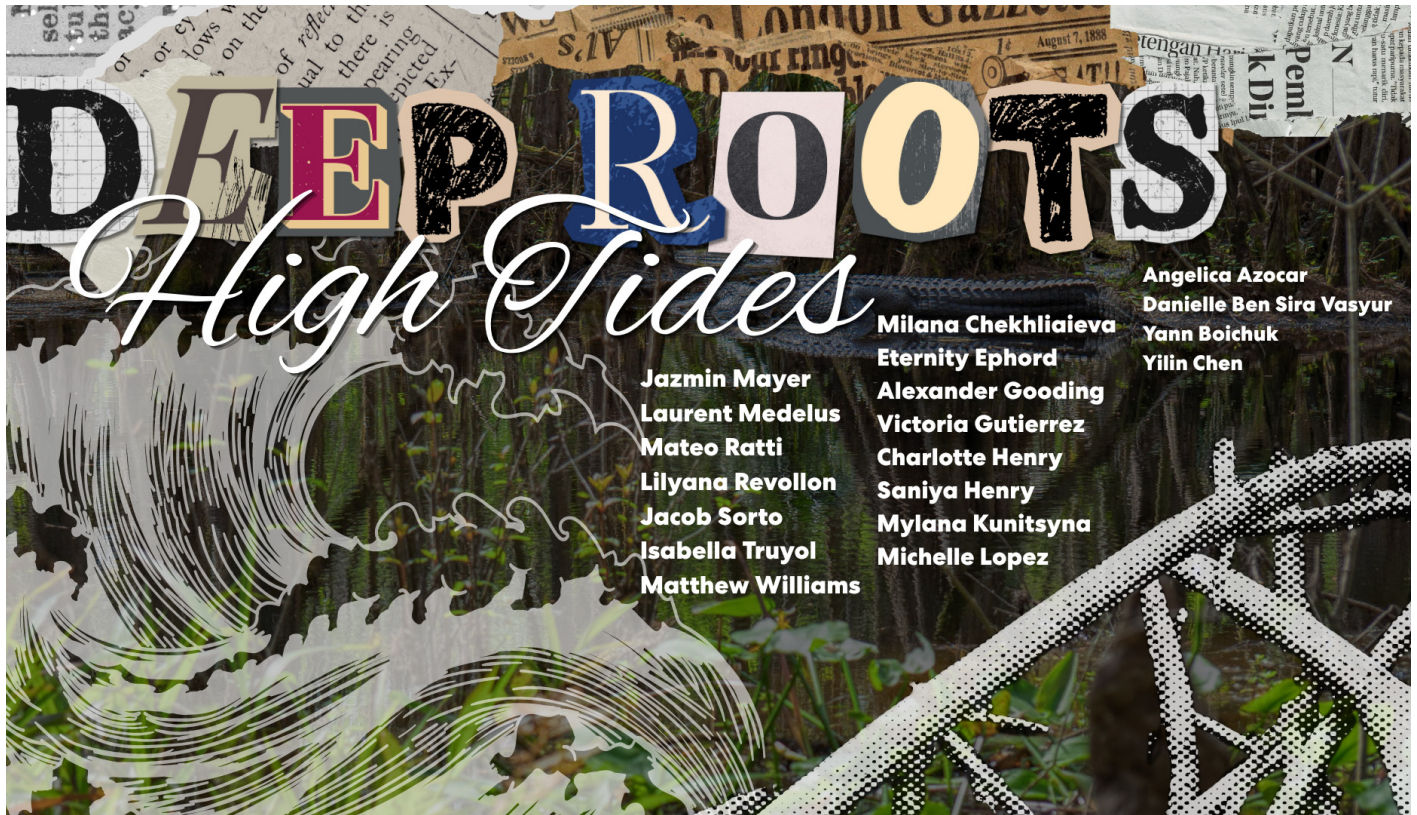




DEEP ROOTS HIGH TIDES:

2026 Locust Art Builders Exhibition

July 18 - August 1, 2026



Celebrating its 16th year in 2026, Locust Art Builders: Summer Art Intensive for Teens, aka LAB, is a unique five-week pre-college program for high school students interested in art, design, sustainability, 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 mentor artists hands-on while collaboratively building an exhibition from the ground up in Miami's longest-running alternative art space. Each year's exhibition evolves as a unique and timely reflection of the issues and ideas shaping the next generation. Inspired by this year's theme, Build for Better, the 2026 exhibition explores sustainable art practices through the creative reuse of discarded materials, inviting audiences to imagine more thoughtful and resilient futures.



The 2026 LAB cohort.

