



Predator

version française [ici](#)

Lydia Lunch

Lydia Lunch : Ok, I have to check my lipstick for the tape recorder.

Jade : **Is underground music completely over for you ? NO !**

But you don't want people to still have this image from you... Well, no my image is... you know, what is my image for each person ? I still am doing music. I have a new Cd out in 2 weeks, it's called "matrikamantra", it means mother of all sons. I hope to come to Europe next year in the summer with this music. But music it's not the priority, it's one of the many things I do. Now I am doing photo exhibitions, and also exhibitions with body cast, and boxes I make with skulls and voodoo boxes. I am writing comics. I am writing my books. I am doing spoken word.

The music that is coming out, "matrikamantra", is what I call overstated word. The music is very disturbing psycho ambient with hypnotic lyrics, no bass-guitar or drums. Different instruments, piano and samples and just very seductive, but disturbing. So I'm never stopping one form of art. It's just at certain periods things take a priority. It's also it's hard being difficult for me to tour much of the music I've done because my intention is not to tour music it's to document a concept, to make a record and only with one record I have ever done, "the shotgun wedding". I've done musical tours, but not make an album make a tour. It's, to me, very... I would rather make a tour, perfect the music and make an album and then put down this over. It's my concept.

Between the different shapes of expression you use, I've always think that the writing was the most important. Absolutely, the words are always what influence the music when I use music, if I need music, if I want to do music, if I have the right collaborators available for music, but every thing always comes from the words, the passion of the words, the obsession. Obsession is always what the words are about so it's always the circle, with every form of art to me.

Have you always write ? Yes, since 12.

And was it different to try to write stories ? Mean like this book ?

Yes. No, it was very natural because it's only the story of my life, it's all true. So it's no different because always when I was writing speeches, or stories, or lyric it was always autobiographical. You know, viewpoint. Always from my view point of L.A., always dealing with the truth as I know it, as I see it, so this was very natural. And also this Creation Books company have been coming up to me 5 years ago, every time I was in England, « would you like to write a book », « I have no time » I said. And then they have not enough books out. So 5 years later they have 60 books out, it's 2 people running the company, books from the marquis de Sade to Salvador Dali, to anonymous erotic pornography, to new writers, these all things. And to me then I had the time, I had the place in my head, I knew what I wanted to write, I knew what I had personally achieved because I am principally dealing with my obsessions in this book so I knew the place in my reality too that would make sense to write this book, otherwise before that doesn't have. The last chapter which to me is the punchline, the progress through all this insanity. It means it's fine to document insanity but what it ultimately the point ? To me in that book is that we live in a society of gluttony. We all go for something. Some glutton for punishment, some for drugs, some for alcohol, some for useless stimulation, some for sex. We all glutton for something. Ok ? Consuming, wanting. Having so much energy I need a lot of energy back. So this is a mutual vampirism. An extreme vampirism because of how much energy I have and I had to come to a point where I realize this unbalanced loss and of course that with gloom, messy things whatever alcohol, drug, sex. You consume so much that actually you just become sick and you have to realize that you have to detox from all of this and fill your, hun, vacancy, fill the void, not with men, not with sex, not with drugs, not with alcohol, not with other people, not with destruction but with yourself and that's really the point of this book, but describing everything I filled myself with and then coming to this conversation.

Does it help, writing all these things ? Yes. But no, with this book I was already at the place, I was already

at a recovering place. So to write it was very natural it was not as if I all I wrote I was exorcising myself at the time because the exorcise had already happend. Yes after 20 years, just hard to belive, after 20 year of creating. Of course, you know these forms of art, of course it's help, of course it makes me as sane I appear to be. My friends might tell you otherwise. The man I live with might tell you completely otherwise. I think I'm sane. Tonight you'll hear me telling my own satinty. I mean, beside helping myself, beside I have my public psychotherapy for 20 years as my artistic attitude, I think it also help people. I think there is a huge minority of people, a huge of intellectual and sexual minority that it also helps because I'm explaing exactly their obsessions. Well that I might have the voice to articulate. So yes gropy alley sure, I hope, to some degre.

Do you have the felling that you were living all this in order to collect material ? Well, that's what some of the men I was with have accused me of. This is a great view point you have, because I've heard for a few men « I'm not just an other story ». Well every one that have said that to me is just now a a fucking story, of course they were stories. Well I mean it wasn't as if, yes it was always an experiment, my life has always been an experiment based on heavy and intensive experiment. I want intense experiment, because I'm an intense person. Of course I frequent intense people, but the goal was not just to « oh well this is an interestin character, I think I'll make a story ». But evantually it is, but it isn't... Yes, of course, because my life is this open book, many open stories I've already told and I feel no taboo in my personal life. I feel that every trauma or every obsession or every horror story that may be mark with my identity is still universal. Ok you might not having gone at the points I've gone trough but still there is some points you can relate to. There are minor things that may be kept personnal, but I never feel anything was a taboo. I will tell all and this is what I am admiting here to, that I will always admit anything. And for most people, most men especialy, it's to much. They don't want to hear every thing, they don't want to hear the most incriminating things. Well, that's what I have to admit, it's important to me to revale but may be a burden to the or just the audience is burden to, I am burding you with this but hoping we both come trough this, so, there is a duality in this.

