

Ming Smith

b. 1947, Detroit, Michigan

Ming Smith was born in Detroit and lives and works in Harlem, New York. She received her BS from Howard University in 1973.

Smith became a photographer when she was given a camera at a young age. She was the first female member of Kamoinge, a collective of Black photographers that documented Black life in 1960s New York, and was the first Black woman photographer in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art. Smith's practice is a tale of five decades spent examining liminal spaces in daily life—moments in which figures blur, atmospheres alter, and souls manifest. Her photographic approach, marked by experimentation, adventure and attention to detail, is both scientific and celestial. Smith's dedication to music, dance, and theater is evident throughout her work. Her documentation of many Black cultural figures, such as Alice Coltrane, Grace Jones, Nina Simone and Tina Turner, suggests her secondary roles as anthropologist, historian, and poet.

Selected solo shows include *Ming Smith: On the Road*, Nicola Vassell Gallery, New York (2024); *Ming Smith: Feeling the Future*, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, TX; Traveled to The International African American Museum, Charleston, SC (2023) and *Projects: Ming Smith*, Curated by Thelma Golden, Museum of Modern Art, New York (2023). Group shows include *Working Together: The Photographers of the Kamoinge Workshop*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Traveled to Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Richmond, Cincinnati Art Museum, OH, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (2020-2022); *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power*, Brooklyn Museum, New York; Traveled to Tate Modern, London, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR, The Broad, Los Angeles, de Young Museum, San Francisco, and The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX (2017-2020); *We Wanted A Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965-85*, Brooklyn Museum, New York; Traveled to California African American Museum, Los Angeles, Buffalo AKG Art Museum, New York, and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2017) and *Pictures by Women: A History of Modern Photography*, organized by Roxana Marcoci, curated by Sarah Meister and Eva Respini, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2010). Smith's work is in prominent collections including the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of Art, the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the National Gallery of Art, Detroit Institute of Arts, Virginia Museum of Fine Art, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture.