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In 2009, a series of teeter totters installed for forty minutes in the border wall separating Juárez, Mexico, and Sunland Park, New Mexico allowed children on either side to engage in communal play. The teeter totters juxtaposed play and violence, as one quickly recalls the separation of children from families at the hands of border patrol. And yet, the seesaws sparked a sort of joy that highlighted the humanity of children on both sides of the wall. This woodcut will combine the yin of play, childhood, and freedom with the yang of separation, confinement, and surveillance to ultimately show that humans can connect across strict borders.

“No hay mal que por bien no venga”—This is a Mexican proverb which translates to “there’s no evil that doesn’t come with some good in it.” The connection of joy brings hope, and with that we can navigate through dark times. Joy unites us all, and even just temporarily, the yang of the wall brought together the community in a celebration of togetherness, the seesaw teetering back and forth, a reminder that after all, we’re all the same, on both sides of the fence.

Artists Sasha Yehya and Ian Bailey are classmates in the Associate in Fine Arts program at Wake Tech Community College, Raleigh, NC.