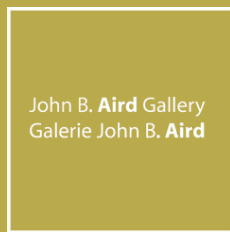
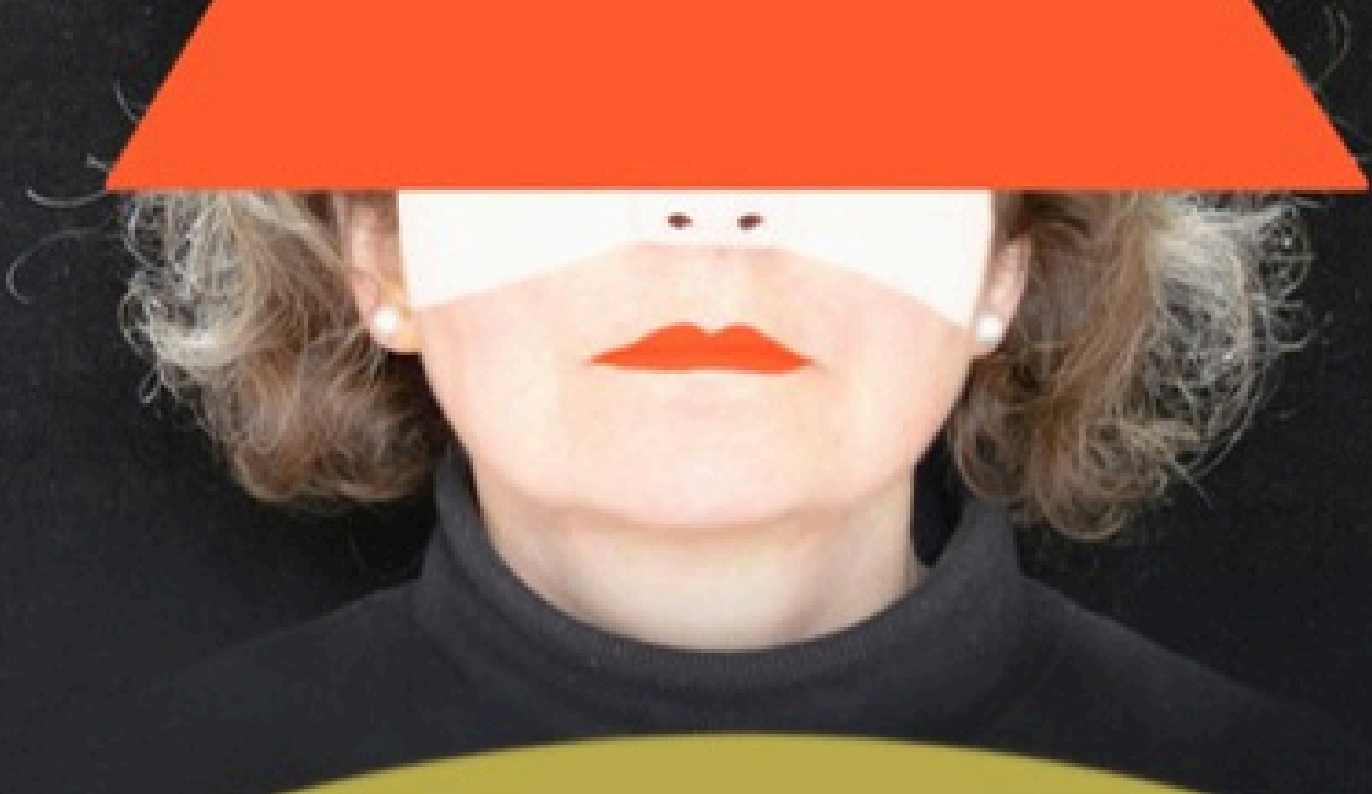


Juried by Andy Fabo
& Ella Morton

Curated by Lisa Murzin

Who is Your Self-ie?



John B. Aird Gallery
Galerie John B. Aird

CONTACT
Photography
Festival

airdgallery.org | Cover Artist: Atia Pokorny

CONTACT: WHO IS YOUR SELF-IE?

Foreword by Arnie Guha,
Exec. Chair, John B. Aird Gallery

May 4, 2026

About a quarter century before the first front-facing phone camera, John Berger noted, in his *Ways of Seeing*: "A woman ... must continually [be] accompanied by her own image of herself." In 1972, Berger was specifically addressing the burden of objectification borne by women, and of the consequent need to be both subject and object, and further, to attempt to control the objectifying image as best as she can, to minimise harm and / or maximize advantage.

