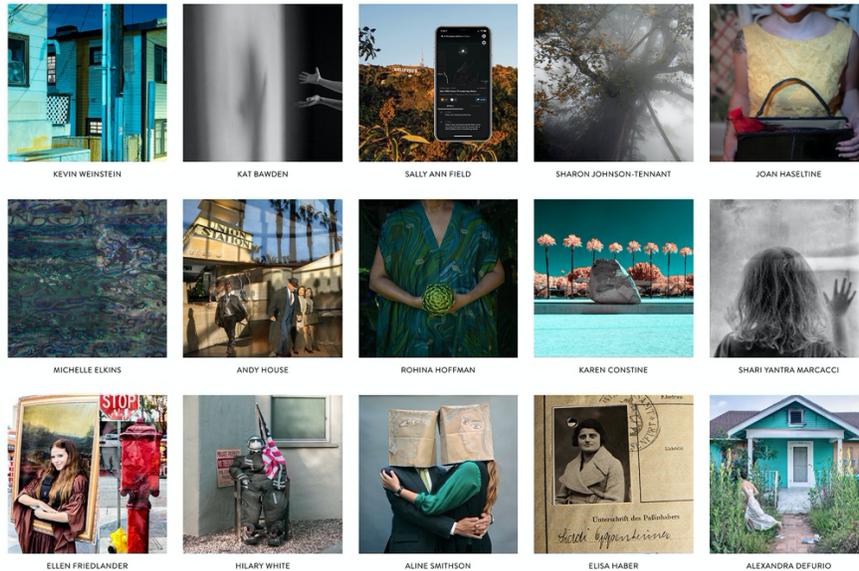


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## THE YEAR OF NOT KNOWING?



**For Immediate Release**

January 11, 2021

### ***The Year of Not Knowing* exhibition opens virtually January 11, 2021**

15 SoCal photographic artists share their personal bodies of work  
in the exhibition, [\*The Year of Not Knowing\*](#)  
January 11 to December 31, 2021

**LOS ANGELES** - Way back in January 2020, when the world was blissfully unaware of the devastating global transformation that would impact every corner of our lives, a group of photographers met for a year-long workshop. Here, each would develop personal photographic projects that would ultimately be exhibited at the Los Angeles Center of Photography in early 2021.

The group met twice in person, once in January and once in February 2020, and then the train went off the rails. For so many of them, the idea of self-quarantining had dual realities—they finally had more time to be creative, but the impact of the virus, the pain of social unrest, and the country seeming to lose its moral compass brought a sense of malaise and futility to their efforts. Each had moved into uncharted waters with no map to keep them on course.

Some photographers continued with work started at the beginning of the year, but now with a consideration of isolation and loss. Others careened off course into new ways of thinking and seeing the world. As the city and its streets emptied, they got to know Los Angeles in new ways, noticing the architecture, flora, and fauna that had been overlooked or unappreciated. 2020 became a year of self and global reconsideration, looking inward with the opportunity to reset and resee their lives, but also looking outward with a profound sense of seeing their own mortality.

The best way to describe this journey is, quite simply, [The Year of Not Knowing](#), also the virtual exhibition's title. This roller coaster year made each one's work better somehow. [The Year of Not Knowing](#) is also a historical marker of this moment in time, with insightful individual projects that speak to gratitude, anxiety, memory, place, and simply being human.

Although each of the projects is personal, they all result from a collaborative process over the course of 12 months under the mentorship of Aline Smithson.

[The Year of Not Knowing](#) photographic artists in alphabetical order are Kat Bawden, Karen Constine, Alexandra DeFurio, Sally Ann Field, Michelle Elkins, Elisa Haber, Ellen Friedlander, Joan Haseltine, Rohina Hoffman, Andy House, Sharon Johnson-Tennant, Shari Yantra Marcacci, Aline Smithson, Kevin Weinstein, and Hilary White.

The following is an overview of their projects:

- In **Kat Bawden's** ongoing series, *Perceptual Isolation*, she continues her exploration of duality and liminal states, and draws heavily on her experiences with anxiety, trauma, and nightmares. For this project, Kat uses self-portraiture and staged images to describe the sense of suspension between waking and sleeping as a means to explore consciousness and the processing of trauma.
- Like the rest of the globe, the Coronavirus forced Angelenos to quarantine and shelter in place. **Karen Constine's** *(un)real Landscapes: Los Angeles plays itself* explores what a pandemic society looks like — otherworldly, unreal. During long walks in this time of COVID-19, the city revealed a new self and an ever-changing sense of place.
- *Forget Me Not* by **Alexandra DeFurio** is a meditation on loss and the meaning of home during uncertain times. After losing her mother to the darkness of early Alzheimer's—and enduring the loss of a long-term relationship—Alexandra processed her grief by photographing herself within the walls of abandoned houses, finding beauty among the ashes.
- Born out of quarantine, *Salted Water Waves* is a series of photographs by **Michelle Elkins** reflecting on family, community and ocean waves. The photographic images are combined with abalone veneer, symbolizing the individuality of those moments.
- In 2019, **Sally Ann Field** installed Citizen on her iPhone, this app delivers real-time safety alerts of incidents nearby. Shocked to see how much was going on within a few miles of her Hollywood home, Sally began taking screenshots of the more humorous and brow-raising reports. When the pandemic hit, the number of reports escalated. Tired of being housebound, she ventured out safely and visited the “scene of the crimes.” The result is *The 911: Los Angeles*, a less than glamorous – yet often hilarious – collection of 100% real happenings in La La Land.

