

## New York

### Coco Fusco

ALEXANDER GRAY ASSOCIATES  
510 West 26th Street  
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When does a revolution die? Can bits of its carcass be found in the crevices of empty squares? Taking Cuba and its silenced dissidents as her case study, Coco Fusco explores these questions in a survey that covers two decades of work via eight videos and an installation.

The exhibition starts with *CONFIDENCIAL, Autores Firmantes*, 2015, which highlights the archive as a means to author—and alter—history. Twenty-one facsimiles of files that were penned by Cuban authorities in 1971 are displayed in vitrines on the ground floor of the gallery, where we find that Jean-Paul Sartre and Marguerite Duras, among countless others, were deemed “anti-Cuban” and therefore blacklisted. These preeminent writers and intellectuals paid the price for standing in solidarity with Heberto Padilla, a poet who was imprisoned for turning against Fidel Castro.

Silenced minds lead to silenced streets, where the effervescence of revolution has been replaced by the banality of daily routine. *The Empty Plaza*, 2012, is a twelve-minute video depicting Havana’s Plaza de la Revolución—formerly called the Plaza Cívica then renamed after the 1959 Revolution—where images of tourists posing for pictures are interspersed with archival footage of revolutionaries. The piece is a melancholic reverie on urban spaces that go from stages for uprisings to ambivalent, discarded relics. Tourists snap pictures on their cell phones as cars drive by, under the omniscient eyes of Che Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos, whose steel faces hang from surrounding buildings. The piece brings to mind so many other squares, such as Tahrir in Cairo—that were once electric with a profound need for radical change and are today quietly plagued by an uncanny ordinary.



View of “Coco Fusco,” 2016.

— Lara Atallah