



ALAN GOVENAR
The Eyes and Ears of the People
June 13 - July 25

cris worley
FINE ARTS

ALAN GOVENAR

The Eyes and Ears of the People

June 13 - July 25, 2026

Cris Worley Fine Arts is honored to present *The Eyes and Ears of the People*, by award-winning photographer, writer, poet, playwright and filmmaker, Alan Govenaar, opening Saturday, June 13th, with a reception from 5-7 PM. The exhibition, which continues through July 25th, features a powerful series of photographs portraying individuals from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and traditions.

The exhibition reflects decades of Govenaar's documentary work exploring cultural identity, representation, and heritage. Central to the exhibition are life-sized and smaller-scale portrait photographs that examine how scale, presence, and visual representation shape the viewer's relationship to the subject. Govenaar is an interdisciplinary artist, whose subjects inform his medium of expression, whether in photography, poetry, novels, films, musical theatre, and studies that bring new perspectives to historical issues and diverse cultures.

Govenaar's exploration of human-sized portraiture began with a 1987 photograph of a couple dancing at the Longhorn Ballroom, created from a 4x5 color negative made from a Kodachrome slide. That image inspired an extensive body of work focused on recipients of the National Heritage Fellowship, the nation's highest honor in folk and traditional arts awarded annually by the National Endowment for the Arts. Many of these individuals were also subjects of Govenaar's films, books, radio programs, exhibitions, and catalogues produced through Documentary Arts, the nonprofit organization he founded in 1985 to advance new perspectives on history and diverse cultures.

Throughout the process of creating this series, Govenaar encouraged subjects to present themselves as they wished to be seen. Working within a documentary framework, often with the assistance of a photographic assistant and carefully constructed studio lighting environments, his approach remained intentionally open, collaborative, and responsive to the individuality of each subject.



Alan Govenaar, *Compassion*, Kamala Lakshmi Narayanan, dancer, detail

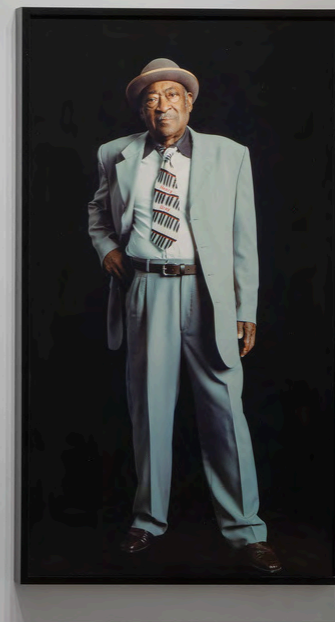


Alan Govenar, *The Eyes and Ears of the People*, installation shot

Poetry is a constant for Govenar. He has been writing poems for years, creating and revising works that often come to fruition decades later. For this exhibition, Govenar wrote the following poem, personal, but as always, in pursuit of the universal, hopeful, finding common ground in a very divided world.

Standing face to face
with someone I don't know.
Realizing something new about myself
by looking at someone else.
Even if whoever couldn't be more different
than who I am.
Imagining connections between realities
that often live in limbo.
Without borders or limitations.
Trusting the words that find their way
out of my mouth
and the images that take shape
through the lens of my camera.

-Alan Govenar



Alan Govenar
Norma Miller, dancer and Lindy Hop born in New York City (Harlem), New York, 2008
archival pigment print
37.50h x 21.50w x 1.50d in
AG027
ED. 5
\$4,000 unframed





Alan Govenar

Norma Miller, dancer and Lindy Hop born in New York City (Harlem), New York, 2008

archival pigment print

37.50h x 21.50w x 1.50d in

AG028

ED. 5

\$4,000 unframed



Alan Govonar, *Norma Miller, dancer and Lindy Hop born in New York City (Harlem), New York, detail*

Alan Govenar

Norma Miller, dancer and Lindy Hop born in New York City (Harlem), New York, 2008

archival pigment print

37.50h x 21.50w x 1.50d in

AG029

ED. 5

\$4,000 unframed





Alan Govenar

Norma Miller, dancer and Lindy Hop born in New York City (Harlem), New York, 2008

archival pigment print

37.50h x 21.50w x 1.50d in

AG030

ED. 5

\$4,000 unframed

Alan Govenar
Norma Miller, dancer and Lindy Hop born in New York City (Harlem), New York, 2008
archival pigment print
37.50h x 21.50w x 1.50d in
AG031
ED. 5
\$4,000 unframed





