



Teamwork makes
the dream

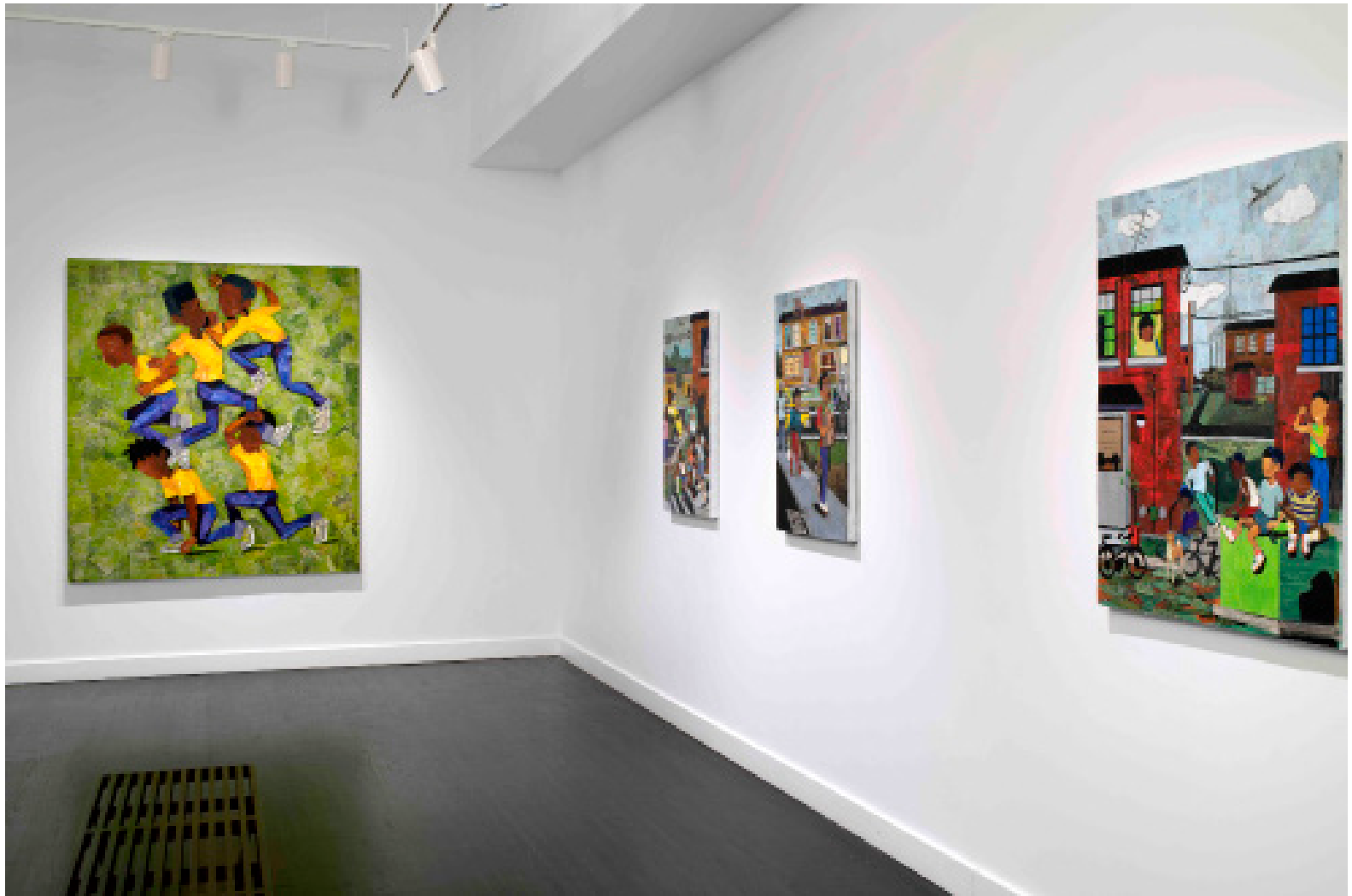
MELVIN L. NESBITT JR.
Your Lil Friends

September 13 – October 25, 2025

Family and
Support



My Sisters With Me
2025
mixed media collage on canvas
64 x 72 inches

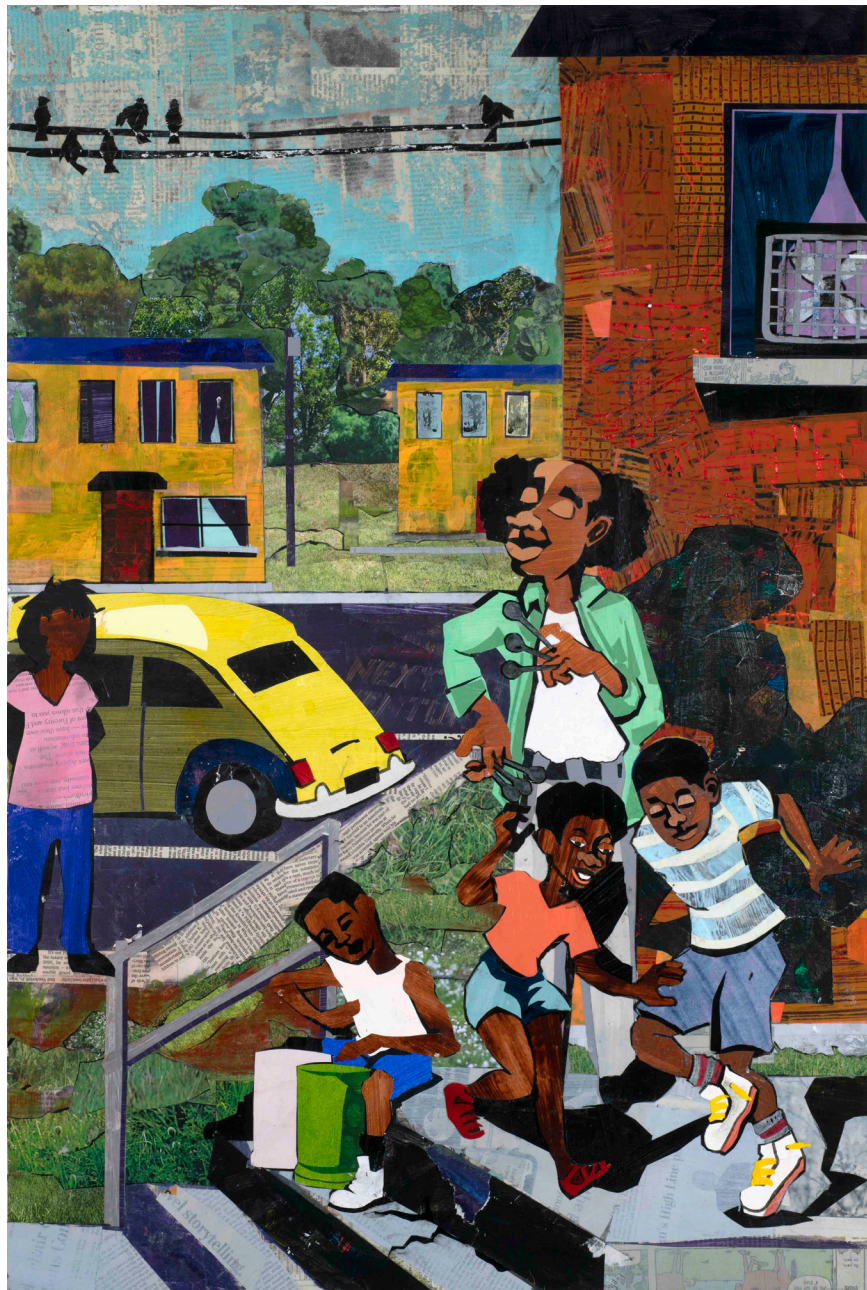




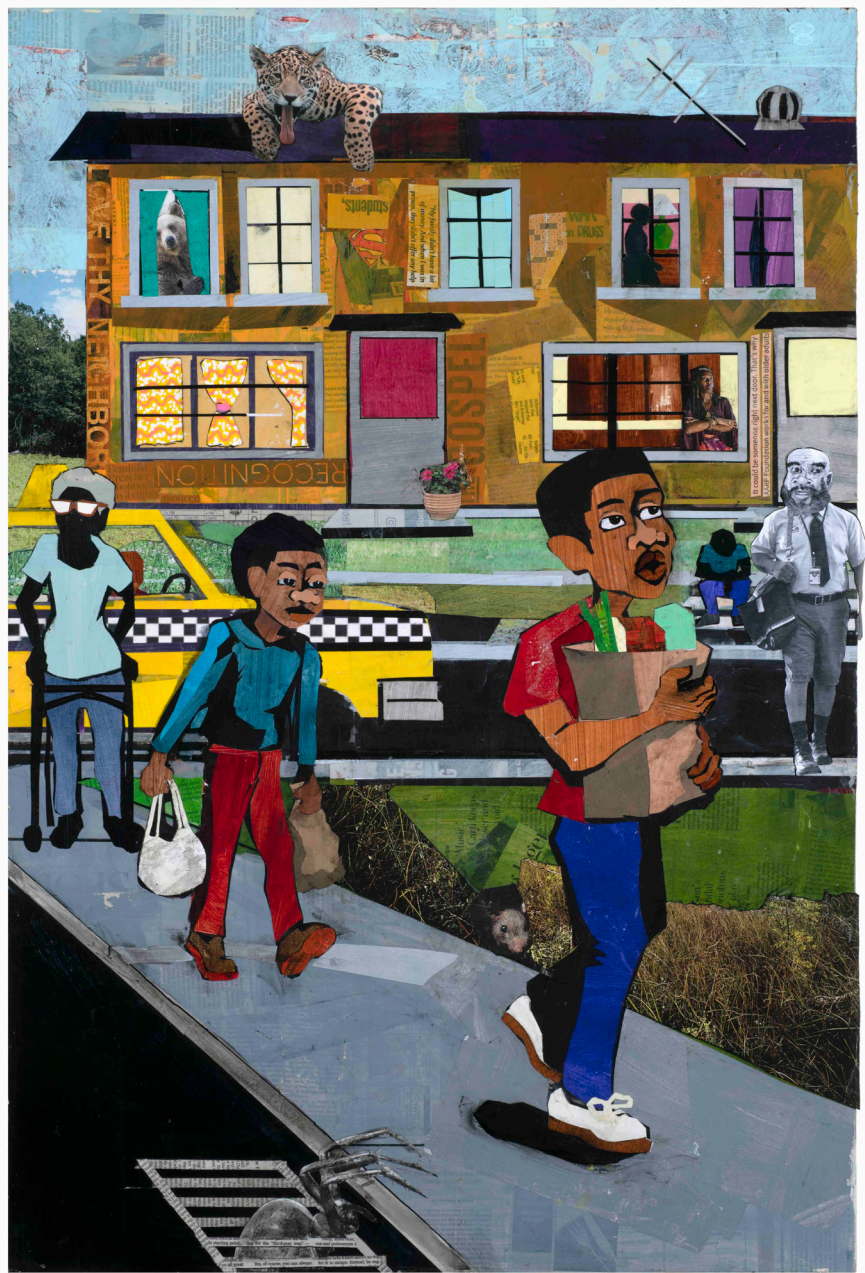
Back Porch Barber
2025
mixed media collage on canvas
64 x 72 inches



My Own Worst Enemy
2024
mixed media collage on canvas
72 x 64 inches



Spoonman
2025
mixed media collage on canvas
36 x 24 inches



Good Deed
2025
mixed media collage on canvas
36 x 24 inches



Green Box
2025
mixed media collage on canvas
40 x 30 inches



Miss Mary
2024
mixed media collage on canvas
72 x 60 inches



24 x 18 inches



Swing Set
2025
mixed media collage on canvas
30 x 48 inches



Lessons from the Babysitter
2025
mixed media collage on canvas
30 x 40 inches



All Together Now
2025
mixed media collage on canvas
30 x 40 inches



Joyful Sounds
2025
mixed media collage on canvas
