



Taylor Smalls Bio

Taylor Smalls is a contemporary palette knife painter based in Oakland, California. Her work studies the kaleidoscopic depth of black and brown skin through the layering of highly pigmented color. It celebrates the endless nuances of melanated womxn by amplifying and exaggerating the underlying tones in colored skins that are often depicted dulled down or neglected, much like the people who inhabit them.

Her work aims to show womxn of color in a bold, proud, and celebratory light as depictions of strong melanated womxn are severely lacking in contemporary portraiture. Smalls has been working as a gynocentric painter since 2012, and continues to do so out of her West Oakland studio.

Artist Statement

My work is intended to relay the rooted pride within Black women that historically is adversely portrayed in modern culture, art, and media. As a mixed woman, these pieces embody a personal understanding and optimism around how we feel about ourselves internally and choose to portray ourselves outwardly.

My current body of work explores how water plays an integral role historically and presently in relation to Black people, and Black womxn specifically. The use of water both literally and metaphorically represents fluidity, malleability, and strength; All necessary components Black womxn have had to embody while navigating their way through American Culture throughout time.