

IT ALMOST FELT LIKE
THE VOICE OF A CLOSE FRIEND

When in the mouth of the giant, the discourse looks like it could never break. A permeable membrane seems to be surrounding it. Eternally adaptable.
Then comes the need to speak about the power of narrative, the strength of mutating voices and stifled stories.

This exhibition is fragmented.
Eighteen voices, de-hierarchized within different spatialities.
Assembling discourses, provoking conversations, allowing confrontations.

Giving space to the space to create intimacy.

This is an exhibition in which you walk, imagine stories and find landmarks.
Like the map at the beginning of a science fiction novel.

You might get this feeling of having already lived a particular situation.
The perception that it was there all along.
Next to you.
So you get closer, you sit, you look. You even stare.

Finally, you realize, *it almost felt like the voice of a close friend.*

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TREACHEROUS AND DECEIVING, VEGETABLE LOVE GROWS

Vegetable love is a dangerous affair. Sometimes it is satisfying for all parties involved, sometimes deceiving. Other times, it reveals itself as treacherous, cruel, even deadly. It admits no chance of error, because on it resides survival. It grows into intricate and teeming networks of relationships and kinships, taking place amid constant exchanges of fluids, scents, edible matter, and sex. On all this rests plant reproduction, finely attuning with all sorts of creatures, great and small, within an ecosystem made of balanced and accurate fits. In other words, when it's not about selfing, plant sexuality is inscribed within multispecies relational patterns, as mating, for most of plants, can only occur through the mediation of a third party. Sophisticated technologies are hence developed by plants so to attract their pollinators, to seduce them and have them partake in their sexual performance.

Red flowers are kissed and licked and sucked by the long tongues of the hummingbirds. Tiny orchids provide tiny iridescent bees with an alluring perfume they can wear to attract their peers and mate. Lunar blooming flowers blossom in the full moon and patiently wait for nocturnal mammals to find and pollinate them. Thynnid wasps are deceived and beguiled by hammer orchids' sapient camouflage, feeling sexually aroused by their labellum, for its color, shape, and scent masterfully mimic those of female thynnids. Hazels make love to the wind, entrusting its capricious whirls with their genetic heritage. Other plants have developed more insidious fertilization techniques,

based on captivity. In the shallow waters of Amazonian oxbow lakes, a giant waterlily grows. Tremendous, yet gentle, it floats. When the night falls, its sexual appetite whetted, it blooms in monumental blossoms, colored in white. The flower opens in the evening and gives off a strong, seductive perfume, irresistible to glutton beetles. As one or more of them make their way in, the flower closes its petals, so that the insects are trapped inside. The flower stays shut for the night and the entire following day, slowly flushing pink. Its prisoners are held captive inside for twenty-four hours. No, the giant waterlily has no intention to kill and eat them. Its sole desire is to mate. On the second evening, its flower opens again, letting the beetles go and carry the pollen it has released overnight to some gynoeceum awaiting nearby. Then, the flower closes for the second and last time and quietly withdraws back to the shady watery world where it belongs. Imprisonment is core to the waterlily's fertilization process. There is no cruelty in this, only a drive to reproduce and thrive. The same can be said for other species of plants, manifesting a similar reproductive behavior, yet adding a touch of horror to it. There is a kind of flower blossoming high up on the cliffs of the Mediterranean coasts, where gull colonies prosper and feast. The place is littered with organic scraps and other products of the gulls' frantic activity, including rotting remains of birds and fishes. A putrid heaven for flies. There, amid rocks and animal carcasses, a strange creature dwells. It is a flower disguised as a corpse, reproducing in shape, texture and smell a shred of dead flesh. The gruesome camouflage is meant to deceive blow flies and attract them inside, where

they will be held captive by a barricade of spikes until the dawn of a new day comes. With sunrise, the spikes shrivel and the blow flies, dusted with pollen, are set free to go and fertilize other corpse flowers sprouting all around. A better fate than the one of those insects that, attracted by gleams and sparkles or a seducing scent, are lured into a trap and never released again. Death, this time, is not only a matter of mimicry. The inmates will die enveloped in the glimmering leaves of sun-dews, or melted and digested down the tubes of a cobra lily. To them, attraction is fatal.

Sexual deception, imprisonment, and killing aren't but a few of the techniques devised by the inhabitants of the plant kingdom, where dissimulation and metamorphosis are commonplace and seduction is of the essence. Enchantment and deception are key to the quiet and lethal sexual allure of forests and swamps and meadows in bloom. In times of plenty, these places vibrate softly with happenings and affairs, eventful yet concealed beneath apparent silence and stillness. Drifting across clusters of herbs and flowers, one realizes fixity is mere illusion: a matter of shifting space and time scales. At the right speed, tendrils, like tentacles, stretch out and gently fondle and grope and feel their surroundings. Creepers coil around tree trunks in search of sunlight, in a deadly embrace. Thousand-petaled sexual organs blossom in myriads of structures and shapes and colors, then morph into juicy fruits. And while doing so, they laugh and chant: a flower calls you and its voice almost feels like that of a close friend, another one resembles your first love. They are discrete exhibitionists, manifold transvestites, soft murderers.

Driven by vegetable love, they attune to their environments, turn into corpses, disguise themselves as thynnids, prepare for sex. And so, treacherous and deceiving, vegetable love grows. Vaster than empire and more slow.

Inspired by the work of Real Madrid, together with Donna Haraway's SF(s), Ursula Le Guin's stories, David Attenborough's documentaries, Hermann Hesse's fables, and the theories of Anna Tsing, Jussy Parikka, and Viniciane Despret.

Le tas dégringolait légèrement à mesure qu'elle fouillait.

Ses mains, protégées des vieux gants de ski pour prévenir des échardes, saisissaient rapidement les petits morceaux et les dégageaient sur les côtés. Elle ramena à la surface une longue planche, qu'elle souleva à hauteur de son visage pour mieux l'examiner.

Elle finit par lancer la pièce de bois qui atterrit dans un léger fracas près des autres fragments de lattes, lambourdes et manches abîmés, gisant sur le sol à quelques mètres de la benne.

Elle avança de quelques pas sur le tas instable, puis plongea à nouveau ses mains dans la masse éclairée par les spots de surveillance de la décharge.

Son ombre glissait sur les surfaces de tôle à mesure qu'elle parcourait les trottoirs en tirant son cabas, dont quelques tiges de bois dépassaient du rabat. Le grincement régulier des petites roues l'accompagnait dans le silence nocturne des rues désertes de la Z.I.

Elle longea les larges parois sans fenêtres de plusieurs entrepôts encore, avant de gagner enfin la rampe de parking. Machinalement, elle amorça la descente de dos pour retenir le lourd panier dans la pente.

La porte de secours destinée aux piétons laissa échapper une vive lumière quand elle l'ouvrit. Elle passa maladroitement le pesant paquetage par-dessus le seuil en plastique et pénétra dans le sous-terrain en laissant la porte se refermer dans l'obscurité.

La rumeur des conversations et des frottements de scies manuelles emplissait le garage désaffecté.

Coucou.

Coucou. Ça a été?

Oui oui, y avait personne de nouveau.

Bon tant mieux.

J't'avoue que je trouve même bizarre. Je me demande si on est pas observées ou comme ça...

Les canapés élimés posés au centre du local étaient occupés par quelques membres du groupe penchées sur la table-basse parsemée de vaisselle sale, d'où s'échappait l'odeur de café mêlée à celle de tabac froid.

Salut, ça va? Ça a été?

Oui oui sans souci.

Ok tant mieux. Tu peux poser le bois près de M, elles ont bientôt fini leur tas.

D'autres s'affairaient déjà aux différents postes, réparties dans le fond du sous-terrain. La plupart s'attelaient par petits groupes aux assemblages, agenouillées à même le sol ou assises sur des planches empilées.

