



Installation view of *Intergalactix: against isolation/contra el aislamiento*, LACE, 2021. (Courtesy of collaborators and artists. Photo by yubo at OfStudio)

A CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL, AND INTERGALACTIC, SOLIDARITY AT LACE



SHANA NYS DAMBROT ([HTTPS://WWW.LAWEEKLY.COM/AUTHOR/SNDAMBROT/](https://www.laweekly.com/author/sndambrot/)), ✕ JULY 13, 2021

It's not easy to create art and exhibitions that balance an urgent educational intention with a more nuanced aesthetic experience. But striking that exact balance has been at the heart of what LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions) has been doing for decades; and their new exhibition, *Intergalactix: against isolation/contra el aislamiento* is just such an instance.

Examining life and history on the U.S. / Mexico borderlands as well as those between Mexico and Central America, the show features new, commissioned work across performance, video, sculpture, installation, photography and their intersections. *Intergalactix* takes viewers on literal and metaphorical journeys through complex liminal geographies.



Installation view by Kaqjay Moloj, Beatriz Cortez & FIEBRE Ediciones as part of Intergalactix: against isolation/contra el aislamiento, LACE, 2021. (Courtesy of collaborators and artists. Photo by Yubo at OfStudio)

The gallery's antechamber is transformed into a place of ritual objects, altar stones and offerings with derivations in the natural world and generational traditions. Objects made through a collaborative process between Beatriz Cortez, Kaqjay Moloj and FIEBRE Ediciones. By merging memory-based techniques and references with specific materials based on ancient Kaqchikel Mayan practices with their own postcolonial perspective on the centuries of intervening history, the artists set a tone of contemplation, learning and loss. There's a free printed takeaway containing instructions and patterns to construct a similar altar stone at home — underscoring the powerful idea of re-integrating legacy rituals into daily modern life.



Installation view by Tanya Aguiñiga, as part of Intergalactix:against isolation/contra el aislamiento, LACE, 2021. (Courtesy of collaborators and artists. Photo by yubo at OfStudio)

The main gallery is a pageant of light and color, didactics and emotions, trauma and beauty, heart and psyche, eye and body, lived experiences and imagined futures, spatial and temporal separations and proximal presence, unearthed facts and flights of fantasy. Works by The Fire Theory collective, Tanya Aguiñiga and collaborators, members of Cog•nate Collective and a host of personal “maps” by artists from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala gather around a central floor sculptural, a cartography made of soil tracing a path northward. Mysterious and rather monumental, this activation offers an elusive, inherently temporary moment of stillness within the surroundings of an ever-shifting narrative. It has the flavor of a sand mandala and of a vintage classroom, something shimmering that might not hold together.



