

# WINDOWS ON THE FUTURE, A REGIONAL COVID-19 ALTERNATIVE EXHIBITION OPENS IN NEW MEXICO

by J. Renee Tanner



New Mexico's Vital Spaces, in partnership with 516 ARTS and The Paseo Project, debuted the winning installations for *Windows on the Future*, a series of month-long storefront art installations across Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Taos this month.

*Windows on the Future* turns storefront and commercial windows into art installations. The community is invited to walk and drive by to see them from the sidewalk and street, working with temporarily closed spaces as well as active and vacant storefronts. The collaborative effort aims to bring vibrancy and vitality to Northern New Mexico's commercial districts in these challenging times while also encouraging social distancing.

In early May the organizations announced an open call to artists, creatives, and art groups to submit proposals for window showcase installations based on the theme Windows on the Future. The theme was open to creative interpretation and after a jury process to review the 300 submissions, 60 artists were selected – 20 per city.

The winning installations take on a variety of topics and styles, from the realistic to the fantastic. Proposals include two-dimensional and three-dimensional works, as well as video and projection, and performance art pieces. A digital map is being prepared to lead viewers on a guided tour of these creative installations.

To support the creative community financially during this difficult period, the organizations dispersed \$500 stipend payments to the winning 60 artists located throughout Northern New Mexico. Installations will be on display for the month of July in all three cities.

Each selected participant is paired with a curator or established artist to talk through their installation ideas. Participating curators are associated with The New Mexico Museum of Art, IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, SITE Santa Fe, The Harwood Museum of Art in Taos, as well as national museums like MOMA, Art Institute of Chicago, and The Guggenheim Museum.

I was selected to exhibit in Taos at a site that is a perfect stage for my *Glove Cloud*, installation. Clean Taos is a beloved, woman owned, small green business in the center of the town crossroads. There is an uncanny juxtaposition of the white glove, fabric and chain elements of the artwork near the moving racks of hanging clothes in for cleaning and alterations. I think it one of my best works and I'm getting positive feedback from viewers moving inside and outside the shop."

*Glove Cloud* is a suspended floating mass resembling a cumulus cloud. The Cloud is comprised of hundreds of stuffed cloth gloves reaching out, offering love, comfort and humor to viewers missing the touch and warm embraces of others in this time of social distancing and isolation. Colored lamps on rotating timers illuminate the soft white gloves in shades of pink and blue. Mimicking a New Mexico red sunset or blue moonlight reflecting on white clouds.

I shared a Zoom studio visit with Merry Scully, Head of Curatorial Affairs and Curator of Contemporary Art New Mexico Museum of Art. Her observations guided the final placement and composition of the installation while giving me the opportunity to share my work with a valued Curator.



I became a New Mexico Artist Thrive Activator in June 2019 and attended the Artists Thrive conference in Berea, Kentucky last summer.

**Artists Thrive tools have since influenced my practice and my life goals. I am new to New Mexico and enjoying living in this vibrant, thriving arts community. This project exemplifies how New Mexico "gets" artists. I am proud to be a part of this exhibition and glad to introduce these New Mexico organizations to Artists Thrive tools and advocacy.**

The organizers, curators, funders and hosts of *Windows on the Future* have created an exhibition format I hope become the new norm. The project partners did a great job of inventing a COVID safe alternative format by paring property and business owners with artists.

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[www.jreneetanner.com](http://www.jreneetanner.com)

[www.VitalSpaces.org](http://www.VitalSpaces.org)

[www.516Arts.org](http://www.516Arts.org)

[www.PaseoProject.org](http://www.PaseoProject.org)

[Read the article in \*\*Forbes\*\*](#)

IMAGE CREDITS: J. Renee Tanner, *Glove Cloud*, 2020, Taos, NM 2020, 12' x 12' x 6', cotton string gloves, mops, chains, foam, canvas, poly fill, pins, thread, lamps, bulbs, timers. Installation at Clean Taos Inc., Taos, New Mexico, June 26 to July 31, 2020.