Coucou.

Tu vas bien? T'es la première à être rentrée,

t'as fait vite.

Ouais c'était tranquille. Vous savez combien sont prévus ce soir du coup?

Il y en a trois qui ont été démontés. On s'est toutes mises d'accord sur l'idée de doubler le nombre. Les autres sont aussi sur le chemin du retour, avec les cargaisons de bois. Du coup on aura de quoi faire.

La grande porte s'ouvrit et la voiture entra lentement dans le garage, suivie de près par une première cycliste. Le véhicule se parqua près de l'entrée tandis que la grande porte se refermait déjà.

La conductrice et la passagère sortirent et allèrent ouvrir les portières arrière. Elles rabattirent la banquette, puis la passagère grimpa sur les sièges repliés. L'autre alla ouvrir le coffre pour y accueillir un des fagots ligotés qui arrivait déjà, porté par deux des assembleuses. Celles-ci déposèrent le fardeau que la passagère tira depuis l'intérieur et ajusta de façon à accueillir les suivants.

À mesure que le chargement se poursuivait, la porte de secours s'ouvrit à plusieurs reprises pour laisser entrer les cinq autres guetteuses, qui pénétrèrent dans l'espace en soulevant leurs vélos par dessus le seuil en plastique.

La conductrice, celle qui l'accompagnait et une nouvelle passagère remontèrent dans la voiture, la dernière grimpant par le coffre. Elles démarrèrent, tandis que les cyclistes avaient déjà commencé à

repartir par paires. La voiture quitta le garage en dernier, laissant derrière elle quelques assembleuses en train de ranger les réserves de bois, nettoyer les outils et préparer des thermos pour la veille de nuit.

Maintenant, plie tes pouces et tire vers le bas la seule corde droite libre qui passe par-dessus. Laisse la boucle glisser de ton pouce et tu vas voir la figure. Tends bien tes pouces et indexes.

C'est trop cool, merci. Après, j't'avoue que j'ai pas trop compris leur importance plutôt. Je comprends le besoin de discrétion et que la ficelle ça fait moins de bruit que percer, visser, tout ça. Mais ces petits jeux et l'attention qu'on met dans comment on attache les ficelles quand on fait les assemblages, je capte pas encore leur importance.

Ca c'est juste des exercices. C'est pour se rappeler que y a plein de figures différentes qu'on peut créer. Mais c'est pareil quand on assemble les pièces de bois, tu vois. Quand on les lie entre elles, les attaches prennent une certaine forme. Et à partir du moment où on donne une forme, du moment qu'on crée comme une image, on doit absolument savoir pourquoi celle-ci plutôt que celle-là. Du coup faut décider ce que tu crées comme liens et qu'est-ce que ça va raconter. Décider comment tu structures les différentes parties, comment tu gères les rapports de tension, de soutien, etc.

Ouais ok. La première fois que j'en ai fait un, j'avais pas complètement capté tout ce travail sur les intentions.

Et tu mettrais quoi comme intentions dans le prochain?

J'ai rejoins le groupe parce que j'ai beaucoup bougé dans ma vie. À cause des thunes entre autres. Et j'aimerais pouvoir me poser quelque part. M'attacher moi aussi.

La voiture se parqua dans la nuit jaune de la rue.

La passagère avant descendit silencieusement. Elle contourna la voiture et ouvrit le coffre pour laisser sortir la seconde passagère. La conductrice laissa le moteur tourner alors qu'elle descendait à son tour pour ouvrir une des portières arrière et pousser de là l'un des fagots ligotés. Les deux passagères extirpèrent la charge du coffre, puis s'éloignèrent hâtivement en portant le fardeau à bout de bras. La conductrice claqua aussitôt toutes les portières, se remit au volant et quitta les lieux dans un grondement sourd.

Les deux porteuses longèrent rapidement la rue vide. Au bout de celle-ci, elles bifurquèrent et débarquèrent sur une petite place sombre. Elles avancèrent encore d'une dizaine de mètres avant de sentir sous leurs pieds le béton qui laissait place au gravier et de deviner devant elles les barrières de chantier. Elles localisèrent aux pieds de ces dernières la présence de l'amoncellement qu'elles recherchaient.

Elles s'en approchèrent et déposèrent au sol le lourd paquet ficelé.

À cet instant, le crépitement du gravier giclant sous le passage de plusieurs pneus leur parvint.

Deux cyclistes s'approchèrent et posèrent brusquement leurs vélos au sol, avant de s'agenouiller à leur tour près du fagot. Avec des gestes vifs, toutes les quatre se mirent alors à désenrouler les planches.

Deux d'entre elles ajustèrent et maintinrent les morceaux de bois ensemble. Les autres tirèrent d'un coup sur les ficelles. La structure se rigidifia et se dressa sur ses pieds.

L'une des porteuses s'assit rapidement dessus pour en tester la solidité, tandis que la seconde vérifiait les nœuds. Après avoir signifié que tout tenait, elles s'écartèrent et s'éloignèrent furtivement. Entre temps, les deux guetteuses avaient commencé à dérouler d'autres fils reliés à la structure pour les passer autour de quelques corps environnant; une poubelle éventrée, un des lampadaires éteints, le tronc d'un vieux platane, quelques unes des barrières Heras et, enfin, le tas de bancs déboulonnés gisant au pied de celles-ci et auquel elles attachèrent les fils.

Elles finirent par remonter sur leurs vélos en laissant derrière elles le long siège un peu difforme tout juste assemblé, tandis qu'un second couple de porteuses arrivait déjà d'un pas pressé.

THE WIDE WIDE THOUGHT ABOUT HOW LIFE JUST PASSED ME BY
AND SAID HI

Cette semaine j'ai oublié tout ce que j'ai fait
alors que c'était là vraiment
J'essayais de rattraper – tout
Tout est très dur mais toujours un peu à côté
un petit peu à côté juste
Alors on dit que ce qui est
que les faits
only facts
J'ai attendu beaucoup et c'était déjà la fin de la
journée
elle est pas vraiment passée par moi
elle est restée à côté comme elle fait des fois
un peu à côté juste
Alors on pouvait parler que de ce qui était déjà là
ça se déplace
ça se remplit et on essaye de recouvrir tout
Alors que c'était là vraiment
C'était aussi dehors, c'était aussi dedans

RECOGNIZE A SINGLE THING

The first work I saw of Paulo's was *Nó-Cego* (*Blind Knot*), an installation made of wood plates covered with green felt laid out on the floor forming what closely resembled the common children's game that in English is called "hopscotch" but in Brazil is referred to as "amarelinha", in which children hop in a fixed alternating pattern from "Hell" to "Heaven". Its shape could also evoke a computer chip circuit, or an orthodox crucifix with circles on both ends – either way, a system that encloses its beginning and end. Atop the felted plates, Paulo placed a variety of painted glassware: wine glasses, goblets, carafes, candle sticks – all of a specific look and feel that made me think he might as well have placed his grandmother directly on the work instead. Along the circuit, he also placed wax hands, which I recognized as his own, woven together with candle wicks, and placed in the ritualistic positions of asking and receiving.

The 'game' aspect of the work, which was amped up by the felt and the resemblance to the 'amarelinha', in addition to the grandmotherly aesthetics of the objects, made me think of childhood, and consequently of memory, and that's what I thought the "theme" of the work was. Knowing that Paulo grew up in Pindamonhangaba, a small, semi-rural town in the state of São Paulo, but had spent most of his adult life in Switzerland, it made sense to me that he'd be looking into memories of childhood. Perhaps he was looking for answers to questions of identity and belonging, which is not uncommon for people who leave, or whose bases are split in more than one place. However, as familiar

as the themes of the work, and even Paulo himself, seemed to me, the way these themes were dealt with in his work did not.

