

# KWM artcenter x Whitechapel Gallery

## Artists' Film International (AFI)



Artist: Miguel Fernández de Castro

2020.08.13 – 2020.09.26

KWM artcenter is pleased to present its ninth collaboration with the Whitechapel Gallery, London from 13th August to 26th September 2020. Throughout 2020, KWM artcenter has been screening a series of moving image works as part of the Artists' Film International (AFI) project based on the theme of language. AFI celebrates moving image work and is selected by a global partnership of arts organisations including KWM artcenter. Each nominates an outstanding work from their region which is screened across each venue during the year.

The fourth film this year is Mexican artist Miguel Fernández de Castro's *'Grammar of Gates' / Gramática de las puertas* (2019). The film is selected by Ballroom Marfa, Texas, USA.

Miguel Fernández de Castro's video *Grammar of Gates / Gramática de las puertas* is a dynamic visual and aural collage that traces the overlapping territories, languages, and conflicts that mark the border between Mexico and the U.S. within the sovereign Tohono O'odham Nation. The artist weaves together excerpts from the 1970 movie *Geronimo Jones* with drone and surveillance-like imagery of the landscape and an affectless recitation of phrases out of *A Practical Spanish Grammar for Border Patrol Officers*.

The rote repetition from the textbook sets a backdrop for the banal and brutal architectures of power situated at the border. Via this military mantra the video registers who navigates the territory, legally and illegally, and the various physical and invisible barriers they might face. The artist uses an observatory set on a sacred mountain and a blocked gate meant to connect ancestral O'odham lands, as indices of the degradation of stewardship and access. Carefully grafting disparate source material, de Castro illustrates the language of power that defines the edges of a violent dynamic that in turn defines the border.

Special Thanks: Exclusive audio equipment sponsor is KEF.

### About the artist

**Miguel Fernández de Castro** (Sonora, 1986) is a visual artist whose work examines how extractive and criminal economies materially transform a territory. Through long-term projects he has developed a body of work through photography, video, sculpture, archives and writing. His work has been shown at Frac Centre-Val de Loire, Orleans; e-flux, New York; Museo de Geología, UNAM, Mexico City; Spazio Veda, Florence; The Wren Library, Cambridge; Museo Artium, Vitoria; Proyecto Paralelo, Mexico City; Casa del Lago, Mexico City; Ashkal Alwan, Beirut; Museo de Arte Moderno de México, Mexico City; Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver; Bikini Wax, Mexico City; Museum of Latin American Art, Los Angeles; among others. Recently, he has been resident at PAOS, Guadalajara and at Casa Gallina-InSite, Mexico City.



## 金杜艺术中心 (KWM artcenter)

The KWM artcenter opened on 20th October 2016. It is located on the second floor of the WFC centre CBD in Beijing. The Art center is supported by the law firm King & Wood Mallesons. The KWM artcenter presents and promotes artists both domestically and overseas as well as building up its own collection. In particular, it acts as a rare art institution at the heart of the economic central area in Beijing. It provides high-quality art educational activities and courses aimed to cultivate art lovers and collectors. It serves to improve the international influence of Chinese Art and become a powerful communicator of Chinese Contemporary Art.

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