

PENSANDO AT SOLUNA

WITH KRISTEN ROSARIO

Puerto Rican Art Director & Interior Designer Kristen Rosario sits down with Soluna in this Fall feature to chat about her practice, process & inspirations in this exclusive Q&A.

BY ANDREA MARIA VAZQUEZ FERNANDEZ

HI Kristen - thank you for taking the time to talk with us today. We are excited to get to know you better. Let's start off with some background.

Where are you from and how does that influence your work ?

I am a native Chicagoan, born and raised here; I also spent some of my youth in Orlando. I feel like I grew up with the best of both worlds, intermingled between Chicago summers, being in the city and Orlando suburbs.

Growing up we always returned to Chicago for the summer, because of this Chicago summers will always have a special place in my heart. Going to movies or festivals, these summers were a key staple to my childhood. Now as an adult Chicago summers mean my mom

visits me, and it's great to see the tradition living on.

Other influences to my work are thanks to my parents, both of them appreciated art, my dad especially, loved it. My father was keen on good architecture & design, growing up we would go see art together. From galleries and museums to showrooms, I got to see it all. In addition to the fine art scene he introduced, my dad always made a point to incorporate my heritage, bringing into our home Puerto Rican art. Growing up I was surrounded with art from my culture, something I am grateful for. These formative experiences really shaped my interest and love for art. I'm lucky enough to say art has always played a big role in my life.

Where do you find inspiration and what motivates you to create ?

Despite how cliché this might sound, I have to say I find inspiration in the everyday. Chicago's landscape offers up so much, from architecture in certain neighborhoods, to small spaces and galleries, there is always something around the corner. Even my latest interest in floral design + landscaping, has been a fun new way to look at the same areas I frequent often. An ideal day might look like, a morning of casual strolls around my neighborhood (walking my dog Devi), and then some time spent at home building onto my ideas. I also think my home is constantly changing and a reflection of where I might be creatively. Change is important to me, bringing new pieces home or reorganizing; creating movement in my home matters to me. Additional outlets that inspire me can include, going to art shows, exhibits and also music - I don't play any instruments but I can build a good playlist !

What is important to you as an artist ?

The creative community I have been able to build for myself here in Chicago is really important to me. I think as artist's we are naturally so self critical, which of course has it's place, right. We want to produce the best work, meet deadlines etc, often leaning towards perfectionism or feeling a sort of 'imposter syndrome' along the way. Connecting with other likeminded creatives, has really offered me a home here in Chicago, allowing me to combat that self criticism. Being supported has allowed me to feel like I can really make my best work. Collaboration and feeding off of other's ideas is something I value. I think art is like an interweb that connects you to humanity/ community as a whole and it's important. Often in today's contemporary environment we isolate ourselves, but I believe true creativity thrives in community, where one can find a sense of belonging. Being around other artists, has really allowed me to grow in ways I probably wouldn't have if I wasn't supported as a creative.

It can be pretty cut-throat and competitive in the industry. Being able to find support / a creative community really just lets you flourish and nurture your art. You're creative practice is like a baby and you have to feed it art.

Where do you see yourself in 5 years ?

I see myself living in London or Copenhagen - this has been a dream of mine for some time. I am excited to start bringing this idea to life in the next few years. Looking at where I am right now, it really feels like the present is laying the framework for what is next. In my near future I hope to be working with a boutique agency where I can incorporate my skills working with interiors, graphic design and art direction. I love the idea of being able to integrate myself into different projects for a variety of clients, collaborating with a team to bring creative projects to life.

Keeping in mind that as I move forward, I also hope to center representation, there's often a lack of such in the design space; especially for women of color. "There's not many Latino/Black people in the industry and it's really important to me that I continue to represent and build new ways to find accessibility in design - everyone deserves to have and appreciate beauty."

I think it's been an interesting journey. The pandemic really threw off my idea of where I thought I was going but at the end of the day I'm grateful for the opportunities I've found along the way and I can't wait to see what's next.

SOLUNA COLLECTIVE

Kristen Rosario is an ambitious creative, with big dreams of building beautiful spaces. With playful aesthetics, from her graphics to interior design, you can see how Kristens youth influences her work. The artist finds a way to blend today's obsession with minimalism, all while pulling from imagination and the Chicago landscape. Managing to bring together elevated statements that feel full of life. Her passion for building captivating visual experiences gracefully translates into each of her projects, from previous work with Rebundle or working freelance, Kristen doesn't hold back. Bright eyed, and enthusiastic doesn't even begin to cover Kristen's love for art. Kristen reminds you of one of those artists you rarely come by, that one creative who is able to wear many hats, celebrating an array of skills. Kristen has either made or explored every element. She has been a model, photographer, stylist, director, and graphic designer. Merging her skills in a symbiotic way, Kristen's versatility breathes life into her work.

An artist to keep your eye on - we can't wait to see whats in store for Kristen.

WHERE CAN READERS GO TO SEE & SUPPORT YOUR WORK?

Personal : @sentrik

Design : @sentrik.studios

LinkedIn : Kristen Rosario