

40 WOMEN

the Undersea Show. a sideshow alley show that would come with the carnival every summer. a series of windows like in an aquarium, each a diorama with a different woman inside. each a different story of the sea with a different actress. a different fantasy and a different fate. different for each woman and each of the men who watched with their faces half lit in the darkness of the gangway they moved along in silence. and her name is 40 women

first window. a mermaid on the rocks. long hair, large breasts with tiny seashells over the nipples. shiny aqua sparkles in the eyeshadow, recalling scales and strings of green and silver in her wild tangled hair to be like seaweed. the image of a siren with her scared savage eyes, but helpless legless body, white belly torso leading down down to where you hope you'll see a bit of pussy but slipping teasingly inside a sheath of fishscales just above her crotch

second window. a naked woman moulded in sand on the beach, her form barely emerging from the folding of the dunes, winkle shells for nipples and oyster shell tucked into the sand for the just there vagina as she erodes and is washed by the tide, she dissolves and becomes more bare, more stripped away. seen in the moment just before she is gone forever

third window. the sunken treasure chest from a pirate's galleon. lid open full of pearls with the woman buried as if bathing in them, her skin lustrous like the pearls, her legs and arms, breasts and neck amongst the orbs that nest against her skin like soft bubbles surrounding every tiny curve of her body while scorpions crawl over the chest. you can look but don't think you can touch

fourth window. a galleon's figurehead. pale golden hair tressed, eyes cast up away from you, her back arched, arms back, breasts forward and bared, the white chiton fallen down to her waist. a greek goddess, but bound a heroine with a patina over her skin of painted timber, old enamel applied by an old man's hand, bits of the paint now flaked showing the grainy salt-bleached wood underneath

fifth window. a deep sea trawling net hauled up and hanging over the deck of a ship, containing its catch of fish with a woman amongst them, the rope netting making a diamond pattern veil through which you can see sections of leg and arm and thigh and cheek and crotch pressed against the rope, surrounded by the flapping fishes' tails and heads

sixth window. a giant oyster open with the grey pink amorphous shape of the creature inside, but as you watch you can make out a suggestion of an eye a mouth a breast a cunt, this thing that changes continually as you watch

seventh window. a foetus in a pink veined rock cave womb, her body tiny but that of a perfectly formed woman floating like an astronaut, curled around her umbilical cord in a coma deep sleep, arms folded and legs bent chastely covering breasts and groin, with children's toys littering the floor of her sea cave. there for her when she wakes in the safety of this vault

eighth window: a flat expanse of wet sand after the tide has receded with two legs protruding from the sand. long legs, a stocking and red shoe on one, moving languid, like drunk, exposed in the daylight, her crotch just covered by the surface of the sand

ninth window. the south pole, sheets of ice over the sea and a woman frozen inside this transparent crystal slab, weightless, this moment caught forever, static, her eyes looking deep into yours, her face inches from yours, so close, her body white, each toe each finger poised, like she's just breathed in

tenth window. a pearl diver, a chinese woman, goggles, snorkel, bikini clad like a james bond girl, but below her flat belly below her navel her thighs dapple and spread into eight. she has the legs of an octopus that sinuously mimic the sea's rhythm and lightly touch the seabed occasionally curling all the way back to reveal the double rows of giant suckers and the beak at the centre of her legs that leads to her stomach

eleventh window. a reclining woman formed in rock in an underwater shelf, her naked body roughly suggested but unmistakably what it is. pores and crevices where tiny fish swim around her breasts and lips, but she doesn't move, isn't bothered by them. sea grass and weed cover parts of the brown body making hair and occasional suggestions of what might have been clothing before she transformed into a reef and became still except for the red and gold anemone that blazes from her crotch fluorescent under this sombre ledge

twelfth window. the drowned woman, washed up on the shore amongst weed and kelp, her body blue and white, crabs nesting in her hair, a redhead, naked like a venus, her skin luminescent, sequined, glittering like pale white coral where each speck of silver is like a star, plankton shimmering from her dead pores, and all you can do is look

thirteenth window. a woven cane cage, arching over and around her, a woman sitting cross legged inside like a yogi, deep in meditation, a crayfish woman with giant cray claws for arms folded in front of her, orange hair, blue spangled eyelids shut in an immobile face that rises above a pair of breasts with blue spangled nipples, armoured by their pristine perfection

fourteenth window. eel hair woman, a medusa, with a mass of writhing coils over her head, each with a snakelike face with yellow bead eyes that exchange complicit glances as they wrap their bodies around each other. she's hiding behind a rock wall peeping at you through a crevice that frames her head and shoulders, her hands placed on the rocky window sill that covers her breasts. come and play with us

