

Images from Pablo Helguera's "The School of Panamerican Unrest" (2006), a road trip from Alaska to Argentina with a mobile schoolhouse



DIALOGUES ON BEING HUMAN: THE INTERSECTIONS OF ART, HEALTH AND DIGNITY

**PABLO HELGUERA AND
ALICIA ELY YAMIN**

Monday, April 9, 2018

Hosted by Artsy

401 Broadway, 24th floor

New York, NY 10013

[RSVP](#) REQUIRED

6:30 – 7:30 PM | DIALOGUE

7:30 – 8:00 PM | RECEPTION

As the third in a series of DIALOGUES ON BEING HUMAN, artist Pablo Helguera will share his work in dialogue with human rights lawyer Alicia Ely Yamin, discussing multidimensional perspectives on borders, migration, immigration and national identity.

The DIALOGUES ON BEING HUMAN explore creative approaches to making health and human rights issues more visible and comprehensible. Seeking to harness the power of art to convey the linkages between being human and living with dignity as a subject of rights, these dialogues provide a space to explore an interdisciplinary sharing of the human experience between an artist and a leading human rights scholar. This invites further reflection and cross-disciplinary dialogues, with the aim of opening people to different dimensions of questions about the meaning of being human, and using rights to create social transformation that advances human dignity and well-being.

Pablo Helguera is a Mexican artist based in New York City, widely known for his socially engaged art, including:

The School of Panamerican Unrest – a monumental journey across 20,000 miles of the Americas in 2006, making 29 stops along the way to set up a mobile schoolhouse as a platform for collective learning in community-specific participatory workshops, addressing social, political and economic issues of the moment. The artist began and ended the road trip with visits to the last living speakers of an indigenous language. He wanted, “to understand how the American ideals of peace, brotherhood, and unity had evolved to a project of global hegemony.” He took on the role of moderator, educator, activist, therapist, journalist, listener and activator of conversations and debates, drawing connections between a vast diversity of cultural communities. The project is currently on view in the exhibition “The Schoolhouse and the Bus,” at [the 8th floor](#) in New York City.

Librería Donceles – an itinerant Spanish-language second-hand bookstore, travelling throughout cities in the United States to promote Spanish-language culture. In 2013, Helguera organized a book donation campaign in Mexico City as part of the art project, resulting in people from all over the country—pained by the plight of immigrants in the United States—donating 20,000 volumes. Since first installed in New York City, the bookstore has visited 7 other US cities, hosting a series of bilingual salon-like events and creating a social space and meeting place for the community. Helguera describes how visitors are visibly and positively altered: “Librería Donceles is the university for those who couldn’t attend one... it is a cultural parenthesis in another language; it is the living room in an immigrant’s mind.”

La Austral, S.A. de C.V. – opening April 11th at El Museo de los Sures, Williamsburg, is a socially engaged project that incorporates storytelling to sensitize the public about the plight of the Dreamers, a term that refers to undocumented immigrants who arrived to the United States as children and are currently protected under the DACA program (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). It will function as an open storytelling center, where visitors can access free stories told live by Dreamers and other immigrants. This project has been sponsored by the International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP).

Pablo Helguera attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, working in the museum education department while earning his B.F.A. Helguera has held significant positions in museum education ever since, pedagogy being an important part of his artistic practice. He has performed and exhibited extensively throughout Europe and the Americas, including at the Museum of Modern Art, NY; Museo de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Bronx Museum of the Arts, NY; Brooklyn Museum, NY; and the Guggenheim Museum, NY. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including from Creative Capital, the Rockefeller Foundation/Fideicomiso para la Cultura Mexico, and the Guggenheim Foundation. He was also the recipient of the First International Award for Participatory Art, created by the Emilia-Romagna Regional government in Italy.

Alicia Ely Yamin is Visiting Professor at Georgetown University Law Center and Director of the Health and Human Rights Initiative at the O’Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law Georgetown University. She is also Adjunct Lecturer on Law and Global Health at the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health and founding Global Fellow at the Center on Law and Social Transformation in Norway. She currently serves as a Panelist on the United Nations Secretary-General’s Independent Accountability Panel for the Global Strategy for Women’s Children’s and Adolescents’ Health (EWEC) and as a Commissioner on the Lancet – O’Neill Institute Commission on Global Health and the Law.

Anita Alvin Nilert – Curator and Creator of the Dialogues on Being Human series – is the founder of *Art to Zebras*, focused on raising awareness about global human rights issues through contemporary arts initiatives. With a 25+ year career in the international art world, including as consultant, editions publisher, curator and artists’ agent, Anita holds BSFS and MBA degrees and speaks seven languages. She advises the NGO *Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security* (WCAPS) and serves on the boards of *Konstig Books*, Scandinavia’s leading art bookseller, and of *alt_break art fair* for social justice, providing contemporary art programming through partnerships with nonprofits.

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