NEWS

‘The Blessings of the Mystery’: Carolina Caycedo and David de Rozas at Ballroom Marfa

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MARFA — Ballroom Marfa will present “The Blessings of the Mystery,” an exhibition beginning January 2021. Artists Carolina Caycedo and David de Rozas have created a new film and series of installations rooted in West Texas, and the project crystallizes the artists’ extended research into the connections and tensions between the cultural, scientific, industrial and socio-political forces of three key locations: the McDonald Observatory in Fort Davis, the Amistad Dam on the Rio Grande, and the Permian Basin oil fields.

The multidisciplinary exhibition centers around “The Teachings of the Hands,” a single-channel cinematic journey across the region’s complex histories of colonization, migration and ecological precarity. The video installation combines observational and experimental documentary with oral histories, reenactments, archival research and found footage. The film’s storylines grow out of the land where both Indigenous and settler knowledge have been historically produced.

The film’s concepts, locations, and objects are encountered in the galleries, where installations, collages and drawings expand on these layered ideas, allowing the viewers to physically experience the film’s storylines in multiple ways. Additionally, the exhibition includes original 1930s watercolors by Forest and Lula Kirkland, which record the ancient Indigenous rock art of the
Lower Pecos, on loan from the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory at the University of Texas.

“The Blessings of the Mystery” is an extension of Caycedo and de Rozas’s multidisciplinary practice centered around environmental issues, encounters between history and memory, Indigenous rights and other cosmologies. With their exhibition at Ballroom Marfa, Caycedo and de Rozas investigate the transformation of the Trans-Pecos by way of industry, infrastructure and private property.

Caycedo is a multidisciplinary artist known for her performances, video, artist’s books, sculptures and installations that examine environmental and social issues, and de Rozas is a multidisciplinary artist and award-winning filmmaker whose practice merges experimental documentary and contemporary art forms, revisiting and relocating the politics of memory.

The exhibition is organized by Ballroom Marfa Curator-at-Large Laura Copelin with Curatorial Assistant Gabriela Carballo. It will run from January 30 to May 28 of next year, with a spring celebration on Saturday, April 24, 2021.

The exhibition will travel to the Visual Arts Center (VAC), College of Fine Arts at The University of Texas at Austin, organized by MacKenzie Stevens and Rubin Center for the Visual Arts, The University of Texas at El Paso, organized by Kerry Doyle.

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