

1983

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (1979-1992): Booklet 02

J. Joseph Garrahy

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/pell_neh_I_81

Recommended Citation

Garrahy, J. Joseph, "Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (1979-1992): Booklet 02" (1983). *Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (1979-1992)*. Paper 16.

http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/pell_neh_I_81/16

This Booklet is brought to you for free and open access by the Education: National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities, Subject Files I (1973-1996) at DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (1979-1992) by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@etal.uri.edu.

A nation is known as much for its artists and poets as it is for its leaders. It is a sign of a nation's grace, her vision and her willingness to strive for perfection. So it is with our own State of Rhode Island.

We are blessed with the natural beauty of our coastline that only the Supreme sculptor could have created. Our architecture reflects a rich past: our preservation of that architecture is a sign of our people's respect for a rich heritage.

Our museums showcase with pride the achievements of our forefathers. Through the work of our poets and authors, we measure our lives and define our dreams and goals.

Rhode Island is a rich mosaic of ethnic heritage and we celebrate the various lifestyles through the arts. Art is truly an expression of our lives and times, and throughout our long history, Rhode Islanders have made innumerable contributions to the arts.

We have always been active patrons of the arts and we will continue to work together to ensure that the spirit and vitality remains alive and vigorous.

J. Joseph Garrahy
GOVERNOR

1983 GOVERNOR'S ART AWARD COMMITTEE

Ms. Anne Utter - *Chair*
Ms. Antoinette Downing
Mr. Barnet Fain
Mr. William Ferrante
Mr. Calvert C. Groton
Ms. Dorothy Licht
Mr. Rudy Nashan
Ms. Phyllis Stanzler
Mr. Frederick vanLiew

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Honorable J. Joseph Garrahy, Governor of Rhode Island
R.I. Lithograph Corp.: Daniel Lecht, President
Governor's Award Medal, design by Gilbert Franklin, produced by Merlin Szosz
Brochure design: Mahler Ryder
Cover photo: Gail Porter

