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Simone Forti at Galleria Raffaella Cortese | Via Stradella 7

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Simone Forti, *Weeding: Simone's Garden*, 2019, video, color, 43' 58".

In her work, artist, choreographer, dancer, and writer Simone Forti channels the subversive elemental forces of freedom and spontaneity.

Born in Florence in 1935, she soon

afterward fled with her family to the United States to escape rising anti-Semitism. Very active in the 1960s scene in New York, she evaded easy categorization as one of the pioneers of American postmodern dance.

It was in the late '60s that Forti revived her relationship with Italy, thanks in part to the efforts of Fabio Sargentini, owner of Galleria L'Attico in Rome. In the exhibition "Distant Lands," various expressive languages—drawing, writing, video, sound—touch on this connection, the invisible thread between the two countries so dear to the artist.

The exhibition features twelve drawings from the series "News Animations," 1985-. For these, Forti commemorated the 1983 death of her father, a tireless reader of the dailies, by pouring over newspapers, improvising off selected incidents to create a body of work that explores the potential of language by transforming it into a graphic performative movement. Humans, animals, landscapes—barely implied in black or colored graphite on paper—evoke worlds laden with meaning, but also its negation.

Pure performative work returns in the ten-minute video, *News Animation: The Getty Center*, 2004, which shows Forti dancing with and against pieces of raw canvas painted with stars and stripes, a primordial American flag. On one wall, the three large video projections *Weeding: Simone's Garden*, *Weeding: Steve and Lisa's Garden 1*, and *Weeding: Steve and Lisa's Garden 2* (all 2019) document the gentle care the artist directs to the earth and to nature. In her hands, the act of tearing out invasive species becomes a metaphor for a universal catharsis from the ugliness that is fast overtaking humanity.