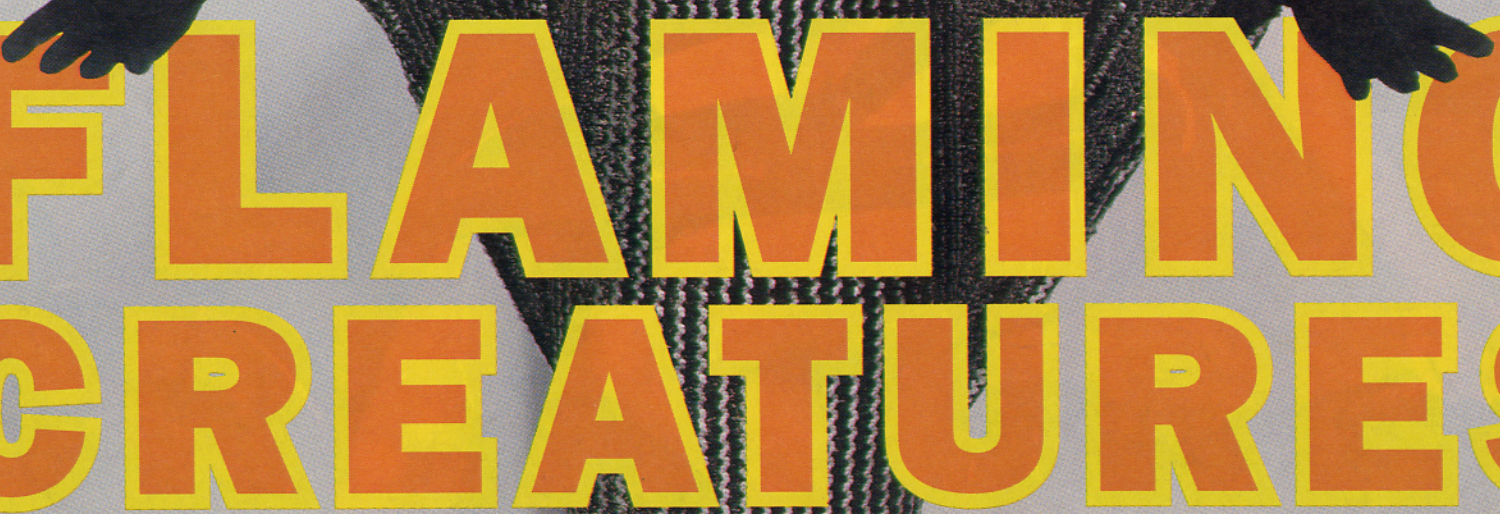


DISCOVERY SPECIAL! COLLECTOR'S ISSUE

Interview

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FLAMING CREATURES



Performance artist
Claude Wampler.

CLAUDE WAMPLER After Claude Wampler got her MFA from Columbia, she went the usual actor's route: interviews and auditions with TV producers, agents, casting directors. "I'd walk into a room and they'd say, 'Turn around' or 'Your hair is kind of frizzy,'" she recalls. "I was shattered because I thought acting was an art." The New York-based performer shifted gears and worked with the Doug Atkins Dance Company and playwrights Suzan Lori Parks and Richard Foreman. She also began creating her own pieces, such as *Knitease*, in which over three hours she unraveled the dress she was wearing and then reknit it, and *Blanket, the surface of her*, in which she asked eight people she admired to tell her what to do for ten minutes ("Piss onstage," directed Richard Kern). Diminutive and daring, the thirty-three-year-old Wampler is now an acclaimed artist whose study of opera, butoh dance, theater, and yoga show up in the careful discipline of her work. She is content with the proportions of the avant-garde's star turns. "I'm making art for Bruce and John and Magda and Renee," she says. "There are five or six people who I know count on me. They love what I do, they understand it, and they pee in their pants waiting for the next thing. Those are the people I'm making art for."