

Water in Motion

Girls Fight Fire

Photographs from the Fairfax County Fire Department's summer program for teenage girls illustrate water in motion as a powerful force and tool for service, safety, and strength.

About the Photographer

Helen Sorokach is a visual artist working with photo and video, based in the United States. Originally from Phoenix, Arizona, completed film studies in Paris, France and attended the Tokyo International Film Festival in 2022. These photos were taken in 2024, while employed by the Fairfax County Fire Department.

Water, for firefighters, is the essential tool.

It is life and it is hope in the extreme heat, destruction, and force of fire. In these photos, young girls take on the role of firefighters, a job typically held by large men, and they are empowered by the force of the water they wield. Water, something often regarded as gentle, soft, calm, clean, and feminine is, in these photos, a strong and powerful force. Likewise, the young girls embrace their strength. Water's essence here is captured in its visceral strength as intense and vital, but nonetheless true to form -- healing, refreshing, fluid. Water and women, often so closely related, are demonstrated here to be essential, powerful, potent.

A fire hydrant becomes the mythic spring; and the adolescent girls, so easily and often brushed off and considered to be flippant, vapid, or naive, are saviors.

The photographs are ordered as follows:

“Effort”

“Push”

“Teamwork”

“Flow”

“Reach”

“Splash”

“Pull”













