

(D)urban Culture: Performing the African City

Ori Bass 

(D)urban Culture: Performing the African City. 7th Biennial Conference of the Society of South African Geographers, Port Elizabeth, 8-10 July, 2007.

HSRC RESEARCH OUTPUTS

5001

*(D)urban Culture:
Performing the African City*

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*“Extraordinary new things are happening in
our cities – its our collective
responsibility to address them”*

(Mabin, 2007)

*“We assert the centrality of people’s
creative attempts to construct, contest
and maintain a material and emotionally
secure sense of place and identity”*

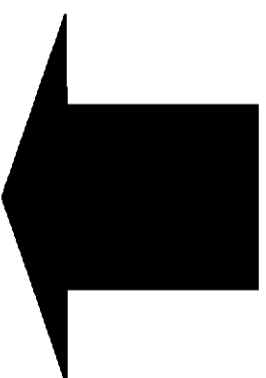
(Field, Meyer & Swanson, 2007:7)



Theoretical Imperatives

Conversation between literatures

- Postcolonialism
- Creolisation
- Culture-led urbanisation
- Inclusive cities



Creative activities transform space




Durban Context

Elaborate alternative postcolonial, urban tradition

- Iconic → organic
- Durban as cultural archive
- Concrete, visual and physical strategies transform material and representational Durban
- African identity and how the city is sculpted (co-constituting relationship)
- Landscaping Durban as a creolised, African city
- Re-appropriate physical space & identity
- Attuned to cultural stories which shape urban life & form
- Engage with the performed, imagined, lived fabric of cities



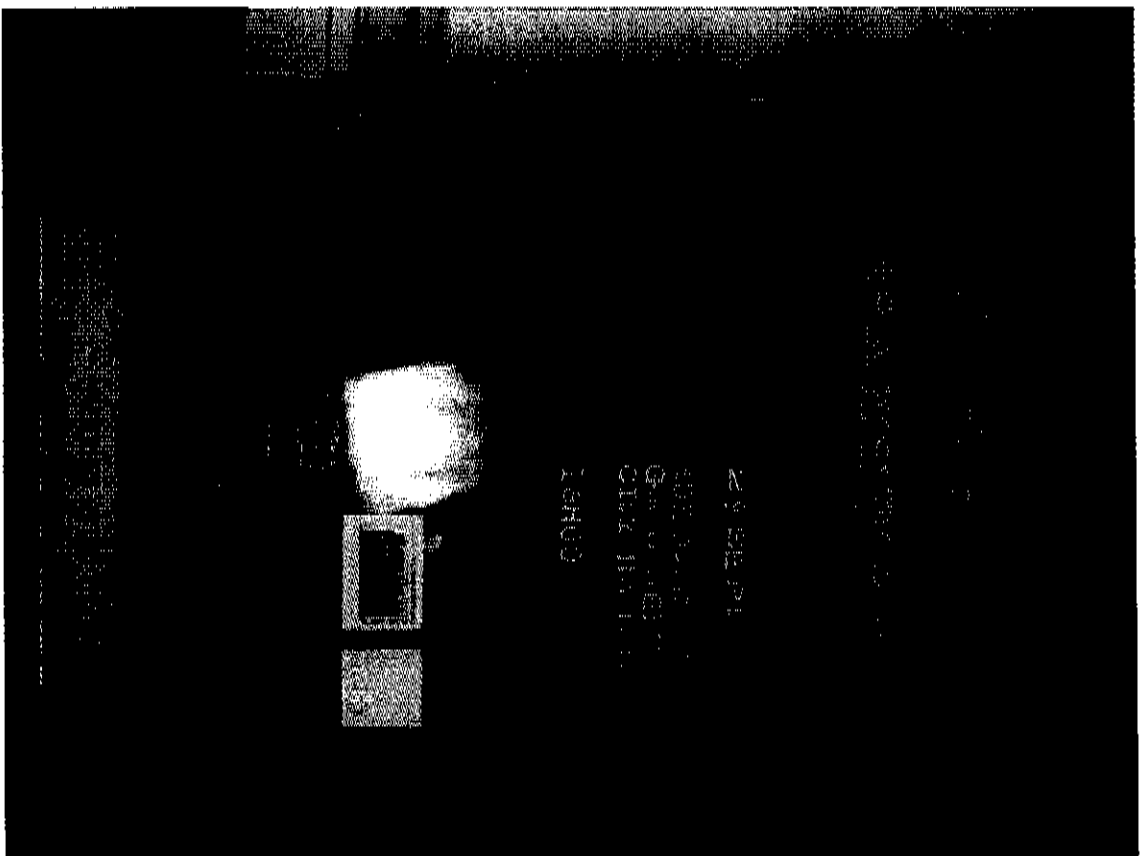
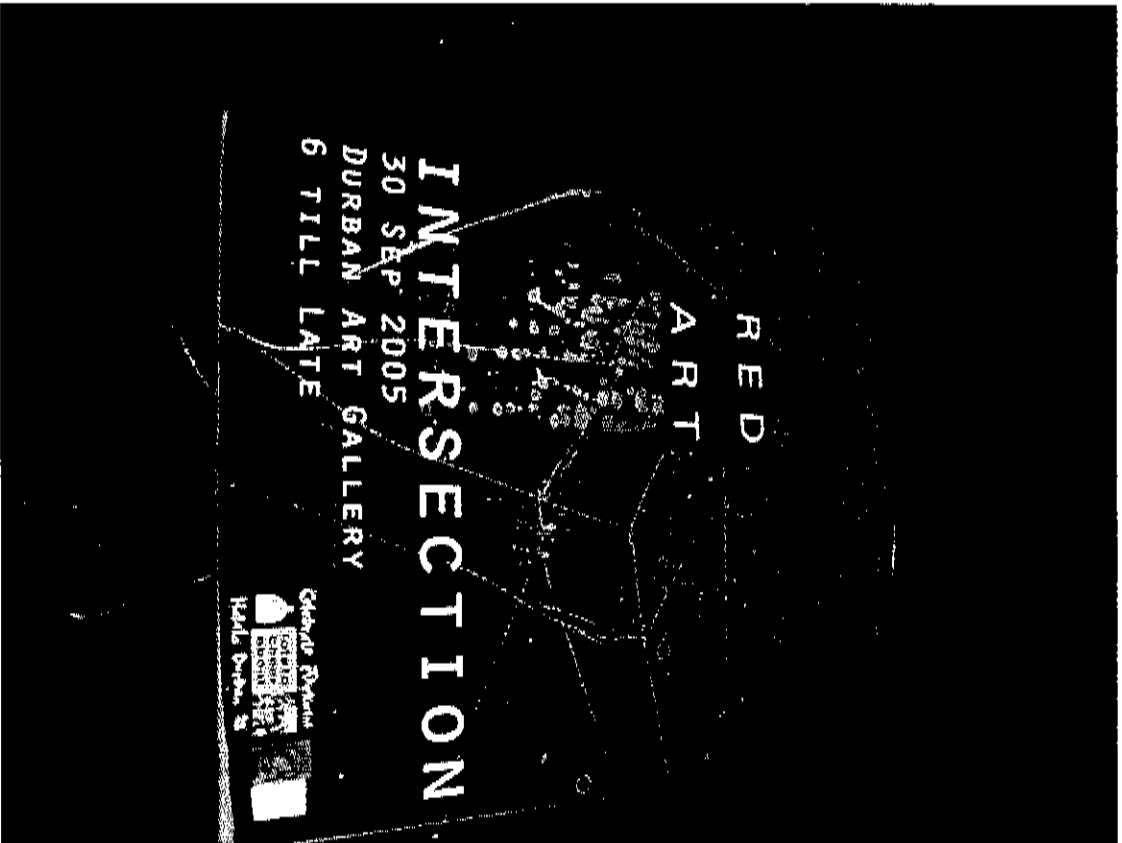
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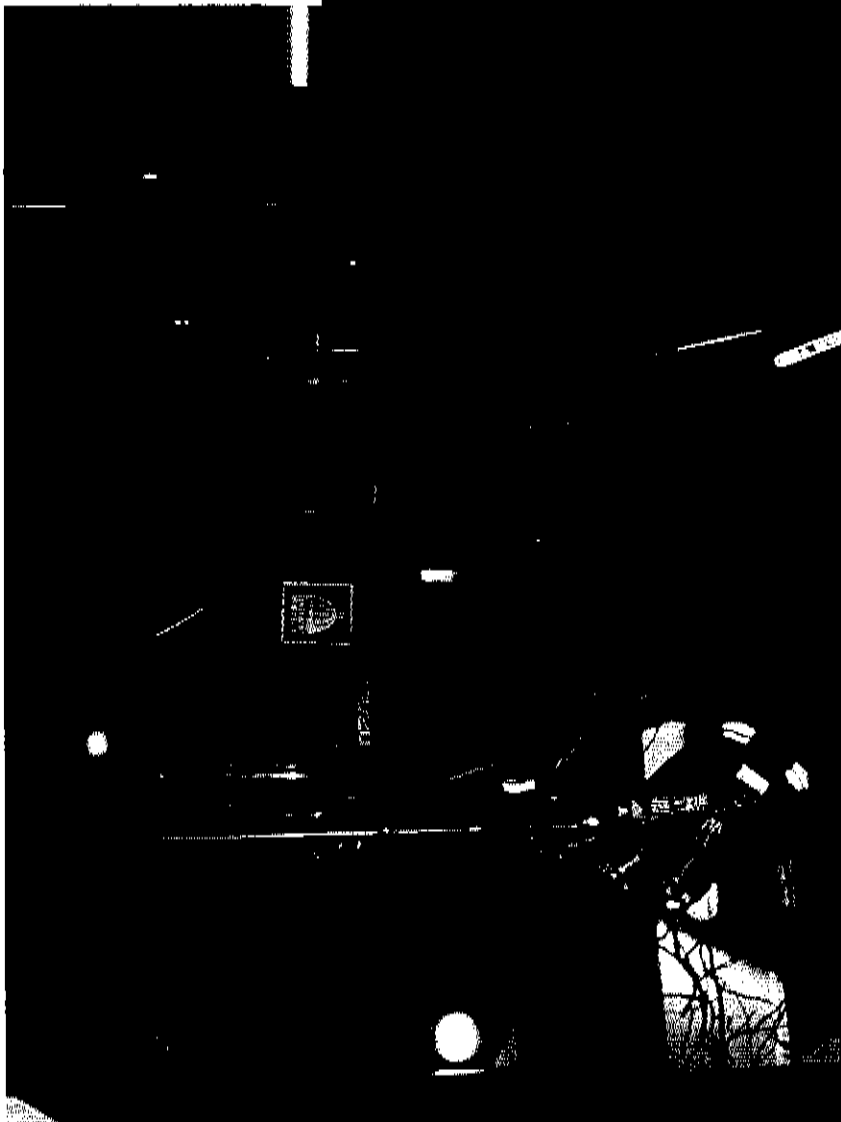
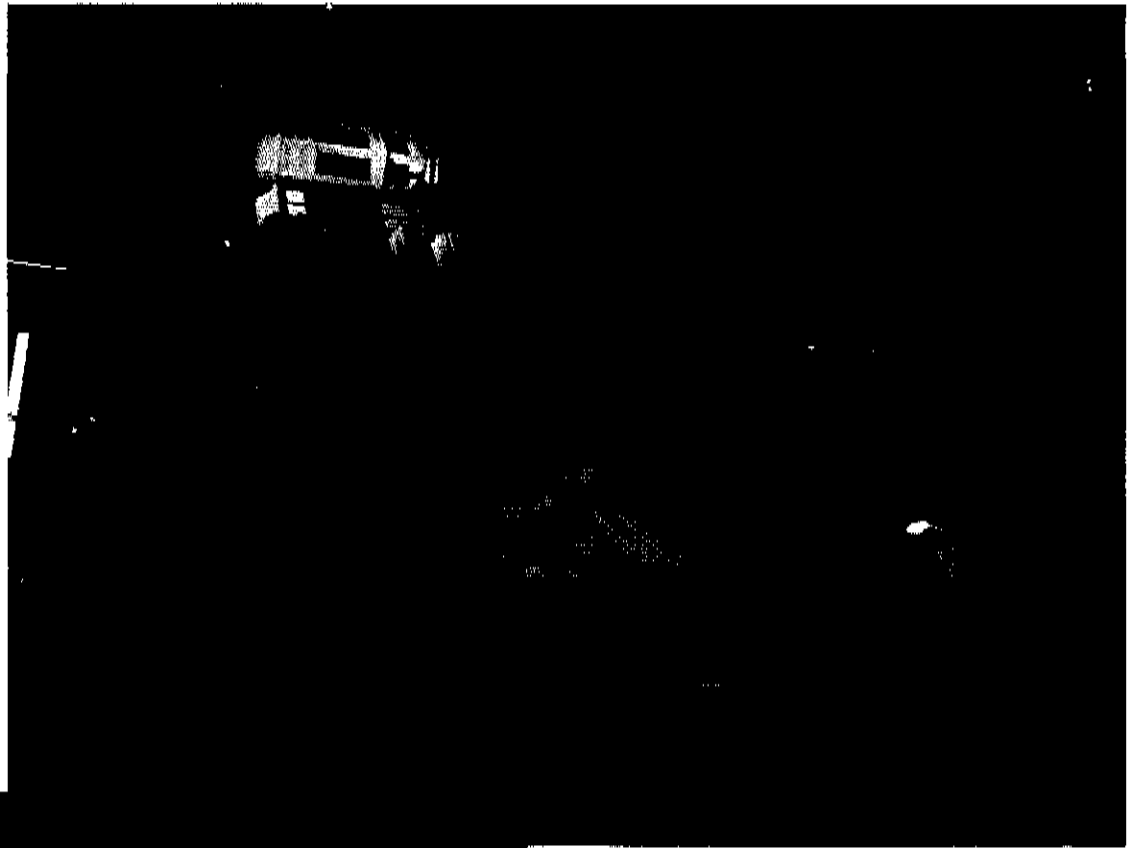
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 - Jürgen Bräuningner
- **Forges beyond stereotypes**
- **Forces juxtaposition & integration**
- **Creolised soundscape**
- **Invokes a sense of present & past creolisation**
- **New senses of Durban's representational space**
- ***Warwick* **

