



**USC Fisher Museum of Art Showcases *Janet Sternburg: LIMBUS*
An Exhibition Exploring Works by the Visual Poet**

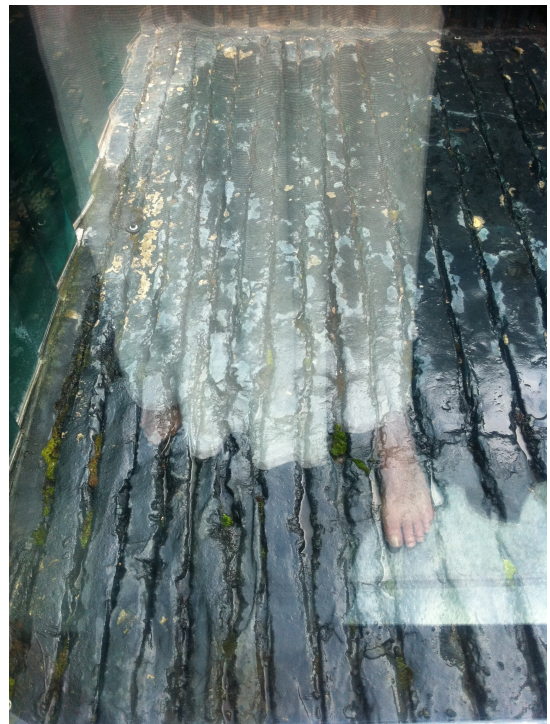
**Visionary and Recent Works Beginning with Sternburg's First Encounter
with Photography in 1998 in Mexico where She Began to Work Without
Manipulation to Capture the Layers of Inner and Outer Experience**

Premieres on September 18, 2018

*It would be way too easy to state that by taking pictures of reflections
she is reflecting on the act of seeing,
and is proving that cameras can make the invisible visible.
Oh no, it is way more complex than that!
Some of her photos make you really dizzy, you get totally lost in them.
The Cheshire Cat is grinning at you at every corner
as you enter this cabinet of mirrors.*
– Wim Wenders on Janet Sternburg

LOS ANGELES (July 23, 2018) — USC Fisher Museum of Art proudly announces *LIMBUS*, a solo exhibition by photographer Janet Sternburg, visual artist, author of books of essays, memoirs and poetry, and educator. The exhibition, organized by the USC Fisher Museum of Art, opens on September 18, 2018 and runs through December 1, 2018.

“Limbus was defined,” writes Sternburg in her artist’s statement, “by the Renaissance physician Paracelsus to describe a hem in the universe between body and spirit. In its current usage,” she continues, “it is the name of the rim of the cornea where the pupil meets the white of the eye. It is the home of infinitely generative stem cells that cross the limbus to maintain and replenish the cornea.” To embody this multi-faceted metaphor for the exhibition, Sternburg has made a limbus for each of her 74 by 48 inch photographs where traces within each image cross the limbus border.



Sternburg’s central concern regarding her photography has been to show an interpenetrating and layered world. Believing that the separations that define much of the physical and political world are not necessary to recreate in photography, Sternburg opens herself and her viewers to a new way of seeing where ambiguity and complexity prevail. She works with single-use and iPhone cameras. With closer viewings, the many conjunctions of Sternburg’s images yield mysterious and captivating passages. Multiple stories hover outside the frame and images emit their own light. She approaches photography as a poet.

In her commentary on Sternburg's work in the monograph *Overspilling World: The Photographs of Janet Sternburg* (Distanz Verlag, Berlin. 2016) photographer Catherine Opie writes, "We are asked to look and decipher time and time again what lies before us. What are we looking at? We are asked to go beyond the depiction of space and into the abstraction of reality." Opie adds, "What is surface? What is reflection? This is what holds me in thinking about the work. It is that question of what connects us to the real. Signs pop in behind and overlay the figure in shop windows, the sky is ever present, red is blood, it is internal and external, and it truly is an "over-spilling world."

Dr. Selma Holo, Director of the USC Fisher Museum of Art, has been following Sternburg's photographic work since she took on this artistic direction. "Sternburg's visionary images capture more than we would ordinarily see as we pass through our lives," said Dr. Holo. "She inspires us to dig deeper into our visual field. The results are often surprising."

About the Artist: Janet Sternburg is a polymath: an artist of photography, a writer of literary books, a maker of theatre and films, an educator, all in the service of a singular vision which is at the forefront of cultural change. Since 1998 when she began taking photographs, her work has appeared in a portfolio in *Aperture* (2002), and that same year in a cover story and portfolio in *Art Journal*. Her photography has been exhibited in solo gallery shows in New York, Los Angeles, Berlin, and Milan, as well as at cultural institutions in Mexico and Seoul Korea where she received a commission for a full-building installation using projection and multiple monitors. A monograph of her photographs, *Overspilling World: The Photographs of Janet Sternburg*, was published in 2016-17 by Distanz Verlag with a Foreword by Wim Wenders. An acclaimed writer, her books include the classic two volumes of *The Writer On Her Work*, (1981 and 1991). Two critically praised books followed combining memoir and essay, both interweaving family, medical science and history: *Phantom Limb* (2002) and *White Matter* (2016). In her book *Optic Nerve: Photopoems* (2005), she experimented with inserting images within the body of her poems, continuing her ongoing involvement with word and image. Other creative and cultural work includes her feature length documentary *El Teatro Campesino* on the Chicano theatre troupe (1969), for National Educational Television, broadcast on national public television and selected for the New York Film Festival at Lincoln Center. Her Cine Golden Eagle award-winning film about Virginia Woolf, *The Moment Whole* (1971) prefigured an idea that imbues her photography, in which she

continues to explore the layers of time and space that are present in a single moment. Sternburg lives in Downtown Los Angeles' Little Tokyo, and San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. She has been the recipient of many grants and artist residencies (among them, the National Endowment for the Humanities and The MacDowell Colony), and was given the honor in 2003, early in her life as a photographer, by *The Utne Reader* ("A New Lens") as one of forty international artists and writers who as "with depth, resonance, ideas and insights, challenge us to live more fully."

About the Museum: The USC Fisher Museum of Art - established in 1939- is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. It functions as a center for intellectual inquiry and aesthetic enjoyment in support of USC's goals of research, teaching, artistic creation, and service to society. The Fisher Museum bears special responsibility to link the art in its permanent collections and the art it presents in its temporary exhibitions to all of USC's present and future audiences: to its students, faculty, staff, alumni, and surrounding communities. Fisher Museum offers an array of programming, including lectures, artists' talks, yoga, film screenings, concerts, and poetry readings to enhance and support its exhibitions. Fisher Museum is also proud to be home and working laboratory for the USC International Museum Institute, a think-tank for museum professionals and a division of the USC College.

Admission is free.

Museum Hours: Tuesday-Friday 12-5pm, Saturday 12-4pm.

Located on the USC Campus: 823 Exposition Blvd Los Angeles, CA 90089

Go Metro! We are located across from Metro Expo Line's Expo Park/USC station!
www.metro.net/expo.

Image #1: Janet Sternburg, *Lantern*, 2011, printed 2018, pigment based color print (original medium: iPhone 4, chromogenic color print) 74 x 48 in. Image courtesy of the artist.

Image #2: Janet Sternburg, *Siren*, 2011, printed 2018, pigment based color print (original medium: iPhone 4, chromogenic color print) 74 x 48 in. Image courtesy of the artist.