



KOW MADRID
CALLE RIBERA DE CURTIDORES 26
28005 MADRID

BARBARA HAMMER CONTRIBUTION TO LIGHT THE EARLY WORKS

Barbara Hammer has helped write the history of feminist art.

Her works on celluloid are considered among the most extensive representations of lesbian identity, love, and sexuality. In more than eighty films, she increased the visibility of women and encouraged them to choose self-determined lives.

Born in Hollywood in 1939, the feminist activist picked up the camera in 1968 to propose alternative visions that sharply contrasted with the prevailing filmic languages, in which a male and heterosexual gaze predominated. She often broke new ground both with her themes and narrative forms and in her aesthetic experiments. Over five decades, her art has continually surprised fans and—no doubt deliberately—defied social clichés and conventions.

Hammer’s experimental films are noted for their physical presence and painterly quality. Her works on paper as well as her photos share this characteristic sensual and sometimes expressive style. The exhibition highlights how her first steps as an artist stem from her physical perception of space and relationships. Her camera gaze seems to literally touch the environment, inseparable from her body and its experiences, while her paint brush and her pencil are unafraid to discern the surface of the paper as a field of action and mental and formal discovery.



Menses, 1974
Color instant print (Polaroid)
Unique
10.8 x 11.4 cm

A production still from my film Menses, a satire on menstruation.



Contribution to Light
Exhibitionviews KOW Madrid





Double Head, 1969/1971

Collage, wallpaper, oil crayon, acrylic on paper

45.7 x 60.9 cm

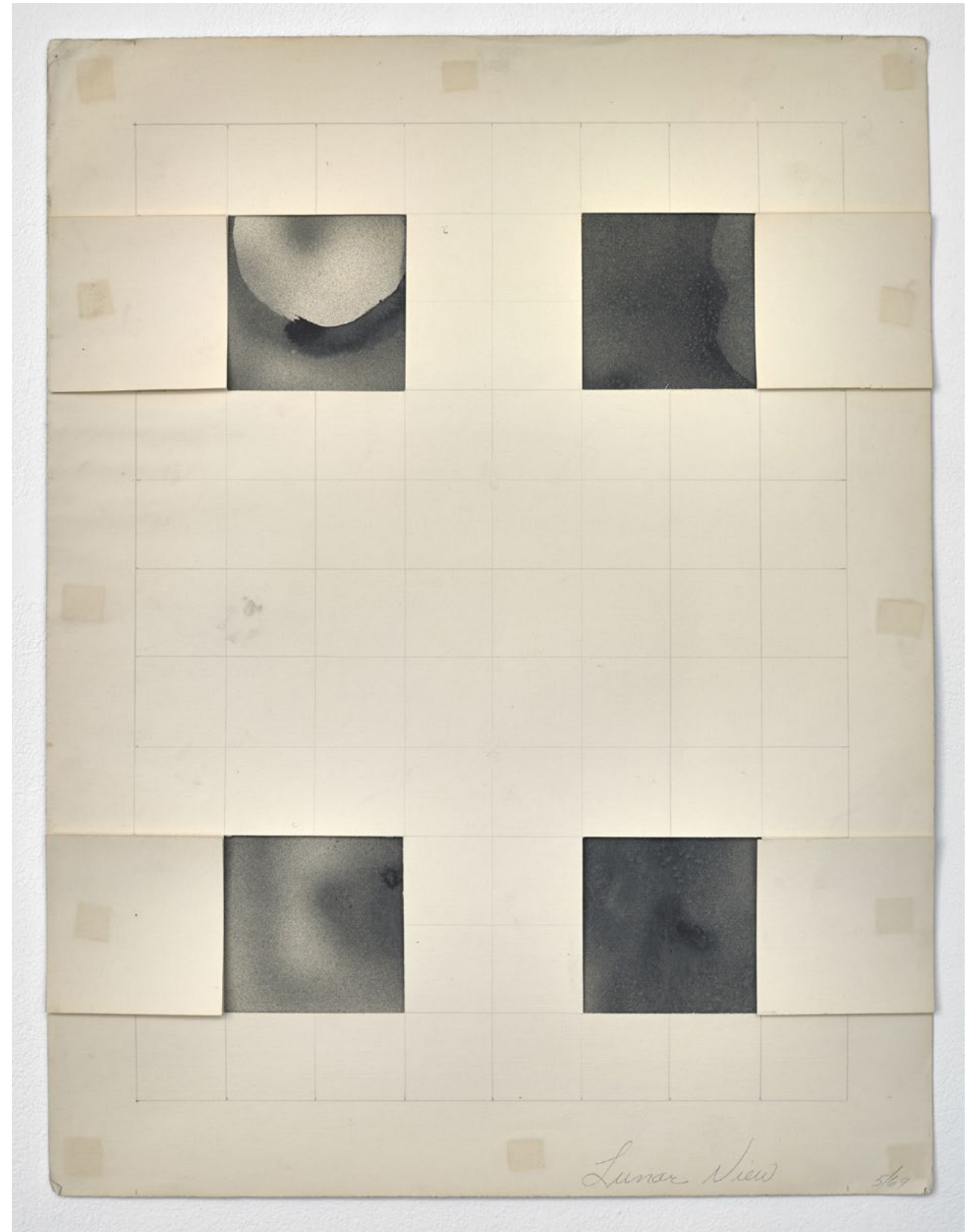
Design and texture reflect use of texture or sense of touch in this self-portrait.

