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PHOTOGRAPHY INTO SCULPTURE

The current notion of what a photograph looks like is that it is a piece of paper on which there is a more or less recognizable image which is interpreted in terms of two dimensions standing for three, picture size representing life size, and a variety of greys representing colors. All of these conceptions are perfectly adequate, as far as they go, but they do not exhaust the complexities of contemporary photography.

In recent years photographers, and many other artists who have turned from other disciplines, have pressed toward a concept of photography which encompasses an alternative formal perspective and one which is more responsive to new technology. A result of this assertive stance has been to explore the possibilities of a different kind of photography, one in which the previously illusionistic qualities of space and scale are transformed into actual space and dimension, thereby shifting photography into sculpture.

It is with this area that this exhibition is concerned. This provocative direction has occurred only in the last two or three years and it has by no means reached the zenith of its significance. This exhibition of some fifty objects, in which only photographs or photographically derived images are used, is the first comprehensive showing of such work. It is conceived of as a sequel to the 1968 exhibition, entitled "Photography As Printmaking," in that it too extends, by example, the practical conception of photography. ~~REPRODUCED~~

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In this case, the exhibition seeks to embrace concerns beyond those of the traditional print, or what may be termed "flat" work, and in so doing it also engenders a heightened realization that art in photography has to do with interpretation and craftsmanship and not mere record making.

More than twenty American and Canadian artists are represented in the exhibition. Most are young, in their twenties or early thirties, and the majority of the Americans are from Los Angeles and elsewhere on the West Coast. In most instances their work is wholly original, but in some cases they have followed Constructivist techniques, the Dada masters Man Ray and Marcel Duchamp, and more contemporary assemblagists and illusionists such as Rauschenberg, Gooch, and Cornell among others. Some of the artists included are: Ellen Brooks, Robert Brown, Carl Cheng, Darryl Curran, Jack Dale, Michael deCourcy, Karl Folsom, Andre Haluska, Robert Heineken, ~~Darryl Curran~~, Richard Jackson, Jerry McMillan, Bea Nettles, James Pennuto, Joe Charles Roitz Pirone, Douglas Prince, Dale Quarterman, Leslie Snyder, Michael Stone, and Lyn Wells. Only one, Robert Heineken, is represented in the Museum Collection and has been shown previously at the Museum. Meaningfully, it is this artist who may be considered an innovator in many of these techniques and who, as a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, has encouraged a lively environment for work with such new ideas in photography.

By stressing these new sculptural artifacts one in no way depreciates the nature of the intrinsic optical image. In fact, to

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appreciate these multi-media directions one must recognize how distinctly the artist adheres to the underlying photo-optical basis of his work, and indeed how he seeks to find his way to the properties inherent to photography itself. When a man makes a photograph he takes subjects - things - as he finds them and manipulates them, with the necessary selectivity to determine their significance, into an expression of his perceptions and feelings so that they may constitute a revelation. It is not what is said implicitly that counts as a work of art, it is what the artist makes with such intensity of purpose that it lives with an intrinsic sensibility of its own to verify its authenticity.

It is this metamorphosis that identifies the artist's creativity in the execution of a piece with imaginatively fuses the literal or symbolic component of the photographic image with a specific form. Along with artists of every persuasion, these photographer/sculptors are seeking a new intricacy of meaning analogous to the complexity of our senses. They are moving from simple iconography - the symbology of sex, ^{landscape,} ~~prostitute~~, family, war- to new materials which are incorporated as content and at the same time are used as a way of conceiving actual space. The sculptural ideas involved insist on volumetric properties which intellectually and physically correlate form, space, and light: the pictorial space is made to work in combination with a literally three dimensional environment. The works range in scale from life-size to tiny pictorial cubes two or three inches square and each work exploits the viewer's compulsion to touch and to look behind, through, and under.

