



## Maria Motyleva

Portfolio, 2019—now

Maria Motyleva is a conceptual artist who primarily uses textiles and embroidery as her main medium.

Maria Motyleva grew up between Moscow and Northern Caucasus and lived in Europe since her early 20s. She graduated from Moscow State University of Printing arts with a master thesis on Artist Book and in 2016 entered Ar.Co Centro de Arte e Comunicação Visual in Lisbon where she studied illustration and comics which ultimately affected her visual language as an artist.

After joining in 2019 an online program of the Moscow based “Textile Laboratory” dedicated to research and experiments with textile and embroidery techniques Maria’s focus of interest has shifted towards the textile art practices within the context of contemporary art, after that she graduated from Ar.Co’s plastic arts department with focus on textile arts.



One of the main sources of inspiration for Maria is her childhood and family history, as well as her connection to the Northern Caucasus region with its rich visual culture and textile traditions. Growing up in Post-Soviet Russia in poverty inherited in several generations she built a very specific relationship with clothes and home textiles. As a base for her work, Maria often uses found home textiles and pieces of clothing that once belonged to her family members or friends. Her fragile handcrafted embroidery becomes a link to the past, connecting Maria's imagination and personal stories with the history and life of the piece.

Maria has been raised by a single mother and has a very strong connection to the female side of her family. That sense of the womanhood inherited from her upbringing has always been a crucial point of her personal life and her art strategies. In this regard textile art, which has always been associated with women and traditionally viewed as a woman's labor seemed like a logical choice of artistic medium. Since centuries back textile practices have always been almost only women's chance for expression, for a "voice". Each piece of the clothing or home decoration cherished female experience, memories, preferences, wishes and dreams which were woven into the fabric and are an inseparable part of it. Through her art practices Maria revokes these precious moments hidden behind the textile objects returning the voice to the generations of women which brings her the sense of being part of the universal experience of womanhood.

In this regard the sense of home, care and belonging are determining for Maria's art. Being half Jewish, living in Moscow in the 90s, having strong ties with the Northern Caucasus and Circassian regions as well as being introduced to a variety of cultures after the immigration to Europe Maria always wonders where and how to find a safe space, how does it feel to have a home, a place where you belong, a culture you can relate to. Textile items are always part of somebody's home and through working with this material Maria examines the feeling of identity, solitude and acceptance.

Drawing, storytelling, working with text is a basis of Maria's work - there is always a storyline behind each of her pieces which refers to her experience working with art books and illustration at the beginning of her student life. Her poetic, fragile and very feminine in its core drawings and embroideries often include text taken from literature or poetry.



## Works

My home was here .....4

Esther's song.....30

Ithaka.....42

Other works.....58

CV.....60



## My home was here.

A series of works created after February 24, 2022, when the Russian government attacked Ukraine and the dictatorship regime in Russia became an indisputable fact.

These works are attempts to express confusion, guilt, loss of home and support, fear, rage, attempts to pray and speak out scattered against dumbness, because you are on the wrong side of events and have no right to speak out.



