

# Exposing the Invisible Art About Detention

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“Aesthetic Justice”

College Art Association, New York City

February 2017

# Detention system created in 1875 for the families of Chinese Railroad workers trying to reunite



Recently rediscovered paintings by Jake Lee of Chinese workers in 19<sup>th</sup> c  
Commissioned by a restaurant in 1953

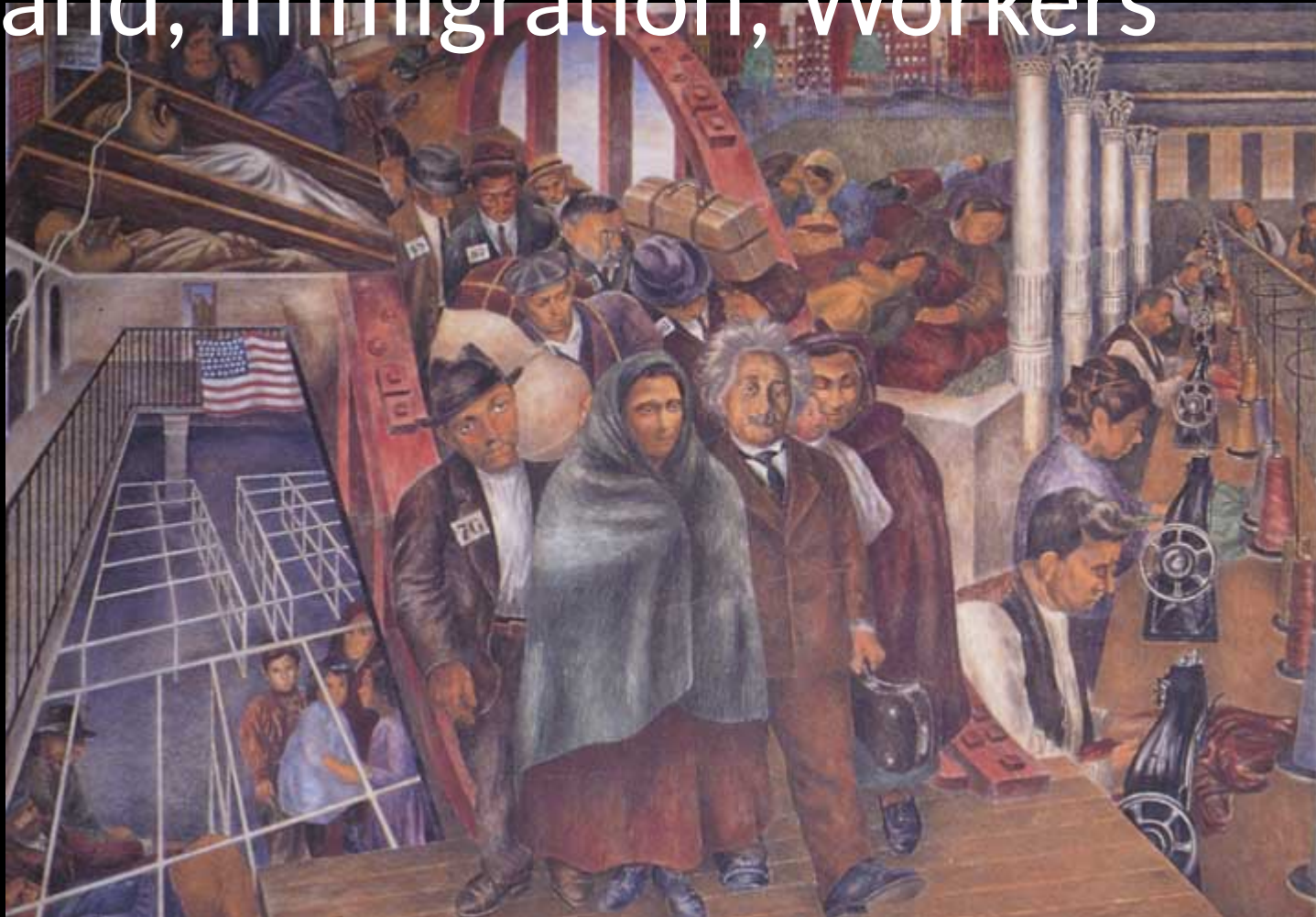
# Ellis Island Near New York City 1892 – 1954 mainly processing immigration



8 million immigrants passed through: one third of current US population traces their ancestry to Ellis Island

