Walls Turned Sideways: Artists Confront the Justice System
August 25–January 6, 2019
GROUND
The Ground section of the exhibition features artworks that explore the relationship between the prison and other institutions, including museums, zoos, asylums, and hospitals, in order to reveal similarities between these places and the prison system.
COCO FUSCO AND PAULA HEREDIA

Inspired by historical examples of human zoos, World Fairs, and exhibitions at natural history museums, the artists Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gómez-Peña created a performance in response to the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus landing in the Americas. They began performing as two inhabitants from an imaginary island in the Gulf of Mexico called the Island of Guatinaui, claiming it had evaded discovery for five centuries. Locking themselves in an oversized gilded cage, the collaborators engaged in a range of cliché “traditional tasks” projected on non-Western people. Their ironic interpretation of such tasks included sewing voodoo dolls, lifting weights, watching television, and working on a laptop. The duo toured eight venues across the United States and Europe, including some exhibition venues that had historically displayed living people. In fact, in 19th and 20th centuries, humans were presented at zoos alongside animals as part of a new approach to ethnographic study. Audiences who experienced the live performance often believed in the authority of the exhibition venues about the performers (fictional) exotic backgrounds. As The Couple in the Cage: Guatinaui Odyssey (1993) attests, the true subject of the performance was the audience’s response to the performers they thought to be living examples of primitive people. This artwork reverses the terms of subject and object of viewing and also implicates the zoo and the exhibition venues as sites in which people have been historically been caged.

Coco Fusco and Paula Heredia

The Couple in the Cage: Guatinaui Odyssey, 1993
Single-channel video: color, sound, 31:00 minutes
Courtesy the artists and Video Data Bank, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois
MARY PATTEN

In 1975, the philosopher Michel Foucault participated in a “Roundtable on Prisons and Psychiatry” with then-22-year-old Howie Harp, who founded the Insane Liberation Front following experiences of being institutionalized as a teenager; activist Judy Clark, co-founder of the intra-prison newspaper, *Midnight Special*; and Scottish anti-psychiatrist R.D. Laing, who enacted his radical perspectives on mental illness at his experimental asylum, Kingsley Hall, in London, England. Artist Mary Patten used the transcript from the Roundtable to restage the event in her installation, *Panel* (2014). Patten is interested in what is not printed on the page: the attitudes and emotionality of the presenters and the mood of the conversation. The “Roundtable on Prisons and Psychiatry” was part of a three day “Schizo-Culture” conference held at Columbia University that presented both anti-psychiatry and perspectives of advocates for prisoners’ human rights in its comparison and critique of the prison and asylum.

Mary Patten

**Panel**, 2013

Four-channel performance-based video installation: color, sound,

24:40 minutes

Courtesy the artist
Trevor Paglen

**Color Study (San Quentin State Prison, San Quentin, CA), 2016**

Pigment print

Courtesy the artist and Metro Pictures, New York, New York
KAPWANI KIWANGA

Kapwani Kiwanga conducted a color study of the prison, museum, and hospital, exploring how color creates the conditions for optimal examination and functions as a psychological operative of control to regulate behavior in these spaces. Her video, *A Primer* (2017), moves the viewer through four colors painted across a series of moveable walls. Examples include Baker-Miller pink, claimed to reduce aggression, soothe agitation, and lower heart rates of inmates in prisons and asylums; green theorized to be the ideal background for surgery, as it offsets the red color of blood; and Ripolin white, extolled by the architect Le Corbusier as creating the optimal conditions for viewing art and adopted by museums of modern art across the world.

Kapwani Kiwanga
*A Primer*, 2017
Single-channel video, 7:43 minutes
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Tanja Wagner, Berlin, Germany
ANDREA FRASER

Andrea Fraser’s *Index* (2011) was originally published anonymously in the Summer 2011 issue of *Artforum International*. The graph shows that the greater the divide between rich and poor, the higher the price of art sold on the market. *Index II* (2014) shows the 700% increase in museums and prisons built in the United States since 1980. According to Fraser, museums are built to accommodate the increase in art that is bought, while prisons are built to manage the increased number of people punished for poverty-related crimes.

