



*Exodus by Betsabee Romero*

## LIBERTY OF ART FOR ALL

August 07, 2017

Amongst the latest PST: LA LA exhibitions to open, Muzeo in Anaheim has opened its doors for you to devour "Deconstructing Liberty: A Destiny Manifested."

Exhibition Dates: August 5 — October 15, 2017

I had the pleasure of attending its opening festivities and came across something truly inspiring. Argentinian Curator extraordinaire Marisa Caichiolo, brought together a wonderful roster of artists from all over Latin America, as well as local Latinx. Amongst the countries represented I recall Honduras, Cuba, Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Argentina, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and of course the United States.

In the words of Marisa herself:

"Deconstructing Liberty: A Destiny Manifested explores the configuration of communities and forms of collective identity. this project will act as a dynamic laboratory for each artist to experiment and examine different aspects of patriotism, community, citizenship, the pursuit of happiness, freedom, equal rights, and activism."



*We The People (detail) by Luiza Prado*

Luiza Prado (Brazil), deconstructs the notion of self with her work "We the People," title which makes a clear reference to the first three words of the United States Constitution. Her work consists of reproductions of biometric photographs. Her work questions bio-politics as a consequence of colonization, as well as the concept of being "equal under the law."

Linda Vallejo's (United States) "Brown Dot Project," signals to the complex issue of Latino Statistical Data in the United States. In her own words "I am literally counting one Latino at a time, brown dot by brown

dot!" Vallejo has been intrigued with analysis for a few years and points to concerns such as Latinx health, employment statistics, Latina business owners in the U.S., Latinx religion, sex trafficking, etc.

Another artistic project that was particularly interesting was that of Reynier Novo (Cuba). Who was systematically bringing attention to the treaties in Latin American History that served to transfer land between countries, once more with the use of data, Reynier emphasized mileage and market value. In the case of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 (by which Mexico relinquished half of its land to the United States) 1,477,955 sq. miles cost \$15,000,000.

Betsabee Romero's (Mexico) "Exodus" (shown above) was by far one of my favorite works in the exhibition. Her work signaled to migration and mobility, as well as global consumerism and the urban landscape.



*Mobile Consulate & Welcome to Colonia Libertad by Omar Pimienta*

Omar Pimienta's (Mexico) Welcome to Colonia Libertad and Mobile Consulate is political art action that challenges the notions of citizenships by inviting its participants to become free citizens of a conceptual colony. In order to do so, one must exchange a physical passport for another which grants the citizen free



entry into "Colonia Libertad," (Freedom Colony). Personally, I became a free citizen a few years back when I had the privilege to work alongside Omar and suggest everyone do the same.

While at Muzeo all of the various concepts set forth by the artists in this exhibition converged for me. I began to wonder as a Latina myself... What statistics do I fall under? how many boxes do I check? Latina, business owner, first generation immigrant, University graduate, quadrilingual... How many brown dots am I for Vallejo? What is my personal history of migration and conquest as signaled by Novo or Romero? Can my Nepantla be codified, and if so how do I know what it's worth? As a first generation immigrant who has often been asked by the foreign country I call home, to relinquish my biometric data, what is my bio-political footprint as referenced by Prado.

Furthermore as a Free Citizen of Colonia Libertad, as a Mexican Citizen, as an immigrant in the United States, what are my inherent freedoms, my real freedoms, my imagined freedoms, my idealized freedoms? When I say "we the people," who are my people? How many collective "we" do I belong to? As I saw Pimienta's work I could not help but notice that a healthy percentage of Colonia Libertad's citizens (at least those I could recognize) are curators, artists, and arts professionals. It made me wonder about the statistical data around art praxis, I understand a certain privilege to be associated with any creative endeavor, but is Art truly free? Is everyone allowed to enjoy art freely? Do we actually have Liberty of Art for all?

### *Other Artworks in the Exhibition*





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I know Anaheim is a bit far for the vast majority of Angelinos who hate traffic, but "Deconstructing Liberty: A Destiny Manifested" is definitely worth seeing. Furthermore, it is my understanding that you will be able to become a part of Colonia Libertad on site a few more times during the exhibition (the political art action on-site requires the artist to be present. However, you can also apply to become a Free Citizen [Online](#)). I highly encourage everyone to engage with art at every level, but especially with Political Art Action!