

# **On the Shining Screen of the Eyelids**



**Josely Vianna Baptista**

with artwork by Francisco Farla

translation by Chris Daniels





On the shining screen  
of the eyelids





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Josely Vianna Baptista

artwork by Francisco Faria

translated by Chris Daniels





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## Introduction

*First, there is the need . . .*  
Charles Reznikoff

*Solo lo difícil es estimulante . . .*  
José Lezama Lima

It's extremely difficult to distill into a few pages four years of collaboration, hundreds of pages of email, all the books, art, and music I studied, and the hours of thought, conversation, and communal effort that have gone into this project that has changed my life. I'm incapable of a bureaucratic approach to literature. I don't want to measure or codify or theorize. I've never wanted to be a critic or a scholar. I want to write sentences like "River is typographical terminology"; I want to pull coarse twine through my tongue and burn the bloody hemp to raise the ghost of Severo Sarduy, in the hope that through the unendurable stare of his goggle-eyed mask he'll hiss

Meaning is the Subject's couchancy in controlled excession's laminate of dense orbits of solar systems in the congealing of a ubiquity of event horizons; hidden by such feracion, by such interpenetration, within primordial mixed metaphor's recent galactic blossoming, it lies in wait, a jaguar queen of plankton in her thicket of alertness.

While translating this difficult work, I've been comforted by the teenage Bernini's failed attempt to chisel marble into leaping flames—that's the most apt statement I can think to make about my part in this book.

I love all dictionaries and thrive on complicated syntax. I cherish tones and registers that collide like the consonants in a Hopkins poem. I'm as concerned with music as I am with meaning. I'm an artist who translates, and translation, for me, is largely intuitive, something much more of the senses than of the intellect. At the same time, I try to keep in mind that to be a translator is to be a point of contact between two cultures. I will attempt to situate the work of Josely Vianna

Baptista and Francisco Faria, but I find I must do this by writing about my own intuitive concerns.

Baptista's poetry must not be thought of as being related to, or influenced by, any of the contemporary poetries and/or poetics in the United States. Something similar can be said about Faria, whose work, like Baptista's, undermines, conquers, colonizes, and transforms European tradition in the creation of new art forms for the Americas. A detailed introduction to this book would have to include a history of Romance-language literature, a history of Iberian and Ibero-American literature, and a discussion of European cultural traditions and the deglutitory transformations wreaked upon them in these Americas.

Faria's drawings are very large, and it's a pity that they must be shown here in such reduced form. On the printed page, it's easy to confuse them with photographs. This isn't the case when one views the original drawings, where any thought of photorealism is immediately banished, and what in this book appears a glossy, virtuosic surface is revealed to be the result of a very free, often wild application (and/or removal) of graphite. Looking at these drawings up close, one can see the impassioned randomness of Faria's line. The drawings remain unsettling even after I've realized that their composition does not draw my eye to a given point on the paper, and they remain mysterious even after I've seen the Brazilian ocean and landscape that quicken Faria's baroque exuberance.

No one really knows the origin of the word *baroque*. It's been suggested that the word derives from *barrueco*, the Spanish word for "sport pearl." Nor has anyone been able to come up with a satisfactory definition for the word. Anglophones use another term, *metaphysical*, to describe our own baroque poets: Donne, Marvell, Crashaw, Herbert, Milton in his aureate youth, et al.

*Baroque* is often used as a synonym for "excessively ornamented" or "in bad taste." But even the most cursory study of baroque art will reveal stark paintings like Caravaggio's *Saint Jerome Writing* and largely unornamented sculptures like Bernini's *David*. And there are the examples of Poussin and La Tour. While *baroque* is most often used to designate a period in art history, to me the word describes a way to see the world. Paintings project into the space immediately before them, open into wide skies, or sink into enclosed spaces, light or dark. There are many paintings in which a gesture or action draws me into the canvas: an outstretched arm points to somewhere beyond the painting; a basket of bread is about to fall off a table and onto the floor at my feet. I'm invited to enter and do so, very willingly.

The baroque is also an attitude toward life and death. Because of Caravaggio, I'll always think of the Virgin Mary as a young mother leaning casually in a doorway. Bernini's statues of dying and ecstatic saints lead me into erotic reveries; his *Gabriele Fonseca* reminds me that love is a kind of awe and that it has a human face. Countless Christs invite me—an atheist of Jewish descent—to imagine and to share, simultaneously, the horror of Crucifixion and the glory of Ascension. Self-congratulatory beholding of the sublime is by no means inevitable. "One either does or does not catch fire," Hilda Doolittle wrote—a sentence that is still with me decades after I first encountered it.

A very short list of Iberian and Ibero-American baroque poets would have to include Góngora, Quevedo, San Juan de la Cruz, and Sor Juana. All of these poets influenced what I tentatively call the twentieth-century Latin American baroque, the great avatar of which was the Cuban writer José Lezama Lima. Writers influenced by Lezama include Severo Sarduy, Julio Cortázar, the Mexican poet Coral Bracho, and Josely Vianna Baptista, among others. Like surrealism, this twentieth-century Latin American baroque is international. Unlike surrealism, the baroque has never been a movement or a school, but a tendency.

While Josely Vianna Baptista and Francisco Faria do not think of themselves as baroque or neo-baroque artists, both are deeply engaged in furthering baroque techniques and ideas. The baroque meant to dispense with Renaissance idealization and abolish the mannerist frame. Italian, Iberian, and Ibero-American baroque artists didn't care for static repose; what they wanted was movement, proliferation of forms, circumflexion, and the dissolution of boundaries. Considering these aims, Baptista and Faria have come to believe that perception isn't an act of confinement; it does not equal possession. Our gaze takes in everything around the object we behold. Because we can't limit ourselves to a single discrete percept, we can never possess what we perceive, and what we do perceive is an endlessly seething palimpsest. There's no room for idealization. Words like *beautiful* and *common* no longer have absolute meanings.

Baroque poets have always made complex use of language. Metaphors are strange and subtle, great attention is paid to sound, wordplay abounds. Perhaps the most recognizable baroque poetic technique is the conceit: the spinning of a concept throughout the body of a poem. Baptista's poems push the conceit deep into the body of language. Her textual spaces are at once airy, watery, and fleshy. They reinforce imagery and idea, incorporate the margin, bestow equal weight upon word, letter, and punctuation, and they mirror and abet the flux of



nonpossessive perception (*sbikantaza*) that is one of the foundations of human existence.

Baptista's poems drive language to the far limits of coherence. They ask not for analysis, but for surrender. To fully experience her texts, it's better to employ a cognitive equivalent of the ranging, aimless, unwilled look that caresses the face of the beloved, and leave for another occasion the minute analysis of Anglo-Saxon literary criticism, which adores to dress up as hard science. Baptista's writing asks me to submit to an apparently unhinged welter of eroticized words-in-violation. It's entirely up to me to decide how far and long I'm willing to search through befuddlement for the apparently missing subject, which is hidden somewhere among the chiaroscuro layers of nomadic metaphor that fold and unfold in my mind. When I realize that the subject is that which I hold in my hands and that it includes my hands, I'm surprised, and moved, to find myself a part of the syntax of the physical book, the ink on its pages and the margin about and within the text. These texts invite me to become the subject or part of the subject or no part at all, as I please.

The baroque is physical and spiritual. When I'm able to surrender intensely, I allow myself the mute luxury of sharing in a very old community of rapture.

I first read Josely Vianna Baptista's poetry in an anthology called *Nothing the Sun Could Not Explain*, edited by Michael Palmer, Nelson Ascher, and Régis Bonvicino, and published by Sun & Moon Press. In that anthology, Baptista's work looks awful on the page (the typesetter hadn't set her poems correctly), so I didn't pay very much attention to the Portuguese texts, but I was interested enough to seek out more of her work. On the Brazilian website *PopBox* ([www.gratisweb.com/popbox](http://www.gratisweb.com/popbox)), I came across her poem "Infinitis" (pp. 40–41 of this book), which is in the Sun & Moon anthology. This time I was taken with the typography (as realized by the webmaster, Elson Fróes), which, while still not ideal, is much closer to the poet's intent. Reading this poem, I was dismayed by my confusion because Baptista writes in a Portuguese that is utterly unlike that of any other Lusophone poet I've read. The work reminded me of Donne and Hopkins, two of my favorite poets, and I was struck by the unusual lexicon, the dense musicality, the syntactic freedom, and the visual presentation. I was excited and felt compelled to attempt to translate her poetry. I began to search the Web for other examples of her work. Again on *PopBox*, I found some translations by Baptista of the Argentinian poet Néstor Perlongher, and I was again overwhelmed by confusion, surprise, and delight.

The translations are part of *PopBox*'s small but excellent anthology of twentieth-century Latin American writing rooted in the Iberian and Ibero-American baroque. As I explored the anthology, I knew that I had stumbled onto something that would prove to be very important to me. The baroque in art and literature has always been one of my passions; I began to re-explore the baroque.

I got Baptista's email address and sent her an enthusiastic note in execrable Portuguese, together with my first clumsy attempt at translating one of her poems. She wrote back expressing gratitude and told me she would get back to me. I soon received an email from Faria, who made some very helpful comments. I was sent a photocopy of Baptista's first book, *Ar*, and a copy of her and Faria's book, *Corpografia*. I carried on. After a year or so of false starts, incredibly embarrassing blunders (which neither Baptista nor Faria seemed to mind in the least), a mountain of email, and growing confidence, I began to achieve a more intuitive understanding of these poems. In 2001, with the help of Manifest Press, with whom I won a collaborative grant from the Creative Work Fund in San Francisco, I was able to spend six weeks in Brazil, where Baptista, Faria, and I sat together in a room for hours at a time and worked.

The result of our collaboration, this book contains less than half of Baptista's published poetry and only a fraction of Faria's work. My own work here is unfinished, for all translations are temporary by nature. Baptista (herself a consummate and prolific translator) and Faria have thought long and hard about the art they make, and both are happy to share their ideas. Together they've made this book (and this introduction) much more than it could have been.

Portuguese is a generously polysemic medium for paronomasia. Lusophone poets sometimes have to be careful to avoid overburdening their poems with puns. In general, where I've been unable to reproduce Baptista's deftly virtuosic wordplay, I've gone for syntactic ambiguity, rhyme, consonance, assonance, dissonance, unusual usage (all of which abound in the poet's work); the occasionally confusing archaic genitive; obsolete, or incorrect usage; and, rarely and as a final measure, total re-invention. Making a poem in English has never been the point; I've always meant for Baptista's Portuguese to take the English language by storm.

