

*Aime-moi mon amour !*  
**Pétra Werlé exhibition**



*Aime-moi mon amour !* © F.Zvardon 2012.

From May 31st to July 13th 2012

**Béatrice Soulié's Galerie**  
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# Eroticism in soft bread and shivers under bell jars

By [LMG] Lolita M'Gouni

« (...) The mirrors which were covering the walls, and the ceiling itself that was also made of mirrors multiplied the animal picture of some mating: At the slightest movement, our exhausted hearts opened themselves to the vacuum where the infinity of our reflections baffled us. »

Georges Bataille, *Madame Edwarda*<sup>1</sup>

Food has always sustained art but bread comes first in the list, notably in the world of Holy Scriptures and religious iconography. A symbol of life, it can be found in numerous sacred paintings and its importance is established in all three monotheisms. In the last three decades and with these ancient beliefs about this essential foodstuff in her background<sup>2</sup>, Petra Werlé has been using bread as her partner in a game of sort. Following her instinct, she chews, kneads and shapes a mysterious space consisting of flour-covered characters under bell jars and display cases. Because of her thorough style of sculpting, everything seems to be challenged: first the status of a work of art but also the ratio of scales or even our place as viewers. Her prolific work consists in thousands of soft bread creatures, who seem to form a new world, at the junction between Lilliput<sup>3</sup> and Argail<sup>4</sup>.

Béatrice Soulié's gallery is the place where the artist is presenting her latest series of sculptures: A variety of roguish postures, ambiguous nativities, naughty phalanxes and half-opened thighs. In 1998, we had already had a glimpse at her delightful *Erotic Scenes*, which consisted in luxurious curves and other roguish postures...with or without yeast. For this exhibition, Petra adorns her work by giving genuine thought to the landscape in the heart of which her mischievous creatures come either to hide or to exhibit themselves. Petra's mouth sucks, bites and chews bread, her material, to give birth to totemic mountains and phallic exuberances where you can spot a line of miniature epicureans with humid clefts. They are soaked in saliva, now viewers, now exhibitionists; they seem to have stopped moving for a second in order to whisper to us the joys brought by their tiny bacchanalia.

So, could Petra Werlé be a new Aphrodite, the goddess of germination, love and pleasures? By using a foodstuff as a proper material for her creations, she manages to create fruitful links between various kinds of pleasure: the pleasure of the flesh and that of creation, among others, seem to become one thanks to an eager and impulsive practice of sculpture with her world of characters who are both lustful and delightful. We can bet that Madame Edwarda would have found them *good enough to eat!*

LMG [Lolita M'Gouni]

An agrégé teacher in fine arts, preparing a doctorate with a grant Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne, an artist and a writer, Lolita M'Gouni takes to Petra Werlé in 2009. She writes a first interview for her; then follows some mutual interest for each other's creations; they then do a four hand exhibition at the Dupuytren museum in 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> Georges Bataille, *Madame Edwarda*, [1<sup>st</sup> édition 1941], Editions 10/18, Paris, 2010, p.38.

<sup>2</sup> We are referring here to a series of sculptures made with a variety of breads from around the world, *Procession*, Petra Werlé, 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's travels*, [1<sup>st</sup> edition 1726], *Complete works*, Gallimard editions, Paris, 1965.

<sup>4</sup> We are referring here to the fantastic universe in the novel by Charles Nodier, *Trilby or the goblin in Argail: Scottish tales* [1<sup>st</sup> edition 1822] Terre de brume editions, Dinan, 1999.