipients) from its (by implication) "guilty" victims (gay men, i.v. drug users). Further instances of Reagan's chicanery on AIDS abound, but the most telling is perhaps his absurdly constituted AIDS Advisory Panel, which in its three months of existence has produced nothing but embarrassing in-fighting and poorly explained resignations³.

Right-wing meddling has not only hampered the development of relief programs for persons already stricken with AIDS, but has also stymied programs and policies needed to prevent its further spread⁴. Two recent instances will serve to illustrate: on October 14, 1987, Senator Jesse Helms succeeded in partially crippling the 1988 Department of Health Fiscal Appropriations bill by attaching an amendment which denies federal funding to organizations producing AIDS educational materials which discuss homosexuality. Equally absurdly, the California Republican Party has sued the San Francisco AIDS Foundation for obscenity in the production of sexually detailed (read "pornographic") AIDS educational materials. This is in spite of the fact that such materials have proven to be highly effective educational tools within the high-risk groups they target. For example, the level of new HIV infection among gay men in San Francisco is now approaching zero⁵.

But perhaps the most damaging and cynical of all has been the Reagan Administration's refusal to establish federal guidelines for protecting HIV-antibody-positive persons from discrimination. The

administration's argument is that the states themselves are best equipped to design and implement policies for protecting such rights⁶. But the truth is that in many states where gays are relatively few in number and powerless politically (i.v. drug users are *de facto* criminals in every state in the Union), and where anti-sodomy statutes remain on the books (Texas, for example), the rights of antibody-positive persons are not certain to be established or defended. The lack of such guidelines (which are supported by the vast majority of the nation's public health officials) not only cruelly worsens the lot of people with AIDS and those who are antibody-positive, but also assures that AIDS will remain half-submerged and difficult to trace.

In spite of the federal government's irresponsibility *vis-à-vis* AIDS, some American cities—most notably San Francisco—have responded swiftly and compassionately. Statistical comparisons of Houston and San Francisco are edifying but also disheartening⁷. Houston, with about twice the population of San Francisco, has the nation's fourth largest AIDS case-load; San Francisco has the second largest. In 1986, Houston spent a total of \$200 thousand on AIDS programs, of which the city contributed \$65 thousand. During the same year, San Francisco spent \$24 million, of which the city contributed \$13.1 million. Houston, the fourth largest metropolitan area in the United States, has no city, county, or state program for AIDS education⁸. With about 1,300 cases and over 800 deaths, Houston has a total of seventy-five hospital beds for AIDS patients and two small privately-funded hospices. How does one explain this long-time callous disregard for people with AIDS at both the private and governmental levels in Houston?

One frequently encountered explanation is the bleak local financial situation—oil-based expansionist *hubris* having collapsed into sobering recession. Along with the demise of Houston's boom (so the hypothetical story goes) went the good-natured *noblesse oblige* that stereotypically accompanies unbridled prosperity. But this is a disingenuous and offensive excuse. For not only does it implicitly equate a major epidemic of a nearly always fatal disease with the sort of minor civic hardships one stoically accepts during lean times (potholes, crumbling sidewalks), but it also implies that the demographics of AIDS have not influenced Houston's response to it—that hundreds of deaths among local children or heterosexual adults would have been greeted with a similar apathy.

A slightly more palatable and convincing argument is that the minimal safety-nets provided by stubbornly conservative social policies have failed at every level of government from the federal to the civic. The buck was passed from Washington to Austin to Harris County to Houston and finally, by default, to a relatively unorganized gay community and a few sympathetic volunteers. While there is some truth to this argument—Texas has no income tax, Houston's tax rates are abnormally low, and Houston does equally neglect its poor and its homeless—it hardly bears careful scrutiny. For although gay men with AIDS often *become* impoverished or homeless because of astronomical medical costs, or through abandonment or eviction, very few *start out* that way⁹. Most gay people with AIDS are more or less "middle class," "gainfully employed," "responsible" "citizens." What places them in the company of the poor (read "welfare cheats") and the homeless (read "bums") in the eyes of reactionaries, and what gives them their status as pariahs in the minds of Houston's straight majority is that they are gay (read "faggots"). Like it or not, folks, Houston's neglect of gay people with AIDS is about homophobia, which is about bigotry and intolerance.

Many Biblical scholars now believe that Sodom was destroyed because of "inhospitality to strangers" rather than because of rampant homosexuality, as the King James Version seems to suggest.¹⁰ In light of this possible revision, and bearing in mind the vehemence with which this text has been used against gays, I'd like to suggest that Houstonians examine their own "inhospitality"—not to strangers, but to their own fellow citizens with AIDS.

Postscript

Houston is not the only American city that has been remiss in its response to AIDS, but simply the worst. Los Angeles, Miami and Chicago have also responded poorly. But this hardly lessens Houston's guilt or the difficult task it inevitably faces in dealing with the AIDS epidemic. AIDS can't be brought to heel by Bible-thumping demagogues or by a civic image-obsessed Chamber of Commerce. Only compassion, understanding and collective effort will do the job.

Footnotes

- 1 Randy Shilts, "AIDS in America/ A Special Report" (part 4), *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 30, 1987, pp. 1, 4.
- 2 The singular voice of reason within the Reagan administration is Surgeon General C. Everett Koop,

who has steadfastly refused to abandon his position that condoms, properly used, can greatly reduce the risk of AIDS infection. His principal antagonist is Secretary of Education William J. Bennett, whose recently issued booklet, *AIDS and the Education of our Children*, recommends that educators "teach restraint as a virtue," "present sex education in a moral context," and "speak up for the institution of the family." Bennett has persistently opposed recommending condoms not only because doing so would "appear to condone promiscuity," but because condoms "sometimes break." But so do fear-induced vows of abstinence in which case a properly used condom is a whole lot better than nothing. See "Education Secretary Backs Morality as Main AIDS Weapon," *Houston Chronicle*, October 7, 1987, p. 2.

3 The President's AIDS Commission now includes one scientist, and one physician who has treated a person with AIDS. It also includes sex therapist Theresa Crenshaw, who believes that AIDS can be transmitted by casual contact (in spite of overwhelming evidence to the contrary), and magazine publisher Cory Servaas who believes that she, herself, has found a cure for AIDS! Total funding for the AIDS Commission is less than one third the amount allocated for the Commission on the Space Shuttle Challenger Accident. See "Can the AIDS Panel 'Pull it Together'?", *New York Times*, October 16, 1987, p. 10.

4 Even more volatile than the issue of condoms is the proposal that i.v. drug users be provided with a supply of disposable syringes. Again, the conservative fear is that doing so would "appear to condone" i.v. drug use and cause its spread. But the truth is that in countries that have instituted such programs, the Netherlands, for example, neither drug use nor the number of new users has been found to increase. Besides which, the spread of AIDS, which is both communicable and untreatable, poses a much greater threat than does i.v. drug use, which is neither. The Reagan administration has in fact proposed to reduce funding for drug treatment programs in spite of its much touted \$1.7 billion "Crusade Against Drugs." See "Drug Addicts with Dirty Needles," *The Nation*, June 20, 1987, pp. 843-847.

5 See "AIDS Virus Found Slower to Spread," *New York Times*, October 16, 1987, p. 16.

6 See "Rights Bill on AIDS is to be Opposed by Administration," *New York Times*, September 21, 1987, p. 1.

7 Shilts, op. cit.

8 Houstonians will soon be treated to a 200-billboard AIDS campaign produced by a local advertising agency for the Red Cross. This campaign, which doesn't mention condoms, utilizes the following text: "I don't remember his name but I'll remember him as long as I live. He gave me AIDS." Yes, AIDS is frightening, but so are melodramatic scare tactics like this masquerading as much needed education. See "Firm Donates Billboards to Give Warning on avoiding AIDS virus," *Houston Chronicle*, October 8, 1987, p. 17.

9 See "The Unhealthy Profits of AZT," *The Nation*, October 17, 1987, p. 408.

10 The passage in question is *Genesis* 19:4-11. See "Homosexuals and the Churches," *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, October 11, 1987, pp. 84-91.

Doug Ischar received his MFA from California Institute of the Arts, and is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Photography at the University of Houston.

LOS ANGELES: TWO TALES OF ONE CITY

By Gay Block

When I was asked to write an article about Los Angeles photography, I wondered if the entire issue would be devoted to my musings, and, further whether it would be a double issue. There's a lot of change today in photography in general, but there's no place more huge and diverse than L.A. I've been here since March, 1986, and I'm just now beginning to see beneath the surface. I'm teaching at Cal Arts this semester, so I'm meeting photographers and learning about schools here, all of which will be the subject for my next "L.A. Photo" article.

I'd like to confine this first piece to two important parts of the photography community here. One is the struggling Los Angeles Center for Photographic Studies (LACPS), a non-profit organization much like HCP, and the other is Twelvetees Press, the successful new (1979) publishing house which is bringing us the most beautiful photographic books on the market these days.

First, LACPS. I spoke with Howard Spector, the Executive Director, this summer, before they closed their doors. That's right, LACPS vacated its downtown location because of problems of "accessibility, size, and the perception of the neighborhood." It is now in a temporary office, continuing some of its programs in various community locations. Its most recent exhibit, *She was SEEN TELLING him*, a narrative, multimedia, multi-artist show was held at Beyond Baroque Literary Art Center (a place which also hosts literary readings). LACPS will continue its schedule of lectures, publication of its new magazine *FRAME/WORK*, as well as monthly video screenings at EZTV.

Howard told me this summer that this hiatus was going to happen. Here's what he said about LACPS and photography in general (I'm paraphrasing, not quoting):

There's no real interest in straight photography in the market place or in contemporary organizations. If we (LACPS) want to appeal to the art community, we must show ART. For instance, Cindy Sherman and Robert Mapplethorpe are not considered photographers, they're artists. There's a schism in photography now between a) young artists who use photography to articulate ideas and b) the more traditional group who call themselves photographers and are proud of it. Members of the latter group are intimidated by mixed media and "experimental" work.

The Gauss/Grundberg exhibit, *Photography and Art*, at L.A. County Museum this summer, was trying to lead us in this direction. Howard would like to see LACPS go into this interdisciplinary mode. He believes that the concept of separatism is passé—it creates a "PHOTO GHETTO." Photography can't be separated as a medium any more. It is no longer concerned with the fine print. It's about connections with history, science, politics, sociology, etc.; and contemporary exhibitions must include experimental, controversial, and political work. He wants to use this time while there's no gallery to canvass the art community, find out what's wanted and what can be supported, so that LACPS can re-open with definite guidelines and dependable resources. Not surprisingly, lack of

funds has been the biggest problem for LACPS since the beginning. In 1974, some artists got together to discuss issues and show work. In much the same way HCP was born, LACPS was formed with lots of energy, ideals, and a board of artists, but little working capital. Spector came in 1983 as the first full time executive director, from a similar position at a similar organization, the Light Factory in Charlotte, North Carolina. He has raised funds through grant writing and is now working on corporate grants and individual support, but he says the entire history of the organization is one of no financial development. I asked him if they thought they might decide to operate with some of their extension programs, but without a gallery, and he said, "I hope not." He feels they need a space to show work.

LACPS began publishing a periodical, *FRAME/WORK*, about six months ago. It is very fine and very informative. For example, the most recent issue, Volume 1, Number 2, contains an article, "Alphapictorials," by Richard O. Zakia, which clearly and easily explained, even to me, the basics of semiotics. Then followed an article about the history of Kodak advertising photography cleverly written by Dan Meinwald. Next was an article by Elizabeth Ellsworth, entitled "The Place of Video in Social Change: At the Edge of Making Sense," about the making of a feminist video piece. The last piece, by Sheila Pinkel, "Toward a Synthetic Art Education," adapted from a lecture she gave at LACPS, explores the need for interdisciplinary education for the artist. So theirs is not a "what's happening in the galleries, let's reproduce lots of pictures" periodical. It is a magazine format with serious articles. Again, it doesn't have an emphasis on looking at art. The magazine is more about photography in the world—past, present, and future.

Will it be possible to amass support for an organization with such lofty, liberal, intellectual ideas? An "alternative space"-type organization is the only one which can do these kinds of programs, but L.A. is not known for getting behind this kind of group, and the national political and fiscal climate won't make support of this organization an easily attainable goal. LACPS wants to do community-based programs which will make it a viable service group. Last year they applied for and received a small grant to teach photography to a seniors' class, older people who had never done any darkroom work and had never been exposed to photography as an art medium. The seniors ended with an exhibition of their work in a Santa Monica Bank. The grant continues, so the program will be repeated this year.

Certainly, many of their programs are good, if experimental, and the support LACPS offers artists is valuable. They are, however, light years away from an organization which simply wants to put pictures on the wall of a gallery. Their concerns are diverse, not glamorous, and hard to support—but many good things are.

That was the hard, the sad, the bad news. Here comes the good news, the success story. It's of a fine press, publishing photography and art books, and committed exclusively to excellence. The usual refrain is that photo books are expensive and hard to market. But this small publisher has disproven that statement and proven that something done honestly and well will succeed.

The first Twelvetees book that I saw was *Certain People: A Book of Portraits* by Robert Mapplethorpe. It is singularly exquisite in both printing and design. Shortly after seeing the Mapplethorpe book, I came across two other books unique in subject and beauty by



Gay Block, Jack Woody, Twelvetees Press

however, were reluctant to let him go and live in an apartment alone in Chicago and wanted him to go to the University of New Mexico. He decided to do neither, and at eighteen years old, in 1976, he hitchhiked to Los Angeles with \$100 and a trunkful of clothes and books.

His first job was at a Hollywood bookstore where he began meeting key people in the literary and artistic community, such as David Hockney, Nicholas Wilder, and Christopher Isherwood. Wilder offered Jack a job in his gallery, which represented important artists of the seventies. One of the artists exhibited at the gallery was George Platt Lynes, an American surrealist photographer who did extensive work in portraiture and ballet. When Wilder closed his gallery in 1979, Woody decided to fulfill a dream he'd had since that exhibit: he would publish Lynes's photographs including the important homoerotic material, which other publishers wouldn't touch.

He received a National Endowment for the Arts publishing grant (the last year NEA awarded such grants) for \$12,500. Someone in New York matched the grant with a loan, and Woody published his first

cover), the second printing 2000, hardcover only, and the third printing 5000 hardcover. I don't even do softcover books anymore. They get damaged and besides, the people who care enough to buy our books want them to be beautiful.

Along this same line of reasoning he says, "We don't remainder books or sell to Crown Books. And I raise the price of every book on subsequent printings."

Woody has learned a lot in these years. Back in the days just before his second book, he still didn't know he had become a publisher. He, again, simply had an idea and wanted to pursue it. This time it was to combine superb visual and literary material, which he did in *October*, a book of Christopher Isherwood's journal and Don Bachardy's portrait drawings from the month of October, 1979. Woody describes the book as "a journal of the way two people see the world."

Now it had become a press and people started coming to him, people like Mapplethorpe and Witkin, and Twelvetees Press was in business. Woody has published thirty titles, about twenty of which are photography books. In each of the last two years he has done seven books.

The primary advantage of a small house is that it can have a personality and its books can have a look, a style. Woody says people can recognize his books by their covers—"by their sparseness." He does his own award-winning design work. His books are identifiable not by their style but by their subject. When I asked if he prefers to publish gay artists, Woody explains that this is not a conscious decision but that because he's gay, it's a part of his interest. The ratio of his published titles is about 50/50 gay to straight. He mentions here *Alice Springs: Portraits and Georgia O'Keeffe: The Artist's Landscape*, *Photographs by Todd Webb*.

Everyone told Woody that he couldn't be a publisher in L.A.; he had to go to New York. Well, he didn't believe that, and he has proven to be right. Woody has just passed the point at which he has had to decide whether to grow and hire more people, or to stay small. He opted for the latter and will cut down the seven books per year to five. Larger publishers have offered to distribute his books, but he feels that the only way to retain the uniqueness of his press is to stay independent.

He has started another company, Twin Palms Publishers, which will distribute Twelvetees Press and will publish its own books. These books will have a wider commercial appeal and again Woody will do the design and editing. The first one will appear this fall, *Lost Hollywood*, "portraits and stills from Hollywood's finest photographers," including George Hurrell, William Mortensen, Edward Weston and Clarence Sinclair Bull. This book also comes from Woody's personal interest because his grandmother was Helen Twelvetees, a silent screen star, for whom he named his press. He said,

A couple of years ago, someone called to say he had seen a collection of photos of my grandmother in a Hollywood shop, and that's how it got started. I went there and found all these other wonderful pictures. DeMeyer's for \$25, \$15 for signed Mortensens, and I started buying photos. So the book is a tribute to my grandmother. I wrote a short historical piece about how and why the photos were done and the captions name the subjects. I guess I did all the writing myself because they're my peculiar ideas.

This book is exquisitely printed, as are most of the others, in sheet-fed gravure, a process that involves a chemically etched copper plate



from Robert Mapplethorpe's *Certain People: A Book of Portraits*, Twelvetees Press



All this faithfully follows the philosophy of LACPS as written in the prospective members' factsheet: "LACPS is a non-profit arts organization whose programs explore aesthetic and intellectual issues of photography from an interdisciplinary approach. By integrating photography into a larger context of visual media, LACPS, through its programs, expands the scope of the medium, focuses on past, present and future issues in photography, and acts as a resource for the support of working artists within an international art community." And on that same fact sheet, the description of publications reads,

FRAME/WORK explores the impact of photographically generated images on culture from an interdisciplinary approach. LACPS also publishes a bi-monthly Photo Calendar, which lists photography-related activities scheduled by LACPS and by other museums, galleries, and arts organizations in Southern California.

the same press, *George Platt Lynes: Photographs 1931-1955* and *Joel Peter Witkin*. Because this remarkable press is based in Los Angeles, I called and made an appointment for an interview with its founder-owner, Jack Woody.

One sunny day—what else is new in Los Angeles?—I drove out to Altadena, a residential suburb north of Los Angeles, and found myself in a peaceful oasis, the home of Jack Woody and Tom Long. Tom, now Jack's partner in Twelvetees as well as at home, answered the door and led me into a splendid California bungalow that he said he had renovated himself. Jack and I sat and talked under the trees by the backyard pool. Seeing how young and boyish he was made me even more curious about the origin of these important books.

