



---

NEWS RELEASE

**WORKS BY CONVENTION-DEFYING PHOTOGRAPHER LYNN STERN  
WILL BE SHOWN AT  
THE 2025 EDITION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW PRESENTED BY AIPAD  
OBSCURA GALLERY, BOOTH B4  
The Park Avenue Armory | 643 Park Avenue, New York  
April 23-27, 2025**

***ABSTRACT AS A VERB***

An online conversation between Stern and **Phil Taylor**, Associate Curator, Department of Photography, George Eastman Museum, moderated by Obscura Gallery Director **Jennifer Schlesinger** will take place as part of AIPAD TALKS: Depth of Field series  
Monday, April 7, 2025 at 1pm ET | Register [here](#)

**STERN'S FORTHCOMING SOLO EXHIBITION *ECHOES OF LIGHT* WILL OPEN AT  
OBSCURA GALLERY, SANTA FE, NM  
June 27 – August 9, 2025 | Opening Reception and Book Signing, July 19, 2025**



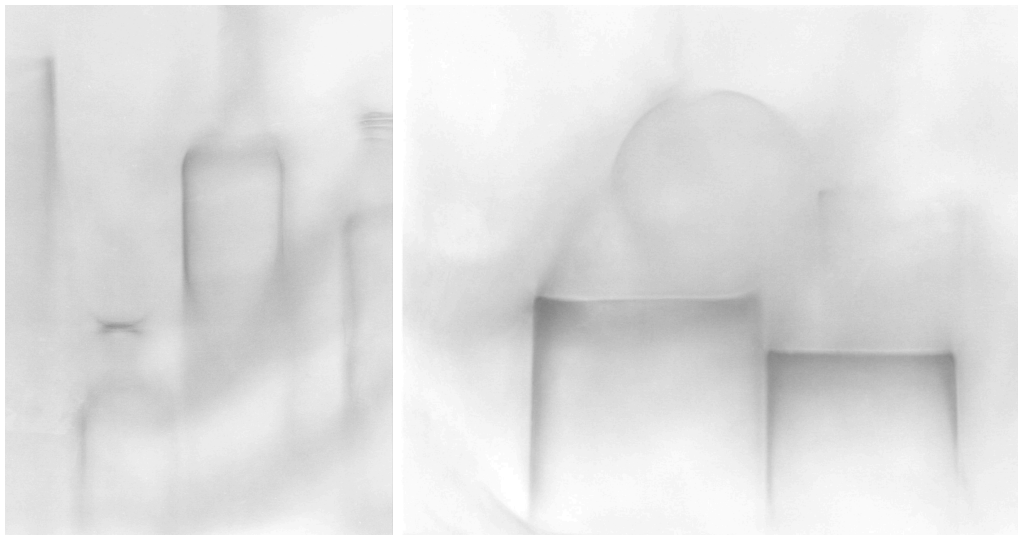
*Unveilings #59, 1985, photo © Lynn Stern*

NEW YORK – **Lynn Stern**, the convention-defying, New York-based, American photographer, has pushed the boundaries of photography during her 47-year career. Her vast body of luminous works are characterized by a quality of indirect, natural light that connects all of her 30 series, regardless of the subject matter. Stern reverses the “Pictorialist” approach to photography that utilizes a traditional dark background, replacing it with white, alluding to a more feminine eye.

Going against the grain of thinking in photography, Stern comments “My photographs are not about what they are of.” Rather than focus on “aboutness,” Stern, in describing her process, says, “I believe that photography is a medium of light, not representation. Light is to photography as paint is to painting. I think like a painter in that my concerns are largely formal: my aim is to create tension, plasticity, texture, and, especially, spatial ambiguity in which figure (or abstract form) and ground seem to merge with or emerge from one another. Above all, I want the image to feel alive and filled with energy.”

Influenced by abstract expressionist painting but working as a lens-based photographer, Stern defies the rules of what is assumed to be essential to photographs by pulling away from the real world, blurring, veiling, cropping, partially obscuring, and otherwise de-literalizing what is in front of her lens. She is driven by “a desire to make visible a quality that is invisible—beyond the ‘thing-itself’.”

Art critic **Donald Kuspit** notes in an early review of Stern’s work, that ghosts of objects in Stern’s abstract works are “even more present than in Giorgio Morandi’s still life paintings, which turn objects into insecurely pure forms,” and says ultimately that “Stern’s photo-abstraction holds its own against abstract painting, and is often more insidiously sublime.”



Left to right: and *Quickening* #19-35a, 2019, photo © Lynn Stern, *Force Field* #19-53, 2021, photo © Lynn Stern

At the 2025 edition of The Photography Show, works by Stern will be presented by **Obscura Gallery** (Booth B4) and will include large inkjet pigment prints from Stern’s *Quickening* and *Force Field* series. In *Quickening*, Stern placed glass bottles and circles behind a scrim, then manipulated both the objects and the scrim to create a sense of quivering movement between the objects. “The images have a dramatic luminosity and feel fleeting – as if they have suddenly come to life and could disappear at any moment,” says Stern. In *Force Field*, Stern placed cubes behind the scrim in such a way that the objects’ edges touching the scrim were sharp, while their outlines were blurred and seemed to emerge from an

indeterminate space. Framed more tightly than in *Quickening*, and with more densely juxtaposed forms, the resulting feeling is of one unit, charged with light and energy.

