

NEW RELEASE



Sheron Rupp
Taken From Memory

Text by Peter Galassi
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A personal search for belonging, as well as a commentary on the rural small towns in the U.S.

Taken From Memory is the result of a 25-year long-time project by American photographer Sheron Rupp. Searching for connections to her own biographical past, Rupp took these photographs in rural America looking to find a piece of someone else's life to give her a sense of »belonging.« Personal in nature, these photographs offer a stirring glimpse into the life in the commonly disregarded rural areas and small towns between the bustling metropolises of the East and West Coast. Without pretense or irony, without assertion or judgment, Rupp's impressions from the past also work as a commentary on today's U.S. society.

»We are a long way from the city, from the bustle of getting and spending. More important: there are no strangers. A visitor might show up, but as soon as she arrives she is present and accounted for. We are in a world free of the anonymous encounters of city life, with no past or future.

Nothing much is happening. Often we are in the backyard, where people are unguarded but not really private. They are at home and at home with each other, and no one pretends to be someone else. Many return our gaze. They are young and old and in-between. If there is no kid in one picture, there will be in the next. The people often touch or hold one another. There are plenty of pets.

The sun is shining. Red things are red and blue things are blue. The grass looks like grass, the dirt looks like dirt, and there is lots of both. The people's bodies have heft and volume, and their flesh is human. Everything is complete in itself. Our view is never blocked. There is no hint of action outside the frame. We see what there is to see.«

– From the text by Peter Galassi

Sheron Rupp, born in 1943 in Mansfield, Ohio, taught herself photography, then later earned an MFA in photography from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 1982. Rupp credits the influences of photographers Helen Levitt for a candid approach and William Eggleston for his sense of color and interest in the quotidian, as well as anonymous family snapshots for their casual ambiance. In the 1980s, Rupp documented Appalachian areas of Ohio, Tennessee, and Kentucky and the mountainous region of Arkansas she remembered from her youth. She received recognition when her work was included in Museum of Modern Art curator Peter Galassi's influential 1991 exhibition, *The Pleasures and Terrors of Domestic Comfort*, and in the exhibition *Where We Live: Photographs of America* at the J. Paul Getty Museum 2006, also published as a book of the same title. Rupp's photographs are in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, The J. Paul Getty Museum, the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, the Smith College Museum of Art, the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College, the University Museum of Contemporary Art at UMass., Amherst, the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University, among others.

Peter Galassi (born in 1951) was a curator at The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, for three decades, including 20 years as Chief Curator of Photography (1991–2011). He organized more than 40 exhibitions, including shows devoted to the work of Henri Cartier-Bresson, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Walker Evans, Lee Friedlander, Andreas Gursky, Michael Schmidt, Cindy Sherman and Jeff Wall.

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