

MINNA NATOMA ART CORRIDOR PROJECT BY MEL VERA CRUZ

NOTE: ALL COLOR SCHEMES WERE BASED ON DURATHERM STANDARD COLORS



My name is Mel Vera Cruz. I am a Cultural Worker for more than two decades working with different groups within the Filipino community.

My designs are mainly Homages to my people with Inclusion and Diversity in mind.

Filipinos have been here in the United States since October 18, 1587 brought by the Spanish Galleon Trade but I feel we are still invisible and under represented so I made it a goal to dedicate my Art to make our presence be known. This isn't about racism but about justification of what I feel the community really deserves.

The South of Market was populated by Filipino Americans before it got gentrified. The scope of their presence reached across Market street up to Chinatown but I never see any trace of what have been.

This opportunity will change that so I thank all the people who have the vision to make this a possibility.

I work as a Graphic Designer for the California Department of Transportation for more than 10 years and have worked directly with Highway Engineers, Landscape Designers and Public Information Officers so I know a thing about Road Construction, it's process and limitations because this is my day job.

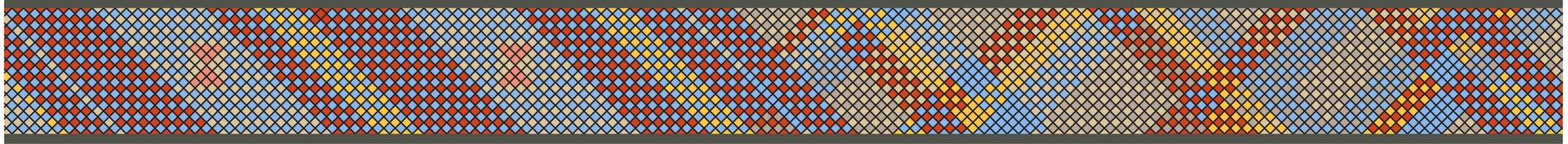
I came in the United States in 1995 at 31 years old so I'm a World Citizen because I'm an immigrant. The United States is a country built by immigrants like me and I am honored to be part of it. My concepts are all inclusive not only because of the reasons I stated above but hospitality is part of mine and the Filipino Culture.

These designs are bonds to Integrate not to Separate because Diversity and Inclusion are main features of a city like San Francisco.

I got excited about the design possibilities but I narrowed them down and divided them into three concepts. Here they are.

1 BANIG

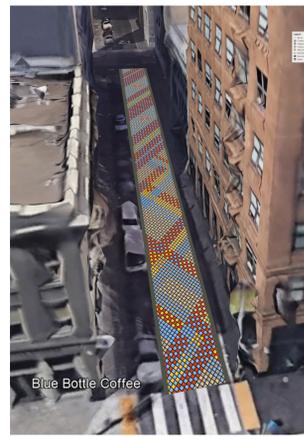
15' x 160'



The BANIG represents the 3 regions of the Philippines, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao because it is weaved throughout the country. It is universally recognized by All Filipinos because they slept on it one way or the other. It is a kind of sleeping mat made out of usually Buri (palm leaves) as you can see in the pictures on the left. This is where I patterned this design.

It is a kind of weaving so it symbolize integration. Every Filipino will give their own beds, in this case their Mats just to make their guests feel comfortable so the Banig is like saying 'You Are Welcome.' I understand the pride of Filipinos if this happens because it will make them feel at home. It will give them back their heritage in this city. It's basically made out of diamond shapes so it is ubiquitous which means all people can relate to it because the shape is neutral.

I understand the construction side so I avoided gradients but it doesn't mean it has to be aesthetically inferior. I used the eye dropper in Illustrator to get the colors from the DuraTherm palette but I know there are other kinds of construction process. I also understand this design does not totally meet the specs, specially with solid fills and that's the reason why I used vectors instead of gradients. It's easier to adjust to specifications whenever needed. I worked as a printer in production for a long time so I understand this kind of process will have a lot of limits due to the material being used.



Placements of designs are for conceptual purposes only. They are along Natoma street.

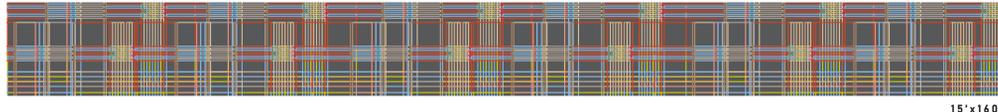
“These designs are bonds to Integrate not to Separate because Diversity and Inclusion are main features of a city like San Francisco.”

2 HABLON

3 THE SUN



15' x 160'



15' x 160'

“Hablon” originated from the word habol, which means hand-weaving in Hilgaynon, Iloilo, Philippines. It is typically used to make traditional patadyong skirts, Barong Tagalog, saya and bandana. See example on the right.

