



ARTIST STATEMENT

James Stephen Terrell
Collage Fabric and Paint
Transcendence
Sept 9 - Oct 8, 2022

As humans we are more than what we see on the surface. We are more than just flesh, blood and bone. There are multiple planes of existence. There are multiple layers beneath our physicality, and mental capacity. Within and around us are unseen but immensely felt dreamlike spiritual realms that intertwines our mind and body and guides our day to day existence. We are not just humans that solely exist on the planet, we also exist and are connected to the cosmos. We are figuratively existing within interstellar spiritual planes.

This series of work incorporates line shape pattern immersed and fused together with fabric, paint and paper using the style of collage. Like my collages, our lives are placed together like pieces of a puzzle. The figures in the art seems surreal, unreal, unearthly and other worldly.

I seek to explore in this body of work that although our physical existence is temporary our spiritual existence is eternal and other worldly. The collages in this series are portals that propels and transcends the viewer to an otherworldly, ethereal, heavenly, magical, mystical, supernatural existence. When it comes to our soul we are so much more than flesh blood and bone we are celestial and intangible beings simultaneously existing on this planet and regions beyond the earth. The art of James Terrell is inspired by the stain glass windows found in the Black Baptist Church and the Roman Catholic Church. In this new series James departs from the use of only paint and takes coloring blocking to a whole unearthly new level. The color blocking techniques are used in my art to interlock memory, life experience and spiritual existence. My work incorporates the principle of opt art as displayed by artist Bridget Riley and Victor Vasarely. The contrasting colors cause the art work to vibrate. The use of contrasting colors empowers and energizes the viewer by radiating energy. I use the color blocking technique of Josef Albers and Johannes Itten to show how various colors respond and interact when placed side by side within and around the subject matter of the figure. Like Piet Mondrian the picture plan of my canvas is divided by shapes, patterns and lines. Unlike Mondrian the figures interact within the picture plane.

The art has movement not only because of color but because of how the colors in the work are incorporated and placed in patterns inspired by quilt designs. The art is about balance. The art is not stagnant. The figures are illusive and keeps the eye and brain



searching until images are found. The placement of color, line and pattern keeps the viewer engaged. Today due to technology and the internet we live in a time of short attention spans. My art commands the viewer to take a moment to stand at a distance, look longer than expected and engage the art. The art takes time to unfold. When you spend time in front of canvas, the colors, lines and shapes play off each other allowing ghost like figures not seen at first glance to slowly emerge from the picture plane. The art is optically striking and must be given time to unfold in the eyes as the brain of the viewer processes what is being observed. Just like life, time brings about discovery and rediscovery and is key for the viewer to fully engage the story being told and presented.