

Art and the Freedom Struggle

THE WORKS OF
MUMIA
ABU-JAMAL



BROWN

see, the arts are flourishing through like sunlight on
Easter morning.

There is a stunning amount of talent hidden behind
these walls, more even than I believed.

We should not be surprised that many young men
see themselves as rappers, for rap/hip hop is
their dominant form, and if you mingle amongst
men under 30, you'll hear the sing-song
rhythms of rap songs, either repeating the work
of someone in videos, or someone's original
composition.

As rap is well, rap - it is a truly democratic
art form and everyone thinks they are the next
Biggie - or the next Tupac.
But that isn't all.

I've seen play piano keyboards with tenderness,
grace and immense talent. For some men, a
keyboard is an instrument for making beats -
beats to rap over.

Others play R'n'B standards. Steve Nader

Art and the Freedom Struggle

THE WORKS OF
MUMIA
ABU-JAMAL



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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Black art has always probed the underside of the American Dream. In the 1960s, the Black Arts Movement applied, as Larry Neal made clear, political ideas to art and literature. Before that time, there was a debate between W.E.B. Du Bois and Alain Locke about what was then called “Negro Art.” In a 1926 article in the newspaper *The Crisis*, DuBois observed the “bounden duty of Black America to begin to create this great work of Beauty.” He then linked this work of Beauty to that of Truth. In other words, for Du Bois, Beauty and Truth were connected and one element of Truth was the “double consciousness” which he wrote about so poignantly in *The Souls of Black Folk*. If Du Bois and Locke had their eyes on the literature, art, and music that was being produced in what has been called the Harlem Renaissance today, one aspect in thinking about practices of Black art is to focus our gaze on where some of that art is being produced.

Today, it is estimated that 37 percent of African Americans are in America's jails. It is not a surprising statistic because one element of American anti-black racism is to make black bodies disposable. What that means is that with that truth we now need to turn to see where art is being produced; to see how – in the midst of conditions of disposability – beauty and truth are created.

This exhibition, “Art and the Freedom Struggle: The Works of Mumia Abu-Jamal,” allows us to develop that gaze. From America's prisons, some of the most formidable thinkers have emerged and here I am thinking of George Jackson and of course Malcolm X to name two. To look at the artwork of Mumia one now has to ask: are we on the verge of seeing Black Art from America's jails that will open up a distinctive space for Black Art in general? In one of the texts that accompanies this exhibition, Mumia notes that we typically “consider Art and Incarceration... as an oxymoron; a stunning incongruity.” That may be so, but the life of blackness

in the contemporary world means that art and various art practices emerge from all spaces in which Black life exists. To be human is to engage in the life of the imagination and to create symbolic forms out of our imaginative processes. In American jails, Black bodies continue this perennial struggle to be human. Art practices then become one terrain for their re-composition of self as human. This is what this exhibition means.

For this work, we need to thank the curator, Melaine Ferdinand-King, and the Curator of the Black Diaspora at the John Hay Library, Christopher West.

Of course, no thanks are huge enough for Ben Kaplan and Erin Wells who, since the Center began doing exhibitions, have been our installer and designer respectively.

ANTHONY BOGUES

Director, The Ruth J. Simmons Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice

“In truth, none of us are whole, as in finished,

for we are all beings

who are still in the process of becoming”

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

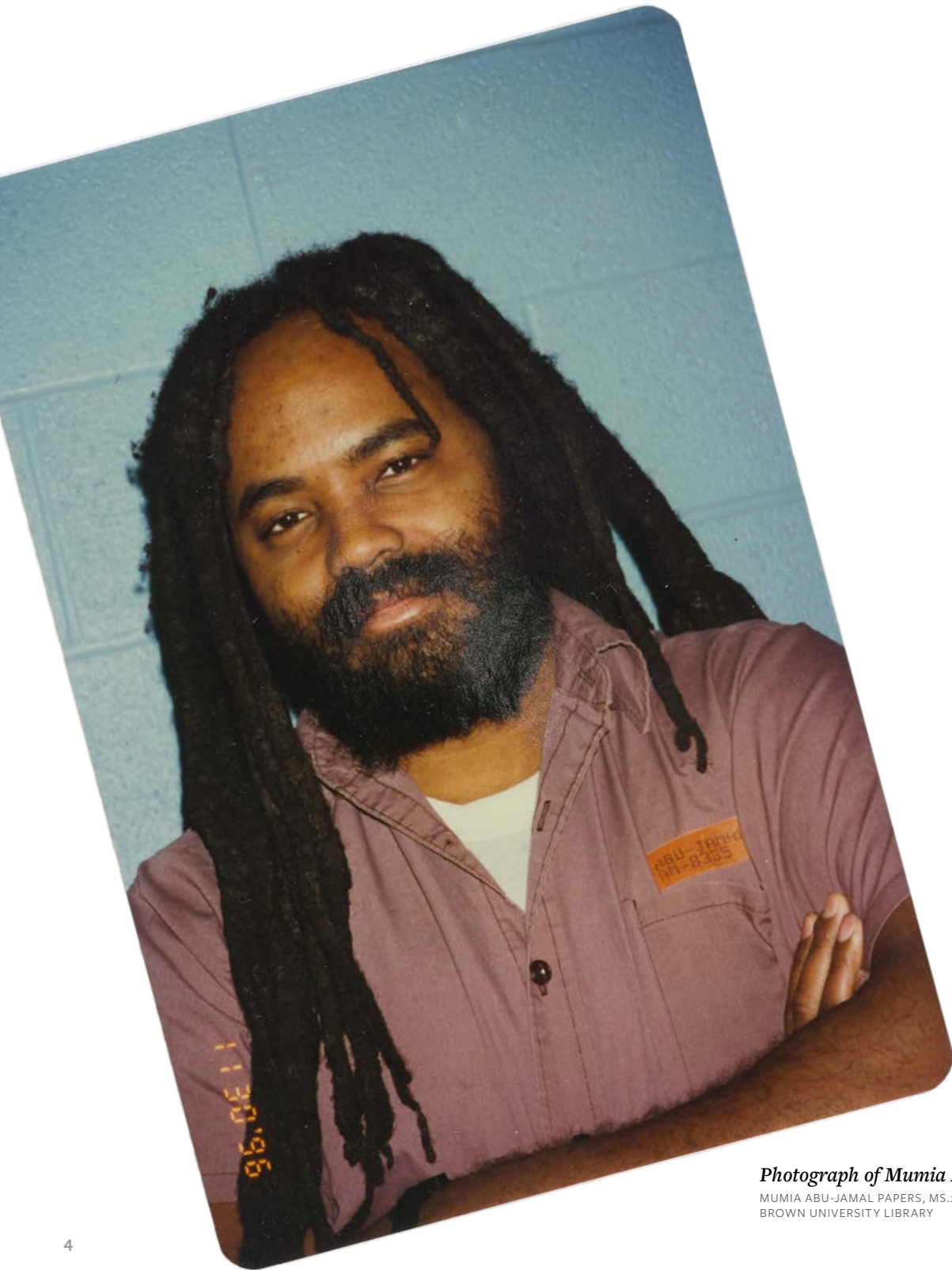
Inspired by Mumia Abu-Jamal’s 2012 essay, “Art & Incarceration,” “Art and The Freedom Struggle: The Works of Mumia Abu-Jamal” underscores the significance of creation under crisis. This exhibition is a creative companion to the biographical “Mumia Abu-Jamal: A Portrait of Mass Incarceration” exhibit on view at the John Hay Library at Brown University.