**Tarrasque, 2021**

136x105  
embroidery, on found fabric



**Мірсконца / World from  
the other end, 2022**

170 x 240 cm  
embroidery, textile collage



NWA

more water  
Zabytne rosoga

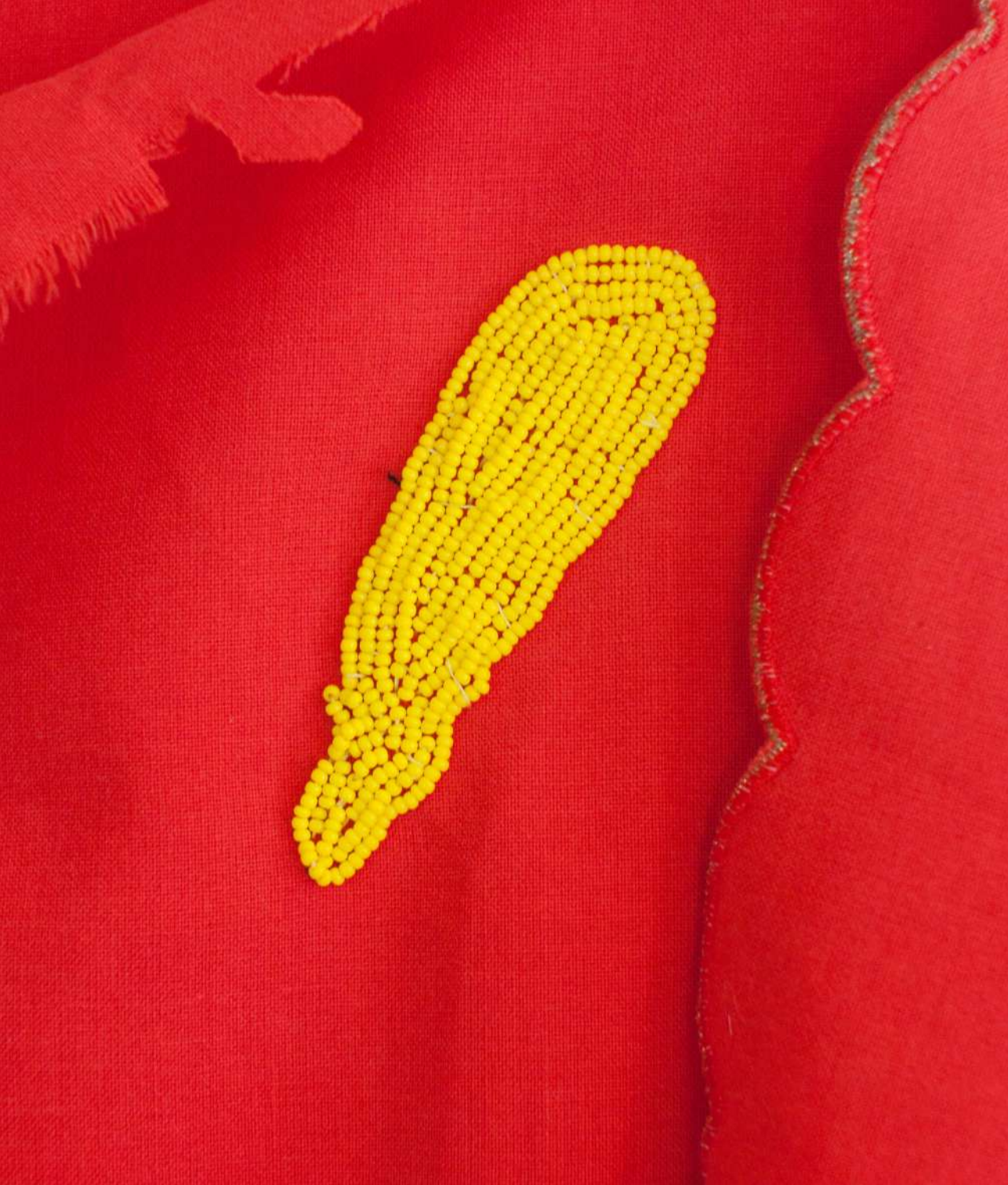


## Red corner, 2022

135 x 60 x 10 cm  
embroidery on tablecloth, beads









**Speechless /  
together, 2022**

120 x 50 cm  
embroidery on found  
tablecloths



**Speechless / the world froze,  
2022**

95 x 40 cm  
