

## Juror's Statement

The 50 artists in this exhibition were curated from a field of over 700 applicants. I want to begin by congratulating them all because they are the ones that got my attention and most inspired me.

But my process was not solely subjective: it was heavily influenced by the cultural moment we are in as a nation. *Self Portrait as Housewife (Who He Wanted Me to Be)* immediately struck a chord with me for its strong formal values but most importantly because of its subject matter which resonated with the ongoing struggle for gender and racial equality at the center of our current cultural discourse.

*A Walk in the Woods*, with its flush color, was particularly poignant because COVID-19 changed my relationship forever with the planet we inhabit. Trees—those sentient life forms related to us, though we rarely see or acknowledge that relationship, except for when they meet our narrow utilitarian purpose—came alive!

The hanging/sculpture, *Caribbean Friendship Bracelet*, made of cotton rope, yarn, chenille and sari silk is a power object encoded with histories of cultural hegemony, indentureship, racial violence, the fight for freedom and solidarity fomented in the crucible of colonial rule.

I struggled to remain open until the end, switching things in and out until I came to the resolve that I wanted to use this opportunity to give a nod to those objects that meant something to me personally. In a way of speaking, I selected objects that gave me something I could feel.

Victor L. Davson