



# My Name Is.

A spotlight on African American Artists in the Flint and Detroit Areas

London • Craig Kelley, Jr. • Marker on bristol • 5" x 7"

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*(cover)* **Just Mad Sometime** • Ed Watkins • Conte crayon on paper • 1994



*The Other Guy • Craig Kelley, Jr. • Digital • 24" x 36"*

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# Editor's Note

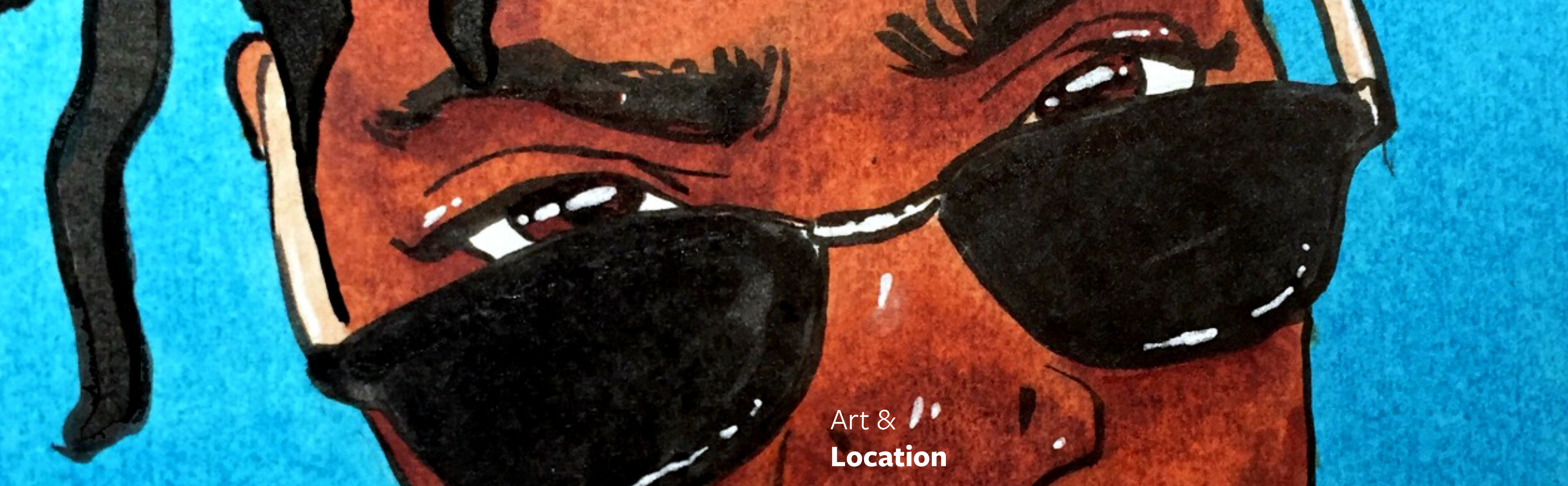
The focus of *My Name Is* is to shine a spotlight on African American artist in the Flint and Detroit areas.

Recently, many new murals have gone up in the city of Flint as part of a new city wide arts initiative. Many of the murals created for this initiative were created by local African American artists. It's uplifting to see artwork created by people like me druing my travels each day.

Working as an artist and arts educator, in both of these cities, I have come to learn the importance of representation in the arts. Seeing others that you can relate to living the life, and creating the art, that you dream of, can be a very powerful motivator to reach out and achieve your own goals. When I decided to pursue a career in the arts it was artists just like those highlighted in this book who showed me the way.

