



ARTISTS MEDIUMS 19.11.2015 Stéphanie Ploda

## Romina de Novellis, work and dreams

As part of the exhibition "To be or not to be", artist Romina de Novellis is currently exhibiting a series of videos at the Galerie Laure Roynette in Paris, until November 29. Her work is displayed alongside that of Bill Viola.

### How did you come to meet Bill Viola?

In May 2014, he was in Paris for his exhibition at the Grand Palais. Thanks to the help of my gallerist, Laure Roynette, Bill Viola heard about my work. A few months later he came to visit me along with his wife. They stayed for a long time, looking at my photos and videos. At first it was very formal, but after looking at my dream videos, we hit it off, we were connected by Italy, he liked my way of working.

We stayed in contact for a while until one day he asked to borrow an artwork. After a month and a half of silence he got back in touch to tell me that he had a video related to my work, which had never before been shown in Paris. The piece, *Silent Life*, was realized in 1979 and we had to source the material that could project the film. It isn't easy to find something with the same dimensions, screen, scenography.



### How would you describe your work?

My work focuses on a discourse between life and death, recounting the most important moments in life. My series on a dreamt life, on the unconscious, is linked to the hormonal process of my pregnancy. There are many pregnant women who experienced the same kinds of dreams.

The project focuses on 9 dreams over a period of 9 months, reliving these dreams by including the people who appear in them, the music, the locations. These videos start out as performances, often in public places. The first pieces are linked to physical sensations, then to other elements of my pregnancy, the transition from daughter to mother and the theme of death and resurrection.

All of these elements made me want to reflect on my creative process, I realized what it really was to find my unconscious.

*I am not a romantic, nor a cynic, I see the work of an artist as something very professional. I am pragmatic.*

Performance is a gesture, it is to observe someone in the process of doing something. You highlight the moment of this gesture, whatever it may be. If we were to observe the work of a sculptor, it becomes a performance. Video is one medium, the artwork is the process which takes place prior to the video.

When I go to an office and watch people work, the fact of observing their actions turns their work into a performance. I am lucky in creating more than a gesture, to leave a trace. The importance is in the observance of what we present. Everybody creates performances.

**But does the intention to create not transform these simple action, which might otherwise be insignificant or anecdotal?**

It is more of a demand, to be trained for creation, this need to express oneself through art. The process is different, but the observation is the same. To be an artist is to have found your way of communicating, it is something very simple, very personal.

Performance has always existed, from African society to ancient Italy or archaic Indian traditions. The presence of an audience creates the difference between daily gestures and performative gestures. It is not only a physical gesture but that of a painter, like Pollock. It is the hybrid medium of art. Performance is everywhere, and it is very popular. The unemployed should take to performance...



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