



SOPHIA DAWSON

OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM

November 18th - December 18th, 2021

916 Bedford ave, Brooklyn

Sophia Dawson, *Wayne*, 2019, acrylic, fabric, gold leaf, oil on canvas, 30 x 60 © Sophia Dawson

November 1st, 2021

"At the end of the day I want for people of color not to consider them disposable statistics but to understand that greatness lies within each of us."

-Sophia Dawson

Artist, Activist, and Professor Sophia Dawson is showcasing her newest body of work, an ongoing series, entitled **"Of Such Is The Kingdom"**. Curated by The Bishop Gallery, on display will be over a dozen mixed media works on canvas and wood, with an array of portraits spanning from political prisoners to musicians. A master of using unconventional materials and striking imagery in telling stories of the black diaspora, Dawson explores narratives of hope, determination, joy, pride, and purpose, with the blind optimism you'd see in the eyes of a child.

Dawson's unique style of painting and the use of vibrant colors create a brilliant luminosity that is distinctive in her works. The use of diverse hues and textures are on full display as they have become signatures in the acclaimed artist's arsenal. Her signature color "Brownsville Blue", is reminiscent of the softer side to otherwise rough neighborhoods such as her own in central Brooklyn. Gold leaf and mustard seeds materials (which represent the "Holy Spirit" and "Faith", respectively) and diamond dust which mimics the luster of curly hair, can all be found throughout this body of work. These delicate pigments are used in much of Sopia's creations including "Janine Africa" and "Proverbs 22:6" (a portrait of young Kanye West). Also used in some of these works are broken chain-links, which are used to symbolize deliverance from bondage both figuratively and literally, as many of the works feature currently or formerly incarcerated political prisoners.

Referencing the "Biblical" verse Matthew 19:14 "Of Such Is The Kingdom" captures people as their younger selves, allowing them to be viewed through a lens befitting a child, one of compassion and understanding. The exhibition beautifully restores the dignity and glory that is often omitted in mainstream portraiture when depicting people of color. The synergy of techniques and materials that are used in this body of work, is a visual allegory which examines deeper narratives within each portrait. Beyond visual storytelling, Dawson uses her work to inspire people to be more understanding while challenging the preconceived notions we have about each other.

About Sophia Dawson:

Sophia Dawson is a Brooklyn based visual artist who has dedicated her life's work to ministry (service.) Her multidisciplinary practice includes portraiture, performance, public art and video. She uses her platform and influence as an artist to expose the narratives and experiences of people who individually and collectively face injustice. Through her artwork, she humanizes social justice issues to prevent such experiences from being repeated in the future.

Ms. Dawson holds a bachelor's degree in fine arts from the School of Visual Arts and a master's degree in visual arts administration from New York University. Her work has been exhibited in Rush Arts Gallery, the Bronx Museum for the Arts, Nathan Cummings Foundation, MFA Boston, and The Bishop Gallery. She is an alumna of the Whitney Museum's Independent Study program, University Settlement's Performance Project Residency program, and the Bronx Museum of Art's first residency program, and The Bishop Gallery Artist Residency Program.

For more information email us at Info@BishopOnBedford.com