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In L.A., Female Video Artists Reign

By ERICA BELLMAN | NOV. 19, 2015



Video-based art is having a moment among women in Los Angeles. Three female artists with solo exhibitions on view there this fall aim to shift perceptions of the medium's potential, using it to capture everything from Op Art-like abstractions to provocative depictions of animal life. Diana Thater, whose career-spanning show opens next week at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, posits that the appeal of video for women might come from the medium's relative newness — there are no old masters glowering from the textbook pages. "Women could enter into it without this art-historical legacy," Thater says. "There is no male-dominated history, so there's more freedom."

Simone Forti

Named after a line from a randomly selected William Carlos Williams poem, Simone Forti's "On an Iron Post" spans the course of the 80-year-old artist's career and includes video, sculpture, paintings and notebooks. A postmodern dancer and choreographer known for her dynamic, improvisational style, Forti is no stranger to video as a tool — she's been documenting her performances for decades. Now, however, Forti is exploring video as a creative form in its own right. "In my performing, I've always loved to allude to big space, taking into account that the space I'm moving in does not end at the ceiling or the floor," Forti says. "The video pieces allow for suspended time in space, especially when projected big." With her recent videos, Forti transports the viewer: to the shores of the Mississippi for "Flag in the Water" or the beaches of the Pacific with "Zuma News." Up next: the frigid banks of Lake Michigan. She hopes to film, she says, "on the chunks of ice that form at the water's edge."

On view through Jan. 9 at the Box, 805 Traction Avenue, Los Angeles, theboxla.com.

