

SHELTER-IN-PLACE

New Year's Eve 2019–2020. The number seemed auspicious. 2020, perfect vision. A small group of us has a long time habit of getting together to celebrate, with elaborate plans for sharing the cooking and lots of alcohol. That night, in the wee hours of the New Year, our friend Eduardo set up his camera in a closet office, and we arranged ourselves in the adjacent living room in anticipation of his sprint through obstacles to be in the picture. It took more than one try, and a crash landing. The black and white photo is a perfect memento of the night, the good humor and the need to document the tradition. That was the last real party of 2020.

I had an exhibition at James Harris Gallery that ran through January. My family visited, I made tentative plans to go to Oaxaca, we spent several days sorting through the rolled up canvasses left in Bob's studio, I bought a plane ticket to L.A. for Easter, I went to my acupuncturist, shopped at Goodwill, made plans to go to L.A. in June to see *Hamilton*, I met my family for happy hour at a neighborhood bar. I'd missed my twin brothers' 75th birthday in 2019, planned to make it for their 76th in summer 2020, and, finally, looked forward to going back to Accokeek in September for an *Outstanding in the Field* dinner at my brother and sister-in-law's farm.

Then the coronavirus hit Seattle and the rest of the world; and we stopped in our tracks. It was mysterious, frightening, and this time old people were most vulnerable. We were told to shelter-in-place. The future was blank and unknowable. All plans were canceled.

I am distanced even from my own family. In lieu of seeing them and friends with whom I'd made plans, I asked them to take photos of themselves sheltered in place. Because black and white photographs are timeless, and I had the New Years photo as a model, I asked for black and white horizontal photographs. And, because we are scattered geographically, "place" was important.

I wanted us together in one place.

Fay Jones
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