

magdalena fernández

2iPM009



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Curator and editor Julia P. Herzberg

With essays by
Estrellita B. Brodsky and Julia P. Herzberg

The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum
Florida International University, Miami

Published for the exhibition

Magdalena Fernández - 2iPM009

Organized by

The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum,
Florida International University, Miami

October 12, 2011-January 8, 2012

Also exhibited at

Museum of Latin American Art
Long Beach, California

February 12, 2012-May 27, 2012

Curator: Julia P. Herzberg

Text Editor: Frances Kianka

Graphic Designer: Kate Johnson

Printer: Color Express Printing

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ISBN: 978-0-9819337-7-1

Cover: *2iPM009*, 2009

Video installation with sound, one-minute, fifty-six seconds

Dimensions variable

Digital animation: Marcelo D'Orazio

Sound effects, corporal percussion: Courtesy Perpetuum Jazzile

Installation view at Periférico Caracas, Caracas, 2011

Photographer: Ángela Bonadies

Courtesy of the artist and Faría+Fábreas Galería, Caracas

Sequences of the one-minute, fifty-six-second looped video are
illustrated throughout the catalogue as Plates 1-11, beginning
on page 4.

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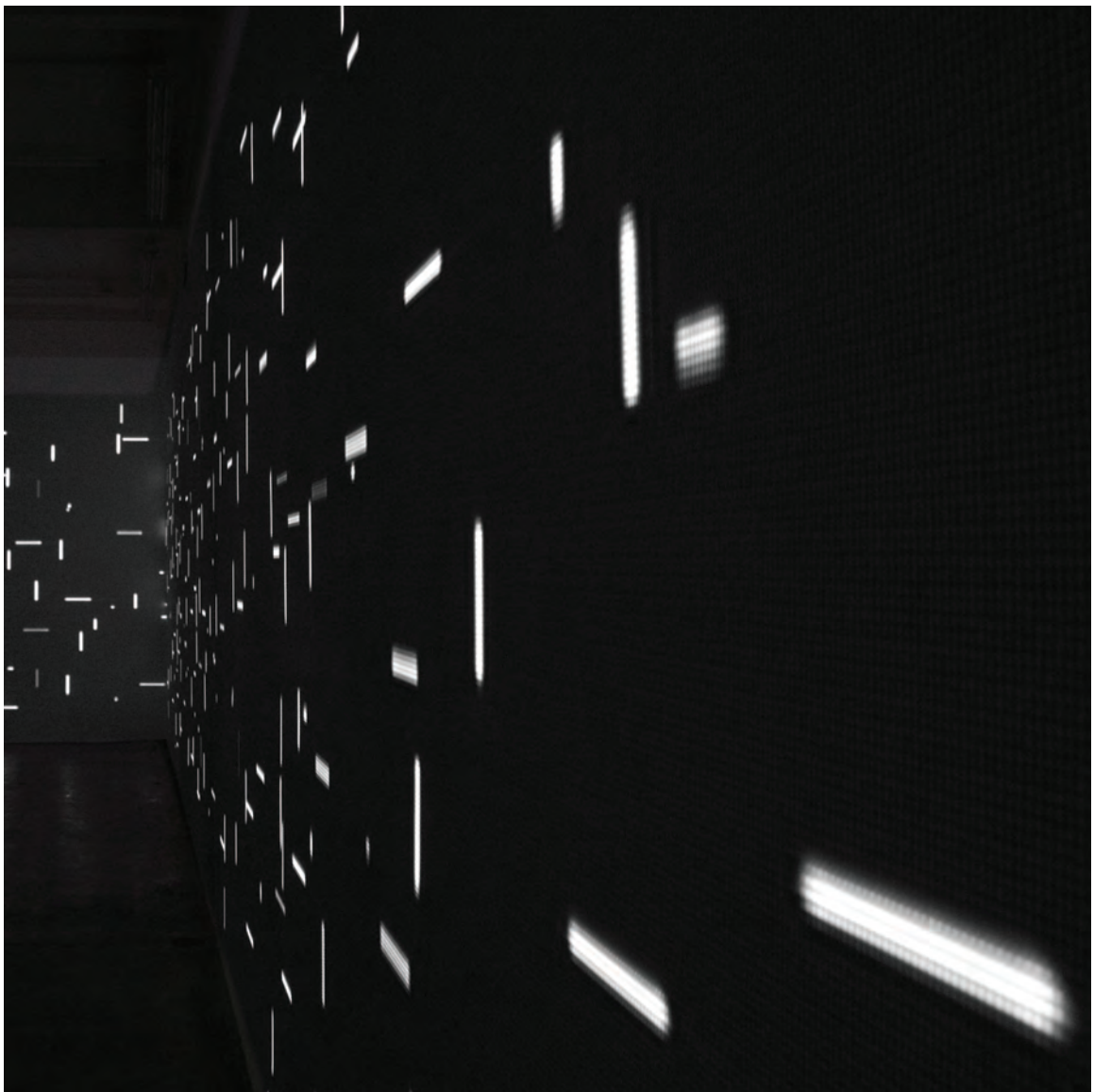


Plate 1

Foreword

The work of Magdalena Fernández was immediately appealing to The Frost Art Museum on many levels. It fits into our interest in the environment and nature as critical subjects for today; it uses advanced technology in a site-specific installation that takes advantage of a gallery space dedicated to the healing properties of nature, and it allows us the privilege of presenting this Venezuelan artist to a new audience. As Ms. Fernández explores the dynamics of abstraction through moving images of rain, she pays tribute to the legacy of artists long dedicated to pursuing the elemental forms of both the natural and mathematical worlds and combining them in ways possible only with new media. The storm comes to life virtually, and mesmerizes the viewer with the cadence of its rhythmic repetition and beauty of fleeting moments in time and space as our ideas of perception ultimately shift in the mind's eye.

I am grateful to curator Julia P. Herzberg for presenting Ms. Fernández' installation to the Museum and for her meticulous attention to the details of the catalogue. I would also like to thank her for writing an insightful essay that places the work within a more comprehensive sphere of influence, and to thank Estrellita Brodsky for contributing her scholarship and expertise on Latin American abstraction to a catalogue that will be significant to understanding and appreciating the artist and her work. We are happy to collaborate with Cecilia Fajardo-Hill at the Museum of Latin American Art to bring the exhibition to Long Beach, California. Lastly, I must express our gratitude to Magdalena Fernández for this extraordinary installation.

Carol Damian

Director and Chief Curator

The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum

Acknowledgments

I am very grateful to Magdalena Fernández for having generously shared with me over a period of months the whys, wheres, and hows of her practice. Without the artist's conversations and collaboration, I could not have reconstructed her early explorations in design and geometric art or analyzed the crossovers between them. Nor could I have known the intricacies of her high- and low-tech solutions in artmaking or the varied kinds of stimulus and inspiration that certain artists provided her, nor understood the importance of that element of "unstable equilibrium" that so distinguishes her artistic production in many mediums.

I thank Estrellita Brodsky for contributing an insightful essay that analyzes the artist's reversal of the reductive modernist mandate through acts of appropriation and transformation.

Kate Johnson was the talented designer for the catalogue who brought form to the visual material in such a dynamic manner. Henrique Faria's enthusiasm and assistance during this project has been extremely helpful.

At the Frost, Jessica Delgado was an invaluable liaison during the production of this catalogue. Klaudio Rodriguez showed great skill in resolving the design for the video installation. And finally, Carol Damian with her "can do" stance was, as always, the key factor in bringing this art project to fruition.

Julia P. Herzberg, Ph.D.

Adjunct Curator

The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum



Plate 2

PLATES

Magdalena Fernández

2iPM009, 2009

Video installation with sound, one-minute, fifty-six seconds

Dimensions variable

Digital animation: Marcelo D'Orazio

Sound effects, corporal percussion: Courtesy Perpetuum Jazzile

Installation view at Periférico Caracas, Caracas, 2011

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Courtesy of the artist and Faría+Fábregas Galería, Caracas

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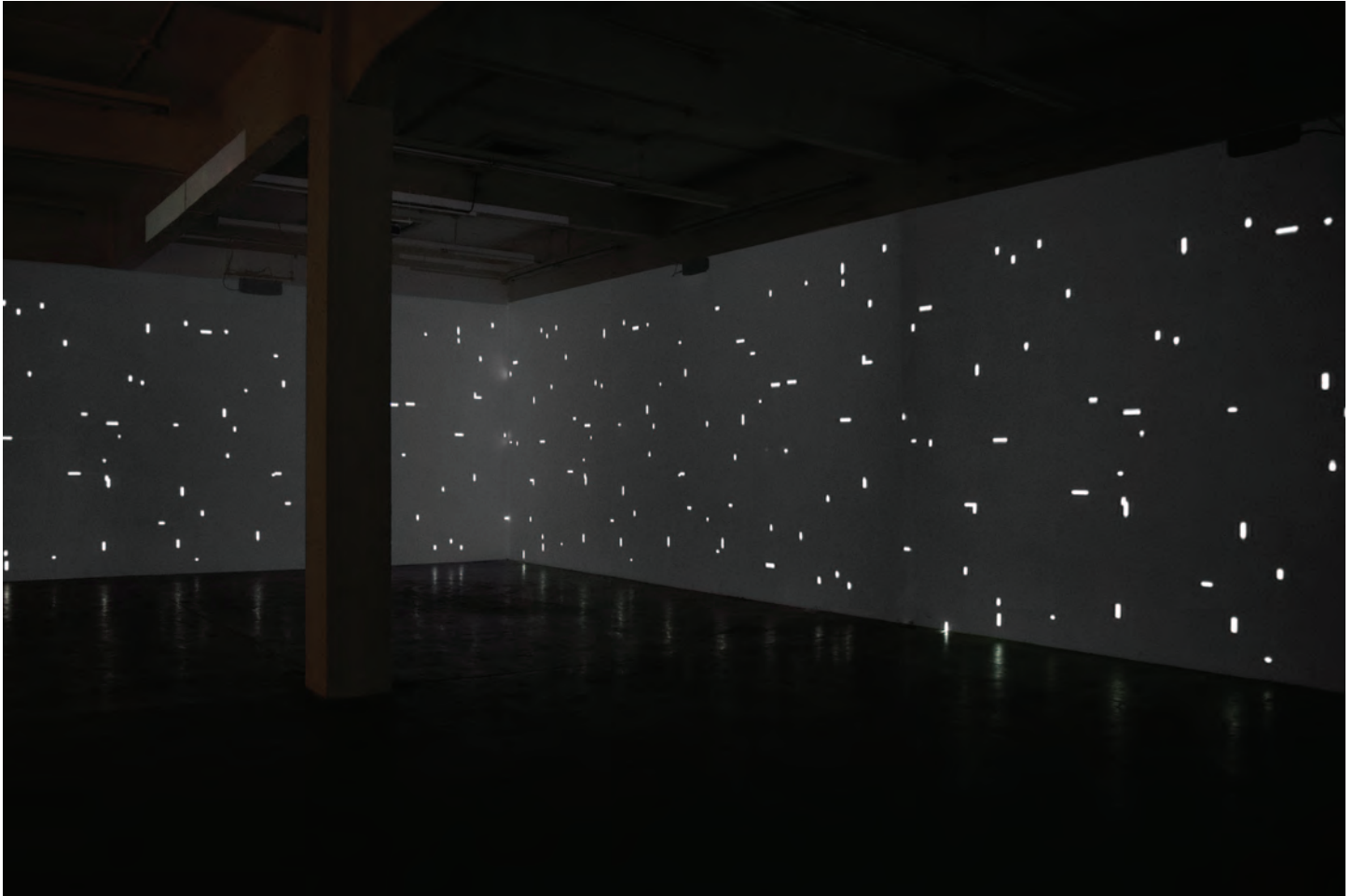


