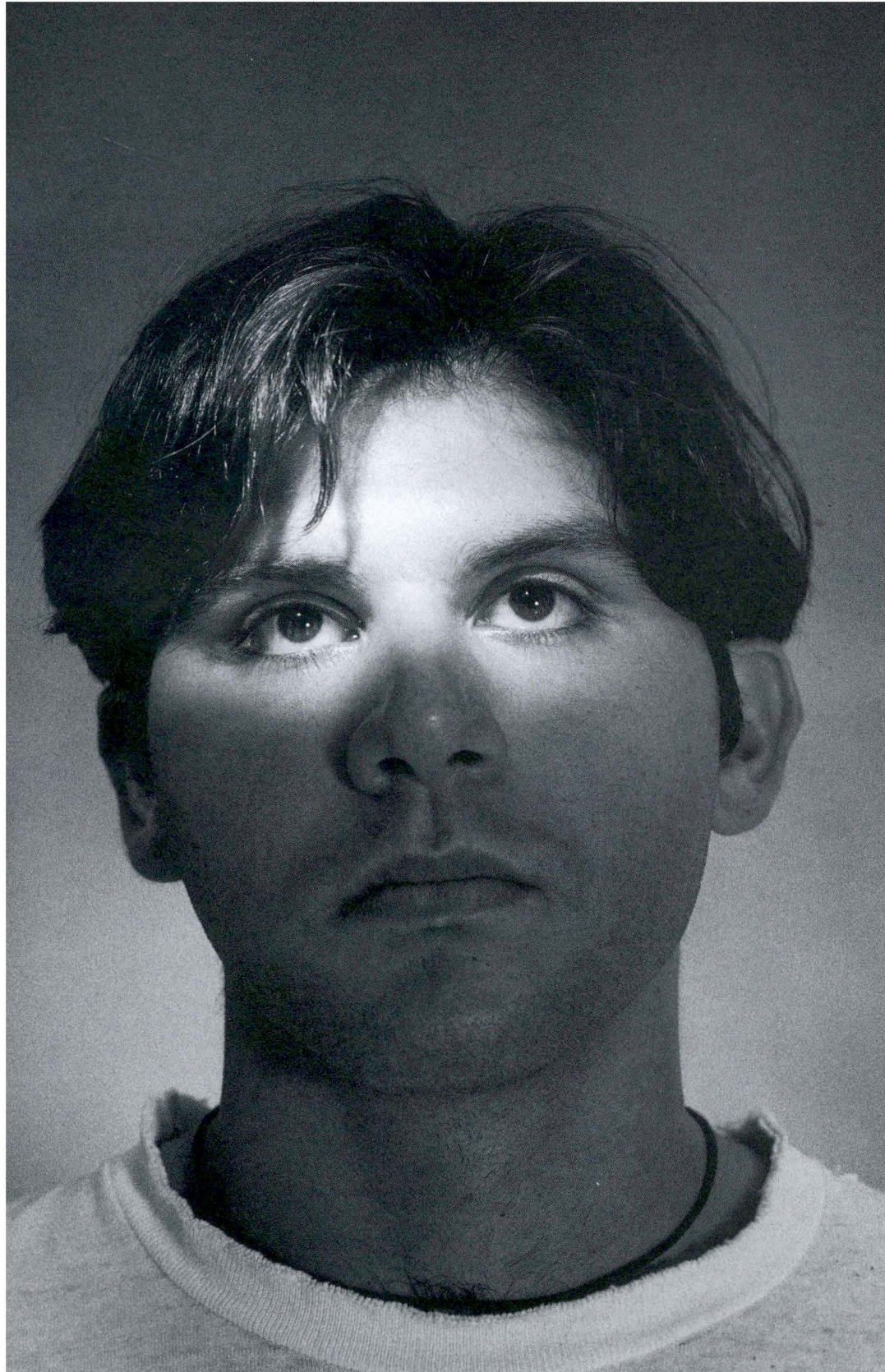


Barrie Jones
THE NAKEDS





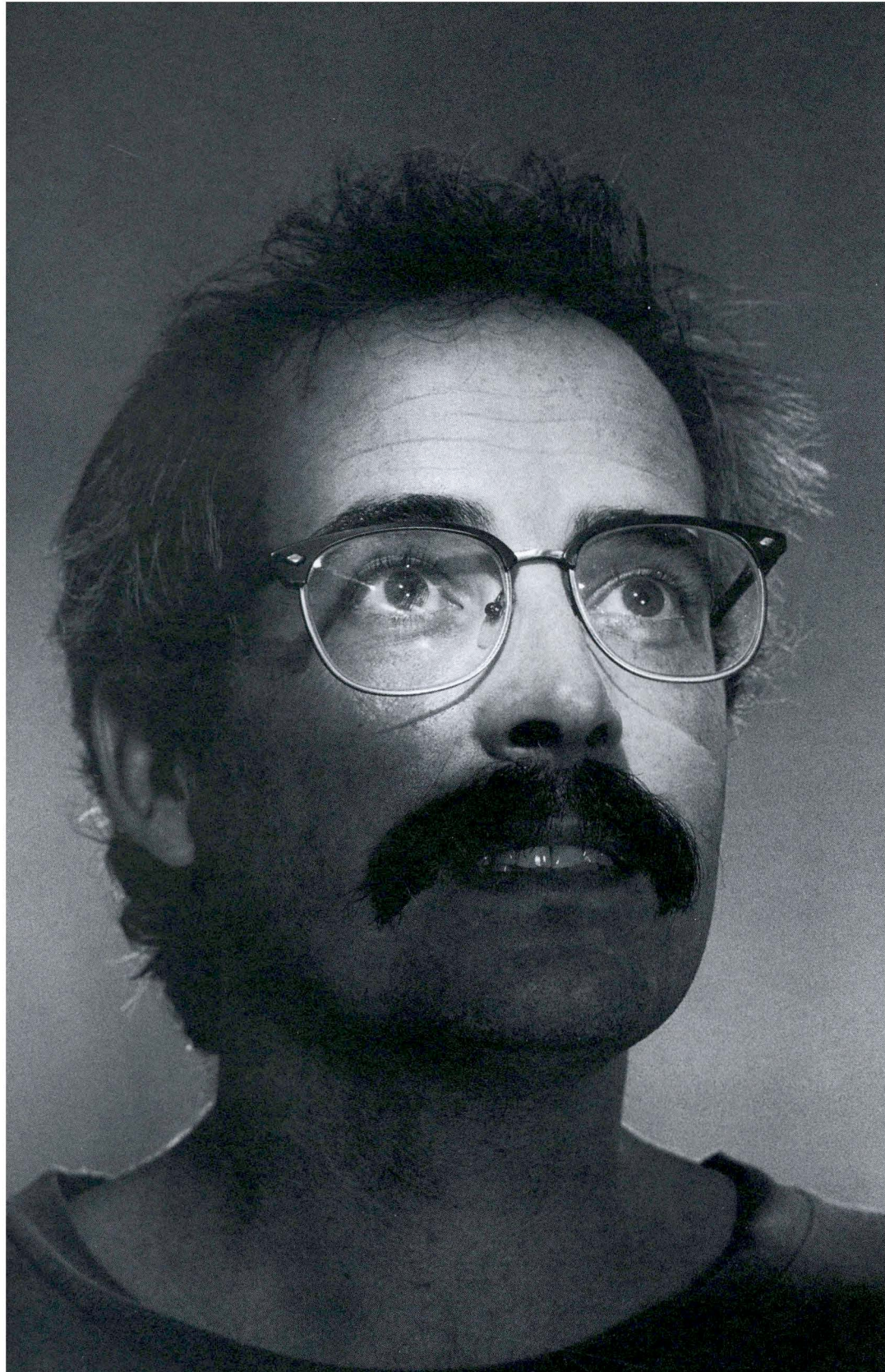




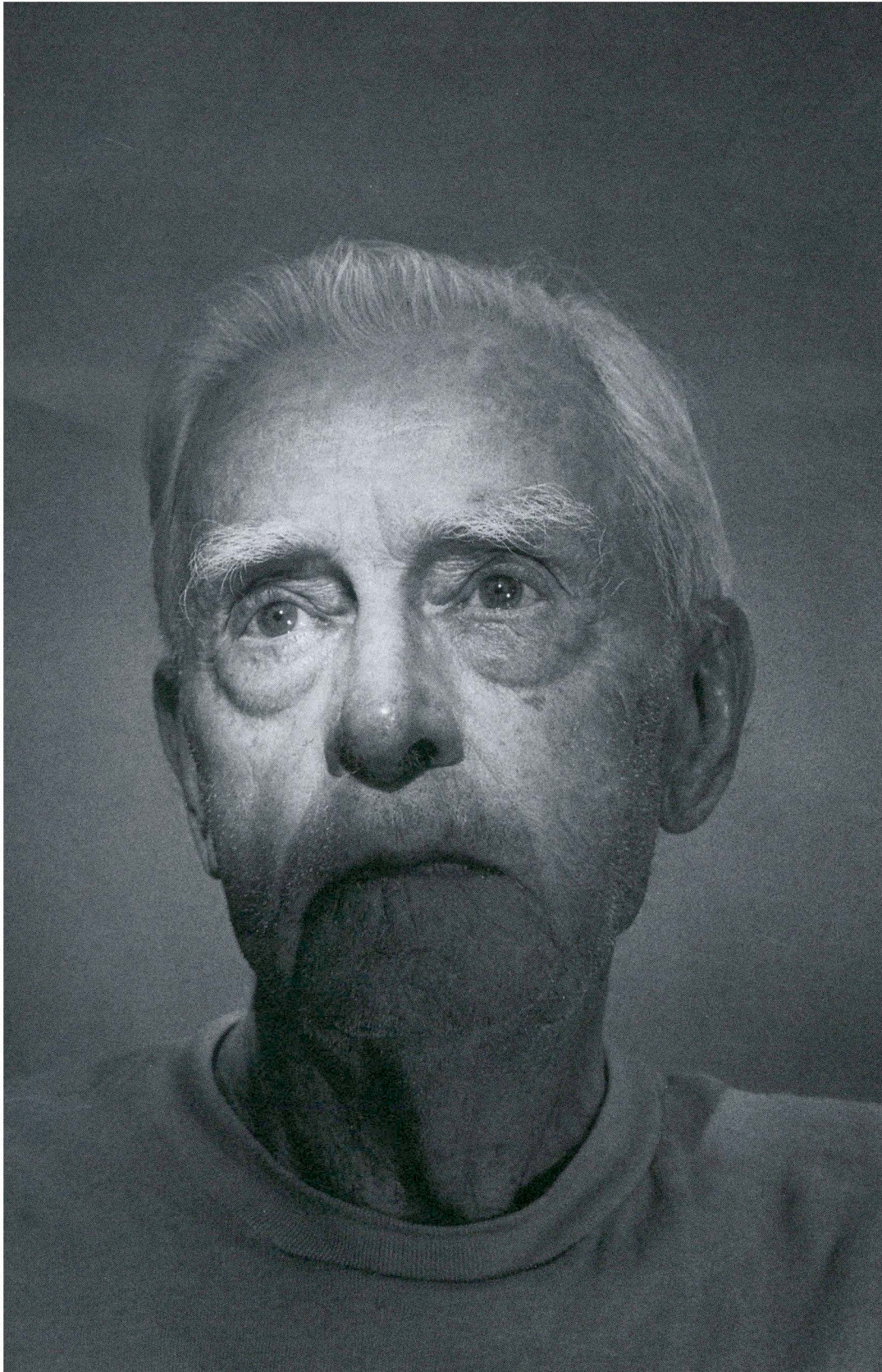




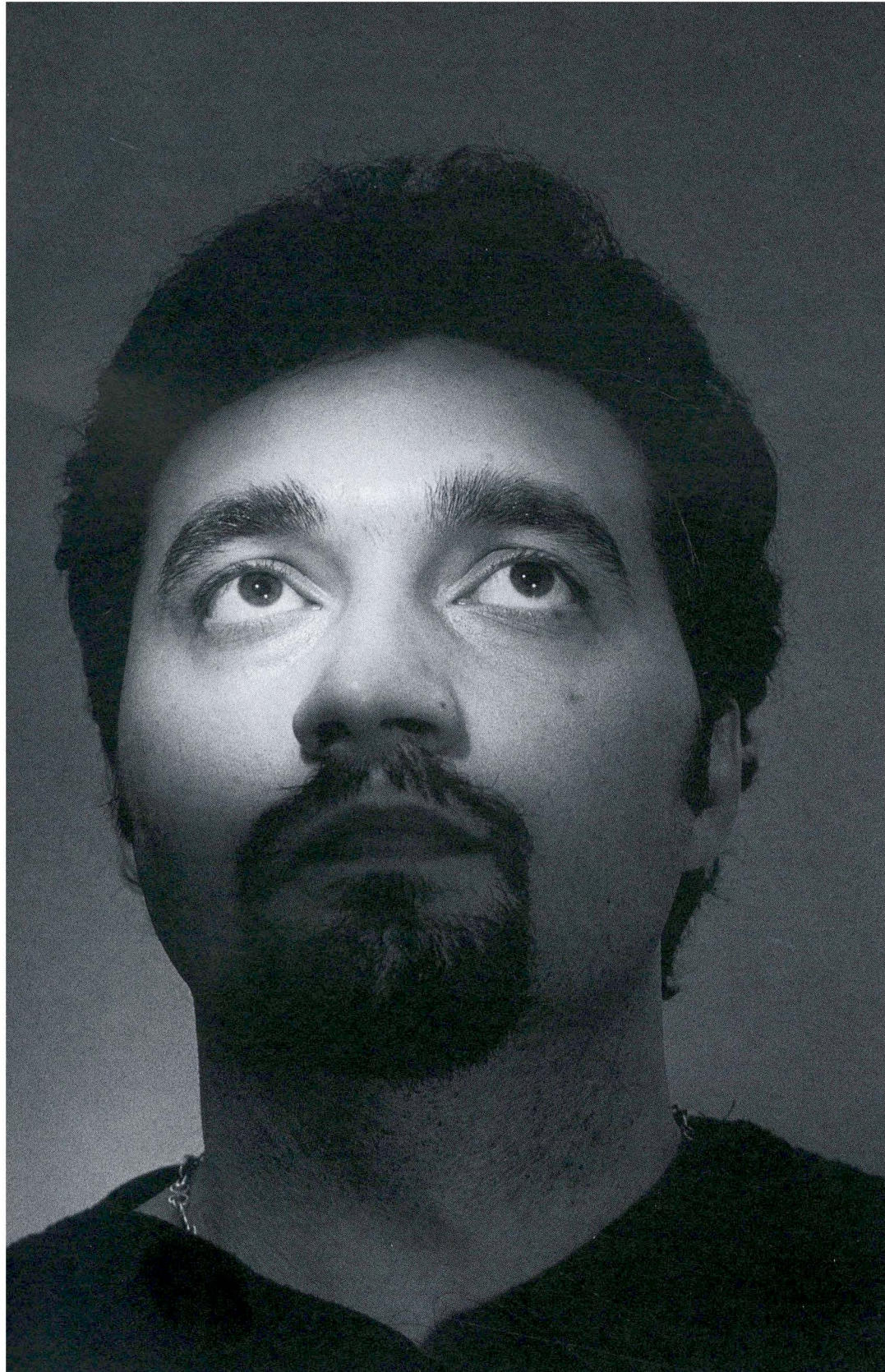










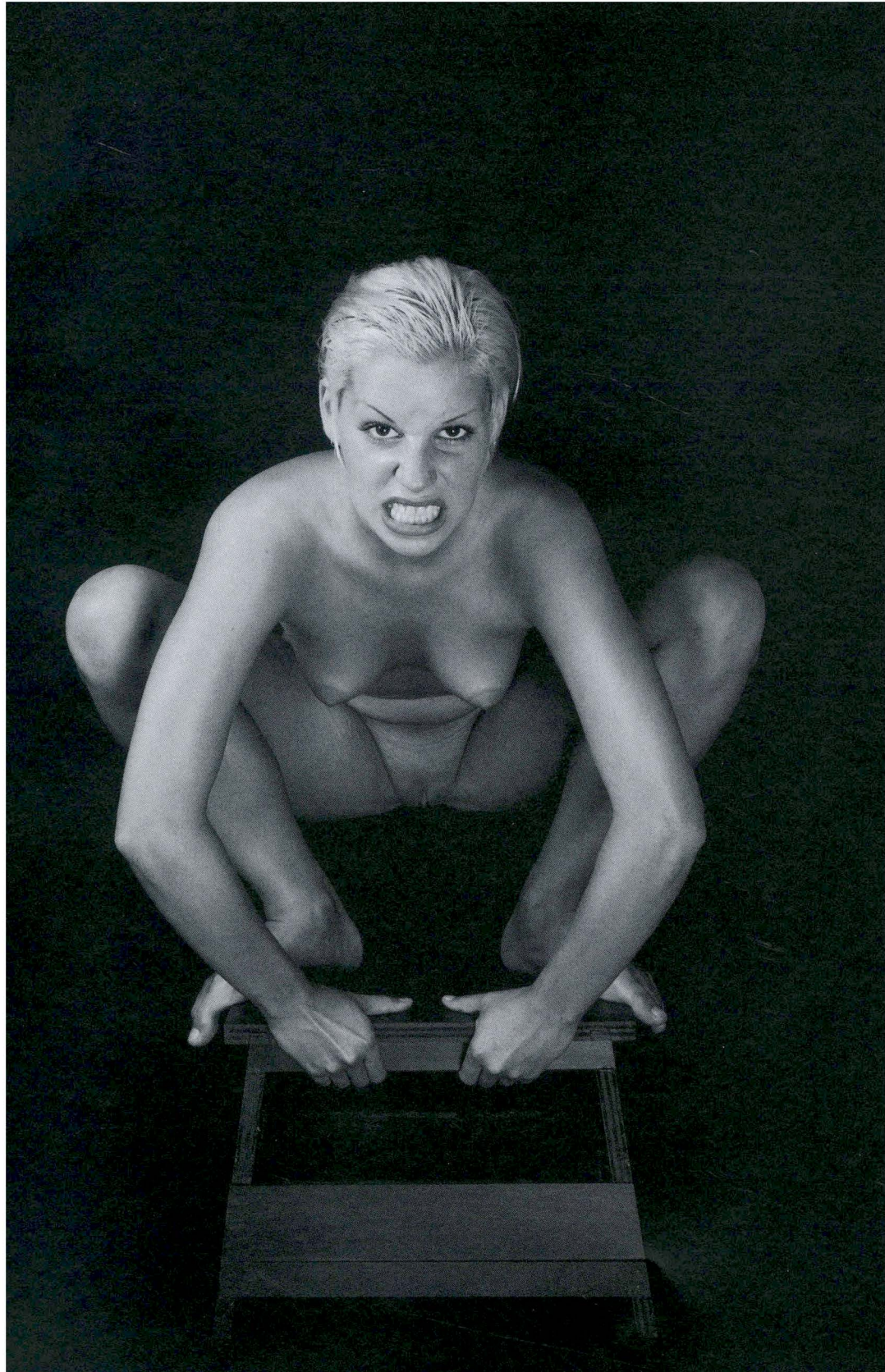


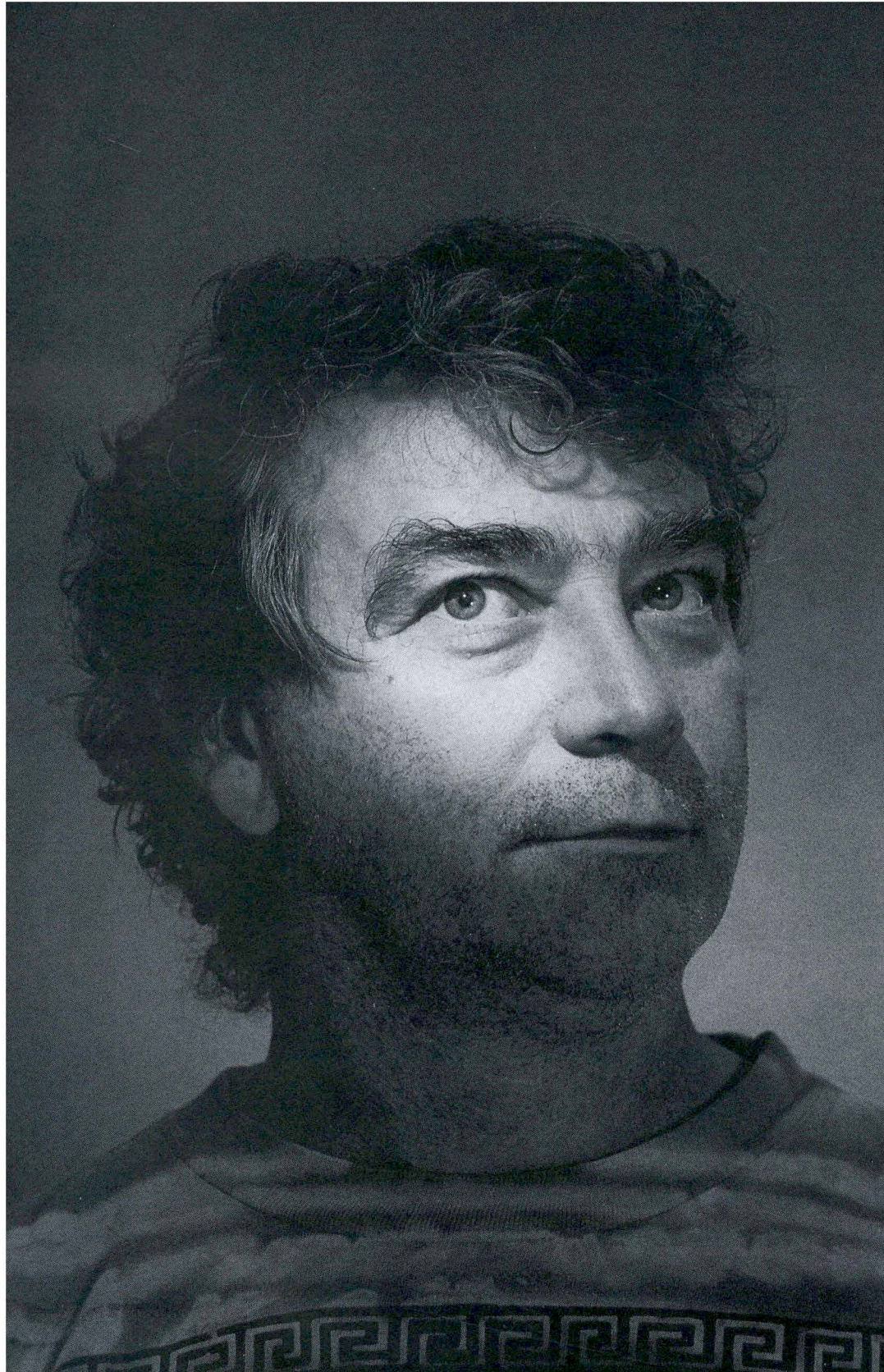




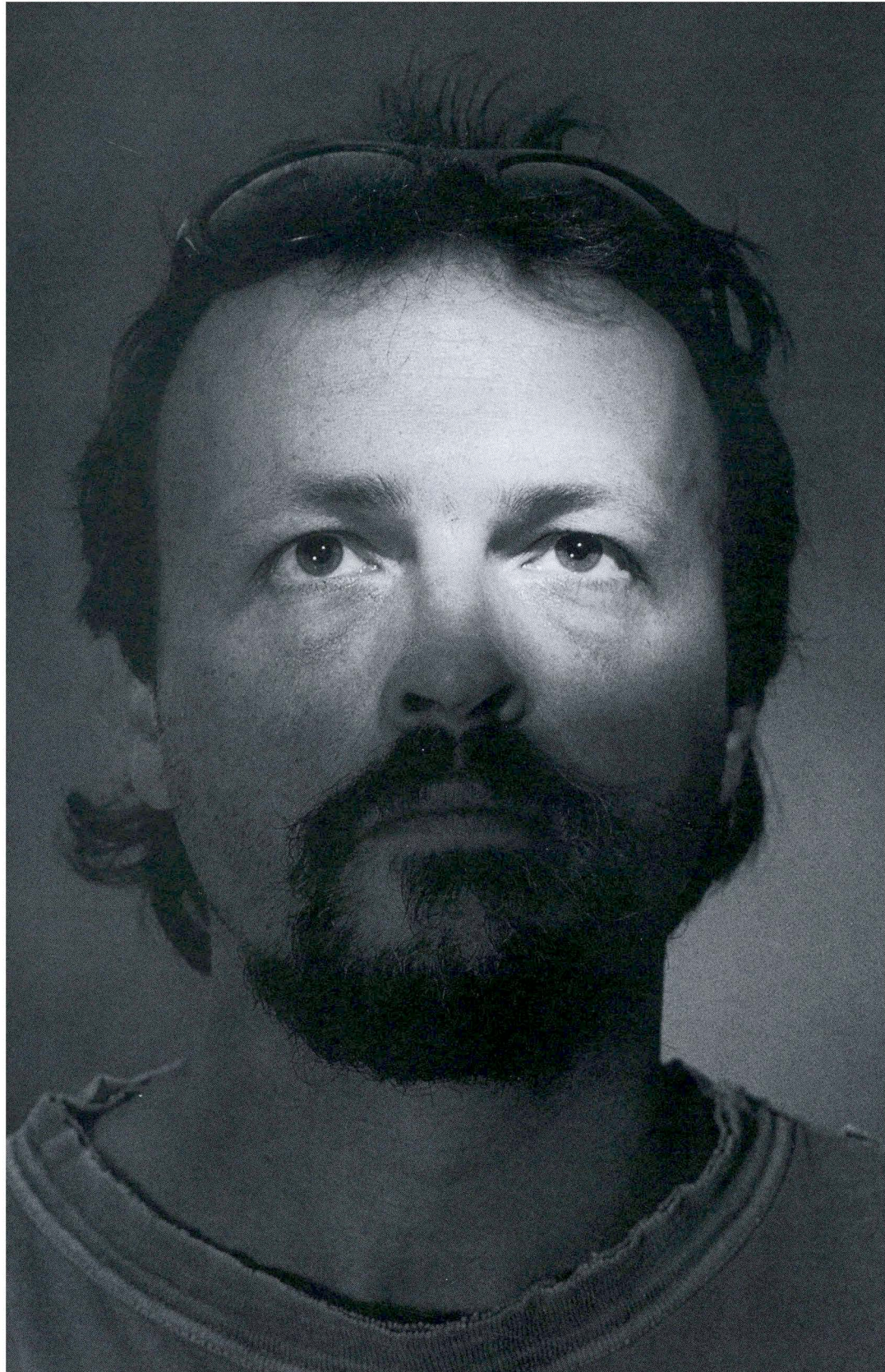




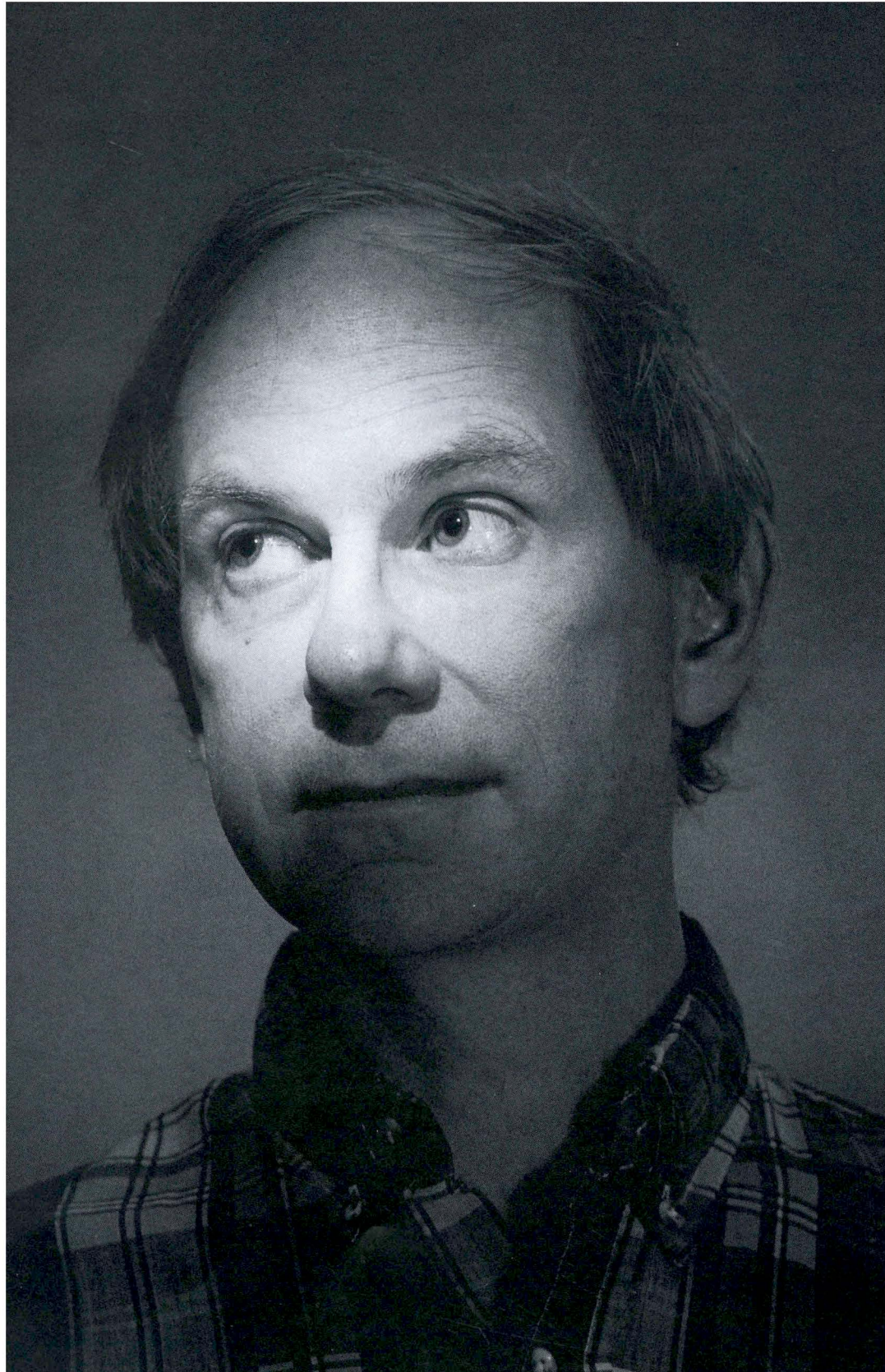








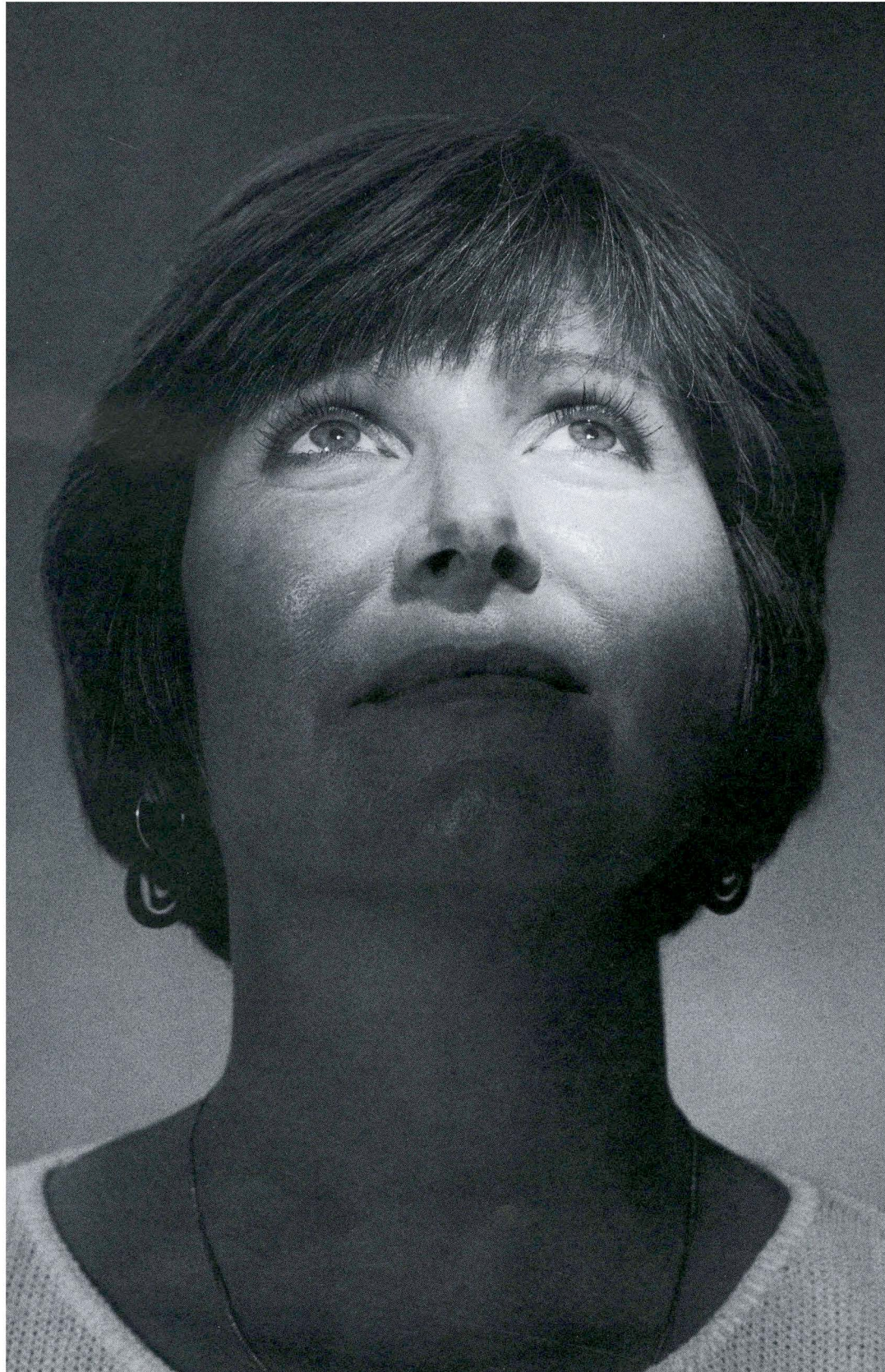












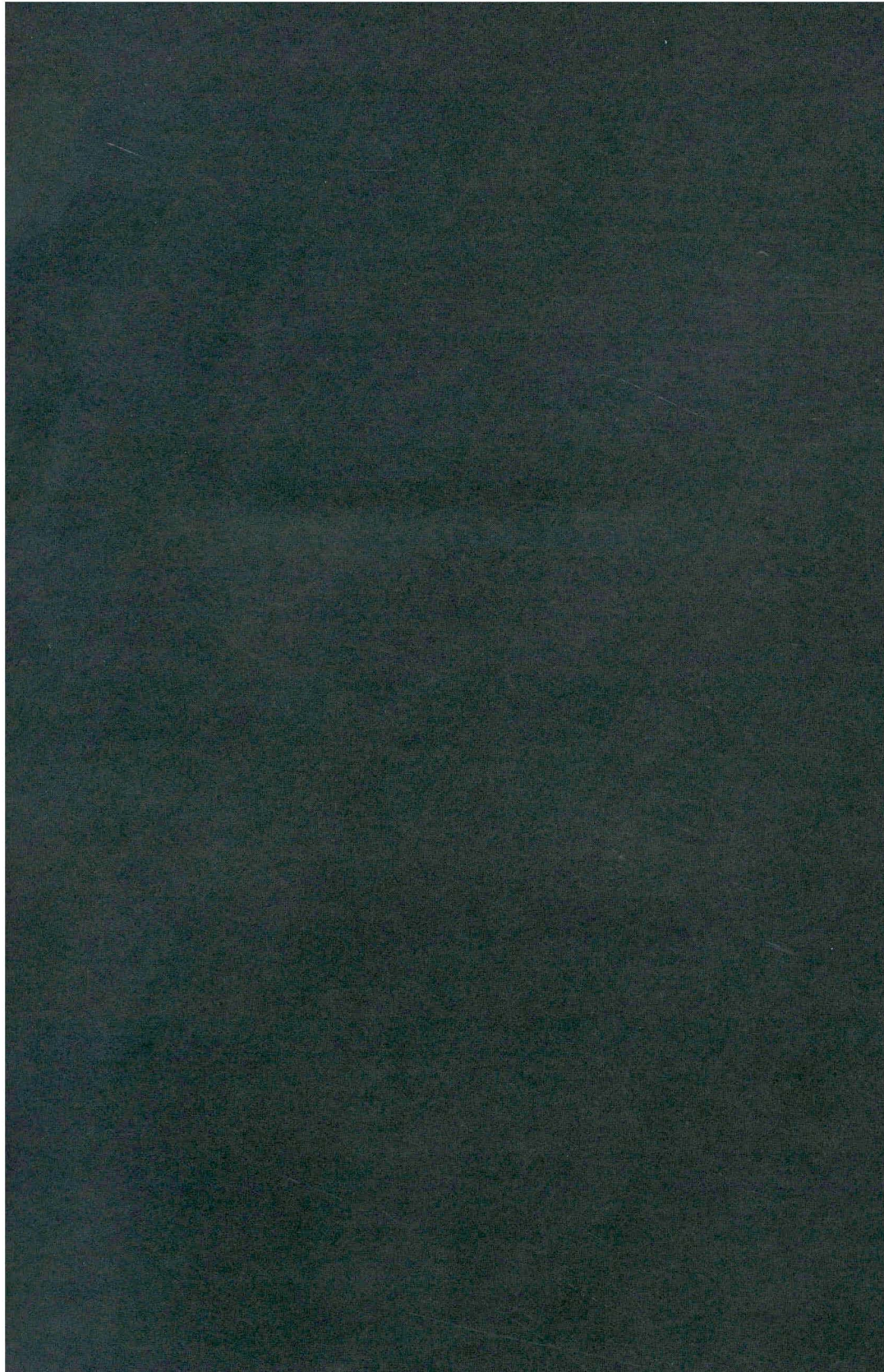












ARTIST'S STATEMENT

For a number of years I have explored individual and group identities as cultural icons, emblems, and personal portraits. The collective identity presented by a uniform has a lingering historical resonance and an ongoing cultural presence. Through a number of older bodies of work, such as the *Hockey Series* and the *Trans-Canada Bicyclists* and such recent series as *Uniformed* and *Workers' Banners* I have concentrated on the effects of a uniform both on the wearer and the observer. One quality of the uniform is the ability to include or exclude one from the group. Despite the fact that uniforms may elicit fear or at least suspiciousness in many people, they retain an exciting and powerful effect on most of us. I am interested in acknowledging this contradiction.

This work in progress, *The Naked*s, deals with many of these issues — the idea of individual identity versus collective identity, of inclusion or exclusion from a group, and the dynamic between the viewer and the viewed.

The nakedness acts on these figures and these viewers in many of the same ways as does a conventional uniform. Those who are naked are united and separated both from those who are clothed and from those “reading” the images. The primitiveness of nakedness is both repellent and attractive to these latter groups, and in either case has a visceral effect on us, much as a uniform does.

These images are “naked” rather than nudes. The impact of the work is directly related to an observation of, curiosity in, and gut response to nakedness. They are not nudes in the conventional sense because they are not primarily concerned with the aesthetics of form or sensual/sexual availability (desirability). The work, however, is concerned with the state of looking and of being looked at. The observer's stare is met, challenged, and returned unselfconsciously by the figures.

The age, sex, and appearance of the figures is not meant to be all

inclusive or particularly significant. They become tribal by virtue of their nakedness and the nature of their activity and relationship to the viewer. The choice of subjects (figures and faces) is meant to be varied and is determined mainly by my photographing people who come from my circle of acquaintances and associates.

Whether motivated by an interest in the politics of the body or by a desire for personal exploration, most of those who participate do so for themselves first and only secondarily as contributors to my project. Almost all have expressed a great deal of personal satisfaction with the experience of modelling. A number of times I have been approached by individuals asking to be included in the series after seeing the photo of a friend and hearing of their experience. As the artist, I find the photos themselves more powerful than the act of making them. Therefore, I ultimately detach