1924 immigration restrictions began by quota to restrict Southern and Eastern Europeans Banned Arabs and Asians. Restricted Africans

# Ben Shahn Jersey Homesteads Mural part one Ellis Island, Immigration, Workers



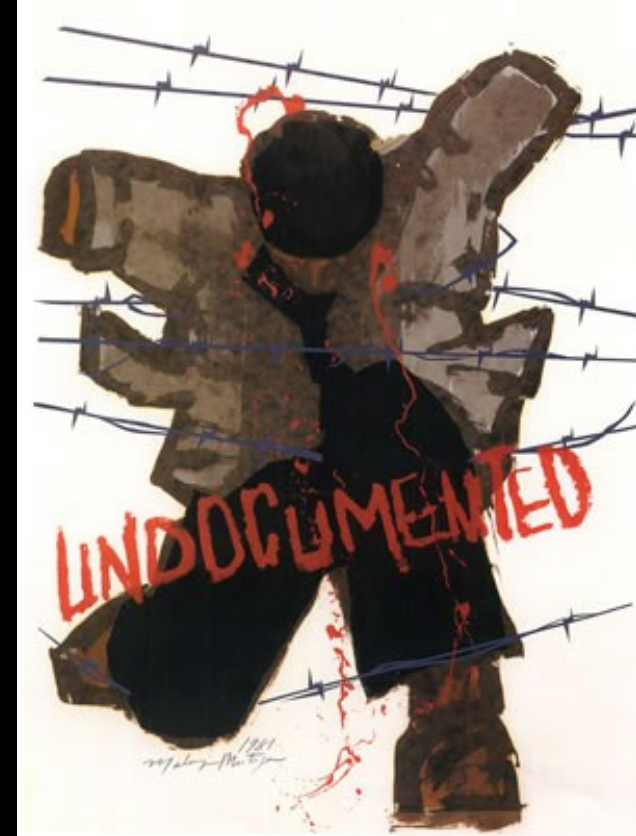
Roger Shimomura American Infamy no 2, 2006  
Connecting World War II Japanese Detention  
and today



