

HOŠEK CONTEMPORARY

— EST. 2016 —

LÉONORE CAMUS-GOVOROFF - IN THIS ROOM, I FEEL HOME

Opening reception: 18th August 2022, 7 - 10 pm

Exhibition period: 19th - 26th August 2022

Curated by Sandra Barré

In the multi-sensory installation flooded with lavender *In this room, I feel home*, calm seems to reign. A room. A mattress, a comforter, two pillows. All four are filled with the mauve grains that repel moths and that Provence, in south of France, is used to enclose in small embroidered bags. A carpet delimits the intimate space where each person can enter barefoot to experience rest. On the bed lies the manifesto *The Woman-Identified Woman*, written by the Radicalesbians. Founding text of the history of feminism, it targets the fracture gangrenant the second wave of feminism in America. In the 1960s, while demands for fairer equity between men and women were being formulated, some feminists reproduced the dominant pattern and excluded from their ranks the rights of those they considered secondary: non-whites and lesbians. Betty Friedman, president of NOW and author of *The Mystified Woman*, fearful of being lumped in with the image of a hateful, man-hating feminine, refers to the lesbian group wanting to assert their rights as "Lavender Menace." As often when it is a question of disdainful designation, the appellation is claimed. On May 1, 1970, the Radicalesbians distributed their manifesto wearing purple T-shirts that proudly read "Lavender Menace".

This lavender threat, the French artist Léonore Camus-Govoroff, materialises it by the smell. The safe place they create is full of it. The grains interfere in everything, they are the constituent of it.

Mistake made by Betty Friedmann, the lavender has nothing of a threat. On the contrary. It is used in aromatherapy to relieve tension, ease pain, treat insomnia, calm nervous breakdowns and relieve symptoms of depression. It would seem that this is exactly the same treatment that those who are breaking out of the one-sided confines of patriarchy are applying. Leaving an oppressive system and opening it to other possibilities has healing and soothing properties.

The sweet smell of mauve spreads here as ideas propagate, as the written and read words of *The Woman- Identified Woman* manifesto are read. "Lesbian is a label invented by the Man to throw at any woman who dares to be his equal, who dares to challenge his prerogatives (including that of all women as part of the exchange medium among men), who dares to assert the primacy of her own needs. To have the label applied to people active in women's liberation is just the most recent instance of a long history; older women will recall that not so long ago, any woman who was successful, independent, not orienting her whole life

about a man, would hear this word. For in this sexist society, for a woman to be independent means she can't be a woman - she must be a dyke. [...] That in itself should tell us where women are at. It says as clearly as can be said: women and person are contradictory terms. For a lesbian is not considered a "real woman. " And yet, in popular thinking, there is really only one essential difference between a lesbian and other women: that of sexual orientation - which is to say, when you strip off all the packaging, you must finally realise that the essence of being a "woman" is to get fucked by men."

Here, the room-lavender (of One's Own) serves other purposes and the identity, essence that the artist transposes in minty, sparkling and dry notes, draws in the intimate all its political force.

Text © Sandra Barré

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.

MS Heimatland

Built in 1910 in Fürstenberg an der Oder, MS Heimatland was initially operating under the name Ida and used for transporting coal to Charlottenburg. After the Second World War, the 58-meter long cargo ship was renamed Heimatland, meaning "homeland". Until the 90s, the ship was sailing on Elbe and Havel, moving other boats, sand and chippings. It served for artistic and cultural purposes for the first time in 2002, when German sculptor Christiane Möbus chose it for her Nackte Tatsache Tatsache project. Finally, in March 2018, Heimatland became the main exhibition space and artist residency of Hošek Contemporary. The boat is permanently anchored in the historic port of Berlin.

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