Andrea Fraser

*Index*, 2011
Adhesive vinyl
Courtesy the artist

Andrea Fraser

*Index II*, 2014
Adhesive vinyl
Courtesy the artist
Jenny Polak
\textbf{ICE Escape Sign: CAM Houston}, 2018
Digital print face-mounted on Plexiglas, Edition 1 of 3
Courtesy the artist

Jenny Polak
\textbf{ICE Escape Sign: White Box Gallery}, 2008
Inkjet print face-mounted on Plexiglas, edition of 3
Courtesy the artist

Jenny Polak
Digital print face-mounted on Plexiglas, edition of 3
Courtesy the artist

Jenny Polak
\textbf{ICE Escape Sign: Nathan Cummings Foundation}, 2007
Digital print face-mounted on Plexiglas, edition of 3
Courtesy the artist, commissioned by No Longer Empty

Jenny Polak
\textbf{ICE Escape Sign: NJ Institute of Technology}, 2008
Digital print face-mounted on Plexiglas, edition of 3
Courtesy the artist
PROFILE
Entry into the criminal justice system happens through the process by which one is profiled as a criminal and targeted for arrest. Artists in this section focus on questioning and challenging assumptions that lead to profiling. Suzanne Lacy collaborated with youth who had been profiled in Oakland, California to create artworks challenging the police, community, and young people to question their ideas about why teenagers are assumed to have criminal intentions. Jenny Polak and Rodrigo Valenzuela focus on the ways immigrant communities are targeted. Dread Scott’s *Wanted* (2014) relates to Glenn Ligon’s broadsides to reveal that racial profiling in the present day is a process that is inherited from two centuries of United States history.
RODRIGO VALENZUELA

Rodrigo Valenzuela paid undocumented immigrant laborers their daily rate to speak on film about their experiences crossing the border. The title *Diamond Box* (2013) refers to the boxes made to store tools in the back of pickup trucks. These same boxes are used as containers for smuggling people across the border. The laborers' stories were filmed in a windowless room that mirrors that of a detention center and emphasizes that the process of crossing the border is the passing from one container to another.

Rodrigo Valenzuela

*Diamond Box*, 2013
HD single-channel video, 4:13 minutes
Courtesy the artist
DREAD SCOTT

Dread Scott’s *Wanted* (2014) is the result of a collaboration with young people of color living in New York City’s Sugar Hill neighborhood. The work was created in response to the stop-and-frisk program in New York City and aimed to engage teenagers, their parents, and their community in a conversation about how the teens were being profiled because of their age and race. After a series of public conversations, Scott and the teens decided on the wanted poster as the form their collaboration would take. They arranged for five teens to have passing encounters with five adults for one minute each. Afterwards, the adults sat down with a police-trained forensic sketch artist. The process by which the sketches of the teens were made was staged as a live performance to give insight to an audience of how such sketches are made. With little information for the artist to draw from, the resulting portraits tended toward generalization. The posters list descriptions of the teens and activities they are wanted for (all of which are legal). The posters were hung in the windows of local businesses in the Sugar Hill neighborhood and gave business owners an opportunity to talk to their customers about stop-and-frisk laws.

Dread Scott

*Wanted*, 2014
Pigment prints
Community-based project: Community participants, public forum, forensic sketch session, and HD video documentation, 5:26 minutes
Courtesy the artist
SUZANNE LACY WITH JULIO MORALES AND UNIQUE HOLLAND

*The Oakland Projects* are a series of installations, performances, and political activism with youth who were being profiled in Oakland, California in the 1990s. Artist Suzanne Lacy staged eight major interventions over the course of ten years that brought the Oakland police and teens together in direct conversations. *The Oakland Projects* provided over 350 young participants with workshops, mentorship, leadership training, and paid jobs that became a curriculum used by the Oakland Police Department. *Code 33: Emergency, Clear the Air!* (1999) was a three-year project that explored ways to reduce police hostility toward youth, provide youth with a set of skills to participate in their communities, and generate a broader understanding of youth needs.

Suzanne Lacy with Julio Morales and Unique Holland

**Code 33: Emergency, Clear the Air!,** 1999
Video of performance documentation, offset printed poster, and vinyl banner, 19:02 minutes
Courtesy the artists and Michelle Baughan

Suzanne Lacy with Julio Morales and Unique Holland

**Youth Police Workshop,** 1999
Video of performance documentation, 4:45 minutes
Courtesy the artists
Produced by KRON-NBC Television, Channel 4
Josh Begley

Officer Involved, 2015

Website

Courtesy the artist
GLENN LIGON

Glenn Ligon created a series of lithographs made in the style and typeface of 19th century advertisements for runaway slaves. Ligon asked friends to write descriptions of his physical appearance, comportment, and dress. He then paired these descriptions with woodcut images of runaway slaves from 19th century broadsheets.

