

PRUNE NOURRY

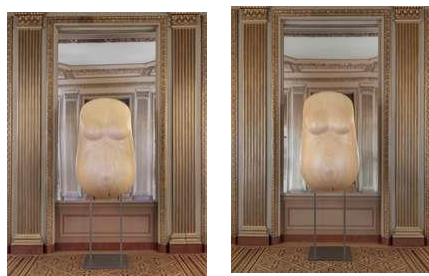
Erogenous Amazon

Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium – In collaboration with Galerie Templon



Erogenous Amazon [2019]

Erogenous Amazon is composed of a target, which center mimics a breast nipple, and of 108 arrows. This site-specific installation echoes Prune Nourry's 2018 sculpture *The Amazon*. In Greek mythology, the Amazons would fight with bows, having cut off one of their breasts to aim with ease at their target. The number of arrows is also a direct reference to Nourry's on-going project: *Terracotta Daughters*, 108 terracotta sculptures inspired by the Chinese Army of Xi'an, and buried in a secret-location in China until 2030.



Fertility Mask #1 [2022]

Fertility Mask #2 [2022]

In the tradition of her previous sculptures made of bronze, terracotta and burnt wood, and inspired by African masks worn on the belly during ceremonies to summon fertility, the artist transcribes these masks on a large scale [three meters high].

Made of stucco with trompe l'oeil paint imitating wood, these new works were unveiled for the first time at the Grand Théâtre in Geneva, whose walls are covered with trompe l'oeil materials, and with the very symbolism of the theatre. Stucco is a material that has been used for centuries for decorations and decorative sculptures, imitating marble in particular; here it imitates wood, more precisely beech and oak. The mask is the theatrical artifice that has existed since the origins of the theatre, allowing both the identification of the character and the concealment of the actor playing the role, but it is also a ritual object, allowing a human being to serve as a vessel to speak on behalf of a god.



Self-Defense [2019]

In reference to her 2018 large-scale *The Amazon*, Prune Nourry has sculpted here the warrior woman's bow and arrow. Nourry's defensive weapon, made from beech wood for its skin tone, has been delicately transformed into a breast seen from the side. This installation can be read as a reference to the Greek myth of the Amazons, but also offers a wide range of poetic resonance, from the healing process to Cupid's arrow.



Single Breasted Huntress [2021]

Single-breasted Huntress is a bronze sculpture that represents the figure of the Amazon. In Greek mythology, the Amazons were the daughters of Ares, the god of war, and following a rebellion against their male-dominated society, they are said to have founded a nation of proud and powerful warrior women. In

the legend, it is said that they mutilated their right breast in order to better handle a bow and spear. Indeed, the word "amazon" means "without breast". Prune Nourry wishes to pay tribute to this mythological figure, which also refers to her own fight against breast cancer.



Circle of Life (2021)

Circle of Life can be compared to the *Catharsis* series produced between 2018 and 2019. The theme of maternity, dear to the artist, is represented here: the breasts, round belly and legs of a pregnant woman emerge from the wall as if the body is floating in a bath of milk. Fragments of life, these limbs are also reminiscent of the *ex voto* that very much inspired Prune Nourry during her own catharsis after her illness.



Catharsis (2019)

Catharsis is one of the five small versions of Prune Nourry's 2018 *The Amazon*: a 5-meter high concrete sculpture, inspired by the *Wounded Amazon*, a Roman statue from the 2nd century BC in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum (New York). As with the larger original, *Catharsis* is covered with numerous incense sticks; these refer to the Japanese tradition of *mizuko kuyo*: women who have had a miscarriage or abortion offer incense in temples for the unborn child. Like *The Amazon*, *Catharsis* has only one breast. In addition to the legend of the Amazon, the woman with her breast cut off refers to the breast cancer that Nourry defeated.



Miracle Woman [2019]

Miracle Woman is the result of Prune Nourry's interest in the universal power of ex-voto, votive offerings given to a deity to grant a wish or as an act of devotion. Here she is inspired in particular by the miniature anatomical ex-voto found mainly in Mexico: the *milagros* [or miracle in Spanish]. They are traditionally used for healing purposes, either to express gratitude for an illness that has been overcome, or to testify to the hope placed in a future treatment. Playing here the role of an ex-voto for the breast cancer that Nourry went through some years ago, *Miracle Woman* also continues her reflections on the female body and fertility. The choice of terracotta is not insignificant: most of the ex-voto unearthed by archaeologists are made of terracotta, a medium that resists well the passage of time. Similarly, the use of silver refers directly to the Mexican *milagros*, generally sculpted in this precious metal.