

Publication Dept.

EVENTS

EN FOCO

HERESIES COLLECTIVE

THE NEW MUSEUM
of Contemporary Art

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THE NEW MUSEUM
of Contemporary Art

June 11 – July 20, 1983

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PREFACE

The New Museum is pleased to welcome En Foco and the *Heresies* Collective as participants in the second “Events” exhibition. The “Events” series, in which independent artists’ groups are invited to organize exhibitions of their own choosing in our space, began in 1981 with “Events: Fashion Moda, Taller Boricua, Artists Invite Artists,” an invitational group show.

What first motivated The New Museum to organize “Events” was a response to the fact that museums traditionally insist upon complete curatorial autonomy in their exhibition policies, thus assuring that museum standards of “quality” are maintained. This is problematic only in that there is no single standard of quality, unless it is assumed that the mainstream standard—that is, one which is white, upper middle class, educated, and urban—is the correct one. Other cultures and traditions, other political and spiritual convictions, other ideas about what art is and the audience which it serves, create other standards of quality, which are generally ignored or rejected by the mainstream.

Because these other traditions are responsible for so much of the richness and complexity of American life, and because knowledge of them is limited to a small and specialized public, it seems important for us to provide wider accessibility through the Museum’s regular exhibition program. Equally important, it seems to us that our own taste is limited by the context in which it was formed, and that the opportunity to participate, personally and professionally, in the organization and presentation of work which is different in its structure, appearance,

intention, or audience, could provide a means of expanding our own esthetic horizons and offer new sources of knowledge and understanding.

“Events” is, for us, one of the most exciting exhibitions of the year, since it gives us an opportunity to work with artists in a manner determined entirely by them and to see our space used and transformed in often surprising and felicitous ways. It also gives us a chance to become familiar with work which we might not otherwise have access to, and to provide a forum for dialog which is fundamental to The New Museum’s purpose.

I am especially grateful to Robin Dodds, Curatorial Coordinator, for overseeing all of the details of the exhibition and publication and for working closely with En Foco and the *Heresies* Collective throughout the planning and installation of the show. Thanks also to interns Cecilia Clark, Marilu Knode, Paul Villinski, and Debra Zawadski for their willing assistance in the many preparations of the catalog and exhibition; to David Lubarsky for his special efforts and the usual enthusiasm he devoted to producing the catalog art; and to Abby Goldstein, designer, and Candice Odell, typesetter, for their considerate and generous cooperation and assistance in the production of our catalogs. Most of all, we are grateful to the participating artists, whose enthusiasm, good will, hard work, and vision have made it possible to change the way we see.

Marcia Tucker
Director

a n e n f o c o

e x h i b i t i o n

L A G R A N

P A S I Ó N

CURATORS' STATEMENT

"La Gran Pasión" actually began as an idea for a multimedia presentation that had as its central theme the life force of the Hispanic-American.

We felt that it was time to focus upon those unique qualities inherent in the Latino experience. Because of limited time, however, we decided that an exhibition of original prints would better serve that end.

A concerted effort to contact Latino photographers was made. Through direct mail, press releases, and advertising, we were able to send word around the nation and the Caribbean about the juried show.

Over 750 prints were submitted from nine different states and Puerto Rico. We selected 65 images that we thought best reflect the intent of the exhibition. That intent perhaps requires further clarification.

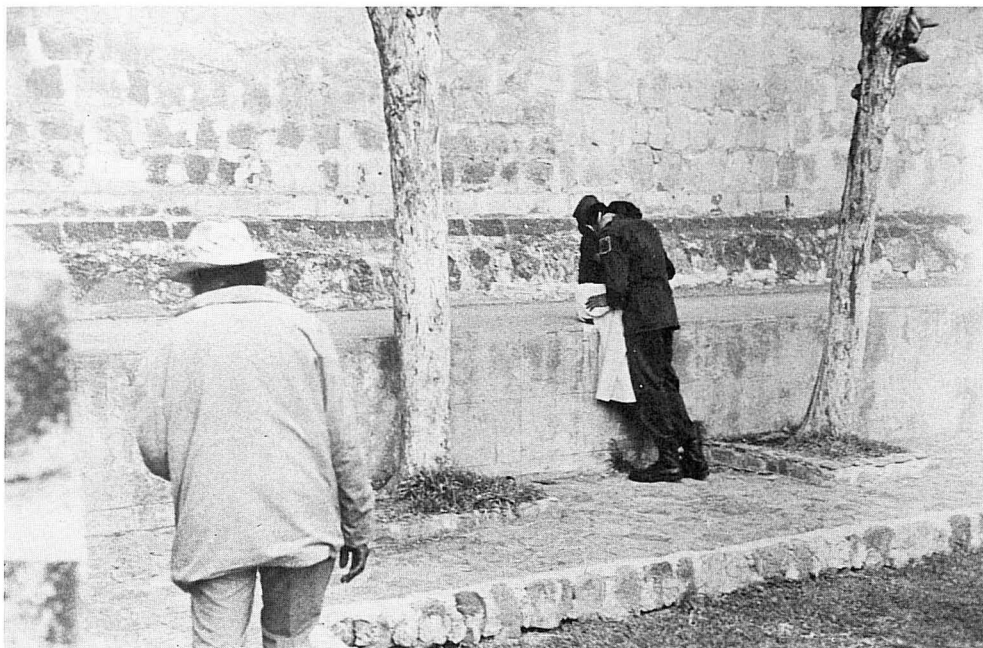
The Hispanic-American image has, for the most part, been created by non-Hispanics. Our opinion was seldom sought by editors, publishers, movie-makers and other presenters of reality. As artists we have begun a process of inquiry. What is the imagery that is real to us? Who are we to ourselves? Each period of history should be free to address those questions but in order to do so we have to overcome what we are supposed to be....

The photographers in "La Gran Pasión" are enmeshed in that struggle. Antonio Mendoza's incredibly perceptive studies show a concern with his heritage. As a Cuban-American, he has created a form of visual anthropology with his prose and images. Jack Delano has produced a memorable series of photographs dealing with a quiet pride and intensity found in Puerto Rico during the '40s. The color photograph of Daniel José Salazar entitled *Cholita Bubblegummer*, 1982, is breathtaking in its power and command to identify a Chicano entity, as well as Ramón Vila's *Diego Ramón*, 1981, which carries such sexual tension it practically bursts its boundaries.

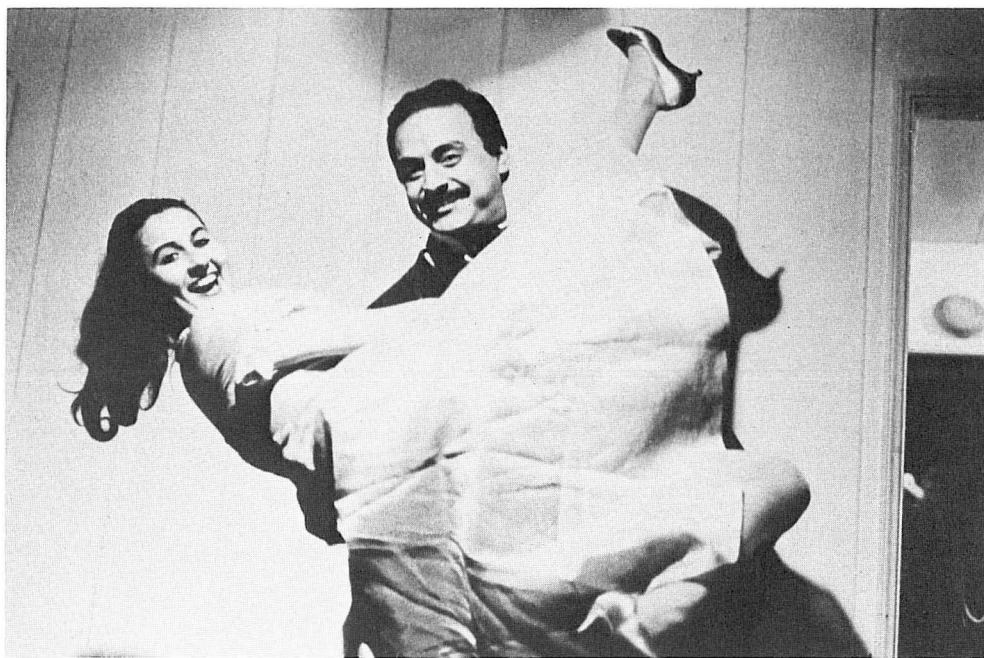
"La Gran Pasión" was conceived as a reminder to the present Hispano generation of artists that we have a distinct heritage of ancient gods and cultures quite different from our surrounding society but equally as important.

In these perverse times when marketing, media, and technology have distorted the function and purpose of art, it is all the more critical that emerging community artists retain a sense of themselves as projectors of their experience and be a part of a continuum of history that is evidence of our spirits.

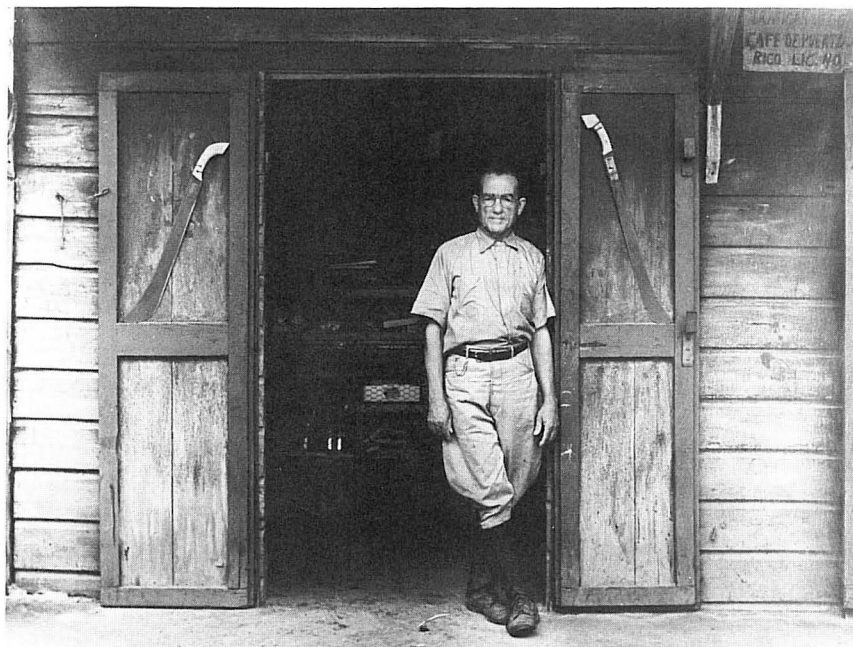
Charles Biasiny-Rivera, Frank Gimpaya
Curators



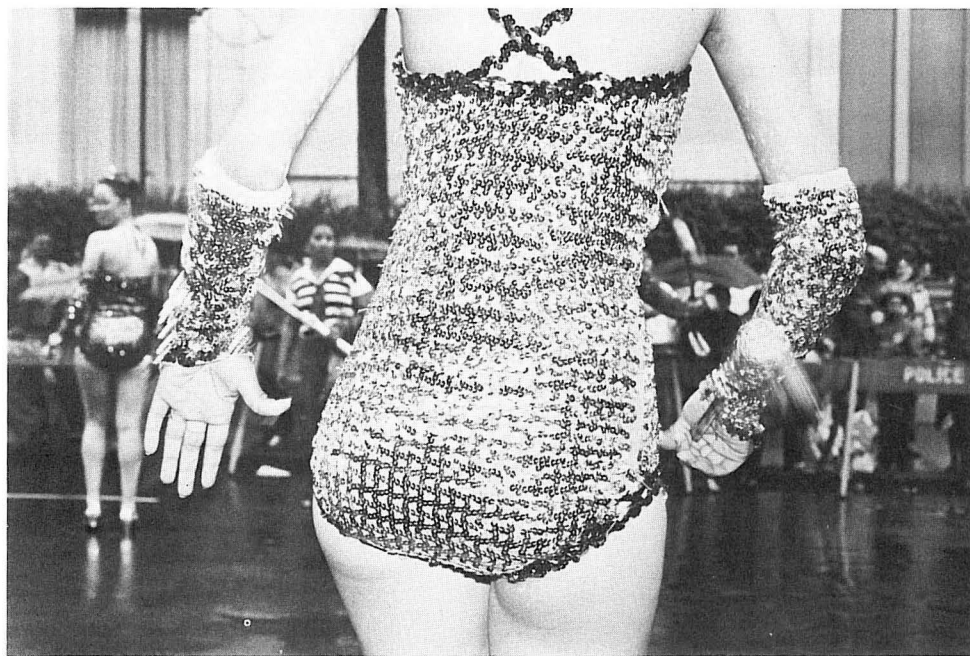
Gilbert Acevedo, *Untitled*, 1980.
Silver print. 7½ x 11".