Known internationally as a political prisoner, Abu-Jamal warrants considerable attention as an artist and cultural critic. In depicting historical figures, pop culture icons, and personal visions, Abu-Jamal reveals how artistic production functions as a mode of self-expression, a junction between “inside” and “outside” worlds, and a powerful tool for social commentary. His paintings, drawings, poetry, and musical compositions disclose, in part, the interests and concerns of an outsider-observer committed to freedom and being free while making sense of a carceral state. Themes throughout the exhibition include abolition, Black liberation, community-building, music, and sports.

The gallery also serves as an activation space. While experiencing the works on display, viewers are encouraged to reflect on Abu-Jamal’s story alongside their individual agency and relationship to the notion of struggle. We aim to spark engaged activity on the local level related to issues of mass incarceration and spirited dialogue on the importance of responding creatively in times of political duress.

MELAINE FERDINAND-KING

Curator
PhD Candidate in Africana Studies



Photograph of Mumia Abu-Jamal
MUMIA ABU-JAMAL PAPERS, MS.2022.009,
BROWN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an internationally-celebrated Black American activist, journalist, and political prisoner. Prior to his imprisonment, Abu-Jamal co-founded the Philadelphia Black Panther Party, served as president of the Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists, and supported the MOVE organization as an activist and radio journalist. Since 1982, Abu-Jamal has maintained his innocence and fought his conviction for the 1981 murder of a Philadelphia police officer. Abu-Jamal was sentenced to death and is currently serving a life sentence without parole. He spent a majority of his time incarcerated in solitary confinement (22 hours daily for over 30 years) during which he created many of the works on display in this exhibition.

Abu-Jamal is the current co-host of the podcast, "The Classroom and the Cell" with Marc Lamont Hill. His books have sold more than 100,000 copies and have been translated into seven languages. He continues to critique, create, and struggle for the global liberation of oppressed peoples while behind bars.

“I am a thinker, writer, activist, creative being, man, dad, husband, grandpop, and son. But just to keep it simple: I’m a free Black man living in captivity.

That’s who I am.”

Music & the Black Freedom Struggle

WHEN WE SPEAK about art in the Black freedom struggle, we're really speaking about the heart, the core, the essence of the Black freedom struggle because there has never been a Black freedom struggle that has not been accompanied, in some sense, by art. Back during some of the darkest days of African-American existence in the United States, it was also the time of some of the most glorious music-making by Black artists who created art forms that the world had never heard before. I speak here about jazz, specifically jazz. In the time where Black people were under legal – what can only be called in hindsight – apartheid. Legal repression and legal oppression.

The world of the arts, especially music, was exploding with a kind of brilliance and life that affirmed in the darkest days of our existence, our humanity. And also, I must say, our genius. When you think about Duke Ellington... his big bands and someone as revolutionary on the stage as Miles Davis – these two jazz artists sent messages around the world. Messages in their music about the humanity, the grace, the beauty, the brilliance and the combativeness, the resistance, the resilience of Black people in the United States. And, there was, especially during the 30s and 40s of the 20th century, a small exodus of African-Americans who fled the United States to live in places like France or Spain and other parts of the world where they could walk down the street and be treated like a human being. James Baldwin spent time in Paris. Richard Wright. And I could name a dozen artists, writers, dancers, performers, musicians.

