

n & n is for lewis stein

Lewis Stein went to Berkeley after two years at MIT. Overnight he became famous and his work entered collections in New York, Europe and California. He quit painting, and the next night he became obscure. During the years he was ignored he marketed his work out of his own N&N Gallery in his Broome St. loft. I asked him why he called his place N&N and he said he named it after his favorite candy. This series of chance photographs of people on the streets of New York was done with a telefoto lens at fractional — second intervals. Since the subject is not aware of the camera, Lewis records the minute shifts of consciousness within her private world. It's intimate and a bit disturbing — a voyeuristic Harold Edgerton.

Why is a New York artist like Stein in this Show? I don't know. New Yorkers like to go to California because it's glamorous. Californians like to go to New York because it's glamorous. Stein's work is always that.



Lewis Stein, *Untitled #1*, from *Candid Portrait Series*, 1984-85, black and white photograph, 29" x 58".
Courtesy of Paula Allen Gallery, New York.