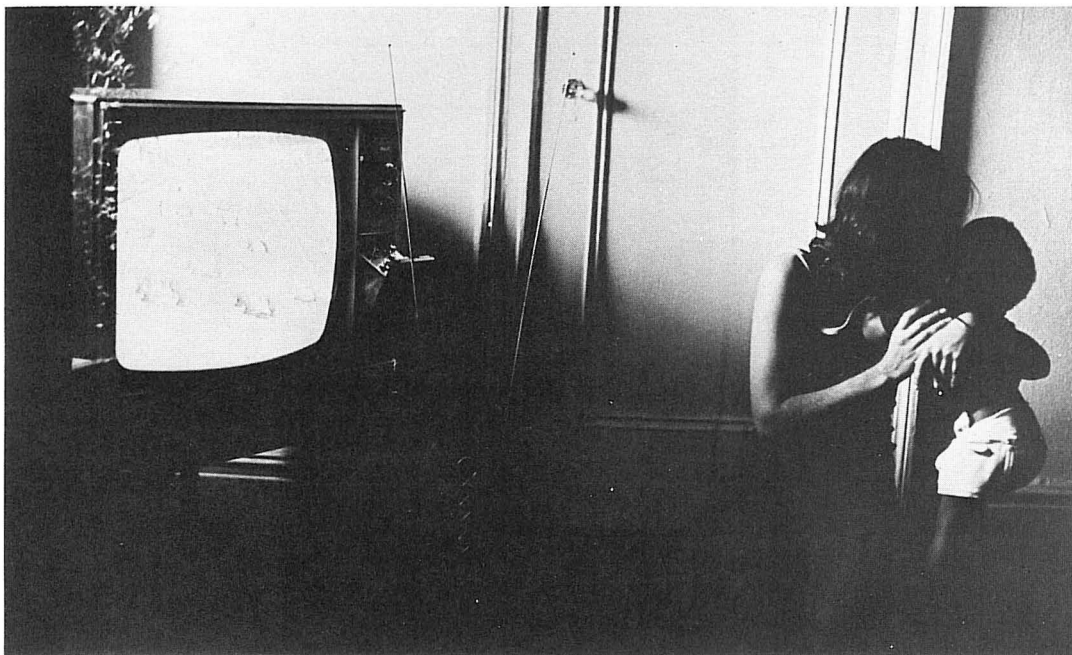
Elsa Flores Almarz, *Noches Pochos*, 1980.
Silver print. 5 x 7".



Jack Delano, *General Store Owner, Puerto Rico*, 1941.
Silver print. 8¾ x 11¾".



Nydza Bejandas, *Baton Girl, New York City*, 1982.
Silver print. 11 x 14".



Carlos DeJesus, *Untitled*, 1980.
Silver print. 7½ x 12¼".



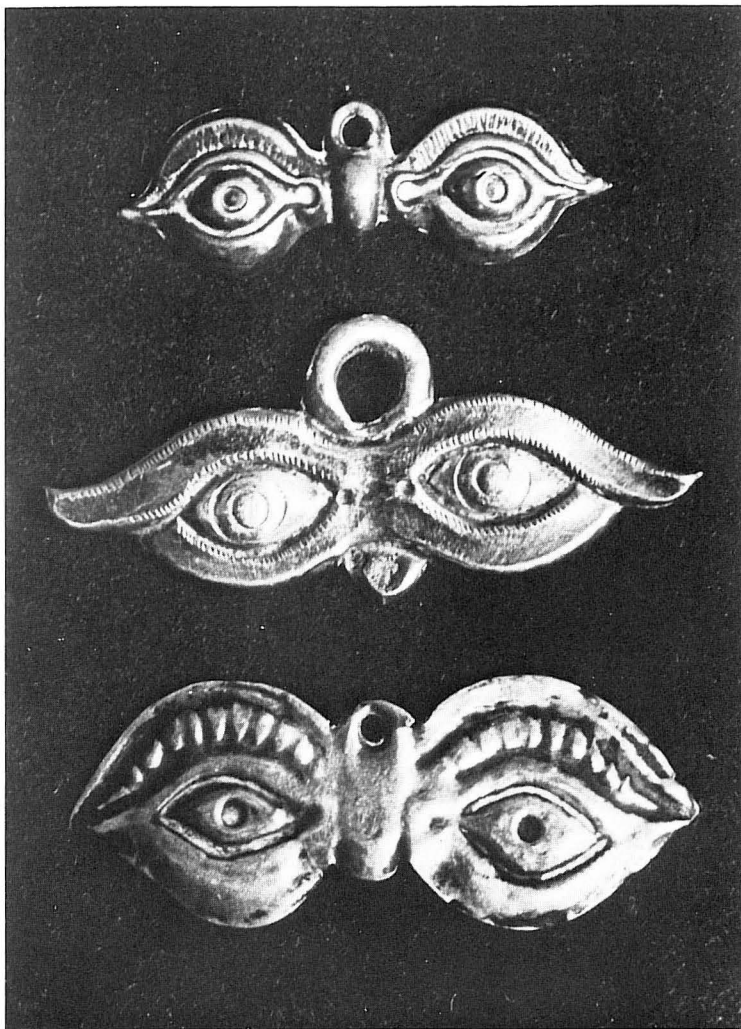
Sylvia Arlene Calzada, *Linda*, 1982.
Silver print. 8 x 12".



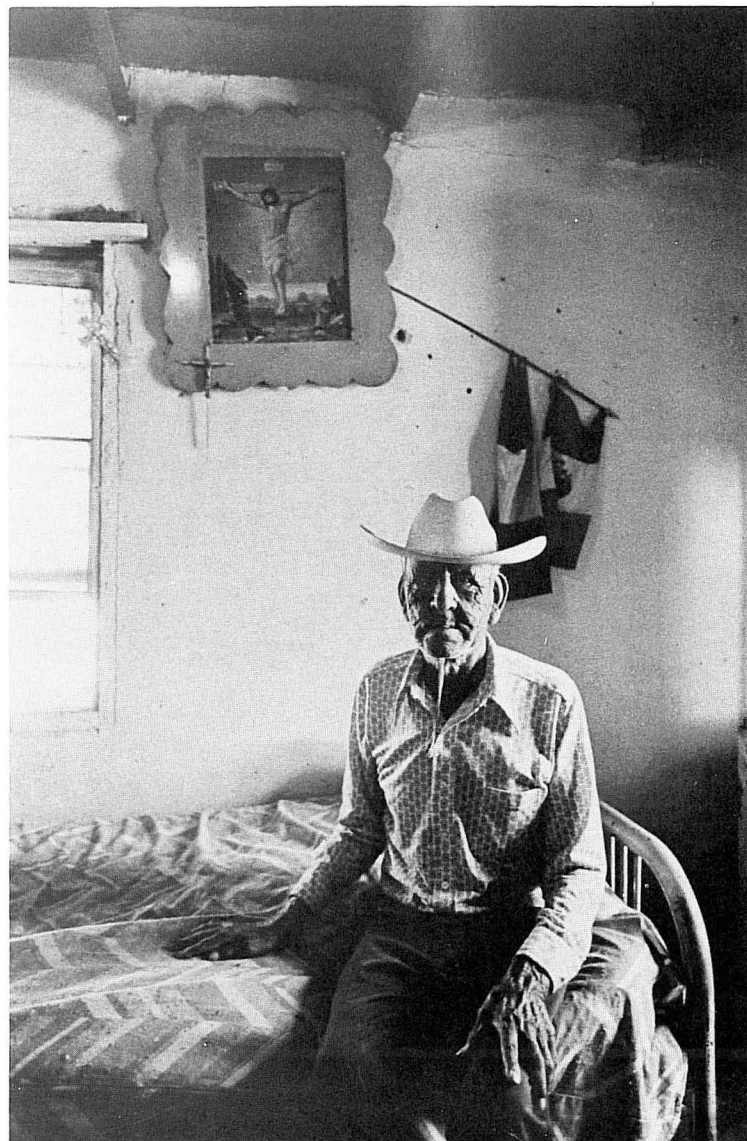
Robert C. Buitron, *Sueños, La Familia de Juan José* from *Family and Photography, Portraits of Family*, 1981. Silver print. 8½ x 11¼".



Hector M. Mendez-Caratini, *Viernes Santo*, Puerto Rico, 1983. Silver print. 8½ x 12¾".



Pablo Delano, *Milagros, Eyes of Santa Lucia*, 1977. Silver print. 10¾ x 8".



Jose L. Galvez, *El Charro Negro, Don Marcos Romero*, 1978. Silver print. 9¼ x 6¼".



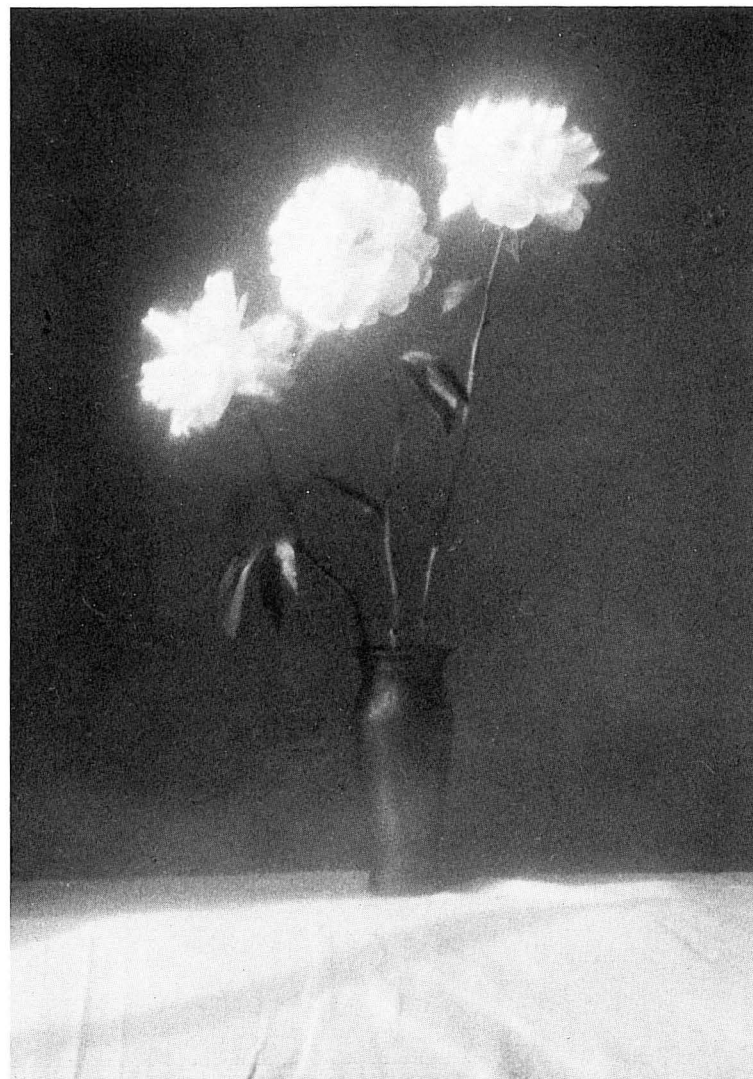
José Ruben Gaztambide, *Historia de una Barriga*,
Puerto Rico, 1982. Silver print. 8¼ x 12½".