Do you read a lot ? I read a lot in faces, you know. When I was writting my book I couldn't read anything, even the newspapers. I read in a short spence, I would go trough reading 3 books at the same time at one time and read 10 books in 2 month and then I would not read again. It go trough on me, it always go trough on me. Again a gluttonry, an intellectual gluttonry. I never want to read fiction. When I read people who wrote fiction like Selby, I don't think that's fiction it's realy details he's then fictionalising. I prefer, you know not realy philosophy, not realy realy existantial writers, but for exemple my fafourite writter is (...) E.M. Cioran. I discovered him a few years ago in London because in america there are only a few books of him translated in English, now they are just starting to come out of universities. But after one goes trough Bataille and Blanchot, and Foucault, and De Sade, and Miller, and Selby and then we end up at Cioran. When we are at Cioran, you would never have to read another after you read one on these books. This to me is just the must beautifull sarcastic, glorious wit. He's just my absolute favorite. And the book, "the hig summit of despair", written when he was 19... If he nerver wrote another book it was a great archivement. So these are the type of book I like to read. Once they are speaking directly to me, with sarcasm and intensity and a philosophy that's not realy a philosphy, a philosophy without dogma. It uses a langage that is so beautifull . And this type of writting is very difficult, there is few people that realy write like this. I'm very specific for what I want to read, it's almost like... because I don't want fiction. I don't have time for the people's imagination. The only fiction I have enjoyed it's James Ellroy, the american crime writter because it's near to his own personal life. And "my dark places", I dont know if you read "my dark places" ?? It's perfect, it's what I'm for , so beautiful... I go trough phases, right now I'm touring, I don't, I never read because all you seem inactive, you are on the train, you fly. I just need time to be blank, no more information, just no thinking. It's sometimes very healing.

I've seen a few weeks ago the movies you did with Richard Kern, and I taught they were more close from written text on picture than a real movie and I find that the feeling was very close to Bataille.

Thank you, hin, hin.

But Bataille from a feminin point of view, a duality between a strong intellectual with precise words and something very instinctive... Yes, yes. Well to me big influences where Bataille and Genet. I mean Genet was a huge influence and not so much his books, because I never read so many of his books but his life, his attitude, his presence, more so than even his writting, that was also beautifull, brilliant, I mean his journal, that is one of my favorites.

Did you read when you where young ? Year, thank Good. That was a good education in life. (...)

The underground scene, do you think it was your youth ? I think it was important at the time and I think especially I am very greatfull that I have the opportunity to work with Richard Kern when I did because to me the meeting with Richard Kern, to do these films, at the point where I am at here, to go through the therapy and education of those films help me to eke knowedged it's what lead up to my book now. I think, with « right side of my brain », which was the early start of realy documeting what this book is about. That's important that I meet Richard Kern at that time and do those documents and that's utimatly what lead me there some 10, 12, 14 years later, however many years it's been, to the place intellectualy that I am now.

Well, where do you estimed you are now ? AHAHAHAHAHAHAH. Beside sleeping on my seat, I'm so tired. I think I'm in the best place I've ever been in my life I am 38 years old now.

Do you feel in peace with yourself ? More peace, yes. And also more satisfaction and to me that's the goal. The goal it's not happiness, it's not even so much peace, it's realy satisfaction, that's the goal. And it can be a mysterious, an invariable lossif condition, satisfaction, because we can try to satisfy ourself with any number of useless and irrelevant obsessions and things. I think, ok, I have a 20 year history as a junkie of many forms, which to me I can look at the sheet of paper that sets every thing I've done and feel completely

divorced from everything. I look at it as if you created all this body of work. I sometime feel I have as much connections to all of these as I would if you did it because to me it all came so naturally, I've never struggled to create anything. I had to struggle sometime to document it or sometime to release the money to document it but I never have to struggle to create it. I never have to struggle to write something. I never have that artistic struggle ever, because to me it's very natural. The expulsion is very natural. I never struggle to. Well I don't paint so I don't know that particular horror. I don't think I will ever paint, it's the one from I leave to old age. Since I never had an artistic struggle, it's as natural as a record or a conversation with you. I fall in that book as a conversation that ran for 3 months. That's very unusual. That's very bizarre, I think. As an artist it's a very bizarre position to be in. So my satisfaction does not necessarily come by the amount of work I've done, although I should be satisfied this age even if I didn't created this body of work until I was 60. And by the time I'm 60 there will be of course 3 time as much. But I feel satisfied in the accomplishment I made when detailing what as obsessed me and understanding why it as obsessed me, and understanding also that some of my obsessions pre-dated my birth.

