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Fortifications of Mass Incarceration: Prison Grid (Triptych), 2017. Mixed media with metal leaf on canvas, 60 x 108 in.

GARRY GRANT

DIMENSIONAL CITIES

July 26 - August 15, 2018

Opening Reception

Thurs. July 26, 2018 | 6:00 - 8:00 pm

North of History gallery is pleased to present **DIMENSIONAL CITIES** a solo exhibition of paintings and works on paper by Harlem based abstract artist, **GARRY GRANT**. This exhibition will run from July 26 - August 15, 2018, with an opening reception on **Thursday, July 26, 2018 from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.**

DIMENSIONAL CITIES feature Garry Grant's two series of works: *The Detroit Industrial Complex Series* and the *Fortification Series*. Grant's body of work focuses on diverse urban landscapes, local and world affairs, and the evolution of our culture. He often includes geometric shapes, vibrant color, and repetition as a way of conveying rhythm in his compositions.

Born and raised in Detroit, MI, *The Detroit Industrial Complex Series* is Grant's response to the urban blight, decay, and natural beauty of his hometown. Employing the use of non-traditional pigments and gilding techniques, the artist creates an imaginary skyline and river front with brilliant, bold colors, stretching the paint upwards and downwards to form the building structures and reflected water patterns. Grant often adds pressure to the canvas to bring about a cracked-pattern effect, yielding a rich texture to the composition. On the foreground, he applies acrylic paint and other pigments to the canvas by hand. A gloss or semi-gloss varnish overlays the finished work, enhancing the vibrancy of the colors and metal leaf.

The sound wave patterning integrated across all the canvases is an acknowledgement of the music of Detroit's Motown and the creative ingenuity from both past and present artists. Utilizing the diptych format with its negative space between the canvases suggests Detroit's racial divide and the need to come together through nonviolent communication. Detroit's official city flag Latin motto, "*Speramus Meliora, Resurget Cineribus*," is the title of one of Grant's diptych paintings. Meaning "We hope for better things" and "It will rise from the ashes," this dynamic painting alludes to the history of the Detroit riots and its current efforts, like a phoenix, to rise from the ashes and be reborn.

The Fortification Series was inspired by a visit to Morocco where Grant and his wife spent several days in the cities of Marrakech and Essaouira (formally known as Mogador). The two city's histories, their ancient Medinas, and their intricate design aesthetics had a profound impact on Grant's artmaking. The artist developed handmade paper works that depict the ornate designs of the old city walls, hallways, archways, and doorways of both cities. Applying scribing lines, cut-outs, and scoring techniques painted with colored shellacs and acrylics, the grid-like patterns are a reference to the geometric shapes found in the cities fortification designs.

Working on canvas as well as paper, Grant's triptych painting entitled *Fortifications of Mass Incarceration: Prison Grid* (2017), incorporates the repeating arabesque motifs over a palette of deep, rich autumnal colors. The heavy black vertical lines inserted throughout the work suggests a multitude of imposing, menacing structures. Harkening back to his Detroit series, this painting serves as a visual metaphor of the American prison system - concealed from view.

Garry Grant attended the College for Creative Studies in Detroit, MI and the American College of Applied Arts in Atlanta, GA where he studied graphic communication and fine art. His work has been featured in galleries throughout New York City, Detroit, Dallas and Atlanta. In 2014, Grant was selected to participate in The Fabergé Big Egg Hunt, a public art installation and benefit auction in New York City and in 2015 as part of a multi-disciplinary art project at the prestigious Park Avenue Armory in New York City. Grant's work is held in private collections throughout the US. www.GarryGrantStudio.com

Curated by Lola Shepard