

Memory Images

Pictures and Text

Duane Michals

Duane Michals

The House I Once Called Home

This abandoned wooden box is
the cabinet where my family's
curiosities are stored.



I now reopen all its shuttered
windows and unlock all its
boarded doors.

Duane Michals

Sonny returns to the house of ghosts,
Where he was born seventy years ago.

A PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMOIR WITH VERSE

Duane Michals



*This photograph is a fossil,
a fleeting moment preserved as a specimen of time
on film, the way ancient insects are in amber.
Time is a string that threads together
each indivisible instant like pearls of an infinite
seamless necklace.*

Eternity is the absence of time.

*By a serendipitous intersection of time and place,
the threads of my family's lives were woven
together into the fabric of this shared moment
in Andy's photographic tableaux of our clan
in the garden long ago.*

Duane Michals



Mother did not love my father. She loved another.
Margaret lived a secret melancholy.
The life she chose to live was her great folly.
For you see mother believed she had sinned.
And of course, Catholics don't divorce.

Duane Michals



In this very room, on a February afternoon,
When Margaret was twenty and Jack was twenty three,
I became to be.
Here stood the bed, where I first cried and mother bled.
And above the bed a cross hung on the wall
the day the midwife came to call.
Over there, a chair near where the vanity used to be,
its mirrors now scattered everywhere,
like shards of forgotten memories .
My yesteryears are this debris,
and I alas am seventy.

Duane Michals



I hold plaster dust from the house in my hand.
This powdery debris, like ashes in an urn,
is the end of our history.
It seems a peculiar irony,
that most of us must cease to be,
to know the real of our reality.

*Goodbye dear dreamers
in the golden gleam,
Sonny*

Wendy Ewald

Wendy Ewald



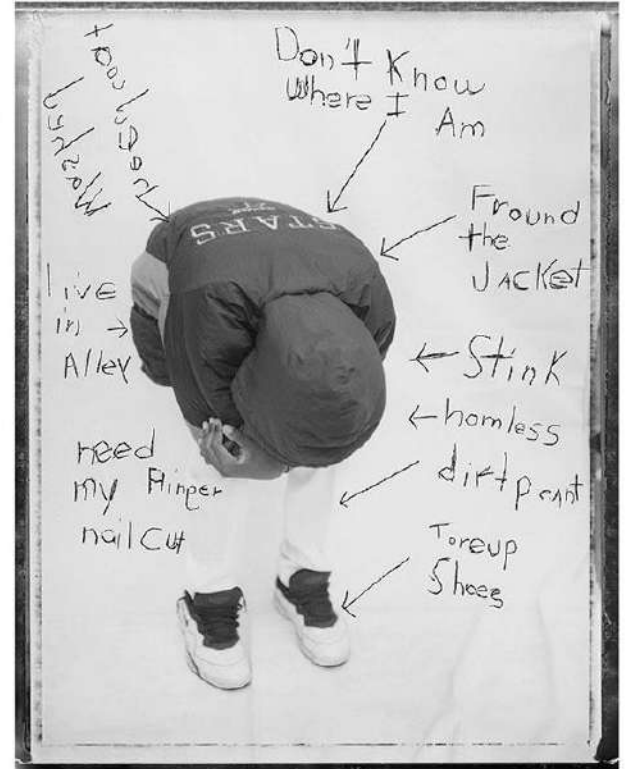
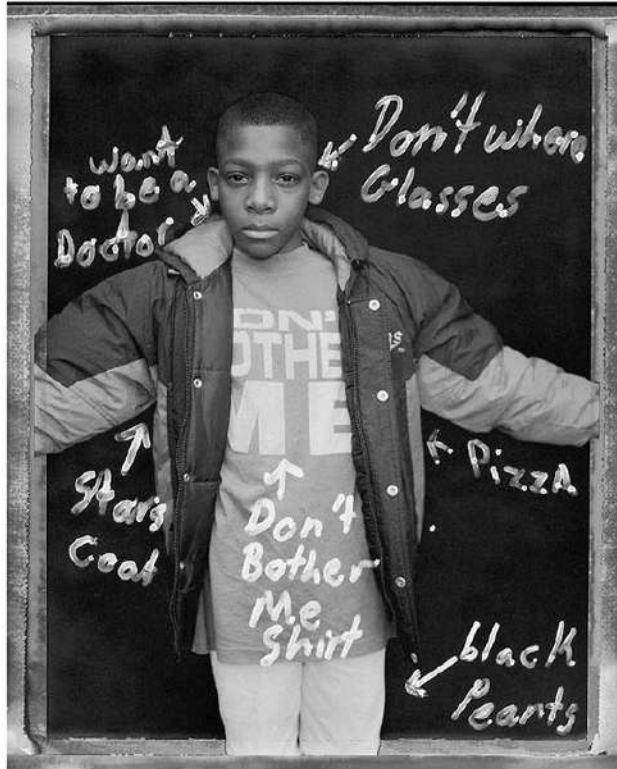
Wendy Ewald



