Finding Aid to the Morrie Camhi Photograph Archive, 1970-1988

Collection number: BANC PIC 2005.109

The Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, CA 94720-6000
Phone: (510) 642-6481
Fax: (510) 642-7589
Email: bancref@library.berkeley.edu
URL: http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/

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Date Completed: 2013
Finding Aid Encoded By: GenX

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Collection Summary
Collection Title: Morrie Camhi photograph archive
Date (inclusive): 1970-1988
Collection Number: BANC PIC 2005.109
Photographer: Camhi, Morrie
Extent: 31 boxes (circa 1,380 photographic prints and circa 11,630 negatives) : b&w ; 16 x 20 in. or smaller
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URL: http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/

Languages Represented: Collection materials are in English

Access Information
B boxes 1, 5, 6, 9, 15 and 16 RESTRICTED EXHIBITION PRINTS. Consult finding aid for shelving locations of smaller use prints. Access to restricted prints only by permission of the appropriate curator. Inquiries regarding these materials should be directed, in writing, to the Head of Public Services, The Bancroft Library.
NEGATIVES RESTRICTED. Use of negatives only by permission of the appropriate curator. Inquiries regarding these materials should be directed, in writing, to the Head of Public Services, The Bancroft Library.

Conditions of Use
Copyright retained by the photographer's heir for her lifetime, after which it has been granted to the library.

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Morrie Camhi photograph archive, BANC PIC 2005.109, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog
Camhi, Morrie--Archives.
Agricultural laborers--California--Portraits.

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Biography/Organization History

Morrie Camhi was born in New York City in 1928 to Greek Jewish immigrant parents. He attended High School in Los Angeles and studied English literature at UCLA. After college, Camhi -- a self-taught photographer -- established a commercial photography business in Petaluma, where he would live for the remainder of his life. In 1972 he began to teach photography at San Francisco City College. He also taught at Stanford University, U.C. Berkeley, University of Oregon, Columbia College at Chicago, Sonoma State Univeristy, and Friends of Photography, among other locations. Morrie Camhi died in 1999.

Morrie Camhi’s sister was Rebecca Camhi Fromer (1927-2012), who founded, with her husband Seymour Fromer, the Judah L. Magnes Museum (now the Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life at the Bancroft Library).

Scope and Content Note

Collection includes negatives and selected prints from Camhi’s major series of portraiture: Farmworkers, Petaluma, Espejo: Reflections of the Mexican-American, Jews of Greece, AD-Vantage, Roadside Attraction and The Prison Experience. Also includes negatives pertaining to other projects and subjects, as well as miscellaneous photographic prints, correspondence, financial records and other papers.

The collection does not include any material pertaining to two of the photograher’s major projects: Haiku, and Journal.

Note

Some series descriptions include quotations taken from the photographer's website: http://www.stare.net/camhi/


Physical Description: 55 photographic prints and circa 780 negatives.

Scope and Content Note

Portraits and other photographs documenting the everyday lives of Chicano migratory farm workers of California.

"By responding symbolically, I saw we had tended to respond to a visual cliché that robbed a valiant people of their individuality and complexity. We had sensed the sledgehammer logic of their condition, muttered something unassailable about how bad it was, somehow felt relieved to have paid our sociological dues." (Morrie Camhi)

AX_box 1

Farmworkers: Photographic prints 11 x 14 in. or smaller. BANC PIC 2005.109--AX

Physical Description: 27 photographic prints.

Access Information

Open for access.

B_box 1

Farmworkers: Restricted exhibition prints. BANC PIC 2005.109--B

Physical Description: 14 photographic prints.

Scope and Content Note

Oversize exhibition prints for which smaller versions are available.

