

Nazanin Noroozi: False Dawn

MEMORY, LOSS

Janet Biggs / Will Harris / Eloise Hess / Katherine Hubbard
Kaitlin Santoro / Edra Soto / Hester Stinnett

September 12 – November 22, 2025
The Print Center, Philadelphia

The Print Center is pleased to present **Nazanin Noroozi: *False Dawn* and *Memory, Loss***. In her compelling series, “False Dawn,” Noroozi brings together moving and still images of migrants attempting to sail from northern Africa to southern Europe, the joy experienced by her family in Iran before the 1979 Revolution and the freedom of mid-century American tourists. The artists in *Memory, Loss* – **Janet Biggs, Will Harris, Eloise Hess, Katherine Hubbard, Kaitlin Santoro, Edra Soto** and **Hester Stinnett** – grapple with the impact of dementia on their loved ones, and by extension themselves. Using carefully selected printmaking, photographic and video processes, they translate those experiences and emotions into visual form.

The two shows share a process-centered approach to make manifest the melancholy of shared history, collective and personal, that can be alternatively ignored or forgotten. Noroozi’s technically ambitious combination of screenprinting with wet, hand papermaking results in prints that are equally menacing and beautiful. Their power is increased when experienced in partnership with her mesmerizing video. Each artist in *Memory, Loss* contends with sadness, tenderness and vulnerability in ways that will undoubtedly speak to all those who care for others with memory loss.

Nazanin Noroozi extends her gratitude to the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, New York, NY, for their support of her creation of the artwork on view. Will Harris is pleased to recognize the Independence Foundation, Philadelphia, PA, for their generous support of his work. The Print Center is grateful for the cooperation of Luis De Jesus Los Angeles, Cristin Tierney Gallery and Company Gallery, both New York, NY.



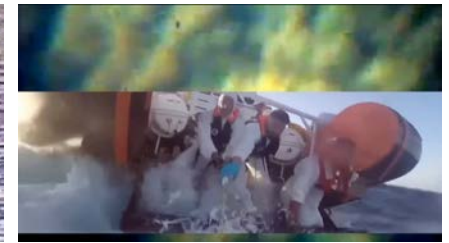
(top) Nazanin Noroozi, *False Dawn 0029*, 2025, pigmented linen pulp with thermal emergency blanket embedded in handmade paper, 30" x 40"; (bottom) Will Harris, *Last Breakfast*, 2018, from the series "You can call me Nana," inkjet print, 24" x 30"

False Dawn

Nazanin Noroozi: *False Dawn* explores the contending forces of home and displacement, as well as travel and migration. The title of both the exhibition and the artworks, *False Dawn*—*fajr'e kâzeb* in Persian—refers to a natural phenomenon called zodiacal light, a cast of unearthly light appearing on the horizon that anticipates the sun's rising or trails behind its setting. In the right conditions, it is observable just before dawn and after dusk. Noroozi is captivated by "this transitional moment, suspended between night and day, darkness and light." Further, for her, it embodies the "uncertain space between departure and arrival."

The moving and still images in Noroozi's video *False Dawn*, 2025, progress at a succinct pace, timed to and against a propelling and lyrical soundtrack. At the beginning, a scorchingly bright yellow sun hovers frenetically in a red sky, casting a neon reflection onto an equally red ocean. In the next clip, a barely visible swimmer moves under the surface of glowing blue water. The following passage proceeds through a series of photographic stills of seascapes with the sun overhead first blocked by clouds, then by a mountain, trees, an airplane wing, and so on. These pictures advance in a manner reminiscent of a projected slide show, commonly used from the mid-20th century by Americans to entertain family and friends. They shared picturesque records of their personal experiences as sightseers travelling through the national landscape, realizing perhaps after the fact, that they had returned home with conventional images of standard views, such as sunrises or sunsets.

Additional images are woven into the video: footage taken by coast guards and news media of the ongoing refugee crisis along southern European shores; and selections from Super 8 family films of women dancing and brushing their hair recorded in Iran before the 1979 Revolution. A subsequent series of mid-century tourist pictures depict bodies of water, such as a lake with boats, a jetty extending into the distance, young boys on a sandy shore, women on a rocky shore



Nazanin Noroozi, video stills from *False Dawn*, 2025

and the silhouette of a woman staring out at the Statue of Liberty in the New York harbor. Noroozi selectively layers painted washes of color that obscure or highlight the subject underneath, guiding the viewer through the montage in which personal and collective histories are intertwined.

