

## EP The Goat

Elexus Pettigrew is an emerging artist from Texas State University with a concentration in Expanded Media. She explores how her African American upbringing contributed to the person she is now and how social media can consume people's thoughts and shape their opinions. Before diving into the art world, she thought that artists had to be hippies and drug addicts. After discovering happiness from a drawing class and the professors who have pushed and support her work. She uses her art to voice her opinions and forces her viewers to question what they have been taught by our society. She takes control of battling those opinions by revealing her vulnerability and identity on display and let the audience relate to her journey through life. She captures intimate photographs of her family and friends allowing the world to see a new perspective of what African Americans live like instead of the outdated stereotypes that remain present today while being hidden in our culture's infrastructure. She might be new to creating art, but she has developed her style by combining drawing, digital art, and painting. Her videos are layered in messages letting the viewer gather more information each time they watch them. Elexus Pettigrew wants to start a conversation to stir up how society has trained the masses to not question what is out there. If social media is only giving one side of the story, Elexus Pettigrew wants the people to see her truth. People can find her work

Instagrams: @epthegoat and @lamreflection\_

Vimeo: eptheartist

Website: [elexuspettigrew.com](http://elexuspettigrew.com)

CS: Where do you find your inspiration?

EP: I get my inspiration from everyday life and nature. I go outside and walk to find things organic. I like to observe people and how they act. I also look to my family. I look at how I am a part of my family and how that has impacted who I am, then I use and compare myself to the media. I like things to come to me organically.



Elexus Pettigrew, Home Series, Photography

CS: At what age did you start your interest in creating art?

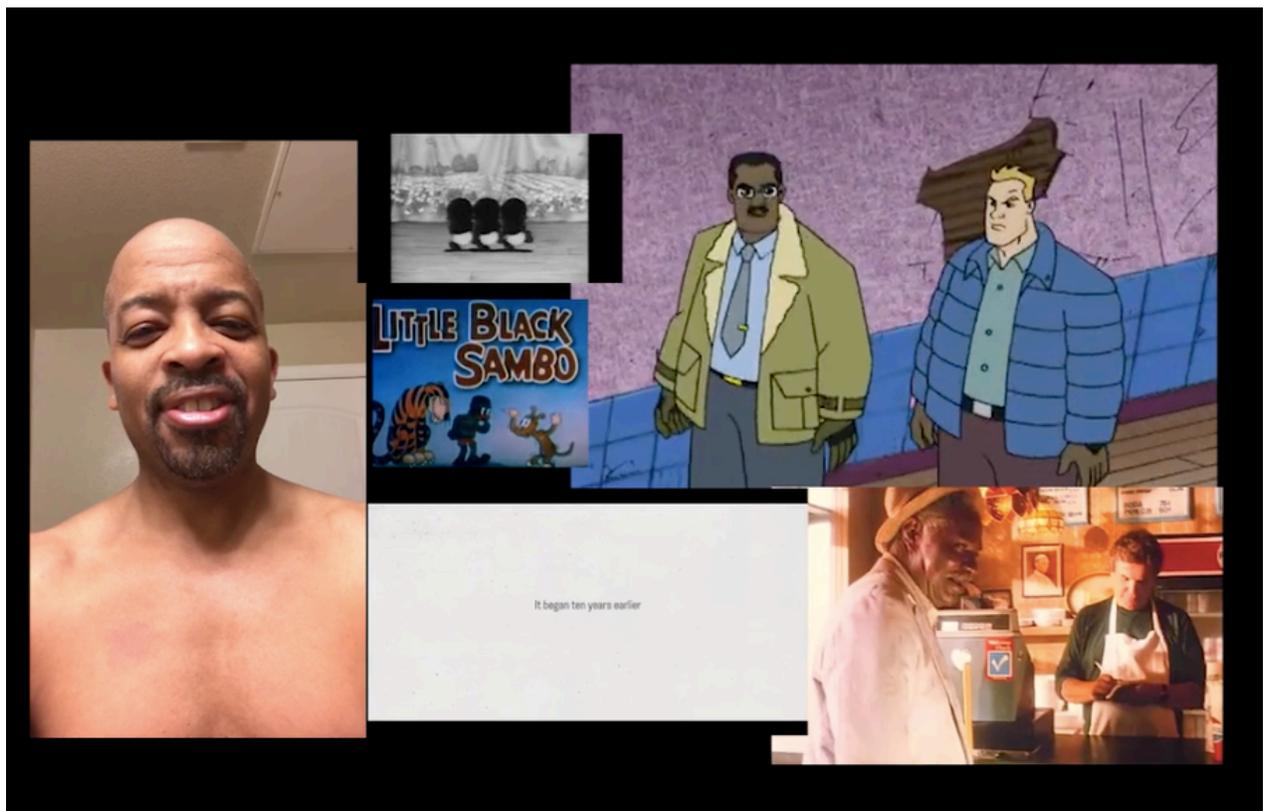
EP: I started three years ago, at 20 when I was in a bad spot and was on probation at Texas State University. I was taking a drawing class at a community college in Dallas. I was noticeably happy after drawing class and I was first a drawing major before I switched my major to expanded media.

