



**ORENDA
ART WORKS**

orendaartworks.com

Orenda Art Works is an arts community dedicated to connecting art makers and art lovers. In addition to selling original work by independent artists, we develop programming and host events to promote artists throughout the five boroughs.

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Dear Reader,

One of the most popular forms of representation, portraiture can trace its origins at least to ancient Egypt, nearly 5,000 years ago. With the advent of modern photography, recording the appearance of another human being, or oneself, has become easy and accessible.

However, portraits do more than just record or represent appearances. They have historically also been used “to show the power, importance, virtue, beauty, wealth, taste, learning or other qualities of the sitter.” (<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/portrait>, 2021) Conventionally, portraits are flattering representations of their subjects, though more truthful portraits, such as those of the Spanish royal family by Francisco Goya, have also been welcomed.

Modern art saw the introduction of photography, a medium that would come to define the idea of portraiture. Nonetheless, painted and drawn portraiture persist in both the realist and expressionist genres. This issue of the Orenda Arts Journal contains drawings and paintings more so than photography, exhibiting the endurance of traditional media. (For more on the history and development of portraiture, visit <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/portrait>.)

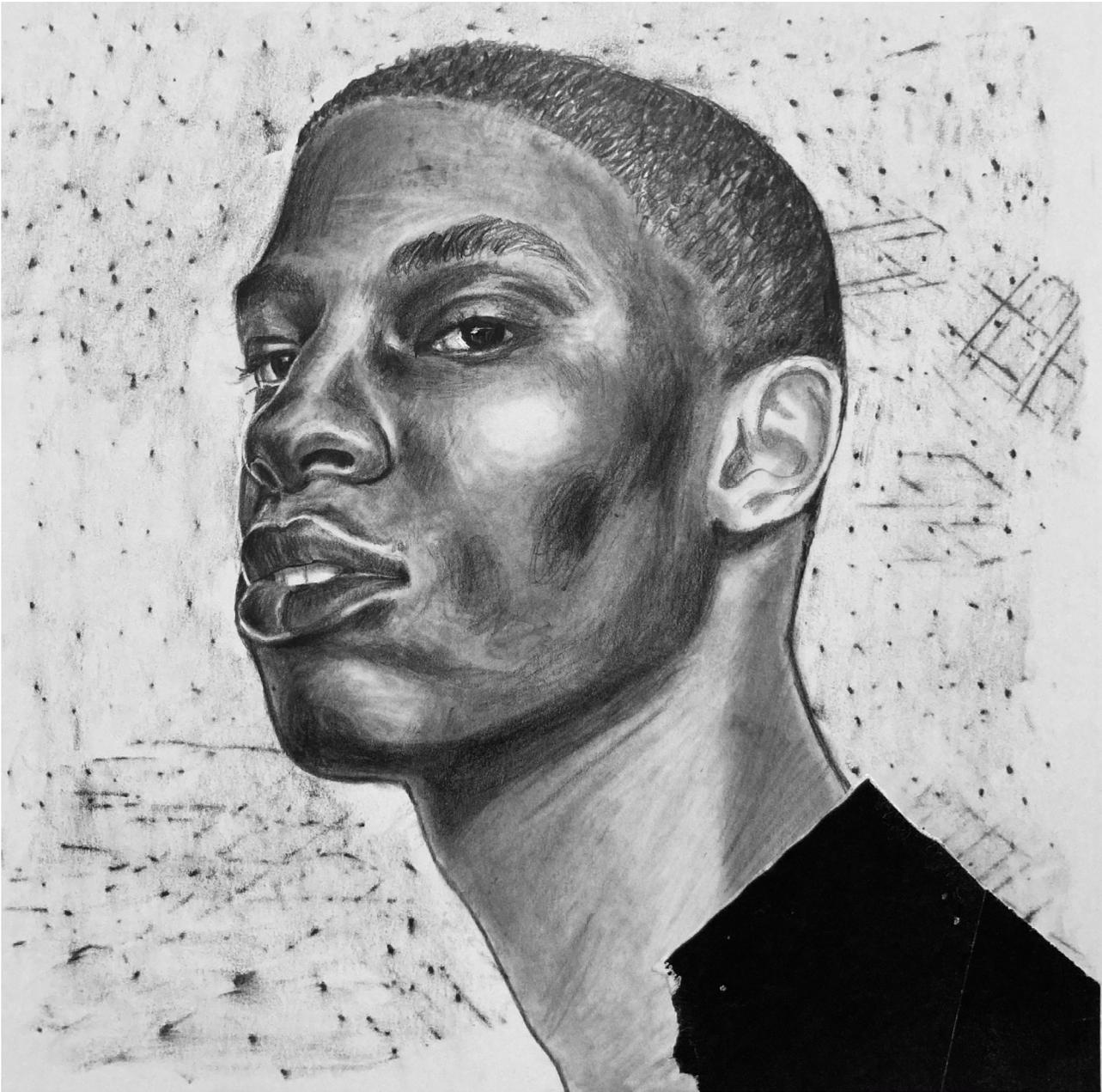
The works in this magazine pulse with life, providing lifelike renderings of the human face, while also expressing vital qualities such as strength and individuality. The works also probe the universal question of identity. Guest editor Austin Lee comments: “These portraits are individual expressions of our collective condition: refractions of the afterglow of consensus reality; responses to the quantification of the unquantifiable human spirit; and refutations of the hierarchical binaries between Mind and Body, Masculine and Feminine, Rational and Emotional, Colonizer and Colonized, Self and Other. Presented here is a vision of the process by which humanity is being reconstructed after having been so thoroughly reconstructed.”

