

'Sex Is The Most Equal Thing Between Humans'



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Multi-disciplinary artists Cara Stricker and John Kirby have teamed up to bring their unique sights and sounds to Sugar Mountain. They talk to Sarah Barrett.

John Kirby and Cara Stricker met at a karaoke bar in Sydney – Kirby sang *In Da Club* by 50 Cent while Stricker hid in the corner and was adamant she wouldn't sing in front of the likes of singer Dev Hynes from Blood Orange. Ever since, the two have lived, created and experienced their evolving art, living together in upstate New York. Most recently, they performed a collaborative piece at New York Fashion Week.

Stricker describes Kirby's sounds as what she imagines sonically when she's creating visuals. Together they create immersive audiovisual performance pieces. "I feel like you walk into a world. It's a sound piece but the visuals are immersed in what world you step into," she explains. Kirby adds, "What I love about collaborating in general, especially when it is something that inspires you, is that it inspires you to work harder. Sometimes I get distracted working alone."

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Some of the work the pair have created is erotically intriguing, repetitious, questioning and evocative of sexuality, nudity and human emotion. "The nature of my music and Stricker's film is it's kind of on this repetitive track," Kirby explains. "You don't know what the cycle is. You see the music is repeating and swirling around on itself. It could be a metaphor for how some people approach sex or sexuality. They look to it as a certain means to an end. We're looking at it to see it for what it really is, to get rid of some of the stigma."

Both artists agree that becoming undefinable in their work is the key to creating truly original, new and exciting pieces. "It is sort of in this in-between region," Kirby begins, Stricker adding that when art "is in this in-between land, it can express itself the way it wants to; it's malleable, it feels like something very right. Everything you do is going to be good as long as it isn't defined. It's completely honest and reflective of the way that I see living projects come about."

Some art critics have described Stricker as a contemporary feminist, which she explains as an inevitable part of being a young, successful female artist. However, she doesn't agree with young feminist artists only pushing the agenda of women. "I'd rather see it as equality. Sex is the most equal thing between humans. Nudity and bodies, acceptance of different cultures and way of live – this is why I love working with Kirby."

So what are we meant to take away from the work that they're bringing to Sugar Mountain? "I want the viewer to be inspired," Stricker concludes, "and also still to be erotic so they lose sensation of what the world tells you to feel about the most innate things, which are sexuality and intimacy, where the barriers between people can be shed."



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