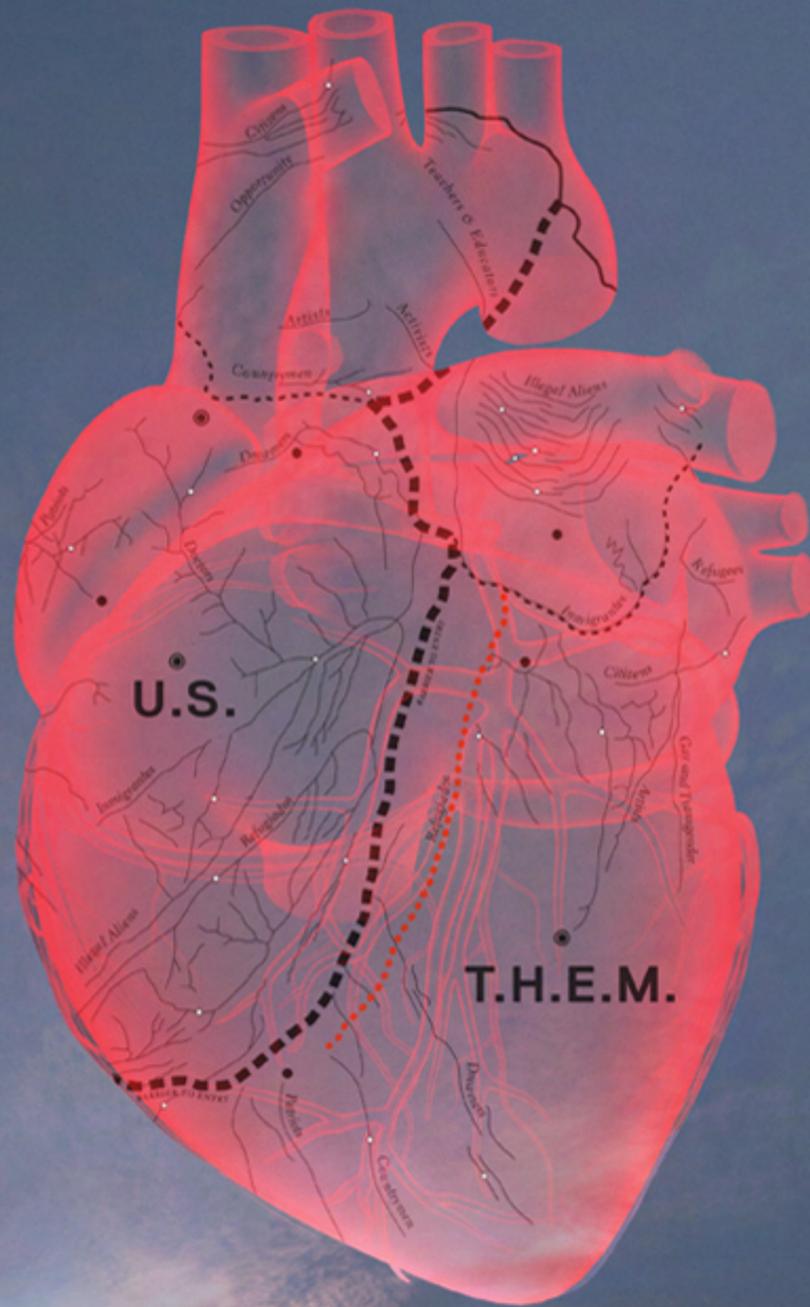


Alejandro G. Iñárritu  
**CARNEYARENA**

(Virtualmente presente, Físicamente invisible)



A VR installation by  
**Alejandro G. Iñárritu**  
Five-time Academy Award®-winner

In collaboration with cinematographer  
**Emmanuel Lubezki**  
Three-time Academy Award®-winner



**PHI**



# CARNEvARENA

(Virtually present, Physically invisible)

An experience about

**The human condition  
of immigrants and refugees**



# CARNE y ARENA

(Virtually present, Physically invisible)

Alejandro G. Iñárritu's virtual reality installation explores the human condition of immigrants and refugees. Based on true accounts, the superficial lines between subject and bystander are blurred and bound together to thoroughly live a fragment of the refugees' personal journeys.