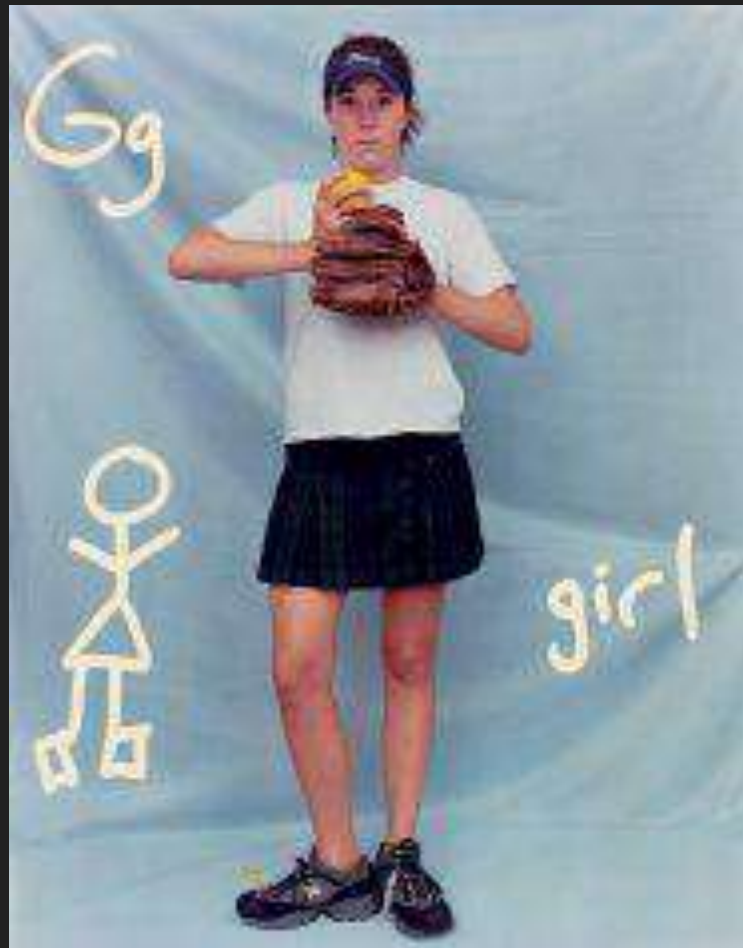
Wendy Ewald



Wendy Ewald

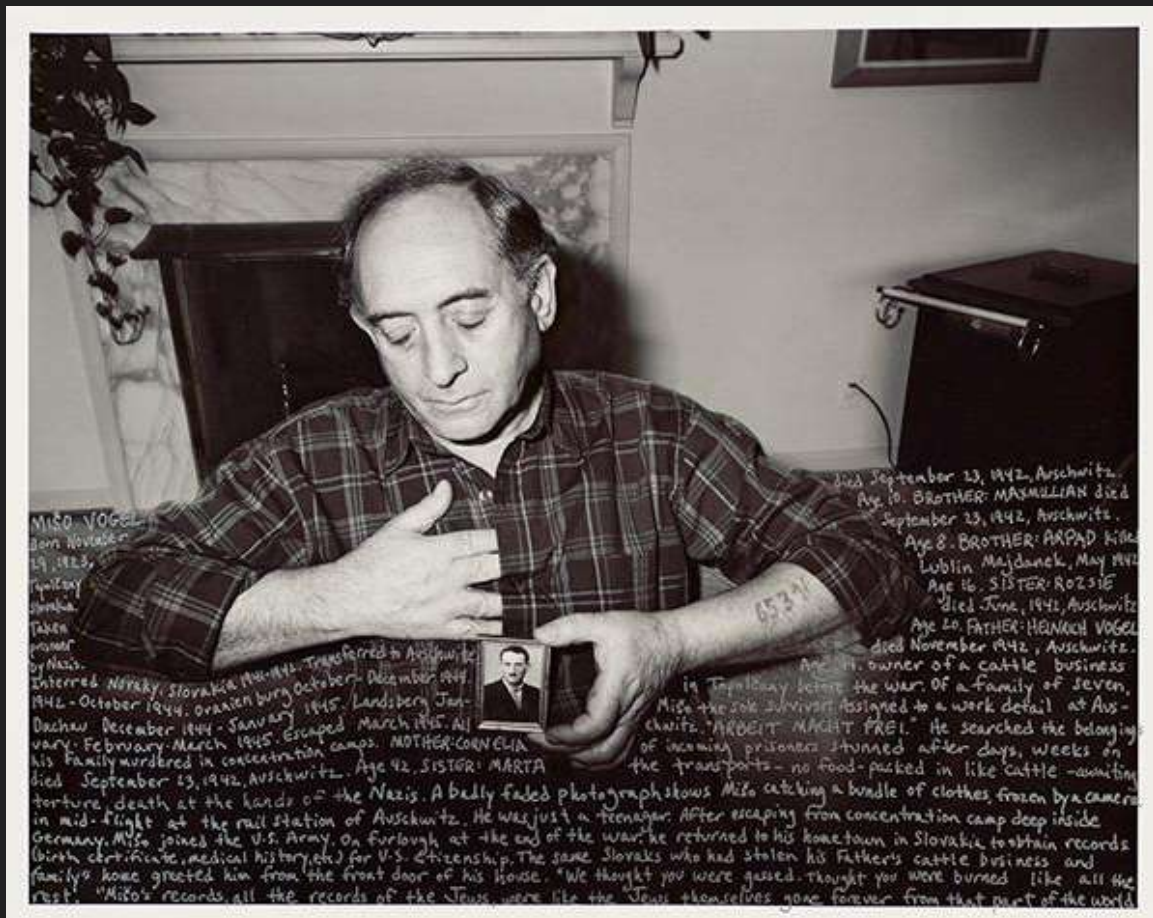


Wendy Ewald

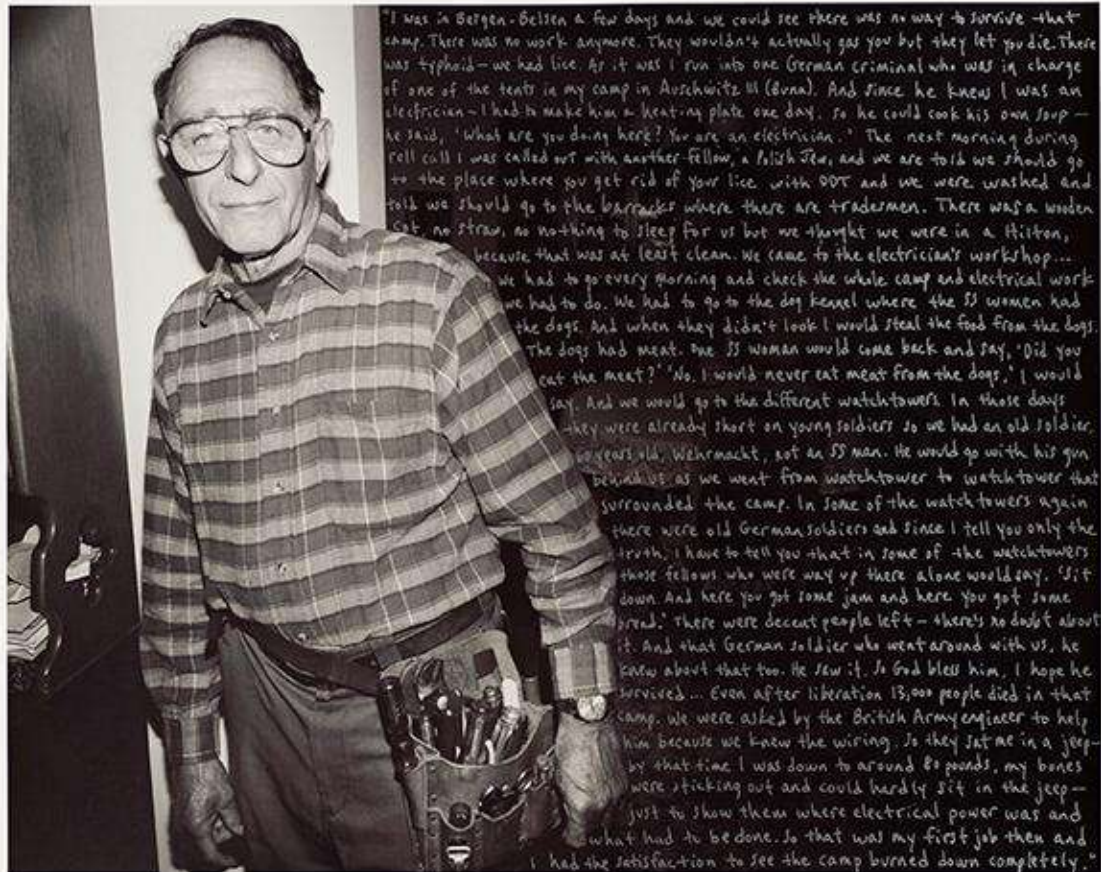


Jeffrey Wolin

Jeffrey Wolin



Jeffrey Wolin



"I was in Bergen-Belsen a few days and we could see there was no way to survive—that camp. There was no work anymore. They wouldn't actually gas you but they let you die. There was typhoid—we had lice. As it was I ran into one German criminal who was in charge of one of the tents in my camp in Auschwitz III (Buna). And since he knew I was an electrician—I had to make him a heating plate one day. So he could cook his own soup—he said, 'What are you doing here? You are an electrician.' The next morning during roll call I was called out with another fellow, a Polish Jew, and we are told we should go to the place where you get rid of your lice with DDT and we were washed and told we should go to the barracks where there are traders. There was a wooden cot, no straw, no nothing to sleep for us but we thought we were in a Hilton, because that was at least clean. We came to the electrician's workshop... we had to go every morning and check the whole camp and electrical work we had to do. We had to go to the dog kennel where the SS women had the dogs. And when they didn't look I would steal the food from the dogs. The dogs had meat. The SS woman would come back and say, 'Did you eat the meat?' 'No. I would never eat meat from the dogs.' I would say, 'And we would go to the different watchtowers. In those days they were already short on young soldiers so we had an old soldier, 60 years old, Wehrmacht, not an SS man. He would go with his gun behind us as we went from watchtower to watchtower that surrounded the camp. In some of the watchtowers again there were old German soldiers and since I tell you only the truth, I have to tell you that in some of the watchtowers those fellows who were way up there alone would say, 'Sit down. And here you got some jam and here you got some bread.' There were decent people left—there's no doubt about it. And that German soldier who went around with us, he knew about that too. He saw it. So God bless him, I hope he survived... Even after liberation 13,000 people died in that camp. We were asked by the British Army engineer to help him because we knew the wiring. So they sat me in a jeep—by that time I was down to around 80 pounds, my bones were sticking out and could hardly sit in the jeep—just to show them where electrical power was and what had to be done. So that was my first job then and I had the satisfaction to see the camp burned down completely."

