

TIERRA BRAVA

With the support of a Fulbright Fellowship in 1997 and drawing inspiration from the pulp comic of the same name, *Tierra Brava* traverses a personal psychological space within the color of a place mired in contradictions; the U.S. – Mexico border. It is a place that is in a constant search for its own sense of identity, juggling the traditions of culture and history of the interior with the pleasures and promises of prosperity and a better life of its northern neighbor. It is not Mexico and not the United States, but rather something and somewhere in-between.

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Este documento faculta a su titular a permanecer en el país, en calidad de No Inmigrante por 310 días, como **NO INMIGRANTE VISITANTE SIN ACTIVIDADES LUCRATIVAS. ENTRADAS Y SALIDAS MULTIPLES** de acuerdo al artículo 42, fracción **III**, de la Ley General de Población en vigor, según oficio de autorización de esta Secretaría Núm. **032592** de fecha **22 AGOSTO 1997** Derechos pagados **\$69.00 DLS. E.U.A.**

Recibo Oficial Núm. _____ de fecha _____

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA, 29 AGOSTO 1997
Lugar y fecha de expedición
Julia Robles
Cónsul de México
Firma del funcionario

Nº 460206

(Huella digital del pulgar derecho)

DATOS DEL TITULAR

Nombre: **PAUL GLENN TUROUNET**
Nacionalidad: **ESTADOUNIDENSE**
Fecha de nacimiento: **6 MARZO 1962**
Lugar de nacimiento: **CALIFORNIA**
Sexo: **MASCULINO** Estado civil: **SOLTERO**

Actividad autorizada: **DESARROLLAR ACTIVIDADES DE INVESTIGACION EN SU CARACTER DE BECARIO, CON EL TEMA COMUNIDADES Y PAISAJES A LO LARGO DE LA FRONTERA NORTE MEXICO-E.U.A., EN EL COLEGIO DE LA FRONTERA NORTE, BAJO EL AUSPICIO DE LA COMISION MEXICO-E.U.A. PARA EL INTERCAMBIO EDUCATIVO Y CULTURAL COMISION FULBRIGHT-GARCIA ROBLES.**

Firma del interesado

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Leaving the United States across the Rio Bravo, a man crosses a fenced walkway that leads into Mexico. His suspicious eyes simultaneously stare off in two directions - at those in his path and straight ahead to the life he is going back to.

Once across this line of dirt and water, a series of storefronts, marketplaces, buildings and street scenes feature the contrasting elements of Mexican life: a street vendors' grill of elotes - corn on the cob, appears in the forefront while a shadowy figure lurks in the background; smiling dentures are locked in a display case with a handmade sign proclaiming "free estimates." In a large mercado, the picture of a bright-eyed baby is prominently displayed above jars of salsa, and who, upon closer examination, is urinating with a smile on his face.

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Along the way, complex relationships of men, women and families reveal their day-to-day joys and struggles. A bikini-clad woman on a billboard tempts us to buy ice-cold beer, but not with her eyes. In a bar lit green, white and red, a man gently lights a cigarette for a woman as she leans in. It is just a matter of time before love is graffiti above a seat-less toilet in a peach-colored hotel bathroom. Babies suckle at their mother's breast and are held by their fathers at a christening. Little boys smile as they play with guns, mimicking a scene from a Hollywood film. The shadow of a finger gun takes aim at a woman sitting with her child; the sadness in her eyes reveals her plight.

While there are moments of hope on La Frontera - the glow of warm morning light coming through a bedroom window; a beautiful young girl in a pink dress - hardship, violence and death are always near: a little boy entangled by a spider-web of steel rebar sleeps on the sidewalk; a bloodied bull lies in the back of a pickup truck, slain by a man with the U.S. flag on his t-shirt; a dead coyote hangs on a barbed-wire fence marking the border - a sign warning migrants not to cross. An anti-drug enforcement soldier in black fatigues clutches a grenade launcher, while strays dogs lay peacefully beside him. It looks like a scene a scene from Iraq, but rather it is Playa Baghdad, where the border dissolves into the Gulf of Mexico.

And in this place, the possibilities of another life are not far away as a statuesque man naked in his underwear, looks longingly across a filthy river. But the journey ends here. A young man carries the dreams of many on his shoulders with "America" emblazoned on the back of his shaven head as he stares at a burning landscape: *tierra brava*.

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<http://paulturounet.com/tierra-brava>

Number of Works | Sizes: 49 archival pigment prints | 13 x 19 and 19 x 13 inches
1 map | 13 x 19 inches and 1 FM-3 Mexico Visa | 7 1/2 x 5 1/4 inches
Frame Sizes: 17 x 21 and 21 x 17 x 1 1/2 inches
Space Requirement: Approximately 104 linear feet (minimum)

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