



HOWARD GREENBERG GALLERY

For Immediate Release

**Howard Greenberg Gallery
Ray K. Metzker: Black & Light
January 10 – March 2, 2019**



67 DH, Early Philadelphia, 1967

Gelatin silver print, printed 1967; 7 3/4 x 9 3/4 inches

© Estate of Ray K. Metzker, Courtesy Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York

NEW YORK CITY – Howard Greenberg Gallery will present **Ray K. Metzker: Black & Light** from January 10 – March 2, 2019. The gallery announced their primary representation of Metzker's estate last year, and this inaugural exhibition of his photographs will survey more than 50 works, many of which are well known and others recently discovered in the artist's archive, which will be on public view for the first time.

One of the great photographers of the modern era, Ray K. Metzker (1931-2014) is known for repeatedly reinventing his approach to the medium throughout his life. He is considered a master of light, shadow, and line whose work pushed the limits of what seemed formally possible in black and white photography.

Curator William A. Ewing describes Metzker's work as possessing, "a delicacy, and a childlike sense of wonder," while his "formalist rigor prevents him from succumbing to a facile sentimentality."

Ray K. Metzker: Black & Light surveys his early street photography from Chicago in the 1950s and Philadelphia in the 1960s, images from an extended trip to Europe in 1960-61, photographs from the series *Pictus Interruptus* from 1976-1980, work from his series *City Whispers* from the early 1980s, and examples from his collage series *Whimsy* and *Arrestation*.

Metzker challenged prevailing notions of what was possible with black and white photography, creating his own unique visual vocabulary. His densely shadowed cityscapes, made mostly in Chicago and in Philadelphia, where he lived and worked from 1962 until the end of his life, transform the ordinary into bold patterns of light. His later series *City Whispers* from the early 1980s reverberates with a sense of urban isolation. With his *Composites* series, Metzker used assemblages of printed film strips, which Keith F. Davis, Senior Curator, Photography, at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, noted marked "a major conceptual innovation in creative photography."

Conceived while working in Greece, *Pictus Interruptus* tested photography's boundaries: Metzker would disrupt the camera's view of land- and cityscapes with ordinary objects such as a piece of paper or a paper clip, thus creating inexplicable abstractions. In addition, the exhibition will include Metzker's collage works, one-of-a-kind pieces that underscore his reputation as a "darkroom alchemist."

"Invention and play work together," stated Metzker describing his methodology. "When it is finally time to invent, I am soaring."

About Ray K. Metzker

Ray K. Metzker was born in 1931 in Milwaukee. Photography became his passion after his mother gave him his first camera when he was 12. In 1953, he graduated from Beloit College in Wisconsin with a fine art degree. He earned a Master's degree in 1959 at the Institute of Design, Chicago (which at that time was being referred to as the New Bauhaus and was considered one of the most important photography programs in the U.S.), where he studied with Harry Callahan and Aaron Siskind. He taught for many years at the Philadelphia College of Art and also at the University of New Mexico. The Museum of Modern Art in New York gave him his first solo exhibition in 1967.

In his over-60-year career, Metzker had more than 50 solo exhibitions at major museums around the world and was the recipient of numerous awards including a Guggenheim Fellowship, two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships, and a Royal Photographic Society's Centenary Medal and Honorary Fellowship. His work is in the collections of more than 40 institutions and is the subject of more than 10 monographs. Among the institutions holding his work in their collections are the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, National Museum of

American Art – Smithsonian, Washington D.C.; Los Angeles County Museum, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Art Institute of Chicago; Nelson Atkins Museum, Kansas City; Cleveland Museum of Art; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Musee d'Elysee, Lausanne; and Albertina, Vienna.

About Howard Greenberg Gallery

Since its inception over 35 years ago, Howard Greenberg Gallery has built a vast and ever-changing collection of some of the most important photographs in the medium. The Gallery's collection acts as a living history of photography, offering genres and styles from Pictorialism to Modernism, in addition to contemporary photography and images conceived for industry, advertising, and fashion. Howard Greenberg Gallery is located at 41 East 57th Street, Suite 1406, New York. The gallery exhibits at The ADAA Art Show, The Armory Show, The Photography Show presented by AIPAD, Photo London, Art Basel, Paris Photo, and Art Basel Miami Beach. For more information, contact 212-334-0010, info@howardgreenberg.com or visit www.howardgreenberg.com.

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