

Artist Statement: 27th Annual Exhibition of Artists in Michigan Prisons

Artist Name: SWERVE (KEAHYU NO-DKS-KUM)

EARLY NATIVE AMERICAN PEOPLES LACKED A WRITTEN LANGUAGE AND USED DRAWINGS TO EXPLAIN THEIR WORLD AND THE OBJECTS IN IT. SO IT WAS FOR THE ANSKAPI AKUNI (BLACKFEET). WHAT DID ORIGINATE OVER TWENTY-THOUSAND YEARS AGO WAS A RICH ORAL TRADITION WHICH CONTINUES TODAY. AS A YOUNG BOY I WAS TOLD THE SAME STORIES THAT HAD BEEN PASSED DOWN FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION OF MY ANCESTORS AND WOVEN INTO OUR BLOOD MEMORY. IN MY ART, I ATTEMPT TO EVOKE THE SIMPLE BEAUTY OF EARLY INDIGENOUS ART. IN DOING SO I HOPE TO HONOR THE SOKKETAPI (THE "REAL PEOPLE") AND THE COUNTLESS SACRIFICES THEY MADE TO ENSURE OUR STORIES - INDEED OUR VERY WAY OF LIFE SURVIVED. "WHAT IS LIFE? IT IS THE FLASH OF A FIREFLY IN THE NIGHT. THE BREATH OF A BUFFALO IN WINTER. IT IS THE SHADOW WHICH RUNS ACROSS THE GRASS AND LOSES ITSELF ON THE SUNSET." CROWFOOT, 1899

Please edit your Artist Statement to fit the space provided.