

# Fellowship 23

Samantha Box

Trent Bozeman

Terrell Halsey

Karen Lue

Dominick McDuffie

André Ramos-Woodard

## About the Artists

**Samantha Box** is a Jamaican-born, Bronx-based photographer. She holds an MFA in Advanced Photographic Studies from ICP-Bard College and a certificate in Photojournalism and Documentary Studies from the International Center of Photography. Her work has been exhibited at the Houston Center for Photography, the DePaul Art Museum, the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art, Light Work, the Open Society Foundation, and the ICP Museum, and is in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

**Trent Bozeman** is a photographer based in Fayetteville, Arkansas, focusing on the erasure of Black legacies in the American South. He received his bachelor's degree in journalism from DePaul University and his MFA from the University of Arkansas. In 1919 the town of Elaine was the site of the deadliest racial confrontation in Arkansas history. Bozeman's collaborative social practice examines the town's continuing racial divide and the contemporary experiences of the communities that live there.

**Terrell Halsey** is a film and media arts graduate of Temple University. As an artist, he combines street, conceptual, documentary, and portraiture to create visual experiences of humanity and better contextualize the world around him. Taking place mainly in Center City, Philadelphia, Halsey's work contemplates the structure of downtowns in cities, specifically exploring how contemporary Black experience is shaped by the physical manifestation of social structures that systematically and psychologically inhibit and displace.

**Karen Lue** is a first-generation Chinese American artist whose photographs explore aspects of identity in relation to grief, loss, isolation, and displacement. She also examines her identity through self-portraiture and the body as it is shaped by race, sexualization, and her chronic illness. In her series 安詳 (*or, when i die i want to die peacefully*), Lue reflects on her grandmother's death and her family history, considering how this has affected her father and ultimately herself.

**Dominick McDuffie** is a Pittsburgh-based photographer whose work is rooted in community and cultural preservation, documenting Black spaces and the people in and around them. Initially inspired by the black-and-white documentary tradition of image-makers such as Gordon Parks, Teenie Harris, and Ming Smith, McDuffie's recent color work speaks to the multiple senses we utilize when perceiving visually. Relating images to the feeling of Black music is also at the core of McDuffie's relationship with photography.

**André Ramos-Woodard (they/them/he/him)** is a contemporary artist who aims to emphasize the experiences of marginalized peoples while accenting the repercussions of contemporary and historical discrimination. In *BLACK SNAFU*, Ramos-Woodard appropriates and recontextualizes various depictions of Blackness throughout the cartooning of American history and beyond. Ramos-Woodard aims to expose viewers to America's deplorable connection to anti-Black tropes through pop culture while simultaneously celebrating the reality of what it means to be Black.



Samantha Box, *A Superior Jamaican Product*, 2022.  
All images courtesy of the artists.

