From March 24 to May 7, 2016, EFA Project Space brings together seven artists from Mexico, Spain, Chile and the U.S., to participate in the exhibition A Certain Urge (Towards Turmoil).

Curated by Blanca de la Torre, A Certain Urge (Towards Turmoil) exists along a fault-line of shaky utopian dreams. Rising from anxieties caused by the perpetual possibility of societal disaster, the show reflects on a past and present connected through turmoil. These artists employ poeticized tactics of disruption to draw out hypocrisies within dominant sociopolitical systems, and undermine the tight grip of political dogma. Active agents in their local communities, while contributing to essential international discourse, the artists are in dialogue with each other as they present previous work alongside work created for the exhibition. Through sculpture, installation, performance and intervention, A Certain Urge (Towards Turmoil) evokes a space to imagine versions of the world yet unattained.

As some of these artists investigate the imprint of past histories on present events, Cynthia Gutiérrez analyzes the inaccuracy of memory and transience of history. Blending historical fact and fiction, Gutiérrez creates Waltz of the Abyss, a group of sculptural headless chickens that rise out of pre-existing cultural narratives to traverse the exhibition space – alluding to the reoccurring metaphor of the detached head from its corresponding body. While Gutiérrez creates contemporary readings of historical eras through delicate formal resolutions, Nuria Güell takes an unmitigated approach, testing boundaries of art and activism with her readings on identity, abuse and complicity. Her work questions institutional ethics and suggests alternative methodologies. For this exhibition,
she collaborates with American war veteran Michael Prysner on an educational critique of aggressive military recruitment practices in a workshop with high school students.

**Avelino Sala** and **Joaquín Segura** are both fascinated by the materiality of dissent and the ontology of conflict, each employing artistic meditations on the contradictions of sociopolitical agendas. Sala acts as instigator, using art to formally question contemporary social consciousness. From the view of late capitalism, he presents *The Catchers*, a suspended Calder-esque mobile, creating a constellation of baseball gloves joined by golden rods. Suggesting that human beings look for a balance in a crumbling system— for a position of resistance against the dominant class, the gloves display the names of the Forbes 2015 billionaire list.

While Sala’s re-imaginations with found cultural objects relay a satirical, biting humor, Segura’s representations are sober and sublime, meditating on the phenomenology of violence, sociopolitical microclimates, and asymmetrical history. *An Act of Abuse of Power* is from a series of “erased” banners procured from Mexican protestors. Segura whitewashes the messages on these banners’ ranging slogans, stressing the futility and the small impact Mexican demonstrations, often organized by corrupt unions, have on established superstructures. The object that results is intended to evoke politicized pictorial practice, reflecting on language and its ephemeral yet contingent relationship to social interactions.

As *One of Eleven Million*, **Chloë Bass & George Scheer** confront the ineffectual flood of political discourse against the ever-worsening refugee crisis in Syria. Their 18’-long banner is a timeline of front-page *New York Times* headlines regarding the Syria crisis between August 21st, 2013 (the date of the Ghouta chemical attack) and December 7th, 2015 (the date of Donald Trump’s speech calling for a ban on all Muslim immigrants to the United States). Through the use of highlighted verbs, their banner emphasizes the language of movement, action and empathy in direct contrast to the continuous rise of refugee and displaced Syrians.

**Manuela Viera-Gallo** speaks to the flows of immigrant movement through sculptural installations that use her immigrant experience as the point of departure. *Constant Movement* challenges the border of the collective imagination, representing frontiers as open or closed movements. Emigrants and immigrants in search of a better future create a circle where the point of arrival is that of departure. Referencing traditions of ancient witchery, each object resembles an aggressive spiked trap: a spinning orbit of the boundaries of desire as a dangerous frontier concealing an empty treasure.

