

## **Curatorial Statement**

As a curator of contemporary art, I personally believe that, while museums have a responsibility to educate and inspire the public through the display of art, they can also function as challenging sites of critical discourse and agents for positive social change. It is with this in mind that I first proposed the traveling exhibition “When Home Won’t Let You Stay: Art and Migration,” for presentation at Mia as a way for our institution to engage with the urgent issues of migration and forced displacement facing the world today.

The exhibition seeks to look at migration and the unprecedented displacement of peoples in the 21<sup>st</sup> century from the point of view of artists, and to give a platform to artists’ perspectives. As such, there are works in this exhibition that may cause emotional pain or (re)traumatize viewers with lived experience of immigration and/or forced displacement. These artworks also pose challenging questions, engage audiences in difficult conversations, provide an opportunity to think deeply about ideas, and perhaps even shift assumptions and perspectives in some way.

Adapting this exhibition to the needs of an encyclopedic museum and its diverse audiences has been a thought-provoking exercise in curatorial practice--catalyzing complex questions around whose stories are told, how, by whom, and at whose expense. We all are implicated in the global narratives of migration and displacement facing the world today, and unfortunately, there are no easy answers. My hope is that artistic responses to such difficult and timely issues can challenge viewers to empathize with a multiplicity of positions and experiences on the topic of global migration and forced displacement. Hopefully we can recognize what we have in common and work to deeply understand and celebrate our differences.

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