

CYNTHIA MADANSKY

cynthia.madansky@gmail.com

www.madansky.com

I am a multi-disciplinary artist with a major concentration in film and video. I work in 16mm, super 8 and video, creating films and videos which integrate hybrid forms and traditions including experimental tropes, cinema vérité, scripted narrative, ethnographic observation and dance and performance. My work engages with cultural and political themes, such as identity, nationalism, the transgression of borders, displacement, nuclear arms and war, foregrounding the human experience and personal testimony. I am interested in portraying the consequences of politics on the daily lives of individuals, focusing on issues of US foreign intervention and interrogating the concept of personal and national accountability.

Trained as a painter, I continue to pursue painting and drawing as an integral part of my practice. My current painting and drawing installation work reflects on automatic writing and the subliminal landscape.

Education

Mason Gross School of Fine Arts, Rutgers University,
MFA, 1993

Whitney Independent Study Program, NYC, 1988

Cooper Union School of Art, NYC, 1987

Bezalel School of Art, Jerusalem, Israel, 1985-87

Hebrew University School of Social Work, Jerusalem,
Israel, BSW, 1982

CYNTHIA MADANSKY

2017

ESFIR

(work in progress)

ESFIR is a feature length contemporary feminist reinterpretation of an unrealized experimental script by Esfir Shub entitled *Women*,

KG

Super 8 film, 10 min. (work in progress)

KG is a performance film made in collaboration with the artist Kleoni Manoussakis. Filmed in various neighborhoods of Athens, **KG** reflects on the poetry found in Katerina Gogous book *three cicks left*.

GRACE + GRAVITY

16mm, 7 min.

Grace + Gravity is an experimental performance film based on excerpts from the philosophical writings entitled *Gravity and Grace* by Simone Weil.

ḤARĀM

16mm, 47 min.

ḤARĀM is an essay film that interrogates the existing political landscape at the Haram Al-Sharif / Noble Sanctuary, in the Old City of Jerusalem. The film explores the growing contemporary Jewish movement that aims to build the Third Temple on the very site of the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aksa Mosque, contextualizing the ideology of the movement with the strategies of reclamation employed to gain sovereignty over the site.

CYNTHIA MADANSKY

2016

A Portrait of Primo Levi

Archival 16 mm footage, 8 min

Portrait of Primo Levi is a film commissioned by the Centro Primo Levi, NY in honor of the publishing of a complete edition of his works translated into English. The film premiered at the Library of Congress, USA.

The Hiroshima Panels Project

HD, 8 min.

This dance film integrates elements from a live performance by Eiko Otake set against the backdrop of the Hiroshima Panels, a series of 15 folded panels painted by Iro and Toshi Maruki produced over thirty years, depicting the atrocities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The Hiroshima Panels Project is a collaboration between musicians Sam Sadigursky (clarinet), Meg Okura (violin), Dan Tepfer (piano), filmmaker Cynthia Madansky, dancer Eiko Otake and educator Kathleen Sullivan who created an immersive experience through music, art, dance and testimony to National Sawdust on 21 October. Also in attendance were atomic bomb survivors who shared their testimony with an audience of local high school students who were learning about current nuclear realities and disarmament.

2015

E42

16mm, 33 min.

E42 is an experimental documentary that excavates the layered identity of the Esposizione Universale di Roma (EUR), a site that embodies the city's past, a utopic vision of its future and its complex resonance in contemporary life. **E42** portrays the pathos and specter of the original ideology of the EUR as a site of scenography. Music composed by Alvin Curran.

Screenings

Rotterdam Film Festival, 2016

VidoeX, Zurich, 2017

DocuFest. Kosovo, 2017

Anna, Pina, Teresa

16mm, 6 min.

