

¶ Cinema of the World

Nina Menkes – Magdalena Viraga (1987)

November 21, 2012



Story of A Red Sea Crossing. Shot in the bars and seedy hotels of East LA, this film is about the inner life of a prostitute imprisoned for killing her pimp. Winner of the Los Angeles Film Critics Association award for “Best Independent/Experimental Film of the Year”, MAGDALENA was featured in the Whitney Museum of American Art’s Biennial as well as in over 40 other film festivals worldwide. Tinka Menkes brilliantly portrays the emotionally frozen prostitute on a circular inner journey, as she battles at the walls which surround her—both material and psychic. “I have not been so moved since watching Tarkovsky; a uniquely compelling intellectual and visual experience.”—Radio France Culture. Produced with support from a Jacob Javitz National Graduate Fellowship.



“CONTROVERSIAL, INTENSE AND VISUALLY STUNNING”

–Sight and Sound

“I HAVE NOT BEEN SO MOVED BY A FILM SINCE WATCHING TARKOVSKY.”

–Radio France Culture

“BOLDLY IMAGINATIVE—MENKES CAN HOLD A SHOT AS LONG AS ANTONIONI AND GET AWAY WITH IT—MAGDALENA VIRAGA IS A STUNNER.”

–Los Angeles Times

“IS AMERICAN UNDERGROUND CINEMA DEAD? PROOF THAT IT IS NOT—MAGDALENA VIRAGA, NINA MENKES’ FIRST FEATURE—SENSUALLY EXISTENTIALIST.”

–Liberation

“POWERFUL, EXTRAORDINARY, MENKES DOES NOT COMPROMISE IN GIVING FORM TO HER DISTURBING VISIONS.”

–Los Angeles Reader

“A DREAMLIKE BLEND OF BROTHEL, PRISON CELL, AND BAROQUE CATHEDRAL—THE BIAS IS METAPHYSICAL, MENSTRUAL BLOOD TRANSUBSTANTIATED INTO THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB.”

–Village Voice

“ASPIRES TO A NEW FORM OF CINEMA”

–Le Monde

“THE HEART OF THE IMAGE IS THE FACE OF TINKA MENKES, THE PROSTITUTE WHO HATES HER WORK...HER FACE REFLECTS A THOUSAND NUANCES OF BOREDOM, DISGUST, ANGER, ANGUISH, REVOLT AND PAIN.”

–La Vie En Rose

“BOLDLY IMAGINATIVE...MENKES CAN HOLD A SHOT AS LONG AS ANTONIONI AND GET AWAY WITH IT. MAGDALENA VIRAGA IS A STUNNER.”

–Kevin Thomas, Los Angeles Times

“MAGDALENA VIRAGA IS A MONUMENT, A GOLD MINE, IN FEMINIST HISTORY.”

–Couttier, Paris Feministe

“POWERFUL...EXTRAORDINARY...MENKES DOES NOT COMPROMISE IN GIVING FORM TO HER DISTURBING VISIONS.”

–Jon Hofferan, LA Reader





