

# HALSEY MCKAY GALLERY

## L'MERCHIE FRAZIER - *FIRST LIGHT: OUR STORIES*

July 9 - August 1, 2022 | 79 Newtown Lane, East Hampton, NY

For all further information please contact [info@halseymckay.com](mailto:info@halseymckay.com)



L'Merchie Frazier, *Who Is In My Neighborhood*, 2018, Pieced nylon fabric; machine quilting

Halsey McKay is pleased to present L'Merchie Frazier's first solo-exhibition with the gallery, *First Light: Our Stories*. Based in Boston, Frazier's textile art incorporates the mediums of fiber art, quilting and light to portray the lives and legacies of African-descended people and their communities across centuries of memory, place, and activism as an on-going series, *The Quilted Chronicles*. *First Light: Our Stories* will be on view from July 9 to August, with an opening reception on Saturday, July 9, from 5 to 7 p.m.

Through carefully-wrought fine art quilting and fiber construction Frazier creates striking portraits of figures from within her surrounding community and throughout history. Frazier refers to her figurative evocations, across media, as "threads of memory," with which she intends to inspire recognition and recollection of personal and collective narratives. The exhibition includes works from Frazier's *Target* series, in which the artist explores the concept of the target from multiple perspectives: Black people as targets of unjust analysis, violence and suspicion, but also of love and affection.

With the attention to detail required for sewing and beading across a multiplicity of textures, Frazier imbues her quilted wall-works with the warmth and familiarity of kinship, evoking private, personal histories with the insistence of national import. Collaging together her portraits of familiar figures with thread, her subjects strike a balance between comfort in their own environments and the stern posture of someone facing down a foreign gaze.

Frazier provides a natural window into these lives, and implies through her perspective the pain and glory of lived experience, childhood memory and political challenges. Her socially-engaged practice provocatively identifies the media of fiber, beads, metals, poetry, performance and community work as equally in service to the threads of memory – reclaiming personal history to arrive at recognition, salvation and redemption for her public. Her work participates in the reparative aesthetics of restorative justice.

Referencing her use of transparent nylon as her canvas, Frazier identifies the material with the texture and auratic effect of a hologram. Her holographic quilts are “prisms of layered light” that impose recorded memory into three-dimensional space. As a holographer, Frazier seeks to transfigure the same facets of light, texture and memory into her quilted works and impose their futuristic effects upon her portraits of community members and historical figures. By fashioning works that explore history in this innovative style, Frazier weaves together a present that is equal parts past and future, situating the viewer in the delicate space that threads between these dimensions.

L’Merchie Frazier, visual activist, public historian, innovator, poet and holographer, is Director of Education and Interpretation for the Museum of African American History, Boston/Nantucket. Currently she is Director of Creative Engagement of the Transformative Action Project/Violence Transformed in the Public Health Advocacy Institute at Northeastern University. Her work highlights the reparative aesthetic approach to expand the historical narrative, diminishing erasure, responding to trauma, violence and crisis through artistic activities. Her work is based on authentic evidence, providing place-based education and interdisciplinary history pedagogy, programs and workshops, projects and lectures. She delivers and manages Faculty/Teachers’ Institutes and its extension, the Diversity, Equity and Belonging, marketed to independent education entities, municipalities and corporations.

She has served the artistic community for over twenty years as an award winning national and international visual and performance artist and poet, in one life work “Save Me From My Amnesia”, with residencies in Brazil, Taiwan, Costa Rica, Africa, France, and Cuba. Her works mirror community. Her artworks are collected by the Smithsonian Institution, the White House, Museum of Arts and Design, the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Dallas Museum of Art. As a lecturer and workshop presenter, her audiences include youth and adults. She is a Boston Foundation Brother Thomas Fellow and Massachusetts Historical Society Fellow and is a member of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts and has recently been appointed to the Massachusetts Arts Commission and was recently awarded for the first Museum Educator Award by the Massachusetts Council on Social Studies. Newly Executive Director of Creative Strategic Partnerships for SPOKE.