

Shot in the West

White Black & Blues



Richard Blair

Freedom of Mind

I have been casting around for a photography project that I am excited about. I have been doing photography for 50 years, and I have done a lot of different things - from street photos of NYC, large negative black and white landscapes in Yosemite and other parks, trips to Bali to do a book, lots of highly skilled studio images for demanding clients, and I was the photographer for the Port of Oakland. Someone complained that "I shot everything" implying that I wasn't a focused artist. The opposite is true, doing diverse work signals breadth and depth.

I always concentrated on the subject at hand - rather than limit myself to a theory or niche. But I'm thinking about what is most important to me as I near the end of my working time - and what I have neglected.

I always knew that what was important to me was freedom. The freedom to move around at will, to be alone with my thoughts, to be energized by what I see; on my own schedule, not be beholden to others, free to explore, to contemplate, and to express my discoveries with images.

This is part of a long tradition of American art. Walt Whitman was an instigator, Jack Kerouac nailed it in *On the Road*, and *The Dharma Bums*, Yvon Chouinard calls the climbers who lived this freedom *dirtbags*. So this is my project - going through my work finding photos that have "freedom of mind", showing people and places when the world is rushing in.

Those are the experiences and insights I store in the camera. That's the secret of good art - the thrill to do it.

Everyone wants to be free - a basic human urge and need - but what stops freedom is a closed mind. Brainwashing: schools, jobs, governments, peers keep a person locked in. I hope that my photos will provide unentanglement.

If you can't understand, then come closer.

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Young Couple by Cody's Books, Telegraph Ave, Berkeley



Marge Beddo and Friend, Humboldt Nevada 1973 (She lived up an isolated mountain road out from town)



