

**10 YEARS OF
CORRESPONDING VOICES**

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17 ST. MARK'S PLACE: SELF -PORTRAIT 1

the leaves have given up their place: in the branch
october monday morning moves
without interruption
the boys are proud to spell their names: at school
they yawn beyond themselves: they glow
like sons of sons of prophets
I autumn walk from block to block: I move
within from street to street as if
my bones would never end
I flow like milk in endless trucks: I integrate
my space: the pale diminished sun
knows all my names

YAYOI KUSAMA

It is said of Yayoi that her work reveals a proliferation of penises. For me, they are not penises. They are potatoes. An unleashed multiplication of potatoes that covers whichever objects she likes. A boat, for example, contaminated with silver-plated potatoes. But what is the boat now if not an object abandoned who knows where, perhaps underneath the ocean, no, how about the earth? It is not decay that alters but this tubercular substance extending itself indefinitely, creating a wild network. Today it covers the boat. Tomorrow all of the floor will be infected with this weighty madness that fills the boat with gloves reaching forward. I want to hold those hands. I want to eat that boat. A hunger, also, to throw myself on a surface that does not hurt, that tempts with its voluptuous tubercular softness.

YAYOI KUSAMA

Dicen de Yayoi que sus obras muestran una proliferación de penes. Para mi no son penes. Son papas. Una multiplicación desencadenada de papas que cubre los objetos que le gustan. Un bote, por ejemplo, contaminado de papas plateadas. Pero que es el bote ahora sino un objeto abandonado, quien sabe dónde, tal vez debajo del mar, pero no, mejor en la tierra? No es la descomposición la que lo altera sino esta naturaleza tubercular que se extiende indefinidamente creando una red de conexiones alocadas. Hoy cubre el bote. Mañana todo el piso se contagia de esta gravida locura que llena el bote de guantes que se ofrecen. Quisiera tomar esas manos. Quisiera comer ese bote. Hambre también de tirarme en una superficie que no dude, sino que incita a acostarse en la voluptuosidad de su blandura tubercular.

WHOSE SUFFERING? WHO'S SUFFERING?

—Excerpt from the Shema Series (Pt. 9)

Others' pain and suffering
Other in death is fragmented
little fragment, slivers of your bones
stab our being
whose leg, whose neck in the pits?
No identifying marks like capped teeth
Or rings,
We know where they went.
He's looking out the shutters
But his sight is limited
How much can you see through a chink of the blinds.
Or is she blinded by fear, shivering, locked in.
Is it fear of becoming the Other?
The victim, the prey?
No definitely not remorse
just fear of a shift in the players.

ODE TO LIBRA AND THE SEA

Libra and the tongue
balance the skirt
in autumn dressed
and drops off a pain.
The penal code
penalizes his penis with no pain,
dressed like a man
draws the dagger.
The chair, the table,
the body and the bed,
she powders desire
they unfold the eyes
and points at the flower.
The lady and the bosom,
the man and the lighthouse,
sibiling sementing,
penetrate and pant,
horizon and pathway,
climate and skin.
The balance ends;
they leak their leaps,
sandalwood, saline;
the ocean opens up,
they both roll in.

ODA PARA LIBRA Y EL MAR

Libra y la lengua
balanza la falda
se viste de otopia
y se saca una pena.
El códice penal
penaliza su pene sin pena,
se viste de hombre
desenfunda el puñal.
La silla, la mesa,
el cuerpo y la cama,
se empolva el deseo
se sacan la venda
y señala la flor.
La dama y el seno,
el hombre y el faro,
sibilan, sementan,
penetran y gimen,
horizonte y camino,
el clima y la piel.
El balance termina;
se lamen relamen,
sandalos, salitre;
se abre el oceano,
se sumergen los dos.