Plate 3

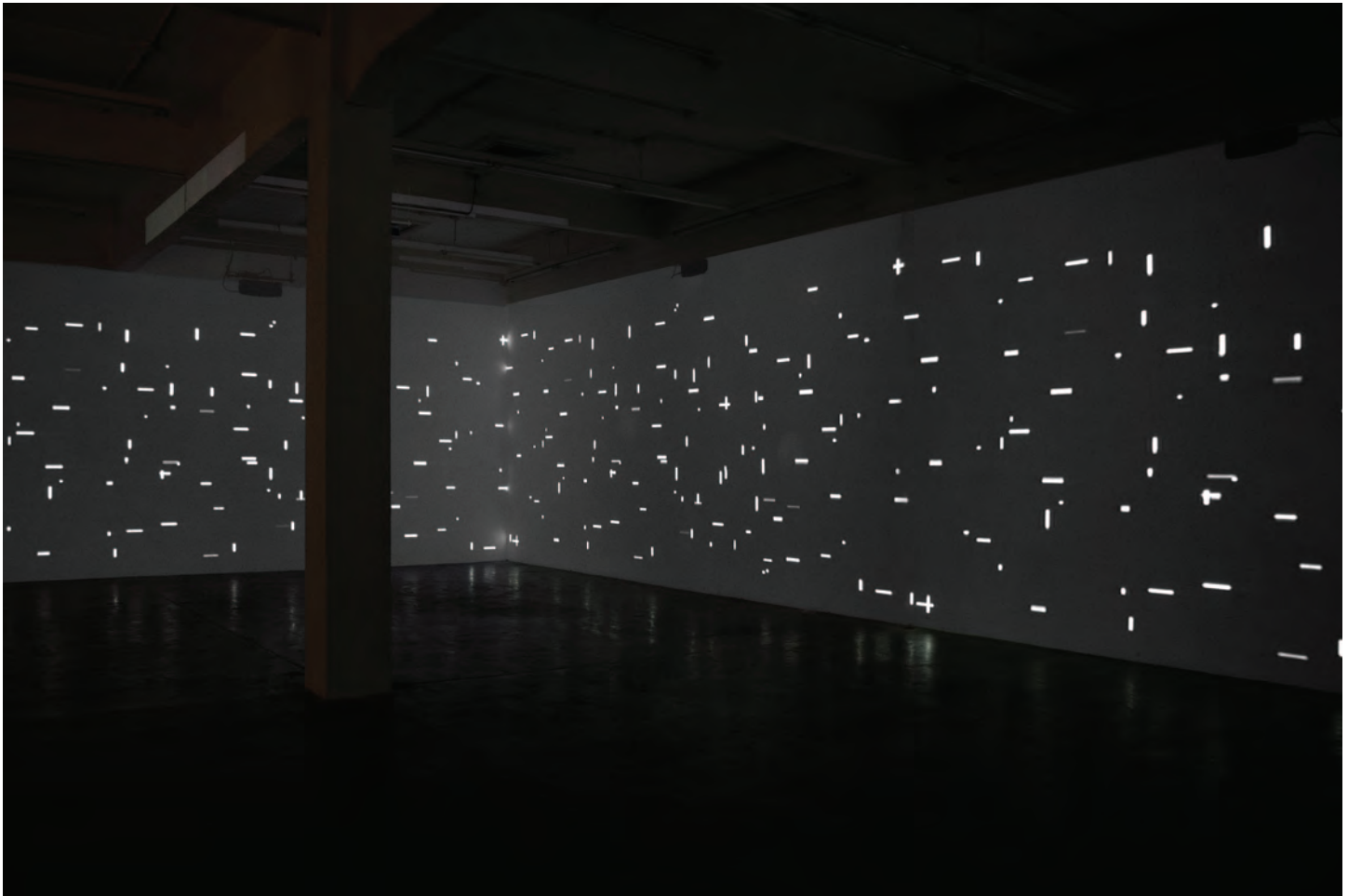


Plate 4

Decomposing – Recomposing: Concepts, Processes, and Sources

Julia P. Herzberg

I had the pleasure of seeing Magdalena Fernández' video installation *2iPM009* for the first time at the 10th Cuenca Biennial in 2009, the same year the artist created it. In a darkened gallery, the sound of rain and the crisscrossing white lines mesmerized me—visually, sensorially, and experientially. The work, in dialogue with Piet Mondrian, an early 20th-century proponent of abstract art, is remarkably creative. I thought it would be ideal for The Frost Art Museum. Art students and the Museum's extended audience now have an opportunity to enjoy the artwork and, as well, to learn about an artist who is one of the most innovative exponents of contemporary geometric abstraction in the Americas.

My hope is that *2iPM009*, together with the two essays in this catalogue, will further an understanding of the artist's concepts, processes, and sources, for this video installation in particular, and for aspects of her overall development in general. My essay focuses on two aspects of her multivalent work: the lesser-known, formative period and several of her dialogues with modernist and post-modernist artists. Fernández' studies in math, physics, and graphic design in Caracas from 1983 to 1989 were followed by additional studies and professional work in Italy from 1989 to 2000. The artist's accumulated experiences during those years shaped her thinking and practice as they evolved during that time.

Magdalena Fernández' early training in physics, math, and graphic design were the three fields of study that became fundamental to her artistic practice—drawing, photography, sculpture, installations, urban interventions, and video.¹ From 1983 to 1984 Fernández began studies at the Universidad Católica Andres Bello in Caracas to teach physics and mathematics. After two years she decided to redirect her studies to pure math and physics at the Universidad Simón Bolívar. At that time math and physics interested her because she thought those fields held the answers to certain existential questions such as truth and certainty. In the months between the end of one semester and the beginning of the next, she taught math and began studies in

graphic design at the Instituto de Diseño Fundación Neumann (Institute of Design Neumann Foundation). Shortly after the beginning of the new semester at the Universidad Simón Bolívar, Fernández recognized that, in spite of its reputation in physics and math, classes there were impersonal, classrooms overcrowded, and faculty attention minimal. Therefore, she decided to leave the university and pursue graphic design, which had already “seduced” her.² She felt that graphic design offered a more intimate environment as well as an opportunity to do work that was more centered on her creative self. Her decision to go to the Neumann (1985 to 1989) was one she would never regret. Her learning, training, as well as the actual work produced either in labs, workshops, or for assigned exercises formed the artistic foundation of her future development in a geometric abstract language.

The Neumann's teaching was based on the curriculum of the Bauhaus (1919–1933), which was founded on the principle that the crafts and the fine arts were of equal importance.³ Fernández took courses in printmaking, photography, art history, life drawing, color theory (based on Josef Albers), three-dimensional design, typography, and layout. In general, courses were geared more toward practical rather than theoretical aspects of design. For example, students learned to make objects from wood and clay in carpentry and ceramic workshops.

Fernández recalls working a lot with her hands, using different tools to build objects and make ceramics by shaping clay without the use of a wheel. She worked equally hard in craft workshops as she did in graphic design courses. Both areas taught her how to think about volume, three-dimensionality, and spatial relationships in both open and closed spaces. Her workload at the Neumann filled her days and very often her evenings. As a consequence of consistent hard work, she developed a method and discipline of working that required concentration and perseverance in making handmade objects or solving design assignments. By the time she graduated with honors, Fernández well understood the objectives of graphic design—to visually communicate an idea with images and/or words. She learned how to make a visual idea come alive and be convincing and at the same time while taking into account the time and money required to produce the end product.

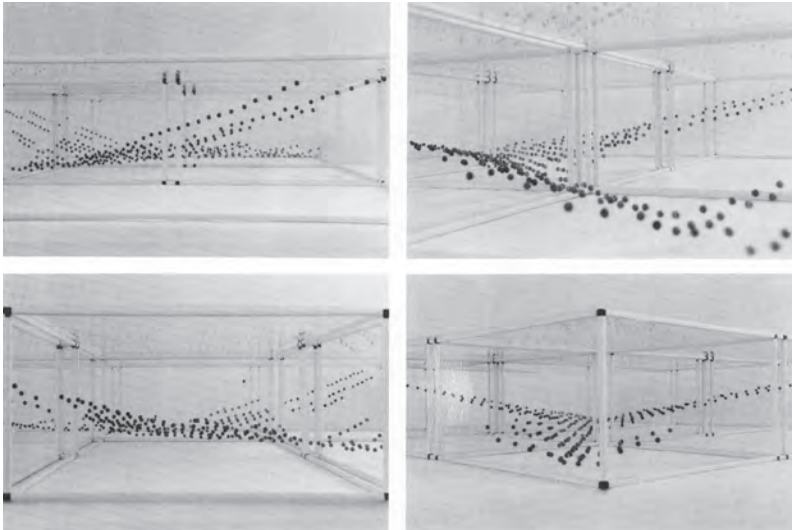
At the conclusion of four years at the Neumann, she had acquired the knowledge, techniques, and tools needed in graphic design, and, just as important, she had acquired the discipline and commitment to strive for excellence in whatever she undertook. These assets would stand her in good stead when she left Venezuela for Italy shortly after graduation.⁴

After graduating with honors in graphic design, Fernández left for Italy where she lived for eleven years in Castiglione delle Stiviere, a town halfway between Milan and Venice. After arriving in Italy, Fernández tried making ceramics, a craft she had very much enjoyed at the Neumann, but the experience in Castiglione delle Stiviere was less than felicitous, so she abandoned that endeavor. She also turned to photography, another medium she had worked with in Caracas, and produced images that featured fragmentary views of piles of books and wooden block letters used in printing. These images, which she had taken at a printing house, were exhibited in 1991 in *Esperando la palabra* in the townhall in Castiglione delle Stiviere.⁵

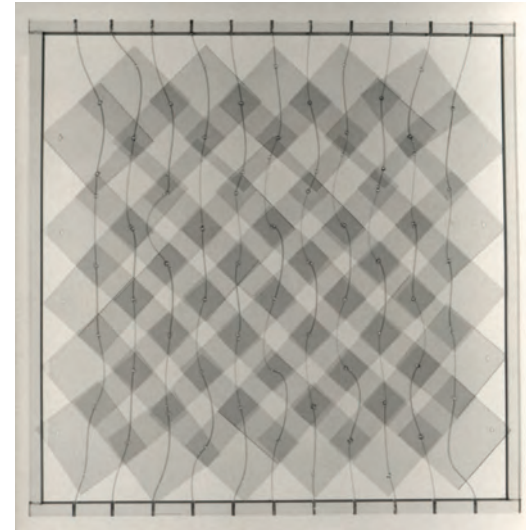
Following a short period of transition, Fernández was introduced to A. G. Fronzoni (1923–2002), the Italian designer and architect renowned for his work in interior design, graphics, exhibitions, theory, and teaching.⁶ She traveled from Castiglione delle Stiviere to Milan three to five times a week (a four-hour round-trip) from 1990 to 1993 to Inscape and Graphic Design, A. G. Fronzoni Studio. Fernández' work in the "shop," as Fronzoni preferred to call it, proved invaluable to her artistic development as both an artist and a person. Fernández, still referring to him as her teacher (*maestro*), says that he instilled in her a philosophical view of art and life that continues to influence her.⁷ Principled, rigorous, and disciplined in his daily life, design work, and teaching, Fronzoni believed that each person should consider life as his or her project and that an art or design project was of secondary importance. He encouraged Fernández' work, gave her confidence, and introduced her to artists working in geometric abstract languages. Through these connections she had meaningful dialogues and discussions with many artists who worked in constructivist, kinetic, and optical directions. Some of the artists whom Fernández met during and after the workshop years were Bruno Munari, Giovanni Anceschi, Luis Tomasello, artists who had been part of Gruppo T., and the Madi International artists. Along with his global vision, his clear pedagogical theories, and his austere life style, Fronzoni held that design, in all fields, should be executed with minimal means.⁸

A central tenet of Fronzoni's life and work was Mies van der Rohe's adage, "less is more." As the Italian theorist put it, "We need to aim at essential things, to remove every redundant effect, every useless flowering, to elaborate a concept on mathematical bases, on fundamental ideas, on elementary structures; we strongly need to avoid waste and excesses."⁹

Toward the end of 1993, Fernández prepared in the "shop" the maquettes for a large-scale installation at the Sala Mendoza in Caracas as well as an extensive series



1



2

of smaller works known as “structures.” The latter, created over a period of two years, became part of her first solo exhibition, *Structures / Estructuras*. Fronzoni took Fernández to the Galería Arte Struktura Milán, a gallery known for promoting constructivist, concrete, and kinetic art as well as the work of the Madi International artists. After seeing her small-scale “structures,” the gallery owners encouraged her to continue developing that work. The installation, *1i993*, consisting of hundreds of black rubber balls suspended from the ceiling by nylon, created a web of interconnected lines and volumes that had a sense of lightness and buoyancy. Visitors were encouraged to touch the balls, thereby energizing the space through their interaction with them. That work had the potential for movement, and thus began her subsequent development of sculptures and installations combining movement and stasis.¹⁰

Approximately seventeen structures / *estructuras*, as they are called, were innovative examples of three-dimensional drawings.¹¹ Each “structure” was made from a polyester sheet that the artist cut into different geometric forms (or modules); she then pricked holes in the polyester and wove nylon through them to connect each module. The finished “structures” resembled woven fabrics (*unos tejidos*) fastened to frames made of acrylic bars.

