

Selma Selman (b. 1991, Bihać, Bosnia–Herzegovina)



Selma Selman: *Platinum*, 2021. Photo: Almin Zrno

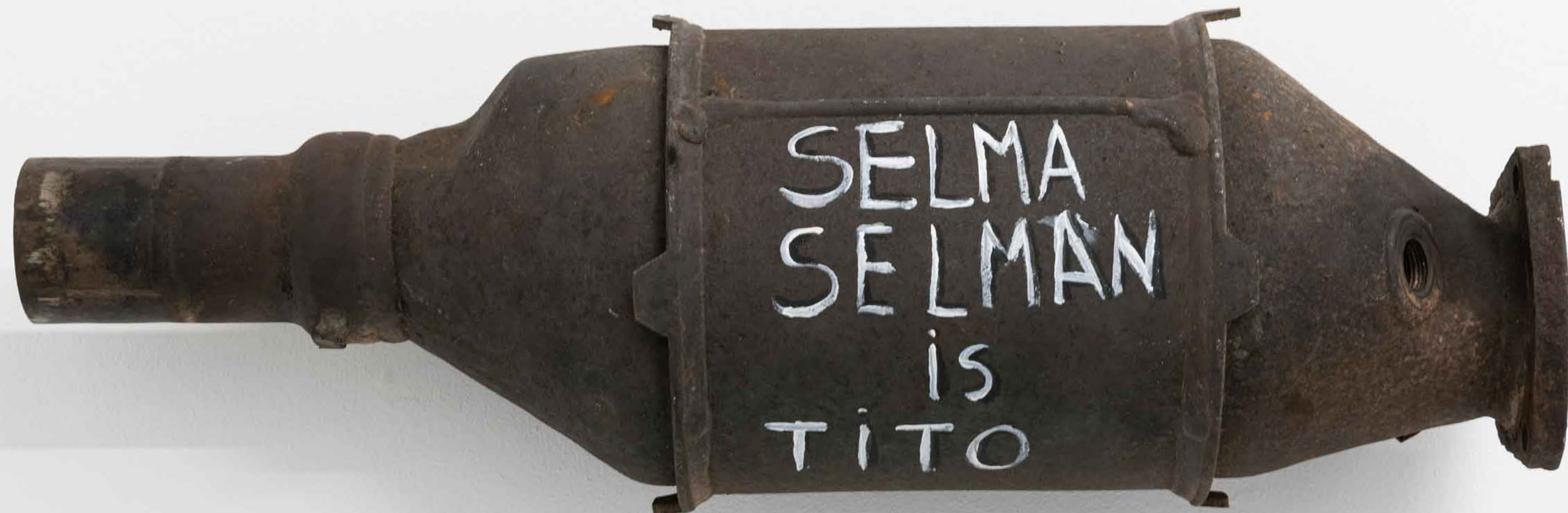
Selma Selman (1991, Bihać, Bosnia and Herzegovina) is one of the youngest and most exciting flag-bearers of a long tradition of critical and political performance from the ex-Yugoslav area, who works with performance, video, photography, drawing and painting. Her practice both embraces and blasts the stereotypes about Roma people by referring to her personal experience, life situations and stories, but also focuses on her own specific condition as a young woman artist of Roma origins from Bosnia. In her art works, the ultimate aim is to protect and enable female bodies and enact a cross-scalar approach to collective self-emancipation of oppressed women. Selma's search for functional, contemporary political resistance stems from her personal experience with oppression from various directions and scales. Selman is also the founder of the organization *Get The Heck To School* which aims to empower Roma girls all around the world who face poverty and social ostracization.



