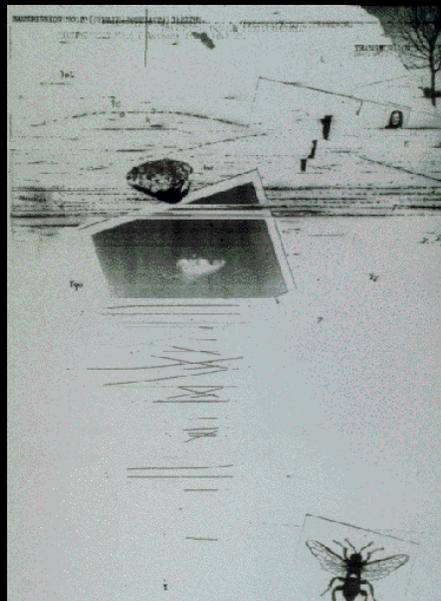
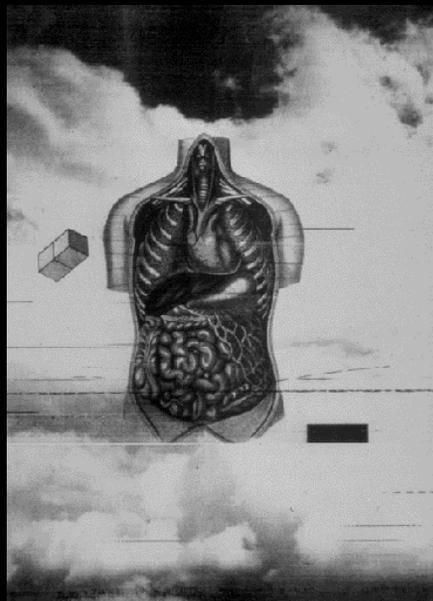


## Images in a Post-Photographic Age

September 17, 1999 - December 17, 1999



Will Larson, *Untitled 1970-75*, 8 1/2" x 11", Electro-Carbon Prints

(Multiple transmissions of photographs, voice, text, music and graphics using Graphic Sciences Teleprinter.)

### @ c21 Will Larson

In Don DeLillo's recent novel "Underworld" the narrator slips into one of those many off-handed remarks that is so characteristic of DeLillo's writing as it oscillates between the quietly profound and the profoundly obvious. He reminds us casually "how human it is to see things as something else." Much of the transformation of our modern culture over the last century rests upon the presumption of just such irony and the patterns of spectatorship shaping what we see and how we see ourselves. For those of us who came of age around mid-century (that is, we recognized the propagation of identity through image) the emerging techno-culture reflected an undeniable reciprocity between technology and representation. So much so that "technology" itself not only became a kind of utopian metaphor for the mechanics of seeing and being seen, but offered its own brand of salvation politics.

Photography has been at the root of much of the discussion and evolving theorization on which our electronic culture now turns. Introduced in 1839 (the same year Charles

Babbage with the assistance of mathematician Ada Lovelace introduced the first true mechanical digital computer), it was quickly embraced as an automated machine image capable of mirroring material reality without the hand of the artist. And it was unique in another critical way. It carried the possibility of conveying meaning on the level of icon, symbol and index simultaneously, distinguishing it from other non-optical systems of expression while securing its place in the now flacid debate of its status as an art form. Much of my own fascination, if not obsession, with the photographic image has been tied to this simultaneous interplay or tension between index and symbol, between mechanical impartiality and personal language. Our collective notion of photography persisted throughout most of the century grounded in this simple yet paradoxical condition, while the image itself gained unparalleled agency in the trajectory of twentieth century thought and politics.

Linking digital technology to the production of photographic images and image-forms,

while unhinging photography from the classic burden of depicting the truth (an admittedly highly complex task reflecting intention, experience and observation), shifted the mutability of the image from the essentially interpretive/psycho-analytic to the techno/imaginative. Our ability to see the image as something greater than simply a descriptive record grew naturally out of our own analytic tendencies, meant to penetrate the intentions of the picture-maker and/or read the subliminal psychological state of the subject(s), all generally compressed into a 1/100 of a second of picture time. The digital photograph has dramatically altered the likelihood of a fictional basis of the image, while properly implicating it within its own technological means of production. There now exists a kind of parallax between photography and the photographic, rendered palatable in the knowledge of our digital capabilities and the demystification of truth.