these images from the reality of the photo session — which for the subjects may be their most powerful experience of this work. As the artist, however, I now use the images of those personal moments to construct a fictional narrative/situation.

This body of work was first conceived as a series for gallery exhibition which — because of the nature of its content, scale, repetition, and number of elements — when viewed creates a ritual-like space for the viewer to enter. Once in this space the viewer becomes an integral part of the whole piece.

Preparing a bookwork, however, requires a different sort of discipline because of the need to direct the flow, timing, and sequence of the images, thereby controlling the options of how one can view and experience the work. The images can be experienced individually but never as a whole, only as a sequence. In that sense, memory (of those images that came before) plays more of a role in a bookwork than in gallery work.

The challenge for me was not to try to represent the experience of viewing the work in a gallery but somehow to bring to the “reader” some of the many levels present in the experience of looking and being looked at without distancing the “reader” from the visceral impact of the images.

In this bookwork the “reader” sees the viewer observing the figures as the figures challenge and observe the viewer. But furthermore, the “reader” also has the opportunity of entering into the work as a viewer

on another level, thereby creating a triangular dynamic of observer and observed that would rarely occur in a gallery exhibition.

This bookwork also creates for me a logical pause in the development of *The Naked*s. I am using this break in shooting to contemplate new possibilities suggested by this publication as I shape the work for gallery exhibition.

— Barrie Jones
August 1995

BARRIE JONES
SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

Solo Exhibitions

- 1992 *Barrie Jones*, Mercer Union, Toronto, Ontario.
- 1991 *Young Women and Young Men of Canada*, Art Gallery of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario (catalogue).
- 1990 *Looking for Paradise*, Artcite Gallery, Windsor, Ontario.
- 1989 *Personal Rituals and Young Women of Canada*, Forest City Gallery, London, Ontario.
- Trans-Canada Bicyclists*, Forma Gallery, Novi Sad, Former Yugoslavia.
- 1981 *Beyond Sensation*, Founders College Gallery, York University, Toronto, Ontario.
- 1978 *Hockey Shots*, Nova Gallery, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Group Exhibitions

- 1993 *Site Survey*, Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, Ottawa, Ontario.
- Southwest Biennial 1993*, Art Gallery of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario.
- 1992 *Beau*, Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, Ottawa, Ontario (catalogue).
- 1990 *Pictures of People*, Gallery 101, Ottawa, Ontario.
- 1986 *Photography*, Detroit Focus Gallery, Detroit, Michigan.
- 1985 *Interior Rites: Domestic Scenes and Rituals*, ARC (Artculture Resource Centre), Toronto, Ontario.
- 1983 *October Show*, 1078 Hamilton Street, Vancouver, British Columbia.
- Vancouver: Art and Artists, 1931-1983*, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, British Columbia (catalogue).
- 1980 *Young Contemporaries '80*, London Regional Art Gallery, London, Ontario (catalogue).