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Gestures and Expressions

Allen G. Arpadi

Gestures
And
Expressions

1980   Baubles & Bangles

In partial fullfillment of M.A. in Photography
and dedicated to my Mother and Father
who bought me my first (and second!) camera

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Gestures and Expressions

Photographic Style and the Exhibition's Theme

My photographic style is akin to the "straight," journalistic/documentary genre` that became established in the Twenties with Erich Salomon, Andre Kertesz, and Walker Evans. Straight photography attempted to capture spontaneity with technical clarity. Unusual film or print manipulation, like the photo-secessionists used, was to be avoided. Also, unusual camera angles and collages of the constructivists like Alexander Rodchenko and Moholy-Nagy were taboo. Straight photography meant that as a journalist, I would cover an event with an objective editorial viewpoint. I attempted to photograph in this manner to obtain truthful gestures and expressions.

I selected only images of people from my archives, which span twenty years, with an underlying theme: to capture the wide range of gestures and expressions in people; to obtain the essence of their physical appearance, with excellent physical detail; and to gain insight into the subject's character.

Paparazzi Style But Closer to Subject

The paparazzi style of photography takes photographs of (un)willing subjects until the photographic images needed are obtained. A paparazzi photographer attacks and takes many pictures. Celebrities are the paparazzi's usual subject matter. The photographer is like a mosquito pestering the subject until blood is drawn. However, unlike the paparazzi who photograph the subjects with their latest "in vogue" hairstyle, in their most fashionable clothing, or with their current lover, my style was to get in even closer than the

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traditional paparazzi and record people void of their clothes, their latest hair-style, and their partners.

My goal was to obtain images of the subjects out of the context of their environment. Through this style of photography, I hoped to strip away all the unnecessary physical baggage and get to the root of the subject's physical likeness; to allow human gestures and expressions to be the dominant features of my photographs.

Yet similar techniques used by the paparazzi photo style became my style of exposing film; quickness of the camera and photographing sometimes unwilling subjects. Many of the subjects in the exhibit did not pose nor did they care to pander to my camera. The images were taken at a moment's notice, with little time to compose, with a split second of time to react, with no thinking. In a sense, I zapped my subjects, took their picture by surprise. Multiple exposures were necessary to obtain the one good composition, the one good camera angle, the one revealing gesture and/or expression. "Irving Penn" and "Woody Allen" were both taken paparazzi style. In fact, Penn was probably the most difficult subject for me to photograph. Penn inherently knew the exact moment I was going to snap the camera shutter and moved at that precise moment in an attempt to prevent my getting good images.

1982 Irving Penn

Sometimes an entire roll of film was required to obtain the one "decisive moment" image. For example, "Joseph Heller" in the exhibition was gleaned from multiple exposures (two rolls of 36 exposure film were used to obtain the one definitive image used in the exhibition).

1984 Joseph Heller

Some images had glare on Heller's glasses; some exposures had visually awkward looking mouths and tongues; other exposures were obscured by the microphone he was speaking into; and still other exposures were obscured due to admirers surrounding him after his lecture and blocking my vantage view or blocking the flashlight and creating shadows on Heller's face.

Photographic Philosophy

The photographic goal of the exhibition was to have the sharp print quality of an Ansel Adams (and the f/64 club members) with the expressiveness and vitality of a Robert Frank (and the street photographers of his era, Garry Winogrand, Lee Friedlander, et al.) but with the psychological portraiture techniques of a Philippe Halsman.

Goal: To Achieve F/64 Club Print Quality

In the Ansel Adams tradition, my photographic prints were to be made from well exposed negatives. In my case, this meant rating the Tri-x film at 320 I.S.O. rather than at 400 I.S.O.. This increase in exposure gave me a density that is slightly higher than normal when developed in D-76 film developer.]

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The exhibition's negatives were printed on a warm-toned Kodak Ektalure paper with "normal" contrast range. I used warm toned LPD developer to increase the resulting print's warmth, and I printed to include a black tone, a white tone, and with a maximum range of middle gray tones. I controlled print contrast by altering the LPD developers concentration. For high contrast prints, I decreased the water to developer ratio towards 3:1. To obtain lower contrast, I increased the amount of water to developer ratio towards 7:1 and for even lower contrast, waited until the next day to "age" the developer and decrease the contrast more.

As in the Adams tradition, the prints in this exhibition were printed in a size relative to the negative's size. The goal was to have exhibition prints that displayed a minimum of grain, with the highest degree of resolution possible. For example, a high percentage of my exhibition prints were made from 35mm negatives, and these negatives were not printed larger than 9 1/2" by 13". Ideally, according to the Adams' tradition, the prints should be closer to 1:1 or at a maximum size of 5" by 7", but this was too limiting a viewing factor for my purposes.

