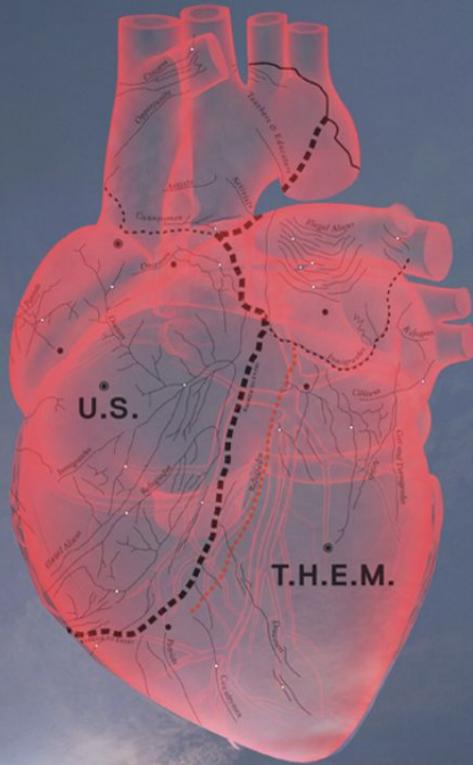


Alejandro G. Iñárritu
CARNEYARENA

(Virtualmente presente, Físicamente invisible)



A VR installation by
Alejandro G. Iñárritu
Five-time Academy Award®-winner

In collaboration with cinematographer
Emmanuel Lubezki
Three-time Academy Award®-winner



CARNEyARENA

(Virtually present, Physically invisible)

An experience about

**The human condition
of immigrants and refugees**



Trailer





Director's Statement

During the making of this project, I had the privilege of meeting and interviewing many Mexican and Central American immigrants and refugees. I invited some of them to participate in this project so that their personal journeys would not be just a statistic for the rest of us, but would instead be seen, felt, heard, and experienced by others.

There are no actors here.

These are true stories reenacted by the people who experienced them. Even some of the clothes they wear are pieces that they wore while crossing the border. This project has grown in my mind over four years and my main interest was to experiment with VR technology in order to explore the human condition while finding a personal way to represent it.

No experience in *Carne y Arena* will ever be the same for any visitor. We created a truthful alternate space where you as a visitor will walk alongside the immigrants (and into their minds) with infinite possibilities and perspectives within a vast landscape, but you will go on your own terms.

In collaboration with Emmanuel Lubezki and ILMxLAB, pushing the technology to a very high level, we digitally documented their undocumented accounts as they created their own photorealistic avatars.

The experience was cathartic and emotional. After many years, their memories finally have a public face.

I NARRAU



CARNE y ARENA

Based on true accounts, *Carne y Arena* is a virtual reality installation where the lines between subject and bystander are blurred and bound together, allowing individuals to walk in a vast space and thoroughly live a fragment of the immigrants personal journey.

Carne y Arena holds the distinguished honor of being the *first ever VR project to receive an Academy Award*, as The Board of Governors of Academy Motion Picture Arts and Sciences voted to present *Carne y Arena* with a Special Award - an Oscar statuette - "in recognition of visionary and powerful experience in storytelling."



A red-tinted anatomical heart is centered in the frame, overlaid with a map of the United States. The map shows a network of roads and a prominent dashed line. The text 'U.S.' is visible on the left side of the heart, and 'T.H.E.M.' is visible on the right side. A black horizontal banner with white text is positioned across the middle of the heart.

