

***Light Rain with Big Drops* by Morta Jonynaitė**

At these moments she thinks that her life could be drawn as two intersecting lines: one horizontal, which charts everything that has happened to her, everything she's seen or heard at every instant, and the other vertical, with only a few images clinging to it, spiralling down into darkness.

Annie Ernaux *The Years*

Morta Jonynaitė's solo exhibition *Light Rain with Big Drops* is akin to *The Years*, a novel by Nobel Prize for Literature winner Annie Ernaux, in that it presents an intersection of two different types of memory. One is personal, pertaining to the protagonist's experiences at different stages in her life. Worn and faded, it manifests as fragments of memories the narrator picks through in the vast sieve of time. The other is collective. It brings together pieces of communal past time and weaves the threads of generational change into a shared fabric of interconnected individuals. These two types of memories form a web of recollections where one becomes another, where the personal overlaps with the collective, and the individual with the universal.

Created using a variety of weaving techniques, Morta's works were physically laborious. They are proof of consistent effort and dedication. This persistent toil is an important ingredient in the energy field of these works, tying them in with the creations of past weavers. Like many other countries, in ancient Lithuania, fabrics and handicrafts were often produced collectively. Only a handful of names involved in this process have been recorded, the rest lost to the sands of time. The fabric therefore becomes a bridge across time, connecting past and present generations, collective and personal experiences.

The artist's works demonstrate a certain lightness. They are almost like woven watercolours, both thanks to their faded pastel colours, and their references to landscapes. They are either suspended mid-air or laid down like everyday objects. Simple and unpretentious, they exist as individuals but tend to form groups. Morta draws out their voices by seamlessly combining ornaments and colours, letting them speak both in unison and one-by-one.

The theme of the female creator is important to Morta. She tells stories in a similar way to Ernaux, only through textiles rather than text (notably, both words share the same root). She alludes to specific experiences that have left a mark in her memory map. The narrative is often

syncopated and fragmented, taking us back to various times in the artist's past. The fabrics, handled with thousands of delicate touches, evoke femininity, while certain works, such as *Chimeras* or *Pink Street Boys*, speak of women's experiences in society.

A musical, poetic language with no strict rhythm dominates in the exhibition. The polyphonic collection of works is aimed at enveloping the viewer and creating a memorable experience rather than communicating meanings and ideas. Each work feels different to the touch – some have softer surfaces, others are rougher. All of them, however, are woven from the threads of lived experience. Perhaps more aptly than this text, the impression of the exhibition is conveyed by the brief yet poignant lines of the poem found at the end of Erneaux's novel:

*I leaned against the beauty of the world
And I held the smell of the seasons in my hands*

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