But a broader question lingers today, in our age of ubiquitous selfies: to what extent is objectification still a burden when we voluntarily and routinely objectify ourselves?

And in framing the title of the John B. Aird Gallery's juried exhibition for CONTACT Photography Festival, 2026, around the question, *WHO IS YOUR SELF-IE?* curator Lisa Murzin extends the interrogatory range to practices that far outdate us, from Van Eyck, Dürer and Rembrandt, through Robert Cornelius's daguerreotype and Princess Anastasia's mirror selfie, to Man Ray, Francesca Woodman and Cindy Sherman's art of self-portraiture.

I mention the range not only to emphasize the historical scope of the practice but also because I find it particularly resonant with the broad span of images included in *WHO IS YOUR SELF-IE?* With 50 artworks from over 40 contemporary artists practising in Canada, the collection ranges from abstractions of self, as well as synecdoche and other

visualized tropes, to the chemical conspiracies of slow photography; from the deliberate exploration of colour to the meditative suspension of monochrome.

The collection is juried by lens-based artist and filmmaker, Ella Morton, and by artist, art critic, curator, educator and member of the John B. Aird Gallery Board, Andy Fabo. The works are individually striking; I have found myself immersed in them this past weekend. As a collection, organized and assembled by award-winning photographer, portraitist and documentarian, Lisa Murzin, they form a many-faceted lamp that both illuminates and fractures our understanding of our aesthetic relationship with ourselves; a source, simultaneously, of objective fulfillment and subjective exploration.

And beyond the images themselves, the collection showcases the John B. Aird Gallery's commitment to engaging and promoting the arts in Ontario, and to providing artists of diverse backgrounds and practices with an institutional platform through which to bring their works to the public.

My heartfelt thanks to Lisa Murzin, Ella Morton and Andy Fabo for making this exhibition possible, and to Jennifer Vong for designing the online catalog. And to the Aird Gallery Board for sharing your wisdom, time, talent and treasure with us, and for helping us steer the Gallery towards tomorrow's light.

Finally, congratulations to all the participating artists: you are the pith and core of the John B. Aird Gallery and this collection, if anything, is a self-portrait of all of us.

Arnie Guha,
Exec. Chair, John B. Aird Gallery

A WORD FROM THE CURATOR

BY LISA MURZIN

As I reflected on the theme of this exhibition and my role as its curator, a brief exchange on Instagram the platform that has helped redefine the “selfie”—captured the spirit of *Who is Your Self-ie?* A participating artist, @Mwords_photo, replied to our invitation: “So humbled to be part of this fantastic exhibition. It is not often that you get to see those of us behind the lens.” That sentiment sits at the heart of this exhibition.

The fifty participating photographic artists have turned the lens inward—becoming both subject and maker—to explore the often hidden layers of identity. By reclaiming the act of being “seen,” they transform the self-portrait into a practice of self-discovery—one that, as these works reveal, is anything but singular.

Across the collection, four distinct approaches to selfhood surface: alternative processes and the hand of the artist; hidden and obscured; contemplative visibility; and objects and the self. In these works, the self is dismantled and reconstructed, manipulated, uncovered, reimagined and rendered in black and white or in colour. Each choice suggests that introspection takes many forms. I found myself wondering: is the process about becoming someone else, or arriving at a truer self? Perhaps the selfie is many things—an ongoing revelation of human experience and self-identity that resists time, unfolding in the present tense and never quite ending.

I invite you to join the artists in their reflection and discover the many dimensions they have generously shared.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE JUROR

BY ELLA MORTON

The works in this show offer an impressive overview of contemporary portrait photography which spans a wide spectrum from intimacy to universality. The artists shown here are using the self as a blueprint to examine loss, rage, whimsy, self-affirmation and transcendence.

While some use the digital camera as their medium, many others use alternative analogue processes, mixed media and collage techniques to deconstruct the image and build it back into something new. The perspectives seen here reflect the chaos of the present moment, as well as the undefinability of the contemporary lens-based image. The medium of photography unfolds here as an open field where possibilities are unbound and celebrated.

BIOGRAPHY

Ella Morton is a visual artist and filmmaker based in Tkarón:to/Toronto. Her expedition-based practice uses experimental analogue processes to explore the sublime and fragile qualities of remote landscapes. She has participated in residencies and projects across the Americas, Greenland, Nordic Europe, Australia, and Antarctica. Morton holds a BFA from Parsons School of Design and an MFA from York University. Her work has been exhibited and screened internationally, with support from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the National Film Board of Canada, and LIFT.

