

PORTFOLIO

performance art

I V A N A R A N I S A V L J E V I Ć

2026

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ARTISTIC APPROACH
AND CONCEPT

Ivana Ranisavljević Ivana Ranisavljević (b. 1983, Belgrade) began as a painter. Her early work was devoted to Jungian psychoanalytic theory — archetypes, ritual systems, and the visual language of the unconscious — explored through painting and installation. The turning point came around 2012, when she entered the field of physical theatre and dance performance through a collaboration with director Uroš Jovanović. What followed was, in her own words, an existential shift — from image to body as primary medium.

Since then, her practice has developed as a consistent and courageous investigation into the relationship between the female body, patriarchal structures, and social norms. Through endurance performances, bodily interventions, and durational practices, she poses questions that Serbian institutional culture often avoids: who has the right to space, voice, and visibility? What does the female body carry, remember, and refuse to forget?



Her work has received international recognition — acquired by the Wiener Art Collection, a collection of contemporary Serbian art by Wiener Städtische, and presented at the Venice International Performance Art Week (2016, 2017), in Italy, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Poland and Estonia. She was shortlisted for the Serbian pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2024. During a formative period, she trained and collaborated with the most significant figures of international body art — Marina Abramović, Franko B, VestAndPage, and Andriego&Aliprandi.

Today, alongside developing a new cycle of works at the intersection of performance and textile installation, she is founding Kožuar Art Lab — a rural arts centre and residency programme in western Serbia, built on the same principles that drive her artistic practice: presence, resistance, and belief in the transformative power of art.

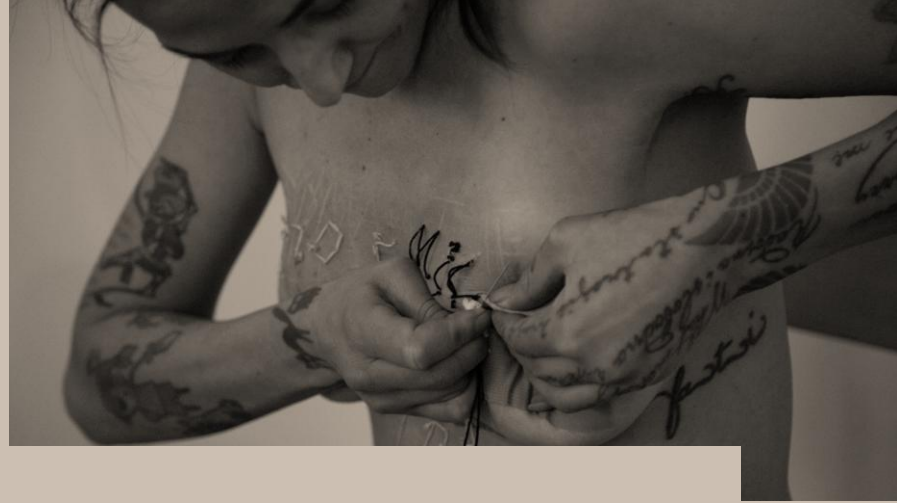
ARTIST BIO

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SELECTED WORKS



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- SHARED SKIN, performance triptych, 2024
- IN THE SILENCE OF THE ENCOUNTER II, performance 2024
- IN THE SILENCE OF THE ENCOUNTER I, video-work, 2024
- THRESHOLD WOMAN, diptych photography, 2021-2022
- IN THE NAME OF THE MOTHER AND THE DAUGHTER, performance, part I, 2023
- IN THE NAME OF THE MOTHER AND THE DAUGHTER, performance, part II, 2023
- WITHIN THE VEIL OF SPEAKING BITTERNESS, interactive installation, 2023 – (ongoing)
- THE WEDDING DRESS, installation 2023 – (ongoing)
- MY MEMORY OF THE FUTURE, video-work, 2023
- TRACES OF SOFT SCRIPT, performance triptych, 2021

SHARED SKIN

performance triptych, 2024

Author: Ivana Ranisavljević

Camera: Filip Stefanović, Đorđe Cvijović,

Editing: Filip Stefanović

Photography: Filip Stefanović, Claudia Caldarano, Matthias Krause, Alfonso Moral

Link: <https://youtu.be/NoDrPp4KaOI>

Concept

Shared Skin consists of three parts: My Body My Playground and Your Mind is Your Battleground — performances for the camera — and Redefine, performed live before an audience at Flutgraben, Berlin.

The work takes Barbara Kruger's *Your Body is a Battleground* (1989) as its starting point — a piece that named the body as a site of political and social struggle. More than thirty years later, that struggle has not ended. Shared Skin enters it from the inside: words are sewn directly into the artist's skin using needle and thread, or cut with a scalpel. The body becomes a palimpsest — a surface on which history is written, erased, and written again.