By looking through these portraits, it is hoped one will gain a sense of humanity represented from the perspective of a diverse array of artists.

Elaine Chao
Art Director

FEATURED ARTIST

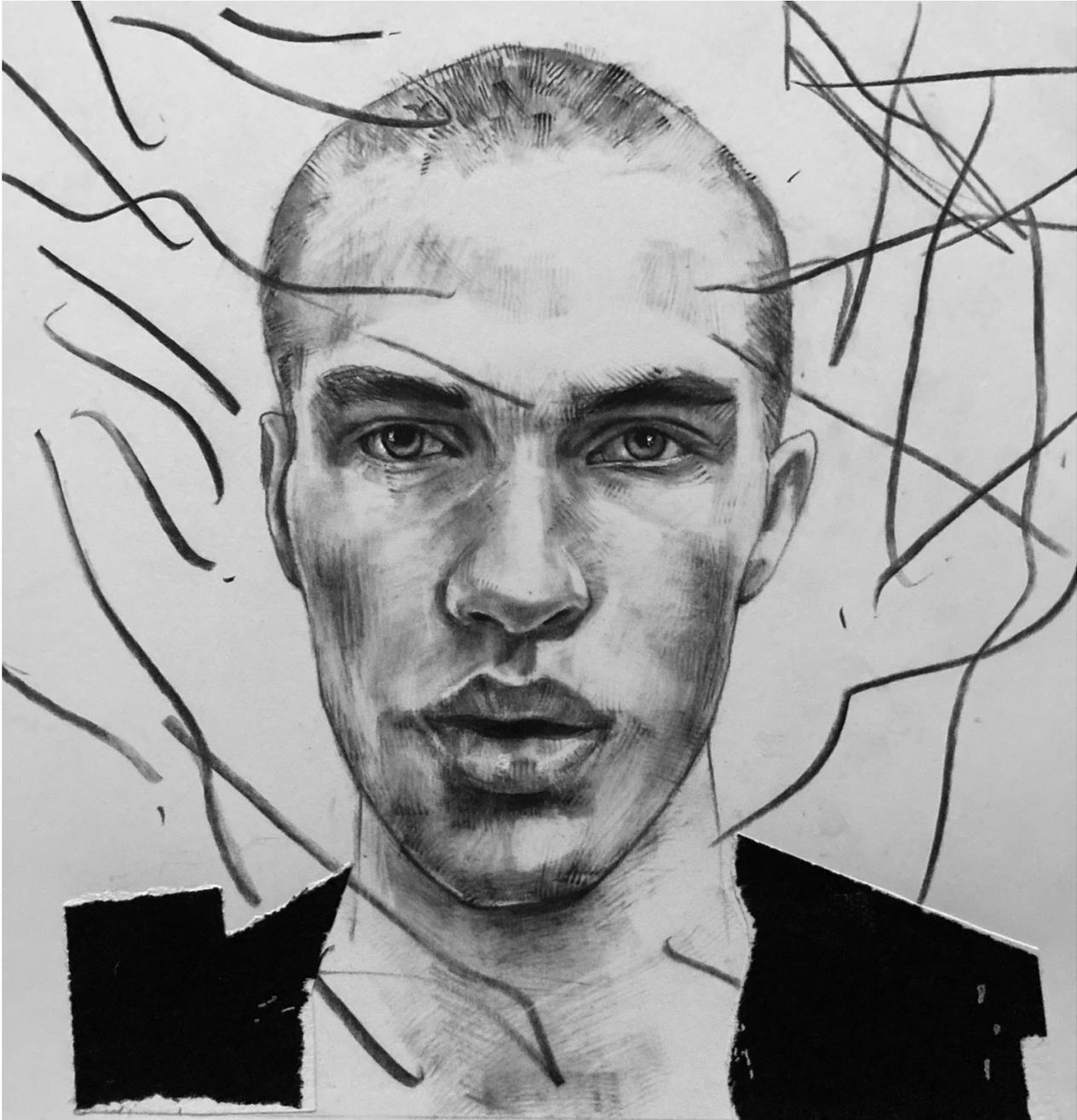
CARMINE SANTANIELLO



Carmine Santaniello, Portrait 1, charcoal and collage, 7"x7"