BIOGRAPHIES

Lisa Murzin is a visual artist and photographer whose lens-based practice explores the concept of transition, understood as the time and space between states, bodies and territories. Starting from a poetic relationship with place, her documentary investigations examine how humans engage with the natural world. Her work integrates moving image, analogue and digital processes, and alternative techniques to construct meaning and deepen a perceptual experience with her subject matter. Lisa's photographs have been exhibited internationally and are part of private and public collections, including the Temiskaming Art Gallery and the United Health Network. She holds a Graduate Certificate in Documentary Non-Fiction Media Production and a Master of Fine Arts in Documentary Media, supporting a practice that brings together research, territorial sensitivity and formal experimentation.

Andy Fabo is a multi-media artist, educator, curator, & critic who studied at the Alberta College of Art, moving to Toronto in 1975 where he earned an MFA from OCADU.

His first solo exhibition was at A Space in 1979 and he's shown locally, nationally & internationally since then. Most recently he was in a group show at the Sanatorium in Istanbul Turkey in 2025.

He's a founding member of the influential ChromaZone collective that spearheaded the resurgence of figurative drawing & painting in Toronto in the 1980s. Pioneering LGBTQ+ issues led him to respond to the AIDS pandemic in his paintings, drawings & digital work. Additionally, Fabo created several collaborative video & digital media works with his partner, the late Michael Balser. Oboro mounted a retrospective of this collaborative media work in Montréal in 2003.

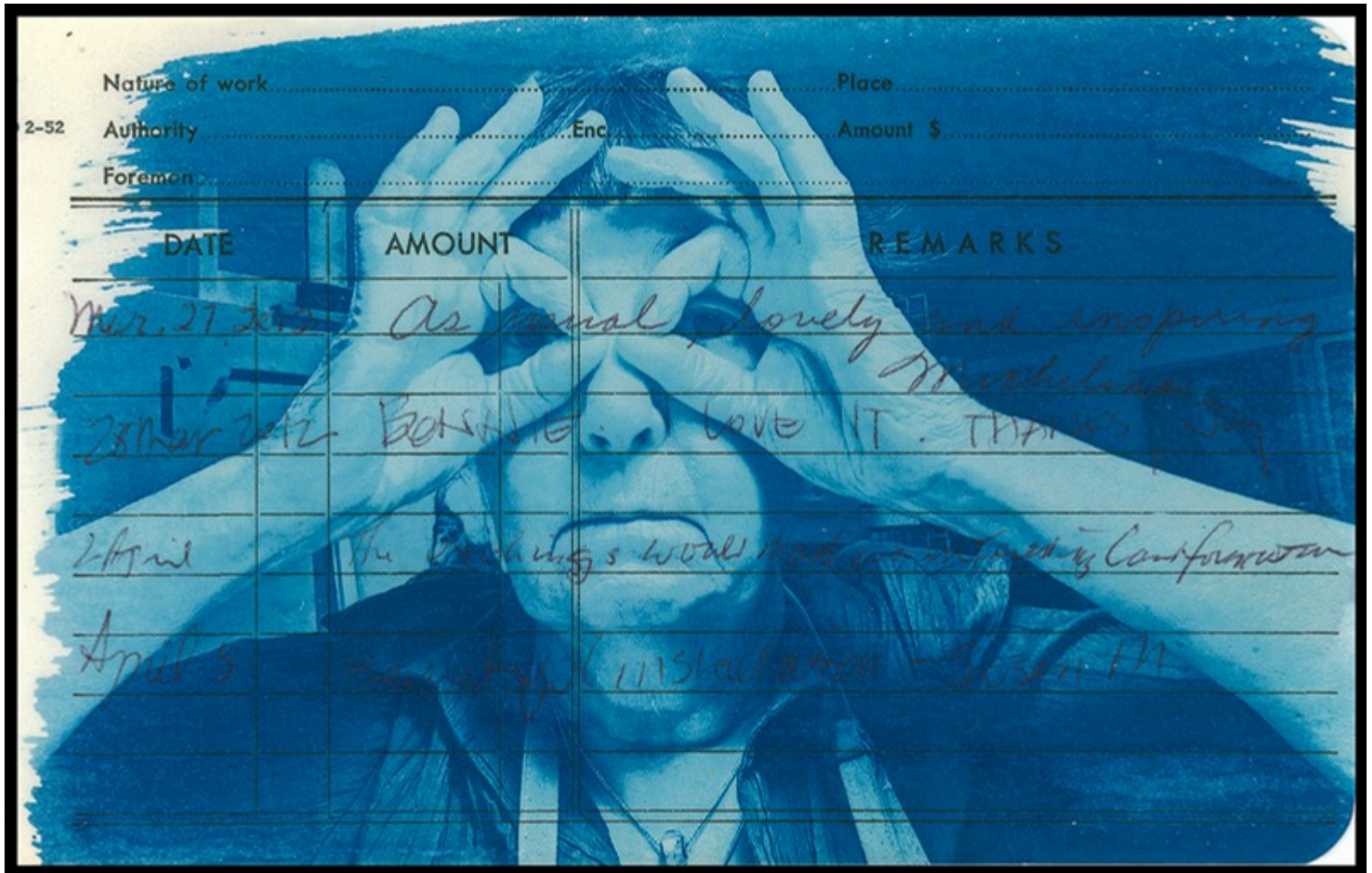
He has work in several works in public gallery collections including the Art Gallery of Ontario, National Gallery of Canada, Art Gallery of Hamilton and Glenbow Museum in Calgary. In 2005, Andy Fabo had a retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Toronto.

