



MINI  
X  
RICHTU

WETHEPEOPLE

ARTURO PEREZ

# INTRO



I was 8 years old when we left home. The neighborhood where I'm from in Mexico had become too dangerous and too corrupt for my parents. They didn't want my sisters and me to grow up in a world without opportunity. So my parents - who had worked their entire lives for this moment - decided to leave everything they knew behind and take a leap of faith and take us to this great country. Without knowing the language, without knowing anyone who could help us, without any assistance from friends or family, they took their three kids and started a completely new life.

30 years later I can tell you that if my parents would not have done that, I would not be here. I would not be a director. I would not be able to talk to you about this great project. In fact, I might not even be alive.



I The immigrant experience is embedded deep within me.

I saw my whole family work harder than anyone around us. My dad would work all week long and then study at night and on the weekends so we could get ahead. We were taught to never complain, to never give up, and to always be kind. We didn't always understand the language, or the culture, but we were always so grateful for the opportunity to be here. After all, this country gave us a chance and we were not going to let it down.



I know Rich understands this on a deep and emotional level. He's an incredibly hard worker who has put his story out there so that other immigrants can feel wanted, important, and seen. And that is an incredibly brave thing for him to do. Especially during the times when it hasn't been popular to do so.

And that's what I find so beautiful and rare about this project: the fearlessness of it. And to do it so proudly, too. As a first generation immigrant, this makes me so happy. Because in truth, when I was growing up I never saw anyone support the immigrant community like this, especially such a legendary company like MINI.





PRINCE HAMLETT





So let's do this project justice. Let's make this film beautiful and poetic and rare. Let's raise Rich's story up so that kids and families and young people everywhere who just landed in a foreign country can feel like they are welcome.

We are, after all, a true nation of immigrants. All of us have someone in our family who came to this great country looking for a better life. So this is not just Rich's story, or my story - this is the story of all of us.

Let's dive in and see how we can make something truly special...





CREU EN FIJAR  
COMO CUALQUIER  
RELIGIOSO CUAL  
EN CRISTO  
MARIO AXEL



# TONNE & APPROACH



This is not a car spot.

It's a documentary film - profiling one man in particular, but speaking more broadly to diversity, creativity, grit, culture, and the immigrant voice in America.

These are big themes and they deserve the full cinematic treatment. Elevated from the typical run-and-gun doc aesthetic, to a film that feels more lyrical, intentional, and vibrant. Still authentic, grounded in Rich's real life, but subtly heightened to amplify the message and give it some depth and gravitas.









Let's dig deep. Touching on Rich's work as an artist but really pushing through to what growing up with this immigrant identity has meant to him. How it's challenged him, how's been a blessing and a curse, how it has pushed him to come to know himself. The full emotional complexity of that. And what he's doing now, his dedication to empowering other creatives from immigrant backgrounds, to give them the opportunities that so many of us haven't had.

Approaching it this way will lead to a film that has true substance, a genuine expiration of the immigrant experience through the eyes of this creative trailblazer.





