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Verneda Lights | Bio | Griotic Journey

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Verneda Lights is a polymath artist whose creative odyssey spans disciplines and defies categorization. Born and raised within the storied landscapes of the South Carolina Low Country's Gullahgeechee Nation, her artistic sensibilities were nurtured amidst the rich tapestry of Gullah culture. A graduate of Bryn Mawr College, where she pursued her passion for history, science, and poetry, Verneda's intellectual curiosity led her to the halls of the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine, where she earned her MD, and later, to Strayer University, where she obtained an MBA.

Yet, it was her profound connection to her Gullah roots that would serve as the cornerstone of her artistic journey—a journey marked by innovation, introspection, and an unwavering commitment to authenticity. Through mediums as varied as visual art, photography, performance poetry, and literature, Verneda has sought to illuminate the multifaceted dimensions of the human experience.

Her recent series, including "Gullah Me," "Caterpillar Dreams," and "Black Dandies," exemplify this commitment, exploring themes ranging from mortality to cultural identity with equal parts nuance and urgency. Drawing on her academic background and a certificate in International Arts Management, Verneda's work occupies a liminal space between tradition and innovation, challenging viewers to reconsider their preconceptions and embrace the complexities of the human condition.

Recognized at prestigious venues such as the Whitney Biennial (as a member of the Occupy Museums group exhibit), South Hampton Art Center, Albrecht-Kemper Museum of Art, Edward M Kennedy Institute, M.A.D.S. Gallery Milan, and the Boston Cyberarts Festival, Verneda's artistry has garnered critical acclaim for its depth and resonance. Most recently, her collaboration with artificial intelligence, "Caterpillar Dreams," was featured in the inaugural edition of the 2023 Yale Ultra Space Printed Volume, curated by the Yale Center for Collaborative Arts and Media (CCAM, 2024).

As we gather to celebrate the 50th Reunion of our class at Bryn Mawr College, let us honor Verneda's contributions not only as an artist but as a custodian of memory, culture, and the enduring quest for truth. Through her work, she invites us to embrace the beauty of our shared humanity, to confront our past with courage, and to envision a future illuminated by the transformative power of art.