

Tapestries: Interwoven voices of local and global identities

Volume 11
Issue 1 *Controlled Burn*

Article 1

2022

Artist Statement

Anjali Moore
Macalester College, amoore4@macalester.edu

Nicole V. Salazar
nsalazar@macalester.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/tapestries>

Recommended Citation

Moore, Anjali and Salazar, Nicole V. (2022) "Artist Statement," *Tapestries: Interwoven voices of local and global identities*: Vol. 11 : Iss. 1 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/tapestries/vol11/iss1/1>

This Introduction is brought to you for free and open access by the American Studies Department at DigitalCommons@Macalester College. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Tapestries: Interwoven voices of local and global identities* by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@Macalester College. For more information, please contact scholarpub@macalester.edu.

Artist Statement

Anjali Moore and Nicole (Nic) Salazar

The artwork used for the cover of this Tapestries edition was a preliminary sketch drawn by Nicole (Nic) Salazar for the creation of the American Studies department bulletin board. Our artist statement for the board is as follows:

This board represents a collaborative effort among seniors in American Studies (Class of 2022) to visually represent our field of study and our capstone projects. The topics we consider in American Studies at Macalester center around deconstructing whiteness and radical thought and praxis--what the right-wing erroneously labels "Critical Race Theory." We push for decolonizing white institutions and centering BIPOC perspectives. We subscribe to abolitionist principles. We hope for an antiracist and equitable world that intentionally rejects capitalist norms and state repression.

Our title for this board, "(Un) American Studies," has two meanings. During the 1950s and '60s, in a period sometimes referred to as the McCarthy Era, the U.S. Congress formed the House Un-American Activities Committee. HUAC investigated and terrorized people for views that were critical of society and politics, labeling them "communist" and contributing to anti-Communist hysteria. Our title also asks: What does "American" even mean? Who belongs here? What actions are taken in the name of a nation built on genocide, land theft, war, racism, and exploitation? We do not align ourselves with the actions of HUAC, but we feel sympathy with the people and groups they were attacking.

Burn it all down! Burning sounds destructive but in our rethinking of flames, burning entails more than destruction--it also signals new growth. Indigenous people have used "controlled burns" to maintain environmental cycles. While a fire burns, seeds can actually germinate as the heat makes their shells crack or the kernels explode. Out of these fires, new life is allowed to flourish. Where this Indigenous practice has been suppressed, the lack of controlled burns has led to bigger and recurring wildfires--and more wanton, unplanned destruction.

In order to usher in a new future that is liberatory for all forms of life on this planet, we need to control burn. Only in this way will we be able to reframe, reimagine, and construct a better world. Each

seed depicted here--waiting to crack, to explode--represents our capstone projects, which will be free and available to any reader who accesses the newest volume of Tapestries.

