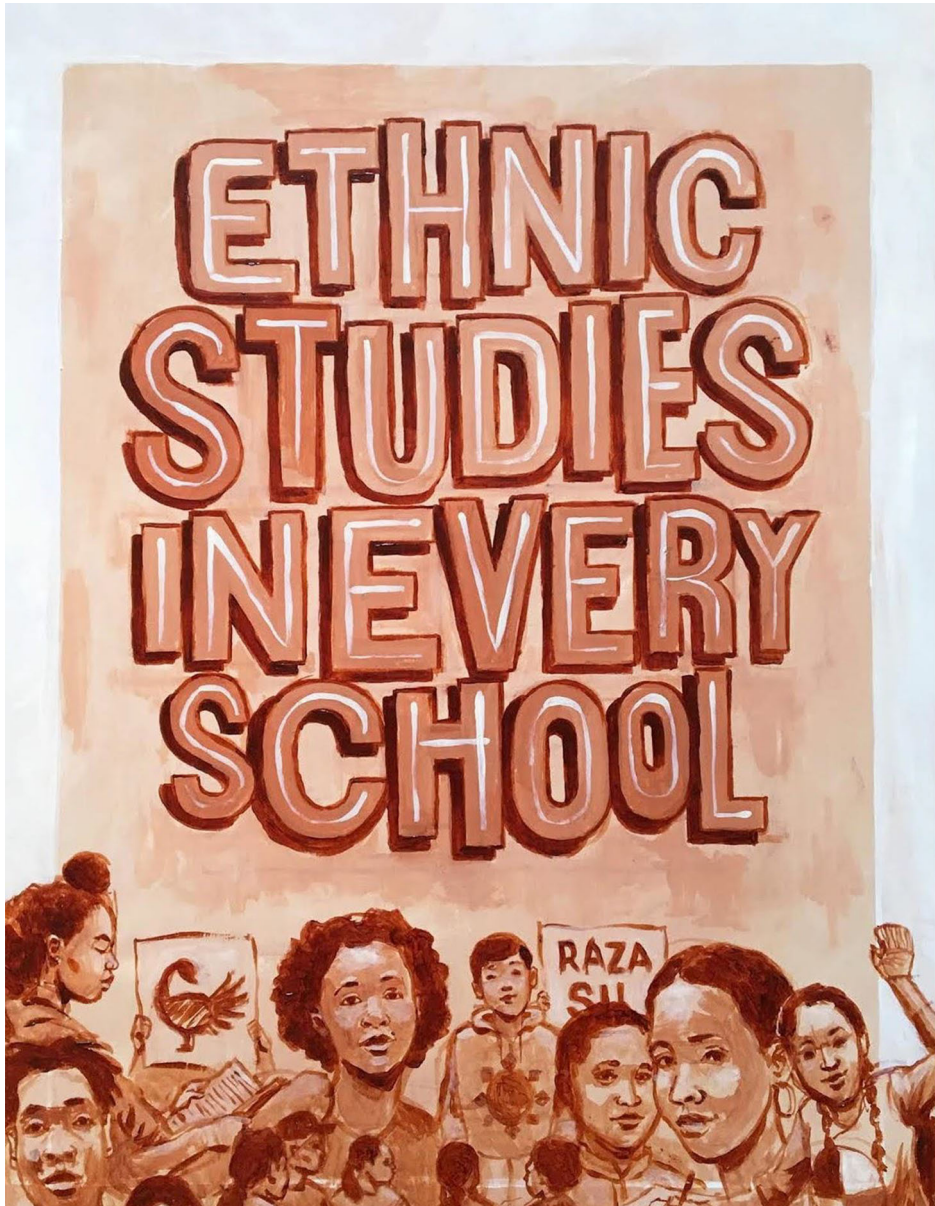


I Am a Product of Ethnic Studies



Ethnic Studies in Every School (2019) by Robert Liu-Trujillo. Acrylic.

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This is a painting I made for the 16th anniversary art show of the Trust Your Struggle (TYS) Collective. This was one of many pieces we showed at the Amor Eterno Arte in Oakland, California. The exhibition highlighted works created with various communities in Oakland, showcasing the visual art tradition in the Bay Area of painting murals grounded in social movements.

Throughout the exhibition time, we featured public programs incorporating cultural dialogue with youth and elders, printmaking workshops, and more.

The exhibition was created for TYS to share their methods of collective and collaborative strategies. Their intent was (and is) to inspire local tactics and international solidarity and to display their cultural growth and longevity in the visual movement here in the Bay Area and worldwide.

I made this piece (“Ethnic Studies in Every School”) because I am a product of Ethnic Studies. I was able to take classes at Berkeley High School and at San Francisco State University.

What is Ethnic Studies? To me, it is a chance to learn about history and culture from a people of color perspective. Typically, US and world history is Eurocentric and leaves out a tremendous amount of stories and history from Black, Indigenous, Asian, and Latin@ people. I believe very strongly that every school from elementary school up to college should have mandatory ethnic studies classes to educate all students.

After being a student, I had the privilege to be a presenter as part of the Trust Your Struggle Collective in the late 2000s’ Ethnic Studies Conferences held at SFSU. ■

ROBERT LIU-TRUJILLO is a lifelong Bay Area resident. Born in Oakland, California, he’s the child of student activists who watched lots of science fiction and took him to many demonstrations. Always drawing, Rob grew up to be an artist falling in love with graffiti, fine art, illustration, murals, and children’s books. In that order, sort of. Through storytelling he’s been able to scratch the surface of so many untold stories. Rob is the author and illustrator of *Furqan’s First Flat Top*. Rob is a co-founder of the [Trust Your Struggle Collective](#), a contributor to the [Social Justice Children’s Book Holiday Fair](#), [The Bull Horn Blog](#), [Rad Dad](#), [Muphoric Sounds](#), and the founder of Come Bien Books. He’s a dad of a teenage boy and a brand new baby girl. He loves ice cream and his wife who laughs big and corrects his grammar every chance she gets. Down with the system and soggy french fries! ■