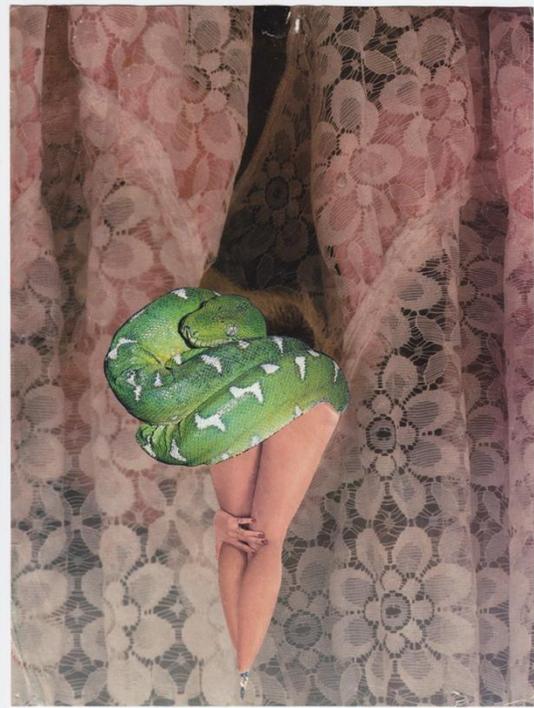


**McEVROY
FOUNDATION FOR
THE ARTS**

1150 25th Street
San Francisco, CA 94107
mcevoyarts.org

For Immediate Release:

Image Gardeners
January 14 – April 30, 2022



Wangechi Mutu, *Eve*, 2011. McEvoy Family Collection.
Courtesy of the artist and Vielmetter Los Angeles



Carolyn Drake, *Untitled* from the series *Knit Club*, 2019.
© Carolyn Drake / Courtesy of the artist

**Photography from the McEvoy Family Collection and Local
Commissions Cultivate Diverse Perspectives on Selfhood and
Womanhood**

**Short Film Program Showcases Interdisciplinary Work of Women and
Non-Binary Artists**

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, October 12, 2021 — McEvoy Foundation for the Arts is pleased to announce ***Image Gardeners***, an exhibition of modern and contemporary photography from the McEvoy Family Collection that challenges photographic conventions of representation in order to cultivate alternative visions of selfhood and womanhood. Newly commissioned presentations by **Marcel Pardo Ariza**, **Carolyn Drake**, and **Chanell Stone** create an intergenerational dialogue among the works on view that reveal personal perspectives on gender, race, and

identity. In the Screening Room, **Gina Basso** guest curates the related program of short films by and about women and non-binary artists, titled ***seen only, heard only through someone else's description***. Both exhibitions are on view from January 14 through April 30, 2022. Admission to McEvoy Arts is free.

An “image gardener”¹ describes a camera operator who maintains a prolonged involvement with its subject or medium in order to realize a photograph. In opposition to Susan Sontag’s theory that photography is a *voracious way of seeing*, image gardeners invest time and care into their craft and employ photographic seeing as a means of cultivation and preservation. Avant-garde artists **Zoe Leonard, Susan Meiselas, Lorna Simpson, Francesca Woodman**, and others utilize self-presentation, appropriation, collaboration, and experimental processes to reflect, reframe, and resist commonly held notions of figures behind and in front of the camera.

As we navigate a renaissance of self-portraiture in the form of digital photography and social media, this exhibition offers insight into the wide spectrum of gender-expansive aesthetics developed over the past eight decades. Striking examples from the McEvoy Family Collection’s extensive holdings of portraits, combined with the three commissions, showcase a chorus of women and non-binary artists as both operators of the camera and its primary subject. **Diane Arbus’s *Self-portrait, pregnant, N.Y.C.* (1945)** is an intimate look at the artist recognizing herself and the transformation of her body while newly commissioned self-portraits by **Marcel Pardo Ariza** present the artist post-surgery as they experience the transition of becoming alongside trans kin.

Commissioned artist **Chanell Stone** debuts black and white analog self-portraits, reframing her body’s relationship to landscape vis-à-vis her ancestral lineage and the erasure of Black histories. Contemporary Collection artists **Stephanie Syjuco** and **Zunele Muholi** demonstrate how identity and history is further signified via decoration, textiles, and ethnographies.

Lorna Simpson and **Erica Baum** reconstruct and manipulate found photographic materials, yielding experimental works in which fragments of women’s bodies are concealed and revealed in novel attempts to resist the gaze. **Carolyn Drake’s** subversive series *Knit Club* presents symbols of domesticity and femininity, within the daily environments of a group of women in Water Valley, Mississippi, all while obscuring their faces and personhood. Together these photographs rearrange our expectations of gender and portraiture, rejecting and flattening existing visual tropes to assert the maker’s agency and authorship over their bodies and their craft.

Along with the Screening Room program ***seen only, heard only through someone else’s description***, *Image Gardeners* includes a series of public conversations, film screenings, and performances to be announced. *Image Gardeners* is curated by **Sara Wessen Chang**, McEvoy Arts’ exhibitions and public programs curator.