Frida • Craig Kelley, Jr. • Maker on Bristol • 5" x 7"





## Art & Location

Allow Me to Reintroduce Myself • Craig Kelley, Jr. • Marker on Paper • 5" x 5"

## Art & Industry

Flint and Detroit both have industrial backgrounds. Some people may not believe that the physical location or city an artist resides in does not influence the artists' work. The art that comes from the residents of Flint and Detroit are influenced by the city, the culture, the seasons, the vibe and the industry that provides shelter for the residents. In this case, it is the automobile industry. Flint's industrial backgrounds started in 1929 with General Motors where it housed about 7,000 workers and made car bodies for the rest of the country. Flint is known for suffering what some would consider its own great depression. In a matter of a few years Flint fell from having the highest gross domestic product per capita in the United States to a struggling city with residents leaving by the thousands. All of this drastic change has affected art in every form that comes out of these cities, including singers, rappers,

dancers, and designers. In Detroit and Flint factories were a lifeline for residents' livelihood, when these factories left so did all the people. That is when crime started to rise. Jobs were scarce, assistance was minimal, and there were not many jobs so people started to commit crimes. Recently Flint has been rated one of the worst places in the city to live in. On the Netflix show Rhythm and Flow we see the Detroit artist and we meet his family, and they instantly showcase the struggle the Detroit residents face, scarcity, and the housing problem. We can feel all of this in the Detroit artist's song, he is aggressive, loud, wants to be heard, and very emotional. This is just one example, it influences all types of art and many aspects. This influences how the art feels, how the colors feel, how the texture meets the eye. It evokes a sense of rawness and makes you feel the artists' pain.

People don't go to New York to be discovered because the land is enchanted. They go because many greats have come from and York, they want to be inspired by their surroundings and talent scouts. In a similar fashion, because so many of the greats have come from Detroit and have made this city popular, it is always a destination for artists to showcase their talents. Whenever your favorite artist goes on tour, you can bet Detroit will be on their list. Detroit is home to Motown where so many of the great African American Musicians are from, once so many great musicians and artists come from a city, others start to see the residents have great taste. Location is also important because it sets the scene and really sells your art to your audience. There are some really cool underground art shows in Detroit that sell creative art that I could not see selling faster at any other venue. Detroit has set the stage for movies in the past such as Robocop and 8 Mile. Many music videos have been shot in Detroit using its graffitied walls as backdrops or rapping from rusted fire escapes. Detroit does more than set a scene it give a vibe. All of this

is important for art. It is important in order to truly understand the art.

Michigan is a state that gets all four seasons, fall, winter, summer and spring. This means every few months the temperature drastically changes, the colors and artists sees everyday changes, and often Michiganders lack nutrient fifty percent of the year due to lack of sun. Michiganders are more likely to suffer from ailments like depression in winter months and things like this can influence your music, drawings, and paintings. One artist that I know from Flint only paints in the summer because he cannot find the inspiration or physical energy to paint during the other seasons. Not only does this affect you mentally, but it also affects you physically and a location could stop you from painting due to the cold, training due to the heat, singing due to the dryness, or selling art because there is very little sunlight to take pictures with. We may not know how it affects and artist every time, but pay attention to where an artists performs their craft.

## Art & Innovation

As mentioned above, Flint and Detroit both suffered huge losses as municipalities and they had to come up with ways to make a come back from their misfortunes. The city started to be innovative in two major ways. First, they would find ways to save money by repurposing things they own, recycling, and bartering. Second They started to create new opportunities for residents to make money. This innovation started to heavily influence the art. Detroit showcased artists becoming famous by performing in ways that was never done before. An example of this innovation is this massive floating hand statue, called "the Spirit of Detroit. Its located in front of the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, and it is one of the city's most recognizable statues. It has a sphere in its left hand and in its right hand, a group symbolizing the relationship between all people. The city commissioned the sculpture in 1955 and bought it for \$55,000. It was renovated in

2006." Locations with variety have the potential to inspire artists to create a wide variety of art for their portfolio. It is common to see music artists in Detroit move from sad songs to hype songs on the same Album, we see it often with artists such as Eminem. Eminem has even used the sounds in nature to fully engage the listener into his song and make them feel what setting he is in. He seems to move through his emotions as seasons just as the weather does in the city that he grew up in. We can also see this in Musician Masego as well. He makes songs that you can jump and dance to in the summer, but in the winter he tones it down and makes instrumentals with his saxophone. Surroundings and innovation are key when it comes to finding great artist that will make work that resonates with the audience (& makes money, of course!).



# Artist Spotlights

Bill White • Craig Kelley, Jr. • Digital • 16" x 24"

## Hi, my name is... Craig Kelley, Jr.

I am a graphic designer and illustrator, primarily marker digital.

