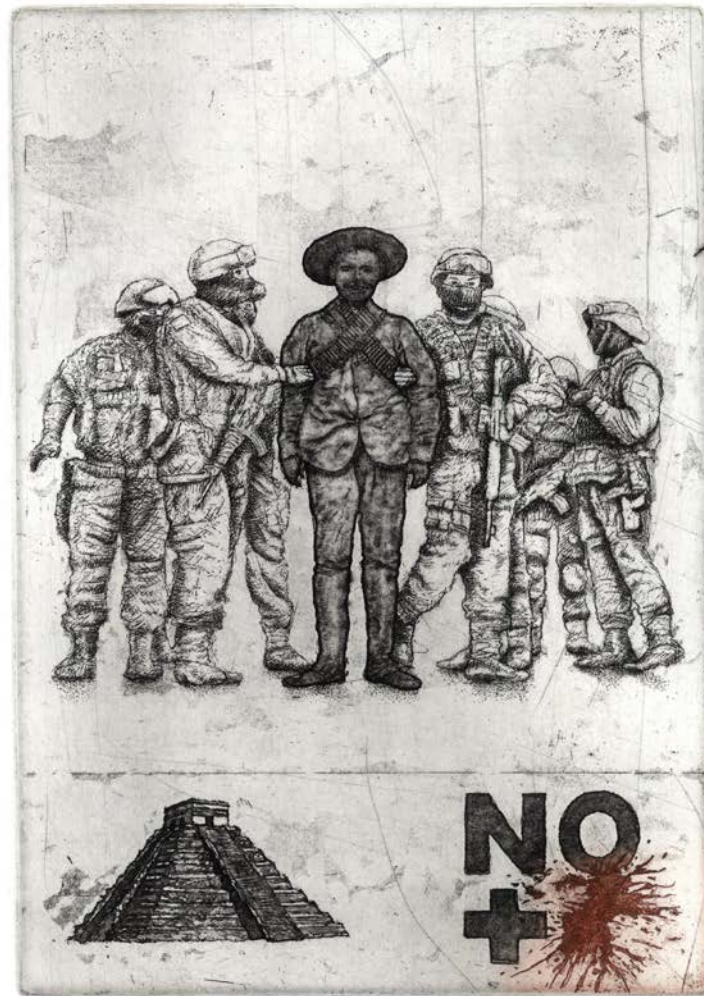


For the month of June 2016, our featured artist was Marco Hernandez. He is a printmaker and 2D artist from Kansas. Here's our interview with Marco regarding his work. Enjoy!



No Mas Sangre, Pancho Villa

TL: How did you get started with fine arts?

