

Donté Hayes

Artifacts are a tangible history which have the capacity to retain, transform, destroy, erase and evoke lost knowledge. My artwork is informed by researching traditional African heirlooms and initiation rites of birth, adulthood, marriage, eldership, and ancestry which are essential to all human growth and speaks to the greater African diaspora. Along with my interest in history, science-fiction, and hip-hop culture, I utilize ceramics as a historical and base material to inform memories of the past. By using a needle tool, I create individual marks on the surface of the clay with each strand becoming a collective form. I compare the construction and deconstruction of materials to the remix in rap music and how human beings adapt to different environments and reinvent new identities. These modern artifacts preserve, empower, and document the past and present to initiate healing and understanding for the future.