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NF / NIEVES FERNÁNDEZ
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NF / Pipo Hernández Rivero

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Pipo Hernández Rivero

Telde (Gran Canaria), 1966

The works by Pipo Hernandez Rivero propose questions on “universally accepted cultural truths”. Built with images and ideas based on modern culture, his works move in the fields of cultural suspicion.

Pointing out to the complex possibilities for painting in the 21st century, his body of work offers a pictorial reconsideration from formal and conceptual structures, which references underlie a sense of failure to the cultural avant-gardes. At the same time, demonstrating that the discursive standardizing results in the exclusion of voices.

Mixing painting with all sorts of materials and introducing texts in languages that are unconventional to the Western paradigm, his works place us at politically disturbed environments, confronting the viewer with an unsolved dialogue and pushing towards rethinking notions of identity and value.

Pipo Hernández Rivero

Has exhibited at CAAM, Canary Islands; Museo de Arte de Pereira, Colombia; Fundación Marso, Mexico City; ARTIUM, Vitoria-Gasteiz; La Recova Art Center, Ermita del Gran Poder and Circulo de Bellas Artes, Tenerife, Fundación Otazu, Pamplona, the Art Museum of Budapest, the Art Museum of Prague and in the Contemporary Art Room of Tenerife. He has also participated in the Canary Islands Biennial and the Havana Biennial.

His works can be found in the collections of the CAAM, Gran Canarias, ARTIUM, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo del País Vasco, TEA Tenerife Espacio de las Artes, Fundación Marso, Mexico City, Galila Barzilai Collection, Brussels, Kells Collection, Olor Visual, Barcelona, MUDO Istanbul.



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Normas para no estar. 2025. Nueveochenta gallery, Bogotá, Colombia.

For several years now, the artist Pipo Hernández Rivero has been developing installation projects in which landscape paintings appear as dominant elements. These paintings, meticulously handcrafted by the artist himself, depict landscapes of a muted, solitary character. They are images of non-existent places, painted with no phyto-botanical intent and without any human or animal presence. Their only narrative is the absence of "narrative." These landscapes have been conceived as spectral echoes—devoid of the fascination and expectations of the passionate landscape tradition that reached its peak in the Romantic crisis of the 19th century. The artist conceives of them as extemporaneous painting: pictorial exercises that in themselves do not aim to function as autonomous wholes, nor as self-sufficient critical options within the debate on the present and future of contemporary painting.

Paradoxically, this approach constitutes a fundamental element of Hernández Rivero's radical concern with painting—an ontological inquietude centered on the question of its obsolescence. This concern leads him to explore the pictorial act in its role as an "entity" within a context. He subjects these paintings to the sphere of contextual complexity, with a (textual, one might say with Derrida) sensitivity both to their inevitability and to what they reveal.

