



# A Keen Eye

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Curated by Sarah Schroth

14 November – 19 December 2025  
Tryon Fine Arts Center – Tryon North Carolina

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Jane Parker Gallery  
Tryon Fine Arts Center  
34 Melrose Ave - Tryon NC 28782  
14 November – 19 December 2025

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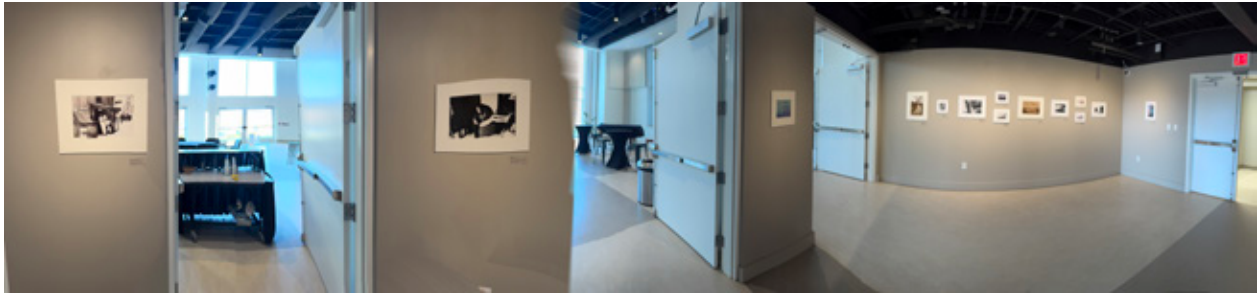
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Special thanks to Marianne Carruth, Nancy Holmes, Darlene Cah, David Riddle TIFAC Writers and Artists, Roger Newman, Sarah Schroth and Sam Heath.



**Sala 1**



**Artist's**

**Statement**

For me, the “visual art” of photography is discovering in a viewfinder and communicating in a picture what can be seen and felt in life’s subliminal human moments.

Photographs compress time and space into moments we might never otherwise stop to notice; here and gone before the mind can absorb them, less than the blink of an eye, in fractions of a second. Photographs cast spells.

Photography is a sort of alchemy. Immortalizing in silver salts (or digital format) momentary effervescent and evanescent glimpses of life. Giving permanence to life’s brief fleeting moments. Blurring lines between objectivity and subjectivity in various media. Energizing in 2-dimensions actual human spirit and feeling.

That’s the art. It’s a form of prayer. Subliminal, ethereal, and transcendent. Non-describable in words. The “art” requires practice in being available and responding to life in moments and feelings discovered in a viewfinder.

It requires sensitivity, sincerity, and intuition. Suspending intellect and opening the heart. Letting the moments and feelings tell you when it’s time to press the shutter. It’s more journey than destination. As much active participation as it is observation.

Pictures can give me joy. And they can make me sad. I love engaging with the world in a camera’s field of vision, in ever-changing time and fleeing light. Evoking dreams, remembrances of things past. Intimations of eternity.

This show is the brainchild of Sarah Schroth, Director Emerita of Duke University’s Nasher Museum of Art. Sarah selected these prints from my personal collection on a recent visit to my home and studio in Boca Raton. She’s grouped the individual pictures, as verses in a poem, into landscapes, interior spaces, scenes from ordinary life, and portraits. I’m thrilled with Sarah’s artful organization, grateful to Tryon Fine Arts Center for the opportunity to show my work, and excited to share it with the Community of Tryon and visitors to the gallery.

Dean Manis  
November 14, 2025

# Curatorial Statement

The Tryon Fine Arts Center in Tryon, North Carolina hosted an exhibition in its Jeanne Parker Gallery entitled A Keen Eye: Photography by Dean Manis (November 14 December 19, 2025). The exhibition catalogue showcases 47 black and white and color photographs by Manis, dating from the 1970s to the present, which were taken during his extensive travels in the US and Europe.

Dean, born in Brooklyn and currently residing in Washinton, D.C. and Boca Raton, Fl., is a lawyer, musician, photographer, painter and printmaker, and recently completed a mosaics workshop in Rome, Italy.

He has been the recipient of one-person exhibitions of his paintings, intaglio prints and drawings in 2006, 2007 and 2009 at the Foundry Gallery in Washinton D.C.

The subjects seen in A Keen Eye: Photography by Dean Manis are formalist images -- landscapes, architecture, cityscapes, portraits and urban scenes, made using 35mm, medium format and 4 x 5 cameras. Featured are vintage silver gelatin prints, pigment prints, Selenium toned silver gelatins and some rare Cibachrome prints. Dean makes his own prints in the darkroom.

