



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

Sandra Gioia Treadway
Librarian of Virginia

“What Peace Looks Like”

Columbia Pike: Through the Lens of Community, an exhibition of photographs at the Library of Virginia, explores Arlington’s Columbia Pike, a community so diverse that it’s been described as a “World in a Zip Code.”

RUNS AUGUST 31, 2021–JANUARY 8, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RICHMOND, VIRGINIA – ***Columbia Pike: Through the Lens of Community***, a unique exhibition of photographs at the Library of Virginia running August 31, 2021–January 8, 2022, celebrates the extraordinary cultural diversity found within a single community in Northern Virginia. Columbia Pike Documentary Project (CPDP) photographers, whose personal connections to the community allowed them to capture the strength, pride, resilience, elegance, and beauty of so many overlapping cultures, created the works on view.

Columbia Pike originated in the 19th century as a toll road connecting rural Virginia with the nation's capital. Today, the Columbia Pike corridor is one of the most culturally diverse communities in the nation, and possibly in the world. More than 130 languages are spoken in Arlington County, with the densest concentration along the Pike. At first glance, life doesn’t appear so different from other contemporary urban neighborhoods. Unlike in many parts of the world, or even in our own country, however, the stunningly diverse group of people—representing every continent—who live and work there do so in relative harmony. “This is what peace looks like. People get along. This is how we should be,” explained CPDP photographer Lloyd Wolf.

The inspiration for the documentary project came from a conversation in 2007 when Wolf, along with fellow residents Paula and Todd Endo, recognized that Columbia Pike was something special and deserved attention. They welcomed additional photographers to the project—including Dewey Tron, Xang Mimi Ho, Lara Ajami, Moises Gomez, and Aleksandra Lagkueva along with writer and community art activist Sushmita Mazumdar—and set about photographing as many aspects of the Pike as they could. Together the team built a remarkable visual and oral history archive ranging in style from street photography to landscape

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photography to portraiture. Learn more about the documentary project at <https://cpdpcolumbiapike.blogspot.com>.

Several thousand photographs from the Columbia Pike Documentary Project were transferred to the Library of Virginia's Special Collections this spring. More than 70 of these images will be highlighted in *Columbia Pike: Through the Lens of Community*. The exhibition will also include information about the neighborhood, the residents, and the photographers themselves.

"The Library is grateful to welcome these compelling works to our collection," said Visual Studies Collection coordinator Dale Neighbors. "As the nation seems more divided than ever, this collection shows how one community is making diversity work."

Look for information about exhibition-related events and programs on the Library's calendar (www.lva.virginia.gov/news) and Facebook page in the coming weeks.

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Find a selection of exhibition photographs here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jniso2d4ey4gfkw/AABKRQYLnlMAMNeud4CKYmv6a?dl=0>

About the Library of Virginia

The Library of Virginia is one of the oldest agencies of Virginia government, founded in 1823 to preserve and provide access to the state's incomparable printed and manuscript holdings. Its collection, which has grown steadily through the years, is the most comprehensive resource in the world for the study of Virginia history, culture, and government with over 130 million items in the collections. The Library also engages the public through in-person and virtual events, education programs, and online resources that reach nearly 4 million individuals each year throughout the commonwealth and beyond. Visit www.lva.virginia.gov.

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