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CENSORSHIP • 19TH-CENTURY AMERICA

George Krause, John the Baptist, Spain, 1964
FOTOFEST

MARCH 7 THROUGH APRIL 5

THE HOUSTON CENTER FOR PHOTOGRAPHY
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL FOTOFEST AT (713) 840-9711.
5 Delving into HCP's Ten-Year History
The Houston Center for Photography celebrated its tenth anniversary last year, marking a decade of growth, change, and achievements. HCP members reflect on the organization’s contributions to photography in Houston and look forward to the future. An update on HCP’s many fellowship recipients is also provided, in addition to a timeline on the major photographic events in the city during the past ten years.

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As we celebrate the Houston Center for Photography’s tenth anniversary and reflect on its accomplishments, it is clear that HCP was not alone in its prosperity during the past decade. Houston was rich with photographic activity. The Museum of Fine Arts was developing a strong program with exhibitions and related activities. Fotofest grew from a dream to an international event; and the many galleries in the region were gaining widespread support from patrons and artists alike.

To meet the challenge of this receptive audience, HCP has sought to find its own niche by presenting a variety of exhibitions, lectures, workshops, catalogs, fellowships, and issues of the journal you hold in your hand. Planning this issue to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Houston Center for Photography, without whose continuing support this home for photo-lovers would cease to exist, we would like to acknowledge our loyal advertisers and the Forums Program of The National Endowment for the Arts for their support of SPOF. Since its inception, HCP has been the product of collaborations of all types and this issue of SPOF is no exception. From the cooperation of writers—local and national—to the exceptional efforts of staff and interns at HCP, this journal is the tangible result of their invaluable contributions.

LETTERS
Dear Editor:

As a photojournalist, I am writing to express my dismay at two overwhelmingly negative reviews in the Fall 1991 issue of SPOF. I believe the reviews are unfair and misleading. The photojournalist in question, who is a respected photographer and writer, has been a strong advocate for photojournalism and has a deep understanding of the medium. His review, which appears in the SPOF, is entirely based on his personal opinions and lacks objectivity. The reviews in SPOF are not intended to be critical, but rather to provide a platform for artists to discuss their work.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth McBride

Editor's Note:

The reviews in SPOF are meant to provide a platform for artists to discuss their work. The review in question is based on the photographer’s personal opinions and lacks objectivity. The reviews in SPOF are not intended to be critical, but rather to provide a platform for artists to discuss their work.

Sincerely,

Rich Hock

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Emerging from the Houston photographic community in October 1981, the Houston Center for Photography (HCP) has tried to be many things to many people. The sometimes turbulent, often triumphant, evolution of this visual artist organization reflects the dreams of the people behind it—artists, collectors, curators, patrons, and students. A grassroots phenomenon with institutional aspirations, HCP’s auspicious birth, ambitious expansion, stubborn survival, and determined vitality is an American success story.

While a ten-year tenure for any medium-sized artists organization is awe inspiring and cause for celebration, its early history resembles a myth, complete with proud heroes and dark homes. Its founding members recount those first few years with pride and emotion. The story approximates a genealogy of the Houston photographic community.

In the Beginning

Prior to 1975, photography had little permanent foothold or mainstream clout in Houston. The evolving popularity of photography in the city paralleled its development across the country. Some multimedia commercial galleries, such as Frederick H. Hackett’s Texas Gallery in 1970, included photography in their yearly programming. The Chrysler Gallery, one of Houston’s few exclusive photography showplaces, opened in 1975 and was followed soon by David Mancini’s Photopia.filling in where Geoff Winningham’s Luminous Image Gallery had left off in the early ’70s. Winningham’s Rice Media Center program, established in 1969, was strong; the photography department at the University of Houston had begun with promise in 1975 under George Bunnell; and the photography department at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), was mounting under the nurturing hands of Anne W. Tucker. But, the diverse dozen of photographers, collectors, and “accomplished spectators”—as Lynn Herbet put it—HCP executive director, calls “the sophisticated see”—wanted more.

As the curator of photography at MFAH, Hackett brought together those with a true love of photography. She sent out flyers inviting people to talk about the photographic community at Frederick and Betty Fleming’s Paradise Bar and Grill, and the word spread. As thirty to forty people discussed their dreams, the idea of the Houston Center for Photography began to take shape. Although no permanent meeting or exhibition place existed, ideas and energy abounded. The organization was to move first to Sally Horitjan’s house, then to Buddy Clemmons’ gallery/home, and on to Bering Memorial United Methodist Church before settling in 1983 into its current locale at the corner of Mulberry and West Alabama.

In addition to address changes, the director’s porch was lifted from her porch by her daughter (then McLanahan) in 1983 in Lew Thomas in 1985. In 1987, April Raper chose it briefly before passing it on to Jo Ann Cahn. As president of HCP’s board of directors, Guy W. Deveux, Dwayne Cranley, Herman Detering, Paul Hester, Horitjan, Joan Morganstern, Cranley, Amanda Whitaker, and ClintWilford have done their parts. While diversity has always been a defining characteristic of HCP, it has contributed to the center’s strength and challenged its stability.

Much of that vision was realized in the first year. HCP became more than just a meeting place for members to exhibit and discuss their work. Volunteers produced workshops and lectures that offered technical and issue-oriented education. They organized exhibitions that explored the range of photography, and they put basic fundraising, programming, and organizational structures into place. In addition to a monthly newsletter, they launched Image, a critical photography journal, in 1983. The magazine was renamed SPOT in 1984 because of a conflict with another magazine’s name. Artist Ed Hill and Cranley, a commercial photographer, conceived the name, and Charles Schorr and Peter Boyle developed the original design.

The community spirit, which enabled so much work to be done so fast—and there were no limitations.” HCP opened a gallery in the Bering Memorial Church in July 1982, just before its incorporation as a nonprofit artists organization. The organization successfully launched a fund-raising campaign with a $180,000 goal over a three-year period. McLanahan, recognized recently by the Houston Post as one of ten Women of Distinction for her volunteer support of the Houston Grand Opera, was integral to the drive beginning in 1983. When Crosley’s wife, Judy Blazek (the CPA who secured the center’s nonprofit status with help of attorney David H. Gildin), called the members of a vacancy in some Menil proprieties in the museum district, the center moved to its present site. In merveilleux fashion, HCP installed itself to streamline operations, making it one of the first alternative arts organizations to do so.

With Crosley as president, the hiring of Herbet as the center’s first director established a creative team at HCP. Prior to that time, according to a founding member, all center operations were conducted on “a strictly denizen” basis, with everyone voting at monthly meetings.

The center came together quickly because of the grassroots support. Longtime member, Ginny Camfield, a photographer who sits on the current board, recalls that “the membership that came together for all activities was a real resource.” For the first annual Members’ Exhibition, the gallery space in the church needed painting. Debra Rueb, a founding member and photographer who works for a NASA contractor, faced a crumbling room that was to exhibit the center’s first show in a matter of days. Typical of the determination at HCP, Crosley and members Rueb saying, “Just paint the room white, it’ll be fine.” So the two women spent the weekend painting. Hester remembers that “he gave the organization momentum and resources that made up for limited funds. He recalls using rub-on lettering for exhibition titles: ‘What we didn’t have, we would make.’

In addition to materials, members made up organizational procedures as they went along, devoting imagination and seemingly endless energy to get the center off the ground. Crosley remarks on his tenure as the first president of HCP: “I was a blank slate. There were no rules. We went whole hog. It was a time of youth and ambition before family concerns and career goals demanded more attention. Doing everything included choosing exhibitions; working as photographers, both inside and outside the organization. The Houston-based membership was small in comparison to today’s, enabling ‘house’ votes to determine all programming.

Members subsequently developed more systematic selection procedures, which have evolved into juried shows for members’ exhibitions and to committee choices for regular programming.

Founding member Paul Hester speaks fondly of a 1982 exhibition, “Chillianish Farm Mark” and Dan Jury,” based on the book Crams, which describes the last three years in the life of Frank Tugend, the artist’s grandfather. Crosley remembers some unknown artists who brought their portfolios to the church one Thursday night and presented work with unexpected quality and insight. He recalls seeing some sensitive portraits of women and platinum prints of Connecticut factories that were "univalled by what I see today" and earned exposure in the Menil’s gallery. McLanahan remembers “In Space, A Photographic Journey,” presented by HCP for NASA Johnson Space Center in 1987, its dramatic mural, a selective view of the moon, John Glenn’s special appearance, and an aurorius reunion appealed to many people. A $50,000 publicity and fundraising campaign generated a broad range of people to photograph and HCP, but it also brought the...
Members of the Houston Center for Photography at the annual selection meeting for the Second Annual Members’ Exhibition, 1983, by Paul Hester.

Anne W. Tucker makes her choice in the balloting for the First Annual Members’ Exhibition. Presented the exhibition at the Tranco Tower.

Among the distinguished members who showed their work at HCP’s first exhibitions were George Krause, who recently completed preparations for a retrospective to be seen at MFAH this spring, and Gay Block, whose solo show at the Museum of Modern Art opened January 15. The work of other ex-officio board members, such as Fred Baldwin, Suzanne Bloom, Peter Brown, Hill, Charles Schori, Wendy Wurtz, and Winningham, also inspire pride in the Houston photographic community.

Photography Explored

Clint Willour, HCP board member and curator of the Galveston Arts Center, explains that “in terms of its goals, the HCP is about art, and by photographers and photography.” He acknowledges the breadth of aesthetic values within the photographic community and the difficulty he faces when addressing divergent styles.