What was once securely factual is now factually ambiguous and the mantel of truth-telling seems to have fallen closer to video, with the

immediacy of the ever-present camcorder, surveillance technology, real-time recording and live broadcasting, while drifting steadily away from the now suspect still image. This marks a semiotic break in the fabric of our collective consciousness about photography and what constitutes the photographic. The ability to perfectly forge the image so that the content neither contradicts knowledge nor conflicts with experience, conceals only the fact that our senses deceive us. No recourse through witnesses, reports, experience or common sense guarantees the integrity of the photograph, although consensus may increase the probability. What is now considered digitally photographic has wedged uncertainty between signifier and the signified. Curiously, photography inherently speaks always to the past while the digital image, like that of painting, resides in the present, leaving the digital photograph to occupy the new boundary between the atom-heavy artifact and cyber-virtuality. For those of us extruded through the keyhole of modernism, the need and fascination to deconstruct and explore the means by which images were produced and how they conveyed meaning confronted classical arguments for the perfectly aestheticized moment and re-animated the critical environment surrounding photography in the latter part of the century.

Although this disrupted a certain cultural logic between the optical unconscious, as Walter Benjamin describes it, and objectivity, it also served notice on the comforting thought of simple order. The new aesthetics of our techno-culture will likely emerge from the tradition of film and the auteur, as writer, producer and director, configured around broadly discursive cultural, political and biological networks. The new "vision" of the mid-century, modeled by followers of both the German Bauhaus and later the new Bauhaus in the United States, seemed to galvanize the practice and formal teaching of photography around concerns of experimental "seeing" and technical exploration against that of the traditional connoisseurship of pure vision. It was an integrated experience bringing artists, writers, poets, architects, designers and film-makers together in common purpose, recognizing the accruing complexity of our modern visual culture, while anticipating the power of networked thinking and collaboration. It spawned a climate of inquiry and experimentation which destabilized virtually all aspects of the medium and

propelled photography center stage, driving our visual culture.

The seeds of our electronic culture grew more and more visible with the broader use of telegraphic devices such as the wire-photo and subsequent telecopier (fax machine), television, telegraph, and telephone, all encoding information electronically for remote transmission. It seemed to signal a radical transformation of the materiality of the image and its potential for manipulation and integration into an emerging electronic elsewhere. This undifferentiated digital coding of photographs, sound, music and text together offered many of us a new language of synthesis, providing a common electronic platform for unifying basically incompatible signifiers. Even in their seemingly primitive state, many of these early electronic image-processing technologies forged a context for what was to follow and began to disrupt our sense of the physicality of the image and its mooring in time.

Other corresponding optical/mechanical means of the photographic process as well as related technologies such as holography, the slit camera, Polaroid SX-70 instant camera and color Xerox copier, itself an instant camera, fueled greater and greater challenges to the temporal boundaries of still photography. Sequence, interval, and collage produced presentational modes of display calculated to convey narrativity, cinematic continuity and temporal flow. As the data-processing technology improved exponentially, so followed the variability and viability of the image in time and space. An image now potentially immaterial, non-local, and of light of a different magnitude. It is probably safe to assume that the computer now stands unparalleled as a tool of production and as a site of interactivity, uniting all of the historical possibilities of the machine-generated image. What flourishes beyond the hyperbole is the raw vitality and ironic play confronting the political and aesthetic issues of our time, raising salient arguments for more integrated experience, while building forms that manage to hold together our incompatibilities and histories long enough to disarm the status quo. Our uneasiness with the intimate coupling of our body and technology is understandable. Maintaining or recouping an integrated sense of "wholeness" is not merely an act of faith but the result of lived social relations, in turn socializing our new networks of communication and mastering our intricate hi-

tech visualizing tools. The greatest risk, as Donna Haraway suggests, is that "our machines are disturbingly lively and we ourselves frighteningly inert."

In a naive state of mind and with the suspension of a certain logic, one could think that the orchestra resides in the radio. The otherness of our cybernetic culture often conflicts with our own innate sense of space, time and place, disrupting the familiar architecture of our identities. In this reconfigured environment what is "photographic" has significantly altered our individual means of designation and, with that, opened new terrain of rendered experience, simulated spaces and fluid connectivity with each other. Our machines cannot dream for us. They do offer a new logic of expression by which we can imagine other worlds and assert our sense of self while taking pleasure in reconstructing the boundaries of everyday life created in the collapse of the "it" and "us" of our cyberculture.

