

Jorge Guzman  
Por Una Vida Mejor

“We had no food or water left anymore mijo. The journey seemed impossible, but it was that grain of faith that kept me going”. My father, Jaime, was explaining the extreme dangers and obstacles that an undocumented immigrant can encounter within the treacherous journey through the US-Mexico border that promises a better future for individuals, a safer environment to raise a family, and a sense of survivability. Jaime decided to escape his neighborhood in Mexico that had many social issues like crime, poverty, scarce job opportunities that were affecting the financially disadvantaged civilians of the state of Michoacán. Jaime took on the pressure of attempting to provide and promise his family a better life. Leaving politics aside, this is a matter of survival. Many people in other parts of the world can be born into harsh living conditions that can include extreme poverty, violence, crime, corruption and racism but one thing remains intact and that is the love and admiration one can hold within ourselves for our roots, cultures and loved ones that are left behind in our home-countries.

My name is Jorge Guzman, I am a practicing urban-contemporary artist. I was first introduced into art with graffiti and urban art and later meshed graffiti art along with contemporary fine-arts. In many of these personal pieces, there’s an incorporation of a narrative that depicts the struggles of being an undocumented immigrant in a subtle way. At other times there is a depiction of a representation of Mexican culture and roots along with the struggles one can face in the motherland like corruption, violence, and poverty.

“*Por una Vida Mejor*” is a painting that tells a narrative of the journey a Mexican immigrant can encounter while attempting to enter the USA illegally. This painting portrays the struggle and hope of living in the United States as an undocumented immigrant protected by DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). This piece consists of many layers using traditional mediums but also incorporates “street” mediums as well, such as spray paint and mops. Stencils are a significant part of these paintings as they hold the symbolic meaning of hope within the piece. These stencils are multi-layered stencils of Catholic religious imagery and also stencils of my fiancée, Evelyn, as she represents hope and comfort. In the middle of the chaos, my “amor” Evelyn, has always been just a phone call away. I am Jorge Guzman, a first-generation Mexican immigrant passionate about art & immigrant culture.

### Bibliography

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