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SAN FRANCISCO

## MIGRATION PATTERNS

BRANDON RUFFIN

**Exhibition on view: January 26 – April 4, 2026**

**Opening reception: Thursday, January 29, 2026, 5:00–8:00 PM**



Brandon Ruffin  
Sunny, 2023

The Gallery at Leica Store San Francisco is honored to welcome Brandon Ruffin back for his first solo exhibition, “Migration Patterns.” First introduced in the 2024 group exhibition “This Must Be the Place,” the project has since evolved into a powerful meditation on the enduring presence of Southern Black culture in Northern California, particularly in Oakland, San Francisco, and Ruffin’s hometown, Richmond.

Framed by Siobhan, a poem by Enjoli Flynn-Ruffin, and an accompanying essay by journalist and cultural critic Pendarvis Harshaw, the project unfolds as a lyrical meditation on legacy, migration, and the evolving meaning of home. As a descendant of Louisianans who moved west during the Great Migration, Ruffin traces how culture travels across distance and time: adapting, resisting erasure, and remaining encoded in language, movement, and ritual. Rather than offering a didactic history, the work moves with quiet intimacy, allowing Southern identity to surface through atmosphere, memory, and presence.

Woven throughout the project is a contemplative tension between life and death, arrival and departure. Ruffin lingers in the stillness of both birth and mourning, asking what it means not only to migrate across land, but across spiritual thresholds as well. Attuned to



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the emotional terrain of transition, Migration Patterns considers what is lost and what endures as communities shift and transform, and how those changes shape belonging. In this project, Ruffin adds a vital voice to contemporary Black photography bridging past and present, personal and communal, silence and testimony while honoring lineage and the responsibility of carrying a story forward with care.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST



Brandon Ruffin  
Portrait by Wayne Serrano

Brandon Ruffin is an Oakland based, multidisciplinary artist, best known for his visual storytelling in the mediums of photography and film under the moniker Ruff Draft.

Brandon attributes his style of storytelling to the exploration of identity as well as how identity influences the movements and cultures of people within society. Brandon uses the physical properties of contrasting light, color, and subject matter to create unique juxtapositions that will yield evocative narratives surrounding the human experience.

Brandon's goal is to allow his work to serve as a mirror in which people can observe themselves and dissect the idea of who we are and why, as well as who we can be. These questions are ones that drive Brandon and have been the fuel in his artistic explorations as he explores his own identity and potential.

In 2023 Brandon became an official Leica USA Ambassador as well as having a body of experimental portraiture showcased in the This Must Be The Place exhibition curated and hosted at the Leica Gallery San Francisco.



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In 2023 Brandon wrote and directed *Faded Requiem* which was awarded “Best Narrative Drama” by the San Francisco International Film Awards. Brandon also served as 1st AD for the short film *Strength* which won “Best Narrative Drama” at the San Francisco Black Film Festival.

Brandon currently works on a research team in the field of Computational Photography at Google, pushing the capabilities of AI, machine learning, and traditional photography. Brandon has had an active role in developing the Pixel 6, Pixel 7, and Pixel 8, which was awarded the title of “Best Smart Phone” at the prestigious Global Mobile Awards.

Brandon has given lectures at multiple academic institutions as well as given instructional workshops for tech leaders such as Google, Apple, and VSCO.

Brandon is a contributor for publications such as Rolling Stone, New York Times, and the San Francisco Chronicle.

He has risen as a prominent community builder in the photography world as founding member of OAKSPC (Oakland Street Photography Club) and Cameras and Coffee Club which has collaborated with Leica, Photoville, and Color Of Coffee.

## **PRESS INQUIRIES**

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