Access Information

RESTRICTED. Use smaller format prints in AX box 1.
| B_box 2 | Farmworkers: Exhibition prints. BANC PIC 2005.109--B  
Physical Description: 14 photographic prints.  
Scope and Content Note  
Oversize exhibition prints. No smaller-format versions available.  
Access Information  
Open for access. |
|---|---|
| NEG_strip_box 1 | Farmworkers: Negatives. BANC PIC 2005.109--NEG(strip)  
Physical Description: ca. 780 negatives.  
Scope and Content Note  
35mm film negatives.  
Access Information  
RESTRICTED. |
| Series 2. Petaluma. 1975-1976  
Physical Description: 38 photographic prints and circa 870 negatives.  
Scope and Content Note  
Portraits of residents of Petaluma and other subjects pertaining to the vicinity. |
| AX_box 1 | Petaluma: Photographic print 11 x 14 in. or smaller. BANC PIC 2005.109--AX  
Physical Description: 1 photographic print.  
Access Information  
Open for access. |
| B_box 3 | Petaluma: Exhibition prints. BANC PIC 2005.109--B  
Physical Description: 19 photographic prints.  
Scope and Content Note  
Oversize exhibition prints. No smaller-format versions available. |
| B_box 4 | Petaluma: Exhibition prints. BANC PIC 2005.109--B  
Physical Description: 18 photographic prints.  
Scope and Content Note  
Oversize exhibition prints. No smaller-format versions available.  
Access Information  
Open for access. |
| NEG_strip_box 1 | Petaluma: Negatives. BANC PIC 2005.109--NEG(strip)  
Physical Description: circa 870 negatives.  
Scope and Content Note  
35mm film negatives.  
Access Information  
Restricted. |

Physical Description: 119 photographic prints and circa 2,275 negatives.

Scope and Content Note
Camhi’s contribution to a comprehensive 2-year survey of Mexican-American people and culture. The project culminated in exhibitions at the Oakland Museum of California and the Center for Contemporary Photography in Chicago. In addition to being one of the six photographers to participate in the survey, Camhi was also the project director.

“I was welcomed into many homes, and the everyday quality of these visits had a special honesty, which I felt was important to share. Each person is the author of his or her environment; what we arrange on our walls is what we decide would be there. The environment functions as a biography and reflects our personal intensities and concerns. It has been my purpose to become part of the photograph, to enter into the equation of response. The images created are the result of our experiences of each other.” (Morrie Camhi)

AX_box 1
Espejo: Photographic prints 11 x 14 in. or smaller. BANC PIC 2005.109--AX
Physical Description: 61 photographic prints.
Access Information
Open for access.

B_box 5
Espejo: Restricted exhibition prints. BANC PIC 2005.109--B
Physical Description: 16 photographic prints.
Scope and Content Note
Oversize exhibition prints for which smaller versions are available.
Access Information
Restricted.

B_box 6
Espejo: Restricted exhibition prints. BANC PIC 2005.109--B
Physical Description: 11 photographic prints.
Scope and Content Note
Oversize exhibition prints for which smaller versions are available.
Access Information
Restricted.

B_box 7
Espejo: Exhibition prints. BANC PIC 2005.109--B
Physical Description: 16 photographic prints.
Scope and Content Note
Oversize exhibition prints. No smaller-format copies available.
Access Information
Open for access.

B_box 8
Espejo: Exhibition prints. BANC PIC 2005.109--B
Physical Description: 15 photographic prints.
Scope and Content Note
Oversize exhibition prints. No smaller-format copies available.
Access Information
Open for access.

- **Espejo: Negatives. BANC PIC 2005.109--NEG(strip)**
  - **Physical Description:** circa 2,275 negatives.
  - **Scope and Content Note:** 35mm film negatives.
  - **Access Information:** Restricted.


- **Jews of Greece: Photographic prints 11 x 14 in. or smaller. BANC PIC 2005.109--AX**
  - **Physical Description:** 60 photographic prints.
  - **Access Information:** Open for access.

  - **Physical Description:** 24 photographic prints.
  - **Scope and Content Note:** Oversize exhibition prints for which smaller versions are available.
  - **Access Information:** Restricted.

