

ARTFORUM



BOSTON

“ERICKA BECKMAN: DOUBLE REVERSE”

MIT LIST VISUAL ARTS
CENTER

20 Ames Street E15

May 24–July 28, 2019

Curated by Henriette Huldish

Characterized by ingenious artisanal special effects and communicating an infectious POW!, Ericka Beckman’s early movies infused object theater with playful psychodrama, advancing the notion that girls just want to have *serious* fun. These enigmatic games, in which contestants, often female, learn how to act in or on the world, suggest self-reflexive metaphors for the films’ own creation. While early pieces like *You the Better*, 1983, and *Cinderella*, 1986, sometimes shown as installations, were made in Beckman’s “black box” studio, her recent work is more architectural (if no less calisthenic), shot at monumental locations. *Switch Center*, 2002, for example, was staged in a defunct Budapest waterworks. Filmed in part at Harvard Stadium, *Tension Building*, 2016, is a dizzying spectacle that, scored with percussive cartoon sound effects, treats football zealotry with pinball wizardry. Beckman’s first museum survey, covering some thirty years of work, will be accompanied by a catalogue with contributions by curator Henriette Huldish, Marie de Bruggerolle, Attilia Fattori Franchini, and Piper Marshall.

— *J. Hoberman*