

**MARA PASTOR**

**THE BUSTS OF MARTÍ  
LIQUIDATION  
HE BROUGHT ME FLOWERS**

**TRANSLATED BY MARÍA JOSÉ GIMÉNEZ**

## THE BUSTS OF MARTÍ

One fine day all the busts of Martí  
started talking,  
all the beautiful busts of Martí  
began to speak Martí.  
From the Martí with the chacmool body in Vedado  
to the one in Villa Lugano, in Argentina,  
and the one in that park in downtown Shanghai,  
the world was filled with talking Martí,  
busts of Martí heading  
like apostles toward Popocatépetl  
along zigzagging resonating routes  
until they lined up next to each other,  
all the Martí in América  
all the Martí in the world,  
all the busts of Martí.

There were those who thought  
it was the end times.  
There were those who wanted to send  
their amphibious forces  
their journalists to interview  
one of the busts of Martí,  
but the chattering was so massive, so strident,  
that every Martí made it impossible to hear the rest,  
and they all became a harmless roar,  
molten lead, tree ash.

## LIQUIDATION

I'm not used to  
watching birds,  
but lately I accept  
that love is  
to accompany you as a cautious amateur,  
to count the vultures on the road,  
pelicans with wings like stretched clouds,  
wild nopales  
and swings hanging from flamboyans  
in barrio Bélgica. I don't usually  
optimize my habits,  
but lately I accept  
that love is  
to buy a bicycle seat  
that takes us to see the Río Portugués together,  
and from there to the sports equipment store  
so we can keep loving each other  
with gel gloves and ultra-lightweight helmets,  
return to the boulevard  
and blow each other kisses from bike to bike  
placing the ball of the foot  
in just the right place. I don't tend  
to optimize love but now  
that I know that holding up your torso  
is a form of loving  
each guaraguao  
is a warning of something  
that could spread its wings and soar  
even if we don't get paid  
next month.

## HE BROUGHT ME FLOWERS

*Not all paradises are lost  
some have an expiration date*

Zaira Pacheco

*Roses anyway*

Ismael Rivera

### 1.

Behind la Corco  
there is a dock  
we had never seen before.  
Despite the steelwork  
the rowboats are worthy  
of a postcard,  
if only we didn't know  
about the heavy metals  
in the air.

### 2.

On the river  
your desire is a cascade  
with no imaginable truce.  
On the rock, five minutes  
of death mix with the water  
and I watch that death  
as if it were a triumph.

**3.**

We stop  
for a smoke, while the sky  
fills with gunmetal blues  
and as if in a movie  
the Lajas aerostat  
appears in the distance.

It is a great day.  
Life seems to say to us  
it is time  
to relaunch with a new  
radar system.

**4.**

Which one is your ashtray  
in my car, you ask.  
I am the kind who flicks ashes  
on the ground, I say.

**5.**

Charrancito,  
querequequé,  
chorlito, aura tiñosa,  
royal yaboa,  
southern birds,  
new birds on the tongue  
old forms of flight.

**6.**

On that beach  
full of river stones  
you made a little seaweed nest.  
With a stone, you gave  
the nest an egg.  
That green nest was so beautiful  
with its stone egg.  
It seemed possible  
for that egg  
to give birth to love.

**7.**

Sitting beside you  
in the passenger seat  
wonders occur.  
Going uphill,  
there they were:  
three cows against a blue background,  
chewing on happiness.

**8.**

In paradise there are oysters,  
a man who sells crabs,  
a beach where the sun sets  
while you swing in your hammock.  
In paradise they fix up fish only  
at the Caro Valle fish market,  
I float as if in a placid dream,  
and your hands rock in slow motion  
a body adrift.  
Until atlas holds up  
the sky again for an eternity.

**9.**

Next time we go  
to the river I will bring  
waterproof questions.

**10.**

Landscapes stop appearing  
on Instagram.  
The house vacates me.  
I'd go to the beach, but yesterday  
a flock of unfinished salts  
walled in the coasts.

**11.**

If he brings you flowers  
without knowing you  
he will leave before you know him  
or that's what you'll think  
during the first days.  
Then you'll see the vine  
he brought from Jayuya,  
the lady of the night  
he transplanted,  
the Spanish thyme  
from Playa Buyé  
he put in the bottle  
of tequila and you will understand  
he left behind a garden  
for you to bloom  
in his absence.