Goal: To Achieve Street Photography Image Style

In the street photographer's genre, i.e., Garry Winogrand, the prints should reflect the fleeting gestures and expressions of people in action in the real world with as little subject manipulation by the photographer as possible, i.e.,"cinema verite."

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The goal of the exhibition was to reflect the subjects in unguarded moments; the unposed moments that captured true human gestures and real life spontaneity. Unlike the studio photographer, the exhibition's snapshots would reflect truthful human emotion; with subject awkwardness, realistic expressions, truthful posture, unfashionable clothing (mismatched clothes and accessories) displayed, and facial warts.

For example, the "Safari Transvestite" image has a troubled expression on his face, and his awkward holding of the cigarette and glass of wine creates a pose of a person unsure of his own status. The harsh light from the portable flash adds skin detail and the flash literally exposes the transvestite undergarments.

The juxtaposition of the man dressed as a woman with the background adds more visual information to the reading of this cross- dresser. The background displays a hand entering the scene from the left side of the frame and the advertisements of the late Seventies add an element of historical context to the reading of the transvestite's life-style. The "sloppy" cropping of the cluttered background reflects the modern world's disorder.

1978 Safari Transvestite

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Another example, "Robert Mapplethorpe" captures the notorious photographer holding a cigarette with a Diane Arbus photographic style: a pose straight into the camera, a startled expression, and "direct frontal flash, that isolates her subjects in pitiless clarity" ("The Photograph Collector's Guide," London and Witkin, New York Graphic Society, 1979, page 72). The background is cluttered, and it helps reveal an aspect of Mapplethorpe that is not well known, perhaps a confused or busy life-style.

1982 Robert Mapplethorpe

Goal: To Achieve the Psychological Impact of Philippe Halsman: The Consummate Photographer

The exhibition's prints were selected to display classically correct camera angles and classical lighting techniques (even the direct flash pictures are considered "front lighting" or "butterfly" technique) to allow the viewer to see beyond the technical aspects of photography and study the photographed subjects. I wanted to avoid an empty pose or "act" by the subject towards the camera. The goal was to allow the viewer to interpret the identity of the subject, but to go beyond their physical mask and to gain a psychological portraiture in the Halsman genre.

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The exhibition's images depicted proper camera lens usage which reflected a good rendition of the features of the face (i.e., no elongation of the nose or jaw and no receding forehead that one would get when using a wide-angle lens). The most appropriate focal length for the relatively tight head shots was a 105mm and/or 135mm lens on a 35mm format camera.

Whenever possible, the camera angle was equal to the most important features of the subject, most likely their eyes. The lighting used was a small harsh portable Vivitar flash. The light was equal in height to the subject's head or slightly above to give an open and normal lighting technique. Halsman would call this "butterfly" lighting. The impact of the harsh light source was to accentuate texture and detail of the subject's skin.

This small and harsh light is in stark contrast to the large and diffused light from the umbrella and softbox light sources of studio photographers. For example, the soft studio lighting technique of the exhibition's "Baubles and Bangles" shows a long tonal range in the flesh of the model's due to the large and diffused soft light used.

A Contrary Photo to Classical Techniques

The image of President Ronald Reagan was taken contrary to the previously stated studio photographer's soft lighting technique: harsh light was used. This image was also contrary to the studio photographer's standard portrait focal length lens and standard camera angle choice for a head and shoulder portrait. For this image a longer than normal portrait focal length lens was used, i.e., 200mm; a lower than normal camera angle, i.e., from below; and the light from a lower than normal standard position.

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1981 Ronald Reagan

The result of this "rule breaking" was an image that reflects this photographer's political views rather than the conservative political views of the president and his image conscious handlers. The low camera angle and light de-emphasizes the intellect (the forehead) and emphasizes his jowls and saggy neck. The harsh light used accentuated the facial wrinkles of Ronald Reagan.

Methodology

Whenever possible, I tried to fill the picture frame with the subject image. The goal was to edit on site so that only the subject was captured on film. Whenever possible only head and shoulders were photographed. In the alternative, additional body parts or backgrounds were included if I felt they added important information to the viewer's reading of the resulting photograph. For example, some images ("Helmut Newton," "Andre Kertesz," and "Beaumont Newhall") had the artist's artwork incorporated into the resulting image to explain the artists' photography.

Whenever possible, the subject's attention was sought to obtain eye contact with the camera. This technique adds an element of subject participa-

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tion to the photographing session and guides the viewer to see past the physical appearance into the subject's personality. The eyes are considered by many portrait photographers to be the "windows to the soul."

