

Migration Art

Art About Migration

At a time when the borders between lands are continually being disputed, what does it mean to move across countries, to change nationalities and to settle in a new place? Some of us migrate by choice, others are forced to flee for our own safety.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBDbkoIYHis>

Jankel Adler (1895-1949)

Jankel was a Polish Jewish painter and printmaker. A collection of sixteen sketchbooks in Tate's Archive help shed some light on the fascinating life of Polish-Jewish artist [Jankel Adler](#).

Forced to leave Germany in 1933, Adler spent the rest of the decade moving through various cities in Europe. After the outbreak of the Second World War, he joined the Polish Army in France. In 1940 he was evacuated to Scotland and spent the remainder of his life in the UK.

His sketchbooks cover the period of 1933-49 and help us trace the development of his artistic style throughout this tumultuous period. They allowed Adler to work when his itinerant existence kept him from easels and canvas, with many pages filled with studies and ideas which would be later worked into finished pieces.

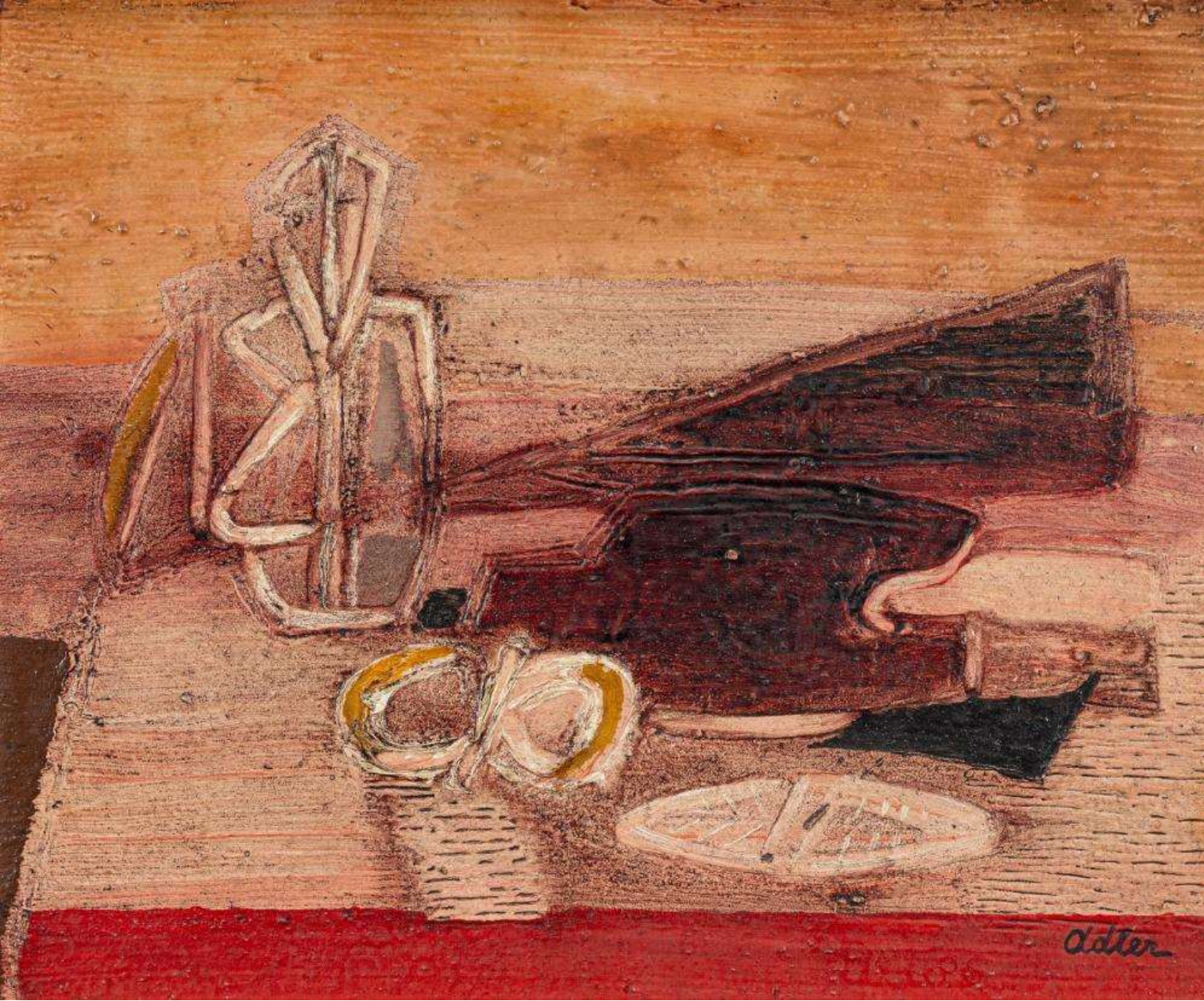
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vVeYOtT3OSg>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8b2DUhcqC0&t=55s>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jBXjjj4nMd8&t=13s>











The Great Migration

The Great Migration, sometimes known as the Great Northward Migration or the Black Migration, was the movement of 6 million African Americans out of the rural Southern United States to the urban Northeast, Midwest, and West between 1910 and 1970.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TfgJnXlaxo>

Jacob Lawrence—Migration Series

Jacob Armstead Lawrence was an American painter known for his portrayal of African-American historical subjects and contemporary life. Lawrence referred to his style as "dynamic cubism", although by his own account the primary influence was not so much French art as the shapes and colors of Harlem.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4lgvB5cV5E> (11 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLC8xRNcJvE> (short version 5 mins)

- <https://www.pbs.org/video/art-about-migration-xs0kfk/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivDIA0QHHJs>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FSNdp8wrgw>



Paul Gauguin 1892









Hiwa K

Hiwa K graduated from High School in Iraq and continued his self-education meeting different intellectuals, visual artists, musicians and theatre artists. The major fields of these informal and non-systematic studies were European literature and philosophy, learnt from available books translated into Arabic. After moving to Germany at the age of 25, he studied music; specifically he was a pupil of the Flamenco master Paco Peña.

