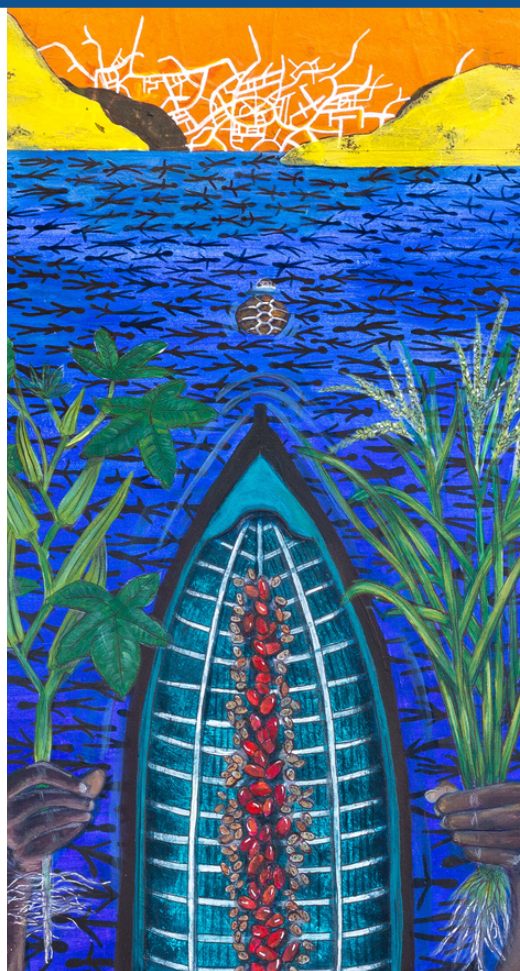


# THE ART CHOSE ME

2021 – Reflections



## AFFIRMED

The visual arts have the power to inspire, incite, confound, inform, and to heal. Unfortunately, the myriad obstacles—real and perceived—that prevent us from viewing art limit our opportunities to experience these potentially life altering events. Considering this, tears came to my eyes as I looked out into the standing room only audience after we concluded the December artist talk at the Hayti Heritage Center. Because this was the point: to reactivate a sacred and accessible space. To foster the magic that inevitably happens when viewers engage with artists with whom they share history, experience, passion and perspective.

This must have been what it felt like generations ago when the residents of Hayti gathered. I believe, more now than before, when they placed the vevè atop St. Joseph's AME Church, the ancestors knew that Erzulie would call us back to her. A beacon to reclaim joy, knowledge, and strength in each other.



## HUMBLED

*We Are Here: Past, Present, Future* is the first exhibition that I've curated and represents a tremendous (and scary!) leap of faith into the creative world. Give thanks to Angel Dozier who not only encouraged my vision but trusted me to be an ambassador of her dream for our community. The generosity of the artists was overwhelming and pure. Thank you to Wade H. Williams, Craig Cutright, Whitney Stanley, Clarence Heyward, William Paul Thomas, Darius Quarles, freedom clay, Shambo Medina and Claire Alexandre. Thank you to the community for your engagement with and support of the exhibition and Artist Markets.

## INSPIRED

The pandemic has tested our resilience, our ability to understand, adapt, grieve, love and exist. To create under these circumstances feels radical; I remain in awe of those who continue to produce works that resonate so deeply and tangibly connect us to who we once were, who we are and who we choose to become.





***"An artist is a sort of emotional or spiritual historian. His role is to make you realize the doom and glory of knowing who you are and what you are. He has to tell, because nobody else can tell, what it is like to be alive." - James Baldwin***

