

The Cloud

A Project by Alfredo Jaar for inSITE 2000

1.

The US-Mexican border embodies an enormous social inequality and an astounding disequilibrium of political and economic power.

2.

One of the greatest ironies at the dawn of the 21st Century is that as economic globalization is being celebrated as the triumph of international capitalism across frontiers, the border between Mexico and the United States has seen implemented the most draconian military measures in its history designed to prevent immigrant workers from crossing the same "open frontiers".

3.

An obscene amount of manpower and resources has been poured in recent years in an effort to stem the flow of undocumented immigrants.

Today, more than 3,000 Border Patrol agents are patrolling the 66-mile border in San Diego County alone.

These agents have implemented military-style tactics to seal the border. They have erected miles and miles of high-security fencing, buried thousands of motion sensors along border trails and deployed dozens of helicopters equipped with infrared detectors.

4.

In the last decade alone, it is estimated that more than three thousand people have died trying to cross the border. These deaths have been the result of shootings by US Immigration Officials, drowning, extreme climatic conditions, and automobile accidents, some of them caused by high-speed chases by the Border Patrol.

5.

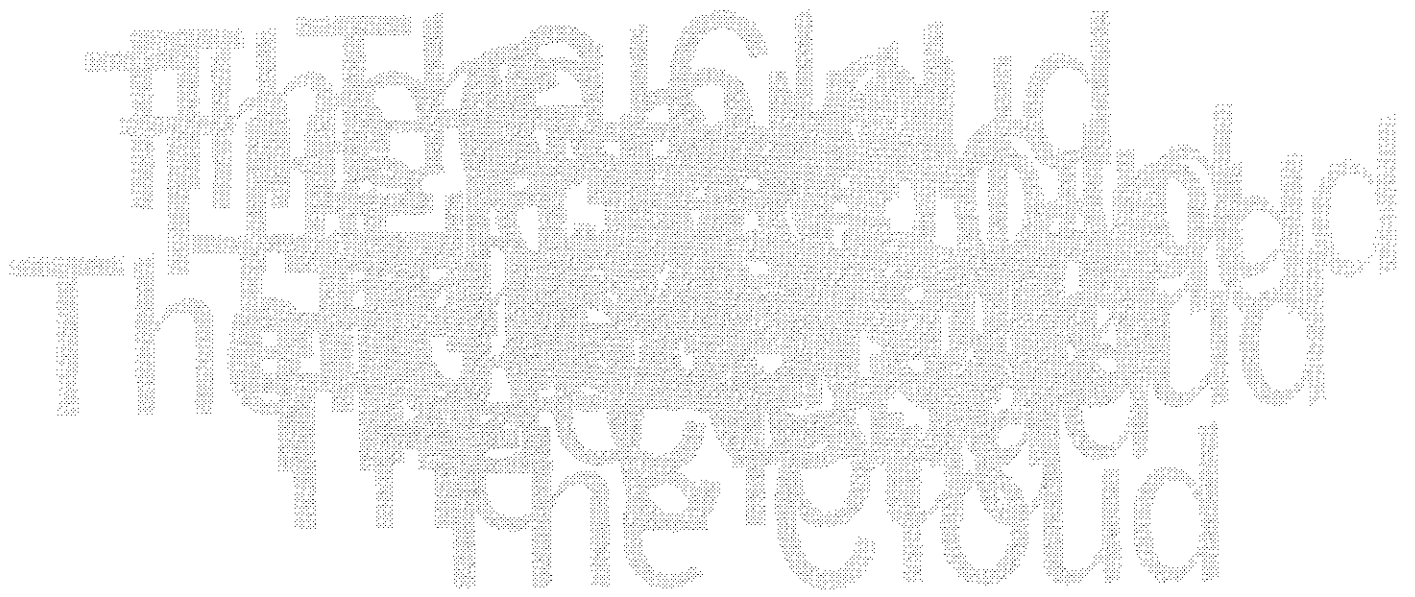
It is an unacceptable tragedy that in the 21st Century people still die trying to simply cross a border between two countries.

