



297 NE 67 Street, Miami, FL 33138  
305.576.8570 | info@locustprojects.org | locustprojects.org

**\*\*MEDIA ALERT\*\***

**Locust Projects and Miami-based Artist Edison Peñafiel  
Awarded a Prestigious VIA Art Fund Artistic Production Grant**



Edison Peñafiel, *De Profundis Clamavi ad Astra* (From the Depths, I Cried Out to the Stars), 2026. Concept rendering, August 2025. Courtesy of the artist.

***“It is an honor to join the VIA Art Fund community, whose past grantees have consistently pushed the boundaries of contemporary art across disciplines and media.”***

- Edison Peñafiel, artist

[Miami: August 25, 2025] Locust Projects, Miami’s longest running alternative art space, is thrilled and honored to announce that Locust Projects and Miami-based multidisciplinary artist Edison Peñafiel are among VIA Art Fund’s 2025 Artistic Production Grantees. Peñafiel’s awarded project, *De Profundis Clamavi ad Astra* (From the Depths, I Cried Out to the Stars), will be on view at Locust Projects November 14, 2026—February 13, 2027 in Miami, Florida.



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“Locust Projects is honored to be awarded a prestigious VIA Art Fund Artistic Production Grant,” says Lorie Mertes, Locust Projects’ Executive Director, “This is a transformative grant that will support Locust Projects in bringing Edison Peñafiel’s vision to life on a major scale and is a game-changer for what both Locust Projects and the artist can do.”

### **ABOUT THE PROJECT:**

Peñafiel’s architectural intervention, *De Profundis Clamavi ad Astra* (From the Depths, I Cried Out to the Stars), transforms Locust Projects’ entire 2,800 sq. ft. gallery, with layered images of an otherworldly ocean realm unfolding across a 170-foot loop of projection space with orchestral soundscape and large-scale animation. Drawing on timeless archetypes and universal narratives, the sea emerges as both a cradle of life and a site of relentless struggle immersing visitors in a haunting underwater world that explores cycles of migration, displacement, resilience, and renewal.

Peñafiel’s melding of mythology, philosophy, and socio-political critique echoes well beyond the walls of Locust Projects. *De Profundis Clamavi ad Astra* recognizes that the conversation around migration must be both local and global, personal and collective. It offers a space for contemplating how we might move beyond geopolitical divides by calling on shared narratives of humanity’s struggle toward renewal. In a city like Miami, marked by continuous waves of immigration, such dialogue is not just relevant—it is urgent.

To realize the artist’s largest project to-date, the project is supported by several collaborators, including major digital production support from MAD Arts, based in Dania Beach, Florida, and more to come.

“This project is a major collaboration in animation, video, sound, and installation, and marks a milestone in my artistic journey,” says Peñafiel, “I am immensely grateful to VIA Art Fund for this recognition, to Locust Projects for their support and trust in my work, and to [MAD Arts](#), as technical co-producers and longtime collaborators, for joining me again on a journey of digital creation and innovation.”



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#### **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Edison Peñafiel's art boldly confronts the unyielding cycles of power and history that shape our world. Through immersive installations that fuse video, sculpture, and site-specific projections, Peñafiel amplifies the voices of the marginalized, compelling audiences to engage with narratives of displacement, migration, and socio-political alienation. His work, influenced by German Expressionism and the omnipresence of surveillance, blurs the boundaries between reality and illusion, creating spaces where personal memory and public history collide.

Born in Guayaquil, Ecuador, in 1985, Peñafiel moved to the United States in 2002. His exhibitions include MARE MAGNVM: A Floridian Odyssey at the USF Contemporary Art Museum and Barrio Alto at Coral Springs Museum of Art, with international showcases at Sabrina Amrani Gallery in Madrid and BIENALSUR in Argentina. Peñafiel has received recognition through awards such as the Knight Foundation's Knight Art Challenge Award (2019) and the Florida Prize in Contemporary Art (2019). Residencies at Mass MoCA, Anderson Ranch, and Oolite Arts have fueled his groundbreaking projects. The artist is represented by [Sabrina Amrani Gallery in Madrid](#)

Peñafiel's art doesn't simply critique; it invites viewers to participate in a larger conversation about justice, identity, and unseen forces. His work challenges societal norms and serves as a catalyst for change, offering new perspectives in an ever-evolving world.

#### **ABOUT [VIA ART FUND](#):**

VIA Art Fund is a 501(c)(3) founded by an international coalition of individuals and private foundations who believe in the central role art plays in society. Funding artists, curators, and arts organizations around the world, VIA Art Fund awards grants in two categories— Artistic Production Grants, and an annual Curatorial Fellowship grant—that exemplify VIA's core values of Artistic Production, Thought Leadership, and Public Engagement.

Artistic Production Grants are awarded twice annually to individual artists, nonprofit organizations, and institutions to support new commissions that take place outside museum or gallery walls, within the public realm, or in non-traditional exhibition environments. These grants are awarded to projects that best exemplify our three core values of Artistic Production, Thought Leadership, and Public Engagement. View VIA Art Fund's past grantees [here](#).



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### **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 incubator grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub.

**Locust Projects receives Major Support from:** The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; 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 State of Florida through the Division of Arts and Culture and the National Endowment for the Arts; Dede and Robert Moss; Ruth Foundation for the Arts; Diane and Werner Grob; Susan and Richard Arregui; Wege Foundation; Funding Arts Network; Cowles Foundation, Kirk Foundation; and the INCUBATORS.