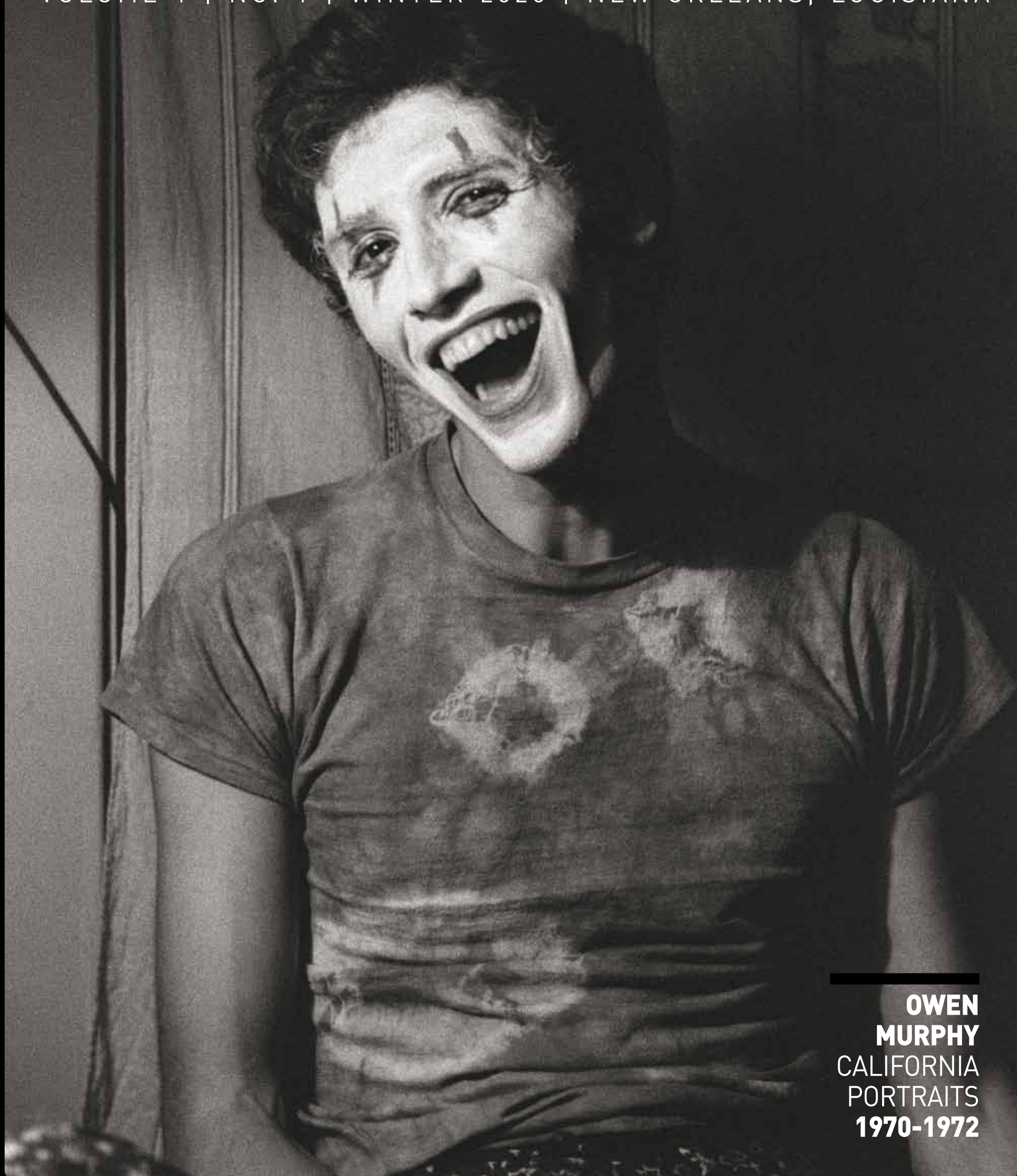


LOST TIMES GAZETTE

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**OWEN
MURPHY**
CALIFORNIA
PORTRAITS
1970-1972



■ **Blue Man (OPPOSITE)** He started painting himself blue before we left for a swanky party. At the appropriate moment, he descended a curved staircase into a huge foyer, naked and blue from head to toe, and strutted like a proud exotic bird amongst the assembled guests, a very California moment for me.

■ **If Three was Zero (ABOVE)** The bird, the young black man, and the elderly woman were coexisting in a place in time, alone in their personal orbits. She was reading a letter that was its own riddle.