CARNE y ARENA is a 15 minute virtual reality based experience set in a large room filled with sand. It employs state-of-the-art immersive technology to create a multi-narrative light space with human characters.



Trailer





## **Special Achievement Oscar®**

**to Iñárritu for CARNE y ARENA,  
recognized by the Academy as an**

**Exceptional storytelling experience**

**The first such award in 19 years!**



# Director's statement

During the making of this project, I had the privilege of meeting and interviewing many Mexican and Central American immigrants and refugees. I invited some of them to participate in this project so that their personal journeys would not be just a statistic for the rest of us, but would instead be seen, felt, heard, and experienced by others.

There are no actors here.

These are true stories reenacted by the people who experienced them. Even some of the clothes they wear are pieces that they wore while crossing the border. This project has grown in my mind over four years and my main interest was to experiment with VR technology in order to explore the human condition while finding a personal way to represent it.

No experience in CARNE y ARENA will ever be the same for any visitor. We created a truthful alternate space where you as a visitor will walk alongside the immigrants (and into their minds) with infinite possibilities and perspectives within a vast landscape, but you will go on your own terms.

In collaboration with Emmanuel Lubezki and ILMxLAB, pushing the technology to a very high level, we digitally documented their undocumented accounts as they created their own photo-realistic avatars.

The experience was cathartic and emotional.

After many years, their memories finally have a public face.