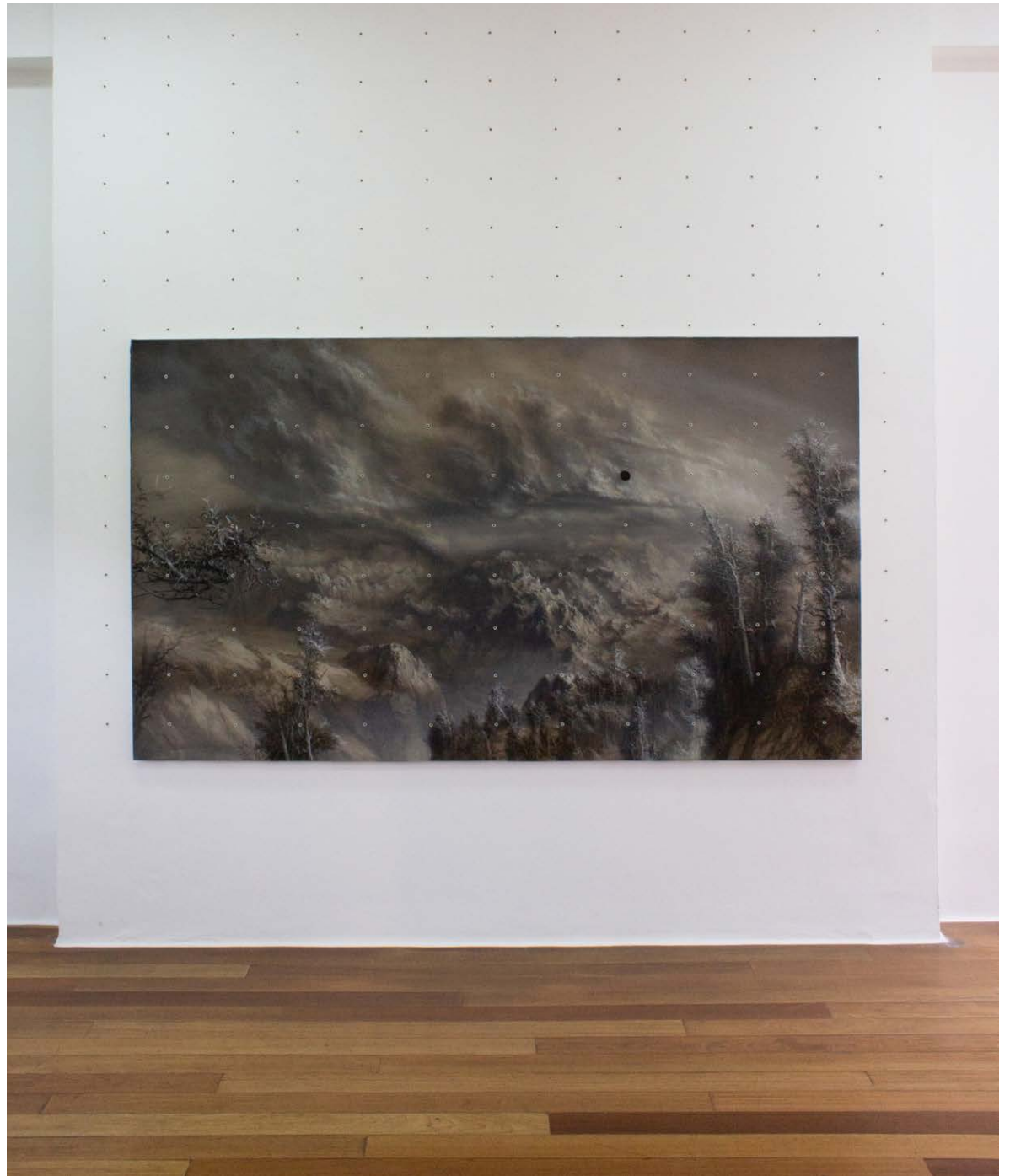
In the case of the installation Normas para no estar (Rules for Not Being), the artist "maps" large areas of the walls—on which the paintings hang—and the surfaces of the paintings themselves, using plastic spacers. He plays with normalizing both surfaces, equalizing them through a regulated distribution of these small blocks. On some of them, small metal coat hooks are installed to serve as anchors or handles.

These hooks are placed there with a clear intention: they are meant to hold accessories. Visitors who wish may use them to hang their bags, coats, or any other items they wish to set aside in order to comfortably view the two exhibitions presented at the Nueveochenta Gallery.

Of course, this seemingly trivial initiative is entirely voluntary. The objects, circumstantially hung and removed from the hooks, play a metaphorical role—a symbolic exercise in banality that invites one to engage in a kind of fetishism of accidental presence, which underlies every idea of existence. The pragmatic act of hanging and removing them functions at first as an irrelevant rite of passage—the opening and closure of the round trip that is the visit to the exhibitions. Yet it also offers an extended allegorical action open to multiple interpretations, many in secret parallel with Nietzsche's idea of the "Eternal Return."

It is the artist's intention that the hooks remain available to visitors throughout the duration of the exhibition.

NF/
Pipo Hernández Rivero
Normas para no estar
Exhibition view





A dos pasos [Two Steps Away] (2024)

In *Two Steps Away*, Pipo Hernández Rivero challenges traditional notions of displacement and belonging, presenting migration not as a fleeting or burdensome event that will eventually be resolved, but as a fundamental part of the civilizing process—a constant driving force in the history of humanity.

