

W O M E N CINEMAKERS



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WOMEN'S
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CINEMAKERS

W O M E N

SPECIAL EDITION

WOMENCINEMAKERS OFFERS ITS OVER 300'000 READERS INSIGHT INTO THE WORK OF EMERGING DIRECTORS IN THE SHORT FILM AND EXPERIMENTAL CINEMA SECTIONS. WOMEN PRODUCERS, WRITERS, AND DIRECTORS FROM AROUND THE WORLD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THEIR FILMS TO THE WIDE ATTENTION OF THE ENGLISH-READING AUDIENCE. SINCE 2012 WOMENCINEMAKERS HAS BEEN PROMOTING NEW EXPERIMENTS BY CREATING THE SECTION NINE NEW WOMEN FILMMAKERS THAT AWARDS DEBUTS AND AND INNOVATIVE FILMS. WITH A MIXTURE OF

NEWCOMERS AND ESTABLISHED DIRECTORS, OUR ANNUAL ANTHOLOGY HAS FEATURED MORE THAN 100 ARTISTS, WITH MANY OF THEM COMPETING IN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVALS INCLUDING THE CANNES FESTIVAL, BERLIN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, AND THE VENICE BIENNALE. FILM DIRECTORS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN DETERMINING HOW WE SEE OURSELVES AND THE WORLD AROUND US. GENDER OF THE STORYTELLER MATTERS. THE WORLD NEEDS THE CREATIVE ENERGY AND VISION OF WOMEN. JOIN WOMENCINEMAKERS.

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TOP: CAMILLE DE GALBERT, GUAN XI, URSZULA PIEREGOŃCZUK,



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Angelina Voskopoulou

Lives and works in Athens, Greece

Some words overwhelm you like an alien spirit and you surrender....

It's the words. Commonplace words making up uncommon sentences, strange words carrying an unutterable weight, words set one after the other so as to create images, feelings, little lights illuminating wide streets. And then there's also the magic. That inexplicable magic of some people's words that you know to be right upon hearing them, you know them to be yet another key to one of many doors.....

An interview by **Francis L. Quettier**

and **Dora S. Tennant**

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Hello Angelina and welcome to WomenCinematmakers: we would like to invite our readers to visit <https://avos.wordpress.com> in order to get a wider idea about your artistic production and we would start this interview with a couple of introductory questions about your background and process. Marked out with a solid education in the United Kingdom, your artistic research is characterized by incessant experimental approach, and whose results

provide the viewers with a captivating heightened experience. Rich of allegorical qualities, your works seem to provide with a materic essence the abstract ideas of memory and perception: when introducing our readers to your usual process, would you tell us how important is for you to produce work of arts capable of challenging the subconscious level of your spectatorship?

What is emotion? As we watch films we can each experience fear, and pleasure, and desire, and surprise, and shock and a whole array of possible emotions, but we will not all experience these emotions equally.