Jack went to high school in New Mexico and describes himself as an "academic rebel." Nevertheless, at sixteen he was accepted at the Art Institute of Chicago. His parents,

book. Woody says, "I never planned to be a publisher. I just knew that I wanted to do this book." But the book's immediate attention and success foretold his future. He laughs now when he remembers that the *New York Times* called, because they had heard about the book, and asked him why they hadn't been sent a copy. The reason was simple—he didn't know that was the practice. The Lynes book received a wonderful review and was named by the *New York Times* as one of the ten outstanding photography books of that year.

Woody describes how he actually got these books to the public:

I've just always loved books, so I haunted bookstores everywhere. When I published the Lynes book, I sort of knew which stores would like it and I walked around to my favorite bookstores—MOMA, Rizzoli, etc.—and sold them. Then the New York Times piece really made it take off. My first printing was 3000 (1000 hard, 2000 soft-

which puts much more ink on the page, providing a lush saturation. The gravure, machine runs at about 10% the speed of offset printing, giving a deep black tactile, almost velvety quality to the heavy matte (not glossy) paper. The process is obsolete because it's so slow, and is done today only in Japan and Spain.

Woody would prefer that all the books be printed in sheet-fed gravure but there are strict morality laws in Japan which prohibit printing pubic hair. So the Witkin book and a book of nude drawings were offset printed in Switzerland.

Out of the Sixties appeared earlier this year in the stores, another beautiful gravure with photographs by Dennis Hopper. The *New York Times Book Review* again selected a Twelvetees Press book as one of the year's best and *Newsweek* said, "Certainly these photographs reflect the same defiant out-front spirit of his best movies."

Other books on the backlist include *The Nature of Desire*, photographs and poems by Duane Michals, *India*, by Francesco Clemente and *Quarry: A Collection in Lieu of Memoirs*, by Lincoln Kirstein. He wanted to publish Kirstein's memoirs, but after Kirstein had written about 200 pages, he stopped and didn't want to go on. Woody was having lunch with Henry Geldzahler one day and told him about the Kirstein memoirs. Geldzahler said, "What you should do is ask him to pick about fifty of his favorite pieces from those he owns and have him write about them." Woody suggested it to Kirstein, who slowly became enthusiastic. Here's how the Twelvetees catalogue describes the book:

In lieu of written memoirs, Lincoln Kirstein has commissioned the great works in his personal collection to be photographed in a remarkable series of 8x10, four color transparencies. To them he has added extensive captions revolving around anecdotes and aesthetics...

This book feels as if Kirstein has prepared a feast and encouraged us to savor it. Woody says, "If there are art and cultural heroes, Kirstein is one."

An exciting book being made ready for spring publication is *Photographs*, by Allen Ginsberg. Woody says it fits in with the whole idea of the Dennis Hopper book, of a non-photographer pointing his camera randomly at the culture around him. This one will include an introduction by Robert Frank.

Another book in the works is Duane Michals' *30 Years of Portraits*. Though this is a second book by the same artist, Woody doesn't promise to publish all future books by any one photographer. Instead, he remains independent and free to choose to publish what he likes, what he feels he must publish.

Those are the glory stories. The tedious work of Twelvetees comes in the distribution of the books by only three people: Jack Woody, Tom Long, and one office worker. Sometimes another person is hired to pack at Christmas time. There are also the sad tales of bookstores, even the big ones, taking a minimum 90 days to pay their bills, and the hassles of having many foreign distributors. But in spite of all these problems, Woody doesn't want to be absorbed by a large publishing house. He wants to continue to choose his titles freely, to work closely with the artists, to do it all, to be totally involved. And his mild manner and quick smile say he can handle it.

I felt after our meeting that Jack Woody is an exceptional human being, and that I had sat for an hour with a nice person who happens to be a genius.

Footnotes

I was assembling slides for my portraiture class at Cal Arts, and couldn't find Cindy Sherman's. I asked the slide librarian, who told me she's filed in the art drawers, not the photo drawers.

Gay Block is a portrait photographer teaching at the California Institute of the Arts during the current semester. She resides in Los Angeles and Houston.

FROM BOOTS TO BALLERINAS

By Edie Scott

Eleanor Antin, a performance artist, lectured at Lawndale on October 15, 1987. The event was co-sponsored by Lawndale and the Houston Women's Caucus for Art.

Eleanor Antin took her place in front of a small, albeit polite and predominantly female audience seated on risers in the cavernous confines of the Lawndale Art and Performance Center. The audience had gathered to hear Ms. Antin present a lecture/history of her art career. Encumbered by a hand-held microphone and tethered to the long cord of a remote slide projector switch which wound itself around the legs of the too-tall stool she precariously attempted to move on and off of, Eleanor got off to a very rough beginning—incongruous for someone as adept at public appearances as she must surely be. But soon she wisely shed the microphone and the stool and found a comfortable pace for her lecture. Diminutive and unaffected, attired in a simple sweater and jeans, with long, unruly brown hair falling in her face, she spoke in a commanding, concise and extemporaneous manner about her art life and provided the listeners with a fascinating glimpse of the evolution of an artist and her works.

Eleanor began her career in New York, but now lives and teaches in San Diego. She described one of her early exhibits, *California Lives*, thirteen "portraits" of friends, each portrait constructed from commonly available consumer goods. One slide of a portrait pictured an army cot made up with sheets, pillow and blanket, with a pair of pearl earrings on top of the blanket and a lantern hanging nearby. Eleanor was amused that all of these portraits, with one exception, recycled back to the environment. Quickly, however, Eleanor tired of art production and the art system where, as she put it, "artists are victimized by the theys," and became interested in finding a new way to distribute her art.

Her solution was the series *100 Boots*, a mail-art work begun in 1971 which culminated in 51 serial postcards. Her first piece, "100 Boots by the Sea," depicted a line of boots along a seashore. Subsequent postcards were of "100 Boots on the Way to Church," "100 Boots at the Supermarket," "100 Boots Cross the Street," until she decided to have the boots do "a more sinister action," producing "100 Boots Trespass" with the boots crowded inside a small fenced area posted with "Do-Not-Trespass" signs. The next postcard in this series was "100 Boots on the Road," an image of the boots escaping from the previous situation. The *100 Boots*

series attracted attention to Eleanor, and she was invited to present the series, and the boots, at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and at various international locations. At this point Eleanor put an end to the boots. As she expressed it, "I could have had an easy life if all I wanted to do was the boot series." Eschewing this star/art trap, she ventured into the next, and most prolific, phase of her career—performance art.

This new artistic exploration began with a video, *Representational Painting*, in which she made up her face until "I ended up looking like a Vogue hippie. For some reason, this piece is filled with angst, and no one knows why." Then, "because I wanted to know what I looked like as a man," she costumed herself as a king from the Charles I period. As the king, with cape, long hair, and a beard, she would

visit my kingdom on trips to the beach in an attempt to organize my "cavalry"—the young hippies and old timers of the area—into an army of protest against the developers who were yuppifying the beach.

One of the slides pictured Eleanor, as the king, holding court on the beach, surrounded by interested, yet skeptical, hippies. These ventures produced "a wealth of information which I gathered while among my people" and coalesced into at least two performances, *The King's Meditation* and *The Battle of the Bluffs*.

Another character Eleanor developed for herself is that of a nurse—Eleanor Nightingale—a role she created to represent "the nurturing side of a woman, the only role allowed women in society at that time." She produced a series of 70-80 photographs which were contrived to resemble daguerreotypes of the Crimean War period, and entitled the series "Angel of Mercy," depicting herself as Eleanor Nightingale and her friends, also appropriately costumed, on location in trenches and hospitals and at rest. A later version of this exhibit retitled "War Games" included a performance with life-sized masonite figures which reproduced her fellow characters. As she described it,

As a nurse, I'm also a murderer. If I didn't save a man, he would be just a corpse, but after I've saved him, then he goes out and kills two more guys. But when I see a man bleeding, I just can't help it.

At the same time, Eleanor looked for "my most beautiful female self" which was also to become her most studied and developed character—the ballerina. Beginning with still photography, as in the series *Caught in the Act* where she posed on point until she would fall, the ballerina character was developed in films, videos, and performances, such as "The Ballerina and the Bum," "The Ballerina and the Poet," "The Ballerina Goes to the Big Apple." Then her ballerina evolved into the present incarnation—Eleanora Antinova, the mythological black prima ballerina of the Ballet Russe. Her performances as Eleanora Antinova utilize elaborate theatrical conventions, as with the life-sized masonite cartoon figures which each have costume changes, much like giant paper dolls. She described these performances as

the complex story of masks within masks, which reminds me of the analogy of the soul as an onion—you peel away endless layers but never quite get to the center.

Eleanor lived as Eleanora Antinova for three weeks and published a book of her experiences, *Living Antinova*.



Dave Crossley, Eleanor Antin

Many times during her lecture Eleanor would exclaim, "I really love that piece" or "I enjoyed doing that one" or "This was a real failure," and her honesty and enthusiasm were charming. After the slide presentation, Eleanor exhibited a video of Eleanora Antinova in a collage of "incomplete works which have been salvaged from the archives of the film industry." Prefaced by lengthy and ironic statements, and filmed in a technique which reproduced the choppy signature of films of the early twenties, each "salvaged" film fragment depicted Eleanor as Antinova and a male partner performing various dance disciplines—as Spanish flamenco dancers, traditional Indian dancers, and so on. Also included was one fragment of Antinova filmed in silhouette with her partner, as the patron, attempting to win her affections and, failing this, taking out a gun and shooting her, whereupon she performs the pseudo-classic dying swan death scene. Another of the fragments, entitled "Swan Lake," depicts Antinova backstage, bending over to tie the laces of her toe shoes. This causes a male dancer who is watching her to become aroused, and his erection emerges, and re-emerges, as a swan's head and neck.

Eleanor's art career resembles a straight path along which she has detoured, but ever returned with a more evolved and diverse concept. Described historically as "autobiographical," her performance work is media collage heavily supported with photography and elaborate set design. Her characters also have evolved, almost to the point of reality, as they each now have a past, a present, and a future. Her future plans for Eleanora Antinova include video/film works entitled "Dancing for Lenin," since she is "attracted to the romantic angst of the Yiddish. These will be vignettes of soundless movies produced for the Bolsheviks." With a great deal of humor and expertise of craftsmanship, much pathos, and not a little irony, Eleanor creates art which leaves the audience and/or viewer with much to chew on. Currently she has also entered the rarefied strata of the playwright with two

produced works, *Help, I'm in Seattle* and *Who Cares About a Ballerina*.

In the question-and-answer session which followed her presentation, a more vulnerable Eleanor emerged. As a young girl she was awarded an Eric Hawkins scholarship to the Martha Graham dance school, but developed "a nervous heart" and "considered dance boring." To Eleanor, dance is "a world where other people make the rules for you—it's awful!" She became a feminist early in her career and admitted being confused by this.

I didn't want to look good. No one told me to do this—it was in my head. So, as Eleanora Antinova I put on make-up every day for three weeks—and I loved it!

Eleanor uses her art as a way of living the many lifestyles she conceives of, but is not actually able to live, and this art-life animates her philosophical and conceptual ideals so they can be shared, enjoyed, and vicariously lived by her audiences.

Edie Scott is a dancer and performance artist who resides in Houston.

ICONS AND TALISMANS

By Bill Frazier

The Warhol/Beuys/Polke exhibition at the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, presents work by three artists who examine later twentieth century society from distinctly critical viewpoints. Each of these artists is engaged in a denial of modernist purism, though some interested in Warhol's participation in the POP movement might disagree with this statement. The fact remains that his work and the work of the other two artists included is involved in a dialogue about our society in a way that makes alignment with modernist tenets of autonomy troublesome at best.

There are many similarities in the ways these three artists approach their work. Both Warhol and Polke use images from the media and society to create their dialogue. Polke, a generation younger than both Warhol and Beuys, looked to POP artists for ideas about popular culture. Beuys and Warhol both went to considerable effort to create public personae which became as much a part of their work as any of their other products. Yet despite these similarities, their different sensibilities led them to approach their examinations of our culture in a highly individualized manner.

Andy Warhol uses images that have become cultural and political icons. When isolated from their origin in the media, and placed in the museum or gallery, these pictures become products and function as signifiers for the culture at large. Sigmar Polke also uses stock images, but he chooses more general pictures which are frequently highly schematized. These schematic drawings are layered in a pastiche which creates an internal dialogue between the various elements. While Polke and Warhol use stock imagery to question meaning and decode patriarchal systems, Beuys tries to offer alternatives. Working with his own shorthand system, he invests his objects with personal significance which he then applies to the culture as a whole. While his work is equally critical of capitalist society, it is more redemptive. These three artists have placed themselves in opposition to the status quo and

ultimately encourage the viewer to question his or her role as cultural producer and consumer.

Probably Andy Warhol is the best known artist of the later 20th century. This notoriety, which the artist carefully cultivated, has made critical review of his work particularly difficult. One of the chief advantages of the CAM exhibit is that it gives Warhol's work an important contextual relationship to other work of his time. When his work is seen next to that of Beuys and Polke, it is impossible to dismiss Warhol as the slick charlatan which many have declared him to be.

Warhol became known as part of the POP movement in the United States in the early 1960's. It was clear from the beginning that Warhol never subscribed to the myth of artistic invention and originality. He used the Campbell Soup can and the Brillo box as symbols of the success of North American culture. His images of Jackie Kennedy and Marilyn Monroe (which he introduced into his work after John Kennedy's assassination and Monroe's suicide), and the Electric Chair became symbols of American failure and decadence. Warhol's selection of these very recognizable images changed their informative value.

The *Portraits of the 1970s*, which were the subject of an exhibition at the Whitney Museum, celebrate the American preoccupation with image and appearance. Warhol's painted diptychs of society glitterati mugging for his Polaroid are a reflection upon the culture that many critics found a bit hard to take. When we look at these portraits, a number of which are included in this show, we see our collective self reflected with all of the commercial hype that is used to create identity in our society. Jeffery Dietrich observed that Warhol's work has helped shape the vanguard of mass culture and reflect it at the same time.¹ Warhol's position as cultural observer and producer makes him an important figure against whom many artists react.

While there are few today who believe art can save the world, Joseph Beuys was certainly willing to give it a try. His performance work and public activities were centered around his social and political concerns. He flatly rejected the anti-art stance put forward by Marcel Duchamp, which Beuys took to be anti-life as well.²

In order to understand Beuys'



Joseph Beuys, *We Were the Revolution*, 1972

work, it is necessary to know some biographical information about him. While Beuys was flying a mission for the German Air Force during World War II, the plane he was piloting was shot down. The Tartars who found him unconscious in the snow covered his body with fat, wrapped him in the thick felt material from which they made their tents, and put him on a sled to take him back to their village. Later, fat and felt were to become important materials in his work. Donald Kuspit writes in the notes for the catalog essay that "Beuys relied on fat and felt, and was forever attempting to recreate the physically and emotionally warm situation in the Tartar tent, (which was) probably even warmer than his 'proper' family situation."³ "The Sled" (1969) and "Felt Suit" (1970) represent Beuys' adaptation of these materials to his personal mythology. The sled, to which a bundle of felt, a flashlight, and a piece of fat are attached is quite literally the instrument of his salvation. The felt suit, which Beuys invests with talismanic properties, is offered to us as a protective layer to provide both psychic and physical warmth.

While Germany had been materially rebuilt after the war, Beuys sought to rebuild it spiritually by offering a metaphorical language for its rebirth. The spiritual and alchemical aspects of his art are also congruent with the earlier German Romantic tradition. Both trade upon art's religious profundity.⁴ Beuys used whatever medium would suit his didactic purpose. Frequently he was involved in performance work, and some of the material shown in the CAM exhibit documents those efforts, which were at times personal and in other instances political. The three slate blackboards in the exhibit are not drawings in the traditional sense, but notes to his lectures—schema for idealized plans. "Energy Plan for the Westman" shows drawings of plants, figures, animals, and a sun which are intertwined by diagrams and notes. What is clearly his intent is a design or proposal for the spiritual energy for "Westman"—Beuys' term for an ideal non-nationalistic being. In works such as this, Beuys sought to integrate his art, life, and ideals. They were not, for him, separate issues.

Polke and Warhol share obvious similarities. Both artists use images which are available in the public media. In Polke's work, the anonymous, banal, schematic image is used to suggest a broader meaning and interpretation. It is not accidental that the inclusion of certain images may carry extra-contextual meanings. This layering of motifs sets up a dialogue between the various elements in his works.

Polke uses a pastiche of styles interchangeably to fit his specific

didactic purpose. For this reason, a formalist interpretation of his work may lead to bewilderment. Not all of his work even looks as if it were done by the same hand. "Wool Blanket Painting with Small White Squares" (1968) uses the spare vocabulary of minimalist painting to raise the issue of the intellectual vacuity often present in such an approach. "Screen Painting with Palm Trees" (1966) presents a dialogue between the pointillist methods of late 19th century French painting and the Ben-Day dot screens of the POP painters.

The form within the work ultimately dissolves into a meaningless pattern at the lower edge of the canvas. "The Copiest" (1982) is a schematized 18th century landscape which, according to the catalog essay by Lisa Liebman, might represent Polke, who remains outside tradition, much as the figure of the painter in the foreground is outside the village and church depicted in the painting.⁵ Might it also be a comment on the improbability of originality and the comfort of repetition? (Recall Flaubert's stodgy urban dilettantes Bouvard and Pechouchet who, after despairing of success in a variety of endeavors, find great potential satisfaction in careers as copyists.) In "Repose in Ludwig's Castle" (1984), a large painting which appears to have been made with some sort of image projected on a light sensitive emulsion, Polke again raises an issue which is open to interpretation. Russel Bowman, author of the

A phallic stain rises from the bottom of the lower panel and partially obscures the Marilyn faces. Is Polke merely restating the obvious—that images which objectify women amount to a form of societal rape? Or does the use of such imagery merely perpetuate problems created by objectification? As Bowman points out, Polke's work vacillates between product-oriented or advertising-manipulated imagery and other overtly socio-political themes.⁷ But such vacillation means that his position about consumerism is not absolutely clear.