INSTALLATION REQUIREMENTS

Installation Specifications

Requirement: 7,000 ft

→ Floor Space: 86' X 79'

Ceiling height

→ 15' minimum (18' is ideal)

Throughput

→ 3 concurrent visitors

→ Maximum of 12 people per hour

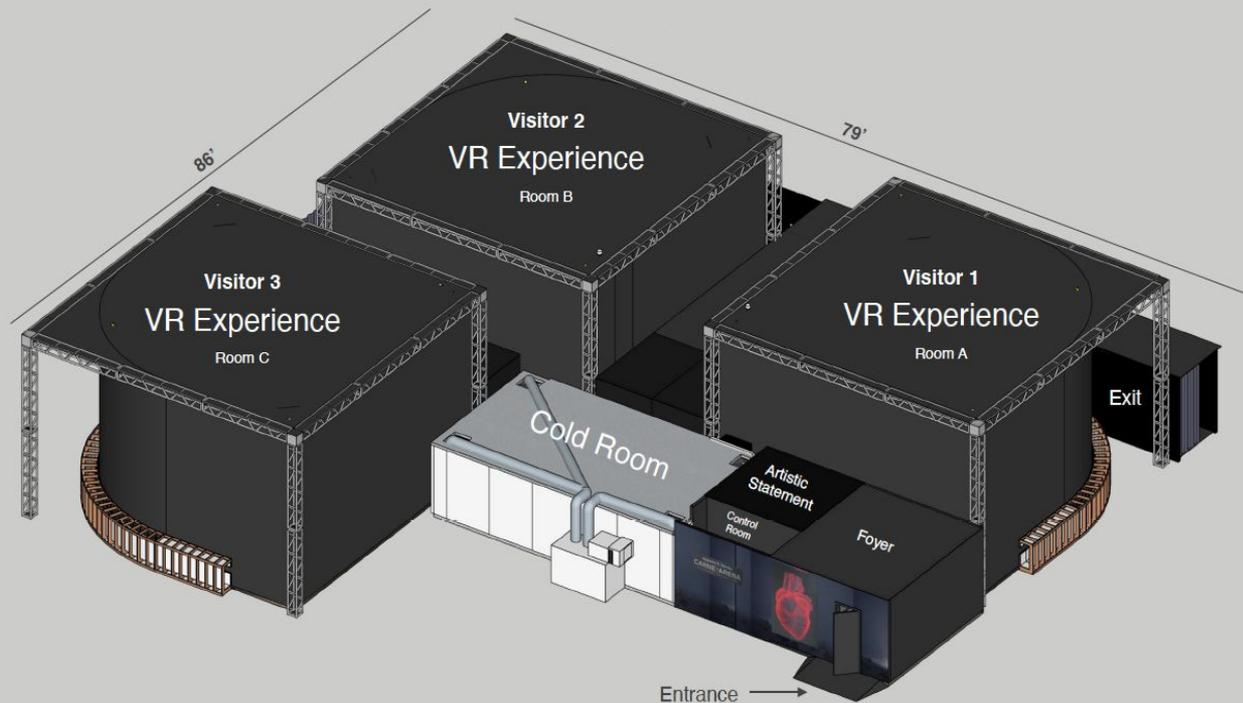
Duration

→ 20-minute CYA experience

→ Portrait gallery experience

Accessibility

→ Reduced mobility accessible



Option A