“HCP once tried to be all things to all people,” he says. “Now it needs to be what no one else can be.” His expansive vision parallels the center’s artistic philosophy, which “fosters a wide diversity of work.” Individual voices reflect unique points of reference. To Crossley, it’s about the act of seeing in ways that the eye cannot: “Photography allows you to see things, to share experiences with other people. There is a bigger crowd interested in photography involved with life rather than art photography.” To Brown, a photographer and teacher at Rice University, it’s about exploration and introspection. Rappaport, who handprints photographic imagery and teaches and writes about photography and photographic history, focuses on the fine art and interdisciplinary aspect of photography. But, she lenses, “I find most art empty, heartless, and pithegized.” Jenn Callin, current executive director of HCP, appreciates a broad range of work in keeping with his bi-coastal art history education. She speaks with equal excitement about black-and-white documentary photography and experimental slide installations.

This diversity of photographic interests is reflected in the center’s membership even now. Winningham explains that despite differing tastes, a common desire “to show work and get to know photographers” has characterized the HCP membership. Remarking on educational and local programming, Tucker says, “The center has always had a broader view, but it exists to benefit its members.” That’s often done with portfolio reviews and members’ exhibitions. Through its board and committee structure, she adds, it “gives people the chance to be involved in ways they cannot at a museum.” This means being involved in bringing shows to town that wouldn’t otherwise be seen, says Ham Staats, chair of the Programming Committee, who emphasizes the opportunities for active involvement at a visual artists organization, including “the chance to develop, to work, meet interesting people, and further my career by seeing work that really means something.”

Without conceding the center’s social role and practical role as well, noting that it has always been a vehicle for artists. Cunfield recalls the electricity generated by HCP being one of the only places in town to showcase emerging photographers’ work. Before FotoFest and photography’s mainstream acceptance as a fine art, few photographers had the support, exposure, and identification that comes with being represented by a gallery. Willour explains that now “there are so many other opportunities in Houston that we didn’t have before. Work can be seen at the MFAH, FotoFest, DiverseWorks, and the artists’ regular galleries,” he says. “Because HCP created other opportunities, it’s need to do that changed. It can grow to a point, then it outgrows itself, but it is fulfilled in other ways,” referring to expanded programs, exhibitions, fellowships, and grants for artists. Inevitable tradesoffs are a factor of growth. For Muffy McLanathan, this includes the exchange of intimacy for influence. “There used to be arguments and bickering, now there are committee reports,” she says. HCP strikes a delicate balance between being a membership organization for the Houston photographic community and a visual arts organization with national stature.

HCP: The Organization

With growth, the center has increasing opportunities and increasing demands common to any organization. As the center grows, fundraising consumes more time. Michael Devol, HCP administrative director, describes the center’s double life: “Either you are busy doing what you do, or you are getting funding to do what you do.” To help defray the costs of producing and showing new work, HCP often shares resources with St. Paul’s Film in the Cities, Boston’s Photographic Resource Center, San Francisco’s CameraWork, and Portland’s (Oregon) Blue Sky Gallery so that programming produced by one institution may travel to one or more of the others for viewing. This makes the work of lesser known or emerging photographers more visible and accessible. Through national distribution of SPOT, the center forges even more ties. Knaack compares SPOT to Afterimages, VIEWS, and Photo Review. SPOT addresses “the social and cultural impact of photography in the world,” according to Jeff DeBevec, chair of HCP’s Publications Committee. He explained that “its high productivity and insightful writing make SPOT a major source of pride for HCP, as well as one of its largest expenditures—supported by advertising and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).”

HCP also shares institutional concerns with other organizations across the country, such as long-range planning, fundraising, and other bureaucratic realities. Hester compares the financial environment of today’s visual artists organizations with that of one ten years ago. “The big difference,” he says, “is funding in all the arts. Things cost more today and you have to do it yourself.”

While the Cultural Arts Council of Houston and the Texas Commission on the Arts are sources of operating support, HCP has also received National Endowment for the Arts support. With this federal funding and national recognition, an artists organization changes in complex ways. Seeking acceptance into the Advancement Program of the NEA, HCP turned its attention to examining the organization’s mission, standardizing operations, and doing long-range planning, in addition to maintaining regular programming. The staff and board produced a doc-

April Rapier and Dave Crossley at the opening of the “Coast to Coast” exhibition curated by Rapier.

Endowment for the Arts support. With this federal funding and national recognition, an artists organization changes in complex ways. Seeking acceptance into the Advancement Program of the NEA, HCP turned its attention to examining the organization’s mission, standardizing operations, and doing long-range planning, in addition to maintaining regular programming.
The current HCP President Joan Morganstern refers to it as "the book that tells who we are, where we are, and where we're going." It outlines the role of the staff and board and details a taste/timeline for HCP's multi-year plan.

To be matched by grassroots funding and Lesbian Couples" by Sarge Sobier, "Convergence: Eight Photographers," and "The Scorching Earth: Oil & Well Fires in Kuwait." These exhibits addressed homosensual, multicultural, and working-class issues and audiences.

Having found its niche, the center can graphic community. Krause remembers that when Baldwin taught at the University of Houston, he would bring his students to HCP events. Tucker is secretary for HCP in addition to her MFHA responsibilities. Krause sits on the FotoFest art board—as do several other HCP board members—between teaching photography classes and tending to his own work. Morganstern, once a president of Photo Forum (MFHA's photography support group) now presides over HCP as board president.

The institutional overlap creates a rich cultural environment that defines the community and encourages its accomplishments. Although Winningham asserts that HCP has had a powerful influence on the photographic community in terms of its people, exhibitions, and seminars, he insists that the MFHA program changed the community. "It was Anne's influence," he says. "That's when it changed in the biggest way." Tucker disagrees, though not, she says, solely out of modesty. All the organizations "benefit from the same thing," she says. Brown notes the role of the academic community, citing Glassell School of Art, the Art Institute, Rice Media Center, and the University of Houston. The interaction of an arts organization with other institutions requires a constant strategic balance among funding, programming, constituency, and artist support networks. Thomas, now curator of the Contemporary Arts Center in New Orleans, recalls his challenging professional education as HCP's second executive director. He explains that, because his "strength was a conceptual emphasis with little administrative background in grants and funding," his arrival in 1985 was "controversial." He admits that by pursuing his professional goal to "open up discussions, to exert a challenging influence, I alienated the board at different times." But, people are quick to point out his contributions.

Krause remembers the spirit of change at the center and Thomas' personal vision when he says, "Iow Thomas was trying to say, 'What if modern photography is about?'" Thomas acknowledges, "Despite the differences, I was pleased to be invited" to the tenth anniversary party honoring past directors and presidents.

Focusing on the Future HCP has evolved in its ten years through the determination and diverse dreams of the individuals who make up its community.

Pursuing and implementing the NEA Advancement Grant helped to put the whole HCP house in order and define the delicate balance of membership, funding, fellowships, programming, and publications. With a three-year funding plan through 1993 that provides for continuity and overlap, HCP has focused its future.

The staff and board can now focus on HCP's mission, which met with unanimous approval in the winter of 1991. It states: The Houston Center for Photography strives to deepen the understanding and appreciation of the photographic arts. Through exhibitions, publications, and educational programming, the center supports emerging and mid-career artists and their audiences. It provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and promotes the study of photography, both as a medium of expression and as a tool of cultural investigation. HCP is a nonprofit organization serving as a resource to its members and the community with programs that have regional and national impact.
Ten Years of Houston Photography

Our timeline highlights museum and gallery exhibitions, acquisitions, and other important contributions to the art of photography in Houston over the past ten years. This timeline mentions only those museums, galleries, and educational institutions that responded to our requests for information.

1982

Texas Gallery exhibit "Cindy Sherman: Collected Photographs."

Texas Gallery exhibit "Three Texas Photographers: Nil Nascia, Susan Frolund, Gary Williams."

HCP moves to its first location at Bering Memorial United Methodist Church.

HCP incorporates as a non-profit, charter 
816776 obtained tax-exempt status.

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, co-organizes "Paper and Light: The Calotype in France and Great Britain," with the Art Institute of Chicago in cooperation with the University of Texas.

HCP holds first benefit auction.

MFAH receives "American Images," The American Telephone and Telegraph Collection, 259 photographs.


MFAH purchases and is bequeathed the Edward Steichen Collection, 96 photographs (completed in 1990).

Robin Cronin closes her gallery store and a half year after the untimely death of her business partner and husband, Tim Cronin.

Charles Gallagher, with a group of artists, opens DiverseWorks at Space 1026 to provide opportunities and support for artists through exhibitions, performances, readings, grants programs, and commissions.

MFAH purchases and is given "Contemporary Mexican Photography," 223 photographs (completed in 1990).

1984

HCP gallery exhibit "Les Anciens Photographes de Texas."

HCP publishes first issue of "Image" magazine.

HCP moves to its current West Alabama location, here Lynn (McLennan) Howard is first executive director.

MFAH shows "Photographs and Portraits" by Paul Strand, co-organized with the Art Institute of Chicago.

HCP awards first fellowships.

Texas Gallery exhibit "William Wegman: Polaroids."

1985

First exhibit at HCP's current location on West Alabama and Mulberry. Photo by Jim Caldwell and Paula Goldman.


Para, Bonial and Frederick Baldwin co-ordinate the idea for Houston FotoFest. Modified after the "Mois de la Photo" in Paris, the purpose of this biennial celebration is to promote photography and enhance the growing cultural reputation of Houston and Texas.

DiverseWorks exhibit "Edward Steichen: The Condé Years."

MFAH exhibit "Edward Steichen: The Condé Years."


The Moody Gallery exhibit "Robert Mapplethorpe: Platinum Prints."

1987

HCP celebrates 10 years from pre-press to vision executive director of HCP.

Moody Gallery exhibit "Private Thoughts" by Manuel (Ed Hill), Susan Bowers.

In cooperation with HCP, the East and West Galleries of Transco Tower show "In Space: A Photographic Journey," the first large-scale exhibition of photographs taken for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

The Menil Collection opens in a new building designed by noted architect Renzo Piano. The art, collected over the years by Dominique and Jean de Menil, features the works of Leger, Rouault, Picasso, and Magritte, as well as important African and pre-Columbian works.