However, I had to photograph fast to photograph by surprise, to obtain honest expressions rather than poses for the camera. In this way the subjects would reveal their true identities to the camera. The expressions found in the "Berenice Abbott," "Irving Penn," "Woody Allen," and the "I. B. Singer" prints depict natural facial expressions and, to a certain extent, reveal something about their strong personalities.

Full Frame Prints

I printed most negatives full frame. The "Hunter Thompson" image was cropped in the darkroom. I deleted some of his chest, cropped from the bottom and cropped just above his head to emphasize the zigzags on the left side of the frame. Hunter Thompson is known as a "druggy" and the zigzags reinforces Thompson's personality and strengthen the portrait.
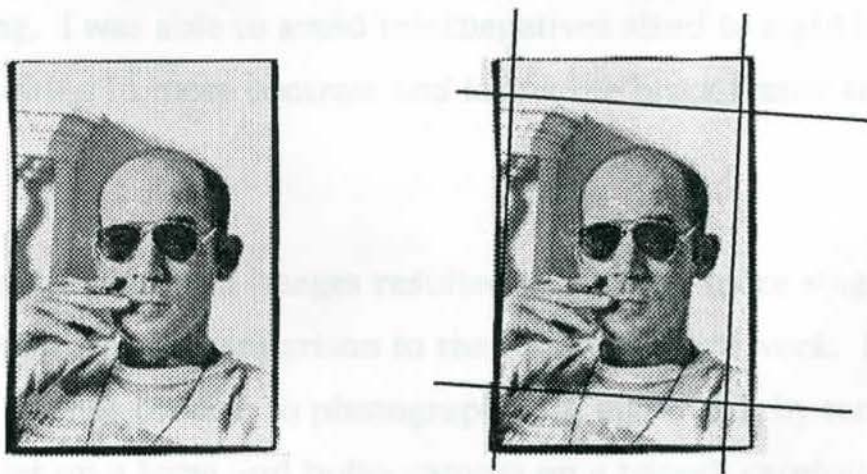
1981 Hunter Thompson Uncropped and Cropped Versions

The black line surrounding the exhibition's images attest to the full frame printing method. This full frame negative printing procedure ensures three things. One, it ensures the greatest print sharpness or resolution because the prints are then enlarged the minimum amount (only 36 times enlargement rather than 54 times for a normal eight inch by ten inch print). Two, the black frame adds depth to the two-dimensional photograph. The black frame compels the viewer's eye to look past the black frame, adding more depth to a two dimensional picture. Three, in some instances, the black frame acts to hold the compositional elements together.

Contact Prints Using an Eight by Ten Camera

The platinum/palladium prints in the exhibition were also full frame prints. Contact printing is the only way to print platinum/palladium since ultraviolet light is required for paper sensitivity. There are no ultraviolet enlargers available that are powerful enough to obtain short exposure times. For the platinum/palladium images, an eight inch by ten inch view camera was used, not the 35mm camera, to obtain the maximum resolution when contact printing. I was able to avoid internegatives sized to eight inches by ten inches, resulting in more contrast and losing the black frame around the image print.

I believe the platinum images resulted in weaker, more stagnant compositions and gestures in comparison to the 35mm camera work. It was a very slow and tedious process to photograph with eight inch by ten inch sized film. I had to set up a large and bulky camera on a tripod, carefully compose and measure the exposure, give posing directions, and expose one sheet of film at a time. However, I gained more sharpness and resolution, and I was

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closer to the Adams' print quality. For example, compare the tight body-builder closeup and the accompanying sharpness to the untitled Indian dancer pose.

Technical Negative and Print Data

The exhibition consisted of sixty-four black and white images. No color photography was incorporated for two reasons. One, this photographer's personal preference is black and white photography. Two, color photography lacks the permanence of black and white.

More Image Control with Black and White Than with Color Prints

With black and white film I was able to develop film myself and manipulate the film's development (by over or underdeveloping) to the specifics of the photo session. If color were used, I would not have developed the film myself and over/underdeveloping would have been very difficult to achieve. By over or underdeveloping the film, I was able to increase or decrease negative contrast. For example, "The Smile" was underdeveloped to maintain detail in the bath robe.

With black and white film I was able to burn (give more exposure) and dodge (give less exposure) and manipulate the photographic print in the darkroom. I was able to emphasize certain aspects of the photographic print by dodging, and de-emphasize by burning down certain features. For the most part, I always burned down shirt collars to de-emphasize the irrelevant collars and dodged either the subject's hair or the background immediately behind the subjects to give visual separation between the head and background. The viewer would know at a glance where the head ends and the

background begins.

