In my ongoing research, I study themes related to identity, border culture, and social justice. Conceptually, I focus on liminality in both geographical and symbolical contexts to approach the semiotics of adornment. My main subject is the U.S.-Mexico border and my main focus is personal and cultural belonging. Other subjects I research are immigration, labor and the body. My theoretical framework uses the idea of “in between-ness,” which literary scholar Gloria Anzaldúa calls “Nepantla,” in order to think critically about the U.S-Mexico borderlands. With the social sculpture Penumbra, I am using the fabricated stainless steel birds to explore lines of distance, lines of travel, migration and lines of communication and connection. My themes are grounded in the experience of immigration, borders and boundaries both in political and natural contexts...key themes I wish people to dialogue about and engage with. Photo on the top was taken at the U.S./Mexico border of Cd. Juarez and El Paso, TX. By Sara Villegas. Photo on the bottom was taken during an interactive social engagement at UIUC. By Ramsey Qiao. Artwork and direction of photography by Alejandra Carrillo.