



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Tiffany Woolf, 917.532.3366; tiffany@woolfpr.com

Voleine Amilcar, 415.978.2700 ext. 116; vamilcar@ybca.org

**YERBA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS PRESENTS DREAM
A PUBLIC ART INSTALLATION BY ARTIST ANA TERESA FERNÁNDEZ
IN SAN FRANCISCO'S EXCELSIOR DISTRICT**



**PUBLIC CEREMONY AND UNVEILING TO TAKE PLACE ON
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2017, AT ALEMANY FARMER'S MARKET**

**Performances by students from Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School to highlight
YBCA's youth programs inspired by the DREAM Installation**

(August 22, 2107- San Francisco, CA) [Yerba Buena Center for the Arts \(YBCA\)](#)

announced today the upcoming unveiling of DREAM, a public art installation by visual artist Ana Teresa Fernández, commissioned by YBCA and co-sponsored by San Francisco Public Works. Facing San Francisco's Excelsior District, the sculpture will serve as a public expression of YBCA's ongoing partnership with the area. Composed of ten-foot-high block letters spelling out the word DREAM, the shimmering sculpture will be situated on the hill above the Alemany Food Market and will be seen by commuters going to and from San Francisco at the Highway 101-Highway 280 merge.

A public unveiling of the sculpture will be held on **Friday, September 22, 2017, 11 am–1 pm** at the Alemany Farmer's Market, located at 100 Alemany Blvd. The event will feature performances by students from Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, where YBCA has provided civically engaged [arts education](#) programs since 2015.

"We are so proud to have brought Ana Teresa Fernández's inspiring message to the public and even more so to connect her work to community and youth in the Excelsior," said **Jonathan Moscone, Chief of Civic Engagement at YBCA**. "Our programs at Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School not only inspire youth to dream about a future in which they can thrive in our city, but provide them with the tools to turn those dreams into reality."

Two years in the making, the DREAM sculpture is located less than a mile from Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School and will be installed near the intersection of the unimproved streets of Jarboe and Peralta. The sculpture, spelling out the word DREAM, is attached to a support system on the south side of Bernal Heights facing Bayshore Blvd. its facade consists of metallic disks that create a visual effect of three-dimensional shimmering water.

Explains artist **Ana Teresa Fernández**, "At Bayshore hill, and beneath two heavily transited freeway overpasses, sits an industrial building whose bottom half is entirely upholstered by graffiti tags that spell out the word DREAM. This graffiti is a creative epitaph to one of the best-known and most beloved graffiti writers and peace fighters from the Bay Area, Mike "Dream" Francisco of Oakland, who was killed in the year 2000.

I was inspired to take the text and create a three-dimensional version higher up on the hill, like the Hollywood sign in Los Angeles. Instead of casting your hopes on fame or notoriety, this would be a sign to compel individuals—not just the widely mixed-race population that inhabits and transits through this area, but all individuals who come across it—to start identifying their goals and aspirations, from a place of consciousness and awareness, and to begin the process of pursuing them.”

The DREAM sculpture and partnership at Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School is part of YBCA’s Youth in the City initiative, which provides youth with the critical thinking and creative skills needed to be active participants in the change and development of San Francisco. Taking inspiration from the DREAM sculpture, for the 2016–17 academic school year, YBCA’s Teaching Artists in Residence developed an art-based curriculum around “dream” and worked with students to create art, poetry, and music to help them dream about and place themselves in the future of San Francisco. The public unveiling will include a performance of “Big Dreams,” a song written by the students about their collective dreams.

Adds **Rebeka Rodriguez, YBCA’s Civic Engagement Manager**, “I’m honored to have curated this gorgeous sculpture by Ana Teresa Fernández and developed a partnership with Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School to create a space for students to see themselves as active participants shaping the future of San Francisco.”

DREAM is a public art and community partnership project by commissioned by Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, visual artist Ana Teresa Fernández, and Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, co-sponsored by San Francisco Public Works.

