NUEVA LUZ

a photographic journal

Premier Issue
Nueva Luz is a photographic journal that addresses itself to the search for statements by photographers who have developed a reflective stance vis-a-vis their culture. The Journal will showcase a process in which we witness a dedication to define a unique aesthetic.

The photographers featured herein have committed themselves to the real work involved in making imagery. This is an opportunity for them to express a point of view.

Thanks to the enthusiastic support of Greg Millard of the Department of Cultural Affairs of the City of New York, our efforts to make Nueva Luz a reality were made easier. It is to his encouragement, good will and memory that we dedicate this inaugural issue.

Frank Gimpaya

Designer/Art Director
Frank Gimpaya

Editor
Charles Biasiny-Rivera

Translator
Jose Ortiz Morro

Promotion and Advertising
Steve Raddock, Associates

Subscriptions
Sandra Matos

Nueva Luz is a photographic quarterly journal published by En Foco, Inc. 32 Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, New York 10468, (212) 584-7718. Single issue price is $3.00, yearly subscription is $10.00 in the continental U.S. In Canada, Puerto Rico and all other countries, single issue price is $5.00, yearly subscription is $18.00.

Portfolios of at least 15 unmounted prints may be submitted for viewing. If mailed, the prints may be no larger than 11"x14". A self-addressed stamped envelope and appropriate packaging must accompany all mailed portfolios to insure proper return. We do not assume responsibility for unsolicited photographs or manuscripts sent by mail. Photographers wishing to deliver portfolios in person must call our office to make arrangements. For advertising rates and distribution contact En Foco, Inc.

Copyright ©1985 by En Foco, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

a photographic journal

Cover photograph: "Paramount Pictures", by Sophie Rivera
Typography by Ortiz Typographies
Sophie Rivera

Sophie Rivera attended The New School for Social Research in New York City. She has exhibited extensively throughout the United States and Latin America. Currently her work is part of “Tercer Coloquio Latinoamericano de Fotografia” en La Habana, Cuba. Sophie has also shown her work at P.S.I., NYC, The New Museum, NYC, Museo del Barrio, NYC, Salamanca, Club, NYC, Caribbean Culture Center, NYC, Purdue University, Indiana, Rutgers University North Museum Gallery, Newark, New Jersey, Casa Aboy, Puerto Rico, The Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago, Illinois, Latitude 53, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, Kosovo House, NYC, Inter Latinoamericano Gallery, NYC, Castillo Gallery, NYC. She has also been a guest curator at the Museo del Barrio and Castillo Gallery of NYC. The Liberation News Service, United Press International, the Village Voice, the Daily News, Heresies, Women Artists News, and Majority Report to Women have featured her work.

Tony Mendoza

Tony Mendoza was born in Havana, Cuba in 1941. He received a Bachelor of Engineering Degree from Yale University and a Masters of Architecture from Harvard. He began his photographic career by having his first photo essay published by the Boston Globe Sunday Magazine. He has since worked for the Boston Magazine, Harvard Magazine and the Real Paper. He has taught photography and book making at the Art Institute of Boston and is currently teaching at the International Center for Photography in NYC. Publications which have featured Tony Mendoza’s work include Camera 35, Real Paper, Modern Photographer, Lightworks, 35 MM Photography, Print and American Photographer. He has exhibited at Photovision 75, Boston, Mass., Boston Visual Arts Union, Panopticon Gallery, Boston, Photoworks, Boston, MIT Creative Photo Lab, Worcester Art Museum, Mass., and Project Inc., Cambridge, Mass. The Museum of Modern Art, NYC., The Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy at Andover, Mass., and the Museum of Fine Arts of Boston all include Tony’s work in their permanent photographic collections. He was awarded a CAPS grant in 1981.

