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SNAPSHOT

'America Seen Through Stars and Stripes' by Ming Smith (1976)

"Being a black woman photographer was like being nobody," Ming Smith told the FT in 2019. "It was just my camera and me."

After decades of relative obscurity, the American photographer is now getting a welcome retrospective. *Painting with Light*, a virtual exhibition, shows work going back to the 1970s, when Smith moved to New York and began using photography as a means of challenging negative depictions of black communities. In her images, family, culture and

spirituality are illuminated through an evocative mix of blurred movement and double exposure.

In several works, Smith's "painting" is literal, with daubs of red and white accentuating the lines of a skyscraper or, as seen here, completing a reflection of the national flag in sinister style.

Chris Allnutt

'Painting with Light: The Photography of Ming Smith' is showing online at houldsworth.viewingrooms.com to July 5