LIST OF ARTISTS

Anda Marcu
Joe Atikian
Bonnie Baker
Lucy Barnett
Mike Callaghan
Melanie Chikofsky
Samuel Choisy
Judy Daley
Andrew Donnelly
Corinne Duchesne
Lin Duperron
Elinor Galbraith
Gunilla Josephson
Elsa Hashemi
Jennifer Henriksen
Diane Holmes
Paula Huisman
Callan Jaida Jones
Jelica Jovin
Rhodri Kasperbauer
Therese Kirchner
Victoria Laube
Gail Leija
Eva Lewarne
Julius Poncelet Manapul
Mariam Magsi
Caroline Mosby
Ralph Nevins
Frances Patella
Pam Patterson
Atia Pokorny
Robert Quance
Dale M Reid
Melanie Robitaille
Lois Schklar
Walter Segers
Sepanta Saeb
Kristin Sweetland
Natalia Tcherniak
Robert Teteruck
Michael Toke
Jeff Van Leeuwen
Viz Saraby
Christian Wenger
Yu-Sheng Chiu
Shalan and Paul

Alternative
Process
&
the Hand
of the
Artist

Bonnie Baker



Looking for Verification

Cyanotype on vintage notepad

3.5" x 6"

\$390

Therese Kirchner



Brain Fog

Still image

20" x 16"