Over-matted prints from two early series, *Dialogues in Light* and *Unveilings* made in 1985, will also be on view. *Dialogues in Light* marks Stern's first experiments with the white scrim, using different types of natural light and types of flowers. In this series, Stern noticed that the flowers not only exuded a certain elegance, but that sometimes their gestures also possessed an emotional quality. Pursuing this emotional feeling led to a new series titled *Unveilings*, in which she sought to create a dialogue between figure and ground, manipulating the scrim to create what she calls a 'charged' composition in light and shadow. The varying stances of the anemone - the curvature of the stem, the turned backs, profiles or fully open petals, their translucency or lack thereof - become metaphors for vulnerability.



*Dialogues in Light* #20, 1985, photo © Lynn Stern

On the release of *Lynn Stern: Unveilings* published 1988 (Hudson Hills Press), art critic **Barry Schwabsky** commented, "**Paul Caponigro** has supplied a foreword to *Lynn Stern: Unveilings*, yet her set of variations on a simple figure/ground setup, a flower against a white cloth background, is quite distant from Caponigro's warmth: these images take on a complicated purity that is almost violent in effect. They are among the strongest photographic images I have seen recently."

On her process and art today, Stern says, "I think the power of art lies precisely in its disconnection from the external world – its ability to provide a *non-verbal* experience that is different from everything in our daily lives. I use a view camera, which necessitates using a dark cloth to see the image on the ground glass; I love putting it over my head, blocking out everything else and feeling as though I'm entering a different world."

Critiqued in the context of photographic works by **Pierre Dubreuil**, **Edward Steichen**, **Christian Schad**, **Man Ray**, **László Moholy-Nagy**, and **Alfred Stieglitz** made as early as the 1920s, Kuspit concludes "Stern's refined, unnerving photographs are the historically inevitable grand climax of more than a century of experimental photography."

The presentation of Stern's work by Obscura Gallery at the 2025 edition of The Photography Show is part of AIPAD's reenvisioned *Discovery Sector*, which provides a platform to discover new and emerging galleries, new examples of photography and curation, as well as to re-discover the work of some of the medium's most iconic practitioners.

Obscura Gallery located in Sante Fe, NM will present Stern's forthcoming solo exhibition *Echoes of Light* opening June 27–August 9, 2025. The Opening Reception and a Book Signing will take place on July 19, 2025.

## IN CONVERSATION



Phil Taylor, Associate Curator at the George Eastman Museum and photographer Lynn Stern, photo by Kristin Gladney

In advance of The Photography Show presented by AIPAD on Monday, April 7 at 1pm, Stern will join Phil Taylor, Associate Curator at the George Eastman Museum, for [an online conversation](#) moderated by Obscura Gallery director, Jennifer Schlesinger, as part of the *AIPAD Talks: Depth of Field* series. The discussion will focus on Stern's work as it relates to the concept of 'abstract photography.' Register [here](#)

---

## ABOUT LYNN STERN



Stern in her New York studio adjusts glass objects behind a white translucent scrim for her *Quickening* 1985 series, photo by Lee Ryder

[Lynn Stern](#) (b.1942) is an American photographer. The primary focus of Stern's black-and-white film photography is luminosity. She uses exclusively natural, indirect light, making it the subject of her images rather than the means by which to illuminate.

Stern began photographing in 1977, studying first at the International Center of Photography and then privately with Joseph Saltzer. Since 1985, Stern has been using a translucent scrim of black or white fabric to create a quality of diffuse light that is a constant in all of her work. She has been working with abstraction for decades, sometimes using the scrim alone to create completely non-objective images, and sometimes combining it with glass objects that merge with the fabric; in these images, the objects are not important as subject matter, instead becoming elements within a composition of light and ambiguous space.

As the daughter of the late David M. Solinger (art collector and former Whitney Museum president), Stern grew up surrounded by an extensive collection of Abstract Expressionist paintings and sculptures. Her later influences would include photographers Edward Weston and Paul Caponigro and painters of the 19th-century Luminist movement. Stern has exhibited throughout the United States and Europe, and her photographs are included in numerous public and private collections, including the Brooklyn Museum of Art; the Herbert F. Johnson Museum, Cornell University (Ithaca); the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Portland Art Museum; the Victoria and Albert Museum (London); the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York); and the Yale University Art Gallery (New Haven, CT), among others. The Lynn Stern archive is located at the Center for Creative Photography, Tucson, AZ

She was born, raised, lives and works in New York.

Follow: [@lynnsternphotographs](#)

---

#### **COMMUNICATIONS | MEDIA RELATIONS**

Lyn Winter, Inc., | Lyn Winter, [lyn@lynwinter.com](mailto:lyn@lynwinter.com), Isabelle Alfonso, [isabelle@lynwinter.com](mailto:isabelle@lynwinter.com)

#### **[LINK TO PRESS IMAGES AND INFORMATION](#)**

#### **SALES INQUIRIES**

Jennifer Schlesinger, Obscura Gallery, [info@obscuragallery.net](mailto:info@obscuragallery.net) or tel. 505-577-6708