

# UC Berkeley

## Courses

### **Title**

Borderwall Urbanism | Spring 2018 Studio Course

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# BORDERWALL URBANISM

GLOBAL URBAN HUMANITIES  
INTERDISCIPLINARY  
GRADUATE STUDIO  
CASE STUDY

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## WHY READ THIS CASE STUDY?

Mexican citizens have long crossed into the US through the southern border, with numbers of undocumented people from many other parts of the world joining the migrant flow. The many salient human and political dimensions of this flow drew graduate students from a variety of disciplines – architecture, landscape architecture, city planning, art practice, urban design, education, and real estate – to join the graduate interdisciplinary research studio, **Borderwall Urbanism**, led by architect Ron Rael and artist Stephanie Syjuco. Based on studio-style pedagogy, unfamiliar to many students, the course exposed them to a learning model based on teamwork, frequent iteration of ideas and multi-media work products, and continuous feedback instructors and fellow students.

In this studio, students studied the research literature on US-Mexican border history, migration dynamics, border city urbanism, and the art, culture and literature of the border region. They also heard from a variety of border experts. They also traveled to the border, to explore the ‘twin cities’ of El Paso/Juarez and San Diego/Tijuana, meeting with local experts and residents, and stopping in the arts hub of Marfa, Texas along the way.

Based on their observations in El Paso/Juarez and San Diego/Tijuana, student wrote ‘dispatches’ about the border cities’ urbanism, landscapes, and cultures. And in their dedicated studio space, students worked individually and in teams to fabricate border-related structures and sculptures, choreograph dance performances and stage plays, and write poetry – all on display at the studio’s final review in Bauer-Wurster Courtyard.

### Keywords:

**Borderwall, migration, migrant experience, US-Mexico border cities, border landscapes, boundary monuments, design and fabrication, performance, project-based learning, activism.**

*This case study is part of an archive of the UC Berkeley Global Urban Humanities Initiative and its Future Histories Lab, supported by the Mellon Foundation. The entire archive, including course case studies, faculty and student reflections, digital projects, symposia, exhibitions, and publications, is available at [https://escholarship.org/uc/ucb\\_guh\\_fhl](https://escholarship.org/uc/ucb_guh_fhl).*

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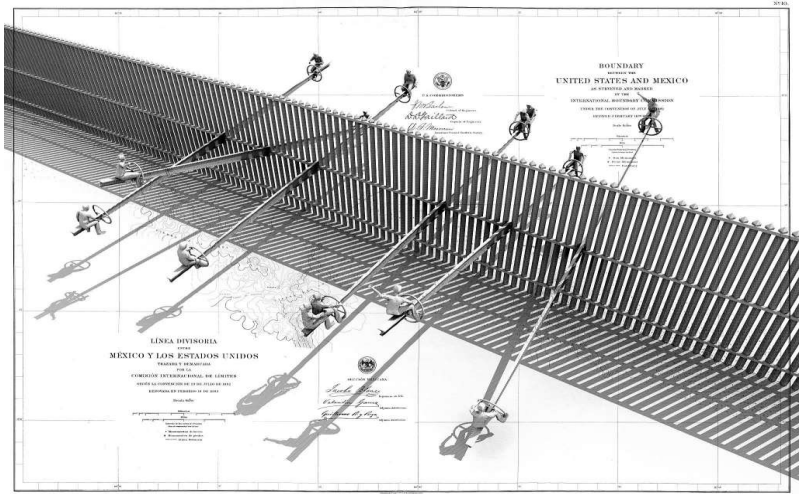




Student deployed this kite when visiting the El Paso / Juarez Border as part of the course's final project.

# COURSE DESCRIPTION

## BORDERWALL URBANISM



### *A GLOBAL URBAN HUMANITIES RESEARCH STUDIO*

**Architecture 209, Art Practice 209**

**4 Units, Spring 2018**

**Instructor:**

**Ronald Rael (Architecture & Art Practice)**

**Stephanie Syjuco (Art Practice)**

There are fourteen major sister cities along the United States - Mexico border whose urban, cultural, and ecological networks have been bifurcated by a borderwall. With 650 miles of wall already constructed, and the population in these urban areas expected to grow to over 20 million inhabitants over the next decade, the long-term effects of the wall's construction must be carefully considered now in order to anticipate the consequences of its incision into a context of rapid growth and massive migratory flows, especially as the current political climate calls for further wall construction.

Using the U.S.- Mexico borderwall as a site of investigation, this experimental graduate seminar/studio class explored the American borderwalled city as an evolving political, societal, historical, and cultural phenomena. Using experimental methods of analysis, fabrication, and collaboration, students were challenged with examining the complex conditions of borderwall urbanism, creating objects and artistic responses to site and space. Several field trips brought students directly to border sites and provided context and examples of innovative reactions that challenged preconceived notions of boundaries and territories. Students learned from examples of artists, writers, and designers whose work is in reaction to the wall. The final projects consisted of individual or collaborative works that were deployed at a site along the border. Students from all departments were welcomed, no previous mapping, design, or art experience was required.

## INSTRUCTORS

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**Ronald Rael**

**Ronald Rael** is the Eva Li Memorial Chair in Architecture in the Department of Architecture in the College of Environmental Design, and is also a member of the art faculty in the Department of Art Practice at the University of California Berkeley. His past leadership roles have included serving as Department Chair, Director of the Masters of Architecture, and Director of the Masters of Advanced Architectural Design programs.

He is a designer, architectural researcher, author, entrepreneur, and thought leader in the fields of additive manufacturing and earthen architecture. He is the author of *Borderwall as Architecture: A Manifesto for the U.S.-Mexico Boundary* (University of California Press 2017), an illustrated biography and protest of the wall dividing the U.S. from Mexico (featured in a TED talk by Rael), and *Earth Architecture* (Princeton Architectural Press, 2008), a history of building with earth in the modern era. Rael San Fratello, the studio he co-founded with architect Virginia San Fratello, was named a 2014 Emerging Voice by The Architectural League of New York—one of the most coveted awards in North American architecture. Most recently, Rael San Fratello has installed “Teetertotter Wall,” three pink see-saws on the US-Mexico border, named 2020 Design of the Year.



**Stephanie Syjuco**

**Stephanie Syjuco** works in photography, sculpture, and installation, moving from handmade and craft-inspired mediums to digital editing and archive excavations. Her projects leverage open-source systems, shareware logic, and flows of capital, in order to investigate issues of economies and empire. Recently, she has focused on how photography and image-based processes are implicated in the construction of racialized, exclusionary narratives of American history and citizenship. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including a 2014 Guggenheim Fellowship Award, a 2020 Tiffany Foundation Award, and a 2009 Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptors Award. She was a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellow at the National Museum of American History in Washington DC in 2019-20 and is featured in the acclaimed PBS documentary series *Art21: Art in the Twenty-First Century*.

Born in the Philippines in 1974, Syjuco received her MFA from Stanford University and BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute. Her work has been exhibited widely, including at The Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art, The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Smithsonian American Art Museum, The Walker Art Center, The 12th Havana Biennial, and The 2015 Asian Art Biennial (Taiwan), among others. A long-time educator, she is an Associate Professor in Sculpture at the University of California, Berkeley. She lives in Oakland, California.

At Berkeley she has taught courses in sculpture, social practice, photography, Junior Seminar, Senior Projects/Professional Practices, Special Topics, and Graduate Studio/Seminars. She oversees the Sculpture area with Professor Brody Reiman, the Ceramics area, and the Project Lab, which houses the Library of Tactical Knowledge.









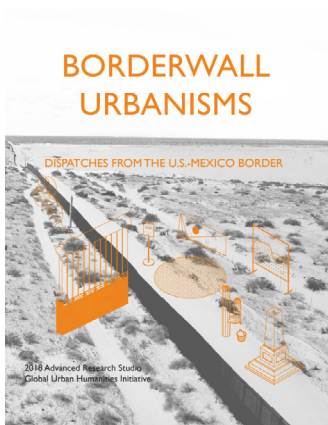
# COURSE SUMMARY

## CONTEXT

There are several major urban environments along the United States - Mexico border whose urban, cultural, and ecological networks have been bifurcated by a borderwall. With 650 miles of wall already constructed, and the population in these urban areas expected to grow to over 20 million inhabitants over the next decade, the long-term effects of the wall's construction must be carefully considered now in order to anticipate the consequences of its incision into a context of rapid growth and massive migratory flows, especially as the current political climate calls for further wall construction.

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## BORDERWALL URBANISM: FINAL COURSE BOOK PUBLICATION



At the end of the course, students put together a 192-page book entitled *Borderwall Urbanism: Dispatches from the US/Mexico Border*. The image-rich book includes student essays, reflections on fieldwork, photographs, art projects, and other documentation of the semester.

## TRAVEL

There were two trips associated with the course. The itineraries were developed during the semester, with the following dates and locations:

Feb 15 - Feb 19	San Ysidro, CA / Tijuana, Baja California
Mar 25 - Apr 1	El Paso, TX / Marfa, TX / Juarez, Chihuahua

## COURSE STRUCTURE

The class met for four hours a week, with an optional Lab period on Fridays run by GSI Matthew Palmquist. As a studio/seminar hybrid, there was an emphasis on making and activating things in parallel with research, reading, and investigation. Lectures included case studies on border history, critical design projects, social practice, and activism. All students were given access to the CED Fabrication Shops, including the digital labs.

Students were encouraged to use these facilities and attend the trainings. Students created a bi-weekly, online journal of thoughts, images, and responses to the course and their projects.

## AREAS OF FOCUS

- Historic Urban Analysis of 14 cities (GIS, Google Maps)
- Case Studies in Design Activism and Social Practice
- Crafted Site Responses
- Bi-weekly online journal
- Field Studies
- Projects / Installations
- Visits from Guest Speakers
- Creating a Course Catalog

## PROJECTS / ACTIVITIES

1. Project 1: Mapping Sister Cities, 2 weeks
2. Project 2: Typologies, 2 weeks, during field trip to San Diego/Tijuana
3. Dispatch #1: San Diego/Tijuana
4. Marfa Mapping Project
5. Dispatch #2: El Paso/Juarez
6. Final Project: 5 weeks and 5 weeks, during and after field trip to El Paso/Juarez
7. Catalog Documentation

## FORMS + SKILLS

Students explored the following skills and forms during their time in the studio-

- woodshop / metalshop
- lasercutter
- 3D scanning, modeling and printing
- model building
- video / sound / media
- printing / publications / zines
- storytelling / podcasts / pirate radio / tours
- ceramics / installation / tool and object making
- photography / archiving / documentation
- social practice / participatory workshops / collaborative processes
- performance / theater / dance
- urban interventions / public art / architectural interventions
- experimental texts / conceptual projects / online projects
- database production / speculative mapping
- drone work

## GUEST SPEAKERS

The class was visited by the following guest speakers throughout the semester-

Michael Dear  
Ana Teresa Fernandez  
Guillermo Galindo  
Cristobal Martinez / Postcommodity  
Richard Misrach  
Emily Jacir (at BAMPFA)  
Guillermo Galindo  
Estudio Teddy Cruz + Forman  
Marcos Ramirez Ere  
Jill Holslin  
Marcel Sanchez Prieto  
Norma Iglesias Prieto  
Ersela Krippa  
Alejandro Morales  
Kerry Doyle

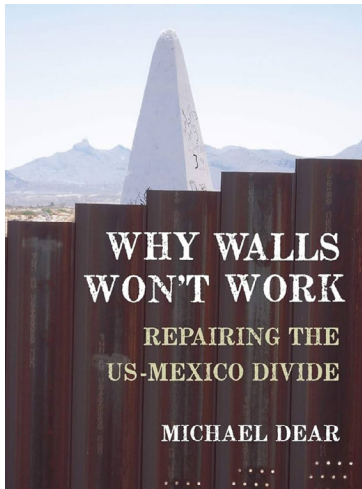




# SEMESTER MAP

## ARC OF THE SEMESTER

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### WEEK 1- INTRODUCTIONS + WHY WALLS WON'T

#### WORK

The week started with course and faculty introductions, where Stephanie Syjuco presented her past work. We were also joined by guest speaker, Michael Dear, professor and writer of *Why Walls Won't Work*. Students were also assigned their first assignment- Sisters (Virtual Overview) and were assigned groups to work together.

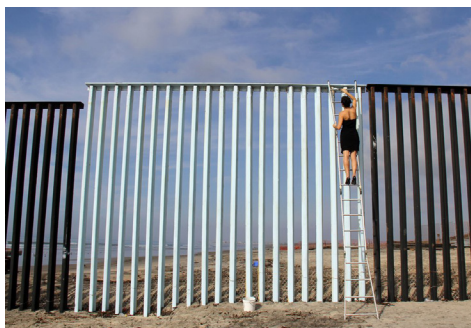
We ended the week with a Digital Fabrication Lab Orientation, and workshops on Illustration, Laser Cutting, and Google Earth.

### WEEK 2- MAPPING + INITIAL PRESENTATIONS

Students gave their introduction presentations, where they highlighted notable projects, research interests, and skills they have. Ron Rael also gave a presentation on an introduction of his work: Borderwall as Architecture with Speculative designs and proposals. We then switched over to assignment 1 initial research presentations on Sister Cities mapping.

### WEEK 3- LECTURE ON SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART AND BORDER ISSUES

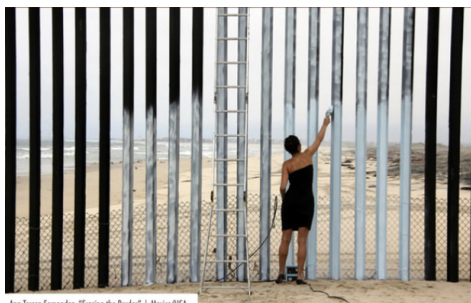
Stephanie and Ron gave a lecture on socially engaged art and border issues. Later, we switched to skills workshops ranging from woodshop, video, photography, and audio.



### WEEK 4- ANA TERESA FERNANDEZ + TYPOLOGY PROPOSALS

The course hosted an open to the public lecture for visiting artist, Ana Teresa Fernandez-

- For Mexican-born, Bay-area based artist Ana Teresa Fernandez, performance is a primary research tool in her complex multimedia practice. Her work often begins as a time-based action or social gesture that explores the politics of intersectionality. Her oeuvre includes community-based projects, public, sculpture, performance, video, and larger-than-life oil paintings that critique cultural assumptions and stereotypes about Latina women and illuminate the psychological and physical barriers that define gender, race, and class in Western society and the global south.



Ana Teresa Fernandez, "Erasing the Border" | Mexico/USA

After the lecture, we held a post-discussion on the ethics and decisions involved in publicly-engaged projects. Students after had to do initial site studies of San Diego/San Ysidro/Tijuana as sites for our first upcoming field trips.

## WEEK 5- FIELD TRIP #1: SAN DIEGO/TIJUANA + RESEARCH

Prior to our trip, students attended Emily Jacir's artist talk at the BAMPFA theater. Jacir's work focuses on silenced narratives, sites of migration, and the Israel-Palestine territory, which provided a strong parallel to our course themes.

Students also got familiarized with various artist mapping projects since we focused on the constraints and power of mapping (from a distance). We researched a selection of artist/community projects that use mapping to uncover hidden knowledge, subvert power systems, and or point our the limits of territorial boundaries. For example- the Ant-Eviction Mapping Project, Fallen Fruit: "Public Fruit Maps", Queering the Map, and Maps Amy Balkin and Emily Jacir, Omar Mismars, and Francis Alys.