REMEMBERING MY HYDE STREET DAYS

I was just learning my craft when a print I dared submit to **ROLLING STONE** was chosen by **ANNIE LIEBOVITZ** to appear on their "Letters to The Editor" page. I took it as a sign. I packed my bags and moved into a flat on Hyde Street in San Francisco. During my time there, I photographed my roomies, my friends, and the vibrant San Francisco street life as well as places and people down the coast to Los Angeles and into Mexico, all the while honing my skills developing and printing in rental darkrooms throughout the city. Eventually I returned home to New Orleans to further my work as a photographer, but my **CALIFORNIA PORTRAITS** were always in the back of my mind, and I vowed to return to them one day and give them their proper due. This issue of **LOST TIMES GAZETTE** is the beginning of the fulfilment of that promise to myself. — **Owen Murphy**

OWEN MURPHY: A STUDENT OF AND BELIEVER IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF PHOTOJOURNALIST DENNIS CIPNIC, OWEN IS A NEW ORLEANS-BASED PHOTOGRAPHER AND TEACHER AND A CO-FOUNDER OF THE **NEW ORLEANS PHOTO ALLIANCE** AS WELL AS **PHOTONOLA**, ONE OF AMERICA'S PREMIER PHOTOGRAPHY EVENTS.

"...and strutted like a proud exotic bird amongst the assembled guests..."



■ **(THIS PAGE)** I was mesmerized by **Caroline's** sad beauty. She was very different, kind of lonely, which is why I guess she hung out with us.

■ **Ronnie** brought all of his NYC street smarts and hustle with him. A singer and musician, he was destined to become one of SF's celebrated poets and a translator of European poets.

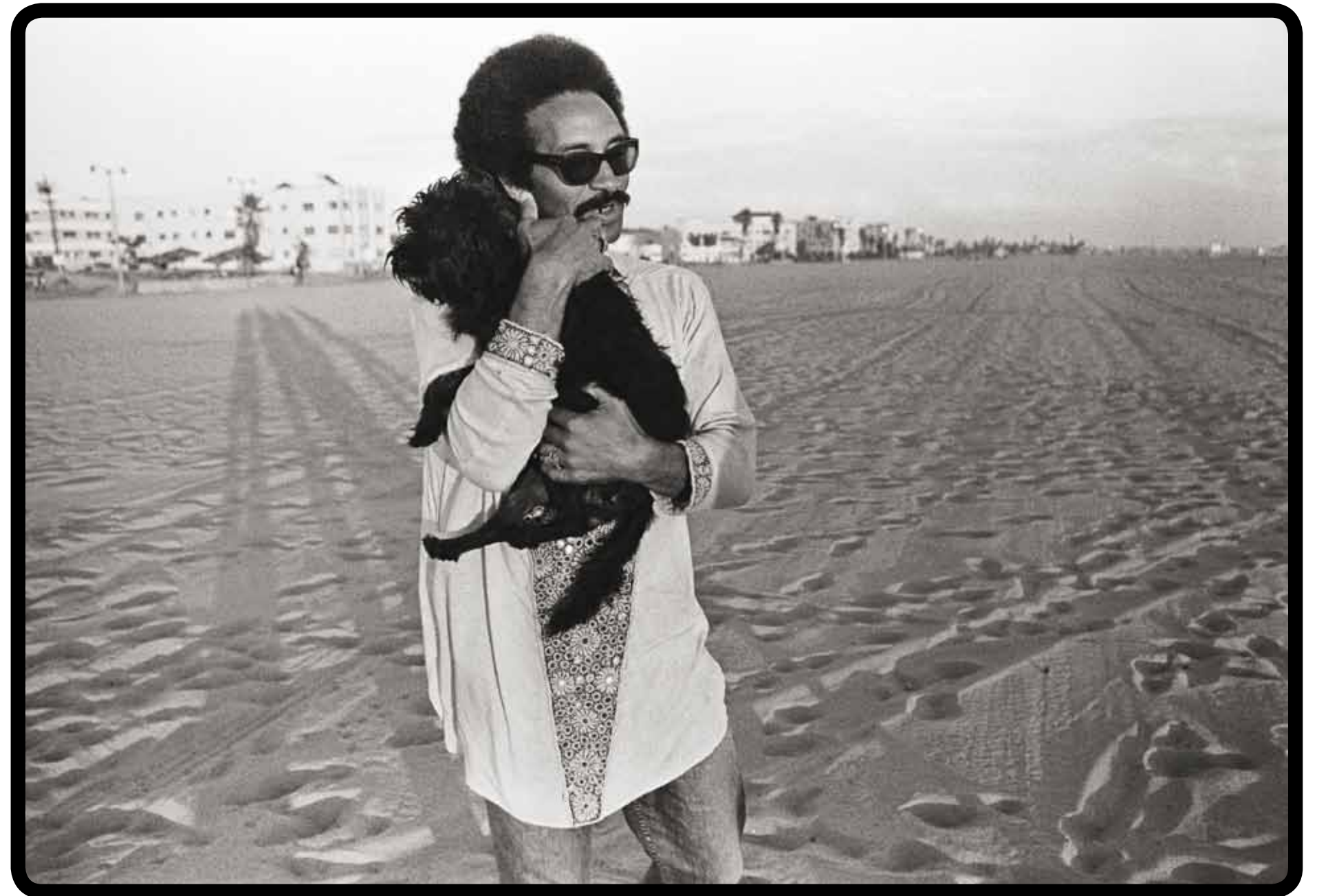
■ **Sarah** and Marsha were in the radical alternative theater piece *The Cubicle*. She never revealed much about who she was and was always guarded.