Dan Lecht - *Chairman RISCA*



RHODE ISLAND GOVERNOR'S ART AWARD



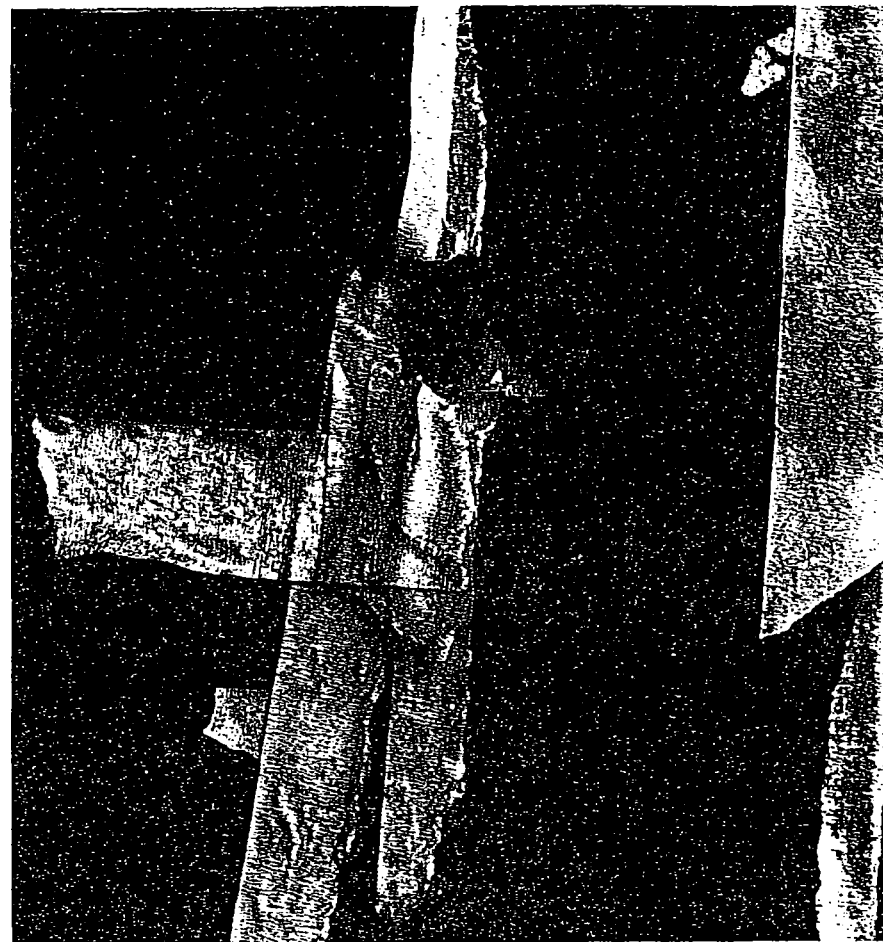
Harlem



In Peru

1981

I think that in any art you don't know in advance what you want to say. It's revealed as you say it. You have to work and look and change and suddenly there it is. And this is the great miracle of art. It's revelation rather than illustration. It's a document not of the physical world but of the spiritual world.... You know when I look at something I've made I can't imagine I've made it. The work of art is more than "compensation" for my personality or the desire to "express" myself. It's much bigger than that. I believe there's a whole thing called the world of art which contains in it the cultures of the past, the personalities of the past, and the ideas of the past.



New York 373

1978



AARON SISKIND - one of the acknowledged masters of twentieth-century photography - was born in New York City in 1903, one of six children of immigrant parents. In 1926 he graduated with a degree in English from City College. He spent the next 23 years teaching in the New York public school system.

Siskind first got a camera in 1930 as a honeymoon gift. Photography rapidly became an obsession. In 1933 he joined the Film and Photo League, seeking to improve his skills.

As a high school student, Siskind had been intensely active in Socialist politics. In the Photo League now, he found many who shared his concerns, and during the next 8 years of the Depression, he helped produce with other League members a variety of documentary studies including *Harlem Document*, *Bowery: Dead End*, *Portrait of a Tenement*, and *Park Avenue: A Study in Contrasts*.

By 1941 Siskind had moved firmly away from social commentary toward a more personal photography. In a statement for a 1946 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, Siskind wrote: "I regard the picture as a new object to be contemplated for its own meaning and its own beauty."

The '40s and '50s saw Siskind closely associated with the new and dominating Abstract-Expressionist movement in art. His own work took a bold, fresh direction, paralleling the formal efforts of such painters (and friends) as Franz Kline, Mark Rothko, Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock.

Siskind spent the summer of 1951 as Harry Callahan's colleague at legendary Black Mountain College. Also that year he accepted Callahan's invitation to teach photography at the Institute of Design in Chicago.

Siskind stayed at the Institute twenty years, half of them as head of department, traveling between times to photograph in Greece, Mexico, Rome and the Badlands of South Dakota, summering on Martha's Vineyard. In 1971, again at Callahan's request, Siskind left Chicago for a position at the Rhode Island School of Design, from which he retired in 1976.

In addition to being widely exhibited and collected, Siskind's photographs have appeared in several book selections: *Aaron Siskind: Photographs* (Horizon, 1959), *Aaron Siskind: Photographer* (George Eastman House, 1965), *Bucks County: Photographs of Early Architecture* (Horizon, 1974), *Places* (Light, 1976), *Harlem Document*, *Photographs 1932-1940* (Matrix, 1981). A biography - *Aaron Siskind: Pleasures and Terrors* by Carl Chiarenza - was published in 1982 by the New York Graphic Society.

Siskind's work has earned him many honors: a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1966; the Gold Star of Merit from the Philadelphia College of Art in 1969 (the same year he was chosen Bingham Distinguished Professor in the Humanities at the University of Louisville); and a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in 1976. He has received the annual Distinguished Career in Photography award from The Friends of Photography. He served on the founding Board of Trustees for the Visual Studies Workshop (Rochester, NY). He has been awarded honorary degrees from Columbia College and the Rhode Island School of Design. His archives have been acquired by the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona.

Aaron Siskind lives and works in Providence. He will be 80 in December.