

**Portraits from Boston,
With Love**
Large Print Labels

Portraits from Boston, With Love

Boston-based photographers Jaypix Belmer, Ally Schmaling, and Olivia Slaughter use the camera to forge connections between themselves, their communities, and the viewer. In cultivating safe and inspiring spaces to make portraits, they draw on their own gender-expansive experiences to encourage others to be their fullest selves. So welcome to this place where you, too, are encouraged to **be**, fully.

All of the artists have processes based in community and chosen families of care, connection, freedom, and love. Belmer,

Schmaling, and Slaughter believe love is work: it is difficult, and it embraces the shadows with the light. These portraits reflect devotion and reverence for their sitters and those experiencing their photographs.

This exhibition is nestled between galleries where Isabella Stewart Gardner fostered artistic talent, interpersonal connection, and community support. Portraits celebrating and affirming multifaceted LGBTQIA+ experiences extend across the Museum. In the New Building's Hostetter Gallery is Mark Seliger's portrait series *On Christopher Street: Transgender Stories* by Mark Seliger. Hakeem Adewumi's

fantastical self-portrait graces
the Museum's Anne H. Fitzpatrick
Façade outdoors.

Community Voices Phone

A project by Crystal Bi

The artists and many of the people in the photographs around you left messages on this phone.

They answer the question: where do you feel like your fullest self?

Listen to memories of oceans and nature, driving and dance floors, mentorship and belly laughs, feeling seen and sexy.

Every time you pick up the phone, you'll hear from someone new.

Featuring
Jaypix Belmer
Ally Schmaling
Sarah Saydun
Kirbie Macewen

Ulysses Cuir
Tabitha Segovia
Indi Massiel
Michael Christmas
Shamsud Abhay Bery
Sherman
K Lenore Siner
Samantha Rose
Naomi Westwater
Seraphim Sea

Try responding to this prompt
yourself at the Art Wall, opposite
the Bertucci Education Studio in
the New Building.

Special thanks to Fred Wolflink for
technical consultation.

Ally Schmaling



Ally Schmaling

Quilt

2024

Inkjet print on mold-made
watercolor paper, string

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Ally Schmaling

“I make art as a kind of exploration, or in reverence for a person, or just in joy of process, rather than in service of the final product.” —Ally Schmaling

Ally Schmaling celebrates all of the ways to live in a human body. Here, they bring together portraits of people they admire: close friends, queer-trans parents, the

organizer of a local kink takeover night, and the founders of a queer-trans healing collective. Schmaling is inspired by quilting, the slow and tedious work of stitching together disparate parts into a unified whole. For them, a quilt is a metaphor for the labor of love of queer community.

In the studio, Schmaling creates a space for their subjects to confidently and joyously step into their bodies in front of the camera. For them, the process of coming together with another person is more meaningful than a final photograph.

Olivia Slaughter

"I think finding your community, finding my community, has really allowed me the gift of loving myself." —Olivia Slaughter

Olivia Slaughter meticulously renders members of their found family in deep, dark blacks and brightened white light. For Slaughter, the contrast honors the people who embrace their shadows, such as mental health struggles, along with their brilliance. Slaughter says, "I realized that I had found my community because of my shadows ... They were understanding the dark parts of me, and they liked those things, too."

The silhouettes recall cut-paper cameo profiles, a popular form of portraiture in the early 1800s United States. (Look for three historical examples of silhouette portraits nearby in the Vaticchino Gallery.) Slaughter reimagines the form with Black and queer people at the center.



Olivia Slaughter
Shamsud Abahy Bery

2024

Silver gelatin print on
fiber base paper

Collection of the artist

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reserved Olivia Slaughter



Olivia Slaughter
J R Alexander

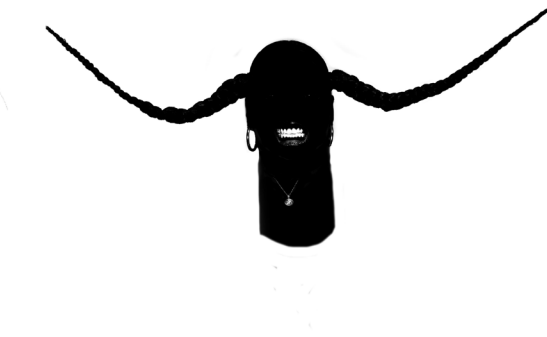
2024

Silver gelatin print on
fiber base paper

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Olivia Slaughter
Indhira Masseil

2024

Silver gelatin print on
fiber base paper

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Olivia Slaughter
Michael Christmas
2024
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Olivia Slaughter
Wayne "Cash"
Montague
2024
Silver gelatin print on
fiber base paper
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Olivia Slaughter
Jasé Gardner and
Seraphim Sea
2024
Silver gelatin print on
fiber base paper
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Jaypix Belmer

“I let people know that they have great gold inside.” —Jaypix Belmer

In this series, Jaypix Belmer makes self-portraits as a character named Gold Member: fearless and spray-painted in gold to project an inner light. Belmer’s tools of communication—camera, hands, eyes—are on display. In one photograph, *Reflect The Light* (top right), Belmer further remixes their image into a prism of gold mirrors with a bright white half-moon shape. Is it a blink? The shutter of the camera? A space for your eyes to meet theirs?

Belmer hopes these photographs

help viewers see their own beauty and power reflected like a mirror. They describe their purpose as being a “reverend for the people,” a guide toward exchange and letting go of preconceived notions.



Jaypix Belmer

Soul Solja

2014

Inkjet print on metallic
finish cotton paper

Collection of the artist

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Jaypix Belmer

The World is Yours

2014

Inkjet print on metallic
finish cotton paper

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Jaypix Belmer

No Joke

2014

Inkjet print on metallic
finish cotton paper

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Jaypix Belmer

Clue

2014

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finish cotton paper

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Jaypix Belmer

Reflect the Light

2014

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finish cotton paper

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Jaypix Belmer

High Reverend

2014

Inkjet print on metallic
finish cotton paper

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Jaypix Belmer

Dome

2014

Inkjet print on metallic
finish cotton paper

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