

## Recognition flows in for Adolfo Martinez

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At mid-career, Kansas City artist Adolfo Martinez is racking up the recognition.

In 2008, he received a \$10,000 Charlotte Street Foundation Award for artistic merit and was included in a show of that year's winners at the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art.

Martinez is a regular in exhibits at the Mattie Rhodes Art Center; locally he also has shown at the Late Show, Leopold Gallery and Cara and Cabezas Contemporary.

Head downtown and you can see a commissioned window installation Martinez created for City Center Square. Titled "Post Office Sofa," it is part of an ongoing series inspired by the "sofa size" paintings offered in starving artist sales.

People love them, and Martinez uses the paintings as a vehicle for sly commentary on current events and issues.

Recently St. Luke's Hospital installed a "sofa size" painting it commissioned from Martinez. The 40-by-40-inch "Surreal Sofa II" features a red sofa with airborne cushions draped with a colorful serape and is part of a collection of works by area artists the hospital is assembling with help from Leopold Gallery owner Paul Dorrell.

This past spring, Martinez spent a month at the Prairie Center of the Arts in Peoria, Ill., as a recipient of a 2010 Midwestern Voices and Visions award. The program, a partnership between the Joyce Foundation and the Alliance of Artists Communities, included a \$4,000 grant and a show at the center, in addition to the one-month residency.

Martinez spent part of the time working on a new series of portraits of Kansas City women artists for his upcoming fall show, "Don't Cry Like a Woman," at Mattie Rhodes.

"I remember hearing that when I was a kid," he said. "I remember my mom saying that to me."

During his residency, Martinez also began working on illustrations for a children's book about Latino childhood. He is collaborating on the project with Kansas City artist Monique Gabrielle Maes Y Salazar.

Works by both artists are on view in the "Viva la Vida" exhibition.



*St. Luke's Hospital recently commissioned this "Surreal Sofa II" painting from Adolfo Martinez.*