

*Meat Joy* has the character of an erotic rite: excessive, indulgent; a celebration of flesh as material: raw fish, chickens, sausages, wet paint, transparent plastic, rope, brushes, paper scrap. Its propulsion is toward the ecstatic, shifting and turning between tenderness, wildness, precision, abandon—qualities that could at any moment be sensual, comic, joyous, repellent. Physical equivalences are enacted as a psychic and imagistic stream in which the layered elements mesh and gain intensity by the energy complement of the audience. (...)

In precisely determined patterns, vertical, diagonal, and horizontal shafts of movement and lighting cut through the overall circular structures of *Meat Joy*. The popular songs occurring throughout most sequences are “circular” in their thematic and rhythmic three minute disc-spun durations, and they introduce a literal, historic time-popular “ritual” sound centering the sensory flow. Tapes of Paris street sounds were superimposed: the cries and clamoring of rue de Seine vendors selling fish, chickens, vegetables, and flowers beneath the hotel window where I first composed the actual performance score. These shouts dominate a layering of traffic noise and displace the songs’ recognizable continuity, interfering with their associative range.

Schneemann, C. *Meat Joy, 1965*. In: *Imaging her erotics: essays, interviews, projects*. MIT Press, 2003.

“Fuses was made as an homage to a relationship of ten years—to a man with whom I lived and worked as an equal. We are perceived through the eyes of our cat. (...)

I did the filming even while I was participant in the action. There were no aspects of lovemaking which I would avoid; as a painter I had never accepted the visual and tactile taboos concerning specific parts of the body. And as a painter I was free to examine the celluloid itself: burning, baking, cutting, and painting it, dipping my footage in acid, and building dense layers of collage and complex A- and B-rolls held together with paper clips. (...)

There is precise cutting between close-ups of the female and male genitals. I wanted viewers to confront identifications and attitudes toward their own and the other's gender. Perhaps because it was made of her own life by a woman, *Fuses* is both a sensuous and equitable interchange; neither lover is "subject" or "object."

Schneemann, C. *Notes on Fuses*, 1971.

## 20.

A rehearsal or movement event from which I hoped to discover an image to carry the central visual metaphor of Illinois Central. (...) I shredded a roll of white printer's paper and filled a bucket with wallpaper paste and molasses. My intention was not simply to collage my body (as an object), but to enact movement so that the collage image would be active, found, not predetermined or posed. When I had covered myself with glue, I ran back and forth around the pile of papers until the momentum of the runs provoked a fall into it. Once there I rolled heavily to attach the papers to my body in random shape and proportion. Standing up led to an impulse to fly. I stood on three iron steps leading from the loft to the fire escape, my arms moving up and down like wings until I "took off" in a flying-run

down the steps. The figure poised on the steps, the sense of elevation and lightly attached papers produced a propulsion, an alighting.

Schneemann, C. *Notes on Body Collage*, 1967.

21.

In *Kitch's Last Meal* synchronicity becomes a physical property, as with accident, as with joke-double entendre. The actual projection system is of two simultaneous Super 8 reels—vertical, one above the other. The disjunctive imagery has been intricately edited: two reels periodically phrase simultaneous images of the local freight train, which ran behind our house, as well as domestic events between the artist couple and the thematic constancy of the cat, Kitch, eating during the last four years of her life. The film is composed of five hours of double-coordinated reels; each set approximately twenty minutes long, so that various time units can be shown. The reels were edited over the five years of the filming. The sound was edited on cassette tapes.

Schneemann, C. *Kitch's Last Meal*, 1981.

22.

Entrance and Exit: The Coat Room.

Admission to the *Parts of a Body House* requires only that everyone bring a coat. The coat is hung up on any one of a series of infinite coat racks. On leaving, everyone picks up and takes away a coat of their choice which is not the one they brought.

When you enter the *Body House* you walk south and north for a long time; you come

to an open circular structure—a staircase of ribs, smooth and shiny white. You will see a fat knotted rope of black hair hanging down. The circular space has become dark. Take off your clothes, leave them. Hoist yourself up the rope; the hairs spread out and become a carpet you crawl along. It has lead you into the Cat House which is somewhere behind the eyes of the house.

