

Why don't
you
believe in
my lies?



Ivana Kalina Mitrović

Nemogućnost ženskog autoportreta

Transformacije subjekta
u radovima
Ivane Kaline Mitrović

Žene moraju da pišu kroz svoja tela, moraju da izmisle neosvojivi jezik koji će uništiti podele, klase i retoriku, propise i kodekse, moraju potopiti, preseći, izaci izvan krajnjeg obrnutog diskursa, uključujući i onaj koji se smeje samoj ideji izgovaranja reči 'tišina', one koja, ustremlivši se na nemoguće, zastaje malo ispred reči 'nemoguće' i zapisuje je kao 'kraj'.

Helene Cixous (*Smeh Meduze*, 1971)



Ivanin novi ciklus radova „Zašto ne veruješ mojim lažima“ nastavlja, proširuje i nadograđuje specifične registre značenja zacrtane u njenom dosadašnjem opusu. Umetnicu zanimaju granice predstavljачkog figurativnog izraza: koliko se može subjekt nazreti kroz ovakav crtež? Čini se da je ženska figura, prisutna na ovim kompozicijama, prikazana iz specifičnih uglova, ili fragmentovana, mistično osvetljena imaginarnim svetlom, obezličena i ogoljena. Ovako vizuelizovana protagonistkinja ukazuje na nad - biografsko, postepeno građenje snolikih narativa. Kompozicije koje su pred posmatračima oslikavaju liminalni prostor sveta koji ima privid realnosti, ali i njene razgradnje - polja nadrealnog postojanja.

Slika i tekst

Predstava Ivanine heroine i tekst koji prati sliku ukazuju na njenu ambivalenciju koja se prepoznae upravo u frikciji izmedju snage i ranjivosti. "Choose your fighter" je diktat koji evocira avatara koga biraju učesnici videoigre, ali i podseća na dvojaku ulogu ženskog subjekta. Ubedljiva linearnost figurativnog crteža odaje samopouzdanje ne samo umetnice, već i njene heroine. Ali, da li ovako ubedljiv tretman figure i prisustvo jasnih simbola govore i još o nečemu drugom? Sve kompozicije, kao i diktati naslova, insinuiraju otuđenost i aludiraju na raznorodne nemogućnosti komunikacije. Istovremeno, prisustvo prirodnih, ne - ljudskih elemenata, kao što su drvo ili dobermani, kao i kruna od rogova koju ženska figura nosi, ukazuju na njen dosluh i intimnost sa prirodom. Dobermani koje Ivana crta su uvek „dobronameri“, njena identifikacija sa životnjama proizlazi iz želje da se vrati jedinstvo koje smo nekada imali sa prirodom, ali i taj subjektivni osećaj ljudskih bića da kroz animizam i vezu sa životnjama ostvaruju svoj

autentični osećaj pripadanja univerzumu. Ovi impulsi predstavljeni u radu nagoveštavaju vraćanja nade u mogućnost uspostavljanja balansa u narušenoj ravnoteži moderne jedinke.

Globalna transformacija

Jungovski psiholog Murray Stein, u svojoj studiji *"Transformacije: Pomalanje subjekta"* podseća da je proces globalne transformacije velika tema i moderne i savremene umetnosti. Liminalnost je stalna tema našeg vremena.

Ništa nije stabilno i sigurno, a planetarna istorijska transformacija koja utiče na pojedince i na sve grupacije ljudi nastavlja da se produblije i širi u svaku dimenziju ljudskog života i poduhvata, a samim tim i da se problematizuje u umetnosti.

U ovoj, trećoj dekadi novog, nesređenog 21. veka, čini se da zamah promena raste, i čini se da se istorija i mit spajaju, a strahovi i očekivanja dostižu vrhunac.

Ovo je kulturna pozadina našeg delovanja u sve više digitalizovanom okruženju u kome mi se čini da umetnica tematizuje proces transformacije upravo kroz prikaz specifičnog,

ženskog subjekta. Ivanine kompozicije se fokusiraju na individualnu osobu i na to kako transformativni procesi utiču na pojedinca u putu ka cilju samostvarenja. Da li su ove predstave samo fragmenti i minijaturna otelotvorena kolektivne psihičke strukture podsvesnog i svesnog, ili beleže upravo nemogućnost ovog predstavljanja? U svakom slučaju, Ivanini radovi su uzbudljivi za posmatrače kao tragovi izvođenja i traženja identifikacije ostvarenja ženskog subjekta. Njihov stil nosi u sebi odjeke nadrealne i pop umetnosti koji su vezani sa snolike predstave, kao što umetnica objašnjava: "Snovi su deo svakog pojedinca, kada ih osvestimo postavlja se pitanje šta dalje sa njima. Snovi su za mene na neki način putokazi, nesto na šta treba da obratim pažnju. Mistični doživljaj i svakodnevica se prepliću, kako bi se našao balans, ravnoteža, jedinstvo."

Nad-biografska naracija

U teorijskom kontekstu, ove predstave nameću se kao figurativne nad-biografske naracije subjekta, koje dinamički povezuju

status samoreprezentacije, sopstvo i subjektivnost i kritičke osvrte na pitanje simbola moderne ženske lepote.