Thread colours carry specific meaning: red for strength, sexuality, and creativity; white for new beginnings and introspection; black as neutral ground. Two words — ground and re — are not sewn but carved with a scalpel, written in blood. The breasts, covered with skin-toned tape, are simultaneously concealed and exposed — a commentary on what society

permits the body to show, and on whose terms.

The triptych traces an internal arc. In the first part, the body is claimed as territory — a declaration. In the second, it is the mind that wages war within itself, its conflict spilling outward into reality; the blood running from ground is not a symbol of defeat but living matter, the body's own capacity for transformation. That viewers often read it as a battlefield is itself part of the work — a mirror of how deeply we are conditioned to see bodies as sites of suffering rather than agency.

In the third part, the subject becomes whole. For the first time, the face appears — direct, present, undefeated. RE bleeds red; DEFINE is sewn in black and holds. Transformation is not painless. But it is possible.

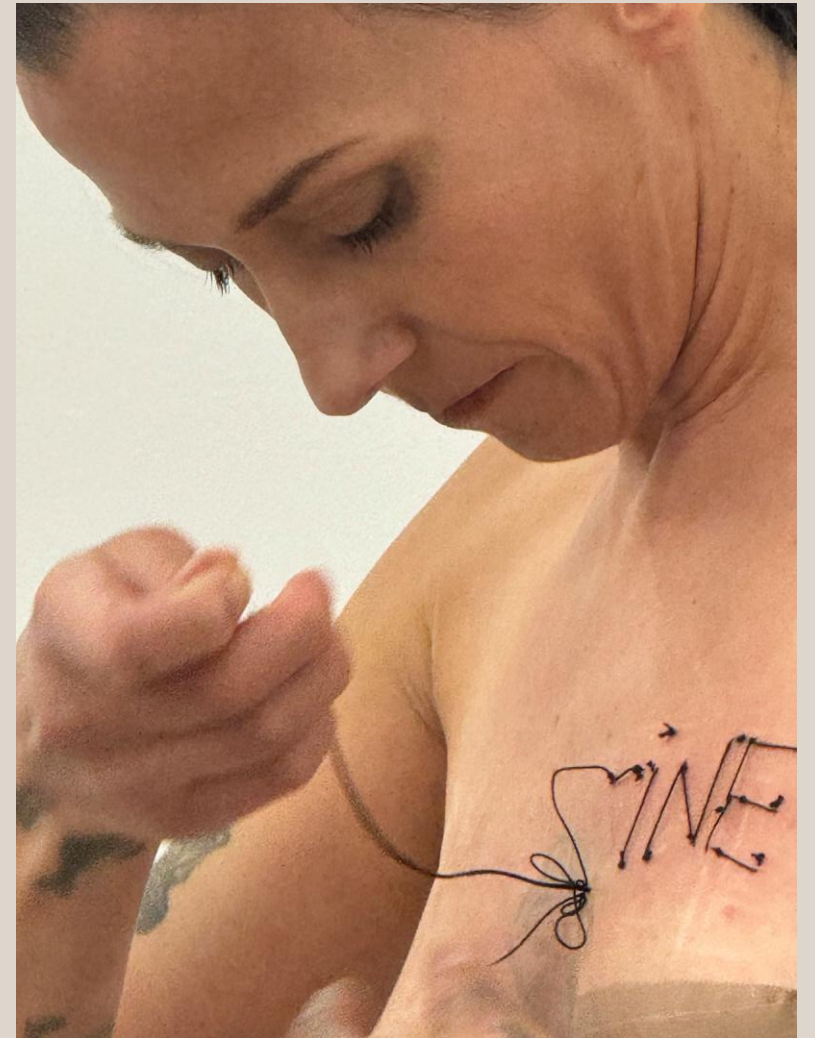
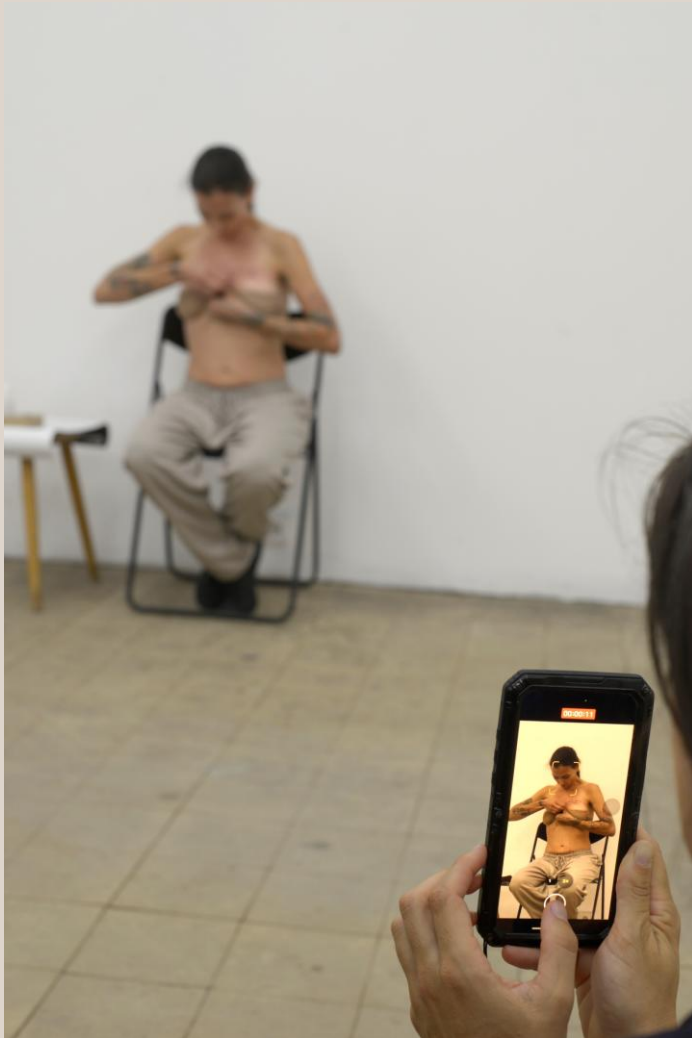
Shared Skin is not only a feminist work. It is a demand addressed to every normative system — patriarchal, corporate, capitalist — that defines the subject from the outside. The act of sewing words into one's own skin is an act of taking back the power to define. Transgression here is not destruction. It is a provocation addressed to every mind willing to be disturbed.



