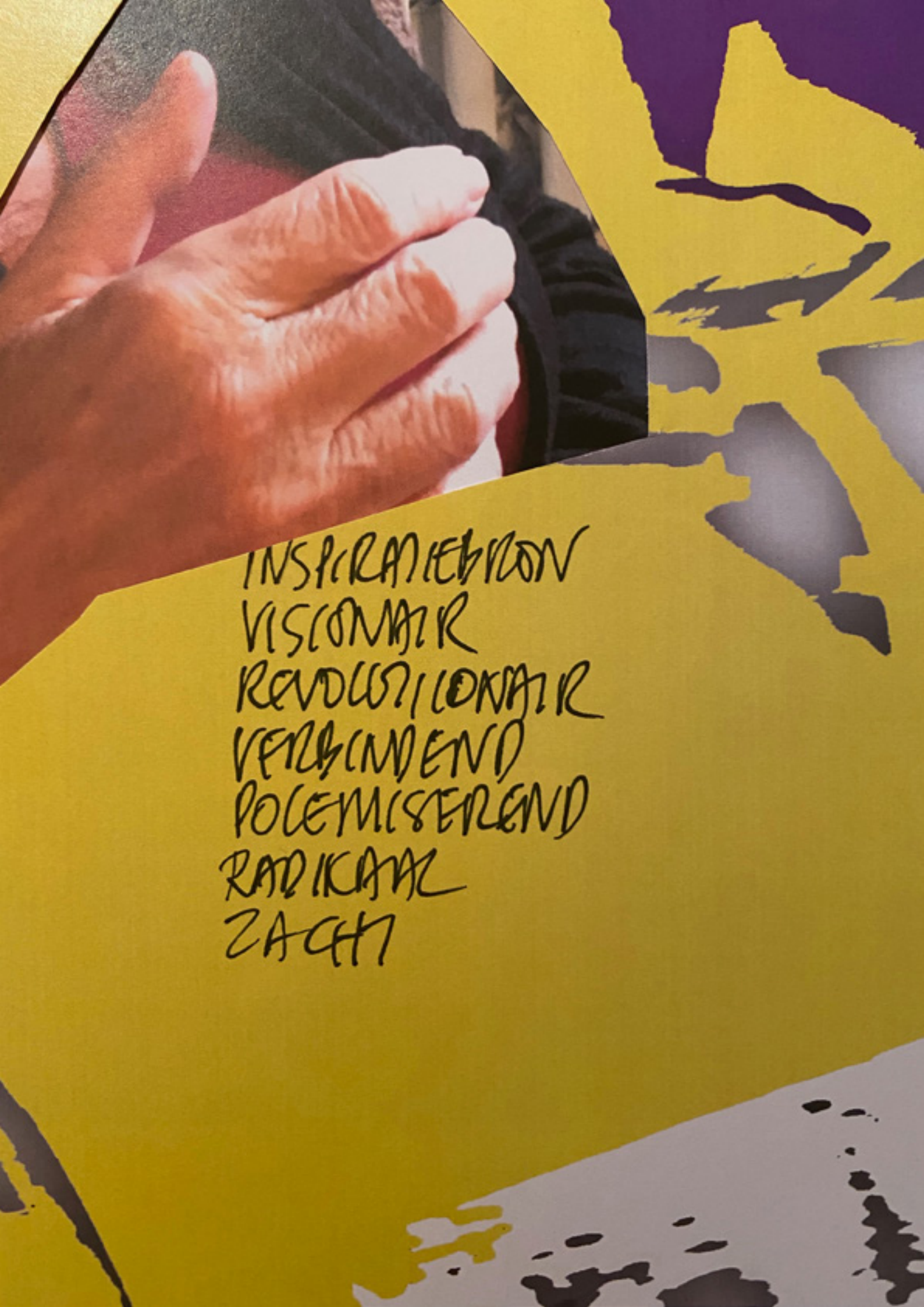


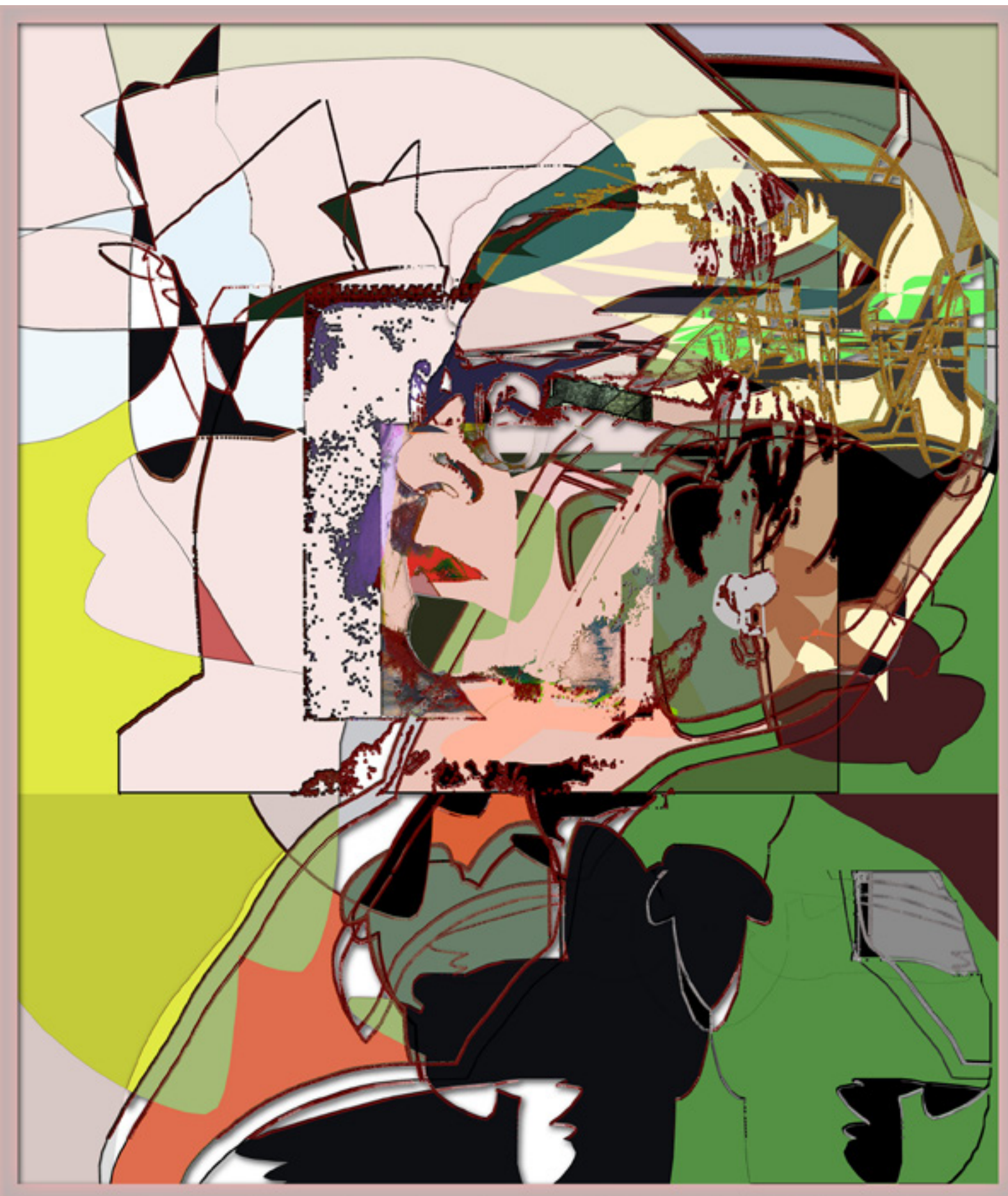


INSPIRIEREND
VISIONÄR
REVOLUTIONÄR
VERBINDEND
POLEMISIEREND
RADIKAL
ZACH





INSPIRATION
VISIONAR
REVOLUTIONÄR
VERBUNDEN
POLEMISIEREND
RADIKAL
ZACH



Maandag 10 mei

#Maaimijniet

Het is de maand mei. Deze maand heeft me altijd bekoord.

De Meimaand is de Maria maand. Als kind herinner ik me deze maand als de enige waar ik de verplichte misviering met plezier tegemoet ging. Marialiedjes hadden iets vrolijks. Gewoonlijk zong je om toch nog op het goede pad te komen, als onmiskenbare zondaar. Uw schuld stond nooit in vraag, de strategie was om er mee te leven. Schaamte was dan ook het grootste goed dat je verder moest helpen met je schuldbesef. Zelfs vandaag voel ik die kinderschaamte fysiek wanneer ik eraan terugdenk.

Maria, steeds vroom verbeeld, en steevast opgesteld in een zijhoek van de kerk met veel brandende kaarsen rond haar. Maria, haar beeltenis en verschijning sprak tot mijn verbeelding. Zij was het enige positieve in deze kerkelijke omgeving. Ze leek me lief, vastberaden en begripvol. Bovendien had ze een goede strategie. De onbevleete ontvangenis, onze maagd Maria, je moet er maar opkomen!

Ook toen al was het opvallend hoeveel leed die Maria's moesten dragen om nooit enige erkenning te krijgen. In mijn kinderwereld werd snel duidelijk dat geen enkel leed erkend werd, noch door priesters, of de katholieke kerk tout court. De raadgevingen die mijn moeder vroeg aan geestelijken in de omgeving en vooral in onze kloosterrijke familie brachten geen soelaas.

Zo kreeg mijn moeder die openlijk bedrogen werd, van mijn grootmoeder de raad, omdat mijn vader een-man-van-de-wereld was, dit systematisch en jarenlang overspel¹ gedwee te aanvaarden. Het was haar taak haar man te steunen.

Mijn vader had zijn moeder gedurende jaren de toegang tot ons huis ontzegd omdat zij hem 'betraapt' had vele jaren eerder in een huis dat haar toebehoorde. Ze was de sleutel van dit appartement terug komen vragen aan mijn hoogzwangere moeder zonder dat haar zoon erbij was, met de onderliggende boodschap dat wellicht door haar houding die misstappen werden begaan. Ik was toen het ongeboren kind en kreeg het geluk van een vroeggeboorte, waardoor ik in de maand juni werd geboren. De dag voor de zomer begint, iets wat perfect bij mijn naam past, nl. Op somer. Dit alles gebeurde voor ik bestond.

Mijn grootmoeder pastte in het plaatje van de clichés van de schoonmoeder alsook van het cliché dat andere vrouwen mekaar afvallig zijn. Gelukkig heb ik dit niet gekend binnen ons gezin waardoor de frictie die ik met onze maatschappij vandaag ondervind, wellicht daar zijn oorsprong kent. Mijn wereld was vrouwelijk in alle facetten.

Wij, alle vrouwen van het gezin, moeder en dochters maakten lange treinreizen om mijn grootmoeder te bezoeken. Mijn vader, als man-van-de-wereld, participeerde minder in deze bezoeken. In onze familie werd de Matria Familias, in dit geval de moeder van mijn vader, geëerd en respect betuigd.

Mijn moeder, Noëlla — genoemd naar de geboortedag van Jesus, ze was op 23 december geboren— huismoeder en runner van het gezin, was gedurende maanden immobiel omdat ze haar benen tot op het bot had verbrand. Ze ruimde de garage op en gezien ze graag vuurtje stookte, gooide ze een rest van een 'fles' op het vuur. Het goedje ontplofte op haar benen.

Als kroostrijk gezin waren we niet uitzonderlijk kapitaalkrchtig maar er bestond veel solidaireit en verbondenheid in onze omgeving. Zo kwam een familievriend me af en toe met een Peugeot 406 Break ophalen na school; een gelukzalig geluid om mee thuis te komen. Mijn moeder zat met volledig ingepakte benen in de bruine 'moderne' zetels. Mijn grootmoeder was die dag op bezoek en toen ik met de familievriend Bob binnenstapte, riep mijn moeder me tegemoet 'Ahh uw tweede vader is er!'.

Na een lang genezingsproces trokken we met alle vrouwen van het gezin, opnieuw, met de trein naar mijn grootmoeder. Mijn vader, als man-van-de-wereld, zoals u weet, participeerde niet. Zo beleefde ik zelf als negenjarig kind een nieuwe familiale terechtwijzing. We stonden allemaal recht in haar statige woonkamer toen mijn moeder op het matje werd geroepen. Ze werd erop gewezen dat ik, het jongste kind en alle kinderen van ons gezin, slecht één vader hadden. Een vriend aan huis als tweede vader benoemen, bleek een onvergeeflijke opmerking. De beoordeling van mijn moeder te midden van haar dochters door onze gerespecteerde grootmoeder werd een publiek tribunaal van een échte zondares.

