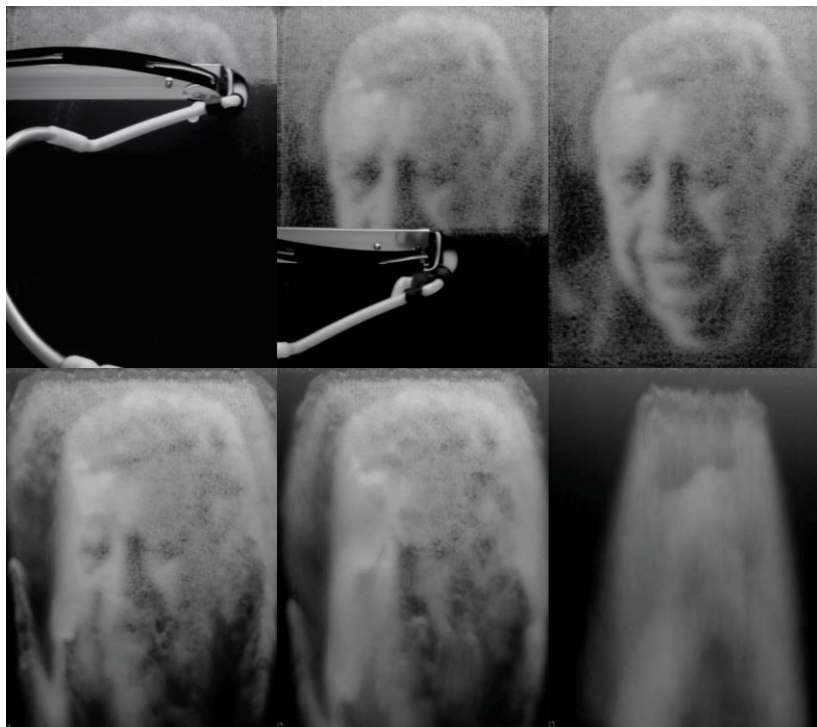


Press Release



Rafael Lozano-Hemmer (born Mexico City, 1967). Documentation of memorial for Manuel Feiguérez Barra in *A Crack in the Hourglass*, 2020–ongoing. Sand, glass, robotic platform, cameras, computers, OpenFrameworks software, lights, anodized aluminum base, 3-D printed polymer head, electronic circuit, tubes, funnels, plastic valves, and website. Courtesy of Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo. © Rafael Lozano-Hemmer. (Photo: Courtesy of the artist)

The Brooklyn Museum Presents *Rafael Lozano-Hemmer: A Crack in the Hourglass, An Ongoing COVID-19 Memorial*

The installation is the first exhibition of the participatory COVID-19 memorial, which provides space to collectively honor and grieve the victims of the pandemic in New York City and worldwide.

Opening October 29, 2021, *A Crack in the Hourglass: An Ongoing COVID-19 Memorial* considers how to memorialize the extraordinary loss of life caused by the historic global pandemic, which continues to rage throughout the world. In this installation, Mexican-Canadian media artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer responds to the ways COVID-19 has halted public rituals of mourning with a participatory, transitory “anti-monument” for the time of the pandemic. Through ephemeral portraits made from hourglass sand, the installation and its related online platform provide visitors and communities with space to collectively mourn and honor those lost to COVID-19 in New York City—an area with one of the highest number of pandemic-related deaths in the United States—and worldwide. This exhibition is a continuation of the Museum’s efforts to act as a resource for its Brooklyn community and to aid in community healing and support since the pandemic began in early 2020.

Originally commissioned by the Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo in Mexico City in 2020, Lozano-Hemmer's installation at the Brooklyn Museum provides the first opportunity to experience the work live. Participants are invited to submit photographs of their loved ones lost to COVID-19 through the project's online platform, accompanied by a personalized dedication, and watch in person or via livestream as a robotic arm deposits grains of sand onto a black surface to recreate the image. After each portrait is completed, it is then archived on the website and slowly erased by gravity. The same sand is then recycled into the next portrait, forming a limitless number of memorials and emphasizing the collective nature of the pandemic as well as its ongoing impact. *A Crack in the Hourglass* refers not only to the installation's use of hourglass sand but also to our broken sense of time during the pandemic. Printed photographs of the sand portraits will be added to the installation throughout the duration of the exhibition, and monitors will display videos of some of the sand portraits being created. The portraits will further be archived on the project's website, where previous iterations can also be seen.

"We're honored to be the first site of this important project that we hope will create much-needed space for catharsis as well as dialogue around how to memorialize the ongoing impact of COVID-19 around the world. Rafael Lozano-Hemmer is one of the most important artists today thinking about how to materialize and visualize our present conditions in relation to technology and power. While the pandemic and the responses to it have deepened existing inequalities along lines of race, class, disability, and nationality, *A Crack in the Hourglass: An Ongoing COVID-19 Memorial* convenes a community around collective care and mourning," says Drew Sawyer, Phillip Leonian and Edith Rosenbaum Leonian Curator of Photography, Brooklyn Museum.

"This project is designed for mourning our losses at a time when we have been socially-distant and denied proximity to those affected. The piece also represents continuity, as the same sand is used to make an endless number of unique portraits," says Lozano-Hemmer, adding "I am very eager to see how the project is received in New York City, an epicenter of the pandemic, and am thankful to the Brooklyn Museum for bringing it to the United States."

To participate in the memorial project, visit www.acrackinthehourglass.net/

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer: A Crack in the Hourglass, An Ongoing COVID-19 Memorial is organized by Drew Sawyer, Phillip Leonian and Edith Rosenbaum Leonian Curator, Photography, Brooklyn Museum.

The project was originally produced by Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo (MUAC) in collaboration with El Aleph: Festival de Arte y Ciencia from Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México's (UNAM) Coordinación de Difusión Cultural. It has been presented in a remote, participatory fashion since November 7, 2020.

Leadership support for this exhibition is provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Phillip Leonian and Edith Rosenbaum Leonian Charitable Trust.

About Rafael Lozano-Hemmer

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer is an internationally recognized media artist working at the intersection of technology, architecture, performance, and public art. Over the past several decades, he has created large-scale, interactive installations that explore themes of state power and capitalism, collectivity, and civic engagement. His "anti-monuments" investigate and subvert technologies of control and surveillance, often

inviting viewers to provide biometric portraits of themselves that he then transforms into active representations of community and individuality. His mid-career survey exhibition, *Rafael Lozano-Hemmer: Unstable Presence*, will open at SFMOMA in October 2021.



Brooklyn Museum