

*Kristen Palana*

*Short Artist Statement*

My work is a manifestation. I compose vivid colors and enticing patterns that consume my images with a mystical essence. What began as a style developed through decades as an animator, illustrator, and digital artist has taken new tangible forms as I embrace my roots in painting and drawing. The work, which started as expressions of hope and good fortune for individuals, has transformed into an artistic practice seeking the realization of greater collective aspirations.

Unveiling the great dichotomies of the universe; the traditional and the new, the ancient and the modern, and the personal and the collective; I use my personal journey as a well of inspiration. Inspired by my work across the globe, my American and Portuguese roots, and growing up in a small Massachusetts town, I am eager to reveal the cross-cultural threads, symbols, and visual languages that unseemingly unite us all. Inspired by the artisans and artists across Asia and Africa, whose work is often overlooked on a global scale, I pull together a diverse array of symbols, patterns, palettes of colors, and subjects. Together, they form rearrangeable shapes that facilitate new connections. In this rapidly globalizing world, my works illuminate notions of cultural empathy, forging new connections rather than reinforcing perceptions of 'otherness'.