When taken as a group, these three artists manage to raise many key issues which those involved in an examination of popular culture must consider. The methods which they use to examine various events and trends certainly resonate with the post-structuralist writings of recent years, which try to get at many of the same ideas about the ways in which images are used or suppressed. Whether we will accept Warhol's and Polke's interpretations of the image systems which operate within the culture, or Beuys' attempt to instill our daily lives with a more passionate concern for personal and environmental responsibility, remains to be seen.

This exhibition affords a rare opportunity to study an important trio of artists. I cannot help but reach the conclusion that, despite the nihilism of Warhol and (to a lesser extent) Polke, all three of these men are moralists. Each is



Sigmar Polke, *Repose in Ludwig's Castle*, 1984

introduction to the exhibition catalog, aptly questions:

*Is it the mad 19th century King Ludwig of Bavaria or the modern collector of the same name imprisoned in an artistic monument of his own making?*⁶

Could he also be referring to the possibility that we are imprisoned by the image which we use to define our roles and personalities?

In several works, Polke addresses problems of objectification. One such painting, "Burda" (1979/82), is a vertical diptych which underscores the commerce of images of women in western society. The upper and lower registers are printed with images of idealized women's faces above and Marilyn Monroe below. The top panel, which mixes these pretty faces with magazine logos, has a schematic drawing of a recumbent nude of a faceless woman being mounted from behind by an equally faceless nude man silk-screened on top of the Burda logo.

deeply concerned about the social, psychic, and environmental well-being of contemporary culture.

Footnotes

- 1 Jeffrey Dietrich, "The Warhol Product," *Art in America* May 1980, p. 9.
- 2 Donald Kuspit, "Joseph Beuys' Mission," *Warhol/Beuys/Polke* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee Art Museum, 1987), p. 55.
- 3 Ibid., p. 59.
- 4 Donald Kuspit, "Beuys: Fat, Felt, and Alchemy," *Art in America*, May 1980, p. 82.
- 5 In "Sigmar Polke's Art," *Warhol/Beuys/Polke*, p. 100.
- 6 Russel Bowman, "Warhol/Beuys/Polke: Three Artists of their Time," in *Warhol/Beuys/Polke*, p. 9.
- 7 Ibid.

Bill Frazier is a Houston artist who recently received a Mid-America Arts Alliance/National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship award in photography



Andy Warhol, *16 Jackies*, 1964



Dave Crossley (original in color)

CHALLENGING CORPORATE COMFORT

By Paul Hester

The Art of Commercial Photography was an exhibition at the Houston Center for Photography from September 4, 1987 through October 11. The show was curated by Jim Caldwell, Paula Goldman, and Janice Rubin.

All art, from the crudest mass media production to the most esoteric art-world practice, has a political existence, or more accurately, an ideological existence. It either challenges or supports (tacitly perhaps) the dominant myths a culture calls Truth.—Martha Rosler

A commercial photograph exists to seduce; its success lies in a momentary glimpse from a targeted viewer. Once this goal has been accomplished, the commercial image is useless; it ceases to exist. Commercial photographs can be seen by the hundreds each day, in advertisements on billboards and in magazines, in annual reports, and on corporate office walls. There is no shortage of these photographs. The question is why the Houston Center for Photography chose to devote a portion of its limited exhibition space to the viewing of such readily available imagery.

Who did HCP want to reach with this exhibition, and once reached, what did HCP say to them with this group of pictures? Was there a clear goal, beyond providing a sort of pep rally for the commercial photographers managing to survive in Houston's downturn economy? It seems unlikely that the show could have aimed at showcasing individual photographers; had that been the case, work would have been grouped under individuals' names rather than lumped together according to vague themes, with food photos in one corner and construction and architecture in another. This particular exhibition of profit-motivated images presents an example similar to that of last season's dull but lucrative space show, where HCP aimed at marketing by reaching out to an ill-defined audience. By committing its limited exhibition space and considerable organizational reputation to images

that are readily available in other sources and publications, HCP diluted its energies and confused its clear educational goals with a kind of promotionalism.

Granted that there is a need to enlarge the membership and expand the audience for HCP, I support the effort to exhibit a wide range of work. However, I do not understand the curators' failure—given no apparent direction from HCP—to present this work in the context of its making. Commercial photographs are not made in a vacuum; a client initiates a process in which talented and imaginative people concentrate their energies in the service of a particular enterprise. This exhibition ignored the collaborative interactions between clients, art directors, editors, stylists, models, and circumstances. The limits and requirements imposed on any project can be understood as valuable sources of creativity. The intended audience of these images would have been enhanced by the inclusion of supporting information. How terrific it would have been to see the reproduced image, so as to compare its appearance in that context to the photographic print itself.

Two specific problems with the curatorial decisions must be considered at this point. First, it was noted (in a panel discussion about the exhibit, entitled "Artistic Freedom in the Commercial Arena") that many of these images actually never had been used in an ad or other publication. Perhaps a more educational approach, on the part of HCP and/or the curators, would have ensured that we could see comparisons between the photographer's preferred image and the one chosen by the client. This might have revealed facts about the differences between client and photographer, enabling the audience to appreciate the challenge of producing work for someone else.

A second issue involves the responsibility for some confusion engendered by the invitation to participate in the exhibition. The initial idea was to present "personal" work of commercial photographers. So some photographers were upset that their pictures of families and friends were rejected in favor of Coca-Cola bottles. Additionally, as Ron Scott said during the panel discussion, the distinction between "commercial" and "personal" work implies that the images which commercial photographers make for a living are not important, that somewhere else are their "real" photographs. He thought that was potentially insulting.

During the panel discussion, art director Lowell Williams referred to "corporate comfort," that level of acceptability which all practitioners in the field recognize as the limit of what will fly in the face of corporate imagemaking. His comment settled for me the issue of "freedom in the commercial arena"; you realize that each participant involved in the production of photographs for corporate consumption carries around with him or her a kind of unwritten list of what is permissible: avoid controversy, don't offend anyone, keep it easy, non-taxing, non-challenging, non-threatening. Play by the rules.

This exhibition presented an essentially idealized world of simplification and reduction. It was a romantic world, untroubled by the strains of memory, facts, or knowledge. In this world, hard-hatted workers became color-coordinated components of architectural abstractions; unimaginative color updatings of *Family of Man*-type images portrayed "happy natives" arranged for good design effects. The installation failed to examine stereotypes it included in representation of women, minorities, or



Frank Golden



Arthur Meyerson (original in color)



Michael Hart

inhabitants of third-world countries. Various images of the world of opera, chamber music or ballet served in this context to lend the exhibition space a second-hand aura of "high culture" respectability. There were no questions here, no probing of the implications of what was being shown and what was not.

These same images could have been presented in such a way as to clarify the values of "corporate comfort" and to increase audience awareness of the conventions used to reinforce our acceptance of the various attitudes behind the pictures. Instead, we were, in effect, told that the images could stand on their own (i.e., be seen as "art")—as if we could look at them detached from the ways in which they function in society. This constituted the most significant betrayal of HCP and the curators' joint responsibility. These images are, after all, much more than pleasant distractions from the numbers in the back of annual reports. They are the primary means by which the values of a dominant political conservatism asserts the "naturalism" of its point of view. This show willingly conceded any possibility for expanding the terms of the debate by its acquiescence to the limited range of subjects acceptable in the new audience-market.

The posture of "art for art's sake" prevented important questions from being asked about photographs that are undeniably used in a social context. It encouraged the viewers to ignore the fact that these are ways of perceiving and describing a social order from a point of view that benefits from, and promotes, certain romantic, idealistic, and illusionistic terms. Is this the role of HCP? What does it tell about the values, purposes—and even more, about the social and economic circumstances of HCP? A lesson in the aesthetics of corporate connoisseurship is not the same as offering an "educational exchange." There is a need for and general unavailability of oppositional work in Houston. HCP could be an arena for the exchange of information and ideas in photographic practice, without repeating the Truths of either the Museum of Fine Arts or the American Society of Magazine Photographers.

Paul Hester makes his living as a commercial photographer in Houston.

GEORGE TICE PHOTOGRAPHS

By Christina West

George A. Tice: Seacoast Maine: People and Places, was an exhibition at the Benteler-Morgan Galleries from September 10 through October 30, 1987.

When George Tice photographed Crincoli's barbershop in Elizabeth, New Jersey in 1966, he made what John Szarkowski would call a "fugitive self-portrait." Framed within the narrow window of the shop door, we see the reflection of the photographer's upper body. It is not a large image, but its inclusion achieves two things: it serves as a visual signature of the 28-year-old maker and places him within the space of his photograph, literally and figuratively allied with its look. It is a look borrowed in form and content from 1930's documentary photography.

Tice was born in 1938 and made most of his best known images in the 1960s and 70s. Yet, walking through the current exhibition of his work at Benteler-Morgan Galleries provokes associations with photos taken for the Farm Security Administration by Russell Lee, Arthur Rothstein and, most notably, Walker Evans. Admittedly, it would be difficult to make documentary-style pictures without referring to previous work. But what is disconcerting about Tice's images is not so much that they are reminiscent of Evans', but that they look as though they were made in the 30s.

The associations with earlier photos do not stop there. Tice's landscapes evoke comparisons with those of Eliot Porter, Edward Weston and Ansel Adams, rather than with photographers of his own generation. This is not to say that he consciously copies earlier work, but that he does not have a style that can be characterized as his own. His vision is eclectic and consciously unmodern.

The 60 works on exhibit include views of the Maine seacoast (the most current images in the show), Amish scenes, rural and urban landscapes of New Jersey, and wilderness landscapes of New York and Colorado. Tice states in the introduction to a book of his prints published in 1981, "I saw the Amish farmer as the complete man, self-sufficient and content, dependent only on himself and the earth. I saw the same qualities in the Maine fishermen I discovered primeval America in the forest of the Peekamoose." His remarkably beautiful images present an America few of us have experienced, a view of an American past which persists in scattered communities or places that have held out against the inevitability of change.

It is an oddly patriotic view, one which has led him to photograph the statues of Abraham Lincoln and to his latest book project *American Hometowns*, which will document the birthplaces of Mark Twain, James Dean and Ronald Reagan. One feels the aura of Americana that attaches to these three men may be as influential in Tice's choice of subject matter as the opportunity it affords him to photograph the American heartland, represented by the small Midwestern towns where these "heroes" were born.

If Tice's weaknesses are a lack of stylistic originality and a tendency to romanticize his subject matter, he may be redeemed by the quality of his printmaking: Tice is a consummate printer. His images in silver and platinum are textbook achievements of the technically



George Tice, *Tree and Meeting House, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1965*

perfect print. He achieves a tonal range in both silver and platinum that begs the limiting designation "black and white." His mastery of craft permits him to draw detail out of the most challenging situation presented by lighting conditions, atmosphere and surface. Although Tice is committed to the production of photo books, none of the reproductions of his work do justice to the original prints. Every inch of the image is attended to, every subtle variation in tone is recorded. Yet the aesthetics of photography demand more; and it is because Tice is so good at what he does that we want more. Critics of landscape photography have generally agreed that whatever else the image conveys it must be true. For the photographer Robert Adams, the truths offered are "geography, autobiography and metaphor." There is something of all three in Tice's work, yet they are clouded with sentiment.

In 1968, Tice published his first portfolio, a portrait of the Amish. The subject matter is taken from his own personal history. Between the ages of 11 and 12, Tice lived in a trailer camp in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. "On one side was an Amish farm, on the other a Mennonite school. I used to watch the horse-drawn buggies go by as I waited for the school bus," he writes. More than 15 years later, that sense of adolescent romanticism pervades many of the images. Horse-drawn buggies are silhouetted against rolling farmland or back-lit against the horizon, schoolboys play in the snow, male elders gather in closed conference, their long beards and severe attire proclaiming the reserve of adults. It is a public look at a private society. Yet, Tice's images are informed by a kind of adulation rather than journalistic curiosity. There is a nostalgia that attaches to his views: a longing for the simple life and for the times of his boyhood.

A comparison with Walker Evans' photos for *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* is apt. Evans and James Agee spent the summer of 1936 in Hale County, Alabama photographing and writing about the lives of sharecropping families. They became involved with the families they chronicled. That

involvement, which is painstakingly, and often painfully narrated by Agee and Evans, refused to produce an oversimplified, patronizing exposé of the rural poor. The sin they strove to avoid was exploitation. Following their example, Tice's images of the Amish are neither judgmental nor sensational. Instead, the transgression he commits is to sentimentalize the subject. To make something sentimental is to diminish it, make it trivial, thin. It is an easy trap to fall into when the subject matter is driven by personal commitment of affection. The trick is to see afresh and universally what is already overloaded with cultural meaning and stereotype. That is what Evans accomplishes in Alabama, as does Alfred Stieglitz in portraits of Georgia O'Keefe, and Bruce Davidson in *East 100th Street*, a series of pictures made in Spanish Harlem during the same years as the *Amish Portfolio*.

There are images within the *Amish Portfolio* that do transcend their subject. *Tree and Meeting House*, 1965, shows the white-washed exterior of a building bathed in sunlight, set off against the dark trunk of a tree in front of it. The view is straight-on in standard documentary fashion, but the frame cuts off the tops of both tree and meeting house, pushing the subject towards us. Tice captures the play of light between the hot white reflections of the man-made wooden structure and the shade of the tree, whose soaring limbs we cannot see except as cast shadows on an immaculately clean walkway. The contrast here between nature and culture, cool and warm, the curve of the tree and the insistent horizontal lines of the clapboarding speaks to the order of Amish life and to relations with each other and the natural world. The meeting house is the community's spiritual center—built by the men who gather there with wood milled from trees like the one outside. It is a community where we do not belong. The meeting house windows and door are closed, shut to us and to the inclinations of nature and outside culture.

Tice might argue it is a view of man in harmony with nature. Whatever the intended meaning,

the formal beauty of the image persists. Tice has an extraordinary feeling for light and economy of line. In works like *Pitchfork, Lancaster, Pennsylvania*, 1968 and *Shaker Interior, Sabbath Day Lake, Maine*, 1971, the delicate tonality of his prints creates a sort of reverence for the everyday objects depicted, which is held in check by the sheer force of compositional line. In *Porch, Monhegan Island, Maine*, 1971, Tice achieves a light as luminous as the color images made by Joel Meyerowitz in 1977 for *Cape Light*. Of all his works, however, it is the series, *Paterson*, made in his home state of New Jersey, that are most consistently good. "In *Paterson*, 'the cradle of American industry,' I saw a vision of America gone wrong," writes Tice. Despite his own inclinations towards the innately beautiful, these views of the urban landscape ring truer and speak better of his possibilities as a photographer.

Christina West is the Public Information Officer at the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston.

RISKS WHILE WRITING IN THE DARK

By Joan Seeman Robinson

One Eye, curated by Jack Massing, including work by Patty Airy and Ken Adams, Peter Bilt, Chuck Dugan, Ramona Fábregas, Michael Galbreth, Michael Miller, Deborah Moore, John Peters, Brian Platt, Charles Schorre, Bill Steen, and Liz Ward was exhibited at the Houston Center for Photography October 16 through November 22.

The relationship between photography and art has been characterized by a familial interdependency for almost 150 years. When photography muscled its way into the family of images in 1839 it produced shockwaves of appropriation and accommodation similar to family squabbles prompting new reconciliations. Painting's touted *realism* and *naturalism* were challenged by the upstart contender, Nature's Ape, in the guise of a little mechanical apparatus advancing on three striding legs.

No wonder that today the dialogue persists. It has always exhibited flourishes and elaborations—painters working from photographs, and photographers working pictorially and manipulating their images—well back into the 19th century. HCP's current show, *One Eye*, curated by Jack Massing, presents the work of thirteen local artists "who process or hybridize photography with other media." While the show looks like a grab bag of choices, much of the work is fertile with ideas.

When the photograph is an integral component of a conceptual plan incorporating other processes and materials, it has an inherently quickening effect. Like seeing the face of a friend in a crowd of foreigners, it becomes the focus around which other elements are foils. It is more "real," stable, and reassuring. But we know better. Photographs in themselves only show us what we choose to see and how we see it. They are culturally determined products of eyes whose vision is established by time and place. When they are distributed they become artifacts, immediately available for re-use while retaining auspicious power to summon forth a palatable likeness. Yet this "seamless illusionistic rendering of visual reality," as A.D. Coleman called the photographic image, has produced its own recombinant mutations. The photograph is also seen as a fetish, amulet, and occasional dopelgänger when combined with new mediums and techniques. Coleman himself posed the question, "What happens when you cross a photographer with a rock?"¹

The artists in *One Eye* utilize various strategies when dealing with the photographic image: dark-room manipulation, appropriation, fragmentation, recombination and



Ramona Fábregas, *Untitled*



collage, over-painting and drawing, and serialization. One must ask what role the photograph plays as stimulant or provocateur, to the artist and for the viewer, in relation to the total image. "Hybridization" creates a dramatic dialogue, and intellectual as well as optical tension. Why has each artist chosen the photographic medium as a key tactical element?

It enables one group of artists in the exhibition to explore the relationship of the human figure to physical, mental and somatic states. For another group, the photograph provides ways to monitor and record alterations in our surroundings and our position relative to those changes. For this group the subject itself is paradox: how to capture in fixed images the perceptual experience of sequential events?

Ramona Fábregas' large black and white photographs of nudes give scale, weight and focus to the subject of the human figure. Five full-length back views of nudes, conceived as a triptych with two end panels, stand in fields of black wet washes. The outer figures are overpainted on their bodies with statements which address us: the male on the left is "alive with pleasure," the female on the right is inscribed with a checklist of likes and dislikes. A raking light throws them into high relief. Like the Adam and Eve on the Ghent Altarpiece, they are of our element—round, muscular and earthbound; mundane, and involved with issues of self-gratification.

The central figure, reproduced twice more in different positions, is patched with dark circles as if perforated with the darkness of the surrounding ground. Self-absorbed, and in "symbolic," enigmatic postures, these three images possess an iconic presence, especially that of the splayed middle man pressing himself against an impenetrable surface. The dots on their bodies recall Pierrot's clown costume, certain Lucas Samaras *Autopolaroids*, and the Ben-Day dot simulations in Roy Lichtenstein's paintings, all of which have the effect of blurring or contradicting the ideal wholeness of the human figure. Fábregas'

works thus have the aura of a secular altarpiece, a pantomime of faith in which the celebrants are preoccupied with self-identification. We accept the veracity of their condition, in large part due to the use of photography.

