

THE UNSEEN CINDY SHERMAN: EARLY TRANSFORMATIONS 1975-1976



**FRONT COVER: Untitled, 1975, 25 hand-colored black and white photographs, 24 x 18 inches, Lent by Dorothy Foster BACK COVER: Photo album, Christmas, 1976, 5 x 5 inches, Lent by Barbara Foster TITLE PAGE: Photo album, Christmas, 1976, 5 x 5 inches, Lent by Barbara Foster. The image on the left page is a selection of "Nail polish colors I've known and loved." See also pages 5, 35, and back cover for other images from this album.**

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CINDY SHERMAN:  
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TRANSFORMATIONS  
1975/1976



by Gail Stavitsky

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**Untitled, 1975**

23 hand-colored black and white photographs

20 1/2 x 33 1/2 inches

Lent by Dorothy and Peter Waldt







As I think of the emotional carrying power of Cindy's early photographic and film work, I can see how it contained the seeds of her future unique translation of some of the most important ideas in feminist and art theory. Her early work was subversive—and constituted provocations to normative social values or at least the values of her classmates in that Buff[alo] State basement classroom. Also, in trying to remember impressions of her classwork, hot contemporary words like "dislocation" and "uncanny" come to mind . . . Anyway, it was always clear that this quiet, serious girl had talent to burn. I have watched her astonishing career carefully over the years and it has been my deep, secret pleasure to be a footnote.

— Barbara Jo Revelle, February 11, 2004

**Untitled, 1975**

25 hand-colored black and white photographs

24 x 18 inches

Lent by Dorothy Foster









**Untitled.** 1975  
13 black and white photographs  
9 1/4 x 45 inches  
Lent by Elizabeth and Frank Leite











I have been working with photography for about two years, at which point I decided to use the camera as means for exploring my experiences as a woman. My first attempts were with **making up** my face in order to become different characters which involved a total transformation of my personality. This grew into an involvement with transforming my whole body so that I could **totally act out a given character . . . .** Subsequently, this brought me to my present state of **making characters with a multiplicity of purpose: stopped action and interaction.**

– Cindy Sherman, 1976, quoted in Anthony Bannon, "Sherman's Star Shines Brightly Amid Decade of Hallwalls Art," *The Buffalo News* (September 30, 1984): E-6.

Untitled, 1975  
reprinted in 1983 and inscribed "Happy Birthday Dorth!"  
Black and white photograph  
20 x 16 inches  
Lent by Dorothy Foster





(TOP) **The Fairies** 1976

Black and white cut-out photographs mounted on paper  
10 x 23 inches

Lent by Elizabeth and Frank Leite





(BOTTOM) **Untitled (Mini)** 1976

Black and white cut-out photographs mounted on paper

16 1/4 x 39 1/4 inches

Lent by Elizabeth and Frank Leite





**The Sub Characters (Vanity, Desire, Madness,  
and Agony) Begin to Close in on the Male Friend,  
Act 3, Scene 7 from A Play of Selves, 1976**

