

SYMPOSIUM

The Kamoinge Workshop: Collaboration, Community, and Photography

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS | THURSDAYS, SEP 3 – OCT 15, 2020



This free symposium is being hosted online.
Registration via Zoom is required.
Visit www.VMFA.museum for details.

VMFA
VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

The Kamoinge Workshop: Collaboration, Community, and Photography

SYMPOSIUM DAY ONE | Thu, Sep 3 | 5 – 7 pm

5–5:10 pm | Opening Remarks

Alex Nyerges, Director & CEO, VMFA

5:10–5:30 pm | Introduction to the Kamoinge Workshop

Dr. Sarah Eckhardt, Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, VMFA, with Kamoinge Workshop Artists

5:30–7 pm | Serious Sociality in the Kamoinge Workshop

Dr. Romi N. Crawford, Professor, Visual and Critical Studies and Liberal Arts, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, with **Anthony Barboza**, Kamoinge Workshop Artist, and **Miya Fennar**, daughter of Al Fennar, Kamoinge Workshop Artist

SYMPOSIUM DAY TWO | Thu, Sep 10 | 5 – 7 pm

5–5:30 pm | The Next Generation: The Kamoinge Workshop's Commitment to Youth and Education

Dr. Sarah Eckhardt, Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, VMFA, with **Herb Randall**, Kamoinge Workshop Artist

5:30–7 pm | Globalism and International Black Photographers

Dr. Tobias Wofford, Assistant Professor of Art History, VCUarts, with **Daniel Dawson**, Kamoinge Workshop Artist, and **Jimmie Mannas**, Kamoinge Workshop Artist

SYMPOSIUM DAY THREE | Thu, Sep 17 | 5 – 6:30 pm

5–6:30 pm | Film Panel: Third World Newsreel

Dr. Sarah Eckhardt with **Allan Siegel**, founding member of the documentary film collective Newsreel and formerly a co-director of Third World Newsreel, and **Shawn Walker**, Kamoinge Workshop Artist

SYMPOSIUM DAY FOUR | Thu, Sep 24 | 5 – 7 pm

5–5:30 pm | The Language of Color and the Photographs of the Kamoinge Workshop

Carrie Springer, Assistant Curator, Whitney Museum of American Art

5:30–7 pm | The Sounds They Saw: Kamoinge and Jazz

Dr. John Edwin Mason, Associate Professor, Corcoran Department of History, University of Virginia, with **Ming Smith**, Kamoinge Workshop Artist, and **Herb Robinson**, Kamoinge Workshop Artist



SYMPOSIUM DAY FIVE | Thu, Oct 1 | 5 – 6:30 pm

5–5:30 pm | Building the Draper Archive Portal

Courtney Tkacz, Archivist, VMFA, with **Sandra Sellars**, Assistant Photographer, VMFA

5:30–6:30 pm | True & Free: A Creation Story of *The Black Photographers Annual*

Bill Gaskins, Director of the Photographic & Electronic Media Masters of Fine Arts Program, Maryland Institute College of Art, with **Beuford Smith**, Kamoinge Workshop Artist

SYMPOSIUM DAY SIX | Thu, Oct 8 | 5 – 6:30 pm

5–5:30 pm | Louis Draper in Focus

Sharayah L. Cochran, pre-doctoral fellow and PhD student at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

5:30–6:30 pm | Unlearning Street Photography from the Kamoinge Workshop

Dr. Erina Duganne, Associate Professor, Art History, Texas State University, with **Adger Cowans**, Kamoinge Workshop Artist

SYMPOSIUM DAY SEVEN | Thu, Oct 15 | 6:30 – 7:30 pm

6:30–7:30 pm | The Impact of Mentoring: Louis Draper and the Workshop

Dr. Deborah Willis, University Professor and Chair, Department of Photography and Imaging, Tisch School of the Arts; Director, Institute for African American Affairs and the Center for Black Visual Culture, New York University

7:30 pm | Closing Remarks

Dr. Sarah Eckhardt, Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, VMFA

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PARTICIPANTS

Anthony Barboza joined Kamoinge in 1963 and was president from 2005 to 2016. Along with Herb Robinson, he edited the book *Timeless: Photographs by Kamoinge*, which highlights the work and history of Kamoinge from its beginnings to its present form as Kamoinge, Inc. Barboza coordinated the production of the Kamoinge Artists' Book, featuring portraits of the fourteen core members. He also arranged group portraits during each of the International Black Photographers dinners, which were attended by multiple generations of photographers.

