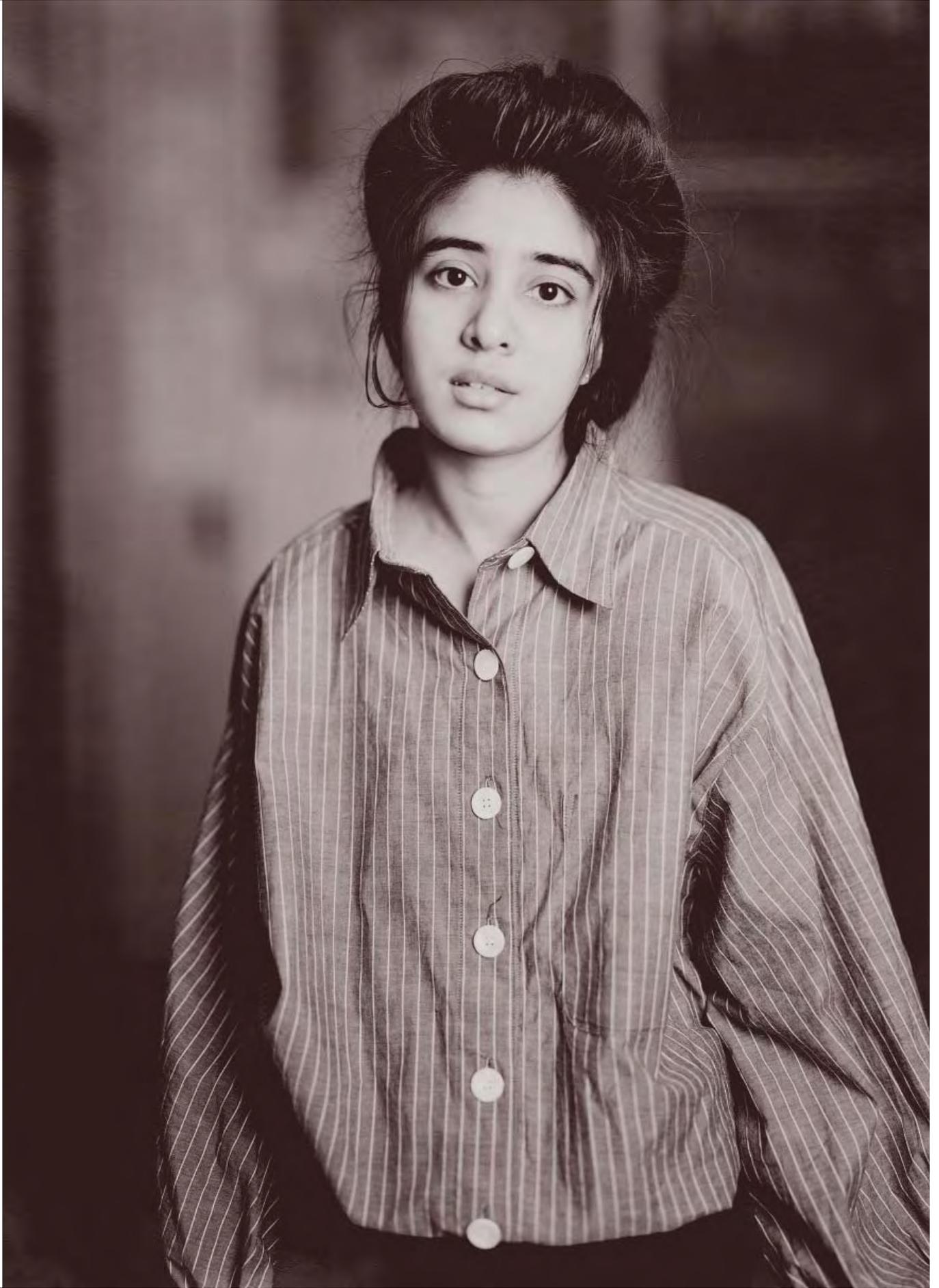


**The Cleveland Museum of Art Members Magazine**

November 2002





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A City Seen

A City Seen: Photos from The George Gund Foundation

## A City Seen



Above: In Michael Book's quiet, sun-drenched cityscape, the façade and belfry of Little Italy's Holy rosary Church became the center of interest, just as it is a central feature in the life of its neighborhood (gelatin silver print, 34 x 45 cm, The George Gund Foundation Collection).

