

PENLAND GALLERY

MICHAEL DIKA

Newark, DE

CLAY | Sculpture

Penland Affiliation | Penland Vision Scholarship Student 2021

Artist Information | Studio artist; education: MFA, University of Delaware (MD), BA Ceramics, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Ghana); teaching: University of Delaware, Infant Jesus Christi Lumen School (Ghana); publications: Mansfield Ceramics (2020), *Facial Expression in Conceptual Ceramic Art* in Journal of Science and Technology-Ghana, *Sustainable ceramic hive for beekeeping in West Africa: Structural Design and Materials Aspects for Mass Production*, *Museum Engagement in Ghana*, Cross-Currents International Peer-Reviewed Journal for the Humanities (2018); residencies: Tyler School of Art & Architecture, 2022 (PA), Kuumba Academy Residency 2022, Delaware Contemporary Museum Wilmington (DE)

Artist Statement | *As an immigrant now familiarizing myself in the United States, I am still trying to find balance. Stability, precarity, and dichotomy loom large in my sculptures. These pieces are mixed media installations that utilize African aesthetics, Ghanaian symbolism, abstraction, and assemblage in an attempt to find connections between my home country and America.*

I explore the complexities of the political construct of identity and the corresponding state of double consciousness as a way of addressing issues of colonial labels, history, and migration and also as a way of initiating a conversation around cultural hybridity. This is often an attempt to unravel and expand the discourse around cultural hybridity

My sculptures are hand built, thrown, slated, welded and abstracted to communicate my emotions. The chaotic yet coherent arrangement of distorted and broken forms atop each other echo my memories of the Ghanaian marketplace. With the work I hope to translate the feelings of fragility, vulnerability and exhaustion into totemic forms that create an awareness of oneself yet are at the mercy of these found objects to balance.