60 x 72 inches





Plum Tree
2025
mixed media collage on paper
24 x 18 inches

There is little evidence to directly link art to solving a problem, but there is evidence that it opens us up to feeling differently. Could art be a first step? Can it encourage the positive inclinations of humans? These days, we find ourselves seeking common ideals. Throughout the history of visual image-making, subjects have ranged from evil to good to the simply decorative. In retrospect, the art of a particular period reveals itself to possess the character of the time in which it was created. Some artworks have endured over time because of their evocative portrayal of human vulnerability. Portrayals of vulnerability are often incompatible with the commercial ambitions of galleries. This raises concerns about the relevance of the contemporary art gallery in today's world.

We find in the paintings of Melvin L. Nesbitt Jr. something gentle and positive. The narrative of his work portrays children going about their day. What he draws out of us are universal concerns. What is more vulnerable than a child? How can we best understand and nurture children? Do they not exemplify our highest hopes? What can be happier than a child? Dr. Martin Luther King, always quotable, said, "Darkness is not defeated by darkness, darkness is defeated by light." King's words are as applicable today as Nesbitt's paintings.

Your Lil Friends is Melvin L. Nesbitt Jr.'s inaugural exhibition at HEMPHILL. He was born in Spartanburg SC and came to Washington DC in 2006. Nesbitt has completed public murals for the CW Harris Elementary School, Washington, DC (2020) and the District Department of General Services Headquarters, Washington, DC (2023). Since 2021, he has returned to his elementary school to conduct an annual collage workshop for nearly five hundred children. Nesbitt lives and works in Baltimore, MD.

H E M P H I L L

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