Sharayah L. Cochran is a pre-doctoral fellow and PhD student in the Art History program at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Cochran's research focuses on cross-cultural photography and photojournalism during the twentieth century. She received her MA from Virginia Commonwealth University where she also taught the history of photography as an adjunct instructor. She was the curatorial research assistant for *Working Together: Louis Draper and the Kamoinge Workshop*.

Adger Cowans, a fine arts photographer, founding member of Kamoinge, and abstract expressionist painter, attended Ohio University, where he received a BFA in photography, and the School of Motion Picture Arts and the School of Visual Arts in New York. While serving in the United States Navy, he worked as a photographer before moving to New York, where he later worked with *Life* magazine photographer Gordon Parks and fashion photographer Henri Clarke. Cowans is the current president of Kamoinge and the recipient of a John Hay Whitney Fellowship and the Martin Luther King Jr., Caesar Chavez, Rosa Parks Visiting Scholars Award, Wayne State University.

Dr. Romi N. Crawford is Professor, Visual and Critical Studies and Liberal Arts, at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her research explores areas of race and ethnicity as they relate to American visual culture (including art, film, and photography). She is co-author of *The Wall of Respect: Public Art and Black Liberation in 1960s Chicago* and a contributor to the *Working Together* catalogue.

Daniel Dawson is a former faculty member at the Gallatin School of Individualized Study at New York University and is currently with the African American and African Diaspora Studies Department at Columbia University. Dawson has worked as a photographer, filmmaker, curator, arts administrator, and consultant. He served as curator of photography, film, and video at the Studio Museum in Harlem, director of special projects at the Caribbean Cultural Center, and curatorial consultant and director of education at the Museum for African Art.

Dr. Erina Duganne is Associate Professor of Art History at Texas State University where she teaches courses on the history of photography, American art, and art criticism and writing. Her current research project explores intersections between aesthetic experience, activist practices, and the effects they produced in the 1980s. "The Nicaragua Media Project and the Limits of Postmodernism," recently published in *The Art Bulletin*, is part of this project. She is also a contributor to the *Working Together* catalogue.

Dr. Sarah Eckhardt, Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, VMFA, joined the museum in 2011, when she began programming the museum's Photography Gallery. She has curated the exhibitions *Signs of Protest, Identity Shifts*, and the series on *The Black Photographers Annual*, as well as *Working Together: Louis Draper and the Kamoinge Workshop*. She is the lead author of the exhibition catalogue.

Miya Fennar is employed at Loyola Marymount University where she oversees capital projects and expenditures. In her spare time, Fennar manages the archive of her father, Albert R. Fennar, and advocates for the historical relevance of his photography and that of the original members of the Kamoinge Workshop.

Bill Gaskins is the Director of the Photographic and Electronic Media Masters of Fine Arts Program, Maryland Institute College of Art. As an artist, teacher, scholar, and essayist, his artwork, teaching, writing, lectures, and workshops examine race and visual representation, photography and the portrait, the history of photography, contemporary art and the politics of visual culture, media literacy, the evolution of university art education, and the artist as citizen. He is a contributor to the *Working Together* catalogue.

Jimmie Mannas has taught filmmaking and held positions at the Fashion Institute of Technology and the Oakland District Community College system. His work has also been published in *Life*, *Amsterdam News*, *Saturday Review*, *Onyx Magazine*, and *Liberator Magazine*. Mannas served as president of the Kamoinge Workshop in the mid-1960s as well as president of the International Black Photographers in the 1970s.

Dr. John Edwin Mason is Associate Professor, Corcoran Department of History, at the University of Virginia, where he teaches African history and the history of photography. He is now working on *Gordon Parks and American Democracy*, that explores that photographer's *Life* magazine photo-essays on social justice and his books published during the civil rights era and how they challenged Americans' notions of citizenship and, at the same time, made him one of the era's most significant interpreters of the Black experience. Mason is also a contributor to the *Working Together* catalogue.

