

96th ANNUAL International Competition Solo Exhibitions

John Joyce: Jab, Cross, Hook

Vikesh Kapoor: See You at Home

Donavon Smallwood: Languor / Beebe

January 21 – March 12, 2022

**Closing Receptions: Saturday, March 12, 3 – 6pm
(registration required)**

For registration and recorded gallery tours: www.printcenter.org.



(from left) John Joyce, *Judith "La Peligrosa" Rodriguez, Boxer. Mexico City, 2020*, from the series "Gimnasio Nuevo Jordan;" Vikesh Kapoor, *Our Childhood Swimming Pool, 2016*, from the series "See you at Home;" Donavon Smallwood, *Untitled, 2020*, from the series "Languor"

PHILADELPHIA, PA – (January 3, 2022) The Print Center is pleased to announce the opening of three solo exhibitions awarded from the 96th ANNUAL International Competition – ***John Joyce: Jab, Cross, Hook***, ***Vikesh Kapoor: See You at Home*** and ***Donavon Smallwood: Languor / Beebe*** beginning January 21, 2022.

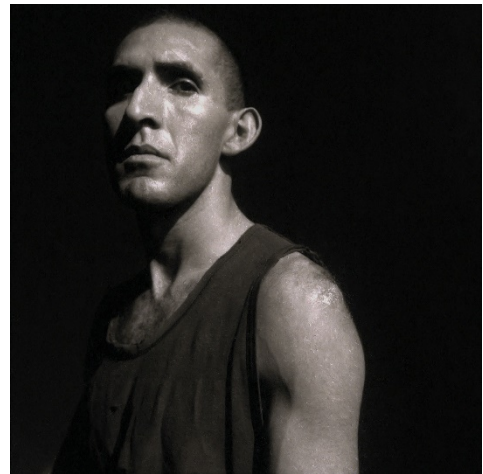
We are thrilled to welcome the three 96th ANNUAL Solo Exhibition Award winners into our galleries. As always, it is a pleasure to see what themes rise to the top among Finalists. This year, each of the artists, all of whom happen to be photographers, is dedicated in some way to portraiture. Their work offers poignant commentary on issues around identity, which are at the forefront of critical dialogues today.

– Dr. Ksenia Nouril, Jensen Bryan Curator

John Joyce: Jab, Cross, Hook

It is clear that for photographer John Joyce, form and content go hand in hand. His intimate platinum palladium portraits are as technically adept as they are conceptually rigorous. The works in *Jab, Cross, Hook* are drawn from three series: “Gimnasio Nuevo Jordan,” “Philadelphia” and “Mexican Portraits.” Eight works from “Gimnasio Nuevo Jordan” appear matted and framed, designed for final presentation by the artist. Across the gallery, selections from all three series are presented unframed and, in some cases, unmatted. By stripping the works of their final armatures, this exhibition unveils the intricacies of Joyce’s analog process, revealing the painterly – almost playful – brushstrokes of emulsion on the paper. This emulsion is more than a substrate. It is the foundation at the core of each, often stoic, portrait.

“Gimnasio Nuevo Jordan” began over five years ago, when Joyce himself started training at a gym in Mexico City. “What immediately struck me was the camaraderie among the boxers and their trainers as well as the families and friends who would accompany them to watch. Although closely integrated . . . this tightknit community welcomed me and my camera,” says Joyce. The gym, which has produced a number of champion fighters, is more than just a training ground. It is a second home for these men – and occasionally women. Through subsequent visits to the gym, Joyce has followed the careers of a number of boxers, some of which have sadly ended in death.



John Joyce, *Fernando de Jesús Meza Guzmán, Boxer, Mexico City, 2020*, from the series “Gimnasio Nuevo Jordan”

The artist’s portraits of boxers Fernando de Jesús Meza Guzmán and Judith “La Peligrosa” Rodríguez capture the two fighters in repose. While their bodies are nearly perpendicular to the camera, their faces are turned ever so gently to confront the viewer as if inviting them to step into the ring. Their stone cold stares belie their intricate personalities and complex emotions, which is evoked through the artist’s use of warm tones and a soft peripheral focus.

Each portrait is taken in ambient light after a boxer has finished training. The title of the exhibition – *Jab, Cross, Hook* – refers directly to types of punches. “Rather than photographing the boxers in motion, I use these moments of exhausted repose to portray their dedication to the honing of their bodies and craft, and their dignity in the pursuit of glory and social ascendancy despite the slim chance of attainment,” says Joyce. The artist employs similar parameters in his series titled “Philadelphia,” also portraits of boxers, as well as in the series “Mexican Portraits,” comprised of recent portraits taken in Mexico.