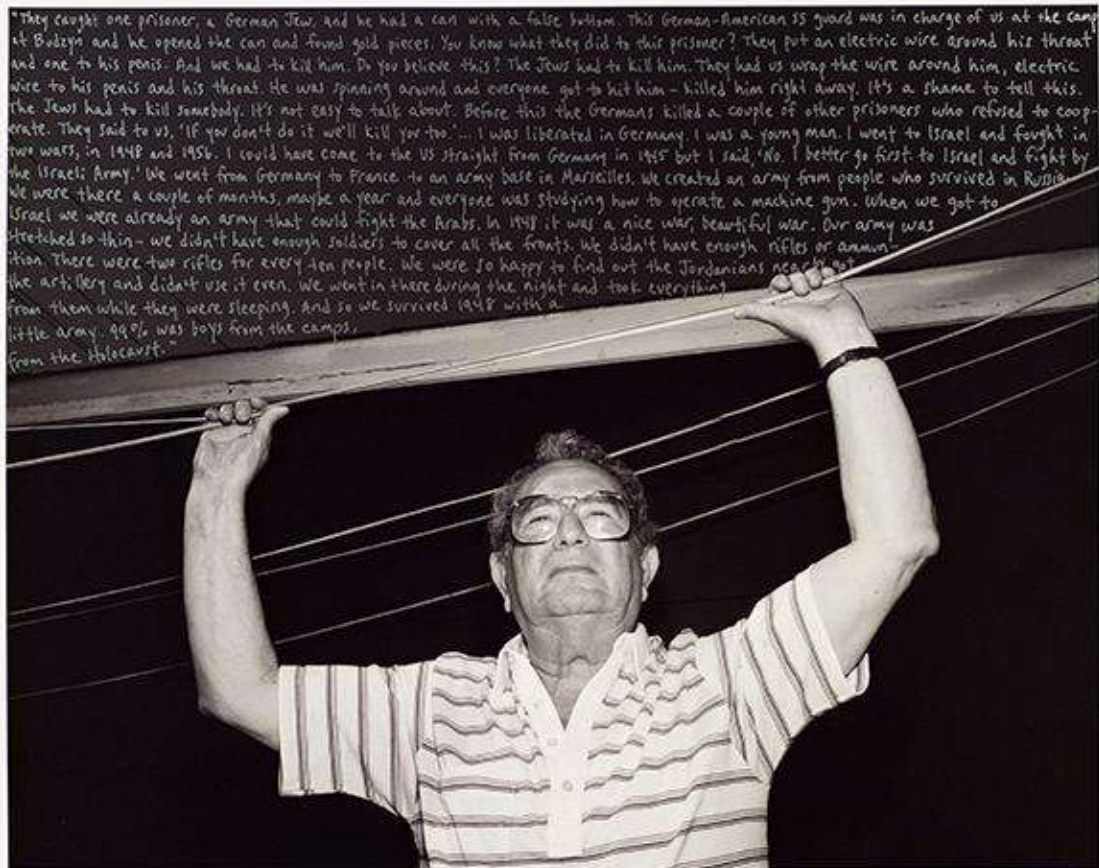
Jeffrey Wolin

"I was 18 and then they closed up the ghetto - no more can't get out. Soon after I had a baby, little baby boy and he was lost. Would you like to see his picture? We stayed in Warsaw for a while but we knew in Warsaw very few are going to survive. My husband came from a small town, Radomsko, near Częstochowa - that's where they seen the Virgin Mary - so we went to his place for a while with the baby and we kept running. Whenever they decided they were closing the ghetto I took the baby and ran from one ghetto to another. His sister lived in another town, Staszow, and her husband was a policeman, so being a policeman he had a right to live, a Jewish policeman. My husband had papers that he's a useful Jew because every morning they took him at 6 in the morning to do all kind of digging... I was are leading a normal life, Polish people, and I say, 'oh my God, why couldn't I be a cow? I wouldn't have to run away now and leave my baby. Somebody would be after us. Why didn't God make me a cow?' ... I at that time went to Warsaw to get a job as a maid and I had a paper that I am not Jewish. I went back to get the baby after two days. Nothing. No baby, no sign, no Jews. It was just hopeless. They said that they took the baby on a wagon with horse-drawn to Łódź, to Łódź, to the train station and they took him to Treblinka. I don't believe it because in my heart I know he's around somewhere. And I still looking. If I see somebody that's probably he is his son, maybe more - he has the most beautiful blue eyes and I say, 'Maybe this is my baby, maybe this is my son.' And I said, 'I wish I could have seen him being taken away - I would not look for him anymore. Then I know this is it, that's the end.' But this way you go with a burden all through your life thinking what happened to him. Maybe he's grown. Maybe he lives next door."



Jeffrey Wolin

"They caught one prisoner, a German Jew, and he had a can with a false bottom. This German-American SS guard was in charge of us at the camp at Budeyn and he opened the can and found gold pieces. You know what they did to this prisoner? They put an electric wire around his throat and one to his penis. And we had to kill him. Do you believe this? The Jews had to kill him. They had us wrap the wire around him, electric wire to his penis and his throat. He was spinning around and everyone got to hit him - killed him right away. It's a shame to tell this. The Jews had to kill somebody. It's not easy to talk about. Before this the Germans killed a couple of other prisoners who refused to cooperate. They said to us, 'If you don't do it we'll kill you too.'... I was liberated in Germany. I was a young man. I went to Israel and fought in two wars, in 1948 and 1956. I could have come to the US straight from Germany in 1945 but I said, 'No, I better go first to Israel and fight by the Israeli Army.' We went from Germany to France, to an army base in Marseilles. We created an army from people who survived in Russia. We were there a couple of months, maybe a year and everyone was studying how to operate a machine gun. When we got to Israel we were already an army that could fight the Arabs. In 1948 it was a nice war, beautiful war. Our army was stretched so thin - we didn't have enough soldiers to cover all the fronts. We didn't have enough rifles or ammunition. There were two rifles for every ten people. We were so happy to find out the Jordanians nearly got the artillery and didn't use it even. We went in there during the night and took everything from them while they were sleeping. And so we survived 1948 with a little army. 99% was boys from the camps, from the Holocaust."



Jeffrey Wolin

"Before I smuggled out from the ghetto to join the underground my mother gave me a little celluloid tube and I put there in a poison pill and my mother gave me some valuable stones to put in there... After my capture I was sitting in the cattle car cutting out my pictures, the faces of my mother and the faces of my father - also cut out a little picture of myself because I wanted to remind myself how I really look. And I had a picture of my brother and me and we were in a summer place the year before the war started. Then I also cut out a picture of my Zionist platoon leader, Icek Rosenblatt, and I cut around the picture of my platoon Beit-Shan, that we made before we left and I rolled them up all tightly. I left the poison pill, I took out the stones and I put in the pictures. We arrived on a very freezing January evening to Bergen-Belsen. So we went in to get a shower and right before we went in I took my tube and I put it in my rectum. They searched you again in your hair and you had to open the mouth and some of the people they even checked internally, whether they didn't hide any valuables. I was lucky - I passed... It was miserable there. They had us schlep stones from one place to the other just to wear us out so they wouldn't even have to use a bullet on us. And so every day the circumstances got harder and harder. My solace were my pictures. When I came in in the evening I used to unroll them and look at them and say, 'My goodness, I am not from Stone, I am from people. I am from a family.' ... We were in Skokie in 1938 when the situation came out with the Nazis that they wanted to march here. This was already too much. Before that we didn't talk for a few reasons. People did not want to listen. They told us to forget about it, to start a new life, to live here for today, not for yesterday. It's not a question of forgetting - we never ever forgot. But as I say, we got involved in everyday life and when the Nazis wanted to come here under our windows, so to say, that was a little too much and it kind of woke us up and we decided not to let it happen because freedom of speech is not freedom to slander. They legally later on won that they can walk but they got afraid to walk here because they knew that we would never let them get out alive from here... When it was over we started speaking; we started telling our stories."



Robert Frank

Robert Frank



Robert Frank



Robert Frank



Jim Goldberg

Jim Goldberg

My wife is Acceptable.
Our relationship is satisfactory.
Edgar S.



