

The Museum of Modern Art

Beth B Retrospective
September 13-25, 2022
The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters

Beth B exploded onto the New York art and film scene in the late 1970s, after receiving her BFA from the School of Visual Arts in 1977. Her prolific career is characterized by work that challenges society's conventions, with a particular focus on social issues and human rights. In the years following her legendary partnership with Scott B in the Downtown New York small-gauge filmmaking scene, B has produced over 30 documentary, experimental, and narrative films, as well as interdisciplinary work that has been shown in galleries and museums throughout the world.

MoMA's *Beth B Retrospective* includes her two big-screen narrative films: *Two Small Bodies* (1994), based on Neal Bell's play and starring Suzy Amis and the late Fred Ward, and *Salvation!* (1987), a sharp-edged social satire with Viggo Mortensen and Exene Cervenka that prefigured pop culture's recent fascination with televangelism. The series pays particular attention to B's documentaries, a form in which she excels along unconventional lines. Notable examples include *Breathe In/Breathe Out* (2000), about war and trauma, which was originally broadcast on German, Swiss, and Austrian Television; *Voices Unheard*, a riveting study of the incarceration and treatment of juvenile sex offenders, which premiered at MoMA in 1998; and her provocative look at gender reality and fantasy, *Visiting Desire* (1996). Series highlights include the premiere screening of her latest short video, *Glowing Woman* (2022), as well as the theatrical premiere of 17 titles newly restored by Kino-Lorber.

Among her most innovative works are films and tapes that merge documentary and fiction. The award-winning video *Belladonna* (1989), a collaboration with artist Ida Applebroog, is a brutal testimony on violence, sex, and family relations. *Thanatopsis* (1991), written by and featuring Lydia Lunch, is a disturbing yet poetic meditation on war and personal resistance. *Stigmata* (1991), a documentary about drug abuse and recovery, articulates internal anguish with a vividness that is both haunting and chilling. And *High Heel Nights* (1993) is a documentary about drag and the transformation of the body. The series also includes video pieces originally created as commissions for installation, including *Hysteria* (2001), *Amnesia* (1991), *Under Lock and Key* (1993), and *Out of Sight/Out of Mind* (1995). In 2021, Kino Lorber Distribution acquired Beth B's entire catalogue of films for restoration and distribution. Their cooperation in the organization of this series is gratefully acknowledged.

Beth B Retrospective Films (in 9 programs)

Features

Two Small Bodies (1993)

Salvation! Have You Said Your Prayers Today? (1987)

Call Her Applebroog (2016)

Exposed (2013)

Lydia Lunch - The War Is Never Over (2020)

Shorts

Amnesia (1993)

Breathe In, Breathe Out (2001)

Voyeur (2017)

The Dominatrix Sleeps Tonight (1983)

Hysteria (2001)

Visiting Desire (1995)

Voices Unheard (1997)

Under Lock and Key (1993)

High Heel Nights (1993)

Belladonna (1989)

Stigmata (1991)

Out of Sight/Out of Mind (1995)

Thanatopsis (1991)

Glowing Woman (2022) – premiere

Screening schedule to be announced.

Beth B Retrospective is organized by Ron Magliozzi, Curator, Department of Film

Presented in conjunction with *The Films of Scott B and Beth B*.

SPONSORSHIP:

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