Konkretna analiza Ivaninih slikovnih predstava ovde je inspirisana teorijom performativnosti, feminističkom estetskom teorijom. Moj pristup fokusiran je na dve tradicionalne umetničko-istorijske kategorije: žanr autoportreta i estetski koncept lepote. Prema tradicionalnoj reprezentacionoj shemi, poznavanje nečijeg identiteta (ja kao subjekt) trebalo bi da bude zagarantovano vernim izgledom te osobe (ja kao objekat). Autoportreti koje su stvarale umetnice od 1970. često osporavaju ovu ideju „sličnosti“. Dominantni jezik tradicije koji tvrdi „objektivnu“ sopstvenost proizvedenu kroz mimetičku istinu ogledala, subvertira se u njihovim delima. Autoportret je način ulaska u reprezentaciju za žene, u kojem je umetnica i subjekt i objekat, i zamišlja kako izgleda u smislu kako vidi, a ne kako se pojavljuje. Otuda, Ivanna protagonistkinja ne spada u ovaj žanr, ali zadire u polje „auto - predstave“. Umetnica objašnjava status ovog lika kroz njen mitski status, bez definisanja crta lica: "Moja "mitska zena", spremna je za borbu,

naoružana i maskirana rogovima i crvenim cipelama u kojima, moram da priznam, ne može brzo da se trči. Štikle su ovde prisutne kao simbol seksualnosti, a njeni rogovi su ne samo snaga i moć, već ukras i kruna.”

Tokom modernog perioda, autoportreti su bili fokusirani ne samo na autonomiju umetnika, već i na osporenu ideju o sebi. Umetnikov autoportret označava tok ličnog istraživanja sopstva, gde god da se nađe, što kulminira u pokušaju da se to sopstvo u potpunosti realizuje u nekoj spolja ekspresivnoj slici, ranije nepoznatoj. Međutim, sopstvo ne treba mešati sa konceptom subjekta. Subjekt se može posmatrati kao efekat čina predstavljanja, gledanja, njegovog učešća u mrežama razmene – proizvodnja, konzumacija i cirkulacija slika. Svako razmatranje samoreprezentacije mora se u nekom trenutku baviti prirodom i uslovima pojedinca, self. U eseju „Žena koja nikada nije bila samoreprezentacija, fotografija i feministička umetnost prvog talasa“, američka istoričarka umetnosti Abigail Solomon Godeau s pravom tvrdi da su sve vizuelne prakse koje nazivamo postmodernim, na različite načine

oblikovane odbacivanjem starijih koncepcija sopstvo povezano sa autentičnošću – kao samoprisutnim, ujedinjenim i suverenim egom. Istina je da istorijski diskurs savremene umetnosti radije poziva na „subjekt“ nego na „ja“ – implicitno pokazujući gubitak vere u ovo samopouzdanje.

Proživljeno iskustvo

U ovom tumačenju, umetnik koji slobodno izražava svoju jedinstvenu subjektivnost smatra da je ona formirana autoritetom ličnog proživljenog iskustva. Međutim, nakon poststrukturalističke paradigmatske promene, subjekt je neodvojiv od uslova da bude podložan. Koncepcija radikalno razjedinjenog, podeljenog, pluralnog i disperzovanog subjekta sada je postala neka vrsta podrazumevane pozicije u savremenoj istoriji umetnosti. Dok se umetnički istorijski autoportret generalno smatra samoreprezentacijom, nisu sve autoreprezentacije nužno autoportreti. Da bih napravila ovu razliku, uvodim čin nad - biografskog koji je samoproduktivan - sama paradigma performativnog teksta.

Ako ovo transponujemo u vizuelnu produkciju - možemo tvrditi da je autoportret performativni - odnosno autoproduktivni čin. Samostvaranje se tako ostvaruje kroz reprezentativne aktove.

Ivana ovde pojašnjava značaj prisustva značenja teksta unutar slike koji se izgovara/ izvodi, kao da je u pitanju navođenje na nešto što možda i nije tako kao što izgleda. Ako tekst u sebi nosi diktate, njegova izvedba (performans) ukazuje na težnju za pomirenjem subjekta sa okolinom. Kroz ove procese, sopstvo se definije svojom sposobnošću da uokviri autobiografski narativ u procesu samo(re)konstitucije. Ovako koncipiran pojam subjekta potiče od francuskog filozofa Alena Badjua. Za njega „subjekt nije rezultat – ništa više nego što je poreklo. To je lokalni status postupka, konfiguracija iznad situacije.“ U tom ključu, tumačimo i naslov cele izložbe “Zašto ne veruješ mojim lažima?” Umetnica ukazuje da se ova rečenica odnosi i “na to kako se predstavljamo sebi i drugima, da li treba da pristajemo na laži, da li bi bilo bolje kada bi

svi izgovarali ono što zaista misle (ovde mislim na svaku vrstu komunikacije) - Lažna vizuelna predstava o ženi koju prihvatom kao realnost, kroz editovane fotografije.”

Ako su u svom procesu nastanka Ivanine predstave imale podjednako poreklo i u tekstu i u crtežu one su došle do novih kombinacija koje otvaraju univerzalne mogućnosti iščitavanja subjekta, kako to umetnica parafrazira Kiki Smith: “nekada treba pustiti stvari da se same dese.”

Ono sto je izuzetno u ovim radovima nije samo bogatstvo njihovih individualnih konstitucija, već ono što omogućavaju posmatračima – uvid u neiscrpno područje imaginarnog, u njegov neverovatni fantazijski tok.

