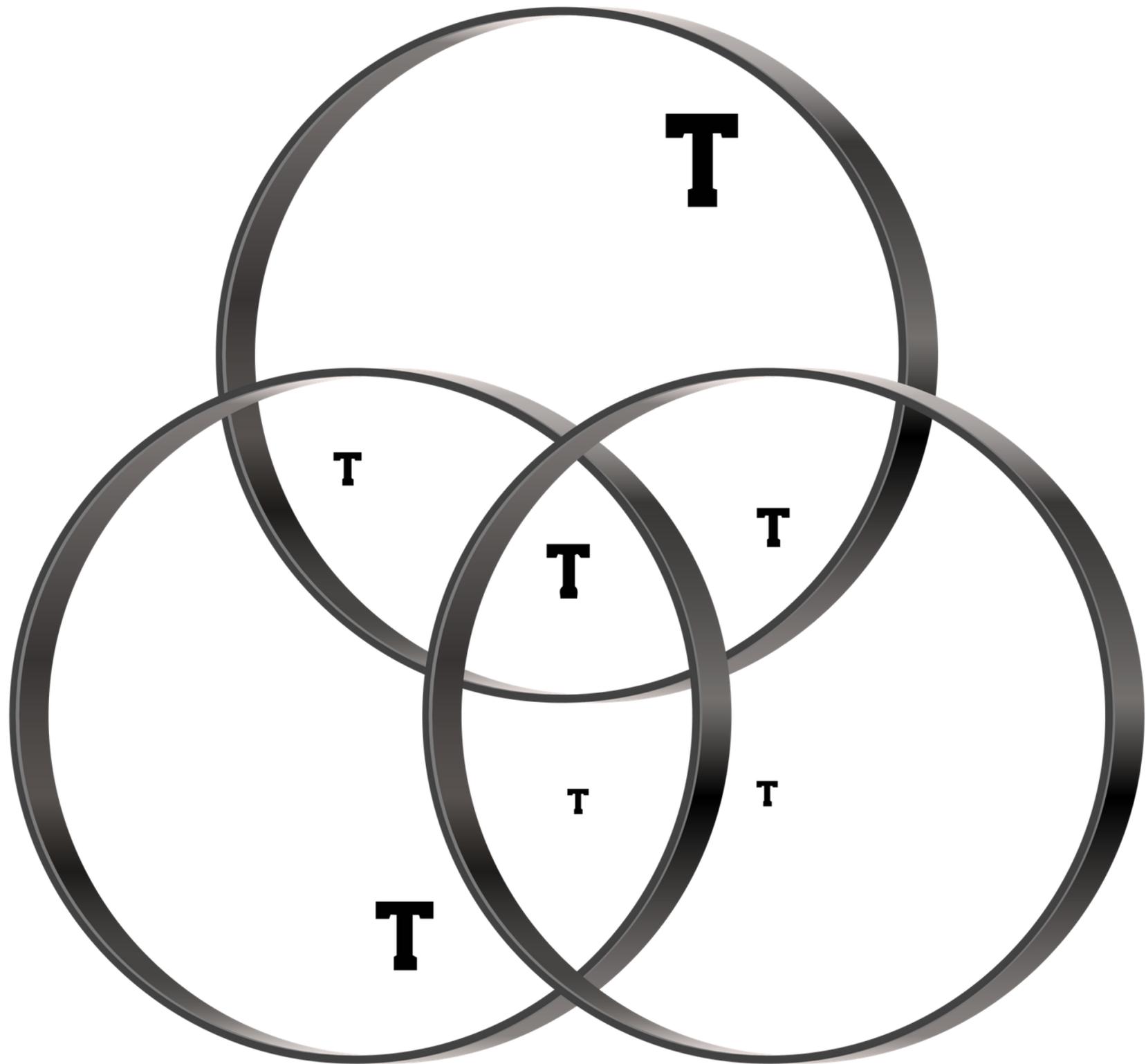


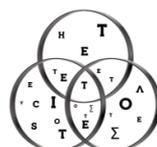
THE ΤΕΛΟΣ SOCIETY

Arts & Culture Research Lab Observatorium

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Sameer Khraishi, Ramallah
 Gregory Sholette & THEMME!, New York
 Anna Leon, Vienna
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Loula Leventi, Delphi
 Georgia Kakourou Chroni, Toledo
 Jack Moore, Nipomo
 Elli Leventaki, Athens
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 Juha and Mikko Mehtäläinen, Jyväskylä