In his two works *Pages from an Unpublished Book*, Charles Schorre utilizes a double page format filled with painted fields suggesting the particular character of each human subject. In *Distant Relative*, yellow, faded photographs of boys with guns and games are framed with mauves and parchment golds, like early daguerreotypes in precious cases. In *Earl*, for Earl Staley, chromatic flecks and photographic scraps litter the surface like the floor of an artist's studio. Nostalgia, the remembered or imagined quality of "being there," is called forth in the inventions around the portrait images.

Bill Steen, John Peter and Brian Platt have all used fragmentation and collage to create partial figures for expressive purposes. Steen's are overtly rationalized. In *La Guillotine*, he scissors the male body, with right angle precision, leading to edgy conclusions about process and latent content. John Peter's *Eurythmic Touch* in contrast, is a squirmy, collaged, muscular warping of a head and upper body in which the segmenting is curvilinear. The grotesque product suggests the convolutions of a contortionist, an offspring of the Surrealists' *Exquisite Corpses*—or the eye-grabbing theatricality of a record album cover. Brian Platt presents *Anxiety* as a torn face, its bilateral features out of synch and symmetry, its hair notched doll-fashion into its mechanical skull. In all these works, the question arises: What is the relative utility of the photographic fragment in enhancing the somatic or mental response, and is the contrivance effective? What are the values to the artist and to the viewer of such revelations?

Among works of the second group, simultaneous images of different temporal conditions, Chuck Dugan's are, well, simple and complex. In Polaroid photographs of ceilings, walls studio table tops and

store windows, he cuts out central features to leave shaped holes. In a witty enactment of the traditional relationship in art between figure and ground, he cancels the image and its physical surface. (It's also a parody of the portrait silhouette, in which there is a contour, but in the words of Gertude Stein, there is no there there.) In Peter Bilt's *Doppelgänger*, reptilian crusts (ickey turds?) are collaged to the shin of a sweet teenager in a large sportswear poster ad. It is done so surreptitiously that it registers as a despoilment, or a barely manifested disease. Far from the graffiti-school reworkings of Peter Drake's Madonna poster, Bilt's poster enhancement prompts us to question the explicit content of all such glorifications of material culture.

If photography, classically, may be said to capture the qualities of a specific time and place with fidelity, then sequential photography had to follow, as in the animal locomotion/chronophotographs of Marey and Muybridge. Michael Galbreth and Liz Ward extend this vision and opt for the optimal—to make the photographic process coequal with the perceptual awareness of the passage of time. When Galbreth aims the camera at the urban street every 10 feet we know that the process can never end—like Jonathon Borofsky's daily accumulation of number counts. And when he (how wonderful!) fails to capture the instants of falling asleep and of awakening, but captures the failure, we wonder what other impossible challenges exist. The ineffable is always conceptually clear; in how many ways can it be approximated visually?

Liz Ward goes to the source of the magical chemistry of photography itself, photographing sequentially the different positions of the sun as it sets below the horizon, and darkness sets in. Like the intercontinental flyer, she knows that if the sun sets in Houston it rises somewhere else, maybe Paris. She photographs it westward over city "skylines," documenting her own solar tracking. When we see her Houston and Paris series together, as we do in the installation, we ourselves posit the next

position and realize that the sun isn't setting at all, but the earth is rotating. If it takes plotted time and continuous travel to record this phenomenon, isn't the ultimate aim our enhanced awareness of the earth's position in the planetary system, and our comprehension of it by virtue of light?

Jack Massing's curatorial theme seems randomly implemented. Even patient attention to individual works fails to counter the sense of an opportunity missed. The overall selection seems hastily made and too vaguely defined for the purposes of an exhibition. Yet the operating strategies and the persistent durability of some of these images alert us to the creative potential in the manipulation of the photographic image as object and artifact.

A hurried viewing gives the impression of confusion—the initial idea expiring like a shot in the dark. When I undertook to write about this show I awoke during the night sure that Charles Schorre's little boy with dead rabbits was a posthumous homage to Joseph Beuys, who talked to a dead hare quietly about art. When daylight came I checked the date of the work. Uh, uh, it was 1982, too early. I had to start again. A little more selective clarity from Massing too would have benefited all of us.

Footnotes

1 ART NEWS, April, 1981, pp. 152-156.

Joan Robinson has taught art history at Stanford University and the University of Houston. In March she will lecture on Wyeth's "Helga" paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and at Rice University.

Liz Ward, *Sunset Points, Paris, 1985*



February 24, 1985



March 20, 1985



April 1, 1985

TWO AT DIVERSE WORKS

By Julie Lee

Concurrent Shows at Diverse Works, September 12 - October 17, 1987: Flesh on Flesh, a Photography Exhibit by Ardith, and, Blood Ties and Other Knotty Issues, curated by Gael Siptak, with work by Kelly Alison, Ellen Berman, Jim Cogswell, Cosgrove/Orman, Charles Grund, Bill Haveron, Ron Hoover, Sharon Kopriwa, Debra Rueb, John Runnels, Beth Secor, Elena Cusi Wortham, with an installation by Paula Fridkin with Frank Martin, Rick Lowe, Cameron Maclean, Laneri Hood.

No, I am not squeamish. Still, there are certain tasks I take small trouble to avoid. Cleaning and filleting fish, for instance. Or cutting a whole chicken into parts for cooking. I am well aware that chicken parts are abundantly available, packaged and half-frozen, in all kinds of assortments, for all sorts of families with all sorts of preferences. A chicken is no longer identifiable. It turns into a seemingly endless multiplication of parts. One could actually have parts from any number of chickens in the skillet at the same time. Or worse, one could feature a chicken with the oddest assortment of parts, which don't match up. Something about these notions troubles me. I can only think of parts in relation to a whole. So I have come to rely on my butcher. I see the whole bird, and he splits or quarters it for me. After that I have no trouble handling or cooking the chicken.

Chickens are selling very well these days. Beef is selling less well than it did formerly. Vegetarian meals are more attainable and more fashionable than they once were. Such are the current trends. I have one friend who wears only canvas shoes. Wearing leather really troubles him. He cannot bear the thought of a live animal, now dead, walking him around. And that is what Ardith does. She walks us around in a small area which is uncomfortably intimate and strangely unfamiliar. We are bound to bump into our own notions, assumptions, and idiosyncrasies. The only outrage in *Flesh on Flesh* is the application of cold, dressed-by-the-butcher flesh to warm, undressed human flesh. Thus, a long series of formal, black and white nude studies becomes outrageous. To Ardith's credit, a very narrow concept evokes surprisingly varied responses. Outrage, disgust, humor, fascination, appreciation. Generally, the most effective images are those containing whole entities. The chickens are plump and appealing, even funny, almost human. And the fish, I think, are

quite beautiful. The strongest image containing "parts" or "cuts" of meat is "Calf Liver and Abdomen." And it is riveting. The images based on analogies such as this one work better than those based on contradictions. (Example: Short ribs worn on the shin, like a shin guard.)

Ardith is not "just a photographer" as we are saying more and more frequently. *Flesh on Flesh* is prefaced and punctuated by newspaper clippings such as advertisements and recipes. There is a companion film to the show; I have not seen it. The show also includes a series of photographs on barbeque, Texas style, which leaves me feeling a little lost. Its relationship to the more formal, more bizarre images seems tenuous at best. Perhaps it does relate to their implicit protest to objectification and consumerism. Even the most reverent among us are at times consuming and at times consumed. The moments when we are both at once probably occur more frequently than we would care to acknowledge.

In her written preface to *Flesh on Flesh*, Ardith says she is asking for a reevaluation of what flesh is and of our relationship to it. Could it be that we need to be reminded that we are alive? She does not seem to have gone quite that far in articulating her intentions. She goes so far as to say, "There is life and death in meat that many refuse to confront because they cannot deal with death." But what about life? Perhaps we cannot deal with life either. I see *Flesh on Flesh* as an inverse approach to the *where has life gone/where have I gone* question. And I am thinking of all the work we see being done with dolls, mannequins, life size cut-outs, figures on the television screen, pictures of pictures. The struggle with meaninglessness continues in earnest, and I am reminded that the boldness or cleverness of the conceit cannot mask the desperation of such a struggle.

Blood Ties and Other Knotty Issues, running concurrently with *Flesh on Flesh*, is actually much larger in size than the former exhibit, so much so that it becomes diluted in its own diversity. As has been pointed out elsewhere, the quality of work is uneven, due, in part, to differences in media and size. "Blood ties" are relatively minor in representation and "other knotty issues" too loose. So in some ways, the choice of title is misleading. Gael Siptak, curator, describes the basis of variation as, "a probing interest in individual entanglements. Social and business entanglements, personal and sexual webs, family bosoms and transcending spirits are the issues." Fortunately for *SPOT* readers, some of the stronger entries are photographs or utilize photographs.

Debra Rueb's black and white series, "Family in Transition," is very simple, very straight, but the nature of the transition remains somewhat obscure. The images have a claustrophobic closeness which made me long to throw open the door for this older, but by no means infirm, couple in their own home.

Talk about close! Paula Fridkin's installation is a black and gold (as in glitter) boudoir, which is sexy and deadly and suffocating. The dressing table is so cluttered with jars and bottles, all black, that it becomes a nightmare cityscape. In place of the mirror there is a video monitor projecting a voice and image I assume to be Fridkin's. Through the windows are eerie photographs of Houston's skyline, while the small space surrounding the room is papered with blow-ups of major downtown buildings (credits for some of these photographs go to some of her



Ardith, Torso, Arms and Legs

collaborators—Frank Martin, Rick Lowe, Cameron MacLean and Laneri Hood).

The photographs in Paula Fridkin's installation are used to create a set, a mental and emotional landscape. The group of highly manipulated and color enhanced photographs by Charlotte Cosgrove and Helen Orman stand on their own quite easily and effectively. All photographers should take heart from the way they look, sharing a corner space with Ron

Hoover's three relatively large canvases. And they do it, not with size, but with intensity. They give the show a personal dimension it wouldn't have had otherwise. The series includes some pairs of figures which would seem to be required by a show about relationships and entanglements, but the images of a single subject are far richer. It is hard to tell where one process ends and another begins. Multiple exposures were made both in the camera and in the dark-

room. This collaboration takes on a persona of its own. And that persona replicates and reverberates within and without itself. The range of emotion goes from sensitive and reflective to anguished, playful, even zany. Perhaps the collaboration is the key, facilitating fluidity of movement between artist, subject, and viewer.

Julie Lee is a Contributing Editor for *SPOT* Magazine.

Debra Rueb, from Family in Transition series, 1986



FAMILY SNAPS

By David Lazar

I first began thinking of family photographs as a genre when I noticed how intolerant I had become of their literary use. More specifically, it seems that fifteen years ago, more or less, American poets started writing family photograph poems with an alarming frequency. There were a few motifs that recurred constantly: grandmothers on porches, mothers by windows, first communions ... What bothered me about these poems was the tone of reverent lyricism, nostalgia for an age of filtered sunlight on hazy days, and the predictability with which the photographs seemed to illuminate complete lives, almost as if the photograph were not merely tremendously portentous, but somehow responsible as well. The impulse was generous: to preserve and commemorate. In doing so, one could find the key to relationships, understand and reveal oneself. But photographs are problematic evidence, cropped experience. Of course, so is memory, but its subjectivity is more obvious.



The impulse to poeticize when looking at family snapshots is strong. The past, made palpable, shoots nostalgia into memory's bloodstream. I experience this when I find my father dancing impulsively in front of a car by some Army barracks during World War II, with a rolled-up newspaper in his hand; he waves it like a wand. Or is he conducting? Haydn on the car radio? On the back of the photograph he wrote "Williamsburg's answer to Fred Astaire," meaning for the photo to be sent home. I itch to poeticize the moment. But whereas Atget seems to have taken the portraits that most of the photo-poems are based on, my own photographs are more like outtakes from Weegee or Arbus, occasionally grotesque, frequently absurd. This is not meant as a lament. Many snaps are so bland, so benign, the poses so familiar that, although they stir the memory, they are not in themselves memorable. I marvel that people are so stiffly uncommitted when photographed, so unconcerned with their presentation of self. Most of us will be seen photographically beyond the memory of anything we do, beyond even our names. I have a shot of my great-grandfather surrounded by his daughters. It was taken around the turn of the century. His beard is long, his look severe. That is all, more or less, I see in him. I could engage in speculation about his attitude or dress, but that would be based on sociological, historical, or cultural generality. I know his last name, Broslovsky, but neither I nor anyone else living remembers his first name, his occupation or demeanor. Other than as a genetic legacy, he has vanished. What remains is his visage: the stiff deportment affected in photographs of the time, nothing else. Were he aware of that withering knowledge of his limited posterity, would he have acted iconically, to preserve his distinction? Would we? The result would be self-caricature. For all I know he could be doing just that. The representative, the typical, is not necessarily memorable.

For much of my childhood I was obese. According to some of the pictures, I was not only fat, but quite a little maniac. There is a rather substantial genre of photographs that show me in various stages of attack: dressed as the devil attacking my Superman brother, as a Green Beret beatif-



ically poised with machete, a Southern sheriff pose: rifle crossed on my chest, the holstered outlaw coolly shooting at the camera. In one shot I am astride my brother, hands high and clenched tight, with a growling smirk of Hun-like victoriousness. It is difficult to lyricize one's childhood in the face of such alienating, albeit amusing, evidence. I look at these pictures and am confronted with a disjunction of memory: I remember myself as a shy, if precociously sarcastic child, not at all showy or hammy. But I am forced to remember that these photos were all taken by my mother, the constant other in the pictures. How often we consign the amateur photographer to oblivion, forgetting that these home stills catch us between two audiences, poised between future and present, tense with that duality. If we do not completely remember that the photo has a future, it is because we are rarely that able to deny the present. Getting back to my photographic militarism, I can imagine that aggression, but I cannot remember it, and part of that may be due to the schizophrenia induced by my teenage weight loss. The before and after shots are radically different, but not only in a physical sense. For several years, in the A.D. photographs (after diet, at fourteen), I show a dark self-consciousness, a brooding quality. My face strains to drain itself of emotion, as though attempting inscrutability, *tabula rasa*, as though I were attempting to wipe out the past and the photographs



with it. There is a gruesome sadness in these pictures, a desperation. I am an open book of attempted closure reacting to the earlier pictures, seeing in them a lack of dignity. I looked at the same photographer, and defended myself and my image against the possibility of an undignified reproduction. This played right into the hands of mine enemy, the parental myth-makers. I confirmed the family folklore that my diet had shed happiness along with skin.

Caught between the camera and a hard place, I failed in my battle against interpretation: "Here is the evidence: look at the idyllic bond as you sit on your mother's lap, enraptured in a kiss; and here your frisky delight as you point the gun at her, and there your fall into thinness and resentment, the document of your descent." My captions, my photographic narrative was quite different: the photographs of my mother as an equally chubby child in some poses remarkably similar to mine, the father-taken shot of me behind bars at Universal Studio, the kiss, the attempted composure, added up to a story about self-preservation and a severing of oedipal attachment, extraordinary family catharses, emotional bloodbaths. My military poses were war games, the playful aggression a reaction to a bonding of perverse closeness. My attempted *coup de grace* in this historiographical war was the picture of myself, napping on the porch, baby bottle in hand at the age of



three and a half. But this was where the stalemate was most fully revealed in mutual cognitive dissonance: the other camp saw what had been my peculiar and self-contained retardation, my failure at self-weaning. Aghast, I would click shut at high speed.

I look at these photos now and feel far from nostalgic. What I know, have learned from them, is important and alienating, alienating because the evidence is so mutable. Part of me still looks back at the snaps searching for the smoking gun, the moment that clinches the *prima facie* case. However, what the case may be is equally ephemeral, utterly elusive, as though I've misplaced memory's fixer, its stop bath. I feel as though there should be answers, but am frequently confounded by what the questions might be.

Perhaps for that reason I have frequently delighted in showing off my photos. It is one of my rituals of intimacy. Faced with the difficulties of interpretation, I call in amenable audiences who can appreciate incongruities without having to understand them. I displace the obligations of audience from myself to my guest who, in fact, has no such obligation. The "other" in the picture, the photographer, fades into an invisible hand, replaced by the exhibitor.

I have a travel bag full of photographs and three photograph albums. The albums are the inexpensive kind with clear covers on top of the pages and sticky stuff on the surface. One album has pictures of my grandparents and my parents from their childhood to the first few years of their marriage. It ends with a few snapshots from my early childhood. The second album covers me, roughly between the ages of twenty-two and twenty-five. Why are these two periods albumized? I believe because they



are the periods of my life that call out least for constant reinterpretation.

When one looks at albums, time is discrete, in geographical or chronological units, moments run together with the rhythm of polysyndeton, the passage of time forcing an organization: my grandfather wore a vest in a park in Kiev, and he walked down a street in Lakewood, N.J. with my grandmother, and my father posed with his siblings in the facade of a boat called the Mayflower in Coney Island, 1930, and my father danced



in front of a barracks in Arizona during WW II, and my mother, in her high school graduation gown, laughed on the roof of an apartment building in Flatbush, her gown flying up in the wind, and they all beamed at my parents' wedding, my mother's silk train going on forever. These arrangements give life meaning, the individual photos all pointing forward to future arrangements. And someone begat Max who begat Rhoda who begat David.



The family album really begins with the birth of the album's owner. The first shot of him or her is a photographic exclamation mark. With it, we leave the exposition and start the rising action. Every photograph leading up to one's birth is contextually subordinate. These albums are like the biographies I used to read as a child, each moment of the past a portent of future greatness, every moment of Abraham Lincoln's grandmother's life leading up to Sumpter and Gettysburg. We reveal this in the way we talk about photographs: "That was my mother and father two years before I was born." Or we use other moments of drama to delineate our lives.

