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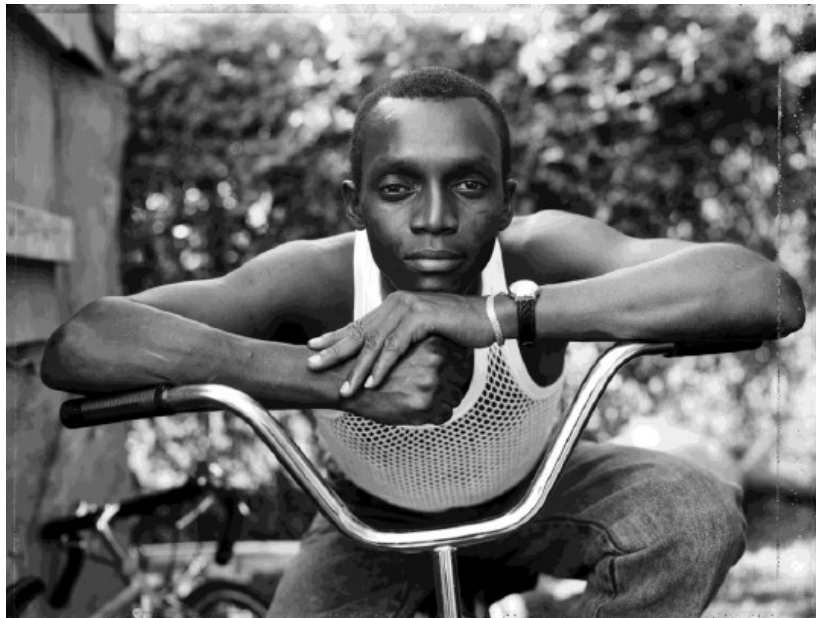
Denver Art Museum presents *Dawoud Bey: Street Portraits*

First museum show explores transformational phase of photographer's work

DENVER – August 27, 2024 – The Denver Art Museum (DAM) is proud to present *Dawoud Bey: Street Portraits*, featuring 36 portraits by celebrated photographer and 2017 MacArthur Fellow Dawoud Bey (American, born 1953).

From 1988 to 1991, Bey collaborated with Black Americans of all ages whom he met on the streets of various American cities. He asked a cross section of people in these communities to pose for him, creating a space of self-presentation and performance in their urban environments.

"We're pleased to present the first standalone museum show of this important work," said Eric Paddock, Curator of Photography for DAM. "Dawoud Bey's Street Portraits mark a turning point where the deliberate, closely observed portraits he had been making with a handheld camera began to contain what he has called 'the kind of lush physical description' he wanted his pictures to convey—and that is a consistent part of all the work he has made since. The slower process of working with a camera on a tripod invited collaboration between the artist and his subjects, making each picture both an experiment and a discovery."



Bey used a large format tripod-mounted camera and a unique positive/negative Polaroid film that created both an instant print and a reusable negative. Bey considers photography an ethical practice that requires collaboration between the artist and his subjects. To reciprocate with the people who posed for him, he gave each person a small black-and-white Polaroid print.

"This is the first standalone museum show of Bey's Street Portraits," said Eric Paddock, Curator of Photography for the DAM. "Each picture is an experiment, a discovery that describes people and the places where they live. At the same time, these photos are attentive to the quality of light on a particular day and the way the artist orchestrates all those things through his camera. This was a transformational work that evolved through the 20 years of Dawoud's signature photography."

The exhibition is organized by the community the photographs were taken in: Brooklyn; Washington, D.C.; Rochester; Amityville; and Harlem. Bey defies racial stereotypes by encouraging Black people to present themselves openly and intimately to the camera, the viewer and the world.

Dawoud Bey will engage in conversation with Curator of Photography Eric Paddock in the DAM's Sharp Auditorium on Tues., Nov. 19, 6-7PM. The presentation is part of the ongoing Anderman Photography Lecture Series.



Dawoud Bey: Street Portraits will be on view at the DAM from Nov. 17, 2024, to May 11, 2025, in the Photography gallery on level 6 of the museum's Martin Building and will be included with general admission.

Dawoud Bey: Street Portraits is organized by the Denver Art Museum. Support is provided by the donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign and the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Promotional support is provided by *5280 Magazine* and CBS Colorado.

Planning Your Visit

The most up-to-date information on planning a visit to the Denver Art Museum can be found online under the [Plan Your Visit](#) tab. Use this page to find details on ticket pricing, public transit options and access information. General admission for museum members is free every day. Youth aged 18 and under receive free general admission everyday thanks to the museum's Free for Kids program. Free for Kids also underwrites free admission for school and youth group visits.

About the Denver Art Museum

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world. Metro residents support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), a unique funding source serving hundreds of metro Denver arts, culture and scientific organizations.

For museum information, visit www.denverartmuseum.org or call 720-865-5000.

Media Resources

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Image Credits:

Image 1: Dawoud Bey, *A Young Man Resting on an Exercise Bike, Amityville, NY*, from the series *Street Portraits*, 1988. Pigment print. Courtesy of the artist and Stephen Daiter Gallery. ©Dawoud Bey

Image 2: Dawoud Bey, *A Couple in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, NY*, from the series *Street Portraits*, 1988. Pigment print. Courtesy of the artist and Stephen Daiter Gallery. ©Dawoud Bey