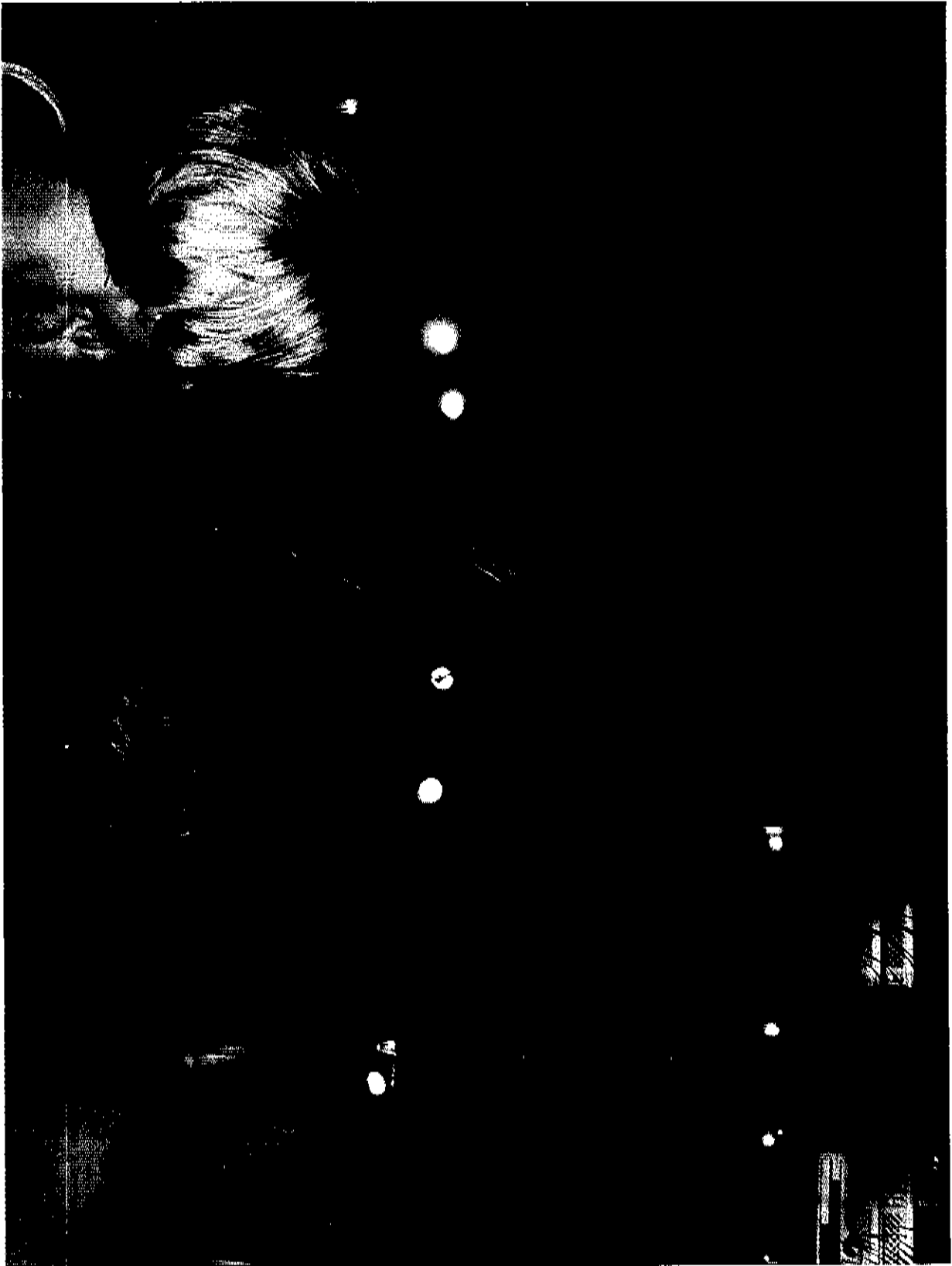


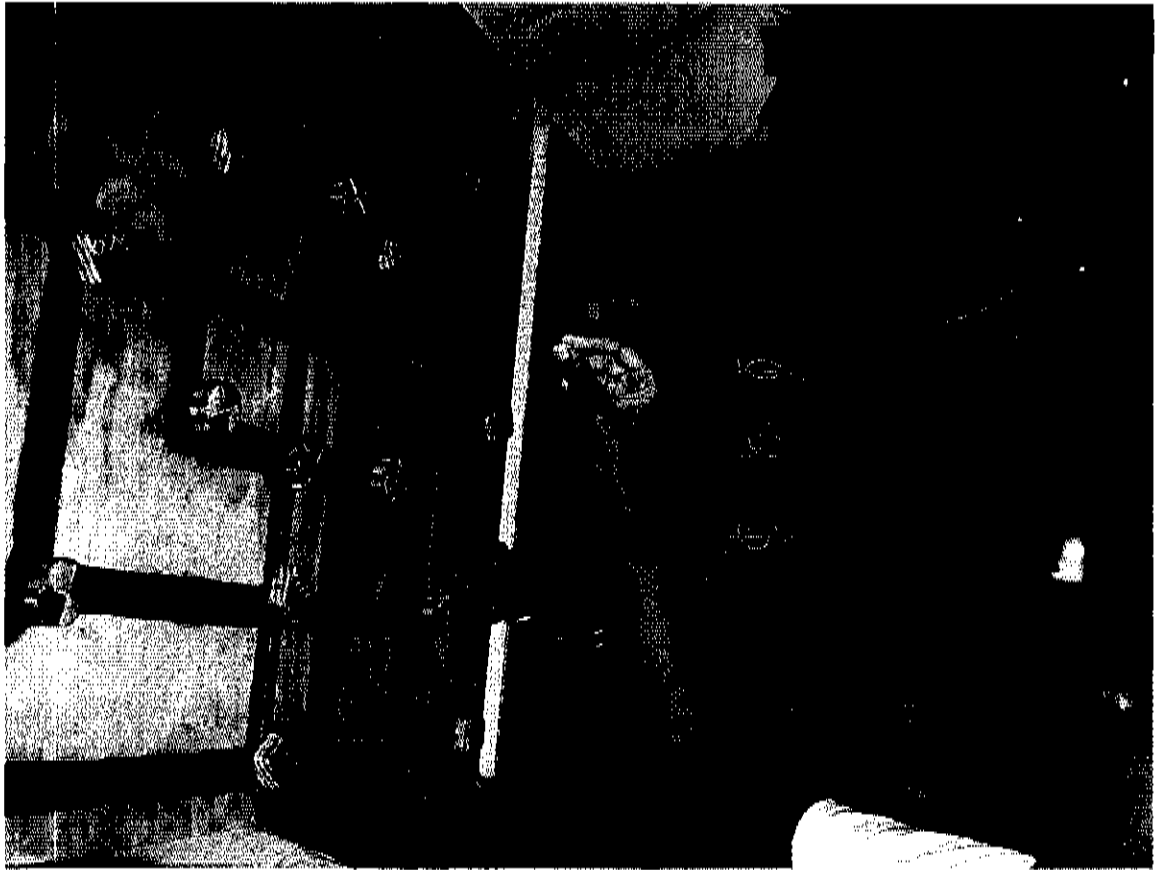
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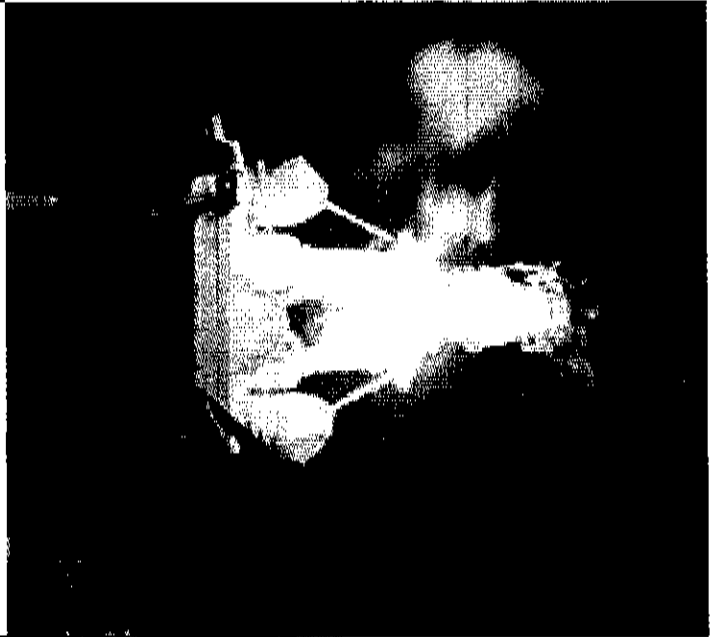