Alan Govenar, *The Eyes and Ears of the People*, installation shot



Alan Govenar, *Henry Gray*, blues pianist born in Alsen, Louisiana, detail

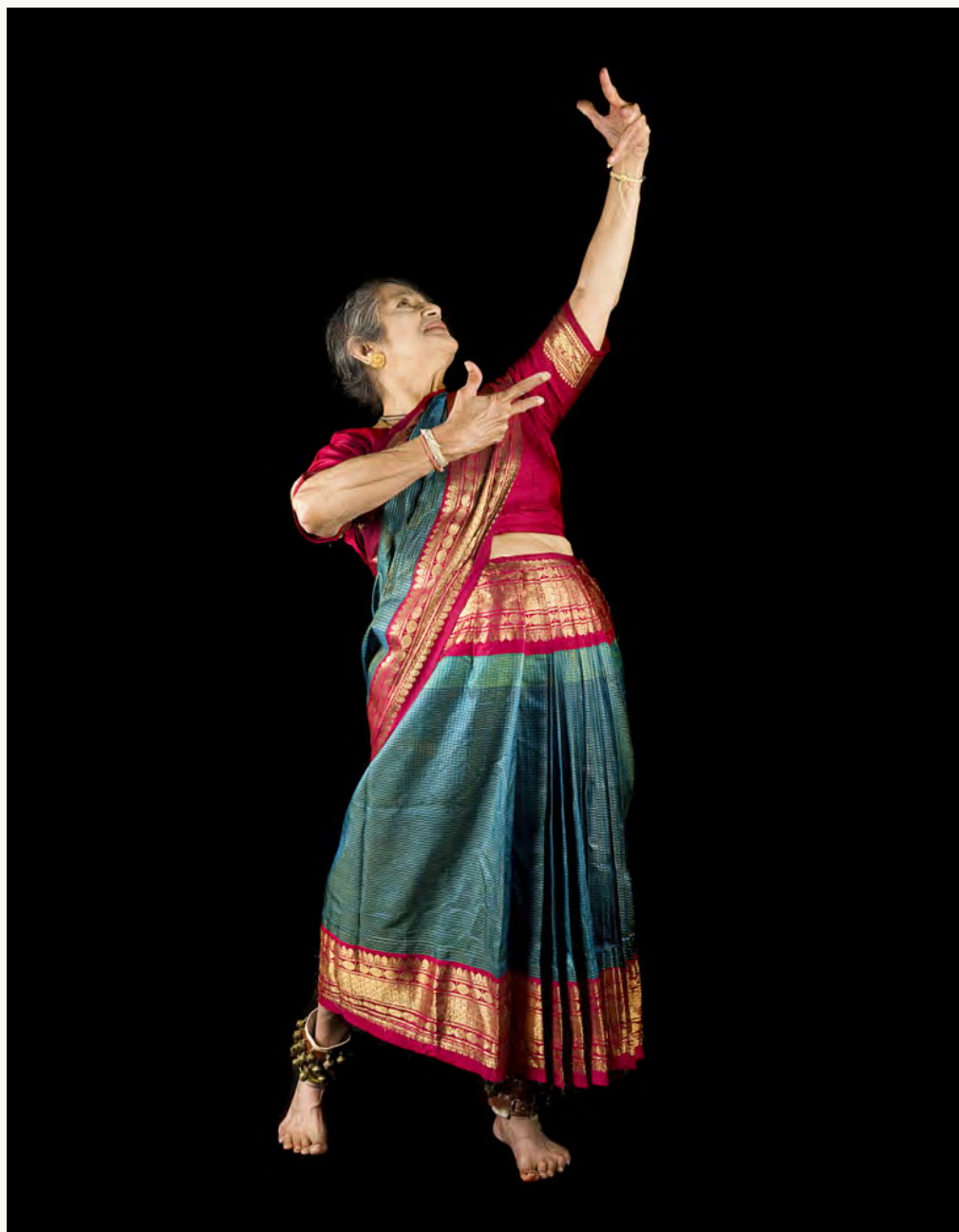
Alan Govenar
Henry Gray, blues pianist born in Alsen, Louisiana, 2006
archival pigment print
69.50h x 39.50w x 1.50d in
AG016
ED. 5
\$10,000 unframed







Alan Govenar
*Love, Kamala Lakshmi Narayanan, dancer, born in
Mayuram in south India, demonstrating the navarasas, or
the nine emotions of Bharatanatyam (classical dance of
South India), Bethesda, Maryland, 2010*
archival pigment print
20h x 16w x 1d in
AG017
ED. 5
\$2,500 unframed