Hitchhikers take a break Interstate 80, Nevada

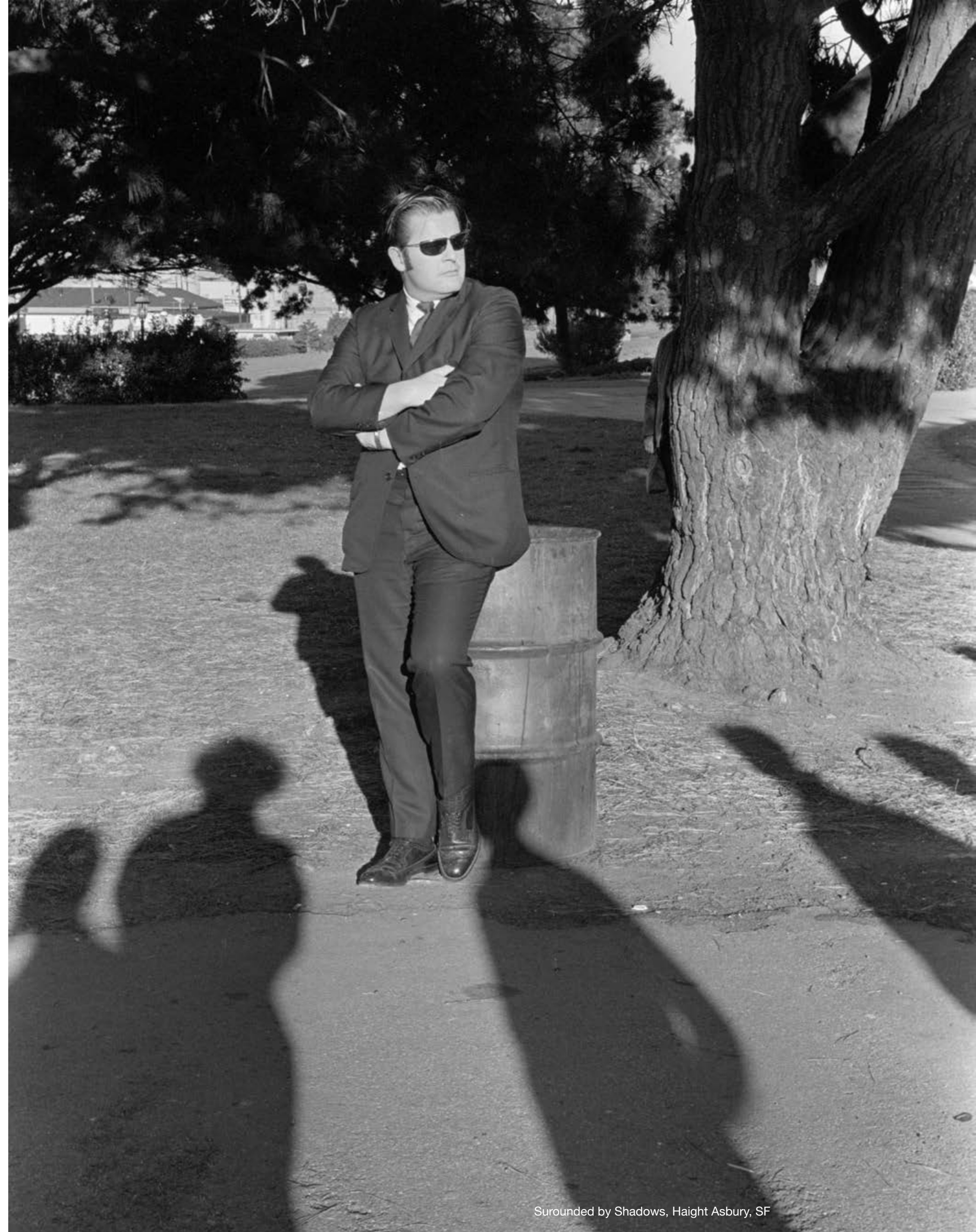




Market Street, San Francisco 1973



Serious Reader, Telegraph Ave, Berkeley



Surounded by Shadows, Haight Asbury, SF

REAL & DREAM

NOW PLAYING

ARE OPEN!

chase Tickets Inside →

MISSION \$3.00 AND WORTH IT!

ADULTS ONLY NO ONE UNDER 18 ADMITTED!

SOFT
SHOULDER



HER DREAMS WERE THOSE OF SIN AND PASSION!

FRUSTRATED CHERIE

IN THE MIND OF A WOMAN! STRICTLY ADULT

HER DREAMS WERE THOSE OF SIN AND PASSION!

FRUSTRATED CHERIE

IN THE MIND OF A WOMAN! STRICTLY ADULT

HER DREAMS WERE THOSE OF SIN AND PASSION!

HOT EROTIC DREAMS

IN THE MIND OF A WOMAN! STRICTLY ADULT

HER DREAMS WERE THOSE OF SIN AND PASSION!

HOT EROTIC DREAMS

IN THE MIND OF A WOMAN! STRICTLY ADULT



Cabbies on a hot summer night, Reno



Cars in Repose, Half Moon Bay



Elderly Bus Rider's Suitcase Upstate NY



SF Motorcycle Cop

[Print Information](#)

SERVED 24 HOURS DAILY

FRIED





Night Out, Reno, Nevada, 1970



Jonathan Jackson Funeral (2), Oakland, 1976



Jonathan Jackson's Coffin, Black Panther Funeral, Oakland 1977



Constipated Shopper, San Francisco



Woman On Planks, BART Construction, Market Street San Francisco



Allen Ginsberg's Car? San Francisco, CA





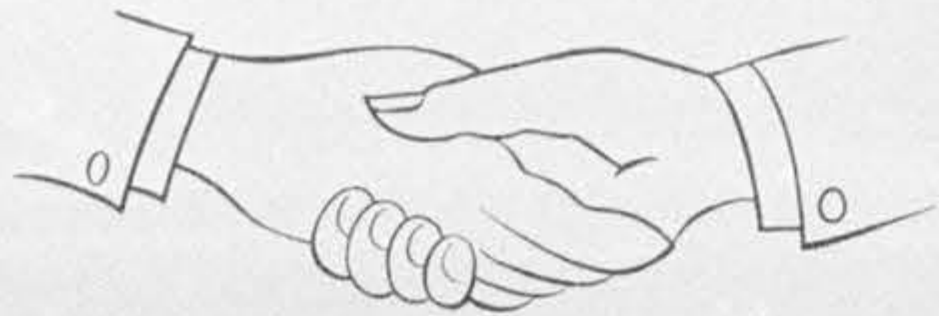
Reading at the bus Stop, Berkeley



Tiny and Girl Friend, Telegraph Ave Berkeley



42



**FRIENDLY
CABS**



San Francisco Neighborhood, 1978



Morning in San Bruno



Sex On the Mind
Sproul Plaza, UC Berkeley 1977



General Wastemoreland and a Hare Krishna Incense Vendor
Telegraph Ave Berkeley, CA



Drunken Redneck Fishermen
Rainbow Pool, off Highway 120 near Groveland, CA c.1980



Diver, Rainbow Pool, off Highway 120 near Groveland, CA c.1980



Two Butts, Fast Food Counter, Merced, California, c.1971



GOOD GIRLS
FOR THE

THE
MAGAZINE
LADIES

Seagram's

Seagram's

Seagram's

NO MINDS YOU MUST BE OVER

NO CHANGES

BITCHALITTLE

NO MINDS YOU MUST BE OVER

Sorry --
No

NO PERSONS
UNDER 21
ADMITTED!