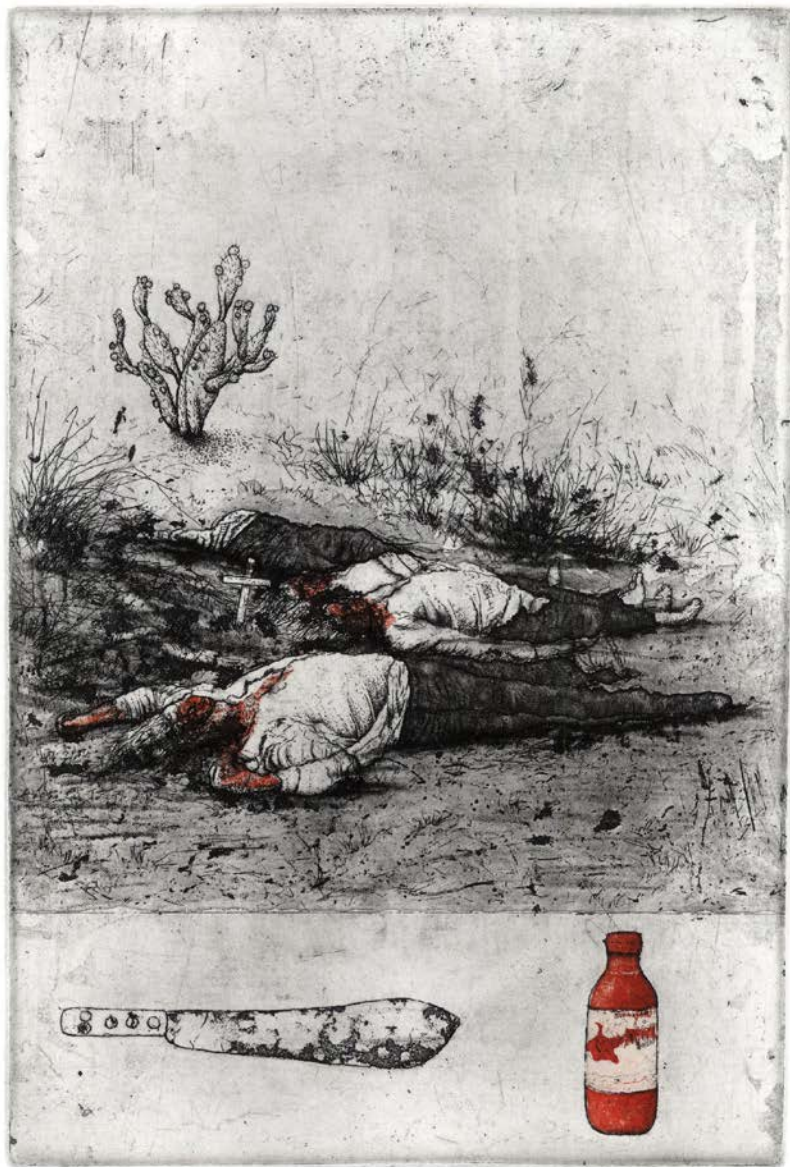
MH: I have always been interested in drawing. I remember being named the class artist in several of my elementary classes, middle school, and high school. I started fine arts during my undergraduate studies at Emporia State University.



Colgados y Abandonados con una AK-47 y Calavera

TL: From your artist statement, you mention that you were influenced by your heritage. Tell us more about what specifically inspired the pieces in this collection.

MH: My culture has always inspired me to make art. I remember looking through *Lowrider Arte* magazines when I was younger and trying to reproduce a lot of the drawings. I was raised by a traditional Mexican family which influenced many of my beliefs and I am sure that it also influenced my art and the imagery that I focus on.