Rigging from ceiling or beams

For fabric ceilings and walls, lighting, wind units and sensors

Option B

Self supported truss structures

As shown here

Experience Flow

Foyer & Check-In

→ 3 minutes

Artist Statement Room

→ 3 minutes

Cold Room

→ 3 minutes

Briefing & VR Gear

→ 1 minute

VR Experience

→ 8 minutes

VR Gear Removal

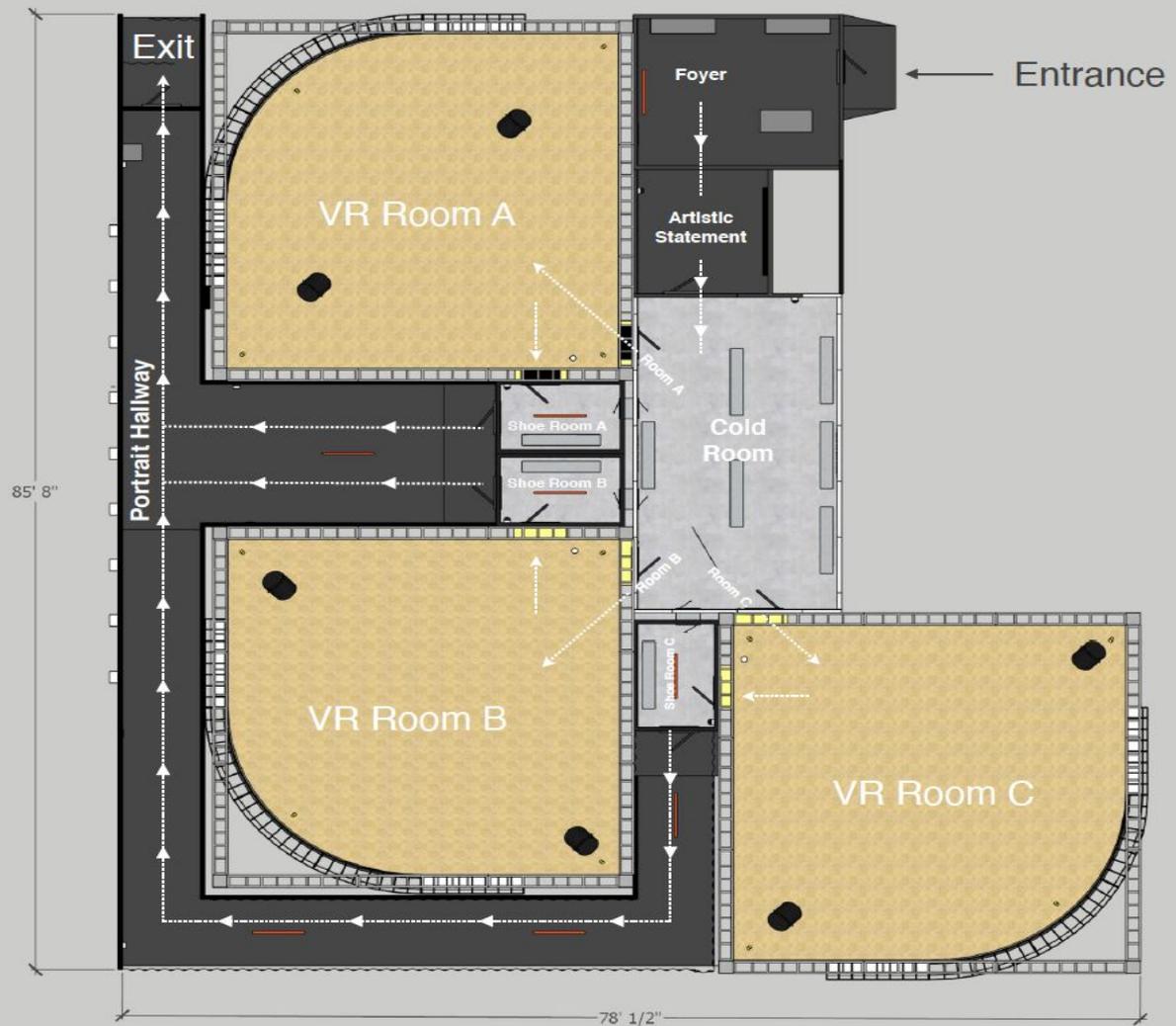
→ 1 minute

Shoe Room

