

June Clark: *Photographs*

April 29 – June 3, 2023

Opening Reception April 29th 3-6 PM, artist in attendance

Daniel Faria Gallery is pleased to present June Clark: *Photographs*, her second solo exhibition with the gallery. This exhibition features Clark's images of Toronto spanning the years from the 1970s to the 1990s.

After emigrating to Toronto from Harlem in 1968, Clark began making photographs of street scenes as a way to situate herself in a new and unknown environment, seeking a community similar to the one she had left behind. "I walked around looking for imagery that brought me home or had me feel as if I was home," she remembers. "I didn't know what I was looking for. I would just see people on Bathurst Street sitting on their stoops or their verandas and this, to me, is community, so I would photograph them and they seemed to love it, so I kept it up."

Clark's interest in photography brought her to the Baldwin Street Gallery, where she met artists Laura Jones, Lisa Steele, and Pamela Harris, among others, with whom she would go on to found the Women's Photography Cooperative. In the early 1970s in Toronto, photography was a male-dominated sphere. Women, for instance, were not permitted to use the dark-rooms at the University of Toronto. Using the two dark-rooms in the basement of the Baldwin Street Gallery, the members of the Co-op taught themselves all aspects of photography, from framing images in the camera to developing negatives, because, as Clark puts it, no man "was going to teach us anything about photography."

The first photograph Clark remembers making is of a discarded television tube on Cherry Beach in Toronto. In the image, the surrounding trees are reflected in the tube's hazy surface, as though a sliver of sky fell to the earth; the object is barely recognizable as someone's trash. Clark continued to pay attention to the overlooked and seemingly ordinary woven throughout the fabric of the city. Her images remained intimate even in the depiction of strangers and storefronts. In 1981, she was hired by *Toronto Life* to document North Toronto's Jewish neighbourhoods. The resulting images are indicative of her ability to portray the hum of life that energizes a place and connects its inhabitants. Whether focused on teenagers sitting on a curb, a friend's clasped hands, a woman carrying groceries home on the streetcar, or men washing a car, Clark's photographs are testament to the variety of personalities, businesses, and buildings from which a community gains its shape.

These early photographs would become foundational for Clark's art practice to follow, leading her to experiment with photo-etchings, collage and photo-based installations. Many of the images in this exhibition appear again in her later work, re-worked and re-imagined in new mediums.

June Clark has earned national and international recognition for her photo-based image works, installations and interventions. She has had solo exhibitions at the Ringling Museum of Art (Sarasota), the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), the Studio Museum in Harlem (New York), The Koffler Gallery (Toronto), and Mercer Union (Toronto). Her work has been included in exhibitions at the Polygon Gallery (Vancouver); the University of Toronto Art Museum (Toronto), the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), the Textile Museum (Toronto), the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), Agnès b. (Paris), and Linda Kirkland Gallery (New York). She has completed residencies at the Studio Museum in Harlem and the Ontario College of Art and Design, among others. Her work can be found in the collections of the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), the Wedge Collection (Toronto), the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), and the James Van Der Zee Institute (New York) and La galerie du jour agnès b. (Paris).