

## Curator's Statement

Thomas Motley

The exhibit, ANIMUS, pairs the artwork of Genevieve Armstrong and Juan Cruz.

The work is about identity, individually and collectively. Each of these artists seeks a kind of recovery, a restoration of dignity and purpose within the human body and spirit. Their work is a confrontation against personal lethargy and public complacency, a reclamation of individual integrity and communal responsibility.

Juan Cruz seeks to identify the lost. In particular, his central focus for over two years has been the subject of the 43 students who vanished from Iguala, Guerrero, on September 26, 2014. Juan's critique of the failure of official bureaucratic mechanisms to protect even the least among us, clarifies the vulnerability of all to the vagaries of economic power.

Animus is about identity, persona, and conventional public perception of who we are. It is an independent cry to be heard, to be acknowledged, from within the body politic.

As Juan has turned his skeptic's eye on the loss of humanity and dignity in the social, public arena, Genn has gone inward.

Questioning the most intimate aspects of her own identity and humanity, Genn has delved into a personal exploration of that fragile landscape of the psyche. Her work is a thundering refusal to accept echoes of ancient voices from art history and fashion, that, to Genn's ears, continue to sum up her very 'being' as simply an object of gender.

Both artists share an enthusiasm for rendering accomplished, mimetic images of face and body. Each has described their method as essentially "drawing" with various colored media on paper, board and canvas. Genn's ability to produce volumetric illusion enhances the viewer's experience of interaction with the tactile portrait before them. Juan's dramatic compositions amplify the desperation of his confined or missing figures.

Genevieve Armstrong is a defender of the individual, and ultimately speaks to a hope of integrity for each of us, an appeal to our androgenous selves.

Juan Cruz is a defender of the concept of *citizen*, the core of any proclaimed Republic.

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