  - **Physical Description:** 17 photographic prints.
  - **Scope and Content Note:** Oversize exhibition prints. No smaller-format versions available.
  - **Access Information:** Open for access.

  - **Physical Description:** ca. 1,415 negatives
  - **Scope and Content Note:** 35mm film negatives.
  - **Access Information:** Restricted.

Series 5. AD-Vantage. 1982

- **Physical Description:** 41 photographic prints and circa 1,325 negatives.

- **Scope and Content Note:** Portraits of singles, most from the San Francisco Bay Area, accompanied by subjects' personal want-ad statements.

  "The personal want-ad is a kind of complete portrait, often telling of inner concerns as well as appearance. To live alongside their portraits I have created portraits of my own. There are surprises. Stereotypes sometimes shatter. There are confirmations as well as contradictions of the ad’s promise. But most of all, the personal want ad people seem a lot like the rest of us—but doing something about their unique needs or preoccupations.” (Morrie Camhi)"
Series 5. AD-Vantage. 1982

**AX_box 1**

**AD-Vantage: Photographic prints 11 x 14 in. or smaller.** BANC PIC 2005.109--AX

Physical Description: 9 photographic prints.
Access Information
Open for access.

**B_box 11**

**AD-Vantage: Exhibition prints.** BANC PIC 2005.109--B

Physical Description: 16 photographic prints.
Scope and Content Note
Oversize exhibition prints. No smaller-format versions available.
Access Information
Open for access.

**B_box 12**

**AD-Vantage: Exhibition prints.** BANC PIC 2005.109--B

Physical Description: 16 photographic prints.
Scope and Content Note
Oversize exhibition prints. No smaller-format versions available.
Access Information
Open for access.

**NEG_strip_box 3**

**AD-Vantage: Negatives.** BANC PIC 2005.109--NEG(strip)

Physical Description: circa 1,325 negatives.
Scope and Content Note
35mm film negatives.
Additional Note
Restricted.

**Series 6. Roadside Attraction. 1984**

Physical Description: 29 photographic prints and circa 1,090 negatives.
Scope and Content Note
Portraits, views and scenes of various subjects, presumably taken along highways of the American west (California, Arizona, Colorado and perhaps other states).

**B_box 13**

**Roadside Attraction: Exhibition prints.** BANC PIC 2005.109--B

Physical Description: 29 photographic prints.
Scope and Content Note
Oversize exhibition prints. No smaller-format versions available.
Access Information
Open for access.

**NEG_strip_box 3, NEG_strip_box 4**

**Roadside Attraction: Negatives.** BANC PIC 2005.109--NEG(strip)

Physical Description: 1,093 negatives.
Scope and Content Note
35mm film negatives.
Access Information
Restricted.

Physical Description: 984 photographic prints and circa 2,545 negatives.

Scope and Content Note
Portraits of prisoners, their families and prison staff of the California State Prison at Vacaville. Includes photographer's subject file folders (arranged numerically), release forms, and subject statements. The project resulted in a traveling exhibition and the book *The Prison Experience*, published in 1989.

"After an initial research period, there were eighteen months of photography at California’s Vacaville Prison. Alongside the photographs created were written statements, all in answer to the same question: “What do you want people to know about the prison experience?” (Morrie Camhi)

Additional Note
3 subject lists available in library: arranged by subject surname; arranged by photographer's file no.; arranged by page no. in book.

PIC_box 1

**Prison Experience: Release forms and accompanying photographic prints.**
BANC PIC 2005.109--PIC

Physical Description: 147 photographic prints.
Scope and Content Note
File nos. 1-40.

PIC_box 2

**Prison Experience: Release forms and accompanying photographic prints.**
BANC PIC 2005.109--PIC

Physical Description: 142 photographic prints.
Scope and Content Note
File nos. 41-90.
Access Information
Open for access.

