

IRAIDA ICAZA



Iraida Icaza,

***Aq Saray* (2014), Chromogenic print, 54 x 72 cm**

***Persepolis* (2014), Chromogenic print, 53.5 x 72.5 cm**

ARTIST STATEMENT: *Broken Time (Ruins and Monuments)*

Fragments is an ongoing photographic project in collaboration with the British Museum's Department of the Middle East. For over a year I explored their collection of early photographic glass negatives, combining historical research and investigations into the changing nature of photography, and with it, the sources of collective memory.

My particular interest focuses on images that depict ancient archaeological sites as they were first recorded in the nineteenth century, such as Persepolis and Aq Saray. Some of these original glass negatives have gone through changes over the past hundred and fifty years caused by chemical instability. It is therefore not only the process of the gradual erosion of the actual ruins over the ages that captured my imagination, but also the inherent changes of visual qualities brought about by the gradual disintegration of the photographic emulsion of the glass negatives. The combination of both elements produces new ways of seeing these images; on these I base

my exploration of transformation and renewal through the application of diverse photographic techniques and procedures. This is for me not an act of appropriation, but instead a way of re-interpreting these images and to giving them a new life, a contemporary existence through creative intervention.

The original black and white images are of ruins and yet these glass plates, by having gone through chemical erosion, are themselves ruins. The awareness of the dual nature of these images has made me find new ways of looking at them: I interpret how image content and photographic substance interact, and explore how both affect memory.

(*Fragments: Persepolis* and *Aq Saray* first appeared in the exhibition *What Remains II* at Rose Issa Projects, London, 2014. Subsequently, six photographs from *Ruined Cities: Fragments* were exhibited in *Unfinished Cities* in the Bruges Triennale in 2015.)

- Iraida Icaza

ARTIST BIO: www.EnglandGallery.com

IRAIDA ICAZA (born 1952 in Panama City, Panama. Lives and works between Berlin, London and Panama.)

Throughout her practice the artist-photographer Iraida Icaza reveals a profound understanding of the natural world and scientific observation, evident in her way of seeing, thinking and associating. Drawing on a variety of sources including art, science and history, and experimenting with different materials, she creates works of poetic and imaginative sensibility that pair her intuitive impulse with impeccable precision, attention to detail and composition.

Born and raised in Panama, she trained first as a sociologist and later as a photographer at the Rhode Island School of Design. Her work contains both analysis and synthesis. Her choices of artistic and technical solutions are wide ranging, often exploratory. Her oeuvre exhibits possible symmetries between apparent extremes, the material and immaterial, artifice and nature. Icaza's images, installations and objects demand to be seen with great care since they are directed precisely at the singularity of human perception, which fuses objectivity, imagination and memory.

Her recent projects test the demarcations between the real and the imaginary, the private and the public, entering a wider social context. Icaza's recent exhibitions *Iraida Icaza y el museo olvidado* (*Iraida Icaza and the Forgotten Museum*) and *El canto de la Capisucia* (*Song of the Capisucia*) exposed the phenomenon of collective amnesia and contextual photography through anthropological investigation and archival collection. [Lutz Becker]

Icaza's work has been presented widely in major international exhibitions and institutions, including solo exhibitions at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (MAC), Panama; the Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo (MADC), San José; the Art Gallery of the Museum of the Americas, Washington, D.C.; and Galerie Arteconsult, Panama. She has also participated in

significant biennials and group exhibitions such as the Havana Biennale, the Panama Biennale, the Ibero-American Biennale in Lima, Art Dubai, Paris Photo, and Photo London. Icaza is the recipient of the Unique Sculpture Prize at the IV Panama Biennale and has received grants from Arts Council England and Fondo Panamá Ciudad de 500 Años. Her works are held in major public collections, including: the British Museum, London; Museo de Arte Y Diseño Contemporáneo (MADC), San José, Costa Rica; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Panamá (MAC Panamá), Panama; Mujeres en las Artes de Centro América, Tegucigalpa, Honduras; World Bank Art Collection, Washington DC.