\$500

Robert Quance



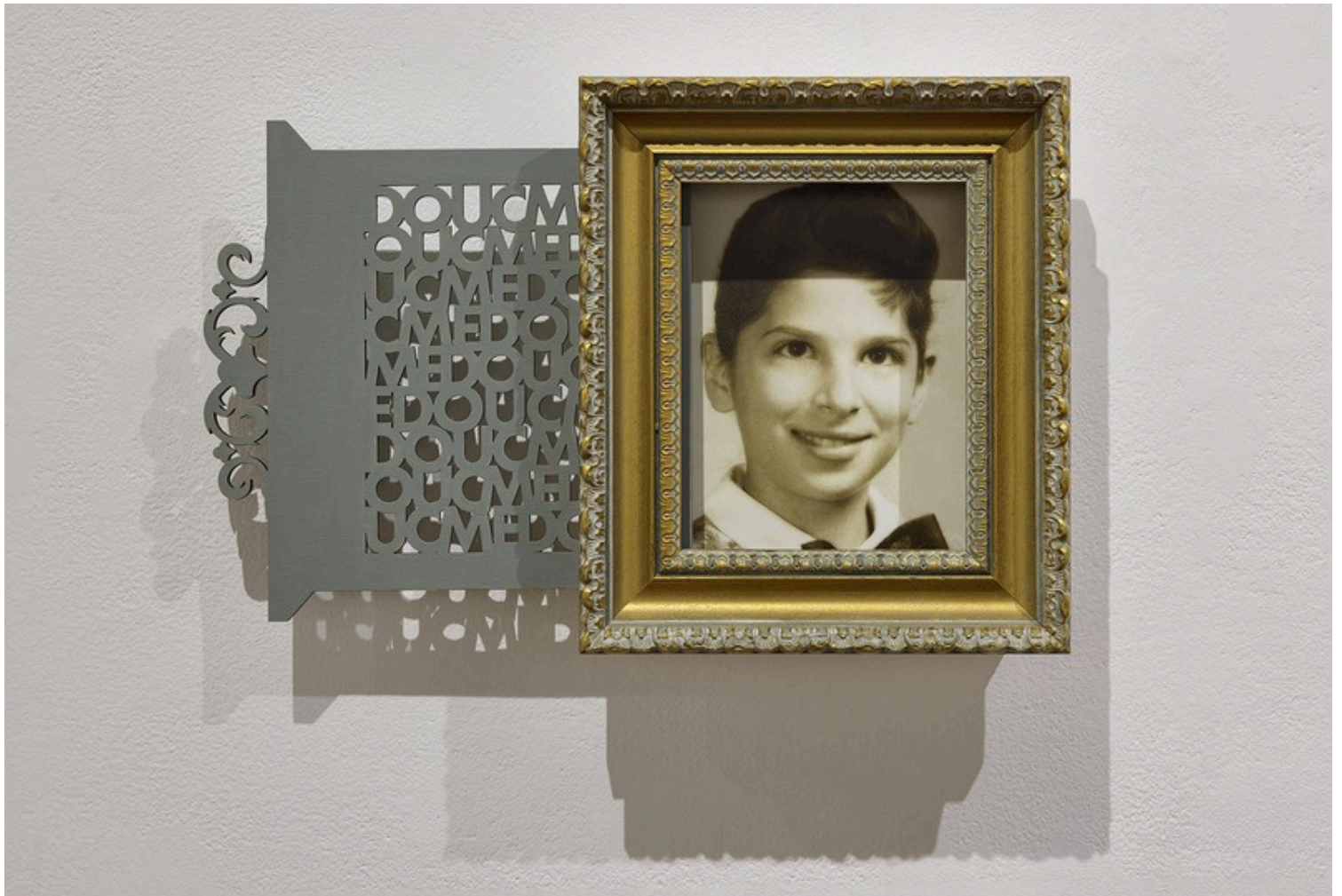
Gemini Rising

Black and white polaroid

3" x 3"

\$150

Lois Schklar



Do You See Me: Self Portrait at 12

Modified frame with sliding door, photographic, interactive

10" x 10.5" x 3"

\$1,100

Andrew Donnelly



Instrument

Acrylic gel-based image transfer on acrylic sheet, nylon filament

8" x 35"

\$700

Melanie Chikofsky



Strung Out

Assembled photo collage with thread and pins

36" x 10"

\$2,000

Lois Schklar



Know me for Who I am Not who I am not

Modified frame with sliding door, photographic, interactive

10" x 10.5" x 2.5"

\$1,100

Robert Teteruck



temps des souvenirs

Cyanotype on coloured note paper

9" x 20"

NFS

Judy Daley



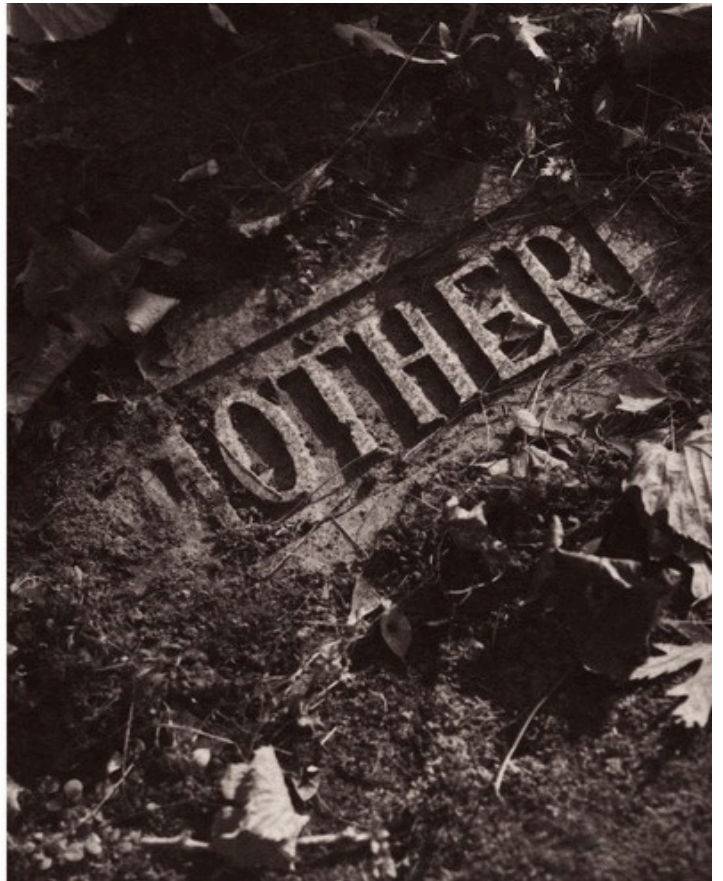
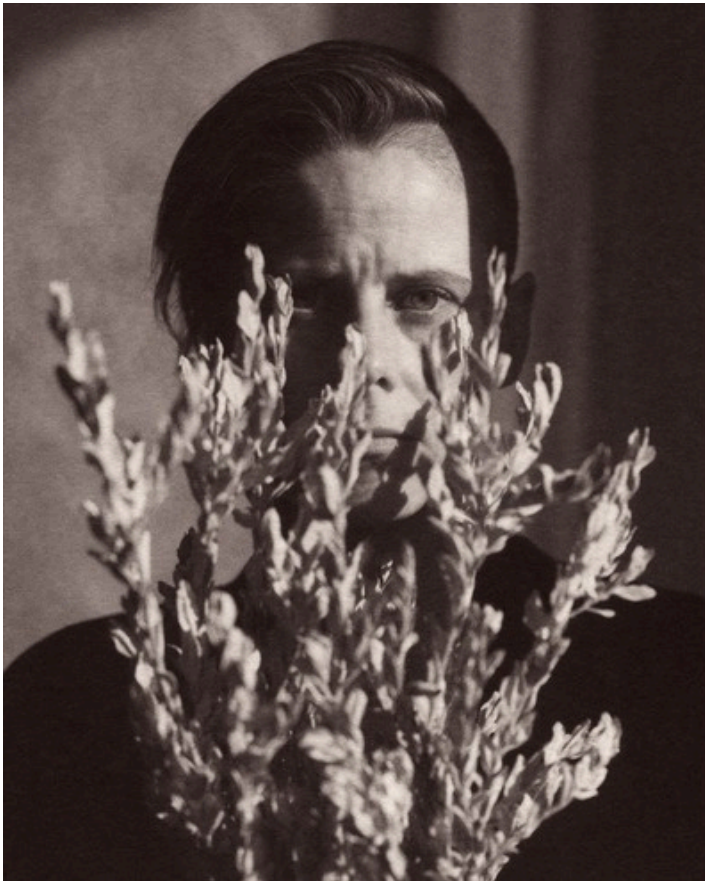
Self Portrait, My Mother's Dementia

