

Jorge Lucero

(Mexican-American, born 1976)

Educational Space (and Time), 1994-2016

Thousands of dollars and hours; many breaths

Gift of Jorge Arturo Lucero and Maria de Jesus Lucero-Quíñones., 1994.01

Jorge Lucero has been breathing the air of the Art Institute of Chicago since 1994 when he became a student of the college (SAIC) from which the museum bears its name. During those twenty-two years, Lucero has rehearsed the objects of this encyclopedic collection through his admiration, criticality, and creative work. Lucero readily admits to the profound influence the Art Institute's collection and exhibitions has had on him as an artist. He once remarked, "My relationship to the museum is one of immersion and emergence. It has been a *labor* of duration and surprises. The Art Institute of Chicago is one of the unquestioned cornerstones of my artistic development."

In Lucero's recent "placard" works he unsettles the casual reading of the museum's educational labels by bringing to the surface the placard's latent subjectivity and its potential for creative intervention. In other words, Lucero uses the placard as a "material" to make a conceptual work of art that is also an art education gesture. By using academic *museum-speak* and appropriating the--almost invisible--form(s) of the placard itself, Lucero presents a disruption of master narratives' positionalities by merely asking: "Who gets to tell the story?". This simple move, enacted first in the mind and then through a material (e.g. a word-processor and printer) returns the task of constructing "meaning" to the day-to-day museum visitor. Lucero's work around "authoritative voice" in the museum attempts to reintroduce relationality, power dynamics, and situationality into the art museum's educational mission. In Lucero's thinking every person who encounters a work of art automatically has a kind of expertise about that particular artwork and that expertise, if made manifest through something like an educational placard, can broaden a collective understanding of that object in a radical way.