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# Amos Badertscher Images and Stories

Edited by Hunter O'Hanian, Jonathan D. Katz, and Beth Saunders, with essays by James Smalls, Joseph Plaster, Rafael Alvarez, and Theo Gordon

## The long-awaited first career survey from photographer Amos Badertscher

From the 1960s to the mid aughts, self-taught photographer Amos Badertscher (1936–2023) documented Baltimore's queer underground scene: drag queens, sex workers, club kids, and hustlers. Spanning the pre-Stonewall era through the height of the AIDS epidemic, his thousands of photographs reveal a world of both ecstatic desire and deep precarity—uncensored moments often overshadowed by mainstream narratives of LGBTQ+ History. This May, Monacelli will publish the first comprehensive survey of his work, *Amos Badertscher Images and Stories*.

Featuring essays by leading queer-art historians and hundreds of striking photographs, *Amos Badertscher Images and Stories* captures the artist's ability to map the rough edges and exuberant insides of everyday experience. The photographs are divided into three sections: 'Visage,' a collection of portraits; 'Nightlife,' a series from Baltimore's clubs and bars; and 'Mirrors,' a selection of images taken through mirrors, reflecting Badertscher's own gaze in relation to his subjects. Through direct stares and swishing limbs, his subjects unravel, exposing inner worlds of lust, loss, connection, and play. Accompanying the photographs are Amos' notes on his subjects—where he met them and who they were. In some cases, these notes occupy the margins of prints, framing photographs with his impressions.

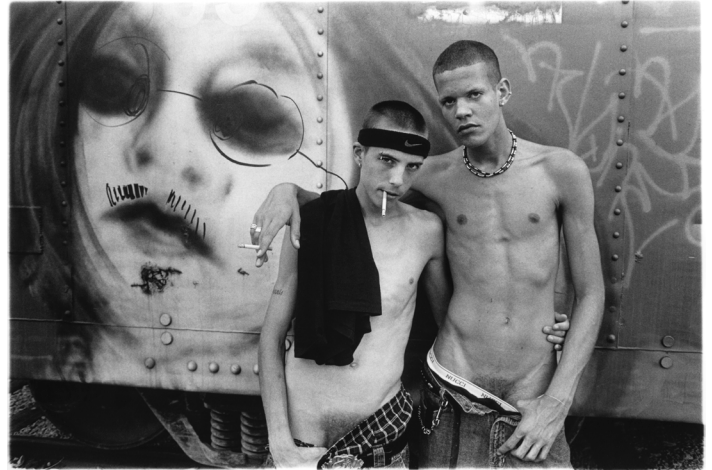
Interspersed between sections are essays by Rafael Alvarez, Jonathan D. Katz, Joseph Plaster, Theo Gordon, and James Smalls, offering critical perspectives on how Badertscher's work intersects with race, class, sexuality, and an evolving canon of queer art. Beth Saunders contributes a preface on the artist's enduring legacy and Hunter O'Hanian presents an introduction to his career, approach to photography, and affinity towards the marginalized communities of Baltimore (which Badertscher himself, born as an upper-middle class Baltimorean, freely chose to join). The prologue provides an intimate window into Badertscher's own mind through a series of prose vignettes that he composed throughout his life.

*Amos Badertscher Images and Stories* carves out an important place for the artist in a growing tradition of portrait photography, cementing his reputation as a vital documentarian and a powerful storyteller. Painting an honest and unseen picture of Baltimore around the turn of the millennium, this book is an essential addition for anyone interested in photography, urban life in America, and queer history and culture.

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## About the Authors

**Hunter O'Hanian** is a curator and former executive director of the Stonewall National Museum and Archives and director of Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art in New York.

**Jonathan D. Katz, PhD**, is Associate Professor of Practice in the History of Art and Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, curator of *The First Homosexuals* at Wrightwood 659 Gallery in Chicago, and author of *About Face: Stonewall, Revolt, and New Queer Art* (2024) and editor of *The First Homosexuals: The Birth of a Global Identity 1869–1939* (2025), both published by Monacelli.

**Beth Saunders** is curator and head of Special Collections at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and curator of *Lost Boys: Amos Badertscher's Baltimore*.

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## About Monacelli

As a leading publisher of illustrated books for more than twenty-five years, **Monacelli** has challenged the conventions of publishing to produce provocative, inspiring, and essential titles. Founded in 1994 by Gianfranco Monacelli, the organization has released nearly 600 books on architecture, art, interior design, landscape and gardens, photography, and the applied arts. Monacelli's books have been made in collaboration with prominent practitioners and scholars ever since its inaugural title, the groundbreaking *S,M,L,XL* by Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau. In 2015, the applied arts imprint Monacelli Studio was launched, adding elevated books on art instruction, photography technique, and crafts to the publisher's roster. In 2020, Monacelli joined the Phaidon family of companies.

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