

Lullaby

MARINA STANIMIROVIC

Opening: July 16, 2021

Duration: July 17 to August 10, 2021

Elle portait un nom, je le sais aujourd'hui, un nom qui coupe : elle s'appelait le silence.

Nina Bouraoui¹

A hand detaches from its background. In this slackened gesture, as if left abandoned, it seems inert and inoffensive. Not immediately noticeable, this capture of the appendage at rest contrasts with the materiality of the other presences in room and yet is part of the ensemble.

Dispersed in the space, Marina Stanimirovic's pieces are mostly made of manufactured and also trivial construction materials such as stainless steel or glass. Their smooth and soft surfaces, sometimes spray-painted and adorned with photographs or seals and gear-like components borrowed from industrial design, are not sufficient to hide cut edges and sharp angles. They seem to have once been the constituent members of a singular corporality, to have participated in a well-oiled machinery; now, they are maintained together artificially, only by the limits of the architecture. If they appear sometimes menacing, the composite sculptures are coated with all kinds of protections, exposing concurrently the weaknesses to the point of revealing the exact locations of the injury. Much as knee or elbow pads might stabilize and rehabilitate a body, these same protections lock the organs in manipulated and frozen gestures. In containing the flaw, they induce the failing forms to silence.

So many stifled screams of a flesh affected by sorrow and trauma. Marina Stanimirovic reveals to us an organism capable of carrying at the same time suffering, desire, pleasure and fear in a vertiginous and confusing proximity. Thus, by dint of living the internal tensions, and constantly torn between survival and self-destruction impulses it finds refuge in silence in order to subsist, yet slowly becoming its hostage. « Avec mes larmes coule ta douleur ² » would she say. If children are born in a climax of cries, the term infant implies (in its Latin root, «the one who does not speak») one whose emotional state must be deciphered through the tears. As if it were the result of a life-long apprenticeship, silence might end up being integrated and perceived as a beneficial strategy, at the risk of turning against oneself. Throughout the exhibition, the artist questions the foundations underlying the processes of silencing and invisibilization, and inquires what

forms can be taken by the violence inflicted on the body.

"It has a name that cuts: it was called silence." It is indeed violence that the protagonist of Nina Bouraoui's *Otages* is talking about here. That which infiltrates the thinnest cracks, the narrowest fissures, and seizes every cell of the being. But it is also the one that infiltrates every parcel of the social fabric, of the social body, to the extent of making the interweaving and interdependence of oppressions inextricable. Not without referring to her personal history, Marina Stanimirovic willingly traces the heritages of violence and confronts the fertile ground of systemic violence to identify them in states' practices and in the legacy of colonialism in the neo-liberal capitalist society. What are the mechanisms that promote patriarchy and justify domestic violence, incest, rape or any violence against women, minorities and vulnerable persons? Who are those who grant themselves the right to dispose of the bodies of others in all legitimacy ³?

The violence that we end up not seeing anymore, so common to become unremarkable, the one that invades bodies with ambiguous mutes and is transmitted through unexpected ways, constitutes the source material of Marina Stanimirovic's work, and its processing appears a matter of necessity. In the exhibition, the artist unfolds a narrative made of ellipses, cuts, resistances and respirations that allow us to catch our breath, like those that give rhythm to the artist's recited poem. Starting from her own figure, she generates a space for speculation in the shape of a distorted cartography of pain or a fragmented anatomy of the silenced body, in which the sculptures and installations become the agents. In this scenery, halfway between an urban construction site and the sanitized interior of a hospital, we are enveloped by the sound and wander around the modular structures. The arrangement of the elements blending with the architecture, the flowers in pots, just like the hand at rest, introduces us to a disconcerting, semi-accessible intimacy, which might leave us to ourselves, confused. Perforated as it is, the work's narrative thread leaves space for interpretation. It invites us to complete and transform our physical and affective responses, invoking the search for balance and, with it, enfranchisement.