Kenro Izu

Kenro Izu was born in Osaka, Japan in 1949. He studied art photography at Nippon University for three years. Arriving in the United States in 1973, he worked as a studio assistant for three years before opening his own studio. In 1983, he exhibited his work at the Photofind Gallery, Woodstock, New York. He received a National Endowment for The Arts fellowship in 1984. Kenro does freelance still photography. His work appears in Connoisseur Magazine.
Sophie Rivera

"Man In Beret", n.d.
Sophie Rivera

"Nedicks Waiter", n.d.
Sophie Rivera

"Mother and Child in Subway", n.d.
Sophie Rivera

"Masked Personage", n.d.
Sophie Rivera

"Young Girl by Tree in Central Park", n.d.
Sophie Rivera

"Man With Bike in Central Park", n.d.
Sophie Rivera

"Raymond Rojas", n.d.
My grandmother Otrin lived very happily with my grandfather for 51 years. They met when she was sixteen, at a dance given in her honor. Her family had moved from Santiago to Havana and she was being introduced to society. My grandfather asked her for a dance, and Otrin recalls, they talked very little but she liked him. The next day a carriage arrived from my grandfather filled with orchids; Otrin knew then that they would marry. I never saw them fight.
My grandfather Malolo converted an old coal carrying barge into a pleasure schooner. During the late forties, he loved treating his family to fishing trips, three and four day extravaganzas around the small islands north of Cuba. The men played bridge and drank; the women played canasta and talked; Malolo held court on his canvas chair on the foredeck, explaining to his grandchildren the wonders of the sea. I was always with a group by the stern, trolling for kingfish and barracuda. At night we would anchor in protected coves and would sleep in canvas beds set on deck, to the constant noises of lines hitting the masts and the sounds of small waves lapping the ship. I loved those trips. Every time we returned home, I would lock myself in my room and cry.
My mother kept a detailed baby book for each of her five children. She wrote a brief description of anything interesting that happened in my life, every week till I was one, then every month till I was eight. She hired a professional photographer, a Chinese man named Victor, who came to our house once a month with his Rolleiflex and took pictures for the baby books. My book is a trove of information for me. The first passion of my life was called Emma; she was three. I swallowed a green Parchesi chip when I was two. My mother was very frightened till Dr. Bode came and dislodged it. I had so many facial nervous ticks when I was five that my uncles would playfully mimick me. They were all taken by my mother to my doctor, who gave my uncles a stern lecture and asked them not to pay attention to me and my ticks, and it worked. I was very skinny and seemed to always be in some fattening program, including one around eight, where I drank a beer with every lunch.
My father, a businessman, thoroughly disapproves of my artistic lifestyle, my financial irresponsibility, my failure to get married and raise a family, and he doesn't understand art. I've stopped trying to explain my life to him but still enjoy his wit and our noncombative conversations, usually about stories from the old days, how to cook Cuban meals, family gossip, and sports.
My uncle Victor has 10 children. In the 50's, after his 5th child, he and his wife Elodia had an audience with Pope Pious the XII, whose real name was Eugenio Pacheli. Victor complained to the Pope that his birth control method, the rhythm method, didn't work at all, witness his last four children. The Pope chuckled and replied that it was a good method, to keep trying it. His 6th child, conceived, according to Victor, while practicing the rhythm method in Rome, was named Pachelli Mendoza.
My cousin Bernardo was my best friend growing up. He was reckless and always getting into trouble. I would find myself, reluctantly, following his lead. He would often do something stupid, like jump from one branch to another, high up on a tree, and would challenge me to do the same. I was never very courageous; Bernardo would always rub it in and say "chicken, eh?". Before he was 10, Bernardo had broken his arm three times, twice jumping for the same branch, and he would wear his casts proudly. I always felt guilty about never breaking my arm.
Every summer my body requires that I immerse it into 83 degrees tropical ocean for at least one month, if it is to function properly for the rest of the year. I usually visit my sister Lydia in Hawaii, if I have enough money to get there, or Ana Maria and Hervin in Florida, and I'm always looking for other hosts in other tropical oceans. I'm not a bad guest. I like to cook, and I clean up too. I'll sleep anywhere. I'm amusing. I'll take great pictures of my hosts' kids, which they will get for Christmas.
I'm 42 years old and I've never been married. I've always liked the idea of having a family, but I've never felt emotionally or financially ready. Now I'm thinking that I'm emotionally and financially unable to remain single.
Kenro Izu