By one
Night...
at the
Free



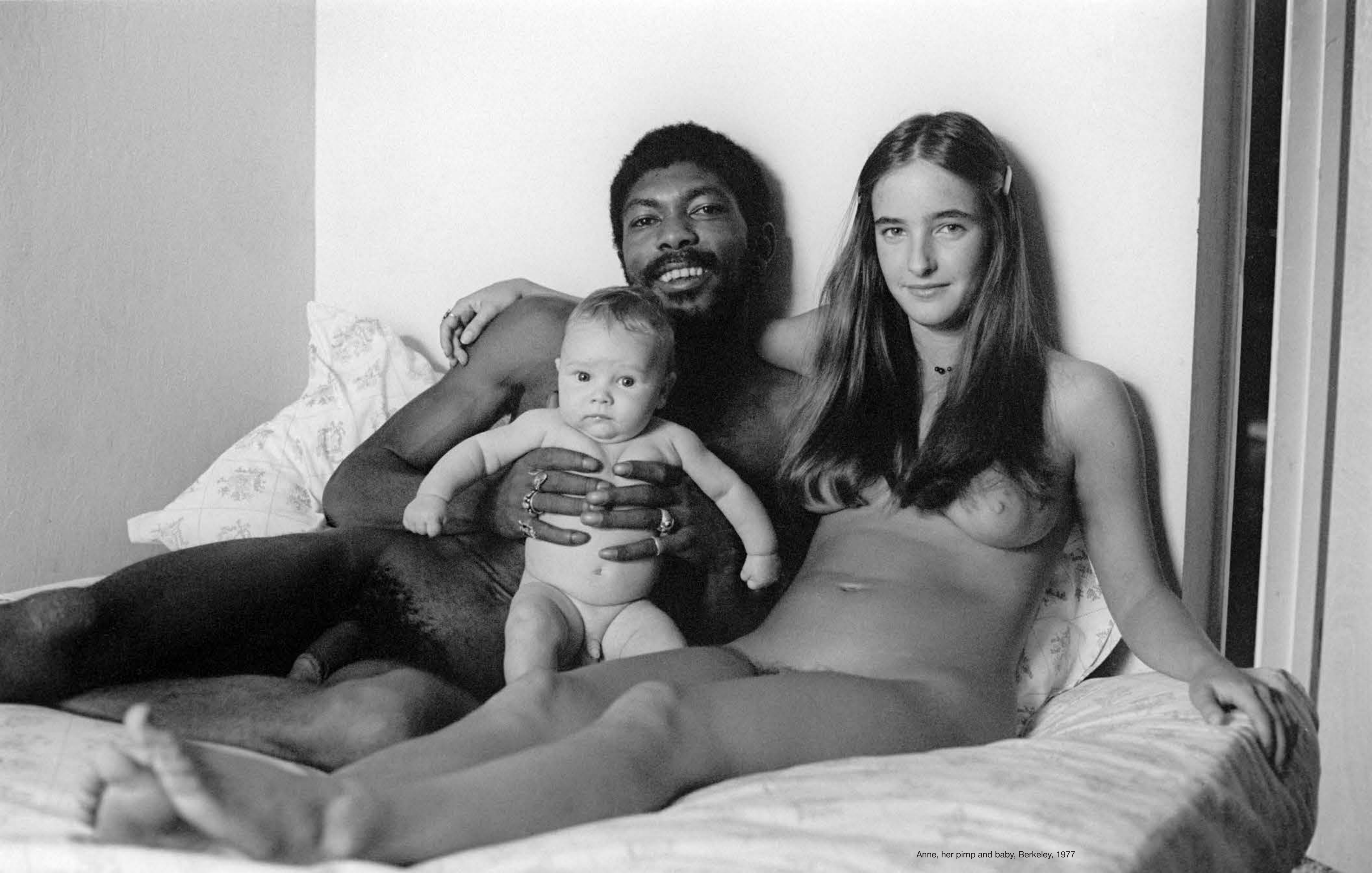
Gas Station Scene (taken on LSD) c.1971



Rural Church, Lee Vining, California, c.1971



Blinded By The Light, Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, c.1970



Anne, her pimp and baby, Berkeley, 1977



My roommate, Claire, c.1970



Cow Bones c.1973



People at the San Francisco City Hall Anti-War Rally, c.1972



GOVERNOR OF
CALIFORNIA
JANUARY 6 1931
TO JUNE 2 1934
THROUGH THESE
MANY YEARS
HE SERVED
MUNICIPALITY AND
COMMONWEALTH
WITH UNSWERVING
FIDELITY