Shared Skin, performance triptych, part I, "My Body, My Playground", performance for the camera by Ivana Ranisavljević, 2024, photo Filip Stefanović



Shared Skin, performance triptych, part II, "Your Mind is Your Battleground", performance for the camera by Ivana Ranisavljević, 2024, photo Filip Stefanović



Shared Skin, performance triptych, part III, "Redefine", live performance by Ivana Ranisavljević, IMPORT/EXPORT, Flutgraben, Berlin (DE), 2024, photo Matthias Krause (1,2), Claudia Caldarano (3)

IN THE SILENCE OF THE ENCOUNTER II

performance, 2024

Author: Ivana Ranisavljević

Camera: Fiip Stefanović

Editing: Filip Stefanović

Photos: Luka Knežević Strika

Duration: 6 min

Concept

In the Silence of the Encounter II intervenes in one of the deepest and most normalised structures of patriarchal order — the family table — transforming it into a field of visibility for what has been systematically rendered invisible.

The dramaturgy of the performance is reduced to an almost ritual minimum: the men sit, the woman serves. What separates this scene from its everyday version is blood. The artist approaches the table with an open vein, and as she sets down the plates and cutlery — objects that encode care, service, and women's domestic labour — blood drips. The attempt to wipe it away with a sponge does not clean but smears, stains, spreads. A cleaning that produces a greater trace than the wound itself becomes a precise metaphor for the mechanisms by which the patriarchal system operates: the more a woman attempts to neutralise her own sacrifice, the more visible it becomes, the more deeply inscribed into the surface of shared life.

The three white halos that remain after the men leave — perfect, untouched circles where their plates had been — visualise privilege as the absence of trace. They leave clean. The plate that remains, with its drops of blood, is not merely hers. It is evidence.

What makes this work particularly complex is the conscious consent of its participants. The father, the brother, the husband were not manipulated or surprised — they knew. And yet they sat. And yet they rose and left. That consent does not free them from the role they play; it inscribes them more deeply into it. The system does not rest on ill intent but on normalisation. Men who love the women in their lives can simultaneously be carriers of the structures that render those same women invisible.

Unawareness is not innocence. It is a form of participation.



In the Silence of the Encounter II, performance, 2024, Ostavinska MKM, Belgrade, Photo: Luka Knežević Strika

