



AESTHETICS OF UNDOCUMENTEDNESS

SYMPOSIUM • EXHIBITION • JAN 27 - 28, 2023

Press Contact

Erika Hirugami, MA. MAAB • Curator
424.253.6179 • CuratorLove@gmail.com

Gallery Contact Eric M. Schmidt
434-924-6123 • ems3z@virginia.edu

Exhibition on view Jan 23 - Fe 17, 2023 Gal-
lery Hours M-F 10AM - 5PM

Opening Reception | Friday, January 27 | 5:00-7:00pm

Ruffin Gallery | 179 Culbreth Road on UVA's Arts Grounds

*A migrant is perpetually unfinished.
Instead of a living embodiment of one's place of origin,
a person is a work of art constantly in revision*
- David Cuatlacuatl

PERTENECER | ENCARNAR AESTHETICS OF UNDOCUMENTEDNESS

Curated by Undoc+ curator
Erika Hirugami, MA. MAAB.

UNDOC+ ARTISTS

Jackie Amézquita
Felipe Baeza
David Cuatlacuatl
Federico Cuatlacuatl
Francisco Donoso
Fidencio Fifield-Perez
Guadalupe Maravilla
Isidro Pérez García
Nancy E. Rivera
Luis Sahagun
Nicole Solis-Sison

There is no easy way to define undocumentedness and no single definition that stands true across the globe. In the words of Jose Antonio Vargas, "If there are an estimated 45 million immigrants living in America, then there are 45 million ways of being an immigrant in America. Like all groups, we are not a monolith."¹ Of those forty-five million immigrants, and as per the Department of Homeland Security, eleven million immigrants currently residing in the United States are unauthorized.² Borrowing Jose Antonio Vargas' logic, there are eleven million ways of being undocumented in the United States. Thus, to completely comprehend undocumentedness, and in the words of Federico Cuatlacuatl, one must consider undocumentedness a spectrum.³ To

understand the complexity of belonging to the undocumented community, undoc+ spectrum and undocumented diaspora emerge to tease out undocumentedness. To clarify, individuals within the undoc+ spectrum have lived or are currently living undocumented, whereas individuals in the undocumented diaspora are directly or indirectly affected by undocumentedness but have not embodied undocumentedness themselves. Examples of the undoc+ spectrum are current or former undocumented individuals, while examples of individuals in the undocumented diaspora are children or partners of individuals in the undoc+ spectrum.

1 Jose Antonio Vargas

2 Bryan Baker

3 Federico Cuatlacuatl in conversation with Erika Hirugami.

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Curated by Erika Hirugami, MA. MAAB.

CURATOR

Erika Hirugami, MA. MAAB.

Hirugami is a first-generation Mexican immigrant, formerly undocumented.

She holds a MAAB from the Sotheby's Institute of Art, in conjunction with the Drucker School of Management and Getty Leadership Institute at Claremont Graduate University, and an MA in Chicana Studies from UCLA. Hirugami also holds BAs in the fields of Art History, Chicano Studies, and Mexican Studies from UCLA. She is currently a lecturer and doctoral candidate at UCLA, where she challenges the aesthetics of undocumentedness through contemporary Latinx art.

Hirugami is the founder and CEO of CuratorLove, the ED at AHSC, a Professor at CGU and SMC, Fellow at Arts4LA, CCI and NALAC NLI Fellow. As a Getty and Kress Foundation Fellow, she has developed curatorial statements at museums across Mexico and United States. After being a Public Art Curator for the Department of Cultural Affairs in the City of Los Angeles, Hirugami became the Curatorial Director for the Ronald McDonald House Charities and has led various galleries while becoming a visiting lecturer for Universities across the country.

She has curated exhibitions for multiple spaces across the globe, and her written work has been published internationally.

CuratorLove.com
@Hirugami x @CuratorLove

Jackie Amézquita, MFA

Amezquita is a Central American artist based in Los Angeles, born in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, who migrated to the United States in 2003. She holds an MFA from UCLA and a BFA from ArtCenter College of Design, and an AA in Visual Communications from Los Angeles Valley College.

Her practice has been influenced by her family history of diaspora and her experiences as a formerly undocumented immigrant. In her work Amézquita explores narratives of migration and how people navigate power structures. Amézquita often incorporates segments of her personal archives to intertwine historical and contemporary references. Amézquita's work makes use of performances, site-specific activations, and installations and uses organic materials such as masa, soil, salt, hydrated lime, and produce to explore a visual language that explores modes of adaptation and integration in the aftermath of migration. In her practice, Amézquita uses growth and decay to inspire forms of non-verbal communication that speak of the cycles of life transformations and temporality. Amézquita is interested in how living organisms and other entities integrate and create other environments. These ecosystems underline coexistence among diverse beings, reminding us of the life cycle and the afterlife.

