

“Natural Life”

Video: Tirtza Even / Installation Design: Ivan Martinez / Music: Oded Zehavi

14 September – 5 October, 2013

Background

Natural Life is an experimental documentary produced and directed by Tirtza Even alongside the legal efforts of the Law Offices of Deborah LaBelle.

The project challenges inequities in the juvenile justice system by depicting the stories of several youths who received the most severe sentence available for convicted adults--being sentenced to die in prison (i.e. given a sentence of "natural life" or "life without parole"). These stories are presented against the overlapping contexts of social bias, neglect, apprehension and alienation.

In this show, the documentary will be shown as a multi-channel video in the context of an installation designed by Ivan Martinez.

There will be a *panel discussion at the opening reception* from 7pm to 8pm, panel members will include: Deborah LaBelle, civil rights lawyer; Donald Logan, sentenced to life without parole at age 17; Ivan Martinez and Tirtza Even

Biographies

Tirtza Even is a practicing video artist and documentary maker, producing both linear and interactive documentary video work that represents the less overt manifestations of complex and sometimes extreme social/political dynamics in specific locations (e.g. Palestine, Turkey, Spain, the U.S. and Germany, among others). Even's work has appeared at the Museum of Modern Art, NY, at the Whitney Biennial, the Johannesburg Biennial, as well as in many other festivals, galleries and museums in the United States, Israel and Europe, and has been purchased for the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art (NY), the Jewish Museum (NY), the Israel Museum (Jerusalem), among others.

Deborah LaBelle is an attorney, professor, writer and advocate who focuses on the application of human rights for marginalized communities. She has been lead counsel in over a dozen class actions that have successfully challenged policies affecting the treatment of incarcerated men, women and juveniles and their families. Ms. LaBelle is a Senior Soros Justice Fellow and, the first American recognized by Human Rights Watch as a Human Rights Monitor. In addition to her private practice, she is director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Juvenile Life Without Parole Initiative. Ms. LaBelle is a recipient of Michigan's State Bar Champion of Justice Award, recognized as one of Michigan's top lawyers and received the National Trial Lawyer of the Year Award from the Public Interest Foundation (2008) and National Lawyer Guild's Law for the People Award (2008). She received the Wade Hampton McCree Jr. Award for the advancement of social justice presented by the Federal Bar (2009) and the Susan B. Anthony Award from the University of Michigan (2010).

Ivan Martinez is an artist and designer from Miami, Florida, now residing in Brooklyn, NY. His work examines the commonly recognizable typologies found within our built environment in order to reassess those objects as a framework for storytelling, observation, and gathering. The resulting work has the ability to be altered and repositioned which consequently embeds, at times literally, artifacts of the transformative and functional history of the object. After receiving a BFA at Florida State University in printmaking and photography he became a designer and art director for various communication and media agencies in Miami and New York. In 2012 Ivan graduated from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago with an MFA in Design for Emerging Technologies. Martinez has shown internationally, investigating the relationship between objects, narrative, and technology.

Directions: 2739 Edwin is just West of Joseph Campau, and 4 blocks North of Holbrook. There is public parking on Joseph Campau, and various other locations including 2 lots just North of the building.