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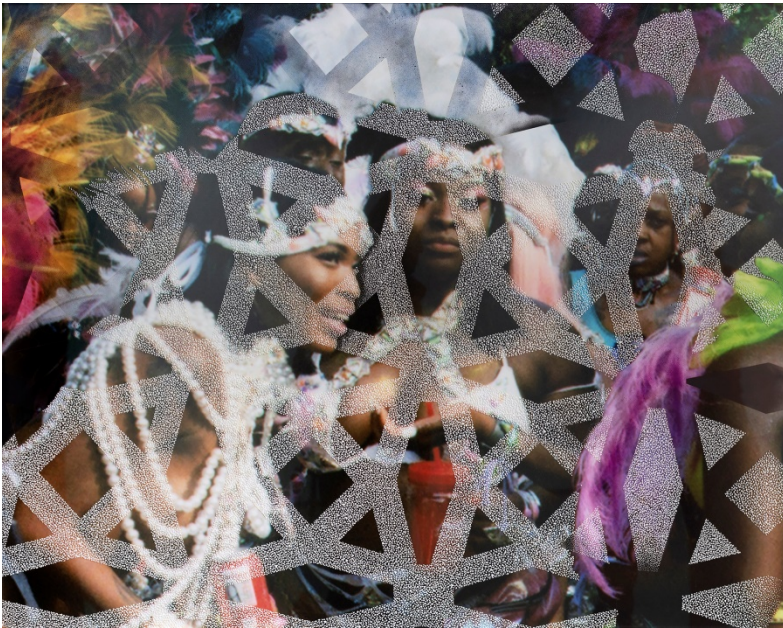
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# Paul Anthony Smith

**A RILEY CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS PROJECT GALLERY EXHIBITION**

October 5 through January 19 at Joslyn Art Museum; Artist Talk on October 10



(Omaha, NE) – Drawing on the art historical traditions of Pointillism and Geometric Abstraction, Paul Anthony Smith creates “picotages,” named for a pattern printing technique that entails pressing textured blocks onto fabric. Trained in ceramics, Smith uses sharp, wooden tools to stipple the surfaces of photographs that examine the African and Caribbean diasporas. Having immigrated to the United States from his native Jamaica, Smith has long been curious about the pursuit of identity and self-determination that can accompany

migration. In exploring this topic, Smith seeks guidance in the writings of Caribbean philosopher Frantz Fanon, who studied the cultural confusions that stem from colonialism, as well as in American scholar and activist W.E.B. Du Bois' theory of “double consciousness,” which suggests that social identity is multifaceted and therefore difficult to define.

Smith's work interrogates the concept of hybrid identity—often experienced acutely by those who have migrated across borders—while mining the intersections of place, memory, and dislocation. By incising his images, Smith references cultural traditions including African tribal masking and scarification, a practice in which the skin is cut, leaving indelible patterns on the body. Just as these customs alter appearances, Smith's interventions complicate the surfaces of his photographs and, at times, even completely obscure portions of the images, calling

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*Paul Anthony Smith at Joslyn Art Museum*

into question their authority as representations of "the truth." Smith further emphasizes the barrier between the viewer and the scenes unfolding in the photographs by employing visual motifs that recall walls and fences, potent symbols associated with immigration and international borders. Despite the narrative and physical tensions that play out across Smith's work, the artist also maintains his belief in the power of community. Many of his images depict parades and other jovial gatherings of peers, a reminder of the Jamaican coat of arms, which reads: "Out of many, one people."

On view at Joslyn October 5 through January 19, *Paul Anthony Smith* is included in free general Museum admission. Riley Contemporary Artists Projects Gallery exhibitions are supported by Douglas County, Catherine & Terry Ferguson, Sara Foxley, and Polina & Bob Schlott.

### **Public Lecture: An Evening with Paul Anthony Smith**

The public is invited to hear Paul Anthony Smith speak about his work during a **6:30 pm talk on Thursday, October 10**. Held in Joslyn's lecture hall, the talk is free. Those wishing to view the exhibition may do so before the talk (Museum hours on Thursdays, 10 am to 8 pm). A cash bar will be available at 5:30 pm.

### **About the Artist**

Paul Anthony Smith (Jamaican, b. 1988) completed his BFA at Kansas City Art Institute in 2010. He has been featured in exhibitions at the Taubman Museum of Art (Roanoke, Virginia; 2018); The Studio Museum in Harlem (New York; 2017 and 2015); New Museum of Contemporary Art (New York; 2017); Brooklyn Museum (New York; 2016); Nasher Museum of Art (Durham, North Carolina; 2015); Seattle Art Museum (Washington; 2015); and Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art (Overland Park, Kansas; 2011). Smith was also included in the Open Spaces biennial, a city-wide international exhibition that took place in Kansas City in 2018.

### **About Joslyn's Riley CAP Gallery**

A 500-square-foot space in the Scott Pavilion suite of galleries, the Riley CAP Gallery showcases nationally- and internationally-recognized artists, as well as emerging talent, selected by Joslyn curators. A rotating schedule of carefully focused exhibitions will examine how artists engage with the world and respond to the issues that challenge them creatively, bringing new perspectives on contemporary art to Nebraska. Riley CAP Gallery artists will be invited to Joslyn for lectures and other public programs, giving audiences the opportunity to gain insight into creative processes and contribute to an expanded dialogue about new art. The first Joslyn


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gallery dedicated exclusively to living artists, the Riley CAP Gallery represents an important step in making contemporary art an even more integral component of the Museum's exhibition programming.

**PICTURED: (PAGE 1)** *Untitled, 7 Women*, 2019, unique picotage on inkjet print, colored pencil, spray paint on museum board, 40 x 50 inches, © Paul Anthony Smith, courtesy the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

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 **JOSLYN** Art Museum **Our Mission** – Joslyn Art Museum collects, preserves, and interprets the visual arts of the highest quality, fostering appreciation and enjoyment of art for the benefit of a diverse audience. **Our Vision** – To be cherished and respected as a premier art museum.

Joslyn Art Museum showcases art from ancient times to the present. The Museum was a gift to the people of Omaha from Sarah Joslyn in memory of her husband, George, who made his fortune as president of the Western Newspaper Union. The

Museum's original 1931 building is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the nation, with 38 types of marble from seven countries. The Walter and Suzanne Scott Pavilion, a 58,000-square-foot addition built in 1994, was designed by renowned British architect Norman Foster as his first U.S. commission. The Museum features galleries, a 1,000-seat concert hall, fountain court, education technology gallery, lecture hall, classrooms, sculpture garden, café, shop, and Art Works, an interactive space for art exploration.

**General Museum Admission:** Free (the *Paul Anthony Smith* exhibition is included in free general Museum admission).

**Regular Museum Hours (includes exhibition):** Tuesday through Sunday, 10 am–4 pm; late 'til 8 pm on Thursday; closed Monday and major holidays.

**[www.joslyn.org](http://www.joslyn.org) | (402) 342-3300 | 2200 Dodge Street | Omaha, NE 68102**