Right: Larry Fink captured students' energy and imagination in his photographs from the Cleveland School of the Arts (gelatin silver print, 36.8 x 37.3 cm, the George Gund Foundation Collection).

**A** City Seen: Photographs from The George Gund Foundation Collection presents Cleveland as revealed by some of our era's greatest photographers. The compelling subjects of the 148 photographs, shown together for the first time, include Cleveland's families and neighborhoods, its public school children, its workers, the Cuyahoga River, and Lake Erie. The fruits of a rare form of enlightened patronage, all the images come from portfolios commissioned

### A City Seen: Photographs from The George Gund Foundation Collection

November 17, 2002– January 26, 2003

A City Seen: Photographs from The George Gund Foundation Collection was organized by guest curator Mark Schwartz and Tom E. Hinson. The exhibition, publication, and public programs are supported by The George Gund Foundation.



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by The George Gund Foundation to illustrate its annual reports from 1990 through 2001, each incorporating a photographic essay that expressed the organization's philanthropic interests in northeast Ohio.

The artists—Michael Book, Lois Conner, Judith Joy Ross, Dawoud Bey, Linda Butler, Lee Friedlander, Gregory Conniff, Frank Gohlke, Larry Fink, Douglas Lucak, Nicholas Nixon, and Barbara Bosworth—were given free rein to approach their projects as they saw fit. With each of them bringing a unique aesthetic vision and passion for photography to bear on their chosen subject, the results were a dozen highly original and individual portfolios.

Michael Book was first, with the 1990 report. Rather than presenting glossy downtown images of “the comeback city,” he delved into Cleveland's living neighborhoods. Landscape photographer Lois Conner followed in 1991 with a group of luminous photographs linked to the Cuyahoga River. Judith Joy Ross portrayed students in Cleveland public schools in 1992. Dawoud Bey examined families using his innovative method of combining multiple images. Linda Butler offered a loving portrayal of Cleveland's arts institutions. Lee Friedlander made the city's working people the subject of his 1995 portfolio. In 1996, Gregory Conniff created *Urban Gardens*, showing how small plots of land all around the city have been remade as oases of life and renewal. Frank Gohlke's Lake Erie project offered a beautiful but unromanticized view of the lake and the land adjoining it. The Cleveland School of the Arts was the subject of Larry Fink's 1998 photo-essay. Douglas Lucak applied his

distinctive style to the urban landscape the following year. Nicholas Nixon provided a portfolio on Cleveland's Free Clinic for the 2000 Annual Report. Finally, Barbara Bosworth turned her lens to the Cleveland Metroparks in 2001.

This ambitious use of fine art photographers has had two stewards. One is retiring executive director of the Gund Foundation, David Bergholz, under whose visionary leadership the concept of commissioning photographers was encouraged to take wing. The other is Mark Schwartz, president of the design firm Nesnadny + Schwartz, whose creative instincts and professional skill are apparent in every aspect of this project.

These 12 outstanding photographers have created eloquent expressions of the city that add wonderful depth to existing photographic images of Cleveland. Most significantly, however, the foundation is giving all of the portfolios to the Cleveland Museum of Art, impressively expanding the museum's collection.

A richly illustrated 180-page book accompanies the exhibition. A provocative essay by John Szarkowski, director emeritus of the Department of Photography at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, introduces this original book about the melding of artistic vision with the character of a multifaceted community. Extensive public programming (described elsewhere in this magazine) also has been organized to enhance the show. This cornucopia of activities celebrates the foundation's 50th anniversary, drawing attention to its ongoing commitment to enhancing the quality of life in Greater Cleveland.

■ Tom E. Hinson, Curator of Photography

*A native of Cleveland, Barbara Bosworth grew up taking long walks in the Metroparks. In this lovely diptych of the South Chagrin Reservation, she concentrated on the design features—a pathway and an isolated bench—that enable people to enjoy nature (gelatin silver print, 25.4 x 40.6 cm, The George Gund Foundation Collection).*