SMALL LITURGY

no thought comes easily
except of what wasn't
the yellow
in nonexistent song
like reminiscence to a point
here we have
doubtless
a richness
don't speak
like someone shattering into laughter
don't shut up
don't render the written house
an image tomb

PEQUEÑA LITURGIA

no se piensa facilmente
sino aquello que no fuera
el amarillo
del canto inexistente
como recuerdo hasta que punto
he aqui
sin duda
una riqueza
no hables
como quien rompe a reir
no calles
no hagas de la casa escrita
la tumba de la imagen

I DON'T KNOW

I don't know about today or my youth.
I don't know whatever happened to the man
next to me yesterday, and I don't know
about yesterday either. I don't know
if I am naming the world or breaking down,
or what part of the world is breaking down.
I don't know whether "part" should be
singular or plural. I heard that 72 migrant workers
were murdered in a remote part of Mexico,
murdered by a drug cartel, but it is two hours later
since I heard the report, and I don't know anything
more about this yet. I don't know why anyone has
to kill anyone, but then, as Vallejo wrote,
"que poco he muerto!" - "I have died so little."
I don't know if I have died a little or a lot. I know
there have been many times when I felt like dying,
or thought I felt like dying, but who knows, maybe
I was just deluded by some other feeling other than
dying. I don't know. I don't know about the door
or where today's doors will lead - I have an idea based
on past experience, but I truly don't know.
I don't know what is possible and what isn't, although
I feel - that word again, "feel" - I feel as if less is possible,
or there is less possibility in my small world than there was
a few years ago. But what do I know? I could tell you
a slightly strange story about two other poets, both deceased,
one of whom I never even met - but what do I know,
what is the source of my information? I have thought
of telling a story about these two and changing their names
to unrevealing and false initials. I don't know if I would
follow through on this thought or not. I haven't yet.
I don't know if I can tell anyone anything about someone else.

I sometimes feel like someone else, like one of my "someone else's."
I don't know if this is a true feeling or statement. I wonder
from time to time if the cosmos is as large as this analogy:
every blade of grass that exists or has ever existed on earth,
on this planet, is the equivalent of the earth itself - and this amount
so-called resembles the measurement of the cosmos. It still seems
too small, this analogy of measurement. No one has walked in
to listen to my theory, no one has walked out. I don't know
if anyone ever will, or whether or not I will even talk about it again . . .
I don't know if I regret this poem or not. I don't know
whether or not this is even a poem.

APOLOGY FOR MUSIC

I guess there was something feckless about my love for sound, a feverish translation of material - freckles, child labor, the anticipation of a life sentence - into the sweet dark tongue of the universal. To curate the spine and its three curves into the lilt of a body not limned by the numbed senses. Musik fliegt wennich fliegt: If I fly, the music will fly - my urge, to conquer space with sound, to hold no philosophy in the roar and whirl of rotors. I sent the quartet into four machines, plotted a tonal flight plan, plotted against the human, fed her colliculi inferior and superior by mic, click-track, force. On the downbeat, the copters lifted - the first notes arrived on earth like ovular bodies that had tunneled inward to unseat the quite hollow of the soul. And then - when the tonnage of steel and glass split the horizon, I knew I'd never make a sound, not broken, not otherwise.

FAIR

There's a voice
The helmet muddles up
With its bars
Such cut
Upon the harness of North's absence
The voice now bewildered by its bars
Becomes resonance
Of signs overshadowed by an eternity
Ephemeral between that instant or light here and there of her thus
Under the firmament
Covered by flags of some distant and forgotten Courts
In fair oblivion as they lie in fair memories of absences and presences.

JUSTA

Una voz hay
Que el yelmo confunde
Con sus rejas
Dicha abajada
Sobre el arnés de la ausencia de Norte
Ya por sus rejas esa voz confundida
Se hace resonancia
De signos opacados en una eternidad
Efímera entre ese instante o luz aquí o allí de ella así
Bajo el firmamento
Cubierto por banderas de unas Cortes lejanas olvidadas
En justo olvido si en justo recuerdo de ausencias y presencias.