Very often, people say I'm based in Berlin. **I'm never based.** I'm based on my feet.

<https://art21.org/watch/art-in-the-twenty-first-century/s9/hiwa-k-in-berlin-segment/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OExAVzBX_sc&t=11s











Do Ho Suh

Do Ho Suh is a Korean sculptor and installation artist. He also works across various media, including paintings and film which explore the concept of space and home. His work is particularly well known in relation to anti-monumentalism.

- <https://art21.org/watch/art-in-the-twenty-first-century/s2/do-ho-suh-in-stories-segment/>
- <https://www.lacma.org/art/exhibition/do-ho-suh-348-west-22nd-street> (LACMA)





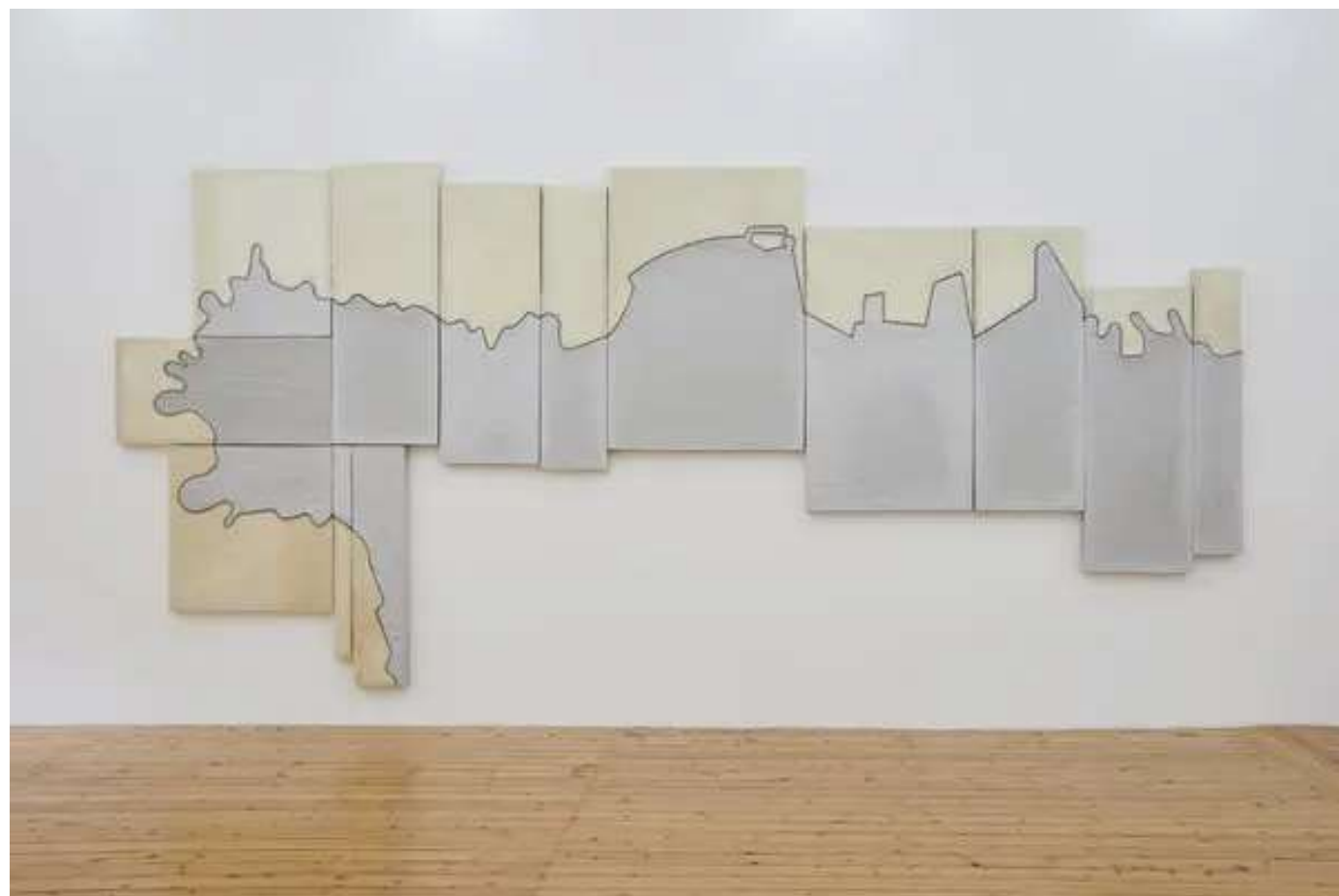




Marwan Rechmaoui

Buildings are often at the heart of refugees' troubles. Cities and homes are reluctantly left behind while new shelter is desperately sought. Looking at this sculpture I am reminded of how cities such as Beirut, during its civil war, were left empty and hollow by refugees fleeing conflict. At the other end of this process, I have met many refugees settled into empty houses caused by deindustrialization in places like Middlesbrough and Sheffield. Though this sculpture could symbolise the absence of life caused by war in once thriving communities, personally I am reminded of all the refugees I have met breathing new life into towns and cities here in the UK.