Carmine Santaniello, Portrait 4, charcoal and collage, 9"x12"



Carmine Santaniello, Portrait 3, charcoal and collage, 7"x7"

“Collage along with drawing is an integral part of my art and is usually the starting point for each work. Through collage, employing the traditional method of cut and paste paper, I create new series of works. While incorporating elements of my own photographs of exterior environments such as graffiti, street art and marred urban surfaces. These then go on to become various types of finished art on paper; Collages, Lithographs with or without Chine Colle, Monotypes, Unique Prints and Artist Books.

Utilizing Charcoal and Graphite allows me to explore the art of drawing incorporating mixed mediums such as frottage and basic mark making. Mixing these two mediums along with collage I have created this year’s new series of small works of ‘Diverse Portraits.’”

Carmine Santaniello
www.carminesantaniello.com



Taty LaPlanche, *Ou Pi Bon Ne (You Better Knot)*, acrylic, 18"x26", 2021



Taty LaPlanche, Matunda ya Dhahabu, oil, 12"x18", 2020



Tafy LaPlanche, Amante de la fruta del dragón, oil, 30"x40", 2020

“Born and raised in NYC, I was always surrounded by diversity. It made me curious about other cultures and people’s heritages. It prompted me to travel and get interested in showcasing that within my art. However, I soon realized that I didn’t know much about my own.

Being both Puerto Rican and Haitian throughout my life people always tried to place me in the stereotypes of one or the other. With my portraits I’ve chosen to showcase unique individuals and people of color who embrace both their culture and who they are.

My patterned backgrounds embraces the vibrancy of both the subject and where they are from.”

Tafy LaPlanche
https://www.instagram.com/lepouf_art/



Poyen Wang, New Moon, 3D Computer Graphics, 32"x40", 2020

“My recent practice utilizes 3D computer graphics to create psychologically charged tableaux through photorealistic textures, physical lighting, and the simulation of natural phenomena. As part of the millennial generation, growing up in East Asia and relocating to the West, my work examines the digital representation of reality in the visual language of Anime and explores themes of masculinity, otherness and death. The cartoonish yet emotionally detached protagonists serve as a projected self, an archetype and an allegorical figure. Fictional narratives are woven with autobiographical references, creating quotidian scenarios which elicit one’s emotional involvement for the human condition while questioning the authenticity of the performance of everyday life. At the core of my work, image making is not merely a truthful depiction of experience but an act of construction.

The Black Sun consists of a series of still and moving images made with 3D computer graphics that tread the line between the inner and external worlds, digital representation and reality, autobiography and fiction, the banal and the uncanny. The concept of duality in the literature of Japanese author Motojiro Kajii (1901-1932) serves as the structure for this body of work. In Kajii’s writings, duality exists in the relationship between not only the mind and the body but also the protagonist and the author. His work resides within the literary genre of the novel, a confessional style of Japanese literature where the story corresponds with the author’s life. Ostensibly lacking of plot, it is instead full of the protagonist’s own reflections on the subtleties of the outside world. Adopting this framework, I further examine the relationship between the simulated and the real as well as the digital avatar and the physical self in the contemporary condition. I see these virtual tableaux rendered by photorealistic textures and lighting as an alternate reality, a landscape of mind exploring themes of masculinity, otherness and death.