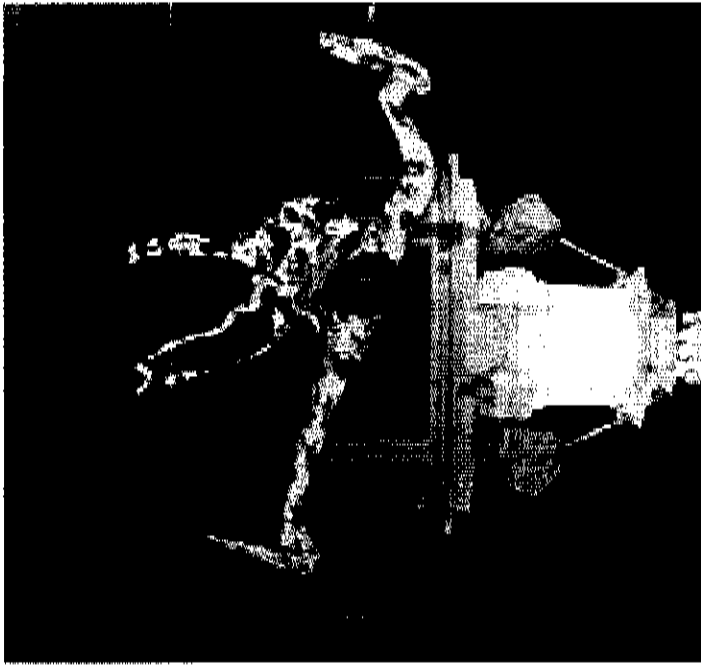
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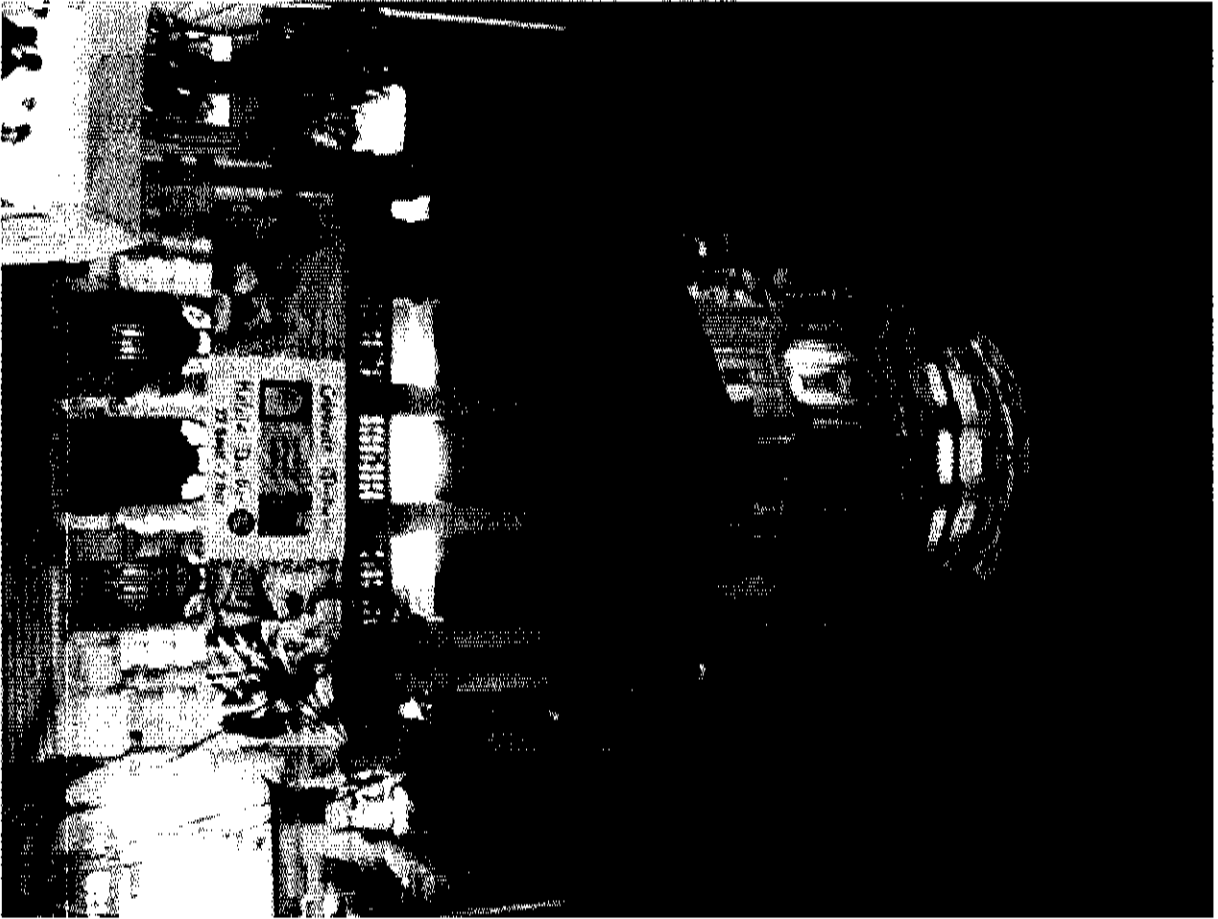


