

The Contemporary Austin

JONES CENTER
700 Congress Ave., Austin, TX 78701

LAGUNA GLORIA
3809 W. 35th St., Austin, TX 78703

The Contemporary Austin Presents *Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago*

The artist's monumental sculpture will be on view at the museum's 12-acre sculpture park from April 4 – November 3, 2024.

Austin, TX (March 21, 2024) – The Contemporary Austin is thrilled to announce *Mariposa Relámpago*, a traveling installation created by the Salvadorian-born, New York-based transdisciplinary visual artist and healer Guadalupe Maravilla, on view from April 4 – November 3, 2024. The Contemporary Austin's presentation is organized by Alex Klein, Head Curator & Director of Curatorial Affairs. Originally commissioned by the Institute of Contemporary Art Boston in May 2023, *Mariposa Relámpago* debuted in Texas at Ballroom Marfa in late 2023 and, following the presentation at The Contemporary Austin's Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park at Laguna Gloria, the show will make its final stop in Texas at the Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston in November 2024.

Known for his sculptures and paintings incorporating natural materials and handmade objects, as well as his sound ceremonies, Guadalupe Maravilla's expansive practice draws from his personal history and Central American ancestry. Maravilla fled El Salvador's civil war as an unaccompanied minor and made a perilous journey through Central America to reunite with family in the United States, becoming a citizen in 2006. Later in life, he was diagnosed with colon cancer, an illness he links to generational trauma and the stresses of his migration experience. Throughout Maravilla's recovery process, he was introduced to ancient and contemporary healing methods. The artist has since continued to raise awareness of trauma and expand access to healing.

Maravilla has a connection with Austin that dates back to 2017 with a performance at Fusebox Festival titled [BOOM! BOOM! WHAMMM! SWOOSH!](#) Now, six years later, the artist will reunite with Austin's community, bringing his installation to The Contemporary Austin's Laguna Gloria in addition to debuting *Serpent of the Sun and the Moon*, a new large-scale bronze artwork commissioned by Fusebox and Waterloo Greenway created specifically for the Austin solar eclipse.

Maravilla's monumental sound-healing sculpture *Mariposa Relámpago* was born out of the artist's life history. Maravilla purchased a yellow school bus in El Salvador with the intention of re-tracing his migration route from El Salvador to the United States. The sculpture continues to travel to three locations in Texas. Equal parts sculpture, shrine, and healing instrument, the work was transformed from a school bus and elaborately reconstructed with hundreds of objects that speak to Maravilla's story. Now adorned with chrome plating, the bus features fringe made of cutlery and a range of objects imbued with spiritual, political, and medicinal meaning, from models of children's torsos, intended to reference the ghosts of those who first used the bus and those who have traversed across borders in search of safety, to symbols from Mesoamerican cosmology, Indigenous practices, and spiritual emblems, as well as contemporary imagery of disease and medicine. *Mariposa Relámpago* features gongs and other tonal objects suspended from its sides, which the artist activates during his sound ceremonies alongside a team of healers. These sessions, which Maravilla has hosted specifically for undocumented immigrants and cancer survivors, are known to reduce stress, anxiety, and trauma that physically

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manifests in the body from systematic abuse. The artist-led sound ceremonies will be held at each iteration of the work in Texas.

Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago's Texas tour comes at a time when the state is confronted with its own deep-seated, socio-political issues surrounding border control, immigration, and healthcare. With the humanitarian crisis with asylum seekers across the state, *Mariposa Relámpago* is presenting in a critical moment in Texas. Three leading institutions and respective curators—Ballroom Marfa in Marfa, The Contemporary Austin in Austin, and the Blaffer Art Museum in Houston—have come together in a unique collaboration that takes Maravilla's powerful installation across the state and invites visitors to simultaneously explore the notions of displacement and recovery, demonstrating the power of contemporary art to confront trauma and nurture healing. Outdoors in all three venues, the work welcomes public dialogue about immigration, healing, and the transformational potential that we all embody.