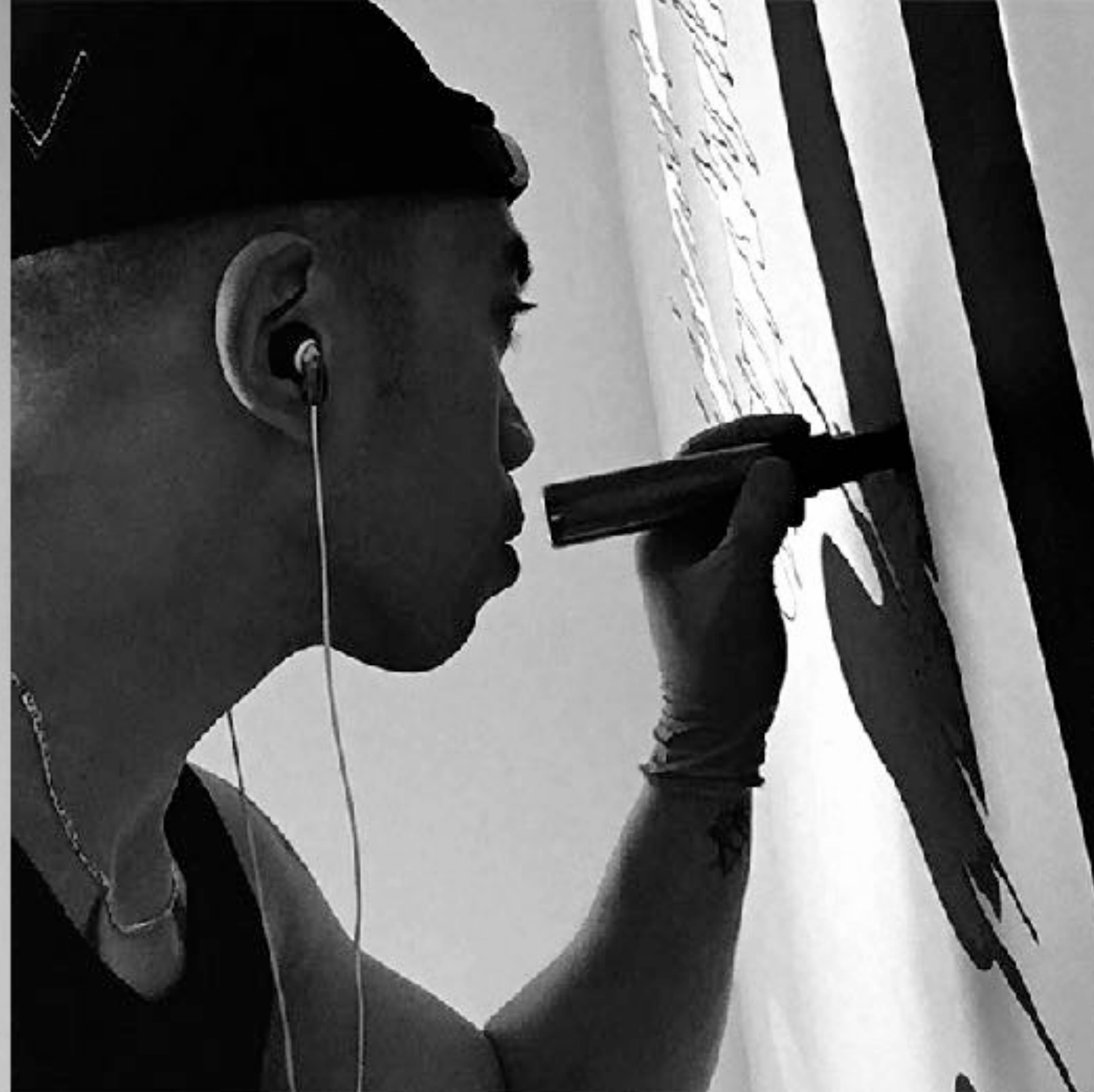
# RICHTU



Super excited to partner with Rich. I think he's amazing - his work, for sure, but even more so, what he's doing for other first generation immigrants like himself. The opportunities he's fostered for them... though his leadership in the design space, his podcast that gives voice to perspectives we don't often hear, and the way he uses his social influence to raise the profile of other BIPOC creatives. He's perfect for the film.


I want to get to the core of his emotional experience, being the child of an immigrant family. That might require pushing a bit, moving through the facade. Rich is a very eloquent speaker, a podcast host, a Ted Talker, and he's talked about this topic many times. So let's look for ways to dig beyond the surface.





