

# MARIA MULLER

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*Reality Transformed*  
Pucker Gallery

## MARIA MULLER

*Reality Transformed*

### credits:

Design: John Veneto  
Editor: Jeanne Gressler  
Photography: Max Coniglio  
Printing: Printed in Hong Kong by  
South China Printing Company (1988) Ltd.

Member of the Boston Art Dealers Association  
One hour free validated parking available on the  
corner of Newbury and Dartmouth Streets

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Works can be printed in different sizes. Please  
contact the gallery with questions.

front cover: *"The Specialists"*, London  
hand colored photograph  
19 x 12 inches, ed.25 MM108



1.



2.

plate 1: *Green Chair, Red Robe*  
hand colored photograph  
19 x 13 inches, ed.25 MM107

plate 2: *Broccoli in Restaurant*  
hand colored photograph  
8 x 13 inches, ed.25 MM105

# MARIA MULLER

## *Reality Transformed*



3.

### INTERVIEW WITH MARIA MULLER

**Tell me about your initial transition from black & white photography to hand coloring. Why did you choose this method of expression?**

In the late seventies I saw a group show of hand colored photographs and was so intrigued that I decided to try hand coloring myself. With those first few photos of hot air balloons, I immediately became enamored of this medium.

**Tell me about the technique you use to create your photographs. Why do you use infrared film instead of regular black and white film? Why do you use oil paint?**

During that period of experimentation with color I discovered infrared film. Though I had never seen it done, I decided to combine the two. Being sensitive to both visible and infrared light, infrared film records objects and light in a unique way. It alters--and in some cases lightens--the tones in the black and white print. This shift can give an arresting, surreal or ethereal effect.

I use a coloring technique that is as old as photography itself. The oil paint enables me to achieve vibrant colors that are also archival. I also use oil pencils occasionally which work well for small detail.

**Do you ever make color changes from one print to another in a particular edition?**

No. My color choices are intuitive and I often pre-visualize them. Then when actually working on a photo, I might make some changes, but when I find the colors that work best for an image and feel right, I have no desire to try another combination of colors for the same image. When hand coloring a photograph the interaction of colors is

plate 3: *Boy and Girl, Wisconsin Road*  
hand colored photograph

9 x 13 inches, ed.25 MM17

critical. Just as in any painting, each color has an intense effect on all the other colors. Change one color and the overall result can be dramatically changed. The color choices I make profoundly influence the impression of the completed photograph. There is great power in color.

**Why do you choose to hand color black and white photographs rather than take color photographs?**

Hand coloring offers me a freedom of expression and a tactile involvement with paint that I prefer. There is something about the look of a hand colored photograph that has always been a bit magical for me. My fascination with color and an appreciation for hand crafted works of art also come into play.

**Is photography in its traditional sense too literal for you?**

My early black and white photographs were quite traditional and though I have a deep respect for this type of photography, I feel that the techniques I now use give me a broader scope with which to express myself. Using infrared film and oil paint, I transform reality to convey my aesthetic and expressive objectives.

**Your work is quite varied in subject matter. What attracts you to your subjects? Do you continue to search for new things to photograph or do you return to the same subjects over and over?**

I am constantly in search of new subject matter. My trip to Africa, for instance, inspired me to photograph animals in a way I had never done before. There are a myriad of both formal and substantive qualities that attract me to my subjects: composition, balance, design, pattern and of course, color. Sometimes my work is sensual, quirky, eerie, even unsettling.



4.

**Do you consider yourself to be a photographer, a painter or a combination of both?**

I think of myself as a photographer with additional skills that involve using paint. I work with the same principles of color theory that all painters use, including hue, contrast, value, intensity, harmony, interaction, as well as the psychology of color.

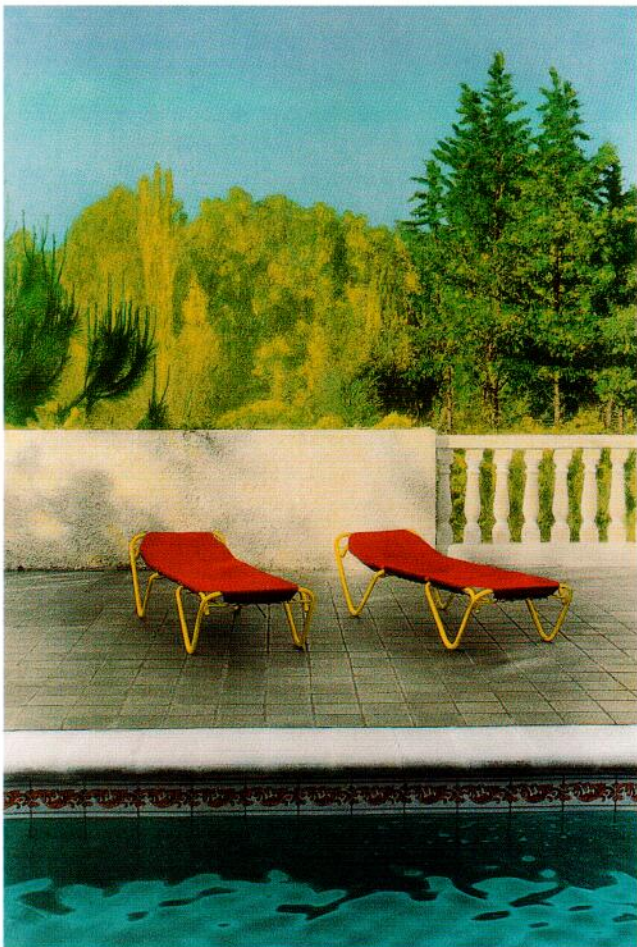
**What role does humor play in your photographs? Irony? Whimsy?**

Although there are elements of humor, irony or whimsy in some of my photographs, I do not set out to create that effect. To the extent that they are present in my work they are aspects of my personality which find expression in my art.

**How has your life affected your work? Your personal history? Your childhood?**

Nothing in my background would have predicted the artistic direction my life has taken. When I was 15 my father gave me his old Argus c3 camera and my love of photography was born. I still have those first black and white photos I took with such care. I am self taught in photography. I learned darkroom skills and supported myself working in photo labs for years until I began to offer custom black and white printing from my own darkroom. Of course one's life affects one's work in untold ways. On the other hand, I am inclined to say that rather than my life shapes my art, my art has dictated the direction of my life.