City Hall Vendor, San Francisco c.1972



Reverend Moon's Unification Church Members, Berkeley 1972



Scene at the City Hall steps during an Anti-War Protest, San Francisco c.1972



Motorcycle Cop and Admirers, Berkeley 1972



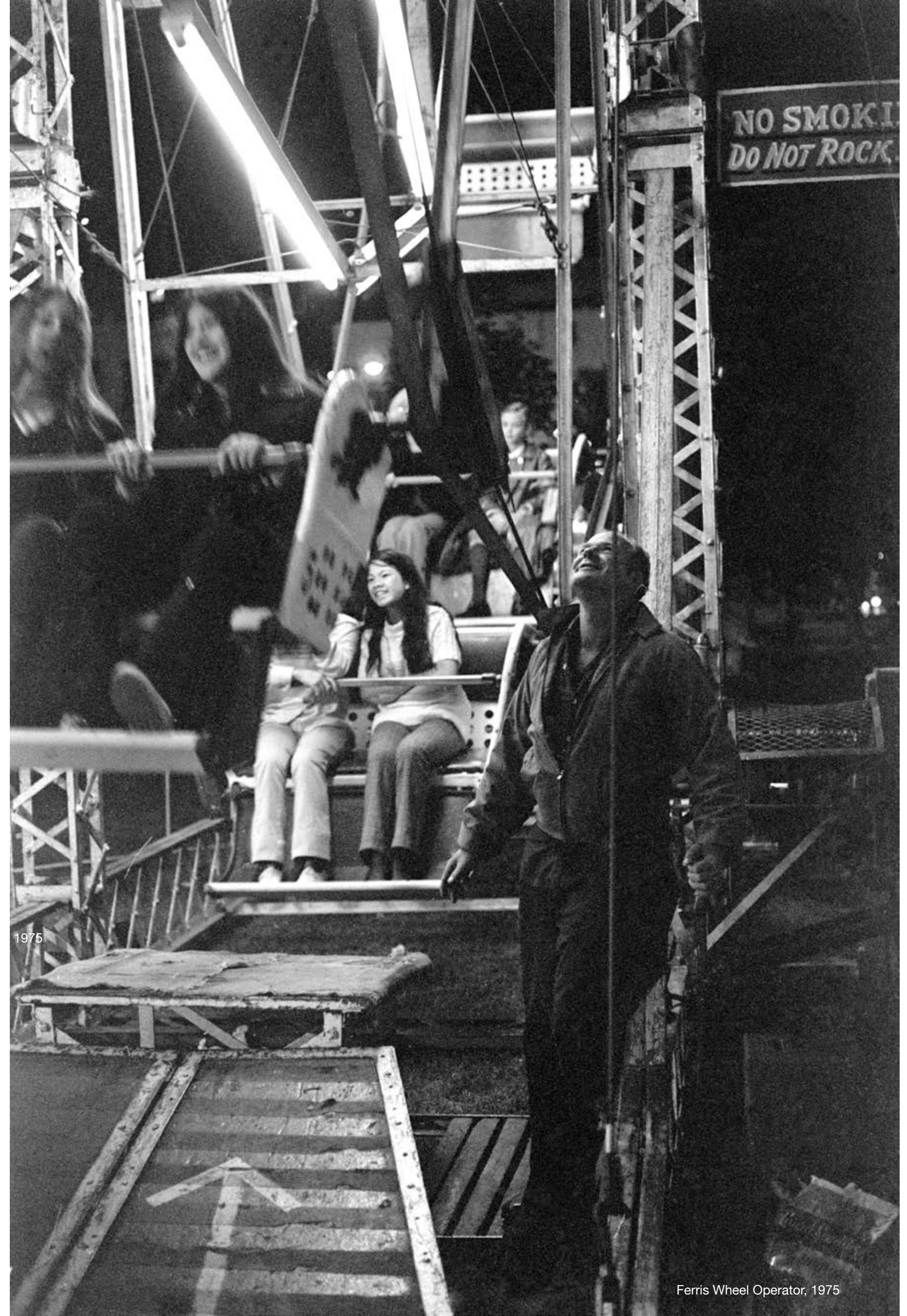
Grace Slick and Paul Kantner's Guitar 1970
*This darkroom solarization was used on the
Jefferson Airplane album "Blows against the Empire"*



Evening, Smokey Joe's Cafe, Berkeley, 1976



Burdened Bus Rider, San Francisco



Ferris Wheel Operator, 1975



Man at Cable Car Turnaround
SF 1973



AC Bus to San Francisco, 1973



Bus Stop, Berkeley 1975



Biggest Little City In The World Reno, Nevada c.1971



Newspaper Vendor, Shattuck and University Aves. Berkeley 1976



Dog by railroad tracks and split in the road Humboldt Nevada 1969



Market Street Cowboy, SF 1974



Man in Doorway, with Newspaper, Waiting for the Bus



Holy Herbert's Bible. Telegraph Ave, Berkeley 1970



Cosmetic Counter Scene, San Francisco



North Beach Tram Lines and Church Steeples



Pregnant Student at Pacific High School Shower Dome 1975



Marsha Sanders Driving Her 1953 Ford Flag Truck at Mariposa Grove, Yosemite National Park