His interest in photography began at an early age, and has stayed with him as a continuing passion, even as he practiced law and explored other media in the visual arts. A Keen Eye: Photography by Dean Manis was the first public exhibition of his photographs.

Dean's subjects are taken with a unique personal viewpoint, often shot from an uncommon angle. I have admired Dean's work for nearly four decades. As the curator for this show, I painstakingly selected the works from a much larger body of work, not an easy task with so many worthy examples to choose from. Dean is a true talent. I am honored to have worked with him to create an exhibition of his astonishing photographs.

Sarah Schroth  
Director emerita, Nasher Museum  
of Art at Duke University

**Notes**

**TFAC**

**Artist &**

**Writers**

*Every Saturday morning, the TFAC Artists & Writers group gathers in the center's gallery to discuss various topics of interest.*

*Following are David Riddle's notes from their meeting on December 20, 2026, where the photographer Dean Manis talked about his work and answered questions on the last day of his exhibition entitled "A Keen Eye".*

Our last meeting was unique. And as is usually the case, you really had to be there to appreciate all that was included in our hour and a half of sharing with Dean Manis, whose photographs were exhibited in the Jeanne Parker Gallery from November 14-December 19.

You can find complete details on the exhibit and Dean's amazing background on the TFAC website, so I won't duplicate that here. I will share highlights from my notes on our conversation. In my notes, it's not always clear who's talking. You may find that to be the case as you read on. No worries, just go with the flow! Dean spoke to the group to get things started, and we wound up focusing on "setting" as it applies to photography, as well as other creative pursuits.

Dean told us, "My first camera was a Kodak Brownie. I was 8 years old taking pictures of the Grand Canyon."

He got an upgrade at 12. Setting relates to time and place in story-telling, whether the story is conveyed in words or visually. Setting relates to a sense of place, and place relates to identity, personally, collectively, culturally.

Dean has traveled extensively in the South, up and down the coast. "When I travel I'd ask myself, 'What is America?' How is it different in Georgia, South Carolina, Virginia?"

There's a spirit, a feeling about a particular



place in a particular time. Time can change this feeling, but a photograph can capture it as the photographer experiences it in that moment.

Things happen in unexpected moments. Dean told about meeting Edward Weston's grandson who was taking out the trash at the family home. He wound up being invited into the house and was able to take one of his favorite photographs – "Edward Weston's desk." We talked a bit about indoor and outdoor settings. Someone mentioned a visit to Monet's kitchen. "It was blue and yellow, so striking. That setting has stayed with me for years, and I've traveled in 9 countries! I remember the gardens too."

We had a description of a moment in NYC, on the way to the airport, the early morning sun on the skyline, with dark sky behind. "It struck me how we're never still, the planet is always moving, the view changes. I just happened to catch that image of the city in the morning light." Another photographer described being drawn to a particular setting, or to the light in the setting, then waiting for the right moment to get the shot. Somebody said photography has been called "instant drawing with light."

Other recollections of memorable settings: My bedroom window faced the Manhattan skyline. A persistent image of an old village in France, walking up the hillside, the dark sky as a storm was coming in.

A monastery in the Andes, stormy weather, black sky. The monastery walls were white, with a red door, and the sun was shining on the front of the building. A road trip, watching scenes changing along the way. Trying to stop the car in time to capture an image.

Trying to get photos of birds in migration. Lots of waiting.

I taught myself "tree-shape appreciation" when I was in elementary school. I use a camera now, but not in the ordinary way. "I'd say my work is more outrageous than professional." My photos look more like paintings, but no tricks! I particularly like old things, old places. Europe has a different spirit of place. In the US, in Phoenix, houses built in the 1940s are "old." Medieval France has castles from the 1100s. I've set my series of mystery novels in that time and place. My detective is an alchemist, the narrator is a ploughman. I've had to travel to France several times for research. (Oh, how we suffer for our art!)

We talked a bit about nostalgia for places in our past, sometimes long past, or even recent past.

After I moved away, I felt nostalgia for that part of my life. I included similar fictional places in my writing, so I could enjoy spending time there again.

We talked about time travel, visiting places that evoke a sense of the past. Sometimes hearing music can do that too. Appalachian music, the Carter family. You can feel yourself there. Some photos are timeless, with no particular

point of reference time-wise. A photo can capture a feeling that transcends time. Portraits can do this also.

We talked about the technicalities of photography, how processing film changed over time and how this changed the way images were presented. Dean spoke about doing his own darkroom work, which involves understanding of chemicals, time, light, properties of materials for printing.

In contrast, now we have digital images and the ability to produce prints from ink on paper, rather than light-sensitive paper. Paper surfaces are variable too – matte, glossy, in-between.