Viva la Vida, 2016, C-print, 60.7 × 50 cm

In 2014 Selman was the recipient of the *Zvono Award* for young artist in Bosnia. In 2017 she was awarded *Trieste Contemporanea Award*, and nominated for *Forbes 30 under 30, Art and Style* in 2018. In 2019 she was the winner of the *White Aphroid Award*, Maribor. Selman's works have been exhibited at: Manifesta 14 (2022) documenta 15 (2022), Museum Fridericianum, Kassel (2021), National Gallery, Sarajevo (2021), Kunsthalle Wien (2020), L'Onde Center for Art, Paris (2020), 58th Venice Biennale (2019), Queens Museum, New York (2019), Villa Romana, Firenze (2019), The Creative Time Summit, Miami (2018), 3. Berlin Herbstsalon, Maxim Gorki Theatre, Berlin (2017), Kunstquartier Bethanien, Berlin (2016), and Museum of Contemporary Art, Banja Luka (2014), among others.

Selma Selman earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2014 from Banja Luka University's Department of Painting. In 2018 she graduated from Syracuse University, New York with a Master of Fine Arts in Transmedia, Visual and Performing Arts. She currently lives and works between Bosnia, the United States and the Netherlands, where she studies at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten.

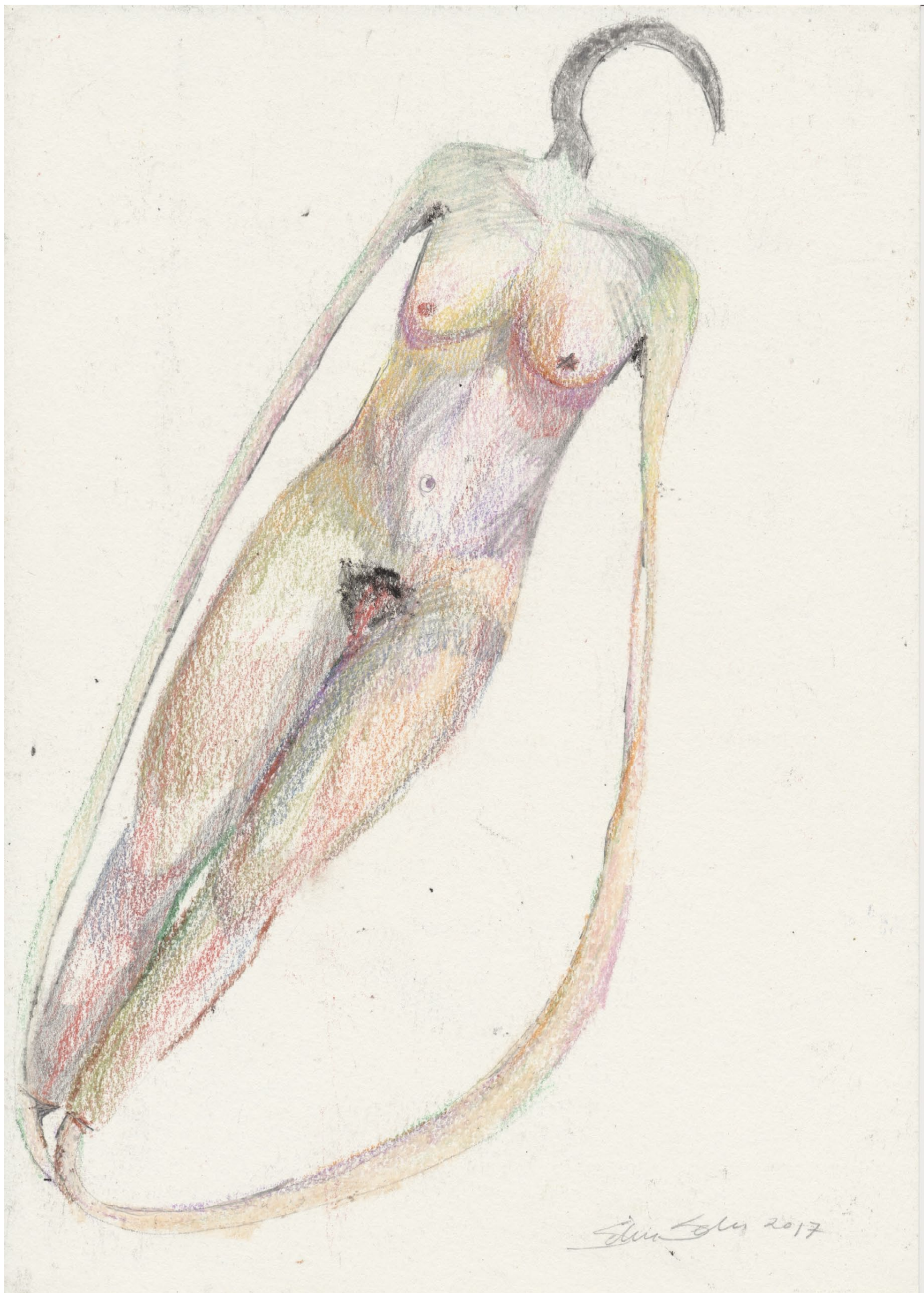


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Selma Selman's paintings on scrap metal are a personal visual diary composed of – sometimes symbolic – self-portraits, portraits of her family, depictions and impressions of everyday life scenes in Bosnia as well as reference to characters or works from art history that have been determining for her. The scrap metal onto which she realizes these works is a reference to her family's struggling existence, her father collecting such metal pieces to sell them in order for his family to subsist. By using this material for her paintings, the artist transforms this seemingly useless surface into a conveyer of her message, her origins into a strong base to build on and to transcends misery, discrimination and stereotypes.



Painting on metal, 2020/2021, acrylic on scrap metal, 106 × 55 × 14 cm



Her series of drawings form an even more intimate body of works as they reflect her struggle, sufferance and discomfort with her own female body and all the gender-based expectations that society and especially her own family are attaching to it. Selma Selman's transcendental work is indeed full of tensions, rips and tears as she continuously tries to mend the wounds and narrow the tremendous gap between her origins – and all burdens that they mean for her – and her autonomous existence as a contemporary artist.

