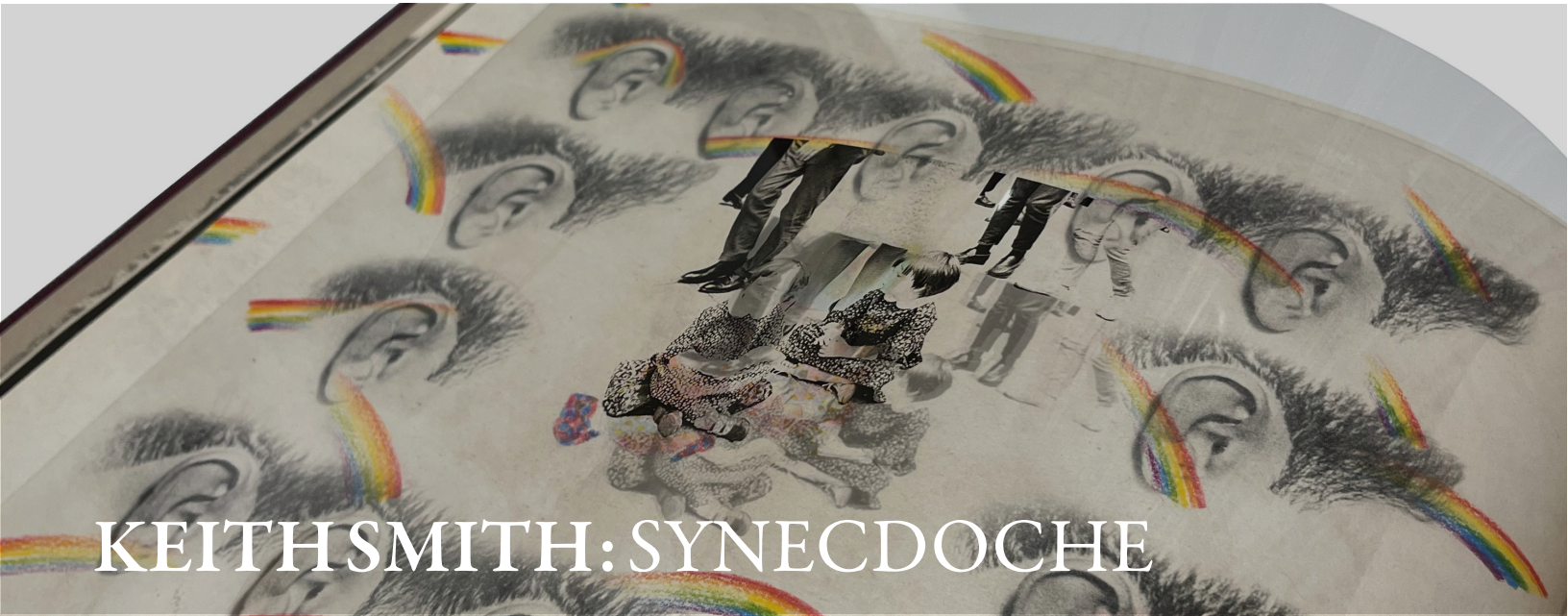


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

KEITH SMITH: SYNECDOCHE
CURATED BY: MEGAN N. LIBERTY

NOVEMBER 6TH, 2025 - JANUARY 9TH, 2026

BRUCE SILVERSTEIN



KEITH SMITH: SYNECDOCHE

Page from *Book Number 2, A Change In Dimension*, 1967

OPENING RECEPTION:

NOVEMBER 6TH / 6PM - 8PM

Bruce Silverstein Gallery is pleased to present *Keith Smith: Synecdoche*, curated by Megan N. Liberty, the gallery's fifth solo exhibition of the artist's work. The title *Synecdoche*, "a figure of speech in which a part represents the whole," captures the conceptual premise of this exhibition and a central tenet of Smith's practice. In his own words, "pictures can, no, must give up their sovereignty for the sake of the total."

The exhibition brings together over forty works from Smith's groundbreaking early experiments in photography and bookmaking from the 1960s to the 1980s, a period of profound innovation. Drawn from the artist's personal archive, the collages, works on fabric, postcards, and artist books in this exhibition offer a rare opportunity to appreciate a true polymath who drew upon a vast range of mediums and techniques to explore themes of love, self-identity, sexuality, friendship, and domesticity. Over six decades, Smith has consistently challenged and expanded the boundaries of art, influencing generations of artists working at the intersection of image, text, and structure.

Keith Smith's (b. 1938) early experimental works stem from undergraduate studies at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (1963–1967) and continued experimentation at Visual Studies Workshop, where he was influenced by Nathan Lyons, Sonia Landy Sheridan, and Joan Lyons. It was during these formative years that Smith began experimenting with sequencing photographs, employing innovative printmaking techniques, as well as stitching, collage, drawing, and painting. Since then, Smith has continued a lifelong investigation into the book as an artistic medium, placing him at the forefront of a movement that transformed the book from a container of images and text into a dynamic sculptural and conceptual form, challenging conventions of sequence, structure, and narrative.

