

TIBOR DE NAGY

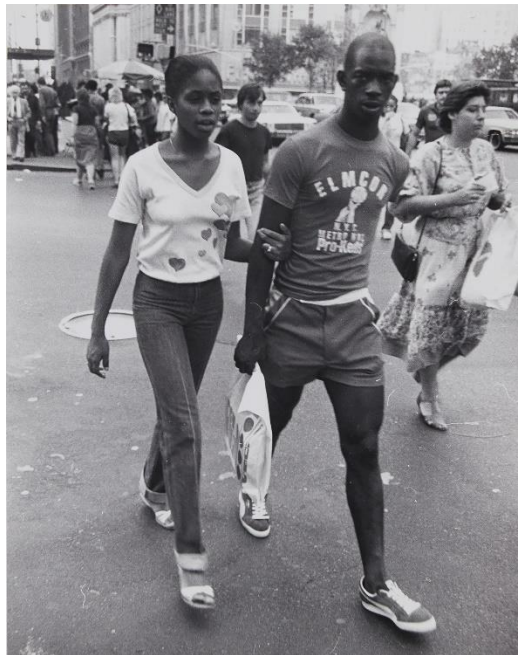
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Rudy Burckhardt

New York Hello!

photographs and films from the 1970s and 1980s

December 11, 2020 to January 23, 2021



RUDY BURCKHARDT *Untitled, New York (couple walking), c. 1985*

Tibor de Nagy Gallery is pleased to present *Rudy Burckhardt - New York Hello! photographs and films from the 1970s and 1980s*. This is the tenth exhibition of Burckhardt's work at the gallery and the first devoted solely to Burckhardt's photography and films from the 1970s and 80s.

It has been many years since this body of work featuring New York City and its inhabitants has been shown. In 1987 they were first exhibited at Brooke Alexander Gallery concurrent with Burckhardt's film retrospective at MoMA and a painting exhibition at Blue Mountain Gallery. This group of works were also compiled in the book *New York Hello!* a collaboration with poems by Vincent Katz and photos by Rudy Burckhardt published by Ommation Press in 1990.



RUDY BURCKHARDT *Untitled, New York (couple walking in street), c. 1978*

Rudy Burckhardt (1914-1999) moved to New York from Basel, Switzerland in 1935 and shortly thereafter started to film and then photograph the busy city streets. The art historian Rob Storr has said of Burckhardt's photographs, "No one has recorded the tempo of New York life more attentively or accurately. Still photography has never moved so much as it does in Burckhardt's images." The writer Edwin Denby, who met Burckhardt in Basel and encouraged him to move to New York, described his process as recording people "dancing in daily life."

A feeling of dance and movement is especially captured in the 3 films on view – *Default Averted*, 1975, *Cerveza*, *Bud*, 1981 and *Ostensibly*, 1989 (whose title comes from a John Ashbery poem and is filmed at home reading it). Burckhardt's cinema verité approach has a lighthearted touch; in his films we see people walking over the Brooklyn Bridge during a transit strike, a building being demolished, groups of people visiting on street corners and celebrating in Central Park. An inherent urban choreography is a key thread throughout each film, as he filmed a car passing by a manhole cover with just the right movement and compositional space.

Burckhardt approached his work in an unadorned and straightforward manner. He summed up his artistic project this way - "I am enough of an amateur existentialist and Buddhist to believe that we actually just mess around because we're alive and awake - working, playing, scheming, falling apart, getting it together again but never in control."

Rudy Burckhardt's work has been exhibited widely in museums in the US and Europe. The photo album *An Afternoon in Astoria* is currently on view at MoMA, New York, the work part of the museum's collection, also was presented in 2002. His album *New York, N. Why?* in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art was presented in an exhibition in 2008. Other recent solo museum exhibitions include *Rudy Burckhardt. Im Dickicht Der Grosstadt: Fotografien und Filme 1932-1959*, in 2014 at the Fotostiftung Schweiz, Winterthur, Switzerland and *Rudy Burckhardt. New York/Maine*, in 2013 at the Museum der Moderne, Salzburg, Austria. A major exhibition, *Rudy Burckhardt - New*

York Moments was presented at the Kunstmuseum Basel in 2005. He was also included in the recent group exhibition *Slab City* in 2019 at the Farnsworth Art Museum in Rockland, Maine.



RUDY BURCKHARDT *Shoulders*, c. 1975

Upcoming exhibitions:

Medrie MacPhee | February-March 2021

Nell Blaine | April-May 2021