embroidery on found tablecloths

**Speechless / Obiymy (hold me)  
2022 - name of Ukrainian song «Obiymy»**

50 x 35 cm  
embroidery on found tablecloths

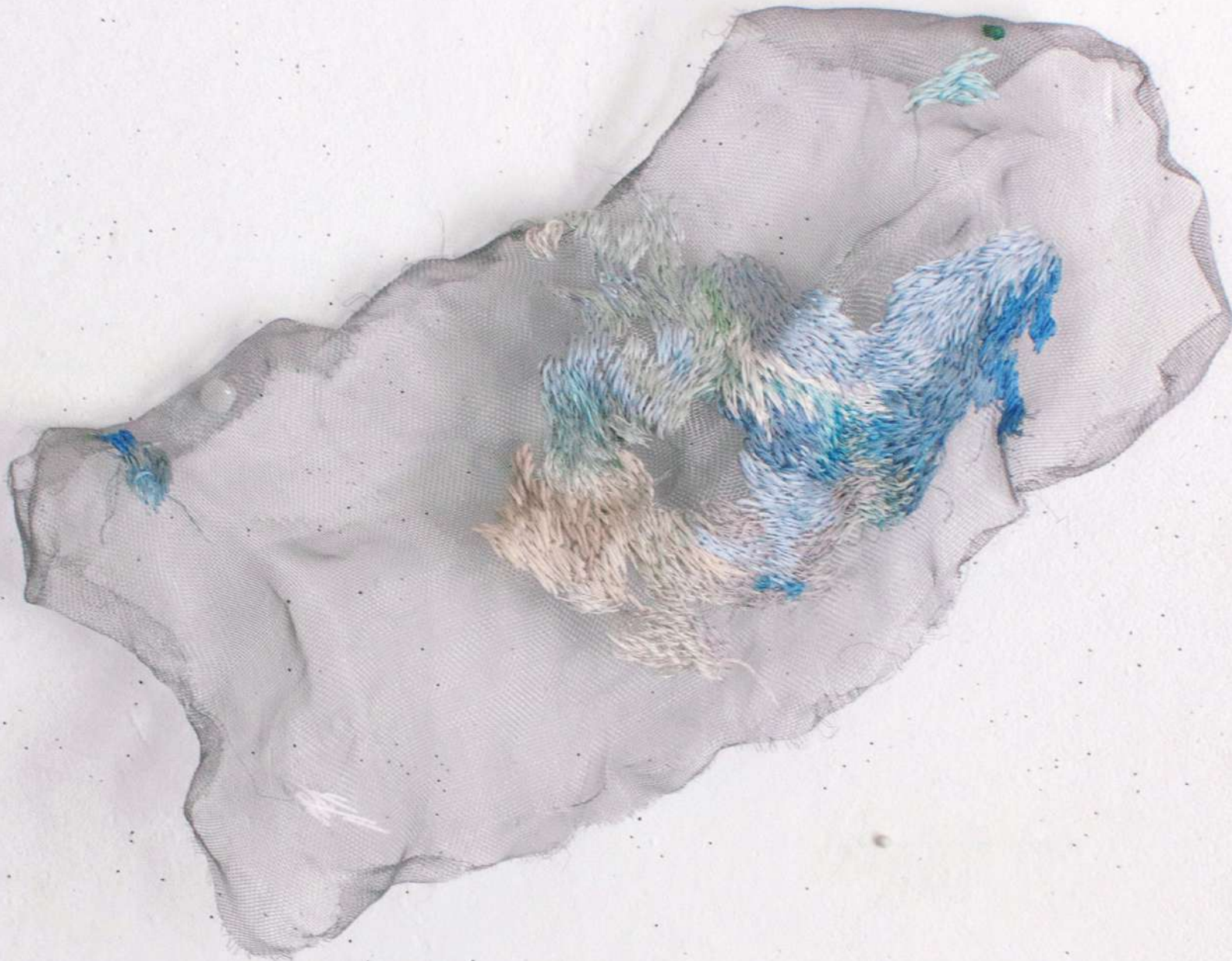


**My flag is white flag,  
2022 - ongoing**

170 x 70 cm  
embroidery







**Hideaway  
1, 2021**  
50x50 cm

embroidery on  
metallic grid





## Hideaway 2, 2022

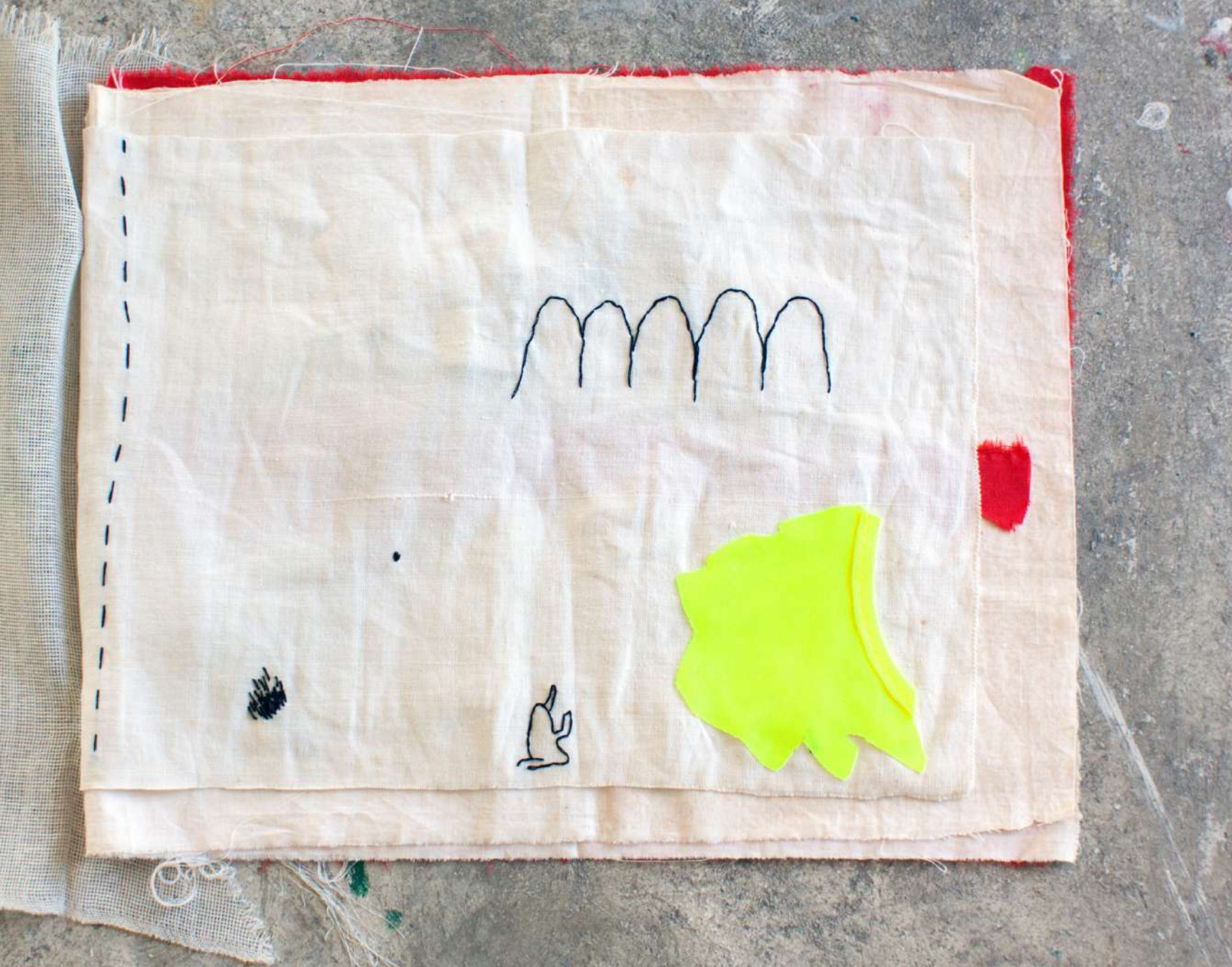
200 x 80 cm  
embroidery on metallic grid





