

# FORT GANSEVOORT



## Cheryl Pope "I'VE BEEN HEARD"

Opening On:

Thursday, November 30, 6 – 8 PM

During the summer of 2016, Cheryl Pope spent three weeks visiting NYC neighborhood park district basketball courts listening to youth reflect on the importance and impact of streetball.

These conversations shed light on how the game influenced their identity both on and off the court. Pope collected statements generated from these conversations and produced them as official Championship Banners elevating them into championship statements in the series titled *I'VE BEEN HEARD*. These voices positioned side by side represent the team of NYC Youth today expressing the importance of the game and its impact on developing both independency and community. Statements such as I AM

DEDICATED, I ENCOURAGE PEOPLE, and I GOT FAMILY reveal the values youth define within themselves and for each other.

Public Parks to this day exist as one of the very few remaining spaces that are designed to be democratic: free and open to all.

NYC youth today continue to use these inclusive spaces as an opportunity to self discover while living in a country that seeks to predetermine their destiny.

I'VE BEEN HEARD is a celebration of youth voices as they share statements that define the future they are becoming.

Displayed along side the championship banners are five All-American Varsity Letterman Jackets. Each embellished with a youth statement, these limited edition jackets, five of each style, represent the team, the family, and the lessons learned and shared by the young players. Using All-American varsity aesthetics, Pope activates this intersection as an opportunity to bring visibility to the systems that distinguish those we hear and to champion those we don't / Those we need to.

*Cheryl Pope is a visual artist focused in sculpture, installation, and performance. Her work questions and responds to issues of identity as it relates to the individual and the community, specifically in regards to race, gender, class, history, power and place. Her practice emerges from the act and politics of listening. Pope received her BFA and MD from the School of the Art Institute Chicago, where she is now a full time Professor in the Fashion Department. She is represented by Monique Meloche Gallery in Chicago, and Galleria Bianconi in Milan. Pope studied under the artist Nick Cave for 12 years, was a teaching artist at the Museum of Contemporary Art for 7 years, and worked in multiple community based organizations throughout Chicago since 2003. After winning the Chicago Golden Gloves Boxing Tournament in 2014, Pope continues to train and teach boxing to youth in communities and adults at SOHO House Chicago.*