



• b. joseph
valenzuela, 30

ARTIST

THE 411: CREATING HIS OWN GENRE: WORD ART

Language and art intersect on the provocative large-scale canvases of B. Joseph Valenzuela, whose unique approach has been given the moniker "word art." His process involves stitching canvas scraps together, applying numerous coats of paint and then carving out images in pen and ink—detailed images built entirely out of handwritten words. "These layers of language shape and shade and create," explains Valenzuela, whose work has caught fire on the local scene, including recent exhibitions at the CoolCat Gallery and Momo Lounge. A 2003 Sac State grad with a bachelor's degree in art studio, Valenzuela's work earned an award of merit last year at the State Fair's California Fine Art Exhibition, though he modestly plays it down. ("It was minor.") His proudest moments, he says, happen "every time someone makes a comment or stares at my art for longer than three seconds. I want the work to act as a bridge."