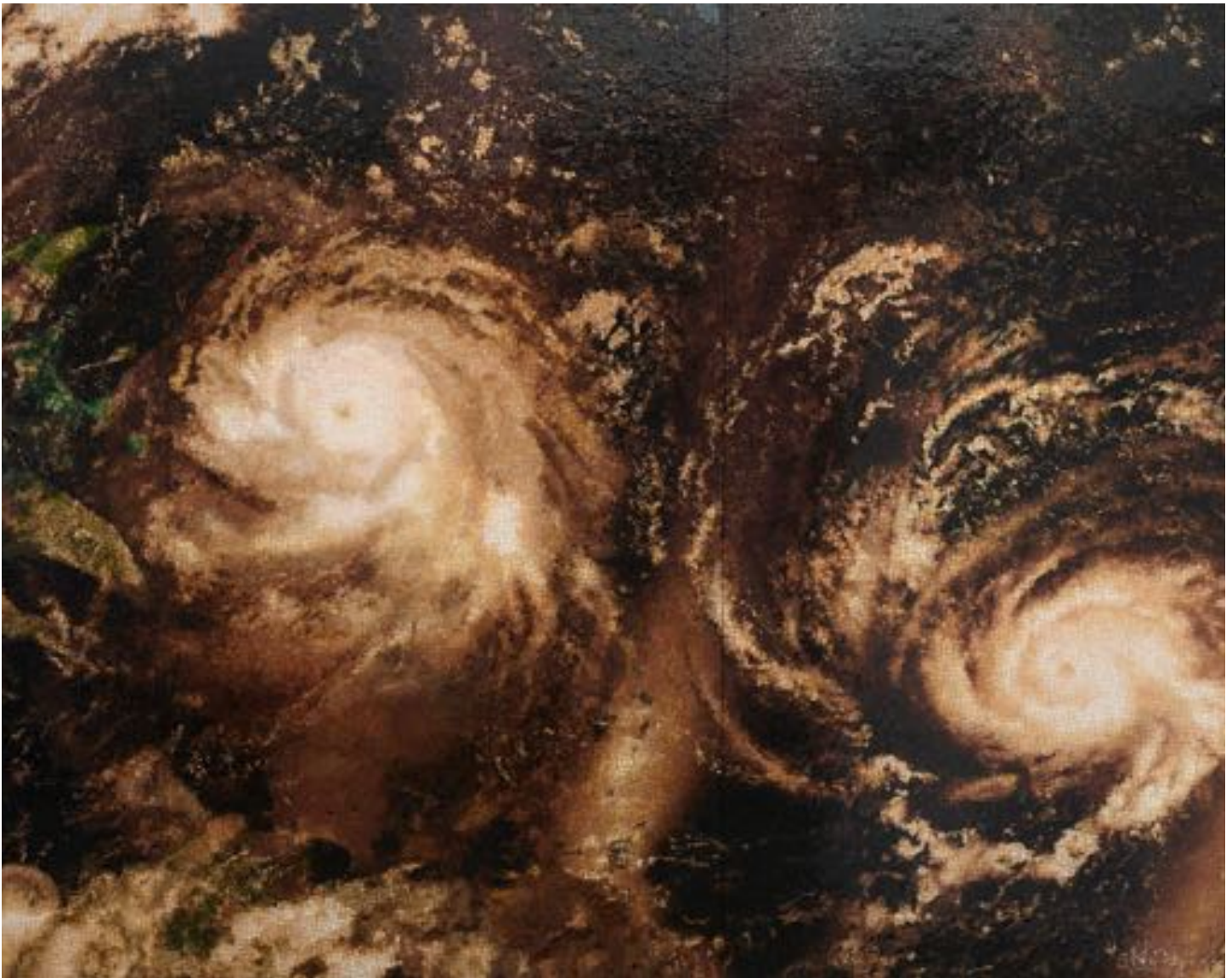


TERESITA FERNÁNDEZ
Caribbean Cosmos

September 14–November 5, 2022
London



Teresita Fernández, *Caribbean Cosmos*, 2020 (detail). Glazed ceramic, 96 x 192 x 125 inches (243.8 x 487.7 x 32 cm)

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Lehmann Maupin announces *Caribbean Cosmos*, an exhibition of new work by New York-based artist Teresita Fernández. Known for her expansive practice characterized by an interest in materiality, conceptual wayfinding, and reflective engagement, Fernández creates immersive work that critically rethinks landscape and place. Incorporating diverse historical and cultural references, Fernández challenges entrenched spatial frameworks and poetically exposes the history of colonization and the inherent violence embedded in how we imagine and define both land and location. On view at Lehmann Maupin London from September 14 - November 5, 2022, *Caribbean Cosmos* includes a charcoal sculpture, a large-scale, glazed ceramic panel, and a new series of seascape dissolves rendered on copper. The artist will be in conversation with Rachel Thomas, Chief Curator of the Hayward Gallery on September 15 at the Royal Geographical Society, London. On October 11, the gallery will host a conversation between Fernández and Sir David Adjaye at 4 Cromwell Place.

