

## PLAYLIST of Sylvia Toy St. Louis - 120 minutes and 32 seconds

2014

QUEEN <https://youtu.be/tVkeM1RWS5M> 09:47

Remastered score including original music (2017).

Cinematic theater. A Butoh inspired performance art short film by African-American filmmaker, Sylvia Toy. A mute, solemn priestess dressed in white conducts a birth ritual in a room draped in white to an unseen congregation, while an invisible choir fills the stark room with sacred music. As she silently performs her sacred duty, her actions are projected in a split screen by a shadow of herself.

This video was improvised on camera without any rehearsal period after being planned for about 13 months, during which I collected eggshells and designed the set. The original release was 2014. The soundtrack was remastered with original music in 2017.

Constructed of: soil, eggshells, cotton, nylon, makeup, acrylic, acrylic latex, egg cartons, rice paper, freshwater pearls, water, Jojoba oil, porcelain cup, tape, felt, craft paper, light, human, bamboo.

Selected for Clash (Siger Art Gallery, London), 2017.



2015

PASSAGES, A MYTH (full) <https://vimeo.com/187838468> 24:34

Three sibling deities rule the world from the firmament. When the king of the god's youngest sister kills a Human for using language, the king absorbs the corpse into his body and becomes pregnant.

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The setting is the firmament from which Sum'o the King of the Gods, Sum'i the Arbiter and their younger sister Sum'a the Enforcer rule the world. There has been ongoing conflict about the Humans between Sum'o, who spends his time in meditation, and Sum'a, who has an ego and temper more like a Human. When Sum'a kills a Human during a dispute over the Humans using language in violation of the laws of the gods, Sum'o, in his grief over the loss of a life, absorbs the Human's corpse into his body and becomes pregnant.

There is no dialogue. There are inter-titles preceding each scene.

Excerpt selected for Fest Miden, 2017.



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2016

VOICE (excerpt) <https://vimeo.com/187838468> 07:54

VOICE is a 159-minute comedic, science fiction fantasy. Psyche Lyssa Echo Smith has entered therapy to “fix herself” so her estranged husband will come back home. All three characters want the same thing – control of Psyche, who is the Self.

VOICE was an official selection of Hong Kong Arthouse Film Festival, 2017, and received an Honorable Mention from LA Underground Film Forum in 2016. VOICE was part of the “Stimmen” exhibition at schau.Räume (Austria) in 2018. Since 2015, VOICE festival cuttings have screened in venues and festivals around the world - London, Marrakech, Berlin, Barcelona, Milan - including VisualContainer TV, Heartearth Project, International Video Art Exchange Program, and CM Projects' Chemcraft Exhibit. Most recently (2017), VOICE FESTIVAL CUTTING 3 was selected by Underground FilmFest and Black Underground FilmFest, and given an Honorable Mention nod by Experimental Film Forum (Los Angeles).



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**THE HARPY** <https://youtu.be/NaxXtcQzYF8> 09:45

A female goddess awakens from a 10,000-year coma only to discover that her kind is extinct. Her sister gods had banished her and put her into what was supposed to be a permanent sleep because she disagreed with the gods' creation of the humans and said it was a "mistake." Since in the world of this story gods don't make mistakes, the Harpy was a heretic. Ironically, when she awakens, the only remaining living member of her lineage is a god, a First One, who also was condemned to eternal sleep as a heretic.

Selected for Bucharest ShortCut CineFest.



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**THE VICTIM** <https://youtu.be/CR4NG5NWJWg> 04:05

A monologue about bullying, fear and courage.

Video of the Day, directedbywomen.com, 2016. Selected for Il mio corpo poetico, il mio corpo politico (Milan), 2018.



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2017

MERGE <https://youtu.be/CAXaNGdzqf8> 04:06

An experimental short exploring the montage possibilities of color-keying my face and body and composing it against fixed video footage of an outdoor location.

Selected for The Videoperformance, Art Web Gallery, 2018.