I'm reminded of a funny story that I read in a book by Quincy Troupe about Miles Davis... because of his brilliance and his inability to play the humble Negro. I remember a story about him playing on 42nd Street in Manhattan and he left the club to smoke a cigarette, that's all. A cop walks up to him, tells him,

“Keep it moving, buddy”. [Miles] said, “Keep it moving? I'm working here.” And the cop beats him up and assaults him. And his name, *Miles Davis*, is on the marquee to the club. Every time Miles came to Philadelphia, the narco squad would bust him. Well, [Miles] liked drugs, he used them, and he loved it. A few months later, he gets tired of this, and he goes to France, and Miles is walking down the gangplank and into where people are registered, and their passports are checked. He sees this red carpet and... then gets to the people, and he says, “Who's this red carpet for?” [The French people respond] “Oh, Monsieur Miles, we love you. You're such a genius.” The French start kissing him and embracing him; [Miles] didn't know that the red carpet was for him. And the French really threw their love at him because they had listened to him, they knew his genius. What did Miles do? Miles had to get up and get back into the United States because it was so juicy and comfy in France, that he couldn't create, he couldn't make music. He needed the American nastiness to give him the grit to create some of the most brilliant music that's ever been created. And Miles created at least two different forms. He was a master. He went to Juilliard because his parents had some money because they owned some stores. He went to Juilliard [and he] stayed there a little bit, and say, “Aye ain't nothin' you cats can teach me.” And he turned around, and he left.

So when you think about the role of the arts in the freedom struggle – our music, our paintings, our sculpture, our dance, our song and our facility with creating a new kind of music, really move the world.

With love, not fear. This is Mumia Abu-Jamal.

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL (2024)

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

Dr. Huey P. Newton

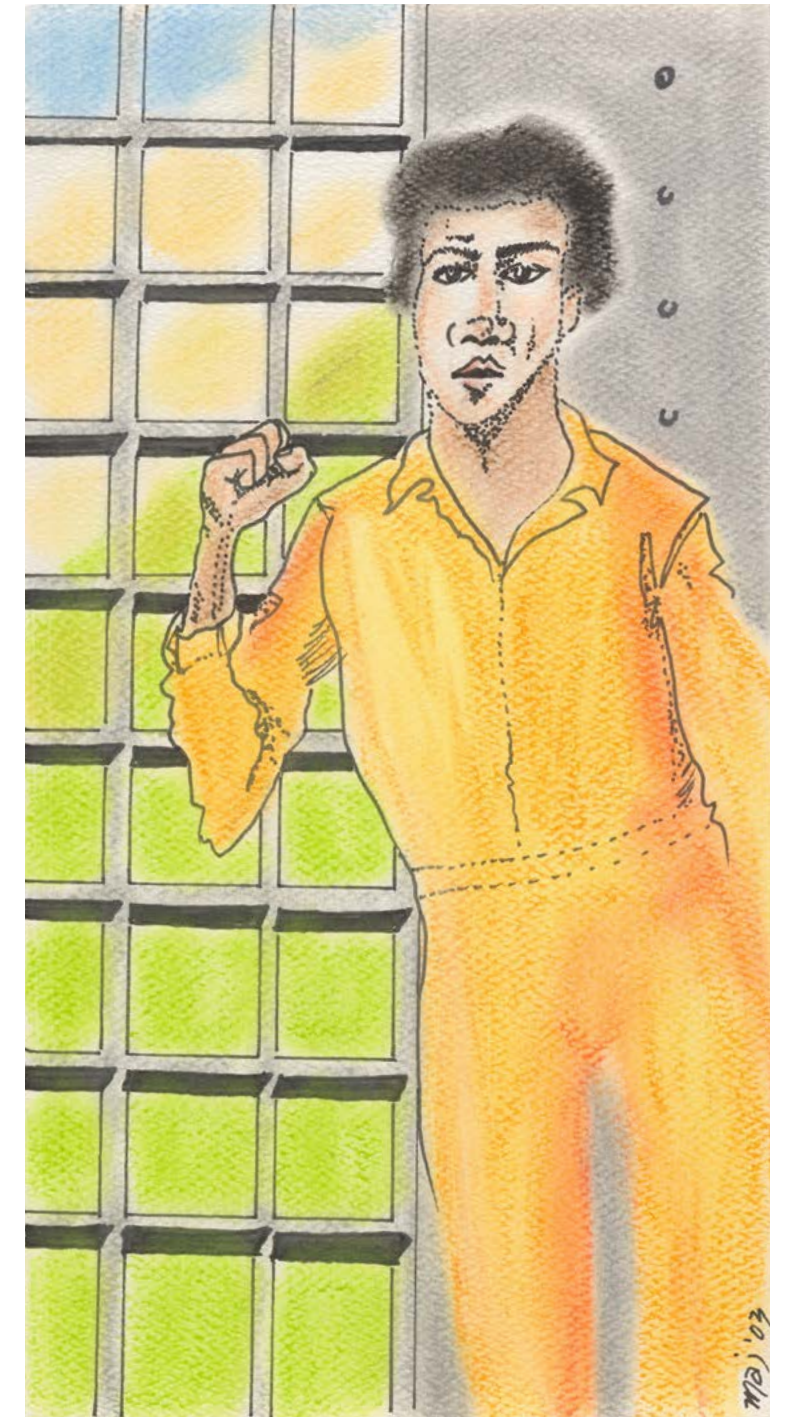
Watercolor on paper

4 in. x 9.75 in.

2003

PhD, founder Black Panther Party, circa 1968, Alameda County Jail.

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL PAPERS, MS.2022.009, BROWN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY





Curator's Reflection

FEW UNDERSTAND STRUGGLE better than Mumia Abu-Jamal. In his 40+ years of incarceration (at least 30 of which he spent in solitary confinement), Mumia has become one of the most prolific writers and enduring freedom fighters of our time. As one of our incarcerated elders, his work deserves recognition and deep exploration.

