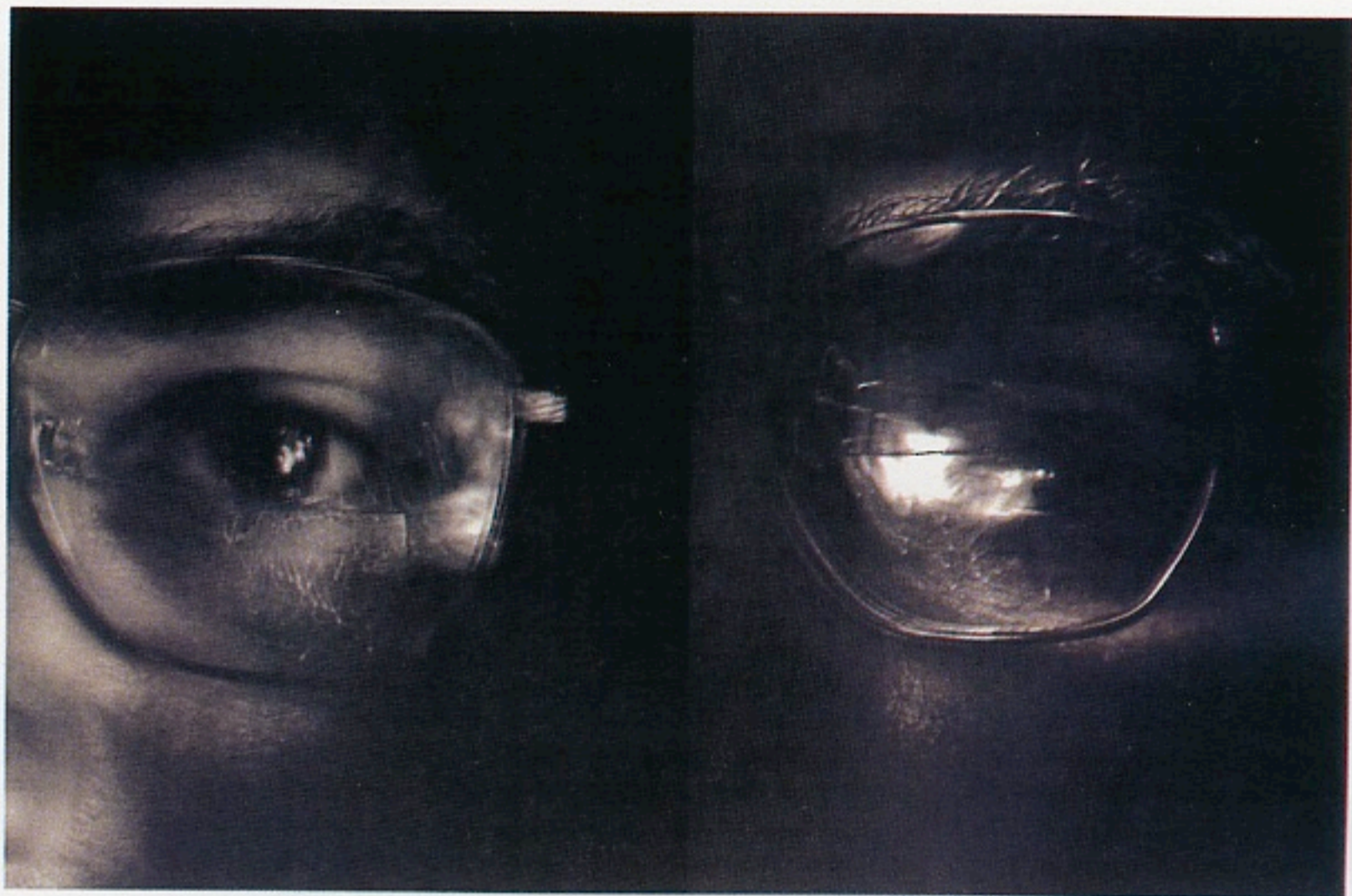


Art On Paper

January-February 1999

Artist's Book Beat

by Nancy Princenthal



Gary Schneider,
*John in Sixteen
Parts*, artist's book
(9-1/2x15 in.,
spread), 1997.
Courtesy Stephen
Daiter Gallery,
Chicago.

In *John in Sixteen Parts* (New York, PPOW, Boston, Howard Yezerski, and Chicago, Stephen Daiter, 1997, \$20 paper, \$35 hardcover), Gary Schneider proceeds instead by progressive elaboration, examining a single subject—the sitter's face—so closely that it is endowed with monumental proportions. A former painter, performance artist, and filmmaker, Schneider produced these photographs in 16 sittings, using narrow beams of limited light and half-hour exposures. Nose to nose with John, we watch his face come apart, our vision drawn into the darkness at the center of his pupils, the hollows of his ear, the pores of his nose, the shadows around his tightly closed mouth. The intimacy, like the blurred features and lack of light, is powerfully uncomfortable; causing optical self-corrections to feel like emotional adjustments is chief among this book's strengths.