**Book of death,  
2022**

40 x 30 cm  
embroidery, collage


















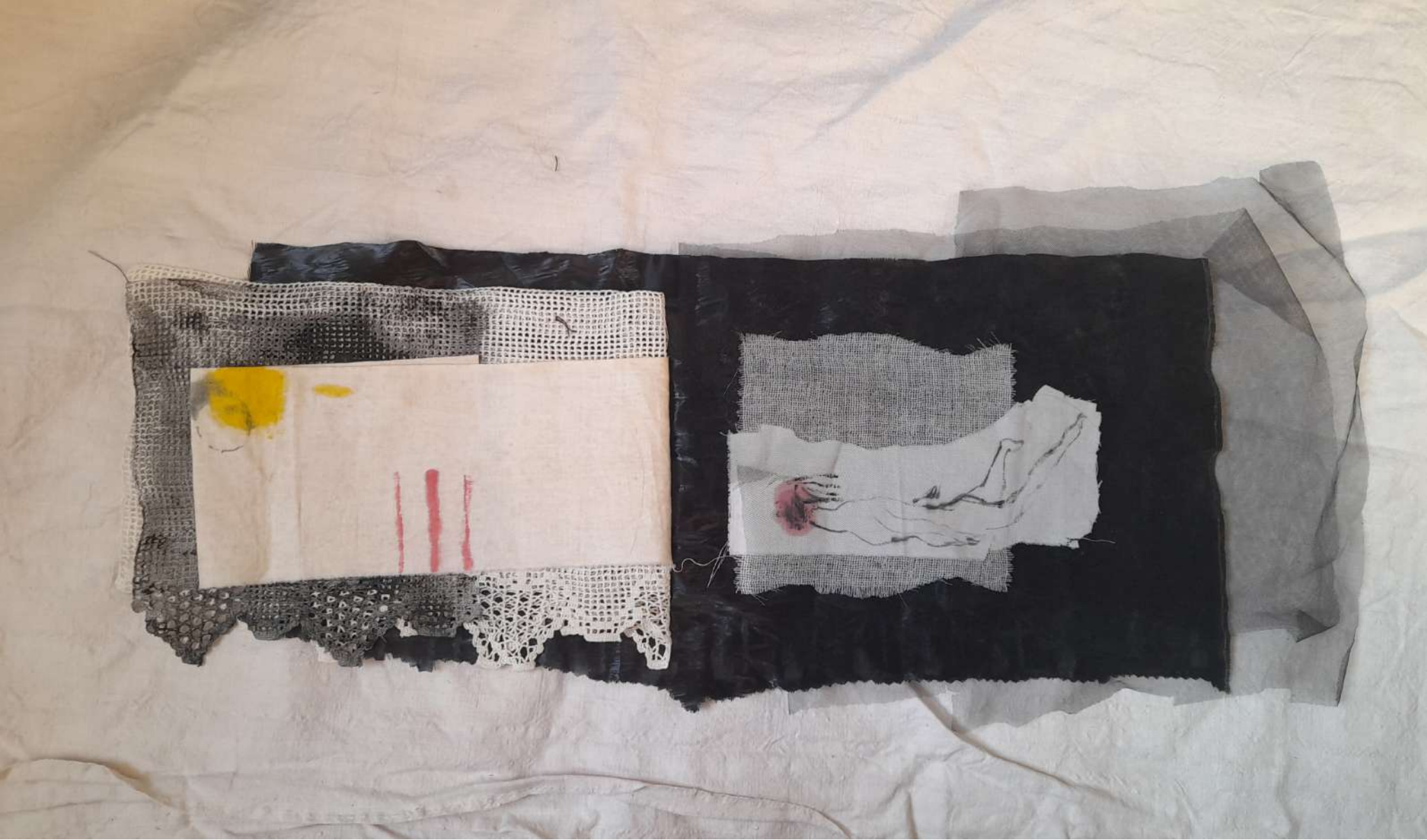
**«About the sun that «melts like a sticky candy».**