I have been working as an artist for 7 years.

Whatever the creative challenge I strive to not only meet, but also exceed the needs of my clients through the use of innovative ideas and minimalistic designs.

The work of Detroit and Flint artists has influenced me to reach out and achieve my goals. Both of these cities have so much life and culture. Everyone benefits when that culture is shared.

My Name is.

*Craig Kelley, Jr.*

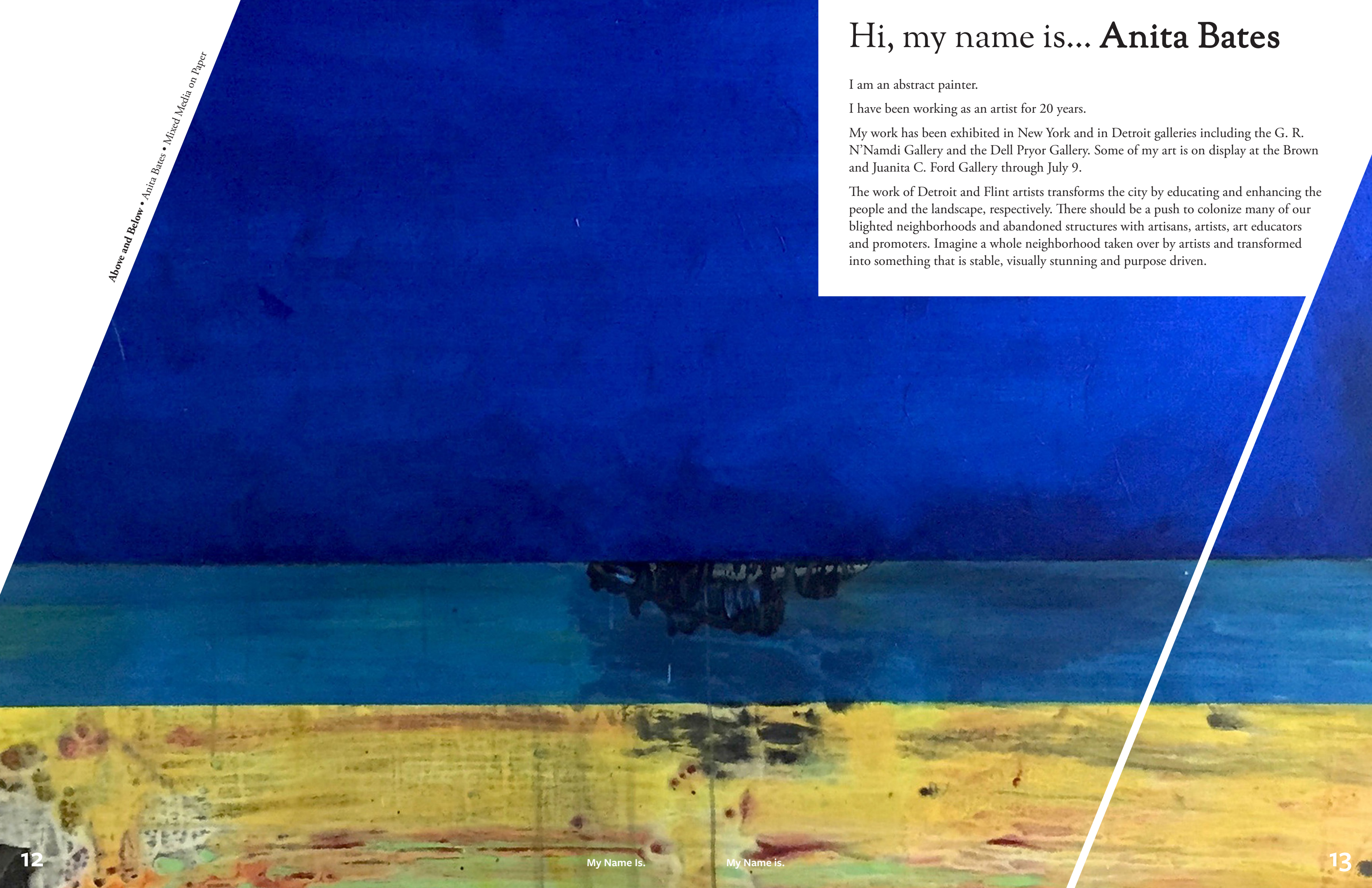
# Hi, my name is... Anita Bates

I am an abstract painter.