Will Larson  
6/21/99  
@3:34 pm

Will Larson is Director of Graduate studies in Photography/Digital Imaging at Maryland Institute, College of Art in Baltimore. His work has been exhibited widely and is in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the National Museum of American Art, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, among many others, both here and abroad. He has received numerous grants and fellowships, including the Pennsylvania Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, a Guggenheim fellowship and four NEA fellowships. He has also served on both a Peer Panel and a Policy Review Panel for the NEA. Will lived in Sienna, Italy prior to studying with Aaron Siskind at Institute of Design in Chicago. From there he moved to Philadelphia, where he still lives. He is currently curating a major digital exhibition entitled; [Signal to Light, Images from the Silicon Elsewhere](#), to open in the Fall of 2000 at the Maryland Institute.



Will Larson, *Untitled Theatre du Monde Series*, 1996, 30" x 40" Color Coupler print

I thought about photographing myself  
nude writhing on a tile floor using a large  
aperture and slow shutter speed.

### Susan Evans

#561,  
11" x 14"  
Gelatin Silver print

Photographic Text exists simultaneously as thought, symbol, sign and referent an accessible, tangible, and manipulatable communication of the visual semiotic. Internalized latent imaging emphasizes the multiplicity of meaning beyond the image captured in silver halide. Photographic Text supersedes traditional imagery, leaving the technical process and bare visual cues, meaning you are to glean, learn, infer, ponder, question, and/or enjoy. The information in each image is directly presented and invariable for each viewer. However, what is done with that information revolves around the individual's imagination, education, preferences, and socialization. These image concepts are processed by each individual in a variety of ways: creation of latent images in the mind, association with past experiences or knowledge, daydreams into the subconscious, application of known structure, addition of knowledge, questioning of current systems, or rejection of what was seen. It is in this way that the 'photographic image,' latent and subjective to each viewer, becomes what that viewer chooses it to be, instead of the photograph dictating universal value. ■

Susan E. Evans received her MFA in photography from Cornell University in 1994 where she moved from minimalist colorfields to working with text. Having started working with photography at the age of eight, Susan has experimented with different formats, subjects, processes and techniques. Susan E. Evans shows nationally and is represented by The Ricco/Maresca Gallery in New York City, by Rule Modern and Contemporary Gallery in Denver, and can be seen on [www.thesight.com](http://www.thesight.com) as part of The Denver Photo Salon. She is represented in both public and private collections across the country. Susan lectures, curates, participates in panel discussions and has taught a variety of photography courses on a collegiate level.

While playfully critiquing American history, Presidential rhetoric, and technological development, this work attempts to serve as a kind of fingerprint for the last century of Americana, as it was addressed by our Presidents.

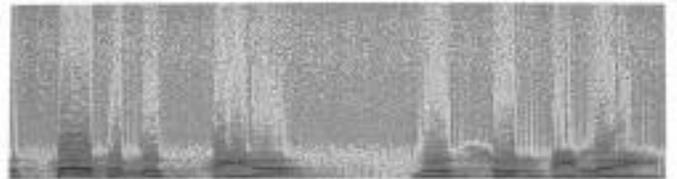
*This Difficult Landscape, Excerpts from Historic Presidential Speeches, 1908-1993*, is both a historical critique and a self-reflective portfolio. The speeches used all come from the CD box-set, *The Library of Congress Presents: Historic Presidential Speeches (1908-1993)*, released by Rhino World Beat in 1995.

Specifically, this work pairs a written excerpt from a specific Presidential speech with a spectral analysis of that same speech fragment as it was said by each President. A spectral analysis (a kind of visual mapping) is the result of a computer recognizing sound as it exists in the sound spectrum and in time. The computer turns sound into raw data that can be changed to alter or edit the sound, or can be used to create visual representations of how sound exists in time. The visual representation is directly indexical to the way that the words were spoken in the speeches; and therefore to the speaker. ■

Matt Gainer lives in Los Angeles, CA., where he pursues his own work and co-directs *Strange Air*, a nomadic exhibition space.

