



Identity Theft Artist Statement by Chukes

This body of work is my creative voice; I have titled it “Identity Theft.” I began working on these pieces during the beginning of 2017. I initially created this work as a protest towards the recent televised brutality and killings of Black people and people of color. These killings were not only happening here in America but throughout the world. As I look back at my own history as well as researching world history I reflect on what I have been taught about myself and other darker skin people of the world. The work in this exhibit is my artistic representation of what happens when people or nations of people are stripped of their indigenous identity and re-taught a history that historically filters the truth and presents an incorrect version of past and present injustices. This filtered history as I call it is being used against us as a weapon of self-destruction.

I firmly believe this inability to see value or substance in one’s skin color is a reflection on how people of color are seen today. I have now changed my creative direction and my work no longer focuses on the hatred and ignorance of killing the darker skinned people. I am now focused on the cause and effects of this senseless taking of another’s life. Our existence on this planet depends on our perceptions of one another. An incorrect version of history should be viewed as a crime against humanity. The art in this exhibit is my truth and that truth must begin to be re-taught.

As a Black Man, I believe history is failing not only the Black race but also the human race. Black history is mainly being taught from the Black American Slave narrative, which is only 5 percent of the 200,000 years of documented African history. Civilization began on the continent of Africa, but our history in America speaks little or nothing of this. Human existence means nothing if we don’t know who we are, and where we come from. Not knowing one’s history or the incorrect history of other races is in my opinion a form of genocide. This type of ignorance has been targeted against people of color far too long and in many cases has led to the annihilation of countless generations.

The Identity Theft exhibit is designed as a learning tool to confront negative stereotypes and challenge the misconceptions plaguing Black people and people of color. I have included aspects of history, race, religion and technology in each work of art. I strongly believe these categories need to be reexamined and corrected, the truth must be told. Not understanding one’s place in life can easily corrupt a mind. This leads to self-hatred, which in my opinion has greater power than any man-made weapon of mass destruction. My way of making a change comes through my ART. This is a non-violent approach created to bring awareness, enhance our civilization and help us get our identity back.