fifteenth window. a shape, a just formed trunk with outstretched limbs, flesh pale yellow and smooth like rubber, the shape just suggesting a woman's body, basic hairless like a doll, and at the ends of the arms legs and neck, a flowering of orange red and white tendrils, anemones with their million fingers sightlessly sensing the currents for what they may bring

sixteenth window. inside a sunken crashed car, the lady from a detective novel, femme fatale, waved blond hair under a stetson hat, simple pearl earrings, expensive makeup, a trenchcoat barely covering her body underneath it, naked except for the gold key on a chain around her neck, her hands pressed against the glass where they had stopped banging on the windows as the car sank and the cabin filled with sea water

seventeenth window. a woman being eaten by a shark, the shark and her in an embrace, waist down inside the shark's mouth, her torso stretched out as her arms reach out grabbing the shark's head to force open its jaws, the fury seething in her shoulders breasts and hair, the two in a death roll, a tango, their eyes locked, blazing

eighteenth window. a naked woman, her feet encased in a square concrete block, the victim, arms up waving gracefully in the current, like her ginger hair, eyes shut like she's sleeping, soft white skin covering her buoyant form, a little plump, a picture of innocence

twentieth window. the woman of atlantis, a mosaic priestess from a sunken kingdom, strings of byzantine jewellery in her hair that sits high above a long aquiline nose, high cheekbones and austere lips, jewels and beads woven into the transparent robe that hangs straight from her shoulders over the full orbs of her breasts, down to the proud hips and black triangle of pubic hair, a living mural she has become one with the patterned wall she recedes into

twenty first window. woman in a titanic cabin, an edwardian lady frozen in time, in her stateroom where the tasselled drapes drift in the undersea currents, the elegant furniture weightless slowly moving through the space defying gravity, a table a chaiselonge an open diary a steamer trunk. she floats a pen still in her hand, mid water, mid room, petticoat gently caressing her calf under the skirts of her layered silk evening gown, her bare feet hanging just above the stately carpet

twenty second window. a giant starfish, flipped over to reveal a woman, arms legs and head extended five-point, her body half covered in the white seafood flesh that pillows her, a living mattress that offers her up, open, as if in the palm of a hand, a veritable fruit de mer

twenty third window. amid a haze of sepia ink in the water, a squid woman, flashes a leg a thigh an arm a tentacle a beak a mouth a hand a cunt a nipple, a silver and black eye that appears against the glass for a second and stares deep into yours then is gone again flash into the velvety brown. she will not let you see her clearly

twenty fourth window. inside an oyster, a naked woman trapped inside a pearl, the nacre encasing her in a ball of translucent lustre, layer upon layer that's hardened around her into a solid glow to protect the grey flesh of the oyster from the sharp affront of her beauty

twenty fifth window. a child all in black on the beach, her face turned away, the sky and the sea grey, picking up shells and tiny polished stones and placing them in the brightly coloured bucket she's carrying

twenty sixth window. a barmaid in a sombre tavern in a port town, darkhaired, a hard look in her eyes like she's a guardian of something, arms, body covered in tattoos that tell of the stories of the sea, sunken wrecks, monsters, the names of drowned sailors, a map of buried treasure, part seen part hidden behind the tornoff jeans that hug her hips and crotch and the shirt that's tied in a reef knot between her breasts

twenty seventh window. sailor dolly woman in a striped sailor shirt white sailor cap, tight white shorts over strong thighs and legs that lead down to shiny black shoes on small precise feet. pink cheeks milkwhite skin curly hair rosebud mouth, a 1930's musical starlet who's about to tapdance any minute, against a painted backdrop depicting the deck of a pink and grey warship, guns ablazing, puffy white clouds in a skybue sky. dancer's legs, utter contempt in her gaze

twenty eighth window. pirate woman standing on the carved deck of a galleon, ornate balustrades, rope rigging, the turned spokes of the steering wheel, black eye patch, long auburn ringlets that brush against a scar that runs from the eye patch down her cheek and fades just above a thick sensuous lip, a wooden peg leg, velvet captain's hat and long coat embroidered in gold and silver with emblems of the sea, a cutlass slung low on velvet clad hips, rings on her fingers that slowly drum onetwothree on the timber railing as she watches you with her unblinking eye