Herb Robinson was one of the early members of the Kamoinge Workshop. Throughout his career, his work as encompassed portraiture, street photography, social commentary, and abstraction, much of which has been influenced by the jazz aesthetic. In 2015 Robinson and Anthony Barboza co-edited *Timeless: Photographs by Kamoinge*, the first retrospective publication dedicated to the group's history and work. Robinson's work has recently been part of the exhibition *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power*.

Sandra Sellars is an Assistant Photographer with the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and the Louis Draper Archive Photographer. Sellars is an award-winning photojournalist with the Richmond Free Press, a Black-owned and operated newspaper. She has earned Best in Show, Best News, Best Spot News, Best Pictorial, Best Photo Illustration and Best Photo Essay honors in state and national newspaper and photography competitions.

Allan Siegel is a filmmaker, visual artist, author, and teacher. He is a founding member of the documentary film collective Newsreel and formerly a co-director of Third World Newsreel. His films have been screened at international festivals and on television. His photographs and video installations have been exhibited at museums and galleries in the United States and around the world. He lives in Budapest and teaches at the Intermedia Department at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts.

Beuford Smith was the founder and chief photo-editor of *The Black Photographers Annual* and is President Emeritus of Kamoinge. His photographs were included in the *Soul of a Nation*, and in 2017, Smith was the first recipient of the Culture of Legacy Award given by the Griffen Photography Museum. His photographs have been featured in *Timeless*, *Harpers*, *PDN*, MoMA publications, the New York Public Library collection (2020), and *Angela Davis: Seize the Time* (2020), as well as the video *Miles Davis: Birth of the Cool*. Smith will have a retrospective at the Wilmer Jennings Gallery later this year.

Ming Smith joined the Kamoinge Workshop in 1972, which expanded her ideas about photography as an art form. Her work appears in all four volumes of *The Black Photographers Annual* (a distinction shared with only one other Kamoinge member, Beuford Smith). In the mid-1970s she responded to a call for portfolios at the Museum of Modern Art, and in 1979 she became the first African American female photographer to have her work purchased for the MoMA collection.

Carrie Springer, Assistant Curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, organizes exhibitions and facilitates acquisitions for the museum's permanent collection. Her current projects include the Whitney's presentation of *Working Together: The Photographers of the Kamoinge Workshop* and *Robert Rauschenberg: Five Decades from the Whitney's Collection* at the Norton Museum of Art.

Courtney Tkacz is the Archivist at VMFA, where she has been employed in different library and archives roles since 2003. She is responsible for managing all of the permanent records at VMFA, including institutional records, artist and subject files, museum publications, and special collections related to the museum and the history of art in Virginia. She oversaw the digitization of the Draper archive, which was funded by a grant by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Shawn Walker was one of the founding members of the Kamoinge Workshop. He was a photo-editor for *The Black Photographers Annual* and a cofounder of the International Black Photographers and Third World Newsreel.. Now, primarily a videographer, Walker still lives in Harlem where he documents jazz concerts at Marcus Garvey Park, as well as the annual African American Day Parade and the annual Harlem Street Baptismal (United House of Prayer), as well as gallery openings and art lectures as part of his commitment to recording and preserving Black culture as a cultural anthropologist and photo-artist.

Dr. Deborah Willis is Professor and Chair, Department of Photography and Imaging, Tisch School of the Arts, and Director, Institute for African American Affairs and the Center for Black Visual Culture at New York University where she teaches courses on photography and imaging, iconicity, and cultural histories visualizing the Black body, women, and gender. Her research examines photography's multifaceted histories, visual culture, contemporary women photographers, and migration. She received the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fellowship and a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship.

Dr. Tobias Wofford is Assistant Professor, Department of Art History at VCUarts. His research explores the meeting of globalization and identity in the art of the African Diaspora since the 1950s, as well as concepts of diversity and multiculturalism in art of the United States.

Working Together: Louis Draper and the Kamoinge Workshop

will be on view through October 18, 2020.

You can also view this exhibition online at www.VMFA.museum/collections/stories/louis-draper-and-kamoinge/

*The catalogue is available for purchase in the VMFA Shop and online.
Educational programs for this exhibition are generously supported
by the Community Foundation for a greater Richmond.*

FRONT: **Kamoinge Portrait**, 1973, Anthony Barboza (American, born 1944), gelatin silver print, courtesy Collection of Shawn Walker, © Anthony Barboza photog