For our field trip, we met with different Mexico-based artists and architects, including Estudio Teddy Cruz, Marcos Ramirez Erre, Norma Iglesias Prieto, Marcos Sanchez, and Jill Marie Holsin. We also visited the following sites- Friendship Park, Tortilla Wall, Floating Fence, and Trump's Borderwall Prototypes. Students also conducted their site visits for their projects.



The class visited with the generous Erre (Marcos Ramirez Erre) at his studio in Tijuana.



UC Berkeley graduate students at the research lab of Estudio Teddy Cruz + Forman at UC San Diego, post-lecture.

## WEEK 6- TYPOLOGY FINDINGS + REFLECTIONS

This week comprised decompression, idea generation, and work time. After traveling to the San Diego/Tijuana border, we reflected on our experience on the trip and how it relates to research interests. Students wrote dispatch reflections on the trip which can be found in the [course catalog](#). Then we presented initial findings for the Project #2: Typologies assignment. We were also fortunate to be able to attend a lecture with Jacques Ranciere-“Shifting Borders: Art, Politics, and Ethics Today,”who spoke on art as political interruption on a global scale.



Students viewed Borderwall prototypes, from Tijuana, off behind a huge area of maquilas.

## WEEK 7- PROJECT BRAINSTORMS + GUILLERMO GALINDO TALK



This week was a major brainstorming session and focus toward the 2nd field trip to El Paso/Marfa/Juarez. Students were challenged to produce one or more projects that will literally be activated or deployed on-site during our trip. The second field trip was not only a research trip, but a working project space for the course. Students were expected to gather and observe, but also set into motion an activity or public project, then present to the class.

We also were able to attend an artist talk by Guillermo Galindo (post-Mexican composer/performer/visual artist)-

- The extent of the work of experimental composer, sonic architect, performance artist and visual media artist Guillermo Galindo, redefines the conventional limits between music, the art of music composition and the intersections between all art disciplines, politics, humanitarian issues, spirituality and social awareness. Galindo’s artistic practice emerges from the crossroads between sound sight and performance and includes everything from orchestral compositions, instrumental works and opera, to sculpture, visual arts, computer interaction, electro-acoustic music, film making, instrument building, three dimensional installation, and live improvisation.

After the talk, Stephanie and Ron gave a presentation of possible forms for course projects and selected artist work that highlight public intervention and space, the presentation ended with group brainstorming of ideas and beginning steps towards production.









Students deploying their projects at the El Paso Juarez borderwall.

## **WEEK 14 + WEEK 15- WORK WEEK**

As students continued working on their final projects, we also prepared all student work and documentation over the semester into the course's final catalog which can be accessed [here](#).

## **WEEK 16- FINAL PRESENTATION + POP UP**

On the day of the Final Exhibition, students set up their installations in the early afternoon. This was then followed with Final Presentations with guest critics and ended with a public reception to celebrate the student work through the semester with food and drinks in Bauer Wurster Hall.



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# STUDENT WORK

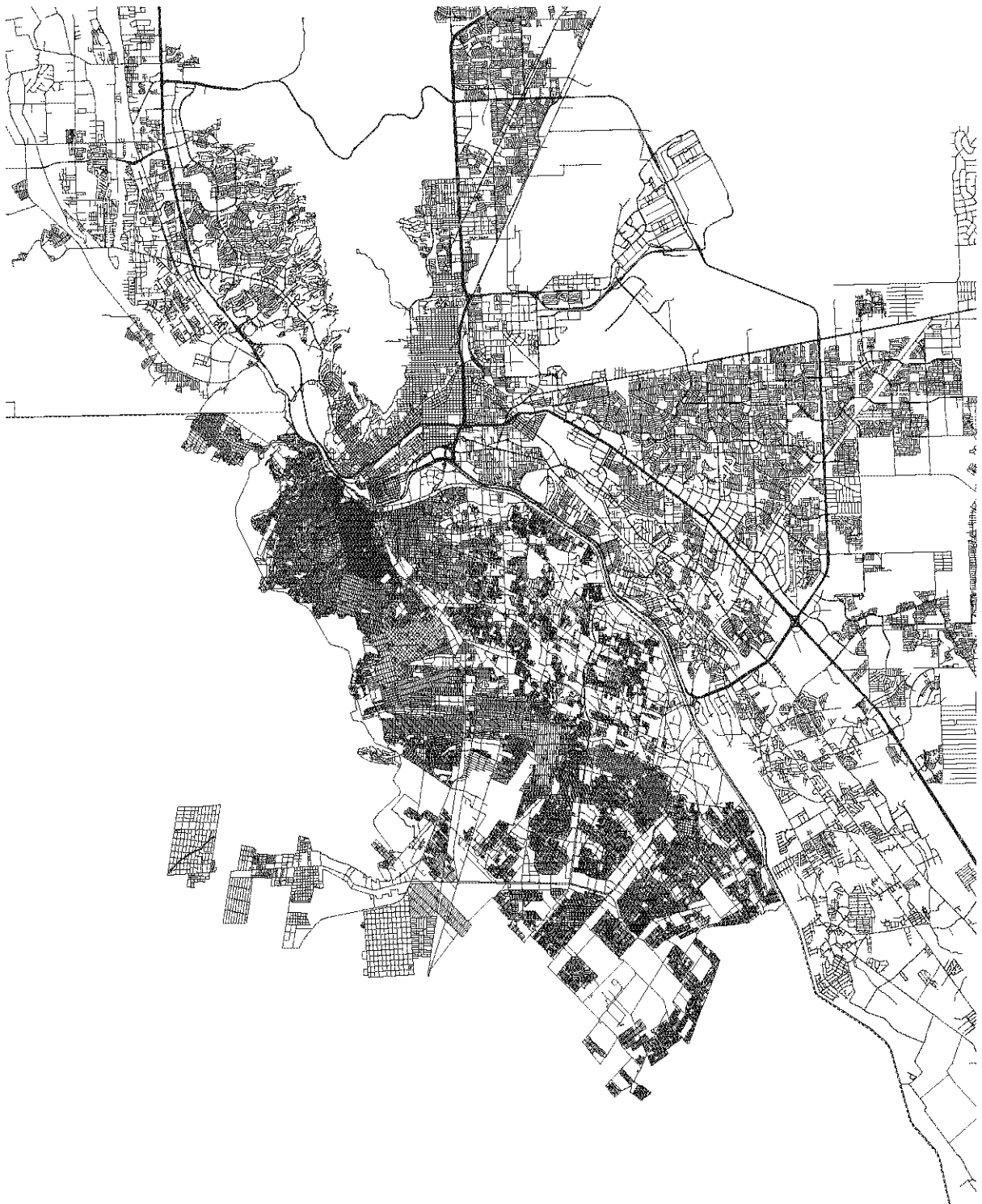
## Assignment 1: Sister Cities

The slippery and fleeting contingencies that define the urban landscape cannot be understood by merely looking at what is built there. We must document not only the built condition but also the unbuilt, and the unseen and overlay these many types of site conditions into a series of meaningful drawings that represent the sites physical and ephemeral conditions. To do this we virtually visited major sister cities along the U.S. - Mexico border who have been divided by the wall, and map what exists. Building from James Corner's canonical text, *The Agency of Mapping*, we first created a "trace" or underlay, defined by the network of roads on each side of the border, and then revealed the latent potential of each place by studying a particular area of research, informed by Corner's 4 mapping types: drift, game board, rhizome, layering.

As an entire class, we determined every sister city divided by the wall in California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. The entire collection of sister cities maps can be found in the course catalog [here](#).

Students got to understand the multiplicity of urban conditions along the border and how their conditions differ across the political border. In respective groups, and we used Google Earth/Maps/Street View, GIS, Open Street Maps, maps from the map library, historical documentation, demographic information, future projection data, etc., and arrived at a topic of interest to map in the student group's cities. We researched the important relationships that exist between the cities and created a series of maps that reveal the unseen conditions that emerge from the urban relationships across the political boundary. Questions we explored included- What is the same/different? What is connected/disconnected? What existed/what is to come? The maps crafted should reveal a hidden set of relationships/issues/phenomena. Research then highlighted an issue that demonstrates the equalities/inequalities/ and reciprocities that exist across the border—a comparison and contrast.

SAN YSIDRO, US/TIJUANA MX; TECATE, US/TECATE MX; CALEXICO, US/  
MEXICALI, MX; YUMA, US/SAN LUIS RIO COLORADO, MX; NOGALES, US/NOGALES,  
MX; NACO, US/NACO, MX; DOUGLAS, US/AGUA PRIETA, MX; COLUMBUS, US/PUERTO  
PALOMAS, MX; SANTA TERESA, US/SAN GERONIMO, MX; EL PASO, US/  
CIUDAD JAREZ, MX; PRESIDIO, US/OJINAGA, MX; DEL RIO, US/CIUDAD ACUÑA,  
MX; EAGLE PASS, US/PIEDRAS NEGRAS, MX; LAREDO, US/NUEVO LAREDO, MX;  
MCALLEN, US/REYNOSA, MX; BROWNSVILLE, US/MATAMOROS, MX.

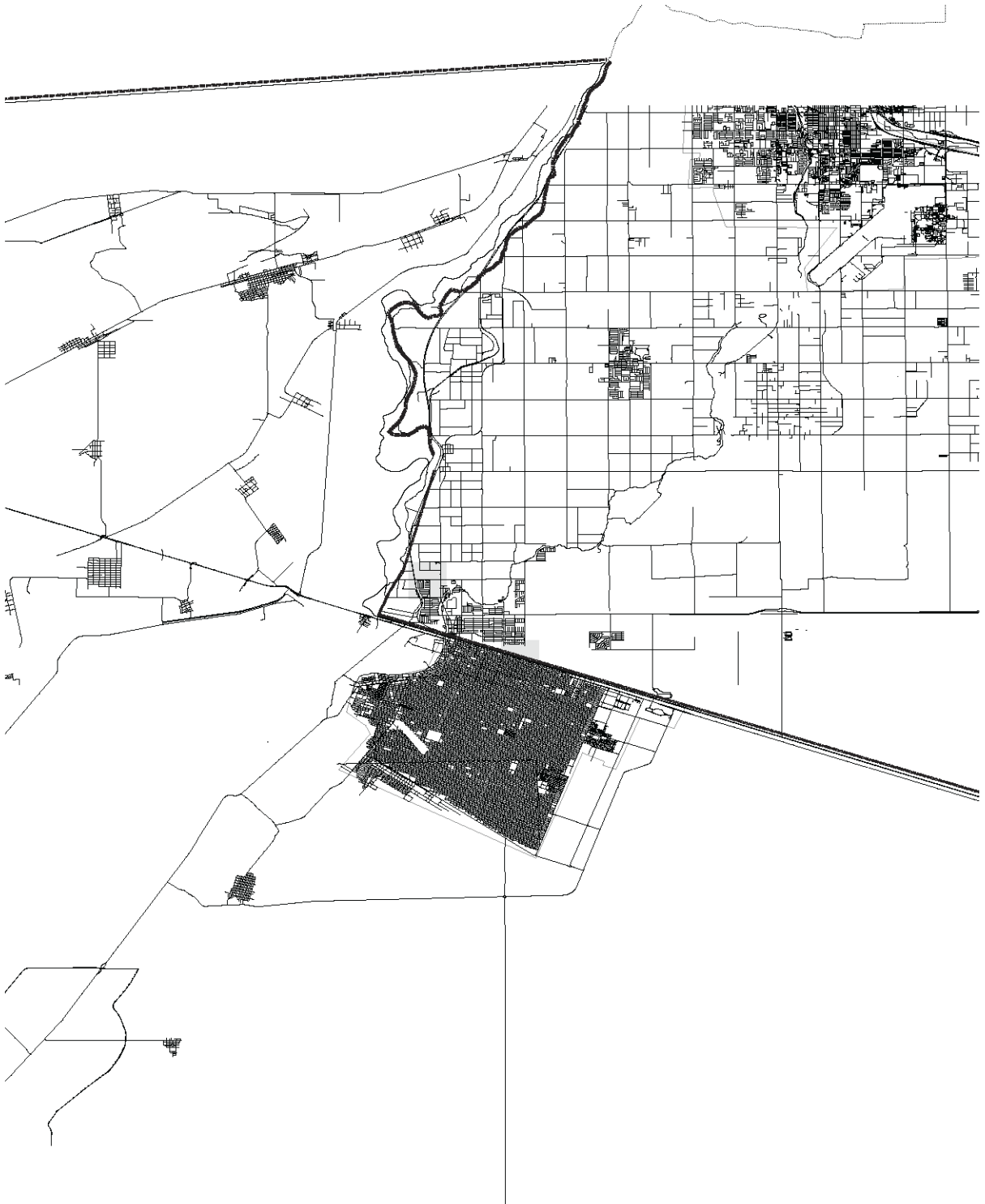


EL PASO, US. - CIUDAD JUAREZ, MX.



SAN YSIDRO, US. - TIJUANA, MX.





YUMA, US. - SAN LUIS COLORADO, MX.

# Assignment 2: Typologies

Using the site of the sister cities of the larger San Diego/San Ysidro area and Tijuana, students cataloged and observed a set of objects, forms, or structures in order to make a comparative visual typology. The importance of this visual typology was to provide a pictorial display of a specific category of things in order to come to a speculation about the cultural, political, or civic similarities and differences between the sister cities. The typologies were akin to gathering visual evidence of these forms and function as a method of data collection.

Based on student research interests and assumptions had about the cities and their observable spaces, we investigated what forms could be anticipated being able to be photographed and documented during our four day visit on both sides of the border? We consider if the forms are “informal” in the sense that they are created by average citizens as opposed to “formal” i.e., constructed or endorsed by civic agencies. We use preliminary research (Google Earth, online archives, etc). From there, we developed a critical rationale for the interest and potential discoveries we may have once on-site.

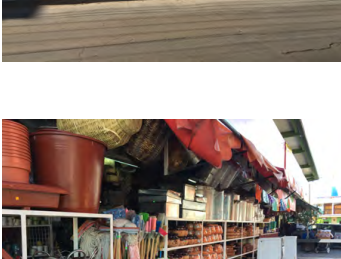
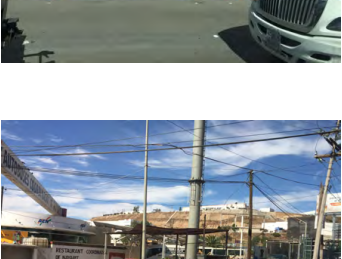
This typology research was not meant to be a definitive portrait of a place, but a starting point for observation and perhaps even surprising interpretation. The typology students uncovered on each side of the border is radically different or incredibly similar. In some cases, variations of forms exist but have core similarities, or key characteristics. Students speculated on the connections as well as the differences and were encouraged to do some research to challenge or support their speculations.

Student, Robert Ungar, explored the typologies of soil type.