The suspended structures, installed in a gallery leading to the Sala Mendoza, created an engaging visual counterpoint to the large-scale installation. Looking back on the suspended “structures,” Fernández feels that she was responding to some of the directions advanced by Gego’s three-dimensional drawings without paper from the 1970s and 1980s, made with wires and other materials, suspended from the ceiling. In fact, some of Gego’s own small structures of intersecting lines resembled weavings.¹²

1
Maquette for *1i993*, 1993
Courtesy of the artist

2
2e992, 1992
Structure
Polyester, nylon, acrylic
9.8 x 9.8 x 0.31 in.
Courtesy of the artist

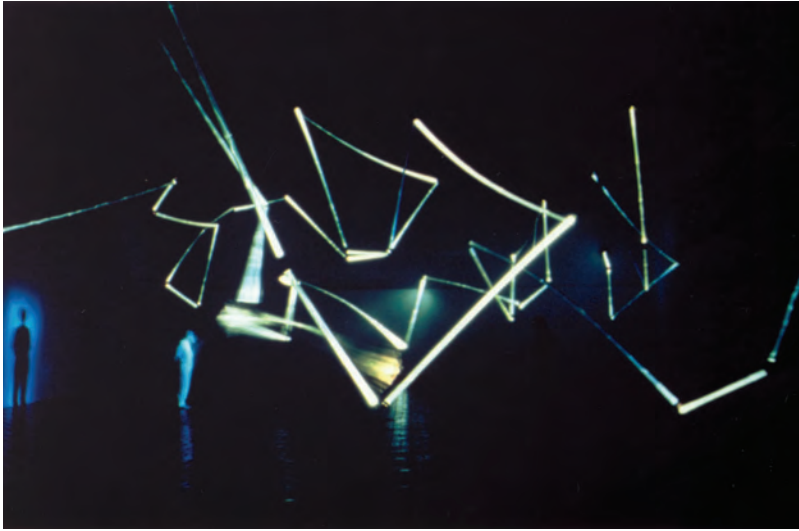
Fernández greatly admired and respected Fronzoni's philosophical positions and work ethic, both of which she shared, and felt privileged to discuss her work with him as it developed in Italy. So while her work in his workshop ended in 1993, her professional relationship continued.

Toward the end of 1993 the artist began work as a freelance in graphic design at Agape in Mantua, one of Italy's leading design companies specializing in bath fixtures and furnishings.¹³ She began in a junior position, following up on the production stages of various product lines. In time, she worked in the advertising area where she contributed to the design ideas for the corporate image for packaging, brochures, catalogues, and invitations. She designed the instructions for the bathroom products so customers could assemble them. While she earned her living as a freelance, she also had time to do her own work, and, as her website indicates, her production was prolific. She had solo exhibitions in Venice, Mantua, and Lisbon as well as in Venezuela, where she returned frequently to visit family and to continue work. The artist's work, informed by math and physics, embraced geometries where the lines were precise, repetitive, and the overall work innovative. As mentioned earlier, the artist was keenly aware of the importance of geometric and optical art in Italy in the 1990s. Three interesting and important projects are discussed here.

1/1996 was a further exploration of ideas on spatial organization, the use of inexpensive materials, and a repetition of forms to redefine the space of a white box.¹⁴ Elastic bands, all the same width, were anchored to the upper and lower walls, creating a stationary web of interwoven lines. As the visitor moved around the environment,

3
1/1996, 1996
 Elastic bands
 Dimensions variable
 Installation view at
 Centro Verifica 8+1,
 Venezia-Mestre, Italy
 Courtesy of the artist





4

2i997, 1997

Transparent PVC tubes,
Scotch Optical Lighting
Film, light bulbs, mirrors
Dimensions variable
Installation view at Museo
de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto,
Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela
Courtesy of the artist

4

he or she could feel the tension of the elastic material and, at the same time, a sense of delicacy and openness. After seeing Fernández' installation, a friend, who had taught her photography in the "workshop," commented that *1i996* had affinities with Gianni Colombo's *Elastic Space* (1974). Although Colombo (1937–1993) was a kinetic and optical artist often referred to in Fronzoni's "workshop," Fernández did not know about that particular work at the time she created hers. Following her friend's comment, however, the artist looked closely at Colombo's work in a catalogue. Although Colombo moved the white elastic bands mechanically in *Elastic Space*, she recognized certain shared material and conceptual directions common to the two works.¹⁵

2i997 was Fernández' first light sculpture, conceived, at least in part, as a response to sculpture she had seen at Leonardo Mosso's studio in Turin. Leonardo and Laura Mosso Castagno, two very well known Italian architects and researchers, had advanced the concepts of management and production of spatial organization in their design projects. Fernández spent an unforgettable day with Fronzoni at their studio where she saw Leonardo's articulated sculpture, which had the potential for movement. In a 1997 return trip to Caracas, Fernández planned an installation that was exhibited at the Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto in Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela. Relying on her ability to create a high-tech look with handmade techniques (lessons learned in carpentry workshops at the Neumann), she designed transparent PVC tubes of different lengths and had a company fabricate them. She inserted pieces of Scotch



5

Optical Lighting Film, made by 3M, to spread light throughout the tubes. She then attached small white light bulbs at one end and a mirror at the other to reflect the light inside. To even out the different colors of white of the cheap bulbs, she added filters in the tubes, which cast a mixture of bluish and greenish light in the gallery. Each tube was connected to the other and then suspended in such a way that they created an unstable equilibrium ("equilibrio inestabile"), which became a conceptual and pictorial element in much of her subsequent work.

About a year after Fernández left Castiglione delle Stiviere for Caracas in 2000, she received an important commission from Agape for a major furniture show in Milan. The commission gave her an opportunity to merge design and art seamlessly while working in a large space where the artist's work had to conform to several pre-set rules. Her challenge was to create a spatial environment that would enhance the cube-shaped floor modules containing the company's products. The resulting work, *2i001*, featured a series of floating squares (the same size as a side of the cube), each hung at different heights above the cubes. Both structures were covered in the same white fabric. A visually interesting play existed between the geometric earthbound forms and those that seemed to float in the air above them.

5
2i001, 2001
 Cardboard, drywall,
 wood, fabrics, wires
 Dimensions variable
 Installation view at
 ex Acciaierie Riva,
 Milan, Italy
 Photographer: Leo Torri
 Courtesy of the artist

After this Agape commission Fernández moved beyond two-dimensional drawings on paper, three-dimensional structures, and site-specific installations and began to explore such mediums as mobile drawings, mobile paintings, and video animation. In these mediums she uses sound to move the abstract geometric imagery. As touched on earlier, in the discussion of her work in the Fronzoni studio, the artist devised an idiosyncratic system for her titles, exemplified by *2e992* and *1i993*. The first number in each title indicates its sequence in the series; the lowercase letters *e* and *i* indicate the medium, *e* for *estructura* (structure) and *i* for installation; the last three numbers in each title represent the year the work was completed, for example, 992 for 1992 and 993 for 1993. The look and systematic nature of the titles derive from her experience with typography in graphic design and her math background, but also reflect her intention to keep the titles free of signifying references.

As Fernández expanded her range of mediums and processes, she also used in her titles the initials *pm*, for *pintura mobil* (mobile paintings); *dm*, for *dibujos móviles* (mobile drawings); and *em*, for *estructura mayor* (large structures). When she initiated a dialogue with an artist, she included his initials in the title to identify him and as a play on words; for example, *iPM* in *2iPM009* signifies “installation Piet Mondrian.” Scientific names of birds and frogs are written in parenthesis after the title, for example, *1pm006* (*Ara ararauna*).

The artist began to dialogue with some of the indisputable “masters” of geometric abstraction beginning in 2004 with Sol LeWitt; in 2006 and 2009, with Piet Mondrian; in 2006, with Kasimir Malevich; in 2008 with Hélio Oiticia; and in 2010, with Torres García.¹⁶ By considering some of the works in these dialogues that engaged the artist’s mind and eye, one may obtain further insight into the processes involved in developing or constructing her work.

We begin with *2iPM009*, the video installation at the Museum. Originally Fernández had been interested in responding to Mondrian’s *Broadway Boogie Woogie* (1942–1943), a paradigmatic work in art history that features a square in which the vertical and horizontal lines, precisely spaced, were composed of red, yellow, blue, and gray blocks. The white areas between the lines were filled with similarly colored planes of various sizes. The painting was in homage to Manhattan’s skyline, neon lights, street activity, and to the overall dynamic rhythm of the city as he perceived it after his arrival there in 1940.¹⁷ However, as ideas churned in Fernández’ head, she came across a corporal performance by the musical group Perpetuum Jazzile on the Internet¹⁸ and decided to respond instead to Mondrian’s *Composition in Line* (1917).¹⁹