Text by Marie DuPasquier

1. Nina Bouraoui, *Otages*, 2020, p. 30 : « It had a name, I know it today, a name that cuts: it was called silence.»

2. Excerpt from Marina Stanimirovic's poem: "With tears flows your pain."

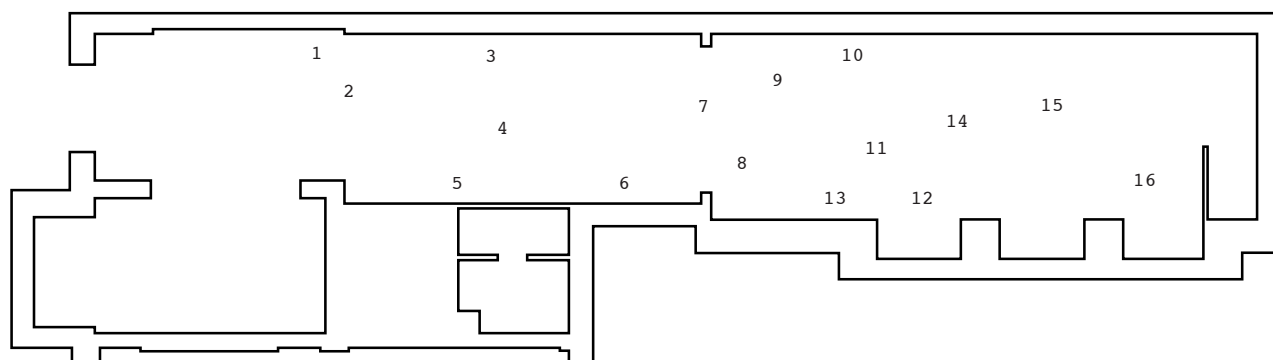
3. Françoise Vergès, *Une théorie féministe de la violence. Pour une politique antiraciste de la protection*, Paris : La Fabrique éditions, 2020.

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1. ON GARD, 2019, 93 x 20 x 0.6 cm
2. DOG, 2019, 55 x 40 x 74 cm , 50 x 38 x 74 cm, 0.8mm stainless steel
3. MORCELLEMENT, 2021, variable dimensions, silicone rubber, glass, ldpe, analog photographs
4. PASSENGERS, 2021, 6 x 80 x 220 cm, car windows, analog photography printed on fabric, rubber, steel
5. COAT HANGER 3-7 YEAR, 2021, 103 x 48.5 x 6 cm, stainless steel, silicone rubber
6. FORGIVENESS, 2021, 270 x 212 x 3 cm, stainless steel, plastic film, silicone rubber
7. ELYTRA, 2021, 47 x 86 x 140 cm, painted steel
8. ARCHITECTURE DU SILENCE B01, 2021, 125 x 33 x 30 cm, stainless steel, silicone rubber , glass, wax
9. HER FLESH SEEMED TO SCREAM, 2021, 7 x 45 x 81 cm, rubber, glass, analog photograph
10. DISPOSABLE, 2021, 112 x 44 x 56 cm, aluminum, rubber
11. SHOE TREE, 2020, 9 x 30 x 22 cm, steel, silicone rubber
12. SADDLE UP!, 2020, 23 x 95 x 24 cm, brass
13. I WAS LEFT WITH A HUGE VOID, 2021, 120 x 110 x 0.6 cm, painted glass
14. FLANK, 2021, 45.5 x 195 x 300 cm, glass, silicone rubber, painted aluminum
15. ARCHITECTURE DU SILENCE LH01, 2021, 204 x 50 x 16 cm, 1mm stainless steel, silicone rubber
16. RUINES, 2021, 55 x 51 x 30 cm ; 35 x 44 x 30 cm, 0.8mm glass, silicone rubber

About gr_und

gr_und is a nonprofit artist-run space situated in Wedding, Berlin. It is an active space for the materialisation of curated concepts, using multi-disciplinary methods of visual art, performance, sound and linguistics. It is a platform for experimentation and re-adjusting the status quo of the commercial art world. Gr_und works from various media outlets via exhibitions, workshops, live web radio and an open source art library.

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