

Global Cows 2020: Second Chapter

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*(...) and I awoke (as I thought) to find myself
lying on a strip of wayside waste by an oak copse
just outside a country village (...)*

William Morris

(...) there are times of urgencies that need stories

Donna Haraway

*If the Sun and Moon should ever doubt,
they'd immediately go out.*

William Blake

The Sunset and the Dream

At sunset, under an oak tree, five women danced in a circle. During the pilgrimage, they encountered Pan, a Greek deity playing the flute. They had brushes and colours at their feet. Sheets of poetry were scattered in the grass. The landscape was bucolic, and they shared their time with the herds of cattle, brambles and weathered scarecrows. It seemed like a dream, or an echo that let a vision perforate. Maybe it was a spiritual union, a dialectical re-enchantment of humans and nature, a negotiation with the invisible in time and space, without contact. Linear time no longer worked, crumbling at the circular dance of the five women. As for space, there were no more borders. Everything was projected into the vision, which turned into a screen where the tears of monarch butterflies joined hypertext links. The revelation—worthy of a historical catastrophe—announced the hope of salvation. Gradually, the dream became less evanescent, revealing the identity of the five women: Vanessa Disler, Tiziana La Melia, Nina Royle, Lucy Stein and Charlott Weise. Together, they worked on a large fresco-secco painting, where they told ancient and remote stories of a pagan past, of mythical forms reverberating globally with divergent meanings.

The Night and the Invisible

Hecate, the great goddess of circular time and spirits initiated the artists into the invisible realm of the night. Ancient knowledge poured forth, suggesting new alliances. 'Change the world as soon as possible, before the animals also perish', Hecate suggested. The archaic lives in the present-day. Let's forget the idea of progress as a way to make space for new stories and new crops. Imagine forgetting consumerist myths. The hedonism of personal and individual worship had to be abandoned for a "culture of difference." Hecate protected the artists with a spell of invisibility and concealment, at the limits of anonymity, focusing on the impersonal gesture of gentle hands, and the sharing of artistic property in order to claim another form of identity. It was about transgressing the dogma of the separate individual for an act of kinship and sympoiesis, reactivating awareness of interdependence to nourish the planet. A secret alliance with planetary solidarity was made palpable on the screen, in the collective drawing. Only in this way could the miracle be accomplished. Only in the power of an invisible self could it be realized. The real trick was to disappear.

The Day and the Parasite

Carrying on with a sense of mutual belonging, this bizarre council of artists decided to use their shared resources in solidarity with the planet. The circle dance was based on the cycle of nature and solidarity between species. A spell was cast with a wand: the shared brush.. An interactive energy circulated through the constellations of the night sky, and then the daytime sky. A warm, maternal sun distilled rays and fertilized the language of the artists. The fresco-secco was mixed with new sketches obtained from the stroke of a ballpoint pen, and arranged interactively upon a screen. A collective body, nourished by affective substance, of intrusions and expulsions, blessed in collaboration with an awareness of interdependence, turned to absolute freedom of coexistence and reversibility. Sharing the creative gift was an act of hospitality. The cycles and structures of the artists' work multiplied. They were engulfed in autopoietic virtual parasitisms. A symbiosis between formal elements, intertextual connections and intersubjective relationships. Each leeches off the other, burgeoning life. In a chain of parasites, one body is a host of another. In this story, the parasite was a large sprawling and neoliberal beast. It had to be inhabited from within, in order to grasp its own tentacles. "[...] we go directly into the belly of a parasite. Think of its stomach, where the natural animal kingdom has found its battlefield of union, the crucible of closest fusion, the organ connecting the various animal species." (Marx in Timofeeva 2016)

The Eclipse and the Boundaries

Concealment happened astrally, with an eclipse that lined up three celestial bodies. The phenomenon of the eclipse distilled moon droplets and solar rays on Earth. It spread along on the ground as an anomalous flora, called broom, a flower that had inspired poets and ancient legends. It was said that its ashes contained gold. Nature continued to produce great things by following and feeding its cosmic course, but also by constantly destroying those things too. In the meantime, humans began to harness nature ever more treacherously, both in the process of creation and destruction; believing in an illusion of cultivation, they forgot the miracle of broom. With indifference, the miracle of broom entered the undergrowth, waiting to be recognised again. Herds of animals moved freely among its branches and flowers. Those yellow flowers were the only borders. Everything flowed in a mysterious and autonomous way, with a sympathetic reaction. There was more than mere life in the ruins and the fragility of the living. "While the miracle repeats, and nature keeps replying to its sly parasite with a silent yes," (Timofeeva 2016) the artists continued to dance and work on this drawing of solidarity and collaboration between the species.

The Cosmos under the New Moon in Taurus

A pilgrimage of global hope began to dissolve into a planetary need. This cosmic vision emanated a sense of swallowing and regeneration, a sprout for new relationships between the species and a pacified syncretism. There was a complex, multiplied image made up of several layers on the screen. It looked like a palimpsest, in which pre-existing images resisted the intrusion of new ones, like snapshots of memories, and of dreamlike fragments. The almond shape from the legend of the Vescica Pisces; an ancient symbol in Indian and Mesopotamian culture, later appropriated by Christianity, alluded to a grain. It alluded to a planetary membrane joined in the complexity of our lives: the inside with the outside, the real with the virtual, the day with the night, the human with the natural. It emitted a cosmic and rhizomatic dust, embracing and interlacing human and non-human relationships and anatomies. Similarly, in a non-dogmatic and free-spirited way, the accumulation of the artists energies and work compiled into a layered vision of drawings, small icons, audio tracks, and constellations of notes, which made up a virtual and subtle fresco. Under the cast of the new moon in Taurus, their drawing communed with the cosmos and the

tears of the monarch butterfly connected the planetary dreams of the artists to the allied eyes of the curious visitor. Even their dreams, in the nights to come, would be that of “a child born for sympoiesis—for becoming-with and making-with a motley clutch of earth others.” (Haraway 2016, p. 137)

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