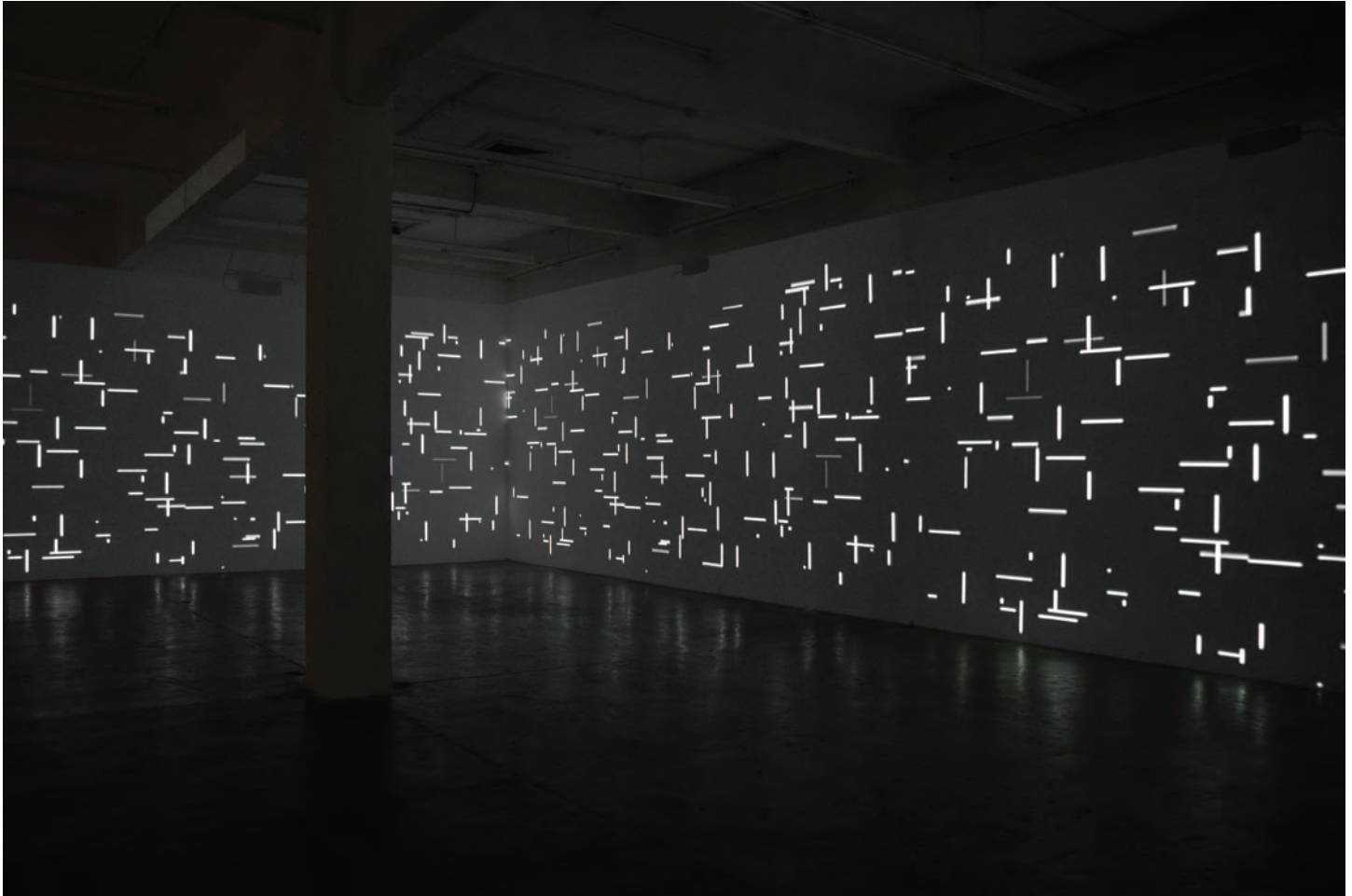


Plate 5

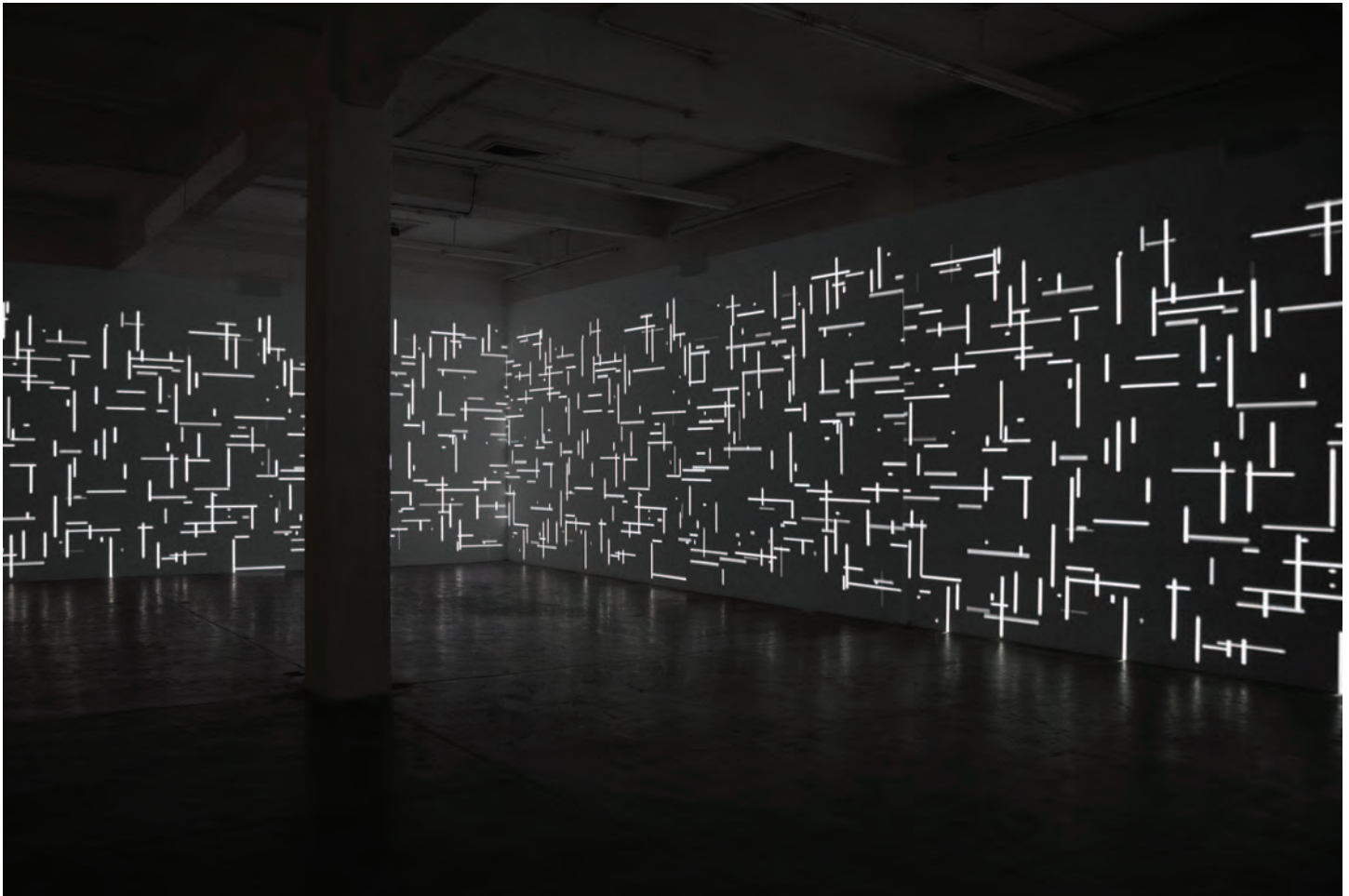


Plate 6

The Dutch artist's first black and white painting represented a transition in his work that for him was a "new form."²⁰ This early iconic abstract work is characterized by a pattern of small horizontal and vertical lines.

2iPM009, a video that runs one minute and fifty-six seconds (on a loop), begins with barely audible sounds of light rain and the appearance of barely visible tiny dots. (See p. 7) In perfectly measured timing, the dots begin to appear in greater quantity and with greater frequency, in effect evoking, however momentarily, a twinkling starry night. (See p. 9) The dots slowly become short vertical and horizontal lines, very much like those in *Composition in Line*. Progressively these lines increase in size, becoming longer and wider, moving in horizontal and vertical directions across the screen, creating a cascade of intersecting white lights. It is the sound of the rain that determines the velocity of movement, and as the sound becomes incrementally louder, it effects a virtual downpour. Suddenly a crash of thunder causes the lines to reach their maximum density. Another crash of thunder resounds, bringing on the same bold imagery. The sensorial effects of sound and light are very dramatic. As the storm subsides, the imagery seems to reverse itself. The video ends when the sound of pattering rain and the tiny moving dots disappear. For a split second, the screen is black and silent. It would appear that nature's cycle has come full circle. Ironically the sound is not "real" rain—the simulation is created by the Perpetuum Jazzile choir, whose artistic director conducts them to snap their fingers, clap their hands on their knees, and jump on the floorboards at different moments to create the sound of rain

Detail of lines at maximum density; see plate on p. 38

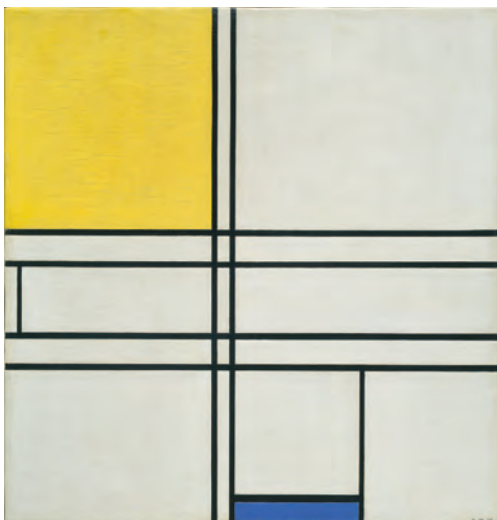


and thunder. The little black and white lines in Mondrian's 1917 painting were the starting point for a stunning composition of moving imagery perceived as rain. Were the video paused at second intervals, each pause would be a similar but different composition, were it painted. Fernández used sound, light, and the moving image to give a 21st-century twist to a 20th-century utopian vision.

Looking back to 2006, Fernández created an animation with the sounds of macaws titled *1pm006 (Ara ararauna)*. (See pp. 32 & 33) As noted by Piet Mondrian's initials in the title, this was her first conversation. Macaws or *guacamayas (Ara ararauna)* are found in Venezuela and other parts of South America. Several pairs of these birds roost in a particular tree in front of the artist's apartment window, everyday from the early evening to early morning. These noisy, large tropical animals are blue, golden yellow, and green. It was the colors of the birds that reminded the artist of Mondrian paintings structured by black lines and planes of colors. Without any specific work in mind, the artist's response to Mondrian was set in motion, quite literally and figuratively. To establish correspondences, I refer to Mondrian's compositions of the 1930s. During that decade Mondrian strove to achieve a sense of "dynamic equilibrium" defined by the black lines structuring the planes, which in his consideration were the active elements of the composition.²¹

Fernández' video begins with a frame in which the three colors are divided asymmetrically by two black lines. The sounds of macaws move the lines and the planes, thus disarranging an otherwise stable composition. Literally, the geometric

6
Piet Mondrian
Composition with Blue and Yellow, 1935
Oil on canvas
28.75 x 27.25 in.
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,
Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, D.C.
Gift of the Joseph H.
Hirshhorn Foundation, 1972
Accession Number: 72.205



7

1dm004
(*Eleutherodactylus coqui*),
2004

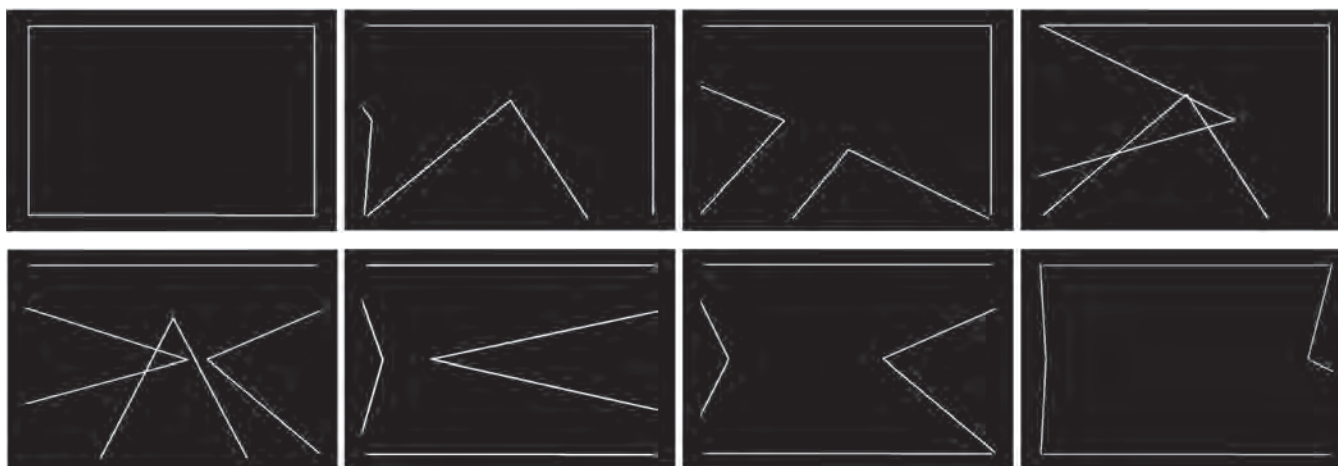
Sequence of stills from
thirty-two-second looped
video

Digital animation: Jorge
Dominguez-Dubuc
Sound: Alonso Toro
Courtesy of the artist

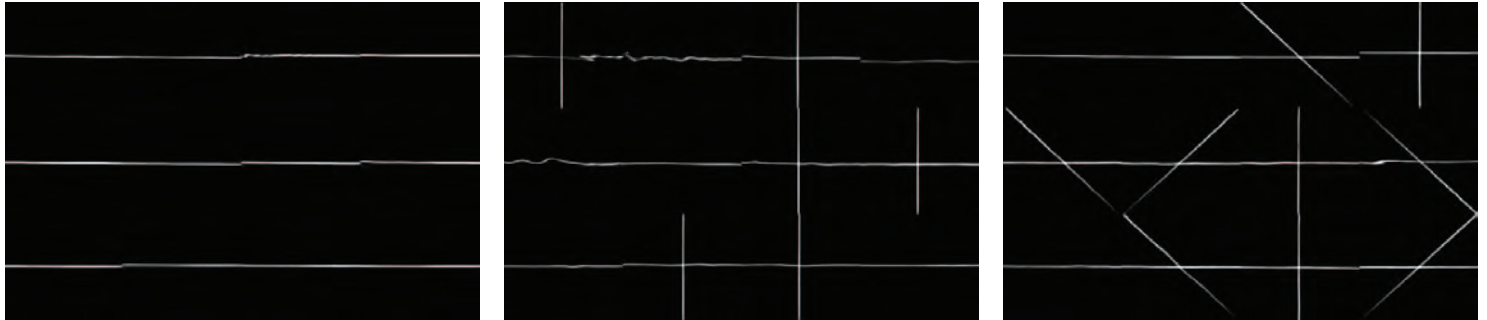
image becomes animated through the sound frequencies of the birds—the higher or lower the pitch, the greater the volume, the more the movement. Their loud vocalizations create an unexpected dynamic when one views the moving planes anticipating their having a quiet sensory effect. They are surprisingly playful responses to one of the great proponents of “pure” abstraction in modernism.²²

In *1dm004* (*Eleutherodactylus coqui*), Fernández used sound and animation together for the first time, as she would in subsequent work.²³ The second part of the title refers to *coquis*, the very small frogs found in Venezuela and throughout the wetland areas of the Caribbean. As a peculiarly distinctive part of the urban atmosphere, their high- and low-pitched sounds fill the air like strident contemporary music around the artist's home and literally generated the imagery of the rectangle in the following manner. The sounds made by three male *coquis* were recorded, separated one from the other using a sound program, then edited in a program that generates graphics (“*gráficos*”) from the sounds. The artist manipulates the graphics (the lines of the rectangle) to obtain a slightly clearer configuration. The movement, or the breaks in the lines, correspond to the frogs' high-and-low pitch, volume, speed, and duration. The higher the pitch, the more acute the broken angles.

