

2009/10 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships Coyne Family Foundation Award

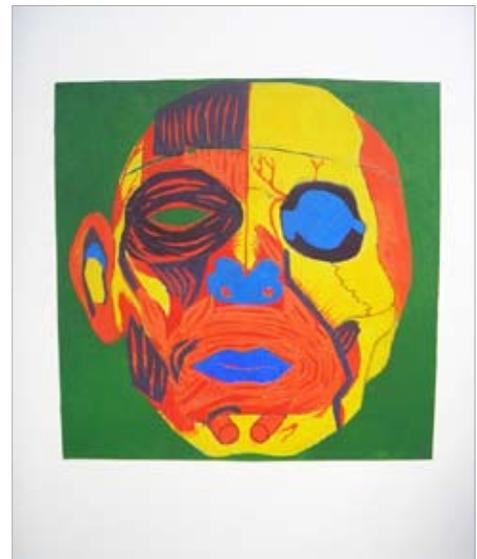


DIEGO TORRES

Illustration
Sophomore
Pratt Institute

Nineteen years ago, in Tarrytown, NY, I acquired my mother's vision for the visual arts. As the backdrop changed from village to urban Bogotá, Colombia, to suburban Weston, FL, to multicultural Brooklyn, NY, this inheritance manifested in the following ways: throughout childhood I demonstrated interest in the arts and excelled among my art classmates. As a teenager, art teachers recognized my talent with awards, I got involved in art clubs, and to enhance my passion for art history and the arts community I interned at the Norton Museum of Art. Believing that my potential would make me an outstanding student in the communicative arts, I transferred to Pratt Institute, volunteered at on-campus galleries and studios, did a work-study assistantship at the Jaffe Center for the Book Arts, and contributed with my artwork.

Growing up in an environment supportive of creativity, I always envisioned myself as either a scientist or an artist. My childhood teachers made art and science extremely interesting, and the fact that my parents provided me with materials,



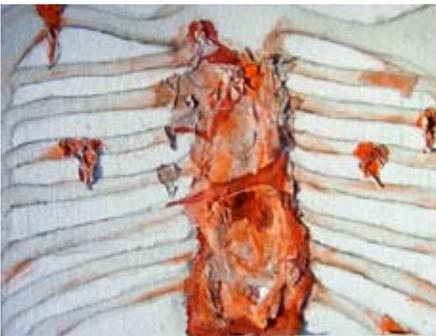
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the professional association for design

DIEGO TORRES

Illustration



science books and kits enhanced my curiosity even further. In addition, I have always enjoyed working on projects, doing research and being in laboratories just as much as in the art studio. And through illustration I can merge both occupations as one, even if I don't have the expertise of a scientist, I still find beauty and wonder in biology, geology, history and nature. In my own personal work I explore anatomy by interchanging it with objects that have a resemblance. Once I graduate and work as an anatomical illustrator, I would like to make the subject fun to younger audiences. Since the real occupation of an artist is to serve as a voice that contributes to society, I have made this a mandatory part of my self-expression. So to further enhance my communication skills, I am majoring in communication design (emphasis in illustration), which will teach me how to be an effective contributor through its integration of three vital fields: design, illustration and advertising. This interrelation will allow me to express ideas through multiple channels, while combining interactive media, either through publishing, editorial or advertising. Such a form of communication is ideal, because I will be facilitating understanding of the greater meaning or, simply put, doing the work of an illustrator: linking images to the written word and serving as the visual aid to the text. I am also motivated by the idea of sharing an accurate image. And lastly, I will be making connections and illustrating what others may not see; this in turn will enlighten them. That is to say, my self-expression will not only be for myself, but for the people as well, for art is about communication.

A community is composed of multiple contributors, each with their own specialty and ability. I landed the role of an artist. This means that, contrary to popular belief, art has societal functions. The field of visual arts and communications requires for a social and environmental awareness, which I am always hungry for, and I continue developing it in my observant, thoughtful and curious approach. Also, being born to Colombian parents, having traveled around the world and having lived overseas, I bring a different perception to the table. And regardless of how diverse art can be, its exploration and practice give me discipline. It is this kind of training, variety, production and contribution that I seek in a career.