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Echo

Visual Ethnography

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Bio
Fiamma Montezemolo is both an artist (MFA, San Francisco Art Institute) and an anthropologist (PhD, University Orientale of Naples). She is an established scholar in border studies and Professor in the Department of Cinema & Digital Media at the University of California, Davis. She has exhibited in various institutions among which: Baruchello Art Foundation, Rome, (2024) Laboratorio Arte Alameda, Mexico City (2019), Herbert Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University (2019), Munich Jewish Museum, Germany (2019), La Galleria Nazionale, Rome (2023), Headlands Center for the Arts, California (2018), ASU Art Museum, Arizona (2019), Kadist Art Foundation, San Francisco (2016), Armory Center for the Arts, Los Angeles (2014). She is represented by Magazzino gallery in Rome. She is widely published and the author of two monographs: on Zapatismo and on Chicano/a politics of representation, as well as co-author (with Rene' Peralta and Heriberto Yepez) of *Here is Tijuana* (Blackdog Publishing, London, 2006) and co-editor (with Josh Kun) of *Tijuana Dreaming, Life and Art at the Global Border* (Duke U. Press, 2012). In 2022, she was awarded the Italian Council Minister of Culture Contemporary Art award in collaboration with On Public and Nero Editions. In 2024 her latest book *Hidden in Plain Sight*, edited by Martina Angelotti, is published by Nero.

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Echo, Digital Video, 38 minutes, 2014

Echo is set in the border between Mexico and USA and it is an ethnographic research on the after life and "echoes" of 9 art works that have been part of the two-decade old public art event called inSite. It highlights the procedures of intrusion at work in such a site as the US-Mexico border as well as the now canonical deployment of the emblematic figure of fieldwork. It teaches us that intrusion is an ontological dimension of intervention, at once anthropological, curatorial, and artistic. By revisiting the scenes of these curatorial and artistic interventions, "echo" emerges both as a concept and a practice that assembles the futures of art works beyond its expected ruins and remains. Each work/artist and afterlife/echo of those works -after the artists finish them and leave or focus on another work - raise different and enriching questions on social art, on its ethics, on the methods, on the people involved in the projects, on the city itself and its urban cycle, on the future of public sculpture. The assemblage of archival images and current reverberations, of text, voice over and interviews, of affects and representation has been a real challenge in this work. The result is that more questions were open after the initial ones. The conclusion is inconclusive: Narcissus (all of us working, representing, intervening on the border: anthropologists, artists, curators, etc.) and Echo (the context, the artists, the collaborators, the public sculptures, the objects, etc.) are part of the same scenario and they are both plural and problematic in their own way...