Alan Govenar

*Valor, Kamala Lakshmi Narayanan, dancer, born in
Mayuram in south India, demonstrating the navarasas,
or the nine emotions of Bharatanatyam (classical dance
of South India), Bethesda, Maryland, 2010*

archival pigment print

20h x 16w x 1d in

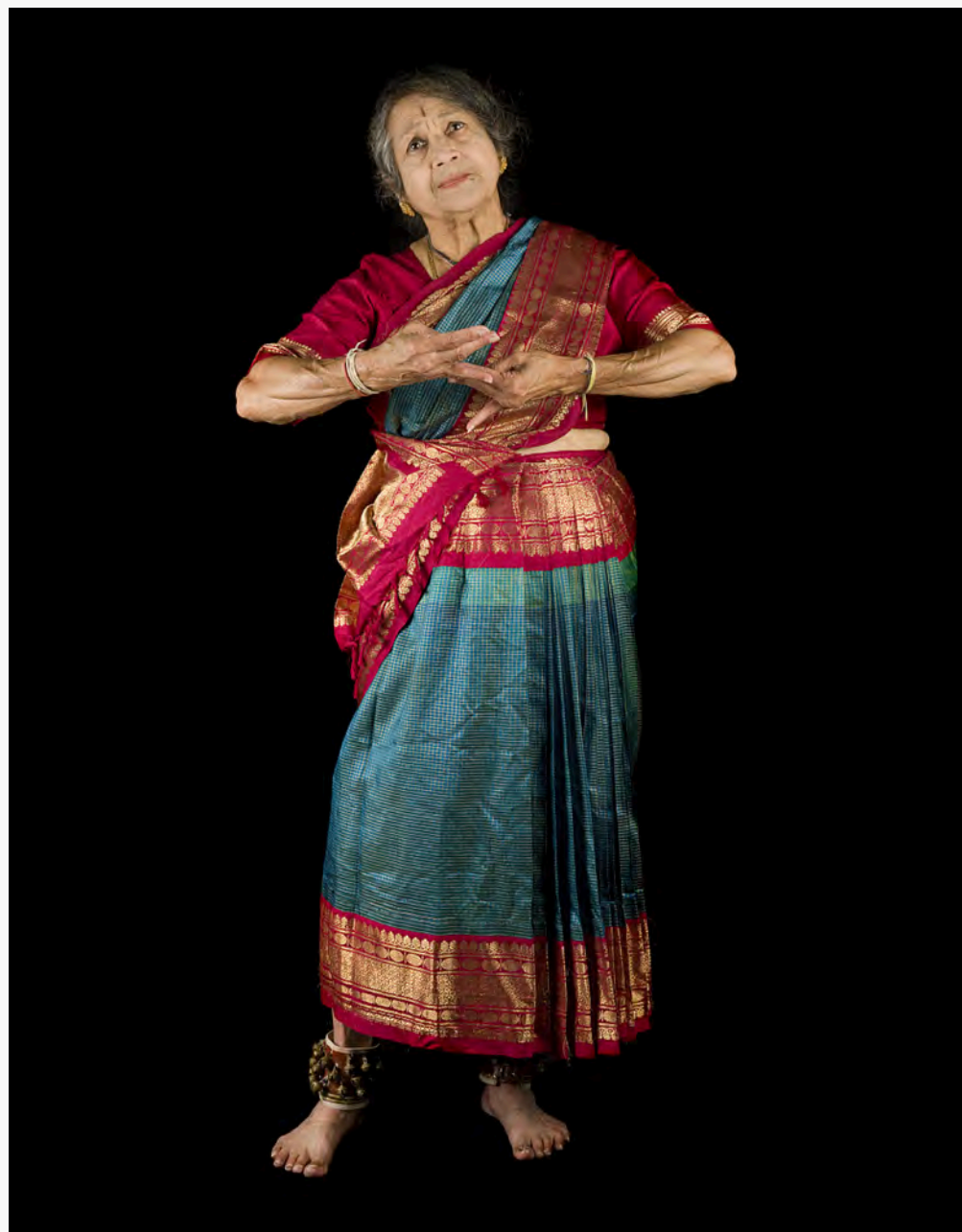
AG018

ED. 5

\$2,500 unframed



Alan Govenar
*Compassion, Kamala Lakshmi Narayanan, dancer, born in
Mayuram in south India, demonstrating the navarasas, or
the nine emotions of Bharatanatyam (classical dance of
South India), Bethesda, Maryland, 2010*
archival pigment print
20h x 16w x 1d in
AG019
ED. 5
\$2,500 unframed





