

ARTFORUM

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Martín Ramírez Show to Inaugurate New ICA LA in September

The new Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles—formerly the Santa Monica Museum of Art, which revealed its new name and plans to move to downtown LA last May—has announced that the first major LA exhibition of works by twentieth-century artist Martín Ramírez will inaugurate the space.



Considered an outsider artist, Ramírez was a Mexican migrant worker who immigrated to California in 1925, but was institutionalized for the majority of his life due to his schizophrenia. While confined to the hospital, he produced more than 300 hundred drawings depicting tunnels, animals, and men on horseback. Created on examining-table paper, the drawings were in poor condition and are being restored by the Art Institute of Chicago. Fifty of the works, some of them as long as eighteen feet, will be featured in the exhibition.

“His work has mostly been discussed within the context of Western art, outsider art,” ICA LA director Elsa Longhauser told Carolina A. Miranda of the *LA Times*. Instead, the upcoming exhibition, which will also serve as the institution’s Getty Pacific Standard Time series contribution, “will look at his work through the lens of Latin American imagery, Latin American culture, and the contemporary issues of migration and incarceration.”

In addition to the Ramírez show, head curator Jamillah James is organizing two shows: a site-specific temporary installation by local painter Sarah Cain and an installation by New York-based artist Abigail DeVille.

The museum, which was originally located at Bergamot Station in Santa Monica, will open its new 12,700-square-foot building on East Seventh Street on September 9. It is currently being renovated by LA-based wHY Architecture.

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