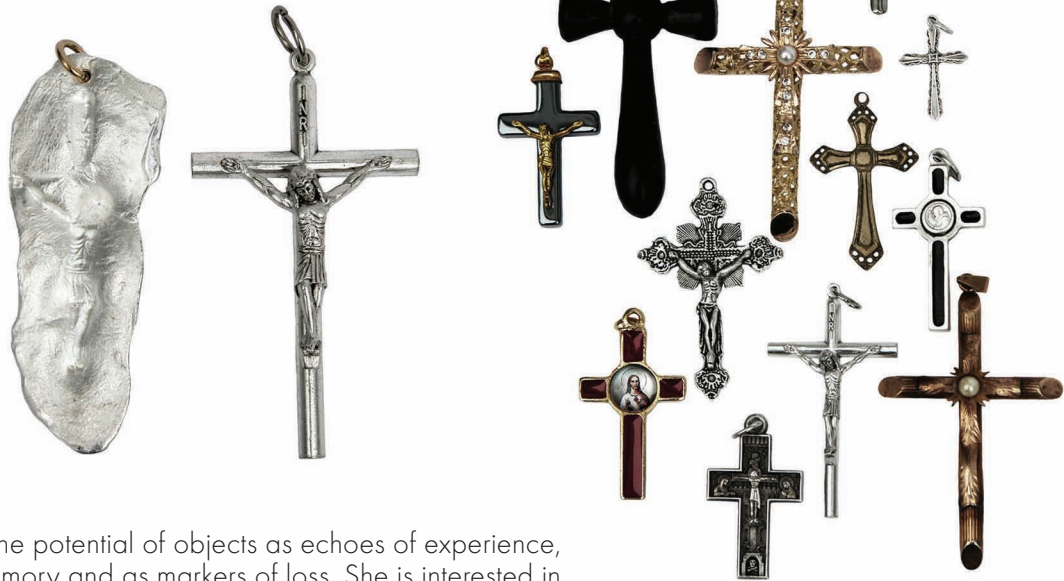


MARIA MILITSI

FRAGMENTS OF MEMORY

Marsden Wool Project Space
3 November - 23 December 2011



Maria Militsi employs the potential of objects as echoes of experience, as fragments of memory and as markers of loss. She is interested in things that are ordinary and familiar, yet strange, and seeks to bring different objects and ideas into close relationship to form new meanings. This feature of her work has been described by Caroline Broadhead as '*... a collision of opposites: complete and incomplete, faithful and mutinous, melancholic and humorous.*'

A work is often triggered by her emotional response to an unwanted item, one discovered in a flea market, purchased through e-bay, or simply found on the street. *Sweet Seventeen*, an incomplete Royal Doulton figurine of exuberant pose is displayed upon a revolving stage, her missing features poignantly replaced by a mass of tiny silver flowers.

These, she points out, both protect the girl's disadvantage *and* draw attention to that which she now lacks.

Militsi acknowledges that her works are often motivated by a need to make sense of her experiences and her immediate environment and two of the works in this exhibition have titles that make reference to teenager

Agnes Sina-Inakoju, the innocent victim of gang crime, who was tragically shot dead last year in a fast-food outlet just around the corner from the artist's Hoxton studio.

Her installation *Self Portraits* is comprised of a collection of found crucifixes in a variety of sizes, decorative styles and materials and composed in the shape of a cross. This is echoed by an adjacent display of their impressions cast in silver-coloured metal. Together they provide a juxtaposition of positive with negative, of colour with monochrome, a multiplicity of materials with a single metal, and the tangible with absent form. The installation is accompanied by a contextualising series of photographic portraits that depict wearers of the symbol of the cross past and present.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Maria Militsi trained at the Mokume School of Jewellery in Greece before gaining a BA (Hons) in Jewellery from Middlesex University (2006) and an MA from the Royal College of Art (2008). She held the post of Head Designer at a jewellery company in Thessalonika (1995 - 2002) before establishing her own art-jewellery practice. She has exhibited internationally: at SOFA, New York with Sharon Kransen Arts (2011), at Goldsmiths Fair, London (2010) and at Collect, London, with Electrum Gallery (2010), as well as in exhibitions in Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Estonia and Japan. Her major work titled 'Ballet-to-Remember' was purchased for the Crafts Council Collection in 2010.

The exhibition is curated by Tessa Peters. The Marsden Wool Project Space runs alongside our programme of solo and small group exhibitions by gallery artists. The Project Space allows us to respond quickly to significant bodies of innovative work and showcases the work of talented emerging artists and designers and fresh directions in the work of more established artists. The exhibitions are organized at short notice, so please check our website regularly for news on forthcoming shows and events.

For more information, images, or to arrange an interview with the artist please contact Alida Sayer or Rachael Crabtree:
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Main image 'Self-portraits' © Maria Militsi (2011)