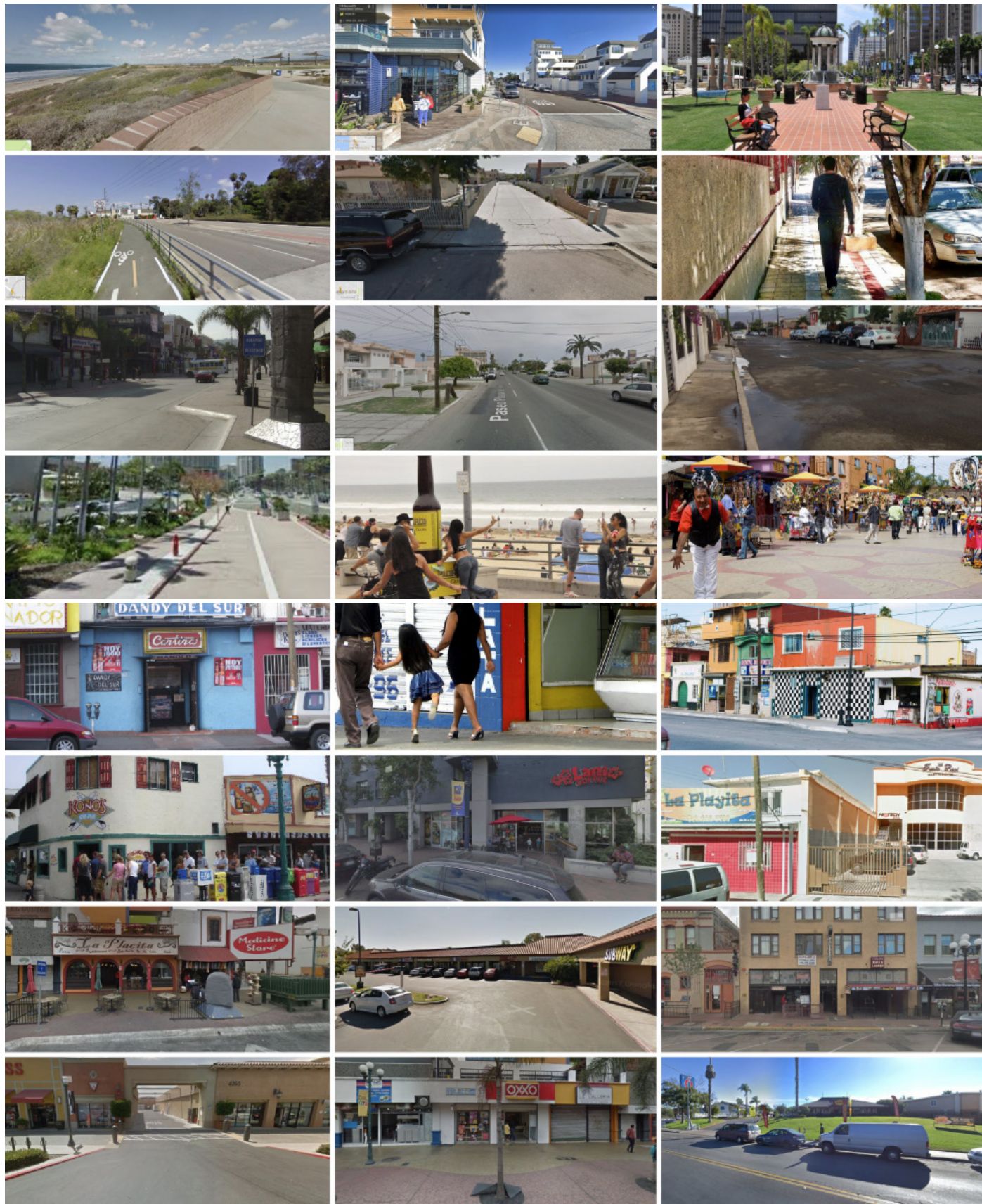


Student Michael Johnson saw similar forms in vending stalls and similar metal structures, such as awnings.





Student Sam Gebb explored sidewalk and awning typologies in the San Diego/San Ysidro area and Tijuana.





# Final Installations

## Monumental Monuments: Graphite Rubbings

*Student work by Sophia Arbara, Sophia Sobko, Gabriella Willenz*



*Two 24" x 30" panels, graphite on printmaking paper.*

Two hundred and seventy-six monuments pepper the U.S.-Mexico land boundary from El Paso west to the Pacific Ocean. The easternmost point of the land boundary is marked by International Boundary Marker 1, a 12' tall, four-sided marker erected in 1855 by a joint U.S.-Mexico team of land surveyors. The artists' act of travelling to the monument, employing a grave-rubbing transfer technique, and transporting the resulting facsimile back home invites interrogation of what is both gained and lost through processes of surveying, research, reproduction, and representation.



# Monumental Monument: Connecting the Dots

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*Student work by Sophia Arbara, Sophia Sobko, Gabriella Willenz*



*12' x 4' x 4' cardboard, 6' x 1' x 1' cardboard.*

*“Monuments as relics say something about the necessity for ruins in our modern world.”*

- Daniel D. Arreola

In 1889, the governments of the U.S. and Mexico established the International Boundary Commission (IBC), a body responsible for negotiating the terms of several treaties signed after the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848. The IBC's survey of the border region resulted in the installation of 276 monuments, “dots” marking the land boundary between the U.S. and Mexico, from El Paso to the Pacific Ocean. Whether the boundary markers were meant to demarcate territory or to heal the wounds of war, in today's context of heavy border fortification and surveillance, they appear as ghosts, mere relics of the past.

By rebuilding International Boundary Markers 1 and 2C (located in El Paso, TX), we displace them from their temporal and geographic contexts, returning to a stage where territorial division was denoted only by monuments: dots that were later connected to become lines, fences, walls. Were the original monuments the colonial markings of new nation-states, the collective suturing of a recent wound, or a preamble to future notions of sovereignty and exclusion?



# Double Anachronism: Staging Antigone in Medieval Times at the US-Mexico border

*Made in collaboration by Sophia Arbara, Sophia Sobko, Gabriella Willenz*

*Participants: Laura Belik, Cheyenne Concepcion, Sam Gebb, Gabriela Navarro, Arturo Ortiz, Lizzie Sturr*

*Production: Shot on location at the US-Mexican border near the Anapra neighborhood*



Antigone was written by Sophocles in about 4410 BC. The play is set in the aftermath of Thebes' bloody civil war, in which both of Antigone's brothers, Eteocles and Polyneices, die while fighting each other for the throne (following Oedipus's death). Creon, the new ruler of Thebes declares Eteocles as righteous and Polyneices as traitor, therefore honouring the first and denying the burial of the latter. Antigone decides to defy Creon's order and bury her brother Polyneices. The play is about the tension between the law of the state - the man-made law - and the divine, the law of the gods or justice. It is about resistance when a ruler behaves as a tyrant and defies basic justice. And It is about the moment when brothers become enemies and one is seen as the patriot and the other as the traitor.

In Double Anachronism, two sets of actors rehearse the scene in which Antigone is brought before Creon to explain the defiant action of burying her brother. Employing Brechtian theatrical methodologies of alienation or estrangement effect (*Verfremdungseffekt*) by presenting a play within a play, aka, the staging of the play Antigone within the context of rehearsals for an amateur theatre troupe, we hope the audience maintains a critical and reflective attitude.

The staging of classic plays within modern contexts is a practice as old as the Greek tragedies themselves, as these plays were based upon well known and ancient myths appropriated for the Greek tragedy festivals and the political climate in which they were performed. Notably, Brecht staged Antigone in 1947 as a direct commentary of World War II. The set and costumes referred to Germany in WW2, instead of "King" the characters call Creon "my Führer"; Creon started a war because in Argos there were iron mines; etc. Antigone states it clearly, and the Chorus repeats, that the Germans didn't react on time and tolerated the rise and the power of a tyrant. In this way Brecht speaks to the middle and upper class people of Pre-Nazi Germany that either tolerated or supported the German authority. In the scene we present in our video both Antigone and Creon refer to the others, the citizens of Thebes pointing to both the importance of the social structure and support of the citizen in obtaining the city's structure; they refer to their power, but also to their inadequacy or fear.

Our production relies on a very modern day translation of Sophocles' play. Using the current U.S. Mexico border wall as the production's set and today's language together with medieval costumes we are asking to collapse the three periods of the past and the contemporary era together, asking the question: from ancient Greek times, to

the Middle Ages and today's border conditions, what progress has been made? The border wall functions as the play's backdrop, equating the technologies and the ideologies of the wall with those of the Middle Ages, while pointing to its performative qualities. The wall is a prop in the theater of U.S. politics.

The myth of Antigone and her actions have been used by notable philosophers to illustrate various ideas and claims. In *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel sees Antigone as exposing a tragic rift between the so-called "Divine Law" of femininity, domesticity, family and kinship, which Antigone herself represents, and the "Human Law," represented by Creon. Judith Butler, in her book *Antigone's Claim*, and Žižek, in various text in which he evokes Antigone, both reject Hegel's removal of Antigone from the political realm. According to Butler, Antigone refuses motherhood and marriage; she defies the very possibility of the social in a very deep way, choosing death over the possibility of a future with Haemon. According to Žižek, Antigone is symbolically dead because she is outside of the social order as her desire makes her inhuman; such a gesture is suicidal, hence Antigone's striving to rejoin the dead in Hades. Žižek believes Antigone to be the ethical figure par excellence. She is not opposed to Creon in the usual political-apolitical antithesis (as Hegel proposes). She is a revolutionary figure, because she acts. Žižek delineates 'Act' from 'action.' An 'Act' is not just an ordinary accomplishment, but something that makes us subjects. This is possible, paradoxically, only by annihilating our very subjectivity. As Žižek explains: Antigone's is the only way, no negotiation is possible, no compromise will work. To create a new social order, one needs to act, to challenge the symbolic, to stick to one's desire no matter what.

Similar to Žižek's interpretation, we chose Antigone to represent our aim at challenging the social structures of the US - Mexico context. But, the amateur aesthetics - the medieval costumes, the acting and the documentation - destabilize and question our ability to resist and subvert. The border patrol vehicle functions as a leitmotif that intersects the preparation and backstage of our artistic production. The border patrol, implying another mechanical security and surveillance methodology, drives by us, completely ignoring our existence. We serve as no threat. The moment we leave our footprints will be erased and the power of the tyrant will prove its upper hand. The amateur and ephemeral structure of our performance reveals our own feelings of inadequacy and impotence as we try to confront these powers. Our 'Act' remains in the realm of acting, in a theatrical context.

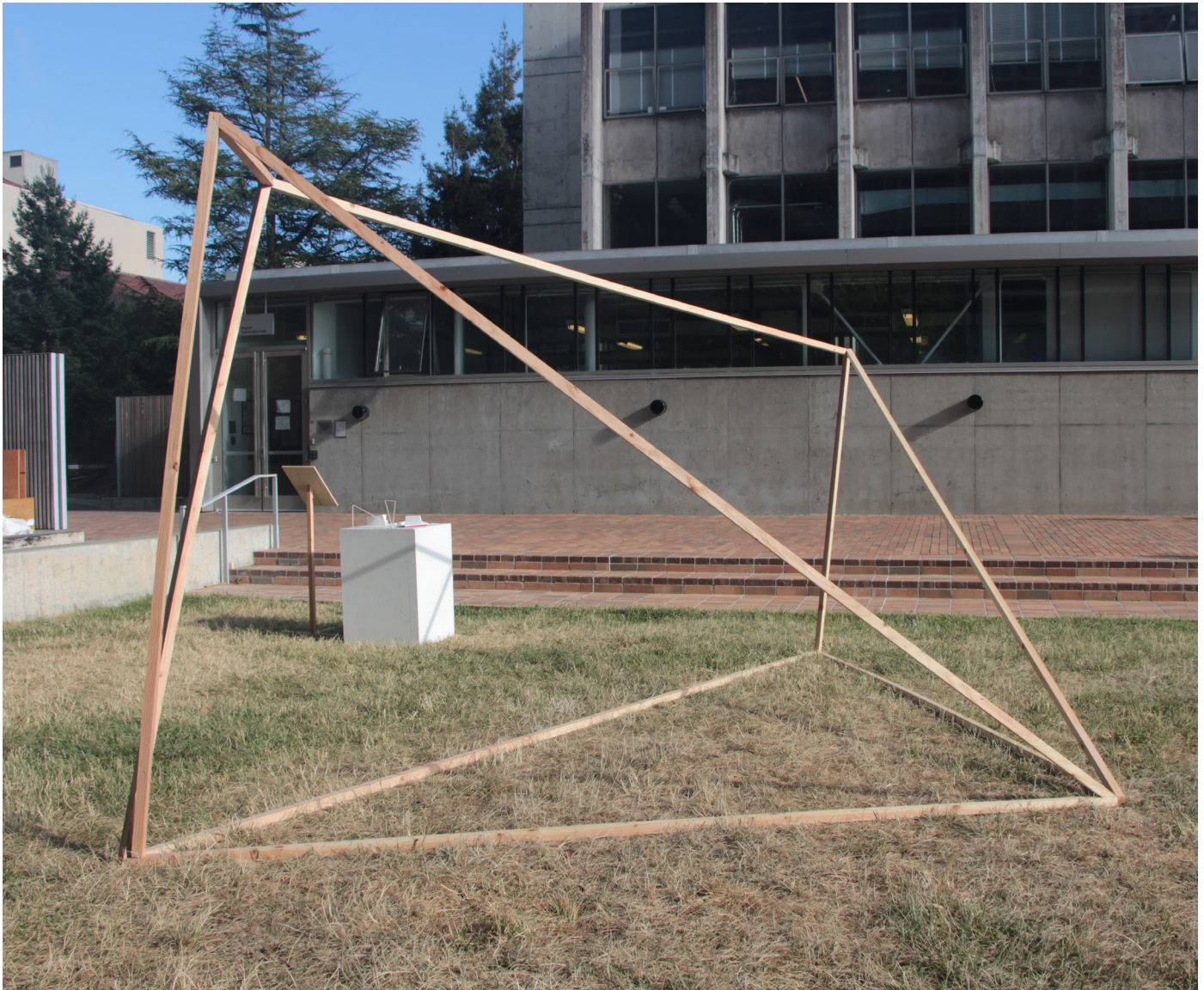




# MANUAL FOR FOUND SPACE

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*Student work by Laura Belik, Sam Gebb, Michael Johnson, Gabriella Willenz*



In the project *Manual For Found Place* we worked to find, extract and later reproduce specific places, in US El-Paso and Mexican Juarez, by defining spaces. Our methodology was simple: we looked for places that had one defined side to which we attached the outlining of additional sides to create a closed polygon. This process culminated in a concrete and perceivable space carved out of the “void.” We refer to this approach as “finding space” (vs. creating space) to acknowledge what already exists in the space - it is infused with unique terrain, smells, particles in the air, weather, sound etc. With that, the place required our gaze to evolve from mere potential into practice, a process that casted value into that space manifesting it into a place.

In his seminal book *The Production of Space* (1974)<sup>1</sup>, Henri Lefebvre argues that space is a complex social construction (based on values and the social production of meanings) but also that this social production of urban space is fundamental to the reproduction of society (and vice versa), hence of capitalism itself. The social production of space is commanded by a hegemonic class as a tool to reproduce its dominance. In our project, we suggest how space can be commodified by simply defining the place it creates as an object. “(Social) space is a





(social) product [...] the space thus produced also serves as a tool of thought and of action [...] in addition to being a means of production it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power.” Considering space as a means of executing power, the ability to define and gain hold over space/place, as we offer through our manual, becomes desired.

The idea of capturing and reproducing space as suggested in the manual, futile as it might be (taking into consideration that a space outside of its context is drained of its authentic-place-making qualities), exposes the post colonial desire to obtain, control and manipulate the “other” through displacement and reproduction of it’s real cultural landscape under western terms.<sup>3</sup> The definition and imposition of a western gaze is of course an intrinsically violent act of colonialism.

