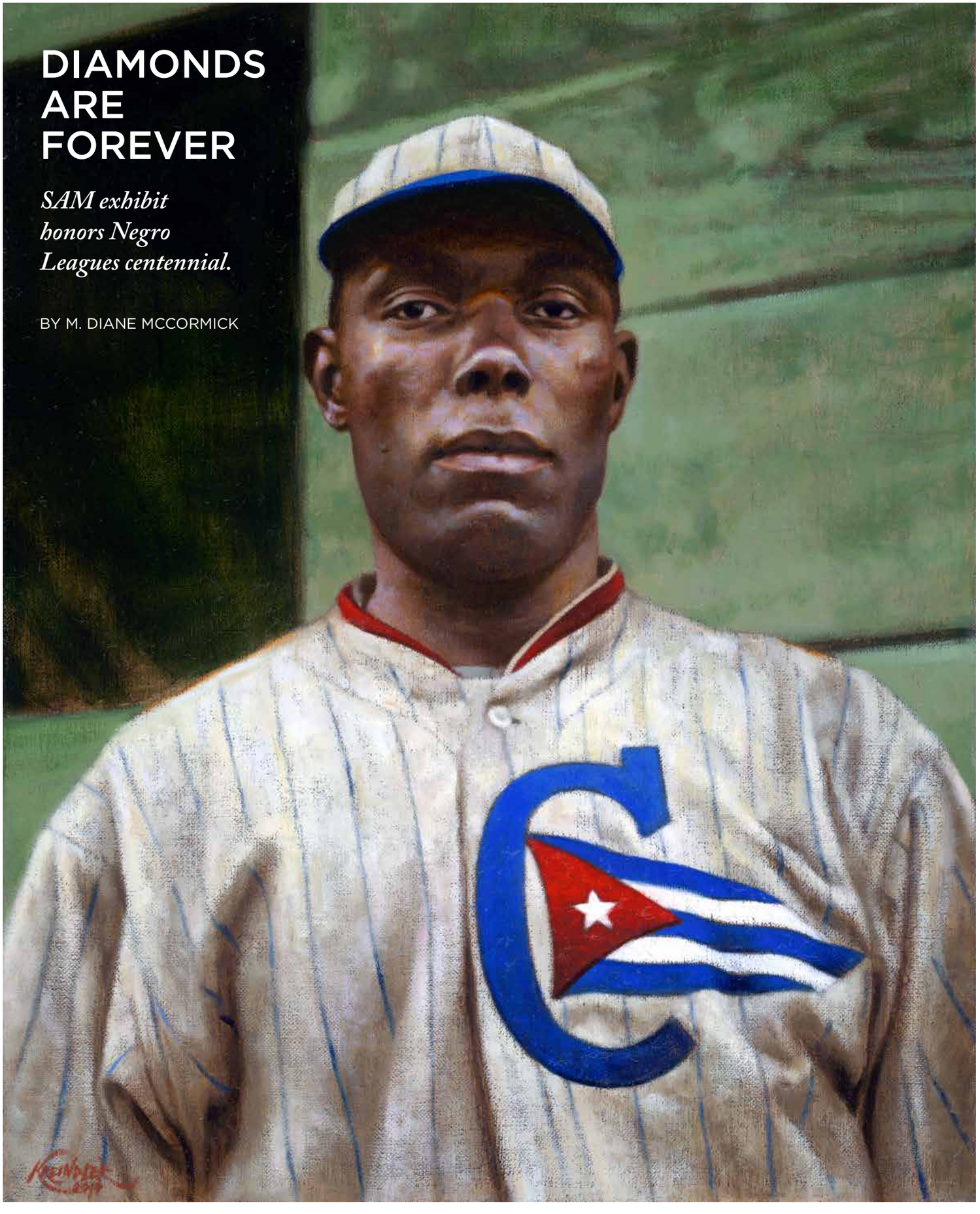
DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER

SAM exhibit honors Negro Leagues centennial.

BY M. DIANE MCCORMICK



The answer: Visibility. Status. Power.

The question: What can art restore to our collective memories of Negro League ballplayers, their careers and significance often lost in time?

The Susquehanna Art Museum's "Separate and Unequaled: Celebrating the 100th anniversary of The Negro League" revives the images of the men—and a few women—who played baseball when legally sanctioned prejudice kept them off Major League diamonds.