IN THE SILENCE OF THE ENCOUNTER I

Video-work, 2024

Author: Ivana Ranisavljević

Camera: Đorđe Cvijović

Editing: Filip Stefanović

Duration: 20 min

Link: <https://youtu.be/vcTH9G5NaAY>

Concept

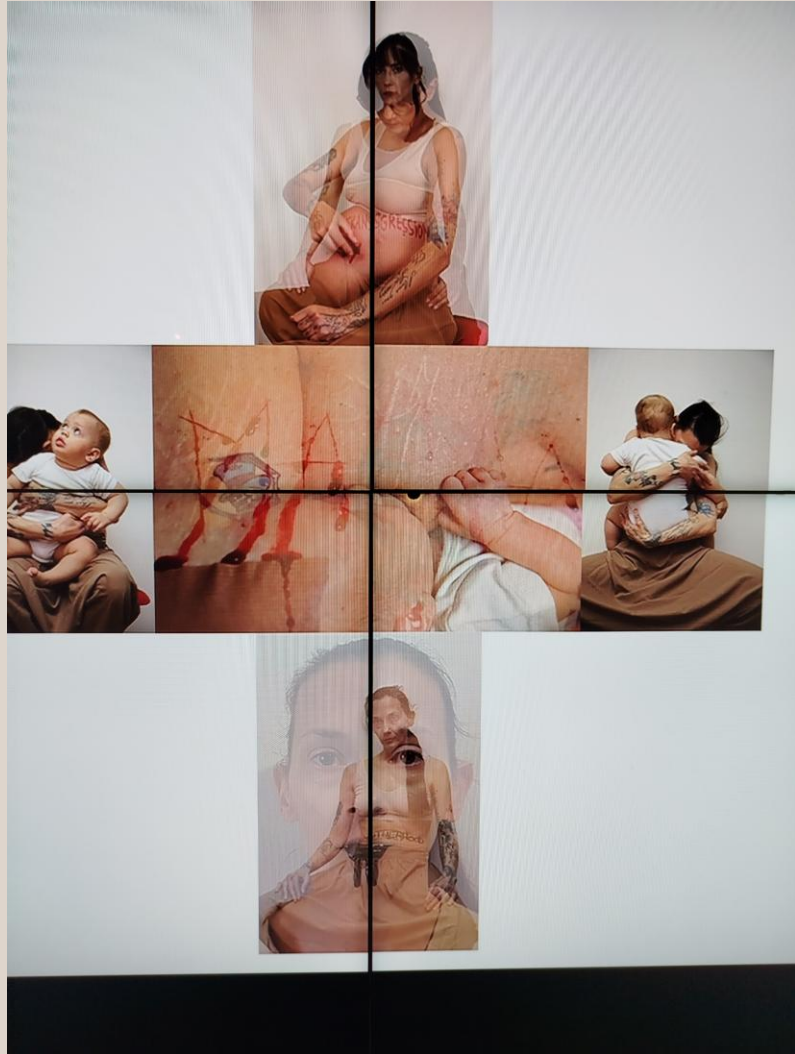
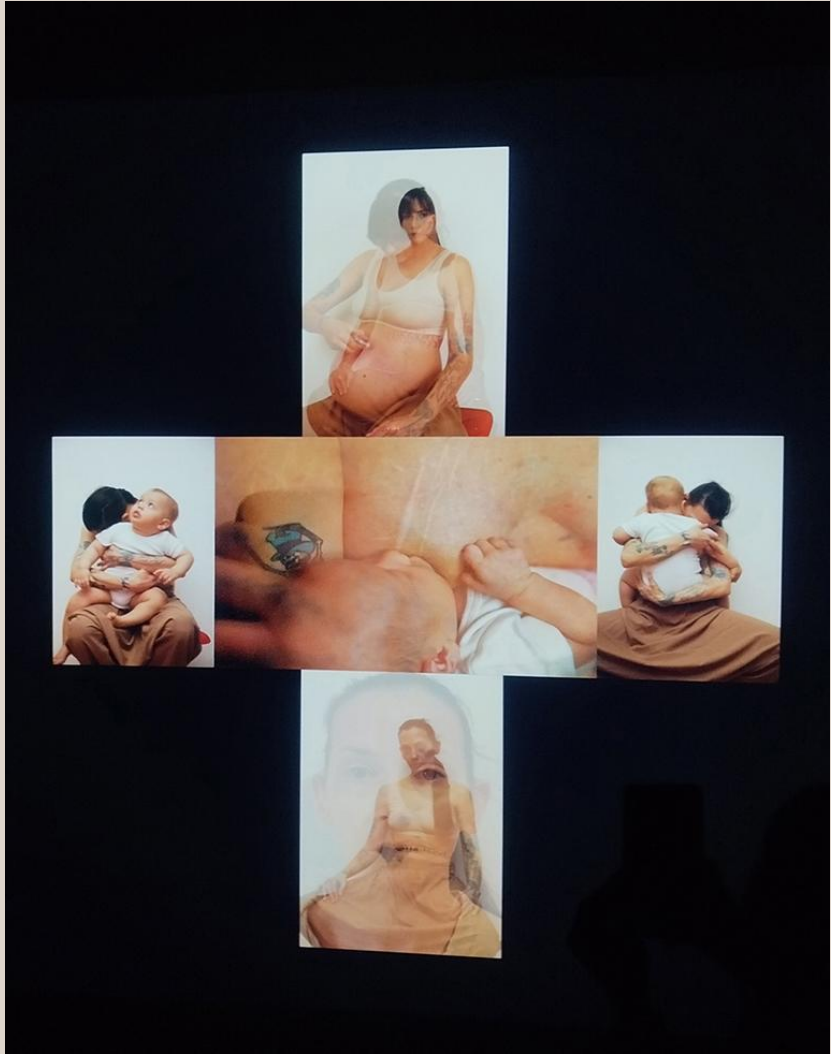
In the Silence of the Encounter I explores the transformation of female identity through the experience of pregnancy, childbirth, and early motherhood. Through a visual representation of a cruciform composition, the work intertwines photography and video performances, emphasizing the liminal phase in which the subject finds herself between the old and new identities.