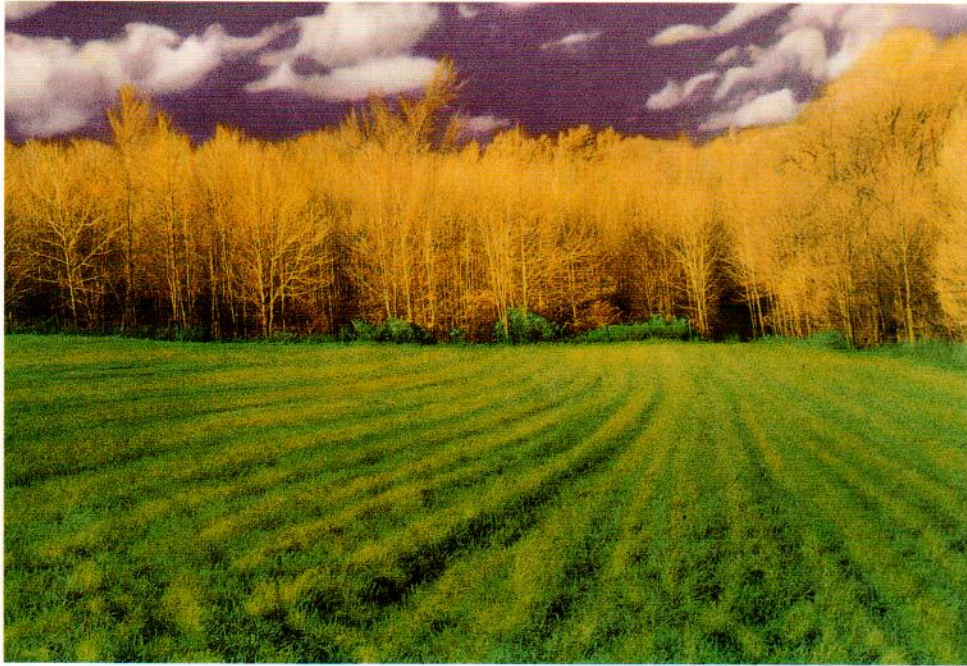
— ENB, 2001



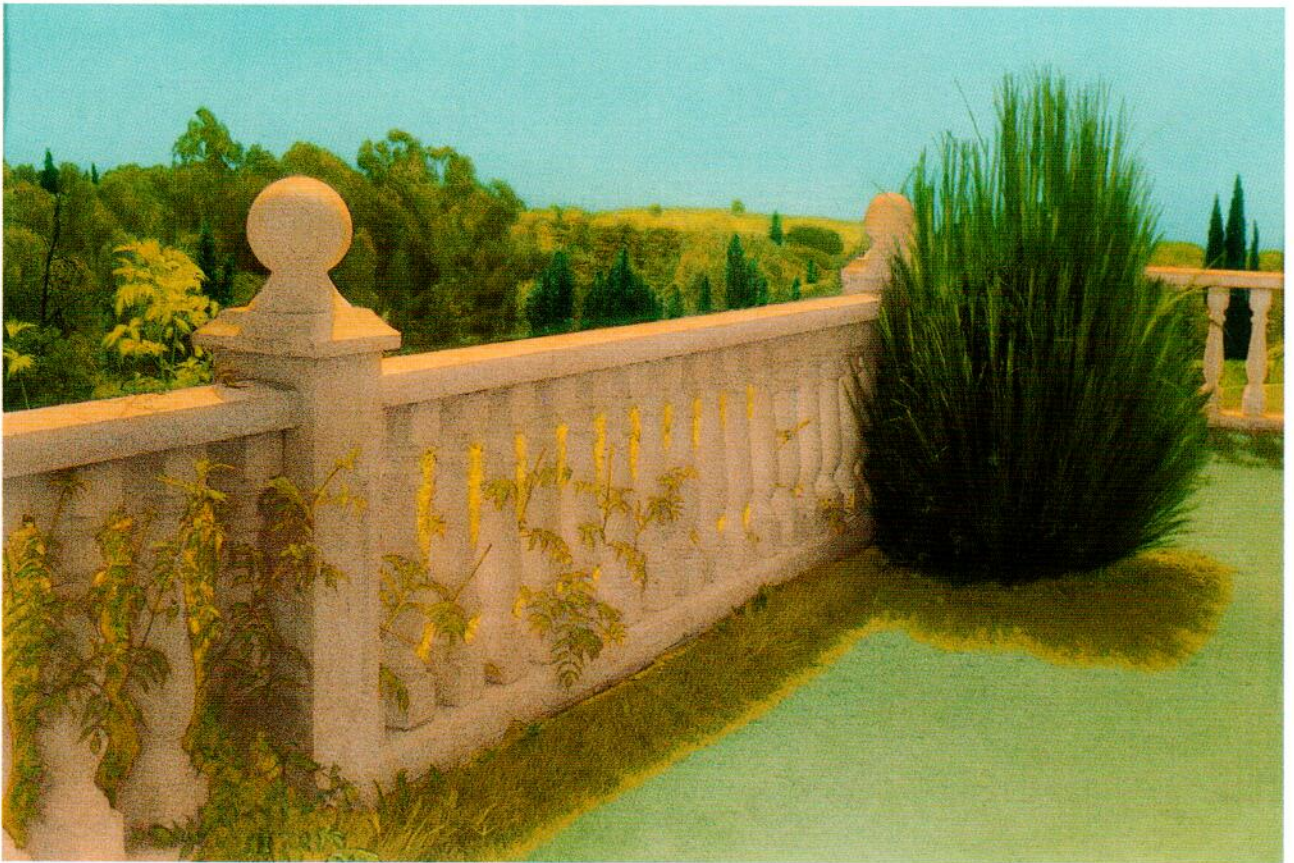
5.

plate 4: *Aaron's Ear*  
hand colored photograph  
9 1/4 x 6 1/2 inches, ed.25 MM30

plate 5: *Red Lawn Chairs and Pool*  
hand colored photograph  
19 x 13 inches, ed.25 MM60



6.



