

Tema Celeste

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The Question of Gender in Art

by Lynn Umlauf

Femaleness is one of the keys to my understanding my own work. For thirty years I have been involved with visualizing my relationship to the earth, for example, in a landscape or cave. This external, and real, inspiration has always brought me to internal imagined color and abstract form. The referents are my body and womb, or my mother's, my birth and my identical twin, lovemaking and the catharsis of abortion. These experiences nourish me.

I think that no matter how clear, honest and direct making forms and painting are, the inner emotion linked with my and your life will not be revealed, but only the intention. During work, I've found that what's really important is not the expressed feeling and generally understood relationship, but the moment that certain forms can be found, extricated and allowed to have color and space (and Life) — no matter how arduous or simple the process of finding this moment may be. We — you and I — are left as witnesses. In the case of my recent painting on rubber and mesh, I have found the limits of a dark, somewhat circular space where a form is born and divided, given body, suggested movement out from a vortex, and by the transparency of the paint, dispersal or transcendence into the air, an embracing coming together — *converamus in unum*. □



Lynn Umlauf, *Il culto di Maria*, 1992, installation, acrylic on rubber and stainless steel screen, aluminum.