



ARTIST

Mima (Toni Maria) Cataldo

TITLE

A 765 Ku Power line in the Backyard

DATE

1977

DIMENSIONS

9.5 in H x 12.5 in W

MEDIUM

Gelatin Silver Print

CATALOGUE NUMBER

1977.078

CURRENT LOCATION

1620-3B

MIMA (TONI MARIA) CATALDO

BORN

1943

BIRTHPLACE

New York, NY

GENDER

Female

CITIZENSHIP

United States

CULTURAL HERITAGE

European-American

LIGHT WORK RELATIONSHIP

Light Work Gallery, 1978
Light Work Grant, 1978
Light Work Gallery, 1980
Light Work Gallery, 2001

LIGHT WORK PUBLICATIONS

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Contact Sheet 7

ESSAYS

Mima Cataldo comes to photography from sociology. She has been actively photographing various aspects of the highly controversial nuclear energy issue. She exhibited B/W photographs made in the north country during the past year. Mima continues to work on this project; her NO NUKES photographs have become increasingly visible (The Syracuse Peace Council Newsletter was first, and continues to publish her work). She teaches part-time at Maria Regina College in Syracuse and will be joining our staff as part-time instructor in November 1978. Images of Resistance: Thirty-five Years of Social Activism and Democracy in Central New York, a collaborative exhibition at Light Work, featured the work of two Central New York photographers, Mima Cataldo and Ruth Putter. Through their documentary work Cataldo and Putter have participated in many important events affecting our society, including war protests, the women's movement, civil rights, gay liberation, Onondaga Nation Sovereignty, labor protests, disarmament, and opposition to nuclear power. Many of the sixty-five photographs included in the exhibition have appeared in local publications such as the Peace Newsletter; others have been published in books, newspapers, and magazines. Ruth Putter's photographs of the Alexander Haig protests had national and international impact when they appeared in newspapers around the world including El Salvador, where they gave hope to the liberation movement fighting a brutal, U.S.-backed military dictatorship. The protest against Haig (then U.S. Secretary of State) at Syracuse University's 1981 graduation involved thousands of faculty, students, and community members. Putter's photographs depicted a dramatic guerrilla-theater, as women dressed as nuns covered in blood pointed and stared at Haig during his entire speech. They represented the four American nuns who had recently been murdered in El Salvador by U.S.-trained paramilitaries. In a statement about her work Putter explains, "When I studied history and social studies as a child, I often felt uncomfortable and questioned why the emphasis was on dates of major events, especially wars. And why no mention was made of the killing: of the deaths of men who often left fatherless children go hungry at night. Why is there torture and slavery; who invented them? Why were blacks and indigenous people and women considered so unimportant that history ignored them? We didn't learn about the people who believed in humanity and were willing to stand in protest against these conditions—often facing ridicule, ostracism, even danger to themselves. The world hasn't changed, and I'm still asking why." Mima Cataldo's photographs gave voice to diverse groups of citizens throughout Central New York, including protests against high voltage power lines, the anti-nuke movement, and Native American protests. Her photographs have been published in the Syracuse Post-Standard and many magazines and textbooks. She was the co-editor and photographer of Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, a book documenting the first year of the Women's Peace Camp near Seneca Falls, published by Temple University Press. The Peace Camp opened in the summer of 1983, and was designed to draw attention to the devastating effects of Cruise and Pershing missiles stored at the nearby Seneca Army Depot. During that summer, some ten thousand women gathered to march, hold rallies and vigils, and voice their opposition to the deployment of these weapons of war to Europe. Cataldo's image, Barbara Demming, Romulus, NY, 1983, depicts the author and long-time activist for peace, as she works to inspire peace and social change. Cataldo also points to her commitment of supporting the activists. "My photographs are meant to document and preserve the spirit and voice of the people that I met, to capture a moment in history in which people had stood up for their beliefs, and to show the human side of political movements." Images of Resistance was organized by the Syracuse Cultural Workers, a national distributor and publisher of progressive products, including posters and calendars, that celebrate movements for social change, and curated by Dik Cool, publisher at Syracuse Cultural Workers. About the project Cool wrote, "This exhibition preserves history, celebrates the work of two dedicated photographers, and inspires the activists present. It is critical that we understand that the freedoms we enjoy in the United States were not given to us by generous people in power. They were won by constant struggle, resistance, and organizing. They can be easily lost. In fact, many are being lost through a combination of apathy and government and corporate collusion." Mary Lee Hodgens Images of Resistance: Thirty-five Years of Social Activism and Democracy in Central New York was exhibited at Light Work from November 12 to December 31, 2001. Mima Cataldo recently moved from Syracuse, NY to California. Ruth Putter lives in Syracuse, NY.