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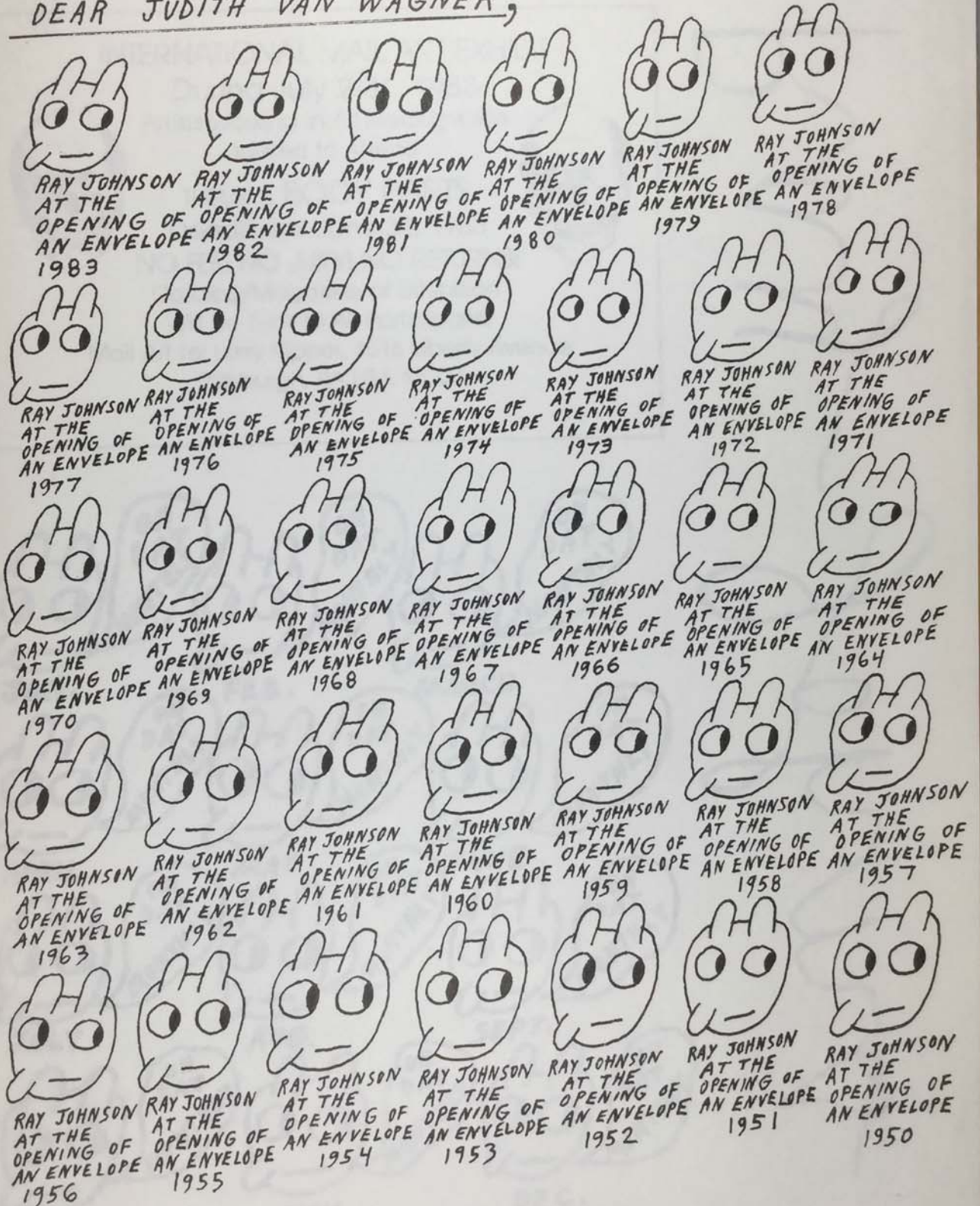
RED W. McDARRAH

Rauschenberg at the openi

A large grid of hand-drawn faces and text. Each face is a simple sketch with two large eyes and a small mouth. The text below each face is a variation of 'RAUSCH ENBERG AT THE OPENING' followed by a year. The text is often written upside down or mirrored. The years listed include 1983, 1982, 1981, 1980, 1979, 1978, 1977, 1976, 1975, 1974, 1973, 1972, 1971, 1970, 1969, 1968, 1967, 1966, 1965, 1964, 1963, 1962, 1961, 1960, 1959, 1958, 1957, 1956, 1955, 1954, 1953, 1952, 1951, 1950, 1949, 1948, 1947, 1946, 1945, 1944, 1943, 1942, 1941, 1940, 1939, 1938, 1937, 1936, 1935, 1934, 1933, 1932, 1931, 1930, 1929, 1928, 1927, 1926, 1925, 1924, 1923, 1922, 1921, 1920, 1919, 1918, 1917, 1916, 1915, 1914, 1913, 1912, 1911, 1910, 1909, 1908, 1907, 1906, 1905, 1904, 1903, 1902, 1901, 1900, 1899, 1898, 1897, 1896, 1895, 1894, 1893, 1892, 1891, 1890, 1889, 1888, 1887, 1886, 1885, 1884, 1883, 1882, 1881, 1880, 1879, 1878, 1877, 1876, 1875, 1874, 1873, 1872, 1871, 1870, 1869, 1868, 1867, 1866, 1865, 1864, 1863, 1862, 1861, 1860, 1859, 1858, 1857, 1856, 1855, 1854, 1853, 1852, 1851, 1850, 1849, 1848, 1847, 1846, 1845, 1844, 1843, 1842, 1841, 1840, 1839, 1838, 1837, 1836, 1835, 1834, 1833, 1832, 1831, 1830, 1829, 1828, 1827, 1826, 1825, 1824, 1823, 1822, 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DEAR JUDITH VAN WAGNER,



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INTERNATIONAL MAIL ART EXHIBIT