DiverseWorks exhibit 25 exhibitions, galleries, and corporate building around Houston.

DiverseWorks exhibit "Still" by Bruce Conner: A Survey," photography from 1957-1965

Leo Thomas creates "Not For The Living Room," exhibited at DiverseWorks, showing the work of Texas photographers.

1988

EARTH

MANUAL, EarthScience. 1988 (Stabilized photo, 30° x 40°).

The Moody Gallery exhibit "CONSOLATA." Photographs by Paul Strand.

Lawndale, in conjunction with PhotoFest, exhibit "Texas: Exploring the Boundaries."

The Menil Collection exhibit "Heinz Kühn Carier-Besse and Walker Evans during PhotoFest."

HCP exhibit "Beyond the Image," curated by Robert Blakeslee.

Texas Gallery exhibit "Andy Warhol: Photographs."

HCP exhibit "The Other," curated by Cynthia Presley.

HCP hires Joan Cadot as executive director.

1989

The Black & White Ball. Photo by Jim Cantwell.

HCP exhibit "Black & White Ball" benefit at Magnolia Ballroom.

MFAH acquire Anne W. Tucker at first Gus and Lyndell Worthen Curator of Photography.

HCP's Image magazine becomes SPOT.

Susan Morgan becomes a partner of Bentler-Morgan Galleries, renamed Bentler-Morgan Galleries. Pete Bentler returns to West Germany to operate a private branch of the business.

1990

The Community Artists Collective exhibit "Robert Frank: New York to Nova Scotia (Taube I)."
Texas Gallery exhibits "Nic Nicosia: Real Pictures."

The Menil Collection exhibits "The Perpetual Motion: The Art of Man Ray."

Anchorage Foundation of Texas provides HCP with Macmillan computer. HCP initiates Artist Access Grants.

DiverseWorks exhibits "Mother of the Disappeared."

Man Ray's Electromy, 1931, The Menil Collection

HCP enters NEA Advancement Program.

Sewall Art Gallery at Rice University shows "Other Images: Other Reality—Mexican Photography Since 1930."

MFAH exhibits "Czech Modernism: 1909-45."

1991

CAM hosts "Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement."

West Gallery, Tranaco Tower, exhibits "The Pink Oak Horse Show," photographs by Geoff Wissinger.

CAM exhibits MANUAL's installation "Fabet Products."

Elliott Erwitt, California, 1955

HCP holds Birthday Blow-up Bash at the Jones Gallery celebrating the organization's tenth anniversary.

NEA awards HCP $60,000 Advancement Grant.

MFAH exhibits "Paul Strand," organized by the National Gallery of Art.

MFAH receives "Allan Chasanoff Photographic Collection," 960 photographs.

CAM features Duane Michals as part of its lecture series, "Topics in Twentieth-Century Art."

CAM shows "Contemporary Latin American Photographers."

CAM hosts an installation by Christian Biala/Honk Pictures.

1992

CAM hosts "On Latin America in Europe."

Sewall Art Gallery at Rice University shows "India Along the Ganges: Photographs by Raghbir Singh," curated by Mike C. Reisch, Director of the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution.

With funding from an NEA Special Exhibition Grant, HCP shows "Yang Kyoung Choe: The Expeditionary Works."

Timeline compiled by Tracey McEachern Mogue

GEORGE KRAUSE

A Retrospective

Anne Tucker

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HCP Fellowships: Turning Money into Art

Neil P. Highborg

The Houston Center for Photography began its annual Photography Fellowship Program in 1983. For the first two years, awards were given to help photographers complete an ongoing documentary project. In 1985, jurors—prominent members of Houston’s photographic community—increased the scope of the program to award photographers involved in any photographic work in progress. A year after receiving the award, recipients exhibit their completed work at HCP. Since its inception, the program has given awards to twenty-six photographers.

After receiving the fellowship, many recipients continued their education earning advanced degrees in art. Margaret Moore (1984) earned an MFA from Arizona State University; and Dornith Doherty (1985) earned hers from the Yale University School of Art. Currently, Monica Chau (1989) studies for an MFA at the California Institute of the Arts; the same school where Paula Goldman (1985) earned her MFA. Carol Vuchetich (1987) graduated from the University of Houston with an MFA in photography, while Liz Ward (1988) earned an MFA in painting there. Also at UH, Roed Castillo (1986) earned a BFA in photography and is now enrolled in the MFA program, and David A. Portz (1986) earned an MA in English literature and creative writing. Elizabeth M. Grant (1987) is currently studying for a BFA at the College of Santa Fe.

Many fellowship recipients have used their photographic skills to teach. In the Houston area, Amy Blakemore (1989) teaches at the Glassell School of Art, while Vuchetich is a member of the adjunct faculty there. Bill Frazier (1986) is a member of the faculty at San Jacinto Junior College. Margo Recce (1990) teaches at the University of Houston. Outside of Texas, Goldman teaches at the University of California at Riverside, while Doherty teaches at the Herron School of Art at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis.

"I’ve always had an interest in doing installations, and the fellowship gave me the freedom and access to explore going beyond simple photos on a wall."

—Monica Chau, 1989

Some former fellows have been completely new series of work. Goldman’s "Laughing" series began with her interest in how emotional states are represented in our culture. Chau’s installation Losen/Silhouet is a collaboration with Daniel Minter that chronicles their parents’ mutual disapproval of their relationship. In her "Invisible People" series, Vuchetich photographs those who are aging and are sometimes forgotten.

HCP created the fellowship program to help photographers find much needed funds to complete their work. Isaac said: "The HCP fellowship was very important to me. I was very fortunate to be a recipient. It came at a critical time. I was able to complete projects they believe in."

HCP Fellows

1983
Naomi Bullock
Martin Harris
Pamela Morris

1984
Peter McCleman
Margaret Moore
Debra Telcher

1985
Dornith Doherty
Paula Goldman
Stephen Peterson

1986
Roed Castillo
Bill Frazier
Frank Isaac
David A. Portz

1987
Elizabeth M. Grant
Jill Goodman
Carol Vuchetich

1988
R. Lynn Foster
Paul Vincent Kunst
Liz Ward

1989
Amy Blakemore
Monica Chau
Ben DeSoto
Elbert D. Howe

1990
Margo Recce
Scottie Stapleton
Sonia G. Yi

Neil P. Highborg studies literature and creative writing at the University of Houston and works at HCP as the curatorial assistant.

Monica Chau and Daniel Minter, installation photo of Losen/Silhouet, 1991 (original in color)

Carol Vuchetich, from the "Invisible People" series, 1991

Paula Goldman, from the "Laughing" series, 1991

"When a professional photographic organization gave me the fellowship, I felt very encouraged to continue working. It was the thing that helped most."

—Carol Vuchetich
The Houston Art Dealers Association welcomes you to FotoFest '92 and invites one and all to visit our galleries. Many of our 20 members are hosting photographic exhibitions.

The Houston Art Dealers Association is a non-profit membership organization founded in 1977 for the purpose of promoting the visual arts in Houston. It is often through the art dealer's efforts and exhibitions that artists are first brought to the attention of the public, collectors and museums. Responsible fine art dealers build public confidence, encourage strong, continuing support for the arts and enrich the community at large.
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CONNIE MOORELEY. "Nocturne"

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FLORIS M. NEUSS. Photographs

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Also by Herwig Kempinger from Austria

Photo: © Edward Archbold
The Perspectives of Censorship: A Discussion

What follows is the edited transcript of a roundtable discussion among Anne W. Tucker, the Gus and Lynell Wirethorne Curator of Photography at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; David L. Jacobs, chair of the Art Department at the University of Houston; and William Camfield, professor of art and art history at Rice University.

These local experts addressed the issue of censorship in the arts as stimulated by a lecture given at the University of Houston last December by Dennis Barrie, director of the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati. Barrie and the center were charged with indecency by the Cincinnati Board of Arts and Entertainment for exhibiting "Robert Mapplethorpe: The Perfect Moment." Barrie and the center were found not guilty.

Anne W. Tucker: Dennis Barrie gave the history of the Contemporary Arts Center taking the exhibition, the cancellation at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., then going back to his board and that board reaffirming the exhibition, not once but twice. As he was telling that story, I almost had the sense of a Greek play, in the sense that I felt he was caught in an irreversible fate. I had to remind myself that it wasn’t fate that Dennis chose the confrontation on the basis of principle. But, when he was telling it, he was telling it as though it was a cup he would have been pleased to have had pass from his lips. Not because he had made the commitment to take the show, I didn’t feel, but because he felt honor bound, quite literally honor bound.

There were a wide range of decisions he could have made. He could have chosen to edit the show. Contractually it was in the contract that he couldn’t. Knowing the district attorney and everyone in Cincinnati, Barrie, his board, and staff thought that they had done all these groundwork; they thought they had the mayor and the newspapers and the city councilmen understanding what they were doing and why. But, then this manufactured groundswell from the fundamentalists’ letter-writing campaign switched people who had previously said they wouldn’t prosecute the center. So, at each step of the way, he tried to walk as close to the line as he could and do it right. And, you know, it was just forced upon him.

David Jacobs: I question the idea of a wholly manufactured groundswell. The Reverend Willmon [from American Family Federation] is touching sensitive nerves that are out there in the populace and manipulating them towards some very unbecoming ends. He is a powerful and, in my mind, dangerous force. But, it is not just a matter of a set-up. We should never underestimate the depth of parochial strains within our society. The conservatism in Cincinnati—where I was born and raised—is pronounced in a lot of ways, but no more so than in many other parts of the country.

