

MATTHEW FIELDS



Self-Awareness: An Introduction to Labor



Through internal exploration

and curiosity-induced research, I am currently negotiating my development as a person, uncovering my concerns for the world, my role within it, and expanding my knowledge on the realities of the American social, political and economic systems. As I can only present what I know from my experience as a Black man, it is a challenge of figuring out what I know about myself. I want to use this idea of knowing oneself as more than a typical personality trait. When I speak of knowing myself, I'm questioning where I come from, how I got here, who's responsible for this, where do I belong, where does the world think I belong, who am I with, and who is with me? I look consciously and unconsciously at the world around me, the

people around me, the systems in which our world operates and how I or the collective "I" are affected by that. It is not that I am being intentionally political about these subjects. It is that these subjects are inherently political.

I am an artist because I have devoted my life to knowing what that truly means. Like art, an artist perpetually adapts to the environment and era in which it exists. As a practitioner of the fine arts, it is my purpose to grow, evolve and transform my practice. To then challenge, reflect or provoke thought within the minds of my audience. It is my mission to never be stagnant or complacent. To always question, to unveil, and to never limit the scope of my creativity.

— MATTHEW FIELDS

ARTWORKS

Trust the Police? Oil paint and printed paper on canvas; 60" x 48", 2021 (featured on facing page)

Tied Up Birch plywood, white chord, burlap rope, plastic frames, cork; 48" x 24", 2021

Don't Be Ridiculous Acrylic and spray paint on canvas; 48" x 36", 2021

Colors of Revolution Ribbon, oil and spray paint on canvas; 12" x 36", 2021

Bloodline Ribbon, pyrography and acrylic on MDF; 36" x 16", 2021

Don't Sweep My Feet Oil and interior black paint on canvas; 48" x 48", 2021

Elevation Mixed media, denim; 72" x 48", 2021

Observation (3) 4ft x 7.5ft free-standing walls; 2x4 studs, gypsum panel, plywood, acrylic paint; 2021

Don't Be Basic Pyrography and cloth, mirror; 30" x 36", 2020-2023

Experiments of Representation Mixed media; (2) panels 20" x 23", (5) panels 23" x 23"; 2020-2023

Elegant Articulation Oil, acrylic and spray paint on canvas, neckties; 30" x 40"; 2021-2023

FOCUS Mixed media; 36" x 48"; 2019-2023

Breakthrough ... Oil paint, acrylic paint, wood, fabric, dried paint skins; 48" x 60"; 2023

Curtains Pyrography on panel; 48" x 60"; 2023

Whitewash My Fear Acrylic on panel, rope, wooden figures; 48" x 60"; 2023

Inside a Real Nigga Oil, acrylic, and spray paint on canvas, neckties, frame; 56" x 34"; 2023

Diaspora Acrylic and spray paint on canvas, printed canvas, cloth, frame; 37" x 26"; 2023

Pride Pyrography, paint skins, vinyl, floral frame, found object drum; 47" x 17"; 2023 (cover image)

Black Dollar Printed canvas mounted on mirror, floral frame, found objects; 38" x 19"; 2023 (featured on this page)



Self-Awareness: An Introduction to Labor by Matthew Fields is on view at The Arts & Science Center for Southeast Arkansas from March 2–May 6, 2023.

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CURATOR'S STATEMENT

In Self-Awareness: An Introduction to Labor, artist Matthew Fields uses the materials and assemblages in his work to reconfigure the environment they are placed in to both attempt to wrestle the workings of his own identity, but also the construct of the society that has been erected around him.

He wisely reckons that in order to effectively change the issues that affect him he must first come to understand who he is within them.

— KEVIN HAYNIE

Curator of Collections & Exhibitions

Breakthrough ... (detail); oil paint, acrylic paint, wood, fabric, dried paint skins; 48" x 60"; 2023

Matthew Fields is an assistant professor of art at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB). He earned his Master of Fine Arts degree from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 2021, and his Bachelor of Science degree in visual arts from UAPB in 2019. He is a native of St. Louis. For more information about Fields and to view more of his work, visit his website unartistikcreations.myportfolio.com.



The Arts & Science Center has three aspects of collecting and exhibition: Art of the Delta, art by Arkansas artists, and art by African American artists.

ASC is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, a distinction held by fewer than 4% of museums in the United States.

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