During July 2-31, 1983

Artists Working in All Mediums Are  
Invited to Attend



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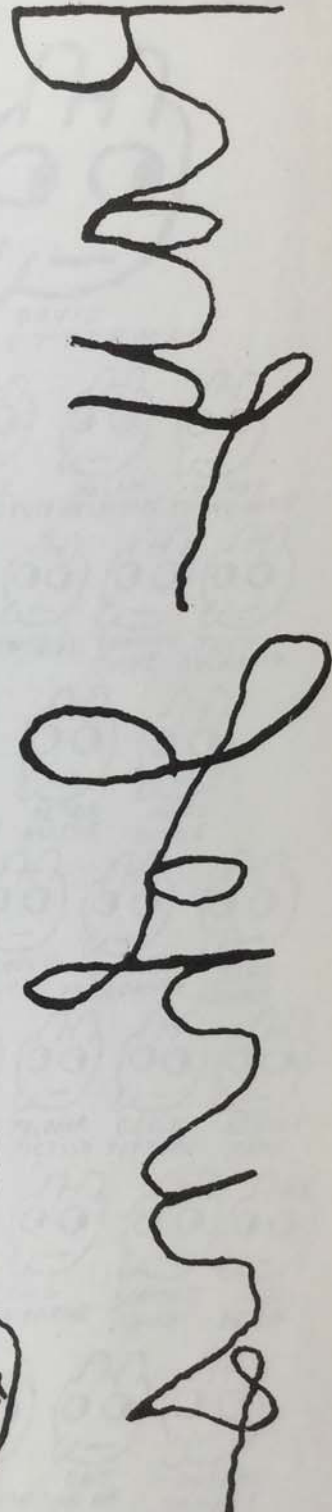
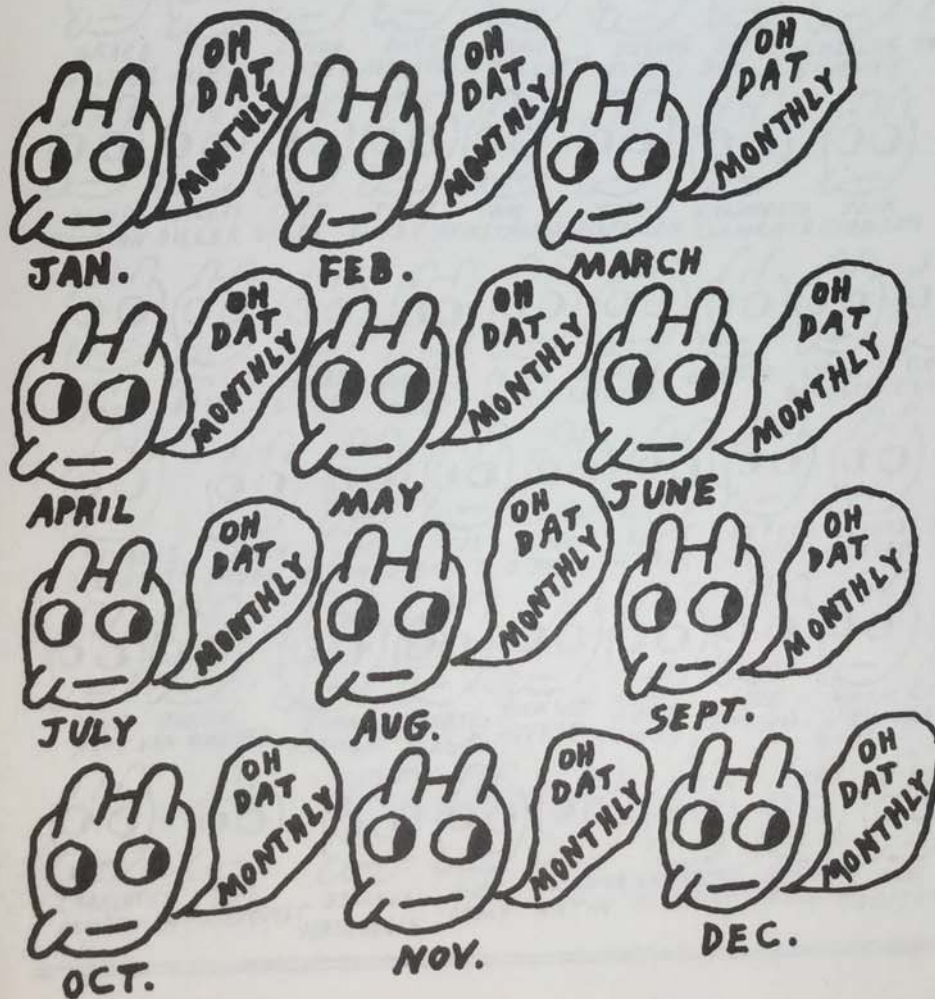
Deadline is June 30, 1983

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Will be Sent to All Participants

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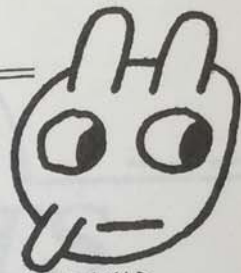


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NEW YORK CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL  
 DAVID LETTERMAN FAN CLUB MEETING

APRIL 21 AT 1:30 P.M.

HILLWOOD ART GALLERY  
 C.W. POST CENTER  
 GREENVALE, N.Y. 11548



DAVID  
LETTERMAN

- |                      |                      |                       |                  |                   |                     |                       |                    |                    |                                   |                |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
|                      |                      |                       |                  |                   |                     |                       |                    |                    |                                   |                |
| EMILY<br>POST        | ALLAN<br>KAPROW      | GLORIA<br>SWANSON     | HANS<br>BALDUNG  | KATIE<br>SEIDEN   | RIP<br>TAYLOR       | COCO<br>GORDON        | WILL<br>FARRINGTON | HELEN<br>HARRISON  | HENNY<br>YOUNGMAN                 |                |
|                      |                      |                       |                  |                   |                     |                       |                    |                    |                                   |                |
| GRACE<br>GLUECK      | JOHN<br>DUKA         | LINDA<br>VI VONA      | NICK<br>MARAVELL | AMEI<br>WALLACH   | JULIUS<br>VITALI    | BETSY<br>BAKER        | CHARLES<br>STUCKEY | TWIGGY             | TOMMY<br>TEENY<br>TUNE<br>DUCHAMP |                |
|                      |                      |                       |                  |                   |                     |                       |                    |                    |                                   |                |
| DAVID<br>BOURDON     | PHYLLIS<br>DILLER    | JOHN<br>DIGBY         | JOAN<br>DIGBY    | TOM<br>ARMSTRONG  | TOBY<br>SPIELMAN    | FRANCESCO<br>CLEMENTE | JOAN<br>HARRISON   | PETER<br>HUJAR     | MARY<br>BOONE                     |                |
|                      |                      |                       |                  |                   |                     |                       |                    |                    |                                   |                |
| HENRY<br>POST        | PHYLLIS<br>BRAFF     | EDVARD<br>LIEBER      | NATALIE<br>WOOD  | PETER<br>BEARD    | MARCIA<br>RESNICK   | CHRISTO               | LYNDA<br>BENGLIS   | CHUCK<br>CLOSE     | ELAINE<br>DEKOONING               | JOHN<br>EVANS  |
|                      |                      |                       |                  |                   |                     |                       |                    |                    |                                   |                |
| SUZANNE<br>DELEHANTY | JOHN<br>GRUEN        | LUCY<br>LIPPARD       | JEDD<br>GARET    | MARCIA<br>O'BRIEN | BRUCE<br>WEBER      | BETTE<br>DAVIS        | CLAUDE<br>PICASSO  | PALOMA<br>PICASSO  | CARLO<br>PITTORE                  | DENISE<br>HARE |
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Long Island Heritage

March, 1983, Page 35

# VISUAL ARTS

## Is Correspondence Art Really in Our Future??

By Patricia Roniger

Traditionally, there has always been room in the field of visual arts for just about everybody and all kinds of art. There's even room for Ray Johnson and his specialized correspondence school art.

Deadpan humor, cartoon drawings, fan clubs for the deceased, both famous and not so famous, an imaginary magazine, primal screams, silhouettes, a dancing lecturer, mail of all types... these are just a few of the things that make up Ray Johnson and his New York Correspondence School.

The school itself is not a school in the traditional sense, but an abstract concept of learning via an exchange of ideas, basically using the medium of art or creative writing, sent through the postal system.

This relatively new category of art is aptly called "Postal Art," and Ray Johnson is the one-man school of this art form.

If a concrete school did exist it would be Johnson's home in Locust Valley from

which he does most of his work.