Mijn relatie tot 'wat algemeen geweten is' en 'den buiten' is op zijn minst teleurstellend en getroubleerd. Tijdens mijn kindertijd wisten we in onze straat wie er af en toe slaag kreeg. Zo kwam geregeld onze overbuurvrouw haar huiselijke ruzies voor onze voordeur uitvechten. De sfeer in deze nieuw aangelegde wijk en binnen ons gezin schommelde tussen een rock optreden à la Tina en Ike Turner en luidkeelse Italiaanse filmfamilies die tegen elkaar roepen om de liefde te betuigen. Dit was het dynamische biotoop waarin ik opgroeide. Ik kende en herkende veel liefde in al deze chaos.

Het zal je misschien niet verwonderen maar alles speelde zich af in het oord van de Helaasheid der Dingen², Nieuwerkerken, Edixvelde meer bepaald in de Kwalenhoekstraat. Wij waren de vreemde eenden in de bijt, in een straat met een naam die alvast vele kwalen en duistere hoeken voorspelde. Er was veel mogelijk in de zeventiger jaren. Dan heb ik het nog niet over de vele aanrandingen en onaangename ontmoetingen die alle dochters van het gezin op den buiten te beurt vielen.

#maameiniet brengt me terug naar de brandende kaars bij het Mariabeeld thuis. Mei was een maand van opgewekte gedachten, vrolijke fietsritten en bloemige genegenheid. Ik plukte vele veldbloemen om haar, mijn moeder en alle vrouwen rondom, te eren. Toen ik nog een auto bezat, durfde ik al eens aan de berm van de A12 stoppen om wilde margrietten te plukken. Eigenlijk te gevaarlijk voor het plezier dat het opbracht, maar de pracht van veldbloemen is volgens mij redelijk onderschat.

¹ het overspel is hier niet het grootste probleem, maar het niet erkennen ervan en de psychologische druk die op dit leed wordt uitgeoefend. De ongelijke manier hoe leed gedragen moest worden en waar er door de gemeenschap geen oplossingen werden gegeven voor de 'minder bedeelde', nl. de financieel afhankelijke huismoeder. Gelukkig is daar vele jaren later een oplossing gekomen door tussenkomst van mijn oudere zus(sen).

² De Helaasheid der Dingen is een boek van Dimitri Verhulst dat in 2006 verscheen. Het is gebaseerd op verhalen rond Nieuwerkerken, bij Aalst en beschrijft het leven in een destructieve en liefdevolle omgeving en de dubieuze relatie ermee.

Vandaag ben ik op residentie in het Frans Masereel Centrum. Het is alweer mei. Enkele weken geleden las ik een artikel en begin deze maand volgde ik de sensibiliseringscampagne #maaimeniet³ van Knack rond de ecologische toestand van het Vlaamse gazon. Deze artikels beschrijven een plausible en vrolijk alternatief om te verhelpen wat we onze natuur te kort doen. Je kan het gras van je gazon laten groeien. Het een verdiende rust geven, door het een maand niet te maaien. Meteen komt dit het hele ecosysteem ten goede.

Frans Masereel Centrum ligt in het bosrijke Kasterlee. De omgeving is bijzonder gevarieerd, mooi en uitgestrekt. De vele wandelingen die ik onderneem, zijn adembenemend al moet je er het geruis van wagens bijnemen. De hele streek lijkt ook goed georganiseerd. Als wandelaar krijg je oneindig veel wegbewijzing aangeboden. In het weekend lijkt ook iedereen zich te beschoeien en te kleden om professioneel aan deze natuur deel te nemen. Wanneer ik als Brusselse in Vlaanderen kom, word ik overstelpt door de regels. De organisatiedwang staat soms naar mijn gevoel het spontane plezier in de weg. Hoewel #maaimeniet ontzettend goed gevonden is, confronteert het me met de vaststelling dat de Vlamingen een collectieve organisatie nodig hebben, om iets te veranderen aan hun dagdagelijkse gewoontes en zo onze ecologie. Waarom?

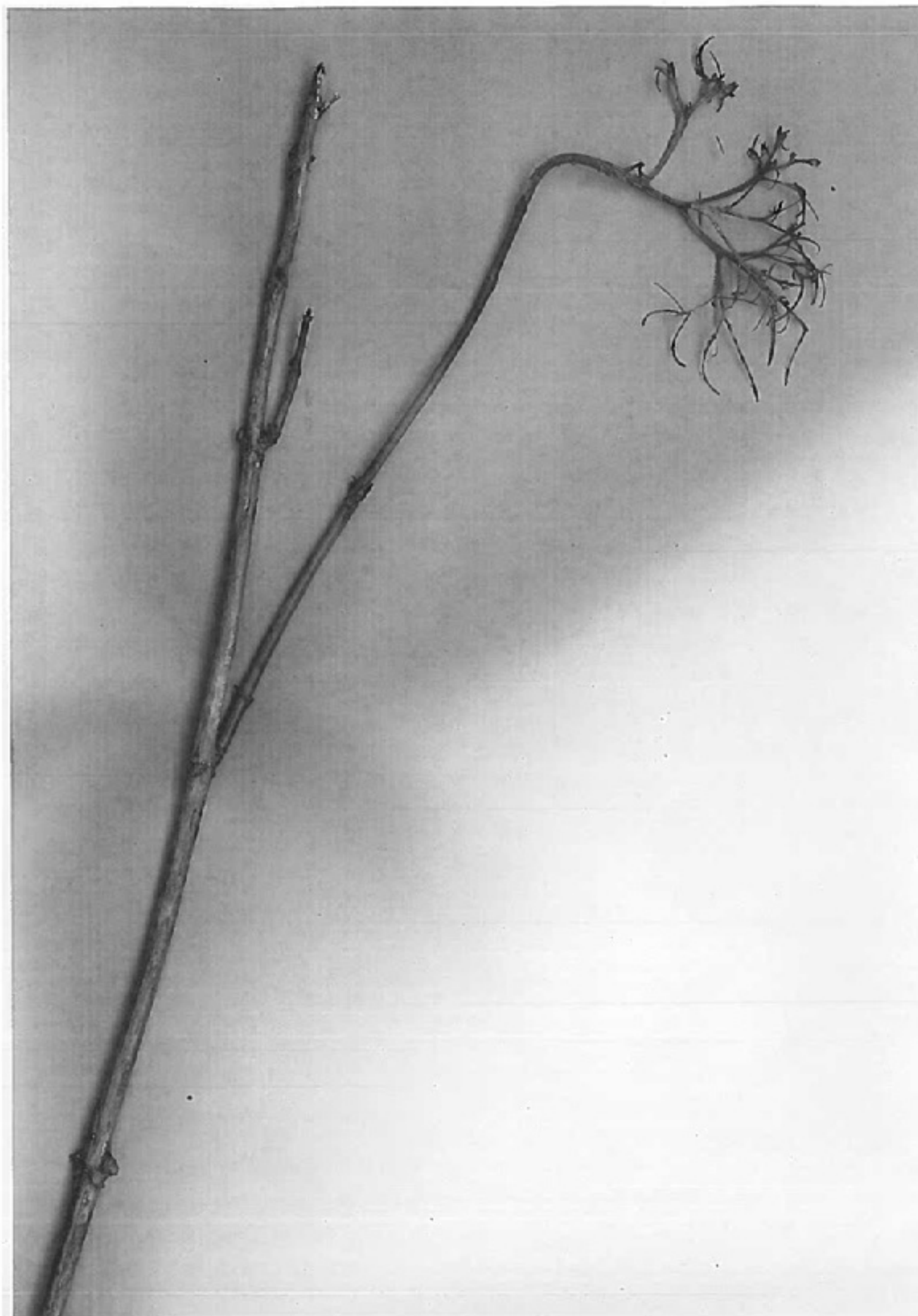
Met #maaimeniet en mijn moeder in gedachten, stapte ik, op zoek naar veldbloemen, door de woonwijk rond het Frans Masereel Centrum. Het contrast tussen deze bijzonder mooie omgeving en de verharde en opgeruimde woonwijk is frappant. Zoals overal in Vlaanderen is ook hier de oprit versteend, ontdaan van ieder sprietje groen en zijn er rond elk huis keurig gemaaide grasvelden. Tuinen ommuurd met hoge houten schuttingen of metalen draad maar met de trampoline in de tuin op een ééntonig kraakgroen gazon.

Ik liep verder langs de aarden weg. Tijdens deze korte wandeling startten viertal tuinmannen hun grasmachines. Ik vond op een 1 km net genoeg veldbloemen voor 1 boeket. Mijn schuldgevoel kwam meteen de kop opsteken. Gezien de schaarste van de bloemen vroeg ik me af of ik met dit boeket de insecten hun bestaan niet ontzegde. Op de terugweg was de berm langs de aarden weg, waar ik de bloemen plukte, keurig gemaaid door de buurman. Het was moederdag en ik schonk dit boeket aan de conciërge van het Frans Masereel Centrum, Maria genaamd. De cirkel was rond. Mijn moordende pluk bleek een reddingsoperatie voor bloemerig⁴ schoon.

Ik moet toegeven dat die opkuisdrang me diep raakt. Zit schoonheid niet in de diversiteit en de onvolmaaktheid? Zijn de mensen die we het meest liefhebben niet diegenen waar een hoek af is? En geldt dit ook niet voor de natuur? Wordt schoonheid niet opgemerkt door ernaar te kijken?

³ <https://maaimeniet.be/> daar kan je jouw persoonlijke nectarscore meten.

⁴ bloomon is een online bedrijf waar je bloemboeket abonnementen kan kopen. De reclame op sociale media springt in het oog door hun 'Original boeket': 'ons populairste boeket. Een iconisch en luchtig veldboeket, prachtig als centrepiece op tafel, in de woonkamer of in de keuken.' Je kan boeketten met de wagen laten leveren, wat je zo dicht mogelijk bij deze weidse bloemen brengt.



Je kan een iets zien, door ernaar te kijken en het waar te nemen. Iets bekijken is iets in je opnemen. Iets in je opnemen, is ervoor zorgen, voor iets zorgen is het aandacht schenken. Aandacht krijgen is gezien worden, met alle aandacht dat het kijken vergt.

In mijn werk, in mijn leven, bij mijn studenten, dring ik aan! ‘Kijk! Heb je het gezien?’ want kijken maakt je medeplichtig en dwingt je zachtmoedig om positie te nemen in de omgeving waarin je jou bevindt.

Deze aandrang tot aandacht wordt in mijn onderwijsleven vaak aanzien als moederlijk zorg. Het ergert me dat dit leren kijken, daarmee geassocieerd wordt. Het moederlabel is iets wat me in mijn professionele leven zeer verveeld. Hoewel ik dit in mijn privéleven met volle overtuiging en naar eigen normen goed draag. Nu we in de meimaand zijn en het zonet moederdag was, geloof ik dat dit de juiste moment is dit verder toe te lichten.

Als vrouw, moeder en kunstenaar ben je meestal geïst⁵. Het valt me op hoe er over moeders met veel eloge wordt gesproken, vooral wanneer ze dood zijn. Het klopt dat de dood van de moeder in de klassieke kindersprookjes een gewoonte is. Als moeder ben je meestal de eerste die moet gaan, om natuurlijk vervangen te worden door een afschuwelijk evenbeeld, de stiefmoeder, die nog slechter bedeed wordt. Sophie de Schaepdrijver⁶ antwoordt in het radioprogramma in Berg en Dal wanneer Pat Donnez vraagt waarom ze haar moeder Claudine Spitaels in haar boek *De Grooten Oorlog* zo expliciet bewierookt: ‘Misschien zou je zo iets vaker mogen lezen?’. Haar levende moeder is een kracht en inspiratiebron en dus ook een schakel in haar carrière als historica⁷.

Maar toch, wanneer studenten meewarrig de zorg of aandacht die je hen toebedeelt klassifiëren als ‘moederlijk’, vind ik dit bedenkelijk. Want aandacht voor de anderen wordt in het professionele leven verward met jezelf niet prioritair vinden of niet op het voorplan te willen treden. Nu, mijn onderwijsvisie is zeer duidelijk. Het eigen ego mag gerust een stap opzij zetten om volwassenen in wording genoeg oprechte aandacht en sturing te geven op een constructieve manier. Dit is voor mij de sleutel tot een grondige verankering in een toekomst van een onzeker kunstenaarsleven.

⁵ naamkundige Magda Devos legde uit in het radioprogramma de wereld van Sofie op 24 oktober 2018 dat Jos, Charles of Piet koosnaampjes voor het mannelijk lid zijn. De uitdrukkingen *geïst/gesjareld zijn* voor *bedrogen zijn* is dus verwant met *gekloot zijn*: ongeveer dezelfde betekenis en in dezelfde lichamelijke (taboe)sfeer. <https://taalverhalen.be/bedenkingen/welke-jos-wordt-er-gesjareld-en-welke-charel-geïst/>

⁶ uitgezonden 22 januari 2021, 10 jaar Berg en Dal met Sophie Schaepdrijver, is een Belgische Historica.

