

La Detención (The Arrest), 2024-dato
(Work in Progress)

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La Detención (The Arrest) is a screen-movie about a fictional political state of emergency in which a wall encloses part of a city. The entire film unfolds on computer screens, where a group of activists reviews footage recorded by surveillance cameras they had previously installed outside the wall. As they watch the material, they reconstruct past events, converse, and search for signs of arbitrary arrests occurring on the other side of the barrier — a zone that remains unseen throughout the film, yet asserts a haunting presence through sound, narration, and editing. The activists themselves never appear on screen; instead, the story is propelled through their dialogue, scrolling, and clicking. The film blends documentary-like visuals with a layered soundscape of sirens, voices, and digital noise. Situated between fiction and reality, *La Detención* unfolds as a visual and acoustic narrative about surveillance, isolation, and the mediated experience of state violence.

They believed this wall could simply block out the surrounding city and claimed it made the area “more peaceful.” Shocked by this political act, we went there to see the situation for ourselves only to find the police had made the first arrest of an intruder (intruso). Watching the screens, we (the activists) later dissect the political arrest and larger political revolt.

La Detención (The Arrest) shows a crossroad where a wall has been built – a real location transformed into a fictional setting. The narrative draws on actual architectural and political examples, such as the 14.6 km wall erected around the favelas of Rio de Janeiro in 2009. Officially justified as an environmental protection measure, it ultimately functions as a symbol and instrument of social segregation. The story follows a group of activists who install cameras just days after the wall’s construction to document events occurring on their side of it. That day, tensions and protests from the previous weeks escalate, culminating in police violence on the other side of the wall – the enclosed area.

This other side, and the coup that unfolds there, become the film’s invisible main protagonist. Only what is heard – the arrests, sirens, screams, and gunshots – carries over to the activists’ side. In the camera footage, it is the reactions of passersby, the ebb and flow of crowds, and frantic traffic that visually evoke the unrest of those days.

La Detención (The Arrest) is conceived as a screen-movie. The entire narrative unfolds through the user interfaces of the activists’ computers, showing material recorded by the cameras they installed. The activists never appear on screen but perform instead their roles through voice, rhythm, and through the way they click and move around their computer screens. A dialogue unfolds while they browse through the footage and scroll through saved videos. We hear them recount the events, reach out to acquaintances behind the wall, and search the recordings for “suspicious individuals” or “clues” about the arrests. A narrative emerges from the activists’ conversations that interweaves with the images of the street scenes.

