

Why Hip-Hop Matters

Why? Because hip-hop is art. And poetry. And music. And rhetoric. Because hip-hop is political science. And cultural anthropology. And linguistic anthropology. And philosophy. Because hip-hop is business. Big business. Because hip-hop is oral tradition. And zeitgeist. Because hip-hop is life. And death. And, for some, even salvation.

By Marybeth Reilly-McGreen

Hip-hop is taking a **STAND**

Bob Dilworth, professor of art, teaches painting, drawing, design,



Bob Dilworth, professor of art, in his Providence studio. He says, "Art has always been a way to comment, to give some expression to what's going on."

Bob Dilworth, professor of art, teaches painting, drawing, design, and African-American art history in the Department of Art and Art History, in addition to chairing Africana Studies. Standing amid his larger-than-life paintings in his Providence studio, he says that he considered naming his next show "Black Lives Matter."

"The idea for this series of paintings, for the new work I'm doing, is to focus on lives affected by shootings and killings of young kids in the streets," Dilworth says. "There are families affected. We never hear from the moms, the dads, the aunts and uncles. We never hear how they feel."

Then Dilworth watched a get-out-the-vote ad featuring former first lady Michelle Obama. In it, she exhorted everyone to vote. Not just Democrats, but all people. It moved him. "I thought, how wonderful! Her concern isn't about black or white or yellow or green. It's about everyone voting. She saw it on a higher level, and everyone's getting the call," Dilworth says. "It's a call that we need to stop, take pause."

"The way the world has to change is through acceptance and through love," Dilworth says. So now the show's working title is "Black Love Matters: The Aesthetics of Repair." "The suggestion is that something needs addressing," Dilworth says. "We need to create a new space for repairing what's wrong."