Cat House is a tiny room filled entirely with cats. They have their own small door and enter and exit at will. Lie down among cats cats kiss stroke and brush walk sleep turn gently up and down your body some cats knead your hairs or belly they sniff your chin, your ears your thigh your armpits your sex dozens of furry shapes different weights textures walk on you move around you brush against you lick you cats eyes shift shine blink off blink on cats purr hum vibrate there is a tail against your neck lights of cats eyes flashing

Schneemann, C. *Parts of a Body House Book*. Beau Geste Press, 1972.

23.

“My need had been to occupy a place of visual simultaneities, to bring forward evidence of a changing multiplicity. (...). By the sixties I took the painting surface into three dimensions with collage, objects, and motorized elements. This was the obvious implication of Abstract Expressionism. The works of Pollock, de Kooning, could only be viewed with optical muscularity—the entire body was active.

*Up to and Including Her Limits* was the direct result of Pollock's physicalized painting process. In *Up to and Including Her Limits*, I am suspended in a tree surgeon's harness on a three-quarter-

inch Manila rope, a rope which I can raise or lower manually to sustain an entranced period of drawing—my extended arm holds crayons which stroke the surrounding walls, accumulating a web of colored marks. My entire body becomes the agency of visual traces, vestige of the body's energy in motion."

Schneemann, C. In: MoMA's film series *Behind the Scenes: On Line: Carolee Schneemann*, u.d.

24.

Since he was a kitten, my cat Cluny woke me every morning with deep kisses. During each week—even half-asleep—I reached for a hand-held Olympus camera to film our kissing. Lighting, angles, exposure, and focus were always unpredictable. Each resulting 35mm slide image is mirror-printed in Xerachrome. These "flipped" images introduce permutations of repeated form as a time process, and the repeated rhythms of convexity, concavity eroticize the shapes surrounding the human and animal mouths. The intimacy between cat and woman becomes a refraction of the viewers' attitudes to self and nature, sexuality and control, the taboo and the sacred. Cluny died in 1988 after being bitten on his mouth by a rat. He was reborn as Vesper in 1990 and continued the kissing expressivity until his death, of leukemia, in 1998. *Infinity Kisses II* continued the dissolution of the boundaries between human and animal, reason and the irrational. In *Infinity Kisses*, the expressive self-determination of a cat is captured in recurring sequences as he ritualistically, ardently kisses me on the mouth.

Schneemann, C. In: *Imaging her erotics: essays, interviews, projects*. Mit Press, 2003.

The last thing I wanted to do at the Telluride Film Festival was an "action." (...) Stan Brakhage had invited me to introduce a program of erotic films by women, and together we made a selection. In the festival brochure we were dismayed to read our program titled as *The Erotic Woman*. I found myself stuck in the lodge facing the mountains, writing away at an introduction to explain my objections to the title of the film program and to the festival brochure itself. The cover had a drawing of a naked man in sunglasses, opening his coat (a flasher) to show "Fourth Telluride Film Festival" lettered across his chest; below the waist was a blank space—he had been deprived of genitals, but knees, socks and shoes had been granted.

Stan introduced me to the film audience while I sat wrapped in a sheet on the small Victorian stage under its hand-painted drop curtain and proscenium arches. I read my introductory statement, which included this:

"Having been described and proscribed by the male imagination for so long, no woman artist now wants to assume that she will define an 'erotic woman' for other women—the very notion immediately reverts to the traditional stereotypes that this program of films vividly counters. Perhaps these films will redefine 'the erotic woman,' or to the contrary, the films will be found to be anti-erotic, sub-erotic, non-erotic. Perhaps this 'erotic woman' will be seen as primitive, devouring, insatiable, clinical, obscene, or forthright, courageous, integral."

At the conclusion of the statement I unwrapped the sheeting and slowly applied stripes of mud to my body from a bowl filled from the Telluride mining stream. Then the scroll was extended and read.

Schneemann, C. In: *Imaging her erotics: essays, interviews, projects*. Mit Press, 2003.

