

Alexis Smith Biography

1949
Born: Los Angeles, California

2024
Died: Los Angeles, California

EDUCATION

1966–1970
University of California, Irvine

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

1974
Alexis Smith, Riko Mizuno Gallery, Los Angeles

1975
Anteroom, Carp, Los Angeles, August 12–23
Alexis Smith, Whitney Museum of American Art,
New York, November 15–December 14

1975–1976
Classics Illustrated, Long Beach Museum of Art,
California, December 6, 1975–January 4, 1976

1976
Star Material, Mandeville Art Gallery, University of
California, San Diego
Scheherazade the Storyteller, Carp, Los Angeles,
August 23–27

1977
Tales of Mystery and Enchantment, Nicholas Wilder
Gallery, Los Angeles
Alexis Smith, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, June

1978
April Foole, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, April 1–19
The Magic Mountain, Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los
Angeles, October 28–November 30

1979
The Magic Mountain, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York,

April 21–May 12
Autumn Sonata, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary
Art, November–December

1980
Raymond Chandler's L.A., Rosamund Felsen Gallery,
Los Angeles, April 19–May 17

1981
Alexis Smith, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, January
5–24

1982
Chinese Junk, P.S. 1, Institute for Art and Urban
Resources, Queens, New York, April 2–May 1
Satan's Satellites, Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Los Angeles,
September 25–October 23

1983
Christmas Eve, 1943, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York,
March 23–April 13

1985
Jane, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, September 7–
October 12

1986
Viewpoints: Alexis Smith, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis,
February 2–March 16

1987–1988
Same Old Paradise, Brooklyn Museum, October 10, 1987–
January 11, 1988

1988
On the Road, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles,
March 26–April 23

1989
Past Lives, Santa Monica Museum of Art, California,
November 2–December 31

1990
Eldorado, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, March 17–
April 14
Past Lives, Josh Baer Gallery, New York, December

1991

Alexis Smith: Public Works, Mandeville Gallery, University of California, San Diego, January 12–February 24

1991–1992

Alexis Smith, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, November 21, 1991–March 1, 1992; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, March 29–July 5, 1992

1993

Alexis Smith, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, March 10–April 17

1994

The Wonder Years: 1973–1983, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, January 8–February 12

1995

The Farmer's Daughter, Gerald Peters Gallery, Dallas, January 5–February 18
Cherished Notions, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, May 25–June 30

1997–1998

My Favorite Sport, Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio State University, Columbus, September 18, 1997–January 4, 1998
A Matter of Taste, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, December 16, 1997–April 12, 1998

1999

Words to Live By, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, October 16–November 13

2000

The Sorcerer's Apprentice, Miami Art Museum, April 28–July 9

2001–2002

An Embarrassment of Riches, Greenberg Van Doren Gallery, New York, October 13, 2001–January 15, 2002

2002

Local Color, David Floria Gallery, Aspen, Colorado, July 27–August 25

2003

The Sorcerer's Apprentice and Past Lives, University of Wyoming Art Museum, Laramie, September 20–November 22

2003–2004

Living Dangerously, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, November 22, 2003–January 3, 2004

2004

Lust/Rust/Dust, Greenberg Van Doren Gallery, New York, March 25–April 24

2009

Imitation of Life, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, April 25–May 23

2011

Alexis Smith: Early Works, Thomas Solomon Gallery, Los Angeles, September 10–October 22

2013

Alexis Smith: Second Nature, Craig Krull Gallery, Santa Monica, California, April 20–May 25
Slice of Life, Honor Fraser Gallery, Los Angeles, June 8–July 27

2015

Alexis Smith: Chandlerisms, Athenaeum Music and Arts Library, La Jolla, California, June 20–July 25
Alexis Smith, Garth Greenan Gallery, New York, October 22–December 5

2017

Alexis Smith: On Point, Craig Krull Gallery, Santa Monica, California, April 15–May 20

