

MALENE DJENABA BARNETT 362 Halsey Street, Brooklyn, NY 11216

September 27, 1972 | (203) 247-6337 | www.malenebarnett.com

EDUCATION

2022 Master Fine Arts, Ceramics, Tyler School of Art & Architecture, Philadelphia, PA

1996 Bachelor of Fine Art, Textile Surface Design, Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, NY

1994 Associate in Applied Science, Fashion Illustration, Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, NY

AWARDS

2024 Nellie Mae Rowe Distinguished Fellowship

2024 Helen Zucker Seeman Curatorial Fellowship Grant

2023 Fulbright, Jamaica, Visiting Artist, Edna Manley College of Visual and Performing Arts

2021 Zenobia Award, Watershed Ceramics

2020 NCECA Graduate Fellowship

2020 Future Faculty Fellowship, Temple University

2019 *NCECA Multicultural Fellowship*

RESIDENCIES

2024 *Hambidge Center for Creative Arts*, Rabun Gap, GA

2022 *Haystack Mountain School of Crafts*, Deer Isle, ME

2021 *Watershed Ceramics*, Newcastle, ME

2021 *Judson Studios*, Los Angeles, CA

2021 *Anderson Ranch*, SnowMass Village, CO

2019 *Africa Crafts Travel*, Ghana, West Africa hosted by NCECA Honorary member Winnie Owens Hart

2018 *Greenwich House Pottery*, New York, NY

2018 *Sculpt Italy*, Pietrasanta, Italy

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2024 Kingston Biennial, National Gallery of Jamaica, Kingston, Jamaica

2024 Smithsonian Design Triennial, Cooper Hewitt, New York, NY

2024 *Liberatory Living: Protective Interiors & Radical Black Joy*, MOAD, San Francisco, CA

2024 *Structural Play*, SugarHill Storytelling Museum, New York, NY

2023 *Neo-Custodians: Woven Narratives of Heritage, Culture Memory and Belonging*, Bemis Center

2023 *Note to Self*, Christie's London, London, England

2022 *What's Left Behind*, The Clay Studio, Philadelphia, PA

2022 *We Called Her Mom*, Temple Contemporary, Philadelphia, PA

2022 *Black Women in Clay*, Mindy Solomon Gallery, Miami, FL

SELECTED LECTURES & TALKS

2024 *Clay Roots: Ceramics from the African diaspora*, Podcast Host,

2024 NCECA "Clay in the Caribbean", Richmond, VA

2024 *Bemis Center*, Artist Talk, Omaha, NE

2023 *Edna Manley School of Visual and Performing Arts*, Guest Speaker, Kingston, Jamaica

2021 *American Craft Council* "The Future of the Creative Economy"

2021 *National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA)*- Artist Lecture "Grounded & Free", Cincinnati, OH

SELECTED ARTICLES, PUBLICATIONS & TV APPEARANCES

2025 *Luxe Interiors + Design*, January

2024 *New York Times*, December

2024 *Galerie Magazine*, November

2024 *Living Etc*, May

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

2024 *Crafted Kinship*, Author, *Artisans Books*

2022 *Black Experience in Design*

2010 *Global Africa Project*, Museum of Art & Design

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Malene (ma-lay-nee) Djenaba (jen-na-ba) Barnett is an award-winning multidisciplinary artist, textile surface designer, and community builder. She holds an MFA in Ceramics from the Tyler School of Art & Architecture, undergraduate degrees in Fashion Illustration and Textile Surface Design from the Fashion Institute of Technology, and was awarded a Fulbright Award in 2022 to research African Jamaican ceramic traditions, as a visiting artist at Edna Manley College in Kingston, Jamaica.

In her work, Malene explores both her Caribbean heritage and surface pattern design found in African and diasporic architecture, textiles and objects. From art and design to research, writing and public speaking, Malene works to empower and unite Black artists and designers through community building.

Her incised ceramic vessels and architectural installations, woven portraits and photo-based collages have been exhibited at galleries and museums throughout the United States, including the Museum of the African Diaspora (San Francisco), African American Museum of Dallas, Mindy Solomon Gallery (Miami), the Museum of Science + Industry (Chicago), Sugar Hill Museum (NYC), and Temple Contemporary (Philadelphia). Malene's art and design work have been featured in magazines including *The New York Times*, *Galerie*, *Elle Decor*, *Architectural Digest*, *Departures* and *Interior Design*, and on tv's "Room to Inspire" (Magnolia Network, HBO Max).

In 2024, Malene released her first book, ["Crafted Kinship: Inside the Creative Practice of Contemporary Black Caribbean Makers"](#) (Hachette), which includes interviews with over 60 artists of Caribbean heritage, taking readers on an important journey through the world of Black Caribbean creativity. This groundbreaking collection is the first to feature Caribbean makers' intimate stories of their artmaking processes, and how their countries of origin—the "land"—influences and informs how and what they create.

Malene is also the founder of the [Black Artists + Designers Guild](#), a collective of independent Black makers featured in the "The Underground Library," a collaborative group exhibition within the Smithsonian Design Triennial at the Cooper Hewitt "Making Home," exhibition.

She has given numerous artist talks and panel discussions for international audiences, including the Rhode Island School of Design, the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA), the Bemis Center, Greenwich House Pottery, the Affordable Art Fair, the 92nd St Y, University of the West Indies and Design Caribbean.

Malene has participated in residencies at Anderson Ranch, Watershed, Greenwich House Pottery, Judson Studios, and Haystack. In 2024, she was the Nellie Mae Rowe Distinguished Fellow at the Hambidge Center in Georgia.

Traveling regularly to Africa, Europe, Asia and the Caribbean for her research on the origins of Black diasporic aesthetics, Malene is based in Brooklyn, NY.