Most interestingly, the recording includes the sounds of three male *coquis* that croak to attract female attention. As a consequence, the top line of the geometric mobile drawing remains stable because it corresponds to the female *coqui*. However, the three moving lines on the two sides and bottom are generated by the male's sounds.²⁴



7



8

2dmSLW004 belongs to a series of videos based on Fernández' interest in Sol LeWitt's exquisite, permutating lines evidenced in his wall drawings, a genre he explored for decades. Regarding LeWitt's "wavelike horizontal lines," Carl Andre and Robert Barry paid homage to their close friend of many years by writing "Sol Is Our Spinoza."²⁵ LeWitt's drawings, composed of nonstraight lines in all sizes and densities, are endless in their variety."²⁶ Fernández acknowledges his enormous contributions to post-1970s art in her mobile drawing. The video begins with three wavy white lines that move continuously across the screen.²⁷ They then become slightly more elaborated as the few vertical lines intersect the horizontal ones. Their movement, described below, is dancelike. One may feel they resemble thin streams of water. Then the diagonals begin to appear over the mutating vertical and horizontal lines, delicately moving, visually captivating due to the process she uses to animate them. The video ends as it began with three wavy, waterlike lines horizontally structured. Fernández' video is intended to be projected on a large wall, so it relates to the



8
2dmslw004, 2004
 Sequence of stills from
 fifteen minute, fifty-five-
 second looped video
 Courtesy of the artist

architectural space as do LeWitt's.²⁸ In dialoguing with LeWitt, Fernández' minimalist, repetitive structuring seems to have resulted more from her training in the Fronzoni "workshop" than from her knowledge of the theoretical writings of either LeWitt or other Minimalists. Through Fronzoni and other artists in Italy, Mies' adage "less is more" has informed her work in all mediums.

This mobile drawing (similar to Fernández' other mobile works) was executed by combining high- and low-tech methods with a well-developed sense of know-how. When she studied design at the Neumann, she learned how to build craft objects and solve spatial problems. For this work, the artist draws the lines on the computer; the computer drawings are sent to a company that cuts out the lines on thin vinyl sheets (the thickness of paper); she attaches the vinyl to a thin sheet of white transparent acrylic. The acrylic (with the vinyl) is placed on the light box located at an angle over the bucket of water. As light passes through the cutout designs in the vinyl sheets, the artist moves the water gently while the camera films the reflections of light. ("Filmo los reflejos de los dibujos hechos luz por la caja de luz. Lo que está filmando es luz.")



9



10

A series of three mobile paintings—*2pm006*, *3pm006*, and *4pm006*—certainly reference Kasimir Malevich (1878–1935), but they are not as closely related to his work as are her dialogues with Mondrian or LeWitt. The circle and the square, two motifs among many that distinguish the Russian artist's Suprematist paintings and Nonobjective art from 1915 through 1929, are adopted in this 2006 series. As anticipated, Fernández transformed the ground rules by adding motion to these works and by modifying their rigid geometries. The three videos, viewed side by side, are ludic. For example, *2pm006*, which runs seven minutes and thirty-six seconds, features a white circle-like form on black with an irregularly shaped circumference that morphs—through movement—into a rectangle. At the end of video, the white on black geometric form seems like a playful allusion to Malevich. *3pm006* performs in a similar way. Its beginning and end may be reminiscent of *Suprematist Painting: White on White* (1918), but the dynamic disequilibrium, due to the movement of the reflections of the motif in the water, distances itself from its progenitor, if in fact the artist had this work in mind. *4pm006* performs very similarly to *2pm006*, with the difference that the black square in the fourth mobile painting begins as a fairly straight-edged quadrilateral until its edges are unsettled, becoming a ragged-edged square by the end of the video.

9
2pm006, 2006
 Sequence of stills from
 seven-minute, thirty-six-
 second looped video
 Courtesy of the artist and
 Henrique Faria Fine Art,
 New York

10
3pm006, 2006
 Sequence of stills from
 five-minute, fifty-eight-
 second looped video
 Courtesy of the artist and
 Henrique Faria Fine Art,
 New York



11

Basic geometric shapes continue to be the subject of works by many artists, who have imbued them with endless meanings: a circle or a square or a triangle is not just a circle or a square or a triangle. Each holds a world of possibilities—thematic, conceptual, formal, and sometimes spiritual. Fernández evidently left out Malevich's initials in the title because the references were too distant. She thought about the Suprematist artist, but from a distance, minus the earlier artist's philosophical postulates.

From the perspective of the work discussed here, Magdalena Fernández has moved in two significant directions: internalizing Fronzoni's need to aim at essential things, to remove redundant effects, to elaborate concepts on mathematical bases, fundamental ideas, and elementary structures; and also being very much in touch with the everyday world around her. Sounds (birds, frogs, rain, thunder), light, and movement from various sources have inspired the creative geometries of her work.

Fernández moves between high- and low-tech modes seamlessly as noted in the handcrafting of the 1992–1993 “structures” and the inventive fabrications using buckets of water and video cameras from 2003 to simulate movement in the mobile paintings and mobile drawings.

Dialogues with other artists, as well as responses and references to their work, both pre- and post-1950s, were motivated by diverse stimuli. In the case of Mondrian, the 2006 video was prompted by the colors of the macaws. The 2009 video installation in this exhibit was inspired by a musical group that simulated rain and thunder by clapping. The artist's dialogue with Sol LeWitt was triggered by his wall drawings in which geometric forms are characterized by minimal lines within complex spatial relationships. Kasimir Malevich's early circles and squares spurred a rethinking of the possibilities to disarrange their precise forms through continuous movement.

The leitmotif that courses through the artist's work is her ability to achieve “unstable equilibrium” in all mediums. Subtracting while adding is somewhat of a conundrum—reaching its high point, in this exhibition, in *2iPM009*, an engulfing work in which symmetry and asymmetry, sound and silence, points and lines, open and filled spaces meet in harmony and disharmony, all in perfect turn.

11
4pm006, 2006
 Sequence of stills from
 four-minute, fifty-five-
 second looped video
 Courtesy of the artist and
 Henrique Faria Fine Art,
 New York

- ¹ Email communication between the artist and the author occurred frequently between January and June 2011. I have chosen to leave her words in the text from time to time so the reader can hear her voice.
- ² Untitled talk for the Latin Maecenas at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, January 13, 2011. Hereafter referred to as the Houston talk.
- ³ The German architect Walter Gropius (1883–1969), founder of the Bauhaus, described the school as a utopian craft guild combining architecture, sculpture, and painting into a single creative expression. The Bauhaus taught fine arts, crafts, and design education so that its graduates could produce beautiful yet utilitarian objects suitable for modern life.
- ⁴ Fernández did not go to museums frequently during the Neumann years, but on occasion she saw the work of such leading Venezuelan geometric artists as Jesús Soto (1923–2005), Alejandro Otero (1921–1990), Gego (Gertrud Goldschmidt, 1912–1994), and Carlos Cruz-Diez (1923–). As a design student with a grasp of art and architecture, she heard about their work from students who often spoke about it. She saw the work of the Venezuelan geometric artists in public spaces and, more often, in books. Gego, who had taught at the Neumann in the late 1970s, had a former student who taught Fernández a course in three-dimensional design. It is logical to assume that Fernández was familiar with Gego's belief that design and art were indistinguishable from each other. Eugenio Espinosa, then a young geometric abstract artist, taught Fernández an art history class; their friendship continues.
- ⁵ See images on www.magdalenafernandez.com/individuales/expo01.htm
- ⁶ Victor Lucena, a geometric artist in Venezuela, introduced Fernández to Getulio Alvani, an Italian artist in Milan who had worked for several years at the Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto in Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela. After learning about her training and interests, he arranged for the introduction to Fronzoni.

- ⁷ The Houston talk.
- ⁸ In this regard, it is interesting to review the visual images of Fronzoni's minimally designed tables and chairs from the 1960s; see http://www.cappellini.it/portal/page/portal/UI/webpages/cappellini/catalogue/product?p=code:CP_FR_01;is_finder_result:0&lang=en
- ⁹ See <http://www.cultdesigned.com.au/shop/designers/a-g--fronzoni.html>
- ¹⁰ After designing the maquette for the installation, Fernández went to a recording studio with a friend, Arno Hanmacher, and saw a sonogram of the sound of drops of water. The sonogram report gave her the idea of how the rubber balls could be distributed. When preparing the actual exhibition at the Sala Mendoza, she added the sound of drops of water, but then removed the sound after the opening night because it did not enhance the installation.
- ¹¹ The seventeen small structures are e992, 1e992, 2e992, 3e992, 4e992, 5e992, 7e992, 8e992, 9e992, 10e992, 12e992, 20e993, 21e993, 26e993, 27e993, 28e993, and 29e993. Some of these are 9.8 x 9.8 x 0.31 in. (25 x 25 cm. x 8 mm), others, 18.7 x 18.7 x 1.96 in. (47.5 x 47.5 cm x 5 cm). Some of these structures are on the artist's website.
- ¹² I am thinking specifically of *Drawing Without Paper*, 1978, iron net, iron wire, enameled iron rod, 14.8 x 15.9 x 0.6 in., a small suspended work that resembles a weaving. In all probability Fernández had knowledge of works like this in which a drawing with net and wires creates the look of a woven fabric. For a reproduction of this particular work, see Nadja Rottner and Peter Weibel, eds., *Gego 1957–1988: Thinking the Line* (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2003), p. 184.
- ¹³ She worked in other firms, but most of her graphic design was at Agape.
- ¹⁴ The 1996 installation was exhibited at the Centro Verifica 8+1 in Venezia-Mestre, Italy.

- ¹⁵ In conversation with the artist, she noted that she consciously referenced Colombo in *1i009* (2009), a kinetic light installation exhibited at Steellife – Triennial of Milan, Studio Chiesa, Marcegaglia Foundation, Milan.
- ¹⁶ Discussions regarding the artist's dialogues with Oiticia and Torres-García will be the subject of another essay.
- ¹⁷ For reproduction and discussion of the painting, see Joop Joosten and Angelica Rudenstine, "Catalogue," *Piet Mondrian 1872-1944* (Boston, New York, Toronto, London: A Bulfinch Press Book; Little, Brown and Company, 1994), pp. 292-93 respectively.
- ¹⁸ The artist called the artistic director of the musical group in Slovenia for permission to use part of a corporal performance the group did before singing "Africa" in her video. See YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjbpwlqp5Qw>
- ¹⁹ For discussion of the painting and its reproduction, see "Catalogue," *Piet Mondrian 1872-1944*, p. 173. Alicia Torres, who discussed Mondrian as a general source of inspiration for Fernández' work, illustrated two silkscreens by the Dutch artist, *Composition in Lines* and an Untitled work, both in the collection of the Fundación Museos Nacionales, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo. See "Magdalena Fernández: When the Spirit Blows Upon the Waters," *Superficies* (Caracas, Venezuela: Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, 2006), p. 17.
- ²⁰ "Catalogue," *Piet Mondrian 1872-1944*, p. 173.
- ²¹ Yve-Alain Bois, "The Iconoclast," *Piet Mondrian 1872-1944*, p. 315.
- ²² Fernández represented Venezuela in the 53rd Venice Biennale in 2009 with *1pm006 (Ararauna)*. The video is now part of the permanent installation *Neoplastic Room - Open Composition*, in the collection of Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz, Poland.
- ²³ Recall that the artist explored the role of sound in *1i993* by adding it to the installation on the opening night. Nevertheless, in her view the sound recording was not integral to the work and thus not essential.
- ²⁴ In addition to the artist, who elaborated on the process involved, I thank Alexander Coyle, a graduate student at the Institute for Fine Arts, New York University, who also assisted me as well in understanding the technical aspects of the manipulation of sound and image in computer programming.
- ²⁵ Carl Andre and William Anthony, "Sol Is Our Spinoza," in *Sol LeWitt: 100 Views* (North Adams: MASS MoCA in association with Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2009), p. 11.
- ²⁶ Susan Cross, curator at MASS MoCA, analyzes both the complexity and simplicity of the artist's wall drawings in "Drawing Restraint," in *Sol LeWitt: 100 Views*, pp. 39-41.
- ²⁷ *1dmSLW003* was actually Fernández' first attempt to use water as a vehicle of movement in a video. Her first mobile drawing in dialogue with Sol LeWitt began as a sketch or a trial in 2001-2002; she perfected the process by 2003. The idea came to her serendipitously in Venice in 2000 when she noticed a small square reflected on the water of a canal. The moving reflection of the geometric shape instigated her search for a process that would enable her to simulate it.
- ²⁸ The artist showed this video on a large wall in the exhibition at CIFO: Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation in Miami and at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo in Caracas in 2006.