Reynaldo Hernandez, *Little Rubén Hernandez Next to
his Father's Mural*, 1981. Type-C print. 6½ x 9½".



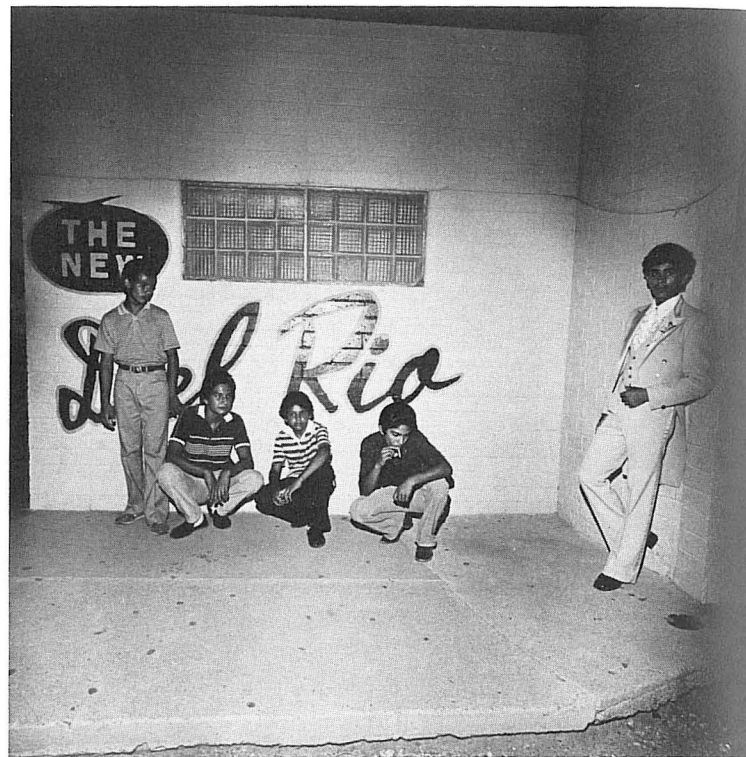
Carlos DelSantos Heyward, *Sir Coco*, 1981. Silver print. 11 x 14".



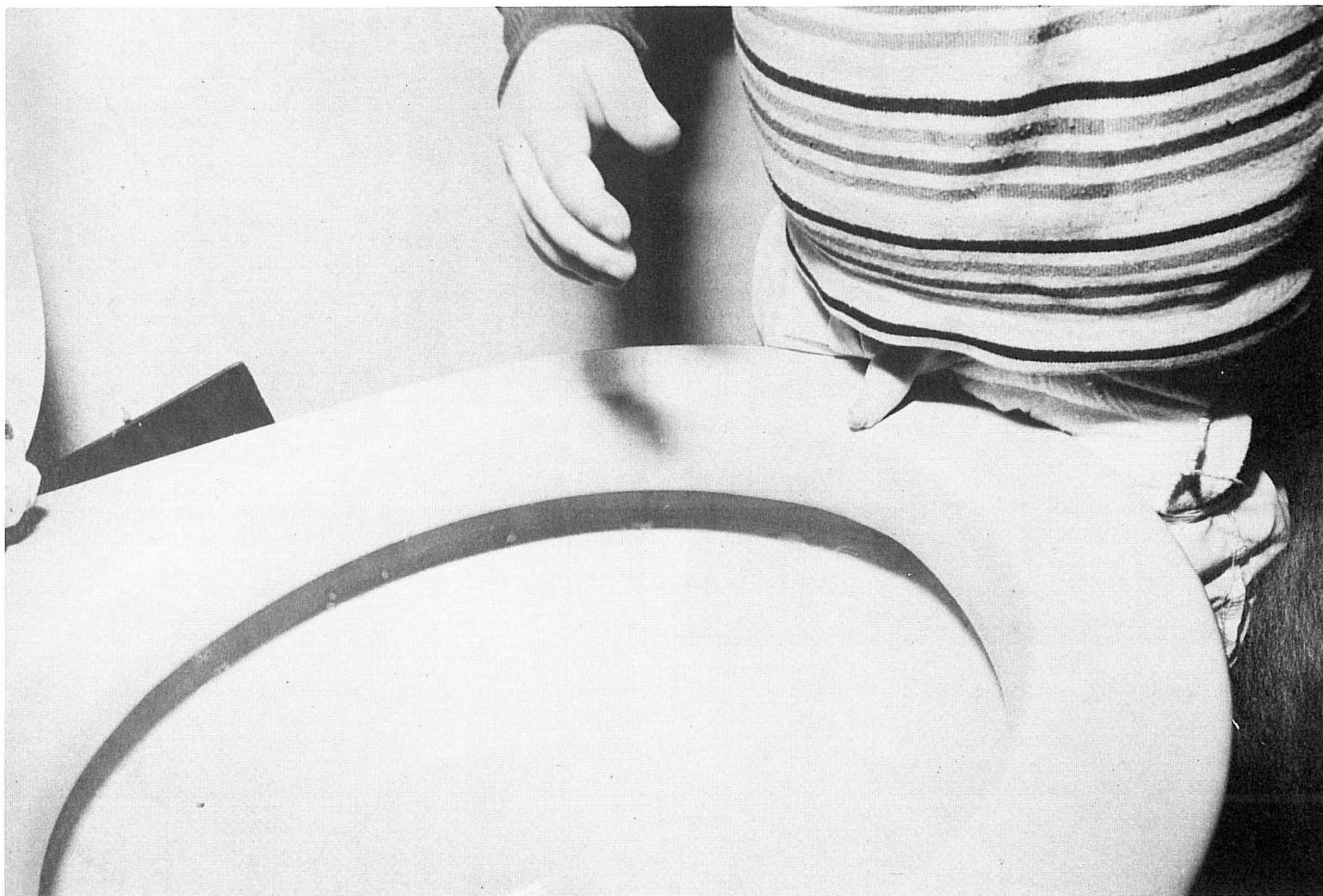
Julio Piedra, *Untitled*, 1983. Silver print. 7¾ x 5½".



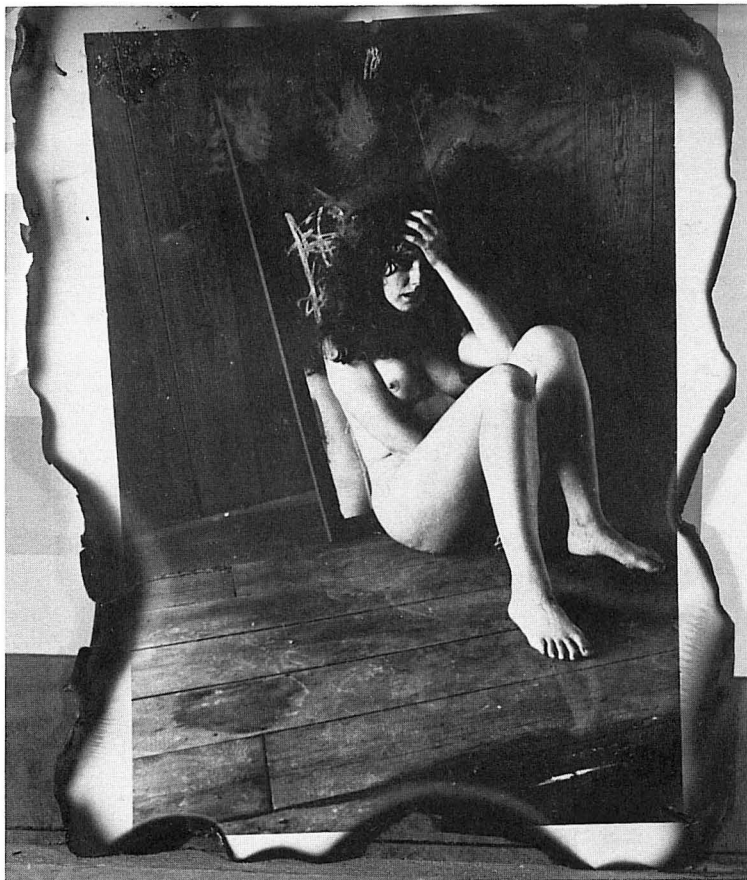
Frank X. Mendez, *Vega Baja Cemetery, Puerto Rico*, 1979.
Silver print. 8 x 8".



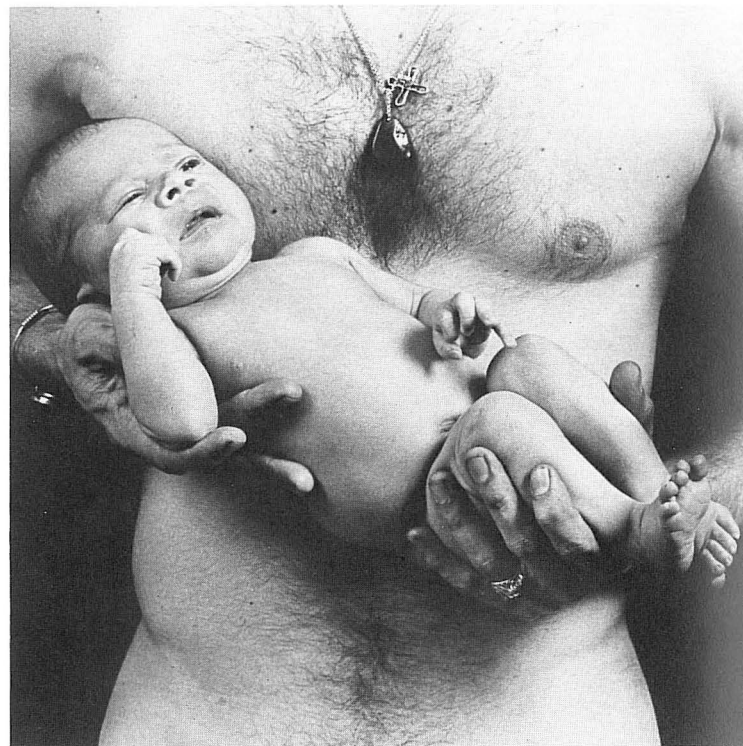
Louis Carlos Bernal, *Saturday Night, Del Rio Ballroom, Los Vatos, Tucson, Arizona*, 1981. Silver print. 9 x 9".



Antonio Mendoza, *Untitled*, 1983. Silver print. 8¼ x 12¼".



Frieda Medin, *Untitled*, 1982. Silver print. 6½ x 4".



Ramon Vila, *Diego Ramón*, 1981. Silver print. 11¼ x 7⅞".



Rafael Ramirez, *El Público*, 1981. Diptych; two silver prints. 10 x 9¾".



Rafael Ramirez, *El Público*, 1981. Diptych; two silver prints. 10 x 9¾".



Sophie Rivera, *Paramount Pictures*, New York City, 1980.
Silver print. 10 x 9¾".



Rafael Robles, *Untitled*, 1975. Silver print. 10 x 7".



