

## Frazier Artist Statement 2019

The work featured in this show represents a compilation of my career as a visual artist for over 40 years. These works consist of drawings on wood and canvas. The wood drawings showcase a copyrighted process I developed, called **Wood Graphics**. This process involves drawing on relief-carved wood with black ink, creating my own wood grain, staining with colored inks, and embellishing with mosaic tiles, beads, and small nails. I developed this process in the early 70s. However, I have recently begun to experiment with the same process of painting on canvas like I paint on wood using colored inks.

### **Drawings on Wood**

The drawings on wood were inspired by the artist Charles White. White once said, "I like to think that my work has a universality to it. When I work, though, I think of my own people...their history, their culture, their struggle to survive in this racist country." Like White, I think of my people, Black people, when I work. I intentionally choose, as I did with these works, to represent Black people with dignity and respect, instead of as representations of marginalization. *Mother of Us All* and *Adam and Eve*, for example, depict humanity's origins in Africa.

### **Drawings on Canvas**

The canvas drawings are a continuance of my experimentation with media other than paper. The painting process for the canvas drawings was the same as the process for creating the wood drawings. However, colored inks were used for the canvas drawings. These drawings allowed me to express my love of fashion illustration. They also have a recurring symbol - the watermelon, which I use as a metaphor. The watermelon is red, black, and green, representing the colors of the Pan-African flag. I have intentionally reclaimed this symbol to, not only liberate Black people from the many negative stereotypes of being lazy and idle while eating watermelon, but to also reconnect Black people with African heritage.

I use other African-inspired patterns like braids and marks of scarification on the faces. This is my way of reminding the viewer and myself that these are elements from a culture that is part of the Human race. I also use many symbols that are metaphors for life such as the *ankh* and elements of nature (trees).

Through my artistic vision and creations, I hope to continue what Charles White and so many Black artists have done to redefine how the world sees Black people.