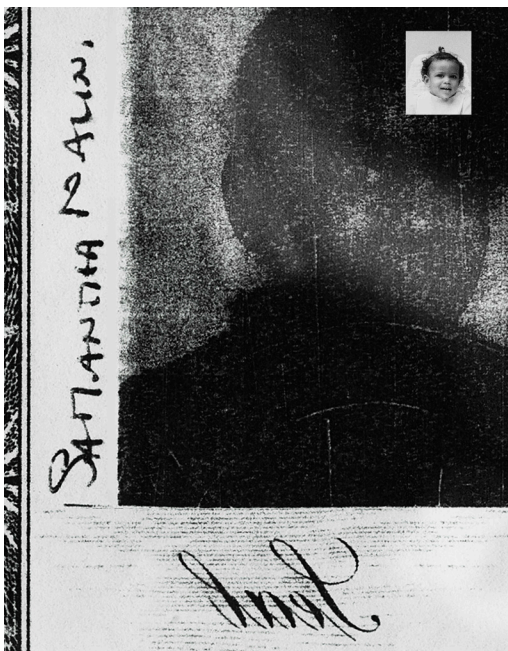
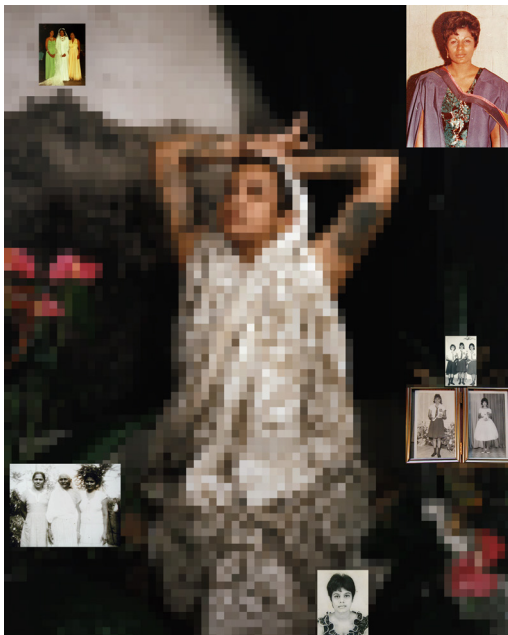
# I. Introduction

## **Fellowship 23**

**Samantha Box, Trent Bozeman, Terrell Halsey, Karen Lue,  
Dominick McDuffie, André Ramos-Woodard**

For over twenty years, Silver Eye has supported vital new voices in contemporary photography through Fellowship, our annual international juried photography competition. Taking the Fellowship 23 competition as a point of departure, this original exhibition reflects the myriad ways photography shapes our understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

The Fellowship Award recognizes a rising talent or established photographer from anywhere in the world. This year's Fellowship Award winner is Samantha Box, and the Fellowship Award honorable mentions are Trent Bozeman and André Ramos-Woodard. The Keystone Award is given to an exceptional photographer living or making work in the state of Pennsylvania. The Keystone Award winner is Dominick McDuffie, and Keystone Award honorable mentions are Terrell Halsey and Karen Lue.



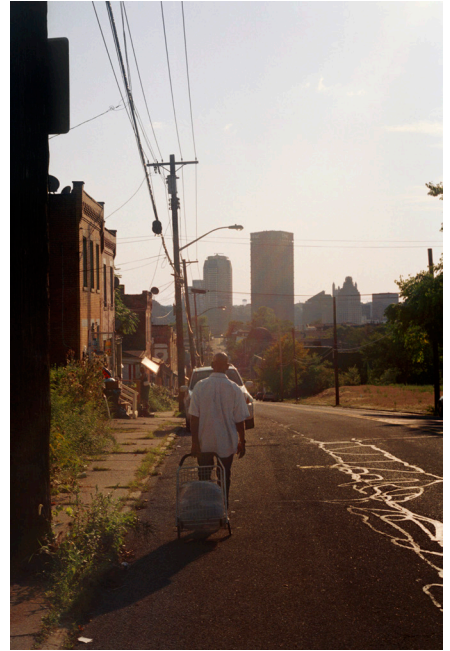
Left column, top to bottom: Samantha Box, *One Kind of Story*, 2020 and *Seal*, 2023. Right column, top to bottom: Karen Lue, *爸爸 with family photo album*, 2018, Samantha Box, *Transplant Family Portrait*, 2020. Karen Lue, *Self-portrait in shadow*, 2018.

## II. Constructing and affirming identity

Creating or exploring photographs can illuminate, construct, and affirm the multitudes of one's ever-evolving identity. Samantha Box and Karen Lue are artists who explore their identities in very different ways - yet they share related concerns in examining the intersections of cultural and family histories and their unique lived experiences. Fellowship Award winner Samantha Box's *Caribbean Dreams* series uses constructed, experimental, and unpredictable compositions to examine **exodus** and **diaspora** and her multiply-diasporic Caribbean histories and identities. Keystone Award honorable mention Karen Lue is a first-generation Chinese American artist whose photographs explore aspects of identity, including experiences of grief, loss, isolation, and displacement. Her series 安詳 (*or, when i die i want to die peacefully*) relays her paternal grandmother's apartment in the days following her death and reflects how the artist began to navigate the lasting impact of this shift in her family's history. Each artist's work reveals how photography can be a tool to examine and understand multiple selves. When considering these works, perhaps we may reflect on the unpredictable complexity of our own processes of self-discovery.

