



ARTIST STATEMENT

My artistic practice is multidisciplinary, investigating traditional and digital mediums and the intersection of the housing crisis, gentrification, and climate change. As a native of the Coachella Valley who moved to Los Angeles at the age of eighteen, the juxtaposition inspired me to document and archive these distinct regions as I experienced them. In my artworks, I often experiment with found materials and digital mediums sourced from the landscape I am painting. The colors used to traditionally paint the landscape are often muted and neutral. Chromatic details, layers, or three-dimensional models are later incorporated to capture the dichotomies between the past and future. After repeatedly dissecting and alternating these environments, I reluctantly accept that the landscape is ever-changing.

Evidently, the wealth gap is widening and low-income families in Los Angeles are adversely affected by a housing shortage that compels them to the exurbs or out of state. The municipality's response to the housing crisis allowed historically brown and Black neighborhoods to be gentrified rather than focusing on sustainability and equity. Digital layers are applied in my work to reference gentrification and single-family sprawl in that digital layers are not permanent and can easily be altered—paralleling how the landscape continuously morphs. Augmented Reality (AR) lenses often accompany my paintings to immerse the viewer into the scene to amplify my concerns and not allow people to ignore the housing and climate crisis. Concerned with accessibility and equity to housing, I ensured the AR experience was also accessible, often only requiring a cellular device with a camera and internet connection. With AR lenses, viewers can interact with my paintings in ways that were previously unimaginable to me.

Due to restrictive single-family zoning ordinances and a lack of housing density, Los Angeles is experiencing a critical housing crisis. The proliferation of tract homes in xeric and flammable areas does not address the climate and housing crisis. If anything, it exacerbates them. As more people move away from the city, traffic congestion becomes progressively severe and we see more car dependency—contributing to our carbon emissions and vehicle accidents. The sun, fire, homes, and memorial crosses have become motifs within my work to reference the consequences of single-family sprawl. Being from the boondocks, it is easy to feel small and forgotten, so painting the repercussions of low-density housing and the exurbs on large canvas makes it harder for people to ignore and, hopefully, address it. It is cruel that more affordable housing is not being built in Los Angeles to prevent people from moving to places like the desert, where the weather can be unbearable, people are greatly car-dependent, and there is a lack of diversity, community resources, and educational and economic opportunities.