1965 Immigration act applied quotas to Latin America for the first time leading to undocumented migration

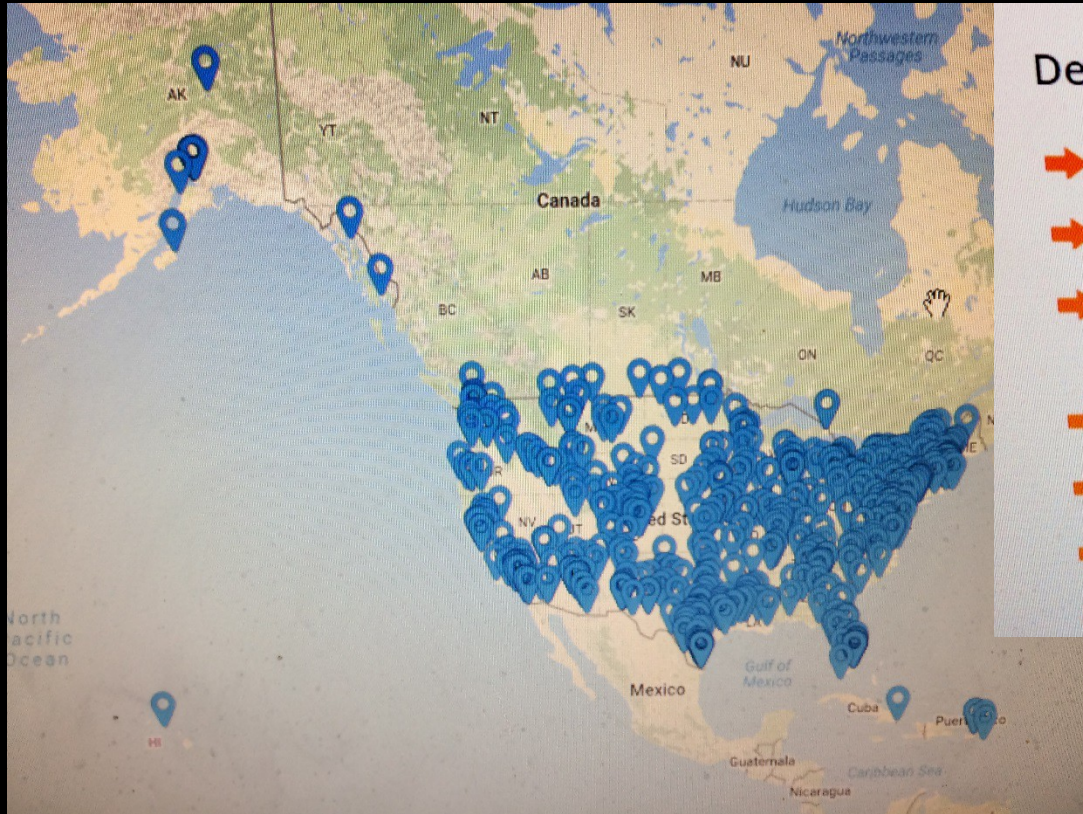


Rupert Garcia 1973



Malaquias Montoya  
Undocumented 1980

# Patriot Act 2001 permitted long term detention of non citizens without a hearing

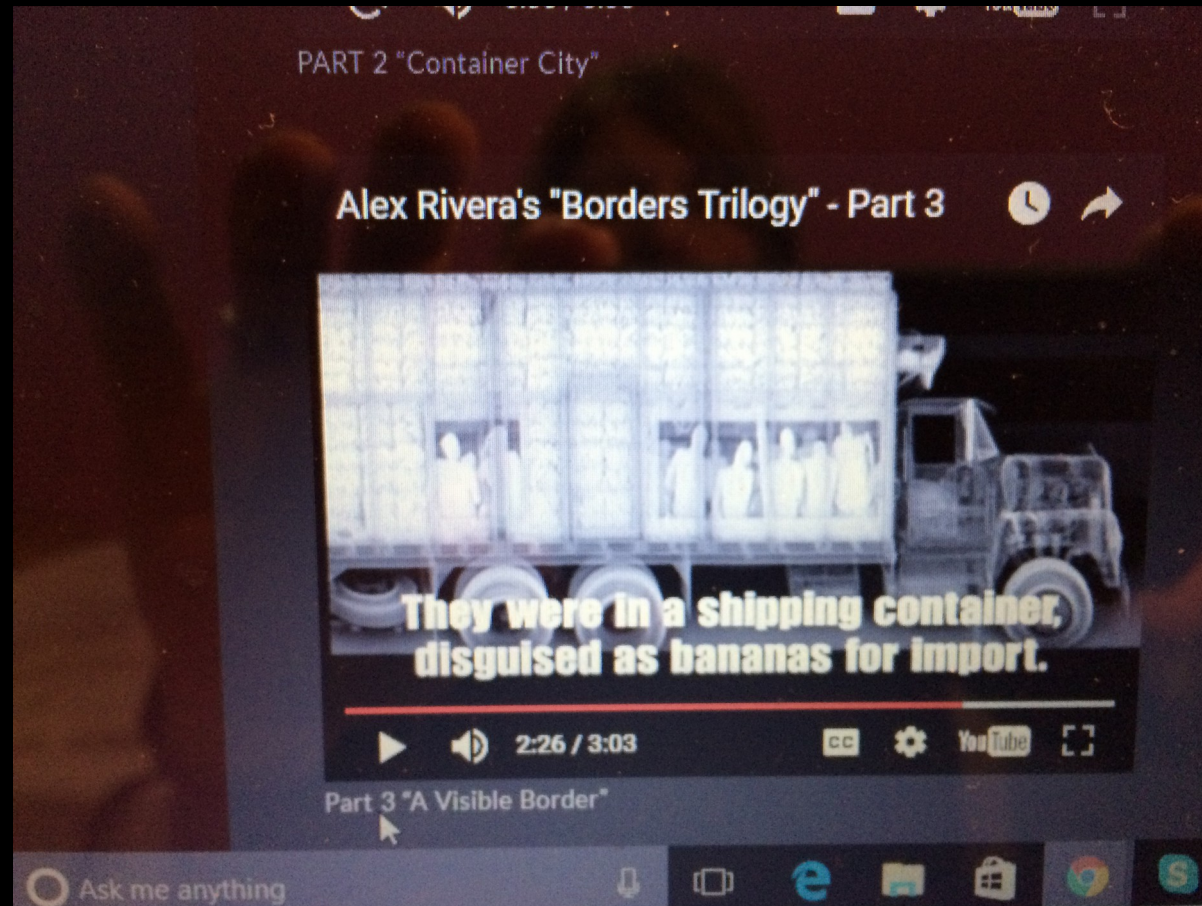


## Detention in Numbers

➔ Number of beds	34,040
➔ Number of people detained each year	441,000 (FY 2013 - latest numbers)
➔ Cost per day	\$124 for adult detention \$343 for family detention
➔ Detention budget	\$2.3 billion (FY 2016)
➔ Number of facilities	209
➔ Percent operated by private companies	62 percent
➔ Number of deaths since 2003	164

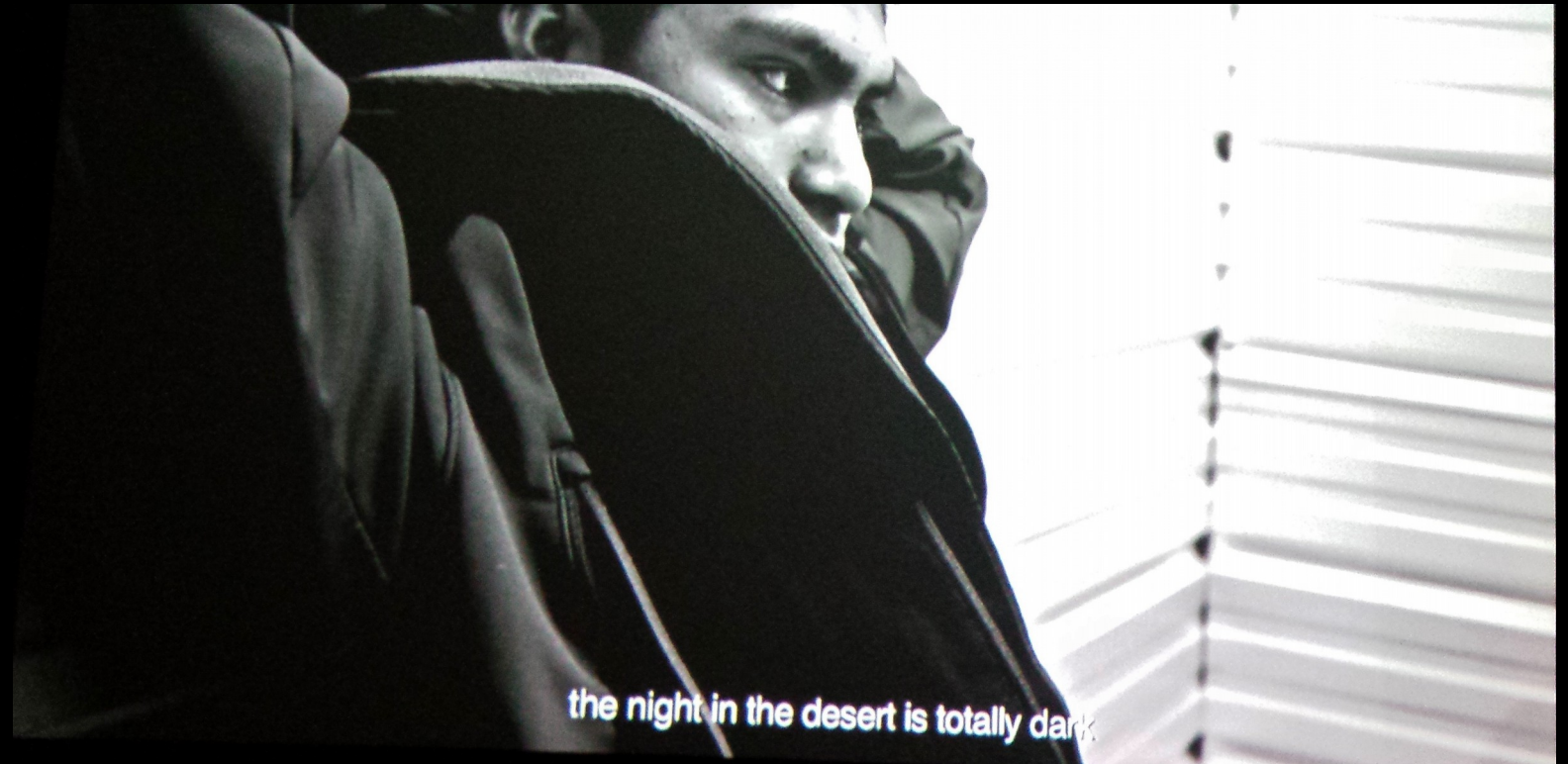
Alex Rivera's film *El Hielo La Santa Cecilia* highlights the daily fears of undocumented workers