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AND SO I SAID <https://youtu.be/XKIVo6r3Kjs> 05:35

An improvisation inspired by the claustrophobic experiences that I often had when I regularly auditioned, usually feeling a good deal more intimidated trying to keep my sanity in the waiting room than I was auditioning for people who often seemed to look disappointed before I even opened my mouth to read or give my monologue.

Selected for Burnt Experimental Video Art and FilmFest (Montreal), 2017.



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**CREDO, A Pilgrim: Character Improv** <https://youtu.be/VocSveD2EtM> 02:21

Excerpt from a nonlinear, episodic short about solitariness, acceptance and friendship. An itinerant gardener and busker who sings ballads and Negro spirituals. A Pilgrim's prize possession is an invisible box containing the disembodied singing heads of a nun, a monk and an ancient priest. A Pilgrim's closest friend is The Old Woman, who employs him as a gardener when he is in town, feeds him and listens to him sing. One of a series of videos created for THE DEMOCRACY SCRABBLE Project (curator, Joas Nebe), 2018.



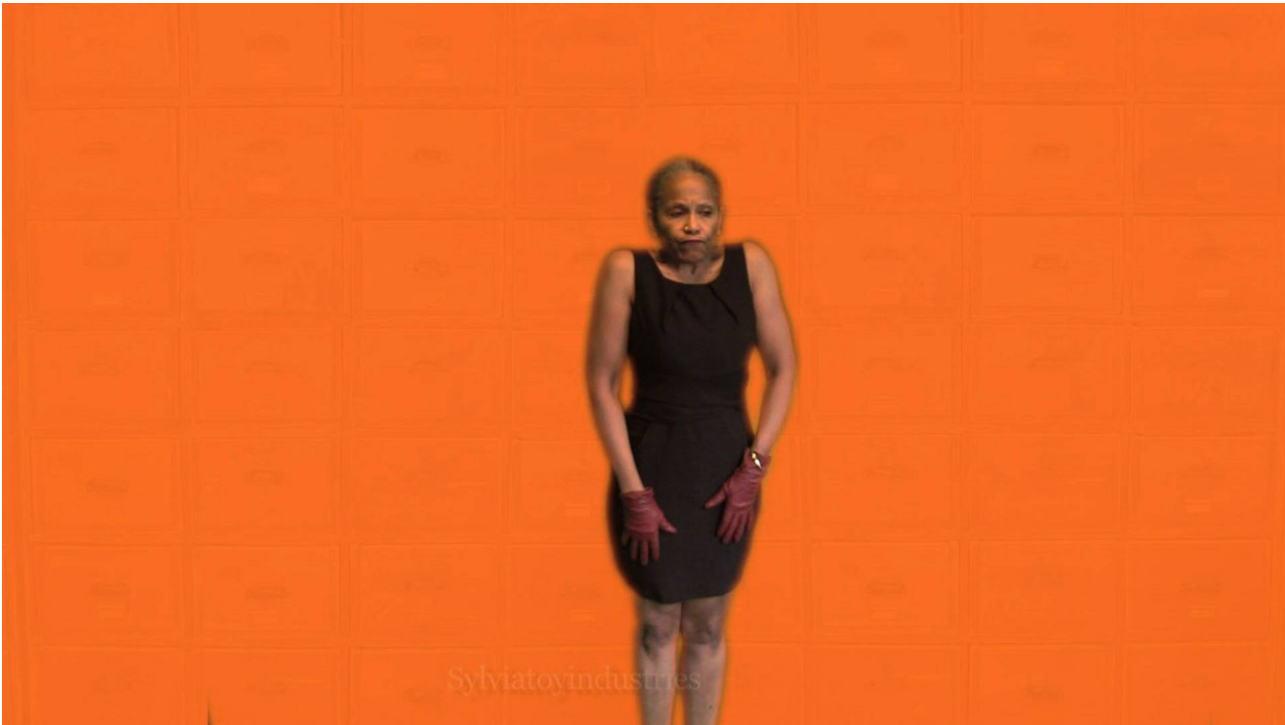
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**KILLER JANE** [https://youtu.be/x\\_6hmd3Ntq8](https://youtu.be/x_6hmd3Ntq8) 13:00

Jane has repeat nightmares of murdering a man whom she does not even know in real life.