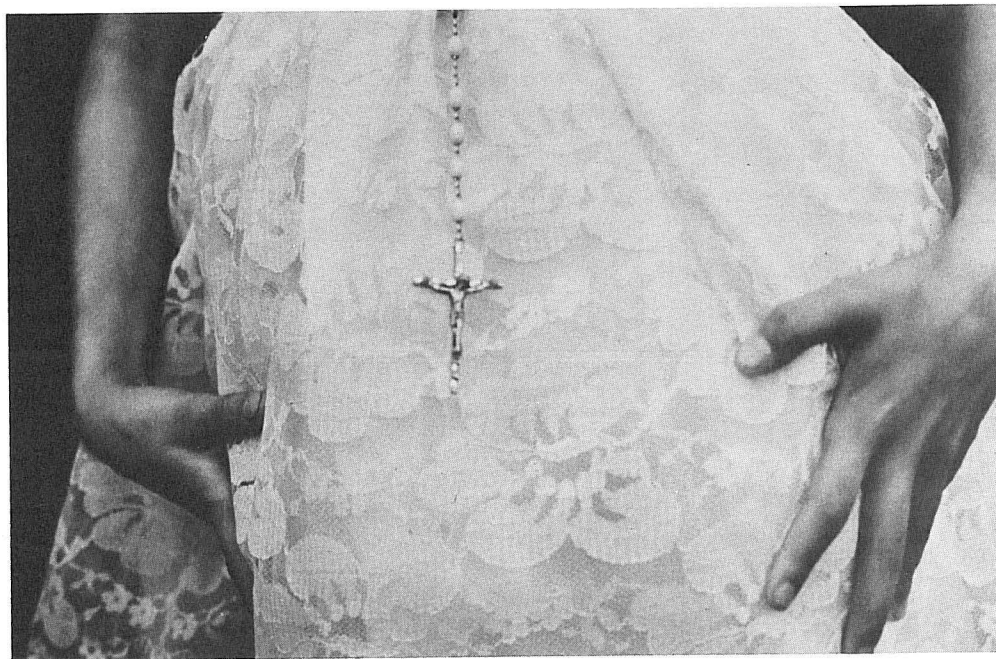
Christina Santiago, *Untitled*, 1979. Silver print. 6¼ x 4½".



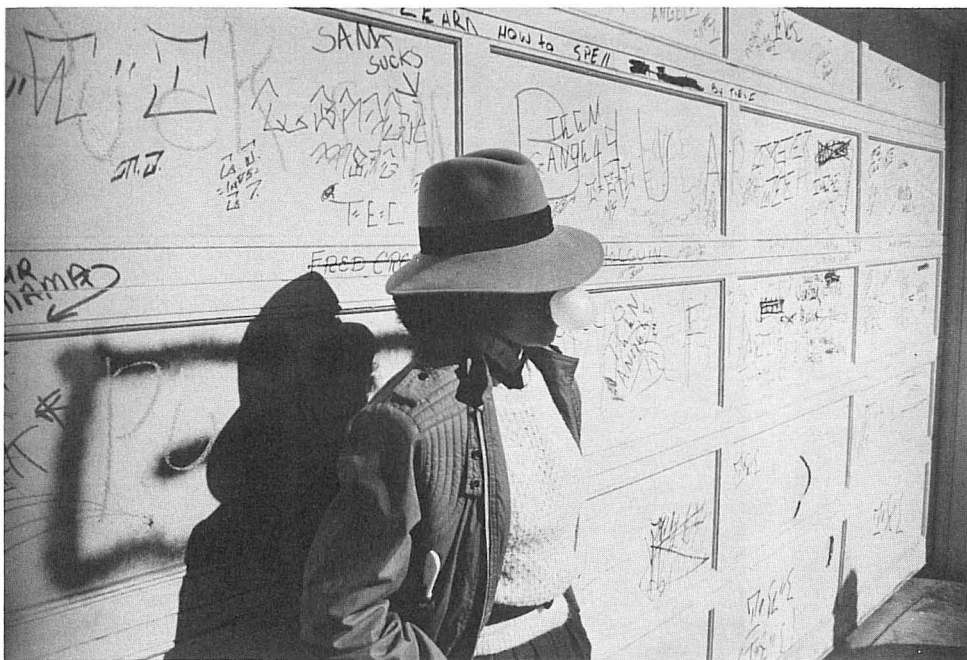
Ricardo Valderde, *Alien Queen de los Muertos*, *Día de los Muertos Series*, East Los Angeles, California, 1982. Silver print. 13¼ x 9½".



Naomi Simonetti, *Burial, Puerto Rico*, 1976.
Silver print. 8½ x 12¼".



Juan Sanchez, *Untitled*, 1978.
Silver print. 5 x 7½".



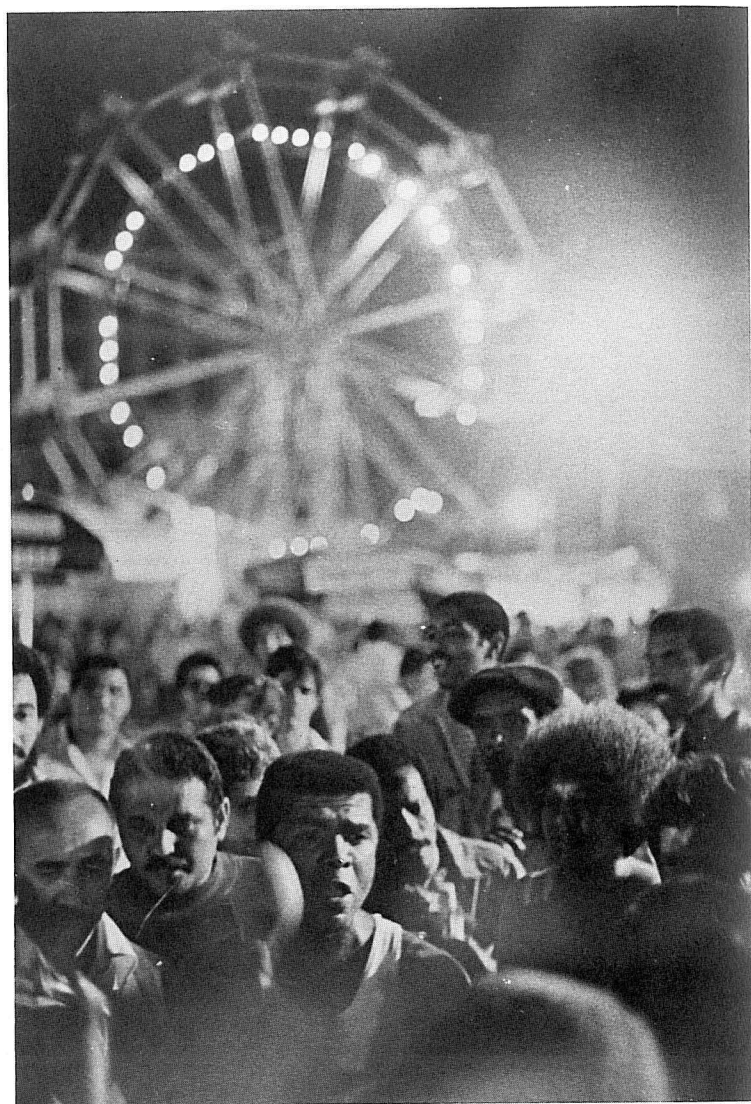
Daniel Jose Salazar, *Cholita Bubblegummer*, 1982.
Type-C print. 9½ x 13¾".



Rene M. Verdugo, *Figure with Legs Extended*, 1981.
Dye transfer print. 5¾ x 7¼".



John N. Valdez, Untitled, 1980. Type-C print. 13¼ x 9¼".



José Antonio Vazquez, Untitled. Silver print. 13¼ x 9".

LA GRAN PASIÓN ORGANIZED BY **EN FOCO INC.**

Works in the Exhibition

Dimensions stated are size of image; height precedes width.
All works courtesy of the artist.

GILBERT ACEVEDO (Bronx, New York)

Untitled, 1980. Silver print; 7¼ x 11".
Untitled, 1980. Silver print; 9¾ x 9½".
Untitled, 1980. Silver print; 8¼ x 12½".
Untitled, 1980. Silver print; 11¼ x 7½".

ELSA FLORES ALMARZ (Los Angeles, California)

Noches Pochos, 1980. Silver print; 5 x 7". Enlarged and exhibited by En Foco as a 40 x 60 inch mural.

NYDZA BEJANDAS (New York, New York)

Desfile Puertorriqueño, New York City, 1980. Silver print; 11 x 14".
Baton Girl, New York City, 1982. Silver print; 11 x 14".
The Band, New York City, 1982. Silver print; 11 x 14".
Desfile Puertorriqueño, New York City, 1982. Silver print; 11 x 14".

LOUIS CARLOS BERNAL (Tucson, Arizona)

Saturday Night, Del Rio Ballroom, Los Vatos, Tucson, Arizona, 1981. Silver print; 9 x 9".

ROBERT C. BUITRON (Tempe, Arizona)

Sueños, La Familia de Juan José, from Family and Photography, Portraits of Family, 1981. Silver print; 8½ x 11¼".

SYLVIA ARLENE CALZADA (Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico)

Linda, 1982. Silver print; 8 x 12".

CARLOS DEJESUS (New York, New York)

Untitled, 1980. Silver print; 7½ x 12¼".

JACK DELANO (Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico)

Barber Shop, Bayamón, Puerto Rico, 1941. Silver print; 8¾ x 12".
Farm Woman, Near Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, 1941. Silver print.
Field Worker's Son, Corozal, Puerto Rico, 1941. Silver print; 8¾ x 11¾".
General Store Owner, Barranquitas, Puerto Rico, 1941. Silver print; 8¾ x 11¾".

Children of a tobacco farmer, near Corozal, Puerto Rico, 1942. Silver print; 8¾ x 12".

Daughter of a tenant farmer, near Caguas, Puerto Rico, 1942. Silver print; 8¾ x 12".

Women at prayer in the cathedral of San Germán, Puerto Rico, 1946. Silver print; 11¾ x 8".

PABLO DELANO (New York, New York)

Milagros, 1977. Silver print; 10¾ x 8".
Milagros, Eyes of Santa Lucia, 1977. Silver print; 10¾ x 8".

JOSE L. GALVEZ (Pasadena, California)

El Charro Negro, Don Marcos Romero, 1978. Silver print; 9¼ x 6¼".

JOSE RUBEN GAZTAMBIDE (Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico)

Historia de una Barriga, Puerto Rico, 1982. Silver print; 8¼ x 12½".
Historia de una Barriga, Flora #1, Puerto Rico, 1982. Silver print; 8¼ x 12½".
Historia de una Barriga, Flora #2, Puerto Rico, 1982. Silver print; 8¼ x 12½".

REYNALDO HERNANDEZ (Milwaukee, Wisconsin)

Little Rubén Hernandez Next to his Father's Mural, 1981. Type-C print; 6½ x 9½".

CARLOS DELSANTOS HEYWARD (San Francisco, California)

Sir Coco, 1981. Silver print; 11 x 14".

FRIEDA MEDIN (Santurce, Puerto Rico)

Untitled, 1982. Silver print; 6½ x 4".
Untitled, 1982. Silver print; 8¼ x 5¾".

FRANK X. MENDEZ (Bayamon, Puerto Rico)

Salinas Cemetery, Puerto Rico, 1975. Silver print; 8 x 7¾".
Comerio Cemetery, Puerto Rico, 1978. Silver print; 8 x 8".
Comerio Cemetery, Puerto Rico, 1978. Silver print; 8 x 8".
Old San Juan Cemetery, Puerto Rico, 1979. Silver print; 8¼ x 7".
Vega Baja Cemetery, Puerto Rico, 1979. Silver print; 8 x 8".

HECTOR M. MENDEZ-CARATINI (Santurce, Puerto Rico)

Viernes Santo, Puerto Rico, 1983. Silver print; 8½ x 12¾".

ANTONIO MENDOZA (Brooklyn, New York)

Untitled, 1983. Silver print; 11½ x 10".

