

A photograph of two elderly women standing in front of a rustic log cabin. The woman on the left wears a white headscarf, glasses, a black and white patterned sleeveless top, and brown pants. She holds a bunch of green herbs in her right hand and a blue bucket filled with blueberries in her left. The woman on the right has grey hair, wears a green and blue plaid short-sleeved shirt and brown pants. She holds a pink bucket in her right hand and a bunch of blueberries in her left. The background is a wall of horizontal log logs. The ground is covered in tall green grass and some small yellow flowers.

THE WINNER OF THE BIENNIAL  
CENTER FOR DOCUMENTARY STUDIES/  
HONICKMAN FIRST BOOK PRIZE IN PHOTOGRAPHY

# AUNTIES

*The Seven Summers of Alevtina and Ludmila*

Sandra S. Phillips selects Nadia Sablin for first prize  
book in this important series celebrating  
North American photography

“In 1952, my grandfather began to lose his vision as a result of being wounded in World War II. Wanting to return to the place where he grew up, he found an unoccupied hill in a village north of St. Petersburg, close to his brothers, sisters, and cousins. He took his house apart, log by log, and floated it down the Oyat River to its present location and reconstructed it. More than sixty years later, this house is still occupied by my aunts from April to September. The two women, who spent their youth working in big cities and never married, have relied on each other for support and companionship all their lives. I have been spending my summers with them, photographing their habits and occupations and the small world that surrounds them. Leaving and returning again divides our time into chapters, as the story moves toward its inevitable end.”—**Nadia Sablin**





“Nadia Sablin, who was born in Russia but has lived in the United States since she was a girl, has visited her father’s sisters each summer for seven years now, finding comfort in knowing them and celebrating the lives they have chosen for themselves. . . . Their bright clothing, the pleasing picturesqueness of their home and surroundings, bring to mind the bright-colored illustrations in Russian fairytale books that were so important to such modern artists as Wassily Kandinsky. In these pictures it is always spring or summer, the garden flourishes, the women enjoy the span of the seasons. The photographs are warm with an aroma of the magical. . . . [Sablin] chooses to show their way of living as almost enchanted: we can hardly believe that what we see in these pictures will ever disappear.”—Sandra S. Phillips, Prize Judge



**NADIA SABLIN**, a freelance photographer based in Brooklyn, New York, earned a B.F.A. from the Rochester Institute of Technology in 2002 and an M.F.A. from Arizona State University in 2011. Her work has been featured in such publications as the *New York Times*, the *Guardian*, the *Moscow Times*, *Slate*, *American Photo*, the *Calvert Journal*, and WPO's *The Magazine*. Sablin, who has received the Firecracker Photographic Grant, a New York Foundation for the Arts fellowship, and a Puffin Foundation Grant, was named one of the Magenta Foundation's Emerging Photographers in 2011, and was Sean O'Hagan's Juror's Pick for the Daylight Photo Awards in 2013. Sablin's photographs have been seen in solo and group exhibitions across the United States, including the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Philadelphia Photo Arts Center, the Southeast Museum of Photography, the Cleveland Museum of Art, Bellevue College in Washington, and Texas Women's University School of Art. Sablin's photographs of her Russian aunts were chosen from two hundred entries to win the seventh biennial CDS/Honickman First Book Prize in Photography.

**SANDRA S. PHILLIPS** is the senior curator of photography at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Among the most recent exhibitions that she has curated for SFMOMA are *South Africa in Apartheid and After: David Goldblatt, Ernest Cole, Billy Monk; Rineke Dijkstra: A Retrospective*; and *Exposed: Voyeurism, Surveillance, and the Camera Since 1870*. Over her career, she has curated major exhibitions, including *Crossing the Frontier: Photographs of the Developing West; William Klein New York 1954–1955; Police Pictures: The Photograph as Evidence; Diane Arbus: Revelations; Larry Sultan: The Valley*; and *Robert Adams: Turning Back*. Phillips has authored or coauthored numerous catalogs, and her articles and essays have appeared in such journals as *Art in America*, *DoubleTake*, and *History of Photography*.

**The Center for Documentary Studies/Honickman First Book Prize in Photography** is open to North American photographers who use their cameras for creative exploration, whether it be of places, people, or communities; of the natural or social world; of beauty at large or the lack of it; of objective or subjective realities. [firstbookprizephoto.com](http://firstbookprizephoto.com)



### ***Aunties: The Seven Summers of Alevtina and Ludmila***

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For more information about this important book series, Nadia Sablin's *Aunties*, and the previous prizewinning books, visit [firstbookprizephoto.com](http://firstbookprizephoto.com).

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