

INMAN GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 2, 2015

Inman Gallery is pleased to present:

Carlee Fernandez *Arranging Family*

January 9 – February 21, 2015

Opening Reception:
Friday January 9
6:00 – 8:00pm

Gallery hours: Tues. – Sat., 11 – 6
and by appointment

Inman Gallery is pleased to present *Arranging Family*, **Carlee Fernandez**' first solo exhibition in Houston. Spanning both galleries, the show opens Friday, January 9th with a reception from 6 to 8, and continues through February 21st.

Arranging Family describes its central character - Carlee Fernandez herself - by tracing her borders. Her photographs and sculptures are less concerned with one discrete persona than with areas of overlap, those blurred boundaries between children, parents and spouses that give shape to an identity without strictly limiting it.

The Strand That Holds Us Together is a black-and-white photograph of a pair of hands, fingers splayed, backs facing the camera. Though mismatched (the left is thicker and hairier), the hands' obvious similarity and the fact that they belong to Fernandez and her father move the image towards harmony, if not quite symmetry. The connection and continuity that comes from family can be a threat to autonomy, however, and a palpable ambivalence is never far from the surface in Fernandez' work. *Family, Baptismal Cup* is an enormous bronze replica of Fernandez' husband's christening cup. The original heirloom was engraved with the names and birthdates of her husband, his father and his grandfather. Its massive descendent has been updated to include their children and seven generations back on both sides, aggrandizing her husband's family tradition while also claiming it for a much larger clan. It's more inclusive, but more overwhelming. *Let This Cup Pass From Us*, a photograph featuring Fernandez, her husband and her two sons legs-up in that same huge vessel, drives the point home: they're engulfed in their cavernous gene pool.

Fernandez' punning good humor and analytic cast of mind treat her biggest themes with a light touch and an unflustered directness. The canvas print *2012* shows Fernandez flanked by life-sized pillows printed with images of her husband and children. Mother, father and eldest son face the camera unsmiling while the baby fusses. They're four separate individuals, of whom only one is "real." It's an imperfect illusion of a nuclear family leavened with a jokey evocation of



Carlee Fernandez, *Let The Cup Pass From Us*, 2014
archival pigment print, 72 x 55 inches, ed 3 + 2 AP's

domestic comfort. *The Possibilities*, a dress printed with pictures of her relatives' eyes, is genealogy made elegant. *My Land, My Loves*, an eight-foot wall calendar modified to include pictures of Fernandez' native California, is a similarly restrained depiction of life's expanse tied into increments. Marked up with extended family members' birthdays, the colossal artifact illustrates the sometimes unglamorous, practical discipline of love.

"Identity" is a fraught word, sometimes applied to emphasize the group at the expense of the individual, and generalities at the expense of specifics. *Arranging Family*, by contrast, cultivates an identity by rooting it in specifics, in the aspects that unite or distinguish one person from the next, and in the small accommodations and adjustments that, over the course of years and generations, become defining.



Carlee Fernandez was born in Santa Ana, CA. She received her BFA from California State University, Fullerton (1997) and MFA from Claremont Graduate University (1999), and was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship in 2000. Her work was included in the Inman Gallery exhibition *do I know you*, summer 2010. She has had solo exhibitions at ACME (2014 and 2010) and Acuna-Hansen Gallery (2006, 2004, 2002 and 2001) in Los Angeles. Her work has been included in group shows at Santa Barbara Museum of Art (2014), the National Portrait Gallery in Washington DC (2014), Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2011 and 2008), Orange County Museum of Art (2010) and Museo Rufino Tamayo in Mexico City (2008), among many others. Her work has been reviewed in *The Los Angeles Times*, *Art in America*, and *LA Weekly*, and is included in a number of permanent collections, including The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas. In 2008 she received the California Community Foundation Fellowship. She lives and works in Los Olivos, CA.

Carlee Fernandez, *My Land, My Loves*, 2014 14 archival pigment prints, metal, unique, 99-1/2 x 50 x 8 inches

For more information, please contact the gallery at 713.526.7800 or info@inmangallery.com