

The 2023 Locust Art Builders, week 5 install progress



Locust projects

Stronger on the Other Side: **Locust Art Builders**

The 2023 LAB Exhibition
July 22 - August 5, 2023

Now in its 13th year, Locust Art Builders: Summer Art Intensive for Teens, aka LAB, is a unique five-week pre-college program for high school students with an interest in art, design, and exploring creative careers. Students are selected through an online open call process from schools across Miami-Dade County for the opportunity to learn from Lead Artist Mentors and other professional artists in a dynamic on-site program and build and art exhibition from scratch in Miami's longest running alternative art space. Each year's exhibition evolves as a unique and timely reflection of the current issues and ideas impacting youth today. This year's exhibition is titled *Stronger on the Other Side*.



The 2023 Locust Art Builders, first day of LAB

ARTISTS' STATEMENT

“We have the power to explore the pressures in our experiences through art. This power not only serves as a therapeutic outlet for expression, but it is also a platform from which individuals can directly challenge societal pressures or expectations. Our exhibition exposes how deeply the notion of conventionality is ingrained into our mentalities by showcasing the many ways we come face to face with pressures. Come and experience our transformative journey as we begin to embrace the challenges and emerge stronger on the other side.”

IDENTITY

In a world defined by societal pressures, the search for identity becomes crucial. We are shaped by expectations and standards imposed upon us, often leading us to question our true selves. Confirming to societal norms can stifle our authenticity, causing us to sacrifice personal fulfillment for external validation. Embracing our unique identity requires courage, as we break free from conformity, challenge norms and embrace our passions on our own terms.

FAMILY

The current of a river on the ground of the installation shows how we are not only flowing but fighting the current to stay afloat and be on the right path to succeed. The mirror-like aspect of the ocean invites the audience to look back at themselves and ask them if they could have found themselves in the current. The skeleton shows how we may lose parts of ourselves to push forwards towards our goals, but the small fruits of our labor manage to give us the energy to continue our stride up the current. As many things may seem too good to be true, the glamorized tree contrasted with the personified tree makes us wonder if the path we are taking is even realistic or plausible compared to our abilities and our family.

SUCCESS

The journey to success is a route that leads to hardships and pressures faced by all in the name of our goals. This installation depicts two trees to show how success as a young artist is perceived in a glamorized way and how we compare our successes as creatives to those of our family. Now for more than a few years, the price of living has become so high, and with that comes the worry of succeeding in these creative careers. The tree's apples are mostly far from reach but much how we experience our small successes in life there is some low-hanging fruit to keep us motivated to fight for the bigger picture.

This year's LAB included 20+ students from 9 high schools across Miami:

Terra Environmental Research Institute

Miami Arts Charter School

Ransom Everglades High School

Dr. Michael Krop Senior High School

Coral Reef Senior High

Downtown Doral Charter Upper School

Palmer Trinity School

Design and Architecture Senior High

Southwest Miami Senior High School

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ART HAPPENS HERE.

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