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THE NAKED BODY AS A SYMBOL

Thrust in your inner beast!

Wildness of unapologetic nakedness beyond frames labels moralities...

In 2019, French anthropologist Nastassja Martin published a book with the title *Croire aux fauves (Thrust in the beast)*.¹ In her anthropological studies she wrote about her liminal experience when she was attacked by wild bear in Alaska. And she survived... After he took away part of her jaw and she struck him in the groin with an axe. She was attacked, she was fighting and she survived, but her integrity was corrupted. Physically the woman acquired the psyche of an animal. The anthropological posthumanism of Martin has a symbolic value for us, who are dealing with our inner beasts rebelling against the stereotypes of our daily lives. Martin wrote about the liminal experience thus (quoting freely from her words):

When two beasts met, their territory collapses. Their fight is similar to lovemaking, their bodies are melting together... they are dreaming similar dreams.

Why are we returning to the animism at the edge of the Anthropocene?

Because we would love to accept our wild part, psychologically called Daimon. In the process of transformation of society we have to face our wilderness and gently transform our deep hurting emotions into a wisdom. We will not change the system by the same tools that it itself uses. This is well expressed by the classic words of Audre Lorde: „The master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.”² Our system has not counted with our emotions and dreams, because most of our power is sub-conscious... But the inner beasts speaks... And she holds the tools which we need in her claws.

Anima as an archetype. Dark naked woman. Half human half animal is surviving in contemporary society stereotypes as the opposite of good girl. The good girl should be perfect and it is not easy to survive the requirements of the perfection and at the same time stay authentic. We should make ourselves kin with the Anima, our inner wild beast. We should enter the door of unconscious and embrace the liminal space inside. Nudity in performance is the way how to express the inner beast. Because we need her! Sure, she is wild, but under the level of our fears, she is wise. Treasures are hidden deep in the mud. The dreams which we have are ours and hers at the same time. The naked body in performance is a form of display of all those dreams. Nudity in performance is a transformative technique as well as being an emancipatory practice.

The feminist artist Barbara Kruger asserts: „My body is a battleground!“ It is the battleground of society and its stereotypes with hidden power games and inequalities.

The naked body in performance is always political.

It is impossible to be impersonal with nudity.

The naked body in the performance is always telling some story.

I am sharing my stories through my art in shared presence, in liminal time, in timelessness which generates the performance situation.³

Now I will take you to the tour around my personal tales.

Aramaic prayer is the original prayer of Christ in its original non-binary form, when translated directly from the Aramaic. I needed to understand this prayer deeper than my brain can do so I asked my close friends to cover my body with this prayer in original Aramaic form as well as in English, Czech and Ukrainian translation. They were using feathers dipped in red ink. It was embodiment of prayers going through my skin. When the work was completed, I was dancing naked covered just in prayers and with a Non-binary Madonna Flag.

The Non-Binary Madonna came to me in a vision and told me: I am relationship. I am a symbol of rediscovered relationships between people, nature and culture! We restore to Madonna her wild animistic potential. The Mother of Mercy does not hold a machine gun or a victory flag but the seed of wild herbs, her body is woven from Amazonian lianas. She is not trying to protect the old structures of power but life itself.

The Madonna is not only a feminist goddess, but above all a relational one. Today, the Mother of Mercy is rebuilding relationships between people and communities and helping to create a society that is not based on abusive power structures.

The Mother of Mercy will never cease to protect every child on Earth!

Nudity as a form of emancipation is shown in the project *Desire is all that exists!* This sentence I heard from the sea in Venice, when was visiting the Biennale in 2019. That time I just realized that *Desire* is over-personal, it is the power of lust flowing

everywhere spreading energy, the driving force of life. And I just express how to break out of the normative demands which contemporary society puts on woman goodgirlness, goodmotherness, goodwifeness. Those demands are unrealistic, and often contradictory. And what stays after all the layers are gone, was my pure naked body swinging on a swing, laughing wildly like a goddess or child.

My version of the sculpture of *Penseur* by Rodin is showing that we should unlearn, unschool, all the frames of rationality to explore what presence means. My performative remake is called *Depense*. I was sitting on a family car in the position of the *Penseur* and was covered by black mud.

We all should dream because, especially in performance art, our fantasy is a regular tool more realistic than the consensual „rational“ reality that we are trying to transform.

We all desire of society its transformation, but we need to reach our inner power, which is not counted in our daily carousel of civilization. We should become kin with our dirty wild anima made from mud, because as I wrote before, she owns the wisdom.

We all have to stare into a Medusas face.

Because She is fucking beautiful! She is showing us the mirror and she is laughing! Her libido will produce far more political and social change than many others like to think.⁴

Performances have transformative power, which can materialize dreams and they come true. You never know what will happen in the next moment.

Performance as poetry speaks the same language of the unknown. It speaks directly from, and to, the unshaped aspects of our soul, which are reflecting the collective shared trauma from the history of society.

In togetherness, as a living web of care we can heal together our collective human and nonhuman hurt body. Through togetherness we can visit inner lands and be consciously part of the process of transformation. The whole process is silent and slow. We are all one body.

The cell of the heart loves the cell of the lungs.



Death as a friend (in collaboration with Jane Scalabroni, Maria Schormová, photos by Karolína Raimund). FNAF 8, Prague, 2022



Hot wives go to heaven! (in collaboration with Petr Váně, photos by Jolana Havelková). FNAF 8, Prague, 2021



Aramaic Prayer (in collaboration with David Josef Merta, Matěj Pšenička, Polina Revunenکو, Sonya The Moon, Daria Kolodina, photos by Jevhenij Lar, Karolina Raimund). FNAF 6, Prague, 2020



Desire is what exist! (photos by Robert Carrithers). FNAF 5, Prague, 2019



Soil Woman (in collaboration with Tereza Trnková, video Demian Kovalov aka Xerox), 2020



Depense, (in collaboration with Lukáš Mejzr, photos by István Kovacs). FNAF 3, Prague, 2017



Vision Babalon, FNAF 1, Prague, 2015



Fairytale, 2012. Photo by Tereza Z Davle



Multihanded woman, 2009. Photo by Václav Beitler



Piel (in collaboration with Petr Skala, photo by Martin Kámen), 2005

Notes

¹ Nastassja Martin, *Věřit v šelmy*, translated by Jana Bednářová (Prague: Neklid, 2022).

² Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: eseje a projevy*, translated by Markéta Musilová (Prague: Tranzit.cz, 2021).

³ Darina Alster, *Kolektivní tělo* (Brno: Vysoké učení technické v Brně, Fakulta výtvarných umění, 2021).

⁴ Helene Cixous, The Laugh of the Medusa, " *Signs* 1.4 (Summer, 1976): 875-893. Translated by Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen. University of Chicago Press.

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Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider: eseje a projevy*. Translated by Markéta Musilová. Prague: Tranzit.cz, 2021.

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