The coast guards' documentation brings viewers in very close proximity to boats with migrants sailing from northern Africa to the southern coast of Europe. One is overcrowded with passengers, rocking back and forth; it nearly tips over on its side. In another, a few figures sit in a dinghy in the open sea. A third is entirely packed with men in life vests. Her selection highlights the experiences of some of the approximately 123.2 million refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons worldwide.¹ This reality is underscored by the visual clarity and image resolution of the footage. Noroozi reflects on these migrants' willingness to risk life at sea rather than withstand the fatal pressures at home as a political calculation made under a veil of desperation. Water becomes the site of this contestation as well as where these men float in a sea of uncertainty.

The migrants' boats and bodies of water they sail upon are also featured in handmade paper pieces, also a part of the "False Dawn" series. To make them, Noroozi employed both the screenprinting process and the wet, hand papermaking technique. She created screens featuring photographic images that were transferred into, rather than onto, wet paper as it was being formed. The artist then incorporated additional materials, such as pieces of colorful paper, open-weave cotton fabric and emergency reflective silver mylar blankets, before the sheet dried. This process results in highly detailed pictures with richly pigmented color and tactile surfaces.

The handmade paper works evoke the migrants' inner state through image and sensation. Noroozi pulls these images from the same

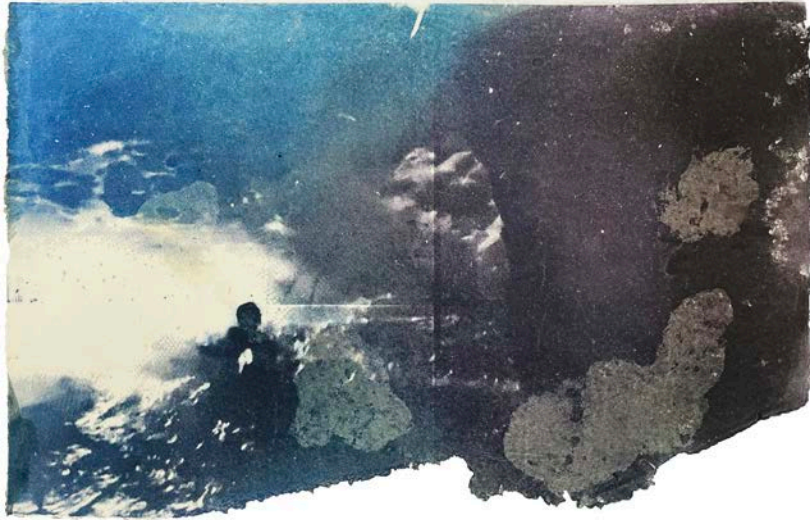
¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Global Trends, 2024," UNHCR | USA, 12 June 2025, www.unhcr.org/us/global-trends. UNHCR is an organization coordinating international relief and protection for displaced people.



Nazanin Noroozi, *False Dawn 0025, 2025*, pigmented linen pulp and cheesecloth on handmade paper, 30" x 40"

media clips as in the video. Men are still afloat in the mental space between having left and yet to arrive. Each picture is repeated several times with variations to the hand-applied colors and the material inclusions, with differing effect. In *False Dawn 0025, 2025*, deep blue, pink and green pigments move over and around a swimming figure's bobbing head. A pink and brown cotton textile hovers over the scene like a cloud or an oversized net that will descend to take hold of the men and lift them out of the water. In the related *False Dawn 0008, 2024*, dark purple pigment covers the entire right side of the image, appearing like a hurricane about to approach the same floating figure. In these prints the sea becomes ever more beautiful, mysterious and threatening.

Noroozi considers *hüzün*, a Turkish word with Arabic roots that describes a feeling similar, but distinct from melancholy, in relation to her work. She draws upon its reference to the deep sense of loss and longing collectively shared by millions, but also to an enduring hopefulness. Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk uses it to describe his home, Istanbul. To him, *hüzün* is "a way of looking at life that implicates us all, not only a spiritual state but a state of mind that



Nazanin Noroozi, *False Dawn 0008*, 2024, pigmented linen pulp on handmade paper, 22" x 30"

is ultimately as life-affirming as it is negating.”² The “False Dawn” series acknowledges the distress of displacement, the migrant’s longing for a home that will never arrive and the strain of empathy fatigue experienced by those watching their plight from afar. Its message avoids solace, but understands that the transitional moments of light offer hope, whether in the memory of a family member dancing, the anticipation of a new homeland, or the freedom of a road trip.

