

TANIA CANDIANI

SOUNDING LABOR, SILENT BODIES

July 1, 2020—January 17, 2021

Tania Candiani's (b. 1974, Mexico City) artistic practice spans sculpture, sound, film and performance to examine innovations of the past and present. Often responding to specific sites and local histories, she reanimates forgotten narratives, protagonists and material traditions that poetically call for a more just and inclusive future. For the past two decades, she has studied the breakthroughs and failures of dominant economic, scientific and technological structures. Whether commenting on US-Mexico border law, gender inequality or workers' rights, she creates objects and actions that provoke critical reflection on the commodification of time, land and labor.

Produced over the course of nearly three years and several visits to Cincinnati, *Sounding Labor*, *Silent Bodies* features historical visual ephemera alongside a new suite of work that mines the contradictions present in the rhetoric of progress that accompanied America's industrial past. Often mediated through

the body, Candiani's work recognizes the politics of voice and insists on the expressive potential of repetitive movement, forming what the artist calls "a choreography of labor." The centerpiece of the exhibition is a three-channel film, created here in Cincinnati, that presents a women's choir reciting the sounds of disappearing forms of manual work. The resulting a cappella music, which recalls pouring, squealing, cutting, and hammering, echos through the galleries as a requiem for four industries — metal casting, meatpacking, printing, and woodworking — that employed Cincinnati's workforce in the late 19th century. In another film, shot in Music Hall, Candiani references the Industrial Expositions that put Cincinnati on the map. *Sounding Labor*, *Silent Bodies* highlights women as a corrective to dominant historical narratives that excluded their role, and suggests parallels with current struggles against gender inequality.

Organized by guest curator Kate Bonansinga, Director, School of Art, University of Cincinnati, in collaboration with Amara Antilla, Senior Curator, Contemporary Arts Center.

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