

HOŠEK CONTEMPORARY

— EST. 2016 —

ÖYKÜ ÖZGENCIL - IN HER SHOES

Opening reception: 14th April 2023, 7 - 10 pm

Exhibition period: 14th - 22nd April 2023

In her exhibition titled *In Her Shoes*, Öykü examines the meaning of healing, conserving and destructing through different female-dominant art practices, including handicrafts, performance art, and feminine writing (*écriture féminine*). The exhibition can be experienced as a single atmosphere, as a never ending construction of a self dwelling space, as a safe boat on turbulent waters. The first part is a video installation that reflects seven healing and protection symbols in the form of knitting patterns from different eastern civilisations. The video is accompanied by a record of knitting sound enacted by the artist's mother. These patterns are knitted by six female craftspeople into wool booties as well as being interpreted by seven female dancers via a performance within their domestic spaces, recorded through their perspectives. By concealing the performance visuals within the symbols' outlines, a distinct semiotic language is created. The non-narrative film sequences focus on infinite encounters between individual expression and collective memory, and are organised in the form of archetypal shapes with fractal motion within - all serving to imply the unchanging patterns within a world of flux.

The second part is a video and text(ile) installation that uses an artist-crafted spoken poem as a sonic backdrop, while embroidering it on a projected canvas in asemic writing form. The invisible writing is a reflection of sexual expression, opening a free play of meanings and interpretations, while centring around the theme of the Home. It is a way of freezing the possible poems and stream of consciousness. The knots betray their function, they clasp nothing but themselves. Just like the dancer, the weaver and the poet.

Specifically, the poem explores the search for a safe dwelling place - including different species, mythological figures and non-living beings. In listening to the words, the audience witnesses the construction and deconstruction of this dwelling place. Within the narrative arc, motions through darkness, encircled by a sense of discomfort, are eventually shifted towards acceptance and transformation. The ambivalent spatial composition of the installation, with bespoke sound design and a veil that blurs the interior and the exterior, reinforces an enveloping emotional landscape that is also feminine in nature.

Altogether, this multi-layered work critiques the hierarchies across four different axes: between art disciplines, languages, senses, and different types of intelligence. Ultimately, the core argument remains that healing can only be experienced by reflecting on the manifold interplays of identity construction, gender, and colonial politics through a needle, a pen, and the body itself.

About the artist

In her works Öykü Özgencil creates a meeting space for both one's own self and for another. Within this journey, she charts new maps that contain private and public dreams, or mythologies, accompanied by the therapeutic effects of collective rituals. Öykü explores the intersection of oral literature, textile, and performance art using socially-engaged practices. Her research alludes to the circular, non-binary, and permeable aspects inherent in the fields, as well as the historically repressed perspectives that they embody. Through this play, she dissolves established forms, molds, entities, narratives and states, the status quo, into the same water and re-enchant their existence as precious particles of a deep well of emotions, memories, instincts, and vibrations. Her works can take forms of text, textile, performance and installation as well as different ancestral and speculative experiments on the exploration of 'otherness'.

Artist: Öykü Özgencil

Video: Ebru Gümrükçüoğlu

Sound: Aytaç Aybak

Performers: Dila Yumurtacı, Melek Nur Dudu, Merve Uzunosman (Dadans), Merve Atılğan, Merve Pudre, Pınar Akyüz, Ülkü Çağlayan

Craftspeople of Booties: Ayfer Demir, Aynur Yazıcı, Emine Kara, Hatice Ferahlı, Havva Türkel, Nevruz Çiftçi

Poem: Öykü Özgencil

Embroidery: Öykü Özgencil, Güldane Özgencil

Vocal: Öykü Özgencil

Exhibition Design: Selin Erdemirci

Graphic Design: Aleyna Tezer, Selin Erdemirci

Hošek Contemporary

Established by Petr Hošek in 2016, Hošek Contemporary is a gallery and art residency located on a historical cargo ship next to Fischerinsel in Mitte, Berlin. The gallery focuses primarily on site-specific pieces, performing arts and experimental sound works. During the spring and summer months, the gallery is hosting weekly improvised and experimental music installations, with local and international musicians.

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