

locustprojects

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Locust Projects presents

MAIN GALLERY:

Leo Castañeda: *Herramientas (Levels & Bosses)*

Exhibition Dates:

September 10 – November 5, 2022

Related Programs:

OPENING RECEPTION

Saturday, September 10 | 6-8pm

Public Hours:

Wednesday to Saturday
11am – 5pm

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Press kit and images:

[Available here](#)

Join Leo Castañeda's Neo-Primordial Sci-Fi Quest at Locust Projects this Fall September 10 – November 5, 2022



Leo Castañeda, Digital Render of the Exhibition at Locust Projects

[Miami, FL] Locust Projects presents *Herramientas (Levels & Bosses)*, a transmedia adventure game experience by Miami-based multimedia artist Leo Castañeda. The immersive installation at Locust Projects invites visitors to play a new video game being premiered in an environment that echoes the game itself and traces the evolution of the game through paintings by the artist, a virtual reality experience, sculptural furniture, immersive video, wall drawings, and more. *Levels & Bosses*, the game at the core of the *Herramientas* exhibition, traverses sci-fi environments where all landscapes, technology, and entities share sentience and interconnection.

Mutating between analog and digital platforms, the *Herramientas* exhibition at Locust Projects represents the next stage in the multi-year *Levels & Bosses* game development project originated by Castañeda, and serves as the launch of a new fine art video game studio, Otro Inventario, the first of its kind in Miami. Castañeda, and the team at Otro Inventario have developed in *Levels & Bosses*, a groundbreaking video game that upends traditional archetypes of game “bosses /adversaries” while players explore nonlinear, science-fiction-inspired levels with a broad range of interdependent abilities, such as camouflage, vibrational touch terraforming, and laser communication.

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Gameplay still from Mangrove Biome 037 created using Unreal Engine 5 for *Herramientas* (Levels & Bosses)

To those that know and understand gaming and game terminology, this expands the lineage of independent games revolutionizing the industry. Navigating landscapes inspired by Castañeda's interests in 18th century Romantic painting, Latin American abstraction, and the liminal environments of South Florida, Colombia, and the Brazilian Amazon, the game follows "The-Other" on a quest across timelines to solve landscape puzzles that adapt the aftermath of a cataclysmic implosion, re-imagining structures of antagonism and progression in games. *Herramientas* (Levels & Bosses) explores the evolution of Castañeda's work as an individual artist throughout the project's development leading into the launch of Otro Inventario, a collaborative art house game studio that uses principles of sustainability and interdependence to expand interactions and world building possibilities in video games and gaming communities. Serving as one means of demo-ing the game created with software, the exhibition is envisioned by Castañeda and the Otro Inventario team to evolve into future iterations at tech/gaming conferences, and more.

Levels & Bosses is made possible with support from Oolite Arts' Ellies Creator Awards, The Emergent Strategy Ideation Institute, The Harpo Foundation, and a Locust Projects Wavemaker Grant in 2018.

The artist and Otro Inventario wish to thank the MUD Foundation and Studio Shell for their support of *Herramientas* (Levels and Bosses).

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ABOUT LEO CASTAÑEDA

Leo Castañeda (b. Cali, Colombia 1988) is an artist and game designer living in Miami, FL. Melding gaming, painting, virtual reality, drawing, and sculptural furniture, Castañeda's work renders surreal posthuman anatomies and social structures. For over ten years Castañeda has been developing the Levels & Bosses series using Unreal Engine to create transmedia worlds that dissolve the boundary between analog and digital. Today, Levels & Bosses culminates in an episodic video game and installation series that investigate interaction design in gaming. Castañeda received his BFA from Cooper Union in 2010 and MFA from Hunter College in 2014. Residencies include SOMA Mexico City; "Of Games III" at Khoj International Artists Association in New Delhi India (2015); Bronx Museum AIM Program (2017), and Oolite Arts Studio Residency (2018–2019).

To-date Castañeda's work has been featured across Killscreen, Rhizome, El Nuevo Herald, El Pais, and Vice. Exhibitions and screenings span Hek Basel (2021), Museo la Tertulia (2020), Bronx Museum of the Arts (2017), Bass Museum (2020), Espacio Art Nexus (2017), Frost Art Museum (2012), Wolfsonian Museum (2019), Children's Museum of Manhattan (2019), IndieGrits Festival (2017), and more. He is a recipient of South Florida

Cultural Consortium Visual/Media Artists Fellowship, Locust Projects Wavemaker Grant, and the Oolite Arts Ellies Creator Award. Castañeda is currently a professor of 3-D animation at Florida International University and New World School of the Arts in Miami.

Otro Inventario is an arthouse video game studio that uses principles of sustainability and interdependence to expand interaction and worldbuilding possibilities in video games and gaming communities. Otro Inventario is built by: Leo Castañeda / Co-Founder, Game Director; Lauren Monzón / Co-Founder, Lead Producer; The Glad Scientist (b. Daniel Sabio) / Lead Software Engineer; Jaime Soto Kure / Associate Programmer; Gwen Lofman / Founding Programmer; Victor Gamboa / Sound Designer; Trngs / Soundtrack; Giovanni Caldas / Soundtrack; Juli Castañeda/Feedock / Wearables; Eric Coultier / Furniture Fabrication; Noah Garcia / Web Designer; Edny Jean Joseph / Graphic Design Consultant; Brittany Ballinger / Graphic Design Consultant; Irene Rodriguez / Vocals in Sound Effects; Tom Tuna Armstrong / Engagement Consultant; Liliana Patiño / Advisor; Levy Castañeda / Advisor; Sage Crump / Advisor; Daniel Humberto Ocariz / Advisor; Diego Berta / Advisor.

ABOUT LOCUST PROJECTS

Founded by artists for artists in 1998, Locust Projects is Miami's longest running nonprofit alternative art space. We produce, present, and nurture ambitious and experimental new art and the exchange of ideas through commissioned exhibitions and projects, artist residencies, summer art intensives for teens, and public programs on contemporary art and curatorial practice. As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, Locust Projects emphasizes boundary-pushing creative endeavors, risk-taking and experimentation by local, national and international artists. We invest in South Florida's arts community by providing artists with project grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub and access to pro bono legal services.

Locust Projects 2022-2023 exhibitions and programming are made possible with support from: The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; 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; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; The Miami Foundation; Susan and Richard Arregui; Florida, Department of State; Hillsdale Fund; The Albert and Jane Nahmad Family Foundation; The National Endowment for the Arts Art Works Grant; VIA Art Fund | Wagner Foundation Incubator Grant;

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