### Questions for Looking:

- Consider Samantha Box's photograph *One Kind of Story*, 2020 and Karen Lue's 爸爸 *with family photo album*, 2018. Samantha Box uses layering and elements of collage to construct her image, while Karen Lue observes an actual moment of reality. How do both photographs speak to the role of the family archive in shaping personal identity?
- In Samantha Box's photograph *Transplant Family Portrait*, 2020, she uses a pink grow light as a metaphor. What does this metaphor suggest to you? How might this device speak to wider questions relating to immigration and nurture?
- In *Seal*, 2023, Samantha Box disrupts a piece of her official government naturalization record, by deliberately deteriorating the image and collaging a photograph of her as a baby. Elsewhere Karen Lue employs multiple self-portraits in her installation, including herself in shadow. How can such examples of resisting being seen and defined speak to questions of identity?



Left column, top to bottom: Dominick McDuffie, *Summer in The Hill*, 2020, Terrell Halsey, *Black Boy Joy*, July 2017, and *Windows*, September 2017. Right column, top to bottom: Dominick McDuffie, *Summertime in The Hill*, 2020 and *Springtime Again, Ode to Sun Ra*, 2021

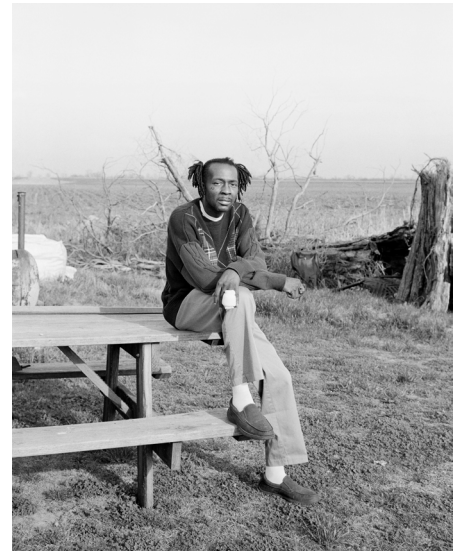


### III. Documenting place and community

Documentary **street photography** has rich traditions within the context of American photography. While often initially perceived as an objective method of representation, from the mid-twentieth century onwards, photographers began to see the potential of this genre to express emotion and encourage social change by bringing attention to social issues or the experiences of underrepresented communities. Keystone Award winner Dominick McDuffie and Keystone Award honorable mention Terrell Halsey each expand upon these traditions in contemporary contexts to explore the expressive qualities of the medium. McDuffie is a photographer whose practice is rooted in community, **cultural preservation**, and documenting Black spaces in Pittsburgh and the people in and around them. Halsey fuses street, conceptual, documentary, and portraiture to create visual experiences of humanity and better contextualize his surroundings. Specifically, Halsey's work explores how Black experience is shaped by the physical manifestation of social structures that systematically and psychologically inhibit and displace. Both artists illustrate how photography can convey a greater understanding of place, belonging, and community. In doing so, they each honor the present while creating space for imagining new futures.

#### Questions for Looking

- Consider Dominick McDuffie's photograph *Summer in The Hill*, 2020 and Terrell Halsey's photograph *Black Boy Joy*, July 2017. How does each photographer use color, light, and shadow to convey emotion? How do these aesthetic decisions affect how you feel?
- Dominick McDuffie is an artist who often relates his images to the feeling of Black music, and this is clearly expressed in his photograph *Springtime Again, Ode to Sun Ra*, 2021. Creative mediums do not exist in isolation, but are frequently inspired by the experience of their relationship with other art forms. What forms of creativity inspire you?
- By documenting the use of space in urban environments, Dominick McDuffie and Terrell Halsey each invite further reflection on the social structures that shape how cities provide for or exclude Black communities. Consider photographs such as *Summertime in The Hill*, 2020 by McDuffie and *Windows*, September 2017 by Halsey. How do each of these photographs serve this important questioning?