Woman and Statue, LA County Museum of Art



Maryann Didyk after abuse from boyfriend, Berkeley 1973

[Print Information](#)



Burroughs



ire Center

Marlboro

PACIFIC

Man Hiding His Face and Marlboro Man Billboard, Downtown Los Angeles



The Caboose Bar, El Portal, California





Aeromotor Windmill



Artwork on Desert Varnish







BULL WHIPS



**HUNTING
KNIVES**



HANDTOOLED LEATHER
BELTS
BILLFOLDS





Maryanne and Quentin Hitchhiking by South San Francisco



Kid with Model Airplane, San Francisco

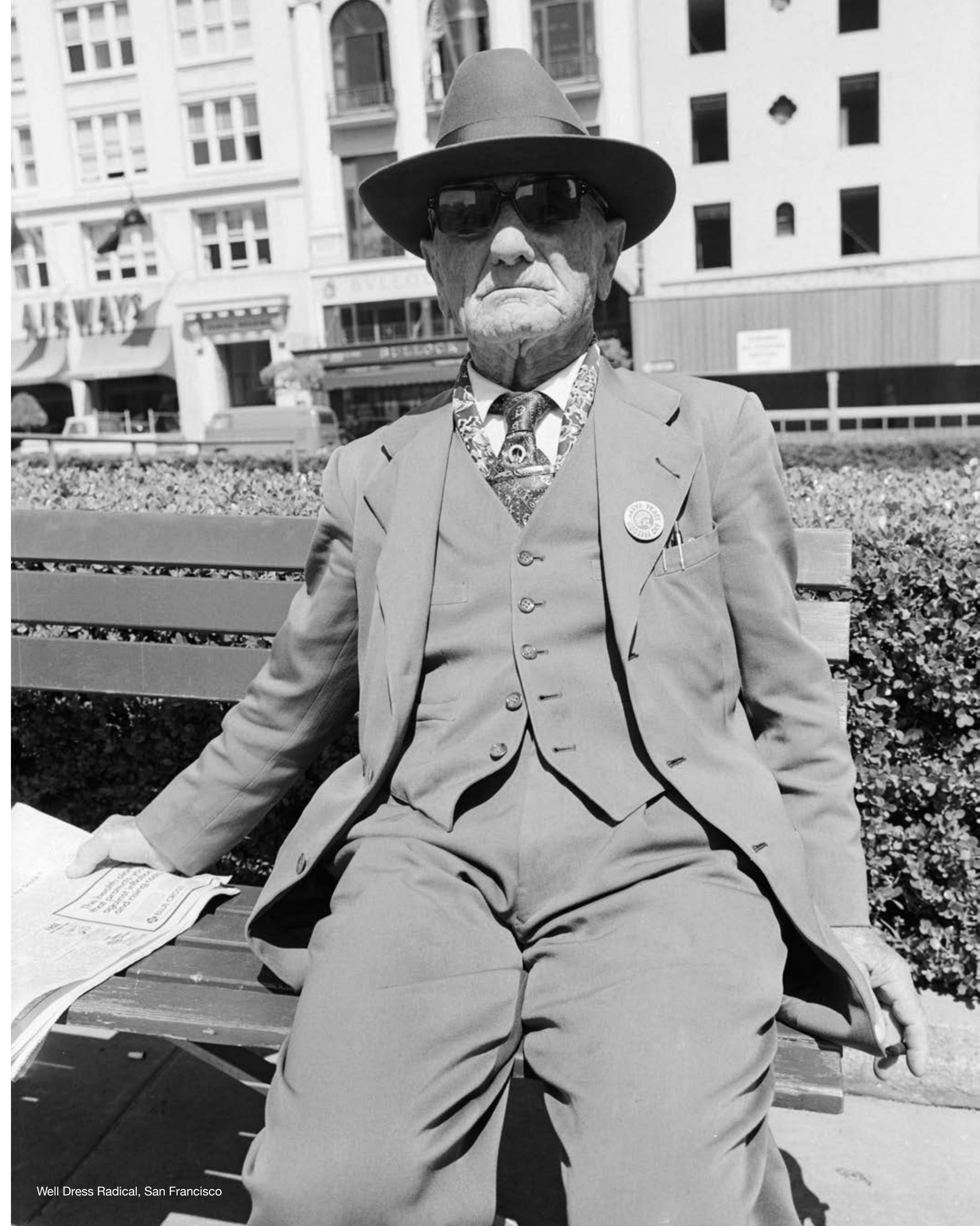


Scared Mother and Daughter, New Year's Eve Fireworks Chinatown



William Buckley, Right Wing Asshole

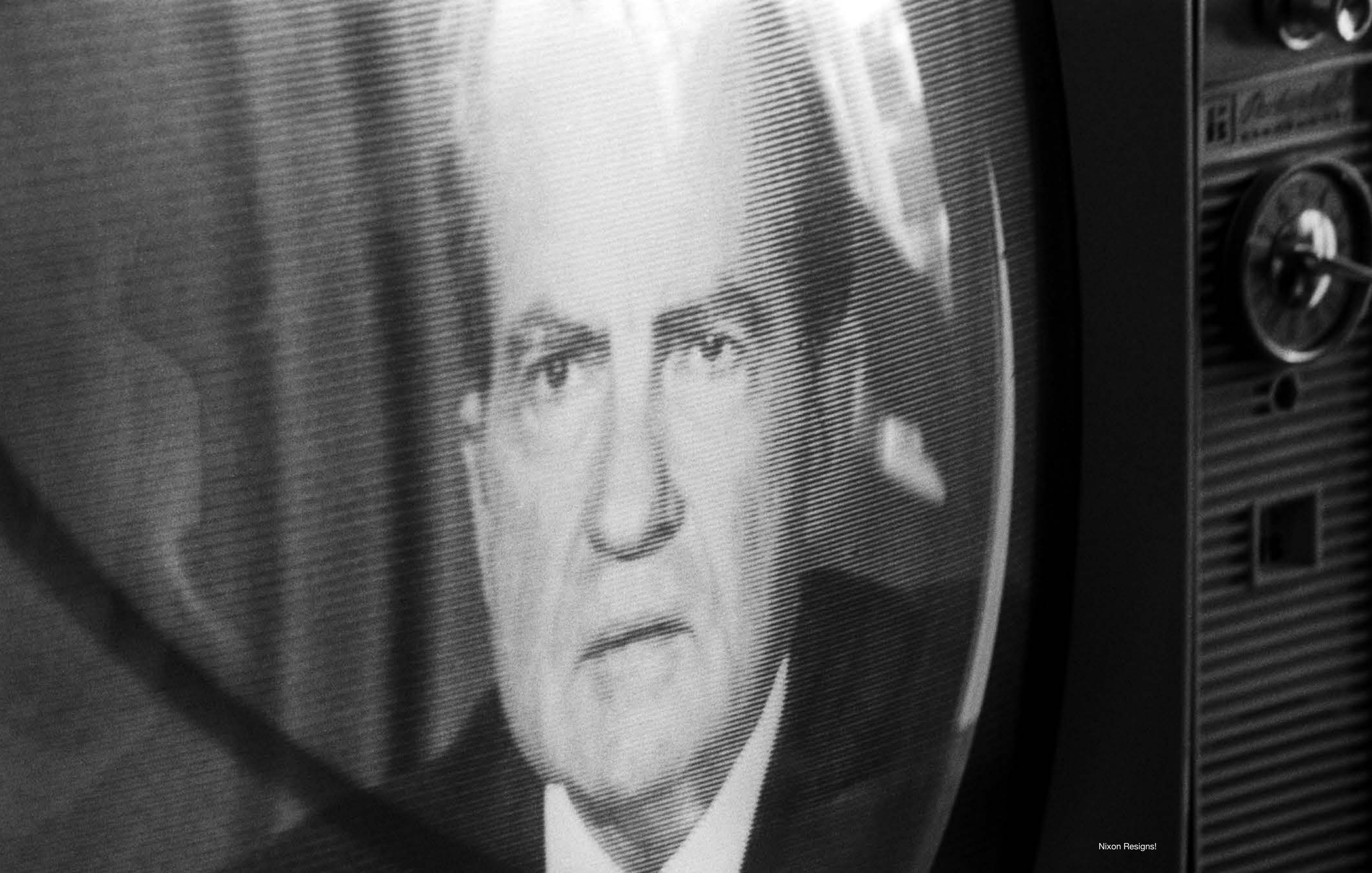
[Print Information](#)



Well Dress Radical, San Francisco



Hippie Girl's Bedroom, San Francisco 1971





Close Shave, Barber Shop, San Francisco



Hells Angels in Chinatown, San Francisco



Chinese Couple



Death by Suicide, Yosemite National Park 1971





Grateful Dead Poster Image, September, 1978



Salvation Army Trumper, Copenhagen



Adam and Eve, Mormon Temple Square, Salt Lake City



Brainwashed Khrisna Girl, Telegraph Ave, Berkeley



If you get caught in a
beach you could get a
Not 200 lines

Bus Passenger Observes Diver, London



Barker on Broadway, San Francisco



Exotic Man, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

DAILY MENU



We Serve Breakfast All Day

STEAKS

CHOPS

BAR B-Q

SANDWICHES

T-Bone Steak	\$ 4.50
Rib Steak	4.00
Club Steak	3.75
Chicken Fried Steak	2.25
Pepper Steak	3.50
Ham Steak	4.00
Hamburger Steak	2.25
Filet Mignon Steak	4.00
Liver & Onions	2.25
Fried Chicken	2.25