Ok, I'm speaking tripod here, I'm speaking of the tradition of obsession from my father's family, ok, which is a genetic insanity that I was at first resentfull of and then in this book I come to thank my father for all the experience he gave me. He helped me to develop, what I had to go trough, how I feel and think now, so this is a full circle thing. That's one thing. So I think, just the place I am righth now, understanding the ritual and habits that I've fallen into, that we all fall into. Understanding why one seek that, why one is attracted to that and been able to be in control of your decisions because, first of all I execute an incredible amount of control. I have an incredible amount of discipline to have archive what I did, considering the insane community I occupied. Ok, and that mentions being schizophrenic to some degre. So, somehow I had an incedible hability to organise and an incredible amout of discipline. And I have come to the place where I choose to execute control. But it's not even a decision, it's very natural to realise that you reach a point of saturation and to prevent yourself from drawing you have to find a different landscape. So I'm very happy now. I'm definitely at the peak of everything and of course sexual peak at my age.

Maybe you never had to struggle in your creative work because you have to struggle for your life ?

Exactly, exactly. You know both thought been born into a very hard ghetto, a very rough area till I was 13 or 14 old and moving to New York when I'm 16 wich is a massive ghetto, you know. So I've been grew up into that poverty, been also grew up into an intellectual poverty. My parent's weren't not intellectuals, they were very low working class. I don't think they ever read a book either of them. And my rebellion of course to go to the opposite direction. So I think every struggle I have to fight against was necessary for the delevopement I am at now. I would not trade anything. I don't feel grate or resentment of anything I had to exprience. It only make now my life sweeter and my victory so much sweeter, because my victory and rebellion is satisfaction and it's self satisfaction, the ultimate rebellion. Well you are not only so satisfied but self sufficient. That's the ultimate rebellion, then you're in your universe.

And now what do you still want to accomplish ? Ah ! Ah !

It's a fucking question. Well, I feel, yes, I'm in such great health, and I'm trully am, I'm never sick, I have incredible health now, have to be sick for the firt 30 years of my life with many operations, and sicknesses and psychosomatic sicknesses and the sickness of reality and psychological torture. Now that I have 30 years of ill, now I'm working on the next 30 years positive health. I think that there are many things I will archive that I can't even imagine at this moment because everything will come in time. I have to concentrate on what's set here. On the last year for instance, you know, doing « paradoxia », doing this comic with Ted Mac Keever, "Toxic Gumbo", doing this new cd "matrikamantra", doing full solo exhibitions of photography and sculpture that's all in the last year and a half. I cannot tell what the next next year and a half will bring, just to continue and I hope to have a book of photos published with texts, I hope to continue doing art. I hope to start writting another book this summer, making more music, and continuing to explore every form of art that interest me when it's necessary to accentuate the power of the world.

Did you feel trapped in this image you give for a period ? No, because the image... What is the image ? Everyone as a different idea what my image is, what's the image I made ? The image is a different work a different sort, a different look, a different record... So what is the image ? People still think I live in New York. I haven't live there for 7 years. I also lived in London, Los Angeles, San francisco, New Orleans, Pittsburg, you know people think I have black haid I haven't black hair for 10 or 12 years, you know, people think... I have no idea, everyone has a different view. I hope of what they think I am, they just think oh, agressive, hard, harsh. I think, my viewpoint is passionate, agressive, truthfull, brutally frank, that's my version of myself. And this kind of icon step beside for myself, this kind of Lydia Lunch icon wich we have very few exemples, female exemples of. Diamanda Galas, ok, she's very strong and powerfull but it's completely totaly different, she's a specialist, I'm a juggler, she's a specialist. Nina Hagen, who as a very strong image but her music suffers in some way of just bad taste or bad production, but still has a great aggressif look. Carol Finnley, there's some similarity there, but she's also a specialist in performance, she's aslo a painter, so I mean as a multimedia jugguling, creative aggressiv angry women there is very few icons which as pre-dated these ones I just said. People are used to, well, for instance it's no big deal to have someone like Kurt Cobain when we have Jim Morrison, when we have Elvis Pressley, when we can go beyon that. With women it's always so unique because... Who was the first agressif female, we have Janis Joplin, this is far back as we go, and a self destructive loser. So that's the problem, you know, people try to paint you with a certain coulour, with a certain paint brush because your agressivness terrifies them or alienetes them because there have almost have been no strong women. They've been denied by the press, they've been denied the intention, they've been called the muses of other artists. And then this is a hitorical problem and that's why it's my job to shit in the face of history and to weigh every form of art I find feet to in, store myself in all of this forms of arts, to break tought and assauwith my passion, forget anger and aggressivness. Yes it's there too, but passion,