² Orhan Pamuk, *Istanbul: Memories and the City* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005), 82.



Photo: Wesley Kingston

About the Artist

Nazanin Noroozi (b. 1985, Tehran, Iran; I. New York, NY) has a BA from Soore University, Tehran; an MA in Art History from the University of Art, Tehran; and an MFA in Painting and Drawing from Pratt Institute, New York. She has exhibited widely, including at the Noyes Museum of Art, Atlantic City, NJ; SPACES, Cleveland, OH; and Baxter St. Camera Club and Nevelson Chapel, both New York, NY; among others. Her work is in the collections of Alfred University, NY; Harvard Art Museum, Cambridge, MA; New York Public Library, New York; and Arizona State University, Tempe. Noroozi has had residencies with the Artistic Freedom Initiative and Mass MoCA, as well as received fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts and Dieu Donné. Her work was featured in the *British Journal of Photography*, *Brooklyn Rail*, *Die Zeit Magazine* and the *Financial Times*. Noroozi is editor-at-large for *Kaarnamaa: A Journal of Art History and Criticism*.

Memory, Loss

Loving other people I

I am not really one for philosophy. My mind does not work in the way that it demands. However, recently I required new perspectives to address unanswerable questions.

Who is this person I love, now changed because of dementia?

For a long time, I had implicitly accepted, as philosopher Stanley Cavell wrote, “what we know of others we know based on their behavior” and “since I know that certain bits of my behavior are correlated with certain stretches of my sentience ... that others have sentience as I do, in particular a sentience like mine, analogous to mine, say feel what I feel, i.e., feel something exactly similar to what I feel.”¹ But, she does not behave as I behave. I am with her, but she is not with me. I know her, but she does not know me. How can I be sure that she feels like I feel?

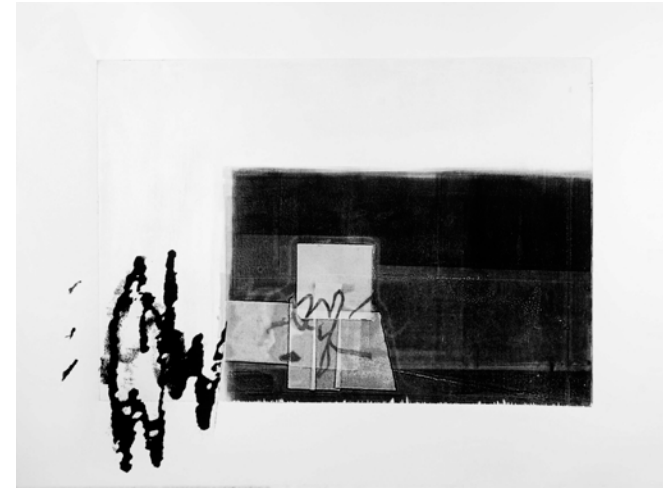
How do I love someone who, due to dementia, cannot reciprocate as she once did?

Cavell also wrote, “... my identification of you as a human being is not merely an identification of you but with you. This is something more than merely seeing you. Call it empathic projection.”² He emphasizes two forms of seeing – with one’s eyes and with one’s heart. I can still see my loved one, but she no longer sees me. I will never have her reply to the questions: What do you see? How do you think? What do you mean? What do you feel? Is it like what I see? Is it how I think? My acceptance of this loss is care work.

– Lauren Rosenblum, Jensen Bryan Curator

¹ Stanley Cavell, *The Claim of Reason* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 46.

² Cavell, *The Claim of Reason*, 421.



Hester Stinnett, *Brace*, 2007, from the series “Syntax,” monoprint with relief transfer and screenprint, 22 ½” x 30”

Loving other people II

The artists in *Memory, Loss* explore the unknowable, physical and psychological experience of their loved ones’ dementia through photography, printmaking and video. Artists **Janet Biggs, Will Harris, Eloise Hess, Katherine Hubbard, Kaitlin Santoro, Edra Soto** and **Hester Stinnett** employ deliberately chosen artmaking processes and techniques in attempts to understand the inner lives of their loved ones. Their artworks fill the space of not knowing with tokens of empathetic connection.