Self Portrait - Sleep Guards, 2018, colour crayon on paper, 29.6 × 21 cm

Further works



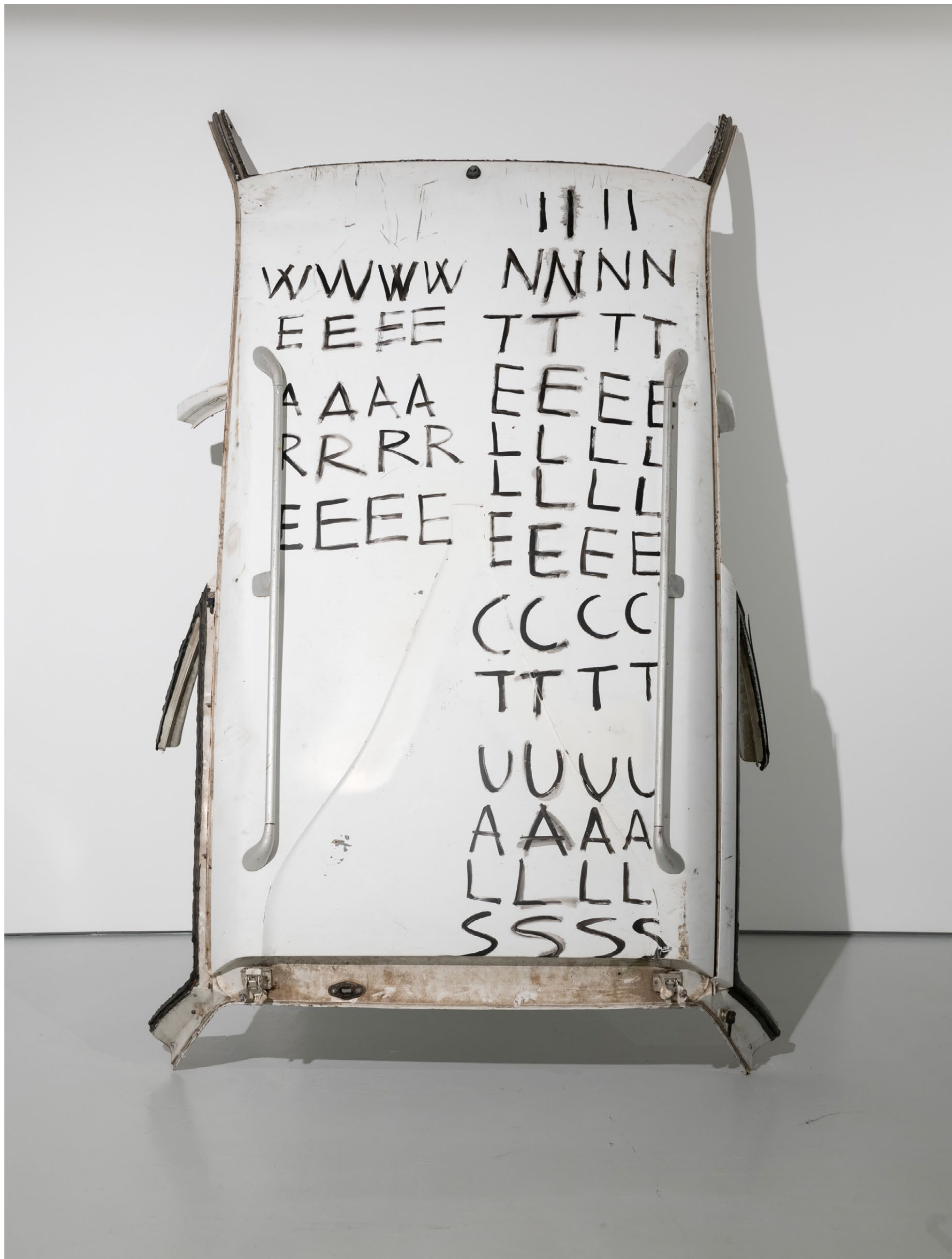


For her exhibition in acb Attachment in 2017, Selma Selman was premiering a new performance in which she destroyed a large number of hoovers with a fireman axe. After destroying the vacuum cleaners, she then sorts the parts according to their materials, thus referring to her father's selling of collected discarded objects in order to provide for his family. Beyond the repeated reference to her family's way to subsist, this performance stands for the destruction of a housework device that became associated with the enslaving of housewives for more than a century, but also a moment of catharsis when the artist can ease the inner tensions that both destroy and construct her.

At viennacontemporary 2022 we are presenting some parts of the smashed hoovers and the video of the 2017 performance.



AEG Vampyr 1400, 2017, performance, acb Attachment



Painting on metal, 2020/2021, acrylic on scrap metal, 266 × 135 × 55 cm



Self Portrait, 2016, acrylic on metal, 30 × 30 cm



Safet Zec, 2016, acrylic on metal, 28 × 57 cm



Coca-cola, 2016, acrylic on metal, 24.5 × 20.5 cm



Painting on metal, 2020/2021, acrylic on scrap metal, 2 pcs, 107 × 33 × 33 cm each