We discussed painting from photographs.

I don't typically paint from photographic images I think I can tell if a painting has been made from a 2-D photographic image.

Photographs are flat. A painting aims to create the illusion of three dimensions.

We spoke about how children view the world, and how different that can be from typical adult-eye view. When we traveled, I'd tell my kids to find something that's interesting.

My digital camera helps me see things I'd never have looked at before. It's a gift, to observe closely. It slows me down and helps me focus on what's here and now.

The written word helps us focus on moments too. One time in France, I was sketching a familiar scene in words. I saw a statue of a saint on a roof that I'd never seen before.

And in theater, rehearsals deal in moments. When I direct a play, I figure it's going to take 1.5 hours of rehearsal time for every minute of the on-stage production.

In cinema, it takes 120 hours of video to make a 40-minute film.

I like having a camera with me, because it keeps me looking forward. At my age (81) it's tempting to think everything is behind me.

The older I get the more I become aware of all the stuff I've missed. It keeps me open to new things.

Dean's long-time friend, Sarah Schroth, who was the prime mover behind this exhibition, shared some of her experiences.

"I've looked at art my whole life, studied art history. Then I took a 12-week drawing class and it showed me a new way of seeing. I looked at the way light hits things. I'd never really seen it that way before. Being called on to do it with my own hand made it real.

The job of curating an exhibit involves deciding what story to tell."

We had other stories, other memories of photographic encounters.

Just seeing a photo can be a connection to the past. It's personal. I worked my first job in that place!

NYC is a beautiful place ... 8 months out of the year! A photo showing an empty restaurant in Athens, Greece. After high school, I'd just gotten news that my mother was leaving and

moving to Greece. I saw this photo, and all the emotions from that time came flooding back to me. I wondered if my mother ever went to that restaurant.

There was a question about one photo, showing the base of a lighthouse, but with the top not visible in the photo. Why? Dean said, "It's good to have a little mystery, to not show everything."

So, we're just now at the beginning of a whole new year. Wonder what we'll be seeing in all our individual settings? Mystery awaits us! Come and see.

David Riddle  
January 2026

**Exhibition**

**Photographs**



Chenango River. Solsville,  
New York. 2022.  
Selenium toned gelatin  
silver print from 35mm  
negative.  
9 x 13 inches

Minnehaha Creek. Glen  
Echo, Maryland. 2018.  
Silver gelatin contact print  
from 4x5 negative.  
4 x 5 inches





Erie Canal. Lyons, New York. 2015.  
Pigment print from 35mm negative.  
5 x 3 1/4 inches



Pacific Coast Highway. Rte 1, California. 2019.  
Silver gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
6 1/2 x 4 1/4 inches



Monocacy River, Dickerson, Maryland. 2017.  
Silver gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
13 x 9 inches



Cohoes Falls. Cohoes, New York. 2021.  
Selenium toned silver gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
13 1/4 x 9 inches



El Rio Canal. Boca Raton, Florida. 2019.  
Pigment print from 35mm negative.  
9 x 6 inches



Exeter River, Exeter, New Hampshire. 2015.  
Pigment print from 35mm negative.  
5 1/2 x 3 1/2 inches



Susquehanna River. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. 2015.  
Silver gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
9 x 6 inches



Old Sheldon Church. Beaufort Co., South Carolina. 2016.  
Pigment print from 35mm negative.  
5 x 3 inches



Visualize Peace. Dumbo,  
Brooklyn, New York. 2003.  
Giclee from 35mm color slide.  
6 1/2 x 9 3/4 inches



Main Street. West Helena, Arkansas. 2016.  
Silver gelatin contact print from 120mm negative.  
7 x 2 1/2 inches



Tim Hudson, Nationals Park, Washington, D.C.. 2012.  
Pigment print from digital color positive.  
5 1/2 x 3 inches



Bryce Harper. Nationals Park,  
Washington D.C.. 2013.  
Pigment print from  
digital color positive.  
3 3/4 x 4 3/4 inches



Mickey Mantle. Yankee Stadium, Bronx, New York. 1967.  
Vintage Cibachrome from 35mm color slide.  
6 1/2 x 4 1/2 inches



Doubleday Field, Cooperstown, New York. 2018.  
Pigment print from 35mm negative.  
5 x 3 1/4 inches.



