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film

# Schneemann met Brakhage as a teenager

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1960s, has been groundbreaking. Her 22-minute erotic film *Fuses*, won awards at Cannes in 1968.

"I take the position that I do not ask anyone else to do what I myself would not do and using myself as subject . . . as material (I) want to displace the power and separation of the artist from what's made," said Schneemann. "In the masculine tradition the director, the producer is always outside of the work because he's above it."

That decade she was involved in the making of three films dealing with the atrocities occurring during the on-going Vietnam War. Schneemann was outraged and deeply saddened by that situation. In *Viet Flakes*, she "travels" with an 8mm camera through images collected from magazines and newspapers over five years creating an animation to a sound collage by James Tenney.

She has also studied what she calls the destruction of Palestinian culture for five years, producing "a very unpopular video and booklet."

The work screening locally is a culmination of

Schneemann's anger at the actions of her native country.

"I'm from the (United States) and my country is in a prolonged progressive program of siege and destroying and overcoming other cultures," she said. "I study what my country is destroying without being problematic about it."

But she also has a strong connection to Canada, spending as much time here as possible. Here, she is inspired and finds "a sanity and a humanism" that is helpful in her work. In addition to her Montreal studio, she worked in Winnipeg and for some time, was in residency at Vancouver's Western Front.

"The art audience is very receptive to what I do. It's a mutual influence," said Schneemann.

Her work will be paired with Stan Brakhage's films at the gallery. Although he was born in New Mexico, he settled on the West Coast and passed away nearly three years ago in Victoria. His work is legendary and has influenced countless artists, including Schneemann.

"Stan Brakhage was one of my oldest friends,"

she said. "We met when I was 17 and he was 20. He had run away from college to study art by finding poets and people that he wanted to be close to."

His best friend was James Tenney, the York University music theorist and composer who was also Schneemann's partner for 13 years. Early on in their careers, they would continuously share ideas and feed off each other's creativity and company.

"(Stan) had come east and we met at a spaghetti restaurant on 42nd Street and we were so poor we had to split one bowl between the three of us and one cigarette between the three of us," recalled Schneemann.

She adds: "We would go cross-country bringing our new work to one another. Jim would play his new music electronic tapes and I would pack paintings and objects into this old car and we would travel to Colorado and then Stan would come east and he would bring his films and have showings."

One thing that has remained the same since

the beginning of her work is that she always aims for it to have "a bite" for what has been suppressed, whether it's sensuous, like female sexuality, or violent.

But there is also a definite sentimentality and poignancy in her work.

"I'm very concerned with working with what is domestic imagery . . . because within those images is the passage of life into death, the disappearance of a moment into its sort of oblivion."

Dating, for example, is all about immediacy and loss because nothing can be grasped, said Schneemann.

"That's why the work has this obsessive focus on the possibility of grasping, the lovers touching or a cat meowing or a dish breaking, a door opening, closing. Those are still the basic forms that concern me."

Devour is showing at the Presentation House Gallery March 11 to April 9. Schneemann will be giving a talk at the gallery tomorrow at 3 p.m. followed by a reception from 4 to 6 p.m.

## Play's wit translates well onto screen

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re-opened after Puritanical rule. Actresses are permitted to play roles on the stage for the first time, but they do double-duty as whores.

The film itself is like a play, from the prologue and epilogue that bookend the bulk of the story to the intimacy of the camerawork, which lets the audience feel present in the events at hand.

Stephen Jeffreys wrote both the original play and the screenplay, and his incredible wit is kept intact: there are

more funny one-liners here than in most comedies set in present day. But as the title suggests the dialogue is just as vulgar as it is funny, so choose your movie date wisely.

The film suffers from some poor editing choices that rush events toward the end, and cinematography is often dim, necessitating some learn-by-feel effort by the audience. Performances, however, are stellar. John Malkovich, who played Rochester in the American run of the stage play, is also perfectly suited

to the role of Charles II. Rosamund Pike, recently onscreen as Jane in *Pride and Prejudice*, is excellent as the heiress whom Rochester kidnapped then married for her fortune.

But this is Depp's film, and he's in virtually every scene. A life of excess could have resulted in a portrayal to match, but Depp manages to keep his performance taut, menacing and tragic simultaneously.

Overall *The Libertine* is a good film about "the cynic of this golden age."

## SHOWTIMES

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604-985-3911

**The Hills Have Eyes** (18A)

— Fri-Thur 1, 3:30, 7:10, 9:40

**Curious George** (G) — Fri-

Thur 1, 3, 5, 7 p.m.

**Ultraviolet** (PG) — Fri-Thur

1:30, 3:40, 7:30, 9:50 p.m.

**Aquamarine** (G) — Fri-Thur

1:20, 3:50, 7:20, 9:45 p.m.

**Munich** (18A) — Fri-Thur

9:10 p.m.

**Mrs. Henderson Presents**

(PG) — Fri-Thur 6:50, 9:20

**Nanny McPhee** (G) — Fri-

Thur 1:10, 3:35 p.m.

**The Pink Panther** (PG)

— Fri-Thur 1:10, 3:20, 7, 9:30

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<b>Community Sport Volunteer</b> An organizer, trainer or manager	<b>Youth Male</b> Athlete 18 & under as of December 31, 2005
<b>Team</b> Amateur team competing in an organized league	<b>Open Female</b> Athlete 19 to 39 years of age
<b>Athlete with a Disability</b> Athlete with physical or mental disability	<b>Open Male</b> Athlete 19 to 39 years of age
<b>Play Fair</b> Athlete who has demonstrated sportmanship	<b>Master Female</b> Athlete 40 years of age or older
<b>Coach</b> Coach who is NCCP certified or pursuing such	<b>Master Male</b> Athlete 40 years of age or older

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**Nomination forms are available at:**

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Deadline for your nominations is Thursday, March 2, 2006 at 12 noon.

**The North Shore Sport Awards ceremony will take place on Tuesday, April 4th, 7:30pm at Park Royal Shopping Centre - North Mall.**

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