Untitled, 1983. Silver print; 12 x 10".

Untitled, 1983. Silver print; 9¾ x 8".

Untitled, 1983. Silver print; 8¼ x 12¼".

Untitled, 1983. Silver print; 8¼ x 12¼".

JULIO PIEDRA (Brooklyn, New York)

Untitled, 1982. Silver print; 6½ x 6".

Untitled, 1983. Silver print; 6¼ x 5¾".

Untitled, 1983. Silver print; 7¾ x 5½".

RAFAEL RAMIREZ (Santurce, Puerto Rico)

El Público, 1981. Two silver prints; 10 x 9¾".

SOPHIE RIVERA (New York, New York)

Girl in Central Park, New York City, 1979. Silver print; 10 x 9¾".

Paramount Pictures, New York City, 1980. Silver print; 10 x 9¾".

Woman on 42nd Street, New York City, 1983. Silver print; 10 x 10".

RAFAEL ROBLES (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

Untitled, 1975. Silver print; 10 x 7".

DANIEL JOSE SALAZAR (Denver, Colorado)

Cholita Bubblegummer, 1982. Type-C print; 9½ x 13¾".

JUAN SANCHEZ (Brooklyn, New York)

Medalia, New York City, 1978. Silver print; 5 x 7½".

Untitled, 1978. Silver print; 5 x 7½".

Untitled, 1979. Silver print; 5 x 7½".

CHRISTINA SANTIAGO (Bronx, New York)

Untitled, 1979. Silver print; 6¼ x 4½".

Untitled, 1979. Silver print; 5 x 7".

NAOMI SIMONETTI (Saugerties, New York)

Burial, Puerto Rico, 1976. Silver print; 8½ x 12¼".

Espiritista, Puerto Rico, 1976. Silver print; 8½ x 12¼".

Puerto Rico, 1976. Silver print; 7¾ x 11½".

Puerto Rico, 1976. Silver print; 8½ x 12".

RICARDO VALDERDE (Los Angeles, California)

Alien Queen de los Muertos, Día de los Muertos Series, East Los Angeles, California, 1982. Silver print; 13¼ x 9½".

JOHN N. VALDEZ (Los Angeles, California)

Untitled, 1980. Type-C print; 13¾ x 9¼".

JOSE ANTONIO VAZQUEZ (New York, New York)

Untitled. Silver print; 13¼ x 9".

Yari. Silver print; 6 x 9".

RENE M. VERDUGO (Tucson, Arizona)

Figure with Legs Extended, 1981. Dye transfer print; 5¾ x 7¼".

RAMON VILA (Chicago, Illinois)

Diego Ramón, 1981. Silver print; 11¼ x 7⅞".

Selected Group and Solo Exhibitions Organized by En Foco

Researched by Marilu Knode

1973 *Taller En Foco*, American Museum of Natural History, New York (sponsored by the Caribbean Studies Program, Department of Education, AMNH)

1974 *Annual Folklorical Puerto Rican Festival*, Central Park, New York
En Esta Vida, Brooklyn Learning Center Gallery, New York
Felipe Dante, Puerto Rican Cultural Center, New York

1976 *En Foco*, Riverside Park Festival, New York
Mujer: Charles Biasiny-Rivera, Roger Caban, Sandra Eleta, Lydia Fisher, Frank Gimpaya, George Malave, Frank X. Mendez, Linda Ferrer Rogers, Lise Steiner, McGraw-Hill Building, Rockefeller

Center, New York (sponsored by the Institute of Contemporary Hispanic Art, New York; exh. cat.; text by Roger Caban and Marifé Hernandez)

Photographer's Choice, Crossroads Gallery, New York
1978 *Documentation Portfolio No. 1*, El Museo del Barrio, New York
Charles Biasiny-Rivera, Mott Haven Library, Bronx, New York
En Foco, Ethnic Heritage Learning Resource Center of School District 12, New York
En Foco, Fiesta de Loiza Aldea, Wards Island, New York
En Foco, 149th Street and Third Avenue, Bronx, New York (sponsored by the South Bronx Youth Brigade)
Grupo Cinco, Tremont Library Center, Bronx, New York

- Latin Impression*, Hunt's Point Library, Bronx, New York
Louis Morales, Bronx North Central Hospital Art Gallery, New York
 1979 *First Annual Photographic Festival*, various locations in the Bronx (sponsored by Citibank)
David Gonzalez and Eladno J. Ballestas, West Farms Library, Bronx, New York
Mrs. Shanna Holmes, Bronx North Central Hospital Art Gallery, New York
La Familia: Louis Carlos Bernal, Charles Biasiny-Rivera, Frank Gimpaya, Frank X. Mendez, Joe Bernal Ramos, Raul Rubiera, Naomi Simonetti, El Museo del Barrio, New York (exh. cat.; text by Charles Biasiny-Rivera)
Ricardo Vargas, Hunt's Point Library, Bronx, New York
Joseta Vasquez and Louis Portiansky, Hunt's Point Library, Bronx, New York
 1980 Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York (performance with photographic costumes; sponsored by South Bronx Project, New York Public Library)
Evelyn Collazo, Fordham Library, Bronx, New York
Felipe Dante: Mexican Portfolio, Bronx North Central Hospital Art Gallery, Bronx, New York
David Gonzalez, Citibank, Fordham Road, Bronx, New York
Second Annual Photographic Festival, various locations in the Bronx, New York (sponsored by Citibank, En Foco/CETA VI Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, NEA, and NYSCA)
Vapors: Rafael Ramirez and Sophie Rivera, Cork Gallery, Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, New York (exh. cat.; text by Charles Biasiny-Rivera)
 1981 *Bus Show*, CEPA Gallery, Buffalo, New York (exh. cat.; text by Charles Biasiny-Rivera)
James R. Hernandez, Hostos Community College, Bronx, New York
Latin Impressions, Citibank, 2 Broadway, New York (sponsored by the New York State Department of Parks and Recreation)
ReVisions '81: Marco Kalisch, Julio Nazario, Ani Gonzalez Rivera, Jose Antonio Vazquez, Fashion Moda, Bronx, New York (exh. cat.; text by Charles Biasiny-Rivera)
Third Annual Photographic Festival, various locations in the Bronx, New York (sponsored by NEA and NYSCA)
 1982 *Alfonso Cartagena*, Citibank, 149th Street, Bronx, New York
Fernando Clamont, Mott Haven Library, Bronx, New York

- Rene Davila*, Rodham Library, Bronx, New York
Frank X. Mendez, Bronx Development Center, Bronx State Psychiatric Hospital, New York
Jose Antonio Vazquez, Mott Haven Library, Bronx, New York
 1983 *Primera Luz: Pablo Cambo, Maria Angelica Fernandez, Herman Guzman, Carlos Arnaldo Meyners*, Cayman Gallery-Friends of Puerto Rico, New York (exh. cat.; text by Charles Biasiny-Rivera)
The 1st En Foco Video Festival and Workshop, Roberto Clemente, State Park, Bronx, New York (exh. cat.)

Selected Lectures, Panels, and Seminars Organized by En Foco

- 1975 *Felipe Dante: En Mi Corazón*, Puerto Rican Cultural Center, New York
 1976 *The Experience of Black and Hispanic Photographers*, WNEW-TV Metromedia, New York (sponsored by The Photographer's Forum, New York)
 1978 *Martin Schneider: Photography as an Institute for Social Change*, Poe Center, Bronx, New York
 1979 *The Hispanic Esthetic/Does It Exist?*, Poe Center, Bronx, New York (Charles Biasiny-Rivera, moderator; sponsored by NYSCA)
Cleofus Price, Fordham Library, Bronx, New York
 1981 *Charles Biasiny-Rivera*, CEPA Gallery, Buffalo, New York
 1983 *Frank Gimpaya*, Fordham Library, Bronx, New York
Marco Kalisch, New York Latin Community Library, Bronx, New York
Jose Antonio Vazquez, Moshalu Library

Since its inception, En Foco has offered an ongoing program of workshops in photography, video, and the arts, including "Critical Mass," a monthly critique session with guest lectures held at En Foco headquarters.

Selected Bibliography

- Deschin, Jacob. "Viewpoint," *Popular Photography*, December 1974.
 ———. "En Foco," *Latin N.Y.*, issue 18, September 1974, p. 30.
 ———. "P.R. for Puerto Ricans," *Photo Reporter* (New York), vol. 4, September 1974, p. 16.
 Moser, Lisa. "A Photographer's Guide to Cooperative Galleries," *New York Times*, October 17, 1977.

CLASSIFIED: BIG PAGES FROM THE *HERESIES* COLLECTIVE

The *Heresies* Collective grew out of meetings begun in Fall 1975 to discuss a new feminist art group—originally “a voice and a space” (publication and school). By Spring 1976 a publishing collective of twenty women had formed, and in January 1977 the first issue of *Heresies: A Feminist Publication on Art and Politics* appeared. Since then 14 more issues have been published, with issue #16 “Film/Video/Media” scheduled for September 1983.

Heresies is unique both in its content and in its structure. Each issue offers a feminist perspective on a particular topic—women’s traditional arts, the Great Goddess, architecture, sex, ecology, racism, to name a few. Because of this theme focus, the issues become stimulating anthologies on areas of political and cultural interest. The main collective—the collective that put together this show—acts as the publisher, making decisions about themes, policy, promotion, distribution, and finances. Each issue, however, has its own editorial collective, made up of women interested in its theme as well as women from the main collective. Every issue, then, is produced by a different group of women—ensuring a continuing influx of new ideas. In the last six years, well over a hundred women from quite varied backgrounds have worked on editorial collectives. The *Heresies* Collective itself includes women of diverse political orientations from a range of art-related fields (painting, sculpture, architecture, photography, writing, performance, art history, anthropology, filmmaking, literature, graphics).

The beginning of our editorial statement, published in each issue, summarizes our concerns: “*Heresies* is an idea-oriented journal devoted to the examination of art and politics from a feminist perspective. We believe that what is commonly called art can have a political impact, and that in the making of art and of all cultural artifacts our identities as women play a distinct role. We hope that *Heresies* will stimulate dialogue around radical political and aesthetic theory as well as generate new creative energies among women. It will be a place where diversity can be articulated. We are committed to broadening the definition and function of art.”

The members of the *Heresies* Collective who worked on this show are: Sandra De Sando, Vanalyne Green, Michele Godwin, Sue Heinemann, Lyn Hughes, Patricia Jones, Kay Kenny, Nicky Lindeman, Lucy R. Lippard, Sabra Moore, and Holly Zox. Other *Heresies* Collective members, past and present, include: Ida Applebroog, Patsy Beckert, Lyn Blumenthal, Joan Braderman, Cynthia Carr, Mary Beth Edelson, Su Friedrich, Janet Froelich, Harmony Hammond, Elizabeth Hess, Joyce Kozloff, Arlene Ladden, Melissa Meyer, Marty Pottenger, Carrie Rickey, Elizabeth Sacre, Miriam Schapiro, Amy Sillman, Joan Snyder, Elke Solomon, Pat Steir, May Stevens, Michelle Stuart, Susana Torre, Cecilia Vicuña, Elizabeth Weatherford, Sally Webster, and Nina Yankowitz.

“‘Classified: Big Pages from the *Heresies* Collective’ is a walk-around magazine of giant 6’ x 8’ pages made collaboratively by the women of the *Heresies* Collective. To me, it is a magazine with child scale; we wanted to explore class origins starting with the ways our mothers socialize us, and we used our own experiences as reverse mirrors. We developed the theme of each page through discussion. Some pages are made individually, some in groups, some are ‘collection’ pages assembled by one woman from the contributions of the group.”—SM

“The show is a visual version of our upcoming issue ‘Mothers, Mags and Movie Stars’—being edited by the core *Heresies* Collective as a way of getting to know each other better and discussing politics and aesthetics more directly, outside of our usual business-meeting format. For several months we discussed our own relationships to our mothers in terms of feminism and class. As we unraveled our histories and those of our families, trying to name and analyze our class backgrounds and foregrounds, we found that no one’s family had stayed in one class, that there were endless subtleties, that very little of sense and use has been written on the subject. Our meetings took on the double aspect of sewing circle and study group. Most of our anecdotes centered on images, clothes, objects, and spaces.”—LRL

Installation view.







