

SHUTTER

Shutter

Kari Alberthal
Laura Pickett Calfee
Sarina DeNardo
Jason Dibley
Nora Herting
Lupita Murillo
Carla Poindexter
Sheri Robertson
Jacinda Russell
Christine Shank
Tricia Moureau Sweeney

Guest Curator Kelli Connell
December 8, 2000-January 24, 2001

Shutter.

Similar to a blink, the camera shutter opens and closes to record on film a scene that exists in front of the photographer. This scene, whether fabricated or found, is an extension of the artist – a comment on their life, culture, and surroundings. From the beginning of its existence, the photograph was considered a documentary tool – a record of the truth. The camera was first used to create formal portraits. Soon, it was used to record the natural wonders of nature, to document war, and as an instrument for social change. Because the camera was born as a documentary tool, it has been a struggle for the photograph to be considered art even though small groups of artists have been using the camera as an art form since its inception. Henry Peach Robinson, the leader of an early group of photographers associated with the High Art Movement, believed that the photograph should advocate beauty and an artistic effect no matter how it was obtained. He felt it was the photographer's duty to avoid the mean, the bare and the ugly – to avoid awkwardness and to correct the unpicturesque.¹ In today's media-driven society, this belief still has some truth.

Turning the conventional sense of beauty inside out has been a theme shared by several photographers for the last thirty years. Cindy Sherman, Nan Goldin, Ralph Eugene Meatyard, Diane Arbus and Joel Peter Witkin have all presented photographs that are considered by many to be grotesque, frightening, and disturbing. Yet, these photographs also present a truth. A hidden, yet more real truth that is grounded in beautiful honesty. Cindy Sherman has said, "I'm generally someone who likes to be happy and find the positive side of things. But not in my work. To drive my work, I've gone beyond my earlier money struggles to other struggles in the world, but I still use personal fears to keep my work moving. I wanted to do some happy and nice pictures but I found I could only show the underside."²

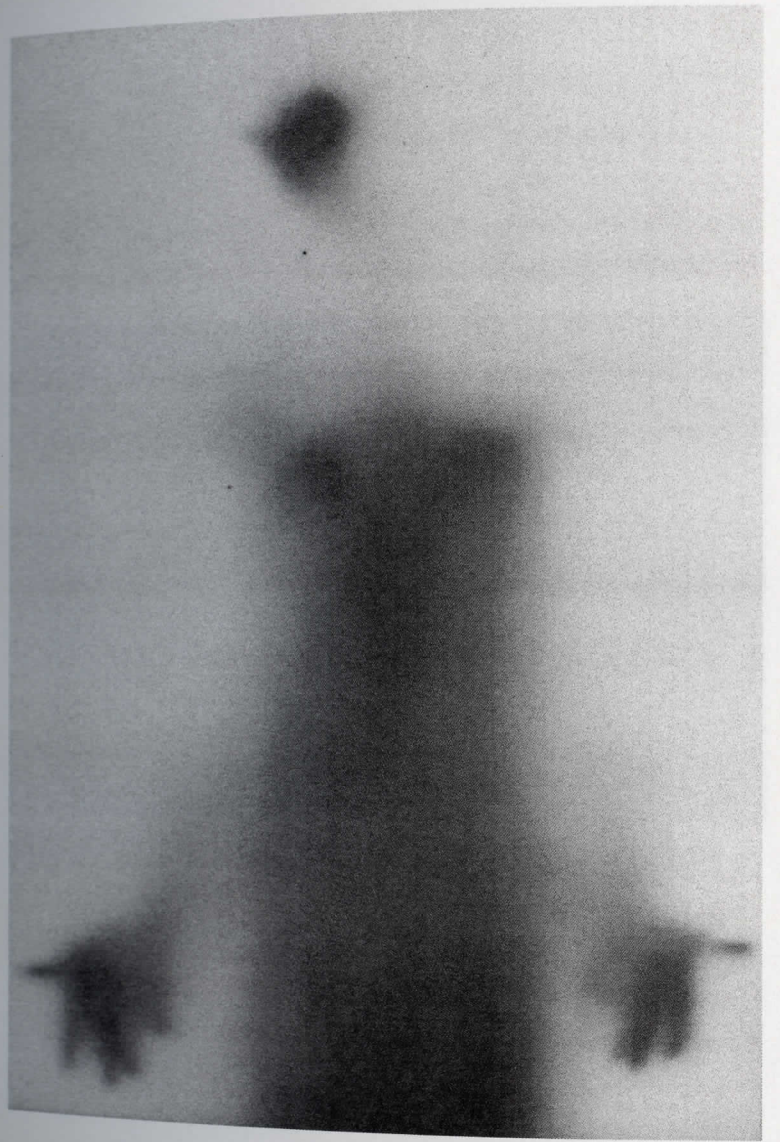
It is this underside that is the focus for *Shutter*. Like peering through the shutters of a stranger's home, these artists give us a glimpse into their personal lives. Shutters are used to keep light out, and to provide protection and privacy. By viewing the work in this show, we get a sense of seeing something that is hidden, a secret. Hairs on our arms stand up. We hear laughter that is bordering on hysteria. We see discarded objects bathed in obscure, ominous light. We see figures, like a memory, float to the surface and then sink back into the intangible. We hear a scream behind floating teeth and see a hand that is controlled by strings. We watch a dark figure move quickly through disintegrating rooms filled with hoards of photographs, a massacre of bicycles, and disgusting hairnets. We watch barflies, inebriated and lonely, whirl through seedy hangouts and nighttime streets. We peer into homes with quiet rooms and overwhelming memories of the past. And we feel a shudder. A tingle moves up our spines. A shiver moves through our bodies.

