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Buffalo Arts Studio presents
Tales from the Porch Extensions: Featuring Fokus'd Kreatives
with Aitina Fareed-Cooke
Exhibition: April 28–June 2, 2023
Opening Reception, Friday April 28, 2023, 5:00–8:00 pm
Performance by Aitina Fareed-Cooke/"A.I. The Anomaly" at 6:00 pm
Formal Artist Talk with the Fokus'd Kreatives at 6:30pm



BUFFALO, NY Buffalo Arts Studio presents *Tales from the Porch Extensions*, an exhibition of new work by Fokus'd Kreatives, a group of five emerging artists with multi-media artist Aitina Fareed-Cooke. Fareed-Cooke developed the *Tales from the Porch* project in 2019 under Get

Fokus'd Productions as an opportunity to amplify the stories and the voices of members of the Buffalo, NY community. In 2022 the *Tales from the Porch* project focused on seven black community leaders positively impacting the city despite the pandemic and the tragedy that occurred at the Tops Market on May 14, 2022.

In partnership with Buffalo Arts Studio and with funding support from Creatives Rebuild New York's Artist Employment Program through Arts Services Inc.'s fiscal sponsorship, Fareed-Cooke extended *Tales from the Porch* in order to invest in the next generation of creatives. Fareed-Cooke developed a creative arts apprenticeship called Fokus'd Kreatives as an opportunity to support emerging artists as they develop their artistic craft within the creative arts field.

Over the course of 6 months, Fareed-Cooke guided the current cohort of five Fokus'd Kreatives as they responded to the 2022 *Tales from the Porch* project. Emerging artists Isaac Fareed, Stephen Forman Jr., Tallulah Gordon, Kaitlyn Lowe, and Mykiss Washington were also given paid opportunities to add to their resumes and support their art production. The end result is *Tales from the Porch Extensions*, an exhibition of new work in a range of media including photography, film, video productions, sound engineering, illustration, and poetry/creative writing.

Stephen Forman Jr., also known as Paulie! attends SUNY Buffalo State University as a Drawing/Painting major. He draws upon his Christian faith and the Black experience to create illustrations that tell stories of those who need to be seen and heard. His contributions to the *Tales From The Porch Extensions* exhibition include three paintings that critique the late-stage capitalist greed that affects Black bodies and homes all over the country.

Tallulah Gordon is a SUNY Buffalo State University student studying Experimental Media Production. Gordon's piece focuses on the role that the Jewish folktale of the golem plays throughout history and the duality of the message it tells. Printed onto large curtains, the piece is meant to be read from right to left as is from the Torah.

Kaitlyn Lowe, also known as The Galactic Griot, is an interdisciplinary artist from Brooklyn with a bachelor's degree in Media Production from SUNY Buffalo State University. She feels called to tell stories of the African Diaspora that encapsulate who folks truly are and what they dream they can become through poetry, photography, and video. Lowe's work is a direct response to some of the painful first photographs of Black folks in America. Lowe's work captures the essence of African American artists from New York City as they purposefully take up space.

Isaac Fareed, artistically known as Aizyk, is a multimedia artist who is a homeschooled high school sophomore. Fareed uses photography and illustrations to show people how he views the world. Using a fisheye lens coupled with digital illustrations, Fareed gives a "porch" to inanimate objects as a way of giving a voice to the voiceless.

Mykiss Washington is a student at Cheektowaga Middle School and studies photography at the Contemporary Photography and Visual Arts Center (CEPA Gallery) as a Photography Works participant. He chose to use a Polaroid camera to capture images of people and locations while gathering advice. His goal is to use photography to collect stories in order to gain counsel and share knowledge with others.

Aitina Fareed-Cooke initially pursued creative arts strategies through poetry, lyricism, and digital storytelling as a means to address early childhood trauma. She has since become an award-winning entrepreneur, educator, and national recording artist (under the name A.I. The Anomaly). Fareed-Cooke has spent close to 20 years providing creative arts strategies for nonprofit organizations, government entities, corporations, educators, and emerging artists.

Buffalo Arts Studio is located at 2495 Main Street, Suite 500, Buffalo, NY 14214. The galleries are free and open to the public Tuesday–Friday, 11 am–5 pm and Saturdays, 10 am–2 pm. For more information about Buffalo Arts Studio, please visit www.buffaloartsstudio.org

Learn more about Fokus'd Kreatives: [▶ Fokus'd Kreatives: The What](#)

Learn more about Tales from the Porch: [▶ Tales from the Porch Promo](#)

Buffalo Arts Studio receives exhibition support from the Cameron and Jane Baird Foundation, Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo, Erie County Cultural Funding, John R. Oishei Foundation, M&T Bank, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the New York State Council on the Arts.

High resolution images available upon request.

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