Sangre y Valentina

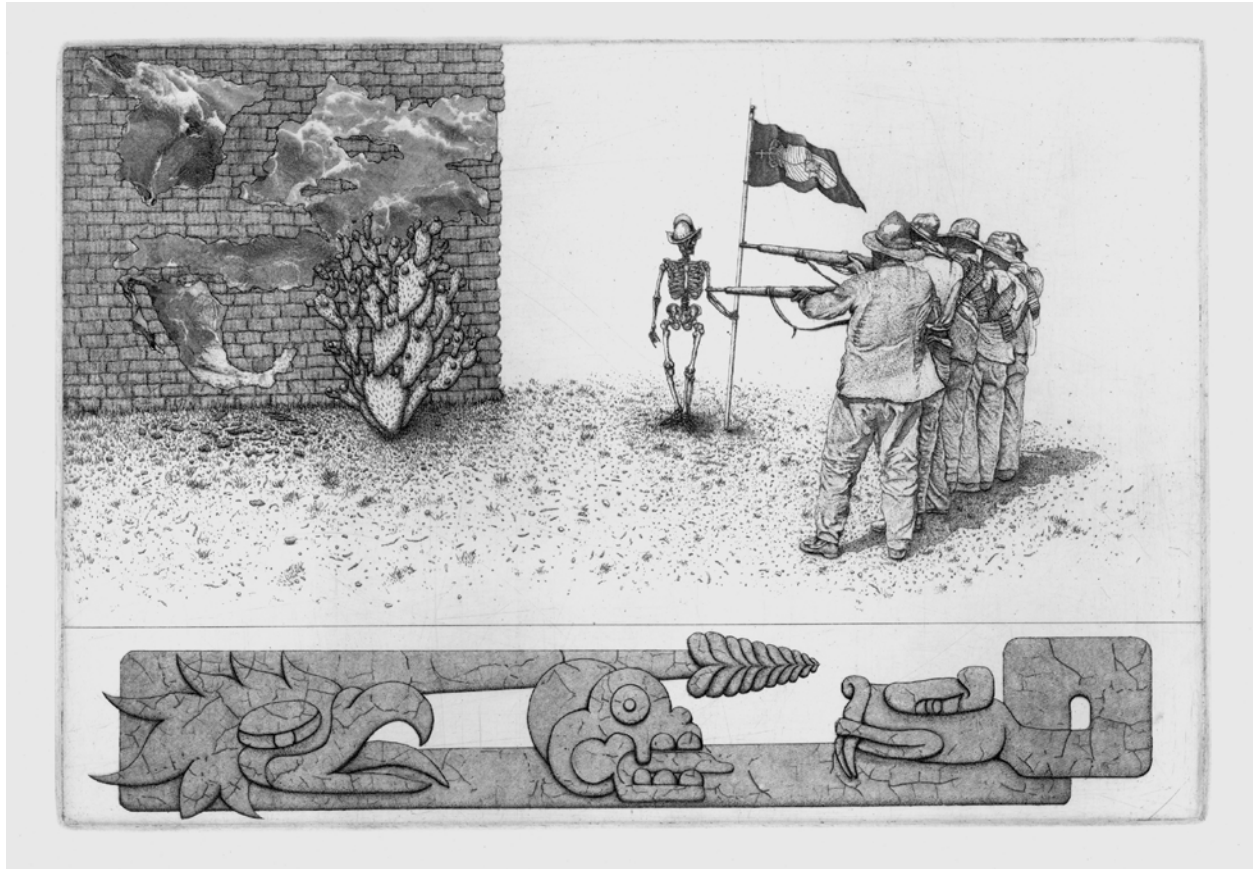
A/P

Marco Rivera

Sangre y Valentina

TL: When did you first know you wanted to research or better understand these social and cultural issues that were part of your life?

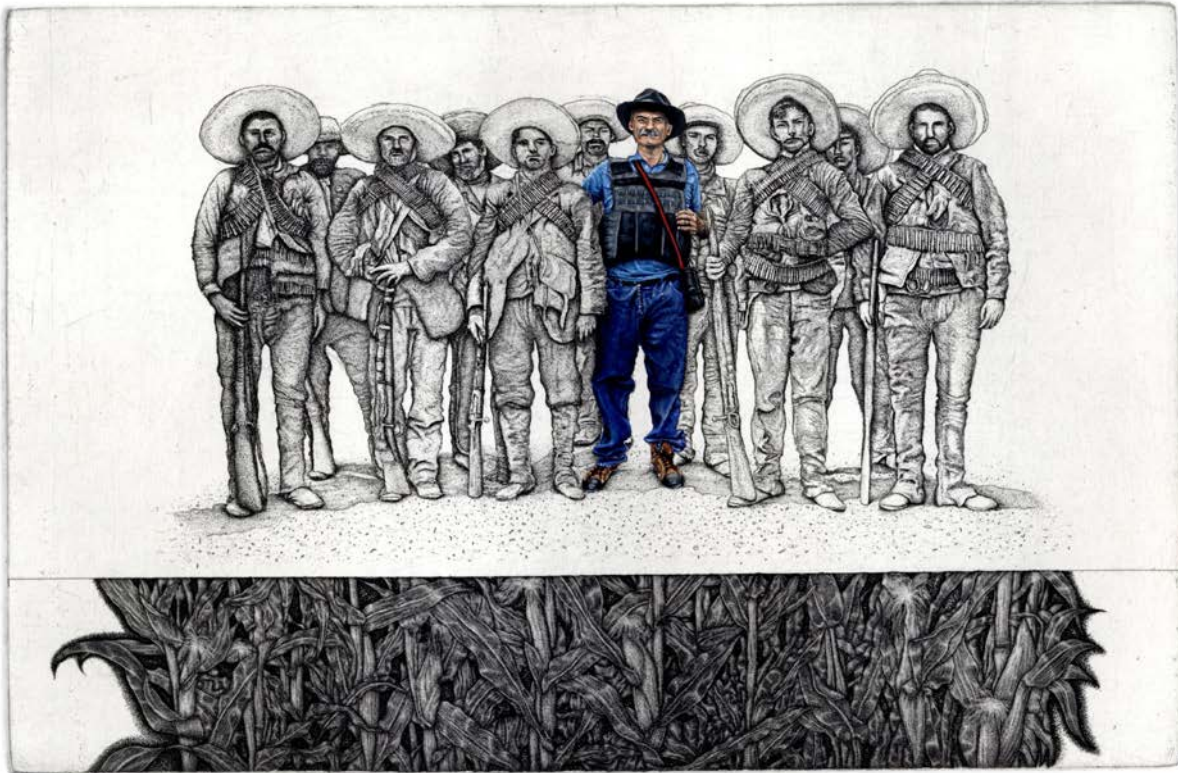
MH: I began to seriously research my culture during graduate school. I did everything that I could to learn more, I would read books and news articles online. I even enrolled in a class based on Mexican and Mexican American culture which was very beneficial to me and the creation of my new artwork.



