

POINT AND SHOOT

CEPA POINT AND SHOOT EXHIBITION NOVEMBER 7-DECEMBER 18, 1992

CURATED BY ROBERT HIRSCH AND DAVID HARROD

CEPA
GALLERY

THIS SHOW STARTED ON THE STEPS OF THE GEORGE EASTMAN HOUSE IN ROCHESTER, NY. BOB HIRSCH, ROBIN TRESSLER, AND I HAD JUST SPENT THE AFTERNOON LOOKING AT AUTOCHROMES FROM THE ARCHIVES. BOB WAS TAKING A SHOT OF THE GRAPE ARBOR ACROSS FROM THE ENTRANCE WITH ONE OF THE ACTION TRACKERS THAT HE WAS ALWAYS CARRYING AROUND. I HAD MY INFINITY JR. AND WAS WAITING FOR SOMETHING GOOD TO HAPPEN. SUDDENLY A THOUGHT HIT ME AND I SAID: "HEY BOB, WE SHOULD DO A "POINT AND SHOOT" SHOW." BOB STOPPED IN MID-ACTION TRACK AND LOOKED AT ME WITH THAT MANIACAL LOOK HE GETS SOMETIMES AND SAID: "YEAH, THAT'S A GREAT IDEA!" SO IT WAS KIND OF A "POINT AND CURATE" DECISION WHICH IS, I THINK, JUST FINE.

AS WE DROVE AROUND LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO EAT WE TALKED ABOUT THE CONCEPT. WE TALKED ABOUT HOW DEMOCRATIC "POINT AND SHOOT" PHOTOGRAPHY IS; ABOUT ITS SPONTANEITY; ABOUT THE HISTORY OF SNAPSHOT PHOTOGRAPHY; WHETHER THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "POINT AND SHOOT" AND THE SNAPSHOT; ABOUT HOW WE BOTH LIKED WORKING WITH THESE THINGS AND KNEW THAT OTHER PEOPLE DID TOO, BUT JUST HADN'T SEEN THAT MUCH OF IT ANYWHERE.

IN THE END, WE DECIDED THAT WE WOULD PUT OUT A SIMPLE CALL FOR WORK AND SEE WHAT WE GOT. IT WAS IMPORTANT TO US TO KEEP MONEY OUT OF IT, SO THERE WAS NO APPLICATION FEE, NO PRIZES, AND NO PROMISES. WE PUT THE WORD OUT MOSTLY IN ART AND PHOTO PUBLICATIONS BECAUSE THEY PRINTED THE ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR FREE AND WE WANTED TO REACH PEOPLE WHO WOULD SEND SLIDES. BOB SENT PROSPECTUSES OUT TO PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD. WE FINALLY RECEIVED WORK FROM ABOUT EIGHTY PHOTOGRAPHERS FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY.

IN LOOKING AT THE WORK WE FIRST ASKED "DO WE LIKE IT?" AND SECOND "IS IT POINT AND SHOOT?" WE HAD A LITTLE TROUBLE DEFINING "POINT AND SHOOT" FOR OURSELVES. WHEN I USED THE TERM I WAS THINKING "WORK PRODUCED WITH THE NEW TYPE OF SMALL, AUTO-EVERYTHING, OR DISPOSABLE, 35MM CAMERA." BOB'S DEFINITION WAS SOMEWHAT BROADER AND INCLUDED ANY TYPE OF CAMERA OR SHOOTING THAT SEEMED TO MINIMIZE CONTROL IN FAVOR OF SURPRISE. I ATTRIBUTED THIS LACK OF FOCUS TO THE LONG HOURS BOB PUT INTO GETTING DECENT PRINTS OUT OF THE NEGATIVES PRODUCED BY ACTION TRACKING. BUT HE STUCK TO HIS FOLLY AND, AS YOU SEE FROM THE WORK HIS DEFINITION WON THE DAY AND I'M GLAD IT DID.

WE TRIED TO TAKE AN APPROACH TO CURATING THIS SHOW, OF OVER 100 WORKS, THAT WAS CONSISTENT WITH WHAT WE FELT WAS THE "POINT AND SHOOT" SPIRIT. RATHER THAN USE THIS SHOW AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP A CRITICAL THESIS, WE DECIDED TO LEAVE THE DEFINITION OF "POINT AND SHOOT" TO THE PHOTOGRAPHERS. WE FEEL THAT THIS EXHIBITION, AND THE ONES THAT WILL FOLLOW ("POINT AND SHOOT II WILL BE PART OF CEPAS NEXT EXHIBITION SEASON), ARE A TESTING OF THE WATER, OF THE

INTRODUCTION

DEPTH OF CURRENT PRACTICE. WHEN WE ASKED A SIMPLE QUESTION: "WHAT IS "POINT AND SHOOT" PHOTOGRAPHY?" WE DISCOVERED THAT, EVEN THOUGH WE BOTH LOVED IT, WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS. SO WE DECIDED TO ASK EVERYONE, AND WE GOT AN INTERESTING ANSWER.

—DAVID HARROD

POINT AND SHOOT—ROBERT HIRSCH

THE LINEAGE OF "POINT AND SHOOT" CAN BE TRACED TO THE DESIRE TO BE ABLE TO MAKE AN INSTANTANEOUS PHOTOGRAPH. WHEN LOUIS JACQUES MANDE' DAGUERRE INTRODUCED HIS PROCESS IN 1839, IT WAS TOO SLOW TO MAKE PORTRAITS OR RECORD ACTION. HOWEVER, AS EARLY AS 1841, MARC ANTOINE GAUDIN WAS ABLE MAKE AN EXPOSURE OF STREET SCENES IN PARIS SHOWING PEOPLE AND TRAFFIC WITH A DAGUERREOTYPE PLATE. BY 1851, HIPPOLYTE MACAIRE WAS ABLE TO COMMAND VERY HIGH PRICES FOR HIS DAGUERREOTYPES PICTURING SUCH SCENES AS A MAN WALKING, A HORSE TROTting, SEASCAPES WITH WAVES, AND SHIPS WITH SMOKE COMING OUT OF THEIR STACKS. ARTISTS, ESPECIALLY, WANTED TO USE THE CAMERA TO SEE THINGS NOT CLEARLY DISCERNABLE BY THE HUMAN EYE ALONE. CHEMICAL ACCELERATORS AND IMPROVED LENSES REDUCED EXPOSURE TIMES TO MAKE THIS POSSIBLE. GEORGE WASHINGTON WILSON'S VIEWS OF PRINCE STREET, EDINBURGH, AND EDWARD ANTHONY'S OF BROADWAY, NEW YORK, BOTH MADE IN 1859, ARE THE FIRST TRULY CONVINCING ACTION STREET SCENES. THE PROSAIC FLOW OF URBAN LIFE WAS ARRESTED WITH A STEREOSCOPIC CAMERA POSSESSING A FAST WIDE ANGLE LENS THAT DELIVERED A SMALL IMAGE IN WHICH SLIGHT MOVEMENT WAS NOT VERY NOTICEABLE. THE INSTANTANEOUS VIEW HAD ARRIVED.

THE VAST MAJORITY OF EARLY PHOTOGRAPHIC WORK INVOLVED STUDIO PORTRAITS IN WHICH THE PHOTOGRAPHER ATTEMPTED TO MAINTAIN A SENSE OF NATURALNESS WHILE THE SUBJECT WAS FORCED TO REMAIN STILL AND ENDURE VARIOUS POSING BRACES, STRAPS, AND BELTS. THIS TYPE OF PORTRAIT TENDED TO PRESENT A FORMAL AND STUDIED LOOK. IT DID NOT PROVIDE A SPONTANEOUS RECORDING OF THE SUBJECT. THE IMPULSE TO MAKE EXTEMPORANEOUS PHOTOGRAPHS IS EVIDENT IN AMATEUR WORK BY THE MID-1850S. A PORTRAIT ALBUM FROM THIS TIME CONTAINS A PICTURE OF A YOUNG GIRL, WITH A BIG SMILE, HOLDING A SMALL WHITE DOG.¹ THE GIRL IS NOT IN SHARP FOCUS, THEREBY GIVING A SENSE OF CHILDLIKE ENERGY TO THE PORTRAIT. THE DOG IS VERY BLURRY, PROVIDING A SENSE OF AN ANIMATED SPIRIT TO THE SCENE. THE COLLODION WET-PLATE PROCESS WAS NOT TECHNICALLY ABLE TO BRING THE ACTION TO A STANDSTILL, BUT THE PHOTOGRAPHER RECOGNIZED THE RECORDING OF THESE FEELINGS, EVEN IF THEY WERE NOT TECHNICALLY CORRECT, AND PLACED THIS IMAGE ON A SINGLE PAGE IN THE ALBUM.

