

# GALLERY | 400

400 SOUTH PEORIA STREET (MC 034)

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**UIC** SCHOOL OF ART & ART HISTORY

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Tues–Fri 10–6, Sat 12–6

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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***The Last Judgment/ El Juicio Final***  
***by Adela Goldbard***

Solo exhibition:  
August 27-October 10, 2019

Major Outdoor Pyrotechnic Performance:  
Saturday, October 12, 2019



Adela Goldbard, *A World of Laughter, A World of Fear*, documentation from November 18, 2017, pyrotechnics performance at Pomona College, Claremont, CA. Photographs by media Art Services, Hannah Kirby and Peter Kirby.

***The Last Judgment***

**Exhibition: August 27-October 10, 2019**

**Exhibition Reception: Friday, September 6, 5-8pm**

**Major Pyrotechnic Performance: Saturday, October 12, 2019 at dusk in Little Village, Chicago**

**July 9, 2019—Chicago, IL—The multi-part, community-focused project *The Last Judgment* by Mexican artist Adela Goldbard includes a seven-week exhibition featuring large-scale sculptures built as pyrotechnic scenography for a public pyrotechnic event, as well as the three-act event presented in Little Village on October 12, 2019.** The sculptures—built by master artisans of Artsumex collective in Tultepec (Mexico’s pyrotechnic capital)—derive from the struggles, life experiences, and resilience of Little Village residents, as well as concerns about environmental justice and gentrification. **Centered on the community interests of residents in Chicago’s Little Village neighborhood, Adela Goldbard’s *The Last Judgment* creatively draws on Mexican traditions and artistry to spectacularly address and ritually purge the challenges facing Little Village.**

Stemming from a series of summer 2019 workshops held by Goldbard and collaborating teaching artists for multigenerational Little Village residents in schools, community centers, and other neighborhood locations, *The Last Judgment* serves as a bridge between artists, artisans, activists, and Mexican and Mexican-American communities across Chicago neighborhoods, as well as across the border. **With a multilingual narrative (Spanish, English, and Náhuatl), *The Last Judgment* takes its name from the first Western play performed in present-day Mexico, evoking its spectacular theatricality but contesting its colonizing spirit through processes of collective building, reenactment, and destruction.**

In the October 12 performance, **pyrotechnic effects and fireworks will be used to partially destroy the sculptures, transforming the spectacle into an allegorical, cathartic collective purging of the social ills addressed in the narratives.** As such, the performance will trace a link between the spectacular use of fireworks in Spanish evangelical theater and present-day Mexican practices of burning effigies, whether Judas Iscariot, pop cultural icons, monsters and mythical creatures, or political figures. *The Last Judgment* adopts the allegorical destruction of evil embedded in these pagan, religious, political, and celebratory pyrotechnic immolations of effigies.

In the performance, the sculptures—or backgrounds/facades and ephemeral theater props/effigies—will be colorfully illuminated before and during the firework sequences. A highly cinematic and immersive soundtrack—including recorded ambient sounds, dialogue, and narrators—will add critical dimensions to the vignettes and guide the narrative and the stage’s parade movement.

In the exhibition, prior to the performance, all of the sculptures will be displayed with portions of the soundtrack and documentation of several of Goldbard's previous pyrotechnic events. Alongside Goldbard's work will be exhibited sculptures and stories that Little Village residents made as inspiration for the pyrotechnic sculptures and narrative. The exhibition will be accompanied by five or six public programs, which may include: lectures on medieval and colonial theater; an artist's talk; reed weaving and papier mâché workshops for adults and children; and a screening of *Brimstone and Glory*, a documentary about Tultepec’s ten-day National Pyrotechnic Festival, one of the largest in the world.

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**Collaborating Teaching Artists:** William Estrada, Silvia Gonzalez, Teresa Magana, Juan-Carlos Perez, and Sue Voss, Edith Mendez and Elizabeth Cardona

**Partner Organizations:** Hammond Elementary, John Spry Community School, Telpochcalli Community Education Project, Yollocalli Arts Reach, Universidad Popular, Corazon de Valor y Fortaleza

The Saturday, October 12, 2019 performance of *The Last Judgment* is produced by Gallery 400 at the University of Illinois at Chicago with the collaboration of Illinois Humanities.

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Major support for *The Last Judgment* is provided by The Joyce Foundation as a 2019 Joyce Award and by Fondo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (Mexico). Additional support is provided by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; Illinois Humanities; the School of Art & Art History, the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts, University of Illinois at Chicago; and the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

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**The Last Judgment Related Exhibition Programs:**

Five to six exhibition-related programs will be announced in August.

**Tours:**

Gallery 400 also offers guided tours for groups of all ages. Tours are free of charge but require reservation. Please complete our online form (accessible at [gallery400.uic.edu/visit/tours](http://gallery400.uic.edu/visit/tours)) to schedule a tour of *The Last Judgment* exhibition. For more information, or to discuss accessibility accommodations, please contact us at 312-996-6114 or [gallery400@uic.edu](mailto:gallery400@uic.edu).

**Open hours:**

Gallery 400 is open Tuesday-Friday 10:00am-6:00pm and Saturday 12:00-6:00pm.

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Founded in 1983, Gallery 400 is one of the nation's most vibrant university galleries, showcasing work at the leading edge of contemporary art, architecture, and design. The Gallery's program of exhibitions, lectures, film and video screenings, and performances features interdisciplinary and experimental practices. Operating within the School of Art and Art History in the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Gallery 400 endeavors to make the arts and its practitioners accessible to a broad spectrum of the public and to cultivate a variety of cultural and

intellectual perspectives. Gallery 400 is recognized for its support of the creation of new work, the diversity of its programs and participants, and the development of experimental models for multidisciplinary exhibition.