

# GEMINI G.E.L.

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Robert Rauschenberg at Gemini G.E.L., 1969. Photo copyright Sidney B. Felsen.

For Immediate Release

*Photographs by Sidney B. Felsen:  
The Artist Observed  
Opening: July 12, 2018*

Gemini G.E.L. is pleased to announce an exhibition of over 200 photographs by Gemini co-founder Sidney B. Felsen. *The Artist Observed*, will be on view from July 12.

Selected from over 20,000 negatives, the photographs in the exhibition serve as a testament to Sidney Felsen the photographer, as well as the vitality of the relationships he developed with his subjects – artists in dynamic collaboration at Gemini. Felsen co-founded Gemini G.E.L. in Los Angeles in 1966 and soon after began to photograph the artists who came to work there. The resulting works are evidence of a photographer trusted by artists to balance the privacy essential to their creativity with the importance of capturing historic events.

This balance and ability to foster creativity solidified Felsen's role as the shepherd for the relationships with Gemini's artists. It was in this unique role that Felsen's "private art" (as identified by Constance W. Glenn in the book of Felsen's photographs, *The Artist Observed*) came to be known. Felsen is quoted as saying:

*There's something about taking photos of people. Since my early teens it's been an interest, and it seemed to find its ultimate mission in the mid-1960's at Gemini, where there have been many days and nights of working with and being with the artists. There's something about seeing someone in a particular action or position and then making a picture of that moment - it's so final.*

*Early on I realized there was an intrusive aspect to using a camera while someone is concentrating on the very private, spiritual, meditative moments of making art. I've tried to be as invisible as possible while photographing them, and have always used a*



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*range-finder camera because of its silent shutter. I've always asked permission to photograph; the answer is usually yes, but there have been some no's. I do believe not being intrusive helps, but my better ally has been the close friendships that have developed throughout the years with many of the artists. It's much more natural to sit with a friend, with a camera in my hand, and start shooting photos than it is to use a hired professional, where there's a veil between the two parties.*

*The spirit of Gemini is best captured by the word "collaboration". It's about artists and printers working hand-in-hand to create works of art. This same spirit prevails when I take photos. There's a trust extended by the artists, allowing me to share so many remarkable moments with them; my greatest thanks go to them for this special permission they grant me.*



Julie Mehretu working on a copper plate, 2010. Photo copyright Sidney B. Felsen.

Some of Felsen's most fascinating images are of artists working on their editions: he aims his camera at the moment when Julie Mehretu is applying spit-bite to her copper plates, David Hockney is drawing a portrait of Henry Geldzahler, Richard Serra is stomping Paintstik onto Mylars, and Elizabeth Murray is surrounded by a wall of her paper constructions *Knottings & Crossings*. Not only does Felsen show this intimate look into the behind the scene life at Gemini, but he also captures artists and printers enjoying their time together, socializing, laughing, and experimenting. His photographs tell the quiet story of some of the most dynamic moments of creativity in 20th century art making.

Sidney Felsen received his first camera for his Bar Mitzvah in 1937 and studied painting, drawing, and ceramics in Los Angeles after his service in World War II. He has served as co-founder and co-owner of Gemini G.E.L. for over 50 years and continues to develop unique relationships with Gemini's artists today.

For inquiries, please contact Annabel Keenan at [Annabel@geminigel.com](mailto:Annabel@geminigel.com)

For further information please contact the gallery at: 323 651 0513 or visit [www.geminigel.com](http://www.geminigel.com)



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