

The Museum of Modern Art

50th Anniversary



48A

WALL LABEL

LARRY FINK

The photographs here have been selected from two bodies of work made within the last eight years. In 1971 Larry Fink began to photograph what he called "the privileged classes" which had intersected his life in New York City. The people photographed at museum openings, discotheques, balls and private parties are lifted from these contexts. It is the tension between their keenly felt public identity and the inner exigencies of their emotional psyche which is recorded.

After moving to the farming community of Martin's Creek, Pennsylvania in 1974, Fink began to photograph his working class neighbors. In this more recent work people are seen during times of celebration in settings which are intrinsic to the life of an American small town--gatherings in the backyard, American Legion Hall dances, and weddings.

The effect created in the frame of Larry Fink's photographs is like that of the stage in a darkened theater. His subjective involvement with the lives of his subjects and the use of the hand-held flash to highlight his concerns, direct our attention to the details of the drama before us. It is the nuances of the personal moment which are described.

Larry Fink captures two groups of individuals as they pursue their social and personal identities. These large graphic photographs provide the opportunity to study a gesture, a smile, a surreptitious glance, even

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the sweat on an arm or a wrinkle of skin, which comprise a kind of evidence of the psychology of desire, sensuality, disappointment or ennui. Fink's exploration of the latent and realized energy of the pursuit of identity provides a unique document of human behavior.

-Susan Kismaric
Assistant Curator

Larry Fink was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1941. He attended Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and The New School for Social Research in New York City. In his teens he studied photography privately with Lisette Model and Alexey Brodovitch. A committed photography teacher for more than fifteen years, in 1977-78 he was visiting professor at Yale University. He was the recipient of Guggenheim Fellowships for photography in 1977 and 1979.

All photographs are on loan from the photographer.

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