

# On *THE* Radar

## Seventeen Artists You Should Know About

It's *THE* magazine Los Angeles's first annual summer issue, and to make you care, we're devoting it to emerging artists.

The thinking was, school's back in session, who are the hottest players on the courts? Simple as that. But why do this at all? What's the big deal about emerging artists, as opposed to established artists, or obscure artists, or for that matter over-recognized or over-the-hill or not-yet-ready-for-prime-time artists? The fact is that Los Angeles's art scene — driven as it is by the impressive network of art schools and departments in the region — is, and has long been, defined by the artists who emerge into it. This is not (at least any longer) true of New York, for instance, which is driven by the art market far more than by its artists. And those other American cities for which it is also true — Philadelphia, for example — boast art scenes not large enough to present their artists effectively beyond their borders. This makes Los Angeles de facto the nation's largest cauldron of "new talent" (which is what "emerging artists" were called back in the day . . .).

Wouldn't it be more useful to examine the mechanisms by which an artist emerges? Well, sure, but who has the time or space? Rather, you can consider our declarations here implicit critiques of the whole "emerging artist" racket. This is not necessarily to bemoan the tendency to look for new faces — contemporary artistic discourse evolves thanks, among other things, to a constant infusion of new ideas and practices and skill sets — but to loosen the grip, however slightly, that conventional thinking and mainstream marketing have on the whole process of emergence. For better or worse, all of us at *THE* magazine are art-world monsters, hooked on the art world's cooking even as we might resist the soup of the day. What we're passing on to you here, once again to put it simply, is a few selections we've made from the menu — if not necessarily the stuff the maitre d' is flogging. — PETER FRANK



Still from *Blood Work*, 2009, HD Video, 3 minutes. Courtesy the artist and The Company, Los Angeles, CA.

**B**orn in Chicago in 1974, **Julie Orser** studied photography and studio art, and currently does something that could easily be mistaken for filmmaking, if it weren't for the fact that modern cinema is the very thing her art most deftly deconstructs. Her videos and photographs are shown in institutions from MoMA and REDCAT to the Royal College of Art, but she also does well on the avant-garde film festival circuit. Taking apart and reconstituting the poisonous allure of fashion, the

psychological dimension of science fiction, horror, and noir, she amplifies key signifiers (dolls, designer bags, blood pools, bare light bulbs, the woods, lighting, music, and all the indispensable clues that let the audience know how to feel) in order to reveal how gender archetypes are created, perpetuated, and subverted in society. Orser's work, screened recently at The Company, was also part of the Armory Center's recent *Drama of the Gifted Child: The Five Year Plan*. [www.julieorser.com](http://www.julieorser.com) — SND

My list formed itself organically, with issues of personal taste, overall demographics, mediumistic eclecticism, and apparent popularity all swirling around the centrifuge of this term, "emerging." There has been some discussion, and slightly divergent definitions, of "emerging" among our editors, but we all agree we know it when we see it. Some buzz, an increasing local profile, the beginnings of real out-of-town and even out-of-country attention,

especially from museums — but not overly much to date . . . I suppose if this group of men and women who are painters, sculptors, installation artists, performance artists, and photographers has any specific qualities in common, it would be a dark sense of humor and the patience and skill sets for superior craftsmanship.

— SHANA NYS DAMBROT