# NANCY REXROTH: IOWA

December 2, 2021 to January 30, 2022

***Rare vintage prints from the pioneering photographic series***

TEN NINETEEN
1019 Erato Street, New Orleans
ten-nineteen.org

Nancy Rexroth, ***My Mother,*** 1970. © Nancy Rexroth

Ten Nineteen is delighted to present ***Nancy Rexroth: IOWA,*** an exhibition featuring **28 rare, small format, vintage photographs** from the American photographer's pioneering 1977 ***IOWA*** series. The series is widely recognized as a seminal achievement in photographic history and continues to inspire countless artists, photographers, and scholars today (Sally Mann, Alec Soth, Jim Goldberg, to name a few). The exhibition will be on view **December 2, 2021 — January 30, 2022** at Ten Nineteen, located at 1019 Erato Street, New Orleans.

In the late 1960s, Nancy Rexroth (b. 1946) began photographing rural landscapes, children, white frame houses, and domestic interiors of rural Ohio, where she was in graduate school. At a moment when photographic technicality and precision were held high, Rexroth opted for a **$1.50 toy camera** (the "Diana") that had irregular exposures, bent perspectives, and faulty focus. She then further manipulated her images by deliberately blurring or overlaying them, abandoning form in the name of feeling, description for evocation. The result was a haunting, dream-like aesthetic that vibrated with joy, sadness, and longing in the slanting 4-o'clock light. As Rexroth explains, the Diana offered **"a pathway from the highly technical to the more internally sensitive."**

In 1977, with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, Rexroth self-published the series in a book she titled ***IOWA***. For Rexroth, though the images were captured in Ohio, they evoked memories of and feelings from summers spent in Iowa visiting relatives as a child. With the help of the title, she explains, she was able to demonstrate that **"a photograph doesn't have to be about the subject at hand. It can be about intangibles, about emotions."** The photographic community was mesmerized. Not long after, ***Aperture*** published a selection of ***IOWA*** images in a special issue called "The Snapshot" alongside works by Robert Frank, Garry

Winogrand, and Emmet Gowin and the International Center for Photography, Corcoran Gallery of Art, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum presented ***IOWA*** works in exhibitions.

In addition to the photographs, the exhibition also includes ***Light On Iowa* (2020)**, a conversational film with Nancy Rexroth, directed by Ann Segal, which debuted at the Cincinnati Museum of Art in 2021 to commemorate the museum's landmark acquisition of Rexroth work and archival materials.

"The ***IOWA*** series left an indelible mark on the history of photography," explains Ten Nineteen's Elizabeth Monaghan, who organized the show. Photographers like Cindy Sherman, Richard Prince, Carrie Mae Weems and many others would soon explore how images create meaning, and photography as a complex visual language would become a familiar genre for artists and scholars alike. **"Rexroth was at the vanguard," says Monaghan. "IOWA showed us that photography can do more than document a moment in time; it can reflect a very personal interiority. It's about the artist's vision, not the tool in her hand. And more than four decades later, these images still have the effect of something compellingly new."**

About the Artist

Nancy Rexroth (b. 1946) is an American photographer noted for her pioneering, evocative images captured with a toy camera. In 1977, Rexroth self-published a book of images entitled IOWA, which has inspired countless artists, photographers, and scholars and that continues to expand the parameters of the medium today. Her work is included in the collections of major institutions, such as the **Museum of Modern Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the National Gallery of Art, the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Center for Creative Photography, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Cincinnati Art Museum, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, and the Library of Congress.** She lives in Cincinnati, Ohio.

About the Gallery

TEN NINETEEN supports artistic innovation and independent thought. Through exhibitions, performances, community programs, political events and institutional partnerships, we strive to enrich public dialogue and stimulate culture shift. Our programs explore new ways to approach social, environmental, economic and political challenges, often engaging the arts as both a lens and catalyst. TEN NINETEEN was founded in 2019 by Elizabeth Monaghan and is located at 1019 Erato Street, New Orleans. ten-nineteeen.org

Hours:
Thursday – Saturday, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m, and by appointment.

Inquiries

Molly Rowe Bresnitz
mrb@ten-nineteen.org
504-272-7355