
A Hoop with No Net

David Jones

Abstract

In the space where photographs elicit memory, I wade between the contours of the metaphor and our ever-present reality to look ahead. The photograph below portrays my cousin Bryan and our favorite pastime growing up. As kids, we would often challenge each other to one-on-one games of basketball. I can still remember my insistent hope that he'd miss every shot. We'd yell "brick!" at one another well before the ball left our dirty fingertips. Every miss became a celebratory moment, and each misstep an inch closer to trading possessions. Now more than ever, I hope he *makes* every shot. In basketball, as in life, we aim for something. From the moment we bend our knees and push away from the ground that holds us, there's no promise of whether the ball goes in; nor is there a guarantee that we will get to play the game again. The precariousness of Black life makes me wary of the possibility of a short game. I hope that we get to play all four quarters, on our terms; I hope that your ball is full of air and your shoes tied tight; I hope your arch is pure and that when the ball goes in the rim, it makes the sound of a hoop with no net.

Keywords

photography, prose, African diaspora, basketball



Photograph by author, 2019.

Author Biography

David Jones is an essayist, photographer, and MA student in the art history and curatorial studies program at York University in Tkaronto. Born in South-Central Los Angeles, David's interdisciplinary research background focuses on photographic history as it relates to the African diaspora. Through careful observation, David's approach is informed by an intersection of scholarship between art history, literature, and Black studies.