Glenn Ligon

**Runaways**, 1993

Lithograph on Sauders Hotpress Paper (10 pieces), edition of 45

Courtesy Marieluise Hessel Collection, Hessel Museum of Art, Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
ARREST
The artists in this section highlight the complex role police officers play in our public consciousness and respond to recent citizen deaths due to encounters with the police. Shaun Leonardo and Carl Pope mobilize the form of the memorial to create a space for a community to grieve lives lost at the hands of the police. Autumn Knight’s performance enacts the moment of arrest, while Josh Begley’s algorithm-driven website visualizes the sites where arrest has resulted in death. Conversely, Danny Giles and Chris Burden focus on the perception of police officers.
CHRIS BURDEN
Please be aware this handgun is disabled.

In response to Rodney King’s beating in 1991 and the Los Angeles riots that followed, Chris Burden created an edition of 30 Los Angeles Police Department (L.A.P.D.) uniforms made to fit a fleet of officers that would each stand seven feet four inches tall. Each uniform is equipped with the complete accoutrement of a Los Angeles police officer: regulation belt, 92F Beretta handgun in a holster, baton, handcuffs, and badge. The oversized quality of the uniforms displays the power of authority in relationship to the people it dominates.

Chris Burden, in collaboration with the Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia
**L.A.P.D. Uniform**, 1993
Wool serge, metal, leather, wood, and plastic, edition of 30
Collection the Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
DANNY GILES
Danny Giles video work *(dead)air* (2015) shows a black screen with intermittent flashes of text excerpts from Richard Wright’s 1940 novel *Native Son* and Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s 1866 novel *Crime and Punishment*. The chosen selections show moments when fictional characters describe their psychological state in the moment of making a decision. These texts are paired with testimonies from police officers describing the minutes before deciding to pull the trigger in incidents when officers have killed citizens. The soundtrack of the video is the 911 call that anticipated the death of 12-year-old Tamir Rice in Cleveland, Ohio and audio from the dashboard camera at Richard Ramirez’s death in Billings, Montana.

Danny Giles
*(dead)air*, 2015
Single-channel video, 9:03 minutes
Courtesy the artist
SHAUN LEONARDO
Shaun Leonardo’s *The Eulogy* (2017) rescripts the funeral speech from Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man* to include the names of eighteen young black men who have been killed during an incident with a police officer. Originally conceived as a performance, Leonardo creates a space of public mourning. He addresses the audience in funeral attire accompanied by a brass band in the tradition of a New Orleans jazz funeral.

Shaun Leonardo
*The Eulogy*, 2017
Single-channel video: color, sound, 28:18 minutes
Courtesy the artist
AUTUMN KNIGHT

Autumn Knight’s work *Do Not Leave Me* (2013) translates the title of Jacques Brel’s song *Ne Me Quitte Pas*. The Nina Simone version of this song is the soundtrack of Knight’s performance that explores the spectrum between suspicion and assumption of guilt around Open Carry laws, which allow registered citizens to carry firearms. Knight’s performance questions to what extent the law protects all citizens equally. The 2013 version of this performance forewarned the death of Philando Castile. Knight performed *Do Not Leave Me* (2013–present) during the opening reception for the exhibition.

Autumn Knight

*Do Not Leave Me*, 2013

Video of performance documentation: color, sound, 5:29 minutes
Performance: Autumn Knight
Courtesy the artist

Autumn Knight

*Do Not Leave Me*, 2013–present

Live performance
Courtesy the artist
CARL POPE

Following the death of Leonard Barnett, an unarmed suspect in a robbery shot by police officer Scott L. Hasler in July 1990, Carl Pope was inspired to create a trophy for each of the thirty Indianapolis police officers involved in the extrajudicial killing of black men between 1980–91. Pope's response pointed a finger at the practice of police officers receiving accolades and often promotions after their involvement in an unauthorized killing instead of being fired or criminally indicted.

