



Photo by Eduardo Verdugo/Associated Press.

Migrants in Ixtepec, Mexico, board "La Bestia" in 2014.

ART

MONTAR la Bestia: Riding the Beast

The train known as "La Bestia" has carried as many as half a million Central American migrants a year on a dangerous journey across Mexico towards the United States. Through art and poetry, the Colectivo de Artistas Contra la Discriminación explores the meaning of "riding the beast."

(Photos by Jim Block.)





Esta vez, no me tirarás, / no soltaré las riendas, /
 This time, you won't buck me, / I'll hold on to the reins,

te asiré con más fuerza, / y el estribe no escapará a mi pie.
 I'll hold onto you tightly, / and I won't lose my foothold.

Gustavo Monroy, *Untitled*, Oil, resin on wood. Poem: Rodolfo González Martínez, "This Time."

A group of 100 artists came together to create this exhibition as the collective *Artistas Contra la Discriminación*. They organized around the principle that discrimination is a cancer, and we are all responsible for identifying and eradicating this sickness.

Through their work as a collective, *Artistas Contra la Discriminación* designs projects to raise awareness about migration and how it marginalizes an already vulnerable population. "The Beast" is a nickname for the train that carries Central American migrants on its back. Men, women, and children travel toward the American Dream, riding the rails through Mexico's underdeveloped landscape.

On this journey in search of a better life, migrants face many dangers, including mutilated bodies, kidnapping at the hands of organized crime, and systematic rape. This exhibition not only describes the horrors of this journey, but also highlights the struggle of those fighting for human rights, reminding us that migration is a complex phenomenon.

Each work of art joins the exhibition by forming part of the train; each car is accompanied by an excerpt from a poem, which serves as the tracks.

– Adapted from the statement of the *Colectivo de Artistas Contra la Discriminación*

Héctor Larios Lozano, *American Blue Dream*, Oil on wood.



Delia Vega, *Untitled*, Mixed media on wood.



Lucía Vidales, *The Kingdom of Wandering*, Oil on wood.





Muchas lunas han girado / desde que arranqué los pies de las tierras del sur / No aceleró el tren sus pasos de hierro / y nos dejó tiempo para la memoria...
Many moons have rolled by / since I pulled my feet from southern lands / The train never sped up its iron pace / but left behind time to recall...

Ernesto Hume Santacoloma, *Untitled*, Assembly. Poem: Irma Pineda, "Many Moons Have Cirled."



Ya murió la Bestia / Ya nadie la puede usar / Es un fantasma / Con cien calaveras encima.
 The Beast is dead already / No one can ride it no more / It is a ghost / With a hundred skulls above.

Jorge Wolff, *Untitled*, Mixed media on wood. Poem: Dominique Legrand, "Beast."



De Guatemala a Nicaragua, / de Honduras, México o Salvador, / La Bestia a diario lleva que lleva /
 From Guatemala to Nicaragua, / from Honduras, Mexico or El Salvador, / daily the Beast takes, it takes /

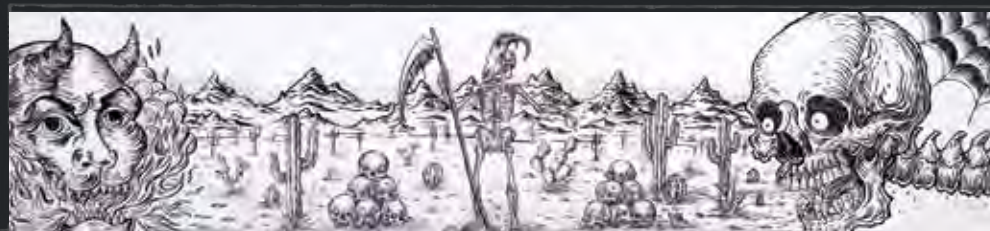
pura carne de cañón, son, son, / pura carne de cañón, son, son,...
 nothing but fodder for the cannon, son, son, / nothing but flesh for the cannon, son, son,...

Mauricio Gómez Morín, *The Last Station*, Collage, group of objects, and ceramic. Poem: Francisco Hernández, "I Am the Beast."

Eduardo "Guayo" Valenzuela, *Children of Their Time*, Oil on canvas.



Carlos Zamora, *Untitled*, Permanent marker on wood.



Amilcar Rivera, *Untitled*, Oil on wood.





Photo by Jim Block.

Visitors view the exhibit at CLAS.

On display at CLAS, 2334 Bowditch Street, Berkeley, through September 29, 2017.

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Artistas Contra la Discriminación



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