¹ Evernden, Neil. “SEEING AND BEING SEEN: A Response to Susan Sontag’s Essays on Photography.” *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, vol. 68, no. 1, 1985, p. 80

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Screening Room

seen only, heard only through someone else's description **January 14 – April 30, 2022**



sair goetz, *me and my army* (still), 2018, 11 min., color, sound. Courtesy of the artist

In conjunction with *Image Gardeners*, this two-part program of short films, organized by curator and filmmaker **Gina Basso**, features a multiplicity of images and narratives across space and time to pose urgent questions about temporality, artifice, and memory. Basso takes the program's title from the 1977 poem *Audience Distant Relative* by Theresa Hak Kyung Cha (1951–1982). Inspired by Cha's performance and mail art piece of the same name that used language to unravel dynamics of distance, visibility, hearing and communication, the poem resurfaced in Basso's consciousness just as the pandemic was quickly becoming less abstract and more of a looming reality in our lives.

seen only, heard only through someone else's description engages filmmakers and artists whose interdisciplinary practices draw from performance, film, photography, research, and writing. The program includes experimental short films made by women and non-binary artists from the 1970s through the 2010s, presented in two separate sessions **Session One - *Portraits and Fleeting Glimpses: Sometimes We Stand Alone*** explores personal identity and history through experimental processes and found footage. **Session Two - *Drawing Energy: Collectives, Communities and Lineage*** is concerned with communities of women and their collective power to document and deeply engage with artistic, cultural, or familial lineages.

Sessions One and Two screen sequentially, for eight weeks each. Featured filmmakers include **Brenda Contreras, Rita Ferrando, sair goetz, Onyeka Igwe, Lily Jue Sheng, Lucy Kerr, Marie Losier, Deborah Stratman, Tina Takemoto, and Paige Taul**, among others. A complete listing of films is to be announced.

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Contributors

Marcel Pardo Ariza (they/them) is a trans Colombian artist and curator exploring the relationship of representation, kinship, and queerness through constructed photographs and installations. Their work has been exhibited at the San Francisco Arts Commission Galleries; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, Palm Springs Art Museum; De:Formal Gallery, New York; NoPlace Gallery, Columbus, OH; and Ochi Projects, Los Angeles, CA. Ariza is the recipient of the 2020 San Francisco Artadia Award, Tosa Studio Award, and a Murphy & Cadogan Contemporary Art Award. They are a former member of the Curatorial Council at Southern Exposure, and studio member at Minnesota Street Project. Ariza lives and works in Emeryville, CA.

Carolyn Drake (she/her) works on long-term photo-based projects that question historical narratives to creatively reimagine them. Her work has been exhibited in solo presentations at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Houston Center for Photography, among others. Her series *Knit Club* was published as an artist's monograph by TBW Books (2020). It was shortlisted for the Paris Photo Aperture Book of the Year and Lucie Photo Book Awards. She is member of Magnum Photos and recipient of the 2021 Henri Cartier Bresson Award, a Guggenheim fellowship, the Lange-Taylor Prize, a Lightwork residency, and a Fulbright fellowship, among others. She lives and works in Vallejo, CA.

Chanell Stone (she/her) is an artist and photographer whose work challenges insular views of Blackness often by exploring the Black body's connection to the American landscape. Her work is in the collections of the KADIST Foundation, San Francisco and Paris, France; Center for Photography at Woodstock, Woodstock, NY; and Meyer Library, Oakland, CA. She has exhibited at the Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, CA; SF Camerawork, San Francisco, CA; and the Aperture Foundation, New York, NY, among others. She lives and works in Oakland, CA and San Diego, CA.

Gina Basso (she/her) is a San Francisco-based independent film programmer and visual artist. She has organized programs for revered San Francisco movie houses including The Roxie Theater, The Castro Theater, and Alamo Drafthouse. Additionally, she has curated programs for Design Within Reach, San Francisco, CA; Hunter's Point Shipyard, San Francisco, CA; and the Northwest Film Forum, Seattle, WA and is currently the film curator for San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Her video work has been presented in the Bay Area at San Francisco's Cinematheque's Crossroads Festival, Artist Television Access, San Francisco, the Roxie Theater, HAXAN Film Festival, Antimatter Experimental Film Festival, and online via publicrecords.nyc. She was the 2017 recipient of a Curatorial Travel Grant for film research awarded by the French American Cultural Society and San Francisco French Consulate.

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McEvoy Foundation for the Arts presents exhibitions and events that engage, expand, and challenge themes present in the McEvoy Family Collection. Established in 2017, McEvoy Arts creates an open, intimate, and welcoming place for private contemplation and public discussion about art and culture. Rooted in the creative legacies of the San Francisco Bay Area, McEvoy Arts embodies a far-reaching vision of the McEvoy Family Collection's potential to facilitate and engage conversations on the practice of contemporary art. McEvoy Arts invites artists, curators, and thinkers with varied perspectives to respond to the Collection. Each year, these collaborations produce exhibitions in the Foundation's gallery, new media programs in the Screening Room, as well as many film, music, literary, and performing arts events each year. Exhibitions are free and open to the public. For more information, please visit mcevoyarts.org.

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High-resolution images and additional materials are available by request to press@mcevoyarts.org.

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