

The Long View

2026 FOTOFOCUS BIENNIAL

FotoFocus Announces “Call for Entry” for 2026 Biennial: *The Long View*

Cincinnati, OH (September 11, 2025) — FotoFocus is pleased to announce a **Call for Entry for the upcoming 2026 FotoFocus Biennial: *The Long View***, welcoming lens-based artists to apply for inclusion in an exhibition at the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC). The Call for Entry goes live today, and the deadline for entry is October 10, 2025. This Call for Entry will align with the Biennial theme, *The Long View*, which considers aspects of time and perspective in photography and film, and how these mediums shape our understanding of the world.

ELIGIBILITY

FotoFocus welcomes proposals from artists living and working in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana, as well as artists from outside the region whose work focuses specifically on Ohio, Kentucky, and/or Indiana. Traditional and non-traditional photographic mediums, as well as site-specific installations and film/video works, are eligible.

FotoFocus encourages bold ideas that embrace the 2026 Biennial theme, *The Long View*, and align with the organization’s lens-based focus. Applicants must be 18 years of age or older, possess an existing body of work, and be able to fulfill the requirements and expectations outlined in the Guidelines and in further conversations with FotoFocus and CAC.

Application is open to artists who:

- Are at least 18 years of age
- Work in lens-based art forms, including:
 - Traditional photographic mediums
 - Alternative and/or experimental mediums
 - Site-specific installation
 - Film/video
- Can present a complete body of work (photographic series, film, documentation, and/or mock-ups of installation, etc.)
- Live and work in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana; *OR* live and work outside the region, but make work that focuses specifically on Ohio, Kentucky, and/or Indiana
- Did not participate in a 2024 FotoFocus Biennial Featured Exhibition, including the Call for Entry Selections

SUBMISSION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process for the Call for Entry category will be led by Theresa Bembrister, Curator at the Contemporary Arts Center, who will guide a panel of FotoFocus jurors in selecting artists to be presented in the FotoFocus Biennial Featured Exhibition at CAC. Selected artist(s) will work in collaboration with FotoFocus and CAC to realize the exhibition.

Applications must include the following information:

- Artist statement, including how the proposed body of work responds to the FotoFocus Biennial theme, *The Long View*
- Artist bio(s) and CV(s)
- Checklist of works including: title, dimensions, medium, object/lender location
- Production, material, and installation costs, if applicable
- Shipping costs, if applicable
- Tech needs, if applicable
- Images with caption/credit information (min: 10, max: 20)

Deadlines for deliverables and tentative installation schedule:

- Exhibition on view: October 1, 2026–February 7, 2027
- Installation: September 14–30, 2026
- Deinstallation: February 8–19, 2027
 - Selected artist(s) must submit installation/deinstallation instructions for their work or be available to be on-site during installation/deinstallation

The 2026 FotoFocus Biennial Call for Entry Applications are hosted on the [Submittable platform](#). Applications are also accessible through the [FotoFocus website](#). Each applicant will need to create a free account on Submittable if they have not already done so. This platform allows the applicant to save, edit, and review the application at any time before submitting the final application.

FUNDING

FotoFocus will support artist honorariums (\$1,000–\$3,000) based on the scope of selected project(s). Additional costs for production, shipping, technical needs, installation, graphics, documentation, and related programming will also be covered based on approved budgets.

VENUE

FotoFocus and CAC have partnered to present the selected artist(s) as a 2026 FotoFocus Biennial Featured Exhibition at CAC in the 4th or 5th floor galleries. For specific details about the exhibition space, including specs and layout, please contact Taylor Howard at taylorh@fotofocus.org.

2026 BIENNIAL THEME DESCRIPTION

The 2026 Biennial theme, *The Long View*, reflects on photography as a metaphor for our attempt to grasp our place within the durational sweep of history. “The long view” is a phrase used to invoke a broader perspective—it suggests both distance and duration, i.e., looking far

into the distance and looking for a long period of time. As an attitude toward history, “the long view” suggests a wise and measured perspective, one that takes into consideration both the distant past as well as the distant future. The long view also describes, in literal terms, two primary functions of photography: photographic lenses enable both long-distance vision and long-duration viewing.

