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The Undocument: FotoFocus Biennial 2016

FotoFocus Biennial



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Kevin Moore, FotoFocus' Artist Director and Curator, explains more about this year's theme: "The Undocument...questions how we grasp 'realism' or 'reality' through photography and, more importantly, how we alter and shape reality through imagination to form our own individual point of view."

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Led by Moore, the curators and directors behind the 2016 Biennial put together a strong set of programs that feature a number of heavy-hitting curators, artists, and industry professionals. These are our editors' picks from the exciting list:

Zanele Muholi: Personae

This exhibition, which runs until January 1, 2017, features two powerful bodies of work by the rising South African star Zanele Muholi. Muholi was this year's recipient of the ICP Infinity Award for Documentary Photography—a well-deserved accolade. She also exhibited her work at a showcase exhibition in Arles.

The two equally powerful series on display are *Faces and Phases*, a set of photographs featuring black South African women who identify as lesbian, and *Somnyama Ngonyama*, a series of self-portraits that Muholi began in 2015. Fittingly, the exhibition is housed in the city's National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (NURFC).

Muholi's self-proclaimed mission as an artist and activist is "to re-write a black, queer and trans-visual history of South Africa for the world to know of our resistance and existence at the height of hate crimes in South Africa and beyond." This exhibition is not to be missed.

Jackie Nickerson: August

Jackie Nickerson's portraits of farm laborers in Africa focus on how individual identity is improvised through clothing, expression, and attitude. *Jackie Nickerson: August* features two bodies of work on this subject matter: "Farm" and "Terrain," series from 2002 and 2013, respectively.

These series depict the physical and psychological impact of agriculture in southern Africa. The photographs represent the intrinsic connection between laborers and the land; Nickerson has also said that they speak more broadly to the shifts that occur in human nature as we respond to the changes we impose on the earth. The relationship between the land and those who labor on it is clearly delineated in these images—in some of the photographs, the workers seem to sprout from the land like peculiar, upright foliage.

Terrain, the latter of the two series, was featured in LensCulture if you would like to discover more of this photographer's work.

Panel: Roe Ethridge: Nearest Neighbor

Roe Ethridge, a photographer based in New York, presents a set of his photographs that shift smoothly between personal, conceptual, and commercial work. His series explores the tenuous boundary separating photography that is meant to inhabit a more intimate sphere and work that is meant for commercial consumption. Family and friends are often subjects in Ethridge's work, and he frequently embeds items of personal significance in his editorial work. Ethridge plays with the confines of sentimentality and the consequences of submitting private themes to the public eye.

The panel will be moderated by FotoFocus Artistic Director and Curator Kevin Moore and feature gallerist Brendan Dugan; Andy Harmon, a production and set designer; Liz Mulholland, a partner at Andrew Kreps Gallery in New York; and photographer Louise Parker. With such a diverse panel, the event seems primed to cover a range of topics appealing to both photography-lovers and serious practitioners.

—LensCulture

Editors' Note: To find out more details about the FotoFocus Biennial, be sure to visit their website.

Enjoy more great photography:

- Afterwar: Veterans from a World in Conflict by Lori Grinker
- Nomad
- Every Day Museum: El Museo de todos los Días
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Somnyama ngonyama II, Oslo.



A day in May, 2016.



Grain Elevators, Cyclone, Minneapolis, 1974.



Ruth, 2012.



Untitled, 2014.



Oscar, 2012.



The Moon is Asleep, 2016.



Nancy with Polaroid, 2003-2006.



Thanksgiving, 1984 (Table), 2009.



Refrigerator, 1999.



Vanished Summer.



Punctured.



Durango in the Canal, Belle Glade, FL, 2011.



Me and Auggie, 2015.



COKE BOLLIES, 2013.



Bester II, Paris, 2014.

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