Carl Pope
From the Trophy Collection of The Indianapolis Police Department and The Office of the Marion County Sheriff's Office, 1992
Engraved trophies and plaques (24 pieces)
Courtesy the artist
JOSH BEGLEY
Using an algorithm, Josh Begley located 5,300 prisons through satellite views on Google Maps and compiled them into a navigable website: prisonmap.com. Presented in a grid in virtual space, each satellite photograph presents a prison from a bird’s-eye view, reversing the terms of surveillance.

Josh Begley
Prison Map, 2012–present
Website
Courtesy the artist
PROCESS
Following arrest, a series of procedures associated with due process of the law move a person through the court system and trial process. The artists in this section highlight the complexity and variety of viewpoints that arise through the assignment of guilt or innocence. Sam Gould enlisted comic book artists to illustrate the interrogation process. Andrea Robbins and Max Becher’s photographs reveal the entanglement of church and state in the physical space of the court house. Shaun Leonardo and Jamal Cyrus examine how the media distorts and influences public opinion.
SHAUN LEONARDO
Shaun Leonardo conducted an image search for Rodney King with resulted in an overwhelming number of cropped versions of the same image of King huddled on the ground surrounded by two different officers with batons. Deeper investigation found the original image included seven more officers who stood by watching. In Leonardo’s drawn version, *Rodney King* (2017) he renders the image in a gray scale of high contrasts and a wavering hand that emphasizes the video source. He also exempts King’s body from the picture, shifting the focus of the image. Leonardo also researched the Central Park Five, the name given to a group of teens who were convicted for the violent assault and rape of a jogger. They were released from prison after serving 13 years, acquitted of all charges when DNA evidence identified the true rapist, but as their innocence was never pronounced in a court of law, the archival record has not been officially corrected. Leonardo created a series of drawings pulled from courtroom photographs and still images from videos entered into evidence. He displays how these images reproduce public consciousness around an event and reinforce a particular scripting of history.

Shaun Leonardo
**Central Park 5 (Drawings 1–5),** 2017
Charcoal on paper (5 pieces)
Collection Manon Slome

Shaun Leonardo
**Rodney King,** 2017
Charcoal on paper with mirrored tint on frame
Courtesy the artist
ANDREA ROBBINS AND MAX BECHER
Following the success of Cecil B. DeMille’s 1956 film *The Ten Commandments*, the Fraternal Order of Eagles, a men’s association with chapters across the United States, built Ten Commandments monuments in public places like parks, city halls, and courthouses. Communities responded immediately with court cases arguing in favor of a division between church and state. In 2006, the divisive issue reached the Supreme Court and the case was ruled in favor of the defendant, the State of Texas, and the monument was allowed to remain on the grounds of the Texas State Capitol in Austin. Andrea Robbins and Max Becher traveled across the country to photograph the remaining monuments, which are clustered in the southern United States.

Andrea Robbins and Max Becher
*Following the Ten Commandments: Bradford County Courthouse, Starke, FL*, 2015
Mesh print
Courtesy the artists and Sonnabend Gallery, New York, New York
SAM GOULD
You are welcome to read the comic book.

In August 2016 the transcript of a 1996 interrogation arrived anonymously at Sam Gould’s Minneapolis bookshop Beyond Repair. The interrogation was of an 8th grader by then-Minneapolis police sergeant Bob Kroll. Gould’s first impression when he read the transcript was of its theatricality. Kroll was in the role of the archetypal “bad cop” and “Otis,” the 14-year-old subject of his inquiry, crumbled at Kroll’s use of the Reid technique—a method of questioning meant to determine the credibility of the suspect. This interrogation method has been contested by the American Civil Liberties Union and the American Bar Association for producing false confessions, especially from children. During the transcript Otis confessed that he did not understand his rights. Gould enlisted Tom Kaczynski of Uncivilized Books and 18 comic book artists to illustrate each page of the transcript and used the resulting document to show the power dynamic between an adult police officer and a black child. The distribution of the comic book fostered a dialogue between Gould and Kroll.