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All sculpture depends on the manipulation of materials. Historically, the techniques of sculpture have reflected the technological level and character of the society from which it is produced. These sculptures are wholly modern in that they clearly parallel the intellectual framework of our scientific culture. If California artists dominate it is mainly because their commitment to technology has been more significantly gratified; if not fulfilled. The exhibition includes such techniques as: contour vacuum molded plastic containers for photographs and film transparencies, film positives sandwiched in lucite constructions of varying depths to be viewed with either reflected or transmitted illumination, photo-sensitized contour molded cloth sculptures, life-size figural compositions constructed from several hundred glass transparencies with multidimensional views, fabricated pictorial or illusionistic boxed environments, participation puzzles, contour vacuum formed topographic landscapes, lucite cubes of photographs, dimensional wall constructions, reductive sculptures of multiple pictorial boxes, and light/negative constructions.

The accompanying illustrations selected from works in the exhibition indicate some of the major areas of concern.

Peter C. Bunnell
Curator of Photography

Photography Into Sculpture. Through July 5. Directed by
Peter C. Bunnell

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In general by everyone —
leave as is

Photography into Sculpture

By whom?

The current notion of a photograph is that it is a piece of paper on which there is a more or less recognizable image which is interpreted in terms of two dimensions standing for three, picture size representing life size, and a variety of grays representing colors. All of these conceptions are perfectly adequate as far as they go, but they do not exhaust the complexities of contemporary photography.

clear if one reads the sentence —
No need to complicate with color

In recent years photographers and many other artists ^{who have} turned from other disciplines have pressed toward a concept of photography which encompasses an alternative formal perspective and is more responsive to new technology. A result of this assertive stance has been the exploration of a different kind of photography, one in which the previously illusionistic qualities of space and scale are transformed into actual space and dimension, thereby shifting photography into sculpture. This provocative direction ^{which} has been taken only in the last two or three years and has by no means reached the zenith of its significance.

obvious when read sentence

It is with this ^{direction} area that the exhibition Photography into Sculpture is concerned. Comprised of ^{some} fifty objects, in which only photographs or photographically derived images are used, it is the first comprehensive showing of such work, and is conceived as a

sequel to the 1968 ^{exhibition} Photography as Printmaking, ^{which} as it also showed work that extended by example the practical conception of photography.

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Photography into Sculpture seeks to embrace concerns beyond those of the traditional print, what may be termed "flat" work, and in so doing ^{hopes to} engenders a heightened realization that art in photography has to do with interpretation and craftsmanship rather than mere record-making.

More than twenty American and Canadian artists are represented in the exhibition. Most are young, in their twenties or early thirties; and the majority of the Americans are from Los Angeles and elsewhere on the West Coast. In most instances their work is wholly original, but in some cases ^{the artists} they have followed Constructivist techniques, the Dada masters Man Ray and Marcel Duchamp, and more contemporary assemblagists and illusionists such as Rauschenberg, Gooch, and Cornell. Among the artists included in the exhibition are Ellen Brooks, Robert Brown, Carl Cheng, Darryl Curran, Jack Dale, Michael deCourcey, Karl Folsom, Andre Haluska, Robert Heinecken, Richard Jackson, Jerry McMillan, Bea Nettles, James Pennuto, Joe Pirone, Douglas Prince, Charles Roitz, Dale Quarterman, Leslie Snyder, Michael Stone, **ROBERT WATTS**, and Lyn Wells. Only one, Robert Heinecken,

is represented in the Museum Collection, and has been shown previously at the Museum. ^{and} ^{Meaningfully} It is ^{Heinecken} this artist who may be considered an innovator in ^{some} of the techniques, and who, as a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, has encouraged a lively environment for work with such new ideas in photography.

