



NEW RELEASE

Mary Berridge Visible Spectrum Portraits from the World of Autism

Preface by Margaret Sartor
 Texts by Mary Berridge and the protagonists
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An intimate view of life with autism, beautifully photographed, and told from personal experience

Mary Berridge's award-winning series of photographs is paired with narratives written primarily by the subjects or their parents. The book *Visible Spectrum* offers an intimate view of life with autism, as told from within an autism community, which includes Berridge and her son. It encourages an alternate way of seeing the condition, in which the diverse and unconventional perspectives of the autistic are valued. It also explores the ways the autistic and their families navigate a world which is not made for them and in which they are not always welcome. Despite this, the stories may surprise readers with their thought-provoking and affirmative viewpoints on autism and being different. The formally composed and quietly luminous portraits allude to the rich inner lives of their subjects.

From the Preface by **Margaret Sartor**:

»It is best to approach Mary Berridge's photographs on tiptoe, to step into their stillness carefully, leaving expectation behind, and without letting what they offer slip away, or get lost in the din of the regular world. What I am suggesting is that you approach these portraits as you would a poem—a poem, say, by Emily Dickinson, the great American poet of inwardness, whose luminous work repays in reading after reading, resonating differently over the many stages of a lifetime, and of whom it has been written that she "saw things directly and just as they were."

Emily Dickinson is also believed by many to have been on the autism spectrum. From this distance, of course, we can't know for certain. We can only speculate. Just as we can only speculate about the interior lives of the subjects of these photographs. So,

for now, putting aside what we know or don't know about autism or autistic persons, let's look at what these photographs can tell us about what life is like for 42 individuals who are living with neurological differences that set them apart from the mainstream culture known as neurotypical.«

Mary Berridge is an American photographer whose work has been exhibited in many galleries and museums including the Museum of Modern Art in NY, the De Young Museum in San Francisco, the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, the Yale University Gallery of Art, and the Princeton University Art Museum. Her photographs have received several awards, e.g. a Guggenheim Fellowship, an Aaron Siskind Fellowship, the Lange-Taylor Prize, a NY Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, a Documentary Project Fund Award, and a LensCulture Portrait Award. Her photographs have been published in numerous anthologies and periodicals, e.g. The New York Times Magazine, Harper's, TIME, Der Spiegel, Raw View. After earning her MFA from Yale and a BA from the University of Michigan, she went on to teach at Princeton University as well as several other colleges and universities. She has published two books: *A Positive Life: Portraits of Women Living with HIV* (1997), and *On the Eve, Moscow*, 1998 (2014).

Margaret Sartor is a writer and photographer currently teaching at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. Throughout her career, Sartor has examined the unique power of photography to explore and illuminate questions of personal identity and belonging.

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