77 *Mud Figure (Figura de Fango)*, 1983-84
Earth and binder on wood
Two pieces: 28 x 18 x 2 1/4 inches; two pieces, 32 1/2 x 18 x 2 1/4 inches; one piece, 11 x 8 1/4 x 2 1/4 inches

78 *Figure with Gnanga (Figura con Gnanga)*, 1984
Earth and binder on wood
Two pieces: 35 x 31 x 2 1/2 inches; 37 x 32 x 2 1/2 inches

79 Untitled, 1984
Earth and binder on wood
Two pieces; 39 x 34 x 1 1/2 inches; 36 x 34 x 1 1/2 inches

80 Untitled, 1984
Sand and binder on wood
61 1/2 x 19 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches

81 *Fernwoman (Mujer de helecho)*, 1985
Osmunda fern root
56 1/2 x 8 x 14 inches

82 Untitled, 1985
Wood slab carved and burnt with gunpowder
54 1/2 x 20 1/4 x 2 inches

83 Untitled, 1985
Wood slab carved and burnt with gunpowder
85 1/2 x 8 x 1 1/4 inches

84 Untitled, 1985
Wood slab carved and burnt with gunpowder
61 x 7 1/2 x 1 1/4 inches

85 Untitled, 1985
Wood slab carved and burnt with gunpowder
65 5/8 x 13 x 1 inches

86 Untitled, 1985
Wood slab carved and burnt with gunpowder
80 1/2 x 11 1/4 x 1 1/2 inches

87 Untitled, 1985
Wood slab carved and burnt with gunpowder
79 1/4 x 11 1/2 x 3 inches

88-91 Untitled, 1985
Four semi-circular tree trunks carved and burnt with gunpowder
73 x 15 1/8; 79 1/4 x 25; 78 x 39 1/2; 80 x 47 inches
The proposed project for the MacArthur Park Public Art Program in Los Angeles, which was not completed before Mendieta's death, was based on these tree sculptures created in Rome, Italy

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Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions

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Catalog Design: Sue Zimmerman

Ana Mendieta

Untitled, 1983
Stonewoman Series

Curated by
Petra Barreras del Rio
and John Perreault

March 1 through April 23, 1989

L A C E
Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions

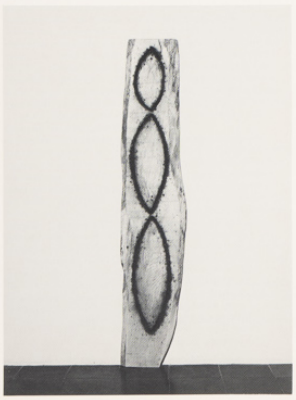
Earth and Fire

Mendieta's Body of Work

By John Perreault

I have been carrying on a dialogue between the landscape and the female body (based on my own silhouette). I believe this has been a direct result of my having been torn from my homeland (Cuba) during my adolescence. I am overwhelmed by the feeling of having been cast from the womb (nature). My art is the way I re-establish the bonds that unite me to the universe. It is a return to the maternal source. Through my earth/body sculptures I become one with the earth . . . I become an extension of nature and nature becomes an extension of my body. This obsessive act of reasserting my ties with the earth is really the reactivation of primeval beliefs . . . [in] an omnipresent female force, the after-image of being encompassed within the womb, is a manifestation of my thirst for being.

Ana Mendieta, 1981



Untitled, 1985
Wood slab carved and burnt with gunpowder

Ana Mendieta's oeuvre is not difficult to situate within the categories of advanced North American art of the past two decades. We can only guess how her work might have developed, but with her tragic death in 1985 at the age of thirty six, her body of work became an oeuvre, a closed set. This set falls within the overlapping categories of earth art, body art, photo art, and perhaps performance art, with the work of more recent years retaining characteristics from her earlier developments within these genres but taking the form of portable, relatively durable objects.

Although Mendieta was not strictly a pioneer in any of the forms she began to synthesize quite brilliantly in the early seventies, she was able to reinvent herself as an artist, leaving her efforts at painting far behind. In the process she created poetically and politically charged artworks influenced by the antigallery, antiobject genres that were spreading rapidly through the art world. News of Robert Smithson's earthworks, Vito Acconci's body art, and performance art by many artists (and writers) came in shock waves that signaled a release from formalism—though many of these works were quite formal—and from traditional ways of art making. The then-emerging feminist movement in art must have played a part too, for Mendieta's art works embody feminist themes; she did at least one tableau/performance on the subject of rape. The female body and the goddess—symbolizing creation and nature—were to become consistent themes.