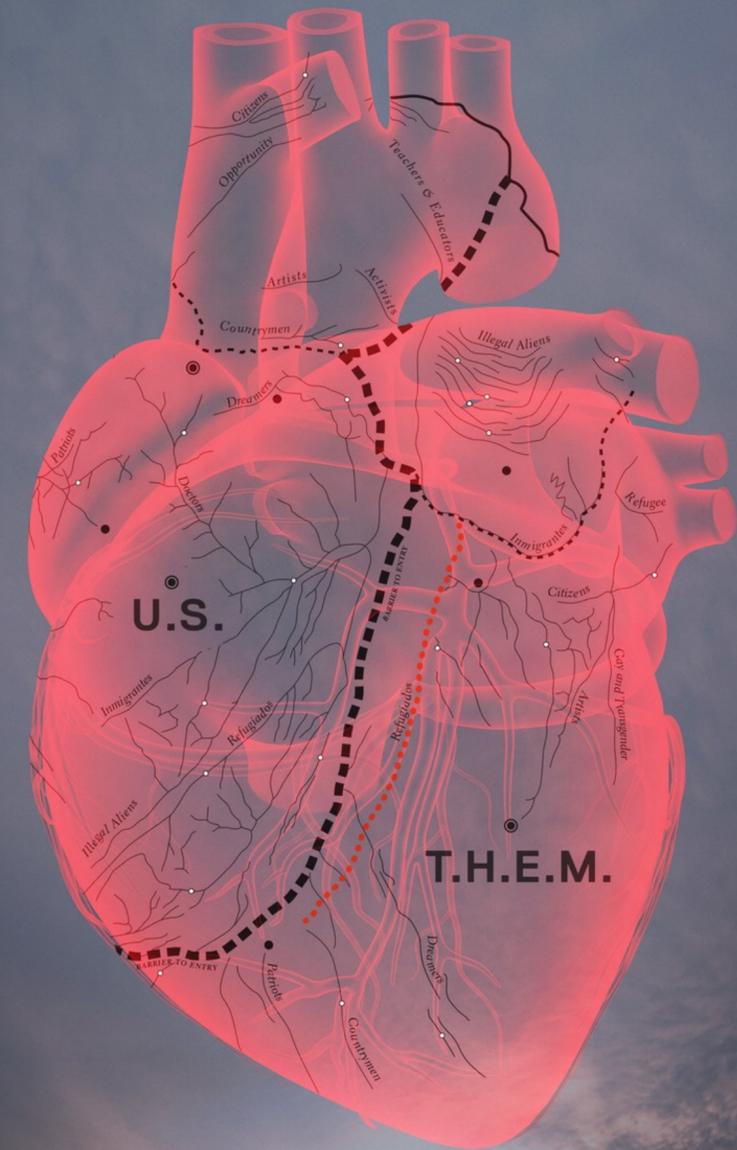
Alejandro G. Iñárritu



**The virtual reality experience transports participants into the Chihuahuan Desert.**

**They join a caravan of migrants being led by a coyote across the U.S. border.**

**Leading to a dangerous but commonplace encounter with the U.S. Border Patrol...**





True border crossing stories reenacted  
by the people who experienced them



**Their personal journeys are  
seen, felt, heard, and experienced**



**Their personal journeys are  
seen, felt, heard, and experienced**



**Their personal journeys are  
seen, felt, heard, and experienced**





A VR piece experienced in a large room

**filled with  
sand**

# The Installation

## Throughput

3 participants simultaneously  
14 participants per hour

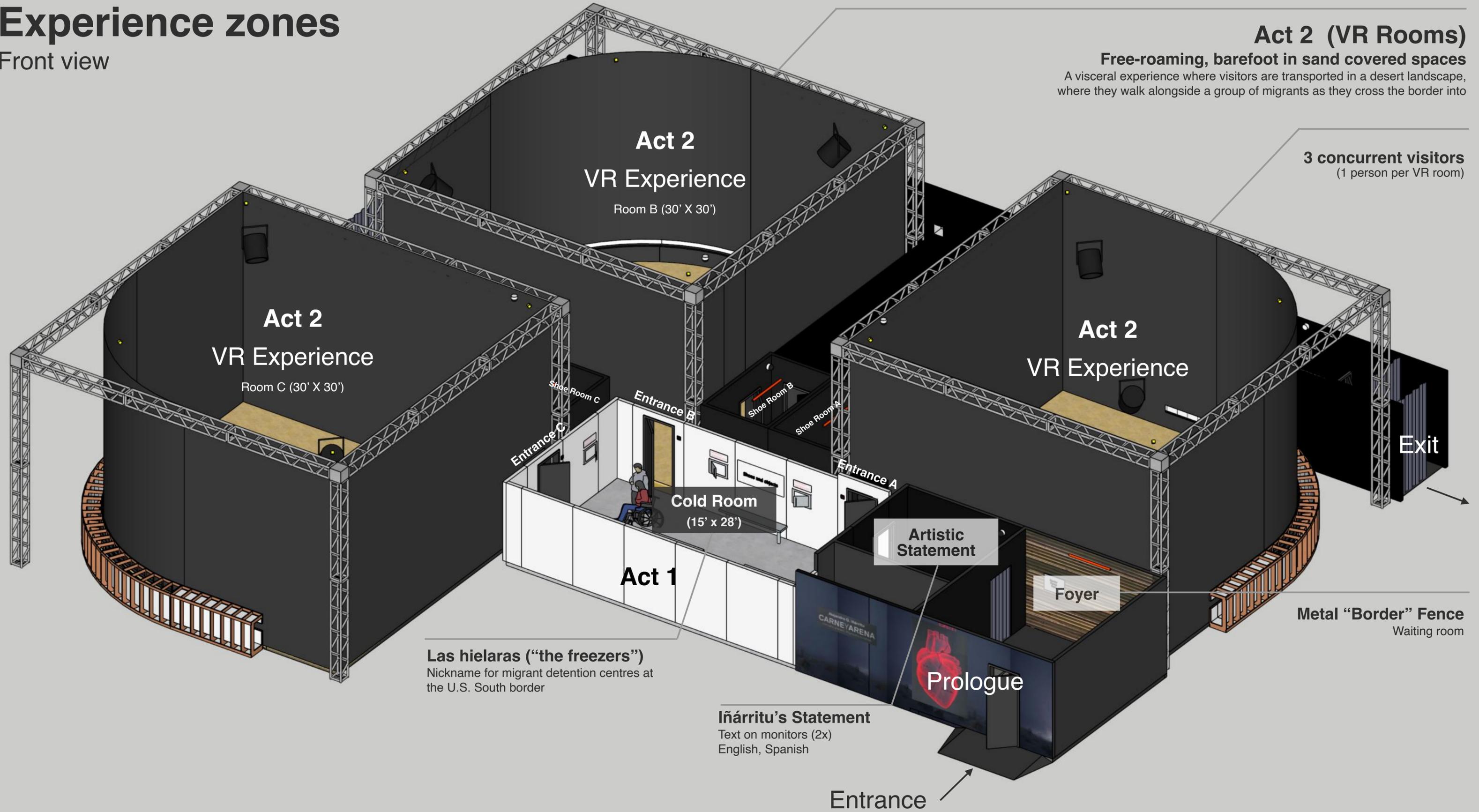
## Space Requirement

7,000 sf<sup>2</sup> / 86' x 79'  
Ceiling height: 15' minimum (18' is ideal)



# Experience zones

Front view



## Act 2 (VR Rooms)

**Free-roaming, barefoot in sand covered spaces**  
A visceral experience where visitors are transported in a desert landscape, where they walk alongside a group of migrants as they cross the border into

**3 concurrent visitors**  
(1 person per VR room)

**Las hielaras ("the freezers")**  
Nickname for migrant detention centres at the U.S. South border

**Iñárritu's Statement**  
Text on monitors (2x)  
English, Spanish

Entrance

Exit

**Metal "Border" Fence**  
Waiting room

Prologue

Foyer

Artistic Statement

Cold Room  
(15' x 28')

Act 1

Act 2  
VR Experience  
Room C (30' X 30')

Act 2  
VR Experience  
Room B (30' X 30')

Act 2  
VR Experience  
Room A (30' X 30')