⁷ Van Sophie de Schaepdrijver verscheen in 2018, *Gabrielle Petit, Dood en leven van een Belgische spionne* tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog, bij uitgeverij Horizon, een uiterst interessant boek over een vergeten heldin dat zich deels in het negentiende eeuwse Brussel situeert.

Deze sensorische en empathische sturing is een talent waar gemakkelijk overheen gewalst wordt. Het wordt aanzien zoals een gadget dat je bij de aankoop van een wagen meegeleverd krijgt. Een pluspunt maar niet meer dan dat. Menig student meent wanneer die stevig aangepakt wordt, of met genoeg hoorn bekeken wordt, dat hij/zij gehard door het leven zal gaan en beter zal scoren.

Het is iets waar ik me totaal niet bij aansluit. Het heeft tijd gekost om de studenten te overtuigen over mijn meer humane aanpak. De traditionele macho en geharde opvoeding heeft de leeromgeving lang genoeg verzuurd. Tijdens mijn opleiding veranderde dit klimaat pas toen ik naar La Cambre, het franstalig kunstonderwijs overstapte. Daar ontmoette ik voor het eerst vrouwelijke én mannelijke kunstenaars, atelier verantwoordelijken en kunsthistorici die een bepaald mededogen als een educatief onderdeel hanteerden. In Sint-Lukas was er tout court geen enkele vrouw geweest of man die deze kwaliteit bezat. Het credo van de pure kennis, waar zelfkennis altijd bijzaak blijkt, is hetgeen wat vele carrières moeizaam doet lopen. Een van de redenen waarom ik master coördinator ben, is omdat ik onzekere gedachten en gebrek aan zelfkritisch vermogen kan omplooien tot een constructief zelfonderzoek. Hierdoor help ik jonge makers om tot een carrière te komen die bij hun persoonlijkheid past. La Cambre was voor mij een openbaring en een belangrijke sleutel in de kunstenaar die ik vandaag ben.

#maaimijniet:

Op donderdag 6 mei in de wereld van Sofie⁸, gepresenteerd door Linde, wordt docent hedendaagse kunst aan de Luca School of Arts en recensent bij Klara, Jeroen Laureyns aangekondigd. Hij wordt gevraagd om David Hockney zijn werk te kaderen omdat het gazon in zijn vroege werk overal aanwezig is. Jeroen belicht zijn emancipatorisch en homo-erotische taferelen op een aanstekelijke manier. The Joy of Nature, is een latere tentoonstelling waar Hockney de onwaarschijnlijke schoonheid van de natuur bezingt. Jeroen is een dynamisch verteller. Hij haalt het oeuvre van Roger Raveel, Hans op de Beeck, Tuymans, Monet aan. Hij vertelt over het einde van het lyrische landschap dat een strekking was binnen de hedendaagse kunst. Jeroen publiceerde zijn doctoraat in 2013 *Weg Van Vlaanderen*⁹ waar hij hedendaagse kunstenaars hun praktijk kaderde in relatie tot de dystopie van het lyrische vlaamse landschap. Deze relatie van mannelijke kunstenaars en denkers wordt beschreven in een boek dat 240 pagina's telt en waar enkel de Duitse Erna Lendvai-Dircksen een plaats veroverd, dan nog, in relatie tot Stephan Vanfleteren.

Vandaag bepleit Jeroen een nieuwe doorbraak van het lyrische landschap binnen de hedendaagse kunst en de terugkeer van schoonheid en biodiversiteit dankzij o.a. Ben Sledsens, Jan de Cock, Les Monseigneurs. Hij maakt tenslotte een bevlogen en oprecht besluit dat de ecocide in Vlaanderen dramatisch is.

⁸ Het radio 1 programma de-wereld-van-Sofie is een duidingsprogramma dat actuele thema's aankaart. op 6 mei ging het dieper in over de actie #maaimeniet.

⁹ Weg Van Vlaanderen Hedendaagse Vlaamse landschappen in de beeldende kunst 1968–2013 Jeroen Laureyns, 240 blz., Uitgeverij Hannibal, 2013. In de inleiding op pagina 9 schrijft Jeroen Laureyns: *Sinds september 2000 heb ik als docent van Sint-Lucas in Gent het voorrecht om elk jaar een groep nieuwe, getalenteerde en gemoti-veerde studenten beeldende kunst in het eerste jaar van hun oplei-ding te mogen begroeten voor het theorievak hedendaagse kunst. ... Tijdens die eerste les peil ik ook elke keer naar hun kennis over hedendaagse kunst door hun te vragen de namen op te schrijven van zes hedendaagse kunstenaars: drie kunstenaars die ze goed vinden, drie kunstenaars die ze niet goed vinden.*

Ik zou er willen aan toevoegen dat deze ecocide en gebrek aan biodiversiteit ook een zware ziekte binnen de hedendaagse kunst is. In deze negen minuten durende toelichting verscheen geen enkele vrouw op het toneel. En geen enkele vrouw, geen Linde of Sofie, vroeg er hem naar.¹⁰

Deze vraag kan ook gesteld worden bij de publicatie van zijn boek. Jeroen dankt ettelijke vrouwen waaronder zijn moeder, grootmoeder en vele vrouwelijke spelers van het kunstenveld maar niemand blijkt gevraagd te hebben waarom in de Weg Van Vlaanderen de vrouwelijke kunstenaar zo afwezig is. Ik kan hem enkel beklagen dat wij het er nooit over hadden want ik herinner me in 2013 zijn radio interview over dit boek en mijn persoonlijke verwondering dat er geen vrouw aan te pas kwam, aan dit lyrische landschap, of de teloorgang ervan.

Vandaag in 2021 is er Kadhija een kind op de freinetschool van mijn tienjarige dochter. Als zesdejaars maken de leerlingen een eindwerk. Kadhija werkt met fotografie en wil visuele verhalen vertellen over haar vriend(inn)en. Als mentor van haar project gaf ik toelichting over het ontstaan van fotografie. Zo schetste ik een parcours van vrouwelijke fotografen waarmee ze verschillende strekkingen kon aantonen en uitleggen in diverse contreien. Door haar juf kreeg ze de opmerking dat ze niet wist wat die vrouwelijke fotografen of die geschiedenis bij haar project rond portretfotografie kwam doen. Ik was verbouwereerd. Hoe kan je naar een geschiedenis kijken zonder naar verwantschappen te zoeken? En was het de juf nog niet opgevallen dat het in de (kunst)geschiedenis vooral over de mannelijke genieën gaat? Zo botste ik op een biografie over Célestin Freinet waaruit bleek dat zijn vrouw Elise een voortrekkersrol en evenzo belangrijk was in deze hele beweging. Mijn kinderen zitten 15 jaar in deze pedagogie. Ik kreeg via de school nog nooit iets te horen over Elise. Alsof dit ons nog verwonderd.

Het valt me op dat vele vrouwelijke kunstenaars of andere succesvolle vrouwen, kinderloos bleven. Dat dit deels een bewuste keuze is omdat je dan meer en alleen op je werk kan focussen, geloof ik best, maar het imago probleem kan zeker meespelen. Moeder en kunstenaarschap lijkt geen winnende combinatie voor een buitenwereld. Een humaan succes nog minder. Succes moet luid en naar gerefereerd worden en daar knelt het schoentje.

Zien en gezien worden. Daarom hebben we deze lyrische toelichtingen nodig, en deze kritische vragen. Iedereen sterft alleen, en het succes dooft wellicht snel, maar zoals Jeroen in zijn inleiding in Weg Van Vlaanderen schreef, kijken de doden mee. En buiten de aandacht en het kijken is er nog een andere overtuiging die diep in me geworteld zit. Ik ben slechts het resultaat van een weg waaraan vele vrouwen, mannen en geesten meetimmerden.

Mijn wezen komt niet uit het niets, maar uit een overlevering. Vandaar mijn oprechte oproep **#maaimijniet** want het zal je biodiversiteit en kennis alleen ten goede komen.

Els Opsomer
Frans Masereelcentrum, Kasterlee

¹⁰ Gezien Jeroen Laureyns en ikzelf collega's zijn, hebben we elkaars email adres. Toen ik zijn bespreking hoorde over David Hockney maakte ik hem erop attent dat hij Lise Duclaux o.a. vergeten was. Er volgde een interessante en oprechte mailuitwisseling en hij vertelde in de kunstgeschiedenis lessen nu ook andere accenten legt : 'met een cursus Hedendaagse Kunst in het eerste jaar volledig gewijd aan vrouwen & kunstenaars van kleur' was zijn antwoord.



Good Museums Copy, Great Museums Steal

(2021)

By Galit Eilat

Good Museums Copy, Great Museums Steal (2021) follows the rhetoric accompanying the projects *Picasso in Palestine* and *The Museum Index* curated by Galit Eilat for the Van Abbemuseum (2010–2011). In the video essay, Eilat repeatedly repeats the same narrative voiced by different actors, revealing how lies are positioned in institutional narratives and become myths and how those myths are disseminated and used by cultural leaders for personal glorification.

Abuse of power and moral harassment relies on cultural norms and social legitimacy. And can not be eliminated as long as they are not defined as offenses in the written law. The departure point for the video essay is Linda Nochlin's conclusion of her legendary essay *Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?*:

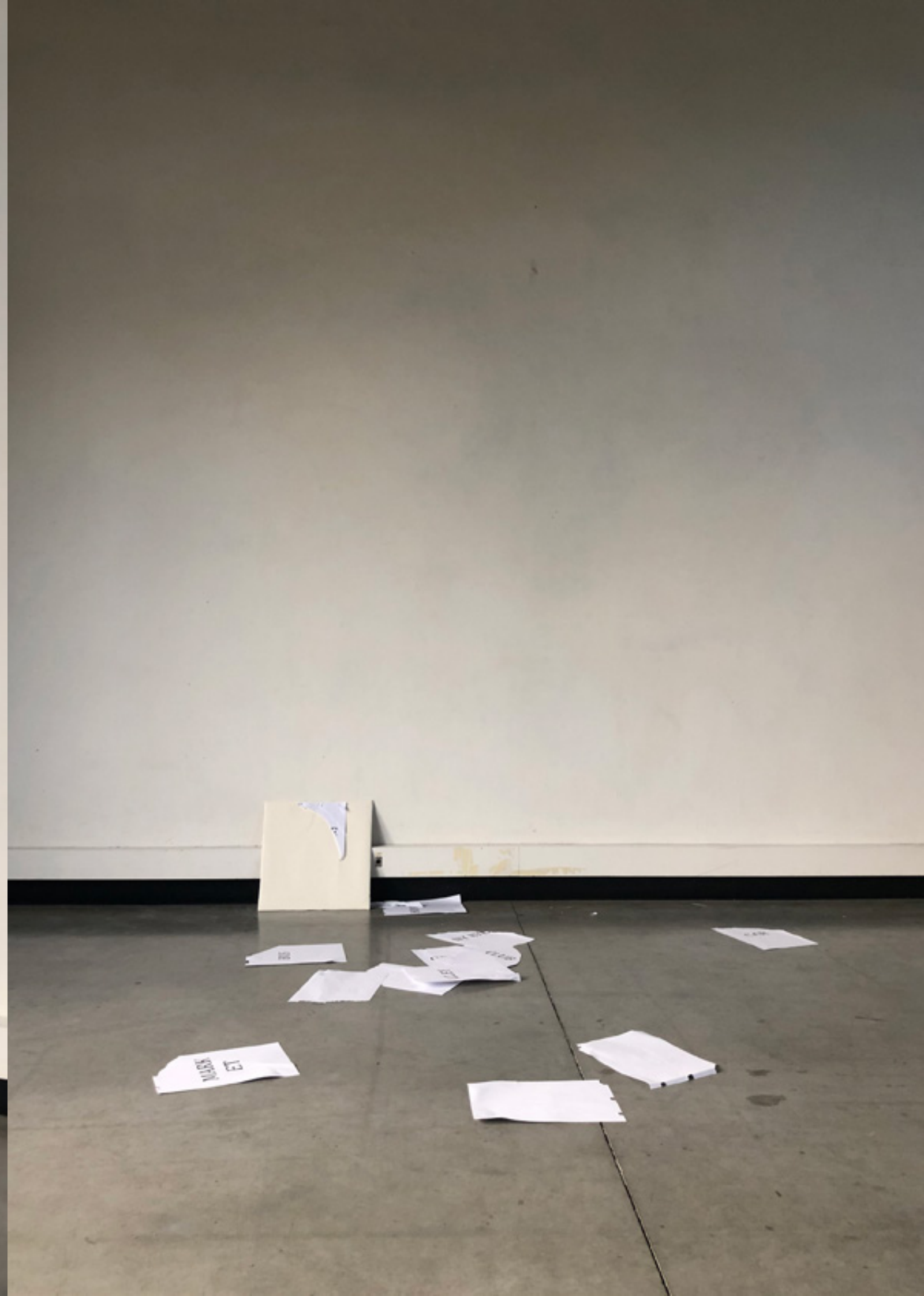
"... Rather, using as a vantage point their situation as underdogs in the realm of grandeur, and outsiders in that ideology, women can reveal institutional and intellectual weaknesses in general, and at the same time that they destroy false consciousness, take part in the creation of institutions in which clear thought-- and true greatness--are challenges open to anyone, man or woman, courageous enough to take the necessary risk, the leap into the unknown."

