

# apexart

2023-24 NYC Proposal  
submitted October 2022

## ***Build what we hate. Destroy what we love.*** **submitted by: Fabiola R. Delgado**

Over 7.1 million Venezuelans (25% of its population) have left their country since 2015 and continue to do so, making it the largest migration crisis recorded in the Americas and one of the largest in the world. Venezuela has become a synonym of political crisis; appropriate, given that etymologically, the word "political" means people. And the crisis Venezuelans are experiencing isn't a result of outsider interventions, but it's made by its own citizens, everyday. The downward spiral fueled by skyrocketing hyperinflation, power cuts, rampant insecurity, and shortages of food and medicine, can only be relieved by everyday small acts of corruption and violence.

This exhibition engages deeply with the narratives of Venezuelan migrants, especially those who've been historically decentered from society, through a navigation of language and material culture of both exiles and "insiles", amplifying their voices and offering a critical view of the official rhetoric of the country's government and para-government. — Through visual storytelling, the artists articulate the social and cultural components that make up this mass exodus, focusing on what they bring with them and what they leave behind.

One of the artists concentrates on textile memory through clothing artifacts of Venezuelan migrants. They explore the relationship between the clothes, their journey, and the identity exchanges that develop from the relocation process, which the artist calls "Maps of Displacement". Presented as large-scale heavy weavings that hang from the ceiling and seem to effortlessly float mid-air, the pieces are accompanied by written testimonies of some of the people whose clothes were transformed into the artwork. By contrasting the objects with personal recounts, we emphasize the humanity behind the pieces, exposing a living archive of individual stories that form a collective history.

A second artist takes an experimental documentary approach, blending photojournalism with music video flair to create infectious arrangements of the severe ethno-economic conditions that spark the Venezuelan exodus phenomenon, commenting on the urgency and ingenuity of those most marginalized by the system. The video series proposes the idea that violence permeates every aspect of Venezuelan society and it's fundamental to its overall structure and sustenance of daily life. It examines people's endurance, resourcefulness, and one consequence of forced displacement: people's belongings being abandoned along the way as their border-crossing trek becomes more strenuous. Things once considered irreplaceable become a burden in the path of the objects.

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A third artist studies the repercussions that personal, intimate memories have over the national history line. They create multiple scale photographic installations by deliberately intervening archives to portray images of fragmented family chronicles while reconstructing cherished recollections. The actions of cutting, slicing, ripping off and then mending together the pieces, mirrors the experience of millions of immigrants who've left all possessions in their origin countries, and are compelled to perpetuate their histories by preserving their memories.

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