Color Photography Not This Photographer's Personal Favorite

With black and white photography, I had much more control of the resulting image. I was able to deal directly with the subject's gestures and expressions and not be bothered with balancing color film because of cross lighting from different light temperatures. Cross lighting is when film is balanced for one type of light source, but another light source exposes the film as well. This results in two different colors of light recorded on the film. Generally, cross lighting is to be avoided. Most rooms where I photographed were lit with relatively weak florescent lights (4500 degrees Kelvin temperature), with some incandescent lights (2800 degrees Kelvin). However, I would have had to use flash-light, a.k.a., electronic strobe (5500 degrees Kelvin temperature) to stop action of the subject's expression and to obtain enough depth of field under the room's weak light. The color film of choice would have been daylight balanced (5500 degrees Kelvin) to match the flash-light color temperature. This color balance and cross-lighting issues would have created more difficulties than I would have liked to have overcome.

If my exhibition had been in color, I would not have been able, to any significant degree, to do burning and dodging and manipulate (increase or decrease) the visual impact of various parts of the resulting photographic print. I would have had to deal with color shifts, and color printing is too time consuming and complicated a process to have to worry about color shifts. There would be less of my "personality" in the resulting color images.

Color Is an Inferior Medium When Compared to Black and White

Importantly, I did not shoot a large amount of color film during my photographic career because I personally feel color is an inferior medium compared to black and white.

I feel the hues of color prints cheat and give an ordinary scene more vibrancy than it really has. I have seen thousands of images in various exhibitions and auction houses. No color images stand out in my memory. Only black and white images stand out in my memory. As a relatively new photographic medium, Kodachrome (fifty years old) is considered the beginning of the modern color era. Color has not yet found its proper niche in history of photography. Beaumont Newhall, a major photographic historian, has only recently incorporated color images into the classic "History of Photography" (1982 edition, Museum of Modern Art, includes a very small selection of color illustrations, 14 color verses 287 black & white).

Color Is Not Stable

I believe color prints are inferior to black and white because there is less stability to color film or prints. According to most experts, color begin to fade within five years. If I had chosen a retrospective exhibition in color the quality of the color prints would have faded in a very short time. The effort and expense (over four hundred dollars in printing expenses) that went into the exhibition would have been in vain.

I believe that the serious art photography collectors and investors want to collect black and white because black and white prints are stable and can

last a minimum of twenty-five years, under ideal conditions. Most collectors do not want their "investments" to fade away and lessen in value.

Darkroom and Paper Information

The exhibition prints were printed on warm-toned Kodak Ektalure photographic paper rather than cold black-toned paper. The prints were developed in LPD paper developer which added more warmth to the warm-toned paper. I chose a warm-toned photographic paper since most people appear to be more natural looking and romantic in warm-toned prints. This, I believe, was Edward Curtis' thinking when he chose to use warm-toned ink while printing his twenty-volume American Indian gravure series, "The Vanishing Race." Kodak claims that portraits printed on warm-toned paper "impart a feeling of life and warmth." ("Quality Enlarging," Kodak, 1985, page 21)

Since the ektalure paper is generally considered to provide a slightly higher than normal contrast (grade three), contrast control was gained by varying the developer to water ratio. Some prints were developed at 1:9 rather than the normal 1:4 to decrease contrast. Other prints had their development times altered to control contrast. Some prints were only developed for one minute and others were developed for three minutes; Long development times increases texture in highlight areas and short development times decrease contrast.

The photographs were printed to depict as much negative detail as the negatives would yield. My goal was to have a tonal range in print quality similar to an Ansel Adams print. The prints were printed low in contrast and dark to obtain the maximum amount of detail. The Paul Strand 1991 Retrospective Exhibition at the Saint Louis Art Museum influenced the print qual-

ity of my exhibition. I strove to print dark like Strand, but not quite as dark. I avoided the contrasty and pale print quality of Richard Avedon and Helmut Newton. I believe, low contrast and dark prints reveal more information to the viewer than light, contrasty photographs.

Since the prints were solely for an exhibition rather than for publication or a client, I was not concerned with reproduction type print quality.

Rather than my usual resin coated paper [r.c.] photographs, the exhibition was printed on fiber-based paper. This fiber-based paper was in recognition of the art world's rejection of resin coated paper due to longevity and print quality issues.

Influences/Inspiration

The exhibition can be considered a retrospective. I chose a people theme from my archives and I chose to depict people's gestures and expressions because I thought the theme could make for an interesting visual display. Ordinarily, portraits bore viewers, unless famous people or nudes are shown. Who wants to look at portraits of strangers? I decided to create an exciting array of imagery that went beyond ordinary portraiture and emphasized gestures and expression instead.

