

City/2

Every Corner Is A Room

Laurence Salzmann



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Forward

Laurence Salzmänn's photographs titled *City/2* depict his journey through the Philadelphia's neighborhoods that are so familiar to him ever since his boyhood and early adulthood: Center City where he grew up; South Philadelphia where Salzmänn's father disembarked with his parents and siblings from the ship that brought them from Russia; West Philadelphia where Salzmänn came to live most of his life with his wife and daughter. Other neighborhoods include tracts of Philadelphia cleared to make way for I-95S, and Manayunk before it became a trendy neighborhood.

These photographs, commissioned by the American Institute of Architects, were first shown at the Philadelphia Museum of Art as part of a larger exhibit of the public use of space in the city, entitled *City/2: The Street is a Room*, 1971. The title was suggested by Louis Kahn, the notable Philadelphia architect and visionary who stated that in any given city half of its space was more or less public that could be envisioned as an extra living room for the public-at-large to enjoy.

Keeping Kahn's idea in mind, Salzmänn set out with his camera to observe people interacting as a performance of

a "ballet of the streets", (in Jane Jacob's metaphor), in the city's parks, street corners, sidewalk cafes and other venues. Salzmänn's visual impressions were varied; he saw people passing each other in the vast public spaces with hardly a nod of recognition where they seemed to meet but did not acknowledge each other's presence.

Was this behavior in public a cultural phenomenon or a consequence of repressive social/political climate of the 1970s—in the midst of the Vietnam war, racial unrest, the presence of vigilant FBI, or the city's civil disobedience squads keeping an eye on the public?

Such thoughts lingered in Salzmänn's mind, and the images for this series merged.

Nearly forty years after the *City/2* exhibit, Salzmänn continues with new projects some of which explore diversity of cultures and ways of life, while other studies just investigate the magic of a simple shadow on the street after a rainfall.



















