Book that contains poetry of Victor Galdobin, a Russian biker who was beaten to death for his anti war position, and trial speech of Sasha Skochilenko, Russian young female artist who is facing ten years in prison for her anti-war protest, 2022

23 x 20 cm  
embroidery, collage, paint

A piece of black fabric, possibly a garment, is laid flat on a light-colored surface. The fabric has a white lace border along the right and bottom edges. A small, rectangular piece of light-colored paper is pinned to the center of the fabric. The paper has handwritten text in Russian. The text is written in a simple, slightly irregular font. The fabric has some white stitching or thread visible on the left side.

О СОЛНЦЕ, КОТОРОЕ  
"ПЛАВИТСЯ ЛИЛКОЙ  
КОНФЕТЫ"







Esther's song.

Series of works on domestic textiles and clothes that used to belong to women of different generations and places. Esther was one of them, a Portuguese woman who scratched her husband's name off all her papers and documents once he died and she became of her own marking each and every textile piece with her name.

Rethinking embroidery practices, which are implicitly perceived as an area of domestic female labor, the artist's works touch upon the issues of gender inequality, misogyny and stigmatization of female physicality.

In textile books, objects and embroideries, one can see not only a therapeutic rethinking of the experience, but also a response to current events. Using of old fabrics and clothing in art works, is very important for the artist. Working with the theme of the mending, Maria Motyleva invests in the repair process metaphor for caring, as well as the concept of emotional repair.



