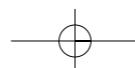
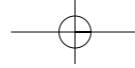




拘束のドロイング





Nisshin Maru

The Nisshin Maru is the only factory whaling ship currently operating in the world. She is the mother ship of the Japanese whaling fleet, and her function is to process and store the meat of the whales caught by a team of catcher vessels. It has been in operation since 1987, the same year an international moratorium on whaling was imposed by the International Whaling Commission. Despite the moratorium, Japan has continued to hunt whales for scientific research, though the amount and type of whales they can catch is restricted by a yearly quota. The moratorium does not restrict Japan from selling the whale meat on the commercial market, thus making the Nisshin Maru a frequent target of environmental groups such as Greenpeace, which has had numerous confrontations with the Japanese fleet. At 129.5 meters long and 19.5 meters high, the Nisshin Maru serves as an icon for Japan's steep whaling tradition, which dates back 5,500 years, and is one of the most important defining symbols of Japanese culture.

Drawing Restraint 9

This film by Matthew Barney with a soundtrack composed by Björk, represents the first creative collaboration of two of the most protean, dynamic forces in music and fine art.

It is an apt pairing. Refusing to choose between pop pleasure and restless experimentation, Björk's musical vision weds technology and emotion, countering gut-level expression with an insistence upon formal modernity and innovation.

Similarly poised, and celebrated, within the world of contemporary art as Björk is within her own field, Matthew Barney is a visual artist whose ambitious, rigorous multimedia work encodes esoteric meanings while providing lushly immediate aesthetic rewards. Best known for *The Cremaster Cycle*, the sprawling sequence of five films made over ten years which was the subject of a recent Guggenheim retrospective, Matthew Barney's work is multimedia in execution but singularly focused in conception: tightly unified fusions of sculpture, performance, architecture, set design, music, computer-generated effects and prosthetics, Barney's films deploy the full range of cinematic resources in the service of a hermetic vision, rich with densely layered networks of meaning drawn from mythology, history, sports, music, and biology.

The basis of Barney's approach is an operative tension between sculpture and film: the lingering attention to sensual detail and richly organized aesthetics lends each character, costume, artifact, set, and architectural location within his work the frozen timelessness of sculpture – yet these components are subjected to vigorous processes of radical rupture and change as the films unfold.

His latest work, the two hour and fifteen minute magnum opus *Drawing Restraint 9*, was shot in Nagasaki Bay on board the Japanese whaling ship Nisshin Maru.

Its core idea is the relationship between self-imposed resistance and creativity, a theme it symbolically tracks through the construction and transformation of a vast sculpture of liquid Vaseline, called "The Field", which is molded, poured, bisected and reformed on the deck of the ship over the course of the film.

Barriers hold form in place, and when they are removed,

the film tracks the descent of form into states of sensual surrender and formal atrophy; this shift in the physical state of the sculpture is symbolically mirrored through the narrative of *The Guests*, two occidental visitors to the ship played in the film by Matthew Barney and Björk, who we first see taken on board, groomed, bathed and dressed in mammal fur costumes based upon traditional Shinto marriage costumes.

They take part in a tea ceremony in which, in the film's only moment of spoken dialogue, they are informed about the history of the vessel, and then, as an

increasingly powerful lightning storm breaks out overhead, the tatami mat room they occupy floods with liquid Vaseline, a fluid which we sense has emanated from *The Field* sculpture itself.

In a harrowing *liebestod* which is the climax and centerpiece of the film, the *Guests*, locked in an embrace and breathing through blowhole-like orifices on the back of their necks, take out flensing knives and cut away each other's feet and thighs. The remains of their lower body are revealed to contain traces of whale tails at an early stage of development, suggesting rebirth, physical transformation, and the possibility of new forms.

Having reached a state of maximum disintegration, the sculpture of *The Field* is then reorganized and the ship emerges from the storm, sailing through a field of icebergs towards the open southern ocean. In the last shot, two whales can be seen swimming behind the ship, headed for Antarctica.









Music

Though her melodic gifts and ambitious arrangements have often led her to create songs with a cinematic quality to them (consider the John Barry-esque drama of *Bachelorette*), the most obvious initial reference point when considering Björk as a composer for the screen would be *Selmasongs*, her soundtrack for Lars von Trier's film *Dancer in the Dark*, in which she also starred. But where that album was anchored in its titular character and in musical theatre as a founding genre, here Björk's compositions must respond to the polyvalent world of Barney's artwork, in which an abstracted narrative is only implied.

This liquid quality of *Drawing Restraint 9* (as material, as allegory, and as setting) allows Björk a unique opportunity to draw upon the full range of her manifold talents, and the result is a stunning new collection of music: delicate single instrument studies for harp, harpsichord, and celeste, large orchestral masses scored for trumpet, trombone, and oboe, sinewy electronic basslines, children's choir, boiling cauldrons of noise, and throughout, her singular, elemental voice.

