

BORTOLAMI

Renée Green

Excerpts A.1

18 June – 30 July 2021

Book launch: Thursday, 8 July 2021

Bortolami Gallery is pleased to announce Renée Green's second exhibition with the gallery, bringing together a series of paintings and gouaches produced between 1985 and 1987. Presented for the first time, these richly layered paintings provide dream-like narratives stemming from the time spent by the artist in Mexico during the 1980s, as well as that decade's US-backed political violence and societal turmoil in Central and South America. The images call to mind the equivocal storytelling of Green's 1994 bilingual novel, *Camino Road*, tracing a New York art student's illusive reminiscence of a road trip to Mexico.

For the past four decades, Green's process has been accretive, with artworks created through her prolific career combining to generate their own novel systems and taxonomies. Her practice has also been marked by a clear intertextuality, sliding seamlessly between text, film, sound, and art objects. With these strategies in mind, the exhibition is flanked by the presentation of two new books: *Pacing* (2020), a monograph detailing the artist's multiyear project at Harvard's Carpenter Center and a cycle of interrelated exhibitions, and *Camino Road* (1994), re-printed this year by Primary Information.

Bookended by an early novel and a contemporary monograph, the exhibition constitutes a recollection of statements that maintain close associations despite being dispersed in time, so that an excerpt from 1994 informs our reading of artworks from the mid 1980s being viewed today.

Renée Green, *Camino Road*, "Appendix", 1994: p. 109.

"Why Mexico? She tried to think back. A rapid rush of associations and images flooded her vision: (tk) flashback – Her uncle in uniform, young, her mother's brother, back from Mexico, he says a family wanted to adopt him there, later he used to read in Spanish in Cleveland aloud to workers at the American Greeting Card Company, he was the first artist she'd ever met, she'd met him before she'd known it, he was a beatnik's age, she didn't know that until later when she found his Esquire jazz greats photo magazines, his Kent State yearbook, photos with the other hip cats, and a turquoise ring with a missing stone, which she believed to be from Mexico and which she still wears. The flood continued, times and places all jumbled: Freddie Prince (suicide), Geraldo Rivera (sell out), "West Side Story," Spanish, a usable language in the U.S., Timoteo (Peace Corps hippy), Ms. Fajardo (Cuban debutante via Miami), Spanish eyes, looking Spanish (Are you from the island?) P.R., Ajúa Campos/The Latin House, salsa in CT. and in Mexico, D.F., Ntozake Shange, near rape, my Spanish teacher's rape, Argentineans in exile, my exiled Argentinean journalist-political economics/Latin American studies professor, my foreign exchange student from formerly Allende's Chile, me getting lost.

She asked herself: Do I want to unpack this dense baggage? Is it too soon still? Maybe I want to be lost a little longer"

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Renée Green (b. 1959, Cleveland) is an artist, filmmaker and writer. Solo exhibitions of her work have been mounted at the Carpenter Center for Visual Arts, Harvard University; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, the Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Maritime Museum, Greenwich; Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne; Portikus, Frankfurt; Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona; Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati; Vienna Secession; Stichting de Appel, Amsterdam; Dallas Museum of Art; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and Jeu de Paume, Paris, among many others. *Inevitable Distances*, a large-scale retrospective dedicated to Green's decades-long practice, will be held at the KW – Institute of Contemporary Art and daad galleries in Berlin this fall. Green is also a Professor at the MIT Program of Art, Culture, and Technology, School of Architecture and Planning.