Anna, Pina, Teresa is a dance film that reinterprets the pivotal scene in Rossellini's "Roma Città Aperta" where Anna Magnani, who plays the character Pina, (which is based on the story of Teresa Gullace,) is murdered on the streets of Rome by the fascist police. Made in collaboration with the dancer Marta Ciappina, and filmed in the Sala Scherma at Foro Italico (the former fencing studio of Mussolini), **Anna, Pina, Teresa** reveals the contemporary and historical dynamics between an urban fascist space and movements of resistance. Music composed by Zeena Parkins.

Screenings

Edinburgh Film Festival, 2016

International Film Festival Lima Independiente, 2016

Viva Agua

16mm, 12 min.

Viva Agua is an experimental narrative that reflects on the philosophical text *Água Viva*, by the Brazilian writer Clarice Lispector. Music composed by Zeena Parkins.

Premiere

Rotterdam Film Festival, 2016

CYNTHIA MADANSKY

2014

White Sands

16mm, 3 film projections, 8 min.

White Sands is an experiential film installation about the nuclear legacy of New Mexico, a meditation on the affects of the nuclear fuel trajectory on the air, water, land and people who live there. Music composed by Stephen Vitiello.

Dear

Super 8mm, 15 min.

Dear is a portrayal of a friendship between two teenage Chinese girls who live in Chinatown, NYC, illuminating struggles with integration and the brutal realities of gentrification. Music composed by Ikue Mori.

Premiere

Documentary Fortnight, MoMA, NY, 2015

Tarlabaşı

HD, 6 min.

Tarlabaşı is a direct response to the state-sponsored urban renewal project in downtown Istanbul that has transformed a vibrant urban landscape into a demolished slum, a ghost town, a spectacle of what was once there. The film integrates dance performances in the everyday movements and gestures reflecting on the effects of neo-liberal urban transformation Music composed by Cenk Ergün.

Premiere

Wavelengths, Toronto Film Festival, 2015

If Not,

15 min. 16mm

This live projection piece filmed in Ephesus, Turkey and the Gowanus, Brooklyn interprets Sapphos poetry translated by Anne Carson. Music composed by Cenk Ergün, performed live at Freedman Gallery, NY

2013

1+8 Installation

SALT, Galata, Istanbul

1+8 is a dynamic eight-screen video installation about Turkey and her eight neighbors integrating the extensive archive of footage of landscapes, architecture, direct address interviews and performances from the bordertowns. The viewer experience is achieved with the help of a custom made algorithmic computer program that creates a dynamic projection drawing edited sequences from an extensive database of videos filmed at the eight borders of Turkey. The result is a unique viewer experience, as the choreography of videos on the eight screens is created dynamically and never appears the same way twice. The simultaneous presence of all eight borders/projections highlights the complexity of Turkey's geopolitical gestalt and draws the viewers' attention to the wide range of relevant issues concomitant at the country's contour.

2012

1+8

HD, 131 min.

Co-directed and produced in collaboration with Angelika Brudniak **1+8** is a two-hour film about Turkey and its unique geo-political position between East and West. The film portrays Turkey along its borders exploring the contemporary demarcations that connect and separate Turkey and its eight neighbors. Filmed along Turkey's borders with Greece, Bulgaria, Georgia, Armenia, Nakhchivan/Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq and Syria **1+8** is an intimate portrayal of the people on both sides of the borders, communicating the diversity that lies behind "Turkish" identity and the relevance of Turkey's relationships with Europe, the Caucasus and the Middle East.

Selected screenings

Istanbul Film Festival

Documenta Madrid

Jihlava Film Festival

Jeonju International Film Festival

Diagonale Film Festival

Trento Film Festival

MAXXI, Rome

Awards

Documenta Madrid, Second Prize International Feature

CYNTHIA MADANSKY

2011

Spellbeamed

16 mm, 13 min.

Creation of hand painted film on clear 16mm leader, based on the notations in Walter Benjamin's Archive Project. This film commission was used as a moving score for a performance piece entitled Spellbeamed which was composed by Zeena Parkins in collaboration with Ne(x)works and the Jack Quartet.

Performed at the Kitchen, NY and Roulette, Brooklyn.

