ALMINE RECH

Genesis Tramaine
Break of Day

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Psalm 46:5
God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved;
God will help her when morning dawns.

At the dawn of things—blood, sun, moon—Genesis Tramaine is her most powerful. In her new show, *Break of Day* , the breadth of her power, the breadth of God's power as it moves through the artist, is on full display. Genesis Tramaine invites you to a new beginning, one that reflects an evolution. "I was in a space where I had to trust God differently this time around. My tools changed, and there was growth in the process. I used different mediums. I used more organic materials and a different part of myself, meaning I'm trusting a different part of myself. I'm listening in prayer and receiving differently. The work speaks to that," Tramaine said.

Rain water. Salt. Oil sticks. Acrylics. Spray paint. With mixed media, Tramaine finds the divine in her subjects and brings out that divine in unexpected ways. She makes paintings that are both otherworldly and of this world. The work is visually arresting and powerful; stunning and sanctified. She creates astonishing colors in hues that reflect the depth and sincerity of Tramaine's devotion.

To surrender your craft, the whole of your work and how you make it to something greater than yourself demands courage. For Tramaine, the act of making is a trust test, a faith walk. Instead of suppressing her disbelief, she asks God to bless it. She trusts that there is strength even in failure, so that wherever God tells her to go, whatever she does with that message, the work will be fruitful.

Tramaine has long been a servant. For nine years, she taught math and art in New York public schools. It is there she learned invaluable lessons about humility, facing thirty young giants each day, being open to the lessons they offered, navigating the realities of a vast bureaucracy. She brings that humility forward into her art, opening herself to an ever-expanding practice. She takes herself seriously. She knows she is good and will continue to get better. And she knows her mission is far more than her art practice. "I'm a black woman artist, and I've got to do what I got to do to not just keep up, but to build for the next generation. To build and inspire for those who may not know a lot of these tunnels don't exist, and there's just no light. I praise and thank God for being the artist who is put in position to create, and to shed that light," Tramaine said.

After a long night's work, there are callouses on her hands. Her shoulders are cramped. Her eyes are dry with fatigue. But the work is good. She works within God's grace, on God's plan. She greets many a morning in her studio held in a canvas's thrall.

This show is named *Break of Day*. The idea came to her as a spark during one of these long nights of work. In that moment when she received the blessing of a name, "the greatest love song starts playing in my ear," she said. And so she danced. She danced with the spirit until they let her go. And so you are invited to join in this dance. To bear witness. To experience this transcendent art. To open yourself to possibility.

Each time she faces the canvas, Genesis Tramaine gets nervous. There is that moment of falter, wondering if God will guide her hand. And then she gets to work. She is the artist, in her studio, on her knees before the canvas. She offers up prayer and hopes that prayer is enough.

It is. Welcome to the bounty of a new day.

-Roxane Gay, writer