Kelli Connell, Curator

¹Barbara London & John Updike, *Photography* (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1994), 387.

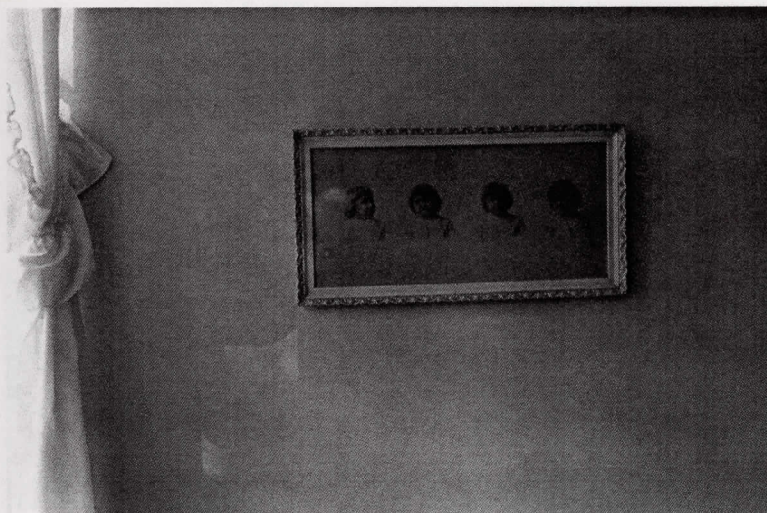
²David Goldsmith, "Cindy Sherman," *Aperture* (Fall 1993), 37.

