

Bio

Born and raised in the city of Los Angeles, Armen Antaramian procured a love for art at a young age. Growing up, he worked with different mediums and explored a variety of designs in the world of graffiti. As a self-taught artist, his style evolved over the years, creating a truly authentic form of abstract. His paintings can be seen as non-traditional and innovative, taking from his environment and utilizing a bright colored palette filled with movement. He received his Bachelor's in Psychology with a minor in Visual Public Art at California State University, Monterey Bay. Each piece not only challenges him mentally but physically.

Artist Statement

. With a background in psychology, my artwork revolves around the intersection of the human psyche. My undying passion for art motivates me to design pieces from a combination of materials, with acrylic paint as the primary medium. Like other artists, I aim to express my interpretation of the world, while alluding to familiar aspects of our physical realm. My work embodies a dream-like state, one without rigid structure or overbearing instruction. Additionally, I employ the fundamental techniques used in painting as well as graffiti. By experimenting with optical illusions, perspectives, and geometry, my art gains an elevated degree of complexity, yet can still be understood by all. Creativity keeps me going, with each piece coming out different from the next.

My approach is all about process and immersing myself in my work. Color for me is a fundamental yet imperative tool. My brand and motto, *NoThisIsArt*, illustrates there is not a single correct perspective of viewing or defining art. Most of my work has been able to successfully achieve a balance between the traditional and contemporary values of art today. I strive to create an inclusive atmosphere with the acceptance of multiple perspectives and various influences.

Statement of purpose

My purpose in applying for graduate study is to learn the skills necessary to create public spaces for artistic expression. I want to create spaces for men, women and children of all ages to create their own art in a collective expression of self. I want to learn the skills and marketing necessary to create these spaces for my community. I want to work with other like minded artists and businesses. Growing as an adult from community college and struggling to live with my parents, I transferred to (which one?)University which made the biggest difference in my life today. My study habits significantly improved as well as my artistic inspiration. Being independent and involved with my school, I developed the confidence in myself which then translated to my artwork.

Coming from a diverse environment, I maintain a perspective that allows me to relate to others. As an avid rock climber, I climb at various gyms and attend their social events. With various community climb nights, these gyms embrace all cultures and genders. Inspired by these welcoming and open gatherings, I want to build similar spaces for artists. In doing so, local artists can come together to enhance their skills, share

constructive criticism and have a space to be themselves. Granted the opportunity to study at UCLA, I intend to involve the community in art projects that bring people together and integrate shared cultural experience.

Having completed a mural course, I understand the importance of bringing art into the public as well as enhancing community empowerment. I intend to create change through the arts with the hope of inspiring collective creativity as well as self-knowledge. Seeing the world in a disruptive state, we need art that makes people think critically in order to bring back unity. During my undergraduate studies, I enhanced professional expertise, to creating a profitable business to sell my work. Since I moved back to Los Angeles, I've been networking and displaying my work in various galleries, including the Tag Gallery in West Hollywood and the Arts District Brewery. I currently have three of my paintings on display at Groundwork Coffee in DTLA and have two paintings featured on the Showtime television series *The Chi*. UCLA's MFA program would help me achieve my goal as an artist by collaborating and receiving constructive criticism by my colleagues and faculty members. I would take advantage of UCLA's vast array of opportunities and learn from its profound faculty.

One of my favorite professors, Barbara Kruger, embodies what my art stands for. Prof. Kruger has shown artists why it is important to use meaningful symbolism and imagery to represent the intricate realities of humanity. UCLA's art program will also grant me the ability to teach others how to understand and shape the world through artistic perspectives. This MFA program will not only transform my devoted dedication into reality, but also allow me to spark change through art.

Personal Statement

Art has always been more than an enjoyable pastime for me. Painting and visual arts have served as my emotional outlet, a form of personal expression, and a vehicle for intimate connection to others. Throughout my Orthodox Armenian preliminary education, I found personal issue with much of the rhetoric perpetuated by the establishment and found deep understanding and comfort in the arts; Art grounded me. I realized that painting and the visual arts created an avenue for true internal dialogue. Although I grew up in an Armenian family, absorbing the culture and values of art and science, I deviated from the norm by challenging the traditional social constructs and pursuing art. I began skateboarding at the age of ten; the same year I became a member at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). What started as playful visits to the museum grew to be the foundation for the self-expression within my work.

My experiences as a child growing up in Los Angeles and my educational experience have confirmed my belief that we all need to support one another, where we can through art. We can create and present opportunities to a diverse group of people to participate in events together, to bring the underrepresented community together through artistic expression. I understand that there are inherent barriers to education in socio-economically marginalized communities. I have always worked to create opportunities for expression and understanding through art in a continual dialogue with my community. One of the main highlights I've gained across every place I worked with, whether as an

advisor or counselor or artist, was working in communities and empowering others one step at a time

Having both parents attend graduate school showed me the importance they were committed to improving their skills by continuing education. I am sure I want to specialize in this field. I selected your highly regarded university to achieve my dream of becoming a formally trained artist. I have the confidence that I have the required qualifications, ambitions, determination, and competency to be part of the highly esteemed UCLA students' community. Collaborating and receiving constructive criticism from profound faculty members at UCLA would help me hone and perfect my style. Attending UCLA will hopefully be a stepping stone for opportunities to collaborate with other artists in creating grand projects.