HOT Links	2.00
Pork Chops	2.50
Mutton Stew	1.50
Beef Stew	1.50
Sausage & Eggs	1.75
Bacon & Eggs	1.75
Ham & Eggs	1.75
Hot Cakes	95
Hot Cakes Striped ^{Bacc}	1.25

Bar B-Q Ribs	\$ 2.75
Bar B-Q Beef	2.75
Chili Burger	1.15
Cheese Burger	1.00
Chili	1.00
Chili Beans	90
Green Chili	1.00
Bowl of Beans	80
Hot Dogs	50
Hot Fish	2.25

Hamburger	70
Hamburger Delux	1.20
Cold Beef	1.20
Hot Beef	1.50
Ham & Egg Snd.	1.25
Ham Snd.	1.15
Cheese Snd.	95
Grill Cheese Snd	95
Bacon & Tomato Snd.	1.20
Bar B-Q Beef Snd	1.75

Gulf

TOKHEIM

\$ 8.73
THIS SALE

22
GALLONS

PRICE INCLUDING TAX
3 8 3

Interceptor

K H F M
PREMIUM





Sph, the VW Bug That I Lived In, Big Lagoon, Humboldt County, California



KODAK SAFETY FILM



**EMERGENCY
ROOM**



George and Louis Kopecky After Printing My Lithograph Al Jones Litho, San Francisco 1978





Swing in Apple Orchard, Foggy Sonoma County



Houseboat Community and Mount Tamalpais, Gate 5, Sausalito 1976



APRIL 15
STOP WAR!

STOP WORK
APRIL 15
STOP WAR!

