

Aline Smithson
Melanesia, from Fugue State
2017

DECEMBER 16, 2023 –
FEBRUARY 24, 2024

If Memory Serves

Photography,
Recollections
and Vision

Honoring Aline Smithson

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Rotem Rozental, Ph.D., is the Executive Director of the Los Angeles Center of Photography (LACP). Between 2016-2022, she served as Chief Curator at American Jewish University, where she was also Assistant Dean of the Whizin Center for Continuing Education and Senior Director of Arts and Creative Programming. Her recent book, *Pre-State Photographic Archives and the Zionist Movement* (Routledge Publishers, 2023), was named recipient of the Jordan Schnitzer First Book Award by the Association for Jewish Studies.

The exhibition is co-organized with the LACP, a non-profit organization dedicating to removing barriers for entry for creative expression. LACP promotes, mentors and nurtures visual storytellers on their creative journeys, at all stages of life and career. Each year, LACP programs, organizes and offers the wider public exhibitions, classes, workshops, public programs, reviews and events, both online and in-person.



December 16, 2023 –
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If Memory Serves

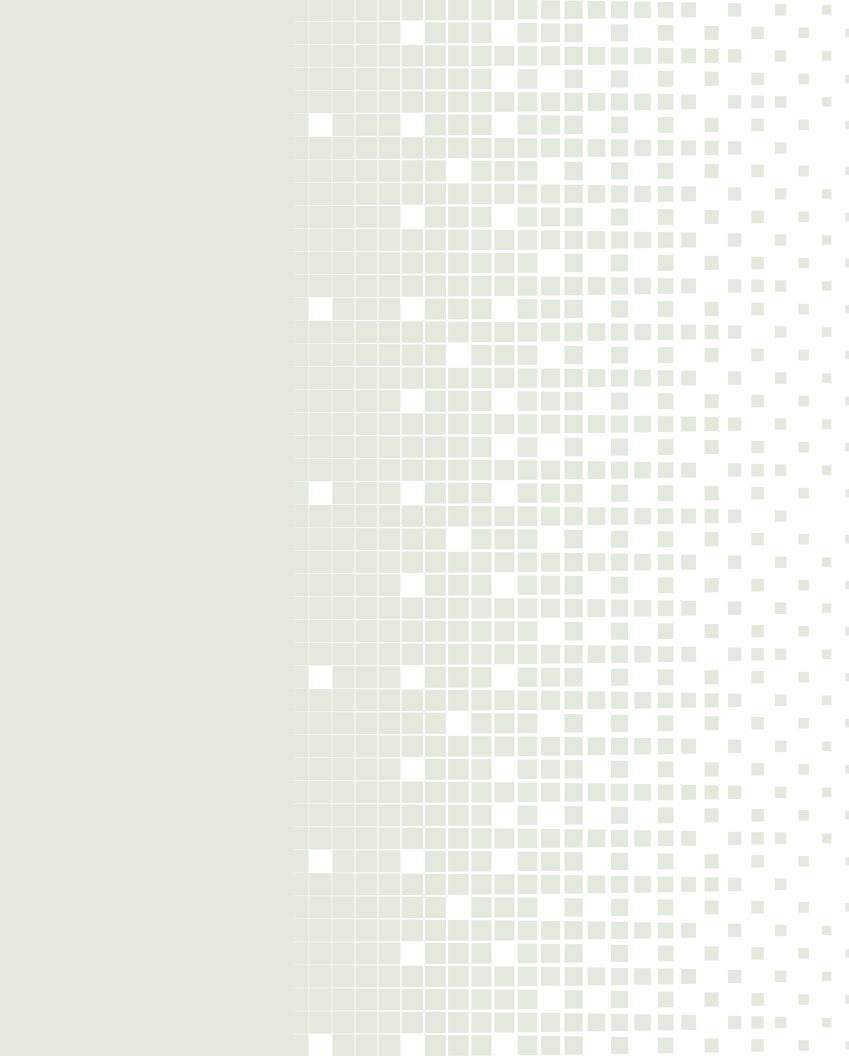
Photography,
Recollections
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Curated by
Rotem Rozental, Ph.D.

ARTISTS

- Aurora Wilder Collective (Jennifer Pritchard in collaboration with Patrick Corrigan and DALL-E)
- Elizabeth Bailey
- Annette LeMay Burke
- Dena Elisabeth Eber
- Sarah Hadley
- Diane Hemingway
- Rohina Hoffman
- Susan Lapidés
- Annie Omens
- Lori Ordovery
- Rosalie Rosenthal
- Safi Alia Shabaik
- Aline Smithson



Our hard drives may fail. Our phones might break. We may forget an image that was once cemented in our minds. Our relationships with images and devices that hold our memories define how we understand our position in the world. *If Memory Serves* emerges from the moments those devices and our recollections betray us and our pictures refuse to bring back the people they captured. This exhibition transpires from the intersection of our haunting pasts, possible futures, and our connections to photographic images, technologies and the systems that ask to speak for our photographs.