Score by Juan María Solare.

Selected for Chicago Amarcord Arthouse Television Awards, 2017. Gold Award, Los Angeles Neo Noir Novel, Script & Film Festival, 2018.



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**LUCY THE FIRST HUMAN: Lucy Finds a Potato** <https://youtu.be/Iny17PuGgt4> 03:35

Excerpt, This is a short silent film with only one character, Lucy. She is based on the Australopithecus afarensis female skeleton discovered by Donald Johanson in 1974. Episodic scenes show what the first human would do, think, feel, and how it would develop.

Lucy is like an infant who spends most of her time sleeping in a nebulous void. In her waking hours, her primary interest is herself until her environment changes as things suddenly and surrealistically appear in her "cave." She gradually is drawn out of her self-absorption into the real world.

This movie originally was improvised in front of greenscreen in 2013. This is a remastered version. B-roll was shot by me in Cold Creek, Nevada and San Francisco. All vocals, sound effects and Foley in this movie were created by me.

Featured in The Unstitute Projection Room, 2017.



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Sequence 13 <https://youtu.be/EYTdUPxyIsU> 08:00

SEQUENCE 13 combines animation and live action an experimental, greenscreen art film inspired by the Central African creator god, Mbombo, who created the world by vomiting it. There is no dialogue. The soundtrack is original, minimalist music.

The characters in SEQUENCE 13 are The Second One, a creator god who begins vomiting all the parts of the Universe, and one of its hatchlings.

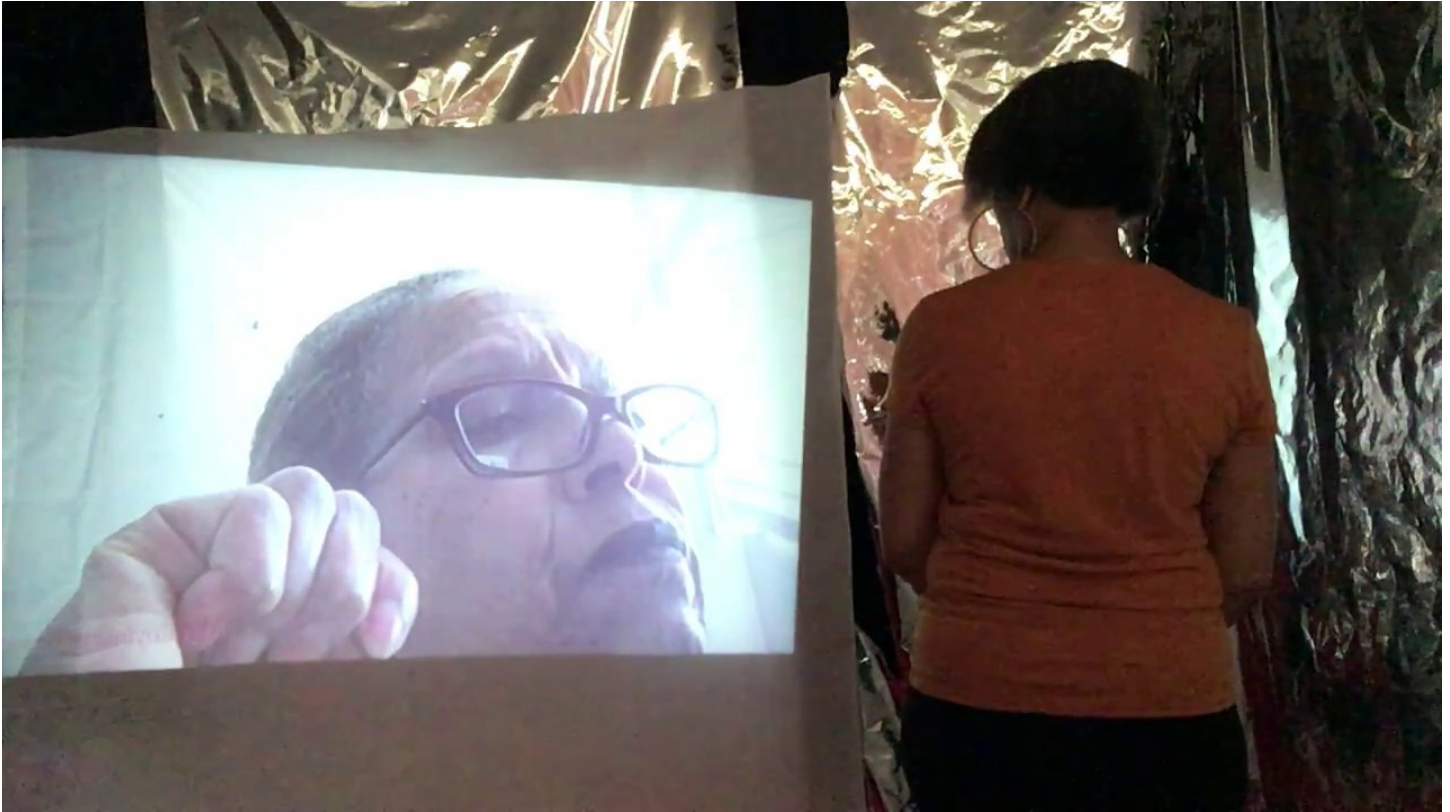
Selected for Five Continents International Film Festival, 2018.