"It is an honor to bring Guadalupe Maravilla's most ambitious artwork to date, *Mariposa Relámpago*, to The Contemporary Austin's sculpture garden, Laguna Gloria, and in partnership with two other Texas organizations. At a moment when the debates around migration are rampant, it is especially meaningful to have this powerful artwork installed within the heart of Texas' capital city, where some of the most violent border policies are being mobilized. Maravilla's project—informed by his personal journey into the United States as a child and his path to becoming a cancer survivor—crucially offers our communities both as a space for reflection and an instrument for healing." said Alex Klein, Head Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs at The Contemporary Austin.

"We are so pleased to partner with Ballroom Marfa and the Blaffer Museum of Art at The University of Houston to bring Guadalupe's work to Texas. Situated on the majestic, meditative grounds of Laguna Gloria, *Mariposa Relámpago* will bring awe and wonder as well as a contemplative and healing experience—something we can all use more of these days," said Sharon Maidenberg, Ernest and Sarah Butler Executive Director and CEO, The Contemporary Austin.

Throughout *Mariposa Relámpago's* presentation, The Contemporary Austin will host a variety of celebrations and programming, including an unveiling reception and set of sound ceremonies with Maravilla during opening weekend. Additional festivities with the artist in Austin—by Waterloo Greenway and Fusebox—will culminate in the once-in-an-era eclipse on April 8, 2024. At each sound ceremony, Maravilla and healers will play the gongs, which are tuned to specific frequencies related to the earth and the moon, as well as wind and percussive instruments, to activate the work and create an immersive soundscape, restoring balance to those in attendance.

Further details on programming related to *Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago* are as follows. For the latest details, please visit <https://thecontemporaryaustin.org/>.

Thursday, April 4, 2024, at The Contemporary Austin – Laguna Gloria ***Mariposa Relámpago* Unveiling | 5-8pm**

Nested amongst the canopy of trees at Laguna Gloria, Guadalupe Maravilla will activate *Mariposa Relámpago*, acting as both a shrine and a sound healing instrument. This evening's reception to celebrate the unveiling of *Mariposa Relámpago* at The Contemporary Austin – Laguna Gloria is free and open to the public.

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The Contemporary Austin + Fusebox Sound Ceremonies

Location: The Contemporary Austin – Laguna Gloria

Friday, April 5, 2024 | 7-8:30pm | Public

Sunday, April 7, 2024 | 10-11:30am | Cancer Community

Sunday, April 7, 2024 | 3-4:30pm | Public

Come to Laguna Gloria for a healing sound ceremony led by Guadalupe Maravilla and other sound healers on Friday, April 5. For this immersive experience, Maravilla will activate *Mariposa Relámpago*, a sculpture he has turned into a large-scale vibrational healing instrument. Skip the line with advance registration or register upon walk-up. Audiences are welcome to sit or lie down on the grassy meadow and inside the bus. Please bring your own yoga mat or blanket. Chairs will be made available on a limited basis, upon request. Please note the session on Sunday, April 7, 10am is reserved for the healing of families and individuals affected by cancer.

Documentary Screening and Q+A with Guadalupe Maravilla

Location: The Contemporary Austin – Laguna Gloria

Thursday, October 10, 2024 | 6:30-8:30pm

The documentary *Mariposa Relámpago* narrates the mythology and spiritual journey around Guadalupe Maravilla's traveling installation. The film follows the sculpture's transformation process from a school bus to a healing instrument featuring the bus' migration across multiple international borders, its blessing inside a volcano, the FBI's involvement, and its future described by a Tarot card reader.

Mariposa Relámpago, Maravilla's installation, will be on view at The Contemporary Austin before and after the film and through November 3, 2024.

