

Juror's Statement

In reviewing the numerous works submitted to Arts Benicia's recent call for *Tattoo You*, I was excited and impressed by the breadth of interpretation of how artists engaged with the meaning and idea of tattoos. Tattooing, as defined by the insertion of inks, dyes, and/or pigments into the skin, embodies a broad spectrum of meaning, especially when considered through a non-Western lens of experience. An entire community can be involved in the process of tattooing, creating moments of genuine transcendence beyond a singular individual experience. Yet, the solitary process of tattooing oneself can also generate mystical and meditative experiences that also lead to unfiltered transcendence.

In jurying this exhibition, I selected works I felt could broaden the conversation about how tattoos are understood not only as examples of actual practice but also understood as a much broader ideology/methodology/philosophy that points to how ubiquitous the art form is in our lives. Hopefully, you leave this exhibition with a richer and more nuanced understanding of tattoos as an art form that exists both within and beyond the flash sheet of your local tattoo parlor. Please support our local shops if you are inspired to get a tattoo!

Kevin B. Chen - Juror, Tattoo You