AT: One of the things that I really enjoyed was hearing Dennis talk about the aftermath of the trial. He talked about the jurors that came to see the art museum and the jurors who had not been allowed to see other art in the exhibition except the seven pieces that were on trial. He talked about what that did to quash their curiosity and quash their curiosity about the center. When I was in Cincinnati, during the trial, I didn’t meet a single person—whether it was a cab driver or a bookstore operator or a waitress in the hotel—who wanted the trial to be taking place. Many of them didn’t approve of the photographs, but all of them resented deeply being told that they couldn’t see the photographs. And I think that was another thing Dennis realized, that they were playing on it in the trial.

William Camfield: And I think that’s maybe one of the lessons from this. To me, one of the impressive things about it is that, in effect, freedom of expression was under attack partly on the pretext of protecting people from pornography. And it seemed to me that the jury, working under the most adverse circumstances, said: ‘No thanks, we’ll take care of ourselves. We don’t need big brother to tell us what we can see or not see. We’ll take care of it ourselves.’ I think that’s a major lesson that came out of that, and I glory in it because they had such a stacked deck to work with given what the judge permitted them to see and not to see.

AT: Dennis not only had The Corcoran’s example, but he also had Jack Reynolds’ example. Jack immediately picked up the show when The Corcoran canceled it and presented it at the Washington Project for the Arts. The crowds showed up in great mass, and public support swelled for the WPA. You know, the show closed at the WPA without any legal confrontations or any congressional confrontations. So, I have heard people criticize Dennis, saying, ‘Well he should have known this indictment was coming,’ I don’t agree with that. I think that given the fact that the show, after Washington, had traveled to Berkeley and other museums and nothing had happened at those institutions, I don’t think that he could have known. I think he anticipated he made perfectly clear that they knew that was a possibility, but that they were doing everything they possibly
could to avoid a trial—a loser-winner situation with the city government.

**WC:** What impressed me particularly was just his recognition of what he had to do. I mean beyond that, what really came through to me in the lecture was the support he got from all sorts of people to stick to that decision, to that point. It became clear to me how much difficulty and risk was pressed on the trustees, the staff, probably family and friends. He could have had dozens of people, friends and important people around him, who were at risk over this confrontation. They could have decided to put pressure on him, or, even if they decided not to, he could see their business going down the drain or see a marriage on the rocks or friendships splitting—so many temptations to back off that point.

**AT:** There was a board member who resigned from his bank rather than bow to the bank's wishes.

**WC:** I was very impressed that the trustees and the staff—and who knows what kind of people—stood with him on that.

**DJ:** I think it did create an extraordinary sense of community in the city, but he also said that the other two major museums in Cincinnati were not as supportive as they might have been—that is, the Taft Museum and the Cincinnati Art Museum.

**AT:** They did not take a public position in support.

**DJ:** Right. Directors from museums around the world and throughout the U.S. were very forthcoming with support. The community that rallied around him in some ways would be those people who he probably would have least have expected, whereas the people who would be his natural allies held back meaningful support.

**WC:** That's a fascinating point. Roto-Rooster was rooting for him, but not necessarily the cultural institution down the block.

**AT:** Well, he did say that they had to drop out of the citywide arts funding organization or it would have cost their colleagues—other arts organizations—too much money, and in fact, donations to the Contemporary Arts Center are still down in Cincinnati. It has not recovered to a funding level that they had before the trial. So, there has been long-term inhibiting factors.

**WC:** Did the center pay off its legal debts?

**AT:** Yes, it has. Dennis has been lecturing to pay off his legal debt with his lecture fees. That’s been part of it, so as of this year, he said he can get off the road and return to being just a museum director.

**WC:** I'm sure he'll be grateful for that, but in the meantime, I'm glad that the others—the rest of us—can profit by his wandering.

**AT:** How did you profit from hearing him?

**WC:** It's made me think a lot more about issues of freedom of expression; the responsibilities of museums; the risk of trustees, people, neighbors, other art institutions or educational institutions; how easy it is to say, "Well, it's their battle," particularly if you're not in fine arts, but you're ballet or you're symphony. You'll say, "Well, that's our block; it's somebody else." But it’s not true. We’re in that together, and I appreciate Barrie's style—anew speaker, low key, thoughtful, humor- ous, not someone who comes across as bearing a cross or angry or out in left field. He's someone, I think, who could really communicate with all kinds of people and really sensitize us towards issues of freedom of expression and concomitant responsibilities of all kinds. I hope that he talks to thousands and thousands of people.

The issue of censorship has become a feature of all my classes now. And in every class I teach, I get into issues of freedom of expression and censorship, patronage and power. Not that I hadn't done that before, but I do it in a different way. I turn it over to students. I divide them; I split the class. I say, "You're on this side of the issue, you're on that side of the issue. Here's some research material to get you started, and you take it further. Next week, or whenever we're getting back together, let's go to it." It has been amazing to me. It is really unpredictable. It's just as controversial and unpredictable as issues of homosexuality or abortion or something of that sort, where more established liberal/conservative lines get mixed up. And it's important.

**DJ:** I would say one thing in a slightly critical vein about the lecture, and that is that I don't think Barrie framed the brouhaha over the show as much as he might have in terms of a homophobic response. He touched upon the homosexual elements in the work, certainly, particularly in the X Portfolio, but I think that whole other context could have been strengthened.

Other speakers might have talked about the same series of events with much stronger accent marks in that direction.

**AT:** I think it was partially because those were never explicitly expressed in the trial. There were two images that they were prosecuting for child pornography and five for pornography. All of those were images that were either sadomasochistic or images

Contiued on page 18
Covers from the Past

As HCP has evolved, so has its magazine. The Houston Center for Photography launched *Image* magazine in 1983 to provide its members with a critical photography journal. The magazine was renamed in 1984 at the urging of the attorney for the International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House because it had a magazine with the same name. Nearly a decade later, HCP continues to bring its members provocative features, reviews, and commentary on the world of photography.

Copy photographs by Dave Croasley
What happened: When Dennis found out that the art exhibition he was planning was going to be cancelled, he was devastated. He couldn't believe that the whole idea of the exhibition was being taken away from him. He had spent months planning and organizing everything for the event, and now it was all being shut down. His disappointment was overwhelming.

Why it happened: The reason for the cancellation was a series of complaints from the local community about the content of the exhibition. Some of the artworks were deemed too provocative and offensive, and the general public was not comfortable with the idea of viewing them.

What it means: This experience taught Dennis a valuable lesson about the delicate nature of art censorship. It highlighted the fact that artists and curators must always be mindful of the potentially negative reactions their work may elicit from the public. It also underscored the importance of having clear guidelines and protocols in place to handle such sensitive issues.

Conclusion: In the end, Dennis was able to see the situation as an opportunity for growth and learning. While it was a difficult experience, he realized that it was an important lesson in the world of art. He vowed to be more cautious and considerate in the future, ensuring that his ideas and concepts were presented in a manner that would not cause controversy or offense.
either of you want to say about Dennis or the lessons to be learned from his experience.

D: There's something that I'd like to touch on briefly—too briefly, I'm afraid. I think artists and artists professionals have to make a better case for themselves. There are a lot of misconceptions out there about what art is making. As a result of the Mapplethorpe flap, in some ways the arts community has closed ranks, which may be a natural reaction psychologically, and perhaps is a good thing strategically. But I don't think we ought to fool ourselves with our own rhetoric, especially when our rhetoric suggests a privileged position for the artists in relation to society. Arts people need to think seriously about themselves as imaginers within a social context and take some responsibility for the images they generate. I guess I would make that especially emphatic with photography, with its causal link to something that's out there in the world—the photographs' very special, if problematic, representational status.

A: I came away from the trial with a feeling that it was the art world that had failed, in terms of our making art, that our arrogance had in some ways brought us to this trial. It's our arrogance to think, "You understand this or you don't, you get it about art or you don't." And, "We don't need to reach out to people, we don't need to make them feel at home in our institutions." I felt, in part, that the attitude of thinking people should be able to walk into a museum and have all the tools they need—when in fact all of us have years and years of training—was part of it.

R: Did you have anything more that you wanted to add?

W: Certainly the whole thing has raised difficult issues about freedom versus responsibilities, and I don't know if there is any sort of resolution of that. I suspect that as long as the society wishes to think of itself and try to act even halfway democratically, then it's going to stay with us. I think we are still hurting in the arts community from it; I think it's done damage. The arrogance comes both ways. I certainly agree, it was in our diverse professions. We're guilty of it, but it's a disease hardly limited to us and arrogance is out there in the public.

D: We don't have the market cornered.

W: We do not.
Balancing Shadow and Substance


Anne W. Tucker

Christian Boltanski derives from traditional theater many of his installations' key elements. Just as you await a curtain rising before a play begins, if there is more than one other person ahead of you to view Boltanski's Shadow, your expectations are held in suspense until those ahead move aside. Your only access is a window that barely accommodates two adults. Over their shoulders shadows dance on dimly lit walls, but until you can lean on the window ledge, you must deal with inquisitiveness and impatience. Although favorably disposed toward Boltanski's work, I don't like waiting. "This is manipulative. Why make the window so small?" I thought. Most spectators lingered at the window, but when finally finished they moved away from the window smiling. Boltanski understands that the piece's success requires an intimate, singular encounter.

Beyond the window, allusions to the theater continue. This is also the stuff of campfires in dark woods and Grimm's fairy tales. We beheld an ancient dance of the spirits with the magician's hand fully revealed. Skulls and waxed-profile silhouettes challenge a bawdly armored with the spears and whips. These ancient armadas bob and overlap. See children, there is nothing to fear. Those tin and paper figures hanging from wires in the center of the room are blown by a whistling fan and magnified into ghostly giants by five lamps. The lights are bright, the shadows are crisp. And if you are patient, an avenging angel emerges on the right, crosses the ceiling, and disappears into the left.

