

Ajamu X

Born 1963
Huddersfield
Lives and works in
London, UK

Selected solo exhibitions

- 2026 *Fierce: Pittsburgh*, Silver Eye Gallery, Pittsburgh, USA
- 2025 *Us in the Frame, FOAM*, Amsterdam, the Netherlands ,
Fierce: Bristol Martin Parr Foundation, UK
- 2024 *A Sensual Chorus of Gestures*, Amanda Wilkinson, London, UK
- 2023 *Ajamu: Patron Saint of Darkrooms*, Autograph ABP, London, UK
- 2022 *The Day the World Came to Huddersfield*, Lawrence Batley Theatre, Huddersfield, UK
- 2021 *Ajamu: Archival Sensoria*, Cubitt Gallery, London, UK
Reluctant Voyeurs, MOCA, London, UK
- 2019 *Fierce: Toronto*, Artseverywhere Festival, Guelph, Toronto, Canada
- 2018 *Melange*, with Patrick Herbert, OBA Library, Amsterdam, Netherlands
Fierce: Toronto works in progress, Harbourfront Centre, Toronto, Canada
Queer Champions, Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, UK
- 2016 *Portraits and Praxis*, International AIDS Conference, Durban, South Africa
Through a Queer Lens, Jewish Museum London, UK
I Am For You Can Enjoy, with Khalil West, Contact Theatre, Manchester, and FACT, Liverpool, UK
- 2013 *Fierce: Portraits of Young Black LGBTQ People*, Guildhall Art Gallery, London, UK
- 2012 *Future Histories*, Street Level Photoworks, Glasgow, UK
- 2009 *Familiar Strangers*, Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow, UK
- 1999 *Anti-Bodies: A Spectacle of Strangeness*, Standpoint Gallery, London, UK
- 1995 *Ajamu: Selected Works*, Pinacoteca Do Estado, Sao Paulo, Brazil
- 1994 *Black Bodyscapes*, Huddersfield Art Gallery, Aytoun Gallery, Manchester, and Camerawork, London

Selected group exhibitions

- 2025 *[uz], [uz], [uz]: Artists from Working-Class Backgrounds*, The Stanley & Audrey Burton Gallery (Leeds University Library Galleries), Leeds, UK
Talisman, Cardion Arts , London, UK
The Ignorant Art School, Sit -in 4, Cooper Gallery, Dundee, UK
- 2024 *Radical Matter: When Materialism is no longer Enough*, Angewandte Interdisciplinary, Lab, Vienna, Austria
Photographing 80's Britain: A Critical Decade, Tate Britain, London *Ultraviolet*, London, UK
This is The Truth: The Black Queer Masculine Through A Reclaimed Lens, Melkweg Expo, Amsterdam, Netherlands
Flaunt: Being the Dream, Mocada Museum, Governors Island, US
Paris Internationale, with Amanda Wilkinson, France
How to Destroy Angels, Horse Hospital, London, UK
- 2023 *(Un) Defining Queer*, Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, UK
Art South Train Festival, Montréal, Canada
A Hard Man is Good to Find, Photographers Gallery, London, UK
The Missing Thread, Somerset House, London, UK
Hopscotch, Copeland Gallery, London, UK
Lapsus Calami, Marlborough, London, UK
Letter like shapes word like sequences, Amanda Wilkinson, London, UK
- 2022 *Very Private?*, Charleston House, UK