7.

plate 6: *Field, Trees, Violet Sky*  
hand colored photograph  
7 x 10 inches, ed.25 MM47

plate 7: *View with Pink Stone Fence, Spain*  
hand colored photograph  
13 x 19 inches, ed.25 MM63



8.



9.

plate 8: *Two Beds, Red Room, Mexico*  
hand colored photograph  
9 x 13 inches, ed.25 MM127

plate 9: *Human Blockhead*  
hand colored photograph  
16 x 20 inches, ed.25 MM58



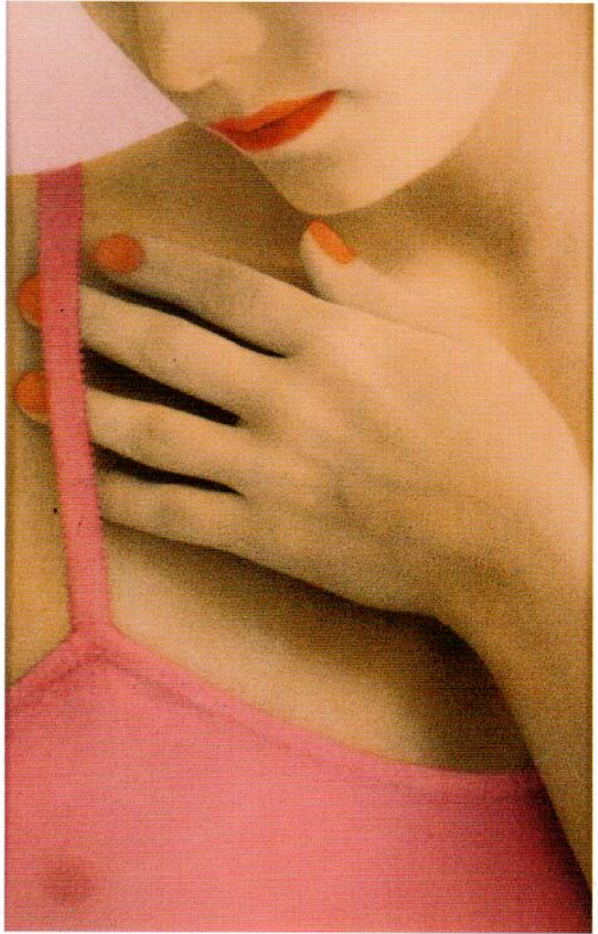
10.



11.

plate 10: *Pink Car, San Francisco*  
hand colored photograph  
7 x 10 inches, ed.25 MM106

plate 11: *Motel, Number 36*  
hand colored photograph  
9¼ x 13 inches, ed.25 MM34



12.



13.

plate 12: *Woman in Pink Top*  
hand colored photograph  
10 x 6 inches, ed.25 MM101

plate 13: *Children & Canopy, Spain*  
hand colored photograph  
13 x 19 inches, ed.25 MM56





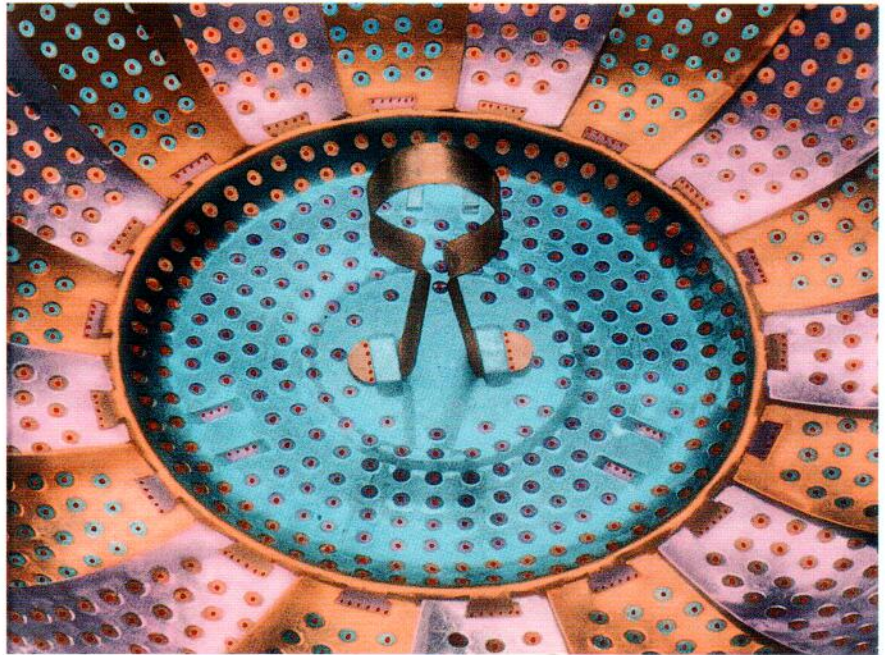
14.