The places we defined are unique and ephemeral. Their boundaries, their sides, are suggested merely by a few lines made out of nylon rope.

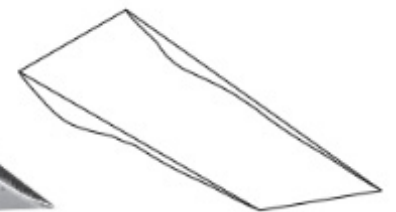
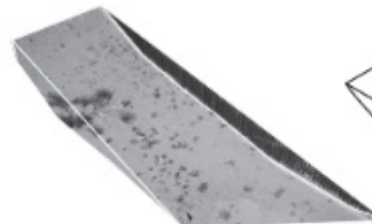
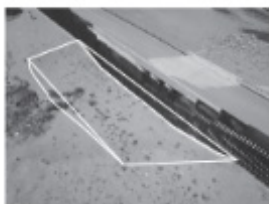
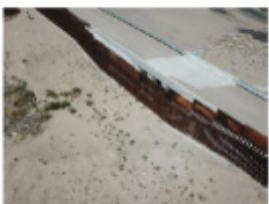
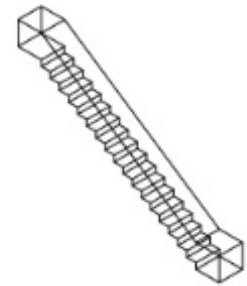
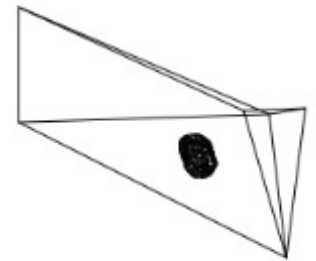
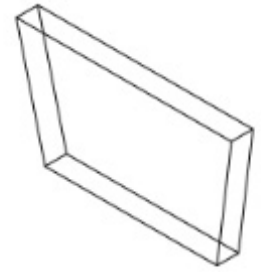
This enables a great deal of porousness and fluidity between in and out, included and excluded. It suggests that concrete shapes rely on human perception to connect the dots into lines and lines into shapes, in other

words, projecting meaning (and value) onto suggested images. Thinking along with Sylvia Wynter’s idea that being human should be perceived as a verb, not a noun, thus, a praxis;<sup>5</sup> and other post-human theorists, physical spaces and the society they create or hold, obtain a great deal of importance in that practice of human being. Users are not externalities, but an intrinsic part of the environment. User and space are not only codependent, but coexistent. Therefore a place could be viewed not only as a physical and cultural space but specifically as a place of social interactions. By displacing and stripping down to a mere outline we are erasing the fact of human experience, and exposing the capitalist understanding of humans and human life in the cycle of consumption and capital.

Returning to Berkeley from the US-Mexico border cities, we engaged with the project of transference and re-production of those found places. Taking a shape of a place out of its wider context, (unable and perhaps uninterested in holding on to the smells, particles etc.), immediately adjusts its ontological state, from a dynamic living and evolving entity to that of an object. Through its reproduction it then becomes a product to be consumed and from which to extract values. Its resemblance to the source is almost an illusion created by its scaled boundaries.

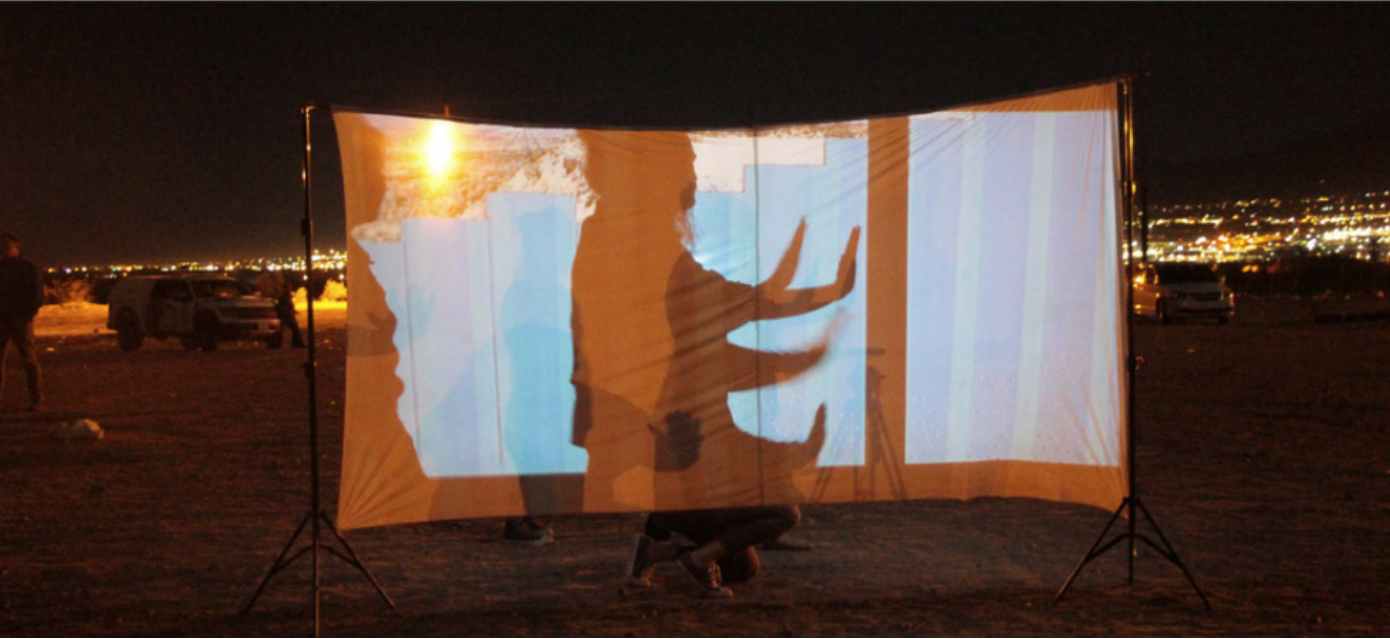
For the exhibition we constructed three iterations of the found place. One is a 1:1 scaled wireframe wooden sculpture, almost mimetically reproducing an El-Pasien captured space, thus functioning, perhaps as Jorge Luis Borges’s map,<sup>6</sup> a simulacra that sheds light on the constructed notion of place. In addition we created “one of a kind” hydrocal sculptures, positioning them as art objects. The third rendering was a series of small 3D printed objects. Their level of resemblance is much lower as is their market value. The reconstruction accrues through the casting and sealing of the space’s boundaries. In this way, these objects function as three-dimensional metaphors. But these are metaphors not for the spaces the object stem from, but for the impotent nature of the quest to hold onto authentic and specific manifestation through reproduction and consumption (or even the notion of learning about). As in Robert Smithson’s Non-Sites the bounds which define these spaces and objects are perceived as aesthetically-based, rather than political or physical.

*Reproduction of Space- Bench, Park, Staircase, Watershed*



# Projected: Bodies + Borders

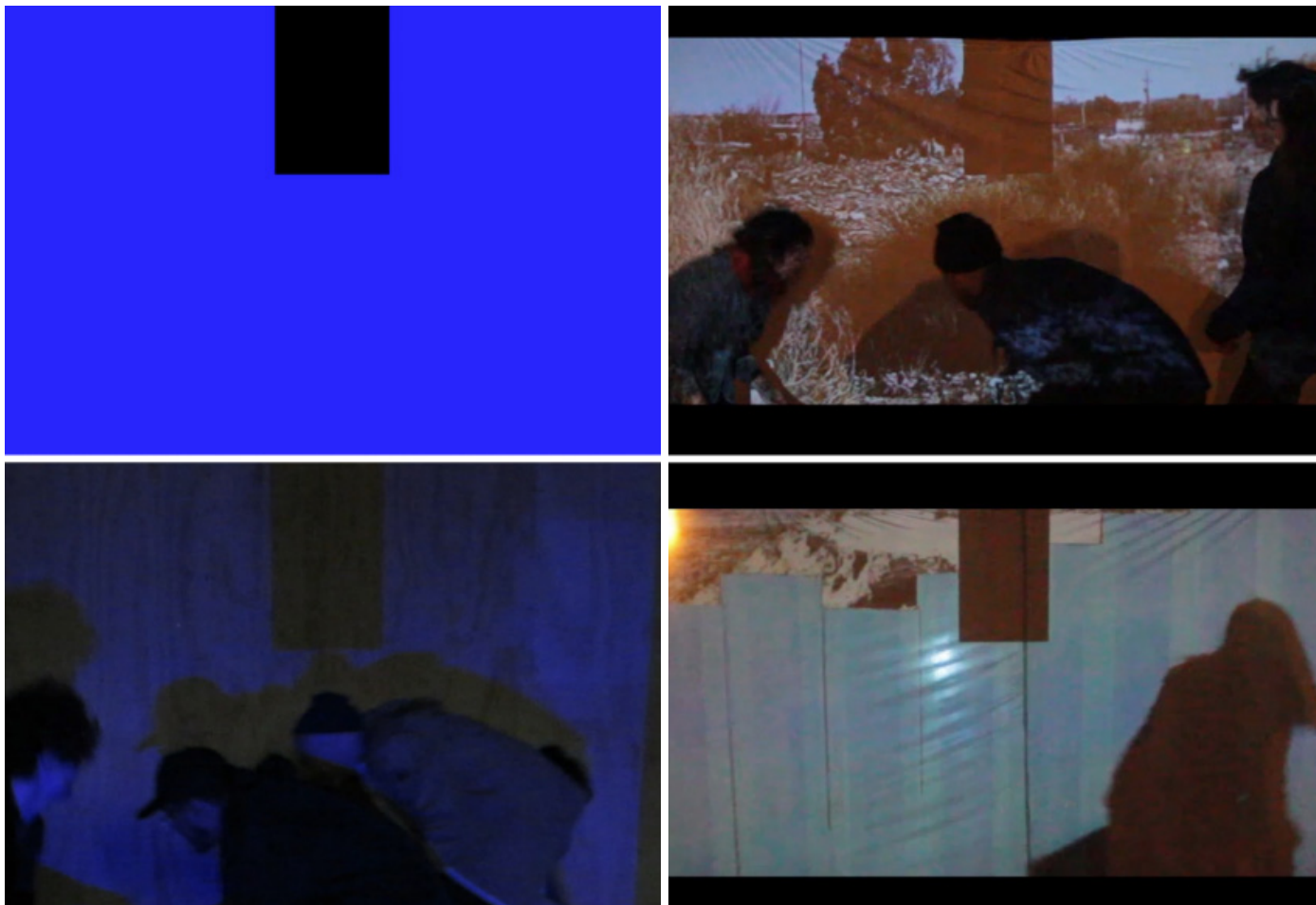
*Student work by Sam Gebb*





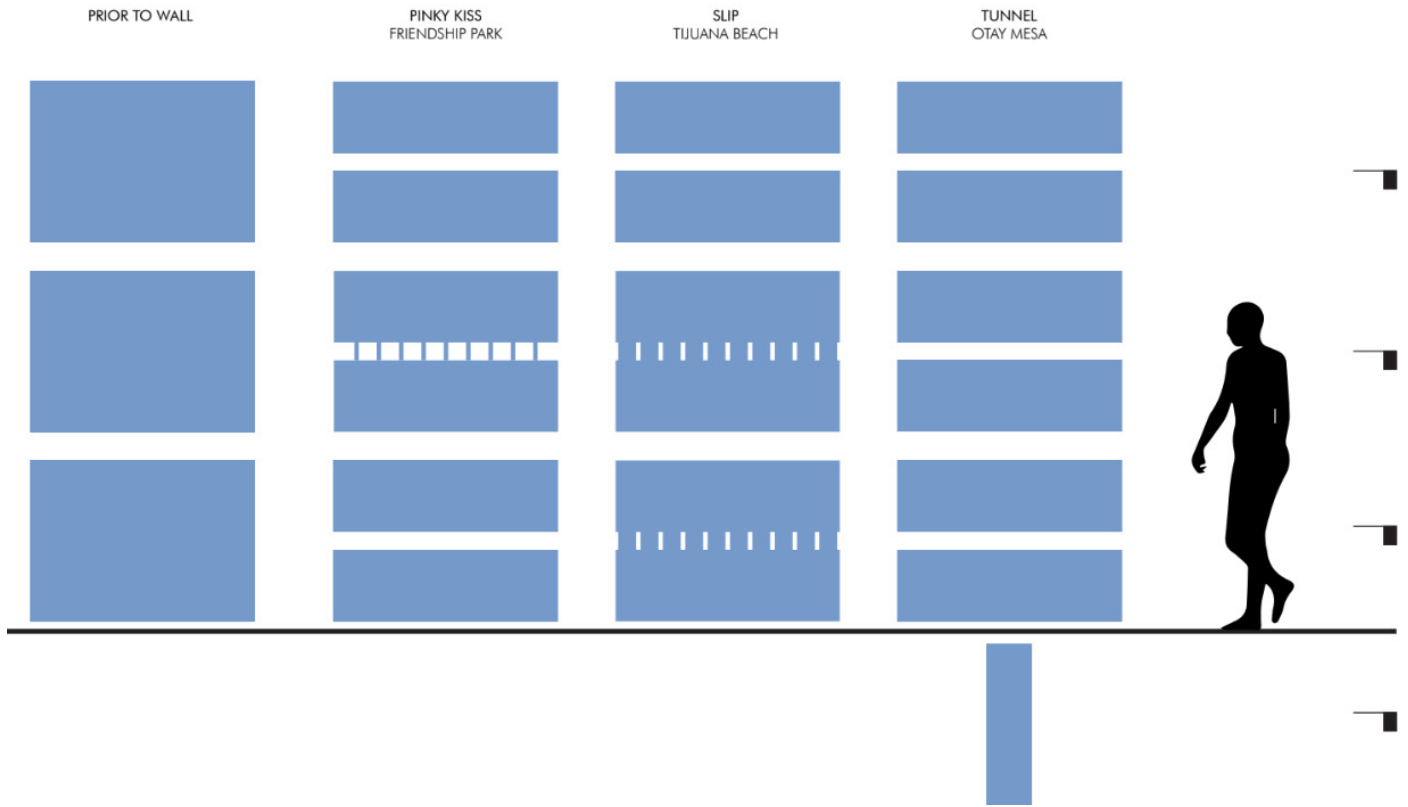
Video projection is a type of mirroring that is more flexible in its surface engagement and better equipped to reproduce temporal as well as spatial characteristics. It allows for more layers to be added, both material and immaterial, and mediate space at multiple scales. There is the scale of the screen in the context of its environment, the difference between the projected object or environment's original and projected scale, and the space between the viewers and the content-laden screen. While we watch a projection, we do not view ourselves directly but rather imagine ourselves located in or with that which is being projected. The screen becomes both a division and a portal. We can imagine ourselves within the screen, or on the other side of it. This is effectively the same location in space, but in the former we are in another world, while in the latter we are in our same environment, just on the other side of the wall.

If we are not simply passive viewers of the projection, we can engage with and manipulate it by blocking portions of light. We effect an immediate embodied response to something that is immaterial and elsewhere. We change the duplication in a way that is real – that escapes the imaginary, if only for a moment. This embodied engagement with projection, with an immaterial throwing of light that duplicates an object or event or place that is elsewhere—perhaps, on the other side of a wall—does more than geometric duplication and alteration. We create a visceral environment that is a hybrid of actual and projected place. This space is within the mirror, suspended between the imaginary and the real, from which both new imaginaries and new realities could flow.