An extreme example of how I've dealt with paronomasia occurs in the poem "Menhir para Kiefer" (pp. 42-43). The original contains the whimsical phrase "nihil tigre e hil eufrates." The word "hil" does not exist in Portuguese. An initial *r* is aspirated in Brazil, and *l*, when it's final, or when it occurs between a vowel and a



consonant, is pronounced as *m*. “Hil” is pronounced *bee-oo*, which is how Brazilians pronounce *rio* (river). I’ve transformed this phrase into “river tigris and rive euphrates,” which is not nearly as whimsical as the Portuguese phrase, and which loses the Latin word “nihil” and the other meaning of “tigre,” which is of course “tiger.” On the other hand, my re-invention is layered, for “rive” can be read as both a noun and a verb, in French and English, respectively.

The final phrases of one poem (pp. 74–75) presented another kind of problem. The poet has set up such an auditory expectation that some readers hardly notice that the last word, “isse,” is a verb-ending without a root. The reader can be led to read this word as a form of *ser*, the verb *to be*. The elegant wordplay is almost invisible to the reader, who is surprised when the subterfuge is discovered. I’ve played with English verb forms, and hoped for the best.

“Ouro-fio” (pp. 52–53) is a beautiful compound word. The literal translation of this adverb is “gold-wire,” and it means “in equal proportion, in parallel, equally, exactly.” The example given in the *Houaiss Dictionary of the Portuguese Language* reads, “No Juízo Final, todos serão julgados ouro-fio pelo Criador” (“On Judgement Day, all will be judged equally by the Creator”). “Os pesos da balança equilibraram-se ouro-fio” means “the weights on the scale balanced perfectly.” I’ve translated “ouro-fio” as “golden mean,” which is totally inaccurate, but I’m pleased with the allusion to Ancient Greek mathematics, to the structure of seashells, and to the Fibonacci Series and its approximation of the Golden Section’s asymmetrical balance and order. Most importantly, the soft brilliance of yellow metal remains intact.

Translation is never a solitary activity. It’s always at least a *folie à deux*. This project has been collaborative from the start. I feel so grateful to so many people that I can’t possibly thank them all, so I will limit myself to the people whose direct actions resulted in this book.

First and foremost, I thank Josely and Francisco. I thank Josely for her work and for allowing me to give it a presence in English. I’ve tried to do so creatively and honestly, and I hope my translation honors her and her work as much as she’s trusted me with her permission to translate.

Had Francisco simply allowed his artwork to be reproduced here, that would have been more than enough. But he has also proved his tireless devotion to the triple partnership of almost four years that, firstly, needed to address the intricate problem of how to help this autodidactic Lusophile find his way through the teeming spheres of Josely’s poetry and, secondly, once understanding set in, had to figure



out how to get it all into English. Josely and Francisco have given me much kindness, patience, hospitality, camaraderie, trust, and, above all, material, intellectual, and spiritual generosity.

Regina Alfarano's pioneering translations were very helpful when I was first trying to find my way. Several of them can be found in *Nothing the Sun Could Not Explain*.

About three years ago, the Brazilian poet and translator Rodrigo Garcia Lopes read early versions of many of the translations in this book, and his help and encouragement at that time gave me the confidence to continue. During my first visit with Josely and Francisco in Brazil, the three of us sat in our room one day, stuck on a phrase and going stir-crazy. Rodrigo dropped by for a visit. We asked him to think about the phrase, and he came up with the solution. Rodrigo also read a near-final version of the work, and made many helpful comments and suggestions. Every page in this book is marked by his friendship, his careful engagement, his respect for Josely's poetry, and his love of the art of poetry and its twin, translation.

Any errors in the work are my own.

Luis Dolhnikoff arranged an apartment for me in Florianópolis. He and his wife, Mercedes Bonorino, together with the "four pillars" (now unfortunately two), have become my friends. *No meio do Caminho, doces de coco . . .*

The Creative Work Fund of San Francisco awarded this project a collaborative grant, which allowed this book to come into being. I know I speak for everyone involved in the project when I thank CWF for its support.

We're all grateful to Norma Cole, so crucial a person to all who know her and her work, for the part she played in bringing about the publication of this book, which is the first representative selection from the work of a living experimental Brazilian poet to be published in the United States.

It would be impossible to give adequate thanks to Barbara Barrigan and Lisa Kovalski of Manifest Press, who are responsible for the conception of this project. Before I met them, my intentions were much more modest—and inchoate. I'm grateful to Trevor Calvert and Michael Cross, who have continued the work of the press.

Finally, I must single out one woman, also of Manifest Press, who is this book's best friend and *sine qua non*: Carrie Pickett.

With all my heart, I dedicate these translations to my father, David Daniels, who is a wonderful poet. Growing up around an artist whose medium is his very

life taught me that generosity is all-important and that there's only one rule: *Don't mistake kindness for weakness*. He taught me how to say "I don't know."

Every word I translate will always be in memory of my late, deflagratory sister, Rita, *the onlie begetter*, whose name is a shortened form of Margarita, and who could just as well have been named Margery or Marge (please go to the dictionary). I miss my little sister every day. She couldn't have cared less about poetry, but we were always proud of each other when it mattered.

Chris Daniels  
Florianópolis, November 2002

On the shining screen  
of the eyelids

de

*A r*

from

A i r



queria entreveros e quimeras, v  
ários rigores e rimas raras, q  
ueria menires e quireras, que o  
que desdera se reouvera. queri  
a trevos e risos feros, leros  
serenos, querelas belas, relar d  
e peles arrepiadas, chorar c  
om um olho e rir com o outr  
o. queria esperas e não demora  
s, se o leste escuro o sul segu  
ro, queria guerra, caça e amore  
s, e por um prazer, sem dores.  
(noite neon. o brilho dentro. n  
oite neon. dos letreiros. noit  
e neon. redondo) tudo agora e  
rindo, ritos, delírios, gritos:  
bem-me-queria em perigo, ra  
sando prédios e logogrifos

i, wishing a fight, a chimera, the  
odd rigor, the rare rhyme, wi  
shing menhir and grit, the take  
n back retaken; wishing clover a  
nd fierce laughter, calm cozin  
g, beautiful complaints, caress of d  
ishevelled fells, to cry with o  
ne eye and laugh with the oth  
er; wishing waiting, not delay,  
if the west be dark, then east y  
our way, wishing war, chase and  
amours, every rose without its t  
horn. (neon night. the bright i  
nside. neon night. the signs. n  
eon night. round) all, now, la  
ughter, ritual, deleria, shrieks  
: love-me-nots in peril, leapfro  
gging buildings and logogriphs

p o i s q u e d e u s e s d e s e j o n e s s e  
d e s e r t o b e m i m e n s o ( u m c  
i n z a - c h u m b o n o s n u b l a e  
a v ê n u s : n u v e m d e n u v e n s  
) e q u e e r r o s c o r r i j o n e s  
s e e n g e n h o d e s i n s , s e m e  
q u í v o c o ( u m c i n z a - c h u m b  
o n u b l a e s s e c i n z a : l i n h a  
s o b l í q u a s ) , s e n o s s e n f i  
n s e u m e ç o e s s e m e s m o c o  
m e ç o t ã o c o m f i m m e d i d o  
( a g u ç a a s z í n i a s , z u m n a s  
g l i c í n i a s : c i n z a - a z u l a d o  
q u e a n u l a o d i a ) e s e o m u  
n d o s e g u e r e d o n d o e i m p  
e r f e i t o n e s s e m o m e n t o e  
m q u e t u d o e s t á m u d o ? ( p  
a l a v r a s l í q u i d a s )

and so how can i desire g  
ods in this desert so i  
mmense (lead gray clo  
uds us and venus: cloud o  
f clouds), fix gaffs in  
this yes craft, unmis  
taken (lead gray clouds  
this ash: oblique lines  
) , if in this unending i  
mull this very beginning  
with so measured an end (w  
hets zinnias, zooms up i  
nto wisteria: steelblue g  
ray annuls day), if the  
world goes on round a  
nd imperfect this mome  
nt when everything is  
mute? (liquid words)



n a m a d r  
u g a d a a  
g u d a q u  
a l a d a g  
a a á g u  
a p i n g a

i n d a y b  
r e a k a c  
u t e a s a  
d a g g e r  
d r i p s w  
a t e r

v i v o s       e m       m e u       c o r  
p o ( s í l e x       i n v i s í v e  
l ) ,       o       b r e v e       d o s       d  
e d o s ,       o       s e l o       d o s       b  
e i j o s       s e       l e n d o       e m  
s e g r e d o ( u m       v i é s       d  
e       m e d o ) .       v i v o s       o       d  
e s l i z e       d e       s i n s       r a  
r e f e i t o ( a v e s s o       s  
i l ê n c i o       d e       s e i x o  
e m       s e u       v e i o ) ,       e       e s  
s e       t e m p o       i n t e i r  
o       e m       m e u       c o r p o       s  
u s p e n s o :       n o       c h á  
d e       t e u s       o l h o s       m  
a d e l e i n e s       m o l h a m  
o s       m e u s       a t r o p e l o s

a l i v e   i n   m y   b o d y  
( i n v i s i b l e   s i l e x )  
,   f i n g e r s '   b r i e f  
,   s e a l   o f   k i s s e s  
r e a d   i n   s e c r e t   (  
a n   a s k a n c e   o f   d  
r e a d ) .   r a r e f i e d   s  
l i p p a g e   o f   y e s s e  
s   ( a d v e r s e   s i l e n c  
e   o f   f l i n t   i n   y  
o u r   v e i n ) ,   a n d   t  
h i s   t i m e   e n t i r e   h  
a n g i n g   i n   m y   b o  
d y :   i n   t h e   t e a o  
f   y o u r   e y e s   m a d  
e l e i n e s   m o i s t e n  
m y   s t u m b l i n g



na madrugada fria a paisagem  
se vê através da paisagem, a  
geada e a lasca de um jasp  
e que se parece ao jade, as g  
azes da geada que esfumam a  
paisagem, e a lasca de um ja  
spe que se parece ao jade e  
se repete jaspe na geada p  
aisagem, na casca de um á  
spide, na valsa de uma vesp  
a, no rasgo de um outdoor,  
na aural de um poema, na m  
ineral fumaça da boca de qu  
em fala, no ar em ar em ars q  
ue condensa uma imagem, gea  
da, jade, jaspe na pele da pai  
sagem, que o áspero da esper  
a altera em miragem: formiga  
s traçam trilhas na farinha

