

Full Artist Statement
Kadazia Allen-Perry

Creating has been a vital part of life from the very beginning. When I tell you, I made the best finger paintings on the market, I mean, my mom still wears the t-shirt with my handprints on it that I made her when I was in Kindergarten. I was diagnosed with a terminal illness called cystic fibrosis when I was 18 months old. I won't get deep into the inner workings of CF but I will tell you that it drastically diminishes a person's quality of life and gives the person an estimated life expectancy of about 37 years. Creating was how I saw past those 37 years. When I was elbow deep in play-doh I could feel hope bubbling and squishing between my fingers. When I was surrounded by the scraps of construction paper on the floor of my bedroom, I could see the road map to my dreams that were still waiting to be claimed. Creating always gave me purpose because it presented me with a future statistics have continuously told me isn't possible.

After 25 years of doctors' appointments, medicines, breathing treatments, hospital exasperations, familial abandonment, anxiety, depression, a suicide attempt, sexual assault, of finding a way to breathe at 16% lung function... Somehow, creativity still has a hold on me. And after waking up from a double lung transplant on April 15, 2019, I am finally able to fully accept its embrace. My doctors and I had been in "keep Kadazia alive" mode for two years. The CF progressed fast, and my motivation to create diminished just as quickly. Then I got *the call* and suddenly I went from being in a wheelchair and on oxygen full time to being able to walk a couple miles when I had a fried seafood craving.

Aside from being disabled, I am also queer, a non-binary womxn, and Black. All of the intersections that I occupy have been historically and intentionally stripped of their humanity and expected to be content with this. I never accepted these terms and conditions. Instead, through creating art, I saw the abundance of possibilities that lie within and beyond these intersections I occupy. I am a multi-media artist because I don't see just one possibility, one future, one dream for myself. I work across mediums to find the stories I want to tell and how they would like to be told. As an artist, I intend to show others alongside me the possibilities creation can offer them as well.

My art aspires to illustrate, design, print, paint, sculpt, write and film marginalized folks into realities we've never been privy to. Into stories that have never been told about us. Into futures that have never included us. My art aspires to make the dreams of the most vulnerable possible... to make us possible.