

BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART

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BLANTON ORGANIZES EXHIBITION OF PERUVIAN PHOTOGRAPHY FROM THE 1960s THROUGH PRESENT; ANNOUNCES NEW ACQUISITIONS

Fixing Shadows: Contemporary Peruvian Photography, 1968–2015
April 23 – July 3, 2016



AUSTIN, TEXAS—April 26, 2016—The Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas at Austin presents *Fixing Shadows: Contemporary Peruvian Photography, 1968–2015*, featuring more than 40 works that reflect the vital history and continued relevance of photographic practices in Peru. Organized in partnership with UT's Harry Ransom Center, a humanities research library and museum, the exhibition draws from their esteemed photography collections as well as the Blanton's.

With works by **Fernando La Rosa, Mariella Agois, Carlos Domínguez, Milagros de la Torre, Pablo Hare,** and numerous others, *Fixing Shadows* explores the foundational practices of Peruvian photographers during the 1970s and 1980s in relation to the rigorous and sometimes interdisciplinary approaches of the younger generation working since the 1990s. Together the collections present a history of Peruvian photography from the last five decades and evidence changing attitudes concerning the role of the medium in relation to art and social justice in Peru.

“We are proud to partner with the Ransom Center to offer this exploration of the development of photography in Peru,” remarked Blanton director, Simone Wicha. “Not only does this exhibition offer a fresh look at the history of photography in Peru since the late 1960s, but it also provides insight into the power and importance of the photographic tradition in this remarkable country. This exhibition continues the Blanton's long and recognized history of exhibiting Latin American art, as well as its dedication to collaborating with our colleagues at the Ransom Center for the benefit of our shared audiences.”

1968–1989

Works from the Harry Ransom Center

The William P. Wright Collection of Peruvian Photography consists of works by some of the most influential photographers working in the 1970s and 1980s in Peru, including, **Mariella Agois, Carlos Domínguez, Roberto Fantozzi, Billy Hare,** and **Jaime Rázuri,** and was assembled by photographer and curator **Fernando Castro.** Before the 1970s,

photography was widely considered to be a purely documentary medium. During that decade, however, photographers and critics actively challenged this notion, and photography began to assume a status on par with literature or painting as an artistic medium in its own right. In the 1980s, violence and political struggle devastated Peru as the Maoist insurgents, Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) waged a brutal guerilla war against the Peruvian state. During this time, photojournalism assumed a great importance in the country, as photography provided not only crucial visual evidence of the violence taking place across Peru but also denounced it. Examples from each of these currents will constitute the early works in *Fixing Shadows*:

- **Secuencia Photo-Galería** was a space founded in 1976 by photographer **Fernando La Rosa**. It focused on exhibiting and circulating images while promoting critical thinking about photography as a medium for artistic expression. *Secuencia* was the first dedicated photo gallery in Peru, and the associated journal, *Secuencia Textos*, was the country's first critical forum dedicated to the medium. Though *Secuencia* lasted only three years (1976–1979), it initiated a new infrastructure for photography in Peru, and the legacy of its activities continues to inform Peruvian photographers today.
- **Documentary photography** and **photojournalism** became important practices in raising awareness about the events unfolding in the changing society of Peru. This focus ranged from capturing tender and joyful human pleasures to documenting and denouncing the violent war raging in the rural areas of the country. At the same time, the collective **Talleres de Fotografía Social (TAFOS)** (1987–1998), whose works were gifted to the Ransom Center by William P. Wright, Jr., supplied cameras and training to inhabitants of the Andes and poor neighborhoods of Lima so that they might document their experiences from a personal perspective. These images range from photographs of local parades to documentation of the violence experienced in their everyday lives.