Alan Govenar

*Wonder, Kamala Lakshmi Narayanan, dancer, born in
Mayuram in south India, demonstrating the navarasas,
or the nine emotions of Bharatanatyam (classical
dance of South India), Bethesda, Maryland, 2010*

archival pigment print

20h x 16w x 1d in

AG020

ED. 5

\$2,500 unframed



Alan Govenar

*Humor, Kamala Lakshmi Narayanan, dancer, born in
Mayuram in south India, demonstrating the navarasas,
or the nine emotions of Bharatanatyam (classical
dance of South India), Bethesda, Maryland, 2010*

archival pigment print

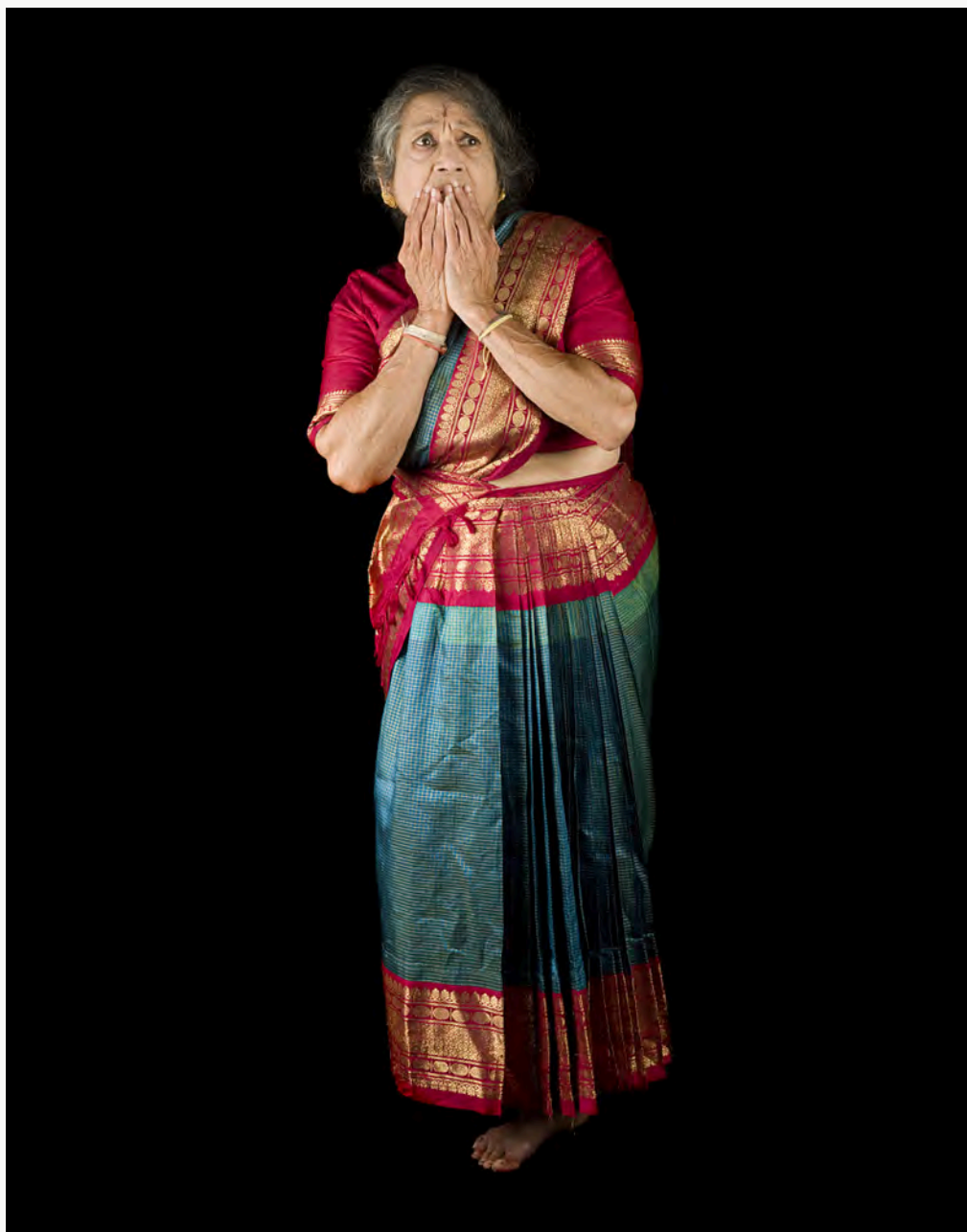
20h x 16w x 1d in

AG021

ED. 5

\$2,500 unframed





Alan Govenar

*Fear, Kamala Lakshmi Narayanan, dancer, born in Mayuram
in south India, demonstrating the navarasas, or the nine
emotions of Bharatanatyam (classical dance of South
India), Bethesda, Maryland, 2010*

archival pigment print

20h x 16w x 1d in

AG022

ED. 5

\$2,500 unframed

Alan Govenar
*Anger, Kamala Lakshmi Narayanan, dancer, born in
Mayuram in south India, demonstrating the navarasas, or
the nine emotions of Bharatanatyam (classical dance of
South India), Bethesda, Maryland, 2010*
archival pigment print
20h x 16w x 1d in
AG024
ED. 5
\$2,500 unframed