IN 1860 SIR JOHN HERSCHEL ADOPTED THE HUNTING TERM "SNAPSHOT," TO TAKE AN INSTINCTIVE SHOT WITHOUT TAKING AIM, TO PHOTOGRAPHIC PRACTICE. IN ITS ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SENSE, SNAPSHOT DOES NOT APPLY TO A TECHNICAL WAY OF WORKING, BUT TO AN INTUITIVE, VISCERAL RESPONSE TO THE SUBJECT. IT IS A STATE OF MIND IN WHICH THE PHOTOGRAPHER REACTS QUICKLY, EMOTIONALLY, AND WITHOUT FORETHOUGHT TO THE SUBJECT. THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN IT IS AN UNTHINKING APPROACH. IT COULD MEAN THE PHOTOGRAPHER HAS DONE THE CONTEMPLATING AND PREPARING BEFOREHAND, SO THAT WHEN THE SITUATION ARISES, THE PHOTOGRAPHER IS ABLE TO RESPOND KNOWINGLY AND INSTINCTIVELY TO THE EVENT.

TODAY SOME PHOTOGRAPHERS FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE HUNTING UNDERTONES CONNECTED TO THE TERM SNAPSHOT, BUT IT IS NO ACCIDENT THAT THE MANUFACTURER'S CALL THE LATEST GENERATION OF HAND-HELD CAMERAS "POINT AND SHOOT." THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A POWER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SUBJECT AND CAMERA OPERATOR. MANY PEOPLE DO NOT WANT THEIR PICTURE MADE, WHILE THE PHOTOGRAPHER SEEMS INTENT ON STALKING AND RECORDING UNREHEARSED OBSERVATIONS FROM LIFE. PHOTOGRAPHERS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN LOOKING FOR A PIECE OF EQUIPMENT THAT WOULD LET THEM BE IN THE MIDST OF AN EVENT AND NOT HAVE PEOPLE BE AWARE THEY ARE TAKING PICTURES.

SUCH DESIRES WERE GRATIFIED IN 1888 WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THE KODAK FLEXIBLE-ROLL FILM CAMERA, WHICH BEGAN THE "POINT AND SHOOT" PHENOMENA. THE KODAK MARKETING SLOGAN "YOU PRESS THE BUTTON, AND WE DO THE REST" SUMS UP THE IDEA THAT ANYONE WHO WANTED TO COULD NOW MAKE PHOTOGRAPHS. THE SMALL, PUSH-BUTTON, HAND-HELD CAMERA GAVE PEOPLE THE ABILITY TO RECORD THEIR OWN IMMEDIATE PERCEPTIONS AND REACTIONS WITHOUT RELIANCE ON TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE OR AESTHETIC CONVENTIONS. ITS EASE OF OPERATION CREATED A WORLD-WIDE AMATEUR MARKET THAT HERALDED A VISUAL REVOLUTION CALLED THE SNAPSHOT.

THE SNAPSHOT: THE PICTURE WITHOUT A HISTORY

THE SNAPSHOT WAS AN UPSTART WITHOUT A HISTORY. IT IS BASED UPON THE VERNACULAR RATHER THAN THE ATTITUDES, SENSIBILITIES, AND TRADITIONS OF WESTERN EUROPEAN ART. THE TRADITIONAL AESTHETIC CRITERIA OF CONTENT, FORM, AND TECHNIQUE DID NOT NECESSARILY APPLY. THE SNAPSHOT ALLOWED SURPRISE TO SURFACE AND BROKE THROUGH TRADITION, REVEALING THE TRUTH OF THE SUBJECT ITSELF WITHOUT ADORNMENT. IT MARKED THE TRANSFER OF THE POWER OF IMAGEMAKING FROM A SMALL ELITE GROUP TO EVERYDAY PEOPLE. THE SNAPSHOT CONTINUED PHOTOGRAPHY'S UNDERLYING FUNCTION AS A GREAT LEVELER OF HIERARCHY. IT COULD EMPOWER BY PICTURING SUBJECTS WHICH WERE PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED UNWORTHY OF REPRESENTATION. ALSO, THE SNAPSHOT COULD CREATE A VISUAL SENSE OF DEMOCRACY THROUGH ITS ABILITY TO TREAT ALL SUBJECTS EQUALLY. THE SNAPSHOT, THROUGH ITS MILLIONS OF INCARNATIONS, BEGAN TO RADICALLY ALTER ALL THE VISUAL ARTS. THE ATTITUDE OF THE SNAPSHOTTER WAS DIRECT AND SPONTANEOUS. IT WAS AN INSTINCTIVE, MATTER-OF-FACT APPROACH THAT CASUALLY EXPLORED THE PLEASURES OF EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES. THE SNAPSHOTTER'S MAIN CONCERN WAS THE SUBJECT HE OR SHE WAS PHOTOGRAPHING, NOT THE SUBJECT OF PHOTOGRAPHY. THIS UNPRETENTIOUS OUTLOOK HAD A DECEPTIVELY SIMPLE FRESHNESS CAPABLE OF CHANGING THE ATTITUDE OF THE OBSERVER TOWARD THE SUBJECT.

THE SNAPSHOT WAS NOT THE INVENTION OF AN INDIVIDUAL GENIUS, BUT AN EXTENDED COLLABORATIVE GROUP PROCESS OF EXPLORATION THAT UNFOLDED OVER TIME. THE GENERAL ATTITUDE OF THE SNAPSHOTTERS BECAME PROVOCATIVE WHEN THEIR SO-CALLED AMATEUR "MISTAKES" SUCH AS INFORMAL FRAMING, UNEXPECTED CROPPING, UNBALANCED COMPOSITIONS, SKEWED HORIZON LINES, UNUSUAL ANGLES, WEIRD PERSPECTIVES, BANAL SUBJECT MATTER, EXTREMES IN LIGHTING, OUT-OF-FOCUS SUBJECTS, BLURRING, DOUBLE EXPOSURES, EXTENDED TIME EXPOSURES, USE OF POOR QUALITY OPTICS, AND DIRECT FLASH BEGAN TO BE ADOPTED AS WORKING METHODS BY SERIOUS IMAGEMAKERS. IN THE INTRODUCTION OF *TOWARD A SOCIAL LANDSCAPE* (1966), NATHAN LYONS CALLED THE SNAPSHOT "ONE OF THE MOST AUTHENTIC PICTURE FORMS PHOTOGRAPHY HAS PRODUCED" BECAUSE "IT IS NOT ROOTED IN TRADITIONAL IMAGEMAKING VALUES."²

OUR VISUAL VOCABULARY HAS BEEN GREATLY ENLARGED AND REVISED BY THE SNAPSHOT. THIS PAST DECADE HAS WITNESSED THE WIDE-SCALE AVAILABILITY OF "POINT AND SHOOT" CAMERAS. THEY RANGE FROM FULLY AUTOMATIC OPERATIONS TO DISPOSABLES WITH UNDERWATER CAPABILITIES. THERE IS GREATER ACCESS IN TERMS OF PRICE, STYLE, EASE OF USE, AND FORMAT TO MEET THE HUMAN DESIRE TO RECORD REALITY-BASED SCENES. SO WHAT IS DIFFERENT AND WHAT IS THE SAME IN TERMS OF CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHIC PRACTICE? THIS IS WHAT WE WERE CURIOUS TO SEE.

EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

THE PICTURES IN THIS EXHIBITION REPRESENT THE WORK OF 19 ARTISTS. WE SELECTED 9 MEN AND 10 WOMEN WE THOUGHT SHOWED THE DIVERSITY OF CURRENT PRACTICE. WE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT SENSIBILITIES THIS WORK REVEALED IN TERMS OF SUBJECT MATTER, MOTIVATION, HOW THE CAMERA WAS USED, TECHNIQUE, HOW THEY MAKE ONE FEEL AND THINK, AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO PAST OPERATIONS.

THE WORK IN THE EXHIBITION ADHERES TO MANY ESTABLISHED SNAPSHOT GENRES. THE OVERWHELMING CHOICE OF SUBJECT MATTER IS PEOPLE. PEOPLE ARE PICTURED MAINLY ENGAGED IN FAMILY EVENTS AND RELATIONSHIPS. THEY SEEM TO BE AWARE OF THE PRESENCE OF THE CAMERA, AND, IN MOST CASES, THE PROXIMAL DISTANCE IS PERSONAL. THE PHOTOGRAPHERS SEEM INTERESTED IN EXPLORING HUMAN INTERACTION BY LOOKING THROUGH PRIVATE MOMENTS. IDEAS ABOUT IDENTITY AT VARIOUS STAGES OF LIFE SURFACE IN BABY PICTURES AND THOSE OF THE ELDERLY. ANIMALS APPEAR AS STAND-INS FOR HUMAN PERSONAS. TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHS DEAL WITH PEOPLE IN RELATIONSHIP TO THEIR ENVIRONMENT, WITH HUMANS GENERALLY THE MOST IMPORTANT VISUAL ELEMENT. LANDSCAPE IN THE TRADITIONAL SENSE OF THE GRANDIOSE VISTA WAS NOT AN ISSUE. THE LANDSCAPE APPEARS AS A METAPHOR OF AN INNER TERRAIN. SPACE IS INTIMATE. THE FORMALISTIC AND MEDIATIVE CONCERNS OF THE LARGE TRIPODED CAMERA AND ITS ACCOMPANYING ISSUES OF VISUAL CLARITY THROUGH VIGOROUS EXPOSURE AND PRINT CONTROLS WERE NOT IN EVIDENCE.

SOCIAL THEMES PERTAINING TO ECONOMICS, FAMILY STRUCTURE, GENDER, POWER, RACE, AND RELIGION MAKE THEIR APPEARANCE CLOAKED WITHIN A HIGHLY INDIVIDUALISTIC CONTEXT. THE OVERWHELMING PREFERENCE FOR FAMILY-BASED SUBJECT MATTER REVEALS A NEED TO RUMINATE ABOUT THE INTIMATE SIDE OF DOMESTIC LIFE. FOR SOME, THE SIMPLICITY OF CAMERA OPERATIONS SEEMED TO HELP REESTABLISH CONTACT WITH INNOCENT CHILD-LIKE SENSATIONS. WHAT SURFACED IS A NEED TO EMPHASIZE AN INSTINCTIVE RESPONSE TO THE SUBJECT WITH A MINIMUM OF INTERFERENCE, OFTEN INTERMINGLED WITH A MYSTERIOUS, SURREAL UNDERCURRENT FROM THE REALM OF DREAMS AND MEMORY. ALTHOUGH THESE ARTISTS ARE DEALING WITH ISSUES THEY CONSIDER SERIOUS, THERE IS AN OVERRIDING FEELING THEY HAVE NOT LOST THE SENSE OF AMAZEMENT, FUN, AND PLAY THAT USUALLY ACCOMPANIES ONE'S INTRODUCTION INTO PHOTOGRAPHY.

CAMERA STRATAGEM

THE CAMERA ALTERS THE BEHAVIOR OF THOSE IN FRONT OF IT. THE "POINT AND SHOOTERS" WHO PHOTOGRAPH PEOPLE WANT TO MINIMIZE THE LEVEL OF INTERFERENCE. THE CAMERA IS HANDLED IN AN INCONSPICUOUS MANNER SO IT CAN BLEND INTO THE SCENE AND BECOME MORE A PART OF WHAT IS GOING ON WITHOUT INFLUENCING THE OUTCOME AS MUCH. WORKING IN CUBA, MEL ROSENTHAL COMMENTED HOW BIG CAMERAS CHANGE CIRCUMSTANCES TOO MUCH. WITH A "POINT AND SHOOT" CAMERA, HE FOUND PEOPLE WERE LESS SUSPICIOUS. A NUMBER OF THE ARTISTS COMMENTED ON HOW "POINT AND SHOOT" CAMERAS FREED THEM FROM THE CONVENTIONAL HORIZONTAL, EYE-LEVEL POINT-OF-VIEW AND ENCOURAGED UNUSUAL VANTAGE POINTS LIKE SHOOTING BLINDLY FROM THE PALM OF THE HAND, PLACING THE CAMERA ON THE TOP OF ONE'S HEAD, OR SHOOTING FROM THE HIP. SULAIMAN ELLISON DISCOVERED THAT NEVER BRINGING THE CAMERA TO HIS EYE ENCOURAGED PEOPLE TO GO ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS, THUS PRESERVING THE GENUINE FLOW OF THE HUMAN THEATER BEFORE HIS CAMERA. SURPRISE WAS DEFINITELY COURTED, ENCOURAGING DEBATE AND RE-EVALUATION OF WHAT IS CONSIDERED "CORRECT" IN TERMS OF COMPOSITION, SUBJECT MATTER, TECHNIQUE, AND USE OF MATERIALS WITHIN CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE.

THE FACT THAT THESE CAMERAS WERE SO SIMPLE RELIEVED THE INDIVIDUAL FROM TECHNICAL BOUNDARIES. COMPACT SIZE AND CONVENIENCE OF USE ENCOURAGED MANY, LIKE BETH LANTGEN, TO MAKE THEIR "POINT AND SHOOT" CAMERAS CONSTANT COMPANIONS. THE SIMPLICITY OF THE BROWNIE HAWKEYE LET CAROL GLAUBER COLLABORATE WITH HER 15 MONTH OLD SON. AUTOFOCUS WAS NOT VIEWED AS A LIMITING FEATURE BUT, AS DENNIS CALLWOOD SAID, IT MADE THE ACT OF PICTURE-TAKING LESS PREMEDITATED. LINDA RASKIN FELT THAT COMPLICATED EQUIPMENT INTERFERED WITH HER INTUITIVE PROCESS OF SEEING. MARK SHEINKMAN APPEARED TO BE AN EXCEPTION TO MOST CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE. HE WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO USED THE CAMERA TO CREATE NON-REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGES THAT DID NOT RELATE DIRECTLY BACK TO THE VISIBLE WORLD. BUT THE ABSTRACT PATTERNS DO FEEL AND LOOK INTUITIVE, WHICH FITS INTO THE SNAPSHOT MINDSET OF ENCOURAGING IMPULSIVE PARTICIPATION.

