

EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ESTAMOS BIEN - LA TRIENAL 20/21 PRESENTS

OBITUARIES OF THE AMERICAN DREAM

An online participatory project by artist Lizania Cruz
debuts Thursday, July 23, 2020

To participate, visit

<http://www.obituariesoftheamericandream.com>

VIRTUAL EVENT

Thursday, July 23, 6-7pm | FREE, To RSVP, [click here](#)

NEW YORK, NY, July 20, 2020 - Launching El Museo del Barrio's year-long initiative *ESTAMOS BIEN - LA TRIENAL 20/21*, the museum announces *Obituaries of The American Dream*, a two-part participatory project by New York based artist Lizania Cruz. Commissioned by El Museo as the first of a series of online artists' projects, *Obituaries of The American Dream* considers how the ideal's roots in individualism and hard work pertains to U.S. society today, especially in the context of a pandemic. Using a fully accessible, digital platform, the artist invites participants, locally and globally, non-im/migrants and im/migrants, to share testimonies of when and how the American Dream died for them. These obituaries will be posted daily on the dedicated [website](#), with contributions later printed in a publicly distributed newspaper in New York City next year.

Describing her project, Cruz explains "For me, the American Dream had terminal cancer but died of Covid-19 complications. It was through the pandemic that I realized the failure of our current value on work and individualism. I knew the system wasn't created for a person like me but, somehow, I believed the idea that through my hard work and my exceptionalism I could make it through. As we were all forced to pause I could see clearly that I was wrong."

The American Dream is defined as the ideal that all individuals can achieve upward mobility based on their hard work. As stated by James Truslow Adams in his 1931 book *The Epic America* "all [individuals] should have access to this opportunity according to ability or achievement." This ideal has proliferated globally and is rooted in the aspiration of individual wealth instead of community wellbeing. *Obituaries of The American Dream* aims to not only to grieve an ideal

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but to reimagine the role of work, interdependency, and government welfare in the creation of a new ideal. Thus, the second part of the project scheduled for spring 2021, will consist of a live stream idea-thon that will invite im/migrants and non-im/migrants share ideas with field professionals in order to co-write a collective new ideal.

PUBLIC PROGRAM | Thursday, July 23, 2020, 6-7pm

Join La Trienal curators Rodrigo Moura, Susanna Temkin, and Elia Alba to celebrate the launch of Lizania Cruz's *Obituaries of the American Dream*, the first in a series of virtual artist's projects commissioned for *ESTAMOS BIEN: LA TRIENAL 20/21*. Cruz will be in conversation about her artistic practice, and will introduce the concept of her new participatory, online project which considers how the American Dream's roots in individualism and hard work pertains to U.S. society today, especially in the context of a pandemic. To RSVP, [click here](#).

ABOUT LIZANIA CRUZ

Lizania Cruz is a Dominican participatory artist, designer, and curator interested in how migration affects ways of being & belonging. Through research, oral history, and audience participation, she creates projects that highlight a pluralistic narrative on migration. Cruz has been an artist-in-residence and fellow at the Laundromat Project Create Change (2018-2019), Agora Collective Berlin (2018), Design Trust for Public Space (2018), Recess Session (2019), IdeasCity:New Museum (2019), Stoneleaf Retreat (2019), Robert Blackburn Workshop Studio Immersion Project (SIP)(2019), and A.I.R. Gallery (2020). Her work has been exhibited at the Arlington Arts Center, BronxArtSpace, Project for Empty Space, ArtCenter South Florida, Jenkins Johnson Project Space, The August Wilson Center, Sharjah's First Design Biennale, and Untitled, Art Miami among others. Furthermore, her artworks and installations have been featured in Hyperallergic, Fuse News, KQED arts, and *The New York Times*.

ABOUT ESTAMOS BIEN - LA TRIENAL 20/21

ESTAMOS BIEN: LA TRIENAL 20/21 is El Museo del Barrio's first national large-scale survey of Latinx contemporary art featuring more than 40 artists from across the United States and Puerto Rico. Curated by El Museo del Barrio's Chief Curator Rodrigo Moura and Curator Susanna V. Temkin, with New York-based artist Elia Alba as Guest Curator, the yearlong initiative launches with online projects (July 23 - October 15,

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2020) and culminates with an onsite exhibition (March 13 – August 22, 2021). The full list of artists will be announced in October 2020.

Online artist projects and schedules, include Lizania Cruz (*Obituary of the American Dream*, July 23, 2020) | Poncilí Creación (*Somxs Poder Seremos*, August 2020) | Collective Magpie (*Who Designs Your Race?*, September 2020) | Xime Izquierdo Ugaz (*Se Que Fue Así Porque Estuve Allí*, September 2020) | Michael Menchaca (*The Wall*, October 2020). Related public programs featuring curators, artists, invited scholars and other guests will take place throughout the year. For more information, [click here](#).

ESTAMOS BIEN: LA TRIENAL 20/21 is made possible by the Jacques and Natasha Gelman Foundation. Leadership support is provided by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Generous funding is provided by the Lily Auchincloss Foundation, Lenore G. Tawney Foundation, Tony Bechara, and La Trienal Council.

ABOUT EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO

El Museo del Barrio, founded by a coalition of Puerto Rican educators, artists, and activists, is the nation's leading Latino and Latin American cultural institution. The Museum welcomes visitors of all backgrounds to discover the artistic landscape of these communities through its extensive Permanent Collection, varied exhibitions and publications, bilingual public programs, educational activities, festivals, and special events.

The Museum is temporarily closed due to COVID-19. To connect with El Museo via Social Media, follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. For more information, please visit www.elmuseo.org.

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