PNC Park, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. 2013.  
Pigment print from digital color positive.  
5 x 2 1/2 inches



Marilyn. Roseland, New Jersey. 1978.  
Vintage silver gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
6 1/2 x 4 1/2 inches



Jack. Derwood, Maryland. 2000.  
Pigment print from Hasselblad Polaroid.  
4 x 4 inches

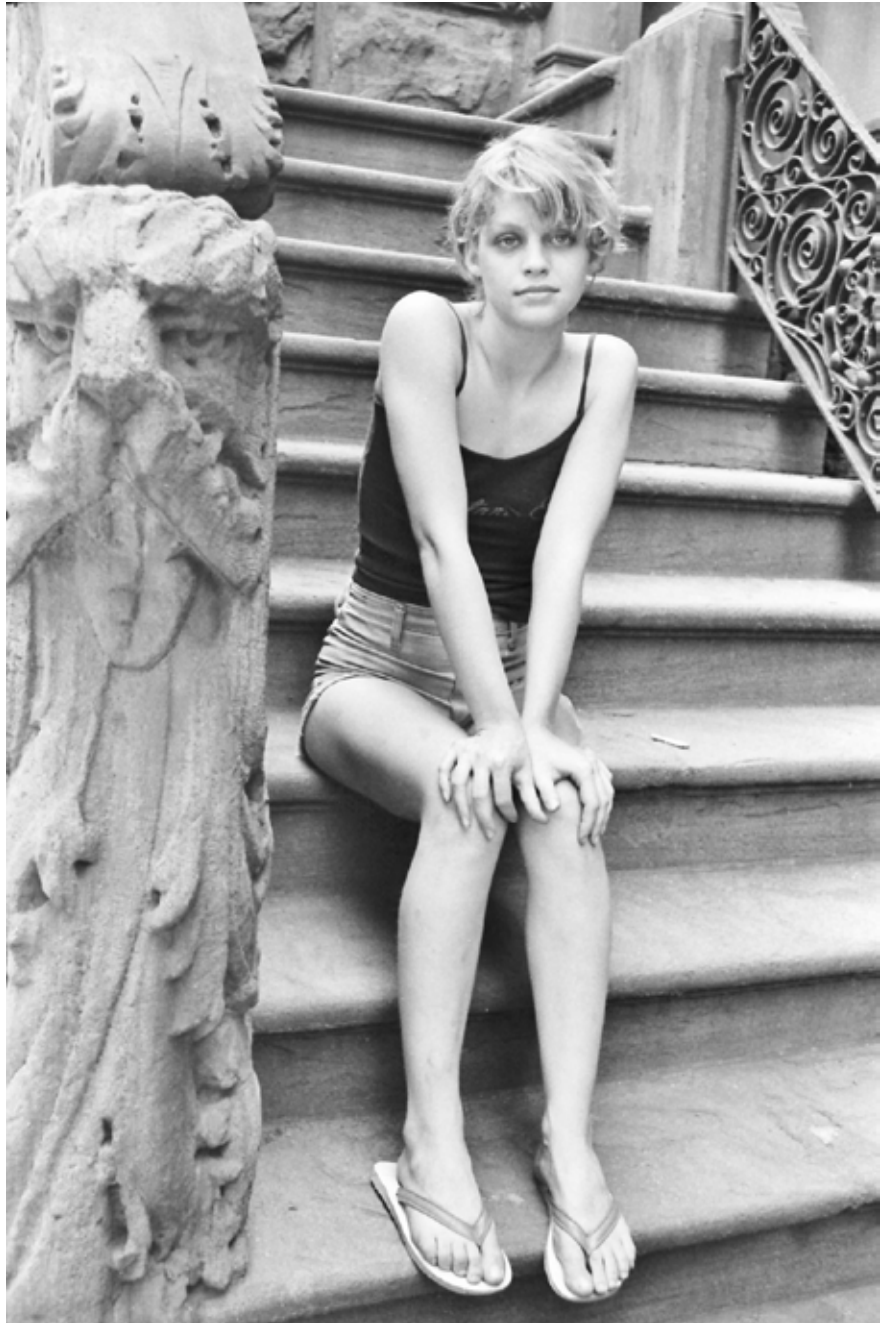


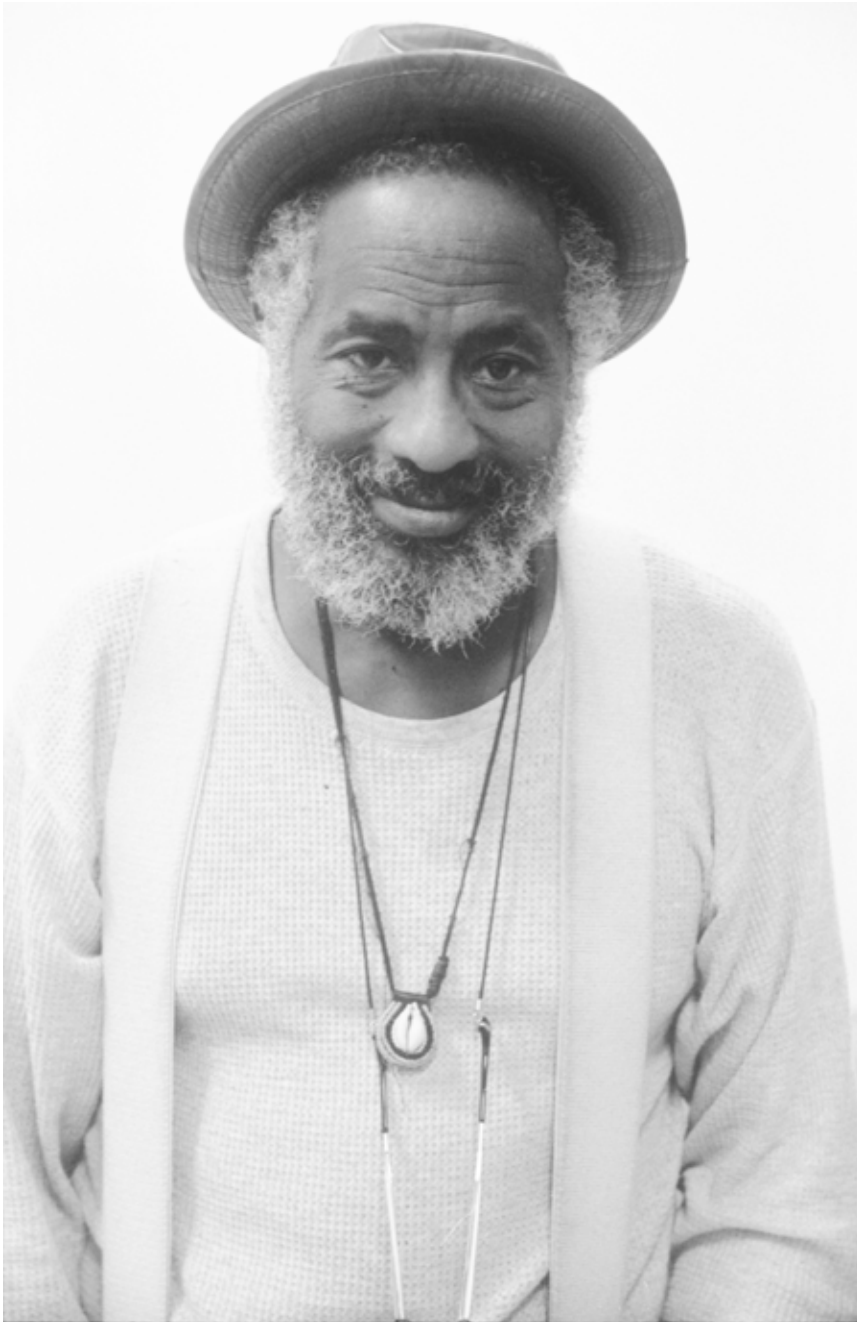
Sisters. Gourdon, France. 1981.  
Vintage silver gelatin print from 35 mm negative.  
3 1/4 x 2 1/2 inches



Pam. Harbor Lane, Brooklyn, New York. 1970.  
Vintage Silver gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
4 1/2 x 3 1/2 inches

J.J., Riverside Drive. New  
York, New York. 1981.  
Silver gelatin print from  
35mm negative.  
4 1/4 x 6 1/4 inches





Saxophone-player. Los Angeles, California. 2019.  
Silver gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
4 1/4 x 6 1/2 inches



Carousel. Paris, France. 1989.  
Vintage Cibachrome from color slide.  
9 x 6 inches



Edward Weston's Desk.  
Carmel Highlands,  
California. 2019.  
Silver gelatin print from  
35mm negative.  
8 3/4 x 13 inches



Lighthouse, Tybee Island. Savannah River, Georgia. 2016.  
Pigment print from 35mm negative.  
5 1/4 x 3 1/2 inches