My photographic influence for this exhibit is directly related to my photographic teacher, Philippe Halsman with whom I studied in 1975. Halsman took my love of people and taught me classical lighting technique and compositional skills, and gave me the photographic ability to capture people's personalities. I no longer needed to depend on luck to capture

revealing portraits.

My portrait skills were honed through many years of public relations assignments for advertising, public relation agencies, as well as, assignments for newspapers, and magazines. I worked consistently for many years for "The Soho Weekly News," "Barrons Publication," "New York Magazine," as well as for various politicians running for elected office.

The assignments were usually rushed, i.e., you got a telephone call and you were expected to rush to the scene of the story immediately, like a fireman waiting for the alarm to go off. I was rushed on location: you have only five minutes from set-up to finish and photographic cliches like, "people on the telephone were to be avoided." I learned to act quickly in order to maximize the shooting time, to be inventive, and avoid stagnant, cliched pictures, and I was able to apply this ability to self-imposed, speculative assignment work as well as work created during my Lindenwood College graduate program.

Perhaps my greatest influence as a photographer came from personal development rather than any photographic technique. In order to photograph people a photographer needs to develop good "people skills." I had to force myself to be less shy to create verbal contact and a relaxed environment with my subjects. I had to be educationally well rounded in order to be versed in speaking to the I. F. Stones of the world, as well as to the Wall Street stock broker or the man who just got laid-off from his factory job. To photograph someone of President Reagan's stature one needs to have good conversational skills.

Also, I had to learn "timing," that is, to understand the rhythm and verbal cadences in people to anticipate when to click the camera's shutter. Due to the nature of the single lens reflex 35mm camera, the viewfinder actually goes dark just when the film is being exposed: one does not see the actual image recorded. The photographer sees just before and right after the picture is snapped. Having played street basketball and high school soccer helped me greatly in addressing this timing issue.

Another influence on me was the work of Ralph Gibson and his small-format street photography. Gibson cropped very tightly and limited his picture frame to a small portion of the body. Gibson's style created an almost surreal imagery. Gibson's "Doorman" is an extreme close-up where the back of the neck of the doorman, some of his collar, and a small portion of the hair on the back of his head creates a minimalist image. This vision was interesting and made an impact on my picture taking in the late Seventies. Whereas, Gibson utilized high contrast, I choose complete tonal ranges.

Also an influence was the photographer Marcia Resnick with whom I worked on "The Soho News" in the late Seventies and early Eighties. A lot of her intimate portraits of celebrities had been shot so tight as to be simply eyes, noses, and mouths. Resnick's tight and dramatic horizontal cropping of the artist "Christo" was at the eyebrows and into the chin. This image impressed me. I felt that Resnick's style of photography was a natural evolutionary process for my head and shoulder styled portraits. I was able to strip away the surplus of a photographic portrait and still keep the essence of someone's likeness and create an intimacy that I did not have before.

Iconography

My exhibition's goal was to probe and explore the vitality of gestures and expressions in humans. The secondary goal was to create an interesting display of portraits, both famous and ordinary people, to create an attractive show. The tertiary goal was to achieve a probing portrait that went beyond the surface of the physical attributes, i.e., depict exactly what the person looks like, but reveal the character of the person.

However, I question to what degree I was successful in capturing someone's character, in the Halsman tradition. Afterall, other than depicting someone's race, color, gender, clothing, or age, how can a portrait reveal the character? How can a portrait through a gesture or expression depict character, political affiliation, or religion?

Perhaps the interpretation of photographic images reveals more about the viewer than it reveals of the sitter's character. "I.F. Stone" is a powerful image to me. But is this because the image is so fantastic that it reveals the inner soul of Mr. Stone or is it so because I am impressed with the man's writings and what his intellect represents to me?

"Robert Mapplethorpe" is also a powerful image, but does this image reveal the man's insecurities or does it depict my feelings towards the man? Does the recent Mapplethorpe controversy (pornography, his homosexuality, and his death due to A.I.D.S.) play a roll in my interpretation of the portrait?

Yet, on the other hand, gestures, expressions, lighting, camera angle, and

composition do aid one in understanding the character of the sitter. "Reagan" is a "lousy" image. The low camera angle and the lighting technique does diminish the man's stature and creates an illusion of a man with a shallow intellect. This is most viewer's reaction to the image and this is true regardless of one's personal political affiliation.

"Woody Allen" does reveal the sitter's insecurity because of the subject's quizzical expression and the low camera angle which emphasizes the open lips of the mouth.