In *Caribbean Cosmos*, Fernández presents a nuanced understanding of the Caribbean, looking beyond dominant, continental narratives and instead considering the region as emblematic of an expansive, decentralized physical geography, and a global, diasporic state of mind. Using this dispersed lens, she unravels dynamic strands of rhizomatic connection, sprawling landscapes, and a metaphysical understanding of the natural world. Fernández uses earthly elements—including fired clay, etched and polished copper, and solid charcoal made from burned trees—to summon a churning material world in the ever-changing flux of decay, evolution, and renewal. In *Caribbean Cosmos*, Fernández infuses matter with meaning, achieving a type of alchemy in the transformation of her raw materials.

Fernández often shifts between the cosmic and the microscopic, the subterranean and the firmament, and the geological and the ephemeral—often within a single work. The titular *Caribbean Cosmos* (2022) is a 12-foot panel composed of thousands of tiny ceramic tesserae, which are glazed with minerals from the earth and fired at high temperatures, mimicking volcanic processes. The work depicts swirling shapes that suggest colliding galaxies, archipelagos, aerial views of hurricanes, and vortex rings such as those found in the tributary systems of the human body. Fernández's adept manipulation of scale reminds us that the physical forces shaping the universe are the same as those that govern our own bodily rhythms. The richly colored, highly reflective surface of the panel inserts the viewer into the artist's shifting landscape, prompting deep contemplation and an attempt to orient ourselves with wayfinding markers, even as the abstracted image evades recognition.

Fernández's complex intertwining of material and meaning also figures prominently in *Pendent(Lynched Land)* (2022), which depicts a battered palm tree frond hanging ominously from a

hemp rope. The somber wall sculpture is composed of textured, hand-carved charcoal, a material that is itself created from burned trees, and the work highlights Fernández's focus on raw materials drawn from the earth. In *Pendent(Lynched Land)*, the artist turns our attention to the extractive processes by which we engage with landscape while also alluding to the historical and political violence wrought by resource extraction and global commerce through the clear implication of the act of burning. Here, viewers are asked to reconsider the stereotypical use of tropical foliage as iconic of "paradise" and to instead grapple with the historic and ongoing violence imposed on these islands.

Anchoring the second half of the exhibition is *Kalunga(Copper Planet)* (2022), in which a celestial copper body floats above a seemingly tranquil sea. In this work and the smaller seascapes that comprise *Kalunga(Maria/Marea)* (2022) Fernández uses patina on copper panel to dissolve material and image, creating fluid movement that introduces an element of chance into the composition. In *Kalunga(Copper Planet)* the effect suggests windswept clouds encircling the celestial body, which is connected alchemically to Venus, a planet associated with the feminine across countless ancient cosmologies. The most reflective element of the panel, this warm, glowing sphere becomes like a looking glass, animating the viewer's gaze and merging it with the nocturnal scene. The title references the Kalunga line, a watery threshold dividing the spiritual and physical worlds that figures prominently in religious traditions in the Congo Basin as well as Afro Caribbean traditions, and which is often associated with the Atlantic Ocean. Made of two flush but separate copper panels, the piece has a sculptural quality that creates a felt physical boundary dividing the waters above from those below.

The smaller, more intimate *Kalunga(Maria/Marea)* features 20 nocturnal seascapes installed in a single continuous line. The work is luminous and cinematic—some of the postcard-sized panels feature ambient moons or a subtle constellation of stars etched into the reflective surface, while dark, distant shores appear on many of the horizon lines. For the artist, these scenes are also psychic landscapes, existing in the mind rather than as physical locations with precise coordinates. The images feel eternal and eerily familiar, at once everywhere and nowhere, poetically conjured from abstracted alchemical dissolves. The title implies the rise and fall of tides through the inclusion of the Spanish word *marea* (tide), reflecting a dynamic quality that can be seen across Fernández's practice, which always suggests movement and explores how history and landscape are interwoven to create notions of place. In *Kalunga(Maria/Marea)* and throughout *Caribbean Cosmos* Fernández illuminates this intimate and profoundly holistic worldview as she examines the islands of the Caribbean, the waters beneath and between them, and the region's rippling global implications across time and geography.