The artist's paintings, executed with a high level of technical skill, harken back to the tradition of landscape painting, from the frescoes of the Villa of Livia to the landscape of the 19th-century Romantic crisis. This period was characterized by an exacerbation of utopias of abundance. Among them, the utopias of discovery, conquest, and territorial domination coexisted with the passionate anti-rationalist and escapist spirit of Romanticism. These landscapes, devoid of human presence, evoke a sense of virginity, reinforcing the idea of an intimate, individualistic utopia of domination. The artist critiques contemporary art conventions. Without falling into appropriation, Hernández Rivero conceptually complicates and reclaims pre-Cézanne painting, with a critical and combative stance against conventional expectations for what painting could be in the 21st century.

The frames, important elements in the exhibition, are not mere functional boundaries or decorative conventions. In modernity, the frame was disregarded under the premise of pursuing purity in painting. However, in this exhibition, the frame takes on a deeper meaning, symbolizing territory. It delineates the space of utopia as a fortress, a closed drawing within which the civilizing process occurs and outside of which chaos threatens. The frame thus becomes a symbol of contact phobia, a wall against any contamination that threatens the possibility of mixing.

The framed landscapes, pictorial utopias, are disrupted by cynical elements, such as beach sandals, the cheapest available on the market, representing the humblest form of footwear. Through the use of these seemingly simple, everyday objects, the artist speaks to how the West finds ways to trivialize such a central issue as migration and the development of civilization. The first human migrations occurred 200,000 years ago; Western modernity began with the exploration and conquest of American territories and their immediate colonization. But it was the complex cultural climate of the 19th century, fueled by escapism and rationality, passionate rebellion and sensible conformity, extraordinary scientific curiosity, and intolerant morality, that pushed these two archetypes to the heights we are most familiar with: the explorer, with audacity almost never innocent, who ventured into unknown places, and the settler, who went to the already-discovered lands to settle and try to prosper. Migratory cycles continue and will continue, but with no more virgin territories to explore. *Two Steps Away* poetizes about territoriality, the feeling of invasion, inevitable mixing, and the cynicism with which the West approaches these issues.

A second additional element in the exhibition is the climbing holds, an object that, according to the author, perfectly embodies the process of "sportification" of human dramas—a socio-ideological defense mechanism that Hernández Rivero critically addresses. These holds symbolize the trivialization of the struggle for survival, the overcoming of obstacles that separate us from an acceptable life. Romantic authors were, in fact, the first to explore a playful dimension of fear—Mary Shelley's novels are proof of this. This exploration has not ceased to advance to this day. Primal fears and the confrontation with survival threats are now key elements in the entertainment industry, present in video games and virtual experiences. The climbing holds, placed on the ground, a space useless for their function, reflect the irony of how the West processes, through distance and entertainment, what in other contexts is a matter of life and death.

The third invasive element present in the pieces is the wall plug, which affects not only the painted canvas but also the wall that supports it. The grid-like arrangement of these plugs alludes to a democratizing subdivision, a metaphor for equidistance—another of the drives allied with Western self-complacency.

Nothing in this exhibition is neutral: not the walls, the floor, nor the paintings. Pipo Hernández Rivero's exhibition presents works that explore the crisis of Western utopias, the frameworks of acceptability, and those that rise as guardians of these utopias. Rather than addressing migration as a problem/inevitability dichotomy, *Two Steps Away* delivers a critical discourse on the contradictions of the tormented Western spirit.



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Pipó Hernández Rivero
A dos pasos [Two Steps Away]
Exhibition view







NF / Ultraleve (2022)

Ultraleve (Ultramince), a project by Pipo Hernandez Rivero for the Museum of Romanticism, draws from one of the most unknown authorial reflections by Marcel Duchamp: The Inframince

Its ambiguous and humorous complexity and the character of "hypothetical play perfectly deferrable" that the artist used to give his work turn it into an extraordinary material to speculate over the course of the relations between the conventions that shape the art work and the society that accepts it.

