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Personal Statement

I was trained to be an art historian and then studied architecture and historic preservation at Columbia University, ultimately writing an architectural history thesis. After graduating, I was a professional art critic, first at *ID*, the design magazine, and then at *Artforum* where I was reviews editor. This was followed by 15 years of practice both as a critic and an exhibiting artist, showing paintings and photography within the contemporary art milieu. This classically art-based background was followed by a period in which I published and wrote illustrated graphic novels, returned to school to receive a degree from NYU's Center for Advanced Digital Applications in computer animation, and, my present incarnation, as a digital artist making animated films and professor of animation and special effects. I feel that this background, compositing my visual artistic language utilizing only high-end virtual reality techniques over my training as an historian directly impacts the conceptual underpinning of my work.

I feel that my work transposes discussions about digital technology and a materialist critique of media through a metaphoric and feminist lens. In the context of ideas about a technology that has replaced nature by threatening to eclipse and permanently alter it, I would like to argue that contemporary ideas and practices concerning nature and technology are not a rupture but remain closely bound with religious ways of thinking. What is functionally an all-male engineering culture - what the historian of technology David Noble has identified as "a world without woman" - the high-tech ethos actually emerges from medieval Christian monasteries and is still driven by an unconscious millennial desire to recreate the world afresh, without women and outside of nature, and therefore also outside of the contamination of Original Sin.

In the absence of women, the masculinist clerical culture of technology, colored by the Christian Millennialism, defines the impulse behind much of technological development, from atomic weaponry and space exploration to cybernetics and robotics, one that has been both of annihilation and of purification. Such religious values still pervade technological research and influence its visual manifestations, particularly in relation to the realm of the body, an example being the typically a hyper-erotic *femme fatale* populating mass-culture representations in the technological milieu. By creating virtual images that are sensual though not pornographic within mechanized, clockwork depictions of the natural, I try to subvert earlier dichotomies of woman and nature pitted against a civilized, "scientific" and masculine self.