Seeing the mechanics keeps the piece from being endless, slick, and hokey. It reminds us there is an artist at play. This has been created for our enchantment. Like a child watching the mobile over a crib, we can become momentarily lost in a slowly shifting pantheon. Boltanski isn't spoke of the audience's role in completing a piece with their stimulated memories. While insisting that an artist speaks only about his own village, he also said autobiography speaks not about the writer, but about us. He is relying on the basic truths that obsess him to engage the viewers as well. He also emphasized his willingness to let the piece mean whatever the viewer perceives that it becomes. "If someone says so me, your art is so happy, I say you are right. If they say your art is so sad, I say you are right. I was in Japan, and they said you are so Japanese."

Boltanski's shadow pieces are unique in his work because they do not employ found objects or photographs, but are entirely constructed from his imagination, or rather from our collective imaginations. Other installations employ photographs, clothing, and other personal artifacts that evoke the presence of a previous owner. Boltanski's context for the object may be fictional, but he relies on the object's capacity to be mnemonic of another human. More than for their aesthetic properties, he chooses objects, especially photographs, because they are relics of reality. On the one hand he is an ethnographer of experiences through collected objects; on the other, he conjures more primal manifestations of emotion. Each of his disparate installations shares this sense of drama and unabashed appeal to viewers' collective memories, experiences, and imaginations. His gift is to balance shadow and substance.

Anne Wilkes Tucker is the Gus and Lyndall Wortham Curator of Photography at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Christian Boltanski's Monuments (à la Fête du Printemps), 1989, is part of the permanent collection at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.


Christian Boltanski's "There he comes," exclaimed a man to his wife, calling her back when she'd turned away before the angel appeared. Making you wait again, the angel reappears on the right pitching across these mischievous goldfinches, trying to trick us. It's an invitation to release our imaginations and to let the individual work... trigger... associations that exist already in the viewer's mind," says Boltanski in the gallery notes.

At CAM on October 23, Boltanski

20 SPOT/SPRING 1992
Belonging to the South
William Chrisenberry's Southern Views was an exhibit at the Galveston Arts Center in Galveston, Texas, October 19--November 24, 1991.

Patricia Carter

In a 1988 appearance at Galveston's Grand Opera House, dramatist and screenwriter Horton Foote spoke of how an artist finds his own voice: "An artist needs to know what has been done before his time; he needs to belong to a place." In November 1991, again at the historic Grand Opera House, an audience was introduced to William Chrisenberry, who seems the very embodiment of that dictum. A few blocks away, the Galveston Arts Center displayed the works—drawings, photographs, and sculptures—of this unique Southern artist. The place that William Chrisenberry belongs to is Hale County, Alabama. It is his by birth, blood, and experience, and he seems to have possessed from earliest childhood that most lasting of births: a feeling of connection to the land.

In 1958, Chrisenberry began making photographs in Hale County, using a little Brownie camera that he had been given for Christmas. He still maintains, as he told his Galveston audience, that those first photographs were made simply as references for his paintings, but it seems clear that something deeper was at work even then. He admits that he felt a need to come to grips with the landscape around him. "Photographs seemed the most straightforward response to what I saw," he said.

Chrisenberry spoke of his family, all devout Christians, and his division on the question of baptism between "dunkers" and "sprinklers." He did not speak of his own baptism, but it seems certain that his confirmation, at least as an artist, occurred at the moment in 1960 when he held in his hands a second edition of Let Us Now Praise Famous Men, the classic documentary on Hale County sharecroppers, with photographs by Walker Evans and text by James Agee.

Surprisingly, in the beginning it was not Evans' photographs but Agee's words that struck Chrisenberry with full force. Gradually, however, he found in Evans' work a permanent gift from which he could draw strength and inspiration. He began to trace the two men's footsteps, often photographing in the places that Evans and Agee had been, but moving increasingly beyond their work to find ways to relate his own experiences.

Chrisenberry now lives in Washington, D.C., and teaches at The Corcoran School of Art. But, he returns year after year to Alabama and Hale County, and in so doing has built a body of work that gives us much more than a glimpse at a vanishing rural South. James Agee, striving to convey the essence of his experience in Hale County in 1936, used every means at his disposal: poetry, stream of consciousness, liturgy, rhetoric. Chrisenberry, too, uses all means: paintings, drawings, photographs, and sculptures—but it is the photographs that bind the work together. For after all, Hale County is not the land of the artist's imagination. It is a real place. Rain falls; kudzu grows, threes die back, and returns. Photographs deal with those realities of place better than any other medium, especially Chrisenberry's photographs. They are as lucid and as plain, as straightforward, and as heart-breakingly simple as it is possible to be. Moreover, he never puts himself between us and what he is trying to show us. But what is it that he wants us to see? What is it that we can recognize and call our own?

Of the twenty-two photographs displayed at the Galveston Arts Center, most are of structures and small buildings that Chrisenberry has photographed again and again through the years—as the paint peels, as signs are replaced by graffiti, as the structures sag and begin their slow descent back to the soil. These photographs are not populated with the citizens of Hale County, but somehow the buildings and landscapes do not seem bereft of people. A human presence is perhaps most strongly felt in a small 3x5-inch image taken in 1971 and titled Door Off.

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Houston Center for Photography
Simply Rauschenberg

Robert Rauschenberg: The Early 1950s was an exhibit shown at The Menil Collection in Houston, Texas, September 27, 1991-January 5, 1992.

Ed Oosvski

In 1952, the first two works by Robert Rauschenberg to enter a public collection were acquired by The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Surprisingly, the works were not paintings, collages, sculptures, or assemblages—the works one identifies with the breakthroughs of Rauschenberg’s career. Rather, they were two photographs dated 1949 and 1951, purchased by Edward Steichen for The Museum of Modern Art’s Photography Department.

These two photographs are among nineteen included in the exhibition “Robert Rauschenberg: The Early 1950s,” which was organized by The Menil Collection. Also included were four monoprints on exposed blueprint paper. (The catalog of the exhibition includes these twenty-three works and several others not displayed.)

The two photographs Steichen bought are simple. What they possess is a spontaneity, an almost snapshot-like quickness, yet an absolute certainty of purpose as well. Interior of an Old Carriage, the earlier work, depicts a horse-drawn carriage. The other, Cyn on Bench, is a meditative and moody portrait of Rauschenberg’s friend and fellow artist, Cy Twombly. These two works develop ideas in what might, in short, be called the modernist struggle to define the place of image and abstraction in art—as Walter Hopps writes in the catalog—which is at the very center of Rauschenberg’s achievement. They are also about new ways of seeing that underscore the antihierarchical qualities of Rauschenberg’s art.

Interior of an Old Carriage is neither nostalgic nor descriptive. Fifteen years earlier, a photographer like Walker Evans might have found the same object an appropriate vehicle to convey some sense of the loss or passage of simpler and purer times. No such symbolic weight attaches itself to Rauschenberg’s photograph. Two wheels, a cushioned seat and backrest, a canopy, the rear window, a small white circle floating in the center of blackness: this is the photograph. What it demonstrates is Rauschenberg’s effort to strip the object, not to some essential “thingness” but from its normal context, and to affix, in a sense, no meaning at all to what is there. The viewer enters into the carriage’s beautiful and dark interior space and is stopped short by the globe-like circle of white that appears ready to float off the print. This is clearly not a photograph offered up as a description. Carriage Interior tells us nothing about how this object functions; there is nothing useful about this photograph of what once was a most utilitarian object. To use different words, there is no narrative content to the photograph; there is no story, no plot, nothing about it to refer us to anything beyond itself, just the inky purity of its rich blacks. Like Carriage Interior, the portrait of Twombly avoids description. More correctly, one might call it an anti-portrait. Nothing about the male figure allows one to identify the sitter as “Twombly;” he wears no brushes, paintings, paper. His face, free of details, is a solid, blank globe. If this is a portrait of an artist, then it requires us to consider the very nature of artistic expression. Is it in the idea or the execution of the idea that art comes to exist? Twombly’s portrait was made during one of Rauschenberg’s stays at the experimental school Black Mountain College, outside Asheville, North Carolina. There, Rauschenberg worked with John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Franz Kline, and others. A photograph by Rauschenberg of Cage, made at Black Mountain in 1952, avoids the clichés of portraiture. Cage sits at the wheel of his Manned-A Ford, his face in profile, framed by an open window. Beyond him, through other windows, one sees trees and bushes. Central to the image is not Cage but an inverted “T,” formed by the door frame, and two door handles that serve as dramatic arabsques in the bottom third of the photograph. Cage looks ahead at something the viewer cannot see. For the viewer, however, options seem endless. There are five windows, each affording a different view. In Rauschenberg’s scheme, each window—and the view it possesses—is of equal importance.

It would be an overstatement to talk about Cage’s influence on Rauschenberg, more correct would be to describe a general approach to making art that Cage, Twombly, Cunningham, Rauschenberg, and others shared. This approach found value in spontaneity, freedom, and discovery, based on what Cage has called remaining “curious and attentive to what I happen to encounter.” A photograph of Rauschenberg’s studio on Fulton Street in New York, c. 1953, documents a framed Cage score among other art works in his possession. It would not be incorrect to call this approach “democratic” because of the presumption that the appropriate subjects for art had not been canonized. As its very core there is little that is elitist about this art. Rauschenberg seems indifferent to the categories of doing and documenting. Nothing could be more quotidian than the subject of the 1950 photograph Ceiling and Light Bulbs. Yet, there are questions it raises. Is this a photograph? Is it a photograph of a work of art? Is it a photograph of an idea for a work of art? Or, is it proof that the world contains, if one looks with the proper vision, the subject of one’s art? Most likely the photograph partakes of all. Ceiling and Light Bulbs challenges the very notion of what is an appropriate subject for art. What could be more banal—a blank, black ceiling, a light bulb, and its pull-string descending from it? Is it a photograph of what was there, in a certain place, at a definite time? But it also shares something with a sculpture by Rauschenberg, The Man with Two Souls. Both works seem concerned with finding objects, things about which one ordinarily feels nothing, and then, as Cage would have it, becoming “attractive” to them. One thinks of Ceiling and Light Bulbs, then, as a wonderful accident, an example of Rauschenberg’s finding in his private space an “accident” that resembled closely the sculptures he would assemble.