- <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/rechmaoui-monument-for-the-living-t13193/marwan-rechmaouis-monument-living>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hqepokR3Yo&t=29s>





Lubaina Himid

Lubaina Himid was born in Zanzibar in Tanzania but moved to England shortly after her birth, and her paintings, woodcuts, installations, works on paper and curatorial projects have often emphasized the contribution of African migrants to the development of European culture. The African-style clothing worn by the women travelling in the boat in this painting suggests a connection with journeys from Africa and the complex cultural politics that are the result of such voyages. As the art historian Alan Rice has suggested, 'This utopic, calm scene depicts the survival of African culture despite the intervention of slavery and colonialism. The women take control mid-ocean consigning Western charts, which have been the bane of enslaved blacks – crucially allowing Europeans to steer more accurately between African and American slave ports – to the depths of the sea' (Rice 2003, p.75).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wp98Db9vHBI&t=144s>





the white of a plot

dress is part to escape

the white of a plot

dress is part to escape

BACKLASH

BATTLE

ANGER

ANGER





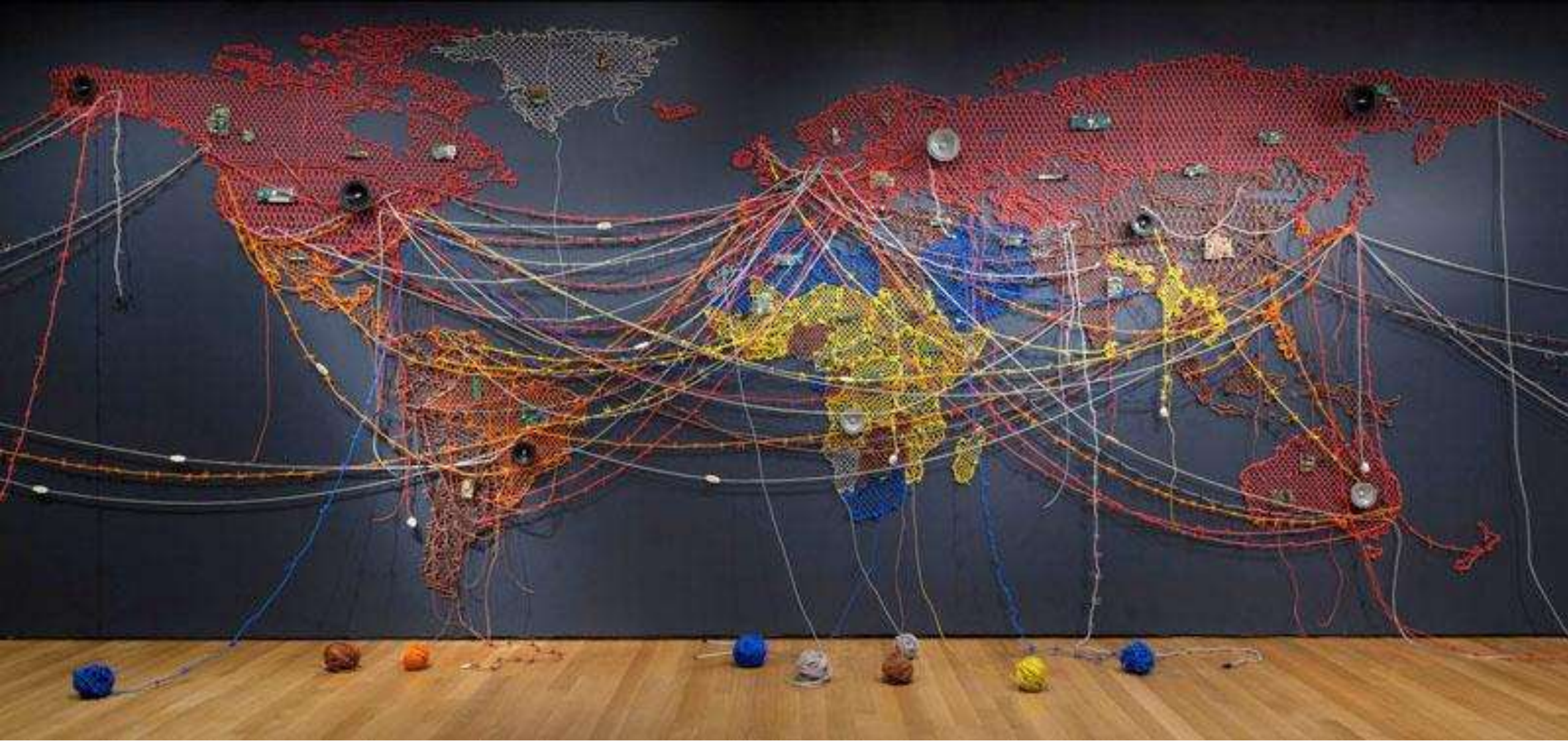
When Home Won't Let You Stay

The exhibition *When Home Won't Let You Stay: Migration through Contemporary Art*, on view Oct 23, 2019–Jan 26, 2020 at the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, considers how contemporary artists are responding to the migration, immigration, and displacement of peoples today. The exhibition borrows its title, with permission, from a poem by Warsan Shire, a Somali-British poet who gives voice to the experiences of refugees. Through artworks made since 2000 by twenty artists from more than a dozen countries — including Colombia, Cuba, France, India, Iraq, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States — this exhibition highlights diverse artistic responses to migration ranging from personal accounts to poetic meditations, and features a range of mediums, including sculpture, installation, painting, and video. Artists in the exhibition include Kader Attia, Tania Bruguera, Isaac Julien, Hayv Kahraman, Reena Saini Kallat, Richard Mosse, Carlos Motta, Yinka Shonibare, Xaviera Simmons, and Do-Ho Suh, among others. A fully illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition, with an essay by Eva Respini and Ruth Erickson and texts by prominent scholars Aruna D'Souza, Okwui Enwezor, Thomas Keenan, Peggy Levitt, and Uday Singh Mehta, among others.

- <https://www.stephenfriedman.com/news/145-yinka-shonibare-cbe-s-the-american-library-in-when/>

Reena Saini Kallat

Woven Chronicle is a cartographic wall drawing that, in the artist's words, represents "the global flows and movements of travelers, migrants, and labor." Kallat uses electrical wires—some of which are twisted to resemble barbed wire—to create the lines, which are based on her meticulous research of transnational flows. Wire is an evocative and contradictory material: it operates as both a conduit of electricity, used to connect people across vast distances, and as a weaponized obstacle, such as the fences used to erect borders and encircle refugee camps. Kallat's family was splintered by the Partition of India in 1947 upon independence from Britain, which divided the country geographically along religious lines and induced the movement of more than ten million people in one of the largest forced migrations in human history. *Woven Chronicle* speaks to this personal memory—and collective history—in its material presence, merging the artist's research on migration with metaphors of violence, and accompanied by an ambient soundscape that evokes the steady hum of global movement.