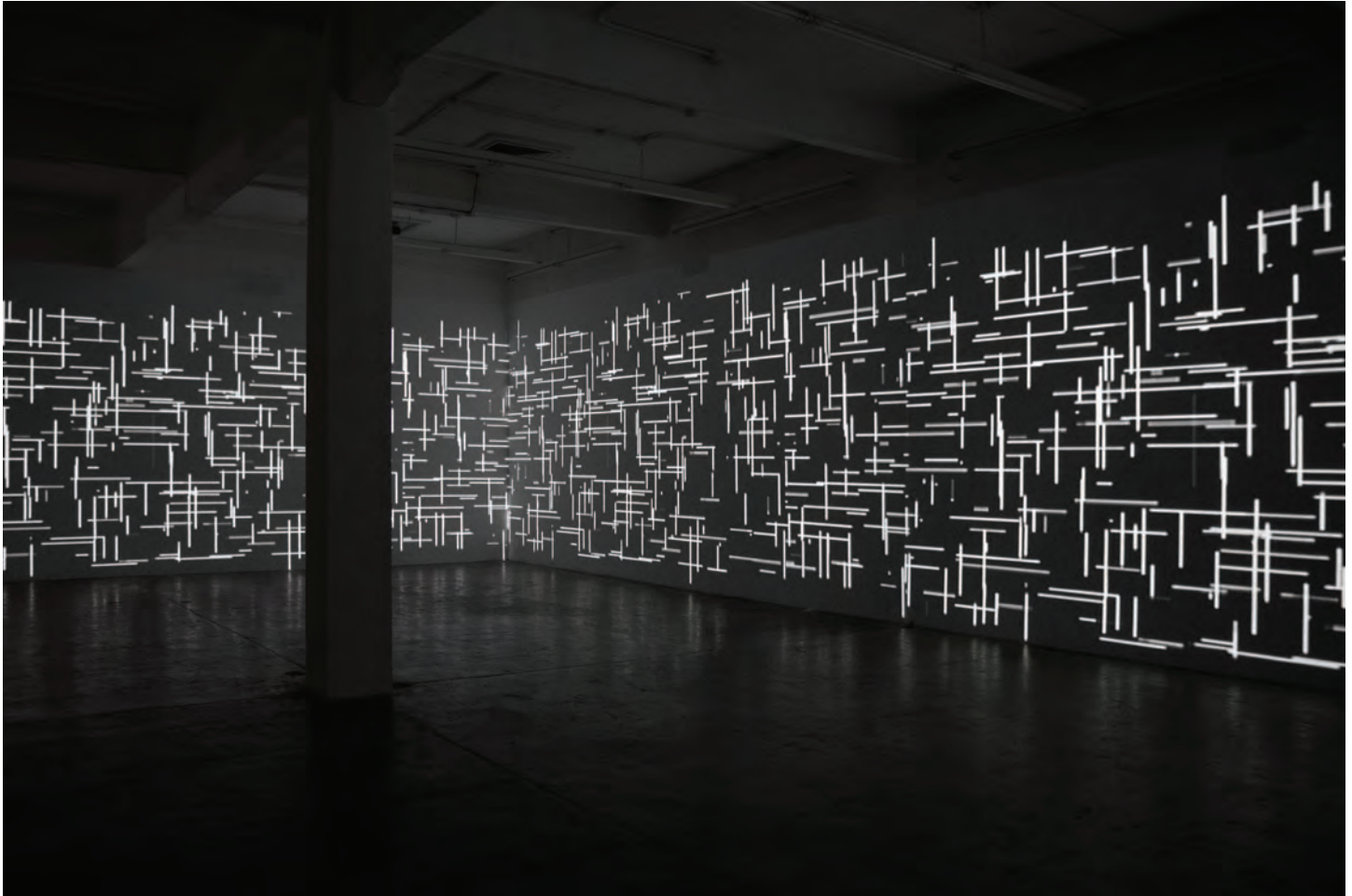


Plate 7

Turning Modernism Inside Out: Magdalena Fernández' (Ir)reverent Order

Estrellita B. Brodsky

I discovered Mondrian's trees and cathedrals, and then understood their evolution toward abstraction. . . . I tried to make [Mondrian's] work dynamic, to take it out of bi-dimensionality. . . . Trying to make movement visible, I decided to repeat it on the surface, with a separation equal to the measurement of each square using a black line for one of its sides and making the line look as if it were moving around the square, I suggested the idea that each one was turning over itself clockwise. In the middle of the work, I realized I no longer needed the white square, and it was enough to make the line turn. Always looking for a greater abstraction, I thought of reducing the line to its two ends indicating them by a couple of black dots and make a sort of summary of all their movements, and represented them as if it were a matter of an orthogonal projection on the plane, which generated those continuous lines of dots.¹

—Jesús Rafael Soto

We shouldn't say that modernity failed but rather respect it even though it is a tradition that doesn't function any longer.²

—Magdalena Fernández

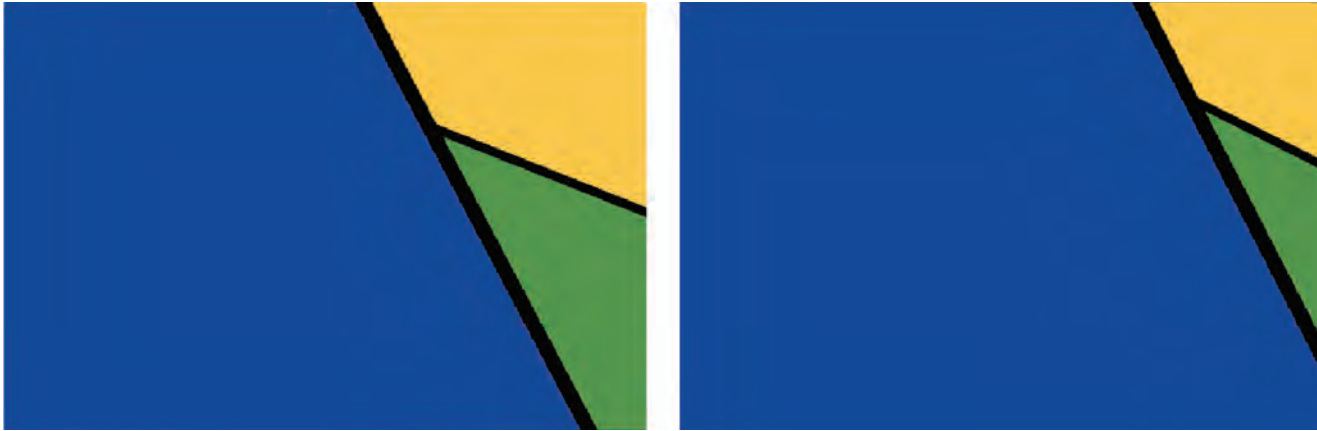
Orchestrating an aesthetic experience at the intersection of art, science, nature, and technology, the Venezuelan artist Magdalena Fernández takes on the modernist canon with an iconoclastic fervor and urgency. Appropriating and then distorting the pristine pictorial elements deployed by geometric abstractionists, Fernández succeeds



12

in making their legacy contemporarily relevant. By replacing the rigid materials of traditional painting and sculpture with the ephemeral experiences of light projected on walls and sound transmitted into the viewer's space, Fernández reverses the reductive modernist mandate. The artist projects onto the screen images of constructivist forms identifiable with works by the 20th-century pioneers Piet Mondrian and Joaquín Torres García, as well as those by a subsequent generation of Latin American artists including the Brazilian Hélio Oiticica and the Venezuelans Alejandro Otero and Jesús Soto. Fernández meticulously overlays the visual elements with sounds of nature—most notably those from the tropical surroundings of Fernández' home country of Venezuela. The artist creates an oppositional tension between the modernist formal components and the discordant sounds from nature that transform them into seemingly haphazard irregular shapes and thereby diverts the evolutionary order through a complex act of naturalizing abstraction. No longer part of an imposed form of modernity or, in the words of Ariel Jiménez, "a failed utopian vision of modernity,"³ Fernández coordinates the sounds of nature, in utopian harmony or disharmony, with the visually immersive experience of light.

In the work entitled *1pm006 (Ara ararauna)*, Fernández makes direct reference to Mondrian's simplified abstract style both visually and in the work's numeric title (*pm* referring to Piet Mondrian). In *1pm006*, she projects an image typical of Mondrian's nonfigurative paintings, such as his *Composition C (No.111) with Red Yellow and Blue* (1935), in which the Dutch artist painted a grid of black vertical and



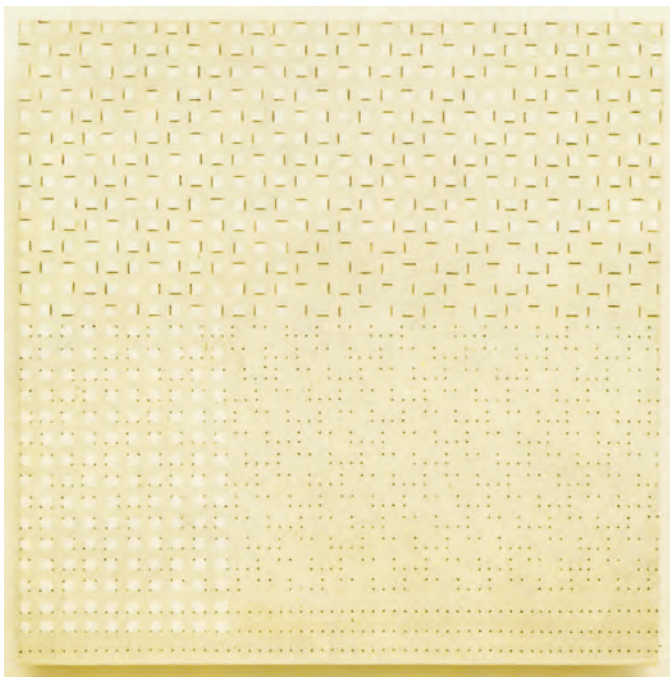
horizontal lines on a white background and planes of the three primary colors—red, yellow, and blue—in order to convey what he described as a “dynamic equilibrium.” Fernández transforms the strict rectilinear composition of the work by visually pulling the grid obliquely in seeming reaction to the cries of a tropical bird, the *guacamaya*, and by introducing the color green into Mondrian’s restrictive primary color palette. The shrieks of the parrot, whose colored feathers are similar to those of the red, yellow, and blue of Mondrian’s neatly painted squares, appear to physically twist the precise geometric composition into an organic reticular form, one that interacts with its acoustic environment.

12
1pm006 (Ara ararauna),
 2006
 Sequence of stills from
 one-minute, fifty-five-
 second looped video
 Courtesy of the artist

13
 Blue and yellow macaw
 (*Ara ararauna*)
 ©Luc Viatour



In *2iPM009*, Fernández similarly evokes Mondrian by projecting a series of light forms on a black background, bringing to mind Mondrian's black and white paintings such as *Composition in Line* (1917), a part of the artist's *Pier and Ocean* series. Whereas in this series Mondrian sought a way of simplifying forms found in nature, parallel to the subsequent practice by Jesús Soto in his serial rotation of lines in space found in works such as *Rotación* (1952), Fernández complicates her predecessors' practice of abstraction in her own work *2iPM009*. She reverses Mondrian's and Soto's process of simplifying the landscape forms into a series of horizontal and vertical lines, by coordinating the video progression with the sounds of a mounting tropical downpour. Fernández turns the reductive aesthetic process into a cumulative one. Individual pinpoints of light expand in size and shape in a way analogous to that of the drops of rain heard in the background. Eventually turning into an audible and visual deluge of lines and sheets of water, the sound seems to separate the visual layers and points projected. As the dots become larger with the mounting rainfall they invade the entire space of the screen as a white mass, only to recede as

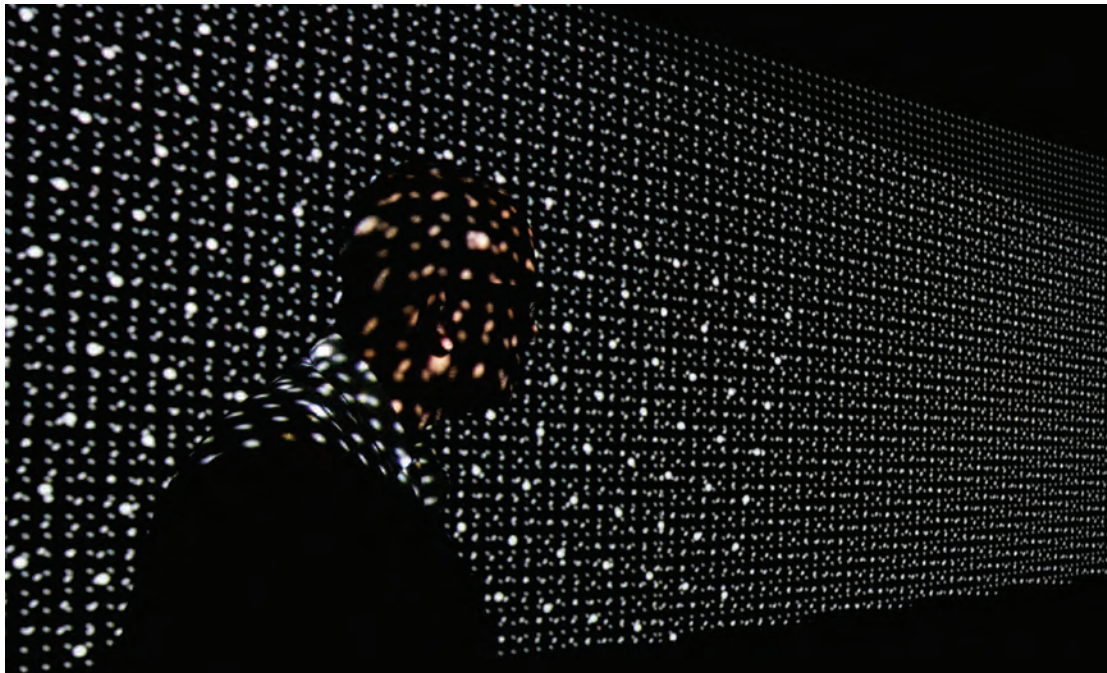


14
Jesús Soto
Rotación, 1952
Oil on wood
39.38 x 39.38 x 3.0 in.
Courtesy Musée national
d'art moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou, Paris
© 2011 Artists Rights
Society (ARS), New York/
ADAGP, Paris

15
1pmS011, 2011
Six-minute, fifty-second
looped video
Digital animation: Marcelo
D'Orazio
Sound: Gerardo Gouverneur
Installation view at Centro
Cultural Chacao, Caracas
Photographer: Ricardo
Jiménez
Courtesy of the artist and
Faria+Fábregas Galería,
Caracas

the sound of rain eventually diminishes into that of droplets. The formal elements of projected light, the points of light that dot the screens, then increase in length to actively become lines rotating on the black screens. The viewer becomes acutely aware of a cyclical yet complex interactive relationship with nature in direct opposition to that proposed by earlier artists.