**Verônica, 2021**

58x50  
embroidery on found  
fabric

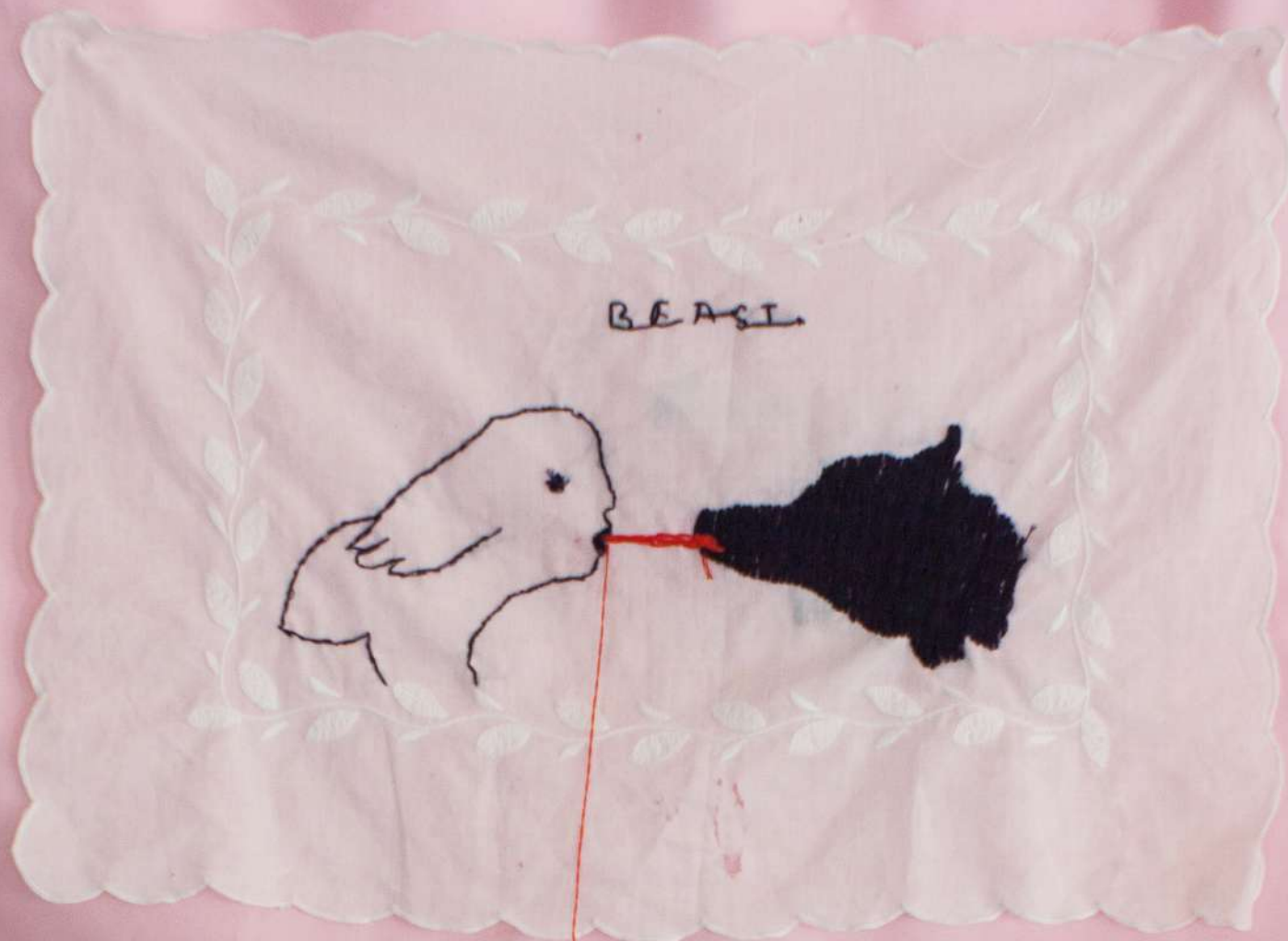


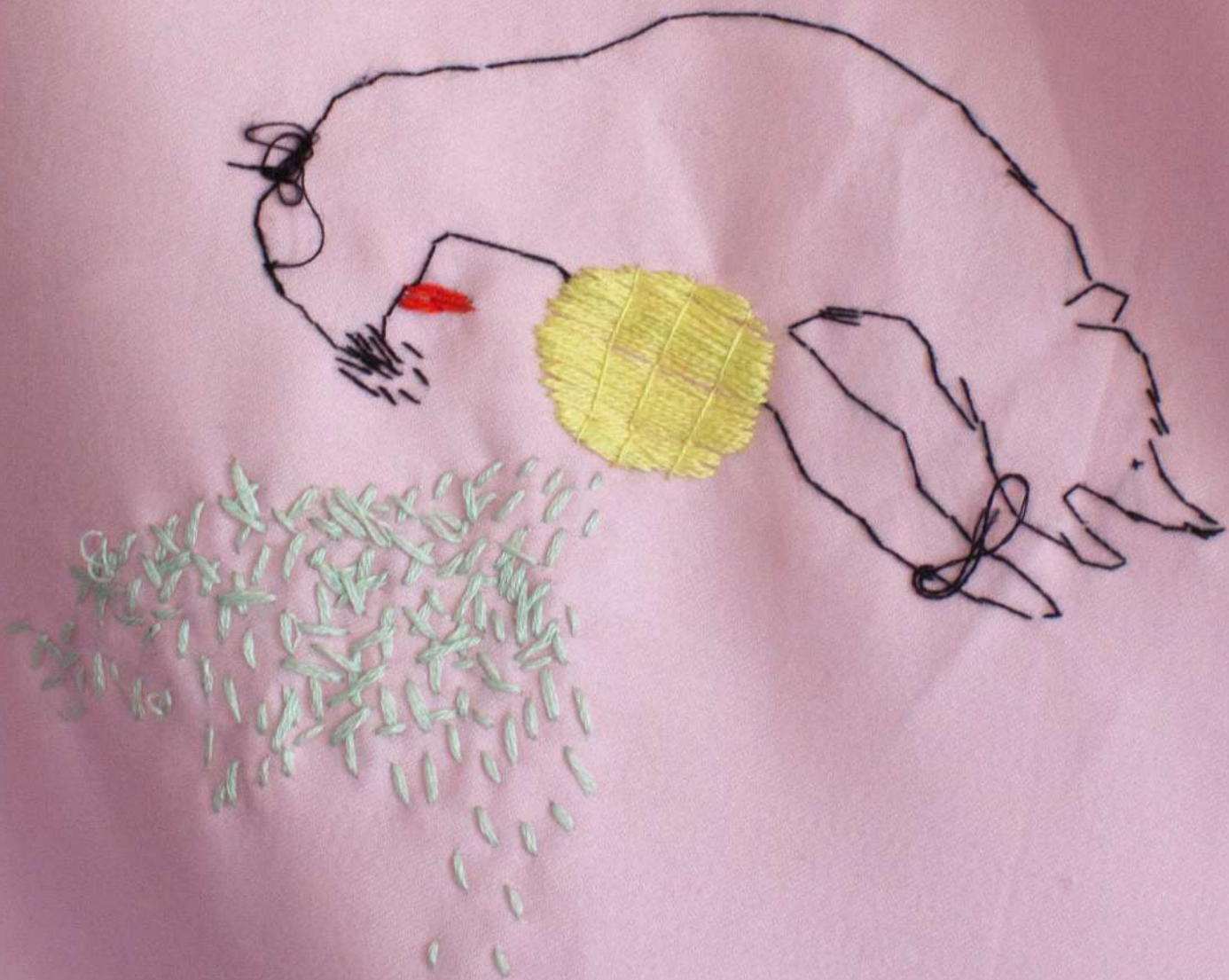




## Beast, 2022

130x230  
embroidery on found bed sheet









## Guardian, 2021

38x71  
embroidery on found object,  
Ar.Co collection





**Esther's dream, 2022**

63x99  
embroidery on tablecloth







**Treasure, 2021**

130x230  
embroidery on my grandmother's  
sleepdress



## Ithaca

A series of works created in 2019-2020, when maria Motyleva returned to her childhood home, where she spent the beginning of the pandemic. All works made with materials found in the house and owned by the artist's mother and grandmother are exploring the idea of eternally leaving and returning home.

Embroidered works are slow attempts to capture all that is home with the embroidery technique, a kind of very slow handmade shots. The slower - the deeper the imprint, affecting not only the surface, but also stitching through the fabric that you can put into your bag for the new journey.

Ithaka gave you the marvelous journey.  
Without her you wouldn't have set out.  
She has nothing left to give you now.

And if you find her poor, Ithaka won't have fooled you.  
Wise as you will have become, so full of experience,  
you'll have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.

(C. P. Cavafy)



### **Ladder, 2020**

230x160  
sculpture, my grandmothers sheets,  
installation in the forest behind the  
childhood house







