

MAGDALENA FERNÁNDEZ

[1964, Venezuela]

Magdalena Fernández's studies began in the fields of physics and mathematics; in 1982, she enrolled at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello in Caracas. After two years at the university, she began exploring graphic design and traveled to Italy, where she studied with architect and designer A. G. Fronzoni. She worked as an independent graphic designer in Italy from 1990–2000. From this work, she developed a rigorous familiarity with line and structure. She began making stainless steel sculptures in the mid-1990s, anchoring them into the ground and inviting viewers to move in and around them. Her activation of the audience bears some relationship to the strong history of Venezuelan sculpture, especially to early interventions by Alejandro Otero and Jesús Rafael Soto.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Fernández began using digital media to incorporate moving images into her work. She made a series of *Dibujos móviles* in 1998, followed soon after by a series of video installations called *Pinturas móviles*. In these, she referenced certain aspects of work by artists Piet Mondrian, Joaquín Torres-García, and Lygia Clark, along with Soto and Otero. However, she reinterpreted them, breaking down some of the authority of these canonical images and artists. There is, she argues, a dialectic of abstraction.

Indeed, many of Fernández's abstractions look also to experience of the natural world. Using the organic forms of nature, Fernández adds sound and noises to playfully re-engage with how we experience these forms and how, by making them unstable, they can be transformed. "I believe instability deals with movement, with fracture, or with a possible transformation. Those thoughts have led to different formal results in my work, both in structural pieces and in videos. In fact, instability in my work is a physical event—an event that separates me from modernity," she observes.

Fernández's work has been shown in many solo exhibitions, including *Rain: Magdalena Fernández at the Houston Cistern*, Buffalo Bayou Park Cistern, Houston, Texas, USA (2017); *Uprooting Architecture: Climas*, IdeoBox Artspace, Miami, Florida, USA (2016); *Triptico de Venezuela: El Dibujo Fuera de Sí (1970-2014)*, Instituto de Canarias Cabrera Pinto, Tenerife, Spain (2014); *Ecos*, Museo Amparo, Puebla, Mexico and Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil (MACG), Mexico City, Mexico (2019); *Magdalena Fernández*, The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles, California, USA (2016); *2iPM009*, Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, Switzerland (solo show within *Complete Concrete*) (2010), Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum, Florida International University, Miami, Florida, USA (2011), and Museum of Latin American Art (MoLAA), Long Beach, California, USA (2012); and *Video Crossings: Magdalena Fernández*, Phoenix Art Museum, Arizona, USA (2017).

Fernández's work has also been included in numerous important group exhibitions, including La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy (2009); *Beyond the Supersquare*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York, USA (2014); *Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA*; *Video Art in*

Latin America, Getty Research Institute, Laxart, Los Angeles, California, USA (2017); *Light and Atmosphere*, Miami Art Museum (MAM), Florida, USA (2004); *Arte Contemporáneo Venezolano: 1990-2004 en la Colección Cisneros*, Museo de Arte Moderno de Bogotá (MAMBO), Colombia (2005); *Contingent Beauty: Contemporary Art from Latin America*, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Texas, USA (2015); and *Constructed Dialogues: Selections from the Latin American Collection in the inaugural installation of the Nancy and Rich Kinder Building*, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Texas, USA (2020).

Fernández's works are represented in several major collections, such as the Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Texas, USA; Centre d'Art Contemporain Frank Popper, Marcigny, France; Colección Mercantil, Caracas, Venezuela; Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros (CPPC), Caracas, Venezuela and New York City, New York, USA; Galería de Arte Nacional (GAN), Caracas, Venezuela; Museo Municipal de Arte Moderno de Cuenca (MMAMCUENCA), Ecuador; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (MNCARS), Madrid, Spain; The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles, California, USA; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Texas, USA; Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi (MS), Lodz, Poland; and Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM), Florida, USA.