

Cultural Daily

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World of Forms

Sarah Elgart · Wednesday, April 25th, 2018

As locations for dance films go, swimming pools are exceedingly popular sites. I've seen dozens of films – most very good actually – that take place in or around swimming pools, so many that they almost constitute their own genre of Screen Dance. Be they old and abandoned with muted color tiles or active and brimming with water, swimming pools somehow lend themselves, each in very different ways, to becoming a kind of romantic and/or nostalgic canvas for glimpses into the human condition at the intersections of dance and camera.



Andrea Ward challenges traditional perceptions of gravity in World of Forms

Towards the end of last year I was in New York for a dance conference that took place at NYU Tisch, and of course there was a section attributed to dance films. It was all very makeshift and low tech, no theater, just a class room with a do it yourself – free standing projection screen, some computers, and some chairs. All fine. Based on many of the films leading up to it I had no great expectations, but when I saw Andrea Ward's film "World of Forms" it actually took my breath away. Opening with a stark stillness that gives way to a computerized voice and Andrea's beautiful underwater movement, it took me completely by surprise with its otherness. By the time I heard the beautiful score by Giles Corey and a younger boy, Tyler, dancing in duet with Andrea was introduced, I was all in.



At once youthful, keenly intelligent, experimental, and fearless, in "World of Forms" we see Andrea questioning conventional ideas of knowledge and perception. The irony of a computerized voice asking, seemingly with genuine curiosity, "Does my experience count?"... The cinematography by Rich Denmark, editing by Andrea Ward, voice over, and shot choices are singular and notable. Underwater, she and Tyler "move through a world unbound by physical or tactile material, in which all ideas exist in a fluid and open state."



To say more is to potentially rob readers/viewers of the experience I had. I love the quality of unabashed inquisitiveness in "World of Forms." It almost reminds me of a child who looks openly, at people and the world around them without any attempt to hide their curiosity, and in glimpsing them we see a bold intelligence and a fierce imagination that suggests the future will be in good hands.

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