The artworks are dense with memories, occupying the space between the artists who hold them and those who have lost them. Dementia – a general term that describes severe loss of memory, attention, language, reasoning and thinking – is a very common, yet little-understood health concern. It is estimated that among Americans over the age of 65, 7.2 million, or 1 in 9 people, live with Alzheimer’s, a degenerative brain disease that is the most common cause of dementia.³ In addition, nearly 12 million people provide unpaid care for their afflicted loved ones. As the population continues to live longer, so will the number of people with dementia and those

³ *Alzheimer’s Disease Facts and Figures 2025* (Chicago, IL: Alzheimer’s Association, 2025).



Janet Biggs, video still from *Breathing Without Air*, 2015, courtesy of the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery

who care for them. The exhibiting artists contend with the questions and challenges of dementia from the position of a caregiver. They, too, see their loved ones twice over.

Picturing inner lives

Artworks by Janet Biggs, Eloise Hess and Hester Stinnett address the theme of “mediation,” serving as pathways to grapple with the unknowable interiority of a person with memory loss.

Janet Biggs’ video, *Breathing Without Air*, 2015, juxtaposes disparate images: an empty swimming pool, a polo player wildly paddling while flipping in his kayak and an elderly mineral collector wandering lost through a bustling trade show. Her images and accompanying soundtrack foster feelings of disorientation, confusion and exasperation. For this work, she drew from observations of her now deceased grandfather’s moments of lucidity while living with Alzheimer’s disease, which she saw as a form of surfacing from beneath water.

The series “Early Morning Tomorrow,” 2025, by Eloise Hess started as a simple exercise of photographing her family home and its surrounding landscape with her father, Charles, who has early-onset Alzheimer’s disease. As his faculties and motor skills



Eloise Hess, 14.27, 2025, from the series “Early Morning Tomorrow,” screenprint, inkjet print and encaustic medium on birch panel, 5 ¼” x 9 ¾”

declined, he required increasingly simpler cameras to continue to photograph. They ultimately developed a system where he identified a composition with a disposable camera and she then aligned her camera’s lens with his viewfinder. Her photographs of his subjects include his pointing figure and a shadowy picture frame within the image field. Hess’s manipulations of the photographic surfaces with screenprinting offer the artist’s vision of her father’s altered sight.

Hester Stinnett observed that her mother, who lived with dementia for many years, frequently made notes on scraps of paper as a reminder of mundane tasks: “turn key right,” “say correct words.” For the print series “Syntax,” 2007, she started with snippets of her mother’s handwriting that indexed any given mood – a coherent letter revealed purpose and a shaky line registered agitation. For each print, the process of building up and erasing layers of monoprints, woodcuts and screenprints became the means to re-engage with her mother’s words and routines. She has created abstract images of undecipherable words, forging a unique language that connects parent and child.

Capturing a body

Artworks by Will Harris, Katherine Hubbard and Kaitlin Santoro each address the idea of “the present body.” Photographs of their loved



(left) Will Harris, *Unknown #2*, 2017, inkjet print, 10" x 8"; (right) Katherine Hubbard, *body print, fold hold*, 2023, from the series "body print," gelatin silver contact print, 39" x 29"

ones with dementia reveal the widening chasm between their minds and their physical presence.

Will Harris' installation, *You can call me Nana*, 2021-25, grew out of an encounter with his grandmother; while living with dementia, she introduced herself to him as if they had never met. At the heart of the series is a selection of manipulated portraits, in which Harris strives to depict the presence of her memory loss with digitally rendered ghostly clouds and foggy halos, as well as through the merging of images across time and space. His work also includes snapshots of his Nana from throughout her lifetime and of the interior spaces of her house as she last left it, drawing a poignant connection between her cognitive decline and the home's fall into disrepair.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Katherine Hubbard regularly returned home to care for her mother, who experiences dementia due to a brain disease called LATE.⁴ In this time together, she saw "how [her]

4 LATE (Limbic-predominant age-related TDP-43 encephalopathy) is a neurodegenerative disease that has symptoms similar to Alzheimer's disease, but stems from a different cause.