Kari Alberthal
Untitled
4' X 5', 2000
Iris giclee print



Laura Pickett Calfee

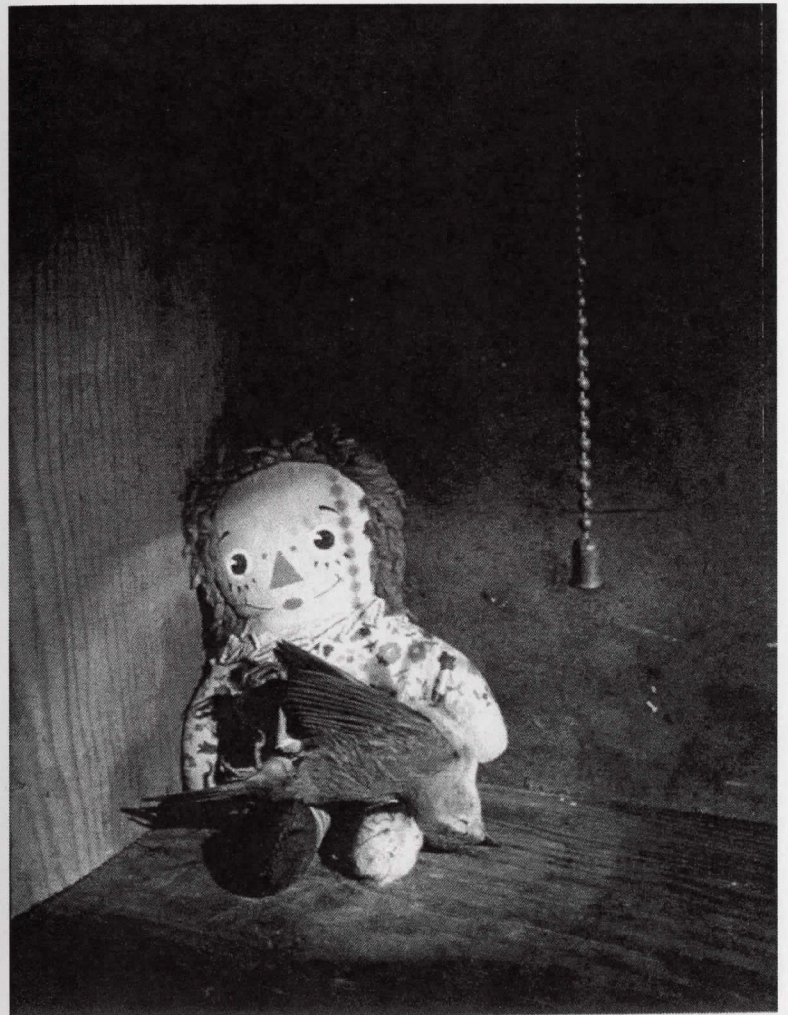
In Juliet's Room
23" X 29", 1999
Ilfochrome print



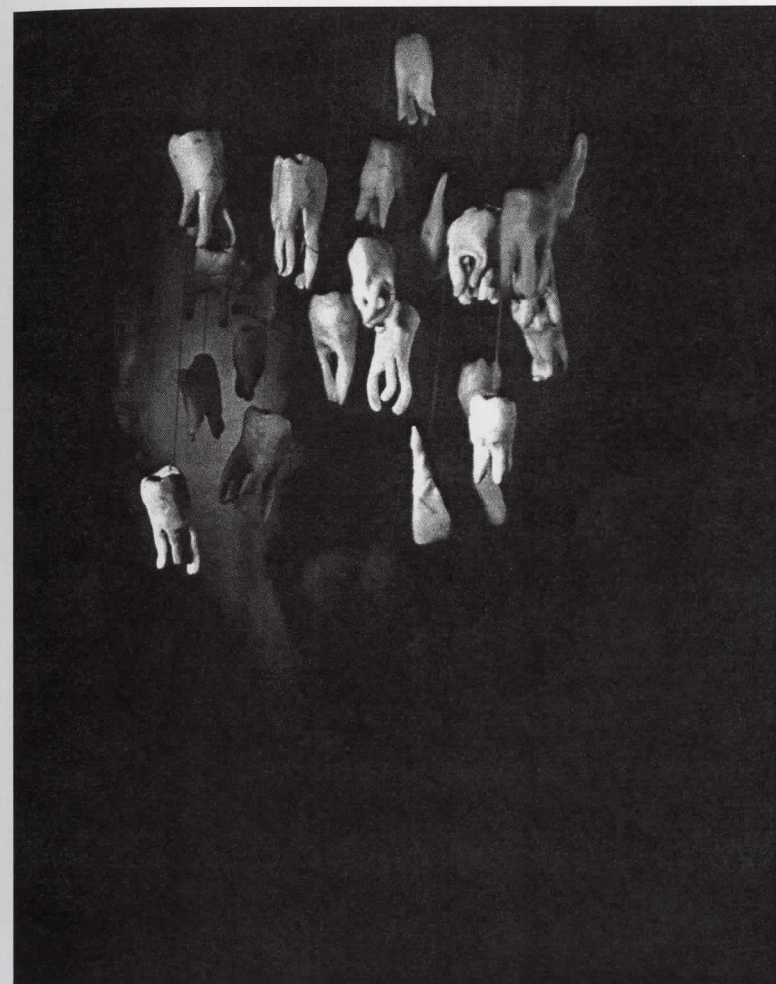
Sarina DeNardo
2100, 1:59 a.m.
11" X 14", 1999
Gelatin silver print



