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## J. John Priola Natural Light

Texts by Rita Bullwinkel, Claire Daigle  
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**Private space as a realm where the things with which we surround ourselves, express our identity, aspirations, desires, and fears**

Sarah Malakoff's long-term photographic projects explore private space as a realm where the things with which we surround ourselves, both consciously and unconsciously, express our identity, aspirations, desires, and fears.

In *Personal History*, she turns her attention to objects displayed within American homes that reference culture, history, and ideology. Whether representations of historical figures, events, or monuments, the possessions point to a longing for connection to the past and an engagement with the world at large. Often the collections of objects underscore the privilege and power implicit in the act of collecting. These souvenirs resonate—sometimes humorously, sometimes disturbingly—with the other possessions and architecture that surround them, uneasily vacillating between heroism and kitsch, patriotism and colonialism.

From the Foreword by Lisa Crossman:

*There is a history of photographers documenting domestic interiors since the nineteenth century in the United States. As Jessica Roscio, Director and Curator at the Danforth Art Museum, alludes to in her essay, the camera was used at that time to capture popular design and the individual character of a home's inhabitants—a tendency that has continued to evolve through the prevalence of materials on the topic of home décor. With affinity to Malakoff's photographs, these early images in house books and interior design guides present the importance of commingling personal taste and shared culture.*

*The title Personal History is general, implying that the photographs could be about Malakoff's and the homeowners' personal histories. The owners, like the artist, are absent from view, invisible subjects embodied by the many other portraits, furnishings, and goods. The thoughtfully sequenced photographs from differen-*

*thomes in this book offer the option of viewing each image both on its own and as part of a collection, a composite of some aspects of culture in the United States.*

**Sarah Malakoff's** large-scale color photographs are examinations of the home as both a refuge from and a re-creation of the outside world. She has had solo exhibitions at Howard Yezerski Gallery and The Garner Center for Photography, Boston, Massachusetts, CameraworkGallery, Portland, Oregon, The Vermont Center for Photography, Brattleboro, Vermont, the Sol Mednick Gallery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Griffin Museum of Photography in Winchester, Massachusetts, and Plane Space, New York, NY and group exhibitions internationally. She received Artist's Fellowships from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and a Traveling Fellowship from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The monograph *Sarah Malakoff: Second Nature* was published in 2013. She currently resides in Boston, Massachusetts, is an Associate Professor at The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, and is represented by Howard Yezerski Gallery.

**Lisa Crossman** is Curator of American Art and Arts of the Americas at the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College. Lisa holds a Ph.D. from Tulane University in the history of art and Latin American studies; she continues to explore the visual arts as part of broad, interdisciplinary conversations.

**Jessica Roscio** is the Director and Curator at the Danforth Art Museum at Framingham State University, Massachusetts. She has curated numerous exhibitions at the Danforth. She has a Ph.D. in American Studies from Boston University and is a native of Virginia.

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Barbara Karpf, [barbara.karpf@kehrerverlag.com](mailto:barbara.karpf@kehrerverlag.com) or [pr.assistance@kehrerverlag.com](mailto:pr.assistance@kehrerverlag.com)  
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