Jovana Stokić

Impossibility of Female Self-Portrait

Transformation of
Subject in Artworks by
Ivana Kalina Mitrović

Women must write through their bodies, they must invent the impregnable language that will wreck partitions, classes, and rhetorics, regulations and codes, they must submerge, cut through, get beyond the ultimate reverse discourse, including the one that laughs at the very idea of pronouncing the word 'silence', the one that, aiming for the impossible, stops short before the word 'impossible' and writes it as 'the end'.

Hélène Cixous (*The Laugh of the Medusa*, 1971)

Ivana's new cycle of works entitled "Why Don't You Believe My Lies?" is extending, broadening and upgrading specific semantic registers charted in her work thus far. The artist is interested in boundaries of representational figurative expression: To what an extent can the subject be discerned through such a drawing? It appears that a female figure, present in these compositions, is shown from specific angles, or fragmented, mystically illuminated by imaginary light, impersonalised and laid bare. The protagonist thus visualised points to supra-biographical gradual construction

of dream-like narratives. The compositions in front of observers depict liminal space of a world with an appearance of reality, but also its deconstruction – the field of surreal existence.

Image and Text

Representation of Ivana's heroine and the text accompanying the image point to her ambivalence which is precisely recognised in the friction between power and vulnerability. "Choose Your Fighter" is a dictate evoking an avatar chosen by video game participants, but is also reminiscent of a dichotomous role of the female subject. Persuasive linearity of the figurative drawing reveals self-confidence of not only the artist herself, but her heroine as well. And yet, do such a persuasive treatment of the figure and the presence of clear symbols also speak of something else? All compositions, as well as the dictates of titles, insinuate alienation and allude to heterogenous impossibilities of communication. At the same time, the presence of natural, non-human elements, such as a tree or the Dobermans, as well as the crown of horns worn by a female figure, points to her



collusion and intimacy with nature. The Dobermans drawn by Ivana are always ‘benevolent’. Her identification with the animals stems from a desire to restore unity that we once had with nature, but also this subjective urge of human beings to bring about an authentic sense of belonging to the universe through animism and connection with animals. These impulses represented in the artwork portend restoration of hope in the possibility of striking a balance in the disrupted equilibrium of a contemporary individual.

Global Transformation

In his study ‘*Transformation: Emergence of the Self*’, Jungian psychologist Murray Stein points out that the process of global transformation is a great theme of modern and contemporary art. Liminality is the constant theme of our times. Nothing is stable and secure, whilst global historical transformation’s effect upon individuals and upon groups large and small continues to deepen and to expand into every dimension of human life and endeavour, and is, consequently, examined in art. In the third

decade of this new and erratic 21st century, it appears that the pace of change is accelerating, and it seems that history and myth are merging, whilst fears and expectations are coming to a head. This is a cultural background to our actions in an increasingly digitised environment in which, I would dare say, the artist comes to grips with the transformation process precisely through a depiction of a specific, female subject. Ivana’s compositions focus on an individual and the ways in which transformative processes affect the individual on the path towards self-actualisation. Are these representations solely fragments and miniature embodiments of a collective psychological structure of the subconscious and the conscious? Or do they record precisely the impossibility of such representation?

In any case, Ivana’s artworks are exciting for observers as traces of performance and search for identification of the female subject’s actualisation. Their style carries within echoes of surreal and pop art which are related to dream-like representations, or in the words of the artist herself, “Dreams are a part of each

and every individual. Once we become aware of our dreams, the question is what then to do with them. For me, dreams are, in a way, signposts, something I should pay attention to. Mystical experience and daily life intertwine so as to seek out the point of balance, equilibrium, unity.”

Supra-Biographical Narration

In a theoretical context, these representations impose themselves as figurative supra-biographical narrations of the subject, which dynamically interconnect the status of self-representation, the self and critical references to the issue of symbol of modern female beauty.

Actual analysis of pictorial representations is inspired herein by the theory of performativity, the feminist aesthetic theory. My approach focuses on two traditional artistic and historical categories: the self-portrait genre and the aesthetic concept of beauty. According to the traditional representational scheme, knowledge of someone’s identity (I as a subject) should be guaranteed by a faithful appear-

ance of the individual in question (I as an object). Self-portraits created by women artists since the 1970s often contest this idea of ‘resemblance’. The dominant language of the tradition, which establishes the ‘objective’ self-produced through a mimetic truth of the mirror, is subverted in their works. Self-portrait is a gateway to representation for women, where a female artist is both the subject and object, and where the artist envisages how she looks like in terms of how she sees herself, and not how she appears to be. Hence, Ivana’s female protagonist does not belong to this genre, but does encroach on the field of ‘self-representation’. The artist explains the status of this character through her mythical status, without defining facial features: “My ‘mythical woman’ is ready for a fight, armed and masked with horns and red shoes in which, I must admit, she cannot run fast. Heels are present here as a symbol of sexuality, whereas her horns are not only her strength and power, but also an ornament, a crown.”