1990–2015

Works from the Blanton Museum of Art

The Blanton will present works by Peruvian photographers active from the 1990s through 2015 that both complement and expand upon themes developed by photographs from the Ransom Center's collection. Many of these photographs are new acquisitions by the Blanton, all by artists that maintain strong connections to the visual and conceptual histories of photography in Peru. Works by **Milagros de la Torre**, **Flavia Gandolfo**, **Luz Maria Bedoya**, **Pablo Hare**, **Edi**

Hirose, **Gilda Mantilla**, **Raimond Chavez** will address the intricacies of Peruvian history and the country's national identity, both within Peru and around the globe. **Milagros de la Torre's** *Bajo el sol negro* [*Under the Black Sun*] (1991–1993) directly confronts photographic traditions in Peru in terms of race and national memory, serving as a transitional marker between practices of artists from the 1970s and 1980s and those working in the 1990s and 2000s. **Luz Maria Bedoya's** quiet contemplative series *Punto*



ciego [*Blind Spot*] (1997) captures glimpses of a desert landscape along Peru's Pan-American Highway, intentionally countering expectations of more spectacular scenery typically associated with the Peruvian Andes. **Pablo Hare's** series, *Monumentos* [*Monuments*] (2005–2012) investigates the relationships among public space and both national and personal identity, inviting viewers to experience some of Peru's lesser-known and more idiosyncratic monuments. **Gilda Mantilla** and **Raimond Chaves'** video *Isla* [*Island*] (2009) animates a series of still photographs depicting a fog that alternately reveals or obscures the island prison El Frontón, the site of an infamous prison uprising and its brutal suppression by the Peruvian government in 1986. Finally, **Edi Hirose's** series *Canteras del Sillar* [*Sillar Quarries*] (2015) exposes environmental devastation in the stone quarries outside of Areuqipa, Peru's former capital and famously "white city." (For the first time, and as part of a new and continuing initiative, Hirose's work was purchased with proceeds from the Blanton Museum Shop.) The Blanton's acquisition of select photographs by important Peruvian photographers will augment its already-robust collection of Latin American art.

In conjunction with *Fixing Shadows: Contemporary Peruvian Photography, 1968–2015*, the following program has been organized, among others:

Perspectives: Peruvian Photography Panel

Thursday 5/19 | 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Curator Beverly Adams will moderate a discussion among three artists featured in *Fixing Shadows*: Luz María Bedoya (Lima), Fernando Castro (Houston), and Pablo Hare (Lima). The artists will reflect on the lasting influence of Lima's groundbreaking Secuencia Photo-Galería (1976–79), their experiences as photographers in Lima during Peru's internal conflict in the 1980s and 1990s, and their ongoing work in photography and interdisciplinary art today.

Funding provided by the Barbara Duncan Centennial Endowed Lectureship

This exhibition is organized by the Blanton Museum of Art in collaboration with the Harry Ransom Center.

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About the Blanton Museum of Art

Founded in 1963, the Blanton Museum of Art is one of the foremost university art museums in the country and holds the largest public collection in Central Texas. Recognized for its modern and contemporary American and Latin American art, Italian Renaissance and Baroque paintings, and encyclopedic collection of prints and drawings, the Blanton offers thought-provoking, visually arresting, and personally moving encounters with art.

The museum is located at the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Congress Avenue and is open Tuesday through Friday from 10–5, Saturday from 11–5, and Sunday from 1–5. Thursdays are free admission days and every third Thursday the museum is open until 9. Admission Prices: Adults \$9, Kids 12 and under FREE, Seniors (65+) \$7, Youth/College Students (13–21) \$5. Admission is free to members, all current UT ID-holders. For additional information call (512) 471-7324 or visit www.blantonmuseum.org.

Image captions:

Domínguez, Carlos "Chino"

Madre e hijo con foto de padre desaparecido. Ayacucho, Perú

[*Woman with child and photograph of missing husband. Ayacucho, Peru*]

1985

Gelatin silver print

14 x 10 15/16 in

Gift of William P. Wright, Jr., From the exhibition *The Peruvians As Seen By Peruvian Photographers*, curated by Fernando Castro and made available by the Texas Humanities Resource Center, a division of the Texas Committee for the Humanities, Photography Collection, Harry Ransom Center

Hare, Pablo.

Miguel Grau, Bahía Tortugas, Ancash, de la serie Monumentos, 2005-2012

[*Miguel Grau, Bahía Tortugas, Ancash, from the series Monuments, 2005-2012*]

Inkjet print on fiber paper

11 7/16 x 14 1/2 in

Blanton Museum of Art, Gift of the artist and purchase through the generosity of Jeanne and Michael Klein, Kathleen Irvin Loughlin and Christopher Loughlin, and Anthony and Celeste Meier, 2016