# The Prototypes

*Student work by Sam Gebb*



This triptych materializes three frames from *Projected: Bodies + Borders*, in which a sequence of geometries are projected against a field of active participants, who are instructed to move through and across the projection while following a rule set such that only specific portions of the image are inhabitable or navigable.

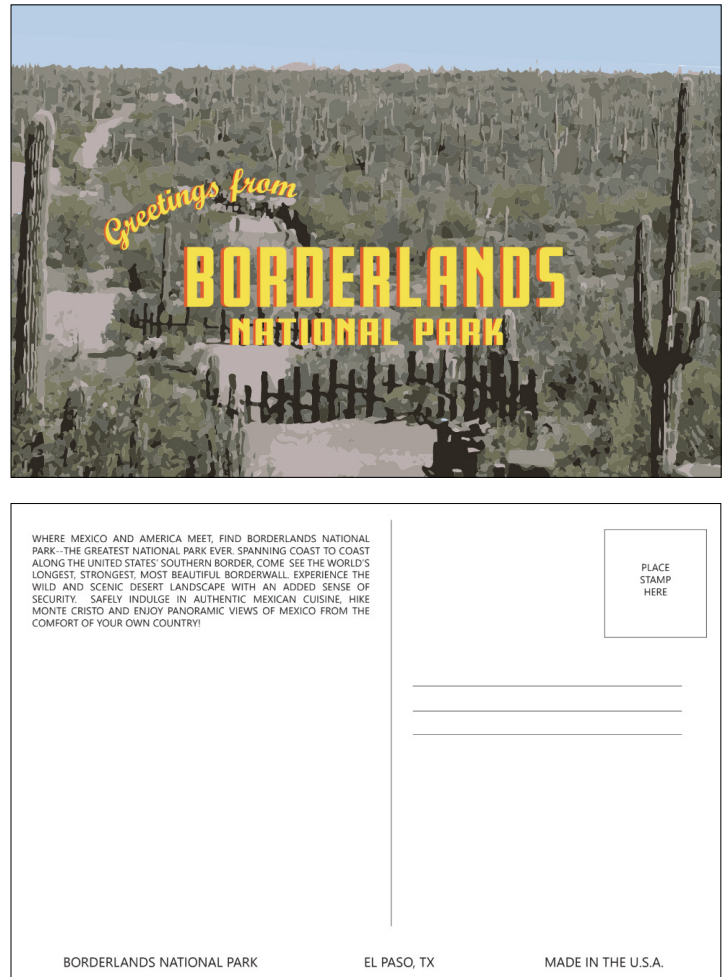
Here, translation from projected light to built form thickens the image and allows others to kinesthetically engage with the work. You are encouraged to move through each panel -- to, for a moment, inhabit an interstitial space that is neither here nor there and that is not accessible by normal means. These structures are intended to both viscerally repel and attract while providing a way through.





# BORDERLANDS NATIONAL PARK

Student work by Cheyenne Concepcion + Gabriella Navarro

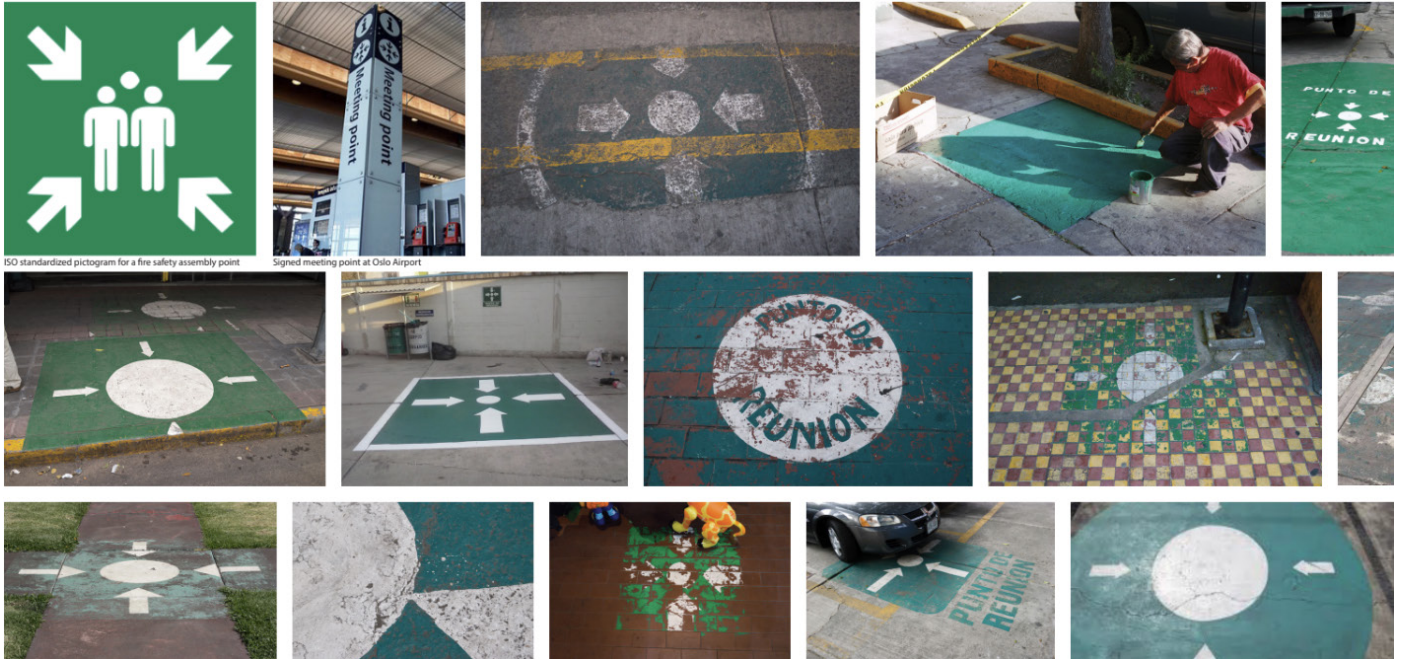


Borderlands National Park questions the concept of protected lands within the context of border spaces. As geographic boundaries that demarcate political territories, borders are a social construction of space. Physical barriers, often justified in the language of national security, attempt to exercise complete sovereignty over interdependent landscapes with indifference to processes of culture and history.

In recognition of the temporality of political borders and the absurdity of physical walls, this project proposes a repurposing of the highly-surveilled, hyper-militarized U.S.- Mexico border region: the designation of a Borderlands National Park.

# Punto De Reunion [Meeting Point]

*Student work by Lizzie Starr*



*Punto de reunion: The geographically defined place where people meet.*

The green dots deliberately marked in the urban landscape, in different colors and forms, each offer a nuance and personal interpretation of what a common + fixed image should be. My research found that this marking has evolved to become a decorative tag throughout the city that does not have one clear purpose.

A good intention with an inefficient result that makes up a larger collective memory for the country. They are human moments, points of focus and reflection in a vibrant city saturated with noise. This project takes the concept of punto de reunion, and its relationship in the landscape and applies it to the borderwall.





# Agro Corn

*Student work by Won Cha and Robert Ungar*



9/11 was the catalyst for a renewed effort by the Bush administration to strengthen national security. The Department of Homeland Security, after 9/11, in cooperation with other federal agencies developed a “threat matrix”, an extensive, covert, infrastructure meant to anticipate and respond to any potential threats to the U.S.

Words like “Agro-Terrorism” were formed, with the help of U.S. agribusiness companies, to define threats to America’s food supply. There are no documented cases of agro-terrorism originating from the U.S. Mexico border. We were interested in the speculative nature of agro-terrorism and what U.S. agribusiness companies see as a threat.

Historically, corn has been and continues to be a foundational staple crop in Mexican culture. Mexico has over 59 known indigenous varieties of corn. Yet, Mexico is America’s top corn importer in the world. Iowa alone produces 3 times as much corn per year than Mexico. Over 90% of corn produced in the U.S. is grown from Monsanto’s GMO seeds. Inadvertently, Monsanto dominates Mexico’s corn supply.

Within the last 2 years, Monsanto, with its unlimited lobbying power and resources, has been seeking to buy the most fertile land in Mexico to expand its corporate project within the country. Directly attacking Mexico’s agricultural autonomy and endangering corn biodiversity. Here we ask who is the agro-terrorist?

Seeking the ancient ancestor of the corn we know today, Teosinte is an ancient grain native to Mexico. Zea Mays Mexicana, or Teosinte is a resilient variety native to the Northern Mexico/Southern U.S climate. Mexican farmers mix Teosinte in their corn fields to strengthen the crops against pests. U.S border control officers confiscate any seed entering the U.S under agricultural quarantine.

We found this Teosinte-GMO hybrid, as a form, to embody the cultural, historical, social flux that has always existed within the 3rd nation. A flux, that is threatened by America’s renewed surge of nationalism and colonial corporate tactics.

Utilizing methods of smuggling and crossing from our respective borders, the DMZ in Korea and the Palestine-Israel barrier, we developed various methods of dispersing Teosinte seeds across the Mexico-U.S border. We hope these seeds take root and continue to disseminate.

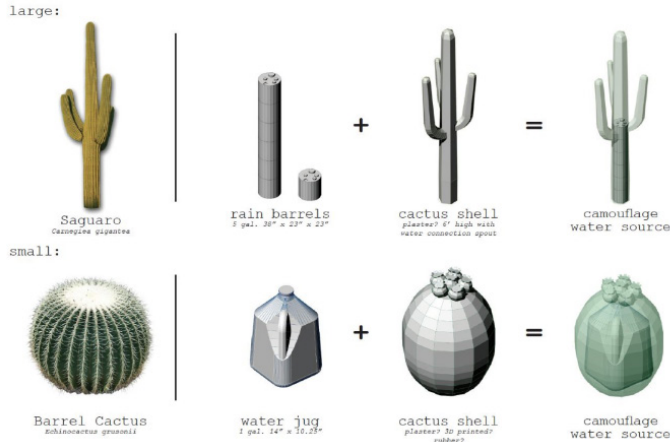




# Between Dualities: Cactus Prototype

Student work by Arturo Ortiz + Lizzie Sturr

Design Solution: Hydration Stations



After Operation 'Hold the Line' was deployed in 1993, fewer migrants were able to cross in safe urban areas and were forced into harsh and dangerous landscapes. Nonprofits and community groups leave water gallons throughout the desert to help prevent migrant deaths. Our project developed after watching and reading about U.S. Border Patrol agents sabotaging water supplies left for migrants coming from Mexico into the United States. On social media you can see them slashing, shooting, kicking, or emptying water from the gallons.

As landscape architects and designers, our project 'Between Dualities' explores this tragedy in two forms and pushes back on the Border Patrol Agents -- one as a design solution and the second as an art object that can be critiqued.

Pinatas: as an art object to be critiqued, we developed a series of pinatas made in the form of the water jug to highlight the juxtaposition between the dual purpose of smashing an object -- one for hatred and fear (as seen in the border patrol video), the other for joy. The materiality of the objects was intentional, the paper mache was made from news articles about immigration, and the other objects are described below:

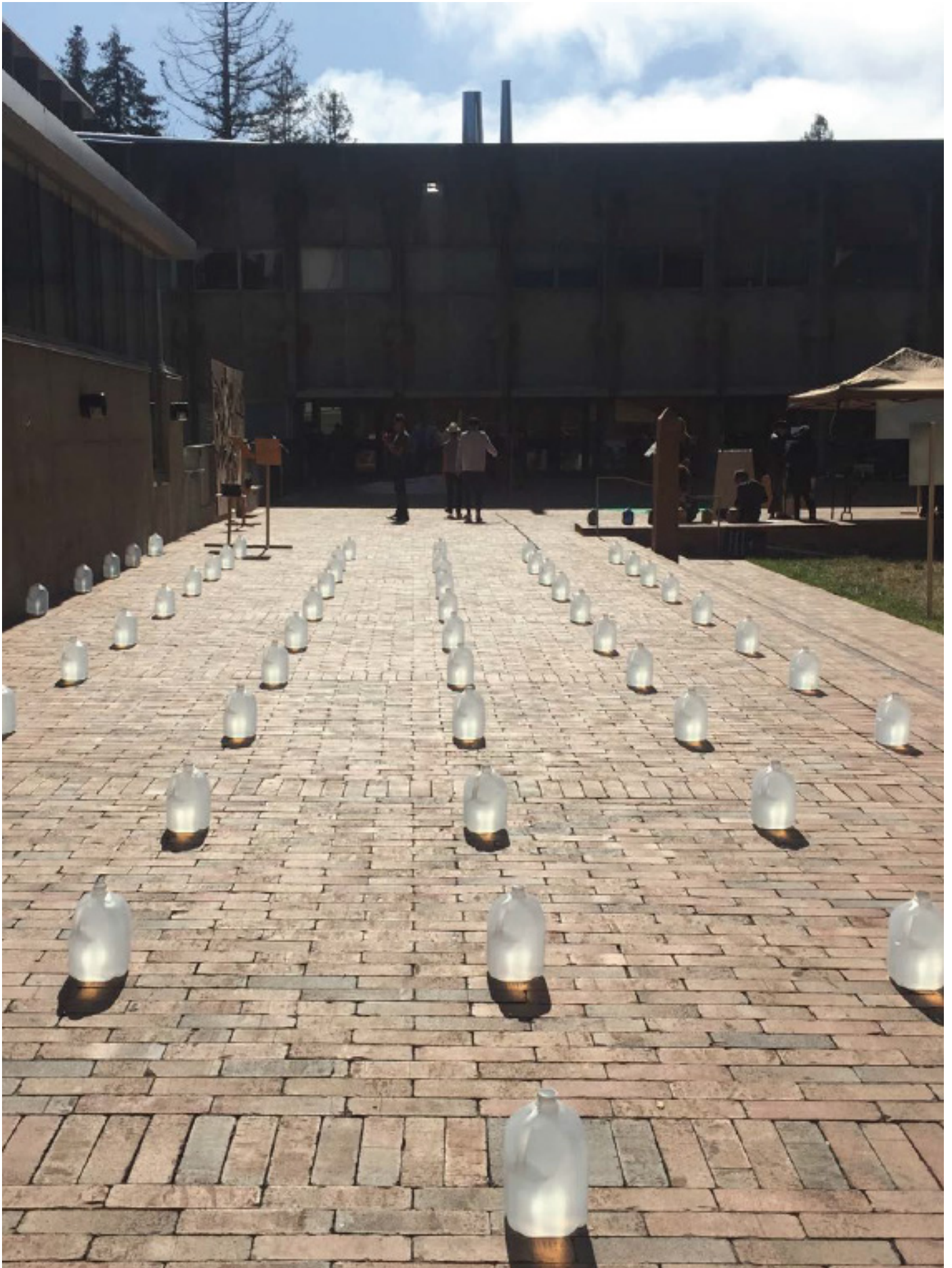
Numbers 20:11 "And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he struck the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their animals also."  
- King James Version

Tire drag: based on the tires used by border patrol agents to scrape the land near the wall to find people crossing.

Mirage: an optical illusion caused by atmospheric conditions, especially the appearance of a sheet of water in a desert or on a hot road caused by the refraction of light from the sky by heated air.







