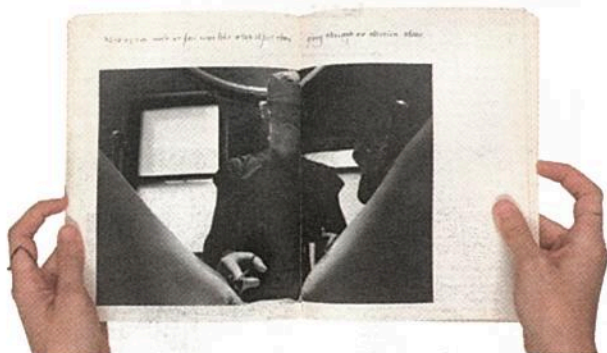
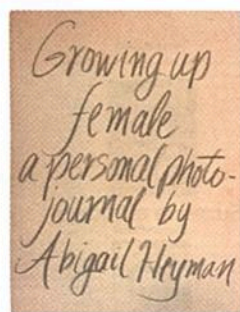


1974



Growing Up Female Clara Bouveresse on Abigail Heyman

In 1974, thirty-two-year-old photographer Abigail Heyman published her first book, *Growing Up Female: A Personal Photo-Journal* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston). Her black-and-white photographs of women's daily life in the United States had been exhibited two years before at the Public Theater in New York, eliciting contrasted reactions, from praise to puzzlement. Some visitors wondered whether the pictures were ironic or purposefully ambiguous. In her book, Heyman chooses to associate text and photographs, imagining a new strategy. The text does not comment upon the pictures; it is rather a parallel narrative exploring her personal experience and raising new questions. Instead of offering a final lesson or explanation, it voices an autobiographical story, echoing the feminist idea that "the personal is political": even though these comments are subjective, they have a collective import. The graphic presence of Heyman's handwriting gives pride of place to this intimate dimension.

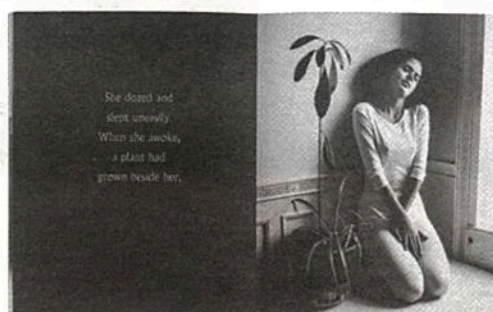
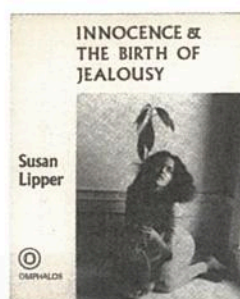
In two instances, the parallel sequences of text and pictures intersect at this autobiographic level. A double-page spread shows a young girl facing a mirror in a bathroom, next to a self-portrait of the photographer in a similar setting. The numerous bottles and beauty products on the sink before the mirror seem to separate her from her own image, revealing how consumerized norms shape the construction of femininity and contaminate self-representation.

Another spread is devoted to the photographer's abortion in 1973, the year when it was made legal in the entire US territory. The outline of a masked doctor, set against the crude glare of an operating lamp, appears in between the photographer's legs. The corresponding contact sheet (not included in the book itself) reveals that Heyman took many shots of the operation, committing her photographer's eye to the surgical treatment she was facing in order to make visible a hitherto hidden or taboo experience. Her accompanying note: "Nothing made me feel more like a sex object than going through an abortion alone," comments on many levels about the power relationships between men and women—including those in the field of medicine, where patients and in particular women are often treated as passive objects, a problem famously addressed in the popular handbook *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, published a few years before in 1971.

Clara Bouveresse is an associate professor at the University of Evry, France. She curated the *Magnum Manifesto* exhibition and is currently preparing an exhibition for the Rencontres d'Arles festival, on books published by Eve Arnold, Abigail Heyman, and Susan Meiselas.

Abigail Heyman • *Growing Up Female: A Personal Photo-Journal*
Holt, Rinehart and Winston • New York, 1974

1974



Innocence & the Birth of Jealousy David Solo on Susan Lipper

Innocence & the Birth of Jealousy (Omphalos, 1974) is Susan Lipper's first book and an early example of a photo-poem. This rare book offers a single, tightly integrated meditation on narcissism and its effects on relationships. It comprises a sequence of twenty spreads, each with white type on a black background paired with a full-page, black-and-white image—alternating recto/verso from one spread to the next. Lipper appears in a set of dancelike poses, first dressed in white and then in black, sometimes alone and sometimes with a plant or mirror.

