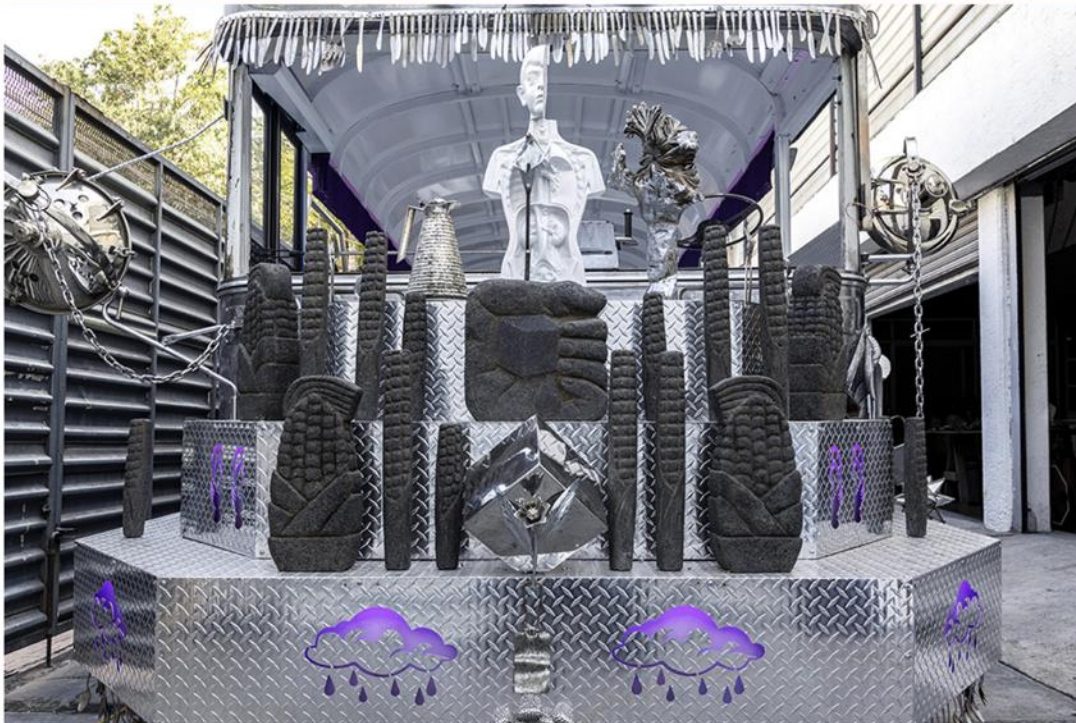


Mariposa Relámpago by Guadalupe Maravilla makes way to Marfa Ballroom in Texas



Installation view, Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago, the Institute of Contemporary Art / Boston, 2023. Photo by Mel Taing.

MARFA, TX.- Mariposa Relámpago, a traveling installation created by the Salvadorian-born, New York-based transdisciplinary visual artist, choreographer, and healer Guadalupe Maravilla, makes its way across Texas in a series of exhibitions and sound activations presented by three leading institutions. Originally commissioned by the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston in May 2023, Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago opened at [Ballroom Marfa](#) on November 4, 2023, before traveling to The Contemporary Austin's Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park at Laguna Gloria in April 2024 and commencing at the Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston in November 2024.

Known for his intricately layered paintings, large-scale sculptures, and sound ceremonies, Guadalupe Maravilla's expansive practice draws from his personal history and Central American ancestry. Guadalupe Maravilla fled El Salvador's civil war as an unaccompanied minor and made a perilous journey through Central America to reunite with family in the United States, becoming a citizen in 2006. Later in life, he was diagnosed with colon cancer, an illness he links to generational trauma, the stresses of his migration experience, and being undocumented. Throughout Maravilla's recovery process, he learned ancient healing methods, including sound, a form of rehabilitation he feels has been abandoned by Western medicine. Maravilla continues to use these methods on others who have had similar experiences.

Maravilla's monumental installation Mariposa Relámpago was born out of the artist's life history. The artist purchased a yellow school bus in El Salvador with the intention of re-tracing his migration route from El Salvador to the United States. The sculpture continues to travel to three locations in Texas. Equal parts sculpture, shrine, and healing machine, the work was transformed from a school bus and elaborately reconstructed with hundreds of objects that speak to Maravilla's story. Now adorned with chrome plating, the bus features fringe made of cutlery and a range of objects imbued with spiritual, political, and medicinal meaning, from models of children's torsos, intended to reference the ghosts of those who first used the bus and those who have traversed across borders in search of safety, to symbols from Mesoamerican cosmology, Indigenous practices, and spiritual emblems, as well as contemporary imagery of disease and medicine. Considered one the largest vibrational healing instrument in the world – and Maravilla's largest sculpture to date – Mariposa Relámpago features gongs and other tonal objects suspended from its sides, which the artist activates during his sound baths alongside a team of healers. These sessions, which Maravilla has hosted specifically for undocumented immigrants and cancer survivors, are known to reduce stress, anxiety, and trauma that physically manifests in the body from systematic abuse of immigrants. The artist-led sound ceremonies will be held at each iteration of the work in Texas.

Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago's Texas Tour comes at a time when the state is confronted with its own deep-seated, socio-political issues surrounding border control, immigration, and healthcare. With the humanitarian crisis with asylum seekers across the state, Mariposa Relámpago comes at a critical moment in Texas. Three leading institutions and respective curators – Ballroom Marfa in Marfa, The Contemporary Austin in Austin, and the Blaffer Art Museum in Houston – have come together in a unique collaboration that takes Maravilla's powerful installation across the state and invites visitors to simultaneously explore the notions of displacement and recovery, demonstrating the power of contemporary art to confront trauma and nurture healing. Outdoors in all three venues, the work welcomes public dialogue about immigration, healing, and the transformational potential that we all embody.

"Guadalupe first came to Ballroom Marfa as an artist in Ballroom Sessions–The Father Place residency, where artists explore ideas in their practice and incorporate learnings from the region. While Marfa is an art destination, it is also just 60 miles from the U.S.-Mexico border. Migration is embedded in both Guadalupe's work and this landscape. As the bus travels from West to East Texas, each of the partner venues will have a different dialogue about migration, ways of healing, and the power of art. We're excited to have Guadalupe back to present this powerful work in Marfa, especially during our 20th anniversary year that is dedicated to visionary artists like Guadalupe" said Daisy Nam, Executive Director and Curator, Ballroom Marfa, Marfa, Texas.

"We are so pleased to partner with fellow Texas-based contemporary arts organizations to bring this important work to Texas. Bringing Guadalupe's project to Austin at this time is a tremendous opportunity to share an important artist project with our audiences. Situated on the majestic, meditative grounds of Laguna Gloria, Mariposa Relámpago brings awe and wonder as well as a contemplative and healing experience — something we can all use more of these days," said Sharon Maidenberg, Ernest and Sarah Butler Executive Director and CEO, The Contemporary Austin, Austin, Texas. The Contemporary Austin's presentation is organized by Alex Klein, Head Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs.

"As an art museum in the largest city in the U.S. South, the Blaffer Art Museum – in collaboration with the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts – is honored to participate in the Texas tour for Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago. The work aligns with our campus-wide vision to program exhibitions and events that drive social engagement, spark critical discussion, bring disciplines together, and engage diverse audiences from all backgrounds," said Steven Matijcio, Jane Dale Owen Director and Chief Curator of Blaffer Art Museum in Houston, Texas.

Throughout the duration of Mariposa Relámpago's presentation, Ballroom Marfa is hosting a variety of programs, including an opening, closing, and private sound bath ceremony led by the artist and his sound healers, alongside an outdoor film screening of its creation, beginning with the bus' blessing from Shamans to the sourcing of volcanic rock from El Salvador. Additionally on view is a Tripa Chuca mural. Inspired by a Salvadoran children's game where two players draw lines between numbers that ultimately form abstract patterns or a map. Maravilla partners with a local collaborator, who shares a similar experience of migration, to create the mural together on Ballroom's courtyard walls surrounding the sculpture.

The Contemporary Austin is hosting a week-long series of celebrations and sound ceremonies with Guadalupe, in collaboration with Fusebox, that culminate in the once-in-an-era eclipse on April 8, 2024.

Combining sculpture, painting, performative acts, and installation, Guadalupe Maravilla (b. 1976) grounds his transdisciplinary practice in activism and healing. Engaging a wide variety of visual cultures, Maravilla's work is autobiographical, referencing his unaccompanied, undocumented migration to the United States due to the Salvadoran Civil War. Across all media, Maravilla explores how the systemic abuse of immigrants physically manifests in the body, reflecting on his own battle with cancer. Maravilla received his BFA from the School of Visual Arts and his MFA from Hunter College in New York. His work is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL; the Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo, Norway; and the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY, among others. He has received numerous awards and fellowships including a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, 2019; Soros Fellowship: Art Migration and Public Space, 2019; MAP Fund Grant, 2019; Franklin Furnace Fund, 2018; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Fellowship, 2018; Art Matters Fellowship, 2017; Creative Capital Grant, 2016; Joan Mitchell Emerging Artist Grant, 2016; and The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation Award 2003. He has presented solo exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver, CO; Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo, Norway; Socrates Sculpture Park, New York, NY; P·P·O·W, New York, NY; and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL, among others. Maravilla's work was featured in Drums Listen to the Heart: Part III, Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco, CA in January 2023 and soft and weak like water, the 14th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, South Korea in April 2023. Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago, a solo exhibition featuring a newly commissioned immersive installation at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston's Watershed, was on view from May 25 - September 4, 2023. His work is currently on view in the 12th Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art: forms of the surrounding futures, Gothenburg, Sweden and the 35th Bienal De São Paulo: choreographies of the impossible, São Paulo, Brazil. La Alegría del Fuego, Maravilla's first solo exhibition with mor charpentier, is on display in Paris through November 18, 2023.

Ballroom Marfa
Mariposa Relámpago
November 4th, 2023 - March 16th, 2023