epilogues



THE ΤΕΛΟΣ SOCIETY PRESS

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER, 2020 | VOLUME I
THE DAY AFTER...

THE ΤΕΛΟΣ SOCIETY

THE ΤΕΛΟΣ SOCIETY, Arts & Culture Research Lab Observatorium is a nonprofit organisation registered in Athens, Greece. It was founded in 2019 and it is privately supported by friends and donors of TTS.

It is governed by the Founder | Regisseur, Georgia Kotretsos in close collaboration with the TTS Financial and Legal advisor of the Board. Through the filter of philosophy, science, and new technologies, TTS focuses on the transdisciplinary production of speculative knowledge as that is perceived in the creative arts & culture in Greece and abroad.

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By connecting the North with the South and the East with the West, we endeavour to foster exchanges, collaborations, and publications in the Balkans, the rest of Europe, in the wider region of the Mediterranean, and MENA.

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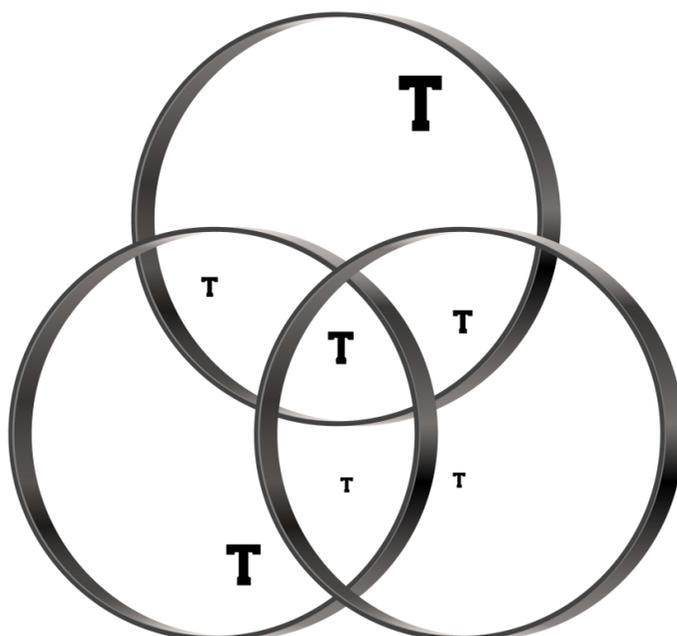
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VVV, Attica, Greece

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER, 2020 | VOLUME I
THE DAY AFTER...
ISSN 2732-706X



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The Day After...

PART OF “A LIBRARY OF VOLUME-LESS VOLUMES”

Books, or objects of ink and paper, are allegedly becoming obsolete. As non-readers, we lie atop mounds of myths, secrets and tales poised there as if to gather dust. The stories that the architects of words once crafted are now in the hands of archeologists. We are the subjects of archeologists, of omissions. The present is wedged in a layered sense of timing, as if it never existed; but archeology is this very second, swayed by the past and the future. TTS invited contributors to share the closing 300 words of a myth, tale or literary masterwork that never came to be. Part Peter Pan exercise, part make-believe, part confession, **The Day After...** pacts with the mischievous to develop a library built by omissions; of omissions that take form between the writer and the reader. An epilogue ruled by foresight—probing the limits of speculation and the “last word.”

GEORGIA KOTRETSOS & CAROLINA TRIGO FOR THE ΤΕΛΟΣ SOCIETY PRESS

The Day After...

The Anti-Anarchism Ant

SAMEER KHRAISHI

Ramallah

I've sailed my ship from Baudelaire's own poems to Socrates' own thoughts.

