

Constellations Warsaw

Nona Inescu × Hannah Sophie Dunkelberg

Curated by Catinca Tabacaru and Gunia Nowik

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There is no outside to catastrophe, no singular moment in which collapse begins; it has always been there, folded into the gestures of preservation, the structures meant to protect but which, upon closer look, do not so much shelter as they enclose. Nona Inescu and Hannah Sophie Dunkelberg's works move through the contradictions of environmental collapse and domesticity, where the destructive and the intimate are bound together in sculptural forms.

Nona Inescu's *Common Daisy* (*Bellis perennis*)—a series of brass sculptures—follows a sequence of mutated specimens found in radioactive zones like Fukushima and Chernobyl, glowing with a sensual aura that subtly carries catastrophe in line with anatomy. Inescu's practice, attuned to cycles of transformation, invites a reading of human bodies and their interactions within a broader geological narrative. Hungarian psychoanalyst Sándor Ferenczi theorized that human sexuality itself is an inheritance of deep time, sculpted by the upheavals of tectonic shifts, both physical and psychological. Inescu's work reminds me of this notion, by engaging with biological morphologies as inscriptions of environmental trauma, where human relationships bear the imprint of planetary crisis.

In contrast, Hannah Sophie Dunkelberg's *en rêve* (en: in a dream) reliefs are a series of "enlarged hieroglyph-like gestures" that hover between language and mark-making, depicting vegetal forms as distant memories, as though pulled from art history books just as references, suggesting a disconnect from their material ontologies. Here, Dunkelberg's mechanical process can be narrativized as the professional inversion of a sharp scratch of a key dragged across an ex lover's car, lodging in the lacquered surface a high pitched, siren-like scream. Freud considered dreams to be wish fulfillments; similarly, we can view Dunkelberg's flower and plant sketches as symbolic consolations for our ecological grief, mirroring outside environmental collapse onto the sheen of metallic surfaces. Blending handcrafted and industrial qualities, *Corset 3* does not cinch or conform, but resist: oversized, steel-plated, unmoving. Not garments but armor, not something worn but something that interrupts, taking up space where it should yield. And then, there is the *Beletage/c*, a lamp experiment taking the shape of spectacle; something to be admired and feared from a distance, its sharp edges refusing once again domestic function.

Inescu's *Preservers* (case for nurturing interpersonal relationships) is a steel structure sparsely occupied by dried thistles, drawing from the imagery of sarcophagi and botanical transport. Sleep and death fold into one another, tracing the movement of flora and entire ecosystems through history—from colonial displacements to contemporary ecological crises. Intimacy emerges as both a vessel of preservation and a

force of intrusion. Consequently, thistles—an invasive, thorned species, delicately held yet never fully grasped, lest not to wound—echo the contradiction of attachment. Love, like an unruly transplant, takes root where it is not invited.

In the end, there is no final resolution—though nobody was really looking for one. No clear distinction between rupture and continuity. If Dunkelberg’s work teases the edges of reinvention and intimidation, Inescu’s operates within the space of an impending event, a speculative suspension. Catastrophe, in this setting, is not a singular event but a state of being, embedded in mirrorings of the outside in inner worlds.

Text by Ioana Gemanar