2008

Orta Anadolu, Istanbul

16mm, 6 films, Installation, 3 min each

Co-directed with Angelika Brudniak

Dance films shot in an old shipyard on the Golden Horn, Istanbul. Choreography by Candas Bas, Ciplak Ayaklar Kumpanyasi. Music by Orient Expressions.

2007

Minot, North Dakota

16 mm, video, 18 min.

Co-directed with Angelika Brudniak

Minot, nicknamed the "Magic City", is the proud home of a U.S. Air Force base guarding 150 nuclear missiles buried underneath the ground in northern North Dakota. *Minot, North Dakota* is a portrait of the highly charged landscape and how people living there cope with these bombs in their backyard.

Selected screenings

Rotterdam Int. Film Festival

Cinéma du Réel, Paris

Documentary Fortnight, Museum of Modern Art, NY

Ghent - COURTisane Festival

Kassel - Dokumentarfilm- & Videofest

Milano International Film Festival

Iran Documentary Film Festival, Tehran

Int. Short Film Festival, Uppsala, Sweden

Viennale - Vienna Int. Film Festival

Wiesbaden - exground on screen

Transmediale, Berlin

Dortmund / Köln - Internationales Frauenfilmfestival

Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival

Melbourne - Int. Film Festival

Nashville Film Festival

Eurodoc Documentary Film Festival, Oslo

Filmwinter, Media Art Festival, Stuttgart

Awards

Cinema du Réel, Best Short Film Award

Salzburg Film Festival, Best Film Award

Broadcast

Sundance Channel

CYNTHIA MADANSKY

2006

Elle

16 mm, 15 min.

Filmed in a semi industrial and residential landscape in Brooklyn **Elle** interrogates everyday movements of falling and getting. Music composed by Zeena Parkins.

Selected screenings

Berlin Film Festival

La Enana Marron, Madrid

Center for Contemporary Art, Antwerp

Alex & José

16 mm, 4 min.

A meditation on gender, a male flamenco dancer and a pregnant woman move through an urban landscape.

Selected screenings

Walker Art Museum, Minneapolis

National Museum of Women in the Arts, Wash DC

La Enana Marron, Madrid

2005

The PSA Project No. 1-15

16 mm, Super 8 mm, video, 3 min. each, 2004-2006

Appropriating the fast-motion, color-saturated cinematography of the televised world, **The PSA Project** is a startling visual reminder and protest of the American war in Iraq. Music composed by Zeena Parkins.

Selected screenings

Rotterdam Film Festival, 2004, 2005, 2006

Istanbul Modern Art Museum

Museum of Modern Art, NY

Toronto Film Festival

Cinéma du Réel, Paris

Tribgyor Film Festival, India

San Francisco International Film Festival

Women in the Directors Chair, Chicago

Indy/Media Conference, Austin

Images Festival, Toronto

Puglia Cultural Festival

Award

PSA no. 11 Best Film, Images Festival, Toronto

Broadcast

Sundance Channel

2004

Devotion

16 mm, 34 min.

A sparing and minimal travelogue of Istanbul — a foreigner meditates on the unraveling of a relationship while moving from hotel room to hotel room. In a city simultaneously devoted to Islam and secular nationalism, she finds refuge in the frailty and severity of the rituals of devotion. Music composed by Zeena Parkins.

Selected screenings

Premiered at inaugural opening screening of MoMA, NY

Homeworks III, Beirut

Hallwalls Art Museum, Buffalo

National Museum for Women in the Arts, Wash DC

San Francisco Cinemateque

Calcutta Women's Film Festival

Brisbane International Film Festival

Winter

7 min. Super 8mm, silent

A portrait of Winter 2004, shot in India, NY, Istanbul and in flight over Greenland.

CYNTHIA MADANSKY

2003

Still Life

35 mm, 15 min.