6.

For inSITE2000,
I propose to create
a monument in the
memory of those
who died trying
to cross the border.

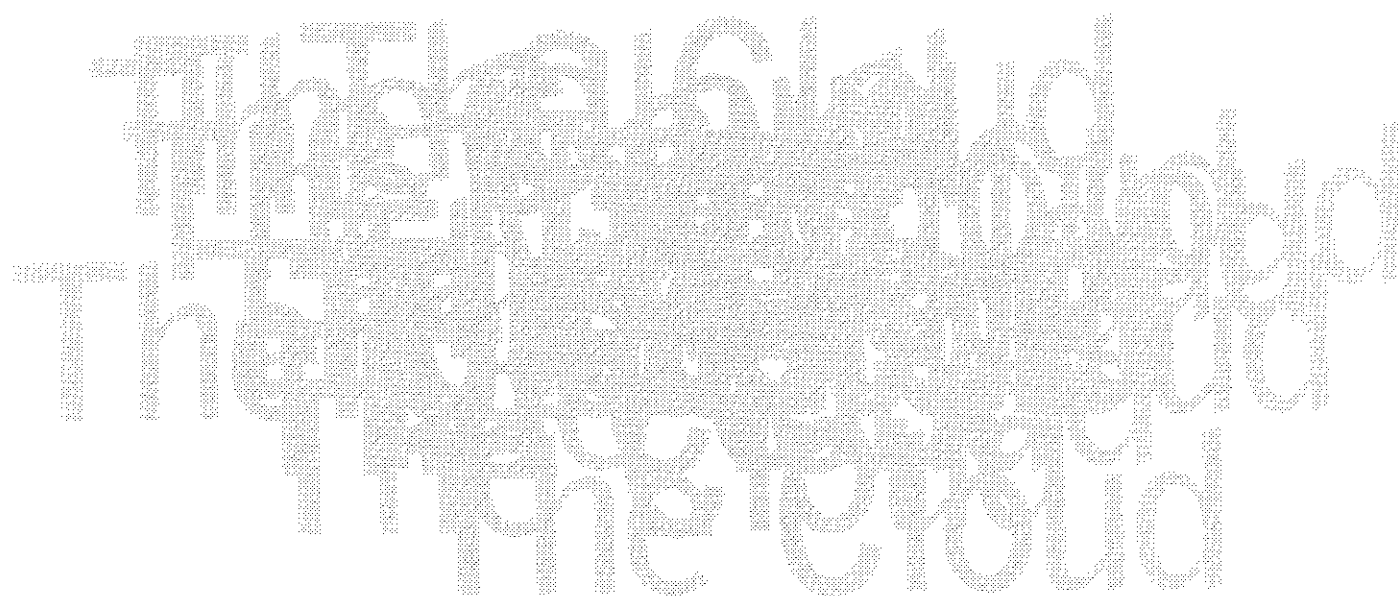
It will be titled
The Cloud.

The crowd



A.

The Cloud is a monument, a memorial for the victims of the border crossing. The Cloud will be suspended exactly above the border line, one side hovering above the Mexican side, the other side above the U.S side. The Cloud is ephemeral, and the wind will take the cloud away.



B

The Cloud will consist of approximately one thousand inflatable white globes. These globes will be fabricated with heavy duty plastic and stamped with the names of all known victims of the border crossing. When possible, relatives of the victims will execute the stamping of the name of their loved ones. The ink to be used is light gray. Once inflated with helium, all globes will be attached together creating a cloud shape. **The Cloud** will be released exactly on the border, and will remain suspended at approximately 1000 feet from the earth. It will stay linked to the ground thanks to heavy duty invisible cords grounded on both sides of the border. A dedication and launching ceremony will take place on the day of the launching, in the presence of relatives of the victims. Twenty four hours later, the connection will be removed by some of these relatives and **The Cloud** will vanish in the sky.

