

# Sculpture as Resistance: A Conversation with Sara Cruz

“I think that resisting, or expressing issues or concerns about the world using art and sculpture, has given me the opportunity to explore different ways in which I can critique or resist aspects of our world, and create something to send a broader message.”

by Renata Blanco Gorbea



Sara Cruz, *Cyclical Border* (2024)

Photo courtesy of Megan Kelly

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***“Sculpture as Resistance: A Conversation with Sara Cruz”*** is part of RRR’s coverage of the Materiality of Resistance Symposium, organized by the History of Art & Visual Culture program at California College of the Arts. The Symposium, which took place March 7–8, 2024, brought together scholars and artists from across the country, as well as CCA students, to explore material modes of resistance to the status quo in American art and visual culture. The Symposium offered a variety of events, including panels and lectures, workshops, performances, and two exhibitions of student artwork on view in the Nave and at the nearby Wattis Institute.

*RRR arts reporter Renata Blanco Gorbea interviewed Sara Cruz (BFA Sculpture 2025) about her installation, on view in the Nave as part of the Creative Citizens in Action Exhibition.*

*As part of the Materiality of Resistance Symposium at California College of the Arts (March 7-8 2024), a group of students, working in various disciplines, were invited to create pieces that respond to their own definitions of the symposium's theme. The Creative Citizens in Action Exhibition, on view in the Nave for the duration of the symposium, showcases this work. I had the opportunity to speak to Sara Cruz (BFA Sculpture '25) about her piece for this exhibition, and how she engaged with the concept of the materiality of resistance in her work.*

**Renata Blanco Gorbea (RBG):** I'm here with Sara Cruz. If you'd like to introduce yourself, the floor is yours.

**Sara Cruz (SC):** My work is an exploration of the Latin American identity within my own lens, but also within the context of syncretism. Syncretism as the merging of culture, merging of iconographies, of history, of current contexts, where the Indigenous aspects of Latin America and decolonial aspects merge into what we see as the "melting pot" of the Latine experience.

**RBG:** What is your definition of the materiality of resistance?

**SC:** The materiality of resistance is a medium or a conduit for change. I think that resisting, or expressing issues or concerns about the world using art and sculpture, has given me the opportunity to explore different ways in which I can critique or resist aspects of our world, and create something to send a broader message.



**Sara Cruz, *Cyclical Border* (2024)**  
Photo courtesy of Megan Kelly.





Sara Cruz, *Cyclical Border* (detail) (2024)  
Photo courtesy of Megan Kelly.

**RBG:** Is this a topic that you often explore in your work?

**SC:** In my work I have been focusing on the U.S. Mexico border relations, especially the issues that arise from this relation, and I see this piece as a way to connect a phenomenon that is happening right now in our spaces, and how I can speak about the ideas and concepts associated with borders.

**RBG:** Could you talk a little bit about the process of making this particular piece?

**SC:** Thinking about the form of the border and the cycle and its physical appearance, but also the psychological image of it, I took the form of the border, something that has always been present in my own context. Growing up with this orange rust border as the background of my hometown, I wanted to take this wall and turn it into a form that could go beyond the wall.

**RBG:** How does your definition of the materiality of resistance shine through the piece?

**SC:** I reshaped the piece as a circle and I am looking at it not only as a symbol for a cycle of oppression and movement/blockage, but also as a symbol of globalization. I am also thinking of other borders around the world and how these relationships are all similar to one another.

**RBG:** What do you consider the hardest part of the process?

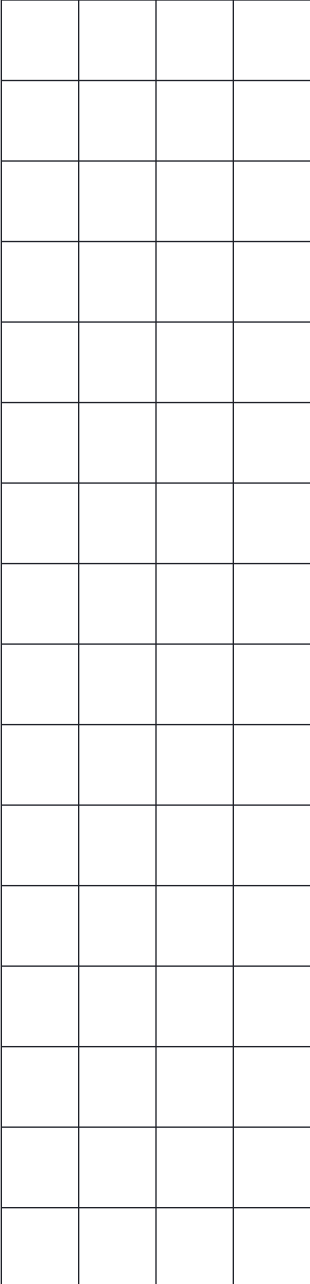
**SC:** It can be challenging knowing that people might not agree with my statements or even me making a piece about the border. The border itself is a huge wall, but it is always made to seem smaller by the power structures. It is considered a protection shield, but there is no talk about the challenges and issues that it creates.

**RBG:** Your piece addresses the issue of global border closure and unprecedented migratory flows. What is your definition of a border?

**SC:** I define a border as a cage, as a restriction. I also describe the border as a deceitful promise. A lot of people that migrate come with the idea of the "American Dream," but on the other side, the U.S. is using this separation to alienate people, so the ideas and the psyche created around the wall have many different layers to it.



Sara Cruz, *Cyclical Border* (detail) (2024)  
Photo courtesy of Megan Kelly.



**RBG:** What would you say is the relationship between borders and the materiality of resistance?

**SC:** Using the structure and silhouette of the border has given me the opportunity to represent the border, and to display it in the way I see it. I don't want to dissolve it, I want to amplify it through my piece, because these borders are there and should not be ignored.

**RBG:** What is the most important thing that you want audiences to consider when looking at your piece?

**SC:** I think placing this deformed version of the wall in the context of fine art brings an easily ignored issue closer to our communities where the issue is not talked about enough. Also, I presented the border or ideas associated with it using a shape that is not a wall. I want to use that to my advantage in order to change the narrative of what the border has come to signify, and I want my audiences to think about the border beyond just a wall.

**RBG:** Is this a piece you would like to expand on?

**SC:** I think my work always has a reference to resistance or materiality in separate ways. My work is very material based, and I want to take these issues that concern all of us and use materials to challenge them.





Installation view, Creative Citizens in Action Exhibition  
Photo courtesy of Megan Kelly.

Renata Blanco Gorbea (BA History of Art & Visual Culture 2025) is a writer interested in pursuing a career in arts journalism, specifically focusing on fashion design and textile art.