My own grandmother was of that particular social strata in which the closeness to poverty creates a huge incentive to make every distinction possible between yourself and those you consider to be actually poor, which very much included having that glassware. Costly and ornate enough to be above a merely utilitarian expense, but from a wealthy person's perspective, woefully undeserving of the importance and display they were granted in her house. Those glasses stood there, like trophies to the failed and futile attempt of a Northeasterner woman of few possessions to join the São Paulo middle class.

Whenever I see these glasses, or other objects like them, used in contemporary artworks, it's almost always with the cynicism of Kitsch. The ironic distance with which kitsch is often employed is just a form of laughing at how ridiculous the attempts of the lower class are to pass off for something better than what they actually are. Yet another iteration of the thinly-veiled elitism that makes up much of contemporary art. However, this was not the case in *Nó-Cego*, nor in any of the subsequent works by Wirz that I came to know (works like *Carruagem* and, more recently, *Hôtes* also use similar elements). There is no humor nor ironic distance in his use of these objects. There's no looking down at.

On the other hand, there is no looking up, either. As an artist who's place of origin is in the lush tropics of Brazil and whose adult life and education has been in the calvinist and zwinglian cities of Switzerland, for whom belonging may be an open ques-

tion, and whose work has elements of ritual, spirituality, childhood, family, decay and memory, it would be very easy for Paulo to look to his childhood and Brazil with sentimentalism and idealization. It would also be very easy for him to make art about it within an existing framework of fascination and exoticism, which is widely used by foreign and Brazilian artists alike. He could've joined the multitude of artists and curators that instrumentalize religious expressions with empty reverence and exploit feelings of exoticism to attach meaning to their work. Or he could've just added a "costela de adao" leaf somewhere in his work and called it a day. But Paulo's work doesn't fall into that camp either. Instead, Wirz's work has a very welcome horizontality towards its subjects.

That horizontality is exemplified in the many boxes that comprise Paulo Wirz's body of work. Take *Divisor de Águas*. The work is a rather large wooden rectangle, perhaps the size of a large bookcase, laid on the floor. It's subdivided into standard-sized boxes, with blue felt on the bottom. Some of the boxes are empty, some have mirrors in one of their sides, some are almost filled with a pale-pink wax, and others have wax-covered leaves, branches, roots, and other organic matter placed in them. Were it standing upright, its boxes could be the individual windows in an apartment building, but lying down they're the graves in a cemetery, the lots in a city, the compartments in a filer, the slots in a game, a maze. The work is big, but not monumental, and the individual boxes are standard-sized, so if they were separated from each other a person could pick one up by themselves, or place their most essential possessions in a single

one. The size of these boxes and their scale within the whole make it clear that they pertain to people: they're bodies, individuals, units. A single thing within a system of units. Much like a tree is a single thing in a forest or a person is a single thing in society. There's an effect of recognition in looking at these boxes. One recognizes themselves as a unit of a system looking at another unit. That's where the horizontality lies. These boxes are not an analogy or representation of a person, but rather they perform the same function of a person within a system. They contain, they divide, they preserve, they exhibit. They can be stand-ins for the body, the mind, the ego, the soul. Wirz's work explores the single thing within a closed system.

Take *Fornalha*: in an empty lot, there's a rectangular hole dug out, closely resembling a grave. It's lined with mirrors on its interior walls and floor, and the one on the floor is red, so that's what all the other ones reflect. Inside that "box", clear glassware is placed. There are also some blades of grass and dry hay from the surroundings. The scene resembles a grave in an empty lot. One can look to Paulo's biography here; the house he grew up in was across from a cemetery and next door to a vacant lot. Perhaps that's why these elements became a part of his vocabulary, but this is not a piece of nostalgia. If we consider that a grave is itself an empty lot, then we have a unit that echoes the function of the whole: to be the allotted space for something else. In the case of the "box", this something else is already there – the clear glassware, mostly wine glasses, champagne flutes, and goblets. If we take the "grave" as a stand-in for the body, then the glasses can stand-in

for the spirit; if we take it as a stand-in for the mind, then the glasses can be stand-ins for memories and thoughts; if we take it as a stand-in for the ego, then the glasses can be the sense of self, so on and so forth. And in all three examples, the "grave" itself in relation to the vacant lot echoes the position of the self in relation to the world. What is important here is not if one of these analogies is the "true" one, but rather that they all work, because we –almost instinctively– recognize their relations to each other and their functions within the whole, even if we may have difficulty describing them precisely. In this sense, Paulo's work deals very directly with spirituality and psychology.

What's *in* those boxes, then, appears as a compelling object of reflexion.

One of the transitional moments between childhood and adolescence is when the child starts to see its parents as fallible. The realization that the parents can be wrong or may not have all the answers makes the child realize that he or she can now disagree with them and perhaps be right, and also pushes them to seek sources of truth and authority outside of the parents.

Thus, the possibility of failure of the parents is a necessary realization in order for the child to grasp its own potential and to assert itself as an individual. This also means that the idealized view that the child has of its parents needs to be frustrated and disappointed in order for the child to grow.

I've never dealt well with this myself. Not with my parents nor with anyone else. One thing I find particularly difficult is that disappointment makes

certain memories rot. Particularly if they are very rosy memories. Once someone disappoints you, it's very hard not to play back all of your memories with them, and tarnish them indelibly as you do.

In recent years, I've experienced this at a new scale when both countries in which I have roots in (Brazil and US) elected neo-fascist governments. Once someone you know votes fascist, it makes you revisit every memory you have of that person, trying to find the hidden clues in the past that would point to this person's *shocking* position. And most times, you find those clues rather quickly, realize they weren't that hidden afterall, and you feel stupid (and privileged) for not noticing them before.

If the blow is significant enough, after you revisit your memories of people you knew, you expand the procedure and begin to review also the memories that support your understanding of family, community, country. This, in turn, can lead to quite an existential crisis: you may start to find that you preserved some memories you have of your parents, your teachers, your neighbors, your friends, your heroes, etc. in just the right way, and placed them in just the right slots so that they essentially propped up your entire belief system. Then, when looking more closely, you start to realize many of these memories have decayed, quite simply as a function of time, and they can no longer prop up your old narratives. All of a sudden, you find yourself a hoarder of rotting memories, and in dire need of a drink.

Along with the realization of the fallibility of people comes the realization of the fallibility of memory. And it can be very tempting to react by closing one's self off from the collective realm, particularly during a pandemic.

Interestingly, what can appear like a rather daunting endeavor, seems to be taken without the existential dread in Wirz's work. The wax-covered fruits, roots, and leaves present in the works *Ponto-Cruz*, *Mensageiros*, and in *Divisor de Águas* perform that exact operation: the inevitable decay of the piece which was preserved in the first place because it, in turn, gives meaning to the system. In these works, the organic materials are enveloped in wax and placed—particularly in the works *Divisor de Águas* and *Ponto-Cruz*—in apparently specific joints between glass tiles, or particular boxes within a broader wooden structure, much like pieces on a board game or circuits on a circuit board. It's clear that these elements, though decaying, are what give meaning to the game or system. Wondering what that meaning is would be a moot point; recognizing the decaying nature of the pieces placed in those systems is enough. Accepting that even within what one expects to be a closed system there is decay seems necessary, and the only way to proceed. Here, an analogy between the relation of the decaying elements and the closed system with the relation between memory and narratives of reality can be quite literal if we take into consideration the instability of memories and think of the human brain itself as a closed system.

Although much of Paulo's work deals with closed systems and self-referential relations, it's also clearly moved by an exploration of faith, or spirituality, or at the very least, of the unknown.

