

A thousand soldiers

Part 2

Dear Performer:

You can perform this piece using any kind of voice/sound recorder of any kind. Sometimes they are built up in our smartphones, or it can be an mp3 recorder or even a zoom recorder, anything that records sound. You don't need any particular editing of this piece unless you want it, but in any case it is perfectly possible to execute it live, just by holding and releasing the recording button. Think of the recording object as a modern tool. And maybe when you have it in your hand look at your hand as an infiltrated spy, an independent entity.

ACT 2:

ADAPTATION

If you are in Kleve, this second act starts in the middle of an inside battle. Place yourself next to the kidney-shaped pond in the Forstgarten. You or someone that embodied you in the precedent episode has been using their mouth to perform the noise of a thousand soldiers passing by. Therefore you have to catch up in the midst of action.

Try to make a single sound come out of your mouth. The sound of a bugle gathering troupes.

Say while trying to remember these words by heart, closing your eyes:

Soft humors are a matter of temperature
Ind sex and symbiosis a matter of resemblance
At when a body is a matter of transformation:
Term is milk, lymph is pus, fluids run both ways
Sand from a body to another,
Sex organs are an underdeveloped version of kin
And taste is the voice.
Nails are bone, teeth are hair.
Blood is a uniform and lymphocytes are /
The expression of hope.
The body is the frontier and the territory a
I problem of faith.

And what do I do when I have a body of faith? If faith moves mountains,
Opens the seas, modifies the course of a river and deploys a diaspora.
Then extractivism is my faith in adaptation.

Run in the Forstgarten among the trees, caress every tree when you see it, scratch it, breathe in and breathe out in the microphone and name all the trees you see.

One of the soldiers that were
passing by is now alone in
Mauritsstad.



He had detached himself from the group of soldiers. Four hundred years have passed by now and the city lives under the name of Recife. He's still there, his knife has become ceramics, his gun has been gnawed by termites. His genitals are dubious.

Say as fast as you can:

Palm trees, pine trees, *Eucalyptus*, sugar cane, *Platanus* trees, coffee, coffee coffeecoffeecoffee.

Carry a small group of pebbles and dead leaves in your hand and shake them as a light maracas that will do a background sound. While you do that, go to the penis-shaped canal, the Prinz-Moritz Kanal. March in a rhythmical way along the canal. Make some noise with your boots. Make it rhythmical.

Say:

I look closer, I squint my eyes, I can see a soldier running in front of me, turning his back to me, running along the canal, wearing two kitchen sponges instead of epaulets and a pine branch instead of a fusil. A pair of mugs replace his hands and inside the mugs he holds coffee. Since he's running the coffee is spilling all over the canal, but hey, he doesn't have hands.

If you ask me, I'd say this is a statement for fashion, not for poverty, obviously. His soft body made of time. So soft that it looks like a muscle. So democratic that he comes from the remote borders of the world. And so mysterious that he rolls in rivers of coffee. I can see his muscles now, all round like eggs. Did you know an egg was used once to describe the round shape of the earth? Eggs are very important in the history of western culture: Their purpose has always been military propaganda.

SStart moving faster along the canal border shaking the pebbles in your hand:

The soldier is now running along the canal. Running employs speed and magnetism. Every time a body runs, time starts curving: because of what magnetism does to gravity. I can see the *Forstgarten* transforming.

KKeep running and start panting in an artificial way. Speak quickly.

I see the *Platanus* getting shorter, until it's just a Ginko Bonsai. The *Magnolia Kobus* has lost all its flowers and is dry and it has shrunken into the hearth, it lost its filling and the roots look like a skin spread out on the ground unraveling slowly towards me. A branch wraps around my ankle. The whole tree unroots.

The soldier keeps running. His uniform is nothing but a pair of Pepe jeans with no shirt. I keep chasing him, dragging the weight of a dead tree.

He keeps running, I keep running behind him, I start hearing the noise of the soldier's father who was also a soldier. And of the father of the soldier's father who was also a soldier. It goes back in time for a thousand fathers and sons, all soldiers. Time goes back and forth very fast, I see it parade in the corner of my eye, bending colors into stripes until my eye is all stray. In that blur I see every economic crisis that has taken place in Latin America since the *descubrimiento*. I see currency and I see debt, I see pharmacy, bakery, nuns and mountains.

Now deep breathe in and deep breathe out. Make it sound like a Yoga class.

Watching the soldier, my eyes got watery. They liquified and ponded. I let the soldier run away.

When I looked at my hand it was not my hand anymore. My hand looked all... colonial? As if it had lost its pinky or something. But maybe this was all part of the same process.

The process by which an organism becomes more adapted to the environment in which it lives, more adjusted to the environment, measured in generational changes: from parents to children to children to children. Time went by. I used time for breathing.

When I looked back my hand was all gone. It was a coffee mugs instead. And on it one could read "Starbucks". I sighed. That was Adaptation. And how did I know that was adaptation? Because it was an imported concept and as we know, everything that's imported is good. Endowing it compelled benefit from the exploitation of any environment. Because adaptation can be described as a process and a product.

*Do a high pitch sound with your mouth, like the sound of a bugle
Play a sort of funeral march that fades slowly into silence.*