

I suddenly unfurled many eyes

Ioana Stanca

Curated by Catinca Tabacaru

25 March — 5 May 2022

Catinca Tabacaru Gallery in collaboration with the Romanian Cultural Institute (ICR) New York is thrilled to announce a new exhibition by Ioana Stanca at the Institute's Brâncuși Gallery at 200 E 38th St, New York, NY, opening March 25 and running through May 5, 2022.

Entitled I suddenly unfurled many eyes, the exhibition, curated by Catinca Tabacaru, highlights the Artist's singular method and seductive choice of materials. Stanca opens up unexpected possibilities of interaction between the human body and the tools of her craft, the artifacts of her life, and the spirits occupying her studio. Combined with impressive technical skills, Stanca's primarily textile works explore the pursuit of a personal, intimate geography in constant transformation as a metaphor of the feminine self.

Stanca's works can be understood as intimate maps, tracing a geography in continuous transformation. Here movements are reflected through seamless shifts through and in between a diverse approach to textiles. She creates visions and objects in embroidery, collage, soft sculpture, installation, and performance. Stanca's imagery intimately enters into conversation with her studio as space and vessel. She invokes a variety of associations, textures and narratives, often bringing life to anthropomorphic scissors-cum-female bodies, but also her helpers: spools, needles and those red high heel shoes so often the subject of dreams and nightmares. In her most recent work, a shadow has entered. Whether depicted as a burning eyed black body or the spider, there is a sense of danger, struggle... or is it strength on the part of her female characters. As sexuality and oneness flow through the undercurrents to all the work, there is also a nostalgia present, a femininity found more clearly in the inclusion of bread making and auto portraiture into her practice, into her being.

This new installation, made specifically for her New York debut, like a flexible macroscopic spider web, may be likened to a metaphorical reconstruction of the artist's creative space, the fusion of her body and eye. Intimacy plays a central role, as does a certain era of womanhood. Equally delicate and strong, we encounter metal chains supporting the weight of soft sculptures and ceramic objects, fused together into a complex environment that draws in our fears and desires.

Oversized black velvet scissors, embroidered with a dozen eyes glancing back at their voyeurs question our assessment of their being. Is it a pair of scissors, or are my eyes playing tricks on me as I encounter this majestic swimming creature? The walls are donned with similar mystery as masterfully embroidered pictures depict reclining female forms, creatures from the underworld, pansies, and sharp metal needles. Their sculptural frames extend the embroideries beyond their edges, adding a hard wooden surface to juxtapose the soft thread marks that feel more like painterly strokes than sewn craft.