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Soldier Claxton: 120 Days in Afghanistan

Soldier Billboard Project Portraits of Soldiers by Suzanne Opton

Sponsored by: Atlanta Center for Contemporary Art, Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, Forecast Public Art, St Paul, and DiverseWorks Artspace, Houston.

Thousands of American soldiers are returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. We may wonder what they saw, what they did and how their war experience has affected them as they return to civilian life. These are the questions posed by a series of powerful artist billboards appearing in five cities during this election season.

Artist Suzanne Opton has photographed soldiers between tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. Her portraits afford the viewer a very intimate and serious look at the young men and women who have put their lives at risk serving in the military. The results are haunting and when they appear on forty-eight foot billboards floating above the freeway in the light of day or eerily illuminated at night, they are compelling and mysterious.

Four arts organizations are sponsoring ten Soldier Billboards. The Museum of Contemporary Art in Denver will launch the project with a billboard on opening day of the Democratic National Convention. Forecast Public Art in Minneapolis/ St. Paul is sponsoring five billboards during the Republican National Convention. DiverseWorks in Houston and the Atlanta Center for Contemporary Art are sponsoring billboards that will be up in September through the elections in November.

This is a unique project of collaboration between organizations and the simultaneous presentation of Soldier Billboards in five different states.

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