2018

Alexis Smith, Frederick R. Weisman Museum of Art, Pepperdine University, Malibu, January 20–April 1
Alexis Smith: Hello Hollywood, Garth Greenan Gallery, New York, May 24–June 30

2021

Alexis Smith: Not in Utopia, Garth Greenan Gallery, New York, June 10–July 31

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1972

Greater Magic: Munger, Smith, Titus, Art Gallery, University of California, Irvine, March 5–April 1
Southern California: Attitudes, 1972, Pasadena Art Museum, California, September 19–November 5

1975

1975 Biennial Exhibition, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, January 20–April 9

Both Kinds: Contemporary Art from Los Angeles, University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, April 1–May 18

Work, Image, Number, Sarah Lawrence College Gallery, Bronxville, New York, September 23–October 19

Visual/Verbal, Art Gallery, University of California, Santa Barbara, September 30–October 26

1976

AutobiographiCalifornial Fantasies, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, January 13–February 20

1976–1977

Southland Video Anthology: Part I, Long Beach Museum of Art, California, October 23, 1976–January 9, 1977

1977–1979

American Narrative: 1967–1977, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, December 17, 1977–February, 25, 1978; Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, March 25–May 21, 1978; Winnipeg Art Gallery, Manitoba, Canada, June 15–August 13, 1978; University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, September 16–November 10, 1978; Art Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara, December 15, 1978–February 12, 1979

1978

Narration, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, April 18–June 18

1979

1979 Biennial Exhibition, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, February 6–April 1

The Decade in Review: Selections from the 1970s, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, June 19–September 2

Paper on Paper, San Francisco Museum of Art, June 29–August 12

Words and Images, Philadelphia College of Art, September 15–October 12

1980

Drawings, Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, November 29–December 13

1981

1981 Biennial Exhibition, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, January 20–April 12

Poetic Visions, Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles, January 24–February 22

Words as Images, Renaissance Society, University of Chicago, February 4–28

Humor in Art, Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, June 27–August 15

Art in Los Angeles: The Museum as Site, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, July 21–October 4

1982

The Americans: The Collage, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, July 11–October 3

1983

Directions: 1983, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC, March 10–May 15

The Comic Art Show: Cartoons in Painting and Popular Culture, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, July 18–August 26

Inaugural Exhibition, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, September 20–October 29

1984

Crime and Punishment: Reflections of Violence in Contemporary Art, Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara, California, February 11–April 1

An International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture, Museum of Modern Art, New York, May 17–August 19

Selections from the Merry and Bill Norris Collection, Fine Arts Gallery, University of California, Irvine, October 11–November 3

1985

Selections from the William J. Hokin Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, April 20–June 16

1986–1987

Remembrances of Things Past, Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, California, November 13, 1986–January 18, 1987

Text and Image: The Wording of American Art, Holly Solomon Gallery, New York, December 11, 1986–January 3, 1987

1986–1988

Individuals: A Selected History of Contemporary Art, 1945–1986, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, December 10, 1986–January 10, 1988

1987

Avant-Garde in the Eighties, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, April 23–July 12

1987–1989

Contemporary American Collage: 1960–1985, Herter Art Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, November 9–December 11, 1987; William Benton Museum of Art, University of Connecticut, Storrs, January 24–March 6, 1988; Art Gallery, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, March 27–May 8, 1988; Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio, September 11–October 23, 1988; Stedman Art Gallery, Rutgers, State University of New Jersey, Camden, November 14–December 24, 1988; Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, January 24–March 6, 1989; Art Gallery, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, March 27–May 8, 1989

1988

Striking Distance, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, March 22–June 19; Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara, California, July 16–August 28; Fresno Arts Center and Museum, California, July 16–August 28; University Art Gallery, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, California, November 17–December 16

1989

Making Their Mark: Women Artists Move into the Mainstream, 1970–1985, Cincinnati Art Museum, February 24–April 2; New Orleans Museum of Art, May 6–June 18; Denver Art Museum, July 22–September 10; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, October 21–December 31

