

About the backpage illustration

Kat Davis created this original work for Street Roots to reflect the state of our nation's controversial immigration policies.

"First, I knew I wanted to feature the flag raising at Iwo Jima. This is an iconic image in American history, but I wanted to tweak it to fit the current political climate. Instead of troops raising the flag, there are figures of different shades. The question that comes to my mind is "What does an American look like?"

Beneath the surface of the earth are hands. "The pair on the sides morph into the roots at the base of the flag raise. They are open, they are welcoming. Yet they provide the support in order for the figures above to raise the flag. This is a call to action to support, or, ultimately, love others. I know immigrants coming to America want to feel a sense of belonging and community. It is up to those already here to offer that inclusion. The hand, or fist, in the center pays homage to the Black Lives Matter fist, which is becoming so widely used in civil rights activism that this icon is now synonymous with a "Call to Action" or a response of "I Stand With You, I Support You."

The sky, Davis said, is inspired by the work of Vincent Van Gogh, and reflects the dream of immigration.

"They dream of a better life for themselves and their families."

- Kat Davis

Little Strategies

by Jay Thiemeyer

One devises little strategies,
same as any homemaker:
tucking in here, nipping out there.

On the street, it's little strategies
knowing who & what, when & where;
how to keep it whole, a world
of one's own. Like any homemaker.

It's about nothing. Nothing good lasts
a wise assumption.
Nothing to take home

Nothing & no one to trust
Nothing matters but this moment,
where you'll be steered.
You find money, take it quick.
You find a book of poetry, Dorianne Laux
say, don't read it. It will
only make you weep.

Keep your eyes on the street.
Keep what you see to yourself.
Little strategies you may have
your own, some that you
haven't stumbled upon yet.
Let me know when you find them.
I won't look for you.
You discover yourself
in the deal.

The street, a world that is otherwise
goalless, undefined,
borderless
and terribly constricted:
little strategies

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