

Melanie Smith's recent work opens a vast and complex dialogue with the history of art in which she channels the Flemish painting tradition through a reinterpretation of several works by Pieter Bruegel the Elder and Hieronymus Bosch.

The exhibition, titled *Atlas de Ausencias* ('*Atlas of absences*'), presents a series of paintings that recreate details and fragments of emblematic paintings by these artists. The partial reconstruction of the images gives rise to both revelations and concealments of meaning. The complex Flemish canvases are presented as intricate, unfinished systems that still have much to reveal about the politics of the body and representation in our current society.

The dialogue with this specific moment in the history of representation finds what is perhaps its most radical moment in the *tableaux vivants* series from the project *Obscuridades Bucólicas* ('*bucolic darknesses*'), exhibited this year at La Tallera in the city of Cuernavaca (Mexico). In this project, Smith reactivates works from both Flemish painters with actors that reconstruct the scenes while nine surveillance cameras record the action. La Caja Negra includes a photography series that provides an account of the action's complexity and the way in which Smith weaves the relationships between the still image, the moving image and the action.

A new graphic edition, which links to the paintings based on fragments from Bruegel the Elder and Bosch, will be presented at the exhibition. It is a series of eight works for which a special printing technique using natural pigments on layers of gesso has been developed.

Melanie Smith (1965 | Poole, England) has lived and worked in Mexico City since 1989. This experience has influenced her work. Her art is characterized by a reinterpretation of the formal and aesthetical categories of the avant-garde and post avant-garde movements which unfolds within the horizons of heterotopias. Her production is intimately linked to an expanded vision of modernity with a relation both to what the term means in Latin America—particularly in Mexico—and to the involvement of its formal explorations as a critical moment in the aesthetic-political structure of Modernity.

In her early work she addressed the political and aesthetical implications of crowds, violence and the aberrant forms of the periphery of contemporaneity. This is evidenced in videos such as *Estadio Azteca –Proeza maleable, Xilitla* (2010), *Bulto* (2011) and *Elevator* (2012). Her work is found in collections all over the world such as the Arnold and Mabel Backman Foundation, California |USA; the British Council, London |England; Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami | USA; the ARCO foundation, Madrid; Isabel and Agustín Coppel, Culiacan |Mexico; the Jumex collection, Mexico City; the Institut Valencià d'Art Moderne, IVAM, Valencia; The Museum of Modern Art, New York

or the Tate Modern, London, among others. Her work has been exhibited in numerous national and international institutions, including the following: PS1, New York, UCLA'S Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; ICA, Boston; Tate Liverpool; Tate Mordern, London; South London Gallery, London; CAMH, Houston; Milton Keynes; CCA, Vilnius; Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Museo de Arte de Lima; Museo Tamayo, Mexico City, Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo and Museo Experimental El Eco, Mexico City; and Museo de Monterrey. In 2011 she represented Mexico at its national pavilion in the 54th Venice Biennale.

Exhibition in collaboration with Proyecto Paralelo, Mexico

(This document was automatically generated by Contemporary Art Library.)