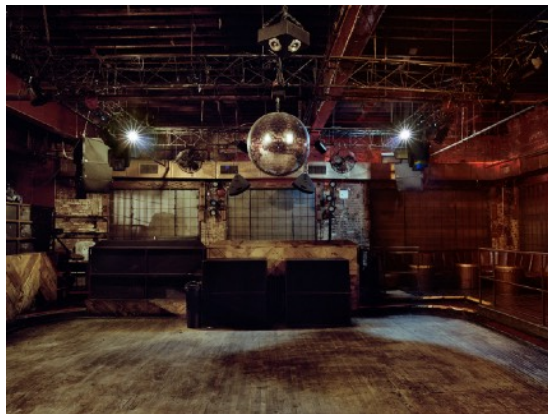




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Contact: info@monirafoundation.org



Images from left to right: Lauren Silverman, Dancefloor (Good Room), Archival Pigment Print, 2020, 60 x 78 inches. Alexa Hoyer, 40.7635908,-73.973738, Archival Pigmented Print, 2020, 16 x 20 inches.

The Monira Foundation, along with Mana Contemporary, is proud to present *Anonymous Architectures*, featuring the work of Brooklyn-based photographers, Lauren Silberman and Alexa Hoyer, on view at Mana Contemporary opening May 14th. Their two photographic projects, *Window Dressing* by Hoyer and *The Lost Happy Hours* by Silberman were made in New York City during the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 when, in the wake of the closures of all non-essential businesses, the city that never sleeps became a veritable ghost town.

With the usually bustling city devoid of its people, structures across New York took on new and unforeseen meanings, both formally and metaphorically. Sites of commerce and gathering emptied out and boarded up became a manifestation of a city under the siege of a rampant virus while their physical alterations literally changed the face of New York.

In The Lost Happy Hours project, Lauren Silberman documented the bars and nightclubs of her vibrant Brooklyn neighborhood as they sat indefinitely unoccupied through the long, Covid months. Spaces of togetherness and conviviality had morphed quickly into funereal catacombs, and Silberman captures the palpable loneliness. In one image, a disco ball hangs forlornly over a vacant dance floor, the nightclub's spotlights shining down into nothingness. In another, plants replace people on a dancefloor, stand-ins for the nightlife denizens now plunged into isolation with the onset of the pandemic. But for Silberman, the lush, thriving greenery also served as a much-needed symbol of hope, representing life and growth during a time of so much fear and uncertainty.

Alexa Hoyer's Window Dressing images were taken mainly during the month of June 2020 when, combined with the Covid lockdown, the world witnessed a series of protests and civil unrest unfold in American cities following the murder of George Floyd by police officers in Minnesota. As protests mounted in New York and elsewhere, shuttered storefronts were hastily boarded up as a means of protection against the perceived threat of looters. Hoyer chronicled the patchworks of wood hammered across doors and shop windows, thrusting to the forefront the uneasy contention between race and capital that exists in the American marketplace. Strikingly, her photographs also highlight the marvels of New York's architecture. Dingy plywood all of a sudden brings the ornate details of a Hermès boutique's façade, for instance, as the mundane clashes with the opulent in an architectural allegory paralleling what was happening on the streets.

Lauren Silberman received her MFA from the International Center of Photography-Bard Program in Advanced Photographic Studies, New York in 2008. She has been awarded residencies at Mana Contemporary as well as others including the Camera Club of New York, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Workspace Program, and ArtGarda in Sirmione, Italy. Her work has been featured in publications like The New York Times Magazine, Elle, and The New Yorker and included in a number of solo and group exhibitions. She lives and works in Brooklyn.

German-born photographer Alexa Hoyer received her MFA from the Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia in 2005. She recently completed a residency at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Governor's Island residency program, and her work has been featured in publications like Vice.com, DOMUS, and Harper's Magazine. Exhibitions include those at the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, the Marjorie Barrick Museum of Art, Las Vegas, and Wave Hill in New York. Hoyer lives and works in Brooklyn.

About Monira Foundation:

Monira Foundation, an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit institution, functions as a radical experimental laboratory, working in close collaboration with artists, curators, musicians, producers, and writers to conceive, realize, and present innovative projects in all media. Its aim is to spark, intensify, and promote an evolving cultural and social dialogue between creators, audiences, and institutions. Focusing on the unique potential of interdisciplinary work in a context distinct from the distracting pressures of academia

and the market, Monira Foundation advances the practices and products of today's foremost artists, amplifying their contributions to communities both local and distant.

For additional images or information on Monira, please email Ysabel Pinyol Blasi: ysabel@monirafoundation.org. Visit the Monira Foundation website at: www.monirafoundation.org. Social: @monirafoundation #monirafoundation. Monira Foundation is located at 888 Newark Ave., Ste 440, Jersey City, NJ 07306.

About Mana Contemporary

ABOUT MANA CONTEMPORARY

Founded in 2011, Mana Contemporary is dedicated to providing a platform for contemporary art and artists through exhibitions, residencies, and public programs. Mana's community network began in New Jersey and has since expanded to include Mana Contemporary Chicago and Mana Contemporary Miami. Membership with Mana Contemporary provides unlimited access to public programming and career development workshops at Mana's three locations and online. As part of a global network of cultural enthusiasts, members gain exclusive benefits when attending art world events, and discounts on live performances and events nationwide.

For additional information on Mana Contemporary, please email Kele McComsey, kele@manacontemporary.com. Visit the Mana Contemporary website at: www.manacontemporary.com Social: @manacontemporary #manacontemporary. Mana Contemporary is located at 888 Newark Ave., Jersey City, NJ 07306.
