Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Living Art Conversations with Rebecca Robinson

Mbizo Chirasha · Wednesday, May 6th, 2020

Her artworks are illustrious, her paintings carry dignity of life. Rebecca Robinson bravely wields her weapons, a pencil and a brush, to communicate life messages, to speak positive change and to heal communities from daily life traumas. Her artistic prowess tripled with maturity and exuberance mesmerizes her audience, her readers and other communities' home abroad. Her wall exhibitions that include billboard painting projects exude versatility and diversity. Robinson's creative career is an embodiment of spiritual reverence, emotional expression and humane contentment. I had a virtual coffee table conversation with Rebecca Robinson and we are honored to feature this special profile of the illustrious artist and gamechanger. Rebecca Robinson studied fashion design in Atlanta, GA and continued her education at North Carolina Central University where she majored in Art/Visual Communications and graduated with high honors. Her background also includes art history, printmaking, photography, graphic design, film, and creative marketing.

We trust our readers, poets and artist are able to pluck chlorophyll filled leaf of inspiration from this baobab of a human.

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Mbizo Chirasha: *Your artist statement carries weight, maturity, and integrity and is obviously befitting: "As long as I can remember art has moved me. Expressing myself with my artwork allows me to convey a thought, an emotion, a personal experience or an important message. As an artist, it is my duty to push the envelope and create artwork that sparks a dialog and remains timeless." And how are you able to fuse such great thought tracks, writing, and visual arts?*

Rebecca Robinson: That is a wonderful question! I am able to fuse a combination of creativity mainly by my ability to directly associate, relate and or empathize with a theme, subject, experience or situation. I have noticed over the years, the majority of my work is directly related to how I may feel at that time or how something is affecting me…ie…love, hurt, happiness, fatigue, anger, gratitude..etc. Also, the majority of my artwork is created as a series. It is my way of telling "my story" visually.

MC: *Sometime back, you were appointed by the Arts Council Indianapolis to exhibit your stunning Billboard paintings. How did that change your artistic life and your creativity? How has this appointment widened your career networks?*

RR: The Arts Council of Indianapolis has definitely played a major role in widening my

audience. The Billboard annual project has been ongoing for several years and I remember applying and submitting my artwork for review. Each year that I was not accepted, it only encouraged me to keep trying and continue to hone my artistic skills. Last year, I decided to give it another try and sure enough…I WAS SELECTED (along with 9 other brilliant visual artists). Only 10 were selected for 2019-2020. This achievement only confirmed that being diligent does matter. The Billboard project also allowed my audience to grow in my home town of Indianapolis. It feels amazing to receive personal messages of those who have driven past my billboard and recognized my work/name. I am grateful that the Arts Council of Indianapolis not only chose my artwork but also selected the art piece titled “Protest” which holds so much significance.

MC: *Give us a brief update of your great local and exhibitions.*

RR: Being busy is an understatement, especially with my schedule of exhibitions in various cities and specifically the city of Indianapolis. My calendar fills a year in advance to art exhibitions that I must prepare for. I have been honored to display my artwork with the art collective WE ARE INDY ARTS in which I have been a proud member for over 5 years. I have also showcased for Flava Fresh, Frequencies, Insight, Washington University School of Medicine, Center for Contemporary and Political Art and The Chicago Museum of Science & Industry annual Black Creativity Exhibit. I am also honored to announce a gallery home/representation for my original artwork which will be at “Gallery Elevate” in Charleston, SC (Opening Spring/Summer of 2020).

MC: *If you were to write a book of your life, arts, and career, what are your first lines?*

RR: My childhood was amazing! At a young age, as early as 3 years old I remember my favorite past time was using my imagination. I had no idea that memorizing the entire play Little Orphan Annie and singing the “The Wiz” album on a daily basis was only the beginning of exploring the arts. From learning ballet to playing the violin, or asking my parents to video record me doing the nightly news, I would have never guessed I was preparing myself all along and I would eventually play a significant role in the art world today.”

MC: *Which of your artistic productions speak to the plight of women and girls?*

RR: I am very proud to be an artist but I am especially proud to be a woman in the arts! A particular series of my artwork was created specifically to remind women how powerful and beautiful we are (Inside and out). Women are also resilient. There is magic in being confident yet vulnerable. The strong yet simple silhouettes I created is to emphasize these attributes. I am extremely proud of these particular compositions.

MC: *What are your lined up artistic interventions during these tough days of COVID 19?*

RR: During this pandemic, I have experienced a lot of ups and downs and I allowed myself to feel what I needed to feel. The world being on hold has actually been a positive for me. I personally needed more time to focus on myself and self-care. I have been painting (when I feel up to it), I have been listening to music again, I have been finishing a few other projects that have been on pause for months due to not having my full attention. I have also been getting much-needed rest. Not just sleeping, but actually resting. Allowing my mind and creativity the opportunity to

recharge, I honestly believe I will create some of my post powerful artwork during these challenging times.

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REBECCA ROBINSON studied fashion design in Atlanta, GA and continued her education at North Carolina Central University where she majored in Art/Visual Communications and graduated with high honors. Her background also includes art history, printmaking, photography, graphic design, film, and creative marketing. Rebecca is mostly known for her fashion design company psnob.com (pronounced snob) which launched in 2001. In the spring of 2019, Rebecca began the initial stages of forming her nonprofit organization called ONE ARRT TM, which will become the first art supply brand that specifically supports all artists, art organizations, art education, museums/galleries and communities in need who would prosper with proper funding and resources. Rebecca has also contributed towards several nonprofit organizations throughout the country by auctioning her one-of-a-kind handbags and fine art. Rebecca's artwork has been featured in dozens of media outlets including; *Jezebel Magazine*, *Pattern Magazine*, *New York Examiner*, *Points North Magazine*, *Indianapolis Monthly Magazine*, The National Endowment Of The Arts and recently exhibited her painting made with the medium concrete and tar of jazz legend Miles Davis at the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry. In the summer of 2019, Rebecca was selected by the Arts Council of Indianapolis to showcase her work for the annual High Art Billboard project (2019-2020). Rebecca is also a self-published author of the book *Arts Honor*. In 2018, Rebecca released the award-winning documentary film *The Color of Medicine* in which she worked as a co-producer and media manager.

This entry was posted on Wednesday, May 6th, 2020 at 2:09 pm and is filed under Visual Art
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