

Students Help Create Border Art

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[ABC News on Campus](#) reporter Maxine Park blogs:

It's a rugged landscape filled with trees, rocks, and hundreds of miles of dry desert. Thousands of people lose their lives each year trying to cross the expanse that is the U.S.-Mexico border and now a new art exhibit at Arizona State University is bringing the public right up to the fence that separates the two countries.

Broken Landscape II (*embedded pictures courtesy of Etienne Frossard*) is the newest sculpture to be shown by the Future Arts

Research department at ASU this month; a painstakingly hand-produced miniature reconstruction of a section of the U.S.-Mexico border.

"It's such a large miniature reconstruction of this very provocative landscape," said F.A.R. director Bruce Ferguson. "I've seen a lot of political art that's usually motivated in some way but this is just more of an object that allows people to project their own ideas about the border."

At its highest point, the roughly \$10,000 constructed wall stands at 7 feet tall and close to 80 feet long. It's made from a variety of materials including foam, stucco, cement and even tumbleweed.

Blane De St. Croix, the artist, said that he's always been fascinated with the idea of "borders."

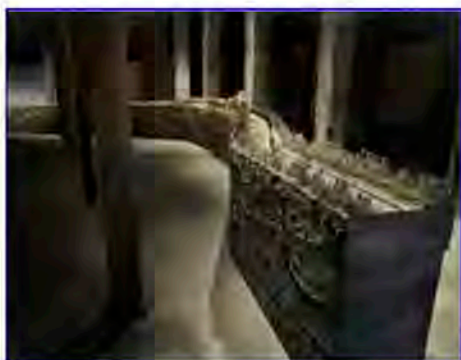
"We create a border between two countries and something unintentional happens," De St. Croix said. "This border with Mexico has almost become a monument of sorts in our country. It's just fascinating."



For this project, De St. Croix, a native of Boston, traveled the entire length of the U.S.-Mexico border; more than 3000 miles, driving from Tijuana to Brownsville and even all the way to the Gulf of Mexico.

"I stopped at about 15 to 30 border crossings along the way and I talked to anyone who was willing to talk to me," De St. Croix said. "I was just trying to absorb as much information as I could about this complex subject."

De St. Croix's model represents about a mile of border fencing that exists near Eagle Pass, Texas. He included representations of the Rio Grande River and a nearby golf course in his reconstruction. De St. Croix said the project is called Broken Landscape II because the original Broken Landscape was showcased in Brooklyn, New York last year. After the showcase, he tore down the original and reassembled it from scratch; adding more dimension to the landscape and differing typography levels. He said he worked with several art students from various universities in order to piece the final project together, which has already been seen by close to 2000 people at ASU's gallery alone. De St. Croix said his ultimate goal is to stimulate conversation.



"Most of the time the viewer does not know which side of the fence that they're on," De St. Croix said.

"And often times people end up having conversations on both sides of this sculpture, which is great because it's creating a dialogue about these issues."

Lauren Jeffrey, 21, a secondary education major at ASU believes the exhibit is significant because Arizona itself is a "border" state.

"Illegal immigration is a hot topic right now in our state and this shows that literal separation between the two countries," Jeffrey said. "It's a cool idea but I think a conversation starter still isn't enough for real change."

The exhibit will be open at ASU until this weekend. But in the meantime, De St. Croix is gearing up for his next border project: the demilitarized zone or DMZ border between North and South Korea.

"I just received a travel grant to go that border, which is very exciting," De St. Croix said. "As an artist and a sculptor, I think the visual arts is a great way of communicating these issues because you can reach the viewer through a visual language."