

STUDIO 280

Visual Art | Baking | Jessica Kalmar | Knitting | Sewing



Side Bar

There is no cabin fever here. Instead there is an appreciation for home against a background of stillness. Sorting through century old photographs inspired me to think about the consistencies shared through generations. | Mixing different genres of books produces more similarities than thought. | In a serendipitous way the storyline and atmosphere of a video game works well with the chosen books. | I think there will always be socks on the knitting needles... but in the meantime, I have a head start on sewing projects for spring - a garden apron and skirt. | A different way to present eggs is put to the test. | Please enjoy the newsletter!

Winter: The Oldest Season

Winter evokes memory. Becoming more acquainted with being indoors most or all of the day one gets a better grasp on the floor plan, layout of the furniture, creaks and groans of the building, sounds from appliances. This familiarity may become second nature, and while happily for some, not so much for others, causes a person to think more.

One of my favorite things about living where we do is how quiet everything is. No matter the season, though winter is definitely the quietest, this stillness is invigorating.

"There is nothing like silence to suggest a sense of unlimited space. Sounds lend color to space, and confer a sort of sound body upon it. But absence of sound leaves it quite pure and, in the silence, we are seized with the sensation of something vast and deep and boundless."

- Henri Bosco quoted in *The Poetics of Space* by Gaston Bachelard

While rekindling my friendship with the easy chair in the family room, I have been reading, writing and thinking a lot this winter. Catching up on books and recipes, sewing and knitting projects, and photography ideas have taken up a lot of my time as I get outdoors less often. A recent activity that could possibly have been an unofficial new year's resolution is photographing more. I have been greatly interested in recording the peacefulness and timelessness of winter.

Books



Coraline | Neil Gaimen

- A story about an explorer, lost souls, and family... and so much more!

The Poetics of Space | Gaston Bachelard

- Philosophical tour around the home.

In the Woods in Winter | Perry D. Frazer

- An article on page 194 in The American Annual of Photography, 1931. This gem is about rediscovering the beauty of snow and ice in our landscape with your camera.

Why People Photograph | Robert Adams

- His unapologetic answers are right to the point with informative examples.

Interviews with Master Photographers | James Danziger and Barnaby Conrad III

- Conversations with some of the great photographers of the 20th century.

Reviews



Little Nightmares |

Windows PC version, BNEI, 2017

This three dimensional linear video game is about a little girl trapped on a huge vessel trying to escape. She encounters very strange and often grotesque creatures while sneaking around abnormally sized rooms and hallways every so often caught in a cat-and-mouse chase where she uses her size to her advantage. There is so much detail in this game that it feels like I am playing along with a stop animation movie. The sounds and music in this story are subtle enough to enhance the ongoing suspense. This is a big puzzle game with a creepy story line that plays with what is real and what is not. Definitely a little nightmare!

little-nightmares.com

Recurring Images

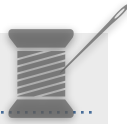
In a 1976 interview with Minor White on the topic of striving for originality, he said, "Everything in the world has been photographed a few million times and it does not stop." Such a blatant quote that becomes truer every day. So how do we set ourselves apart? White encourages us "to make a photograph which has the power of the original subject" and reminds us to ask ourselves that "all we have to look for now is, as a picture, does it move my heartstrings?"



Unknown photo from collection c. 1896

Always drawn to portraits of people and their homes, my collection of old photographs seem to make a timeless journey among all the similarities shared with the present day. The above image is a beautiful example of this with smiles among the intimate group, crowding around the seated woman who is leafing through a basket of photographs, all eyes closed in anticipation of the flash, and even the presence of the photographer with the shutter release bulb in hand.

Sewing



Sewing projects for spring have started.

I'm not sure how practical this will be, but I made a [garden apron](#) with heavyweight fabric. This is meant to hold light things like seed packets, twine and pens. Hopefully the Velcro will hold up while holding heavier hand tools. We'll see how this fashionable apron works soon enough! The pattern is from *One-Yard Wonders*.



I miscalculated the amount of fabric on hand and so required a modification in an already ambiguous [half circle skirt](#) pattern. What was to be the liner became an accent on the outside of the skirt while still fulfilling its purpose.

Regardless of style in dress or furnishings of course, this image holds a familiarity. All the components are there - a happy group of people looking at pictures and enjoying themselves while making a "selfie."

Dwelling



Unknown postcard from collection

A welcomed home is like a warm hug. When you walk into another's house you get wrapped up in the ambiance of their familiar smells and their relaxed voices. All their possessions displayed as an opened book for you to casually read. And, perhaps best of all, a chance to eat together, which always makes food taste better. Recalling all the senses when visiting somebody's home helps me to appreciate my own.

"To be fully alive, fully human, and completely awake is to be continually thrown out of the nest." - Pema Chödrön

But when priorities shift we sometimes find we need a different home. In these circumstances I am both eager and anxious. When the previous home has been stripped of all those familiar smells and furnishings leaving nothing but bare corners and empty outlets I find such a peacefulness. The home becomes a big shell with memory

Baking



Sunny Eggs

How about a little sunshine for those overcast wintry days? While flying to Boston I caught a quick segment on the airline's television for a unique way to serve eggs.



Prepare cookie sheet with parchment paper (I lightly oiled the cookie sheet thinking that would be enough, but it was a little hard to get the eggs off after the baking time). Preheat oven to 450°F.

Separate egg whites and yolks. Place yolks each in a separate bowl and set aside. Put all egg whites in one bowl. Beat egg whites until they form stiff peaks. Arrange on cookie sheet to resemble fluffy clouds. Make an indent in the center (I realized if you don't do this the eggs tend to run out of the egg whites). Bake for 4 minutes.