The central visual elements include the author's figure during pregnancy with the word "transgression" written on her stomach, the maternal figure with the word "motherhood," as well as scenes of breastfeeding and physical interventions on the body. The video segments further highlight the internal struggle between the past self and the new identity of the mother, which emerges as a paradox — simultaneously powerful and fragile, tender and angry, real and unrecognizable.

The work thematizes pregnancy as a state of physical, emotional, and social transgression. It opens a liminal space of uncertainty — women find themselves in an intermediate space between the old identity and the new one that has yet to be defined. Childbirth, although considered the conclusion of this phase, often prolongs it, introducing the subject into a state of fragmentation, where past and future identities collide.

Feminist theories recognize motherhood not only as a biological role but also as a social position shaped by patriarchal norms. The woman in the role of mother often goes through isolation, social redefinition, and the loss of her previous identity. This work problematizes the contemporary position of the mother — is she accepted as a full-fledged subject, or does she remain on the margins of social structures?

Through visual and bodily narration, *In the Silence of the Encounter I* opens up space for reflecting on motherhood not only as an individual experience but also as a broader social phenomenon in which questions of identity, transgression, and belonging intersect.



In the Silence of the Encounter I, video-work by Ivana Ranisavljević, 2024

THRESHOLD WOMAN

Diptych photography, 2021–2022

Author: Ivana Ranisavljević

Photography: Đorđe Cvijović

Concept

Threshold Woman explores the boundaries between the physical and psychological stages that a woman experiences, highlighting the inner conflict she undergoes when transitioning from pregnancy to motherhood. This transition involves not only a change of roles but also a struggle with societal expectations and norms that, through the patriarchal structure, influence the woman's physical appearance. Patriarchy often shapes the image of a woman, recognizing and valuing her according to her physical appearance, which not only diminishes her inner freedom but also creates unconscious tension between the desire for self-recognition and the pressures of the outside world.

The photographs reveal the psychological space of the "threshold," where risks and opportunities collide, creating tension between the identity before and after childbirth. This work not only explores the personal process of transformation but also connects with collective issues of women in society, particularly in the context of patriarchal norms and expectations.

Through this work, the artist reflects on the significance of the psychological and social aspects of this transitional period, exploring how society shapes a woman and her role, and how a woman herself perceives and processes these changes.



Threshold Woman, diptych photography, 2021–2022, Ivana Ranisavljević, photo Đorđe Cvijović

IN THE NAME OF THE MOTHER AND THE DAUGHTER

Performance diptych (part I), 2023

Author: Ivana Ranisavljević

IMPORT/EXPORT international art project

Location: Fortezza Vecchia, Livorno, Italy

Camera: Matthias Krause Hamrin

Photo: Laura Sgherri

Duration: 30 min

Video edit: Đorđe Cvijović

Link: <https://youtu.be/cyKvOy2oGJI>

Concept

The performance *In the Name of the Mother and Daughter* explores the transmission of knowledge and the empowerment of women through the act of articulating women's rights. The performance begins with sewing the lips together, symbolizing the silencing of the female voice, after which the artist cuts the seam and reads a declaration of women's rights. The text of the declaration is composed of excerpts from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Beijing Declaration, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, with the reading beginning with the words: "Dear daughter, I wish for you to..."

The performance emphasizes the educational function of art – through public reading, it introduces current and future generations to the rights that women have and those they should have. The artist's voice becomes a tool for collective awareness, and the audience is not just a passive observer, but an active participant in the process of re-examining social norms.

The central setup includes a table, a chair, and a mirror, creating a space for reflection and interaction. The artist's gaze in the mirror invites the audience to confront their own beliefs and the barriers that shape the female experience. The lighting is arranged to emphasize the tension between the repressed and the spoken, between silence and empowerment.

When a daughter becomes a mother, she transmits knowledge to the next generation. This performance illuminates the cycle of the female experience, but also the possibility of its interruption – through education, awareness, and change.

The performance was re-performed at the Podroom Gallery, Belgrade Cultural Center, in 2025, as part of the solo exhibition *Other Skins*.



