

BOWDOIN COLLEGE
COMMENCEMENT 1997

ABELARDO MORELL. Some people may know about your leadership in making the photography program at the Massachusetts College of Art one of the most respected in the country. More know about your recent Guggenheim Fellowship and your coming term as artist-in-residence at Boston's Gardner Museum. Many have seen your photographs at the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan, and indeed at most major art centers in this country and around the world -- such far-flung places as London, Tokyo, Barcelona, Brunswick.

But what few people know is that you arrived in this country -- abruptly -at age fourteen and started learning English. Four years later, you arrived at Bowdoin and started figuring out what photography is all about. Recently, in answer to the question "Why don't you take pictures about exile?" I heard you say "Because I'm more interested in life."

You live in the present and bring it straight to us -- sometimes straight enough to be disorienting. Just last Sunday, the New York Times Magazine, displaying one of your most recent photographs, wrote that you made it both as homage to the history of your craft and as a tribute to its magic.

Abe, what's next? Alice in Wonderland? You've got a lot to show us; we look forward to seeing it.

President Edwards, it is an honor to present to you **ABELARDO MORELL**, for the degree of **DOCTOR OF FINE ARTS**, *honoris causa*

Presented by Professor John McKee