

CaLARTS

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS

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Cuban and American artists, participating in *El Acercamiento/The Approach*, on the Cuban shore looking towards Miami in 2016. Artist: Aissa Santizo. Photo: Pablo Bordon. Courtesy of CalArts. [Click here](#) for high resolution version.

El Acercamiento/The Approach: Cuban and American Artists Come Together in Havana

Students from Havana's Instituto Superior de Arte and California Institute of the Arts join with professional artists for an exhibition and performance on March 30th, 6-12 pm, at Fabrica de Arte Cubano in Havana.

El Acercamiento/The Approach is a three-year transnational project, with events in Havana, Los Angeles and Miami—uniting Cuban and American artists to envision possible futures between the two countries.

Valencia, CA — Following successful exhibitions in Havana, Los Angeles, and Miami, *El Acercamiento/The Approach* kicks off its second transnational circuit in Havana, Cuba. Students from California Institute of Arts (CalArts), and Havana's Instituto Superior de Arte join together with professional artists from the U.S. and Cuba in a series of projects envisioning possible futures between the two countries.

The next iteration of the project will take place on March 30th beginning at 7 pm at Fabrica de Arte Cubano in Havana, Cuba.

“El Acercamiento” describes the slow and cautious process of normalizing relations between Cuba and the United States. This series of exhibitions, visual and performative projects, and urban interventions works to untangle the implications of renewed U.S. – Cuba relations and to give shape to a multiplicity of potential futures. Each year of the three year project brings together a group of American and Cuban art students and professional artists who collaboratively create and present a fresh cycle of exhibitions. The series is a project of California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) Center for New Performance (CNP)/Duende CalArts.

El Acercamiento is the brainchild of CalArts faculty member **Evelyn Serrano**, a Cuban interdisciplinary artist, who teaches classes such as “Arts and Activism” and “Art & Community Engagement” in the CalArts School of Theater. A child of the Cold War and the U.S. Embargo, Serrano said, “*El Acercamiento* aims to engage in a process of healing after so many decades of divisive politics. The project will allow the work created by participating artists to evolve in response to our research and our encounters with our fellow artists, their communities, and their cities.”

El Acercamiento/The Approach presents more than 30 projects to evoke the many layers of U.S. – Cuba relations. Serrano herself teams up with CalArts students **Ally Kocerhan** and **Gabriel Jimenez** for *Acto*, a series of pre-recorded and live video performances investigating the construction of political values and the civic agency. Other highlights include video performances by student **Paige McGee** inspired by her investigations of the work of Cuban anthropologist **Fernando Ortiz**. McGee explores cane sugar as an object of oppression and liberation, drawing connections between Cuban and North American slavery. Cuban artist Aissa Santiso and CalArts School of Theater faculty **Marissa Chibas** collaborated on a video and sound installation inspired by the final speech given by Cuban leader **Eddy Chibas** before his death. Their installation reflects on nostalgia, Cuban history, loss, and legacy.

El Acercamiento/The Approach is supported by the CalArts Center for New Performance/Duende CalArts, Espacio a-106, Instituto Superior de Arte, and Academia Nacional de Bellas Artes San Alejandro.

Calendar Editors Please Note:

What:

El Acercamiento/The Approach

When:

Thursday, March 30th, 6 pm to 12 am

Where:

Fabrica de Arte Cubano

Calle 26 entre 11 y 13, Vedado, 10400 Havana, Cuba

<http://www.fac.cu>

Gallery hours:

Thursdays through Sundays, 8 pm-3 am

Admission: 2 CUC

CalArts Center for New Performance (CNP), the professional producing arm of California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), was established to provide a unique artist- and project-driven framework for the development and realization of original theater, music, dance, media and interdisciplinary projects. Extending the progressive work carried out at CalArts into a direct dialogue with professional communities at the local, national and international levels, CNP offers an alternative model to support emerging directions in the performing arts.

California Institute of the Arts has set the pace for educating professional artists since 1970. Offering rigorous undergraduate and graduate degree programs through six schools—Art, Critical Studies, Dance, Film/Video, Music, and Theater—CalArts has championed creative excellence, critical reflection, and the development of new forms and expressions. As successive generations of faculty and alumni have helped shape the landscape of contemporary arts, the Institute first envisioned by Walt Disney encompasses a vibrant, eclectic community with global reach, inviting experimentation, independent inquiry, and active collaboration and exchange among artists, artistic disciplines and cultural traditions.