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## That Time Art and Activism Met in Antarctica

By Andrew Nunes — Jan 25 2016



*Antarctic Village - No Borders, Dome Dwelling, 2007. Photo by Christine Pan, Courtesy the artists and Jane Lombard Gallery.*

With a grand total of 0 permanent residents and an average winter temperature of  $-56.2^{\circ}\text{F}$ , Antarctica is a bit more than your average “no man’s land.” This didn’t deter artist duo Lucy + Jorge Orta (<http://www.studio-orta.com/en>), however, who took an expedition to the territory in 2007 on commission from

*The End of the World Biennale* (<http://www.bienaldelfindelmundo.org>). Nine years later, the duo’s cumulative work created during the program is finally on display in NYC at Jane Lombard Gallery (<http://www.janelombardgallery.com>).

Simply titled *Antarctica*, the exhibition is a complex menagerie of activist artwork. One of the works on display is *Antarctic Village – No Borders*. Originally manifested as a series of 50 hut-like tents constructed by the duo in Antarctica, the exhibition hosts a single, extracted tent from the project. The tent is covered in the flags of hundreds of countries, a reflection on the politically neutral nature of the territory. Antarctica functions as a political condominium ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Condominium\\_\(international\\_law\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Condominium_(international_law))), governed by parties that have consulting status to the Antarctic Treaty ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antarctic\\_Treaty\\_System](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antarctic_Treaty_System)).



*Antarctic Village - No Borders, Drop Parachute, 2007-8. Photo by Christine Pan, Courtesy the artists and Jane Lombard Gallery.*

“Antarctica is a symbol of the unification of world citizens. The continent’s immaculate environment embodies all the wishes of humanity and spreads a message of hope to future generations,” says Lucy Orta. “Drawing upon this visualization of hope, the project *Antarctic Village – No Borders* was first developed as a Utopian endeavor through which we could consider the current climate of migration and the refugee status in which many people throughout the world find themselves.”

*The Antarctic World Passport Delivery Bureau*, another project within the exhibition, expands upon the idea of global unification envisioned through Antarctica. Made entirely of reclaimed wood and other materials, the installation simulates a rudimentary passport issuing office. More than a static work of art,

*The Antarctic World Passport Delivery Bureau* issues editioned “*Antarctica World Passports*” to visitors, so long as they take a vow of moral fortitude. Lucy explains, “*Antarctica World Passports* can be delivered to everyone, to become members of a world community without borders, in exchange for an agreement to protect the environment, respect mankind, and fight for peace.”



*Antarctic Village - No Borders, Drop Parachute, 2007-8. Photo by Christine Pan, Courtesy the artists and Jane Lombard Gallery.*

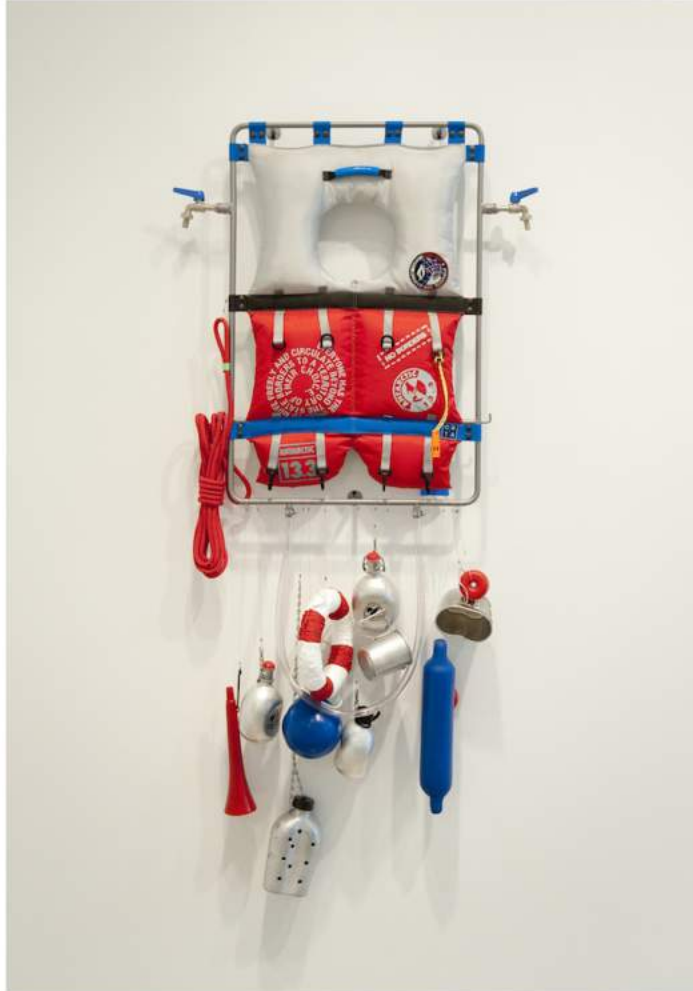
Beyond the installation, *Antarctica World Passports* is also an online initiative that functions as an online project database as well as a virtual passport outlet. But the artist duo explains that this is just phase one: “Once we have a critical mass it will be possible to develop a social platform, whereby citizens can choose the actions they wish to engage with.”



*Antarctica World Passport, Mobile Delivery Bureau, 2008. Photo by Christine Pan, Courtesy the artists and Jane Lombard Gallery.*



*Antarctica World Passport Delivery Bureau, 2016. Photo by Christine Pan, Courtesy the artists and Jane Lombard Gallery.*



*Life Line - Survival Kit, 2008. Photo by Christine Pan, Courtesy the artists and Jane Lombard Gallery.*

*Antarctica* will be on display at Jane Lombard Gallery (<http://www.janelombardgallery.com>) until February 20, 2016. View more of Lucy & Jorge Orta's work on their official website. (<http://www.studio-orta.com/en>)