

Together, as contemporaries, we are trying to understand what we are experiencing in our own time in relation to what has been done before. Yes, artists are constantly in dialogue with other artists. You know, like the small world of people that go to the same bar.

For Haim Steinbach, his community of artist friends represents forty years of conversations about art-making. Each artist has contributed to the way he has come to understand the nature of objects.

Nancy Shaver, Haim continues, guided me to a world of objects, and we would go to flea markets together. This experience was fundamental and I became aware of how my own prejudices would project themselves onto what I saw. Nancy would pick something out, and I would think it was horrible. But then over time, I came to see that her choices were right.

Haim met Nancy back in 1968, when they were students at Pratt, and they moved to New Haven together. *In the class I was TA'ing at Yale, I met Peter Halley.* After a hiatus of 10 years, he encountered Peter's work at Artists Space. *I was taken off guard.*

After grad school, Haim taught at Middlebury College. *One day, I read Joseph Kosuth's "Art After Philosophy and After" and invited him to give a lecture.* That was 1974. He gave him a ride back to New York and they became friends.

His students at Middlebury included Steel Stillman, Julia Wachtel, and Robert Gober. *Julia and I spent a lot of time talking about representation, gender, and material culture. And Steel was seriously involved with issues that have to do with the nature of photography and staging as a vehicle to capture personal and collective histories.*

While later teaching at Cornell, he met Shelly Silver, *a student who made the class interesting. For the thirty years since then, she has been questioning me on the politics of choice.*

In 1982, he met Sherrie Levine at a party. *It's just one of those encounters when you know you are both involved in the same field.*

He met Gwen Smith in 1993, at the Sapphire Lounge in the East Village. And to their surprise, a colleague of Gwen's was the wife of Haim's assistant. *Gwen's photography focuses on street and youth culture and what I would call the collective rituals of people communicating.*

A couple years later, Gwen and Haim met Glen Seator in the Israeli desert. They were in an exhibition called “Coexistence: Construction in Process.” They quickly found that they shared an interest in the architecture of everyday spaces.

It wasn't until around 2000 that he visited Rachel Harrison's studio. *Rachel has a sense of the collectivity of objects, of objects that come from the field of art as well from the vernacular. Things that people put on their front lawn. He pauses and puts it another way: I would say that Rachel and I have been in the same backyard.*

Haim Steinbach curates an exhibition titled “The Bigger Picture” with works by Peter Halley, Rachel Harrison, Joseph Kosuth, Sherrie Levine, Glen Seator, Nancy Shaver, Shelly Silver, Gwen Smith, Steel Stillman, and Julia Wachtel. It is on view from January 6th to 26th, 2013.