A Brave New World, Karsten Schubert Gallery, London, March 14–April 15

Art in the Public Eye: Selected Developments, Security Pacific Gallery, Costa Mesa, California, June 13–August 19

1989–1990

Image World: Art and Media Culture, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, November 8, 1989–February 18, 1990

1991

Framed, Stephen Wirtz Gallery, San Francisco, April 4–May 4

1992

A Complete Hand of One Suit, Art Gallery, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, January 11–February 5

L.A. Stories, Jack Rutberg Fine Arts, Los Angeles, February 3–29

Western Myth: Twentieth Century Update, Aspen Art Museum, February 11–April 11

1994

Drawings, Gerald Peters Gallery, Dallas, June 16–April 3

1994–1995

The Art Cup, Garth Clark Gallery, Los Angeles, December 3, 1994–January 4, 1995

1995

Untitled (Reading Room), Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, July 8–August 19

Commercial Art, Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco, October 4–November 11

1996

Landfall Press: Twenty-Five Years of Printmaking, Milwaukee Art Museum, September 13–November 10

1997–1999

Sunshine & Noir: Art in L.A., 1960–1997, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark, May 16–September 7, 1997; Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany, October 31, 1997–January 18, 1998; Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin, Italy, May 15–August 23, 1998; Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center, University of California, Los Angeles, October 7, 1998–January 3, 1999

1999

The Eclectic Eye: Selections from the Frederick R. Weisman Foundation, California Center for the Arts, Escondido, January 15–May 2

2000

Library, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, July 26–August 26

2000–2001

Made in California: Art, Image, and Identity, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, October 22, 2000–March 18, 2001

2001

Seeing or Believing, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, June 9–July 28

- Recasting the Past: Beneath the Hollywood Tinsel*, Art Gallery, California State University, Fullerton, September 8–October 11
- 2002
Visions from America: Photographs from the Whitney Museum of American Art, 1940–2001, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, June 27–September 22
- 2002–2003
Some Assembly Required: Collage Culture in Post-War America, Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York, September 28, 2002–January 26, 2003; Madison Art Center, Wisconsin, June 8–August 17, 2003; Polk Museum of Art, Lakeland, Florida, August 20–October 26, 2003
- 2003
Raid the Icebox, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, March 22–April 26
- 2004–2005
100 Artists See God, Jewish Museum, San Francisco, March 3–June 27, 2004; Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, California, July 31–October 3, 2004; Contemporary Art Center of Virginia, Virginia Beach, June 9–September 4, 2005
- 2006
Los Angeles, 1955–1985: Birth of an Art Capital, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, March 8–July 17
- 2007–2009
WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, March 4–July 16, 2007; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC, September 21–December 16, 2007; P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, Queens, New York, February 17–May 12, 2008; Vancouver Art Gallery, October 4, 2008–January 18, 2009
- 2008
Southern Exposure: Works from the Collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, March 20–June 1
- 2009
Reading Standing Up, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, January 31–March 14
- 2010
Works in Edition, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, April 17–May 15
S, M, L, Greenberg Van Doren Gallery, New York, October 28–December 23
- 2011–2012
Under the Big Black Sun: California Art, 1974–1981, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, October 1, 2011–February 13, 2012
- 2012
Arctic Summer, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, July 31–September 29
- 2014–2015
The Avant-Garde Collection, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, California, September 7, 2014–January 4, 2015
- 2015
Drawing in L.A.: The 1960s and 70s, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, May 10–August 2
A Performative Trigger: Radicals of Irvine, University Art Gallery at University of California Irvine's Claire Trevor School of the Arts, October 3–December 12
- 2016
CALIFORNIA 101: Art from the Collection, Art, Design & Architecture Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara, January 22–May 1
Physical: Sex and the Body in the 1980s, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, March 16–July 13
Holdings: Selections from MCASD's Collection, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, June 4–September 4
A Retrospective Space: UC San Diego's University Art Gallery, California, October 17–December 16
- 2016–2017
Collected, Pier 24, San Francisco, May 2, 2016–January 31, 2017
Los Angeles - A Fiction, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo, Norway, September 22, 2016–January 22, 2017
- 2017
Forms of Identity: Women Artists in the 90s, Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, California, January 7–April 2
Chapters: Book Arts in Southern California, Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, January 29–May 7
Living Apart Together: Recent Acquisitions from the

