

Statement 1:

Artist Background

I was born in 1965 and raised in the most visited border in the world, Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico. A highly industrialized, cross-cultural and international city, Tijuana is the place of constant change, international commerce and pseudo-American post-modern living. Without a doubt, my early artistic development was markedly influenced by the socio-political conditions afflicting Tijuana and the San Diego, California, area where I lived after post-high school in Mexico.

The dichotomy of life within these two worlds, the “south” (Mexico) and the “north” the (United States), was an important influencing artistic factor. I quickly learned to adapt developing my own individual artistic and cultural identity, while retaining a deep socio-cultural curiosity for my surroundings and a strong visual design identity and ultimately a persistent tenacity to do art.

In 1985, I moved to San Diego to pursue formal graphic design and art studies. The move was a risk but it afforded me with [artistic and economic] opportunities to refine my art craft and ultimately route a cross-cultural career path in branding. This led me to a number of international branding agencies which eventually brought me to Minnesota in late 90’s where I launched my own cross-cultural branding agency and art studio.

Current Artistic Direction

Today, as a trans-disciplinary artist that specializes in non-commercial and commercial art design work for both urban and gallery art settings, I explore cross-cultural issues in multiple mediums including: traditional Mexican paper cutting, silkscreen, traditional and digital illustration, mixed-media painting on canvas and on recycle corrugated boxes, wheat paste and urban art installations.

In these most recent years, I have been exploring the technique of the colorful and vivacious Mexican hand cut paper or ‘Papel Picado,’ an art form traced to the 18th century when paper was imported to Mexico from China. My rendition of the technique utilizes digital visual scans, computer art and large format printing.

Future Artistic Direction

My future artistic direction is a natural progression of my current work. I plan to capitalize on my experience in branding communications, story telling and urban art and to combine these disciplines into one new artistic language that I feel is right for me and the new cross-culture demographics in urban cities. Additionally, I feel connected to the on-going renewed local, national and global efforts to revitalize urban centers through art by making it easily accessible to and consumable by urban residents.

The McKnight Grant would afford me with the necessary capital to:

- 1) to devote and explore more time to my art craft and urban artwork
- 2) to invest the necessary time in developing my art studio capabilities to put back on track my future innovative trans-disciplinary work and
- 3) to dedicate resources to make my art easily accessible to local minority residents who typically don’t go to museum or art galleries.