

2200 Dodge Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68102 Phone: 402-342-3300 Fax: 402-342-2376 www.joslyn.org

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Contact: Amy Rummel, Director of Marketing and Public Relations
(402) 661-3822 or arummel@joslyn.org



Virginia Beahan

A RILEY CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS PROJECT GALLERY EXHIBITION

Opens February 11 at Joslyn Art Museum

(Omaha, NE) – Virginia Beahan's photographs tell a story that is at once demanding, joyous, surprising, and painful. In the fall of 2002, Beahan and her husband helped her 88-year-old mother, Jeanne Cadwallader, sell her house in Yardley, Pennsylvania, and moved her to their home in rural New Hampshire. In failing health, her mother's doctors believed she would die within the coming months. She soon recovered, however, and for the first time in many decades, Beahan and her mother began to spend their days together, learning to accommodate each other's needs and lives. Suffering from the early stages of dementia, losing her memory and her ability to process information, her mother could never be left alone. Accustomed to a busy schedule of teaching, traveling, and making photographs in places as far removed as Iceland, Cuba, Sri Lanka, and the

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Virginia Beahan at Joslyn Art Museum

Aeolian Islands, Beahan felt trapped by these unexpected circumstances. Turning to her camera to bring structure and familiarity to a new routine, Beahan created a remarkable document of her family as it navigated what might otherwise be heartbreaking circumstances.

The latest exhibition in Joslyn Art Museum's Riley Contemporary Artists Project Gallery, *Virginia Beahan* opens Saturday, February 11, and continues through May 7. The exhibition is included in free general Museum admission.

Beginning with portraits of her mother and daughter, Christina, Beahan soon expanded her subjects to include her husband, brother, cousins, and family friends — the people who surrounded and enriched her mother's life. Beahan's photographs face a difficult situation with directness and compassion, without flinching from her mother's condition or succumbing to sentimentality. They reveal a painful transition that every family faces, yet one that is rarely shared with the outside world. Beahan captured the end of her mother's life with openness and generosity, and a belief in the fundamental strength that binds together those we love and hold dear.

About the Artist

Virginia Beahan (American, born Philadelphia, 1946) received a BA in English from Pennsylvania State University and an MFA in Photography from the Tyler School of Art, Temple University. She is Senior Lecturer in Studio Art at Dartmouth College, and has taught photography at Harvard University, Massachusetts College of Art, Wellesley College, and the Rhode Island School of Design. Beahan's work is included in the collections of the J. Paul Getty Museum; Metropolitan Museum of Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Smithsonian American Art Museum; and Whitney Museum of American Art. Her publications include *Cuba: Singing with Bright Tears* (2009) and *No Ordinary Land: Virginia Beahan and Laura McPhee* (1998). In 1993, she received a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship in Photography. Beahan lives with her husband Michael in Lyme Center, New Hampshire.

An Evening with the Artist

On **Thursday, March 30, at 6:30 pm (cash bar @ 5 pm)**, the public is invited hear Virginia Beahan speak about her work in conversation with Toby Jurovics, Joslyn's Chief Curator and Holland Curator of American Western Art. Held in the Abbott Lecture Hall, this event is free to all.

About Joslyn's Riley CAP Gallery

A 500-square-foot space in the Scott Pavilion suite of galleries, the Riley CAP Gallery showcases nationally- and internationally-recognized artists, as well as emerging talent, selected by Joslyn curators. A rotating schedule of carefully focused exhibitions will examine how artists engage with the world and respond to the issues that

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Virginia Beahan at Joslyn Art Museum

challenge them creatively, bringing new perspectives on contemporary art to Nebraska. Riley CAP Gallery artists will be invited to Joslyn for lectures and other public programs, giving audiences the opportunity to gain insight into creative processes and contribute to an expanded dialogue about new art. The first Joslyn gallery dedicated exclusively to living artists, the Riley CAP Gallery represents an important step in making contemporary art an even more integral component of the Museum's exhibition programming.

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PICTURED (PAGE 1): Virginia Beahan (American, born 1946), *Christina Brushing Gram's Hair*, 2005, chromogenic development print, 18 ½ x 23 ½ inches. Courtesy of the artist.



JOSLYN
Art Museum

Our Mission – Joslyn Art Museum collects, preserves, and interprets the visual arts of the highest quality, fostering appreciation and enjoyment of art for the benefit of a diverse audience.

Our Vision – To be cherished and respected as a premier art museum.

Joslyn Art Museum showcases art from ancient times to the present. The Museum was a gift to the people of Omaha from Sarah Joslyn in memory of her husband, George, who made his fortune as president of the Western Newspaper Union. The Museum's original 1931 building is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the nation, with 38 types of marble from seven countries. The Walter and Suzanne Scott Pavilion, a 58,000-square-foot addition built in 1994, was designed by renowned British architect Norman Foster as his first U.S. commission. The Museum features galleries, a 1,000-seat concert hall, fountain court, education technology gallery, lecture hall, classrooms, sculpture garden, café, shop, and Art Works, an interactive space for art exploration.

General Museum Admission: Free (the *Virginia Beahan* exhibition is included in free general Museum admission).

Regular Museum Hours (includes exhibition): Tuesday through Sunday, 10 am–4 pm; late 'til 8 pm on Thursday; closed Monday and major holidays.

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