Rivera's Border Trilogy still from Part 3





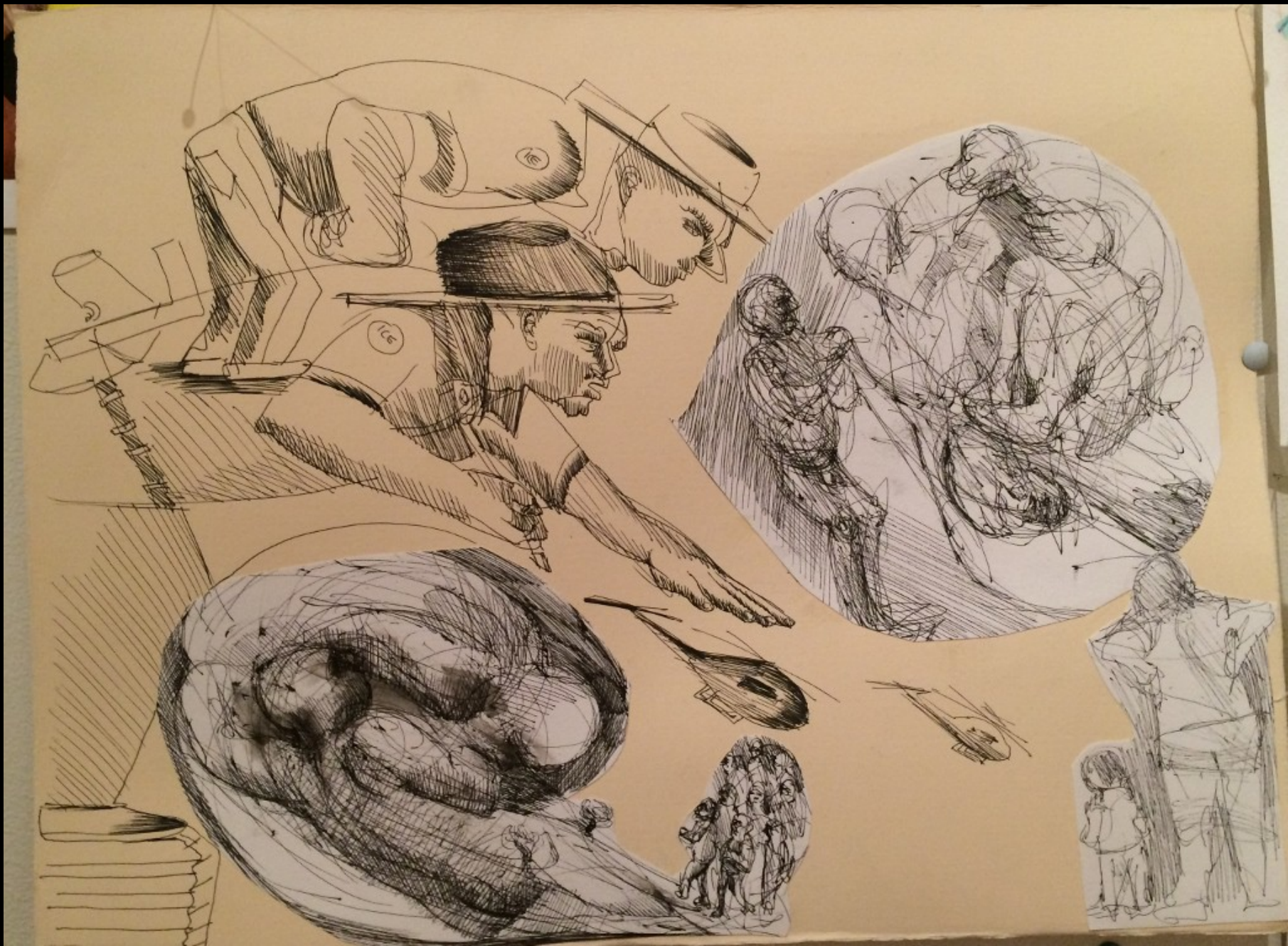
Rodrigo Valenzuela Diamond Box 2012 undocumented day laborers stories, but workers on film are silent.



Digital video with audio (4 minutes)

# Maria de Los Angeles: ICE Raids





Illegal Fashion Show  
White Box  
NYC  
Feb 14 2017



# Cecilia Alvarez

In my artwork I attempt to bring to light the parts of our society that are rendered invisible/without value; in a visual vernacular that does not use violence as a symbol of power/excellence. Each person held without legal recourse has a story and a reason to flee. They come here with the hope of life.”



