

I'm Mikel Bresee, I'm the *Director of Community Arts Partnerships for the College for Creative Studies*. Community work has always been a part of what I did for the first couple of years out of art school, I tried to make pretty pictures and sell them and impress people with that... and it just wasn't fulfilling. It really wasn't fulfilling. I always had this lingering feeling in the back of my mind, like I was wasting my time. I never get that feeling today... I really don't. One of the things I've found is, the less I actually do the art, the more art gets made around me. And that's kind of been the process of my life.

One of the significant projects on 12th Street, very near to 12th and Claremont, where the Detroit riots broke out. We wanted to memorialize not the events, but the people. We we're supposed to have the monument upright, but we had some problems getting installed. So actually for the unveiling, the memorial was laying flat on the ground. But what was remarkable was everybody kind of gathered around it and it was almost like people gathered at a gravesite, we had a trumpeter playing taps at that point. And people were pointing to the names on the markers and actually breaking out in tears because that wasn't an abstract name. That was the name of the person who, when they were 10 years old and standing on their porch, was shot dead by the National Guard, 10 feet in front of them who fell at their feet. The art didn't come from us. The art really came from the community. And to see how it impacted them was really quite remarkable and it really makes getting up and going to work in the morning worthwhile.