Teresita Fernández: Elemental

Artist’s First Mid-Career Survey Features Large-Scale Sculptures, Installations, and Wall Works that Challenge Definitions of Landscape and the Psychology of Looking

Opening October 17, 2019 at PAMM


Photo credit: Lehmann Maupin

Click Link to Download Images

(Miami, FL — April 23, 2019) — Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) is pleased to announce the first mid-career survey of internationally-acclaimed visual artist Teresita Fernández. On view from October 17, 2019 through February 9, 2020, Teresita Fernández: Elemental, which is co-organized with Phoenix Art Museum, will feature more than 50 of the artist’s large-scale sculptures, installations, drawings, and wall works created over two decades.
Teresita Fernández: Elemental offers visitors an unparalleled opportunity to experience numerous works by one of the nation’s leading contemporary artists. The exhibition tells the story of a creator who, through her practice, reflects and challenges perceptions of place, the natural world and the U.S. social order, and asks viewers to contemplate who they are as an extension of where they are. The retrospective will introduce visitors to the artist’s large-scale sculptures, installations, and mixed media works that merge formal and conceptual aspects of her practice through the use of natural materials and the historic genre of landscape to reinterpret relationships between nature, history, and identity.

“We are thrilled to be collaborating with Phoenix Art Museum on this monumental retrospective,” said PAMM Director Franklin Sirmans. “Teresita’s work and influence has been vital to the evolution of Miami’s art scene and has played a significant role in the development of our museum. We are also very grateful to have received a generous grant from the Andy Warhol Foundation to directly support the exhibition and enable us to present an in-depth series of programming around this exhibition.”

Teresita Fernández: Elemental represents the first collaboration between Phoenix Art Museum and Pérez Art Museum Miami and spans the mid-1990s to the present, offering a comprehensive view of Fernández’s career to date. Featured works include Fire (2005), which uses thousands of hand-dyed silk threads to construct flame patterns that become animated by light and color as viewers move around the sculpture, and Borrowed Landscape (1998), a room-sized installation in a darkened space where glowing colored volumes suggest an immersive, landscape.

The exhibition will also showcase the artist’s most recent body of work, in which she intertwines the sublime nature of traditional landscapes with the violent history and current socio-political climate of the United States. Fernández strategically uses beauty and light to evoke a sense of vulnerability, and intimacy. Through this, she is able to speak about some of the most pressing social issues facing the United States today, including the contradictions of democracy and the repercussions of social injustice connected to land and place, while prompting viewers to engage with these important topics by "locating" themselves. Both Fire (United States of the Americas) (2017) and Charred Landscape (America) (2017) underscore Fernández’s reinterpretation of the land, presenting a contemporary American landscape marred by colonial histories, violence, and climate change that stands in stark contrast to the idealized vision of the American dream.
Based in New York, Fernández, who was born in 1968 in Miami to Cuban parents, is renowned for her prominent public installations and experiential sculptures. Through her practice, she explores perception and the psychology of looking, regularly manipulating light and space to create immersive, intimate, and evocative experiences. Using a range of materials including silk, graphite, onyx, mirrors, glass, and charcoal, her minimalist yet substantive artworks evoke landscapes, the elements, and various natural phenomena, including meteor showers, cloud formations, and the night sky.

*Teresita Fernández: Elemental* will premiere at Pérez Art Museum Miami from October 17 through February 9, 2020 before traveling to Phoenix Art Museum in spring 2020. The traveling exhibition is co-curated by Amada Cruz, the Sybil Harrington Director and CEO of Phoenix Art Museum; Franklin Sirmans, the Director of Pérez Art Museum Miami; Gilbert Vicario, the Selig Family Chief Curator of Phoenix Art Museum; and María Elena Ortiz, Associate Curator of Pérez Art Museum Miami.

*Teresita Fernández: Elemental* is co-organized by Pérez Art Museum Miami and Phoenix Art Museum. This exhibition is presented by Citi with generous support from the Ford Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation, and John Hardy Jewelry. Additional support from Funding Arts Network and JW Marriott Marquis Miami is gratefully acknowledged. Lead individual support from Camille and Patrick McDowell together with support from Patricia and William Kleh, and Anthony and Celeste Meier is also gratefully acknowledged. Valuable support for the exhibition catalogue was provided by Lehmann Maupin, New York and Hong Kong.

About Teresita Fernández

Teresita Fernández (b. 1968, Miami, Fla.) lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She received a BFA from Florida International University, Miami, in 1990 and an MFA from Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, in 1992. Fernández is best known for her prominent public installations and experiential large-scale sculptures that evoke striking landscapes. Her work, often inspired by natural wonders, invites an individualized experience of the work and the space it occupies. She places particular importance on her choice of medium, playing with the limitations of materials and employing those such as gold, graphite, and other minerals that have complicated histories often tied to colonialism. Her work is characterized by an interest in place, perception and the psychology of looking. She is a 2005 MacArthur Foundation Fellow and a recipient of the Aspen Award for Art (2013), the Guggenheim Fellowship (2003), and the Louis Comfort Tiffany Biennial Award (1999). Appointed by President Obama, she was the first Latina to serve on the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, a 100-year-old federal panel that advises the president and Congress on national matters of design and aesthetics. Fernández’s work is featured in the permanent collections of various international public and private collections, including The Museum of Modern Art (N.Y.); Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Mass.); The New Orleans Museum of Art (LA); Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo (N.Y.); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (Calif.); Pérez Art Museum, Miami (Fla.); the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C.; and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (Minn.). For more information on the artist, please visit [lehmannmaupin.com](http://lehmannmaupin.com).

About Pérez Art Museum Miami
Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) promotes artistic expression and the exchange of ideas, advancing public knowledge and appreciation of art, architecture, and design, and reflecting the diverse community of its pivotal geographic location at the crossroads of the Americas. The 35-year-old South Florida institution, formerly known as Miami Art Museum (MAM) and led by Director Franklin Sirmans, opened a new building, designed by world-renowned architects Herzog & de Meuron, on December 4, 2013 in Downtown Miami’s Museum Park. The facility is a state-of-the-art model for sustainable museum design and progressive programming and features 200,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor program space with flexible galleries; shaded outdoor verandas; a waterfront restaurant and bar; a museum shop; and an education center with a library, media lab, and classroom spaces.

About Phoenix Art Museum
Phoenix Art Museum has provided access to visual arts and educational programs in Arizona for nearly 60 years and is the largest art museum in the Southwestern United States. Critically acclaimed national and international exhibitions are shown alongside the Museum’s permanent collection of more than 19,000 works of American, Asian, European, Latin American, Western American, modern and contemporary art, and fashion design. The Museum also presents festivals, a comprehensive film program, live performances and educational programs designed to enlighten, entertain and stimulate visitors of all ages. Visitors also enjoy vibrant photography exhibitions through the Museum’s landmark partnership with the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona. To learn more about Phoenix Art Museum, visit PhxArt.org, or call (602) 257-1880.

###

Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. Support is provided by the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners. Additional support is provided by the City of Miami and the Miami OMNI Community Redevelopment Agency (OMNI CRA). Pérez Art Museum Miami is an accessible facility. All contents ©Pérez Art Museum Miami. All rights reserved.

PRESS CONTACTS

Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM)
National:
Ali Rigo
Account Executive
Cultural Counsel
ali@culturalcounsel.com

Phoenix Art Museum
Margaree Bigler
Assistant Director, Marketing and Communications
Margaree.Bigler@phxart.org

The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts
ali@culturalcounsel.com

Local:
RockOrange
pamm@rockorange.com

Phoenix Art Museum
Margaree Bigler