John Joyce (lives Collingswood, NJ) is skilled in numerous traditional, non-silver processes including gum bichromate, cyanotype, anotype and platinum palladium – for which he is best known. An analog aficionado, he uses medium format film to make contact prints that are intricate in detail. Joyce has photographed around the world, in such far-flung locales as Cuba, Egypt, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, Syria

and Turkey as well as for decades in the Pine Barrens of his home state of New Jersey. His long-term project “Gimnasio Nuevo Jordan” was a LensCulture Portrait Awards 2021 Finalist. His works are held in the private collections of renowned artist Ann Hamilton and the Mexican collector Pedro Slim. Joyce is represented by The Print Center’s Gallery Store.

Vikesh Kapoor: See You at Home

See You at Home is an exhibition of works from Kapoor’s ongoing series of the same name. The works are, in the artist’s own words, “a personal narrative that centers on family, memory and the myth and melancholy surrounding the American Dream.” It revolves around his parents, Shailendra and Sarla Kapoor, who emigrated from India to the United States in the early 1970s. They built their new lives – their family of four and their careers as physicians – in a small, rural Pennsylvania town of about 10,000 people, where they were one of just a few immigrant families. The town was, and remains, predominantly white and conservative. The Kapoors, now retired and growing older are becoming increasingly isolated as their children have moved far from home.



Vikesh Kapoor, *At Fox’s Restaurant*, 2017, from the series “See You at Home”

Kapoor turns his lens on his parents, photographing them in and around their home, capturing some of the most intimate – if not banal – moments of their everyday lives: his mother sits at a booth in a diner, his father stands in their empty pool. These two portraits of Kapoor’s parents draw our attention to the particularities of their physical attributes – his mother’s petite frame against the backdrop of a cavernous restaurant, his father’s stoic expression despite the absurdity of his location – whilst reminding us of our own lives. The everyday plays a

critical role in Kapoor’s work. In valorizing the vernacular, he underscores the great lengths taken by his parents as immigrants to assimilate into local culture.

Kapoor’s interest in his family began fifteen years ago, while traveling to India with his father. “Questions of family, identity and personal history were born out of that trip and continue to inform my work today,” he says. The contemporary photographs in this series are paired, often side-by-side, with snapshots from his parent’s family albums amassed over the course of many years and great distances. Kapoor sutures images across space and time, creating dialogues between them. The series reflects upon the slow but steady passage of time and the process of “becoming” that one experiences whenever fashioning a new identity.

Vikesh Kapoor (born Sunset Pines, PA; lives Los Angeles, CA) is a multidisciplinary artist whose work examines race, class and identity as a first-generation American. Kapoor has exhibited his series “See You at Home” in solo exhibitions at Filter Space, Chicago, IL and the New Orleans Photo Alliance Gallery, LA. He has been included in group exhibitions at the Houston Center for Photography, TX; Aperture Foundation, New York, NY; Silver Eye Center for Photography, Pittsburgh, PA; and SF Camerawork, San Francisco, CA, among other venues. He has received numerous awards, including The Joan Hohlt and Roger Wich Emerging Photographer Scholarship from the Houston Center for Photography, The Hopper Prize, LensCulture Art Photography Juror's Pick Award, PhotoNola Review Grand Prize and a Project Development Grant from CENTER, Santa Fe, NM. He has been a finalist for the Documentary Essay Prize from the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University; PHmuseum Mobile Photography Prize; and Portrait Award from the Head On Photo Festival, Sydney, Australia as well as a semifinalist for the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery's triennial Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition. He was a resident at the Center of Photography at Woodstock, NY and Latitude Chicago. In 2021, he produced the *Leica x 1854 Witnesses of: Devotion* commission for the *British Journal of Photography*.

Donavon Smallwood: Languor / Beebe

Donavon Smallwood's exhibition brings together photographs from his two major bodies of work: “Languor,” which was recently published as the artist's first monograph; and “Beebe,” a new project in the early stages of development. This is the first exhibition of “Beebe.”

Smallwood, a self-taught photographer, has been recently recognized for “Languor,” which was shot in Central Park, New York during the pandemic. The series comprises black-and-white portraits alongside closely cropped landscape images. A life-long resident of Harlem, Smallwood turned to the park as a refuge in the difficult days of lockdown and isolation due to COVID. However, it was not the bucolic landscape that drew his attention in the park, but the people within it – both neighbors and passersby. His subjects were cast directly from those in the park or via online postings on Craigslist and Facebook. Although his medium-format camera might have intimidated some, Smallwood relaxed his subjects by sitting with them for some time while photographing. It was important for the sitters to feel comfortable – at home. “Its [“Languor's”] subject is what it's like to be a Black person in nature,” says Smallwood. Picturing Black people in this context references the history of Seneca Village, a 19th century Black community at the heart of what is now Central Park. “Languor” is influenced by that history as well as the artist's own interest in the Romantic poet and artist William Blake, who is known for his transcendental works.



Donavon Smallwood, *Untitled*, 2020, from the series “Languor”

Smallwood more pointedly explores the notion of home in his new series “Beebe.” It is sited at the ruins of Beebe Chapel – a Methodist church, originally located behind his grandmother’s house in the town of Washington on the coast of North Carolina. The artist considers this location to be the genesis of the paternal side of his family. Thus, the series is a family portrait, capturing the people, places and things still inhabiting this auratic land today.

