

## **Bordando por la Paz y la Memoria - Embroidery for Peace and Memory**

*Update from Danielle House on 'embroidery for peace and memory'*

Embroidery for Peace and Memory began in Mexico City in 2011. In response to massive levels of violence seen in Mexico since the start of the War on Drugs in 2006, a group in Mexico City, Fuentes Rojas, decided to embroider, in public space, the names and details of victims of violence in Mexico onto handkerchiefs, a handkerchief for every victim. They began stitching in red the names of people killed, and the project began to spread as people began embroidering in plazas in Puebla, Guadalajara, Tijuana, Cancún, and Monterrey. Some of these embroiderers were the relatives of the victims, and they began to embroider in green the names of people who had disappeared (see here for a video of Leticia Hidalgo, founder of FUNDENL, telling her story and what it means to embroider: <https://vimeo.com/214412299>). Pink and purple are now used to embroider victims of femicide.

12 handkerchiefs from three of the groups (Mexico City, Puebla, and Nuevo León) will be exhibited as part of the Stitched Voices exhibition in Aberystwyth Arts Centre in Spring 2017.

In 2016, while in Mexico for my PhD fieldwork, began embroidering with Fuentes Rojas weekly in a plaza in the south of Mexico City. However, since my return to Wales I have begun 'Bordando por la Paz Gales' sessions (Embroidery for Peace Wales). These sessions will continue, and throughout the Stitched Voices exhibition will take place on a weekly basis either outside the Arts Centre or inside the Gallery.

Here is a summary of the sessions held so far:

### **Mexico City, with Fuentes Rojas**

I embroidered with Fuentes Rojas weekly from February to May 2016.



**Mach Speak, Machynlleth, 29th June 2016**

I presented the project at the weekly Mach Speak event and then the group began embroidering on the first Welsh handkerchiefs.



**El Sueño Existe festival, Machynlleth, 20th August 2016**

El Sueño Existe celebrates the life and legacy of Chilean folk singer Victor Jara. I took the handkerchiefs along on the Saturday and people spent all day embroidering while listening to talks and music.



**KnitSoc, Aberystwyth, 30th November 2016**

I took the project to Aberystwyth University's Knitting Society, and they swapped knitting needles for sewing needles.



**Upcoming sessions:**

Machynlleth Women's Institute, 19th April 2017

Weekly during Stitched Voices exhibition