

MARGARET WILLIAMS

DANCE FILM

A RETROSPECTIVE

1988-2007

PRIVATE VIEW

THE WAPPING PROJECT

10 MAY 2007, 7PM – LATE

THEN: 11 MAY – 16 JUNE, MONDAY – SATURDAY, NOON TO 10.30PM, SUNDAY, NOON – 5.30PM

In a building closely associated with radical contemporary dance commissions and bold film making, it was just a matter of time before the two art forms came together in the first major assessment of the work of British film maker Margaret Williams. In a multi-screen installation, the viewer engages with a body of extraordinary work which spans nineteen years.

Williams has defined (1988 – 2007) what dance on film is.

Margaret Williams trained as a painter. Following a stint in Hollywood and at the BBC, she cut her teeth as an early independent, making art films. Her introduction to dance began in 1988 with DANSE des SYLPHS for Antenne 2 Television in France. Filming on the rooftops of Paris with two dancers proved to be so addictive she has been making groundbreaking dance films ever since. A host of British and international awards and commissions have followed. Her hugely respected and internationally successful films have always taken a new, original and innovative approach, characterised by humour, a powerful sense of composition and thrilling visual flair.

Village Voice noted how 'the differences between choreography and cinematography begin to disappear'.

For the first time in Williams' career, the retrospective pulls together a range of work which moves from documentary, to multi camera shoots, to a daring revelation of Williams at work with a new young choreographer: the dancer and director caught in a taut and promising improvisation in Williams' rehearsal studio in London, DRAWING 1 and DRAWING 2. Williams' confidence is such that allowing early and raw work

to be seen enables us to see how many of the glorious end products have come to light. Collaborations such as those between Victoria Marks, MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS (Channel 4) and MEN (BBC) "The most impressive and uplifting twenty minutes of television to have come along in years", Time Out. CROSS CHANNEL (BBC) with Lea Anderson, WATERMARK (BBC & Channel4) with Jiri Kylian and YOU CUBA, shot in Havana with Danza Contemporánea de Cuba(Channel 4). Her documentary GYPSY PASSION a film about the Flamenco star Joaquin Cortés and a documentary about regular British people who love to dance flamenco, were both made for BBC. She adapted David Bintley's CARMINA BURANA with Birmingham Royal Ballet which won a Welsh BAFTA. Her relationship with BRB continued in 2006 when she was invited to direct the multi-camera filming of ROMEO AND JULIET for the Diverse series 'Ballet changed my life: Ballet Hoo'.

Williams has recently completed the short dance films MIDDAY and IN STONE with choreographer-performer Maria Muñoz of company MAL PELO and PLAZA DE TOROS – BIRMINGHAM with Joel Aragón C. She is currently co-producing THE ABC OF DANCE4 FILM for Channel 4/ABC Australia/Arts Council England and Australia Council for the Arts.

The retrospective runs over three and four screens, on loops, throughout the gallery opening hours. It allows the viewer to dip in and out at will and to shift between the documentary, the dance film, the improvisational and the multi camera work, leaving not just Williams' glorious eye as a thumbprint on the retina, but adding up to a truly revelatory celebration of contemporary dance and film making.