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Things As Yet Unknown : A Finding Aid For Selected 8 x 10 Negatives From The Roger Mertin Archive

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THINGS AS YET UNKNOWN: A FINDING AID FOR
SELECTED 8X10 NEGATIVES FROM THE
ROGER MERTIN ARCHIVE

by

Adam Giles Ryan
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Professional Photographic Illustration
at
The Rochester Institute of Technology, 2010

A Thesis
presented to Ryerson University & George Eastman House,
International Museum of Photography & Film

in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in the program

Photographic Preservation & Collections Management

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2012
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Things As Yet Unknown: A Finding Aid for Selected
8x10 Negatives from the Roger Mertin Archive

Adam Giles Ryan

Master of Arts, 2012

Photographic Preservation & Collections Management
Ryerson University & George Eastman House

Abstract

This thesis and project centers on a portion of the 8x10 inch negatives of the Roger Mertin Archive at George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography & Film, in Rochester, New York. Roger Mertin, a once-prominent photographer, came of age artistically during a turning point in photographic history—the widespread “academization” of the field. Sorely under-researched, Mertin’s work remains a critical example of an aesthetic attitude exhibited by a number of influential photographers from his generation. Since taking custody of the Archive, GEH has kept it in storage, relatively undisturbed. Throughout most of 2012, an item-level spreadsheet was compiled and the objects were catalogued and given accession numbers. In satisfaction of the requirements for a Master’s degree in Photographic Preservation and Collections Management from Ryerson University, this thesis outlines, discusses and defends my methodology. The resulting finding aid also includes appendices thought to be useful to current and future researchers.

Dedicated to my mother, Patricia Anne Ryan, for allowing me
to find my own way - and for her ceaseless love & support.
I love you, Mom.

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Introduction

Roger Mertin would wish to be described, above all else, as a “working photographer.” Even now, it is his work ethic that remains the most prominent memory in the minds of those who knew him. Closely associated with the photographic community of Rochester, New York, his work and his life straddle a revolutionary time in the history of photography. On the following pages, I will describe my experience of processing a portion of his archive at George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography & Film. Dealing solely with the his 8x10 inch negatives, I created a finding aid that increases intellectual as well as material access, and contributes to the preservation of the physical objects.

I was originally introduced to Roger Mertin’s work in a history of photography class, as an undergraduate student at the Rochester Institute of Technology. The instructor for that course was David Wooters—the archivist at George Eastman House. Unbeknownst to me, he was also inventorying Mertin’s archive at the time as well. I thought Mertin’s photographs were rigorous and subtle, powerful, yet filled with a whispering instructiveness. Despite Wooters’ departure from George Eastman House, and my continuance into graduate school, the truth that I found in Mertin’s photographs stayed with me. When I returned to Rochester to complete my final year of graduate work, I found myself standing in the “Mertin Room” at George Eastman House, unable to resist the urge to visually inhale the photographs and negatives found in the boxes. My final decision on a thesis topic stemmed from a desire—something I can only describe as a hunger—to consume the vision of a photographer who possessed greater complexity and more artistic maturity than myself. It was an educational opportunity, both professional and personal, that I could not pass up.

This written portion of my thesis outlines the steps I took to create the finding aid, which was assembled from January 2012 to August 2012, and justifies the choices that I made in the process. After relating the texts that aided me along the way, I will consider the history of the Mertin Archive and theories informing the concept of original order. This will strengthen my argument that the rearranging of the Mertin Archive is patently justifiable and desirable. The Methodology section will explain in technical terms my *modus operandi*

in generating, gathering and organizing data from the Mertin Archive. Embedded within my thesis is the official finding aid. Some information found in the thesis is repeated in the body of the finding aid because it is meant to be a stand-alone document. My finding aid includes a chronology, an itemized list of Mertin's known bodies of work, an overview of the objects' arrangement, thorough lists of his exhibitions (both solo and group) and publications, as well as the most comprehensive biography yet written on Roger Mertin.

This thesis presents what I have achieved thus far, and calls for others to continue the work. The full potential of the Roger Mertin Archive can only be unlocked after critical decisions of practicality have been made. It must be arranged properly so that access may be granted. My work has begun this process, but others must finish it. I am confident that the data found in this thesis will serve as the starting point for later, greater research—just as this thesis has benefitted greatly from the dedication and thoroughness of Photographic Preservation & Collections Management Alumna Jessica McDonald, with her past research on the life and work of Roger Mertin.

Literature Survey

When gathering sources, two distinct categories established themselves. One group of sources deals with the creation of finding aids and archival theory. The other group deals with information about Roger Martin. PPCM alumna Jessica McDonald previously compiled a number of sources dealing with Martin's bibliography, biography, exhibition history, etc. Her initial research allowed me to begin this project with the advantage of having multiple leads already identified. McDonald laid the foundation for the eventual understanding of the Martin Archive. I, in turn, will expand this knowledge, and bring this process closer to completion.

I began by examining previous finding aids by former Ryerson students. The theses by Amanda Smith¹ and Lisa Hennessey² aided me greatly. Smith's thesis is an example of the well-considered structure that I aim to achieve with my own thesis. Smith also pointed out useful resources in her literature survey. Hennessey's thesis has well written procedural steps, and her clear writing also serves as an example of how someone might effectively explain a practical methodology.

Two books have been useful when thinking about the priorities of a finding aid. Gregory Hunter's *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives: A How-To-Do-It Manual* (2003) is a very accessible and readable guide to dealing with collections material. I found Hunter's section on arrangement to be helpful. It allowed me to more sharply define my priorities when dealing with the Roger Martin Archive. Mary Ritzenthaler's and Diane Vogt-O'Connor's book, *Photographs: Archival Care and Management* (2006), is an exhaustive volume with worthwhile information on all facets of this field. Specifically, Helena Zinkman's chapter, "Description and Cataloguing," explained in great detail the various components that go into a successful finding aid.

While completing my summer internship in 2011, I worked with various finding aids at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. I found inspiration in a finding aid written by

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¹ Amanda Smith, "Providing Access to the Everette Dixie Reese Prints and Negatives at the George Eastman House" (MA thesis, Ryerson University, 2011).

² Lisa Hennessey, "The Mark A Freeman Collection of World War II Photographs at George Eastman House" (MA thesis, Ryerson University, 2007).

Joanne Danifo for the “Lantern and Lens Gild [sic] of Women Photographers” collection.³ The layout and formatting epitomize utility. Danifo also successfully balanced length and comprehensiveness. Another existing finding aid from which I learned is the guide to the Paul Strand Collection at the Center for Creative Photography in Tucson, Arizona.⁴ While much longer than Danifo’s, it shows the information relevant to a finding aid for the collection of an individual photographer. The entire document also serves as a warning of the dangers of creating a finding aid so large as to be ungainly.

Another topic of particular importance to my thesis is “original order.” The combination of provenance and original order acts as a linchpin in the mechanisms of archival stewardship. A further discussion of original order and its impact on the Roger Mertin Archive can be found on page 10. However, here I will consider the various sources that helped me understand what I was confronting—a principle of practicality, but one which academia has destabilized for good reason.

My list of sources relating to original order expanded tremendously after finding Jane Zhang’s PhD dissertation for Simmons College.⁵ Her bibliography provided a number of articles that challenged me to think differently about archival theory. Her dissertation was particularly helpful in giving the history of original order and the field of archival practice in general, along with the writings of figures such as Theodore Schellenberg⁶, Sir Hilary Jenkinson⁷ and the trio Muller, Feith and Fruin.⁸

More recent writings have further questioned original order. “Disrespecting Original Order,” by Frank Boles⁹ establishes a very clear distinction between collections created by corporate or group entities and those created by individuals. It was in Boles’ article that I first came across the assertion that “an archivist ‘should have no compunction about rearranging series in relation to each other or single record items within them if by so doing he can make the records more intelligible and more serviceable. The test here is a

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³ http://hsp.org/sites/default/files/legacy_files/migrated/findingaid3085lanternandlens.pdf

⁴ <http://ccp.library.arizona.edu/sites/ccp.library.arizona.edu/files/documents/findingAid/AG17Strand.pdf>

⁵ J. Zhang, “The Principle of Original Order & The Organization and Representation of Digital Archives” (PhD diss., Simmons College Graduate School of Library & Information Science, 2010).

⁶ Theodore R. Schellenberg, *Modern Archives: Principles and Techniques* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956).

⁷ Hilary Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archival Administration* (London: Percy Lund, Humphries and Co., 1922).

⁸ Samuel Muller et al., *Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives* (1898).

⁹ Frank Boles, “Disrespecting Original Order,” *The American Archivist* 45, No. 1 (Winter 1982).

very practical one of usability”¹⁰ (Boles quoting Schellenberg).

Brien Brothman¹¹ interrogates the language used to talk about archives. He argues that archivists are not objective and the space of the archive influences, and is influenced by, societal values and cultural norms. Heather MacNeil¹² argues for more widespread acceptance of the inevitable change that every archive makes to every collection. She calls this principle “archivalterity.” Her ideas have greatly influenced my own, especially the realization that clinging to original order is in many cases wishful thinking and the understanding that “orders given to the records by their various custodians—or at least what survives of these various orders—are as relevant to the present meaning and authenticity of the archive as the order given to the records by its creator.”¹³

Sources on the life of Roger Mertin come from various places. The information files from Visual Studies Workshop have been valuable. This includes curricula vitae, chronologies, a “Photographer’s Biographical Data Sheet,” transcripts of interviews and more. This material contains information that may not exist elsewhere. Two photography books edited by Sally Eauclore in the 1980s situate Mertin’s work within the larger community of working fine art photographers, providing the context necessary to glimpse the path to widespread recognition that Mertin was on at one time.^{14,15}

In 2002, Jeffrey Hoone, Executive Director at Light Work Gallery, wrote a descriptive text on Mertin that considers his methodology and commitment to photography.¹⁶ The essay from Mertin’s major exhibition publication, *Roger Mertin: Records 1976-78* (1978), written by Charles Desmarais, investigates Mertin’s work with a method reminiscent of John Szarkowski, while identifying Walker Evans and Eugène Atget as “spiritual” ancestors. James Borcoman’s essay from the National Gallery of Canada’s exhibition “Roger Mertin: O

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¹⁰ Ibid., p. 30

¹¹ Brien Brothman, “Orders of Value: Probing the Theoretical Terms of Archival Practice,” *Archivaria* 32 (Summer 1991).

¹² Heather MacNeil, “Archivalterity: Rethinking Original Order,” *Archivaria* 66 (Fall 2008).

¹³ Ibid., p. 17

¹⁴ Sally Eauclore, *American Independents: Eighteen Color Photographers* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989).

¹⁵ Sally Eauclore, “Roger Mertin: The Blues,” in *New Color/New Work: 18 Photographic Essays*, (New York: Abbeville Press, 1984) 139-151.

¹⁶ Jeffrey Hoone, “Mertin, Roger :: Light Work Collection,” Light Work, <http://photography.cdmhost.com/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4023coll6/id/1190/rec/6> (accessed February 6, 2012).

Tannenbaum, *O Christmas Tree*" (1991) analyzes the series *Die Tannenbaumserie*, as well as provides further biographical information.

One source that proved very useful is an interview conducted by William Johnson and Susie Cohen, brought together in print form for the Rochester Film and Photo Consortium at George Eastman House in December 1989. It contains important information, as well as helpful anecdotes, related by Mertin himself, about his young adult life as a photography student at RIT and his experience in Rochester. Other sources show the influence that Mertin wielded later in life, such as his connection to Magnum photographer Alec Soth, made by Siri Engberg when she discusses Soth's development as an artist.¹⁷ Rod Slemmons, in an exhibition essay titled "Zeroing In," considers Mertin's artistic intentions while establishing a lineage to Eugène Atget and stresses a "kind of perceptual realization... at the core of Mertin's work," relating to his various typologies.¹⁸ Similar to Eauciaire's books, this exhibition included Mertin along with significant artists working in photography such as Ed Ruscha, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Candida Hofer, Thomas Ruff, Thomas Struth and others. Once again, Mertin's inclusion in this kind of company suggests he was an important photographic artist of his time. There are a number of other far-flung sources that contribute, in a collective sense, to understanding Roger Mertin as a photographer. A list of these additional references can be found in the bibliography of my thesis, on page 60.

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¹⁷ Siri Engberg, "Welcome to Utopia," in *From Here to There: Alec Soth's America* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2010), 40.

¹⁸ Rod Slemmons, "Zeroing In," in *Typologies: Nine Contemporary Photographers*, org. Marc Freidus (Newport Beach, California: Newport Harbor Art Museum & New York: Rizzoli, 1991), 44-48.

An Account of the Roger Mertin Archive

I have chosen to include a short history of the material that now comprises the Roger Mertin Archive. This is valuable information because it sheds light on how the objects arrived at their current ordering. This information also corroborates my belief that altering the arrangement of the material is valid and defensible, because it shows that Roger Mertin was only partially responsible for its arrangement. Elizabeth Ihrig, Mertin's former partner, is the primary source of this information. After corresponding with her over a period of months, I have pieced together a brief account of the various movements of the objects through time. This description is also reproduced in the body of my finding aid, in the Background Note (on page 23). As the Archive represents the merger of two distinct segments of Mertin's records, I will discuss the material as belonging to "Group 1" or "Group 2."

The material that comprises the Mertin Archive was, at one time, stored together in Rochester. Mertin owned a house in downtown Rochester, located at 16 Upton Park. The house is between East Avenue and University Avenue, only half a mile from George Eastman House and a mere 700 yards from Visual Studies Workshop. According to Ihrig, Mertin lived on the second floor of the house while renting out the first floor. Also according to Ihrig, Mertin owned the house next door, 18 Upton Park (which, at one point, he rented to a group of nuns). Any of his work that had not entered an institutional or private collection resided with Mertin at 16 Upton Park or in his office at the University of Rochester.

Then in 1992, Mertin relocated to Minneapolis to be with Ihrig. However, he maintained ownership of his house in Rochester, where the bulk of his material still resided. It should be noted that any work he produced while living in Minneapolis remained there, at 515 Fifth Avenue S.E., #6. In 1997, Mertin and Ihrig moved to 56 Arundel, Saint Paul, Minnesota. At this time, Mertin brought a portion of the work being stored in Rochester to Saint Paul. The combination of the work he produced since 1992 (in the Twin Cities), and the work he relocated to St. Paul in 1997, forms what I will call "Group 1." Group 1 also contained items that Ihrig gathered after Mertin's death from scattered dealers, recently

printed lab work and an exhibition that was hanging in a college gallery forty miles from their home. According to Ihrig, Mertin organized much of Group 1 himself.

After Mertin's death in 2001, his sister Ruth Meyer collected any work that still remained in Rochester, at his house and office. I will call this "Group 2." Group 2 was relocated to Meyer's home in Stratford, Connecticut. During this time, it appears that artist Michaela Murphy (Mertin's former girlfriend) made contact prints from some of Mertin's 8x10 negatives. These prints still reside with the negatives. The material remained in Stratford for one year, and then was moved to St. Paul. Ihrig recounts that Group 2 was stored in the space of a local art dealer, Thomas Barry Fine Arts. Between this time and 2006, Ihrig inventoried Group 1.

Group 1

- Work made after 1992
- Work Mertin moved to Saint Paul in 1997

Group 2

- Work that remained in Rochester & was removed by Ruth Meyer

In 2006, George Eastman House received a grant from the Judith Rothschild Foundation to bring the entire Archive back to Rochester. According to the grant proposal (found on page 69):

Mertin's work is not widely recognized beyond that community of curators and artists who trace their careers to enthusiasms of the 1970s and 1980s. The reason for this eclipse is central to our interest in the Mertin collection and central to this application of support from the Judith Rothschild Foundation: Roger's career exemplifies a brief epoch in the practice of fine art photography—a practice that prefigures the surpassing ubiquity of postmodern camera work. Roger may be the most perfect embodiment of art making that originated *inside* photography.

GEH sent Rick Hock and Sean Corcoran to retrieve it in its entirety—at the time of writing, these men are now the Archivist at Visual Studies Workshop and the Curator of Prints and Photographs at the Museum of the City of New York, respectively. In June 2006, Ihrig, Hock and Corcoran loaded Group 2 onto a truck. During this loading process, Hock and Corcoran

created a checklist for Group 2. The following day, Group 1 was loaded into the truck. I have included Ihrig's inventory of Group 1 as an appendix to this thesis (page 111). The entirety of the Mertin Archive was then brought to George Eastman House. When it arrived, the archivist at the time, David Wooters, began to inventory the material as one unit. His inventory is box level, and includes tallies for number of items in each box and basic subjects represented (i.e. trees, portraits, hoops, xmas trees, etc).

I was uncertain what relationship Wooters' inventory had to Elizabeth Ihrig's. After speaking with her and examining her inventory, it is clear that they are different documents. Group 1 and Group 2 are now the "Roger Mertin Archive." It appears that Wooters used Ihrig's inventory to guide the creation of his own. He preserves some of the box designations that she uses, such as "N" for negatives and "P" for prints. Wooters made a number of alterations to Group 1's ordering. He also records different information about each box (or binder), such as precise tallies. When comparing both inventories line-by-line, it is not immediately clear that they refer to the same boxes—however, I believe they do in the majority of cases. Wooters also inventoried what use to be Group 2. Ihrig did not inventory Group 2, thus Wooters' document is the first of its kind. In it, he does not use the N or P designations. Based on the imprecise overlap between the two inventories, it may be possible, theoretically, to separate Group 1 and 2 again. However, I do not believe the benefits of doing so are proportionate to the resources required, both in time and space.

Now that the reader has an understanding of the varied components of the Roger Mertin Archive, I can address the issues related to the rearranging of the material. Understanding the somewhat tangled movements of the pieces that comprise the Roger Mertin Archive informs the stance I take on the question of original order in the next section.

The Principle of Original Order & its Implications for the Mertin Archive

Aside from this project's numerous practical considerations, there was a sizeable theoretical issue that demanded attention. "Original order" is a ubiquitous concept in archival science. The binary doctrine of provenance and original order has functioned as a foundational principle in document repositories for over a century. When I began this project, I did not realize the significance this would have for the Mertin Archive. Original order and the ultimate arrangement of the Mertin Archive matters a great deal—both to those who will work with it firsthand, and to the public who will gain a holistic understanding of it from researchers and historians. The realization that archivists influence the telling of history is a profound one. I desperately wanted to get this right, because I knew that my choices would become part of the Archive's history.

As I learned about the importance of original order and its sway in the field of archival science, I realized I would have to delve into its history and theory. Rearranging an institutionalized collection is not something to be done lightly. My initial anxiety was rooted in the fear that my actions would obscure, or somehow destroy, knowledge that might be implicitly gained by preserving and studying the "authentic" organization in which the material arrived. I believe my anxiety was the result of misunderstanding the discursive relationship between the content creator, the institution, the archivist and the public. With the rise of postmodern thought, much of archival discourse has been challenged, original order included.¹⁹ What are the limits of this idea? When does the concept become more of a burden than a benefit? What responsibilities does an archivist have, and how does he or she prioritize original order vis-à-vis collections access?

The distinction between personal archives and non-personal archives is important to make. Original order "became widely accepted by archivists dealing with governmental or other institutional records. Archivists responsible for the care of personal papers have been far more reluctant to accept the principle."²⁰ Boles identifies four reasons why original order has persisted as a guiding principle, two practical and two theoretical. In a

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¹⁹ See Brien Brothman, "Orders of Value: Probing the Theoretical Terms of Archival Practice," *Archivaria* 32 (1991): 79.

²⁰ Frank Boles, "Disrespecting Original Order," *The American Archivist* 45, no. 3 (1982): 26.

practical sense, it is cheap and frequently works. In a large number of cases, keeping a collection in its original order is satisfactory. Archives also rarely have the funding to systemically reorganize large collections. The issue becomes more complex when examining it from a theoretical perspective:

Historically, the ordering of documents by their creator reveals information about the character and organization of the creator independent of the documents' content. Original order has evidential value. It also has archival value in that it broadens considerably the cardinal principle of provenance... Not only is the integrity of the creator's documentary body respected, but also the creator's ordering.²¹

Reorganizing a collection is easily justified if only considering the practical reasons. However, original order's presumed connection to the principle of provenance (maintaining a single creator's documents as a distinct unit) confuses the matter. When judging whether a collection can be rearranged, the archivist must weigh the evidential value of the documents with the evidential value of their filing system. This means the archivist must evaluate the potential data to be gained by studying the filing system and compare it to data found in the documents themselves.

What does the ordering of the Archive reveal about Roger Mertin? It is worth remembering that Mertin is only partially responsible for the "original" order that the Archive currently is in. Its size, shape, location and ordering fluctuated in the years immediately following his death. Entire segments of the collection have different historical trajectories, only to be united into a comprehensive oeuvre after Mertin's death. That must surely weaken claims that the Archive's current arrangement reveals something of paramount importance to understanding Roger Mertin as a photographer, creator and organizer. The archive's arrangement does say something, but not necessarily something about Roger Mertin individually—and clearly not something so significant that preserving that order should outweigh the providing of access to the photographs. The original order cannot be preserved while also granting access to the collection material. Its arrangement

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²¹ Boles, *Disrespecting Original Order*, p. 29

does not allow access. In this case, a choice must be made.

However, digital technology provides the archivist with additional options. My methodology preserves the Mertin Archive's original order in metadata. The digital entry for each object contains a record of its previous location. This allows the earlier arrangement to be reconstructed at a later date. This means, in a practical sense, that my arrangement is reversible. It is unlikely that a reversion will ever be necessary, but the option exists nevertheless.

The confirmed information found in the photographs is more important than the information (of uncertain value) to be gained by studying the Archive's arrangement. This is the kind of value judgment that archivists must make. Archivists regularly make these judgments. The paradigm of archivist-as-custodian has lost its relevancy. The relationship between an archivist and the material under his or her care has complexity that has only been recognized in the last few decades. Archivists do not passively identify objects of archival or historical value, but actively invest objects with value by bringing them into an archive and ordering them. Archivists can no longer presume to stand on a pedestal of objectivity—nor should they feel the need to. “For archivists to abstain from cultural awareness and criticism is tantamount to professional irresponsibility. It amounts to a shirking of the unique and positive task that each generation of archivists has, or should have, of continually replenishing its intellectual resources and reaffirming its cultural station.”²²

Brothman employs a useful metaphor, comparing archivists who cling to the tenet of original order with historians who claim to capture the past and bring it to the present.²³ It is no surprise that, in this era of postmodernity, original order has been called into question—originality itself has been challenged, along with objectivity. If original order is about primary context, is it not damaged, at its most basic level, when a collection is removed from the physical location where it was first stored? Simply putting it in an archive changes its context. Brothman reinforces this notion:

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²² Brothman, *Orders of Values*, 90.

²³ *Ibid.*, 83.

Archives do not live in hermetic isolation from the rest of the world, for they do not transcend the social and cultural forces that have shaped our modern, information-hungry, knowledge-based (or is it knowledge-basing) society; they, too, are positioned within—determined by—the web of information production, exchange and circulation. Archives constitute a web within a web.²⁴

He concludes by stating:

Archives, in other words, have been too much regarded as culturally transparent sites rather than as constituents or objects within a larger, historically characterizable structure which both determines and is determined by archival practice through a dynamic of negotiated social and cultural relations... The history of the record does not stop at the portals of archives. Archives are participants in that history.²⁵

Heather MacNeil echoes this viewpoint of active, even optimistic, participation by the archivist. The “meaning of a body of records is shaped not only by its archival bond [to its creator] but, also, by what we might term a *custodial bond*, meaning the relations that exist between a body of records and [its] various custodial authorities.”²⁶ Time does not stop changing a collection when it enters an archive, neither physically (much to the chagrin of conservators) nor semantically. A collection will change, and be changed by, the society that preserves it. The relationship is dialectical, cyclical.

