

AMELIA

Beatrice Alici, Lula Broglio, Anaïs Horn, Amalia Vekri

This text is the result of an imagined conversation between Chiara Nuzzi, the artists featured in the exhibition, and the poets Etel Adnan, Patrizia Cavalli, and Audre Lorde.

Amelia scratches at the surface. Amelia transforms silence into language and action. Amelia is continually being born, possessing nothing but her own body.

“Does the discovery of origins remove the dust? The horizon’s shimmering slows down all other perceptions. It reminds me of a childhood of emptiness which seems to have taken me near the beginnings of space and time¹”.

Immersed in a leaden moonlight, Beatrice Alici’s Amelias emerge from an ancient, mystical, and sacred matriarchal past. Introspective and untamed, gathered together or portrayed in serene solitude, these women are free from the dynamics of masculine production and commodification. Their bodies become both the instruments and recipients of a language of union that admits no compromise.

“Flesh in exile, never
where it longs to be. Try explaining that.
For this I must arm myself with thoughts.
And other bodies, distant and haughty kingdoms.²”

At the centre of experience, the female body in Amalia Vekri’s work asserts itself as a political device and a site of conflict. Witches and vampiric figures from a liquid world return us to a time when women were bent, in the name of civilisation, into subjectivities functional to the discipline of capitalist labour through the destruction of an entire universe of communal relations.

“There are places that seem to be where they ought to be, but they are in some parallel world and I reside in one of them.³”

The estranging spaces Anaïs Horn reveals through her images — vintage auction catalogue photographs depicting isolated interior objects and furniture, altered by the artist through experimental material interventions — conceal both her obsession with painting and her need to reclaim a domestic sphere shaped by social conventions. Transformed through gouache and varnish, the images welcome spectral female figures – presences moving through temporal strata saturated with meaning. Horn plays as much with omission as with inclusion; nothing escapes her gaze.

“My thoughts drip, not unlike the faucet. They don’t let me know what they’re about. Other ones follow, strangers equally.⁴”

¹ Etel Adnan, *Shifting the Silence*, New York, Nightboat Books, 202, p. 1

² Patrizia Cavalli, *Datura*, Torino, Giulio Einaudi Editore, 2013, p. 29 (Translation: Giacomo Raffaelli)

³ Etel Adnan, *Shifting the Silence*, New York, Nightboat Books, 202, p. 55

⁴ Etel Adnan, *Shifting the Silence*, New York, Nightboat Books, 2020, p. 5

Lula Broglio's unrestrained painting flows across the canvas like nothing in life but life itself. The faces of her *Musiciste* are caught in expressions charged with tension, reflections of the climax of musical action. Yet the artist preserves a degree of ambiguity within her scenes, haunted by possible moments and expressions of anguish. Small insects inhabit the canvases – talismans and invaders of a restless world – reminding us that nature never loses. Her work deeply engages us, stimulating our senses and emotions, penetrating the mind like the lingering afterimage of the sun behind closed eyelids.

“For there are no new ideas. There are only new ways of making them felt - of examining what those ideas feel like being lived on Sunday morning at 7 A.M., after brunch, during wild love, making war, giving birth, mourning our dead - while we suffer the old longings, battle the old warnings and fears of being silent and impotent and alone, while we taste new possibilities and strengths.”⁵

Chiara Nuzzi

Translated by Giacomo Raffaelli

⁵ Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1984, p. 39