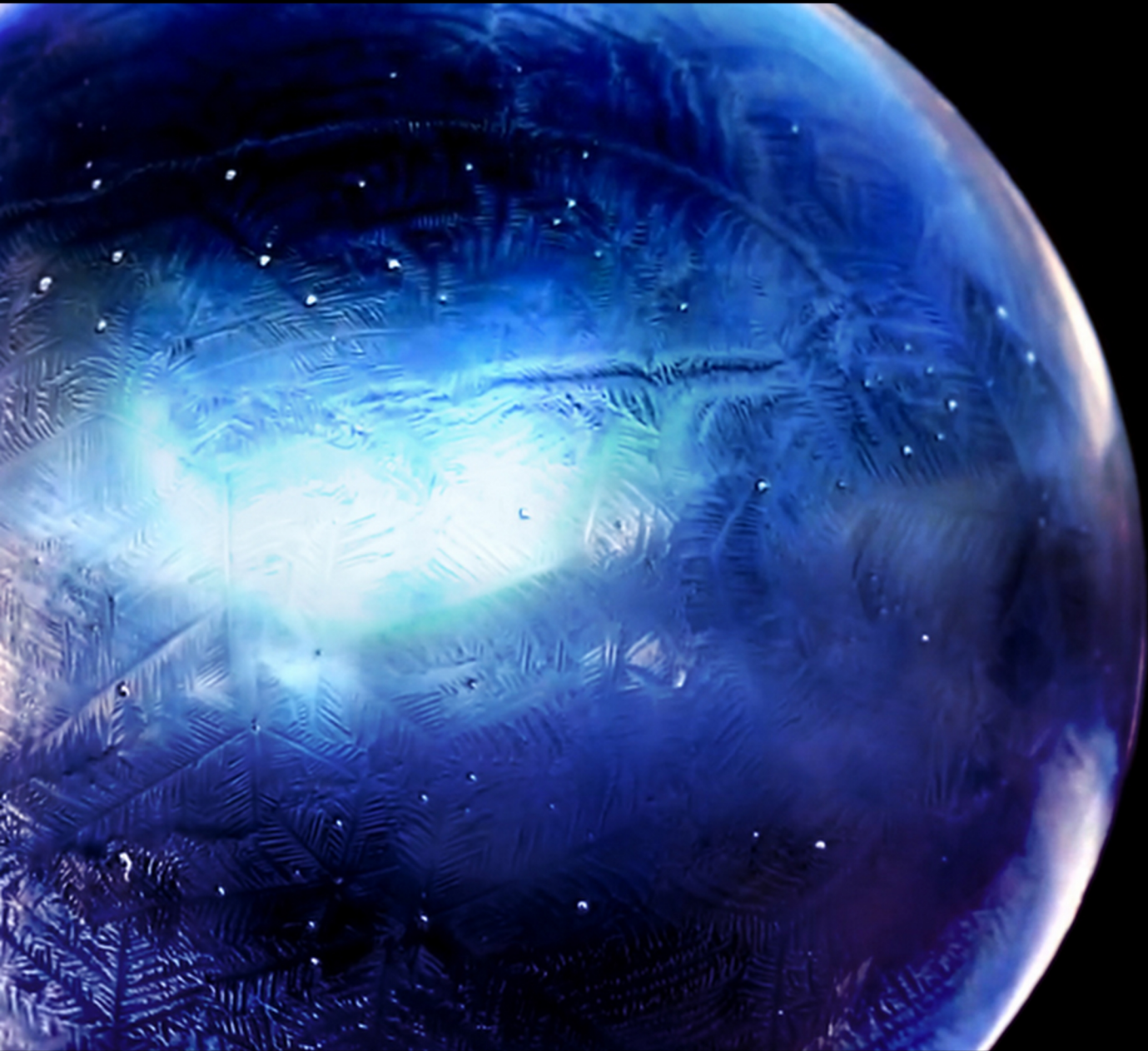
Spectatorship is an important concept in film theory. The film builds a specific relationship with every individual who experiences it. What we experience in consciousness is inflected with and shaped by the unconscious and that addressing the needs of unconscious life can be fundamental to aesthetic appreciation. Life and memory: The key contemporary photographic and video-film narratives. Memories is a key component of who we are. Its subjective and fragmentary nature forms our personality. It is a matter of philosophical debate since ancient times. Through art we record and preserve and try to dominate its fleeting state. When we remember something from the past we think of it in parts as if putting together a puzzle, which is really ready and exists in our minds...when we think of our past that helps us become better persons... As a medium, film is unique because it captures life in a way that cannot be captured through other forms of art, like painting or photography. Experimental film is a term for moving images that explore the human condition, nature, or fantasy in ways that haven't been traditionally explored before.

For this special edition of WomenCinematic we have selected Skin deep - an hymn to Eros, an extremely interesting dance video that our readers have already started to get to know in the introductory pages of this article and that can be viewed at https://youtu.be/mnuoDrd_hJo. Centered on the resonance between the body and its surroundings, this stimulating film has at once impressed us of for the way you have been capable of providing the results of your artistic research with such captivating aesthetics, inviting the viewers to such a multilayered experience: when



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walking our readers through the genesis of *Skin deep* - an hymn to Eros, would you tell us how did you develop the initial idea?

When I create a video work, for the most part, I am creating videodance, (also known as screendance), I am not documenting. I am making dance for the camera. I choreograph a piece knowing that I will re-organize and 'manipulate' the material during the editing process. combining Elements such as time, space, speed and spatial composition. In addition, one incorporates the movement of the camera, as well as the composition of the frames. Even though the body in movement is the 'seed' and inspiration of screendance, often the movement phrases get 'throw' around, the end becomes the beginning, the body gets fragmented and layers of dancers end up superimposed into different backgrounds, creating a new work which in some cases is far apart from the movement material that it was based on. My decisions are based on the rhythm and composition of the new piece, as well as on the design, contrast and the proximity to the camera. I am trying to create a creating a visual metaphor. Using a combination of both, narrative and location. The concept of a video choreography, in my films, is based on my own lyrics texts and ideas.

