

Review of 'Anima/Animus' at Winchester Cathedral, 10 days Creative Collisions

By Kerry McPhail

Exploring links and synergies between contemporary art and sacred space, Wilson-Eflerova's 'Anima/Animus' reflects upon the found statuettes of Ecclesia and Synagoga as its' departure point, re-contextualising both for contemporary audiences and drawing upon shared humanity and experience.

The luminous compelling presence of Anima/Animus within the North Transept of Winchester Cathedral is a superb testimony to Wilson-Eflerova's artistic insight, creating temporary non-interventional artwork that stimulates new ways of thinking about contemporary art within a sacred space.

Offering a timeless meditative experience that is at once compelling and fascinating, Anima/Animus is strikingly dominant yet achieves the feat of melding seamlessly into the surroundings of Winchester Cathedral, highly respectful of worshippers and visitors alike. Exploring synergies between the past and the present moment, Eflerova's eloquent use of visual language expertly employs gesture, movement and costume to re-interpret and convey Synagoga and Ecclesia to contemporary audiences. Reflecting and drawing upon their historical context, she create a spell-binding performance, captured on film within the custom built video installation that effortlessly draws the viewer in, sparking intrigue and prompting curiosity.

Anima/Animus bridges the temporal and eternal, exploring ever-changing social values by referencing common human experiences over time. Instantly accessible and endlessly fascinating, audiences are naturally drawn to revisit the work, inviting exploration of self and other as they gaze intently, provoking thoughtful reflection and re-examination of the artwork itself.

The powerful observational qualities of Anima Animus possess the curious effect of slowing down time itself, referencing the past historical statuettes in the light of the present moment to create a transcendental quality.

In performance, Helena is immersed in a trance-like sphere yet simultaneously invites the viewer to participate in conscious self-reflection until they too form an intrinsic part of the work.

Anima/Animus employs digital technology to expertly encompass the ancient and sacred within a contemporary context, speaking directly to audiences. Promoting a powerful performance within the ancient walls of the Cathedral and throughout the world via online coverage, Wilson-Eflerova's non-invasive, contemporary, accessible artwork is both relevant, compelling and innovative while remaining delightfully challenging.

The energy conveyed by the installation and filmed performance runs deeply within one's psyche. Long after I had departed from the Cathedral I found myself mulling over the work, keen to revisit and explore it further, its' valuable presence leaving one energised and bringing to life the ancient and sacred in a way that transcends the conventions of time.