MEDIA CONTACT

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ABOUT GUADALUPE MARAVILLA

Combining sculpture, painting, performative acts, and installation, Guadalupe Maravilla (b. 1976) grounds his transdisciplinary practice in activism and healing. Engaging a wide variety of visual cultures, Maravilla's work is autobiographical, referencing his unaccompanied, undocumented migration to the United States due to the Salvadoran Civil War. Across all media, Maravilla explores how the systemic abuse of immigrants physically manifests in the body, reflecting on his own battle with cancer. Maravilla received his BFA from the School of Visual Arts and his MFA from Hunter College in New York. His work is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL; the Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo, Norway; and the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY, among others. He has received numerous awards and fellowships including a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, 2019; Soros Fellowship: Art Migration and Public Space, 2019; MAP Fund Grant, 2019; Franklin Furnace Fund, 2018; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Fellowship, 2018; Art Matters Fellowship, 2017; Creative Capital Grant, 2016; Joan Mitchell Emerging Artist Grant, 2016; and The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation Award 2003. He has presented solo exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; Museum of Contemporary

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Art, Denver, CO; Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo, Norway; Socrates Sculpture Park, New York, NY; P·P·O·W, New York, NY; and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL, among others. Maravilla's work was featured in *Drums Listen to the Heart: Part III*, Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco, CA in January 2023 and *soft and weak like water*, the 14th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, South Korea in April 2023. *Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago*, a solo exhibition featuring a newly commissioned immersive installation at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston's Watershed, was on view from May 25 - September 4, 2023. His work is currently on view in the 12th Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art: forms of the surrounding futures, Gothenburg, Sweden and the 35th Bienal De São Paulo: choreographies of the impossible, São Paulo, Brazil. Maravilla's solo exhibition, *Si no sanas hoy, sanarás mañana*, is currently on view at P·P·O·W in New York through April 6, 2024.

ABOUT THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN

As Austin's only museum solely focused on contemporary artists and their work, The Contemporary Austin offers exhibitions, educational opportunities, and events that start conversations and fuel the city's creative spirit. Known for artist-centric exhibitions and collaborations, The Contemporary invites exploration at both its urban and natural settings—downtown at the Jones Center (700 Congress Avenue) and lakeside at the Laguna Gloria campus (3809 West 35th Street), which includes the museum's Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park, with a growing program of commissions, temporary projects, and a permanent collection of outdoor sculptures by artists including Ai Weiwei, Terry Allen, Carol Bove, Sarah Crowner, Tom Friedman, Anya Gallaccio, Ryan Gander, Liam Gillick, Nancy Holt, Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler, Paul McCarthy, Wangechi Mutu, Tom Sachs, Monika Sosnowska, Jessica Stockholder, SUPERFLEX, Marianne Vitale, and Ursula von Rydingsvard. Learn more at thecontemporaryaustin.org.

Follow The Contemporary Austin on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

ABOUT BALLROOM MARFA

Founded in 2003 by Virginia Lebermann and Fairfax Dorn, Ballroom Marfa is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and a dynamic, contemporary cultural arts space housed in a converted dancehall that dates to 1927. Ballroom Marfa's mission is to serve international, national, regional, and local arts communities and support the work of both emerging and recognized artists working across all media: visual arts, film, music, and performance. As an advocate for the freedom of artistic expression, Ballroom Marfa's mission is to support the work of artists, musicians, and visionary thinkers of all backgrounds. We commission new work, collaborate across disciplines, and produce exhibitions, public artworks, performances, screenings, concerts, symposia, education programs, and publications.

Ballroom Marfa celebrates twenty years of working with and presenting visionary artists in Marfa and beyond. The 2023–24 season features special exhibitions, programs, commissions, and an anniversary book published with Phaidon | Moncelli Press. For more information, please visit Ballroom Marfa's [website](#), or follow on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [X](#).

ABOUT THE BLAFFER ART MUSEUM

The Blaffer Art Museum endeavors to further the understanding of contemporary art through exhibitions, publications, and public programs. As the gateway between the University of Houston's Central campus and the City of Houston, Blaffer Art Museum is a catalyst for creative innovation, experimentation, and scholarship. Its exhibitions and programs are free and open to the public, create community through dialogue and participation, and inspire an appreciation for the visual arts as a vital force in shaping

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contemporary culture. For more information, please visit the Blaffer Art Museum's **website**, or follow on **Instagram**, **X**, and **Facebook**.