### Matt Gainer

*The Phantom Of Fear Will Soon Be Laid,  
Franklin D, Roosevelt 3/12/33, The First "Fireside Chat" • An Intimate Talk  
With The People Of The United States On Banking,  
from This Difficult Landscape, Excerpts From Historic Presidential  
Speeches, 1908-1993, 1997  
23" x 23"  
Iris print*



The Phantom Of Fear Will Soon Be Laid

Franklin D. Roosevelt 3/12/33  
The First "Fireside Chat" • An Intimate Talk  
With The People Of The United States On Banking



**Rachel Schreiber**

*Untitled, from Anne in New York, 1998*  
26" x 20"  
Iris print

*Anne In New York* is a series of images which continues my exploration into the representation of the Holocaust in American culture. There is a certain irreverence to using Anne Frank's visage in anything other than a sacred context. By doing so, I am attempting to wrench the viewer out of the more familiar trappings of Holocaust imagery: barbed wire, flames, black and white images of trains, etc.

"She is perhaps Hitler's best known victim, but what was Anne Frank really like?" So reads the postcard pinned to my bulletin board, which advertises the recent film, *Anne Frank Remembered*. Most of the hype surrounding Anne Frank is not really concerned with Anne herself (and the film really isn't, either), but is concerned with what I have come to call The Cult of Anne Frank. She has been made into the quintessential Holocaust victim for a variety of reasons. She wasn't an observant Jew, and as such assimilated American Jews can relate to her. As a young girl, her "innocence" is redoubled by her age and her gender. And, her story ends neatly, we do not need to read about her suffering. In fact, many are unaware that Anne died in Bergen-Belsen.

Anne's face, made slightly forlorn and opaque by its translation into a graffiti stencil, has come to symbolize the suffering of millions of people. Can one image really bear that kind of weight? As a monochromatic "tag", the image takes on the iconic status of such images as Warhol's Monroe, Che Guevara, and others. She looms about New York City, locus for American Jewish culture, such a seamless part of the urban landscape that she is scarcely noticed by passersby. Her translation into American culture is so complete that when her image is reunited with its original caption, "I usually look quite different," in her own handwriting, we hardly notice that the caption is in English, while Anne Frank wrote in Dutch. ■

Rachel Schreiber is an artist and writer who works with photography, video, and computers. Her videotapes have screened internationally in such festivals as the World Wide Video Festival, the London Jewish Film Festival, the New York Video Festival, the San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, and the Women in the Director's Chair Festival in Chicago. Her writing has been published in such journals as *Index: Contemporary Art and Culture*; *the New Art Examiner*; and *Afterimage*. She received her MFA in Photography and Critical Writing from the California Institute of the Arts, and subsequently participated in the Whitney Independent Study Program in New York City. Schreiber lives in Baltimore, where she teaches electronic media at the Maryland Institute, College of Art.

By digitally manipulating and combining disparate elements taken from images that I've photographed myself as well as from images I've found, I fabricate narrative possibilities and situations that appear vaguely familiar and produce numerous associations. I combine parts of different faces and bodies to create characters with peculiar appearances and physical expressions that reveal a sense of truth about his/her state of mind and being.

Children and adolescents exist in a state of disingenuous grace and innocence that evokes compassion and sympathy in the viewer. In my images, I take the idealistic image of youth and corrupt it by putting children and adolescents in discomfoting situations. I want to create a conflict between our inherited precepts of right and wrong in order to cause a disturbance in the viewer and provoke a dialogue with his/her conscience.

I feel that the true power of an image emerges when it is allowed to develop on its own. This means that I do not overtly conceptualize or plan my images. I allow myself to change them constantly by intuitively adding and subtracting elements, thus keeping the image in a state of flux until the type of peculiar situation that I'm looking for is achieved.

The final image is output onto photographic negative film and then printed and toned conventionally. By doing this I obtain archival prints and a photographic quality that contributes to a deceptive sense of familiarity and nostalgia and that opposes the general expectations of computer-manipulated imagery. ■

Born in Kirkenes, Norway, in 1973, Simen Johan moved to New York in 1992. He received his BFA in Photography from the School of Visual Arts in New York and has exhibited in Europe and the US. His images have also appeared in several publications, including *HotLava* magazine, *Zoom International*, and *USA Today*.

