

# PLAINS ART MUSEUM

## MICKEY SMITH: *Morphologies* to open at Plains Art Museum

### Press Release

For Immediate Release (January 2025)

*MICKEY SMITH: Morphologies* travels to Plains Art Museum from Macalester College's Law Warschaw Gallery in St. Paul, MN. The exhibit will be on view from January 18 to May 25, 2025, in Plains' Ruth and Seymour Landfield Atrium and Xcel Energy Gallery.

Over the past two decades, Mickey Smith has documented significant cultural shifts in academic and public libraries, primarily across the United States, Aotearoa/New Zealand and the South Pacific. Her photography captures the evolution of libraries, from traditional card catalogs and stacks to digitization and the advent of artificial intelligence, highlighting their role as stewards of knowledge.

The exhibition features Smith's acclaimed projects *VOLUME*, *Denudation*, and *As You Will: Carnegie Libraries of the South Pacific* alongside new mixed-media installations made from deaccessioned library materials donated to the project by academic libraries. Through this confluence of Smith's oeuvre, *Morphologies* explores the dynamic nature of library lifecycles with striking imagery, like her trademark — never lit nor touched — captures of in-situ bound periodicals. Smith's work considers not only the ways in which books are revered, but how libraries adapt to changes, including repurposing buildings and transitioning from physical books to online resources.

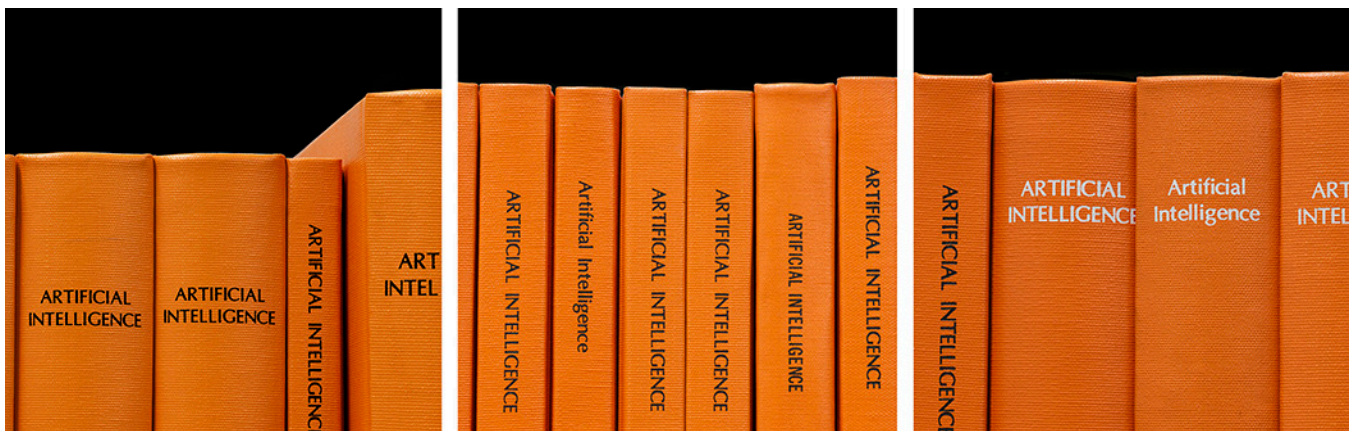
Mickey Smith holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Photography from Minnesota State University Moorhead (1994) and a Diploma in Jewelry Design from Hungry Creek Art & Craft School in New Zealand (2019). Mickey is an advocate and spokesperson for Harbour HoSpice Auckland. Since 2003, Smith's work has been included in numerous exhibitions throughout the United States, in New Zealand, China, and Russia. Her works belong to numerous public and private collections, including the Museum of Modern Art Library, Sheldon Museum of Art, and Weisman Art Museum. She has received grants and awards from the McKnight Foundation, CEC ArtsLink, Americans for the Arts, and Creative New Zealand.

**“Seeing this exhibition at the Plains Art Museum feels like a homecoming. As an art student at MSUM, I spent countless hours in the Livingston Lord Library, devouring materials which profoundly shaped my perspective as an artist.”**

- Mickey Smith, Artist

**“We are thrilled to showcase *MICKEY SMITH: Morphologies* at Plains Art Museum. This compelling body of work offers a timely exploration on the shifting role of libraries in the digital age. Smith breathes new life into deaccessioned books, inviting contemplation on the preservation of knowledge, the intersection of digital and analog forms of media, and the complexities of information access in today's world.”**

- Danielle Gravon, Chief Curator and Director of Collections and Exhibitions, Plains Art Museum



Mickey Smith, *Collocation No. 19 (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)*, 2024, three 46 x 46 in archival pigment prints on paper, Photographed at Macalester College, DeWitt Wallace Library, St. Paul MN, courtesy the artist

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An accompanying illustrated publication is co-edited by exhibition curator Heather Everhart and Laura Wertheim Joseph, PhD (newly appointed head curator of the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum), and includes essays by Everhart + Joseph, Shannon Mattern, PhD (Professor of Media Studies and Art History at the University of Pennsylvania), and Aisling Quigley, PhD (Postdoctoral Fellow in Digital Liberal Arts at Macalester College).

The exhibition travels to Lincoln, NE in fall 2025, jointly presented by the Eisentrager-Howard Gallery at the University of Nebraska and Fiendish Plots.

For artist information, artwork details and images, public program details, or purchase information, please contact: Heather Everhart, director & curator, Law Warschaw Gallery / [heverhar@macalester.edu](mailto:heverhar@macalester.edu)

*MICKEY SMITH: Morphologies* is generously sponsored by Karen & Leslie Desnick and Dual Purpose/Dual Citizen Brewing Company Law Warschaw is an academic gallery, gratefully located on the sovereign Dakhóta land of Mni Sóta Maŋkoce.

Plains Art Museum thanks our generous PlainsArt4All members, donors, and Organizational Partners for their support. Additional support provided by The McKnight Foundation; FM Area Foundation; The Arts Partnership with support from the cities of Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo; The FUNd at Plains Art Museum; and the North Dakota Council on the Arts, which receives funds from the North Dakota Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support provided by Art Bridges Foundation's Access for All program.

**Exhibition Tour Thursday, January 30, 6-6:45 PM, Free**

Explore *Morphologies*, a captivating exhibition that documents the transformation of libraries in the digital age.



Mickey Smith, *Stack Vol. 1*, 2024 donated library shelves and 98 years of shredded National Geographic installation dimensions variable courtesy the artist, Installation: Law Warschaw Gallery, St. Paul, MN / photo by Rik Sferra

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