I have been working as an artist for 20 years.

My work has been exhibited in New York and in Detroit galleries including the G. R. N’Namdi Gallery and the Dell Pryor Gallery. Some of my art is on display at the Brown and Juanita C. Ford Gallery through July 9.

The work of Detroit and Flint artists transforms the city by educating and enhancing the people and the landscape, respectively. There should be a push to colonize many of our blighted neighborhoods and abandoned structures with artisans, artists, art educators and promoters. Imagine a whole neighborhood taken over by artists and transformed into something that is stable, visually stunning and purpose driven.



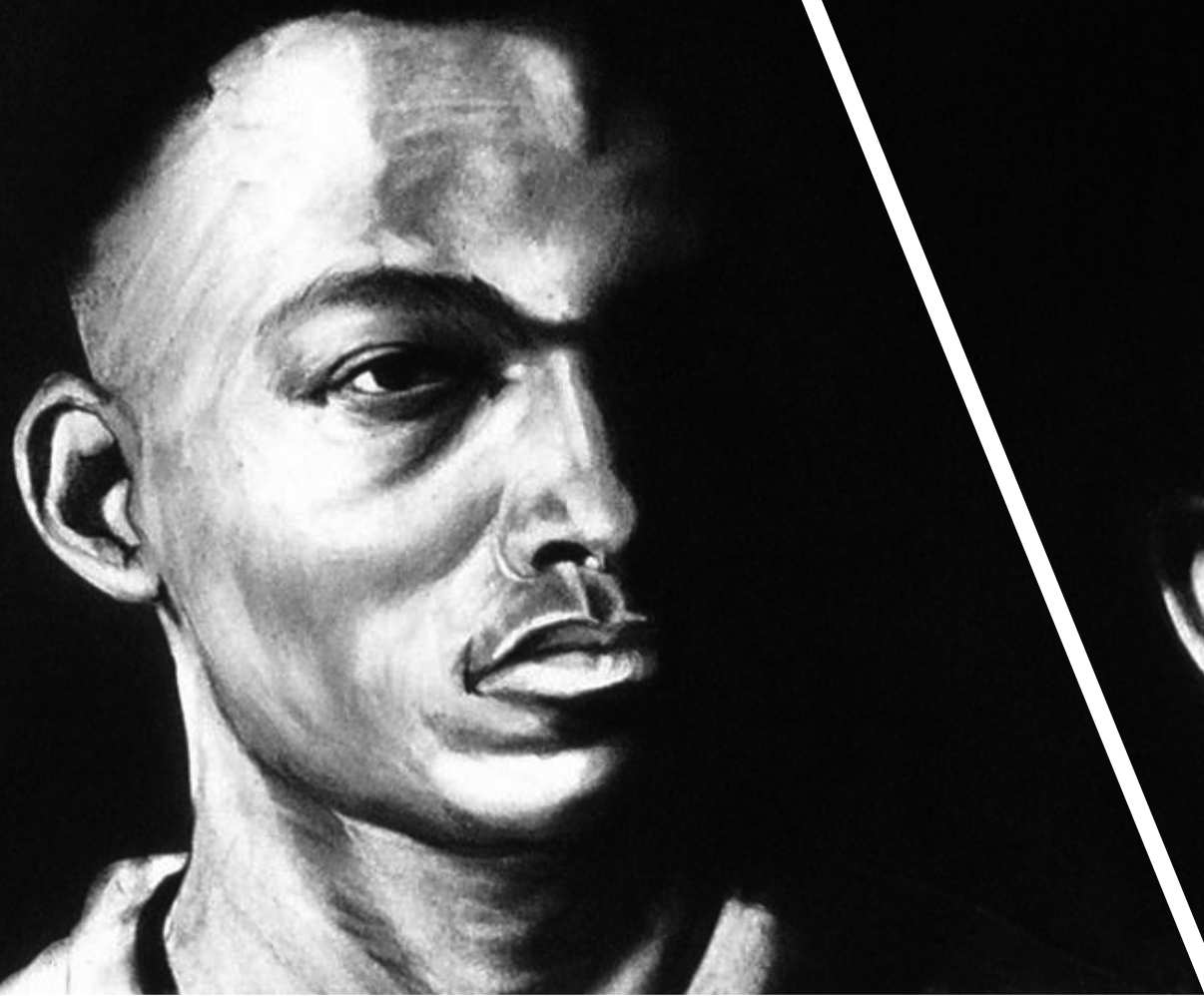


## Hi, my name is... Sabrina Nelson

I paint, print and sew incorporating drawing techniques.  
I have been working as an artist for 28 years.

My work has been exhibited in New Orleans, San Francisco, Miami and at galleries throughout Detroit. Currently, I have are on display at the Scarab Club in Detroit.

The work of Detroit artists transforms the city by engaging the community. By allowing the viewer to feel healing and hope. By creating more conversation about the freedom and space to create in a city where the ground is fertile [for] limitless passion.



## Hi, my name is... Ed Watkins

I am an illustrator.

I have been working as an artist and arts educator for more than 40 years.

I taught Fine Art at an Alternative Education school (everybody nobody else wanted to teach), a Girls Reformatory, Middle School, High School, Children's Hospital wing, After School and Summer programs and finally retiring from a Career and Technical Education program in Flint, Michigan.

I've been around a lot of kids who needed another way to speak up or speak out. They just needed someone to show them how. I often said "if you going to hustle something, hustle this." Visual Art can help you provide for yourself without disgracing your family.



My Name is.

*Just Mad Sometime • Ed Watkins • Conte crayon on paper • 1994*

*Yellow Parasol • Carole Morisseau • oil • 48" x 38"*



## Hi, my name is... Carole Morisseau

I am a painter.

I have been working as an artist for more than 20 years.

My work has been exhibited in New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and other cities. Later this year, some of my paintings will be displayed in Pasadena, Calif., and Durham, N.C. I have work now on exhibit at the Affirmations Gallery in Ferndale, the Michigan chapter of the National Conference of Artists' gallery and the Scarab club in Detroit.