"Pyramids Over Cemetery", Giza, Egypt, 1983 (original size 14 1/4" X 19 1/4")
"The Wall", Sakkara, Egypt, 1983 (original size 14" x 194")
Kenro Izu

"Pyramid over the Ruin", Chichen-Itza, Mexico, 1961 (original size 15" X 19.5")
Kenro Izu

"Pyramid of Magician", Uxmal, Mexico, 1981 (original size 14" X 18")
Kenro Izu

"Step Pyramid", Saqqara, Egypt 1979 (original size 14" X 18")
Kenro Izu

"Temple Ruin", Abusir, Egypt, 1983 (original size 14" x 1916")
“Stone Circle”, Avebury, England 1981 (original size 14” X 18”)
Kenro Izu

"Stonehenge", Amesbury, England, 1981 (original size 14" X 18")
We entered the 20th century generally believing that americans had a definite shape and color. A remarkable experiment in democracy had led us to the door where myths are made. We casually accepted a melting pot concept as if it were payment for belonging. As photography set its cast during that early formative period, it established an exclusionary imagery that visually washed an entire society. An aesthetic developed out of this process, reinforcing additional myths in an attempt to create one ideal form of americanism, one ideal look and sound. Any other notions were relegated to exotica. It is possible that as the 21st century approaches, a new American aesthetic will evolve from the infusion of fresh and fertile energies bursting out of the nations constrained corners.

The three photographers presented in this issue possess those energies, expressing them according to their individual life rhythms. In Sophie River’s portraits, identification deals more with a vague presence than with who these people are within their society. Even when garbed in the dress of their occupation, her subjects appear somewhat peculiar, surely apprehensive. The faces stare right back, returning your gaze as if you were caught staring at them in the subway, a sense of confrontation pervades these photographs. It is this discrete feeling of impending discomfort, somewhat reminiscent of Diane Arbus’ work, that dominates; this is all the more disconcerting since her picture structure remains formalistic and traditional.

Sophie has opened a door of internal reality, belieing the notion that photography can only deal with what is, that it has no consciousness of its own. These photographs allow us to peer through a rare prism that draws us into their unknown parts.

Tony Mendjia’s autobiographical series offers a highly comfortable viewing experience. The vulnerability he expresses in his writing matches perfectly with the identities found in the images. His humor, usually self-directed, is soft, at times touching upon pain hurt easily shared by this viewer. The photographs span a number of years, settling here and there on aspects of his life that held amusement or importance for him. What removes this work from being just another photographer’s personal indulgence is the honesty of the statements, the willingness to share unabashed, these very private thoughts of successes and failures.

The visualness of this composite work carries its own power, a critical requirement when combining mediums. The photographs contain a degree of patience and warmth, identifying memories and absolving them of all blame; there is not an accusatory image to be found and they deal more with forgiveness than reversion.

In Kenro Izu’s photographs, memories have been replaced with a total dedication to the space, obviously his passion. Landscape photography usually carries a yoke of expectation; tonal, compositional and content expectations. When I first viewed Kenro’s portfolio at the Photograph Gallery in Woodstock, New York, I was impressed with his ability to achieve such fine printing subtleties using only the middle tone range; I felt this command of technique was superb. However, the real power of his talent is evident when you allow yourself to enter that space. What I have felt from seeing Kenro’s photographs is a remarkable freedom; the same thing happens to me when reading Zen poetry. He is somehow in contact with the spirit of the spaces he photographs. His concerns seem not to clash with the space but instead what is out of it. The way he approaches these vast enormities, photographically, is exemplary of intuitive vision, culturally ordained and as masterful as the last shivering leaf of autumn.

Charles Biasiny-Rivera
Editor
C omencamos este siglo creyendo que los americanos tenían una forma y color propios. El sorprendente experimento democrático nos había llevado al punto donde nace el mito. Aceptábamos de manera casual el concepto del crisol de razas como si fuera el pago que se debía hacer para pertenecer al grupo. La fotografía de este período, el crear sus normas, estableció unas imágenes excluidas que purificaron de manera visual a toda una sociedad. Se creó una estética propia que fortalecía mitos adicionalmente, tratando de forjar una forma ideal de americanismo, una visión y sonido ideales. Cualquier otra nación quedaba relegada al campo de lo exótico. Es posible que, al acercarnos al siglo XXI, tome forma una nueva estética norteamericana, producto de la inmersión de energías fértil y frescas que surgen de los rincones restringidos de la nación.