The New York Correspondence School can be likened to a communication center. Mail of all different types is received by Johnson and then forwarded to someone else, who can then add to it and send it to another person. Johnson compares it to a chain letter of ideas.

Some of the things that are exchanged are poetry, prose, art, rocks, handmade objects, T-shirts, almost anything. In fact Johnson once received a small tombstone in the mail. This he did not forward to anyone. Art, poetry and prose, however, make up the bulk of his "Postal Art."

According to Johnson, in this age of communication, these schools or centers, such as his are being founded in many areas around the world such as in Budapest, Hungary, and Parma, Italy.

An extension of Johnson's school is his various fan clubs which he initiates, such as the Giuseppe Archimboldo Fan Club (who was a Milanese artist from the 14th century,) the Nancy Sinatra Fan Club

and the David Letterman Fan Club, to name a few. In initiating these clubs he considers himself a "communication catalyst."

As an example, his David Letterman Fan Club get together at a gallery in Manhattan was an amalgamation of many people, except David Letterman who declined to attend, exchanging ideas, information, poetry art, anything.

Johnson also does silhouettes, more than 275 people have shown the left side of their face (he will only silhouette the left side) to him over the last seven years including Lou Reed, Andy Warhol, Arakawa, Craig Claiborne and other famous and many not so famous people.

Since Ray Johnson and his school are indivisible from each other, an examination of the artist is necessary to understand the school.

Before starting his silhouette work, and before the art correspondence school, Johnson was a commercial artist. He then met Andy Warhol, who gave Johnson his "hand-me-

down" jobs. When Warhol moved onto another job, he would give the old one over to Johnson. Jobs such as fashion photographer or book jacket designer were attained in this fashion.

As a point of interest, Warhol became a fan of Ray Johnson and has a large collection of his work. "Unfortunately Warhol has not been exchanging his work," states Johnson.

Johnson's art is also in other private collections, as well as in museum collections in England, France, Italy and across this country.

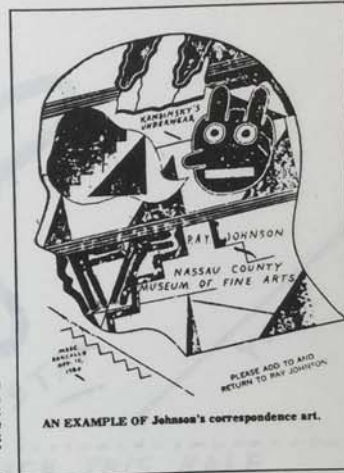
Johnson also has "home delivery" collections which he personalizes, puts in a box and takes to someone's home for a viewing. "Somewhat like a Fuller-Brush man," states Johnson.

Critics have called his work "a rude collage" and he of the throw-away gesture." Johnson, however, prefers the term "give away." In any case he liked the idea and decided to adopt it. At a lecture he gave, Johnson stuffed an air sickness bag with his brochures and threw them into the audience.

Johnson was the throw away "jester" at a lecture he gave at a Midwestern college when he stripped and ran through the audience. "The only thing I had on was my underarm deodorant," expostulated anyway. Dancing, primal screams, stripping, whatever feels right at the time is what Ray Johnson does at his lectures.

Ray Johnson is spontaneous, crazy and puzzling. "The whole thing is a clown act," explains Johnson, in that I am interested in the element of surprise." He also describes some of the things he does as an elaborate joke. For instance, his magazine "Smile" which was a take-off on the magazine "Vile," which was a take-off of the magazine "Life," which was a Canadian take-off of the more well-known "Life" magazine, is an example of what lengths this artist will go to for a joke.

He advertised "Smile" by requesting anyone interested in it to send for a free copy. Johnson describes the magazine as being analogous to the cheshire cat in that it



AN EXAMPLE OF Johnson's correspondence art.

was an invisible magazine. Johnson imagines his next magazine might be entitled "Half Smile" or "how about '33-1/3 Smile," states Johnson.

"Smile" is an unusual name for a Ray Johnson non-publication, for the artist rarely smiles, choosing instead to totally incorporate his deadpan humor into his being.

To use an old phrase, Ray Johnson and his work are "off the wall." The way he melts fantasy into reality, a 1960's type of concept and uses it to exchange ideas in this technological age of communication is decidedly unique.

Are you still wondering what Ray Johnson's correspondence art is? Well here is another example.

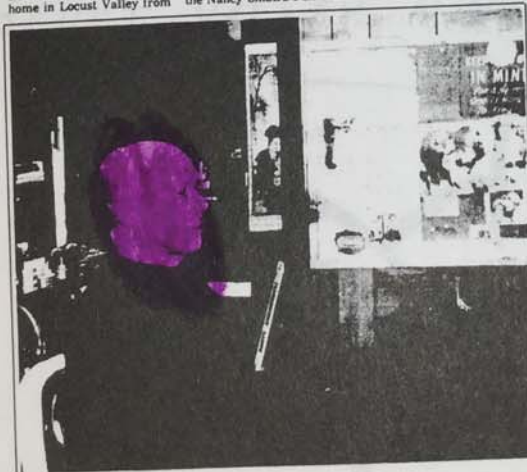
On meeting with Ray

Johnson prior to our interview he handed this writer a "xerox" copy of a silhouette done by him (the subject I do not know) which requested I add my own art to the silhouette and return it to Ray Johnson's address. Sometimes he'll request it be sent to another person, hence, the chain letter analogy.

In this manner Johnson involves the artist and sometimes, as in this case, the non-artist in his work.

Besides his silhouettes, Johnson is also noted for his cartoonish doodles of characters, with hotdog shaped noses who always have something to say.

A unique character who always has some statement to make. Can a correspondence be drawn? I'll leave that up to you.



RAY JOHNSON (right side pose) at his favorite barber shop. Tacked to bulletin board is a newspaper article featuring what appears to be a headless Johnson.

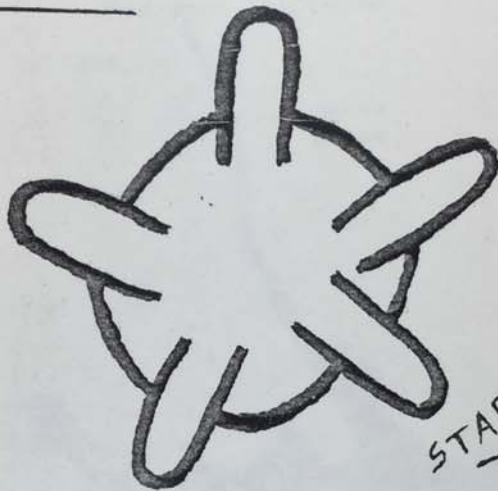
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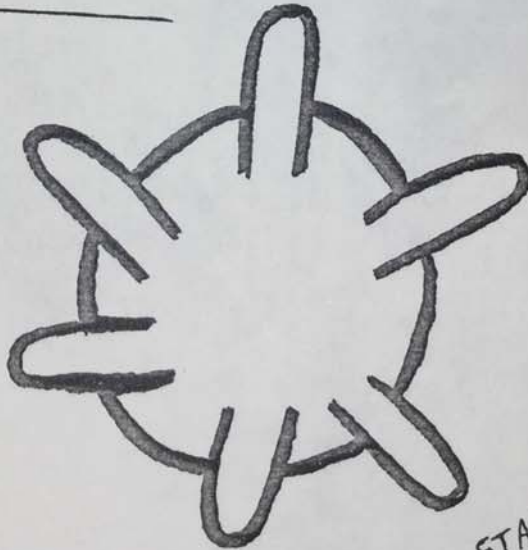
YOUR NAME