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Curator's Bio

Blanca de la Torre (b. 1977 in León, Spain)
Blanca de la Torre is an independent curator and art critic. Before 2009, she curated exhibitions internationally in cities such as New York, Prague, London and Madrid. From 2009 to 2013, she acted as Chief Curator at ARTIUM, Basque Museum-Center of Contemporary Art (Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain) where she organized the first European survey shows of artists such as Regina Jose Galindo, Katarina Zdjelar or Enrique Chagoya, as well as group shows like Video(s)torias or Montage of Attractions. At ARTIUM she directed projects with artists like Esther Ferrer, Jaime Davidovich, Santiago Sierra and Ignasi Aballí, among others. During her tenure, she conceived new exhibition programs as PRAXIS, based in recycling, process-oriented practices and DIY culture, which featured more than fifteen international artists and also the site-specific project series Grey Flag and Mutatis Mutandis.

Between 2014 and 2015, she curated a solo show by Eugenio Ampudia at the Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas in Madrid, Spain. She co-curated the exhibition trilogy Invisible Violence, which showed at MoCAB (Belgrade, Serbia), ARTIUM and Salzburger Kunstverein (Salzburg, Austria). Her critical writings have been included in several international publications among which the catalogues for the Spanish Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale and the Greek Pavilion for the 2015 Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space stand out. She has collaborated with periodicals such as INPUT (New York, USA) and Arte al Dia International (Miami, USA), among many others. She has participated in several talks, workshops, curatorial residencies and seminars held in a variety of international locations.

She recently curated There Is Only One Catch and That Is Catch 22 at Y Gallery (New York); Eugenio Ampudia: El futuro no es de nadie todavía at Centro de las Artes, Monterrey, and Museo Carrillo Gil, Mexico City; Cromática: Tania Candiani at Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Oaxaca (Oaxaca, Mexico) and the group show PIGS, travelling to different European venues. She is currently developing projects for NC-Arte (Bogotá, Colombia), (MUSAC, León) or LAZNIA, (Gdansk, Poland), among others.

Artists’ Bios

Cynthia Gutiérrez (Guadalajara, Mexico, 1978)
With a background in Visual Arts at the University of Guadalajara, Gutiérrez has had several solo exhibitions such as Coreografía del colapso, Proyecto Paralelo (2014, Mexico City), Notas de Carnaval, MAZ (2011, Mexico) and has participated in group exhibitions such as Clemanía, Frac des Pays de la Loire (2014, France); the Berlin Biennale 8, KW Institute for Contemporary Art (2014, Germany); Algunas Lagunas, Proyecto Paralelo (2013, Mexico City) and Crossing Boundaries, II Moscow International Biennale For Young Art (2010, Russia). In 2014 she received the Jóvenes Creadores FONCA grant. She was invited to the residency program at Frac des Pays de la Loire (2014, France).

Núria Güell (Girona, Spain, 1981)
Núria Güell uses her artwork for political and social activism, believing that art can push us to rethink ourselves as a society. Through installation, writing, performance, and video, Güell rethinks the ethics practiced by the large institutions that govern our society. Some of her projects have included publishing a book explaining how to expropriate money from a bank, entering into a marriage of convenience in order to give legal status to an individual, and creating a company to hire a construction worker to demolish doors to enable squatting. She graduated from the University of Barcelona with a degree in fine art and continued her studies under Tania Bruguera at the Museum of Arte Útil in Cuba. Her work has been exhibited in biennials in Havana, Pontevedra, Ljubljana, and Liverpool, as well as in the Print Triennial of Tallinn.