# Sarah Lopez UT Austin School of Architecture maps spatial stories of migration and detention: how does architecture shape punishment one venue of States of Incarceration



States of Incarceration is created by over 500 people in 17 states, and growing. We explore the roots of mass incarceration in our own communities -- to open national dialogue on what should happen next.

# “Detention Nation” by Sin Huellas



recreating a detention center with  
bunk beds, letters, videos, sound tracks



Downtown Tacoma Washington,  
one mile from the  
Northwest Detention Center  
located in a toxic waste land of  
industrial buildings



# David Long mural on street leading to NWDC



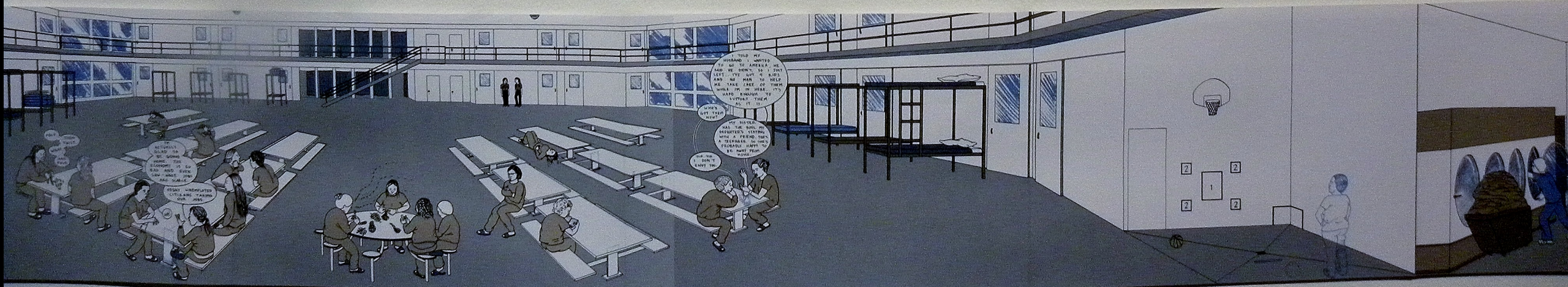
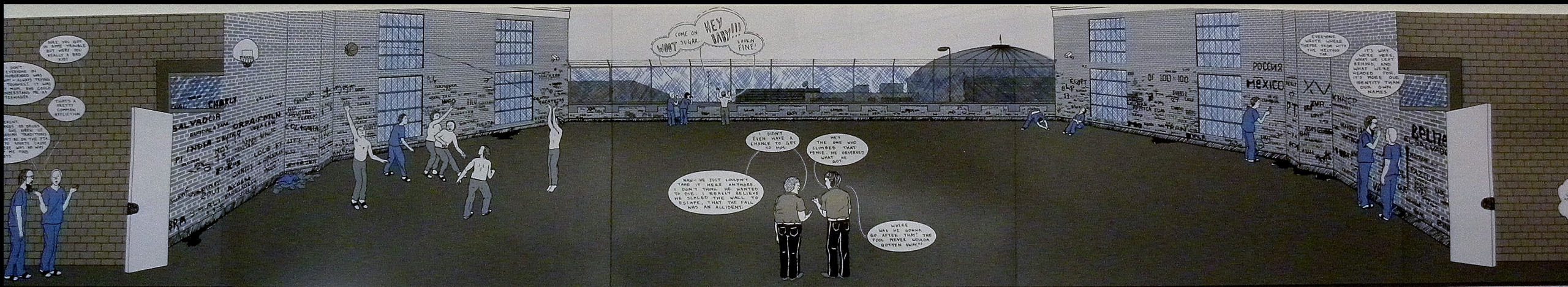
# The Northwest Detention Center, Tacoma opened in 2004



