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Akeem Smith Rebuilds Memory at Art Basel Miami Beach 2025

December 04, 2025

For the 2025 edition of Art Basel Miami Beach, Heidi presents new work from American-Jamaican artist Akeem Smith, pieces that feel less like sculptures and more like portals into Caribbean cultural memory. Smith, who has spent the

**last fifteen years gathering
photographs and VHS
footage from family, friends,
and dancehall icons,
transforms that personal
archive into charged,
architectural installations.**

**Each work houses imagery
inside metal structures built
from salvaged fragments of
once-vibrant Caribbean
social spaces. These
materials, the bones of
rooms where communities
gathered, carry their own
weathering, their own
histories. Smith folds them
into the images, creating
layered compositions where
memory doesn't sit neatly; it
erodes, ghosts, resurfaces.**

The effect is a kind of visual anthropology: memory as debris field, architecture as witness. Smith toys with the instability of images, how they circulate, who controls them, and what happens when the artist becomes archivist, caretaker, and cultural mediator all at once.

Born in Brooklyn and raised in Kingston's Waterhouse district, Smith has long dissolved the boundaries between conceptual art, fashion, and vernacular storytelling. His practice examines the politics and economies of image-making while preserving the stories that mainstream cultural iconography often overlooks.

At Art Basel Miami Beach, these new works feel like a homecoming: not nostalgic, but defiantly present. They anchor Caribbean social worlds in physical form, holding space for a community whose histories are too often unrecorded. In Smith's hands, transformation isn't just metaphor; it's material.



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