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DETACH THIS HALF

PLEASE ADD TO & SEND TO  
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STAR  
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YOUR NAME

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July 4, 1983

David,

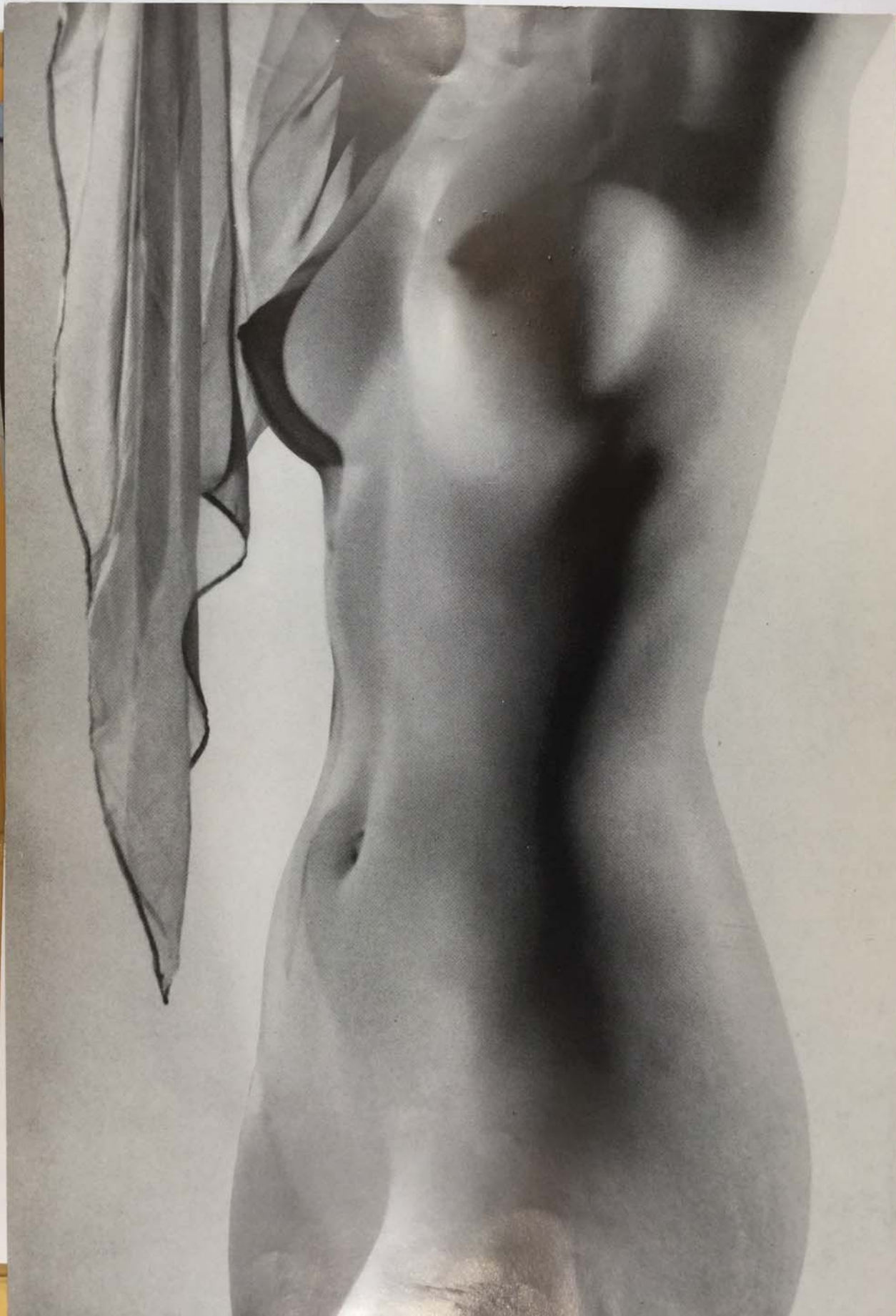
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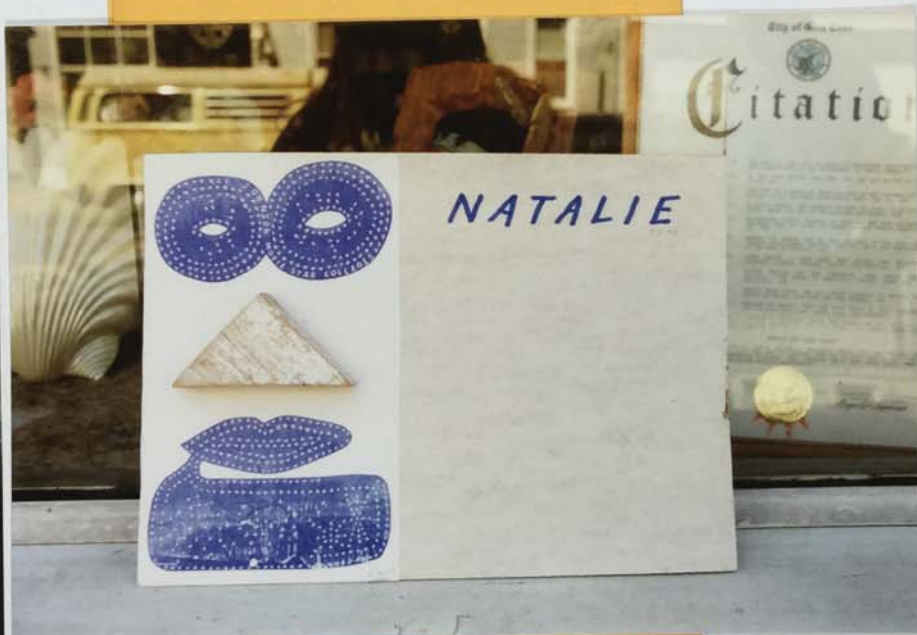
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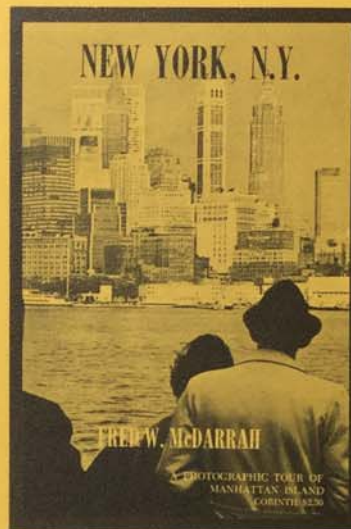