However, albums, the conventional narrative form of photo-showing, interest me less than grabbing from the bag, offering representations which are non-linear, full of contrast and contradiction. The album presents the past as a golden age, a faded millennium, and presumes a progression towards...a second coming? At least a moment of metaphysical culmination: And Here I Am Today, the great photographic I Am. When I pick from the bag, time becomes relative. Everyone living, everyone dead, the sequence of memory is a vaudeville show, a carnival. I think of myself as Winnie, in Beckett's *Happy Days*, trying to fit together



pieces of an arcane riddle, the solution to which is completely elusive and somehow hilarious. Time diffuses, moments seem to merge, connections suggest themselves, specious and tantalizing. I serve, offer this up to new co-conspirators. The appetizer: I am in a girlish pose, one hand to head, one to hip, a twist of the body, a smile enough to set any pederast on edge. I am four or so. Next: three years later, I stand in front of a motel in Washington wearing a visor, holding a



yellow balloon, my feet are spread at right angles, my stomach bulges beneath a blue sportshirt, spills down over brown slacks, I look tremendously pleased with myself. But it couldn't have been my salad days. The main course is a diversion. We go back to the age of three. It is a shot of my family, my parents, brother, and myself. We are on a cruise ship, the last American cruise ship to go to Cuba, as it happens. I am three. We are surrounded by a bouquet of paper flowers, with wax roses springing from the bottom. The picture is poorly cropped: my legs dangle on the lower right; someone is walking away. My mother smiles sexily, holding my brother who is holding his mouth, who looks like he is trying to mold her expression on his own face. But he has ended up sullen and his eyes seem to hate the photographer. My father holds me, looks at me with pure affability. And I am so clever and coy. I purse my lips; I pout. I am full of consternation. I am even sexier than my mother. I don't recall ever seeing my mother looking so "come hither." My father became affable several years ago. I attempt "coy" from time to time, but it is never effective, coming out shy, or enigmatic instead. My brother? Well, he is a little sullen at times, but only when work wears him down, or the family, the three men who remain of it, clashes. There is an enormous Swiss cheese on a table to my mother's left, a conveniently ironic comment on the idyllic intentions of the portrait, the framing plastic bouquet.

This leaves us laughing and we indulge in an aperitif: I sit on my father's lap, my fly is open, and I am pulling away, snarling so it seems. My father is angry, gripping me. My mother sits placidly at his side, hands folded on her lap. We are by a pool somewhere. Is my father angry because my fly is open? What did I do?

I have no idea, and it isn't really important unless I decide that it is revealing. The unruly child? The cantankerous father? The oblivious mother? None of these hold. I could link it with the girlish pose and the pursed lips. The Randy Infant? I think not.

Why is it funny? Because I am not a victorious Hun, or a small Tab Hunter. Because even if it is atypical, even if it is twenty-seven years ago, it admonishes my adult composure, control of the public self. It says at least this is a dramatic moment. It tweaks the placid nose of years of pictures, of calm deportment. It says "To hell with the photograph! I want to go swimming! I want something!" It is funny because it suggests things it cannot be saying. The same is true of the picture of my toy fox terrier, in a seemingly precarious position



on the top step of the metal staircase leading to our backyard. Her head is dramatically turned back towards the camera. She seems forlorn, suicidal. She is therefore a strange and memorable dog.

Not all of my pictures are this amusing. I have a photograph of my mother, head swaddled in a kerchief, grimacing in disgust or anticipation of pain, about to apply Oil of Olay to the walnut-sized tumor on her neck. I took this one. I look at it and try to remember back to my motives for taking it. Understanding that her death was near, wanting a few last images? Was it guilt-inspired morbidity, the preservation of pain? It is in the bag with the others. As with any picture, it alters the narrative when it takes its turn. Sometimes it is a double negative, covering all the other shots, and hardly has to be drawn. Sometimes I put it back when I don't want the plot to take that turn. But it is my hedge against nostalgia, and my desire for it. In whatever sequence it comes up, it is *ubi sunt*, with a vengeance, the picture and the place beyond it. However, with my audience present, the photograph becomes more of a scene, and less a series of relationships. The subject becomes dominant, the photographer fades. Because of this, the loss I experience is not so distracted by both looking at the picture and through the lens at the same time.

Maybe my friend is tired now. Perhaps, as luck would have it, the final selection is a picture in front of a cage. My arms are crossed; I am cross. An elephant is on its way inside, tail swinging in the dis-



tance. I display my discontent for posterity, for my mother. I remember this moment, twenty-five years ago, that happiness settled in a few minutes later. We went and talked to the monkeys. But I was aware that the evidence of my unhappiness remained. I wanted another picture, a chance to cancel the earlier one out, but there was no more film. I knew that I would have a lot of explaining to do. Why was I unhappy? I believe I did not want my picture taken. Too young for irony, I inspired it. I couldn't have known that the context of my unhappiness would continually shift, that the moment, calling out like a found object with the nature of a changeling, could only be explained so far.

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RELENTLESS GUILF

By April Rapier

Into the Heart of Darkness and Light: A Dream Sequence, by Lewis Koch was exhibited at Rice University Media Center, September 15 through October 15, 1987.



Lewis Koch, from The Dream Sequence, 1986



Lewis Koch, from The Dream Sequence, 1986

Lewis Koch, from The Dream Sequence, 1986



The Rice University Media Center is a Houston space not generally thought of as a gallery as much as an educational facility, although it is quite a spacious, elegant, and important one. The exhibitions—locals are given equal consideration with people of national stature—are selected by Peter Brown and Geoff Wingham, who encourage artists to submit proposals for exhibits.

Lewis Koch's photographs were recently mounted in sequence in this linear, flowing space; I use the term "mounted" advisedly in the particular context of these curious metaphors (which he terms "emblematic of a central mythology"—evidence of which has yet to emerge), given that sequence is all-important to his demonstration of intent. Out of order, the pictures would flounder and wane. It is generally granted that art comes from a very personal space within the artist, and is impelled by private, inaccessible motifs, memories, ideas, and such. This mysterious and sometimes unfathomable seductiveness is the very thing which makes art so compelling; in venturing an interpretation, the

viewer is apt to learn—not only about the art, but about the language of motivation, understanding, and self-application as well. A poetic blurb precedes Koch's images, compounding the apparent internalization process that separates all but the most tenacious viewers from this difficult yet oddly rewarding opus.

The black and white work is divided into two sets of realities: large, soft-focus *non sequiturs* function in an off-handed and irreverent communion with smaller, straightforward, anecdotal documents, the former (made at night) being surreal studies, the latter (made during the day) mundane studies. To an extent, order dictates an active/passive interaction between the two sets. Koch gleams a universal, subliminal truth from his visions and juxtapositionings, but his is not a self-conscious culling. The night images are mostly unpopulated; the day images may as well be, as lifeless as their inhabitants read as being (quite the opposite of the stereotypical night/dream/zombie expectation of life after dark). His one concession to coercion is that by using the camera as a tape recorder he imposes a literalness upon the conditions under which we view the images, throwing the viewer's timing and subsequent response for a loop.

I find myself thinking of the show linearly, not in pairings, as requested by the physical structure of the exhibit. Even though the small images provide clean passage to the large ones, the large ones dominate, affording the most memorable experience. The large images elicit no sympathetic response whatsoever; demonstrably disinterested in details, they incite closure. For example, the last large image in the exhibit, that of a tree branch in the foreground (and not much else), reminds the viewer that this nighttime vision isn't attractive or seductive in intent. These night moves seem to be impelled, among other things, by rambling born of insomnia. (While Koch states in his biography that, having done a lot of other seemingly unrelated stuff, he is "generally taking a good, long look around," he fails to allude to an undercurrent of voyeurism, a notion addressed later.) As the visual narrative unfolds, one is inclined to witness events in a manner guided by, commensurate with, his poetry and guile. By definition, things do look considerably different at night, lack of sleep concurrent and influential. This theme is enhanced recurrently as he sets up a dynamic between lit interior (positive space) and dark exterior (negative space). Large patches of light compete with dimly lit areas; signs and notices help ground the viewer away from alignment with Koch's facile, heavily crafted dream spell. Although ultimately desolate, the interiors refer to the small pictures, security assured.

Animate and inanimate have equivalent energy in Koch's night—that is to say, none whatsoever. The night affords objects a diminutive perspective: when people (ostensibly active) appear, they loom ominous and large, whereas that which is passive is accorded undeserved importance—not the only contradiction to surface. It is as though once the sun goes down, things are mischievously rearranged, but the deeds escape even the keenest notice. At this juncture the dream sequence/*non sequitur* ritual attains momentum and strength. Buildings and trees are vitalized by shadow and light; due to a prevalence of things, people seem static, staged. But the night shouldn't look this bright, eerily illuminated as though glowing independent of an exterior source. The viewer's faith begins to be tested as credibility is exceeded

time after time: we are asked to explore the importance of that which we care nothing about, or rarely note ourselves. One feels that Koch is a voyeur, yet he is spying on the inorganic, to a bizarre end, the illustrative exception being one image in which a couple is kissing—and smiling. Importance is afforded throughout to alleys and backs of buildings and such, to that which we can reject most easily. On the other hand, one large image in which a train is seen blurring by isolates a vision which keenly matches one's experience of such an event.

The small images segue into a larger drama, but alone convert archetype to a cognitive *seek, recognize, and discard* process of sorts, ultimately leading full circle. An example of this is found in an image where a duck is positioned tightly in the corner of the picture, floating on an endless body of water. Period. The ordinary is sought as icon—haystacks, telephone poles and fields are deemed emblematic, indeed, in a methodology similar to the FSA style. In this way, the viewer is returned to the elemental strangeness of the act of discovery accorded to the new: the now familiar (satellite dish) seems again unrecognizable. Koch allots greater impact to things this way—cinematically—divining an otherwise undetectable importance. The two sets approach each other here, in the only way the surreal and the mundane can: the symbols in the former are heavily weighted, and the symbols in the latter are exponentially devoid of irony. The viewer is led into an action/reaction rejoinder, the condition by which one processes notations unavoidable. One begins to call into question applied (but non-applicable) themes and emotions: is the image of a crescent moon over farmland romantic, or sarcastic, or some unsettling fusion of both? This insider's joke, derivative of an enigmatic genre (inaccessible fascination) long since demystified invites one to search (in vain) for clues that simply aren't there. Nowhere is the imagemaker present—only his indifference.

It is not surprising, then, to note that Koch addresses the most over-worked subject matter vigorously: a car to which numerous marching trophies have been taped leads to a parade of drill team gals. Two faces are housed within, one obscured by the trophies, the other framed by them, stature duly accorded. Even a rather tired old photographic cliché, the view in the auto side-mirror, is rendered unique as illustrative of a human dilemma: the road behind (in the mirror) shows silos and rolling hills, and is cluttered and unhelpful. The road to the side and ahead is empty and vast. Trouble is, the moralizing and signals are confused. Yet one is not inclined to challenge this standing on any grounds.

There is power in such absurdist shock value (forgetting for the moment Jungian or Freudian dream interpretation). The power is incontrovertible in the most disturbing of the large images, which frames a man with a night-black backdrop. He is wearing a white T-shirt, hands on hips, face forced into a semi-smile: as he looks away from the camera, he seems to be dreaming nightmares. Through no fault of the subject, he is utterly terrifying, and elements of the image reinforce this feeling. His whiskers are sharp, and one erect nipple shows through his shirt. The only other presence in the night is a small shadow—the photographer?—empty, and equally threatening. Although it is difficult to like this work, it is impossible not to respect it for its intensity and originality, but most of all its relentlessness.

DRAMA & JUSTICE IN THE TABLEAU VIVANT

By T.R. Mackin

Recent Work By Ten Texas Artists, including the photographs of Nic Nicosia and Casey Williams, at the Texas Gallery, October 6 through November 7.

Works of ten Texas-claimed artists—make that one piece from each except for Michael Hollis' smaller-format work—hang in the annex of Texas Gallery. The show is dominated by painting—Casey Williams and Nic Nicosia are the installation's two artists who are working with photography. Williams is a very painterly photographer whose prints are hand-tinted. His untitled piece in the show is a 48 x 48 black and white print in which the well focused foreground has been left untinted and the out of focus background has been softly colored. The perspective exaggerates the scale of the foreground cactus and thereby diminishes the background. The predominant branches serve as barrier, dissecting the action of the background to yield two half bodies and an arm. Because of the graininess of the background, the action in it would be difficult to read anyway. Any narrative to be derived can only be inferred from the one uninterrupted figure, a woman, who is walking away from the undefined action. In this image, and in study prints from several other series which are also available for viewing at the gallery, references are personal, meaning relies upon viewer response. The color Casey has chosen is muted, reminiscent of the hand-tinted photographs that were popular as late as the 40s and before color photography and snapshots became synonymous. (Qualification: This is not to say that color photography and snapshots were completely or justifiably or are still synonymous.) Color in this image, as is consistent in his work, is not the harsh color of reality. This image's central device—a black and white layer of focused reality obstructing a manip-

ulated, romantically seductive second layer—is one upon which Casey frequently relies.

Nic Nicosia's "Real Picture #4" (1987), 48 x 72, is of a very different romantic genre—a contemporary *tableau vivant* beneath an unlit street lamp. Moving out of the studio and leaving color for black and white, Nicosia continues to work in the cinematic tradition of writer/director. As a note of interest, he has cast five artists for roles in this piece. He has also issued a verbal disclaimer that nothing need be inferred from any projected connections between their occupations and the content of the piece. The *tableau* consists of a menage of violence on the right, a victim (he appears to be truly distressed) or a culprit (he is dressed in black) being physically subdued by a strong figure of a man who appears to be certain of his control over the situation. The third person is holding a rope, either for binding or for hanging—presumably the latter, since a truck (substitute for a horse) stands beneath the cast iron street lamp (substitute for a tree). This scene evokes a mock nostalgia for the days when one could take the law into one's own hands (in a less complicated way than did Ollie North *et al.*). Standing astride the hood of the half-lit truck is a fourth man whose gaze confronts the camera. His lips could be smiling, could be sneering. He does not threaten but, with arms folded across his chest, he does not make the viewer feel welcome. In front of the truck, sober-faced and confronting the viewer with his stare, is a fifth rough-looking man armed with a golf club in his left hand and the bulb of a cable release in his right.

As viewer, we stand directly in front of this scene in a confrontational position. The truck's headlights shine directly towards us. While we realize we cannot be literally blinded by the light, we feel we should be and do react to the implication. Just as our experience of confrontation falls short of the real thing because of the inherent limitations of a photograph (hence the title, "Real Picture"?), the two men in the photograph who acknowledge, even challenge our presence, do not give us a sense of being confronted by our implied presence.

The stark lighting which sets the scene comes from somewhere to our left, as if we had just gotten out of the passenger side of a car to see what is going on, whether we need to get involved. The figures occupy maybe 18 inches of vertical space, leaving a large proportion of greyed sky behind and above these figures. This does not appear to be justice, this deed being carried out in the dark (the street lamp is not lit). Yet at the same time, the *tableau* is reminiscent of a bronze sculpture of heroic proportions, strategically placed under a street lamp. (We have just stumbled upon it in the park. Why is the lamp not lit? It is after dark.) The grainy silver quality of this image *sans tableau vivant* is romantic, referencing memories of those qualities in other photographs. Depending upon one's penchant for mysteries of the tense and threatening kind, the *tableau vivant* created here is romantic. While this work does not raise any new issues about the real, it is neither naive nor simplistic. This image is loaded with allusions, from the stereotyped to the cryptic. It merits spending some time with. "Real Life #4" is one of six completed pieces in this currently unfinished series of Nicosia's.

Postscript:

Cast of "Real Picture #4"

Man with Club—Jack Mimms
Man on Truck—Michael Cerny
Victim/Villain—Dan Rizzi
Restraint—Vernon Fischer
Man with Rope—Ed Blackburn



Casey Williams, Untitled (original in color)

Nic Nicosia, Real Pictures #4, 1987 (original in color)





Stanley Forman, *Only One Way Out*

A QUESTIONABLE CULLING

By April Rapier

A selection of images from the 44th Annual Pictures of the Year Missouri School of Journalism and National Press Photographers Association. Of the 1670 images selected for this archive, 87 images were recently on view at the First City Bank Plaza in Houston.

Upon entering the lobby of First City Bank, an institution which laudably exhibits photography on a regular basis, one is barraged with text acknowledging grant funding, sponsorship, and collaboration (Canon most prominently mentioned). What influence does corporate support exert over work emerging under its beneficence? One begins to suspect a dilution effect, operant in dominating or superceding the intensity, clarity, and controversy this exhibit has represented in years past. Instead, the overall quality of the work is generic, derivative, palatable—just right for the steady stream of passers-by who populate downtown during the day. The general notion of associative photography, a style of image one uses as a measure for, say, wartime imagemaking (also a style of photography formerly venerated, now left to rest), is least

Bradley Clift, *Stevie's World*



threatening because of its familiarity. With the exception of Bradley Clift's picture essay, "Stevie's World," this genre of photography is characteristic of the work sent to Houston. My colleagues and I (factoring in comments overheard as well) felt that maybe the good stuff went elsewhere. Lack of curatorial credit or statement made it impossible to ascertain how and why this particular collection ended up here, or whether in fact this predictable selection went to all cities in so watery and vague an incarnation.

Bradley Clift's images of a severely burned little boy won him photographer of the year award, as well as taking first place in the newspaper category. More importantly, the images reaffirmed the tradition for a warm human connection in photojournalism, somewhat suppressed nowadays due to the uncoverings of scandalous behavior of our leaders and the insanity of the times. Although the images are heartbreaking and terribly painful to look at, Clift places this irreparably injured child in a normal context, elevating him. And how Stevie's spirit soars in these intimate views! Perhaps the most widely published image, with Stevie hugging his cat, is a bit formulaic, yet the child's triumphant and confident demeanor transcends genre. The shock of seeing him standing in a sink to "groom" himself is overridden by his sense of accomplishment. The utter normalcy to which normal humans gravitate will prevail. This tragedy, the viewer surmises, will have a reasonably happy ending. Unfortunately, other of Clift's images don't fare quite as well. Positioned next in line is a trite image of a cleaning woman dusting a nude male statue, recalling the worst sexist schlock of the anything-for-a-laugh kind. Another image shows a dog standing on parched, cracked earth, a strong and beautiful picture that would find itself more at home in a fine art gallery. Perhaps such distinctions are inappropriate, yet they exist as standards for entry into such competitions, and as such call into question the blatant exceptions.