In 1986, Vilém Flusser regarded digital images as a “cultural revolution.” A decade later, Geoffrey Batchen predicted that the rise of digital computation systems will embody the demise of photography, since they collapse the indexical characteristics of images. In other words, digital images, created and produced through a computational device, do not have any outside and cannot point at or attest to the existence of anything other than themselves. Decades after their approaches began to inform global discourse, the digital photographic image had become embedded in technologies of communication, in how we understand our position in relations to others, in how we capture and share our lives. In fact, we live our lives for the benefit of the digital image. Not the singular being that is the digital image, but for the benefit of the entire system that holds, speaks and distributes photography.

The artists participating in this exhibition observe the complicated meeting points of photographic technologies, the systems that capture our position in the world and our sense of time. *If Memory Serves* begins with Aline Smithson, a mentor, photographer and educator, whose work with artists has been redefining the field of photographic practice. This exhibition celebrates her immense contribution to photography and further comments upon the reach of her stewardship and pedagogy. The participating artists have all been studying with and from her. Seen together, their works offer profound insight into our co-existence with photography, suggesting pathways that connect personal experiences with larger societal issues and conflicts — from privacy to grief, to representation and immigration. How do we treat our most vulnerable community members? How do we remember those who have no one to commemorate them? How does our technology tear us apart? How can we claim a space to be seen and heard? How do we share our histories with the next generation? And what are we leaving behind for them?

In her work, Smithson frequently returns to moments of photographic loss — images corrupted by failing hard drives, pictures lost to their original owners, captions that were separated from their photographs — all driven by an acute awareness of the tactile relationships between photographs, memories and our connections with one another.

During the pandemic, Smithson led an online class at the Los Angeles Center of Photography, which brought together 11 women who realized their creative projects share a concern for issues surrounding photographic practice and the pains of loss, mortality and legacy, exacerbated by a moment defined by global trauma and uncertainty. That class birthed the group *Memory is a Verb*, who has been exhibiting together since 2021.

Their projects that are included here, alongside works by other former mentees, invite the viewers to immerse in transitions and transformations, in discomfort, in the borderlines between vision and sense, knowing and unknowing. At the same time, these works refuse nostalgia in its depoliticized condition. These projects are defined by the viewpoint and lived experiences of their creators: female-identified, immigrants, descendants of inherited traumas, caregivers, providers. Photography is key to efforts to claim visibility, capture narratives and elicit conversations about the lives of vulnerable bodies and communities. The works on view can then be seen as opening points, a threshold, for a conversation that should never be silenced, a conversation that is as concerned about the conditions of its production — the possible futures of photography — as it is concerned with its political, social and personal content.

— Rotem Rozental, Ph.D.

Aurora Wilder Collective

(Jennifer Pritchard in collaboration with Patrick Corrigan and DALL-E)

We centered “An Ambiguous Place” at the intersection of philosophy and metaphysics. Over a condensed timeframe during the summer of 2022, we set daily probing prompts for DALL-E — anthropomorphized into a character in our story, exploring liminal topics in a collaboration of words and images, unearthing the In-between. At every juncture of this diaristic exploration, we were sliding between worlds — between human form and technology, pursuing individualized truths of our future selves and worlds in an innocent, unprejudiced, childlike state.

We questioned how it might further our understanding of the world and our influence within it by asking if AI is programmed by humans and modeled on the sum of human imagery, wouldn't any work product reflect a broader understanding of ourselves and provocation for our shared future? In these early days before mass accessibility, the sum of imagery is not yet tainted with images disconnected from reality or narratives not based on human experience. Perhaps, in the plethora of generated images, artistic endeavors can move beyond the photographic domain and explore other possibilities. AI can be the catalyst for new ways of seeing each other and the world and not the purveyor of disinformation.

Truth in photography has been debated since the 1800s, raising philosophical questions about the grammar of photography, memory, and reality. This work interprets a ‘singularity’ as defined by Ray Kurzweil in 2005, where humans and AI are merged to achieve one. Presented this way, the work evolves into something ‘other’ — not human, not AI, altogether something else, a convergence of human and machine.

Aurora Wilder Collective is a collaboration founded in Southern California between Patrick Corrigan and Jennifer Pritchard, exploring the intersection of philosophy and metaphysics. There is a keyhole through which they seek connection to complex themes of truth, reality, and existence using the photographic arts, digital media, sound, painting, and printmaking.

Corrigan's work focuses on basic human communal needs such as belonging, connection, and purpose and how these needs manifest within individuals and the wider landscape of a divisive culture. His work has been exhibited in numerous group shows at the de Young Museum in San Francisco, received honorable mentions at several CPA Members' Juried Exhibitions, and is a 2023 Santa Fe Juried Invitation Attendee. His work is also held in numerous public and private collections.