Moreover, MacNeil asserts that the creator-to-collection relationship and the archivist-to-collection relationship are both equally important and valid.²⁷ This would mean that the relationship of David Wooters (or Elizabeth Ihrig, or Adam Ryan) to the Roger Merten Archive is just as important to its history as that of Roger Merten himself. This statement has profound implications. Rather than viewing the intellectual residue of individuals other than Roger Merten as a contamination or corruption of his Archive, it can instead be accepted, even embraced, as the natural accumulation—and maybe even transformation—of meaning that comes to every product of human creation. This view is

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²⁴ Brothman, *Orders of Values*, 86.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 91.

²⁶ Heather MacNeil, “Archivalterity: Rethinking Original Order,” *Archivaria* 66 (2008): 14.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 17.

hopeful, even celebratory. Its language does not try to paralyze the Roger Merten Archive or restrict it to one set of meanings. It acknowledges that the Archive can, and will, drift free and acquire new meanings over time, even while it resides within the walls of George Eastman House.

I encourage and welcome other cataloguers to refine the sequencing of the material within Roger Merten's respective bodies of work. Since this is the beginning of a long process, I am confident that some future expert will be able to organize the negatives in a more perfectly chronological way. I hope this further honing of the arrangement takes place. A more thorough chronological sequence would help tap into the Archive's considerable potential. For example, one could compare and evaluate the photographs from two different bodies of work made in the same year. If the bodies of work are separated and arranged chronologically, then the evolution of each can be studied in isolation (as the unfolding of an internal set of negotiations), as well as in tandem with its siblings (as embedded in a larger, external dialogue).

The solution for one collection may not be the solution for another. There is no definitive step-by-step process that applies to all collections. In many cases, improvements and fixes need to be carried out on an *ad hoc* basis. My methodology, outlined in the next section, is an example of such a tailored response.

Methodology

The beginning of this process was confusing. The first step was to summon the willpower to confront such a large collection. To stand in the "Mertin Room" is to be faced with questions like, "Okay, now what?" Preservation concerns, and the guidance given to me by GEH Assistant Curator Jamie Allen, narrowed my focus to the negatives. Starting with the negatives was logical because I previously gained experience working with negative materials at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. After examining the extent of the Mertin Archive, I chose to further restrict my work to 8x10 inch negatives (of which there are nearly 8,000)—mainly due to time constraints, knowing full well that I would only work through a portion of them.

I used a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to record any relevant information, keeping in mind that this information would make its way into George Eastman House's collections management system, TMS (The Museum System). During this stage, I would also assign an accession number to each negative. The key objective was to increase access to the Mertin Archive by rearranging the material with a more sensible schema. The major consideration that shaped my plan was how researchers would most likely seek to enter the work. This is a subjective determination, but one that can withstand scrutiny. Arranging the material by body of work, and then chronologically, makes the most sense because it is the most consistent with this photographer's project-based working method. As a monographic collection, the Roger Mertin Archive begs a different kind of interpretation when compared to one with multiple or unknown content creators. It can, among other things, showcase the artistic vision of one person. Indeed, the investigation of a singular man's photographic vision—along with his mental, emotional and intellectual evolution—is where I believe a large part of this Archive's significance lies. When developing my methodology, I had to bear in mind that many are unfamiliar with Roger Mertin's work. Consequently, I knew that his Archive would need to be arranged in a way that promoted ease of use and discovery of artistic intention. Body of work, or series, was the obvious choice.

Understanding how to begin and where to begin was the most difficult part of this project. My original workflow entailed pulling a box off the shelf and processing all of the negatives it contained (recording data, assigning accession numbers, etc.). In addition to

being inefficient, this method also introduced major obstacles that caused me to abandon it after cataloguing nearly 150 negatives. Many of the negatives contain ambiguous subject matter. I realized that if I was to organize the negatives according to bodies of work, as close to Mertin's own understanding as possible, I could not proceed in a purely linear way. There were too many unanswered questions. The margin of error in matching a negative to a poorly understood body of work was too high. I realized that I would need to choose a single series and work solely on gathering those negatives together, even if that meant searching through the same box at a later time.

My workflow evolved into something more serviceable. This was possible because of the preliminary inventory created by David Wooters, former Eastman House archivist. I combed through his document, line by line, and populated a list of subject keywords and their corresponding locations. For example, I listed all the boxes where Wooters found "Xmas trees," or annotated a box listing with "*Tannenbaumserie*." This provided me with a roadmap, showing where to look for certain negatives. Instead of picking a box and cataloguing all the negatives inside, I began to search for specific boxes and pick out the relevant negatives. Working this way also meant I would only need to process a few hundred negatives to vet my methodology, as opposed to a few thousand. I chose Mertin's *Die Tannenbaumserie* as my first body of work to gather together because of the better-known imagery and the negatives could be more easily identified.

After finding a relevant box, I would verify its contents as recorded in Wooters' inventory, while noting any relevant information found on the box (or inner dividers if present). During this stage, I would examine the negatives and the box to identify any urgent preservation concerns. In some instances, the boxes were not entirely full of negatives. The empty space caused the negatives to sag against one side

Fig. 1

of the box. To combat this, I made inserts of scored mat board to hold the negatives upright (see fig. 1). Some of the negatives were stored in acetate sleeves with strips of masking tape

adhered to them. The adhesive from the tape spread to other parts of the sleeve, causing certain sleeves to stick together. These I rehoused in acid free paper envelopes, while transcribing any information from the old sleeve onto the new. Bare negatives also were placed in new envelopes.

At this point, I assigned an accession number to each negative. At Eastman House, accession numbers have three tiers.²⁸ The first tier of the Mertin Archive would invariably be 2006. The lot numbers would demarcate the Archive into chronological, all-encompassing five-year periods, as predetermined by the Registrar (see page 54 for a lengthier explanation). The item numbers were to be assigned sequentially as I worked through the material. After an accession number was logged into the Excel spreadsheet, I would write the number, in pencil, on the negative's sleeve (see fig. 2). If the negative was stored in an acetate sleeve, I would adhere a small strip of Filmoplast P90 with the written accession number to the sleeve's corner.

After linking the negative (both physically and digitally) with its own unique number, I would input additional information into the spreadsheet. This list of fields, developed in collaboration with Jamie Allen, typifies the kind of data relevant for the eventual import into TMS. It is as follows:

Fig. 2

accession numbers have three tiers.²⁸ The first tier of the Mertin Archive would invariably be 2006. The lot numbers would demarcate the Archive into chronological, all-encompassing five-year periods, as predetermined by the Registrar (see page 54 for a lengthier explanation). The item numbers were to be assigned sequentially as I worked through the material. After an accession number was logged into the Excel spreadsheet, I would write the number, in pencil, on the negative's sleeve (see fig. 2). If the negative was stored in an acetate sleeve,

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²⁸ The first tier reflects the year the material was brought into the collection. The second tier is the sequential lot number of that particular year. The third tier is the item number.

- *New location* – for example “Box 1-3”
- *Old location* – for example “Box #76”
- *Classification* – In all cases, “negative, sheet film.”
- *Date* – A negative’s date was not always clear. In this situation, I would estimate.
- *Maker* – “Mertin, Roger”
- *Descriptive title* – Based on image content, often very general.
- *Series title* – i.e. “*Die Tannenbaumserie*,” or “Hoops”
- *Medium* – In all cases, “negative, gelatin on polyester sheet film.”
- *Dimensions*
- *Description* – often the same as the descriptive title
- *Inscription* – usually the information written on the negative’s sleeve
- *Notes* – I used this field for making connections between negatives, i.e. “same scene as 2006:3008:0012,” as well as noting when a negative had a corresponding contact print.
- *Process* – I used this field to differentiate between black and white negatives and color negatives.

I chose a two-tiered box numbering system so additional boxes could be added to a series without disrupting or confusing the global sequence. A negative’s old location is straightforward, based on Wooters’ and Ihrig’s box numbering systems. As stated previously, knowledge of the objects’ old locations is being preserved so it may be recreated if necessary. Classification, dimensions and medium are fields in TMS that contain information about the object’s physicality and format.

Dating the negatives was not always easy. In most cases, the dates were recorded on the negative sleeves. Other times, I was forced to estimate—due to the linkage of the objects’ lot numbers with the years of their making. If I did not choose a date, I would have no accession number—which would prevent me from cataloguing it. As scholarship on the Mertin Archive advances, my estimates may prove inaccurate, consequently making the lot numbers inaccurate. It is my worry that the lot numbering schema will, at best, be a minor inconvenience. At worst, it may hinder or obscure a future understanding of the Mertin Archive. It is unclear, at this stage, what will be asked of the Archive in the years to come.

The description and descriptive title were often the same (for example “Christmas tree”). For the sake of efficiency and completeness, I decided that more specific wording would have to come later. The inscriptions field contains any information physically recorded on the objects. Primarily, this was text on the negative sleeves. Mertin often wrote

enlarging exposure information on the sleeves as a reference for making prints. This included precise information like color filter pack numbers and even small sketches of how to dodge and burn the resulting print. I also used the notes field to link negatives to each other. When I noticed negatives depicting the same scene, I would include the accession numbers of the related negatives. While far from complete, it was an easy way to make note of relationships between negatives that might not have been recorded until later.

Proceeding with this workflow, I located the 22 boxes in which Wooters found negatives from *Die Tannenbaumserie*. I identified and pulled each of the negatives, rehoused them as necessary, numbered and catalogued them. I placed the newly catalogued negatives into new boxes. After filling each new box, I arranged the negatives in ascending order, by lot number and item number. When the process was over, I had located and catalogued 433 negatives in the series. I then went back and rearranged the entire sequence in ascending numerical order, as shown on page 55. They fill 8 small boxes (see fig. 3). I cannot claim that the series is definitively complete. There may still be stray negatives from this series hidden in other boxes, but the group of 433 negatives constitutes the vast majority.

There are, however, negatives from other various series in my spreadsheet as well. Any negatives from other series that I catalogued while using my earlier workflow remain in their original boxes. These will have to be considered at a later date, when some future cataloguer can address them directly and place them in their appropriate series.

At this time, George Eastman House is transitioning from one Manager of Information Systems to another. This will prevent the automated import of my spreadsheet from happening within the timeframe of this thesis. However, it was previously known that there would be limits to the program's thoroughness.

Certain fields of information, such as date, medium and titles, would be entered only as free

Fig. 3

text, not as official classifications found in TMS. This was deemed acceptable due to the large volume of entries being created. The task of further refining the object records in TMS will remain an ongoing process.

THE ROGER MERTIN ARCHIVE

A finding aid for the 8x10 negatives
of the following series:

Die Tannenbaumserie
&
Hoops

Contact: George Eastman House
900 East Avenue
Rochester, New York 14607
585.271.3361
www.eastmanhouse.org

Processed by: Adam G. Ryan

Processing completed: August 2012

International Museum of Photography and Film

Abstract

This finding aid provides information about the photographer Roger Mertin. Specifically, it deals with 8x10 inch negatives he made during the course of his artistic career. This document will allow researchers to find specific negatives in specific boxes, while also providing background information on the following series: *Die Tannenbaumserie* and Hoops. In addition to this series-specific data, this finding aid also aims to contextualize Roger Mertin by including as much information about him as possible. This includes a written account of the various peregrinations of the Roger Mertin Archive, a timeline and biography of his life, an overview of his photographic series, a thorough bibliography and exhaustive listings of his exhibitions (solo and group), awards, publications and places that have collected his work.

Scope and Content

The Roger Mertin Archive is made up of photographs, large format negatives, roll film negatives and transparencies, slides, polaroids, posters, publications, picture frames and a variety of manuscript materials. The manuscript materials consist of correspondence, expense records, tax records, exhibition catalogs and personal notebooks. Unsurprisingly, most of the Roger Mertin Archive dates from the 1960's through the end of the 1990's. In total, it spans the width and depth of Roger Mertin's entire life. There are approximately 23,230 photographs, 7,725 8x10 inch negatives, 3,322 rolls of negative film, 51 rolls of transparency film, 10,000 slides, 254 posters, 2,020 publications and 471 folders of manuscript materials. This adds up to nearly 50,000 objects.

Housed in 330 boxes before processing, the Roger Mertin Archive stretches 92.5 feet (28.2 meters). It is unclear at this time if the extent of the collection will change as a result of processing. While many collections shrink as a result of more convenient arrangement, properly housing the prints and negatives will incrementally increase the space taken up by each item. This may cause the Archive to grow slightly in size as it is processed. At the time of this writing, part of the processing plan is to move the manuscript materials to the Richard and Ronay Menschel Library at some later date.

Background Note

The material that comprises the Roger Mertin Archive was, at one time, stored together in Rochester. Mertin owned a house in downtown Rochester, located at 16 Upton Park. The house is between East Avenue and University Avenue, only half a mile from George Eastman House and a mere 700 yards from Visual Studies Workshop. According to Mertin's life partner, Elizabeth Ihrig, he lived on the second floor of the house while renting out the first floor. Also according to Ihrig, Mertin owned the house next door, 18 Upton Park (which, at one point, he rented to a group of nuns). Any of his work that had not entered an institutional or private collection resided with Mertin at 16 Upton Park or in his office at the University of Rochester.

Then in 1992, Roger Mertin relocated to Minneapolis to be with Ihrig. However, he maintained ownership of his house in Rochester, where the bulk of his material still resided. It should be noted that any work he produced while living in Minneapolis remained there, at 515 Fifth Avenue S.E., #6. In 1997, Mertin and Ihrig moved to 56 Arundel, Saint Paul, Minnesota. At this time, Mertin brought a portion of the work being stored in Rochester to Saint Paul. The combination of the work he produced since 1992 (in the Twin Cities), and the work he relocated to St. Paul in 1997, forms what I will call "Group 1." Group 1 also contained items that Ihrig gathered after Mertin's death from scattered dealers, recently printed lab work, as well as an exhibition that was hanging in a college gallery forty miles from their home. According to Ihrig, Mertin organized most of Group 1 himself.

After Mertin's death in 2001, his sister Ruth Meyer collected any work that still remained in Rochester (at his house and his office). I will call this "Group 2." Group 2 was relocated to Meyer's home in Stratford, Connecticut. During this time, it appears that artist Michaela Murphy (Mertin's former girlfriend) made contact prints for some of Mertin's 8x10 negatives. These prints still reside with the negatives. The material remained in Stratford for one year, and then was moved to St. Paul. Ihrig recounts that Group 2 was stored in the space of a local art dealer, Thomas Barry Fine Arts. Between this time and 2006, Ihrig inventoried Group 1.

Group 1
-Work made after 1992
-Work Mertin moved
to Saint Paul in 1997

Group 2
-Work that remained
in Rochester & was
removed by Ruth Meyer

In 2006, George Eastman House received a grant from the Judith Rothschild Foundation to bring all of it back to Rochester. GEH sent Rick Hock and Sean Corcoran to retrieve it in its entirety—at the time of writing, these men are now the Archivist at Visual Studies Workshop and the Curator of Prints and Photographs at the Museum of the City of New York, respectively. In June of 2006, Ihrig, Hock and Corcoran loaded Group 2 onto a truck. During this loading process, Hock and Corcoran created a checklist for Group 2. The following day, Group 1 was loaded into the truck. I have included Ihrig's inventory of Group 1 as an appendix to this thesis (page 111). The entirety of the Mertin material was then brought to George Eastman House. When it arrived, the archivist at the time, David Wooters, began to inventory the material as one collection. His inventory is box level, and includes tallies for number of items in each box and basic subjects represented (i.e. trees, portraits, hoops, xmas trees, etc).

I was uncertain what relationship Wooters' inventory had to Elizabeth Ihrig's. After speaking with her and examining her inventory, it is clear that they are different documents. Group 1 and Group 2 are now the "Roger Mertin Archive." It appears that Wooters used Ihrig's inventory to guide the creation of his own. He preserves some of the box designations that she uses, such as "N" for negatives and "P" for prints. Wooters made a number of alterations to Group 1's ordering. He also records different information about each box (or binder), such as precise tallies. When comparing both inventories line-by-line, it is not immediately clear that they refer to the same boxes—however, I believe they do in the majority of cases. Wooters also inventoried what use to be Group 2. Ihrig did not inventory Group 2, thus Wooters' document is the first of its kind. In it, he does not use the N or P designations. Based on the imprecise overlap between the two inventories, it may be possible, theoretically, to separate Group 1 and 2 again. However, I do not believe the benefits of doing so are proportionate to the resources required, both in time and space.

Roger Mertin Timeline

- **1942:** Born on December 9th.
- **1960:** Graduated from high school in Stratford, Connecticut
- **1961:** Enrolled as freshman at the Rochester Institute of Technology
- **1965:** Graduated from the Rochester Institute of Technology with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, specializing in photography—senior thesis *Architectural Ornamentation* was exhibited at George Eastman House.
- **1965-66:** Worked as a photographic technician for Eastman Kodak.
- **1966-69:** Employed at George Eastman House (variously worked in darkrooms, was in charge of reproduction center and was Assistant Curator of Extension Activities)
- **1969:** Entered Visual Studies Workshop
- **1969-72:** Served as an adjunct faculty member at the Rochester Institute of Technology
- **1969-74:** Co-founded “Walrus Company” with Michael Becotte (a technical firm specializing in slide reproduction of photographs)
- **1972:** Graduated from Visual Studies Workshop with a Master of Fine Arts degree in Photographic Studies through SUNY (State University of New York) Buffalo.
- **1972:** Worked as an instructor during a summer session at the San Francisco Art Institute. Also was a Visiting Assistant Professor of Art at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque.
- **1973:** Hired as a photography instructor at the University of Rochester
- **1974:** Awarded the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship for Photography
- **1976:** Received Photographer’s Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts
- **1978:** *Roger Mertin: Records 1976-78*, exhibition at the Chicago Center for Contemporary Photography

- **1978:** *Mirrors and Windows*, exhibition by John Szarkowski at MoMA, New York.
- **1980-91:** Served as an Associate Professor in the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Rochester
- **1982:** *Plastic Love Dream: A Portfolio*, exhibition at Robert Freidus Gallery
- **1983-85:** Worked as an adjunct faculty member in the Fine Art Photography and Graduate Programs at the Rochester Institute of Technology
- **1991:** *Roger Merten: O Tannenbaum, O Christmas Tree*, exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada
- **1991-2001:** Served as Professor in the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Rochester
- **1992:** Relocated to Minneapolis
- **1997:** Transferred a significant portion of his negatives and photographs to Saint Paul
- **2001:** Died on May 6th.

Biography

Roger Mertin was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut on December 9th, 1942. His picture making began as a teenager, after receiving an Ansco camera as a Christmas gift from his parents. His experimentation with this camera, and the darkroom he eventually set up in his house, led him to join a camera club in Milford, Connecticut. While in his school library, Mertin found a series of brochures on career possibilities (one of which was photography) published by the Rochester Institute of Technology. After graduating from high school in Stratford in 1960, he attended the University of Bridgeport for a single year.

In the fall of 1961, Mertin was enrolled at the Rochester Institute of Technology as a sophomore. In an interview conducted by William Johnson and Susie Cohen, Mertin describes himself during his first year at RIT as “your average college student who was adrift.”²⁹ However, something changed during his second year. Mertin recounts a story of a RIT photography professor named Neil Croom, who writes a small note to him, saying he is not working hard enough. The combination of this quiet indictment, a photography workshop with Minor White, the greater availability of photography books (specifically those of Harry Callahan) and the presence of a steady girlfriend named Joan Schultz all focused the young Roger Mertin on the task of making successful photographs.

The following year at RIT, Mertin took his first workshop with Nathan Lyons. Lyons was working at George Eastman House at the time, and taught workshops for different skill levels out of his home on Rutgers Street. It was also during this time that Mertin completed a photographic history course at GEH taught by Beaumont Newhall.³⁰ In 1965, Mertin graduated from RIT with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in photography. His senior thesis was called *A Study of Architectural Ornamentation*. It comprised forty-four gelatin silver prints now housed at the Visual Studies Workshop, also in Rochester, New York. By this time, he had married Joan Schultz, who was also the subject of many of his early portraits, including the series *One: A Selection of Nudes* and a previously unknown maquette titled “Joan.” Mertin secured a full time job at Kodak testing potential consumer products, while

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²⁹ Cohen, Susie and William Johnson. “Interview with Roger Mertin, November 30 and December 3, 1989” (interview transcript presented during the Rochester Film and Photo Consortium at George Eastman House, December 1989-January 1990).

³⁰ Ibid., p. 4

he assisted Nathan Lyons with workshops and photographed on the weekends.³¹

Martin was hired as a photography technician at GEH in 1966. This granted him access to original prints while generating copy negatives of the museum's holdings. He worked at GEH for three years, and came into contact with artists like Robert Fichter, Thomas Barrow and future curator Robert Sobieszek (who at the time was a Stanford graduate student taking a summer workshop with Lyons). In these years he also made the photographs that would later be published with the name *Plastic Love Dream*. An image from this series would go

Roger Martin Archive, George Eastman House

on to be published in *The Print*, part of the well-known Life Library of Photography.³²

Martin realized earlier than his contemporaries that to teach photography he would need a graduate degree. In the spring of 1969, he enrolled in Lyons' new program—then known as the Photographic Studies Workshop. It was affiliated with the SUNY Buffalo Art Department, and in its second year changed its name to Visual Studies Workshop. From 1969 into the early 1970s, Martin worked as an adjunct faculty member at RIT while also co-founding and running a firm called the Walrus Company, which specialized in slide reproductions of photographs. In 1970, he began his project of photographing trees, with 35mm black and white film and flash. In 1972, Martin received a Master of Fine Arts degree in photographic studies with the completion of his final thesis, *23 Couples*, at VSW. Martin and Schultz ended their marriage in 1972. That summer, he was a visiting instructor for a summer class at the San Francisco Art Institute, as well as a Visiting Professor of Art at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque.

Martin began working as a photography instructor at the University of Rochester in

³¹ Cohen and Johnson, Interview, p. 6

³² Mason, Robert G., ed. *The Print*. New York: Time-Life Books, 1970.

1973. In the same year, Mertin also completed a little-known project with photographer and friend Michael Becotte. Kodak paid for a road trip that Mertin and Becotte took across the country, shooting with 110-format color roll film. Kodak wished to demonstrate the enlarging capability of their 110-format film—so as to encourage consumer confidence—while also supporting local photographers. The following year their work was exhibited at George Eastman House (which comprised over 250 photographs, printed by Kodak) with the exhibition title *Road Shots*.

In 1974, Roger Mertin was awarded the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship for Photography. This recognition bolstered his career even further. In his proposal, he discusses his desire to photograph trees in a “transitional landscape,” while developing “a concept of portrait as it might relate to trees” (see page 96). Despite being typically vague, it highlights a concern that permeates the entirety of Mertin’s career—a sharply honed focus on the way an object influences the environment where humans confront it (both physically and psychologically).

There was a fundamental shift in the art making of Roger Mertin when he began using an 8x10 inch view camera in 1975. Multiple people had suggested to Mertin that he change to large format—Harry Callahan in 1966, Thomas Barrow in 1970, John Szarkowski in the early 1970s and finally Michaela Murphy in 1975.³³ He split the cost of the camera with Murphy (his girlfriend at the time). The increased resolution, the greater demand for formal rigor and the unique spatial renderings of such a large lens were all factors that made Mertin’s shift to large format nearly unavoidable. The results from the large camera were more consistent with his goals as a photographer, while the apparatus itself changed his relationship to the subjects in front of his lens. His first formal experiments with Christmas trees were made in 1975. The following year, he photographed the landscape of downtown Hailey, Idaho, triggering the original idea that led to his typological series, *Die Tannenbaumserie*—a large body of work depicting Christmas trees and holiday decorations. It may have been this typological working method that led him to photograph basketball hoops from 1977 to 1980 with similar insistence and dedication.

