



ELEANOR ANTIN

Artist Talk + Screening

Tuesday, May 19, 2009
6:30 pm



Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI)
535 West 22nd Street, 5th Floor
(between 10th & 11th Avenues)
www.eai.org

Admission free



Eleanor Antin has worked in film, video, photography, installation and performance for four decades. In the 1970s, Antin produced a series of feature-length narrative videos starring hand-painted paper dolls. Performing with a cast of two-dimensional characters, Antin tackled major issues of the day, while lampooning contemporary gender roles and cultural stereotypes. Antin will speak about this series and screen excerpts from works including *The Adventures of a Nurse* (1976), *The Nurse and the Hijackers* (1977) and *The Angel of Mercy* (1981).

In *The Adventures of a Nurse*, Antin introduces her paper doll protagonist, "Nurse Eleanor," who becomes the brave, and much put-upon, heroine of a succession of cliché romances with a dying poet, a biker, a doctor, a French ski bum, and an anti-war senator. *The Nurse and the Hijackers* employs the structure of a popular movie genre as an armature for Antin's theater of ideas. Featuring a cast of hand-painted paper dolls, who display more than a coincidental resemblance to figures in the art world of the 1970s, Antin's drama recounts the hijacking of "Nurse Eleanor's" plane on the way to St. Tropez. Finally, in *The Angel of Mercy*, Antin's paper dolls become life-size in a live performance restaged for video in 1981. Here, Antin replaces "Nurse Eleanor," her ironic amalgamation of 1970s bimbo stereotypes, with "Eleanor Nightingale," who leaves the silken prison of her Victorian home and goes off to war in the Crimea.

Antin will also screen an excerpt from her newest video, *Classical Frieze* (2009), which documents the production of Antin's large-scale photographic tableaux. One can see these recent works, which focus on classical history, mythology and allegory, as the logical outcome of Antin's earlier directorial activities. Instead of filling the frame with a paper cast, here she carefully directs and arranges flesh and blood models.

In her early works, Antin uses fictional characters, autobiography and narrative to invent histories and explore what she calls "the slippery nature of the self." Antin deploys role-playing and artifice as conceptual devices, adopting archetypal personae — a ballerina, a king, a nurse — in her theatrical dramatizations of identity and representation.

A Q&A session with the audience will follow Antin's presentation.

Eleanor Antin was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1997, and is currently an Emeritus professor at the University of California, San Diego. Her work has been exhibited at The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and the Jewish Museum, New York, among others. The PBS series *art:21* featured Antin in its 2003 season. In 1999 she was honored with a retrospective of her work at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The San Diego Museum of Art held a major exhibition of her works in 2008. Antin lives and works in San Diego.

About EAI: Founded in 1971, Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI) is one of the world's leading nonprofit resources for video art. A pioneering advocate for media art and artists, EAI's core program is the distribution and preservation of a major collection of over 3,500 new and historical media works by artists. EAI fosters the creation, exhibition, distribution and preservation of video art and digital art. EAI's activities include a preservation program, viewing access, educational services, extensive online resources, and public programs such as artists' talks, exhibitions and panels. The Online Catalogue is a comprehensive resource on the artists and works in the EAI collection, and also features extensive materials on exhibiting, collecting and preserving media art: www.eai.org

For more information about this event please contact: Josh Kline (josh@eai.org) (212) 337-0680 x17
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