→ 2 minutes

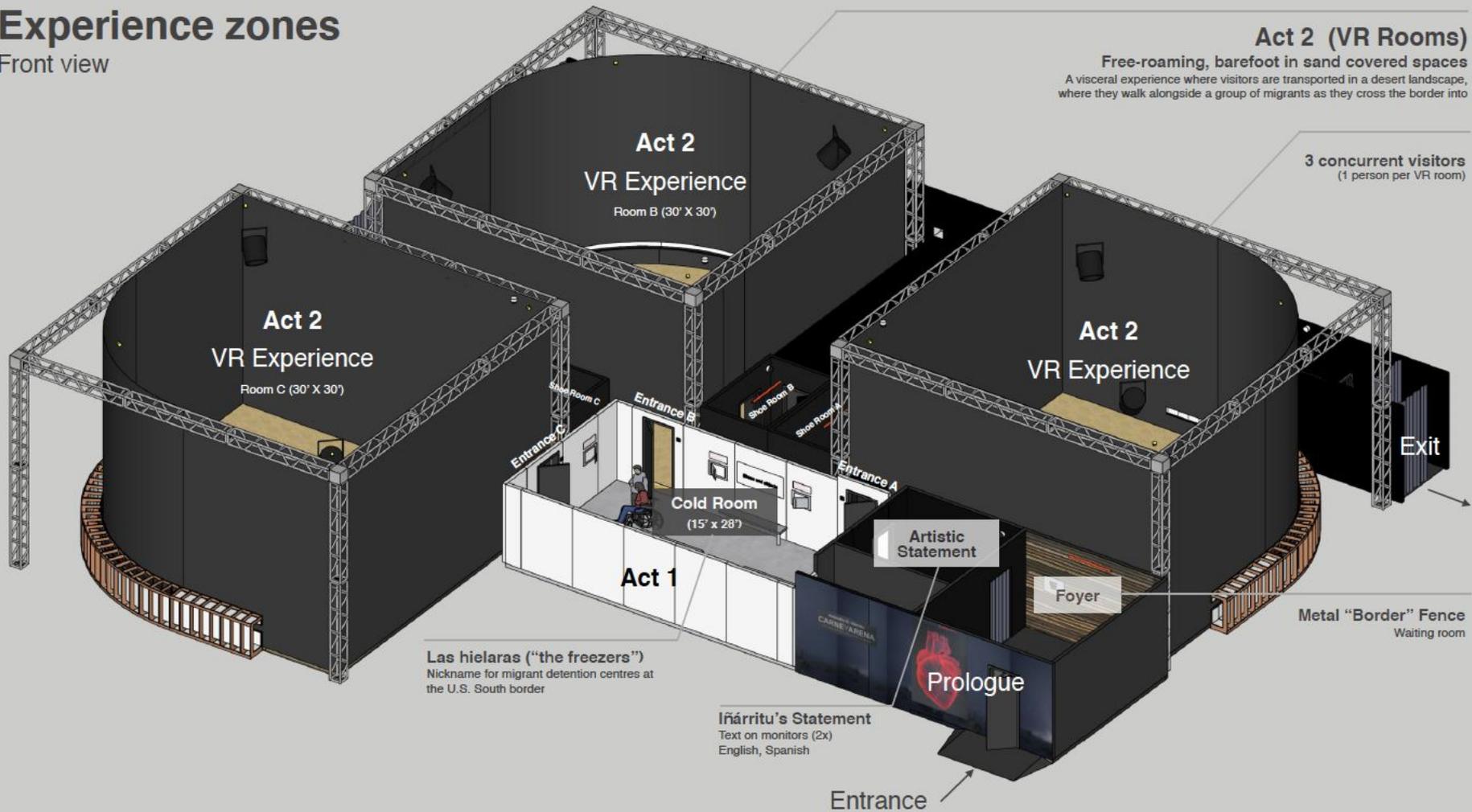
Portrait Hallway & Exit

→ At each guests individual speed



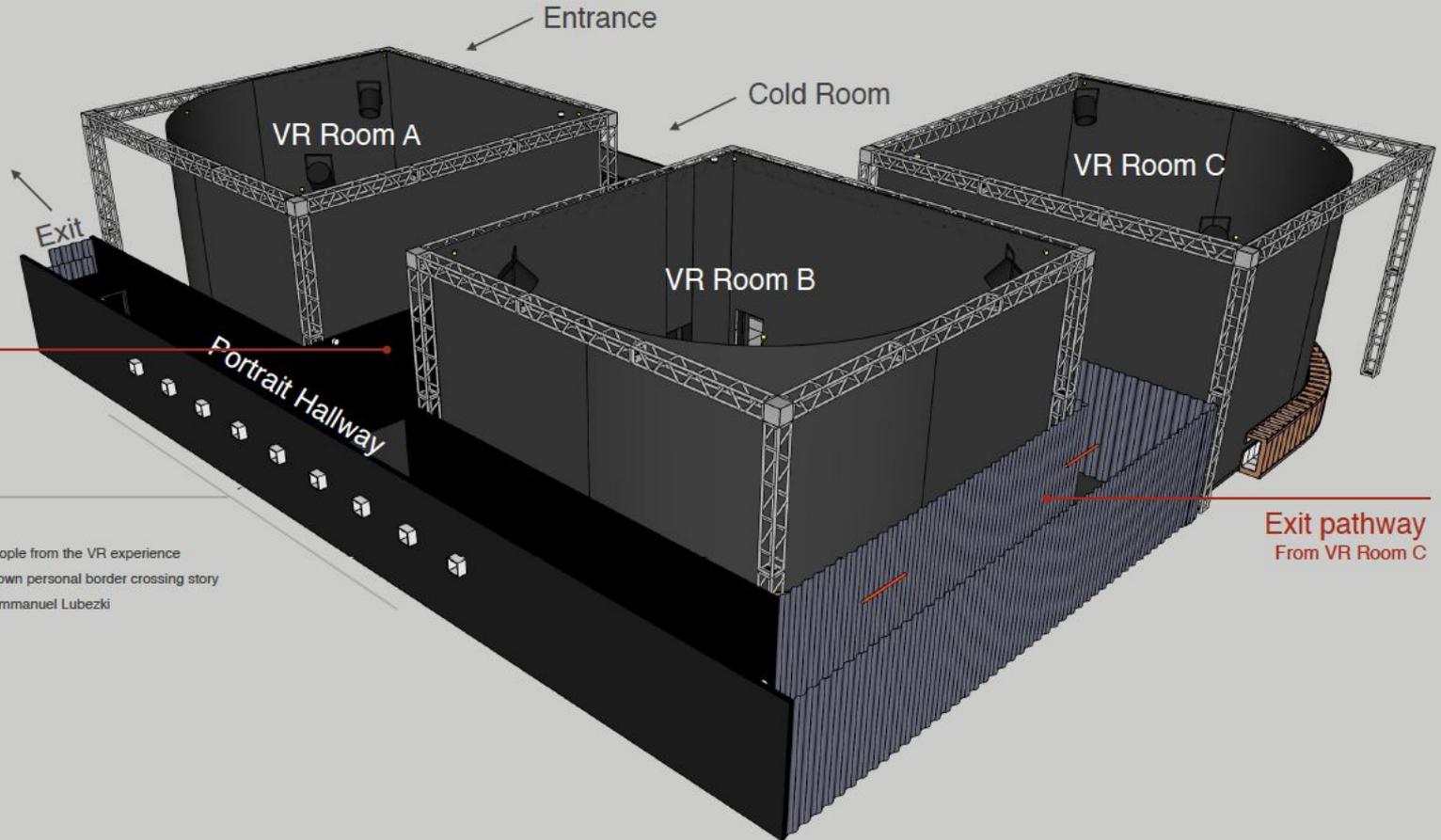
Experience zones

Front view



Experience zones

Rear view



Exit pathway
From VR Rooms A & B

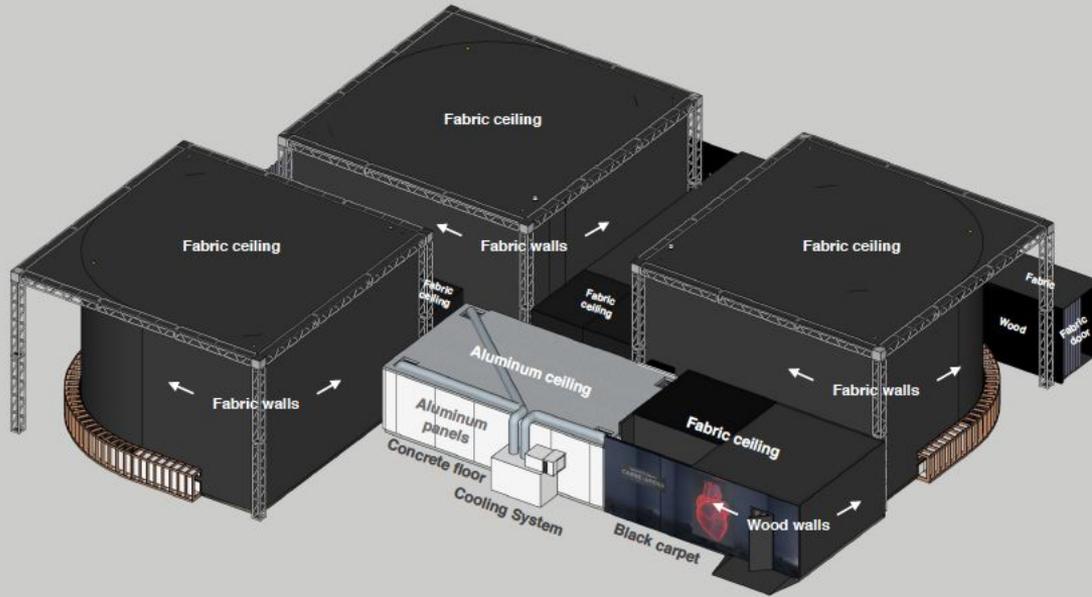
9 video monitors

- Short video portraits about people from the VR experience
- Fragments of each migrant's own personal border crossing story