Sam Gould
Sgt. Kroll Goes to the Office, 2016
Comic book
Courtesy the artist
JAMAL CYRUS
Jamal Cyrus compiles and manipulates a wide range of documents including FBI memorandums, the front page of newspapers, and concert posters, in an attempt to catalogue the erosion of black radical thought from the memory and political consciousness of the United States. Cyrus replicates these documents in papyrus because of its associations with Ancient Egypt and the idea of archives. He etches a facsimile into the paper-like material through a laser-cutting process that destroys as it inscribes. Through the physical degradation of the material, the image and text of the transcribed document breaks down the legibility of the information being transmitted. Each of the works relay the position as a different local newspaper with a contrasting point of view.

Jamal Cyrus
Eroding Witness, Season 3, Episode 20A, 2014
Laser-cut papyrus
Courtesy the artist and Inman Gallery, Houston, Texas

Jamal Cyrus
Eroding Witness, Season 3, Episode 20B, 2014
Laser-cut papyrus
Courtesy the artist and Inman Gallery, Houston, Texas
Jenny Polak

**ICE Escape Sign: CAM Houston**, 2018
Digital print face-mounted on Plexiglas, Edition 1 of 3
Courtesy the artist
INCARCERATE

A prisoner’s time within carceral institutions is governed by regulations that also extend to their community of family and friends. The artists in this section present perspectives on incarceration from their experiences of being in prison or as the family member of an incarcerated person. Sherrill Roland emphasizes time through the accumulation of marks on a cell wall, while Deana Lawson visualizes time passing in a series of photographs taken during prison visitation hours. In *Men Who Swallow Themselves in Mirrors* (2017), Sable Elyse Smith situates a personal meditation on her relationship with her father within the larger structure of time-based media, the time of the prison, and the frequency with which black masculinity is rendered criminal in moving images.
ASHLEY HUNT
Ashley Hunt traveled to 250 prisons, jails, penitentiaries, and detention centers across all 50 states and four U.S. territories, photographing each from the nearest public road as an average passerby would see it. Each image names the location of the facility along with the number of people incarcerated.

Ashley Hunt
Degrees of Visibility, 2010–present
Multimedia installation
Courtesy the artist
TITUS KAPHAR
Titus Kaphar searched for his father’s mugshot in an online archive of criminal records; in the process he also found the images of 99 incarcerated men who shared his father’s name. Since 2011, Kaphar has treated these mugshots not as a means of identifying the arrested and incarcerated but as portraits of men caught in a system for his series, The Jerome Project.

Titus Kaphar
The Jerome Project (Asphalt and Chalk XVIII), 2015
Chalk on asphalt paper
Courtesy the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York, New York
Sable Elyse Smith

**Men Who Swallow Themselves In Mirrors**, 2017

Single-channel video, 8:32 minutes

Courtesy the artist
SHERRILL ROLAND
You are welcome to leave your response on the wall.
Please be aware that the tools are sharp.

Sherrill Roland's job duty while incarcerated for a crime he did not commit involved making vacant cells ready for occupancy by new inmates. During the midnight shift, he worked with a crew of people to add a coat of paint to the walls and furniture surfaces, without cleaning or scraping off dirt or paint. The accumulation of the layers of paint became a way to mark the number of inhabitants in a particular room, all of whom found the thickened texture of the wall's surface to be a place to imprint their mark and make the space their own. No coat of paint ever fully erased the previous marks. Roland translated this experience into the participatory work *The Jumpsuit Project: After the Wake Up* (2017). A changing question on the topic of mass incarceration is offered to museum visitors, who are invited to carve their responses directly on the wall in the exhibition space using similar tools to what one might find in prison. The marks are erased with a coat of paint throughout the run of the exhibition.

Sherrill Roland
*The Jumpsuit Project: After the Wake Up*, 2017
Primer paint and screwdrivers
Courtesy the artist
MICHELLE HANDELMAN
This artwork is designed for no more than two visitors. Please wait your turn.

Michelle Handelman’s *Beware the Lily Law* (2011) imagines trans men in women’s prisons and trans women in men’s prisons immediately after the Stonewall riots in June 1969. The video is formatted to give the viewer a sense of sharing a cell with a trans roommate listening to their stories of arrest and incarceration. Because trans people often disrupt the categorical organization of the prison system, they are frequently placed in solitary confinement.
Deana Lawson

**Mohawk Correctional Facility**, 2013

Pigment prints

Courtesy the artist and Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, Illinois
MARIA GASPAR
You are welcome to interact with the curtain by carefully pulling it along the curtain track.