# Inside the Northwest Detention Center Alex Stonehill from the Globalist



# Eroyn Franklin: "Detained" accordion book format follows lives of two detainees









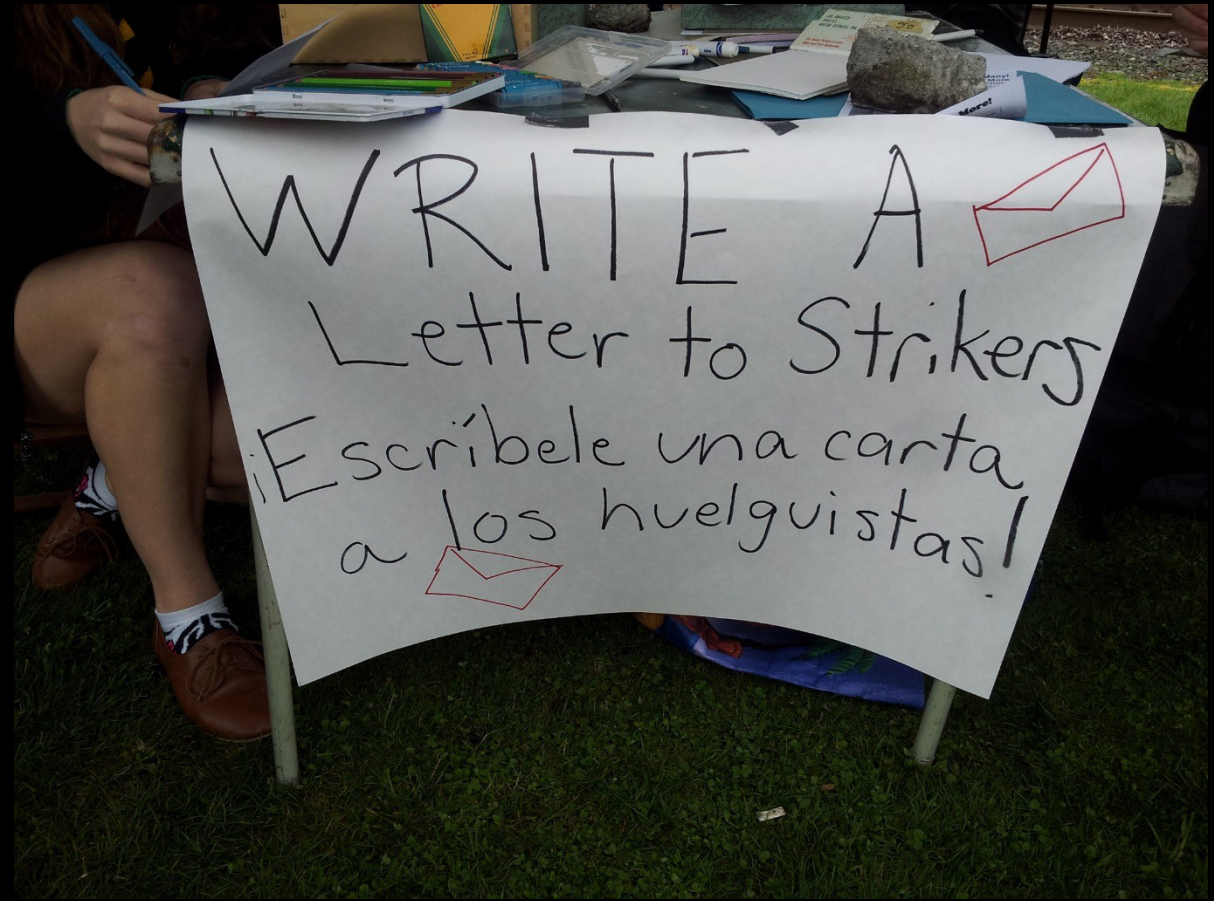
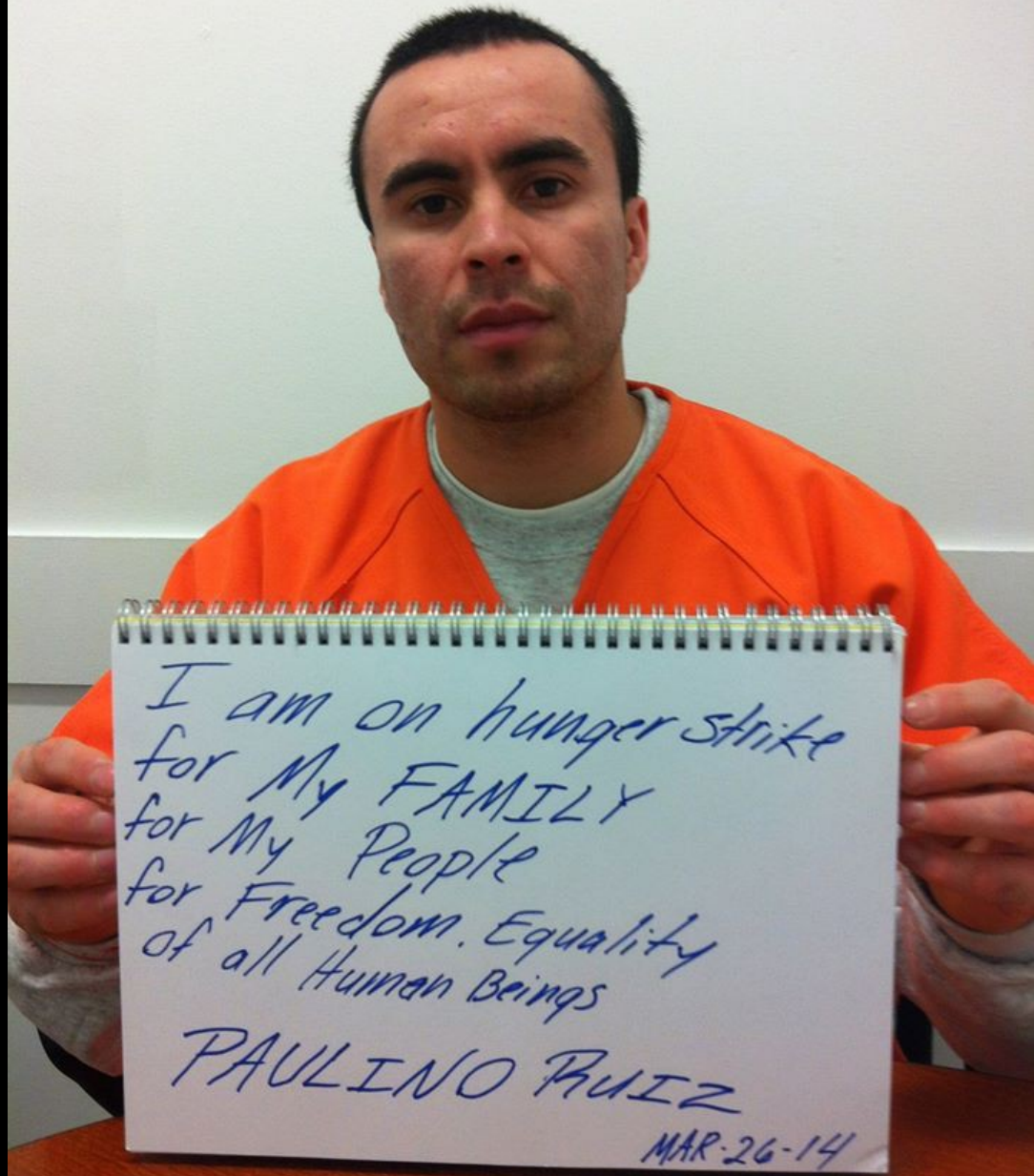