- Slow motion videos shot by Emmanuel Lubezki

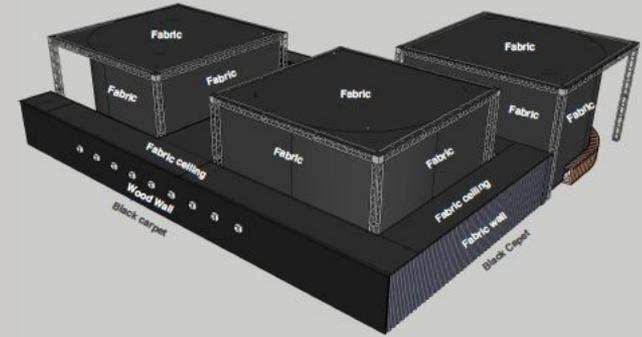
Exit pathway
From VR Room C

Materials

Front View



Rear View



Notes

- Wood walls are painted with fire-retardant paint
- Curtain walls and ceilings: Fire retarding fabric with NFPA 701 certification (Rosebrand's "Melt out" or "smoke out" fabric for ceilings)
- The Cold Room is entirely closed, walls and ceiling in aluminium panels
- Floor in some rooms (Foyer, Artistic Statement, Cold Room, Shoe Rooms): 4 inches riser and wood panels (with fire-retardant paint) covered with carpet

Security

- Fire exit signs in all rooms
- Security cameras in all rooms linked to the master control room with a full-time attendant during operations
- Emergency lights in all rooms