26.

BE PREPARED:

to have your brain picked

to have the pickings misunderstood

to be mistreated whether your success  
increases or decreases

to have detraction move with admiration—  
in step

to have your time wasted

your intentions distorted

the simplest relationships in your  
thoughts twisted

to be USED and MISUSED

to be "copy" to be copied to want to cope  
out

cop out pull in and away

if you are a woman (and things are not  
utterly changed)

they will almost never believe you really  
did it

(what you did do)

they will worship you they will ignore you

they will malign you they will pamper you

they will try to take what you did as their  
own

(a woman doesn't understand her best  
discoveries after all)

they will patronize you humor you

try to sleep with you want you to transform  
them

with your energy

they will berate your energy

they will try to be part of your sexuality

they will deny your sexuality or your work

they will depend on you for information  
for generosity

they will forget whatever help you give

they will try to be heroic for you  
they will not help you when they might  
they will bring problems  
they will ignore your problems  
a few will appreciate deeply  
they will be loving you  
as what you do as what you are  
loving how you are being they will of  
course  
be strong in themselves and clear they  
will NOT  
be married to quiet tame drones they will  
not say  
what a great mother you would be  
or do you like to cook and where you might  
expect  
understanding and appreciation you must  
expect NOTHING  
then enjoy whatever gives-to-you  
as long as it does and however  
and NEVER justify yourself just do what  
you feel carry it strongly yourself

27.

Scroll 2, 1977

I met a happy man  
a structuralist filmmaker—  
but don't call me that  
it's something else I do—  
he said we are fond of you  
you are charming  
but don't ask us  
to look at your films  
we cannot  
there are certain films  
we cannot look at  
the personal clutter  
the persistence of feelings  
the hand-touch sensibility  
the diaristic indulgence  
the painterly mess  
the dense gestalt  
the primitive techniques  
(I don't take the advice  
of men who only talk to



themselves)

PAY ATTENTION TO CRITICAL  
AND PRACTICAL FILM LANGUAGE  
IT EXISTS FOR AND IN ONLY  
ONE GENDER

even if you are older than I  
you are a monster I spawned  
you have slithered out  
of the excesses and vitality  
of the sixties . . .

he said you can do as I do  
take one clear process  
follow its strictest  
implications intellectually  
establish a system of  
permutations establish  
their visual set . . .

I said my film is concerned  
with DIET AND DIGESTION  
very well he said then  
why the train?

the train is DEATH as there  
is die in diet and di in  
digestion

then you are back to metaphors  
and meanings

my work has no meaning beyond  
the logic of its systems

I have done away with  
emotion intuition inspiration—  
those aggrandized habits which  
set artists apart from  
ordinary people—those  
unclear tendencies which  
are inflicted upon viewers . . .

it's true I said when I watch  
your films my mind wanders  
freely . . .

during the half hour of  
pulsing dots I compose letters  
dream of my lover

write a grocery list  
rummage in the trunk  
for a missing sweater  
plan the drainage pipes for  
the root cellar . . .

it is pleasant not to be  
manipulated

he protested  
you are unable to appreciate  
the system the grid  
the numerical rational  
procedures—  
the Pythagorean cues—  
I saw my failings were worthy  
of dismissal I'd be buried  
alive my works lost . . .  
he said we can be friends  
equally though we are not artists  
equally I said we cannot  
be friends equally and we  
cannot be artists equally  
he told me he had lived with  
a "sculptress" I asked does  
that make me a "film-makeress"?  
"Oh no," he said. "We think of you  
as a dancer."

Carolee Schneemann, In: *Kitch's Last Meal*, 1973-1978 .

28.

Covered in paint, grease, chalk, ropes, plastic, I establish my body as visual territory. Not only am I an image-maker, but I explore the image values of flesh as material I choose to work with. The body may remain erotic, sexual, desired, desiring but it is as well votive: marked, written over in a text of stroke and gesture discovered by my creative female will.

Carolee Schneemann, "Eye Body". In: *More Than Meat Joy*, Bruce McPherson, ed., New Paltz, N. Y: Documentext 1979.

29.

