

HINTERLAND a solo show by Violaine Lochu

October 06th - November 17th 2018

Performance by Violaine Lochu, *Magnetic Song*, with Chloé Breillot, October 06th, 2018 at 7 PM

Performance by Violaine Lochu, *Fabula*, with Joëlle Lèandre, November 09th 2018, 2018 at 7 PM

The title of the exhibition, *Hinterland*, refers to the inland, a territory sheltered from wind and sea. A place where it is possible to take your time and reconstruct yourself. From a metaphorical point of view, *Hinterland* sends us back to what is not immediately visible. Behind the landscape, backstage, inside the body, its foundations, organs and memory. Because this art work is all about the body. The artist has made the body her instrument: captor, receptor and transmitter of intuitive languages inherited from anterior lives and/or ancestral traditions. **Violaine Lochu** listens to her body, her experience, her languages and her writings. Her works give a physical and sensorial access to this listening.

There is a movement from alienation towards self-determination. "The intruder exposes me excessively. It extrudes me, it exports me, and it expropriates me."¹ Her body is subjected to plural forms of violence: chemistry, the medical profession, the expectations and injunctions of a society that often shows little consideration for women. An experience that **Violaine Lochu** has chosen to put on stage with sound and image. In this manner, the actual space of the gallery is envisaged as a sensitive body: a powerful body entering a phase of reconstruction. Working to re-appropriate the body starts by a refusal, the refusal of being considered as a patient, a passive entity waiting for information, results and precisions. Struggling against dispossession and objectivism, **Violaine Lochu** reveals, with a wry sense of humour, her body's subjective imagination. In this state of a waking dream, she decides to visualize the totality of her organs and attribute a specific song to each one of them. Her body is transformed into a polyphonic orchestra sending us back to an active inner life, a singular symphony through which care and recapture are thought out in song.

Because she is unable to recognize herself in the medical images of an objective body, **Violaine Lochu** generates an intimate, subjective representation. Little by little, she stocks up her body while filming herself with a GoPro camera. Like an archaeologist scanning a statuette about which nothing is known, the artist works towards a form of recognition, reconstruction and self-recovery. Hannah Wilke writes: "To disseminate prejudice about the self, women must take control, be proud of the sensuality of their own bodies and create the signification of sensuality in their own terms, without referring to concepts degenerated by culture."² The video triptych is part of an affirmation, a new mastery over her body and the image of her body. Self-filming is inherent to her artistic practice. Ever since she was 16, **Violaine Lochu** has been filming fragments of her everyday life. 15 seconds here and 15 seconds there... Once edited, the seconds come together to create a film (*Hinterland* – 2018), which brings twelve years of life together, a visual, sensorial, sound diary. A non-chronological narrative, "layers of life" coexist. The question of time is central in her practice. The artist values the visible just as much as the invisible. She explores different temporalities combining past, present and future to shift the passive representations of the feminine body.

"I am concerned by the creation of a formal image that is specifically feminine, a new language that fuses the spirit and body in erotic objects that are both sufficiently abstract and nameable. Its content has always been linked to my body and my feelings, reflecting pleasure as much as pain, the ambiguity and the complexity of emotions. Human gestures, metaphysical symbols made of superimposed accounts translated in an art close to laughter, making love and vibrant hands."³

Violaine Lochu is observant of the conscious and unconscious signs that disrupt an enlarged memory, composed of several lives brought together in a single body. The body's memory constitutes an *inland* that is impossible to map, where the imprints, sensations, reminiscences and clues must be carefully deciphered. In a practice governed by intuition and analogy, the artist proposes gestures, images, scripts, elements of writing and language. This way of listening and extracting memory from the body has become a motor of empathy, resistance and *empowerment* opposite a patriarchal, medical system based on authority and violence. A critical motor that commits the artist to movement, disobedience, shouting and resilience.

Julie Crenn, Valognes, 4th August 2018

1. NANCY, Jean-Luc. *L'Intrus*. Paris : Galilée, 2010, p.42.

2. *Hannah Wilke: A Retrospective*, University of Missouri Press, 1989.

3. Ibid

Translated from the French by Emmelene Landon