**Simen Johan**

*Untitled #71, 1997*  
25" x 29"  
Toned Gelatin Silver print





### Martina Lopez

*The Gifts of Life*, 1998  
40" x 50"  
Cibachrome

I started working with my family archives nearly twelve years ago. It was also at this time that I began to use the computer for my art making. Since then, the elements of the family photograph and the electronic media remain prevalent in my work. In the beginning, my images were very autobiographical; they were, in fact, documentation of my family history. I began incorporating family images beyond my personal album as a way to create a collective history, one which would allow individuals to bring their own memories to my work.

The 19th century portrait, landscape, and the digital media help me communicate my interpretation of the human experience. By extracting people from their original context and then placing them into fabricated landscapes, I hope to retell a story of their being, one which allows the images to acquire a life of their own. While the pieces from photographs verify an actual lived experience, the landscape stands as my metaphor for life, demarcating its quality, where the horizon suggests an endless time.

I feel my work is successful when it reflects my personal thoughts and experiences which then speak to the inner soul of the viewer. For instance, look at my recent images and then consider the events of my personal life. The previous year was a time of extreme emotions for me. I lost a brother to a terrible disease and three months later I gave birth to my first child. This blatant exchange of life and death made me question many things, the intangible human spirit, the miracle of birth, the passage of death, nature's role of the mother, and my own inner conflict of independence and the dependent child. The specific stories are not necessary to understanding the work, but they are what drive their creation. My images have become a visual diary, a place where I come to terms with life. ■

Martina Lopez has been teaching photography and digital imaging at the University of Notre Dame since 1993. In 1985, she earned a BFA Degree from the University of Washington in Seattle and a MFA degree from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1990. Her work was included in the third edition of Naomi Rosenblum's *A World History of Photography* and is in various private and public collections including the Art Institute of Chicago and the National Museum of American Art in Washington, DC.

It is my inclination to mistrust the surface--the official version, the apparent reality. How our perceptions shape our view of what is real and unreal, how they are manipulated by media and by socialization, and how they influence the construction of identity are some of the concerns evident in my work. As a lesbian familiar with misperception, and as a native Angeleno who has been weaned on Hollywood's obsession with illusion and glamour, I am motivated to examine the balance of power and the forces (internal and external) which mold our observations. The work's conceptual framework explores the tension between what is natural and unnatural, between beauty and ugliness, and between surface and content, and is supported through diverse media--photographic-based, installation, sculpture, and offset lithography--sometimes independently and sometimes coexisting within a given piece. Overall, the work strategically seduces viewers into questioning how and what they tend to perceive.

The Self-Portraits (1995) explore interior or private identity. Here my face is distorted sometimes beyond human recognition--the viewer sees flesh where there is none, or the absence, say, of a nose or mouth. These haunting small-scale portraits are produced by literally moving my face across the surface of a flatbed scanner. While the camera is arguably a social mediator, the scanner is a tool of technology whose purpose is to copy that which is laid on its flat surface. But what if the subject is neither flat nor stationary? The resulting portraits are a series of moments, an unfolding of identity rather than a fixed construction. Distortions are achieved solely in the performative process of scanning; virtually no manipulation is done within the computer. In the Portraits, which pay homage to surrealism's dialogue between the conscious and subconscious, I attempt to raise questions about the nature of beauty, as well as attempt to reshape lesbian identity. How is beauty perceived, or ugliness? Is mutant, twisted, or deformed flesh necessarily ugly? Such definitions deny the possibilities for transformation or variation, no matter the gender, cultural identity, or sexual preference. ■

Susan Silton currently resides in Los Angeles. Her work has been exhibited at the Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Craig Krull Gallery, the Joseph Gross Gallery at the University of Arizona, Tucson; SF Camerawork; Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena; and the Municipal Art Gallery, Los Angeles. In May 2000 she will be exhibiting in London at the JK Gallery. She is the recipient of a Phelan Award in Photography. Her work is included in the permanent collections of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum and the Library of Congress.