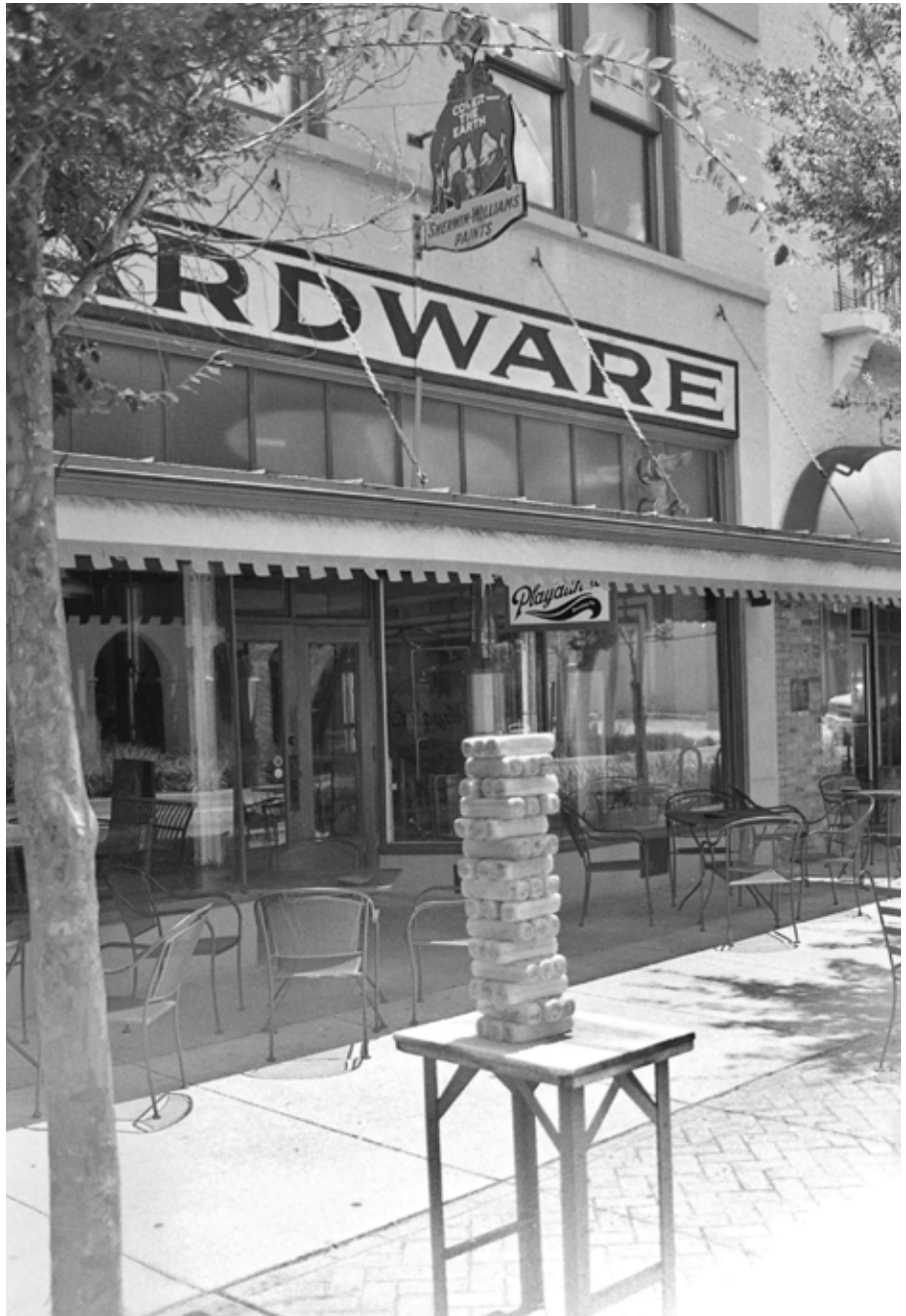
Ford's Theater. Washington, D.C.. 2016.  
Pigment print from 35mm negative.  
5 1/2 x 2 inches



Laurens Cotton Mill. Laurens, South Carolina. 2015.  
Silver gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
9 1/4 x 6 1/4 inches



Otto Milk Bldg. Pittsburgh,  
Pennsylvania. 1997.  
Pigment print from 35mm  
color slide.  
3 1/2 x 5 inches



Hardware Store.  
Titusville, Florida. 2019.  
Pigment print from  
35mm negative.  
3 1/4 x 5 1/4 inches



Caroline. Au Sable Forks,  
Jay, New York. 2007.  
Pigment print from digital  
positive.  
2 x 5 inches



Self-portrait with Graflex. Washington, D.C.. 2020.  
Silver gelatin contact print from 4x5 negative.  
5 x 4 inches



Self-portrait. San Francisco,  
California. 1981.  
Pigment print from  
35mm negative.  
3 x 5 inches



Brandon Mill. Greenville, South Carolina. 2020.  
Silver gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
9 1/8 x 6 inches