Gazing unflinchingly at the violent territorial war in Gaza and the West Bank, **Still Life** observes the eerie architecture of a Palestine collapsed under Israeli occupation. This portrait provides brutal witness to how government sanctioned destruction metes upon structures of home and state in the Occupied Territories. Music composed by Zeena Parkins.

Selected screenings

Museum of Modern Art, NY

Berlin Film Festival

Human Rights Film Festival, NY

Tehran 11th International Film Festival

Seoul Independent Documentary Film and Video Festival

Huesca International Film Festival

Fid Marseilles Documentary Film Festival

Calcutta International Women's Film Festival

Jerusalem Film Festival

Split Film Festival, Croatia

InVideo Festival, Barcelona

Mediterraneo Video Festival, Palermo

Oberhausen Short Film Festival

Dokufest, Kosove

L'Alternative, Festival de Cinema Independent de Barcelona

Curta Cinema, Rio de Janeiro

Cinema Delle Donne, Torino

Festival De Popoli

Awards

Human Rights Award, Huesca Film Festival

Short Film Award, Mediterraneo Film Festival

2002

Past Perfect

16 mm, 43 min.

A meditation on the elusiveness of Jewish history set against the backdrop of contemporary Poland. Music by Zeena Parkins, Pauline Oliveros, Winter & Winter.

Selected screenings

Rotterdam Film Festival

Museum of Modern Art, NY

Margaret Mead Film Festival, NY

Jerusalem International Film Festival

San Francisco Jewish Film Festival

Barcelona Jewish Film Festival

I Dream of the Bosphorous

Video, 5 projections, 3 min. each

A series of five art videos filmed on the Bosphorous.

2001

Ritual By Rote

Super 8, projection, 5 min loop

A portrayal of obsessive rituals.

Selected screenings

YYZ, Toronto

1998

Treyf

16 mm, 54 min.

Co-directed with Alisa Lebow. Treyf —“unkosher” in Yiddish— is an unorthodox documentary by and about two Jewish lesbians examining the Jewish identity of their upbringings and its impact on their contemporary queer lives. Music composed by Zeena Parkins.

Selected screenings

Museum of Modern Art, NY

Margaret Mead Film Festival, NY

The Brooklyn Museum

Jerusalem Film Festival

San Francisco Jewish Film Festival

Awards

Special Jury Prize New Festival, NY

Honorary Mention, Jerusalem Film Festival

Broadcast

Sundance Channel

CYNTHIA MADANSKY

1995

Internal Combustion

Super 8mm, 8 min.

Co-directed with Alisa Lebow. An experimental video which addresses the silence surrounding lesbians and AIDS, portraying the unspoken tensions of this epidemic— survival and power, mourning and loss.

Selected screenings

The New York Women's Film Festival

Jerusalem Cinematheque

Women in the Directors Chair, Chicago

We At Her

Super 8mm, 8 min.

An experimental film about a young woman living in Jerusalem who becomes mentally ill.

Selected screenings

Cologne Feminale

Jerusalem Cinematheque

Film Retrospectives

MUSAC, Leon, Spain, 2014

La Enana Maron, Madrid, 2007

Yerba Buena Art Center, 2007

San Francisco Cinematheque, 2006

DVD Collections

Still Life, Talents 3 DVD, The Art Video Collection. Paris, PSA No. 11, For Life Against the War, Filmmakers

Cooperative, NYC.

The PSA Project, no. 1-15, compilation DVD, Films for Peace, India

Reviews [selected list]

m-3, Review of 1+8, Ilhan Ozan

Alisa Lebow, Alt Yazı, Review of 1+8

David Rakoff, Review of Past Perfect

Sobhi Zobeidi, Review of Still Life, Asking All the Wrong Questions, Art School Palestine and presentation at Cinema Studies Conference, 2006

Alisa Lebow, First Person Jewish, Writings about Treyf and Past Perfect

Terri Ginzberg, Presentation at MLA 2007 on Still Life and The PSA Project, forthcoming monograph

Kamal Al Solaylee, Review of On the Jewish Question, YYZ

Sue Wechter, Review of Devotion, "Offering Female Perspective", University of Buffalo