■ **(OPPOSITE PAGE)** I was completely humbled by the openness of **Barbara** and **Frank**.

They accepted me, a stranger, with a graciousness that was not uncommon for the era. My timing was another of Fortuna's gifts, as they were planning on christening their new baby the day after I arrived.

■ **Danny**, who was good friends with Frank and Barbara, joined us for the sunset christening and personified gentleness and acceptance of his place in the world.

"They accepted me, a stranger, with a graciousness that was not uncommon for the era."





THIS PAGE:
MARSHA MORNING, SF, HYDE ST.
[6]

■ **Marsha Morning** Marsha was mercurial and spontaneous; she never, ever told me I couldn't make a photo of her.

■ **Miss Jester (Marsha)** A theatrical, soulful woman, with a wonderful singing voice and a joy for life, she made our flat a wonderful place to share.

■ **Marsha Sleeping** I almost felt guilty about making this photo in her room while she was unaware of my silent, voyeuristic intrusion, but the light and balance of the scene spoke to me while Fortuna whispered in my ear, "Do not waste a gift like this."

"Fortuna whispered in my ear,
'Do not waste a gift like this.'"

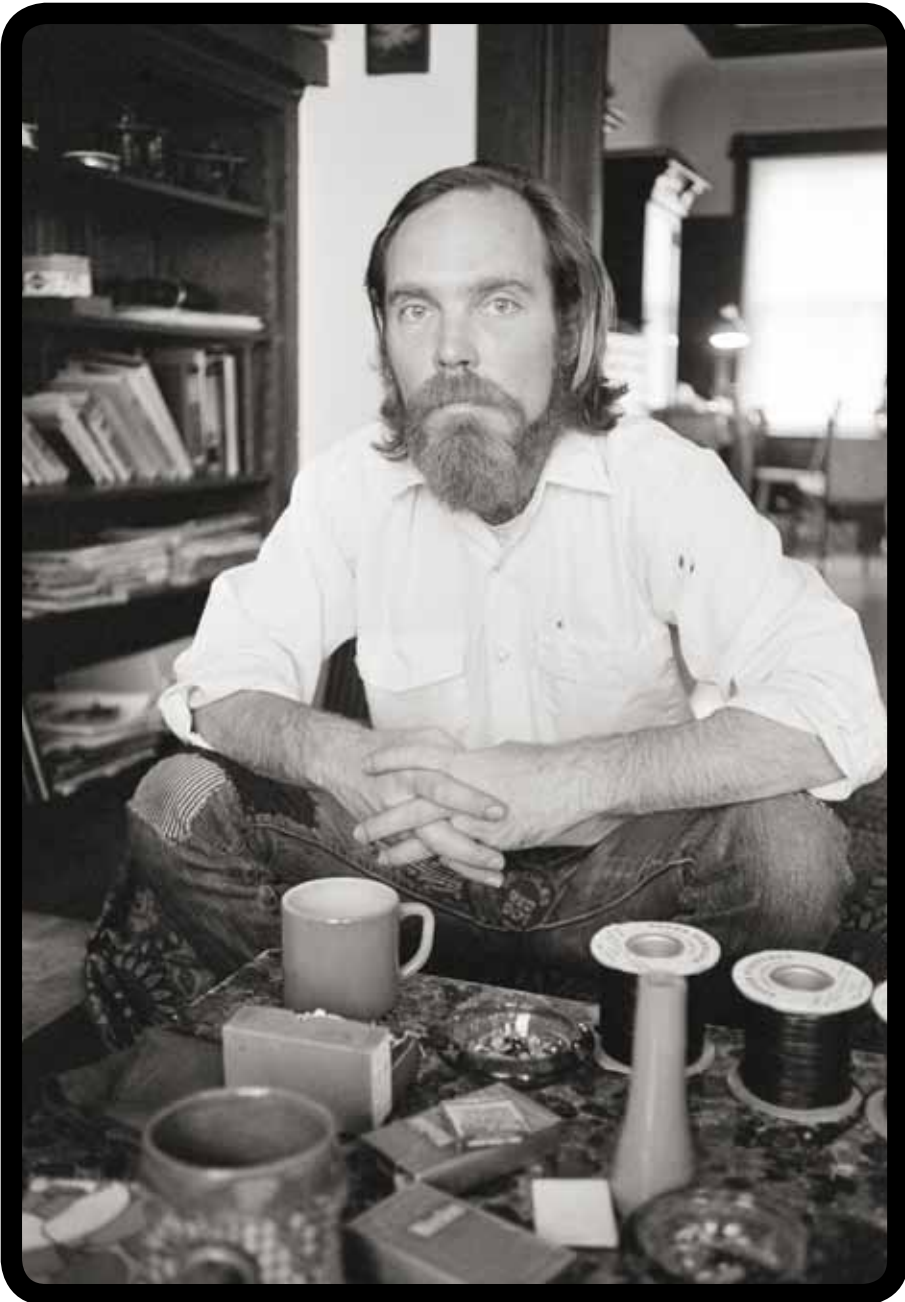


TOP MARSHA AS MISS JESTER, SF, HYDE ST.
BOTTOM MARSHA SLEEPING, SF, HYDE ST.
[7]

