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Artist's Statement

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Artist's Statement

Denise Rodriguez

Throughout my education, I moved over eight times. My home was always with my family and I would follow them wherever they went. Time after time however, my community was ridden with crimes that would be easily excusable in more affluent neighborhoods. We were always wary of the police and made sure to have any relevant documents readily accessible. In my town, calling the police was not always a form of safety but a more of a threat to the community. Growing up in these dark times was unsustainable as a child, so I decided to find hope through my artwork. My art teacher once told me I was a waste of talent for pursuing economics, but she never understood the life I lived or the deaths I experienced. She did not understand the pressure and tokenization put upon a first-generation Mexicana student to over perform to the point of exhaustion. Nevertheless, I still make watercolor portraits of revolutionary Latinx figures while understanding the economic factors of immigration. Liberation is a complicated art piece that may never be resolved, but it most definitely does not lie in incarceration.