

# FLORIAMA CÂNDEA

## METABASIS

Text: Ana Lemnaru

EASTWARDS PROSPECTUS proudly presents METABASIS, an exhibition premiering paintings and objects by Floriama Cârdea. This is the artist's third solo show in Bucharest. It is featuring several series of mixed media canvases as well as a series of light-box wall pieces. The opening will take place on the 3rd of June. The show is on display until the 2nd of August.

Following her fascination for plant life and corporeal partitions, METABASIS unravels fragments of an imagined biological world. Loosely inspired by museum displays or anatomical illustrations a collection of fragments is re-mixed in a complex and intriguing visual puzzle.

Bodies, be those of plants or animals, are cut and reassembled into uncategorised forms. This imagery of hybrid organisms is disconnected from a context or explanation. We know nothing about their origins. They could be specimens of the post-natural world or newly discovered species. They could be intact or dissected, alive or dead. In the realm of indeterminacy, systems begin to unfold: ambiguous images are revealing the workings of vision and cognition. Rootless anatomies raise questions about uncharted information and taxonomy. Subtle visual references to remixing hint at the possibilities behind genetics and bio-politics. However these notions are not examined directly. Much like in medieval manuscript entries depicting far-away places, in METABASIS, facts contain some degree of fabrication, poetry and biology may overlap on the same page and the borders between the real and the imaginary are sometimes hard to pinpoint.

Floriama Cârdea's works often make use of experimental artistic procedures to bring about renditions of flesh-plant morphologies. Her artistic enterprise is highly intuitive; discovery plays an important role. It is a constant negotiation between existing mental images and seeking ways to bring them about. Photographic impressions can be miss-interpreted as scribbles or ink-blot, figures are hidden in a tapestry of intricate details. Perception is brought forward as mechanism, making the viewer question not only what but also how does one see. In order to uncover all of the ingrained artefacts, the observer needs to spend time with the paintings.

METABASIS is constructed around the idea of transformation, of the continuity of an object in time.

Two different artistic approaches, exhibited in parallel reflect the same concept employing different procedures.

The canvases are depicting the evolution of these hybrid specimens in all of their varieties. Image transfers, prints, photographic impressions, as well as drawings, and painting overlap on the painted surface. Layers upon layers are added then removed from the canvas surface. Photographs of fruit, viscera, flesh, leaves or other fragments are digitally altered and morphed together. The resulting digital image is then used as a negative and printed on large films, then photographically impressed onto the paintings. Small gestural interventions are sometimes emerging from the colour layers below, or are overlaid onto the photographic emulsion.

Introducing highly aestheticized articulations of decay, light-boxes display dried kombucha film, cut into hide like shapes. Sometimes images are transferred on these skins. Kombucha is a symbiotic microbial culture, containing bacteria and one or several types of yeast. It is usually bred in sweetened tea, feeding on the sugar and fermenting the liquid in this process. Once removed from its tank, the biofilm dies and dries out in a couple of days, resulting in a thin, transparent membrane. Over a longer period of time oxidation darkens the material; it becomes opaque and changes colour to a dark shade of brown. The images, once imprinted on this material will also darken and disappear. This conceptual approach follows the metabolic development of a living being up to its death and deterioration.

Floriama Căndea is currently based in Bucharest and is a young and upcoming name on the Romanian contemporary art scene. She graduated from the National Art University Bucharest in 2007 and is enrolled in a master of Image Theory and Practice at The Centre of Excellence in Image Studies, an inter-faculty department of the Bucharest University and the Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism.

Floriama Căndea's works prove an ongoing attraction to biological forms, here presented as subjects. They are dismembered, reassembled and re-contextualised into complex and close-knit visual embroideries. She is challenging the way memory, cognition, perception and taxonomy are set in motion as mechanisms in the subjective relation with the world. New means of expression as well as unconventional materials are constantly expanding her uses of mixed media techniques.

Drawing, painting, photographic or printed image transfer, kombucha film or found objects are interlaced on large format canvases, revealing a clear preference for sophisticated textures and dense materiality. Floriama is set out to: *"describe the visceral experience of perceiving an image"*.

Her works were featured in solo shows such as FFF-XXX at H'art Gallery or Untitled at Galeria Caminul Artei, Bucharest; group shows: Classic vs. Contemporary at The Romanian Athenee(2009) or Untitled at Raum für zeitgenössische kunst , Nuremberg (2013) and art fairs: Berliner Liste (2012) Berlin and Art Safari (2015) Bucharest. She is featured in Snapshot Romania - Imago Mundi, a global collection of contemporary art by Luciano Benetton. Finally she is one of the artists represented by Andrei Breahnă and Raluca Șoaita at EASTWARDS PROSPECTUS since 2014.