Lunar View 5, 1969

Acrylic, ink on paper

66.2 x 50.5 cm

Living in the country there were many night views out the window.
Paper flaps reflect the act of opening and closing the window to change the view.





Red Skeleton, 1968

Ink on paper

60.7 x 36.5 cm

Early sketch of human body without flesh showing my early interest in mortality.

Print Painting, 1969/1971

Acrylic on paper

62 x 44.3 cm

Experimenting with various methods of printing, using corks, wood, wire mesh etc.

Red Hill With Boxes, 1969/1971

Acrylic on paper

50.6 x 66.2 cm

One of my favorite pieces showing early experimentation with spray paint and stencils.

Green Hill, 1969/1971

Acrylic, ink, felt tip pen on paper

50.4 x 66.2 cm

Similar to Red Hill, but using artists' tools to make marks, rather than spray paint.





Sun & Hand, 1969/1971

Acrylic on paper
66.3 x 50.5 cm

Fascinated by the changing shadows of the sun, I captured in soft focus, my hand.



The Year I Spent, 1973

Pencil, acrylic on paper
35.5 x 43.2 cm

Architecture, landscape and body merge as I reflect on a year of creative making.

next page:

Chumash Bright 2, 1969/1971

Acrylic on paper
122 x 78.6 cm

A celebration of the rock paintings of the Chumash Indians who lived in hills above Santa Barbara, California.





Corky in Love #9, 1982

RC single weight paper

20.4 x 25.4 cm

Voluptuous body reflected in flesh and paint.



Big Eye, 1980

RC single weight paper

25.3 x 20.2 cm

Darkroom solarization gives extra sparkle to a lover's eye.

Tee Corinne #1, 1972

Print on matte board

23 x 18.1 cm

The artist Tee Corinne and I exploring female sexuality and intimacy in our work.





Tee Corinne #2, 1972

Print on matte board

17.3 x 24.3 cm

Also known as "Tee and my Hairy Leg, San Francisco."
Everything about intimacy-location, texture, light-interests me.



Tee Corinne #3, 1972

RC paper

28.4 x 24.5 cm

Another form of intimacy was my work in the darkroom.
Here I print the same negative twice, enlarging one of the images to capture movement in a still photograph



Tee Corinne #4, 1972

RC paper

16.2 x 22.1 cm

I was interested in making photographs that were unique and could not be repeated.
TC #4 reflects the complexity of personality.



