ABOUT THE ARTIST

I am a multi-faceted, self-taught artist from Las Vegas, NV who uses acrylic, aerosol, wood-cutting, and other media to create my art. After obtaining my degree in Criminal Justice and Pre-Law from the University of Nevada, Reno in 2014, I moved to Pittsburgh, PA where I began to explore social justice through art. I have had the opportunity to show several pieces at various exhibits including Glare and Lay Bare at Brew House Association, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust Showcase Noir and Gallery Crawl (Pittsburgh, PA). As well as exhibiting my work, I have also participated in performance art shows where I paint live while interacting with audiences at events like Barrel & Flow. I began my mural journey in 2020, I then took that passion and skill and started my own mural business, PBJ Customs, in 2021 after graduating from the "Own Our Own" Business Academy.

CONCEPT NARRATIVE

Through both collaborative and individual projects, I am able to offer skills in executing others artistic vision with precision as well as designing and developing my own. I believe in the power of community and using art to elevate the voices of all people. My goal is to create work that highlights the identity and emphasizes the defining characteristics of the community and space, as well as create a welcoming inclusive environment for everyone. I have had the opportunity to work with PPG Colorful Communities in the past and design 'paint-by-number' murals at UPrep/Milliones for a community paint day.

A large scale mural is a great way to brighten the community with artwork that depicts both the history and future of the Hill District. The space will highlight the neighborhood by incorporating elements of the past. The proposed design depicts a young Black girl opening a book, which opens a door to the past. The pages of the book are glowing, and coming off of the pages are influential Hill District figures including Josh Gibson, Charles "Teenie" Harris, August Wilson, Thelma Lovette, Derrick Bell, Stanley Turrentine, Mary Lou Williams and George Benson. The idea behind this design is "keeping the past alive through art and education".

I envision this mural being mixed media. I would use spray paint for the background and the young girl. The book and the figures coming out would be wheat pasted/adhered to the wall. I took inspiration from James "Yaya" Hough’s "A Gift to the Hill District" mural completed in 2022, where volunteers helped paint the design before it was installed. I love the aspect of community engagement and participation. This allows community members to participate and know that they had a hand in the artwork that will live in their community. I am open to feedback and ideas regarding design elements in this mural project.