Radically conceptual and left by the artist in a state of speculation, its more defiant aspect is its adjective character. It is not "of the inframince" but "the inframince". Duchamp offers it to us as the first approximation to an adjective and not a substantive work of art. It's not an independent entity, but a quality. A small sample of the funny and at the same time profoundly sharp way of the artist: the light warmth left on a seat after rising up is "inframince"

From a small but suggestive change of prefixes "Ultramince" sets against the experience of visiting the museum. The piece inquires about the ritual of seeing exhibitions and how does it fit into the daily routine, reflecting on the complex contradictions within wandering/consuming/investing time, energy and the museum space. Looking at the paintings is hampered by the presence of the bathroom scales, small individual podiums designed to find out intimately our own weight

The installation forces us to face the dilemma between two elements playing to be decoys of each other.

To dare to "read" a work of art or ask ourselves if we are too much. Or maybe to do both things at the same time.

Maybe during this episode of attention deficit there is margin for the inframince.



NF/ Ultraleve
2022
Exhibition view







NF/
Israel Galván / Pipo Hernández Rivero
Esquinitas/La Pastilla
2018
TEA Tenerife espacio de las artes
Exhibition view



NF/

Fardos (2021)

Fardos offers the appearance of almost a parcel or customs hall. With packaging ready to ship, in an in-pass that seems to condemn them to an eternal territory of transit. A useful paradox if you remember that **Interludios** is a valuable flash project. I pretend a climate of intense waiting as **Fardos** [bundles] reflects on the Deadlock, in the minimum deadlock that invites us to inhabit Interludios. Bulks made almost in the manner of makeshift rafts. 'Rig with whatever you have' seemed to promote Reinhard Mucha. Perhaps I too hope to put back on the table The problem of the background and the form in the architecture of Baroque. Maybe I have just tried to make sure that things fit in the truck, come and go reasonably safely and that in the room the pieces do not fall below the ground. In any case, the bundles exercise their beauty table, they contain their plan. They are configured halfway through the survival kit, the micro-narratives in distress or the bullets of Style awaiting the deployment of their variables. We know that beauty according to conservatives not only has to be Darwinian (beauty as the appearance of the best adapted), but also – and therefore, in terms of the culture of hedonistic masochism that assists us – it should be gymnastic. 'Art has to fit' Roger Scruton could whisper to us now. If anyone wants to consider Fardos a resolutely conservative exhibition, go ahead. After all, Fardos inhabits the third edition of Interludios and the later only seeks to keep its brief span of time in shape.

Pipo Hernández Rivero, 2021

NF/
Fardos
2021
Exhibition view







NF/

Lounge (2018)