15.

plate 14: *Pink Bathing Suit, Green Towel*  
hand colored photograph  
9 1/2 x 6 1/4 inches, ed.25 MM49

plate 15: *Pool with Yellow Towel*  
hand colored photograph  
9 1/4 x 13 inches, ed.25 MM64



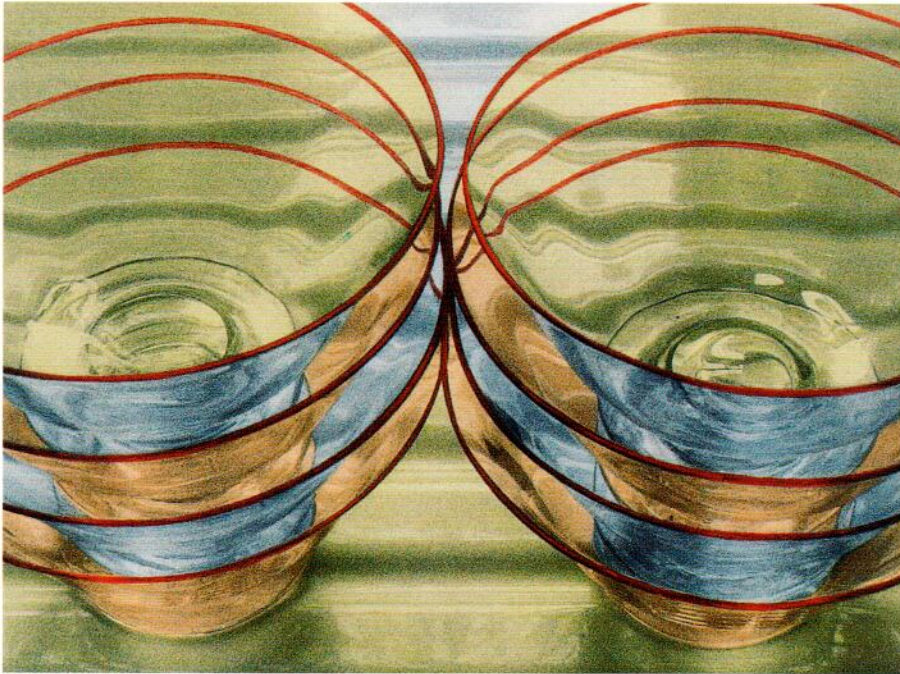
16.



17.

plate 16: *Steamer with Red Dots*  
hand colored photograph  
7 x 9¼ inches, ed.25 MM19

plate 17: *Cabin Window, Mackinac Island*  
hand colored photograph  
13 x 19 inches, ed.25 MM110



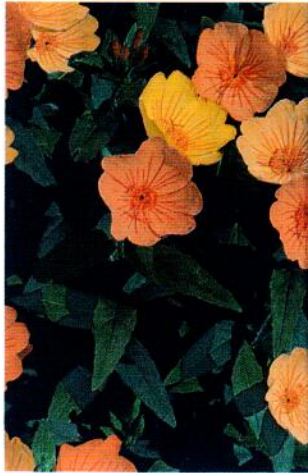
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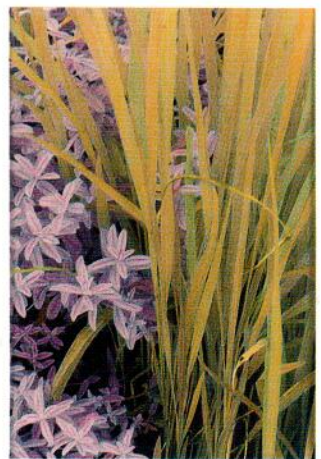
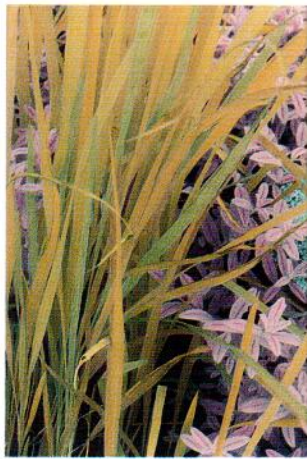
19.

