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#Platano girls serve to empower all women to live unapologetically freely and righteously. My oil paint and mixed media portraits express the beauty and strength in santeria as a method of survival that has been passed on through generations in order to cope with the racism and discrimination people of color face everyday. My portraits create confidence in women by representing the people that are excluded for their individuality or do not fit into the whitewashed feminism that excludes a majority of the population. As a woman of color I aspire to make *Platano Girls* a platform and movement in the simplest form of a hashtag to open up a safe space where instead of receiving ridicule, judgement, violence or policing; sexual confidence should be received with love and support from others who may relate and can connect with the struggles. The people depicted in my work are venerated in the act of painting and symbolically adorned with sacred objects from santeria. I see my work developing into representation of women of color, then establishing the strength of women as a fundamental aspect to be normalized in societies that one do not acknowledge nor respect the women's' role. The lack of representation hinders women from expressing themselves without support. Representation of people of color in art has created a stigmatism of women of color as hypersexual beings. In response I print on clothing imagery of women of color expressing their beauty. The images reference real women around the world who could be role models to the next generation of women of color. I implore women to embrace characteristics that media shames them on like dark skin, stretch marks, mental illness, acts like crying or outward anger. The unavoidable brightness that people of color exude is what drives my work. It's is loud and blinding like the light that reflects off satin.



Brujas, oil on canvas, 2018.