



Arrastre 6, direct print to silver Dibond, 20 1/2 x 36 in

Ana Teresa Fernández: Foreign Bodies
April 3 – May 31, 2014

Gallery Reception: Thursday, April 3, 2014, 6-8 pm

Artist Discussion: Saturday, April 5, 2014, 2-3:30 pm

Gallery Wendi Norris

161 Jessie Street, San Francisco, CA 94105

SAN FRANCISCO, CA.

Gallery Wendi Norris presents *Foreign Bodies*, an exhibition of new work by Ana Teresa Fernández exploring how women navigate the geographic, social, and physiological boundaries between the United States and Mexico. Documenting her performances and installations using photography and the painted image, Fernández's work reveals how women's bodies become surfaces imprinted with political and social upheavals.

Fernández's visually complex and emotive photographic prints document the artist's performance as she rode an iconic white horse in sinkhole waters in Mexico. The images are hauntingly rendered as direct prints to silver Dibond and depict Fernández and the horse as conjoined bodies. At times serene and other times frantically agitating the water that surrounds them, the underwater

perspective of the horse and rider calls attention to the other-worldly, disorienting state of foreign environments. The horses' bulging muscles and Fernández's violent black stilettos express the combative nature of the artist's bodily engagement with the animal, and further brings to bear the physicality of her experience.

Fernández's oil on canvas paintings record her performances at the United States and Mexico border, in which she filmed herself painting the fence separating the two countries. These works conflate the body of the artist as a political actor and as a creative force. Another exhausting, physical piece, Fernández used giant ladders to scale the boundary and was interrogated by authorities during the process. In painting the black bars of the fence to sky blue, the barriers between artist and political activist dissolve, just as the barrier between the countries seems to fade into the background. As the fence disappears into space, the "foreign" nature of the artist's female body is further called into question.

Fernández's imagery connects the intimacy of a personal, physical encounter to a wider understanding of strength, vulnerability, autonomy, and authority. In this way, the white horse alludes to a wide history of declarations and disruptions of power, from its use in assertive portraits of Spanish conquistadors, to Picasso's *Guernica*. Further, Fernández's practice is in dialogue with contemporary artists such as Patricia Ruiz-Bayón, Tochiro Gallegos, and others contemplating and engaging the landscapes and residents of the border territories.

Though *Foreign Bodies* emphasizes the artists' own body as the "foreign" site of transgression and repression, it simultaneously inserts this individual experience into a wider political and historical context. Zora Neale Hurston's analysis that a racial "other" is most vividly felt "when placed against a sharp white background" is crucial to Fernández's aesthetic perspective. With her work in *Foreign Bodies*, Fernández presents the truth that women face at the border—their bodies are singular passports of "otherness," to be stamped with the political and social violence of a foreign land.

About the Artist

Ana Teresa Fernández was born and raised in Tampico, Mexico and lives in San Francisco, CA. She explores the politics of intersectionality and the ways it shapes personal identity, culture, and social rhetoric through painting, performance, and video. Her work illuminates the psychological and physical barriers that define gender, race, and class in Western society and the global south.

In addition to solo exhibitions, Fernández has exhibited at the Tijuana Biennial in Mexico, Snite Museum at Notre Dame University, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco, and The Oakland Art Museum. Her large-scale "5W" public art project in San Francisco was awarded "Best of the Bay" by 7x7 Magazine in 2013. Her numerous residencies include La Fragua in Cordoba, Spain; Greatmore Art Center Residency in Capetown, South Africa; Fanal Otantik Sant D'A Jakmel in Haiti, and the Headlands Center for the Arts (Where she was a Tournesol Award Recipient). Her films have been screened at the Woodstock Film Festival, the Female Eye Film Festival in Toronto, and the Honolulu International Film Festival where she was awarded the Gold Kahuna Award for Best Experimental Short. Fernández received her MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2006. *Foreign Bodies* is Fernández's first solo exhibition at Gallery Wendi Norris.

About the Gallery

Gallery Wendi Norris presents a compelling contemporary and modern program with a strong emphasis on the global market. Since 2003, we have collaborated with over one hundred of the top museums around the world, placing works in their collections and collaborating on solo and

group exhibitions. Though, by design, the range of works we show is diverse, a common thread runs through them all: a focus on the human ability to create psychological and spiritual meaning through form and content. Both the artworks and the artists themselves are emblematic of this aesthetic ambition and our trans-cultural nature. Through our expertise in the modern art world, with an unparalleled network in Surrealism, and through our considered selection of some of today's most dynamic artists, we work with a range of private clients, museums, public art projects and not-for-profit art organizations.

On Saturday, April 5 at 2pm, Gallery Wendi Norris will also host Sean Kissane in conversation with author Rebecca Solnit and Ana Teresa Fernández to discuss Carrington's imaginative world and her influence on important contemporary artists working today.

For additional information and images please contact the gallery (415) 346-7812 or email molly@gallerywendinorris.com.