I thought of the vagina in many ways—physically, conceptually, as a sculptural form, an architectural referent, the source of sacred knowledge,

ecstasy, birth passage, transformation. I saw the vagina as a translucent chamber of which the serpent was an outward model. enlivened by its passage from the visible to the invisible: a spiraled coil ringed with the shape of desire and generative mysteries, with attributes of both female and male sexual powers. This source of interior knowledge could be symbolized as the primary index unifying spirit and flesh in Goddess worship. I related womb and vagina to primary knowledge, recorded as earliest history with strokes and cuts on bone and rock. By these marks, I believe, my ancestor measured her menstrual cycles, pregnancies, lunar observations, agricultural notations—the origins of time factoring, of mathematical equivalences—of abstract relations.

Censorship and pornography are blood brothers. We will never find one without the other. If my paintings, photographs, film, and enacted works have been judged obscene, the question arises: is this because I use the body in its actuality—without contrivance, fetishization, displacement? Is this because my photographic works are usually self-shot, without an external, controlling eye? And are these works obscene because I posit my female body as a locus of autonomy, pleasure, desire; and insist that as an artist I can be both image and image maker, merging two aspects of a self deeply fractured in the contemporary imagination?

Schneemann, C. In: *The Obscene Body/ Politic*, 1991.

“Istory” has been my solution to the History/Herstory tug and pull. Whenever possible I use a neutral noun or pronoun

instead of a specific gender. A few years ago Clayton Eshleman asked about my use of "Istory": did I know Olsen's reference to "Istorin" in the Greek as "the root of history?" Eshleman explained an ancient conflict. Thucydides defined Istorin as "history as facts"; Herodotus defined Istorin as "the personal search for the real."

(...) For a painter no part of the body should have been considered taboo, relegated to a subphysical "actuality"! As a student I painted self-portraits using my entire body as one which stood for all or any human shape from which I would learn. I was free to study, perceive my own genital shape and form—as well as my ears and elbows. My art professor told other students this study was narcissistic. I was dumbfounded. I thought I had "objectified" my own fragile, but concrete reality in a stream of istoric image-making.

Schneemann, C. In: *Cézanne, She Was a Great Painter* (1975).

31.

The use of my own body as integral to my work was confusing to many people. I was permitted to be an image but not an image-maker creating her own self-image. If I had only been dancing, acting, I would have maintained forms of feminine expression acceptable to the culture: "be the image we want." But I was directing troupes of performers, technicians; creating lights, sound, electronic systems, environments, costumes—every aspect of production, and then physically moving in the space I had created. Some people wanted to constrain our actions as seductive, provocative, obscene, but

the tenderness, boldness, spontaneity and pleasure which the performers communicated forced them to question their own attitudes. After a time, the audience stopped yelling: "Is this art? Is this sex? Is this some religion?"

Schneemann, C. In: *Cézanne, She Was a Great Painter* (1975).

32.

Mysteries of the Pussies  
Performative Lecture with Teija Lammi

Pori, Finland, June 1998

Text at beginning of film: *Teija Lammi, the museum librarian, takes off her glasses and lets down her hair when she agrees to improvise with Carolee Schneemann. They physically respond to projected images of Carolee's cars, domestic and travel surroundings. Texts from Schneemann's research on gender and feline abuse are read in both English and Finnish.*

Carolee Schneemann: Vulva goes to school and discovers she doesn't exist.

[Teija Lammi translates to Finnish.]

CS: Vulva goes to church and discovers she is obscene, quote from St. Augustine.

[TL translates to Finnish.]

CS: Vulva goes to church and discovers she is obscene.

[TL translates to Finnish.]

CS: Vulva deciphers Lacan and Baudrillard and discovers she is only a sign, a

signification of the void, of absence, of what is not male. She is given a pen for taking notes. Vulva reads biology and understands she is an amalgam of proteins and oxytocin hormones which govern all her desires.

[TL translates to Finnish.]

CS: Vulva reads biology and realizes she is an amalgam of proteins and oxytocin hormones which govern all her desires.

[TL translates to Finnish.]