La Ejecucion del Nopal

TL: Are any of the pieces in this collection from your memory or experience specifically?

MH: Some were. Most of the imagery in my prints was influenced by my research and life experiences. I would always hear about current events happening in Mexico just by being around family and friends and watching Spanish television. My mother has told me stories about family members in Mexico who have been affected by the modern crime that is currently taking over Mexico.



Mireles y sus Soldados

TL: Of the works you sent to us, did you create this collection previously, or were these selected to go together just for this exhibit? (Clarification: did you create these pieces as a set originally or were they compiled upon our request to show your work?)

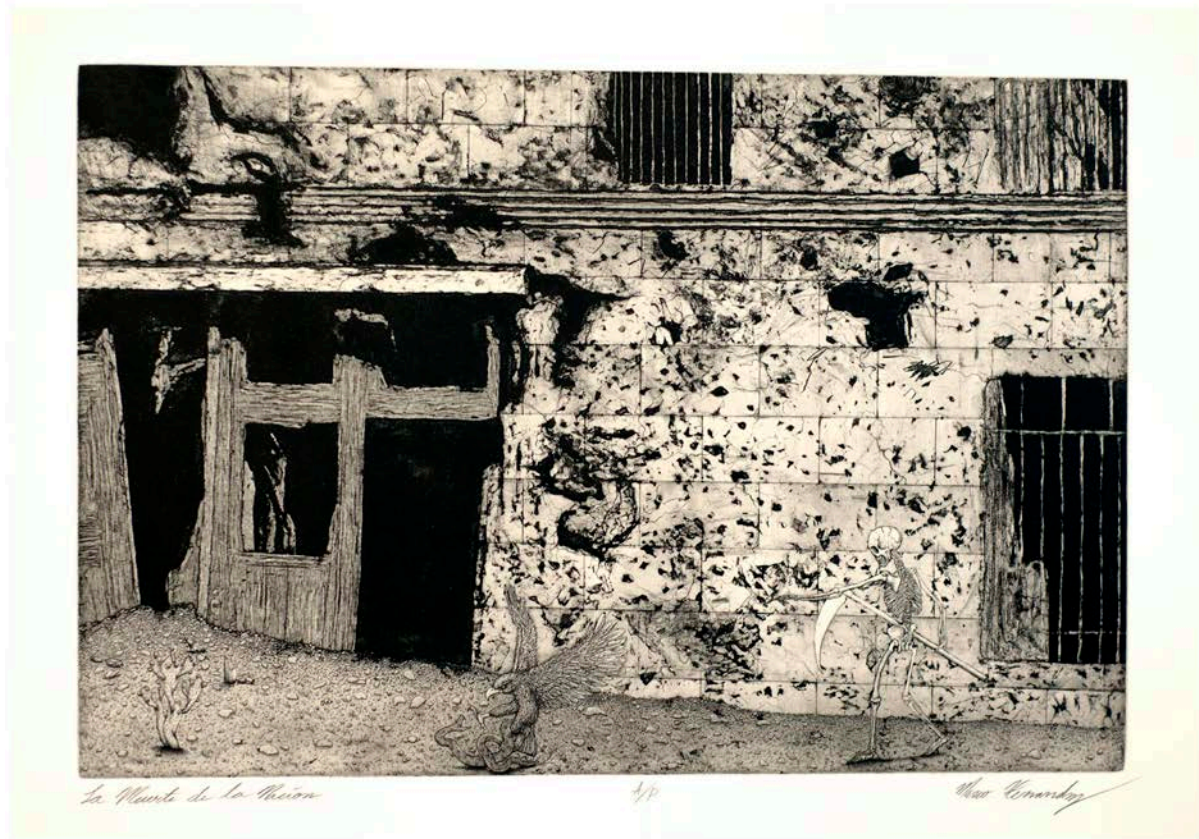
MH: Most of the prints that I sent were from my thesis exhibition. I like to think of them as a set of prints that go together.