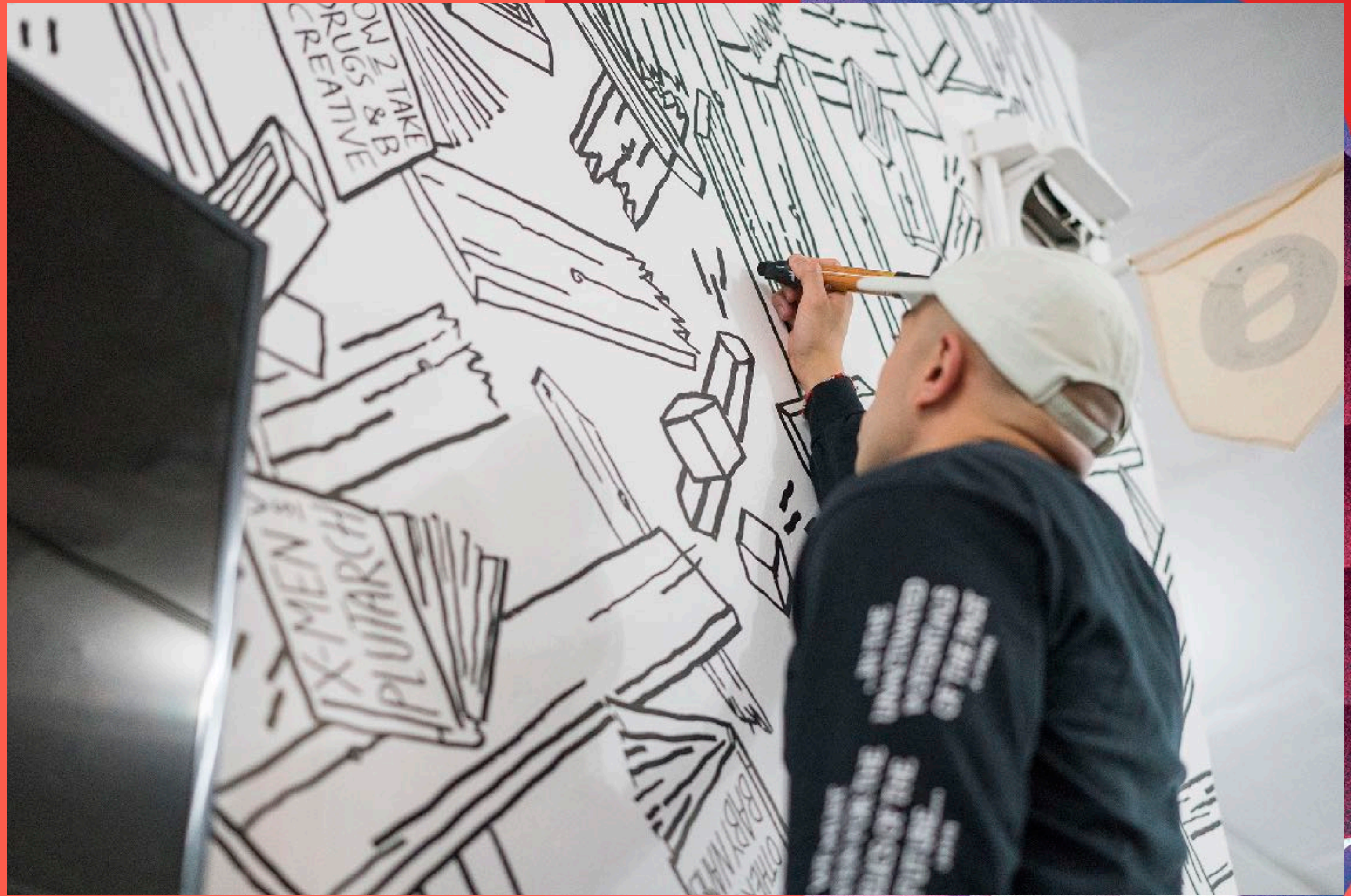


I've had a crash course in this recently, working on a film with Paul McCartney. We've had a number of lengthy conversations, and as a guy who has sat for thousands of interviews, he naturally has some go-to anecdotes and responses. But what I've found is that if I don't just settle for that initial answer - if I reframe the question a bit, and aren't afraid of pushing a little, I find that I can get him to consider the answer more deeply. I'd use the same technique with Rich so we can strip away any polish and get to the heart of his experience.



That requires earning his trust. Getting him into his comfort zone so he feels we're protecting his image and will do him justice, giving him a space to be vulnerable. I would start this process of building rapport long before the shoot day. By connecting with him during prep I can start to tune in with him. I can share about my own experience as a first generation creative who probably has a lot in common with him. We'll do this over Zoom, and I'd also love a chance to meet him in person prior to the shoot, perhaps while we're scouting. That way they'll be warmed up and have a relationship with me before the whole production gets under way.

There's one trick I like when working with non-actors - shooting 50/50, where sometimes we roll without the talent knowing. We aren't always slating and yelling action - a lot of times we just start, and the line between filming and not filming gets a bit blurry for them. This will make for genuine moments where Rich is being completely authentic on camera, any facade disappears.



# STORY



LA WENA  
x MINI



Story is king, especially when it comes to documentary. Even though it's all true, we still need to find that narrative shape and refine it.

Of course we will allow things to develop organically and be reactive, as a documentary crew always does. But since we do not have the luxury of spending weeks or months embedded with Rich, we need to create a frame for his story and then capture the moments that best fill it in.

So here's a rough structure, just to get the ball rolling. Nothing set in stone here.





# ACT 1:

# INTRODUCTION

We open on scenes of Bushwick. An overhead drone shot showing this urban expanse, cut with shots from the POV of a cary moving through the streets, capturing the color, the energy, the diversity of this neighborhood. The Puerto Ricans and Dominicans. The Italian-Americans. The Mexicans and El Salvadorians. The Black community, the Asian community, and yes, the more recent arrival of gentrifiers as well.





In his studio we meet Rich. We have a brief introduction to him, to his work, and to his background. We see some of what makes him Rich: comic books, sneakers, etc.

He talks about his parents, their journey to America, and what is what like being raised by them in New Jersey. Perhaps he shows us photos of them, or even artwork of them that he's done.

