

**Artist Statement: 26th Annual Exhibition of Art by Michigan Prisoners**

Artist Name: Julio Martinez

My name is Julio and I'm from the beautiful Island Puerto Rico.  
I have been incarcerated for 25 years and while in prison I have decided  
to live my life with purpose. For me, creating art is a spiritual practice  
which helps me grow as a person and it gives me a sense of purpose.  
I have been an evolving artist for the past 4 years. I started out experimenting  
with different mediums in order to gain a diverse working knowledge of the  
creative process. My primary medium is watercolor. I love working with this  
medium; I enjoy the meditative quality, the free and flowing nature, the  
simplicity of the medium, and how it allows me to connect with my intuitive  
nature. Over the past year I have narrowed my focus to painting in watercolor.  
I like painting in a loose style and when it comes to selecting a color palette  
I go with my intuition. I use professional grade paints and paper in my  
artwork, I like the quality it renders. Painting in watercolor brings me joy  
and it provides me with an avenue to bless others. For me Art is the gift  
that keeps on giving.

Please edit your Artist Statement to the space provided.