

RAFFAELLA CORTESE ~

Simone Forti Biography

Simone Forti was born in Florence (Italy) in 1935. She has lived and worked in Los Angeles, where she died in 2026.

Forti has been a leading figure in the development of contemporary performance over the last fifty years. Artist, choreographer, dancer, writer, Forti has dedicated herself to the research of a kinesthetic awareness, always engaging with experimentation and improvisation. Investigating the relationship between object and body, through animal studies, news animations and land portraits, she reconfigured the concept of performance and dance. Forti emigrated from Italy with her family via Switzerland to Los Angeles in 1938, where she subsequently studied for four years with choreographer Anna Halprin and has since spent most of her life. She joined the experimental downtown art scene in New York during the emergence of performance art, process-based work and Minimal Art and spent a fruitful time in Rome in the late '60s, where she used the spaces of L'Attico to study and perform. Her work is seen as a precursor of the famous Judson Dance Theater – a group of artists experimenting with dance, including Trisha Brown, Steve Paxton, and Yvonne Rainer – and Minimal Art, although she prefers to be referred simply as a “movement artist”.

Simone Forti has achieved the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement of the Biennale Danza 2023.

Forti has worked with artists like Dan Graham and Robert Whitman and composers like Charlemagne Palestine, Peter Van Riper, and La Monte Young. In the past few years younger artists have reached out to collaborate with her, further indication of the great

significance of Simone Forti's work for artists today.

Selected institutions that have hosted solo exhibitions and performances by Simone Forti include: Palazzo Altemps, Rome (2024); 60th International Art Exhibition of Venice Biennale (2024); Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles (MOCA), Los Angeles (2023); Centro Pecci, Prato (2021); ICA, Milan (2019); Kunsthaut Baselland, Basel (2019); Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2015); Louvre Museum, Paris (2014); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2013); Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (2013); The High Line, New York (2012); Galleria L'Attico, Rome (2009); Getty Museum, Los Angeles (2004); Musée d'art moderne et contemporain (MAMCO), Geneva, (2003); Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris (2002); Castello di Rivoli, Turin (1999); Fundacao Serralves Museum, Porto (1999); P.S.1, New York (1983, 1977, 1976); Kunsthalle, Basel (1979); Sonnabend Gallery, New York (1978, 1974), San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco (1977); Yoko Ono Studio, New York (1969, 1961); Merce Cunningham Studio, New York (1961).

Her work has been included in group exhibitions by institutions such as: MACRO, Rome (2024); 15th Baltic Triennial, Vilnius (2024); Kunsthaut Baselland, Basel (2024); Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York (2018, 2014, 2013, 2009, 1979, 1978); Kunsthaut Zurich, Zurich (2017); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2015, 2012); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2015, 2011); Guggenheim Museum, New York (2013); Haus der Kunst, Munich (2011); Hayward Gallery, London (2010); Galleria L'Attico, Rome (1972, 1969, 1968).