

Alecia Dawn Young Bios and Artist Statement

Short:

Alecia Dawn Young is ceramic artist and scholar, and is the founder of YOGAMOTIF -- a creative wellness studio based in Pittsburgh, PA. With a career that spans a commitment to community arts education and wellness, her work is grounded in the collective healing of Black mothers and the relationship between arts education and mental health and well-being. Alecia holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Alfred University, Master of Arts Management from Carnegie Mellon University, and is a PhD student at the University of Pittsburgh.

Long:

Alecia Dawn Young is a ceramic artist and scholar who believes the creative process is an invitation to heal. The founder of creative wellness studio YOGAMOTIF, she invests her time in people, projects, and communities that explore generating art. Her career spans a commitment to community arts education and wellness, rooted in making, teaching, and researching in the visual arts.

Her first love was the clay studio, and she pursued this craft through a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Alfred University. While there, she also received a New York state teaching certification in K-12 studio arts. After teaching in non-profit and public education for five years, Alecia obtained a Master of Arts Management from the H. John Heinz III College at Carnegie Mellon University. She went on to manage and consult nonprofit operations for arts organizations in Pittsburgh and around the country, including at the August Wilson Center for African American Culture and Manchester Bidwell Corporation. Currently, she anchors her ceramic practice as a BIPOC collaborative studio member at the Union Project in Pittsburgh, PA and through artist residencies and workshops at Watershed Center for Ceramic Arts and Touchstone Center for Crafts.

She is a PhD student within the Applied Developmental Psychology program at the University of Pittsburgh's School of Education. Her work is grounded in the collective healing of Black mothers and the liberation of colonized people through creative arts practices that support mental health. An energetic leader and thought partner, she believes that creativity (including birth) is a path to healing and collaboration is our way forward.

Artist Statement:

I use the clay body to explore moments of softness and taken-for-granted norms, symbols and routines of Black mothering. Seated within a desire-based framework, I invite wonder, ease, and curiosity of what is and what could be. A functional and decorative series of lush pattern compositions feature thoughtfully illustrated Black hair maintenance rituals, the intimate and sacrosanct process of a mother doting on their child's hair, or carved patterns inspired by the hair care processes. Hair products, accessories, and hair designs inspire portraits of combs, brushes, ballies, and intimate moments of care. I see Black identity as a fertile space to cultivate joy as a liberatory practice of collective care and my studio works are an invitation to gather and share in this community.