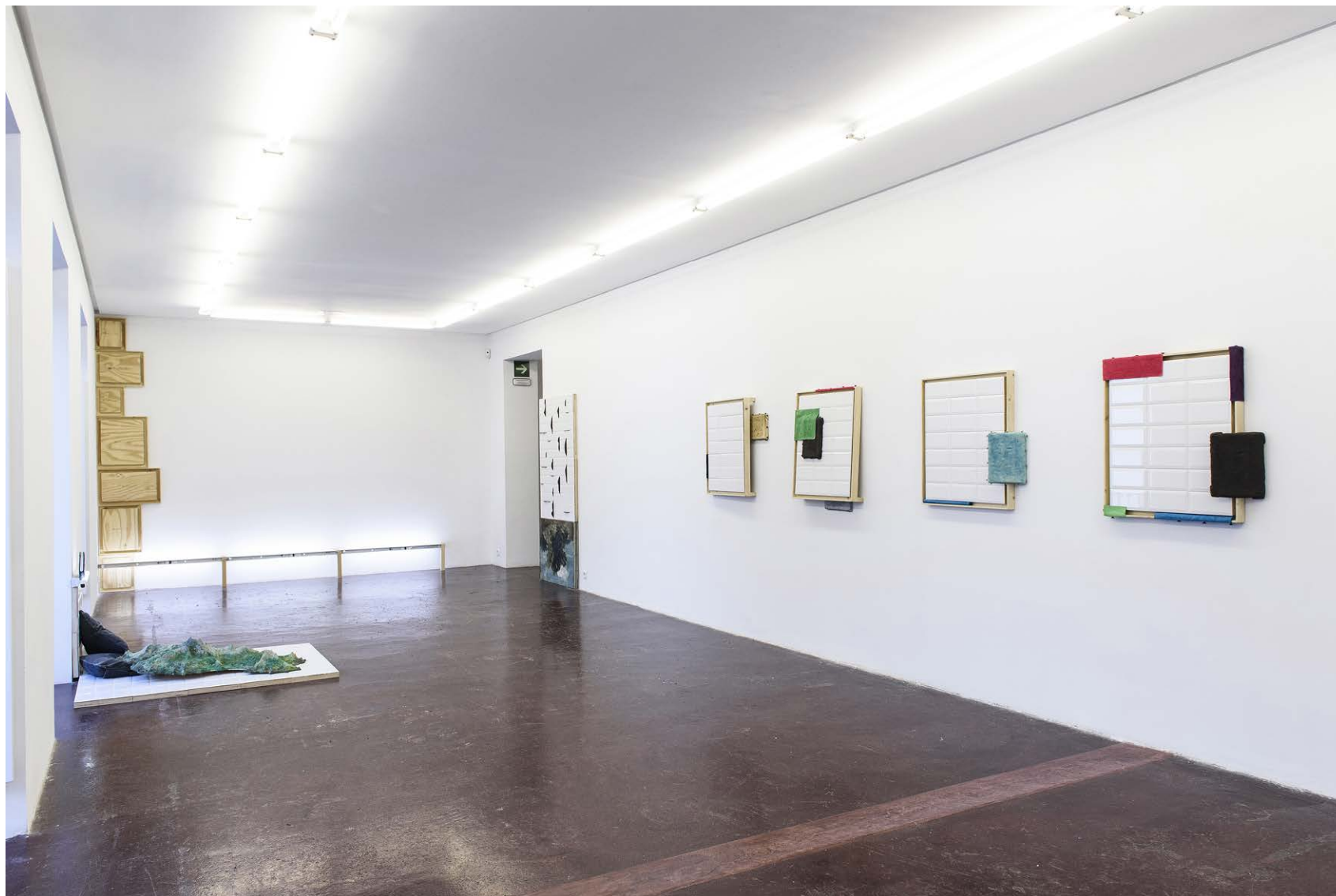
"I started exploring from a notion of Homeland as a resolved issue, as the bare bones of a dead utopia but which still acts as a scaffold for sustaining the idea of the State. I usually approach these issues from the perspective of a double that drives me to demarcate, and at the same time to falsify the demarcation, to offer it as something useless.

Among the materials that I employ to do this, two are the most constant and important: Verses chosen randomly from national anthems and lights, fluorescent tubes.

The patriarchal voice that makes up every national anthems, inevitably results in a guardian poem. As I don't know any anthem composed by a woman, this also makes them symbols of the imperative and masculine culture. A lying song proclaiming justification and menace, glorification of a notion of exclusivity and an admonition of an idea of what is common.

What attracts me to fluorescent lights is not only their antiquated technology; I use them as a horizontal decorative lines. When turned off, as suspect, waiting objects, they act as signifiers of a cloistered utopia."

