Carrie Mae Weems grew up in Portland, Oregon, on April 20, 1953, as the second of four siblings. At the age of four, she moved with her family to California, where she spent much of her childhood. Weems was later diagnosed with dyslexia, a learning disability that can make reading and writing challenging. However, this did not deter her from pursuing her passion for photography. She has said, “I knew that I would emulate what they had begun. “ In 1976, she returned to San Francisco to attend San Francisco State University, where she studied art and was influenced by the Black Arts Movement. She began taking photographs of people she encountered on the street, capturing their portraits and documenting their everyday lives.

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Weems hasaddressed the second-person viewpoint of the text, explaining that she was trying to explore the movement of black families out of the South and into the North. My family becomes a stand-in character, she says, “I was thinking not only of my family, but...” Weems uses this approach to challenge the way that history is often told, and to give voice to the experiences of everyday people.

Throughout her career, Carrie Mae Weems has addressed issues of race, gender, and social justice through her artwork. She has explored the ways in which communities have been constructed and reconstructed over time, using images and objects to create a dialogue about the past and present. Weems’swork has been shown in numerous exhibitions, and she has received numerous awards and distinctions. She remains an influential artist, whose work continues to be celebrated for its engaging and thought-provoking nature.
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