

## **Karen Y. Buster**

Baltimore, Maryland native Karen Y. Buster was reared in a private artist colony - her childhood home. How else do you describe an atmosphere with a designer-mother, a dancer sister, another sister, a wordsmith-poet and an artist brother?

The only one in her immediate family to be a career artist, Karen is blessed to have grown up in a household that encouraged creativity and recognized the source of her art, which is a gift from a higher power. Her mother told her as a child she was gifted and different. More importantly, Karen believed it too.

Original Karen Y. Buster's are in the private celebrity collections of Queen Latifah, Denzel Washington, Cheryl Lee Ralph, Toni Braxton, Jada Pickett Smith, and Charles Dutton among a host of others. Her prints also call the walls of the Beverly Hills and Philadelphia Chambers of Commerce, respectively, home. Among her awards, Karen is the recipient of Baltimore's own "Unsung" Art Exhibition 2014 Female Artist of the Year, The National Coalition of the 100 Black Women's Arts and Culture Award, 2007 and the 2002 recipient of the Black Heritage Visual Arts Association's "Favorite Emerging Artist"

Karen is also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated since 1978. Karen's journey to the world of fine arts came via her t-shirt design business, Bustertizin. She doesn't take her transition from t-shirts to 35 plus-years creating fine art originals and prints for granted. Karen hears testimonials from her collectors about how her art speaks to them and brings solace to their personal situations such as overcoming illness, recovery from drug abuse, and finding peace after the death of a loved one.

Her eyes have been trained since age five to distinguish between positive and negative space thanks to her attraction to photography negatives and dreaming in black and white. These key components hold significance in Buster's art and are the inspiration for her signature black and white X-acto® Knife cut-outs. The introduction of color in her signature cut-outs came via a dream based on a New Orleans jazz club scene. Karen's grandmother always said "when you dream, its God that's talking to you". Speaking of New Orleans, the movement in Karen's work can be traced to her decade-long residency (1977-1987) in that jazz city where she studied and graduated from Dillard University.

***Karen believes the music and sexy, seductive nature of New Orleans seeps into and inspires her art. Baltimore is where Karen was born and raised. She now creates and resides in Bowie, Maryland.***