

**#76 October 2022 Cameraderie
Lee Frieland (1934-)**

Three Self-portraits.



Lee Frieland is now 88 years old, so it is not surprising to see his self-portrait above-right, during a time of seriously bad health. His interests have ranged across many areas: nudes, self-portraits, parks (both natural and cultivated), street scenes, and special subjects (like photographs of little television sets). All his work is marked by highly original composition. This summary remark captures his style, and appears essentially the same in many articles on the Internet:

His photographs used detached images of urban life, store-front reflections, structures framed by fences, and posters and signs all combining to capture the look of modern life.

Here is the Wikipedia article on Frieland:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lee_Friedlander. It is remarkably brief, considering his extensive record of Guggenheim, MacArthur, and other fellowships, as well as his many solo exhibitions at prominent museums. In the Wikipedia article, this remark also pinpoints his style:

Friedlander evolved an influential and often imitated visual language of urban "social landscape,"

Here is an interestingly confounding article by John Szarkowski (future article) (successor to Edward Steichen (#9, Sept. 2013) as Director of the Department of Photography at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York City): http://masters-of-photography.com/F/friedlander/friedlander_articles3.html

The Fraenkel Gallery website has an excellent online collection of Frieland's work, with some commentary: <https://fraenkelgallery.com/artists/lee-friedlander>

Here is a recent The New Yorker photo article about Frieland's wife and family over a sixty-year period: <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/photo-booth/lee-friedlanders-intimate-portraits-of-his-wife-through-sixty-years-of-marriage>. It is full of wonderfully intimate and personal photographs.

However Frieland has developed his style, it has a crispness (not just sharpness) that I have not seen before in street photography. See if you can sense this in the following example images:

Banff, Canada, 1974



I think this typifies Frieland's "Social Landscape" style, and what I have called "crispness."

Philadelphia, 1961



This is one of Frieland's many continuing projects: images with small television sets with a show on. I think this is another aspect of his "Social Landscape" project.

Yosemite, 2004



A good shot of a famous natural location. I find it interesting that the foreground rock and the pool around it loom as large—and similarly shaped—as the mountain in the background.

Maria, New York City, 1959



Here is one of the many shots of Frielander's wife, Maria, from the New Yorker article that I cited above. In addition to great portrait lighting from the open window, note the excellent sense of "place" in this image: the plants on the table, the open window, the view of the typical New York City apartment buildings.