



# ANTHONY HERNANDEZ

31 January to 12 May  
Fundación MAPFRE Bárbara de Braganza  
exhibition hall  
Madrid

Fundación  
**MAPFRE**

# ANTHONY HERNANDEZ

**Exhibition dates:** 31 January to 12 May 2018

**Venue:** Fundación MAPFRE Bárbara de Braganza exhibition hall  
(c/Bárbara de Braganza, 13, Madrid)

**Curator:** Erin O'Toole, Associate Curator of Photography, Baker Street Foundation,  
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

**Production:** SFMOMA in collaboration with Fundación MAPFRE



<https://www.fundacionmapfre.org/fundacion/en/exhibitions/barbara-braganza-hall/anthony-hernandez.jsp>



@mapfrefcultura **#expoAnthonyHernandez**



@mapfrefcultura **#expoAnthonyHernandez**



facebook.com/fundacionmapfrefcultura

---

## **MAPFRE Corporate Communication**

**Alejandra Fernández**

Tel.: +34 91 581 84 64 – 690 049 112

[alejandra@fundacionmapfre.org](mailto:alejandra@fundacionmapfre.org)

**Marina Calvo**

Tel.: +34 91 581 94 00 -636213311

[clmarin@mapfre.com](mailto:clmarin@mapfre.com)

Cover image:

Landscapes for the Homeless #1, 1988

Cibachrome print, 30 1/8 x 29 7/8 in. (76.5 x 75.9 cm)

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Donated by the artist in honour of Sandra S. Phillips

© Anthony Hernandez



Fundación MAPFRE is launching its 2019 season with the first exhibition to be held in Spain on the American photographer Anthony Hernandez (born Los Angeles, 1947), which will also be the first major retrospective devoted to him. Featuring more than 110 photographs, it will offer an extensive survey of Hernandez's lengthy and prolific career while also celebrating his distinctive and unique style of street photography and its significant evolution over time.

The exhibition has been organised by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), an institution with which Fundación MAPFRE has collaborated since 2015 when it presented the exhibition Garry Winogrand at its Madrid exhibition space. At the present time Fundación MAPFRE'S exhibition Brassai can be seen at the SFMOMA, where it is on display until 17 February 2019.

## **ANTHONY HERNANDEZ**

The son of Mexican immigrants, Anthony Hernandez was born and raised in Los Angeles. Initially unaware of the formal traditions of photography and essentially self-taught, he developed his own way of understanding street photography that was closely connected to the particular characteristics of his native city, its run-down urban landscapes and the increasing proliferation of asphalt and cement. During his career Hernandez has seamlessly passed from black and white to colour, from 35mm cameras to large-format ones, from the human form to landscape and the abstraction of details. The result is an unusually varied oeuvre in which the guiding thread is its breathtaking formal beauty and its subtle commitment to issues relating to society today.

Particularly notable among the images included in the exhibition are the black and white photographs taken on the streets of central Los Angeles with which Hernandez embarked on his career in the late 1960s and early 1970s; his first colour photographs, taken on Rodeo Drive in the mid-1980s; and a selection from his series Landscapes for the Homeless, created between 1988 and 1991 and particularly praised by specialist critics. For the latter series Hernandez photographed thrown-away objects from abandoned places where homeless people had lived, thus evoking the lives of those who had found refuge there at some point. Another fundamental section of the exhibition is devoted to the artist's most abstract work; large-format, colour images either created recently by Hernandez in Los Angeles or during his trips to numerous destinations ranging from Oakland and Baltimore to Rome.

# THE EXHIBITION

Covering Anthony Hernandez's entire career of more than 45 years, the exhibition is structured as eight thematic sections that also follow a chronological order, although with some exceptions that reveal how particular visual motifs recur in different series over time.

## STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

This first section looks at Hernandez's initial endeavours as a photographer when, armed with a 35mm Nikon, he captured people on the streets of central Los Angeles. These images are shown alongside his first series, comprising images taken on urban beaches which pay subtle and humorous tribute to the Californian photographer Edward Weston (1886-1958). With these early works Hernandez connected to the American tradition of street photography led by figures such as Robert Frank, Garry Winogrand and Lee Friedlander, whose work he barely knew at this date.