About Ana Teresa Fernández

Through time-based actions and social gestures, often using her body, Ana Teresa Fernández creates artwork that explores the politics of intersectionality, subverts expectations, and illuminates the psychological and physical barriers that define gender, race, and class in Western society and the Global South. Using performance as a primary research tool in her multimedia practice, Fernández creates community-based projects, public art, sculpture, performance, video, and larger-than-life oil paintings that

critique cultural assumptions and stereotypes about Latina women. Fernández's public project *Borrando la Frontera* (Erasing the Border) has been the subject of extensive media attention and critical acclaim. Originally staged in 2011, the work has been re-commissioned across various locations in the United States and Mexico and was recorded for a documentary feature by VICE media in 2017. Fernández has had numerous exhibitions of her masterful oil paintings, including inclusion in *Mi Tierra: Contemporary Artists Explore Place* at the Denver Art Museum (2017); *Energy Charge: Connecting to Ana Mendieta* at Arizona State University Art Museum, Tempe (2016); and *Framing Beauty* at Grunwald Gallery, Indiana University, Bloomington (2017). Fernández was born in 1980 in Tampico, Mexico, and lives and works in San Francisco. She is represented by Gallery Wendi Norris, San Francisco. For more information, please visit <https://www.gallerywendinorris.com/fernandez-ana-teresa/>.

About Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA) is one of the nation's most innovative contemporary arts centers. Founded in 1993, YBCA's mission is to generate culture that moves people. Through powerful art experiences, thoughtful and provocative content, and deep opportunities for participation, YBCA is committed to creating an inclusive culture that awakens personal and societal transformation. YBCA presents a wide variety of programming year-round, including performing arts, visual arts, film/video, and civic engagement. For tickets and information, call 415.978.ARTS (2787). For more information, visit ybca.org.

###

Artist statement from Ana Teresa Fernández

At the bottom of Bayshore hill, and beneath two heavily transited freeway overpasses, sits a long tan industrial building, quietly. What is so special about this building, which most drivers miss from their bird's-eye view from the freeway, is that the bottom half is entirely upholstered by graffiti tags that spell out the word DREAM. The graffiti collage on the building was created as a creative epitaph to one of the best-known graffiti writers and peace fighters from the East Bay, Dream. At first I wasn't aware of this, and simply became enamored with the idea of the word "Dream" spelled out over and over and over as an insistence to take action and as a call to wake up to pursue your dreams. I was later introduced to the story of how it was an homage from all the graffiti writers from the Bay Area to this man who had helped change the creative platform of the graffiti world from the trade's more combative and violent nature to a more constructive and collective approach. Moreover, today, this word seems to be undergoing massive threat and feels that much more urgent, as bans, limitations, and obstacles are being placed on individuals due to race and gender under this presidential administration.

Oftentimes I wondered how this building's message could become more visible. I felt it had to be seen and felt, and not just left to lurk underneath a space of transition, a place of coming and going, the sleepy commute of zombies operating on neutral. Then the idea hit me to actually take the text and create a three-dimensional version higher up on the hill. It would be like the Hollywood sign in Los Angeles. But instead of casting your hopes on fame or notoriety, this would be a sign to compel individuals—not just the widely mixed-race population that inhabits and transits through this area, but all individuals who come across it—to start identifying their goals and aspirations, from a place of consciousness and awareness, and to begin the process of pursuing them.

Freestanding and with the surface completely covered in four-inch mirrored round disks, standing ten feet tall and spanning seventy feet across, the letters would give a sensation as if each one were the surface of an ocean wave, or a field of flowing grass as wind comes across a hill. Constantly in motion, this metallic surface would mesmerize the viewer, luring us into a trance-like state of contemplation at the beauty and awe of nature in movement.

DREAM will sit high on the hill, echoing louder the call to dream that began on the building fully wrapped in graffiti from the barrio, that works endlessly and tirelessly with blue-collar workers day in and day out. It will be a welcome mat to the drivers who commute every morning and every evening into and out of San Francisco, our sanctuary city, greeting them, insisting, reminding us to awaken ourselves, to tap into our imaginations of what we could be. In the forever illuminating words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "I have a dream today."

###