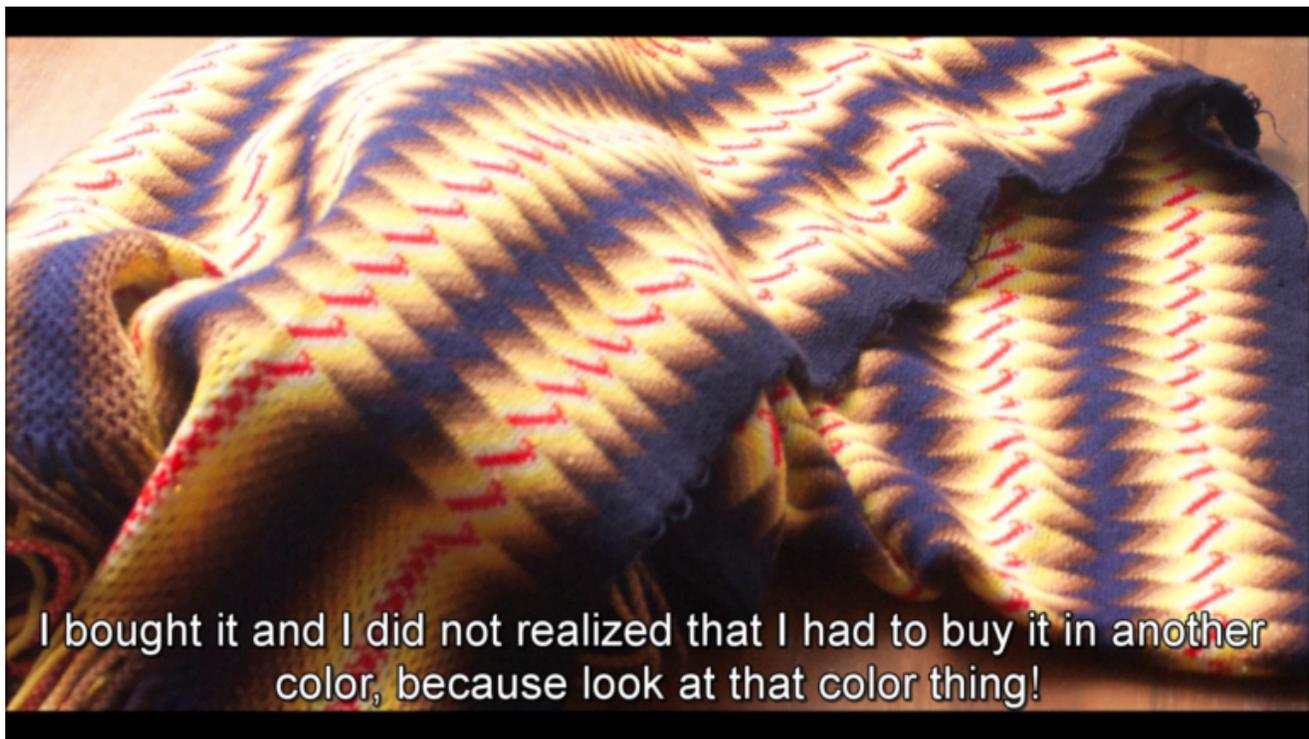
Installation view of The Fire Theory installation as part of Intergalactix:against isolation/contra el aislamiento, LACE, 2021. (Courtesy of collaborators and artists. Photo by yubo at OfStudio)

The work arrayed around this center of gravity includes video using a gaming aesthetic to impart the inconceivable scale of a walk of thousands of miles. Viewers are shown a series of richly cinematic films reenacting depictions of children in holding facilities, other more raw documentary style films going into granular detail on the texture of family lore, nearly architectural sculptural forms using soccer iconography and objects that point to both the beauty of play and the futility of pipedreams and a museological display of enchanted handmade copal burners — the artifacts of a multifaceted, embodied and enacted border rituals communicating tactics of both physical and spiritual survival.



*Detail of The Fire Theory installation, Dream Team by Crack Rodriguez, 2020-2021.
Intergalactix:against isolation/contra el aislamiento, LACE. (Courtesy of collaborators and artists.
Photo by yubo at OfStudio)*

This engrossing and even at times overwhelming impact of this eclectic creative experience exists, however, in the ultimate service of a less joyful documentation of the current catastrophe of post-NAFTA immigration policy across the Americas, as well as the crossborder violence of U.S. foreign policies that contributed to the dangerous circumstances leading so many to flee these countries in the first place. By not only asking for the audience to educate themselves on the history, but by offering myriad experiential ways into the narrative using empathy and emotion to open those lines of communication, the goal of the exhibition is right there in its title — to resist isolation of individuals and of communities, to stop the scourge of erasure of both people and their countries and cultures, and to give indelible form to the lateral modes of solidarity that keep hope alive.



Mauricio Kabistan, La memoria de mis padres (The memory of my parents), 2020-21. Single channel video.



Tanya Aguiñiga, Metabolizing the Border (installation detail shot), 2020. Installation, glass, US/MX Border. (Courtesy of the

Exhibition programming includes LACE's first live in-person artist talk, with members of the [Cognate Collective](https://welcometolace.org/lace/cognate-collective-in-person-talk-and-will-be-again-y-de-nuevo-sera/) (<https://welcometolace.org/lace/cognate-collective-in-person-talk-and-will-be-again-y-de-nuevo-sera/>). *And will be again... (Y de nuevo será...)* is at the gallery on Wednesday, July 14 at 6pm. The [Online Talk](https://welcometolace.org/lace/online-talk-objeto-antiguo/) (<https://welcometolace.org/lace/online-talk-objeto-antiguo/>) on the *Objeto Antiguo* self-assembled paper altars and their uses is on July 21 at 6pm on zoom.

The exhibition is on view at LACE, 6522 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; through August 14; free. For more information visit: welcometolace.org (<https://welcometolace.org/>).