

I was told about this competition through an advisor in the Art department at Concordia college, and reading the line about creating a space for black, Latinx, Asian, and indigenous individuals to creatively express themselves is brilliant. With the theme being “This American Moment” I instantly felt a strong connection, as we live through a pivotal moment in our countries observable history, and the knowledge it will be written in history books shapes the day to day lives of all Americans. I thought this meaning to be quite interesting because for people of color there is so much going on in terms of the fight for equity. While there is the compounding issue of the global pandemic, a ravaging force among people of color and specifically those in low income areas around the country. To fight a two front war is no easy task, especially one that has been fought for lifetimes.

This pandemic has shown the fragility of our countries’ leadership in the wake of so many lost, and to politicize the matter, is of grave disrespect on all fronts. To each statistic thrown daily, there is a name, along with each statistic for police brutality, there is a name, and for many black and Americans and POC in the country there is a lineage of names which were erased. Politicizing BLM, Covid-19, Indigenous Land rights, or any other topic involving the lives of individuals only leads to the muddied-out cries of those affected. So, for those names, my submission is in remembrance. For all those who are left marginalized, all people of color, all people in the LGBTQIA+ community, all those diametrically opposed and oppressed in any capacity, and especially those who are marginalized further by the intersectionality of all said groups; we must fight for them, for those who reflect us, for those who came before to show the path. For all the faces never seen but present in the opportunity to cause change.

My draft for the competition reads, “A house divided cannot stand” a heavy quote from Abraham Lincoln which is a token of the heavy sway politics skews perception of issues that heavily face people of color. There is also heavy symbolism to the BLM movement with the two pillars with black power fists atop them. This is paired with the faces in the background which is dually symbolic of all the lives lost and all the power begotten from many POC’s ancestors. The fists are holding up a mask with tears to the forgotten pouring out, and the hands of color holding the world together as we are all untied under one lineage of humanity. As a collective we are being held up by those who took the ivory tower of altruism to sacrifice themselves for us during this pandemic. This is representative of those who paved the civil rights path, those who are on the front line of the pandemic, and all those who fight for equity during times of crisis. The fist has gold highlights along with the faces as a representation of pricelessness, the ability of being apart of something bigger than oneself, all shrouded in a gold background representing the potential and hope we all feel as a global population navigating a major time of crisis.