

Artist Statement: 27th Annual Exhibition of Artists in Michigan Prisons

Artist Name: J. BLAKIE

ART IS WHERE I GO TO ESCAPE THE TRAGEDY OF MY SURROUNDINGS. UNHAMPED BY REALITY, ART TYPICALLY BRINGS ME SATISFACTION AND JOY. THAT SAID, 2023 WAS A DIFFICULT YEAR FOR ME FROM A CREATIVE STANDPOINT. THROUGHOUT MUCH OF THE YEAR I FELT AS THOUGH MY CREATIVITY WAS SUFFOCATING UNDER WAVE AFTER WAVE OF MELANCHOLY. PUSHING THROUGH MY 27TH YEAR OF INCARCERATION AND TURNING 50 SEEMINGLY WEIGHING MORE HEAVILY ON MY MIND THAN I THOUGHT IT COULD OR WOULD. AS SOMEONE WHO NEVER EXPERIENCED DEPRESSION THIS WAS A BIT SHOCKING. IT ALSO INSPIRED "BEATING THE BLUES", A REWORKED VERSION OF A PREVIOUS PRINTING. THE OVERLAPPING BLUE SWIRLS SYMBOLIZES MY STRUGGLE TO OVERCOME THE PROFOUND SADNESS AND ANGST I FELT THROUGHOUT THIS PAST YEAR. AS I PULLED MYSELF OUT OF THE FUNK THE BLUES BECAME BRIGHTER, THE BURDEN LIGHTER. MY HOPE IS THAT THIS PRINTING ENCOURAGES OTHERS TO PERSEVERE THROUGH WHATEVER HARDSHIPS THEY'RE FACING AT THE MOMENT AND PUSH TOWARD A MORE POSITIVE TOMORROW. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Please edit your Artist Statement to fit the space provided.