Anthony Hernandez  
Santa Monica #14, 1970  
Gelatin silver print, 11 x 14 in. (27.9 x 35.6 cm)  
Black Dog Collection. Promised donation to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art  
© Anthony Hernandez

## THE CITY AS SUBJECT



Anthony Hernandez  
*Automotive Landscapes #35*, 1978  
Gelatin silver print, 16 x 20 in. (40.6 x 50.8 cm)  
Black Dog Collection. Promised donation to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

The section *The city as subject* emphasises the absolute originality of Hernandez's street photography due to its treatment of the city as not just a setting but as a subject in itself. In 1978 he began to use a Deardorff 5 x 7-inch camera, a large device that required the use of a tripod and meant that he was unable to pass unnoticed or rapidly through the crowd. Given that he had to move more slowly and distance himself from his subjects, his viewpoints became broader and he started to observe how most of the people around him (homeless and working people) moved through an urban environment that seemed designed with a total disregard for their needs. Starting from this premise, Hernandez produced four interrelated series between 1978 and 1982: *Automotive Landscapes*; *Public Transit Areas*; *Public Fishing Areas*; and *Public Use Areas*. These photographs capture not only the visual qualities of southern California but also the class difference that configures its social reality.



## RODEO DRIVE



Anthony Hernandez  
Rodeo Drive #3, 1984, printed in 2014  
Cibachrome print, 16 x 20 in. (40.6 x 50.8 cm)  
Collection of the artist  
© Anthony Hernandez

*Rodeo Drive* provides the title for the third section of the exhibition and is also the name of the series that marks Hernandez's first incursion into colour in 1984. It represents an important turning point in his work for two principal reasons: firstly, with this series he permanently abandoned black and white; and secondly, it is the final work to include the human figure. The images in *Rodeo Drive* manifest a profound rapport with the particular social dynamic of the famous Beverly Hills shopping street from which it takes its title: omnipresent consumption and the way the shoppers hope to be spotted while walking along the street, dressed up for the occasion. Technically, this rapport is reinforced by the artist's decision to use slide film rather than negatives: with its strident colours, cibachrome printing allowed Hernandez to emphasise the fashionable dress of the passers-by and the luxury of the boutiques, while touches of vibrant red are echoed from one photograph and another.

## ABSENCE AND PRESENCE

In the photographs included in the section Absence and Presence the human figure is only visible through the traces of its passing. In *Shooting Sites*, a series created between 1986 and 1988, Hernandez portrays the traces left behind by the activity of target shooting by shooting enthusiasts in different locations on the outskirts of Las Vegas and Los Angeles. This section also features another series with a similar focus: *Landscapes for the Homeless* of 1988-1991, in which Hernandez photographed places where homeless people lived on the streets of Los Angeles. He used precise framing to order the chaotic scenes that he encountered, humanising the absent subjects by focusing on what they left behind, in the manner of an archaeologist.



Anthony Hernandez  
*Angeles National Forest #3*, 1988, printed in 2016  
Cibachrome print, 20 x 20 in. (50.8 x 50.8 cm)  
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Donated by the artist in honour of Sandra S. Phillips  
© Anthony Hernandez



## URBAN RUINS



Anthony Hernandez  
Pictures for Rome #17, 1999  
Inkjet print, 40 x 40 in. (101.6 x 101.6 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist  
© Anthony Hernandez

The section **Urban Ruins** focuses on Hernandez's exploration of interconnected visual themes to which he has repeatedly returned since the late 1990s: brick walls, fences, windows and openings of different shapes and sizes. These forms, most of them square or rectangular – a window blocked up with paper, a gleaming yellow wall with innumerable scratches, holes and large paint stains, a door with its edges strangely lit up – are frequently presented in a flat space that prevents access to anything which might lie behind. While Hernandez principally takes his photographs in Los Angeles, much of the work displayed in this section was produced while travelling. *Pictures for Rome*, a series created between 1998 and

1999, was the result of his receiving the Prix de Rome. Rather than portraying the city's famous classical ruins, Hernandez centred on Rome's modern ruins in order to express the relatively throw-away nature of contemporary culture. *Oakland* (2000-2001) arose from the artist's involvement with the Capp Street Project, while *East Baltimore* (2006) is the result of the work he undertook when invited to the John Hopkins University by the art historian and critic Michael Fried. These two series present ruined structures about to be demolished, with the emphasis on abandoned possessions and the marks left by the former occupants.