In a manner recalling the a cappella experimentation on the all-vocal *Medulla* album, Björk's voice is here treated as both an instrument and as a strikingly flexible source of texture, heard in close-mic-ed whispers, lo-fi recordings to Dictaphone, and in wildly distorted howls. But Björk's voice is just one instrument within the overall vision that drives the soundtrack; as befits an artwork

about the creative possibilities of restraint, she largely eschews the first person songwriting mode familiar from her previous post-Sugarcubes solo albums.

The one exception to this is *Gratitude*, the song which begins the soundtrack. In the film's moving opening sequence, we hear Will Oldham sing in English the text of a letter from a Japanese citizen to General MacArthur thanking him for lifting the U.S. moratorium on whaling off the nation's coasts; this text was adapted by Matthew Barney and set to music by Björk for harp, here played by Zeena Parkins. Its delicate delivery acknowledges the folk-culture roots of whaling, while it also subtly flags the barbed history and politics surrounding its source text.

Fittingly, Björk's soundtrack primarily orients itself around the traditional musical forms of Japan. Effortlessly sidestepping any attempt at cheap pastiche or ethno-fusion clichés, Björk has instead written a suite of haunting new music for one of the culture's oldest instruments, the sho.

The sho's rich, dense harmonics are a reflection of its unique structure: with seventeen reeds and fifteen distinct pipes, it calls for a nimble fingering which blocks and silences particular notes in order to produce the ten tone-clusters, or "aitake", which were regarded as pleasing to the Imperial court of eighth-century Japan. Transitions between these fingerings call for subtle, minute shifts between these rigorously defined chords. Thus the performance practice of the instrument itself reflects the

organizing thematic of *Drawing Restraint 9*: the relationship between creativity and resistance.

The music Björk has written for sho is performed by Mayumi Miyata, one of the world's foremost sho players who has premiered compositions for the instrument by, among others, John Cage and Toru Takemitsu; she appears in the film playing her instrument.

In order to come up with a primal, direct musical equivalent to the operatic climax of the film's flensing ritual, Björk has worked with scholars of the Noh theatre to produce new musical settings of a Matthew Barney poem which is sung in the intonation patterns and low, growling vocal techniques of traditional Japanese court entertainment. Punctuated by woodblock percussion and high-keening tones, the result is a powerfully felt music with an elemental, invocatory power.

Providing a counterpoint to the ancient instruments and traditional compositional methods, Björk's ongoing collaborations with a close-knit circle of representatives of the cutting edge of electronic production continues unabated.

The presence of longtime Björk collaborators Mark Bell, Valgeir Sigursson and Leila, is felt here as a kind of sonic equivalent to the prosthetic and computer-generated aspects of Barney's work, as their contributions expand the palette and extend the formal complexity of Björk's musical ideas:

on *Petrolatum Bell* fashions a rubbery bassline out of a pattern provided by Björk and based on a traditional

Japanese folk dance to celebrate the arrival of the liquid Vaseline tanker into the harbor;

Bath sets Björk's lonely voice against the shivering processed textures of Akira Rabelais' computer music to produce a tactile equivalent to the film's bathing sequence; while on *Storm*, Leila encrypts a virtual chorus of Björk's in a dense and terrifying sheet of distorted processing which musically models the ship's malfunctioning electronics as they are short-circuited by the creeping flow of Vaseline.

Western artwork about Japan typically fetishizes its glittering urban post-modernity, or stalls out in cheap gags about its unintelligible otherness; Björk's soundtrack for *Drawing Restraint 9* shows a refreshingly open-hearted capacity to take Japanese history and culture both seriously and creatively, forging a poetics of translation which is as thoughtful as it is insistently new.

Like the figure of the Guest which she plays in the film, this album captures her testing her own resources, undergoing a strange but compelling metamorphosis, and pushing out into new territory. Combining deeply felt emotion with a bracing, risky independence from formulas and conventions, Björk's questing nature and stubborn inventiveness remain very much in evidence. A uniquely sensitive response to the artwork it supports, the soundtrack to *Drawing Restraint 9* also stands alone as a bold step forward from an uncompromising musical visionary. Like the film it scores, it is ravishing, but wields a sharp knife.



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GUEST **DRAWING RESTRAINT** *GUEST*



Starring BJÖRK and MATTHEW BARNEY

Written and Directed by MATTHEW BARNEY

Produced by BARBARA GLADSTONE and MATTHEW BARNEY

Director of Photography: PETER STRIETMANN Music Composed by BJÖRK

Associate Producer: MIKE BELLON Production Design: MATTHEW D. RYLE

Special Make-Up and Effects: GABE BARTALOS Lighting Design: CHRIS WINGET

Visual Effects Supervisor: MATTHEW WALLIN, MANTRON CORPORATION

Post Production Supervisor: CHRISTOPHER SEGUINE

Sound Design: DAVE PATERSON Beauty Makeup: ISAO TSUGE

Costume Design Execution: MICHIRU MURAKAMI

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