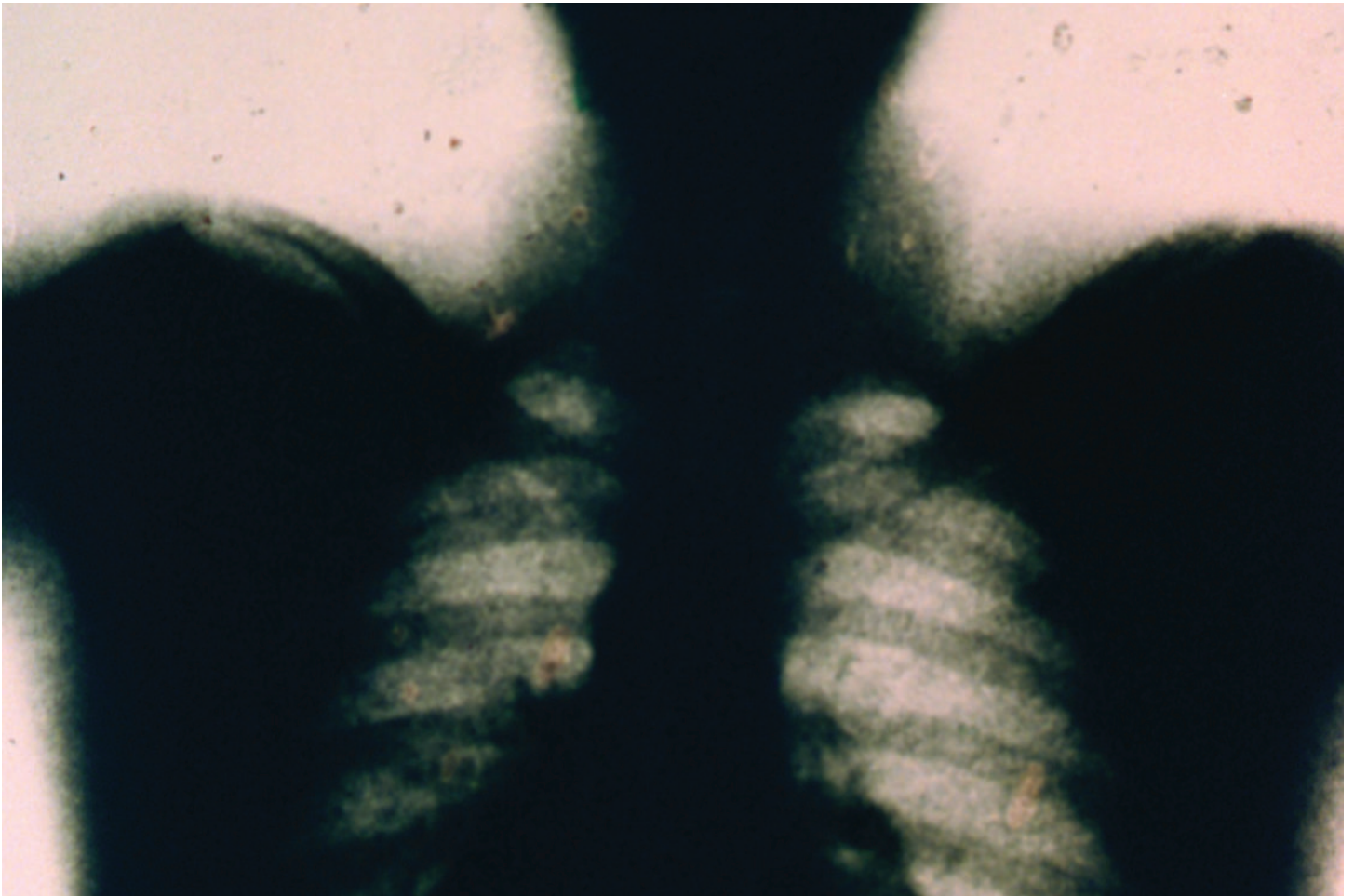


# Teacher Guide

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## *Stonewall 50*

April 27–July 28, 2019



Barbara Hammer. *Sanctus* (video still), 1990. 16mm film transferred to video, transferred to DVD: color, sound, 18:16 minutes. Image and work courtesy The Barbara Hammer Estate and Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York, New York.

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## EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

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- In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH) is bringing together a local, national, international, and multi-generational group of artists who works offer a snapshot of the complexion, interests, and activities of queer and allied communities to be part of the exhibition titled *Stonewall 50*.
- On June 28, 1969, the serial police raids on the New York, New York gay bar the Stonewall Inn prompted the bar’s patrons to riot.
- Fifty years ago, it was illegal for gay, lesbian, and gender non-conforming individuals to meet together in groups in New York state—their gatherings were seen as “disruptive.”
- By addressing trans visibility, intergenerational dialogue, and queer production outside of the United States, *Stonewall 50* considers how many artists today link cultural perceptions around race, nationality, economic status, age, ability, and other issues to the disadvantages and privileges of sex and gender self-determination.
- The exhibition includes painting, photography, video, and sculpture that look back at the Stonewall Riots and ahead to a future thinking more broadly about queer identities.



Zanele Muholi. *Yaya Mavundia, Parktown, Johannesburg* (detail), 2014. Silver gelatin print, edition 6 of 8. 34 x 24 inches. © Zanele Muholi. Image and work courtesy the artist, Yancey Richardson, New York, New York, Stevenson, Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa.

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- Some works featured in the exhibition include: a video installation by Nick Vaughan & Jake Margolin in which drag performers lip-synch moving historical and political speeches made by advocates for equality and inclusivity; films and a video installation by Barbara Hammer, a pioneering voice in queer and experimental cinema; sculptures made from repurposed refuse by Leilah Babirye whose birth country of Uganda currently outlaws homosexual activity; series of photographic portraits by the artists Zanele Muholi and Catherine Opie that document their diverse queer communities in South Africa and the United States, respectively; a site-specific installation by Chitra Ganesh that reimagines queer identity through comics, and more.

### Key Questions

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- What do you know about the Stonewall Riots?
- What laws and perceptions have changed in the past fifty years? What do you think still needs to change?
- What is your understanding of the word queer, gender, and sex?
- The Stonewall Inn was the site of the riots by the bar's patrons, the bar was a place that this marginalized group was able to meet. There are other bars across the country that also served as a place for queer individuals to come together in community. Where do you meet with your community? What do those places mean to you?
- What do you know about laws regarding homosexuality around the world? Are they similar or different to laws in the United States?
- There are many portraits in the exhibition, what does a portrait or self-portrait mean to you?

### Curriculum Connections

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**History** | *Stonewall 50* celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, an important event in the demand for civil and equal rights by queer communities. What other events throughout history include queer individuals and milestones for civil rights? What important people in history considered themselves queer? How are their stories told?

An important part of the *Stonewall 50* exhibition is intergenerational dialogue. There are several artists included in the exhibition who were alive during the Stonewall Riots, while several younger artists have grown up with different ideas around queer identities. Do you know someone who remembers a significant moment in the fight for civil rights? Can you interview them and ask them what they remember and if/how they view the changes that have happened in the past fifty years?

**Language Arts** | *Stonewall 50* has work by a variety of artists using a wide array of different mediums. Spend some time looking at the exhibition and making notes about what you see. Find a work that interests you or that you have questions about. Write a poem or story inspired by a work in the exhibition.