One of Eleven Million is a horizontally organized, digitally distributed artist project started by Chloë Bass (Brooklyn, NY) and George Scheer (Greensboro, NC). The project seeks to combat negative responses to President Obama’s statement that the U.S. will welcome 10,000 additional Syrian refugees beginning in 2016. One of Eleven Million’s first campaign placed figurines representing Syrian refugees into Nativity scenes across America, emphasizing the conflicted message of xenophobia during the holiday season. Their current action is a poetic representation of front page New York Times headlines about the Syria crisis, highlighting America’s lack of action as the number of refuge and displaced Syrians continues to grow. The project’s goal is simple: to increase U.S. support for Syrian refugees. Chloë Bass (b. New York, NY, 1984) is a conceptual artist working in performance, situation, publication, and installation. Her current project, The Book of Everyday Instruction, is an eight-chapter investigation into one-on-one social interaction. George Scheer (b. Atlanta, GA, 1980) is the co-founder and Director of Elsewhere, a living museum and artist residency set in a former thrift store in Greensboro, NC. George is a writer, scholar, and artist who fosters creative communities at the intersection of aesthetics and social change.
Avelino Sala (Gijón, Spain, 1972)
Based in Barcelona, he has participated in biennials such as the Biennial of Video Art of Puebla, in Mexico (2014); the Biennial of Istmo Centro Americano of Guatemala (2014); VideoZone. V biennial of Video art of Tel Aviv (2010); Nightcomers, 10 biennial of Istanbul (collateral 2007); Biennial of the Caracas Fire (2006) and the Poles Apart / Poles Together project, 51st Venice Biennale (Collateral 2005), among others. His work has been presented in national and international shows, in venues such as: Gallery Ponce+Robles, Madrid; Contemporary Art Centre la Spezia, Italy; Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, New York; Museum of Fine Arts of Asturias; Museum of Anthropology and Contemporary Art, MAAC in Guayaquil; Es Baluard Art Center, Palma de Mallorca; National Center for Contemporary Arts, NCCA, Moscow; Museum Marble of Carrara, Italy; Matadero, Madrid; Centre d'Art Le Lait Graulhet, Albi, France; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; among others. He has received grants and awards like Generaciones CajaMadrid (2003) UNESCO and the New York Foundation for the Arts for the Artport International Award Video in Basel (2007), the Royal Academy of Spain in Rome (2011) and Le Lait Art Center of Albi in France (2012), among others.

Joaquin Segura (Mexico City, Mexico, 1980)
Visual artist. Lives and works in Mexico City, Mexico. His action, installation, intervention and photographic work has been shown in solo and group exhibitions in Mexico, USA, Europe and Asia. Some spaces that have featured his work include Sala de Arte Público Siqueiros, Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, La Panadería and Museo Tamayo Arte Contemporáneo in Mexico City, along with El Museo del Barrio, Anthology Film Archives, White Box and apexart (New York, NY), LA –<ART, MoLAA (Los Angeles, CA) Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid, Spain), National Center for Contemporary Art (Moscow, Russia), the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, TX and the Museum of Contemporary Art of Denver, CO. His work has been widely reviewed & featured in local and international art publications & major newspapers such as Flash Art, Adbusters, Art Papers, Código, Art Nexus, Discipline, Celeste & The Washington Post, among many others. In 2008/09, Segura was an artist-in-residence at the International Studio & Curatorial Program, New York, NY and at the 18th Street Arts Center, Santa Monica, CA. Between 2012 and 2015, he undertook artistic residencies and research stays at Hangar –Centre de Producció i Recerca d’Arts Visuals (Barcelona, Spain), MeetFactory – International Center of Contemporary Art (Prague, Czech Republic), Impakt Foundation (Utrecht, Netherlands) and Casa Wabi (Oaxaca, Mexico). He’s a founding member and board advisor of SOMA, Mexico City.

Manuela Viera-Gallo (Rome, Italy, 1977)

EFA Project Space, launched in September 2008 as a program of The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, is a collaborative, cross-disciplinary arts venue founded on the belief that art is directly connected to the individuals who produce it, the communities that arise because of it, and to everyday life; and that by providing an arena for exploring these connections, we empower artists to forge new partnerships and encourage the expansion of ideas.

The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts (EFA) is a 501 (c) (3) public charity. Through its three core programs, EFA Studios, EFA Project Space and the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop, EFA is dedicated to providing artists across all disciplines with space, tools and a cooperative forum for the development of individual practice.

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