

Farida Amadou - Dubnobasswithmyheadwoman !

While she is about to take the long flight of stairs that lead from the Rue Royal to the entrance of the Bozar, Farida Amadou makes the observation that she is in the train and doesn't seem to get off. Pronounced as a kind of epilogue, her remark put an end to the conversation we engaged in during an icy and foggy late afternoon of January. How abrupt they may seem, her words sum up wonderfully well the drive of this musician who is presenting 'In Between' in the Belgian Museum of Fine Arts just a few steps further away.

This audio-visual installation is conceived around two axes. On a screen that covers a complete wall panel are projected a series of pictures Farida caught on the spot from within a passing train. In the foreground, long metallic piano strings connect, end to end, two steel panels on which micro contacts are attached. The visitor is invited to tickle and pinch the strings that produce amplified sounds. The parallel aspect of the strings refers inevitably to railway tracks. Commissioned for the Europalia exhibition 'Trains & Tracks', the structure reveals its full narrative and symbolic dimension. The images carry a reminder of the work of the photographer Bernard Plossu who often favoured a train journey to shoot his pictures.

It is the first time Farida explores this kind of exercise. Collecting sounds and pictures and mounting the device made it an undertaking of considerable length. Especially for the engineering of the structure she could benefit from the help of Pavel Tchikov, a fellow musician and partner in crime as it were, who also is sound designer. Over the years, the two already joined forces. Explaining her work, Farida points out that initially the metal strings were supposed to be much longer but such revealed to be impossible to install due to a number of contingencies of the settings in the museum. But nevertheless the reduced proportions did not impact the musical aura and plastic expression that fully emanate from her work.

Where Farida Amadou remains rather discrete about her family life, she is all the more communicative as to her life as a musician. Her first steps were accomplished in Liège where she accompanied, on the bass, jam sessions in the "Blues-sphere" in the Liège Outremeuse quarter. After having worked within l'Oeil Collectif and some CD recordings with the Nystagmus duo with Tom Malmendier, she established her trademark, multiplying encounters and collaborations. She played the bass in the postpunk combo *Cocaïne Piss* but also played with, amongst others, violinist Cécile Broché, trumpet player Timothée Quost, drummer Steve Noble and, more recently clarinetist Yoni Silver and saxophonist Chris Pitsiokos.

Meanwhile she never stopped elaborating her technique and sound eloquence thus spending relentless hours on her instrument. What a journey she made since her first solo concert at the occasion of the summer solstice 2018 in the little village of Fontin until her appearance last November on the big scene of the Ancienne Belgique Brussels as supporting act of Thurston Moore, before an audience of over a thousand people. She reveals that Thurston took a chair backstage the podium in order to listen to her performance. The first album to her name; "00:29:10:02" was released during the first lockdown and recently reissued on cassette by the micro-label Autogenesis.

Apart from being an industrious and talented musician, Farida Amadou is also a woman of the world, a nomad and curious about things. The path she has chosen in order to reveal her art to us is diverse and based on multiple tracks she will not hesitate to leave if ever the need arises or if that is what it takes to trace a new line for a train in perpetual motion.

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