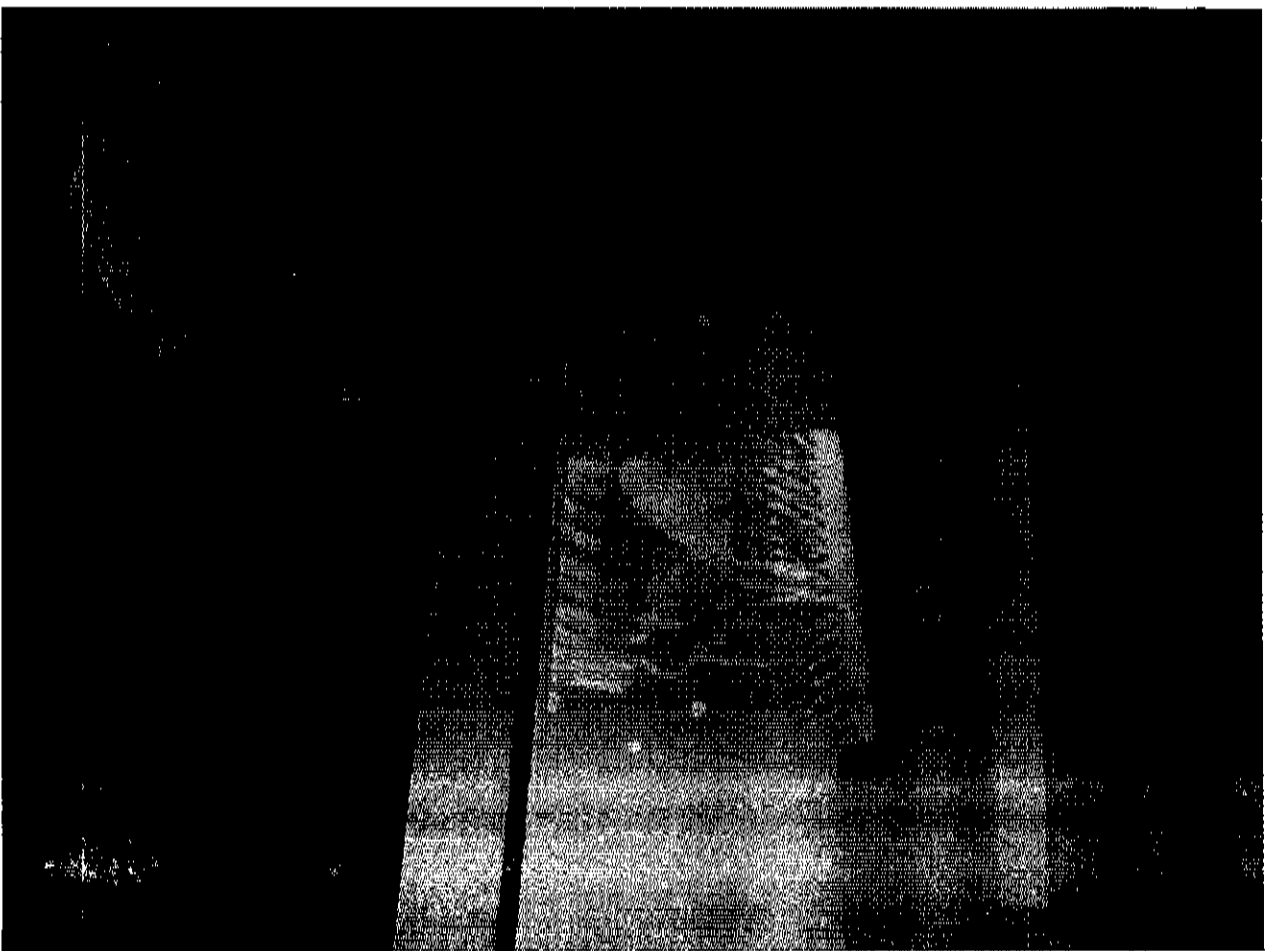


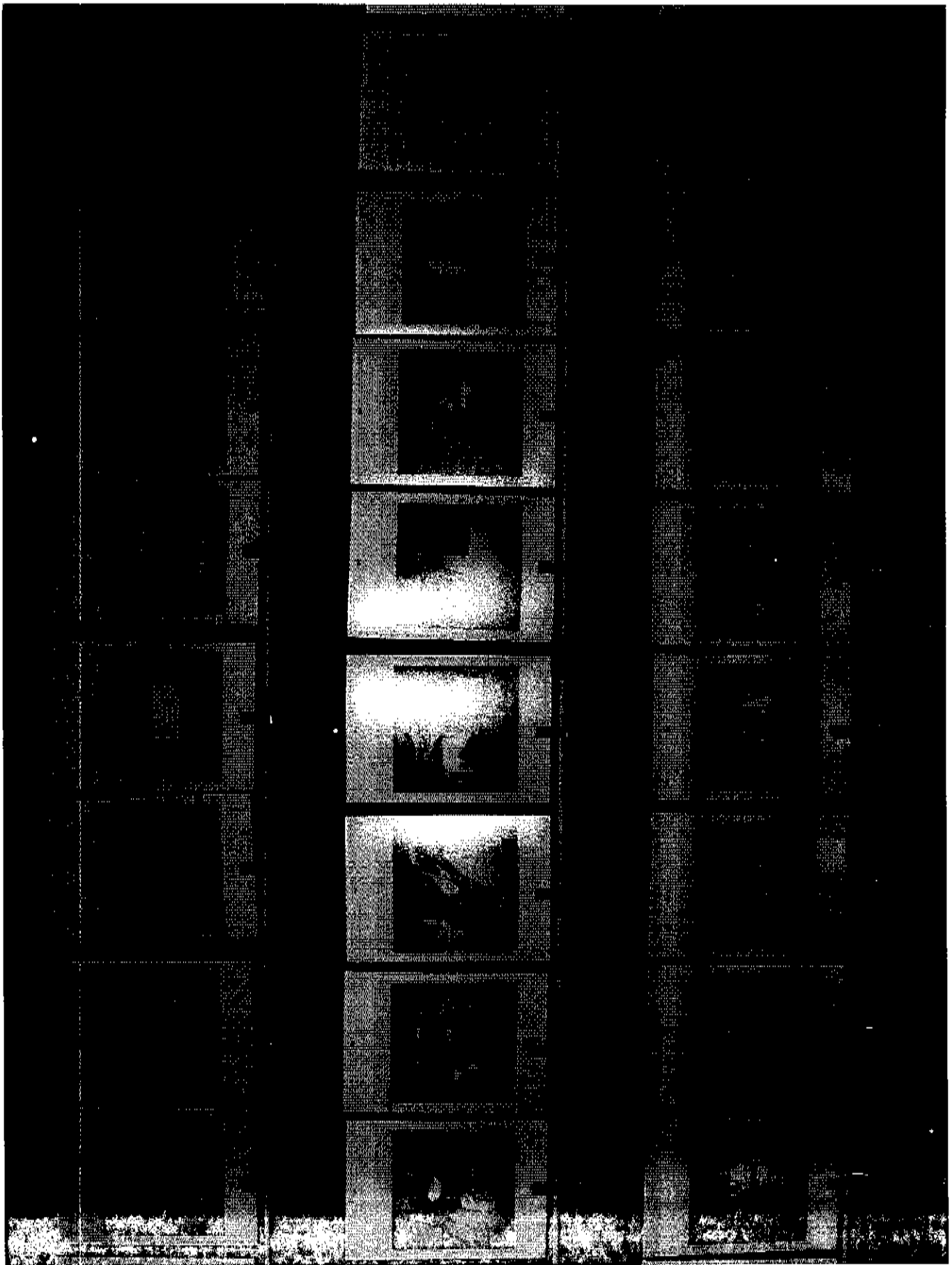




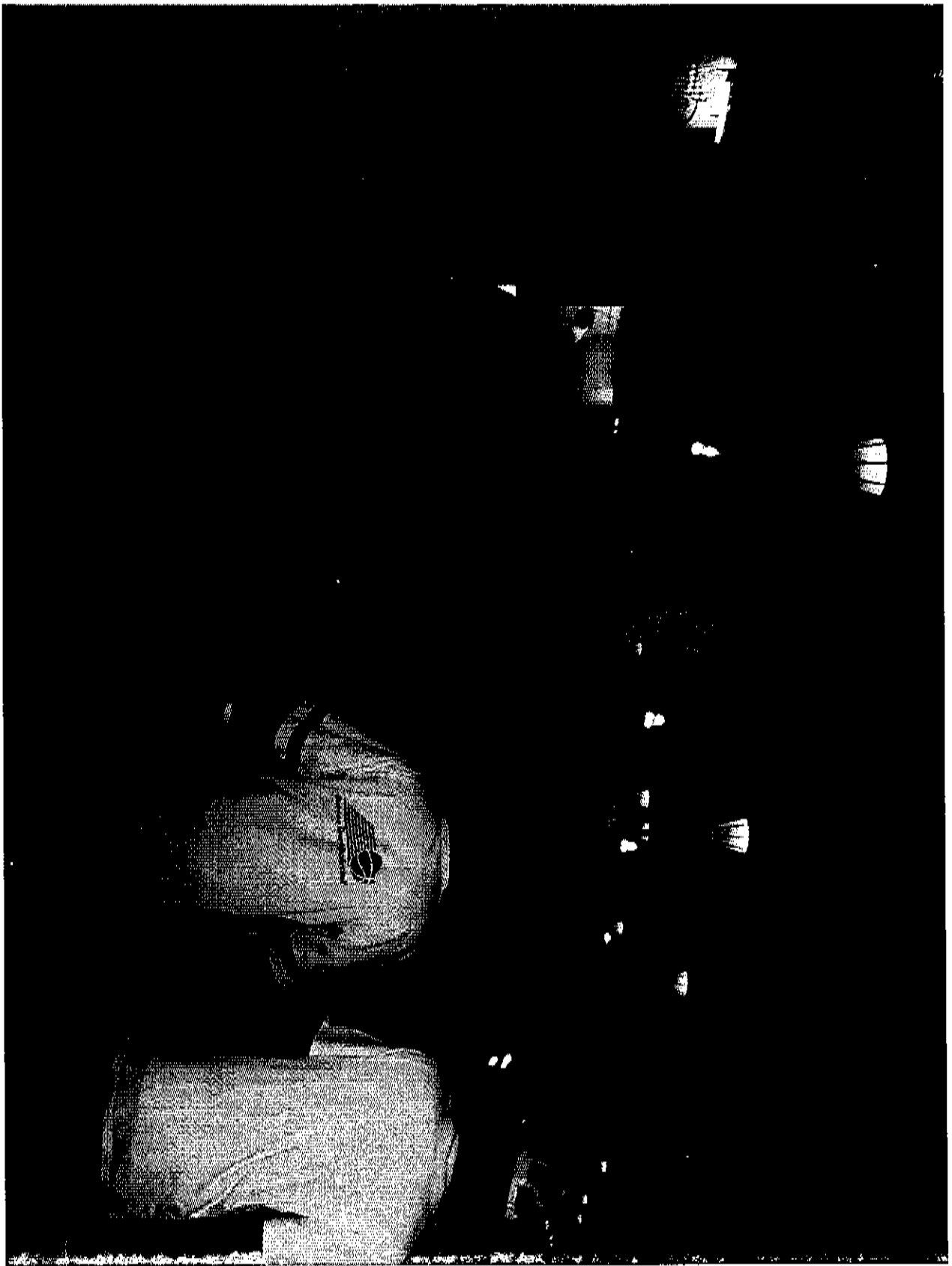


