

seangarrison



seangarrison (b. 1968, Detroit, MI) is the curator and artist in Blak Grit. He is a native Detroiter raised in Minneapolis, MN. A proclaimed “renaissance man”, he is a writer and Abstract painter in which both disciplines cross-influence the other. A self-taught artist, he feels that all artists should have a foundational understanding of art but art is conceived in the soul of the artist which precludes an academic knowledge. His visual practice includes both creating artwork in the studio and live performative work he calls “live painting experiences”. His practice is rooted in the statement “art is meant to wake people up, sit inside their head and spin the imagination like an old soul record. I guess that makes me a 'DJ' of a different sort.”

On April 20, 2021 as a response to the Chauvin trial verdict for the murder of George Floyd he painted “Walking On Air”, an abstract painting created in real time on location. It received national attention on MSNBC as well as multiple local news outlets. In addition to his studio work he has performed several “live painting experiences”. In 2021 he did three of these interpretative works. His show in August, Heaven or Hell centered on the murder of George Floyd.. In 2022 he performed The Darkness In My Skin, which centered on racism in America. at the Mounds Theater. This year he will perform Blood Seed.” This performance will center on gun violence in America. He is also a curator in 2012 he curated “Fade to Blaq”, in 2023, “The Technicolor Truth”, and in 2024 “Blak Grit” and the second iteration of The Technicolor Truth called “Art for the Anti-Antagonist.”

www.seangarrisonartist.com



A Drew Hammond

A “Drew” Hammond (b. 1964, Baltimore, MD) His family lived in the Edmondson Village community. He attended public schools in Maryland and South Carolina. Self-taught Artist who credits God with endowing him artistically with the gift and affinity for art.

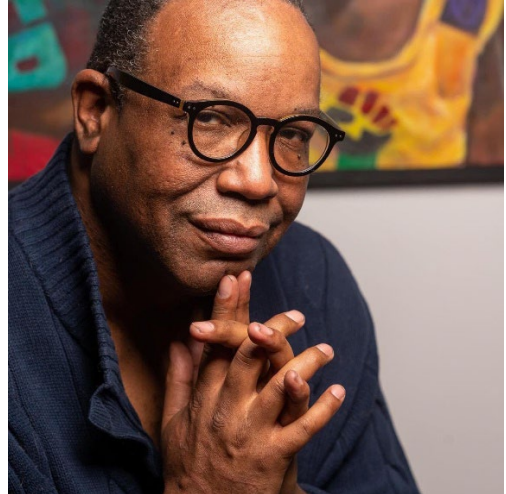
His work focuses on expressing the people in the African American diaspora, which is an important and personal undertaking in a society filled with disregard. Of his medium versatility, his most expressive works are his collages which provoke thought and create visual disputation and resolve. He will never concede to having the torch of his hero, Romare Bearden (1911-1988), but he confesses that his torch has been lit by Bearden, George Grosz (1893-1959) Melvin Smith (Minnesota) and “Dame” Judy Bowman.

In March 2020, A Drew and his wife, author and visual artist, Beverly Tipton-Hammond launched Berries On the Vine a gallery in the Northrup King Building in Northeast Minneapolis and in June 2021, change the name to Tipton Hammond Arts honoring the late Tom Tipton (1933-2020)

In the summer of 2020, A Drew was a participant in the making of the “Black Lives Matter” mural in Minneapolis sponsored by the Minnesota African American Heritage Museum & Gallery. He was commissioned to create two visual art works in the Art Connects Us “COVID” and “Social Justice” billboards projects sponsored by the Hennepin Theater Trust in conjunction with Clear Channel Communications. In February 2021, A Drew and his wife hosted a “Social Justice” art exhibit at the Northrup King Building to commemorate Black History Month, with over 600 visitors

Widely known for his collage works, his art will be featured in an upcoming exhibit of the legendary Romare Bearden in St. Cloud, MN in 2024. A Drew also plans to release a book of drawings and haikus called “Opulent Beauty.” A Drew and his wife reside in St. Paul, MN.

www.tiptonhammondarts.com



Miko Simmons

“Jazz is about invention, it is a constant battle between the mind and the heart, the struggle between who you are and who you wanna be...” John Coltrane”

Miko views his art in the form of Visual Jazz, it is free expression, it is collaboration and improvisational co-creation within the boundaries of structure and order, it is spiritual and contemplative connecting black people to familiar memories, it is dedication to honoring the history of the art-form, it celebrates the Ancestors while being poised for the future. My work has always been about healing.

