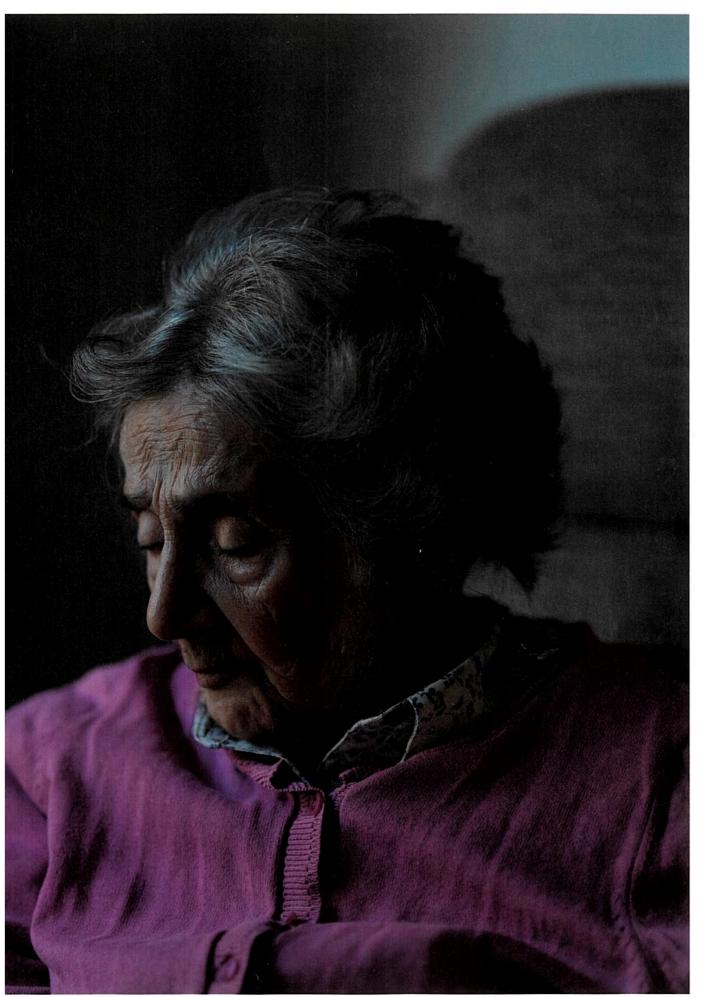


Ketaki Sheth, Munira poses for her wedding album, Jamnagar, Gujarat, 2008

Looking at others: thinking about the world we share and live in

Through his years of work as a curator, Yasufumi Nakamori, the new head of photography at Tate Modern, has come to appreciate the importance of portrait photography in helping us to embrace diversity at a time of increasing division. Here he selects eight artists whose images he feels fulfil that aim



Paul Graham, from the series 'Mother', 2018



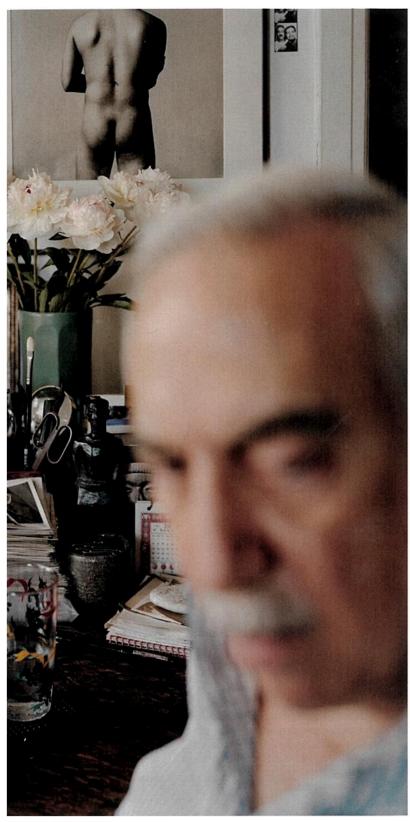
Liz Johnson Artur, Burgess Park, 2010



Sauri Gill, Jannat, Barmer, from the series 'Notes from the Desert' (1999-ongoing)

'The image by Gauri Gill visualises her long-lasting relationship with a Rajasthani woman and her daughters, one of whom collaborated with her to make this elegant portrait'





Alec Soth, Vince, New York City, 2018

◀ family. Gill collaborated with her daughter to make this elegant portrait.

New York City-based Paul Graham (page 23) and D'Angelo Lovell Williams (page 25), who works in both New York and Los Angeles, have made their mothers photographic subjects. Graham has photographed his mother - who lives in Ely, near Cambridge - every time he has returned home to the UK in the past three years. He has portrayed her sitting in the same chair, lit by gentle, natural light through a window. Although she is almost always daydreaming while being photographed, Graham, as her only son, reveals his care and their tender relationship in a sharp-focused portrait.

Williams shows his mother as part of a selfportrait, the practice he is known for. With a keen sense of the absence of gay black Americans in the history and current status of visual art and culture, he makes portraits as visual narratives and equally as autobiographies. In the photograph, Williams and his mother are linked with a piece of red chewing gum, a metaphor for their kinship.

More conceptually, **Leslie Hewitt** (page 24), who also works in New York, tells of the experiences of several generations of 20th-century African-Americans in her work composed of multiple images, which include snapshots and magazine photographs. She meticulously layers and positions the images on a wooden floor before taking a picture. In the photograph shown here, a black woman's face on a page from a magazine, probably Ebony, has two corners deliberately bent by Hewitt to reveal images and words beneath, and is superimposed and obscured by a dark snapshot of a gathering. Her work is a portrait of the time, as the work's title indicates.

Lieko Shiga (page 24), who works in Miyagi in Japan's north-eastern Tohoku region, has created work about the coastal village where she used to live, inviting villagers to take part and documenting their lives. The villagers, and others devastated by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, inspired her to create work about their psychological state after seven years of mourning and rehabilitation. Shiga compares it to the arrival of a spring season after a long and harsh winter. The enigmatic portrait of a young man, his face painted red, titled Human Spring: Eternal Present, exemplifies the villagers' state of mind.

Liz Johnson Artur (page 26), a London-based Russian-Ghanaian photographer, grew up in Bulgaria, Russia and Germany. Since her arrival in London in 1991, she has used photography as a means of discovering black communities, both in London and in Africa, whether in music, fashion or their everyday lives. This has culminated in what she calls her Black Balloon Archive, a collection of pictures shot across London, Paris and New York, as well as in cities in Africa and the Caribbean.

The out-of-focus profile of the critic Vince Aletti by the Minneapolis-based photographer **Alec Soth** (this page) draws attention to the surroundings in his home in New York's East Village: snapshots he has collected; a Peter Hujar portrait of his lover who has died. Talking about his recent portrait photographs, Soth, who had taken a break from the camera, says, "When I returned to photography, I wanted to strip the medium down to its primary elements... I made all of the photographs in interior spaces. I wanted simply to spend time looking at other people and, hopefully, briefly glimpse their interior lives."

Yasufumi Nakamori is senior curator of international art (photography) at Tate Modern