1978 was an important year for Roger Mertin. His work was shown in two

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³³ “A Conversation with Roger Mertin, Part I.” Interview by Gary Metz. Transcript from Visual Studies Workshop records. New York City, June 6, 1981.

important exhibitions. First was *Roger Mertin: Records 1976-78*, at the Chicago Center for Contemporary Photography.³⁴ The show presented an overview of Mertin's work, including trees, hoops, portraits and Christmas trees. The 80 photographs in the exhibition were 8x10 inch contact prints—specifically gelatin printing-out prints, or “POPs,” toned with gold chloride (giving them a purplish-red color).³⁵ The catalog's essay, written by Charles Desmarais, establishes Mertin as a torchbearer for a particular photographic style, exemplified by Eugène Atget and Walker Evans. According to Desmarais:

It's not only that each [Atget and Evans] was a documentarian of his culture (a great many people have attempted that), but each of them found a way to inject into his pictures the suggestion of a personal truth that paralleled the half-truths described by the lens... There is no such thing as objectivity. There's no such thing as perfection. Mertin shows that it is possible to know these things, accept them, and love them about the world.³⁶

The second was *Mirrors and Windows: American Photography since 1960*, one of John Szarkowski's better-known photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Mertin's inclusion in Szarkowski's show, and resulting book, indicates the kind of recognition his name accorded by this time. Two of Mertin's photographs were included in the exhibition—*Casual Heart #1*³⁷ and *Tree, Rochester, New York* (1973). Both photographs were included in the book's first section. This first part exemplifies Szarkowski's “mirrors,” or photographs that function primarily as distillations of introspective analysis. Also in 1978, Mertin received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, for a group project called *From This Land*, a photographic survey dealing with the impact of mining on the landscape.³⁸

The next professionally significant achievement for Mertin was his commission to

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³⁴ Founded in 1976 by Columbia College Chicago, the CCCP was succeeded by the MoCP (the Museum of Contemporary Photography) in 1984.

³⁵ Candida Finkel, “McPherson, Mertin featured in summer show,” *Afterimage* (October 1978): 19.

³⁶ Roger Mertin and Charles Desmarais, *Roger Mertin: Records 1976-78* (Chicago: Chicago Center for Contemporary Photography, 1978).

³⁷ According to an interview conducted by Gary Metz in 1981, Mertin considered this photograph one of his best photographs from *Plastic Love Dream*.

³⁸ This group project was conceived by Richard “Sandy” Hume and also included photographers Robert Adams, Linda Conner, Ronald Wholauer, Richard van Pelt and Barbara Houghton.

photograph the festivities surrounding Rochester's sesquicentennial in 1984. This color work includes portraits of people in costume, examples of children's artwork, replicas of historic buildings on barges along the Erie Canal, images (maybe a typology?) of historic markers throughout Rochester, festival markets and more. Also in 1984, Mertin's photographs were reproduced in Sally Eauclaire's *New Color/New Work: Eighteen Photographic Essays* — along with distinguished company like Stephen Shore, William Eggleston, Joel Meyerowitz, Mitch Epstein and others. Her essay, "The Blues," (also Mertin's title for the series) describes his use of tungsten-balanced color film in daylight, which imparted intensity of blue that Eauclaire equates with various mental states.

Despite some intimations of the "blue devils" of depression, many of the works are witty. But their humor is the brittle kind designed to stave off tragedy, as in the novels of Milan Kundera... Through the snapshot aesthetic, Mertin—like the protagonist in *The Joke*—"realized that things conceived by errors were every bit as real as things conceived by reason and necessity."...Through relentless photographic cataloging, Mertin has found a personal means of attaining meaning and remembrance in what Kundera has called our "world of accelerating forgetting."³⁹

In 1986, Mertin began photographing the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island with his 8x10 view camera. Two years later, he became part of The Ellis Island Artifact Project. Headed by Montclair State College photography professor Klaus Schnitzer, the project sought to examine Ellis Island and its "mystery of memory and time."⁴⁰ Two of Mertin's photographs were subsequently published in one of the project's incarnations, *Ellis Island: Echoes from a Nation's Past* (1989), a book produced by Aperture.

In 1991, he had a major exhibition, *O Tannenbaum, O Christmas Tree*, at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa. The National Gallery's Curator of Photographs, James Borcoman, wrote the essay accompanying the exhibition. Borcoman championed Mertin and his photographs, so much so that the National Gallery has the second largest holdings of Mertin photographs, after George Eastman House. In his essay, Borcoman keenly

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³⁹ Sally Eauclaire, "The Blues," in *New Color/New Work: Eighteen Photographic Essays* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1984), 142.

⁴⁰ Vivien Raynor. "Ellis Island and Beyond," *New York Times*, June 23, 1991, Arts section.

analyzes Mertin's series *Die Tannenbaumserie*:

Undoubtedly, there is an appeal to childhood memories of excitement and wonder in these photographs. We may also see them as anthropological studies, for what could more appropriately symbolize Middle America than all this glitter and tinsel with its emphasis on material abundance... But there is more to Mertin's photographs than a homage to memories or a cataloguing of facts. Mertin is out to give us the whole truth—great cornucopias of irrelevant things... These photographs are not of trees only, but of spaces. Spaces dense with information, a kind of information to which the eye is often inured... The photographs tell us about the act of looking. In a sense, they are also Mertin's gift to us, above all a gift of discovery.

In the same year, Mertin's photographs appeared in an exhibition at the Newport Harbor Art Museum (in Newport Beach, California), titled *Typologies: Nine Contemporary Photographers*. The other photographers were Bernd & Hilla Becher, Lynne Cohen, Judy Fiskin, Candida Hofer, Thomas Ruff, Ed Ruscha and Thomas Struth. Again, a list of such prominent names says something about Mertin's recognition, at least from curators drawn to his era of photography.

By this time, Mertin had begun his last major typological series, one that he would continue throughout the final decade of his life. He chose libraries as his subjects—specifically those funded by Andrew Carnegie between 1886 and 1917⁴¹. He met Elizabeth Ihrig for the first time in the summer of 1991, while pursuing the project. At the time, she was the librarian at The Bakken Library.⁴² When a friend suggested The Bakken as a possible subject (despite not being a Carnegie library), Mertin made an appointment and was given a guided tour of the facilities by Ihrig. During the course of their initial conversation, Ihrig suggested that Mertin apply for a small travel grant that was administered through the Bakken. According to Ihrig, Mertin did apply, and returned to the library again in October of that year as the recipient. Mertin notes in his curriculum vitae

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⁴¹ Mertin received a McKnight Foundation Artist Fellowship for photography in 1999 that allowed him to continue working on the library series.

⁴² Now known as The Bakken: A Library and Museum of Electricity in Life

that he was a “Visiting Scholar” at the Bakken. Ihrig concluded her telling of her first chance meeting with Mertin in this way: “Serendipity! All the way through—the first law of research and library reference—it served us well!”⁴³

In 1992, Mertin moved to Minneapolis to be with Ihrig. While this was not the beginning of his artistic relationship with the city of Minneapolis, moving there strengthened this connection. He was a well-known figure in the photography scene of the Twin Cities, even influencing the aesthetics of a young Alec Soth.⁴⁴ It should be remembered that Mertin was still a faculty member at the University of Rochester. According to Ihrig, Mertin travelled back and forth from Rochester to Minneapolis very frequently—often by boat or plane. However, in 1997, Mertin relocated, with Ihrig, to the city of Saint Paul. Despite still commuting back and forth to Rochester, Mertin transferred a large portion of his archive to Saint Paul when he moved there.

Mertin continued to make work and teach at the University of Rochester. While in conversation with Roger Bruce (former employee of George Eastman House and longtime friend of Mertin), he stated that Mertin had great personal difficulties when it came to teaching. Bruce said that teaching did not come naturally or easily to him. Instead, Mertin taught by example. According to Carl Chiarenza, fellow photographer and colleague at the University of Rochester, Mertin “taught as a practicing artist—by example, revealing what a commitment to making art is all about.”⁴⁵ On May 6th, 2001, Roger Mertin died suddenly at his home in Rochester, at the age of 58. Having no children of his own, he was survived by his sister Ruth Meyer and two nieces, as well as his life partner Elizabeth Ihrig.

The executive director of Light Work in Syracuse, Jeffrey Hoone, referred to Roger Mertin as the “master of the understated eloquence of vernacular photography.”⁴⁶ In a statement of remembrance, and in the voice of a friend, he says that:

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⁴³ Elizabeth Ihrig, e-mail message to author, May 28, 2012.

⁴⁴ Siri Engberg, “Welcome to Utopia,” in *From Here to There: Alec Soth’s America* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2010), 40.

⁴⁵ Sharon Dickman, “Professor, Photographer Roger Mertin Dies,” University of Rochester, <http://www.rochester.edu/news/show.php?id=650> (accessed January 12, 2012).

⁴⁶ Jeffrey Hoone. “Mertin, Roger :: Light Work Collection.” Light Work. <http://photography.cdmhost.com/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4023coll6/id/1190/rec/6> (accessed February 6, 2012).

Although Roger worked primarily with an 8x10 view camera and photographed things out in the world the way he found them—he wasn't a documentary photographer in the tradition that his tools and techniques suggest. Most of Roger's work had a strong conceptual base but his sense of humor and the importance he placed on small details prevented his work from being caught in a static theoretical framework... Roger's pictures, more than any other artist, got me to pay attention, to really understand how to look at a picture and understand what I was seeing.⁴⁷

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⁴⁷ Hoone, Light Work Collection,
<http://photography.cdmhost.com/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4023coll6/id/1190/rec/6> (accessed February 6, 2012).

Series and Project Listing

Below is a bulleted list, arranged chronologically, of the various projects that Roger Mertin worked on during the course of his life. This is not a complete list, as other additions and alterations are sure to be made as more people examine the Archive. “Portraits” and “Miscellaneous/Side Projects” are two categories that span Mertin’s entire career. I included general, minor groupings that have been uncovered thus far. As with the others, I am confident more will be added.

- Student work
  - *One: A Selection of Nudes* (1964)
  - *A Study of Architectural Ornamentation* (1964-65)
  - *23 Couples* (1969-72)
  - Miscellaneous
- Rochester Storefronts (1966-67)
- *Plastic Love Dream* (1967-68)
- Trees (1969-
- SX-70 Polaroids (1972-
- *Road Shots* (1973)
- *Die Tannenbaumserie* (1975-95)
- Hoops (1977-80)
- Rochester 1984/Sesquicentennial
- Ellis Island/Statue of Liberty (1986-
- Library series (1989-

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- Portraits
  - Basketball Players
  - Beaches
  - Friends/Family
  - Pageant contestants
  - Women’s Encampment (protest group related to nuclear disarmament)
  - Lilac Festivals
- Miscellaneous/Side Projects
  - *The Blues* (1979-
  - *From This Land* (1978, group project on mining)
  - Parkleigh photographs
  - “T Pictures” (diptychs with a horizontal image over a vertical image)
  - University of Rochester photographs
  - [Things as yet unknown.]

Solo Exhibitions (as of 2006)

- 2001 *Roger Mertin: Photography*, Hartnett Gallery, University of Rochester, New York [memorial exhibition]. November 19-January 31, 2002.
- Roger Mertin: In Minnesota, 1991-2001*, pARTS Gallery (now Minnesota Center of Photography), Minneapolis [memorial exhibition]. December 1-January 20, 2002
- 1999 *Library Project: New Pictures*, Meliora Gallery, Tucson, Arizona
- 1996 *Now & Then: Pedagogic Problems: Minneapolis, Minnesota / Rochester, New York, 1992-1996*, Rush Rhees Art Library Gallery (University of Rochester, New York).
- 1993 *The Library Project: Work in Progress*, Athenaeum Music and Arts Library, La Jolla (The Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, California)
- 1991 *Roger Mertin: O Tannenbaum, O Christmas Tree*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. December 6-February 2, 1992
- 1990 *Living Evidence*, Presentation House (North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada)
- 1989 *Artist's Statement: Photographs*, Art Library Gallery (University of Rochester, New York)
- 1985 *Roger Mertin: October 15—November 30, 1985*, Robert B. Menschel Photography Gallery (Syracuse University, New York) [Rochester sesquicentennial work]
- 1984: Rochester*, Hartnett Gallery (University of Rochester, New York). February 16-March 17
- 1984 *Roger Mertin: Decorated Trees and other Works*, Northlight Gallery, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona. March 4-April 5
- 1983 *Roger Mertin: Christmas Ornaments*, Freidus/Ordover Gallery, New York City. December 10—January 3, 1984
- Roger Mertin: An Exhibition of Color Photographs*, Brent Sikkema Gallery (Boston, Massachusetts). March 3-27.
- 1982 Vision Gallery (Boston, Massachusetts)
- Roger Mertin: Photographs*, The Photographers' Gallery (Toronto, Ontario, Canada). September 17-October 10

- 1982 *Plastic Love Dream: A Portfolio*, Robert Freidus Gallery, New York City. October 26-November 27.
- 1981 Friends of Photography (Carmel, California)
- 1980 *Film in the Cities* (St. Paul, Minnesota)
Light Gallery (New York, NY)
- 1979 Light Work (Syracuse, New York)
Rockwell Kent Gallery (SUNY College at Plattsburgh, New York)
Center Gallery (Sun Valley Center for Art & Humanities, Idaho)
- 1978 Visual Studies Workshop (Rochester, New York)
Roger Mertin: Records 1976-78, Chicago Center for Contemporary Photography (Columbia College)
- 1976 Afterimage Gallery (Dallas, Texas)
- 1974 Gallerie Stampa (Basel, Switzerland)
- 1973 *Roger Mertin*, Light Gallery, New York City. March 6-31.
- 1972 *23 Couples*, Atholl McBean Gallery (San Francisco Art Institute) & Riverside Gallery II (Rochester, New York). June 22-July 23.
- 1971 *Plastic Love Dream*, Do Not Bend Gallery, London, United Kingdom
Haystack School of Crafts (Deer Isle, Maine)
Roger Mertin: Photographs, The Toronto Gallery of Photography, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. August 9-September 12.
4 Couples, Center of the Eye Gallery, Aspen, Colorado
- 1969 *Plastic Love Dream*, Music Listening Room Gallery, University of California, Davis, California. May 5-June 14.
- 1966 *Photographs by Roger Mertin*, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York. November 18-December 30.
- 1965 Rochester Institute of Technology

Group Exhibitions (as of 2006)

- 2006 *The Collectible Moment: Photographs in the Norton Simon Museum.* Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, California. October 13-February 27, 2007
- 2005 *The Bad Boys of Photography,* Anderson Gallery, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia
- 2003 *Best of Photo and Film: Right Before Your Eyes,* George Eastman House, Rochester, New York. September 13-April 11, 2004.
- 2002 *Picturing What Matters: An Offering of Photographs.* George Eastman House, Rochester, New York. September 7-January 20, 2003.
- 2001 *Surrealism in Photography.* Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska. April 10-July 1.
- 2000 *The Social Scene,* The Museum of Contemporary Art at California Plaza, Los Angeles. June 4-August 20.
- The Cities Collect,* Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Body Work: Photographs of Nudes,* Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota.
- 1999 McKnight Photography Fellows,* Katherine Nash Gallery, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.
- 1999 *Hot Lunch,* Hartnett Gallery, University of Rochester, New York
- Documentation/Manipulation,* Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida. October 8-December 12.
- 1997 *Chiarenza, Cohen, Mertin, Topolski, Walsh,* Hartnett Gallery, University of Rochester, New York
- 1996 *11 Photographers,* College of Visual Arts Gallery, St. Paul, Minnesota
- 1995 *Deck the Halls: Holiday Photography by Roger Mertin and Christina Patoski,* Weisman Art Museum, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. November 19-March 3, 1996.
- Rituals and Transformation: An Exhibition of Photographs,* National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.
- 1994 *Local Color: Recent Photographic Works,* pARTS Gallery [now Minnesota Center for Photography], Minneapolis
- Roger Mertin, Hilton Braithwaite, Cynthia Hawkins, Noah Savett,* Foreman Gallery, Hartwick College, Oneonta, New York. January 10-February 5.

- 1993 *Magicians of Light: Photographs from the Collection of the National Gallery of Canada*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa
San Francisco Camerawork, California
- 1992 *Between Home and Heaven: Contemporary American Landscape Photography*, National Museum of American Art [Smithsonian], Washington, D.C.
Eye on the Ball: The Camera's Focus on Basketball, Worcester Art Museum, Massachusetts
- 1991 *Recent Acquisitions*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa
Spring, 1991, Light Impressions Spectrum Gallery, Rochester, New York
Typologies: Nine Contemporary Photographers, Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, California
Patterns of Influence, Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona
- 1990 *Street Engagements: Social Landscape Photography of the Sixties*, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York. November 2-December 9.
Transformations: Experimental Photography of the Sixties, Hartnett Gallery, University of Rochester, New York. November 2-December 9.
Photographers on Ellis Island: 1900-1990, The Museum of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, New York
- 1989 *Cherished Image: 150 Years of the Portrait in Photography*, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa
Night Light: A Survey of 20th Century Night Photography, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri
- 1988 *Roger Mertin and Harry Orlyk: Contemporary Landscape Photographs and Paintings*, Lucy Burne Gallery, Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester, New York
On Time in Photographs, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York. January 10-February 6.
- 1987 *Holiday Greetings from Photographers*, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York
Likeness, Expression and Character: Presence in Photographs, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College, Chicago
Interiors: Contemporary American Photographs, Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York

- 1987 *Images of an Icon*, Photographic Archives, University of Louisville, Kentucky
American Dreams, Centro Reina Sodia, Madrid, Spain
 Museo de Bellas Artes, Bilbao, Spain
 Fundacion Joan Miro, Barcelona, Spain
- 1986 *Taking Liberty*, New York State Museum & the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Albany and Buffalo, New York
Images of an Icon: Photographs of the Statue of Liberty, San Angelo Museum of Fine Art, San Angelo, Texas
On the Road: 58 Photographs from the Permanent Collection of the Chrysler Museum, The Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Virginia
Oh, How Lovely Are Thy Branches, Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois
Regional Survey, Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York
- 1985 *American Images: Photography 1945-1980*, Barbican Art Gallery, Barbican Centre, London, United Kingdom
Light Work: Photography over the 70s and 80s, Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York
Recent Acquisitions, Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York
New Color/New Work, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College, Chicago
Photographs from the Permanent Collection Part II, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota. June 1-August 18.
- 1984 *American Photography Today 1984*, University of Colorado, Denver, Colorado
New Color/New Work, Middendorf Gallery, Washington, DC
Photographs by the Visual Studies Workshop Artists, Gallery of Art, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa
Platinum and Gold: Image and Process, Jeffrey Fuller Fine Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Rochester: An American Center of Photography, George Eastman House, Rochester, NY
New Works in the Permanent Collection, Andersen Gallery, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia

- 1984 *Seven Curators Look at Contemporary Photography*, AIPAD [The Associations of International Photography Art Dealers], New York, NY
- 1983 *200 Photographs from the Museum Collection*, Seattle Art Museum, Washington
- Arboretum*, University of Colorado, Denver, Colorado
- Recent Acquisitions*, Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Virginia
- Flash Photography Past & Present*, The Photographers' Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- Faculty Exhibition, Hartnett Gallery, University of Rochester, New York
- 1982 Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, France
- Twentieth Century Photographs from the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art*, Seibu Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan
- American Photography Today*, University of Colorado, Denver, Colorado
- The Back Yard*, Impressions Gallery, Boston, Massachusetts
- Floods of Light: Flash Photography 1851-1981*, The Photographers' Gallery, London, United Kingdom. December-January 1983
- Form, Freud, & Feeling*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California. September 17-November 28.
- 1981 *Selected Gallery Artists*, Workshop Gallery, Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York
- The New Color*, Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York
- American Landscapes*, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- Bang, Mertin, Miller, Venezia*, Bevier Gallery, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY
- 1980 *American Photographs 1970-80*, Whatcom Museum of Art, Bellingham, Washington
- Photography: Recent Directions*, DeCordova Museum, Lincoln, Massachusetts
- Polaroid Photography*, Philadelphia College of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- LeMoyne Art Foundation, Tallahassee, Florida
- Beach*, Vision Gallery, Boston, Massachusetts
- 1979 *20x24*, Light Gallery, New York, NY

- 1979 *One of a Kind: Recent Polaroid Color Photography*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
- American Photography in the '70s*, Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois
- The Residual Landscape*, Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Massachusetts
- Attitudes: Photography in the 1970s*, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, California
- 1978 *Mirrors and Windows: American Photography Since 1960*, Museum of Modern Art, New York. July 28-October 2.
- Photography: Four Stylistic Approaches*, Katonah Gallery, Katonah, New York
- University of Minnesota, Minneapolis
- Kline Commons Gallery, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
- The Landscape in Photography*, Vision Gallery, Boston, Massachusetts
- Photography: Permanent Collection*, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota. March 11-October 13.
- The Nude in Photography*, Photopia Gallery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- 1977 *Contemporary Photography*, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama
- Yajima Gallery, Montreal, Québec, Canada
- New Aspects of Self in American Photography*, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York
- Flash: An Exhibition of Photographs by Michael Bishop, Mark Cohen, Sandy Hume, Roger Mertin*, Miami-Dade Community College, Miami, Florida
- CAPS Photographers*, New York, New York
- The Great West: Real/Ideal*, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado
- Survey of Contemporary Photography*, Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield, Michigan
- 1976 Elgin Community College, Elgin, Illinois
- Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York
- Peculiar to Photography*, University Art Museum, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque

- 1976 *Photographie: Rochester, New York*, Centre Culturel Américain, Paris, France. April 28-June 18.
- Contemporary Photography*, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 1975 *Seven Photographers*, Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York
- Bakersfield College, Bakersfield, California
- Lake Placid Workshop, Lake Placid, New York
- Young American Photographers*, Kalamazoo Institute of Art, Kalamazoo, Michigan
- Texture: A Photographic Vision*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York
- A Photography Show*, School of Art, Bradley University, Peoria, Illinois
- Dimensional Light*, California State University, Fullerton, California
- Selections from the Permanent Collection*, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota. September 17-June 27.
- 1974 *Road Shots: Photographs by Michael Becotte and Roger Mertin*, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York. October 1974-January 1975.
- Southwestern at Memphis, Memphis, Tennessee
- Two Photographers*, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado
- Photography Unlimited*, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- Burchard, Cohen, Hallman, Mertin*, Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York
- Faculty Exhibition*, Memorial Art Gallery & University of Rochester, New York
- Photography from the Coke Collection*, University of California Davis Art Gallery, Davis, California. February 20-March 15.
- 1973 *Photographs: Becotte – Mertin*, MFA Gallery, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York. October 27-November 16.
- Light and Substance*, University Art Museum, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque
- Dog Show*, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York. July 7-August 20

- 1973 *Photography Invitational '73*, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida
Quiviera Gallery, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Images & Ideas: Photographic Expressions in the Seventies, Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York. May 4-June 3.
- 1972 *Women, Zone V Photographers Workshop*, Watertown, Massachusetts
Summer Light, Light Gallery, New York, New York
Contemporary Photography, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, Lincoln, Nebraska
Invitational Photographers Exhibition, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design
Photographic Portraits, Moore College of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- 1971 Putnam Street Gallery, Athens, Ohio
Figure in Landscape, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York
Rochester Institute of Technology
Thirteen Photographers, Light Gallery, New York, New York
Fifteen Photographers, Pensacola Junior College, Pensacola, Florida
Art Institute of Chicago
Photomedia, USA, San Diego State College, San Diego, California
Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1970 *Photographs for Sale*, Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York
Photography: New Acquisitions, Museum of Modern Art, New York
The Found Photograph, Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York
Be-ing Without Clothes, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts. November 3-29.
Latent Image (Houston, Texas)
Riverside Studio II (Rochester, New York)
- 1969 *Vision and Expression*, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York
Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida
Photographs for Collectors, Museum of Modern Art, New York
Recent Acquisitions, 1969, Pasadena Art Museum, Pasadena, California

- 1969 Rhode Island Arts Festival, Providence, Rhode Island
 Rochester Institute of Technology
 Riverside Studio II, Rochester, New York
The Photograph as Object: 1843—1969, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario
 National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario
 SUNY Buffalo, New York
 Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, Illinois
- 1968 *Photography 1968*, Lexington Camera Club, Lexington, Kentucky
Photography USA, DeCordova Museum, Lincoln, Massachusetts. December 10-January 28, 1969.
Light 7 [curated by Minor White], Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 1967 *Alice Andrews, Steve Foster, Roger Mertin*, The Underground Gallery, New York, New York. January 12-29.
Contemporary Photography Since 1950, New York State Council on the Arts, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York
Photography in the Twentieth Century, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa & George Eastman House, Rochester, New York. February 16-December 15.
 Westbank Gallery, Minneapolis, Minnesota
 Riverside Studio, Rochester, New York
Contemporary Photographers IV, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York
- 1966 Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, Illinois
 School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois
- 1965 *Architectural Ornamentation* [RIT senior thesis], George Eastman House, Rochester, New York
Photographs, Riverside Studio, Rochester, New York
Photography 65 / Seeing Photographically, New York State Exposition, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York

1963   *In Search of Images*, Stratford Galleries, Connecticut & IBM Research Center,
Rochester, New York

Fellowships and Awards

1999	McKnight Foundation Artist Fellowship for Photography, Minneapolis, Minnesota
1998	Minnesota State Arts Board, Visual Artist Fellowship
1995	Artist-in-Residence, Light Work, Syracuse, New York
1994	Open Studio Day, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota
1991	Visiting Scholar, Bakken Library and Museum, Minneapolis, Minnesota
1987	American Center in Paris; Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, Artist Residency (declined)
1985	Sponsored Project, Light Work, Syracuse, New York & New York State Council on the Arts
1984	Rochester Sesquicentennial Arts Grant, Rochester, New York
1978-79	National Endowment for the Arts; Photographic Survey, <i>From This Land</i>
1976	Photographer's Fellowship, National Endowment for the Arts
1974	John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship for Photography CAPS Photographer's Fellowship, New York State Council on the Arts

Publications: portfolios, books, articles & catalogs

In addition to this listing (which was compiled from Mertin's curricula vitae), I have included a more thorough publications list as Appendix 3, on page 73. Compiled by Jessica McDonald, it includes additional information such as specific photographs that were reproduced, George Eastman House library call numbers for particular items, etc.

