

João Pinharanda, 2003
DIALOGUE FOR ONE VOICE

"- One day we enter a room and we don't find anything inside it. Nevertheless, we feel that there is no room for anything else in it, that we are surplus.

-Why?

- We feel that something in there threatens us. We feel that something is going to happen and that this will determine our future.

- The future never goes in just one direction. How can we know that it is the future and that it is born from a threat?

- Because on that day, in that empty room, we remember all the rooms of all the houses where our life has been lived, all the memories and all the sorrows, all the mistakes and all the desires, where everything was and how it looked, all the smells, all the pleasures.

- This is the past. Only we forget all of this. On this day, we can have the future.

- It is the same: forgetting, remembering; one day, another day... This experience occurs in successive, intense, short moments which we only become aware of afterwards. But that moment can last the rest of that life, of our life. This is why it is the future. Only after remembering everything do we become aware that we have forgotten things, lost things... everything, everything...

- Does anything remain? Does anything remain for us?

- We forget everything because we feel we have been left without any of what our body is built with, without anything we can remember and even without anything that we can wish and invent for ourselves: the past, desires- And what is that woman doing, whom we hear passing behind the curtain of this room we are entering? Will she enter this other stage, where we are? Does she know we are here? Does she want us to call out? Is she caught up in her own steps, believing herself to be alone and in a place without an exit? But she could escape to this side after all!

- What we hear is not on that side, it is on this side. Nothing is exterior. Everything is interior. Everything is inside us: we draw a trickle of blood in the labyrinth which surrounds us, we feel a silent pain, cigarette smoke is wafting around our eyes.

- It could be exactly the opposite of this: one day we might have the certainty that everything that exists is, in the end, outside us, outside of the room we are in, outside of the life we live, always beyond a stage curtain, which will never be raised. Only then can we forget everything or remember everything. This woman is an intrigue of currents and weights which we are not. These steel wires measure the space of her prison and our freedom.

- We are and we are not this woman. These dilemmas are not important. There are no differences between the different: the woman is in fact divided by a sharp wire. Everything is within her and everything is outside her. An anguish divides her in two like a sharp blade. We could almost say that we see her entrails. Or that she herself is seen lying on a dissection table.

- In reality, there is no other interior beyond that portrayed by our organs.

- All the emotions felt, and those which others believe they sense, are chemical reactions for which there is no work which finds words.

- A life like that is reduced to a list. The woman has lost her memory: the past and the future. She amasses diaries where she measures territories, records surroundings and attitudes, objects, elements and forms. She is not empty. Only there is no emptiness

outside her, everything is present.

- Does this woman not have a body?

- She defines the boundaries of her life: the body, the house, work, objects. It is a presence that is neither physical nor psychological but a purely emotional expression.

- Is there no retreat from desire?

- It has no retreat, no words, it has no defence. It is this neutrality which destroys the senses.

- Does she live without expression, without history, without purpose?

- Life becomes a ready-made. But on presenting herself as such, with no apologies, the woman rejects mediocrity while we continue to debate.

- Because of all this, the woman in the adjacent room has already entered, is already talking to us.

- No. The woman is guarded, the woman does not give, the woman hides, she does not present herself. The woman uses a pattern of behaviour which rejects universality and divides it.

- A woman like this is a closed place. She has a mirror in front of her: she is repeated in it infinitely, she dies.

- No, because each one of her repetitive behaviours is a deviation from consequences. There is no mirror, there is a shadow. And then, each object she touches is broken up in plans, forms, ever diverse colours.

- For example, she raises the curtain. What happens?

- The curtain falls or flutters. The wind shakes it or weighs it down like a sopping wet cloak. A new dense cloud passes over, a delicate Veronica veil covers a body, a dirty rag falls to the ground."

Catalogue *Diálogo Ana Vieira+Patrícia Garrido*. Lisbon: Galeria Giefarte, 2003

Catalogue *Ana Vieira: Muros de Abrigo / Shelter Walls*; Ponta Delgada [Azores], Museu Carlos Machado, Lisboa, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2010, p. 237 (org. Paulo Pires do Vale)