CS: What has your family done or provided to support your decision to go into art?

EP: My family has been super supportive. My mom told me that I should do art and that she saw how happy I was after my drawing class. She is my rock. My family all have their creative outlets, my little sister is a music artist, and my brother has his clothing brand. So, it felt natural coming from a super creative family.

CS: Do you have a certain time of day you like to work?

EP: Oh wow, I try to have a schedule, but I have like four jobs so it's sporadic. I like to do it Monday through Thursday during the school week. I end up doing it pretty late in the day. I work on my projects past midnight. I guess you can say I'm a night owl.



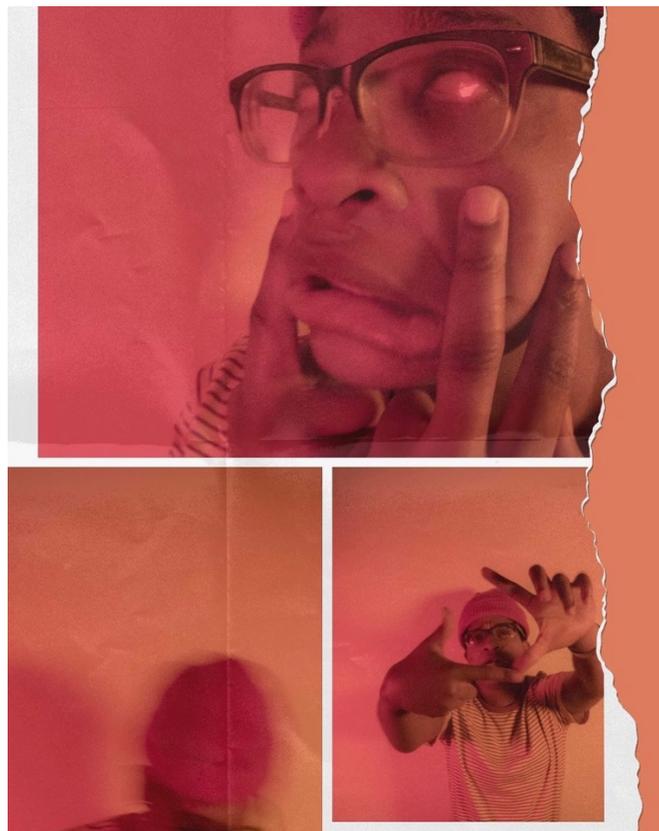
Elexus Pettigrew, WhatYouGetIsWhatYouSee, Collage Video, 2021

CS: If you didn't create art, what would you be doing?

EP: Honestly, I would be miserable. I would probably be a pharmacist like my aunt.

CS: Wow, that's a huge contrast.

EP: Yeah, I would not enjoy it. It would feel machine-like, and I would be depressed. I don't see myself not doing art. But if I had to do something, it would be a pharmacist, but I would be really unhappy. So, I try not to think about not doing art.



Elexus Pettigrew, Home Series, Photography and Collage, 2020

CS: How do you deal with creative block?

EP: I have a process. I like to meditate then ask myself if it's me or outside issues. I like to go outside and clear my head to figure out what is happening. It's my avenue to process why I have the creative block.

CS: What is the best advice you've gotten? It doesn't have to be about art, it can be concerning how you take on life since your art involves getting inspiration from every day.

EP: I use to work at Amazon as a driver. My boss, there was my first African American boss, and he had a lot of impact on me and my perspective. He told me that "You only have one life, and you should live it how you want". That stuck with me and that it was all about perspective. I was at a crossroads in my life and hearing that helped with the decision towards my thesis and what I wanted to explore.



Elexus Pettigrew, Home Series, Photography with Collage, 2020

CS: Why did you choose to work in this medium? I know that you started as a drawing major. Why did you decide to change to expanded media?

EP: My drawing class was the first art class that made me happy and push me towards the art life, but it was my Professor Liz Rodda who introduced me to mixed media and expanded media. I already liked film and in a photography class I studied Latoya Ruby Frazier, who's a black woman and I didn't see many black women in art and that spoke to me. She made me look towards my family as being my subjects. Professor Jason Reed, in another photography class pushed me to look more into my work. Having both Professor Liz and Jason believing in my work helped with the decision to go into expanded media.



Elexus Pettigrew, Home Series, Photography, 2019

CS: How have you seen your art evolve?

EP: I've noticed it this year when it was either the second or third project and no one had anything in the critique to say that was bad or that needed to be improved.

CS: What was the topic that you explored in this project?

EP: It was about being part of your environment, like the influence of your family had on you and your environment growing up. Then how the environment that your parents had while they were young and made them to be now. I combined those to be compared at the consumption of media and how the internet is raising children today. So, it's about being a product of your environment and consumption. Asking the people, who are you really?



Elexus Pettigrew, Portrait of Jean Michel Basquiat, 2019

CS: Does a certain art movement and its philosophy inspire how you create art?

EP: I like Jean-Michel Basquiat. His work seems simple but there are multiple layers he's working with. That is how I like doing my collage videos. It might appear to be simple but the