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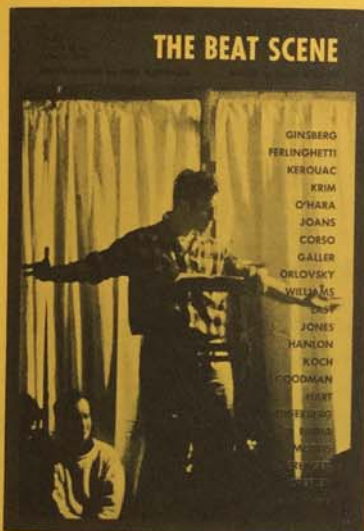
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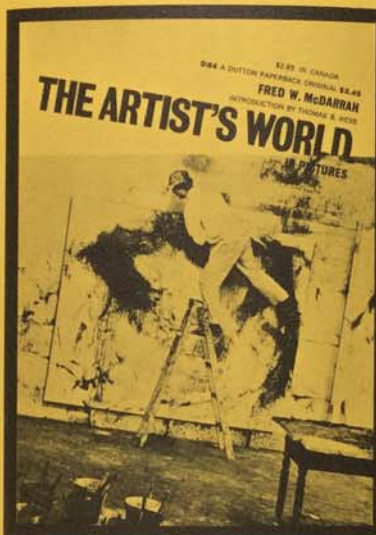


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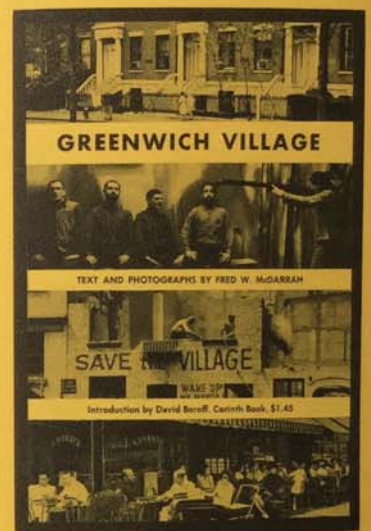


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# ART NEWS

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## Cover



Jasper Johns, who painted *Target* in encaustic on newsprint, and added a boxed shelf of plaster heads, is the newest member of a movement among young American artists to turn to a sort of neo-Dada—pyrotechnic or lyric, earnest but sly, un-aggressive ideologically but covered with esthetic spikes. Johns first one-man show [at Castelli; see review on p. 20] places him with such better-known colleagues as Rauschenberg, Twombly, Kaprow and Ray Johnson.

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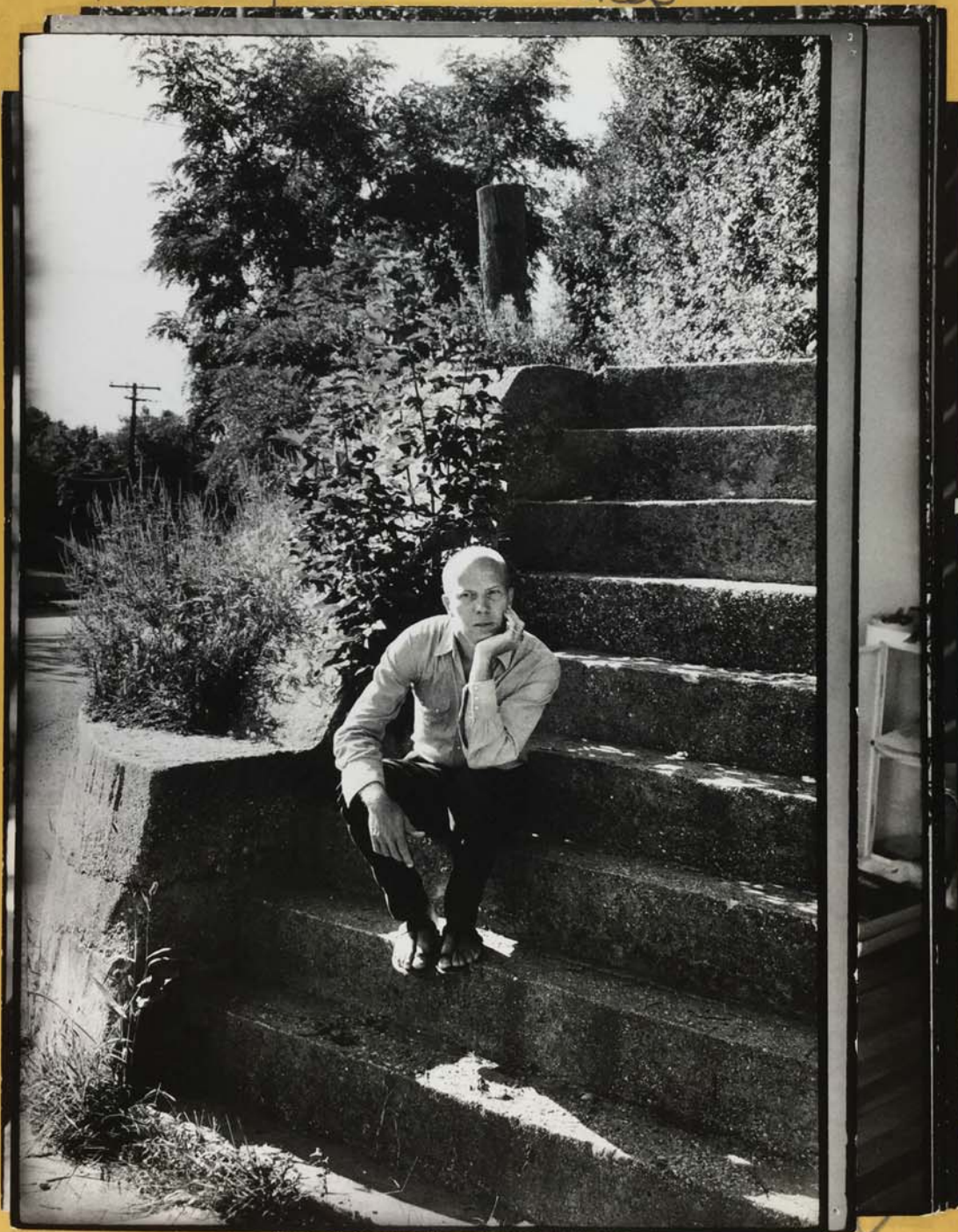
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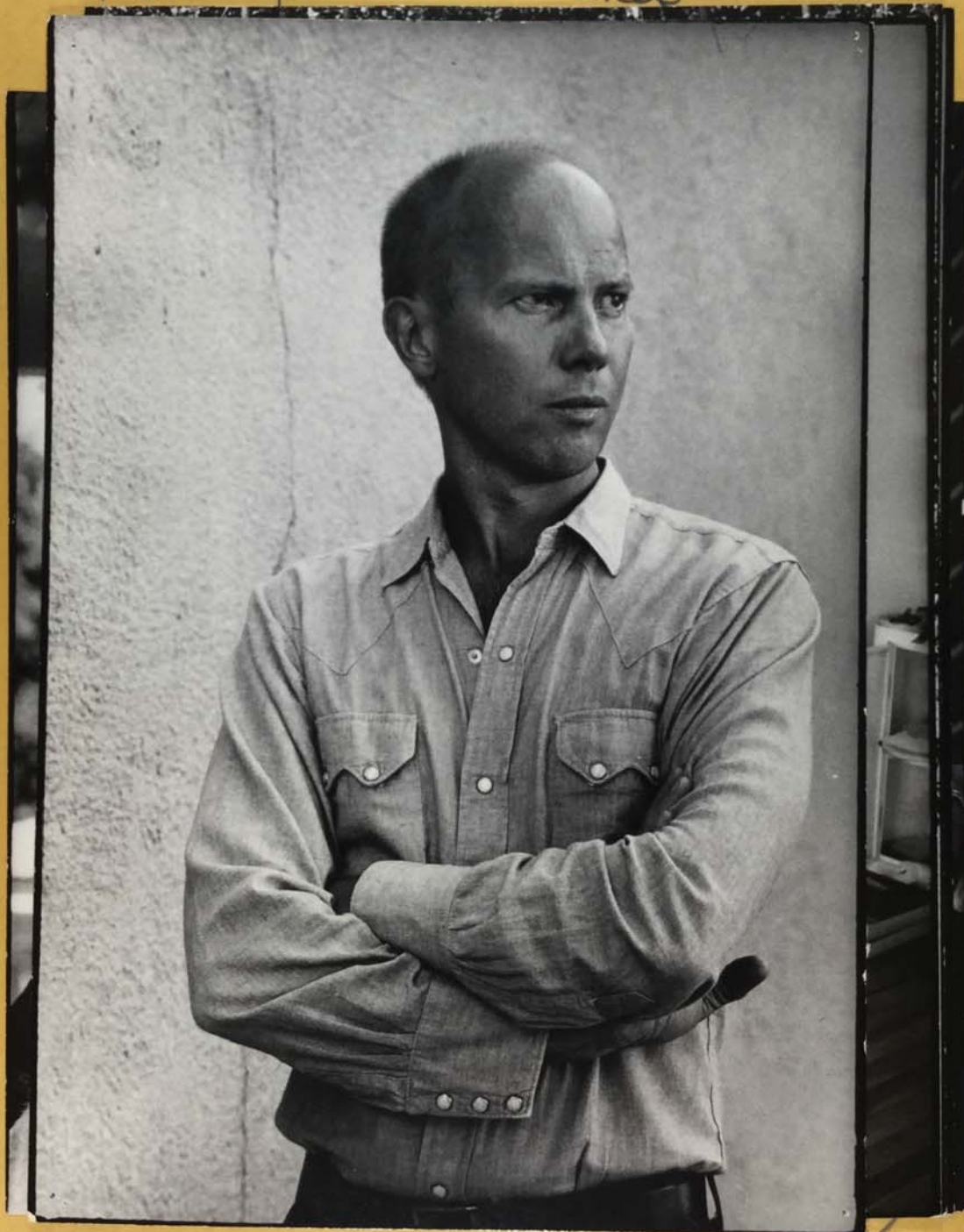
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Ray Johnson, c. 1969-70