The exhibit, suggested by Harrisburg-area Negro Leagues researcher Ted Knorr, commemorates the centennial of the Negro National League, formed to provide high-level opportunities for African-American players.

Just like sports, art breaks boundaries by raising awareness of overlooked cultures and moments, said SAM Executive Director Alice Anne Schwab.

"Harrisburg had one of the preeminent Negro League teams here, and I don't think that's so well known in all walks of life," she said. "It's so cool to be able to tell that story."

The exhibit spotlights 11 works from four artists.

Graig Kreindler's Josh Gibson seems about to stand up and stare down any pitcher who dared test the legendary slugger. Phillip Dewey's Hank Aaron takes a mighty swing, while peepholes reveal images of Little Rock High School's raucous desegregation and the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. In Paul Kuhrman's portrayal of three female players from a novelty exhibition team, Mamie Johnson, Toni Stone and Connie Morgan link arms like Raphael beauties.

And Herbert "Rap" Dixon strikes the classic ballplayer's pose, right hand on knob of bat like a cane, left hand on hip. Dixon's image, framed by Dewey in ornate wood, represents the Harrisburg Giants, a team whose 1920s iteration played a brief but crucial role in Negro League history.

"Though they were world-class athletic talents, because of segregation, they were not given the same opportunity that equally talented or lesser white players had," said SAM Director of Exhibitions Lauren Nye.

GIANT FOOTPRINTS

Around 1890, Harrisburg newspapers started referencing the baseball team formed by the civic-minded, entrepreneurial Colonel William Strothers. Strothers ("Colonel" was his given name) was once a police officer in his adopted city of Harrisburg. He founded a pool hall, cigar store, lunchroom and barbershop.

Through it all wove baseball. Organized play by African-American players on segregated and integrated teams in Harrisburg dated to 1867. When creation of the National Negro League and the Eastern Colored League division introduced organization and an elevated stage to African-American baseball's patchwork of teams, Strothers made up his mind to compete.

Dixon was a key selection. He started as a 13-year-old slugger in 1916 for his hometown Keystone Giants in Steelton. Playing around town, he caught the eye of Strothers.

"Dixon doesn't have to go to New York or Baltimore to play," said Knorr. "The Major Leagues are coming to him."

Then there was Oscar Charleston, considered one of the greatest ballplayers of all time. Charleston had power, hitting, fielding, throwing and running equal to the all-time greats on both sides of the color line.

In September 1922, Charleston and his Indianapolis ABCs played the Harrisburg Giants. This may have been when he met a young, widowed, Harrisburg preacher's daughter named Jane Blalock Howard. They married in 1922. So, when Strothers came calling with an offer to serve as player-manager for the Giants, Charleston was ready.

Strothers bankrolled the highest-paid team in the Negro League, and, from 1924 through 1927, the Harrisburg Giants are "Major League-equivalent," said Knorr. Charleston, Dixon and teammate Fats Jenkins comprised what Knorr called "the greatest outfield ever to play the game, certainly in the Negro Leagues."

Before leaving the soon-to-fold ECL in 1927, the Giants amassed the league's second-best record but never won a pennant. Strothers died in 1933, but the Giants reemerged in various versions over the years.

How good were those 1920s Giants? Five former Harrisburg players, including the intact Dixon-Charleston-Jenkins outfield, played in 1932 for the Pittsburgh Crawfords, considered one of the greatest teams in Negro Leagues history. Charleston and Giants teammate Ben Taylor are among 35 Negro Leaguers in the National Baseball Hall of Fame. Others, including Dixon, have been nominated.

Dixon would go on to become the first African American to hit a home run at Yankee Stadium. That was in the first game of a 1930 Negro League exhibition double-header. In the second game, he hit two more.

IN THEIR EYES

Exton, Pa.-based artist Dane Tilghman submitted two works to the SAM exhibit, including the Larry Doby painting. His work has incorporated African-American players for about 30 years, since his flea-market find of baseball cards dedicated to Negro League players.

In Tilghman's travels, he met surviving players, seeking out details for the stories he wanted to tell. He felt blessed to meet many players in their final years, soaking up their wisdom and seeing "how they would gleam when they started talking about the particular players they played against and how they fared against the Major League guys."

