

Sandi Haber Fifield
The Thing in Front of You
January 11 –February 17, 2024



The Thing in Front of You, an exhibition of unique photocollages and small-scale wall sculptures by artist Sandi Haber Fifield, will be on view at Yancey Richardson from January 11 through February 17, 2024. An opening with the artist will be held on Thursday, January 11 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

In her fifth exhibition with Yancey Richardson, Haber Fifield propels the medium of photography past the conventional frame with a new distinct body of work. Made between 2022 and 2023, the large-scale irregularly shaped collages are comprised of photographs taken by the artist of both the natural and the built environment, often interspersed with partially seen human figures. In a further exploration of photographic fragmentation, Haber Fifield has extended the picture plane into three dimensions, constructing intimately-scaled wall sculptures from intersecting layers of plexiglass, wood, rubber and photographs.

Throughout her career, Haber Fifield has analyzed the ways in which the human mind sorts and assembles incongruent fragments of reality and organizes them into a coherent and harmonious whole. As Mark Alice Durant, a writer and professor of photography at the University of Maryland writes in the exhibition catalogue, "*Haber Fifield's layered images are visual analogs of time's fluidity and the slipperiness of memory, and in that sense, she freed her images from the discontinuous seconds of the camera's fractioned shutter.*" Durant notes, "*By collaging and colliding disparate imagery, Haber Fifield's work resists the evidentiary impulse in favor of an experience of suspended recognition; one cannot rely on the conventions of photographic framing to fulfill the promise of meaning.*"

Inspiration for *The Thing in Front of You* came after Covid lockdown in 2021, which allowed her time to consider how visual information is processed. Most interested in how people synthesize the random and discordant information that is confronted in everyday life, Haber Fifield writes, "*Everything in life connects; combined imagery has been my point of departure throughout my career. The interplay of images infers potential meanings. In the studio I challenge the objective reality of the photograph and transform it into something else. I am driven to find music in the cacophony that bombards us.*"

In one work, an image of a person wearing an orange hat overlooking mountains is juxtaposed with photographs of pieces of wood intersected by a metal cable, stained concrete, and patterned fabric. Durant writes that several of the compositions remind him of Caspar David Friedrich's 1818 painting, *Wanderer above the Seas of Fog*. As Durant explains, "*Haber Fifield is of course, an artist of a different time, making art in an era of fragmentation and alienation, in which the landscape does not intimate the sublime but is instead a contested territory, a poisoned and compromised Eden.*"

Sandi Haber Fifield was born in Youngstown, Ohio in 1956. She holds an MFA in photography from Rochester Institute of Technology. Her work has been widely exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the United States, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Art Institute of Chicago; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC; Oakland Museum; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Southeast Museum of Photography, Daytona Beach, FL; and St. Louis Art Museum.

Haber Fifield's photographs are the subject of four monographs: *The Certainty of Nothing*, 2021; *After the Threshold*, Kehrer Verlag, 2013; *Between Planting and Picking*, Charta, 2011; and *Walking through the World*, Charta, 2009. Additional publications that feature Haber Fifield's work include *Our Selves*, Photographs by Women Artists, MoMA, 2022 and *The Photography of Invention* by Mary Foresta, MIT Press, among others. Her work is held in numerous major public collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Art Institute of Chicago; Philadelphia Museum of Art; High Museum of Art, Atlanta; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Library of Congress, and The Parrish Museum, Water Mill, NY. She lives and works on Shelter Island, New York.

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Image above: TY23_427, 2023, from the series *The Thing in Front of You*. Unique collaged archival pigment print, 39 x 57 1/2 inches.