SPECIFIC VISIONS

TERRY TOWERY PURPOSELY INTRODUCED "AMATEUR MISTAKES" TO QUESTION TRADITIONAL IMAGEMAKING VALUES. IN A DADAIST TRADITION, HE OFTEN DID NOT USE THE VIEWFINDER, THEREBY STRESSING THE ROLE OF THE UNPREDICTABLE IN ARTISTIC CREATION. DUALISM, THE CONCEPT OF TWO OPPOSING FORCES, EMERGES AS A THEME IN TOWERY'S "LOOKING AT ANIMALS" SERIES. A DINOSAUR APPEARS IN A MODERN URBAN SETTING, STRESSING OUR CONTINUAL STRUGGLE TO SORT OUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REALITY AND WHAT THE CAMERA SHOWS US. ANIMALS APPEAR AS SURROGATE PEOPLE. IT IS POSSIBLE TO RECOGNIZE PEOPLE YOU KNOW AND EVEN YOURSELF IN THESE PORTRAITS. THEY ARE DUALISTIC IN THE SENSE THAT THEY EXPRESS NOT ONLY THE RESEMBLANCE OF ANIMALS AND HUMANS, BUT ALSO EXPRESS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ANALYTIC AND INSTINCTIVE BEHAVIOR. THE OFF-KILTER ANGLES INJECT A PSYCHOLOGICAL SENSE OF UNEASY ANTICIPATION INTO THE SITUATIONS. IT FEELS LIKE SOMETHING IS GOING TO HAPPEN, BUT WE ARE NOT CERTAIN WHAT IT IS GOING TO BE. TRADITIONAL FOCUSING GUIDELINES ARE VIOLATED AS THE SUBJECT IS OFTEN BLURRY AND OUT-OF-FOCUS WHILE THE BACKGROUND IS SHARP. THIS CREATES AN UNEXPECTED JUXTAPOSITION WHICH CALLS INTO QUESTION THE ANIMAL'S RELATIONSHIP TO ITS SURROUNDINGS. THE ANIMALS ARE ALL IN ARTIFICIAL ENVIRONMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN PRODUCED BY PEOPLE IN ORDER TO REGULATE AND CONTROL THEIR BEHAVIOR. THE FOCUS SHIFT ALSO CALLS INTO QUESTION WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT: THE LIVING CREATURE OR THE HUMAN CONSTRUCTED ENVIRONMENT? AT FIRST THESE IMAGES APPEAR FUNNY AND WHIMSICAL, BUT LURKING BENEATH THE SURFACE THERE ARE QUESTIONS ABOUT ANIMAL RIGHTS AND HUMAN MANIFESTATIONS OF TOTALITARIANISM. THE SEEMINGLY INNOCENT USE OF A COMMON "AMATEUR MISTAKE" PRODUCES A LINKAGE THAT WOULD NOT OCCUR IN A "CORRECTLY" MADE PHOTOGRAPH.

AS A COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHER, JUDY SÁNCHEZ SPENDS TIME PREVISUALIZING SCENES FOR LARGE FORMAT CAMERAS. THE IDEA OF PHOTOGRAPHING THINGS SHE HAD NOT ACTUALLY SEEN PRESENTED A FASCINATING OPPORTUNITY TO REACT SPONTANEOUSLY TO PERSONAL OCCURRENCES. THIS MEANT RELINQUISHING THE TRADITIONAL STUDIO CONTROLS INVOLVED IN CREATING A PICTURE. THE CAMERA IS INTIMATELY INVOLVED IN THE SCENE. THE SUBJECTS, CHILDREN AND ANIMALS, ARE OFTEN GAZING DIRECTLY INTO A CAMERA NOT MORE THAN A FEW FEET FROM THEIR FACES. THIS ESTABLISHES A SUBJECT, OFTEN CUT-OFF, SHOWN FROM AN UNUSUAL ANGLE, OR DISTORTED BY THE CLOSENESS OF THE LENS THAT DOMINATES THE SCENE IN THE FOREGROUND. THIS COMPOSITIONAL STRUCTURE IS OFTEN ACCENTUATED THROUGH THE USE OF THE AUTOMATIC, ON-BOARD FLASH TO SUPPLY A DIRECT BLAST OF LIGHT. THE RESULT IS A HOT, BRIGHTLY ILLUMINATED SUBJECT IN THE FOREGROUND PLAYING AGAINST A MUCH DARKER BACKGROUND, WHICH GIVES THE SUBJECT A CONTRASTY THREE-DIMENSIONAL EFFECT AND PROVIDES IT WITH POP-UP PRESENCE WITHIN THE FRAME.

ON THE WHOLE, THE "POINT AND SHOOTERS" MANIFEST A DIFFERENT PHOTOGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND THEIR SUBJECTS. PHOTOGRAPHERS ARE TRADITIONALLY SPECTATORS, PEOPLE STANDING OUTSIDE THE ACTION, REVEALING THE NEED NOT TO BE PARTICIPANTS BUT TO FUNCTION AS WITNESSES. THE PHOTOGRAPHERS GIVE THEIR SUBJECTS A KIND OF IMMORTALITY WHEREBY THEIR ACTIONS CAN CONTINUE TO BE REPLAYED OVER TIME. MANY OF THE "POINT AND SHOOTERS" SPECIALIZE IN EXPANDING WHAT IS WORTHY OF BEING RECORDED AND SAVED. THEY ACT AS SPECTATORS RECORDING PERSONAL EVENTS PREVIOUSLY NOT VERIFIED BEFORE THE CAMERA. IN "THE POOL SERIES" JENNETTE WILLIAMS USED A PANORAMA CAMERA TO RECORD EVENTS AT HER SON'S SWIM CLASS. ITS UNCONVENTIONAL ASPECT RATIO MAGNIFIES THE SENSE OF HORIZONTAL SPACE, EMPHASIZING THE WATER IN THE POOL. THE BENDING OF PARALLEL LINES BY THE PANORAMA CAMERA REPLICATES THE SENSATION OF THE EARTH'S CURVATURE, WHICH EMBRACES A SURREAL SENSE OF FLOATATION. THE EXTENDED ANGLE OF VISION PERMITS ONE TO WITNESS THE INTERPLAY OF THE WATER, THE CHILDREN, AND THE ADULTS DURING THIS RITE OF PASSAGE. WE SEE A CHILD HOLDING ON TO THE EDGE OF THE POOL, BUILDING THE YOU-CAN-DO-IT CONFIDENCE NECESSARY TO LET GO AND MAKE HIS OWN WAY TO THE OUT-STRETCHED HANDS IN THE LOWER LEFT OF THE FRAME. TRUST IS AFFIRMED BY TWO MEN HOLDING SMALL CHILDREN WHOSE SELF-RELIANCE IS RATIFIED THROUGH THE ACT OF LEARNING TO FLOAT. THESE MINICHILDHOOD EVENTS THAT SHAPE ONE'S LIFE ARE THE TYPE OF SUBJECT MATTER MANY OF THE "POINT AND SHOOTERS" WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND SANCTION WITH VISUAL DOCUMENTATION. THE HIGHLY PERSONAL AND INTIMATE NATURE OF SUCH WORK PARADOXICALLY PROVIDES IT WITH A SENSE OF THE UNIVERSAL BY ALLOWING US TO INTERACT WITH OUR OWN MEMORIES OF SUCH EXPERIENCES.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES/THEN AND NOW

THE WORK WE SAW WHILE PUTTING THIS EXHIBITION TOGETHER SEEMED TO REPRESENT A NATURAL CONTINUATION OF THE SNAPSHOT THEMES THAT EMERGED IN THE WORK OF SUCH PHOTOGRAPHERS AS ROBERT FRANK, LEE FRIEDLANDER, DANNY LYON, AND GARRY WINOGRAND. THE DEFINITION OF WHAT CONSTITUTES A PHOTOGRAPH CONTINUES TO BE EXPANDED. THE EARLIER GENERATION BEGAN TO CLEAR AWAY MANY OF THE MODERNIST NOTIONS ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION AND PRINT QUALITY. NOW THERE IS NOT AS MUCH EMPHASIS ON CORRECT FRAMING OR PROPER USE OF MATERIALS. THE AUGMENTATION OF PRACTICE THAT BEGAN IN THE 1960S WAS ON DISPLAY. ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE "POINT AND SHOOT" WORK IS CLEARLY RECOGNIZABLE AS BEING PHOTOGRAPHICALLY DERIVED, ITS PRACTITIONERS DISPLAY THE INDEPENDENCE NECESSARY TO USE PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIALS AND PROCESSES IN ANY MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE VISUAL MANIFESTATIONS OF THEIR CONCERNS.