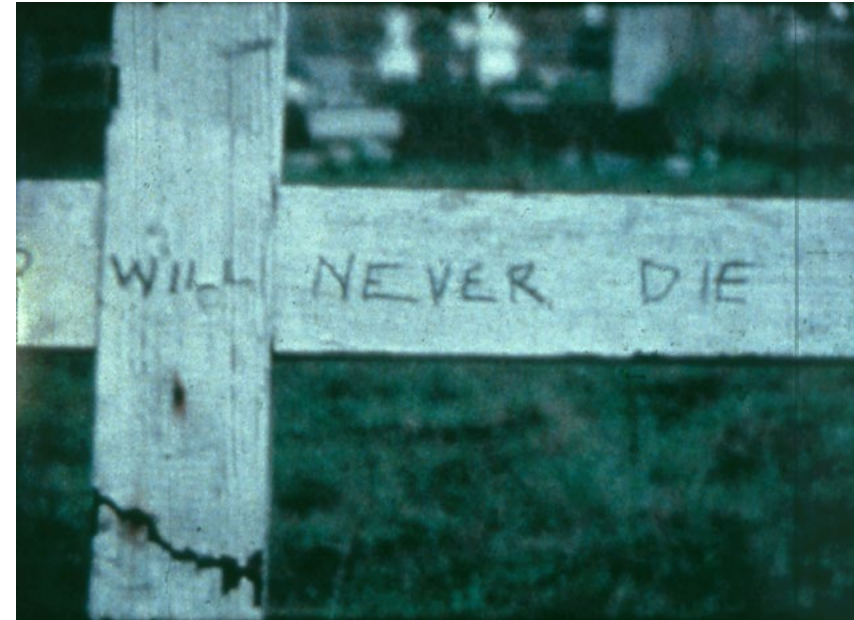
Tee Corinne #5, 1972

RC paper

20.1 x 25.2 cm

Another darkroom experiment showing the streaks of emulsion and movement that
many would consider a mistake, but I loved it and kept it to show movement.

These films were made before I had taken a class on filmmaking. Someone gave me a Super 8 camera and I was smitten with what I could do with it, what it could record, the portability and, especially, the intimacy-how film could express who I am in a way I hadn't yet found.