Pritchard's work probes explorations of life and loss, memory, and dreams across a diverse photographic and literary toolbox. She is a member of the national traveling show *Memory is a Verb, Time and Transience*, opening in 2023, was recognized in the top 200 of PhotoLucida's Critical Mass in 2022, and honored in 2017 by the American Photographic Artists national organization as an emerging artist. Her work is an ongoing part of the collections at On Center Gallery in Provincetown, Massachusetts.



Aurora Wilder
2022-2023

Elizabeth Bailey

When my reclusive neighbor of many years disappeared and died in her house, there were no friends or family to claim anything that remained: her body, her possessions, or even her memory. It seemed she was simply going to disappear. Who had she been? What had happened to her? Convinced the answers lay inside her silent, vacant house, my curiosity grew into obsession. “The House Next Door” documents the days and weeks and months that followed, as I gained entry, and returned to the house again and again. Through letters, photos, and personal items — many salvaged from a dumpster I climbed into — I pieced together fragments of her history. Her mementos grew meaningful to me, and I began spending more and more time in the house next door, giving shape and voice to her past. As her story intertwined with my own, I felt both gratitude, and a deep sadness for all that was lost. In life I’d hardly known her, thinking our differences were insurmountable. Now I wondered; were we really so different, after all? A meditation on atypical beauty, perception, and point of view, “The House Next Door” ultimately considers how one individual’s untold story can impact and alter the life of another.

Elizabeth Bailey is a Los Angeles based artist who uses photography to create evocative imagery that explores the themes of self, identity, memory, and longing. She uses staged scenes, portraiture and self-portraiture with implied narratives to consider what we conceal and reveal about ourselves to others. Born and raised in Minnesota, Bailey moved to Los Angeles at 18 to attend Occidental College. After receiving a BA in Philosophy, she studied photography and graphic design, finding that each informed the other. She currently works as a graphic designer and fine art photographer. Her work has been exhibited in galleries nationally and internationally, including Light Box Gallery in Portland, Oregon; A Smith Gallery in Johnson City, Texas; and PH21 in Budapest, Hungary. Her award-winning photographs have been published in books and magazines including Float, ArtDoc, and SHOTS Magazine, and are held in private collections.



Annette LeMay Burke

“Fauxliage” documents the proliferation of disguised cell phone towers in the American West. By attempting to conceal an unsightly yet essential technology of the modern world, our landscapes are now sown with a quirky mosaic of masquerading palms, evergreens, flagpoles, crosses, and cacti. But the towers are simulacra. They are water towers that hold no water, windmills that provide no power, and trees that provide no oxygen; yet they all provide five bars of service. The often-whimsical camouflage belies the cellular equipment’s covert ability to collect all the personal data transmitted from our cell phones. Big tech and the government are always listening, storing, buying and selling our harvested information. Surveillance capitalism is big business in the 21st century.

The faux trees pose an environmental concern. As the trees age, the plastic needles and fronds breakdown and litter the ground beneath the trees. What started as an attempt to reduce visual pollution is now creating plastic pollution. I traveled to ten western states to photograph the variety of concealments. The towers pose the question: how much of an ersatz landscape and manufactured nature are we willing to accept in exchange for connectivity?

Annette LeMay Burke is a photographic artist and a native Californian. She is interested in how our environment changes over time and the telltale artifacts — both tangible and temporal — that are left behind. Her work has been exhibited in museums and galleries worldwide. Burke’s images were selected for Earth Photo 2023 and shown at the Royal Geographical Society in the UK. She won Photolucida’s Critical Mass in 2022, the 2021 Lenscratch Vernacular Photography Exhibition and the 2021 Imago Lisboa Photography Festival in Portugal. Her images have been featured in prominent publications including the Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, and The Times (London). Burke’s monograph, *Fauxliage: Disguised Cell Phone Towers of the American West*, was published in 2021 by Daylight Books.

Fauxliage —
Airport Approach,
Palm Springs, CA
2019



Dena Elisabeth Eber

“Bere'shith” is the first Hebrew word in Genesis and means “in the beginning.” This work is my story of starting again after considerable loss in my life, which warranted a reflection on the larger meaning of cycles, death, and renewal. Coming through this pain and starting again on new land is what inspired this project. In the Jewish tradition, we have a yearly cycle of reading the torah, starting over again each year from the beginning of the scroll, reading the same words. However, the text takes on new meaning as we evolve, thus reflecting the spiral variation of a cycle as we move forward in time. In short, the project investigates what it means to be human, to move through sadness, to start again, to create a new life, and to be alive. The images reflect the symbolism of cycles that encompass reformation and transformation, just like the caterpillar digests its own body to restructure its DNA into a new organism. This tumultuous start transforms into something new, an ultimate peace in a new land (Exodus). This work is my spiral, my renewal, and dare I say — heaven presented through light.

