



Map of the sites Montiel activated during her residency

Hyde ParkARTCENTER

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WXNDER WXRDS

Gallery 5
January 11 - February 21



Installation image from *Wxnder Wxrds*, monoprints, 25 x 18 inches each

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[Nuria Montiel is a wanderer.](#) Mobile, like one of her types, the Mexico City artist and printmaker is known to pack up her supplies and relocate temporarily to new, distant places. There, she exercises her participatory practice, which involves meeting people of all stripes, collecting words, and inviting them to join her in making prints.



The Middle, 2014, monprint, 25 x 18 inches

graphic designer and Bauhaus pioneer of grid-based modular typography, Jurriaan Schrofers (1926-1990) and a traditional type found in southeast Mexico that references Mayan architecture.

Montiel mobilized her project across Chicago, crossing neighborhood thresholds on foot, by bicycle, and on public transportation to connect with organizations, including The Franklin (Garfield Park), Sweet Water Foundation (Englewood), Jane Addams Hull House (Greektown), National Museum of Mexican Art (Pilsen), The Odyssey Project (Hyde Park), Chicago Art Department (Pilsen), among others, inviting participants to play with language and engage in collective printmaking. Montiel worked with a multigenerational group of teachers, students, and artists onsite at these organizations and inside her Art Center studio to share words, selecting the most resonant ones to ink up and print. As a reflection of the linguistic give-and-take, prints are in English and Spanish and have no set paper orientation; an upside-down reading is equivalently legible.

Inspired by Brazilian educator and philosopher Paulo Freire's (1921-1997) pedagogy connecting knowledge and literacy to social change and action, Montiel turns every social encounter into an opportunity to learn, hoping that "the written word can be

During the Fall of 2014, Montiel spent ten weeks in Chicago as part of Hyde Park Art Center's Jackman Goldwasser Residency. She criss-crossed the city to introduce her printmaking practice and collaborate with various communities, producing eight new series of relief prints which comprise *Wxnder Wxrds*.

The roving printmaking project continues a previous initiative, *La Imprenta Móvil*, a mobile cart Montiel would take to demonstrations to collect and print slogans alongside protesters. The project began in Mexico in 2010, and was adapted for operation in New York in 2012 and in 2014 for her residency here. The Chicago version features a unique set of letterpress types which Montiel developed and cut specifically for the city. The monprints on view feature Montiel's original "Bauhaus-Chicago" font, which combines traits from the letterforms of Dutch



"Bauhaus-Chicago" letterpress types by Nuria Montiel.

understood as action." Galvanizing Freire's theoretical work, Montiel forged an important collaboration with artist and DePaul professor Jim Duignan along with a group of Chicago art teachers for a Printing Pedagogy workshop, which highlighted the importance of experiential learning to Montiel's own practice. Montiel is an active participant in Mexico's student movement and strong education proponent. In printmaking sessions, she acted as a guide but was always involved in process, embodying the *method of learning through doing*.

Montiel rearranged and retooled words like *risk*, *corruption*, *free space*, and *hope*, re-envisioning prints as visual poems following each workshop. She often returned to the sites of collaboration to wheat-paste prints on abandoned buildings and other public spaces, as a reminder of the collective work done at those locations. By pasting them up in public, Montiel gave the prints another life, mobility and connection to new audiences through their messages.

Since the Enlightenment period, printmaking has made possible easy reproduction and dissemination of information to wide audiences. For Montiel, each print is not simply a duplication, but a handmade reflection of a collective process that contains within it the potential of mobilizing the masses.

Text by Megha Ralapati

Biography:

Nuria Montiel began her training at Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas (ENAP-UNAM) and continued her studies in contemporary art at SOMA, an artist organization dedicated to pedagogy based in Mexico City. Montiel's work has been presented in group exhibitions, including *Panamericana* curated by Jens Hoffman at Galería Kurimanzutto, Mexico City; *Jardín de Academus* curated by José Miguel González Casanova at Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City; *Ésto no es un museo, artefactos móviles al acecho*, AcVic Barcelona; 2012 New York Art Book Fair at MoMA PS1, New York; and at the Kunstverein Munchen, Mexico City. In 2012, Montiel participated in the International Studio and Curatorial Program residency program in New York City. Since 2010, Montiel has collaborated with artist Abraham Cruzvillegas for La Galería de Comercio, a non-profit initiative that presents monthly public-art projects in Mexico City.

The Jackman Goldwasser Residency

Started in 2012, The Jackman Goldwasser Residency at Hyde Park Art Center catalyzes networks by connecting global artists to the unique resources and opportunities offered by Chicago, deepening the engagement between local and international contemporary art practices. The program provides a platform for international, national, and local artists to take creative risks within their practice and expand their professional networks through residencies, for which the Art Center facilitates the relationship between resident artists amid the city's diverse publics.



AgriFarm, 2014, monprint, 25 x 18 inches