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An Interview with Cheryl Maeder

By [Ashley Matthews](#) - November 4, 2019 7 0

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Not only has Cheryl Maeder's work been exhibited all over the world, there is honestly a true sense of innocent intrigue and passion showcased in her photography and films. Renowned across the globe, Maeder delicately hones her senses down to the most minute details when it comes to the human condition. Her video installation, *Simulacra*, is currently available now on our platform reelsubmissions.com

The following is an interview that I had the pleasure of conducting via online with Cheryl Maeder.

Q: What sparked your interest in filming your video installation *Simulacra*?

A: Since 2009, I have been exhibiting my work at the Miami art fairs during Art Basel with my Paris Gallery, *Galerie Mark Hachem*. Through the years of exhibiting, I noticed a remarkable shift in how the art fair patrons were viewing the art. In early years of social media, patrons would come to the booth and ask if they can take a photo of the work. As the years progressed, and social media took off, more and more patrons would come to the gallery booths with their smart phones and not engage, just take photos of themselves and the artwork. Every art fair I attended in these past few years, mostly everyone attending had their smart phones taking photos and selfies with the art. Having observed this evolution, I wanted to document it. I thought it would be interesting to use my own iPhone to film the viewers, so that I, too, would become an active participant in this process, and therefore, through the film *Simulacra*, we all become the "Art".

Q: Your video installation *Simulacra* is a reflection and imitation rather on who “we” have become in this social media age. As the filmmaker, capturing the scenes displayed before you with your phone, you too then became a vital piece in this absorbing puzzle that we find our civilization enraptured in. How has that made you feel post production and how did that make you feel during the present moments of filming?

A: I went through various emotions while filming the footage for *Simulacra*. What I humbly realized, is that I, too, am part of the social media age. I cannot sit in judgment of others, while I am also a part of it. Who am I to judge? Instead I wanted to film it from a higher vantage point, more as a satire, an observer with a sense of humor. For me, the ability to laugh at ourselves is so transformational and healing.

Q: How long, collectively, did the actual production and post production span in developing the piece?

A: I filmed the footage for *Simulacra* in December 2018, and we finished the film in May, 2019. I was also working on other projects at the time, and did not want to rush through the production process. I wanted to just be with it and let the creative process develop on its own time frame. I collaborated with Artist Mary Tidy-Coyle, who is the editor of the film. We have an amazing, creative collaboration. Mary is also a Professor of Art, and she helped me come up with the name of the film, *Simulacra*, through her art studies. When I am working on a film or photographic series, I have an idea in mind for the piece. However, I am totally aware that true creation, comes from within, from the *Muse* inside, and I, am only the vessel. That is where the magic occurs, and the film becomes not about me, but takes on a universal context.

Q: Out of pure curiosity, in your own words and to the best of your ability, could you define the 'human condition'?

A: The human condition in my work is about "Connection", the innate connection to the self, each other, and other living beings on this planet which includes the environment. We are not separate from Nature, We are Nature. We humans, operate as if we are separate, which causes alienation, and destruction of the planet. However, I think more holistically, and am optimistic that who we truly are will transform our consciousness and this planet.

Q: With the boom in technological advancements, do you feel that our (us as humans) current relationship with technology is completely positive or more so a detriment when it comes to the accessibility and appreciation for art? In other words, do you feel in any way, that our current dependence on smart phones and the internet, effects how we may truly understand and perceive 'art'?

A: Technology is only a tool. There has always been technology in every age of our civilization. It is not the technology that is good or bad. It is about how we humans, use the technology. If we use technology as a tool to truly connect from inside/out, it can lead to amazing creations and a greater consciousness.

Q: Photography and film-making are a very symbiotic couple. I believe, the two go hand in hand in extreme manners, as one cannot exist without the other. Are there aspects of either that you find yourself enjoying more thoroughly or uniquely and how so?

A: My creative process lately has been about the inquiry of merging these two art forms; the two-dimensional art image and the moving interactive film images. I have just finished a film project *Pixel Beach* which is on this theme.

Q: You've stated in prior interviews, that 'you know no limitations' and that you live without them. If you could elaborate on that ideology and belief and possibly share more insight for those, in every day scenarios, that encounter the fear of accomplishment and grapple with the struggle to go after their artistic desires?

A: We as humans all experience fear. Fear is always there, and, as we are driving, it is sitting in the back seat, talking to us and telling us what we should do and why we cannot do it. Elizabeth Gilbert in her book, *Big Magic*, spoke about this so eloquently. I, too, of course, experience fear, I just do not let it stop and limit me. I acknowledge it, and still do what I need to do, and move forward.

Q: Are there any exhibitions of yours in Florida or elsewhere that are currently available?

A: Yes, *Simulacra*, Video Installation was recently on exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome, Italy with Miami New Media Festival, in collaboration with Arts Connection Foundation & Doral Contemporary Art Museum.

Q: Are there any exhibitions of yours in Florida or elsewhere that are currently available?

A: Yes, *Simulacra*, Video Installation was recently on exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome, Italy with Miami New Media Festival, in collaboration with Arts Connection Foundation & Doral Contemporary Art Museum.

Simulacra is now currently being exhibited at Laundromat Art Space, Miami with Miami New Media Festival, in collaboration with Doral Contemporary Art Museum & Arts Connection Foundation, in “Identity” Group Exhibition through November 19th.

On November 30th, *Simulacra* will also be on exhibition at the Doral Contemporary Art Museum/Miami with Miami New Media Festival & Arts Connection Foundation.

My video installation, *I Am Climate Change*, is currently on view at ArtServe, Fort Lauderdale, October 9th thru December 27th in 30th Anniversary Season Preview for Changing Landscapes Exhibition.

From April to June 2020, I will be exhibiting my fine art photographs and video installation for “Changing Landscapes” Exhibition at ArtServe, Fort Lauderdale. The multi-disciplinary art exhibition will highlight the importance of environmental protection and preservation.

Q: Are you a part of the social media world? Do you have an Instagram, Facebook or Twitter account and would you care to share them for our readers?

A: Yes, I say with a smile, I am part of the social media world. My work is about connection, and the social media world is a tool to connect with others on a global scale.

My instagram handle: @cherylmaeder

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ArtistCherylMaeder>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/cherylmaeder>

Q: Do you currently have any prospective elements or topics for future projects?

A: Yes, I am currently working on a new film, where I will be collaborating with a musical composer.