

The eight photographers represented in this exhibition share no single stylistic ideal or goal. Instead, their participation here is based on a collective individualism through a shared belief in the process of photography as a format of deliberation. The emphasis in their respective work is on the viability of the final print to be the output of a controlled, calculated and applied series of pre-determined thoughts and actions. The role of the photographer, in this context, has become one of director, and the image is meant to read as tableau; eschewing formal, technical and other pictorial issues in favor of a transcriptive document.

The document presents a portion of the photographic imagination, accepting through the set-ups, situations and castings the acute artificiality of the photographic print. That which is seen is always only a portion of reality, and within its limited size and scale can only, truly suggest the resemblance of appearances. With this in mind, the photograph is open to a greater range of intuited productions.

The conceptual aspects, as well as narrative schemes and fictional nature of their photographs have obvious precedents; particularly in the works of such artists as John Baldessari, Jan Groover, Duane Michals and William Wegman. But they have moved one step further within the context of the "art world," venturing to bring to the photograph the impact and staying power of much of commercial photography in terms of their respective use of color, texture and drama.

The two structural aspects that are key to deciphering the works are alteration and appropriation. In the work of Richard Prince and Cindy Sherman, the photograph is constructed from sources that are culled from the pages of magazines or film stills. Both imitate and by doing so either by means of directly borrowing from pre-existing commercial images (Prince) or by surrounding the protagonist (Sherman herself) in a world of real-life fantasy. For Jimmy De Sana, Don Rodan and Laurie Simmons the level achieved is equal to the elegance, style and wit of contemporary fashion photography. The set-ups in their color photographs alter the objects which surround us to depict a world perfected by visual and physical sensations. Each brings to the photograph a symbol of myth and eroticism which are the tools of the fashion photographer. In their hands the story holds several meanings, shifting between fact and fiction, playfulness and seriousness.

In the work of Aileen Bassis and Lewis Stein the photograph has a didactic quality; teaching us the basic lessons of vision and sight as if seeing were an acquired talent. Bassis implodes the image, marking it with dye or paint to suggest not only the act of an outward glance, but the sensation of a returned reflection. Stein counts and formulates his lexicon of pictures. The complete tabulation of combinations with his toy dolphins and cupcakes would be seemingly astronomical.

Finally, Jim Casebere's photographs of studio made constructions read like black & white prints from newspapers or billboards. Yet the unusual documents report not news but unsolved mysteries. Are these illustrations after the fact, or are they to suggest a stage set for events to occur?

The direction, and possibilities of their investigations suggests an added dimension to the growing tradition of photography in America. Within this new tradition photography is leaving behind the ruminations of technique and style for ideas that are at once provocative and timely.

MICHAEL R. KLEIN
NEW YORK, 1981

EIGHT CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHERS

AILEEN BASSIS

JAMES CASEBERE

JIMMY DE SANA

RICHARD PRINCE

DON RODAN

CINDY SHERMAN

LAURIE SIMMONS

LEWIS STEIN

3 APRIL - 1 MAY 1981
USF ART GALLERIES—TEACHING GALLERY

ART DEPARTMENT, COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS,
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA,
TAMPA, FLORIDA 33620

THE EXHIBITION

AILEEN BASSIS

Italy Series (numbers 1, 2, 3, 4)

1979

dodged split toning

14" X 17"

Three Times (numbers 1,2)

1980

hand colored b&w photo

16" X 26 3/4"

untitled

1980

b&w photo

14" X 17"

all work courtesy of the artist

and RH. Oosterom, New York

JAMES CASEBERE

Courtroom

1979-80

b&w silver print

15" X 18 7/8"

Typewriter

1980

b&w silver print

15" X 18 7/8"

Desert House with

Guardtower and cactus

1980

b&w silver print

15" X 18 7/8"

Boats

1980

b&w silver print

15" X 18 7/8"

Library(number 2)

1980-81

b&w silver print

15" X 17 7/8"

all work courtesy of the artist

JIMMY DE SANA

Gauze

1979

c print

15 1/2" X 23 1/2"

Storage Boxes

1980

c print

15 1/2" X 23 1/2"

Aluminum foil

1980

c print

15 1/2" X 23 1/2"

Extension Cord

1980

c print

15 1/2" X 23 1/2"

Soap Suds

1980

c print

15 1/2" X 23 1/2"

Plastic Bag

1980

c print

15 1/2" X 23 1/2"

all work courtesy of the artist

and Stefanotti, New York

RICHARD PRINCE

2 untitled works

1979

color photo

20" X 24"

4 untitled works

1980

color photo

20" X 24"

all work courtesy of the artist

and Metro Pictures, New York

DON RODAN

Perseus and Medusa

1977

color polaroid

8" X 10"

Eros

1977

color polaroid

8" X 10"

Thanatos

1977

color polaroid

8" X 10"

Hypnos

1977

color polaroid

8" X 10"

Muse

1977

color polaroid

8" X 10"