# STUDENT REFLECTION

## A SELECTION OF STUDENT REFLECTIONS FROM THEIR TIME IN THE COURSE.

### *San Diego/ Tijuana Dispatch*

*Spring 2018*

*by Michael Clyde Johnson*

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#### Introduction: The Border Wall



The collaged nature of the border wall is perhaps symptomatic of the schizophrenic nature of relations between the United States and Mexico (and Latin America more broadly). Despite the two countries' inextricably interdependent existence – economically and culturally – an anxiety over maintaining strict separation persists (perhaps a product of this very interdependence). Mexico is the third largest trading partner of the United States – totaling 538 billion USD of imported and exported goods in 2015. Much of the Western half of United States territory was ceded to the US from Mexico after the U.S.-Mexico war of 1848, and Latin and Spanish culture is a major part of the culture of this area and in the United States at large. More native Spanish-language speakers live in the United States than in Spain.

But despite this deep integration between the economies and cultures of the United States and Mexico – particularly within the “third-nation” of the borderlands, as described by Michael Dear – a desire remains for a distinct separation between these two broader societies, manifest in the form of a border wall. Worldwide, this desire for separation and building of border walls appears most often among states “with significantly different economic standing [since 1990].”

The fortification along the U.S.-Mexico border, however, doesn't exist in a single, monolithic form. Rather, the “wall” appears largely as a series of discordant wall- and fence-like structures, set at various distances from the political border on the U.S. side, often as a single structure, and sometimes as multiple layers. On the beach in Tijuana alone, I counted many different materials comprising the barrier along the border: railroad rails (with and without sheet metal adhered at top, with and without chain-link fence attached), thick structural steel square bar or tube, thin steel square bar or tube with steel mesh adhered, thick steel round bar or tube, and ubiquitous corrugated sheet metal, all painted various colors (on the Mexican side), all in various states of decay, rusting in the salty sea air. Most of this fronts additional layers of fencing that appear to have been more recently erected. Further inland from the beach, this pattern of assemblage continues, with many different fencing typologies littering the border to El Paso, where the Rio Grande River begins to do most of the work. Seeing the wall in person, and describing it here, the outlines of an inner existential conflict begin to take shape. Rather than as a true fortification, “the wall” appears to me now as an expression of a people's conflict over their own desires. Like a wound variously bandaged, re-opened, re-cut, and bandaged again.

#### The Prototypes

As the entire length of the border wall is a mashup and assemblage of various materials and fence typologies, the border prototypes themselves appear as a postmodern tapestry of architectural features, colors, and materials. From painted red and blue, to steel, concrete, smooth, striated, squared and rounded, the prototypes stand in the desert sand like monuments to disjointed thoughts, manic attempts to ward off the other. But in their haphazard stance, they do no such thing. Instead, the prototypes appear as monoliths



peering above the existing border fence, looming more as symbolic agents of desire rather than devices of enclosure, expressions of fear rather than strength. In their existing state, they seem to serve their intended purpose – as guard dogs, or rather, scarecrows, or, maybe, gargoyles, a secular attempt to ward off evil. However, it isn't clear whether either the enclosed or those on the other side are convinced of this illusion. The immediate audience is instead hundreds or thousands of miles away, with these objects truly only functioning through images and media, intended for those who will never encounter them. The prototypes, then, seem to serve simply as props in an ongoing border play.



### **Marcel Sanchez-Prieto**

During our visit with Marcel, we were introduced to broader patterns of development within Tijuana. In moving from the Modulo Prep Library in Camino Verde to Laureles, we could see the dramatic impact made once a neighborhood or area is brought under the auspices of the municipal government, under which it may receive services such as water, electricity, and roads, and housing density increases. This pattern seemed to mirror the development of rural areas in the United States, but within the purview of a municipality. The process that Marcel described, wherein landholders are able to increase the value of their property and gain access to municipal services at citizen expense, wasn't unfamiliar to discussions of gentrification within the United States. As I remember, rather than paying for services to be installed, landowners would lease their land for informal settlements in order to attract a critical mass of people to live on the land. After which, they were able to approach government agencies and compel them to provide services to the people living on the land, thereby increasing the value of their property for lease or sale for more profitable development. As Marcel noted, Camino Verde, only fifteen years before construction of the library, had existed in the same state of development as Laureles. He also noted the

existence of an OXXO on the corner, as an informal early indicator of the area's integration into the broader municipal system.

### **Teddy Cruz and Fonna Forman**

Our first visit, to the Cruz / Forman Studio at the University of California, San Diego, brought many of the larger issues surrounding our trip immediately to bear. Namely, to what end do we work, and whom do we serve. Cruz provided a blunt defense of his projects (particularly in conversation around the *maquiladoras*): one must produce and engage how one can, within the broader context as it exists, rather than wait for a "revolution" or ideal conditions. More nuance probably exists here, but it was meant to counter, I think, those who might ponder these issues and engage through thought rather than intervention in the built environment. I think it's still a question worth considering, but alongside a broader practice, which seems to be Cruz and Forman's true approach. The ethics around Cruz's *maquiladoras* project is worth considering, as one can still engage while remaining more skeptical within a broader context: essentially, does worker housing built from raw manufacturing materials left over from the *maquiladora* help the worker or the factory owner (or both, but to what degree)? Cruz's description of community engagement sessions as sites of contestation – the meeting of one group's (design) expertise with another group's (community knowledge) – was simultaneously provocative, invigorating, and a bit impolitic. But truly creative collaborations can be antagonistic, as long as mutual respect remains. Cruz's preference for projects that endure, rather than temporary interventions, seemed to be a common – if not always feasible – desire. However, I think that in their relative ease and quickness of implementation, temporary interventions can be productive in inserting functions and ideas into a space.

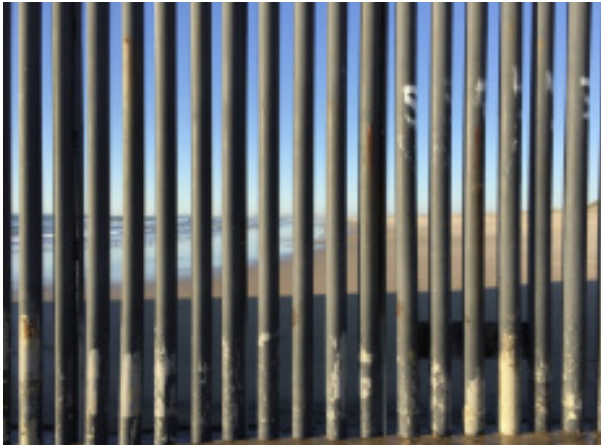
### **Towards a Project**

A larger question around the ethics of insertion and engagement persists, and I wonder if this is a question of power – an imbalance of power, whether real or perceived. I think, there is a desire to provide a service – broadly speaking – without inadvertently enacting a play of humanitarianism. This reminds me of a debate within architecture around Shiguru Ban's work, specifically, to what degree are architects responsible for the conditions in which they work, and in that work, are they responsible to ameliorate, free to ignore, or simply work within, those conditions? In Ban's case, he designed refugee housing from inexpensive material, but



perhaps ignored the context in which the desire existed for use of cheaper material – in other words, the change in material benefited NGO's but not refugees. "... Ban's shelters did not only introduce refugees to Gihembe [the refugee camp]; through the exchange of valuable aluminum poles for valueless cardboard tubes, those shelters also introduced refugees to the abjection that humanitarian assistance at Gihembe entailed." Since previously, the refugees were able to sell their aluminum poles for more economic independence from the camp. As well, In working to address a crisis, care should be taken not to reify the conditions of the crisis. "The refugee camp at Gihembe therefore exists as a permanently temporary space where the threshold conditions of bare life extend indefinitely into the future."

And what of snark? We may needle those with whom we disagree, but in service to whom? Ourselves – in a dramatic accumulation of cultural and professional capital – and to please those with whom we already agree? Or as a critical gesture, one that (hopefully) alters people's perception of an issue to realize previously unseen connections?



I would like the project to take architectural form, that is, as an object or proposal which defines space. I was struck by the abundance of steel, wireframe-like structures I saw as we walked and drove around Tijuana. These structures were in service to many different functions: market stalls, vending carts, shelves, awnings, billboards, shelters, and were often covered in tarps or other materials stretched or simply set across often parallel poles defining surfaces. These could perhaps be seen as highly articulated geometries in an otherwise chaotic visual field of curves, solids, colors and materials. I wonder, then, if such a structure, or, even, a collage of such structures, could start to

define spaces of calm, a resting place, providing shade, seating and maybe wayfinding. Perhaps a Traveling Architecture, akin to Robert Morris's Traveling Sculpture, moving through the space of the border in some rule-bound way. And looking to Luis Aldrete's "Pilgrim Route" for those on pilgrimage.

Some other ideas...

- Vertical stripes of local color displayed on billboards on the opposite side of the border from where color was derived.
- Skydio autonomous drones following border patrol agents and people crossing the border
- Ask people to "draw the wall," and display these drawings on either side of the border.
- Create a "gathering space," such as circular chairs around a circular table, similar in plan to the "meet here" sign/diagram, but able to serve as a functional space of meeting.



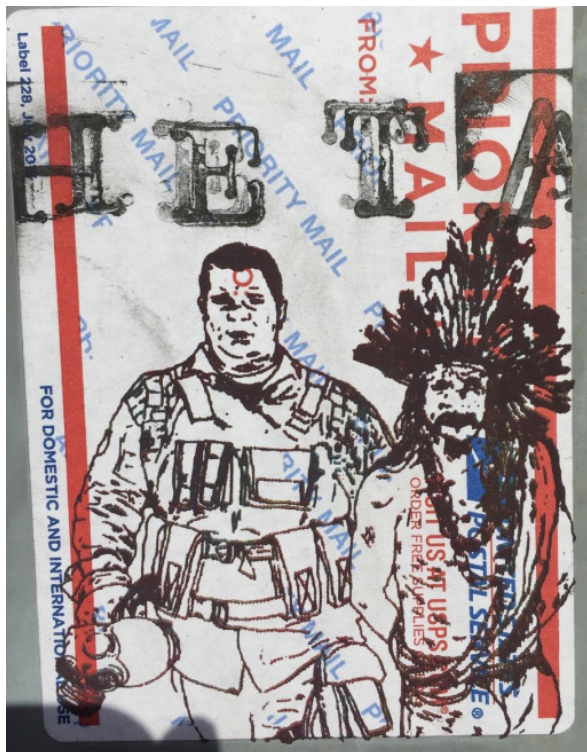
## San Diego/ Tijuana Dispatch

Spring 2018

by Arturo Ortiz

### Introduction: De donde eres? Where are you from?

In order to understand my position throughout this journey as we embark collectively as class this semester, I will first state my own positionality and how I identify. Like Norma Prieto explained, there are different identities that derive from the borderlands. For me, it is important to understand my identity, and how it is part of a larger spectrum of identities. Under Norma's research, I would fall under the Mexican-American Chicano identity:



Right when we crossed the border into Tijuana I saw this Slap-On. A border-patrol agent detaining an indigenous person.



A photo of when I lived in Oaxaca, Mexico. (me on the left with my twin sister in the pig-tails)

an identity that succumbs to the notion that you don't belong from here nor from there. Growing up in Oaxaca, Mexico I had no clear understanding of the "States" despite being born there. I didn't understand the land nor the demarcations, but I was always aware that there was *el otro lado*, the 'other side.' All my cousins, uncles, aunts and my mom crossed that border. They all crossed for better opportunities and a better way of life. Growing up, I hated that border and now I remain ambivalent about it and all of its complexities. The border is more than a physical barrier for my family and friends; it is a symbol. Its symbology is extremely ingrained in our psyche in the sense that I grew up with fear and deep hatred towards the border that was heavily militaristic and xenophobic. My reflections are personal and the personal is political, which enrich my reflective topics below: My Family and Their Border-Crossing Journeys, Rasquachismo, and Designers in the Borderlands.

### Reflection Topic #1: My family and their border-crossing journeys

I decided not to tell any of my family members that I am a part of this class. I reflected on it and thought that by not telling them or them not knowing would be best since it is a very traumatic topic to revisit.

I remember when I was 7 years old and my mom had a gathering at our house here in the States in Petaluma, CA. All of my family members that

had crossed were there. *My uncle, Pato, my Tia, Chajo, my uncle, Gabriel, mi Mami-Tia, my Abuelo and Abuela, mi Ama, and my cousins.* There were around 16 of us (including kids) hanging out, eating, and conversing in the living room and kitchen. Then Primer Impacto (a popular news channel in Mexico) came on TV. Suddenly las noticias started to talk about the border and everyone in the room stopped their conversations and payed attention. It was a video of a man attempting to cross the border by swimming across a river. The video showed this man as he swam across when suddenly he stopped halfway and started to scream and panic. It seemed as something was pulling him down. He ended up disappearing into the water and drowned to death. As I watched, I looked around the room and saw most of my family crying silently. I was so bewildered and I didn't understand what happened, but it deeply affected my family.

The picture below is when I thought about my family. Some are in Mexico and others are in the States. Some have accessibility to travel and others don't. Some are from here and others are from there.



This was a strong memory I carried with me when going to the border. Crossing is one step; living in the shadows, is another. When we met with the person from BorderAngels, that is when I realized how my involvement could have potential. There are already people doing radical work within and outside the borderlands. So as for now, my immediate reflection is to help.

Questions I have:

1. What were their journeys like?
2. What do they remember?
3. How do they feel about the border then and now?
4. How would they feel about me doing this kind of work?
5. What kind of aid is needed after you cross?

### Reflection Topic #2: Rasquachismo

Rasquachismo - a word that I embrace, especially when I got to college. As I wrote in my borderwall application, my family...

*“was unable to give me material things, but they were able to give me something much more valuable: the knowledge of what we call ‘Rasquachismo.’ Rasquachismo is an approach to be resourceful by making the best of what you have and letting your imagination partner up with your ingenuity to create efficient solutions.”*

I saw rasquache things everywhere when we arrived in Tijuana. Rasquache was embedded in the built environment from tires being converted to planters to reusing gerber baby jars as salt-shakers. It was amazing that people living in these conditions are able to create very clever solutions in everyday things in order to survive. Once we arrived I could spot things everywhere. It was sort of nostalgic for me because it was how I grew up.

Rasquachismo for those who don't know, was originally meant to be demarcated as a negative thing. It was looked down upon if you were rasquache. It was and is often still seen as a classist way of demonizing the poor. Rasquachismo “stems from the word rasquache, which is used to describe an attitude that is lower class, in bad taste or too frugal” (Art, History, and Culture). People before the 1950s-60s or even today, would not like to be called rasquache. Until the Chicano Art Movement, a lot of young activists started to reclaim the word and use it as a positive identifier. This is important in case someone ever tells you it is something bad, which in part is true. It is also important to understand the origin and intention of the word, and the way it is reclaimed as a source of agency.

Questions I have:

1. Where is the point where something is rasquache and commercialized?
2. The knowledge is there: how can I help be a liaison between the resources and
3. knowledge?
4. How can rasquache be seen as something



positive for those who see it negatively?

5. What are things we see here in the States that is rasquache?



Above. A picture of the living conditions when I was young to understand how parallel Tijuana is to my upbringing. (Whatever mattress frames, whatever sheets, whatever tools, whatever you can find you can use). It was just a way of life.

### Reflection Topic #3: Designers in the Borderlands

How do designers play a role in the borderland landscapes and how can design be used as a form of activism? As a designer now, I'm diving into this "other" world. The world that has the ability, the privilege, and the resources to physically change our environment dramatically. One of the things that resonated with me was when Norma Prieto said, "you can design even if you don't have a transborder experience." What I was able to take away from that, is if you have the ability to help, then help.