c h i l l p r e - d a w n , l a n d s c a p e s  
e e n t h r o u g h l a n d s c a p e , f r o s t  
, j a s p e r s h a r d s e e m s j a d e , f  
r o s t ' s g a u z e h a z e s l a n d s c a p  
e , j a s p e r s h a r d s e e m s j a d  
e , p r o l i f e r a n t j a s p e r o n f  
r o s t y l a n d s c a p e i n a v i p  
e r ' s h u s k , i n t h e w a l t z o  
f a w a s p , o n a b i l l b o a  
r d ' s t a t t e r , i n a p o e m '  
s a u r a , i n m i n e r a l s m o k e  
f r o m a s p e a k e r ' s m o u t  
h , a i r u p o n a i r i n t o a r  
s c o n d e n s i n g a n i m a g e  
, f r o s t , j a d e , j a s p e r o n  
t h e s k i n o f a l a n d s c a p e  
w a i t i n g ' s h a r s h n e s s a l  
t e r s i n m i r a g e : a n t s t r  
a c e t r a c k s i n f l o u r

de repente presente. no sol a  
tômico da estação inverno. em  
tudo. de repente zênite. insta  
nte-nit de lucidez sombria, e  
o sol. lentes especulares que  
olhares vãos: brilha. preto no  
branco, prata no preto, pedra  
s britadas: geometria de íris  
, pupilas dilatadas, largos, lat  
as, becos cegos. lua de ecoli  
ne às três da tarde. onde se  
mpre te vejo, vira. te miro, m  
era. sortes, azares, *basard*, ta  
lvezes: gritar o sermão da p  
aixão pelo microfone como q  
uem berra morrendo de fome  
e leva nas mãos um ramo d  
e *fleurs du mal*. só quem j  
á é que sabe o quant  
o vale uma ventura

suddenly present. in atomic w  
inter sun. in all. suddenly z  
enith. instant's-nit of shadow  
y clarity glints, and the sun  
. specular lenses gaze empty:  
gleam. black on white, silver  
on black, shattered stones: i  
ridial geometry, dilated pupi  
ls, alleys, trashcans, cul-de-s  
acs. ecoline moon at three i  
n the afternoon. where i see  
you, always, at a glance. sig  
ht you, slightly. chance, mis  
chance, *basard*, maybes: to cr  
y sermons of passion into mi  
crophones as one dying of hu  
nger bellows, a bunch of *fl*  
*eurs du mal* in hand. one  
unwilling to will ne  
ver share the rapture



i s s o   t u d o   j á  
p a s s a   d e   a r t i  
f í c i o :   s e r i

a   f ó s s i l ,   n ã o

f o s s e   i n í c i  
o ,   s e r i a   t r a ç  
a ,   n ã o   f o s s e  
m   í   s   s   i   l

i t ' s   a l l   j u s t  
s o   p a s t   a r t i f  
i c e :   i t ' d   b e

a   f o s s i l   i f   i t

w e r e n ' t   a n   o  
n s e t ,   a   m o  
t h   i f   n o t   a  
m i s s i l e

# R E F R A C T A

para Vera e Milton

o  
s e g r e d o  
d o  
a b r a ç o  
e s t á  
n a  
g r a ç a  
d e  
q u e m  
f a z  
o  
a g r a d o  
—  
á g u a  
r e c o r t a n d o  
o  
n a d o  
d e  
u m  
p e i x e  
s e m  
d e i x a r  
r a s t r o

## REFRAKTION

for Vera and Milton

t h e  
s e c r e t  
o f  
t h e  
e m b r a c e  
i s  
a l l  
i n  
t h e  
m a k e r  
' s  
g r a c e  
—  
w a t e r  
c l e a v e s  
a  
f i s h  
' s  
w a k e  
,  
l e a v e s  
n o  
t r a c e



m e

g u a r d a

c o n t i g o

c o m o

t e u

u m b i g o

,

r a s o

e

n a r c i s o

,

t e

a b r a ç a

c o m i g o

c o m o

s e

a

p e r i g o

,

p a r a í s o

w a t c h  
o v e r  
m e  
a s  
y o u r  
n a v e l  
,  
s h o a l  
a n d  
n a r c i s s u s  
,  
c l u t c h  
m e  
a s  
i n  
p e r i l  
,  
p a r a d i s e

acordei com meu amor às sete, consultei os oráculos, vi desenhos de ensimesmadas sereias de 1600, os cisnes néscios de darío, vir e revir o sol diagonal enquanto viajava por maláxias atrás de paraísos ouvindo quasares que ganhei de aniversário e mirando fotografias das caras de meus amigos e destraduzi poemas de dylan descobri traças no baú querendo ser feieira de perlas-parole estrelas geométricas ou um poema que fizesse você respirar fundo, fundo, tonto tateando meu corpo desfiando as peles sob pétalas de minha pele pelo dia afora dentro de mim: por um minuto a lua ilumina tudo (no mínimo um júbilo, um susto), como se nunca o escuro

i awoke with my love at seven, consulted  
the oracles , saw drawings of withdr  
awn sirens from 1600 , darío's nescie  
nt swans , diagonal sun coming and c  
oming again as i traveled through m  
alaxies behind paradises hearing qu  
asars i got for my birthday and po  
ring over photographs of the faces o  
f my friends and i untranslated a p  
oem by dylan in the trunk discover  
ed moths trying to be a string of pea  
rl-*parole* geometric stars or a poem i  
made for you to breathe deep , deep , d  
izzy probing my body ravelling the s  
kins under petals of my skin all da  
y , all me : for a minute the moon illum  
ines all (at minimum a jubilum , a fri  
ght) , as if the darkness never

D E P E S S O A A P E S S O A

Para Arnaldo e Zaba,  
Maria e Gui

*o que em mim sente está p  
ensando o que em mim pe  
nsa está passando o que e  
m mim passa está mentindo  
o que em mim mente está  
fingindo o que em mim f  
inge está esfinge o que  
me esfinge está cifrando  
o que em mim cifra está  
criando o que se cria e  
stá amando o que em mi  
m ama está sabendo o qu  
e em mim sabe está fic  
ando o que em mim fic  
a está estando*

P E S S O A      T O      P E R S O N

for Arnaldo and Zaba,  
Maria and Gui

*w h a t   f e e l s   i n   m e   t h i  
n k i n g   i s   w h a t   t h i n k s   i  
n   m e   p a s s i n g   i s   w h a t   p  
a s s e s   i n   m e   l y i n g   i s   w  
h a t   l i e s   i n   m e   f e i g n i  
n g   i s   w h a t   f e i g n s   i n   m  
e   s p h i n x   i s   w h a t   s p h  
i n x e s   m e   c i p h e r i n g   i  
s   w h a t   c i p h e r s   i n   m e  
c r e a t i n g   i s   w h a t   i s   c  
r e a t e d   l o v i n g   i s   w h  
a t   l o v e s   i n   m e   k n o w i  
n g   i s   w h a t   k n o w s   i n  
m e   s t a y i n g   i s   w h a t   s  
t a y s   i n   m e   s t a y i n g   i s*



# I N F I N I T S

para Nietzsche

entre bétulas e nadas, nadas e madrugadas, beats, fadas, fugas, árias, e entre gélidas pétalas de neve, leves cristais limando nichts de fumaça, e entre picos e abismo, bétulas e nadas, lá, onde o ar falta: ali sua fala limalha, polindo tudo e um isso: no crepúsculo dos ídolos, divinos idosos (andarilho entre verdades e mentiras), à procura da flor que brota, rara na rocha, entre neins e pistilos, aurora, pedra lascada: na alta e ngadina valquírias cavalgam luas que ainda uivam para lous, e o visionário, no limiar, parindo centauros

I N F I N I T S

for Nietzsche

among birches and nothings, nothing  
s and dawns, beats, fairies, fugue  
s, arias, among frozen snowpetals, li  
ght crystals filing down smoky night  
s, among peaks and abysses, birches a  
nd nothings, there, where breath short  
ens: your speech, rasping, polishes a  
ll and a nil: in the twilight of ido  
ls, the divine unseen (wanderer a  
mong truths and lies), seek the burs  
ting flower, rare in rock, among nein  
s and pistils, aurora, shattered stone  
: on ober engadin valkyries course in  
file down on moons howling still for  
lous, and the visionary, on the thres  
hold, engendering centaurs

M E N I R     P A R  
A     K I E F E R

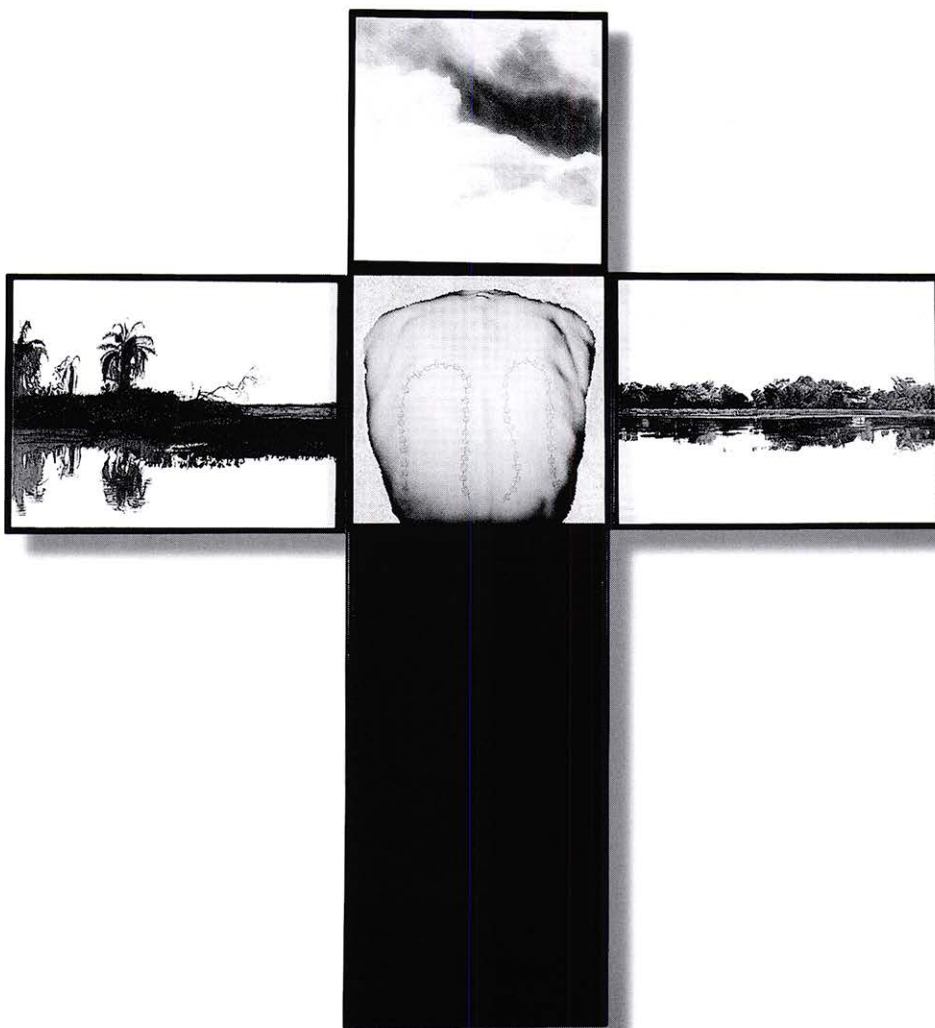
reco rren tes    r  
io co rren tes    i  
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t o m o s    e    é t i  
m o s ,    r i o    t i g  
r e    e    r i o    e u  
f r a t e s    ( r e v i  
s i t a d o s    p o r  
k i e f e r )    v i r a m  
t o q u e ,    v i r a m  
c h o q u e ,    l i v r  
o s - c h u m b o  
,    l i v r o s - t ó t  
e m ,    d ó l m e n s  
d e    v e r s o s    i m  
ó v e i s ,    r e s t o s  
d o    l i x o    d a    h  
i s t ó r i a ,    p ó  
l e n d e    f l o r e  
s    d a    h i s t ó r  
i a ,    v i r a m    l i  
m o ,    v i r a m    v í  
r u s    ( s e m í r a  
m i s    l e n d o    a  
s    h o r a s    n u m  
r e l ó g i o    d e  
s o l ) ,    d ó l m e n  
s    d e    v e r s o s  
i m ó v e i s ,    m o  
n u m e n t o    a o  
e s q u e c i m e n t o  
( n i h i l    t i g r  
e    e    r i o    e u f  
r a t e s )    e    a o  
q u e    s e    v a i  
c o m    o    v e n t