My **Roomies**, my tribe, my people: I was so comfortable with this group sharing our flat together. We liked being in each other's company and spent many a day and night listening to music, talking, and sharing meals. As in many living arrangements, washing the dishes was the main issue, and buying toilet paper was everyone's personal responsibility. We were all at that point where our lives stretched out in front of us, each striving for our place in the grand scheme.



"...our lives stretched out in front of us, each striving for our place in the grand scheme."



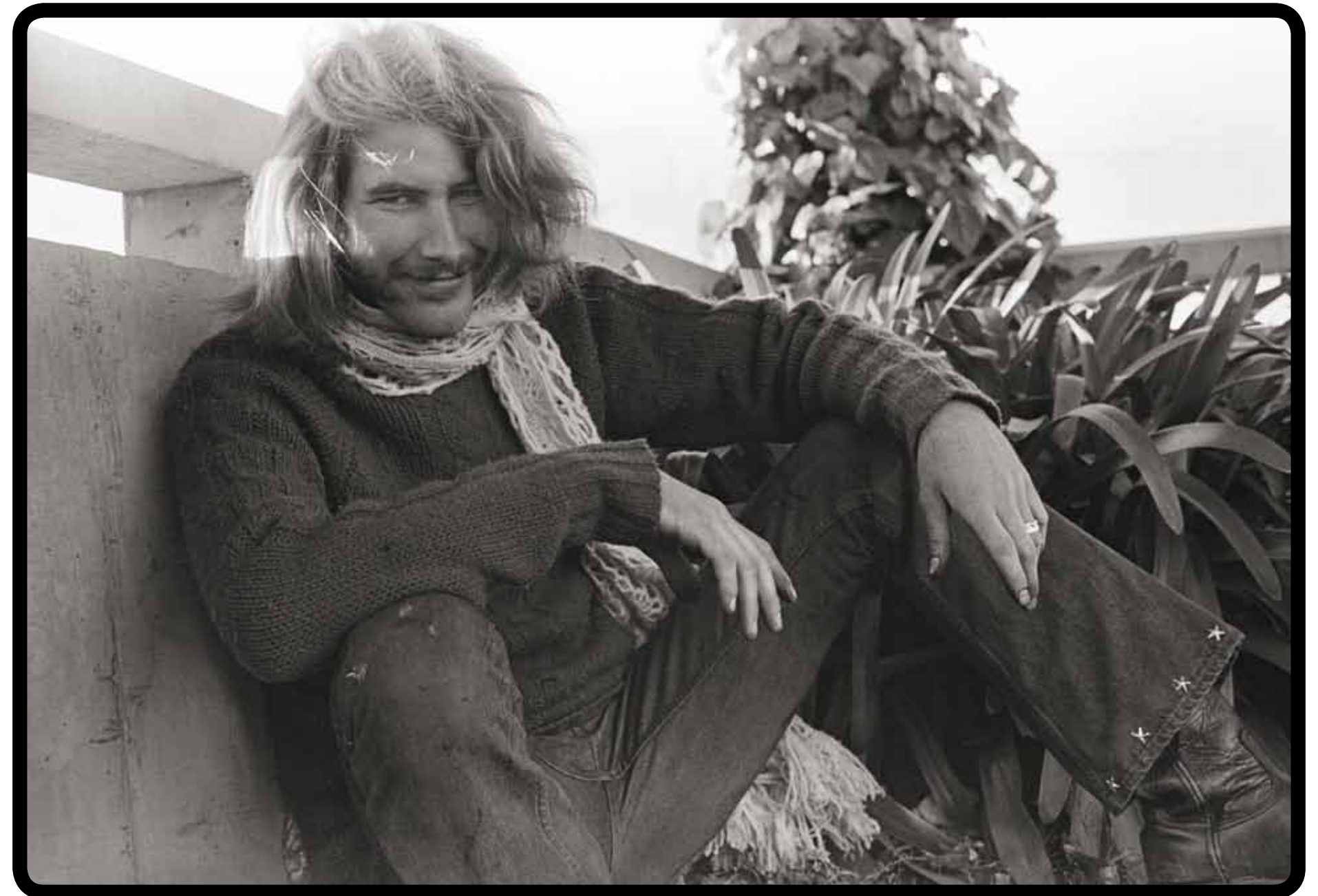
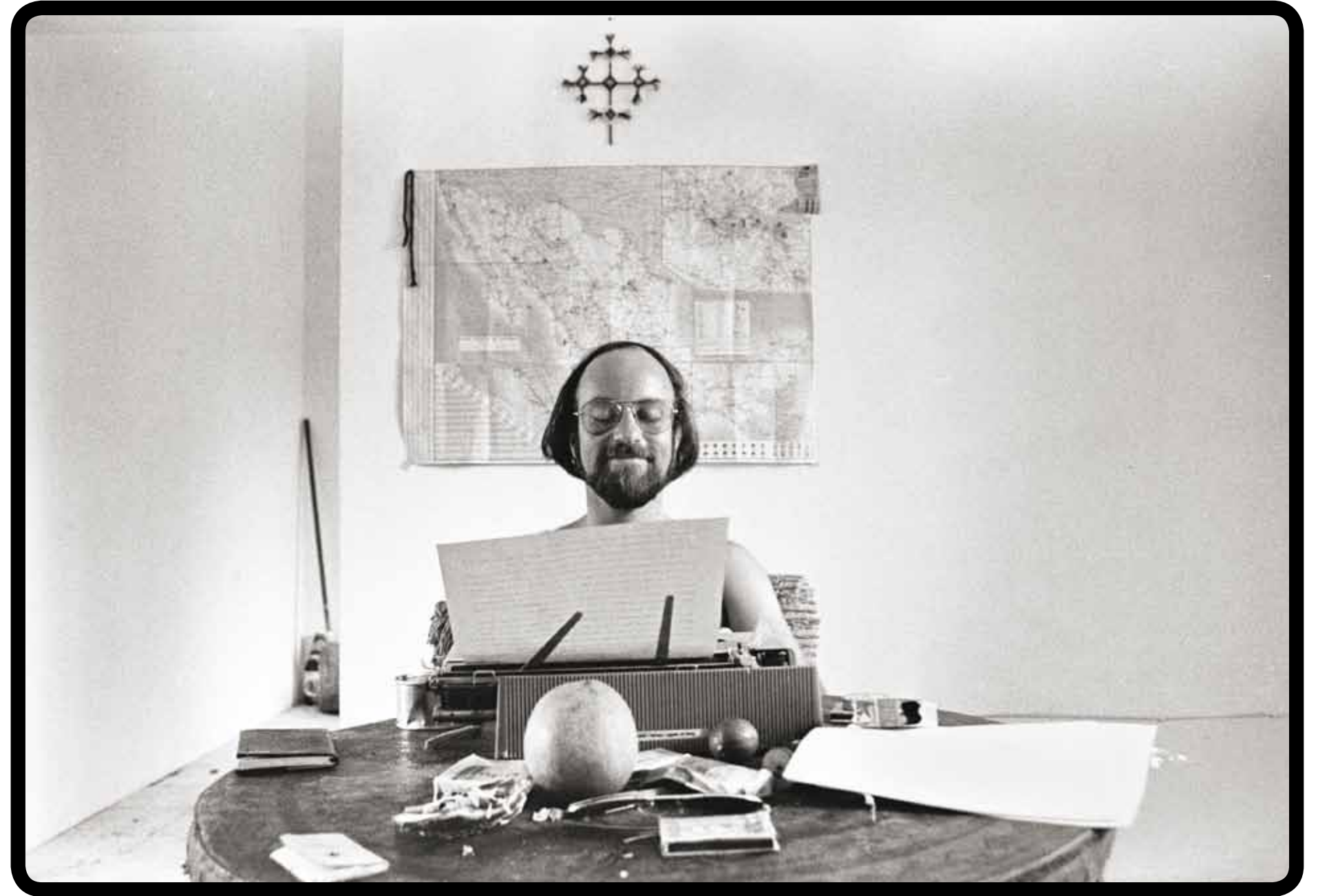
■ **Fast Eddie** was always a hard one to read. He was part of a loose group of transplanted New Orleanians and other southerners. We would gather from time to time in a large house in the Sunset district for meals or just to hang out.

