

Harem: A Territory of Memory and Resistance

Harem is an artistic installation that occupies the threshold between the sacred and the forbidden, the visible and the hidden. Consisting of two works – *L'amour n'est pas un crime* and *Azetta #1* – this installation evokes memory and resistance, and is situated on a delicate border between tradition and subversion. Using everyday Moroccan materials, Marion Mounic interweaves memory, narrative and gesture, questioning the harem as a site of confinement and power, desire and prohibition.

A space of female seclusion, the harem conveys a notion of territory that is both sacred and forbidden, a gynaeceum inaccessible to men and non-Muslims (except for princes and sultans). The harem is not just a female enclave, but a place where hierarchy meets intimacy, where silence echoes as powerfully as the whispers of unseen negotiations.

It is a territory where the laws of flesh and spirit intertwine in licit and illicit relationships, a space where gender intersects in many directions and is sometimes reversed, as in the case of eunuchs. A theatre of shadows and light, of domination and resistance, where prohibition and duty pulsate under the veil of tradition. Here, desire knows freedom, just as restriction knows transgression.

This installation includes the works *L'amour n'est pas un crime*, a monumental canvas impregnated with henna and other organic components, where a phrase written in Arabic emerges: 'Love is not a crime.' and *Azetta #1*, a tapestry of silences and stories on a woollen weave. In berber language, *Azetta* means both the loom and the cells of the hive and, in this sense, Mounic once again evokes the history of women, their spaces and their resistance.

Between everyday gestures and invisible rituals, the artist gives form to the memories that persist, reimagining spaces of femininity as places of resistance and reinvention.

Harem is murmur, breath, and inscription. In its textures and in the interlacing of the tangible and the absent, it opens a portal where tradition and transgression coexist, revealing that art, like memory, is a continuous act of creation and insurgency.

Adelaide Ginga