1978 Woody Allen

The "Safari Transvestite" does reveal a confused man due to the body language; the subject's expression, the way he holds his drink and cigarette. The relatively high camera angle of "Al+En=Arp" emphasizes the brain. The image impresses the viewer of the lofty intellectual status of the sitter and, that was my goal in parodying Halsman's famous photograph of the intellectual Albert Einstein.

My photographs include background material, body language, clothing, gestures, and composition, and these elements do help the viewer to draw

conclusions about the subjects. The "Fire Island" image of the woman holding the football does arouse one's curiosity, especially when the head is cropped out of the picture frame. She becomes a more universal figure. She becomes an object.
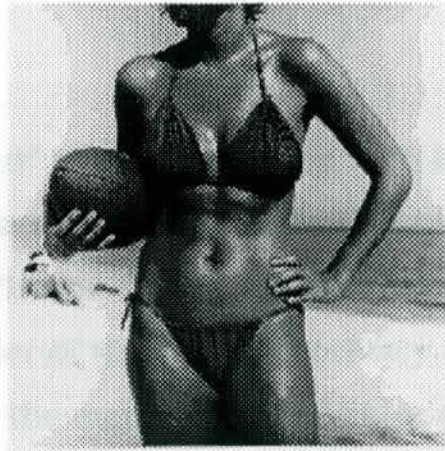
1985 Fire Island

Of course, some of this interpretation is my own response. However, the image shows how she wished to reveal herself to the world. She has literally placed herself on display; the two piece bathing suit, the tanned and "hard" body, and the grasping of the football.

Cropped Heads

Issue: Why are heads cropped out of the photograph? One of the major reasons for cropping out important features of the face and the body is that I got bored with faces. The "generic face" no longer held my interest. By cropping so severely, I discovered that the gesture and expression became more universal in appeal. The figure of the subject became a form, an abstract design. The figure was divorced from the subject's personality. This method of photography has a long standing tradition with cheesecake, according to

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my mentor, Lindenwood College's Professor of Photography, Hans Levi.

I was able to see the subject's body language without having to be concerned with his/her personality. Most importantly, I did not have to be concerned with pleasing the subject, since the image was more obscured and unidentifiable.

The "Fire Island" image of the man with his arms akimbo has more power without the face. [I remember telling him to smile when I clicked the camera's shutter.] The viewer can look at the bathingsuited body without feeling like an invader of the subject's privacy. The viewer can explore the details in the image; the man's body, his hairy chest, the style of bathing suit, his glasses, and his arm position.

I was able to break classical rules of portrait photography, and it was fun. I was able to be satirical about people. Halsman said that we must treat the body with respect. We crop in polite places, i.e., not in the middle of the woman's breast, but above or below the breast. Halsman said that the photographer does not crop in the middle of the joints, i.e., the knee, the ankle, or the knuckles of the fingers. The photographer should crop below the knees, but above the ankle. The photographer should include all the digits of the fingers or delete the entire hand from the image. I broke the rules and began to experiment with how much I could depart from the classical portrait rules and still produce a strong portrait picture.

The Exhibition's Image Selection and Its Arrangement

My procedure for the exhibition was first to video tape the exhibition

space and all the wall space before selecting the images for the exhibit. In this manner I was able to calculate how many images and what size images I could exhibit. I was now able to work in visual units.

I was able to work matching similar images to a panel. For example, The "Icon" (the man on the toilet) was matched with "Roller-skating Scout" (the man lacing up his roller blades). Likewise, I was able to place the "Fire Island" series together, as well as place the two transvestite images together; "Safari Transvestite" and "Beautiful Transvestite." I was able to place "Ronald Reagan" and "Woody Allen" together. All of the famous artist and author images were placed together on two long panels in the exhibit. In fact the night after I hung the images at "The Harry Hendren Gallery," I realized I was one image short of filling the long panel. I went home and immediately printed "Louise Dahl-Wolfe," matted and framed it to complete the panel theme.

Patronage

Some of the photographs were self-assignments. I went to events on "speculation," i.e., I would shoot an event and then I would attempt to sell the images afterwards to the media.

"Ronald Reagan" was a self-assignment during his campaign for President in 1980. Since I had a press pass, I was able to cross police and Secret Service lines and photograph where the ordinary photographer could not go.

"Woody Allen" was a self assignment as well. I discovered he was having a press conference to promote his film, "Annie Hall," and I gained access to

this event. I subsequently sold Reagan and Allen images to New York Magazine. Reagan was also sold to "The Soho Weekly News." I also have these two images on consignment with Black Star Photo Agency (New York, N.Y.) for future sales. "Monkey" was accomplished while on assignment for "New York Magazine."