Dena Elisabeth Eber is an artist based in Northwest Ohio whose artistic endeavors include VR artworks, photography, and interactive installations. Dr. Eber has shown her work at numerous international and national exhibition venues including Gallery D-ART, SIGGRAPH, SPE, the Griffin Museum of Photography, and the Manifest Gallery, and was named on PhotoLucida's Critical Mass top 200 list. She recently published her first photo book, *You Refuse to Believe that You Ever Liked Pink* with Schilt Publishing, 2023, essay by Alexa Dilworth and book design by Caleb Cain Marcus. Dr. Eber is a Professor of Photography and Digital Arts at Bowling Green State University where she has taught since 1997. She earned her Ph.D. and her MFA in Art from the University of Georgia, and her MS in Computer Science and her BS in Mathematics from Colorado State University.



Bere'shith
(In the Beginning)
2023

Sarah Hadley

I had an unusual upbringing that has transformed how I see the world, understand the past, and recognize how visual influences shape our art making. I grew up on the 4th floor of the Gardner Museum in Boston. My father was the museum director for 20 years and we lived in an Italian renaissance palace surrounded by magnificent art, antiques, and furniture. My brother and I played in large ivy walled gardens surrounded by sarcophagi and ancient sculptures.

Though she had been dead for over 50 years, Isabella Stewart Gardner was a constant spectral presence in my life, and her indelible influence and artistic vision permeated every corner of my world. As a young girl, I sought to find my place amidst classical female representations and architectural splendor. My project, “the Whispering Dark,” reflects a series of layered narratives that speak to the enduring allure and influence of the past and revisit questions of home and belonging. Through the juxtaposition and fusion of images, I am plumbing my recollections of those formative years, spent prowling amidst such grandeur and in the deep shadows of the gardens. The work weaves an intricate tapestry between memory and imagination and speaks to not only the legacy of a female visionary but honors her profound impact on my artistic journey.

Sarah Hadley is a Los Angeles based artist whose narrative work explores themes of loss, impermanence, memory and female identity. Originally from Boston, Hadley received degrees in Art History and Italian from Georgetown University, and Photography from the Corcoran College of Art. Hadley has had numerous solo shows in museums and galleries and her work has been exhibited in photography festivals in France, China, Italy, Australia, India and Portugal. She has received many grants and fellowships and been featured in magazines, blogs and publications worldwide including *Le Monde*, *Elle Italia*, *Black + White* (UK), *L’Oeil de la Photographie* and *Lenscratch*. In 2020, her first monograph *Lost Venice* was published by Damiani Editore and is now in the collection of the Getty Research Institute library, the Huntington Library, and the National Museum of Women in the Arts. Hadley’s photographs are held in public and private collections worldwide.



Whispering Vines

2023

Diane Hemingway

The photographs and recorded prose in “The Wild Cosmos” chronicle my interior journey through life and profound loss. Even as an adult, nothing prepared me for when the stars — my mom, dad, and brother — fell from the sky. Seeking solace, I immersed myself in the land and in my art, trusting that my world would right itself. Looking for light in the darkness, I retraced the cross-country trips of my youth and explored the backroads of Maine. I wanted to rekindle the wonder of my untethered childhood while remembering those I had lost. Nature is a portal to survival. Much like the transcendentalists, I believe it is essential to experience the simplicity and solitude of nature to understand oneself better. I emerged resilient like the wild cosmos, a wildflower that can thrive in almost any circumstance. I pair my photographs with audio versions of my writing loosely based on my journal of field notes and dreams. My photography and recorded prose are love letters to places, memories, dreams, and family. Each is an invitation to pay attention.

Diane Hemingway is an artist who tells stories of life through photography and interdisciplinary media. Her photographic work, which includes written and recorded prose, explores the spiritual, emotional, and physical link between the natural world, memory, and lived experience. Hemingway received her MFA from Maine Media College in Rockport, Maine. She has exhibited in galleries nationally and internationally, including the Griffin Museum of Photography, A Smith Gallery, Panopticon Gallery, PhotoPlace Gallery, SE Center for Photography, Atlanta Photography Group, Oceanside Museum of Art, Gallery 263, and Museo de la Naturaleza de Cantabria. Her work has been featured in numerous publications, including All About Photo, Lenscratch, and What Will You Remember. Diane’s first handmade artist book, “The Wild Cosmos,” was created in 2023. She lives and works in Maine.



