

HOŠEK CONTEMPORARY

— EST. 2016 —

IMOGEN-BLUE HINOJOSA - I AM NOT FOR LOVING ANYMORE

Opening reception: 16th September 2022, 7 - 10 pm

Exhibition period: 17th - 28th September 2022

Curated by Petr Hošek

'I dead the heart, I am not for loving anymore.'

(Eimear McBride: *A girl is a half formed thing*, 2013)

I am not for loving anymore, the first solo show of Imogen-Blue Hinojosa in Berlin, is a physical and performative reply to ongoing violence toward trans women and sex workers globally. The date of the opening marks one year since the death of Ella Nik Bayan, a transgender woman who publicly self immolated at Alexanderplatz. *'I think many trans women of colour in the community can relate to Ella's story, we suffer constant harassment and violent attacks'* says Hinojosa about her relation to Ella. This tragedy resonated profoundly in Berlin's trans and queer community due to its obvious political meaning. Public officials have largely denied this, however, continuing historical patterns of trans exclusion from public life.

This new series of works was created particularly for Hošek Contemporary after Hinojosa was awarded the *Hošek Contemporary Prize 2022*. The work focuses on a long history of connections between cloth makers and sex work. Hinojosa's creative process uncovers historical cloth making techniques that imbued mainstream public life with the lives of marginalised women and sex workers who suffered to produce it. Hinojosa weaves together this historical erasure of women and what it meant to be a textile craftsperson with the current erasure of trans narratives, recovering and celebrating both the history of these forgotten women, and the experiences of trans sex workers.

The installation consists of three physical artworks - *The Severity of Affection*, *Cocoon I*, and *Cocoon II*, featuring custom handmade leatherwork, handwoven textiles by the artist on her loom, and recycled cloth pieces from trans sex workers in London, Ireland and Berlin. On the night of the opening reception, the artist will perform a self composed text written over the last two years, related to the topics of the exhibition.

When visitors approach *The Severity of Affection*, their first impression might be of a common fetish object that could be found in any Berlin darkroom. But this custom, five-point suspended, black leather sex swing hides something else underneath: a quilted collage made out of real clients' socks and underwear. These tokens from men include brands which could be potentially sexualised, such as Lonsdale, Hugo Boss, Fila, CK or Everlast. One could think of a human body which is here cleverly represented by those once worn items, yet the body is absent. This fully functional swing is installed safely so the visitors are welcome to use it.

Cocoon I & II are inspired by the image of a mortuary bag. This object with its own weight creates a tangible feeling of heaviness in the observer. One side of the works are made out of silk cloth that was handwoven by the artist, calling to mind both the time, care, and skill taken to create such a textile. The other side is in a way analogical to the *The Severity of Affection*; though instead of tokens, Hinojosa creates a collage out of slightly different garments: *'The clothing is gathered from my own collection as well as other trans sex workers, all of which were used during sex work, including both high quality items from designer labels, and cheap slutty attire. I like the juxtaposition of these materials, because for me at least, it plays with the idea of realness (a term here meaning to portray archetypes usually associated with straight cis culture) and classism. I can embody both my experience and the fantasy that my clients wish for me to portray,'* adds Hinojosa. The allusion to the mortuary bag is placed here as a reminder that trans women, especially those involved in sex work, are being murdered at an alarming rate globally. With *Cocoon I & II*, Hinojosa is protesting against the frequent reduction of her community to image and fetishism. The collage could also be understood as an archive of trauma and joy at the same time.

I am not for loving anymore is a protest and a love letter. It is a statement and a question at the same time. Inspired from a line in *'A girl is a half-formed thing'* by Irish novelist Eimear McBride, who recounts the life of the unnamed narrator and her struggles with psychological, physical, and sexual abuse. Hinojosa sees the title as a positioning of resilience. In her own text she writes *'Sometimes being offered tenderness feels like the very proof you've been used. What if? What if this body at its best is only the longing someone else has for it?'*

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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