"They brought everything they had to the game," Tilghman said. "A Negro League game on a Sunday afternoon would fill any of the Major League stadiums. You could see it in their eyes." B

"Separate and Unequaled," runs through July 19 at the Susquehanna Art Museum, Pollock Education Center Gallery, 1401 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg. This schedule may change due to COVID-19 restrictions. For more information, visit www.susquehannaartmuseum.org.

Paintings by Graig Kreindler, "Among the Greatest" and "Quiet Confidence."

HARRISBURG HITS

A few "Harrisburg, who knew?" moments in African-American baseball history include:

- The 1868 meeting of the National Association of Base Ball Players that yielded the first written rule against integration was held in Harrisburg, said Harrisburg historian Calobe Jackson, Jr.
- The powerhouse pitcher Rube Foster traveled to Harrisburg for games early in the 20th century. After retiring, he founded the Negro National League to recast a system that shuttled African-American teams to inferior venues and put them under the financial thumb of booking agents.
- Most of the players in the SAM exhibit played in Harrisburg, where the strategic convergence of roads and railroads attracted top teams, said Jackson.
- As a child in the 1930s, Warren, Pa., native Robert Peterson witnessed the Harrisburg Giants barnstorming against a white team. That game sparked Peterson's curiosity about African-American baseball, according to Jackson. The historian's landmark 1970 work, "Only the Ball Was White," helped trigger the movement that enshrined Negro League players in the Hall of Fame.
- During World War II, Pittsburgh Pirates great Honus Wagner managed the Harrisburg-St. Louis Stars on a fundraising tour for the war effort.

Drew Hart

DIFFERENT LIVES, DIFFERENT NARRATIVES

Messiah College Professor Drew Hart on the divisions between Black, white America.

BY SUSAN RYDER

"There is more support than any time in our history, in this moment," said Dr. Drew Hart, author, professor, activist and Harrisburg resident about the current attention on racist policies in this country.

He hopes that this interest and activism are not superficial.

"There is the potential that something really meaningful could flourish from this," he said.

How do we move from this cursory concern to profound change?

Not in the way one might think, according to Hart. We must start at the root and unlearn and relearn much of the knowledge we have acquired, not just about Black history, but about American history or "real American history." In his book, "Trouble I've Seen: Changing the Way the Church Views Racism," Hart give readers an opportunity for this relearning.

He described historical practices like red-lining, an intentional federal government system of color-coding neighborhoods to keep minorities and immigrants out of predominantly white neighborhoods, and the withholding of GI Bill benefits like low-interest loans and mortgages from Black veterans.

There are two different narratives in America, Hart explained. Black stories include oppression, brutal policing and the constant scrutiny of whites. White stories are centered around American pride, opportunity and wealth achieved by hard work. By challenging the white narrative, white Americans challenge their identity.

"If you are in a social bubble, when your narrative always gets told, then you take that for granted," he said. "That becomes the instinctive way that you interpret everything that happens around you."

In other words, people begin to think that their perspective is the only perspective, and they spend little time listening to other people's experiences.

"Even though they [whites] may not have any lived experience in these [Black] communities, they don't have the meaningful, substantive relationships from a variety of people in those communities to receive these stories, and yet they have an immediate response" to events in the Black community, he said.

His book described this as "going with your gut," a practice that white Americans need to set aside in order to understand the struggles of the Black community.

To sustainably turn this present progress into change, people need to invest time into their neighborhoods, find ways to participate in community good, hold police accountable, and "link arms with those who are oppressed," said Hart.

For those who doubt the racism and oppression against Blacks and respond that "All Lives Matter" to the cries of injustice, "You are not listening to what Black people have been saying," Hart said.

This response to Black Lives Matter is also a result of not recognizing racism, he said. People hearken back to crosses burned on yards, segregated lunch counters and whites-only water fountains to define racism. However, according to Hart, racism is a chameleon, adapting to the current situation just as it has done throughout American history.

After slavery was abolished, Jim Crow laws took effect. These laws, which lasted into the late 1960s, allowed for segregation, decided where Blacks could work and travel, and disallowed voting rights. The "war on drugs" followed, which incarcerated Blacks at a higher rate than whites and provided for much tougher jail sentences for the use of crack cocaine, used more by Blacks, versus the use of powdered cocaine, used more by whites.

