

Rosalie Rosenthal
Midlife Tableaux

Midlife is traditionally a nexus for recalibration; parents reach an age of needing care, children become adults, and those of us in the middle assess and adapt. *Midlife Tableaux* is a manifestation of that reconsideration of self through examination of significant objects in my familial histories.

The project began after my father's worsening Alzheimer's disease caused my parents to move from their home. Objects were packed-up, and many made their way to me. I photographed these objects as an act of care and as an expression of agency as I witnessed the intractable grip of memory loss. I chose the visual language of the still life and vanitas traditions to provide the historical context to explore mortality and to consider the significance of possessions, once resplendent, but now outdated.

As my work progressed and the pandemic kept my family at home, I included myself and my daughter in the scenes. The intergenerational element allows the objects to become actors in a larger narrative about the gift and weight of a family legacy, both material and individual. *Midlife Tableaux* touches the human experiences of loss and transition and offers a respite for others to mine their interiority.

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