## SIGNS AND MARKS

Signs and marks starts with the series Everything of 2002, in which Hernandez surveys the artificial banks of the Los Angeles river near where he grew up and where he used to play as a child. When he returned as an adult what he found was a rubbish dump and an alien world. Hernandez photographed the giant cement culverts and the objects swept along by the current or thrown in by people passing by. This section of the exhibition also looks at the photographer's return to the subject of homelessness in his series Forever of 2007-2012. Rather than focusing on the traces left behind by people living on the street, in this work Hernandez adopts the viewpoint of an inhabitant of one of these improvised places, photographing what that person sees when looking out.



Anthony Hernandez  
Everything #77, 2002, printed in 2016  
Inkjet print, 20 x 20 in. (50.8 x 50.8 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist  
© Anthony Hernandez

## DISCARDED

Discarded is the title of the final section, which focuses on the series of that name created between 2012 and 2015. Marking Hernandez's return to natural landscape and sweeping views, like much of his work from the late 1980s onwards it offers both a reflection on the decline of southern California and a study of specific abandoned places; in this case communities located in the desert zones surrounding Los Angeles, which were devastated by the economic crisis and the wave of home repossessions in 2008.

These images speak of personal failure and loss: the foundations of a never built caravan park; an unfinished, half-built house; a desolate plot of empty land. The series includes the few photographs to feature people which the artist has taken since the 1980s: a man whom Hernandez encountered living in an old school bus in Salton Sea looms up like a watchman guarding the remains of the apocalypse.



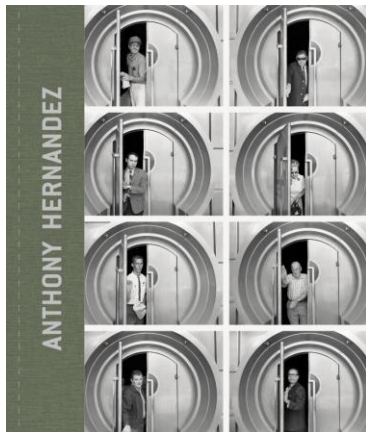
Anthony Hernandez  
*Discarded #50*, 2014  
Inkjet print, 40 x 50 in. (101.6  
x 127 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist  
© Anthony Hernandez



## SCREENED PICTURES

The exhibition closes with the section Screened Pictures, which centres on Hernandez's most recent series of that title. He returned to Los Angeles and focused his lens on the perforated metal panels of bus stops. These metal screens, which recall Roy Lichtenstein's grids of dots, function as filters through which Hernandez portrays the city, creating abstractions. While in *Forever* he adopted the viewpoint of homeless people living on the street, in *Screened Pictures* the shots are taken from the viewpoint of people waiting for the bus. In contrast to the series *Public Transit Areas*, in which the city seems to expand infinitely, in *Screened Pictures* the space is flattened and compressed. In addition, the wealth of details present in those black and white photographs of bus stops has disappeared, replaced by softened, simplified forms and patches of vivid colour.

## THE CATALOGUE



The catalogue published to accompany the exhibition is fully illustrated with more than 200 colour and black and white photographs. It includes an introduction by the photographer Robert Adam and texts by Erin O'Toole, curator of the exhibition and Associate Curator of Photography, Baker Street Foundation, SFMOMA, and by Ralph Rugoff, director of the Hayward Gallery, London. Also included is a conversation between Hernandez and his close friend the photographer Lewis Baltz (1945-2014).

# EXHIBITION DETAILS

## VENUE

Bárbara de Braganza exhibition hall  
C/ Bárbara de Braganza, 13, 428004 Madrid  
Tel.: (+34) 91 581 46 09  
[www.fundacionmapfre.org](http://www.fundacionmapfre.org)

## TICKET PRICES

Standard ticket: 3€ per person  
Reduced price ticket: 2€ per person  
Free entry: Mondays (except public holidays), 2pm to 8pm

## OPENING TIMES

Mondays: 2pm to 8pm  
Tuesdays to Saturdays: 10am to 8pm  
Sundays and public holidays: 11am to 7pm  
\* Last entry to the galleries 30 minutes before closing time

## GUIDED TOURS

Mondays to Thursdays: 5.30pm to 6.30pm  
Price: 5€

## GUIDED TOURS IN SPANISH SIGN LANGUAGE (LSE)

Last Thursday of every month:  
31 January, 28 February, 28 March and 27 April at 5.30pm  
Any person who is deaf or hearing impaired and who would like to take part in a guided tour should book at least 24 hours in advance on tel: 91 581 61 00.

## AUDIO GUIDES

Audio guides (Spanish and English):  
Price: 3.50€  
Free use of sign guides and audio guides with audio description.