M E N H I R     F O  
R     K I E F E R

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and river eu  
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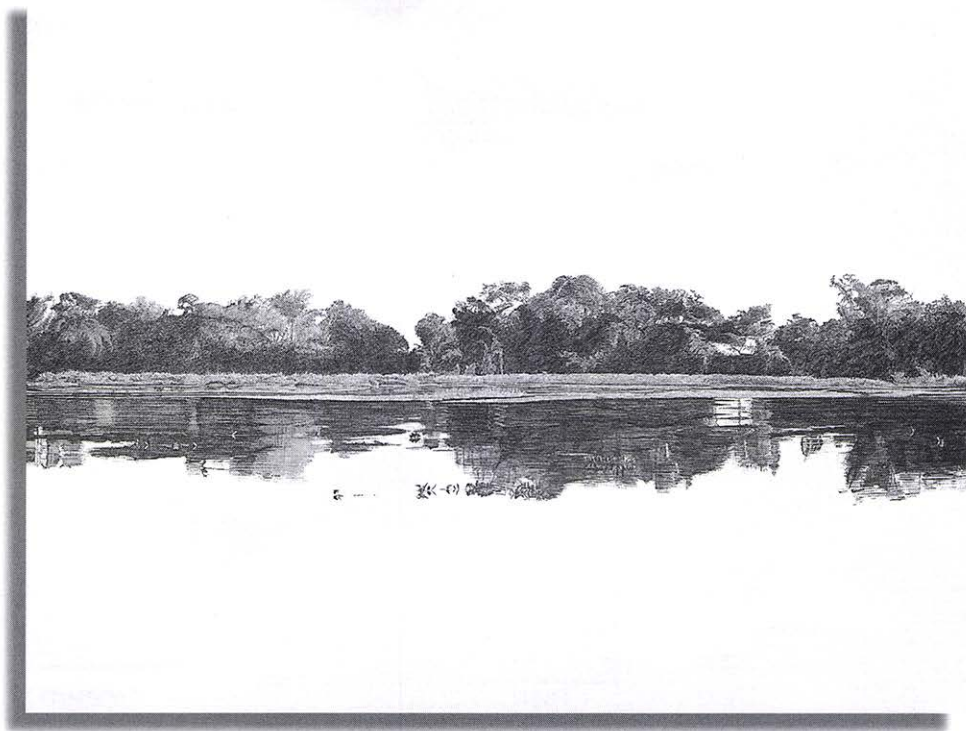
*Corpografia*

# Corpography





B u r n i n g m i r r o r



*E s p e l b o a r d e n t e*

l e o n a d o   o   d e s e n h o   d  
e   u m   v e r s o   f o s f o r e c e n  
o   e s c u r o :   b r i l h o   p  
r ó p r i o   d e   ó r i o n s  
,   p ó s   d e   f e r r u g e m  
n o   e s p e l h o   c u r v o  
,   v e l o s ,   r e f l e x o s ,   n  
ú c l e o s   d e   s e n t i d o   q  
u e   o   v e r s o   c a r a n g u e  
j o   s i d e r a   à   s u p e r f í c i  
e   e m   v e r m e l h o - c o r í n d  
o n ,   g r a f i s m o   s a n g ü í n  
e o   o n d e   s e   a b i s m a m e  
p e r d e m   o s   o u t r o s   s e n t  
i d o s :   a   o l h o   n u   a s t e r ó  
i d e s   m a r i n h o s   p a r e c e  
m   m e t e o r o s   ( t e u   n o m e  
à   m a r g e m   d e   u m   p o e m a  
a b a n d o n a d o ) ,   e s p u m a   o  
s   v e r s o s   q u e   e s t a   c a  
r t a   e s q u e c e ,   b r a n c o s ,  
n o   s u d á r i o   d e   e s t r e  
l a s   -   i d é i a   a v e s s a   a   t  
u a   d e s g e o g r a f i a

l i o n - h u e d        t h e        d r a w i  
n g        o f        a        v e r s e        p h o s p  
h o r e s c e s        i n        d a r k n e s s  
:        t h e        o w n        s h i n e        o f        o  
r i o n s ,        r u s t        d u s t        o n  
t h e        c u r v e d        m i r r o r ,  
f e l l s ,        r e f l e c t i o n s ,  
m e a n i n g ' s        n u c l e i        t h e  
c r a b        v e r s e        s i d e r a t e s  
o n        t h e        s u r f a c e        i n  
c o r u n d u m        r e d ,        b l o o d  
- h u e d        t h e        g r a p h i s m  
a n        a b y s s        w h e r e        o t h e r  
s e n s e s        p l u n g e        a n d  
f o r g e t :        t h e        n a k e d        e y e  
s e e s        m a r i n e        a s t e r o i d  
s        a s        m e t e o r s        ( y o u r        n  
a m e        o n        t h e        v e r g e        o f  
a n        a b a n d o n e d        p o e m ) ,  
f o a m        t h e        v e r s e s        t h i s  
c h a r t        f o r g e t s ,        b l a n k  
s ,        o n        t h i s        s t a r r y        s h  
r o u d        —        i d e a        a g a i n s t  
y o u r        d i s g e o g r a p h y

no que em não se vend  
o e tendo vem bem - vin  
do (pênsil mergulho e  
ntre um horizonte e u  
m ontem) venho: íris q  
ue em filigrana de t  
eu mirar retira o alvo  
e retine, límpida, tin  
indo intangíveis di  
stâncias: teus olhos t  
intos: sombras que al  
umbram águas, duplos  
que vibram pertos, e  
essa festa de silêncio  
e o acerto que se e  
nreda nos pêlos, se deg  
ela na pele, no sempre aus  
ente s.o.s. de oásis pres  
ente: a vida: uma alegria  
de fotografia? e um amor  
me abre em vale de tal  
vez passagens, essa m  
iragem que é gen de p  
aisagens, corpografia e  
m voga e viagem, ness  
a vertigem de teu sor  
riso que nem o tempo, r  
ede de elipses, mina

into the unseen and unhard  
come welcome (pensile  
dive between preterit and  
horizon), i have come:  
iris which in a sighting's  
filigram with draws the  
target and, limpid, tinkles,  
tinkles intangible distances:  
your inky eyes: shadows  
that kindle waters, doubles  
that quiver close, and this  
festival of silence, lucky  
cast all tangled in down,  
thaws on skin, in the ever  
absent s.o.s. of present  
oasis: life: a smile for the  
camera: and a love opens a  
valley of evanescent passages,  
this mirage the gene of  
*paysages*, corpography in  
volant voyage in this, the  
vertigo of your smile, which  
not even time, that net  
of ellipses, undermines

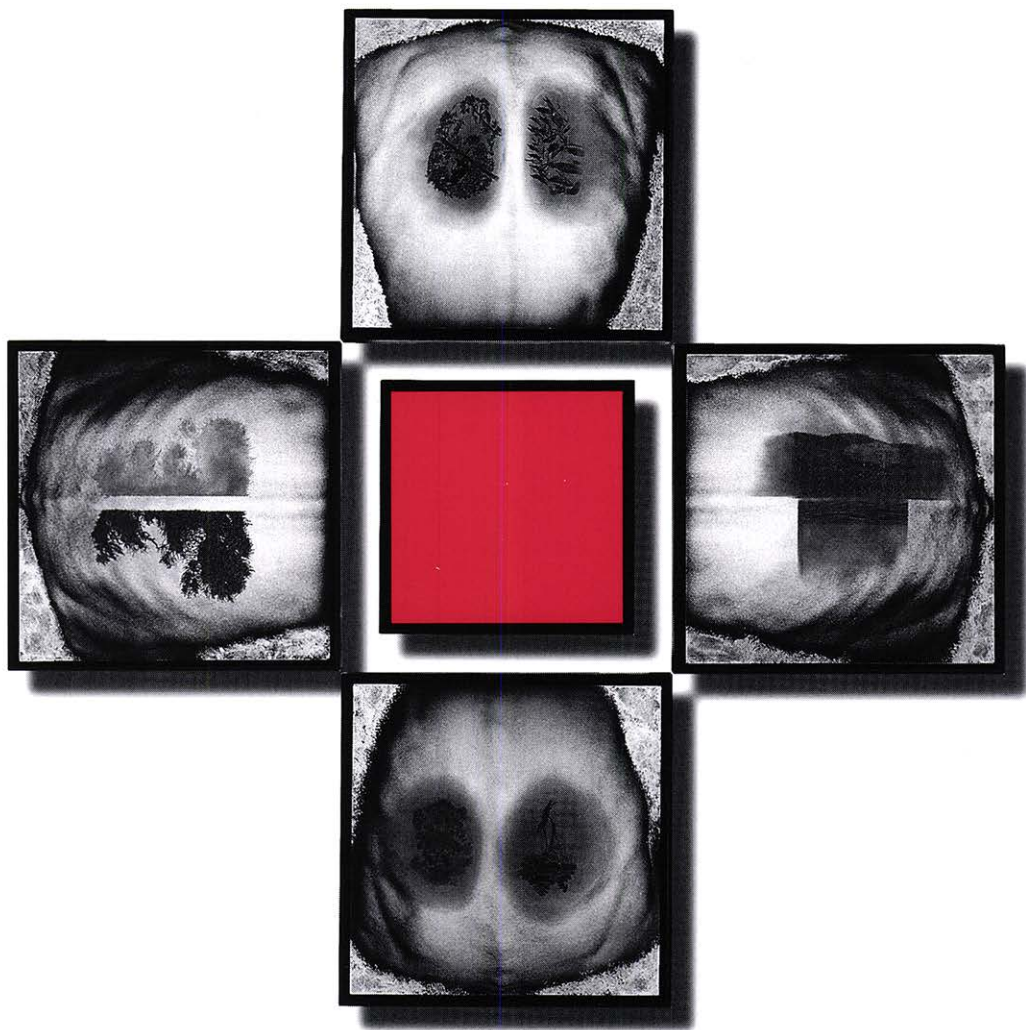
p u l s e i r a s       d e       l i l a s e s  
s o b       a       p e l e       r e v e l a m       a  
f i e i r a       d e       t e u s       d e n t e s  
,       e       s o b       o       v o i l e       c a s t  
a n h o       s e       d e s c o b r e m       o  
s       m e u s       p e l i n h o s       l o i r  
o s       p e l o       s o l .       a z u i s - c  
h i n a       e       a r c a n j o s       n o  
c é u       o c r e ,       v o l u t a s ,       c a  
r n a v a i s ,       *f o l i e       d u       v o i*  
*r* ,       e       e n t r e       u m       p o n t o       e  
u m       p e s p o n t o       a       t u a       l  
í n g u a       r e b o r d a       d e       v a  
z i o s       o       s i l ê n c i o ,       p e n  
s a n d o - m e       e m       s u s p e n s  
o       o       m e u       p e n s a r .       d e b  
r u n s       d a       n o i t e       e m       v ó  
r t i c e       d e       n e g r o s ,       n o  
*c b i a r o s c u r o*       o       o u r o - f i  
o       d o       c a o s       e m       s e g r e  
d o       r e p e t e       o       f u l g o r       q  
u e       o       g o s t o       d e       t e u       c  
o r p o ,       t o r s o ,       e m       f o g o ,  
d e m o r a       a       d e s m a i a r       e  
m       m       e       u       o       l       h       a       r

