

ADRIAN ESPARZA – Mid-Century Cultural Content **15 November 2014 – 10 January 2015**

Mid Century Cultural Content presents the work of Adrian Esparza.

Esparza draws from a wide range of cultural and art historical references when creating textile pieces made from unraveled Mexican blankets or sarapes. He uses the thread from the sarapes to create wall drawings whose forms and colors often directly reference specific landscapes and other complex forms. Esparza has long drawn inspiration from the work of mid-century minimalist artists who reduced visual expression to its essential elements, often creating work based on grid-like constructions and using simple, geometric forms. The works have additionally been likened to minimalist versions of western landscape paintings, with bright colors and jagged forms stretching out along an imaginary horizon. Esparza takes the practice of deconstructing the essential elements of painting several steps further, using the process to re-imagine his own Mexican-American heritage and the minimalist practice itself. With the sarape as a starting point, he unravels this stereotypical representation of Mexican culture, and reformulates it into a piece that both challenges and reflects art historic and cultural traditions.

In Mid-Century Cultural Content artist Adrian Esparza expands his circle of influence to directly reference mid-century architecture, drawing inspiration from its flat planes, split levels and engagement with landscape. His work has always had architectural elements, the lines of the thread in his wall drawings reference both volume and form. Exaggerated one and two point perspective create structures that suggest illusionistic space while isometric methods of design inform conceptual structures in the work.

Without identifying a specific structure or architect, Esparza enters the world of mid-century modernist architecture through this fascination with geometric idealism, mimicking simple forms and referencing clean, empty and futuristic spaces presented in the modernist architectural imaginary. In recent years Esparza's works have taken on a more overtly architectural quality in their construction through the use of wooden armatures, increased scale, and a growing dimensionality. They have begun to look less like western landscapes and more like futuristic urban panoramas, often based loosely on commercial postcards of cities that Esparza has collected as he travels around the world. He supplements these found images with google searches for modernist architectural structures from around the world. He likens these practices to a 21st century immigration experience, where both the successes and failures of modernism are increasingly experienced by a global public in both real and virtual spaces.

Written by Kerry Doyle, October 2014

*Adrian Esparza born 1970 in El Paso, Texas, USA.
He lives and works in El Paso, Texas, USA.*