Pat Cleveland in Stephen Burrows, 1971

TOMMYE BLOUNT

Understand, lovelies, I’m just a muse meant to mother his vision, enrobed in what manages to escape his penned measure. A tall golden frame, I shake this masterpiece my mother gave me. Stephen’s canvas, a blanket from unbolted shades: mauve, tangerine, maroon, aquamarine, and oh so black. Of this brother’s sketch, this new stitch darning an old fabrication, I toss its bother. A discounted color in disco light, I throw down this hot mustard train, blaze a path to roam, to spin, to parry a dated way—white hands under dark designs. I’m used to turning a mother out. Ah, freak out!—play this blackness waxing on the A side, mister DJ, turn the tables. Feel the rhythm! My feet, hemmed to the metered beat of Stephen’s line: colored outside the lines, future tints that’ll leave white-wined lips parched for more of our big beauty’s tonic. A slave to his own fashion, slave in no one’s house. In this field, there’s no master in gloves he stands under. Of this manse, he is its father and mother.

About the author

Tommye Blount is the author of the chapbook What Are We Not For (Bull City Press) and the full-length collection of poetry Fantasia for the Man in Blue (Four Way Books)—which was finalist for: the National Book Award, the Kate Tufts Discovery Award, the Lambda Literary Award in Gay Poetry, the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award, and others. He is the recipient of commendations, fellowships, and grants from: the Whiting Foundation, Cave Canem, Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference, Kresge Arts in Detroit, and the Aninstantia Foundation. Just a few miles shy of his hometown in Detroit, Tommye now lives in Novi, Michigan.