These racist policies are fueled by the idea of white supremacy—not the "skinhead" white supremacy many people are familiar with, but the accepted, often unconsciously held idea that whites are superior to Blacks. Hart's book points out that white people need to begin to examine their assessment of Blacks and other minorities.

Society labels white teenagers who use drugs as "experimenting," as a normal part of growing up. However, it labels Black teens who engage in drug use as "thugs" and a threat to society.

In fact, Hart has experienced that a Black man's mere presence often labels him a "thug." The book dives into these experiences and the fact that they happened in an unlikely place—a Christian college.

That Christians foment racial division may seem unconscionable, but Christianity has not only participated in but has perpetuated and justified racial oppression and remained silent in its midst. Within the pages of "Trouble I've Seen," Hart calls out the church and urges it go beyond its complacency.

Christianity has racial work to do, as does Harrisburg, according to Hart. Substantial conversations regarding race need to be had and neighborhoods like Uptown and Allison Hill need more investment.

"[There are] no simple answers, but until we talk about the root problems, we won't get to anything meaningful," he said.

This weighty work is what birthed Hart's next book, "Who Will be a Witness: Igniting Activism for God's Justice, Love and Deliverance," due out in September. During his countrywide speaking engagements, people often ask what's next or how to we "do" racial justice.

"I realized they need a little more help thinking through this," he said.

Even with the focus on racial matters right now, those working on the long, uphill cause of justice know this is an ultramarathon not a sprint. When asked if he has hope for the future, Hart measured his words. He said he's not hopeful in the optimistic sense but in another way.

"I'm hopeful in the sense that we can be the hope," he said. "I'm more interested in the practice of hope, of exercising hope, of living hope for others."

For more information on Dr. Drew Hart, his activism and books, visit www.drewgihart.com.

THE MADNESS & THE MAGIC

Julia Mallory takes inspiration from the sublime, the tragic.

BY YAASMEEN PIPER

Julia Mallory was in the blue waters of Puerto Rico with her best friend and her best friend's niece when a piece of seaweed touched the niece's leg. Between Mallory and her friend's laughter and the niece's screams, someone asked, "What if it was a mermaid?"

Years later, Black Mermaids stands as Mallory's brand, which houses her clothing, accessories, books and more. Her T-shirts and hoodies include the words Black Mermaids in bright, vivid colors, messages of encouragement that randomly popped into her mind and names of iconic black women in literature like Toni Morrison and Audre Lorde.

Mallory also wrote six books under her Black Mermaids brand, including four poetry collections and two children's books.

"My work seems to invoke a sense of cultural pride, and also connects with individuals that recognize its universal themes such as love, grief, displacement, dreams and purpose," she said.

Mallory says she's written all her life but didn't consider herself a poet until her senior year of high school. Around this time, the Harrisburg native won a poetry contest that was sponsored by the African American Museum of Harrisburg. That was all she needed to keep going.

She then became active on the poetry scene. She and a group of friends would travel city to city and perform or listen to poetry readings at universities and other venues. As she dove deeper into the world of poetry, she saw more and more people publishing their books, so she decided it was time for her to do the same.

She started pulling all of her work together and outlining and figuring out the theme for the book. After a few bumps in the road, her first poetry collection, "Black Mermaids," came out in 2016.

Though the idea of "Black Mermaids" originated from that moment in Puerto Rico, the idea goes much deeper than that. Mallory thought of her ancestors who were enslaved and forced on to boats and away from their homelands. What if those who jumped or were thrown overboard then became mermaids?

"So, this reimagining of life after death and linking it to modern day, and all the things that were made to destroy us and yet we still persevere," she said. "We even turn what is absolute madness in our lives into something that is magical."

Mallory was taken aback by all level of support she got from the book.

People would tell her how much her poetry spoke to them. Many people also came up to Mallory and told her how much her kids loved mermaids, that we need more mermaids of color and asked her if this was a children's book. She laughed it off and said no, but it got her mind rolling.

A month later, she finished her children's book called "Kareemah and the Black Mermaids." The book follows a young girl named Kareemah who is rescued by a trio of mermaids.

"I let my daughter read it and she was like, 'Wow, this is really good. Almost like a real writer wrote it,'" she said laughing.

Mallory sent the book to her friend and illustrator Taqiyya Muhammad, who also illustrated the cover of her first book. Muhammad said she would need three months to create her designs, so Mallory planned for the book to come out in May 2017, but then her life was turned upside down.

