

**MUSÉES DE LA VILLE DE STRASBOURG**

Strasbourg, 20 March 2018

**Press Release**

**Exhibition**

***Joana Vasconcelos, I Want to Break Free***

**Strasbourg Modern & Contemporary Art Museum**

**5 October 2018 – 17 February 2019**

For the duration of the exhibition “Joana Vasconcelos, I Want to Break Free”, the MAMCS exhibition space, laid out in the style of an apartment with cornices, carpets and corridors, becomes an extravagant residence where objects are endowed with extraordinary powers.

This ‘home sweet home’ offers an itinerary including both ‘iconic’ works, marked by the ‘glamour’ aesthetic that has made the Portuguese artist famous (*Betty Boop*, *Coração Independente Vermelho #1* [Red Independent Heart #1]), and much tenser pieces (*Menu do Dia* [Today's Specials], *Esposas* [Wives/Handcuffs]), attesting to a capacity for constant reinvention. All have in common that they offer visitors an opportunity to look differently at the everyday as a way of transcending it, each of these creations plunging us into an alternative world, playful, enchanted or disturbing. Starting out from day-to-day objects – a washbasin, plastic cutlery or a clothes rack – Vasconcelos lures us into a fanciful narrative that leaves no room for blandness. Shower fixtures turn into baroque, pearl-embroidered braid, while ‘his’ dressing room is brought to life by whirring fans or a shock of hair takes on the appearance of a creature of fantasy, a jellyfish with curlers or Chewbacca<sup>1</sup> at the beautician’s.

Vasconcelos is an artist whose work uses humour and fantasy, at the same time with a political content eminently rooted in today’s society. At the heart of this project borrowing its title from the pop rock<sup>2</sup> universe is the theme of the domestic space. It invites all of us to move through an environment soliciting the different senses: works are offered to our gaze but some can also be touched and others play music or exhale pungent effluvia.

Her work combines everyday objects, the applied arts and skills deriving from Portuguese culture, including ceramics, embroidery and ironwork. From these encounters emerge sculptures and installations, frequently installed in the public space.

Joana Vasconcelos (born in 1971, she lives and works in Lisbon) is one of the most recognized artists of the contemporary scene. The first woman artist to have been invited to exhibit at the Palace of Versailles (2012), she represented Portugal at the Venice Biennale in 2013 and is the subject of a major exhibition to be held at the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao in 2018.

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<sup>1</sup> A character in the *Star Wars* saga, famous for his hirsute physique.

<sup>2</sup> *I Want to Break Free* by the group Queen and its charismatic singer, Freddy Mercury, was one of the biggest hits of the year 1984.

**Exhibition Curator:** Estelle Pietrzyk, Chief Heritage Curator, Directress of MAMCS

#### **KEY FIGURES**

Number of works: 24

Exhibition area: 600 m<sup>2</sup>

Exhibition organized as part of “Happy 20”, a program of events organized by the City of Strasbourg, on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Strasbourg, celebrated in 2018.



This exhibition enjoys exceptional financial support from Strasbourg Eurometropolis and Les Amis du Musée d'Art Moderne d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Strasbourg ( AMAMCS).

#### **VISITOR INFORMATION**

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**Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Strasbourg**

1, Place Hans-Jean-Arp

Strasbourg

Open 10 am – 6pm, closed on Mondays

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