Take the works *Carruagem* and *Heranças*, for example. *Carruagem* is a box shaped like a cross, a shape that you'd achieve if you took a long rectangle and intersected it with a slightly wider square. It's not unlike a coffin. It's also lying on the floor, made

of wood, burnt on the outside and with mirrors covering its interior walls and floor. The intersecting lines of the mirrors get reflected and form harsh angles and lines. Inside the box, on the mirrors on the floor, are painted glassware, similar to that in *Nó-Cego*; *Heranças* is comprised of three rectangular wooden boxes, all lined with mirrors in their interior walls and floor, but two of them are closed with transparent glass painted red, which of course makes the whole interior of the boxes appear that color. In the "red" ones, placed closer to each other than to the third box, are wax casts of the artist's left leg and of his forearms and hands, strongly resembling ex-votos (the Brazilian tradition of hanging casts of the part of the body that is ill in a church as a way to ask for healing). The third box is open, and filled with straw, plates, cutlery, and bead necklaces. Although also dealing with function, these works bring the attention further towards the contents of the vessels. Their elements and materials – glassware, wax, casts, etc. – invite instinctive and unconscious responses. Their proximity to symbolism forces the question of what is it that these objects are standing-in for, a question to which, of course, there's no predefined answer. This push towards a possible resolution, the demand for an answer, can be traced to the work *Bonança*, in which the whole room is now the box, and the viewer is no longer separated from its content.

It's worth mentioning how Paulo Wirz's work stands in a particularly interesting place in a context where art seems to be constantly between the fetichism and the internal logic of the white cube on the one hand, and the commodification of political and social struggles under the guise of "engaged art" on the

other. In this duality, Paulo's work adopts the path of internal logic, but it does so not as a way to remove himself and his work from society and reality, but rather as a way to discuss its condition and our various positions in it. It's a rare place, and one that has much ground yet to be uncovered.

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againlouderagainfading **louder**

"La conduite des ancien.ne.s doit servir de leçon à leurs descendant.e.x.s. Que l'on considère ce qui leur est advenu pour s'en instruire, que l'on prenne connaissance de l'histoire des peuples anciens pour savoir ainsi distinguer le bien du mal. Gloire à celui ou celle qui rappelle leurs exemples afin qu'ils soient médités par leurs descendant.e.x.s. [...] Le but [...] est d'instruire. Ce que l'on [...] raconte forme l'esprit. Ce que l'on [...] comprend le fortifie. [L'histoire] s'adresse aux grand.e.x.s de ce monde. [...] On y suivra de nobles récits. *Écoutez-les.*"

Quel regard portons-nous aujourd'hui sur l'histoire de celles et ceux qui nous ont précédé.e.x.s? Ces histoires qui ont failli tomber dans l'oubli et qui risquent encore d'y tomber. Chaque récit, aussi futile qu'il paraisse, peut sauver des vies. Chaque récit est contenu dans un récit-cadre, lui-même un récipient que l'on peut remplir pour l'adapter à son public et en fonction des besoins d'un temps donné, d'un moment dans l'histoire. Le récit-cadre est une identité mais aussi un carrefour, composé d'une infinité de voix et qui devient dès lors un très puissant porte-voix dont il est sage de se méfier. Si le récit cadre change, alors tous les récits contenus changent. Le récit-cadre est en fait le point de vue unifiant par lequel on entre dans chacun des récits. Il est aussi le récit qu'on oublie, pris.e dans les récits qu'il contient et qui absorbent l'esprit, la capacité de jugement.

Si le tout tient ensemble, c'est bien parce que chacun des récits varie, en tons, en personnages,

en voix. L'unité, c'est le jaillissement perpétuel. [Un récit] qui contient les possibilités du Plaisir spontané, qui est la beauté ^[1]. L'unité c'est elle.

Tous les matins, on se lève pour gagner sa vie et ainsi on suspend sa condamnation à mort. A la nuit tombée, on comprend qu'on a conquis une journée de plus. Entre ces deux temps, des histoires se sont racontées. Et alors, c'est par la nuit qu'on découpe le temps. La nuit, on ne fait pas que raconter.

Dans les récits, les identités peuvent devenir évanescentes et changeantes. Chaque histoire devient un espace d'ambiguïtés. Si le récit est efficace, la fiction a le potentiel de réorganiser le réel, à un point tel qu'au-delà de la société apparaît le rêve et celui-ci est tel, que c'est le réel qui se montre au bout du mensonge (d'après Jamel Eddine Bencheikh). N'importe quelle fiction construit une vision du monde, qui s'appuie sur certaines idées préconçues, sur des craintes, des utopies. L'enjeu, ce ne sont pas les héroïne.x.s qu'on crée, qu'on se crée. L'enjeu ce sont les qualités incarnées par les personnages.

Autour de ces récits, on entend souvent beaucoup d'hommes parler de ce pour quoi se battent les femmes, pendant qu'ils prononcent des mots savants à propos du récit-cadre. Ils veulent une femme qui tienne -le monde- par la parole, et pourtant ils ne donnent la parole à aucune femme et ne remettent pas en question leur parole d'homme sur des vies de femmes. Ils parlent aussi de ce que cette femme qu'ils fantasment aurait en réalité voulu faire [ils fantasment sur un dérivé de la fiction dans la fiction], ils se positionnent, sans en avoir conscience, contre le récit qu'ils adulent puisqu'ils le modifient intrinsèquement en le fantasmant, plutôt que de regarder, *écouter*.

Dans les récits, il y a des personnages invisibles qui deviennent visibles, et vice-versa. On ne peut plus "situer 'l'autre'", le réduire à son "apparaître"^[2]. L'absence et la poésie sont intrinsèquement liées au récit: il était ou il n'était pas. L'absence, la poésie et la contradiction. Un espace qui nous révèle dans l'invisibilité^[3]. Ces récits ont, me semble-t-il, le potentiel de produire des corps qui surgissent "dans un double mouvement contradictoire", affirmant leur présence tout en œuvrant à leur fuite^[4].

Dans les lettres écrites par son grand-père à sa grand-mère, Camille Kaiser n'a accès qu'à un point de vue, aussi ambigu soit-il. Si ces lettres lui sont encore accessibles, c'est bien parce que sa grand-mère les a précieusement conservées. C'est donc le regard et l'attention portée par cette femme, qui nous donne accès à d'autres récits et en l'occurrence au récit d'un homme, que Camille Kaiser propose à chaque spectateur.trice.x.s de se réapproprier librement, dans son installation.

La vraie question est de savoir si, quand l'histoire se termine, le pouvoir est rétabli, si le système a été déréglé, ou s'il se perpétue.

Ce texte cite en introduction les *Milles et une Nuits* -en y immisçant une écriture inclusive-, et s'inspire librement de son historiographie et des réflexions d'Aboubakr Chraïbi, Jamel Eddine Bencheikh, André Miquel, Michel Butor notamment écoutés sur les ondes de France Culture. Il cite également l'ouvrage *Décolonisons les arts!* publié chez l'Arche,

Paris, 2018 sous la direction de Leïla Cukierman,
Gerty Dambury et Françoise Vergès.

- [1] Simone White, *Dear Angel Of Death*, New York:
Ugly Duckling Presse, 2018, p. 86
- [2] Myriam Dao, "Tisser du lien", p. 26
- [3] Olivier Marboeuf, "décoloniser c'est être là,
décoloniser c'est fuir", p. 76
- [4] Olivier Marboeuf, *idem*, p. 74

Sensing loss before it happens
feels like recognizing your voice before it fades.
Measuring this uncertainty with the curve of your "y"
I put in all my analytic qualities:
The interpretation a bottomless losing ground
like a missed step on your way down
Clasp and grip onto the airwaves
scratchy, distant, intermittent
"it it you?" the atoms rattle.

What's playing on your internal radio?
You know, the frequency behind your ear drum
One hell of a shortcut to my heart.
Where do frequencies go when they die?
(do they actually die?)
It might sound like I'm high
but these are important questions, I hear...

