

FAMCAM NEWS

Keeping in touch with The Family Camera Network

Greetings from Thy Phu, PI

It's hard to believe that The Family Camera Network is ending the final phase of its three-year period. From April 2016 to March 2019, we collected over 17,000 photographs, 60 albums, 37 home videos, and almost 800 other objects at the Royal Ontario Museum and The ArQuives: Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives (formerly the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives). We have video-recorded 42 interviews. Over the course of the project, we curated 3 exhibitions, hosted numerous roundtables and workshops, developed 6 related academic courses, collaborated with 3 graduate-level courses on exhibition projects, and created employment and volunteer opportunities for 20 students and emerging scholars. Our growing archive has inspired new research, including digital projects, conference papers, publications, and graduate theses. We have explored the relationship between family, photography, and migration—and have shared our work with broad audiences. The FamCam public archive project has been a resounding success because of the outstanding energy and commitment of our collaborators and the generosity of our participants who have shared their time, photos, and stories with us. This summer, we are wrapping up the project, sharing the archive with the public, and exploring possibilities for future expansion. Please enjoy our final newsletter, which offers a summary of our most recent events and activities, and look forward to updates about how this project may continue to grow and develop in the future.



Message from Elspeth Brown, The ArQuives: Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives (formerly the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives)

It's hard to believe that this chapter of The Family Camera Network is drawing to a close! It seems like just yesterday when we were having workshops together on ethics and oral history; vernacular photography, anti-racist and LGBTQ2+ positive community-engaged research, and other critical topics. The project continues to live on in multiple ways, including inspiring some of our narrators to create their own amazing projects, such as Courtney MacFarlane's *Legacies in Motion* exhibition (currently on display at The ArQuives). Many thanks to all of our narrators who were so generous of their time and stories, as well as to all the staff and volunteers at The ArQuives and at The Family Camera Network who made this project possible. *To request access to FamCam material at The ArQuives, please email queries@arquives.ca at least 5 business days before your planned visit.*

Message from Deepali Dewan, Royal Ontario Museum

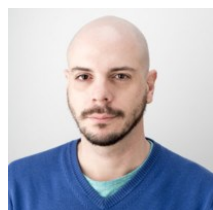
My original motivation to do this project was to use the platform I had at the ROM to create an archive of family photos to write new histories of photography. By being focused on the experience of migration, this material could also be used to write new histories of Canada. I am happy to say we have achieved that—together. Some of the outcomes include: understanding how much a Canadian sense of self is shaped outside of Canada, how much the history of global photography can be found in Canadian family albums, and how much a family photo is never quite what it seems. The importance of pairing family photos with their oral histories, as we have realized, cannot be underscored enough. Rather than an end point, I think we are at a beginning—where the potential of this archive can start to be realized. *To request access to FamCam material at the ROM, please email Deepali Dewan at deepalid@rom.on.ca.*

Online Collections at The ArQuives: Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives and the ROM

The Family Camera Network public archive project is accessible online! View FamCam's growing online archive via the [ROM's online collections](#) or experience the [Queering Family Photography exhibition](#) in a new digital format.



Introducing a New Videographer



Vitor Pavão has joined FamCam as a videographer this spring, helping to finish a few outstanding interviews and working with born digital materials. Vitor moved from Brazil to Toronto in 2017 in order to pursue a Master's in Photography Preservation and Collection Management from Ryerson University. He is currently completing his residency at the ROM, where he is developing collection management protocols for born-digital vernacular photographs from The Family Camera Network collection. In 2016, he earned a post-graduate certificate from FAAP (São Paulo, Brazil) in Photography: Cultural and Artistic Practices. He has 8 years of experience as a professional photographer and worked as a summer intern at the Photography Department of The Art Institute of Chicago. Vitor also volunteers at The ArQuives: Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives (formerly the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives).

FamCam Wrap-Up Activities

As we wrap-up the project, we will continue to share our outcomes and archive with our collaborators and participants. Our website will be updated over the summer months, and we will develop a concise report that reflects all of our outcomes over the past three years. If you would like any updates made to your profile on the FamCam website, please email Jennifer Orpana at jorpana@rom.on.ca before the end of July. Also, please take a look at our [Research](#) page and advise if there are any FamCam activities that may need to be included.

Image Credits—Top Right: Deanna Bowen, *We Are From Nicodemus*, Video Still, 2017 (Image Courtesy of the Artist); Middle (left to right): Screenshot of *Queering Family Photography* online exhibition (2019); Screenshot of ROM Online Collections (2019); Bottom: Profile photo of Vitor Pavão (courtesy of Vitor Pavão, 2019).

SSHRC PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT GRANT

Co-Applicants
Thy Phu (PI)
Sarah Bassnett
Elspeth Brown
Deepali Dewan
Sarah Parsons

Collaborators

Nadine Attewell
Lily Cho
Julie Crooks
Silvia Forni
Richard Fung
Donald Goellnicht
Sunil Gupta
Sophie Hackett
Peter Leonard
Laura Levin
Gaëlle Morel
Gabrielle Moser
Vinh Nguyen
Abdelkader Ouda
Kamran Sedig
Sharon Sliwinski
Shawn Michelle Smith
Linda Steer
Laura Wexler
Kelly Wood

Partner Institutions

The ArQuives: Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives (formerly the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives)
Royal Ontario Museum (ROM)
Ryerson Image Centre
Ryerson University's Film + Photography Preservation & Collections Management Program (F+PPCM)
Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival
Western University
Yale University