Another thing she said that resonated with me before she was talking about identity was, "juntos pero no revueltos," which means we're together but not mixed. The reason this was powerful to me, is that it spoke deeply to the ambivalence I have about my own identity. Even if I am Mexican-American, which may be different to those who are the other

side of the border, this border is still a wound to the land and people. Although we may have distinct identities, we are still in this struggle together. Same goes to designers. We are all together but not mixed. Everyone has their own identity and role in the landscape, therefore we all have ways we can contribute to this built environment.

Having a diverse set of lecturers was very critical to my understanding, interest, and my capabilities. From Teddy Cruz/Fonna to Norma Prieto in San Diego to Erre, Jill, and Mercel in Tijuana, this trip had a variety of people doing different types of work at different scales. It was great to see how different people had a role in the borderlands and whether I agreed with them or not, they are physically embedded in the community and environment.

What I took out of these lecturers as a future designer is to question the projects:

1. Who does it benefit?
2. Acknowledge when you should or shouldn't intervene
3. Understand the scale in which you work in
4. Understand the history and legacies of the place.
5. Educate oneself of the people already doing work in those environments.
6. Understand our positionality and our experience during the trip. What we do with this experience is another story.

### Findings/Conclusions towards thinking of a project

- Mediums
  - Silkscreen posters
  - Printed posters/flyers
  - Rasquache approach
  - Spirit color: blue (incorporating that in)



- Type of work
  - Create a flyer that offers free access to graphic work
  - Create a flyer that offers free help
  - Create a flyer that depicts some

information that would inform the public (what public?) or get their attention

- Assist a current non-profit with any type of design aid
  - Engage with my family to create a bridge between their journey and my life.
  - Creating a digital photo album for my family so people on both sides can have access
  - Creating a platform for a photo album for others
  - Create a rasquache platform/object/mobile icon that helps provide food for undocumented workers.
- Despite being part of my project or not, having a dialogue with my family would be important in understanding their perspective and their knowledge of the border. It is important to know their stories and share them with all my families. I want to understand how I can have a positive impact in those crossing and to illustrate the reality of what happens after you cross.



# San Diego/ Tijuana Dispatch

Spring 2018

by Lizzie Sturr

## Introduction:

In his book “Why Walls Won’t Work,” Michael Dear describes Tijuana as having “more buzz than any other border city.” Dear describes that over the last decade, Tijuana has enjoyed a reputation as “a ‘creative city’ where a combination of demographic dynamism, economic growth, and an innovative do-it-yourself cultural scene combined to produce an unprecedented explosion of contemporary art, music photography, film, video, architecture, food, and fashion” (page 155).

While our trip was not entirely representative of the Tijuana experience (staying in a gated community, driving around in a van), the people we met (Erre, Marcel, Norma) and the unique experiences (Nortec show, nightlife, Telefónica) helped to provide a better picture into the systems that Dear describes as ‘Border Fusion.’

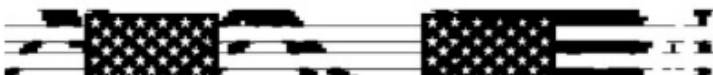
For this dispatch I am focusing on natural systems in the urban realm (meeting points + topography) and the similarities I found between my experiences with the Israel/Palestine Wall.

## Reflection Topic #1: Dos Ciudades, Una Región: Natural Systems

*“The environment does not know boundaries. On the contrary, the geography and resources that we share are the element that validates our friendship and binds our destinies.” - Raul Arriaga (Mexican Environmental Protection Agency)*

We briefly discussed that a closely-linked environmental problem requiring international cooperation from both sides is pollution from industrial and residential sources. We witnessed first hand the raw sewage while walking in Friendship Park. While I think that this is an extremely important topic and a whole project could be completed around water and pollution prevention, I want to focus on public spaces that are created for ‘natural disaster’ preparedness. As mentioned in the quote above, natural disasters do not know boundaries-- the sister cities will face similar issues simultaneously along the border and I think that these spaces, marked in the urban fabric of these cities, could make for an interesting project.

I was curious about the many green circles that I saw in a variety of different forms and sizes around the city. One passerby explained it was a meeting point for earthquakes while two other people questioned did not know what they represented. My research found that these circles are called ‘punto de reunión,’ or meeting point. Each circle marks a predesignated evacuation point for a nearby building. There



Bitmap Testing: Arturo | American Flag | TJ, 2018



are a lot of reasons a building may be evacuated but such procedures are important in a city and country where residents need to plan for the aftermath of earthquakes. My research found that these circles are common across the country and people have written about them in Mexico City. These painted street-side markers were part of safety regulations launched in 2002. The positioning and inclusion of these mandated meeting points is determined by building owners, not the government. Markers are supposed to be far enough from the building to avoid falling debris but often this is not the case in dense urban areas (or if cables will fall).

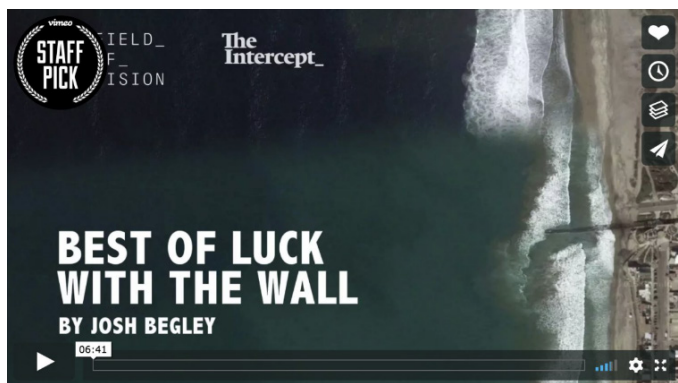
These spaces are all used in a similar way but all have different forms -- sometime squares, sometimes rectangles, all of varying sizes with arrows pointing at a central dot. The green-and-white color scheme of Mexico's meeting points is the typical color for emergency exit signs outside of the United States. Green generally represents no burning, safe, etc. In the United States schools and companies have meeting locations for emergency drills (fire, earthquake, etc.) but they are not physically marked. The color and style of meeting point signs in the US isn't standardized -- more research will have to be done in El Paso to see if the space is marked.

I am most excited about this topic because I think it would be the most applicable to implement in a wide range of Sister-Cities along the border. Despite their effectiveness, the importance of these markers is firmly fixed in the collective memory of the people. In Mexico City, earthquake drills are carried out each year on September 19th (in remembrance of the 1985 earthquake), and residents gather around the puntos de reunión.



### Reflection Topic #2 - The Wall: Scale + Topography

Before starting this class I was shown Josh Begley's short film 'Best of Luck With the Wall,' which follows the US-Mexico border by stitching together 200,000 satellite images. See link [here](#) \*caution motion sickness warning.\*



I was extremely fascinated with the 6+ minutes of rapidly changing landscapes, topographies, hydraulic, and city systems that exist along the US-Mexico border. Although its fast and the author does not address the existing wall infrastructure, politics, or people, etc. I think this video does a good job at trying to show the vastness and variety of the territory that exists between the two countries.

While visiting Tijuana and San Diego I was constantly reminded of this flickering as we drove along the wall in Tijuana and the sheer changes in topography, in sharp contrast with the expensive and surreal ways the fence followed the border which we could see while driving or even from the roof deck of our Airbnb.



In *Borderwall as Architecture: A Manifesto for the U.S. Mexico Boundary*, Ron Rael discusses "Smuggler's Gulch," a canyon bookended by two mesas (which we drove past in Tijuana). The gulch, which was a 520-acre highly functioning coastal scrub/ tidal wetland ecosystem, drained stream overflow and runoff from Mexico into the the Tijuana River Estuary watershed (it was one of the nation's largest wetland restoration projects) where it was cleaned and released back into the watershed. The Gulch was filled in 2008 with 2 million cubic yards of soil (taken from the surrounding mesas) and larger wall and surveillance infrastructure were installed on top (lights, three walls). This effort was part of a larger project which built 3.5 miles

of wall at a cost of \$60 million. The solution for the drainage was to construct a 680' culvert which rapidly accelerates runoff and floods the estuary and surrounding farmland with polluted water. This poses as a health risk as well as it damages the habitat of the native plants and animals (page 147).

In Tijuana we also saw the massive building projects that capped the mountainside to cut roads (and the plants/trees that were breaking through), as well as the massive housing projects that flattened mountain tops to provide more housing. As mentioned in my first reflection topic, messing with the natural and hydrological systems of these places will have a much greater and lasting implications on the region as a whole. Current regional policies are weak -- will there be more effective regional policies in the future? What would the cost be to repair these ecosystems and how does it compare to Trump's border wall prototypes?

**Reflection Topic #3: The Wall: Israel + Palestine**

Frequently throughout the trip I was reminded of the time I spent traveling between Israel and Palestine and the "architecture of the Border."

Not surprisingly, one of the prototypes that we visited was designed and built by a large Israeli defense contractor owned by state-run Israel Aerospace Industries (ELTA). ELTA was the only international contractor to win a bid to create a prototype. The company, which makes radar and other gear, opened its new U.S. headquarters in Maryland in May.


**Washington Post's Models:**



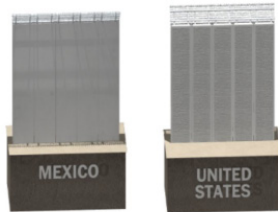
Cost: **\$406,319**

Wall has a concrete base and a solid metal wall with six light blue squares with white trim on the bottom third  
**\*\*ON THE US SIDE\*\*** topped by dark blue beams and metal plates

**\*\*Light blue panels soften or to mimic ranch or HGTV of border wall architecture?\*\*\***



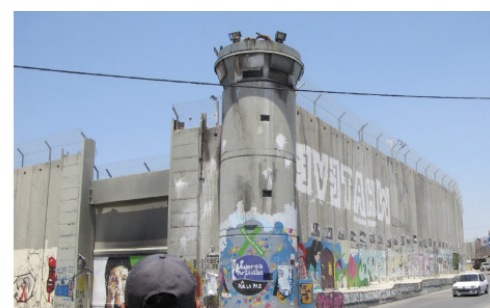
View of prototype from Mexico  
 February, 2018.



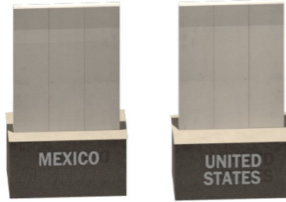
Texas Sterling Construction Co.  
 Cost: **\$470,000**  
 U.S. Side used stamped brick pattern, Mexican side has metal grating at the top and is covered in spikes.



Top: Left - View of Prototype from Mexico, 2018.



Right-View of the Wall from Bethlehem, 2011



Fisher Sand + Gravel Co.  
 Cost: **\$365,000**  
 Only prototype built entirely on site. Gradual slope



Top: Left - View of Prototype from Mexico, 2018.



Right-View of the Wall near Bethlehem, NYTimes, 2014

**Additional Photos - Israel / Palestine:**



**Palestinian men climbing over the barrier dividing East Jerusalem in 2015.** Photo credit: Tomas Munita, NYTimes





## The Wall near Bethlehem, 2011.

### Other Similarities: Settlement Construction

Most Israeli settlements are located nearby Palestinian cities on hilltops. The design and construction reminded me of some of the new development happening in Tijuana.



## Israeli settlement outside of Ramallah, 2011.

### Findings/Conclusions towards thinking of a project

While I am not sure the form or point of view/critique of my final project, I think I would be interested in exploring how these spaces could be utilized not only during a time of crisis but reactivated to connect or share information between the two cities. The following is a list of my “questions” or topics that I am exploring:

1. Is the wall one of the locations of “crisis”?
2. Ron mentioned that El Paso / Juarez border is

located in a valley, and noise travels freely in between the two cities. Could these locations be strategically located to communicate with the other side (like the house next to the Airbnb --see below)?

- a. OR, do they frame a certain view or item (create sitelines)
3. What is the form? What is the color? Is it bilingual?
  4. Can people directly communicate with one another in these spaces?
  5. Are they permanent or temporal?
  6. What additional information or instructions are provided in this space?

An interesting concept from Michael Dear’s book is looking at a cross-section from the most frequently trending topics in six twin cities -- “the topics represent the usual melange of ephemera and quirky obsessions but also reveal a diversity of cross-border exchange and topical concerns focusing on events from the other side” (page 100). I want my project to not exist in the physical realm but would be interested in using social media or other platforms to bring greater information exchange and dialogue between the two cities. I am struck by Dear’s statement, “popular memory may also be at work in creating public perceptions of a distinct territory.”

Just some of my initial thoughts and research... welcome to any ideas or potential collaboration :)





## *El Paso / Juarez Dispatch-*

### *Reflection & Projection*

*Spring 2018*

*by Sam Gebb*

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#### Reflection

During this trip, I was thinking a lot about reflection and mirroring, in spatio-physical and metaphorical senses as well as in a visual material sense. I noticed acts of mirroring:

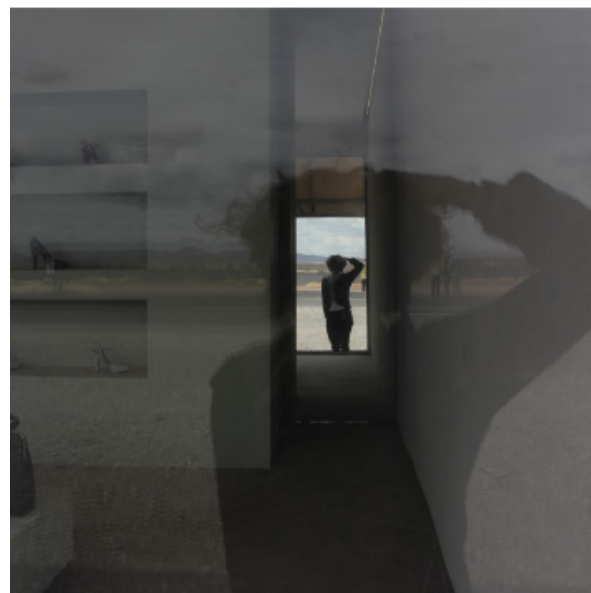
- in Marfa,
  - in site-specific artworks
  - in the rural vernacular
- in El Paso and Juarez,
  - at the Juarez art museum
  - along the wall/border/river
  - in our projects

My interest in mirrors as a spatial device is three-fold: 1) what they do and do not duplicate through reflection (are you, the viewer, visible in the frame, or are you looking at it from an angle?) as well as the faithfulness of that duplication, 2) their uncanny ability to both compress and expand depth while encouraging the viewer to take note of their distance from the reflective surface, and 3) the contemplation that the mirror spurs of what is contained in that space between the mirror and the viewer, as well as what is beyond and being blocked by the mirror. A mirror is an object in an environment that asks you to consider not itself but everything else, captured and thrown back to you through direct visual or indirect association. Mirrors can never present the entire picture; they highlight a fragment that wants to be fit into an imaginary whole.

#### Marfa

Prada-  
One approaches Prada Marfa tangentially and at high speed: it's eerie self-contained symmetry and broader incongruity with the expansive, formidable landscape of west Texas become apparent suddenly and almost too late if one isn't already looking for it. The building is a mirror in which the viewer becomes acutely aware of herself, perhaps in her participation in consumer capitalist

society, which apparently can worm its way even into primordial landscapes, and certainly in the two mirrors embedded in the interior of the building, one in each back corner, reflecting those who peer through the plate glass storefront. Perhaps here we expect to continue to look through the building to the Mexico-US border and the mountains beyond, but instead we are confronted with our own image against a backdrop of ranchlands on the other side of the highway and railroad tracks. The bilateral symmetry of the storefront is distinctly Prada but is detoured here by the omission of a central title over the door, collapsing hierarchy and making the prospect of entering unsettling. What does the building—through its nervous symmetry, its singularity yet non-monumentality, its furtive reflections—ask its visitors to confront in the middle of what appears to be a vast desert?