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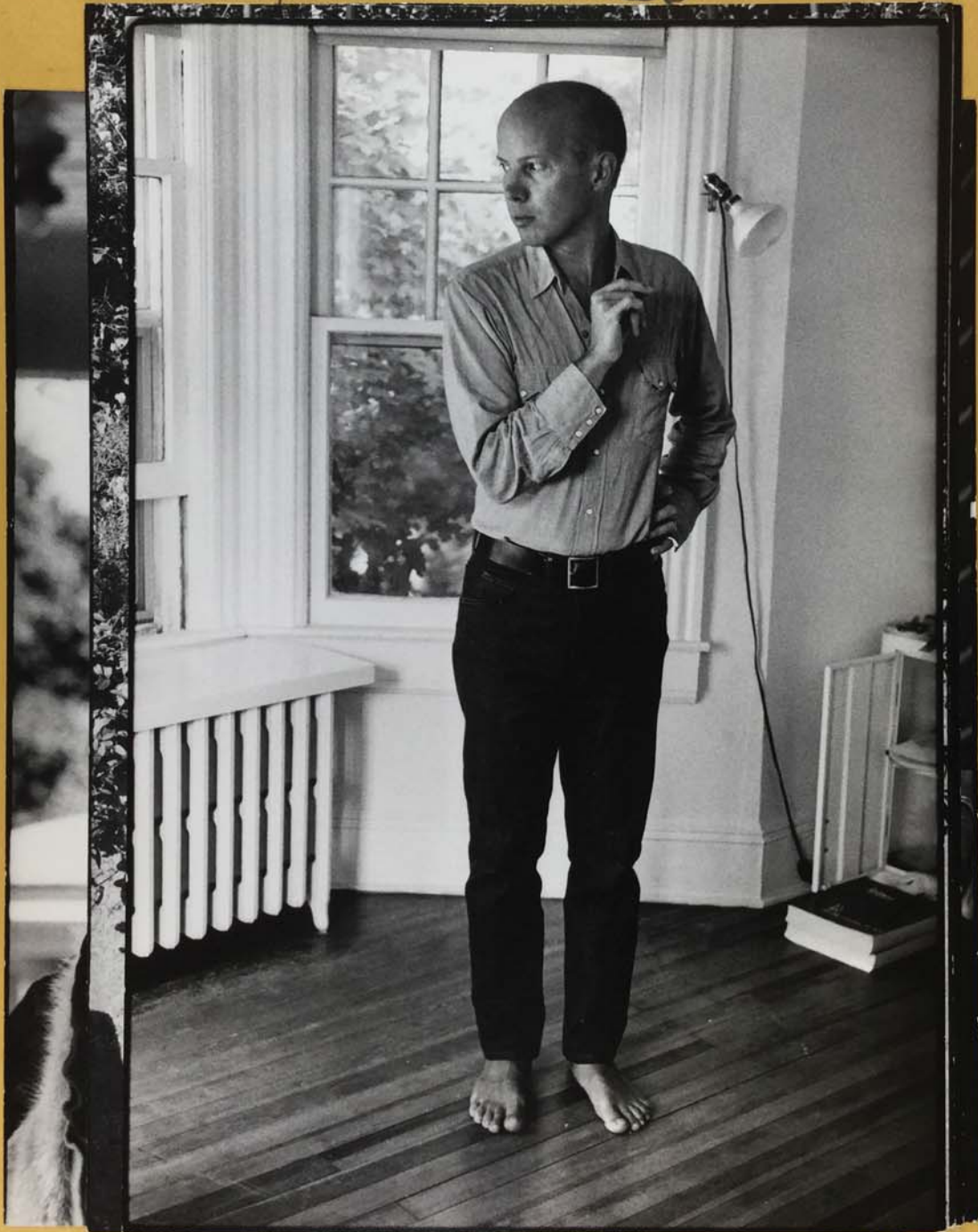
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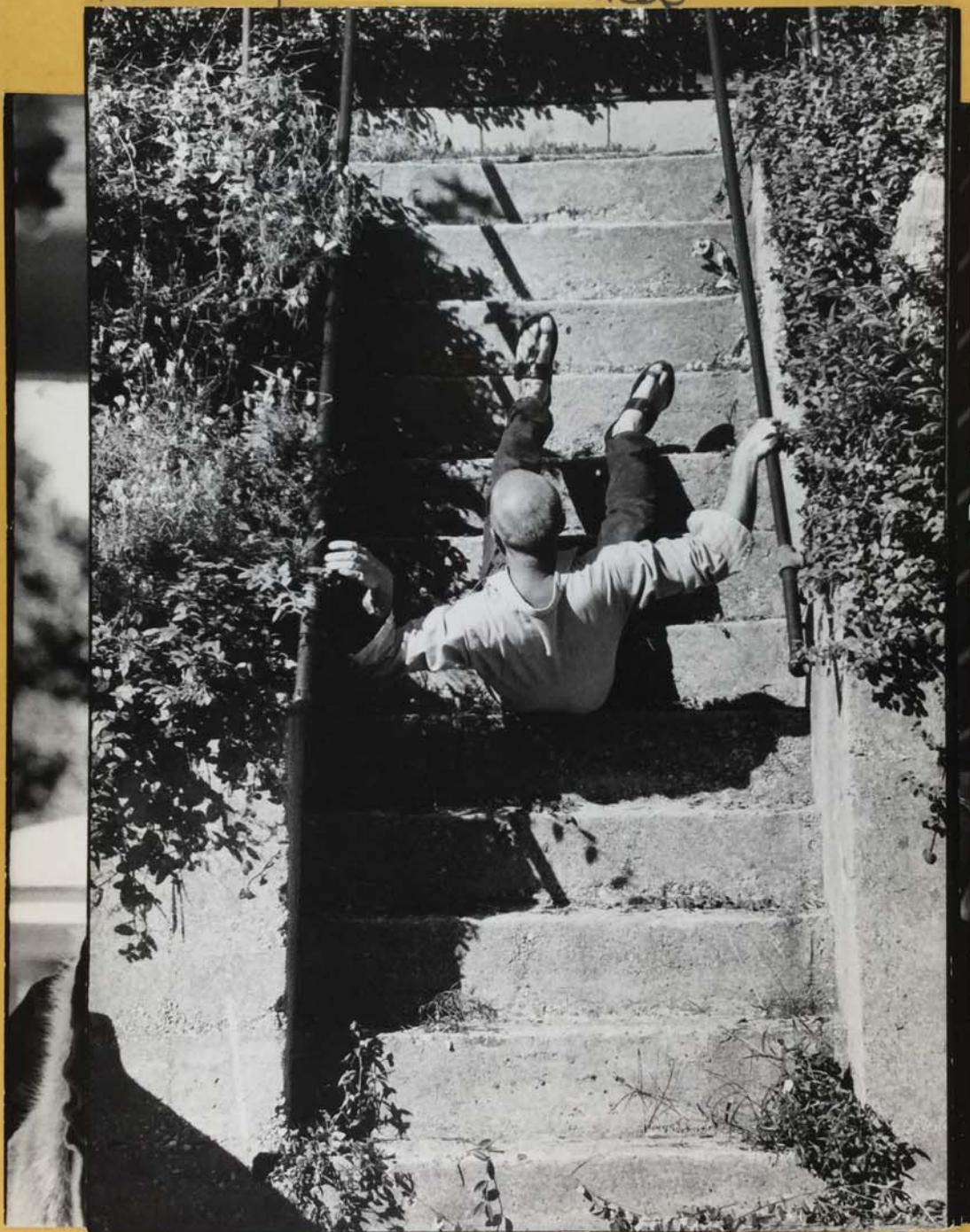