Regando el Maiz el Nopal

TL: Do you work in other mediums besides engraving and printmaking?

MH: Yes, I appreciate all art mediums but I choose to focus on Printmaking, drawing, and painting.



La Muerte de la Nacion

TL: How is printmaking specifically the best medium to portray these images and events?

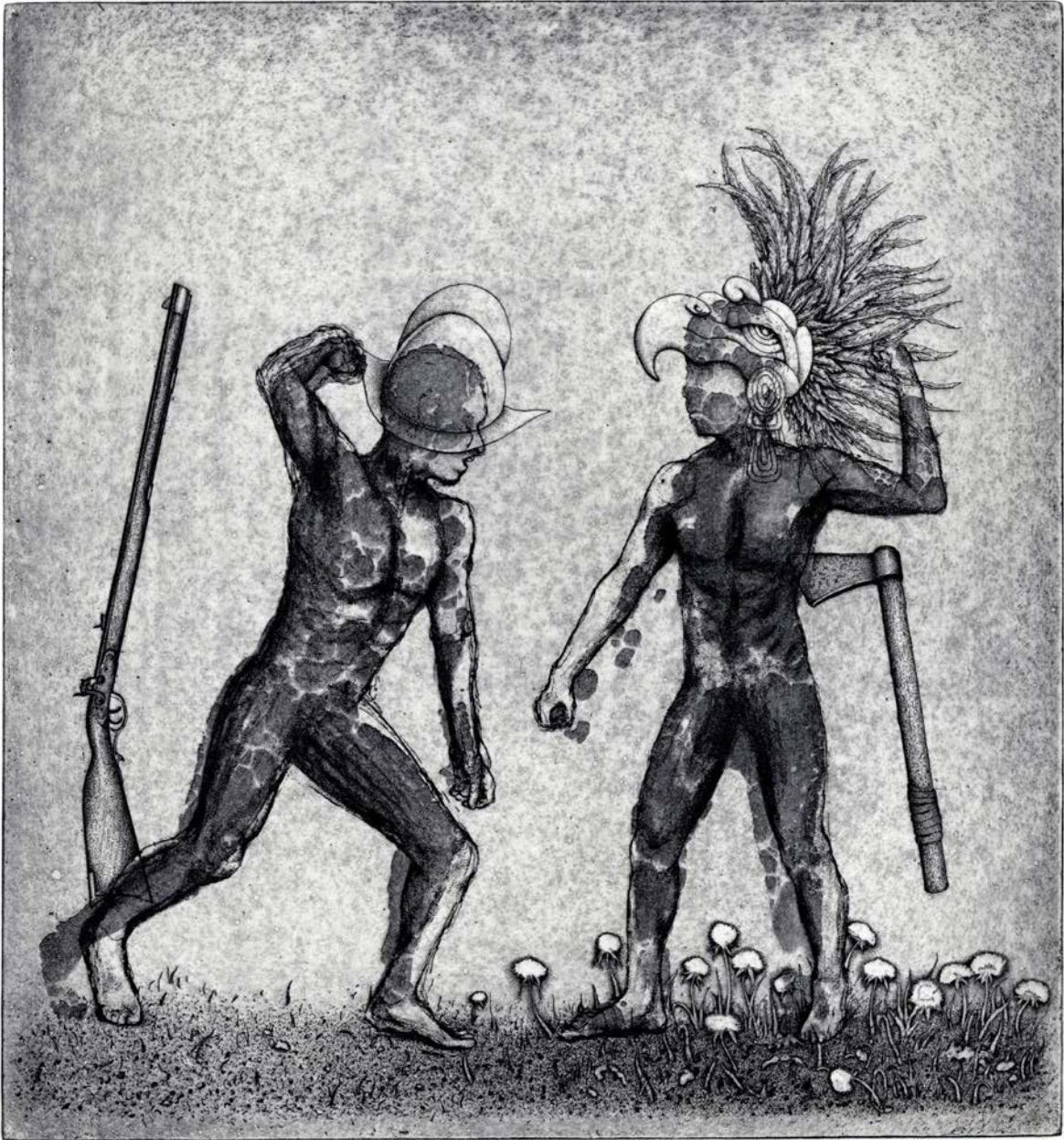
MH: I have always loved to draw but when I found Printmaking I fell in love with the art form. I was able to use my drawing ability and incorporate it into the way that I make prints. I also enjoy the physical process that comes with printmaking and the permanent marks that I am able to create on a print. I have also been influenced by Francisco Goya and his series of prints *Los Desastres de la Guerra* (*The Disasters of War*).