ONE KEY DIFFERENCE IS IN WHO IS NOW DOING THE PICTURING. CHANGES WITHIN OUR SOCIETY HAVE GIVEN PEOPLE GREATER ACCESS TO PHOTOGRAPHIC TECHNOLOGY. THE ARTISTS IN THIS EXHIBITION CONSTITUTE A WIDER CULTURAL, ETHNIC, AND RACIAL SPECTRUM THAN IN EARLIER GENERATIONS. OVER HALF THE WORK WAS CREATED BY WOMEN. THIS SEEMS TO INDICATE A DIVERGENT GROUP IS MAKING USE OF "POINT AND SHOOT" AS A DEMOCRATIC-TECHNOLOGICAL MEANS OF EXPRESSING THEIR POSITIONS, THUS HELPING TO ALTER PREVIOUS MODES OF REPRESENTATION.

AS AFFLUENT, MODERN, AND SECULAR NORTH AMERICANS WE HAVE SET A GREAT DEAL OF IMPORTANCE ON SELF-FULFILLMENT. WE BELIEVE WE CAN FIND THE DREAM THAT NOT ONLY SATISFIES US, BUT ALSO IS AUTHENTICALLY OUR OWN. "POINT AND SHOOT" CAN PROVIDE A MODE FOR EXPLORING EXISTENTIAL DILEMMAS AND OFFERING HOPE IN THE FACE OF WHAT GEORG LUKACS DESCRIBED AS "TRANSCENDENTAL HOMELESSNESS;" OUR MODERN MALAISE OF RESTLESSNESS, ROOTLESSNESS, AND FAILURE TO CONNECT WITH ONE-ANOTHER. "POINT AND SHOOT" PROVIDES A WAY FOR SOME OF US TO LOOK INSIDE OURSELVES TO FIND MEANING IN A WORLD THAT HAS BEEN DECLARED EMPTY. IT OFFERS A PASSAGEWAY TO BE RESUPPLIED WITH THE PERSONAL RESOURCES SOME OF US NEED AND SEEK TO MAKE OUR LIVES MEANINGFUL AND FULFILLING.

—ROBERT HIRSCH

THE CATALOGUE FOR THIS EXHIBITION PRESENTS ONE IMAGE FROM EACH ARTIST AND A DISTILLATION OF WHAT EACH ONE HAD TO SAY ABOUT "POINT AND SHOOT."

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1. International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Rochester, NY. Portrait album, circa 1850s, by unidentified [English?] photographer (B1:1263:1-42).
2. Conversation with Nathan Lyons and the author about the snapshot on September 9, 1992 at Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester, NY.



LOOKING AT

ANIMALS

(GOAT)

1991

16" x 20"

GELATIN

SILVER PRINT

TERRY TOWERY

TERRY TOWERY: BROOKLYN, NEW YORK. I HAVE AN EXPERIMENTAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS PHOTOGRAPHY AND I AM CONSTANTLY SEEKING TO SURPRISE MYSELF. OFTEN, WHEN USING AN OLYMPUS XA, I DO NOT USE THE VIEWFINDER AND SHOOT FROM THE HIP. I AM INTERESTED IN USING THE COMMON ERRORS THAT BEGINNING PHOTOGRAPHERS CALL MISTAKES ON PURPOSE TO GIVE A DIFFERENT SYNTAX TO THE PHOTOGRAPHIC LANGUAGE. I FIND THAT THE POINT AND SHOOT LANGUAGE IS EASILY UNDERSTOOD BY MANY NON-PHOTOGRAPHERS. THE GERMINATION OF THE IDEA FOR THIS IMAGERY CAME FROM JOHN BERGER'S ARTICLE "WHY LOOK AT ANIMALS."



LAMBY-KID

N/D

9" x 12"

GELATIN

SILVER PRINT

JUDY SÁNCHEZ

JUDY SÁNCHEZ: ROCHESTER, NEW YORK. AS A COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHER I REALIZED MY PREVISUALIZATION TECHNIQUES HAD BEEN REFINED TO THE POINT WHERE I NO LONGER FELT THE NEED TO MAKE THE PRINT. I DESPERATELY NEEDED A REVITALIZING CHANGE. THE SAMSUNG AF SLIM CAMERA OPENED THE POSSIBILITY OF SHOTING THINGS I HAD NOT ACTUALLY SEEN (PREVISUALIZED), AS IN SPONTANEOUSLY PUTTING THE CAMERA UNDER THE TABLE TO PHOTOGRAPH THE ANIMAL COMMOTION OCCURING THERE. I FIND MYSELF CARRYING IT WITH ME AT ALL TIMES. THIS ENCOURAGED NEW WAYS OF IMAGING FOR ME AS I STARTED PHOTOGRAPHING FLEETING MOMENTS THAT USED TO MAKE ME THINK: "I WISH I HAD A CAMERA WITH ME NOW."



UNDERWATER

BOY

1992

6" x 11"

CHROMOGENIC

COLOR PRINT

JENNETTE WILLIAMS

JENNETTE WILLIAMS: NEW YORK, NEW YORK. I PHOTOGRAPH ANECDOTAL DAILY OCCURRENCES OF FAMILY LIFE. I BEGAN PHOTOGRAPHING THREE MONTHS AFTER MY HUSBAND AND I ADOPTED OUR DAUGHTER. I NEEDED TO DESCRIBE AND EXPLORE THE FOREIGN WORLD OF MOTHERHOOD INTO WHICH I FELT CATAPULTED WITHOUT PREPARATION. AFTER SIX YEARS OF PHOTOGRAPHING CHILDREN IN VARIOUS FORMATS, I CHOSE A WIDELUX, AN ARCHETYPAL POINT AND SHOOT CAMERA, TO CAPTURE THE EVER-CHANGING DYNAMICS AND INTENSITY OF THE ACTIVE INTERPLAY. "THE POOL SERIES" SHARES THE VISION OF HOW FAMILY LIFE, WHEREVER FOUND OR OBSERVED, IS COMPOSED OF INTIMATELY FAMILIAR ELEMENTS.



PORTLAND,

OREGON

1990

12" x 12"

CHROMOGENIC

COLOR PRINT

CAROL GLAUBER

CAROL GLAUBER: PORTLAND, OREGON. THE PROCESS OF MAKING PHOTOGRAPHS WITH A 1950S BROWNIE HAWKEYE, THE CAMERA OF MY CHILDHOOD, IS A CHALLENGE, FULL OF SURPRISES, AND LOTS OF FUN. I BEGAN BY PHOTOGRAPHING MY 15-MONTH-OLD SON AND SOON NOTICED HIS INTEREST IN PUSHING THE SHUTTER. OUR COLLABORATION EMERGED AT THAT POINT, AS WE STARTED USING THE CAMERA BOTH CONCURRENTLY AND INDIVIDUALLY. THESE PICTURES ARE A SPONTANEOUS NARRATIVE OF ACTIVITIES, TRAVELS, AND PERSONAL MOMENTS.



VICTOR AT

ATTENTION

1959

10 1/2" x 10"

GELATIN

SILVER PRINT

DAVID PACE

DAVID PACE: LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA. I BEGAN PHOTOGRAPHING IN 1959 WITH A BROWNIE HAWKEYE I RECEIVED FOR MY EIGHTH BIRTHDAY. MY INITIAL POINT AND SHOOT PERIOD LASTED ABOUT SIX YEARS DURING WHICH I PHOTOGRAPHED MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS AT HOME AND AT SCHOOL. THIRTY YEARS LATER I RETURNED TO GRADUATE SCHOOL TO WORK ON MY MFA IN PHOTOGRAPHY. DURING STUDIES I REDISCOVERED THE NEGATIVES OF THE SNAPSHOTS I HAD TAKEN AS A CHILD. INTRIGUED BY THE SIMPLICITY AND DIRECTNESS OF THESE NAIVE IMAGES, I BEGAN REPRINTING THEM AS A WAY OF EXPLORING THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN MY PAST AND PRESENT VISION.



