

# cincinnati art museum

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**\*Images Available Upon Request**

## **The Cincinnati Art Museum to make landmark acquisition of photographer Nancy Rexroth's archive**

**CINCINNATI** — The Cincinnati Art Museum announces a landmark acquisition agreement to form The Nancy Rexroth Collection, which will bring together over 300 rare and vintage photographic works, including a complete set of pictures from the 1977 and 2017 editions of the artist's iconic photobook, *IOWA*. The acquisition marks the creation of the definitive collection of Rexroth's artistic achievements—a chapter of photographic history the Cincinnati Art Museum is proud to steward.

A photographic pioneer in the 1970s, Nancy Rexroth (American, b. 1946) is best known for her virtuosic use of the Diana camera, a plastic device manufactured to be a toy. She was introduced to the Diana during graduate studies at Ohio University, where she earned her MFA in 1971. Between 1969 and 1976, with the aid of an NEA grant, Rexroth created a body of Diana images that stands as a unique achievement in photographic history. Her pictures of small-town southeastern Ohio conjured up flickering memories of white clapboard houses, front porches in slanting afternoon light, joy and melancholy. At the same time, they plumbed the artist's personal journey from innocence to maturity.

In 1977 Rexroth published this work between lavender covers and named it *IOWA*. Her singular vision has inspired photographers ranging from Sally Mann to Alec Soth, and continues to expand the parameters of the medium for viewers all over the world. Although Rexroth's work has been shown and collected by numerous prestigious institutions, she is not a lover of limelight. After the publication of *IOWA* she went on to make other bodies of work and taught photography at Antioch College and Wright State University.

For the past 20 years, Rexroth has lived quietly in Cincinnati, Ohio. Shortly after joining the Cincinnati Art Museum's staff in 2017, Nathaniel M. Stein, Associate Curator of Photography, entered into conversation with the artist, Weinstein Hammons Gallery, and The 1988 Rexroth Family Trust to assess how the museum could play a role in sharing Rexroth's significant artistic legacy with the public.

The acquisition now underway includes Rexroth's finest early photographs, a significant representation of previously unseen *IOWA* images, and remarkable works made after the publication of *IOWA* in gelatin silver, platinum, SX-70 Polaroid Transfer, gum bichromate, 120mm film positive, and inkjet. Almost all rare vintage prints, in many cases these photographs exist in no other private or institutional collection and have seldom if ever been seen by the public. They will be preserved together with archival material and photographs by other artists from Rexroth's personal collection, enabling scholarship and appreciation of Rexroth's work for generations to come.

The Cincinnati Art Museum is working with foundations and its established photography community to complete the acquisition. Additional participation from all of those whom Rexroth's work has touched is welcome. For more information, visit [www.cincinnatiartmuseum.org/Rexroth](http://www.cincinnatiartmuseum.org/Rexroth).

### **About the Cincinnati Art Museum**

The Cincinnati Art Museum is supported by the generosity of individuals and businesses that give annually to Artswave. The Ohio Arts Council helps fund the Cincinnati Art Museum with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. The Cincinnati Art Museum gratefully acknowledges operating support from the City of Cincinnati, as well as our members.

Free general admission to the Cincinnati Art Museum is made possible by a gift from the Rosenthal Family Foundation. Special exhibition pricing may vary. Parking at the Cincinnati Art Museum is free. The museum is open Tuesday – Sunday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m. and Thursday, 11 a.m.–8 p.m. [cincinnatiartmuseum.org](http://cincinnatiartmuseum.org).

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