

The Arts Center In Orange

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"A New Vision 2020"

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8 Orange County Review, Thursday, February 6, 2020

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The Arts Center In Orange announces its next exhibit, "A New Vision 2020," featuring paintings by Charlottesville artist and percussionist Darrell Rose. The exhibit opens with a reception at The Arts Center Thursday, Feb. 6, from 5 to 7 p.m. and continues through Tuesday, March 31.

In his visual art, Rose is working with commitment and passion to explore and realize the expressive potential of another language. Although widely known and celebrated as a musician, he has been painting for more than 25 years, broadening his range considerably as a creative artist.

While at Tennessee State University, where he earned a B.S. in sociology and political science, Rose experienced a deep attraction to African drumming, and ultimately went on to study traditional hand drum techniques with West African master drummers Mor Tiam and Abdou Kunta of Senegal and Babatunde Olatunji of Nigeria. This set him on his life's journey in music, taking the stage during his career with such performers as the Wallers, Taj Mahal, Odetta, John Lee Hooker, Dave Matthews and many others, while touring widely in the United States, Canada, Europe and Africa.

Landing in Charlottesville in early 1990s, Rose not only continued to perform, as the music director of Chihamba, as well as the founder of Afrikan Drum Festival, but he became a dedicated teacher as well, passing along his love and knowledge of music to hundreds of students. In the mid-1990s, one of his students suggested that he experiment with visual art and explore ways in which he might "take his music to the canvas."

In this case, the student became the teacher and guided Rose in his earliest efforts to make visual art. And thus, he set off on another important path in his life, devoting himself tirelessly to the art of painting. In his words, he describes the experience: "Painting for me is about spontaneity, about opening up and celebrating positive energy. I turn on music, and see colors in the rhythms I hear, or patterns in the drumbeats. My work is also about change and transformation, where I bring



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Artist and musician Darrell Rose.

forth stories from the past and give them form. Many of these stories are about people, from those with me today to the voices who came before me: ancestors, friends, strangers, faces I saw in a crowd on a trip to Africa; they speak of how humans behave, and how different and yet similar we are."

Rose largely is self-taught in this pursuit, so his interest in other artists and the history of art is avid and ongoing. In research to recognize and understand the variations of artistic styles, he notes influences from Picasso to Klee, Rauschenberg to Basquiat, and most recently, the contemporary painter George Condo. The content of his work is inspired by memories of growing up in the American South and his world travels as a musician, augmented significantly through his imagination as well as the keen observation of the world around him. His art gives expression to the many flavors of his mixed heritage: New Orleans Creole, Haitian, Irish, Spanish, French and North African.

About this, Rose says, "In the end, my work pays homage to those who have come before me, for knowing where you came from helps you to know where you are going."

The exhibit and reception are free and open to the public. The Arts Center In Orange is located at 129 East Main Street, Orange and is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Visit www.artscenterinorange.com for more information.