YVONNE

RAINER:

MAMbo - Museo d’Arte Moderna di Bologna
30 giugno / June – 10 settembre / September 2023

WORDS

DANCES

FILMS
Introduzione / Introduction

La mostra esplora le relazioni tra la produzione coreografica, filmica e teorica di Yvonne Rainer (San Francisco, 1934) tramite una ricostruzione storica della sua transizione dalla danza al cinema.

Nota internazionalmente per aver rivoluzionato il mondo della danza promuovendo negli anni Sessanta un approccio minimalista che trovava ispirazione nel naturale movimento cinetico del corpo e nella gestualità quotidiana, Rainer inizia la sua carriera da regista nel 1972, anno di uscita del primo film *Lives of Performers*.

Le radici di tale passaggio si rintracciano in mostra sia nell'impostazione intermedial o delle performance degli anni Sessanta e Settanta in cui parlato, proiezioni di fotografie, testi e immagini in movimento ricoprivano un ruolo centrale, sia nelle tematiche di impronta socio-politica che, in seguito allo scoppio della guerra in Vietnam e all'avvicinamento di Rainer al movimento femminista, diventano un carattere distintivo della sua ricerca.

Se nella performance il corpo assume un ruolo politico perché presentato nella sua nderogabile materialità al di là di qualsiasi finzione narrativa, nei film è l'interiorità umana a trovare spazio nella sua complessità psicologica. È l'attenzione alle emozioni come a "fatti" (*Feelings are facts* è il titolo del suo memoir del 2006), a segnare la decisione di dedicarsi alla scrittura e alla regia, trovando nel racconto e nella sua capacità di coinvolgere e immedesimare il pubblico, lo strumento tramite cui trasformare una storia personale in una questione politica.

This exhibition explores the relationship between Yvonne Rainer's (San Francisco, 1934) choreographic, filmic, and theoretical production through a historical reconstruction of her transition from dance to cinema.

Internationally known for revolutionizing the world of dance in the 1960s by promoting a minimalist approach inspired by the body's natural kinetic movement and everyday gestures, Rainer began her career as a director in 1972, the year her first film, *Lives of Performers*, was released.

The exhibition traces the roots of this transition both in the intermedial approach of Rainer's performances in the 1960s and 1970s - in which speech, projections of photographs, texts, and moving images played a key role - and in the socio-political issues which became a distinctive feature of her research after the outbreak of the Vietnam War and Rainer's interest in the feminist movement.

While in performance the body takes on a political value, as it is presented in its absolute materiality, beyond fictional narratives, in films it's the human interiority that is portrayed in its psychological complexity. It is the focus on feelings as “facts” (*Feelings are Facts* is the title of her 2006 memoir) that marks her decision to devote herself to writing and directing. Rainer finds in narrative, and in her ability to engage and empathize with the audience, the tool through which she can transform a personal story into a political issue.
The plot unfolds in the form of a long therapy session, in which a woman confesses to several psychiatrists her daily experiences of oppression and power. Shot by Rainer upon her return from Berlin, the film is influenced by the experiences she had during her year-long residency in the German city.

Film About a Woman Who..., 1974
biano e nero, 105’/b/w, 105 min.
In programmazione ogni martedì / Scheduled on Tuesdays

Il film ripercorre la storia di una donna rivelando la psicologia e le dinamiche di potere di una relazione in crisi. La narrazione è contrassegnata dalla presenza di intertexti che si alternano aggiungendo constatazioni e osservazioni critiche. L’ambientazione è spoglia e la scenografia ridotta a pochi oggetti dalla forte connotazione narrativa.

The film tells the story of a woman, revealing the psychology and power mechanisms in a relationship crisis. The narrative is characterized by the presence of alternating intertexts that add critical insights and observations. The setting is austere and the scenography is reduced to a few objects that have a strong narrative connotation.

