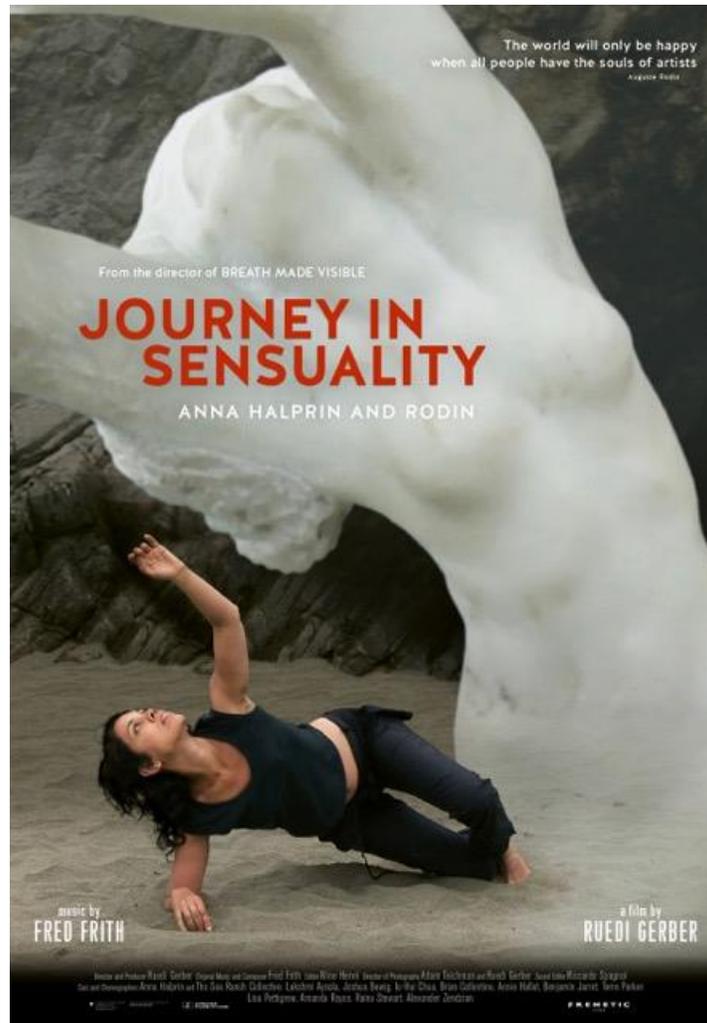


JOURNEY IN SENSUALITY – Anna Halprin & Rodin



a film by Ruedi Gerber
with
Anna Halprin and the Sea Ranch Collective

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SYNOPSIS

"The world will only be happy when all people have the souls of artists" Auguste Rodin."

After the international success of *Breath Made Visible*, *Journey in Sensuality* brings new insight into Anna Halprin's influential artistic work. Auguste Rodin's sculptures and Anna Halprin's creative process come together with the music of composer Fred Frith in this poetic film of dances in nature.

While in Paris for a major retrospective of her career at the Centre Pompidou, the American dance pioneer Anna Halprin reflects on her devastation of the images the pervasive violence in the world and seeing the most unimaginable horror of tortured, starved bodies at the Holocaust Museum. In the hopes of lifting her spirits, she visits the Musée Rodin, and is so deeply moved that she decides to create a performance based on Rodin's sculptures; expressing her vision, like Rodin, of the human body being a reflection of nature, something innocent, true and beautiful and the world's need for artistic beauty.

Rodin's sculptures spoke directly to her kinesthetic sense. His knowledge and struggle to capture the expression of the nature of the human body connected directly with her vision of dance. It also spoke to her lifelong quest for non-stylized, authentic movement.

This one-hour film, *Journey in Sensuality – Anna Halprin and Rodin*, offers for the first time ever in her 70+-year career, an intimate view into Anna Halprin's creative process and the making of a performance. It shows how she prepares the dancer, using Rodin's sculptures as a container, to create a performance that is at once authentic and visually powerful and touches the audience on an emotional level. The movement of the dancers and images of Rodin sculptures are supported by the brilliant, innovative score by composer, Fred Frith.