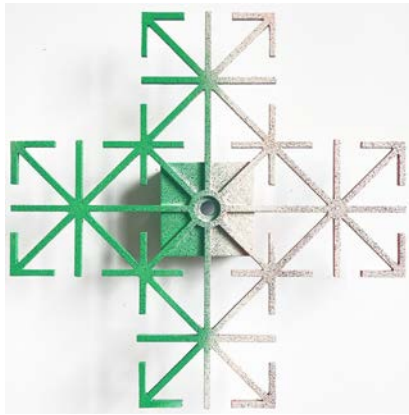


Kaitlin Santoro, (left) *Always posing with plants* and (right) *She always loved dogs*, both 2025, screenprints with photochromic ink on linen, 10 ½" x 10 ½"

mom was changing and [paid] attention to the ways that memory is interwoven with emotionality and one's sense of personhood."⁵ Sharing this heightened awareness, the two collaborated on the photographic series "body print." Each title describes the manner of their intimate embrace, as in "my chin on your shoulder from behind." The gelatin silver contact prints capture the shapes of their bodies, the exactness of their textured skin and the immediacy of their touch. These pictures index short-lived moments of shared corporeal closeness, as acts of love that acknowledge the ephemerality of memory.

Kaitlin Santoro's family photographs capture the strong, inter-generational bonds among generations of matriarchs, some of whom lived with dementia. Women pose together holding babies, in front of cherished apple trees and with spouses at the dinner table. The artist draws from her experience of their sundowning, the state of increased confusion and emotional extremes that lasts from late afternoon through night. She reprints the pictures using chromosensitive pigments on linen napkins, like those found in family homes, that disappear in darkness and appear in sunshine. In doing so, Santoro recreates the daily cycle of her elders' memory loss and recovery, showing a deep understanding of the mutability of recollection.

5 Ally Ferraro, "'I'm all Over the Place,' American Artist Katherine Hubbard," *french fries*, 25 March, 2024, <https://frenchfries-mag.com/interview/katherine-hubbard>.



Edra Soto, (left) *por la señal* and (right) detail of image in viewfinder, 2025, paint, wood, plastic, porcelain, inkjet print, 16" x 16" x 3", courtesy of the artist and Luis de Jesus Los Angeles

The series “por la señal” (“by a signal”), 2025, by Edra Soto, is based on *rejas*, ornamental wrought iron grilles common in Puerto Rican domestic architecture. These vividly colored, patterned screens are both signature design elements and security measures. They reveal the home while guarding access. Soto’s architectural sculptures also function as viewfinders with images of her homeland and the house where her aging mother lives with Alzheimer’s. The artist asks the viewer to lean forward and look through the screens to view the pictures, activating a portal into memories that carry the presence of loss.

About the Artists

Janet Biggs (b. 1959, Harrisburg, PA; I. Brooklyn, NY) has a BFA from Moore College of Art and Design, Philadelphia, PA and studied at the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence. Biggs has exhibited nationally and internationally, including at the Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, NC; Berman Museum of Art, Ursinus College, Collegeville, PA; Blaffer Art Museum, University of Houston, TX; and Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; as well as the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal, Canada. Biggs’ work is held in numerous collections. She has been the recipient of awards and



Photo: Régis Figarol

grants including the Anonymous Was a Woman Award, Artistic Circle fellowship and residency, John Simon Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship and a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship. Biggs is represented by Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York.



Photo: Ellen Erikson

Will Harris (b. 1990, Philadelphia, PA; I. Philadelphia) has a BFA from University of the Arts, Philadelphia, and an MFA from Lesley University, Cambridge, MA. In 2019, he was a Critical Mass finalist and received their MFA Scholarship. He has exhibited in the US, India and Denmark. In 2020, he received a Black Creative Endeavors Grant from Something Special Studios, NY and in 2024 was an artist-in-residence at TILT, Philadelphia. His book, *You can call me Nana*, was recognized as a finalist for the 2021 Paris Photo-Aperture Foundation PhotoBook Award and was shortlisted for a Lucie Foundation Photobook Award. The book is in collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York and George Eastman Museum Library, Rochester, both NY.

Eloise Hess (b. 1995; I. Los Angeles, CA) has a BA from Bennington College, VT and an MFA in Painting and Printmaking from Yale University, New Haven, CT. Hess has had solo exhibitions at Helena Anrather, New York, NY; von ammon, Washington, DC; and Matta, Milan, Italy. She has participated in group exhibitions at 86 Walker and Yossi Milo Gallery, both New York; SPURS Gallery, Beijing, China; and Zero... & Matta, Paris, France. Her work has been reviewed in *Artforum*, *Flash Art* and *Mousse Magazine*.