DIMENSIONS

To stay or to move on
to repeat images and actions
to build a road
among ruins
Bright moments survive
disappearance
Memories remake
every cycle of the sky
Speed
beyond light
without a body to feel
nor eyes to see
A wound scars over
the hacked tree
seeks to be reborn
We'll see
writings on the sand
or stone

DIMENSIONES

Quedarse o seguir
repetir imágenes y actos
construir entre ruinas
un camino
Fulgores sobreviven
desaparición
Recuerdos rehacen
cada ciclo del cielo
Velocidad
más allá de luz
sin cuerpo para sentir
ni ojos para ver
Herida se cierra
árbol cortado
busca renacer

Conoceremos
escrituras en arena
o piedra

A DOMINICANYORK IN ANDHARA

Then, I stared at the window. Passing thru, looking at a group of squatting men shitting, women setting cow dung to dry and children running. I felt asleep. I arrived full and filled with stories. I arrived to continue my story.

From Agra to Hyderabad

He looked at me. He looked into my eyes. He looked and smiled. In fact, he was the only one using his eyes truly. Dressed in a very bright yellow sari, his face portrayed a harshness absent in his eyes. Suddenly, the eunuch sat next to me. And holding my hands he told me what I already knew. "Nobody like us here. And you and me are happily alive". While he loudly said the obvious, a voice translated the fact. It was the voice of that civil engineer that I met buying oranges in the station. A soft voice in the middle of this crowded train heading down to the south. Down to meet the Indian Ocean. He who said that is not safe for a woman to travel by herself these days. He was the echo of the action. A monotone voice. Like a prayer. Not looking at me. Not looking at anybody. But translating the eunuch strident anthem of truth. My intense friend laughed to end his phrases. He laughed so thunderous that badly hurt the cowards, the racists and the dishonest traveling in the train accompanied with their aloofness. His bangles cheered his unveiling act. He left as he came.

Then, I stared at the window. Passing thru, looking at a group of squatting men shitting, women setting cow dung to dry and children running. I felt asleep. I arrived full and filled with stories. I arrived to continue my story.

BLESSED WATER

I went down to the river
I left for the sea
I trust in the water
It teaches me to dream
Of liberty
Of liberty
Of liberty
At the base of a dying maple
I saw the water flow free
Its roots gave birth to a stream
That runs toward the sea
Toward the sea
Toward the sea
Toward the sea
Blessed water, dance with me
Take me close to a truer path
With your wisdom of milenia
Make it so they shall not pass
They shall not pass
They shall not pass
I went to the mountain
To know the green
I stayed alone all night there
With no anxiety
it protects me
it protects me
and the dead dance with me
they show me a way to happiness
like the water they take me to other worlds
where i can forget all my sadness
where i can forget, where i can forget

AGUA BENDITA

Yo me voy al río
Yo me voy al mar
En el agua confío
Me enseña a soñar
Con libertad
Con libertad
Con libertad
A la base de un árbol marchito
Vi la fuente brotar
Su raíz dio luz al chorro
Que corre hacia la mar
hacia la mar
hacia la mar
hacia la mar
Agua bendita, baila conmigo
Llévame cerca a la verdad
Con tu sabiduría de milenios
Prométeme que no pasarán
no pasarán
no pasarán
Yo me fui al monte
Por el verde saber
Me quedé sola de noche
Con nada que temer
Él me sabe proteger
me sabe proteger
Y los muertos bailan conmigo
Alegres me enseñan a festejar
Tal como el agua me llevan a otros mundos
Donde mis penas puedo olvidar
Puedo olvidar, puedo olvidar

MEN AND WOMEN ALONE

—Pt. 13 of 13

When we see each other for the first time
I'll drop my scarf so you bend down
and as soon as you bump into me
from the cuffs of your trousers up
we'll climb the trees of our heights
to a limit which will not be right
but there's no right measure for encounters
they grow from the bottom up
an animal happiness in our four-leggedness
the happiness of falling on our feet
in that horizontal line that lays us down together.

SOLOS Y SOLAS

—Parte 13 de 13

Cuando nos veamos por primera vez
si suelto el pafuelito
va a ser para que vos te agaches
desde la botamanga ni bien te encuentres conmigo
vamos a ir trepando arbol adentro de nuestra estatura
hasta un limite que no es el indicado
no hay medida para un encuentro
crece arrancando por lo bajo
una alegda animal en la postura
cuadrupeda alegrfa de caer parados
los que nos acostamos juntos.