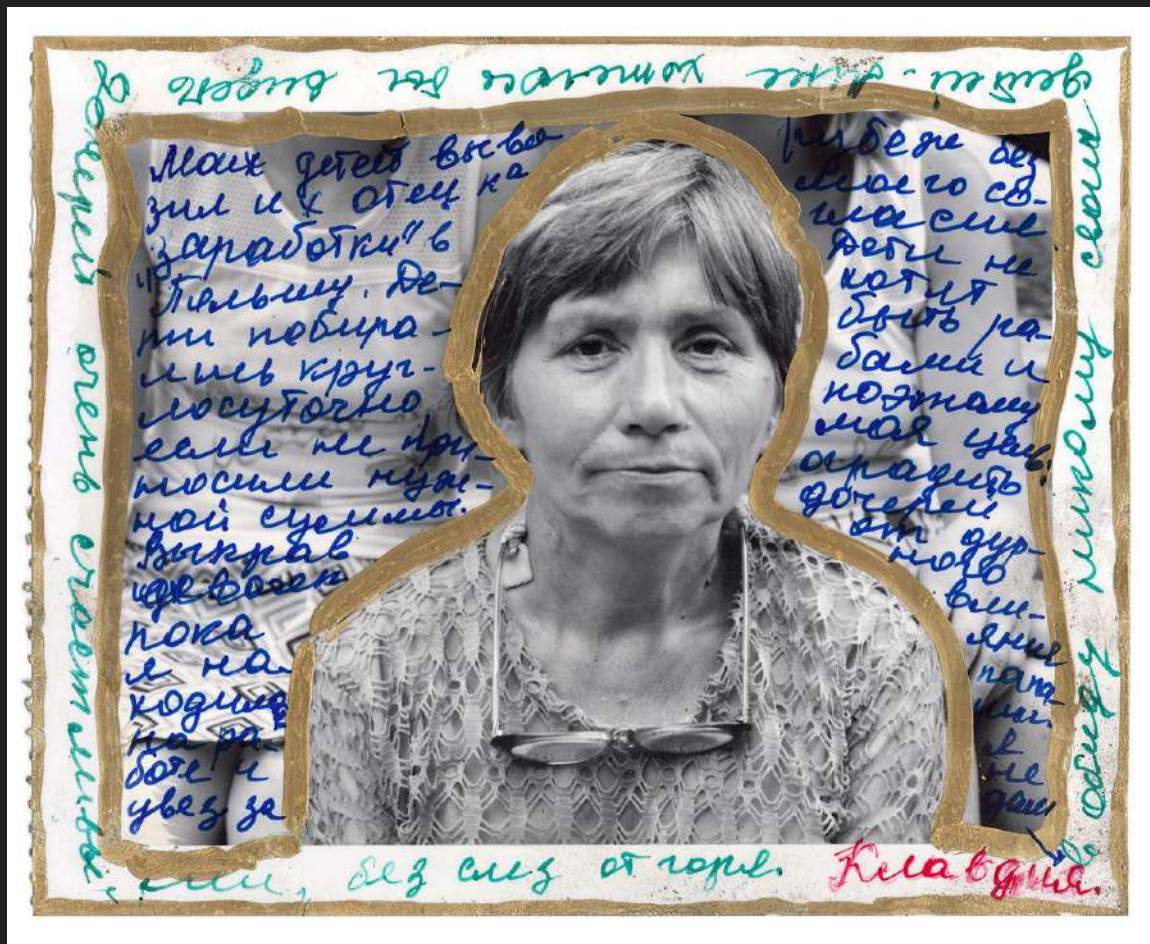
Edgar looks splendid here. His power and strength of character come through. He is a very private person who is not demonstrative of his affection; that has never made me unhappy. I accept him as he is.
We are totally devoted to each other.

Regina Goldstone

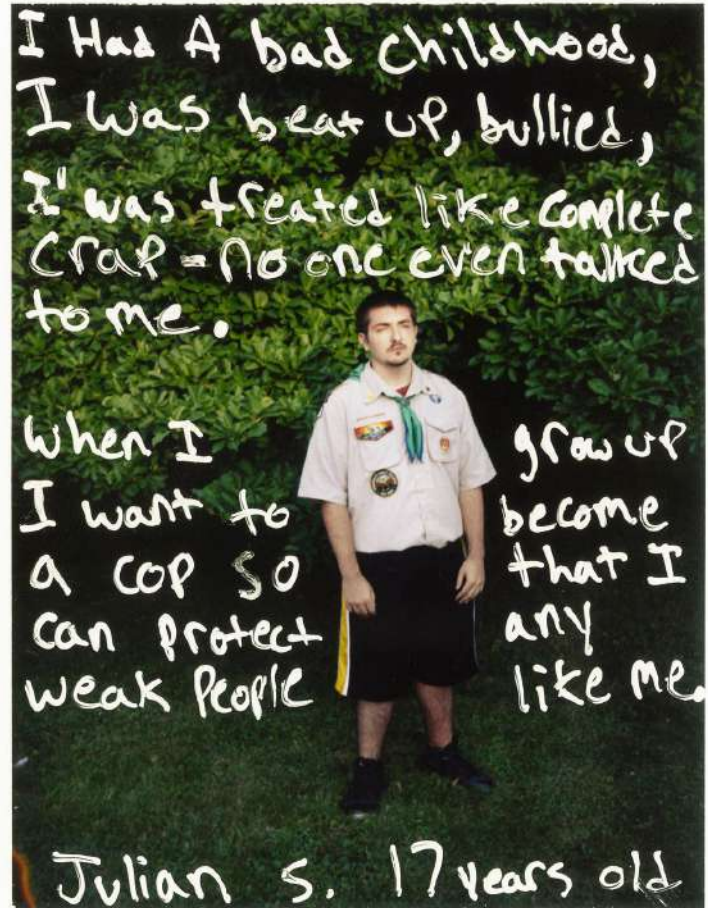
Dear Jim:

May you be as lucky in marriage!