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**YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD SAY THAT ME** <https://youtu.be/mobw4rCN6Fw> 10:02

Developed from improvisations inspired by my experience of bipolar mania.



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2018

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A SOUL, Scene 6 <https://youtu.be/IOvpKZkUHJQ> 10:00

A cinematographic collage exploring layers of perception and awareness. At any given point in time, a trillion things are going on in your life at the same time, in addition to whatever you are focused on, most conscious of, obsessed with, etc., in a particular moment.



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**DERMALIAN: Cmdr Pearce Meets The Reenactor's Guardian** [https://youtu.be/fvW\\_QZBTdX4](https://youtu.be/fvW_QZBTdX4) 02:53

This is a story development rehearsal for DERMALIAN. DERMALIAN is a movie in preproduction about an alien race long after humans for whom, having discovered the ruins of the NYPL, human culture is all the rage. Some Dermalians adopt the human form, as shown in this scene.

This is one of many preproduction videos that will be made during story development. I usually create at least 5 times more scenes than are in the final cut of the movie. My husband Mike Lewis is Story Consultant/Dramaturge for DERMALIAN and he always kills the right darlings. We are pleased to be making progress on the story, which we have been talking about, making drawings and designs for, and trying to figure out how to make this movie since 2013. Long story short, we had lots of ideas but no story until we had a protagonist, Captain Barack, the Pilot and Commander of the Space Bubble, a mutation who was born 98% Human and only 2% Dermalian.



Director: Sylvia Toy St Louis. Executive Producer: Michael Lewis.

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**MEMENTO MORI IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT** <https://vimeo.com/278021961> 04:38

Perhaps my modesty is too old fashioned or maybe I've been a feminist too long or plainly and simply had too much therapy for bulimia to be able to understand, for example, someone hashtagging her own selfie "beauty." I am usually in front of my own cameras as someone else, a character. I make video essays from time to time because I am more likely to get to the point and tell the truth on camera than in writing. Besides, there is something very cleansing about editing out, deleting for all eternity, "rejecting clip" my own narcissistic bullsh\*t. It took me a long time (several years) not to be appalled by selfies, regardless its hashtags.

At any rate, being a short sleeper who sleeps even shorter in the brightest and darkest weeks of the year and who is at the age of remembering every time she wakes up that she is going to die someday, I have been spending these short summer nights shooting existential little movies of myself one one iPhone while lighting them with another iPhone; and then editing them in iMovie for mobile.

They are creepy. But for some reason, making creepy little movies in the middle of the night to keep myself quiet so my husband can sleep is much less depressing than writing to keep myself quiet.