No matter what the medium or format, there is an intensity of vision that is astounding. Mendieta did not dabble. Many artists have learned to imitate themselves in order to satisfy requirements of the art market. Mendieta was consistent because she had no choice; she made the art she had to make, which was the only art she could make and the only art she needed to make. Her single-mindedness was dictated by inner necessity. The act of tracing the outline of her own body—her silhouette, her shadow— upon the earth in the long-lived "Silueta" series was important to her as art, as magic, as political act.

This was equally true of the rock carvings and inscriptions of female symbols. These helped her heal herself, if only temporarily. If one could claim even a small portion of the earth as one's own territory, exile was assuaged.

Art is a belief system, and Mendieta believed in the power of art to change lives. Art changed her life and allowed her moments of equilibrium, caught between the pain of exile and the transcendence of ritual. This is dangerous territory, but all else is banal. Mendieta can either be seen as a romantic or as someone absolutely clearheaded about how to heal the breach between humanity and the nonhuman world. Mendieta's works are about the numinous. At their finest, they are numinous themselves.

What do we see when we look at what remains of her art works? A few photographs depicting silhouettes on the ground or rock carvings in Cuba. Later we see female figures made of femwood or constructed of vines. We see earthly symbols on the floor. We see work inscribed with fire, as if this were the only way to let the soul become visible. If we do not see beyond what we see, then we are not seeing the art: we are stuck in the fallen world of art products. Eschewing the sentimental and, for the most part, the sensational, Mendieta was courting the gods.

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with permission by The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.

Tierra y Fuego

La Obra de Mendieta

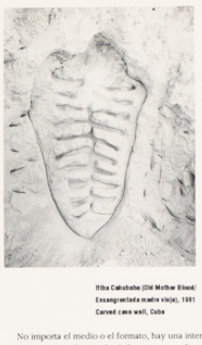
Por John Perreault
Traducido por Myrna Nieves-Colón

He estado conduciendo un diálogo entre el paisaje y el cuerpo femenino (basado en mi propia silueta). Creo que esto ha sido un resultado directo del haber sido arrancada de mi tierra natal (Cuba) durante mi adolescencia. Estoy abrumada por el sentimiento de haber sido arrojada del vientre (la naturaleza). Mi arte es la forma en que reestablezco los lazos que me unen al universo. Es un regreso a la fuente materna. A través de mis esculturas de tierra/cuerpo me hago una sola con la tierra. Me convierto en una extensión de la naturaleza y la naturaleza se convierte en una extensión de mi cuerpo. Este acto obsesivo de afirmar mis lazos con la tierra es en realidad una reactivación de creencias primigenias . . . [en] una fuerza femenina omnipresente, la imagen posterior de estar encerrada en el útero, es una manifestación de mi sed de ser.

Ana Mendieta, 1981

La obra de Ana Mendieta no es difícil de situar en las categorías del arte norteamericano avanzado de las dos últimas décadas. Tan sólo podemos adivinar cómo pudo haberse desarrollado su obra, pues con su trágica muerte ocurrida en 1985 a la edad de treinta y seis años, la totalidad de su trabajo se convirtió en obra terminada, un conjunto cerrado. Este conjunto cae dentro de las categorías sobrepuestas de arte de la tierra, arte del cuerpo, foto-arte y quizás arte de "performance," reteniendo en la obra de los años más recientes las características de sus desarrollos más tempranos con respecto a estos géneros, pero tomando la forma de objetos portátiles y relativamente durables.

Aunque Ana Mendieta no fue exactamente una pionera en ninguna de las formas que empezó a sintetizar tan brillantemente a principios de los setenta, pudo reinventarse a sí misma como artista, dejando muy atrás sus esfuerzos en la pintura. En el proceso, creó trabajos de gran carga poética y política, influenciados por los géneros de la antigalería y el antiobjeto que se difundían rápidamente por el mundo del arte. Las noticias sobre los trabajos de tierra de Robert Smithson, el arte del cuerpo de Vito Acconci y el arte de "performance" de muchos artistas (y escritores) que llegaban en sacudidas periódicas, eran señal de un abandono del formalismo—aunque muchos de estos trabajos eran bastante formales—y de las formas tradicionales de hacer arte. El movimiento feminista en las arte que emergía entonces debió haber jugado también su papel, ya que los trabajos artísticos de Mendieta encarnaban temas feministas; ella hizo por lo menos un cuadro vivo sobre el tema de la violación sexual. El cuerpo femenino y la diosa—simbolizando la creación y la naturaleza—se convertirían en temas constantes.



