

ABOUT MONIQUE LA FONTAINE (AUSTRALIA)

AN INTRO BY NELE HERZOG

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Monique is an Australian artist who has long been interested to experience Berlin. Travelling around the world for the last six months she has completed artist residencies in Istanbul and Barcelona and held a solo pop-up exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Oaxaca Mexico (MACO). After participating in La Dinamitera festival in Barcelona she is now spending the month of April at the Büro in Neukölln.

Monique is interested in the mythologies of human experience and in stories that can be read beneath surface appearances. In large drawings and paintings on paper, using intense coloring and shaping, she specifically alludes to the outer appearance of psychological processes. Ideas of internal conflict - her own as well as other people's - inspire visual metaphors that in turn act as vehicles for unravelling and better understanding those experiences. Her figurative images allow the viewer to draw their own layers of meaning and suggest that the worst things that happen in life can also be, somehow, the most profound.

In Turkey Monique exchanged wishes for handmade talismans and attached the wishes to a sequined net, which she fished into the Bosphorus, accidentally catching a fish in the process. The exhibition at MACO explored the ways in which society reads women's bodies, and the idea that the body is both a mask and mirror of an individual's experience. Monique drew a series of portraits for the show, which capture an ambivalence in the public display of women's bodies and reveal the pains accompanying these practices on the

most intimate, private levels.

Now, the beginning of her time in Neukölln is marked by having to deal with a different kind of crisis - struggling with new ways of constructing what she feels will best achieve her current artistic intentions. Exploring chaos, is how Monique would describe what she is planning to do. It's not as simple as it sounds: she is building a vortex, a metaphorical bio-system that gives shape to the chaotic motion of energy, as an analogy for quantum theories of dissipative structures and the idea that evolution only occurs through processes of rupture and reorganisation. In doing so she has to develop a whole new way of bringing her ideas into being.

When looking at the development that Monique's art has undergone in her time away from home it seems as if she has continually moved inward figuratively, whilst digging deeper thematically. Monique herself would at this point probably insist on mentioning the fact that growth can only come from re-evolving. In that sense, her zooming in can probably be understood as a way of rising out of the ashes. Like a phoenix.