Tienes el Nopal en la Frente

TL: What is your favorite thing about working with this medium?

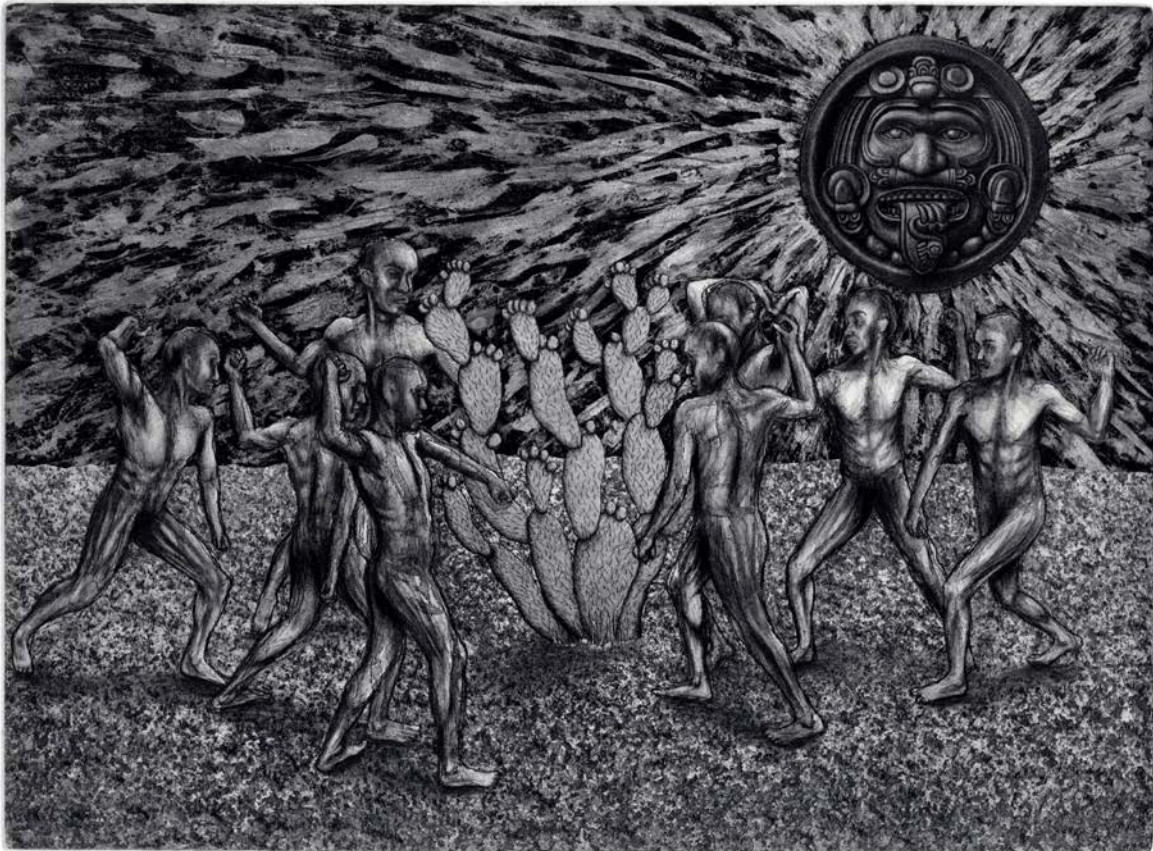
MH: The thing that I enjoy most about Printmaking is the process but I also love the permanent and intense marks that I am able to create, especially with etching.