I began my invested study of Mumia's life and influence in 2021 through the Pembroke Center's "Black Feminist Theory Project." As a graduate proctor, I worked with archivists Mary Murphy and Amanda Knox on a site visit, charged with surveying the materials of Johanna Fernández and Mumia Abu-Jamal. Following Brown's acquisition of their papers in 2022, I assisted in creating the finding aid for Mumia's archive. While organizing, labeling, and interpreting 80 boxes of Mumia's collection, I discovered an undeniable revolutionary with what C. Wright Mills would call "a sociological imagination." Mumia applies his exceptional quality of mind toward enriching our understanding of apparatuses of control, especially in how they are employed to disenfranchise Black American and indigenous populations. His essays and speeches cover various relevant topics, from anti-imperialism and environmentalism to spirituality and Pan-African knowledge systems. He has much to teach us about pressing forward in the face of oppression.

Broadly speaking, Mumia is concerned with uncovering the truth and making it plain. What requires our attention at present is how overarching power structures shape our institutions, relationships, and beliefs. Specifically, Mumia's work rethinks the terrain of struggle from a Black American perspective and how we can intentionally divest from value systems aligned with anti-Black violence, colonization, capitalism, and white supremacy. Writing from the prison cell, he urges us not to settle for unrealized possibility or shallow rhetoric of slow, gradual change. Instead, he proposes we close the gap between our values and daily actions. Primary to this rethinking of struggle and dedication to veracity

is the role of Black arts and culture in grappling with ideology and power. Social and aesthetic matters in the history of global freedom struggles have been difficult to disentwine. "Art," he believes, "is a mirror. Art is what makes us human". The arts, and consequently, *culture*, reflect our condition as beings in the world. From this view, there can hardly be art for art's sake. We are always already sociohistorically situated; our artistic production is symbolic of our respective realities and experiences, and our truths are underlying at the onset. From Mumia's point of view, this *truth* must be placed at the forefront of modern social justice movements.

"Art and The Freedom Struggle" is motivated by my thinking with Mumia in preparing the archives, especially his essays "Art & Incarceration" (2012), "Music and Revolution" (2012), and "The Role of Art in the Movement" (2011). This exhibition is about responsibility – responding to our shared condition as people by taking the helm where we can and using our power for the good of others. In solidarity with Mumia, this exhibition asks: "What are your creative tools and skills? How can you use them to restructure our collective imagination and strengthen our commitment to liberation?"

As I developed the exhibition from the archives, I confronted what scholar Geri Augusto calls "the curator's conundrum," the challenge of deciding what works should or should not be exhibited. This project also required a curatorial adjustment – an embrace of displaying works never intended to be in any gallery. In making this adjustment, I shifted my focus from beauty to responsibility. My position as a Black Studies scholar and being a part of the purchase of Mumia's papers by Brown University make me accountable to the moment. Mumia was incarcerated and sentenced to death at age 28, not much older than I am now. This fact and the difference in our circumstances were a constant point of rumination for me as I carried out this work. It was important for me to create a space where we can reckon with the meaning of

this acquisition, learn more about Mumia Abu-Jamal's offerings, and work as a community toward a future aligned with his emancipatory visions. In this space, I ask visitors to join me in concentrating less on art's face value and its aesthetic merit and more on the meaning: What does it mean for this work to hold a place on gallery walls? What does inclusion in Brown's collections mean for these objects, the communities they should serve, and Mumia's freedom?

My job as curator is to create the conditions for artists and their works to sing. The vehicle of the exhibition allows me to put specific ideas such as "culture," "critique," "resistance," and "spirit" in conversation with one another, but it also makes room for me to highlight the artist as an innovator of lens and language. Mumia's language and lens emerge from a serious life. The archival pieces selected for the exhibition express the man's preoccupations over several decades; however, Mumia's art is also a kind of soul work. In an early phone conversation, he shared that he sees no difference between his artwork and political work. Through poetry, painting, or prose, he forges a language for spirit so that others might reclaim their words and find their voice. His creative works engage us in a dialogue concerning the living, the lost, the locked up, and the dreamers who dare to venture beyond levity and leisure.

I hope that "Art and the Freedom Struggle" moves folks to recommit to the *longue durée* of struggle, visit Mumia Abu-Jamal's archives at the John Hay Library, and learn more about Mumia as a revolutionary artist and griot. This is a token of gratitude to Mumia Abu-Jamal and other freedom fighters, for their example of how to use our power creatively, afraid yet undeterred. We owe them far more.

I am honored to present this exhibition to the public.

MELAINE FERDINAND-KING
Curator
PhD Candidate in Africana Studies

Art & Incarceration

WHEN WE CONSIDER Art and Incarceration; this originally sounds like an oxymoron; a stunning incongruity. But, in fact, these drab, colorless human storage boxes are bursting with art. For those with an eye to see, the arts are bursting through like sunlight on Easter morning. There is a stunning amount of talent hidden behind these walls, more even than I believed.

We should not be surprised that many young men see themselves as rappers, for rap, hip hop is their dominant form, and if you mingle amongst men under 30, you'll hear the sing-song rhythms of rap songs, either repeating the work of someone in videos, or someone's original composition. As rap is well, rap – it is a truly democratic art form and everyone thinks they are the next Biggie – or the next Tupac.

But that isn't all.

I've seen play piano keyboards with tenderness, grace and immense talent. For some men, a keyboard is an instrument for making beats – beds to rap over. Others play R&B standards, Stevie Wonder, The Temptations and the like. And still others play songs of their own composition: works of considerate imagination, of sweetness and beauty.

Some guys play for the prison chapel, accompanying sermons, or gospel songs.

That this incredible talent exists here is all the more remarkable because there is no music class here. Men either learn from other men, or they simply teach themselves, through trial and error, or study from books.

A story: There's a young man here, who, like many men his age, loves music; although he's never studied it, nor played an instrument. He's been told, almost his whole life, that he's learning disabled. As a consequence he has difficulty reading. A few months ago, he acquired a keyboard. He produced 3 beats the first night! Within a few weeks, he and his cellmate recorded a song with a catchy hip-hop beat, but above it all, flowing in

and out, was a remarkable jazz solo, the light airy sound of a soprano saxophone.