### Susan Silton

*Self-Portrait #5*, 1995  
9 1/2" x 12 1/2"  
Giclée print on Rives BFK





**Paul Berger**

*Card Plate #5, 1998*  
30" x 22"  
Iris print

In the realm of the material, a computer image is capable of nearly seamless collage. Its lack of inherent "surface", its existence as first and foremost a "description" of a picture, makes this so. At the same time, its ability to gather images from such an array of personal and public sources - photography, drawing, diagrammatic rendering, video, broadcast television "synthetic" 3D imaging - provides an opportunity to create highly charged composite images with multiple and even contradictory references to science, art, reportage, media, memory. It is significant that these sources are themselves inherently collage-like.

The Card Plates series, composed of 30" x 22" IRIS prints, begins with the metaphor of the press sheet. Each print has the dauntingly dense and composite look of a pre-signed or pre-trimmed sheet codex. However, it is clear relatively soon that there is a basic card unit structure, composed of 2D and 3D elements, that weaves a repetition and redundancy across a quasi narrative space - a cross between a mosaic and a comic strip. This density and blending of temporal and spacial landscaping is a reflection of the implosion of all image making systems currently underway within our culture with no clear end in sight. We must find a way to thrive, navigate and play within the image world we have created and continue to expand. ■

Paul Berger, BFA 1970, UCLA; MFA 1973, Visual Studies Workshop. I have worked in the photographic medium since 1965, and in digital electronic media since 1981. I have exhibited nationally and in Europe, and have received two NEA grants, 1979 and 1986.

During the period of the Oklahoma City bombing, the Unibomber and the various other violent political acts perpetrated by extreme radicals I became quite fascinated by the media's treatment of the driven individuals that carried out these acts. That treatment was of course instant vilification. And while I certainly don't condone acts of violence, it seems to me that they, and the public in general, seem to completely forget the course of American history and the positive effects of radical acts on our current freedoms. I suppose it depends on what side of history you fall on as to whether you are or become a sinner or a saint. Which brings us to John Brown.

John Brown shares a lot of traits with these men. He was fixed on his mission. He believed himself anointed by God to carry out his work. He was headstrong and obstinate, and let nothing deter him from his goal. He could be incredibly ruthless as well as incredibly foolish. He was both a liberator of men and a cold-blooded murderer. "Remember that there can be no redemption of sin without the shedding of blood," he said.

John Brown was a failure during his lifetime at almost everything he tried to do. The Harper's Ferry Raid was a dismal failure too, except for one point, it lit the fuse that started the Civil War and in the end freed the slaves. Lincoln might be known as the Great Emancipator, but his actions were made inevitable by the chain of events John Brown set in motion.

One thing we know for sure about John Brown, he was right. ■

Tyrone Georgiou received his Masters of Fine Arts from Yale University. A native New Yorker, he has been the recipient of various awards and grants including a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship. His work has been seen in Solo and Group Exhibitions through out the country. A Professor of Art at the University at Buffalo/SUNY for over twenty five years he is currently head of the photography program.

**Tyrone Georgiou**

*Untitled,*  
from the *John Brown Series*, 1999  
36" x 36"  
DigiPRINT





### Avraham Elat

*Untitled,*  
engraved C.T. (computerized tomography) image, 1999  
50cm x 60cm  
Gelatin Silver print

1.

In his book *The Story of Art*, E.H. Gombrich says that traces of strikes with sharp tools on animal images in cave paintings are evidence of the belief of the pre-historic man that injuring a painted animal image will bring success in the hunt. In order to demonstrate the magic of such an act, even in our time, Gombrich asks if we could calmly, without fear and apprehension gouge out the eye of a beloved from a photograph. This question was on my mind when I decided to scratch into the CT (computerized tomography) images of my own brain, and indeed, the act was followed by feelings of danger and threat.

2.

In photography there is a direct physical link between the object and the negative. "The photograph is literally an emanation of the referent. From a real body, which was there, proceed radiations which ultimately touch me, who am here." (R.Barthes, *Camera Lucida*)

And thus, the act of scratching the brain photographs brings me back to the cave: to deeply rooted fears and predilections, and to the elementary signs of language crystallized into art – which contains on the one hand values of pure beauty, and on the other hand becomes the instrument for exorcism, defense, and healing. ■

Avraham Elat was born in Israel. He is Co-founder and member of Pyramida - Centre for Contemporary Art in Haifa where he has his studio. He works in various fields of visual art including painting, etching, sculpture and experimental films. His work has been shown in many solo and group exhibitions and art events around the world.