ACTIVE TEAMS & COMMITTEES

Steering Team

Thy Phu (PI)
Sarah Bassnett
Elspeth Brown
Deepali Dewan
Sarah Parsons

Collecting Team

Deepali Dewan (Lead)
Nadine Attewell
Sarah Bassnett
Elspeth Brown
Julie Crooks
Silvia Forni
Richard Fung
Donald Goellnicht
Gabrielle Moser
Vinh Nguyen
Jennifer Orpana
Thy Phu
Sajdeep Soomal

Videographers

Manuela Accarpio
Celio Barreto
Blanche Joslin
Annette Mangaard
Katie Micak
Vitor Pavão

Digital Archive Team

Elspeth Brown (Lead)
Celio Barreto
Deepali Dewan
Lucie Handley-Girard
Blanche Joslin
Mark Kasumovic
Jennifer Orpana
Julienne Pascoe
Vitor Pavão
Kelly Wood

For more information & updates visit our website: familycameranetwork.org
Follow us on social media: @FamCamNetwork

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Recent Events & Activities

Exhibition // We Are From Nicodemus—Deanna Bowen

McIntosh Gallery, University of Western Ontario (March 21—April 27, 2019)

Curated by: The Family Camera Network

This spring, The Family Camera Network brought Deanna Bowen's work, *We Are From Nicodemus*, to London audiences at the McIntosh Gallery. In *We Are From Nicodemus*, Deanna Bowen traces threads of her family history as it relates to historical accounts of African American migration from the Midwest to the Canadian Prairies. The installation, first shown at the Royal Ontario Museum as part of *The Family Camera* exhibition (2017), explores intersections between photography and migration and recovers a history of struggle and emancipation. The video documents Bowen's first meeting with her cousin, Angela Bates, with whom she connected after finding a photograph of Angela's grandmother, Elizabeth Risby Williams, during her genealogical research. Through a series of interviews presented in eight episodes, she builds connections with extended family members, recovering stories of her family's migration from Nicodemus, Kansas to Campsie, Alberta in the early 1900s.

[Click here](#) for the exhibition essay by Western MFA student Ramolen Laruan.



Roundtable // The Family Camera Network

Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India (February 22, 2019)

On February 22, Thy Phu, Deepali Dewan, Elspeth Brown, and Sarah Parsons participated in a roundtable discussion on The Family Camera Network public archive project. This discussion explored the culture and art of family photographs, and it took place at the School of Art and Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Roundtable // The Culture and Art of Family Photographs

India International Centre, New Delhi, India (February 21, 2019)

On Thursday, February 21, Thy Phu, Elspeth Brown, Deepali Dewan, and Sarah Parsons discussed The Culture and Art of Family Photographs at the India International Centre, New Delhi.

View footage from this event on the FamCam website! [Click here](#).



New Research

CAA Paper // The Album as Archive: Margaret Corry's souvenir photographs through the lens of Canadian citizenship (1946-1963)

College Art Association conference, Feb. 13, 2019

Presented by: Gabrielle Moser and Maya Wilson-Sanchez

This paper analyzed the souvenir photographic album as a public, as well as personal, archive by investigating a collection of 20 albums put together by Canadian resident Margaret Corry and recently acquired by the Royal Ontario Museum.

Special Issue // *Trans Asia Photography Review: Family Photography—Fall 2018*

Guest Edited by: Deepali Dewan

This special issue explores the production, consumption, and circulation of family photographs within the many geo-political spaces of Asia. It strives to put particular emphasis on the visual dimensions of family photography. These might connect with image making practices from the past or be shaped by new visual sensibilities. This issue acknowledges that, given the interconnected nature of photographic history, some of the ways in which family photographs are made and acquire meaning may overlap across different global geographic locations. Yet it also gives space to the ways in which family photos might operate in different ways based on particular technical, aesthetic, and semiotic circumstances. This special issue is meant to be more than simply additive to the study of family photography; it aims to contribute to a fuller understanding of local and transnational histories of photography broadly.

Peer-Reviewed Article // Phu, Thy and Elspeth Brown. 2018. "The Cultural Politics of Aspiration: Family Photography's Mixed Feelings." *Journal of Visual Culture* 17 (2): 152-165.

This article describes the relationship between family photography, oral history, and feeling. The authors explore questions about affect and family photography in relationship to black, queer relationality and to Asian, diasporic subjectivities. They argue that the affective modality of family photography for marginalized subjects is that of "mixed feelings", which they analyze through a focus on "aspiration" as central to the visual and affective discourses of family photography, oral history, and diaspora. Working with recent work by Christina Sharpe and Tina Campt, the authors describe aspiration within family photography as indexing both the normative temporalities of capitalist futurity and, at the same time, a utopian technology of black futurity that enables the making of necessary futures outside of white supremacy and heteronormativity. The research is part of a larger photography and oral history project, The Family Camera Network, which the article describes.

MA Theses // Film & Photography Preservation & Collections Management, Ryerson University

Pavao, Vitor. In progress. "The Museum as a Collector of Vernacular Born-Digital Photographs: A Case Study of The Family Camera Network collection at the Royal Ontario Museum." MA Thesis. Film and Photographic Preservation and Collection Management Program, Ryerson University.

Kohan-Harpaz, Idit. 2018. "Digitizing Family Albums at The Family Camera Network, Royal Ontario Museum (ROM): A Case Study of the Evans Family Collection." MA Thesis. Film and Photographic Preservation and Collection Management Program, Ryerson University.