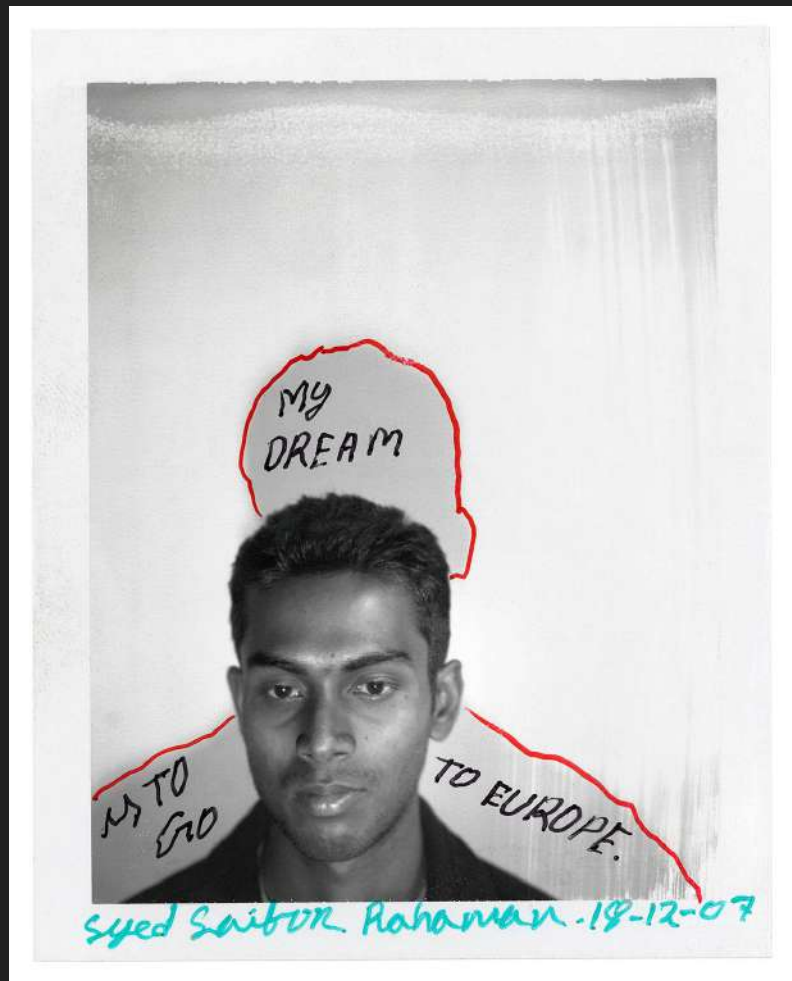
Jim Goldberg



Jim Goldberg



Jim Goldberg



Lorna Simpson

Lorna Simpson



SHE SAW HIM DISAPPEAR BY THE RIVER,
THEY ASKED HER TO TELL WHAT HAPPENED,
ONLY TO DISCOUNT HER MEMORY.

Lorna Simpson



Bieke Depoorter

Bieke Depoorter



This opinion doesn't fit the picture because she is smiling.

I was upset. I was distant with people.

You have lived through one snapshot—an hour or two, maybe a night. Just a picture. But you haven't experienced what's in this picture.

I have lived through what's in this picture.

I live the same reality.
I'm in love with someone and she's
not here with me.
I turn off the light so that
I don't see anyone apart from her.
Then I'm happy because I'm with the
most beautiful person in my life.

Tamer says: Maybe the dark expresses

Tamer says: Why is the picture in the dark?

something.

Bieke Depoorter



فِيهِ جَنَاتٌ نَافِلَةٌ كَيْفَ مِنْ عِنْدِنا وَالنَّفْكَرُ
كَيْفَ أَوْيَ بِسَ بَنَقُولُ "سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ"

My dad's always sitting like this.

Papa says: This man is broke.

The picture is wrong because the picture was taken of the woman while she was sleeping.

How did he agree to let his wife be photographed like this?

When visitors come to the house
and the man of the house is not present,
they have no right to enter the house.

Is this one picture or two?

When there are
conflicts between
the mother and the father,
it affects
the children.

This is the deepest picture.

She is sad because Papa took the remote.

There are a lot of things we don't have,
there's a lot on our mind,

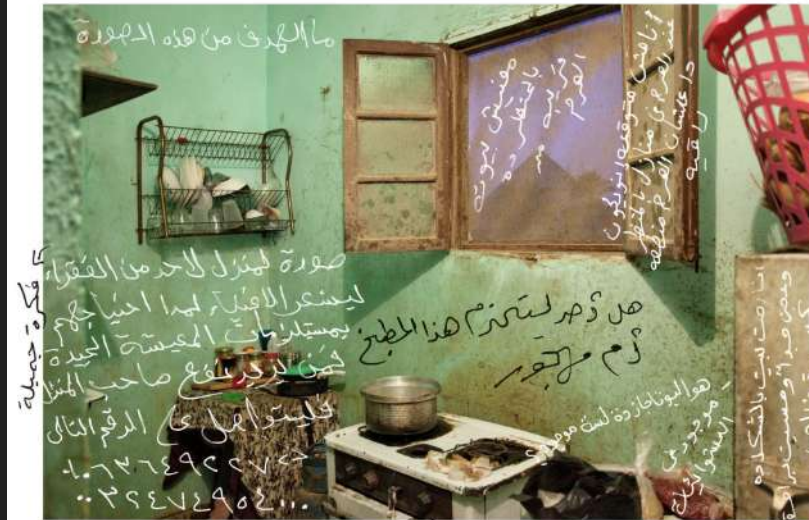
but we just say: "Leave it to God."

Very good.

Cairo, June 2012

القاهرة، يونيو ٢٠١٢

Bieke Depoorter



أنا بأقول فكرة محبسة خالص
أنا أرى أنها فعلة فقرة توبست

الصورة معاً دليلاً بفتح التي من دليلاً

What is the purpose of this picture?

There are no houses
that look like this
close to
the Pyramids.

I can't believe that
there are houses like this
near the Pyramids. Because
the Pyramids are in an
upscale area.

Beautiful idea...

A picture of the house of someone poor,
to make the rich think about how they need
the basic requirements for a good life.

Does someone use this kitchen
or is it abandoned?

Anyone who wants to help the owner of this house
can call the following number:

01063649227

0032474954000

Do these gas stoves still exist?
They still exist in
slum areas.

