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Glenn Kenny, "'Redoubt' Review: Diana the Huntress Manifests in Idaho," *The New York Times*, October 29, 2019

The New York Times

'Redoubt' Review: Diana the Huntress Manifests in Idaho

Breathtakingly beautiful and with little spoken dialogue, Matthew Barney's film is a western that reaches for the cosmic.



K.J. Holmes as the Electroplater in a scene from the movie. Credit...Hugo Glendinning/Grasshopper Film

As has been noted in other reviews of his work, the artist Matthew Barney does not make films via Hollywood or its indie arm. The multimedia artist

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produces them with art-world money, and often uses them as portions of larger gallery work. The movies are beautifully made, with high-gloss visuals and production values. They're often provocative, with depictions of explicit sex and, in 2015's "River of Fundament," persistent consideration of fecal matter.

So one surprise about "Redoubt," shot in the Sawtooth Mountains in Idaho, is that it's almost entirely wholesome by conventional standards.

Initially part of a larger exhibition that premiered at Yale this spring (which was lavishly praised in The New York Times), "Redoubt" is a myth-informed western, an allegorical apologia for artistic practice.

In the snow-covered mountains, Diana, the ancient huntress herself (played by the real-life sharpshooter Anette Wachter), roams and shoots, accompanied by two virgins who seem equal parts trackers and animal doppelgängers. (The hunting action is, end credits assure, simulated.) Diana soon crosses paths with Engraver, played by Barney. He makes etchings on pieces of metal forged and later electroplated by a trailer-dwelling character, who is designated Electroplater (K.J. Holmes).



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The movie's narrative is divided into six "hunts." That there's not any spoken dialogue keeps things obscure.

But the beauty of the imagery, and the specificity of what we are shown — the precision with which Diana measures her gunpowder, the care with which Engraver sets up a tripod and easel in the snow, the quiet joy with which Electroplater mixes the chemicals of the baths into which she submerges etched plates — build an emotional power that's unusual in any kind of art. "Redoubt" reaches for intimations and apprehensions of the cosmic.