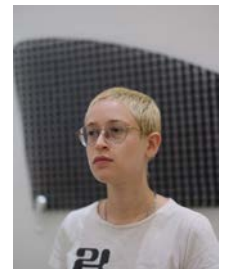


Photo: Tanner Pendelton



Photo: Katherine Hubbard

Katherine Hubbard (b. 1981, Philadelphia, PA; I. Stone Ridge, NY and Pittsburgh, PA) received a BFA from Parson School of Design, New York, NY, and an MFA from Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY. Hubbard has exhibited nationally and internationally, including at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA; Brooklyn Museum, The Kitchen, MoMA PS1, and New York Public Library, all New York,

NY; as well as the Centre Pompidou, Paris, France. Hubbard's work is in the Whitney Museum of American Art collection and has been discussed in *Art in America*, *Artforum*, *n+1*, *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker* and *The Village Voice*. She has had residencies at The Chinati Foundation, Recess and Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture. Hubbard is MFA Program Director and Associate Professor of Art at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh. She is represented by Company Gallery, New York.

Kaitlin Santoro (b. 1991; I. New York, NY) has a BFA from the University of Connecticut, Storrs and an MFA from Tyler School of Art and Architecture, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA. Santoro has exhibited at the International Center of Photography and Print Center New York, both New York, NY; and DaVinci Art Alliance, Fabric Workshop and Museum and Temple Contemporary, all Philadelphia. Her work is held in the collections of the Corning Museum of Glass, NY; Fabric Workshop and Museum; Thomas Dodd Research Library, University of Connecticut, Storrs; and Sculpture Space, Utica, NY. Santoro has participated in residencies at the Manhattan Graphics Center, Oxbow School of Art, and Pilchuck Glass School. Santoro is Assistant Teaching Professor at Montclair State University, NJ.



Photo: Carlos Avendaño



Photo: Georgia Hampton

Edra Soto (b. 1971, Puerto Rico; I. Chicago, IL) has a BFA from the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Diseño de Puerto Rico, San Juan and an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Soto has exhibited extensively, including at The Arts Club of Chicago, Hyde Park Art Center and Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, all Chicago; Abrons Art Center, El Museo del Barrio and Whitney Museum of American Art, all New York, NY; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; Institute of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA; and Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, CA. Her work is held in collections including the Pérez Art Museum, Miami, FL; and Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Puerto Rico and Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, both San Juan. Soto received awards from the Bemis Center and a College Arts Association Public Art Dialogue Funders Award, among others. She has received fellowships from the Illinois Arts Council, Joan Mitchell

Foundation and US LatinX Art Forum. Soto is co-director of the outdoor project space The Franklin in Chicago. She is represented by Luis de Jesus Los Angeles.

Hester Stinnett (b. 1956; I. Philadelphia, PA) holds a BFA from the Hartford Art School, University of Hartford, CT and an MFA from the Tyler School of Art and Architecture, Temple University, Philadelphia. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, and is held in numerous private and public collections, including the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Rhode Island Museum of Art, Providence; and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. In 2004, she was awarded a Pennsylvania Council Artist Fellowship. Stinnett was an artist-in-residence at the Fabric Workshop in 2003 and co-authored *Water-based Inks: A Screenprinting Manual for Studio and Classroom* (1987) with Lois M. Johnson. She is professor emerita of printmaking at Tyler School of Art and Architecture, where she taught for 40 years.



Photo: Joseph V. Labolito, Temple University

All images courtesy of the artists unless otherwise noted.

Programs

Gallery Talks + Opening Reception

Thursday, September 11

5:30pm Gallery Talks with the artists and Lauren Rosenblum

6 – 7:30pm Reception

Artist Talk with Nazanin Noroozi

Thursday, November 6

6pm, in-person and on Zoom

Public Exhibition Tours

Wednesdays, September 24 + October 29, 12:30pm

Fridays, October 3 + November 21, 5:30pm

RSVP requested, but not required: info@printcenter.org

All of The Print Center's exhibitions and programs are free and open to the public. For more information or to register for Zoom, visit printcenter.org.

About The Print Center

Mission

For 110 years, The Print Center has encouraged 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 changing exhibitions, which highlight established and emerging, local, national and international contemporary artists. It mounts one of the oldest annual art competitions in the country, now in its 100th year, provides the Artists-in-Schools Program to Philadelphia public high school students and its Gallery Store offers a carefully selected array of contemporary prints and photographs onsite and online.

Funders

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