It wasn't just good – it was excellent – and it sounded like something you'd hear on the radio.

I asked, "Who played that?"

He answered, "I did."

I asked, "How did you do that? Where did it come from?"

He said, "I heard it."

I asked, "What do you mean 'heard it?' On the radio?"

He replied, "Naw, I heard it, like, in my head."

I was stunned.

And yet – incarceration unleashes hidden talents in those encaged. I've seen drawings in pencil or pen, painting in water-color or acrylic, even sculpture of truly amazing craft, skill, and vision; artworks that could proudly be exhibited in any gallery or museum in America, made by prisoners. And poetry to make you wonder or weep. Hidden behind brick and steel, in shadowed cell, alone, in twilight – art lives.

Art is that which makes us human. And in this place, in the most inhuman of places, art yet lives – colorful, resplendent, magical echoes of creativity – yet lives.

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

November 27, 2010

Typed from handwritten draft by Melaine Ferdinand-King

Art and the Freedom Struggle

GALLERY OF WORKS

“How does the arts speak to us?

They nourish our souls; or they cripple them.

They lift our hearts,



MUMIA ABU-JAMAL
*painting of Black women
in the Black Panther Party
raising their fists*

Acrylic on paper
8 in. x 9.75 in.
n.d.

Based on a 1968 photograph by Pirkle Jones of Mary Ann Carlton, Delores Henderson, Joyce Lee, Joyce Means and Paula Hill at the Black Panther Party rally to free Huey P. Newton in Oakland, California.

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL PAPERS, MS.2022.009,
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MUMIA ABU-JAMAL
Two Black women's faces

Acrylic on paper
10 in. x 8 in.
n.d.

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or they shatter them into bits

of self-hatred and

shattered dreams.”

RIGHTS HUMANE?

What good is human rights,

without the right to Life?

The Constitution ain't nothin' but paper,

it ain't nothin' but lies, that

vanishes like vapor;

If you don't wanna believe me, good,

pay me no mind;

But see what happened to the MOVE 9,

convicted of murder in a Philly courtroom,

Where American justice spelled the death of freedom;

Where a blinded judge called them criminals,

for kicking John Africa's Truth, subliminal,

for exposing this demonic system is critical,

for building a Revolution against all that's wrong,

it's natural!

And for daring to open up so many ears,

The Move 9 was sentenced to 900 years!

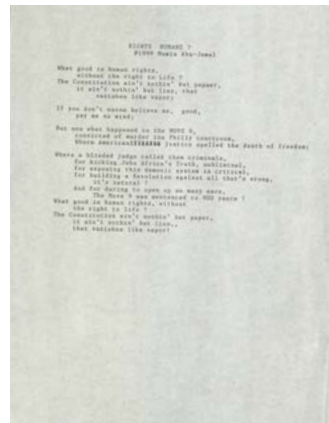
What good is human rights, without

the right to life?

The Constitution ain't nothin' but paper,

it ain't nothin' but lies,

that vanishes like vapor!



MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

Rights Humane

Handwritten poem

1999

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MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

American Democracy

Marker, pastel, pen, watercolor on
paper

4 in. x 9 in.

2003

Based on a photograph of an Arab
immigrant in US custody.

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Panther Walk

LYRICS AND MUSIC BY MUMIA ABU-JAMAL, 2011.

There was a time, in otha days
 when Black Panthers walked thru the cit-ay—!
 They rolled strong all day loong
 That they don't today is a pit-ay!
 They fed the ba-bies and helped old la-dies,
 and struggled for Re-vo-lu-tion!
 They defended the People
 from the forces of evil
 with their ideas and their guns;
 All they wanted was power for every-one!

 Pow—errr— to the People!
 Pow—errr— to the People!
 They said: “All Power to the People!”
 Pow—er for everyone!
 Black people, brown people, red, yellow, pink
 people, yes, even poor white people;
 Pow—er— for everyone!
 They wanted Pow—er for everyone!
 They said: “Power—er— to the People!
 Pow—er to the People!
 All Power to the People!
 Power—er for everyone!

 With red books in their hand, they dared to
 take a stand
 to bring Freedom to the Black Nation;
 the government came, and using some lames,
 They brought COINTELPRO Operations;
 With Panthers in jail the Movement went to hell
 People left in deep frustration;

Cuz they ain't got Power for their People;
 Cuz they need Pow—er— Power for their
 People, Power to be Free!
 They need Pow—er to be Free!
 They got incarceration brutalization impoveri-
 zation globalization —-people left in isolation!
 Like Yogi, Maroon, Mutulu & Sekou too!
 political prisoners of the longest war!
 Until Panthers ain't no more!

 ‘Cuz they wanted “Pow—er to the People!”
 Pow—er to the People!
 They wanted: “Pow—er to the People!
 Pow—er to the People!
 They wanted: “Pow—er to the People”
 Pow—er for everyone!
 They fought for Pow—er! to the People!
 Pow—er for everyone!

 There was a time in otha days
 when Black Panthers walked thru the cit-ays!
 They rolled strong all day long;
 That they don't today is a pit-ay!
 They fed the babies and helped old ladies and
 struggled for Rev-o-lut-tion!
 They defended the People
 from the forces of evil
 with their ideas and their guns;
 All they wanted was power for everyone;

Pow—er to the people!
 Pow—er to the People!
 They demanded: “All Power to the People”
 Pow—er— for everyone!
 it took women and men to help us win the
 lovin’ support of our Nation;
 they all worked hard to make us large to help
 bring us Liber-ation!
 We wanted power— Pow—er, Pow—er—
 for our People!
 Pow—er!
 Pow—er
 Pow—er!—for our people!
 Power— to be Free!
 Pow—er to be Free———!