CHOOSE TO LIVE

On May 30, 2017, Julian, Mallory's oldest son, was shot while trying to break up an argument between his friend and her family members. He died in the hospital four days later.

During this time, Mallory felt like time stopped but was accelerated at the same time. The last thing on her mind was anything related to Black Mermaids, her career, or anything other than her son. But she knew she needed to anchor herself and try to find some goodness to cling on to.

"My son's tragic death made it plain for me how fleeting life is," Mallory wrote in a blog post on her Black Mermaids website. "Julian's earthly absence has made my choices exceptionally clear—either I renew my commitment to living daily or I offer myself as a sacrifice to grief. I am unwilling to do the latter. And so I choose to live."

She threw herself back into Black Mermaids and created three more T-shirts. She created calendars and buttons with random phrases that popped into her mind such as, "Nah, this lifetime," a play on Erykah Badu's song "Next Lifetime."

By the end of 2017, she published her children's book, "Kareemah and the Black Mermaids," and an anniversary edition of "Black Mermaids." Her second children's novel, "Breathe," was published the following year, as well as a chapbook edition of "Black Mermaids."

Black Mermaids was becoming much more than Mallory had imagined.

"Black Mermaids is slowly evolving and becoming its own thing," she said. "I am continuously looking for ways to not just be in the pursuit of what's next, but how I can deepen my relationship to the work that I already created."

Throughout this time, she was working on another book that would later become her most recent collection, "Survivor's Guilt," which was published in October.

The death of her son amplified the survivor's guilt Mallory was already grappling with from losing childhood friends and family members.

"I think my son's death really gave me the language to be able to articulate what I had been feeling, and so the closest thing I could come up with that describes that feeling is the concept of survivor's guilt," she said.

In the book, she talks about not only her experience with grief but how grief affects communities, especially black communities, and how she learned to heal.

Along with poetry, the book includes the victim impact statement that she gave to the court the day the woman who killed her son was sentenced, letters to her son, uncle and grandmother and photographs.

"I think there is something about being here and being able to talk so boldly about my son's death that will also be healing to other folks," she said. "It was obviously healing to me too. Like, I'm not going to hide in this pain. I'm going to talk about it."

And Mallory continued to talk about her experience with grief either through her work or actually speaking about it.

Aside from raising her kids Kareen and Jaya and working at Perry Media Group, she has a few creative projects going. She's nailing down a courier poem she has been working on for over a decade, another children's book and a book related to her "Do Your Work" phrase.

"Hell, that's enough," she said, "And that's just what I'm planning to do. Black Mermaids feels like what I'm supposed to do, but I could literally get another assignment and go off doing something else." B

For more information on Black Mermaids, visit www.blackmermaids.com.

Photo by Dani Fresh.

PASSION & PROFIT

Black entrepreneurs in Harrisburg are making money doing what they love.

BY MADDIE CONLEY

Aubrea Thompson

Maisha Webb wants to be seen before she is heard. She has always been a little quiet, but when she makes an entrance, she's determined to be noticed.

"Fashion was a way to express myself without having to say anything," she said. "I knew when I walked into a room […] it's going to turn heads."

When you enter Mean Girl Style Boutique, the first thing you notice is pink—pink walls that Webb's dad had contested when she pulled out the paint cans. But remember, she was going for head turns.

Racks of neon dresses, shimmering skirts and graphic tees with messages like, "Alexa. Block his number," line the wall. Her outfits are for people who like to think outside the box when it comes to fashion, she said.

"I really like sparkly things," Webb admitted. "I have a lot of sequins."

Webb's story reflects that of a growing number of Black shop owners and entrepreneurs in the Harrisburg area, who are taking something they love and turning it into a money-making venture. Whether it's fashion, food or health, many new African American businesses have opened in recent years.

When she started her brand, Webb didn't have a degree or business experience, she just wanted to sell shoes. She went through ups and downs, periods of stepping away from the business and name changes to her boutique. Webb took time for her family, working other jobs and caring for her three kids. But something was missing.

"When you have something you're really passionate about and you step away from it, it's like a void," she said.

It was in 2016 when she decided to commit to her business. Webb was listening to a Jay-Z song, "Girls, Girls, Girls," when the lyrics called out the perfect name for her boutique, Mean Girl Style. Hip-hop lyrics often speak to her like that. In 2018, she bought her store on N. Front Street in Steelton, painted the walls pink and, in her words, worked her butt off.