s u b c u t a n e o u s   l i l a c  
b a n g l e s   s h o w   f o r t h   y  
o u r   t e e t h   i n   f i l e   a  
n d   f r o m   u n d e r   c h e s  
t n u t   v o i l e   m y   d o w n  
s h o w n   b l o n d   b y   t h e   s  
u n .   c h i n a - b l u e s   a n d   a  
r c h a n g e l s   i n   t h e   o c h  
r e   s k y ,   v o l u t e s ,   c a r n  
a v a l s ,   *f o l i e   d u   v o i*  
*r* ,   a n d   b e t w e e n   o n e  
p o i n t   a n d   a   b a c k s t i t  
c h   y o u r   t o n g u e   e m b r  
o i d e r s   v o i d s   o n t o   s  
i l e n c e   d o e s   t h e   t h i n  
k i n g ,   t h i n k i n g   s u s p  
e n s e d .   n i g h t   p l e a t s   a  
v o r t e x   o f   b l a c k ,   i n   *c b*  
*i a r o s c u r o*   t h e   g o l d e n   m  
e a n   o f   c h a o s   i n   s e c r e t   r  
e p e a t s   t h e   g l a r e   t h e  
p l e a s u r e   o f   y o u r   s  
k e w e d   b o d y ,   o n   f i r e  
,   k e e p s   f r o m   s w o o n i  
n g   o u t   o f   m y   g a z e

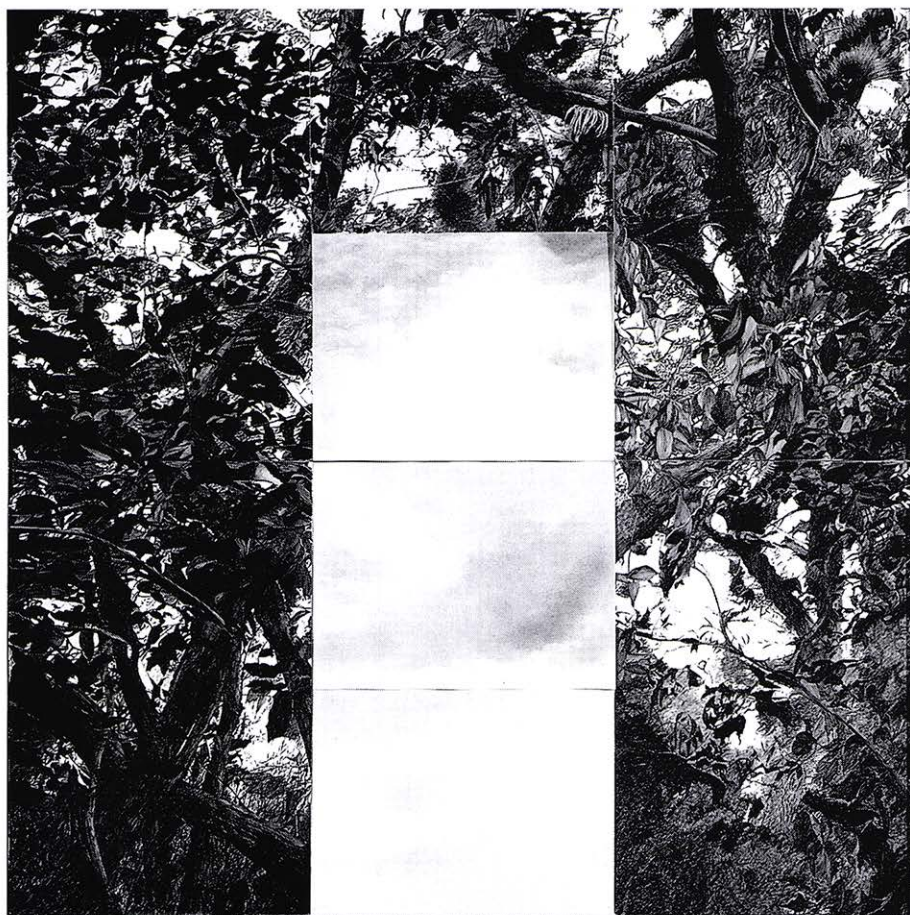


i n v i s í v e l o z ê n i t e ,  
o i d e o g r a m a d a i d é i a  
i n c o n c l u s a , e s t á t u a d  
e s a l q u e s e d e s f a z  
, f e l i z , e n t r e c a r d u  
m e s e m e d u s a s . i n v i s  
í v e l o d e s e j o n o a  
v e s s o d o t e u g e s t o , n  
e r v u r a t r a n s p a r e n t e n  
a a s a s e c a d o i n s e t  
o . i n v i s í v e l a s e d e  
d e s a u d a d e , d e t u d  
o s e r p a i s a g e m , l u c i  
d e z d e o p a l i n a s

i n v i s i b l e   t h e   z e n i t h ,  
i d e o g r a m   o f   a   t r u n c a t  
e d   t h o u g h t ,   s t a t u e   i n  
s a l t   i t s   g l a d n e s s   t o  
d i s s o l v e   a m o n g   s c h o o l  
s   a n d   m e d u s a s .   i n v i s i  
b l e   t h e   d e s i r e   o n   t h e  
o t h e r   s i d e   o f   y o u r   g  
e s t u r e ,   a   t r a n s p a r e n t   n  
e r v u r e   o n   a n   i n s e c t ' s  
d r y   w i n g .   i n v i s i b l e   t h  
e   t h i r s t   f o r   s a u d a d e ,  
f o r   a l l   t o   b e   l a n d s c  
a p e ,   o p a l i n e   c l a r i t y



H y l e a s



*H i l é i a s*

q u e   p u l s e ,   r e p u l s e   s ó i  
s ,   t u f o s ,   v i o l e t a s ,   s o  
b   u m   c é u   p e d r e n t o ,   d e  
c h u v a   o u   d e   v e n t o ,   e   t  
r a d u z a   o s   f ó l i o s   d a   i  
m a g e m   d a   p e l e   e m   n u v  
e m   l a z ú l i ,   b u l b o   d e   v  
e l u d o   e   p u l s e ,   r e p u l s e  
s ó i s ,   t u f o s ,   l i l a s e s   a o  
l e r   o s   i n f ó l i o s   d a   i m  
a g e m   d a   p e l e   e m   p a l i  
m p s e s t o :   u m   a b r i r - s e   à  
b r a s a   q u a n d o   a   a l m a   n  
u a   s e   v e s t e   d e   a r e s   e  
o   s o l   c a l c i n a   e m   s a l a  
m a n d r a s   r u i v a s   a   g a l a  
s e m   f l o r   d e   u m a   o r q u  
í d e a   r a r a ,   g ó n g o r a   b  
u f f o n i a ,   i d é i a   d a   i d é i  
a   o u   g o z o   i n v i s í v e l   d  
o   b e i j o   r o u b a d o   e n t r  
e   s i n s   e   s i l ê n c i o s ,   l e  
i t o   d e   e s t a m e s ,   v e n t r  
e   d e   p i s t i l o s   e   o s   i  
l v o   s e l v a g g i o   d e   u m   p  
i n t a s s i l g o   a s s o m b r a  
n d o   a b r a ç o s ,   a s   p r o m  
e s s a s ,   l a m p e j o s   d e   r e  
l â m p a g o   n a   f l o r e s t a

l e t   p u l s e ,   r e p u l s e   s u  
n s ,   t u f f s ,   v i o l e t s   u n d  
e r   a   s t o n y   —   w i n d y   o  
r   r a i n y   —   s k y ,   a n d   t  
r a n s l a t e   f o l i o s   o f   t h  
e   s k i n ' s   i m a g e   i n t o   l  
a z u l i   c l o u d ,   v e l v e t   b u  
l b   a n d   l e t   p u l s e ,   r e p  
u l s e   s u n s ,   t u f t s ,   l i l a  
c s   u p o n   r e a d i n g   f o l i o  
s   o f   t h e   s k i n ' s   i m a g e  
i n   p a l i m p s e s t :   a n   o p e n  
i n g   i n t o   e m b e r   w h e n   t  
h e   b a r e   s o u l   d r e s s e s   i  
n   a i r s   a n d   t h e   s u n   c a l  
c i n e s ,   i n   b l o o d - r e d   s  
a l a m a n d e r s ,   a   r a r e   o r  
c h i d   —   g ó n g o r a   b u f f o n  
i a   —   i t s   f l o w e r l e s s   f i n  
e r y ,   i d e a   o f   i d e a   o r   i  
n v i s i b l e   d e l i g h t   o f   t h  
e   k i s s   s t o l e n   b e t w e e n  
y e s s e s   a n d   s i l e n c e s ,   b  
e d   o f   s t a m e n s ,   p i s t i l l a  
r y   w o m b ,   a n d   t h e   w i l d  
w h i s t l e   o f   a   g o l d f i n c h  
t h a t   a w e s   e m b r a c e s ,   p r  
o m i s e s ,   s u d d e n   l i g h t n  
i n g   i n   s e l v a g e



