

"You'll be a Mother One Day"

In her exhibition "You'll be a Mother One Day," Michal Blayer raises questions about femininity and its essence, the roles of traditional women, motherhood, pregnancy and childhood, roles that shape every woman's identity. Whether she chooses to accept or reject them, they will still mold her identity vis-à-vis society as a whole.

The image of a honeypot ant is woven throughout the exhibition. This ant, which stores honey in its body in time for winter and sacrifices itself when no other food is available, to ensure the survival of the other ants in the colony, symbolizes for Blayer, the internal feminine conflict between her desire to be a mother, and her fear of the sacrifice she would be making and the relinquishment of her autonomy and independence.

Returning to childhood memories that combine playing with images and materials of various sorts, Blayer generates a discussion as to the essence of the girl that will be a woman – a girl with the potential for motherhood. This reality accompanies every girl like a shadow, from the day she is born, as does the question of whether she is bound to fulfil this potential in order to actualize her femininity, or whether she can choose otherwise and yet remain whole, unbroken, not damaged.

Blayer sews together personal, intimate pieces of memory. Using local materials, flowers and plants, she creates a childlike, genderless perspective for the viewer, one that focuses on details that are little more than microscopic in size, as well as on experiences that are intimate, feminine and absent of men: relationships among grandmother, mother and daughter; experiences passed down from one generation to another and that share without words, life's significance - with a hug, kiss and care.

The exhibition comprises two series of works, one featuring etchings that have been manipulated in one way or another, and the other consisting of three-dimensional pieces that may be sculpture, or perhaps jewelry. It is possible to notice that the illustrations Blayer uses in her engravings and paintings are in search of a way to depict situations difficult to describe verbally, situations in which the images tell the story of a physical experience and seem to be looking for the near-physical memory that continues to make its presence felt. In her three-dimensional works, Blayer creates images that are entrenched, material, disturbing, and which generate dialogue with abstract concepts like gut feeling.

Conceptual and tangible concepts connect the two series; ideas and materials flow from one to the other with diffused equilibrating power. Thus, mixing and hopping between reality and imagination, the material and the spiritual, Blayer recreates segments of memory that contain a distortion of the years that have passed, and of growing up – the result of thought's coercion and the explication of innocent, simple experience.