

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Your community chose me. You spoke to me. This is the only program I am applying to.

UC Berkeley's Practice of Art program inspired me the moment I opened the website. The first thing I explored was the 2018 cohort. I googled each faculty member, flipping through your bodies of work, the designs of your websites, much like the process you use to select your cohort each year. After I read your artist statements, I wanted to experience your work and then dive into how you interpret your own art – a process I am exploring for the first time with my own work. The process of understanding my art from a perspective outside of my own.

It seemed as if each faculty member and student were meant to connect to my work, each in their own way. I was frankly baffled and inspired into a state of flow. My favorite state, where hunger, fear, exhaustion disappear, the place where the work takes over and nothing else matters.

I want to learn from the best, and more importantly from people with whom I feel connected. Your art and my gut tell me this is the right place.

Completing this application is one of the hardest things I have ever done, and it has sparked my determination to make a place for myself in Academia.

This opportunity will open doors, allowing me to teach as a professor, to continue writing and publishing books, to collaborate across disciplines, and continue researching.

The purpose of studying the Practice of Art at UC Berkeley is to learn from artists exploring similar subject matter, to gain a deeper understanding of my own work, while preparing me for exhibition. With access to professional development opportunities, special grants and residencies, the interdisciplinary and innovative approach of UC Berkeley's Practice of Art Program is just the fit I was searching for.

My gift is seeing others as they are. Allowing them to be who they are. Creating space for openness and freedom to express themselves as they experience themselves. As an artist and a teacher, I do the same. I share my darkest secrets to find the light in them.

Many of my former students are undergraduates with full-ride scholarships at your University. Some of these scholarships even came from La Manada de Lobos, the female-dominant Latina robotics team I coached for three years that competed annually in UC Berkeley's Pioneers in Engineering competition. We took home trophies more than once.

I once taught 48 third graders, in a 6-hour window in mini-groups back to back, to solder together circuit blocks. I have put saws in the hands of Kindergartners, watching a sense of empowerment expand within them. I have battled teenage angst and middle school self-

consciousness to pull the best work possible out of my students. Now I am ready for students who have *chosen* to study art. I want to be a teacher with the ability to inspire others because of my own love of learning and the compassion I've built up through the challenges I have faced and overcome.

I have researched the Practice of Art with K-12 students, educators, and collaborated with Sonoma State University to create the first Making Credential.

I am not a generic brand. I'm not afraid of mistakes. Trusting and taking chances are part of learning. I have a left-right brain that seems to allow me be the artist and to guide the artist. I help people find processes that work for them.

The Practice of Art is based in ritual.

In terms of my own art practice, I hope to expand, to continue painting, to build installations about what it is like to be a woman today. I work in many forms, am interested in documentary film making, and in the power of Youtube – to reach people through the formats that resonate with them and speak to the subject matter. I want to continue making education accessible to those who seek it. I believe in documentation, the sharing of our practice as artists and teachers.

My work is interdisciplinary and touches on subjects that are critical and culturally relevant. I explore gender, psychology, sexuality, relationships, and addiction. I invite the viewer to participate. The studio and exhibition space the programs offers is a unique platform I will use to its fullest.

I have chosen Berkeley for its community of artists. Community is a space of refuge for me—being a part of it, building it, taking on leadership roles when communication breaks down.

The faculty members who I would most like to be mentored by are Asma Kazmi, Stephanie Syjuco, Indira Martina Moore and Greg Niemeyer. They can help me to understand and expand my work, reach my audience, and get exposure outside my studio. I chose them not only for their subject matter, but for their use of form as a vehicle, striving to demonstrate significant, relevant cultural themes effectively by speaking through their art.

Blessed by a few special and unforgettable teachers who gave me direction, I have spent my life working to pay it forward by guiding others. I want to leave a mark on this world by teaching people to go within themselves, in order to understand others, through the Practice of Art.

Expanding my art and my experience through your program will allow me to share all that I learn long beyond the two years of the program.