← A ROOMFUL OF MOTHERS – Sabra Moore

"Everyone starts with her/his mother, so our show starts with 'A Roomful of Mothers.' Her body is our first measure of dimension. Later we are placed in class.

"We met in one room to plan a magazine. By stepping back a generation, we wanted to look at ourselves as products of female history. 'A Roomful of Mothers' is a 'collection' work; the images were assembled by me from twelve women, each providing a photo of her mother and a hand-written one-page class history with the mother as the focus. Most of us chose the mother from our childhood, so the women in the 'Roomful' are young, though our ages span twenty-five years. We shared stories, describing our families' work histories, the crossings between classes through marriage, political refuge, or education.

"There was an element of play and pressure in developing this work. I felt like an elected representative. I asked a friend to stat each mother to 20" standing; then I cut the mothers out, color-xeroxed them, and moved them around on my wall, the way I used to play with my paper dolls. I wanted them to be in a relaxed group together. I developed feelings about them; I recognized their gestures in my *Heresies* friends. Then I made the room an actual 'model' that folds out, as if the walls could fold up and the whole room stand in space.

"Next to the 'Roomful' is a xerox quilt of stories; I chose the traditional form developed by women for fitting things together. I included the backgrounds left over from the photos when I cut the mothers out; some contain the daughters."—SM



From Tender Me (1979) by Vanalyne Green, a multimedia performance with Ed Ott and Judith Scherer, which "could also accurately be subtitled 'confessions of a white middle-class feminist.'"

"The mobility in this piece is not necessarily upward. Everybody in the collective gave me a list of movie stars they thought had affected them. (Some were in specific roles; some were men; others horses.) Our birth dates range from 1937 to 1962, and the original idea was to make a chronological map of female models. I found as many as I could at Cinemabilia. But the photos were expensive and we couldn't remember exactly when we had wanted to be who, so it became more of a collage; the placements are often sight gags. Still, it's a bizarre (and dubiously feminist) selection from fifty years of idols and influences. Several of us focused on National Velvet, and Trigger outran both Roy Rogers and Dale Evans."—LRL

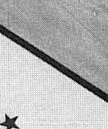
MOVING STARS – Lucy R. Lippard →

MOVING STARS
MOVING STARS
MOVING STARS

"AS WOMEN, WE'LL SPECIALIZE IN THE ART OF IMAGERY"



"THERE CAME A TIME WHEN I DIDN'T WANT TO LOOK LIKE A STAR ANY MORE. I WANTED THEM TO LOOK LIKE ME."



THESE ARE SOME OF THE MOVIE STARS HERESIES COLLECTIVE MEMBERS REMEMBER WANTING TO BE OR LOOK LIKE, FROM ILLUSION TO DISILLUSION. BECAUSE OF TV, THERE ARE CROSS-GENERATIONAL OVERLAPS.

PUT THEM ALL TOGETHER THEY SPELL MOTHER—Vanalyne Green,

“Originally the intent of this piece was to create a visual and textual dictionary. A deconstruction of the meaning of mother. A dictionary of moms whose clichés were so varied that one would have to reevaluate some of the standard definitions. Thus, in the top part of the panel we see Lady Di as a cover girl mommie, beloved by all. Only to discover several months down the line that her public image has metamorphosed into the selfish, spoiled bitch who spends too much money buying clothes.

“As a concept, all of us were attracted to this ‘deconstruction.’ But what became most interesting was that each of us had a different agenda of things we wanted to deconstruct. Patricia’s observations about aprons brought out the different media messages for Black and white women. Through Holly’s input, we reexamined what happens to meaning when a suffering Lebanese mother is juxtaposed in *The New York Times* with a great bathing suit sale at Saks Fifth Avenue.

“Not surprisingly, I found myself fascinated with ’50s stereotypes of mothers, coming as I did from a family where my mother’s great energy and social skills were halted and turned inwards by the ’50s move to take women back into modernized jail cells, otherwise called homes. Several of the images in the piece therefore recall the days when a woman’s supposed interests were taken up with dressing in formal gown attire to stock her new Amana refrigerator with a chuck roast.

“And so it was that an abstract concept became fleshed out in a process characteristic of how women really do work together at various times—taking the evidence, the daily detritus of experience, as an important formal element in a piece of art.”—VG

Patricia Jones,

Holly Zox



“This piece attempts to address the conflict inherent in media presentations of women, especially mothers, and how that conflict may be viewed ironically, politically. One of the things I wanted to deal with was the impotence of Black women in the media (maids) who were both maternal and infertile at the same time. This racist fantasy of the GREAT BLACK MAMMY, who fortunately has no children of her own to take care of, just the little white ones, has always intrigued me because it still has currency in the culture (think of the Black women on screen and try to recall their children). I thought about the issue of the maid’s uniform, aprons, and my mother’s bitter experience as a maid in Arkansas in the early ’50s. So, underlying some of the irony is a lot of anger on my part. Vanalyne seemed more interested in the psychological ramifications of media manipulation, and Holly researched the popular myths of motherhood and found a wonderful book—*The Mother Book* by Liz Smith—about those myths.

“The images on a grid recall our own place(s) in the socioeconomic scheme of things. Women are flattered or cajoled or commanded by the images of motherhood to conform to current notions of just what their biological place is. The statistics on the number of women in the labor force in 1944–1954 are chilling. If the government or industry or any authority does not want women in the labor force, then pregnancy and motherhood are tools to keep them out.”—PJ

“We had each collected many media images and texts about mothers. In one long meeting we threw all the images on the floor and made a quilt. One woman would pick up a picture and say, ‘I think this should go here,’ another woman would pick up another picture, and as we went on, each of us would see patterns emerge from what the others had done. We kept putting things up, and then, except for a few details, we were done.”—HZ



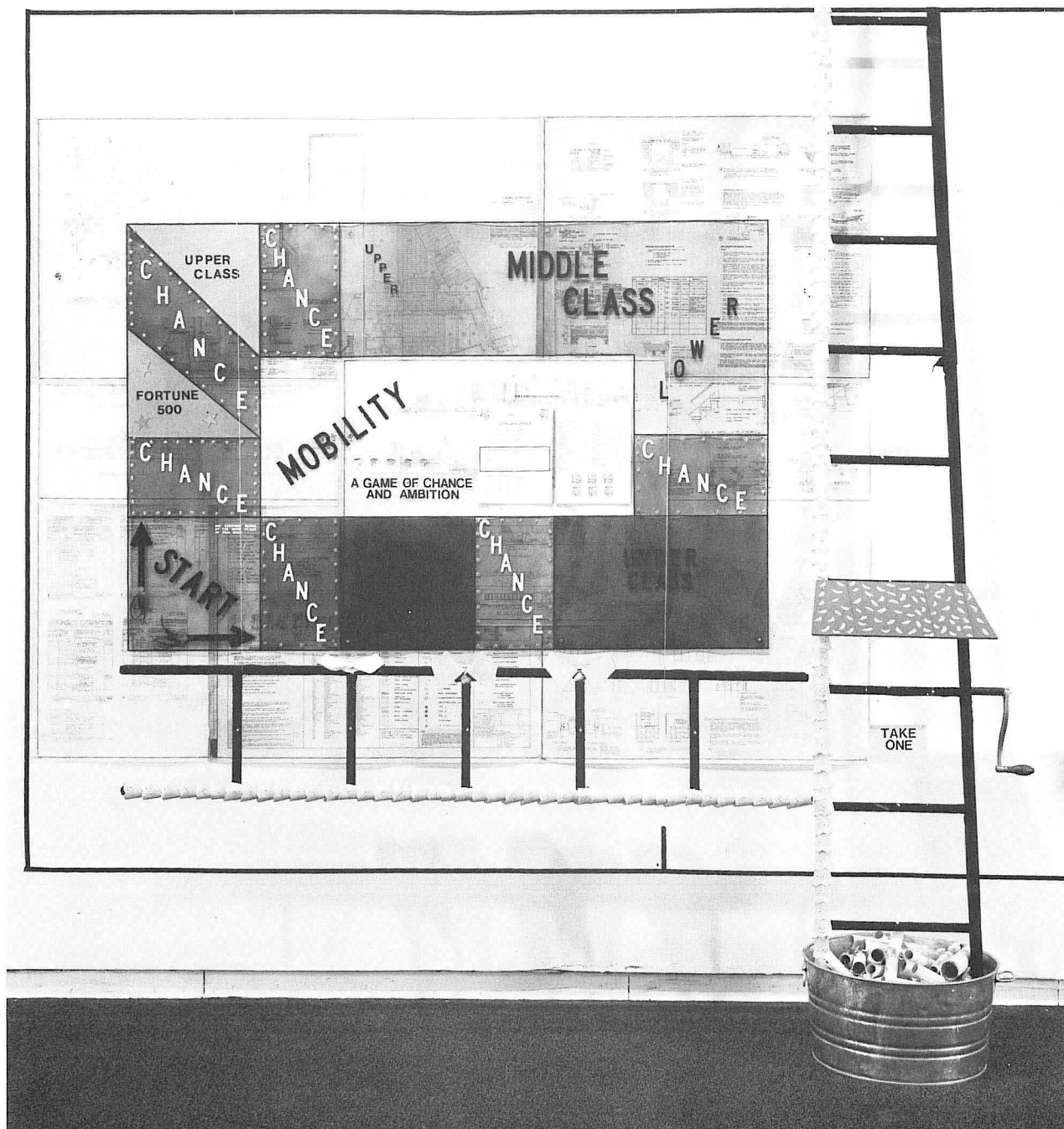
← DEVOTION PROCESSION, OR WE'RE #1 – Sandra De Sando

"The figures are of Mary and her mother Anne. Anne is gently drawing Mary forward, guiding and leading her. In the original icons, Mary and Anne jointly hold a book or scroll, with Anne pointing out her vision to her daughter. It is a strong image, exacting the socializing process each girl child must enter. It tells her who she is and how she in turn must confirm this knowledge and responsibility to her own daughter. The wall hanging behind the figures contains images that are to become part of her future—the snake, world, visitation of the angel, birth, and the twelve stars of the Apocalypse. The power of the Virgin in Catholicism is enormous. Think of recent new events: 1.5 million Polish Catholics worshipped along with their Pope at the Shrine of the Black Madonna. The power of Mary as intercessor, giver of life in birth and nurturance, and thus responsible for the very survival of the Catholic Church, so separates her from her mortal counterpart that she condemns every modern woman to the precarious duality of sisterhood with her predecessor, the fallen Eve.

