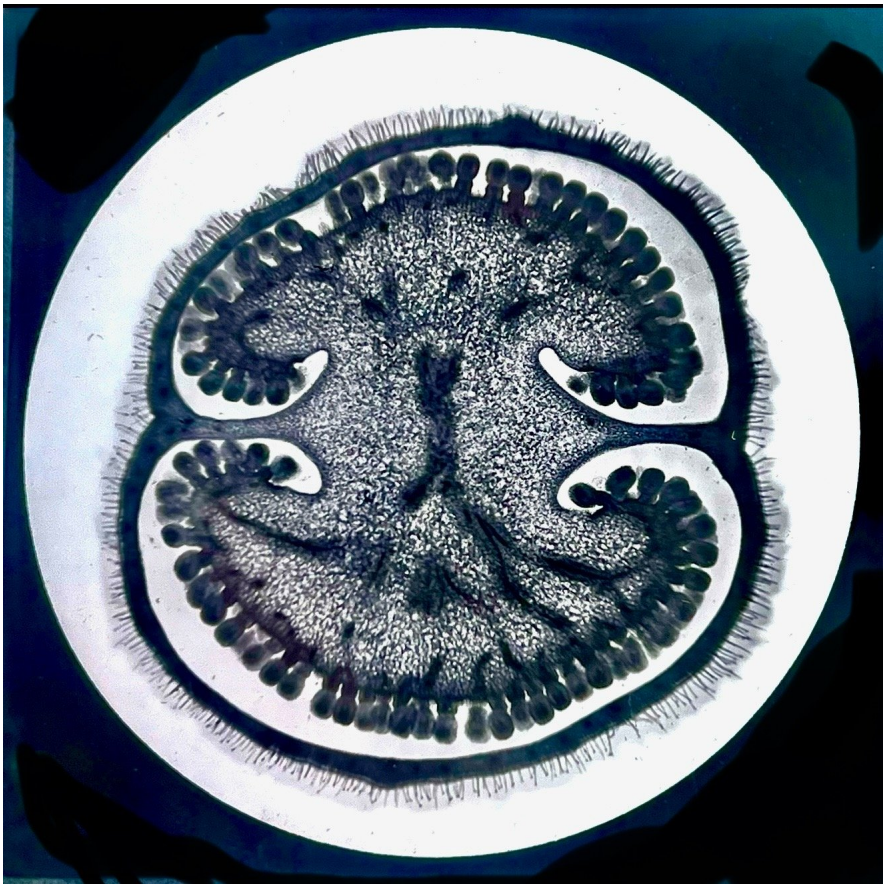
I Say Potato | Bridgehampton Museum

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Potato Ovary 19th century glass slide

Written by Carolyn Schachtel

What separates the past from the present? What changes, and what stays the same?

The Bridgehampton Museum's current exhibition, I Say Potato, contends with themes of memory, nostalgia, and identity of place. It does so through spotlighting a Long Island staple, ever-present throughout the region's history: the potato. The varied assortment of images featured in the exhibition reflects how the land—and, in turn, its inhabitants — has transformed over the past centuries, featuring nineteenth-century photographs and contemporary, experimental pieces alike. Together, the collection pays homage to Long Island's agricultural industry, honoring the crop as inextricably intertwined with the region's history.



1971 LA police with LSD laced potato chips

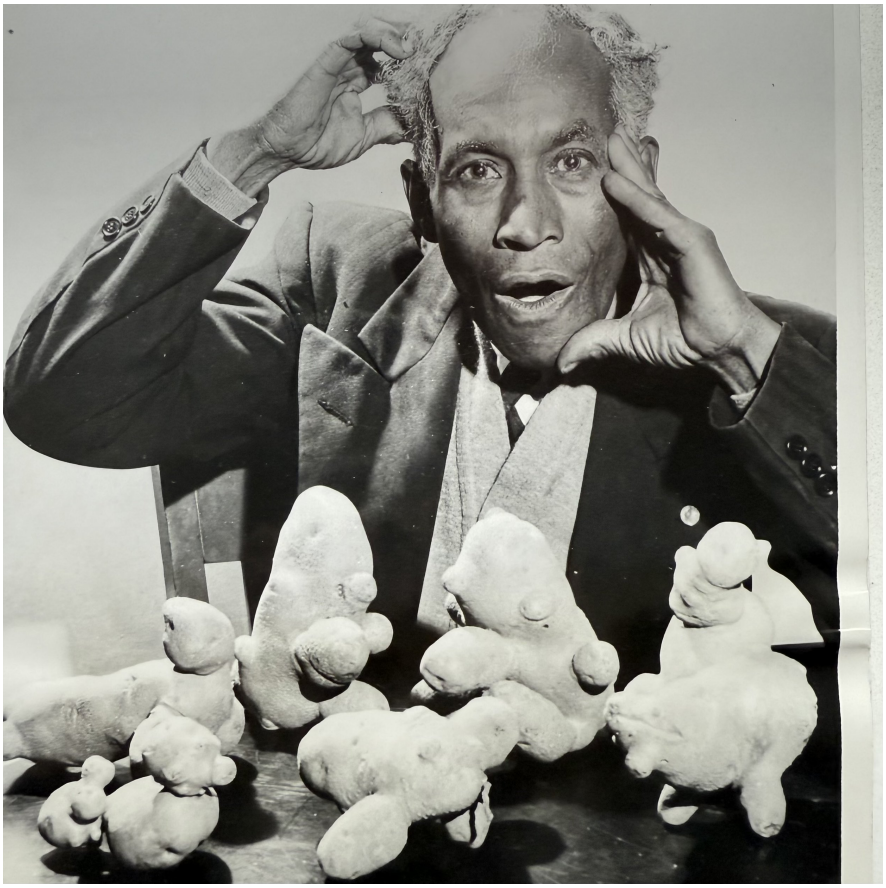


1936 Miss Idaho potato

The exhibition features the potato, represented through a wide range of mediums, including photography and film. Each image offers its own fresh perspective, thus showcasing each artist’s individual and complex relationship with the region. Steve Miller, for example, catches viewers’ attention with his “Potato X-ray,” an X-ray image of a locally purchased sack of potatoes. The photograph is a surprising departure from earlier images, which depict the potato being grown, harvested, and sold. Instead, Miller places the potato sack in the context of present-day technology, demonstrating, perhaps, how the potato’s essentiality and the significance of the land from which it was yielded have endured through time. The image, says Miller, speaks to his love for Long Island. The work is emblematic of the exhibition as a whole in positioning the land's output as the artistic object, thereby blurring the distinction between land and art while honoring the significance of place.



Pipi deer MN 2



Antoine Almeida 1955 press photo Fairview Massachusetts

Other featured pieces range from an image of a hot potato vendor in 1982 Manhattan to the now-iconic photograph of Marilyn Monroe in a potato-sack dress. Spanning multiple time periods, the exhibition brings together varied iterations of the region’s history in a single shared space, thereby creating a testament to the land that is both playful and nostalgic. Ultimately, the exhibition weaves images of the past with the present, showcasing the continued resonance of memory and place and honoring the spirit of Long Island.

Source: https://museemagazine.com/culture/2025/6/19/i-say-potato-bridgehampton-museum