Webb's daughter Ajia's artwork decorates the walls of the boutique. Ajia even has a few shirts and jackets on the racks that she designed herself.

"My mom is an inspiration to me," she said. "I'm trying to follow what she is doing."

LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTER

Yolanda Maina learned everything she knows from her mother. Her skills of beading jewelry, carving wood and stone and sewing clothing came from her mother's teaching.

At Jambo African Fashion and Design, she sells items just like the ones that she and her mother made and sold in Kenya years ago.

"We have bright colors, beautiful colors," said Maina, who owns the enterprise with husband Edwin. "I try to make many different pieces."

Until recently, their store was located in downtown Harrisburg, but recently turned to an all-online model.

Maina said that the couple brings a taste of African heritage to customers. Dresses, jewelry, men's suits and kente head wraps are just a few of the items they sell.

She makes some of the jewelry and clothing herself, and some is sent from Kenya.

"I try to create employment for the ladies back

home," she said. "It's about empowering them, and they are learning the skills, too."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, things slowed down at the shop, except the owners. Maina continued working and studying in school to be a nurse, while running the store.

"There are some good days and bad days," she said. "It's about patience."

DEEP BREATH

Owner of Ex•hale Candle Co., Aubrea Thompson, not only wants to make her customers happy, but healthier.

About four years ago, Thompson started experimenting with making aromatherapy candles.

"There was a lot of trial and error," she said. "There's a science to it. I had to learn a lot."

Thompson loved a good candle—the way it made the room glow while creating ambience and a sense of relaxation. But through research, she found information on how paraffin wax candles, the most popular kind, could potentially cause health issues, she said.

Thompson decided to make her candles with soy wax and essential oils. They are all-natural, organic and vegan-friendly, and each is handmade by Thompson, who pours many hours each week into the craft.

One of her scents, perfect for fall, is a blend of blood orange and cassia (cinnamon) called "Bliss." Another customer favorite is "Zen AF," a mixture of lavender and vanilla.

Each candle has the name with a definition of the word underneath. "Pur•if•y," "Pros•per•i•ty" and "Vibes" are among them. There's one for almost every feeling or state of mind.

"I'm big on words and positive affirmations," Thompson said. "My candles have a meaning of wisdom and purpose."

In addition to candles, she has her own photography business, ATV Studios in Carlisle. Thompson currently sells her candles online, but hopes to find a storefront eventually to continue helping people live a healthier life.

One of Thompson's candles recently sat on Webb's desk at Mean Girl Style Boutique.

"I'm a Black-owned, small business so I get a lot of support from my community," Thompson said. "Doing this makes me feel like I have purpose again."

MAKING A STATEMENT

When the pandemic hit, most people suddenly had a lot more time on their hands. Danielle Williams sure did.

Now that she had more time at home, she wanted to do something meaningful with it.

Williams started designing and making her own earrings. She was selling clothes on her small online boutique, The Beat Boutique, but wanted to expand to jewelry. YouTube helped her learn the technicalities, but the creativity was always there, she said.

"It started as a hobby," she explained. "It was just something to do in quarantine. But then people started reaching out."

It wasn't long before Williams set up a room dedicated to earring making in her home in Midtown.

Every day, she spends time rolling and hand molding polymer clay, using a pasta maker to get the air bubbles out, and cutting out whatever shape she has in mind.

Some of her earring designs resemble a sunset, others a crescent moon. One pair is a swirl of pink, blue and purple pastels, another a simple, moss green that reminds her of her destination wedding in Iceland.

"I'm really big on loud colors," Williams said. "I have darker skin and short hair, so I like statement earrings."

Under the name Earrings by Dee, Williams has sold her jewelry at venues like Rubicon, La Cultura and the HBG Flea. She is grateful for the opportunity she has, while recognizing there is still often a lack of diversity among artists and makers showcased at festivals and pop-up shops.

"I think the community is working on giving a platform to people like me," she said. "But I would love to see more people that look like me at these pop-ups."

While Williams never expected her quarantine hobby to take off like it did, she is grateful for the ways she has grown because of it.

"I've learned to really believe in myself and grow outside of my comfort zone," she said. "It's a feeling of 'wow, I've done this.'" B

Mean Girl Style Boutique is located at 147 N. Front St., Steelton. For more information, visit mgsboutique.com or their Instagram (@meangirlstyle).

