

Stephen Friedman Gallery

The New York Times
So I will take care of you too
Rosa Martínez
1 May 2020

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CORONAVIRUS POSTCARDS

So I will take care of you too

I don't know what the future of museums and exhibitions will be, but I do know that art can help us during the pandemic. So I made this virtual exhibition.



Image: Javier Jaén

Postcards of the coronavirus is a collective newspaper of this era of uncertainty. You can see the entire series [here](#) .

BARCELONA, Spain - Now, when I am confined at home, I am grateful that I was able to be by my mother's side when she died, at the age of 96, in August 2019. I think of the pain of those who die alone, as circumstances compel during this pandemic . I think of the consolation of a worthy farewell for those who leave and for those who stay, and how much gestures, words, music or images help in our rituals.

My mother's death coincided with a collective project to revitalize a practically uninhabited plaza in Burgo de Osma, a town in Soria on the wide Castilian plateau. My collaboration consisted of supervising the artistic proposals and, while, imagined my mother as a star of the Milky Way and felt that from there I would also take care of myself. This is how I dared to make an unsuspected and first-time "pictorial work". Assumpta Bassas, a friend and teacher of Fine Arts, welcomed me in her home workshop and helped me look for images, prepare the wood, buy the colors. All of this helped me cope with grief.

I don't know what the future of museums and exhibitions will be, but I do know that art can help us. Just as it helped me bear my mother's death, perhaps it can also help more people find comfort.

So I made this virtual exhibition.

The work of artists, healers, and active recipients can be a healing balm. It can help us to question the discourse of our politicians - in which the law of the fittest seems to prevail - to appeal to collective solidarity and mutual support, as the Russian naturalist Piotr Kropotkin said. Doing so calls for a new order that is based on the ethics of care, on a social motherhood that respects the Earth and its different species.

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Photo: Alfred Vernis

Assumpta Bassas (1965, Barcelona, Spain) and Rosa Martínez (1955, Soria, Spain) painted in 2019 "Persiana de luz madre", a work in which a star stands out among the nebulae of our galaxy. The Milky Way, named after having been considered in Greek mythology as a trail of milk from the chest of the goddess Hera, in Viking narrations was seen as the path that led to Valhala or paradise of the dead. Today astronomers know that it is made up of millions of stars and perhaps we all were and will be stardust.



Image: Rivane Neuenschwander

Rivane Neuenschwander's works (Belo Horizonte, Brazil, 1967) are explorations of thought, feeling, communication, and relationships. In the series of photographs titled "Belongs. It does not belong" (2000), made together with Cao Guimarães, various moving beetles go through soap bubbles. These works are a metaphor for the complexity of affective relationships and the mourning for losses. Beetles

represent people and soap bubbles the ephemeral reality of their interactions.



Image: Mujeres Creando

The Bolivian collective Mujeres Creando defines itself as a feminist and anarchist social movement. With more than two decades of existence, his political work in the field of mutual aid stands alongside his radical and ephemeral interventions in the public space to critically question violence, the injustices of the established order and, specifically, the submission of women to the patriarchal order. When they write the phrase "Stay home is not the same as shut up at home" (March 2020) next to the doors of the public university

of La Paz they deconstruct the mandate that, in addition to obeying, condemns silence.

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Photo: Nikos Navridis

Nikos Navridis (Athens, Greece, 1958) often uses breath and breath as artistic materials that reflect the primordial forces of existence. In his installation "On life, beauty, translations and other difficulties" (1997), four video screens host four human figures who inhale and exhale with different intensities. The images are taken from inside latex balloons, creating a sense of distressed effort. The so-called "Translations" speaks of the need to get closer to the

other.



Image: Courtesy: Ghada Amer and Kewenig /
Photography: Carlos Díaz Corona

Ghada Amer (Cairo, Egypt, 1963) is a multidisciplinary artist who questions gender inequalities and claims feminine pleasure, considering that seduction and feminism are not incompatible. Both in his embroidered paintings and in his sculpture or gardens, he reflects on love, death or the feminization of poverty. The phrase "TODAY 70% OF THE POOR IN THE WORLD ARE

WOMEN" (2001-2019), placed in the Plaza de los Caudillos, in Guadalajara, Mexico, takes the form of a playground for children using red containers and sand . See how women are responsible for care and how they are in the lowest strata of the unfair distribution of wealth.



Photo: Vittore Fossati

In 1981, during one of his trips through the Italian region of Piedmont, the landscape photographer Vittore Fossati (1954, Alessandria, Italy) made this image that he titled "Oviglio", the name of a small town. The composition follows the outline of the classical Renaissance perspective, with its lines converging towards a central vanishing point. The rainbow that arises from the mechanical irrigator appears on the left side of the image and ends in the

center of the road. This celestial phenomenon in miniature suggests that beauty can appear unexpectedly in our daily transits and become an individual revelation, inviting us to contemplate the wonderful.

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Image: Janine Antoni, "Slumber", 1993. Photo of Javier Campano at the Reina Sofia Art Center, Madrid, 1995.



Image: Janine Antoni, "Slumber", 1993. Photo: Ellen Labenski at the Guggenheim Museum Soho, New York, 1996. Credit © Janine Antoni

Janine Antoni (Freeport, Bahamas, 1964) performed the 'Slumber' performance on several occasions between 1994 and 2000. At night, connected to an electroencephalographic device that collected the movements of her eyes during the different phases of sleep, the artist slept in the art center that welcomed her. During the day, the lines that the machine had drawn were sewn by herself on the blanket that covered her body, which lengthened with each new presentation of the work. This contemporary Penelope no longer waits for Ulysses to return from her travels, but instead connects the unconscious, science and the language of art to activate her power as a weaver of her own dreams and new realities.

I thank the artists who answered my call for their courageous and regenerative works.

Rosa Martínez (@rosamartinezcurator) is an art historian and exhibition curator based in Barcelona. In 2005 she was the first woman to direct the Venice International Biennale.