- On Our Backs: The Revolutionary Art of Queer Sex Work*, Handwerker Gallery, New York, US
- Fashioning Masculinities*, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK
- Afro-Scots: Revisiting the Work of Black Artists in Scotland*, GOMA, UK
- Lightwork 50th Anniversary Exhibition*, Eversom Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY, US
- 2021 *My Whole Body Changed into Something Else*, Stevenson Gallery, South Africa
- 2020 *Darkness and Light*, Los Angeles LGBT Centre, US, and Gochis Galleries (Online)
- 2019 *Kiss My Genders*, Hayward Gallery, London, UK
- Get Up Stand Up, Now*, Somerset House, London, UK
- On Our Backs: The Revolutionary Art of Queer Sex Work*, Leslie Lohman, New York, US
- 2018 *Black Togetherness as Lingua Franca*, Framer Framed, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2017 *Expanded Visions: Fifty Years of Collecting*, Leslie Lohman, New York, US
- 2016 *Now! Now! In More Than One Place*, Chelsea College of Arts, London, UK
- 2015 *A Line Drawn from the Eye to the Summit*, Waterfall Gallery, Birmingham, UK
- Shake the Bottle*, Herbert Read Gallery, Kent, UK
- 2014 *Re-Imagine: Black Women in Britain*, Black Cultural Archives, London, UK
- 2011 *Queer Self-Portraits Now*, Fred Mann Gallery, London, UK
- 2010 *Photoshow*, Leslie Lohman, New York, US
- 2009 *British Subjects*, Neuberger Museum of Art, New York, US
- 2007 *Fellow Travellers*, Salford University, Manchester, UK
- 2005 *Identity and Nomadism*, Palazzo delle Papesse, Italy
- 2004 *Transformation*, Manchester Museum, UK
- Hidden Histories*, Walsall New Art Gallery, UK
- 2003 *Phantom of Desire*, Neue Gallery, Austria
- 2002 *Odalisque*, Mafuji Gallery, London, UK
- 2001 *Men's Bodies*, University of Nottingham, UK
- 2000 *Sexmutant*, Nunnery Gallery, London, UK
- 1998 *Africa by Itself*, Maison Europeene de la Photographie, Paris, France
- The Miniature Museum, Academic Medical Centre, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- Black Nude New Identities*, Tropen Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 1997 *Kissing the Dust*, Oldham Art Gallery, UK
- In Visible Light*, Museum of Modern Art Oxford, UK
- Subjects of Desire*, Konstack, Stockholm
- Transforming the Crown*, Caribbean Cultural Centre, New York
- 1996 *Prospect 96*, Schirn Kunstalle, Frankfurt, Germany
- 1994 *Strangers in Paradise*, Foto Institute, Rotterdam, Netherlands
- 1990 *Different Circles*, Brixton Art Gallery, London, UK

Selected curatorial projects and collaborations

- 2024 *Ah Sugar*, with Marlene Smith, Cubitt Gallery, London, UK
- 2023 Instagram takeover, Photographers Gallery, London, UK 2022
- The Making of Black Queer Britain*, Dir. Topher Campbell,
- My5/BET UK 2021 *Docking the Archive with Evidence to Exist /*
- Culture Seed

- Sensuousness Discoveries*, 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning, London, UK
- 2020 *Me and My Penis*, Channel 4
- 2019 *Ajamu: Joyful Insurrection* with Steven Isaac-Wilson, Channel 4
- 2018 *Blissful Chaos: A Black Queer Kink-Posium*, 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning, London, UK
- After Dark*, Gallery of Modern Art and Glasgow International, UK
- I Am for You Can Enjoy*, with Khalil West, Harbour Front Centre, Toronto, Canada
- 2017 *Alternate Endings, Radical Beginnings: Day With (OUT) Art*, Visual AIDS and 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning, London
- 2016 *#blackgayslay*, with Blackout UK (Online)
- 2016 *Archival Pleasures*, Online exhibition, Visual AIDS, New York
- 2015 Maud Sulter exhibition and book with Dr Deborah Cherry, Autograph ABP, London
- Street Level Photoworks, Glasgow
- 2009 *We Live Here!*, International homo-lesbian information archive, Netherlands
- In This Our Lives: The Reunion*, with Dr. Antoine Rogers and Topher Campbell (Dir), rukus! Federation
- 2008 *London Liberationists*, filmed installation, Museum of London, UK
- People, Signs and Resistance: On the Front Line*, 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning, London
- Outside Edge*, exhibition and study day, Museum in Docklands, London, UK
- 2005 *The Queens Jewels*, Positive East, London, UK
- 1995 *The Homecoming: A Short Film about Ajamu*, Topher Campbell (Dir), Arts Council of England

Selected residencies / institutional affiliations

- 2023 Lightworks, Syracuse, NY, US
- 2021 Visual Transgressions: Gendered Identities in Art, Brandeis University and MIT, US
- 2016 Visual AIDS and Residency Unlimited, New York
- 2014 Alice Yard, Trinidad and Tobago, WI
- 2010 Street Level, Photoworks, Glasgow, UK
- 2009 Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow, UK
- 1998 Light Work Community Darkroom, Syracuse, NY, US
- East Moors Correction Centre, Leeds, UK
- 1995 Art Media Centre, Batley, UK
- NAFOTO, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Selected grants / bursaries / awards / nominations

- 2024 Developing Your Creative Practice, Arts Council England
- Realisation Grant, Centre for British Photography
- Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize (long list)
- 2022 Royal Photographic Society Honorary Fellowship
- Keith Haring Arts and Activism Nomination
- 2021 Culture Seeds, London
- Arts Council Grants for the Arts (2013, 2014, 2021)

