

# COLLABORATORS

## John Brook and Steven Trefonides

Steven Trefonides, a well-known Boston painter, had a studio on Newbury Street in Boston that was near John Brook's portrait studio. Often, Trefonides would walk by Brook's studio in front of which was a kiosk displaying his distinctive photographs, which had resonance to him. One day, Trefonides was compelled to meet Brook. He walked up the stairs to Brook's studio, and there he was mesmerized by more of Brook's photographs hanging on the walls.

That was the beginning of a long friendship. Brook encouraged Trefonides to photograph. They collaborated on a number of projects including a film, which was never finished. Trefonides first major photographic project was to document the life of the Boston Hebrew Home for the Elderly, and in 1959-60 he spent months in India photographing, which resulted in the publication of *India*, a photographic portfolio. Trefonides paintings and photographs are found in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Currier Museum of Art, the de Cordova Museum, as well as other museums and private collections.

### Brook's Comments about Steven Trefonides

*In or about one of the 3 books I am reading...I came across this statement...that 'the genius never stops asking questions.' I have never thought of myself as a genius, but in case I ever do, that quote decides it instantly; I am too busy admiring my own answers to ever think of a question. Each of my pics is a beautiful solution: there is nothing disturbing, or unpleasant, uncomfortable in my pics. (sic) I realized that Steve (Trefonides) is a great photog (sic)...while I am only a talent.*

John Brook's 1993 Journal

### Brook Eschews Formal Art Education

*But the general concept of how you achieve something is that you go through the social process that will more or less go predictably leads to that. (A fine photographer). As I have not done this. So, the fact that I have not done it makes it necessary for people to acknowledge that it can be done outside of the context of the structure of society. It should be acknowledged that a student or any individual decides what he or she is going to do and does it. It not only worked for me, for example Steven Trefonides who is one of the best known photographers in Boston. He became a photographer in exactly this way.*

*Aura* magazine. June, 1996