"'Devotion Procession' grew out of 'Good Works: Art by Women Raised Working Class and Catholic' (Small Walls, New York, 1983) and discussions of the *Heresies* Collective. I didn't share the actual hands-on making of the piece with the collective, but I was extremely influenced by the talks. Kay Kenny made the big find of Marina Warner's book on the Virgin Mary—*Alone of All Her Sex*—and lent it to me before reading it herself. The discussions defined and articulated the art work as we went along. I would go home from a meeting invigorated or angry about how close or how blocked I felt in getting to the heart of the piece. At the time I lived in an Italian working-class neighborhood—that helped. During the final month of preparation I had to visit my mother and my aunt. My mother was recuperating from an emergency operation. For the first time I got to hear the stories of my family background. It added pleasurable thoughts and compressed a lot of yearning into a two-week crash course of photos, sentiment, real life hardship, and bargaining chips in ongoing family dynamics. I used to have a lot of anger and unfocused memories. The intensity of the past few months pressured me into a clearer perspective. This piece is dedicated to my sister, Theresa Durante Ferrara."—SDS

"In the midst of our countless group discussions, patterns began to emerge—foremost of which, or so it seemed to me, was the concern with media and fashion. Either we were pitted against it or we used it as a barometer for class distinctions. It seemed absurd that Madison Avenue should hold such sway over our lives, but when it came to discussing women and class there was no getting away from it. It was someone's story of Mary Boone's enormous shoe collection and someone else's reflection that perhaps women have no class of their own that brought the Cinderella myth to my mind. In the numerous books I had read or skimmed on the American class system, women simply didn't exist. The largely female occupations were not included in prestige charts, nor were women's special problems, such as taking on one's husband's class via marriage or the barriers to upward mobility facing women who didn't marry, ever considered. Market research seemed to offer the only consideration of the dilemmas of women in the class system. Thus, when it comes to class, the media and Cinderella have provided us with one strong paradigm: Women who want to move up in class may not have the money or even the potential for making it, but everyone can learn to dress for the part and to be in the right places and possibly succeed via marriage. My character 'Aspirella' was born on that premise, and she dies realizing that without an economic base of one's own, it's a premise as mythful as advertiser's copy."—KK

ASPIRELLA: CINDERELLA'S UNFORTUNATE STEPSISTER – Kay Kenny →



← MOBILITY: A GAME OF CHANCE AND AMBITION – Lyn Hughes

“‘Mobility: A Game of Chance and Ambition’ originated in discussions on the way a woman can change her class, i.e., through marriage or a career. A career is attainable relative to one’s educational achievements. But class-based attitudes, values, and social skills determine resources available to individuals, making for inequalities of opportunity (education being a major factor). These things underlie the perpetuation of social classes and the stratification system fostering them.

“In my mind, mobility could only be constructed as a game, wherein the aesthetic and literal messages merge. ‘Not Everyone Begins at the Same Place in this Race’ is denoted at the ‘START.’ Although the individual acquires her/his initial position at birth, life ‘chances’ determine one’s later social rank. It is a piece that extends beyond the gallery walls, that reaches out to the audience, and into which the audience can reach. As a source of information distribution, it expands the definitions and conventions of art. By distributing itself (utilizing a ‘Take One’ format), the game and its instructions are reduced and reproduced, making it accessible to everyone.”—LH



“‘Growing Up a Bird’ is a hybrid—not fully an individual vision, not fully a collaboration. The piece began as a joint endeavor with another woman, and we chuckled together, remembering our first texts and reliving teenage magazine fantasies. In finishing the piece alone, I wanted to include both our ideas. We talked about how books and images we encountered as children shaped our views of who we ‘should’ be—what was ‘normal,’ ‘ideal,’ etc. On the surface, books have changed over the years—but have the hidden messages about femaleness and class? When I went to a large New York bookstore to look for something on a Black preteen girl’s experience, there was nothing available. That’s a message, too. Each person will have different memories of the media of childhood. But what I hope viewers will do is relook at the personal for its political implications, especially in relation to definitions of class.”—SH

GROWING UP A BIRD – Sue Heinemann →

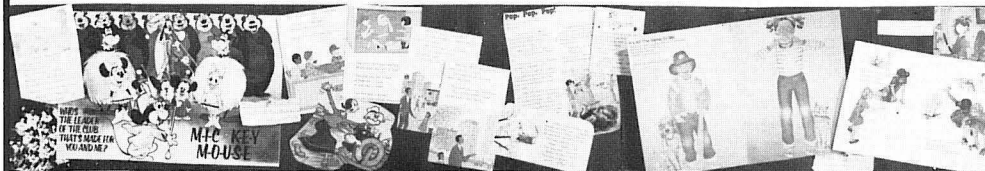
From Crayon Bondage (1982) by Jessica Hagedorn, a two-character performance in which Laurie Carlos (the mother) and Jessica (the daughter) grapple with the fantasies, illusions, and economic hardships of Filipino immigrants.



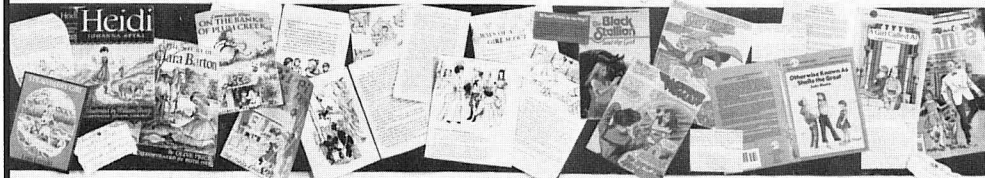
growing up a blind...



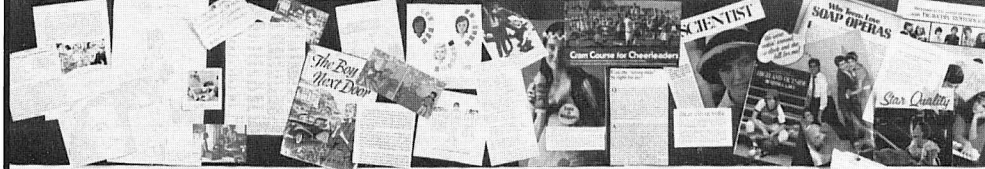
what do I dream?



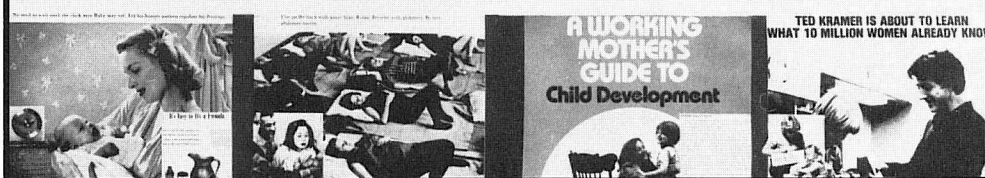
can I fly? am I free?



do I come home to nest?



caged in whose American dream?



CROSS-DRESSING CODES – Lucy R. Lippard, Sabra Moore, Holly Zox

“We talked about women who dressed like girls, women who dressed like boys, women who dressed like men in neutralized, androgynous suits and ties. (That’s how this executive monster became hermaphroditic.) We talked about age and sex and how clothes affect and reflect power, about how women are seen as girls like Black men are seen as boys and artists are seen as kids. We talked about pants and skirts, long and short hair, and their diverse messages. (The masking-taped texts on the big red X were the remnants of these talks.)

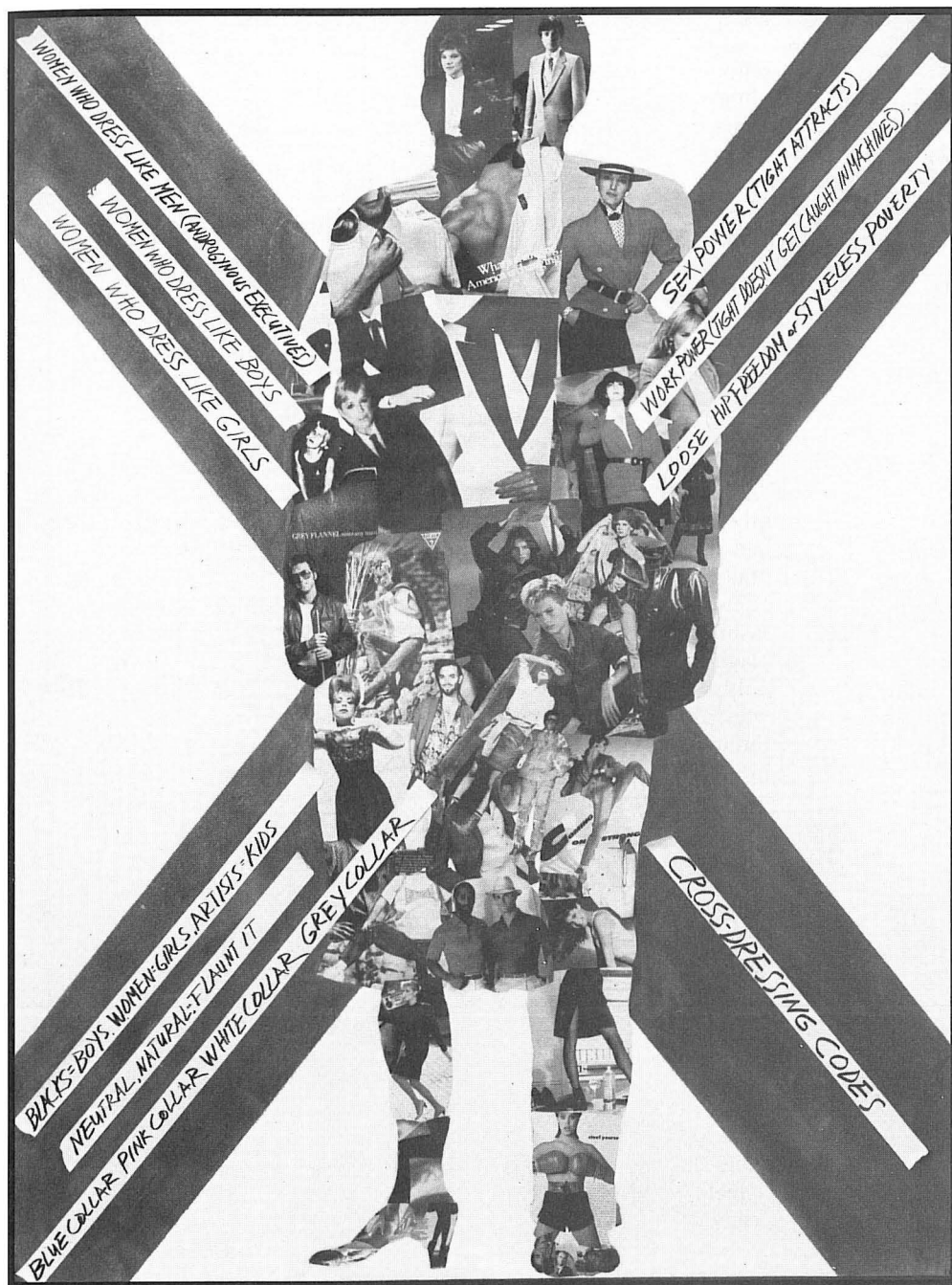
“I liked the way the piece came out better than Holly and Sabra did; Holly’s shadow figure really loomed and altogether it was less chatty than most of the show. But I may like it because I filled in most of the collage—starting with the executive cross we have to bear at the top down through the class cross (a *Vogue* model leaning gracefully on a pitchfork; the use of jeans), then into some trans-sexual stuff below.”—LRL



Window installation—“Jeanealogy”—by the Heresies Collective.

