Intergenerational Philosophical Activity

Carl Trahan • What Is a Shadow That It Must Be Captured?

For ages 9 and up

1 **To begin the activity, take some time to explore the exhibition at your own pace. Get up close to the artworks to observe its details. Consider what you see. . . and what you don't see!**

2 **Together, reflect on the questions raised in this dialogue:**

Wow! Look at the picture of the Sun. It's shining brightly, isn't it?

A long time ago, a philosopher named Plato compared the Sun to knowledge, because without its light, the world would be plunged into darkness. We wouldn't be able to see or understand anything around us.

What about you? Would you say that you absolutely have to see something in order to understand it?

According to some scientists, about a quarter of the universe is made up of dark matter. It is a very dense form of matter, but completely invisible to our eyes. Even though the sky seems empty when we look at the stars, it actually holds many hidden mysteries!

In Carl Trahan's photos, do you think the people photographed are surrounded by emptiness? Or is the darkness hiding something?

Eugene Thacker, a philosopher who inspires Carl Trahan, believes in the idea of a "world-without-us"—that is, that our planet would continue to exist without humans. What do you think? If humanity were to disappear, would the universe be any different?