

PRESS RELEASE



2,000 Miles: Divided Land, Common Humanity

Exhibition on walls and borders opens in cooperation with Mexican Cultural Institute

September 14 – November 4, 2016

**Goethe-Institut Washington
1990 K St. NW Suite 03 (20th Street Entrance)
Washington, DC 20006**

www.goethe.de/washington

Download Dropbox images [here](#).

(Washington, DC, September 9, 2016) - The exhibition **2,000 Miles: Divided Land, Common Humanity**, at the Goethe-Institut September 14 – November 4, 2016, features works by two German artists who look at the commonalities on the two sides of the U.S.-Mexico border.

Until recently, the idea of separating territories and peoples via manmade borders seemed an outdated relic from the past. Recent political developments, however, including the creation of new barriers at the European Union's borders, have made such barriers a topic of heated debate once again. Germany's own past in this regard serves as inspiration for two German artists, **Daniel Schwarz** and **Stefan Falke**, who take a close look at the geography and the cultural and social commonalities on the two sides of the U.S.-Mexican border. This exhibition contributes to our ongoing conversation about walls, borders and people.



Two 1,000-inch-long accordion books by Daniel Schwarz entitled *The Mexico – United States Border (East & West)* make the border tangible, examining it through Google Maps satellite imagery. Starting in the West with the Pacific Coast's urbanized area between San Diego and Tijuana, the books extend eastward to the Colorado River Delta and Sonoran Desert, through the Chihuahuan Desert, and then proceed along the course of the Rio Grande to the Gulf of Mexico in the East.

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In the photography project **LA FRONTERA: Artists along the US Mexican Border**, Stefan Falke focuses on artists who live and work along the U.S.-Mexico border, documenting their individual stories and their arts' positive influence on their societies. *LA FRONTERA* functions as a counter-narrative, giving a face to the vibrant culture,

cultural expression and artistic exchange of this little-known border region which is disproportionately portrayed by the media through the lens of violent crime.

Daniel Schwarz works and lives in Los Angeles and teaches at Loyola Marymount University. He moved to Los Angeles in 2013 and graduated from UCLA with an MFA in Design Media Arts. His works, which engage critically with aspects of control and power structures, state authority and cartography, have been exhibited and performed at MassMoCA in New York, Sónar Festival Barcelona and the Venice Film Festival.

Stefan Falke moved to New York in 1985, where he works as a photographer. **LA FRONTERA: Artists along the US Mexican Border, on which he has been working since 2008**, received the 2013 *David Chow Humanitarian Award* and has been exhibited in Mexico, the U.S. (e.g. PHOTOVILLE 2014/New York) and Germany (e.g. Triennial of Photography/Hamburg). The project has been featured in *The New York Times*, BBC, *The Huffington Post*, *Wired.com* and others.

Opening reception and discussion with artists Daniel Schwarz and Stefan Falke on Wednesday, September 14, 6 - 8 pm
RSVP at www.goetheinstitutwashington.eventbrite.com

Gallery hours: M-Th 10 am – 6:30 pm; F 10 am – 3 pm

Inspired by and organized in cooperation with the Mexican Cultural Institute, which is exhibiting a related show entitled *Delimitations* from September 28, 2016 - January 28, 2017, including an artist talk on the day of the opening. Works by artists Marcos Ramírez Erre and David Taylor catalog a 2,400-mile-long, site-specific installation that traces the border between Mexico and the United States as it existed in 1821. In marking the short-lived historic boundary with a series of monuments that mimic those installed along the contemporary border between Mexico and the United States, Ramírez and Taylor question the permanence of borders. Their work acknowledges the territory that Mexico lost and makes a claim for the present, not to contest the current boundary but to prompt a recognition that the United States and Mexico have a shared history and a common interest.



Accompanying Reading and
Presentation

Thursday, September 15, 6:30 pm
Goethe-Institut, GoetheForum

The Other Side of the Wall

Cartoonist and author **Simon Schwartz** was born in Erfurt, Germany in 1982, at a time when the repressive Socialist Unity Party

controlled the region, a part of history he captures in his autobiographic debut graphic novel *drüben! (The Other Side of the Wall)*. Recently honored with the Independent Publisher Book Award (2016), the novel tells the narrative of the protagonist's willingness to leave the communist side of the Wall in search of freedom

Based on his own parents' painful personal experiences of reprisal and alienation in East Germany after announcing their intention to leave for the West, *The Other Side of the Wall* eloquently depicts the challenges faced by those who's State once inspired but ultimately turned on them. A new life on the western side of the Wall meant not only freedom, but also uncertainty and the fragmentation of relationships with family and friends.

Simon Schwartz studied Illustration at Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (HAW). He taught editorial illustration at HAW and the BTK University of Art & Design, Berlin, and works as a freelance illustrator for several well-known magazines, newspapers and agencies. Schwartz is the winner of several awards, including-the Max and Moritz Prize (2012) and the ICOM Independent Comics Award (2010).

Moderated by Antje Krüger, Assistant Professor of German at Goucher College.
No charge. RSVP at www.goetheinstitutwashington.eventbrite.com

About the Goethe-Institut:

Mutual understanding among nations by promoting international cultural dialogue: this is the ambitious mission of the Goethe-Institut. On behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany, cultural institutes around the world provide cultural programs, language courses, support to educators, and up-to-date information on Germany in the context of Europe.

Founded in 1990, Goethe-Institut Washington, DC is a center for German culture and language. From its location downtown, the Goethe-Institut Washington reaches out to both individuals and organizations in the community, bridging the past, present, and future with a variety of high-quality events.

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