- 2019 London Arts and Humanities Partnerships
2014 Gertrude Aston-Bowwater Bursary
Man of the Year, Black Gay Community Awards (2008, 2009)
2008 Heritage Lottery Fund
Westminster Photography & Digital Multimedia (still image) Bursaries
Awards for All, National Lottery

Selected talks / lectures / workshops

- 2025 An Exquisite Texture of Light, ALMA| LEWIS, Pittsburgh, USA
Encounters Festival, (w/ Ita O'Brien) Van Gogh House and Gallery, London, UK
Piss, Rat Park - Duckie, London, UK
Through the Lens of Time (w/ Campbell Addy, Stephen Issac Wilson, Jacquill Basedew) Tate Britain, UK
2024 Tranquility of Communion, Rotimi Fani -Kayode, Symposium, Wexner Centre for the Arts, Ohio, USA
2023 In Conversation with Mendez, Photographers Gallery, London
2022 Meditation on the Black Archive, Black Swedish Archive Project
Photo Erotic, Rode Island School of Design Symposium
Carbon Turning Slowly Conference, on the work of Ingrid Pollard, with Dr Sheena Calvert, MK gallery
2021 Black Gay Mail, with Alan Bell, Ajamu X, Gregory D. Victorienne, Rick Irick, Adrienne Adams on Transnational Postal Networks
Piss and Cocoa Butter, Sexuality Summer School, with Adrienne Adams, Manchester
2020 Archiving in the Dark: Darkroom, Materiality, and Erotic Senses, Glasgow School of Art
2019 Pleasure and Messy Propositions in Turbulent Times, Goddard College, US
Ephemeral Provocations: Perverting the Archive, AERI Conference, Liverpool
Troubling Gender, Hayward Gallery, London
Unruly Black Bodies: Image, Archiving and the Erotics of Sense, Edinburgh University
2018 From a Place of Abundance: An intergenerational conversation with Evan Ifekoya, and Rene Matic, Gasworks, London
See You at Breakfast: Memory and Materiality, with Marlene Smith, Grand Union Gallery, Birmingham
Lighting the Path, with Rita Keagan, Paul Dash and sorryyoufeeluncomfortable collective, Tate Modern, London
Promiscuous Archiving: The Joys of Curating Queer Black Legacies, in conversation with Courtney McFarland, Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Toronto, Canada
Lubricious Sensorium: Erotic Praxis, Darkroom and the Queering of Sense, Photographers Gallery, London
Black Masculinity, Male sexuality/Respectability Politics, Black Liberation Symposium, Harbourfront Centre, Toronto
Encountering Difference, Camberwell College of Art/UAL, London
2017 Promiscuous Archiving, Goldsmiths University, London
#radicalblackqueerjoy, OCAD University, Toronto
2016 Curating Queer Black Legacies with Sur Rodney Sur, Syracuse University
Archival Dirt: The Politics and Pleasures of Queer Black Archives. 10 th

International Archive Conference, London Metropolitan Archives

The Politics of Pleasure, in conversation with Topher Campbell, 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning, London

We liked the Way He Moved, International AIDS Conference, Durban with Patrick 'Pato' Herbert

Suitcase Under the Bed, Cidade Queer/Queer City Initiative, Sao Paulo

Suitcase Under the Bed, The LGBT Community Centre, New York

2014 Photographing the Black Queer Body, Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool

2013 Queer Artists Speak Out, Brighton Museum

2009 The Image in the Global Age???, Goldsmiths University, London

2005 Something Pleasurable, Intimate, Sexy and Dirty, with Dr Ope Lori, Camberwell College of Art/UAL, London

2004 Portraits and Praxis, in conversation with Dr. Darren Sharpe, Goldsmiths University, London

2002 Poetics of Provocation, CICES, Dakar Biennale, Senegal 2001

Poetics of Provocation, Jan Van Eyck Academy, Maastricht

Selected publications

2025 *Ajamu X*, Tate Publication as part of Tate Photography Series, London

2024 *Archives of Arousal*, Spit & Spider Press

2021 *Ajamu: Archive*, limited edition artist's monograph, Spit & Spider Press

2013 *Fierce: Portraits of Young Black LGBTQ People*, monograph

Selected public collections

Leslie Lohman Lesbian and Gay Art Museum, US

Autograph ABP, UK

Neuberger Museum of Art, US

Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow, UK

Tate Britain, UK

Rose Art Museum, US

Huddersfield Art Gallery and Museum, UK

Arts Council of England, UK

Victoria & Albert Museum, UK