

I keep a folder dedicated to the tongue, that strangely active extension of sensory flesh. Rama talks about one of her lovers having a Kafkian tongue. I laugh. The man in front turns around. Rama's laugh splits in two directions. She laughs through her sex as much as she laughs through her mouth.

In Rama's watercolours the serpents coming from vaginas that hands grasp are not tightly located organs. These serpents pass right through the body, as if that strange extension of sensory flesh was not tied to the back of the mouth, but was a loose organ that stretched all the way down the throat, through a hole in the womb, out the vagina and into the world. It's not about birth. It's a force, an animal, freedom writhing wild inside and out of a human form. It's an ecstasy that knows no bounds and furthermore, doesn't seem to need a man, or a god. Hysterical perhaps. Physicians starved hysterics to sedate their terrifying unpredictability, their irrational verbal expulsions and unfathomable hunger. The physician was afraid of being eaten, of being consumed into an inhuman unknowability. Yet he was also fascinated and so, like Peeping Tom he hid behind the hole of a camera.

Rama's watercolours seem to be aimed at the viewer. Her figures take positions that position us. Serpents and tongues shoot out, at us.



Inner tubes from bicycle tyres cut. Limp rubber hung. Hung. I love the word hung, how it hangs at the end, stretches out and can't quite end.



Rama says she loves penises, because they've given her so much pleasure. So much so, it seems she's sucked them flaccid and stolen them from their bodies. 'But you said, she didn't need a man'. What I mean is, she defied the coupling norm. Her love of the penis was of many penises. Penises multiply

like her tongues. Two men stand behind her with their many penises hanging over her shoulder. At first I don't notice the men and see only the two packs of penises, that I read as a tribal necklace of freshly cut flesh instead of bone. Dick is singular and powerful. I say penis when it comes to Rama, even though she says dick. Penis sounds silly and fits in a pack. 'I'd fuck all five.' she says 'Because instinct and pleasure are universal.'

Rama didn't simply love penises for the pleasure they gave her. Rama wanted a penis for herself. 'I've always wanted to be a bullfighter. To be male. Beautiful. Piss everyone off...' Rama wants to penetrate, maybe even more than being penetrated. She isn't fucked. She fucks. It's a serpent dildo wildly laughing that she's waving in our faces.

Rama's love is of hot flowing blood, of breaking the boundaries of distinctions. She dismantles identification with a style, with a species, with a sex, with a coupling. 'These tits and bull dicks, this way of seeing the anatomy of everybody in shared parts.' Nothing's owned. Species don't meet. They aren't objects outside one another. They pass through one another, get muddled up. Contaminating more than touching. Amputated limbs arranged side by side don't differentiate, but metamorphose one to the next, foot to hoof. Biology is deeply queer.

'Freedom is an individual concept', she says. In my fiction, Rama's freedom is in the form of a hole that holds onto nothing. Only passing through. Right through. Entry to exit. Eye. Mouth. Vagina. Ass. Nothing's totally enclosed. Bodies are tubes that suck, eat, shit and spit, turning differential solids into compost.

At the tip of her dick is a little slit. There's always a hole that's laughing.

There's a woman squatting called Marta, whose indulging in the infantile pleasure of shitting. She has an excessively pear shaped body, with pink ass cheeks that nearly fill the width of the page. Marta is timeless. That is, she is going to shit until the end of time. As periods pass and fashions change, I am convinced this shitting woman will still be shitting in her small frame. There's been more recent figures shitting in art, but they're often busy, jittery and glittery. Rama gives most of the space over to a void body punctuated at either end by an intimate expulsion. The eye moves from tongue to shit and back. Tongue and shit shouldn't mix. It's a quiet image with a gently hot hiss. Marta is an incredibly beautiful drawing of a seemingly abject act. Marta is not without humour, but it's a cheeky childish humour, and after the humour something else takes it's place. It's verging on unfathomable to my digitalised mind. Marta makes me miss drawing, like it was the long lost love of my life.

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The above is a selection of fragments written in response to the exhibition *The Passion According to Carol Rama* at IMMA, 2016. All quotes and references to Rama's words come from either the video documentary that is in the exhibition, or from an interview with Corrado Levi and Filippo Fossati, 1996. The latter can be found online at - <http://www.essogallery.com/Carol%20Rama/InterviewCR.html>