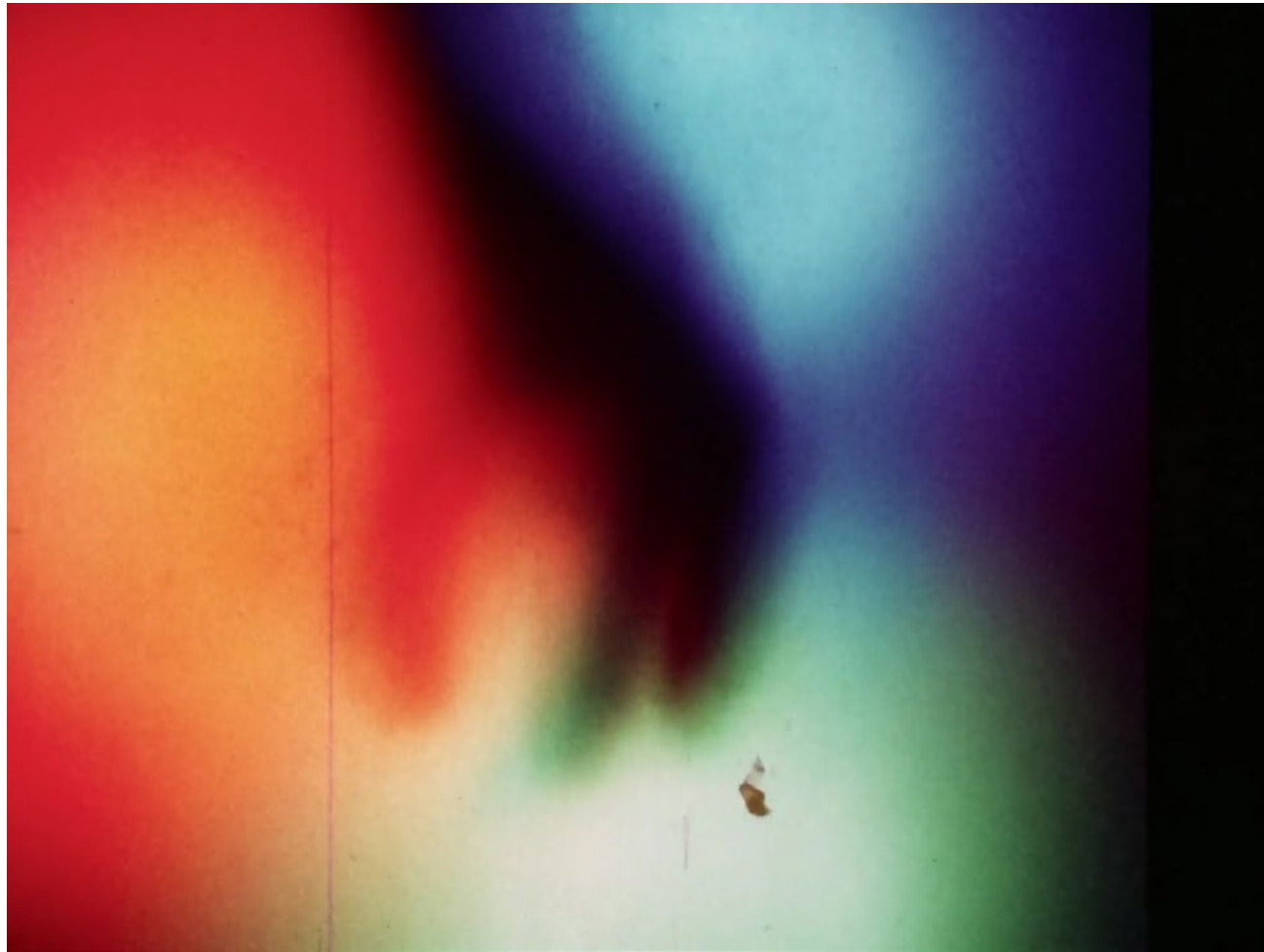
Barbara Ward Will Never Die, 1968

Transferred S8 mm film, 4:3, color,

silent

2:27 min

7 + 2AP



Contribution to Light, 1968

Super 8 film, color, silent

3:42 min

7 + 2AP

Contribution to Light is all about my excitement, thrill of seeing reflected and refracted light. I shot the edges of pieces of found broken glass that streamed light rays broken into myriad colors. I saw, years later, a shared aesthetic in Stan Brakhage's study of a crystal ashtray.