I imagine myself crawling inside your auditory canal
I'm on my way back
from the island of scandalous impossible promises
I sit on the pier to catch my breath
A helix a slide stretches its long legs
some fun at last after this hellish journey.

The oracle, meanwhile, had sang me to sleep
Her lull a tinnitus, carries me to the shores of your
shoulders
and here I stand, half angel half afrit
buzzing left and right
trying to prison hand every undulation
of your curly words...

Have you heard?

WHAT'S LEFT TO DO WHEN TOMORROW'S OFF TOO?

These are our twisted words, La Capsula, Zürich, 2020
Publishing performance by Macaco Press

Speaking about the ecological political sensitivity that emerged during the first months of the French national lockdown starting in March 2020, Bruno Latour argued that there was a shared and sudden suspicious feeling towards the ambition of running the same race to progress as we were pre-pandemic and pre-lockdown. Latour's view seemed pretty optimistic: from this newly acquired sense of vulnerability stemming from, among other things, the acute awareness of the increasing interdependence of world economies (which had the French government lie about the usefulness of face masks because of the lack thereof, health professionals wear trash bags as protection against COVID while waiting for China to fly in medical supplies, or seen supermarkets coming short of flour because of the lack of their foreign produced packaging), from the awareness of poor past and present political choices and health policies (such as the decision to keep decreasing the number of hospital beds available across the country even as the pandemic continues to unfold), from this brutal moment of sideration, would a desire for a new world order emerge, a "monde d'après", a comforting hope that the pandemic and its subsequent social, economic and financial crisis would force us into rethinking our whole lives' fabric, our industrial modes of production, our consumption habits, and even, the role of our governments, our social rights etc., everything that affects the viability of our lives on Earth.

But in what ways did the pandemic actually reshape environmental awareness, discourses and communication? How did it affect the democratic debate and popular, militant and governmental ecological engagement in addressing climate change and ecological concerns at large?

Although COVID-19 abruptly put the Amazonian rainforest wildfires and Australian bushfires –which had just captured international attention– on the media back burner, it seems to have pushed forward a qualitative discursive change in environmental communication. Scientists and health experts were given more and more platforms to speak about the connexions between “human practices” (deforestation, the farming industry, wet markets etc.) and the origins of such an epidemic, as well as to ring alarm bells about global warming and the potential upcoming epidemics resulting from the melting of the permafrost and the release of long-forgotten pathogens. Besides, following Richard Horton’s editorial for *The Lancet* which philosopher Barbara Stiegler consistently mentions in her recent media interventions, the intertwining of health and the environment has become undeniable. Indeed, COVID-19 can only be referred to as a pandemic in its most restricted sense: a disease that crosses international borders. According to Horton, it would be much more appropriate (and politically potent) to recognize its “syndemic” nature, as it’s become known that COVID-19 does not affect people equally across territories. The particularity of a syndemic, as opposed to a pandemic, resides in its biological interactions with pre-existing conditions such as chronic illnesses, which exacerbate the gravity of the

disease. In many cases, those have environmental causes. Hence, the light shed on the dangerous and peculiar consequences of a syndemic which affects people whose respiratory health have been fragilized by higher exposure to air pollution, for example, worked as an invitation to rethink housing and environmental policies and social and racial inequalities—fundamental parts of a decolonial perspective on ecological matters.

However, when announcing the beginning of the first lockdown, Macron adopted the belligerent rhetorics of “a war against nature”, which, in light of the events that were already tarnishing his first (and hopefully last) presidential term (from the once in a while protests to the saturday tradition of the gilets jaunes, from the suburbs-relegated racial justice concerns to the massive national anti-racists movements of late spring 2020), seemed to appear as the much awaited and welcome pretext to remind the french population of its due “national republican unity”. The disciplinary rhetorics of terror became a means to justify the recourse to extra-ordinary measures: a new state of emergency, perpetually extended, and the restriction of civil liberties and democratic rights accompanied with a demand for every (ecological) sacrifice Macron, his defense council and industrial lobbies would deem necessary.

From an ecocritical standpoint, what the discourse of “the war against COVID” did is perpetuate a well-preserved divide between nature (presented as this unpredictable and violent threat to the nation) and culture. Beyond the wrongness of this choice of metaphor (as, for instance and among other things, the virus obviously is indifferent to geopolitics and nationalizing pharmaceutical labs in order to help

producing more vaccines has not been considered an option since), paradoxically representing nature as this agent enemy in a bipartisan war participated in feeding a conception of nature as a sovereign force governing the conditions of existence of all living and non-living things on Earth, and, subsequently, in minimizing the "politicalness" of the response to address the crisis. In Latour's words, such concept of "nature" is amoral, it dictates moral conducts in place of ethics, and apolitical (Macron obviously did not mention the "anthropocenic" causes of the epidemic), it dictates political responses in place of politics. Avoiding public acknowledgement of the root causes (as it would mean disavowing the learnt-by-heart and only-known neoliberal program), turning "nature" into this more than human belligerent agent while refusing to let it into the field of politics helped Macron legitimize his reinforcement of the status quo. Although he and local authorities initiated a few cosmetic changes such as the promotion of AMAP networks and local markets during the first lockdown or the introduction of new bike lanes and individual financial aids to repair old bikes (an idea that did not emerge from an ecological concern but rather a desire to prevent physical proximity in public transportations and which, then, backfired as a suspicion towards public transportation leading to an increased use of individual combustion vehicles), we would soon start to notice the expected backtrack. The fixation on short-term economic recovery set ecological transition objectives aside: massive financial support was granted to struggling polluting industries such as the french aviation and automobile industries, without demand for ecological trade-offs. The plastic lobby, threatened

by the soon-to-be-applied single-use plastic directive—restricting sales of a few single-use plastic items—pitched its case brandishing sanitary safety and hygiene arguments to reclaim a positive image. While Denmark culled farmed minks, suspecting mink farms to be a reservoir for the coronavirus to spread, the french government postponed the ban of mink farming from the initially planned year of 2023 to 2025. In addition, two years after their definitive ban, the ministry of ecology and sustainable development also reintroduced, for a temporary period of time without any expiration date, bee-killing pesticides (neonicotinoids) to help the struggling sugar beet industry, surfing on the pandemic-related risk of sugar shortage and on the economic argument of the social and economic protection of French beet farmers suffering external market pressure. If the latter seems valid a reason, it is regrettable that 20 years of scientific research on the matter has once again been brushed under the rug because of the primacy given to the economic imperative without any consideration for alternative methods to support farmers.

Making up for the lack of recognition of the pandemic's causes by government officials, another war spread on social media: a meme war. Preaching the benefits of the unexpected and welcome decrease of greenhouse gas emissions and somewhat magical return of the wildlife to the deserted and silent cities during lockdowns, this social media trend in ecological communication concluded that nature was healing and that "we" were, in fact, the virus. If witnessing such an improvement in air quality, for instance, might very well provoke an electrical—or rather ecological—jolt, most discourses around the causes, whether about

the bat or the pangolin as the missing part of the transmission chain, about "we" as the virus or the escaped-from-a-chinese-lab virus, either revolve around an anthropocentric understanding of world dynamics with its undefined and undifferentiated "we", or risk feeding into a "there is no alternative" scenario, an ecophobic irrational fear of the natural environment as the divine master behind some sort of apocalyptic revenge, or even an ecofascist angst at overpopulation. When not accusing humans as a species, those discourses touch on cultural differences, blame cultural habits (such as wet markets and bushmeat consumption) and serve racist rhetorics of "the chinese virus".

Consequently, if Latour seems right when praising this moment as an opportunity to resume discussions on urgent matters, as a rehearsal for the upcoming climate regime and as the manifestation of a widespread doubt about the hegemony of the economic discourse as the sole framework from which to think about our planetary interrelations, the pandemic also appears to be unleashing environmentalism's dark sides (incidentally, bunker sales and survivalist's workshops are skyrocketing): whether it be ecophobic or leaning towards ecofascist tendencies and solutions, or totally apolitical (governmental communication and greenwashing campaigns without subsequent action). For better and for worse, then.

