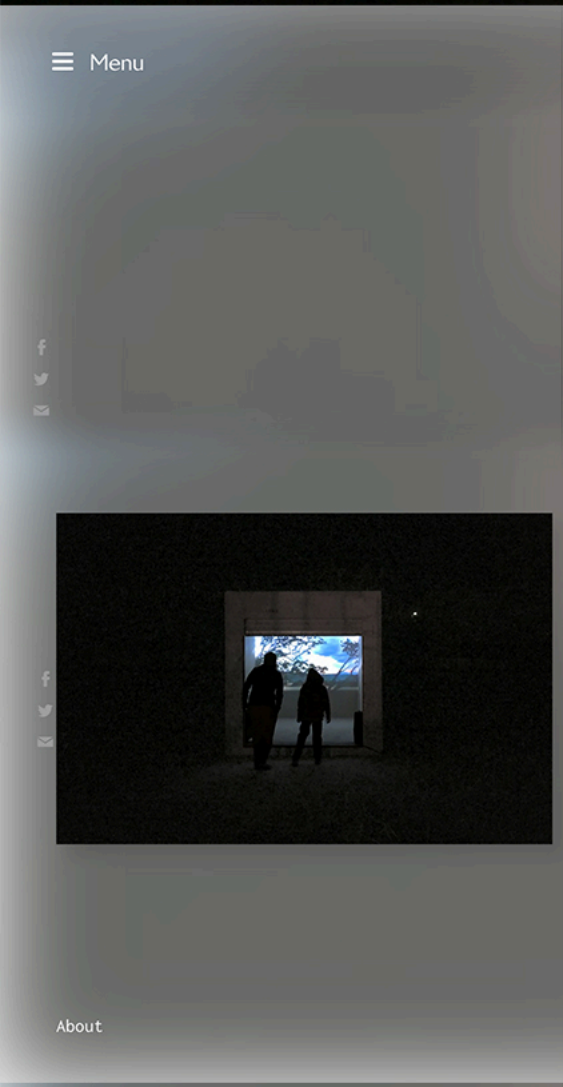




This artist
breaks down
borders through
intimate stories
and shared
memories



Articles / Art
by [Helen Longstreth](#)
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Puerto Rico-born Lionel Cruet creates an audiovisual installation in a storage unit to explore the contemporary immigrant experience in the United States

On a street in Taos, New Mexico, the artist Lionel Cruet has erected a human-sized storage unit dedicated to relaying the contemporary immigrant experience in America. Titled *Intangible Sites* the work is an immersive installation displaying images and recordings that he has collected from the local community. Images of hazy New Mexican landscapes are projected across the container walls, while local immigrant voices, flitting between Spanish and English, connect these scenes with memories of home.

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As an artist based between both Puerto Rico and New York City, his project aims to expand on what it means to exist between two places. In a previous work of the same name he interrogated the concept of digital storage by projecting images of clouds he had collected from emails and social media across the walls of a storage container. Now with *Intangible Sites*, he takes this further, creating a physical space that connects geography to the intangible nature of memory, digital image and sound.

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Opening out onto the street by metal shutter, the unit becomes a portal, a box of sound and colour, transporting visitors and passersby into a landscape of collective memory. From inside the small enclosed space, viewers look out at panoramas of mountains, deserts and lakes. As they stand clustered together and listen to the intimate stories of others from the area, the whole community becomes part of the artwork. In a climate of anti-immigrant hysteria, and amongst vocal demands to build a wall between the U.S and Mexico, Cruet's work brings a borderless space to a border state, and gives voice to the complicated reality of the immigrant experience.