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

Panther Walk

Sheet music
2011

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“Let our song be freedom”

Vampire Nation

LYRICS AND MUSIC BY MUMIA ABU-JAMAL, 2009.

From the very beginning
 To this very day;
 This country has gone—its own special way;
 from placing Indians in chains and graves;
 to bringing Africans—across the waves;

 How can we call this freedom's land?
 When it was built by slavery's hand!
 From 1492 many millions were slew;
 From the day Co-lumbus sailed ocean blue.
 This is—this is—a Vampire Nation!
 Been that way since its creation!
 This is—this is—a Vampire Nation!
 I sing it without exaggeration!

 But why call it Vampire Nation?
 It ain't Dracula's generation;
 ‘Cause America was old before that story got told;
 They came in a flood, to feed on each other's blood;
 They bled Cherokee, Ashanti, Arapaho & Mandingo;
 Worked 'em 'till they were no mo';
 Runnin' 'em from shore to shore!

 Why call it Vampire Nation?
 It ain't Dracula's generation;
 This is—this is—a Vampire Nation!
 Been that way since its creation!
 This is—this is—a Vampire Nation!
 Call it out—no hesitation!

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

Vampire Nation

Sheet music
2009

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MUMIA ABU-JAMAL
*untitled: two figures
performing capoeira*

Watercolor on paper
5 in. x 6.75 in.
1997

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL PAPERS, MS.2022.009,
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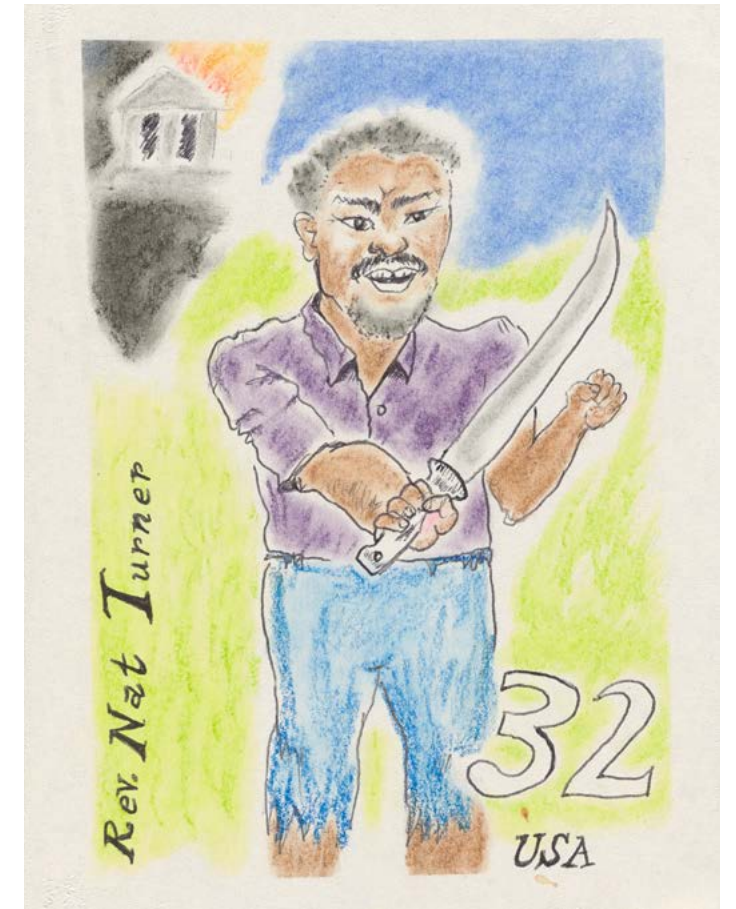
MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

Rev. Nat Turner

Colored pencil, pen on paper
4.5 in. x 5.75 in.
n.d.

Postage stamp design.

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“Our recent ancestors knew

that culture was a vital part

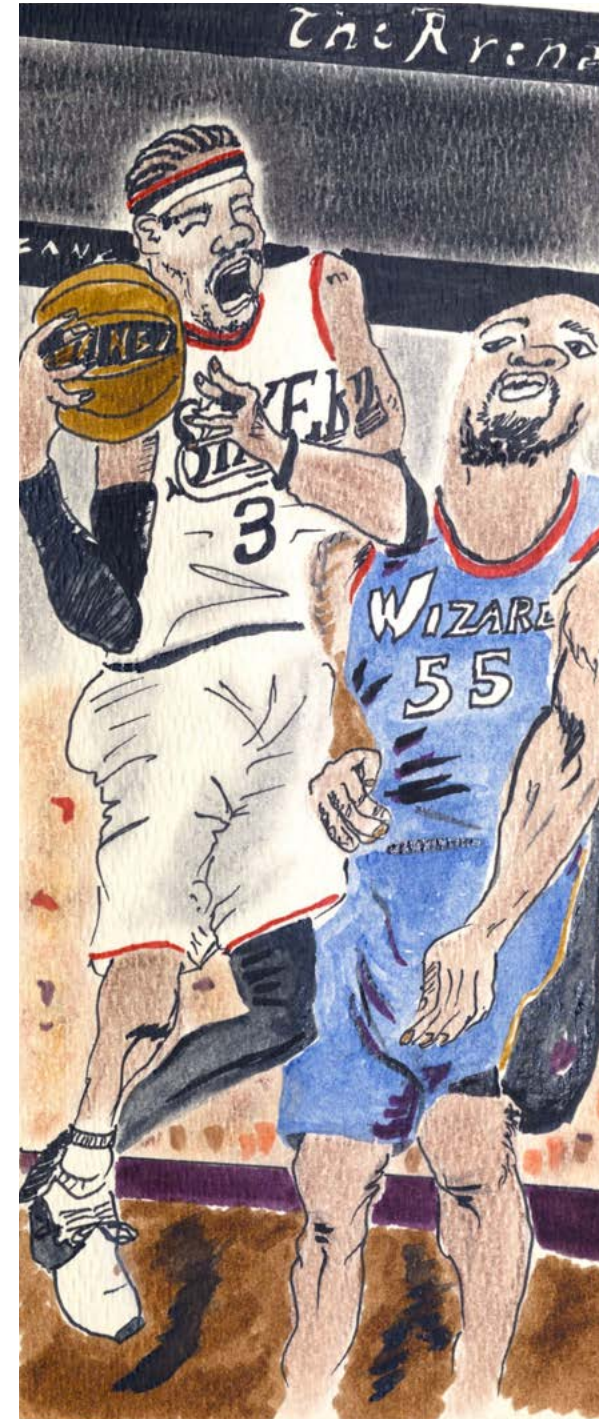
of a larger, social movement”