The video essay *Good Museums Copy, Great Museums Steal* can be viewed online here:
<https://vimeo.com/569961256>









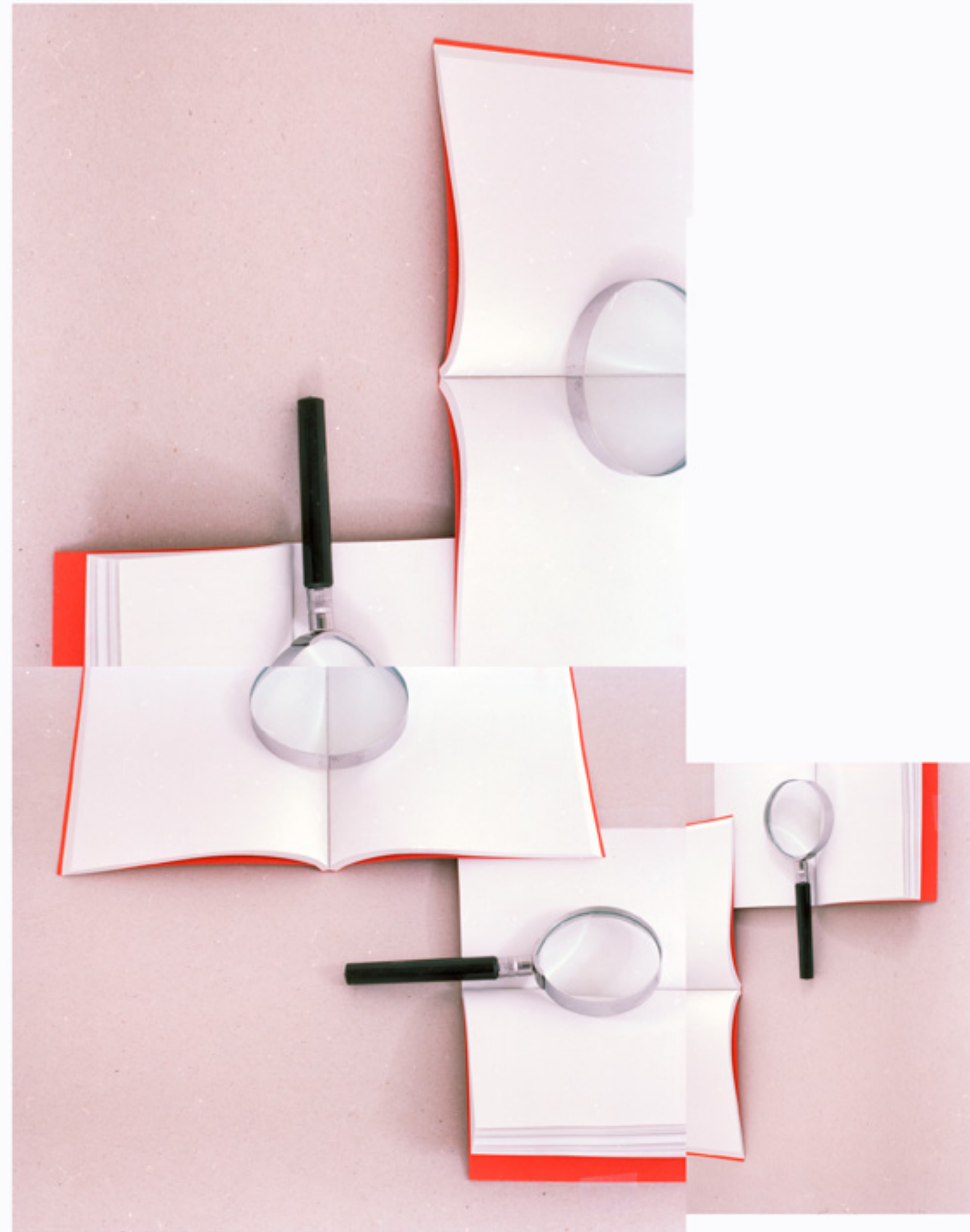
**If I can't dance
I don't wanna be
part of your
revolution**

Emma Goldman

Vrouwerpower

!reclaim public institutionalized space!

Open call



Myths about mothers in art – The layered spiderweb of unspoken power relations

By Mirthe Berentsen

As a child I watched The Sistine Madonna of Raphael every day. It hung above my bed and for years it was the last thing I saw before I fell asleep. The tranquility, the primary colors, the calmness of Mother Mary, the angels as a cheerful note became my ultimate imagination of motherhood. Until I found a book about birthing, full of black and white pictures of screaming women, blood and alien-like-heads. On maternity visits there was whispering and the exchange of meaningful glances. Those were the moments when most interesting things happened, I soon learned. I sat at my mother's friends' bedside and heard words that had no meaning for me, but from the looks of my mother's face, it was mostly terrible, and whispers were taken for granted. I searched for the stains in the sheets as proof of this mysterious horror that apparently belonged to being an adult. Films didn't make it any better: screaming, possessed women lying on a hospital bed bathed in blood, holding their knees and making strange puffff puffff sounds.

In retrospect, I felt betrayed, by the Madonna, by the happy baby blogs, by the movies, the whispers, the art. What no one had told me was that chaos and fear would prevail, with an occasional glimmer of love. The birthing of new life also brought mortality into the home. Like an overwhelming infatuation that causes a crippling fear for the future. Because what is can also be gone. The moment of being and not being anymore is captured in a minute. Born at 05:31, died at xx:xx. The impressive natural phenomenon of liberation from my body emphasised the irreversibility of the moment while leaving an implosion-explosion. In the overwhelming chaos I felt I had to rearrange the whole universe and cosmos with my own hands. The stars in the right place, the planets and the sun. Not only my organs had to get back into place after having been pushed away for months by the new human.

This panic is clearly felt in Jenny Holzer's rapidly flickering light installation "Mother and Child" (2005), in which she describes in a few luminous words the feelings of fear of losing the child after having her daughter. The work is an homage to German expressionist Paula Modersohn-Becker, the first Western, female artist to paint herself pregnant, naked moreover. The fragility of that gesture and the grandeur of its significance to the art world becomes even more loaded when one knows that Modersohn-Becker died of complications a few days after giving birth. Ladie Smith, mother of two, describes it aptly in the wonderful 2013 essay "Toy". "Sometimes joy multiplies itself dangerously. Children are the infamous example. Isn't it bad enough that the beloved, with whom you have experienced genuine joy, will eventually be lost to you? Why add to this night-mare the child, whose loss, if it ever happened, would mean nothing less than your total annihilation?"

After the birth, every meter I was further away from my daughter felt like a goodbye, a small death. The consolation of the trauma of childbirth is the respectful wonder for your own flesh. That jaded, tattered body that can create universes. That can shrink while feeding, can comfort through presence, and can produce infinite amounts of food so that the new body continues to live. Being an artist and being available all the time seemed inconsistent. It is the constant mental and physical availability attributed to motherhood that instills fear and deters people from it. As a creator, you must always be available to yourself, to your own work, your thoughts, and the floods of your head. You must be of the world. The child makes a claim on that availability, on your world.

While there is a logical connection between the making, creating, and creating of life and of art, the subject of the woman as mother, the mother as artist, has long been ignored within art and literature. Serving thus invisible. At the Venice Biennale in 2013, I saw the installation by Italian artist Linda Fregni Nagler in which she showed 997 beautiful and gruesome photographs of invisible women, titled "The Hidden Mother". At first glance, the female figures appear veiled, a closer look reveals that the nineteenth and twentieth century women have been deliberately made invisible. The mothers serve as invisible silencers of the children being photographed. Like ghosts, they are hidden under a cloth, disguised as pieces of furniture. Hidden away from the photographs while they help create them, allowing the focus to be on another subject.



It is exactly this Victorian ghost that Virginia Woolf writes about when she talks about “killing the angel in the house.” The selfless, sacrificial woman whose purpose in life was to soothe, flatter and comfort the male half of the world’s population. According to Woolf, it is the internalized voice of women that continues to assert that they must care and be available, leaving no room for imagination and creativity. Woolf herself said that she had killed that angel so that she could have and hear her own voice. Just before her death in 2010, Louise Bourgeois worked with Tracey Emin on the series “Do Not Abandon Me,” in which they linked their womanhood to being or not being a mother. And the accompanying longing, expectation, grief, and loss which for them both played a part in their choice – however different it was. Bourgeois had three children and Emin very deliberately none (in an interview in 2015 she said of this “There are good artists that have children. They are called men”). A similar urgency describes Nobel Prize winner Doris Lessing in “The Golden Notebook,” in which she writes about the artistic and sexual life of a “free woman” who is willing to sacrifice family happiness for freedom. Literally, because Lessing was 23 when she left her three-year-old son and one-year-old daughter behind and started a new life a few blocks away. She had joined the Communist Party and was convinced that she was about to create a different world for her children. She wanted to write and that was impossible while living with a conservative and traditional man.

It raises the question whether her lack of freedom came from the children or from a normative pattern in which she was expected to care for the children and subordinate her own needs to that care. Call it patriarchy, the layered spider web of unspoken power relations. Lessing broke the norm and in doing so committed the greatest sin within patriarchy: she became a woman who refuses her supreme task as a mother (no need to name the list of male writers/artists who left their families to follow their hearts and dreams and devote themselves fully to art here right?).

In 2017, I stood in front of the White House in Washington DC on a cold January day, the day after the inauguration of America’s 45th president. Millions of people had gathered during the Women’s March, and for the first time in my life I physically understood the many talks, books and artworks about female solidarity, sisterhood, and the importance of the growing resistance to the prevailing conventions of patriarchal society. The second time was after giving birth when I felt the presence of all the mothers I knew. Activist and singer Janelle Monáe spoke at the Women’s March about the abuse of power and the role of pregnancy in history. “I wanna remind you that it was a woman that gave you Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It was a woman that gave you Malcolm X. And according to the Bible, it was a woman that gave you Jesus” The applause continued for minutes, and she called on all women to choose freedom and solidarity.

Feminism and motherhood have a long and complicated relationship. The famous feminist Shulamith Firestone goes so far as to say that women will never be freed from patriarchy if they are not freed from the yoke of reproduction. She longs for the day when babies can be created in mechanical wombs, so that the physical subjugation of childbirth is no longer an inevitable part of the female experience. Writer Adrienne Rich wrote in *Of Woman Born* in 1976 “My children cause me the most exquisite suffering of which I have any experience” and claims that patriarchal oppression is the problem with motherhood, the maintenance of certain power relations and the myth of sacrifice. But it’s more complex than that. Monáe sees herself as a womanist, following in the footsteps of writer Alice Walker. She points out that this is a purely white approach, ignoring a long history of forced sterilization and eugenics, in which having children and reproduction has a very different meaning for women of color. For women of color, the womanists argue, motherhood is not just freedom but agency. And with it, the ability to make individual choices and actions that allow them to maintain control over their own circumstances.

However different my history as a white woman, I recognize myself in the experience of motherhood as agency. A deadly hereditary disease has held my family in a stranglehold for decades. Having children of my own was a curse because it meant I would be saddling the child with the burden of illness and premature death. When I decided, after years of hesitation, that I wanted a child in our lives, it was the biggest step for me in appropriating my destiny, my history and determined experience of reproduction. The choice for the child was a choice from reclaiming, a victory over death. What followed was a process of examinations, hormones, more examinations, bruises, hormonal outbursts of the same hormones that seemed to kidnap my body and mind, and disappointment. The red crying rivers

coming out of my body on a monthly basis seemed to under-score that fate cannot be defied. When I finally became pregnant, I stayed up all night reading all the possible research in *JSTOR* about miscarriages, rates and terminated pregnancies. Each day as the baby continued to nestle in the lining of my uterus, I slept a little longer.