In the contemporary period, self-portraits have been centred on not only the artist’s autono-

my, but also a contested idea about one's own self. The artist's self-portrait charts a course of personal exploration of the self, wherever it may happen to be, culminating in an attempt to implement the self in imagery, which is expressive on the outside, and not known from before. However, the self should not be confused with the concept of the subject. The subject may be seen as an effect of the act of representation, viewing, its participation in exchange networks – production, consumption and circulation of imagery. Any consideration of self-representation must, at some point, deal with nature and the conditions of an individual, the self. In her essay *"The Woman Who Never Was: Self-Representation, Photography, and First-Wave Feminist Art"*, American art historian Abigail Solomon-Godeau rightfully argues that all visual practices which we refer to as postmodern are shaped in a variety of ways by rejection of older conceptions of selfhood associated with authenticity: a self-present, unified, and sovereign ego. The truth is that the historical discourse of contemporary art would rather refer to the 'subject' than 'I' – implicitly manifesting a loss of faith in self-confidence.

Lived Experience

In this interpretation, the artist who freely expresses her/his unique subjectivity holds a view that it is formed by the authority of a personal lived experience. However, following the post-structuralist paradigmatic change, the subject is inseparable from the requirement of susceptibility. The conception of a radically disunited, divided, plural and dispersed subject has now become a sort of a default position in the contemporary history of art. Whilst the self-portrait in artistic and historical terms is generally considered a self-representation, not all self-representations are necessarily self-portraits. In order to make this distinction, I introduce the act of the supra-biographical which is self-productive – a paradigm itself of a performative text. Were we to transpose this to visual production, we might argue that the self-portrait is a performative, i.e. self-productive act. Self-actualisation is thus achieved through representational acts. Ivana clarifies herein the importance of presence of the meaning of the text within the painting which is uttered/Performed as if at

issue here is a referral to something that might not be what it seems. If the text contains dictates within, its utterance (performance) indicates its aspiration to reconciliation between the subject and its surroundings.

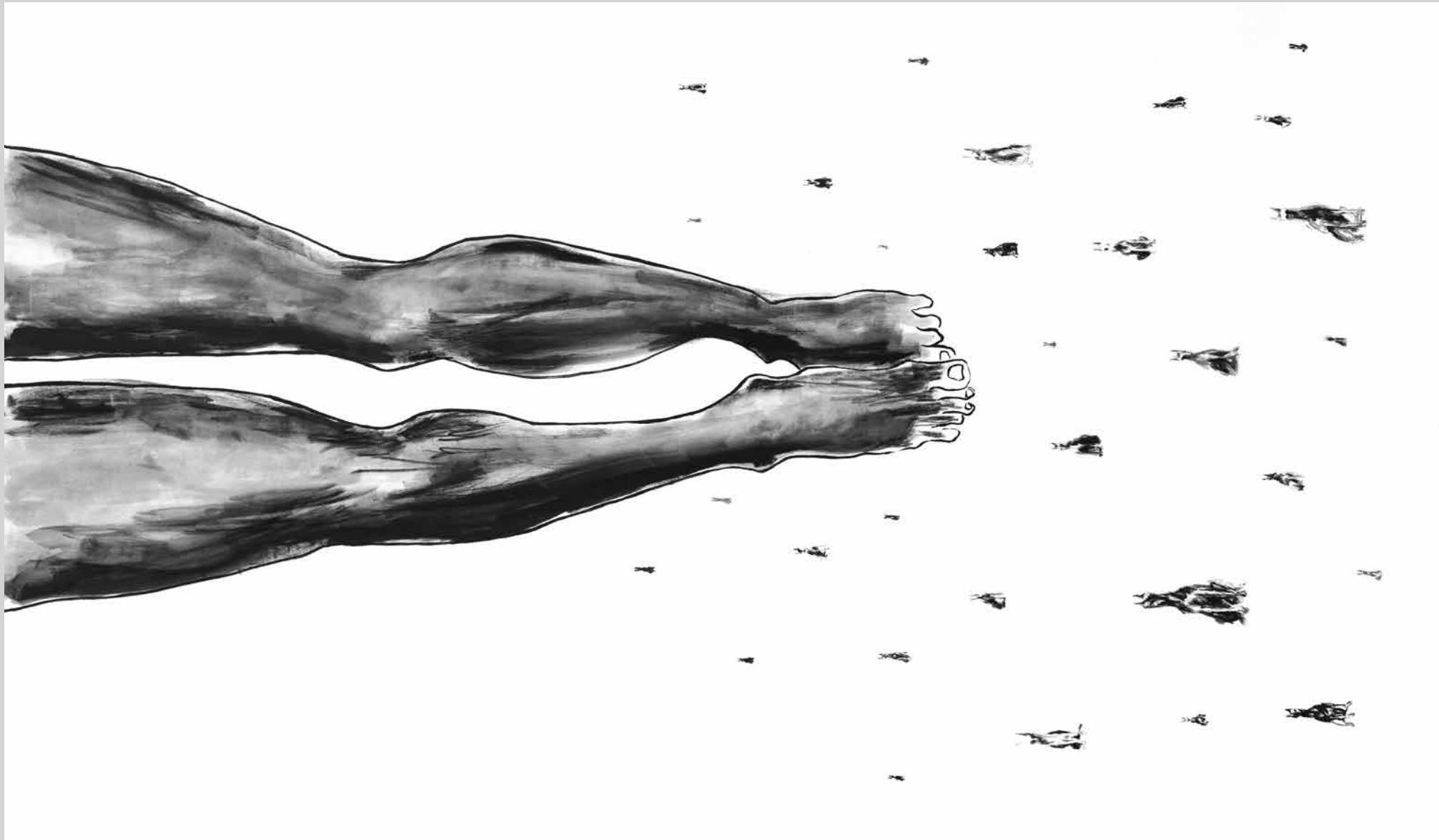
Through these processes, selfhood is defined by its ability to frame self-biographical narrative in the process of self-(re)constitution. The notion of subject, conceived in such a manner, hails from French philosopher Alain Badiou. In his view, 'a subject is neither a result nor an origin. It is the local status of the procedure, a configuration which exceeds the situation.' We interpret the title of the whole exhibition in this key: 'Why Don't You Believe My Lies?' The artist points out that this sentence also pertains to 'how we present ourselves to our own selves and others, should we go along with lies, would it be better if everyone were to truly speak one's mind (the reference here being to any type of communication) – false visual representation of a woman whom we accept as reality, through edited photographs.'