MUMIA ABU-JAMAL
LaTasha Colander, Lauryn Williams, and Marion Jones
 Watercolor on paper
 5 in. x 6.75 in.
 2004

Rendering of the 2004 Olympic Women's Relay runners.

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL PAPERS, MS.2022.009, BROWN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY



MUMIA ABU-JAMAL
76ers star Allen Iverson
 Marker, pastel, pen, watercolor on paper
 4 in. x 9 in.
 2003

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL PAPERS, MS.2022.009, BROWN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL
Venus II
 Acrylic on paper
 7.5 in. x 9.5 in.
 2007

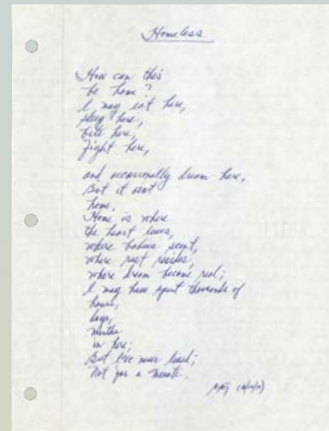
Based on a photograph of Venus Williams at the Wimbledon Championships in 2007.

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HOMELESS

How can this
be home?
I may eat here,
sleep here,
bite here,
fight here,

and occasionally dream here,
But it ain't
home.
Home is where
the heart lives,
where babies scent,
where rest resides,
where dream become real;
I may have spent thousands of
hours,
days,
months
in here;
But I've never lived;
Not for a minute.



MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

Homeless

Handwritten poem
June 10, 2010

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MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

Nuts (or Not?)

Handwritten poem
July 9, 2010

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NUTS (OR NOT?)

They scream
incessantly.
Banging on bars,
raging,
shrieking,
with eyes
poised inward,
Reflecting pains
as deep as seas,

And we call them
'nuts'.

We do not
scream,
bang,
rage
at least
outwardly.

As we turn slowly
on spits
like quiet
lambs.

We're not
'nuts'.

Are we?

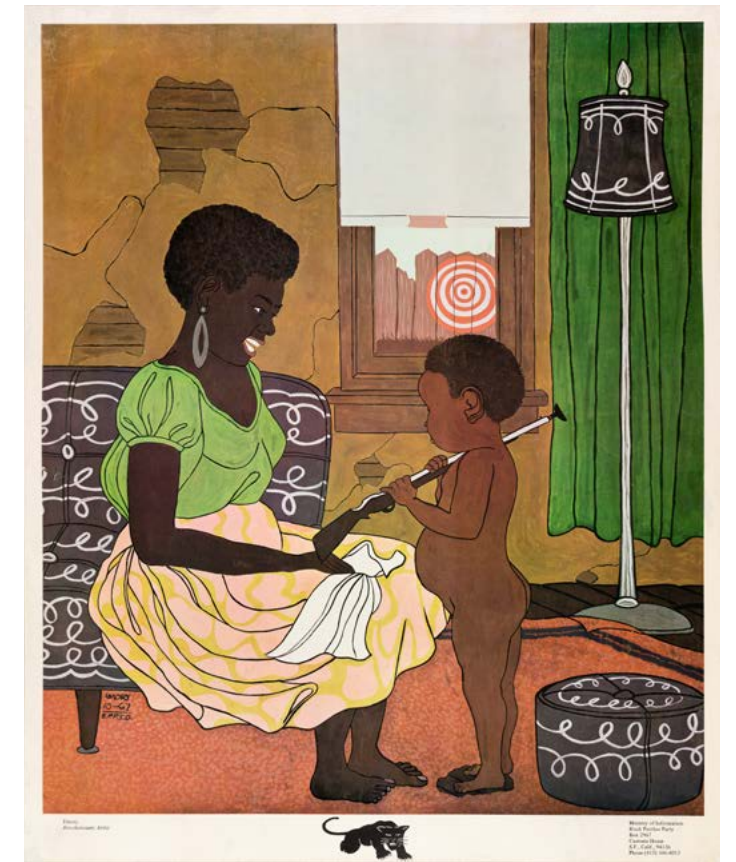


MUMIA ABU-JAMAL
Jill Scott, soul singer
 Colored pencil, marker, pen on paper
 4 in. x 7.5 in.
 2003
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EMORY DOUGLAS
*Black Panther Party:
 All Power to the People*
 Poster work on paper
 37.5 in. x 28 in.
 Circa 1970

EMORY DOUGLAS
Untitled
 [armed woman and child]
 Poster work on paper
 17.5 in. x 22.5 in.
 1967



Activation Space

The varied prompts are designed to foster deeper contemplation and dialogue around the exhibition's themes. Feel free to respond by creating a poem, statement, or drawing in the space provided.

