

Edwin Jered Stephens

Artist Foundation of San Antonio

Artist Statement

As an artist who creates, composes and performs in both solo and group contexts, as well as a producer who extracts, accents and often plays the role of creative mediator, I have most often found myself using music to explore relational tension. I am constantly exploring the differences between alienation as opposed to self-sufficiency and unity as opposed to feigned cooperation. Music's unique combination of individual and collective contribution creates the opportunity to explore, and more so to wrestle with, these ideas at every step - from concept to creation - from production to performance.

My hope is to overcome social and emotional barriers and challenge the inherent disconnectedness prevalent in the modern human condition. These themes are visited lyrically, melodically and tonally, but most importantly, experientially through stories that live and emerge from every creative endeavor. Personal songs become collaborative undertakings and visa versa. People are invited in to participate and share in a vision. These experiences are recycled, thus making way for and influencing new works.

I'm interested in communicating powerfully, particularly in discerning when and where simplicity versus high-articulation is most efficient in transmitting ideas, emotion or aesthetic from one person's mind/heart to another's. My process is most often centered around capturing a vision, idea, particular feeling or performance, and usually involves sulking in whatever inspires that, whether it be a musical theme, progression, lyrical idea, or emotional feeling. I often find myself trying to extend a moment or experience until it has become tangible enough to carry into a place to capture.

Lyrically, I continually find myself exploring themes that include slavery, oppression, God, freedom and love from both romantic and ethical standpoints. Instrumentally, I phase between grandeur and minimalism, experimenting with everything from orchestral instrumentation to synthesized electronics, always aiming for an organic or live feel.