If Ivana's representations in the inception

process had their origins equally in both the text and the drawing, then they have reached new combinations which open up universal possibilities of the subject's elucidation, along the lines of the artist's paraphrase of what Kiki Smith has said, 'At times it's about letting things reveal themselves.'

The extraordinary thing about these artworks is not only an abundance of their individual constitutions, but also what it makes possible for observers – providing an insight into an inexhaustible field of the imaginary and its incredible, fantasy-like flow.

Jovana Stokić

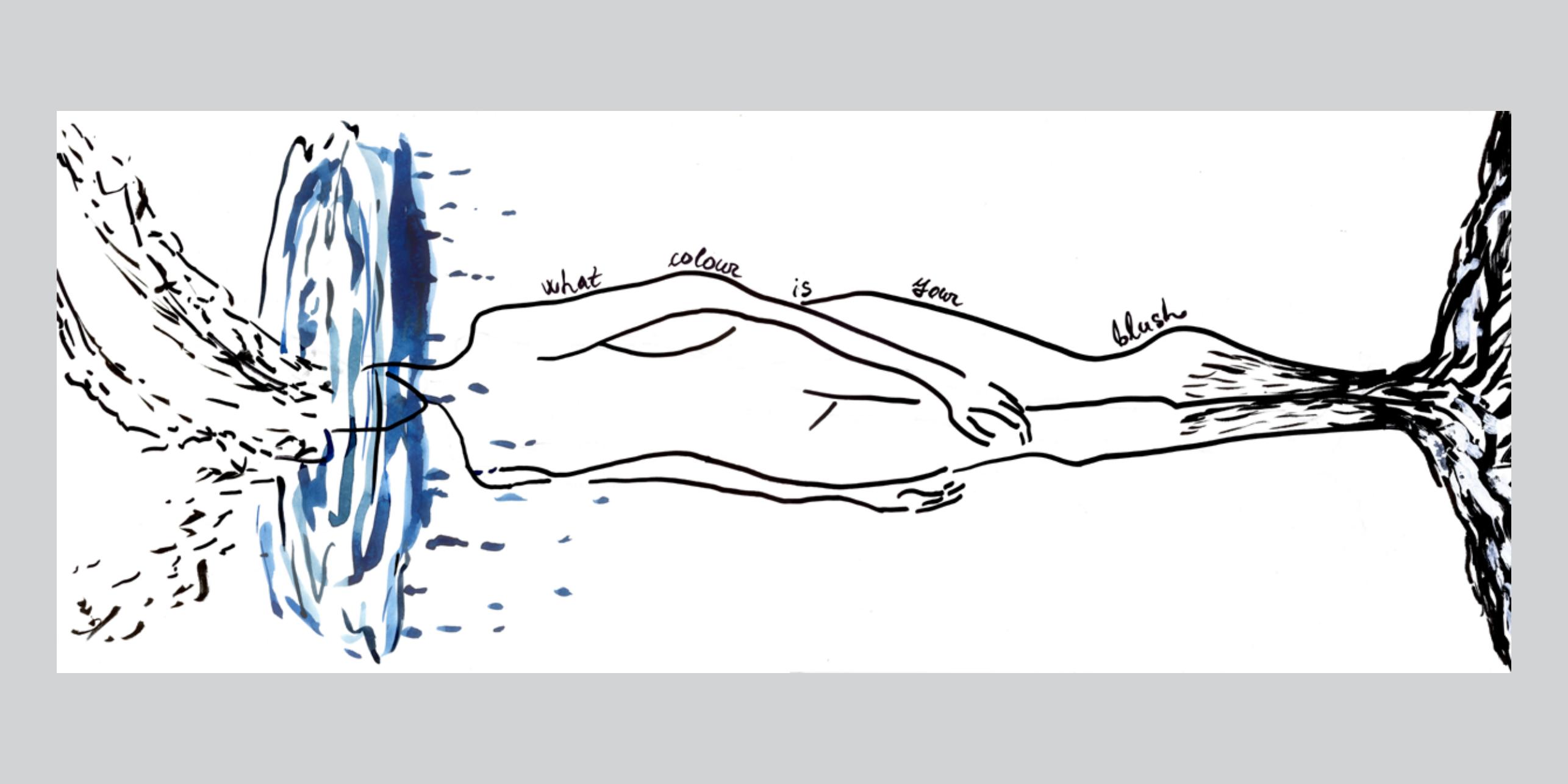






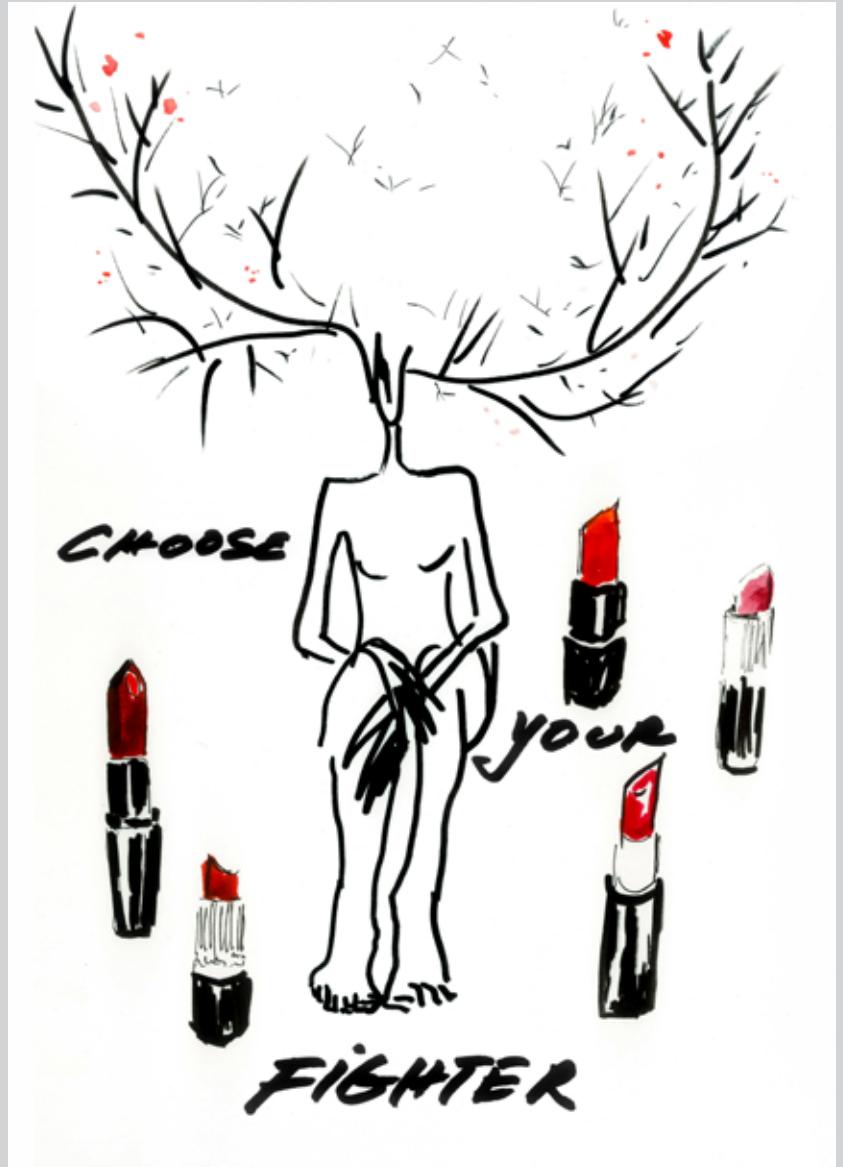
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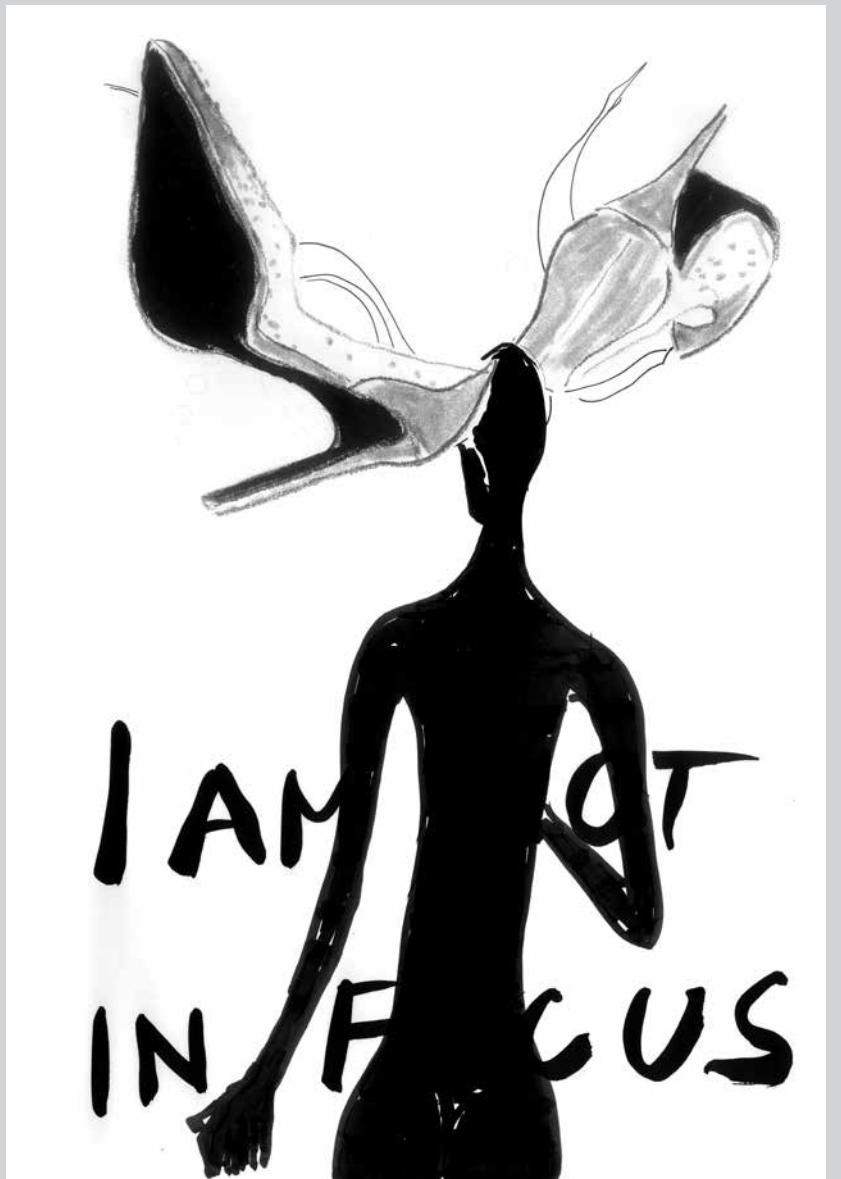