Itha Calubaba (Old Mother Blood/ Ensangrentada madre vieja), 1981
Carved cave wall, Cuba

No importa el medio o el formato, hay una intensidad de visión que es asombrosa. Mendieta no hacía las cosas a medias. Muchos artistas han aprendido a imitarse a sí mismos para satisfacer los requisitos del mercado del arte. Mendieta era consistente porque no tenía alternativa; hizo el arte que tenía que hacer, que era el único arte que podía hacer y el único arte que necesitaba hacer. Este enfoque tan directo de su visión estaba dictado por una necesidad interna. El acto de trazar el contorno de su propio cuerpo—su silueta, su sombra— sobre la tierra en su perdurable serie "Silueta" era importante para ella como arte, como magia y como acto político. Esto era igualmente cierto en cuanto a los grabados en las rocas y las inscripciones de símbolos femeninos. Estos le ayudaron a curarse a sí misma, aunque sólo temporalmente. Si uno pudiera por lo menos reclamar una porción pequeña de la tierra como territorio propio, entonces el exilio se mitigaría.

El arte es un sistema de creencias y Mendieta creía en el poder del arte para cambiar las vidas. El arte le cambió la vida a ella y le permitió momentos de equilibrio, suspendida entre el dolor del exilio y la trascendencia del ritual. Este es un territorio peligroso, pero todo lo demás es banal. A Mendieta se le puede ver como a una romántica o como a alguien con absoluta claridad mental sobre cómo sanar la brecha entre la humanidad y el mundo no humano. Los trabajos de Mendieta son sobre lo misterioso. Los mejores, son misteriosos ellos mismos.

¿Qué observamos cuando vemos lo que queda de su obra? Unas cuantas fotografías representando siluetas en el suelo o grabados en las rocas en Cuba. Después vemos figuras femeninas hechas de helechos o construidas con enredaderas. Vemos símbolos terrestres en el piso. Vemos obras inscritas con fuego, como si fuera esta la única forma de hacer que el alma se hiciera visible. Si no vemos más allá de lo que vemos, entonces no vemos el arte: nos quedamos estancados en el mundo fallido de los productos de arte. Evitando lo sentimental y en su mayor parte, lo sensacional, Mendieta le hacía la corte a los dioses.

Extraído del catálogo *Ana Mendieta: a retrospective*,
propiedad artística 1987, con el permiso del New Museum
of Contemporary Art, New York.

Ana Mendieta

A Historical Overview

By Petra Barreras Del Río

By all accounts, 1972 was a turning point in Ana Mendieta's art: it was then she realized that "my paintings were not real enough for what I wanted the images to convey, and by real I mean I wanted my images to have power, to be magic."[1] That search for powerful, magical images guided Mendieta's efforts throughout her career.

The murder of a fellow student on the University of Iowa campus in March of 1973 provoked one of Mendieta's body-art events, her first rape piece in which an unsuspecting audience of artist friends entered her apartment to discover her bloody, half-naked body. With this dramatic work, conceived in "reaction against the idea of violence against women,"[2] she joined other artists who were likewise concerned with a feminist approach to making art.

From then on, Mendieta did not hesitate to use provocative images and subject matter in her art. Throughout 1973 and 1974, she repeatedly used blood combined with tempera in ritualistic performances that have been preserved in black-and-white films. During an outdoor performance in 1973 at Old Man's Creek in Iowa City, Mendieta rubbed blood over herself and rolled in a bed of white feathers, which then covered her naked body as she stood up. This act suggested her transformation into the white cock whose sacrifice is a preparatory rite for the Nañigos, a male secret society of Santería, the syncretic, Afro-Caribbean religion that embraces the spiritual traditions of the Yoruba in Africa and elements of Catholicism.

Mendieta's attraction to Santería developed not while she was living in Cuba with her family, but after she had begun work as an artist. She later noted that she became interested in Santería because her art contained "a lot of healing imagery."[3] Time and time again throughout her career, Mendieta would draw inspiration from various African and Pre-Columbian traditions of nature worship. She was an avid reader of history, anthropology, and literature, particularly works relating to Spain and Latin America, and her library contains the now-classic texts by the Cuban writer Lydia Cabrera, who documented and studied Santería in twentieth-century Cuba. Mendieta's first Santería-related works were executed in 1972, and she was still exploring the theme through 1981, when she created a piece on a tree deemed sacred by Santería believers in Miami.