VR Room Set-Up

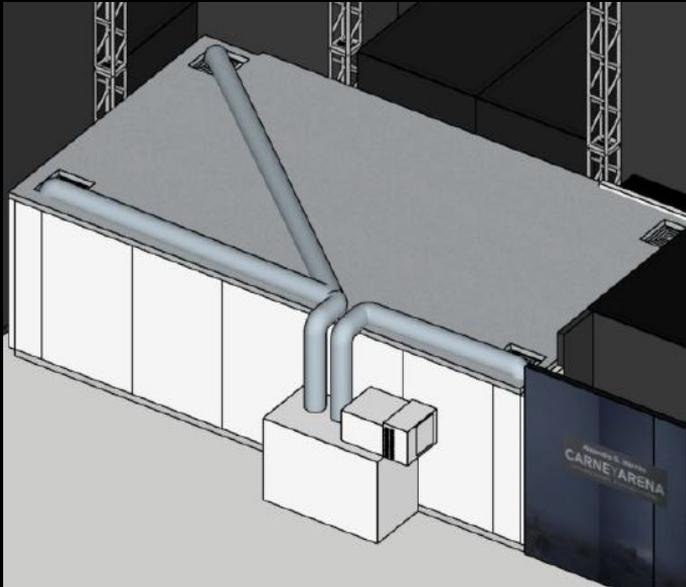
- 3 inches of sand needed in each VR experience rooms (3x)
- Total of 700 ft of sand (30 metric tons)
- 25 lbs per ft
- Spread on a plastic sheet over a geotextile membrane to protect floors
- Easy access for loading in and disposal
- Required: forklift access, space for disposal at close



Cold Room

→ Cooling system to maintain Cold Room temperature at 50 degrees F as part of the experience

→ Power requirement: 120V/20 amps



Truss Structure

→ 3 black 12''x 12'' truss structures with an inside of 30'

→ Ideally, suspended from ceiling on chain blocks or standing truss columns of 16'

→ At the minimum:

- Version 1: 12 black trusses of 12''x12'' of 10' length + 12 corner blocks + 12 chain blocks (if suspension)
- Version 2: + 24 black trusses 12''x12'' of 8' and 12 base plates of 24''x 24''

Lighting + Audio

Cold Room

→ Very bright white LED lights

Corridors

→ Low voltage orange LED neon lights

Foyer, Artistic Statement Rooms

→ Dimmed LED lights

Emergency Exit Lights

→ Dimmed LED lights

Audio

→ Ambient sounds

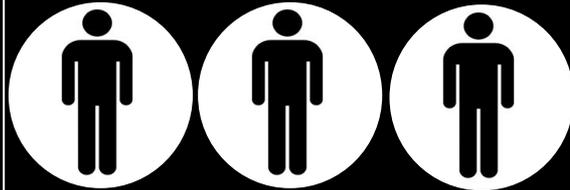


On-Site Team



Backstage Manager

To oversee the day to day running of the show and managing the onsite team. Will also be responsible to prepare the show for start up each day, to monitor all equipment and provide any fixes during daily operations. Will play the shift breakers as required depending on operational hours/model.



Lead Host x 3

They are responsible for getting the guests ready for their experience in the VR space and monitor the guests throughout the experience (onboarding and offboarding). Preparing the guests and applying the sanitation protocol to the gear in between each guest.



Front of House - ticket office

First point of contact for the participant, the front of the House is responsible for welcoming guests, scanning tickets, inviting them to wait until we are ready to start the experience.



GUEST REACTIONS & PRESS

Guest Reactions

"What a profound and beautiful work of art. It will haunt me forever"

- **Thomas Holder, State Department, Consular Officer, Monterrey**

"I found this work very powerful for many reasons, not least for the way in which the 3-D experience was built around a strong visceral affect, rather than in narrative closure. Individual testimony was given in the form of brief textual accounts accompanying portraits of each participant. The combined effect of these different media dramatized the subject in deeply affecting terms."

- **Lynne Cooke, Senior Curator of Modern Art, National Gallery of Art**

"The best art encourages you to walk in someone else's shoes. Inside *Carne y Arena*'s virtual reality exhibit, the figurative becomes literal. You experience life as a refugee first hand. Outside, you learn more about each of the people you met inside. It's inspiring, frightening, emotional, and immersive. Above all, it's human. As the daughter of Mexican immigrants, I can't think of a better subject than our southern border, but *Carne y Arena* demonstrates something universal. We need to apply this technology to other problems, and we need to figure out how to get more people to experience it. I think it is crucial for the President to experience this exhibit to encourage him to walk in an immigrant's shoes."