plate 18: *Glass Bowls* (blue, orange, green, with red lines)  
hand colored photograph  
6¼ x 9¼ inches, ed.25 MM42

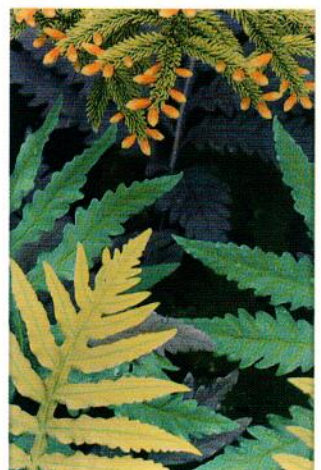
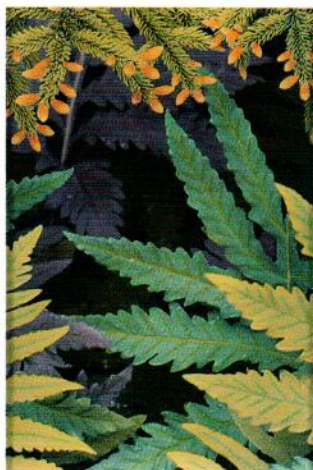
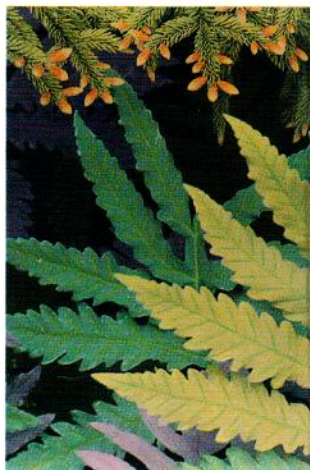
plate 19: *Red Line / Toilet Paper*  
hand colored photograph  
13 x 9 inches, ed.25 MM40



20.



21.

