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CONTACT**

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© Robert Carter, *Soteria II (Salvation II)*
Archival Pigment Print. Signed on recto.
Size 30" x 40"



© Robert Carter, *Nèigōng III (Inner Work III)*
Archival Pigment Print. Signed on recto.
Size 30" x 40"



© Robert Carter, *Atemporal Artefact II.II*
Archival Pigment Print. Signed on recto.
Size 30" x 40"

ROBERT CARTER
Atemporal Artefacts

On view at The SPACE Art Gallery

Oct 14, 2022 – Dec 3, 2022
Artist Reception: Friday, Oct 14, 5-8 PM

The SPACE Art Gallery
749 S. 8th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147
(215) 279-7145

www.thespacephiladelphia.com

Robert's work is atemporal - it is about time, without time.

Atemporal Artefacts began as an exploration of global mythologies and a meditation on time. Artifacts tell us so much about who we were. They can teach us about the things we desired, feared, revered, and endured. They speak to humankind's ingenuity and aesthetic sensibilities, and in some cases mark major milestones in our development as a species.

Robert Carter (he/they) is a visual artist, photographer, and writer whose figurative work often features brown skin in an array of hues, often set against lush fabrics and colors. With influences ranging from the ancient and historical worlds to fantasy, his work is a meditation on the things that connect us all.

Robert was raised in Prince George's County, MD in a colorful home filled with Black art depicting slices of life. At an early age he found a connection to history and culture through museums, magazines, movies, and music. These influences have culminated in his endeavors to use art as a bridge to better understanding of oneself, our communities, and ultimately our roles in the larger context of the world and beyond. His vision is to use creativity in ways that help to foster a culture of equity, awareness, and greater compassionate empathy.

Robert has this to say about his work:

Through my life's lens as a Black queer person, I enjoy creating vivid worlds and telling universal stories that sift through histories and build new futures. My creative practice is centered in photography, and supported by set design, styling, literature, and reclamation. My images feature brown skin in an array of hues, often set against lush fabrics and colors. At times they are luminous and sculptural in ways that reference the classical and ancient arts, at others they are magical in ways that speak to my love of fantasy and afrofuturism. While they are bold in their presentation, they are also quietly subversive, encouraging conversations around gender expression, representation, and cultural identity. In this way they are expressions, extensions of myself. Through my creative process I celebrate the beauty, the presence, and the possibility of Black people. Ultimately, my artwork is a love letter to humanity, a celebration of brown skin, and an exploration of time and space.



Drawing inspiration from some of the most important relics and artistic eras of human history, this photographic series poses the question of what future art histories could look like. These modern, 'living artifacts' assume Blackness as a state of divinity, seamlessly blending elements of afrofuturism, ancient history, and cinematic aesthetics into a cohesive, otherworldly tapestry.



© Robert Carter, *Soteria III (Salvation III)*
Archival Pigment Print. Signed on recto.
Size 40" x 40"

Soteria, translated from Greek as 'salvation' or 'deliverance', is the title and subject of one of the artifacts in the series. The figure's blue skin is a nod to Shiva, the supreme Hindu deity. In many cultures, blue is said to represent the infinite.

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© Robert Carter, *Nèigōng II (Inner Work)*
Archival Pigment Print. Signed on recto.
Size 40" x 40"

Nèigōng, translated from Mandarin as 'inner work' or 'inner strength,' refers to the Chinese spiritual and martial arts practices of this name. The practice includes meditation and breathing techniques designed to develop a heightened awareness and eventual mastery of one's body both internally and externally. It is a process of 'inner alchemy' that strengthens mind, body, and spirit. The aesthetics of the Nèigōng series are influenced by both Egyptian and Chinese art and culture. In traditional Chinese color symbolism, the color red can signify vitality and luck. Some believe it to ward off evil. The hieroglyphic stances of the artifact and hand-woven beaded headdress suggest a tie to ancient Egyptian fashions and artworks.



© Robert Carter, *Artefact II.I*
Archival Pigment Print. Signed on recto.
Size 60" x 40"

The aesthetics of *Atemporal Artefact II.I* are informed by the Paleolithic figure carving known as Venus of Willendorf. The 4" limestone carving features a round, faceless figure of a woman colored with red ochre, and is one of the oldest known works of art in human history. Its maker is theorized to be a woman, perhaps creating the idol's figure from life.

Artefact II is also a meditation on body image and gender. In many parts of the world, round bodies are decidedly feminine. However, this figure is also influenced by one of the more hyper-masculine artistic forms in modern times - the Oscar statuette.

Robert is a Mural Arts Black Arts Fellow, an artist in residence at Fidler Club, a member of the independent BIPOC art collective Crafted//Community, as well as a teaching artist with classes ranging from teens to adults at Fleisher Art Memorial and Mural Arts. He is currently a freelance photographer and retoucher based in Philadelphia. He holds a BS in Photography from the Art Institute of Philadelphia.

Robert Carter in the Press

[AI Dia 2022 - Adding More Vibrancy to Philly's Artist Identity](#)
[Mural Arts of Philadelphia 2021 Fellows](#)
The Philadelphia Citizen 2021 - [20 Black Artists to Watch](#)



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The SPACE Art Gallery, Philadelphia, established 2018, specializes in fine art photography and modern original jewelry and gifts. The physical area is impeccably designed, with a bespoke jigsaw hardwood floor, a viewing bench and natural lighting. In the curated collection of functional arts, the pieces are handmade by artisans across the world. The materials range from wood to glass and from silver to resin in a wide variety of price-points. The photography captures realistic and artistic natural and manmade images from small to large in a variety of developmental processes and sizes.

For more information, visit <https://www.thespacephiladelphia.com> and follow us on instagram [@thespacephl](https://www.instagram.com/thespacephl)