■ **Alex** What a beautiful, kind person Alex was. He spoke with a heavy Romanian accent and was leaving his job at The Boarding House music club, where he was the cook's helper. He introduced me to the owner as his replacement, and I got my first job in the city on the spot.

■ **Bob In Mexico** Bob and I drove down from SF in his '54 Chevy and found a house to rent for a month in San Blas, just a little north of Puerto Vallarta. He was working on his porn novel and had just finished a satisfying chapter. From time to time, Fortuna will send us a gift, but only if we are able to accept it.

■ **Wes** We were neighbors on a thin strip of land between the sidewalk and the street rented from the Union Hall to craft vendors and artists selling work to the tourists. A rascal and a hustler, he was cool and knew it in a good way. We had just finished a smoke break.

"He was working on his porn novel and had just finished a satisfying chapter."





"...she threw my voyeur's lens right back at me."

■ **Coffee Shop Window**

Another day lying in wait for the next capture, but she was too quick and didn't miss anything on her streets; she threw my voyeur's lens right back at me.

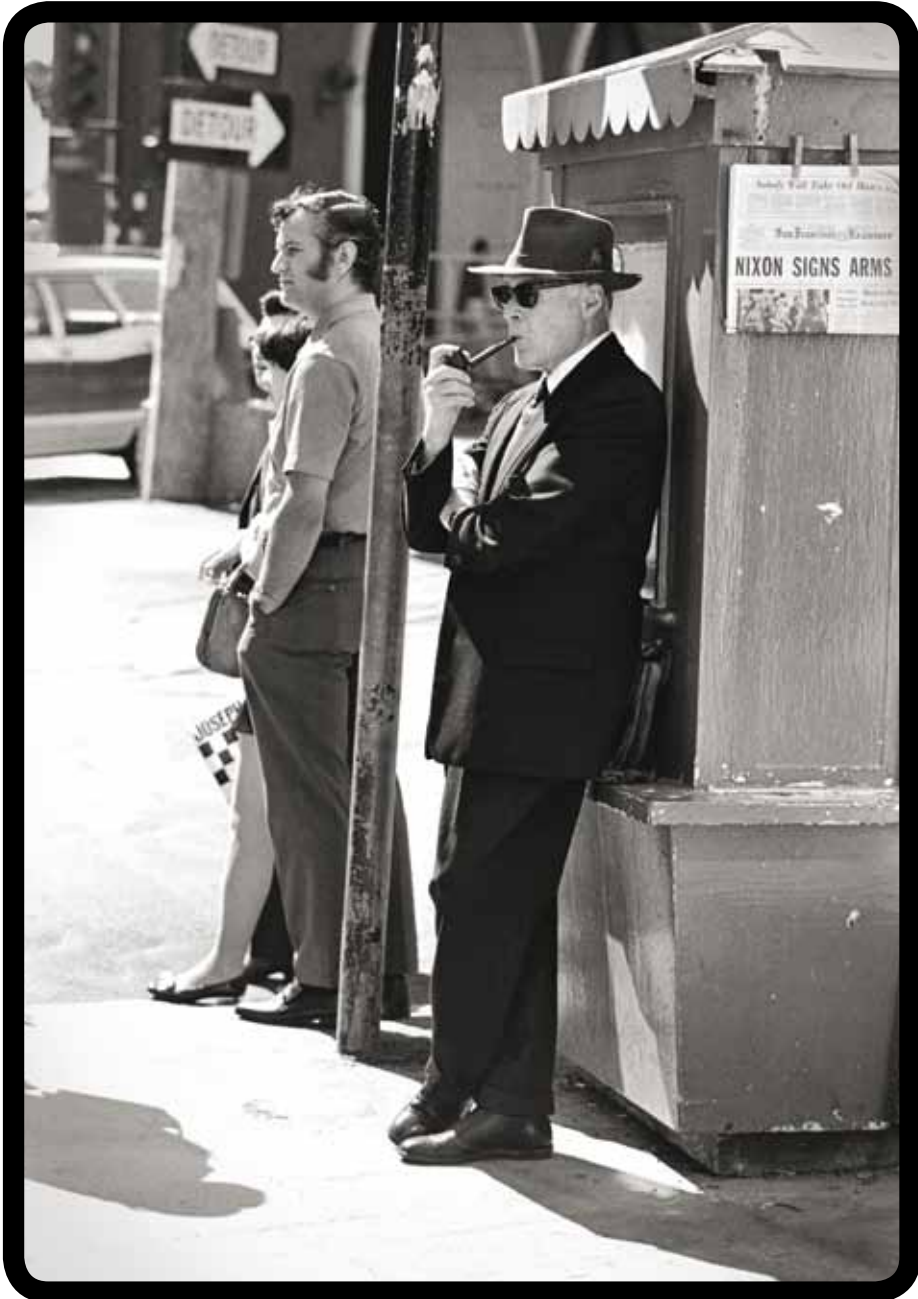
■ **Balloon Girl** floated before me, silent in her mime's face, inscrutable as to her intent, gliding past and never looking at my camera, averting her gaze in defiance.

(OPPOSITE)

■ **Counting Money** He thought no one was watching him count his money. A player can't play without a bank. He knew what it takes to win on the street – you've got to look the part and be able to back it up.

■ **Barber Mirror** Through the looking glass, the mirrors reflect what's in front and behind at the same moment. I was confident in making this image, easy to look at but hard to decipher, as it is in all of our living moments.





"My process was intuitive and unplanned. Later the meaning and intent were revealed."

■ **Cosmopolitan (TOP)** I was beginning to explore the ideas of windows and reflections. The moment suggested the isolation of the elders, how confusing the transitory nature of life can be. At this time, I wasn't looking for images to support an established concept. My process was intuitive and unplanned. Later the meaning and intent were revealed.