Mixed media and transfer print

15" x 11"

NFS

Shalan and Paul



Expectations

Dptych, salted paper print

10" x 8"

\$250

Caroline Mosby



Dream Night Noir

Hand painted negative (photogram) on fiber

10" x 8"

\$400

Lin Duperron



I'm a Leo
Scanography
13" x 19"
\$300

Natalia Tcherniak



Noted

Cyanotype on coloured note paper

9" x 6"

\$100

Hidden
&
Obscured

Atia Pokorny



Invisible Woman

Inkjet print

11" x 15"

\$500

Walter Segers



Temagami Tanya

Archival inkjet print

15.5" x 12"

\$350

Sepanta Saeb



i don't remember

Digital photo

20" x 15"

\$250

Jennifer Henriksen



The Way it Used to Be

Film photography

12" x 8"

\$195

Eva Lewarne



Eva Bird

Photography + photoshop

20" x 16"

\$700

Mariam Magsi



Echoes of Heritage

Digital photography, archives

24" x 16"

\$500

Yu-Sheng Chiu



Ghost of Her Sorrow

Photograph on outdoor mesh banner

40" x 32"

\$2,400

Elinor Galbraith



Nude Self Portrait 1

Photograph

4.5" x 6.5"

\$100

Samuel Choisy



Perfect Storm
Archival Inkjet print
36" x 24"
\$2,850

Viz Saraby



Self Portraits 1

Photography

11" x 35"

Ralph Nevins



selfie20260220

Photograph and giclee

8" x 8"

NFS

Michael Toke



Archaic Torso

Digital photography of self-sculptural assemblage manipulated through
old gen photoshop
13.3" x 10"
\$500

Melanie Robitaille



Stranger in the Night

Photograph

12" x 12"

\$350

Victoria Laube



Hiding Behind

Pigment ink on cotton rag

20" x 15"

\$350

Therese Kirchner



The Invisible Woman

Still image

20" x 16"

\$500

Paula Huisman



Looking Grief in the Eye

Photograph

9" x 12"

\$175

Corinne Duchesne



#outofsorts

Photography

20" x 16"

\$750

Sepanta Saeb



god loves you, but not enough to save you

Digital photo

18" x 12"