MY NAME IS  
MELORZ I WANT  
MY DAD TO COME  
OUT



I AM 4 YEARS  
OLD  
I REALLY  
NEED MY DAD





# Day of the Dead protest at NWDC

## La calavera catrina



# Luis Rodriguez Arenival

We want better medical care; properly trained medical staff on hand who are suitable to handle the amount of overflow detainees on compound.

We need better dental care; and more Dentist working at a time. We require dental assistants who are properly trained in the dental field. Dentist and assistants who can handle the overflow of detainees who need dental care, on compound. Dentist and assistants who will not just extract our teeth, But will perform Fillings, Root canals and periodically clean our teeth.

We insist on our family members who come to visit, be treated by all GEO staff in a respectful, helpful and friendly manner. Our families should not have to wait endless hours in line to have only one hour visiting time.

We insist on employees of the GEO corporation to undergo a "People Relation" course or seminar. The reception, front desk and be attended by friendly and who can answer and listen of our Families. The front desk be an environment of friendly where families feel welcome.



## Description of Solitary Cell:

"The Solitary Cell is Very Small and has a bunk bed and the beds are very small you can only fit when you are laying on your side. There is a table the size of two laptops and two seats it also has a sink and the toilet. The door only has a hole to give the food in the middle. Also the length of the bed is the length of the room."

- Ramon Mendez Piscal

*yo basta de tanto  
y deportacion hacia  
que no tomar ningun delito*

*Este es el pan de*



## Pavel Bahmatov Detainee in Tacoma



"Everything made here is mostly out of paper or plastic, for instance I am making little shoes, purses, jewelry boxes, picture frames and more out of recycled paper and plastic. I use plastic wrappers from candy, ramen noodles, cookies, anything really that we can get around here. The silver colors is mostly inside of the chips bags or candy bar wrappers. Most of the things I make are woven together and then sown with plastic string that we make out of garbage bags.



<http://www.nwdcresistance.org/call-to-artists/>







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