My art practice uses the language of maps to create mixed media abstractions that describe physical and psychological spaces. Much of my immersive, mixed media work was initially inspired by my longing to connect to my father, a long-haul cross country truck driver and mechanic who passed away when I was a teenager. Based on road maps of the U.S., routes my father often travelled, and an invented conglomeration, mutation, and fragmentation of those passageways, these works help me piece together the past and make up the parts I cannot know. An ongoing concern in my work is how to push the language of abstraction in order to create a visceral sense of movement through space and a universal, emotional impact. Mapping serves as a metaphor for searching, an implication of the unknown in wide, open spaces, and a trace of how we see where we’ve been.

The San Francisco International Airport is a site that resonates with the themes of my work, being a hub for travel and exchange. I have been a resident of the Bay Area for eight years, but I grew up in New Jersey with a father who criss-crossed the country. During graduate study and in the years since, I have amassed a large map collection as research and source material for my large-scale abstractions. Flight maps, the ocean floor, earthquake maps, road maps, and many others have provided inspiration for my ongoing body of work that uses maps as metaphors, charting the psychological, emotional spaces we inhabit and how those spaces seem to be in perpetual flux.

In addition to my work with mapping, I have a deep engagement with the element of recycling in San Francisco as an urgent, productive, transformative strategy in my art practice. Recycled materials gleaned from Recology, also known as the San Francisco Dump, have become an important component in my work. I became invested in reuse while an Artist-in-Residence at Recology in 2010, where I was challenged to make an entire body of work using solely materials scavenged from the dump. The experience of using recycled materials had a deep impact on my practice. Integrating materials imbued with the history of someone else's unknown journey imbued the work with another layer of embedded meaning for me, informing and expanding my work conceptually in unexpected ways. During the four months I was in residence at Recology, I spoke several times per week to public tours of diverse ages and communities, speaking about my work and experiences with recycling and reuse and how it deeply affected not only my artistic life but my everyday life. I became more educated about our waste stream and the urgency of reducing our environmental impact. This residency was pivotal and life changing, and my work with reclaimed materials has continued to influence my practice.

In the context of a public artwork, much of my work has been large-scale, and I am dedicated to pushing the boundaries of scale. I often work with paper and two-dimensional materials through collage processes that can sometimes be sculptural and low relief. I have also been expanding my practice into three-dimensional installation over this past year through several projects, including a show in New York last winter and an upcoming solo exhibition for the SF Arts Commission Gallery. As a self-employed artist for the last decade, I have learned to manage my time and to be flexible and adaptable to working in many different freelance, exhibition, and residency environments with diverse communities.

For this public art project, I envision multiple methods of translating my ideas into durable materials. Possibilities for artwork above the escalator are a suspended sculpture of laser-cut aluminum or plastic hung with lines from the ceiling. I am particularly interested in the Control Tower connector wall and the Terminal 3 Checkpoint Wall as sites for a series of large-scale, two-dimensional artworks. The potential 10’ x 10’ scale for each panel is an ideal working size for me that I have utilized for several existing pieces. I have installed a 10’ x 10’ sculptural paper artwork in the lobby of a residential building in Oakland, working with professional art installers to build a frame support on which to mount the paper work for long-term display on the lobby wall.

Glass or tile mosaic could be an apt material in which to translate my ideas for the connector wall site, as well as collage/mixed media work on wood or artist panels, which would then be sealed with resin or varnish. I see the connector corridor as a site rich with potential in which to make a dramatic, high impact visual statement that connects to our human experience of travel, transition, and interconnectedness. My approach to the project will be to research the site--it’s history, the diverse population that travels through it, et cetera--and to synthesize the research visually, extracting elements and symbols in order to create the piece. Thank you for your time and consideration.