

OPHELIA

Directed and performed by *Carmen La Griega*

<https://youtu.be/q78JObo3MVI>



20 de abril de 2018
Taller la Griega
Calle Fúcar, 4 Madrid
PASES 20.30 / 21.00 / 21.30

OFELIA

TEATRO DE OBJETOS DE CARMEN LA GRIEGA



CARMEN LA GRIEGA, Madrid 1971

The visual artist known as *Carmen La Griega*, began her research in Athens. She is known by the pseudonym *The Greek* for the influence that ancient Greek theatre has had upon her work.

The union between visual arts and literature is a fundamental characteristic of her work, thus, the journey of the heroine results in the creation of her own personal mythology. Feminine archetypes such as Medea, Arachne, Athena, and now, Ophelia, are central to her research. She aims to reach all types of public through the medium of theatrical staging and techniques.

Outstanding examples of her many works include *My fingers*, *Choir of Ghosts*, exhibited at the NiigataEya Gallery, Japan, in August 2017, *Rat Woman*, at the Rafael Pérez Hernando Gallery, Madrid, in 2015, and *Catharsis, 2005Reserva*, at the Alegría Gallery, Madrid, in 2013

Among her notable performances are *The Great Black Mother*, Kulturpalast International, Berlin, in 2008 and Pradillo Theatre, Madrid in 2011, and *Arachne* at the Centro de Arte dos de Mayo y Circulo de Bellas Artes, Madrid in 2009.



OFELIA , THE BEGINNING

<https://youtu.be/-hQA7m12djo>

In the year 2018 I set myself the challenge of creating a different painting everyday, using only my hands as brushes. The paintings were to be done in oil, one on top of the other, on the same two by two metre canvas. Through this meditative process a succession of images appeared one after the other, until the eventual completion of the work. Every day I created a new painting. During this time I took photographs of the whole process, and when I finally saw them all together, around twelve paintings, I discovered that they all shared one thing in common: a person lying in water.

Stepping back the title Ophelia, from Hamlet, by William Shakespeare, came to me. Ophelia is the legend of the woman characterised by the qualities of love, indecision, doubt and tragedy. This story of her tragic death has been an inspiration for many artists myself included.

I wondered what happens to Ophelia after her death. How does she move? Perhaps I can give her life. I took objects which I had brought back with me from my trip to Japan, together with drawings, paintings and other items that I had created during this period. In my performance Ophelia is reborn. Her rebirth is represented through the use of the materials, milk, oil paint and paper. At this moment, everything came to life, as it were a dance

Many aspects of my life are here, from my relationships, both family, and intimate, to my travels, to my struggle to make a living as an artist. Everything together upon the same table.

OPHELIA, object theatre by CARMEN LA GRIEGA centres around the process of representation of the ghost of Ophelia in her afterlife. We witness a provocative linking of the prototype's qualities and those of the artist's.

The performance of Ophelia is a series of objects made from simple materials such as paper, clay, painting, which are moved around to bring life once again to Ophelia as she seeks out new spaces which give her the hope to go on living.

Its an autobiographical metaphor where desire, life and death, reality and fiction come together, through movement, inviting the spectator to embark on a dream like journey in which simple and abstract materials come to life, through contemplation.



OPHELIA ON STAGE

Carmen La Griega tells a story through object theatre

Text by Ms. Wonderly

Object theatre is a great table-stage upon which a *Carmen La Griega*, dressed in black, brings her creations to life. She does so through the movement of tiny characters and landscapes. Some of those objects are figurative and others more abstract. The characters move to the rhythm of music. It is their very internal drama in the story itself which also moves the figures.

I was profoundly moved by the story and yet the plot defies description. Ophelia sets out on her journey. Carmen works with archetypes, images beating against the unconscious. Our day to day logic gives way to a different logic, the logic of dreams. This somewhat hypnotic state, provokes powerful dream like emotions. Sadness gives way to annoyance, annoyance to fear. Also indefinable emotion: fear – laughter, desire – melancholy.

Have you ever observed a child playing with their toy cars or houses you may have asked yourself why we no longer play ourselves? When and why did we cease to play as children do? Clearly, if an adult with a proven artistic track record plays for you, the rules of the game will be much more complex. The relationship between Carmen and spectator is not an infantile one. What we see in fact is not the pleasure of children but pleasure for adults. Scenically, the fact that you are witnessing somebody playing with dolls upon a table gives one the impression that at any moment one can distance oneself. Curiously, it is the opposite which happens: One submerges even deeper into ones emotions. In a way, being aware of the fiction is one of the profound, inexplicable qualities of theatre which transports the spectator into catharsis.

So, once again, Carmen has succeeded in honouring her pseudonym, *La Griega*.



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