o s m ó b i l e s d e b r o n z  
e n o p ó l e n e m s u s p e  
n s o s ã o a n j o s q u e d  
e s c e n d e m , r e b e l d e s  
d e l i o z , f e i t o e m o u  
r o e m p ó d i s p e r s o n  
o s f i o s d e t e u s c a  
b e l o s s e o c é u e m  
c u r v o s a b r e s e a b r e  
e s o b e o s o l : t r a n s  
l ú c i d o i n t e r v a l o  
e n t r e o e s q u e c i m e n  
t o q u e o t e m p o c i c a  
t r i z a , e c l i p s e s o l a r  
, e o b r i l h o d o s u o  
r q u e o b r i s e - s o l e i l  
i m p r i m e a o l o n g o  
d o s n ó s c e g o s q u e  
u m r e s t o d e s s e s o l  
a i n d a d i s s o l v e n o s  
t e u s p o r o s - f u l i g e m



b r o n z e       m o b i l e s       s u  
s p e n d e d       i n       p o l l e n  
a r e       d e s c e n d i n g       a n  
g e l s ,       r e b e l s       i n  
l i m e s t o n e       s t r e w n  
a s       g o l d       d u s t       i n       t  
h e       t h r e a d s       o f       y o u  
r       h a i r       i f       t h e       s k  
y       o p e n       s a b e r - c u r  
v e d       a n d       t h e       s u n       a  
r i s e :       t r a n s l u c i d       i  
n t e r v a l       i n       f o r g e t  
t i n g       t i m e       s u t u r e s  
,       s o l a r       e c l i p s e ,       g  
l e a m i n g       s w e a t       t h  
e       b r i s e - s o l e i l       i m  
p r i n t s       a l o n g       b l i n  
d       k n o t s       t h i s       s u n  
' s       r e s i d u e       s t i l  
l       d i s s o l v e s       i n       y o  
u r       p o r e s       —       s o o t

g r a a l e m v i l a v e l h a o  
u n a p o n t e v e c c h i o , n  
a s l a j e s l i m a d a s p e  
l o s g r ã o s d e a r e i a , n  
a l i s t r a r i s c a d a e n  
t r e p e d r a e l í q u e n , a  
r e s t a s d e j a d e , c r i s t  
a s d e g r a n i t o , e m i l  
h a s d e m i n a s , n e b u l  
o s i d a d e s , n a s m a r g  
e n s t r a n q ü i l a s q  
u e o g r a n i z o f r i s a , n  
u m f r e m i r d e l á b i o s ,  
r e t i n i r d e d e n t e s , n a  
t u a a l e g r i a o u n o s  
e n s o e m d e s l i z e d o s  
o l h o s e m f a l s o d e s c  
o b r i n d o o c e l o s n  
a s a s a s e s t r i a d a s d e  
u m p e q u e n o i n s e t o

g r a i l      a t      v i l a      v e l h a      o  
r      o n      p o n t e      v e c c h i o ,  
o n      s l a b s      g r o u n d      s m  
o o t h      w i t h      g r a i n s      o  
f      s a n d ,      o n      t h e      l e d g e  
e t c h e d      b e t w e e n      s t o n  
e      a n d      l i c h e n ,      j a d e      v  
e r g e s ,      g r a n i t e      c r e s t  
s ,      o n      i s l e s      o f      m i  
n e s ,      n e b u l o s i t i e s ,      o  
n      t r a n q u i l      m a r g i n s      h  
a i l c r i n k l e d ,      i n      a      q u i  
v e r i n g      o f      l i p s ,      i n  
a      r i n g i n g      o f      t e e t h ,      i  
n      y o u r      j o y      o r      i n      t  
h e      s l i p p i n g      s e n s e      o f  
m i s l e d      e y e s      d i s c o v e r  
i n g      o c e l l i      i n      t h e      s  
t r i a t e d      w i n g s      o f      a  
s m a l l      i n s e c t

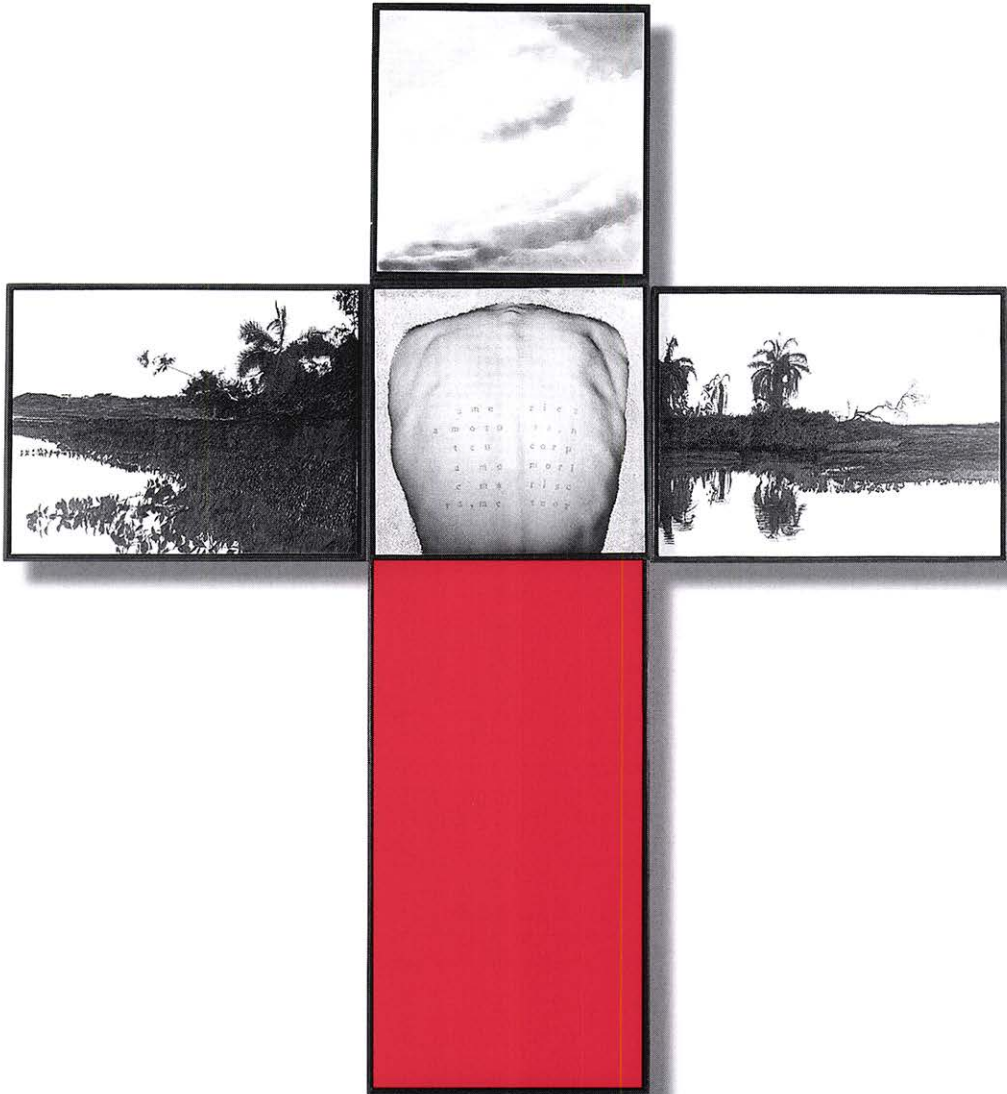
n a d a d e m a i s : o e s q u  
e c e r u m e s g a r ç a r e m  
s a l : a b r a s a b r a n c a  
d a s s a l i n a s , a l v u r a s  
e m n e b l i n a , u m d i a a  
m a i s . n a s d u n a s d a n ç a  
m c á c t u s , l a s c a s s e c a  
s , e s c a m a s , p e l e s s  
o l t a s p e l o s o l , n o s  
a l : o p ó d o d i a s e e s t  
i l h a ç a e m b r a n c o s , e  
n a v o r a g e m o a r e s p a  
l h a p é t a l a s , s e p a r a s  
é p a l a s , d e s l i z a p á l e  
a s , o a r t r i n c a b r á c t  
e a s : b e l e z a s d a a r i d e  
z t e t r a z e m e m f l a s h e  
s , a b r a s a m o s o l h o s ,  
d e s e n h a m n é b u l a s n a  
l e m b r a n ç a : e m s a l q u e  
s é d a e e s g a r ç a e e s  
f u m a e o r g a n z a o d i a  
m e e s t i l h a ç a : b r i s a s

n o t h i n g   w r o n g :   f o r g e  
t t i n g   i s   a   s h r e d d i n g   i n  
s a l t ,   t h e   w h i t e   e m b e r   o  
f   s a l t w o r k s ,   a l l   t h e  
p a l e s   i n   m i s t ,   a   d a y   l  
i k e   a n y   o t h e r .   d a n c e  
o n   d u n e s   c a c t i ,   d r y   s  
h a r d s ,   s c a l e s ,   s k i n s   p  
e e l e d   b y   t h e   s u n ,   i n  
s a l t :   t h e   d a y ' s   d u s t  
s p l i n t e r s   i n t o   w h i t e s  
,   a n d   i n   t h e   v o r t e x   a  
i r   s t r e w s   p e t a l s ,   s e p  
a r a t e s   s e p a l s ,   s k i m s   p  
a l e a e ,   a i r   c h e w s   b r a c  
t s :   a r i d i t y ' s   b e a u t i e  
s   b r i n g   y o u   i n   f l a s  
h e s ,   k i n d l e   t h e   e y e s ,   d  
r a w   n e b u l a e   i n   m e m o r y :  
i n t o   s a l t   t h a t   n u m b s   a  
n d   s h r e d s   a n d   f u m e s  
a n d   s i l k s   t h e   d a y   s p l  
i n t e r s   m e :   b r e e z e s

r i s c o s , h i e r o g l i f o s  
i n s c r i t o s n a s f r i n c h a  
s d e u m a c o n c h a , p o e m a  
c i n z e l a d o n a s c r a c a  
s , b ú z i o - m u r m ú r i o s , h  
e r m a f r o d i t o s i n c r u s t a  
d o s n a s c a r a p a ç a s á s  
p e r a s : a r t é r i a s c a l c á  
r i a s q u e o t e m p o c i f r  
a , r a s u r a e m b r a i l e q u  
e o v e n t o m o l d a c o m  
o i n d í c i o s — i n c i s u r a d  
e a r ú s p i c e , n a s v í s c  
e r a s d e u m b i c h o , n o  
r t e d e o u t r a s a m é r i  
c a s o u s o r t e a m o r o s  
a , n o r a s t r o d e t e u c  
o r p o l a m i n a n d o a m e m  
ó r i a ( a l m í s c a r e m a r i  
s c o ) q u e a f l o r a , m e t e  
ó r i c a , a d o r d e u m p  
a r a í s o , o s m e u s l á b i o  
s r a c h a d o s e m t e u s l á  
b i o s s a l g a d o s , m ú r i c e  
s e m o r é i a s n o ê x t a s  
e d a s m ã o s , m o l u s c o s ,  
c o r a i s - c é r e b r o , l á g r  
i m a d e a l e g r i a — o g u m  
e u m r i s o d e s a l s u g e m

strokes, hieroglyphs r  
iven in the clefts o  
n a shell, poem chi  
sleed into barnacles,  
cowries rilling, her  
maphrodites encrusted  
on rough carapaces: c  
alcarious arteries t  
ime ciphers, erasure  
in braille the win  
d molds like indicia  
— haruspicial incision  
— in an animal's gut  
s, north of other a  
mericas or sort amor  
euse, in the spoor o  
f your body lamina  
ting memory (musk a  
nd mussel) that cro  
ps up, meteoric, a p  
aradise's pain, my c  
happened lips on your  
salty lips, murices  
and morays in the e  
cstasy of hands, m  
olluscs, brain-coral  
s, tears of joy — cu  
tting-edge a laugh o  
f brackish mud