Satyr

1978

color polaroid

8" X 10"

all works courtesy of the artist

and Castelli Graphics, New York

CINDY SHERMAN

8 untitled studies for Film Still

1979

b&w photo

11" X 14"

all work courtesy of the artist

and Metro Pictures, New York

LAURIE SIMMONS

Water Ballet(numbers 1-9)

1980

cibachrome

11" X 14"

all work courtesy of the artist

and Metro Pictures, New York

LEWIS STEIN

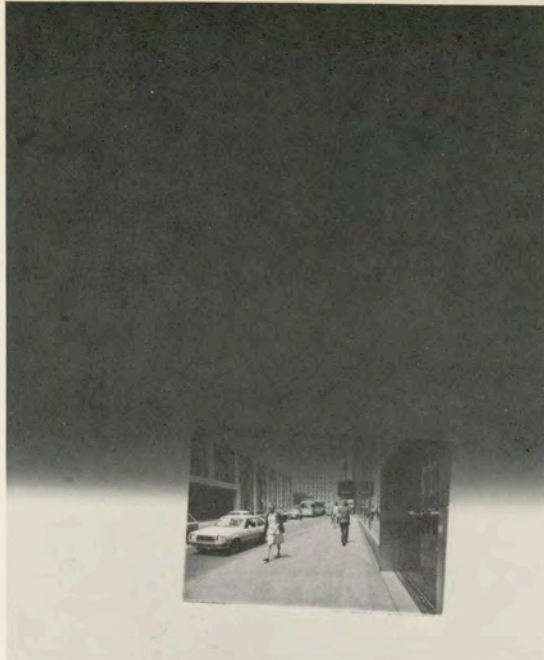
10 untitled works

1978

cibachrome

8" X 10"

all work courtesy of the artist



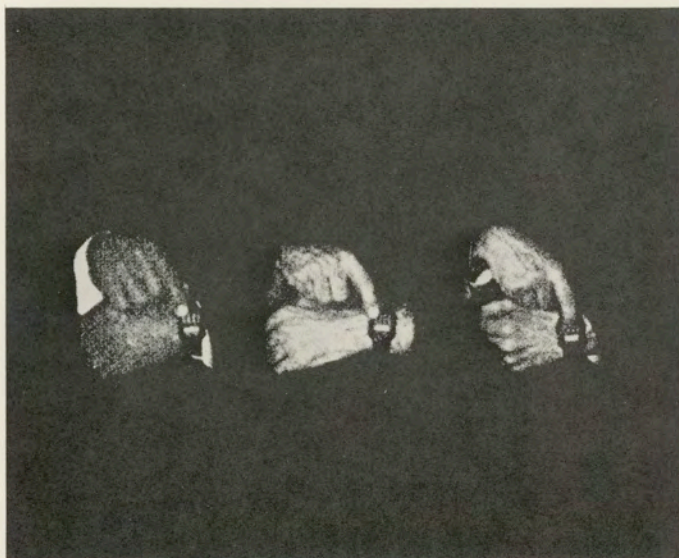
1.



2.



3.



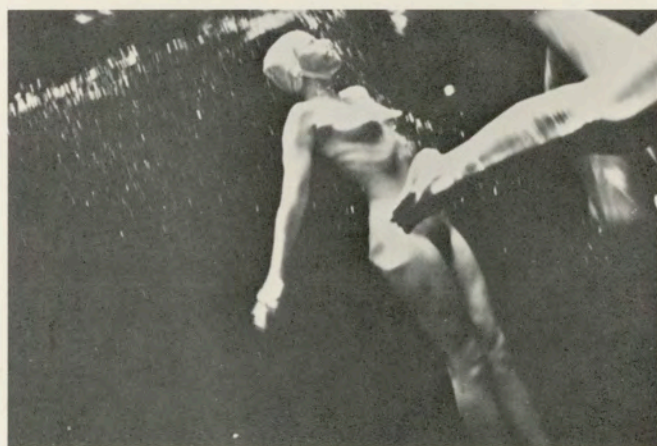
4.



5.



6.



7.



8.

1. AILEEN BASSIS
untitled, 1980 b&w photo 14" × 17"
courtesy of the artist and RH. Oosterom, Inc.

2. JAMES CASEBERE
Typewriter, 1980 b&w photo 15" × 18 7/8"
courtesy of the artist

3. JIMMY DE SANA
Aluminum Foil, 1980 c print 15 1/2" × 23 1/2"
courtesy of the artist and Stefanotti, New York

4. RICHARD PRINCE
untitled, 1980 color photo 20" × 24"
courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures, New York

5. DON RODAN
Echo, 1977 Polaroid SX-70 3" × 3"
courtesy of the artist and Castelli Graphics, New York

6. CINDY SHERMAN
untitled study for Film Still, 1979 b&w photo 11" × 14"
courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures, New York

7. LAURIE SIMMONS
untitled, 1980 cibachrome 11" × 14"
courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures, New York

8. LEWIS STEIN
untitled, 1978 cibachrome 8" × 10"
courtesy of the artist

**EIGHT
CONTEMPORARY
PHOTOGRAPHERS
USF ART GALLERIES—TEACHING GALLERY**