

Marion Baruch – Widerstandsgeist



**Press date:** October 4, 2024, 12 pm  
**Opening:** October 5, 2024, 7 pm  
**Duration:** October 6 – November 24, 2024

*„For me, textiles are something that lives and breathes; I feel the ineffability of their breath or its flow, a continuous flow that is also that of society at large. It reflects the history of humanity and, at the same time, the social dimension of work.” – Marion Baruch<sup>1</sup>*

**NAK Neuer Aachener Kunstverein** is pleased to present **Widerstandsgeist**, one of the first institutional solo exhibitions of the artist **Marion Baruch** in the Rhineland.

To mark the occasion, the Kunstverein is bringing together a large number of outstanding sculptural works from the artist's oeuvre, all of which were created in the last decade and are distributed throughout the exhibition rooms of NAK in a site-specific installation. For example, Neuer Aachener Kunstverein is showing the large-format and room-filling

<sup>1</sup> Rita Selvaggio, „Marion Baruch“, in: Flash Art 336, 2017.

*Traiettorie* in the lower floor, which were specially adapted by the artist for the spatial conditions. Due to her age, this most recent creative period is accompanied by physical limitations and the increasing loss of the artist's eyesight, so that in 2012 Baruch began a series of works that use textile waste from the Italian prêt-à-porter industry as material.

Baruch reinterprets the materials that the fashion world has cast aside as unusable in a formalist sense, following her own intuitive-artistic logic and practice, thus giving them a second purpose: „When all is said and done, waste does not exist; when you see a pile of offcuts, what you are seeing is life, and life is not a waste.“<sup>2</sup>

The artist calls the resulting works *Sculptures*: „*The Sculptures were born from an encounter between what I found in bags full of leftovers and my memory.*“<sup>3</sup> Just as these works behave in space and operate with gaps as well as omissions, Baruch fills these de facto voids with memories of encounters of an artistic nature, her own work, her own biography, willingly and unwillingly enters into collaborations, thus recurring to private, social and economic relationships. The result is a complex network in which the works can unfold freely and easily.

The works are „*on the very edge of existence and of that emptiness (...) – a dense emptiness, one endowed with its own meaning – (that) builds and shapes another space, one free and light,*“<sup>4</sup> which the viewer completes with their own thoughts. Positioned in space, the sculptures thus define „*a dialogue, albeit between two immaterial forces, such as space and matter.*“<sup>5</sup> Baruch's sculptures focus on presence and absence, a shift or even dissolution of perspective, transparency, but also on material, fabric, surface and allowing negative space. Form becomes a container, also for ideas. A genuine free space for both the artist and the visitors, like an invitation.

Marion Baruch's sculptures „*are not fixed, nor are they eternal; (...) they often acquire new vigour if a movement of the air or a ray of sunlight tickles them, thus bringing them to life.*“<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, Baruch specifically attributes to them a quality that characterizes all of the textile works and is virtually inherent to them, animating them. A spirit of resistance, a Widerstandsgeist. The title of the presentation chosen by the artist herself, who is always very thoughtful with language, aptly describes Baruch's works: the material therefore outlasts its original purpose, willingly accepts changes and reinterpretations, unimpressed in itself. Existence, re-existence, resistance.

Marion Baruch (\*1929 Timișoara, Romania) began her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bucharest in 1949. Just one year later, she was given the opportunity to study at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem under Mordecai Ardon, among others; in 1954, she continued her academic training at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Rome. Baruch's artistic practice also changed, she turned away from painting and drawing and henceforth worked mostly in the genre of sculpture, although her entire oeuvre always took unexpected turns over the decades, with a multidisciplinary

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<sup>2</sup> Emma Zanella, Allesandro Castiglioni, „Life Is Not a Waste“, in: Fanni Fetzer, Noah Stolz [Hg.], *Marion Baruch*. Luzern, Mailand 2020, S. 210.

<sup>3</sup> Noah Stolz, „Tzimtzum. Marion Baruch in conversation with Noah Stolz“, in: Illaria Bombelli, Nicola Trezzi [Hg.], *Tzimtzum*. Mailand 2023, S. 65.

<sup>4</sup> Maura Pozzati, „The other source“, in: Stampa L'Artiere [Hg.], *The other source*. Bologna 2024, S. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Maura Pozzati, „The other source“, in: Stampa L'Artiere [Hg.], *The other source*. Bologna 2024, S. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Noah Stolz, „The most beautiful is the object which does not exist“, in: Stampa L'Artiere [Hg.], *The other source*. Bologna 2024, S. 52.

orientation and interest, for example when she continued to produce art solely under the company label Name Diffusion from 1989 onwards, thereby reacting critically to the art market.

In 2022, the gallery of the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst Leipzig dedicated a comprehensive solo exhibition to Baruch for the first time in the German-speaking world; the artist has previously been presented abroad, for instance at MAMCO Geneva and Kunstmuseum Luzern in 2020. Marion Baruch's work has received a renewed, welcome recognition in recent years. Baruch lives and works in Gallarate, Italy.

Parallel to *Widerstandsgeist*, Kunstmuseen Krefeld are showing the retrospective exhibition *Soziales Gewebe* at Haus Lange with works by Marion Baruch from all decades of her career. The exhibition in Krefeld opens on October 6, 2024.

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