BIG ANDY

1988

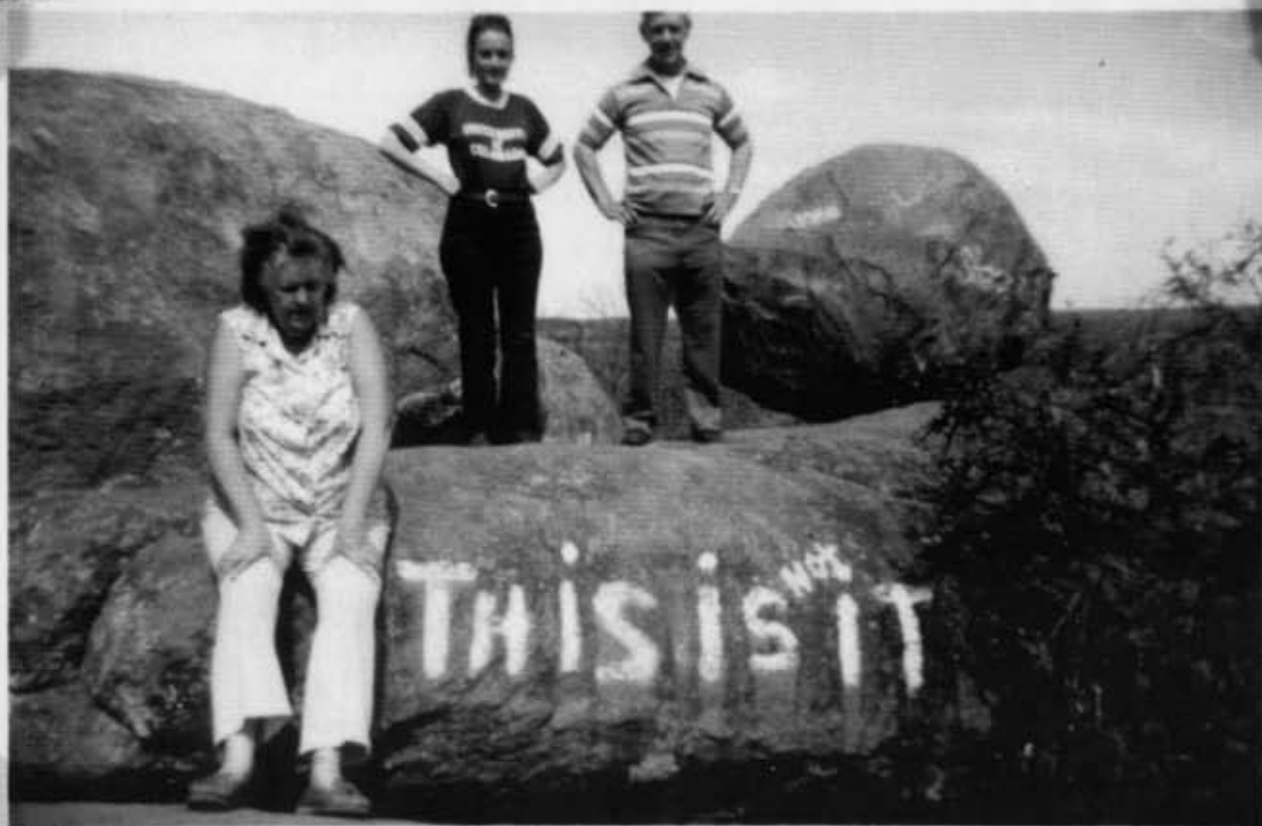
11" x 14"

CHROMOGENIC

COLOR PRINT

MATTHEW MARVIN

MY OLDER BROTHER AND HIS FRIENDS TOOK ME ON THE JACK RABBIT ROLLER COASTER, AT SEABREEZE AMUSEMENT PARK OUTSIDE OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK, WHEN I WAS FINALLY AS TALL AS THAT DAMN LINE. I REMEMBER TAKING A NUMBER OF FIRST DATES ON THE JACK RABBIT. THE FIRST TIME I THREW UP AT AN AMUSEMENT PARK WAS BECAUSE OF THE JACK RABBIT, OR MAYBE IT WAS THE CORN-DOGS, COTTON CANDY, CHERRY COKES, AND ICE CREAM. ALL MY LIFE I WANTED TO TAKE PICTURES OF ME AND MY FIRENDS ON THIS ROLLER COASTER, BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO RISK MY EXPENSIVE 35MM CAMERA. IN THE SUMMER OF 1988 I TOOK THE FIRST SET OF PICTURES WITH A DISPOSABLE KODAK FLING. ENJOY THE RIDE.



THIS IS

NOT IT

1984

1 5/8" x 2 1/2"

GELATIN

SILVER PRINT

FRANK WHITE

FRANK WHITE: HOUSTON, TEXAS. I AM A POINT AND SHOOT AFICIONADO. I HAVE WORKED IN THE FIELD OF COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHY SINCE 1978 AND ESCAPE BY SHOOTING WITH MY KODAK BABY BROWNIE, CIRCA 1950. SHOOTING IS PURE JOY, AN UNFETTERED EXPRESSION OF MY SOUL! THE IMAGES ARE NOT SHARP, DUE TO INEXPENSIVE OPTICS. THE PRINTS ARE 1:1, JUST THE WAY GOD (EXCUSE ME!) KODAK INTENDED.



GRANDMA'S
GARDEN

1990

8" x 10"

CHROMOGENIC

COLOR PRINT

BETH LANTGEN

BETH LANTGEN: ESTELLINE, SOUTH DAKOTA. MY VIVITAR POINT AND SHOOT CAMERA IS MY CONSTANT COMPANION. IT IS READY TO CAPTURE ON FILM THE UNEXPECTED, ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME, EYE-CATCHING SCENE THAT MIGHT ARISE AS I DRIVE THROUGH OUR COUNTRY-SIDE IN RURAL SOUTH DAKOTA. THIS CAMERA IS COMPACT, HANDY, EASY TO STORE, AND TAKES BRIGHT, CLEAR, AND COLORFUL PICTURES. I HAVE WON MANY AWARDS AND RIBBONS WITH PHOTOS TAKEN BY THIS POINT AND SHOOT CAMERA. IT HAS BECOME PART OF MY LIFE!



CUBAN FAMILY
ON THE HIGHWAY
TO TINĀR
DEL RIO
1991
11" x 14"
GELATIN
SILVER PRINT

MEL ROSENTHAL

MEL ROSENTHAL, NEW YORK, NEW YORK. I AM INTERESTED IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHANGING SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON PEOPLE. THESE PHOTOGRAPHS WERE TAKEN WITH AN OLYMPUS STYLUS. WHEN I SHOW UP WITH BIGGER CAMERAS AND FLASHES, IT CHANGES THE CIRCUMSTANCES TOO MUCH. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY TRUE IN CUBA WHERE PEOPLE ARE JUSTIFIABLY SUSPICIOUS OF ANYONE WHO IS WORKING FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN PRESS.



TROPICAL

IDOL

1988

11" x 14"

GELATIN

SILVER PRINT

DENNIS OLANZO CALLWOOD

DENNIS OLANZO CALLWOOD: LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA. THROUGH CULTURAL EVENTS AND THEIR LOCATIONS, I TRY AND CAPTURE PURE HUMAN EMOTION. THE AUTOFOCUS CAMERA ENABLES ONE TO TAKE A GOOD PHOTOGRAPH WITHOUT FOCUSING. THESE PHOTOGRAPHS ARE NOT ART BEFORE OR DURING THE RELEASING OF THE SHUTTER. THEY BECOME ART WHEN THEY TURN INTO IMAGES, SWIMMING UP THROUGH THE DEVELOPER, AS SURPRISING TO ME AS TO ANYONE ELSE; THEY ARE NOT ART PREMEDITATED.



