

# Rodrigo Valenzuela: *Journeyman*

## Artist Statement

### Una Jornada

I originally wanted to name my show “Jornada.” This translates to “a day’s work” in Spanish. I kept thinking about a single word to describe one full day of intense labor. I thought about what a journeyman does--what journey a person goes through when she or he is off to work.



The image is a screenshot of a dictionary entry for the word "journeyman". It features a speaker icon, the word "journeyman" with hyphens, and its phonetic transcription. Below this, it is labeled as a noun and provides two definitions. The first definition is "a worker or sports player who is reliable but not outstanding" with a sub-definition "a solid journeyman professional". The second definition is marked as "HISTORICAL" and describes "a trained worker who is employed by someone else." The "Origin" section shows a diagram where "journey" (with sub-definition "day's work") and "man" are combined to form "journeyman" in "late Middle English". A text block below explains that "journeyman" is derived from "journey" (in an obsolete sense of "day's work") and "man", and notes that the term was used because journeymen were no longer bound by indentures but were paid by the day.

**jour·ney·man**  
/'jɜrnəmən/

**noun**  
noun: **journeyman**; plural noun: **journeymen**

1. a worker or sports player who is reliable but not outstanding.  
"a solid journeyman professional"
2. **HISTORICAL**  
a trained worker who is employed by someone else.

**Origin**

**ENGLISH**  
journey  
day's  
work  
**ENGLISH**  
man

→ **journeyman**  
*late Middle English*

late Middle English: from **journey** (in the obsolete sense 'day's work') + **man**; so named because the journeyman was no longer bound by indentures but was paid by the day.

In the dictionary, Journey is only defined as a trip: going from one place to another, emotionally or physically. However, etymologically, journey comes from Medieval Latin *diurnata* (day’s work, which derives from old French *jernee*, also meaning day’s work). The weight of the flaws in translation became the central problem of finding an exhibition title, more specifically the bifurcation of journey and work, which is made apparent in their dictionary definitions. Why is the journeyman defined as not outstanding\*, and when did the journey, as a day’s work, become obsolete and worst, a mere trip?