We also see aversion of the billboard artwork in his studio - setting it up so we can pay it off when we later reveal it in all its glory. Perhaps the interview takes place while he is painting to avoid the "chair type of interviews" and give the energy more movement and style.









ACT 2:

THE JOURNEY



Rich takes us for a drive. Along the way he opens up about what it was like for him, personally, to have that “burden” of being a first generation immigrant... the pressure to do right by his parents as well as the uncomfortable feeling of being the “other.”

I’d love to see if we can give this part of the story a little more interest beyond the drive itself. Maybe he takes us to his favorite Filipino bakery and picks up some *ensaimadas*? He talks to us while eating them on the hood of the Mini.





Or could we follow Rich on a journey as he looks for design inspiration around Bushwick? Does he take photos? Look at work by the local taggers?

Or what if we drive to his childhood home in New Jersey? This might make a great background for his reflections on our immigrant theme. He considers how much things have changed, and how some things are the same, and the work that's left to do.



YOU GREAT  
UNFINISHED  
SYMPHONY.

REVOLUTION!  
I want a  
REVELATION.  
Do listen to my

DORPHAN  
SON OF A WHORE  
AND A SCOTSMAN



IMMIGRANTS  
can leave their  
FINGERPRINTS

AND WHEN I MEET  
Thomas Jefferson  
I'M A COMPEL him to  
INCLUDE WOMEN

SQUALOR  
GROW UP to be a  
HERO AND  
-A-



ACT 3:

THE REVEAL

We drive to St. Nicholas Ave & Jefferson St where we reveal the three-story tall version of Rich's artwork on the side of a building. Beautiful and meaningful in its full scale.

In thinking about this final moment, what about surprising him by bringing his parents out to the artwork to see it? I can imagine it might be really meaningful to have this reflective moment with them at his side, understanding the sacrifices they made, while looking at this enormous achievement in front of him. Could really help to trigger some emotions.



AHERN








**VISUAL  
STYLE**

This film will have an elevated documentary style - cinematic while still remaining authentic. I'd like to move away from the typical impromptu feel of doc shooting, and capture this story in a more poetic way. The [Timberland film](#) you shared is a great reference for finding that balance. And I think we can do even better.





I'm inspired by the idea of reflections. Much of this film is about Rich reflection in his experience, and we can echo that visually in ways that add to the lyricism of the images. Playing with reflections in glass, in metal, in the body of the car. The way reflected images can feel abstract and fleeting, just like our emotions or memories. This motif will help elevate our visuals to a more artful and expressive place.

Moments of slow motion, used sparingly can be used for dramatic effect. Suddenly slowing down the speed of the image when we shift into a more reflective mood, for example. Allowing us to fully appreciate the emotion of a certain moment.

TOP  
SIDE  
SIDE


PROSPECT  
PARK  
GRILLE

BOTH  
SIDES  
CONVENIENCE  
STORE

Prospect Park Grille

PROSPECT PARK GRILLE



A woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a grey tank top and blue jeans, is walking on a dirt path through a dense, sun-dappled forest. The path is surrounded by lush green trees and foliage. The lighting is bright, creating strong shadows on the ground.

Camera will move fluidly on a Trinity steadicam. We elegantly push in or pull out, or smoothly track alongside Rich on the street. Going from low to high mode seamlessly. Twisting the camera and rotating it in a circle motion with fluidity and ease. To underline the poetic things in his story in a poetic way.

I'd also love to look at the possibility of capturing a few overhead drone shots to bring a sense of scale to the story.



The overall look will be very filmic. Capturing the realness, the grit of the city, the colors and textures. Natural light whenever possible. Perhaps a touch of grain added into the grade, to give the film a hint of rawness and life.







This kind of work requires an effective but minimal documentary crew. Smaller is better. We don't want a ton of trucks rolling up or a lot of lights that need to be wrangled. That kind of stuff can slow us down and be distracting when you're trying to get non-actors to forget about the camera and be themselves.

When you're small, it's also easier to react. We move so fast in documentary that often the crew is just trying to catch up, so it's best to keep it as nimble as possible. A small footprint lets us turn the camera around quick, capturing the inevitable spontaneous moments that will pop up.



# INTERVIEWS



I envision much of our interview playing as VO. That said I think a few moments of voice on camera will help ground this film in authenticity. Creating a stronger connection with the viewer as they experience the words coming out of Rich's mouth.

What I want to avoid are typical talking head interviews where Rich is speaking off camera in front of a background sitting on a chair. It should feel uncontrived, more in the moment, more off-the-cuff than that. Instead, let's do this more casually, in his studio while he's working, or in the car while he's driving, or posted up eating *adobo* at a local Filipino restaurant.