In 2017 shortly after Rebecca Solnit published her essay “The Mother of All Questions” I interviewed her for the Dutch *Volkskrant* and she emphasized how necessary it is for men to be involved and committed to changing the status quo because it will ultimately be to their own benefit. “For a long time, there was this ridiculous idea that feminism is the job of women. We also don’t say that anti-racism is the job of black people, do we? Because we also understand that white people must change if you want to address racism, because that’s where racism is.” Feminism focuses on the lives of women, but most of the gender revolution is taking place in the lives of men. The arena of fatherhood.

Pregnancy and the accompanying parenthood may safely be called a rite de passage, a rite of passage rich in symbolism. Death, divorce, or great love are among the Great Stories within art and literature. If not childbirth and parenthood. Last month I saw the exhibition “Mother” by British photographer Paul Graham at the Berlin Carlier and Gebauer. Large photographs of his mother, an old woman in – what seems – the last period of her life. Sleeping, tired and fragile. Many artists have portrayed their mothers before dying, from Whistler to Freud, Cézanne, Mookney, Ingres, Gauguin, Durer. The mother is an iconic figure within art history, the madonna on a statue. Not the child, but the mother (one would like to dust off the Freudian theories again).

But fatherhood as a subject of male artists is virtually absent. Sure, we know the absent father, the smoking, gambling, drinking, oblique father who is emotionally unapproachable. Or the runaway father, as in Noah Davis’ beautiful painting “Single Mother with Father out of the Picture” (2007). I asked around if people knew of any artworks about the early days of fatherhood, about the caring father of a baby, about the fear I describe above, about the transformation from autonomous being to present father. The result was meager to nothing. A few songs and a documentary about fashionable-latte-drinking-dads.

The distant father is the ideated father. The vulnerability and sacrifice of parenthood is equated with motherhood. If being a man means not being a woman, then patriarchy is inevitable. The entrenched ideas and expectations surrounding motherhood affect and impact everyone. Both men and women get stuck in the patriarchal norms and expectations, where women deliver and men desire. Struggles arise in expectations, especially now that men are not automatically the co-drivers of parenthood. More and more research is showing how caretakers go through hormonal and neurological changes when they spend a lot of time with their child (whether they are biological fathers, caregivers or second (or third/fourth) mothers and fathers). The enormous changes that a father goes through have been overlooked for too long, individually, socially, and artistically. Changing the status quo is never and for no one easy. Rethinking fatherhood is an essential step toward creating gender equality.

As long as representation of vulnerable and searching fathers is lacking, there can be no support for an interpretation of a different kind of fatherhood and artistry. The romanticized idea of availability needed to the world is the biggest pitfall for any artist. Confusion arises about cause and effect. Is parenthood the problem, or the old-fashioned and romantic idea of the artist as genius madman, the possessed maniac who is detached from conventions and mores? It is a dangerous and romanticized image of the artist that imprisons both men and women. In Linda Nochlin’s groundbreaking 1971 essay “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?” she describes the problem of the artist as genius. ‘The fault lies not in our stars, our hormones, our menstrual cycles, or our empty internal spaces, but in our institutions and our education—education understood to include everything that happens to us from the moment we enter, headfirst, into this world of meaningful symbols, signs and signals.’ Patriarchal relationships are not so much about men as they are about the past, about ideas perpetuated by the past, based on assumptions without arguments.

Vulnerability has its own kind of genius I wrote just after giving birth.



WHORE MOTHER



WHORE MOTHER





[...]

I have been amazed more than once by a description a woman gave me of a world all her own which she had been secretly haunting since early childhood. A world of searching, the elaboration of a knowledge, on the basis of a systematic experimentation with the bodily functions, a passionate and precise interrogation of her erotogeneity. This practice, extraordinarily rich and inventive, in particular as concerns masturbation, is prolonged or accompanied by a production of forms, a veritable aesthetic activity, each stage of rapture inscribing a resonant vision, a composition, something beautiful. Beauty will no longer be forbidden. I wished that that woman would write and proclaim this unique empire so that other women, other unacknowledged sovereigns, might exclaim: I, too, overflow; my desires have invented new desires, my body knows unheard-of songs. Time and again I, too, have felt so full of luminous torrents that I could burst—burst with forms much more beautiful than those which are put up in frames and sold for a stinking fortune. And I, too, said nothing, showed nothing; I didn't open my mouth, I didn't repaint my half of the world. I was ashamed. I was afraid, and I swallowed my shame and my fear. I said to myself: You a mad! What's the meaning of these waves, these floods, these outbursts. Where is the ebullient, infinite woman who, immersed as she was in her naiveté, kept in the dark about herself, led into self-disdain by the great arm of parental-conjugal phallocentrism, hasn't been ashamed of her strength? Who, surprised and horrified by the fantastic tumult of her drives (for she was made to believe that a well-adjusted normal woman has a ... divine composure), hasn't accused herself of being a monster? Who, feeling a funny desire stirring inside her (to sing, to write, to dare to speak, in short, to bring out something new), hasn't thought she was sick? Well, her shameful sickness is that she resists death, that she makes trouble. And why don't you write? Write! Writing is for you, you are for you; your body is yours, take it. I know why you haven't written. (And why I didn't write before the age of twenty-seven.) Because writing is at once too high, too great for you, it's reserved for the great—that is, for "great men"; and it's "silly." Besides, you've written a little, but in secret. And it wasn't good, because it was in secret, and because you punished yourself for writing, because you didn't go all the way; or because you wrote irresistibly, as when we would masturbate in secret, not to go further, but to attenuate the tension a bit, just enough to take the edge off. And then, as soon as we come, we go and make ourselves feel guilty so as to be forgiven; or to forget, to bury it until the next time.

[...]

Excerpt from Hélène Cixous, *The Laugh of the Medusa*
Translated by Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen

Ouverture ancienne
Leda in white domino,
incandescent, the unashamedly glossolalic *TIGERSPRUNG*
(Other possible openings)
Pulls the curtain aside and enters the scene tits first.

So, as to, in the evening, retired to my couch, a snake
Hérodiade in Valentino Jeans.
“Smell my rose!” said Berin to the Princess
Sweat those syllables,
protector, protector!
I love it when you dance so low
Thee, semantic ghost of uncompleted poem

The birds are awake already!
TRACE THE PICTURE. RUB A BIRD IN THE SKY
Crown crawling serpentine
Keep up, girl
There are many bright i's, u's and o's to go with this frosty passage







The Goodtraits – Lisa Lapointe

By Zoe Young

When you know an artist, their work makes total sense, it's a facsimile of sorts of their traits. For instance, I have quite an addictive personality, so there's a fair amount of pattern in my work. Lisa is partial to some pattern too, I guess that's why we were such good friends. I really pondered this notion, after a visit for a long weekend from one of my oldest artist friends, Lisa Lapointe.

At school, I remember smoking a cigarette in the overgrown fields before I left, my final dart, my parting words to Lisa at this pivotal moment of my youth were "you know you'll be next". But in true Lisa form, she surprised me and wasn't expelled.

Lisa's weekend in Bowral left me completely motivated, it was like she was Marie Kondo incognito dressed in a flanny sporting a wild mop of cinnamon locks. It was my weekend off from the kids, the house was empty, Lisa arrived and threw a four pack of Asahi's on the table, I was a teenager again, "Dude, I love that this house is in the Industrial area". I was always a little ashamed of our hood, but in one passing comment, I now felt like I'd made the right choice (not that our budget sufficed choice) and I was in some sort of strange, yet ultimately chic, Southern highlands version of Brooklyn.

Lisa sat at the Kitchen table and I sat on Kitchen bench, The light streamed into the room and it struck me, I needed to make a souvenir of this moment. Lisa and I have had ten year stints between catch ups, but we always just pick up where we left off, just with an extra tattoo, child or wrinkle, but the same as always.

It was a bit tricky balancing my beer, sketch pad and pencil and I ultimately made a rubbish sketch of the moment. However, I took a photo and the recollection of at least trying to make a souvenir, should never be underestimated. Your eyes don't forget, so the act of drawing really just draws the details to one's attention, which makes it so much easier to relate to later when you only have some Kodak snapshot of the moment to work with. I wanted to capture this time in our lives, before it slipped into another era. Lisa is an effortless beauty and she always brings a new perspective to my work when she visits the studio. I've been reading a lot about the lives of impressionists lately. The importance of the friendships between them and the significance of these key relationships on the development of their work is undeniable. It was with this in mind that I embarked on Lisa's portrait that day and then returned with the same thought to it in the studio a few weeks later. I wanted to distil the sense of adventure and creativity that arrives in our house when Lisa comes to visit. In this moment she's pausing before her next line, she never ceases to amaze me with her insights. Never saccharine nor tart, Lisa's style is unique and my respect for her as an artist is immense.

I often think of the years when I was gathering enough force to establish my studio, it's a perplexing period and often as artists, we have to revisit this moment again, reinventing ourselves and establishing a new focus, material or purpose to our practice. It's a financial and creative risk, it's far easier to do what has been done before, than to carve one's own aesthetic path out into the wilderness of our imagination. Years of study at art school, like Lisa and I have done, prepares the artist for this ultimate act of solitary discovery. However ultimately, there is only you who can draw that creation out of the darkness. Having comrades in the art world makes it easier in such times, they can't pick up the brush and do the work for you, but they can empathise with the impossibility that creativity is often disguised in. Lisa established a name for herself with her relentless mark making in colour pencils, her massive over-sized drawings, cultivating garbage loads of pencil shavings, are in distinguished collections throughout Australia. However, it wasn't long before mainstream homeware stores and Instagram copycats diluted her art, to the point that she was turned off by her own creation. It's one of the shortcomings of the domestic art explosion that the digital age has cultivated. Art becomes devoured, regardless of the artist and their work behind it. I've watched Lisa completely pull her studio apart and rebuild it, metaphorically. She has put the pencils away and drawn out the clay. Her authenticity now distilled and rendered sculpturally.

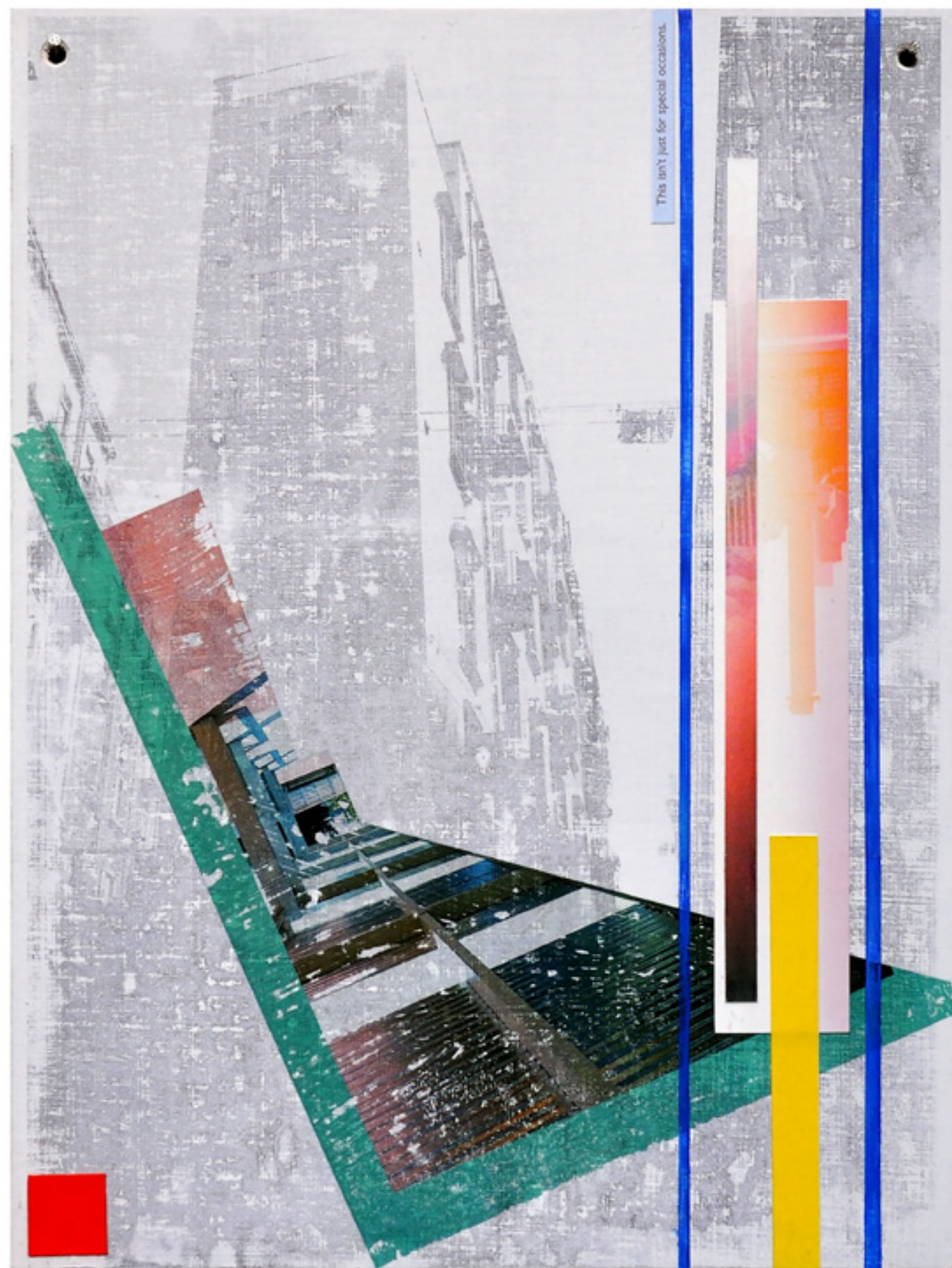
I admire the guts that Lisa has, living regionally in Bilpin with her three children and husband, to go against the slip stream and stand her ground on her creative journey, going into the studio with nothing but a quiet, authentic confidence that she's creating something true to herself.











