

Cauleen Smith (b. 1967), a multidisciplinary artist and filmmaker, draws on poetry, science fiction, non-Western cosmologies, and experimental film to create works that reflect on memory, Afro-diasporic histories, and new models of self-reliance and agency. This exhibition presents her films *Pilgrim* (2017) and *Sojourner* (2018), along with selected drawings from a new series titled *Firespitters* (2020–), in two installations that reimagine the future as a utopian space of care, acceptance, and mutuality. By placing the title of this exhibition in the plural, Smith points to the idea that what is held in common is never singular.

Unfolding across several important sites in Black spiritual and cultural history, each film weaves together writings by women from different eras, including Shaker visionary Rebecca Cox Jackson (1795–1871), abolitionist Sojourner Truth (1797–1883), the Black feminist Combahee River Collective of the 1970s, and experimental-jazz composer and spiritual leader Alice Coltrane (1937–2007), whose music also forms the soundtrack for both films. This gathering of voices enacts a shared female subjectivity, the collective strength of which is expressed in Smith's poetic use of the camera and light as improvisational instruments to reveal how invention, creativity, and generosity can be resources for transformation and regeneration.

Cauleen Smith: *Mutualities* is part of the Whitney's emerging artists program, sponsored by

NORDSTROM

Generous support is provided by
The Rosenkranz Foundation.

Additional support is provided by
the Artists Council.