The work of Detroit and Flint artists transforms the city by bringing more global attention to our area. We have a unique story to tell and there are many areas in the nation and worldwide that are curious about our city, its problems and successes.



*Barber • Carole Morisseau • Charcoal • 40" x 50"*

My Name is.

Landscape • Eileen Monteiro • oil • 48" x 38"

## Hi, my name is... **Eileen Monteiro**

I am a painter, primarily watercolor, and a photographer.

I have been working as an artist for 40 years.

My work has been exhibited in New York and Atlanta, as well as Birmingham Community House, the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History and other Detroit venues. This month, some of my art can be seen at the G. R. N'Namdi Gallery.

The work of Detroit artists transforms the city by providing a visual journal of the beauty and the struggles of a vibrant and troubled city. We are unique in that there are more African-American owned and operated galleries here than anywhere in the world. The quality of art produced here should be touted as one of the most positive aspects of the city.

My Name is.



# Hi, my name is... Scott Everett

I am a illustrator & graphic designer based in Detroit, Michigan.

I am very curious by nature and have a huge obsession for learning new skills. Illustration is my natural talent and graphic design is my nurturing motivation to be GREAT.

As a professional illustrator I can be classified as a generalist because of my diverse skills in different styles. I am best known for my sketchy digital painting of famous hip-hop artists. As a professional graphic designer I have experience in advertisements, social media, merchandising, branding and most recently web layouts. With the Creative Suite at my fingertips and fresh cup of coffee, the sky is the limit. I can create whatever you need... just give the word!



# Colophon

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## **Apps** Used

Adobe InDesign  
Adobe Photoshop  
Adobe Illustrator  
Microsoft Word  
Google docs

## **Typefaces** Used

Freight Sans Pro  
Adobe Garamond Pro  
OFL Sorts Mill Goudy

## **Paper** Used

Cover 80# Semi-gloss (216 gsm)  
Paper 80# Matte text (118 gsm)

