

Marcelle Alix

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Ethan Assouline, Pauline Boudry / Renate Lorenz, Georges Juliette Ayrault & Louis Chaumier, Anne-Lise Coste, Pierre Creton, Brice Dellsperger, Lou Fauroux, Romain Grateau, Dorothy Iannone, Monica Majoli, Gyan Panchal, Bruno Pelassy, Jean-Charles de Quillacq, Sarah Tritz, Zohreh Zavareh

Explicit lyrical

09.01.2025 - 01.03.2025

"I have lived within a lyrical poem, like anyone possessed."

Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Qui je suis* (éd. Arléa, 1999)

"The hunger of the skin. Sometimes I felt like my skin hurt as though it were an empty stomach. The fine hairs below my navel seemed to rise as if they wanted to touch something. My mouth would open when I slept, and my tongue would stretch out into the air, extending and extending. I would wake from dreams where I rose, like yeast, toward an embrace that welcomed and satisfied this hunger—an embrace I desperately desired."

Dorothy Allison, *Skin: Talking About Sex, Class & Literature* (1994)

The first exhibition at the gallery, *Moon Star Love* (14.11.2009–23.01.2010), outlined less of a program than an atmosphere and a way of working together—confronting our subjectivities and harmonizing like two instruments that would now play together. The exhibition “explicit lyrique [explicit lyrical]” marks 15 years of Marcelle Alix by celebrating the inclusion of a third subjectivity: Florence Bonnefous and the program of Air de Paris. Thus, we continue to imagine the gallery as a space for sharing and discussing, and the exhibition as an expression of friendship.

Isabelle Alfonsi: Thanks to you, Florence, I met Dorothy Iannone when she exhibited her work *Story of Bern* at the Centre Culturel Suisse in Paris (3.06–10.07.2016) and I was able to discuss with her the powerful nonconformity of her work, where explicitness radiates as a synonym for equality, where the joy of making art is inseparable from the expression of freedom. When we began exchanging ideas with Cécilia about what this exhibition could be, I wanted to bring Dorothy Iannone closer to Dorothy Allison, tireless advocate for women's emancipation (from their origins, from compulsory heterosexuality) and spokesperson for pro-sex and lesbian feminism. The works of both Dorothys convey a defiant spirit that I hope will shine through in our display. From Sarah Tritz's miniature theatrical sets as mini stagings of body-toys, to the umpteenth remake of *Nights in White Satin* by Romain Grateau's cavernous voice, to Ethan Assouline's dialogue with a Marxist baby, the invited artists love to manipulate references to excess, as winks to their "friends of the past."¹ Pauline Boudry and Renate Lorenz's *Microphone Piece*, which opens the exhibition, draws a queer artistic lineage from John Cage's *Silent Pieces*² to Aérea Negrot, a musician and a performer with whom the artists have collaborated multiple times. The communities we form with the living and the dead, present times touching the history of art and contributing to its writing—all of this makes the spirit of a gallery.

Florence Bonnefous: From the outset, I've believed that this exhibition is about love.

¹ Pauline Boudry / Renate Lorenz, *Salomania*, self-published zine, 2010.

² Art critic Jonathan E. Katz suspects these pieces are a tribute to John Cage's lifelong intimate relationship with Merce Cunningham, at a time in the United States when it was preferable for male couples not to acknowledge their relationships publicly.

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Of course, when we speak of love, we often think of shared happiness and joy. But love also walks alongside terror and pain. Immense pain, so often repeated, that crushes and kills for 2,025 years. We see this pain in Dorothy Iannone's bruised women and in Brice Dellsperger's drowned-suicided-transvestites, embodied by the beautiful Lupe Vélez, Carole Landis and Linda Darnell, revenants of Hollywood-Babylon.

I believe that this exhibition is about lOve. But also about umOr. The seismic, absurd umor of Anne-Lise Coste, who welcomes us with a small *FRANÇAIS FRANÇAISES* with big ears and *LA GIFLE*, the quintessential 70s romance. The love and practical umor displayed by Monica Majoli in two charcoal sketches from 1992 which may evoke early strap-on experiences—not always easy to stabilize, not always fitting, as Dorothy Allison recounts in another story.³

And we come to hands—or rather, gloves. Bruno Pelassy's butcher's glove, with chainmail; Gyan Panchal's farmer's glove, with castration rings. Blood, semen. And animal brain, spread on Pierre Creton's large drawing sheet. The EXPLICIT is sprayed by Coste with an airbrush in one word: SEX.