The central idea in this film is arising from the question of Love...This word that dominates the senses...which has never been deciphered. I believe thats where its magic lies. I wouldnt like to lose this magic, wouldnt like to shed too much light on it, because that is when itll become irretrievable. Ill play with it, Like I did when I was a little girl





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A more intense oscillation culminates in greater energy. The energy change and the delicate change in its coordination may constitute the beginning of a process. Birth or death. The energy reduction of the frequency of a vibration may cause something to manifest itself as matter in the material and visible world. What is more, the increase of a frequency of a vibration causes something to manifest itself as invisible energy. Everything is driven to an "energy alignment" at the specific point in "the present". Therefore, although the greater part of our knowledge of the world is dependent upon light, we are unable to fully conceive of its properties.

The Body- It is the shadow of an existing object. Of some other object, some other shape- form-figure and not simply of a body as it is perceived by the imperfect human senses.

There is no such thing as isolated people. They are not separated by a void. They are united by light, radiation. They are capacitors of the same material and are forever communicating with each other. If we feel isolated, it is because we don't fully comprehend the universal continuum. We don't feel, haven't sharpened our senses so as to realise that we are not alone. Loneliness is our personal problem, not a problem of nature. Nature did not create us alone, we brought it on to ourselves. We experience loneliness which is the result of our own actions and our own perception. There is nothing to be taken for granted. Is anything to be

taken for granted in love, for instance? Once you take something for granted in love, love is dead.

We have appreciated the way your approach to dance conveys sense of freedom and reflects rigorous approach to the grammar of body language: how do you consider the relationship between the necessity of scheduling the details of your performative gestures and the need of spontaneity? How important is improvisation in your process?

Improvisation helps keep you on your toes, not tied to a script. And, if you're doing it right, it helps you take everything personally which creates a better stage presence as well. Without improvisation there can be no creativity— only mimicry. Through this you are accepting, cooperating and communicating... so is actually the opposite of the fear reactions. Fight, flight and fright. In other words you're going from fear to trust.

Featuring well orchestrated camera work, *Skin deep* has drawn heavily from the specifics of its environment and we have highly appreciated the way you have created such insightful resonance between urban and natural environment, as the breathtaking views of Castel del Monte - and dance: how did you select the locations and how did they affect the performing and shooting process?

Nature has always been close to my heart. People today have forgotten they're really just a part of

nature. They destroy the nature on which our lives depend. They don't see that they're going to perish. I have always been interested in studying and practicing art in various forms. The body, itself, is living art. Our movement through time and space is art. Our bodies are used as portals to move through this world. The base of all our communication with one another. It is our flesh and blood that is the base of what makes us human and how we are all linked to one another. Castel del Monte is one of the most mysterious building works. The building appearing in the film is one that reminds of the original Castel del Monte - an ancient castle very close to Olympus Mountain. The one called Platamon Castle. . The filming was very difficult due to the needs of the aerial performance. There were lots of things to be considered before filming. Each scene was a meditation on the landscape, with dance-characters entering a leaving frame, becoming one flowing organism. Each choice of light had its own purpose, I set the tone of the scene, trying to introduce or trying to breaking away from a dream sequence. Art is for the people, it is supposed to move us and allow us to see the world from different perspectives. The scenes has to be taken from real life experiences and presents them in a way that is relatable and allows the viewer to submerge themselves in the film and view it as if they are the character themselves and each memory or dream is their own.

Reminding us of Peter Greenaway's surreal atmospheres... We have been really impressed with your film, and we really appreciate the way you

explore the resonance between the body and its surroundings, capturing unconscious emotional reactions, as well as your sapient use of offscreen space, reminding us of Pina Bausch's Die Klage der Kaiserin: Skin deep challenges the viewers' perceptual categories to create personal narratives: what are you hoping Skin deep will trigger in the spectatorship? In particular, how much important is for you to address the viewer's imagination in order to elaborate personal associations? In particular, how open would you like your works to be understood?

I keep thinking that We might do not need a text-based cinema ... we need an image- based cinema. Something close to poetry in motion. A poets duty is to tell what others are afraid to express and help his fellow human get through life... Cinema uses our life. I am Trying to combine elements of various art mediums and use them in film, combining poetry, photography, and paintings in most of my experimental shots. Its a great honor , actually, to be mentioned next to great artist, such as Pina Bausch and Peter Greenaway. Both artists of true inspiration. Pina Bausch has changed the dance and theatre landscape forever. Always provocative. Watching Bausch's choreography is like watching life through a train window: unexpected peeks into private places. So, some parts of Bausch work wash the past, leaving you unmoved, while there are moments which leave you wondering how she got the keys to your soul...where you step, you will find that everything moves in perfect symphony with everything else. Peter



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Greenaway, believes that everything is connected and relevant to the artist. His work has been trying to invest a lot of energy and imagination into the notions of strong and effective pictorial communication...