ON THE LAND, THAT IS USED
TO BE BURNED AND DRIED
OUT, I WAS PREPARED TO
FILTER DROPLETS OF
RAISING HUMIDITY.
IT'S BEEN RAINING THE PAST
TWO DAYS AND THE WATER
DOESN'T FIND ANOTHER
SOLUTION THAN TO
GATHER. INSTEAD OF
SOAKING IN IT STARTS
FLOATING DOWN. I THINK,
THE SOIL IS NOT USED TO
THIS AMOUNT OF EMOTION.





You shook the sky

By Florence Cheval

(a letter I read on the occasion of the Chiara Fumai exhibition at La Loge, Oct 2021)

1. Today used to be Monday

Dear *yous* who shook the sky,

On Monday I felt like I should write to you while at the same time it felt like not a piece of me justified you should be listening to me.

Others write and say such amazing things so much better than me it feels like I should just quote quote quote repeat repeat repeat. The only thing that may be worth in me is these others entering my body through their words and inhabiting my brains especially my language, My language and my tongue only capable to let these amazing witchespoets sip through, Amazing creatrixes that I allowed inside so late. So that my body is now just a container, a vessel for them to circulate. Well, I guess you know about these things. What I'm reading now is a letter I've been struggling to write to the multiplicity of yous, Chiara Fumai. I'm saying yous, as you are one amongst those who consented "not to be a single being". Yous, singular plural.

Listen: Chiara Fumai, I can't even pronounce your name correctly. Pronouncing an Italian name with my broken English. While I guess so many many names have been channeled through you. Your body and voice as an amazing receptacle for hauntologies. This text is no elegy because you may have spit on it – I saw you spitting before, it was quite impressive.

This text is not a spell either. I cannot write a spell, I'm not capable of that yet, though I'm learning. I mean, I'm trying. I'm trying hard. I've been hanging out with quite a number of witchespoets lately, more than I ever did before. I've also been dating satyres, devils and tyrants, that definitely aroused my will and desire to cast spells all over the place.

I've always been late at doing anything. I started early but then I lost track of everything, which caused my being chronically late since then. Seems I keep running, often backwards, which is exhausting.

My mother forbade us to walk backwards. That is how the dead walk, she would say. Where did she get this idea? Perhaps from a bad translation. The dead, after all, do not walk backwards but they do walk behind us. They have no lungs and cannot call out but would love for us to turn around. They are victims of love, many of them.¹
We will move backwards, because strange encounters might be a pleasant starting point for something unforeseen to happen.²

Running backwards can definitely be exhausting.
Do you know how exhaustion feels? Chronic exhaustion.

Yes, I guess many of you know about it.

Chiara, I guess you were an expert in ghosts, spirits, hauntologies – “h-a-u-n-t-o-l-o-g-i-e-s”
Instead of elegy, I guess the term demonology should do, to honour the sort of performative and
filmic intertextual practice you’ve been delving into. Demonology.

Lately, I met many other witchespoets who delve into that too. A demon is **δαίμων** in Ancient
Greek – I guess **δαίμων**s relate to diamonds : see this diamond on which the sentence “give
me a break from these preppy talks” is engraved upstairs – diamonds as layers of times which
accumulate endlessly. Some called this *hétérochronies*³.

For example” “when I curve” “my arms” “just so,” “I am a grotto” “of diamonds’ ” “I looked
& saw that” “she was” “was a curved” “rock wall” “studded” “with black” “faceted jewels”
“She curved towards me” “a dark shining” “I wanted” “to stand enclosed by” “As if you
could” “stand upright en-” “veloped” “by a geode—” “But no one knows,” “no one sees,” “I
said” ““His great failure—” “the tyrant’s failure—” “& yours too?” she said,” “is to think that”
“achievement” “must be evident,” “in the light—” “The black gems spoke now” “There were
purple-black” “amethysts” “among them” “small purple lights—” “What you make” “is nothing”
“unless it’s dark” “Darker than this” “And in the dark” “in the great dark’ ” “What do you
mean?” “In the dark” “Made 3 e in the dark” “
Reflecting darkness” “Only darkness’ 4

Let’s say demonology, demons, diamonds also relate to dementia.
I have no idea actually but I’ve decided I would state the relationship between these words:
demon, **δαίμων**, diamonds, dementia.
Let’s say this is (im)proper etymology.

It’s not that you wanted to understand everything or even to understand anything
you wanted to understand something else⁵

2. Today used to be Tuesday

Lately, I’ve been making endless series of attempts at writing letters to my lovers, which
include poets, artists, witches I am in love with. What I’m reading today is a letter, which
starts with the letters “D-e-a-r,” “Dear,”

Let’s say it’s a draft – a version 1.0 – as I like to think nothing is immutably engraved in
stone forever – except for your black diamond, Chiara. I’m stating this is a draft because
today is one of the first times I read one of those letters publicly.

One of the many letters I’ve been writing these last years and months, which were either not
sent, either not received, either not read.

Just like I did for the previous ones, I’ve decided this letter, which I address to you, would
aggregate a multiplicity of voices.

By means of an introduction, I wanted to share some excerpts from one of those previous
letters, as a distant echo. This letter was not addressed to you, while at the same time it
seems that it was, in many ways, retrospectively, addressed to you. This letter took the form
of a collectively written film-essay.

We crafted this together, with a group of artists called Messidor. See, these people know
about revolutionary calendars. Messidor is the harvest season in revolutionary times.
This collective piece of writing was called Unknown Language.
We crafted this together a few months ago.

And it started like this: **VIDEO PLAYS** part 1 *Unknown Language*, a collective film-essay
developed together with Messidor⁶ artists collective .

Chiara, I’m not sure you were *as bright as six billion suns*. You asked for the lights to be
switched off.

I’d rather state the following: you shook the sky. You broke the solar system.
Like Pluto. You know, Pluto. Pluto was considered a planet until they found out that their
path of orbit could never be accurately predicted. It followed that they were discredited
from planet status. Pluto were considered a planet, and then discredited as a planet. They
were excluded for not being predictable enough, which means: tameable.
I suggest we briefly listen to what Pluto has to say:
Today, I broke your solar system. Ops.
My bad. Your graph said I was supposed
to make a nice little loop around the sun.
Naw.
I chaos like a motherfucker.

(Footnote: Together with some members of the Church of Chiara Fumai, we suggested we’d
rather say Fatherfucker instead of Motherfucker.)

Ain't no one can
chart me. All the other planets, they think
I'm annoying. They think I'm an escaped
moon, running free.
Fuck your moon. Fuck your solar system.
Fuck your time. (..)

My name means hell, bitch. I am hell, bitch. All the cold you have yet to feel. Chaos like a
motherfucker.
And you tried to order me. Called me ninth.
Somewhere in the mess of graphs and math and compass you tried to make me follow rules.
Rules? Fuck your rules. Neptune, that bitch slow. And I deserve all the sun I can get, and
all the blue-gold sky I want around me.⁷

I can hear you talk through those words, Chiara. You broke the solar system. You shook the
sky. You blew up the graphs.
You blew up the graphs.

You were a constant glitch⁸.
You were a riot of atmospheres and inexplicable non-gravitational intensities⁹.

No one could chart you.
You were the unexpected subject¹⁰, as someone used to say.

3. Tuesday used to be Wednesday

I can see your face, Chiara.
Your face is featured on the cover of a magazine from 1991.
I can see this drawing of your face. Your glazed eyes staring at the viewer, frowning.
Sometimes they become reddish, dragon-like. I know a song that says: Eyes lit on sharp
threats¹¹.
Your long hair around your face becomes a series of snakes – just like the one on this wall
over there. The magazine was titled Angry Women¹². You knew about all of them.
Anger can be a source of power, strength and clarity as well as a creative force¹³.
There are snakes but also spiders – tarantulas that dance Tarantella.

Sometimes I see you with your mouth wide open, screaming – PERFORMING from these
liminal spaces, these borders, troubling oneself.

I know a witchpoet who calls this disassociation season¹⁴.
Madness is not a safe space, not a place to walk in elusive diversion. Madness burns¹⁵. But
Madness is also a form of ultrasanity¹⁶
a “generative matter of outrageousness and outrageous propositions¹⁷
A SATANARY¹⁸ could be a safe space, maybe.

Lately I made a series of attempts at writing a semi-fictitious text on how neurodivergence
may affect ways of (non-) seeing or (mis-) visions, but also experiences of touch and
embodiment. It will be a tender made-up story about someone I know.
... ..

Your times were layers of time accumulating endlessly.
Your times were freak time, sick time, crip time. Cripistemology.

I can see your assistants surrounding you.
They look like galla – you know the creatrixes that surround Innanna, the Goddess of justice
and of the underworld.
Your galla-assistants standing, holding guns, surrounding you.
Because you knew about the relationship between the rife and the typewriter.
Together with some others, you knew that, historically, the typewriter co-emerged with the
rife¹⁹. Some witches state that All the guns in the world are owned by females²⁰.
From which it obviously follows that: all the writers in the world are females.
Typing: what an exquisite job²¹.

4. Tuesday used to be Thursday

Dear, I've decided Wednesday would be the day for the embodiment of languages, or
rather: for the overlapping of multiple voices – because the speechless have so much to say.
So many speechless creatrixes²² in this world. Your body was the full surrogacy for the
bodies who were forced into speechlessness.

To be a witch is to know words.
To speak the unspeakable.
To uncover manifestos that were buried on purpose and scripts that were lost on purpose.

Once I discovered there exists a shredding machine for written documents.

That is called Destrudata
A machine that turns papers into ribbons
Destrudata they called it.
Chiara, seems, you became the night with an “n”, even the the knight with a “k”, that slayed
the dragon Destrudata.

“ ‘I’m a scroll—” “swallower,” “she said to me,” “ ‘I take scripture” “on scroll” “& hold it,”
“keep it in my throat—”²³

Chiara, I actually think you were a writer.

5. Wednesday used to be Friday

Dear Chiara, Fragmenting yourself into discreet parts De-multiplying,
You wrote endless letters to the Alphabet. To the Letters of *ALPHABET*, especially the *XX*
and the *XX* even more so.

And you gestured lyrics like few of us can read – The hand that says it all
Captioning yourself with sign language Blindfolded

Remember, at the beginning I mentioned this film we made with Messidor. We read this
word which means: I create as I speak²⁴.

Listen to how it went:

abracadabra – Messidor excerpt

Abracadabra, I create as I speak²⁵
Can the monster speak?²⁶ : I guess so.

You’ve been transcribing in so many different ways
Transcribing as translating.

you took it as the task of the translator to forbid that they should ever lose their screams²⁷

Now, listen to this other piece of writing from the recent past: Unknown Language (video
excerpt Messidor) – on Translatrices

6. Tuesday used to be Saturday, and then Thursday

You birthed the spells,
Or rather: you reproduced, you repeated the spells. You produced a soul contagion.

I’ve also explored many of them lately. I’ve tried to practice many of them.
Let me give you a few examples:

– 1947: Spell to Reverse a Line²⁸
– Incantation against Mumsnet²⁹
– How to become a walking alchemical experiment³⁰ – To purge the desire to write like a
man³¹

– A spell for binding all-male conference panels³²
– *A SPELL TO BIND MURDEROUS ART COLLECTORS AND GALLERISTS*³³
– *A SPELL TO BIND STRAIGHT WHITE CIS MALE ARTISTS FROM GETTING
RICH OFF OF APPROPRIATING QUEER AESTHETICS AND FEMININE
ABJECTION*³⁴

– *A SPELL TO BIND MALE ARTISTS FROM MURDERING YOU*³⁵

To make love, turn to page 121. To die, turn to page 172.³⁶

7. Today used to be Sunday, again

Chiara, You were amongst the few who birthed the fire emoji.
Thunder Perfect Mind
I can see serial fireball fusions³⁷, which lead me to the following statement: you obviously
studied pyrotechnics
No need for fire extinguishers.
No need for lightning rods.