\$250

Gail Leija



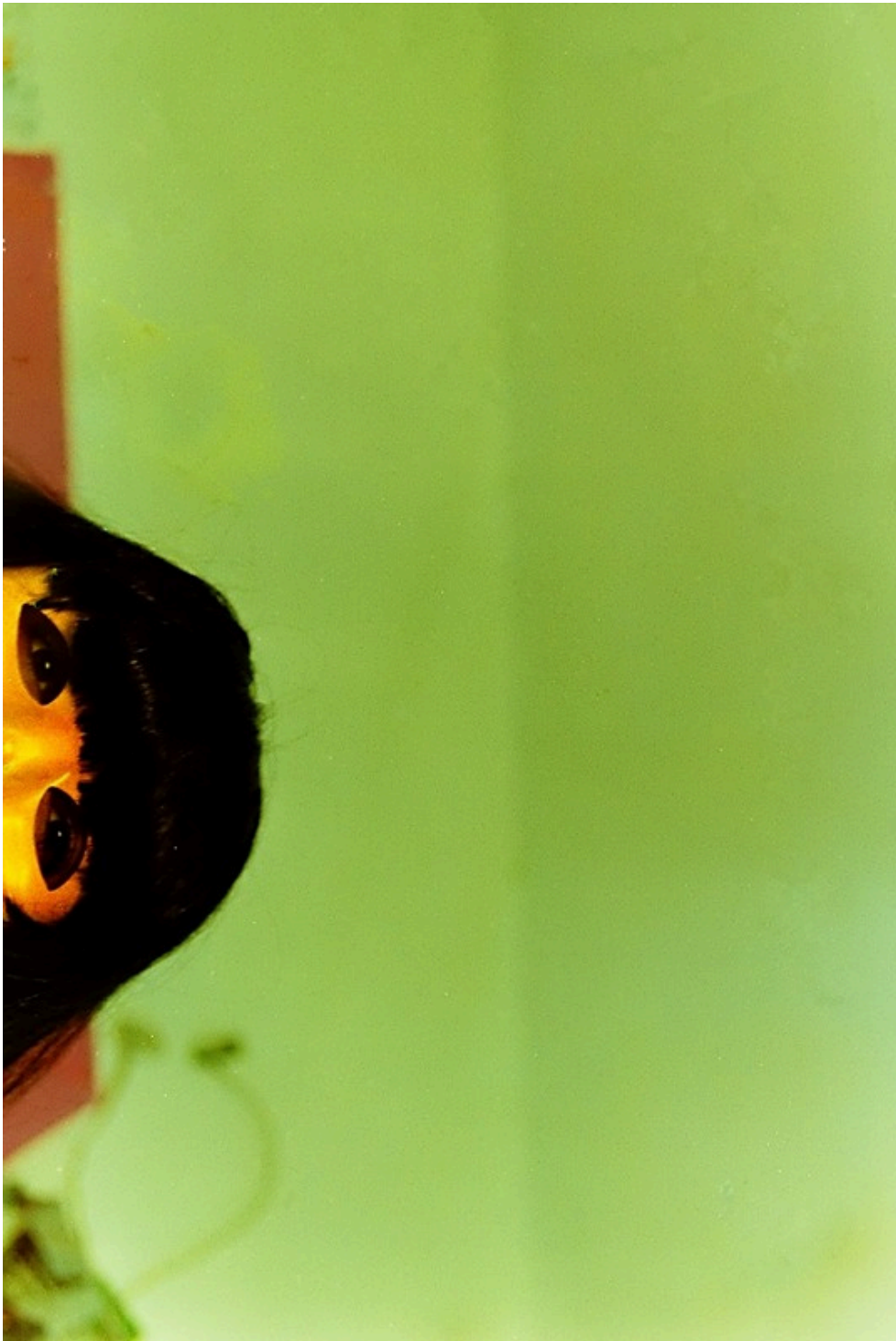
I Was Never There

Digital photo collage printed on aluminum

24" x 24"

\$1,200

Anda Marcu



Angst

Film photography

18" x 12"

\$450

Contemplative Visibility

Joe Atikian



Midnight Crystal
Archival pigment print
16" x 16"
\$350

Jeff Van Leeuwen



Plasticinity
Inkjet photoprint
12" x 16"
\$200

Gunilla Josephson



Beneath the Skin

Photograph

5" x 12"

\$150

Pam Patterson



Dragging (as) Doug

Photo

5" x 17" (x2)

\$300

Mariam Magsi



Jahez - Dowry
Inkjet on archival paper
24" x 20"
\$750

Callan Jaida Jones



Pup X Badlands
Archival pigment print
30" x 30"
\$400

Kristin Sweetland



Don't Look Back

Inkjet on archival paper

12" x 16"

\$250

Jelica Jovin



Anima
Digital photography
18" x 12"
\$400

Objects
&
the Self

Rhodri Kasperbauer



12 Variations Searching for Contact

Photo collage

10" x 10"

\$250

Mike Callaghan



To Be Your Mother

Digital photo collage

10" x 10"

