**Lavett Ballard Artist Statement**

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I’ve spent hours compiling a photographic catalog of female images that cover the African diaspora over different geographic areas and historical periods. The prints are collaged, painted, destroyed and reborn to create a re imagined visual narrative to the history portrayed In my work. I use reclaimed large and small aged wood fences, as a symbolic reference to how fences keep people in and out, just as racial and gender identities can do the same socially. These fences are then arranged as sculptural 'altars' to single sculptures, diptychs or even triptychs as icons much like traditional altars in Roman catholic churches and cathedrals. Just as Catholic altar pieces were used to glorify biblical individuals and events. I look to honor African American subjects and more importantly offer stories to often forgotten and lost histories, and cultural traditions.

My process uses the medium of collage, paint and distressing of images to create a lexicon of reimagined themes of Afro-futurism and folklore to the history portrayed throughout my work. I use handmade paper, cloth and most often reclaimed large and small aged wood fences, as my substrate. The fences are a symbolic reference to how fences keep people in and out, just as racial and gender identities can do the same socially. These fences are then installed as wall mounted or sculptural 'shrine’s as iconography to honor the strong visual narratives of each subject.