Investors take the long view to speculate about the future, to predict outcomes from actions made in the present day. In certain Indigenous cultures, the long view is expressed by the principle of Seven Generations, which instructs one to consider not only the present but also the future, to consider how decisions today will affect those seven generations from now. Another version places humans at the center of the seven generations, recognizing the three generations that came before and the three that will come after.

The Long View will acknowledge the semiquincentennial of the United States, encouraging a posture of reflection in regards to the grand sweep of our country’s history, its past, present, and future. Photography not only reveals moments from history, but it also serves as a metaphor for how we understand our history and decide to shape it over time.

Time and perspective are fundamental aspects of photography. Time operates most essentially in terms of the duration of the photographic exposure. Early photographic technologies, in particular, were notoriously slow, requiring animated subjects to remain still for long periods of time, while faster films of the early twentieth century allowed for instantaneous exposures, or snapshots. No matter the duration of the exposure, photographs, of course, once made, may be regarded for any length of time, for a split second, as for an Instagram post, or protractedly, for a photograph of an absent loved one.

Perspective is also an essential aspect of photography. The camera’s position in relation to subject matter remains essential in terms of the composition and, ultimately, the final impact of a photograph. Close up for greater detail, far away for greater context—these are also critical decisions in relation to photographic meaning. Distance can be paradoxical: a telephoto view of the night sky, something far away but seen up close, will render stars and other bodies in greater isolation and detail, while an image of microorganisms can open entire biological landscapes not seen before.

ABOUT FOTOFOCUS

Founded in 2010 in Cincinnati, Ohio, FotoFocus is a nonprofit organization created to celebrate and champion photography as the medium of our time through programming that ignites a dialogue between contemporary lens-based art and the history of photography. FotoFocus presents lens-based Signature Programs including the [Biennial](#), [Symposium](#), and [Talks Series](#), and [Film and Video](#) programming. Additionally, FotoFocus has awarded over 550 grants to support partners presenting projects and educational programs that are accessible and engaging to the public. These initiatives are a vital part of what makes FotoFocus such an impactful contributor to the community and the larger art world.

For more information, visit our website, fotofocus.org.

ABOUT CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER

Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) is a catalyst for dialogue and discovery, serving as the region's premier venue for contemporary art for over 86 years. Located in downtown Cincinnati, CAC presents five to seven exhibitions annually, featuring cutting-edge work by local, national, and international artists. In 2018, its curatorial excellence was recognized with the prestigious Sotheby's Prize.

CAC produces a robust slate of education programs aiding visitors in exploring and engaging with exhibitions, reaching more than 14,000 individuals of all ages and backgrounds in the 2024 fiscal year—including nearly 5,000 underserved Cincinnati teens who rely on CAC as a safe, creative third-space outside of school and home. CAC's Creativity Center and the Sara M. & Patricia A. Vance Education Center: The UnMuseum® is a nationally recognized interactive gallery where visitors of all ages can explore contemporary art through hands-on play and learning. In fiscal year 2024, CAC welcomed approximately 34,000 visitors into its architecturally iconic home—the Lois & Richard Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art, designed by Zaha Hadid.

ABOUT THERESA BEMBNISTER

Theresa Bembnister is Curator at the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) in Cincinnati. Prior to joining CAC in 2023, she served as Curator at the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts in Little Rock. During her tenure, she worked toward the opening of the institution's new building, including the inaugural permanent collection installation, its accessible and equitable labels, and a forthcoming publication about the design of the building and grounds. She also spent five years at the Akron Art Museum (AAM), where she began as Associate Curator before being promoted to Curator of Exhibitions. Her legacy there includes *Open World: Video Games & Contemporary Art*, an innovative, technology-driven exhibition that attracted new audiences and incorporated extensive community outreach and partnerships. Before her time with the AAM, she was the Associate Curator at the Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art. Bembnister was also an Art and Writing Curatorial Fellow with the Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition, where she received an Achievement in Writing Award.

Terms of Use

By submitting the application, you have read and agreed to the outlined Guidelines for the 2026 FotoFocus Biennial Call for Entry Application. If the application is approved, FotoFocus and Contemporary Arts Center have the right to edit and/or change the submitted content language to align with FotoFocus and Contemporary Arts Center style guides.