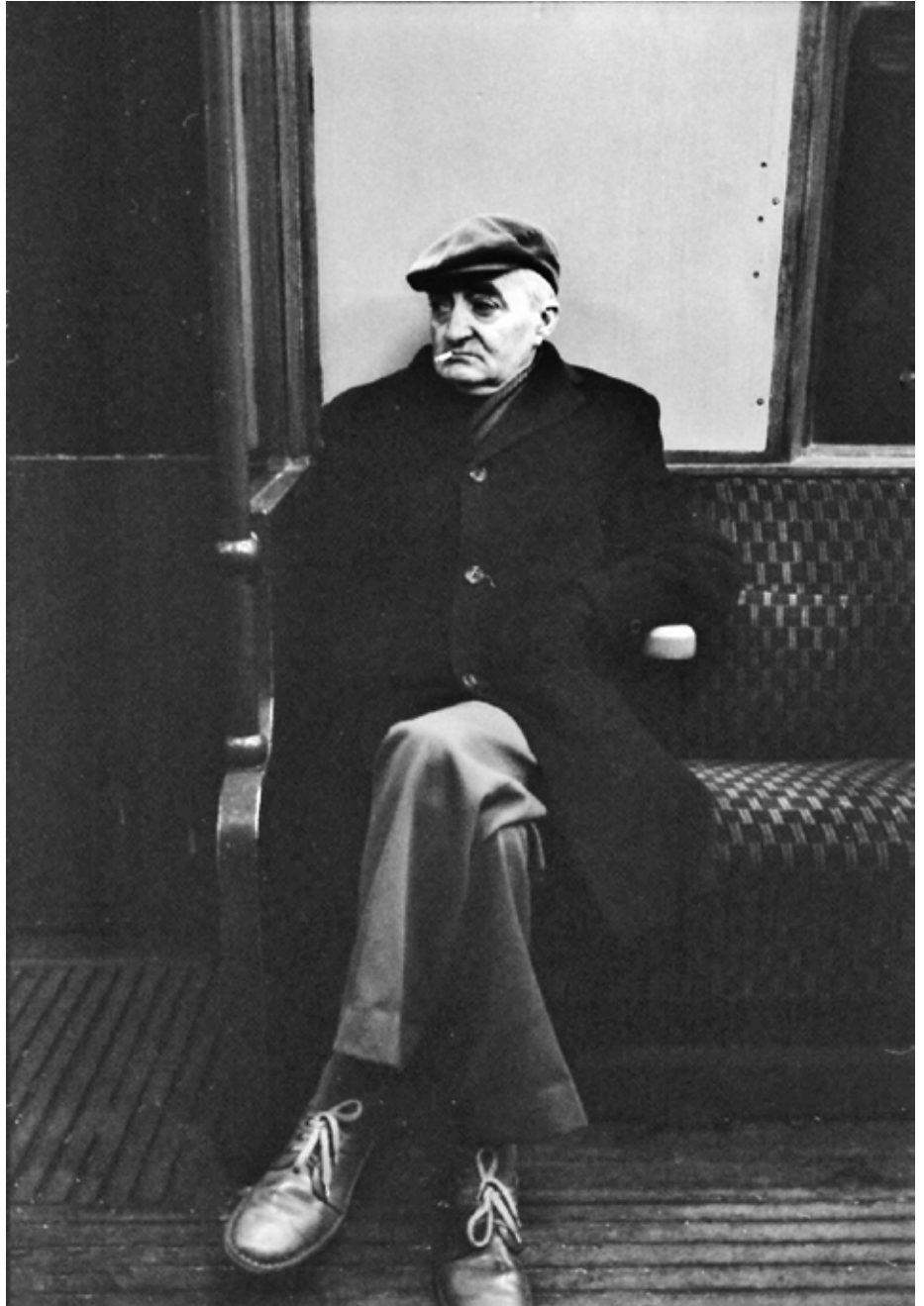
Streetsweeper. Paris, France. 1981.  
Vintage Silver gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
6 x 3 3/4 inches



Subway Station. Bensonhurst, Brooklyn. 1979.  
Vintage Silver Gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
8 x 5 1/2 inches



Basilica of Saint Anthony.  
Padua, Italy. 1975.  
Vintage Silver gelatin print  
from 35mm negative.  
4 1/8 x 6 inches



London Tube. London,  
England. 1981.  
Pigment print from  
35mm negative.  
3 1/2 x 5 inches



Pont Mirabeau, Seine River.  
Paris, France. 1980.  
Vintage silver gelatin print  
from 35mm negative.  
4 x 6 inches



Rue Zig-Zag.  
Gourdon-en-Quercy,  
France. 1980.  
Silver gelatin print from 35mm  
negative.  
2 3/4 x 4 inches



Place St. Pierre,  
Gourdon, France. 1980.  
Vintage Silver gelatin print  
from 35mm negative.  
2 1/2 x 3 3/4 inches



Eglise St. Romain. Gourdon, France. 2014.  
Pigment print from digital color positive.  
5 1/2 x 4 inches



