



MoMA Presents Tania Bruguera's Banned Cuban Performance Installation

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by Pat Rogers

Opening this weekend, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) presents artist and activist Tania Bruguera's groundbreaking installation performance *Untitled (Havana, 2000)*. Originally conceived for the 7th Havana Biennial, the work was shut down after a few hours by the Cuban government, according to MoMA. Presented in the Cabaña Fortress, a military bunker used as a jail for prisoners of conscience during the Cuban Revolution, the piece suggested contradictions in Cuban life after the Cuban Revolution, the museum stated. This is the first time the work will be presented since its acquisition by MoMA in 2015.

["Tania Bruguera: Untitled \(Havana, 2000\)"](#) opens on February 3 and continues on view through March 11, 2018 in the Second Floor Collection Galleries of the New York City art museum. Combining milled sugarcane, video footage of Fidel Castro, and live performance presented in near-total darkness, the work suggests the contradictions of life following the Cuban Revolution. The piece premiered in a Cuban fortress used from colonial times through the early years of the Revolution as a site where the counter-revolutionary opposition was submitted to torture and execution by firing squad. The work signifies the Cuban-born Bruguera's complex relationship to authority, according to MoMA curators.

The exhibition includes nude live performers, fragrance, uneven footing and limited visibility. High heels are discouraged, bare feet are not allowed and children must be accompanied by an adult at all times. *Untitled (Havana, 2000)* will be performed at MoMA by Ian Deleón, Rudy Gerson, Jonathan Gonzalez, Ernesto Manuel López, Kyle Lopez, Micki Pellerano, Alexis Ruiseco-Lombera, and Jake Sokolov-Gonzalez.



"Untitled (Havana, 2000)" by Tania Bruguera, 2000. Sugar cane bagasse, video (black and white, silent; 4:37 min.), and live performance. Dimensions variable. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The Modern Women's Fund and Committee on Media and Performance Art Funds. © 2018 Tania Bruguera. Installation view, Uno más cerca del otro, VII Bienal de La Habana. Fortaleza de San Carlos de la Cabaña, Galería de Contraminas de San Ambrosio, Havana (November 17, 2000). Image courtesy the artist. Photo: Casey Stoll.

“Tania Bruguera: Untitled (Havana, 2000)” is organized by Stuart Comer, Chief Curator, with Martha Joseph, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Media and Performance Art, and performances produced by Lizzie Gorfaine, Performance Producer, with Kate Scherer, Assistant Performance Coordinator.

While Bruguera’s most recent work often uses the strategies of social movements and education platforms to address topical matters, this exhibition looks back to *Untitled (Havana, 2000)* as a crucial work at the turn of the millennium that symbolizes an important shift in Bruguera’s oeuvre, as she moved from working primarily with her own body to considering active audience engagement. Bruguera refers to her work from this period as *Arte de Conducta* or “behavior art”—a practice aimed at “not representing the political but provoking the political,” according to the museum. Through constructed situations, Bruguera addresses collective memory and the social body as a performative body.



Video still from “Untitled (Havana, 2000)” by Tania Bruguera, 2000. Sugar cane bagasse, video (black and white, silent), and live performance. 164 x 39 ¼ x 13 1/8 feet. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Casey Stoll.

This exhibition is part of *Citizens and Borders*, a series of discrete projects at MoMA related to works in the collection that offer a critical perspective on histories of migration, territory, and displacement. Additionally, the exhibition will run concurrently with “[Tarsila do Amaral: Inventing Modern Art in Brazil](#)” which highlights the influential artistic production of two maverick Latin American women. The exhibition opens on February 11 and continues on view through June 3, 2018.

BASIC FACTS: “Tania Bruguera: Untitled (Havana, 2000)” is on view February 3 to March 11, 2018 in the Second Floor Collection Galleries at the Museum of Modern Art. The Panel Discussion, “Considering Tania Bruguera’s Untitled (Havana, 2000)” will take place on Monday, February 26, 2018 at 7 p.m. in Theater 3. The Museum of Modern Art is located at 11 West 53rd Street, New York, NY 10019. www.moma.org.

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