ALMINE RECH

Claire Tabouret 'I am spacious, singing flesh' Collateral Event of the 59th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

Apr 23 — Nov 27, 2022 | Venice

‘Claire Tabouret: I am spacious, singing flesh’ presents a new critical reading of key dimensions of the Los Angeles-based French artist’s work in a remarkable survey exhibition curated by Kathryn Weir that explores multiple transformations: of self, other, collective identities, struggle, release, refuge. A powerful and unexpected dialogue is created with a number of vernacular devotional objects drawn from archaeological and liturgical collections in Italy, invoking an ambivalent threshold in Tabouret’s practice, a portal into multiple temporalities and subjectivities through which to consider alternative relationships amongst human beings, and between human beings and their environment, in the face of ecological and social crises and in communication with the supernatural.

Across 25 works by Tabouret - the earliest from 2008 but drawn mostly from the last decade of the artist’s multifaceted practice - the exhibition articulates various structures and fluidities existing within subjectivity and constructed identities through paintings, sculpture, video and works on paper. Errant subjectivities and magical materialism constitute thematic axes of the exhibition. Gradually, a suspended potential and metaphysical friction inscribed in the works comes to the fore through associations interior and exterior, material and spiritual, visible and invisible.

An enigmatic language of ritual and repetition in Tabouret's amniotic worlds unfolds mysterious states of consciousness and entangles individual identity in broader forces. In the exhibition, a doubled and multiple condition of the self is explored also in relation to fertility and motherhood, notably through the inclusion of two Madri of Capua, celebrated ex voto sculptures carved in volcanic tuff during the period from 500 - 200 BC, a magical presence that introduces a renewed material connection to the earth. Processes of incarnation and transfiguration, monstrous and inexplicable creatures, all are linked in a miraculous possibility of transformation. As Hélène Cixous wrote in The laugh of the Medusa (1975), ‘I am spacious singing Flesh: onto which is grafted no one knows which I – which masculine or feminine, more or less human, but above all living, because changing, I.’

This exhibition is presented by FABA (Fundación Almine y Bernard Ruiz-Picasso para el Arte) in collaboration with Almine Rech.

— Kathryn Weir, Curator