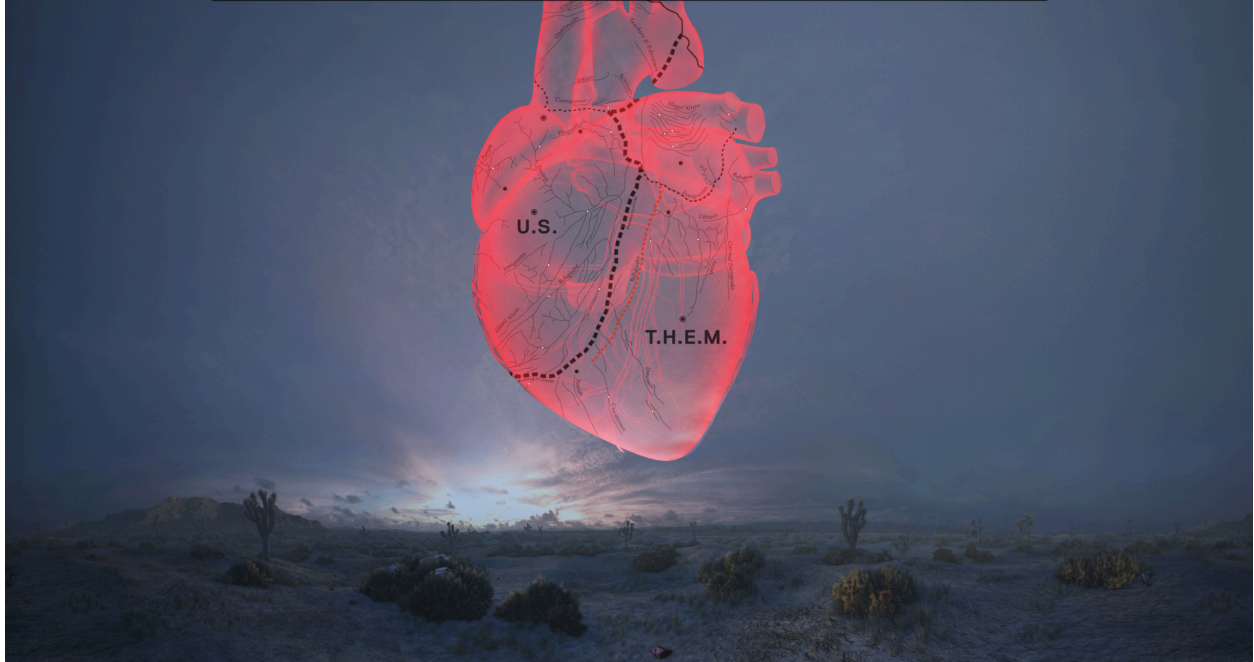


Visualizing the U.S.-Mexico Border

Instructor: Nike Nivar Ortiz ▪ nivar@usc.edu

USC-Mellon Digital Humanities PhD Fellow

- USC undergraduate students will receive a \$1,500 stipend for course completion
- Non-credit course taught by a USC Mellon Digital Humanities Ph.D. Fellow
- Tutorials meet twice a week for two-hour long sessions from June 4-28, 2018



Publicity image from Alejandro Iñárritu's 2017 virtual reality installation *CARNE y ARENA (Virtually present, Physically invisible)*—now on view at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

The U.S. Secure Fence Act of 2006 has financed more than 700 miles of fortifications dividing the United States from Mexico at a cost of up to \$16 million per mile; it is the most expensive architectural project in the United States in the 21st century. In spite of this period of hyper construction and militarization of the border, crossings have steadily increased with human rights groups reporting a rise in the number of deaths since 2006. The border wall appears to be an ineffective gatekeeper, but it undoubtedly has important significance as a place of proximity between two countries and their peoples. This course will investigate the U.S.-Mexico border beyond the official discourses of the state, and explore the many ways we can visualize it through art, literature, film, and critical theory. We will ask what discourses are inscribed in the concept of a border wall and what transgressions are possible in thinking about border politics outside the logic of the state. Course materials include Oscar Martínez's *The Beast: Riding the Rails and Dodging Narcos on the Migrant Trail* (2014), Alex Rivera's *Sleep Dealer* (2014), Rael San Fratello's *Recuerdos (Souvenirs)* (2011), and Wendy Brown's *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (2010), among others. This course will stress both theory and practice, exploring the potential of digital tools to intervene in the ossified political discourses around the border wall. Students will collaborate on a media-rich Scalar project that builds on course materials and class discussions.

Application Procedure: Interested undergraduates should send a CV/Resume and a cover letter explaining their academic experience and interest in the course to digitalhumanities@dornsife.usc.edu by March 30, 2018.