"Russell Lee," "Berenice Abbott," "Irving Penn," "Joseph Heller," "Kate Millet," Robert Mapplethorpe," "Aaron Siskind," "Isamu Nochuchi," "Barbara Morgan," "Beaumont Newhall," "Andre Kertesz," "Helmut Newton," "Isaac B. Singer," were self-assignments. Some of these images generated sales by being sold to publications afterwards. "Helmut Newton" was used in "American Photographer Magazine," now entitled "American Photo Magazine." "Kate Millet" was sold to "In These Times."

"Kertesz" was used in "American Society of Picture Professionals, Inc. Newsletter," Fall 1983. The other images (or others similar and from the same shoots, excepting Mapplethorpe, were used in my own publication, "Photographs: A Collector's Newsletter." In December 1992, "Berenice Abbott" was sold to A.G. Edwards Corporation (St. Louis).


1981 Berenice Abbott

Others were for assignment. "Baubles and Bangles" was shot as a jewelry editorial essay for "The Soho Weekly News." "Allen Ginsberg," "Bust in the Store," "Masks," "I.F. Singer," "Egan's Eye" (the image was used for an article on cataracts on the eyes caused by computer screens), "Margaret Atwood," and "Hunter Thompson" were accomplished while on assignment for "The Soho Weekly News."

"Egan's Eye" has also been used in "Photographs: A Collector's Newsletter" and recently, in 1991, as the cover image for a St. Louis Community College at Forest Park photography program brochure. "Hunter Thompson" has been sold to several literary magazines, including "Washington Monthly." "Thompson" has recently, Fall 1992, been used by Penguin books in their catalogue to promote their forthcoming book on Hunter Thompson by author E. Jean Carroll.

"The Smile" image was a full page magazine advertisement for a dentist who promotes invisible braces. This image was shot to strict layout specifications, including the rose and the "splashes" of light on the background. [If you look closely one can see the braces on the top right canine tooth.]

"Polish Dancer" and "Parade Watchers" were recorded on assignment for an advertising agency attempting to promote Polish Ham, which was a major account of mine. "Gary Gadson" was for the subject's acting portfolio.

"Al+En=Arp" and "I did It For You, Cindy" were personal statements in response to all the critical acclaim that followed photographic artist Cindy Sherman during the Eighties.
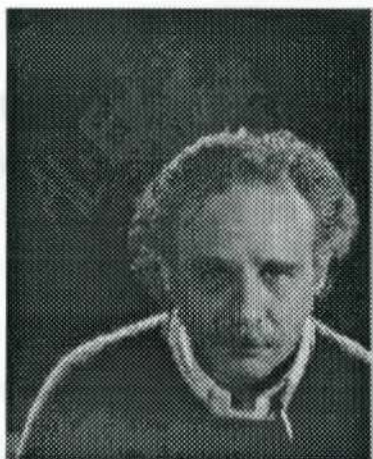
1988   Al+En=Arp

1988 I Did It For You, Cindy

I felt that Sherman had a wonderful idea in self-portraiture, but she executed her ideas with no regard for lighting and camera angles.

In my opinion, Sherman is a poor photographer who does not know the classical rules of portrait lighting and technique (double shadows and poor placement of fill lights, for example) and does not deserve the outpouring of critical acclaim.

My personal statement is that I could do her self-portrait character photography better than she by simply following the rules of classical portraiture. I would like to mention that her most recent work, post 1990, has radically improved and she now follows the classical rules of portrait photography. Since her latest work was shot in Italy, I wonder if she hired a lighting expert to light her poses for her.

The "Fire Island" series was personal work where there was a purposeful attempt to record bodies without identifying heads. This headless (or cropping into the head) theme has continued in my most recent work.

My most recent work has been headless people that tie into the exhibition's theme of gestures and expressions. This work was produced for my Masters of Art in photography at Lindenwood College. A listing of photographic images in the exhibition are on the following pages. The personal goal for my graduate studies was to define my photographic weaknesses and to improve my knowledge and skills.

For example, the platinum/palladium prints increased my knowledge of old fashioned print techniques and improved my skills of working with people using a large and cumbersome format camera. It also increased my knowledge of photographic history.

The following is the listing that accompanied the photographic exhibition:

By Allen G. Arpadi, M.A. in Photography Graduate Exhibition
5846 Waterman Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63112
(314) 863-6643

All the photographs are for sale for $ 350. matted and framed, except the Resisn Coated (R.C.) prints which are not for sale.