PIC_box 3

**Prison Experience: Release forms and accompanying photographic prints.**
BANC PIC 2005.109--PIC

Physical Description: 126 photographic prints.
Scope and Content Note
File nos. 91-135.
Access Information
Open for access.

PIC_box 4

**Prison Experience: Release forms and accompanying photographic prints.**
BANC PIC 2005.109--PIC

Physical Description: 118 photographic prints.
Scope and Content Note
File nos. 136-179.
Access Information
Open for access.

PIC_box 5

**Prison Experience: Release forms and accompanying photographic prints.**
BANC PIC 2005.109--PIC

Physical Description: 131 photographic prints.
Scope and Content Note
File nos. 181-215.
Access Information
Open for access.
PIC_box 6  
**Prison Experience: Release forms and accompanying photographic prints.**  
BANC PIC 2005.109--PIC  
Physical Description: 62 photographic prints.  
Scope and Content Note:  
File nos. 216-221, plus empty file folders and miscellaneous project files.  
Access Information:  
Open for access.

AX_box 2  
**Prison Experience: Photographic prints 11 x 14 in.**  
BANC PIC 2005.109--AX  
Physical Description: 158 photographic prints.  
Scope and Content Note:  
Photographic prints of selected prisoners.  
Access Information:  
Open for access.

B_box 14  
**Prison Experience: Restricted exhibition prints.**  
BANC PIC 2005.109--B  
Physical Description: 34 photographic prints.  
Scope and Content Note:  
Oversize exhibition prints for which smaller versions are available.  
Access Information:  
Restricted.

B_box 15  
**Prison Experience: Restricted exhibition prints.**  
BANC PIC 2005.109--B  
Physical Description: 33 photographic prints.  
Scope and Content Note:  
Oversize exhibition prints for which smaller versions are available.  
Access Information:  
Restricted.

B_box 16  
**Prison Experience: Restricted exhibition prints.**  
BANC PIC 2005.109--B  
Physical Description: 33 photographic prints.  
Scope and Content Note:  
Oversize exhibition prints for which smaller versions are available.  
Access Information:  
Restricted.

NEG_strip_box 4,  
NEG_strip_box 5  
**Prison Experience: 35mm film Negatives.**  
BANC PIC 2005.109--NEG(strip)  
Physical Description: circa 2,545 negatives.  
Access Information:  
Restricted.

Series 8. Miscellaneous photographs and papers.  
Physical Description: 1 box of assorted papers, 16 photographic prints, circa 1,335 negatives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PIC_box 7</td>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous: Papers.</strong> BANC PIC 2005.109--PIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Description: 4 folders</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General correspondence; AD-Vantage project correspondence; workshop registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>materials; workshop financial records.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access Information</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open for access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AX_box 1</td>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous: Photographic prints 11 x 14 in. or smaller.</strong> BANC PIC 2005.109--AX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Description: 7 photographic prints.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subjects include Morrie Camhi, Christo and Van Deren Coke.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Access Information</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Open for access</td>
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<tr>
<td>B_box 17</td>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous: Exhibition prints.</strong> BANC PIC 2005.109--B</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Physical Description: 9 photographic prints.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Various subjects, perhaps related to the photographer's major projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subjects: Morrie Camhi (self-portraits), Christo, Van Deren Coke, Viola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weinberg, Kalico Kitchen Kafe (Cloverdale, Calif.) and Pelanconis' work hats.</td>
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<td>Access Information</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Open for access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEG_strip_box 5</td>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous: 35mm film negatives.</strong> BANC PIC 2005.109--NEG(strip)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Description: circa 1,335 negatives.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Various subjects, including (as described in photographer's annotations):</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gay liberation (235 negatives); Ralph O'Neill (165 negatives); Nell Sinton</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(331 negatives); Tom Carcione, Novato portrait (29 negatives); Ben Asher</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(515 negatives); miscellaneous/prisons related (60 negatives)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access Information</td>
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