Maria Gaspar reproduced an image of the entire north facing wall of the Cook County Jail in Chicago, Illinois, and printed it on a sheer curtain. This immersive installation reminds the viewer of the 7,500 incarcerated men in this institution and also makes the viewer question on which side of the wall they are standing.

Maria Gaspar
**Haunting Raises Specters (By A.G.), 2015**
Digitally-printed dye sub fabric, aluminum, beaded chain, and grommets
Courtesy the artist
Martin Wong

47-04, 1992
Acrylic on canvas
Courtesy the Estate of Martin Wong and P.P.O.W Gallery, New York, New York

Martin Wong

C76, Junior, 1988
Acrylic on canvas
Collection Charlie Ahearn and Jane Dickson

Martin Wong

Cell Door Slot, 1986
Acrylic on canvas
Collection Adam Putnam
KEITH CALHOUN AND CHANDRA MCCORMICK
Keith Calhoun and Chandra McCormick are a husband and wife team that have been photographing the cultures of Louisiana for nearly 40 years. Their images of inmates at the Louisiana State Penitentiary bring the invisible aspects of the state's labor force into focus. The Louisiana State Penitentiary is a maximum-security prison that is also known as Angola after the former plantation that occupied the same area. The name Angola is from the African country that was the origin of many enslaved Africans brought to Louisiana. In their photographs, Calhoun and McCormick make the argument that Angola the penitentiary still functions as Angola the plantation with prisoners taking the place of slaves.

Keith Calhoun and Chandra McCormick
*Who’s that man on that horse, I don’t know his name, but they call him Boss*, 1980
Archival pigment print
Courtesy the artists

Keith Calhoun and Chandra McCormick
*Ditch Digging*, 1980
Archival pigment print
Courtesy the artists

Keith Calhoun and Chandra McCormick
*Men going to work in the fields of Angola*, 2004
Archival pigment print
Courtesy the artists
ZACH BLAS
Zach Blas investigates the zone between physical spaces of confinement and the virtual and digital technologies of capture. To construct his face cages, Blas submitted himself and three collaborators to biometric facial recognition scans. The results flatten the topographies of each artist’s face into a 2D map. Blas rematerialized these scans to create a wearable 3D sculptural object. The four artists wore their respective masks for an endurance performance captured on video. These face cages bear a resemblance to head cages from 16th century Europe that would be adopted throughout the Americas in the 18th century. One example is the Scold’s Bridle, a device used mostly to punish women through humiliation and pain while still allowing them to work. The biometric recognition programs Blas used to make the work are increasingly a part of not only policing practices but also daily life. Notably, the digital technology does not recognize every face equally, with those of different races more likely to fail scanning because the technology is not optimized to scan the specificity of different skin tonalities.
Zach Blas  
**Face Cage 1**, 2015  
HD video of endurance performance, 12:01 minutes  
Performance: Zach Blas  
Courtesy the artist  

Zach Blas  
**Face Cage 2**, 2014  
HD video of endurance performance, 10:02 minutes  
Performance: Elle Mehrmand  
Courtesy the artist  

Zach Blas  
**Face Cage 3**, 2014  
HD video of endurance performance, 12:00 minutes  
Performance: micha cárdenas  
Courtesy the artist  

Zach Blas  
**Face Cage 4**, 2016  
HD video of endurance performance, 12:02 minutes  
Performance: Paul Mpagi Sepuya  
Courtesy the artist
JAMES DRAKE

James Drake collaborated with the female partners of men detained at the El Paso County Jail to create the works in the *Tongue Cut Sparrow* series. The title is taken from a Japanese folk tale about a woman who cuts the tongue of her husband’s pet sparrow out of jealousy. Drake’s work displays the alternative means of communication the jailed men use to maintain contact with loved ones outside of regular visiting hours. The stark light of the sun makes deep shadows on the pavement below the jailhouse, allowing signs cast by the men’s hands from their cell windows to be legible to those positioned below. The signs the men spell out are part of a universal sign language with regional dialects used in prisons across the world. In Drake’s charcoal drawing, the hands are positioned in the sign for “freedom.”