Left column top to bottom: André Ramos-Woodard, *interlocuter*, 2023, and *hate monger*, 2022. Trent Bozeman, *Miss Veora's Home*, 2020. Right column top to bottom: Trent Bozeman, *Stoop*, 2021, and *Cousin*, 2021.

## IV. Confronting historical and contemporary racism

While photography can be a medium for affirmation, this art form and associated visual culture can also be a tool for harm to perpetuate racial injustice. Fellowship Award honorable mention André Ramos-Woodard confronts and explores this complex relationship in *BLACK SNAFU*, using **reappropriation** to challenge depictions of Black people he finds throughout the racist history of cartooning and beyond. By juxtaposing these cartoon characters with original photographs and interventions through drawing, Ramos-Woodard draws attention to and celebrates the reality of Black experiences. With a background in journalism, Fellowship Award honorable mention Trent Bozeman is interested in how Black history is reshaped, documented, and preserved. His recent work focuses on the town of Elaine, which in 1919 was the site of the deadliest racial confrontation in Arkansas history. Today the racial divide in this overlooked town continues, and Bozeman's **social practice** exposes the consequences of a sustained culture of silence and negligence. Since September 2020, Bozeman has organized photography summer camps in Elaine, providing local children with the tools and knowledge to create their own representation. In different ways, both artists confront the damage perpetuated by racial injustice in America and show how photography can become a tool for empowerment.

### Questions for Looking

- Consider André Ramos-Woodard's work *hate monger*, 2022. At the bottom of this image, Ramos-Woodard presents an adapted cartoon image of Hate-Monger, a Marvel comic character that has taken many guises, originally as a clone of Adolf Hitler. How is Ramos-Woodard using juxtaposition to respond to our contemporary social-political moment?
- In *interlocuter*, 2023 by André Ramos-Woodard, the artist's hands are seen mid-drawing. Is the recognizable figure of Mickey Mouse partly drawn or partly erased? How does the composition of this artwork invite us to question ideas of agency and the unfixing of narratives?
- Sustained collaboration and community-building is at the heart of Trent Bozeman's photographic practice. Consider his photographs *Stoop*, 2021 and *Cousin*, 2021. How does pose, gesture, and gaze of each person depicted express emotion or convey trust? In the photograph *Miss Veora's Home*, 2020, the human figure is not present, yet how does this photograph convey intimacy and connection?

## V. Community Perspectives

Community Perspectives is an ongoing series where people from diverse disciplines and backgrounds respond freely to images in our exhibitions.



Samantha Box, *The Jamaican National Dish*, 2019.

**janera solomon reflects on Samantha Box's photograph,  
*The Jamaican National Dish*, 2019**

**of what I am made (in the making)**

of catholic school ritual and reward, all things equal before God, never mind the fallacies, *ah tell yuh*, the truth speaks for itself, eventually

of peas and rice, roti and curry, sweet mangoes, sour ones too, with salt and red pepper, because a little salt brings the sweetness, juicy fleshed guava, fried plantains and salt fish (Poor People's Food), and ground provisions, served up with a pride full of coconut water

of fertile land, boasting gold dust survivors whispering of histories past

of making hard things, built to hold, patched and stitched, making do and make it work and making the best of no matter, making a way, space to make it through and make it over and make it across

of home away from home, a beginning made fresh of loss, and separation, trimmed desires and soothing wild breezes

of oiled skin, of braiding hair rituals of care, brushing against the balmy sun brewing always some warm tea served with love beneath love beneath pain beneath love again beneath forgiveness beneath hope dreaming rocksteady

my people are a songbirds and clever people, thinking in one language, moving in another

of a cutting tongue, judiciously embalmed affection, and sugar and spice and everything nice, time before time coated bitters still 'satisfy my soul,' and dance

of a smile after the baseline, one after the other one, bubbling high pitched sunset melodies, and granny says the old people used to say, 'who laughs last, laughs best'

we laugh and laugh.