I went to a house that looks like
this and I really liked it and felt
very relaxed.

A picture does not always show
the difference between rich and poor.

Papa says: That's a very good idea.

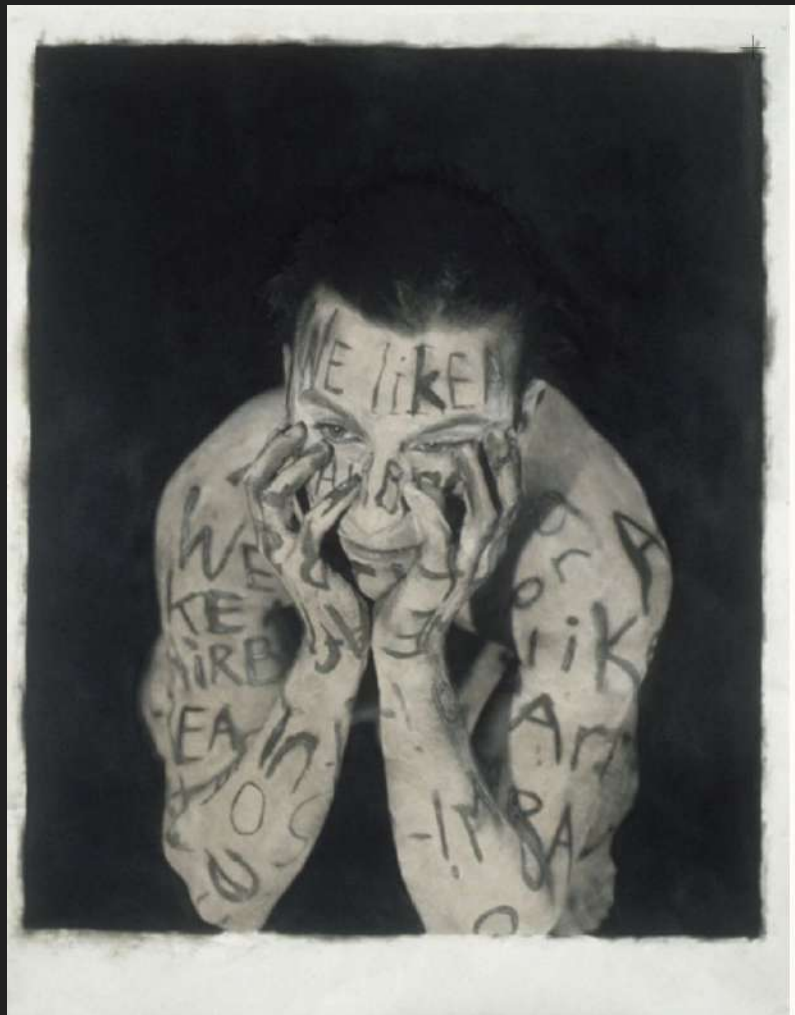
I agree, that's a good idea.