With the growing sense of the present and upcoming use of the shock doctrine, social distancing measures and the long-in-the-making criminalization of social movements and solidarity in the context of the slow but secure enforcement of a police state, environmental activists know the time really has come to change the

formats of their militant activities. It is no surprise that, among others, two of the main critical thinkers about (environmental) justice released books in 2020 calling for a need to rethink militant strategies (*Sortir de notre impuissance politique*, Geoffroy de Lagasnerie and *Comment saboter un pipeline*, Andreas Malm). We did not have to wait for the pandemic to see that protesting, as a mode of political expression and contestation, had reached its limits. The 2019's climate protests, qualified as "historical success", were born out of the automated reproduction of well-known forms of political expression, and led to no immediate and strong political outcomes. The following lockdowns, curfews, assembly restrictions, the work of social distancing and the security law (in place before it even passed) only completed atomizing society and its political "street cred": if not because of the fear of contracting COVID-19, protests gather fewer and fewer people because of the repressive, dissuasive and ever-growing law enforcement arsenal and because of the increasing powerlessness that comes with publicly expressing collective needs and urgencies without willing ears to listen. Mainstream media and government officials add on to the issue by continuing their discursive undermining work, discrediting social movements and ecological concerns in the face of such a big economic and social crisis: the proposals of the "Convention citoyenne pour le climat" initiated by former prime minister Edouard Philippe, which intents were to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030, are presented as "moving" but "not a priority" and "highly unrealistic"; intel files are, from now on, extended to political opinions, religious affiliations, union memberships,

and social media activities, hence targeting suspected terrorists but also, of course, leftists and environmental activists fighting against security laws, racist laws such as the one comforting "republican values", the nuclear option etc.

Macron's response to COVID-19 has significantly contributed to limiting and closing spaces of democratic debate, transformation, exchange, and political opposition, as can be universities, performance arts venues etc. Political reflexions and contestations have, for the most part, been relegated to the comfort (or not so comfortable) zone of the "technococoon" (Damasio) and the domestic sphere, increasing political organization's reliance on fragile means of communications held by private corporations (notwithstanding their own freedom of speech agenda and the environmental impact of internet browsing), with the risk of mistaking online connexion with solidarity. Through our screens, we witnessed how the pandemic served to legitimize the acceleration of the 5G process, a process done without public consultation, with the refusal of a moratorium and with a presidential dismissive conflation of 5G opponents with "Amish people" still living in the "oil lamp era". From the inside of our homes, we're seeing lockdown logics applied to the few currently implemented ecological policies such as the creation of new protected areas (knowing that 80% of french biodiversity is located on overseas territories and that there's an ongoing decolonial critique of such environmental measures). We're also seeing the taking off of greenwashing businesses such as low-waste or eco-conception businesses feeding a capitalist ecology of individual responsibility and guilt and a domestically situated

discourse that aggravates women's "environmental load" (as women are unfortunately still handling most of household tasks).

Lockdown logics are taking over current climate action, which is taking place behind closed doors: whether it be the "Convention citoyenne pour le climat" with its 150 drawn by lot participants or "l'affaire du siècle", the prosecution of the french government for climate change inertia. Climate action is currently institutionally supervised and managed, public debate is narrowed down to a sample of the population whose consultative role is staged and its propositions ignored.

Despite the loud and blatant climate skepticism, denial of a Trump or a Bolsonaro and their constant dismissal of scientific discourses and conclusions, it seems pertinent to argue that COVID-19 managed to set a different light on ecological stakes. With the setting up of new publicly accessible scientific tools for tracking the ecological impact of the pandemic on air and water pollution, airport activity and land productivity, attention has been brought on the temporary reduction of greenhouse gas emissions during the different national lockdowns, which could have been paving the way for a much pressing discussion on the ecological cost of international mobility and transportation and on urbanization processes, ecosystem and biodiversity preservation, human-animal cohabitation etc. If the amount of ecological communication as we knew it paled in comparison to the year-long constant COVID-19 bombing of newsfeeds—especially as Acrimed, the French critical observatory of the media, observed a huge imbalance in the media treatment of the "monde

d'après" discourse as TV and radio programs did not give it as much space as the press, pointing to a real issue of media pluralism, drastically influencing and amputating democratic debates—, qualitatively, it functioned as an odd-sounding wake up call, heightening environmental awareness thanks to a greater consciousness of global interconnectedness, as well as an opportunity to improve public's environmental literacy, bringing attention to environmental justice and environmental racism. This realization, or consensus, however, might only apply to popular and scientific opinion. The war against the virus shows it's in fact a war against democracy: a preventive muzzling of political contestation, consecutive backsteps taken without public consultation, all covered with a green cosmetic veil which started with "this crisis gives us a reason to accelerate our 'green' transition, not a reason to end it" and climaxed in the "One planet summit", focused on biodiversity issues and zoonotic infections, organized by Macron in the beginning of 2021, from which nothing of importance came out. Thus, the picture is pretty grim: everything seems to be in place to give weight to radical ecological discourses, however, hoping for those being a turning point was just wishful thinking. Knowing these catastrophic events will do nothing but multiply, if this pandemic indeed is, as Latour says, a "rehearsal" for the new climate regime, what seems to be rehearsed is our increasingly diminishing pool of perspectives for (non-violent) action. Climate cynicism is as dangerous as climate skepticism and denial. In face of it, how do we build a culture of solidarity before our political existences are entirely brushed off? Because, as entry 25 of "De la conséquence du confinement des militants

écologistes" confirms: "le conflit politique à l'ère de la pandémie dans les pays du Nord n'a pas encore eu lieu" (Lundi matin magazine). [The pandemic's political conflict in northern countries has not happened yet.]

La scène se déroule un jour d'été. Monsieur Palomar est confortablement installé dans une chaise longue dans le jardin. Occupé à ne rien faire, il écoute le chant des merles:

Le sifflement des merles a ceci de particulier: il est identique à un sifflement humain, à celui de quelqu'un qui ne serait pas particulièrement habile à siffler, mais qui se trouverait en situation d'avoir une bonne raison pour siffler, pour une fois, une seule, sans intention de continuer, et qui le ferait d'un ton décidé mais modeste, et affable, de manière à s'assurer la bienveillance de qui l'écoute.

Après un peu de temps, le sifflement est répété —par le même merle ou par son conjoint—, mais toujours comme si c'était la première fois qu'il lui venait à l'idée de siffler; si c'est un dialogue, chaque réplique arrive après une longue réflexion. Mais est-ce un dialogue, ou bien chaque merle siffle-t-il pour lui-même et non pour l'autre? Et, dans un cas comme dans l'autre, s'agit-il de questions et de réponses (à l'autre ou à soi-même) ou de confirmer quelque chose qui est la même chose toujours (sa propre présence, son appartenance à l'espèce, au sexe, au territoire)? Peut-être la valeur de cette parole unique tient-elle à ce fait qu'un autre bec sifflant la répète, que l'intervalle d'un silence ne la fait pas oublier.

Ou bien tout le dialogue consiste peut-être en ceci, dire à l'autre: "Je suis là", et la longueur des pauses ajoute à la phrase ce sens: "Encore", comme pour dire: "Je suis encore là, c'est toujours moi".

Et si le sens du message se trouvait dans la pause et non dans le sifflement? Si les merles se parlaient précisément par leur silence? (Le sifflement ne serait dans ce cas qu'un signe de ponctuation, une formule comme: « terminé ».) Un silence, apparemment identique à un autre silence, pourrait exprimer cent intentions différentes; un sifflement, aussi; se parler en se taisant, ou en sifflant, est toujours possible; le problème est de se comprendre. Ou bien personne ne peut comprendre personne: tout merle croit avoir mis dans son sifflement un sens fondamental pour lui, mais que lui seul comprend; l'autre lui réplique quelque chose qui n'a aucune relation avec ce qu'il a dit; c'est un dialogue de sourds, une conversation sans queue ni tête.