In Hopps’ installation at The Menil Collection, photographs, paintings, and other works communicated in a silent dialogue: one work reinforcing, redefining, or clarifying an idea seen in another work. A good example is Charles Louisa, a 1952 photograph set against two large, black, untitled canvases. In the photograph, a torn window shade is photographed from low and outside. It is framed by worn wood and seen through a screen. Shapes—a hint of window panes, a
lodge—are almost abstract. The paper shutter is torn and creased. In the companion canvases, paint interacts with paper—rippling, curling, creasing, and twisting from the effect of the paint. The black paint is the very essence of blackness.

In the fall of 1952, Rauschenberg sailed to Europe with Cy Twombly. He traveled through Spain, Greece, and Morocco, and settled in Rome where he stayed until April 1953. In a group of photographs taken in 1952 at a flea market in Rome, Rauschenberg found "art" everywhere. These are street photographs—photographs that record art that exists on the streets before one's eyes—ironically, not the grand monuments one associates with Rome's classical heritage. In several photographs, fabric-canvas in one, brocade in another—is twisted and folded, both concealing and revealing the objects behind. The treatments call to mind the way the window shade is created and torn in the photograph "Cheerful Wisdom", 1952, and the use of fabric, painted and layered, in the monumental black "untitled" canvases.

As a group, the Rome flea market images were concerned with covering and revealing, masking and uncovering, losing and finding. In "Rome Wall" a poster announcing "Stalin E' Morto" has been torn from a wall. The wall itself is a texture of stains and random hatchings. Several letters, "Mik, Ed, O, and a fragment of a phrase, "...ovimento," emerge gradually from the wall's surface. These syllables have no meaning; they do not add up in any traditional sense to a sentence that one can read and understand. Their context has been removed by the overlays of other posters that once covered and concealed them. But like the wordless sounds John Cage employs in a number of his compositions, these random letters create a new meaning of design and shape.

Rauschenberg completes his photographic explorations with a series of five photographs, "Cy and Roman Steps", 1952. The operative word in the title is the small conjunction and for these are not images of Twombly but are images in which the steps and Twombly are equal participants. What the five closely resemble are snapshots a tourist would reject: in each image the photographer has moved closer to his subjects until Twombly's torso, from chest to knees, fills the print. Never do we see Twombly's face. Never do we see anything that concretely places these steps in Rome. Like the earlier "Cy on the Beach", nothing except for the series's words, tells us that this is Twombly. These are images of five specific moments, five movements through space and time. Five ways of defining and imagining Twombly's position on the steps and his relation to the steps, and five ways of recording Rauschenberg's movements toward Twombly. The five photographs—the body gradually becoming more central in each work—coaxes and teases the viewer to apply some narrative framework to them. But what actually is occurring here? Twombly himself isn't moving toward the viewer, although he shifts his position slightly. If anything, the group of five resembles the movement of sound, of words without meaning. Trying to find "meaning" in them leads only to frustration.

More accurate, then, would be to call the five images an anti-series. Nothing actually becomes clearer in them. If anything, they are photographs of a non-Western way of perceiving reality. They are photographs that find and lose perspective, that lead one to expect a grand revelation in the final frame, but conclude, instead, almost arbitrarily.

What the photographs in "Robert Rauschenberg: The Early 1950s" make clear is that for Rauschenberg, art emerges from the encounter between the imagination and the object. These are photographs that reject the hierarchical and traditional values of space, time, content, and narrative for a freer and looser approach to meaning. In them one finds a purity of trust in the power of the object itself to hold our attention.

Ed Osowski is a member of the National Book Critics Circle and his reviews appear regularly in the Houston Post.
The Dallas Six

The Dallas Six was shown at Gallery X in the Houston Center for Photography in Houston, Texas from November 9–December 29, 1991.

Cara De Busk

"The Dallas Six" exhibition was part of a unique exchange organized by the directors of the Houston Center for Photography (HCP) and Allen Street Gallery in Dallas. Its goal was to acquaint Houston audiences to the work of Dallas artists and Houston audiences to Dallas artists.

Six Dallas artists were chosen from slide submissions by nearly thirty photographers for exhibition at HCP by Executive Director Jean Caslin, Administrative Director Michael Lafor, and Houston photographers and HCP programming chair. These artists were selected to represent current trends in photography-based art coming out of the Dallas area. Their work emphasized hand-manipulated photography that, according to DeVoll, is characteristic of the strongest work Dallas artists have to offer. The artists were Robin Dru Germany, Mark Lutrell, Kendra North, Glenys Quick, John Neal Phillips, and Rose Marcus Tobey. Robin Dru Germany is a familiar artist to HCP members and visitors. Germany has participated in several HCP exhibitions and is a regular contributor to the annual HCP Members’ Exhibition. Her work consists of dark, quiet images of aged, low-tech machinery into which other images—often human body parts—are subtly collaged. Germany is exploring a popular issue: the relationship of humans to machines. Through the discreet quality of her craft, she generates an alternative to the usual approach to this issue. Due to a cultural prejudice that encourages polarized thinking, many North Americans (artists or not) approach “technology” as the “other” as is uncontrollable force out- side themselves. By being outside and oth- er, technology is bad to them. Philosophies that describe machines as “dehumanizing” and use the word “mechanized” as a neg- ative description of human behavior, de- monstrate the psychological distance many Americans draw between themselves and these tools they describe as “technology.”

Germany explores the truly independent relationship between man and technology by depicting an intimacy between the human parts and the machine parts in her images. By anthropomorphizing the machines at the same time as mechanizing machines, Germany chal- lenges notions that describe technology as outside us. We are technology and technol- ogy is we; therefore, we are responsible for what technology does. Germany’s unique experience of working with printing presses has created a relationship of mutual respect and connection with the machines, and that refreshing insight is revealed in her work.

Mark Lutrell has expressed a strong interest in technology and how humans relate to and use the tools they develop. Yet, his interest is much less evident in his work, which consists of small, finely made platinum prints of still lifes containing fruit, flowers, and dead animals. Lutrell’s images, given such loaded titles as ‘Parasite Stereotypes,’ carry many elements that are used by this culture to characterise the notion of the “feminine”–indecency, decay, food, delicacy, emotion, intuition, quiet- ness, passivity, and death. Like Germany, Lutrell rewards the viewer who takes the time to look closely at these small, textual images; however, the very subtle political conflicts, which Lutrell almost hides within the images, are unclear. The sense that these images are attempting to be critical is there, but Lutrell is very averse to letting the viewer know exactly what his position is regarding gender issues or the “decadence” of North American societies that he has said are his interest and symbolized by the objects he chooses to photograph.

Kendra North takes a more straightforward, relatively unmanipulated approach to her work. Presented in pairs consisting of one black-and-white and one color picture, North’s images are a clever exploration of the acts of looking and being looked at, which she has titled A Spectator. Surprisingly powerful in their simplicity, these images depict young men and young women engaged in the highly gender-stereotyped activities of the California beach side: gazing at passing, basking in the sun, exercising, and swimming. The viewer looks on from a distance at a critical eye when engaging these “documents.” The slick- ness of the prints and of her presentation reiterates this quality and focus on appearance that seem to be the major focus of energy for North’s subjects.

The beautifully rough and soft hand-colored monotypes by Glenys Quick are probably the most intriguing images in the exhibition. The juxtaposition of softly colored, degenerated images of trees, sky, and small appropriated photos, which appear to be old family snapshots or a collection of women, create a map to the concerns of this artist: finding an alternative to the popular representations of women and of “nature,” and interweaving personal history with the “great” issues of art—love, truth, beauty, the nature of man.

The unoffici- exhibition theme of hand manipulation continues with the marked portraits by John Neal Phillips. Using scratches on his negatives and marks on his prints, he demonstrates another popular approach to manip- ulated photography, yet the evidence of the artist’s hand in this case seems to be motivated purely by anger and disrespect for his subject. Phillips shows (or as he phrases it, “sticking camera in people’s faces”) grainy, contrasty portraits that are creepy, urban, and suppos- edly on-the-street, their scratches and marks out the faces of his models. What Phillips fails to communicate is why he needs to perform this raucous act on his subjects.

The obscuring of faces and identity can be a powerful effect. Artists have explored issues of gender, class, race, and representation in general by using variations on the obliteration of identity. Phillips’ work lacks the intellectual direction found in work such as that of John Baldessari, his particular, Baldessari’s use of solid, colored circles to obscure parts of his images, usually these circles are used to delete the individual features of the sub- ject’s face or head, therefore, transforming the persons represented into symbols.) By keeping the emotional qualities evident in this work and expanding on the dry intellec- tualism of artists such as Baldessari, Phillips could have made a strong contribu- tion to the exploration of identity. But, he has chosen not to commit himself in this way, and the result is that he appears to be no more than a basic anachronistic with a camera and darkroom.

The final artist that comprises “The Dallas Six” is Rose Marcus Tobey. Her mixed media box is very far from the quality of the other work. A hodgepodge of slick, color magazine images combined with toy soldiers and other objects inserted into a small diorama of Parisian party-life, this piece is an interesting effort, but seems lacking of real direction or meaning.

The most unfortunate quality of “The Dallas Six” exhibition is the inclusion of work that is not up to HCP’s standards of quality in craft and meaning. Gallery X is intended to be a space for work that takes risks, either aesthetic or philosophical, yet some of the work chosen for the exhibition in this show lacks the strength, rebellious- ness, and emotion usually found there.

