

# Irene Solà

## There is a story about a woman who

09.07.20 > 10.09.20



"There is a story about a woman who goes into labor when the attending physician is tired. There is a story about a woman who herself was born too early. There is a story about a woman whose body clung to her child so hard they cut her to retrieve him. There is a story about a woman who heard a story about a woman who birthed wolf cubs in secret. When you think about it, stories have this way of running together like raindrops in a pond. Each is borne from the clouds separate, but once they have come together, there is no way to tell them apart".

*Her body and other parties*, Carmen Maria Machado

*There is a story about a woman who / Hi ha una història d'una dona que / There is a story about a woman who* is a project that relates and subverts several images and narratives around a woman riding on top of a man, icons that preach fear and hatred towards the figure of women. These stories and images appear in very different places and contexts; as accusations, in witchcraft trials of modern times, in European legends from the Middle Ages, in the context of the black community of the American South, or the story of Phyllis and Aristotle, a cautionary tale of Asian origin, which spreads, quickly in parts of the West, producing an endless iconography, preaching against women and their seductive ploys.

*There is a story of a woman who* reappropriates this icon of hate, plays with the irony that the image triggers from a critical and contemporary perspective, and reflects on how stories are produced, travel, spread and survive, on the imaginaries they build and on the ideas, intentions and fears attributed to them.

*Witches come in at night an ride Yuh too* (2020) is an installation that contrasts the visual imagery of dozens of representations of the story of Phyllis and Aristotle (dating from the 12th to the 20th century), with fragments of transcriptions of witch trials in which, often in the first person, different men accuse women of having ridden them or explain how they were ridden by witches.

*Una dona que* [A woman who] (2020) is a video created from Youtube clips of women from all over the world riding donkeys, which explains the legend "Les bruixes del pla de les Arenes", the story that triggered this research and project.

*Llegir dret com un cavall* [To read standing up like a horse] (2020) is the installation of a creative text that rethinks the imagination and stories that have been part of the research process, while turning the visitor/reader into a horse.

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By interlacing art and literature, Irene Solà's (Malla, Barcelona 1990) work investigates the construction, uses and possibilities of narrative and storytelling, from the historical and popular contexts to the more contemporary ones,

Irene Solà has a degree in Fine Arts from the University of Barcelona, and a Master's degree in Literature, Film and Audiovisual Culture from the University of Sussex. Her texts and works have been exhibited and read at the Whitechapel Art Gallery and Jerwood Arts Centre in London, CCCB, Bòlit in Girona, MAC in Mataró, ACVIC, Galeria José de la Fuente (Santander), Espai Cultural Rizoma (Celrà), la Bianyal (Vall de Bianya), Sala d'Art Jove, Can Felipa, Cinemes Zumzeig and the JCE European Biennial of Contemporary Art, among others.

She has received the Cálamo Otra Mirada 2020 Award, the Anagrama Book Prize 2019 for her book *Canto jo i la muntanya balla*, the Documenta Award 2017, and the Barcelona Producció- La Capella 2017 grant, as well as one of the grants for literary creation from the Department of Culture of the Generalitat of Catalonia, the Art Jove grant or the Ciutat de Vic grant.

In October 2018 she was a writer-in-residence at the Alan Cheuse International Writers Centre at George Mason University (Virginia), and in autumn 2019, she was a resident at Art Omi - Ledig House (New York) and, most recently, in early 2020, at the Santa Maddalena Foundation (Tuscany).

## List of works

### Room 1

#### ***Phyllis and Aristotle, 2020***

(Ref. Image: Hans Baldung, *Aristotle and Phyllis*, 1515. Kunstmuseum Basel.)

Mural. Black ink on wall

280 x 230 cm.

(variable dimensions)

Ed 1 + 1 PA

#### ***You can always tell, 2020***

(Ref. Image: Master of the Judgment of Paris, *Aristotle and Phyllis*, 1440. Museo Stibbert, Florencia)

Diptych

High quality digital color printing on expanded PVC

Framed

41 x 45 cm. + 41 x 61 cm.

Total dimensions: 41 x 110 cm.

Ed. 3 + 1 AP

### Room 2

#### ***Llegir dret com un cavall, 2020***

Installation. Digital B/W print on A4 paper

30 x 119 cm.

Ed. 5

#### ***Witches come tonight, 2020***

Installation (10 texts + 80 images)

Digital color printing on paper

Variable dimensions

Unique

### Mini-cinema room

#### ***Una dona que, 2020***

Video, color sound

16 min 50 sec

Ed. 3 +1 PA