Out the Mud

Troy Lamarr Chew II (MFA 18’) Simpson Library Jan 16 - Feb 26 Artist Statement

Seems to be a hierarchy
oh you better than me?
We both paint on fabric, that we can agree.

Except I use dye, and you use oil,
But they both come from the earth
ya know,
minerals and soil.
And we both tell stories that seem to have a moral;
So why is my success somethin you try to foil?

Well I'll switch it up on you,
Show you I can do both.
On the same picture plane, I’ll mix abstract strokes
with a painting of some figures, and a message that triggers
an emotional connection to all my past folks.

So is it mud cloth or oil cloth? Is the question to ask.
But whichever you pick, it's my connection to the past.

So now, is it fine art or a textile?
Well I don't mean to be a let down,
But that's just like asking me; “is that a snake or a reptile?”

It's the same damn thing at the same damn time.

But slavery the only reason I paint that separation line.

Maybe all these symbols could’ve been understood;
Though the translations lost, we still got it in our blood.

Stories only to be understood by those initiated,
now drape the beds of hipsters, keepin’ us separated.

We have to fill the blanks
With slavery to thank
No wonder we tote the hammer or end up robbin banks.

We had to get it out the mud, anyway that we could,
Some of these paths are bad, some of them are good.

Forced to fill the fabric while living in the hood,
Forced to fill the fabric without knowing how to sew,
Forced to fill the fabric some pimp, some hoe.