

**Holding On**  
**Gregory Geipel & Louise Francis-Smith**  
 June 21 – July 23, 2021



Gregory Geipel



Louise Francis-Smith

*Two Vancouver photographers document places in the City that are part of an Old Vancouver now threatened by a rapidly evolving New Vancouver.*

This exhibition contains selections from two of **Gregory Geipel's** photographic series. *Still Vancouver*, his most recent body of work, documents older individual buildings across the City. The photographs are a type of portraiture; with a range of building types given visual continuity through the standardized format of each image in the series, allowing for a consideration of the unique personality of each of the structures. However, in Vancouver, where real estate is one of the major drivers of the local economy, these buildings seem valued for the potential monetary worth of the land rather than as vital architectural and social places. They are important components of the urban fabric, but their survival feels tenuous.

*On the Corner*, his tribute to the quickly disappearing corner store, was inspired by the tearing down of his own childhood neighborhood store and its replacement by multi-unit housing. These small shops are often family-run, full of personality, beautiful in their jumble of signs, posters and products. Victims of changing consumer shopping preferences and urban gentrification, very few of these corner stores have survived into New Vancouver, being mostly replaced by sterile gas-station versions located on the roadways leading in and out of the City.

**Louise Francis-Smith** has been undertaking a multi-decade project documenting the Strathcona neighborhood where she lives, with special attention given to Vancouver's historical Chinatown area. During this time, Chinatown has been physically in decline and threatened by encroaching development. Part anthropological study, part classic street photography, Francis-Smith tells the story of this place through the people who live, work and shop here and the sidewalks, streets and small shops where they move, gather and interact.

Sensitive and empathetic, her photographs achieve their resonance through a complete immersion in her project. Over time, she has mastered the expression of a personality through a small gesture or a bit of clothing. Recent photographs show figures from behind, torsos down, reducing visual cues and gestures to the minimum required to tell the story and reveal the personality of the subject. Always aware of the socio-economic conditions of her subjects, she looks closely but unjudgementally, reflecting on life in the community from an insider's perspective.

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Artists: Louise Francis-Smith	francissmithphoto@gmail.com	604 813-2700	louisefrancissmith.com	@louisefrancissmith
Gregory Geipel	info@gregorygeipel.com	604.306.6973	gregorygeipel.com	@gregorygeipel
Gregory Geipel courtesy	Kurbatoff Gallery	www.kurbatoffgallery.com		
Gallery: Chris Keatley	chriskeatley@shaw.ca	604.250.9682	pendulumgallery.bc.ca	@gallerypendulum

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**Pendulum Gallery**  
 885 West Georgia Street  
 Vancouver BC, Canada