JackieAmezquita.com
@jackieamezquita

ARTISTS

Felipe Baeza, MFA

(b. 1987, Guanajuato, Mexico) works and lives in Brooklyn, NY.

Baeza's practice is equal parts confrontation of violent pasts and a tribute to people whose sense of personhood is constantly litigated and defined by those in power. His "fugitive bodies" created over densely layered paintings appear in different states of becoming and, at times, are even abstracted to the point of invisibility. Recent group exhibitions include The Milk of Dreams, 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2022); Prospect 5, New Orleans: Yesterday We Said Tomorrow, New Orleans (2021); and Desert X, Palm Springs (2020). Recent solo exhibitions include Made into Being, Fortnight Institute, New York (2022); Unruly Suspension, Maureen Paley, London (2021); and Through the Flesh to Elsewhere, the Mistake Room, Los Angeles (2020). Baeza received a BFA from Cooper Union and an MFA from Yale University.

FelipeBaeza.com
@felipebaeza

David Cuatlacuati, MFA

1989-2017

Born in Coapan, Cholula, Puebla, Mexico. Lived and worked in the United States. Lover of tacos al pastor and atole de calabaza. Wanted to be a box fighter at an early age. David received his BFA from Ball State University and his MFA from Pennsylvania State University.

DavidCuatlacuati.com
@david_cuatlacuati



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Curated by Erika Hirugami, MA. MAAB.

Federico Cuatlacuati, MFA

Cuatlacuati is an artist born in San Francisco Coapan, Cholula, Puebla, Mexico. Federico's work is invested in disseminating topics of Nahua indigenous immigration, social art practice, and cultural sustainability. Building from his own experience growing up as an undocumented migrant and previously holding DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), Federico's creative practice centers on the intersectionality of indigeneity and immigration under a pressing Anthropocene. At the core of his most recent research and artistic production is the intersection of transborder indigeneity, migrant indigeneity diasporas, and Nahua futurisms. Federico's independent productions have been screened in various national and international film festivals as well as exhibitions in museums and galleries worldwide. As founder and director of the Rasquache Artist Residency in Puebla, Mexico, he actively stays involved in socially engaged works and binational endeavors.

Cuatlacuati.com
@rasquache_tolchikualistli'

Francisco Donoso, BFA

Donoso is a transnational artist based between NYC and Miami. Donoso's works are embodiments of the human experience where notions of placement and fixed boundaries are questioned to reveal the precariousness of belonging. Originally from Ecuador, but raised in Miami, FL, he's been a recipient of DACA since 2013. He received his BFA from Purchase College and has participated in fellowships and residencies at Wave Hill as a Van Lier Fellow, Stony Brook University, The Bronx Museum Artist in the Marketplace, and the Kates-Ferri Projects Residency among others. Francisco has participated in solo and group exhibitions throughout the US

in NYC notably at El Museo del Barrio, The Bronx Museum of Arts, Children's Museum of Manhattan, Wave Hill, Kates-Ferri Projects and Field Projects, in Miami at Club Gallery, in Virginia at Second Street Gallery, in Los Angeles during SPRING/BREAK, and Las Vegas, and in Berlin. He is a recipient of an Artist Corp Grant from the New York Foundation for the Arts and a Cultural Solidarity Fund Grant.

Donoso's work has been written about in Hyperallergic, CRUSHfanzine, The Latinx Project Interventions, The Financial Times, The Village Voice, and Art Zealous among others. He is the owner of the online shop, Donoso Studio, an immigrant-powered design studio specializing in uniquely handcrafted art objects. He is the founder of The Undocu Spark Lab, a creative incubator and nomadic classroom for undocumented artists, fiscally sponsored by the New York State Youth Leadership Council. He is represented by Kates-Ferri Projects in NYC.

FranciscoDonoso.com
@donosostudio

Luis Fidencio Fifield-Perez, MFA

Fifield-Perez was born in Oaxaca, Mexico, and raised in the United States after his family migrated. His practice critiques the authority given to paper objects over the people they document. Recent works reincarnate discarded maps and envelopes as papel picado and ex-votos, referencing the crafts and customs he learned to celebrate festivals and mourn the dead in Oaxaca. These techniques ground Fifield-Perez in experiences that preceded and came after the defining moment of crossing the border. Fifield-Perez received his BFA from Memphis College of Art and an MA & MFA from The University of Iowa. He has exhibited

at multiple institutions, including The Cleveland Museum of Art, the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, the Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, and the International Print Center New York. He is currently the inaugural Dr. Harold R. Adams Artist-in-Residence Fellow at The University of Minnesota.

