

DENESE KING-ASHLEY

Multi-Disciplinary Artist | Drawing | Painting | Performance

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ARTIST STATEMENT

As a multi-disciplinary artist working at the intersection of drawing, painting, and performative arts, my practice explores the profound connections between personal narrative and universal human experience. I draw inspiration from the region's vibrant chromatic heritage, where intense colors serve not merely as aesthetic choices but as cultural signifiers and emotional catalysts. My work, particularly in large-scale portraiture and botanical transformations, investigates themes of identity, family history, and cultural memory.

Through intuitive mark-making and deliberate compositional strategies, I create works that hover between representation and metaphorical exploration. My current practice in Baltimore, Maryland, continues to evolve through experimental drawing techniques, performative elements, and innovative approaches to traditional media.

EDUCATION

Certificate in Administration & Supervision (Present)

National Board Certification (Present)

- **Master of Fine Arts**, Maryland Institute College of Art (2021)
 - Focus: Drawing, Painting, and Interdisciplinary Practices
 - Thesis: "An Exploration of Beauty, Personal and Witnessed Trauma, and Resiliency."
- **Certificate in College Teaching**, Maryland Institute College of Art (2021)
 - Specialized in Contemporary Art Pedagogy and Inclusive Teaching Methods
- **Standard Professional Certificate**, Continuing Instructional Education Program (2020)
 - Advanced Certification in Arts Education
- **Master of Arts, Museum Studies**, Morgan State University (2010)
 - Thesis: "Preserving Legacy-Developing Critical Consciousness/Analysis about Morgan State University's Visual Artists who have Contributed to the Art World"
- **Bachelor of Fine Arts, Fine Art**, Morgan State University (1996)
 - Concentration in Drawing and Painting

SELECTED EXHIBITION

2023 "The Cost of Living," An Observation of The Resistance, Resilience and Joy of the

Black woman, Dupont Underground Washington DC

2022 "Unveiling Resistance, Galleries at CCBC, Baltimore MD

- **2020** "Despite the Distance", Virtual Exhibit, Maryland Institute College of Art
 - Curated exploration of artistic response to global isolation
 - Featured large-scale portrait series examining family dynamics
- **2020** "Color Tomorrow (2)", Montgomery Park Building, Washington, MD
 - Group exhibition featuring experimental drawing techniques
 - Presented series of botanical transformations
- **2020** "NOW", Ely Center of Contemporary Art, New Haven, CT
 - Juried exhibition exploring contemporary drawing practices
 - Showcased innovative mark-making techniques
- **2019** "Of Nature and Identity", Hamilton Arts Collective
 - Solo section featuring floriography works
 - Installation incorporating found text and botanical elements
- **2019** "Left Space", Popup Exhibition, Wicomico Chesapeake Building, MD
 - Site-specific installation combining drawing and performance
 - Interactive elements engaging viewer participation

ARTIST TALKS & WORKSHOPS

2023 "The Cost of Living" An Observation of the Resistance, Resilience and Joy of the Black Woman,

Dupont Underground Washington DC

- **2021** "Intuitive Mark-Making in Contemporary Practice"
 - Maryland Institute College of Art, First Year Experience
 - Workshop focusing on experimental drawing techniques
- **2021** "Crossing Boundaries: Performance and Visual Art"
 - Department of Graduate Studies, MICA
 - Lecture and demonstration on interdisciplinary approaches
- **2021** Public Art Project
 - Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County
 - Spoken word performance integrated with visual elements
- **2020** "Color as Cultural Memory"
 - Ely Contemporary, curated by Margaret Roleke
 - Discussion of West Indian influences in contemporary practice

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- **2026-** VPA Teacher Mentor (Fine Arts)
- **2025- Present** Department Lead (Fine Arts)
- **2024-** MICA MAT Practicum Mentor Teacher

- **2021-Present** Drawing Tradition & Innovation, Maryland Institute College of Art
 - Developed innovative curriculum combining classical and experimental approaches
 - Lead advanced workshops in mark-making and composition
- **2000-Present** Art Instructor, Baltimore City Public Schools
 - AP 2D-Art & Design, Drawing & Painting, Fundamentals of Art
 - Created comprehensive curriculum for diverse student populations
 - Integrated contemporary art practices with traditional techniques

CURATORIAL EXPERIENCE

- **1996-1998** Assistant Curator, James E Lewis Museum, Morgan State
 - Coordinated exhibitions focusing on contemporary African American artists
 - Developed educational programs and community outreach initiatives

PUBLICATIONS & MEDIA

- **2020** Cover Art & Feature
 - Yellow Arrow Publishing, Highlandtown Writers-In Residence
 - Created series of illustrations exploring narrative and visual poetry
- **2018** Featured Artist
 - Wyrd & Wyse Literary Magazine
 - Portfolio showcases of experimental drawings

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Member, College Art Association
- Member, National Art Education Association
- Member, Baltimore Artists' Network
- Creative Alliance

SKILLS & TECHNIQUES

- **Drawing:** Graphite, charcoal, conte, experimental mark-making
- **Painting:** Oil, acrylic, mixed media
- **Digital:** Adobe Creative Suite, digital documentation
- **Performance:** Spoken word, movement-based drawing
- **Installation:** Site-specific work, mixed media installation