

# ARMORY

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Exhibition: ***Down and to the Left: Reflections on Mexico in the NAFTA Era***  
***Abajo y a la izquierda: Reflexiones sobre México en la era del TLC***

Exhibition Dates: Sunday, May 7, 2017 through Sunday, September 17, 2017

Opening Reception: Saturday, May 6, 2017, 7-9pm

Location: Armory Center for the Arts, Caldwell Gallery and Mezzanine Galleries  
145 North Raymond Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91103

## **NAFTA-Era Activism, Labor, Culture, and Pedagogy in Mexico Reflected at the Armory**



*Minerva Cuevas, State, 2002. Wall painting.*

Pasadena, CA—The Armory Center for the Arts is pleased to present ***Down and to the Left: Reflections on Mexico in the NAFTA Era / Abajo y a la izquierda: Reflexiones sobre México en la era del TLC***, a group exhibition in the Armory's Caldwell Gallery from May 7, 2017 through September 17, 2017, with an opening reception, free and open to the public, on Saturday, May 6, from 7-9pm. The exhibition was conceived of and organized by Irene Tsatsos, Director of Exhibition Programs/Chief Curator, and co-organized with Daniela Lieja, Contributing Curator. Funding for this exhibition comes from the Pasadena Art Alliance, the National Endowment for the Arts, and East West Bank. Additional support comes from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and the Mexican Consulate.

*Down and to the Left / Abajo y a la izquierda: Reflexiones sobre México en la era del TLC* features work by: **Carlos Aguirre, Yolotl Alvarado, Judith Barry, Nao Bustamante, Cráter Invertido, Minerva Cuevas, Rafael Doniz, Andrés Garay, Maya Goded, Lourdes Grobet, Luis G. Hernández, Fred Lonidier, Pedro Meyer, Sarah Minter, Grupo Proceso Pentágono, Daniela Rossell, Javier Téllez, Antonio Turok, and Pedro Valtierra.** *Down and to the Left: Reflections on Mexico in the NAFTA Era / Abajo y a la izquierda: Reflexiones sobre México en la era del TLC* is the second in a series of exhibitions, events, and publications – collectively entitled **#BetweenDownBelow/#EntreAbajoMasAbajo** – that have emerged from extensive research in Mexico for the Getty’s forthcoming LA/LA initiative.

The 1990s were a period of fervent change throughout Mexico. With the decade’s emergent transnationalism and neoliberal thrust, boundaries between the local and global all but vanished. Cultural exchange between communities, countries, and continents became more fluid. The transnational economic boom accompanied – and signaled – a consolidation of neoliberalism. The formal push of NAFTA ushered that process and helped define that decade in Mexico and throughout North America. Many in Mexico – artists, activists, and others – reacted against it, predicting a disaster. For example, the Zapatista rebellion declared war against neoliberalism and the government, and simultaneously galvanized many artists who began to explore art-based forms and ideas in other areas, such as the academy and theory, pedagogy and education, and activism. A new Mexican contemporary art of the 1990s was forming. Many of the works included here depict socioeconomic and political climate and contradictions, including vast discrepancies in wealth and social status, and actions of political protest and social unrest.

According to Tsatsos, “The show was conceived of over a year ago, when researching contemporary art practices in Mexico of the 1990s and listening to the rhetorical bluster that characterized the US presidential campaign. With that bombastic rhetoric now influencing the shape of US foreign and economic policies, the themes in this exhibition are painfully acute.”

About #BetweenDownBelow/#EntreAbajoMasAbajo

*#BetweenDownBelow/#EntreAbajoMasAbajo* is a year of exhibitions and related programs with Latin-American and Latinx artists, focusing on themes of communication, individual agency, collective action, and social spaces generated by alternative art practices. *#BetweenDownBelow* is inspired by the Getty’s Pacific Standard Time LA/LA initiative; particularly by research conducted for ***Below the Underground: Renegade Art and Action in 1990s Mexico (Más abajo que el underground: Arte renegado y acción en el México de los noventa)***. With exhibitions exploring the possibilities and difficulties of translation, reflections on Mexico in the NAFTA era, and a special project with artist and designer Giacomo Castagnola, the year will highlight cohesive and international programming culminating in the presentation of *Below the Underground: Renegade Art and Action in 1990s Mexico* as part of the Getty’s LA/LA initiative in the fall of 2017. *#BetweenDownBelow/#EntreAbajoMasAbajo* is directed by Irene Tsatsos, the Armory’s Director of Exhibition Programs/Chief Curator.

### **About the Armory**

Armory Center for the Arts, in Pasadena, California, is the Los Angeles region’s leading independent institution for contemporary art and community arts education. The Armory

believes that an understanding and appreciation of the arts is essential for a well-rounded human experience and a healthy civic community. Founded in 1989, the Armory builds on the power of art to transform lives and communities through presenting, creating, teaching, and considering contemporary visual art. The organization's department of exhibitions offers diverse programs at its main facility and in locations throughout the region. Armory exhibitions inspire dialogue around visual culture and contemporary life; contribute to global discourses in contemporary art; include residency programs that encourage experimentation and outreach; and introduce contemporary visual art to Pasadena, the Los Angeles region, and beyond. The Armory also offers studio art classes and related educational programs to more than fifty schools, community sites, and juvenile justice centers in the greater Los Angeles area.

Admission to the Armory is free. Parking is available on the street or in the Marriott garage directly north of the Armory for free for 90 minutes. The Armory is off the Gold Line at Memorial Park – walk one half block east to Raymond and one half block north to the Armory. For more information please visit [www.armoryarts.org](http://www.armoryarts.org).

Lead support for this exhibition comes from the Pasadena Art Alliance, the National Endowment for the Arts, and East West Bank. Additional support comes from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.



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