Restaurant. Athens,  
Greece. 1981.  
Vintage silver gelatin print  
from 35mm negative.  
2 1/2 x 4 inches



Fontana Maggiore. Perugia, Italy. 2023.  
Pigment print from digital positive.  
10 1/2 x 8 inches



Royal Dragon and Killarney Rose. New York, New York. 1979.  
Silver gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
13 x 8 5/8 inches



Marilyn. Washington, D.C.. 1979.  
Vintage Silver gelatin print from 35mm negative.  
13 3/8 x 9 inches



Coney Island Ave. Brooklyn, New York. 1967.  
Vintage Cibachrome from 35mm color slide.  
9 x 6 inches

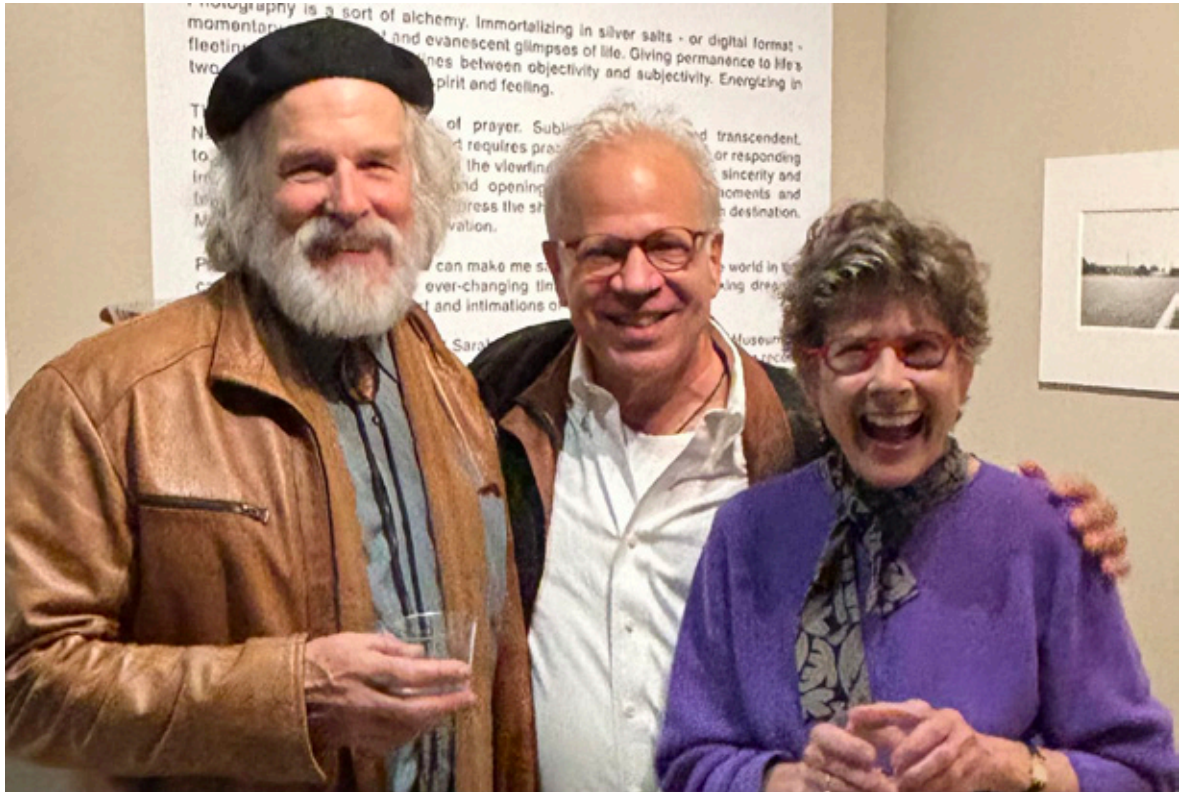


Self-portrait. San Francisco,  
California. 1981.  
Pigment print from  
35mm negative.  
3 x 5 inches

# DEAN

was born in Brooklyn, NY and currently resides in Washington, DC and Boca Raton, FL. A retired federal attorney, a musician, and a photographer, painter, and printmaker, Dean recently completed a six-week mosaic workshop in Rome, Italy. The Foundry Gallery in Washington, DC exhibited Dean's paintings, drawings, intaglio prints, and sculpture in shows in 2006, 2007 and 2009. The 47 photographs in *A Keen Eye* date from the 1970s to the present, and were taken during the artist's extensive travels in the US and Europe.

# MANIS



Sam Heath, Dean Manis and Sarah Schroth at the TFAC exhibition.  
Photo Ron Williams





Tryon Fine Arts Center