

ONLOOKER

Onlooker seeks to reveal the common threads that bind us in our everyday lives. The photographs are candid portraits that encapsulate backstories about loners, dreamers, thinkers, listeners, observers and passersby as we travel through each other's landscape. These are stories I share as an onlooker, but are my stories too, as an average person just going about my life.

Sometime ago, I found a collection of poems by Leonard Cohen...have been a fan of his music and writing since the 1970's. The poem, "I Wonder How Many People in this City" from *The Spice-Box of Earth* (1961) is not a complicated statement, just a question that made me think about my experiences observing people I do not know and being observed in the same way. But, instead of writing poems or songs, I make photo notes as a witness to life around me.

"I wonder how many people in this city
live in furnished rooms.
Late at night when I look out at the buildings
I swear I see a face in every window
Looking back at me,
And when I turn away
I wonder how many go back to their desks
And write this down."

Elliot Erwitt said in an interview with Stephanie Rafanelli for the story, "Life Behind The Lens" published by *The Evening Standard* 4/16/2015 that "Photography is an art of observation. It's about finding something interesting in an ordinary place. I've found it has little to do with the things you see and everything to do with the way you see them." This is my guiding philosophy.

Susan Gans