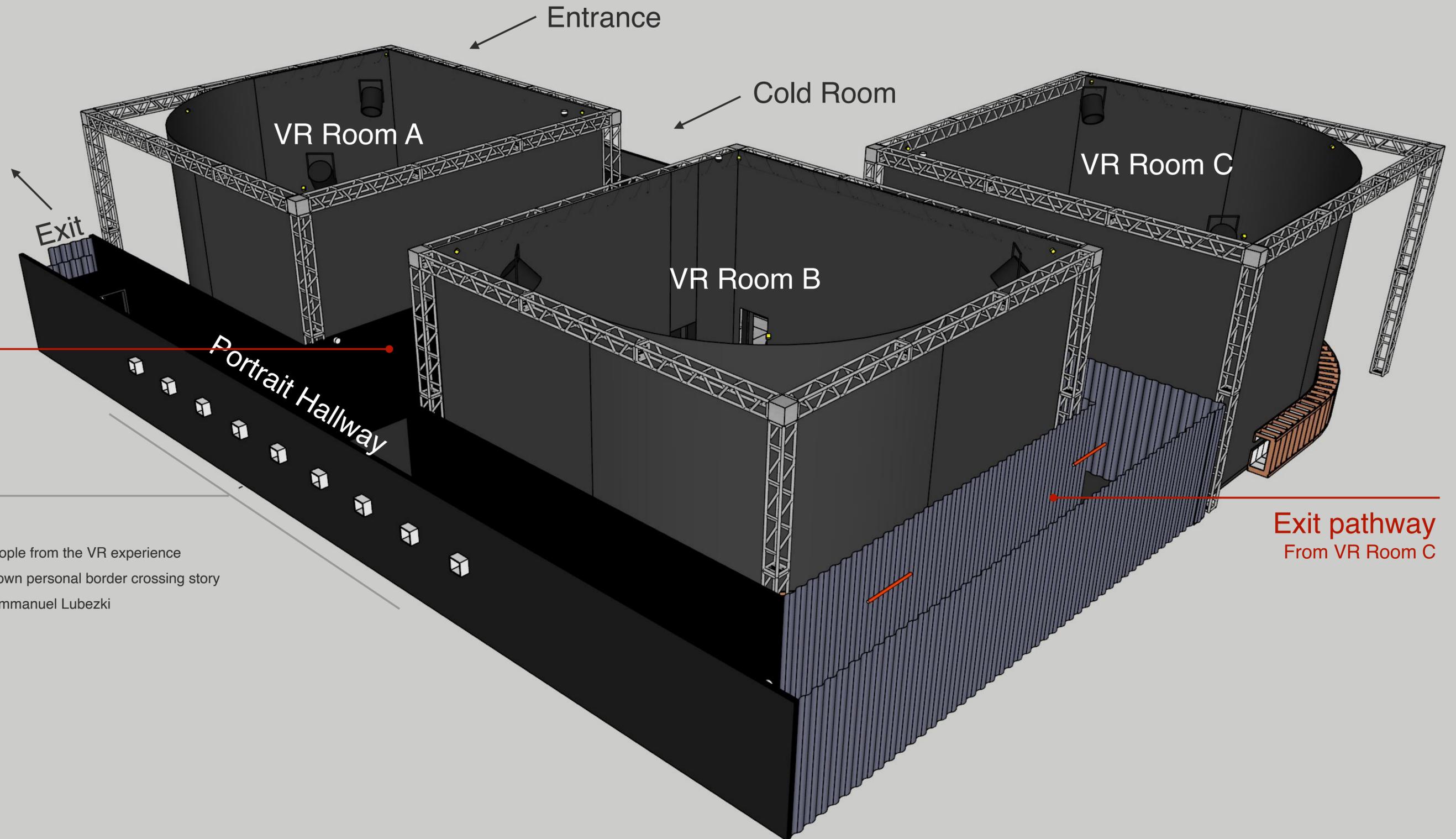
Shoe Room C  
Entrance C

Shoe Room B  
Entrance B

Shoe Room A  
Entrance A

# Experience zones

Rear view



## 9 video monitors

- Short video portraits about people from the VR experience
- Fragments of each migrant's own personal border crossing story
- Slow motion videos shot by Emmanuel Lubezki

# Reviews

“...the dazzling virtual reality exhibit offers a fresh look at the refugee crisis... Birdman director Alejandro González Iñárritu’s latest project is an innovative and immersive account of the horrors faced at the Mexico-US border... It’s a theatrical triumph.” - *The Guardian*

“It is a visceral and astonishing work. It is also vital. Iñárritu takes the abstract issue of undocumented immigration and humanizes it by putting us there, by making us look into the eyes of those who survived their ordeals.”

- LA Times

“Iñárritu’s *Carne y Arena* proves that great virtual reality means going beyond the headset... Iñárritu has built something focused on delivering the best emotional experience, not simply the best virtual one, and that’s where *CARNE Y ARENA*’s power lies.”

- The Verge

“It's the VR revolution we've been waiting for.”

- Variety

“I was among the lucky ones to experience it. And *experience* is the word.”

- DEADLINE

# Noteworthy

A Special Achievement Oscar® to Iñárritu for CARNE y ARENA, recognized by the Academy as an exceptional storytelling experience - The first such award in 19 years.

Presented for 5 months in Washington, DC by the Emerson Collective  
(April to August 2018)

Presented for 12 months at Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)  
(July 2017 to June 2018)

Presented for 10 months at Tlatelolco University Cultural Center in Mexico City  
(Sept 2017 to June 2018)

Presented for 8 months at Fondazione Prada in Milan  
(June 2017 - Jan 2018)



First-ever VR Special Selection at the Cannes Film Festival  
(May 2017)