Kristina Talking Pictures, 1976
colore, 90’/color, 90 min.
In programmazione ogni mercoledì / Scheduled on Wednesdays

Seppure presentato come il racconto di una addomesticatrice di leoni da Budapest che si trasferisce a New York per intraprendere la carriera da coreografa, il film scoraggia lo sviluppo della trama e del personaggio, lasciando la narrazione costantemente in bilico: i dialoghi iniziano per essere interrotti, un singolo personaggio può essere interpretato da più membri del cast.

Although presented as the story of a lion tamer from Budapest who moves to New York to pursue a career as a choreographer, the film discourages the development of plot and character, leaving the narrative in a constant state of uncertainty: dialogues begin and are interrupted, and a single character can be played by several members of the cast.

Journeys from Berlin/1971, 1980
colore, 125’/color, 125 min.
In programmazione ogni giovedì / Scheduled on Thursdays

La trama si sviluppa come una lunga sessione di terapia in cui una donna confessa a diversi psichiatri esperienze quotidiane di repressione e potere. Girato da Rainer di ritorno da Berlino, il film è influenzato dalle esperienze vissute durante l’anno di residenza nella città tedesca.

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Trio A, 1978, è la video documentazione della coreografia del 1966 che ha reso Rainer nota internazionalmente. Essa è un esempio di un approccio minimalista basato sulla riduzione ed eliminazione delle componenti drammaturgiche che caratterizzano la danza moderna. L’esposizione di virtuosismi tecnici, l’elevazione del danzatore a figura eroica e straordinaria, l’espressionismo drammatico lasciano spazio a una visione “ordinaria” del movimento sviluppata tramite un’impostazione dell’azione legata al “simil-compito” (task-like), in grado di generare un movimento (alzare un braccio, inclinare il bacino) in un tempo e con un investimento di energia reali e non mimetici. La coreografia si caratterizza per l’equilibrio ricercato nel fraseggio (la maniera di esecuzione) che trasmette continuità e non l’alternarsi di differenti intensità.

Trio A, 1978, is the video documentation of the 1966 choreography that made Rainer internationally known. It is an example of a minimalist approach, based on the reduction and elimination of the dramaturgical components that characterize modern dance. The display of technical virtuosity, the elevation of the dancer to a heroic, extraordinary figure, and the dramatic expressionism give way to an “ordinary” idea of movement, developed through a task-like approach to action that is capable of generating a movement (raising an arm, tilting the pelvis) over a real period of time, and with a real, non-mimetic investment of energy. The choreography is characterized by an energy balance achieved in terms of phrasing (i.e. the manner of execution), which conveys continuity rather than alternation between different levels of intensity.
Dedicato alla menopausa, il film intreccia storie di donne a vicende che mettono in rilievo sexualizzazione del corpo femminile. Rainer decostruisce il modello hollywoodiano di rappresentazione della donna, presentando il personaggio femminile come una voce fuori campo, mai ripresa dalla camera.

The film chronicles the end of a marriage, focusing on a man who seems to know all too well the discourses at the root of women’s struggle for emancipation. Rainer deconstructs the Hollywood model of female representation and presents the female character as a voice-over, never seen by the camera.

Dedicated to menopause, the film interweaves women’s stories with others that highlight social privilege, whether associated with gender, class, or ethnicity. Using an intersectional approach, Rainer recounts the story of protagonist Jenny to paint a portrait of a society in which forms of injustice such as domestic violence, racism in law enforcement, and the sexualization of the female body are perpetuated on a daily basis.

Una storia di un’amore di mezza età tra Mildred, lesbica da una vita, e Doris, innamorata di una donna per la prima volta, si presenta come una meditazione sull’invecchiamento femminile, la sessualità lesbica e il cancro al seno in una cultura che glorifica la giovinezza e il romanticismo eterosessuale.

