

# The Silva x The Art Island

**Everyday People | Lionel Daniels**

Curated by The Art Island

January 15 - April 26, 2026

**Reception: Friday, January 23, from 6-8pm**

## **ARTIST BIO**

Lionel Daniels is a Maryland-based fine artist whose mixed-media practice explores Black life through history, spirituality, and the everyday. A graduate of Morehouse College, his work draws from personal archives, collective memory, and symbolic materials to create layered narratives that honor both intimate moments and larger cultural truths.

Rooted in storytelling, Lionel's paintings elevate ordinary scenes alongside conceptual reflections on faith, place, and identity. Through bold color, textured surfaces, and collage elements, he reveals the sacred within the familiar while also addressing systems that shape Black life—past and present. His work invites viewers to slow down, reflect, and recognize meaning in both the monumental and the quiet.

Lionel has received multiple Arts & Humanities Fellowships from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities. He has exhibited at Art Basel with 1223 Potomac Gallery, Culture House DC, Touchstone Gallery, the Shakespeare Theatre Company, Bowie Town Center, and Paul Robinson Gallery. His work is in public and private collections across the country, including Morehouse College, Spelman College, and various other collections.

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## **ARTIST STATEMENT**

*Everyday People* is a body of work centered on the quiet dignity of ordinary life. Drawing from personal memory, family, and familiar scenes, the work focuses on moments that often pass without notice. Resting. Waiting. Learning. Being present. These figures are not meant to perform or stand in for anything larger. They exist as they are.

I paint Black life through daily ritual and stillness, treating ordinary moments as worthy of care and attention. Faith enters the work not as instruction, but as posture. A bowed head. A steady gaze. A body at rest. In this way, the paintings move between observation and reverence, allowing the sacred and the everyday to occupy the same space.

Using house paint, acrylic, charcoal, and occasional oil pastel, I build surfaces slowly through layering, restraint, and revision. Earlier marks remain visible, holding memory and weight. Figures live between realism and abstraction, grounded yet open, shaped as much by atmosphere as by line. Color is intentional but measured, used to support emotion rather than spectacle.

While rooted in Black life, *Everyday People* resists explanation. The work does not ask to be decoded. It asks to be witnessed. Each painting becomes an act of care, honoring presence, endurance, and the quiet heroism found in simply being seen.