



Melinda Camber Porter Archive of Creative Works
Volume I: Journalism and Volume II: Art and Literature
ISSN: 2379-2450 (Print), 2379-3198 (Ebook), 2379-321X (Audio)
Unfinished Documentary Film

Saving Beauty

(The Life and Works of Martin Scorsese)

a ninety-minute unfinished feature documentary film

Concept Developed by **Melinda Camber Porter**

I began preliminary interviews with Martin Scorsese in 2002. I will focus on the creation of his storyboards and using his film *Lifelines* as the paradigm which will relate his recurrent imagery to his formative years. I became convinced, after discussions with Martin, that any film about his creative process should focus on his primary creative impulse—which he says is the creation of the storyboards. I will film him for several days working in solitude on his storyboards. I'm very taken by his statement to me that imagery rather than narrative is what truly interests him, so I hope that I will be able to delve deeply into the way his mind gives birth to his imagery.

Martin and I will gradually decide on and select a childhood incident that surfaces in our discussions as the most pivotal turning point in his creative evolution. Obviously, we will not know what this incident is until we are well into the film. However, the preparation—the casting of the child, the scouting for the location, etc.—will all be documented. As a child, Martin suffered from severe asthma attacks and was obliged to spend time at home. During this period of enforced solitude, he began to draw feverishly and to watch movies, which he then tried to re-create at home in paintings. I sense that this period will provide us with the key episode that Martin will direct from his childhood days.

Also, I was struck in my conversations with him how vivid religious imagery insistently surfaces, as well as the deep ethical questions engraved on his sensibility by his Catholic upbringing. Martin told me that he seriously considered becoming a priest and actually studied for the priesthood, which he then abandoned. I will re-create the visual texture and vividness of this spiritual imagery, which still influences him profoundly, and have decided to film him in St. Patrick's Church in downtown Manhattan where he worshipped as a child. I believe this environment will also give us clues as to perhaps another pivotal developmental moment in his life and imagination that he or I will direct.

Peter Gabriel, who composed the score for *The Last Temptation of Christ*, will be composing the music for this film. Peter's musical and collaborative memories of working on the score will filter into the musical themes for this film. Also, Peter and Martin will be filmed in discussion, exploring the spiritual imagery that they worked on together. As with all the documentaries, we will see where their interaction leads us. Also, Peter's creative process, creating the film's score, will be one of the key stories we will film. The fact that Peter and Martin both have worked on Martin's most profoundly spiritual and religious work will allow us to explore not only visually but also musically the essence of Martin's imagination. In addition, I will obviously, film Martin at work on the set of his next film. I will hope to trace the pathways that link his underlying creative process and the actions he takes as a director on the set.

Melinda Camber Porter
New York 2005