

Ana-Teresa Fernández.

Reuters

Factbox: Eight artists spotlighting the human cost of migration

By Kate Ryan

NEW YORK (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - Videos of children playing on fluorescent pink seesaws on the U.S.-Mexico border - an art project to highlight the impact actions on one side have on the other - were shared by thousands of people on social media this week.

As countries around the world battle over the politics of migration, here are eight major public art projects that have tackled the issues faced by migrants, refugees and their families:

- French artist JR installed a massive photograph of a Mexican baby that appeared to be peering over the U.S. border in 2017, the same week President Donald Trump moved to end amnesty for undocumented immigrants brought to the country as children.

- Anonymous British artist Banksy painted a mural in 2015 of Apple founder Steve Jobs carrying a bag and a computer on the wall of the “Jungle” migrant camp in Calais, France. Jobs was the son of a Syrian immigrant.

- Chinese artist Ai Weiwei in 2016 covered the pillars of Berlin’s Konzerthaus concert hall in 14,000 life vests from refugees who had

arrived on the Greek island of Lesbos. The journey has proven deadly for thousands of people.

- From 2013, U.S. artist Joel Bergner traveled to Za'atari Syrian refugee camp in Jordan to create murals with children on the caravans and buildings where they lived about their hopes for the future, memories of home and issues like water conservation.

- In Mexican-born artist Ana Teresa Fernandez's "Borrando la Frontera" ("Erasing the Border") project, volunteers painted the fence between the United States and Mexico sky blue, creating the illusion that there was no barrier between them.

- Artist and activist Salma Zulfiqar worked with refugee women from Yemen, Somalia, Senegal, Syria and elsewhere to create "The Migration Blanket" in 2018 to illustrate their struggles to integrate in Birmingham, central England.

- In 2015, U.S. artist Michelle Angela Ortiz created the "Familias Separadas" ("Separated Families") mural series to tell the stories of detained and deported families in Pennsylvania, including one installation in front of the immigration agency.

- One year after the Trump administration ordered immigrant children be separated from their parents on the border in 2018, Paola Mendoza erected a statue of a woman reaching out to a small boy trapped in a cage outside Congress on Capitol Hill.

Sources: Reuters, United Nations refugee agency, Instagram, International Organization for Migration

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