ALMINE RECH

Genesis Tramaine
Worship Works

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WORSHIP WORKS! Inspired by my belief in Gods grace and Mercy! Is an affirmation series that informs my faith energy. I wanted to draw' closer to God literally! So I spent a lot of time drawing... sketching... sometimes with my eyes closed, in hopes of giving further trust to God, a blind space. I allowed my self to be led, by the Holy Spirit! I dare not draw God but I can draw on Jesus and draw closer to his message of love. These worship works' help me to be bold in my belief that God is for all Of us. God is bigger than our immediate and furthest understanding. I needed to rely on love to be used to birth these gospels, so I prayed for the presence of the Holy Spirit to occupy me, to use me. I'm so grateful for this guidance, it has allowed me a self depth that transforms the work. There is a maturity, with this body of work, a comfort in my belief in Gods love for me. Each portrait is a testimonial prayer map, a physical manifesto of worship in devotion to Christ Lord Yahweh! While the works present portrait focused, they are aimed to detail the gospel, the good news! God Loves us all!

- Genesis Tramaine

To close your eyes and move is to take a leap of faith, and Genesis Tramaine is one of the faithful. She began many of the paintings in *Worship Works* by shutting her eyes and letting the Holy Spirit guide her, unsure of where it might lead. Blind contour drawings, as they're often called, are best completed by raising or shutting one's eyes and letting the hand trace a pencil, pen or oil pastel across a page, never lifting it until the work is finished. Here, they provide a framework upon which Tramaine later labors with a host of other materials – gouache, acrylic, oil stick, spray paint – until a face, warm and fleshy, emerges. Call it divining, a way of finding light in the darkness.

The Prophet Isaiah was particularly fond of the blind: "I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth." (Isaiah 42:16) Rough into smooth is also every artist's dream. By refusing to allow her vision to cast doubt on what her hand can already feel, Tramaine places her trust in a sacred process. Creation, after all, was the first work of art.

The affirmations of each title – *Jesus loves me* and *Jesus knows it's me,* for instance – are likewise truths Tramaine doesn't need to see. Her conviction allows her to become a kind of medium for material she considers holy, and to that end, "Holy Spirit" is listed among her paints. Working a paper or canvas into something beautiful and new is a kind of anointing. When the Tower of Babel fell, the Holy Spirit anointed all people with tongues of fire, giving them different languages which they struggled to understand. Tramaine's unique aesthetic language coheres here into portraits that are clearly legible as human faces, even though their features are too abstract to identify. They might be angels or everymen; she calls them "blueprints of my prayers."

Tramaine listens to contemporary gospel or jazz while she works, inscribing the energy and power of the music onto her canvases. Swift, repetitive gestures for a rounded hairline, a set of braids or a pair of lips lend their surfaces a frenetic visual rhythm. Many of these faces have multiple sets of the same features: in *Jesus knows it's me* (all works 2021), for instance, the subject has at least eight eyes. In *Jesus loves me: Middle Road*, the circular gesture that forms a pupil could also be nostrils, studded above and below a pair of full, blushing lips. In each painting, bold lines in paint or oil pastel denote jaw and hairlines, bounding the concatenating shapes within them. The portraits are studies of what the artist calls the American Black Face, their features exaggerated to better capture the expressive soul of Black people.

Jesus healed the blind, but he was clear that blindness itself was not a defect. Vulnerability – physical or financial – has no impact on an individual's worthiness in the eyes of God. Willful, momentary blindness allows Tramaine to better perceive this message of love, and to transmute it into a heavenly chorus for us all to see.

-Evan Moffitt