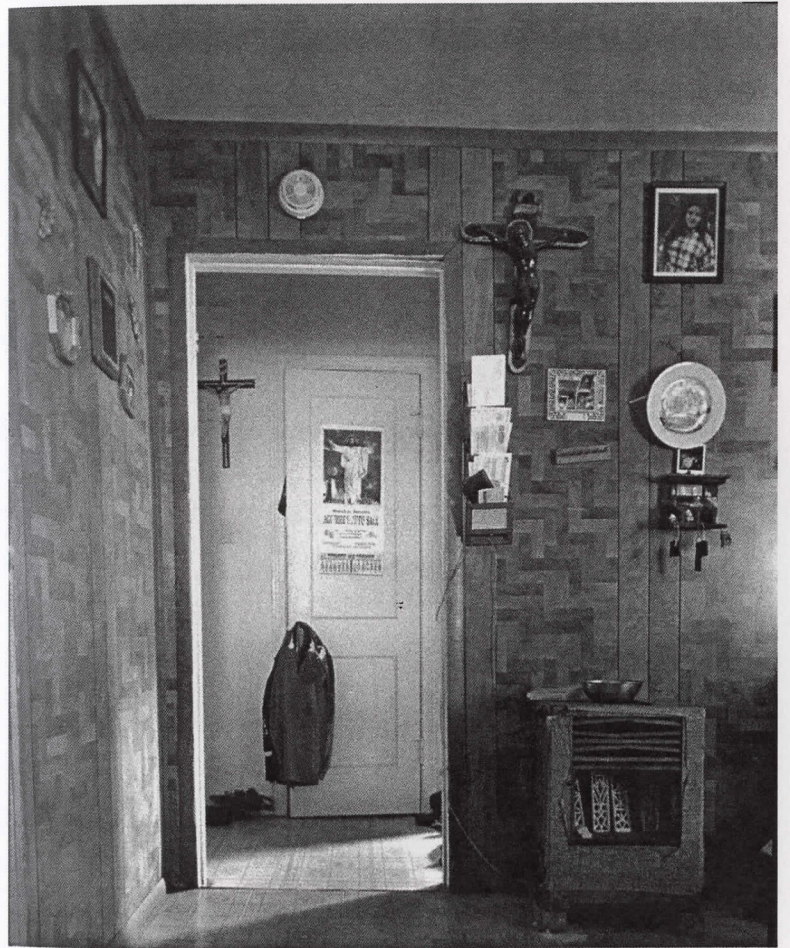
Jason Dibley
Bird Girl
16" X 20", 1999
Gelatin silver print



