

The Van Gogh Affect

Sept. 24, 2021 - March 27, 2022

Kennedy Museum of Art



Anne Desmarest, photographed 25 years apart in the Saint-Paul Asylum, Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, France. ©Lynn Johnson

Currently a women's asylum with a focus on art therapy, Van Gogh spent a year at Saint-Rémy in 1890 where the window still offers the same timeless view onto the gardens he painted more than a century ago.

The Van Gogh Affect is an exhibition of work by award-winning photographers Lynn Johnson and Patricia Lanza, addressing the artist Vincent Van Gogh's profound and ever-present influence on contemporary perceptions of the world. Simultaneously contemplating and reaffirming Van Gogh's resounding posthumous influence over art and culture of the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries, Johnson and Lanza offer evocative insight into the artist's uniquely sensitive lived experience of place and light.

The exhibition includes images Johnson created 25 years ago for a National Geographic story, *Lullaby in Color*, which the photojournalist has called "a meditation on why we, as humans, need creativity in our core — why the art spirit is a life force that can fuel both wonder and addiction." Recent images created for the exhibition by both Johnson and Lanza were produced during a joint creative pilgrimage through France and The Netherlands in 2018 – 2019. Working in collaboration with the Saint-Paul Asylum in Saint-Rémy, the visual journalists were granted special access in their exploration of the still-functioning sanitarium and the village of Auvers-sur-Oise.

Lanza's color images reflect the interior and exterior spaces of their exploration, while Johnson's new work includes large-scale black-and-white portraits of the women who continue to create art in the very rooms and gardens that inspired Van Gogh.

Lynn Johnson and Patricia Lanza will present an opening night talk on *The Van Gogh Affect* on September 24, 2021 (time TBA). Johnson, based in Pittsburg, and Lanza, based in LA, are available to discuss additional programming opportunities for OHIO students on campus with individual departments. Interested departments may contact Sally Delgado, curator of education, Kennedy Museum of Art delgado@ohio.edu

Lynn Johnson (<https://www.lynnjohnsonphoto.com/>) an alumna of the OHIO School of Visual Communication, is recognized globally for her artistry in photographing the human condition. A regular contributor to National Geographic (NG), with more than 36 feature stories to her credit, Johnson is a twice-recognized Pulitzer Prize Finalist (in 2017 for the NG story "Gender Identity" story, and in 2019 for her NG feature, "Face Transplant"). She is known for finding beauty and meaning in elusive, difficult subjects such as threatened languages, zoonotic disease, rape in the military, the centrality of water in village life, and the mysteries of the human brain. Johnson's master's thesis as a Knight Fellow at Ohio University, *Hate Kills*, probed the societal impact of hate crimes.

In 2011 Johnson gifted her collection of approximately two million images to the Documentary Photography Archive in the OHIO Libraries. Spanning the early 1970s to the 2000s, the collection includes her work with the Pittsburgh Press, Black Star and Aurora photo agencies, National Geographic, LIFE, and Sports Illustrated, as well as her on-set (and off-set) photography with Fred Rogers of the highly acclaimed children's television show, *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*.
<https://www.ohio.edu/library/collections/archives-special-collections/documentary-photo-archive/collections>

American photographer and photo curator **Patricia Lanza** (<https://www.patricialanza.com/>) has traveled to over 53 countries on assignment to document some of the most compelling people, nature, cultures and stories of our time. Lanza began her career at the National Geographic Society in Washington, D.C., learning about narrative and storytelling through imagery. Starting as a staff photo editor working with NG's vast archive, her position evolved to full-time contract photographer, a direction she followed for eight years. Lanza has been on assignments around the globe for countless editorial and commercial newspapers, magazines and clients.

As the Director of Talent, Content and Exhibitions for the Annenberg Space for Photography in Los Angeles from 2009 to 2017, Lanza's leadership led to many industry and media awards. Projects included the multi-media exhibition *Beauty CULTure* (2011) as well as the exhibition and accompanying publication *Refugee* (2016 collaboration with the United Nations). With extensive experience as a curator, editor, and photojournalist, Lanza has worked with major museums and photo venues around the world in the creation of visual stories.



The Van Gogh Bridge, Arles, France, 2019

© Patricia Lanza