The PSA Project, "Demokrasiyle Gelen Filmler", Culture and Art Section of Haber, Istanbul

Lauren Berlant, Review of The PSA Project, On the Desire for the Political, University of Chicago 2008

James Wagner, Review of exhibition with The PSA Project at Momenta Gallery

Ori Z. Soltes, Jewish Artists on the Edge, review of installation "On the Jewish Question"

CYNTHIA MADANSKY

Art Exhibitions

MAXXI, Rome, 2016
Cinque Mostre, American Academy in Rome, 2015
MAXXI, Rome, 2014
Fridman Gallery, NYC, 2014
1+8, SALT, Istanbul, Turkey, 2013
Momenta Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, 2005
White Hot, Smack Melon Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, 2000
Jewish Artists on the Edge, Santa Fe, NM, 1999
On the Jewish Question, YYZ, Toronto, Canada, 1998
Here and Elsewhere, YYZ, Toronto, Canada, 1996
Update Exhibition, Copenhagen Denmark, 1995
Center for the Visual Arts, Denver, CO, 1994
Esperanza Gallery, San Antonio, TX, 1993
Zimmerli Museum, New Brunswick, NJ, 1993
National Gallery of Australia, Sydney, Australia, 1992
Artists Space, NYC, 1992
Salon Show, Art in General NYC, 1992
10 on 8 Installation, NYC, 1991
Cooper Union Houghton Gallery, NYC, 1989
Young NY Artists, Sala Mendoza, Venezuela, 1989
Whitney Independent Study Program, NYC, 1989
Maps and Madness, Bronx Council on the Arts, 1988
“New Work”, Marine Midland Bank, NYC, 1987
“Queer Art”, New Langton Arts, San Francisco, 1987
CUNY Graduate Center, NYC, 1987
LI University Gallery, NY, 1987
Houghton Gallery, Cooper Union, NYC, 1987

Artist Presentations

Master Class, IFFR, 2015
MUSAC, Leon, Spain, 2014
Bilgi University, Istanbul, Turkey, 2013
Escola Tècnica Superior d'Arquitectura del Vallès (UPC),
Barcelona, Spain, 2007
Society for Cinema Studies Conference, Chicago, 2007
Minot State University, ND, 2007
Trivandrum Art School, Kerala, India, 2006
NYU Film School, NY, 2005
Oberlin College, OH, 2005
Hunter College, NY, 2005
San Francisco Art Institute, CA, 2005
Art Institute of Chicago, IL, 2005
California College of Design, CA, 2005
Hamilton College, NY, 2002
Rutgers University, NJ, 1995

Teaching

Associate Visiting Professor of Film, Hampshire College,
2017-2018
Minot, State University, Film and Video Workshop, 2007
Polytechnic University, Undergraduate, Design,
2002-2005; Graduate New Media Program, 2003-2005
Rutgers The State University, Mason Gross School of
Fine Arts, Undergraduate Design Studies, 1991-1995

Grants

Guggenheim Fellowship, 2017
CES, Fellowship, St. Petersburg, Russia
Wurlitzer Foundation, Taos, NM, 2017
Rome Prize, American Academy of Rome, 2015
Art Omi, NY, 2014
NYSCA, 2014
Art Matters, 2011
NYSCA, 2011
NYSCA, 2009
North Dakota Historical Society Grant, 2006
NYSCA, 2006
Santa Fe Art Institute, Artist Residency, 2006
Jerome Foundation, 2004
Experimental Television Center Grant, 2004
Ucross Foundation, Artist Residency, 2000
NYSCA, 1999
NYSCA, 1998
National Foundation for Jewish Culture, 1997
New York Foundation for the Arts, 1997
Jerome Foundation, 1997
Vito Russo Award, 1996
Paul Robeson Funding Exchange, 1995
Astraea Foundation, 1995
Art Matters Grant, 1990
Art Matters Grant, 1989