Sports photography is poorly and inauspiciously represented by obligatory and grotesque violence. Politics, patriotism, dropped trousers, naked buns, and hats flying in the wind are given a tired but thorough going-over, and delivered the death blow by a collective groan of recognition. The prevailing question which overrides impact is "What percentage of these are set up?" The decisive moment, by which Cartier-Bresson (and to a lesser extent, due to content, Eugene Smith) led an entire generation of *Life Magazine* viewers (as opposed to readers) to believe in a more magical and terrifying world elsewhere (wherever the viewer was not) was considered the standard by which all photojournalism would be judged. As distinctions between reportage and entertainment blurred, and advertising prevailed over honesty, more and more often we as a critical audience could rely upon a false overlay being part of the increasingly unbelievable images offered publicly. Yet photography has astonishing credibility, given its history and technical function; reality has come full circle, more frequently identified with whatever the photographer wishes the viewer to believe (or to an extent, how the saturated and desensitized viewer would have memory serve). One image that illustrates this point is by Maggie Steber, designated freelancer in her credits, in which implied danger far exceeds real and present danger. Granted, out of context, any journalistic image is disserved, and as further injury,

text was removed from image. Yet one feels especially put-upon to buy into the story being recreated, a simpler truth being far more satisfying. In fact, both here and in most other war-zone imagery in the show, this generic and sensationalistic misery causes the viewer to feel victimized, taken advantage of, an odd turn considering subject matter and intent. (Jon Warren's image of skulls, five rows deep, highlighted by graffiti, and a child—either blasé or shell-shocked—overseeing it all, loses impact in deference to reliance upon shock value.) This is not to say that these images don't have the right to exist, nor that they are powerless, but only that they presuppose a guaranteed response, and as such, are devalued, emasculated.

Judy Griesedieck's pop shot of "Melvin Bell's Buddies" belongs to the *Rolling Stone/Vanity Fair/People* school of portraying characters as eccentric but adorable old (or young) farts. With his boots on, this attorney demi-god is sprawled over a loud bedspread, accompanied by dogs, a rabbit, and a guinea pig. A far more gripping image shows a girl with a growth defect standing in a man's hand. Both images are seductive, not quite cheap shots, but not quite on the up-and-up, either. Somewhere in between is her portrait of the master portraitist/illusionist Helmut Newton, photographing, somewhat out of character, it appears, men. One wonders what audience is being pandered to, and one has but to look around any newstand for an answer.

Of particularly despicable note is Melissa Farlow's image entitled "Last Call for Help," showing a hand disappearing into waves on a large body of water. The single emotional response to this image was a fervent hope that Ms. Farlow was indicted as an accessory to murder as a result of the image being published. David L. Ryan defines new levels of tastelessness, *National Enquirer*-style, in his image of a legless wheelchair-bound person, crashed into a stop sign pole. Similarly, Joyce Marshall's operatic, silhouetted suicide (gun to temple) invites invective by reducing so sensitive and private an act to drama.

The obligatory sleight-of-hand is tempered somewhat, curiously, by a stylistic turn toward 1960's design. Other period indicators are obscured by timelessness of category. Ever-present and inexplicable is reliance upon sensationalistic theory, and playing upon one's worst fears. Ms. Griesedieck surfaces again, later in the show, with pictures from a nursing home. The indignities portrayed make the viewer feel the charge of invasion of privacy. Were many of the subjects up to the task—in a mental state or physical condition adequate to granting permission to be used as photographic studies? My disappointment at anticipating a large gathering of the best of journalistic photography was tempered only by the hope that the best is still at-large, without the dubious honors and distinctions bestowed by such a questionable culling.

April Rapier is a photographer, writer, and educator. She is currently the Acting Executive Director of the Houston Center for Photography.

REPORT FROM THE CATACOMBS

By Maggie Olvey

Even in Houston, believe it or not, there is a place where one can get a first-hand look at works on paper without having to do the wall label dance and without having to peer past one's reflection in the glass to see the surface of a photograph. Yes, unbelievers, there is a Print Room at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. The room is the size of a small exhibition gallery and houses one full-time Print Room person, one part-time matting specialist, one phone, and 8000 works of art with paper as their primary support.

Established in 1974—at the same time that the most recent addition to the museum was constructed—the Print Room was to serve a three-fold purpose: storage, conservation and matting, and research and outreach. By installing twelve modular storage cabinets outfitted with horizontal shelves (for matted and loose works) and vertical slots (for framed works) and one plan file to house oversized prints, the storage needs of the 1200 works on paper then in the collection were more than adequately met. The prints, drawings, photographs, and fine press books and portfolios technically were available to the public, but at that time there was no one to provide access to them except through the registrar's office (there was not even a desk for such a person). And to make things absolutely impossible, very few people other than the registrar



Albrecht Dürer, Large Horse, 1505, engraving

knew exactly what was stored in the room.

Gradually, as the paper collection grew, so did the demand on the storage area. By 1979, there were 3000 works on paper in the room, along with a table, four chairs, two metal cabinets, a desk, and a print room person to provide continuing public access to the room. In 1980 that Print Room person resigned. In a terse briefing left for the then-undetermined successor, it was mentioned that accommodating an expected influx of 299 American Telephone and Telegraph photographs would be difficult under existing circumstances.

A DIGRESSION:

The photography collection at the museum prior to the inception of a photography department, in 1976, numbered somewhere between 200 and 250 photographs; works by Geoff Winningham, Roy DeCarava, Edward Curtis, and photographs for *The Galveston That Was* project by Henri Cartier-Bresson and Ezra Stoller formed

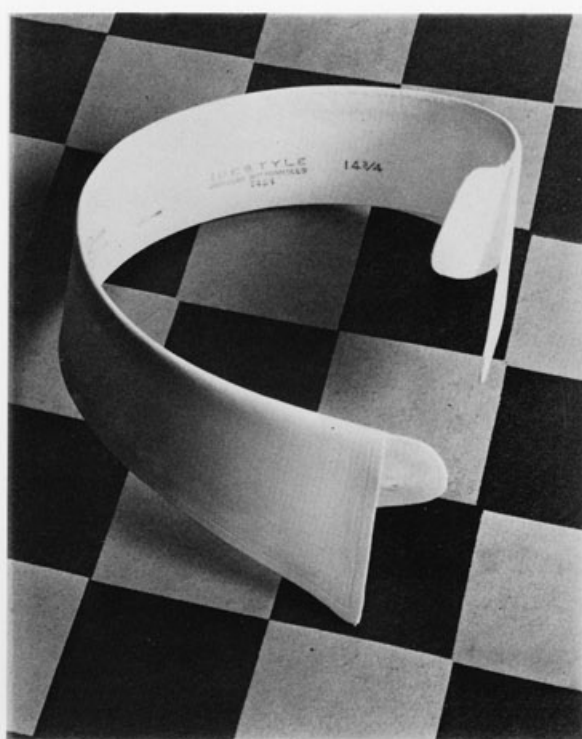
the majority of the museum's photographic holdings. Anne Tucker was hired, first as a consultant, then as a full-time curator, in February of that year; she has been the Museum's only curator of photography. Particular strengths of the photography collection include the following: post-1945 American photography, European avant-garde images (especially the work of Czechoslovakians and of the photo-monteur John Heartfield), and works of American Modernists.¹

Around 1980 the exhibition schedule at the museum started to gain momentum. Photography exhibitions increased in frequency, and, as acquisition of images from exhibitions is a primary means of building the collection, the number of photographs increased proportionately. Public awareness of the museum's holdings was nourished by word of mouth (there has been no finding aid generally available to scholars or patrons outside the museum proper until just recently²), and an occasional visitor was known to request access to the collection. An internal checklist of the collection was devised, enabling two or three classes of photohistory students per semester, and a few printmaking classes, to be taught from the original artworks. Everything seemed to be going along just fine.

The collection total topped 7000 at some time during 1986; half of the works on paper were photographs. Therein lay the rub. Empty storage space did not exist—and had not existed for several months. Something had to be done. With the help of two National Endowment for the Arts grants, matched by donations from the Houston community, the museum undertook to renovate all of the art storage areas, including the Print Room. Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending upon your point of view), while plans were being drawn up, argued about, revised, redrawn, and passed through interminable committee meetings, the collection was continuing to grow. In the Print Room, boxes containing art were piled on the table, desk, and even on the four chairs. Extra metal shelving was scavenged to provide a modicum of breathing room. Needless to say, not even a dwarf could have found a square foot of space in which to contemplate a Dürer engraving, a Heartfield photomontage, an Outerbridge photograph, or a Sargent watercolor; thus the room was quietly closed to public access.

Late in the spring of 1987, plans were finalized for the Print Room remodeling; construction commenced in September. Fully operational status is expected (and hoped for) by January 1, 1988. Even when the work on the Print Room is completed, more phases of the ongoing improvement project will remain. Future plans include the renovation of art storage space for non-works-on-paper, such as sculptures and paintings. Expanded Print Room facilities in new surroundings, complete with permanent exhibition galleries for works on paper, are also being contemplated.

What happened to all those 8000 works of art, you may ask. And well you might. As of this writing, they are temporarily stored in a gallery space within the museum. Here all of the lights have been dimmed, all of the boxes have been sealed, and the Print Room person is claustrophobically entombed. But there is always the comfort of knowing that after the first of the year the public will be back,³ the art will be immediately available to assuage sudden fits of scholarly inquiry (and imagistic DT's, from extended deprivation, on the part of the Print Room person), and there will be a real telephone line to the outside world.



Paul Outerbridge, Advertisement for George P. Ide Co., 1932

Footnotes

1 Items of interest in the print collection include extensive holdings in 19th century printmaking: Winslow Homer, Honore Daumier, Barbizon School, and Belle Epoque. There are also small but tasty groups of 17th century Italian drawings, 16th century German woodcuts and engravings, and early 19th century English satiric prints.

2 Richard Pearce-Moses, *Photographic Collections in Texas: A Union Guide* (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1987).

3 For an appointment to see any portion of the museum's works on paper collection, please call 526-1361. Ask for the Print Room (or Maggie), request an appointment, and provide a list of the pieces you would like to see. (It is helpful to know which works you are interested in beforehand, so that they can be pulled in advance of your arrival).

Maggie Olvey is the Curatorial Assistant for Works on Paper, and Print Room Person at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

All images courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

John Heartfield, photomontage, back cover of German Natural History, 1934



Henri Cartier-Bresson, Seville, 1933 (from the Menil Collection)

IN THE AERIE

By David Gresham

A photography collection which up until now has wandered, from the campus of St. Thomas University to the Rice Media Center, is now at home in the second floor of the recently opened Menil Museum. This collection, with more than 2500 images, represents well over 170 photographers. Work is still under way in preparing the print room, matting images, and so on. The collection is not ordinarily open to the public, except for specialized scholarly research. However, exhibitions have been drawn from the collection in the past. (*SPOT* readers may remember, for example, the *Four Walls* exhibit at HCP, discussed in *SPOT* Winter, 1986); future exhibitions are also being planned.

The Menil Collection of photographs includes works by numerous French photographers (Atget, Cartier-Bresson, Lartigue, and others) and other Europeans. American photographers are also

well-represented, from Matthew Brady, Edward Curtis and Lewis Hine to William Eggleston, Walker Evans and Danny Lyon.

In the early '70s, at the request of the Menil Foundation, Cartier-Bresson selected over 375 photographs from his thousands of contact sheets. These images, printed in Paris in '72-'73, are grouped by country and time. As time permits, Cartier-Bresson will add new subjects; the collection now includes over 450 photographs, spanning the years 1929-1985. The Menil Museum includes one of four existing sets of these Cartier-Bresson selections. In addition, it houses an extensive Walker Evans collection, spanning the years 1928-1970, including his Farm Securities Administration work as well as projects done later in various states across the country.

Work by both Cartier-Bresson and Evans will be exhibited at the Museum during FotoFest '88.

David Gresham is a student at the Art Institute of Houston and Administrative Assistant at HCP.

FOTOFEST '88

Beginning February 26 and continuing through March 25, 1988, Houston will host the second biennial international month of photography. FotoFest '88 will present 77 exhibitions of photographs in 66 locations throughout the city. These shows will be held in museums, galleries, and corporate spaces and will provide a rare opportunity to view a wide variety of work. The exhibits provide a framework for the other activities sponsored by Houston FotoFest Inc., including lectures, workshops, and opportunities for artists to show their work to interested people. A catalog is being prepared and should be available in mid-January.

FotoFest '86 was an enormous success, with over 175,000 people in attendance. FotoFest '88 promises to be even larger because it will coincide with three conventions scheduled for Houston during the international month of photography: the Society for Photographic Education, the Association of International Art Dealers Fair, and the Southwest Photographers of America. FotoFest '88 will again feature The Meeting Place in the Warwick Hotel where artists, critics, curators, publishers, and collectors will be available to review work and exchange ideas. Registration is required to participate in The Meeting Place; the fee is \$10 in advance or \$15 at the Warwick. In exchange for this nominal fee, participants will have access to free portfolio reviews, a 25% discount on the catalog, and free admission to lectures. Information on registration will be made available soon.

Exhibitions will be concentrated in four main areas in the city: the museum area, downtown, the Galleria area, and the Kirby corridor, with other shows in scattered areas. A substantial difference between FotoFest '88 and its 1986 predecessor is the inclusion of many downtown sites for exhibition, which will enable a larger audience to participate in next year's festival. Visitors to Houston will be able to ride the Metro 34 weekender bus from the Medical Center to see 19 exhibitions along the route.

The catalog for the second FotoFest will cost \$19.95. There will be a Director's Statement by Fred Baldwin and an introductory essay by Jean-Luc-Monterosso, Artistic Director, Month of Photography, Paris. Essays and

photographs related to the many exhibitions will be featured, and the catalog promises to be an important record of the FotoFest. If you missed buying a copy of the FotoFest '86 catalog, the two publications will be available as a boxed set. Detering Books will be the official FotoFest '88 bookseller for the exhibition catalogs and related material.

FotoFest '88 will include two series of lectures. A formal lecture series, sponsored by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Houston FotoFest Inc., and the Houston Center for Photography will be held at the MFAs Brown Auditorium. An informal series of noontime brownbag lectures will be held at the Rice Media Center; schedules and subjects for this series will be made available at a later date. Rice University is also offering a film series at the Media Center on Sunday evenings during the month of activities.

The public will have an opportunity to exhibit their own work on the FotoFence, to be located on the lot across from the Glassell School. Anyone may hang an image on this fence, and there will be a children's section reserved for work by younger photographers. Houston is the subject of the FotoFence and work from the FotoFence will be donated to the Houston Metropolitan Archives at the Houston Public Library in March, 1988. There will be informal classes on photography for children, where they will be taught some basic information about taking pictures. This event, called the "Pied Piper Snappy Shoot," will be led by area professionals.

Houston FotoFest has received major funding from Kodak and is supported by grants from the Cultural Arts Council of Houston, the Texas Commission on the Arts, the Brown Foundation, and the Wortham Foundation. Harla Kaplan, Susan Morgan and Martha Thomas are responsible for organizing the many details of the FotoFest. FotoFest organizers have many demands on their time at present, and have asked that inquiries about specific events or exhibitions be directed to the organization or gallery sponsoring the event. They are, however, interested in taking calls from people available to work during the first two weeks of FotoFest '88, as well as in the weeks immediately preceding the February 26 opening. A list of exhibitions, lectures, and workshops follows.



David Strick

LECTURE SCHEDULE

Feb. 26	Anne Tucker	MFA Collection
Feb. 28	Harold Edgerton	his work
Mar. 1	Reinhold Misselbeck	New German photography
	Letizia Battaglia	Sicilian photography
Feb. 29	Christiane Gehner	sports magazine photography
Mar. 1	Deborah Ryan	contemporary Black women photographers
Mar. 2	William Messer	Yugoslavian photography
Mar. 3	Frank Gohlke	his work
Mar. 4	Collecting Symposium	Assoc. International Photo Art Dealers
Mar. 6	Art Networks Symposium	Carl Chiarenza, Betty Hahn, Van Deren Coke, Aaron Siskind
Mar. 7	Luit Bieringa	contemporary New Zealand photography
Mar. 8	Els Barents	Dutch photography
Mar. 9	Christina Rodero	Spanish photography
Mar. 10	Mary Ellen Mark	her work
Mar. 11	Margarita Tupitsyn	Russian photography
Mar. 13	Rodolfo del Percio	photojournalism from Argentina
	Rune Hassner	photojournalism from Sweden
	Arthur Tress	his work

Berenice Abbott



WORKSHOPS

Mar. 4, 5, and 6	Environmental Portraiture & Still Life
Marie Cosindas	The Making of Documentary
Jerome Liebling	Photography
Duane Michals	Reality in Photography
Robert Sisson	The Macro World of Nature
Mar. 11, 12, and 13	Discovering the Intuitive
Larry Fink	Documentary Photography
Mary Ellen Mark	Environmental Portraiture
Neal Slavin	Making the Fine Photographic Print
George Tice	

Workshop fees: \$245 per workshop

Workshop enrollment is limited, and available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Space will be reserved upon receipt of a \$50 non-refundable deposit. Remainder of fee is due in full two weeks prior to workshop. Tuition minus the \$50 deposit is refundable if you give notice a full two weeks prior to the first day of class. To register, call 522-9766.



