



Traveling With the Ancestors

Photographer and activist Lola Flash brings four decades of their work together in a new photo book.

May 15, 2023 By POZ Staff

In the early years of the AIDS crisis, Lola Flash was an active member of ACT UP New York and its affinity group ART+ Positive, which was founded to fight homophobia, AIDSphobia and censorship in the arts. In 1989, Flash was featured in the now famous “Kissing Doesn’t Kill” poster by the activist artist collective Gran Fury. The poster appeared on buses throughout New York City.

As a photographer, Flash’s early work focused on social and political issues, which included HIV and AIDS. Over the past 40 years, their art has continued to challenge stereotypes and preconceptions about sex, gender and race.

Flash’s work is in important collections, such as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC, as well as museums in New York City, such as the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Brooklyn Museum.

For the first time, Flash’s work is the focus of a new book. Titled *Believable: Traveling with My Ancestors*, it’s the 17th book in a series of LGBTQ-themed photo books from The New Press.

“Believable” by Lola FlashLola Flash/The New Press

The book spans from Flash’s “Cross Colour” images of the 1980s and early ‘90s to their more recent work, which examines the intersection of Black culture, technoculture and science fiction. The book also features images exploring Black identity and portraits showcasing urban

trendsetters and people who challenge traditional concepts of gender.

“To experience Lola Flash’s portraits is to come face to face, eye to eye, with a subject who will not stay on the margins or in the shadows.” —The New York Times



Lola Flash in Washington, DC. “I decided to do my best Obama ‘look.’ The sign is a nod to the 1968 Memphis sanitation strike, for which demonstrators carried signs that read ‘I AM A MAN.’ It was a declaration of their civil rights.” Copyright Lola Flash