Italo Calvino, *Palomar*, traduit de l'italien par Jean-Paul Manganaro, Paris: éditions du Seuil, 1985, p.29-30.

VOLER DU PAIN AUX CANARDS

Je revois encore tourner cet étrange objet. C'est un jeu pour enfants: un cercle de papier sur lequel est dessiné d'un côté un oiseau, et de l'autre une cage. Une ficelle est accrochée des deux côtés. En faisant tourner très vite la ficelle, on crée une illusion d'optique: sur le cercle, l'oiseau apparaît pris au piège dans la cage.*

La capacité de la poule à voler a diminué au fur et

à mesure de l'évolution de l'espèce au cours de sa domestication par l'humain.

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

You tit you tit you tit you tit

You tit you tit you tit

HUMAIN

Voici la mésange charbonnière

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

You tit you tit you tit you tit you tit you tit you tit
tit

HUMAIN

C'est la plus commune des mésanges, avec son ventre jaune, une cravate noire et les joues blanches.

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

You tit you tit you tit you tit

You tit you tit you tit you tit

HUMAIN

Et son chant est tout simple, toujours sur deux ou trois notes, et toujours bien rythmé.

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

You tit you tit you tit

HUMAIN, imitant le chant de l'oiseau

You pip you pip you pip

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

You tit you tit tit tit

HUMAIN

Et c'est gai et plein d'entrain.

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

Touit touit touit touit touit touit touit touit

HUMAIN

Là elle a changé de chant, parce que la charbonnière connaît plusieurs façons de chanter.

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

Touit touit touit touit touit touit

HUMAIN

Et tout son art consiste à inventer des combinaisons nouvelles...

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE, l'interrompant.

Touit touit touit touit touit touiiiiit

HUMAIN

... des variantes, et toujours avec deux ou trois notes.

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

Touit touit touit touit touit touit touiiiiit

HUMAIN

Tulipe tulipe tulipe tulipe tulipe

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

Touit touit touit touit touit touit touit

SANS TÊTE NI QUEUE

Zi zazazi zazazi

HUMAIN

Et voici une autre variante.

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

Zi zazazi zazazi zazazi

HUMAIN

Ti tatati tatati tatati

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

Zi zazazi zazazi zazazi

Zi zazazi zazazi zazazi

HUMAIN

C'est l'un des premiers chants que l'on entend
en hiver...

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE, *l'interrompant à nouveau.*

Zi zazazi zazazi

HUMAIN

...souvent vers la mi-décembre

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

Zi zazazi zazazi

HUMAIN

Et elle va continuer à chanter comme ça pendant cinq
ou six mois...

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

Zi zazazi zazazi zazazi

HUMAIN

...jusqu'en mai-juin

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

Zi zazazi zazazi zazaziii

Fufu fifi

HUMAIN

Encore une variante.

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

Fufu fifi fufu fifi fu fifi fufu fifi fufu

HUMAIN

Il n'y a toujours que deux notes, mais cette fois-ci
elles sont assemblées deux par deux:

Tutu titi tutu titi tutu titi

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

Fufu fifi fufu fifi fufu fifi fufu fifi

Fufu fifi fufu fifi fu fifi fufu fifi

Fufu fifi fufu fifi fufu fifi

HUMAIN

Voilà, c'est tout pour aujourd'hui, la semaine pro-
chaine nous écouterons sa cousine, la mésange bleue.

MÉSANGE CHARBONNIÈRE

Fufu fifi fufu fifi fufu fifi

Fufu fifi fufu fifi fufu fifi fu

Fufu fifi fufu fifi

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRB2KwOJ3C8>

Les goélands se sont installés sur les toits du quartier. Ils poussent des cris insupportables. Roland tente de leur jeter un pétard pour les faire fuir, mais le pétard lui éclate presque entre les doigts.

Depuis qu'il habite à la campagne, mon beau-père nourrit les oiseaux, crie sur les chats, caresse les chiens, tapote le flanc des chevaux, écoute le martèlement du pic, traque les taupes, sauve les libellules coincées dans la véranda, éclate les mouches, noie les larves de hanneton, laisse des restes de nourriture pour le renard.

En hiver, les gens accrochent des sachets de graines devant leur fenêtre:

1. Par curiosité, pour mieux observer les oiseaux.
2. Par empathie, parce qu'ils croient que les oiseaux ne trouvent pas assez de nourriture.
3. Par mimétisme comportemental, parce que ça se fait.
4. En guise d'offrande.
5. Pour avoir l'impression d'être utile à quelqu'un.
6. Pour mesurer le temps qui passe.
7. Pour se sentir moins seul.
8. Pour être content d'être humain.

9. Pour avoir un semblant d'interaction avec leur environnement.
10. Pour avoir le sentiment de contrôler quelque chose.

Il arrive que des moineaux intrépides franchissent les portes automatiques des centres commerciaux et se retrouvent coincés à l'intérieur, sans que l'on parvienne à les chasser dehors. Commencent alors pour eux une nouvelle vie d'oiseau d'intérieur, passée à flâner dans les grandes allées et se nourrir des déchets des humains, comme s'il ne s'agissait que d'un nouvel écosystème plafonné, une cage géante parfaitement adaptée à leurs besoins.

Les milans tournoient derrière la moissonneuse-batteuse, à la recherche de restes de petits rongeurs déchiquetés par la machine.

Il y a cette scène dans le film *Rumble Fish* (1983) de Francis Ford Coppola: le motorcycle boy – qui ne peut pas voir les couleurs – est obnubilé par les poissons combattants dans le magasin d'animaux, ce qui inquiète son frère Rusty James, ainsi que le patron de la boutique. Un policier finit par venir voir ce qui se trame. Les combattants sont placés dans des aquariums séparés pour éviter qu'ils ne s'entretuent. Si on place un miroir en face d'un des poissons, le combattant

attaque son propre reflet. Le motorcycle boy se demande s'ils agiraient de la même façon dans la rivière.

1066

01:09:35,214 --> 01:09:39,301

- What was he doin' there?

- Lookin' at the fish, as far as I could tell.

1067

01:09:39,385 --> 01:09:41,387

Those fuckin' fish.

1068

01:09:42,096 --> 01:09:44,473

What is it with those fuckin' fish, man?

1069

01:09:44,557 --> 01:09:46,600

(TRAIN PASSING)

1070

01:09:48,269 --> 01:09:50,938

(TRAIN WHISTLE BLOWING)

1071

01:10:05,578 --> 01:10:08,080

(BIRDS CHIRPING, SQUAWKING)

1072

01:10:18,132 --> 01:10:19,675

Hey, what's up?

1073

01:10:20,551 --> 01:10:21,760

Hey.

1074

01:10:23,220 --> 01:10:25,389

Hey, what's the matter, man? Huh?

1075

01:10:26,599 --> 01:10:28,475

Really, are you feelin' all right?

1076

01:10:32,980 --> 01:10:35,149

How come the tank is separated?

1077

01:10:36,025 --> 01:10:37,818

These are rumble fish.

1078

01:10:39,111 --> 01:10:41,614

- They'd kill each other if they could.

- Yeah?

1079

01:10:41,697 --> 01:10:44,033

MAN: You boys gonna buy a fish
or something?

1080

01:10:45,409 --> 01:10:46,493

Nah.

1081

01:10:48,579 --> 01:10:50,789

That's right, Rusty-James.

1082

01:10:50,873 --> 01:10:53,000

These are Siamese fighting fish.

1083

01:10:54,668 --> 01:10:57,671

Watch this.

You know, if you lean a mirror...

