



What's on the other side

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When I sketched the drawing for my project, I immediately had a vision of what I wanted it to be. I wanted the piece to have a sense of dysfunctionality and symbolism to communicate how immigrants are often not integrated into American society. I recently visited El Paso, Texas, and heard and read about the relocation of immigrants who arrive in Texas to other cities via buses. I thought the relocation process epitomized not dealing with the problem and merely setting it aside. I drew inspiration from that injustice to include buses in my project as a symbol.

I initially sketched my idea on a piece of printer paper with a standard pencil. I knew I wanted a desert, a city, buses, a road, and a church, and my teacher requested the inclusion of surrealism. I transferred my sketch to the door and began painting with acrylic paint and house paint that was lying around. I used a paint marker to do the lettering, and the piece took about 12 hours over 3-4 sessions to complete.

My piece starts with a woman at the bottom, a desert scene with cacti, a winding road, and a bus in front of a church, a non-governmental organization (NGO). A grass field and a setting sky are on the other side of the road. A city is lying in the sky, and on the upper right side, the road breaks apart and does not reach the city.

The door has two sides, which indicate different meanings. There is a desert scene in the lower half, representing the southern half of the border, and a scene with a church and city, representing the U.S. half of the border. There is a bus stop that reads in Spanish, and a quote underneath that reads in English. There is often a language barrier for immigrants, so I intentionally put the bus stop in Spanish, as it can appeal to people trying to get further into the U.S. and establish roots here. The quote in English is more about how the relocation process is typically unhelpful and inhumane in many ways. Further in the scene is a road with a bus that approaches a city but never actually reaches it. Although many immigrants are relocated to some major cities, they are never truly integrated into society.