

SI TU M'AIMES, PROTÈGE-MOI

ROMINA DE NOVELLIS

Jan 22nd - 23rd

2021



47 rue de Montmorency - 75003 Paris

PERFORMANCE

Performance: 3pm - 5pm / Video installation until February 6th

Opening hours: Tue-Sat 10am - 5pm

Alberta Pane Gallery is pleased to present in its Parisian space, on January 22nd and 23rd, 2021, the new performance *Si tu m'aimes, protège-moi* by Romina De Novellis.

Romina De Novellis is a performer, visual artist, and researcher. She studies the body from an anthropological perspective and through the lens of the Mediterranean cultures. The artist uses ecofeminist theories¹ as a parameter to analyze and denounce the oppressive realities of our societies and the dichotomies: *nature/humanity, femininity/masculinity, north/south, scientific/intuitive, power/bodies, establishment/cultures*. Her intention is to highlight the reappropriation of the feminine features for both women and men, with the aim of questioning the dominant models.

This new performance is inspired by the peasant cultures of Southern Italy, in which women covered the ears of hens before practicing any violent gesture that could have shocked them and caused their infertility. Carefully, the woman used to take the hen on her knees and to protect her ears from the noise.

Today, in intensively farmed slaughterhouses, millions of chickens are exposed to deafening methods to make them lose consciousness and become insensitive to pain. Stunning with electric water baths is the most common way in the European Union for the slaughter of chickens: the birds are placed in transport containers and then hung up by both legs at the hock, which takes them to an electrified water bath.

Romina De Novellis takes a critical look at any form of ritual. Popular celebrations, lightings², and traditions linked to religious ceremonies often place the role of women in a secondary and submissive position. This explains why the work of this artist addresses the bodies, the gestures of care and the intimate moments of taking care of the other. It is during these moments of intimacy, silence, and care, that the feminine pole can arise showing another way of relating to nature, to the animal, and to the other. "Women make the children and they make dead, but they also make the animals".³ They "make" to the extent that they take care of the family and their loved ones and they give another vision to the social uses of the body.

In her new performance, Romina De Novellis completely transforms the gallery space by creating an installation with a strong emotional impact, in which she will replicate the gestures of animal protection. In this performance Romina De Novellis proposes a reflection where eco-feminism becomes the key to read care, as a vision for life and as respect for the body of humans and animals both in life and in death. It is an invitation to think about ecofeminism as a key to get out of our current productivist and consumerist logic.

¹ Ecofeminism is a philosophical, ethical and political current born from the conjunction of feminist, and ecological thinking.

² Large colorful light installations created in southern Italy during holidays, events, and celebrations of the patron saints of the cities.

³ In some anthropological studies on peasant cultures, the expression: «Women make children, and they make the dead» (Caforio Antonella, *Figure Femminili Protettrici della Nascita*, Milan, 2002). Notably in French, and Italian texts, where the expression "making children" is commonly used to describe a woman's physical specificity or willingness to give birth to children. This expression also explains the role of women in peasant cultures in caring for and protecting both children and the dead. Washing these bodies, dressing babies but also corpses, preparing beds, giving birth to life as well as death.

Romina De Novellis

Born in 1982 in Naples, Italy
Lives and works in Paris, France

Graduate from London's Royal Academy of Dance method, Romina De Novellis has dedicated several to dance theater. She then moved to Paris where she is following a thesis in anthropology and sociology at EHESS on autism and performance through the analysis of unusual behaviors. Her performances are centered on the concept of the body, its limits and the way society looks at it. Through repetitive gestures and a work focused on the Mediterranean world, she delivers a political and social message by addressing issues such as the status of women, the drama of refugee women, and LGBTQ rights. Traces of her performances are collected in the form of photographs and videos. Her first monograph, published in 2019, presents a selection of works dedicated to the Mediterranean and produced over the last ten years.

Her works have been presented in many contexts, including the *Ca' Pesaro International Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art* in Venice, the *MADRE Museum* in Naples, the *Poznan Biennale* in Poland, the *Armory Show* in New York, the *Villa Datriis Foundation*, the *Espace Vuitton*, the *Palais de Tokyo*, the *Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature* in Paris, among others.

In 2019 Romina De Novellis launches a residency project for artists and curators called *Domus Artist Residency*, based in Galatina, Italy.

