



ARTIST

Hilton Braithwaite

TITLE

NYC

DATE

1988

DIMENSIONS

12 in H x 17.75 in W

MEDIUM

Gelatin Silver Print

IMAGE NOTES

sheet 16x20 image 12x17.75

CATALOGUE NUMBER

2000.092

CURRENT LOCATION

2024-3B

HILTON BRAITHWAITE

BORN

1943

GENDER

Male

CITIZENSHIP

United States

CULTURAL HERITAGE

African-American

LIGHT WORK RELATIONSHIP

Artist-in-Residence, 1991
Robert B. Menschel Gallery, 1992
Fine Print Program, 1994

LIGHT WORK PUBLICATIONS

Contact Sheet 71

ESSAYS

Hilton Braithwaite's photographs are a refreshing example of making connections at a time when society is becoming more fractured. His straightforward black-and-white images exhibit the sure touch and true sensibility of an artist who can translate things felt to things seen. It is the intimate connection between photographer and subject that sets Braithwaite's work apart from the cool visual choreography of other photographers working in the documentary style. The difference is like walking down the street and making eye contact with everyone you pass instead of just catching a glimpse of their gestures and movement as you try to avoid being run over. Braithwaite's point of observation flows from the center of the photograph, and is always studied and deliberate. Even when he photographs in a crowd, Braithwaite only attempts to make a connection with one or two people. He makes this intimate connection again and again as if he has opened a visual conversation with his subjects who finish his sentences after he has made the opening remarks. He provides the space for his subjects to communicate on their own terms as he pauses just long enough to complete the exchange in the form of a single photograph. The connections he makes within each photograph are clearly between photographer and subject: the translation of a shared experience, the celebration of a quiet moment, or the realization of an exact moment of tension. As we find the rhythm of connection within each photograph we can apply this connection between different photographs. He links a diversity of subjects, continually interpreting and engaging our social landscape rather than merely recording and observing it. Braithwaite recognizes that by exploring the diversity of experience and attitude, we build a strong emotional home. From this home base Braithwaite takes us back and forth through the drama of daily life where each photograph is a pause contained by an exclamation. As we move from one photograph to the next we might carry the intimate touch of a foxglove in full bloom, to the quiet comfort shared by a couple in a cafe, to the explosion of tension on a city street. As we recognize the connections Braithwaite makes with his photographs, we are encouraged to make connections of our own. Sometimes we are drawn to the same moment that encouraged Braithwaite to make the photograph and other times we drift away from the photograph, perhaps only enjoying its motion and pulse. But we remain engaged by his observations because they create an atmosphere of comfort and resolve that persists beyond the limits of our experience. Jeffrey Hoone (c)1992