During the late seventies, Mendieta developed an extraordinary ability to work in an outside setting, improvising with whatever natural materials were at hand. In 1977, while continuing to create body art, Mendieta also began tracing the silhouette of her five-foot-tall body on earth, sand, tree trunks, and fields, in the environs of Iowa City and near Oaxaca, México. Natural rock formations, vegetation, earthy materials and debris, fire, water, and gunpowder became her media as she shifted her focus to producing outdoor pieces. In this series of work, the artist removed herself from the finished products, which she described as "earth-body sculptures."[4] This was an extremely prolific period: about two hundred individual pieces from the "Silueta" series are documented in films and photographs.

Even before her first return to Cuba since adolescence, Mendieta had expressed a desire to work there, writing, "it would only be logical to bring the 'Silueta' series to its source."[5] Returning there in August of 1981, Mendieta began working in the woods of Jaruco. The soft limestone of the hilly terrain provided an optimal medium for her carvings, whether on existing rock formations or chiseled into caves and solid rock walls.

Once again, Mendieta's art exploded with power and exuberance. In this series, called the "Rupestrian" sculptures (from rupes , the Latin for rock), the artist attained great facility in handling relief sculpture, a skill she would later use in her tree-trunk sculptures and in her floor pieces. Mendieta carved with fluidity a large number of images inspired by prehistoric representations of fertility and by Pre-Columbian symbols. In fact, all the titles of these pieces included works from the language of the now-extinct Taíno Indians of Cuba.

Between 1982 and 1984 Mendieta began to experiment with drawings, employing a black acrylic paint on amate (bark) paper, and dry leaves. These pieces were the first non-photographic, portable work she produced. The images continued to be identifiable as female figures, however abstracted and emblematic. With these smaller works, the reference to the artist's own body was blurred.

In 1983, while at the American Academy in Rome on a fellowship, Mendieta had a studio for the first time, and she started to explore the possibilities of floor works for indoor exhibition. The works from this period are executed from different types of earth and sand in a range of natural colors, with surfaces elegantly molded into grooves. In some cases the cracks produced when the earth dried out are the only—yet highly effective—decorations.

At the same time that Mendieta was producing her first indoor pieces, she was also planning her most ambitious public-art commission. In 1985, Al Nodal, Director of the Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles, commissioned Mendieta to create a work to be installed in downtown Los Angeles for MacArthur Park's public art program. Because of her untimely death, the project was never realized.

Ana Mendieta's work in this retrospective, which spans the years from 1975 to 1985, maintains an extraordinary cohesiveness. Inspired by the mythological metaphors of Gaea, or Mother Earth, and Hades, the dwelling of departed spirits, she relentlessly searched for images that would capture the power of nature. Mendieta handled natural materials with ease, shaping them into images at times shocking, at times dramatic, and usually arrestingly beautiful.

For Mendieta there was no choice but to be an artist. She was prolific, restless, intelligent. Her work touched on many of the relevant issues explored by visual artists in the seventies and early eighties, but her talent for handling the most elemental materials and her grasp of the poetic transcend the moment.

1. Ana Mendieta, bilingual wall text for exhibition, © 1981, documents courtesy Raquel Mendieta Harrington.
2. Cherry Kinredge, "Mendieta Incorporated Herself, Earth and Art," The Daily Iowan, Iowa City, December 6, 1877, p. 7.
3. Ana Mendieta and Linda Montano, unpublished interview, 1983-84, documents courtesy Raquel Mendieta Harrington.
4. Mendieta, bilingual statement.
5. Ana Mendieta, unpublished papers, courtesy Raquel Mendieta Harrington.

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Ana Mendieta

Sinópsis Histórica

Por Petra Barreras Del Río
Traducido por Myrna Nieves-Colón

Todos los testimonios indican que el año de 1972 fue crucial para el arte de Ana Mendieta; fue entonces, ella afirmó, "cuando me percaté de que mis pinturas no eran lo suficientemente reales para lo que deseaba que las imágenes transmitieran, y cuando digo real quiero decir que deseaba que mis imágenes tuvieran poder, que fueran mágicas."[1] Esa búsqueda de imágenes poderosas, mágicas, guió los esfuerzos de Ana Mendieta a través de su carrera.