- 2000   *1999 Photography Fellows: Work from the University of Minnesota/McKnight Foundation Artist Fellowships for Photographers Program*, ed., George Slade, University of Minnesota/McKnight Foundation
- The Social Scene: The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation Photography Collection at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles*, ed., Stephanie Emerson, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
- 1998   *Hungry Mind Review*, no. 48, Saint Paul, Minnesota
- 1997   *Eyes of the Nation: A Visual History of the United States*, Vincent Virga, Curators of the Library of Congress, Knopf, New York
- 1996   *Contact Sheet* no. 1, 89, 97, Light Work, Syracuse, New York (1996 & 1998)
- pArts Journal* 21, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- 1993   *Magicians of Light: Photographs from the Collection of the National Gallery of Canada*, ed., James Borcoman, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa
- 1991   *Living Evidence*, Presentation House Gallery, North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
- Hungry Mind Review*, no. 19, Saint Paul, Minnesota
- Typologies: Nine Contemporary Photographers*, Newport Harbor Art Museum and Rizzoli International, New York
- 1989   *Artist's Statement PHOTOGRAPHS*, Key River Press, Rochester, New York
- Ellis Island: Echoes from a Nation's Past*, Aperture, New York
- Recaption: Recontext*, University Art Museum, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis
- 1988   *DISPLAY '84*, A limited edition portfolio of 12 photographs published by KRP, Rochester, New York

- 1987 *Athletes Photographs 1860-1986*; ed., Ruth Silverman, foreword by Senator Bill Bradley, Knopf, New York
- American Independents*; ed., Sally Eauc Claire, Abbeville Press, New York
- American Dreams*; Ministerio De Cultura Direccion General De Bellas Artes Y Archivos, Centro Nacional De Exposiciones, Spain
- 1986 *50 Years Modern Color Photography 1936-1986*; Messe-und Ausstellungs GmbH, Cologne, Germany
- 1985 *Roger Mertin: October 15-November 30, 1985*; essay by Ben Lifson, Robert B. Menschel Photography Gallery, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York
- American Images: Photography 1945-1980*; ed., Peter Turner, Penguin Books and Barbican Art Gallery, London
- Light Work: Photography over the 70's and 80's*; ed., Janice Giarracco, Light Work, Syracuse, New York
- Photographers Encyclopedia International 1839-1983*; ed., Camera Obscura, Geneve, Suisse
- 1984: Rochester*; Hartnett Gallery Exhibition Poster, University of Rochester
- 1984 *New Color/New Work: Eighteen Photographic Essays*, ed., Sally Eauc Claire, Abbeville Press, New York
- New Directions*, ed., Weston Naef, DNP (America) Inc., Tokyo and New York
- The Making of a Collection: Photographs from the Minneapolis Institute of Arts*, Carrol T. Hartwell, Aperture, New York
- Rochester: An American Center of Photography*; International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Rochester, New York
- 1983 *200 Photographs from the Museum Collection*, Seattle Art Museum, frontispiece for checklist to the exhibition, Seattle
- Arboretum*, slide set, University of Denver, Colorado
- Contemporary Photographers*, ed., Walsh, Naylor, & Held, St. Martin's Press, New York
- 1982 *Modern Photography*, vol. 46: no. 1, "The Landscape Re-viewed," Charles Hagen
- Plastic Love-Dream*, a limited edition portfolio of 27 photographs in collaboration with RFG Publishing
- 1981 *American Photographer*, vol. 7: no. 5

- 1981   *Modern Photography*, vol. 45: no. 8
             The New Color, ed., Sally Eaucloire, Abbeville Press, New York
             American Landscapes, ed., John Szarkowski, Museum of Modern Art, New York
             American Photographs 1970-80, Whatcom Museum of Art, Bellingham, Washington
             Acquisitions 1973-80; International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Rochester, New York
- 1980   *9 Critics, 9 Photographs, Untitled 23*, ed., James Alinder, essay by Gary Metz, Friends of Photography, Carmel, California
- 1979   *Modern Photography*, vol. 43: no. 1, "Currents: American Photography Today," Andy Grundberg, exhibition review, New York
             The Photograph Collector's Guide, Witkin and London, New York, Graphic Society, Boston
             One of a Kind: Recent Polaroid Color Photography, ed., Belinda Rathbone, Godine, Boston, Massachusetts
             Popular Photography, vol. 85: no. 6, "The Instant Still Life," Don Leavitt, New York
- 1978   *West Art*, vol. 17: no. 6, "Photography: Current Trends," Carol Huebner, New York
             Roger Martin, Records 1976-78, ed., Charles Desmarais, Chicago Center for Contemporary Photography, Columbia College, Chicago
             Mirrors and Windows, American Photography Since 1960, ed., John Szarkowski, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1977   *The Great West: Real/Ideal*, ed., Gary Metz, University of Colorado
             Flash, Miami-Dade Community College, Miami, Florida
- 1976   *Modern Photography*, vol. 40: no. 7
             Artforum, vol. XIV: no. 6, exhibition review
             American Photography: Past into Present, ed., Anita Ventura Mozley, Seattle Art Museum, Washington
             Photographie: Rochester, N.Y., Center Culturel Américain, Paris, France
             Light Gallery Catalog of Contemporary Photographs, New York

- 1976 *Peculiar to Photography*, Art Museum, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque
- 1975 *Afterimage*, vol. 2: no. 7, Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York
- 1974 *Exposure*, vol. 12: no. 3, Journal of the Society for Photographic Education, New York
- Artscanada*, "An Inquiry into the Aesthetics of Photography, issue no. 192, 193, 194, 195, Toronto, Canada
- Light and Substance*, Art Museum, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque
- Four Photographic Centers*, Imageworks, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 1973 *Bulletin*, no. 5 & 6, University of New Mexico, University Art Museum
- 1972 *Artweek*, "With 23 Friends," exhibition review, July 15
- Fifteen Photographers*, Pensacola Junior College, Pensacola, Florida
- Photographic Portraits*, Moore College of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- 1971 *View on Nudes*, ed., Bill Jay, Focal Press, London, England
- 1970 *San Francisco Camera*, San Francisco, California
- The Print*, Life Library of Photography, Time-Life Books, New York
- Album 8*, London, England
- Album 3*, London, England
- 1969 *Camera*, Lucerne, Switzerland
- Vision and Expression*, ed., Nathan Lyons, Horizon Press, New York
- The Photograph as Object: 1845-1969*; ed., James Borcoman, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa
- Plastic Love-Dream*, University of California, Davis
- 1968 *Form 7*, "New American Photography: The Authentic Vision," Mike Weaver, Cambridge, England
- Photography 1968*, Lexington Camera Club, Lexington, Kentucky
- Photography, U.S.A.*, DeCordova Museum, Lincoln, Massachusetts
- 1967 *Photography in the Twentieth Century*, ed., Nathan Lyons, Horizon Press, New York

Collected Works

- Art Institute of Chicago
- Australia National Gallery, Canberra, Australia
- Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, France
- Center for Creative Photography, Tucson, Arizona
- C.N.G. Foundation, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Cray Research, Inc. / Film in the Cities, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- George Eastman House, Rochester, New York
- Hallmark Photographic Collection, Kansas City, Missouri
- Kiyosato Museum of Photographic Arts, Yamanashi Prefecture, Japan
- Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester, New York
- Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota
- Monsen Collection of American Photography, Seattle Art Museum, Washington
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California
- Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, California
- Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts
- Museum of Modern Art, New York
- National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa
- National Museum of American Art, Washington D.C.
- New York Public Library, New York
- Princeton Art Museum, Princeton University, New Jersey
- San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, California
- Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington
- Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, University of Nebraska
- Sun Valley Center for Arts and Humanities, Cedar Falls, Iowa
- SUNY College at Plattsburgh, New York
- University Art Museum, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque
- University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado
- University of Northern Iowa Art Gallery, Cedar Falls, Iowa
- University of Oklahoma Art Museum, Norman, Oklahoma
- Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York
- Weisman Art Museum, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Whatcom Museum of History and Art, Bellingham, Washington

Administrative Information

- Restrictions

The Roger Mertin Archive is not open for research at this time. Limited access may be gained through discussion with the Curator of Photographs and/or the Archivist.

- Acquisition Information

Gift of Ruth Meyer, 2006.

- Preferred Citation

Roger Mertin (American, 1942-2001). From the series [*series title*], [*date of object*]. © George Eastman House

- Processing Note

Processing took place as part of the required Master's thesis for the joint Ryerson University/George Eastman House program, Photographic Preservation and Collections Management.

Lot Number Allocation

What follows is a list of the various lot numbers and their corresponding associations that the Registrar's Office predetermined for a portion of the collection material.

Accession number example:

- 2006:3007:0001

[year accessioned : lot number : item number]

Lot Number	Description
3000	4x5 inch negatives
3001	11x14 inch negatives
3002	8x10 inch negatives, 1955-1959
3003	8x10 inch negatives, 1960-1964
3004	8x10 inch negatives, 1965-1969
3005	8x10 inch negatives, 1970-1974
3006	8x10 inch negatives, 1975-1979
3007	8x10 inch negatives, 1980-1984
3008	8x10 inch negatives, 1985-1989
3009	8x10 inch negatives, 1990-1994
3010	8x10 inch negatives, 1995-1999
3011	8x10 inch negatives, 2000-2004
3012-6500	Roll film or film strips
2300	Polaroids, 1955-1959
2301	Polaroids, 1960-1964
2302	Polaroids, 1965-1969
2303	Polaroids, 1970-1974
2304	Polaroids, 1975-1979
2305	Polaroids, 1980-1984
2306	Polaroids, 1985-1989
2307	Polaroids, 1990-1994
2308	Polaroids, 1995-1999
2309	Polaroids, 2000-2004

Overview of Arrangement

What follows is a table of the resulting box-level arrangement of Roger Martin's 8x10 inch negatives. Specific, item-level descriptions have been omitted from this table for the sake of space. Including entries for each negative within the body of this finding aid would span many pages. For more information about singular negatives, consult the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet created for this project.

Location	Series	Accession Numbers	Count
Box 1-1	<i>Die Tannenbaumserie</i>	2006:3006:0001-0005 0017-0022 0066-0070 0096-0121	42
Box 1-2	<i>Die Tannenbaumserie</i>	2006:3006:0122-0165	44
Box 1-3	<i>Die Tannenbaumserie</i>	2006:3006:0166-0175 0563-0564 2006:3007:0001-0012 0066-0072 0091-0115	56
Box 1-4	<i>Die Tannenbaumserie</i>	2006:3007:0116-0170	55
Box 1-5	<i>Die Tannenbaumserie</i>	2006:3007:0171-0222 0253 2006:3008:0001-0010	63
Box 1-6	<i>Die Tannenbaumserie</i>	2006:3008:0011-0080	70
Box 1-7	<i>Die Tannenbaumserie</i>	2006:3008:0081-0130 2006:3009:0001-0015	65
Box 1-8	<i>Die Tannenbaumserie</i>	2006:3009:0016-0033 2006:3010:0001-0020	38
Box 2-1	Hoops	2006:3006:0176-0217	42
Box 2-2	Hoops	2006:3006:0218-0256	39
Box 2-3	Hoops	2006:3006:0257-0297	41
Box 2-4	Hoops	2006:3006:0298-0338	41
Box 2-5	Hoops	2006:3006:0339-0378	40
Box 2-6	Hoops	2006:3006:0379-0418	40
Box 2-7	Hoops	2006:3006:0419-0460	42
Box 2-8	Hoops	2006:3006:0461-0502	42
Box 2-9	Hoops	2006:3006:0503-0540	38
Box 2-10	Hoops	2006:3006:0541-0562 2006:3007:0223-0240	40
Box 2-11	Hoops	2006:3007:0241-0252	12

Series Description

Series 1: *Die Tannenbaumserie* (boxes 1-1 through 1-8)

The negatives from Mertin's *Die Tannenbaumserie* span twenty years (1975-1995). The final resulting group, totaling 433, is stored in eight archival boxes. They are arranged in numerically ascending order by lot number, and subsequently by item number. Throughout the course of the processing, it became clear that this body of work did not only include Christmas trees, but any sort of visual representation of decorated trees—be it through Christmas lights, drawings or other mass-produced decorations. A large number of the images were made within the domestic space of homes, but there are also negatives showing Christmas trees (or representations of them) in public spaces. This project was carried out in color as well as black and white. Many of the domestic spaces shown in the negatives appear over the course of multiple years.

Series 2: Hoops (boxes 2-1 through 2-11)

The negatives from the Hoops series span four years (1977-1980). The final resulting group, totaling 417, is stored in eleven archival boxes. They are arranged in numerically ascending order by lot number, and subsequently by item number. Despite purchasing his 8x10 Deardorff camera in 1975, Mertin had clearly mastered this tool by 1977. The Hoops series showcases basketball hoops. Found in various places, the hoops appear to function as useful (and plentiful) catalysts—a category of mundane objects deliberately and consciously chosen to trigger the photograph-making process. One prevalent formal strategy entails placing the basketball hoop, as an element in the photograph, in front of a tree with branches spreading upwards. The branches serve as graphical lines that either spring out of the hoop, or, in reverse, are sucked down within it. The majority of the photographs appear to be “landscapes-with-basketball-hoops.”

Conclusion

One goal of this project has been to increase access to the Roger Mertin Archive. Another goal has been to establish a methodology by which to organize the Archive in the future. The size of the Roger Mertin Archive prevented me from accounting for all of the material. Such an undertaking will require much time and many hands. However, this project marks a strong beginning to this long procedure. Assigning accession numbers to the negatives allows the tracking and description of each one. The arrangement of the material into distinct bodies of work will allow for a more careful examination of Roger Mertin as an artist and photographer. As the Roger Mertin Archive becomes better known, historians and researchers will go to the photographs first. The Archive's arrangement will provide the ideal environment to study the artistic legacy of Roger Mertin. The loosely chronological groupings within each body of work have begun the process of establishing a more exemplary arrangement.

There was the additional objective to build upon the previously gathered sources relating to the life and work of Roger Mertin. Following the threads of previous research to their ends and pulling harder have achieved this. I had the luxury of grounding my research in the physical objects. This allowed me to clean up existing data, while distilling it into a more understandable and more readable format. This also results in greater access to the Archive—by providing greater access to the facts surrounding it. With the information gathered so far, a prospective researcher can better triangulate his or her desired entry point into the Archive.

As stated previously, this finding aid and thesis will function as the document of primary reference to those who wish to explore the photographs or those who wish to persevere in the cataloguing of the Archive—until such time as there is a more complete document. The goal is nothing less than to fill in a gap of photographic history. I intended to leave this project open-ended, in the hopes that others will come after me to complete this very worthwhile and rewarding endeavor. Of this I am confident.

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Excerpt from:
GEORGE EASTMAN HOUSE
Acquisition Committee Meeting
Photographs Collection
Friday April 17, 2009

D. Donations

3. Roger Mertin Archive—Gift of Ruth Meyer
(American, 1942-2001)

Roger Mertin died mid-career in May of 2001 at the age of 58. He had been a member of the fine arts faculty at the University of Rochester since 1972 and a consistently prolific image-maker throughout his career. Mertin was the recipient of fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the McKnight Foundation, and others. His work has been featured in dozens of exhibitions throughout the United States (over 30 of them were solo or two person shows) and is in the permanent collections of 26 major museums and cultural archives.

Mertin was a significant innovator in both photographic technology and its ideas. He pioneered the return to large format and initiated the use of dual, staggered flash, a practice now so ubiquitous as to go unnoticed. He was also one of the first photographic artists to work in conceptual series. His photographs of basketball hoops in situ, an extended series of images of Christmas decorations, the façades and internal architecture of rural libraries, and a series of pictures of curiously anthropomorphic, urban and suburban trees—all coined idioms defined in the particulars and specificity of large format photography.

Despite this, Mertin's work is not widely recognized beyond that community of curators and artists who trace their careers to enthusiasms of the 1970s and 1980s. The reason for this eclipse is central to our interest in the mertin archive and Mertin's career. It exemplifies a brief epoch in the practice of fine art photography—a practice that prefigures the surpassing ubiquity of postmodern camera work. It can be argued that Mertin is the perfect embodiment of the art making that originated *inside* photography. At the cusp of the first generation of photographers to obtain an MFA in photography, Mertin entered the field while the discipline was still in a state of self-remediation, struggling for recognition in the academy. An explosive recognition was soon to occur in an unanticipated form: from artists who chose to use photography as a device for quotation. But this was decidedly not the central project of Roger Mertin's career. Mertin's photography took him directly to objects in the world. His particular genius was the ability to see and trace the thread of a visual idiom through the American social landscape.

We believe that the work of this important artist, belongs in the Eastman House collection for reasons that derive from our collection and the important position of this artist in the

history of photography. We anticipate an eventual retrospective and publication that will permanently place Mertin's work in the trajectory of the photograph as art.

The Roger Mertin Archive includes not only prints and negatives, but slides, correspondence, and publications. The photographic prints number 23, 194 which accompany 7,685 8x10-inch negatives and 3,321 roll film negatives. A basic inventory of the items has now been completed for acquisition purposes. We look forward to working with these materials in the future to provide access for researchers and to use them within our own exhibitions.

In 2007 the Acquisitions Committee voted to accept this collection in its entirety on principal, with formal application to the full board to occur as soon as an inventory has been completed.

A full inventory will be available at the acquisitions meeting for those interested. An extended bio follows:

Roger Mertin was born in Bridgeport, CT on December 9th, 1942. According to Mertin, he became seriously interested in photography in 1963. At this time, he was a sophomore at RIT and sought out photography workshops with Nathan Lyons and Minor White. In 1964 he married Joan Schultz, the subject of many of his early photographic projects. He received his bachelor of fine arts degree from RIT in 1965, and his senior thesis *Architectural Ornamentation* was exhibited that year at George Eastman House. He was part of the exhibition *Photography 65* that year, and was featured in a one-man show at George Eastman House in 1966. During 1965 and 1966 he worked as a photo technician at Eastman Kodak.

Mertin was hired in the darkroom at George Eastman House in 1966, and was head of the reproduction center by 1967. In 1968 and 1969 he worked as assistant curator of "extension activities" at George Eastman House. In 1969 he founded a slide reproduction business with Michael Becotte, which they called the Walrus; they dissolved the business in 1974.

Mertin entered the Visual Studies Workshop (VSW) in 1969. That first year, VSW did not officially offer graduate programs; known then as the Photographic Studies Workshop, it offered informal workshops but granted no degrees. In 1970 the institution became affiliated with SUNY Buffalo and began offering the MFA degree. Mertin was in the first group, graduating in 1972. He served as a graduate teaching assistant during his first year at VSW, and an adjunct faculty member at RIT from 1969 to 1972. He and Joan were divorced in 1972.

After short term teaching positions at the San Francisco Art Institute and the University of New Mexico, Mertin was hired as an instructor of photography at the University of Rochester in 1973. In the next decade he was a visiting artist at schools in such places as New York, Colorado, Michigan, Idaho, Minnesota, and Virginia and taught summer

workshops in North Carolina, Colorado, California, and New Mexico. He traveled continuously, photographing, teaching, and presenting his work around the U.S. and Canada. Friends remember that he drove everywhere; he would drive across the country even for a weekend Society for Photographic Education (SPE) conference.

Travel was, in fact, the major vehicle for communication for Mertin. Referring to Mertin's practice of correspondence while he was on the road, Heidi Katz explained, "once he left town he was in touch." He sent frequent, sometimes weekly postcards or photographs enclosed with brief, sometimes ambiguous, usually entertaining messages, leaving many of his friends and fellow photographers at the time with collections of correspondence. He photographed constantly; if he wasn't working formally, he was making snapshots of everyone and everything around him. The act of photographing, and the images that resulted, were his means of communicating with the world.

Mertin worked at the University of Rochester until his death in 2001. He was essentially the only photography instructor on staff, though there were occasional adjuncts. He was active in the department, frequently curating exhibitions at the Hartnett Gallery in Wilson Commons. He curated exhibition of work by Atget, Friedlander, Jerome Liebling, and others. For many years he was represented by the Visual Studies Workshop Gallery, and showed/sold prints through light Gallery in New York City in the 1970s. Mertin's friends insist that he was always ahead of the trends. He experimented with hand-held flash at night until too many other photographers began to copy him, he began shooting with a large format view camera before that became trendy, and he made 20x24-inch Polaroids before they were widely popular.