TIMKAT,
ETHIOPIA
1987
8" x 19"
GELATIN
SILVER PRINT

SULAIMAN ELLISON

SULAIMAN ELLISON: BRONX, NEW YORK. I DEVELOPED MY POINT AND SHOOT TECHNIQUES WITH A WIDELUX CAMERA IN AFRICA; WHERE PLACING A CAMERA TO YOUR EYE CAN GET YOU INTO TROUBLE, EVEN WHEN YOU ASK BEFORE YOU SHOOT. I SHOOT WITH THE INTENTION OF YOU NOT BEING AWARE OF ME OR THE CAMERA. I SHOOT FROM THE HIP, MID-CHEST, EVEN FROM THE TOP OF MY HEAD. WHEN PEOPLE SEE I NEVER PUT THE CAMERA TO MY EYE THEY GO ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS AND I CAN GO ABOUT MINE BY PHOTOGRAPHING THEM. I WANT TO DRAMATIZE THE HUMAN FACTOR WHILE SHOWING SENSITIVITY AND COMPASSION FOR THE TRUTH AND DIGNITY OF THE PEOPLE I PHOTOGRAPH.



GAMEDAY

SERIES:

FAT MAN'S

STOMACH

N/D

19" x 19"

GELATIN

SILVER PRINT

LOUIS M. SOUILLACE

"GAMEDAY" IS A PHOTOGRAPHIC EXPLORATION, COVERING THREE FOOTBALL SEASONS FROM 1986 TO 1989, OF THE ENERGY GENERATED BY THE GATHERING OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE TO WITNESS A SPECIFIC EVENT. WITH TECHNOLOGY AT A MINIMUM (THE DIANA CAMERA), ONE HAS TO CONCENTRATE ON THE VISUAL STIMULI AND REACT! RELIEVING THE PHOTOGRAPHER OF TECHNICAL BOUNDARIES, PRODUCES IMAGERY THAT IS SPONTANEOUS AND ENERGETIC.



CASTLE

1986

13" x 13"

GELATIN

SILVER PRINT

LINDA RASKIN

LINDA RASKIN: NEW YORK, NEW YORK. I HAVE BEEN EXPLORING THE JUXTAPOSITION OF THE REAL WORLD WITH THE SUBTERRANEAN REALM OF DREAM AND MEMORY. FEELING COMPLICATED, HIGH-TECH EQUIPMENT INTERFERES WITH THE INTUITIVE PROCESS OF SEEING, I TURNED TO A CHEAP, PLASTIC CAMERA. THE SIMPLICITY OF THIS CAMERA, WITH ITS LIGHTWEIGHT "TOY" QUALITY, PROVIDES ME A MORE IMMEDIATE, DIRECT LINE OF INTERACTION WITH MY SUBJECT MATTER. IT ALLOWS ME TO PHOTOGRAPH SITUATIONS AS I RESPOND TO THEM ON AN EMOTIONAL, VISCERAL LEVEL AND TO REVEAL THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARGE I FEEL IS INHERENT IN ALL THINGS.



BENDING

TIME SERIES:

JEFFERSON

PARISH, LA

1991

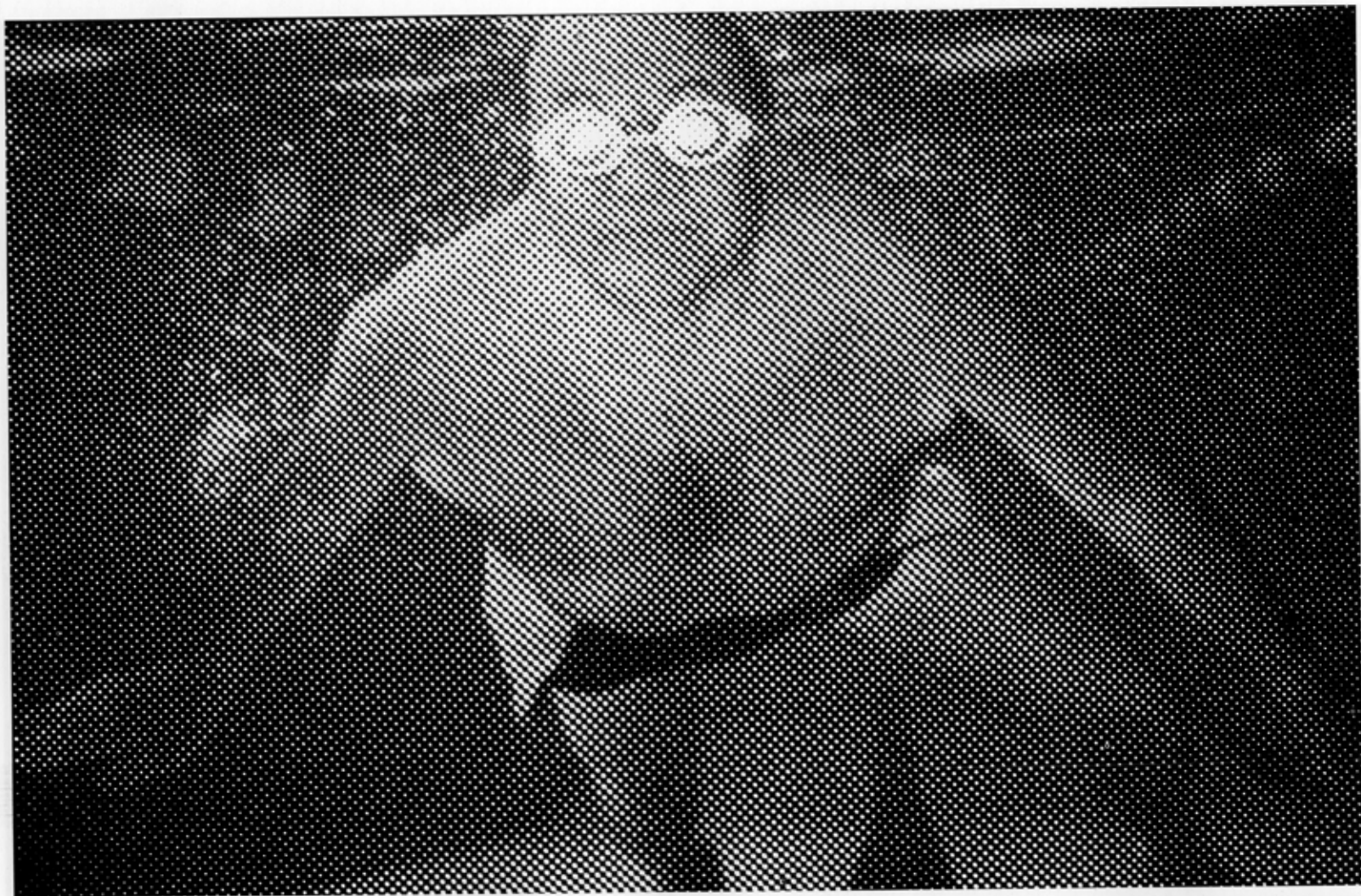
13" x 13"

GELATIN

SILVER PRINT

ANNETTE FOURNET

ANNETTE FOURNET: NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA. UPON RETURNING TO NEW ORLEANS, I BEGAN TO PHOTOGRAPH THE FAMILIAR LANDSCAPE OF MY UPBRINGING USING A PLASTIC DIANA CAMERA. IT PROVIDED A METHOD OF MAKING IMAGES WITH MORE PERSONAL CONTENT AND QUALITIES FOUND IN THE HUMID, KUDZU-SCULPTED LANDSCAPE. SOME OF THE PICTURES EXAMINE SOUTHERN ESTATES AND ARCHITECTURAL REMNANTS AS METAPHORS FOR DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS.