Listing

1. "Egan's Eye," 13" x 9 1/2", 1980, silver
2. "Ben Asen," 10" x 8", 1990, platinum/palladio
3. "Untitled," 13" x 9 1/2", 1977, silver
4. "Tennis Players," 10" x 8", 1990, platinum/palladio
5. "Polish Dancer," 13" x 9 1/2", silver
6. "Parade Watchers," 13" x 9 1/2", 1975, silver R.C.
7. "Bird's Nest," 9 1/2" x 13", silver
8. "Untitled," 8" x 10", 8" x 10", diptych, 1991, silver
9. "West Point Cadets," 13" x 9 1/2", silver
10. "Salute," 13" x 9 1/2", 1982, silver
11. "Yankees," 13" x 9 1/2", 1975, silver R.C.
12. "The Smile", 9 1/2" x 13", 1984, silver
13. "Majority Reports Covers Women," 13" x 4 3/4", 1978, diptych, silver
14. "Bobby Egan," 11" x 14", multitych, 1978, silver R.C.
15. "Gary Gadson," 8" x 10", 1977, silver
16. "Walter," 8" x 10", 1991, silver
17. "San Francisco," 8" x 10",1978, silver
18. "Princess," 5" x 7", 1988, silver
19. "Woody Allen," 9 1/2" x 13", 1977, silver
20. "Ronald Reagan," 9 1/2" x 13", 1981, silver R.C.
21. "Russell Lee," 13" x 9 1/2" 1981, silver
22. "Beaumont Newhall," 13" x 9 1/2", 1982, silver
23. "Robert Mapplethorpe," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1982, silver
24. "Berenice Abbott," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1981, silver
25. "Irving Penn," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1982, silver
26. "Aaron Siskind," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1982, silver
27. "Barbara Morgan," 6 1/2" x 9 1/2", 1982, silver
28. "Arthur Rothstein," 6 1/2" x 9 1/2", 1982, silver
29. "Louise Dahl-Wolfe," 6 1/2" x 9 1/2", 1982, silver
29a. "Andy Warhol," 6 1/2" x 9 1/2", 1977, silver
30. "Margaret Atwood," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1980, silver
31. "Joseph Heller," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1984, silver
32. "Kate Millet," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1979, silver
33. "I. F. Stone," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1980, silver

34. "Andre Kertesz," 13 1/2" x 9 1/2", 1983, silver
35. "Helmut Newton," 13 1/2" x 9 1/2", 1982, silver
36. "Isaac Beshevis Singer," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1984, silver
37. "Hunter Thompson," 6 1/2"x 9 1/2", 1982, silver
38. "Isamu Noghuchi," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1980, silver R.C.
39. "Allen Ginsburg," 6 1/2" x 9 1/2", 1981, silver
40. "Houston Texas," 6 1/2" x 9 1/2", 1992, silver
41. "James Rosenquist," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1982, silver
42. "Baubles & Bangles," 10" x 9", 1980, silver
43. "Indian Fake," 9 1/2" x 11", 1977, silver
44. "Clown," 9 1/2" x 11", 1979, silver
45. "Muscle Ladies," 9 1/2" x 3 1/2", diptych,1982, silver
46. "Aunt Mollie," 9 1/2" x 2 1/2", triptych, 1980, silver
47. "Mickey & Alex Coleman's Face," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2",1975, silver
48. "Bust In The Store," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1981, silver
49. "Masks," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1982, silver
50. "Look-a-Likes," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1980, silver
51. "Monkey," 9 1/2" x 6 1/2", 1979, silver
52. "Dancers," 6 1/2" x 9 1/2", 1977, silver
53. "Male Bodybuilder," 8" x 10", 1990, platinum/palladio
54. "Female Bodybuilder," 8" x 10", 1990, platinum/palladio
55. "Girl on a Big Wheel," 10" x 8", 1990, platinum/palladio
56. "Girlfriends," 10" x 8", 1990, platinum/palladio
57. "Fire Island Body With Football," 8" x 10", 1985, silver
58. "Fire Island Body," 8" x 10", 1985, silver
59. "Fire Island Couple, 8" x 10", 1985, silver
60. "Fire Island Smile," 8" x 10", 1985, silver
61. "Fire Island Watcher," 8" x 10", 1985, silver
62. "The Icon," 8" x 10", 1990, silver, browntoned
63. "The Roller-blading Scout," 8" x 10", 1990, platinum/palladio
64. "Al + En= Arp," 9 1/2" x 11", 1988, silver
65. "I Did It For You, Cindy," 9 1/2" x 13", 1988, silver
66. "Safari Transvestite," 9 1/2" x 13", 1978, silver
67. "Beautiful Transvestite," 9 1/2" x 13", 1978, silver