STOP THE WAR
ON THE POOR



Kodak Processing

Couple at Margo St. James Anti-Vice Squad Meeting in Berkeley



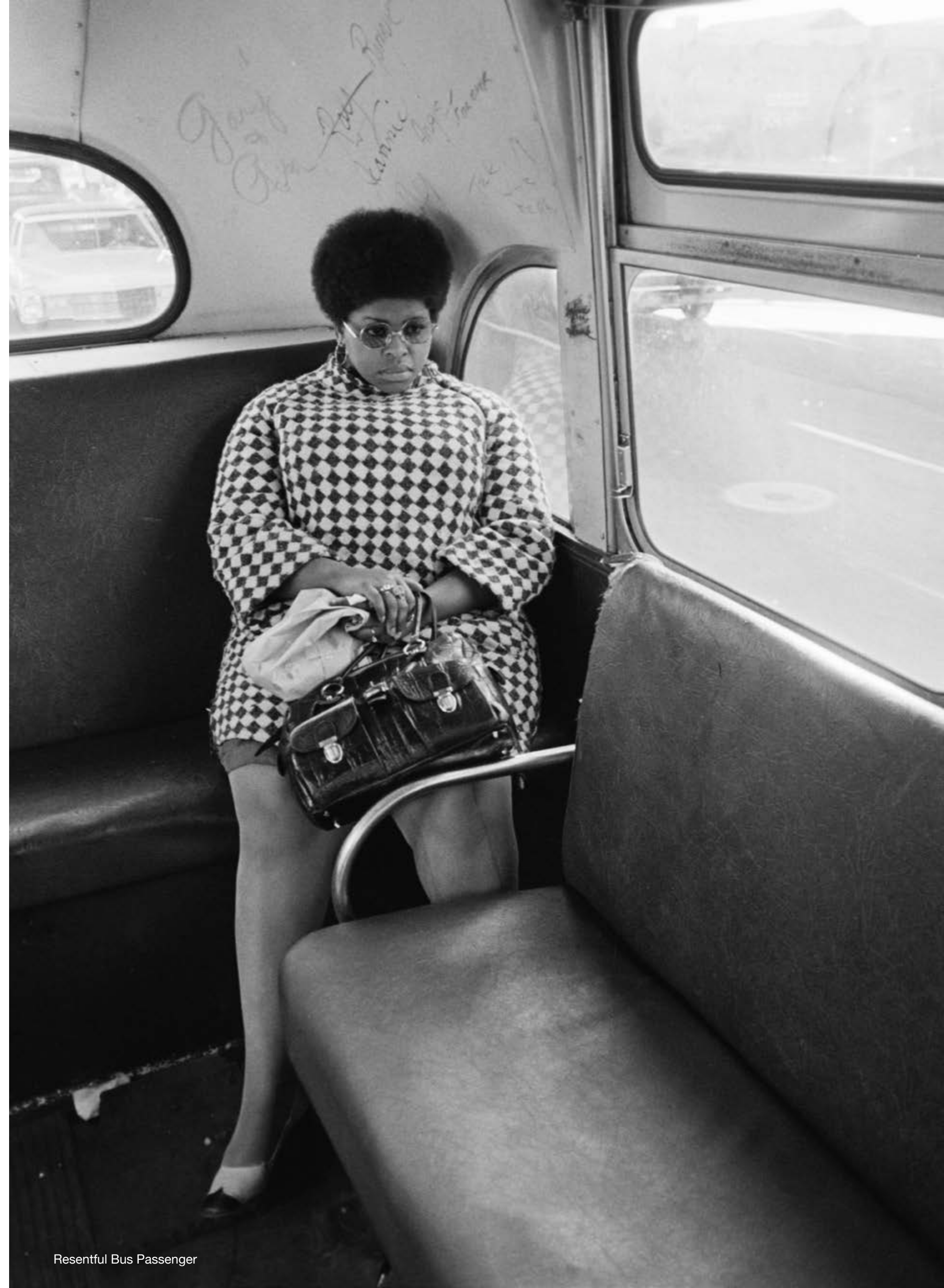


BANK
OF
AMERICA

ROTHSCHILD
PAPPIN INC.



Woman with Cake, Market Street, SF



Resentful Bus Passenger



1970



2015

Biography

Richard Blair has enjoyed a long and varied career as a photographer and publisher of photography books. He was born in New York City in 1948. With a talent for drawing and painting, he was accepted into Music and Art High School, a famous New York City public school, where he took college-level painting and visual art classes.

Blair took up photography in 1968, directing his humanistic interests and talents toward documenting street scenes in Manhattan. “I grew up in a socially conscious family and became interested in photographing people who could not handle the pressures of life in the city and had become marginalized,” he explains. “I wanted to create images with high impact and intensity, using juxtaposition and contrasting elements.” “I’ve always known that those early pictures are some of my best work,” says Blair, who credits his “youth and agility, a beloved Nikon FTN and pushed Tri-X.” Blair was first influenced by John Szarkowski’s book, *The Photographer’s Eye*. He also had the unusual opportunity to examine original prints by artists like Eugene Smith, Robert Frank and Ansel Adams at the Museum of Modern Art. After a year of “street shooting”, Blair began freelancing as a photojournalist for various New York newspapers and magazines. An avid mountaineer, Blair moved to Yosemite National Park in 1969. He later relocated to Berkeley, working as chief custom printer at a black and white lab in San Francisco. He continued to shoot street scenes and concerts during San Francisco’s hippie era, and photographed hippies and Altamont for Pix, a press agency. In 1970, Blair landed a job as park photographer for Yosemite National Park, where ironically, he was asked not to photograph landscapes, but people in the park. “There were a lot of problems between the hippies and park service, including a terrible riot on July 4th, 1970,” says Blair, explaining that park officials used the photographs and slide shows he made to defuse tensions. Blair returned to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1972, working as a freelance photographer, shooting the Jefferson Airplane and Grateful Dead for album covers and posters. He picked up a major account, the Port of Oakland, and opened his own studio with national accounts. “I learned to combine camerawork and stripping techniques in the darkroom so I could control how my pictures reproduced on a printing press. This really helped me to get publication work and later the pre-press knowledge was invaluable in producing photographic books.

After 20 years in the studio, Blair thought he had accomplished what he set out to do and wanted his life to take another direction. He relocated to Point Reyes in Northern California to pursue fine art photography, and used his knowledge of printing to self-publish *Point Reyes Visions*, a coffee table book that became a regional best-seller. Written by his wife, journalist and artist Kathleen Goodwin, the book is now in its fifth printing. A second book followed, *The Point Reyes Visions Guidebook*, a 5x7-inch pocket-format book printed in duotone black and white. The couple recently launched a third title, the 300-page *California Trip*, which describes the state from a progressive point of view. With chapters on Yosemite and other parks, it also covers the hippie movement, agriculture, San Francisco and Los Angeles, and features Blair’s decadeslong photographic chronicle of the protest movements in California, including anti-war protesters, and the Black Panthers. “We consider it a real look at the state, a thinking person’s view,” Blair says of the newest project.

Blair has been represented by the Barry Singer Gallery in Petaluma for six years and the June Bateman Gallery in New York since 2003. His work is in the permanent collections of the Di Rosa Preserve, Packard Foundation and Peabody Museum at Yale University. In addition to publishing business, Blair and Goodwin have an art gallery featuring his photography along with paintings by Goodwin and artists living in the Point Reyes area. Blair remains an active photographer, and has had much success selling landscape photography, but he remains devoted to the vision and technique that guided his initial photographic forays on the streets of New York City. “Street photographs capture eras like the late 1960s with hundreds of time clues, while natural landscapes are not easy to date from the image.” Blair comments. “New York City in the 1960s was unique.”

—Richard Pitnick, *Black and White Magazine*