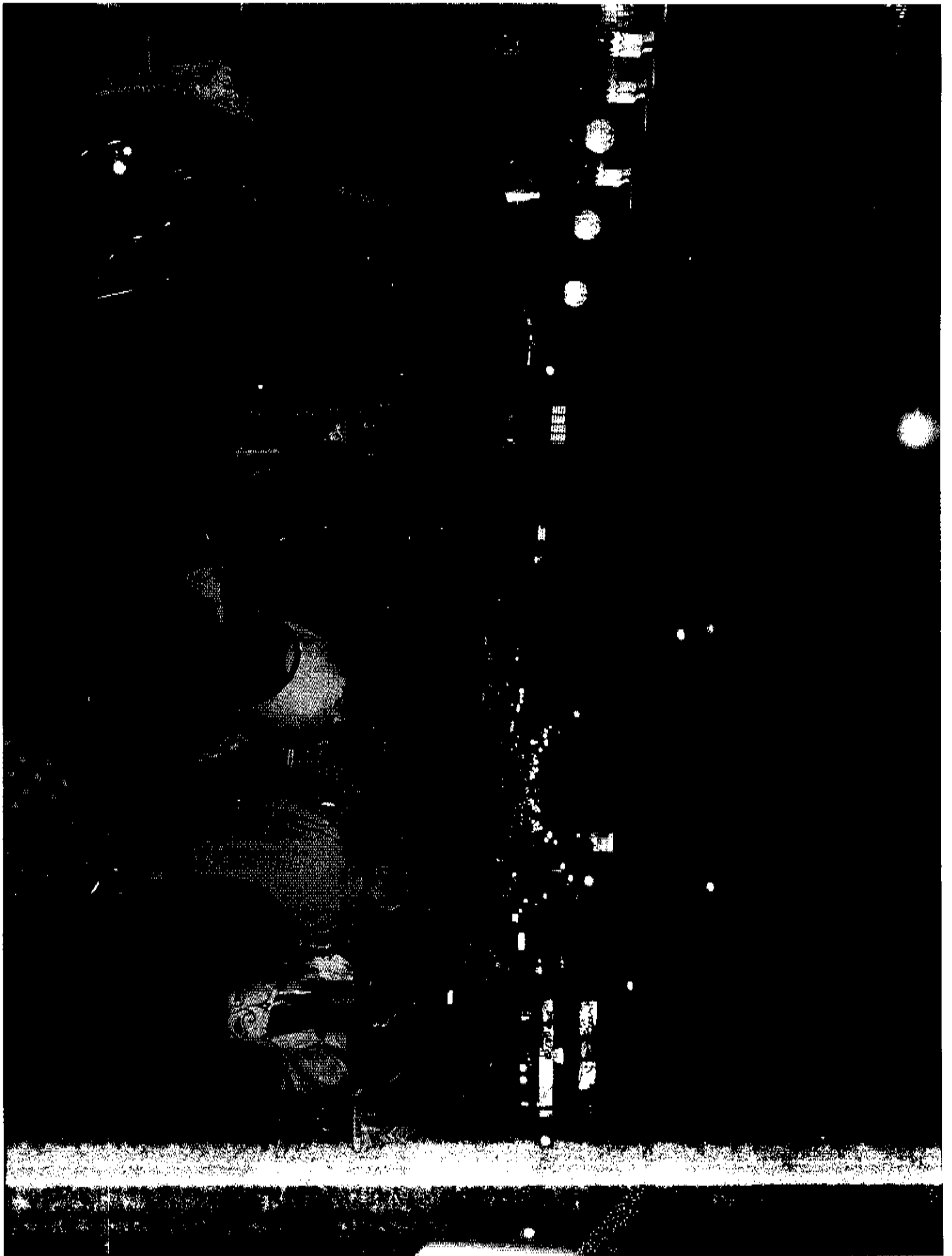








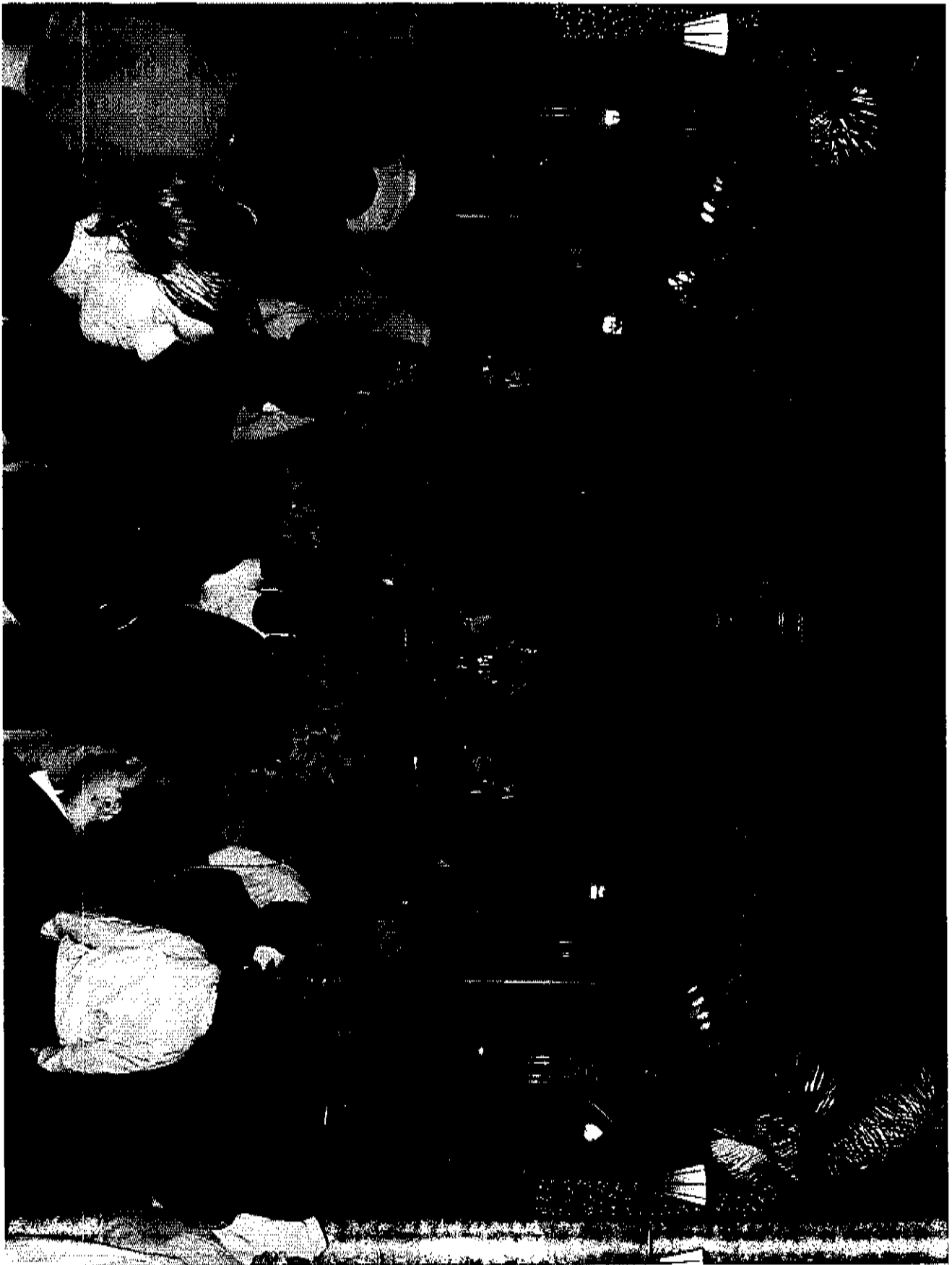