FidencioPerez.com
@fidencio.f.perez

Guadalupe Maravilla is a transdisciplinary visual artist, choreographer, and healer. At the age of eight, Maravilla was part of the first wave of unaccompanied, undocumented children to arrive at the United States border in the 1980s as a result of the Salvadoran Civil War. In 2016, Maravilla became a U.S. citizen and in 2016, he adopted the name Guadalupe Maravilla in solidarity with his undocumented father, who uses Maravilla as his last name. As an acknowledgment of his past, Maravilla grounds his practice in the historical and contemporary contexts belonging to the undocumented and cancer communities.

Maravilla currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. His work is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, The Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami. Additionally, Maravilla has performed and presented his work at the Whitney Museum of American Art, MoMA, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Institute of Contemporary Art Miami, Queens Museum, Bronx Museum of the Arts, and many more.

GuadalupeMaravilla.com
@guadalupe__maravilla



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Curated by Erika Hirugami, MA. MAAB.

Isidro Pérez García (aka ChiloTe) is a borderless artist from Santa Ana, CA and Atotonilco El Grande, Hidalgo, México. He works across various artistic media, approaching his work from his positionality as a formerly undocumented migrant and a campesino urbano. From this perspective, he makes art as a networked and layered process of “thinking with things” in a visual and material way, with a focus on how his art work and practice can contribute to anti-colonial histories and narratives. He earned his BFA in Studio Art from CalArts and his MFA in Visual Arts from UC San Diego, where his thesis work was awarded the David Antin Prize from UCSD and the Graduating Artist Award from ICA San Diego.

Isidro Pérez García (aka ChiloTe) es un artista sin fronteras originario de Atotonilco El Grande, Hidalgo, México, viviendo en Santa Ana, CA. Isidro trabaja con varias técnicas, y su orientación artística se deriva desde su posicionamiento como ex inmigrante indocumentado y como campesino urbano. Desde esta perspectiva, él hace arte como un proceso de “pensar con las cosas” de una manera visual y material, un proceso entretejido y en capas. También, él se enfoca en cómo su obra y práctica artística pueden contribuir a las historias y narrativas anticoloniales. Obtuvo su BFA en Studio Art de CalArts y su MFA en Artes Visuales de UC San Diego, donde su tesis recibió el Premio David Antin de UCSD y el Premio de Graduating Artist de ICA San Diego.

@chiloteeeee

Nancy E. Rivera is a visual artist, curator, and arts administrator based in Salt Lake City, Utah. She explores code-switching, cultural assimilation, and displacement in

her work, which is often rooted in photography. By and large, her work is influenced by her dual cultural identity and explores the different contexts in which we may encounter duality and hybridity.

Rivera has exhibited nationally in a variety of traditional and non-traditional venues. Her work has been featured in publications including Southwest Contemporary, Aint-Bad, and Lenscratch. Her work is part of private and public collections, including the State of Utah Alice Merrill Horne Art Collection, the Utah Museum of Fine Arts, and the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona.

NancyRivera.com
@_nancy_rivera

Luis Sahagun, MFA

Sahagun was born in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico in 1982. He cultivates civic activations for community members, students, and other educators alike. A unique element fueling his social art practice is his experience growing up feeling invisible to society because he was Brown, undocumented, and poor, making him privy to perceptions that most people have not been exposed to in academia. He uses the residue of those traumas to guide the development of meaningful performances, public interventions, discussions, and workshops.

He has exhibited at venues including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL; Chicago Cultural Center, Chicago, IL; Anderson Museum of Contemporary Art, Roswell, NM; The National Museum of Mexican Art, Chicago, IL; the International Exposition of Contemporary Art (expo) Chicago, IL; DePaul Art Museum, Chicago, IL; amongst many others. Additionally, his work has been covered in publications

such as: ArtForum, ChicagoMag, NewCity Magazine, New American Paintings, and the Chicago Tribune. His practice has also been spotlighted on the radio, podcasts, and television networks such as MundoFOX, UNIVISION, and WBEZ-NPR. Sahagun has held residencies at Roswell, NM, Oaxaca, MX, Chicago Artist Coalition, Mana Contemporary in Miami, and was an Artist in Residence for Critical Race Studies at Michigan State University. A 3Arts Awardee, he received his undergraduate degree from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, an MFA at Northern Illinois University.

LuisSahagun.com
@luis_alvaro_sahagun

Nicole Solis-Sison, BFA

Multi-racial Filipinx visual artist, writer, producer, and creative director. Her work focuses on cultural equity, diversity, and sustainability in digital discourse across the art, media, and film industries. Nicole is a proud founding member of the Undocumented Filmmakers Collective, a nationwide organization that tackles systemic inequities facing undocumented immigrants in the media field. Nicole received her BFA at the University of California, Berkeley. She is the recipient of the 2016 Eisner Award for the Highest Achievement in the Arts. More recently, Nicole is a 2022 Define American Fellow and 2022 Sundance Asian American Fellow.

NicoleSolisSison.com
@nicolesolisison

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