

Artist Statement

I work through the lens of Afro-Futurism and Surrealism. The latter was an art-cultural movement that began in the early 1920s. It was re-contextualized in the 1970s by the late author, Amiri Baraka, who coined the term Afro-Surrealism. Baraka argued that the Black experience in America was so unfathomably hard that our oppression and survival was surreal and beyond one's imagination. Baraka's concept of Afro-Surrealism has enabled me to explore the negative images and stereotypes that society has imposed on black women with great clarity. And through surrealism, I can reimagine and reconstruct new narratives that disrupt the norm while simultaneously allowing the reconfigurations of beauty to envelop the viewer.

The progression of my work begins with fieldwork—people watching and taking photos of objects that have a metaphorical meaning. My secondary research is more tactile and materials based. My research includes studying textile, wood; different kinds of paper (both the texture and weight), printed paper including photographs, books, and various materials that I can use to formulate a solid narrative. I hunt exhaustingly for books to purchase at libraries, garage sales, used bookstores and thrift shops.

Every blank piece of paper or canvas involves a gestalt of creativity—Juxtaposing and integrating disparate images that fit evenly or symbolically together. I rely purely on my imagination to guide me towards creating beautiful hybrids of Afro-Diasporan characters grounded in dadaism, constructivism, or minimalism that personify beguiling interlocutors that disrupt worn-out societal notions of black women. The work succeeds when the visual metaphors can speak to our strength, vulnerability, resistance, and power.

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