BERNIE

1989

29" x 43"

GELATIN

SILVER PRINT

LIL FRIEDLANDER

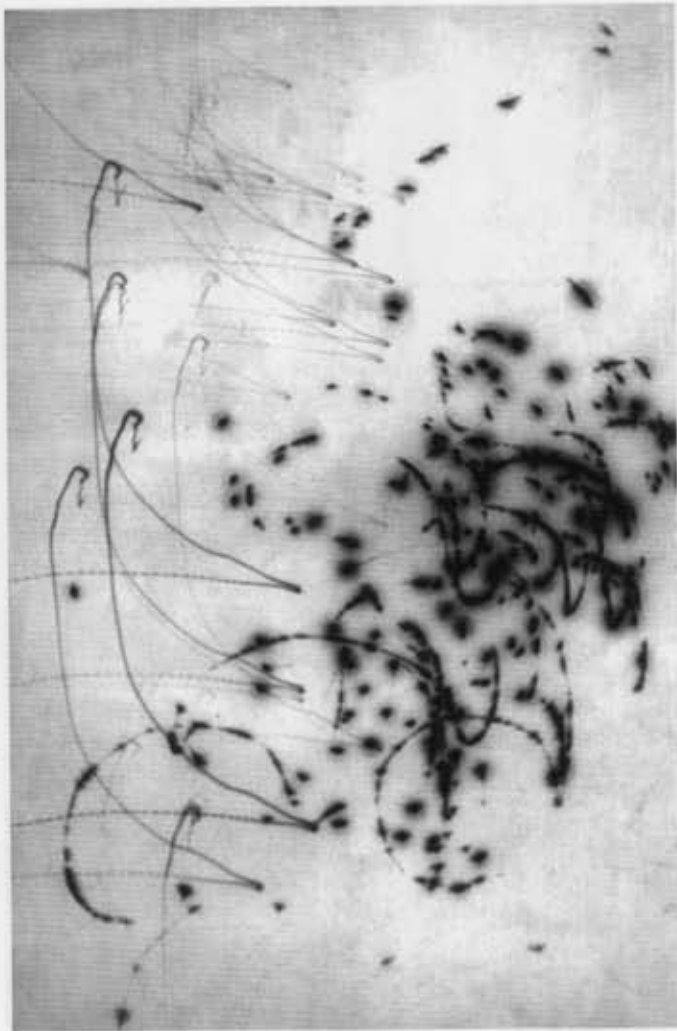
LIL FRIEDLANDER: ATLANTA, GEORGIA. I HAVE USED MY AUTOFOCUS CAMERA FOR HUMOR, IRONY, AND NOTETAKING. IT'S LIKE HAVING AN INSTANT RETORT TO ANY COMMENT. ITS UNDERWATER CAPABILITIES GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE UNDERWATER PORTRAITURE. IN THE PROCESS I DISCOVERED THAT WORKING WITH THE ELDERLY UNDERWATER YIELDED TOUCHING PHOTOS. I WAS AMAZED AT THE GRACE AND YOUTHFULNESS REVEALED WHEN GRAVITY WAS NO LONGER A BURDEN. THAT SPURRED ME TO RESHOOT THE IMAGES IN BLACK-AND-WHITE THROUGH A SCREEN TO RENDER THEM SURREAL AND SERENE.



POST
CATHOLIC
RELIC #13,
THE FEMALE
PRIAPUS
1991
17" x 10" x 4"
DIFFUSION
TRANSFER PRINTS
WITH MIXED MEDIA

K. JOHNSON BOWLES

K. JOHNSON BOWLES: LA PORTE, TEXAS. I HAVE WORKED WITH POLAROID MATERIALS BECAUSE THEY ARE OFTEN USED FOR SNAPSHOTS, AS AN IMMEDIATE VISUAL RECORD, AND IN FAMILY ALBUMS. THIS ASPECT LENDS ITSELF WELL TO THE CONTENT OF MY WORK—MEMORIES, PERSONAL HISTORY, AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS. SINCE THE IMAGE IS MADE OF PLASTIC I CAN EASILY CUT, COLLAGE, AND SEW THE IMAGES ONTO FABRIC. SPECIFICALLY, "POST CATHOLIC RELICS" EXPLORE THE FREEDOM FROM THE TRADITIONAL FEMALE ROLE IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.



UNTITLED

(#5)

1992

72" x 48"

MIXED MEDIA AND

PHOTOGRAPHIC

EMULSION ON LINEN

MARK SHEINKMAN

MARK SHEINKMAN: NEW YORK, NEW YORK. I USE AN OLYMPUS XA CAMERA PRIMARILY AS A DRAWING TOOL TO GENERATE, RECORD, AND MANIPULATE IMAGERY. I USE A POINT AND SHOOT CAMERA FOR THESE PURPOSES BECAUSE IT IS SIMPLE AND PORTABLE. THESE WORKS WERE CREATED BY DRAWING WITH LIGHT ONTO FILM AND PRINTING WAS DONE ON LINEN COATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHIC EMULSION.

THE RESULTING IMAGES ARE REWORKED WITH VARIOUS DRAWING AND PAINTING MEDIA.



FIVE FEET
INTO THE
FLAMES

1991

8 1/2" x 11"

COLOR LASER PRINT

TRANSFERRED ONTO

HANDMADE PAPER

BLAIR RUTH RAINEY

BLAIR RUTH RAINEY: NEW YORK, NEW YORK. I USE A SUPER 8MM BELL AND HOWELL CAMERA AND WORK WITH ITS LIMITATIONS. BLURRING IS EASY, OBSCURITY BECOMES THE DESIRE, WHICH RELATES BACK TO MY THOUGHTS ON MEMORY. I LIKE THE IDEA OF SNIPPETS OF TIME BEING PULLED FROM A LARGER NARRATIVE, JUXTAPOSING IMAGES TO MAKE A NEW SINGLE IMAGE, MY OWN VERSION OF A FILM STILL, THAT DEFINES MY CONCERNS. THE IMAGERY IS MADE UP FROM WORLD WAR II VIDEOS (TAKEN OFF THE TV), OLD FRAGRANCE/MAKE-UP ADS, AND URBAN SCENES. ONE OF THE BASES FOR MY WORK IS DERIVED FROM A LINE BY THE SURREALIST POET, ROBERT DESNOS: "CAN I DEFEND MY MEMORY AGAINST OBLIVION?"



THE FATHER & THE SON

SOME HEROES
OF DAILY
LIFE: THE
FATHER &
THE SON
1991
96" x 108"
CHROMOGENIC
COLOR PRINTS,
SILVER GELATIN
PRINTS AND
MIXED MEDIA

HANNEKE VAN VELZEN

HANNEKE VAN VELZEN, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK. I AM WORKING WITH THE IDEAS OF STEREOTYPE, PERSONALITY, IDENTITY, AND ANONYMITY WITHIN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE. THE CENTRAL COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS ARE FROM A 110 "SHOOTER" PLASTIC CAMERA THAT GAVE ME THE FREEDOM TO PHOTOGRAPH RANDOMLY AND "BLINDLY" OUT OF MY HAND. ADDED ARE SOME SNAPSHOTS AND SECOND GENERATION IMAGES FROM OTHER SOURCES. THE GRAININESS MAKES IT ONLY READABLE FROM A DISTANCE. THE SIDE PANELS ARE VERY SHARP. THE LATTER BEING "REAL" WHILE THE CENTRAL PANEL IS SYMBOLIC.



CEPA GALLERY PROVIDES A CONTEXT FOR UNDERSTANDING THE AESTHETIC, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL INTERSECTIONS OF PHOTO-RELATED ART AS IT IS PRODUCED IN OUR DIVERSE SOCIETY. THE GALLERY SUPPORTS, ENCOURAGES, AND FUNDS THE PROJECTS OF BOTH ESTABLISHED AND EMERGENT VISUAL ARTISTS, AND IS COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING ARTISTS FROM GROUPS THAT HAVE BEEN UNDERREPRESENTED IN CULTURAL SPACES. CEPA ALSO FUNCTIONS AS A RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CENTER FOR THE EXPLORATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN THE PHOTOGRAPHIC ARTS. CEPA GALLERY IS A MEMBER OF THE ARTS COUNCIL IN BUFFALO AND ERIE COUNTY, THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ARTISTS ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE SOCIETY FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC EDUCATION.

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