In the Name of the Mother and the Daughter, art performance (part I) by Ivana Ranisavljević, IMPORT/EXPORT art project, Fortezza Vecchia, Livorno (IT), 2023



In the Name of the Mother and the Daughter, art performance by Ivana Ranisavljević, solo exhibition *Other Skins*, Podroom Gallery (KCB), Belgrade (SRB), 2025

IN THE NAME OF THE MOTHER AND THE DAUGHTER

Diptych performance (part II), 2023

Author: Ivana Ranisavljević

IMPORT/EXPORT art event

Location: Fortezza Vecchia, Livorno, Italy

Camera: Matthias Krause Hamrin

Photo: Laura Sgherri

Duration: 3 hours

Video edit: Đorđe Cvijović

Link: <https://youtu.be/cyKvOy2oGII>

Concept

The second part of the performance *In the Name of the Mother and Daughter* is a continuation of the inquiry into women's rights through participatory artistic practice. After performing the act of sewing and unsewing the lips in the first part, the artist enters a new phase of interaction with the audience – creating a space for collective reflection and awareness through written word.

The audience is greeted by a minimalist set design: a table covered with a long white cloth and red markers inviting participation. The artist begins the process of writing sentences that describe personal and collective experiences of the violation of women's rights and societal limitations. The first sentence is symbolically written by the artist with a pencil, then with embroidery – red thread – continuing the exploration of female

handwriting and traditional women's crafts in a contemporary activist context.

During several hours of the performance, in a silence filled with respect and presence, the audience gradually becomes involved, leaving their confessions on the cloth. Each written trace becomes part of the collective body of testimonies, an archive of suppressed voices and unspoken stories.

This performance does not end with the act of the artist – it leaves an open space for further development. From this process, a separate work *In the Veil of Speaking Bitterness* emerges, functioning as a living, changing installation, recording the voices of women from different cultures and generations.

Educational Dimension of the Performance

The performance has a strong educational and activist component – it not only raises awareness among those present about forms of discrimination but also invites them to actively participate in writing a new history of the female experience. The artist uses the artistic act as a means of documenting and archiving voices that are often silenced or ignored.

The performance was first presented in 2023 in Livorno (Italy), as part of the international art project IMPORT/EXPORT.

WITHIN THE VEIL OF SPEAKING BITTERNESS

Interactive Installation, 2023 – (ongoing)

Author: Ivana Ranisavljević

Location of the first performance: Livorno, Italy, 2023

Subsequent Performances: Lazarevac, Belgrade, Rudnik (SRB), Banja Luka (BA-SRP), Berlin (DE), with further planned exhibitions

Photo: Claudia Caldarano (1), Ivana Ranisavljević (2, 3, 4), Ema Ugarčina (5, 6)

Concept

Within the Veil of Speaking Bitterness is a living installation that grows. A white cloth — now six metres long — carries several hundred written and embroidered sentences: accounts of rape and physical violence, tragedies that were never spoken aloud, but also the small, everyday phrases heard since childhood that quietly and deeply inscribe themselves into consciousness — because we are women, and therefore worth less.

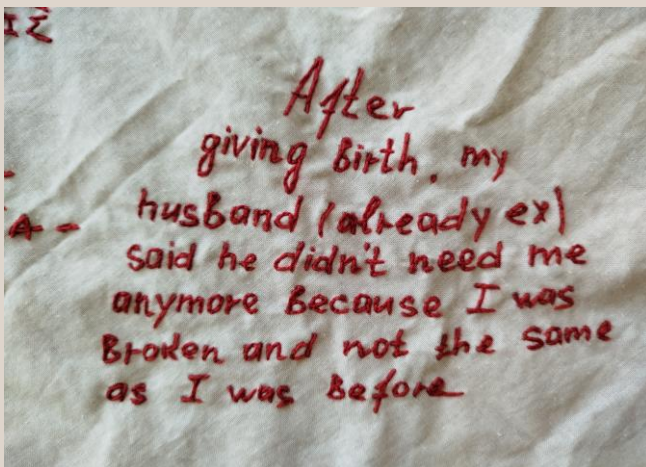
The installation is born from interaction with its audience. Anyone who approaches the table — laid with white cloth and red markers — is invited to write their own or another's story of violated rights and discrimination against women. The artist takes these written sentences and embroiders them in red thread into the fabric. Through this act, the words are transformed: they cease to be testimony alone and become embodied, permanent, indelible.

The title draws from the Chinese tradition of *speaking bitterness* — an ancient form of collective female testimony that evolved from lamentation into political activism within women's movements.

The work began in Livorno in 2023 and has since travelled — Lazarevac, Belgrade, Rudnik, Banja Luka, Berlin. At each location the cloth grows longer, enriched by new voices, new languages, new cultures. Its power lies in accumulation: the more experiences it carries, the more clearly it reveals how deeply discrimination against women is embedded in the norm — so deeply that it often remains invisible, especially to those who do not live it.

The work invites both women and men. Men who approach the cloth often encounter for the first time experiences that surround them but have never reached them. That awakening — quiet, in the silence of a gallery, before a cloth full of others' pain — is the heart of the work.

In some presentations, the artist sits beside the cloth and embroiders in the presence of the audience, transforming the installation into a live performance. This does not happen at every showing — but when it does, the boundary between artwork and act dissolves entirely.