Conquistando la Batalla

TL: How long does it take to create a print, from start to finish? Can you outline that process for us?

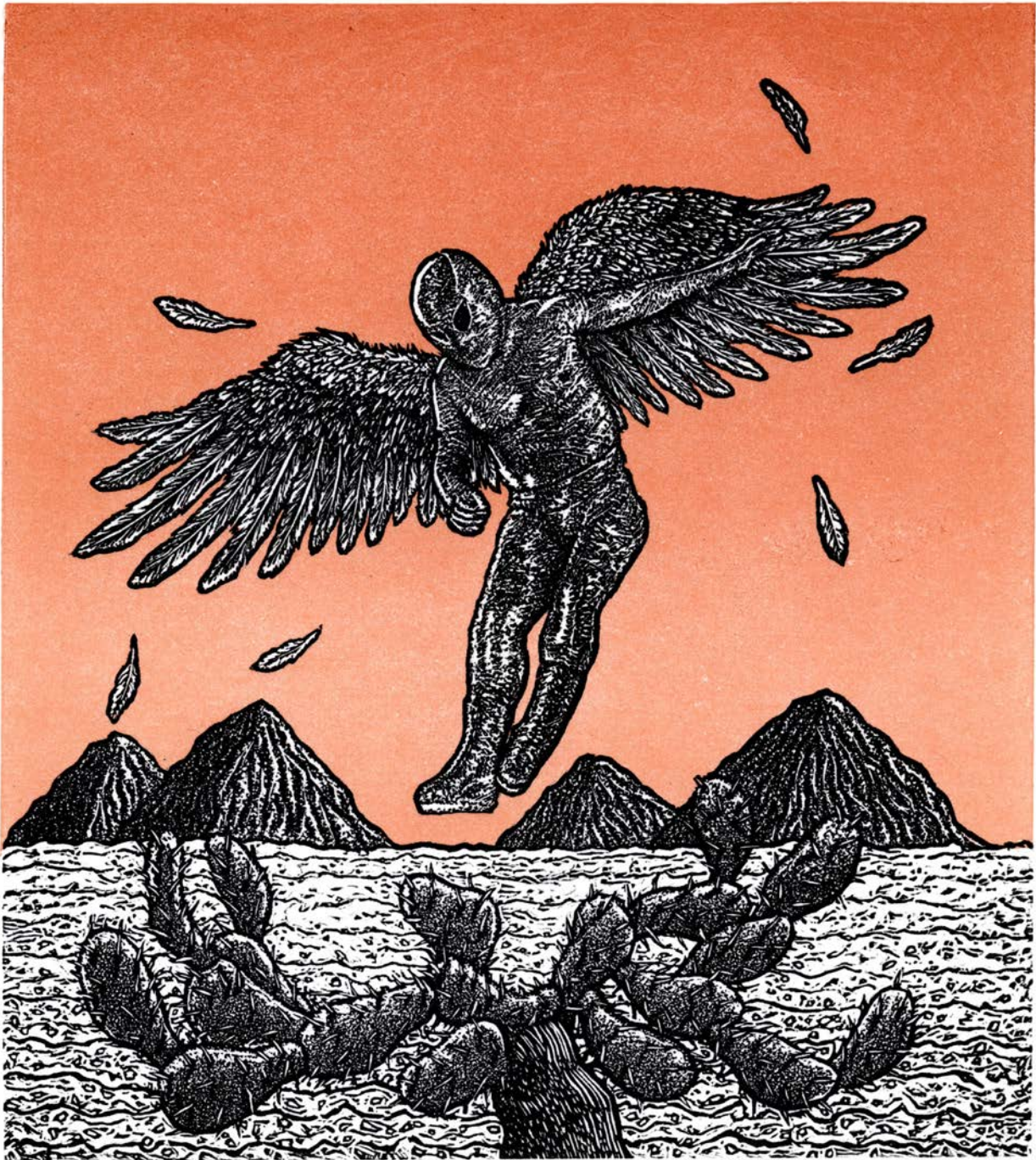
MH: The time that it takes to create a print all depends on the style and size of the print. Engravings usually takes less time to create than an etching. I have spent months working on one plate before it is finished and ready to print. Etching is a very time consuming medium and it usually has many steps. I begin by researching and sketching out some designs. I choose one design and transfer the image to the plate. I then work on the plate, this can take anywhere from a couple of weeks to several months. Once I am satisfied with the image that is on the plate, I can then print and edition it.