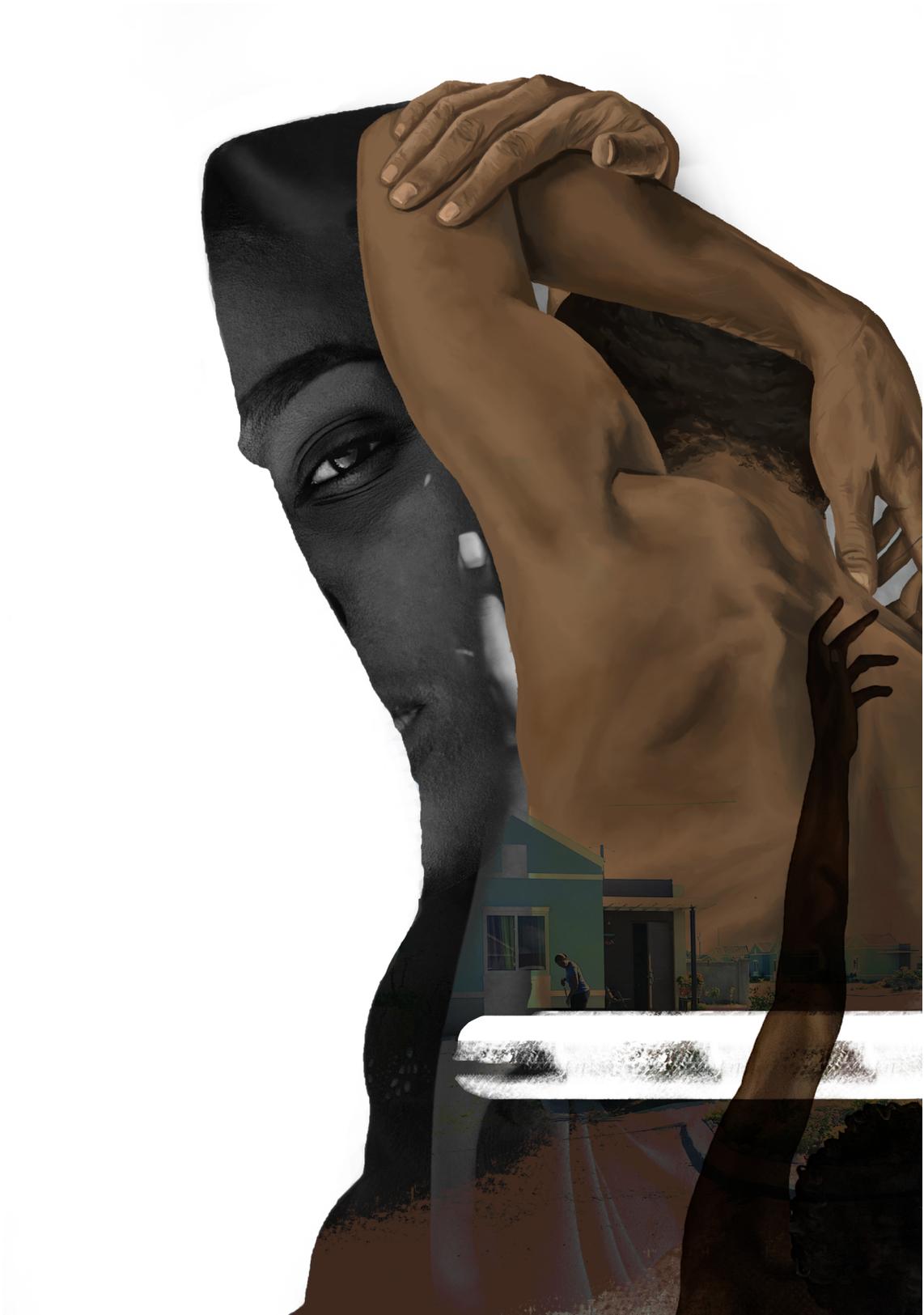
Drawing upon both Kajii’s literature and vignettes of personal referents, the protagonist inhabits various scenarios, such as playing Schubert’s Am Meer transcribed by Franz Liszt under cherry blossoms, being alone in a timeless cave-like classroom, sitting in a room full of roses with his own reflection, suggesting nonlinear narratives and inviting the viewer’s symbolic reading. The imagery in The Black Sun borrows from figurative painting which is conflated with the visual language of Japanese Anime.”

Poyen Wang
<https://poyenwang.com/>



KR

Kaylee Reynolds, Conscious, digital painting, 2020



Kaylee Reynolds, From Home Keep Reaching, digital painting, 2020

“Working with traditional and digital mediums, Kaylee Reynolds’ work explores the movement and expression of the body, as well as portraiture in various spaces. In her paintings and digital pieces, black figures and portraits are portrayed as individuals who exist and perform for themselves, who embrace their identities and seldom directly acknowledge the viewer’s gaze. The work explores the shapes we create with our bodies and how this is perceived, by juxtaposing the subjects against or in the context of various, usually white, backgrounds.

Kaylee’s work is inspired by the various individual yet intersecting experiences that are intertwined with her identity as a black woman who was born and raised in Jamaica, but who completed her undergraduate studies in the US. Ultimately, the work seeks to empower the black figure, by unpacking the complex and layered realities faced by black individuals, to challenge the systems built against them, and ultimately, to celebrate our power and fortitude.”

kayleereynolds.com

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