Instagram: Mikosys13

Ron Brown

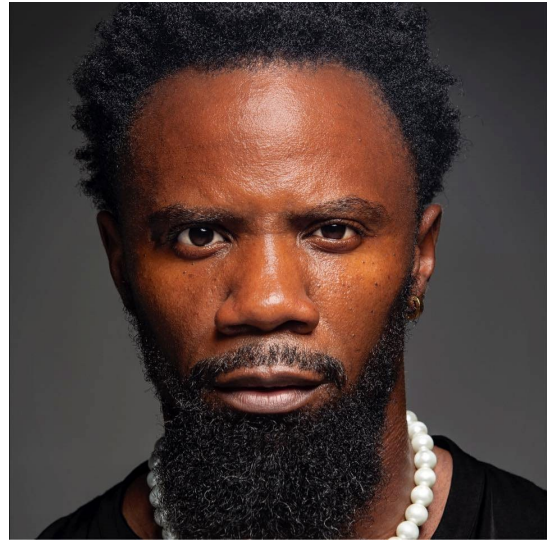


Ron Brown has been an artist all his life, working in painting, illustration, collage, digital art, comic books, and fashion, and says that he doesn't believe in being just one kind of artist because the world of art is limitless. Brown pursues the work of Afrofuturism because it expresses the beauty of Blackness and African diaspora culture. He speaks upon his Black culture and lived truth. "My art is my sword and my tongue is my shield," he says.

The challenges he experiences as an artist come from the fact that he's Black. Black people don't have safe spaces to freely express themselves culturally and artistically. Black communities are hurting from the many injustices that target Black souls deeper than we can imagine. This is why Afrocentric art is important in Brown's work. He believes that Black art must be celebrated so that we can see the many layers of Blackness in art and the many layers of Black existence."

Instagram: afroanimeillustrator_ronbrown

Flahn Manly



Flahn Manly (b. 1988, Monrovia, Liberia.) is a Liberian native whose work focuses on freedom, hope, and social transformation. He creates works that reflects his life’s journey and spirit of his soul. As an artist, he has an affinity for creating bodies of work using subjects with dark skin tones. His work is often a response to the challenging portrayal of communities of color in society. “Media has often portrayed us as loud; aggressive; unattractive; evil; and most of all: undesirable. “

In his defense, he aims to create a depiction of Black men, women and children in the image of love, grace, honor and great stature as they navigate and conquer spaces and industries. Flahn believes his art is a powerful mode of expression because of its nonverbal quality that makes it as once direct and so tacit. He understands the importance of providing imagery that represents Blackness in a way that encompasses nobility and relatability.

“As a contemporary artist specializing in figurative painting with a concentration on portraiture, my work typically focuses on capturing the beauty, strength, and resilience of primarily people of color.

He aims to create engaging bodies of work that elicit love, light and positivity that brings people of all walks of life together. He believes unity creates change.

Instagram: Flahnmanly



Nnamdi “Dio” Darlington

Nnamdi “Dio” Darlington is an emerging multi-disciplinary artist and curator. He’s currently based in the Twin Cities and, as an artist of many dimensions, his work lives within the intersection of music, visual art, film, and theater. His practice is centered around storytelling, connection through universal emotions and experiences, and free expression. His work revolves around grappling with an upbringing as “a black body in white spaces” and “shining light on the Unseen”; whether it’s the underrepresented communities in our world or the hidden truths within our souls. Influenced by African heritage, hip-hop culture, American and Japanese comics, he creates stories within his paintings that are multilayered (both literally and figuratively) which stylistically blends representational portraiture and neo-expressionist abstraction.

Instagram: [Dio.mpls](#)



Shea Maze

Shea Maze (B. 1997, Minneapolis, MN) is a sculptor, painter, and chef based in Minneapolis, MN. as the newest member to family of creative minds. His Mother's knack for precision, harmonious color palettes, and abstractive flow guided by subconscious intention blended seamlessly with his Grandmother's high level of craftsmanship, resourcefulness, and adoration of the natural world. His Fathers "Do It Myself" mentality instilled the confidence to never shy away from a concept, no matter how daunting the process might seem. These roots laid the foundation for the Artist he is today. Surprisingly, Shea's path wasn't always so clear. Growing up in an environment where creatives were plentiful, but their resources few, Shea didn't believe that art could ever be a viable career path. Luckily as an adult, a brief but formative period in the restaurant industry would help reignite his creativity.

In the kitchen, Shea found a passion for balancing the qualities of different ingredients in order to create a memorable experience for the consumer. While he still throws down in the kitchen regularly, his ideology regarding cuisine has been adapted to feed into his visual artistic process. Allegorically, Shea believes, "some of the best meals are made when you think there's nothin' good to eat." In his work, Shea embraces the bizarreness of speculative fiction and employs metaphorical representation in order to process emotion and better understand the human psyche. These concepts manifest largely through sculpture, painting, and drawing. He is taught by his community and is in constant collaboration with his environment by using what's available, whether sourcing from the natural world or a trash heap. Shea believes that we can simultaneously stand against throw away culture and make art more accessible to our communities by not viewing "up-cycling" as niche, but our responsibility, whenever applicable.

<https://www.mazeart.xyz/>