Content Review

Ming Smith: Feeling the Future
On view | May 26–October 1, 2023

This content review is designed to communicate accessibility and powerful subject matters within this exhibition. Powerful subject matters include nudity, sexuality, violence, and explicit language.
**Content Review**

*Ming Smith: Feeling the Future*

On view | May 26, 2023 – October 1, 2023

*Ming Smith: Feeling the Future* is the first major career spanning museum survey for Harlem-based artist Ming Smith, a pioneer of image-making. Smith, who is known for her improvisational and experimental approach to photography, uses light, shadow, and movement to create dynamic portraits of the Black experience and multidimensional expressions of everyday life. The exhibition showcases Smith’s expansive use of lens-based media and features her street photography, figurative imagery, portraiture, and abstractions. She has documented the cultural movements and social circles within her reach, such as other artists, models, musicians, dancers, and cultural icons that have populated her life and communities since arriving in New York in the early ‘70s.

Among the standout pieces in the exhibition are Smith’s portraits of jazz musician Sun Ra, which capture his otherworldly essence and unfixed identity, using the formal technique of blurring to convey motion and a visual interpretation of the Afrofuturist’s metaphysical nature. Similarly, *Acid Rain* (1977) is a stunning example of Smith’s use of superimposing multiple images to show the multidimensionality of a community and its environment in a single photograph. Also, *Amen Corner Sisters (Harlem, New York)* (1978) offers a strikingly intimate and soulful glimpse into the lives of two women going or coming from church.

This is an engaging exhibition with a lot to explore. There are three works that contain nudity. *Male Nude (New York)* (1977) looks at a nude person from behind. *Female Nude (New York)* (1977) is a deeply shadowed work that shows a person laying down, you can see one exposed breast in the image. *Transcendence, Turiya and Ramakrishaa for Alice Coltrane* (2006) shows the torso of a nude female.

The exhibition also has a Meditation Room with benches meant for contemplation. Large print labels of the wall texts are available in English and Spanish at the front desk and on CAMH’s website camh.org.