



Endurance

Janet Biggs and Regina José Galindo

April 27 – May 27, 2017

Opening Reception: Thursday, April 27th, 6:00 to 8:00 pm

Cristin Tierney Gallery is pleased to present ***Endurance***, a black box exhibition featuring video works by **Janet Biggs** and **Regina José Galindo**. The exhibition opens Thursday, April 27th with a reception from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, and continues through Saturday, May 27th. Biggs will be present at the reception.

Janet Biggs has traveled the planet to confront the limits of the known world. Recognized for her multichannel video installations involving extreme and often remote environments and the people who dwell there, Biggs' recent three-channel work *Afar* depicts the artist's travels in a geologically unstable but visually arresting desert region at the intersection of Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti in Africa. This volatile environment of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and intense heat serves as a metaphor for the ongoing political instability of a region in which salt traders, nomadic people, and militia vie for scarce natural resources.

Accompanied by an affecting soundtrack by William Martina, *Afar* intersperses images of the bleak desert landscape and its inhabitants with shots of dancers from Elizabeth Streb's acclaimed company. Positioned behind a metal screen, the dancers aggressively throw themselves repeatedly against the steel barrier, echoing not only the strictly enforced borders between the three African countries, but also the violence endured by a population regularly

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traumatized by the forces supposedly meant to protect them. *Afar* was created with generous support from the SCAD Museum of Art.

Regina José Galindo's video *Tierra*, 2013, is a haunting reinterpretation of the atrocities recounted during the 2012 trial of José Efraín Ríos Montt, a former president of Guatemala who was charged with genocide and crimes against humanity for the rape, torture, and murder of thousands of people under his rule. The video begins with Galindo standing naked in a verdant field, the tranquility of which is shattered by a bulldozer gouging a deep trench into the earth around her vulnerable body. Alluding to the state's murder and mass burial of innocent citizens, *Tierra* captures the horrific brutality of Ríos Montt's regime. The abyss that grows around her serves as a poignant symbol of the despair and alienation born of political violence in general, and Ríos Montt's post-conviction acquittal in particular. Exhibited side-by-side, *Tierra* and *Afar* offer timely observations on the human impact of political instability, and the endurance required to survive.

Janet Biggs (b. 1959, Harrisburg, PA) focuses on extreme landscapes and situations, and on the ability of individuals to define a sense of themselves within these extremes. She often draws connections between physical landscapes and psychological, societal, or political dynamics. She had solo exhibitions and film screenings at the SCAD Museum of Art, University of Waterloo Art Gallery, Blaffer Museum of Art, Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Tampa Museum of Art, Skulpturenmuseum Glaskasten Marl, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Mint Museum of Art, Everson Museum of Art, Gibbes Museum of Art, and the Rhode Island School of Design Museum, among others. She is the recipient of numerous grants, including the Electronic Media and Film Program at the New York State Council on the Arts Award, the Arctic Circle Fellowship/Residency, Art Matters, Inc., the Wexner Center Media Arts Program Residency, the Anonymous Was a Woman Award, and the NEA Fellowship Award. Her works are in the collections of the SCAD Museum of Art, Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC), Zabłudowicz Collection, Skulpturenmuseum Glaskasten Marl (Ruhr Kunst Museum), Tampa Museum of Art, High Museum, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Mint Museum of Art, Gibbes Museum of Art, and the New Britain Museum of Art. Biggs lives and works in New York.

Regina José Galindo (b. 1974, Guatemala) has developed a socially and politically motivated practice that acknowledges the thirty-six years of civil war endured by her country while looking forward to a more peaceful and productive future. Her work explores the universal ethical implications of social injustice, especially those related to racial and gender discrimination. She has received several major international awards for her art, including the Golden Lion award at the 2005 Venice Biennale for a young artist under 35, the Grand Prize at the 2011 Biennial of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana, and a 2011 Prince Claus Award. Her work is included in important collections such as the Centre Georges Pompidou, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Tate Modern, Castello di Rivoli, Daros Collection, Blanton Museum of Art, the Pérez Art Museum Miami, The University of Essex, Princeton University, and the Museum of Contemporary Art and Design in Costa Rica, among others. She lives and works in Guatemala City.

Tierra was commissioned and produced by Studio Orta during the Les Moulins Residency Program in 2013. It was created with the support of the University of the Arts London and La Maréchalerie – Centre d'art Versailles.
2013 Poncé-sur-le-Loir, France.

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Credits for Tierra:

Originally commissioned and produced by Studio Orta. France
Realized during the Les Moulins Residency Program 2013
With the support of the University of the Arts London and La Maréchalerie center d'art
Versailles
With thanks to the associate curator Clare Carolin

Lucy + Jorge Orta (producers)
Bertrand Huet (photographer and cameraman)
Didier Martial (cameraman)
Pascal Pauger (driver)
Studio Orta assistants: Tiziana Abretti, Sofia Cavicchini, Andrea Rinaudo, Alberto Orta

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Image: Janet Biggs, *Afar*, 2016. three-channel installation, HD video with sound, 16:9 format.
9:24 minutes. Collection SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, GA.