

BIOGRAPHY

Amy Halpern is the maker of nearly forty short films, almost all in 16mm., and of the feature film *FALLING LESSONS* (1991). Halpern was born and raised in New York City and has lived and worked in Los Angeles for more than 40 years.

Amy Halpern's films are abstract in their concern with light, movement and the film medium, but they are also human in their elements and themes.

The idea which persists throughout her work is that of liberation – from social, political, psychological, perceptual and even bodily constraints.

Halpern first trained as a dancer, and as a teenager was a member of the fiercely radical Lynda Gudde Dance Company in New York City. Her grasp of body movement and gesture informs all of her films, and she uses her own body in several; the conjuring hands in *INVOCATION* are her own, and she is the furiously writhing Woman in the White Room in *FALLING LESSONS*.

In 2012 Halpern completed *ASSORTED MORSELS*, a suite of eight short films exaltations. It included *THREE MINUTE HELLS*, *INJURY ON A THEME*, *BY HALVES*, *PALM DOWN* and *ELIXER*. In 2022 she completed another suite of 12 short films, including *HULA*, *CHABROT*, *FOUR FINGERS FIVE TOES* and *I TREMBLE*, which premiered in June 2022 at the S8 Mostra de Cinema Periférico in A Coruña, Spain.

Committed to encouraging a wider awareness of abstract film, Halpern co-founded two screening cooperatives: the New York Collective for Living Cinema (1972-1982) and the Los Angeles Independent Film Oasis (1975-1980). She has taught at various institutions, including for seven years in the University of Southern California Department of Cinema.

Halpern has collaborated as cinematographer and gaffer on many films, including Pat O'Neill's *THE DECAY OF FICTION*, Charles Burnett's *MY BROTHER'S WEDDING*, and David Lebrun's *BREAKING THE MAYA CODE* and *OUT OF THE MAYA TOMBS*.

Her work in multimedia includes collaboration in the 1970s with Ken and Flo Jacobs *NEW YORK APPARITION THEATER*, a 3D shadow play company, and between 2010 and 2015 as a member of the classic West Coast light show group, *SINGLE WING TURQUOISE BIRD*.