Within of Veil of Speaking Bitterness, interactive installation, by Ivana Ranisavljević , 2023 – (on going)

THE WEDDING DRESS

Installation, 2023 – (on going)

Concept

The wedding dress is made from old and used hand-crocheted tablecloths that the artist's mother had kept for decades. Their patina, traces of use, and wear carry a dual symbolism: on one hand, the sentimental value of handmade work, and on the other, the weight of tradition passed down through generations via "women's" crafts and expectations.

The wedding dress, as a visual embodiment of the "aesthetics of beauty," carries a deeply rooted societal symbolism of women as objects — as those who are "given away," who are not heirs but "foreign" in another home. Through the very materiality of the work, the issue of female heritage is emphasized, not only in the context of family objects but also in the inherited societal roles that shape a woman's identity within patriarchal structures.

The artistic use of handcrafts, which have been marginalized for decades as "domestic crafts," questions their historical subordination and their subversive power in the contemporary artistic context. Since the Renaissance, when women were

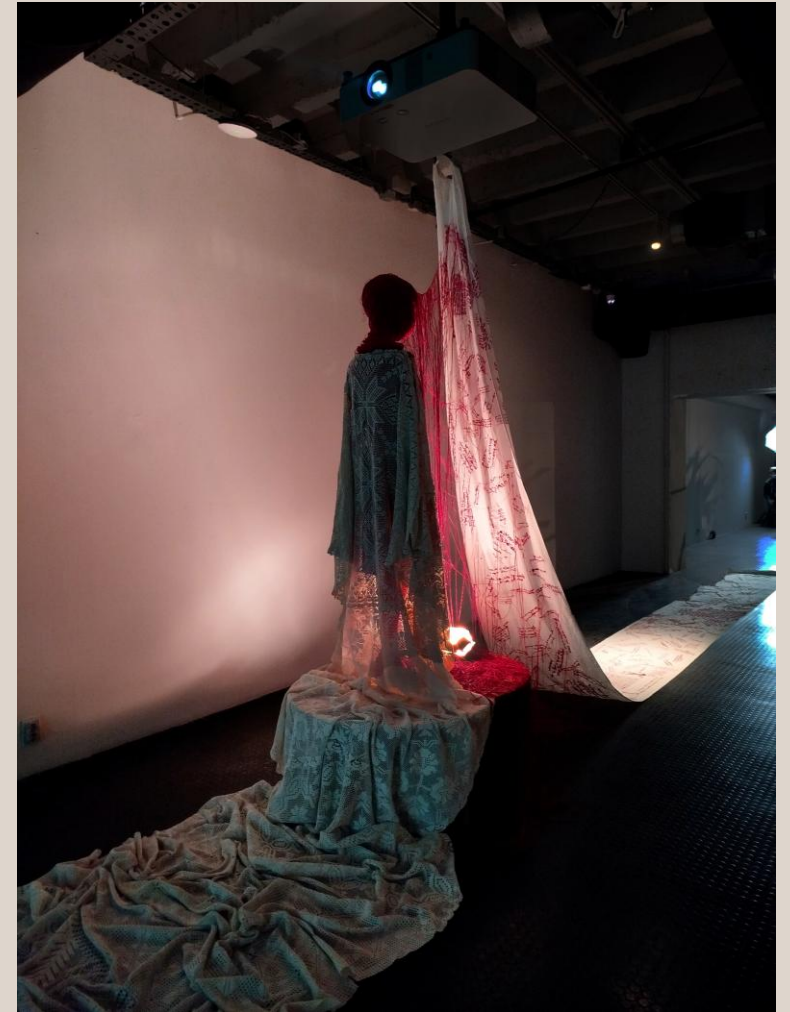
systematically excluded from "high art," handcrafts became a symbol of their social marginalization. However, with the development of feminist art and engaged artistic practices, it has been re-adopted and transformed into a tool of critique and empowerment.

In this work, the wedding dress functions as both a burden and a possibility for transformation. While the material from which it is made bears witness to the invisible labor of generations of women, its artistic contextualization enables the redefinition of meaning and opens space for changing the perception of female identity, choice, and the right to inheritance — not just material but also symbolic.

The Wedding Dress is not a static work; it is progressively enriched over the years with new donated tablecloths, symbolically carrying the stories and memories of different women. The work thus acquires an additional dimension of collective female experience and continuity.



