

## Statement Amani Johnson

Letters to AmeriKKKA is a body of paintings and works on paper that treat image-making as a form of therapeutic discernment — a negotiation between the subconscious and the conscious. These works are rooted in accumulated experiences across the American landscape: northern districts, southern regions, and the east and west coasts. The imagery originates in travel-based sketchbooks — intimate documents of conversations, observations, media consumption, spiritual inquiry, and lived contradiction — later translated into layered compositions on canvas and paper.

Each painting functions as a letter. Not written in ink, but in gesture, repetition, and residue.

Recurring hooded figures, graffiti-coded text, architectural fragments, and spiritual archetypes operate as protagonists navigating survival within a system that markets freedom while quietly rewarding conformity. Through repetition, these figures become psychological evidence — reflections of how cultural programming embeds itself into the individual psyche.

Layer after layer, the surface accumulates like spray paint on a vandalized wall. Bold compositions suggest the spectacle of American consumer culture, while smaller details reveal quieter spiritual tensions beneath. Apparel, posture, and coded symbols reference both street fashion and metaphysical inquiry, exposing the friction between material desire and spiritual seeking.

The sketchbooks serve as the force — collected research from movement, dialogue, and observation. The paintings enact the flow — where automatism, improvisational line, and subconscious mark-making destabilize rigid narratives. Together, they build a world that examines authenticity versus assimilation, individuality versus collective myth, survival versus self-actualization.

Letters to AmeriKKKA is both critique and confession — a love letter written from survival mode. It confronts corrupted traditions while acknowledging personal entanglement within them. The internal and external are revealed as inseparable forces, continuously shaping and rewriting one another.