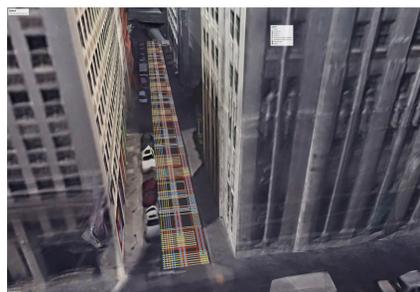
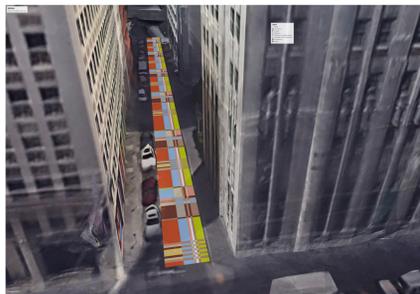


I chose this pattern as design to represent the Filipino Americans because of it's neutrality. This pattern may be recognizable to Filipinos but the squares and rectangles can represent anyone and anything. I chose this among other native designs from the Philippines because it is aesthetically pleasing for everyone. It is significant because San Francisco thrives on diversity.

I made two versions, one with just the Outlines showing other possibilities to accommodate the DuraTherm process.

I appreciate and would like to emphasize the inclusion of SOMA Pilipinas in this process because as a Filipino immigrant, I feel we are under represented. This is a great opportunity for Filipino Americans to integrate its presence in the city of San Francisco and have that sense of ownership that they deserved.

I chose the designs thinking of construction limitations too without sacrificing the aesthetic side. They are flat and repetitive for easier application. The patterns are easily adjustable to accommodate the requirements on all sides.



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15' x 160'

This design was based on our Sun.

Just like Gold, our Sun went to the process of the elements to reach its current state. Humans have 5 limbs, 5 senses, 5 fingers, most flowers have 5 petals and I believe they are all synchronized and happened for a reason.

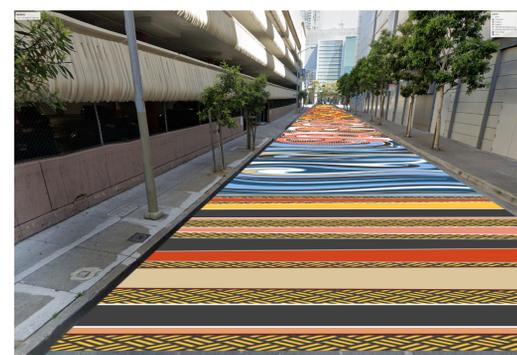
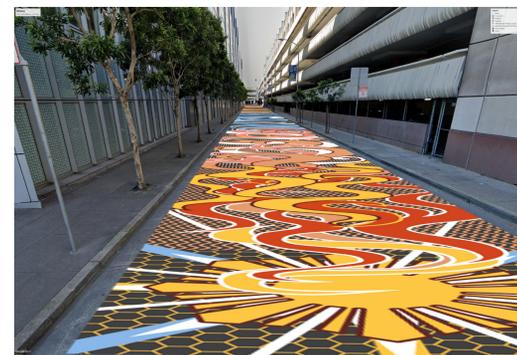
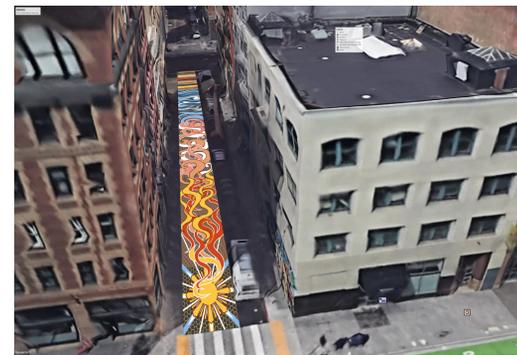
In the esoteric world, I have read that the number five represents Life. It represents the four elements plus the spirit which controls everything. It made sense to me because of it's simplicity. Like the Lotus Flower, it starts from Mud (Earth) then the stem goes through Water then from water, it goes up to Air and blooms towards the Sun (Fire). I believe this is universal. Everyone and everything goes through this simple process so I patterned this design on this idea because it symbolizes All of Us. I believe inclusion is one of the important things in this project so I always make it a point to make my designs appeal to everyone.

The concept is synonymous with 'Golden State.' It is aligned with nature and the beliefs of the indigenous people who were here first but it will also resonate with everyone with a twist for Filipino Americans because I used the 'Sun' graphic from the Philippine flag towards the end of the design.



I did this design with DuraTherm process in mind so I used their color palette and used filled lines combined with custom and existing template shapes that represent, (see photo above) from left to right - Earth, Water, Air, Fire and the Sun which symbolize our spirit. The backgrounds of the design changes and those symbols represent the five Elements in that same order.

I'd like people walking from the terminal towards the museums walk through and 'experience' this process.



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