El asesinato de una compañera de estudios en el campus de Iowa en marzo de 1973 provocó uno de las obras de arte del cuerpo de Ana Mendieta. Mendieta creó su primera obra de violación, donde una audiencia de artistas amigos que no sospechaban nada, entraron a su apartamento y descubrieon el cuerpo medio desnudo y ensangrentado de la artista. Con esta obra de carácter dramático, concebida como "reacción a la idea de la violencia en contra de la mujer,"[2] ella se unió a otras artistas que se encontraban igualmente interesadas en un enfoque feminista del quehacer artístico.

Desde ese momento en adelante, Mendieta no titubeó en utilizar imágenes y temas procativos en su arte. Durante el 1973 y el 1974, usaba sangre combinada con témpera repetidamente en "performances" rituales que se han conservado en películas en blanco y negro. En 1973, durante un "performance" al aire libre en Old Man's Creek en Iowa City, Mendieta se estregó sangre y rodó por una cama de plumas blancas, que le cubrieron el cuerpo cuando se levantó. Este acto sugería su transformación en el gallo blanco cuyo sacrificio es uno de los ritos preparatorios de les ñáñigos, sociedad secreta masculina de la santería, religión sincretista afro-cubana, que abarca tradiciones espirituales de los yorubas en África y elementos del catolicismo.

El interés de Mendieta en la santería no se desarrolló mientras vivía en Cuba con su familia, si no mucho más tarde, cuando comenzó a trabajar como artista. Ella ha dicho que se interesó en la santería porque su arte contiñía "muchas imágenes curativas."[3] Una y otra vez a través de su carrera, Mendieta buscó su inspiración en las tradiciones africanas y precolombinas del culto a la naturaleza. Era una ávida lectora de historia, antropología y literatura, particularmante de obras relacionadas con España y Latinoamérica. En su biblioteca se encontraban los clásicos textos de la escritora cubana Lydia Cabrera, quien documentó y estudió la santería cubana del siglo XX. Mendieta hizo los primeros trabajos sobre santería en 1972 y continuó explorando el tema hasta 1981, cuando creó una pieza en un árbol que los creyentes de la santería de Miami consideraban sagrado.

A fines de 1972, Mendieta desarrolló una extraordinaria abilidad para trabajar en lugares al aire libre, improvisando con cualquier material natural a mano. En 1977, mientras continuaba cerando arte del cuerpo, Mendieta también comenzó a trazar la silueta de su figura de cinco pies de altura en tierra, arena, troncos de árboles y cuevas en los alrededores de Iowa City y cerca de Oaxaca, México. Las formaciones naturales de las rocas, el agua y la pólvora se convirtieron en el medio artístico a medida que fue poniendo todo su interés en producir obras al aire libre. En estas obras, la artista no incluyó su cuerpo en el producto final, que describió como "esculturas de tierra-cuerpo."[4] Este fue un período muy prolífico; aproximadamente unas doscientas obras de la serie "Silueta" están documentadas en películas y fotografías.

Con anterioridad a la visita, Mendieta había expresado interés en crear obras en Cuba. Había escrito: "Sería lógico llevar la serie 'Siluetas' a su fuente de origen."[5] Al regresar a Cuba en agosto de 1981, Mendieta se puso a trabajar en los bosques de Jaruco. La suave piedra caliza de las lomas prometía ser un medio óptimo para sus tallas, ya fueran hechas en formaciones rocosas naturales o cinseladas en las cuevas y en las paredes sólidas de las rocas. Nuevamente el arte de Mendieta "explotó" con poder y exuberancia. En esta serie, titulada "Esculturas rupestres" (de rupes que significa roca en latín), la artista alcanzó una gran facilidad en el manejo de la escultura en relieve, destreza que más tarde usaría en sus troncos de árboles talladas y en sus obras para colocar a nivel del piso. Mendieta talló con fluidez un gran número de imágenes inspiradas en representaciones prehistóricas de la fertilidad y en símbolos pre-colombinos. De hecho, todos los títulos de estas obras fueron tomados del lenguaje de los desaparecidos indios taínos de Cuba.

Entre 1982 y 1984, Mendieta empezó también a experimentar con dibujos. Trabajó en tinta china sobre papel amate (corteza) y hojas secas. Estas obras se convirtieron en el primer trabajo no fotográfico y portable producido por Mendieta. Las imágenes se podían identificar como figuras femeninas, aunque eran abstractas y emblemáticas. La referencia al cuerpo de la artista en estas obras pequeñas era borrosa.