Melding Rodin's sculptures and testaments with the stunning footage of rehearsals on the Northern Californian coast, and the final piece performed by the nude dancers of the Sea Ranch Collective in a redwood forest, this film is a poetic portrait of the coming together and coming to life of the visions of two great artists – that we (our bodies) are a reflection of nature and ultimately humanity.



“Few artists continue working into their 90s and fewer still pioneer new and risky territory. Ruedi Gerber’s latest film Journey in Sensuality – Anna Halprin and Rodin masterfully captures both these impulses in the extraordinary dance artist Anna Halprin.

Chronicling with rare intimacy how the germ of Anna’s lifelong passion for nature and the natural body coalesce into a stunningly sensual dance on the raw Northern California coastline, this film maps the spiritual essence of Halprin’s bold dialogue across art forms. If the great impressionist sculptor August Rodin and Halprin had ever met, Journey in Sensuality beautifully captures just what might have resulted from a collaboration between these two master connoisseurs of the artful eroticism of the nude.”

Janice Ross, Professor Theatre & Performance Studies Dept., Stanford University & author of Anna Halprin, Experience as Dance

DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

Anna Halprin always reminded me in her work and performances, to sense my body. As she says, remember your body and accept it without judgment, but instead, how it is, with endless possibilities of expression.

Be it early in my direct work with Anna as an actor, or later as a filmmaker, I set my goals to communicate the feeling of the movement sense - the kinesthetic sense- in a cinematic way.

During the creative process of making this film, I was continually reminded of this endless resource. Specifically in the editing process, but also in the shooting, I focused on that sense of movement; anticipating the movement, tracking the movement, so that the audience is able to follow it without intellectual perception.

In this film we look for the first time into the “factory” of Anna Halprin’s work. We experience the becoming of one of her “opuses” and understand her creation better. Originally I wanted to communicate with the dancer or artist with this film, but I soon realized that this work and this film is universal; that anyone can relate to this material.

I was enthusiastic to discover Anna’s affinity with Rodin, who lived 100 years ago and helped me to look at Rodin in a new way - to see the frozen moment as a vessel containing the artistic process and conveying it to us visually. Through many hours on the editing table and collaboration with the musician Fred Frith, I tried to achieve a kind of documentary film poem that celebrates the human body with the theme of “us”. It’s a ceremony. It’s us. This film shows how our emotions and movement are directly connected but there is also a technique and method behind this.

The work with nature is a very important part of this process, on the beach and in the forest with magical high trees. I intended to shoot and cut it in such a way as to bring to screen, this idea that we are a reflection of nature, and allow the viewer to truly and viscerally experience this work in a way that they could otherwise not, unless they were moving.

Recently in Rome – during a state visit, statues were covered out of religious fear or consideration. In a time like this, it is all the more urgent to remember the natural expressive beauty of the naked body and its uniqueness, as a statement of our human existence.



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BIOGRAPHY OF DIRECTOR/ PRODUCER RUEDI GERBER

Ruedi began his career as a professional theatre actor, performing in over 30 plays in Germany, Switzerland and Austria. Upon graduating with honors from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts in 1990, Gerber produced and directed a series of award-winning fictional shorts, including *Café Mechanique* and *Midnight Barbeque* (Best Director Award, NYU).

Transitioning into feature length films, Gerber continued to garner acclaim, beginning with his documentaries *Living with the Spill* (Channel 4, London), and *Meta-Mecano* (awarded Best Architecture Documentary, Paris 1997). Later, he directed his first narrative feature in the U.S., *Heartbreak Hospital*, starring Patricia Clarkson, John Shea, Damian Bichir, and Diane Venora. Soon after Gerber began work on what would become *Breath Made Visible*, a feature length documentary about Halprin's inspiring, trailblazing life and work, which premiered at the Locarno Film Festival and the Mill Valley Film Festival, where it won the Audience Award. Following *Seniors Rocking*, he directed and produced *Journey in Sensuality - Anna Halprin and Rodin*, completing the trilogy about the work of Anna Halprin.

Ruedi Gerber is also producing the Italian feature film *Girl in Flight - La Fuga* and is a producer of *Basmati Blues* with Donald Sutherland and Brie Larsen. His next project, *Songs of Seeds* - a documentary about rice farmers in Kerala, India - is in production.