In *1pmSO11*, Fernández turns her focus onto the artistic practice of her Venezuelan countryman, the kinetic master Soto. Here, Fernández builds up the pictorial elements found in Soto's iconic work *Desplazamiento de un elemento luminoso* (*Displacement of a Luminous Element*) (1954) through a narrative that takes place over an almost seven-minute duration. The sounds overlaid and seemingly responsible for the image's distortion are no longer those of a passing shower or a bird in flight but rather those of a daily event in which nature is gradually awakened at sunrise. The shifting sounds separate the collage layers found in Soto's original work: a black radio grill pressed between the white painted wood support and a clear Plexiglas pane painted with white dots repeating the holes of the radio grill. In *1pmSO11*, the animal sounds deform the



layers of white dots found in Soto's collage in an increasingly radical way that makes the viewer conscious of an "awakened" multisensorial experience within an ever more complex environment.

Although seemingly presenting reverent references to the modernist canon established by the European master Mondrian or a kinetic master most often associated with Venezuelan national projects such as Soto, Fernández' works irreverently dismantle the modernist paradigm. The political and social implications of Fernández' work become acutely apparent. Her geometrically abstract projections, laid over with sound tracks that intensify in volume and references, present an alternative to the functionalism and progress advocated by an earlier generation of artists such as Soto in Venezuela or Mondrian in Europe. In a way described by Alicia Torres as "naturalizing abstraction and abstracting nature,"⁴ Fernández turns over the modernist paradigm by finding a liminal space wavering between the rationalizing evolutionary order from nature to abstraction and a deviation back to nature.



16
Jesús Soto
*Desplazamiento de un
elemento luminoso*
(*Displacement of a
Luminous Element*), 1954
Vinyl dots on acrylic,
tempera on board, wood
19.63 x 31.50 x 1.25 in.
Courtesy Colección Patricia
Phelps de Cisneros

Fernández' work goes beyond a historical cataloguing of past generations of modernist artists, pioneers such as Mondrian and the Venezuelan kinetic artists such as Soto, or the more traditional landscapists of Venezuela. Fernández takes their work as a point of departure in establishing her own powerfully personal lexicon. She takes the challenge set forth by Soto, "to make Mondrian dynamic," and makes it contemporary. Appropriating the visual legacy of the modernist tradition of geometric abstraction, Fernández creates a series of sensorial collisions—exploding dots, lines, colors—choreographed to the sounds of untamable parrots, the rushing onslaught of driving rain storms, the gradual dawn awakening. She expresses vibration as light to make movement visible in a physical and acoustical world of natural phenomena that envelops the viewer in unpredictable ways. In her work, Fernández achieves a truly dynamic fragment of an infinite, unstable reality as the essence of all things.

¹ Soto, in Ariel Jiménez, *Conversaciones con Jesús Soto*, trans. Evelyn Rosenthal (Caracas: Fundación Cisneros, 2005), pp. 153–56.

² "No hay que decir que fracasó pero hay que respetar la modernidad aunque sea una tradición que no funciona mas." Magdalena Fernández in conversation with the author, April 25, 2011.

³ Ariel Jiménez, "Neither Here nor There," in Héctor Olea and Mari Carmen Ramírez, eds., *Inverted Utopias: Avant-Garde Art in Latin America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 246–53.

⁴ "In other words, the work [by Magdalena Fernández] looks into the process of naturalizing abstraction and abstracting nature." Alicia Torres, "Magdalena Fernández: cuando el espíritu sopla sobre las aguas," *Vasos comunicantes, Superficies: Magdalena Fernández* (Caracas: Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, 2006), p. 14.

