

# 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
  - Wyrld & 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