EXPLICITE LYRIQUE [EXPLICIT LYRICAL] is also a missing work: Maia Izzo-Foulquier's performance video, nonetheless present for me in this exhibition. At the very bottom, blending with the burning passions of Dead Can't Dance's seraphim, I can hear the highway traffic outside Marseilles harbor. No one notices the slender body in a corset and heels, spray-painting the words WHORE AND PAINTER — on a large screen leaned against the wall like a streetwalker.

“What do you want?”

— Love.

That's not a job...”⁴

That's why I need you to listen, whispers Lou Fauroux's exhauSt-pipe-Mask in black.

Thank you for the invitation, to friendship, love, and joy!

Cecilia Becanovic: I already imagine an exhibition with dramaturgy as thrilling as the photomontages of Hannah Höch, who opened her heart to these "wandering and extravagant beauties that obligingly enrich our fantasy"⁵ and channeled all the energy, empathy, and political will necessary to bring her vision to life. This 'photo-matter', stripped of pretense, confesses, as Anne-Lise Coste does, a desire for love and connection so powerful that it is impossible to turn away from it.

We don't talk enough about friendship and love in public, even though, as bell hooks⁶ invites us to, we could collectively ask ourselves what we lack and what might make us feel good. Thank you for the silence, dear Pauline and Renate, and thanks also to those who create with others, sustaining the conversation as they have for years. Discussing, in order to build community. Working toward an emancipation of the heart. Revealing oneself through a reciprocal gift that enhances the other's value. This is what I see in this first collective sculpture by Georges Juliette Ayrault & Louis Chaumier. Love is what is made there; these imaginations and works are placed in the middle, between us, rushing to meet

³ Dorothy Allison, "Theory and Practice of the Strap-On," 1985, in *Skin*.

⁴ Freely adapted from a line by Isabelle Adjani to Lino Ventura in *La Gifle*, 1974, by Claude Pinoteau.

⁵ "Whenever we want to force this 'photo-matter' to yield new forms, we must be prepared for a journey of discovery, we must start without any preconceptions; most of all, we must be open to the beauties of fortuity. Here more than anywhere else, these beauties, wandering and extravagant, obligingly enrich our fantasy." Hannah Höch, "On Today's Photomontage" in *Stredisko* 4, no. 1

⁶ bell hooks, *All About Love*, 1999



our emotional needs. Jean-Charles de Quillacq, through carefully reframing gestures, manages to humanize these women holding up fish in an erotic magazine—a context that is, above all, about power.

In a world where sexist masculinity claims no emotion, the positive self-assertion I also see in Zohreh Zavareh's work—like in Hannah Höch's—operates through a fantastical realism that allows her to connect with her true identity. This exhibition is a way to recharge and feel heartfelt connections at work.

*Come have a drink in the limbo.
Here, the threshold is not between body and soul.
Time and blood drip onto our fingers,
Awaiting the prodigious flower of pleasure.*

Ethan Assouline was born in Paris in 1994. He lives and works in Paris.

Pauline Boudry / Renate Lorenz were respectively born in 1972 in Lausanne, Switzerland and in 1963 in Bonn, Germany. They work together in Berlin.

Georges Juliette Ayrault & Louis Chaumier were born in Colombes, France, in 1997 and Paris, France, in 1995 respectively. George Juliette lives and works in Paris. Louis lives and works between Paris and Genillé.

Anne-Lise Coste was born in 1973 in Marseille, France. She lives and works in Paris.

Pierre Creton was born in 1966. He lives and works in Normandy, in the Pays de Caux region.

Brice Dellsperger was born in 1972 in Cannes, France. He lives and works in Paris.

Lou Fauroux was born in 1998 in Mulhouse, France. She lives in Saint-Ouen and works in Saint Denis.

Romain Grateau was born in 1991 in Ancenis, France. He lives and works in Paris.

Dorothy Iannone was born in Boston in 1933. She died in 2022 in Berlin.

Monica Majoli was born in 1963 in Los Angeles, USA. She lives and works in Los Angeles, USA.

Gyan Panchal was born in 1973 in Paris, France. He lives and works in Faux-la-Montagne, France.

Bruno Pelassy was born in 1966 in Vientiane, Laos. He died in 2002 in Nice, France.

Jean-Charles de Quillacq was born in 1979. He lives and works in Sussac, Limousin, and Zurich, Switzerland.

Sarah Tritz was born in 1980. She lives and works in Paris.

Zohreh Zavareh was born in 1985 in Teheran, Iran. She lives and works between Paris and Teheran.

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