**COH / sleep, 2020**

190x200  
embroidery, installation in the  
forest behind the house











## Ithaka, 2019

65 x 50 cm  
embroidery on my grandmothers  
scarf



The marvellous

our names



o wouldn't have set out





Keep Ithaka  
always  
in your  
mind



**Garden, 2019 - 2020**

120x100  
embroidery on grandmother's fabric









**Sweet dreams  
2019 («LGBTQ  
propaganda»  
law passed in  
Russia.)**

106x70  
embroidery over  
oil painting copy of  
«Morning in a pine  
forest»



**Hörst du Geliebte, 2021**

212x64  
embroidery, collage



## Collective and personal exhibitions:

Nacional Museum of Contemporary Art — collective show, Lisbon, Portugal, 2023

«Wireless», Cortex Frontal — collective show, Evora, Portugal, 2023

Mycelium festival, Pobegi Les, Georgia, 2022

Hörst du Geliebte: ich hebe die Hände — duo show, TOBE gallery, Bern, Switzerland, 2022

Sprachloser Dialog — duo show, Dreiviertel Art Space, Bern, Switzerland, 2022

Kunstprozessionen. Waiting society — collective show, Wandfluhkapelle. Raron. Valais, Switzerland, 2022

Ar.Co Bolsiros e Finalistas collective show — Not A Museum, Lisbon, Portugal, 2022

Self-isolation anthology — collective show, Smolny Exhibition Hall, St. Petersburg, Russia, 2020

Repair — solo show, Dreiviertel gallery, Bern, Switzerland, 2020

Ithaka — solo show, Between windows gallery, Moscow, Russia, 2020

Weird — Ural kvartiralle parallel program, Basel, Switzerland, 2020 Slishkom Lichnoye online collective exhibition, 2020

