

Janelle Washington is a paper cut artist from Virginia who explores history, identity, family, and beauty of African-American culture using paper as her medium. While working in the fashion industry, Janelle was presented with an opportunity to display her other artistic talents during a company show and tell presentation. Designing with paper proved to be quite an interesting concept and after extensive research, she designed and made her first paper cut. All her paper cuts and silhouettes are cut using an Exacto knife and one sheet of paper. As a self-taught paper cut artist, Janelle is intrigued by the negative and positive spaces created and the boldness that each of her pieces delivers.

Janelle's artwork retells a story of the past to current and future generations by adding a present-day perspective by empowerment and reflection. She uses silhouettes, geometric lines, patterns, and African Adinkra symbols to represent the pieces, parts, and details to showcase her African American heritage.

Her paper cuts have been exhibited at the 311 Gallery and Artspace in North Carolina, Southeastern Railway Museum in Georgia, Children's National Medical Center in Washington, DC. She has permanent silhouettes housed at the National Institute of Health and Smithsonian National Museum of African-American History and Culture Slavery and Freedom Gallery in Washington, DC. She is also a member of The Guild of American Papercutters.