

During my access to Cinenova's materials, I watched Robina Rose's *Birthrites* (1977) alone in my studio and found it very powerful to watch a woman give birth filmed by another woman. While I shortlisted it to show, I could not tell if the emotional intimacy I had experienced watching the film on my computer monitor, would exist among a screening audience or if her nudity and the rarely expressed eros of joy in childbirth against a backdrop of the scorching but necessary throes of *Me Too* that are happening now, would endanger the highly personal and empathetic work of the film, unless I drew attention to a mode of viewing and making. There's a book called *The Experience of Childbirth* from the 1962 by birth educator, social anthropologist and mother, Sheila Kitzinger: chapter one is called *Childbirth with Joy* and to my reading of the film *Birthrites* is within what Kitzinger describes there... a different image of birth than what we get used to hearing about, it contains the psycho-sexual element, a continuity of experience from the act of sex and the moment of conception. Consent is an indivisible aspect around this piece of work – between the subjects present in the film including the filmmaker and the mother. That consent extended to viewership and I again, like a discovery of a photo of my birth last year, felt somehow protective of the mother's 41 years of nakedness and birth experience within the index of the Cinenova catalogue - now that I was considering projecting it large, or wondering who else might browse it just as I had found it. That conflicted sense of looking pushed towards inclusion for this evening because it is more than these things but I wanted to explain.

Many thoughts from engaging with the collection lead me to reflect on the quantity of material I feel 'protective' over which I include in my films – which includes and possibly centres on my mother's image, who appears in *Asides* (2011). Using subjects that have a precious value to you as a filmmaker creates a tension, because it is fiercely important to you and because it heightens a legacy of moving image or film stills that must not be misused. The power of the image of those we love appearing as cultural content in the wider world can be problematic to those close to the material, but I would not have known this when I was first drawn to make films as a student.

*Asides* was my Royal College of Art degree show film. I noticed Robina Rose's film is also cited as an RCA production and I wondered if the mother in the film was a close friend she had known. The baby we see born is six years older than me... I hope he has some relationship with the film and that he has ease with it, for the depth Robina Rose and the mother Julia Laurer bind and imbue into the film.

But its not specifically the act of labour that I was drawn to. Ursula le Guin, who sadly passed away last week, once said at a Q&A "The less explicit [the story's] meanings are, the more powerful they may be", and this emphasis on the worth of the journey is what I keep coming back to. I liked my encounter with the digital copy of *Birthrites* for its rough image quality; its film graininess, barely featured but apparent domestic setting, and the tiny scraps of language caught in the fabric of the process of the birth: these small things hold my attention. Nothing is scripted and it's all about touch. These aesthetic fragmentary atmospheric translations are things I look for in my work. For the screening I am placing *Birthrites* in tandem with a film I made with friend, artist and writer Rose O'Gallivan *To the microphone, please (with mrs soprano)* (2013) which will be shown first.

With the addition of Clara van Gool's dance film *Reservaat* (1988) and a certain value around cinematography and celluloid that has always interested me to film works myself, I have chosen to put together works that weave around notions of gender and layered voice, duality, intimacy, 'nature', movement and an attuned ear for sound recorded at the site of filming, embedded within the filming.

I am also delighted to present *EIDOLON* (2017)– making this immersed me sonically before I could shape the film and spent many hours balancing the readings of Sandeep Parmar's postcolonial feminist poem to discover what it could do as a film. It formed a really close engagement with poem, grabbing me as soon as I found it within the collection of the International Literature Showcase, who have commissioned the work and shared with their members in July 2017.