No need for curfew.

I entered” “a cavern” “in which a queen sat” “on a throne—”
“a golden woman,” “metallic woman, in” “black-yarn wig” “& gold crown,” “kohl-outlined
eyes” “The queen” “was being bowed to” “by white-robed figures;” “the floor before the
throne” “was strewn with” “plastic
petals” “As I watched her” “she grew larger,” “grew taller” “& also fatter—” “expanded
like” “a balloon” “Until” “with a loud bang” “she exploded,” “disappeared” “Her courtiers”
“vanished into air”³⁸

It all started with a blast.
A huge blast.
And then it ended up with a wound. (Seems you went away with your demons.)

*This Last Line Can Not Be Translated*³⁹

I've kept thinking about this text called *The Weight of Our Living: On Hope, Fire Escapes, and Visible Desperation*⁴⁰. A text that the poet wrote following the death of their uncle, at a times when they would walk the streets of New York ...

looking at all the buildings — “and yet only the fire escape, a clinging extremity, inanimate and often rusting, spoke — in its hardened, exiled silence with the most visible human honesty: *We are capable of disaster. And we are scared*”⁴¹.

Every text, — every book, every poem, I think, is an attempt at articulating a fire escape⁴².

A fire escape.

1 Anne Carson ; 2 Pauline Boudry & Renate Lorenz ; 3 Michel Foucault ; 4 Alice Notley. *The Descent of Alette* ; 5 Anne Carson. *Antigonick* ; 6 messidorgroup.be ; 7 <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/58058/pluto-shits-on-the-universe> Fatimah Ashgar, *Pluto Shits on the Universe* ; 8 Legacy Russel, *Glitch Manifesto* ; 9 Anne Carson ; 10 Carla Lonzi ; 11 Song by Crystal Castles, *Crimewave* ; 12 https://monoskop.org/File:Research_13_Angry_Women_1991.pdf ; 13. Introduction to *Angry Women Magazine*, 1991 ; 14 Precious Okoyomon ; 15 *Ultrasanity. On Madness, Sanitation, Antipsychiatry, and Resistance* ; 16 *Ultrasanity. On Madness, Sanitation, Antipsychiatry, and Resistance* ; 17 *Ultrasanity. On Madness, Sanitation, Antipsychiatry, and Resistance* ; 18 *Ultrasanity. On Madness, Sanitation, Antipsychiatry, and Resistance* ; 19 Avital Ronnell, intro to Valerie Solanas. *a SCUM Manifesto*. ²⁰ ; 20 Andrea Long Chu ; 21 Quote *Up Your Ass* by V. Solanas in: Andrea Long Chu ; 22 Judy Grahn ; 23 Alice Notley. *The Descent of Alette* ; 24 Ariana Reines ; 25 Ariana Reines. 26 Paul B. Preciado ; 27 Anne Carson, *Antigonick* ; 28 Bhanu Kapil ; 29 Daisy Lafarge ; 30 Diane di Prima ; 31 Rebecca May Johnson 32 Linda Stupart ; 33 Linda Stupart ; 34 Linda Stupart ; 35 Linda Stupart ; 36 Bernadette Mayer ; 37 Anne Carson ; 38 Alice Notley, *The Descent of Alette* ; 39 Title of a work by Chiara Fumai ; 40 Ocean Vuong, “*The Weight of Our Living. On Hope, Fire Escapes and Visible Desperation*”, *The Rumpus*, August 28th, 2014 ; 41 Ocean Vuong, “*The Weight of Our Living. On Hope, Fire Escapes and Visible Desperation*”, *The Rumpus*, August 28th, 2014. <https://therumpus.net/2014/08/the-weight-of-our-living-on-hope-fire-escapes-and-visible-desperation/> ; 42 Ocean Vuong, “*The Weight of Our Living. On Hope, Fire Escapes and Visible Desperation*”, *The Rumpus*, August 28th, 2014.



YENTL



MENTL



Quits for
Students

6/20/70

please discuss the reasons for
the absence of female artists.
(not only at the conference but
internationally "known.")



SOMETHING I FEEL VERY
MUCH IS SUDDENLY
WISHING THAT ONE HAD
NEVER GOT STARTED ON
THIS BUSINESS OF BEING
AN ARTIST & THAT ONE
RETURN TO BEING A
COMPLETELY FREE PER-
SON THAT NO ONE
WANTS TO KNOW ABOUT
OR SEE, OR IS INTER-
ESTED IN. DO YOU
GET THIS FEELING EVER?

Nell Dunn to Pauline Boty in *Talking to Women*, 1965



KONINKLIJKE ACADEMIE
VOOR SCHONE KUNSTEN
ANTWERPEN



BIBLIOTHEEK - CAMPUS MITSMAARSTRAAT
BIBLIOTHEEK CMU-AP ST 1103 110 71 08

second shelf



The book you are holding is part of
second shelf, a research program that
addresses the under-representation of
artists who are women, queer, or of color
at the library of the Royal Academy of
Fine Arts Antwerp

book number:

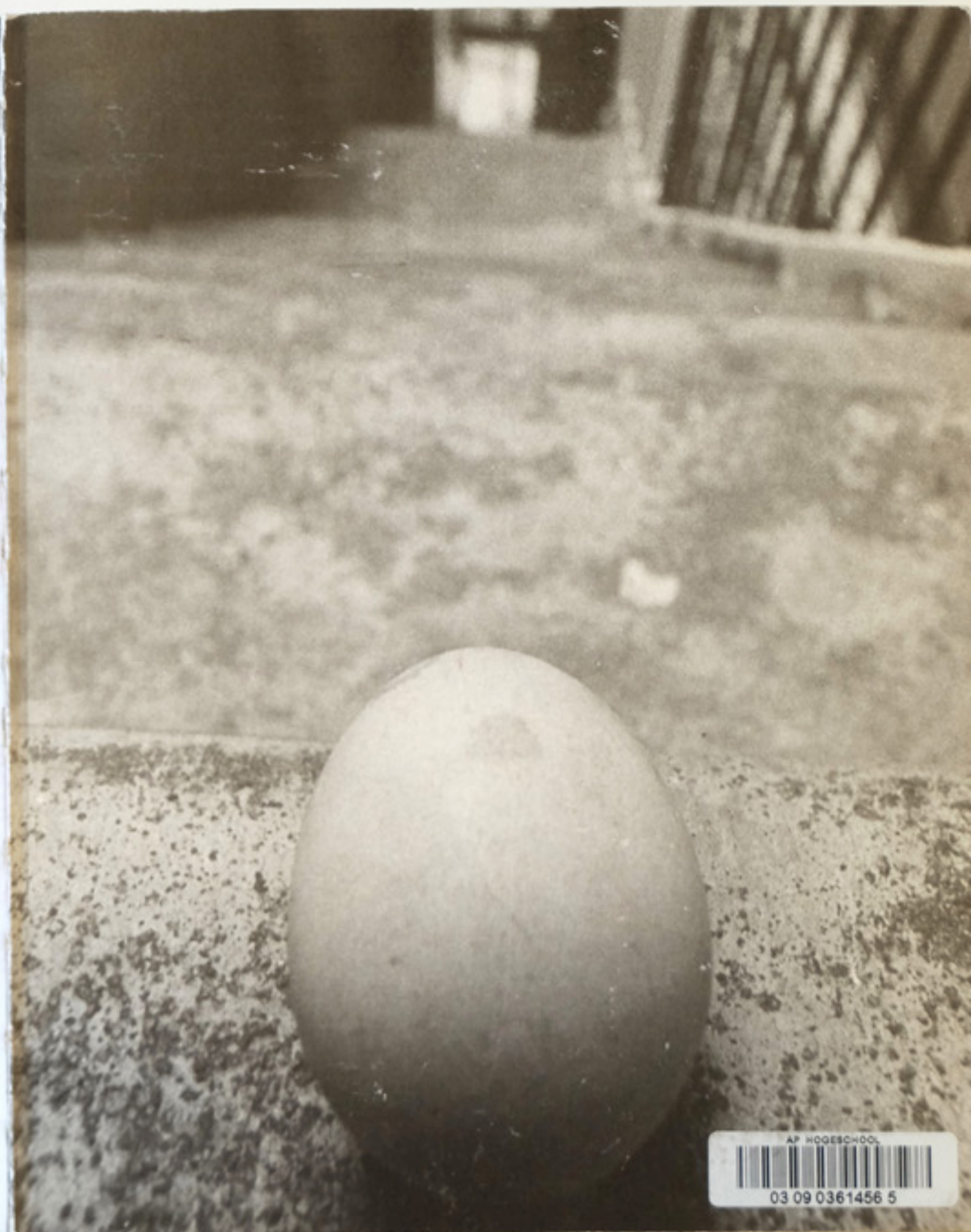
82

previous book: next book:

CMU 792.5 CMU 700.8
WARK 2006 PACA 2018

www.second-shelf.org

Alma
Winifred
Christiane
Ann-Lisbeth
Eva
Marga
Lillian
Maya
Elena
Eleanor



lynnettew / Lara Well

Not in America / The inner core

abyss dweller / carrier of treasures / geological actor
friend of the seagulls / looking for clues / fear-driven

Education

Dreams

Love

Youtube

Work experience

Cumean Sybil

Rock whisperer

Gay poet

Field investigator

Time traveler

Pet owner

Kristen Stewart expert

Slug

Skills

walking with dragons

staying alive

feelings are facts

sit on a chair / stare at the wall / listen to what demands attention

witnessing / it's like making love to the ocean. mmmh.

Interests

Hermit crabs

Construction sites

Christmas







Rock, scissors, silence.

A single word sent forth into silence
is of no consequence to silence.

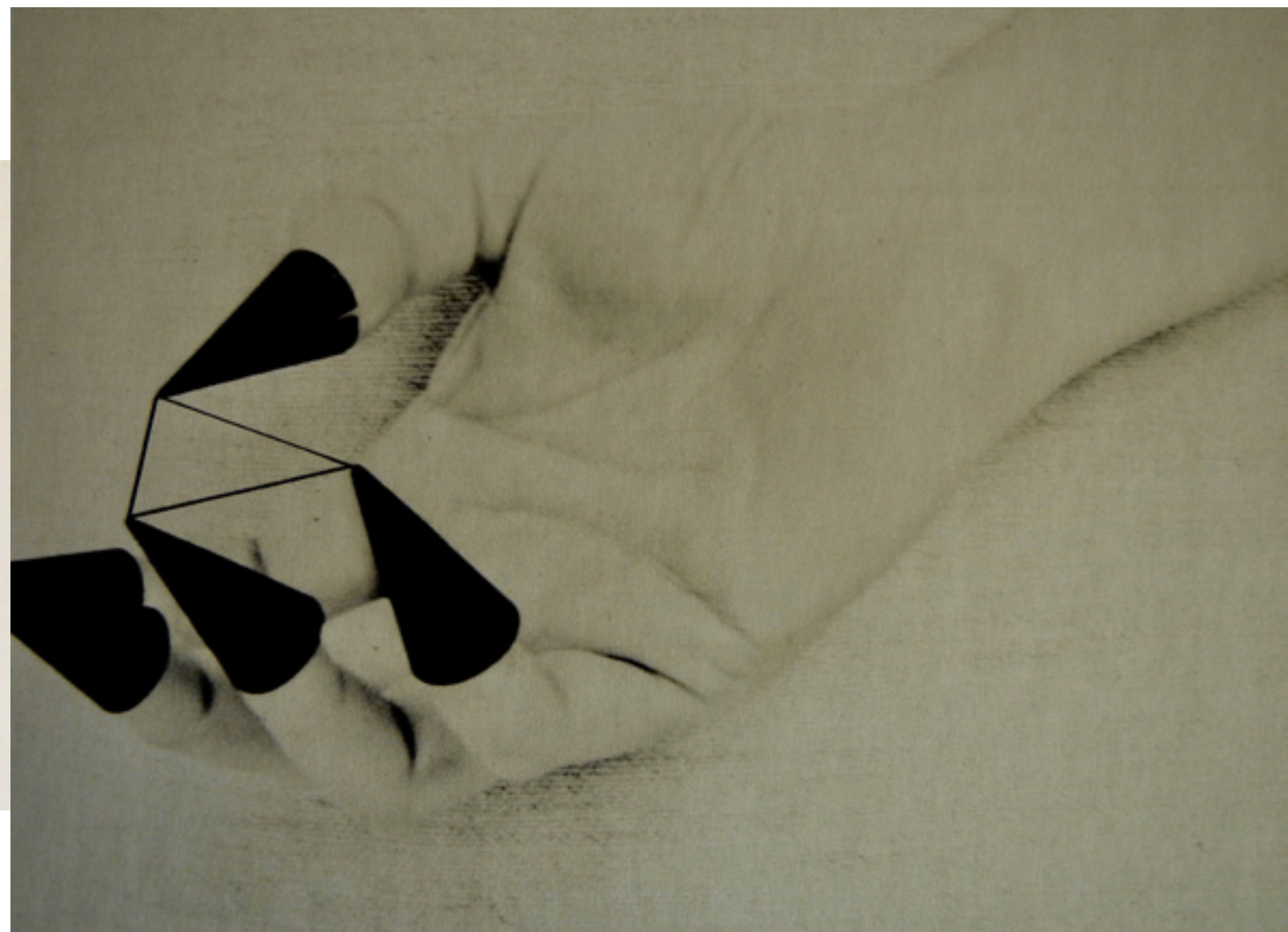
The teeth and tongue that
hurled it brutally into the silence
now settle into stillness
behind sealed lips.