Mertin photographed typical American subjects, and included the phrase "American photographer" in his artist statement. He focused on trees, basketball hoops, basketball players, baseball players, libraries, dogs, friends, Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty, and Christmas trees and decorations. Other photographers have portrayed such objects in a more sarcastic, sardonic way, poking fun at the excess of America. Mertin's images do not carry this tone. He approached his subjects with an honest curiosity and gentle observation. He placed all of his subjects in the center of the frame, at eye level, without judgment.

Mertin met Elizabeth Ihrig while working on his Library series in Minnesota. In his last decade, he commuted frequently between Rochester and their home in St. Paul. According to Allen Topolski, Mertin went to St. Paul every other weekend, often driving himself. He had become more and more active in the Twin cities photography scene in the late 1990s, showing his work and speaking to students at the University of Minnesota. Mertin's friends all agree that he wanted to find a way to live in Minnesota full time, but any plans he might have made were never carried out.

There were memorial exhibitions in Rochester at the Hartnett Gallery, and in Minneapolis at the pARTS Gallery. The photographs in the Rochester exhibition were all from the private collections of Mertin's friends and colleagues. The U of R now offers the annual Roger Mertin Memorial Prize for Excellence in Studio Art, a scholarship fund for outstanding undergraduate students.

File Copy

September 15, 2005

Ms. Elizabeth Slater
Vice President, Grant Program
The Judith Rothschild Foundation
1110 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10128

Dear Ms. Slater,

George Eastman House, International Center for Photography and Film, is pleased to submit a proposal to The Judith Rothschild Foundation to support the acquisition, transportation, storage, cataloguing and scanning of the archive of photographer Roger Mertin. We are seeking grant support in the amount of \$35,000.

Roger Mertin died mid-career in May of 2001 at the age of 58. He had been a member of the fine arts faculty at the University of Rochester since 1972. Mertin, a master darkroom technician, gained recognition for the emotional nature of his 35-mm photographs in the late 1960s and 1970s. In the early 1990s, photographic curator James Borcoman called Mertin's work "a gift of discovery" because his photographs enlightened viewers about the act of looking.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our request for funding from The Judith Rothschild Foundation for Roger Mertin. Should you have any questions regarding our request, feel free to contact me at (585) 271-3361, ext 211. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Anthony Bannon
Director

GEORGE EASTMAN HOUSE/The Judith Rothschild Foundation

1) Project description

George Eastman House seeks the support of the Judith Rothschild Foundation for the acquisition, transportation, storage, cataloguing and scanning of the archive of photographer Roger Mertin. (1943-2001) The archive, which includes thousands of photographs, transparencies, negatives, and contact sheets, as well as boxes of important manuscript material, is a promised gift to George Eastman House; the Museum expects transfer of title in 2006. This acquisition project will culminate with "The Constant Photographer: Roger Mertin in a Transforming Medium," an online interpretation of the artist's career that will establish both visibility and access to this important work. The project will be installed as a permanent collections access component of the Museum's online presence. Following the process of collection organization and online accessibility, we will, in consultation with the artist's widow, develop duplicate print sets for deposit in other museums and coordinate a traveling exhibition and publication. An Eastman House staff team consisting of Alison Nordström, Curator of Photographs, Rick Hock, Director of Exhibitions, Roger Bruce, Director of Interpretation, and David Wooters, Chief Archivist will undertake the work. Graduate students in the Photographic Preservation and Collections Management, a joint masters degree program of George Eastman House and Ryerson University, will assist them.

2) Project Budget

Collection transportation	\$3,000
Materials (archival shelving, cabinets, boxes, sleeves, interleaving)	6,000
Design and implementation of "Constant Photographer" (Web design, coding & linking of documents & images online)	5,000
Cold storage refrigeration for color work	5,000
Dedicated TMS license (Terminal software cost for catalog database)	6,000
Dedicated computer and scanner (for digital public access to low-res online images)	3,000
Overhead and administration	7,000

Total Request from Rothschild Foundation **\$35,000**

GEH contribution

Labor \$12 hr x 18 mths x 5 cataloguers (For registration, conservation, archiving)	\$172,800
Archival and Curatorial Staff (Nordström, 8%; Bruce, 8%; Wooters, 10%; Hock, 9%)	\$20,934

Project Timetable

To date, the Mertin archive has been consolidated in two sites in Minneapolis, where it has been inventoried and catalogued at the box level. Alison Nordström, George Eastman House, Curator of Photographs and Rick Hock, George Eastman House Director of Exhibitions, are traveling to Minneapolis in October, 2005, to survey the collection, assess future transportation and collections management requirements and negotiate transfer of title with artist's widow and executrix. The accession will be formally proposed to the George Eastman House Board of Trustees in April 2006. In May 2006, and shipping will commence shortly thereafter.

A team of MA candidates from the Museum's program in Photographic Preservation and Collections Management will, through August 2006, begin the systematic organization and object-level cataloguing of the entire archive under the leadership and supervision of GEH Chief Archivist David Wooters. In September 2006, the additional graduate students. We anticipate that cataloguing will be complete in the spring of 2007 and that the collection, sleeved, boxed, numbered and catalogued on our database will be moved into the George Eastman House archive over the summer 2007.

While we do not seek Rothschild Foundation support for the activities that will precede and follow this undertaking, these funds are essential. Our ability and desire to undertake this cataloguing and preservation process is the contingency on which the gift hangs. Once acquisition and cataloging are complete, we anticipate a major exhibition and publication in 2009. Given the over-all costs of such a significant acquisition, the amount requested from the Judith Rothschild Foundation may seem a small percentage—but the work to be achieved with these funds is key to the entire enterprise. We are certain that this support will secure the lasting custodianship and visibility of a very significant body of work and its related documentation.

3) Artist biography

Roger Mertin died mid-career in May of 2001 at the age of 58. He had been a member of the fine arts faculty at the University of Rochester since 1972 and a consistently prolific image-maker throughout his career. Roger was the recipient of fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the McKnight Foundation, and others. His work has been featured in dozens of exhibitions throughout the United States (over 30 of them were solo or two person shows) and is in the permanent collections of 26 major museums and cultural archives.

And yet, Mertin's work is not widely recognized beyond that community of curators and artists who trace their careers to enthusiasms of the 1970s and 1980s. The reason for this eclipse is central to our interest in the Mertin collection and central to this application for support from the Judith Rothschild Foundation: Roger's career exemplifies a brief epoch in the practice of fine art photography—a practice that prefigures the surpassing ubiquity of postmodern camera work. Roger may be the most perfect embodiment of art making that originated *inside* photography. At the cusp of the first generation of photographers that could obtain an MFA in photography, Mertin entered the field while the discipline was still in a state of self-remediation, struggling for recognition in the academy. An explosive recognition was soon to occur—in the 80s and 90s within the cool regard of post modern irony—in an unanticipated form: from artists who chose to use photography as a device for quotation. But this was decidedly not the central project of Roger Mertin's career. Mertin's photography took him directly to objects in the world. His particular genius was the ability to see and trace the thread of a visual idiom through the American social landscape. Sometimes the project's thread would be a kind of visual argot, sometimes effable, sometimes not. His photographs of basketball hoops in situ, an extended series of images of Christmas decorations, the façades and internal architecture of rural libraries, and a series of pictures of curiously anthropomorphic, urban and suburban trees—all coined idioms defined in the particulars and specificity of large format photography.

We believe that the work of this important, yet under recognized artist, belongs in the Eastman House collection for reasons that derive from our collection and the important position of this artist in the history of photography.

While there are currently 57 Mertin photographs in the Museum's collection, acquisition of the Mertin archives will be an important complement to our collections in that it will allow a more aggressive interpretation of a transitional period in late 20th Century photography. Mertin's work exemplifies a vein of fine art photography that originated in the 1960s and was heavily influenced by the resources and institutions of Western New York State.

Roger began working in photography at the Rochester Institute of Technology as an undergraduate; he studied with Nathan Lyons, founder of the Visual Studies Workshop before beginning his teaching career at the University of Rochester. Mertin worked at Eastman House for a time while he was a graduate student.

Roger's archives will have a special significance within the Eastman House collections regardless of our geographic proximity within his career. The acquisition of these materials presents us with a special opportunity to interpret an artist's life work in a crucial period in the evolution and maturation of fine art photography. The photographs, negatives, correspondence, and other materials provide important context for Roger's previously exhibited and published work, and in addition, these materials from a rich backdrop for other contemporaneous works by other artists already in the Museum's collection.

4) Organizational background

George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography and Film, is the oldest museum in the world dedicated to photography and one of the premier institutions for their preservation and interpretation. In addition to collecting, preserving, and interpreting photographs, we promote both scholarly research and recreational inquiry of our collections and exhibitions. We are active in both exhibition and publication, mounting more than ten photographic exhibitions annually and organizing more than that number for national and international tour.

The Photography Collection is comprised of more than 400,000 prints, negatives and pre-cinematic works, includes substantial holdings of 19th century French, British, and American photographs; the world's most extensive daguerreotype collection; major 20th century holdings by artists such as Ansel Adams, Alfred Stieglitz, Margaret Bourke-White, Edward Weston, and Gertrude Käsebier; sub-collections of commercial, scientific, photojournalistic, and contemporary photography, all international in scope; and significant holdings that include Civil War photography by George Barnard and Alexander Gardner, the American Museum of Photography/3M Collection. We hold and oversee several comprehensive archives similar to the Mertin material for which we seek support, including those of Lewis Hine, Alvin Langdon Coburn, Nickolas Muray, Victor Keppler, Southworth & Hawes and Edward Steichen.

ROGER MERTIN
PHOTOGRAPHS IN PUBLICATION

Compiled by Jessica S. McDonald
Spring 2006

- 1964   **Mertin, Roger. *One: A Selection of Nudes*. Portfolio of 12 prints. 1964.**
[edition of 3]
Mira Godard Study Center, Ryerson University
- 1967   **Lyons, Nathan. *Photography in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Horizon Press, 1967.**
One image, page 119:
Untitled, Rochester, 1966 [storefront].
GEH TR 646 O87 N277 P42
- Mertin, Roger. Photographs 66.**
[unpublished artist book, only known example is at VSW. Photos mounted on boards, which are taped together accordion-style so that book folds out. Images of storefronts, interiors of diner, concrete, etc. Perhaps these are the images that were exhibited in Mertin's 1966 solo exhibition at GEH? -jm]
Visual Studies Workshop library
- 1968   **Weaver, Mike, ed. "New American Photography: The Authentic Vision." *Form 7* (March 1968): 19.**
Two images reproduced:
Provincetown, Mass., 1967 [teens eating ice cream cones]
Rochester, Memorial Day, 1967 [flag, reflection, dark sky]
GEH periodicals
- Photography USA*. Lincoln, MA: DeCordova Museum, 1968. Exhibition Catalogue.**
One image:
Bridgeport, Conn [motorcycle reflected in window]
GEH TR646 L452 D33 P41
- Photography 1968*. Lexington, KY: Lexington Camera Club, 1968. Exhibition Catalogue.**
One print, no title [cut flowers covered in plastic].
GEH TR 646 L4 L45 P45 1968
- 1969   **Lyons, Nathan, ed. *Vision and Expression*. New York: Horizon Press, 1969.**
One image from *Plastic Love Dream*
GEH TR646 R63 I555 V5

- 1969 cont'd ***Plastic Love Dream*. Davis: University of California, Davis, 1969.**
 [Small plastic box with fold-out photographs and texts, including exhibition viewer comments, an essay by Robert Sobieszek, untitled images from exhibition, and *Self-portrait at the Bristol – New York City, 1967*]
 GEH RB OVER TR 647 M377 C274 P6 and VSW library
- "Two Sisters." *Camera*, no 9 (1969).**
 One image reproduced from *Plastic Love Dream*, page 30.
 GEH periodicals
- Metz, Gary. "Roger Mertin." *Album*, no. 3 (1969): 44-48.**
 Five images reproduced, no titles given, pages 45-48:
 [motorcycle in front of window]
 [mannequin]
 [wonder bread, reflection in window]
 [image of Jesus on storefront]
 [woman's face in ad, window reflection]
 GEH periodicals
- 1970 **"Plastic Love Dream: Photographs by Roger Mertin." *Album*, no. 8 (Sept 1970): 4-20.**
 Twenty-one image *Plastic Love Dream* series reproduced.
 Also includes "Some random quotations that seem to relate to *Plastic Love Dream*" edited by Thomas Barrow, and "Notes Upon Rising From a Plastic Love Dream" by Gary Metz.
 Essay "Plastic Love Dream: A Celebration of the Female Sex Object" by Robert Sobieszek on pages 22-23.
 GEH periodicals
- The Print*. Life Library of Photography series. New York: Time-Life Books, 1970.**
 Text, page 136, describes Mertin's printing process including papers and enlarger settings. Image reproduced and discussed, page 137:
 From *Plastic Love Dream*, 1968.
 GEH TR 330 T55
- Phillips, Doyle, ed. "A Selection of Photographs from the Pasadena Art Museum Permanent Collection." San Francisco Camera 1*, no. 5 (1970).**
 Two images from *Plastic Love Dream* reproduced:
Untitled, from the series "Plastic Love Dream" 1968
Untitled, from the series "Plastic Love Dream" 1968
- 1971 **Jay, Bill, ed. *Views on Nudes*. London: Focal Press, 1971.**
 One image reproduced from *Plastic Love Dream* series.
 GEH TR 674 J38

- 1971 cont'd **Figure in Landscape. Rochester: George Eastman House, 1971. Exhibition Catalogue.**
No images reproduced, but listed in checklist.
GEH oversize TR646.R63 I555 F5
- Borcoman, James, ed. *The Photograph as Object: 1845-1969. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1971. Exhibition Catalogue.***
One image reproduced, 1968, no title [woman reclining in lawn chair in landscape].
GEH TR 646 O97 N277 P4
- 1972 ***Photographic Portraits. Philadelphia: Moore College of Art, 1972. Exhibition Catalogue.***
One image:
Joan with Friends, 1971
GEH TR646.P44 M6 P4
- Fifteen Photographers. Pensacola: Pensacola Junior College, 1972. Exhibition Catalogue.***
One image reproduced without title [hand extending into landscape].
GEH TR646 P35 P325 F5
- Murray, Joan. "With 23 Friends." *Artweek*, July 15, 1972. Exhibition Review.**
Two images reproduced, no titles [one nude couple and one pair of torsos]
U of R Art Library periodicals
- 1973 ***Bulletin nos. 5-6. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, University Art Museum, 1973.***
- 1974 **"An Inquiry into the Aesthetics of Photography." *Artscanada* nos. 192/193/194/195 (1974).**
One image reproduced, page 64:
Hand, with Tree, Seneca Lake, 1972
U of R Art Library periodicals
- Four Photographic Centers. Cambridge: Imageworks, 1974. Exhibition Catalogue.***
- Light and Substance. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, University Art Museum, 1974. Exhibition Catalogue.***
Text, page 56, discusses Mertin's flash technique.
One image reproduced, page 8:
Untitled, Toronto, 1973 [hand-held flash] GEH TR646.A45 N452 L5

- 1974 cont'd ***Exposure: Journal of the Society for Photographic Education* 12, no. 3 (1974).**
 One image reproduced on cover:
Diane's Hand, Mt. Mitchel, North Carolina [n.d.]
 GEH periodicals
- 1975 ***Afterimage* 2, no. 7 (1975): 8.**
 One image reproduced in traveling exhibition ad, page 8:
Joni, Seneca Lake, 1971
 GEH oversize periodicals
- Dimensional Light*. Fullerton: California State University, 1975. Exhibition Catalogue.**
- 1976 **Mozley, Anita Ventura, ed. *American Photography: Past into Present*. Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 1976. Exhibition Catalogue.**
 One image with flash technique, page 146:
Rochester, NY c. 1965
 GEH TR646 S352 S4 A4
- Photographie: Rochester, NY*. Paris: Centre Culturel Americain, 1976. Exhibition catalogue.**
 One image reproduced:
Trumbull, Connecticut, 1973 [flash-lit tree]
 U of R Rhees Library, Rare Books (2nd floor) TR646.U62.R6 1976
- Coke, Van Deren and Thomas F. Barrow, eds. *Peculiar to Photography*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Art Museum, 1976. Exhibition Catalogue.**
 One image reproduced, with flash technique:
Rochester, New York, 1975
 GEH TR646 A45 N452 P3
- Patton, Phil. "Reviews." *Artforum* 14, no. 6 (February 1976): 66-67. Exhibition Review.**
 One image reproduced, page 66:
Penland, NC, 1974 [tree]
 GEH periodicals
- Scully, Julia, and Andy Grundberg. "USA: Pushing the Limits." *Modern Photography* 40, no. 7. (1976): 79-105.**
 Two images reproduced, page 101:
Route 140, Mass., 1973 [tree]
Route 20, NY, 1974 [tree and light pole] GEH periodicals

- 1976 cont'd ***Light Gallery Catalog of Contemporary Photographs.* New York, 1976.**
- 1977 **Metz, Gary, ed. *The Great West: Real/Ideal.* Boulder: University of Colorado, 1977.**
 Two images reproduced, pages 90-91:
Hailey, Idaho, 1976 [Christmas tree suspended over intersection]
Ketchum, Idaho, 1976 [trees in yard]
 U of R Art Library TR646.U6 B65 1977
- Photographs: Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.* Lincoln: Nebraska Art Association, 1977.**
 One image, page 71:
Untitled (hand over aerial view), 1971 [localized solarization]
 GEH TR650.S46
- Read, Dave, ed. *Flash: An Exhibition of Photographs.* Miami: Miami-Dade Community College, 1977. Exhibition Catalogue.**
 Three images reproduced:
Marlene Scott Venezia, 17 June 1977
Judy and Rachel, 15 June 1977
Webster, NY, 22 June 1977
 GEH TR646 M4 M42 F5
- 1978 **Desmarais, Charles, ed. *Roger Mertin: Records 1976-78.* Chicago: Chicago Center for Contemporary Photography, 1978.**
 Forty images reproduced; trees, Christmas trees, portraits, basketball hoops [there were eighty in the show].
 GEH TR647 M377 C45343 R6
- Szarkowski, John, ed. *Mirrors and Windows: American Photography Since 1960.* New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1978.**
 One image, page 51:
Tree, Rochester, New York, 1973
 GEH TR646.N39 N478 M5
- Huebner, Carol. "Photography: Current Trends." *West Art* 17, no. 6 (1978).**
- Davies, Hugh M., ed. *Class of 1928 Photography Collection.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1978. Exhibition catalogue.**
 Two images reproduced:
Untitled (from the series "Trees"), 1974
Untitled (from the series "Trees"), 1974
 GEH TR646.A53 U752 C56

- 1978 cont'd **Finkel, Candida. "Correspondents: McPherson, Mertin Featured in Summer Show." *Afterimage* 6, no. 3 (October 1978): 19-20.**
 Lengthy review of Mertin's Records exhibition in Chicago. Good information about his working methods.
 Two images reproduced, page 20:
Lake Rd (NY Roadside), 1977
Michaela, Wisc., 1977
 GEH oversize periodicals
- 1979 **Witkin, Lee D. and Barbara London. *The Photograph Collector's Guide*. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1979.**
 Overview of Mertin's work, page 191.
 One image reproduced, page 191:
Rochester, New York, 1975 [trees with flash at dusk with blur]
 GEH TR6.5 W57
- Rathbone, Belinda, ed. *One of a Kind: Recent Polaroid Color Photography*. Boston: Godine, 1979. Exhibition Catalogue.**
 Essay by Eugenia Parry Janis
 Plates 32 and 33, both bathrooms:
Rochester, 1978
Boston, 1978
 GEH TR646.H6 H68 O5
- Grundberg, Andy. "Currents: American Photography Today." *Modern Photography* 43, no. 1 (1979): 114. Exhibition review.**
 Review of Mirrors and Windows at MoMA
 One image reproduced, page 117.
Tree, Rochester, NY, 1973
 GEH periodicals
- Huginin, James. "More on Mertin" 6, no. 6 (January 1979): 17-18.**
 Lengthy review of *Records* catalogue.
 One image reproduced, page 18:
Linda, NY, 1977
 GEH oversize periodicals
- 1980 **Metz, Gary. "Meditations on a Blue Photograph" in James Alinder, ed. "9 Critics, 9 Photographs." *Untitled* 23 (1980): 40-45.**
 One image reproduced, page 42:
 Rochester, New York, 1980 [in GEH collection]
 GEH periodicals

1980 cont'd **Karmel, Pepe. "Roger Mertin at Light." *Art in America* 68, no. 6 (Summer 1980):158-159.**

Author discusses work in exhibition at Light Gallery.

One image reproduced, page 158:

Paltneyville [sic] Orchard, 1977.

GEH periodicals

Sullivan, Constance, ed. *Nude: Photographs 1850-1980*. New York: Harper & Row, 1980.

Two images from Plastic Love Dream reproduced, plates 122 and 123:

Casual Heart #1, 2nd Version, 1969

Untitled, 1968

GEH TR675 .N796

Thomas Bang, Roger Mertin, Archibald Miller, Michael Venezia: *Studio Faculty, Department of Fine Arts, University of Rochester*. Rochester: University of Rochester, 1980.

Memorial Art Gallery library N6535.R6 T46

***American Photographs 1970-80*. Bellingham: Watcom Museum of Art/Washington Art Consortium, 1980. Exhibition catalogue.**

Five images reproduced, page 68:

Stratford, Connecticut, 1974

Route 11, Virginia, 1975 [flash at dusk]

Rochester, New York, 1975 [tree]

Rochester, New York, 1975 [tree]

Route 31, New York State, 1974 [tree, also on page 13]

GEH TR650 A4924

1981 **Eauclaire, Sally, ed. *The New Color Photography*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1981.**

Comments on Mertin's work, page 78.

Three images reproduced, pages 89-91:

Boston, Massachusetts, 1978

Rochester, New York, 1979

Rochester, New York, 1979

GEH TR510 E29

Szarkowski, John, ed. *American Landscapes*. New York: Museums of Modern Art, 1981.