A mid-life love story between Mildred, a lifelong lesbian, and Doris, who falls in love with a woman for the first time, is presented as a meditation on female aging, lesbian sexuality, and breast cancer in a culture that glorifies youth and heterosexual romance.
Lives of Performers, 1972, è il primo film di Yvonne Rainer, dove il mondo della danza fa da sfondo al “melodramma” di un triangolo amoroso. L’opera è un esempio del livello di sperimentazione narrativa dell’autrice e del suo interesse per la critica cinematografica femminista. Rainer gioca con la struttura formale del melodramma e della soap-opera “to make the tensions and dilemmas of women living in a patriarchy accessible and visible” (Y.R., in The Films of Yvonne Rainer, 1989), così come con i cliché che definiscono (es. la femmè fatale, la moglie tradita). I dialoghi e i monologhi introspettivi dei personaggi sono inseriti come voci fuori campo creando un contrasto tra l’apparente carica emotiva della vicenda e la monotonia del parlato, in un’atmosfera di verosimilitude e ambiguità.

Lives of Performers, 1972, is Yvonne Rainer’s first full-length film, in which the world of dance provides the backdrop for the “melodrama” of a love triangle. This work is an example of the level of narrative experimentation reached by the author, and of her interest in feminist film criticism. Rainer plays with the formal structure of melodrama and soap opera “to make the tensions and dilemmas of women living in a patriarchy accessible and visible” (Y.R., in The Films of Yvonne Rainer, 1989), as well as with the clichés that define women (for example, the femme fatale, or the betrayed wife). The introspective dialogues and monologues of the characters are inserted as voice-overs, creating a contrast between the apparent emotional charge of the story and the monotony of the speech, in an atmosphere of verisimilitude and ambiguity.
A large part of the exhibition is devoted to archival materials that document the author's theoretical research and her career as a choreographer between the 1960s and 1970s. The first room presents two of her most famous texts: No Manifesto, 1965, in which the author simulates an attack on the creative industry and makes a list of attributes that she doesn't want to support in her dance work, such as the idea of spectacle, entertainment and “magical” fiction, which she counters with a real, kinetic and ordinary idea of movement; An excerpt from A Quasi Survey of Some Minimalist Tendencies in the Quantitatively Minimal Dance Activity Midst the Plethora or an Analysis of Trio A, 1968, which provides a summary of the formal features shared by minimalist sculpture and dance, divided into what is formally “minimized” and what is “eliminated”. Rainer Variations, 2002, is a hybrid documentary, the result of a partnership between Yvonne Rainer and Charles Atlas. The author reworks interviews, film clips, fragments of performances and rehearsals, and reconstructions of choreographies by Rainer or others, as in the case of Richard Move playing Martha Graham.

A timeline traces Yvonne Rainer’s career as a dancer and choreographer from 1960 to 1973, with photographs, curatorial descriptions, and statements by the author, complemented by reproductions of notebooks, drawings, written documents, and posters from the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles.

A special section is devoted to Rainer’s poetic production of the 1990s and 2000s, as evidence of the author’s continuing interest in writing. This is another example of her willingness to transform the inner life into something that opens onto a shared space, the “in-between” (as Hannah Arendt put it in her The Human Condition, 1958) that defines “the political”.

Mappa / Map

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Mappa / Map
Orari di apertura / Opening hours

martedì e mercoledì / Tuesday and Wednesday:
  h. 14 - 19 / 2 - 7 pm

giovedì / Thursday:
  h. 14 - 20 / 2 - 8 pm

venerdì, sabato, domenica e festivi / Friday, Saturday, Sunday and festivities
  h. 10 - 19 / 10 am - 7 pm

chiuso: lunedì non festivi / closed: Monday except festivities

Biglietti / Tickets

Ingresso mostre temporanee / Tickets temporary exhibitions
intero / full € 6,00
ridotto / reduced € 4,00

Conservando il biglietto di ingresso
hai diritto a un secondo accesso a partire
dal giorno successivo /
By keeping the entrance ticket, you are entitled to a second access starting from
the following day