La Batalla del Nopal

TL: Regarding the last question, does that time frame include research time at all?

MH: Yes, the research portion is part of my printmaking process.



El Luchador el Nopal

TL: Your bio mentions that you teach. What and where do you teach?

MH: Yes, I am currently an adjunct art instructor at Kansas State University. I have taught several different art classes including Printmaking 1, Advanced Printmaking, and Drawing.

TL: What made you decide to pursue teaching art as a career?

MH: I always admired my art professors and believed that they had awesome jobs. It became a dream of mine to be able to become an artist and teach art at the same time.



El Narco

TL: Your artist statement and bio indicated that you have received awards for your work. Do you currently have any work on exhibit?

MH: Currently I don't have any work on exhibit but I will soon. I received news that one of my prints got accepted in two national exhibitions and I will also be having a solo show this fall.



El Indio Valiente

TL: About how much time do you spend making art each week?

MH: I am constantly working on making art. I wouldn't say that I spend every day in the studio but I will say that I spend several days a week working on something. Some weeks it feels like if I were living in the studio, especially if I have deadlines to meet.



El Maiz

TL: What do you hope to accomplish with your artwork?

MH: I hope to accomplish several things with my art. Currently, I hope that through my art I will be able to find a full-time art job. I also hope to make printmaking a more well-known art medium. I believe that printmaking doesn't get enough recognition or credit in the art world.



El Nopal #1

TL: Do you have any projects in the works right now?

MH: Yes, I am currently working on a larger plate that I hope to complete this summer.



Santa Muerte

TL: Do you have any words of wisdom for aspiring artists?

MH: Having a good work ethic will lead to talent and good skills. I have always considered myself as a very hard worker and at this point in my life I believe that it has paid off.



Damaged Devotion



Heidy

Marco Hernandez is a Mexican Artist/Printmaker who currently resides in Kansas. He received his Master of Fine Arts Degree from Kansas State University in December of 2015. He is currently working as an art instructor at Kansas State University. Marco's work has been exhibited in many national and international exhibitions and has received numerous awards including purchase awards, merit awards, and best of show. The theme of his work relates to his upbringing and Mexican culture. He includes symbolic imagery that creates a connection to his unique nationality. Marco is very optimistic about the future, he is determined to become a full time art professor and keep making art for the rest of his life.



Self Portrait, 2010.
Ink & Graphite, 11 x 14 in.