1084

01:10:58,881 --> 01:11:00,633

up against the glass...

1085

01:11:05,554 --> 01:11:08,432

they try to kill themselves
fighting their own reflection.

1086

01:11:08,515 --> 01:11:10,100

- (BIRD SQUAWKING)

- That's pretty cool.

1087

01:11:10,184 --> 01:11:12,144

Yeah. Try it.

1088

01:11:12,227 --> 01:11:14,563

- (DOG BARKING)

- Right there.

1089

01:11:15,481 --> 01:11:17,149

- In the middle.

- Yeah.

1090

01:11:18,233 --> 01:11:21,070

No, over that way.

See that one over there? That one.

1091

01:11:22,988 --> 01:11:24,198

Yeah.

1092

01:11:28,452 --> 01:11:30,871

I wonder

if they'd act that way in the river.

1093

01:11:32,039 --> 01:11:37,211

I should close up now, boys.

I don't carry much cash. Really I don't.

1094

01:11:37,670 --> 01:11:39,213

Hey, we're lookin'.

1095

01:11:39,797 --> 01:11:41,298

Wow.

1096

01:11:41,382 --> 01:11:44,051

- Oh, yeah.

- Hey, man, I really dig the colors.

1097

01:11:44,134 --> 01:11:45,386

The colors?

1098

01:11:46,303 --> 01:11:48,347

- RUSTY-JAMES: The colors are cool.

- Mm-hmm.

1099

01:11:50,849 --> 01:11:53,477

MOTORCYCLE BOY: Makes me
kind of sorry I can't see the colors.

1100

01:11:53,560 --> 01:11:56,563

RUSTY-JAMES: I never thought
you were sorry about anything.

1101

01:11:56,647 --> 01:11:59,274

What's the big interest
in the pet store all of a sudden?

1102

01:11:59,358 --> 01:12:02,277

- (BIRD SQUAWKING)

- They've been hangin' around here.

1103

01:12:04,279 --> 01:12:06,615

- Take a look at the fish.

- (DOG BARKING)

1104

01:12:11,036 --> 01:12:12,579

You're crazy.

1105

01:12:13,622 --> 01:12:15,332

You're really crazy.

1106

01:12:16,959 --> 01:12:19,253

And you know

I've known about it all along.

1107

01:12:20,045 --> 01:12:22,965

But they belong in the river.

1108

01:12:23,757 --> 01:12:26,343

I don't think that they would fight
if they were in the river,

1109

01:12:26,427 --> 01:12:28,846

if they had the room to live.

1110

01:12:29,346 --> 01:12:31,974

Someone oughta get you off the streets.

1111

01:12:36,645 --> 01:12:40,065

Somebody oughta put the fish in the river.

(CHUCKLES)

1112

01:12:51,243 --> 01:12:53,328

(MEWS)

1113

01:12:57,041 --> 01:12:59,793

(TRAIN PASSING)

1114

01:13:11,472 --> 01:13:13,849

(♪ MAN WHISTLING)

1115

01:13:24,318 --> 01:13:26,528

- (♪ WHISTLING CONTINUES)

- (TRAIN WHISTLE BLOWS)

1116

01:13:35,996 --> 01:13:38,040

(CRUNCHING ICE)

1117

01:14:00,062 --> 01:14:03,315

(TRAIN PASSING)

1118

01:14:17,162 --> 01:14:20,040

(WIND WHISTLING)

1119

01:14:23,919 --> 01:14:26,463

(TRAIN PASSING)

1120

01:14:45,899 --> 01:14:48,026

(LOUD RUMBLING)

1121

01:14:50,279 --> 01:14:52,698

(INSECTS CHIRPING)

1122

01:15:22,769 --> 01:15:25,522

(INSECTS CHIRPING)

Rumble.Fish.1983.720p.srt

En suédois, il existe un mot pour désigner l'action de se lever très tôt pour écouter les oiseaux chanter: gökotta.

Dans sa cage, le ménure superbe imite le bruit du chantier d'à côté.

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x29qh5g>

Au Zimbabwe, les vautours sont perchés sur les clôtures de barbelés près des champs de mine. Ils attendent

que des gazelles sautent sur les mines pour se nourrir de leurs charognes réduites en lambeaux. Mais les vautours se font parfois prendre à leur propre jeu et explosent eux aussi sur une mine.

Chaque printemps, les merles qui nichent dans notre cerisier attaquent le rétroviseur de notre voiture comme s'il s'agissait d'un rival, becquetant furieusement leur image et souillant la portière de leurs fientes. Mais qui parmi nous n'a pas été victime de sa vanité ou n'a pas été surpris par son reflet, potentiellement menaçant, qu'il n'a pas reconnu tout de suite?

Jennifer Ackerman, *Le génie des oiseaux*, traduit de l'américain par Patrice Salsa. Paris: éditions Marabout, 2017, p. 16-17.

ANTHROPODÉNI

Les corneilles noires utilisent les voitures qui passent comme casse-noix.

Les oiseaux comptent parmi les rares animaux à se servir d'outils. L'ornithologue Russell Balda a ainsi assisté à une drôle de bataille armée lors d'une observation en Arizona: mécontent qu'une corneille

se délecte de graines dans une mangeoire, un geai s'empare d'une brindille pointue pour attaquer l'oiseau rival. Mais l'attaque du geai échoue, et il laisse tomber la brindille, que s'empresse de récupérer la corneille pour riposter.

On peut se demander si les oiseaux auraient agi de la sorte si aucun humain n'avait mis de graines dans la mangeoire.

Alors que leurs cousins les crocodiles se sont mis à ramper sur les rivages, les ancêtres des oiseaux se sont ingéniés à développer leur capacité à voler, suivant un processus de rétrécissement connu sous le nom de « miniaturisation progressive ».

ESCAPE ROOM

Placé en captivité, le cacatoès de Goffin est réputé pour son habilité à ouvrir les verrous.

Mon grand frère m'a raconté cette anecdote de quand j'étais petit: on passe devant une fontaine et je lui dis que je veux me baigner dedans. Il doit trouver un prétexte pour m'en empêcher et me dit que ce n'est pas possible parce que les oiseaux chient dans la

fontaine. Je lui répond que ce n'est pas vrai, et là
FLAC: un oiseau me chie dans la main.

En Nouvelle-Zélande, les perroquets nestors kéas
volent les antennes de télévision et dégonflent les
pneus des voitures.

Une petite fille de Seattle a reçu de nombreux cadeaux
de la part des corbeaux qu'elle nourrit régulièrement
sur le chemin de l'école: vis, boulon, caillou,
boucle d'oreille, bouton, petit os, et autre calamar
en plastique déposés à l'endroit où elle-même dé-
pose la nourriture.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWXe7Js6GnI>

Le loriot d'Europe est un oiseau d'une vingtaine de cen-
timètres d'un jaune éclatant aux ailes et à la queue
noire. L'animal est menacé, très rare et particulière-
ment discret. Avoir le privilège d'observer et
l'occasion de photographier un loriot constitue
le graal de tout ornithologue européen.

John Marzluff est un chercheur de l'université de
Washington spécialiste des corbeaux et des corneilles.
Il a capturé quelques spécimens aux alentours de

l'université pour ses expériences avant de les relâcher. Depuis, les corbeaux le reconnaissent parmi la foule qui fréquente le campus, et poussent des croassements inquiétants quand ils le croisent. Plus étonnant encore: il semblerait que les corbeaux soient parvenu à transmettre l'information à leurs congénères, si bien que désormais tous les oiseaux se méfient du professeur.

L'humain pointe la caméra sur le corbeau, qui le regarde d'un air interrogateur.

HUMAIN

Say nevermore.

CORBEAU

Say nevermore.

CORBEAU

Waka waka waka

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIX_6TBeph0

It aslmost felt like a close friend
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