\$500

Christian Wenger



Blue World

Digital photographic image, printed on acrylic

16" x 24"

\$350

Julius Poncelet Manapul



"Queerious Angel of Death" 1

Photography and digital collage

48" x 48"

\$800

Frances Patella



Self Portrait With Film

Digital photography

20" x 16"

NFS

Dale M. Reid



Queen of the Sea Queen of the Deck

Silver gelatin analogue print on fiber

29" x 23"

\$1,500

Lucy Barnett



Cat People 30

Photography

16" x 24"

\$1,120

Diane Holmes

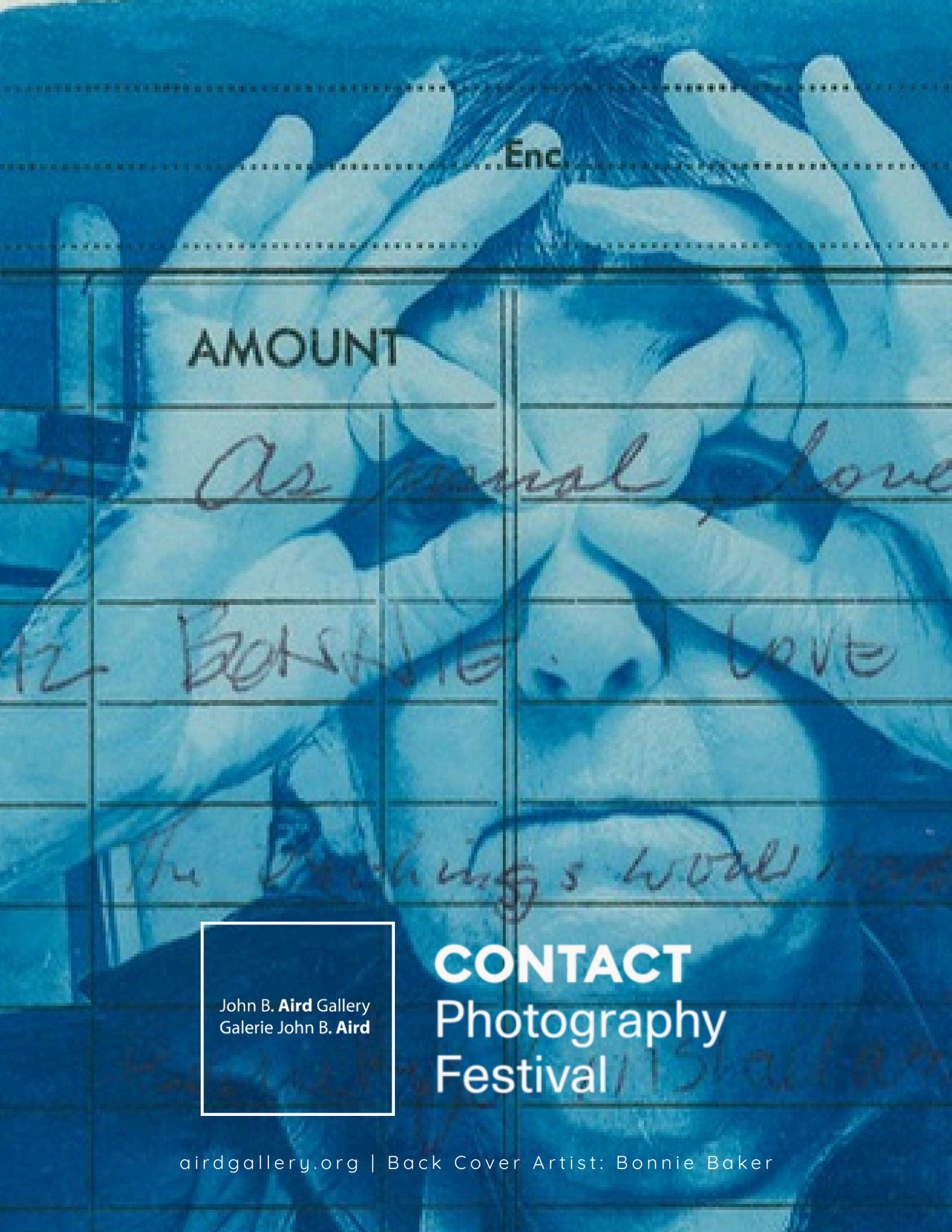


Que Sera Sera

Digital print – archival ink on hot press

16" x 20"

\$650



Enc

AMOUNT

As usual, love

Batsville, love

The Bookings would have

John B. Aird Gallery
Galerie John B. Aird

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