

**PIONEER PHOTOGRAPHS FROM 1973-1976 BY LUCAS SAMARAS TO BE EXHIBITED
AT PACEWILDENSTEIN LOS ANGELES THIS SUMMER**

Beverly Hills, July 18, 1997 - Forty "Photo-Transformations" by Lucas Samaras, created between 1973 and 1976 and never exhibited, will be on view at PaceWildenstein Los Angeles, 9540 Wilshire Boulevard, Beverly Hills from July 31 through September 20, 1997. The exhibition marks the first time since 1984 that Samaras's work has been shown in California.

Lucas Samaras, born in Macedonia, Greece in 1936, came to New York with his parents in 1948. Samaras met Allan Kaprow, George Segal, and Robert Whitman when he attended Rutgers University in New Jersey. He then became an active figure in the New York art world when he participated in the first series of "happenings" with Jim Dine, Red Grooms, and Claes Oldenburg. Since that time Samaras has become widely known for his sculpture, drawings, paintings, photographs and his diverse use of media including beads, chicken wire, clay, Cor-Ten steel, fabric, pastel, pencil, pins, plaster, and oil.

Lucas Samaras changed the landscape of photography in the early 1970s when he used the new Polaroid SX-70 camera. While the 3 x 3" Polaroid image developed, Samaras manipulated the surface and produced astonishing visual effects. Samaras, both the artist and subject of the Photo-Transformations, captured more than his mere self-portrait. In the work, photographed over three years in his small New York City studio apartment, Samaras assumed hundreds of intimate poses for the camera, changing his identity from image to image. The intense exploration of his body and moods was influenced by a strong interest in theater and his early work as an actor in the "happenings".

Samaras once remarked on his use of the Polaroid, "It allowed me to explore myself and it had a whole set of interesting permissions. These were taboos from the outside world, but for me they were marvelously positive things to do. It permitted me to expose, or explore, or record, or use as a weapon - all those aspects of myself. You know, aspects of getting older, of self, of being adult in a different way."

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LOS ANGELES