En 1983, mientras estaba becada en la Academia Americana en Roma, Mendieta tuvo un estudio por primera vez y comenzó a explorar las posibilidades de hacer piezas para colocar a nivel del paso para las exhibiciones en el interior. Las piezas de este período están hechas de diferentes tipos de tierra y arena en una gama de colores naturales con superficies elegantemente moldeadas en surcos. En algunos casos, las grietas que se producían cuando la tierra se secaba son las únicas, pero muy efectavas, decoraciones.

Al mismo tiempo que Mendieta producía sus primeras piezas para interiores, estaba planificando su comisión de arte público más ambiciosa. En 1985, Al Nodal, director del Otis Art Institute de Parsons, Los Angeles, le encargó a Mendieta que creara una obra para ser instalada en el área central de Los Angeles como parte del programa de arte público del parque MacArthur. Debido a su intempestiva muerte, el proyecto no se realizó.

La obra de Ana Mendieta en esta retrospectiva, que abarca los años de 1972 a 1985, tiene una extraordinaria cohesión. Inspirada en las metáforas de Gea o la Madre Tierra y de Hades, la casa de los espíritus que han muerto, ella, inexorablemente, buscaba imágenes que pudieran captar el poder de la naturaleza. Mendieta manipulaba los materiales naturales con facilidad, dándoles formas que a veces eran chocantes, a veces dramáticas y que siempre llamaban la atención por su belleza. Como la novia del relato africano, Mendieta cargaba su saco de tierra dondequiera que iba, pero también se cimentaba en cada nuevo lugar- Iowa, México, Nueva York, Cuba, Rome-produciendo ofrendas artísticas a la naturaleza

Mendieta no podía dejar de ser una artista. Era prolífica, inquieta, inteligente. Su trabajo tocó muchos de los temas relevantes que exploraron los artistas visuales de la década del setenta y de principios de los ochentas, pero su talento para manejar los materiales más elementales y su entendimiento de lo poético, trascienden lo temporal.

1. Ana Mendieta, declaración bilingüe, texto para la pared de una exhibición, © 1981, documentos, Raquel Mendieta Harrington.
2. Cherry Kinredge, "Mendieta Incorporated Herself, Earth and Art," The Daily Iowan, Iowa City, December 6, 1977, p. 7.
3. Ana Mendieta y Linda Montano, entre vista sin publicar, 1983-84, documentos, herencia de la artista.
4. Mendieta, declaración bilingüe.
5. Ana Mendieta, papeles sin publicar, Raquel Mendieta Harrington.

Extraído del catálogo *Ana Mendieta: a retrospective*,
propiedad artística 1987, con el permiso del New Museum
of Contemporary Art, New York.

Ana Mendieta

Joy Silverman
Executive Director

In 1985 Ana Mendieta died tragically. During her 36 years of life she produced a tremendous amount of work covering a range of activities that included performance, installation and sculpture. Her death cut short her prolific career and left the art world and those who knew her void of a feisty, political and passionate human being.

After Mendieta's death, her sister and estate executor, Raquel Mendieta Harrington, formed an art advisory committee comprised of Mendieta's friends to insure that her work would be compiled, catalogued, and exhibited. John Perreault and Petra Barreras del Rio were chosen to curate a retrospective exhibition of important selections representing a full range of work that had never before been presented together. The result was an exhibition held at the New Museum in New York City, November 1987 through January 1988. *Ana Mendieta: a retrospective* affirmed the abundance, strength and significance of Mendieta's work. For LACE's exhibition, *Ana Mendieta*, John Perreault with the assistance of Petra Barreras del Rio chose work from the original retrospective exhibition previously held at the New Museum.

We are thankful to those who have made this show a reality. Sue Zimmerman, for coming up with an inventive solution for the brochure design; Martin Steele of Aesthetic Frame Design, for framing the many photographs; Maria Elena Gaitan for translating this introduction and editing the Spanish portion of this brochure; Kate Horsfield of Video Data Bank for providing the Fuego de Tierra tape; Jinger Heffner, LACE's Exhibitions Coordinator, for overseeing every aspect of this show with acumen and countless hours of work; LACE's staff who assisted with their usual dedication; the curators, John Perreault and Petra Barreras del Rio, for their insight and knowledge in selecting and coordinating this exhibition; John Perreault's supervision of the design and installation of the show; Raquel Mendieta Harrington, who worked as a representative of the Ana Mendieta estate and attended to a multitude of details. Special thanks to the Lannan Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts for enabling us to present Ana Mendieta's work in Southern California.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of LACE I am pleased to present the work of Ana Mendieta, a gifted artist and inspirational friend who is dearly missed.