Alan Govenar

*Peace, Kamala Lakshmi Narayanan, dancer, born in
Mayuram in south India, demonstrating the navarasas, or the
nine emotions of Bharatanatyam (classical dance of South
India), Bethesda, Maryland, 2010*

archival pigment print

20h x 16w x 1d in

AG025

ED. 5

\$2,500 unframed



Alan Govonar, *The Eyes and Ears of the People*, installation shot





Alan Govonar, *Couple Dancing, dancers, Longhorn Ballroom, Dallas, Texas, 1987, detail*

Alan Govenar
Couple Dancing, dancers, Longhorn Ballroom, Dallas, Texas,
1987, 1987 archival pigment print
69.50h x 39.50w x 1.50d in
AG011
ED. 5
\$15,000 unframed





Alan Govenar, *The Eyes and Ears of the People*, installation shot



Alan Govenar
Frank Newsome, gospel singer and musician born in Pike County, Kentucky, 2011
archival pigment print
41.50h x 23.50w x 1.50d in
AG013
ED. 5
\$4,500 unframed



Alan Govenar, *Frank Newsome, gospel singer and musician born in Pike County, Kentucky, 2011, detail*



Alan Govanar
Frank Newsome, gospel singer and musician born in Pike County, Kentucky, 2011
archival pigment print
41.50h x 23.50w x 1.50d in
AG014
ED. 5
\$4,500 unframed



Alan Govenar
Frank Newsome, gospel singer and musician born in Pike County, Kentucky, 2011
archival pigment print
41.50h x 23.50w x 1.50d in
AG015
ED. 5
\$4,500 unframed



Alan Govenar, *The Eyes and Ears of the People*, installation shot





Alan Govenar, Evalena Henry, basket maker and artisan born in San Carlos Apache Reservation, Arizona, 2007, detail



Alan Govenar
*Evalena Henry, basket maker and artisan born in San Carlos
Apache Reservation, Arizona, 2007 archival pigment print*
69.50h x 39.50w x 1.50d in
AG012
ED. 5
\$10,000 unframed





Alan Govenar, *Moges Seyoum, liturgical singer, born in the Shewa region of central Ethiopia, 2008, detail*

Alan Govenar
*Moges Seyoum, liturgical singer, born in the Shewa
region of central Ethiopia, 2008 archival pigment print*
51.50h x 49.50w x 2.25d in
AG026
ED. 5
\$10,000 unframed





Alan Govenar - b. 1952

Over the years, Govenar has expanded this work internationally through major exhibitions and commissions. In 2008, he was commissioned by the Musée franco-américain du château de Blérancourt to direct and produce a series of sixteen human-sized videos. In 2010, he created forty-four life-sized photographs for the exhibition *Recognizing Our Cultural Heritage: An American and Flemish Dialogue* presented at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. Organized in collaboration with FARO in Brussels, the exhibition later toured five cities throughout Belgium. Concurrent projects included *Dual Lives: Chinese Opera* in New York City for the Wright Museum and the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point, as well as a series of human-sized videos for *Jasper, Texas: The Community Photographs of Alonzo Jordan* at the International Center of Photography.

The Eyes and Ears of the People continues and expands upon these longstanding investigations into cultural memory, identity, and representation. Interweaving the visual language of documentary film and photography with influences drawn from Govenar's novels, poetry, and plays, the exhibition invites viewers to consider how individuals actively participate in shaping the ways they are seen.

Works by Alan Govenar are held in numerous prominent museum, library, and institutional collections in the United States and internationally, including The Museum of Modern Art, Victoria and Albert Museum, Centre Georges Pompidou Bibliothèque Kandinsky in Paris, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Library of Congress, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the New York Public Library, the Boston Public Library, the Getty Center, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago John M. Flaxman Memorial Library, the Tyler Museum of Art, Texas Tech University, and the Meermanno Museum in The Hague, The Netherlands.

