

# BROADWAY

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*The Black Man Inside*  
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*I love being called a black person. The color of my skin is nowhere near what the actual pantone looks like. I've just always loved the idea that my identity is tied and associated with a color, and it happens to be one of my favorite colors to work with. Also, being a visual artist, I think it's clear why I would love being marginalized down to a color. A color that has a culturally established notions, ideas, and vibes attached to it. The very definition of the word black has a whole legacy on its own:*

*1. Black is a color that results from the absence or complete absorption of visible light. It is an achromatic color, without hue, like white and grey. It is often used symbolically or figuratively to represent darkness.*

*2. Black, or less commonly, black*

*a: of or relating to any of various population groups of especially African ancestry often considered as having dark pigmentation of the skin, but in fact having a wide range of skin colors.*

*Black Americans*

*NOTE: Capitalization of Black in this use is now widely established.*

*b: of or relating to Black people and often especially to African American people or their culture.*

*Black literature.*

*3. Black was one of the first colors used by artists in Neolithic cave paintings. It was used in ancient Egypt and Greece as the color of the underworld. In the Roman Empire it became the color of mourning, and over the centuries it was frequently associated with death, evil, witches, and magic.*

*Black is the most common ink color used for printing books, newspapers and documents, as it provides the highest contrast with white paper and thus is the easiest color to read. Similarly, black text on a white screen is the most common format used on computer screens.*

*Some pretty, pretty fucking cool facts in my opinion.*

*The works in the show are all basically forms of self-portraits. These self-portraits are told through the guise of the studio, with the studio being a reflection of myself. This is also*

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*achieved by putting myself into a painting that exists somewhere inside of the still-life-like interiors, that mimic and mirror my own studio set up. So, I am formally and metaphorically inside all of the images. While my essence and some of my body parts inhabit the pictorial space, the idea of the portrait is subverted by objects and ephemera that populate my life as a painter. The objects start to become motifs that move from painting to painting, leaving a trail of my presence in them all.*

*The title is also a reference to my physical and meta self and how I delegate myself to be inside the studio and the gallery itself, while also referring to the idea that I'm in my own head.*

*While being in my own head, I begin to constantly think about the landscape and trajectory of "black" contemporary painting and its relationship with portraiture, how that relationship has been formed and molded by a mainly non-black audience. The idea of just putting up a mirror in the studio and using what you see in the mirror's reflection as the sole content for your current works.*

*This journey for me has been a fascinating introspective look to all things that I hold sacred when thinking of what marks, colors, and forms best describe the self in the metaphoric and the literal sense—then trying to find the best way to redirect all that shit onto a fucking canvas.*

--Devin Troy Strother  
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