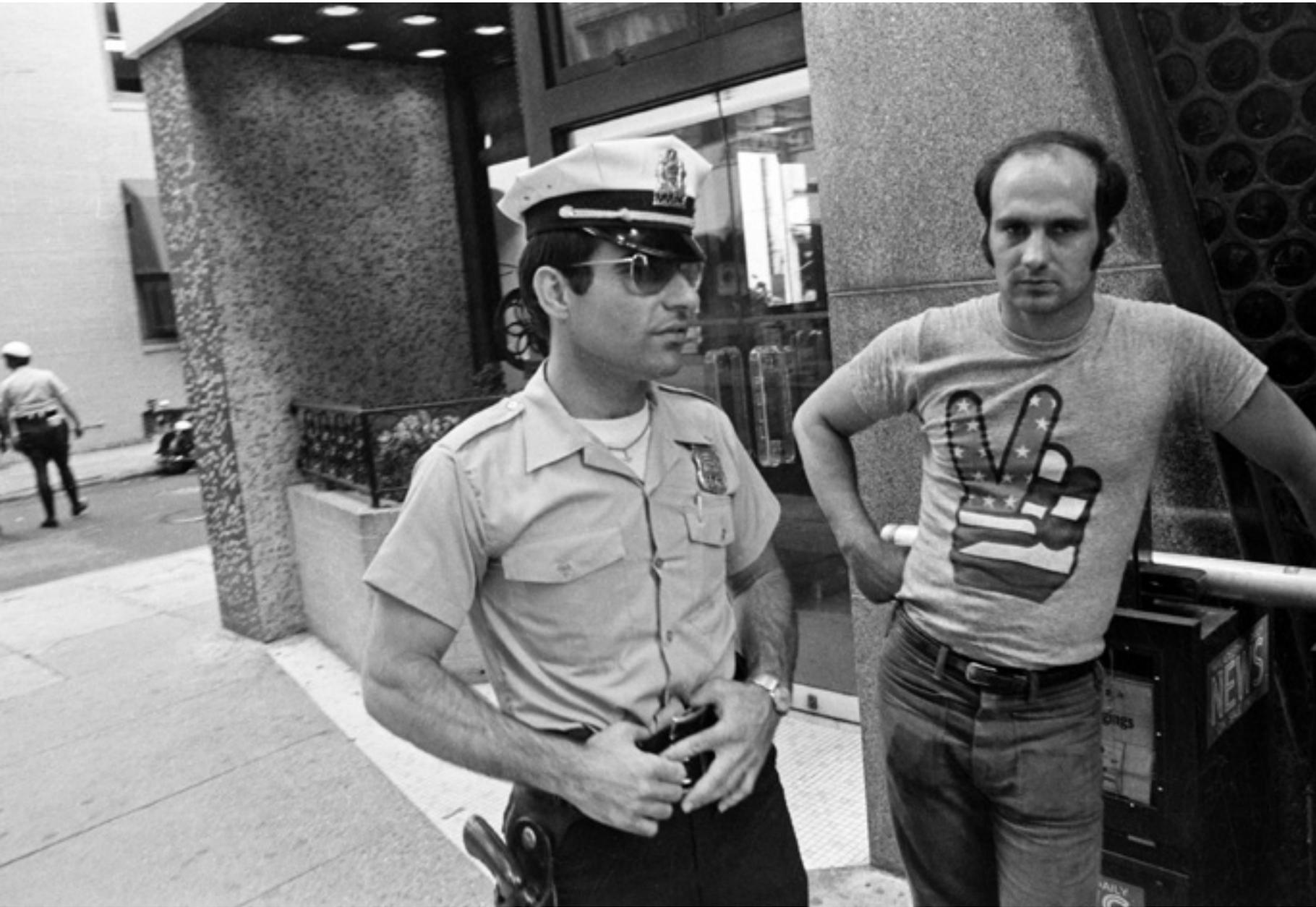




















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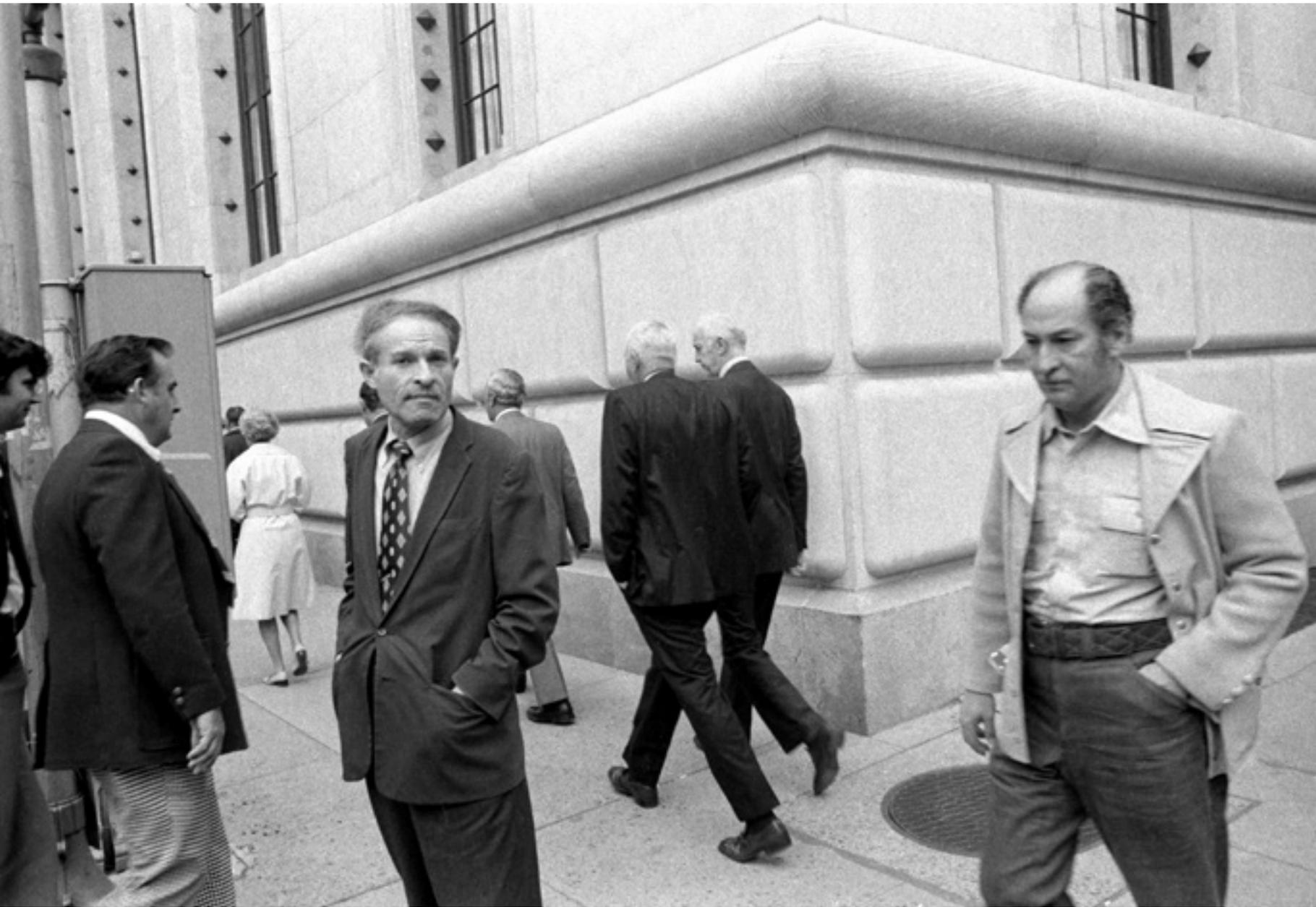
























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About the Photographer

As a native of Philadelphia, Laurence Salzmänn grew up in the 1800 block of Pine Street. He had a Caucasian birth mother, Eunice Chaiken Salzmänn (see page 25), and a Black nanny who raised him, named Zenora Carter (see page 24). To both, he owes his insights about the intersection between peoples of different races and cultures.

Photographs for City/2 series made with an Asahi Pentax Camera equipped with a Takumar 28mm lens. Shot on Tri-x film rated at 400 asa.