I m p e n e t r a b l e   c o l o s s u s



*C o l o s s o   i m p e n e t r á v e l*

e n a d a é n a d a , n e m n é v  
o a - n a d a : o p r a t a e m  
p r e t o , o b r i l h o e m b r e  
u , o r i s c o e m f a l h a , e  
e n t r e o p r e t o e o p r  
a t a : b r e u , e e n t r e o b  
r e u e o b r i l h o : p r a t  
a , e e n t r e o p r a t a e  
o p r e t o : f a l h a , e e n t r  
e a f a l h a , o e u — c i s a l h  
a o l h o s s e m l a s t r o , r  
a s t r o d e p l â n c t o n , l ú z  
i o à d e r i v a s e m l u m e o  
u l e m e n o b r e u - b e r i l o  
, u l t r a m a r i n o , e o p r e t  
o e m p r a t a e o b r e u e  
m b r i l h o , s ó t e u s o r r  
i s o e m m e i o a o n a d a ,  
a n u v e m n e g r a e m b r a  
n c a s n u v e n s , o g u m e - l  
u m b r e e a b r u m a - l a s c  
a . e e u m e v o l t e i e u e v  
i n é v o a - n a d a s o b o s o  
l : n a a r e i a a é r e a d a d  
e s m e m ó r i a , a p a l a v r a l  
u z g r a v a d a n a p e d r a

n o t h i n g ' s   n o t h i n g ,   n o t  
e v e n   a   m i s t   o f   n o t h i n  
g :   b l a z e   i n   b l a c k ,   s p a  
r k   i n   d a r k ,   l i n e   i n   f a  
u l t ,   a n d   b e t w e e n   b l a c  
k   a n d   b l a z e :   d a r k ,   a n d  
b e t w e e n   d a r k   a n d   s p a r  
k :   b l a z e ,   a n d   b e t w e e n  
b l a z e   a n d   b l a c k :   f a u l t  
,   a n d   b e t w e e n   f a u l t   a  
n d   i — s h e a r s :   u n b a l l a  
s t e d   e y e s ,   s p o o r   o n   p  
l a n k t o n ,   d r i f t i n g   i n   b  
l a z e ,   n e i t h e r   g l o w   n o  
r   o a r   i n   b e r y l - d a r k ,   u l  
t r a m a r i n e ,   a n d   b l a c k   i n   b  
l a z e   a n d   d a r k   i n   s p a r k ,  
o n l y   y o u r   s m i l e   i n   t h e  
m i d s t   o f   n o t h i n g ,   b l a c k   c  
l o u d   d r a w i n g   a   b l a n k ,  
b l a d e - g l o w   a n d   f o g - c h i p ,   a  
n d   i   t u r n e d   b a c k   t o   m e   a n  
d   i   s a w   a   m i s t   o f   n o t h i n g   u  
n d e r   t h e   s u n ;   i n   i m m e m o r  
y ' s   a e r i a l   s a n d ,   t h e   w o r  
d   l i g h t   c a r v e d   o n   s t o n e

r ú b i a      a u r a      d a s      p r í m u  
l a s      i n s i n u a      c h u v a s :  
c e n a      q u e b r a d i ç a ,      r a  
i a s      q u e      s e      i r i s a m ,      r  
a i o s      q u e      a r r e p i a m      a  
l i n h a      d o      m a r      e      v i b r  
a m      r e t i n a s ,      ú m i d a s  
v i b r i s s a s ,      p ú r p u r a  
d a s      r a m a s      q u e      s e      a p  
r u m a m      e m      t i r a s ,      r u g a  
s      q u e      s e      e s p r a i a m      e  
m      s o g a      d e      s a r g a ç o s  
,      f e b r e      d e      t e u s      o l h o  
s      s e      d o b r a n d o      e m      l e  
q u e s ,      p r í m u l a s      q u e      r  
o l a m ,      s e      e n r o l a m      n a      o  
r l a ,      v i r a m      t e m p o r a l :  
o      n e g r o - ó l e o      d a      p a i s  
a g e m      e      o n d a s      v â n d a l  
a s      e m      n ó s ,      à      d e r i v a

r u b y      a u r a      o f      p r i m u  
l a e      i n s i n u a t e s      r a i  
n s :      b r i t t l e      s c e n e ,  
r a y s      t h a t      i r i s ,      b o l  
t s      r i p p l e      t h e      l i n  
e      o f      t h e      s e a      a n d      r e  
t i n a s      v i b r a t e ,      m o i  
s t      v i b r i s s a e ,      p u r p  
l e      o f      s t a l k s      t h a t      s  
t i f f e n      i n      r i b b o n s ,  
f u r r o w s      p u s h      a s h o r e  
i n      r o p y      s a r g a s s o ,  
t h e      f e v e r      o f      y o u r      e  
y e s      f o l d i n g      f a n l i k  
e ,      r o l l i n g      p r i m u l  
a e      e n r o l l e d      o n      t h e  
m a r g e ,      b e c o m e      s t o  
r m :      l a n d s c a p e ' s      o  
i l b l a c k ,      v a n d a l      w a v  
e s      i n      u s ,      a d r i f t

o verde - água das som  
brinhas se ofusca e  
a chuva vem em fios  
( exercício de rio ), c  
omo se o tempo sum  
isse nesse cinza, no b  
rilho fugaz que dev  
olve teu rosto entre  
visto nos vidros que  
levam longe o olhar  
, levam comos, levam q  
uandos, levam horas d  
esferindo raios no c  
orpo que volta a se  
r tempo, *bosque sem á  
rvores onde o vento e  
ntoa entre as árvo  
res*, como se assim o  
vazio sumisse nesse c  
inza, como sumisse, f  
o s s e , i s s e



p a r a s o l ' s      w a t e r g r e e n  
d a r k e n s      a n d      r a i n      t h r  
e a d s      d o w n      ( r i v e r i n e      e  
x e r c i s e ) ,      a s      i f      t i m  
e      v a n i s h e d      i n      t h a t      a  
s h ,      i n      t h e      f l e e t i n g      b  
r i l l i a n c e      r e t u r n e d      b  
y      y o u r      f a c e      v i e w e d      t  
h r o u g h      s h e e t s      o f      g l  
a s s      t h a t      f a r      b e a r      t  
h e      g a z e ,      b e a r      h o w s ,  
b e a r      w h e n s ,      h o u r s      t  
h r o w i n g      b o l t s      i n      t h  
e      b o d y      t h a t      r e t u r n s  
t o      b e i n g      t i m e ,      *t r e e*  
*l e s s*      *w o o d*      *w b e r e*      *w i*  
*n d*      *w i n d s*      *t h r o u g h*      *t r e*  
*e s* ,      a s      i f      v o i d      s o      v  
a n i s h e d      i n      t h a t      a s h ,  
a s      i f      i t      v a n i s h e d ,      i  
t      w e r e ,      a s      i f      i t



u m a p é r o l a s e f a z e m  
d e f e s a d e r e v e s e s . f a  
z - s e l e n t a , a c a d a a t a  
q u e a t e n t a . o u t r a , n e g  
r a , s ó s e f o r m a n o a c  
o n c h e g o d e u m a c o n c h  
a . m a d r e p o r á r i a o s t r a  
f e i t a d e f é s s e m c o n t  
a . d e s a f i a n t e s l e t r a s g  
r e g a s d e s f i a n d o r o s á  
r i o s , s e r e i a s , í c a r o s e  
d o c e o d i s s é i a - u m a s e  
o u t r a s a l f a s e ô m e g a s  
. a l g u r e s , á l g i d a s . n e n  
h u r e s , g é l i d a s . a q u i l e s  
, c l á s s i c a s . a l g u m a s n u  
n c a . n e n h u m a , n u g a s : a  
l g a g i g a n t e e m m a r é s s e  
m m a r e s n e m p e r g u n t a s

o n e p e a r l i s f o r m e d t o  
h o l d b a c k s e t b a c k s . i s  
f o r m e d s l o w l y , a t t e n t  
i v e t o e a c h a t t a c k . a n o  
t h e r , b l a c k , i s f o r m e d  
o n l y i n t h e s h e l t e r o  
f a s h e l l ( m a d r e p o r i a  
n o y s t e r f o r m e d o f c o  
u n t l e s s f a i t h s ) . d e f i a  
n t g r e e k l e t t e r s r a v e l  
r o s a r i e s , s i r e n s , i c a r  
i , a n d s w e e t o d y s s e y —  
s o m e a n d o t h e r a l p h a s  
a n d o m e g a s . g e l i d n o  
w h e r e s . t h o s e c l a s s i c  
a l a c h i l l e s . s o m e n e v  
e r . n o n e , n u l l i t i e s : g  
i a n t a l g a e i n s e a - , i n  
q u e s t i o n l e s s t i d e s

e s o b r e o m a r d e v i  
d r o , s i l ê n c i o , s i l ê  
n c i o - s í l e x d e c é u q u  
e s e r e c o l h e c o m o l  
i v r o r e f l e t i n d o a s  
t i l h a s p ú r p u r a s d a l  
u a o u d o s o l n e g r o n  
a s á g u a s d e a b s i n t o e  
m q u e a n j o s d o a b i s  
m o c o n t a m o s n o m e s m  
o r t o s d e s e t e m i l h  
o m e n s , e s o b r e o m a  
r d e s e r t o a s p a l a v r  
a s n a d a m e n t r e a s o  
n d a s , a s p a l a v r a s - c â  
n c e r s e a l a s t r a m n o  
e s c â n d a l o d a s o n d a s ,  
d e s d o b r a n d o a l â m i n a  
d e o b s i d i a n a a n t e s q  
u e a l g u m a c o i s a f o s  
s e n a d a e c é u s d e c  
e l o f a n e n o s t u r v a s s  
e m , a n t e s q u e e m t u  
a f a c e e u v i d r a s s e m  
e u b e i j o — p o l i d o , l i  
s o c o m o u m e s p e l h o

