

17th Annual Juried Exhibition — Juror's Statement

Photographers, like no other contemporary visual artists, have a wealth of opportunities to showcase their work across a myriad of platforms — the 'juried exhibition' is one such platform. When presented by respected institutions, such as the Griffin Museum, juried shows can make a real and measurable difference to the career of an aspiring professional artist and the pursuits of an amateur that is chasing a passion of visual interrogation. Remarkably, they can also prove to be an interesting barometer of an overall vision of what contemporary photography is or might be.

The importance of this is echoed in the selection process undertaken for this exhibition. Without any pre-conceived notions, the selections made are a direct response to the hundreds of submissions received. The final list of photographers curated into the 17th Annual Juried Exhibition, demonstrate carefully conceived and executed photographs that caused an intake of breath or insisted on being 'read' by causing a spark of intellectual and visual curiosity. The subjects and method of making vary greatly and this is reflected in the photographs made by the final 16 photographers selected for the exhibition.

Three photographers stood out and have been recognized with an appropriate accolade. Rania Matar's portraits of young women photographed in the habitat of their bedrooms, are reflective of an ongoing preoccupation in photography to look into private lives and spaces within a domestic context. A striking aspect of these photographs is the homogeneity of paraphernalia contrasted with the very apparent individuality of the subjects. The photographs made by Tara Sellios register a rise of engagement with art historical themes albeit with a contemporary twist. Her use of the still life draw you in with a wonderful use of rich colours, but entice even further with a sophisticated use of perspective and visual construction that is easy to overlook upon first viewing. Finally, the photographs of Bremmer Benedict, of children's relationship with the Natural World, are mesmerizing. With so much photography dealing with the environment, these understated and quiet images are also refreshingly bold and confident in use of metaphor, that extends the image beyond the intimate narratives played out inside the frame.

- Debra Klomp Ching