

## **Artinfo**

### **November 16, 2010**

#### **Through a Glass Greenly: Teresita Fernandez on Her Reflective Landscapes and Seascapes**

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PARIS— An artist who works in the landscape tradition, Teresita Fernandez is known for her museum installations, especially "Blind Blue Landscape" at the Benesse Art Site in Naoshima, Japan, and "Stacked Waters" at Texas's Blanton Museum of Art. Her monumental installations often question the ways that nature is represented through industrial processes, using various materials, from stone to acrylic.

While Fernandez is well known in the United States — she was the recipient of a MacArthur Foundation "genius" grant in 2005 — she is now having her first solo show in France, at the Almine Rech Gallery. Featuring her "Nocturnal" series, which consists of several graphite seascapes, the show also includes intriguing sculptural works made of small glass cubes and leaves of precision-cut stainless steel. Fernandez shared her thoughts with ARTINFO France on her first Paris show, the ideas behind her water scenes, and how viewers can see themselves in her art.

How do you feel about having your first Paris show?

I'm thrilled to work with the Almine Rech Gallery and to show my work in a Parisian setting. A large part of my previous work was based on the formal gardens of 17th-century France, with the idea of a romanticized landscape that was intermediary and deliberately manipulated, with a phenomenological approach to place. So the work I'm showing here is completely part of this context.

Since you hail from Miami, do these works also refer to a Florida setting?

No, not really. I'm from Miami but I've lived in New York for 15 years — New York is also surrounded by the ocean. Really, water in my works is an abstract reference, more an idea than a specific place. I am interested in showing how an image can lead viewers to project themselves onto it, how they can be caught in a situation without ever being able to name something specific. It's less about the image than about the desire of the viewer to be immersed in a vision that sometimes resides in the production of a few horizontal lines.

Is there a difference for you between working in a gallery or outdoors?

These are two totally different situations. Working on a landscape in a real landscape creates conceptual problematics that never come up in the context of a gallery or a museum. I am interested in what can happen between the two, and I think in some way that my work occupies the very tenuous space between internal and external landscapes.

What were you trying to achieve with the images of the shards of mirror in "Double Dissolve?"

With "Double Dissolve," each little reflective glass cube becomes something like a miniature landscape painting. If you stand far away from the piece, what you see is a reflection of the landscape panorama of the graphite piece behind you. The closer you get, the more you see the details of the landscape behind you. I am fascinated by the idea of turning your back on something in order to see it — which is a totally different way of seeing.

The shadow of your sculpture "Mirrors" appears as a green light on the gallery wall. Is this a kind of secondary representation of nature in shadow?

The green light of this piece emanates from the sculpture itself. It's just green paint that is reflected onto the white walls of the gallery. There isn't any artificial light source. This piece reflects us in the act of looking. Your own reflection is abstract and ends up mingling with the pattern of the leaves. The landscape here is anthropomorphic, meaning that when you look at this piece, it looks back at you.