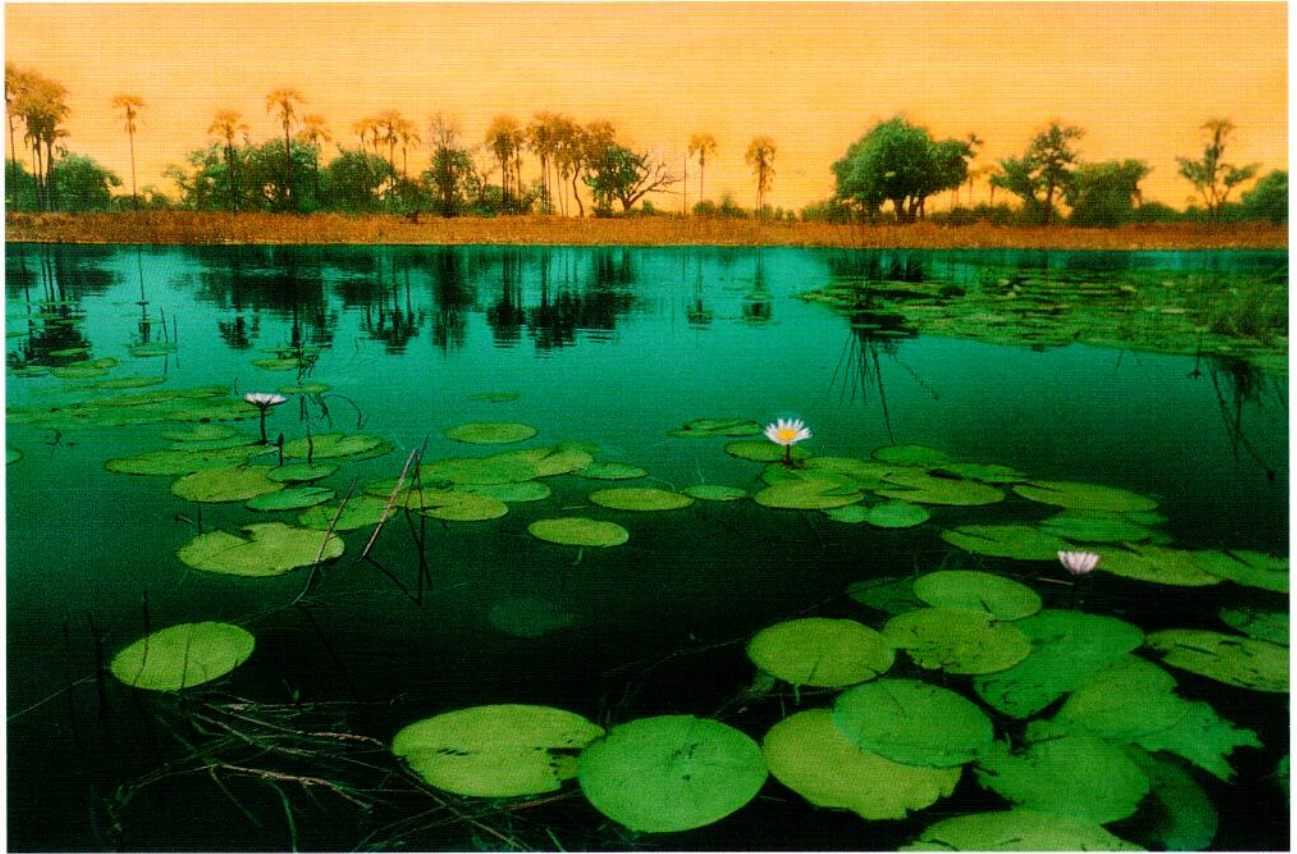


22.

plate 20: *Evening Primrose*  
hand colored photograph  
6¼ x 15¼ inches, ed.25 MM77

plate 21: *Grass and Small Leaves*  
hand colored photograph  
6¼ x 15¼ inches, ed.25 MM78

plate 22: *Ferns and Firs*  
hand colored photograph  
6¼ x 15¼ inches, ed.25 MM73



23.

plate 23: *Water Lilies, Orange Sky*  
hand colored photograph  
13 x 19 inches, ed.25 MM98



24.

plate 24: *Ivy Covered Wall, London*  
hand colored photograph  
13 x 19 inches, ed.25 MM100



25.

plate 25: *Mexico, Turquoise Door*  
hand colored photograph  
9¼ x 13 inches, ed.25 MM35



26.



27.

plate 26: *Five Giraffes and Acacia Tree*  
hand colored photograph  
12 x 19 inches, ed.25 MM91

plate 27: *Termite Mound with Lagoon*  
hand colored photograph  
13 x 19 inches, ed.25 MM120





28.



29.

plate 28: *Red Lechwe Herd*  
hand colored photograph  
13 x 19 inches, ed.25 MM92

plate 29: *Hippo, Baby Hippo, Egret*  
hand colored photograph  
12 x 19 inches, ed.25 MM93

30.



31.



## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

In my photography I am exploring the impact of color when superimposed on tones of black and white, blending the mechanics of photography with the craft of painting. I photograph my subjects with infrared film for the unique way that it records light and detail. After making a black and white print, I apply translucent oil paints to its surface with cotton swabs and then smooth them with tissue paper. The photographic image retains its shapes and tones and becomes fused with added coloration.

Working with many subjects and presentation formats, my imagery includes both representational and abstract work. The representational work includes still life, landscapes, interiors, and figurative narratives—scenes of objective reality transformed by vivid, peculiar, and sometimes whimsical colors. My abstract photography takes objects such as kitchen utensils, salvage yard car parts, or physical plant equipment, and transforms them using color and composition. Love of patterning and the sensuality of color inspire my work. Whether to create beauty, establish mood, elicit humor or intensify sensuality, it is the eloquence and vitality of color that enables me to express myself.