Image on page 70:

Rochester, New York, 1974 [landscape at dusk with flash in foreground]

GEH TR646 N39 N478 A55

- 1981 cont'd **Szarkowski, John. "The American Landscape Tradition." *American Photographer* 7, no. 5 (November 1981): 60-69.**
 One image reproduced in part of discussion of "young photographers":
Rochester, New York, 1974
 GEH periodicals
- Grundberg, Andy and Julia Scully. "Currents: American Photography Today." *Modern Photography* 45, no. 8 (1981): 102.**
 Article is mainly about Linda Connor's work.
 One image reproduced on page 188:
Phelps, NY, 1977
 GEH periodicals
- Sobieszek, Robert, Marianne Fulton and Philip L. Conday. *Acquisitions 1973-80. Rochester: GEH, 1981. Exhibition Catalogue.***
 Plate 182: *L.L.; Bridgehampton, New York, 1977-1978.*
 GEH TR646.R63 I555 A32 1981
- Metz, Gary. "A Conversation with Roger Mertin, Part I." *Working Papers* 2 (November 1981): 13-20.**
 [Great interview in which Mertin describes many of his early projects
 Mertin rarely spoke/wrote about his own work, so this is a key resource. I
 could not locate the "Part II", if indeed it was published. -jm]
 One image reproduced, page 19:
Rochester, NY, 1975 [flash-lit bush in foreground, tree, fence at night]
 Visual Studies Workshop and U of R library periodicals
- 1982 **Hagen, Charles. "The Landscape Re-Viewed: Smith, Ginsberg, Mayes, Enos, Leven, Mertin, Adams." *Modern Photography* 46, no. 1 (1982): 88-97, 158.**
 A few paragraphs discussing Mertin's work.
 Two photographs reproduced on page 95, no titles [one from *trees*, one from *basketball hoops*].
 GEH periodicals
- 1983 ***Plastic Love Dream. Limited Edition Portfolio of 27 Photographs. RFG, 1983.***
 Visual Studies Workshop library
- 200 Photographs from the Museum Collection. Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 1983.***
- Arboretum. Slide set. Denver: University of Colorado, 1983.***

- 1983 cont'd **Walsh, George, Colin Naylor, and Michael Held, eds. *Contemporary Photographers*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983.**
One image reproduced on page 507:
Lordship CT, 1978 [basketball hoop]
GEH TR139.C66
- 1984 **Hartwell, C. T. *The Making of a Collection: Photographs from the Minneapolis Institute of Art*. New York: Aperture, 1984.**
[*Untitled, 1974* reproduced on page 86; hand extending into frame with localized solarization]
GEH TR650.H277
- 1984: Rochester. Hartnett Gallery Exhibition Poster. University of Rochester, 1984.**
[no image title on poster; image of school hallway]
- Eauclaire, Sally, ed. *New Color/New Work: Eighteen Photographic Essays*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1984.**
Four-page essay: *Roger Martin: The Blues*
Ten images reproduced, pages 138-151:
Rochester, New York, 1980
Rochester, New York, 1980
Route 17, New York, 1979
Rochester, New York, 1980
Ridgewood, New York, 1979
Helen and Anne Robinson, Rochester, New York, 1980
Rochester, New York, 1981
Michaela Alan Murphy, Rochester, New York, 1981
New York City, 1980
Barbara Floria, New York City, 1980
GEH TR510 N38
- Green, Jonathan. *American Photography: A Critical History 1945 to the Present*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1984.**
[textual references on pp. 93, 149 and 155; no images reproduced]
GEH TR23.G73
- Sobieszek, Robert. *Rochester: An American Center of Photography*. Rochester: GEH, 1984. Exhibition Catalogue.**
One image reproduced, page 21:
Rochester, New York, 1973
GEH TR646.R63 I555 R6
- 1985 **Lifson, Ben, ed. *Roger Martin*. Syracuse: Robert B. Menschel Photography Gallery, 1985. Exhibition Catalogue.**
Three images from Rochester's sesquicentennial reproduced:

Monroe Community Hospital; April 27, 1984
Historical Personae; John Noble/Jonathan Child, August 4, 1984
Terry and Adam Werth; Adams Basin, September 10, 1984
GEH library info files

**Turner, Peter, ed. *American Images: Photography 1945-1980*.
New York: Viking, 1985.**

Brief text and two images reproduced, page 186:
Michaela, Backyard, Rochester 1977
Backyard, Rochester, 1977
GEH TR 646.L55 B27 A4

**Giarracco, Janice. *Light Work: Photography over the '70s and '80s*.
Syracuse: Light Work, 1985. Exhibition Catalogue.**

One basketball hoop image page 55:
Rt #11 New York State, 1977
GEH TR645.S9 E83 L54

**Auer, Michel. *Photographers Encyclopaedia International 1839 to the
Present*. Geneva: Editions Camera Obscura, 1985.**

Extended biographical information, one image reproduced:
16 Upton Park, Rochester, New York
GEH REF TR 139 A93 1985

1986   ***50 Years of Modern Color Photography 1936-1986*. Cologne: Messe und
Ausstellungsges.m.b.h., 1986. Exhibition Catalogue**

1987   **Silverman, Ruth, ed. *Athletes: Photographs 1860-1986*. New York:
Knopf, 1987.**

Two images reproduced on pages 106 and 107:
Rochester, NY 1981 [woman seated with trophy]
Morrison, Illinois, 1978 [basketball hoop]
GEH TR821.A84

***American Dreams*. Ministerio De Cultura Direccion General De Bellas
Artes Y Archivos, Centro Nacional De Exposiciones, Spain 1987.
Exhibition Catalogue.**

- 1987 cont'd **Eauclaire, Sally, ed. *American Independents: Eighteen Color Photographers*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1987.**
 Essay about Mertin's sesquicentennial project and color work. Images from Rochester's sesquicentennial, pages 126-135:
Great Canal Caper, Genesee Valley Park, Rochester, NY, July 8, 1984
School #34, Rochester, New York, October 1984
Rochester, New York, September 1984
Rochester, New York, 1983
Rochester, New York, January 1984
School #23, Celebrate the Lake-Tall Ship Extravaganza, Rochester, New York, April 1984
Rochester, New York, April 28, 1984
City Jubilee, Rochester, New York, June 10, 1984
Historical Personae, Gail Sallome/Kate Fox, Carol Manes/Margaret Fox, Rochester, New York, 1984
School #39, Rochester, New York, June 1984
 GEH TR510 E28
- 1988 ***Display '84: Limited Edition Portfolio of 12 Photographs*. Rochester: Key River Press, 1988.**
 [images from Rochester sesquicentennial]
- Roger Mertin and Harry Orlyk: Contemporary Landscape Photographs and Paintings*. Rochester: Memorial Art Gallery, 1988.**
 Memorial Art Gallery archives
- 1989 ***Artist's Statement Photographs*. Rochester: Key River Press, 1989.**
 [Mertin published under the copyright name of Key River Press, so this essentially indicates artist books he self-published. I was unable to locate this particular book. -jm]
- Jonas, Susan, ed. *Ellis Island: Echoes from a Nation's Past*. New York: Aperture, 1989.**
 One image reproduced on page 119:
View: Looking Southwest, Ellis Island, Island 3, 1988
 GEH JV6483 .E44
- Recaption: Recontext*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Art Museum, 1989.**
- Cohen, Susie and William Johnson. "Interview with Roger Mertin, November 30 and December 3, 1989." *Rochester Film & Photo Consortium Info Update*, December 1989: 1-15.**
 No images reproduced, but lengthy interview by GEH staffers.

1991

Borcoman, James, ed. *Roger Mertin: O Tannenbaum*. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1991. Exhibition Catalogue.

Lengthy essay about Christmas tree series, with six images reproduced:

Ridgewood, New York 1979 [cover]

Park Avenue, Rochester, New York 29 Dec 1987

Highland Park Diner, Rochester, New York 24 Dec 1990

Beachcomber Lane, Indian River Shores, Florida 22 Dec 1988

Seager Street, Rochester, New York 19 Dec 1981

Hailey Idaho, 1976

GEH info files

***Hungry Mind Review*, no. 19 (Fall 1991).**

One image reproduced, page 50:

University of Rochester, Rochester, New York [chalk marks on Wilson Commons during Desert Storm]

Visual Studies Workshop / Mertin artist file

Freidus, Marc, ed. *Typologies: Nine Contemporary Photographers*. Newport Beach: Newport Harbor Art Museum, 1991.

[essay by Rod Slemmons discusses Christmas tree series]

Six separate images from tree series, each with same title:

Poughkeepsie, New York, 1977

Three images from Christmas tree series:

New York City from Die Tannenbaumserie, 1983

New York from Die Tannenbaumserie, 1983

New York from Die Tannenbaumserie, 1984.

GEH TR646.N47 N48 T96

***Living Evidence: Lynne Cohen and Roger Mertin*. North Vancouver: Presentation House Gallery, 1991. Exhibition Catalogue.**

Four images from Christmas tree series:

Ridgewood, NY 1979

Rochester, NY 1981, Seager Street

Rochester, NY, 1981, Rutgers Street

Rochester, NY, 1979, 451 Park Ave.

GEH TR646.C22 N66 1991

1992

Foresta, Merry A. et. al., eds. *Between Home and Heaven: Contemporary American Landscape Photography*. Washington DC: Smithsonian American Art Museum in association with University of New Mexico Press, 1992.

Two images reproduced:

Liberty Island; Centennial Observation, October 28, 1986

View Looking Southwest, Ellis Island #3, 1988

GEH TR646.W28 N26 B48

[Many of the images from this book were also published in bound postcard form, *Between Home and Heave: Contemporary American Landscape Photography Postcards*. This was a promotional product and will probably not be found in libraries. Mertin's 1986 image listed above was included. George Morrison at the U of R has a complete copy in his office in Wilson Commons.]

- 1993 **Borcoman, James. *Magicians of Light: Photographs from the Collection of the National Gallery of Canada*. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1993. Exhibition Catalogue.**

One image: *Vancouver Public Library, Joe Fortes Westend Branch 1989*.

Full page of text describes the image and mentions Mertin's work with color, page 244.

GEH TR650.N286

- 1996 ***Contact Sheet 89. Syracuse: Light Work, 1996.***

[contains essay by George Slade discussing Mertin's library project]

Eight images reproduced:

Taylors Falls, Minnesota, 21 August 1993

Lackawanna, New York, August 1991, Carnegie Library Grant 1917

Solvay, New York, 20 September 1991, Carnegie Library Grant 1903

Taylors Falls, Minnesota, 5 March 1994

Zumbrota, Minnesota, 17 May 1994, Carnegie Library Grant 1906

Turners Falls, Massachusetts, 10 June 1991, Carnegie Library Grant 1903

Bayfield, Wisconsin, 11 August 1993, Carnegie Library Grant 1903

Bayfield, Wisconsin, 11 August 1993, Carnegie Library Grant 1903

GEH periodicals

pARTS Journal 2, no. 1 (March 1996).

- 1997 **Virga, Vincent, ed. *Eyes of the Nation: A Visual History of the United States*. New York: Library of Congress/Knopf, 1997.**

One image reproduced, page 330:

Wilson Commons, East Façade, Rochester, New York, April 30, 1991

[wall on campus where students had made chalk marks for each Iraqi citizen who died during Gulf War]

U of R Art Library E178.5 V57 1997

- 1998 ***Contact Sheet 97. Syracuse: Light Work, 1998.***

One image reproduced, page 38:

The Bakken Library and Museum, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1992.

GEH periodicals

Hungry Mind Review, no. 48 (Winter 1998-99).

Image reproduced, page 16:

Canada Day, By Ward Market, Ottawa, 1988 [radishes in open air market]
Visual Studies Workshop Mertin artist file

2000

Emerson, Stephanie, ed. *The Social Scene: The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation Photography Collection at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles*. Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2000.

Slade, George, ed. *1999 Photography Fellows: Work from the University of Minnesota/McKnight Foundation Artist Fellowships for Photographers Program*. St. Paul: University of Minnesota/McKnight Foundation, 2000.

JOHN SIMON GUGGENHEIM MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

90 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 10016

(212) 687-4470 - abernard@gf.org

ANDRÉ BERNARD
Vice President and Secretary

Adam Ryan
699 Park Avenue
Apt. 8
Rochester NY 14607

Dear Mr. Ryan:

Having had a letter from Ruth Meyer, administrator for the estate of Roger Mertin, granting you permission to see his successful application in the 1974 Guggenheim Fellowship competition, I can now send you a copy of it.

There are two separate entities here. One is the application itself. I have omitted only the letters of reference that came in to the Foundation. Because the application is less than fifty years old, I cannot release those letters, even with the permission of the letter writers. Otherwise, the application is complete.

The second is his report to the Foundation of what he accomplished during his Fellowship period. A very general report, usually one page in length, is required by the Foundation to satisfy IRS regulations governing not-for-profit entities. You will see here Mr. Mertin's one-page statement as well as a brief general statement of his expenditures.

I hope this material is useful to you. Please let me know when you receive it.

Best regards,

August 9, 2012

Cc: Ruth Meyer

JOHN SIMON GUGGENHEIM MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

RECEIVED

ACKNOWLEDGED 90 Park Avenue · New York, N.Y. 10016

OCT 1 1973

APPLICATIONS and accompanying documents should reach the office of the Foundation not later than the date specified in our announcement.

JOHN SIMON GUGGENHEIM
MEMORIAL FUND

Name in full (give initials) Roger MERTIN
Preferred mailing address 72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York Zip Code 14607 Telephone (716) 546-4323

Home address (if other than above) Same as above
Zip Code _____ Telephone _____

Title of present position (include name of institution, if any) Instructor, Part-Time, University of Rochester, Partner: The Walrus, a technical firm specializing in slide production.

State the specific field of scholarship or art in which your proposal lies	<u>Photography</u>
State concisely the title of your project	<u>The Continuing Photographic Documentation of Trees</u>
State where you intend to carry out your proposed plan	<u>Northeastern United States</u>
Specify the inclusive dates of the period for which you are requesting a Fellowship	<u>June 1, 1974 to May 31, 1975</u>

Place of birth Bridgeport, Conn. Date of birth December 9, 1943 Sex M

Citizenship U.S. If not a native-born citizen, give date and place of naturalization: _____

Marital status Separated Number and ages of children ---

Name and address of spouse or nearest kin Mr. George Mertin
39 Longview Terrace, Trumbull, Conn.

Social Security number (if U.S. citizen or resident) 048-32-1176

Educational Summary	Name of Institution	Period of Study (give dates)	Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates (give dates)
Academic: Undergraduate	<u>University of Bridgeport</u>	<u>1960-61</u>	<u>---</u>
	<u>Rochester Institute of Tech.</u>	<u>1961-65</u>	<u>B.F.A. 1965</u>
Graduate	<u>State University of New York at Buffalo</u>	<u>1969-1972</u>	<u>M.F.A. 1972</u>
Other: (Artistic, Musical, etc. where pertinent)			

List the foreign languages that you can use, indicating your proficiency in reading, speaking, and writing each:.....

List the professional organizations of which you are a member..... Society for Photographic Education

List the positions that you have held (professional, teaching, administrative, and business), beginning with your current position and working backwards.

Name of Institution or Organization	Position (Full Title)	Dates of Tenure	Compensation
University of Rochester The Walrus	Instructor, (Part-Time) Partner	1973 1969 to Present	\$6,000 ⁻ Average Annual 2,000 ⁻
University of New Mexico	Visiting Assistant Professor of Art	Fall, 1972	\$6,500 ⁻
Rochester Institute of Technology	Adjunct Faculty	1969-1972	\$1,200 ⁻

REFERENCES:

List the names of four persons to whom the Foundation may write for expert judgment concerning your abilities, especially in relation to your proposal for the use of a Fellowship. (All statements by references to the Foundation are held in the strictest confidence.)

64 Name of Reference	Position (Full Title)	Address
Mr. James Borcoman ^{MR} 5	Curator of Photography Nat'l. Gallery of Canada	Ottawa 2, Canada
Mr. Nathan Lyons 4	Director, Visual Studies Workshop	4 Elton Street Rochester, N.Y. 14607
Mr. John Szarkowski F 2	Director, Department of Museum of Modern Art	11 West 53rd St., New York, NY 10019
Mr. Aaron Siskind F 3	Photographer	61 Keene St., Providence, R.I. 02906

If you have applied or expect to apply elsewhere for any fellowship or scholarship for the same period, state the facts regarding such applications:..... Creative Artists Public Service Program of the
State of New York

If you apply elsewhere for any fellowship or scholarship after presenting this application, please notify the Foundation immediately.

You are advised that, in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Tax Reform Act of 1969, each successful applicant for a Fellowship will be required to agree, as a condition of his award, to submit at the conclusion of his term a report on what he has accomplished and an accounting for the funds he has received.

SIGNATURE.....

PLACE AND DATE OF MAILING.....

Roger Martin
Rochester, New York

September 26, 1973

If you move after filing this application, please notify the Foundation of your new address.

Roger Mertin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

- 1963   Became seriously interested in photography while a sophomore at Rochester Institute of Technology. Actively sought out and studied with Nathan Lyons (workshops 1963-64; 1965-66) and Minor White, 1963.
- 1965   Awarded Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Photography from Rochester Institute of Technology.
- 1966   One man exhibition at George Eastman House.
- 1967   Head of Reproduction Center at George Eastman House. Represented in the exhibition Photography in the Twentieth Century.
- 1968-69   Assistant Curator of Extension Activities at George Eastman House.
- 1969   Founded, with Michael Becotte, the Walrus, a technical firm specializing in slide production of original photographs. "Plastic Love-Dream" exhibited at University of California at Davis.
- 1969-70   Graduate teaching assistant in photography at State University of New York at Buffalo.
- 1971   Taught photography workshops at Penland School of Crafts, Penland, North Carolina, and Center-Of-The-Eye, Aspen, Colorado. Participant, National Endowment for the Arts and Penland School of Crafts, Conference on the Arts. Began photographing trees.
- 1972   Awarded Master of Fine Arts degree from State University of New York at Buffalo, program in Photographic Studies at Visual Studies Workshop. Taught intermediate photography at San Francisco Art Institute.
- 1972   Visiting Assistant Professor of Art at University of New Mexico.
- 1973   One man exhibition at Light Gallery, New York City. Instructor in photography at University of Rochester.

Roger Martin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

PHOTOGRAPHS PUBLISHED:

PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, Horizon Press, in
collaboration with George Eastman House, 1967
PHOTOGRAPHY, U.S.A., DeCordova Museum, 1968
FORM, "New American Photography; The Authentic Vision," by
Mike Weaver, March, 1968
PHOTOGRAPHY 1968, Lexington Camera Club
VISION AND EXPRESSION, Horizon Press in collaboration with
George Eastman House, 1969
PLASTIC LOVE-DREAM, University of California, Davis, 1969
CAMERA, September, 1969
THE PHOTOGRAPH AS OBJECT: 1845-1969, National Gallery of
Canada, 1969
ALBUM, March and August, 1970
THE PRINT, Life Library of Photography, Time-Life Books, 1970
SAN FRANCISCO CAMERA, 1970
VIEW ON NUDES, Focal Press, 1971
PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAITS, Moore College of Art, 1972
FIFTEEN PHOTOGRAPHERS, Pensacola Junior College, 1972
BULLETIN, Number 5-6, The University of New Mexico, University
Art Museum, 1973

Roger Martin
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Rochester, New York 14607

ONE-MAN EXHIBITIONS:

1965	Rochester Institute of Technology
1966	George Eastman House, Rochester, New York
1969	University of California at Davis Moore College of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
1970	Haystack School of Crafts, Deer Isle, Maine "Plastic Love-Dream," Do Not Bend Gallery, London, England (Circulated in England) Center-of-the Eye, Aspen, Colorado
1971	"4-Couples," Center-of-the-Eye
1972	"Photographs, August 9-September 12, 1971," Toronto Gallery of Photography, Toronto, Canada "23 Couples," Riverside Studio 2, Rochester, New York "23 Couples," San Francisco Art Institute
1973	Light Gallery, New York City

Roger Martin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

GROUP EXHIBITIONS:

- 1965 "Photography '65," New York State Exposition,
Eastman House Riverside Studio, Rochester, N.Y.
- 1966 School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Illinois Institute of Technology
"Seeing Photographically," Eastman House
- 1967 "Contemporary Photographers IV," an Eastman House
traveling exhibition
"Photography in the Twentieth Century," a traveling
exhibition first shown at the National Gallery of
Canada; circulated in Canada by the National Gallery
and by the Eastman House in the United States
Riverside Studio
Underground Gallery, New York City
Westbank Gallery, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- 1968 "Photography USA," DeCordova Museum, Lincoln, Mass.
"Photography 1968," Lexington Camera Club, Lexington,
Kentucky
"Light 7," Massachusetts Institute of Technology,
(circulated)
- 1969 Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida
"Photographers for Collectors," Museum of Modern
Art, New York City
"Recent Acquisitions, 1969," Pasadena Art Museum,
California
Rhode Island Arts Festival, Providence, Rhode Island
Rochester Institute of Technology
Illinois Institute of Technology
Riverside Studio 2
State University of New York at Buffalo, Interim
Campus
"The Photograph as Object: 1843-1969," a traveling
exhibition prepared by the Art Gallery of Ontario
and the National Gallery of Canada.
"Vision and Expression," an Eastman House traveling
exhibition
- 1970 "Photographs for Sale," Visual Studies Workshop and
eight cooperating galleries
"Photography: New Acquisitions," Museum of Modern
Art, New York City
"The Found Photograph," Visual Studies Workshop,
Rochester, New York
"Be-ing Without Clothes," Massachusetts Institute of
Technology, circulating
Latent Image, Houston, Texas
Riverside Studio 2

1971 Putnam Street Gallery, Athens, Ohio
 "Figure in Landscape," an Eastman House traveling
 exhibition
 Rochester Institute of Technology
 Museum of Modern Art
 Inaugural Exhibition, Light Gallery, New York City
 "Photomedia USA," San Diego State College
 Art Institute of Chicago

1972 "Fifteen Photographers," Pensacola Junior College,
 Pensacola, Florida
 "Photographic Portraits," Moore College of Art,
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
 "Invitational Photographers Exhibition," Nova Scotia
 College of Art and Design
 "Contemporary Photography," Sheldon Memorial Art
 Gallery, Lincoln, Nebraska
 The University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
 Quiveria College, Albuquerque, New Mexico

1973 "Dog Show," International Museum of Photography at
 George Eastman House
 Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida
 Rochester Institute of Technology.

Roger Mertin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

COLLECTIONS:

Art Institute of Chicago
Center-of-the-Eye
George Eastman House
Lincoln Rochester Trust Company
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Minneapolis Institute of Art
Museum of Modern Art
National Gallery of Canada
Pasadena Art Museum
Ryerson Polytechnical Institute
Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, University of Nebraska
University of New Mexico
Visual Studies Workshop
Baltimore Museum of Art

Roger Mertin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

The Continuing Photographic Documentation of Trees

It is my intention to investigate, through photographic activity, aspects of man's relation to trees.

My major concerns are threefold.

1. Trees in a transitional landscape.
2. The establishment and evolution of a concept of portrait as it might relate to trees.
3. The introduction of artificial light and it's relation to existing light in the above-mentioned areas of investigation.

RECEIVED

FEB 19 '74

February 14, 1974

JOHN SIMON GUGGENHEIM
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation
90 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Gentlemen:

This is to inform you that I have been awarded funding in the amount of \$ 2,400.00 from the Creative Artists Public Service Program (CAPS) of The State of New York for a project proposal similar in concept to that stated in my Guggenheim application. The proposals differ in that the CAPS project is a much abbreviated version of the one put forth for the Guggenheim Fellowship.

In light of this information I respectfully request that full consideration be given my application for a Guggenheim Fellowship.

Sincerely yours,

Roger Mertin

Roger Mertin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

7/10 folder
Ap 27 8
file

April 2, 1974

MEMORANDUM TO APPLICANTS

The examples of your work which you submitted in support of your application are now being returned to you under separate cover.

When you have received them, please return the enclosed receipt for our records.

Stephen L. Schlesinger
Associate Secretary

Mr. Roger Martin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

MERTIN, ROGER

JOHN SIMON GUGGENHEIM

MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

90 PARK AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016

April 9, 1974

DATE

I acknowledge receipt ^{as noted} ~~in book order~~ of all material
submitted by me to the John Simon Guggenheim
Memorial Foundation.

Roger Martin

SIGNATURE

JOHN SIMON GUGGENHEIM MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

90 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016

TELEPHONE: MURRAY HILL 7-4470

CABLE ADDRESS: GUGMEMORA

APPLICANT'S NAME: Roger Martin

ADDRESS: 72 North Union Street; Rochester, New York 14607

ADDRESS TO WHICH WORKS SHOULD BE RETURNED:

Same as above

ITEMS SUBMITTED

negative

- #
- *1. 73.34.14; Rochester, N.Y. 1973
2. 73.52.26; Stratford, Ct. 1973
3. 73.33.23A; Rochester, N.Y. 1973
4. 73.32.21; " " "
5. 73.31.29 " " "
6. 73.32.10 " " "
7. 73.21.15A; Trumbull, Ct. 1973
8. 73.32.33; Rochester, N.Y. 1973
9. 73.31.21 " " "
10. 73.30.35A; Seneca Lake, N.Y. 1973
- 11. 73.34.27A; Rochester, N.Y. 1973
12. 73.34.31A " " "
13. 73.7.32; " " "
14. 73.11.28; Toronto, Canada 1973
15. 73.13.15A; Rochester, N.Y. 1973
16. 73.51.17; Route #17, N.Y. 1973
17. 73.14.22; Rochester, N.Y. 1973
18. 73.45.33; " " "
19. 73.45.2; " " "
- ✓ 20. 73.66.5; Penland, North Carolina 1973

Orange box
+
Jacking crate

December 14, 1973

MEMORANDUM TO PHOTOGRAPHERS

To enable the Foundation's advisors to give fuller consideration to their applications, applicants in photography may wish to present a selection of their photographs for review. Please edit your portfolio carefully and submit not more than twenty prints which in your opinion best represent the quality of your work. Recent photographs are, in general, the most pertinent. There is no need to mount each print; in fact, we prefer to receive unmounted prints.

