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Monument Lab Podcast

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Monument Lab Podcast

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The [Monument Lab podcast](#) is a podcast about public art and art history that reimagines monuments as tools for social and cultural change. The *Lab* has produced twenty-seven podcast episodes since its launch in 2018, ranging in duration from thirty-five minutes to nearly an hour and a half. Each podcast is available directly from the website or is downloadable to mobile devices via the Apple, Google, Spotify, and Stitcher podcast platforms.

Produced by a collective of artists and activists, the mission behind the podcast is to “disrupt the status quo of how monuments are made, preserved, and interpreted,” in order to lay the foundations for a more just, artful, and “joyful” future society. It covers all aspects of the evolving monument landscape and public history activism in the United States (and sometimes beyond our borders). The conviction driving these allied artists, historians, curators, educators, and students is that monuments represent systems of power as much as public memory. Monuments’ meanings are dynamic rather than frozen in time, rendering them open to interventions through collaborative public engagement. The *Lab*’s territory is the landscape of public memory in the United States, but their vision that “Monuments must change” is not limited by official borders.



EPISODE 15

Erasing the Border and the Wall in Our Heads with Social Sculptor Ana Teresa Fernández

Renowned artist and social sculptor Ana Teresa Fernández joins us to discuss her life growing up in Mexico and Southern California, and what happened when she painted the border near Tijuana. We also explore her continued artist’s practice at global border lines and crossing points for migrant families including the Mediterranean Sea, and her recent collaboration with writer and cultural geographer Rebecca Solnit.

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Podcasts serve up content with mobile convenience and the immediacy of voices inside one's head. The subject is as timely as it is fraught--socially, culturally, and politically. The podcast presenters are a diverse and inclusive roster of artists, activists, educators, historians, art curators, and civic organizers, among whom BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ voices predominate. But it's the breadth and scope of Monument Lab's discursive interrogation of what and how we commemorate human experience that is most exhilarating:

- Paul Ramírez Jonas, untangling the symbolism of the equestrian monument through a participatory project on New York City's High Line,
- The ceremonious removal of a Christopher Columbus statue from Los Angeles' Grand Park in 2018
- Artist Partirica Okoumou's protest climb of the Statue of Liberty in 2018, to draw attention to inhumane Trump Administration immigration policies.
- Syrian-led technologists archiving images and video of the war in their country, as testimony for future war crimes prosecutions.
- A teach-in at the university of Mississippi honoring Ida B. Wells.
- A public display of the Confederate Army's flag of surrender at Appomattox.
- The MADAD collective's critical mapping of the monuments of St. Louis
- A dive into the psychogeography of Emancipation Park in Houston,
- The evolutionary arc of the Museum of Capitalism, from an installation in Oakland, CA, to a traveling exhibit.
- A photographer's harrowing documentation of California wildfires.

On the website, listeners can adjust the speed of the audio stream, and a full transcript for each podcast is the accessibility icing on the audio 'cake.' To add images to the mix, each podcast introduction links to websites of featured artists, activist groups, and their projects.

Monument Lab podcasts are consistently well-produced, intellectually engaging, provocative, and potentially change-making. These resources are highly recommended for any culturally curious audience.