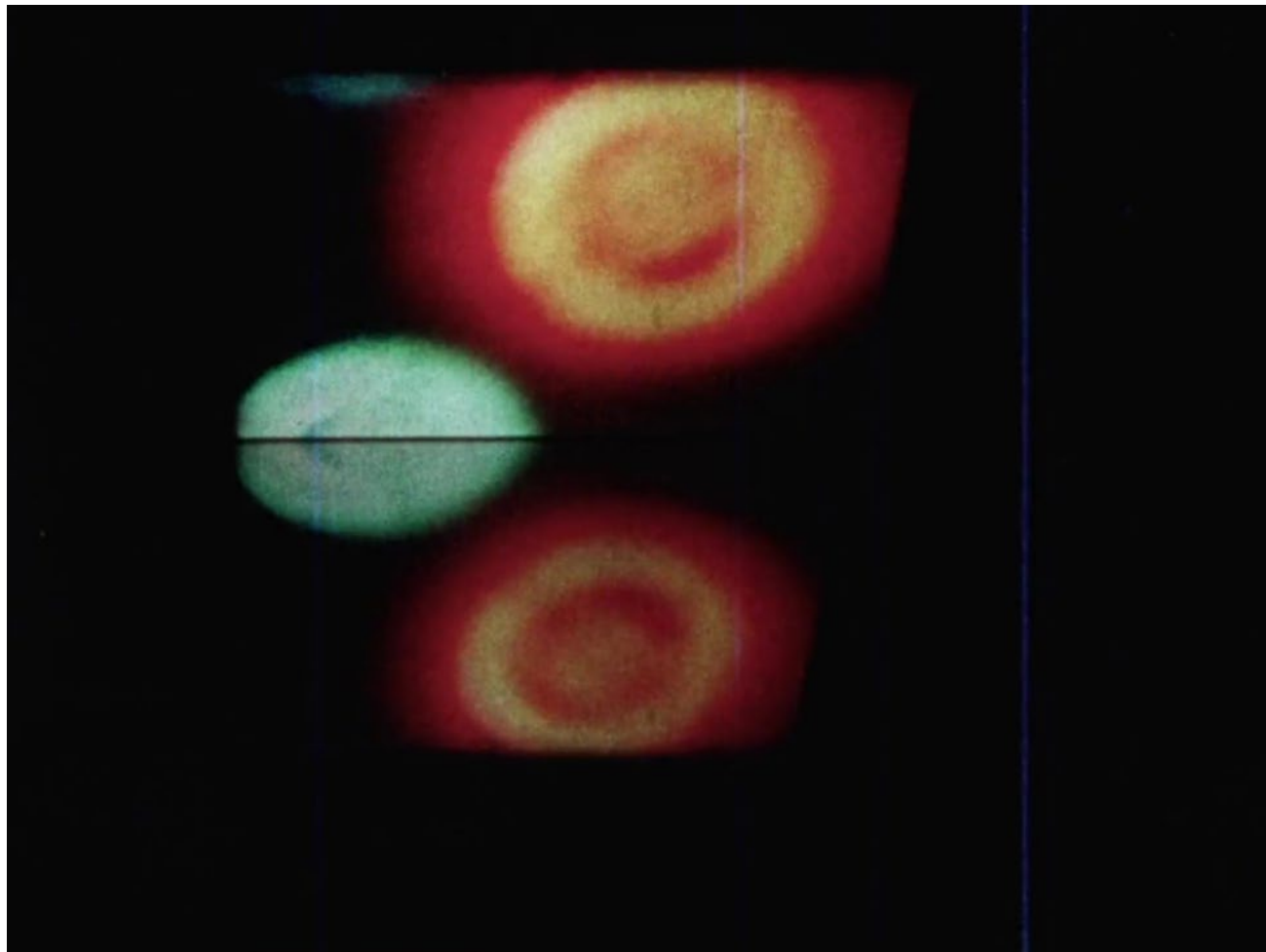
Death of a Marriage, 1969

Super 8 film, color, silent

3:09

7 + 2AP

Death of a Marriage I think is my first psychodrama-finding images and filmic methods of portraying my interior emotional being. I had built by hand with my husband a home in the woods, made my own horse corral, and had an art studio yet the alternative lifestyle didn't erase the feeling of entrapment, proscribed role, and constrictions I felt. Yip, yip and away!



Aldebaran Sees, 1969

Super 8 film, color, silent

3:15 min

7 + 2AP

Aldebaran is the brightest star of the Taurus constellation. It is not without hubris that I claimed that light-seeing eye for myself. The world of Aldebaran is projected light, rear screened and filmed again, pre-optical printer, and contemporary with the Haight-Ashbury projection light shows that played behind the bands at The Fillmore.



Aldebaran Sees, 1969

Super 8 film, color, silent

3:15 min

7 + 2AP

Abstractions of light, hand shaped mattes, radical exposure changes and the subjective body of the filmmaker mark this early film of Hammer with filmic language that reappears in her later work. Shot in Northern California on the Sonoma Coast and in the woodlands, the beauty and sparkle of silent Super8 is breathtaking and wondrous reminding us of a time before depletion and pollution marked the landscape.



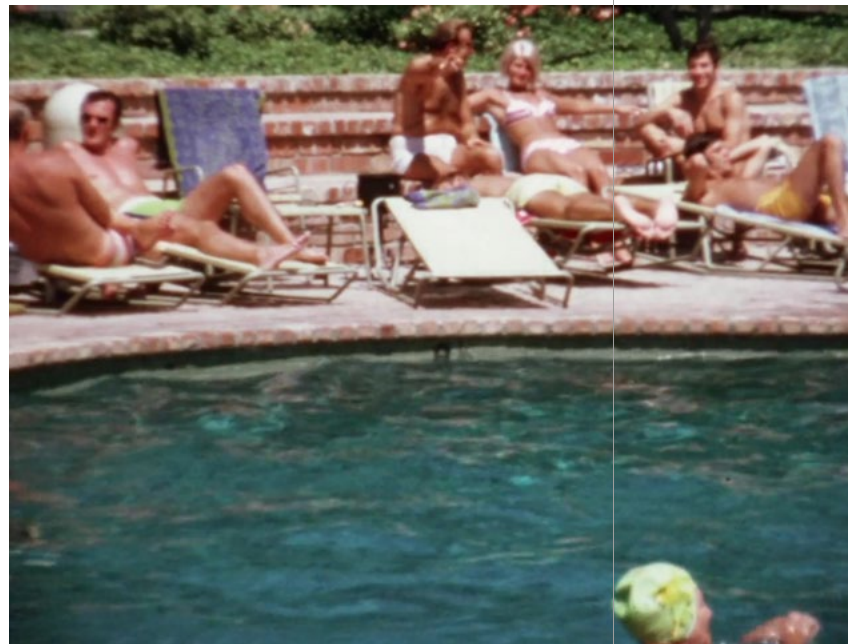
Clay, I Love You II, 1968 - 1969

Super 8 film, color, silent

5:19 min

7 + 2AP

On a preview trip for an around the world motor scooter tour (1973), Hammer and her x-husband traverse the Mendocino coast on their motorcycle, Hammer filming all the while from the rear seat. Light reflections, creative camera perspectives and Hammer's signature self-inclusion mark this early film.



White Cassandra, 1968

Super 8 film, color, silent

4:08 min

7 + 2AP

Aerial views of Los Angeles rooftops and a swimming pool surrounded by tan sunbathers contrast starkly with the Wheeler Ranch, hippy free land of shacks and barren landscape in Sonoma County. Is Hammer talking about her own childhood urban lifestyle and the rural choice she chose in early adult years identifying with Cassandra, the prophet foretelling a future celebrating an end to capitalism? And what of the radical attempt to divert the small aircraft with mirrors and bow and arrows harassing the open land freestylers?

Barbara Hammer
Contribution to Light.
The Early Works

Exhibition at KOW Madrid

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