REGEN PROJECTS

Jackson, Crea. “Sable Elyse Smith Brings ‘SKY FENCE GROUND’ Home to Los Angeles.” Los Angeles Sentinel (November 12, 2026) [ill.] [online]



Installation view of Sable Elyse Smith *SKY FENCE GROUND* at Regen Projects, Los Angeles Nov. 6 – Dec. 19, 2026. (Evan Bedford)

Los Angeles-born artist Sable Elyse Smith returned to her hometown this past weekend with “SKY FENCE GROUND,” a solo exhibition at Regen Projects in Hollywood. The show opened Friday, Nov. 6, with an artist walkthrough and evening reception.
Smith, a professor at Columbia University School of the Arts, left California in 2004 after high school. Coming back through her art, she shared, is “really beautiful and kind of surprising.” The exhibition includes new woven works on paper, a short video and a monumental kinetic sculpture, all examining how systems of power and incarceration shape the way we see.



Woven works made from Smith's "Coloring Books" on display at Regen Projects. (Evan Bedford)

The woven works are made from her "Coloring Books," originally created from an activity book designed to teach children about the judicial process. Smith slices and interlaces the pages into a grid, breaking apart the scenes to expose how they function. For her, painting and language are each their own kind of system.

"Swapping out one word or another drastically changes the possibility of meaning, or even the effect of what those words can do," she explained.

The centerpiece is the sculpture "A Clockwork," which turns prison visiting-room tables and stools into a slowly rotating Ferris wheel. Smith drew from her own experience visiting loved ones in prison, describing the visiting room as a liminal space where "different things are allowed to happen" because the rules and behaviors are suspended when an incarcerated person has a visitor. The work places a symbol of amusement beside the machinery of incarceration, a pairing that makes you sit with the thin line between violence and entertainment.



A view of Smith's video project titled "skin suit," critiquing the entertainment aspect of policing. (Evan Bedford)

That line is the subject of the video "skin suit," a visual collage of reality TV that involves police chases and bodycam footage. Influenced by the popular TV show "Cops," Smith was curious about what other media the format inspired and whether it still exists. She pointed out that the humor in these programs comes at the expense of the people being pursued.

"I use this to highlight the absurdity in the form itself," Smith shared, "and undermine all the narrative expectations of how it initially functions to make visible the autonomy of all the police officers." Smith spoke about police officers' ability to decide who gets arrested and who doesn't.

"SKY FENCE GROUND" is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., at Regen Projects, 6750 Santa Monica Blvd., through Dec. 19.