

# JESSICA WIMBLEY

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## ARTIST STATEMENT

I use the literary term **biomythography**, defined by poet Audre Lorde as a combination of "biography, myth, and history", as an interdisciplinary visual arts practice. By using biomythography and the para-fictional, I investigate and question identity and history, merging both the genetic and biological with socio-historical, creating narratives that shift between micro and macro representations. The historic American racial paradigm of the one-drop rule is reassessed to consider the biological and genetic implications of the literal blood, revealing implicit and explicit identities; with subsequent narratives that reveal differing yet simultaneous histories. By investigating the one-drop rule at a micro level (DNA and genetic information contained) to a macro level (origin of humanity) the African diaspora is reframed in the context of the African as the original colonizer and explorer of the earth. Using aesthetic elements such as collage, digital imagery, appropriation, panoramic landscapes and space imagery, as well as images of microscopic biological entities, including t cells, melanin, stem cells, and DNA, provides both a conceptual and visual metaphor for the macro and micro- galvanizing what is seen and unseen, and questioning the scope of the human experience and identity. The figure in these narratives straddles both objectification and subjectification, as a result, creating narratives that conjure multiple histories through the codification of landscape, objects, and the body. Literary references to science fiction novels by Octavia Butler, as well as popular culture media are used to compose narrative, in conjunction with photographic digital, and printed images, painting and drawing. The hybridity of images in the work reflect the way in which one composes culture in the digital age, integrating gazes by reflecting the mass consumption and democracy of the internet. The finished work reflects historical artistic approaches of painting and drawing with Photoshop, collage and digital photography, itself becoming a hybrid.