Teresita Fernández (b. 1968, Miami, FL; lives in New York, NY) received a B.F.A. from Florida International University, Miami, FL in 1990 and an M.F.A. from Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA in 1992. She is a MacArthur Foundation Fellow (2005) and the recipient of numerous awards, including a Creative Capital Award (2022); Meridian Cultural Diplomacy Award (2021); Guggenheim Fellowship (2003); the Louis Comfort Tiffany Biennial Award (1999); an American Academy of Rome Fellowship (AFAAR) (1999); and a National Endowment for the Arts Individual Artist's Grant in Visual Arts (1994). In 2011, she was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve on the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts. She is the first Latina to serve on the 100-year-old federal panel, which advises the president and Congress on national matters of design and aesthetics. In 2021, Fernández installed a monumental, outdoor sculpture titled *Paradise Parados* on the rooftop of the BAM Harvey Theater in Brooklyn, NY, which was honored with an Award for Excellence in Design by the New York City Public Design Commission (2021).

Solo exhibitions of Fernández's work have been organized at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA (2021); Maria & Alberto de la Cruz Art Gallery, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. (2021); Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, AZ (2020); Pérez Art Museum Miami, Miami, FL (2019); Harvard University, Boston, MA (2018); Olana State Historic Site, Hudson, NY (2017); Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, North Adams, MA (2014); Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, TX (2011); Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, Cleveland, OH (2011); University of South Florida Contemporary Art Museum, Tampa, FL (2009); and Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Málaga, Málaga, Spain (2005).

Site-specific commissions include *Paradise Parados*, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, NY (2021); *Apparition (Golden)*, Denning House, Stanford University, Stanford, CA (2021); *Solarium (Sanctuary)*, Pérez Art Museum Miami, Miami, FL (2019); *Night Writing*, Park Tower, San Francisco, CA (2019); *Vinales (Mayombe Mississippi)*, New Orleans Museum of Art, Sculpture Garden, New Orleans, LA (2019); *Island Universe*, Ford Foundation, New York, NY (2019); *Autumn (...Nothing Personal)*, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (2018); *Double Glass River*, Grace Farms, New Canaan, CT (2015); *Fata Morgana*, Madison Square Park, New York, NY (2015); *Golden (Panorama)*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO (2014); *Nocturnal (Navigation)*, United States Coast Guard, Washington, D.C. (2013); *Stacked Waters*, Blanton Museum of Art, University of Texas, Austin, TX (2009); *Blind Blue Landscape*, Benesse Art Site, Naoshima, Japan (2009); and *Seattle Cloud Cover*, Olympic Sculpture Park, Seattle, WA (2006).

Fernández's work is featured in numerous international public and private collections, including the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Benesse Art Site, Naoshima, Japan; Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, TX; Bloomberg Family Foundation, New York, NY;

Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, New York, NY; Cornell Fine Arts Museum, Winter Park, FL; Dallas Cowboys Stadium, Dallas, TX; Ford Foundation, New York, NY; Grace Farms, New Canaan, CT; Harvard Art Museum, Cambridge, MA; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA; Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL; Israel Museum, Jerusalem, Israel; Linda Pace Foundation, San Antonio, TX; LVMH Collection, Paris, France; Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, TX; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, TX; Nerman Collection, Overland Park, KS; New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA; Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, FL; Olympic Sculpture Park, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA; Palm Springs Art Museum, Palm Springs, CA; Pérez Art Museum Miami, Miami, FL; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA; Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, OH; Progressive Art Collection, Mayfield, OH; Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, MO; Sammlung Goetz, Munich, Germany; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY; Sprint Art Collection, Overland Park, KS; Stanford University, Stanford, CA; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.



Teresita Fernández, 2019. Photo by Natalia Mantini

ABOUT THE GALLERY

Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin co-founded Lehmann Maupin in 1996 in New York. Since Inception, Lehmann Maupin has served as a leading contemporary art gallery with locations in the U.S., Europe, and Asia. For over 25 years, Lehmann Maupin has been instrumental in introducing international artists in new geographies and building long-lasting curatorial relationships. Known for championing diverse voices, the gallery's program proudly features artists whose work challenges notions of identity, and shapes international culture. Today, the gallery has locations in New York, Hong Kong, Seoul and London, as well as a team in mainland China. In the past year with growing opportunities in new markets, the gallery has opened seasonal spaces in Aspen, Palm Beach, Taipei, and Beijing.



Lehmann Maupin London at Cromwell Place. Photo by Alex Delfanne