

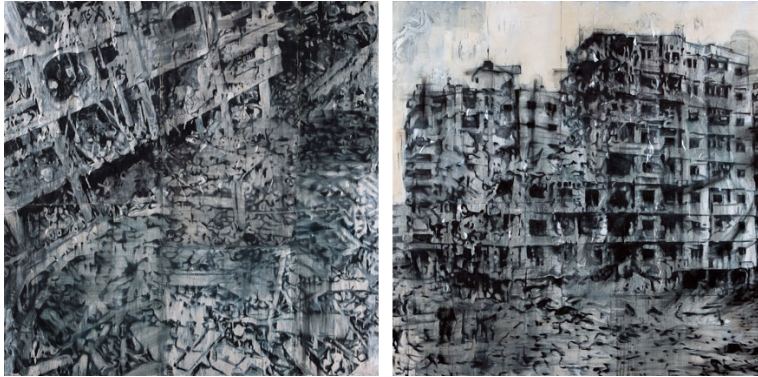
CRISTIN TIERNEY

Dear Mr. Thanatos: Modern and Contemporary Art from Latin America

Curated by Christian Viveros-Fauné

Featuring Regina José Galindo, Patrick Hamilton, Anibal López, Teresa Margolles, Ana Mendieta, Alejandro Almanza Pereda, José Guadalupe Posada, and Jorge Tacla

October 2 – December 13, 2014



Cristin Tierney Gallery is pleased to present *Dear Mr. Thanatos: Modern and Contemporary Art from Latin America* curated by Christian Viveros-Fauné. Opening on Thursday, October 2nd, the exhibition features works by Regina José Galindo, Patrick Hamilton, Anibal López, Teresa Margolles, Ana Mendieta, Alejandro Almanza Pereda, José Guadalupe Posada, and Jorge Tacla.

Dear Mr. Thanatos, curated by Christian Viveros-Fauné, is a missive or love letter to the dark forces—death, destruction, war, political violence, etc.—as seen through the lens of modern and contemporary Latin American art.

Proposed by psychoanalytic theory as the "death drive" in opposition to Eros—the tendency toward survival, propagation, and the life-giving pleasure principle—Thanatos describes, in Sigmund Freud's terms, "the inclination to aggression," which the Austrian thinker defined "[as] the greatest impediment to civilization."

The themes of death, aggression, and psychic and physical violence have long been central to contemporary Latin American artists. Because of Latin America's violent history, most artists from the region find themselves at most a single generation away from large-scale collective manifestations of the "instinct toward aggression"—with its devastating effects on local societies. From the repeated figure of *Santa Muerte* evoked by turn of the century Mexican engraver and cartoonist José Guadalupe Posada to Jorge Tacla's paintings of bombed out buildings to the mortuary and burial-related video and sculpture of Guatemalan Regina José Galindo, artists throughout Latin America have repeatedly turned to the subject of death to express not just existential dread, but the reality of living the examined life in situations of heightened insecurity.

Some Latin American artists—like those in this exhibition—draw creative sustenance from these experiences and often interpret their reflections in the context of social, political and cultural developments. That is the role the destabilizing spirit of Thanatos assumes in the minimalist-inspired sculptures of Chilean artist Patrick Hamilton and the radically unstable structures of Mexican sculptor Alejandro Almanza Pereda. Others, like the Guatemalan Anibal López and the Mexican Teresa Margolles, connect dramatically to specific narratives of violence as urgent subjects for their video and installations. American artist Ana Mendieta, for her part, is represented by *The Rape Scene*, photographs of a powerful tableau the artist enacted in 1973 as a response to the rape and murder of a nursing student at the University of Iowa. Today, these images stand as an increasingly relevant creative response to violence against women.

The death instinct is familiar to all of these artists, as it is to millions of other people around the world. Like language, geography and identity, Thanatos remains an important part of Latin American art's peculiar symbolic inheritance to this day.

For more information, please contact Maria Kucinski at 212.594.0550 or maria@crisintierney.com.

Above left: Jorge Tacla, *Identidad Oculta 39*, 2013. Oil and cold wax on canvas. 100 x 100 inches.

Above right: Jorge Tacla, *Identidad Oculta 40*, 2013. Oil and cold wax on canvas. 100 x 100 inches.