CS: Vulva studies Freud and realizes she will have to transfer a clitoral orgasm to her vagina. Vulva reads Masters and Johnson and understands her vaginal orgasms have not been measured by any instrumentality and that she should only experience clitoral orgasms.

"The torture of animals, especially cats, was a popular amusement throughout early modern Europe. To protect yourself from sorcery by cats, there was one classic remedy. Maim it, cut its tail, clip its ears, smash one of its legs, tear or burn its fur, and you would break its malevolent power." That's from Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*, New York, Basic Books, 1984.

Vulva decodes feminist constructivist semiotics. She realizes she has no authentic feelings at all. Even her erotic sensations are constructed by patriarchal projections, impositions and conditioning.

[TL translates to Finnish.]

CS: Vulva interprets essentialist feminist texts and paints her face with her menstrual blood, howling when the moon is full.

[TL translates to Finnish.]

CS: Vulva strips naked, fills her mouth and cunt with paintbrushes and runs into the Cedar Bar at midnight to frighten the ghosts of de Kooning, Pollock, Kline.

Vulva recognizes her symbols in graffiti under the railroad trestle. Slit, snatch, enchilada, beaver, muff, koozie, fish and finger pie.

[TL translates to Finnish.]

CS: Vulva learns to analyze politics by asking, "Is this good for Vulva?"

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33.

In my artistic journey, I've perceived a significant shift in the themes that impel me to paint.

Initially, I felt an impulse to tackle issues such as violence and machismo, subjects that bothered me deeply. Over time, even though these concerns are still existing, they seem to have given way to a greater emphasis on the inherent questions of the painting itself. I feel there has been an internal battle between what I want to express and how I want to express it. In my perception as an artist, the creative process always takes precedence over the content I'm exploring.

Despite these changes, I remain faithful to a figurative approach. For me, this representation serves as a kind of safety net. I can move freely within this space, exploring different directions and ideas, but always with the security of having this support structure. I'm a fairly Cartesian person, who seeks order and clarity in many aspects of life. However, my art is the opposite of

this: it's chaotic, free and explosive. Removing this freedom would be like closing a door that I haven't yet had the courage to explore.

Márcia Falcão

34.

These bodies have always been a constant presence in my work, ever since my education days - and they still fascinate me a lot. (...) Often, as I paint, I reflect on how these bodies, especially the naked ones, serve as a great metaphor in painting. If you look at it, there is a nudity in the process itself that is revealed in the result of the work, especially in this Capoeira series, in which I even leave traces of charcoal in the drawing in some works. It's a procedural nakedness, which reveals how the painting reaches its conclusion, where it has been and how it got there.

(...) You can still find traces of violence and resistance to sexism here, themes that were present in my early works and which continue to be discussed. The difference lies in opening the door to painting a little wider and closing the door to figuration, which was so necessary and so obligatory until then.

Márcia Falcão

35.

In the *Yoga* series, I explored the relationship between bodies and space, seeking a dialog between the desire for freedom and the feeling of imprisonment. Here, each work represented a conflict between the claustrophobia of the confined body and the search for physical and perhaps even spiritual liberation.



As this series evolved, I felt a growing need to introduce movement into my works. That's when Capoeira came along, an artistic expression that shares some elements with *Yoga*, but allows for a more playful and dynamic exploration of body movement. At this stage, I delved deeply into researching the names of capoeira moves, realizing how these terms evoked vivid images.

This connection between the title of the works and the resulting image of anatomical distortion became an additional layer in my creative process. In addition, the transition from the *Yoga* series to Capoeira brought about a change in the color palette, with the introduction of more vibrant and acidic tones, further highlighting bodily expression and the energy of movement. In both series, I have deeply explored the use of earthy palettes to represent the nuances of the skin while playing with chromatic saturation. This work has been a constant search for the expression of the body in its multiple states: imprisoned, liberated, distorted and dynamic.

Márcia Falcão

### 36.

The *Monumentais* series has its roots in the *Yoga* series. While the *Yogas* represented a feeling of claustrophobia, with the bodies barely fitting inside the frame, the *Monumentais* express a desire to transcend these limitations. I began to imagine what would be beyond the limits of the painting and what the space around these confined bodies would be. This gave rise to the idea of representing a smaller body dialoguing with a much larger one, gradually revealing itself.

