

Hollis Frampton
Box 99, River Road
Eaton, NY 13334

Tel: (315) 684-3149

PROPOSAL SUBMITTED TO LIGHT WORK/COMMUNITY DARKROOMS, SYRACUSE

Funding is requested for a photographic project that falls within the general category of Artists' Books.

One general, public assumption about photographs is that the process of photographic representation amounts to a preservation or embalming process. The lost presence of the photographed thing, person, situation is invoked through a mummified echo, reduced to a husk of the light that once revealed it. The photographic likeness bears a distant, partial, decolorized or muted resemblance to its 'subject;' at the same time, it has unique qualities of its own, which are entirely independent of what it depicts. Every photograph is potentially a keepsake, like a lock of hair, and a MEMENTO MORI.

For some years I have been interested in this abstract process of preservation, and its symmetry with natural processes of mummification where the contour of the once living thing is recognizably retained. I have made a collection of such "autographic likenesses" of animals. They range from Upstate New York road kills, flattened and sun-baked, to dried fish and squid in oriental food markets: a single general process and appearance, metaphorically reminiscent of the photographic image, covers a range from the blatantly morbid through the grotesque and sentimental to the edible. Like photographs, as well, they are remarkable objects in themselves.

The proposed project will close the circle between these two sorts of likeness. I will make a portfolio of about fifteen 16x20 color prints of photographs of these formerly living objects; the photographs will be accompanied by a printed text. The edition will be limited to sixteen sets, of which one will be donated to Light Work/Community Darkrooms in Syracuse and another to the Visual Studies Workshop Research Center in Rochester. Two sets will be retained as Artist's Proofs, and the remaining twelve offered for sale at a currently competitive price. All the portfolios will be individually

signed and numbered.

A single set of photographs will be matted and framed. Light Work/Community DarkRooms is committed to exhibiting the series on completion.

I anticipate this project will be completed within six months of funding.

A note may be in order about my qualifications for carrying out such a project. Although the largest part of my work for the past fourteen years has been in film, I have continued to work in still photography on an occasional basis. I would point out that I once worked for ten years as a laboratory technician, making what were then called "Type C" prints, and dye transfers. I have taught color and black-and-white still photography at the university level, and have published a body of critical writing on photography. A copy of my current vita is enclosed.

For some years I have been interested in this abstract process of observation and the capacity with natural processes of identification, and the capacity of the once living thing to be recognizable as alive. I have made a collection of such photographic images, in various forms. They range from letters now lost near walls, partially sun-baked, to dried fish and squid in which food workers handle general objects, and apparently uncharacteristic elements of the kitchen. They range from a range from the instantly visible to the unrecognizable and sentimental to the subtle. Like photographs, they are remarkable objects themselves.

The proposed project will show the results of this process of observation and identification. I will make a series of about fifteen color prints of uncharacteristic objects, for example, dried fish, squid, and other objects, which will be displayed in a series of prints. The exhibition will be the work of the artist, and will be shown at Light Work/Community DarkRooms in Syracuse and another of the Visual Studies Research Center in Rochester. The work will be exhibited in a series of prints, and the exhibition will be referred to as a series of photographs. All the photographs will be of the same size.