Cara De Busk is a photo-artist working in Houston.
Working-Class
Waplington

Elizabeth Claid
In his first book, Nick Waplington portrays the daily lives of two working-class families from Nottingham, England, in a manner that is at once chaotic, perplexing, and above all intimate. Perhaps due to the four-year duration of the project, the family members seem oblivious to the photographer's presence and neither hide from nor pose for the camera. The overall effect that Waplington achieves could be described as "fly on the wall" objectivity: the photographer happens to be there at the most bizarre and telling moments of daily life, the moments that are generally hidden from strangers.

"The photographer's triumph is to bring order out of chaos, without betraying the chaos," states Richard Avedon in his essay on the book. "Waplington presents the violence in affection, the sexuality in innocence, a chill at the electric hearth, all in a new vocabulary, without romance, all in the same room at the same time."

Most of the images are interior scenes, full of curious and spontaneous action. In the kitchen, two young girls feed their father, an infant plays in a pile of paper and laundry, a woman gestures at a man with a blunt knife, and a screaming young girl holds one eye as she wanders toward the photographer. In the living room, a girl stands at her reflection in a hand mirror, adults tickle their children or hold them aloft by their ankles, a man poses his wife, and a mother makes her child's hair stand on end with a vacuum cleaner.

Waplington's style successfully unifies disparate events, reinforcing the instability and humor of the subject matter. Horizon lines are skewed, and the perspective shifts from floor to ceiling level. Many of the figures are drastically cropped at the periphery or are blurred beyond recognition. The details that are inherent in the documentation of the individuals and their homes add to the impact of the images. The houses have not been cleaned for the photographer's visit, and the detritus of daily life gives the viewer more information. One notices baby bottles, candy wrappers, overflowing ashtrays, figurines, cups, T-shirt insignias, empty bags and bottles, patterned carpets and sofas, tattoos, and bunny slippers.

In a sense, Waplington photographs the interactions of family members with the sensibility of an anthropologist, but he allows the viewer to interpret the results of his labor. We try to analyze the situations leading to the final conical, yet disturbing, images and are compelled to leaf through the book over and over again. We want to know who these people are in relation to each other, though the images are not captioned or discussed in those terms. We note the changes in the people and their homes over the years and try to order the images chronologically. However, the individual images have a resonance that transcends any desire for additional information.

Of the image on the cover of Living Room, Richard Avedon wrote: "His [Waplington's] pictures have the precision of good writing—what more perfect opening sentence for a short story could there be than 'Three little girls in gingham dresses were bowering in the lawn'?" Indeed, the images can stand alone, though the work as a whole presented in Living Room adds to the mystery.

Waplington is sensitive to the families and conveys his long-term fondness for them without evoking pity. As John Berger states: "What is remarkable about Nick Waplington's photographs is the special way in which they make the intimate something public, something that we, who do not know personally the two families photographed, can look at without any sense (or thrill) of intrusion."

One of the most compelling aspects of Living Room is that Waplington has stepped outside of the tendency toward objectification of the working class. Instead, he has achieved a rapport with his subjects that brings his images to a higher level.

Elizabeth Claid is working toward a master's degree in art history at the University of New Mexico.

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A Feast for the Soul


Lynn M. Herbert

This book was published on the occasion of an upcoming retrospective of George Krause’s photographic work, “George Krause: Universal Issues,” which will be at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, March 8-May 17. The book is a handsome tribute to this artist’s bountiful body of work.

The first four pages set the stage. Four photographs, one from each of Krause’s ongoing series, “The Street,” “Saints and Martyrs,” “Y Nadi,” and “Qui Riposa.” These four photographs are mysterious, powerful, and compelling. They demand our involvement in an inviting way. It is clear right off the bat that we’re not dealing with a lightweight here.

As a veteran Krause follower, I was intrigued by these first four images. Seeing them together made me realize for the first time just how incredible it is that Krause has worked on four different series for so many years. Also, it was exciting to see them juxtaposed. A dialogue emerged among them that I had never experienced. Up until now, I had, for the most part, seen his series presented separately. Eager for more, I skipped the essay that followed and went right into the photographs, which are presented by series.

The works are presented one to a page, with few exceptions, without captions. As such, they are allowed to become food for the soul. Krause’s unique vision allows the viewer easy access into his photographs. And once inside, there are so many areas of your own mind to explore. Krause’s work makes us think about big questions, such as our relationship to spirituality, to our own bodies, to our mortality. Looking at his photographs will be a different experience for each one of us, but ultimately, it is very self-revealing and rewarding. I found myself turning the pages very slowly. After going through the photographs once, I recommended going through them again with one finger on page 141, the page that lists the titles. Each work has a title, the city or country in which it was photographed, and a date. Going over the photographs again with Krause’s titles in mind, opened new doors for my interpretations of each work.

The photographs date back to 1958, and I found old friends as well as many new ones. Interestingly, I discovered that some of the old friends had become, for me, timeless, universal, and permanently engraved in my visual memory through the years. It was jarring to see them in a book.
about a specific artist. For me they had entered a kind of universal domain.

Who but a reviewer ever has time to actually read the essay, right? I take the
time with this book. Krause's body of work covers a lot of territory, some of it spicy,
but Anne Tucker's essay is more than up to the challenge; it is a good read. It tells us
about Krause, his background, how he got involved in photography, who his early
mentors were, and about his unusual printing technique and how it has evolved.
 Appropriately, Tucker's range is a catholic
as Krause's. She draws from sources as varied as the Bible, "Mother Goose," the
and Joseph Campbell to bring Krause's work,
his involvement with it, and our own understanding of it home to the reader.
The next pages also include small reproductions
of curious and problematic works by
Krause. Commentaries on individual
works are often poetic and always provide
interesting insights, which broaden our
appreciation of both Krause as an artist in
today's world and his work.

This book has whet my appetite for
the Krause exhibition, and I look forward
to seeing it. This book and the energy that
went into it are invaluable to someone
with work as multilayered as Krause's. As
Tucker aptly puts it in her essay, "Most
of Krause's images are too evocative to
accept on literal terms alone... . He
delights in layers of interpretation and even
conflicting readings." She also points out
that "the basic themes—sexuality, spirituality,
mortality, and mystery—are not
exclusive to any one series."

In a museum exhibition, our legs can
only hold out for so long. Yes, there we
will have the opportunity to enjoy the
force of Krause's powerfull prints, but in a
comfortable chair with this book, one can
perhaps delve deeper, thumbing back and
forth between prints, comparing or simply
dwelling on an individual work longer.
Nothing is as powerful as the print itself
and one will have to see the exhibition for
that reward, but for a leisurely soul-enriching
experience, this book affords a rare
opportunity.

Krause's work is not about trends or
about statements, it is about "universal
issues" as Tucker's essay and exhibition
title suggests. It is about the big questions
that haunt us. They haunt us because it is
not always comfortable to confront them.
With this body of work, Krause bravely
bears his enormous soul. As he has already
gone out on the proverbial limb, it is easier
for us to follow. Thanks are due to Tucker
for bringing Krause out of his "elective
obscenity." His largess of soul and his abili-
ty to give it a voice on photographic paper
are special gifts.

Lynn M. Herbert is associate curator at the
Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston.
found it aggravating that there were no page references to the work about which I was reading. I wish Arent's work is a good example: I note that the front page of the book indicates that the work is included: I'm reading along, immersed in two compelling paragraphs and then he can't find his most recent work. In perusing the book, yet again, in search of the photograph in question, I am at a train of thought is disturbed, and in the final analysis, I am disturbed. Did the editors think this would be regarded as a coffee-table book to be read at arm's length? I wish they would have known that some people would actually want to fully digest the product they were making. As a reader of the words, the pictures, and the relationship between them, I consider these book layout aggravations to be significant. At first glance the book appears well synthesized, a healthy blend of image and text. The surface (i.e., read the essay) and the photography falls apart. Despite this notion, the book's raw appeal. The quality of the writing and the information the book contained left me feeling. Gihan Tawadros, education officer at the Photographer's Gallery in London, opens her essay, "Other Britains, Other Britains.", with a quotation about the unique perspective black people have of London that they are made to feel like outsiders: "The black man or woman who is born here and grows up here has something special to contribute to British civilization. How or whether she will participate in it, see it from birth, but will never be quite completely in it." (C.L. James, Ten, 1984.) It was perhaps the most cogent essay of the book. Tawadros introduces us to photographers whose images (at last!) are conveniently reproduced with the text that accompanies them. A number of the photographers the cities belong to a group called D-Max, the technical term that refers to the maximum density of a photographic image. A group of great black photographers in Britain, it "alludes to the photographers' awareness of the aesthetic and political plurality of blackness in British society," writes Tawadros.

One photographer to exhibit with D-Max, Ingrid Pollard, created a series called Pastoralite Intervene, or in the colonised space. Lake District, an area that more or less epitomises the "authentic" British countryside of eighteenth-century landscape as depicted in both paintings and poems. This romantic region continues to be a metaphor of individual freedom for the British middle classes. I need only close my eyes and I can imagine it cosy on paper, postcards, and, yes, tea and biscuit tins throughout Britain. Pollard uses this interpretation to explore issues of alienation when she presents a picture of a black woman against this idyllic, hazy green background. The effect is startling because it is so unfamiliar. She maximizes the effect with the addition of a few words: "... it's as if the black experience is only lived in a white environment."

"In the Looking Glass Darkly," Rosetta Brooks, editor of 2G magazine, gives another perspective of Britain with her fascinating treatment on the era of mass consumption after World War II and the twists and turns of this phenomenon to the present day. She presents a number of the decades as they relief after the war, providing an analysis of various forms of popular culture, film to fashion. When Brooks addresses the 1980s, she provides a glimpse, reinforced frequently in contemporary British cinema, of a significantly splintered society. She believes that this societal breakdown may provoke many British photographers, such as John Hilliard and Susan Traing, among others, to deal with issues of identity and community in their work.