STUDENT ARTISTS' STATEMENT

As the world seems to spin further out of control, the younger generation inherits the weight of an increasingly broken future. Anxiety takes hold as news of displacement, political division, and climate change dominates the headlines. We are now faced with the challenge: How can we build for the better?

Deep Roots High Tides explores this idea by directing our gaze to the local Miami community, a city defined by migration, resilience, and constant transformation. As we identify the places closest to us—our beaches, mangrove forests, cultures, and families—we realize that the answer is rooted in our past.

“Deep Roots” reflects the diverse cultures of Miami and the untold stories that shape the local community through the motif of mangrove roots as a metaphor. Our communities—interconnected like mangroves—weather storms together and draw strength from one another. This exhibition honors the challenges that shape us, unafraid to discuss topics such as immigration, identity, and sustainability. Beneath the vibrant tourist culture, the heart of Miami lies in the labor, connections, and stories of its people.

“High Tides” communicates both the chaos and excitement surrounding the rise of the younger generation and the future of Miami. We envision a future where people are united and recognize the commonalities between vastly different backgrounds. We encourage visitors to share their own stories, hopes, and visions for the Miami they wish to build. With a strong connection to and understanding of the past, we believe the future is filled with possibilities.

Just as healthy mangroves protect coastlines from rising waters, a strong community is the key to resilience in times of change. This exhibition celebrates the belief that, by honoring our history and embracing our differences, Miami will be deeply rooted and unafraid to meet the shifting tides ahead.



THE ARTISTS

Angelica Azocar, Danielle Ben Sira Vasyur, Yann Boichuk, Yilin Chen, Milana Chekhlaieva, Eternity Ephord, Alexander Gooding, Victoria Gutierrez, Charlotte Henry, Saniya Henry, Mylana Kunitsyna, Michelle Lopez, Jazmin Mayer, Laurent Medelus, Mateo Ratti, Lilyana Revollon, Jacob Sorto, Isabella Truyol, and Matthew Williams.

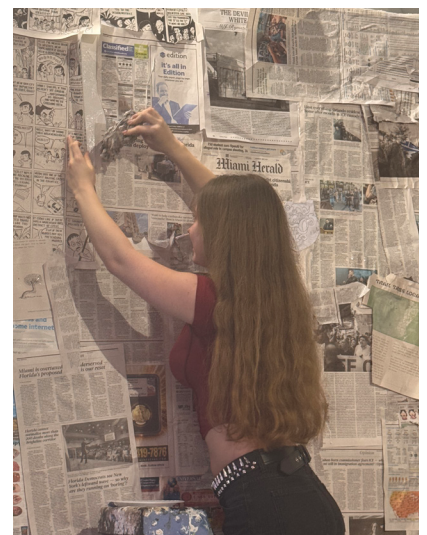
INTERNS

Sonya Vasileva (University of Miami) and Diana Zelayandia (MDC Honors College)

SCHOOLS REPRESENTED

Coral Reef Senior High, Design and Architecture Senior High, Miami Arts Charter School, Miami Beach Senior High School, New World School of the Arts, and South Dade Senior High

This year's LAB is led by Lead Mentor Artist Crystal Pearl Molinary Garcia, with workshops led by guest artists and technicians including: founding LAB Lead Mentor Artist Monica Lopez De Victoria; longtime LAB Lead Mentor Artist Loni Johnson; Pangea Kali Virga; Charo Oquet; Past LAB Mentor Artist, Cynthia Cruz; Miami Design Shop; Mark Herrera; with additional support from Locust Projects team members.





ABOUT LAB

Since 2010, Locust Art Builders (LAB) Summer Art Intensive for teens has provided more than 300 students with a vital program nurturing the next generation of creatives in our community. LAB's impact is multi-fold: it empowers and inspires the next generation to find creative modes of expression, learn how to work collaboratively, and gives them the confidence and self-actualization that comes with new experiences, learning new skills, and building a new network of peers.

LAB is FREE to all students. In addition they receive:

Daily lunches and snacks

Travel stipends to make LAB geographically and economically accessible

Builder Box filled with art supplies and an artist-designed t-shirt

**Celebrating 16 years of inspiring the next generation
of creatives at Locust Projects.**

Locust Art Builders: Summer Art Intensive for Teens 2026 is made possible through lead support from The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, The Children's Trust and the Hillsdale Fund.

Additional support provided by The Kirk Foundation and Locust Projects' INCUBATORS, Friends of the Next Generation.



Special Thanks to Jerry's Artarama, official art supplies sponsor for LAB

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TALENT.**

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