ALMINE RECH

Inès Longevial
Les Silences du Désir

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In some corner of this world, where the boundaries between the real and the absurd merge, a giant woman stood alone, in her garden of contradictions. Like a goddess lost among humans, she clasped flowers like so many sacred relics, the petals caressing her immense skin with their fragile softness. The flowers, mute accomplices of her voluntary exile, were for her much more than simple decorations. They became shields, fragile ramparts against the ceaseless din of the world. She picked these flowers with infinite tenderness, preserving them intact like watching over a secret. Then, with a delicate gesture, she arranged them in her ears, a border between external chaos and her internal disorder. This ritual was a hymn, a subtle fusion of woman and nature, of order and disorder. Some might consider her crazy, lost in the twists and turns of her own illusions. But, for her, this was a fleeting embrace of the ephemeral beauty of the world. Stopping her ears with flowers was her way of transcending the banality of the everyday, of defying the established order. Thus, in a world where reason seems to have smothered any trace of magic, this giant woman continued to stick flowers in her ears. And maybe, just maybe, her strange ritual would inspire other souls searching for meaning. A tribute to crazy gestures and calm movements that don't exist in this world, a world that we try by any way possible to make livable. An imagined story.

— Inès Longevial

This is not a story that is already over, faded as soon as it has been told, but one of those that infuse the world by being tirelessly replayed.

Inès Longevial gives life to a giant, a brute yet fragile force, evoking a repressed desire that is expressed through every stroke of paint. The lines of Cécile Coulon's poem "My Strength"1 echo here: "My strength smothers / Those who prevent it / From moving forward," depicting an internal struggle that is felt in the palpable vigor and energy of the painter's work. Faced with absurdity, she confronts herself: "My force has no meaning / it has never stopped struggling," but discovers in her introspection a growing confidence that is in harmony with the world around her: "My strength is having understood the beauty of the mountains."

In the privacy of her studio, this female excess emerges from her brush expressing its own rules and desires. Her eyes marked with melancholy in the first painting, *Tulipe noire*, gradually look up at others, unrestrainedly revealing a violence, her desire, her sexuality, like a constant transformation, thus embodying the complexity of human passions and unveiling the unsuspected depths of the artistic soul. This is especially evident in her blue painting *Le cri*, where a naked giantess with the painter's features shouts not from fear, but from liberation, like a conquering roar. She is faced with witnesses: other facets of humanity caught like a frieze of existence scattered with flowers.

In this painter's enchanting universe, the search for meaning is revealed as a guiding theme that runs through every painting in the exhibition. The solitary giantess "clasping flowers like sacred relics" embodies this aspiration to find a deeper meaning in a world without magic. Her unusual ritual of plugging her ears with flower stems becomes a way of "defying the established order and transcending the banality of the everyday."

Les Silences du Désir also highlights a series of small exquisite corpses drawn during the artist's time in Spain. These patchworks show the influence of surrealist practices in Longevial's work. Each drawing is an open window onto the artist's unconscious, a journey into the twists and turns of the imaginary, somewhere between the real and the fantastic. Contemplating them, the viewer is invited to get lost in a maze of symbols and hidden meanings.

— Elise Roche

1. Coulon, Cécile, *Les Ronces*, Le Castor Astral, 2018