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OFFICE OF  
COMMUNICATIONS

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## **City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs Announces *Anonymous Ancestors***



**Charleston, S.C.** — The city of Charleston’s Office of Cultural Affairs presents *Anonymous Ancestors*, on view from October 28, 2022 to January 29, 2023 at City Gallery, 34 Prioleau Street. City Gallery will host an opening reception for the exhibition on Friday, October 28 from 5 – 7 p.m.

To stand within Susan Lenz’s *Anonymous Ancestors* is to become immersed in the myriad of family stories handed down through generations. Thousands of anonymous, vintage photographs have been altered to create a nostalgic interior. Works include over 250 individually framed, altered images; furniture upholstered with image transferred fabric; and three sculptural garments.

Viewers are invited to sit, browse through the altered photo albums and scrapbooks while contemplating the future of their own heirlooms. Minds wander to visions of forgotten friends, past holidays, ancient occasions, former cars and hilarious fashion trends. Yet, these are anonymous photos. They come from yard sales, auctions, and abandoned locations. Who are these people? Who really knows? The site-specific installation transforms City Gallery into a comfortable sitting parlor where the inhabitants become distant aunts and uncles, cousins, grandparents, siblings and in-laws. They are society’s family tree, our collective wall of ancestors.

This installation has been shown at the USCB Sea Islands Center Gallery in Beaufort (2016), the University of South Carolina-Upstate’s Gallery on Main in Spartanburg (2017), Eastern

Shore Art Center in Fairhope, Alabama (2018), Theatre Art Galleries in High Point, North Carolina (2018), and the Gadsden Museum of Art in Gadsden, Alabama (2019).

**About the artist: Susan Lenz**

Susan Lenz is a professional studio artist who works to articulate the accumulated memory inherent in discarded things, seeking a partnership with her materials, their purposes, values, and familiar associations.

Susan indulges a passion for old textiles, book arts, and 3D found object assemblages. Anonymous photos are an obsession. These are among the key ways Susan uses to communicate a moment between the temporal and the fixed and to give new life to old things.

Susan’s work has appeared in national publications, numerous juried exhibitions, and at fine craft shows including the Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show and the Smithsonian Craft Show. She has been featured on art quilting television programs and on South Carolina ETV’s Palmetto Scene. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Textile Museum in Washington, DC and the McKissick Museum in South Carolina.

Susan has been awarded fully-funded fellowships to art residencies including The Anderson Center, Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Hot Springs National Park, Great Basin National Park, the Studios of Key West, and Homestead National Monument. Her solo installations have been mounted all over the country including the Mesa Contemporary Museum of Art and as far away as the Festival of Quilts in Birmingham, England. Susan is represented by the Grovewood Gallery in Asheville.

**About City Gallery**

City Gallery, located at Joe Riley Waterfront Park, is owned by the City of Charleston and operated by the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs, presenting an annual program of exhibitions and events featuring the finest contemporary art from local, regional, national and international artists, with a focus on the Lowcountry. City Gallery is located at 34 Prioleau Street in downtown Charleston, and gallery hours of operation are noon until 5 p.m., Thursday through Sunday. For more information and holiday closures, visit [www.charleston-sc.gov/citygallery](http://www.charleston-sc.gov/citygallery) or call 843-958-6484.

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