Black and white cut-out photographs mounted on paper  
15 1/4 x 11 inches

Lent by Elizabeth and Frank Leite





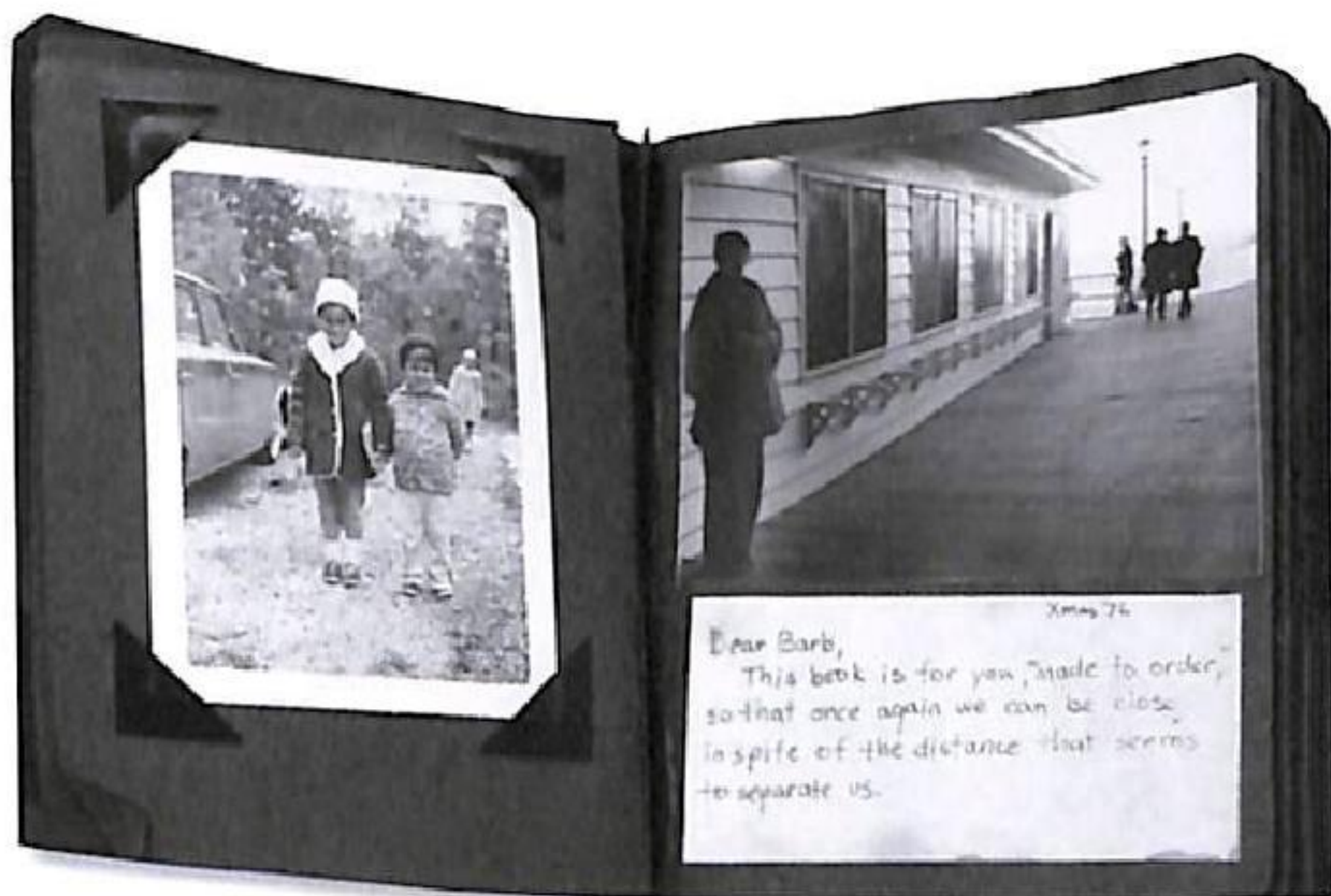
**Leading Man and Actress Stare into Each  
Other's Eyes from the Murder Mystery Series, 1976**  
Black and white cut-out photographs mounted on paper  
14 1/4 x 15 1/4 inches  
Lent by Elizabeth and Frank Leite





**The Press Interviews the Director as the Actress  
Poses from the Murder Mystery Series, 1976**  
Black and white cut-out photographs mounted on paper  
18 x 18 inches  
Lent by Robert and Sandy Sherman





**Photo Album, Christmas, 1976**

5 x 5 inches

Collection of Barbara Foster

Inscribed: "Dear Barb,

This book is made for you,

made to order, so that once again we can  
be close despite the distances."

The photograph on the left shows Cindy Sherman's nieces Dottie Jean and Barbie Ann, as they were called during their childhood. She is shown on the right page in front of the restaurant she worked in, located in Ocean Grove, NJ, ca. 1975-76.







(LEFT) Untitled (The Son at the Funeral), #392  
from the Murder Mystery People Series 1976 (printed 2000)  
Gelatin silver print, 10 x 8 inches  
Lent by Beth and George Meredith

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PHOTO CREDITS

Covers, title page, pages 5, 22-23, 25, 28, 34-36 Peter Jacobs Fine Arts Photography  
Pages 26-27, 30-31, 32-33 Geoff Reed Photography Page 12 Suzy Lake

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