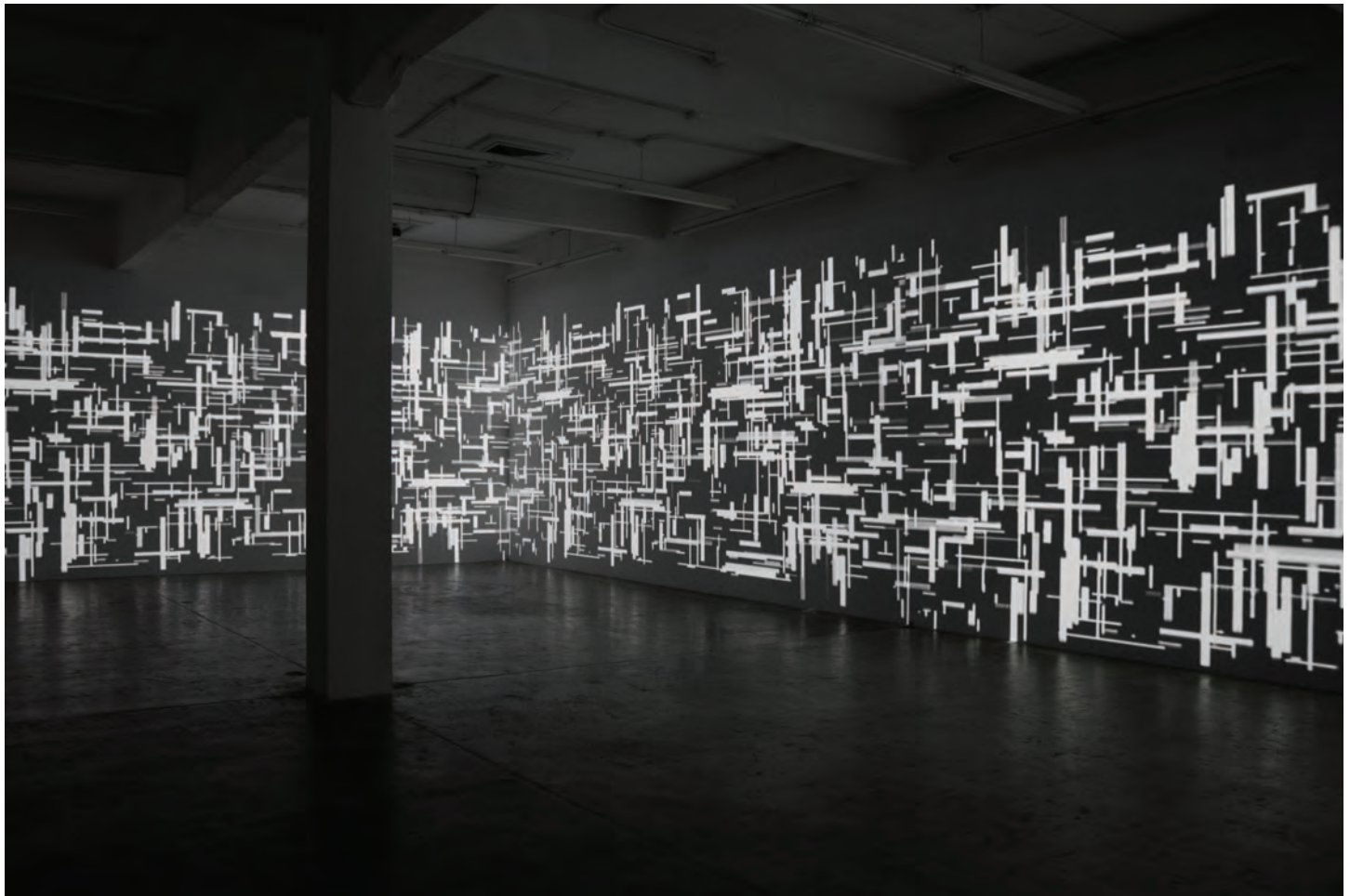


Plate 8

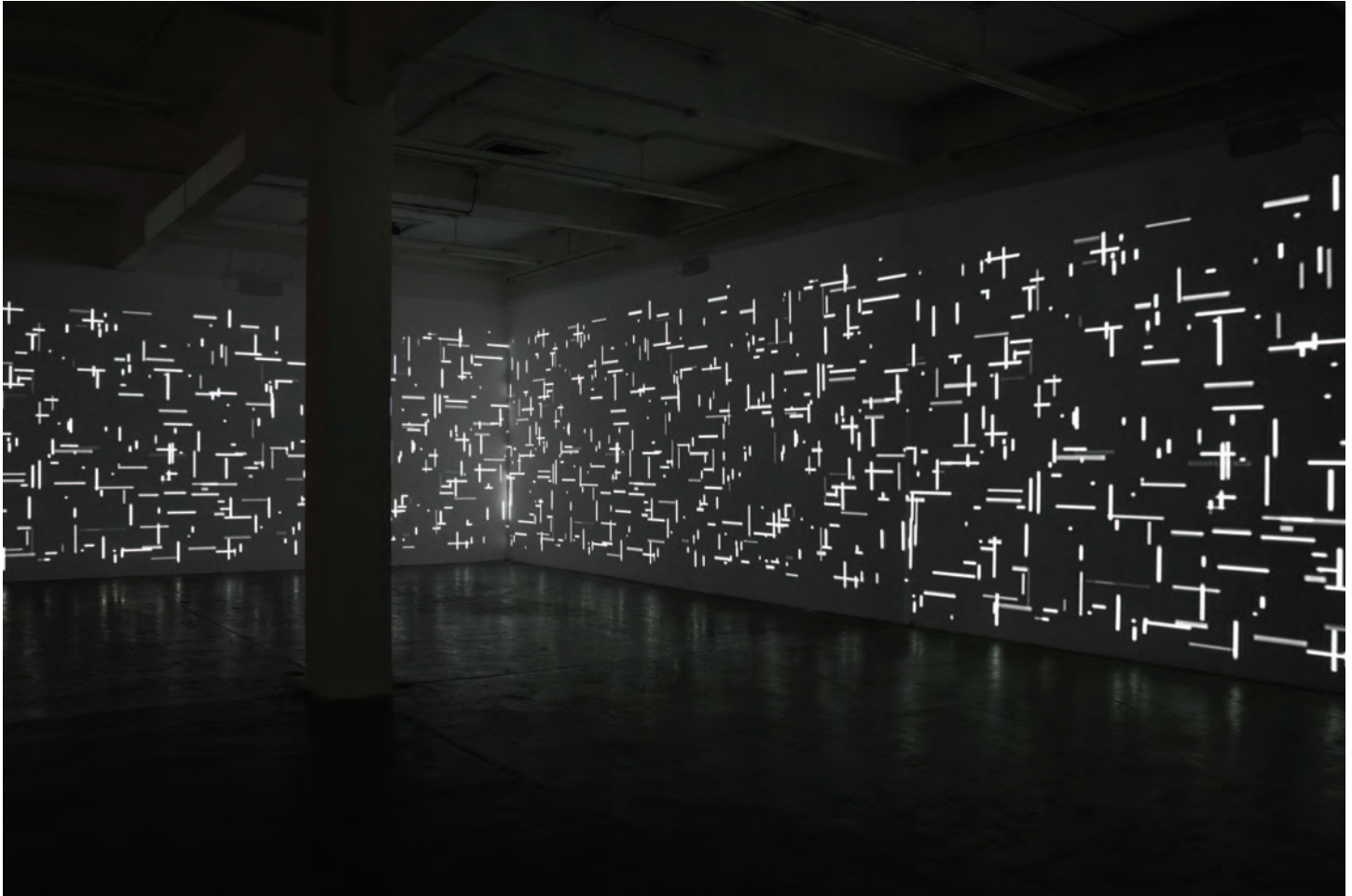


Plate 9

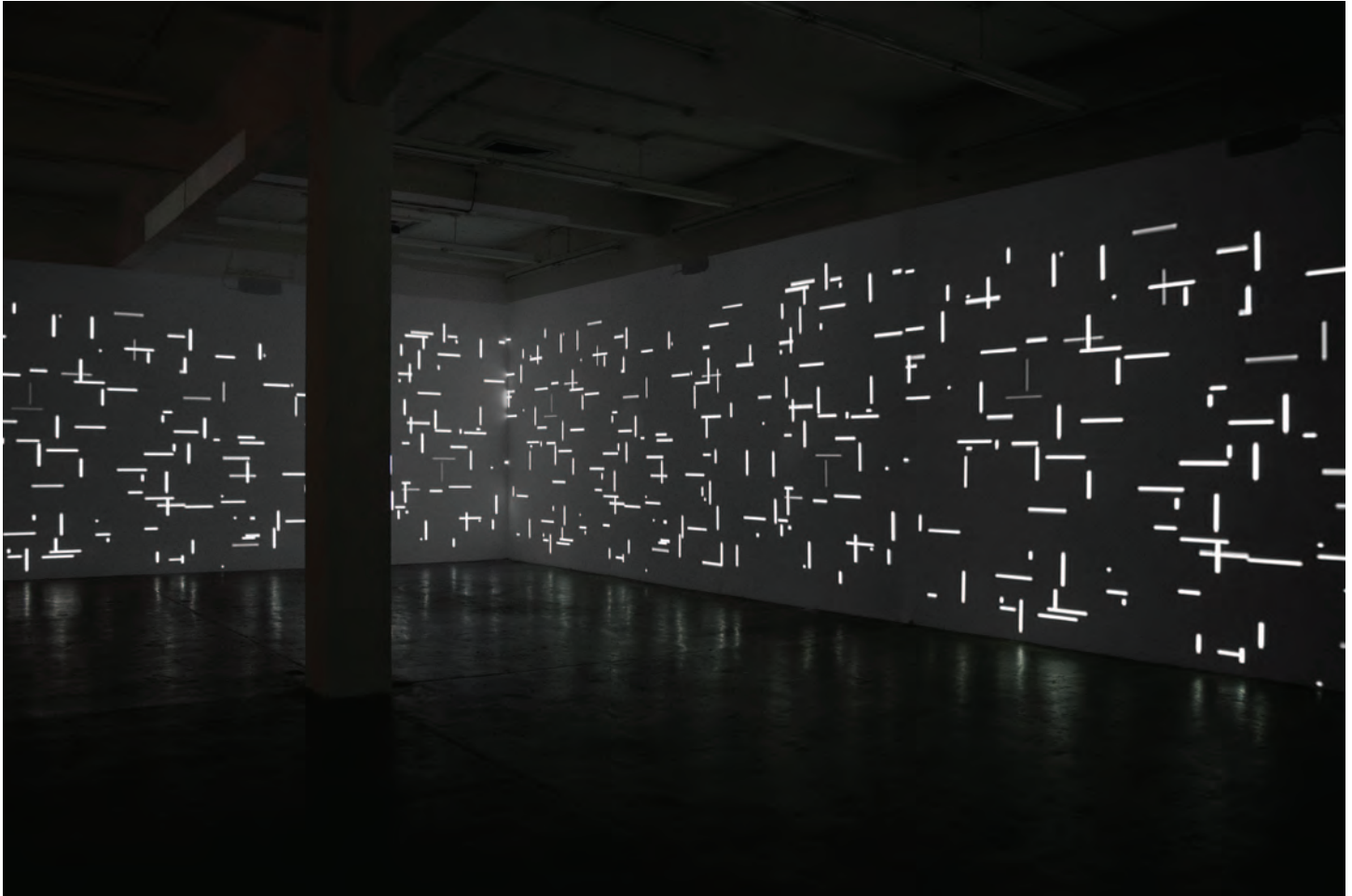


Plate 10

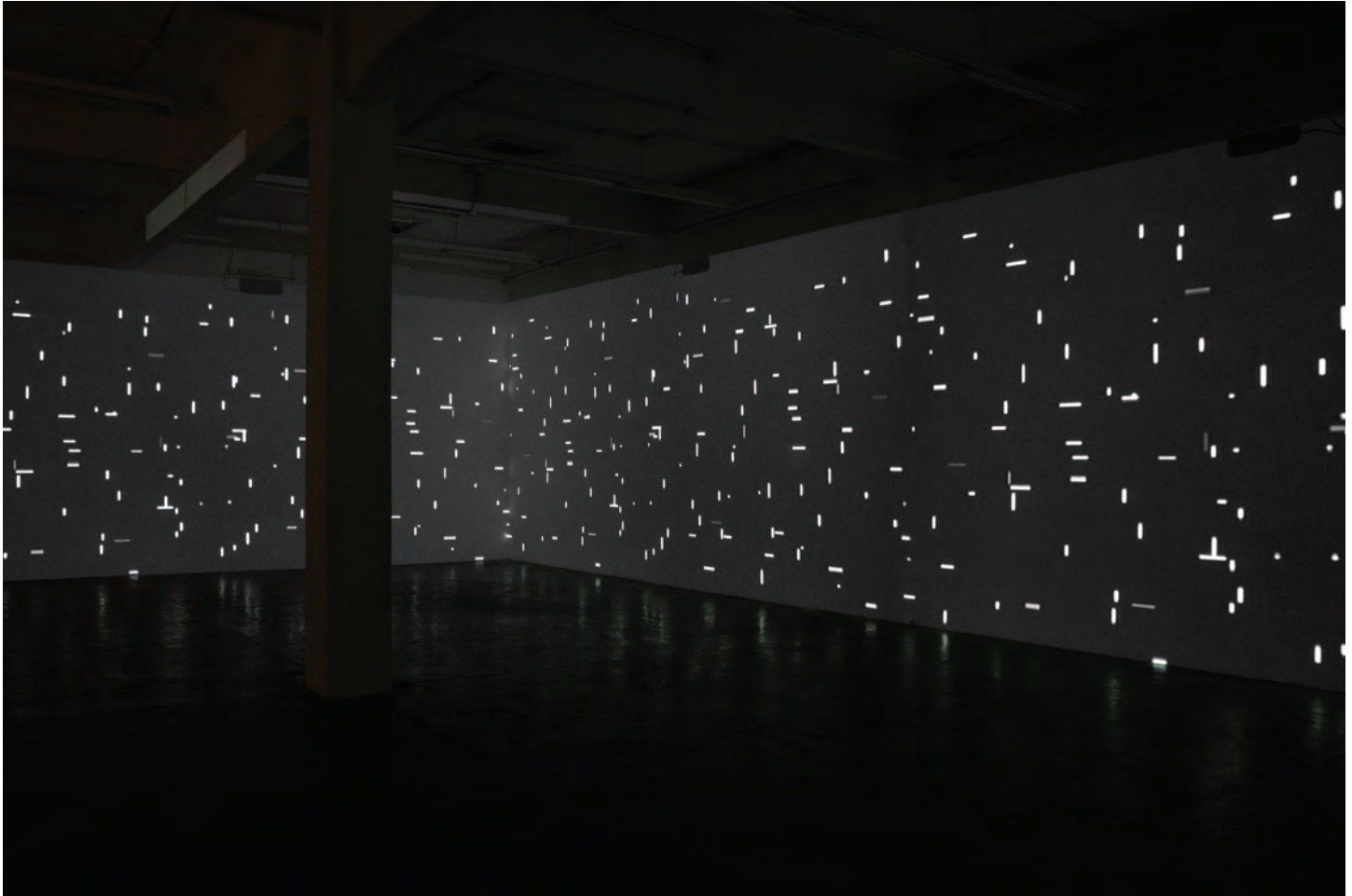


Plate 11

Selected Biography

1964 Born in Caracas, Venezuela, where the artist lives and works

Education

1983–1984 Physics and Mathematics, Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, Caracas, Venezuela

1985–1989 Graphic Design, Instituto de Diseño Fundación Neumann, Caracas, Venezuela

1990–1993 Studio Fronzoni, Milan, Italy

Teaching

2001 Professor, “Managing Space” seminar, Instituto Universitario Armando Reverón (IUESAPAR), Caracas, Venezuela

2002–2004 Professor, “Practice and Criticism of Contemporary Visual Representation Systems” at masters level, IUESAPAR

Solo Exhibitions

2011 *Moving Objects: Atmospheres – Structures – Earth*, Centro Cultural Chacao, Periférico Caracas and Faria+Fábregas Galería, Caracas, Venezuela

2iPM009 (solo show in) *Complete Concrete*, haus konstruktiv, Zurich, Switzerland

2010 *1i010*, French Embassy, Caracas, Venezuela

2006 *Connecting Vessels II: Magdalena Fernández–Surfaces*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas, Caracas, Venezuela

Surfaces, CIFO: Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida

2000 *Lines*, Galeria Pedro Cera, Lisbon, Portugal

2i000, Galleria Disegno ArteContemporanea, Mantua, Italy

4i000, Museo Alejandro Otero, Caracas, Venezuela

1998 *Airs*, Sala Mendoza, Caracas, Venezuela

1997 *2i997*, Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela

1996 *1i996*, Verifica Center 8+1, Venice, Italy

1993 *Structures*, Sala Mendoza, Caracas, Venezuela

1991 *Awaiting the Word*, Town Hall, Castiglione delle Stiviere, Mantua, Italy

Public Works

2008 *1eu008* (first phase of an urban structure), Plaza Alfredo Sadel, Caracas, Venezuela

Selected Group Exhibitions

2010 *La Nuit Blanche 2010*, Galerie NMarino, Paris, France

Neoplastic Room – Open Composition, Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz, Poland

2009 *Worlds in Process*, Venezuelan Pavilion, 53rd Venice Biennial, Venice, Italy

Steellife – Triennial of Milan, Studio Chiesa, Marcegaglia Foundation, Milan, Italy

Water Poetics, 10th Cuenca Biennial, Cuenca, Ecuador

- 2008 *The Canvas Is the Screen*, Caixa Forum Palma, Palma de Mallorca / Caixa Forum, Barcelona, Spain
Intangible, ArtBo2008, Bogotá, Colombia
- 2007 *1st End of the World Biennial*, Ushuaia, Argentina
- 2006 *Drawing Papers, Analog Animation*, The Drawing Center, New York, New York
- 2005 *Venezuelan / 1990–2004 Contemporary Art in the Cisneros Collection*, Museum of Modern Art, Bogotá, Colombia
- 2004 *Light and Atmosphere*, Miami Art Museum, Miami, Florida
- 2001 *Agape Installation – Fuori Salone*, ex Acciaierie Riva, Milan, Italy
Subtle Cities, Spaces and Cardboard Projects, Cloister of San Michele, Lucca, Italy
4th Biennial Clay of America Roberto Guevara, Memorial of Latin America, São Paulo, Brazil
- 2000 *Variable Dimensions*, Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela
Art in the World 2000, Pont Alexandre III, Paris, France
Friendship Park Israel-Spanish-America, Natanya, Israel
- 1999 *56th Arturo Michelena Exhibition Hall*, Ateneo de Valencia, Valencia, Venezuela
Latin America, Caribbean: A New Generation of Artists, Passage de Retz, Paris, France
Public Art in Italy, Vafarini, Milan, Italy
6th Christian Dior Biennial of Visual Arts, Fundación Grupo CorpBanca, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1998 *Of Discrete Authorships, Cuba and Venezuela: Poetics News*, Museo de Arte Mario Abreu, Maracay, Venezuela
- 1997 *The Invention of Continuity*, Galería de Arte Nacional, Caracas, Venezuela
1st Biennial of Mercosur, Porto Alegre, Brazil
- 1996 *8th Mendoza Award*, Sala Mendoza, Caracas, Venezuela

Awards

- 2009 First Prize, 10th Cuenca Biennial, Cuenca, Ecuador
- 1999 Best Foreign Artist, 4th Atlantic Forum, Pontevedra, Spain
Unique Prize, 6th Christian Dior Biennial of Visual Arts, Caracas, Venezuela
- 1998 Arturo Michelena Award, 56th Edition, Valencia, Venezuela
- 1996 Unique Prize, Eugenio Mendoza Award, 8th edition, Sala Mendoza, Caracas, Venezuela

Selected Public Collections

The artist's work is included in the following museums and collections:

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas, Caracas, Venezuela

Colección Mercantil, Caracas, Venezuela

Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, Caracas, Venezuela / New York, New York

Colección CIFO: Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, Florida

Miami Art Museum, Miami, Florida

Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz, Poland

Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela

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Luis Tabares, *Security Guard*
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Sherry Zambrano, *Assistant Registrar*

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The Frost Art Museum receives ongoing support from the Steven & Dorothea Green Endowment; the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, the Cultural Affairs Council, the Mayor and the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners; the State of Florida; and the Members & Friends of The Frost Art Museum; The Miami Herald 2010-2011 Media Sponsor

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