A single frightened word,
shivering and alone,
is of no consequence to silence.

Be mindful of the brittle bones of words;
their fragile souls...
once you expel them into silence,

they will be swallowed,
and they will be lost.

They say that words break silence,
But I have seen how silence can
Utterly Crush Words.







I'm dreaming of your land, dear little Utopia.

Where home is easy to define.

Where education is based on task.

Where integration is beyond debate.

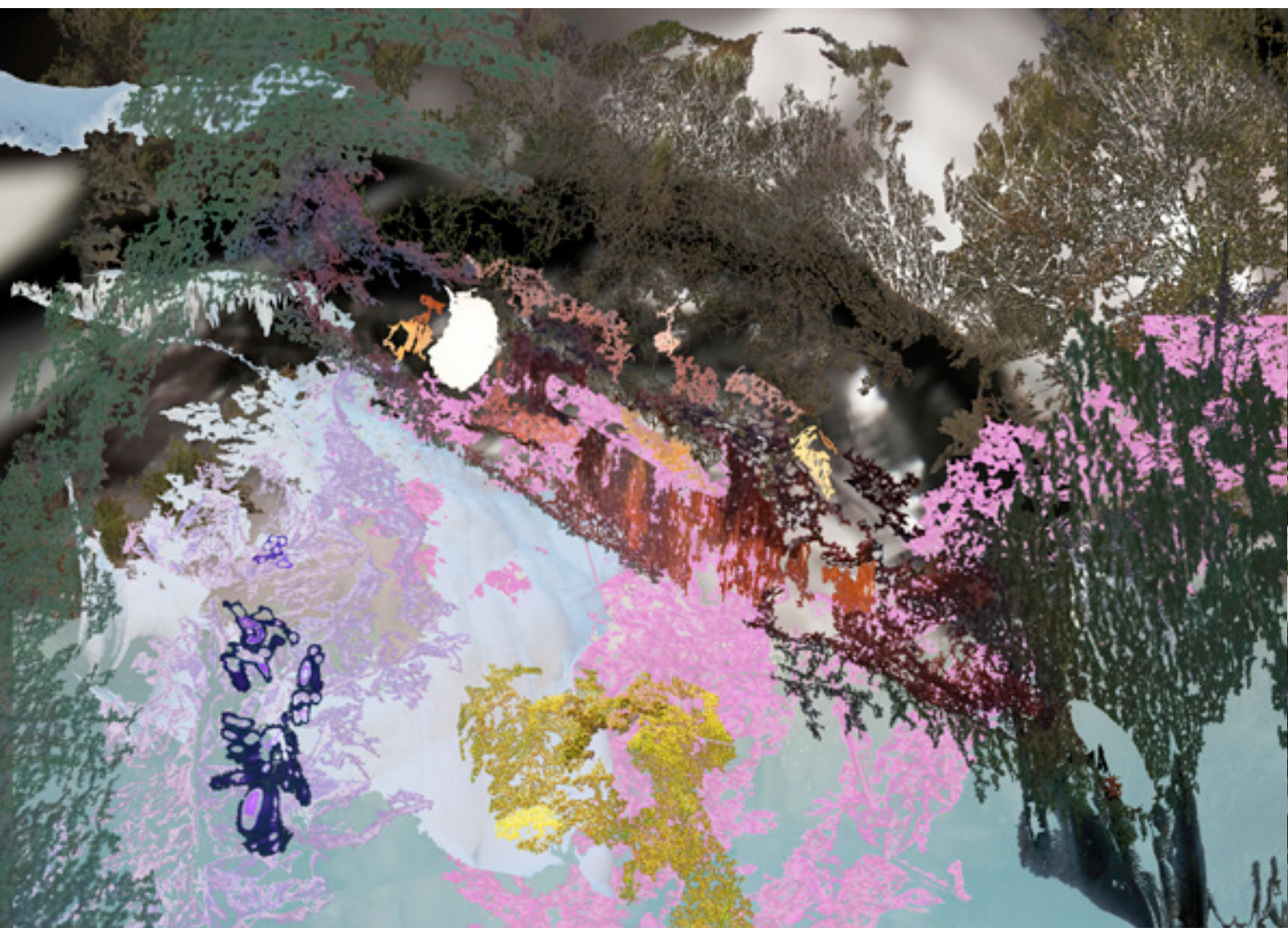
Where success is experienced through the body.

Where numbers are utilized to measure space.

Where luck is comprehended while it is happening.

Where - sometimes - the air savours of milk and sugar.











thank you
for being part
of
this exhibition

Contributors to this issue in order of appearance:

1/5 – Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven, *Portret van Chantal De Smet*, detail, 2021

6 – Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven, *Portret van Chantal De Smet*, digital print on two plexi sheets, 68x80x1cm, 2021, courtesy ZenoX Gallery

7/14 – Els Opsomer, *#Yaaimijniet*, 2021

15 – Golnesa Rezanezhad in collaboration with Ravanah Sadri, *Warp and Weft: Weaving the Past into the Present*, rug in synthetic thread, 165x107cm, 2012

16 – Galit Eilat, *Good Museums Copy, Great Museums Steal*, video essay, 1:10 minutes, 2021

17 – Isabella Theys, *The Controversy of Curiosity*, oil painting on canvas, 100x100cm, 2021

18 – Astrid Van de Vijver, *A view of my vagina*, 109x72cm, acryl and chalk on paper, 2016

19 – Caroline Bonfond, *Immersion*, cyanotype, 2020

20/23 – Naomi Schatterman, *Untitled 001 (Mohammed Tabet, Bobby Joe Long, Jean Luc Blanche, Vince Champ & friends)*, performance documentation, 2021

24 – OOOO, *It's Can't Dance Open Call*, digital photography, 2007

25 – Katja Mater, *Growth Factor ϕ* , c-print, 2019

26 – Mirthe Berentsen in collaboration with READS the Meerstek, *The right to be forgotten*, ceramics, 2021

27/29 – Mirthe Berentsen, *Myths about mothers in art*, 2021

30/31 – Maria Kapajeva, *Or Other*, installation with neon light, 2021

32/34 – Serena Vittorini, *SV1, SV2, SV3*, digital photographs, 2020

35 – Carolina Festa, *Excerpt / The Laugh of The Medusa, Hélène Cixous*, 2021

36 – Natasja Mabeoone, *Nérodiaide in Valentino Jeans*, 2020

37 – Natasja Mabeoone, *Nérodiaide in Valentino Jeans*, marker, colored pencil and graphite on paper, 2020

38 – Natasja Mabeoone, *Nérodiaide in Valentino Jeans*, marker, colored pencil and graphite on paper, 28x36, 2020

39 – Natasja Mabeoone, *Nérodiaide in Valentino Jeans*, graphite on paper, 2020

40/41 – Elke Boon, *Gun*, black & white photography, 2011

42 – Zoe Young, *The Goodtraits – Lisa Lapointe*, 2021

43 – Catherine Lemblé, *A Room of Her Own*, photography, 2017

44 – Catherine Lemblé, *Charlotte*, photography, 2017

- 45 – Catherine Lemblé, *Byrunden*, photography, 2021
- 46 – Catherine Lemblé, *Cultural Palace*, photography, 2021
- 47 – Catherine Lemblé, *Sara's First Sun*, photography, 2020
- 48 – Catherine Lemblé, *Mia on the day the news broke*, photography, 2021
- 49 – Catherine Lemblé, Siv, *The First Female Pastor in Svalbard*, photography, 2017
- 50 – Catherine Lemblé, *Pastor's Office*, photography, 2020
- 51 – Jolien De Roo, *Special Occasion*, mixed media on wood, 30x40cm, 2020
- 52 – Hannah Mevis, *Land's Emotion*, poem, 2021
- 53 – Minne Bezuijen, *Untitled*, biotop paper, 48,1x59,4cm, 2019
- 54 – Maartje Fliervoet, *Correspondances* (detail), piezographic wallpaper prints, silkscreened fabric, triplex, paint, 80x40x1,5 cm, 2021
- 55/62 – Florence Cheval, *You shook the sky*, 2021
- 63 – Chiara Fumai, *Chiara Fumai Reads Valerie Solanas*, single chanel video, 10'34", video still, 2013, Courtesy of the Church of Chiara Fumai
- 64/65 – Anna La Chocha, *VENTL/MENTL*, digital collage, s.d.
- 66 – Loraine Furter, *Speaking Volumes*, photocopy, 2017
- 67 – Silvia Vëndramel, *My Baby Just Cares for Me*, fabric, foam, cork, 18x12x11cm, 2009
- 68 – Moosje Goosen, *Well Dunn to Pauline Boty in Talking to Women*, 1985, s.d.
- 69 – Ioanna Sakellarakis, *Altheia (unconcealment)*, *The Truth is in The Soil*, photography, 2020
- 70/71 – Weide Winrichs, *second shelf* (detail), digital photography, 2021
- 72 – Lara Well, *Life is not a race*, cv printed on fabric, s.d.
- 73 – Batsheva Ross, *Warmup*, charcoal on paper, 2020
- 74 – Batsheva Ross, *Firing Squad*, oil on canvas, 2020
- 75 – Batsheva Ross, *The placement of the thigh*, oil on canvas, 2020
- 76 – Batsheva Ross, *The Yoga Master*, oil on canvas, 2020
- 77 – Tania Theodorou, *Rock, scissors, silence*, poem, s.d.
- 78 – Arianna Musetta, *Boils de chat*, gouache and acryl on paper, 2021
- 79 – Trees De Mits, *Z.T.*, photo on uncoated dibond paper, 55x40cm, 2005–2021
- 80/81 – Meleen Seys, *Untitled (erect)*, black & white photo, 10x15 cm (18 x), 2019
- 82 – Veronika Pot, *Zonder titel*, gelatine silverprint, 2012
- 83/84 – Hannah Mevis, *Dear little Utopia*, poem, s.d.
- 85 – Anouk De Clercq, *One*, video still from *One* (black & white video, 8'30), 2020
- 86/87 – Maria Morales, *Computer Dreams*, digital collage, 2021
- 88/89 – Samah Hijawi, *Paradise (2)*, digital collage, 2021
- 90/91 – Katja Mater, *Anus*, c-print, 2018
- 92/93 – Katja Mater, *Holder of Self*, 16mm film still, 2021
- 94 – Lieve D'hondt en sabine oosterlynck, *thank you for being part of this exhibition*, A2 poster on paper, 2021

Colophon

KIOSK's *LINDA NOCHLIN FANZINE*
Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?
Issue 4

50 years ago, in January 1971, Linda Nochlin's essay *Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?* was published in *ARTnews* magazine.

Few art historians have been as influential, prolific and radical as Nochlin who, between 1960 and 2017, wrote seventeen books and countless articles in which she socially and historically examined, commented on and argued for equality for women in the arts. To mark the 50th anniversary of the essay, KIOSK aims to contextualise Nochlin's work and that of artists and writers, activists or designers who identify as women, in the creation of a set of 4 *FANZINES*.

KIOSK's *LINDA NOCHLIN FANZINE* is published online on kiosk.art in a pdf that can be printed at home.

Editorial team fanzine 4: Jessica Gysel & Els Roelandt, Simon Delobel

Thanks to: the artists, contributors, contributors and Chantal De Smet

Published by KIOSK, Ghent, 8 December 2021

Copyright: Kiosk, the artists and contributors. Textual contributions are added without prior editing by the editorial board.

Font: CirrusCumulus by Clara Sambot

(downloaded from <https://www.design-research.be/by-womxn/>), except 'Good Museums Copy, Great Museums Steal' by Galit Eilat (font: Mrs Eaves) and #maaimijniet by Els Opsomer