These photograms are counterfeit.

Real photograms are created through a simple photographic process in which solid or translucent objects are placed over light sensitive paper. The paper is then exposed and processed, resulting in images, which look like negative silhouettes and shadows. In making these counterfeit photograms I have devised an integration of this early experimental photographic process and computer graphics. My intent is to produce a plausible reality through artificial means. In a 3D modeling computer program I construct a digital or virtual model that – if existed – could produce a real photogram. I create 3D objects, assign properties to these objects (e.g. Transparency, reflectivity, etc.), arrange these objects over a surface, and cast lights over the whole arrangement. I then isolate the objects' shadows, which fall on the surface and invert the image into a negative image using a photography software program. The final image is inkjet printed with Lysonic permanent inks on fine art rag paper with the look of an aquatint.

This work synthesizes aspects of a particularly complex and politically charged dynamic between society and technology: How technology is used by terrorists and how electronic surveillance technology is used to counter terrorism. I researched the subject by reading counter-terrorism manuals and catalogs of espionage and terrorism equipment and found that many of the items one would find in a terrorist's luggage are dynamic forms in themselves. And, while I have always found the images in airport X-ray security monitors compelling, they grew in significance as I developed the strategies for producing the counterfeit photograms described above. The X-ray process and the photogram process share some interesting similarities. ■

Kimberly Burleigh received her MFA in Printmaking in 1980 from Indiana University. She has had a number of solo exhibitions and has participated in numerous group exhibitions internationally. She has been the recipient of several honors and awards and was selected as the single artist for the 1999 Ohio Arts Council Artist in Residence at Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, MA. Burleigh is and Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in Fine Arts at the University of Cincinnati.

### Kimberly Burleigh

*Shrapnel #2*, 1998  
7.5" x 10"  
Inkjet Print





### Michael Endsdorf

*Memory Grid*, 1995  
102 1/2" x 61 1/2"  
Color Coupler prints

The *Memory Grid* is a collection of mostly anonymous faces created with the help of digital imaging software. The individual faces were extracted from digitized media imagery, advertising pictures, and family snapshots, and manipulated in various ways using Adobe Photoshop on a Macintosh, in order to investigate the nature of photographic, as well as ocular vision. The individual faces/files were output directly, via a syquest disk, to a Canon Color Laser copier and mounted individually on gator board by the artist. Combining the personal with the political is an attempt to understand and convey the elusive nature of photographic representation. Just what can a photograph tell us about the past and the present? What information is relevant? What part of the photographic process is a construction of the maker, and what part the subject's? What visual information is required for a viewer to make a positive ID, to trigger a memory, to spark a connection? Memory, identity, and visuality are the driving forces within the *Memory Grid* project. ■

Michael Endsdorf, Assistant Professor of Communication at Roosevelt University, Master of Fine Arts, University of Illinois at Chicago, 1989. Recently, Michael Endsdorf had his work exhibited in the Photography after Photography exhibition at museums in Germany, Austria, Denmark, Switzerland, Finland, and at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia. His work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago, and in the archives of the Digital Imaging Forum at [www.art.uh.edu/dif](http://www.art.uh.edu/dif).

As a child, I watched the movie *Carmen Jones* and saw Dorothy Dandridge for the first time. The film was made in 1954, and as a black child of the seventies, Dorothy was a magnificent wonder to me. "Mom, who is she?" I asked as we watched her magical performance. Mom told me Dorothy's story as though she were reading from a best-seller. She was a great actress and singer in the forties and fifties, an icon in the hearts of her community. However, her career would repeatedly stumble. Hollywood was not ready for Dorothy, no matter how talented she was. Despite her limitations, in 1955 Dorothy Dandridge was nominated for an academy award (best leading actress). Dorothy died in 1965, *Carmen Jones* would be her greatest accomplishment. It should have been one of many...so I placed Dorothy in scenes opposite legendary leading men, starring in movies she could only dream about. ■

Beverly L. Johnson is a photography student at Villa Maria College in Buffalo. She is an emerging artist who hopes to one day open a photography studio and gallery.

### Beverly L. Johnson

*Denied*,  
Bus Show Panel from *The Dorothy Dandridge Series*, 1999  
9" x 26"  
DigiPRINT



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