Yinka Shonibare

The American Library consists of six thousand volumes wrapped in vibrantly colored Dutch wax-print fabric. Many are embossed with the names of first- and second-generation immigrants or their descendants, or those affected by the Great Migration in the United States. All those named have made a mark on American culture: they include writers ranging from W. E. B. Du Bois to Grace Lee Boggs, Toni Morrison, and Teju Cole; artists such as Ana Mendieta; and industrialists such as Apple innovator Steve Jobs. These individuals span race, gender, and class, recasting how ideas of otherness, citizenship, home, and nationalism acquire their complex meanings. The fabric also reflects the complex interactions among cultures: introduced to West Africa in the nineteenth century through English and Dutch colonial trade as a mill-printed derivative of patterned batik cloth from Indonesia, the fabric has become synonymous with West African fashion and a key material for Yinka Shonibare CBE, RA, who was born in London and raised in Lagos, Nigeria. The American Library is an imaginative projection of a nation whose commonly told origin story is one of immigration.

https://www.google.com/search?q=American+Library+Shonibare&source=lmns&tbm=vid&bih=769&biw=1333&client=firefox-b-1-d&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwimyaoKj4L-AhXsPkQIHdlzCkMQ0pQJKAF6BAgBEA4#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:fb7a71cf,vid:6OippKajk_Y





Judy Baca—Migration of the Golden People

ARECEN mural, the first significant public work created in Los Angeles about the migration of Central Americans into the Pico Union district of Los Angeles represent the partnerships with community groups who wish to visualize the issues affecting their community. The mural reflects the terror of military oppression, but also forcefully express a determination to resist, whether by taking arms or joining a silent protest march. *Migration of the Golden People* reminds us of those who did in this struggle and of the continued energetic effort to speak on behalf of the oppressed. This is the story of those who founded CARECEN in 1983, and of their families. All were scarred by oppression and civil war, but remain dedicated to the empowerment of their community. Mural installed at CARECEN (Central American Resource Center) Los Angeles, CA.

- <https://www.craftinamerica.org/short/carlos-rogel-on-migration-of-the-golden-people-mural>



Rufino Tamayo and Mixographia

[Rufino Tamayo](#) (1899-1991) is a modern master whose legacy is rooted in his contributions across a variety of media, including mural and easel painting, drawing, and the graphic arts. Produced between 1925 and 1991, his graphic work includes woodcuts, lithographs, etchings and [Mixografia](#)® prints — a new technique that was developed in the early 1970s to allow him to produce his prints in relief.

<https://www.bondlatin.com/rufino-tamayo> (bio)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olfArxU5BqE>

The 10 Mixografia® prints presented in our [Latin American Art Online](#) sale come from the collection of the [Los Angeles County Museum of Art](#), and are being sold to benefit acquisitions of Latin American art. Collectively, they attest to Tamayo's mastery of colour, and underscore his status as one of modern art's great innovators.

- <https://www.christies.com/features/Rufino-Tamayo-and-the-birth-of-Mixografia-prints-9547-1.aspx>





Mixografia

The Remba family has been involved in the world of printmaking for three generations. Moving from Mexico City to Los Angeles, Mixografia's three-dimensional printing technique has been developed and perfected over the course of over 50 years. Because of the medium's versatility, the workshop is always searching for new techniques to expand possibilities in printmaking for artists of all disciplines.