FILMOGRAPHY

- 2016 *Journey in Sensuality – Anna Halprin & Rodin* (Director, Producer)
- 2015 *Girl in Flight- La Fuga* (Producer)
- 2015 *Basmati Blues* (Producer)
- 2010 *Seniors Rocking* (Director, Producer)
- 2009 *Breath Made Visible* (Director, Producer)
- 2002 *Heartbreak Hospital* (Director, Producer and Writer)
- 1997 *Meta-Mecano* (as Rudolf Gerber – Director, Producer and Writer)
- 1993-94 *Communication at Your Workplace* (Director)
- 1992 *Midnight Barbeque* (Short Film, Director, Producer)
- 1991 *Living with the Spill* (Documentary, Director, Producer)
- 1990 *Café Mechanique* (Short Film, Director, Producer)

CREW

Director and Producer Ruedi Gerber
Editor Aline Hervé
Composer Fred Frith
Camera Adam Teichman and Ruedi Gerber
Sound Editor Riccardo Spagnol
Grip Daniel Spalinger
Assistant Director Hannah Lichtenstein

CAST

Anna Halprin
and
The Sea Ranch Collective:
Lakshmi Aysola
Joshua Bewig
Jarell Iu-Hui Chua
Brian Collentine
Joy Cosculluela
Annie Hallat
Benjamin Jarrett
Terre Parker
Taira Restar
Amanda Royce
Lisa M. Russo
Rana Stewart
Alexander R. Zendzian
Robert Webb
Claudia Cuentes

BIOGRAPHY OF ANNA HALPRIN

Anna Halprin's diverse career has spanned the field of dance since the late 1930s, creating revolutionary directions for the art form and inspiring fellow choreographers to take modern dance to new dimensions. James Roose – Evans author of "Experimental Theatre" called Anna one of the most important theatre artists of the 20th century.

Anna founded the groundbreaking San Francisco Dancer's Workshop in 1955 and the Tamalpa Institute in 1978 with her daughter Daria Halprin. Over the years, her famous outdoor deck has been an explorative haven for numerous dancers and choreographers, including Merce Cunningham, Eiko and Koma, and Min Tanaka.

Halprin is an early pioneer in the expressive arts healing movement. Halprin has also investigated numerous social issues through dance and through theatrical innovations. Halprin has recognized new directions for dance and followed those paths into unknown territories, ever-willing to adapt her work to the present moment, a philosophy that led to a broad redefinition of dance.

Halprin has created 150 full-length dance theater works, which are extensively documented in photographs, books and on film. She is the recipient of numerous honors and awards including a lifetime achievement in choreography from the American Dance Festival. The Dance Heritage Coalition has named Anna Halprin one of "America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures".

In 2006 The Museum of Contemporary Art in Lyon, France presented a one-woman exhibition of her life's achievements. In 2009, the film "Breath Made Visible", a documentary of Anna's life and work premiered. The current film "Journey in Sensuality Anna Halprin and Rodin" a new film by Ruedi Gerber is being shown in select theaters.

At the age of 95, she continues to perform, travel, and teach with fervor.



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BIOGRAPHY OF FRED FRITH



Fred Frith is a songwriter, composer, improviser, and multi-instrumentalist best known for the reinvention of the electric guitar that began with *Guitar Solos* in 1974.

He learned his craft as both improviser and composer playing in rock bands, notably *Henry Cow*, and creating music in the recording studio. Much of his compositional output has been commissioned by choreographers and filmmakers, but his work has also been performed by *Ensemble Modern*, *Hieronymus Firebrain*, *Arditti Quartet*, *Robert Wyatt*, *Bang on a Can All Stars*, *Concerto Köln*, and *Rova Sax Quartet*, among quite a few others.

Fred teaches at *Mills College* in Oakland California and at the *Musik Akademie* in Basel, Switzerland.

FILM MUSIC

L'amour, l'argent, l'amour (2000, Director: Philip Gröning), *The Tango Lesson* (1997, Director: Sally Potter), *Middle of the Moment* (1995, Director: Nicolas Humbert und Werner Penzel), *Orlando* (1992, Director: Sally Potter), *Ostkreuz* (1991, Director: Michael Klier)
1995 version of Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin*