

Powell, Jr. and world heavyweight champion Cassius Clay were leaders who supported Malcolm's "uncompromised black masculinity" and displayed a similar courage.

Malcolm X's personal photographer Robert L. Haggins (1922–2006) captured the visionary leader at his most charming and steadfast moments. The 13 photographs in the exhibit document Malcolm in the streets of the "black capitol of the world" and at famed gathering places where information on black nationalism was readily exchanged—e.g., the iconic image of Malcolm X speaking in front of Harlem's National Memorial African Bookstore in 1960. There are two photographs of Malcolm X with African representatives to the United Nations prior to his parting from the Nation of Islam and forming the Organization of African-American Unity.

The photographs are on loan from Robert Haggins's daughter, Sharon Dunn. Haggins was born in Richmond, Va., and grew up in Harlem where he was a staff photographer for the *Amsterdam News*.

The single painting of Malcolm X is by portraitist Theodore A. Charron. It is on loan from the Ella L. Little-Collins Foundation which Malcolm X's nephew, Rodnell P. Collins directs. In an exhibit-related program, Collins

recounted his story of growing up with his Uncle Malcolm on nearby Dale Street.

At age 15 Clarissa Sligh was thrust into the vortex of history and change as the central plaintiff in the 1955 school desegregation case in Virginia. From there it was off to Hampton Institute (now University); followed by marriage and motherhood; the professional cultures of NASA and Wall Street, and finally, making photographic-based art and other art, and teaching at New York University and the University of Pennsylvania.

Haverford College presented **CLARISSA SLIGH: Photographs**, a three-part exhibition of Sligh's work in three separate spaces on the Pennsylvania campus, February 22–April 13, 2008.

The compass of Sligh's journey always seems to point towards challenging injustice and conventionality. Her *Masculinities* exhibit questions the possibilities of role reversal in a world ordered by traditional sexual and racial expectations. The collection of images provokes acceptance or rejection of individuals possessed of qualities generally perceived to be opposite of the person's "official" gender. Influenced by personal memory, Sligh prompts introspection about

whether female/male could manifest in ways other than mother/father matriach/patriarch, nurturer/provider, acquiescence/machismo.

This theme of authenticity and tolerance is explored more intimately and racially in the *Jake in Transition* exhibition where Sligh documents the medical transformation of Deborah to Jake. Sligh parallels this story with narratives of African Americans who relinquished racial and sexual identity to "pass" as white in search of freedom from slavery and institutionalized racism.

The third exhibition was *100 Americans: A Presence of the Past In Philadelphia*. First constructed in 2007, Sligh created this installation of 100 portraits of present day Philadelphians to humanize an exhibit of African American historical documents and decorative arts that was on display at one of the city's leading institutions. The work served as a "call and response" to the community to "witness" its contribution to American history.

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Clarissa Sligh  
*Jake Shaving* (from "The Jake in Transition" series), 1999  
black and white silver gelatin print



Clarissa Sligh  
*Tommy with Roses* (the "Masculinity Project"), 1996  
black and white silver gelatin print