a n d ,     o n     t h e     v i t r e o u s  
o c e a n ,     s i l e n c e ,     s i l i c  
a     s i l e n c e     b i n d s     t h e  
s k y     i n t o     a     b o o k     r e  
f l e c t i n g     s h a f t s     o f  
p u r p l e     m o o n ,     b l a c k  
s u n ,     o n     a b s i n t h e w  
a t e r s     w h e r e     a n g e l s  
o f     t h e     a b y s s     r e c i t e  
t h e     d e a d     n a m e s     o f  
s e v e n     t h o u s a n d     m  
e n ,     a n d     o n     t h e     d e  
s e r t e d     o c e a n     w o r d s  
s w i m     a m o n g     w a v e s ,  
s t r e w n     c a n c e r - w o r d s  
u n s c r o l l     t h e     o b s i d  
i a n     p a g e     o n     u n d u l a  
r     s c a n d a l     b e f o r e  
s o m e t h i n g     m i g h t     h a v  
e     b e e n     n o t h i n g     a n  
d     s k i e s     o f     c e l l o p  
h a n e     m u d d l e d     u s ,  
b e f o r e     i     v i t r i f i e  
d     m y     k i s s     o n t o     y o u  
r     f a c e     —     p o l i s h e d ,  
s l i c k     a s     a     m i r r o r



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## Translator's notes

### *Ar* (Air)

The book's original Brazilian edition bears the epigraph, "à liga da palavra-alma Guarani—*ñe'eng*—e a seus suicidas," the English translation of which is, "to the alloy of the Guarani word-soul—*ñe'eng*—and to their suicides." An indigenous, nomadic people of South America, the Guarani, prior to colonization, dominated the region that is now Paraguay and southern Brazil. The Mbyá are one of several Guarani peoples. Their word *ñe'eng* can be translated into English only as a compound: *word-soul*. This concept plays an important role in all of Baptista's work.

Mbyá creation myths have been transcribed, edited, and translated by the Paraguayan anthropologist León Cadogan in his work *Ayvu Rapyta: El fundamento del lenguaje humano*, published in Asunción in 1959. Baptista has chosen to translate this title not as *O fundamento da linguagem humana* but as *O tronco da fala* (which I translate as "the taproot of speech"). The sacred hymns and prayers of the Guarani peoples often mention a life-giving mist contained in the hollow of two cupped hands; this mist is also represented by tobacco smoke and by breath in cold air.

The Guarani way of life has been severely diminished by centuries of colonization. In recent years, many have lost all hope. The Guarani word-soul resides in the throat; hundreds of young Guarani have hanged themselves.

Published in 1991 by Editora Iluminuras in São Paulo, Brazil, and with a foreword by Néstor Perlongher, *Ar* is Baptista's first book of poems. At the publication party in São Paulo, Brazilian poets Haroldo de Campos and Arnaldo Antunes gave a reading from the book. In 1992 the Brazilian actress Bete Coelho performed a poem from *Ar* during the celebration of the seventieth anniversary of *Semana de Arte Moderna de 22* (*Modern Art Week*, 1922).

## *Corpografia* (Corpography)

*Corpografia* is a visual-poetic project developed by Josely Vianna Baptista and her husband and close collaborator, visual artist Francisco Faria. The project consisted of the book and an installation of the same name. The book contains a section entitled *Variations on a given body*, which contains specially written prose texts by Severo Sarduy, Néstor Perlonger, Eduardo Subirats, and Rodrigo Garcia Lopes, and a poem by Haroldo de Campos. Installations appeared at Galeria Casa da Imagem, Curitiba, and at Galeria Arco, São Paulo, in 1992. Another installation was shown at the V Bienal de la Habana, in the Palacio de las Artes del Museo Nacional de la Habana, in 1994, and again at the Lüdwig Forum für Internationale Kunst, in Aachen, Germany, in 1995.

pp. 62–63: Vila Velha is a national park in Paraná, Brazil. One of the sandstone formations in the park is called *A Taça* (The Goblet).

pp. 67: “Cowries rilling” alludes to a form of divination in which seashells are shaken in a round, shallow sieve.

pp. 70–71: The italicized text cites and plays with an excerpt from Haroldo de Campos’ creative translation of Ecclesiastes.

pp. 74–75: The italicized text cites José Lezama Lima’s essay *Pascal y la poesia*. I’ve deliberately mistranslated a word: “Entoar” means “to intone”; I have used the word “winds,” which has two pronunciations and several meanings. Both pronunciations and more than one of the meanings are meant to be employed.





Francisco Faria, Josely Vianna Baptista, and Chris Daniels at Açores Beach, Brazil, 2002. Photo by João Urban.

## Notes on author and contributors

**Josely Vianna Baptista** was born in Curitiba, Brazil, in 1957. She holds a BA in Spanish language and literature and Hispano-American literature, with post-graduate work in Semiotics. Baptista has published two books of poetry: *Ar* and *Corpografia* (São Paulo, Iluminuras, 1991; 1992). *Sol sobre nuvens*, which includes her first two books and contains *Os poros flóridos* and other poems, is soon to be published by Edições Mirabilia (Primeiro de Maio) and Perspectiva (São Paulo) as part of its prestigious Coleção Signos, directed by Haroldo de Campos. *Los poros floridos* has recently been published by Editorial Aldus (Mexico D.C., 2002). Translation into Spanish by Reynaldo Jiménez and Roberto Echavarren).

As a translator of literature from Hispanic America, Baptista has published approximately fifty works, including *Paradiso*, by José Lezama Lima, and the collections of poems *Luna de enfrente* and *Cuaderno San Martín*, by Jorge Luis Borges, the latter two for which she received one of Brazil's most prestigious literary award, Prêmio Jabuti, in 1999. In 1996, Baptista organized and edited the collection *Cadernos da Ameríndia*, mythopoetic translations from oral traditions of the South American indigenous peoples Mbyá-Guarani and Nivacle (Tipografia do Fundo de Ouro Preto). In 2001, she was awarded the Prêmio Bolsa Vitae de Artes to develop her project *Do zero ao zênite: com viagem à Cena de Origem Mbyá-Guarani*, which will consist of a translation of the initial part of *Ayvu Rapyta*, the Guarani "Genesis," and a book of poems written during her travels among indigenous peoples.

From 1996 to 2000, Baptista co-edited (with Francisco Faria) "Musa paradisiaca," a weekly cultural page in the Paraná newspaper *Gazeta do Povo* and the Santa Catarina newspaper *A Notícia*. In 2000, Baptista founded Edições Mirabilia, an independent press dedicated to poetry, art, and culture. The press's first publication was Baptista's *A Concha das Mil Coisas Maravilhosas do Velho Caramujo*, a collection of progressive juvenile fictions with illustrations by Guilherme Zamoner (2000), which represented Brazil in the Bratislava Biennial of Illustration in 2001 and was awarded the Sixth Annual Award for Illustrated Books for Children and Adolescents by the Mexican National Council for Arts and Culture. In 2001, Edições Mirabilia published *Outro*, a book of engravings by Maria Angela Biscaia with a poem by Baptista and Arnaldo Antunes. Baptista has also edited and introduced the anthology *Moradas provisórias: alguma poesia brasileira atual* (Mexico City: Aldus, 2001).

Baptista's poems have been included in anthologies of contemporary Brazilian poetry in Brazil and other countries and have been published in literary reviews in Spain, Australia, Argentina, Cuba, Mexico, and the United States. In the US, her work has been included in the anthologies *Nothing the Sun Could Not Explain* (Ed. R. Bonvicino, N. Ascher, and M. Palmer. Los Angeles: Sun & Moon, 1998), *99 Poets/1999: an international poetics symposium* (*Boundary 2*, 26: 1. Ed. Charles Bernstein. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1999), and *New American Writing*, #18 (Ed. Paul Hoover. Mill Valley, CA: OINK! Press, 2001).

**Francisco Faria** was born in Curitiba, Brazil, in 1956 and holds a BA in architecture and planning. Faria has worked strictly as an artist since 1982, concentrating on drawing. His work has been shown in International Biennials (São Paulo, 1994, and Havana, 1994) and in exhibitions such as *Form und Funktion*, *Der Zeichnung Heute* (Frankfurter Messe, Frankfurt, 1997), *Contemporary Art in Brazil* (Yan Huang Art Museum, Pequim, 1995), *Contemporary Brazilian Drawing* (Karmeliterklöster, Frankfurt, 1994), and *Panorama de Arte Brasileira-Papel* (Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, 1990). Faria's many individual gallery expositions include Galeria Bruno Musatti (São Paulo), Galerie Ulrich Gering (Frankfurt), Galeria Casa da Imagem (Curitiba), Brazilian-American Cultural Institute (Washington), Museu de Arte de Santa Catarina (Florianópolis), and Museu de Arte Contemporânea (Curitiba). Faria is publisher and art director for Edições Mirabilia. Among the books that include Faria's artwork is the comprehensive *Francisco Faria / Significado da paisagem das Américas* (Edições Mirabilia, Primeiro de Maio, 2003).

**Chris Daniels** was born in New York City in 1956. He dropped out of high school in 1972, never bothered with college, and has lived in the San Francisco Bay Area since 1981. Daniels is a prolific translator of Lusophone poetry. His work has appeared in *The San Jose Manual of Style*, *sylogism*, 26, *LVNG*, *-Vert*, *Prosodia*, *Antonym*, *nocturne*, *Urvox*, *Chain*, and *Kenning*. His translations of Fernando Pessoa were featured in *Crayon 3*. In the near future, Listening Chamber will publish Daniels' translations of Brazilian modernist poet Murilo Mendes.



"Josely Vianna Baptista is one of Brazil's most strikingly inventive contemporary poets, a writer of wit and emotional depth whose vision ranges from black to blaze and back again. Chris Daniels' renderings into English represent a triumph of the translator's magical art. In sum, a perfect pairing."

Michael Palmer

"Sites of kinship and wonder await you in these shifting skeins, veils, folds, layers and planes of written human landscapes, limned human nature at the far limits of coherence." The stunning orchestration of Josely Baptista's poems, Francisco Faria's artwork and translator Chris Daniels' perfect pitch produces sensory declensions framed by restrained yet effulgent silences. This shimmering address is located on the Shining Screen of the Eyelids."

Norma Cole



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