

CULLEN WASHINGTON  
ARTIST STATEMENT

Collagraph:

A collagraph is a print made from an improvised printing plate, often a collage of materials glued to a square of cardboard. When dry, the plate is shellacked or varnished so it can be painted, which is then pressed onto paper to produce a print.

“The collagraph is a natural organic progression for the cultivating of my ideas synthesizing spirituality and science. The metaphor for this synergy is the grid. The grid takes on many lives, shapes and forms as I question it in hopes to somehow understand it though this is an infinite quest.

“These collagraphs started out as paintings. My paintings have a visceral surface, which I consider to be terrestrial and landscapesque in nature. When the indentions, hills and valleys are covered in ink and wiped, their impression is left on the contacting paper. This is the difference between a monotype and a collagraph. The collagraph uses the actual object or matter as the printing plate. The result is a new life for the work. I think of this process as sublimation. While this is a term used to describe the transformation of a substance from one state to another (example: solid ice turning into vapor bypassing the liquid state), I apply it here as the painting sublimates into another form while retaining its essence or its spirit.

“The works are named after coined spiro-scientific terms. For example, *Od Matter* integrates the origin of the word, "God", which is "Od" and matter, the substance of which all things are made. To me, the works represent a language, which visually describes God's matter, which is matter with the infinite possibility to become any thing. It is matter before it is fully formed and named.

“The idea supporting the entropic works uses many collagraphs torn and re-assembled in an infinite array. The principle of entropy is just that, the infinite arrangement of atoms to create infinite more possibilities for the arrangement. In this case infinite re-ordering is creativity. So the collagraphs are replicated and then re-arranged.

“For *String Theory*, I cut up illustration boards and wind yarn around the boards. I then arrange and print them. The String Theory states that the small particles of matter are instead one-dimensional strings. The works' process and scientific reference coincided.

“In all these examples, the works have a somewhat linear yet organic character, which is arranged in a semi-perpendicular array. In this, I still investigate the grid whether loosely or conservatively.

“With that being said, I envision the works being shown together. They each exemplify a specific effort to communicate a spiro-scientific idea. They also are stronger being seen in a group as they create a cohesive visual sentence.”

-Cullen Washington, 2016