Rohina Hoffman

“In Gratitude” is an homage to food and family. Prompted by the early days of Covid-19 pandemic, it is a series of portraits of myself, my husband, and my three children showcasing the items that we used to create our daily meals. Despite the uncertainty and fear we felt because of the pandemic, it has enabled me to see my gratitude more clearly, allowing me to honor the foods we eat and the laborers who bring this bounty to market through these portraits. Influenced by Pablo Neruda’s *Elemental Odes*, I add my own poetry to celebrate the mundane and acknowledge the idea of scarcity. I aim to highlight the words of M.F.K. Fisher “our three basic needs, for food, security and love, are so mixed and mingled and entwined, that we cannot straightly think about one without the others.”

“Generation 1.75” is a metaphorical and lyrical look at themes of loss, uprootedness, and gained perspective in my personal journey of migration, identity, and the emotions that accompany the lifelong exploration of where I belong and who I am.

Rohina Hoffman is an Indian-born American artist whose narrative work focuses on themes of identity, home, and the female experience. Raised in New Jersey but now residing in California, Rohina received her BS in Neuroscience and MD both from Brown University. She also studied photography at the Rhode Island School of Design. After years of practicing as a clinical neurologist, she now focuses on her artistic practice.

Her work has been exhibited widely in venues such as The Center for Fine Art Photography, Griffin Museum, Atlanta Photography Group, Colorado Photographic Arts Center, Los Angeles Center for Photography, Photo LA, with solo shows at the Griffin Museum of Photography and Brown University’s Alpert Medical School. She has published two monographs: *Hair Stories* (Damiani, 2019) and *Embrace* (Schilt Publishing, 2023). Awards include winner of the Purchase Award with Atlanta Photography Group (2021), Winner, 20th Julia Margaret Cameron Award, (professional Self Portrait category 2023), First prize with The Language of Color Exhibit, Atlanta Photography Group (2023).



Always Buy Flowers
2020

Susan Lapides

Cellphones are ubiquitous, and they have changed public spaces. As people turn away from each other and toward devices, phone interactions feel hidden and private; yet every online action is potentially public. We often share more about our private lives to strangers on social media than to those sitting beside us. My photographic series “Screen Time” pairs a studio portrait with a reveal of the subject’s phone screen, showing their recent activity. How does this knowledge, which might reinforce or contradict an initial impression, influence our perception of an individual? What sorts of clues are hiding in the browser cache? This series explores how the pervasive influence of technology impacts privacy, identity, and engagement with one another.

Susan Lapides is an American photographic artist who creates time-based projects focusing on adolescence and place. Through her portraits and landscapes, she examines social, cultural and community issues. Lapides earned her BA in Art History from Tufts University and the Museum of Fine Arts School. During her extensive career as a professional editorial photographer for national publications, she photographed President Barack Obama, then the Harvard Law Review Editor. The most life-changing assignment was meeting her future husband while photographing for People Magazine. Lapides began her fine art career in 2011 with a solo exhibit at the Griffin Museum in Boston and continues to exhibit her photography nationally and internationally in solo and juried shows, receiving multiple awards and honors. Her photographs are in the permanent collections of the Fidelity Corporate Art Collection, and in New Brunswick, Canada and private collections. She resides in Boston, Massachusetts, USA and New Brunswick, Canada.