James Drake
*Tongue Cut Sparrows*, 1995
Arches Watercolor Paper (260 lb) and Mulberry Tissue, edition of 18
Collection Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin; Purchase through the generosity of Jeanne and Michael Klein, 2018

James Drake
*Tongue Cut Sparrows*, 1996
Charcoal on paper
Courtesy the Hallmark Art Collection, Kansas City, Missouri
EXITS

For many, exiting the physical structures of prison does not equal freedom. Rather, the institutions of the courtroom, jail, and prison are the physical manifestation of a system that still governs a criminalized person's life even after they leave these spaces. Artists Gregory Sale and Laurie Jo Reynolds work with people who have histories of incarceration to reframe their experiences and prepare them for the future. Tirtza Even collaborates with people who were tried as adults when they were teenagers and sentenced to life in prison; similarly Sarah Ross and Damon Locks worked with older adults who were given long-term sentences. Both scenarios mean that the incarcerated person likely will die in prison before the terms of their sentences will be considered for parole. Artists Richard Kamler, Mark Menjivar, Luis Camnitzer, and the collaborative Lucky Pierre lay bare the reality of the death penalty by using the last meal and final words of executed men as materials for their artworks. The exhibition ends with the extraordinary story of Anthony Papa, who leveraged his artwork to secure his release from prison.
Luis Camnitzer

Last Words, 2008
Pigment prints (12 pieces), Edition 7 of 12
Collection Michael Chesser
LUCKY PIERRE

Lucky Pierre is a Chicago-based collaborative. In their film project *Final Meals* (2003–present), they have recreated the 310 meals requested by Texas death row inmates from 1982–2003. Each meal is prepared by members of the collaborative working with volunteers. Participants from the community are invited to eat a meal alone in a room, as the death row inmate would have done. The camera films the scene from above while the participants eat (or choose not to), simulating the conditions of surveillance in the space of the prison cell. The compiled footage is over five days long.

Lucky Pierre

*Final Meals*, 2003–present
Single-channel video, 129:10 hours
Courtesy the artists
MARK MENJIVAR

Mark Menjivar’s work with the non-profit organization the Texas After Violence Project helped him to gain access to a number of archives left by men executed in Texas. One such archive contained the full contents of the cell of David Lee Powell, who spent 32 years on death row awaiting his 2010 execution. Menjivar’s photograph *DLP* (2018) shows an alternative portrait of a convicted killer. He invites the viewer to imagine life inside of a 6 × 9-foot cell for over 30 years. The objects that Powell left behind are presented in storage boxes; their contents described as a catalogue.

Mark Menjivar

*DLP*, 2018

Archival pigment print and vinyl

Courtesy the artist
Richard Kamler

**Last Meal**, 1999–2000

Lead sheeting and plastic

Courtesy the Estate of Richard Kamler
GREGORY SALE

*Future IDs* (2017–18) is a project designed during Gregory Sale’s time as an artist working in collaboration with the Anti-Recidivism Coalition, a Los Angeles-based advocacy group. Sale organized a series of workshops in which participants reframe their narratives of incarceration to shift the focus from past actions to future directions. Workshop participants were invited to imagine a job, role, or function in society that they would like to fulfill. They then designed an identification card that featured their portrait in that role; to envision themselves in the future in tandem with the practical task of goal setting.

Gregory Sale in collaboration with Anti-Recidivism Coalition members (Dominique Bell, Dr. Luis Garcia, Jose Gonzalez, Kirn Kim, Aaron Mercado, and Ryan Lo); artwork by David Cruse, Guss “Lumumba” Edwards, Bruce Fowler, Dr. Luis Garcia, Kirn Kim, Cirese LaBerge, Emiliano Lopez, Felix Lex Miranda, JD Melendez, Omid Mokri, Mark Stan-Bey, and Frederick Tinsley

*Future IDs*, 2017–18
Social art project: workshops, exhibitions, and public programs across California
ID-inspired artwork: mixed media on paper
Courtesy the artists
ANTHONY PAPA

In 1993, Anthony Papa was sentenced to 15 years to life in prison for a first time, non-violent, drug offense under New York’s Rockefeller Drug Laws. That same year the artist Mike Kelley had an exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art. The curator of Kelley’s exhibition, Elizabeth Sussman, wrote to the warden of Sing Sing prison, where Papa was incarcerated, looking for a murderer who was also a painter to feature in Kelley’s installation *Pay for Your Pleasure*. Papa was fully aware that he didn’t fit the terms of serial murderer but he decided to circumvent the system to submit his painting, *15 to Life* (1988) to the Whitney. Papa’s work was accepted into the exhibition, and this became the opportunity that ultimately allowed him to leverage his sentence to the parole board and secure his release from prison. Since his discharge Papa has brought together his work as an artist with his work as an activist, advocating to change legislation around drug-related crimes.
Anthony Papa