Nora Herting
Beneath Sleep #5
11" X 14", 1999
Gelatin silver print



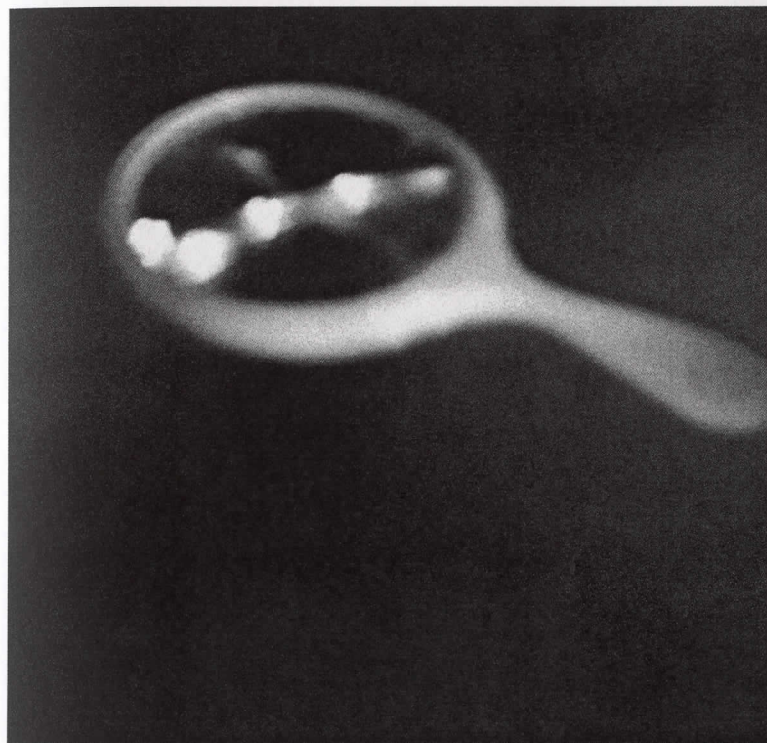
Lupita Murillo
In the Living Room
16" X 20", 1999
Gelatin silver print



Carla Poindexter
Allegorical Resemblances:
Disrupted Vertigo
13" X 13", 1999
Gelatin silver print



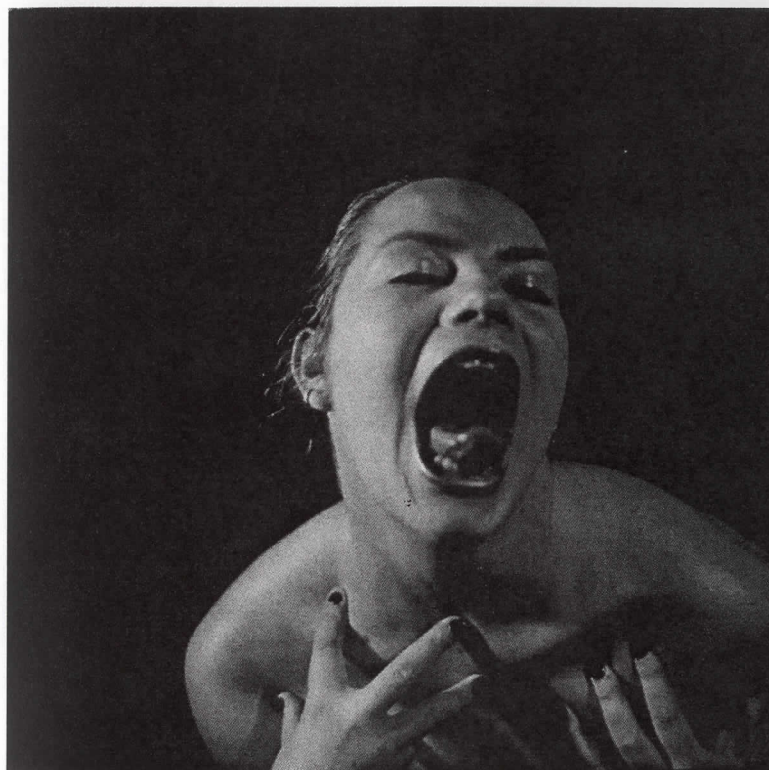
Sheri Robertson
Mirror
28" X 32", 2000
Gelatin silver print



Jacinda Russell
Amass
30" X 40", 2000
Type C print



Christine Shank
Untitled
(Personality Series)
15" X 19", 2000
Type C print



Tricia Moreau Sweeney
Untitled from series
Expressions of Frustrated Wishes
13.5" X 19", 1998
Type C print