“A ‘talking’ piece – we three, sometimes four, met in restaurants after other meetings and talked—running in our imaginations past clothes we had seen—clothes that worked—literally—tight for factory, loose for farm, ornamented for sex, gray and stylized for power—and our own dress—all of us wearing pants. Then the reverse, each of these styles repeated as fashion and ‘show.’ We decided that we dressed like boys or like girls playing dress-up; expressive dress is always ‘play’ in this culture, there is only one power-dress—the suit. So we developed the piece as a composite, suited power-figure with everyone else around the edges. We went through magazines and picked, bringing in cut-out versions of these ideas. No actual ‘laying on of many hands’ in finishing the work—a talking and collecting piece straight through.”—SM

“Nowhere in the ‘cross-dressing’ page do I find any insight into all the things that made me, at the age of two, demand that my mother dress me in boys’ clothes. Yet we ‘undressed’ these and many other layers of cross-dressing as we talked and talked about clothes and power. Lucy, Sabra, and I (and Nicky) all spent an entire day getting the museum ready for our show, and were each working on three different pages. When the time came at the end to actually make the piece, we were too tired, and too stubborn to say we couldn’t do it. Though I don’t think what we put on the wall goes sufficiently into, and beyond, our discussions, I am nonetheless glad we did not set the page aside. Our talking, and indeed my thinking and writing this statement, have enabled me to pull at many more threads. I also think it is good to show people that we tried to do something, and were not completely successful—this time. So we’re not ready to turn the page yet...”—HZ





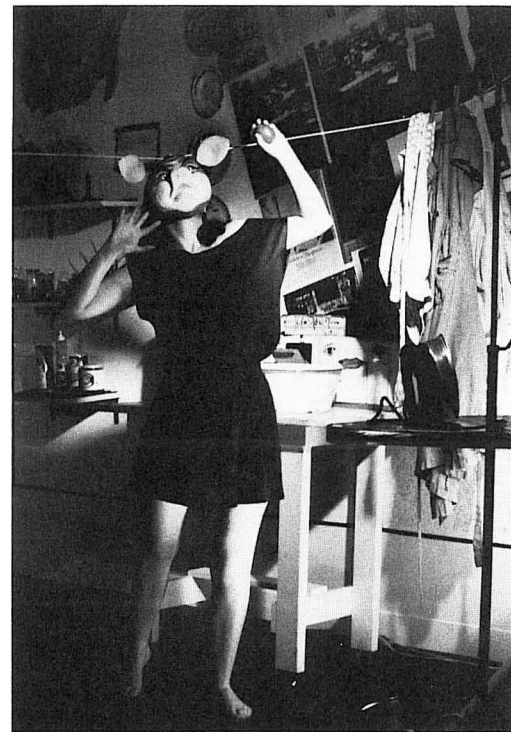
← CHOOSE A CLASS-Y LOOK – Michele Godwin, Sue Heinemann

"The process of collaboration was not difficult for me, as I have always worked with people in partnership situations, whether working with children (camp counselor) or doing an illustration assignment. There weren't any clashes of temperament, as people seem to think when two artists work together (like any other profession, it depends on the personality of the individual and how much ego is involved).

"In developing our piece—'Choose a Class-y Look'—there was an exchange of ideas, and we used the ones that best suited our space in the show. The choice of paper dolls, we felt, was a fun way to convey to the public how the simple changing of clothes on a doll relates to one's class."—MG

"For me, there was a women's gossip aspect (that's not pejorative) to the paper-doll piece. After talking about which stereotypes of clothing we wanted to present—the preppy look, the 'ethnic' style, good housekeeping attire, etc.—we went shopping (how many men shop together?). And then we drew the dolls together, first tracing around each other and then coloring in our own images while exchanging 'makeup' techniques. What happened in the making of the piece echoes the fun of play with paper dolls with a friend. In a way it is the woman-to-woman exchange that provides a counter to the ad notion of how one should look/act. I like it that the museum-goers can also share in this play, dressing up the dolls and adding their own comments, like the person who dangled a cigarette from 'my' mouth opening night (chuckle). Whatever the dolls are wearing when you first see them will affect how you dress them yourself. The piece becomes an ongoing collaboration."—SH

From Manna (1983) by Lenora Champagne, a solo performance mixing text, dance, and music and featuring letters from Lenora's mother.





DREAM KITSCHEN – Sue Heinemann, Nicky Lindeman, Sabra Moore, Holly Zox

“It was through working together on the kitchen that each of us came up with what might be viewed as ‘individual’ contributions to the whole. Yet these contributions aren’t isolated visions. At one point we were talking about what was still needed. I mentioned doing something with an ironing board; Nicky suggested drawing a figure on the ironing board; I thought of an X-ray I had of my skeleton; a friend (Cham Hendon) later tried out the effect with the light underneath. Working with others, the input is different, leading to different associations, different directions. However much one person might work on realizing one part, the result is still a collaboration, shaped by the exchange with others along the way. How we decided to portray the kitchen came out of lengthy discussions of our ‘kitchen experiences,’ one person’s memory triggering another’s. It’s interesting that the making of the piece in some way re-created the way women used to come together (and still sometimes do) in the kitchen, talking over the ‘news.’”–SH

“I think of the kitchen piece as a sort of stage set, a backdrop, which grew out of a number of conversations comparing our mothers’ lives with our own lives. We used the objects usually found in kitchens as well as symbolic objects to convey some of our ideas and stories on the reality of ‘kitchen life’ as opposed to the ‘media’ kitchen. Our collaborative process allowed us to work out both individual pieces and a group piece. Our individual efforts went a level further in meaning when placed in the context of the group piece. Later, the piece was used as a backdrop for Lenora Champagne’s performance.”–NL

“Working on the ‘Dream Kitschen’ felt like four women setting up house. We each brought some piece of the room; we went window-shopping in magazines together; everyone wanted to tell her own story around the table, so the kitchen visually is inhabited by grandmothers from Texas, mothers from Ohio, daughters in New York, and four women trying to pull apart the messages from our own stories and the media messages we were supposed to accept. We wanted everything to fit, the way a woman can’t move out in New York because there aren’t new apartments, so she keeps building new shelves, she sorts out, throws out, adds in. This kitchen could take it all. We cooked it.”–SM

“When I told my mother that I was collaborating with other women to make a kitchen installation in an art museum, she laughed a nice laugh. It was very nice to work on the kitchen piece. We all came together with very strong ties to kitchens—to our experiences in our mothers’ and grandmothers’ kitchens. Our first (of many) meetings was filled with moving ‘kitchen stories,’ in which we shared our class and ethnic backgrounds. We knew we wanted to show the contradictions between our experiences and media images of the ‘dream kitchen.’ We decided to deal with the media images collectively, and that we would also each make objects that drew from our individual experiences.

“In the kitchen, my mother has always been both priestess and prisoner. I wanted to make an altar that would express my mother’s complex kitchen existence, but I didn’t know how to go about it. I felt stuck. Then I went to a meeting and saw Sabra’s window with her grandmother’s dishwashing ritual and Nicky’s painted toy kitchen. Then I went home and took a shower. And in the shower it came to me. My mother had already made an ‘art work’ (a paper bag with a brick hidden inside) that said beautifully what I wanted to say. The rest was easy.”–HZ

CLASS NOTES – Nicky Lindeman, Lucy R. Lippard

“In collective discussions, the idea came up to do a serial—the adventures of Henrietta Heretic, the *Heresies* heroine featured several years ago in a collective page-art piece in *Criss-Cross*.”—LRL

“Lucy wanted to incorporate all the magazine covers into the narrative. She wrote a rough text which traced Henrietta’s personal/political evolution through *Heresies*’ themes, chronologically. We discussed it briefly and I took it home. My first drawing began as a series of ‘hieroglyphics’ which merged into one very large graffiti-like drawing. When we looked at the drawing together, we couldn’t see how to incorporate Lucy’s writing and the covers into it. So I cut it up on the spot and later reworked the individual pieces to go with the covers.”—NL

“I was horrified to see Nicky chop away at her big drawing and felt I’d driven her to it. But it worked both ways. Her criticisms of my text sent me back to the typewriter; I abandoned the serial aspect because it was too complicated for a wall piece.

“Nicky was hesitant about drawing directly on the wall and also about making ‘illustrations’ for each issue of the magazine, because her own art was going in a different direction. But when we went to the museum to begin the installation, she felt the drawings glued to the wall would look lumpy, so she decided to take the risk. When we got the page mapped out, we just started to improvise, and that’s when (for me) the collaboration worked best. We pinned up the covers, trying different angles; then Nicky just plunged in and began her drawings; then I scribbled my texts on, rewriting as I went along, so they were finally short enough, more like notes.”—LRL

“I saw the piece as sort of an advertisement/notebook history of the magazine, so I added holes at the top of the page, as though it were torn out of a spiral notebook. That made the sketchy aspect easier to take.”—NL

“I always work fast, on the spur of the moment, and not being an artist, I was a lot less worried than Nicky was about the end result. I saw it as an experiment in collaboration. We’ll probably work together again, and probably in a very different way, having learned something about each other from this round.”—LRL

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Page Art by the Collective

- "Artrace: An Heretical Bored Game," *Artforum*, February 1980, pp. 59-62.
- "From Cradle to Collective or Higher Than Hierarchies: The Horrors and Hopes of...Henrietta Heretic!," *Criss-Cross* [Boulder], no. 11/12, March 1981, pp. 36-41.

Events*

- Rummage sale and skills auction with performances by Poppie Johnson, Carolee Schneeman, and Theodora Skipitares, among others, 112 Greene Street Workshop, February 1977.
- Benefit readings by Rita Mae Brown, Sheila Jordon, Eve Merriam, and Adrienne Rich, Sahara Club, January 1978.
- Benefit auction of Collective members' art, Hamilton Gallery of Fine Art, February 1979.
- First Annual Art Benefit Exhibition, with over 100 women artists, Frank Marino Gallery, May 1980.
- Second Annual Art Benefit Exhibition, with over 300 women artists, Grey Gallery, June 1982.
- Issue #14 benefit, with performances by Jessica Hagedorn with the Gangster Choir and Lipstick, No More Nice Girls, and Body, Mudd Club, June 1982.
- Third Annual Art Benefit Exhibition, with over 150 women artists, Frank Marino Gallery, September 1982.
- Issue #15 readings, Just Above Midtown Gallery and Schomburg Center for Research on Black Culture, March 26 and 28, 1983.
- Third Annual Women's International Film Festival, co-sponsored with Second Decade, Eighth Street Playhouse, September 8-11, 1983.

Issues of Heresies

- #1 "Heresies: Feminism, Art and Politics," vol. 1, no. 1, 1977, 112 pp.
- #2 "Patterns of Communication and Space Among Women," vol. 1, no. 2, 1977, 128 pp.
- #3 "Lesbian Art and Artists," vol. 1, no. 3, 1977, 128 pp.
- #4 "Women's Traditional Arts: The Politics of Aesthetics," vol. 1, no. 4, 1978, 128 pp.
- #5 "The Great Goddess," vol. 2, no. 1, 1978, 136 pp. (reprinted Dec. 1982).
- #6 "On Women and Violence," vol. 2, no. 2, 1978, 128 pp.
- #7 "Women Working Together," vol. 2, no. 3, 1979, 128 pp.
- #8 "Third World Women: The Politics of Being Other," vol. 2, no. 4, 1979, 128 pp.
- #9 "Women Organized/Women Divided: Power, Propaganda and Backlash," vol. 3, no. 1, 1980, 96 pp.
- #10 "Women and Music," vol. 3, no. 2, 1980, 96 pp.
- #11 "Making Room: Women and Architecture," vol. 3, no. 3, 1980, 96 pp.
- #12 "Sex Issue," vol. 3, no. 4, 1981, 96 pp.
- #13 "Earthkeeping/Earthshaking: Feminism and Ecology," vol. 4, no. 1, 1981, 96 pp.
- #14 "The Women's Pages," vol. 4, no. 2, 1982, 48 pp.
- #15 "Racism Is the Issue," vol. 4, no. 3, 1982, 96 pp.
- #16 "Film/Video/Media," vol. 4, no. 4, 1983, 96 pp.

Upcoming

- #17 "Women's Groups: Time to Raise Hell!"
- #18 "Acting Up! Women in Theater and Performance Art"
- #19 "Mothers, Mags and Movie Stars: Feminism and Class"
- #20 "Satire"

General Information

The *Heresies* Collective can be reached at: PO Box 766, Canal Street Station, NY, NY 10013; phone: (212) 505-7878. Subscription rates are: \$15 per year (four issues) for individuals, \$24 for institutions. Single current issues cost: \$5.00; back issues: \$6.00.

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*All events took place in New York City.

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