Bruce Gilden

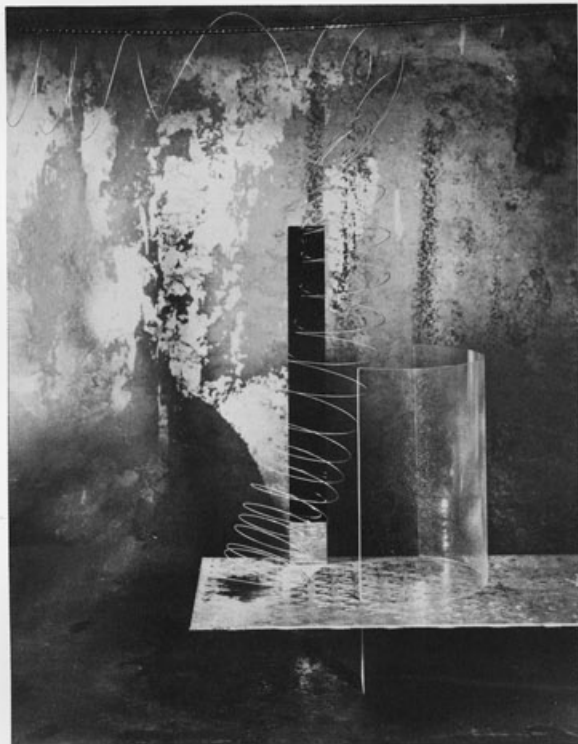
EXHIBITION DESCRIPTIONS:

1. Allen Center, *Images and Emphasis*, Austrian contemporary photography.
2. Allied Bank Plaza, Italian photographer Mario Giacomelli.
3. Archway Gallery, *New York City—Same Street—Three Views*; Bruce Gilden, Lou Lanzano and Patrick D. Pagnano.
4. Art Institute, Harold "Doc" Edgerton.
5. Art League, *Salon de Refuses*, statewide annual juried show.
6. Benteler-Morgan Galleries, Belgian photographer Herbert Grootclaes.
7. Barnes-Blackman Gallery, five contemporary Black Houston photographers.
8. Black Heritage Gallery, *Places and Faces*, Houston photographer Morris Richardson.
9. Blaffer Gallery, *Roots and Turns*, retrospective of 20th Century Dutch photography; Jerome Leibling.
10. Brent Gallery, *Feet First*, Argentinian photographer Maria Inez Rogue.
11. Butler Gallery, Diane Arbus.
12. Caroline Lee Gallery, *Explicit Image II: Past and Present Erotic Photography*.
13. Chevron, *Windows*, (curated by Jean-Claude Lemagny of the Paris Bibliotheque Nationale).
14. Children's Museum, Wendy Ewald, *Portraits and Dreams*.
15. Citicorp, *Young European Photographers*, based on Award for Young European Photographers.
16. College of Architecture (U. of H.), Contemporary Swedish Documentary Photography.

Arno Rafael Minkinen



17. College of the Mainland, *Dances: Public/Private* by Jim Caldwell.
18. Contemporary Arts Museum, *Sally Galt: Tropical Landscapes* and *Bill Viola: Survey of a Decade*.



Beatrice Helg

19. Davis-McClain Gallery, *Gary Brotmeyer: Recent Works*.
20. Detering Book Gallery, *Michael Someroff: Photographers Unknown*.

21. Diverse Works, *Rudy Burkhardt and Texas Photographers: Not For the Living Room*.
22. Farrish Gallery, *Views from Italy*, Portraits of Buildings by Daniel Samuels.
23. Firehouse Gallery, *Herstory*, Black woman photographers.
24. First City Bank, Polish photographers Edward Hartwig and Jan Jas.
25. Goethe Institute, *Images for Everybody* early photography in Bremen.
26. Graham Gallery, photography and the creative process.
27. Harris Gallery, Peter Brown, George Krause, and Geoff Winningham.
28. Heritage Plaza, Bernice Abbott.
29. Hooks-Epstein Gallery, E.F. Kitchen: L.A. Portrait Series; Cay Lang: Flower Series.
30. Houston Center, Sadayoshi Shiotani, Shoji Ueda, Japanese Art Photography 1920-1940.

31. Houston Center for Photography, *Au Delà de L'Image: Beyond the Image*, recent photography from France.
32. Houston Post, best of the Houston Post photographers.
33. Innova, *Visions: Five Monographs*, a day in the life of the Soviet Union.
34. Interfirst, Brazilian photography in the 19th Century.
35. Jack Meier Gallery, Swiss photography, Beatrice Helg.
36. James/Schubert Gallery, Rick Dingus.
37. Jewish Community Center, 18th Juried Photography Exhibition.
38. Kahn Gallery, *Bill Aron: From the Corners of the Earth*.
40. Lawndale Art and Performance Center, *Texts: Exploring the Boundaries*.
41. McMurtrey Gallery, Regional Photography.
42. Menil Collection, Walker Evans, Henri Cartier-Bresson.
43. Leslie Muth Gallery, *Kenny Rogers Captures the Essence of America*.
44. Marathon Oil, Ten Norwegian Photographers; *Directions*, Finnish Photography in the Twentieth Century.
45. Millioud Gallery, *Valentin Gertsman: Image et Imagination*.
46. Meredith Long Gallery, *Charles Schorre: Pages from Books Unpublished*.



Rick Dingus

47. Moody Gallery, *Feste di Foglie: Ray Metzger; MANUAL Installation*.
48. Museum of Art of the American West, A.J. Russel: *Westward to Promontory*; Wanda Hammerbach: *Natural Site Photographs*.
49. Museum of Fine Arts, *Evocative Presence*, Twentieth Century Photography in the Permanent Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.
50. New Gallery, *Selections from Collected Light*, Walter Chappell.
51. O'Kane Gallery, Allan Ludwig/Gwen Akin.
52. Parkerson Gallery, Josef Breitenbach.
53. Penzoll, *Bernard-Pierre Wolff: Birth of a Myth*.
54. Judy Youens Gallery, Jerry Uelsmann's multiple prints.
55. RepublicBank Center, *Selections 3* from the Polaroid Collection.



Matti Saario

59. Texas Commerce Bank, German photographer Andre Gelpke.
60. Texas Medical Center, *Photography and Psychiatry in the 19th Century*.



Sadayoshi Shiotani

56. Rice Media Center, *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency: Photographs by Nan Goldin*.
57. Sewell Gallery, *Portrayals*, contemporary portraits.
58. Susanna Sheffield Gallery, *Fred Baldwin/Wendy Watriss: Black Cowboys*.

Sophie Ristelhueber



61. Toni Jones Gallery, California photographer David Strick.
62. Transco Art Gallery, *Art Networks 1950-1970*, Harry Callahan, Van Deren Coke, Henry Holmes Smith, Aaron Siskind, Minor White and their students.
63. University State Bank, *America's Uncommon Places: The Blessings of Liberty*.
64. Walzel's Jewelers, Mary Margaret Hansen, Barbara Riley and Patsy Cravens.
65. Watson Gallery, Margaret Bourke-White, Andre Kertesz, L'Udo Stacho.
66. Watercolor Society, *Reclaiming Paradise: American Women Photograph the Land*.
67. Congregation Beth Israel, Gay Block and Arthur Leipzig.



Peter Brown, *Alison's Back*, 1983 (original in color)



Peter Brown, *Blueberry Muffin Breakfast*, 1982 (original in color)

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY IN HEATH

By T.R. Mackin

HEATH: Photographs from Heath, Massachusetts, 1979-1987, Harris Gallery, October 24-November 17, by Peter Brown.

Peter Brown's "beginnings of a collective portrait" are as articulate as they are beautiful. In the current arena of photographic criticism, the beautiful and the loved are not safe undertakings. Brown has rendered his subject with a deft hand—avoiding sentimentality by editing his images to work not with sequential associations, but with conscious narrative invention. The individual images range from complex to minimalistic, from abstract to cliché (this man dares to photograph babies, dogs, and blue-and-white checkered tablecloths), from sharply graphic to casually composed. None of these images is just about composition, color, or even issues of representation. This visual journal is not just "a collection of photographs of personal moments" as Brown states simply. It is a well-constructed autobiographical sketch of the character of the photographer. One does not have to identify personally with the experiences, the spaces or the relationships evident in these photographs to read and appreciate the literary sense conveyed by the visual images.

The light and color are so seductive in "Dinner at Heath" (1982) that one initially references advertising imagery. Then one notices the motion-blurred arms and the ritual of passing butter. The glow of the mismatched silver calls attention to the handwoven rag placemats, and the eye moves around the table to take in the salt-glazed crock, the hand-embroidered napkin, the small handmade bowl. The people in this image are in motion, but the table and all the rituals it incorporates are frozen in time. The table's warm patina, the black and white formal photograph which hangs upon the wall, and the spoked-back wooden chair visible in the yard through the open window, all reference a slower-cadenced past time.

The chair reappears in a portrait of Brown's father, "Pa Playing the Cello" (1981). This photograph is so perfectly idyllic that its plausibility seems almost incredible at first. It seems to have its roots in the early attitudes of art photography when photographers with romantic and/or pre-Raphaelite visions staged and photographed moral allegories. The viewer is denied entrance at the lower edge of the image by ferns reinforced by light brush. Each edge of the photograph is framed by a single tree. This fenced vignette is the opening of a close field, the other side of which appears out of focus at the top of the photograph. Behind the lacy brush on this side of the close, sitting in the spoked-back chair with his back to us, bow arm raised, the photographer's father plays his cello. The solitary quality of the image, the isolation its edges force upon the viewer/would-be participant, are very like the sounds of a cello out in a small enclosed field.

This portrait of Brown's father plays off another which is taken in the tradition of a family snapshot (albeit a sophisticated 16 x 20 version thereof). "My Father Being a Dog" (1986) is absurd in content but does not rely only on the humor of a gray-haired man on all fours carrying a stick in his mouth. This is a snapshot which also incorporates the "decisive moment" of

Cartier-Bresson or Kertész. A dog yawns at the man's performance, and the small child who is the intended audience of the action is both amused and cautious—he is smiling but has pulled back his hand, as reluctant to take the stick from this playful gentleman as he might be to take it from a strange dog.

"Alison's Back" (1982) appears to be a cinematic still. Predominant is Alison's back above the top of the front passenger seat of a car. Alison is waiting, her car door shut, her head turned to look out the window next to her, and her face visible in the side mirror. But the out of focus face in the rear-view mirror and the figure diffused by the dusty window are non-cinematic, serving as ties to life, not as clues to some fictive action. The viewer, in returning to the in focus information in this image, sees a sliver of light resting unchallenged on Alison's back. Alison is waiting with her car door shut, her head turned to look out the window. The photographer is waiting too, his door open.

Another subtle image which relies upon the viewer's powers of perception to relate it to its context is "Blue Clothesline" (1984). A line strung in a woods is laden with assorted blue laundry. The photograph at first appears to be a study of color and odd happenstance, but the lighting and the red dirt, with little ground cover, reveal that this must be a small clearing in the woods seen not far behind the line. Someone who lives in these woods—or at least finds it convenient to hang laundry there—is also practical enough to wash blue clothes together to prevent color disaster in the washing machine (or is it maybe in the large galvanized washtub?).

Where personal and familial concerns are not now usually considered as meritorious as political or existential ones, and where other photographers' recent attempts to deal with so personal and intimate a subject have proved mediocre, Brown has amazingly and laudably found a way to make his communication accessible and acceptable to the viewer. His success depends in part on his abilities to distance himself appropriately from one image to the next, and to edit for connotations in juxtaposition. His success also depends upon his willingness to vary his approach, not ignoring schools of photographic theory past and present, but incorporating their attitudes into his different images, making these images into varying elements of speech—metaphor, hyperbole, witticism, and the like—to produce a personal essay which is clear and wonderful to read.

T.R. Mackin is an editor, writer, and photographer residing in Houston.

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April Rapier, New Orleans, 1985.



April Rapier, Ajijc, Mexico, 1986



PERSONAL TERRAINS

By Anne Roberts

Photographs by April Rapier and George O. Jackson were exhibited at the Nave Museum in Victoria, TX, October 22 through November 20, 1987.

The landscape flows by with an unrelieved monotonous flatness during the miles from Houston to Victoria, but the trip serves to clear the mind for the images of April Rapier and George Jackson appearing at the Nave Museum through November.

"A constantly evolving terrain" according to her statement is what interests April Rapier in her portraits, but it was the amazing texture and dimension of this terrain as it appeared in her landscapes which intrigued me. In each of the large (16x20 inch) black and white landscapes, the framing narrows in to spotlight a section of the garden, forest, or cemetery with a particularly heightened reality. Using infrared film for its grainy texture and contrast, Rapier adds split-toning, bleaching, some masking and even faint graphite to add further texture. The resulting monoprints have a three dimensionality which is both subtle and mysterious, seducing the viewer to appreciate each object and tone. Rather than a literal presentation of the place, this reworking of the image serves to transform the image much as time itself changes our memory of events.

In "East Providence, 1980," a background wall with faint graffiti on its edge is echoed by the delicate foreground foliage forming its own calligraphy. "East Providence, 1982" silhouettes a tracery of leaves against a delicate carpet of grass, while in "Austin, 1985," each lily pad seems to float in a different plane. In another image entitled, "New Orleans, 1985," a single urn with two large mums, probably in a cemetery, becomes icon-like, singular in importance. In "Houston, 1983, #1," the lights and darks of plants and bushes are very startling, almost like explosions, but as you look closely, you see a tiny cat in the left corner, and suddenly the image's entire perspective changes.

A later series of photographs called "Ajijc, 1986," are gathered in another cemetery, this time in Mexico. Here Rapier isolates intricate wreaths and other decorations around each grave, their flowers long spent, evoking a mood of both celebration and loss. Portions of the beautiful scenes dominate or recede, similar to the process of memory itself.

Some of these same images become the background for the most recent of Rapier's work, six collaged drawings. By painting over some elements, emphasizing others with color, and adding bits and pieces of very personal significance, Rapier has taken her interest in texture and dimension a logical step further. While they were very beautiful and colorful, I found somehow the process of looking at each added object and pondering its possible meaning distracting. Perhaps they were too personal and lacked the universal identification available in the photographs themselves.

The exhibition also shows 12 of Rapier's paired portraits. While in a museum show one does expect to see a large body of work, showing two such different disciplines in one room was somewhat unsettling. In most of these portraits Rapier uses a neutral white studio background, making faces stand out almost in relief and creating much the same dimensionality seen in the landscapes. Here, however, the focus seems more on

the interaction of the paired faces (previously described as an evolving terrain), but I was not as sure of the photographer's intent as in the former work. My final impression of the exhibition is of an amazing body of work from a steadily developing artist.

While Rapier works in toned black and white, all of the photographs by George O. Jackson begin as color transparencies. Jackson has traveled extensively in Mexico and Latin America, and has said he collects these slides (250,000 currently) to show the effects of the Roman Catholic religion on the area. Most of the pictures exhibited were taken during a trip to Guatemala this past Easter.

Seen as a group, the hand-held, available light, color photographs reflect much of that mysterious quality of religion and its symbols in this area. However, many individual images such as a group of wooden ducks or a cracked and painted wall do not hold up so well alone. Particularly effective was *El Desenganche* ("The Unhooking"), an enactment where dark figures remove others from the cross, combining with shadows on the wall to produce a feeling of the sadness of

the actual event. In another scene from an outside procession, *San Pedro*, purple clad participants surround an elevated figure of St. Peter. *Procession, Santiago de Atitlan* showed many red clad bearers elevating a jeweled, flowered and lighted coffin through the streets. In the largest photograph in the exhibition, *Procession Santa Catarina Jueves Santo*, (24 x 36) an elaborate and colorful sawdust rug is drawn in the street. On either side are many purple clad figures waving incense, as a large elevated saint figure appears in the background.

These photographs effectively transcend documentation when they emphasize the solemn quality of the drama as well as the unreality of the scene, to approach a more universal interpretation of the mysteries of religion.

Also shown were a few of Jackson's *Park Lane* series of the city of Houston which were reviewed in SPOT, Spring, 1987.

Anne Roberts, the former editor of *Artscene*, is also a photographer.

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BOOKS

By Ed Osowski

Cecil Beaton: A Retrospective, David Mellor, Editor. Boston: New York Graphic Society 1986. 256 pages. \$35.00.

Marilyn Monroe: An Appreciation, by Eve Arnold. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987 144 pages. \$30.00.

Striking Poses: Photographs from the Kobal Collection, by Richard Schickel. New York: Stewart, Tabori and Chang, 1987. 152 pages. \$24.95.

The title of a new murder mystery by Robert Campbell, *In La-La Land we Trust*, playfully and cynically suggests the split feelings that Hollywood engenders in many of us. Hollywood is, of course, the land of dreams, of all that is fabricated, artificial, phony. Yet we, as a culture, have granted a certain credibility to the images ground out by Hollywood cameras for our consumption (and indoctrination). Those images have shaped—and continue to shape—the ways in which we perceive the roles of women and men, the institutions to which we pay allegiance, the patterns by which we live our lives. Three recent books demonstrate how the photographic image, as a tool of the Hollywood publicity agent, created a language of symbols and desires, investing stars and would-be stars with a gravity that now seems, depending on one's perspective, quaint, frightening, insulting, sexist, and more. That these images cynically exploit their subjects is clear. What is equally clear, however, is that in many of the photographs, the subjects themselves cynically exploit the viewer.

Richard Schickel has reviewed movies for *Time* since 1972. In *Striking Poses* he has assembled 160 color publicity stills taken between the 1930's and the 1960's. The stills come from the Kobal Collection, identified by the publisher as "one of the world's most valuable sources of film imagery." Little more is said about the Collection—how it was assembled, where it is located, who can gain access. The quality of reproduction varies greatly. Many of the photographs appear washed out, faded, or bleached.

The photographs in *Striking Poses* were intended to serve two purposes. Most were taken to fill the pages of Sunday supplements and movie magazines. They promoted new "talents" as if they were new products (as, indeed, they were) and they helped to keep established stars before the public. Others were intended to capture, in a single image, the theme of a particular film. Schickel points out that these images are from the first generation of color photographs as color film entered the market in 1935. So, the harsh, unrealistic lighting, the hard-edged contrasts, and the frequently murky reproductions owe something to the fact that the new technology was still in its infancy.

Schickel is, however, too cynical, too flip, towards his subject, too caught up in his own sophistication



Dorothy Lamour, c. 1942 (from the Kobal Collection)

and remove from these images. He goes so far as to call them "machined junk." Schickel is correct to a point. The level of bizarre imagery here is certainly high, as in the section titled "Spots of Nature" (actresses in leopard-spotted bathing suits posed with leopards), or again in the group of eccentric hats and headgear titled "Hats on Their Belfries." Other images here are the stuff of sexual/political fantasies and nightmares. Janet Leigh, in one, poses from the film "Kid Rodeo." She stares at the viewer, a holster crossing her middle, a gun in her right hand, clothed only in a corset, garter belt, nylons, and high-heeled shoes. Is Leigh the castrating woman Sigmund Freud warned us of? But if the sexual message of the Leigh photograph is not to one's liking, Schickel obliges with another which employs a similar "western" theme. In the second John Payne, drawn guns held in both hands, stands bare-chested between two women. The sexual battlefield that Payne here protects is too obvious for comment.