- **Patti Solis Doyle, Political Operative**

"A highlight of our trip to the U.S., was *Carne y Arena* and I realise how fortunate we were to witness it. Thank you. Interestingly, it has become the topic of several discussions since our return - political, artistic and sociological. For what it's worth I did tweet about it the other day, not that you need the publicity!"

- **Hugh Bonneville, Film Actor**

"The experience goes beyond any real description. As I wrote in my Instagram post, it's not *just* a history lesson, it's not *just* an art piece, it's both of those things and SO much more. It is IMPORTANT. It is vital. It should be a permanent feature in Washington, DC, a city where Americans with every different viewpoint under the sun come to learn more about our history. Not to mention all of the visitors from every other corner of the planet. Please let me know how I can help to keep the piece here beyond August 2018. As you know, I'm an artist and my financial resources are limited, but my energy is unlimited and this is consequential!!!"

- **Linn Meyers, Artist/Co-founder of STABLE**

"Every person who is unclear about what their position is on immigration, DACA, human rights etc. Should see this. VR is going to be a major conduit for us as we work to advance humanity. Why?! Because when we truly understand and move closer to empathy we treat each other better. We listen more and the ever widening gap between us begins to close."

- **Samantha Abrams, "March on Washington" Film Festival, CEO**

Select Press

- *A VR experience simulating refugee border crossings, arrests opens in Montreal* | [Montreal Gazette](#) | March 17th, 2021
- *Laurene Powell Jobs Is Co-Funding a Global Tour of the Immersive VR Refugee Experience 'Carne Y Arena' to Combat 'Division in Our Society'* | [ArtNews](#) | October 22nd, 2020
- *The Experience is Virtual. The Terror is Real* | [Bloomberg](#) | June 7th, 2018
- *Can you handle Alejandro G. Inarritu's virtual reality film, 'Carne y Arena'?* | [The Washington Post](#) | April 19th, 2018
- *Inarritu's VR Hit 'Carne y Arena' Storms DC* | [Forbes](#) | April 14th, 2018
- *Alejandro G. Iñárritu's virtual-reality voyage is D.C.'s most intriguing experience right now* | [The Washington Post](#) | April 12th, 2018
- *VR Installation of Crossing U.S.-Mexico Border Comes to Nation's Capital* | [Smithsonian Magazine](#) | March 30th, 2018
- *Can VR Really Make Us Feel Empathy? Alejandro G. Iñárritu's 'Carne y Arena' Proves That's the Wrong Question* | [ArtNews](#) | March 30th, 2018
- *D.C. politicians can now live the immigrant experience through VR* | [Quartz](#) | March 27th, 2018
- *Crossing Over: Alejandro G. Iñárritu's VR Piece About Traversing the U.S.-Mexico Border Comes to Washington, D.C.* | [ArtNews](#) | March 26th, 2018
- *Inarritu Receives Special Oscar for 'Carne Y Arena'* | [Forbes](#) | November 1st, 2017
- *Alejandro Inarritu: Carne y Arena awarded special Oscar* | [BBC News](#) | October 28th, 2017
- *Why it is significant that Venice Film Festival put VR on the bill* | [The Economist](#) | September 5th, 2017
- *Carne y Arena: Alejandro Iñárritu's virtual reality project* | [Financial Times](#) | August 11th, 2017
- *Inside Alejandro Iñárritu's VR border drama at LACMA: What you will see and why you might cry* | [The Los Angeles Times](#) | June 29th, 2017
- *Immersive experiences, the future of philanthropy* | [The Economist](#) | July 5th, 2017
- *Iñárritu's 'Carne y Arena' Virtual Reality Simulates a Harrowing Border Trek* | [The New York Times](#) | May 17th, 2017