



Left: *Orixa*, 2010; above, *Dreamcatcher*, 2009
Right: *Protest*, 2010



Marilène Oliver Carne Vale

October 6 to November 6, 2010 (private view October 5, 6-8pm)

Beaux Arts, 22 Cork Street, London W1S 3NA

Beaux Arts presents **Carne Vale**, a new body of work by printmaker-meets-sculptor **Marilène Oliver** (b.1977). The work is inspired by her relocation to **Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**, where she has been living and working for the past year. 'In Brazil', says Oliver, 'I have seen much I covet: samba queen costumes made of thousands of ostrich feathers, a ruby-laden bloody Christ, tree trunks painted and decorated to commemorate the Indian Xingu dead, mysterious candomblé rituals.' All leave their mark on this show.

Marilène Oliver left the Royal College of Art in 2001 and has since made a name for herself using technology more usually associated with the world of medicine to reinvent the human portrait. She takes MRI and CT scans of the human body which she slices into thousands of lateral sections, printing each layer on to individual sheets of acrylic, paper or cork-like rubber. She then re-stacks these to reassemble her sculptures. She remakes the body, allowing us to see it as it has never been seen before, *from the inside out*.

What is different about this, her fourth solo show for Beaux Arts, is that this work places a much greater emphasis on the fantastical and the handmade.

Her experience of living in Brazil has opened her up to exploring a whole host of different narratives and given her the freedom to surrender herself, like some computer-game 'Second-Lifer', to new cultural horizons. The sensuousness of Rio's carnival parades, the mysterious rituals of the Afro-Brazilian candomblé religion as well as the brutal reality of life as an immigrant can all be found in this exhibition.

In *Dreamcatcher*, an exhausted carnival queen lies prone on a cloud of ostrich feathers; each 'slice' of the figure's body an individual 'dreamcatcher', of the kind used by indigenous people for thousands of years

to ensnare 'bad' dreams. In *Orixa*, the figure is captured in the middle of a traditional ritual, at the moment the spirit of the ancestors enters the body. Her body arches backwards, ecstatic, its 'layers' fanning out to reveal its inner organs and arteries, even a small, glittering tumour - the interior mesmerisingly beautiful. Then there is *Protest*, inspired by an account of an immigrant who killed himself out of fear the authorities would reject his case for asylum in the UK. The figure hangs suspended by jewelled threads from the ceiling, its innards, his 'inner life', tumbling in ribbons (printed, appropriately, on the 2009 Immigration Act) to the floor. The subject's body and act of protest are redeemed from oblivion in just the same way as the scans she's used are rescued from their virtual existence online, as if Oliver is reasserting the importance of reclaiming our common humanity; of not losing our selves, and our spirit, to the digital world.

Another way in which Oliver emphasizes the human over technology is in her use of handmade Brazilian artifacts and materials; exquisite glass beads, ostrich feathers and gem stones have all found their way into her sculptures. 'Orixa' alone, with its thousands of hand-sewn beads, took six months to make: a labour of love, which stands as a reminder of the need for us to get back to enjoying the sensuality of the real world, full of things, experiences and people.

Marilène Oliver will be giving a free talk on her work on Tuesday, October 12 at 6.30pm, at Beaux Arts (22 Cork Street): numbers are limited - to reserve a place email info@beauxartslondon.co.uk

For further information, hi res images or an interview with Marilène contact Emma Lilley on 020 7437 5799 info@beauxartslondon.co.uk

Beaux Arts, 22 Cork Street, London; tel 020 7437 5799

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Opening times, Mon-Fri, 10am to 5.30pm; Saturdays, 11am to 1.30pm; Access: FREE

Nearest tube: Green Park or Piccadilly

Notes for editors

* Prices range from £7,500 to £35,000

* Oliver (b 1977) studied at the Royal College of Art, London; MA Fine Art Printmaking (1999-2001); and MPhil (2006-09)

* She has work in the V&A Museum and Wellcome Trust Collections