It is not because we have become too sophisticated and too knowledgeable that the photographs in *Striking Poses* appear so obvious, so lacking in subtlety, so banal, so clear in their messages. They were meant to be read quickly, then discarded, to make a quick, not lasting impression. But no impression ever fades. By stripping them of their contexts, *Striking Poses* allows us to read them more deeply and longer.

After seeing an article on Marlene Dietrich illustrated by Eve Arnold in *Esquire* in the early 1950's, Marilyn Monroe arranged an interview with the photographer. Monroe had one goal in mind—to become for Arnold a photographic subject who would appear in magazines like *Life* and *Esquire*. Monroe appreciated the exposure that a talented and well-placed photographer like Arnold (a member of the prestigious photographers' cooperative Magnum Photos) could secure as necessary if she were to escape the restrictions of her studio contract. So began a "professional friendship," as Arnold

Cecil Beaton, H.M. Queen Elizabeth II, Coronation Day, 1953



writes that lasted ten years and resulted in six photographic sessions. *Marilyn Monroe: An Appreciation* collects those six sessions and adds Arnold's intelligent recollections.

Arnold will tolerate none of the sentimental clap-trap that has grown up around Marilyn Monroe (the actress as victim, as martyr, as genius forced to hide her intelligence). Monroe recognized that her greatest skill was her ability to use the camera. "She adored posing for the still camera, and her way of getting stardom—and staying there—was to stay in the public eye." Monroe was a self-creation, Arnold writes, trained on publicity stills of the sort collected by Schickel. She knew, through long hours of practice, the style and content of the "glamour shots" of the movie magazines. But she also had the special skill to stamp her own style on those images.

What one gets in *Marilyn Monroe: An Appreciation*, then, is all the guile, posing, and imagery designed to convey a particular persona. If the viewer wants a naive child-genius, Monroe accom-

plishes his own best subject. In his photographs there is never the slightest hint of work or exertion. His is a fantasy of ease, comfort, repose.

Following the disastrous decline in popularity of the British royal family after Edward VIII abdicated to marry, Beaton became the favorite photographer of the new king, George VI and especially of his Queen and daughters. His photographs of them draw on his skills as a fashion photographer and invest them with glamour, spiritual calm, or weight, depending on what the occasion demanded. So, in 1939, he photographed Queen Elizabeth as the "Faerie Queen," pushing credibility to the limit. In 1948, she appears again, dramatically dressed in black. What is peculiar about these royal photographs (and others as well) is how they advertise themselves as "artifice."

The most striking example of Beaton's tendency to flaunt the self-consciously artificial aspect of his images is his 1953 coronation photograph of the current monarch, Queen Elizabeth. She sits slightly askew, dressed in the robes of state,



Eve Arnold, Marilyn with Kenneth, 1961

modates by posing on a piece of playground equipment, a copy of James Joyce's *Ulysses* in her hand. Or, if it is glamour that is wanted, Monroe smiles—very blonde, very sophisticated—with Kenneth, her hairdresser. Arnold's photographs, whether from movie sets (*The Misfits*) or from domestic situations (with Arthur Miller), make no effort to be spontaneous. Rather, they offer moments from an ongoing drama whose title might appropriately be "Control."

One turns to *Cecil Beaton: A Retrospective* and confronts a true master of manipulation, camp, bombast, wit, and artistry. Those artists who are not of the first rank are frequently the ones who enable us to see how certain artistic and cultural changes are communicated to a wide audience. Beaton was such an artist. His incongruous juxtapositions of props with models made surrealism (without its backbone) palatable. He himself posed endlessly—in costume, in drag, as a country squire, as an artist—each pose suggesting the ease with which one appearance could be replaced by the next. Beaton was

against a painted backdrop of the chapel at Windsor Castle, almost pushed up against the architectural painting. Is the subject floating? Do her powers include the ability to defy gravity? Or is it logic that she defies? Beaton slyly laughs at the monarch while surrounding her with the symbols of her authority, here brought into question by the cockeyed angle at which she appears.

What links the photographers in these three books is the ability to give their subjects (or clients) exactly what was wanted. Unlike paparazzi who try to capture the rich and famous with all their warts (and try to suggest that what they are offering is somehow more "truthful" than the images made by press photographers), the photographers in these volumes offer the truth of photographic illusion, of myth, of insincerity, of posing.

Ed Osowski is a librarian with the Houston Public Library System. He is a frequent contributor to SPOT and occasionally reviews books for the HOUSTON POST.

CALENDAR EXHIBITIONS

DECEMBER

Benteler-Morgan Galleries, through Dec 23 Multi-Image Group Exhibition of Photographs, 4200 Montrose Suite 350, Mon-Fri 9-5, and by appointment. 522-8228.

Butera's on Alabama, through Jan 6 "Evergreen Trees Ever More," photographs by Mary Margaret Hansen, S. Shepherd at Alabama, M-F 7am-10pm, Sat-Sun 8am-10pm.

Butera's on Montrose, Dec 7 through Jan 31 Photographs of the Delia Stewart Dance Company by Leigh Farmer, 4261 Montrose, Mon-Fri 7-10, Sat-Sun 8-10.

Graham Gallery, Dec 5 through Feb 6 Area photographers exhibit (upstairs gallery), 1431 W. Alabama Tue-Sat 10-5:30, 528-4957.

Houston Center for Photography, through Dec 5 Annual Benefit Auction Exhibition; also, **Dec 11 through Jan 17** Joel Meyerowitz, 1441 W. Alabama, Wed-Fri 11-5, Sat-Sun 12-5. 529-4755.

Milloud Gallery, through Dec 7 "Houston: Image and Imagination," photographs by Valentin Gertsman, 4041 Richmond Mon-Sat 10-4, 621-3330.

Rice University: Rice Media Center, through December student photography exhibit from Geoff Winningham's Mexico Workshop, 2030 University Blvd. Entrance 7, Mon-Fri 9-5, 527-8101.

JANUARY

Benteler-Morgan Galleries, January 7 through Feb 12 "Southern Expose," Views of the South by Women Photographers 4200 Montrose Suite 350, Mon-Fri 9-5, and by appointment. 522-8228.

Butera's on Alabama, through Jan 6 "Evergreen Trees Ever More," photographs by Mary Margaret Hansen, S. Shepherd at Alabama, Mon-Fri 7am-10pm, Sat-Sun 8am-10pm.

Butera's on Montrose, through Jan 31 Photographs of the Delia Stewart Dance Company by Leigh Farmer, 4261 Montrose, Mon-Fri 7-10, Sat-Sun 8-10.

Butler Gallery, through Dec 31 "DeWitt Godfrey Installation," and "Timothy Greenfield Sanders: Photographs," 2318 Portsmouth. 522-4430.

Houston Center for Photography, through Jan 22 Joel Meyerowitz; also, **Jan 22 through February 28** "I'm Not Crazy, I Just Lost My Glasses," photographs by Lonnie Shavelson, plus "The Other," photography by ethnic, racial, and sexual minorities, and "Revising Romance," a video exhibition representing eight women video artists, 1441 W. Alabama, Wed-Fri 11-5, Sat-Sun 12-5, 529-4755.

Rice University: Rice Media Center, Jan 12-Feb 15 "University of New Mexico Student Exhibit," 2030 University Blvd. entrance 7, Mon-Fri 9-5, 527-8101.

Watson Gallery Feb 20-March 19 "Vintage Photography: Andre Kertesz and Margaret Bourke-White," 3510 Lake St. Tue-Sat 10-5:30, 526-9883.

FEBRUARY

Benteler-Morgan Galleries, through Feb 12 "Southern Expose," Views of the South by Women Photographers, also, **Feb 25 through Mar 31** Herbert Grootecloes, photographer from Belgium, 4200 Montrose Suite 350, Mon-Fri 9-5, and by appointment. 522-8228.

Buteras on Montrose, Feb 1-April 3 "Mardi Gras" photographs by Phyllis Hand, 4261 Montrose, Mon-Fri 7-10, Sat-Sun, 8-10.



Francis Giles, Portrait of His Mother, from "The Other" Show at HCP

Diverse Works, Feb-26-April 4 30 Year Survey by Rudy Burkhardt-film maker and photographer; Texas photography, "Not for the Living Room" 214 Travis, Tue-Fri 10-5, Sat 12-4, 223-8346.

Harris Gallery, Feb 12-Mar 12 FotoFest Exhibit featuring Peter Brown, George Krause and Geoff Winningham, 1100 Bissonnet, Tue-Fri 10-5:30, Sat 11-5, 522-9116.

Houston Center for Photography, Jan 22 through February 28 "I'm Not Crazy, I Just Lost My Glasses," photographs by Lonnie Shavelson, plus "The Other," photography by ethnic, racial, and sexual minorities, and "Revising Romance," a video exhibition representing eight woman video artists, 1441 W. Alabama, Wed-Fri 11-5, Sat-Sun 12-5, 529-4755.

Lawndale Feb 27-April 2, Trends in Texas Photography, 5600 Hillman. Tue-Sat 12-6. 921-4755

McMurtrey Gallery Feb 20-Mar 19 regional photography, 3508 Lake St., Tue-Sat 10-5, 523-8238.

Moody Gallery Feb 20-Mar 19 MANUAL (Ed Hill/Susan Bloom), 2815 Colquitt, Tue-Sat 10-5:30, 526-9911.

Museum of Fine Arts Feb 27-May 1 "Evocative Presence: Twentieth-Century Photographs in the Permanent Collection," 1001 Bissonnet Tues-Sat 10-5; Thurs 10-9; Sun 1-6. 526-1361.

Rice University: Rice Media Center, through Feb 15 "University of New Mexico Student Exhibit," also, **Feb 25-Mar 31** Nan Goldin, "The Battle of Sexual Dependency," 2030 University, Entrance 7, Mon-Fri 9-5, 527-8101.

Watson Gallery Feb 20-March 19 "Vintage Photography: Andre Kertesz and Margaret Bourke-White," 3510 Lake St. Tue-Sat 10-5:30, 526-9883.

EXHIBITIONS ELSEWHERE IN TEXAS

DECEMBER

Abilene: West Texas Photographic Gallery, through Dec Photography Group Show, 1140 1/2 N. 2nd St., Sat-Sun 1-4. (915)677-8389.

Amarillo: Southern Light Gallery, through Dec 11, "Personal Maps—Linear Strip Photography," Amarillo College, (806)371-5000.

Dallas: Afterimage, Dec-Jan 7, Christmas Show of Gallery Artists, 2800 Routh Street, The Quad #250, Mon-Sat 10-5:30. (214)458-8191.

Dallas: Allen Street Gallery Dec 4-Jan 24, New Faces Exhibit, 4101 Commerce St., Wed-Fri 12-5, Sat-Sun 1-5. (214)821-8260.

Dallas: 500X Gallery through December, mixed-media exhibit by Michael Whitehead and photography exhibit by Sarah McCoy, 500 Exposition Ave., Thur 5-9. Fri-Sun 1-5. (214)828-1111.

Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum, through Jan 3, Eliot Porter, a retrospective of his photography, 3501 Camp Bowie Blvd., Tue-Sat 10-5, Sun 1-5:30. (817)738-1933.

Lubbock: S.R.O. Corridor Gallery, through Dec 11, Sherry Zuckerman colorprints, Photographic Resource, Texas Tech University, (806)742-3825.

JANUARY

Amarillo: Southern Light Gallery Jan 10-Feb 19, "Watergraphs" Ken Kaplowitz, Amarillo College (806)371-5000.

Dallas: Afterimage, through Jan 7, Christmas Show of Gallery Artists, 2800 Routh Street, The Quad #250, Mon-Sat 10-5:30. (214)458-8191.

Dallas: Afterimage, Jan 9-Mar 5, Peter Feresten, 2800 Routh Street, The Quad #250, Mon-Sat 10-5:30. (214)871-9140.

Dallas: Allen Street Gallery through Jan 24, New Faces Exhibit, 4101 Commerce St., Wed-Fri 12-5, Sat-Sun 1-5. (214)821-8260.

Dallas: Allen Street Gallery Jan 29-Mar 13, Duane Michals Exhibition, opening reception January 29 at 7p.m., 4101 Commerce St. Wed-Fri 12-5, Sat-Sun 1-5. (214)821-8260.

Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum Jan 15-March 6, "Laton A. Huffman: Frontier Photography," 3501 Camp Bowie Blvd., Tues-Sat 10-5, Sun 1-5:30. (817)738-1933.

Lubbock: S.R.O. Corridor Gallery, Jan 18-Feb 5, Karen Hillier cibachromes, Photographic Resources, Texas Tech University, (806)742-3825.

FEBRUARY

Amarillo: Southern Light Gallery through Feb 19, "Watergraphs" Ken Kaplowitz, Feb 22-Mar 25, "American Scenes" Jim Haberman, Amarillo College (806)371-5000.

Lubbock: S.R.O. Corridor Gallery, through Feb 5, Karen Hillier cibachromes, Photographic Resources, Texas Tech University, (806)742-3825.

Lubbock: S.R.O. Corridor Gallery, Feb 8-26, Jack Barnosky, "Man Made Landscapes," Feb 29-

Mar 25, Steve Fitch color landscapes, Photographic Resources, Texas Tech University, (806)742-3825.

Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum through March 6, "Laton A. Huffman: Frontier Photography," 3501 Camp Bowie Blvd., Tues-Sat 10-5, Sun 1-5:30. (817)738-1933.

WORKSHOPS ELSEWHERE IN TEXAS

Dallas: Allen Street Gallery Jan 14 Tech Talk- Holiday Equipment, **Jan 30**, Workshop with Duane Michals, 4101 Commerce St. (214)821-8260.

WORKSHOPS

Color Workshop/Critique with Joel Meyerowitz Sat Dec 12, 10am-2pm at HCP, 1441 W. Alabama. Given in conjunction with his exhibition at HCP. \$40 HCP members, \$50 nonmembers. Call 529-4755. Early registration advised.

LECTURES

Joel Meyerowitz lecture prior to the opening of his exhibition on Fri, Dec 11, at HCP, 1441 W. Alabama. Lecture at 7pm and opening reception at 8:30pm. Free and open to the public.

Linda Podheiser lecture, Tue, Jan 26 7:30pm at HCP, 1441 W. Alabama. A film historian in the Environmental Studies Dept. of Harvard University, Podheiser will lecture on the video series "Revising Romance," at HCP from Jan 22 through Feb 28. \$2 HCP members and \$3 nonmembers.

WCA (Women's Caucus for Art) Conference, Houston '88 Feb 9-11, "Back to the Future: Re: Veiling, Imaging, Presenting," exhibitions and conference panels. For more information, contact Sandi Seltzer Bryant at 726-0516.

Photographic Collectors of Houston Feb 20-21, will host the 23rd Semi-Annual Houston Camera Show and Sale. The Show will be held at the Holiday Inn-Hobby Airport, 9100 Gulf Freeway and is open to the public. \$3.50 admission from 10am-5pm. For more information contact Leonard M. Hart, Show Director, c/o Photographic Collectors of Houston, P.O. Box 70226, Houston, TX 77270 or (713)868-9606.

Lonnie Shavelson lecture, Wed, Feb 24 at HCP, 1441 W. Alabama. Shavelson will lecture on his current exhibit at HCP, consisting of photographs with accompanying text and tapes. \$2 HCP members, \$3 nonmembers.

LECTURES ELSEWHERE IN TEXAS

Dallas: Allen Street Gallery Jan 23 Celia Munoz, a professor at University of Texas Arlington will review and critique work 10am-12noon open to the public, 4101 Commerce St. (214)821-8260.

Dallas: Jan 23 Duane Michals lecture at the Bob Hope Theater at SMU. For time, call (214)821-8260.

Dallas: Allen Street Gallery Feb 13 Associates lecture on "Xerography" 7:30, members free, nonmembers \$3.50. **Creative Exchange**, Jim Newberry a professor at East Texas University will review and critique work. 10am-12noon, open to the public, 4101 Commerce St. (214)821-8260.

CLUBS

American Society of Magazine Photographers (ASMP), meets 2nd Mon. monthly in the Graphic Arts Conference Center, 1324 W. Clay. International association "whose members work in every category of published photography." 6:30pm social; 7:30pm meeting. Visitors welcome. Charge for monthly meetings. 771-2220.

Houston Chapter of Association for Multimage, meets 3rd Thurs. monthly. Steve Sandifer. 667-9417.

Association of Students in Photography, Houston Community College, 1300 Holman. For HCC students. Meets 8pm 1st Mon. monthly. Randy Spalinger 521-9271.

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

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

The Houston Camera Club, meets 7:30pm 1st and 3rd Tues. monthly at Baylor College of Medicine, DeBakey Bldg. room M-112. Competitions, programs, evaluations. Glenn Stevens. Pres. 520-5013.

The Houston Photochrome Club, meets 7:30pm 2nd and 4th Tues. monthly at St. Michael's church, 1801 Sage Rd., room 21. John Patton 453-4167.

The Houston Photographic Society, meets 7:30pm 2nd and 4th Tues. monthly at the Bering Church, Mulberry at Harold; programs and critiques. John Moyer 933-4492; Jim Rivers 464-9525.

Photographic Collectors of Houston, meets upstairs at the Color Place (4102 San Felipe) 4th Wed. monthly at 7pm. Steve Guglielmi 524-5361.

1960 Photographic Society, meets 7:30 pm 1st and 3rd Tues. monthly at Doss Park, 2500 Frick Rd. (1 blk. off Veteran's Blvd.) For more info, contact Royce Shaddix, Jr., at 237-3787.



Danny Lyon, Route 12, Wisconsin, 1963

Jim Elmore, Texas A&M Band, Houston, 1983



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HCP would also like to express our gratitude to the following for their culinary contributions to the auction preview:

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