Body Tracks
(Rastros Corporales), 1982
Blood and tempera paint on paper,
from performance at Franklin
Furnace, New York

En 1985, Ana Mendieta murió tragicamente. Durante sus 36 años de vida, la artista produjo una cantidad tremenda de trabajo que abarca una variedad de actividades inlusive "performance", instalación y escultura. Su muerte acontó bruscamente su carrera fecunda y dejó al mundo del arte y a los que la conocieron con un vacío por falta de su bravura y su presencia política y apasionada.

Después de la muerte de Mendieta, su hermana y caudal heredituario Raquel Mendieta Harrington, fromaron un comité consejero compuesto de las amistades de Mendieta para asegurar que sus obras fueran recopiladas, catalogadas y exhibidas. John Perreault y Petra Barreras del Río fueron escogidos como conservadores de museo para presentar una exhibición retrospectiva de las obras más importantes que representaran un panorama completo de obras que nunca antes se habían presentado juntas. El resultado fue una exhibición que se llevó acabo en el New Museum en la ciudad de Nueva York, desde Noviembre de 1987 hasta enero 1988. En *Ana Mendieta: una exhibición retrospectiva* se afirmó la abundancia, la fuerza y el significado de la obra de Mendieta. Para la exhibición de LACE, *Ana Mendieta*, John Perreault, con la ayuda de Petra Barreras del Río, escogieron obras de la exhibición retrospectiva original que se había celebrado anteriormente en el New Museum.

Estamos muy agradecidos con las personas quienes han realizado esta presentación: Sue Zimmerman, por haber resuelto ingeniosamente el diseño del folleto; Martin Steele de Aesthetic Frame Design , por haber puesto en marco el gran número de fotografías; María Elena Gaitán por la traducción de este prólogo y por haber editado la sección en Español de este folleto; Kate Horsfield de Video Data Bank por haber proveído la cinta Fuego de Tierra; Jinger Heffner, Coordinadora de las Exhibiciones de LACE, por haberse encargado de todos los aspectos de esta exhibición con perspicacia y cantidad de horas de trabajo; el personal de LACE quienes asistieron con su dedicación de siempre; los conservadores de museo, John Perreault y Petra Barreras del Río, por su descernimiento y sus conocimientos en seleccionar y coordinar esta exhibición; la supervisión del deseño y la instalación de la presentación por parte de John Perreault, Raquel Mendieta Harrington, quien trabajó como representante caudal heredituario de Ana Mendieta y asistió con resolver multiples detalles. Gracias especialmente a Lannan Foundation y el National Endowment for the Arts por habernos ayudado a presentar la obra de Ana Mendieta en el Sur de California.

De parte de la Mesa Directiva y el personal de LACE me da gusto presentar la obra de Ana Mendieta, una artista dotada quién nos inspiró y quién nos hace mucha falta.

Joy Silverman
Directora Ejecutiva

Figure with Gourga
(Figura con Gourga), 1984
Earth and blinder on wood

Chronology

Oracar
(Oor Menstruation), 1981
Carved cave wall, Cuba

1948 Born Havana, Cuba, November 18

1961 Moved to Iowa, United States, September II, with her sister Raquel

1969 Bachelor of Arts, University of Iowa

1970 Became citizen of the United States

First performance-photo works using her own body

1971 Archaeological fieldwork in San Juan Teotihuacán, Mexico

First one-person exhibition, Iowa Memorial Union, University of Iowa, Iowa City

1971-73 Special Support Scholarship, University of Iowa

1972 Master of Arts in Painting, University of Iowa

1972-77 Taught in Iowa high schools

1973 & 1974 Coordinator, University of Iowa Summer School Multimedia Program, Oaxaca, Mexico

1976 Traveled in Europe during spring months

Coordinator, University of Iowa Summer School Multimedia and Video Art Program, Oaxaca, Mexico

1977 Grant, Iowa Arts Council

1978 Moved to New York City

Coordinator, University of Iowa Summer School Multimedia and Video Art Program, Oaxaca, Mexico

Visual Artist Grant, National Endowment for the Arts

1979 Sculpture Grant, Creative Artists Program Services

1979-80 Instructor, State University of New York, College of Old Westbury

1980 First visit to Cuba as an adult

Visual Artist Grant, National Endowment for the Arts

Guggenheim Fellowship in Sculpture

1981 Visiting Artist, Art Institute of Chicago, February-April

Second visit to Cuba; one-month stay at the Escaleras de Jaruco, with Cuban Ministry of Culture support