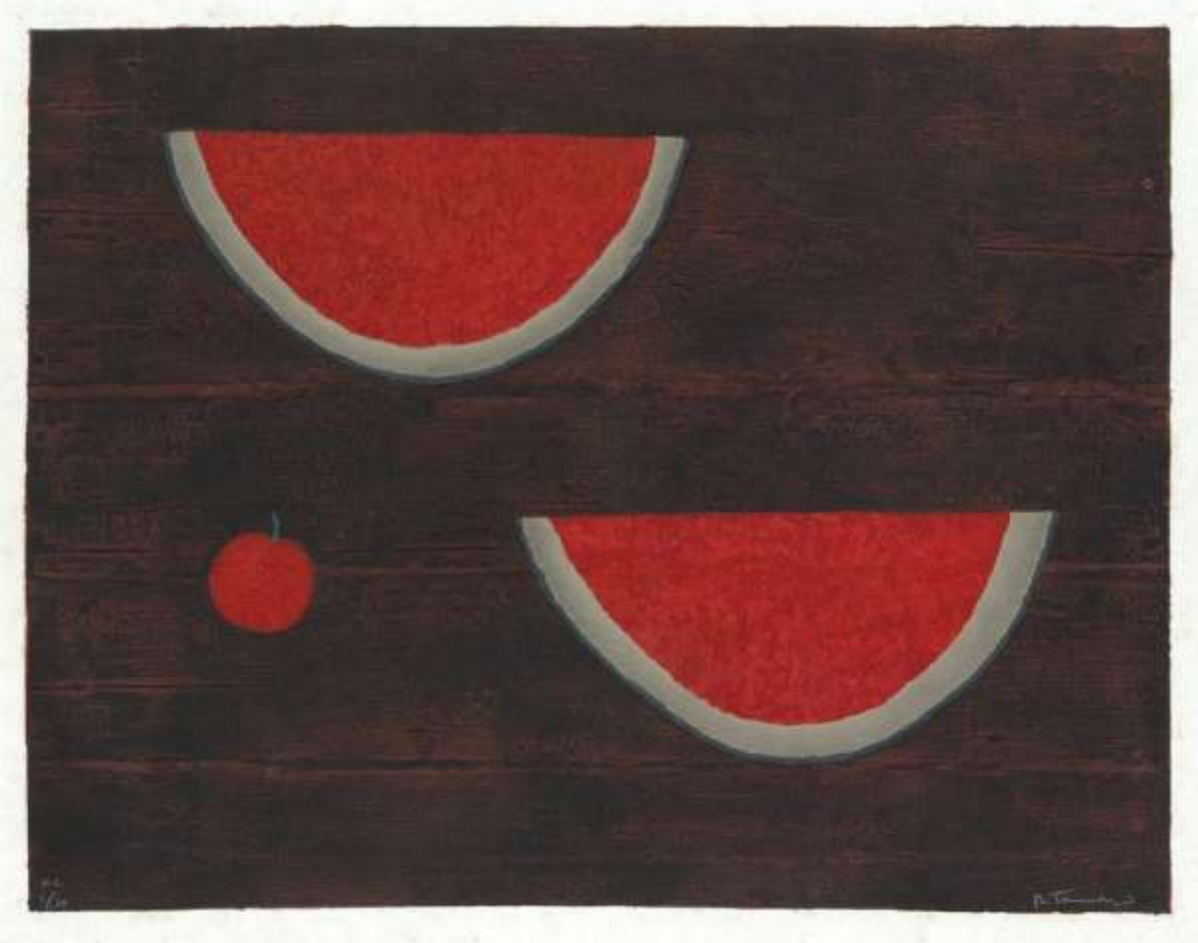
<https://mixografia.com/about/>

<https://mixografia.com/processes/printmaking/>









Yukinori Yanagi

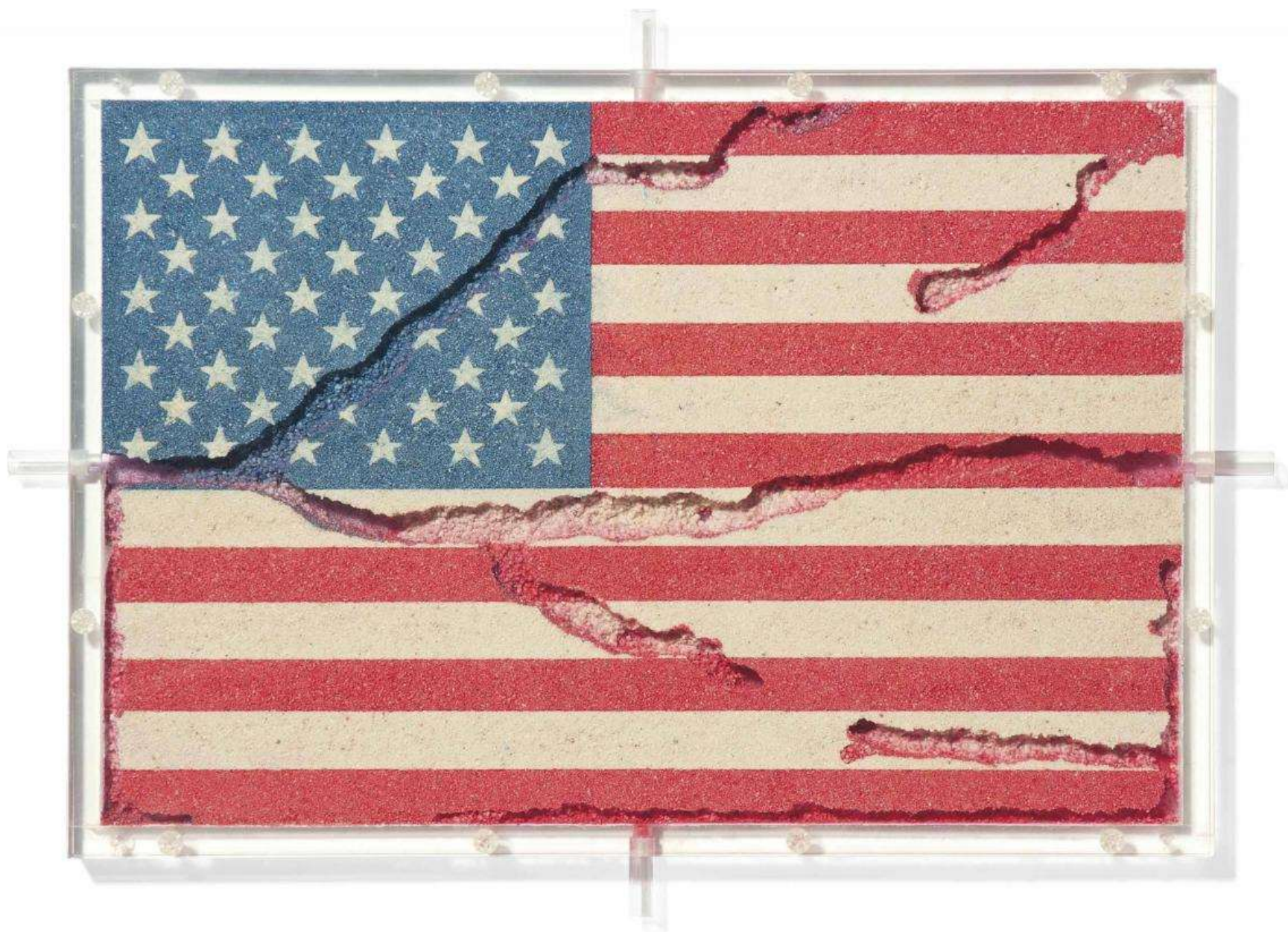
Yukinori Yanagi is a contemporary Japanese artist. Yukinori Yanagi is a contemporary Japanese artist who has addressed themes of national and transnational sovereignty, globalization and borders, as well as Japan's imperial history and nationalism.

<https://fahrenheitmagazine.com/en/modern-art/plastics/ants-to-break-down-borders-this-is-the-art-of-yukinori-yanagi#.ZCTHJvbMKM8>