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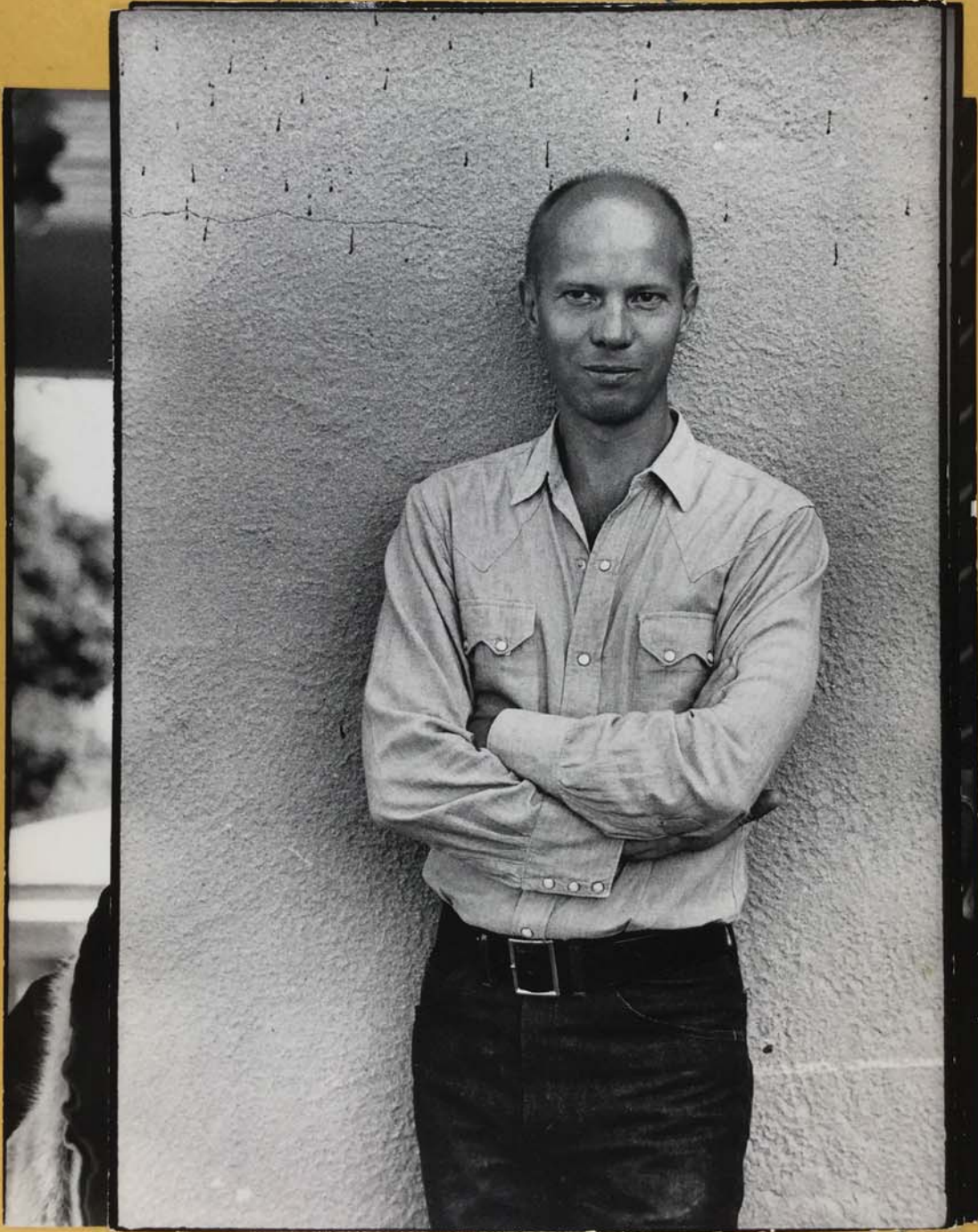
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