

Teresita Fernández
Night Writing
September 12 – October 20, 2012

Lehmann Maupin Gallery
201 Chrystie Street

In her fifth solo exhibition at Lehmann Maupin Gallery, Teresita Fernández creates works that evoke the dramatic and universal experience of looking at the night sky. The exhibition consists of a single, large-scale installation built on site in the soaring double-height space of the Chrystie Street gallery. Made up of thousands of translucent, colored layers of polycarbonate, the hovering form becomes like sculptural painting, filtering the natural light in the space to create a color field reminiscent of the aurora borealis.

Fernández will also present a related series of unique prints. Created while in residency at the Singapore Tyler Print Institute, each unique hand-made pulp work in this series is perforated with braille-like patterns that recall constellations. The title of the series, *Night Writing*, is a reference to "Ecriture Nocturne," a secret code written in the early 19th century to enable Napoleon's soldiers to communicate at night, silently and without light.

Names of people, places and things, from star crossed lovers, to famous gems, to coordinates marked by latitude lines, are incorporated into the works as words translated into braille and made into an abstracted composition of points that are superimposed on sumptuous large-scale, printed images of the night sky. Artworks such as *Tristan and Isolde*, *Koh-i-Noor*, and *Tropic of Cancer* are made up of cryptic words lost in an undecipherable code of dots. The works become a statement on the ephemeral quality of language and the attempt to grasp the content hidden within the invisible text. Fernández's works explore this subtle space between blindness, vision, and the tactile.

An accompanying artist's book, published by The Singapore Tyler Print Institute, is an integral part of this body of work, and includes an essay written by Fernández. "Humans have always looked up for information. Like a vast billboard, the night sky has always been read and scanned for revelation, direction and guidance. The stars have always served as coordinates that ground us to a physical location and time; they offer a sensual orientation," writes Fernández, whose enlightening essay, both historical and personal, documents her research and sheds light on this subject.

Teresita Fernández was born in 1968 in Miami, Florida, and has lived in Brooklyn, New York, for the past 15 years. She is an artist best known for her conceptual, experiential works, prominent public sculptures, and unconventional use of materials. Fernández's work is characterized by an interest in perception and the psychology of looking. Her large-scale works are often inspired by landscape and natural phenomena as well as diverse historical and cultural references. She is a 2005 MacArthur Foundation Fellow and has received many prestigious awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Louis Comfort Tiffany Biennial Award, an American Academy in Rome Affiliated Fellowship, and a National Endowment for the Arts Artist's Grant. In 2011, President Obama appointed Fernández to the US Commission of Fine Arts.

Large-scale commissions include a recent site-specific work titled "Blind Blue Landscape" at the renowned Benesse Art site in Naoshima, Japan. Fernández is the youngest artist commissioned by the Seattle Art Museum for the recently opened Olympic Sculpture Park, where her permanently installed work "Seattle Cloud Cover" allows visitors to walk under a covered skyway while viewing the city's skyline through optically shifting multicolored glass.

Teresita Fernández's works are included in many prominent collections and have been exhibited around the world at important public institutions, such as the Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; The Modern Art Museum of Ft. Worth; Castello di Rivoli, Turin, Italy; The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; Centro de Arte Contemporaneo, Malaga, Spain, and Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, among others. Fernández is currently on the board of Artpace, a non-profit, international artist's residency program. She received her MFA from Virginia Commonwealth University and her BFA from Florida International University.