Pipo Hernández Rivero



NF/ Lounge
2018
Exhibition view







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Pipo Hernández Rivero

Luz de occidente

2014

Neon lights, texts and candles

Installation view, Sala de Arte Contemporáneo (SAC), Tenerife



NF/

Pipo Hernández Rivero

Luz de occidente

2014

Neon lights, texts and candles

Installation view, Sala de Arte Contemporáneo (SAC), Tenerife

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Pipó Hernández Rivero

Corral

2009

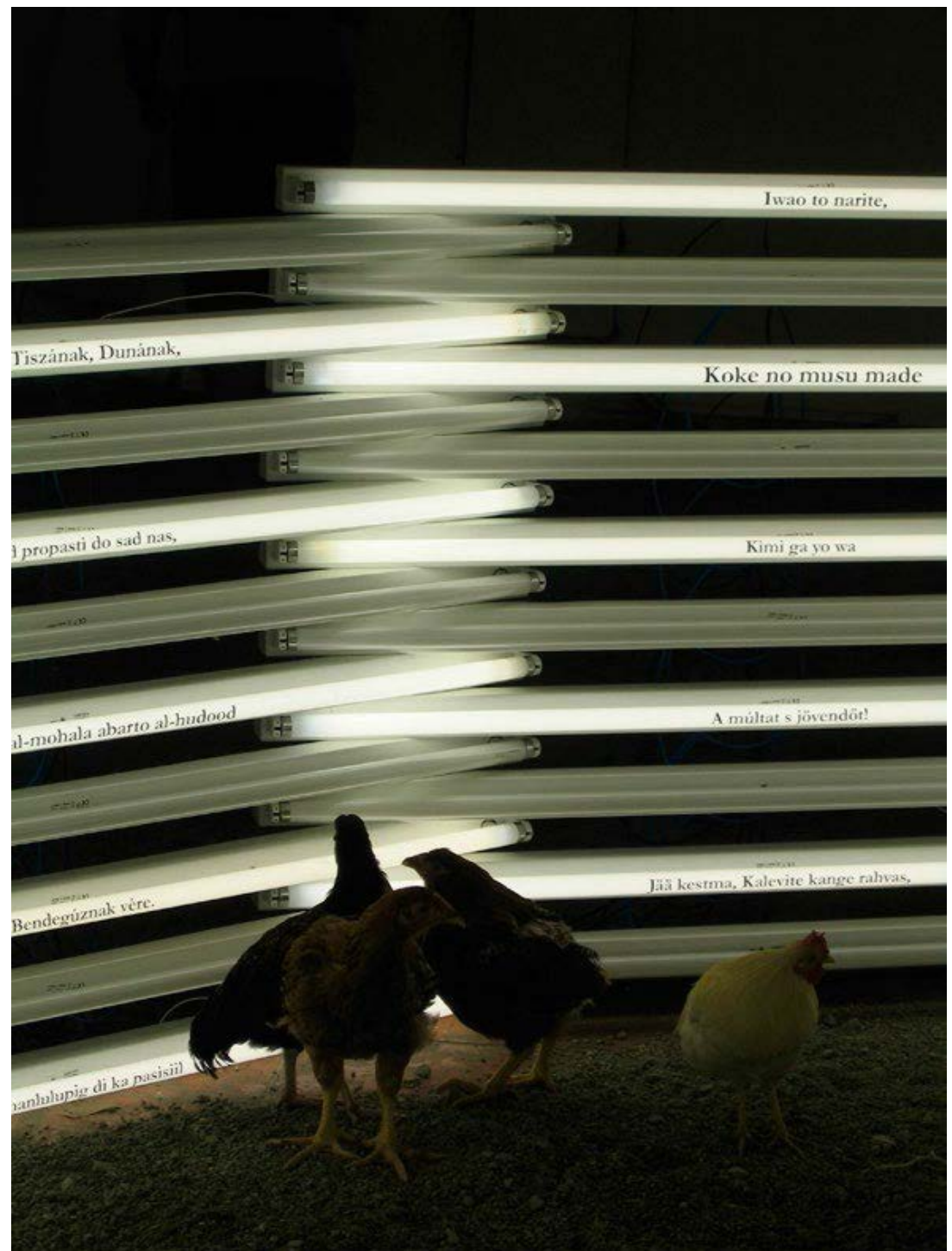
Neon, vinyl and hens

Exhibition view, Bienal de La Habana



NF/

Pipo Hernández Rivero
Corral
2009
(Detail)





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Solo Shows (selected)