Member of Selection Committee, Sculpture, CAPS Grant, New York

Member of Selection Committee, Franklin Furnace Archives, New York City

1982 Visual Artist Grant, National Endowment for the Arts

Individual Artist Grant, New York State Council for the Arts

Sculpture Consultant, CAPS Grant, New York

1983 American Academy Fellowship, Rome, Italy

Principal residence in Rome until her death

1984 Award in the Visual Arts, Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art

1985 Married Carl Andre, January 17

Died September 8, New York City

1986 Establishment of the Ana Mendieta Memorial Scholarship, School of Art and History, University of Iowa

Curated by
Petra Barreras del Río
and John Perreault

March 1 through April 23, 1989

L A C E
Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions

Untitled, 1983
Stonehenge Series

This Exhibition is supported by a grant
from the National Endowment for the Arts
and the Lannan Foundation.

Catalog Design: Sue Zimmerman

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Ventura, CA 93003
(213) 654-9050

The preparation project for the Mendieta Park
was completed before Mendieta's death, was
not completed before Mendieta's death, was
based on some new sculptures created in
Rome, Italy.

Photos:
Peter Moore
Karen Cinton
Cid Cristobal Hemmerly
Edward Hubbard
Dr. Stacey Josephs
Bruce Lyon
Bruce Kirby
Dr. Hassan
Jan Hassan
Alan Ayers
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Mirror/Cowles Enterprises, Bruce Corporation,
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SUPPORTERS of LACE.

L A C E
Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions
1804 Industrial Street
Los Angeles, CA 90021
(213) 624-5650

Works in the Exhibition

Ana Mendieta titled her works in Spanish. English or Cuban, an idea which originally determined a by Ana. A translation of the titles has been found on those occasions where the artist's intention is clear. Ana Mendieta's use of Cuba, Cuba, Iowa, Mexico and New York City, Iowa

Color photographs

Sweat, Iowa, 1973
Sweat and Blood, 1973
Alien Cuba, Cuba, Iowa

1. Creation (Tree), 1973
Color photograph
11 1/4 x 20 inches

2-6. Anima (Arboles), 1979
Color photographs
13 1/4 x 20 inches each

7. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

8. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

9. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

10. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

11. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

12. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

13. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
11 3/16 x 11 3/16 inches

14. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
20 x 13 1/4 inches

15. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

16. Untitled, 1979
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17. Untitled, 1979
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18. Untitled, 1979
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19. Untitled, 1979
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20. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

21. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

22. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
20 x 13 1/4 inches

23. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
20 x 13 1/4 inches

24. Untitled, 1979
Color photograph
4 x 3 inches

25. Rose and Snake (Fuerza y Pasion), 1978
Rubber snake on photograph
Black book cover with handprint
11 9/16 x 11 1/4 inches

26. Untitled, © 1978
Black book cover with handprint
11 1/4 x 8 1/4 inches

27. Untitled, © 1978
Wood burnt with handprints
60 x 40 inches

Earth and water photographs

28. Untitled, August 1980
Color photograph
40 x 30 inches

29. Sirenas (Cifra Femenina del Río), 1981
Solarized negative prints of the artist's
body and the sea
Black and white photographs
40 x 30 inches

30. Chanango (Cifra Femenina/Hembra), 1981
Solarized negative prints of the artist's
body and the sea
Black and white photographs
40 x 30 inches

31. Guamuriva (Vista Femenina/Hembra), 1981
Solarized negative prints of the artist's
body and the sea
Black and white photographs
40 x 30 inches

32. Guamuriva (Cuadros) de Piedra/Tierra
Jaruco, Havana, Cuba
Color photographs
13 1/4 x 20 inches

33. Jaba (Cubanidad/Cifra Femenina)
Black and white photograph
40 x 30 inches

34. El Elemento de la Cruz (The Archetypal Cross)
Black and white photograph
40 x 30 inches

35. Ataud de Jaruco, Havana, Cuba
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

36. Ataud de Jaruco, Havana, Cuba
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

37. Ataud de Jaruco, Havana, Cuba
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

38. Ataud de Jaruco, Havana, Cuba
Color photograph
13 1/4 x 20 inches

39. Jaba (Cubanidad/Cifra Femenina)
Black and white photograph
40 x 30 inches

40. Jaba (Cubanidad/Cifra Femenina)
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56. Jaba (Cubanidad/Cifra Femenina)
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57. Untitled, 1982
Clay and earth sculpture executed on Cuban
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55 x 60 inches

171. Untitled, 1982
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