

“The Pineapple Metaphor: *Expanding the Narrative*” is a conversation between myself, people, and place, using art as a paradoxical intervention to address racial trauma at its core. I weave historical narratives of the Harlem Renaissance, the Black Arts Movement, and Souls Grown Deep, welcoming a critical view of one’s *Lebenswelt* (life-world) impacted by direct and indirect societal ills. I arrange my vision by fusing elements of abstract realism using detailed, edgy, and thought-provoking symbolism to create space for suppressed memories. The style of my work embraces chaos, emptiness, fragments, and rigidity. The intense and vibrant colors call on the audience to be seen and heard with intent to inspire individuals to create or at least feel.

The pineapple is central to my work; the fruit’s vibrancy urges viewers to create a new memory; that of the pineapple, a positive memory not bound by trauma. I want my audience to see my use of symbolism as a way to capture a snapshot of their own individual trauma and marry it with healing. I use the collective nature of the pineapple to help us reframe our memories, reclaim our narrative and tell our story our way. Like signifiers that constantly remind us of our racial past, I hope the pineapple is the ultimate signifier, leading us to release and externalize trauma; giving this nightmare called ‘life in a racialized society’ a *new* story. I mean come on you can't help but smile when you look at a pineapple right?