The Wedding Dress, installation, by Ivana Ranisavljević, 2023 – (on going), photo Đorđe Cvijović



An installation composed of two works: *The Wedding Dress* and *Within the Veil of Speaking Bitterness*, solo-exhibition *Other Skins*, Podroom Gallery (KCB), Belgrade, Serbia, 2025

MY MEMORY OF THE FUTURE

Video-work, 2023

Author: Ivana Ranisavljević

Camera and editing: Đorđe Cvijović

Photo: Đorđe Cvijović

Duration: 6 min 29 sec

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntAU9WCJ3_c&t=11s

Concept

My Memory of the Future explores the relationship between personal and collective pasts through the lens of women's heritage. The work is based on a performance filmed for the camera, featuring three generations of women: the author, her daughter, and her husband's grandmother. Through the dialogue of image and sound, the work problematizes the transmission of women's experiences within a patriarchal system and the possibility of overcoming them.

The central visual motif consists of two wedding dresses: one from the author's own wedding and the other made of hand-crocheted tablecloths kept by her mother. This second dress symbolizes the burden of tradition and women's cultural heritage, a symbolism also carried in the later performance *In the Name of the Mother and Daughter*. The space in which the performance takes place – the threshold of the author's grandfather's house – marks the place of conflict between the past and the future, a place where family heritage is transmitted and potentially transformed.

The sound segment of the performance is based on interviews with the husband's grandmother, whose responses reflect the experiences of generations of women who faced limitations in marriage, work, and inheritance within the patriarchal system. The overlap of sound and image constructs an aesthetic of memory, as well as a hidden critique of societal patterns that repeat across generations.

In feminist theories, the term "reverse memory" refers to "memory of the future" – a process in which the past is revised to open the possibility for a different future. Feminist revision involves rewriting a culture shaped by patriarchy, but this work raises the question: is revision possible if patterns are unconsciously inherited?

My Memory of the Future does not only critically reflect on past experiences but also opens space for a new identity of women – one that does not reproduce a system of subordination, but rather raises awareness and transforms it.



My Memory of the Future, video-work, detail, by Ivana Ranisavljević, 2023, photo Đorđe Cvijović

TRACES OF SOFT SCRIPT

A triptych of performances, 2021

Author: Ivana Ranisavljević

Camera and editing: Đorđe Cvijović

Photography: Marina Ilić (1,2,3,4,6), Đorđe Cvijović (5)

Video link: <https://youtu.be/oxXkBnJloPA>

Concept

Traces of Soft Writing (2021) is a triptych of performances executed in different locations and time periods. Each act involves the ritual of embroidering sentences onto the artist's own skin with a needle and thread, followed by standing in front of institutions of power: the National Assembly of Serbia, the New Maternity Hospital in Lazarevac, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade.

The embroidered sentences – *No milk for the old system*, *Let the future lead*, *No art worker no future* – represent a stance against oppressive societal mechanisms. The work examines the role of women in an androcentric system, critiques patriarchal values, and advocates for change through artistic action.

The inspiration comes from the artist's mother's hand-stitched embroidery, traditionally considered a "woman's craftsmanship."

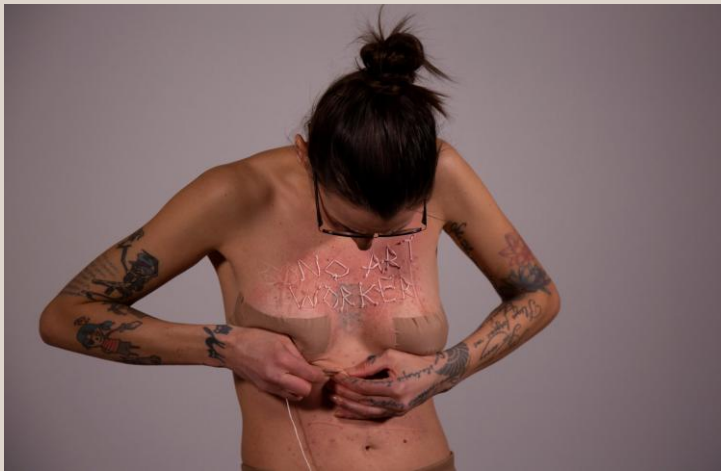
However, in this context, embroidery becomes a subversive act – inscribed directly onto the body, it is both a weapon and a message.

The physical intervention symbolizes transgression and a break from the phallogocentric system, raising questions about women's strength and persistence in the fight for autonomy.

Each of the three performances addresses a key societal issue:

- *No milk for the old system* – rejecting submission to patriarchal and capitalist structures, affirming a woman's right to autonomy and choice.
- *No art worker no future* – a critique of the undervaluation of cultural labor and its necessity for the evolution of human consciousness.
- *Let the future lead* – a call to break away from repressive patterns and actively shape a different future.

The triptych functions as a whole, questioning mechanisms of control, coercion, and resistance, while redefining the role of the body, art, and political subjectivity in contemporary society.



Traces of Soft Script, performance triptych, by Ivana Ranisavljević, 2021, Belgrade (SRB), photo Marina Ilić, Đorđe Cvijović



Traces of Soft Script, performance triptych, by Ivana Ranisavljević, 2021, Belgrade (SRB), photo Marina Ilić

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