

Anat Propper Goldenberg | Copper Moons, Installation And Performance
Snehta Gallery, Athens, October-November 2018

A Wounded Piece of Copper

Text by the curator: Ioanna Gerakidi

*The wind is passing onwards, again
Message to the sea
A moment she's passing
A moment she's closing
Between the harbor gates*

Song of the sailor's beloved,
Yair Lapid.

The song continues, when its lyrics are absent. The words are missing. The only thing I can hear of is a mixed sound of metal and Israeli sand, your bare feet walking on concrete, gestures choreographing the circle. Your steps, heard through a practice of auscultation. A close listening of your body. Listening is an action, not a passivity.

Then the audience, you and the stage as one, almost missing the beginning, almost forgetting about the end. Brandon LaBelle thinks of the step as a space for new imaginaries, for new meetings. While performing your waiting, your steps were becoming this space. The voice of your circular movement generated an idiolect. "An idiolect is always found, never invented", I once wrote somewhere. You found yours, you generously gifted it after.

Using a linear syntax for Anat's performance TEMPERED BREATH feels erroneous, as the work is tracing the desire to reach the impossible when processes of waiting enact the eternal. Waiting never felt coherent. Its time breaks, and breaks again. Its temporality is torn into myriads of pieces. Anat performed the temperatures of love theses. Her gestures were accompanied by an act of stitching the metal to create an apron. Through her craftsmanship she found a language, speaking about the unwaged labour of being a mother, a partner, an artist. The apron became her shield to face the world when performing her song, when being in and with all of her roles, when becoming through them, when espousing transmutation. Her breath operated as chasm. The greek contemporary artist Jannis Kounellis, has once said that "a space is its chasms; you can only read it through them, otherwise you only see rooms". TEMPERED BREATH moved along with the qualities of this hiatus. It justified its existence in time and space. Anat's steps turned into a fluctuation; they re-arranged schemas of life, they turned into an act arising from the Other, concluding in the I. The ambience of anticipation was present, prominent, consistent.

The object-based works accompanying the performance in the gallery space of Snehta Residency, were there to hold Anat's facial expressions and bodily amplifications. A series of light plates looking heavy, an array of full moons and halves of them itched in diverse textures and various sizes signifying the differentiated phases of the lunar cycle, were exposed on top of each other. Whilst displayed on two found fragments of glass, the copper surfaces were transcribing the rhythms of waiting; they were used as a metaphor, while embedding the oscillations of the menstrual circle. The moons as breaths, unspoken vowels and consonants exposed in transparency, standing on found rocks and fractured marbles was the work's organic

evolution. Pieces of metal, newly born, looking archaic, were morphing along with what requires close reading. Mnemonic representations of wounds were carefully exhibited, almost cynically commenting on what and how art works are being chosen and valued when exhibited within the institutional context. The group show *can you hear the sirens moan* was exploring the aforementioned elements of an art work, when this remains un-fixated, unfinished, a-syntactic; when unfoldings, remnants and ruins of love willfully demand an equal attention with the finalised, linear story.

Non of the works exhibited in the show had a title. A compositional narrative has replaced the individualized structure instead, aiming on speaking about collectivity, respecting yet rethinking of positionalities and subjectivities. Anat's work has generously accepted the interventions of fragments of works of the other artists participating in the show. She genuinely gifted a verbal interaction with their works too. Emily Roysdon reframes theoretical concepts of intersectionality when talking about Ecstatic Resistance. She writes that: "Ecstatic resistance develops a positionality of the impossible as a viable and creative subjectivity that inverts the vernacular of power". The show was drawing on this attitude of resistance, on what it takes to change the oppressive systems from within. It was using it as its architectural and conceptual axis. It was striving for re-arranging the semantics of the tongues of power. Anat's work, a trace among other traces, a remnant of her willful practice was hosting inconsistencies; it was politicising their necessity.

Built on intercession as a mode of belonging the exhibition's curatorial approach was dynamic. It was affecting and was being affected by the works in progress. It was engaging with and evolving through a multiple participation; it was staying with togetherness. Starting with Anat's drawing on the wall, a ship heading outwards, the show was devoted the unintelligible high-pitched utterances of the sirens, to their moaning, sorrow and active resistance. Figures of birds, were accompanying the drawing, statically flying towards the boat's direction. The viewer could almost listen to their songs. The birds as parables of the sirens' presence were hosting the current narrative, were becoming a *holding environment* through which the viewer would navigate themselves in the gallery's time and space.

Donald Winnicott speaks about the *holding environment* generated when a mother breastfeeds her infant. He says that within this tender and loving structure, there is always the possibility of hurting and being hurt. Anat's drawing embodied and activated these characteristics. The potentiality of the sorrow in waiting's anticipation did not escape non of the metaphorical lovers; the mother and the child, *her* and the sailor. It turned into a *Message to the sea*. In and across its entirety, Anat's work embodied the practice and semantics of waiting in every possible way. Her waiting became her shield to face the world, to speak about what it takes to be a woman, to keep your voice loud, your laugh vivid, your cry clear.

TEMPERED BREATH, performance by Anat Propper Goldenberg, Athens, 2018

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