Photographs must be accompanied by the enclosed form and should be delivered or mailed to the Foundation at 90 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016, to arrive by January 28. Please date each photograph and label it with your name.

Submissions will be returned, as soon as possible, subject to the following: Everything is submitted at your own risk and expense, exclusive of return mailing charges which will be paid by the Foundation. Although we take every reasonable care of all work received, the Foundation receives all materials on the understanding that it is not responsible for their accidental loss or damage from fire or any other cause while in its charge or in the course of transmission.

Stephen L. Schlesinger
Secretary

Mr. Roger Martin
72 North Union St.
Rochester, N. Y. 14607

SUGGESTED FORM OF ESTIMATED BUDGET FOR PERIOD OF FELLOWSHIP

MAR 1 1974

Period for which Fellowship is requested: 12 months
 Contemplated period of Fellowship: From October 1, 1974
 To September 30, 1975 **
 Place or places where you plan to carry on your proposed studies:
Northeast United States and Eastern Canada

ESTIMATED EXPENSES:

Expenses of travel incident to Fellowship grant:
 Transportation for yourself.....\$ 1,350.00
 Transportation for your family, if any.....\$ -
 Meals and lodging while traveling for yourself.....\$ 2,400.00
 Research incident to Fellowship grant.....\$ -
 Clerical help incident to Fellowship grant.....\$ -
 Equipment incident to Fellowship grant.....\$ 650.00
 Total.....\$ 4,400.00

Estimated other expenses:
 Living expenses ~~for yourself and family, if any~~.....\$ 4,400.00
 Other expenses.....Materials (Film, Paper & Chemistry).....\$ 1,200.00
 .....\$ -
 Total.....\$ 5,600.00
 Total Estimated Expenses.....\$ 10,000.00

ESTIMATED RESOURCES:

Sabbatical, or other leave, salary.....\$ -
 Other income.....\$ 2,000.00
 Sum requested as Guggenheim Fellowship grant.....\$ 8,000.00
 Total Estimated Resources.....\$ 10,000.00

Post-doctoral Fellowships held since January 1, 1954:

Total number of months: none

Have you pending an application for another grant or scholarship or fellowship for the same or similar studies and period as your application to us?
 If so--or if you have received another award--please write us any facts which seem to you to be relevant. see enclosure

Signature Roger Martin Social Security No. 048 32 1176
 Home Address 72 North Union Street, Rochester, New York
 Zip Code 14607

Single, Married, Widowed, Divorced: Separated
 Ages of children, if any: no children
 Current annual salary (S): 7,800.00 or earnings (E): 2,500.00
 Title of present position: part-time instructor
 Institution: University of Rochester and Rochester Institute of Technology

JOHN SIMON GUGGENHEIM MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

90 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

FEB 21 1974

The Committee of Selection has expressed strong interest in your application and requests that we now secure specific details concerning your proposed Fellowship studies.

I ask that you return at your earliest convenience an initialed copy of our statement concerning your proposed studies, or an amended version should you find our statement inaccurate.

I shall also need to have financial details for our final decisions. You will find enclosed an estimated budget form. Please complete and return one copy of the form and retain the other for your files. The form is designed to meet provisions of the Internal Revenue Code with respect to the tax liability of fellowship grants. It is essential that all lines pertinent to your proposed fellowship period be completed in order that the document may be self-contained and self-explanatory.

Individual tax liability of fellowship grants is determined by Section 117 of the Internal Revenue Code. By its provisions, holders of fellowships are entitled to exclude from taxable income \$300 per month for the period of their fellowship studies up to a lifetime maximum of 36 months. Further, they are not liable for tax upon amounts in excess of \$300 per month if such amounts satisfy two requirements: (a) that such sums are specifically designated by the funding agency for expenses incident to the proposed fellowship; (b) that such sums are actually expended for these purposes. Thus the estimated expenses incident to the fellowship listed on the budget form provide the basis on which the Foundation formally designates funds for that purpose in the event of a Fellowship award.

Please note that the section pertaining to Estimated Expenses is divided into two parts. One part concerns estimates of expenses incident to your proposed fellowship studies. This part includes an excludible item for the expenses of your own meals and lodging while traveling--that is, while you are living away from your normal residence. The expenses of your travel and the travel of your family, if they accompany you, also are excludible. Such expenses for one's family include only the cost of transportation, air passage, etc., but not their living expenses. That is why the second section of Expenses on the form includes an item for your family's living expenses, whether or not they accompany you on your travels. The two are separate items and should be estimated separately in the proper sections of the budget form under Expenses. If the excludible items in the language of the statute do not seem to apply in particular cases, you may call upon us to provide what clarification we can.

Fulbright appointments, sabbatical-leave salary, and grants-in-aid may be held concurrently with Guggenheim Fellowship grants; other fellowships or scholarships, as distinct from grants-in-aid, may not. Hence, if you are awarded both a Guggenheim Fellowship and another fellowship or scholarship for the same period, you will have to choose between the two.

I need your response as soon as you possibly can send it.

GORDON N. RAY
President

Mr. Roger Martin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

March 29, 1974

Mr. Roger Mertin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

Dear Mr. Mertin:

I have the honor to inform you that the Foundation has awarded you the Fellowship which you requested. Your grant is recorded in the Minutes of the Board of Trustees as follows:

Photography.
Twelve months from October 1974.
Eight thousand dollars (\$8,000).

Will you please send me at your earliest convenience a note acknowledging your Fellowship and a signed copy of the accompanying memorandum?

With all good wishes.

Sincerely yours,

SLS:mj

S L S

RECEIVED

APR 10 1974

JOHN SIMON GUGGENHEIM
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

April 8, 1974

Mr. Stephen L. Schlesinger, Secretary
John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation
90 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10019

Dear Mr. Schlesinger:

In reply to your letter of March 29, 1974 I wish to
acknowledge my appointment to a Guggenheim Fellowship.
It is an honor to have one's work so recognized.

I am enclosing a signed copy of the memorandum you requested.

Sincerely yours,

Roger Martin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

April 10, 1974

Mr. Roger Martin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

Dear Mr. Martin:

Thank you for your letter of April 4. We are pleased to welcome you to the company of Guggenheim Fellows.

We shall shortly send you a memorandum on the relation of your Guggenheim grant to Federal income tax provisions, together with information concerning our payment procedures.

With all good wishes.

Sincerely yours,

Stephen L. Schlesinger
Secretary

SLS:mj

Roger Martin

APR 10 1974

MEMORANDUM TO RECIPIENTS OF GUGGENHEIM FELLOWSHIPS

The Federal Tax Reform Act of 1969 imposes on private foundations and their managers potentially heavy penalties for making grants to individuals unless such grants meet certain requirements.

To avoid such penalties under the terms of this new law, grants for travel, study, or other similar purposes must be awarded on an objective and nondiscriminatory basis, in accordance with a procedure approved by the Internal Revenue Service. In addition, the Service must be satisfied that their purpose is "to achieve a specific objective, produce a report or other similar product, or improve or enhance the literary, artistic, musical, scientific, teaching, or other similar capacity, skill, or talent of the grantee."

We have been formally advised by the Internal Revenue Service that the procedures followed by the Foundation in making its grants comply with the law. To establish that our grants are used for the purposes intended and to fulfill the requirements of Federal regulations, the Foundation must require each Fellowship recipient to submit a statement showing concisely how his or her period as a Fellow was spent in accomplishing one or more of the purposes stated above together with an accounting for the funds he or she has received. We ask you, therefore, as a condition of the award of your Fellowship, to sign the undertaking below.

* * * *

I agree to send you at the conclusion of my fellowship term a statement showing that my grant was used to accomplish one or more of the following purposes: to achieve a specific objective, produce a report or other similar product, or improve or enhance my literary, artistic, musical, scientific, teaching, or other similar capacity, skill, or talent, and an accounting for the funds I have received.

Roger Martin
Name

April 8, 1974
Date

RECEIVED

12 1974

JOHN SIMON GUGGENHEIM
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

January 12, 1976

RECEIVED

JAN 13 '76

Mr. Gordon N. Ray
President
John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation
90 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10016

JOHN SIMON GUGGENHEIM
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

Dear Mr. Ray:

The purpose of this letter is to indicate to you in a broad and general way the very substantial artistic and professional growth I have experienced during, and as a result of my term as a Guggenheim Fellow in Photography.

As a practicing photographer the time afforded to me during my appointment in addition to funding for travel, equipment and materials has allowed me to further develop a body of work photographically documenting trees in the United States. This was primarily accomplished during my twelve month term by traveling over 20,000 miles in which close to 10,000 negatives were produced. Presently, I am printing from these negatives.

The amount of work reflected above has allowed me to refine and clarify my function as a photographer. Additionally, time I was able to devote to the research of contemporary photography during my travels has allowed me to enhance my skills as an instructor of the practice of photography at University teaching levels.

A brief statement of how my Fellowship funding was expended is included on page two.

With best regards,

Roger Martin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation
90 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Statement of funds expended during my appointment as a
Guggenheim Fellow for Photography:

1. Living expenses; \$ 300.00 per month for twelve months		\$ 3,600.00
2. Incidental expenses incurred;		
A. Travel	\$ 1817.10	
B. Materials and supplies	1314.00	
C. Research material	265.00	
D. Equipment	1003.90	
	\$ 4,400.00	4,400.00
		\$ 8,000.00

Submitted January 12, 1976;

Roger Martin

Roger Martin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

5

RFA ✓ ✓

✓

January 13, 1976

Mr. Roger Mertin
72 North Union Street
Rochester, New York 14607

Dear Mr. Mertin:

Thanks for your report of January 12 on your term as
a Guggenheim Fellow.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon N. Ray
President

gnr:ft

IHRIG INVENTORY

BOX (i.e., ENCLOSURE) LEVEL INVENTORY OF ROGER MERTIN'S PHOTOGRAPHY AT 56 ARUNDEL STREET, SAINT PAUL, MN.

In late 2001, I made a list of Roger's work in our St. Paul home for estate purposes and I've updated it a few times since then, as other things turned up or shifted position as a result of the posthumous pARTs show in 2001 and my working on a partial prints inventory from 2003-2006. The few glitches in numbering that appear arose as I worked more closely with these materials over the past five years, but those glitches are pointed out and explained in the text. The most recent additions and update took place as staff from Eastman House and I packed these items for shipment to Rochester on June 6, 2006. The version here lists all the items from 56 Arundel trucked to Rochester.

There are three "series" in this inventory: "N" (negatives, etc.), "P" (prints, etc.) and "F" (framed pictures). The labels on the boxes themselves contain one of these three letters. In this way, the works that Roger brought to our St. Paul home from Rochester in the late 1990s, or the work he generated and kept here, are distinguished from the work he left in Rochester and that remained there at the time of his death. His sister, Ruth Meyer, gathered and transported the Rochester material to Stratford, CT in 2001; in April 2002, she transported it to Minneapolis, where it was stored in the vault at Thomas Barry Fine Arts. The labeling on the boxes from the Barry vault do not contain any letters, so they may be distinguished in that way from the St. Paul items.

I worked on making an inventory of images, beginning in 2003, and managed to make rough, annotated lists of the contents of about half the prints boxes at our home, necessarily focusing on those from the time Roger and I lived together, or from the few years before we met, but with which I gained some familiarity in our life together. They are only rough lists, but may be useful when proper cataloguing is undertaken on the collection. On this box-level inventory I've indicated by a note those boxes for which a print inventory exists --- Elizabeth Ihrig, June 8, 2006.

Italics indicate the actual words of the labels, mostly in Roger Martin's (RM) hand or punched in tape by him; labels provided by me (EI) are usually so noted.

"N" Series: negatives, negatives filed with contact sheets, slides. In 3-ring binders or boxes:

1. Blue binder, 11 x 12 x 2", no label. Contains b/w contact sheets and b/w negatives; format: 120. Subjects: libraries, friends. Dates: 1996-1998.
2. Red binder, 11 x 12 x 3", no label. Contains mostly color negatives and contact sheets (some b/w of both); format: 35mm. Subjects: includes home and travel pictures. Dates: 1993-1996. Some of the holders have dates.
3. Maroon binder, 11 x 12 x 2", no label. Contains b/w and color slides in slide holder sheets, most of them unlabelled. Subjects: includes exhibit installations, domestic,

University of Rochester, vacations, libraries, trees, portraits and more. Dates: 1990s

4. 11.5 x 11.5 x 3" binder. Labelled on spine: *June 1998* [i.e., beginning date]. Contains color contact prints and negatives, 120 format, 46 poly holders of prints and 48 poly holders of negatives. The negatives pages are labeled in RM's hand with date, subject and file number; several bear post-it notes in RM's hand.
5. 11.5 x 11.5 x 3" binder. Labelled on spine: *Nov. 1998* [i.e., beginning date]. Contains 31 holders of contact prints sheets and 31 of negatives. 120 format. The negatives pages are labeled in RM's hand with date, subject and file number; several of them bear post-it notes in RM's hand.
6. 11.5 x 11.5 x 3" binder. Labelled on spine: *1 May '99* [i.e., beginning date]. Contains 35 holders of contact sheet prints and 35 of negatives. 120 format. The negatives pages are labeled in RM's hand with date, subject and file number; several of them bear post-it notes in RM's hand.
7. 11.5 x 11.5 x 3" binder. Labelled on spine: *Aug. 1999* [i.e., beginning date]. Contains 32 holders of contact sheet prints and 32 of negatives. 120 format. The negatives pages are labeled in RM's hand with date, subject and file number; several of them bear post-it notes in RM's hand.
8. 11.5 x 11.5 x 3" binder. Labelled on spine: *1.1.00* [i.e., beginning date]. Contains 44 holders of contact sheet prints and 43 of negatives. 120 format. The negatives pages are labeled in RM's hand with date, subject and file number; several of them bear post-it notes in RM's hand.
9. 11.5 x 11.5 x 3" binder. Labelled on spine: *Canada 1996-Nov. 1999*. Contains 5 holders of contact sheet prints and 5 of negatives, followed by 20 holders of contact sheet prints and 20 of negatives, followed by 11 holders of contact sheet prints and 11 of negatives, followed by 4 holders of contact sheet prints and 4 of negatives. 120 format. The negatives pages are labeled in RM's hand with date, subject and file number; several of them bear post-it notes in RM's hand.
10. 11.5 x 11.5 x 3" binder. Labelled on spine: *15 JUL '00* [i.e., beginning date]. Contains 50 holders of contact sheet prints and 50 of negatives. 120 format. The negatives pages are labeled in RM's hand with date, subject and file number; several of them bear post-it notes in RM's handwriting. Later note: Negative sheets # 1514, 1515, 1518, and part of 1521 (Biedermann Project) were removed in 2002 and given to the Weisman Museum (U. of M.), part of a contractual arrangement between Rog and the Weisman.
11. 11.5 x 11.5 x 3" binder. Labelled on spine: *Ontario 2000-2001*. Contains 7 holders of contact sheet prints and 7 of negatives, followed by 14 holders of contact sheet prints and 14 of negatives. 120 format. The negatives pages are labeled in RM's hand with date, subject and file number; several of them bear post-it notes in RM's hand.
12. 11.5 x 10 x 1.25" binder. Unlabelled on spine. Contains 19 negative holders. Holders are labeled with RM's name, our home address and telephone no. No date, subject, or file number. Post-it notes in RM's hand (usually pencil) and another hand (usually ball-point). [I think this is RM's current work file, containing projects pending or just finished when he died.]

13. Blue cloth binder. Includes contact sheets and negatives of Thanksgiving 1995 and winter 1996, among other subjects.
14. Green binder, 10.5 x 12.5 x 1.5", labelled on spine: *Slides T.S.* Slides of trees and decorated Christmas trees, color and b/w. Pre-1991.
15. Green binder, 10.5 x 12.5 x 1.5", labelled on spine: *SLIDES*. With RM notes inside. Slides pre-1999 from original finished works, and original 35 mm transparencies, and library project after 1995.
16. Green binder, 10.5 x 12.5 x 1.5", labelled on spine: *SLIDES No. 2*. With RM notes. Includes grant application slides; many notes; labels on slides. 1990's.
17. Green binder, 10.5 x 12.5 x 1.5", labelled on spine: 7-99. Slides with RM notes, identifications, classifications. Mostly mid-late 90's, installation pictures (MIA, Nash Gallery, etc.)
18. 9 x 11 x 6" flip top box, labelled by RM: *Portraits Liberty Variations Ellis Island Foreman Gallery Hartwick College 7 Jan-5Feb '94*. Contains 8x10 color negatives in clear interleaving files, a few of them also enclosed in opaque balanced seam envelopes, with further labelling in RM's hand. Full.
19. 12x15x3" grey flat box labelled by RM: *Tree Stories '70>'76: 35 mm negatives 1993 + collection*. Mixed formats: Contains color prints, 35 mm negatives (b/w and color); 35 mm contact sheets (mostly color); color slides; 11x14" b/w prints of trees and two 11x14" color prints of piers, [in, I think, San Diego(?)]. Subjects (in addition to the trees of label) include libraries, homelife & friends ca 1993. **There are a lot of prints in this box, it could just as well have been listed in the prints section of the inventory.**
20. 7x15x2", metal box. Contains slides filed upright, most recent looks to be ca. 1980. All are labelled.
21. Flip-top box (Light Impressions, metal-edged, acid- and lignin-free light tan), 8-5/8 x 10.5 x 5.5". Labelled in RM's hand: *Minnesota '91 1992; Libraries '92-early '93; finals '93-94; Tannenbaumserie 1 Jan. '92; Finals: 1998, 99, 00*. Contains 8 x 10 negatives, housed in Light Impressions 3-mil, clear interleaving folders first, then in L.I.'s balanced seam opaque envelopes. Most of these negatives are individually labeled on the outer opaque envelopes. By my count, 141 negatives.(not double-checked).
22. Flip-top box (Light Impressions, metal-edged, acid- and lignin-free light tan), 8-5/8 x 10.5 x 5.5". Labelled in RM's hand: *Negatives: Library Project; Minnesota 1993-Colorado 1994; >1998; Arrowhead 1998*. Contains 8 x 10 negatives, housed in Light Impressions 3-mil, clear interleaving folders first, then in L.I.'s balanced seam opaque envelopes. The negatives are grouped, with sheets of paper wrapped around each group like a band, and labeled in RM's hand.
23. Flip-top box (Light Impressions, metal-edged, acid- and lignin-free light tan), 8-5/8 x 10.5 x 5.5". Labelled in RM's hand: *Libraries 1989-1991; Athenaeum Exhibition; LaJolla Spring 1993*. Contains 8x10 negatives housed in Light Impressions 3-mil, clear interleaving folders first, then in L.I.'s balanced seam opaque envelopes. Many of these individually labeled by RM on the opaque envelopes.
24. Flip-top box (Light Impressions, metal-edged, acid- and lignin-free light tan), 8-5/8 x 10.5 x 5.5". Labelled in RM's hand: *Tree Stories; Select negatives 1986-96*. Contains

- 8x10 negatives housed in Light Impressions 3-mil, clear interleaving folders first, then in L.I.'s balanced seam opaque envelopes. (more "Select" than "Trees")
25. Kodak film box with post-it note: *Sharon Edwards* (this is the name of a printer at the Photolab Imaging Corp. in Golden Valley, MN, with whom Rog was working). Contains 8x10 negatives and contact prints. Subject: correspondence between Roger and Sharon; McKnight Show 1999 (shown August 2000) installation pictures. **Combined with Box 26.**
  26. **Combined with Box 25 (called 25-26; i.e., there is just one box for 25-26).** Kodak film box, with post-it note: Seven negatives to Sharon at Photolab Imaging Thursday Sept. 7th [2000]. [However, there are only 2 negs inside]. 8x10 McKnight installation shots.
  27. Fujicolor film box, 9 x 11 x 1.75", labelled on box in RM hand: *Photolab Imaging*. Contains mostly color 8x10 negatives, a few prints.
  28. Kodak film box, 10.5 x 12.5 x 1", labelled by EI: *Library contact prints and negatives, 8x10, color, 1990s*.
  29. Quill banker's box labelled by EI, listing contents: *Domestic life, St. Paul, 1997-1998; Rochester 1998*. Negatives (labelled) and slides (labelled)
  30. Black binder, 11.25 x 11.5 x 3", labelled on outside, dymo type: 1996. Labelled on inside: *31 May 1997 1996*. Contains about 125 poly holder sheets of mostly 120 format negatives (a few 35 mm). Each poly sheet is labelled and dated in RM's hand. There are numerous post-it notes. Wide-ranging subject matter includes travel, libraries from all over, Minneapolis and St. Paul domestic life, our summer vacations 1996-1997, flowers, North Shore (of Lake Superior), Lake Superior, Bone Lake Farm Arizona. Pages of notes at back in RM's hand. These negatives accompany the contact sheets in Box 31.
  31. Flip top tan box, 10.5 x 12.5 x 5.5". Labelled by EI: *Contact sheets of 31 May 1998 1997 1996* (accompany labelled negatives in black binder #30 above).
  32. Blue binder, 10.5 x 11.5 x 1.5", labelled in dymo tape on spine: *Waring Jones*. Title page reads "Waring Jones Library ... February 1998". Color contact sheets, negatives.
  33. Kodak film box, 8.5 x 11 x 8.5 ", labeled on blue paper by RM: *10x8/8x10 Selection for finals*. (I'd initially put this box in the prints section, but on closer inspection it turned out to contain negatives!)
  34. Grey flip-top box, 10.5 x 12.5 x 5". Loose slides.
  35. Black 12 x 15 x 1.5 box" box. Loose slides.

"P" Series: prints (contact prints, contact sheets, working prints, worksheets, finished prints) in binders, boxes, or portfolios:

1. Flat drop-edge tan, 9x11x3", labeled in RM's hand: 1975>1979. Contains b/w 8x10 prints. (not interleaved, not sleeved, a little warped at edges). Labelled on back in RM's hand. Grouped, divided by clean sheet of paper. Subjects: trees, basketball hoops.
2. Flat drop-edge tan, 9x11x3", labeled: *Die Tannenbaumserie Proofs*. Full of unsleeved, not interleaved, color 8x10 proofs. Labelled on back in RM's hand.
3. Flat drop-edge tan, 9x11x1.5, labeled: 1976>1978. Contains 8x10 b/w prints.