Los tres fotógrafos que aparecen en este número poseen esas energías, expresándolas de acuerdo a sus propios ritmos individuales. En los retratos de Sophie Rivero, la identificación se relaciona más a una presencia sorda que con la identidad de esta gente dentro de su sociedad. Aún visitando los uniformes de sus empleos, los individuos lucen un tanto extrañados y obviamente recelosos. Los rostros no miran fijamente, desviándose lo mirada tal y como si nos hubieran sorprendido mirándolas en el tren subterráneo. Un sentido de confrontación permea estas fotografías. Domina en las fotos un sentimiento discreto de inminente incomodidad que nos recuerda la obra de Diane Arbus. Esto es aún más sorprendente ya que la estructura pictórica de la artista se mantiene formalista y tradicional.

Sophie ha abierto una puerta a la realidad interna, contradiciendo así la idea de que la fotografía solo puede presentar lo que es; es decir, que no tiene una conciencia propia. Estas fotografías nos permiten mirar a través de un raro prisma que nos atrae a las partes desconocidas de ellas.

La serie autobiográfica de Tony Mendoza nos ofrece una experiencia visual altamente agradable. La vulnerabilidad que él expresa en sus escritos se acopla perfectamente a las identidades que aparecen en sus imágenes. Su humor, el cual frecuentemente dirige hacia sí mismo, es suave, y a veces toca puntos dolorosos del pasado que este observador puede compartir. Las fotografías cubren un período de años, deteniéndose aquí y ahí sobre varios aspectos de su vida que le son humanísticos o importantes. Lo que separa su labor de la indulgencia personal de cualquier otro fotógrafo, es la honestidad de sus aseveraciones, el deseo de compartir, sin remilgos, estos pensamientos privadísimos sobre sus triunfos y fallas.

El aspecto visual de esta labor compuesta coloca su propia fuerza, un requisito crítico cuando una combinación medias. Las fotografías tienen un nivel de paciencia y calor humano, identificando recuerdos y aboliéndolos de cualquier sentido de culpabilidad; no aparece en toda la obra ninguna imagen acusatoria y las fotos se asocian más con el perdón que con el enjuicio.

En las fotografías de Kenro Isu, los recuerdos han sido reemplazados por una dedicación total al espacio, obviamente su pasión. La fotografía de paisajes conlleva usualmente un juego de expectativas: expectativas de tono, composición y contenido. La primera vez que él el portafolio de Kenro en la Galería Photofind en Woodstock, Nueva York, me impresionó su habilidad de lograr tantos fines con detalles de impresión usando solamente la gama de tonos medios. Consideré que este manejo de la técnica era excelente. Sin embargo, la verdadera fuerza de su talento se hace evidente cuando uno se permite a sí mismo entrar en ese espacio. Lo que siento al observar las fotografías de Kenro es una extraordinaria libertad. Los mismos me ocurre cuando leo poema Zen. Kenro está en contacto de alguna manera con el espíritu de los espacios que él fotografía. Su preocupación no aparece ser el espacio, sino lo que aparece estar fuera de dicho espacio. La forma en la cual él se acerca de manera fotográfica a esta vasta enormidad, es prototípica de una visión intuitiva de origen cultural y de tal perfección como la de la última hoja trémula del otoño.
PORTRAITS

Portraits of the Puerto Rican Experience is a historical publishing coup d'etat that provides an informative and fascinating account of the lives of 100 prominent Hispanics who have achieved greatness in such diverse fields as painting, music, athletics, cinema, the professions and economics.

It displays 100 artistic portraits captured by internationally renowned photographer, Adal Maldonado combined with the unique editing techniques of poet-author Luis Reyes Rivera who uncovers in depth the pathos and pride of 100 Puerto Rican cultural bearers. They are Hispanics who have carved out careers without godfathers or mentors.

