

Christina Ignacio- Deines

Art Should be Inclusive

Christina Ignacio-Deines, an Edmonton based artist, designer and event producer creates inclusive and beautiful spaces. As a child of immigrant parents Christina was raised Canadian with almost no connection to her Filipino background. This disconnect caused her to feel like she did not have a distinct place in the world. As a result, her goal as an artist became to create spaces for people like her; people who do not feel like they belong. For her undergrad, Christina decided to pursue a degree in civil engineering at the University of Alberta with the goal of becoming an architect. Christina realized her program lacked abstract thinking, and she decided to look for a direction that was more accepting of open-ended answers. Switching to an art and design program at the University of Alberta allowed her to follow this passion. Christina works to create unique experiences where people feel comfortable to connect with themselves and others.

Christina met her husband at university. While searching for wedding event planners they were having trouble finding anyone who embodied the bold ideas they envisioned. With a clear vision for their big day, Christina and her husband decided to plan their wedding as their first professional project together. After this successful wedding, they decided to go into business together and founded Threshold (formerly known as ID Bohemia) in 2007. Between her husband's construction skills and



her artistic talents, their unique event planning and interior design company flourished. Christina shares her unique visions with the world, being able to work and collaborate with people while bringing her art to life. As an introvert she knew that becoming a studio artist would only contribute to her shyness instead of getting her to push boundaries.

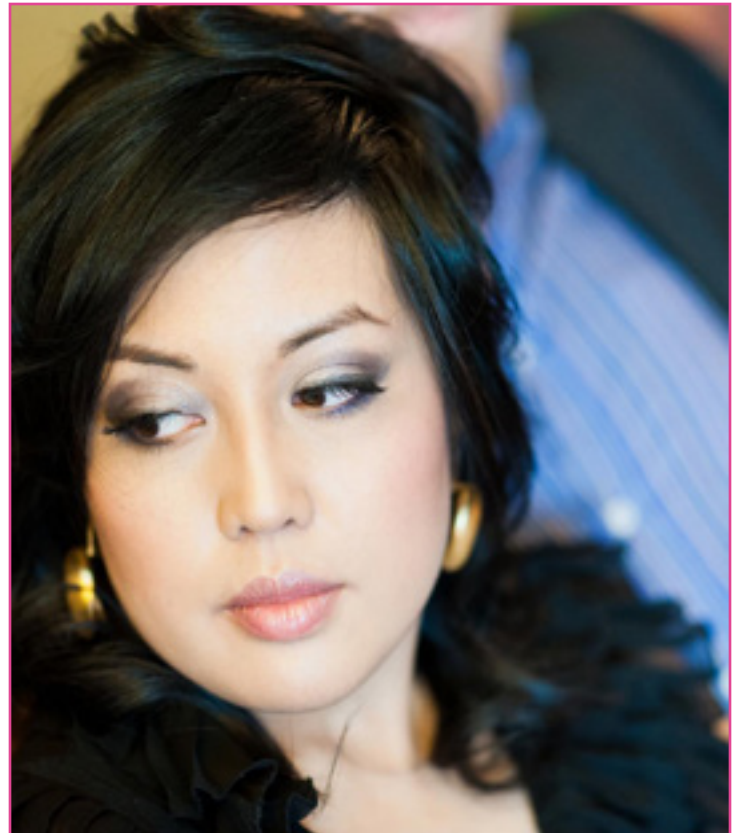
Christina takes pride in her profession and works to create a healthy work life balance to maintain her health and the quality of work. By prioritizing her family and herself she always ensures that she can produce the best possible results for her clients. She spent many years struggling to call herself an artist. As an event and wedding planner Christina has a versatile portfolio that she adapts to each client's vision. Each event is unique, and while she is known for doing non-traditional events, she can also perfect a straightforward formal wedding. When planning an event, she always tries to gather as much information

as possible. Asking questions about their family, childhood and background allows Christina to dig below the surface to curate the most personal event possible.

Wedding planning was a logical choice for Christina to explore installation art. As an emerging artist she noticed that she wasn't as interested in traditional forms of installation such as ceramics and pottery. Christina has worked on many interesting projects such as Diner en Blanc, galas for the Stollery Children's Hospital and for rock star Dee Snider, exemplifying her versatility. As someone who has struggled with their identity finding a delicate balance between her Canadian and Filipino culture is important. Because of this about eighty percent of her clients are interracial couples who need help blending two or more cultures. Whether for decorating a space or planning a wedding, Christina finds the perfect balance.

"I want to build a space where people who also struggle between two cultures can feel comfortable."

Christina is currently working on her most ambitious project. It is a large installation piece that represents her spiritual journey into motherhood and womanhood. This four-part artwork is a large interactive work currently still in the planning and building stages. The first part of the project is a large sacral tree of life that is a mosaic based on the archetype of the tree of life. It is meant to represent the nerve bundles that connect a women's sexual organs to her brain and body. The second aspect is an altar piece of the postpartum Madonna. This altar piece is a visual representation of her body with actual portions cast from her body to represent her body in a heroic way. It also celebrates the changes she has gone through as a mother instead of attempting to hide or erase them. In the third part, the piece will include an eighteen-part labyrinth with devotional niches that represent her own personal development. The labyrinth will be separated



into two cycles of nine and each cabinet will have little artifacts in miniaturized environments. Lastly, the whole piece will be accompanied by a musical composition made up of eighteen different recorded voices that will be shaped and layered to imitate a religious hymn.

Christina hopes that her art can embrace communities that have never felt as though they have had a place to be comfortable in. This drive provides her clients with potential models of themselves they never had. While creating something new is scary, Christina has learned to value her own work as an extension of herself. Her art creates environments of familial spaces where people can feel comfortable to connect deeply and experience these connections together.

Based on an interview by Isaac Belland in 2022