With “Languor,” Smallwood has developed rhythm in the form and context of his photographs. The alternation between portraits and landscapes provides the viewer with an even-keeled pacing that allows for deeper consideration of the body, nature and healing in our time. This translates to “Beebe” in which there are many connections across works signaled by subtle details, like the fragility of a spider web or the reflection of a figurine. Both series represent sites – Central Park and his grandmother’s home – that are important to the artist’s identity. They are at once places of rest and security in a time of great uncertainty.

Donavon Smallwood (lives New York, NY) received his BA from Hunter College, New York. He has had a solo exhibition at the Baxter St Camera Club of New York and has exhibited in group exhibitions nationally and internationally. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the 2021 Aperture Portfolio Prize and the 2021 Daylight Photo Award. His editorial photographs have been published in *Aperture*, *The Atlantic*, *FT Weekend*, *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker*. *Languor*, his first monograph, was released by Trespasser (Austin, TX) in November 2021.

Programs

Closing Reception

Saturday, March 12, 3 – 6pm

Registration required*

Recorded gallery tours will be available at www.printcenter.org. All visitors are required to be vaccinated and wear facemasks.

Artist Talks (all 6pm on Zoom*)

The artists will discuss the works in the exhibition and their artistic practices.

Vikesh Kapoor

Thursday, January 27

Donavon Smallwood

Thursday, February 10

John Joyce

Thursday, March 3

* Register at www.printcenter.org. **Visitor information may change with shifting COVID-19 conditions. Please visit our website for up-to-date information.**

All of The Print Center’s exhibitions and programs are free and open to the public.

About the ANNUAL International Competition

Solo exhibition winners **John Joyce**, **Vikesh Kapoor** and **Donavon Smallwood** were among the 10 Finalists selected from the 537 international artists who submitted to the 96th ANNUAL International Competition juried by **Ana Casas Broda**, Hydra + Fotografía and **Dr. Kelli Morgan**, Tufts University. Online portfolios of all the Finalists' and Semifinalists' works will be available on the 96th ANNUAL website launching in February 2022.

The ANNUAL is one of the oldest and most prestigious competitions in the United States, which is juried each year by distinguished colleagues in the fields of photography, printmaking, book arts and contemporary art. Artists who use printmaking and/or photography as critical components of their work, or whose work pushes the boundaries of traditional photographic and printmaking practices, are encouraged to enter. The ANNUAL's focus reflects The Print Center's interest in the use of photography and printmaking in intriguing and expansive ways, both in content and in process. Awards from the ANNUAL include three museum purchase awards: the Art Museum of West Virginia University Purchase Award, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Purchase Award and Stinnett Philadelphia Museum of Art Collection Award.

Finalists

Caleb Cole, Raymond Grubb, Rod Jones, John Joyce, Vikesh Kapoor, Dora Lisa Rosenbaum, Donavon Smallwood, Heather Evans Smith, Peggy Washburn, Bingqin Zhang

Semifinalists

Liz Albert, Patty Caroll, Jo Ann Chaus, Alexis Childress, Tony Chirinos, Cathy Cone, Helen Maurene Cooper, Anastasia Davis, Hossein Fardinfard, April Flanders, Anna Garner, Helen Glazer, Claudia Ruiz Gustafson, Lali Khalid, Tarrah Krajnak, Dominic Lippillo, Eric Lubrick, Fabiola Menchelli, Hannah Norton, Jennifer Pepper, Jennifer Mckinnon Richman, Aline Smithson, Tamara Staples, Aurelia Wrenn, Jaclyn Wright

About The Print Center

Mission

Founded in 1915, The Print Center encourages the growth and understanding of photography and printmaking as vital contemporary arts through exhibitions, publications and educational programs. The Print Center has an international voice and a strong sense of local purpose. Free and open to the public, it presents temporary exhibitions which highlight established and emerging, local, national and international contemporary artists. It mounts one of the oldest art competitions in the country, now in its 96th year and its Gallery Store offers the largest selection of contemporary prints and photographs available for sale in Philadelphia, as well as online. The Artists-in-Schools Program brings arts education to 600 Philadelphia public high schools students each year.

Funders

Support for The Print Center is offered by: Bryn Mawr Trust; Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation; Forman Family Fund; Sheila Fortune Foundation; Fund for Children; Allen Hilles Fund; Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Foundation; Christopher Ludwick Foundation; The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; National Endowment for the Arts; William Penn Foundation; Pennsylvania Council on the Arts; The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage; Philadelphia Cultural Fund; The Philadelphia Foundation; Rosenlund Family Foundation; Michael Shannon Designs; University of the Arts; University of Pennsylvania Office of Government and Community Affairs; Henrietta Tower Wurts Memorial; and our Board of Governors, Luminaries, members and friends.



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Free and open to the public
Tuesday – Saturday, 11am – 6pm

Vaccination is required to enter
All visitors are required to wear facemasks

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