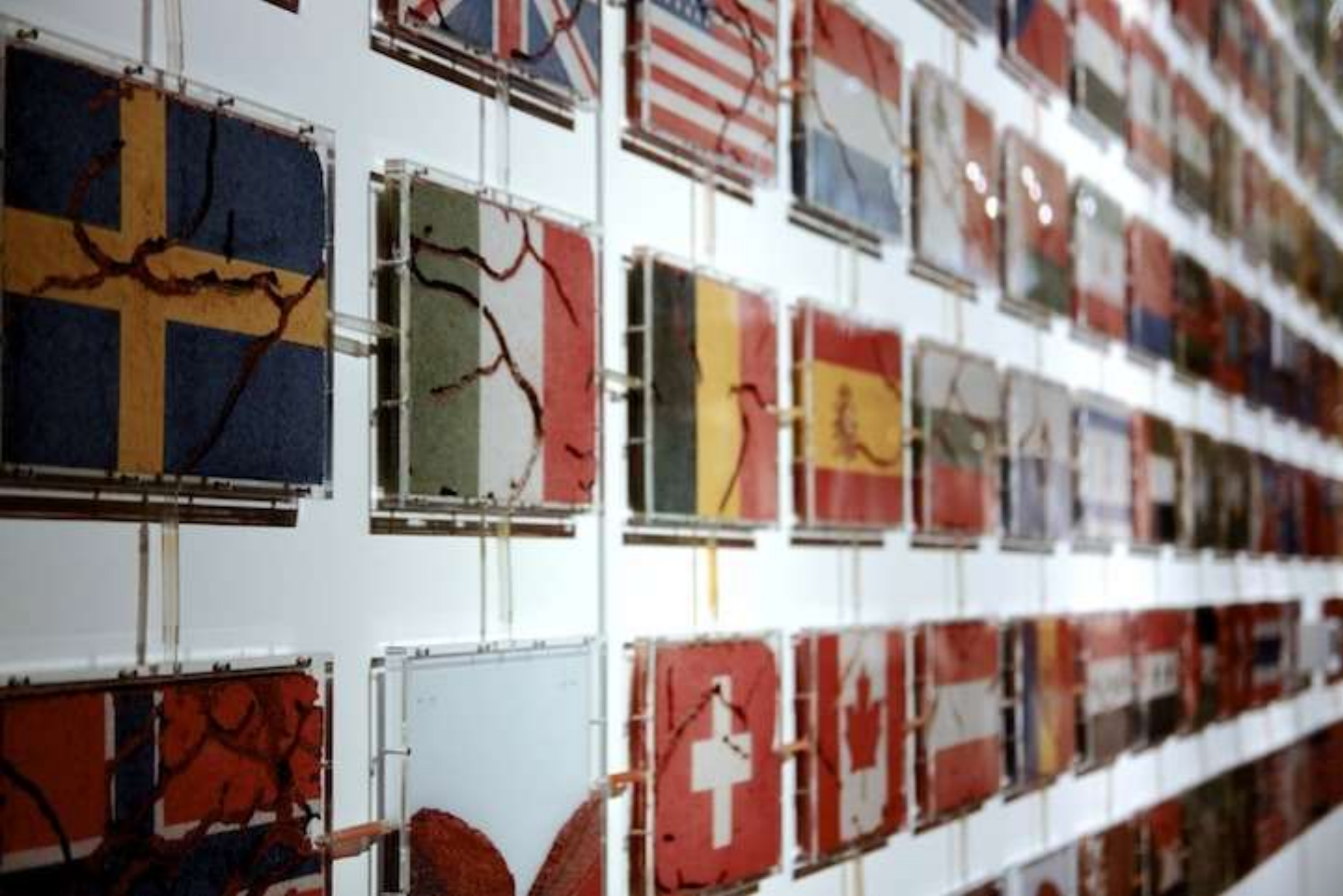
World Flag Ant Farms

Across the course of his career, Japanese artist Yukinori Yanagi has found ways to collaborate with the tiny little world of ants in his artwork. In *The World Flag Ant Farm*, Yanagi created a series of world flags by pouring colorful sand into a labyrinth of plexiglass boxes connected by tubes. He then introduced live ants into the art farm and let them go about their daily lives. In the process of tunneling through the sand, the ants created cracks in the flags and mixed the colors of each country's identifying design, resulting in their very own version of the United Nations.

The symbolic movement of the ants across sandy borders is a statement on national identity and the division of cultures across the world. As the ants work to transport food and sand through the system, the sands evolve over time and the divided system breaks down into an ambiguous blend of flags. Yanagi personally identifies with the project and he says, “My works are borders I have had to cross or barriers I have confronted in trying to define myself as a Japanese.”







Nima Javen

Born in Iran, where he studied graphic design and painting, Nima arrived in the United Kingdom in 2019 as an asylum seeker. Working from his London flat, Nima brings a contemporary aesthetic to the traditional Persian art that inspires him. He's been using his art to tell stories of shared experiences among refugees, and he dreams of creating large-scale sculptures of his animal characters for public display.

Watch Nima's video on @design to learn more about his work and see how it comes to life:

- https://www.instagram.com/reel/CfCa8Qcpe-3/?utm_source=ig_embed&ig_rid=3e4929de-e4d9-4e90-a2fc-396778becb80
- <https://www.instagram.com/nimajavan.art/>



Tania Bruguera

Tania Bruguera is an artist and activist who focuses on installation and performance art. She lives and works between New York City and Havana, and has participated in numerous international exhibitions.

Tania Bruguera's Immigrant Movement International, presented in partnership with the Queens Museum of Art, is a long-term art project in the form of an artist-initiated socio-political movement. Bruguera began the project by spending a year operating a flexible community space in the multinational and transnational neighborhood of Corona, Queens, which served as the movement's first headquarters. Engaging both local and international communities, as well as working with social service organizations, elected officials, and artists focused on immigration reform, Bruguera examined growing concerns about the political representation and conditions facing immigrants.

- <https://art21.org/watch/extended-play/tania-bruguera-immigrant-movement-international-short/>



