

A Mouth / A Mood

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Lauriers. Laurels. In English, I mean. The latter. “Don’t rest on your laurels,” they say (who). This is a saying (a maxim) about ambition, about satisfaction, about ends and beginnings and possible (future) achievements. But what if the laurels are there—a kind of bed of dark, glossy leaves, a kind of crown, bedhead of flora, etc.— and you are tired? What if horizontal is the ambition of the figure, her hard mouth? An exhibition called “Lauriers” by an artist called Laure Marville suggests such questions, such leaves, such definitions, so many moods, their repetitions. So many names, titles to apply—to the body (of work or figure, her crowns, boards, moods).

In the evening of the artwork some aromatic in the air. Laurel. Laure. Some laughter. *Rires* (2017) is the name of one of these crowns of laurel, one of these works. Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha, it goes, across a pattern of eyes, heavy lashes. Each *ha* like a lash, blinking. Another laurel, another linocut (on wood, with padded fabric), a work, is called: *Ce qui est tissé ensemble* (2017), or: What is woven together. What we weave together are often words. This sentence to that one, some fragment. Weaving is the visual metaphor of writing—both are often understood as “women’s work.” Made “by hand” or by the mouth. And why not. Her syntax, her language, constructs a world. To be read by others, in the gallery or in the evening, aromatics in the air, on the paper, in the wood—like laurel, like language, its metabolic others.

Who are these others? “Style is character,” yes, and maybe style is characters. They are named (by the artist): *The Agitator*, *The Chessplayer*, *The Collector* (all 2017); a *Loglady* (2016). Their round forms (hard as wood, soft as fabric) blinking from pale Swiss walls like portraits of characters, metaphor for a temporal order that is circular not linear, like the social world of the quiltmaker. Surreal as in real. Who makes quilts? Women. Who names us as social actors, as artworks? What is influence? Neo Geo in Geneva—its macho metabolizing of women’s work, that same old story—and the quilters of Gee’s Bend in Alabama, their vivid patterning of violence and virtuosity, hard and soft, simultaneously. Textile as language, as a long (circular) narrative. Ideology and the lives living under its hard, honeyed tongue. Who gets to speak it, though? Who write, who weave. Who text. And who will repeat it: a pattern, a stutter, a hiccup, an energy, a political button, her (short) story or (long) slogan. A grid. And all of its repeated ideologies.

We repeat what we hear like a pattern (like a network, that weave). *Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha*. *There are so many forms of thirst. I feel appreciated. Art & Literature. Leisure & Entertainment. The Best Homemade Pizza. Elegance Is Resistance*. Pattern that covers the walls of our minds like some textile, covers our tongue like cloth. Our tongue a kind of pattern. Our tongue a mood. The artist named Laure—remember those laurels, so many rests, a kind of pause—makes *Mood boards* that cover the walls like blocks of (hard and soft) cheese. Some square, some circular, like a pie chart. “A part of a circle is

called an arc and an arc is named according to its angle. A circle graph, or a pie chart, is used to visualize information and data.” But this writer thinks of Ms. Pac-Man, a circle with a triangle cut out. A face with the tongue cut out. So that it might have a mouth.

Stupid people shouldn't breed. Don't rest on your laurels, don't rest on your tongue (its dark leaves). You don't know who might use it. Or where this language might go—its system—and what it might do. Proverbs, text messages, wellness slogans, allegories, advertorial or political spam, pop lyrics, art criticism, trash theory, languid pedagogy, experimental publishing, her book. The artist uses these. Hears them, writes them down, patterns them. The authoritarian operations of authoritarian language. The pop operatives of popular language. So many dumb mouths (that speak). So many tongues, virtuosic. Like eyes, their lashes. Nets, their works. Loose in our lives—our heads, our mouths—and the world. Sea of snakes, all their refrains. You know the drill. Style is character, etc. Her hard silence, her soft lyrics. Language on the wall. Rondo. What it does. “Don't rest, Laure,” they say (who). She'll voice this.