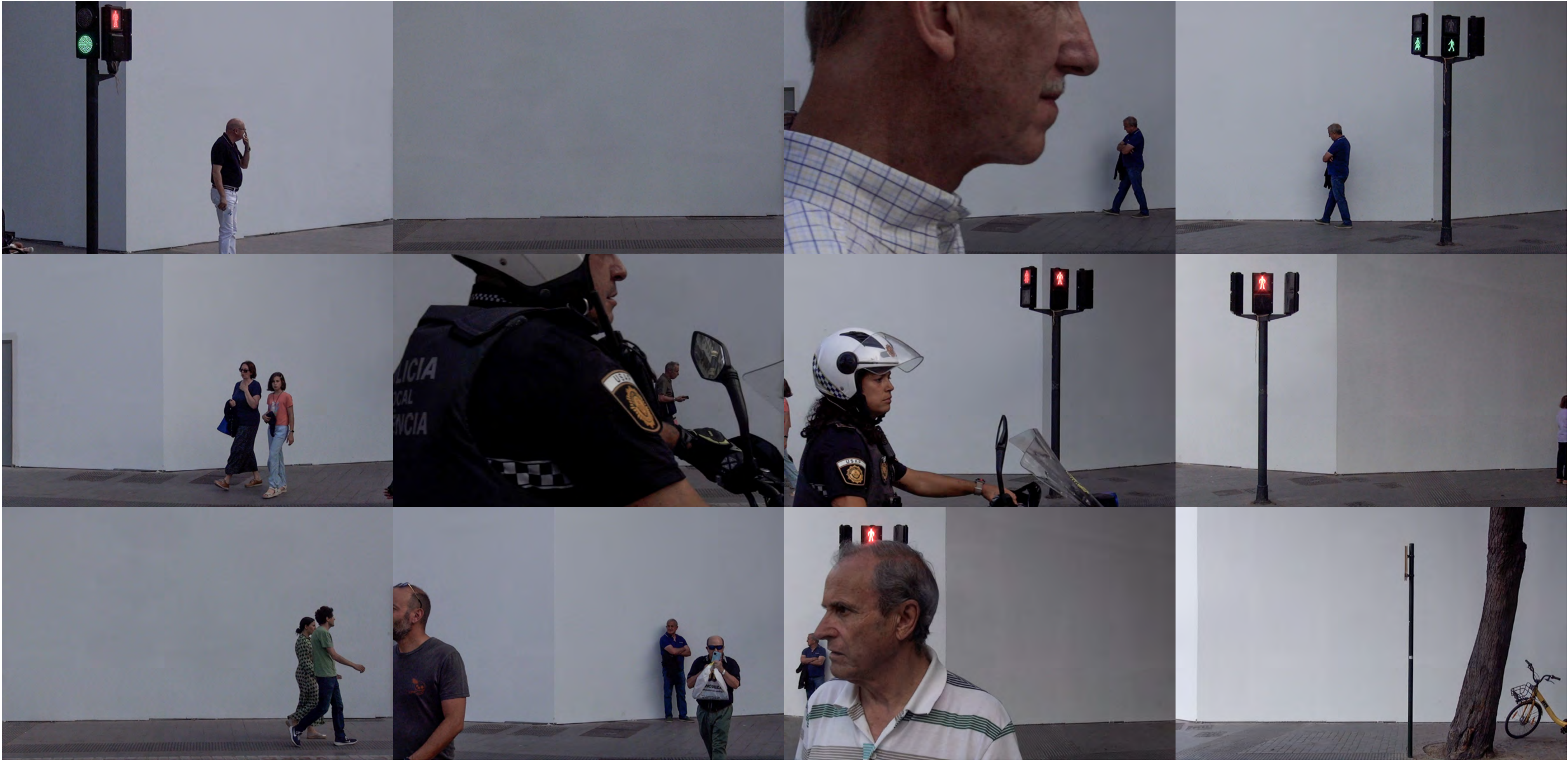
The footage is shot at a real location at a crossroad in Valencia. Later, this footage is heavily edited in postproduction. The alterations and editions on the image correspond to the dialogue: crowds are sped up or slowed down, the crossroad is vacated and repopulated as passersby are digitally removed or reinserted. Additional sounds accompany the audio of the film: screams, sirens, the impact of stones as they are thrown, etc. The activists /performers then use the edited material pretending it is the original unaltered footage of the real crossroad in Valencia.

In the final screen recording, performers portraying the activists click through the edited and sound-enhanced material. Their interaction with the footage – clicking and watching – is synchronized with the dialogues and thus the narrative is conceived. Without ever showing the actual “event,” the imagination fills and creates a space merely through dialogue and sound design. The seemingly casual browsing of the footage by the activists creates a sense of immediacy, producing a kind of credibility that subtly reinforces the fictional events as plausible realities. Between still and moving images, the installation finds its rhythm. The sounds of scrolling and clicking are interwoven like a net with ambient noises, screams, and sirens from the off-screen location behind the wall. Though never visible, the coup becomes irrevocably present through sound and narration.

La Detención is intended to be shown as a large-scale, six-channel video installation. Due to the low resolution of the footage, the faces of passersby appear pixelated and unrecognizable. The screenplay is currently being developed in collaboration with writer and screenwriter Gabriel Solis (b. 1983, Buenos Aires). In 2015, Solis founded a youth center in Villa 31 – also known as “La Villa Miseria,” one of the most densely populated informal settlements in Buenos Aires. His experience plays a vital role in shaping both the dialogue and the conceptual approach of the film.

Teaser // La Detención (The Arrest), 2024:
https://youtu.be/9mXm0icbf_o

Teaser 2 // La Detención (The Arrest), 2024:
<https://youtu.be/29ZRDkSTYa0>



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I think I just found the person who...





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