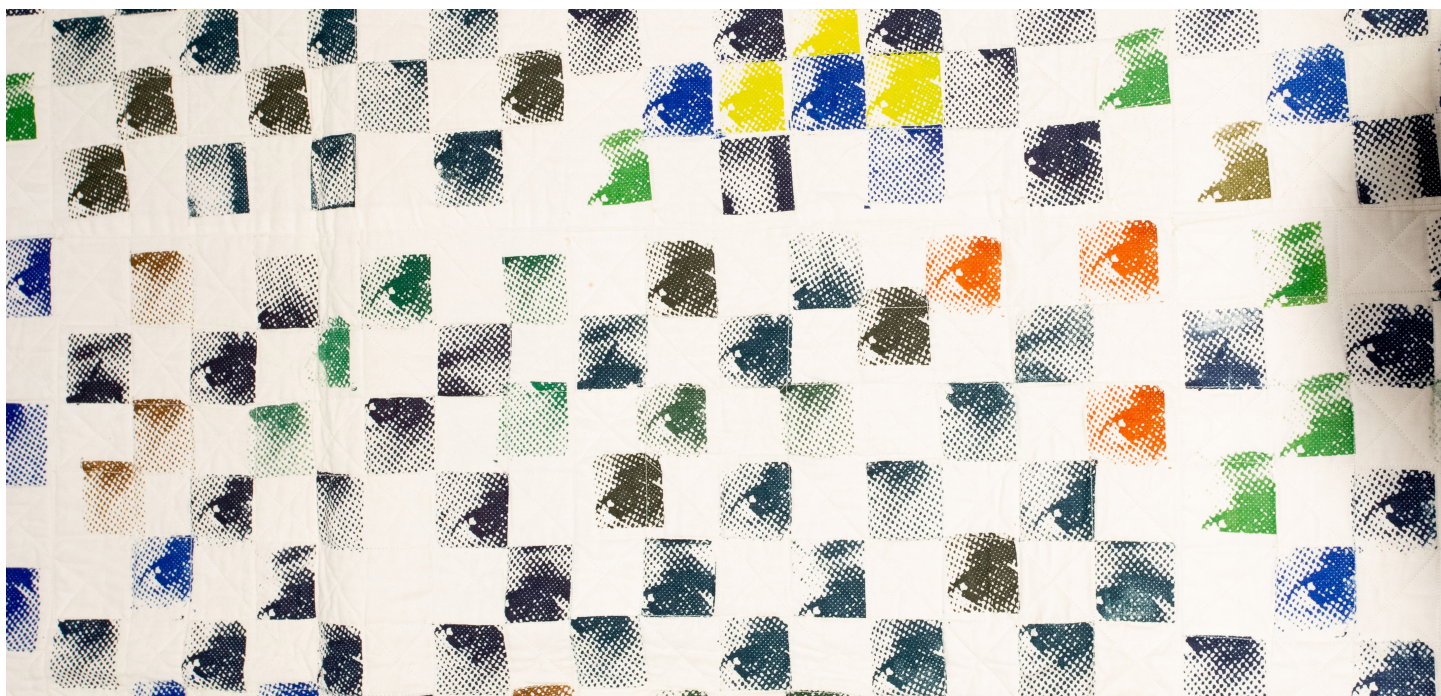
Across Smith's early works, Liberty observes, a persistent interest in shifting perception of the part within the whole.

This dynamic is especially evident in his use of transparencies, collage, quilting, and photocopier technology. The works gesture to the unexpected relationship between the part and the whole, changing how we read a book or see a photograph.” To this end, *Book Number 2, A Change in Dimension* (1967) and *Postcard: Keith* (1975) both feature moving transparent sheets. Other works use body parts as stand in for full figures, such as floating heads in *Emerging Image, Portrait of the Artist* (1965). *Miss B.* (1971), *Eye Quilt* (1965), and *Book Number 10, Orifice* (1969) use quilting techniques and patterns to create layers that shift how we see the figures. In other cases, the stitched parts create gridded bodies that suggest people in motion and cinematic sequencing, as in *Book Number 27* (1973), *Book Number 34* (1973), and two untitled copier portraits from 1971.

Keith Smith (b. 1938, Tipton, Indiana) is an American artist and author whose work is held in major collections including the Art Institute of Chicago, Museum of Modern Art, New York, The Getty Museum, Los Angeles, and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. He is the author of influential texts on bookmaking, including *The Structure of the Visual Book* (1998) and *Text in the Book Format* (2004), and has been awarded two Guggenheim Fellowships, a National Endowment for the Arts grant, and a Pollock Krasner Foundation grant. Smith’s work was included in the landmark 1978 exhibition *Mirrors and Windows: American Photography since 1960* and featured in a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1974. More recently, he was the subject of a major solo retrospective, *Keith Smith at Home*, at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 2018, his first major museum survey in five decades.

Megan N. Liberty is an arts writer, editor, and curator based between Brooklyn and Los Angeles, with a focus on artists books and publishing. She is the Art Books section editor at the Brooklyn Rail and has curated major traveling exhibitions. She holds a Masters in Art History from the Courtauld Institute of Art.

For inquiries, please contact the gallery at inquiries@brucesilverstein.com or 212 627 3930.



Eye Quilt, 1965