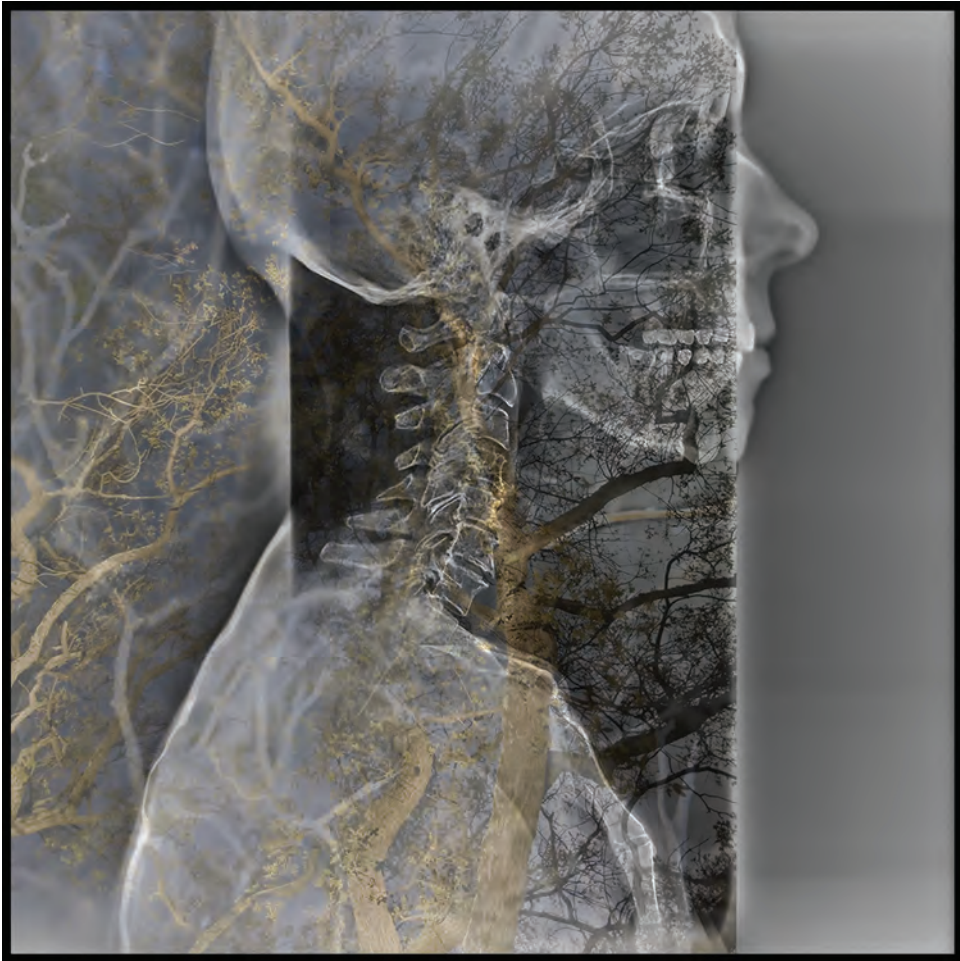


When the
Kite String Pops
2023

Annie Omens

Exploring my connection with trees was an antidote for the loss of connection I felt with society during the pandemic and lockdown. Being in nature, amongst the trees, helped me transcend this temporal situation of suffering and death. The forest spoke to my soul of a kind of essential stability and permanence allowing me to see life cycle from seedling to fallen tree, renewing itself to support life again. The forest gave me the courage to re-member my place in the world and feel grounded in it. Through the use of photomontage, I layered together two or more of my straight captures to create an ethereal sense of the ordinary. I reveal a mystical connection to something that is more permanent by dissolving boundaries, affirming the unseen relationship to something beautiful, larger and profound.

Annie Omens is a photographic and mixed media artist who explores the natural world with a conscious perception of what is hidden, what is known, and how nature impacts the human psyche. Informed by her interest in Shamanism and Celtic lore, Omens uses photomontage to examine the intersection of the real and the dimensional depth of the unseen, mixing modalities and meanings with what is perceived and what might be. Omens' education includes studies in photography and art at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, the Savannah College of Art and Design, Marquette University and Mount San Jacinto College in Menifee, CA.



Me In the Trees
2022

Lori Ordover

Unlike most chaotic and cacophonous childhoods, mine was spent in silence. Growing up with a deaf mother, I spent most of my youth not being heard. My project, “Silence Is” evokes my experience of her through self-portraits, family photographs and empty spaces.

My mother, now deceased, read lips and was quite good at it. At a young age she was taught to speak. She spoke with an accent, but most people didn’t realize she was deaf. She is laser focused on your mouth when in conversation.

A clue to her deafness would come when she would say an incorrect response during a conversation. Most people would assume that they did not understand, not that my mother did not hear what they were saying. Rarely would she ask someone to repeat themselves, fearing they may guess she is deaf.

I was not allowed to correct her misunderstandings publicly.

When she turns from you, you are gone, completely. When having an argument, she will say her piece, then turn away, giving you no chance to respond.

At times like this as a child, I felt powerless, invisible, and angry. At an early age I gave up trying to be heard, which left me spending a lot of time alone in my thoughts.

Lori Ordover is a lens-based artist who uses memory, nature, and the family album to investigate elements of identity and geography. Her work examines nuances of emotion, beauty and tension in order tell stories that allow for a reclamation and consideration of self. She received a BA from Sarah Lawrence in Philosophy. After a career in New York real estate, Ordover graduated in 2014 from the International Center of Photography Continuing Education Program. Ordover was selected as a Critical Mass 2021 finalist and her photographs have earned her recognition in International Fine Art Photography Awards, The International Photography Awards for Street Photography, The New York Center for Photographic Art and South x Southeast Magazine. She has exhibited with the International Center of Photography, the New York Center for Photographic Art, I(Le) Poisson Rouge Gallery, Umbrella Arts Gallery, Handwright Gallery and South x Southeast Gallery, amongst others. Her work has been exhibited at The Oceanside Museum, Dallas Center For Photography, and Bonsack Gallery at Burroughs School as an artist with Memory as a Verb collective. She has just released an artist’s book, *Silence Is*. Ordover currently serves on the Board of Trustees of Los Angeles Center of Photography and Penumbra Organization.



