

THE NEW MUSEUM

65 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK 10003 (212) 741-8962

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DECONSTRUCTION/RECONSTRUCTION: THE TRANSFORMATION OF PHOTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION INTO METAPHOR OPENS JULY 12 AND CONTINUES THROUGH SEPTEMBER 18, 1980.

DECONSTRUCTION/RECONSTRUCTION, organized for The New Museum by critic and art historian Shelley Rice, presents new ways of using photographic images to depict modern life. The nine artists whose work is included in this exhibition work with multiple rather than single photographic imagery. Each artist "deconstructs" photographic images by removing them from their normal visual contexts and primary role as sources of information; they become, instead, fragments of visions, symbols of the artists' personal explorations. The artists then "reconstruct" these photographic symbols into larger frameworks which both alter and expand upon the meaning inherent in the individual photographs.

RAY METZKER's experimentations in the 1960's laid much of the groundwork for this type of photography. Metzker is interested in recording and manipulating the visual patterns, the tonal contrasts and the formal interrelationships that he finds as he roams the city streets, making them into composite photographs that reflect the multiplicity and vitality of urban experience. BARBARA CRANE superimposes individual photographs on structural grids. The grids function as rhythmic designs to orchestrate the otherwise unrelated images into sequences of a unified nature. ANDREA KOVACS pieces together 3½ x 4½" kodacolor prints so that individual photographs are dematerialized and function as building blocks in an emotionally charged network of color and shapes. Thus, time--collective moments--is viewed simultaneously. In Firsthand, CECILE ABISH cuts and assembles 28 photographic views in four sequences of seven each. The subject matter is constant: two images of

a house in New Jersey. Manipulated, the photographs are no longer two specific views of a specific house but are composite images that undermine the realism of these documentary records. BONNIE GORDON visually integrates words (like "eye," "retina," "blink") with images (like the frontal view of a male figure) in a way that is usually reserved for the dissemination of scientific information. By disassociating the words and images from their former meanings, Gordon reminds us that they, like her pictures, are symbolic projections of the human mind. In Sylvia, EILEEN BERGER's photographic book, words and images found in newspapers and magazines, are rearranged into a non-linear narrative depicting the heroine's odyssey through her inner life, wherein she confronts various persona. DARA BIRNBAUM edits footage from popular color TV shows and forms them into durational sequences that alter the context--and thus undermine the meaning--of the most commonplace and widespread TV metaphors. The Visions Station team, HAAS MURPHY and JERRY JONES, examines the mythology and functions of visual "display" in our society to create an art that can be integrated directly into the urban environment.

A comprehensive catalog with an essay by Shelley Rice will be published to accompany the exhibition.

This exhibition is supported by grants from the Jerome Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D. C., and is made possible in part by public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

We hope you will attend our press preview on Friday, July 11, 2:00-4:00 pm. at The New Museum.

THE NEW MUSEUM hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 12:00-6:00; Wednesday 12:00-8:00, Saturday 12:00-5:00.