

PITCH A TENT

Lucy + Jorge Orta

The stark landscape of Argentina's Marambio Base, Marambio Island, Graham Land, Antarctic Peninsula, sets the scene for the duo, Lucy and Jorge Orta, to install dome-like tents made from repurposed textiles including national flags and recycled clothing, stitched together using traditional tent-making techniques. These nomadic shelters aim to draw attention to displacement, cultural plurality, and the need for universal freedom of movement. The patchwork of national flags is overlaid with a reinterpretation of Article 13.3 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, asserting that no individual should rank below capital, commerce, or pollution, forces that cross borders with impunity. Antarctica is the canvas for this project with its political neutrality and collaborative scientific governance. It is the only continent without a native population or private ownership; its frozen terrain challenges geopolitical norms and envisions a hopeful future for unity.

The Ortas display the power of textile not just as material but also as a valuable cultural language. Their use of reclaimed fabrics symbolises resilience, while the shelter's construction echoes traditions of survival and solidarity. For this year's British Textile Biennial, a survey exhibition of the Ortas' work will be on display in Blackburn Cathedral's Crypt. *** **Homo Mondialis, Lucy + Jorge Orta, British Textile Biennale, until 2 November 2026, Blackburn Cathedral Crypt, Blackburn, UK, studio-orta.com britishtextilebiennial.co.uk**



Thierry Bal

Image above: Lucy + Jorge Orta, *Antarctic Village – No Borders*, 2007. Coated polyamide, various textiles, nation flags, silkscreen print, second hand clothes, webbing, clips, three telescopic armatures, 230 x 175 cm each.