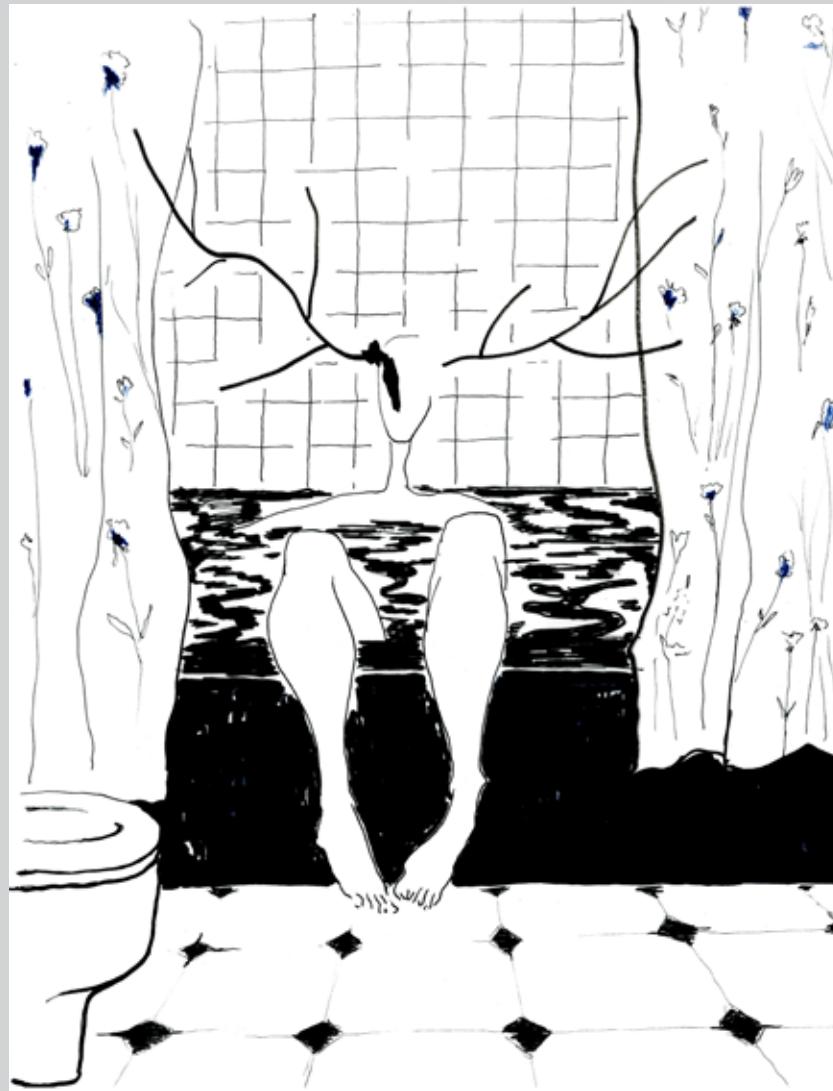
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I AM
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GOTTA STAY HYDRATED

