



HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

ROANOKE ARTIST BRYCE COBBS IS MAKING HIS COMMUNITY A MORE BEAUTIFUL PLACE TO BE, ONE PIECE OF ARTWORK AT A TIME.

Bryce Cobbs has had a busy few years connecting and inspiring others through his artistic talent, and our readers have certainly taken notice, awarding him platinum in our reader poll's brand-new "Best Local Artist to Watch" category.

"This is just such an amazing honor," says Cobbs. "Being born and raised here in Roanoke and having my art noticed and accepted on this scale by my community is so humbling."

He can't remember a time when art wasn't a part of his life, but it wasn't until his junior year of high school that it became more than just a pastime. Cobbs went on

to study Communication Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University before returning home to the Star City to work full time as an artist, focusing much of his energy on portraiture and anatomy projects.

Cobbs truly loves Roanoke and can't imagine there being a better place for him to call home. "I love the nature and sense of community here," he says. "I feel like Roanoke is the perfect place for an artist to thrive and be able to give back to their community while also staying true to themselves."

Another thing he loves about the Star City? Seeing how important art is to not just him, but to the residents of the city as a whole. In

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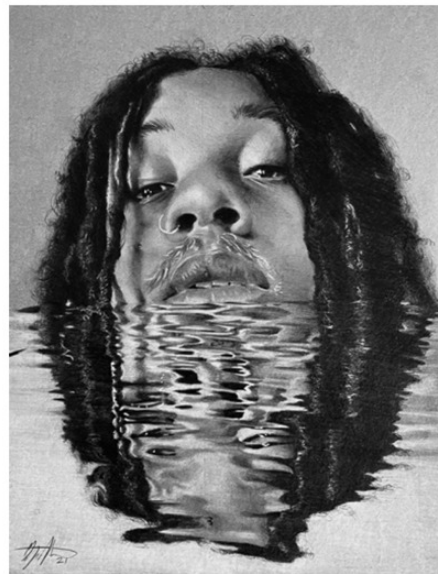
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December 2022, Cobbs unveiled concept drawings he designed that will inspire the Henrietta Lacks sculpture to be erected later this year as a part of the Henrietta Lacks Hidden Histories Project. The reveal drew a big crowd of local supporters, and it also received national attention.

In February, Cobbs completed the Heart of Gainsboro Project in which he created an oil painting acknowledging Black community members that were displaced during the urban renewal efforts of the 1950s. Cobbs presented the painting to the individuals represented in the piece before it was digitally reproduced and displayed on the back side of the Berglund Center.



He also participated in the creation of the 2020 "End Racism Now" street mural on Campbell Avenue and served as a collaborator on the Nipsey Hussle mural outside The Humble Hustle Company as well as on rapper Wale's "Wow... That's Crazy" album cover. Cobbs has also shown his artwork at numerous exhibitions in the region.

While Cobbs says that his biggest challenge as an artist is staying motivated through the ebb and flow of daily life, there's nothing more rewarding than loving what you do and following your dreams. "Every painting or drawing I finish [feels] better than my last and that constant feeling of progressing in my passion gives me the best feeling I can imagine."

Learn more about Bryce Cobbs, his artwork and upcoming projects on his website at artbybryce.com. —SR

DAVID REHOB / COURTESY OF BRYCE COBBS