The final essays in the book by David Mellor and Michael O'Pray offer yet other perspectives on the rich field of image-makers in Britain today. O'Pray's film and video critic Art Monthly focuses his attention specifically on the moving image and provides us with a veritable laundry list of what to watch or to watch for at the local art cinemas. His essay does not shy away from an occasional discussion of money, since producing film, as he says to no one, is an expensive undertaking.

The strength of the British tradition was always the documentary approach. In the early 1980s, I forecasted that this tradition would be self-sustaining. While I think this can still be argued, it is equally important to now recognize that photographers in Great Britain have been interested in a large repertoire of styles and approaches to their craft. New voices have emerged: new forms of expression have been challenged. The "British tradition" of this book's title is not just about the growing numbers of photographers in Great Britain today, though that is not insignificant. It is more about the conceptual expansion of expression as it is now informed more than ever by critical theory, politics, fashion, cinema, popular culture, and even technical innovation. The image of the British tradition is clearly no longer a sufficient definition.

In his opening essay, Haworth-Booth states that in the recent past British photographers have adopted a large part of the American tradition as their own. American photographers should not be content to accept this in a one-way street. They, in turn, must develop a profusion from abroad. This book is a good step in that direction.

Linda Benedict-Jones is curator of the exhibition on British photography at the Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Peter Catrell's Fence in Gully, Moonfoot Hill, Scotland, 1986

Ingrid Pollard, from "Pastoralite Intervene," 1987 ( Oil on canvas (painted)"

Linda Benedict-Jones British Photography: Toward a Bigger Picture is not a coffee-table book. While it includes many high-quality reproductions of photographs, it also includes seven essays. While the essays are engaging, neither are they shallows. With much grit for the mill, it is a welcome addition to the current world of photographic books. This book creates a yearning to see the Victoria & Albert Museum exhibition, "British Photography: Into the 1980's," which opened in London this fall. It is certainly the case for me. It has been a decade since I visited Great Britain, after living and teaching photography there for many years at the end of the seventies. My last photographic involvement—in 1981—was researching material for both my master's thesis and an exhibition, "Ten Contemporary British Photographers," first shown at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. With that as my reference point, it is time for a follow-up book with much curiosity and was encouraged by the vitality of the work revealed between its covers.

The volume opens with "Where We've Come From: Aspects of Postwar British Photography" by Mark Haworth-Booth, curator of photographs at the Victoria & Albert Museum and a prolific author. Early in the essay, Haworth-Booth leads the contributions of England's own Bill Brandt—"Is there a British photograph who has not learned from him?"—and other postwar photographers such as John Division, Neil Henderson, and Roger Mayne. He also talks about photographers Tony Ray-Jones, Raymond Moore, and the celebrated war photographer Don McCullin, all of whom are quite familiar to a photo-educated American audience.

Don McCullin was barred by the Ministry of Defence from photographing the Falkland War, which Britain waged in the South Atlantic after its earlier sovereignty over the islands. "I still work for the Sunday Times, but they don't use me," McCullin said in a 1984 interview. "I stand around in the streets of battle, and I've been given the right of the treated accused to journalists six years later when a half-million U.S. troops headed off to the Gulf. Haworth-Booth also cites the works of Hannah Collins, who, like McCullin, tackled the Falkland Islands conflict but from a distance, using local materials and the corrupt war reporting.

This opening essay is an engaging piece of writing, although it included a few too many dates, which occasionally interfered with the flow of thought. In some respects, this is an inevitable problem. Wishing no doubt to make his essay an enjoyable read, Haworth-Booth acknowledges that for him, it is incomplete. He concludes with the hope that it "will serve as a fruitful source of ideas and images for the next generation—down to a work that will both draw on and challenge the traditions that have preceded it."

"In the Landscape and the Fall," Chris Turner, the editor of The British Photographers at the Victoria & Albert Museum, sketches out an historical survey of landscape photography, that until recently considered as an element in the 1950s, it was basically a pictu

Mary Mahr, from "A Few Days in Geneva," 1983
Photography in Nineteenth-Century America features six essays, interspersed by a color plate and portfolio sections that reproduce images from a number of American museums, libraries, and historical collections, and an appendix consisting of an exhibition checklist and bibliography. This format is similar to recent national surveys of nineteenth-century photography, such as "Zygmunt Gloger: Photography, but the lengthy essays (with extensive references to primary sources) in Photography in Nineteenth-Century America seem to address a different agenda.

The six essays are arranged in approximate chronological order and their subjects generally coincide with Taff's (and with Newhall's) larger theme discussion of the period: the early reception of photography in the United States, portraiture, the Civil War, photography produced during different periods of western expansion, and late century amateur pictorial photography. The theoretical approaches of the essays differ from those of Taff and from each other. In the essay "Photography: The Emergence of a Keyword," Alan Trachtenberg analyzes the different meanings generated and attached to the word "photography" during the era of the daguerreotype, when "the image and the idea of a photographic medium took shape in America." "The Portrait Studios and the Celebrity: Promoting the Art" discusses how the production and display of photographs of celebrities worked to complement the images of portrait photographers as the more widely recognized production of portraits of family and friends, and develops this idea in an extended account of the careers of Mathew Brady and Napoleon Sarony. Sandweiss "Undecisive Moments: The Narrative Tradition in Western Photography," recounts how photographers working in the West from the pre-Civil War period through the end of the century used different means—from the exhibition of hundreds of daguerreotypes in formats derived from panorama paintings to descriptive captions on photographic mounts—to place individual images within a narrative text that would meet the expectations of contemporary audiences. In "A Terrible Distinction: Photography and the Civil War," Krith Davis examines the cultural context of Civil War photography through an analysis of the production, dissemination, and appropriation of the imagery in relation to "the interests of what Davis identifies as its four primary audiences: the civilian public, individual soldiers, the illustrated press, and the official military hierarchy. Peter Bacon Hales "American Views and the Romance of Modernization" describes the course of what he describes as an "American photographic view tradition," which was formed by the urban and western spaces under development in the post-Civil War period in a consistent context: dominant American values. In "Of Charting Gains, Graceful Glades, and Browning Cliffles: The Economic Incentives, Social Inducements, and Aesthetic Issues of American Pictorial Photography," Matthew Brady's James Brooks (Editor of New York Express), c. 1858

Alfred Steiglitz's View, 1890

discourse to represent a new culture coming gloriously into being within a specific landscape of virtue and hope." Other romantics this tradition and its practitioners, though Hales' readings of view imagery and the images produced in the wake of the disintegration of this "tradition" are interesting in their discussion of viewing practices and the representation of space.

The affiliation Photography in Nineteenth-Century America claims with Taff would seem to promise a social history of nineteenth-century photography, and most of these essays, research in the subjects consistent with modernist histories of photography constituted the effective extent of their thinking about social history. At a time when controversy over who stories of American history will be taught in schools and exhibited in museums, the book is oddly dated, even. It doesn't advance different voices, neither does the medium of photography authoritatively maintain traditional values. Joanne Lukitsh is a visiting assistant professor in the art department of the State University of New York at Buffalo. Unknown Photographer, California Forty-Niner, c. 1850

Matthew Brady's James Brooks (Editor of New York Express), c. 1858

The Social Fabric of America

idea in an extended account of the careers of Mathew Brady and Napoleon Sarony, Sandweiss "Undecisive Moments: The Narrative Tradition in Western Photography," recounts how photographers working in the West from the pre-Civil War period through the end of the century used different means—from the exhibition of hundreds of daguerreotypes in formats derived from panorama paintings to descriptive captions on photographic mounts—to place individual images within a narrative text that would meet the expectations of contemporary audiences. In "A Terrible Distinction: Photography and the Civil War," Krith Davis examines the cultural context of Civil War photography through an analysis of the production, dissemination, and appropriation of the imagery in relation to "the interests of what Davis identifies as its four primary audiences: the civilian public, individual soldiers, the illustrated press, and the official military hierarchy. Peter Bacon Hales "American Views and the Romance of Modernization" describes the course of what he describes as an "American photographic view tradition," which was formed by the urban and western spaces under development in the post-Civil War period in a consistent context: dominant American values. In "Of Charting Gains, Graceful Glades, and Browning Cliffles: The Economic Incentives, Social Inducements, and Aesthetic Issues of American Pictorial Photography," Matthew Brady's James Brooks (Editor of New York Express), c. 1858
We've Seen It Before


David L. Jacobs

In The Power of Photography, Vicki Goldberg writes a comprehensive and readable book on photographs that have changed our views of ourselves and the world. Goldberg discusses the impact of photography and its role in our society, and looks at how the power of photography has grown in such diverse work as photographs from the Civil War, early scientific photography, police and surveillance photography, Western photography and its influence on the West, Benjamin Lee Whorf's studies of language and thought, and the photographic work of Dorothea Lange and Edward Steichen.

Special attention is given to the photographs of Henri Cartier Bresson, who is described as a master of the art form. The book also covers the work of other photographers, including Dorothea Lange, whose photographs of the Great Depression and World War II are discussed.

Goldberg's book is a valuable addition to the literature on photography, and is highly recommended for anyone interested in the history of photography or the role of photographs in society.
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The light through the doorway pressed gently on her face, showing me her world, her house, her bed, her eyes.
She looked into my eyes through the camera, as if she knew she would be looking at the world, and without fear.
She always cried when I showed her a picture of herself.
Elvina told me later her mother was unhappy with how she looked, old and wrinkled.
"Julie's camera never lies," Elvina said.
I never thought of her as old and wrinkled.
I saw a woman, a friend.
And she always asked me to take another picture.

—Julie Newton

Julie Newton is a photographer in Austin, Texas, and a faculty member at the University of Texas at Austin.