Maria Muller

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS:

- 2001 *Reality Transformed*, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA  
 1998 Fletcher/Priest Gallery, Worcester, MA  
*New Work/New England: Maria Muller*, DeCordova Museum, Lincoln, MA  
*Maria Muller: Hand-Colored Photographs*, Fitchburg Museum, Fitchburg, MA  
 1986 Lee Gallery, Boston, MA  
 1984 Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, MA  
 1983 *Maria Muller: Hand-Colored Photographs*, Hoffman Gallery, Spokane, WA

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS:

- 2000 The William Benton Museum of Art, The University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT  
 1999 *One Thousand and Under*, Fletcher/Priest Gallery, Worcester, MA  
*Five Fine Photographers*, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA  
 1996 *Recent Acquisitions*, DeCordova Museum, Lincoln, MA  
*Palate/Palette: An Exhibition of Food Related Works*, Starr Gallery, Newton, MA

plate 30: *Self-Portrait with Crow*  
 hand colored photograph  
 8¼ x 6 inches, ed.25 MM112

plate 31: *Self-Portrait with Yellow Socks*  
 hand colored photograph  
 12½ x 20 inches, ed.25 MM28

- 1994 *Artists' Books: Text, Image, Form*, Barn Gallery, Ogunquit, ME  
 1993 *Faber Birren Color Award Show*, Stamford Art Association, Stamford, CT  
*New England Biennial 1993*, Photographic Resource Center, Boston, MA  
*Why Artists' Books?*, The Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA  
 1990 *The Painted Photograph*, John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI  
 1988 *The Emerging Concept*, Newton Arts Center Gallery, Newton, MA  
 1987 *Four Photographers*, Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center, Cambridge, MA  
 1986 *Figures and Faces: The Human Seen*, Cambridge Art Association, Cambridge, MA  
 Clark Gallery, Lincoln, MA  
 Francesca Anderson Gallery, Boston, MA

#### AWARDS:

- 1996 Communication Arts, Photography Annual-Award of Excellence: Book Series  
 1993 MIT Technology Review-"Encountering the Machine"-first prize  
 1991 Massachusetts Artists Foundation Fellowship Award-Artists' Books-one of a kind  
 books of hand-colored photographs and text  
 1989 Massachusetts Artists Foundation Finalist-Artists' Books-one of a kind books of  
 hand-colored photographs and text  
 Bunting Institute Finalist, Radcliffe College, Cambridge, MA

#### PUBLIC COLLECTIONS:

Boston Public Library, Boston, MA  
 Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH  
 DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, Lincoln, MA  
 Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, MA  
 The Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA  
 Mead Art Museum, Amherst College, Amherst, MA  
 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA  
 The New York Public Library, New York, NY  
 Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA  
 United States Embassy, Brussels, Belgium  
 The William Benton Museum of Art, The University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

#### CORPORATE AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS:

Bank of Boston, Boston, MA  
 Bedford Country Club, Bedford, MA  
 Fidelity Investments, Boston, MA  
 Lifetime Corporation, Boston, MA  
 Morrison, Mahoney & Miller, Boston, MA  
 Pastiche (restaurant), Hyannis, MA  
 Putnam Investments, Quincy, MA  
 Price Waterhouse, Boston, MA  
 Private collections: United States, Europe and Australia

#### PUBLICATIONS:

Graphis Nudes 3: Graphis Inc., New York, NY: 1999  
Photo Annual 1998: Graphis Press Corp., Zurich, Switzerland: 1998  
Graphis Fine Art: Graphis Press Corp., Zurich, Switzerland: 1996  
Shorelines: Graphis Press Corp., Zurich, Switzerland  
Graphis Alternative Photography 95: Graphis Press Corp., Zurich, Switzerland: 1995  
Technology Review: MIT, Cambridge, MA: 1993

**MARIA MULLER**  
*Reality Transformed*

8 September 2001 –  
9 October 2001

Opening reception:  
8 September 2001: 3 – 6pm

The artist will be present  
The public is invited to attend

gallery hours:  
Monday through Saturday:  
10am to 5:30pm;  
Sundays 1:00 to 5:00pm



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