2025	Normas para no estar. Nueveochenta, Bogotá, Colombia
2024	A dos pasos. NF/NIEVES FERNÁNDEZ, Madrid
2023	Esquinitas/La Pastilla. Teatro auditorio San Lorenzo de El Escorial
2022	Ultraleve. Museo del Romanticismo, Madrid
2021	Interludio 3: Fardos. Pipó Hernández Rivero. NF/ NIEVES FERNÁNDEZ, Madrid
2020	Accidental. Fundación MARSO, Ciudad de México
2019	LOUNGE N.2: GRAMÁTICAS DEL CONTACTO. Nuova Galleria Morone, Milán
2018	Lounge. NF/ NIEVES FERNÁNDEZ, Madrid
2016	Luz Abisal. Museo de Arte de Pereira, Pereira
2014	Luz de occidente. NF/ NIEVES FERNÁNDEZ, Madrid
2013	Galería Fernando Pradilla, Madrid
2012	Nuova Galleria Morone, Milán
2011	Punto Contrapunto. Sala Pelaires, Palma de Mallorca SAC, Sala de Arte Contemporáneo, Santa Cruz de Tenerife
2009	Galería Fernando Pradilla, Madrid
2007	Remanso. Centro de Arte La Recova, Santa Cruz de Tenerife

2006	La sub-serie. Galería Manuel Ojeda, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
2004	Espacio velado. Galería Manuel Ojeda, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
2001	Los cuadros malos. Academia Crítica, Santa Cruz de Tenerife
2000	Galería Manuel Ojeda, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
1997	Ermita del Gran Poder, Bajamar
1996	Sala San Antonio Abad, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria ¡Ale-Hop. Círculo de Bellas Artes, Santa Cruz de Tenerife

Group shows (selected)

2024	No Place 2024. Galería Arróniz Arte Contemporáneo, México Babel Materia y Lenguaje, Centre del Carme, Valencia
2023	Este puede ser el lugar. Curated by Natalia Simó and Javier Arozarena. Tenerife Espacio de las Artes (TEA), Santa Cruz de Tenerife
2022	Museo moderno, desandar el camino. Tenerife Espacio de las Artes (TEA), Santa Cruz de Tenerife
2021	La noche más corta. Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Alicante (MACA), NF/ NIEVES FERNÁNDEZ, Aural Galería. Madrid y Alicante
2020	In/Out: Un mapa posible. Dos generaciones de creación artística contemporánea de Gran Canaria. Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno (CAAM), Las Palmas de Gran Canaria NO PLACE. Vía Libertad, Guadalajara

- 2019 Heimat / Mi tierra, Fundación Otazu, Navarra
Territorios de lo textual. Contextos invisibles. Galería Aural, Alicante
- 2018 NO PLACE en el Glinkastraße 17, Berlin
- 2012 Malas Artes. Galería NF/ Nieves Fernández, Madrid
The Cross Shown. Nuova Galleria Morone, Milan
Lenguajes en papel 3. Galería Fernando Pradilla, Madrid
- 2011 Lenguajes en papel 2. Galería Fernando Pradilla, Madrid
- 2010 Pintura del siglo XX, Townhall, Praga
Bratislava Art Museum, Bratislava
- 2009 Alta Tensión (comisariada por Andrés Isaac). Galería Fernando Pradilla, Madrid
Ida y vuelta. Espacio Canarias, Madrid
2ª ed. Bienal de las Islas Canarias
10ª ed. Bienal de La Habana, Cuba
- 2008 La otra orilla. Galería Manuel Ojeda, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
- 2005 VIII Martínez Guerricabeitia Bienal, Valencia
- 2004 Dak-Art 2004, Dakar Bienal

Collections

- Olor Visual, Barcelona
- TEA. Tenerife Espacio de las Artes, Tenerife
- MUDO. Estambul
- CAAM. Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Las Palmas
- ARTIUM. Vitoria
- Cabildo de Canarias
- Colección Galila Barzilai, Bruselas
- Colección Kells, España
- Colección Eduardo Salazar y Juliana Hernández, Bogotá
- Fundació Sorigué
- Colección Meana Larrucea



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