

A VISIONARY ARTIST

Gives Hope to the Visually Impaired



BY DEB LEHMAN

Though classified as legally blind, Michael Freeman uses his inner eye and soul to create dazzling worlds of color and texture.

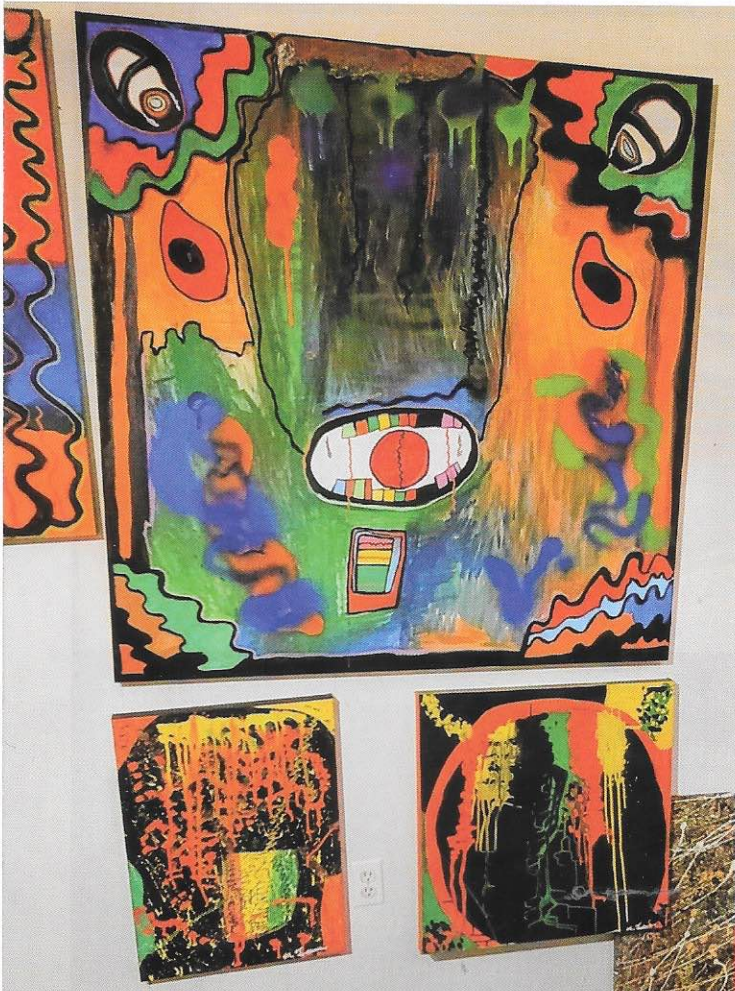
“Never give up on your dreams and passions in life,” said Freeman. “No matter what anyone says, make your own path and your own way.”

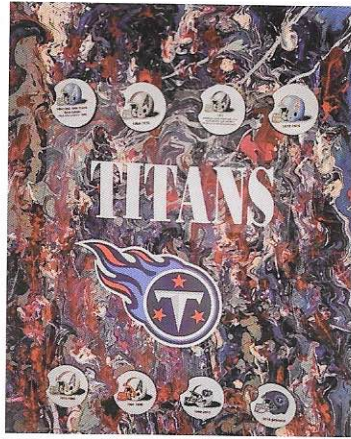
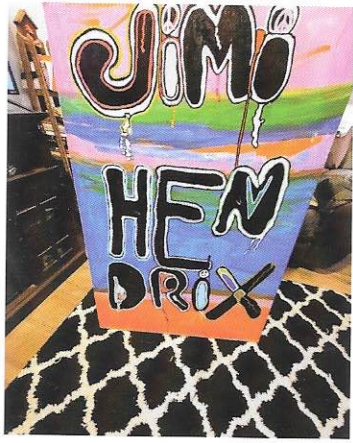
Freeman has never given up on his dreams despite tunnel vision and childhood abuse.

“I paint pictures with tactile components and textures so others with vision impairments may experience my artwork,” Freeman said. “I began painting three years ago as a way to push my limit with my vision and also as a creative outlet for stress and anxiety.”

Art represents many things to Freeman. It’s therapeutic and gives Freeman a constructive outlet for his PTSD. Art is a window to his soul. When Freeman is in a dark mood, he expresses himself in blacks and grays. When he wants to connect to his African and Caribbean heritage, the canvas explodes with dramatic hues of red, green, blue, and gold.

Finally, art is freedom. Abstracts allow Freeman to experiment with different media, which adds a three-dimensional quality to his work.





“Abstract art challenges people’s perceptions by offering different perspectives,” Freeman said. “I use textual materials such as boxes, beads, and rope to invite touching which is especially helpful to the visually impaired.”

Freeman didn’t attend art school but learned how to paint by watching videos. He was most inspired by artists Jackson Pollock and Jean-Michel Basquiat, a contemporary of Andy Warhol. Like Pollock and Basquiat, Freeman paints abstracts with vivid colors, bold strokes, and haunting imagery.

Music also plays a significant role in Freeman’s work.

As the son of a preacher, Freeman was exposed to gospel music. But he is most passionate about Jimi Hendrix and Miles Davis. They unleash his creative spirit.

Freeman sells his work directly to the public with the support of his wife. Born and raised in New Jersey, and now a resident of the Lehigh Valley, Freeman believes in giving back and teaches art at Sights for Hope in Allentown.

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