

Erika Nunez

I am for an art that will say I existed, that I was here. I am for an art that upsets and excites and makes you squirm a little from both. I am for an art that forgives the girls who broke my heart. I am for an art that reminds me to feel remorse about girls whose hearts I broke. I am for an art that says I am not afraid of hell. I am for an art that I will never be able to show my parents. I am for an art that states I have the right to love and be loved, despite what society has told me. I am for an art that says being raised Christian was a result of imperialism and colonialism. I am for an art that doesn't negate my parents' beliefs but rather makes a new space for my own. I am for an art that outs me. I am for an art that reminds me of how far I've come from the days I thought I'd have to lie about who I was forever. I am for an art that puts the girls my parents warned me about on a pedestal. I am for an art that reminds me of mornings in someone else's bed. I am for art that reminds me of every person I have ever loved (cause you are in there, somewhere). I am for an art that comforts me about all the mistakes I made trying to figure out who I was or where I was going. I am for an art that reclaims everything I was told I could not have or be. I am for an art that tells others, "here is someone like me." I am for an art that serves as a physical reminder to never let myself feel shame or self-hate ever again. I am for an art that reminds me that my identity and existence is something to be celebrated.

And while they'll never see these works, I'd like to thank my parents for the sacrifices they made for me. Thank you to my professors for mentoring me throughout this year and also to my fellow majors for their invaluable emotional support. To my dear friends—thank you for putting up with me. And last but not least, I send love to a very special individual—I've learned the meaning of reverence through your company.

Please send any inquiries to: guadalupe@guadalupenunez.com