Nazlat al-Samman, Cairo, March 2012

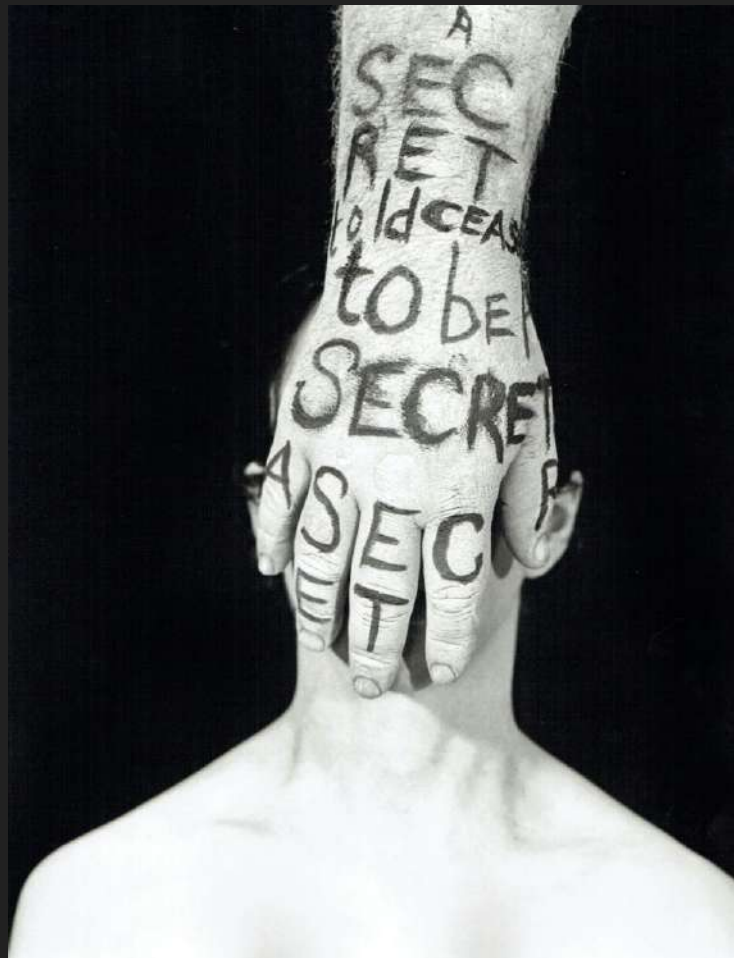
نزلة السمان، القاهرة، مارس ٢٠١٢

Leslie Dill

Leslie Dill

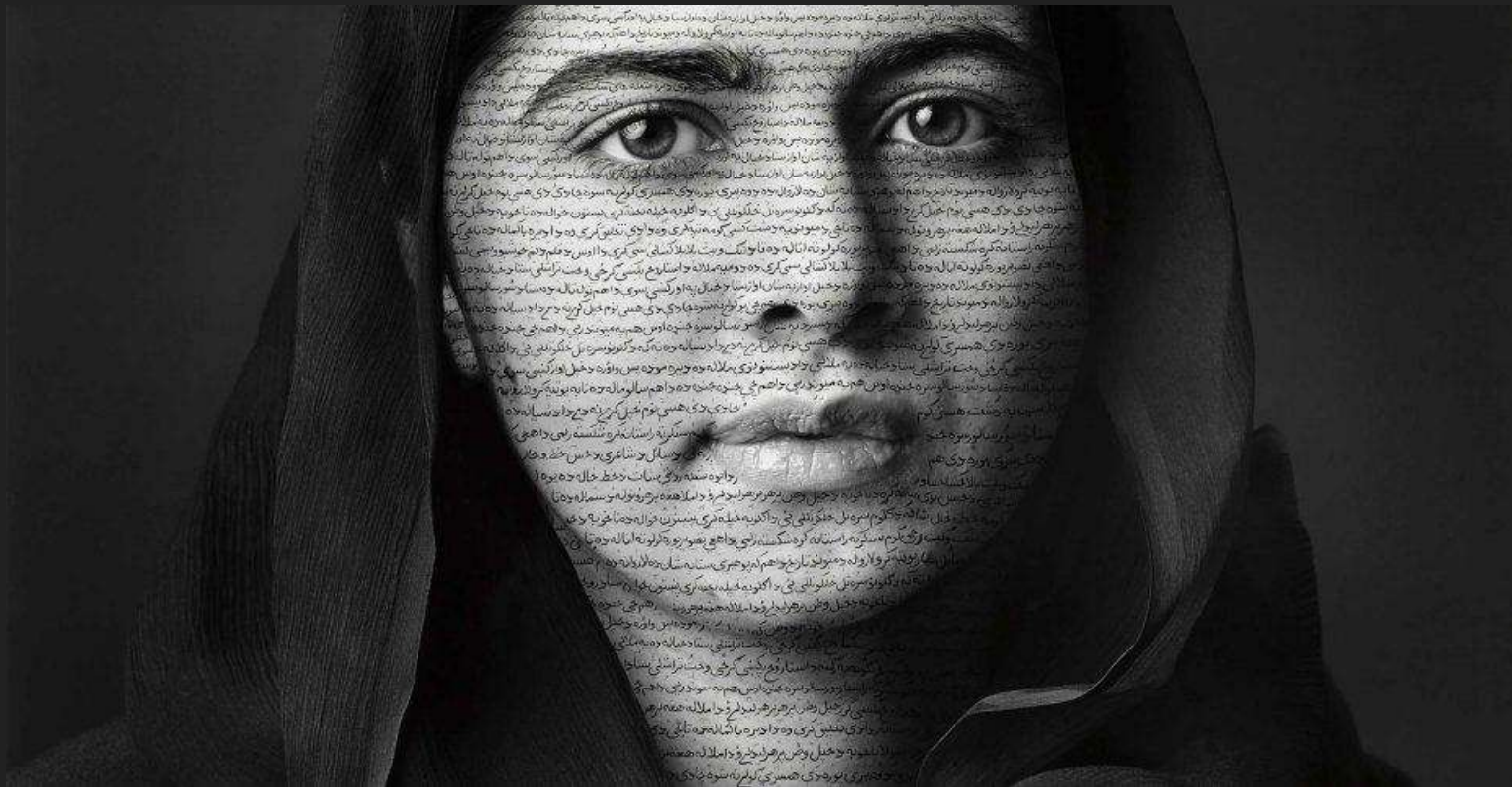


Leslie Dill



Shirin Neshat

Shirin Neshat



Shirin Neshat

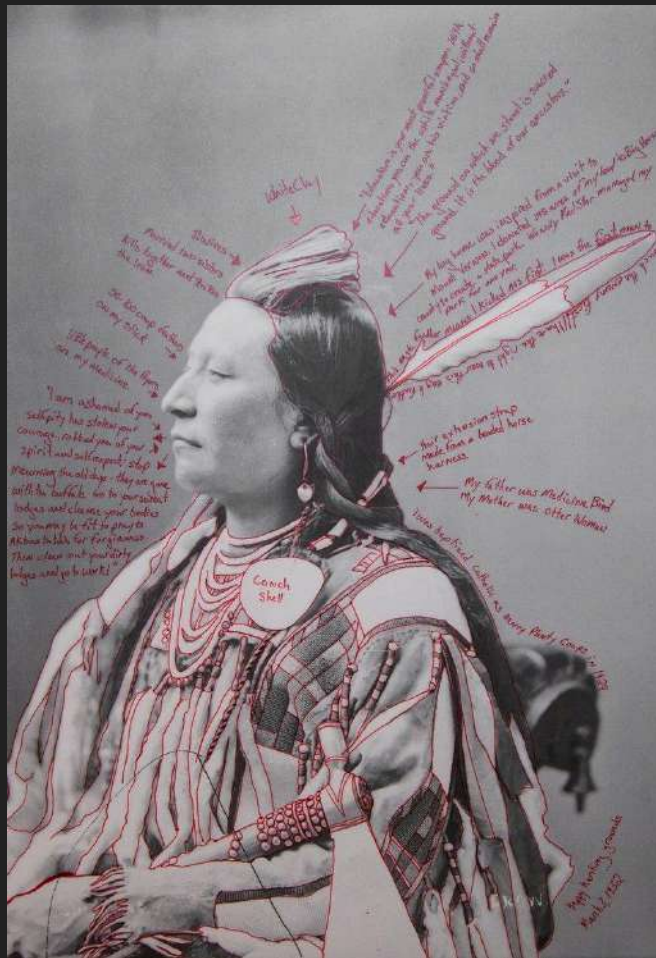


Shirin Neshat



Wendy Red Star

Wendy Red Star



Wendy Red Star



Ken Lum

Ken Lum



**I lost my job.
What am I going
to do?
I lost my job.
What am I going
to do?
What am I
going to do?**

Ken Lum



**What am I
going to do
with my kids
while I work?
What am I
going to do
with my kids
while I work?**

Ken Lum



What is it
Daddy?
What's the matter
Daddy?
What is it
Daddy?
Daddy
what is it?

Ken Lum



**I can't
believe
I'm in
Paris.
I can't
believe
I'm in
Paris.**

Ken Lum



...pew...

...I'm tired...

..Oh, man...

...man...

...pew...

...tired