Hammer Contemporary Collection, Hammer Museum,
Los Angeles, May 20–August 13

2017–2018

*An Incomplete History of Protest: Selections from the
Whitney's Collection, 1940–2017*, Whitney Museum of
American Art, New York, August 18, 2017–August 27,
2018

2018

An Homage to Hollis Benton, *Over the Influence*, Los
Angeles, May 25–June 24

This Brush for Hire: Norm Laich and Many Other Artists,
Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, June 3–
September 2

Artists and Their Books/Books and Their Artists, Getty
Research Institute, Los Angeles, June 26–October 28

2018–2019

Hidden Narratives: Recent Acquisitions of Postwar Art,
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, February 17,
2018–January 6, 2019

*First Glimpse: Introducing The Buck Collection at the UCI
Institute and Museum for California Art*, UCI Institute
and Museum for California Art, Irvine, September 29,
2018–January 5, 2019

*Expressions of Vandalism: Asger Jorn's Modifications
Paintings and their Legacy*, Petzel, New York, March
5–April 13

2019

Open House: Elliott Hundley, Museum of Contemporary
Art, Los Angeles, April 14–September 16

*Selected Works from the Collection of Holly Solomon,
1968–1981*, Marlborough Contemporary, London, May
29–June 29

NOMEN: American Women Artists from 1945 to Today,
Phillips, New York, June 19–August 3

Tomes: An Exhibition of Artist Books, Alyce de Roulet
Williamson Gallery, ArtCenter College of Design,
Pasadena, California, July 18–December 15

2020–2021

Don't let this be easy, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, July
30, 2020–July 4, 2021

SELECTED MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Hammer Museum, University of California, Los Angeles

