

EJ Henderson

Video Transcript

I'm EJ Henderson. I'm a graphic designer in the marketing department with Commerce Bank. At Commerce, I do a lot more than just graphic design. I work with a lot of different people across different teams, where we brainstorm ideas, and we bring things to life across span of different media, from print material to web design, and digital video production.

I'm a multimedia artist in every way.

It doesn't matter if you give me some markers, I can draw you a picture. If you give me some blocks, I could build you something. I often find myself, looking for, like, the next thing to get into. It's always, something that grabs my attention, and I always want to figure out how work. When I hear the term black art, to me, I'm like, well, what is black art?

If I painted a tree, does that make it a black tree? Cause it's it's still it's just art. It's all art. And I feel like when people put the term black on it, sometimes it puts it in a box.

And once it's in that box, people look at it a certain way or they try to digest it a certain way, but if it's art, there's no box to art. That's not the point of it. It's all outside the box. So growing up, there's definitely like some stereotypes placed on to you just being of any kind of race.

So when you make art, they're like, oh, that doesn't look like what I think you would make. And it's like, well, why wouldn't that be what I'd make? It's what I like. Oftentimes, there's pressure to try to fit this box, but there's no box to really fit in, and it's all a mental thing that you get put in sometimes that you gotta overcome.

So I think exploring the unfamiliar, while it's scary, there's always something to be gained from it, and I think that's really exciting. Oftentimes, you don't know it's on the other side of the door until you walk through it. I never thought that a bank would have a dedicated in house, creative department. And so I thought that was really interesting, And the fact that we work in so many different forms and in areas, there's a lot of there's a lot of things to learn.

What Black History Month means to me it's a time of reflection, about the people who came for me. If it wasn't for the people who were pushing boundaries before me, I wouldn't be sitting here now.

And it reminds me of where I'm from and where I'm going because what I do is gonna open doors for other people, after me. So I think it's important to celebrate Black History Month because, just as it inspires me, I think it can inspire anybody. We're talking about generations of people who beat the odds, who push boundaries. Ultimately, these generations of people, have helped craft the world that we all live in, and none of us would be here without them. And I

think that that is inspiring for anyone, whether you think about your family or yourself, we can always overcome and go further.