*janera solomon is a writer, curator and cultural strategist based in Pittsburgh. Born in Georgetown, Guyana, she draws inspiration from the music and dance, writers and artists of the African and Caribbean diaspora, and so much more. janera served as the executive director of the Kelly Strayhorn Theater for more than a decade, establishing the organization as leading presenter of contemporary performance rooted in community centered cultural practice. janera holds a BA from the University of Pittsburgh and an MA in Writing (nonfiction) from Johns Hopkins University. She is completing her forthcoming collection of essays and poems, Here Comes the Sun.*

# Glossary

- Cultural preservation** Cultural preservation can refer to both tangible and intangible culture. Tangible culture might include the physical environment and material culture, such as architecture, social objects, and landscapes, whereas intangible culture can include many elements related to cultural identity and legacies, including beliefs, practices, traditions, historical narratives, and values. Preserving tangible and intangible culture can address past injustices and inspire community pride and further appreciation of shared histories, and empower personal identities.
- Diaspora** Refers to the dispersion of a people, language, or culture that was formerly shared in one homeland of origin, but has now been displaced to separate countries. Diasporas can be created through chosen immigration or the forced movements of people.
- Exodus** Refers to a mass departure or migration of a large number of people.
- Reappropriation** In an art context, reappropriation refers to the act of reusing existing artworks, symbols, and signs in a new context. In doing so, the artist may refer to the original context, but their recontextualization creates new meanings. This process of breaking down and re-building can be useful when making social and political critiques.
- Social practice** Social practice in the context of photography refers to collaborative processes in which photographers work with individuals or communities to co-create visual representations of themselves and/or the world around them. In these instances, the process behind the work is often as important as any final physical presentation. Photographers working in this way reflect and elevate multiple voices, rather than pursue a single artistic aim or vision.
- Street photography** A broad genre of photography that focuses on recording everyday life in a public setting. This may include photographing individuals with or without their knowledge. Often photographers working in this genre aim to document moments that might otherwise go unobserved.



# Reading List

Dan Boardman, Introduction, *Contact Sheet 218: Samantha Box*  
(Light Work, August 2022)

Tina M. Campt, *A Black Gaze: Artists Changing How We See*  
(MIT Press, 2021)

Robin Di'Angelo, *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for  
White People to Talk About Racism*  
(Beacon Press, 2018)

Frantz Fanon, *White Skin, Black Masks*  
(Éditions du Seuil, 1952)

Karen Lue, *Or, When I Die I Want To Dream Peacefully*  
(Self-published, 2018)

Nicholas Sammond, *The Birth of an Industry: Blackface Minstrelsy and  
the Rise of American Animation*  
(Duke University Press, 2015)

Grif Stockley, Brian K. Mitchell, and Guy Lancaster,  
*Blood in Their Eyes: The Elaine Massacre of 1919*  
(University of Arkansas Press, 2020)

Krista A. Thompson, *Shine: The Visual Economy of Light in African  
Diasporic Aesthetic Practice*  
(Duke University Press, 2014)

Ida B. Wells, *The Arkansas Race Riot*  
(First published 1920, Reprinted CreateSpace Independent  
Publishing, 2013)





**Silver Eye Center for Photography**  
**4808 Penn Avenue**  
**Pittsburgh, PA 15224**

This guide serves as an education supplement to our exhibition and contains information about the works on view, questions for looking and discussion as well as room for student responses. To schedule a tour of this exhibition for students, go to: [silvereye.org](http://silvereye.org)

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