4. Flat drop-edge tan, 9x11x1.5, labeled: *FRMSP-Spring*. Contains 8x10 color prints, labeled on back by RM. Subjects: portraits, libraries, Statue Liberty, Florida.
5. Flat drop-edge tan, 9x11x1.5, labeled: *Ellis Island Liberty*. Contains 8x10 color prints. Some labeled on back by RM. Prints inventoried.
6. Flat drop-edge tan, 9x11x1.5, labeled: *35mm*. Contains 8x10 color prints. Homelife, 1993-1995. Prints inventoried.
7. Flat drop-edge tan, 9x11x1.5, labeled: *Die Tannenbaumserie*. Contains 8x10 color prints. Labelled on backs by RM.
8. Flat drop-edge tan, 9x11x1.5, labeled: *Die Tannenbaumserie working proof*. Contains 8x10 color proofs.
9. Commercial box 9x12x2, labelled: *Tannenbaumseries & Proofs 1990-1995*. Contains 8x10 color proof prints. Includes various subjects in addition to Christmas trees.
10. Flat drop-edge grey, 9x11x2, unlabelled. Contains 8x10 prints, mostly b/w, a few color at bottom. Subjects: trees, portraits, basketball hoops.
11. Kodak film box, 9x11x1-1/4. Labelled: *Ellis Is. '88/89 Proofs*. Contains 8x10 color prints. Prints inventoried.
12. Kodak film box, 9x11x3/4. Labelled: *30x24 – 30x40*. Contains 8x10 color portraits and a few libraries.
13. Flat drop-edge tan, 8.5 x 11 x1.5", labelled by RM: *Libraries: Architecture*. Contains 8x10 prints. Prints inventoried.
14. Flat drop-edge tan, 8.5 x 11 x1.5", labelled by RM: *Libraries 1989-91, 92, 93, 94 Interior*. Contains 8x10 prints. Prints inventoried.
15. Flat drop-edge tan, 8.5 x 11 x1.5", labelled by RM: *Mertin Libraries: Library Working Proofs*. Contains 8x10 prints. Prints inventoried.
16. **Two boxes: 16A and 16B.** (When I added interleaving tissues, these prints needed to be put into two boxes, which I labelled 16A and 16 B). Flat drop-edge tan boxes, 8-5/8 x 11", labelled by RM: *Libraries 108 contact proofs: Selection*. (And title repeated in ei hand on second box) Contains 8x10 prints; these are grouped with labelled paper wrappers. Prints inventoried.
17. Fuji film box, 9x11x5/8", labelled by RM: *Repro Prints*. Contains 8x10 prints. Prints inventoried.
18. Fuji film box, 9x11x5/8", labelled by RM: *Meliora for 8x10 final contact & life size/slide for Graham*. Contains 8x10 prints; also contains Bakken Library selection.
19. Fuji film box, 9x11x5/8", labelled by RM: *Roger Mertin, 56 Arundel St, Saint Paul, Original prints/651-298-8646* [our home telephone #]. Contains 8x10 prints. Subjects: Ellis Island and Paris Statue of Liberty Prints inventoried.
20. Kodak film box, 9x11x1-3/8", labelled by RM: *Proofs 1990-1992*. Contains 8x10 prints grouped with paper wrappers and labelled thereon. Prints inventoried.
21. Kodak film box, 9x11x1-3/8", labelled by RM: *Proofs 1993 Athenaeum Music & Arts, LaJolla Exhibition*. Contains 8x10 prints grouped into two groups with paper wrappers and labelled thereon. Prints inventoried.
22. Kodak film box, 9x11x1-3/8", labelled by RM: *21 June '94 Extras from Theresa – Sort - for finals plus spotting*. Contains 8x10 prints grouped into two groups with paper wrappers and labelled thereon. Prints inventoried.
23. Grey portfolio, 8.5 x 11 x 1/2". Not labelled. 8x10 prints. Prints inventoried.

24. Black portfolio, 8.5 x 11 x ½". Title page reads: *Library Pictures, Roger Martin, Key River Press.*
25. Green binder, 10 x 11 x 1" unlabelled. Contains slide list for McKnight presentation 9/21/00; seven installation shots of 1999 McKnight Photography Fellows exhibit (August 2000); artist's statement for McKnight show; list of works for McKnight show, and catalogue for McKnight Show.
26. Flat drop-edge tan, 8.5 x 13 x 1.5", labelled: *Editing.* Contains domestic, friends, travels, landscapes, etc., most from 1996-1999. Format: 120; RM's worksheets (i.e., contact prints mounted on 8.5 x 11.5 sheets of white paper) and work prints. Many things are labelled on the back, many things have additional notes, there are groupings with paper bands Prints inventoried.
27. Flat drop-edge tan, 8.5 x 13 x 1.5", labelled: *Library Project; EDITING '00.* Contains 120 work prints and worksheets (i.e., contact prints mounted on 8.5 x 11.5 sheets of white paper). Labelling and notes in RM's hand on much of it. Prints inventoried.
28. Flat drop-edge tan, 8.5 x 13 x 1.5", labelled: *1998: Finals + Proofs 1999:* Contains 120 and some 8x10 work prints (RM also uses term "proofs" or "working proofs"); some labelled. Subject: Libraries. Prints inventoried.
29. Flat drop-edge tan, 8.5 x 13 x 1.5", labelled: *Proofs: 1996 Library Project.* 120 format. Prints inventoried.
30. Flat drop-edge tan, 8.5 x 13 x 1.5", labelled: *Proofs: 1997, 1998 Library Project.* 120 format. Also includes a few USS Badger & Waring Jones project. Prints inventoried.
31. Kodak film box, 9 x 12 x 1.5", labelled: *Photocopies; composite sketches.* Subject matter includes domestic, friends, travels, landscapes, etc.. [These are worksheets that show how Rog imagined putting pictures together; I can identify most of them]. Prints inventoried.
32. [Kodak film box, 8.5 x 11 x 8.5", labelled on blue paper by RM: *10x8/8x10 Selection for finals.* This turned out on closer inspection to be negatives and this box has been moved to the negatives section where it became #33 there. **There is no Box #32, so numbering jumps from 31 to 33]**
33. Kodak film box, 9 x 12 x 1.25", labelled on blue paper by RM: *Arrowhead Lake Superior.* Prints inventoried.
34. Kodak film box, 9 x 12 x 1.25", labelled on blue paper by RM: *Proof prints 1998 1997* Prints inventoried.
35. Tan drop edge box, 10 x 13 x 1.5", labelled by RM: '94- '95- '96. Subjects include libraries, Christmas trees, State Fair, domestic, and friends. Groups banded and labelled in RM's hand. Prints inventoried.
36. Tan Fujifilm paper box, 14 x 15 x 2". Labelled by El: *Biederman Project.* Prints inventoried.
37. Green Fujifilm box, 9 x 11 x 1.5", labelled by RM: *Tree Stories 21.July; 1998* [i.e., date he organized this box]. Contains color prints of pictures made in late 1980s, banded and labelled in RM's hand.
38. Yellow Kodak box, 9 x 12 x 1.25", labelled by RM: *Photocopies, composite sketches, Library Project.* Full. Prints inventoried.
39. Green Fujifilm box, 9 x 11 x ½", main label by RM: *Bart Schneider Editor: Hungry Mind Review.* Contains two color prints.

40. Black binder, 10 x 11.5 x 1". Front cover has title page: *Roger Mertin Photographs*, with a postcard of the "starfish" library. It contains installation shots and photocopies and documentation of the show at Meliora Gallery in Tucson, March-April 1999 that we installed together.
41. Grey box, 15x18x3", labelled: *Plastic Love Dream*. Contains b/w prints, label from Minneapolis Institute of Art nudes show (fall 2000), and hand-written notes from Rog. I've also added in a set of *PLD* returned from the Terry Etherton Gallery (2001).
42. Grey box, 12x15x3", labelled: *Portraits of Trees/Tree Stories, 1975, 1994, & 1971. Multiples / diptychs 1975*. Contains inventory prepared by RM on July 22, 1998.
43. Grey box, 12x15x3", labelled: *1974 72 North Union Rochester NY Portraits of Trees/Tree Stories*. B/w prints measuring 14x11", mostly all trees. Includes a page of notes RM made Sept 1, 1998. Pictures are folded with a paper flap labelled: *6 March 2001*
44. Grey box, 12x15x3", labelled: *1974 B/w prints measuring 14x11"*, mostly all trees. Inside, groups of prints are banded with labelling in RM's hand.
45. Grey box, 16x20x3.5", labelled: *810's [i.e., 8x10's] matted to 14 x 17 Meliora Selection 5 Jan 1999*. Subject: libraries. Includes RM's notes with details. Prints inventoried.
46. Light tan box, 12 x 15.5 x 3", labelled: *1998 Personal Work – Library Project – 810 contacts on 11x14 11x14 (6x7) Finished Prints*. Unmatted. Prints inventoried. [see note following item 47]
47. Box labelled: *1998 Personal Work – Library Project – 810 contacts on 11x14 11x14 (6x7) Finished Prints*. Matted [originally, the contents of 46 and 47 were in one box, all unmatted; several were removed in late 2001 for the posthumous pARTs exhibit and returned in mats so I put the matted prints into Box 47 and the unmatted ones in Box 46.] Prints inventoried.
48. Light tan box, 12 x 15 x 3", labelled: *810 Finals '00*. Contains 8x10 color prints; subjects include Bone Lake Farm beehives, libraries, etc. Prints inventoried.
49. Light tan box, 12 x 15 x 1.5", labelled: *Library Project 1998, 1999, '00*. Contains 11x14 color prints. Sheets of RM's notes. Prints inventoried.
50. Light tan box, 12 x 15 x 1.5", labelled: *Library Project '00*. Contains 11x14 color prints. Also includes some North Shore pictures. Prints inventoried.
51. Light tan box, 12 x 15 x 1.5", labelled: *4: Matting & Documentation*. Contains: [a] a note reading: "Sort 29 April '01" is wrapped around seventeen color 11x14" prints. [this was Rog's last day at home in St. Paul before he died and was the last thing he worked on at home]. [b] Twelve of RM's worksheets (i.e., contact prints mounted on 8.5 x 11.5 sheets of white paper) all labelled. [c] About 35 color prints, mostly measuring 11x14" – libraries, Lake Superior, domestic, friends. [d] Photos of postcards and 1 actual postcard of Chatfield, MN public library; there's also a photo by Rog of the Chatfield Public Library. Prints inventoried.
52. Black box, 17 x 21 x 1.5", labelled: *Personal work 1996-1998-2000 5. January 1999 24. December '00 Selection: 16x20's + matted 11x14's to 16x20*. All color. RM sheet on inside dated 24 December '00. Prints inventoried.
53. Grey box, 17 x 21 x 1.75", labelled on long side: *2016 Finals: EXTRAS 1996> plus Ellis Island, Now & Then*. Labelled on short side: *2016 Finals: 1996> Ellis Island,*

Liberty Variations & Interpretations. Rochester, Tree Stories, Matt "T" Pictures.
Prints inventoried.

54. Grey box, 21 x 25 x 1.5", labelled by RM: *16 x 20 contact sheet France 1994 24 x 20 projection prints: Tree Stories and 1988>1994, East Face 16x20, 20x24.* Prints inventoried.
55. [Grey box, 17.5 x 21.5 x 2.5", labelled by EI listing contents. Contains library prints, 1999-2000. **The contents of this box were combined into Boxes 45 and 47 when I made the print inventory, so there is no longer a Box 55; numbering jumps from 54 to 56]**
56. Grey box, 17.5 x 21.5 x 2.5", labelled by RM: *Ellis Island 810 matted to 1417, 23 Dec '98.* Inventory by RM inside. Prints inventoried.
57. Grey box, 17.5 x 21.5 x 2.5", labelled by RM: *1992-95 B&W 35mm/16x20 contact sheets (1993).*
58. Grey box, 21.5 x 25.5 x 2.5", labelled by RM on paper slip: *Library Project / Hudson Wisconsin: Diptych / 24 x 20 projection prints /pre 1994* Prints inventoried.
59. Grey box, 21 x 25 x 2", labelled by RM: *Weisman Tree Stories matted 11 x 14 & 16 x 20 prints.* Prints inventoried.
60. Grey box, 21 x 25 x 2", labelled by RM: *Weisman Tree Stories matted 8 x 10 prints* Prints inventoried.
61. Kodak film box, 8.5 x 11 x 1", labelled by RM: *a Record: Records 1979>1980 / Proofs.* Full.
62. Tan drop edge flat box, 8.5 x 11 x 1.25", labelled by RM: *FRM.SP (mid>late 80's) / Tree Stories POP [i.e., printing-out paper] & Color Proofs (Spring) Prints Installation / Documentation / Hartnett & Rush Rhees / L. Burne Gallery} finals & proofs.* Full. Prints grouped and banded with labelled bands within.
63. Tan drop edge flat box, 8.5 x 11 x 1.25", labelled by RM: *Romulse [i.e., Romulus] New York 1983/1984 Rochester Sesquicentennial / Display '84 + Proofs Powers Building 1990 Records 1979-1980 the blues.* Full. Prints grouped and banded with labelled bands within.
64. Tan drop edge flat box, 8.5 x 11 x 3", labelled by RM: *Liberty: Variations and Interpretations 1985>.* Almost full. Prints grouped and banded with labelled bands within.
65. Black drop edge flat box, 9 x 11 x 2", unlabelled. Full. Subjects: apple orchards, trees, spring, portraits. Prints grouped and banded with labelled bands within.
66. Black drop edge flat box, 9 x 11 x 2", unlabelled. Full. Prints grouped and banded with labelled bands within, with working notes. Subjects include Tannenbaumserie 1977-early '80's; POP and B&W.
67. Black drop edge flat box, 9 x 11 x 2", unlabelled. Full. Prints grouped and banded with labelled bands within. B&W. Subjects include portraits, vernacular landscapes, tree portraits, basketball backboards.
68. Black drop spine box, 9 x 11 x 2", unlabelled. Full. Prints grouped and banded with labelled bands within. B&W. Subjects include 1977> portraits, vernacular landscapes, decorated holiday trees, tree portraits, basketball backboards.
69. Tan print box, 17 x 21 x 2", unlabelled, with notes on cover by EI listing contents. Full of color and b/w prints from early 1970s through early 1990s. Prints inventoried.

70. Grey print box, 15 x 18 x 3", labelled by RM on end of box: *L: V & I Ellis Island Die Tannenbaumserie Presentation House 1990 Records 1976-78 Portraits*. Includes inventory in RM's hand. Also includes Powers Building series 1990, and architectural photos. Prints inventoried.
71. Grey print box, 12 x 15.5 x 3". Labelled: *Trees*. Full of b/w tree pictures, 14 x 11", grouped with paper bands. Includes notes in RM's hand dated 10 Sept. '98.
72. Grey print box, 12 x 15.5 x 3". Labelled: *1971* and labelled in RM's hand: *Hand(s) within the frame / landscape the figure / nude / MM, LK. Aspen photography community*.
73. Tan box, 9 x 11 x 1.5 ", labelled by RM: *Portraits*. Located inside box no. 72 (preceding).
74. Grey print box, 17 x 21 x 3", labelled by RM: *1970, 1971 Hand series Manipulated printing/mounted/matted prints Tree Stories, Thousand Islands, NY Aspen. Colorado workshop 1971 Nebraska, I80, 1971.*
75. Black print box, 15 x 19 x 2". Unlabelled. Inside is RM sheet with inventory dated 25 Aug. 1998. Subjects include portraits and views, color and b/w; contact prints.
76. Black case with clasps, 12 x 15.25 x 2.75", labelled by RM: *Portraits with friends 1968 – B&W prints POP 11x14 contacts*
77. Grey print box, 15 x 18 x 3.25" labelled by RM: *Portraits B&W: Color* [crossed out words] *Misc. 79-86*. Inventory in RM's hand inside dated 4 Aug '98.
78. Grey clamshell portfolio box, 12.5 x 15.5 x 1.5". Contains *Plastic Love Dream*.
79. Grey print box, 15 x 18 x 3", labelled by RM: [2 crossed out labels] *Tannenbaumserie 1979-1986* [another label crossed out] Inventory by RM inside.
80. Grey print box 9 x 11 x 3", labelled: *Trees 1976, 1977, 1978*. All b/w prints, with inventory in RM's hand inside.
81. Grey print box, 14.5 x 17.5 x 3". This is a box put together and labelled by EI: *PLD, Other, 1965-68; 1982*. Contains (RM labelling) *PLD 1982 edition (27); PLD '68 printing (4); 1965-67 (4); 1965-67 (7)*. Matted prints.
82. Black clam shell print box, 14.5 x 19 x 2", unlabelled. Contains matted color and b /w prints. Subjects include trees, decorated Christmas trees, and basketball hoops.
83. Grey 15 x 19 x 3" box, labelled by RM on the end: *Library Project 810 contacts / matted 1989>1991 (5. Jan '99* [i.e., date he organized this box]) and labelled by RM on side: *Library Project Ellis Island Statue of Liberty Blank (MT) mats*. About half full. Notes inside in RM's hand dated 5. Jan. 99. Contains all library prints (end label is the most recent and accurate). Prints inventoried.
84. Yellow Kodak photographic paper box, 8.5 x 11 x 4" (i.e. 500 sheet size), typed label on top: *35 mm contacts 1974.201-* and in RM hand on end: *1974.201-75.199*. Full. B/w. There's a piece of yellow lined paper taped on top with RM notes (I put this inside the box for safe keeping).
85. Yellow Kodak photographic paper box, 8.5 x 11 x 4" (i.e. 500 sheet size), labelled on top: *35 contacts 68.1-* and on end: *1968-1972 contacts*. B/w. Pretty full.
86. Yellow Kodak photographic paper box, 8.5 x 11 x 4" (i.e. 500 sheet size), typed label on top and end: *35 mm contacts, 1973-1974.200*. B/w, pretty full.
87. Red Agfa box, 8.5 x 11 x 1.25", labelled on end in RM hand: *35 contacts 1976*. B/w, full.

88. Black portfolio case, metal clasps, 12 x 15 x 3", unlabelled. Contains b/w prints of portraits; trees, 1st selection (unsigned).
89. Kodak box, 7 x 33 x 5", unlabelled. Contains large rolled up color print of *Great Canal Caper – Genesee Valley – 8 July 1984*. Prints inventoried.
90. **Two boxes, 90S and 90L.** (I broke Box 90 up into two boxes, Box 90S (small) and Box 90L (large) when I made an inventory of the individual prints.) Grey Light Impressions gallery print boxes, 25 x 32.5 x 2.25", unlabelled. Contains finished color Christmas tree prints, matted and unmatted; portraits; Ellis Island; Statue of Liberty; library interiors. Sizes: 16x20 (three); 20x24 (eighteen); 24x30 (eighteen). Also contains posters for shows: Jerome Liebling; Dockery, Mertin, Topolski, Venezia; Roger Mertin Rochester 1984; M. Bravo. Prints inventoried.
91. Grey Light Impressions gallery print box, 33 x 41.5 x 2", labelled: *Weisman Tree Stories matted 20x24, 30x24, 30x40 prints*. Prints inventoried.
92. Grey Light Impressions gallery print box, 33 x 41.5 x 2", unlabelled. Contains nine 30x40 prints and two 24x30 prints; Lake Superior/Solbakken triptych matted; Washington, DC, June 6, 1998 composite matted Prints inventoried.
93. Large grey gallery print box.. 25 x 32.5 x 2.5". Contains unmatted and matted color prints. Subjects include Lake Superior, libraries, Minnesota History Center, USS Badger, and posters (Liebling; Mertin 1984). Prints inventoried.
94. Grey flat box, 16.5 x 20.5 x 1.5". Labelled by RM: *35mm / PROOFS 1992>1993>*. Large contact sheets, color, b/w. Our life, Rochester, U of R., etc.. Quite full and dense, be careful handling it.
95. Yellow Kodak box, 11.5 x 15 x 1". Unlabelled. Contents: unmatted color prints, 11 x 14"; subjects: friends, North Shore, Wilson Commons, Kissimee monument. Prints inventoried.
96. Dark grey drop spine box, 17 x 21.5 x 3.75". Typed label: *Roger Mertin*. Matted b/w prints. * (see note below)
97. Flat tan drop-edge box, 12 x 15 x 3": labelled in RM hand on end: *Portraits of Trees / Tree Stories FRM.SP 1971>1976*. * (see note below)
98. Flat light grey drop-edge box, 15 x 19 x 3". Labelled on end in RM hand: *Die Tannenbaumserie 14 x 18 & 14 x 17 matted 8 x 10 Finals unmatted*. * (see note below)
99. Light tan flip top box with reinforced corners, 7.75 x 10.5 x 5.5", labelled in RM hand: *2R/3R Proofs '93*. Box is full, items labelled within.
100. Package of six diptychs and composites. Libraries. Prints inventoried.
101. CUAG (Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa; show Rog was preparing for August 2001). Canadian Libraries. Prints inventoried.
102. Package of four matted diptychs and triptychs. Taylors Falls and North Shore (of Lake Superior). Prints inventoried.
103. Grey box 12 x 15 x 3". Labelled w/ dynotape: *1973*, and little blue label in RM hand: *10 Sept. 98*. B/w trees. Inside the box is note in RM hand that reads: "8 July 1998. 1971> Pictures of trees / with ambient light and flash."
104. Yellow 44 x 7 x 6" box. Rolled up huge prints.
105. Black drop spine box, 11.5 x 15 x 1.5. Loose prints.
106. Black drop spine box, 11.5 x 15 x 1.5. Loose prints.

107. Tan 10 x 13 x 1.5" box. Labelled by EI: *Roger Mertin last photographs: negatives and contact prints.*
108. Yellow Kodak paper box, 11.5 x 15 x 1 ". Prints on Rog's worktable.
109. Yellow Kodak paper box, 11.5 x 15 x 1 ". Prints on Rog's worktable.
110. Yellow Kodak paper box, 25 x 21 x 1". Posters.
111. Yellow Kodak paper box, 25 x 21 x 1". U.S.S. Badger print, matted.
112. Grey flip top box. Notebooks.
113. Hollinger banker's box: documentation.
114. Hollinger banker's box: travels, maps, brochures
115. Hollinger banker's box: publications.

NOTE: Box 19 in the Negatives Section could just as well have been placed here in the prints section; there are a lot of prints in that box.

* Roger temporarily stored a number of boxes of prints at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts in 1998. Between then and the time he died, Roger spent many hours at the MIA reviewing and sorting those prints. We brought most of them home before May 2001. He mentioned to me in the spring of 2001 that the three boxes left to fetch home (#'s 96, 97, and 98) were what he considered to be the cream of the crop insofar as those subject areas were concerned; he left them there because he planned to discuss them with the curators at MIA. He had ideas for a show or books, or both. I brought these boxes home after he died. -- EI

"F" Series: framed pictures.

1. Viroqua, WI library, diptych
2. Madison, MN library, diptych
3. Janesville, MN library, diptych
4. Eveleth, MN library, diptych
5. Mapleton, MN library, diptych
6. Cumberland, WI library, diptych
7. Riverbranch Library (St. Paul, MN), diptych
8. Bay City, MI library, diptych
9. Warsaw, NY library, diptych
10. Mt. Vernon, NY library, diptych
11. Little Falls, MN library, diptych
12. Paris, Ontario library, diptych
13. Column and Door, library, diptych (two 8 x 10's side by side). NB: #'s 12 and 13 are packed together, labeled separately
14. Ironwood, MN library, diptych
15. Bayfield, WI library, diptych
16. Gloversville, NY, 23 May 1998 (young woman)
17. Wallace Idaho library

18. 515 Fifth Avenue SE, Minneapolis, January 5 1992
19. Bemidji, MN library
20. Southwest Branch Library, Washington, DC
21. Amsterdam, NY library
22. Ashland, MA library
23. Mountain Iron, MN library. NB: #'s 22 and 23 are packed together, labeled separately.
24. Strousberg, PA, 76 Truck Stop
25. Taylors Falls, MN library '93
26. Taylors Falls, MN library '94
27. Two Harbors, MN library. NB: #'s 25, 26, and 27 packed together, labeled separately.
28. Four portraits (in one frame)