

The Exhibition Lab Exhibition

July 7th – July 30th 2022

Opening Reception: July 7th 6-9 pm

On July 7th, Foley Gallery opens the 2022 edition of "the Exhibition Lab Exhibition," a group show featuring work by Aaron Deetz, Barbara Ehlers, Dale Armstrong, Daniel Kariko, Debe Arlook, Diana Nicholette Jeon, Diana Cheren Nygren, Hannah Altman, Kris Davidson, Leslie Levenson, Meghann Stelzner, Meredith Esser, Robin Bell, and Suzanne Lovett.

The exhibition will feature photographers exploring various genres, from documentary, autobiographical, and surreal to new media forms, including mixed media.

Aaron Deetz has spent the last year driving cross country photographing truckstops. What started as an attempt to capture the American landscape through a working-class lens evolved into a much larger social commentary. As the world was grappling with the onset of COVID-19, supply chain shortages, and rising gas prices, these truck stops became symbolic of America in a state of crisis.

At the largest truckstop in the US, Iowa 80, a sign read, 'Without Trucks, America Stops. Without Truckstops, Trucks Stop.' Along highways and interstates, Deetz also discovered the find remains of abandoned truckstops. The ghosts in these structures may speak to the future of this American tradition.



Barbara Ehlers finds her sense of peace and purpose while photographing at her Manhattan neighborhood park. In such a large city, photographing her natural environment gives Ehlers a feeling of being in an intimate space where she can connect with herself. She began photographing foliage details using transparent and semi-transparent materials, collaging the image. Prints are made and then rephotographed in their original environment. Ehlers brings the artificial and natural landscape together in an entirely new way through this process.



Dale Armstrong is a Tuscon-based photographer telling the story of the diminishing Sonoran Desert. The ecosystem is transitioning from iconic cacti to non-native invasive grasses. These human-caused changes are a result of initial solutions to livestock overgrazing and ill-conceived remediation of non-native grasses. His environmental documentary-style approach conveys the relentless and catastrophic loss of an ecosystem by wildfires caused by grasses in their dry season. While saddened by the current state of the Sonoran Desert, Armstrong finds solace in preserving as much of the landscape as he can with his camera.

North Carolina-based artist **Daniel Kariko** investigates environmental and political aspects of landscape, land use, and cultural interpretation of inhabited space. Since 1999 Kariko has documented the endangered wetlands and dramatic changes in the landscape in the Barataria Terrebonne region of South

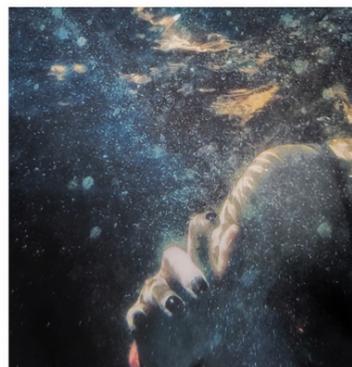


Louisiana. Louisiana is at the forefront of global sea-level change, experiencing the highest rate of coastal erosion in America, losing about one hundred yards of land every thirty minutes- land loss the size of a football field every half-hour. Its condition is emblematic of sea-level change around the world.



The series *One, one thousand...* is a love story and an unconventional documentary exposing the impact of a rare and incurable form of epilepsy, Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome, on a mother and son's experience of life-long care. At 28, David is non-verbal, has scoliosis and severe autism, and requires 24-hour care. After years of pursuing conventional approaches to stop David's seizures, his mother Lori turned to nonconventional healers, working in energetic and mystical realms. Her sister, photographer **Debe Arlook**, conveys this complicated life drama with great sensitivity and creativity. She explores the intersection of what is 'real' and what is outside our realm of understanding. Multiple artistic interpretations convey Lori's spiritual practice and David's unknown perception of the world.