- In *dispLAcEd*, by **Ellen Friedlander**, individual photographs - and the subjects within them - are placed in conversation with each other to explore dichotomies of public vs. private, unity vs. isolation, and the collective vs. the individual. As Ellen grappled with the implications of being alone together at the onset of the pandemic, she took to the streets to document the changing Los Angeles landscape, and so emerged these Extended Frame™ photographs.
- *Siddi Oppenheimer Stoll* by photographer, **Elisa Haber**, is a memory project about her maternal Grandmother Siddi, who passed about when Elisa was 4. Visually, Elisa tells the story of her Siddi through objects and visual memories from her childhood.
- **Joan Haseltine's**, *The Girl Who Escaped and Other Stories*, captures through a cinematic lens, little stories with no beginning or end of women who are alienated, vulnerable, insecure, strong, and possibly treacherous. The viewer is a complicit voyeur to these women traveling a solitary journey.
- *In Gratitude* by **Rohina Hoffman** is an homage to food and family. Created during the pandemic, it is a series of portraits of herself, her husband, and three children showcasing the items they use to produce their daily meals.
- As a street photographer, **Andy House** has primarily been interested in shooting people to capture their interesting moments. Recently, he has departed from that practice by cutting people out of his photographs and putting them into different places, with different people, doing things in different times, to create moments he finds interesting, ironic, funny or maybe disturbing. They are *Fictional Moments*.
- *The Boundaries were Everywhere; I could not See* by **Sharon Johnson-Tennant**, is a visually journey of Sharon's life made from within her home and throughout her neighborhood during the pandemic. The images are paired with the written word and explore both the pain and loneliness of a new reality combined with the absurdity and whimsy that she experienced within these perceived boundaries.
- *In Limbo*, **Shari Yantra Marcacci** recalls March 2020, when what seemed like a distant threat became reality for all as we were forced to self-quarantine. By documenting this time, Shari recognizes the passage of time finding solace in learning the language of her life – a shaft of light as it moves through a room, the way her son's hair curls over his shoulder, the beauty of an afternoon walk. And it's in these unremarkable moments that Shari can finally breathe again.
- **Aline Smithson's** *Undercover* is inspired by the humorous paper bag masks created by Saul Steinberg in the 1950's. For this project, the fine art photographer asked family and friends to create their own interpretations of self, during the period of self-quarantining. The end result revealed new sides to people that knows well and documented how art can shift moods even in the darkest of days.
- **Kevin Weinstein** has always been inquisitive about what can't be seen rather than what can be seen. Façade's bore him, and the camera is a tool to search for authenticity. In **Callejones**, these images were made during the early months of the pandemic during the nighttime hours as a way to honor his desire for solitude while craving human connections.
- **Hilary White** created *The Reciprocity Project: A Visual Conversation* ([@reciprocity\\_project](#)) as a way to stay connected with other photographers during the pandemic. Posting on Instagram each week, Hilary shares a new photograph of her work with two photographers, and they in turn respond. At first sight each new contribution elicits surprise and then she sees a myriad of patterns emerge.

## Artists Talks 2021

[The Year of Not Knowing](#) artists' talks will take place on the third Tuesday of each month, January 19, 2021, through May 11, 2021. All talks are free, and pre-registration is required. Pre-register [here](#). The exhibition and talks are conducted in partnership and hosted by the [Los Angeles Center of Photography](#).

Tuesday, January 19, 5 pm PST, Kat Bawden, Andy House, and Aline Smithson\*.

Tuesday, February 16, 5 pm PST, Ellen Friedlander, Rohina Hoffman, and Sharon Johnson-Tennant.

Tuesday, March 16, 5 pm PST, Karen Constone, Joan Haseltine, and Kevin Weinstein.

Tuesday, April 20, 5 pm PST, Alexandra DeFurio, Sally Ann Field, and Shari Yantra Marcacci.

Tuesday, May 11, 5 pm PST, Michelle Elkins, Elisa Haber and Hillary White.

\*Aline Smithson will introduce *The Year of Not Knowing* exhibition and moderate artists talks.

## Year of Not Knowing Collaborative Book Project

These visual artists also participated in collaborative book project during the pandemic, also called *The Year of Not Knowing*. Inspired by an article in the *New York Times* written by Larry Smith, about challenging people to describe their 'COVID-19' worlds in six words, a form he calls the Six-Word Memoir. As photographers, they took the challenge even further, creating visual descriptions to accompany their carefully chosen six words. The collaborative book project is included within the website and available for purchase.

## Website

[The Year of Not Knowing](#) [[theyearofnotknowing.com](http://theyearofnotknowing.com)] exhibition is online through December 31, 2021. The exhibition's website was created by photographer and designer Sally Ann Field of Sally Ann Field Creative

## Exhibition Social Media

Hashtags: #theyearofnotknowing #lacphoto

[The Year of Not Knowing](#) [[theyearofnotknowing.com](http://theyearofnotknowing.com)] is a virtual exhibition and culmination of 15 creative journeys during the most profound and emotional year of their lifetime. The exhibition is a historical marker of this moment with insightful individual projects that speak to gratitude, anxiety, memory, place, and simply being human.

The [Los Angeles Center of Photography's](#) (LACP) mission is to build a community of dedicated photographers and strengthen the importance of photography as an art form by providing education, events, exhibitions, portfolio reviews, and public programs.

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(Final. Jan. 11, 2021)