Jambo African Fashion and Design can be found at www.jamboafricanfashion.com or their Facebook page.

To order from Exhale Candle Co. or to learn more, visit www.exhalecandleco.com or see their Instagram page (@exhalecandleco).

To check out Earrings by Dee, visit thebeatboutique.shop or her Instagram (@earrings_bydee).

Danielle Williams models her earrings, also shown right.

The Washington family, from left: Dynellia, Siede, Selah and Sedrick.

RUNS IN THE FAMILY

The Washingtons rediscover their love of art, create gallery for city hall.

BY MADDIE CONLEY

Dynellia Washington remembers seeing her name in the newspaper when she was young.

She won second place in an art competition. Her mom was so proud that she cut out the section that featured her daughter. To this day, her mom still has that clipping.

But, once she reached high school, Dynellia was discouraged to pursue art by a guidance counselor who told her it wouldn't pan out well.

Despite feeling unsupported at school, Dynellia left her hometown of Harrisburg and went on to study at the former Art Institute of Pittsburgh and the Art Institute of Atlanta. She then taught art for four years.

Now, much more advanced than that piece in the newspaper clipping, her art hangs in Harrisburg's MLK Jr. City Government Center as part of the Art Association of Harrisburg's Community Exhibition Program.

This gallery was Dynellia's entry back into the art world, a world that she never really left mentally, but was finally dipping her brush back into. It had been years since she taught art or focused much time onto her own art.

"This show put the fire back in me," she said.

DREAM COME TRUE

This gallery holds even more importance to Dynellia because it's not only her artwork showing but her entire family's: husband Sedrick, son Siede and daughter Selah.

The gallery features a sampling of Sedrick's photographs, which show animals like cattle, geese and insects up close. Dynellia's collection revolves around the zebra. She used mixed media techniques to paint the animal as well as showcase its print on a grove of trees and a vase of flowers.

Dynellia said her artwork is often inspired by her husband's photography.

"I critique myself very hard, but he's always there," she said. "He's my biggest cheerleader."

The couple met through art when they were both living in Atlanta. They connected while Sedrick was doing videography work. The two artists fell in love, got married and eventually had their two children. Dynellia's dream of having a family that loved art like she did was taking shape.

Siede, who is 13, created a collection of anime sketches inspired by his favorite TV shows for the gallery. He watches YouTube tutorials showing him how to carefully pencil characters from the cartoons.

"He can go to his room and do it for hours," Dynellia said.

On the other hand, 8-year-old Selah loves to join her mom when she paints.

"She likes to do abstract like me," Dynellia said.

Displayed in city hall are Selah's brightest and most colorful pieces of art. Some are mixed media pieces; one uses melted crayons to create a rainbow waterfall. Others are paintings like a big juicy watermelon and a glittery mountain range.

"I always dreamed of doing art with my kids," Dynellia said. "It has come to fruition."

BACK TO LIFE

The family became members of the Art Association about a year ago. There, they met President Carrie Wissler-Thomas, who found out that the whole family created art and then couldn't resist putting it on display.

"I said, 'Let's show the whole family!'" Wissler-Thomas said. "I thought, what fun for the city government center."

She gave them over a year to prepare and bring their best pieces to show.

After delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they finally put their art on display in July and couldn't be happier to feature it in their hometown.

The AAH Community Exhibition Program displays art in a number of public places in the Harrisburg area. Wissler-Thomas explained how the program gives smaller-scale, local artists a chance to showcase their work.

"I found my outlet with the Art Association," Dynellia said. "Even if I can't do it full-time, I can at least do something."

The art show encouraged Dynellia to start a website to showcase and sell her art. She plans to stay involved with the Art Association and find other ways to immerse herself in the Harrisburg art scene.

"The Art Association is what brought us back to life," she said. "It makes me really proud that me and my husband have shown our kids that they can have a side hustle." B

The Washington Family Gallery is on display through the end of October in Harrisburg's MLK City Government Center, 10 N. 2nd St., Harrisburg. The Art Association of Harrisburg is located at 21 N. Front St., Harrisburg. For more information, visit www.artassocofhbg.com. For more information about Dynellia Washington and her art, visit www.originalpiecesdsw.com.