Remove egg whites from oven and drop one yolk into the indent you made in each cloud. Bake 4 minutes. Bake longer if desired.



lingering everywhere as you move about the space stepping around the ghosts of chairs, floor lamps, and rumpled rugs. I can still get that warm hug. I can still feel the presence of



home, because I spent time there. But when it becomes somebody else's time then all of it turns to a reminiscence.



At the very top of a tree in our front yard one can clearly see a bird's nest supported by three skinny, bare branches. The winter weather has been no threat to this vacant home while

sustaining extreme winds, heavy snowfalls and drenching rains. I wonder if it will become a home again in the spring, as I've witnessed birds reuse nests before. Just as a bed is cozy to us, this little roost may hold on for the duration of the season and soon give a warm hug to a cold critter.



"To worship beauty for its own sake is narrow. One surely cannot derive from it the aesthetic pleasure which comes from finding beauty in the commonest things." - Imogen Cunningham

What sets us apart in these types of familiar photographs are the details of each individual memory. All that uniqueness of each of us tweaking similar stories in similar homes with similar friends and families. When somebody makes a snapshot during a fleeting but memorable moment I believe that person *has* photographed the power of the original subject because that subject moved the heartstrings.



Archive

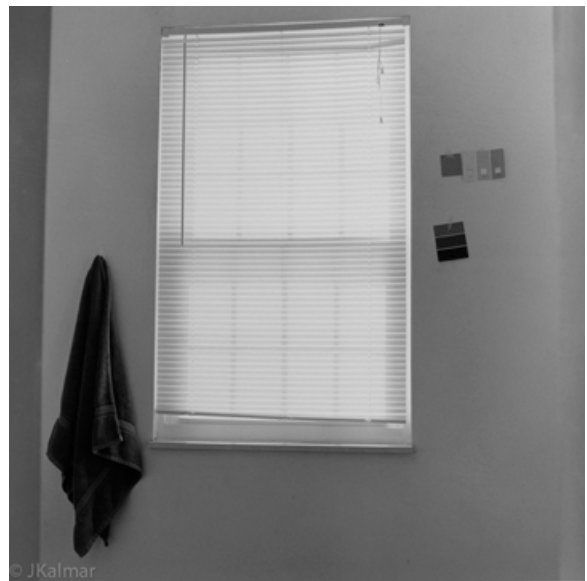
Panoptica: A Merging World, 2015

Silver gelatin and ink jet prints

The public side of us is groomed as best as possible. No garden left unmaintained. No cracks or crevices left untreated. Made up, brushed and cleansed, it is the side showing all colors as vivid and as loud as possible. But the private side of us is entrapped. Stuck to bad habits and bad feelings. It is who we are, truly.

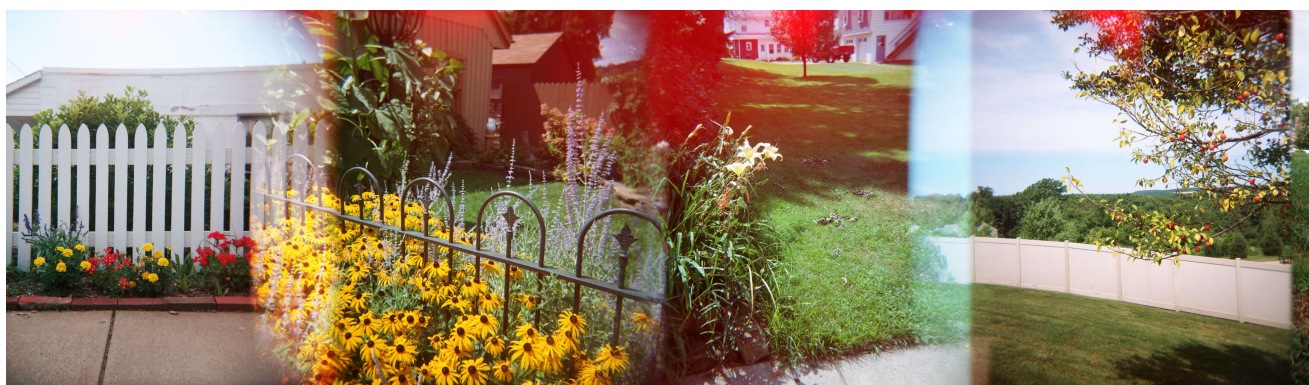
I created a world inside a plastic camera that connects all the ideas of a colorful public side. But look carefully and notice it is not all as wonderful as it seems. There are some imperfections.

These discrepancies, or the private side, are exhibited in black and white and in fine focus to be sure the viewer notices these details that help describe who we are.





Panoptica is a merging world that connects all of us. It allows us to blend. Inside this world we all know each other's secrets. We may not verbalize, but the compassion is there. This series of photographs help the viewer to acknowledge the understanding of the connectedness we all share.





At home

photo by David Dulick

Peace & Quiet

Where do you find your peace and quiet? A library, museum, or warmth of the conservatory? A bathtub, couch, or a hug from the easy chair? Of course this stillness doesn't need to be so literal, as one can find comfort in noise. When walking in a city park the sounds from the nearby highway become roars of a turbulent river. A group of friends gathered in a small space with chatter and laughter create the feel of a grand ballroom. No matter how we interpret the notion of stillness it is always welcomed. It is always timeless.

"Photography takes an instant out of time, altering life by holding it still." - Dorothea Lange

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Thank You

If you have any questions, or want / can give further information on any of the content in this newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact me. I hope you find beauty this winter season and it inspires you. Look for the next Studio 280 Newsletter around May 8, 2018.

Winter 2018 | Bundle up, it's cold out there. | jessicakalmar.com
