eclipse your art? bowl. I didn't want to dig myself into the hole of the hairdresser artist. I wasn't going to reveal much, but slow, slow, slow, slow. I wasn't going to god, they were always pushing me. I played, played, played and I said, 'OK, I'm going to start being an figuration. We should have the right to be abstract. Why not?

HILL: Is it possible for us to restore the place of black artists in this part of the world in this form?

BRADFORD: Anita, I was completely haunted from seventeen years old. Haunted. I look back now, never loses the feeling that she could be sexually assaulted. Although I got labelled as girls do – fast, street, promiscuous, all that stuff – I liked going out and dance routines. Me and my girlfriends and boyfriends, we'd play characters and do all kinds of things:

HILL: Did you care about what other people thought?

BRADFORD: Whatever you're into, they have it in the streets. At the same table, I might have been

HILL: Was all of what you were doing and what other people were doing performance?

BRADFORD: I had to navigate. I think that that came naturally to me because my mom navigated. I remember that delicate person standing right there. That's something that burned into my memory and

HILL: Tell me more about the clientele, the women in the shop. How were they moving forward?

BRADFORD: My mamma's customers were all black; over 50 percent were raising kids. We'd have to

HILL: Would you say that your mom created a gendered space where women shared experiences that

BRADFORD: I watched her from five, six, taking her time. It was art. My mom was always a little artsy and a

HILL: Tell me about the beauty shop. Was it a public space or a private space?

BRADFORD: Is the way the public sees abstract art racialized, in particular, white and male?

HILL: Is the beauty shop a therapeutic space?

BRADFORD: I had to navigate. I think that that came naturally to me because my mom navigated. I remember that delicate person standing right there. That's something that burned into my memory and

HILL: Was the beauty shop a therapeutic space?

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HILL: The Devil Is Beating His Wife

BRADFORD: I had to navigate. I think that that came naturally to me because my mom navigated. I remember that delicate person standing right there. That's something that burned into my memory and

HILL: I read a couple of days ago that recently a large collection of twentieth century abstract

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HILL: We talked about a lot of things, but in particular, we talked about

BRADFORD: Whatever you're into, they have it in the streets. At the same table, I might have been

HILL: Questions of abusive violence and counter narratives are key to Bradford's own work. Though he

BRADFORD: Whatever you're into, they have it in the streets. At the same table, I might have been

HILL: The big name guest interviewers conducting the Q&A's in Phaidon's Contemporary Art Series of

BRADFORD: Whatever you're into, they have it in the streets. At the same table, I might have been

HILL: See More

BRADFORD: Whatever you're into, they have it in the streets. At the same table, I might have been

HILL: Get 10% Off Your First Order

BRADFORD: Whatever you're into, they have it in the streets. At the same table, I might have been
about maybe going to college. Housing, job training, job placement: these are fundamental blocks, and once we get all that, we can talk choose how far you want to go.' That's why I'm a strong proponent of education and why I love to see

BRADFORD: In that situation, you're truly on your own on the fringe. So much of what I had to do, them.

[DiCastro] come up with the idea for the Art + Practice Foundation in Leimert Park?

BRADFORD: An artist. In a long tradition of artists. It goes all the way back to the beginning of time.

HILL: I can't even imagine a seven-year-old saying, 'I'm going to be a great master painter of the

BRADFORD: It's me grappling with being three-fifths of a man originally in this country in the south. Where do I fit

 SEXY CASH is about a whole mindset of exploitation and colonization. When I'm dealing

BRADFORD: Expressionism and social abstraction. There's a joy and a mastery and a power in those works. That's

BRADFORD: I wasn't trans. I was Iman – Grace Jones kind of thing. I was racialized and exoticized.

HILL: Transracial?

BRADFORD: I've often said that when you're with your own – when you're both black – you don't call

HILL: You come into the second salon and, for me, it really is the hair salon. It's me hiding

BRADFORD: You know you got to go model' or 'You know you got to do this.' I said, 'All these big words, these big

HILL: I was like that at seven.

BRADFORD: You could just go to the bathroom and pull out your hair and say, 'Now I'm an artist.'

HILL: Middle Passage. In the belly of the boat, what were they

BRADFORD: You come out of that boat and you're free to do anything and everything. When I'm talking about the

BRADFORD: Politics and anthropology live in a world of people. Art history is this tomb and art theory is a

HILL: Do you see a parallel between what happened in Greenwood and what the map shows?

BRADFORD: That was a hard show. I was very uncomfortable doing that show.

HILL: Policy can be a decision to do something affirmatively or not to do anything at all.

BRADFORD: Oh yes. The feeling that there's always a threat.

HILL: You want to talk about your work? Can we start with 'Sea Monsters', your exhibition at the Rose

BRADFORD: That was a hard show. I was very uncomfortable doing that show.

HILL: Six years later, First Lady Michelle Obama awards you the Medal of Arts. You have the State

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HILL: Do you see a parallel between what happened in Greenwood and what the map shows?
BRADFORD: I can do art. That’s what I do. That’s the whole thing.

HILL: They take off. I don’t keep too much around in my head. I never have really. That’s why

BRADFORD: They land, they fuel and they take off. I read.

HILL: Where does your mind go when you sit still?

BRADFORD: My mind doesn’t go anywhere. My mind is like the airport. Airplanes are like ideas.

HILL: Do you ever sit still?

BRADFORD: No. Not at all. No. In the art world I don’t feel like that. The art world is a safe place

HILL: Do you ever feel scared now?

BRADFORD: Deal with it? I learned to run really fast. I think I had to emotionally move on because

BRADFORD: I was about eleven years old. I was in our apartment in Santa Monica and my mom had

HILL: I have this picture of you, taken at some point in your childhood. You’re clearly creating

BRADFORD: Right. If we can provide a non-judgemental site where they can feel safe enough to

HILL: Would that include your foster youth?

BRADFORD: Absolutely. When I first met them, their eyes were always down. I did a talk and I

BRADFORD: Yes. Yes. Yes. I never thought about it until you said it, but yes, you’re right. I do want to

BRADFORD: Yes, that’s true. Full of rage. I say, ‘No. You’ve maybe done some things that you aren’t

HILL: They’re the Medusas?

BRADFORD: Yes. Proud. I say ‘I’m proud of you. I’m proud of your attempts. I’m proud of your

BRADFORD: We hire more people. Some are Italian, some refugees, some gypsies and some undocumented

HILL: They hire more people. Some are Italian, some refugees, some gypsies and some undocumented

BRADFORD: I accept the

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HILL: Do you think of these women as the ‘fringe’, as you say?

BRADFORD: Yes. Proud. I say ‘I’m proud of you. I’m proud of your attempts. I’m proud of your

HILL: They’re the Medusas?

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HILL: They’re the Medusas?

HILL: I’ve seen your library. You read everything and I see it in your art, the ideas that you began to

BRADFORD: In and Out Burger, and a lady has just ordered and I’ll look at her hair and look at her shoes and look

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