The book is 11 X 14 in size, contains 240 pages of parchment like quality paper and is available in two editions, hand worked black Spanish leather bound Collectors for $300.00 and grey cloth Library series for $125.00 each. It is published in English by Julio Rodriguez and is distributed solely by IPRUS Institute at 384 East 149th Street, room 330. Bronx, N.Y. 10455.

"There is a strong sense of personal presence in Adal's handsome portraits. The thoughtful posing, lighting and framing are obviously the work of the photographer. But each picture was taken in a place where the sitter lives or works, and each sitter seems to project a powerfully individual sense of character and achievement."

Gene Thornton
The New York Times

"...None of Adal's previous creative periods prepared me for his present one. As an artist, he had to go through his own "Puerto Rican Experience" to achieve the maturity as a photographer of his current project... Bravo Adal! Thanks for a body of work that brings surprise, enlightenment and much satisfaction to all involved..."

Cornell Capa, Director
International Center
Of Photography
**Topol** es un poco más caro que la pasta dental corriente, pero comparado con el precio de los cigarrillos y sus resultados, ¡vale la pena!
"Mira, mira" call out the Jewish and Pakistani merchants on 14th Street to catch the attention of Hispanic passersby. They learned it from the customers themselves. "Mira esto, que bonito". "Mira mamá, que barato". "Mirar. To look. Looking is one of our favorite pastimes. Men stand in the corners mirando the women go by. The women sit by their window mirando the world as it transpires in the street below. These are memory pictures of the town and cities where we come from. Of the very barrios where we now live. And we have our own special way of looking. And no one can capture that better than our photographers.

The crop of Hispanic art photographers has continuously increased in the last ten years. And their work has enriched and documented our life, our culture.

*Mira, mira*, "Nueva Luz" has arrived! It is a beautiful and needed publication. Welcome. We wish it a long and successful life. Because, in the words of Charles Biasiny-Rivera, "the time has arrived for the emergence of the people's artists as a new source of vitality and energy.

(excerpts from Cover Story of IAHA! HISPANIC ARTS NEWS, NO. 39)

FOR CURRENT INFORMATION ABOUT HISPANIC ART AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS, CONTACT THE ASSOCIATION OF HISPANIC ARTS
AT 200 EAST 87th STREET, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10028
(212) 369-7054

200 East 87th Street, 2nd Floor
New York, N. Y. 10028
(212) 369-7054
WINTER EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

Melehi: Recent Paintings
December 8, 1984—February 10, 1985

The Artist Celebrates New York: Selected Paintings from the Metropolitan Museum
February 2—March 24, 1985
* Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Fairfield Porter.

Puerta del Caribe by Jan D'Esopo
February 2—March 20, 1985

The Museum is open to the public Saturday through Thursday (closed Friday) 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Contact: Dee Barbato
Enter historic Puerto Rico through "Puerta del Caribe" (The Doorway to the Caribbean), an exhibit by "Hispanic Artist of the Year", Jan D'Esopo.

At the Bronx Museum of the Arts
1040 Grand Concourse
Bronx, New York

January 31-March 20, 1985

The exhibit is made possible through the generous funding of Bacardi Imports, Inc., Citibank, N.A., Consolidated Edison and I.T.T.

IT'S YOUR CITI®
CITIBANK®
A CITICORP COMPANY
THE 3RD ANNUAL EN FOCO LATINO VIDEO FESTIVAL

FALL ’85
For information contact EN FOCO, INC.
32 East Kingsbridge Road
Bronx, New York 10468

THE RETURN
A Photographic Exhibition
at The DCA Gallery
2 Columbus Circle
New York City
April 1985
Johnny Betancourt
Jose Ruben Gastambide
Raphael Ramirez
Nueva Luz Subscription
4 Issues $10
SUBSCRIBE !

Nueva Luz

MEMO
NAME
TITLE
ADDRESS
CITY/STATE/ZIP

Nueva Luz

MEMO
NAME
TITLE
ADDRESS
CITY/STATE/ZIP

Nueva Luz

32 EAST KINGSBRIDGE ROAD
BRONX, NEW YORK 10468
(212) 584-7718