The project arose out of an independent study program on poetry with George MacBeth, and one on collage with author and artist Penny Slinger, while Lipper was studying English literature in London. Lipper's book was made following the 1971 publication of Slinger's first book, *50% the Visible Woman*, which presented poems on translucent sheets over photo-collages. The images in *Innocence* were part of a photo shoot Slinger took of Lipper, and the original plan was to use these images as material for Lipper's own collages.

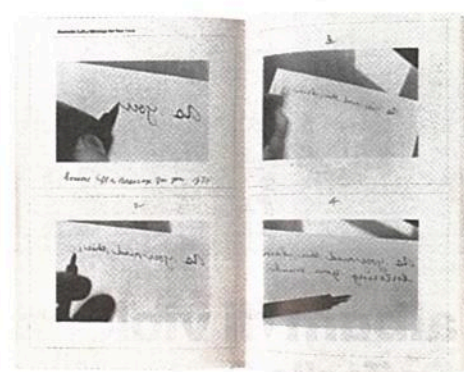
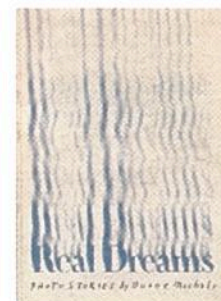
When Lipper reviewed the contact sheets, the idea of the sequence/story emerged, and she wrote the accompanying narrative poem immediately thereafter. Given how closely the images and text connect, it's initially a surprise that the poses weren't based on the poetry; however, looking at the images without the text, one can imagine constructing a wholly different narrative and mood. The text shapes the read of the images as much as the images reinforce the content of the poem. The book was designed by Martin Booth of Sceptre Press (who published it under his Omphalos imprint), and the resulting design both frames the work well and balances the amount of time needed to read the text and image from each spread, with the successful result of a strong, ironic photo-poem.

After returning to the United States, Lipper attended Yale in the early 1980s and developed her more recognized style, as seen in the trilogy *Grapevine* (Cornerhouse, 1994), *trip* (powerHouse, 2004), and *Domesticated Land* (MACK, 2018). While visually very different, the trilogy also features the creation of a female persona's diaristic perspectives, and retains the strong use of sequence and integration with text seen in this early work.

David Solo is a Brooklyn-based collector of photography, contemporary Japanese and Chinese art, and artist and photobooks. He is actively involved with a number of institutions in London and New York, and is currently working on a history of photography and poetry combinations in book form.

Susan Lipper • *Innocence & the Birth of Jealousy*
Omphalos Press • Rushden, Northamptonshire, UK, 1974

1976



Real Dreams: Photo Stories Tim Soter on Duane Michals

If there is one book in the canon of Duane Michals's thirty-five-plus publications that best shows his use of prose, in tandem with and sometimes even in place of photography, it is *Real Dreams*. In this 1976 book, the eponymous "photo stories" do not always come in the form of photographs. Take, for example, "A Failed Attempt to Photograph Reality," a reproduction of handwritten text composed with a nib-tipped pen dipped in an inkwell and inscribed on an unexposed piece of 11-by-14 photographic paper. "I had confused the appearances of trees and automobiles and people for reality itself . . .," Michals writes. The full passage replaces an unrealized photograph, challenging the form without abandoning the medium in order to convey the newly learned lesson. The opening text, "Real Dreams," follows, with all ten pages again written out in cursive. Words or entire sentences are aggressively crossed out where Michals miswrites them. Michals manages to focus attention not only on the message but also on the messenger, whose personality comes through in a conversational, often instructional handwritten missive to the reader. "I am a short story writer. Most other photographers are reporters. I am an orange. They are apples." In explaining himself as a photographer, or an "artist who uses photography" (Michals has vacillated between the two), he identifies as a writer.

In a photo sequence titled "The Violent Act," Michals has signed his name twice on the first panel and crossed out both. He has scribbled in the margins, apparently to test the fluidity of his nib. Were the instructions to the book publisher unclear, or is Michals calling even more attention to the writing on the physical print? In "Someone Left a Message for You," the photographer's (author's?) hand and pen appear in the image, writing text backward on a piece of paper. The handwritten title appears below, but the true sequence can only be realized when the viewer or "reader" holds that text up to a mirror to decode it.

"I am not interested in the perfect print," Michals announces. "I am interested in a perfect idea. Perfect ideas survive bad prints and cheap reproductions. They can change our lives."

Tim Soter is a photographer and book publisher of the imprint The Ship Escaped. *TIM! GO AWAY!*, his book about "stalking" Duane Michals (The Ship Escaped, 2015), is followed this year by the release of *ForTress*, a photo-biography about photographer Arthur Tress (The Ship Escaped, 2019), available now at TheShipEscaped.com.

Duane Michals • *Real Dreams: Photo Stories*
Addison House • Danbury, New Hampshire, 1976