

JONA FRANK
You Are Not Enough
May 6 - July 8, 2023

EUQINOM Gallery is pleased to present Jona Frank's *You Are Not Enough*, an exhibition that will reflect Frank's youthful journey to find herself while attempting to grasp and failing to conform to the social mythologies encapsulated by the post-World War II suburban dwelling of her upbringing. Through photographs as well as various objects Frank identifies with her childhood, *You Are Not Enough* will invite viewers to experience episodes—both real and imagined—from Frank's upbringing, and, in so doing, to explore the promises and perils of suburbia conceived not so much as a material landscape as a state of mind.

Picking up on themes explored in the memoir *Cherry Hill: A Childhood Reimagined*, including the alluring promise of the nuclear family that conforms itself to the demands of school and church, the deadening simulacra that populate “readymade” homes understood as the culmination of personal desire, and the claustrophobia created by heteronormative, patriarchal models. While using the language of photography, the artist simultaneously acknowledges and subverts the suburban rituals with which it is associated. Tacitly pointing to the common tendency to “perform” a particular role for the camera, Frank's self-investigation does not directly picture the photographer and her family but instead uses surrogates: actor Laura Dern portrays her mother while younger actors depict a maturing Frank. Forbidden as a child from handling the family camera (an experience “documented” by Frank), the artist plays with the residue of memory filtered through snapshots. This assemblage of unsettling “Kodak moments,” pictures brandish moments of aggressive suburban pride: an expectant young mother places her hand over her abdomen with a knowing smile; mother and daughter in matching outfits show off “picture-perfect” pies.

Also present is the rotary dial phone that seemed to bring only life-shattering pronouncements and meticulous recreation of a birthday party gone awry. Colorful embroideries reference the handiwork traditionally associated with “woman's work” and humorously elevate the seemingly mundane to objects worthy of real attention. At the center of the exhibition stands a miniature sculptural facsimile of the artist's childhood home, through which viewers can watch projections of the domestic tableaux unfolding within. The exhibition serves as a counterpoint to the photographs it features, bringing the viewer back into contact with the physical environment that so powerfully imprinted the mind of the artist as a young girl.

“From the very beginning of this project, I have been interested in playing with the structures of storytelling,” said Jona Frank. “In addition to using photography to explore the feelings and tensions I felt as a child, this project has also been about translating the sensations of childhood into a narrative experience.

Two publications accompanying this exhibition will be available at the gallery; *Cherry Hill, A Childhood Reimagined* by Jona Frank, published by The Monacelli Press, a coming-of-age photographic memoir about Frank's upbringing in—and flight from—a suburban New Jersey household. Also *Jona Frank: Model Home*, an exhibition catalog by Bowdoin College Museum of Art, featuring essays by Jona Frank, Anne Collins Goodyear, photography critic Arthur Lubow, writer Hanna Rosin, curator Dorothy Moss, journalist Jori Finkel, cultural historian, and essayist D.J. Waldie, and an interview between the artist and actor Laura Dern.

About Jona Frank

Jona Frank, who was born and raised in Cherry Hill, NJ, and now lives outside Los Angeles, CA, has long explored through her photography the strategies of identity exploration and formation used by adolescents and young adults, often spending significant periods of time immersed in the world of her subjects. This characterized her approach to picturing the students populating the many cliques visible on American campuses in *High School* (2004); the conservative college students pictured in *Right: Portraits from the Evangelical Ivy League* (2008), and the young British boxers featured in *The Modern Kids* (2015). In 2016 Frank turned her attention to her own youth, exploring the power—and also the limitations—of photography as a narrative tool in her 2020 visual memoir, *Cherry Hill: A Childhood Reimagined* (Monacelli Press). In 2022 Bowdoin College hosted the premier exhibition from the Cherry Hill series, *Jona Frank: Model Home*. Pioneering the use of an anamorphic lens used in filmmaking to create the stills featured in her memoir, Frank undermines the notion that a single, heroic image can encapsulate an entire narrative.