

Fragile Objects of Desire

07.12.2024 – 25.01.2025

Ivan Gallery is pleased to invite you to the opening of *Fragile Objects of Desire* on Saturday, 7 December.

Our last group show for this year, *Fragile Objects of Desire*, brings together four artists (Elijah Burgher, Giulia Crețulescu, Ivana Mladenovic, Ecaterina Vrana) who explore the theme of fragility and desire through different media and artistic discourses.

Elijah Burgher positions his work on the edge between the real and the imaginary, intervening with painting on photographs taken during a performance. Through symbolism and the occult, Elijah Burgher lays the groundwork for a fantastical and abstract world that explores queer sexuality. The magic, rituals, religious iconography and all the mystical chaos that engages the artist reflect at once the vulnerability of eroticism and desire submerged in mystery, but also the barely sketched, often fragile line between the real and the imaginary.

Giulia Crețulescu's inox objects are artifacts of healing. These objects were created for the Weapons series. They are based on a drawing in relief on fabric, which the artist visualizes as a scar. Giulia Crețulescu explores self-harm and in this context, the sharp objects represent the weapons that caused the pain and then remained like fossils, only a proof that they existed. The archiving of the object that caused the pain is a method of healing. The pain has been petrified in these weapons as a way of protecting oneself.

In the 2016 video *The Leaves of Grass*, Ivana Mladenovic explores the fragile nature of human being by drawing a parallel between the story of twin boxing brothers and Walt Whitman's poem *Song of Myself*. The possibilities are limitless, but the future is uncertain. Training isn't a guarantee of a title, it's just an activity of the moment. What might be is in a dangerous balancing act with what is in the end. The balance is fragile, but the audience is invited to generate new meanings, it remains open to interpretation.

Like Elijah Burgher, Ecaterina Vrana's works meet at the intersection of the real and the unreal. The exhibition presents two large-scale paintings from the last years of the artist's life. Through her sincere, direct compositions, Ecaterina Vrana opens the door to a dark world where words complement the image through the very contrast between a positive message and a gloomy landscape. In these works, raw honesty and pure emotion coexist in a vulnerable way.

Every desire, every moment, every action, every thought, every human being is fragile, which is why breakage is more of a probability than a possibility.

Elijah Burgher (b.1978, USA) is an American artist living and working in Berlin, Germany. His work has been featured in both solo and group exhibitions, some recent examples include *Our Lady of the Latrines*, Western Exhibitions, Chicago, IL, 2024, *Ghost Image*, Galerie Judin, Berlin, Germany, 2024, *Transcendental Arrangements*, Miller Institute for Contemporary Art, Carnegie Mellon, Pittsburgh, PA, 2023, *Friends and Lovers*, Shulamit Nazarian, Los Angeles, CA Cosmic Geometries II, Carrie Secrist Gallery, Chicago IL, 2023, *The Venusians, Come Again!* Berlin, Germany, 2022, *Figures, Grounds*, Western Exhibitions, Chicago, IL, 2022, *Queen of the Forest*, P-P-O-W, New York, NY, 2021, *Intimacy: New Queer Art from Berlin and Beyond*, Schwulesmuseum, Berlin, 2020-21, *AA"Bronson's Sacre du Printemps*, Grazer Kunstverein, Whitney Biennial 2014, Gwangju Biennial 2014.

Giulia Crețulescu (b. 1994, RO) holds a BA and MA in Graphic Arts, after having completed the PhD programme in Visual Studies at the National University of Arts in Bucharest, where she was assistant professor at the Graphic Arts Department. Giulia Crețulescu has collaborated with art institutions in Bucharest (National Museum of Contemporary Art), Cluj-Napoca and internationally, including in recent years: *Wild Card*, Fragment Gallery, New York, 2024, *Variables as Absence of Uniformity*, Stockholm, 2024, *Pickle Bar Presents: Slavs and Tatars*, West Den Haag, Netherlands (group show, 2023), *Following the Body*, Fragment Gallery, New York, 2023, *A Human Being After All*, EastContemporary Gallery, Milan, 2023, *1:1*, Ivan Gallery, Bucharest (duo show with Gavril Pop, 2023), *Costume and Collapse*, Pickle Bar Slavs and Tatars, Berlin (group show, 2023), *My Rino is Not A Myth*, ArtEncounters Biennial, Timisoara, 2023.

Ivana Mladenovic (b. 1983, SRB) studied law in Belgrade before moving to Bucharest, where she graduated from the directing department of the University of Theater and Film Art "Ion Luca Caragiale" in 2010, and in 2011 she completed her master's studies in the same department. Her filmography includes short films, *If 6 Was 9* (2013), *Skin* (2011), *Afterparty* (2009), *Pizza Love* (2008), *Milky Way* (2007), as well as feature films: *Ivana the Terrible* (2019), *Soldiers. The Ferentari Story* (2017), *Turn off the Lights* (2012).

Ecaterina Vrana (b. 1969 - d. 2019, RO) was born in Constanta and studied painting at the Academy of Arts in Bucharest. Recent exhibitions include *Indigo*, MNAC, Bucharest, Romania, 2023, *Ecaterina Vrana: UnSeen*, Nicolae Minovici Museum, Bucharest, Romania, 2021, *Ecaterina Vrana: Mi-e frică să pictez*, The Art Museum of Constanța, 2022, *Ecaterina Vrana: A Woman Without Secrets*, Nicodim Gallery, Bucharest, Romania, 2017, *Ecaterina Vrana*, Nicodim Gallery, Bucharest, 2017 and Los Angeles, 2016, *Coasa era pui*, The Museum of Art, Constanta, *The Scythe was a Chick*, Art Museum, Constanta, Romania, 2015, *Funeraria*, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest, Romania, 2011, *Badly Happy: Pain, Pleasure and Panic in Recent Romanian Art*, The Performance Art Institute, San Francisco, 2011 and *The Bear's Dance*, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Bucharest, Romania, 2010. Ecaterina Vrana's works have been exhibited in public and private collections in Romania, Hungary, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and the USA.

Special thanks to Valentin Gora, Andreea Alexe (Nicodim Gallery)

The exhibition can be visited in the space of the Ivan Gallery in the Ateliere Malmaison on Calea Plevnei 137C, corp B, Et. 1, until January 25, 2025, from Wednesday to Saturday between 3pm-7pm, and the rest by appointment.