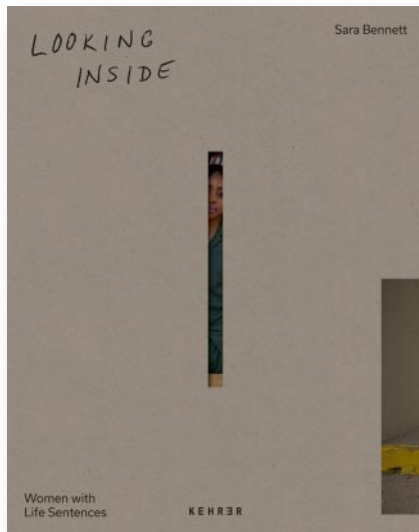


NEW RELEASE 2026



Sara Bennett  
***Looking Inside***  
***Women with Life Sentences***

Texts by Sara Bennett, Judith Clark  
Designed by Teun van der Heijden, Heijdens Karwei  
Softcover with inner and outer cover, laser die-cutting,  
and shortened pages  
21,6 x 27,4 cm  
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**Intimate portraits from prison cells to life beyond release**

Former public defender Sara Bennett spent over a decade photographing women convicted of homicide and sentenced to life in prison in New York State. Her long-term project traces the women's lives across time and space: inside prison walls, in their post-incarceration bedrooms, and as they re-enter the outside world after decades behind bars.

Through intimate portraits and personal ephemera—Polaroids, letters, drawings, and handwritten notes—Bennett creates a layered narrative that offers a rare perspective, resisting stereotype. *Looking Inside: Women with Life Sentences* is a striking reminder of the complexity and humanity of women who are, and have always been, far more than the single act that sent them to prison for life.

The publication is complemented by a powerful afterword by Judith Clark, who served 38 years in prison and is now Director of the Survivors Justice Project, alongside additional pictorial endnotes by Bennett that further expand the project's context.

From the book:

*Just because we ask for a second chance at life doesn't mean we have forgotten what we have done; it means we were once part of the problem and to heal those we have hurt, we must be part of the solution, part of the conversation. You've held the state accountable by our punishment. Now let us show you how we've held ourselves accountable to your pain.*

Patrice, age 36 – Incarcerated at the age of 16 in 1998 – Sentence: 25 years to life – Released: 2020

From the book:

*My children were one and three years old when I left them and I felt as if they were one and three the whole time I was away. I feel that way about myself now. I was arrested when I was 19 and being in this big, unfamiliar, advanced world makes me feel like a 19-year-old trapped in a 45 year old body; like putting a kindergarten in college.*

Aisha, age 45 – Sentence: 25 years to life – Served 25 years – Released 2016

**Sara Bennett** is a New York based photographic artist and 2024 Guggenheim Fellow. As a former defense attorney, she uses photography to draw attention to the problems of mass incarceration. Her work has been exhibited widely in museums and galleries, including MoMA PS1 and the Museum of the City of New York, and is in the collections of several museums.

**Judith Clark** is the Director of the Survivors Justice Project, which fights for decarceration through the implementation of New York's Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act. During her 38 years in prison, she helped create peer organizations including ACE (AIDS Counseling and Education) and the committee that helped bring back college after public funding was eliminated.

Exhibitions:

Solo show, BAXTER ST at CCNY, New York, New York, February 3 - April 7, 2027

Sara Bennett and Mark Loughney, Bader & Simon, Cincinnati, Ohio, May 1 - June 8, 2027

**Please note:**

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## Press Images



01\_Sahiah, 23, in the college library at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility (2019)  
Sentence: 20 years to life. Incarcerated at the age of 16 in 2011 © Sara Bennett



02\_Judy, 69, in the nursery at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility (2019)  
Sentence: 75 years to life. Incarcerated at the age of 31 in 1981. Released: 2019  
© Sara Bennett



03\_Linda, 70, in the recreation room for the medically unemployed at Taconic Correctional Facility (2019) – Sentence: 30 years to life. Incarcerated at the age of 43 in 1992. Released: 2022 © Sara Bennett

*This is my 27<sup>th</sup> year being incarcerated. I've been scared, lonely, hurt, disappointed and forgotten. When I got here 11 months ago, I couldn't believe all the women I had done time with, were still here, going to Board After Board, and never getting out. Will that happen to me? I do my hair and make-up every day, it makes me feel good. But on the inside, I'm breaking down. To name a few, I had a triple bypass, 2 strokes, major back surgery and I take 30 pills a day. The bottom line is - I beg for forgiveness and a second chance. Will I ever see my freedom????? And I die behind these walls???????????*

04\_Linda's handwritten statement, 2019 © Sara Bennett



05\_Evelyn (Astoria, NY 2015) © Sara Bennett



06\_Jennifer, 40, in her own apartment, 15 months after her release. Brooklyn, NY (2021) – Sentence: 18 years to life. Served: 17-1/2 years. Released: 2020  
© Sara Bennett



07\_Assia, 35, in the storeroom for baby clothes at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility (2018) – Sentence: 18 years to life. Incarcerated at the age of 19 in 2003. Released: 2021 © Sara Bennett



08\_Pages from a book Assia made for her children commemorating their first visit to her in prison (2016) © Sara Bennett



09\_Karen, 69, in the visiting room at Taconic Correctional Facility (2017) Sentence: 25 years to life. Served: 35 years. Released: 2017 © Sara Bennett



10\_Karen, 69, in a homeless shelter four weeks after her release. New York City, New York (2017) © Sara Bennett



11\_Karen on the Staten Island Ferry (2017) © Sara Bennett



Taylor in the fire and safety office at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility

120 Taylor, age 36 Incarcerated at the age of 24 in 2006



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12\_Taylor, 36, in the fire and safety office at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility (2018) – Sentence: 22-1/3 years to life. Incarcerated at the age of 24 in 2006 © Sara Bennett



13\_Andrea, 64, in a recreation room at Taconic Correctional Facility (2019)  
Sentence: 20 years to life. – Incarcerated at the age of 46 in 2001. Released: 2020  
© Sara Bennett



14\_Evelyn, Queens, NY 2014 © Sara Bennett



15\_Carol, 69, in supportive housing, four years after her release. Long Island City,  
NY (2017) – Sentence: 25 years to life. Served: 35 years. Released: 2013  
© Sara Bennett



16\_Veronica, 53, with her husband of 29 years, Vernon, in their apartment,  
21 months after her release. Flushing, NY (2021) – Sentence: 25 years to life.  
Served: 27 years © Sara Bennett