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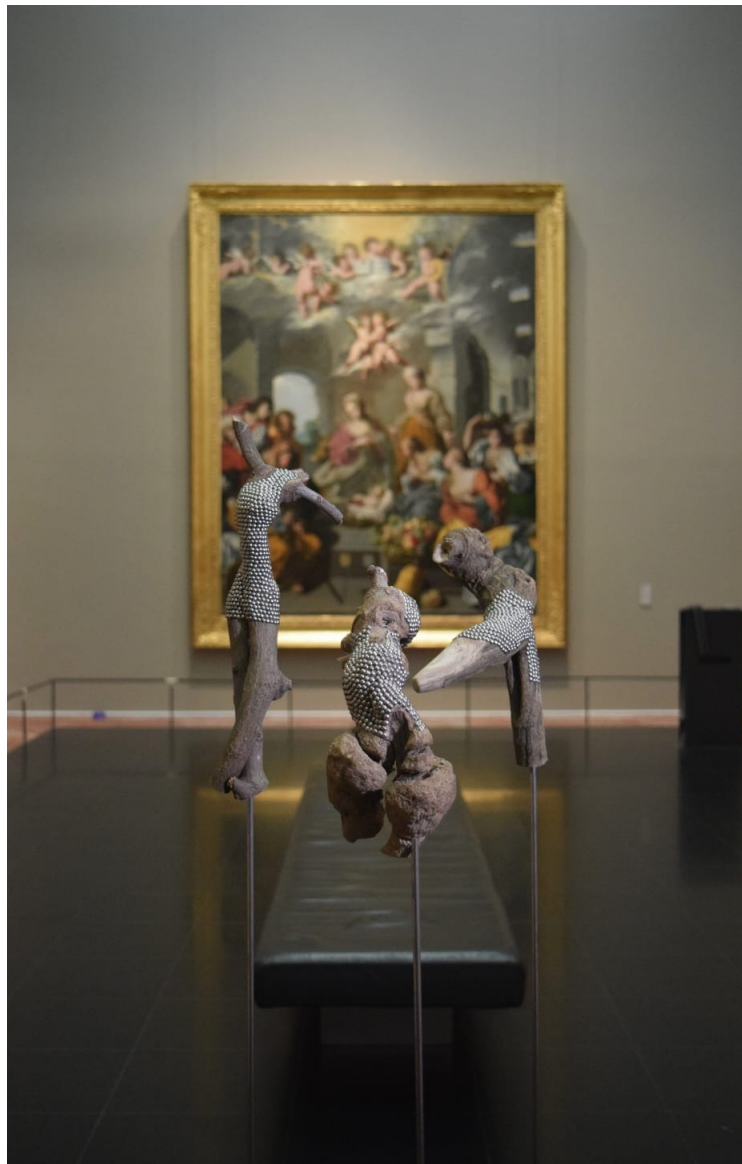
ART ANALYSIS

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ALBA SAGOLS

TRINITY OR THE POLYPHONY OF VOICES

By Marie-Pierre LESSIRARD



*Alba SAGOLS, Trinité (fille, mère, aïeule),
Installation: Sculpture in wisteria, nails, iron structure & recorded sound,
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With *Trinité (fille, mère, aïeule)*, Alba Sagols extends the series of nail-trees first inaugurated with *Fuzzy Preacher*: fragments of vine gathered and reworked with nails, suspended like relics, where form is born of constraint.

The volumes knot, warp, bristle with protuberances; the material bears the repeated trace of gesture, like a hollowed-out script. Through this hammering-in of nails, the work lets the votive practice of the nail-tree, found in certain Nordic cultures, surface in filigree: wood turned into a support for deposits, vows, wounds recorded over time.

The installation takes the form of a triptych, from which an intergenerational trio emerges: nailed vine fragments, fantasised female figures, a human voice traversing the space. In the background, one glimpses the myth of Palaeolithic Venuses, set in tension with other trinities drawn from Christian culture: three times, three images, three presences answering one another. Trinity becomes less a religious motif than a way of arranging these forces within a shared sensible field.

Sound opens up a second plane. The artist calls upon kulning, a form of singing from the fäbod cultures of Sweden and Norway, traditionally used by shepherdesses to call their herds and communicate across long distances. In *Trinity*, it is the voice of artist Elsa Jauffret that inhabits the space – high-pitched, projected, almost sculptural: a vocal line that carves out the volume as much as it fills it. This pastoral song rubs up against the materiality of the nailed vines; it binds an absent herd to these wooden fragments, as though the call once addressed to animals were now redirected towards an already dead landscape.

In *De Trinitate*, Saint Augustine notes that an obsolete word, such as "temetum" for wine, is never a mere noise: even if he does not understand it, the listener senses that "there is something to be understood". Sound is not an empty voice but a voice full of potentiality: through the voice pronouncing this word, another Voice can be glimpsed, that of a will to signify.



Trinity can be read from this premise: there is the voice we hear – the kulning, clear and articulated – and another, quieter voice that circulates through the matter of the nailed vines, made up of votive gestures, agricultural memory, feminine mythologies. The perforated vines condense this inner speech; the sung voice draws it out, sets it in motion, without ever reducing it to a single meaning.

"Thus the word is in me prior to the voice." – Saint Augustine

The work thus appears as a polyphony: the mute voice of materials, the ritual voice of the nailing, the mythical voice of Venuses and trinities, the sung voice of kulning. Nothing here simply illustrates a concept: the nailed wood "speaks" through its deformations, the song sketches out a space, the female figures thicken our imaginary.

Between the inner voice of things – what accumulates in texture, scar, knot – and the outer voice of song, Trinity organises a passage. To look at and listen to the installation is to allow this circulation of voices to settle within us, like a shared utterance between the living, myth, and ritual.