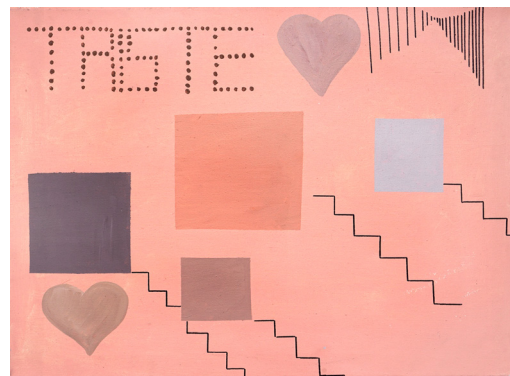


Fernanda Laguna: The Path of the Heart

March 10–May 22, 2022

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New York, NY... From the start of her career in the mid-1990s, Fernanda Laguna (b. 1972, Buenos Aires) has charted her own artistic path, making artworks with a unique visual style through a feminist lens. Featuring almost sixty works that span three decades, *Fernanda Laguna: The Path of the Heart* is the first major survey to focus on Laguna's expansive drawing practice. The exhibition highlights Laguna's understanding of art as a language that communicates emotions and foregrounds the role of drawing in an oeuvre that includes Laguna's work as a visual artist, and also as a writer, curator, activist, and cultural agitator. Fundamental to Laguna's multifaceted practice is the cultivation of community. In her words, "Art manifests in people; if there are no people, there is no art."

Laguna first gained attention with a series of mid-1990s solo exhibitions, which featured her replicas of vintage illustrations for children, portraits of pop stars depicted as close friends, surreal landscapes, and text-based drawings of positive affirmations. Laguna went on to build an energetic career that includes visual art, writing, curating, independent publishing, and a sustained social practice. As a visual artist, Laguna has defined an aesthetic of the periphery, creating artworks that often incorporate inexpensive or discarded materials with a deliberately naïve, feminine, and popular sense of beauty—such as drawings that feature flowers, black cats, and her furry heart avatar, as well as canvases with pockets, windows, and hidden messages. Together these symbols form a visual lexicon that Laguna deploys throughout her work to express universal emotions and experiences—sadness, love, longing, and friendship—and to forge emotional bonds with viewers.

During the 2000s, Laguna's previously discrete writing practice began to intersect with her art practice, resulting in the more pronounced use of raw, visceral language in her drawings; a change in materiality (including the incorporation of found materials like toilet paper, stickers, bottle caps, and tree branches); and overall, artworks that are intentionally crude and roughly executed but at the same time profoundly emotional.

Since the turn of the century, Laguna has initiated projects that have provided opportunities for collective artistic expression and production, including the widely influential *Belleza y Felicidad* (Beauty and Happiness), an art gallery, DIY publishing space, and art supply store that was a meeting ground for Buenos Aires's women and queer artists and writers. Collective initiatives like *Belleza y Felicidad* are highlighted in The Drawing Center's lower level gallery, where Laguna has installed a site-specific archive of hand-drawn murals, ephemera, videos, photos, and objects that chronicles her collective practice and activism, as well as a series of photographs that document *Belleza y Felicidad* by Argentine artist and Laguna's longtime friend Cecilia Szalcowicz.

Fernanda Laguna: The Path of the Heart is organized by Rosario Güiraldes, Associate Curator.

About the Artist

Fernanda Laguna (b. 1972, Buenos Aires) lives and works in Buenos Aires. She studied at the Prilidiano Pueyrredón School and continued her training under the mentorship of artists Guillermo Kuitca, through the Fundación Proa Fellowship, and Jorge Gumier Maier, through the Rojas Gallery. Solo exhibitions of her work have been presented by the Institute for Contemporary Art at Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia (2020), and Campoli Presti, Paris (2018). Over the past several years, Laguna has participated in *Take Me (I'm yours)*, Villa Medici, Rome, curated by Christian Boltanski, Hans Ulrich Obrist, and Chiara Parisi (2018); *SITELines 2018: Casa Tomada*, Site Santa Fe, curated by José Luis Blondet, Candice Hopkins, and Ruba Katrib (2018); *A Universal History of Infamy*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2017); *Cuenca Biennial*, Ecuador (2014); the 9th Mercosul Biennial, *Porto Alegre*, Brazil (2013); *Fetiches Críticos*, Museo de la Ciudad de México (2010); *Beginning with a Bang! From Confrontation to Intimacy*, Americas Society, New York (2007); and *Ouro Sentimental*, Niterói Contemporary Art Museum, Rio de Janeiro (2007). Her works are in the collections of the Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Pérez Museum, Miami; Kadist Collection, San Francisco; Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires; Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA); and Museo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City.

Credits

Major support for *Fernanda Laguna: The Path of the Heart* is provided by the Institute for Studies on Latin American Art (ISLAA). Additional funding is provided by Bortolami Gallery, Florencia Cherñajovsky, Erica Roberts, Isabel Stainow Wilcox, Fundación Ama Amoedo, Alec Oxenford, Campoli Presti, Galería Nora Fisch, Gabriel Guilligan, and Raúl Naón.

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