

## DANIELA FEDERICI: FILM, FAME AND OPPORTUNITY

**D**ANIELA FEDERICI'S photography first came to my attention by means of a now defunct Melbourne-based magazine, *Tempo Libero*, near the turn of the decade. It was a time when little of any real excitement was going on in local fashion photography, and her glamour-laden imagery with its obvious debt to Italian Neo-realist cinema of the 1950s and 1960s was a real breath of fresh air.

Federici was just out of college time, for all its accomplishment she became the subject of negative criticism from established photographers. They to remember their own beginning influences were also obvious. Success came in envy, and I looked forward to impress her critics into silence and personal vision.

That time has arrived, I believe to better things as a New York director. She is well on her way to photographers in Australia aspiring to be recognised by acclaim from star major advertisers, and represent more famous photographer in the world. I interviewed Federici by phone at her new-born photography agency, The Photo district of Manhattan.

Karin: I gather you've been busy on vacation.

Daniela: As you called I was rethinking black and white photography because the Badgley-Mischka advertising modern version of that old classic never know even two weeks in a

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## JOYCE BARONIO REGAINING PARADISE LOST

**O**n looking once more at the photographs that brought Joyce Baronio overnight fame in 1980, I can't help but reflect on how attitudes to sex, sexuality and the unclothed human form have changed since then.

The images in her book *42nd Street Studio*, made during a four of a tiny upstairs room off answer to Kings Cross, has poignance of an era of lost appearances deceive it there is far more here than eye. The '80s was the age of drugs party that would not price of admission to be paid a lengthy incubation period waiting in the wings.

In persuading workers entertainment industry to their dark subterranean of her sun-lit space above the Baronio was digging deep. Her mistresses of bondage of discipline became visible for the disparity between real lives and the roles the society.

The project was also a self-discovery, but not one costs. When recalling it, Baronio Nietzsche: "If you're going the dark side of humanity, have a strong rope to pull

after deep immersion in the street's artificial world, Baronio's psyche was in desperate need of recuperation.

Baronio's next project was set in the world of Nature, not Man. She explains: "I felt I needed a cleansing of some kind to bring me away from 42nd Street and 8th Avenue. I had to find

## JOYCE TENNESON WORKER OF TRANSFORMATIONS

**E**very so often an artist comes along who defies the easy labelling that curators and critics feel obliged to stick on everything falling under their rapacious gaze.

In spite of lacking obvious inspirations and role models, these artists manage to create deeply felt, radical works that an extraordinary number of viewers respond to with fervour and pleasure.

Joyce Tenneson appears to be one of the few such spiritual visionaries allocated to us in this film de siècle, and

laden dreamscapes and a peculiar attachment to winged beings and religious iconography rooted in the long tradition of Western art.

Raised in an Irish Catholic household near Washington DC, with both parents working in the convent where the family home was located, Tenneson's childhood was populated by monochromatic nuns and child-like brides of Christ, a religious immersion that has strongly influenced her work.

It was an upbringing that transmitted Tenneson to the mysteries larger everyday world. "Looking

I see it as something out of Fellini, with symbolism, ritual and mystery, and also a disturbing kind of imagery," she says.

Living in Washington DC—officially a provincial outpost to the East Coast art capital, New York—she was also critical to her growth as an artist, allowing her to explore her own. "Living there, I had no mentors. I was on my own in a cocoon. It was a blessing in disguise because I try to emulate anybody," says Tenneson. "It really just evolved my style from the inside out."

Now based in New York, Tenneson is busy balancing what she terms her full-time jobs—workshops, art work, commercial work, fine art, exhibitions and family.

"It is," says Tenneson, "a very 1990s phenomenon, in that a modern artist is aware of and participates in the world, now that most artists only do commercial work. That's a modern solution, like giving yourself a grant." ❧

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# KATHY WILLIAMS

## Skinny Legs and All

by Karin Gottschalk

"In a minute or two, the music starts up again, and once more the K&L is transformed into a savage sexual steam bath by the beautiful young dancer, skinny legs and all. A sweet-soaked Abu and a wild-eyed Spike ask Ellen Cherry, in breathless succession, 'What do you think of that tambourine girl?' and 'So what're you thinking of our little Salome?'

She pokes out her lower lip so far she could get a potted plant on it and replies, 'Her legs are skinny. For a belly dancer she's sure got skinny legs.'"

— from *Skinny Legs And All*, by Tom Robbins, Bantam Books, 1990, page 322 of the paperback edition.

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