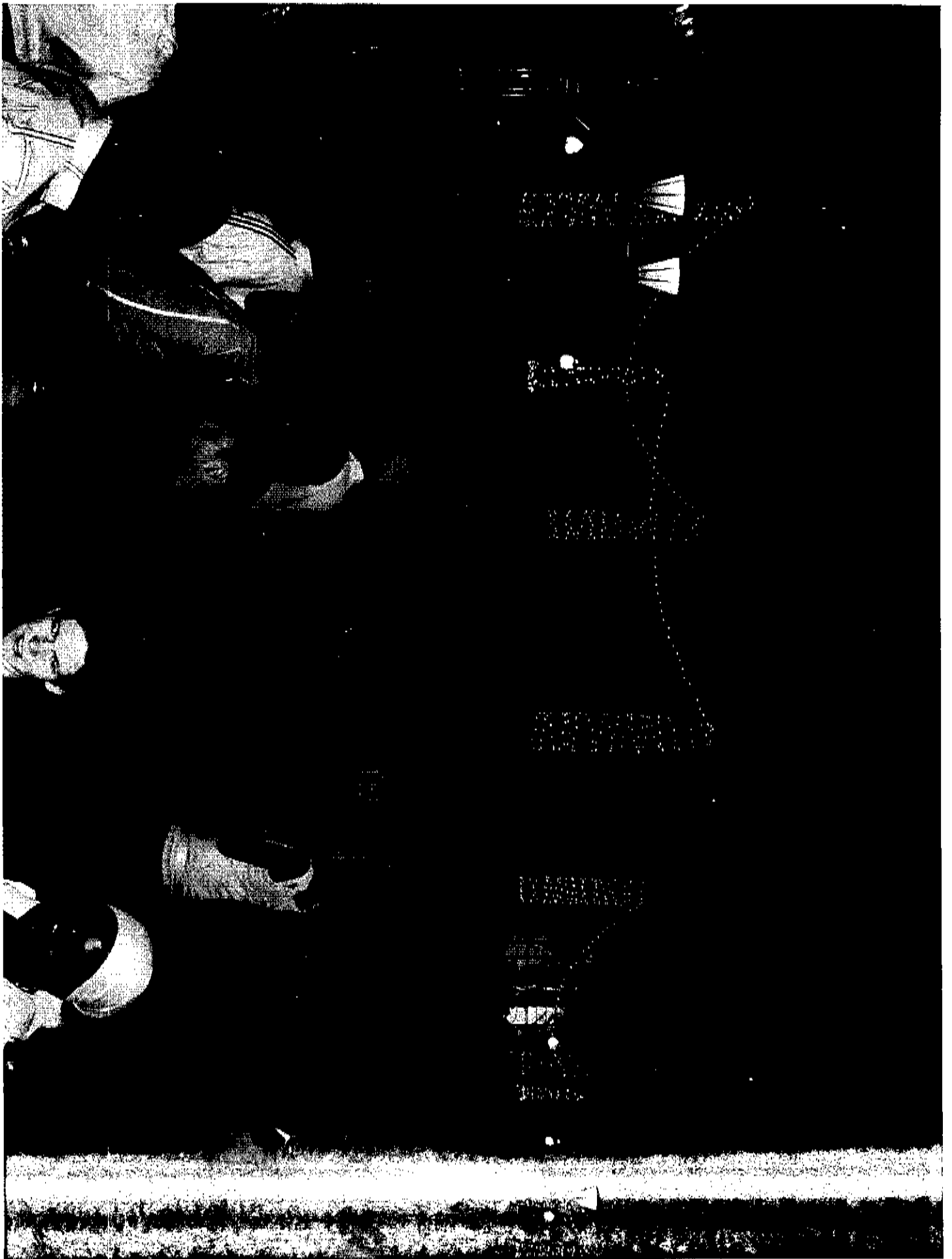


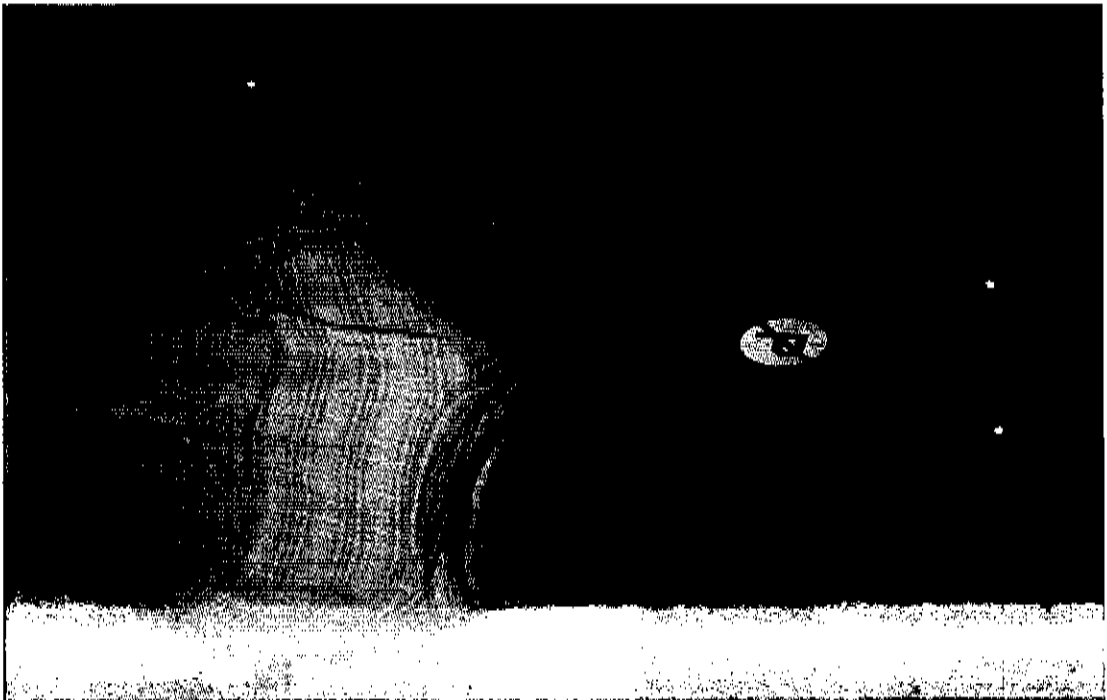
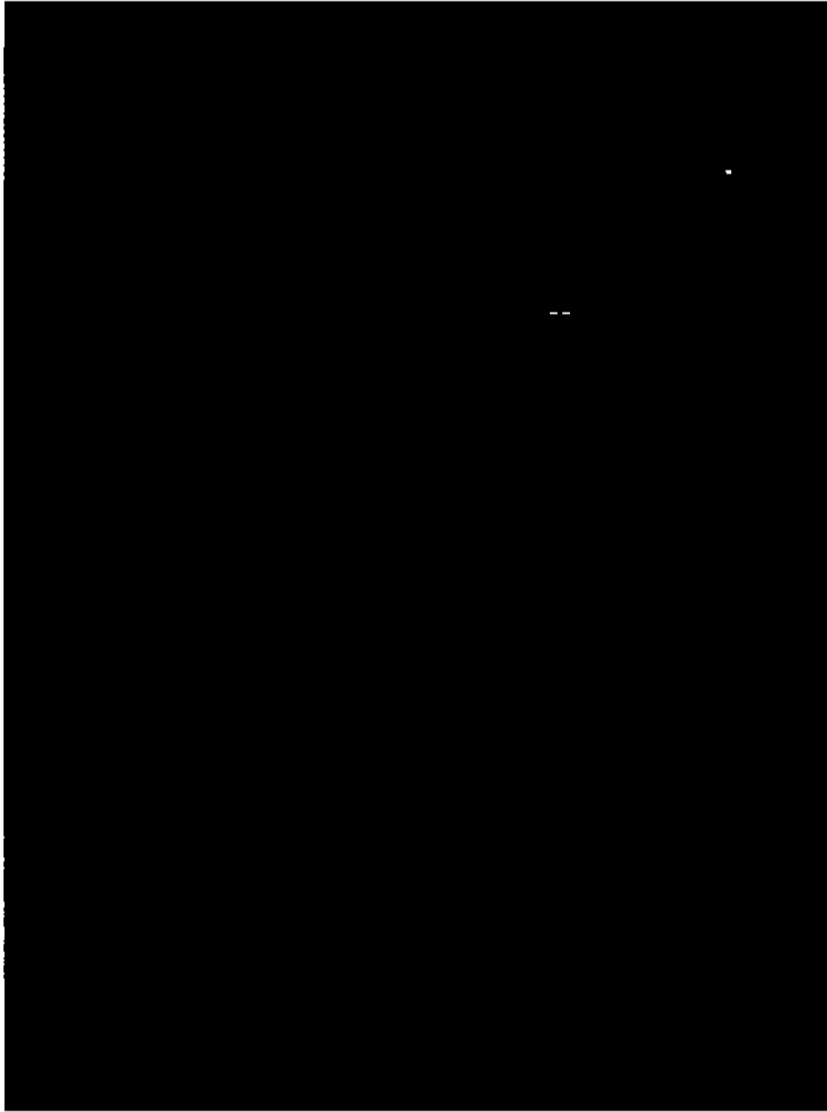


