

2006/2007 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships Kraus Family Foundation Award



FELIPE ARTURO

Fine art

Graduate

Columbia University School of the Arts

I grew up in the last period of the “partial collapse of the state” in Colombian history. The first one was in the fifties, a period called “la violencia” (the violence) that was the last of a series of bi-partisan civil wars started in the nineteenth century. The second one began in the eighties and was a combination of the wars of the state against the drug-cartels narco-terrorism and the war between the extreme leftwing insurgents, the criminal groups of the extreme right, and the formal army. There were massacres, urban terrorism, massive kidnapping, selective disappearances, political assassinations, systematic extortions, torture, corruption, forceful displacement and all these currently goes on. This war is involved in our everyday life, nevertheless some create an illusive reality thinking it is possible to not look there. Most Colombians do; for some of them it is the strategy for leading a “normal life”. The consequence of the indifference is a country that imposes oblivion and forces the lack of memory. There, influenced by contemporary artists, I found the intangible but fundamental sense of art for a society, “trying to turn oblivion into presence” as Colombian artist Doris Salcedo wrote. As I reexamine the trajectory of my artistic practice, from the ethereal presence of video to the tangible presence of sculpture I see my future practice as a place for experiencing ethics and to engage a concern for the other. Hopefully there will be a time when I will adopt a practice of education fully related with my own practice of art.