My short films are an expression of my thoughts, emotions, intuitions, and desires, but it is even more personal than that: its about sharing the way I experience the world, which for me is an extension of personality. It is the communication of intimate concepts that cannot be faithfully portrayed by words alone...

The combination between sound and visual is a crucial component of your artistic practice and we have appreciated the way the effective sound tapestry provides the footage of Skin deep - an hymn to Eros with such an ethereal and a bit enigmatic atmosphere: as an artist particularly concerned in the connection between sound and moving images, how would you consider the role of sound within your practice and how do you see the relationship between sound and movement?

For me, filmmaking combines everything. In films, painting and literature, theatre and music come together.

In the first scene, music composition is interpreted with harmonica instrument combined with finger clicks on the microphone, resulting in beats and buzz that resemble a distant pseudo- rhythmic storm.

I chose as a model the process music (based on minimalism, a transformation of original melody) Key characteristics: oscillation, coordination, meeting, truth.





The second part was played with synth. Key characteristics: searching, loneliness and awareness.

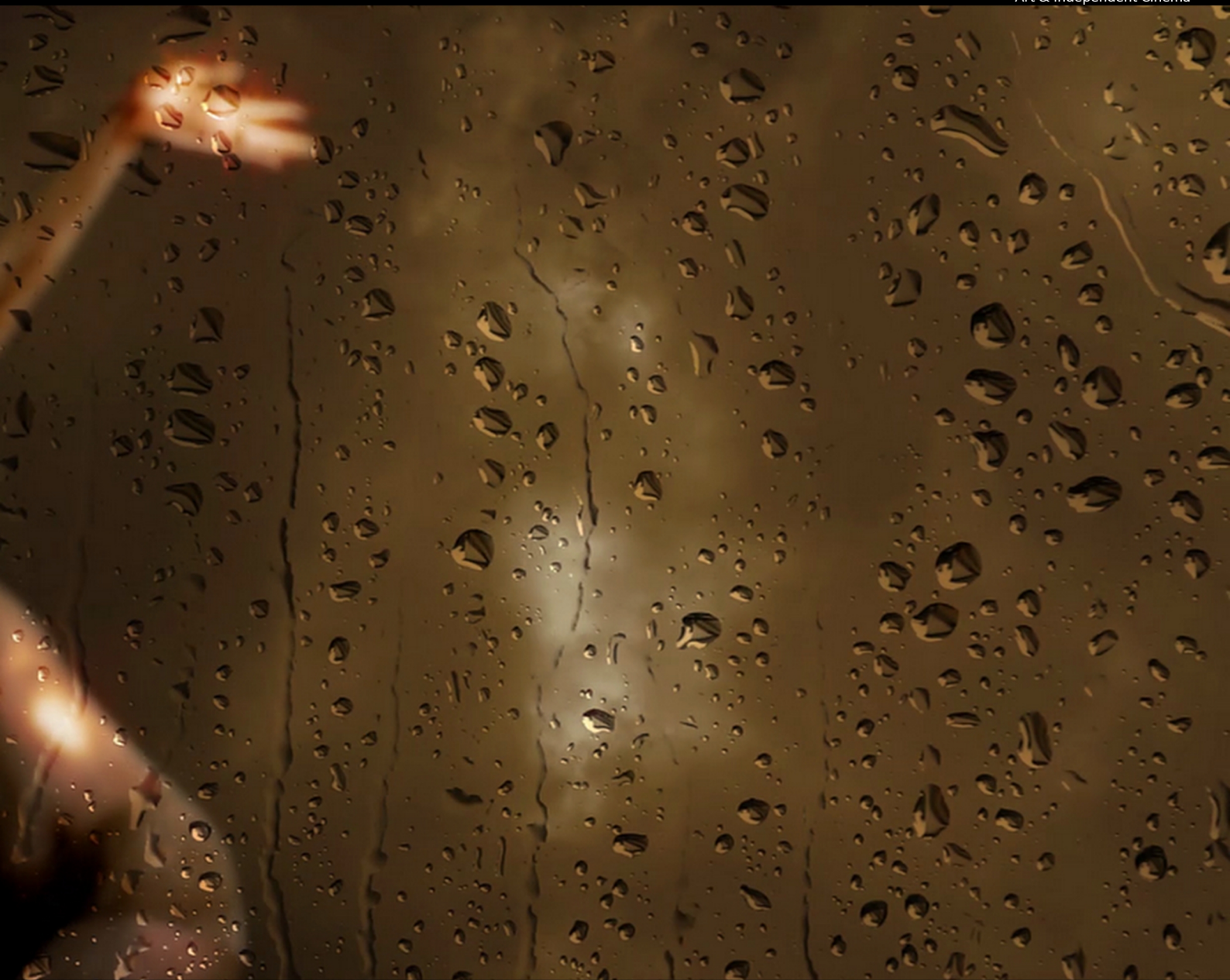
These days, to be experimental is to begin to speak a language that not everyone speaks yet. Putting music within a scene changes it completely.