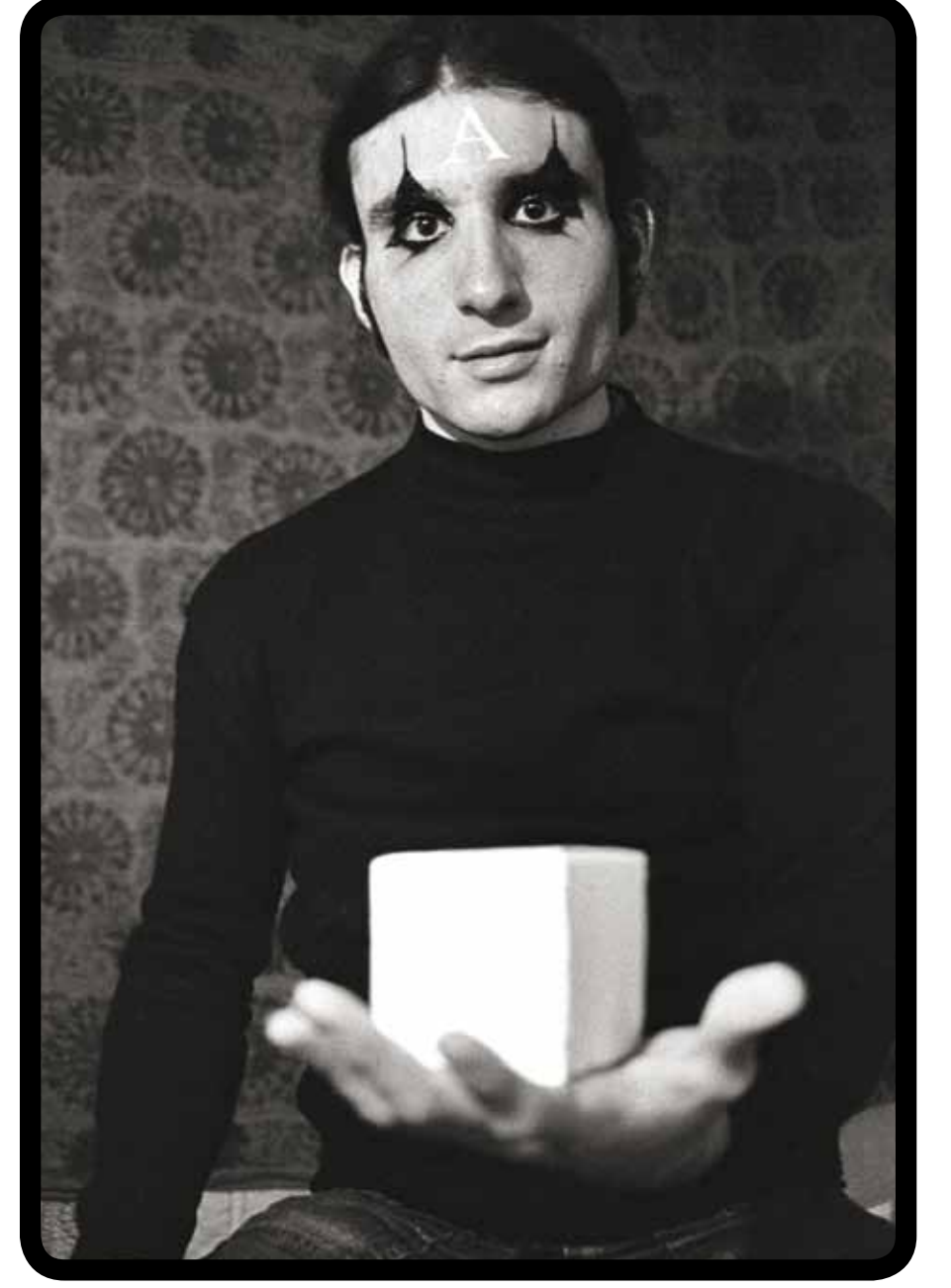
■ **Pipe Smoker (BOTTOM)** Some people stand out on the crowded streets. He was so self-contained, his poise and confidence were like a beacon. The headline from the *SF Examiner* was when President Nixon signed the strategic arms treaty.

■ **Allen (TOP)** was my first (non-paying) job ever. I was to photograph him with a prop to make a poster announcing the performance of *The Cubicle*, an avant-garde abstract theatre piece.

■ **Mr. Flower (Flower Power) (BOTTOM)** stood alone in all of his glory, holding his shield against the straight world, letting his freak flag fly with his magnificent hair.

■ **Angelo (FRONT COVER)** was a friend of Ronnie's from NY. He was the joker. Charisma was his middle name. He stayed with us on R&R break from the Air Force, so he said. He also came with a chaotic spark, as the wall art he painted created our first women's rights moment. His persona emerged full blown under the influence of the acid we took this night.

■ **The Conversation (BACK COVER)** This scene, as if from a stage production, appeared as I turned the corner. There was a sadness about his reality, about the space he existed in, a life that was soon to end, but for now he was in the between space, a personal purgatory.



