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
Collection of the artist © 2024, all rights reserved
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
©2024, all rights reserved Olivia Slaughter

Olivia Slaughter

**J R Alexander**
2024
Silver gelatin print on fiber base paper
Collection of the artist
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Olivia Slaughter

**Indhira Masseil**
2024
Silver gelatin print on fiber base paper
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©2024, all rights reserved Olivia Slaughter
Olivia Slaughter

**Michael Christmas**

2024

Silver gelatin print on fiber base paper

Collection of the artist

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Olivia Slaughter

**Wayne “Cash” Montague**

2024

Silver gelatin print on fiber base paper

Collection of the artist

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Olivia Slaughter

**Jasé Gardner and Seraphim Sea**

2024

Silver gelatin print on fiber base paper

Collection of the artist

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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
Inkjet print on metallic finish cotton paper
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Jaypix Belmer

**Reflect the Light**
2014
Inkjet print on metallic finish cotton paper
Collection of the artist
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Jaypix Belmer

**High Reverend**
2014
Inkjet print on metallic finish cotton paper
Collection of the artist
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Jaypix Belmer

Dome

2014

Inkjet print on metallic finish cotton paper

Collection of the artist

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