twenty ninth window. woman in a bath in her bathroom, images of the sea over the walls wallpaper, shells, starfish, sponges, fish shaped soaps in jars, everything like the colours of pale candy as she shaves her legs, hair gathered up and tied to keep it dry, a few strands hanging wet against her neck and shoulders, the tap

slowly dripping, absorbed in her task, she doesn't notice the bath overflowing or you watching through the window

thirtieth window. a tableau, the birth of venus, full blown bollywood style, complete with scallop shell, ivory skin, flowing hair with a tress held to her crotch to preserve her requisite modesty, and attendant handmaidens, nymphs and cherubs by the score amid a swirling panorama of enchanted waves and groves and grottoes, all done with mirrors that repeat her cryptic smile and her protested virginity over and over into a renaissance mandala

thirty first window. a bathing beauty in white iridescent bathing cap and suit, image of glamour deep in a sea pool the folds of refracted light dancing over her body and walls of the tank as she poses for a perfect photo looking knowingly into your eyes as her hand lightly caresses her throat where just behind her perfect fingers you can see the triple folds of gills

thirty second window. a woman long red hair in swirls around her head shoulders and back totally naked riding a seahorse, laughing intoxicated, her arms and legs wrapped around his spangled neck like she's riding a painted carrousel horse on a roundabout, spinning, rocking, undulating, as the tears of pleasure run down her ecstatic cheeks

thirty third window. jelly fish woman, hanging almost static mid water, as much a part of the current as within it, her body completely made of a transparent jelly that fills the rounded form of crystal breasts and curvaceous torso that has tiny twinkling specs and threads through it suggesting organs and arteries and deep within the twin amber glows of her throbbing heart and womb

thirty fourth window. a deep sea diver in canvass suit, lead shoes, brass orb helmet over her head, her face behind the glass window showing blond hair sleepy eyes long lashes, full slightly parted lips, as she walks in slow motion over the deep sea floor like on the surface of the moon, a knife in one hand and a bag of precious coral prized off the seabed in the other. imagine the feel of the canvass suit against her naked body inside

thirty fifth window. a woman in a filmy nightgown splayed on the rocks below a cliff, as the surf washes around the black rocks sometimes moving and lifting the seethrough nightdress. eyes open a slight smile on her lips, her eyes open still focussed to the top of the cliff from where she has jumped. the the suicide note still in her hand, her last words to the sea: take me

thirty sixth window. a whirlpool far out in a lead grey ocean under a silver and black sky, 100 metres across, the water coursing around and downwards. and in the wall of the vortex an arm an eye a turn of hair a thigh a mouth and a cunt a nipple. drawing ships, whales, birds in and down into the bottomless spiral

thirty seventh window. the widow sitting at a barred window looking out to the sea at night dressed in black watching the storm waiting, locked to her chair in this endless vigil, still but for the small regular movement of her fingers passing the beads of a rosary through her fingertips

thirty eighth window. deep sea woman, no eyes no hair no limbs because the pressure and cold and darkness of the depths is so great that she has become just a shape with a gaping mouth and sheathed cunt, an amorphous form but unmistakably primally a woman

thirty ninth window. a woman on a makeshift raft of broken planks tied together with a sail made from the torn remnants of her clothes, a castaway floating on an empty sea flat and windless under a pale sun, her hair bleached and tangled, her underwear barely covering sunburned skin, vacant pale blue eyes that have

been looking over a timeless sea for days, now hopeless

fortieth window. the mad woman on the beach at twilight, pacing on the shore's edge, the wind blowing her hair across her face and eyes, but not able to hide the eyes that tell of what they have seen coming across the waves, the vision of the future that has driven her mad and left her torn open, and available to any man that finds her here

but there's one more window, the uncatalogued one, the boy, the man, king neptune's son, a flat seabed, a few rocks dotting the sand that stretches back infinitely behind but the atmosphere clear like the water's drained away and he is exposed under a pale sun, lying on his side, supported on his left arm, holding a blue trident encrusted with diamonds in his right, his head slightly drooped forward like he's drunk or drugged, a filigree silver crown sitting lightly on his forehead, above downcast hazel eyes with heavy lids. lying naked, languid, light unblemished skin, ivory except for his cock that stands erect, sheathed in red gold and purple folds, the casing of an undersea flower, a bud wrapped with barbed petals, tiny ruby teeth along their edges, a thing that once inside you will open and bloom and fill your blood with a fire that you will never forget, a fire of being known by him and seen by him and blessed, a crown borne deep within and finally the same scenes, all of them with the same feeling of wonder and awe and blessedness, but all of them empty because the boy and the women have left and gone home for the night because the show is over. this is the second cycle of the trip