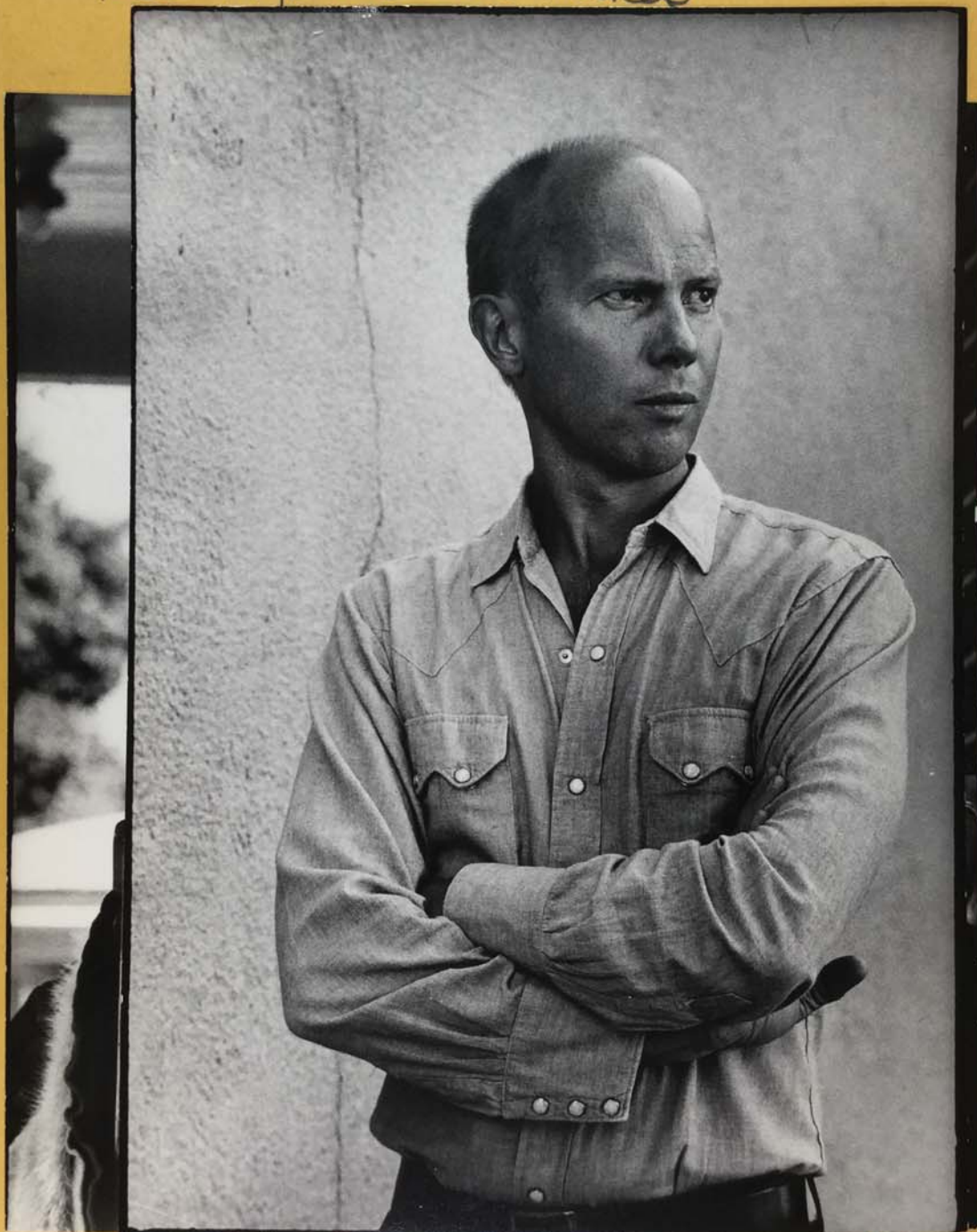
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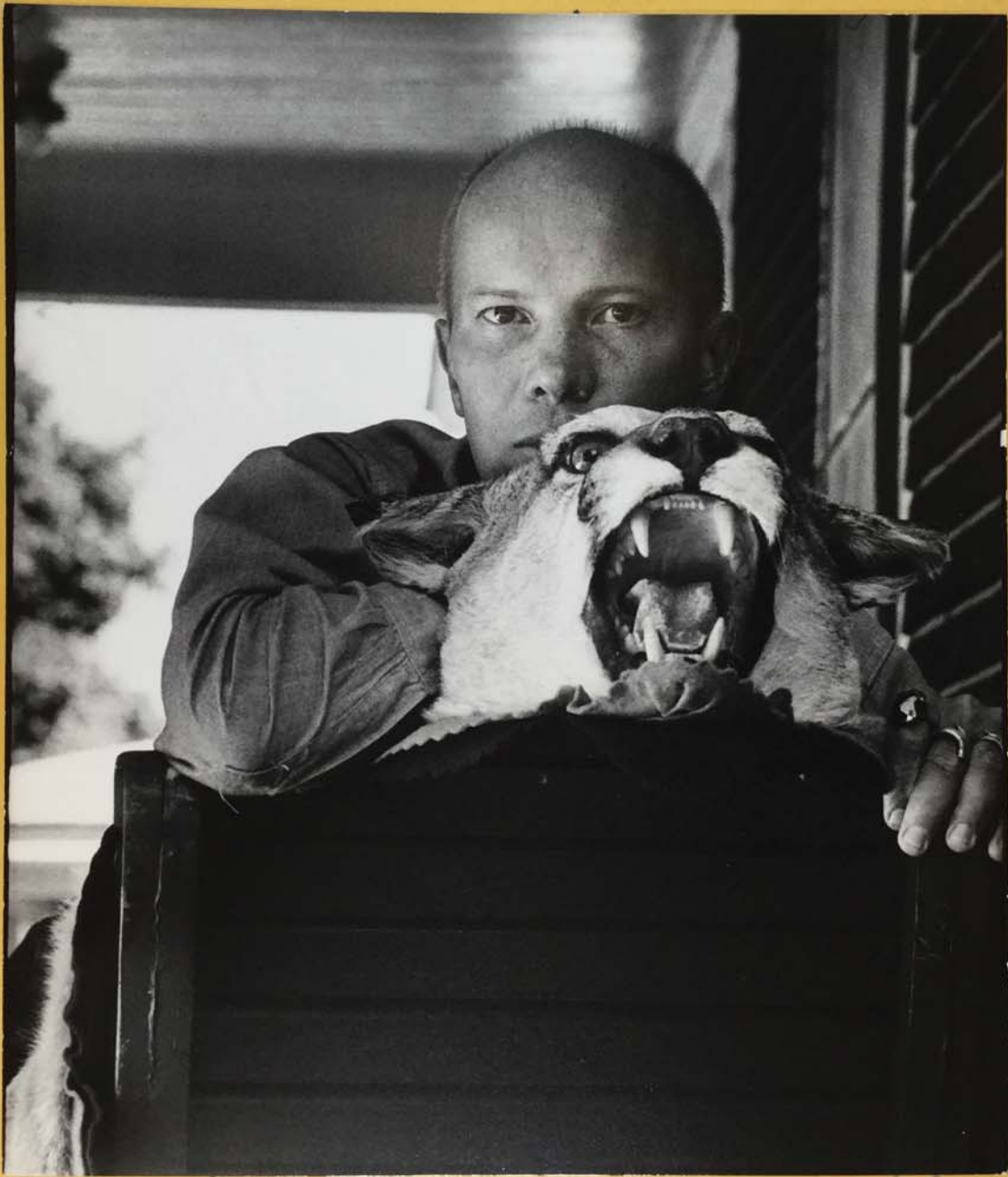
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