

FILM AT REDCAT PRESENTS

Mon March 2 |8:30 pm|
Jack H. Skirball Series

MANIA AKBARI and DOUGLAS WHITE
A Moon for My Father
(Yek Mah Baraye Pedaram, 2019)

Winner New:Vision Award 2019 at CPH:DOX

followed by
the short video *Lubion* (2019)

Iran-born Mania Akbari collaborated with British sculptor Douglas White for *A Moon for My Father*. Shaped as an exchange of letters—in Farsi

and English—the film resumes Akbari’s self-portrayal as a cancer survivor initiated with *10 + 4 (Dah be alaveh Chahar – REDCAT, 2007)*. Years later, in London, the cancer is back, forcing radical changes in her body, and prompting a fascinating dialogue with White’s practice, which involves sculpting with rubber and skin-like material. Turning herself into a medical experiment, a latex sculpture, Akbari investigates the connection between her body and Iran’s political history. A painter and video artist, Akbari inspired Kiarostami to cast her as the driver in *Ten* (2002); since 2003, she has directed eight films that have screened internationally and received numerous awards.

In person: Mania Akbari

“*A Moon for my Father* is a deeply intimate, personal and moving work from Mania Akbari (whose movies have often been meditations on beauty and body image), a form of digressive-poetic cinema, connecting images and ideas in a dream-associative logic. Calmly, almost miraculously, it avoids the tones of tension or trauma or ostentatiously courageous humor.” – *The Guardian*

"Together with her partner, sculptor Douglas White, Akbari has created a fascinating essay film in form of a correspondence. The letters document their artistic process and provide a strong narrative that accompanies their cinematic collage of personal pictures, images of White's work, and archival material from Iran." – DOKUARTS, Berlin

"Mania Akbari has created another extremely intimate documentary in which a story about physicality is interlaced with traumatic events from the past. Film letters of the director and her partner are intertwined with medical documentation, family photographs or tales from the underground." – Krakow Film Festival

"Brave and never pitiful, *A Moon for My Father* is a visual, poetic diary, put into a larger socio-politic context, making it a multilayered documentary." – CPH:DOX FIPRESCI Jury

Program:

A Moon for My Father

DCP, 85:00 min, 2019

Mania Akbari collaborates with British sculptor Douglas White to coin a tender fusion of language, where a meeting of cinema and sculpture investigates the processes of physical and psychological destruction and renewal. The two artists started to work together within weeks after their first meeting, and the film charts a deepening artistic and personal relationship that explores the nature of skin, family, death, water, desire and a variety of formal strategies, overlaying texts, contexts and images. Akbari looks into the connection between her body and the political history of Iran, investigating the relationship between her own physical traumas and the collective political memory of her birthplace. As she undergoes surgeries on a body devastated by cancer, remembrance and reconstruction provide a framework for investigating how bodies are traumatized, censored and politicized, and yet ultimately remain a site of possibility.

Lubion

Video, 5:30 min, 2019

The piece delves into a hallucinatory landscape, journeying through a shifting psychological and corporeal terrain borne of the powerful effects of the eponymous IVF hormone treatment undertaken by Mania. As the drug is delivered by injection, reality mixes with a chimeric techno-natural vision of inner and outer worlds.

The Artists:

Mania Akbari (b. Tehran, 1974) is an internationally acclaimed artist and filmmaker. Trained as a painter, she veered toward cinema in 2000, first as a director of photography, then as an assistant director. In 2002, she starred in Abbas Kiarostami's *Ten*. In 2003, she co-directed the documentary *Crystal*, and in 2004 wrote, directed and acted in her first feature, *20 Fingers (20 Angosht)* which won the Venezia Digitale Prize at the Venice Film Festival. This was followed by *10 + 4 (Dah be alaveh Chahar, 2007)*, a generous mixture of fiction and documentary in which she appeared, transformed after her first cancer treatment, within the context of society's reactions to the disease and taboos involving the female body; the film received the Best Film and Best Director Awards at the Kerala International Film Festival, among other awards. Akbari moved to London in 2012, which inspired the features *From Tehran to London (Az Tehran be London, 2012)* and *Life May Be (Zendegi Shayad, 2014, co-directed with Mark Cousins)*.

Akbari's films have been shown in numerous film international film festivals, such as Venice, Karlovy Vary, Kerala, Edinburgh, Oldenburg, Nantes and Barcelona. Retrospective of her work have been organized at the BFI, London; the DFI, Denmark; Oldenburg International Film Festival, Germany; Cyprus Film Festival and Nottingham Contemporary UK. Her latest film, *A Moon For My Father*, made in collaboration with British artist Douglas White, premiered at CPH:DOX where it won the NEW:VISION Award 2019. The film also received a FIPRESCI Award at the Flying Broom Festival, Ankara. She is currently working on a new project, *Libido*, with her son Amin Maher.

Douglas White (b. 1977 Guildford, UK) is a sculptor known for his evocative use of found objects and materials. His works have a sense of transformation through decay, of materials restlessness. Since graduating from the Royal College of Art in 2005 he has worked and exhibited around the world. Recent exhibitions include *Portraits of my Father as a Horseshoe Bat*, Galerie Valerie Bach, Brussels (2017), *Splendor Solis*, Eden Rock Gallery, St Barth (2014), *Song of the Roustabouts*, Gabriel Rolt, Amsterdam (2013), *New Skin for an Old Ceremony*, Paradise Row, London (2011). Recent notable group exhibitions include *Iconoclasts: Art Outside the Mainstream*, Saatchi Gallery, London (2017), *Feito poor Brasilieros*, Cidade Matarazzo, Sao Paolo (2014), *Island*, Dairy Art Centre, London (2013), *Con Amore*, ARoS Museum, Denmark (2012), Weizmann Institute, Tel Aviv (2012),

London Twelve, City of Prague Gallery, Prague (2012), REHAB, Fondation EDF, Paris (2010), and Natural Wonders, Baibakov Fine Arts, Moscow (2009). He was a recipient of the Man Group Drawing Prize (2005) and the Deutsche Bank Pyramid Award (2005) and has been shortlisted for the Paul Hamlyn Award (2007) Jerwood Sculpture Prize (2005) and Jerwood Drawing Prize (2006). His work is held in significant collections both nationally and internationally including the Saatchi Collection, David Roberts, Frank Cohen, Ernst and Young and Simmons & Simmons. He is represented by Galerie Valerie Bach, Brussels.

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