



Morning (2007)

Experimenting with the use of texture on screen, this dance film tells the tale of a young couple who would rather sleep in.

Bat-Sheva Guez (*Director & Co-Choreographer*) gives an Interview to Susanna Fosse about Morning & 3F:

Bat-Sheva Guez is fascinated by experimental storytelling. Most recently, she's been engrossed with the untapped possibilities in the mingling of dance and film. She recently completed two dance films (*Morning* & *3 F* screening in London April 2008) in collaboration with the acclaimed dance company everything smaller. Each film strives to go beyond straight filming of dance choreography and bring cinematic storytelling into the art form. Before that, she told stories in stillness with her photographic tale, *The Winter Quilt*.



Susanna Fosse: *You made your first film when you were fourteen. Do you remember the first time you picked up a camera?*

Bat-Sheva Guez : My father was a filmmaker in Israel before we all moved to the US, and one of the first things he purchased when we got here was a giant VHS video camera. This camera was a prominent figure in our family. Along with an endless collection of home movies, he taped the many plays that we kids wrote and performed in our basements and living rooms. One day I discovered I had a better chance of convincing my friends to act in movies than in our basement theater, so I borrowed the camera and took off from there. I edited the

films by hooking the camera up to a VHS deck and used my superior reflexes to press the "record" button at the precise frame of the edit point. Needless to say, editing took a long, long time.

Susanna Fosse: *Susanne Fosse: You studied film abroad at Sydney's University of Technology. What was your experience as a foreign film student in Australia?*

Bat-Sheva Guez : Most of my film classes in the US put a great emphasis on story, but during my semester abroad at UTS, I was introduced to experimental filmmaking. I spent the semester studying and making films where style held as much importance, if not more, than the story. It was liberating to ignore all those constraints of traditional filmmaking and just play around with the possibilities of the medium. I still believe in the importance of theme and story, but my experience abroad gave me the freedom to try some things and find my own voice.



Susanna Fosse: *Morning is described in the production notes as a tale of a young couple who would rather sleep in. What was the transition process from idea to film?*

Bat-Sheva Guez: I wanted to make a short dance film with an emphasis on texture. I have spent lots of mornings imagining whole worlds under the covers of my bed, so the idea came naturally. This film was a fun one to create - lots of hours spent in bed burrowed under my blankets looking at the way they moved, or trying to find a set of movements that reflected the softness of the mattress. Testing out the concept was fun too, with friends and colleagues recruited to help make the various bedsheets forts where we experimented with different methods of telling the story.

Susanna Fosse: *Katherine Singer's art direction is an in integral part of the storytelling. How important was her seamless transition of bedsheets and backdrops to the film?*

Bat-Sheva Guez : This film couldn't have been made without Katherine Singer's set. She took our small design from the tests and single-handedly recreated it on a fantastic scale. We needed a set that was versatile enough to show the richness of the texture on the screen without also hampering the dancer's movement. With Katherine's elaborate puppetry, the set could wrap around the dancers and then fly up and away from them as they moved.

Susanna Fosse: *You have worked with everything smaller on several film projects. What attracted you to their work?*

Bat-Sheva Guez: The first everything smaller performance that I saw began with one of the dancers standing on stage eating a donut. There was something so wonderful about this to me. It seemed to capture an element that I was searching for in my film, 3f. The company incorporates a lot of performance art into their work. They mix dialogue, spoken word, animation and art seamlessly into their choreography. I felt that they were up to the challenges of creating a film. They're also a collaborative company. The four dancers work together to create all their pieces. It made the process of collaborating with them on the choreography a wonderful experience. They have such a great time even when they're working hard that it makes them a joy to work with. .

Susanna Fosse: *You also made a film called 3F which is frenetically edited. However, in this film (Morning) your editing has a minimal approach at the beginning concentrating on longer shots. How do you approach the editing of your films?*

Bat-Sheva Guez: I don't feel that pacing is something that an editor should impose upon a film; rather it is something that is inherent in each film and must be sought out. The editor just needs to be sensitive enough to feel the heartbeat of each scene and know how to translate it into tangible cuts. For me editing is more listening to the film than anything else.



Susanna Fosse: *You have described yourself as an experimental filmmaker. However, directors like Michel Gondry (The Science of Sleep) are also considered experimental, but appeal to a wide audience. Are you similarly seeing your work along those lines?*

Bat-Sheva Guez: I love Michel Gondry's work. I think the word "experimental" tends to sound a bit prohibitive, but a lot of music videos and commercials are experimental films, and great features often use experimental storytelling techniques. What draws me to experimental filmmaking is the potential to make new and exciting things, and I think there is always a market for that.

Morning is part of **Dance, Camera, Action 1**
and is being shown on **Wednesday 2nd April 2008**

3F is part of **Supporting short to Water Flowing Together**
and is being shown on **Friday 4th April 2008**

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