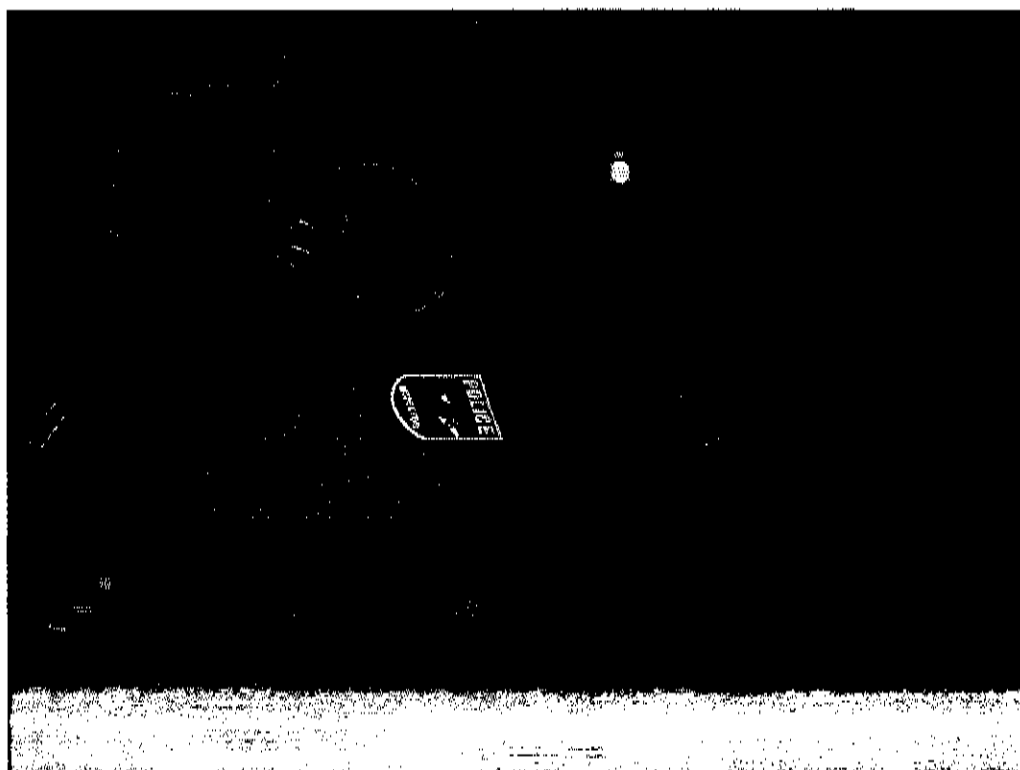
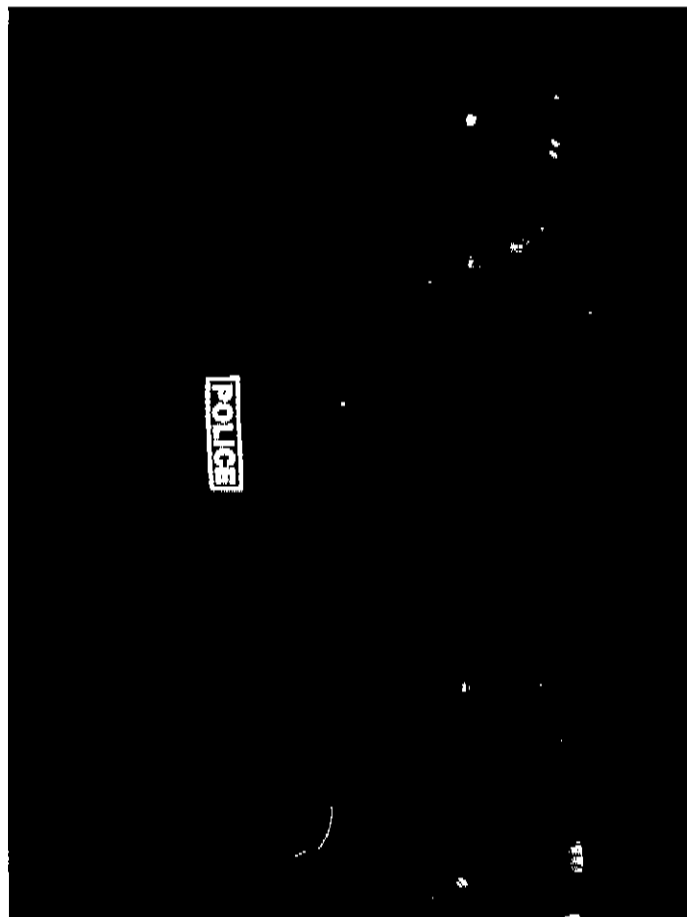
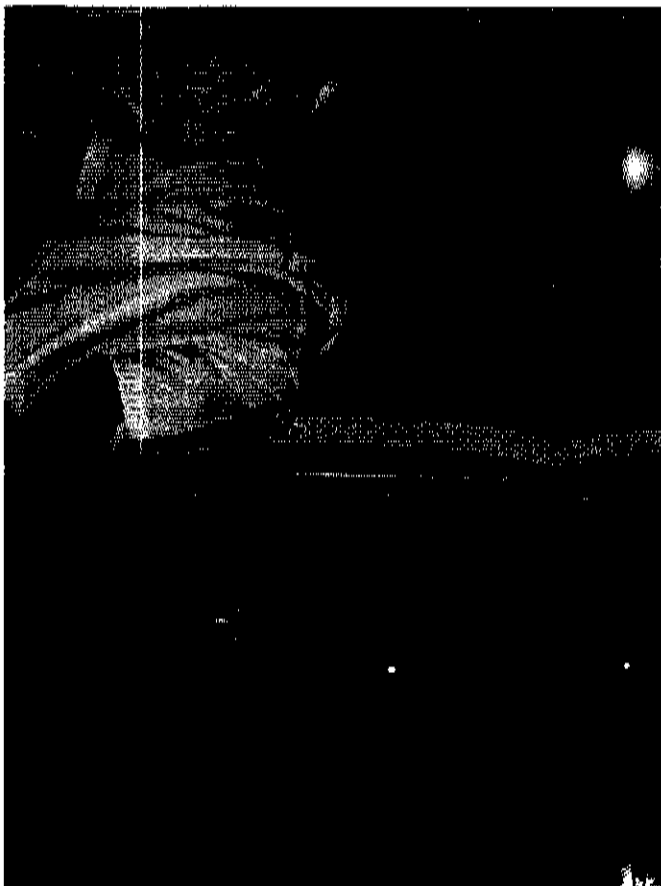
Organic Cultural Moments

- Recontextualise/ Invest with new meaning:
 - Urban space
 - Architecture
 - Statues
 - Art
- Constructs cultural path
- Encountering, moving, dancing, playing = new paths of connection
- City experience = fluid, suggestive, inclusive, accessible
- Conveys possibilities of urban, African future











Towards Urban Inclusion

- **Ordinary moments of possibility**
 - Shared encounters, experiences, meaning, space
 - Powerful transformation
- **Policy implications**
 - Low investment
 - Culture-led urban regeneration
 - Social interaction

