

Francis Alÿs. *A Story of Negotiation* at Museo Tamayo, Mexico City

March 25- August 16, 2015

Museo Tamayo is pleased to announce the exhibition ***A Story of Negotiation***, by **Francis Alÿs** in collaboration with **Emilio Rivera, Daniel Toxqui, Julien Devaux, Elena Pardo, Rafael Ortega, Felix Blume, Raúl Ortega** and curated by **Cuauhtémoc Medina**. The exhibition stems from a dialogue between painting and action in Francis Alÿs' recent works. It presents three projects made in the last decade, ***Don't Cross the Bridge Before You Get to the River*** (2008), ***Tornado*** (2000-2010) and ***Afghanistan*** (2011-2014).

In recent years, Francis Alÿs has developed a body of work where painting collapses his artistic practice and the mobilization of social agents. Simultaneously autonomous and accessories to the project that emits them, these paintings allow him to relate different forms of imagination to actions that operate as fables.

Don't Cross the Bridge Before You Get to the River is the conclusion of a series of works that started in 2005 with the project *Bridge*, where Alÿs devised a bridge made of boats, going from Havana to Key West, in order to unite symbolically the opposite shores of Cuba and the USA. This semi-clandestine action was followed in 2008 by *Gibraltar*, a mythological bridge made by children entering the sea, linking the shores of Morocco and Spain across the Strait of Gibraltar, where one of the most significant migratory and smuggling flows of the world is concentrated.

Fascinated by the whirlwinds that form after the maize harvest in Milpa Alta, in southern Mexico City, Alÿs set out to document these meteorological phenomena, wanting to register the eye of the storm. *Tornado* (2000-2010) transformed progressively into a meditation on the social crisis of Mexico, weighed down by the inequality and violence consequential of the failed neoliberal project. Once the so-called "war on drugs", generated mountains of corpses numbering over a hundred thousand, chasing tornados became a private act of exorcism.

REEL-UNREEL is the result of series of visits that Francis Alÿs made to Afghanistan between 2011 and 2014 when the country was occupied by American and European powers trying to contain the Taliban insurrection. In a context in which the dogmatic interpretation of the prohibition of images among the Taliban led to the destruction of an undetermined number of artworks, images, historical objects and filmed material, the artist approached the local history by filming children playing with film reels, rolling them through the streets of Kabul. In parallel, the artist made a series of remarkable paintings that subvert the traditional division between abstraction and figuration.

If Alÿs' projects are conceived as a story that triggers thought, his paintings are a log of the personal process sheltered behind the artist's silence. Perhaps it would be appropriate to suggest that, for Francis Alÿs, paintings are the shadows of his acts.

The exhibition at Museo Tamayo gathers preparatory drawings, videos, sculptures, and other materials belonging to each of these projects. It will be accompanied by a public program and a bilingual catalogue with commissioned texts by, Cuauhtémoc Medina, Michael Taussig and Francis Alÿs including the logbooks his works.

Museo Tamayo thanks the contribution of the patrons of Fundacion Olga y Rufino Tamayo and the support of David Zwirner New York, Peter Kilchman Zürich as well as the corporate sponsorship of Grupo Habita.

For press inquiries please contact: prensa@museotamayo.org

About Museo Tamayo

Founded in 1981 in Mexico City, Museo Tamayo presents innovative international contemporary art exhibitions, including projects with its collection with the intent of generating new experiences and knowledge. Since 1986, Museo Tamayo forms part of the state-funded national network of museums directed by Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (INBA), and receives additional support from the Fundacion Olga y Rufino Tamayo.

Museo Tamayo

**Paseo de la Reforma 51, Bosque de Chapultepec
11580**

Mexico City, Mexico

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