When **Diana Nicholette Jeon's** husband unexpectedly left their marriage, her life became a rollercoaster for which she never got in line. Incessant feelings of despondency intertwined with certitude and faith as she navigated an anomalous season of 860 days. These forlorn, ambiguous photographs subtly reflect upon her journey and speak to anyone who has experienced loss, despair, and longing.



Diana Cheren Nygren has watched her children grow from innocence into jaded young adults. She misses her children's youthful embrace of the world and admires their determination with which they now try to change it. In *The World Needs a Superhero*, Nygren transforms images of her children when they were younger into superheroes, giving them brightly colored capes, a celebration of the confidence with which they hope and imagine all is possible.

Mirroring the ways that Jewish stories are shared, **Hannah Altman's** project *Don't You Have Another World* uses images to reject static answers and repeat familiar symbols to stretch their hands across time, land, and set conclusions. The Hebrew words for "I" and "nothing" are made from the same letters; it is only the arrangement of symbols that shapes the difference between "me" and "void." Altman explores Jewish narrative structures, iconography, and repetition through self-portrait photography. These images build their own storied worlds.



American Portraits is a photo collage series that considers Americans from all walks of life, adorned with shared personal snapshots, revealing threads of ancestry and spirations, a mix of hope, loss, and dreams. **Kris Davidson** immigrated to the United States with her family many years ago, a defining event in her life. This ongoing project is a way to deepen her place in her adopted home and honor the vast range of individual stories held within the American people.

This collection of self-portraits is **Leslie Levenson's** exploration of aging and mortality. More specifically, how she can bring meaning to the experience of aging. These six panels present photographs that are combined with traditional encaustic medium and water-based encaustic. Levenson is drawn to using wax because it creates layers, depth, and texture. The medium's qualities permit concealment and excavation.





Meghann Stelzner is motivated to remove the stigma surrounding mental illness. Through this lens, she hopes to seek awareness, knowledge, and understanding, demystifying falsehoods and promoting the realities surrounding her experience. This honest, raw, and unassuming body of work reveals a unique perspective that infuses various physical and psychological states of mind within the context of culture, media, and technology. Stelzner hopes to show the beauty of discovering and treating mental illness by inviting the viewer into this open-ended dialogue and artistic vision.

Meredith Esser's work explores the mundane ways humanity punctuates the land. Even in the most remote, rural, and exposed areas of the United States, the human presence is almost always felt. We are invited to stop and look closer at small, sometimes nearly undetectable, traces of human activity. Taken in 2020, these images reflect an internal experience of solitude and isolation many of us have felt for the last two years.



Robin Bell is a New York-based physician and photographer who has spent the last two years living with her family in Los Angeles. In her new surroundings, she has been taken by the presence of a nearby pool. Ordinary at first glance, this small enclosed body of water provides certain magic, capturing reflections of trees on the water at different times of day and year in an ever-changing environment. The intense California light turned the reflections into abstractions so vivid that they seem dimensional and subterranean.

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Chaos swooped into **Suzanne Lovett's** life, its black wings menacing the sunshine of a perfect June sky. It transformed her world instantly, yet it will take time for her to truly grasp how traumatic this episode has taken hold of her composure and uprooted her from her element. Lovett's project *Following Light* reflects these days – dark in spirit yet dominated by light. The relentless sunlight creeps interminably across the walls of her room, marking another day spent in the shadows. The temperamental moon rolls past her windows and illuminates another restless night.



The Exhibition Lab is a study of photography outside of a traditional academic setting. Michael Foley co-founded the initiative in 2010 as a study center for fine art photography dedicated to learning by critique. Students of the Ex Lab meet over 5 months, holding critique sessions with one another and one-on-one sessions with Michael Foley.

"*The Exhibition Lab Exhibition*" will remain on view through July 30th, 2022. Foley Gallery is open Wednesday through Saturday, 11 – 5:30 pm. To request images, please contact the gallery at 212.244.9081 or hello@foleygallery.com.