By stressing these new sculptural artifacts ~~one~~ in no way depreciates the nature of the intrinsic optical image. In fact, to appreciate these multi-media directions one must recognize how distinctly the artist adheres to the underlying photo-optical basis of his work, and indeed how he seeks to find his way to the

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but not

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4.

modern in that they clearly parallel the intellectual framework of our scientific culture. If California artists dominate, it is mainly because their commitment to technology has been more significantly gratified, if not fulfilled. ~~The Techniques demonstrated in the~~ *works employing a variety of techniques:*
^{the} exhibition includes [^] contour vacuum-molded plastic containers for photographs and film transparencies; film positives sandwiched in lucite constructions of varying depths [^] to be viewed with either reflected or transmitted illumination; photo-sensitized contour molded cloth sculptures; life-size figural compositions constructed from several hundred glass & transparencies with multidimensional views; fabricated pictorial or illusionistic boxed environments; participation puzzles; contour vacuum-formed topographic landscapes; lucite cubes of photographs; dimensional wall constructions; reductive sculptures of multiple pictorial boxes; and light/negative constructions.

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Edited Draft

Helen Frank

PHOTOGRAPHY INTO SCULPTURE

In the last few years artists from a variety of disciplines have embraced a new kind of photography in which many of the imaginary qualities of the photograph, particularly spatial complexity, have been transformed into actual space and dimension, thereby ~~transforming? bringing~~ ^{transforming?} photography into sculpture. These ~~new~~ ^{as well as new} works have introduced into the medium many fresh illusionistic qualities ~~and also innovative~~ ^{up to} techniques and materials which ~~before~~ ^{among these innovations are} now have ~~only~~ been marginally important. ~~for example~~, topographic structure, image participation, tactile materiality, procedural time, and the technology of plastics, liquid emulsions, fabrics, dyes, film transparencies, and emitted light.

Spatial

To stress this new dimensionality in no way ~~depreciates~~ ^{diminishes} the nature of the inherent photographic image. In fact, to appreciate these sculptural artifacts one must recognize how distinctly the artist adheres to the underlying photo-optical basis of his work, and / indeed / how he exploits the properties unique to photography itself. ~~When one makes a photograph~~ ^{the maker of a} ~~he~~ takes subjects - things - as he finds them and, with the necessary selectivity to determine their significance, manipulates them into an expression of his sensibilities so that they may constitute a revelation. It is not ~~what is said that~~ ^{what is said that} counts ⁱⁿ as a work of art, it is ~~also~~ ^{what} the artist makes, with such intensity of perception that it lives with an intrinsic truth of its own that ~~verifies its authenticity~~ ^{verifies its authenticity}.

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It is this metamorphosis ^{that} which identifies the artist's creativity in the execution of a work that fuses the literal or symbolic component of the photographic image with a specific form. These photographer/sculptors are seeking a new intricacy of meaning analogous to the complexity of our senses. They are moving from ~~internal~~ ^{INTRINSIC} meaning or iconography— of sex, the environment, war --to a visual duality in which materials are also incorporated as content and at the same time ^{are} used as a way of conceiving actual space. The sculptural ideas involved insist on volumetric properties ^{that} which intellectually and physically correlate form, space, and light; the pictorial space is made to work in combination with ~~literally~~ ^{an} three-dimensional environment, ^{that is literally three-dimensional}.

Historically, the techniques of sculpture have reflected the ^{character of the technology in the society in} technological character of the society in which the work was produced. ^{The work of these were} More than twenty American and Canadian artists ^{are} represented in this exhibition, ^{work in a way that is} and their work is wholly modern in that it closely parallels the pictographic and constructivist framework of our scientific culture. All ^{of them} ~~of these~~ artists are young, in their twenties or early thirties, and the majority ~~of them~~ are from the West Coast - from Los Angeles to Vancouver. If these artists dominate, it is mainly because their commitment to technology has been more significantly gratified, if not fulfilled; ~~and that~~, as a regional expression, they have enthusiastically endorsed the notion that photography is a material medium.

^{plastic}

Peter C. Bunnell

structural
constructed

PS

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final draft before editing

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Peter G. Russell

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Peter C. Bunnell