

*“The fence starts about eighty feet out into the Pacific. It's made of metal pylons and looks like a procession of old telephone poles, each jutting about twenty feet above the waves. The pylons are spaced tightly together, and there's a sign warning of additional barriers below the waterline. Once the fence hits dry land, it marches east across the beach, and then, on a little hill that begins where the beach ends, it changes. It becomes, in fact, two fences, a double barrier. Compared with the single-ply barrier on the beach and in the water, these two fences — sturdy square beams supporting tight rows of whitewashed steel spindles — look much more modern and formidable, like prison fences.”*

-Luke Dittrich, *Walking the Border, Esquire*, April 27, 2011

Walk across the US/Mexico border with colleagues—guided by experienced bi-national arts leaders whose lives and leadership have been shaped by the rhythms, power and politics of this unique place.

Together, we will see that very fence where it ends – or begins – in the Pacific Ocean before extending 1,954 miles to the Gulf—the spot where contemporary artists Javier Telléz launched a human cannonball across the border to draw attention to the realities and absurdities of such an obstacle. We will visit areas of the “New Tijuana” that have been constructed on land occupied by “squatters” until their communities were wiped out by the Mexican government in the 1960s. We will enjoy a strong *café mexicano* and watch how Tijuana residents enjoy board games, hand holding and selfie-taking with the border as their backdrop. We will see the ruins of the Casino Agua Caliente, once a playground for Hollywood socialites during Prohibition and the symbol of the “black legend of Tijuana,” but now a preparatory school preparing its students for Tijuana’s promising future. We will travel east to the vast landscape of worker’s housing that has been constructed to serve the *maquiladora* industry -- factories and assembly plants that are the end point for most migration from southern Mexico and Central America. In doing so, we will discuss the realities of and strain on a city that has been growing by one full city block per day for the past 25 years. Without question, Tijuana is an extraordinary microcosm of the forces of globalization, capitalism, immigration, and environmental policy—all impacting the formation of arts and culture in incredible ways.

The emergence of contemporary cuisine is a staple of 21st-century life in Tijuana, and our lunch will take place at Querencia, one of the several outstanding restaurants establishing a collision of flavors typical of “Baja Med” cuisine. Vast selections of seafood, meat and game will be available, as well as an immense variety of tacos (all filled with the delicacies that make this region so special).

Over a glass of *vino* or a *cerveza*, we will visit the working studio of Marcos Ramirez Erre, a renowned local artist who has undertaken extraordinary projects in the region and internationally and whose studio is located in a factory in Colonia Libertad, one of Tijuana’s oldest creative communities—the rusting steel border fence

erected in its very backyard. We will have the opportunity to see his most recent projects and hear about the ways that the border has informed his thinking and plans for future projects and interventions.

Depending on time, we will also visit the Revolución area of Tijuana—an area that truly reflects the diversity and cosmopolitan nature of the city. Here, nightclubs, thrift stores, bars and restaurants line the car- and music-filled streets, and we will stop to enjoy a *mezcal* or *margarita* tasting and see the place that gave birth to the world's first Caesar salad, which, believe or not, originated in this once-sleepy border town.

Our cross back to the United States will be no less educational, as you witness the significant differences between “going” and “coming”—powerful illustrations of how immigration, opportunity and humanness are viewed differently in this place of colliding ideas and ideologies.

**Participants will need a valid passport with current Global Entry AND accompanying Senti card, NOT JUST THE PASSPORT.** This is highly important for the return trip to the United States, where lack of such a card and passport status may potentially subject participants to lengthy delays in crossing the border. Participants should plan on light to moderate walking and bring along a hat, sunscreen, bottled water and spending money for souvenirs and other items, too.

Due to the intimate nature of this special experience, registration is limited to the first 40 individuals. Cost of participation is \$275 and will include morning coffee, an all-expenses paid lunch, transportation within Mexico and drinks and snacks during our studio visit.

Bienvenidos a México!