Barbara 1951
2021

Rosalie Rosenthal

Midlife is traditionally a nexus for recalibration; parents reach an age of needing care, children become adults, and those of us in the middle assess and adapt. “Midlife Tableaux” is a manifestation of that reconsideration of self through examination of significant objects in my familial histories. The project began after my father’s worsening Alzheimer’s disease caused my parents to move from their home. Objects were packed-up, and many made their way to me. I photographed these objects as an act of care and as an expression of agency as I witnessed the intractable grip of memory loss. I chose the visual language of the still life and vanitas traditions to provide the historical context to explore mortality and to consider the significance of possessions, once resplendent, but now outdated. As my work progressed and the pandemic kept my family at home, I included myself and my daughter in the scenes. The intergenerational element allows the objects to become actors in a larger narrative about the gift and weight of a family legacy, both material and individual. Midlife Tableaux touches the human experiences of loss and transition and offers a respite for others to mine their interiority.

Rosalie Rosenthal is an artist who uses lens-based and camera-less photography to investigate the transience of objects, people and place, transformed by context and perspective. Her practice looks beyond the intended functionality of everyday materials, or the expected vantage point, to reflect upon themes of memory, legacy and personal histories. Rosenthal received a BFA from the University of Louisville’s Hite Art Institute and a BA in History from Smith College. She has exhibited nationally at the Oceanside Museum of Art; the Griffin Museum of Photography; Filter Space Gallery, Chicago; Spalding University; the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft; and Manifest Gallery, Cincinnati. Her photographs have been published in Fraction Magazine, aPhotoEditor, and Manifest Gallery Photography Annuals. Her work is collected by 21c Museum Hotels, Omni Louisville, and private collectors. Residencies include Makers Circle in Marshall, NC and Residency Unlimited in Brooklyn, New York. Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, Rosenthal lives in Louisville, Kentucky.



Mother and Daughter
2020

Safi Alia Shabaik

My interest in the human condition and relentless curiosity for people and things has led me on many adventures exploring and documenting daily life on city streets. To quote Robert Frank, “I’m always looking outside, trying to look inside. Trying to say something that is true. But maybe nothing is really true. Except what’s out there. And what’s out there is always changing.” My affair with the street began during my art school college years, inspired by the legacy of many street photographers — Diane Arbus, Robert Frank, Helen Levitt, Mary Ellen Mark, Susan Meiselas, Weegee, Garry Winogrand, etc. I have spent countless hours hitting the pavement with camera-in-hand to build my visual voice, hone my eye, strengthen my intuitive ability to anticipate human behavior, and capture life’s grand choreography as it unfolds in front of my lens. This is an ever-growing body of work chronicling daily life, ranging from 2015 to current day. It presents my version of truth, which is constantly evolving with the reinvention and revitalization of the city itself. This work has become my visual creative journal marking a deeper relationship with human existence and big city living, a dynamic for which I have gained a profound new respect and love.

Safi Alia Shabaik is a Los Angeles based Egyptian-American interdisciplinary artist. She earned her BA in Fine Art with honors at UCLA, followed by an apprenticeship with Catherine Opie. She became fashion stylist, personal assistant, documentarian, travel companion, and confidante to the legendary icon, Ms. Grace Jones. Her work explores the human condition: identity, persona, transformation, daily life, and the humanity of all people. Safi exhibits her work nationally in solo and group shows, and has been featured in numerous publications, such as the New York Times, Black+White Photography, and Lenscratch. Her work has been the subject of several podcasts, including The Candid Frame (episode #465). Her collaborative body of work with her father during his end-of-life journey, *Personality Crash*, has been recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts and PhotoLucida’s Critical Mass Top 50. She is a founding member of the Los Angeles Street Collective, and an award-winning mortician. Her work can be viewed at flashbulbfloozy.com.



