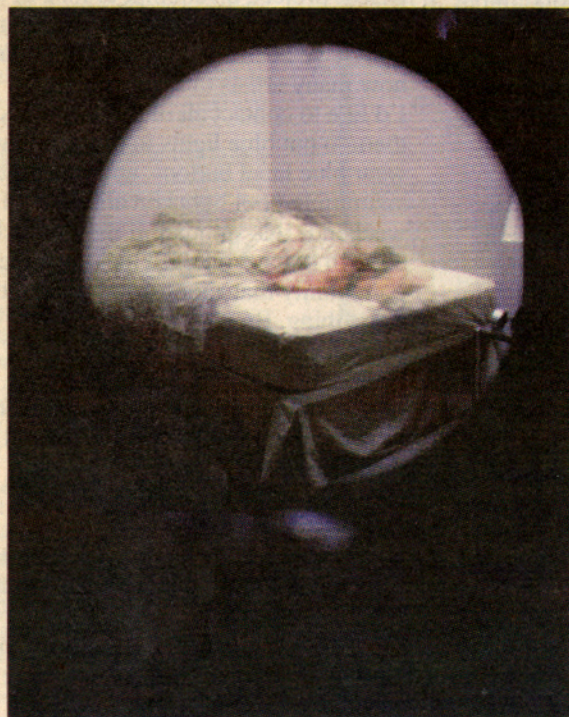
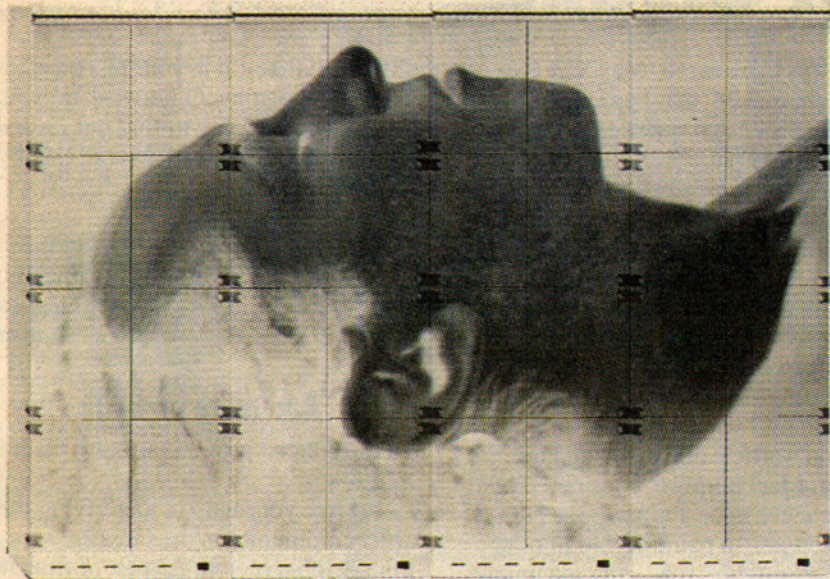


“Lucid” sheds light on cancer patients



Top left, X-ray self-portrait and, bottomleft, a pin-hole view are two of the photographs on exhibit. Below photos show Brian Moss working with patient Cheryl Downer.

The new exhibition “Lucid” at the Delaware Center for Contemporary Art (DCCA) is the collaborative work of artist Brian Moss and cancer patients from the Wellness Community, a national organization that provides support to cancer patients and their families. The exhibit opens July 14 and continues through Aug. 9. Opening reception is July 14, from 3 to 5 p.m.

As part of its continuing series of community partnerships, DCCA hosted Moss for an eight-week residency while he worked with the patients. Together they built pin-hole cameras that they used to create images, including self-portraits and portraits of significant people in their lives. The project was designed to give the participants an opportunity to alter their normal relationship with self-image, over which they often have little control due to their illness.

The exhibition “Lucid” draws on Roland Barthes’s “Camera Lucinda,” in which he writes about photography, time and memory. Moss builds on Barthes’ observations and makes some of his own. Among the most prominent of these is that, in some respects,

pinhole photography echoes the conditions of life touched by cancer — in particular, loss of control and an altered and heightened relationship to the passage of time. In addition, the collaboration fostered a reversal of roles. Usually the scrutinized subject of medical observation, here the patient became director and observer as collaborator and photographer.

Moss created his own pinhole camera to make oversized portraits of the participants. The exhibition features these photographs as well as the collaborative ones. Some of these portraits are displayed in a grid of negatives using multiple X-ray viewers as lightboxes. By exhibiting them in this manner, the exhibit expands their meaning by referring to the diagnostic method used to discover cancer. These images suggest another way of looking at, and thinking about the medical self-images upon which this community depends. The overall effect on both subjects and viewers alike is profound, challenging the negative associations of medical imaging. During the residency, Moss developed close relationships with the participants and his work reflects that collaboration.

