

Mike Smith: Boston  
April 14 - May 28, 2022  
Opening Reception April 14 | 6-8pm



Tracey Morgan Gallery is pleased to present *Boston*, a solo exhibition of photographs by Mike Smith. Made in the late 1970 while in his mid-twenties and studying at MassArt, Smith's Boston street portraits have not been seen until recently as the subject of a monograph published by Stanley/Barker. These portraits are intimate and gentle, and in clear celebration of humanity, with gracious nods to August Sander and Diane Arbus. Smith embraces serendipitous and often humorous moments with a simple unifying notion: humans are endlessly complex, and endlessly fascinating.

It's impossible not to pine for the pre-cellphone era of photography when looking at these images, for a time when strangers approaching strangers on the street was not so fraught with suspicion and paranoia. Most of Smith's subjects are aware of the camera and embrace the chance to be captured on film. Smith's chosen tool at the time, a cumbersome 6x7 Linhof camera, influenced the final images as it necessitated a collaborative effort between photographer and subject:

"The camera I chose...was a peculiar thing; unfamiliar considering the reign of the 35mm SLR at the time. It was not difficult to hold someone's attention as the machine had a presence which I relied upon heavily. I literally disappeared behind it once it was raised to my eye. That quality, the anonymity of its maker is, to me, the lasting aspect of the work." - Mike Smith

Mike Smith has been photographing his adopted home of East Tennessee for the last 40 years. While the early portraits included in this current exhibition feel much different on the surface from his other work, paramount to both is an underlying desire to both acknowledge and relish in the existence of other people and their myriad of nuances.

Mike Smith's work has been exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Art and the Cleveland Museum of Art. In 2001 he was awarded the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship and the Tennessee Governor's Distinguished Artist Award. His work is held in the collections of major museums throughout the United States including the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Houston Museum of Fine Art, and the Art Institute of Chicago. Smith's first monograph, *You're Not From Around Here*, was released in 2004 by Johns Hopkins University Press and the Center for American Places with an essay by Robert Sobiesek, curator, Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Originally from Massachusetts, Smith received his BFA from the Massachusetts College of Art and his MFA from Yale University.

For additional information or inquiries, please contact [china@traceymorgangallery.com](mailto:china@traceymorgangallery.com)  
[Above image: Mike Smith, *Untitled, Boston*]

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