How do you understand the relationship between art and politics?

Which struggles are you trying to overcome? In what ways are you creative?

What scares you about using your gifts?

How will you try to free yourself? To free someone else?

How has the exhibition and Mumia Abu-Jamal's story inspired you to use art as a critical resource?

Get Involved

VISIT THE ARCHIVES

Mumia Abu-Jamal's personal and professional papers are currently housed at the John Hay Library at Brown University as part of the "Voices of Mass Incarceration" collection.



WRITE TO MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

Mumia Abu-Jamal

Smart Communications/
PADOC Mumia Abu-Jamal AM 8335
SCI Mahanoy
PO Box 33028
St Petersburg, FL 33733

"The struggle

against the prison industrial complex

is bigger than me.

DISCOVER MUMIA'S LEGACY

International Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Campaign bringmumiahome.com

The movement for Mumia Abu-Jamal is an international network that has taken to the streets for over thirty years to stop two state-sponsored executions. It organized to overturn Mumia Abu-Jamal's death sentence and most recently sponsored a landmark court case that forced the PA Department of Corrections to administer treatment for his Hepatitis C. The campaign is currently working to raise awareness on Mumia's declining health condition and advocate for his hospice care.

Prison Radio prisonradio.org

Prison Radio is an independent multimedia production studio, producing content for radio, television, and films for 30 years. Prison Radio's mission is to include the voices of incarcerated people in public debate. You can find up-to-date news on Mumia Abu-Jamal and support his cause through Prison Radio online and on Instagram.

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

These Rhode Island based organizations lead political education workshops, community-oriented solutions to harm, and direct action campaigns against oppressive systems.



AMOR is an alliance of community based grassroots organizations mobilizing at the intersections of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and immigration status to prevent, to respond to, and to end state violence against our community.



Black & Pink National is a prison abolitionist organization dedicated to abolishing the criminal punishment system and liberating LGBTQIA2S+ people and people living with HIV/AIDS who are affected by that system through advocacy, support, and organizing.



DARE's mission is to organize low-income families living in communities of color for

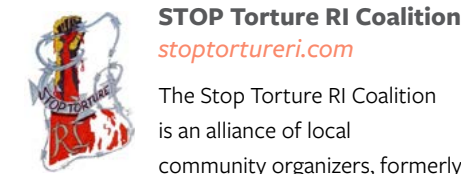
The struggle for social justice is bigger than me.

And they will continue long after I'm gone."

social, economic, and political justice. We are a community of people who have been impacted by incarceration. We believe that building strong communities is necessary if we are to reduce our society's reliance on incarceration.



FANG organizes with our community to build a decolonized world free of prisons and police, where systems of oppression are uprooted and healed, while taking action to avert the worst impacts of climate change. FANG believes in a diversity of nonviolent tactics from community organizing and coalition building to escalated direct action.



The Stop Torture RI Coalition is an alliance of local community organizers, formerly incarcerated people and their loved ones, direct service providers, students, and other concerned people all working to end the use of extended solitary confinement in by passing the Reform Solitary Confinement Act.

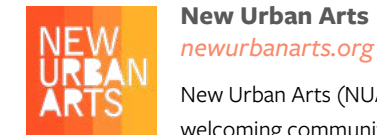
ACCESS THE ARTS

These Rhode Island based hubs offer accessible art, workshops, as well as creative support.



AS220 as220.org

AS220 is an artist-run organization committed to providing an unjuried and uncensored forum for the arts. AS220 offers artists opportunities to live, work, exhibit and/or perform in its facilities as well as a youth program focusing on youth under state care and in the juvenile detention facilities.



New Urban Arts newurbanarts.org

New Urban Arts (NUA) is a welcoming community of high school students and adult mentors in Providence sharing space, skills, and resources to inspire creative expression. NUA's student-led approach to learning enables young people to discover their power and develop agency. NUA is a haven from the many pressures and systemic inequities young people navigate daily.



Public Not Private publicshopandgallery.com

Public is an African & Latina owned creative art space

based in Providence RI. The space hosts monthly art exhibitions, an open mic, community building programming, and occasional comedy shows, film screenings, pop-ups, collaborative events, and more.



Queer Archive Work. queer.archive.work

QAW is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) library, publishing studio, and residency serving supporting artists and writers with free, open access to space and resources for experimental publishing, with a special focus on queer practices.



The Steel Yard's historic campus is a platform for professional artists, makers, and the community to practice and learn the industrial arts. The organization fosters creative and economic opportunities, by providing workspace, tools, training, and education while forging lasting links to a local tradition of craftsmanship.

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“Art allows us to connect

through steel, through bars, through concrete...

heart-to-heart”

He said, "I heard it."
I asked "What do mean 'heard it?' on the radio?"
He replied, "Now, I heard it, life, in my heart."
I was stunned.
And yet - incarceration unleashes
encaged. I've seen drawings in pen, painting
in watercolor or acrylic, such
amazing craft, skill and vision,
could proudly be exhibited in any gallery or museum
in America, made by prisoners.
And poetry to make you warden weep.
Hidden behind brick and steel, in a shadowed cell,
alone, in twilight - art lives.
Art is that which makes us human.
And in this place, in this most inhuman of places
art yet lives - colorful, resplendent, magical
of creativity - yet lives.

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Camila Cortina
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DONORS OF ORIGINAL
EMORY DOUGLAS WORKS

Anthony Bogues
Estate of Lyle E. Bourne, Jr., Ph.D. '53

“The question must be,

‘Is this expression oppositional

or is it acquiescent?

Does it challenge what needs to be challenged

or does it roll over

and play dead?’”