Painting on metal, 2020/2021, acrylic on scrap metal, 62 × 53 × 4 cm



Painting on metal, 2020/2021, acrylic on scrap metal, 177 × 113 × 31 cm

Drawings

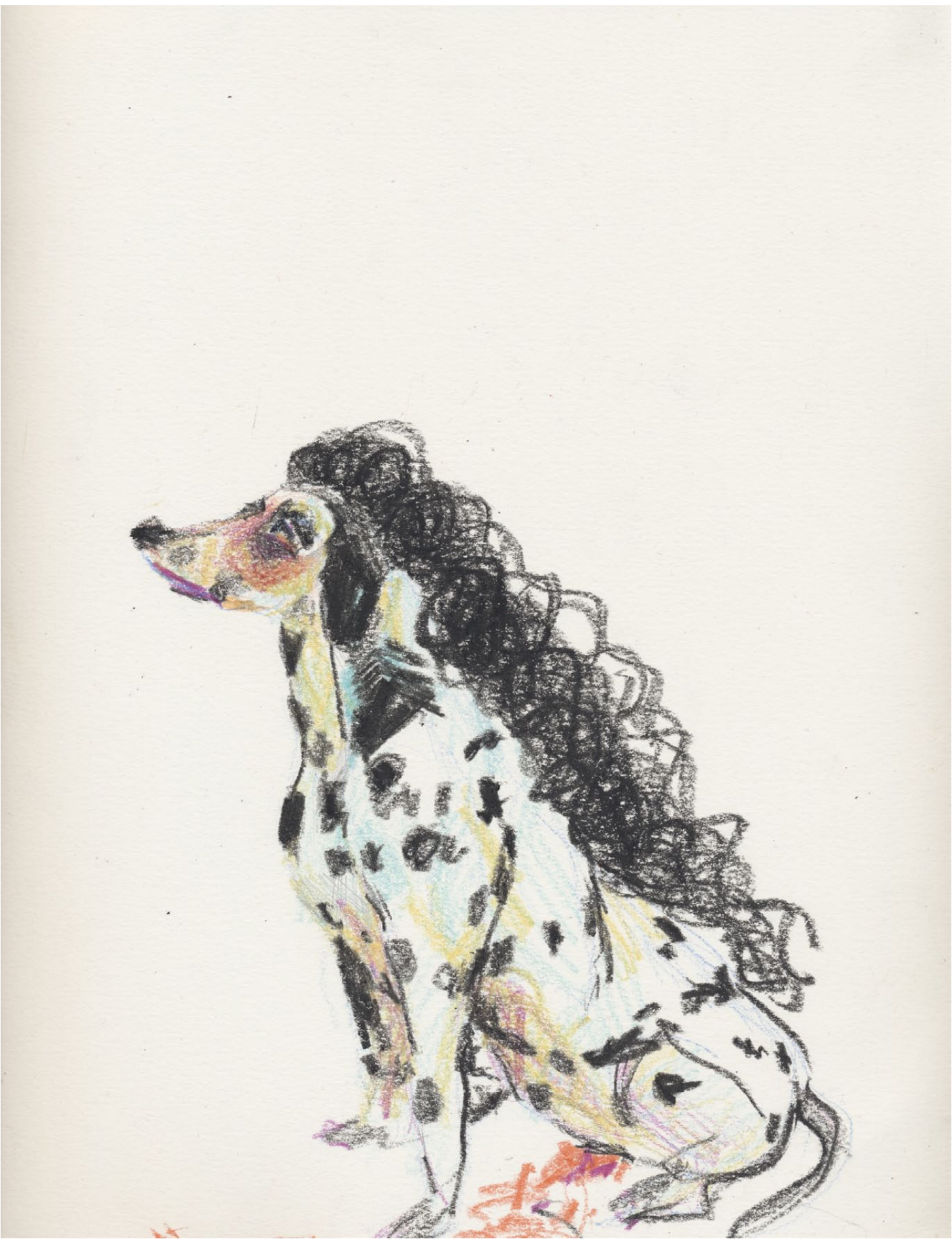
Drawing



Self Portrait (Snake), 2017, colour crayon on paper, 28.1 × 21.7 cm



Self Portrait (Cat), 2017, colour crayon on paper, 28.1 × 21.7 cm



Self Portrait (Dog), 2017, colour crayon on paper, 35 × 23 cm



Self Portrait (The Sky Fart), 2017, colour crayon on paper, 21.7 × 28.1 cm



Self Portrait (Bird), 2017, colour crayon on paper, 21.8 × 28 cm



Self Portrait (Pussy), 2017, colour crayon on paper, 28.1 × 21.7 cm



Self Portrait, 2017, colour crayon on paper, 28.1 × 21.7 cm



Self Portrait (Half), 2017, colour pencil on paper, 28 × 22 cm



Self Portrait - Sleep Guards, 2018
colour crayon on paper, 30.5 × 22.9 cm



Self Portrait (BMW), 2017
colour crayon on paper, 41.7 × 29.5 cm



Self Portrait - Sleep Guards, 2018
colour crayon on paper, 41.7 × 29.5 cm



They Key to Paradise, 2017
colour crayon on paper, 41.7 × 29.5 cm

Selma Selman Interview

In-depth

acb Gallery is pleased to share a video interview with Selma Selman.
[Click here to visit our Viewing room](#)



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