**BHM 2024 Theme: Culture/Diversity**

**Sandra Brewster: Canadian visual artist**

**Sandra Brewster** (born 1973)[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster%22%20%5Cl%20%22cite_note-encyclopedia-1) is a Canadian visual artist based in Toronto. Her work is multidisciplinary in nature, and deals with notions of identity, representation and memory; centering Black presence in Canada.[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster#cite_note-Sandra_Brewster:_Blur-2)

## Early life

Brewster was born to a [Guyanese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guyanese_Canadian) immigrant family and grew up in [Pickering, Ontario](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pickering%2C_Ontario).[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster#cite_note-encyclopedia-1) She completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts at [York University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/York_University) in 1997 and her Master of Visual Studies at [University of Toronto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Toronto) in 2017.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster#cite_note-encyclopedia-1) Her thesis exhibition, titled *A Trace | Evidence of time past*, was shown at the Art Museum at the University of Toronto.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster#cite_note-rom-3)

## Career and work

Brewster's early works focused on traditional [portraiture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portrait). She later transitioned towards [drawings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drawing) and metallic [sculptures](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sculpture). Her work has been exhibited in Canada, the US, the [Caribbean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caribbean) and South Africa.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster#cite_note-bio-4) She was an artist-in-residence in Brazil, Canada, Trinidad and Tobago and South Africa, and her work has been published in numerous magazines, including [*Caribbean Beat*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caribbean_Beat) and [*The Walrus*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Walrus).[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster#cite_note-:0-5)[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster#cite_note-6)

One of Brewster's most prominent bodies of work is *Smiths – a* series of drawings that question identity and representation. *Smiths* began in 2014 when Brewster started cutting pages with the name "Smith" from phone books, and transposed these pages over afro-headed, faceless individuals. The series combines the varied personalities, desires, and personal stories of these people by applying a unified visual treatment, which removed any sense of individuality.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster#cite_note-:0-5) Brewster eventually developed these drawings into a series of paintings that illustrate the impact of gun violence on young black men in Toronto.

## Awards

Sandra Brewster was awarded the title of Artist in Education by the [Ontario Arts Council](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ontario_Arts_Council) in 2009.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster#cite_note-bio-4) She was awarded the Gattuso Prize for an outstanding featured solo exhibition *It's all a blur* in the CONTACT Photography Festival in 2017.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster#cite_note-rom-3) Brewster is also a recipient of the Artist Prize from the Toronto Friends of the Visual Arts (2018).[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster#cite_note-Sandra_Brewster:_Blur-2) **(read more):**

[**https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra\_Brewster**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandra_Brewster)