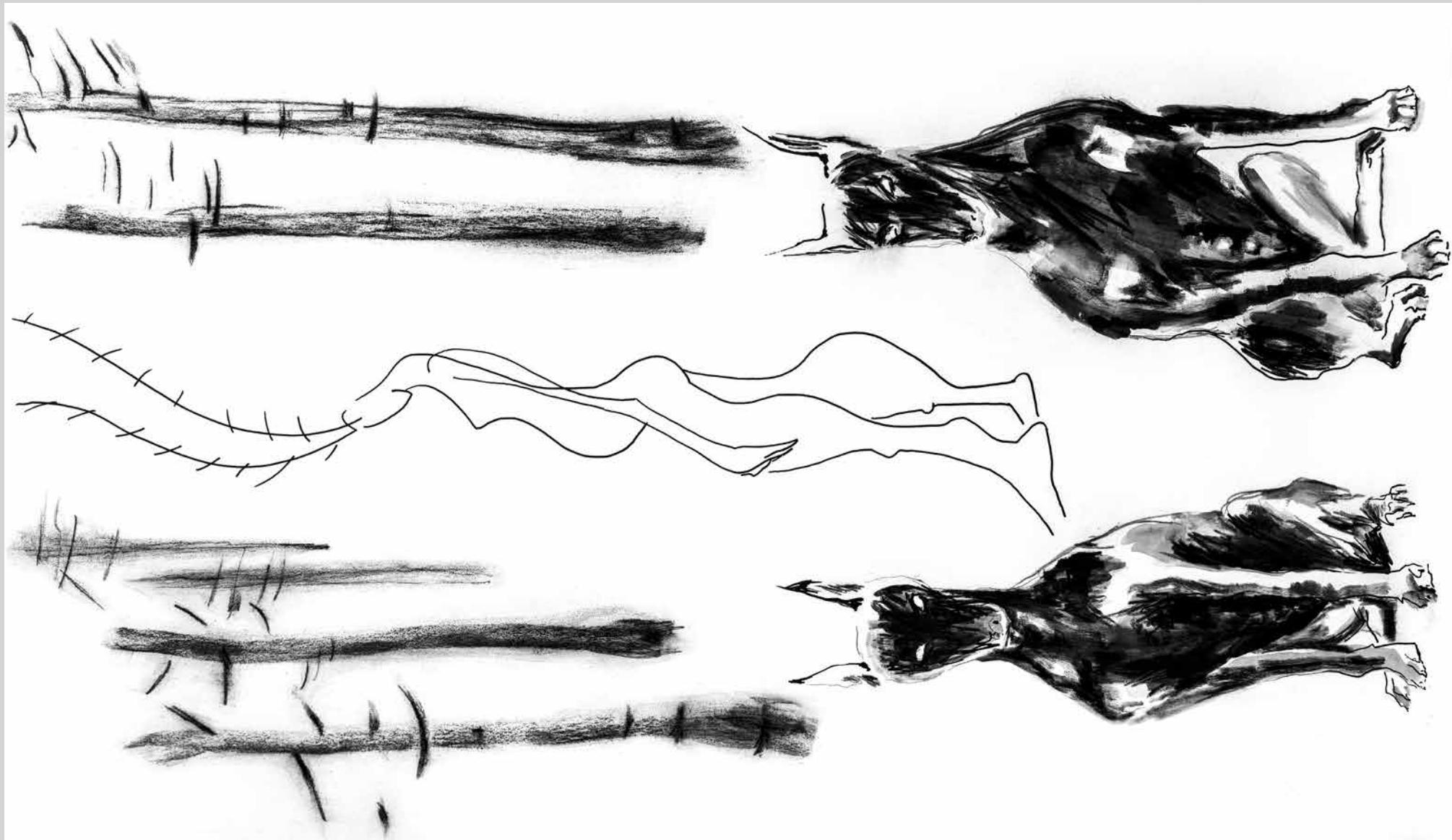
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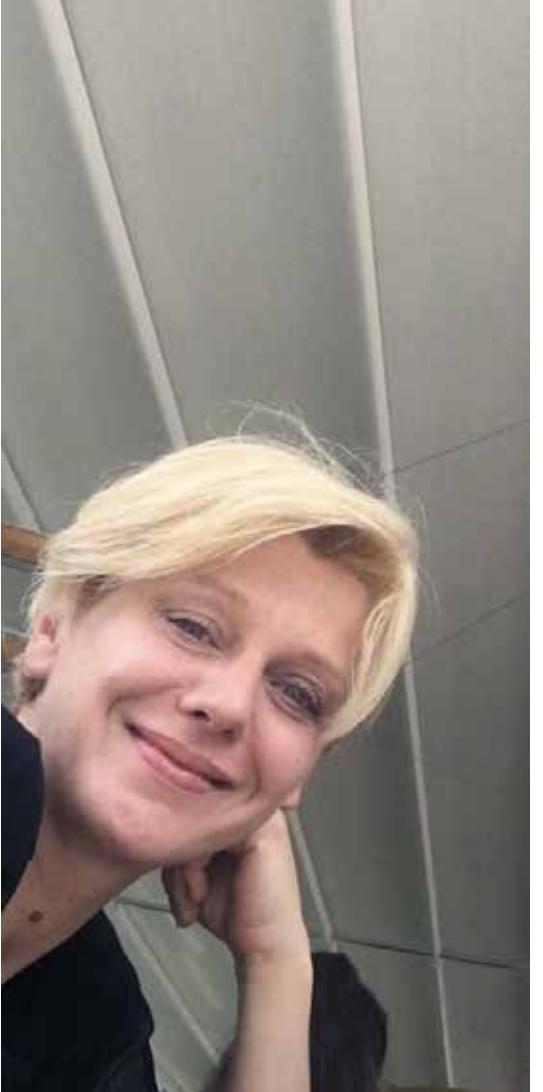
I HAVE
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Ivana Kalina Mitrović (1971. godine, Ivanjica) diplomirala je na Fakultetu likovnih umetnosti u Beogradu 1995. godine na slikarskom odseku. Magistrirala je na istom fakultetu 2003. godine, Odsek crtež. Od 1997. do 2007. godine radila je u Muzeju primenjene umetnosti u Beogradu. Član je Udruženja likovnih umetnika Srbije od 1995. godine. Izloženi radovi nastali su u poslednje tri godine i tokom rezidencijalnog boravka u Cité Internationale des Arts u Parizu 2022. godine.

Ivana Kalina Mitrović (1971, Ivanjica) graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade, Department of Painting, in 1995. She earned her master's degree at the same faculty in 2003, Department of Drawing. From 1997 until 2007, she worked at the Museum of Applied Arts in Belgrade. She has been a member of the national fine arts association, ULUS, since 1995. The exhibited works were created in the last three years and during a residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris in 2022.

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