



Closing Weekend for Beatriz Santiago Muñoz at New Museum

June 10, 2016

by Hamptons Art Hub Staff

This weekend is a great time to visit the New Museum and catch the final days of “Beatriz Santiago Muñoz: Song, Strategy, Sign,” the first New York City museum solo show for the artist. The solo exhibition premieres a 16mm Film, a Three-Channel Video, and a Suite of Masks made while Santiago Muñoz was in residency at the New York City art museum. The exhibition closes on Sunday, June 12, 2016.

“Beatriz Santiago Muñoz: Song, Strategy, Sign” is the first New York museum solo exhibition of Puerto Rican artist [Beatriz Santiago Muñoz](#) (b. 1972, San Juan, Puerto Rico). In Miami, another solo show of her work is exhibited at Pérez Art Museum Miami. “Beatriz Santiago Muñoz: A Universe of Fragile Mirrors” opened February 18 and continues on view through November 13, 2016.

Describing how she incorporates the research skills of a documentary filmmaker into her art, [Beatriz Santiago Muñoz](#) told Elisa Turner for Hamptons Art Hub, “You have to break the rational frame of the camera. That is why I have been playing with mirrors a lot.”

Click [here](#) to read the full review by Turner on Beatriz Santiago Muñoz’s Miami exhibition.

At the New Museum, “Beatriz Santiago Muñoz: Song, Strategy, Sign” explores the ways connections to the past are actively produced, maintained, and refuted.

In her recent film and video work, Santiago Muñoz has documented the lives of individuals—political dissidents, teachers, and farmers—who are deeply invested in political transformation. The subjects of her films and videos reveal their close physical connections to their environments, sites marked by legacies of colonial trade and military occupation in the artist’s homeland of Puerto Rico, by recounting stories and engaging natural materials as well as inherited or handmade objects.



“Beatriz Santiago Muñoz: Song, Strategy, Sign,” 2016. Courtesy New Museum, New York. Photo: Maris Hutchinson / EPW Studio.

Santiago Muñoz captures the aspirations and imagined futures of those who are deeply invested in alternative models of being, using the stories of farmers, activists, and artists working in Puerto

Rico as allegories for larger political possibilities in the region.

For her exhibition and residency at the [New Museum](#), Santiago Muñoz premieres a new three-channel video *That which identifies them like the eye of the Cyclops* (2016) and a new silent 16mm film *Black Beach/Horse/Camp/The Dead/Forces* (2016). The film, three-channel video, and masks in “Beatriz Santiago Muñoz: Song, Strategy, Sign” serve as testaments to the individuals who forge their own terms for how to live, remember, and advance their own evolving histories.

The three parts of Santiago Muñoz’s video *That which identifies them like the eye of the Cyclops* are titled as a sequence: One/Song, Two/Strategy, and Three/Signs. The footage emerged from years of contact between Santiago Muñoz and a group of women, and each video channel corresponds loosely to a different theme in [Monique Wittig](#)’s 1969 novel *Les Guérillères*, which describes a world where the patriarchy has fallen after a bloody war between the sexes.

Like *Les Guérillères*, the video closely follows the sensorial and material worlds of the women and imagines a post-patriarchal future. Unlike the characters in Wittig’s novel, the women portrayed in Santiago Muñoz’s video are real, and the story is rooted in the specific place and time that they inhabit—including Caribbean cities, bankrupted states, and coastal towns.

The video documents the injured farm animals that the women care for, a concert on a beach at night, a Santiago Muñoz’s exhibition at the New Museum also features a set of commissioned masks, which will be activated in a series of new films and videos made during the artist’s residency this spring.



“Beatriz Santiago Muñoz: Song, Strategy, Sign,” 2016. Courtesy New Museum, New York. Photo: Maris Hutchinson / EPW Studio.

Santiago Muñoz’s 16mm film *Black Beach/Horse/Camp/The Dead/Forces* portrays subjects— people, places, and things—she has come to know through previous projects. The film was shot on the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico, which was the site of a bombing range used by the US Navy for sixty years and is still filled with unexploded bombs.

The film weaves together images of a man who cares for horses that roam the old target range where the bombs lie, a black magnetite beach that is slowly eroding, an artist who has helped to resurrect a sacred tree that was once on the naval base and who has herself been resurrected from illness more than once, and a man who hopes his ritual movements will return the island of Vieques to a cosmic balance. Together, their stories tell interlacing accounts of land, toxic bombings, political work, celebration, and death.



"Beatriz Santiago Muñoz: Song, Strategy, Sign," 2016. Courtesy New Museum, New York. Photo: Maris Hutchinson / EPW Studio.

The exhibition is co-curated by Johanna Burton, Keith Haring Director and Curator of Education and Public Engagement; Lauren Cornell, Curator and Associate Director, Technology Initiatives; and Sara O'Keeffe, Assistant Curator.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Beatriz Santiago Muñoz was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, where she currently lives and works. Her recent exhibitions include "Beatriz Santiago Muñoz: A Universe of Fragile Mirrors," [Pérez Art Museum Miami](#) (2016); "Ce qui ne sert pas s'oublie" [What is not used is forgotten], [CAPC musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, France](#) (2015); "La Cabeza Mató a Todos," [TEOR/ética](#), San José, Costa Rica (2014); "MATRULLA," [Sala de Arte Público Siqueiros](#), Mexico City (2014); "Under the Same Sun: Art From Latin America Today," the [Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum](#), New York (2014); "Post-Military Cinema," [Transmission Gallery](#), Glasgow International (2014); "The Black Cave," [Gasworks](#), London (2013); "Beatriz Santiago Muñoz / Trinh T Minh-Ha / Gregorio Rocha," [Tate Modern](#), London (2013); "Ensayos de Geopoética," [Mercosul Biennial VII](#) (2011); and "Capp Street Project: Beatriz Santiago Muñoz," [CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts](#), San Francisco (2008).

Santiago Muñoz is also a cofounder of [Beta-Local](#), an arts organization in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Director of Sessions, a series of intensive seminars anchored in the specific geography, emerging art practices, and sociopolitical conditions of Puerto Rico. Santiago Muñoz is a 2015 Creative Capital Visual Arts award grantee.

BASIC FACTS: "Beatriz Santiago Muñoz: Song, Strategy, Sign" remains on view through June 12, 2016 at the New Museum located at 235 Bowery, New York, NY 10002. www.newmuseum.org.

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