

MEDIA RELEASE

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Suzanne Paul ***A Tribute to Suzanne Paul***

March 14, 2020 through May 9, 2020

Deborah Colton Gallery is pleased to present *A Tribute to Suzanne Paul*, an exhibition that features work from the archive of Houston-born artist, Suzanne Paul. *A Tribute to Suzanne Paul* highlights influential figures in Houston's art history and reveals a reflection of Paul's time in New York. The exhibition examines Suzanne's unique approach to creating photography. Please come to view this exhibition during our normal gallery hours. All works are available for acquisition.

Suzanne Paul, a native Houstonian and avid photographer from a young age, has made an inestimable contribution to representing the arts in Houston and to recording Houston's art history. In intimate and revealing ways, Paul has documented many of the artists, patrons, and community leaders who have shaped Houston's art scene from the 1970s until 2005. Her introduction to the Houston arts and launch of her fine arts career happened in 1976 when she was commissioned by James Harithas, then Director of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, to photograph artists and installations for the museum's publications. Shortly thereafter, she was offered the first solo photography exhibition by a woman at the museum. From there, Paul was seen at every major art event in Houston, capturing the finest moments of significant art events in our city. "If Paul was there, it was an important happening," states Deborah Colton.

Soon it was realized that Paul's work was much more than just capturing images of the art scene though. Clearly, Suzanne Paul captured the essence of each person in a way that Houston had never seen before. As Clint Wilour, curator of the FotoFest solo exhibition of Suzanne Paul's work, *Being Human* wrote in 2001, "There is a belief in many cultures that the camera is capable of stealing the human soul or spirit. [Suzanne] Paul's camera may not steal the soul, but it certainly captures it and the spirit within... These are personal, intimate, compelling excursions into the humanity of her subjects..."

Born in Houston, Texas in 1945, Paul received her BFA from the University of Houston in 1968 and completed graduate work at the University of California, Berkeley. In the 1960s, Paul became a political activist for anti-war and civil rights causes. In Houston, she photographed for the feminist magazine *Breakthrough* in the late 1970s.

Suzanne Paul has over 15 works in the permanent collection of the Museum of Fine Arts: Houston and has had solo exhibitions at the Contemporary Art Museum: Houston, the Fort Worth Art Museum, the Galveston Arts Center and the University of California, San Francisco. She has participated in numerous group exhibitions including *Collaborations: Artists Working Together in Houston* at the Glassell School of Art and *Texas Artists* at the Charles Cowles Gallery in New York among many others nationwide.

In 1981 Suzanne Paul received a National Endowment for the Arts Photo Survey Grant and has been listed as one of the top national female photographers over the years. Her photographic works have been featured in both solo and group exhibitions by FotoFest International since their founding in 1983. Suzanne Paul's work has been shown in many of exhibitions at Deborah Colton Gallery, including the gallery's 2016 FotoFest solo exhibition of Paul's work *Proof*, and going as far back as at the Memorial exhibition and reception at the time of her passing in 2005 at Colton's first gallery space on Summer Street. Suzanne Paul's work is now permanently featured in Deborah Colton Gallery's "Houston Foundations Room."

As Catherine D. Anspion wrote about Suzanne Paul in her essay, *The Legacy of the Lady with the Leica* in the Deborah Colton Gallery *Proof* catalogue, "It is sincerely hoped that this exhibition will be the beginning of the rediscovery of Paul, as well as propelling her authentic images to achieve the renown they deserve both in Texas and beyond. She surely was our Jonas Mekas."

Deborah Colton Gallery is founded on being an innovative showcase for ongoing presentation and promotion of strong historical and visionary contemporary artists world-wide, whose diverse practices include painting, works on paper, sculpture, video, photography, performance, conceptual future media and public space installations.