

Visual Arts

miamiherald.com/entertainment/visual-arts/article238756048.html

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HOMETOWN HERO

There are times that much-anticipated large solo exhibits, especially ones from an artist with Miami or Caribbean roots, can be a bit of a letdown. Too much can be shoved into one presentation in an attempt to show an all-inclusive career record. Fortunately that's not the case for Teresita Fernandez's "Elemental" solo show at Pérez Art Museum Miami. Born in Miami, she's been based in New York and has become best known for her public sculptures made from unique materials; she's shown early on with high-profile galleries — currently Lehmann Maupin — and had had solo exhibits in museums from Tokyo to Turin, Italy.

Back here in Miami, "Elemental" is indeed a survey, in that it includes works from the 1990s onwards.

But this has a transfixing, thematic feel, as though the works are flowing together. Fernandez's background as a daughter of Cuban immigrants and her explorations of ethnic and social threads emerge in her work. But "Elemental's" interpretations of the fluctuating nature and land around us feel fundamental. While the wonderful large installations such as the translucent, fabric floor-to-ceiling "rooms" of "Borrowed Landscape" and the graphite-and-steel "Drawn Waters" cascade might be initial show-stoppers, it's the subtle works and muted tones that create the atmosphere, a landscape of lakes and shorelines at dark, northern lights, fire and charred landscapes, the inky sky at night.

"Elemental" solo show of works by Teresita Fernandez, at Pérez Art Museum Miami, 1103 Biscayne Blvd., downtown Miami; through Feb. 9. pamm.org. Admission free every first Thursday.



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