Erick Medel

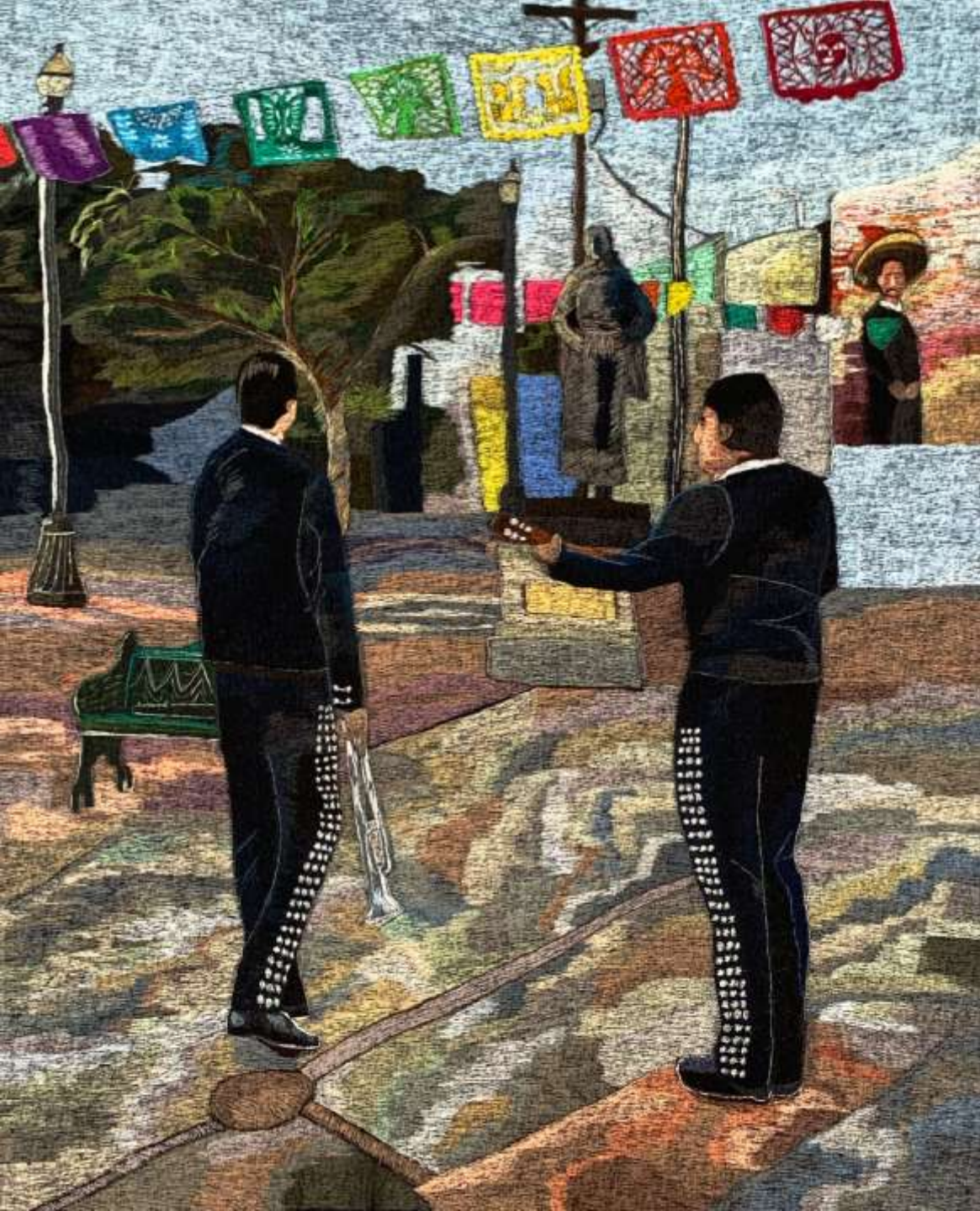
The lives of many of Mexican heritage are punctuated by performances; an ensemble of mariachi musicians celebrates a birth, performs for a first communion, plays for the crowds gathered at weddings and birthdays, and is hired for the commemorative rites of the funeral. Their tune is a traditional genre of music dating back hundreds of years to the rural communities of western Mexico, now as proud and bold of a sound as the musicians that troupe from location to location to perform for their listeners. As boisterous as their ballads are the performers' outfits: their tightly-fitting ornamented pants, short jackets, embroidered belts, boots, wide bow ties, and sombreros. Their attire, known as the charro suit, has become a universally recognized symbol of national pride and Mexican identity.

Mariachi, [Erick Medel](https://www.erickmedel.com/)'s debut solo exhibition with Rusha & Co., celebrates these performers, featuring them centerstage in his works. The musicians, armed with their violins, guitarrónes, trumpets, and guitars, appear ready for battle. Or, as in the case of *Mariachi on 1st St.* (2022), might be marching home. Their uniforms are akin to armor, shining and courageous, equally as important as the men donning the charros. It is no coincidence that their getups can be traced back to the liberators of the Mexican Revolution. Some of the men, as in *Violin* (2023) or *En La Noche (At Night)* (2022) perform their solos in solitude, breaking away from their ensemble for their moment to shine. Other scenes, as in *Showtime* (2022), *Pa La Foto (For a Picture)* (2023), or the largest piece in the exhibition, *Listos!* (2023), feature the band as a body. Medel's depictions of his heroes emphasize his chosen protagonists as a type of celebrity, iconic figures deserving of recognition and angling for glory.

- <https://www.erickmedel.com/>









Jamie Wyeth

Following the Vietnam War, refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos settled in America. This was often a treacherous journey. The boy in Jamie Wyeth's painting, *Kalounna in Frogtown*, was a Laotian immigrant who had relocated to rural Pennsylvania with his family.

Part of a family of American artists, Jamie Wyeth continues their realistic style, but also incorporates a sense of mystery and tension that is difficult to define. This painting contains a series of contrasts, many of which describe how Kalounna is both integrated into this landscape and set apart from it.

Kalounna in Frogtown

- <https://smarthistory.org/seeing-america-2/an-american-story/>



Doris Salcedo

In Colombian artist [Doris Salcedo](#)'s monumental installation titled "Uprooted" at the [Sharjah Biennial 15](#), the concept remains nebulous.

Salcedo is known for sculptures and installations that incorporate quotidian, domestic objects like tables or garments. Her practice often takes historical events as a starting point, focusing on the effects of major political actions on people's everyday mental and emotional experiences. "Conveying burdens and conflicts with [precise and economical means](#)," she once cataclysmically [cracked](#) the floor of Turbine Hall in London's Tate Modern and lowered more than [1,500 chairs](#) between two buildings in Istanbul to address displacement caused by war. In "Uprooted," the theme of migration continues in the form of hundreds of dead trees that have been shaped into the recognizable silhouette of a house, its meticulously constructed walls and pitched roof gradually morphing into a thicket.

- <https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2023/02/doris-salcedo-uprooted/>





Georgina Reskala and Arleene Correa

SAN FRANCISCO - In celebration of Women's History Month, a new exhibition featuring the works of Mexican artists Georgina Reskala and Arleene Correa Valencia has opened, exploring lesser known stories of migration and immigration.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/news/san-francisco-art-exhibit-tells-the-untold-story-of-migrant-women/>

Georgina Reskala













Monarch Migration

- <https://laughingsquid.com/sound-of-millions-of-monarch-butterflies/>

Assignment Suggestions...

- Tell your own migration story in an art piece
- Incorporate elements or fragments of “your old life” in a new art piece