

## Artist Project

# Xavieria Simmons

Working across disciplines has pushed my practice into a space where the language of each medium falls at times seamlessly and at other times more awkwardly into the others, where the performance practice is in direct conversation with some of the strategies I use in sculpture and photography and I cannot produce a video or film-based work without directly linking text, narrative, archival materials, sound, and performance. In this way, I am allowing the languages of each of these elements to influence, shape, engage, and strengthen the languages of every other one.

A continuous interest in land/landscapes has led me from feelings of desire to those of inspiration in the multitude of literal spaces and places. The works exist in nebulous and enigmatic in-between spaces formed by time and space. These segments or parcels of liminal space, coupled with the literal landscape or place, drive linear and nonlinear narratives that I explore through photographic, sculptural, cinematic, and performative media. I see space as an exploded concept, one in which thousands of narratives can be broken apart and reconstructed infinitely.

I engage directly with this notion of expanded space in my studio practice by unpacking aspects of the political and performative to reconfigure in new ways. Working on a project titled *Archive as Impetus* at The Museum of Modern Art for almost a year now, I have delved into aspects of the museum's archive, collections, and institutional history to reveal historical political angles in the types of works collected by the institution and artists' engagement within this sphere. I aspire to present the notion that political movements are ephemeral; they ebb and flow, perpetually shifting, and are crucial instances in the history of humanity that continue to take shape and change with time.

This conceptual part of my practice has led me to attempt to engage the performative in the political or to try to think of presenting the political as a performative, ephemeral process that will break down over time. It is inevitable—a performance is usually constructed to respond to a moment and to the moods or notions of the day, and politics carries this similar air and weight.

I consider my performance-based works to be ephemeral in nature; they work for a specific time, in a particular place, and usually for a specific audience. When the performance is articulated as a video piece, the original source material breaks down into nuances of space, and then I build it up again (perhaps in another medium), knowing full well that the process is cyclical and will happen again, in a new way, with new results.

—Xavieria Simmons





Xaviera Simmons, video stills from *Number 15 and Number 16*, 2012,  
digital video, 45 minutes (courtesy of the artist and David Castillo Gallery)





Xaviera Simmons, *Untitled*, 2010, color photograph, 40 x 50 inches  
(courtesy of the artist and David Castillo Gallery)





Xavier Simmons, *Currents*, 2010, color photograph, 40 x 50 inches  
(courtesy of the artist and David Castillo Gallery)





Xavier Simmons, *Denver*, 2009, color photograph, 30 x 40 inches  
(courtesy of the artist and David Castillo Gallery)





Xavier Simmons, *Warm Leatherette*, 2009, color photograph, 30 x 40 inches  
(courtesy of the artist and David Castillo Gallery)