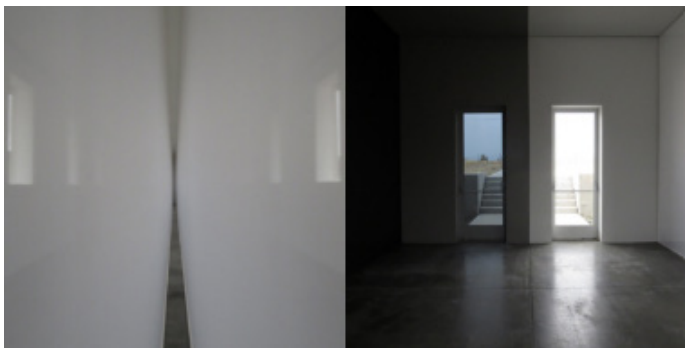
### Judd-

Continuing our tour of art objects dropped in the middle of the desert, Donald Judd's 100 untitled works in mill aluminum. These are, indeed, very reflective, and housed buildings mediate their relationship to the landscape through large swaths of plate glass. These boxes, like a mirror, draws the viewer into a simulacrum of her environment while disallowing penetration of the object itself. The boxes seem not of this world; they have a nuanced language, but it is not decipherable by us. Amidst the boxes, we are aware of our doubled selves and surroundings, both real and reflected, but the goings-on between the reflected and the real remain enigmatic, opaque.



### Irwin-

Not so far from the boxes, one encounters another innominate work, Robert Irwin's untitled (dawn to dusk). Here, the scrim panels, on the edge of solidity, soften rather than reflect their surroundings. Yet, there are two levels of mirroring in the form of the organization. First, we encounter a doubled long screen directing axial movement followed by a series of penetrable frames channeling transverse movement. Second, we move through the same progression but in reverse, this time rendered in white rather than black. This project encourages its visitors to viscerally and cognitively consider what it is to move along, then through, then through, then along a partition—a wall—that flips from black to white, drawing attention to yet simultaneously obfuscating the environment.



### Flavin-

In an installation that is unapologetically rooted in immateriality, the viewer is guided through a series of long corridors occupying a linear array of six U-shaped buildings, each with a pair of lit openings at its terminus. The geometry is replicated exactly, only the color shifts through a progression of neon hues. Of the works discussed so far, this one is the most at odds with its environment. The work still hinges on mirroring, on a symmetry in which there is only one variable, but it chooses not to reflect (neither its environment nor its viewer). As viewers, we are forced to reconcile the abrupt, repeated transition between neon-lit corridor and naturally-lit outside world. There is something Sisyphean about retracing your steps, being forced to go out and around and back in again, just to see another pair of lights. These objects of interest are quite close to each other as the crow flies, yet walls and doors force us to take the long way around.



### Rural Vernacular-

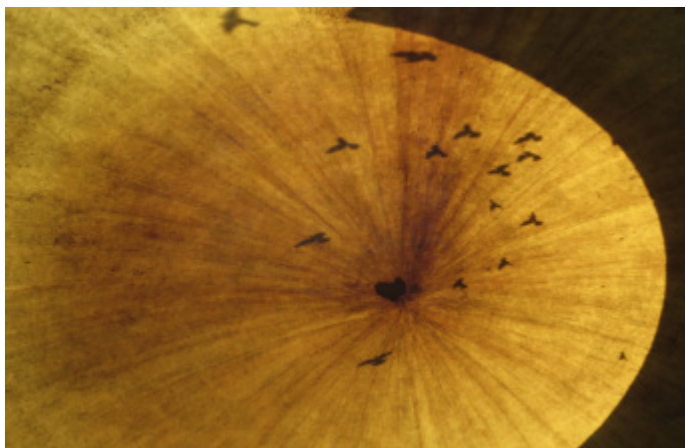


Wandering around the residential and rural zones of Marfa, one notices multiple instances of mirroring, specifically through the mechanism of bilateral symmetry seen at Prada. Yet unlike Prada, there are distinct variations between the two halves, indicative of human life and suggestive of differences in ownership and activity. A warehouse is divided and converted into two parallel dwellings, a double garage changes paint color at its midline, two houses—one with an awning, one without—face each other across an easement, the gates for two adjacent grazing fields meet at a right angle, an alley is flanked by fences of similar height but of varying color and material. This domestic vignettes suggest lives that move in tandem but are not the same. What similarities and differences might we find in the two garages, the two dwellings, the two fields, separated by only a thin sheet of material or a strip of land?

### Juarez

#### Birds-

In the art museum in Juarez, we were all very enamoured by the shadows of the birds perching on and taking flight from the translucent domed roof above us. The scene of birds flocking and gathering is so quotidian, yet when viewed through a screen, it became arresting. Through the screen, we see not the bird itself but its shadow, flattened in color and geometry through projection. We imagine the in its vivacious fullness occupying the sky that we cannot see while also perceiving the shadow as an entity in itself. The space between the shadow and our imagined bird opens up, allowing us to fill that space with our own meanings, musings, and sensorial responses.



#### Signs-

At the site of Casa de Adobe, where Monument #1 lies near the confluence of Mexico, Texas, and New Mexico's terrestrial holdings, the delineation of the border is marked by two mirrored signs and a slight, assumedly natural depression in the earth through which runoff might reach the Rio Grande. Here, one can easily be in the two countries at once. Here, the US fortifications

lie quite far from the actual boundary, sited along the opposite bank of the river. Hop-ping back and forth across the border is a strange self-reflexive exercise. On either side, one imagines oneself a moment before, located in one country but looking across to the other. Here, there is no hindrance—physical, technological, bureaucratic—to making this transition quickly and easily. It lies in a stark distinction to all of the other border crossings we have undertaken thus far.



#### River-

Just to the east of Casa de Adobe is where the international border enters the Rio Grande. Yet the river is not the border; it just contains it, floating somewhere in the middle of the waterway. While the border in some places might seem thick, here at the river it feels infinitely thin, a ribbon suspended in an aqueous body with mass and volume that reflects light and accepts life along its banks. Yet, the mirror of the river here is one sided. On the Mexico side the river is flanked by a road allowing access to the river for fishing, swimming, and relaxing. On the US side, the wall blocks visual and physical contact with the river.





## Projects: El Paso + Juarez

Decoy Cactus + Tire Pinata-  
Lizzie and Arturo's projects speak to the ways that water stored in the desert. Their decoy cactus is easily mistaken for an actual barrel cactus and is hypothetically intended to store and dispense water for illegal border crossers. Their pinata water jugs, specifically, the tire pinata, highlight the nefarious actions of Border Patrol of tire dragging and water jug slashing. The cactus is a duplicitous mirror to hide its actual contents, while the pinata is a superficial mirror meant to provoke awareness of an incongruity.



Monument Rubbing-  
Gabi, Sophia, and Sophia created duplicates of the border markers through rubbings. The time it takes to do the rubbing is a prolonged look in a mirror; one registers, stroke by stroke, every minute contour of the object. One can then transport the rubbing and view it in another context, increasing the distance between the original object and its duplicate while lessening the cognitive and imaginative rift between primary and secondary environments.



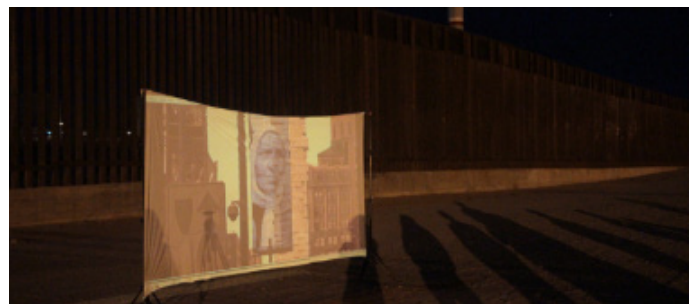
Found Space-  
In a similar mechanism of duplicating and recontextualization, Michael, Gabi, Laura, and Sam found spaces in El Paso and Juarez and delineated them with string to highlight their existence. Measured drawings facilitate reconstruction of those spaces in other locations. Yet the string is only a wireframe; while it can duplicate the volume of the space, it cannot reproduce the sensorial and narrative context of the original space. One can physically inhabit the

reproduced space, but it will take on an entirely new meaning determined by its new context.



Projection-  
(Video) projection is a type of mirroring that is more flexible in its surface engagement and better equipped to reproduce temporal as well as spatial characteristics. It allows for more layers to be added, both material and immaterial, and mediate space at multiple scales. There is the scale of the screen in the context of its environment, the difference between the projected object or environment's original and projected scale, and the space between the viewers and the content-laden screen. While we watch a projection, we do not view ourselves directly but rather imagine ourselves located in or with the content being projected. The screen becomes both a division and a portal. We can imagine ourselves within the screen, or on the other side of it. This is effectively the same location in space, but in the former we are in another world, while in the latter we are in our same environment, just on the other side of the wall.

If we are not simply passive viewers of the projection, we can engage with and manipulate it by blocking portions of light. We effect an immediate embodied response to something that is immaterial and elsewhere. We change the duplication in a way that is real – that escapes the imaginary, if only for a moment. This embodied engagement with projection, with an immaterial throwing of light that duplicates an object or event or place that is elsewhere—perhaps, on the other side of a wall—does more than geometric duplication and alteration. We create an empathetic, visceral environment that is a hybrid of actual and projected place. This space is within the mirror, suspended between the imaginary and the real, from which both new imaginaries and new realities could flow.





Projection work by student Sam Gebb along the El Paso /Juarez Border.

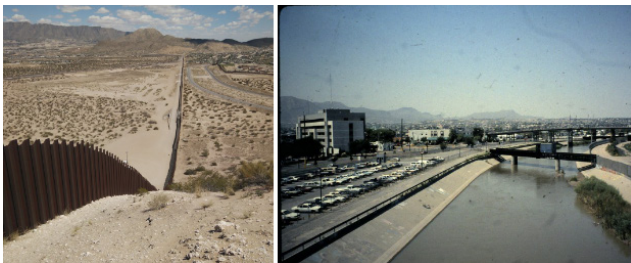


## *El Paso / Juarez Dispatch-*

*Spring 2018*

*by Sophia Arbara*

This dispatch will reflect upon some of the questions that emerged through our second trip to the US - Mexico border, this time visiting the cities of El Paso and Juarez. Spending only one day in Juarez, and most of our time in El Paso and Marfa, I focused more on trying to capture the intangible connections that one could notice through the proximity to Mexico and the border.



## The Rio Grande, El Paso/ Juarez, source: Mapio.net

### Reflection Topic #1: The Role Of Landscape

The visit to Cristo Rey - Meeting Ersela and Stephen - the mock infrastructure of the military training centers, the simulated creation of a real place - how climatic and topographic conditions allow this places of simulation to exist within cities and El Paso is one of them.



The National Training Center tries to create a realistic training environment in which soldiers and units can get better every day. Photo credit: David Burge/El Paso Times

Landscape also forms boundaries, and in the case of El Paso, before the creation of the wall, the deepest canal of the river was meant to be the division among the two countries. What does it mean to have a natural, shifting border, changing according to landscape?

The natural border, the river, reminds me of Bosnia - Herzegovina and the city of Mostar, which is still divided by its river in two ethnic/religious groups: the Christian Croats and the Muslim Bosniaks. The bridge, that has been destroyed and reconstructed during the war in 1993, becomes the point of conflict or unification.



Inside the U.S. government's simulated border patrol installations. FLETC mock port of entry and border patrol station, Glynco, Georgi. Photo credit: Agency

### Reflection Topic #2: Institutions, Art, Humor, Horror And The Border

Staying longer than in the San Diego/Tijuana trip and visiting for a second time a border city



and the borderwall has definitely impacted the way to perceive these contested places.

By walking around the city center, it is not necessary obvious that the southern part of the city ends where Mexico begins, and that a tall linear structure stops the city from expanding.

In San Diego and El Paso, we had the chance to visit and hear from academics and professionals how institutions can play a role in the dialogue of sociopolitical crises. Theoretical as well as practical approaches had been included. What I didn't had the chance to explore enough was how these critique and challenge within the academic discourse reflects upon the places and interacts with the communities residing in those.

Ron Rael in his presentation at the "Porous Border" conference, opened the discourse around the borderwall through "humor and horror". Horror, absurdity, impotence and power is what this structures evoke to me. But when asked to confront it and challenge, humor becomes an important tool to raise questions. Questions that we didn't even had to ask and therefore, a satiric approach gives us the permission to do so; ask the obvious.

### **Reflection Topic #3: This Weird Place Called Marfa**

I had heard before about Marfa, being this cool place that people in the art discourse keep talking about. My expectations were very different from what I perceived by visiting the place.

Besides exploring Judds work and visiting the Chinati foundation, there was little interaction with the place. It almost felt that the existence of the art spaces was operating in a different layer, and that we were the only group of people moving around the place. Wandering on the south side of the city, beyond the trails, these neighborhood didn't seem to interact with the art world and Judd's work in Marfa. To me, Marfa is one of the strangest places I have visited. Marfa seems as a unique place, a one of a kind, a small village that became of a big importance in the art discourse, but that I could not read through its identity. Very likely there is more than one, but I wish I could go back and unfold more the history and dynamics within this space. Judds legacy in Marfa can be perceived in two ways: the art projects and pieces and the Marfa project; intentionally or not, Judd reshaped the urban environment of this small place.

### **Reflection Topic #4: Project Implementation**

The implementation of the projects on site arose for me again the questions of concept and context, intentions and impact, speculation and reality. Staging Antigone

at the border opened a dialogue with the place. The wall became the backdrop and the surrounding Border Patrol cars driving by and the trains passing, became the reminders of what we were aiming to challenge and confront through amateurism and ephemerality. Placing this project in a different time and place, was an experiment that generated a terrain for discussion.

The monument rubbing project also gained its own importance in place. In the monument rubbing 2c, located in Anapra, beyond the wall where the Mexican neighborhood is, draw quickly the attention of the children that were playing nearby. Being itself a performative art, the participation of the people living there, in our case the young girl Alejandra, made me realize that initiating informal dialogues through small gestures, even though that was not our main purpose, can become really powerful, just through disrupting the everyday conditions, the normality. Similar, when rubbing the monument number 1 next to "Casa de Adobe", the attention it draw, interfering with the inhabitants everyday conditions, making this gesture a performative act that was not only speaking to us and the action of "bringing something back" but also leaving something behind, this disruption of the everyday through our act. And of course, the rubbing we left behind in "Casa de Adobe".

What I gained from this experience is that intentions and impact, especially when implementing a project, a performance or an installation on site, is that there are at least two parameters: the ones the creator/author has thought about and expects as an outcome, and the unpredictable ones, that can always be surprising.

Lebbeus Woods, in his projects, points towards a "Subversion of an existing authoritarian system of social control". Inspired by his attempts to incorporate social change and critical thought through metaphorical and narrative drawings, I wonder how speculation and real world can be in conflict and contact at the same time. Having returned from our second trip, my question would be: how can our projects challenge the existing, create speculation, thus operating within this real dynamics?