**Nightmare of Justice**, 1988
Oil and acrylic on canvas
Courtesy the artist

Anthony Papa

**After the Whitney**, 1994
Oil and acrylic on canvas
Courtesy the artist

Anthony Papa

**Metamorphosis**, 1991
Mixed media on canvas
Courtesy the artist

Anthony Papa

**15 to Life**, 1988
Oil and acrylic on canvas
Collection John Payne
Improvers

**Assorted Work**, 2016–8
Single-channel video, running time variable
Courtesy the artists

Laurie Jo Reynolds and collaborators

**Documentation**, 2017–8
Single-channel video, running time variable
Courtesy the artists
LAURIE JO REYNOLDS

Laurie Jo Reynolds’s *Calling Cards* (2008–present) navigate issues of disclosure for sex offenders to redirect complicated social interactions into productive conversations. Each *Calling Card* offers a different option for a sex offender or their loved one to follow up if they experience an aggressive attack or negative interaction due to their sex offender status or association with an offender. The cards are designed to help correct misconceptions, offer information, and explain why many sex offender laws are counter-productive to public safety.

Laurie Jo Reynolds

*Orange Police Notice on My Door*, from *Calling Cards*
series, 2008–present
Union-printed business cards
Courtesy the artist
Laurie Jo Reynolds

**Dear Neighbor**, from **Calling Cards** series, 2008–present
Union-printed business cards
Courtesy the artist

Laurie Jo Reynolds

**Dear Parent**, from **Calling Cards** series, 2008–present
Union-printed business cards
Courtesy the artist

Laurie Jo Reynolds

**Dear Friend**, from **Calling Cards** series, 2008–present
Union-printed business cards
Courtesy the artist

Laurie Jo Reynolds

**Dear Illinois Legislator**, from **Calling Cards** series, 2008–present
Union-printed business cards
Courtesy the artist

Laurie Jo Reynolds

**Self-Affirmation**, from the **Legislative Mantra Cards** series, 2008–present
Union-printed business cards
Courtesy the artist
TIRTZA EVEN

Tirtza Even works with people who were tried as adults and sentenced to life in prison in their youth. This phenomenon is called “natural life” because the youth will spend more time living in prison than outside. Made in collaboration with five people sentenced to life as teenagers, the experimental film tells their stories about the circumstances leading up to their crimes and about their experiences of growing up in prison. Because of the conditions of their sentences, Even’s collaborators are unable to leave the prison. She worked with her incarcerated collaborators to visualize their stories in virtual space and arranged for teenagers to reenact their experiences in a decommissioned prison in Michigan that is often rented out as a film set.

Tirtza Even

Natural Life, 2014–15

Video installation, 77 minutes

Courtesy the artist
SARAH ROSS AND DAMON LOCKS

The Truth in Sentencing policies passed in 1994 resulted in incarcerated people having to serve their full sentence instead of getting parole or being released early. The effects of these laws were noticeable to Sarah Ross and Damon Locks, two Chicago-based artists who teach at Statesville Prison in Illinois through the Prison + Neighborhood Arts Project. With the majority of their students directly impacted by these new laws, Ross and Locks dedicated their curriculum to the creation of a collaborative project. Over the course of a year, Ross and Locks worked with 13 students enrolled in their art class to create *The Long Term* (2018) and to tell the story of how Truth in Sentencing laws came to pass, the effects on a community in which most of the male population is incarcerated, the cost of long-term incarceration of the elderly, and how individuals have been affected by their sentences.

Sarah Ross and Damon Locks

*The Long Term*, 2018

Animation, 15 minutes

Courtesy the artists
Alexa Hoyer
*I always wanted to go to Paris, France (cell)*, 2005
Single-channel video, 4:43 minutes
Courtesy the artist

Jenny Polak
*ICE Escape Sign: Generic*, 2006
Vinyl cut-outs on aluminum on foamcore, edition of 2
Courtesy the artist