

SOHN FINE ART

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SHAWN THEODORE

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Born in Germany, 1970

Lives in Philadelphia, PA

Shawn Theodore is an award-winning photographer whose work opens broad conversations regarding the role of the photographer in the shaping of agency and imagery, engages in new forms of storytelling, and impacts the trajectory of the collective black consciousness.

Theodore's work is defiant, and not simply in regards to labels, it has become a standard by which the contemporary photographic image of Blackness, for its nuance, depth and meaning, is now measured. Theodore calls himself an "Afromythologist" (which is his not-so-subtle rebuttal to Afrofuturistic aesthetic values), and serves as a continual affirmation for those who, while oft-overlooked, are in no way unsure of their own agency within the context of ever-changing historically accurate, *and* vividly imagined, archives of the Black American traditions that predate '*Blackness as an American Invention*'. In an interview for ID magazine he explains the term as "someone who questions official histories, and explores the radical possibility of alternative narratives through the creation of a missing, yet necessarily specific, African American mythology."

Theodore was awarded the prestigious PDN's 30 New & Emerging Photographers to Watch (2019), the Getty Images / ARRAY 'Where We Stand' (2018) grant and a grant from the Knight Foundation for 'A Dream Deferred' (2018). He is a two-time nominee of The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage Fellowship, and a nominee of the Magnum Foundation Fund.

Theodore earned his BA in JPRA (Journalism, Public Relations and Advertising) from Temple University and he currently attends the MFA for Photography program at Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD Atlanta). Theodore is a Senior Lecturer of the photography department of the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. Theodore is a current trustee of the Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation and the Philadelphia Photo Arts Center.

Theodore has participated in exhibitions at various institutions, galleries, and fairs, including the African American Museum in Philadelphia (2017, 2018), Mennello Museum of American Art (2018), The Barnes Foundation (2017, 2018, 2019), Steven Kasher Gallery (2018), AIPAD (2018, 2019), Hudson Valley Community College (2018), Catherine Edelman Gallery (2017), The Bakalar & Paine Galleries at MassArt (2017), Snap! Orlando (2018), Richard Beavers Gallery (2018), PRIZM Art Fair, Scope Art Fair, Philadelphia Photo Arts Center, Rush Arts Gallery (2017, 2018), and the University of the Arts (2019). His commercial projects include works for Apple, Showtime Networks, RocNation, PAPER Magazine, New York Magazine, Smithsonian Magazine, The Atlantic, The New York Times, PDN and others.