I tried to work with the sublime and explore saturation and shades of gray to create an intriguing visual experience. In Monumentais, there is an optical play in which a larger figure slowly reveals itself to the viewer, challenging immediate perception. This technique seeks to prolong the contemplation time of the work, a dimension that interests me deeply in the construction of the images: the ability to slow down the time it takes to enjoy and read the paintings, allowing for a deeper and more contemplative immersion.

Márcia Falcão

37.

I have kept on tackling themes such as violence and suburbia, which have been present since my earliest works. However, I've been exploring the tools of painting. It's an interesting form of militancy for our times. I see few people really discussing painting itself, while many use it as a vehicle for other subjects. That's valid, of course, but what about painting itself? When are we going to talk about it? It's also a question of debating representation and point of view, among other things. With so many centuries of painting history, there is a lot to be explored. We are in an extremely visual age.

Márcia Falcão

38.

I usually try to create a visual impact that involves the viewer, making them feel immersed in the work. Often, this experience requires the viewer to move around the painting, exploring it from different angles. As I finish my works,

I realize the importance of inserting elements that draw the viewer in for a closer look, even if the work is initially designed to be seen from a distance. What interests me is the sensory reaction that art can provoke, going beyond simple like or dislike. (...) I am constantly interested in challenging the expectations of artistic perception, sometimes exploring the grotesque or provoking a visceral reaction in the viewer, as a way of breaking away from the constant seduction of images.

Márcia Falcão

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39.

I connect quite easily with the practices of artists from another era or another historical moment. I let myself benefit from all that knowledge as if they were philosophical tools for approaching the current reality. I'm also interested in formal and procedural aspects, I feel totally authorized to use these resources, I believe that each artist's practice is a teaching that shouldn't be wasted... So this gives me a lot of freedom to act, to get closer and to distance myself, to transpersonalize, to make myself available as a tool for a thought from another era.

Diego Bianchi

40.

There are materials that I tend to identify with, because this confidence allows me to use them in a different way every time, as if I were an old acquaintance with whom I can continue a long conversation without repeating what has already been said, taking permissions and liberties, starting from a point

of confidence that allows me to move forward in the process, often in areas of uncertainty.

I generally work from existing things; the whole process is a permeable territory. I base myself on collections, discoveries, materials, replicating myself with what exists, materials that the space and the city propose.

Diego Bianchi

41.

I walk a lot. Here, I take long walks almost every evening: I'm attracted by the movement of the city, which seems to be disappearing, by the remnants of the daily hustle and bustle; I collect things if I can; and another side of the city that lives at a different pace or lives on the fringes of the system becomes visible. Being close to vulnerability is a different point of observation.

(...) In São Paulo, everything is huge, and humans seem smaller, it makes you want to hug yourself... also the permanent noise, the rampant demolition and construction, while, like human ants, we explore the dumpsters that expose the waste and entrails that are expelled daily from this great organism...

Diego Bianchi

42.

The veneration for objects, the affection they awaken in us, the things around us, always looking at us - they know things about us.

Sometimes I try to make them more vivid and vibrant, almost as if I'm inviting

them to express themselves. It's a complex love-hate relationship: I try to fix them, heal them, create layers of skin for them or take them apart, cut them up, break them, until I reach a point of torture so that they reveal something. (...) Architecture is often perceived as something definitive and immovable, something free from relationships with people, rather than with objects. (...) To work in a space, I need to explore it, soften it and become sensitive to this spatiality... I like to think that architecture can be softened by the bodies that inhabit it and accentuate this type of interaction, which is not only affective, but also implies a type of sensual experience.

Diego Bianchi

43.

Getting closer or moving away,  
distrusting visuality.

Getting a little confused, disoriented in  
order to reconfigure connections.

Observing from the belly, I think the  
only way to know is to know bodily, the  
body itself can be an antenna to navigate  
between links and reflections.

That interests me.

Diego Bianchi