Chance Encounter
2016

Aline Smithson

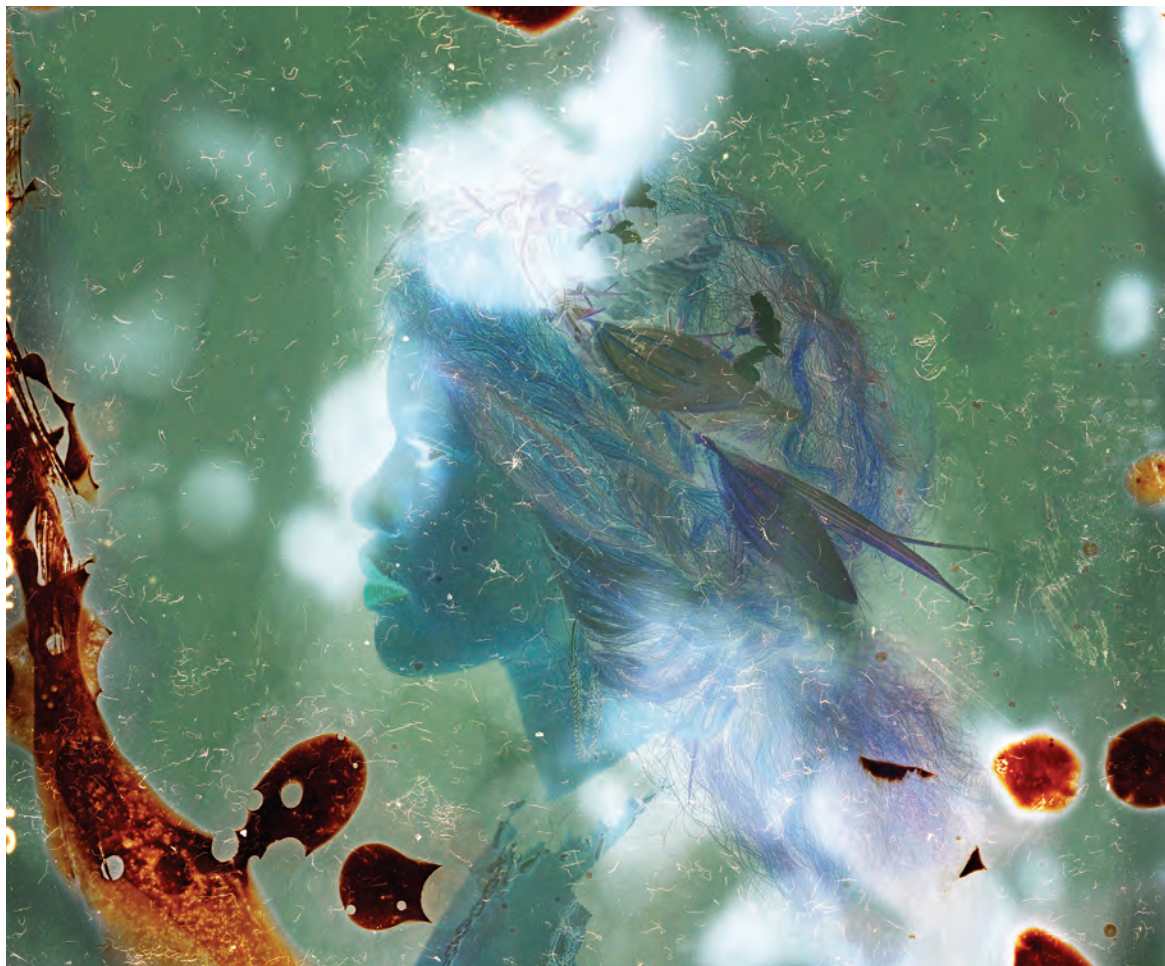
Neuroscientist and author David Eagleman has famously written that we all die three deaths: when the body ceases to function, when the body is consigned to the grave, and “that moment, sometime in the future, when your name is spoken for the last time.” Bill Shapiro, a former Editor-in-chief of LIFE magazine, adds a fourth, “the moment the last remaining picture of you is seen for the final time.” As he puts it, “Photographs not only remind me of this delicate thing we run both toward and away from — time — but they also hold something else. The humbling, steadying truth that, one day, that’s all we’ll be: a photo.”

It is a universal truth that we abandon, only to learn that what we abandoned has value. Memories are more important as time inevitably slips silently and swiftly away.

For the past several decades, I have been considering how photographs move through time — as conveyers of memory, history, and being. Photography has always been an ever-changing medium, morphing and shifting with new technologies, but the digital revolution has had a profound impact on our ability to not only print images, but also to access images. The “corruption,” the literal de-composition, of digital files is its own kind of fugue state — a loss of “consciousness” with wide-ranging implications and effects: the erasure of histories, writ large, and those quieter histories, of the self, of family.

“The Ephemeral Archive” exhibition is an expansive and conceptual exploration of the power that family photographs hold and the alarming potential of losing our visual legacies to platforms that corrupt and lose whole histories of being. The decline of physical photo albums and the impermanence of digital formats underscore the need for deliberate efforts to preserve our family histories.

Aline Smithson is an interdisciplinary artist, editor, and educator. She has exhibited widely including exhibitions at national and international institutions and her work has been featured in major publications. Smithson is the Founder of Lenscratch, a daily journal on photography. In 2016, the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum commissioned Smithson to create work for the “Faces of Our Planet” exhibition. In 2018 and 2019, her work was exhibited in the National Portrait Gallery in London as part of the Taylor Wessing Prize. The Magenta Foundation published her retrospective monograph, *Self & Others: Portrait as Autobiography*, Kris Graves Projects published her book, *LOST II: Los Angeles*. Peanut Press released her monograph, *Fugue State*, in Fall of 2021. Her books are in the collections of the Getty Museum, the National Portrait Gallery, London, the Metropolitan Museum, the Guggenheim, the Museum of Modern Art, among others. In 2022, she was named a Hasselblad Heroine.



Melanesia,
from Fugue State
2017



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Brand Library & Art Center is a branch of the City of Glendale Library, Arts & Culture Department.