Collective show, Tsaritsyno museum, Moscow, Russia, 2019

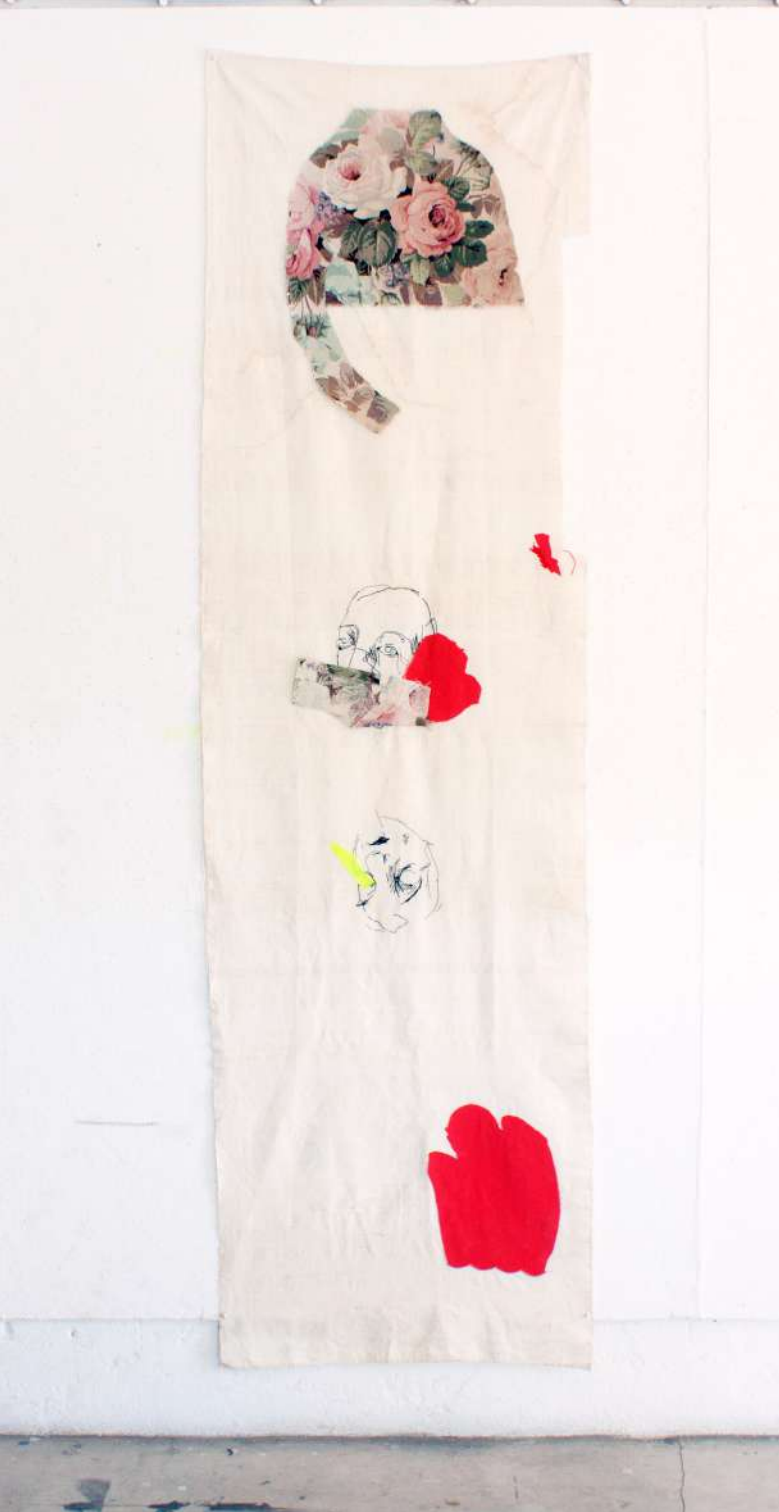
## Residencies:

November 2022 — Abastan Residency, Tumanyan, Armenia

June 2022 - WIRELESS — Ciclo de residências de arte têxtil para artistas visuais, CórteX Frontal, Arraiolos

November 2020 — PROGR Art Center, Residency.ch, Switzerland

May 2019 — Azbooka Morsa residency in Tsaritsyno, Moscow, Russia.



## **Publications:**

Aprtil 2022 — Rbc.Style, Russia - Obiymy (hold me)

March 2022 - Pentangulo #4, Chili Com Carne, Portugal - «Red island»

June 2021 - Ovd Info - Russian human rights media project aimed at combating political persecution - embroidered illustration «Agism in protest movement»

November 2020 - Bobla magazine, Norway, graphic story «Fragment from a fairty tale»

June 2020 - Bobla magazine, Norway, graphic story «Forest»

October 2019 - Bobla magazine, Norway, comic «Anna»

## **Contacts:**

+351 920425226

maria.mmotyleva@gmail.com

Ig: @mariamaria\_motyleva