

R THE REELER

NEW YORK CITY CINEMA, FROM THE ART HOUSE TO THE RED CARPET

DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT

Women filmmakers at Tribeca

Presented by *Waitress*

Marie Losier, *Manuelle Labor*

By S.T. VanAirdale

STV: What can you tell me about *Manuelle Labor*?

ML: It's a little collaboration I did with Guy Maddin. We've known each other for a while now, and I've always made film portraits of different artists. The last one was on Richard Foreman, and the last one at Tribeca was on George Kuchar. So I asked Guy if I could film him, and he said: "No! I hate my face and I hate my voice." So I said: "OK, well, film your hands or your feet, and I'll do something with it." So he actually shot his hands on Super 8 film, and a year later he sent me the reel. I was asked to finish this short film for the Berlin Film Festival, because Guy was the guest of honor there for *Brand Upon the Brain*. I made a little silent film using his hands. I shot a film around them where I'm getting sick and pregnant and I'm giving birth to a pair of hands. And they're his hands.



All hands on deck in Marie Losier's *Manuelle Labor*

STV: Why did you want to give birth to Guy Maddin's hands?

ML: It's kind of the best way to give an homage to him. In some ways it's completely kooky and it goes with the style of his films and my films. It's always related to the mother and the belly. Everything's superimposed, and there's the craziness of silent films. Also, giving birth to him is like giving birth to a portrait. It's an homage to him. Instead of playing with his hands, it's actually living with them; he's inspiring me in my work -- his friendship.

STV: What started you on the process of filming filmmakers?

ML: I started with Mike Kuchar three years ago. Then I did George Kuchar and Richard Foreman. Right now I'm finishing one on Tony Conrad and starting a feature film on Genesis P. Orridge. It's very natural because they're people I know. They're friends, and I spend a lot of time with them. The best way to incorporate that into what I'm doing is a film portrait. It's sort of documentary about other artists, but in a very personal voice because it's based on spending many years with them and long friendships. I have an insight on them that is not at all chronological or academic. I see them (via) my relationship with them.

STV: Is this somewhere you want to go continually?

ML: Even when I go with a film portrait, it can end up like *Manuelle Labor*: It's a story, actually, when you see it. It's very fictional. It doesn't look like a portrait at all.

STV: Where do you think this kind of work fits in the context of Tribeca?

ML: Because I'm the film programmer at the French Institute, I have to see a lot of French films; a lot of the guests are also people I invite to show films here. I like to go to the experimental portions, but otherwise I'm not too keen on it because there are so many films and I have no idea what they are, most of them. It's a money festival; it's huge, and I don't always feel my best in there.

STV: Have you seen any of the films you're programmed with in the *Portraits of Women* category?

ML: Not really, no. It'll be a surprise!