High Museum of Art, Atlanta

Honolulu Museum of Art

J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles

Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego

Museum of Modern Art, New York

San Diego Museum of Art

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, California

Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton,
Massachusetts

Stuart Collection, University of California, San Diego

Walker Art Center, Minneapolis

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

Selected Bibliography

BOOKS AND CATALOGUES

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- Aspen Art Museum. *Western Myth: Twentieth Century Update*. Aspen, CO: Aspen Art Museum, 1993.
- Baldessari, John, Meg Cranston, and Thomas McEvilly. *100 Artists See God*. New York: Independent Curators International, 2004.
- Barron, Stephanie. *Art in Los Angeles: The Museum as Site*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1981.
- Barron, Stephanie, Sheri Bernstein, and Ilene Susan Fort. *Made in California: Art, Image, and Identity*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2000.
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- Butler, Cornelia H., and Lisa Gabrielle Mark. *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution*. Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2007.
- Cameron, Dan. *The Avant-Garde Collection*. Newport Beach, CA: Orange County Museum of Art, 2014.
- Cathcart, Linda L. *The Americans: The Collage*. Houston: Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, 1982.
- Fine Arts Gallery, University of California, Irvine. *Selections from the Merry and Bill Norris Collection*. Irvine: University of California, 1984.
- Fox, Howard N. *Avant-Garde in the Eighties*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1987.
- Goldsmith, Constance. *Paper on Paper*. San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Art, 1979.
- Goldstein, Ann. *Striking Distance*. Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1988.
- Grenier, Catherine. *Los Angeles, 1955–1985: Birth of an Art Capital*. Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 2006.
- Haskell, Barbara. *Southern California: Attitudes, 1972*. Pasadena, CA: Pasadena Art Museum, 1972.
- Heiferman, Marvin, and Lisa Phillips. *Image World: Art and Media Culture*. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1989.
- Herter Art Gallery. *Contemporary American Collage, 1960–1986*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1987.
- Hertz, Richard. *Theories of Contemporary Art*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1985.
- Holly Solomon Gallery. *Inaugural Exhibition*. New York: Holly Solomon Gallery, 1983.
- Inside the Getty: *Second Edition*. Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2019.
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- Karsten Schubert Gallery. *A Brave New World*. London: Karsten Schubert Gallery, 1989.
- Kurcfeld, Michael. *Humor in Art*. Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, 1981.
- Leja, Michael. *Narration*. Boston: Institute of Contemporary Art, 1978.
- Linker, Kate, and Howard Singerman. *Individuals: A Selected History of Contemporary Art, 1945–1986*. Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1986.
- Margo Leavin Gallery. *Jane*. Los Angeles: Margo Leavin Gallery, 1985.
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- Milwaukee Art Museum. *Landfall Press: Twenty-Five Years of Printmaking*. Milwaukee: Milwaukee Art Museum, 1996.
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. *Selections from the William J. Hokin Collection*. Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 1985.
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- Otis Art Institute. *Poetic Visions*. Los Angeles: Otis Art Institute, 1981.
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- Relyea, Lane, and Constance Fitzsimons. *Remembrances of Things Past*. Long Beach, CA: Long Beach Museum of Art, 1986.
- Renaissance Society. *Words as Images*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1981.
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- Triton Museum of Art. *Crime and Punishment: Reflections of Violence in Contemporary Art*. Santa Clara, CA: Triton Museum of Art, 1984.
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- . *1981 Biennial Exhibition*. New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1981.
- PERIODICALS
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- Bonansinga, Kate. "SITE Santa Fe, 'Beau Monde: Toward a Redeemed Cosmopolitanism.'" *Sculpture* 21, no. 1 (2002): 64–65.
- Bonetti, David. "Where Elite and Popular Meet." *San Francisco Examiner*, October 27, 1995.
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- Casademont, Joan. "Alexis Smith, Holly Solomon Gallery." *Artforum* 19, no. 8 (1981): 65–66.
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- . "Reviews: Los Angeles: Alexis Smith, Margo Leavin." *Art News* 84, no. 9 (1985): 127.
- . "SITE Santa Fe, 'Beau Monde: Toward a Redeemed Cosmopolitanism.'" *Artforum* 40, no. 2 (2001): 153–154.
- . "The Public Art of Alexis Smith." *Artspace* 16, no. 3 (1991): 60–66.
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- . "Mosaics, Memories, and Merchandise." *Art in America* 89, no. 11 (2001): 130–135.
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- . "Puttin' on the Ritz." *House & Garden* 156, no. 6 (1984): 213.
- . "When a Long Eclipse Yields to Light." *New York Times*, April 15, 2001.
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- . "Alexis Smith at Josh Baer." *Art in America* 79, no. 3 (1991): 133.
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- Klein, Jennie. "It's a Beautiful Morning." *New Art Examiner* 29, no. 2 (2001): 74–81.
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- . "A Meeting of Media." *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, November 22, 1981.
- . "A Wide Array of Sites to Behold." *Los Angeles Times*, October 31, 2001.
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- . "Review: The arc of Alexis Smith's career in just 11 works. A smart L.A. show to see now." *Los Angeles Times*, November 12, 2019.
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- . "Under the Big Black Sun at MOCA." *Los Angeles Times*, October 14, 2011.
- . "Unveiling the State of L.A.'s Art." *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, September 21, 1986.
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- . "Review: The Arc of Alexis Smith's Career in Just 11 Works. A Smart L.A. Show to See Now" *Los Angeles Times*, November 12, 2019.
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- . "L.A.'s So Aujourd'hui." *Los Angeles Times*, February 26, 2006.
- . "Reviews: Los Angeles: Alexis Smith, Margo Leavin." *Art News* 92, no. 6 (1993): 184.
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