“Bloom”

In my journey as an artist, I have found fear to be the greatest obstacle when creating. The fear of failure can often hold us back, paralyzing and preventing us from ever accomplishing the great things we are meant to do. Every time we try something that is outside of our comfort zone we feel it and overcoming it is necessary for our personal growth. All together, the art in this utility box serves as an allegory for conquering fear, what is needed to do so, and the outcome of it.

I see blooming as the outcome of defeating fear. One must feel the depths of despair, fear, and hopelessness in order to experience freedom, confidence, and faith. Much like a seed must be buried onto the ground first and left in darkness before its flowers can bloom. This is why there are two opposite sides in this box. One is the encounter with fear and the other its defeat. Oftentimes, we idealize our fears and make them big in our minds. They seem like these powerful and scary things that we have no chance at defeating. However, once you face them, you realize that they are much smaller than you thought. It takes courage to face your greatest fears and conquer them but once you do, you bloom.

The flower at top was the final touch that I believe encompasses this message and serves as a reward for the curious people that take the time to get up close to the box to see it all. I like to think of it as being able to see the flower that blooms at the top of the saguaro on the box’s side that faces the street. In which we see the premise of the artwork (The cockatiel hiding from the snake). We all have our time to bloom, and it is dictated by our decision to face our biggest fears.

Bio

It was the year of 1998, when Fernando Cabrera Gonzalez was born. Fernando spent the first fifteen-years of his life living in a small border town named “San Luis Rio Colorado” located in the state of Sonora in Mexico. At the age of 11, Fernando became a resident of the United States. Later in 2014, he became a naturalized citizen while attending high school in Arizona.

2012 was a turbulent year for him. This was the year that he made the transition to attend school in the U.S. While living in Mexico. His lack of fluency in English led him to struggle not only academically, but also socially. In a desperate attempt to express himself, Fernando found his voice in painting.

Through art classes, Fernando developed his painting skills. In 2016, he was awarded the Obama Scholarship which allowed him to attend Arizona State University. During his college years, he started looking back at the chaotic years when he was always between places. Always running back and forth between two cultures, two countries, and what felt like two different identities. This is when Fernando decided to tell his story through his paintings, to inspire hope to those who live in the same identity limbo.

From 2016 to 2020, Fernando took part in many art exhibitions in and outside of the university galleries. In 2019, he was awarded the Honors Studio at ASU. This allowed him to submerge himself into his work and develop it even further. He graduated from Arizona State University with a bachelor’s degree of fine arts in May 2020. Shortly After Graduating Fernando was selected as a finalist for the AXA XL Art Prize hosted by the Academy of Art in New York and juried by major curators from institutions such as the MET, and the Brooklyn Museum. Today, Fernando continues his practice in the Sonoran Desert. On both sides of the border.