

I create bold colorful textured portraits by combining several materials and methods.

In my work, I use influences from my African heritage, to tell the stories of my ancestors and their descendants in the United States, in Africa, and in the diaspora at large.

The extent of my history lessons ended at the point at which my ancestors arrived on the shores of America. Everything after that was through the lens of media generated narratives which did not match the lived lives of my kinsfolk.

Now, I use my work to tell the stories I was not told.

Hair features prominently in my work because it's an integral part of Black identity. The way it's worn, how it's decorated, and which styles are chosen; all come together to paint a picture of my people and our culture.

Growing up in Ghana, most of a person's major life celebrations - like the day you were born, the day you got married, and the day you passed - have specific fabrics associated with them. Fabrics have names and meanings and they served to tell the stories of our lives. In much the same way, I carefully design textile patterns to help me tell the stories of the subjects in my work.

Very often, when I'm designing patterns, I use Adinkra symbols; which in Akan culture represent wise sayings. It's my way of employing the lessons of the ancestors to build foundations for the youth to stand on. So that they can in turn build something for future generations.

There's a lot of layering that goes on in my work - layering of techniques (digital painting, textile design and thread painting/quilting), layering of materials (fabrics, threads, and inks), layering of symbols, and layering of stories.

My hope is that when people view my works, they'll see my subjects just as they see themselves, their families and their loved ones - as people deserving of love, dignity, and respect.