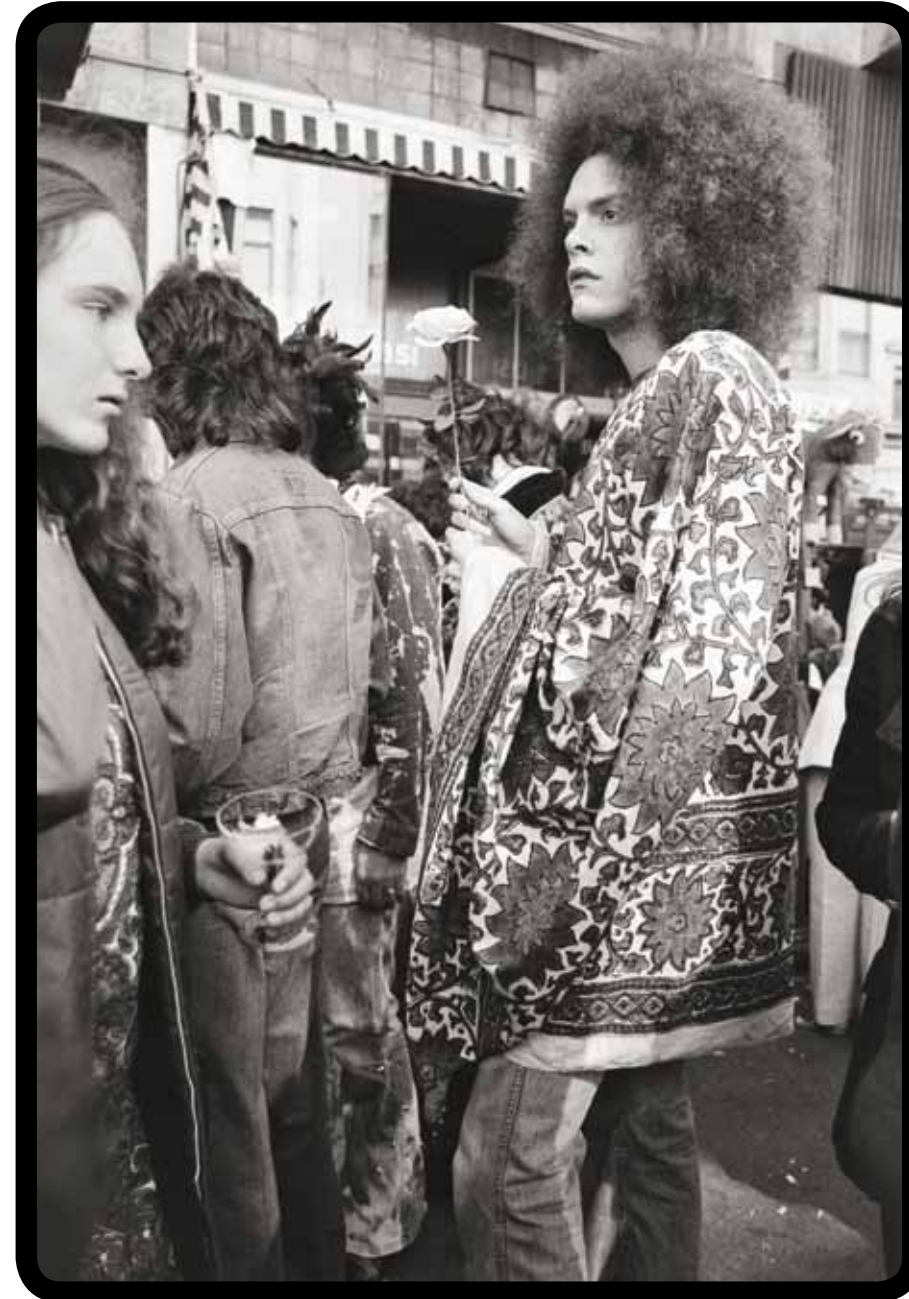
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people help to make creative projects become a reality. Opinions are weighed, new ideas emerge, and professional insights are presented. Rarely does one find success in the completion of a project such as this alone. So for all of the help I've received, I am grateful and humbled.

Kathy Anderson, Monica Cipnic, Eliot Kamenitz, David Rae Morris, and Doug Parker brought their enthusiasm and years as veterans of the world of professional photography to help with the initial editing. Thanks to Gus Silber (Johannesburg) for the quote (BACK PAGE) from his Facebook tribute to Joni Mitchell, to Jude Solomon for her honest appraisal of what I do and always keeping me on track, and to Max Singer, the best creative partner I've ever worked with; his commitment and creativity made this a beautiful collaborative effort.

Finally, to all the subjects, known and unknown, I could never thank you enough. Hasha Musha (Marsha), you accepted me for who I was and gave me the gift of how to believe in myself; I hope this issue of *LOST TIMES GAZETTE* will show how I've never forgotten those years.

"...letting his freak flag fly with his magnificent hair."



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