which especially in America we have no concept of passion or sarcasm, which is another alienating thing, because I am very sarcastic, I am very cynical, but I'm not better. So this is a duality which is hard to understand, how sarcastic and cynical is not really better. I mean my world view is better but as a human being I'm not fucking better, as a human being I'm not angry, I'm passionate. I don't have the energy to be fucking angry, I use my energy creatively and other to communicate to either one or one hundred or what ever. so people like to pigmy you because it's easier to put you in a small category that they think they can comprehend then. Then that's it, they don't have to think further on this image, you know. Common garisher. That's fine. What can I do about it ? Teint blond and wear a happy face, dress in pink ?

To do this as a women maybe it's harder and also more exciting ? Well it's easier and of course it's exciting. It could be harder but it could be easier in one sense, because there's less competition, most women in this field, unfortunately. I wish that wasn't. I wish there are a thousand. I wish on stage there have a hundred women. One time on stage I had a show, a few shows, with ten women on stage, doing courses of my speeches, that was fantastic, a great course. I wish that in 20 years my influence was such that every city I have gone, there have then a premediadly, audience to which maybe there'll have, ok, 50 to 150 or 300 women. Ok ? In an audience. If 10 % of them then said if Lydia Lunch can do it I can fucking do it, then I will feel my influence, culturaly and impressibility. I don't feel that influence now. My influence is not feyet. My influence is not the fuckin' Riot Grrrls, my influence is not Courtney Love, that's not a crime I'm willing at for. I don't see my influence and that's the only frustration as an artist I have, but like De Sade, like Miller, like many painters, like Francis Bacon, like many artist it's often after your death, 20, 30, 50, 100 years you influence, and your fact is truly feand because the people... The next generation maybe have less fucking bullshit on mind side. My favourit artists or wriiters, most of them are dead, with very few exceptions. Ok, so for me, fine... in 20 years, 50 years, 150 years, it doesn't matter. I know the place I leave in history, doesn't matter if I can't see my influence now. Yhear I wish there is a true Riot Girl revolution, but it's bad fucking losy music that make no fucking point to me, it's pointless, it's not enough to have bad music with a soapy concept. It's the antithesis of what I'm about. So that's the only disapointment as an artist, I wish there should be some more immediat results, I know I'm influencing women. Women came to me and say « thank you », « this is very empowering ». It's just that I don't know what they are doing, they could be doing any number of great fucking things but they're not getting attention, they're not getting interviews. So I know my effect is feepersonnaly with women and with men, that's beautifull. Just culturaly I don't see it. Which is fine. No one come and voice me so maybe when I'm 60 there will have a lot of little Lydias. We can have girls for very different periods. Oh, these is the lydia from the 70', this is for the 80', this is for the 90'. Here is the cult, year, now show the concourse !

I think most of the people we find great witch are dead now, they didn't see their cultural influence, they tried to... Year and also as a wriiter how can you see your influence on people who are reading your book in their home, and the reading of books it's a private thing. (...) That's why I love book to me I've done enough CD's. Which does not mean I won't do more. To me a book it's the most important form of creation. It's that that I respect the most. I respect a book more than I respect paintings, movies, anything. It's the private experience. It's one to one, you and the reader's fucking mind. That to me is direct communication, that's mind fucking, that's the most urgent form, and in no delay I want to create another book as soos as possible, that's the most important form, because it is the private thing it's a one to one experience, that's beautiful. Beautiful.

Yes and in creation you just make marks, it's just marks... Exactly, exactly.

It's your own mark, you put it on floor and people can find it... Exactly and to me I'm happy with the plateau I've been since 20 years. It's the same, I have the same amout of people on my shows, I have the same amout of attention. That's fine to me. I'm dealing with. These are the people I want to come to my shows. Not 200 or 300 more people who are there because it's saturday night, only there cause « oh it's a wild woman ». People that come have to make a point, an effort to know. Not every one comes to my fucking show. I think that most of the people that are coming are coming with a true intention, wanting to investigate and to get into the psyche, wanting this relive and that's beautifull. That's to me, that's just perfect because to me the perfect form of spoken word, the perfect communication was traditionally the salon, this is my ideal, « the 120 days of sodom », this is my ideal. Here's the living room, tell the stories, that's beautiful, that's fucking beautifull...

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