I find that this casual/conversational approach to interviewing allows the subjects to be more comfortable. When you sit someone down in front of a camera and stare at them and start asking questions, it's only natural to fall back on those polished answers. But if they're engaged in something familiar - making art, driving, or from behind the wheel of the Mini - it's a much more grounded environment and people tend to speak more candidly and freely, without trying to package their words too much.

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# LEPNEY

#FilipinoCuisine

**PANCIT**  
noodles, calamansi  
Chicharon

**PINAKBE**  
sautéed pork  
sitaw, bayut  
bamang

**San Miguel**  
RED HORSE

**ARROZ CALDO**  
chicken  
tripe,  
onion,  
achuan

**rice.**  
gailic

**SUMAN**  
king prawn, saba  
crispy lilla, kamatis

**HALO HALO**  
ICE CREAM  
LECHE FLAN  
JAMON PORK  
KADON SAGO  
MACAPUNG

**GOD BLESS THE PHILIPPINES**

**SAO MAI**  
VIETNAMESE CUISINE

**SAO MAI**  
VIETNAMESE CUISINE



Handwritten graffiti in red on the dark door frame.

I love talking with people. For me, interviews are about having a conversation. I'm not directing them while they're being interviewed. I'm just chatting with them, getting them to forget that the camera is rolling. Some of my questions are leading, but they still feel conversational. The thoughts I bring up will be designed to guide the conversation toward our themes and story points, but we will work around to that in an organic way.

Of course we will have certain key points to hit for the campaign, which together we will weave into the interview questions. But the goal is to get this from Rich naturally, without feeding him lines. We can help him restate certain points more succinctly, but in general let's allow it to unfold as naturally as possible.



# POETRY





The final thing I would add is that with a project like this, preparation allows us to find spontaneous, magical moments. Doing our research ahead of time, knowing as much as we can about Rich, having pre-interviewed him, having scouted ahead of time and built rapport, having a detailed shooting schedule... all of this work frees us to work organically and be reactive in the moment.

And preparation also allows us to find and shoot the poetry. During my initial conversations with Rich, my research into his work and personal life, my extensive scouting of his neighborhood, I'll be looking for ways to frame the entire film in a poetic way, as well as looking for those elevated moments to cover specific parts of his story.

For example I spoke about the cinematic reflection motif above. That's visual poetry, which becomes a metaphor for the way the film reflects on these potent themes around immigration.



W D I G

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S D A Y

I'LL BE LOOKING FOR WAYS  
TO FRAME THE ENTIRE  
FILM IN A POETIC WAY



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Poetry can be found in sound design, too. The way we allusively use an audio cue. Rich is known to be a sneakerhead - what if we used that familiar squeak of the sneaker sole as a moment of transition? Imagine he's drawing something in his studio, talking with us... and as he turns around, his sneaker squeaks on the floor, and it feels heightened... that shifts us into a deeper moment of reflection, we ramp to slow motion, as Rich gets raw... "I was the only one in that entire room of creatives who grew up in a house where English wasn't the first language spoken."





Poetry can be found in how close or far we shoot the scenes. For personal parts of his story, we might want to shoot an ECU of his eye and brushes as he reflects deeply, the anatomical complexity of it so incredible, a symbol of the complexity of his human experience. Then when he talks about feeling lost or alone, we can plan some shots where he is quite small in the frame. Finding poetic ways to cover what he is saying with poetic images will be the name of the game.

As with any good documentary we will find spontaneous moments and follow them. But with pre-planned poetic tentpoles like these in place, we can be confident that we will walk away with what we came for.







MUSIC  
& SOUND





Sound will be very important as another layer of the storytelling. It's another way to elevate the film, making it feel more immersive and cinematic. I'd want to roll on atmospheric sound the whole time, capturing those great moments that we can level up in the mix: the sonic texture of Bushwick, the honking horns, the scratch of Rich's pencil on paper, his footsteps echoing through the studio.

In terms of music, there are a couple of ways we can go. Rich is a big hip hop fan, so that's definitely a direction to consider, but I'd like to explore a more ethereal version of it to help set the mood of the film. Some electronic influenced hip hop beats mixed with some traditional Filipino music to give a nod to where he's from and a new view to where he's going... melding the old world with the new.



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As a MINI owner, as an immigrant, as a human who cares deeply about the inclusion of ALL voices in the American experience - I appreciate for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the project. It would mean a lot to help bring it to life.

*Arturo Perez Jr.*





THANK

YOU