It's a combination- a synthesis of poetry and film that generates associations, connotations and metaphors neither the verbal nor the visual text would produce on its own. That the essence of poetry is its unique presentation of ideas, is the art form's ability to inspire a state of rational and irrational bliss through language. The words themselves become images and appear as visual text on the screen.

As you have remarked in your artist's statement, in the last few years you have been searching for new possibilities to break the physical and mental boundaries as a performer. To emphasize the need of establishing a total involvement between the work of art and the spectatorship, Swiss visual artist Pipilotti Rist once remarked that "we are trying to build visions that people can experience with their whole bodies, because virtual worlds cannot replace the need for sensual perceptions." Do you think that this statement reflects the direction of your artistic trajectory? Moreover, do you think that the role of artists has changed these days with the new sensibility created by new media?

The body has been an integral part of the self-concept, and body image has come to play an important role in contemporary society as a means of constructing,





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mbolizing and expressing one's selves. Performance art is the "unconscious" scenery.

eams and traumas are the content of this unconscious, and a performer's art is to externalize these and enlarge them, so that they become available, ultimately, to the gaze of the other. It is something you can feel.

Technology allows me to feel more, not less, connected to what I am creating. Technology is reshaping what art is and how it is produced.

How do many artists express the ideas that they explore through presentations of the body and by using their own bodies in their creative processes: how do you consider the relationship between the abstract feature of the ideas you aim to communicate and the physical act of creating your works?

Through my films, I am trying to expand the possibilities of visual/conceptual connections and offer different ways in searching the notion of visual metaphors, while at the same time using audio-visual temporal specificity make possible for more direct metaphorical connections. I could say that a material body does not simply develop but reaches its original stages. The Body- It is the shadow of an existing object. Of some other object, some other shape-form-figure and not simply of a body as it is perceived by the imperfect human senses. If life is the greatest form of art, then it seems only natural for artists to use the physical body as a medium. The body in performance art is a ... passage and transformation of sense and sensation into







and through the flesh of the body. It produces its own level of significance.

For the performer, exposing his/ her own flesh gives rise to an inverted theoretical movement. Through the performative act, he/ she can loosen oneself from his/her own flesh and be directed back to it.

For example contemporary dance, to a high degree depend upon the body and its alteration. A relationship between artist and her artwork is a relation between her body and physical world that encircling her. It is a process during which the artist reshapes reality in accordance with aesthetic criterions.

We have really appreciated the originality of your artistic research and before leaving this conversation we want to catch this occasion to ask you to express your view on the future of women in contemporary art scene. For more than half a century women have been discouraged from producing something 'uncommon, however in the last decades there are signs that something is changing. How would you describe your personal experience as an unconventional artist? And what's your view on the future of women in this interdisciplinary field?

Why have there not been many women artists in the art scene? The answer probably lies in the fact that women were neglected as artists, or anything that differed from their assigned roles, whichever period that was in. art started to be seen as a powerful medium to introduce the world to a womans point of view about their socio-political status, to describe their lives,



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personal experiences, to show a woman's body in a different light, coming from the very owner of it.

The goal of it all was to create change! We should keep fighting for women's rights, giving them a vision of a better future.

When I reflect on the question of sexism, I realize I don't think of whether someone is male or female; what is most important is that they excel at what they do. I believe there is a lack of female representation in every segment of the art world—from artists to art dealers and business leaders to art collectors; especially at the top. This is not new and unique to the art world alone. It takes will, focus, and patience to overcome this challenge, but the future is bright. I am an optimist.

Thanks a lot for your time and for sharing your thoughts, Angelina. Finally, would you like to tell us readers something about your future projects? How do you see your work evolving?

My last work fuses the use of spoken word poetry, visual images, and sound to create a stronger presentation and interpretation of the meaning being conveyed. It's a cinematic poem. .. It has never been important for me to know exactly why I am doing it. The basic sensation is wanting to do what I do....

An interview by **Francis L. Quettier**
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