

ARTIST BIO

Javier González was born in Bogota, Colombia in 1978. He currently resides and pursues an art career in Detroit, Michigan. His interest in art and creativity began at an early age. Primarily self-taught, he has continued to build on the skills learned early in his education. Pursuing a desire to create high relief in his work, Javier developed a technique called “piping.” Through piping paint, he creates looms that are woven with an infinity of colorful media. Javier uses colorful, often iridescent, rustic, new and found materials to create futuristic sculptural tapestries. He began exploring this technique in 2012 and — by testing different materials and approaches — he was able to reach the depth he was seeking by 2016. Although he has been fully piping since 2018, he recognizes the importance of practice and production to ensure growth in his craftsmanship and skill. Javier is influenced by the aesthetics and discipline of fashion, especially Chanel couture, the Afro-Colombian culture of San Basilio de Palenque, African American culture in Detroit and the city itself.

Javier had always subconsciously used art to visually represent personal experiences, spiritual lessons, and emotions. In August of 2020, he participated in the *Grandma Exhibition* at the Kayrod Gallery. This event demonstrated his creative path intertwined with the legacies of his grandmothers’ craftsmanship. This realization brought him to explore his African and Indigenous roots. Afro-Colombian people used the arts to communicate strategies and routes to freedom among each other during slavery. Today, they preserve this legacy of the arts within their own families. Embracing this history has encouraged Javier to carry on his family's legacy and healing process through art, including the *Roadmaps to Freedom* series, which he began in 2020.

The practice of art affords Javier many stimulating experiences. He raised funds for his own kidney transplant in 2018 by auctioning his artwork at Oloman Gallery. He also had the privilege to curate and organize projects for institutions such as the Heidelberg Project and Mack Alive. In 2019, after the success of the *Heidelbergers* installation design, he and his team held *The Quit Bitchin’ Design Team Open House* at the Heidelberg Project Headquarters. Javier’s work has been included in many other exhibitions throughout metro Detroit, including: *Bombay Sapphire Series* (2012) at N’Namdi Center for Contemporary Art; *Murals in The Market* (2019) at Eastern Market; *Bonded* (2021 and 2022); the *Gilda Snowden Memorial Exhibition* (2021) at The Scarab Club Detroit; *Mighty Real Queer Detroit* (2022); *Art in Detroit: Now!* (2022); *The Secret Garden Art Pop-Up Show* (2020, 2021, and 2022); *Family Tree* and *Shades of Blackness* at Brix Wine (2023 and 2024, respectively); and *The Power of Abstraction* at the Toledo Museum of Art (2023).