

CultureStrike to Host Event on Central American Migration



Migrants ride on top of a northern bound train toward the US-Mexico border in Juchitan, southern Mexico, Monday, April 29, 2013. Migrants crossing Mexico to get to the U.S. have increasingly become targets of criminal gangs who kidnap them to obtain ransom money. (AP Photo/Eduardo Verdugo)

The pro-immigration magazine [CultureStrike](#) in collaboration with [Verso Books](#) and [Impact Hub Oakland](#) will be hosting “Before the Destination: Migrations from Central America to the United States,” in an effort to shed light on the dangers that Central American immigrants face on their journey to the United States. The multidisciplinary event scheduled for Saturday, December 7, 2013 will feature the work of award winning journalist Óscar Martínez, photographer Edu Ponces and artist [Favianna Rodriguez](#).

Martínez, author of “The Beast: Riding the Rails and Dodging Narcos on the Migrant Trail,” will be doing a reading from his book. In October 2013 he was featured in NPR’s [Alt.Latino](#) show for his work in documenting the story of Central American’s who

travel through Mexico to the U.S. border on freight trains known as *La Bestia*.

Ponces is an award winning, Spanish, photojournalist whose work has centered largely on the topic of migration. He co-authored the book "*En el Camino: Mexico, la Ruta de los Migrantes Que no Importan* (On the Way: Mexico, The Route of the Migrants Who do Not Matter)." Ponce's exhibit will focus on the experiences of women on the Train, who face additional risk factors.



Artist Favianna Rodriguez at the pro-immigration event "Face to Face: Action. Healing. Solidarity" in collaboration with French artist JR and his project Inside Out, on Thursday, July 25, 2013 in Oakland, Calif. (Photograph by: Natalie Rodriguez)

Rodriguez is an interdisciplinary artist and activist. She is an international lecturer, coordinator of CultureStrike and co-founder of the national organization, Presente.org. Her work will be present via an art installation.

Despite the many dangers of making the trip from Central America to the U.S. through Mexico via freight train, according to [The New York Times](http://TheNewYorkTimes.com), the number of American arrests of

undocumented immigrants from Central American countries increased from 46, 997 in 2011 to 94,532 in 2012.

The event will take place at The Hub Oakland located at 1423 Broadway Ave., Oakland, Calif.; from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Admission will be free. Register for the event via the [Facebook Event](#) page or through [Eventbrite](#).



A group of Central American migrants read the news of their ordeal from a local newspaper outside of a shelter after they were attacked on the freight train they were riding through Mexico, in Acayucan, Mexico, Thursday, May 2, 2013. The United States-bound migrants had hopped on the train in southern Mexico and were traveling through the Gulf Coast state of Veracruz when attackers shot and cut them with machetes. Some jumped from the train to escape and others were thrown off, said migrants' rights activist Tomas Gonzalez Castillo. At least 10 Honduran migrants are recovering from wounds suffered in the attack. (AP Photo/Felix Marquez)

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[International Artist Show The Faces of Migrants Through Face to Face: Action. Healing. Solidarity](#) from [Natalie Rodriguez](#) on [Vimeo](#).

On Thursday, July 25, 2013 artist

International Artists Show the faces of Migrants

Favianna Rodriguez and CultureStrike hosted [Face to Face: Action. Healing. Solidarity](#) in collaboration with [Ted Prize winning](#), photographer [JR](#) and his project [Inside Out](#) and [HUB Oakland](#). The goal of the project is to show the faces of migrants and their allies in “dignified ways.” Black and white poster-sized portraits were taken in a mobile photo booth, printed and put together to cover a large white wall at 2323 Broadway Ave. in Oakland, Calif.

Rodriguez is an internationally recognized artist who has become involved in the pro-reform debate on immigration at a [national level](#). She is also the [coordinator](#) of CultureStrike. According to Rodriguez, CultureStrike is a national organization that organizes “artist and musicians and filmmakers around migrant rights.”

Julio Salgado, CultureStrike network coordinator says that the event is meant to “put a face to the migrant and people of color community.”

Rodriguez says that the project is “about honoring our beauty and our resiliency as a community.” She says, “There’s many Trayvon Martin’s, there’s many Oscar Grants, and there’s also people being deported every single day, over a thousand deportations a day.” Rodriguez explains the excitement about JR’s participation in the project and at the fact that “we’re able to really send a message to the entire country that black and Latino communities can come

together.”

JR is a French artist who exhibits his black and white portraits around the world. His project [Inside Out](#) began in 2011. Portraits that are a part of the project have been exhibited in countries like Brazil, Mexico, Haiti, Italy, Thailand and Pakistan.

More than 10 volunteers helped with the project throughout the day. By approximately 2 p.m., more than 50 people had already participated by having their pictures taken. The wall on which the portraits were placed belongs to [HUB Oakland](#), which according to their website, is a “physical space where community leaders and social entrepreneurs can join together, cross pollinate, bloom and thrive.”

According to [The Pew Research Hispanic Center](#), there are currently an estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. The Senate passed the immigration reform bill in June.