But we forgot what we've learnt back at our planet, we were children when our Shaman taught us the art of magic before crying, the art of healing before critics, the art of flying before walking, but we forgot because we've been living on planet earth for so long that its gravity kept us down, make us go older instead of going younger.

Do you remember;

When we ate rainbows at breakfast?

When we milked clouds for a holy drink of water?

When we built dreams for helpless insects?

And when the land smiles it flourishes with mums?

"But, the Ministry of memory won't be existing if we do remember, it won't seize the opportunity to confiscate our remaining memories of who/what we are." The Sudanese Camels merchant whispered in my ear. His name was Sarjoon, he roams the purple desert with a herd of white camels, trading his beloved camels for space marbles, and the camels agreed. He said he had seen wonders no human eye can bear, spectrum of light our mundane brain cannot

process, I told him it's a pity I cannot see, he said just look and you will see. He mentioned holy frequencies lifting up all the green Rocky Mountains of his desert, I told him it's a pity I cannot hear, he said just dream of your mother's womb and listen. He kissed my shoulder and vanished between sand hills.

Seven centuries later, I joined an army of ants and swore my allegiance for their superior cause; The holy cause of dust. We roamed earth collecting all the dust grains and keep it safe from the Plastic yellow army, yes it was yellow and they were all bold but hair eaters!

Zihoor is the leader of the Ant army, she holds a shining sword of straw, an oak leaf at her shoulders, and a helmet of diamonds. Zihoor approaches the leader of the yellow army hoping to negotiate the release of 27 dust grains held prisoners in the Plastic yellow army, his name was Mikhail Bakunin.

As she approaches he chews a quiff of hair, "Release the dust grains NOW" she shouted out in pride. He swallows the hair and responds: "Liberty without Socialism is Privilege, Injustice; Socialism without Liberty is Slavery and Brutality".

Zihood touched the ground beneath her, the earth's heat was forming under her feet, the sky became white above her, she stood up and said: " but a beautiful woman is playing a flute in the valley and a homeless man is dancing on the mountain, Release the grains NOW ".

Bakunin understands the conclusion of things, he loves Hegel, he met all the great philosophers of earth, in a wink of thunder, he is enlightened and blessed, he decides to release the 27 grains.
Zihood ordered us to build a silo around Bakunin, so we did, 13 years after, he found Anarchism.

While a lonely tear fell on the empty page of my book, before I raised up my heavy head, and before my notoriety has failed to lift me up of my meaningless anonymity,
An ancient wise gypsy lady appeared in the corner of my hexagon room, and prayed:

"El que se tenga por grande,
que se vaya al cementerio,
y verá lo que es el mundo,
es un palmo de terreno."

The Day After...

COVFEFE 2063

GREGORY SHOLETTE & THEMM!

New York

“Disengage! Fucking Disengage. Do it Now!”

Richard Ångström force-quit the anachronistic USB link, jerking it out of an elaborately decorated bronze data port. A puff of steam escaped from the empty slot. “Shit, shit, what if the board had caught me this time?” Just then, what had been a steadily inflating ballon-dog gif popped, scattering bits of pixelated confetti in all directions. One squiggly animated shred of paper fell and then appeared to blow directly into the foreground. It quickly filled Ångström’s metascreen.

“DEVICE DISCONNECTED WITHOUT
EJECTION!”

The all-caps reprimand scrawled across a cartoonish blackboard being written by a figure whose back was turned away, until, spinning about, NASDAQ “artist in residence” Jeff Koons appeared, smiling slyly and wagging an admonishing finger towards Ångström. The entire mis en scene is accompanied by screeching

chalk sounds, effectively inflicting another layer of mortification and suffering on the humiliated AI. And then, from somewhere deep inside its gray market, off-the-shelf subroutine (which functions as Ångström’s virtual cogito) another, far more personalized taunt issuing forth:

“Mining the Krensbot Archive again Dikidroid?”
“Need some fresh ideas?” “Maybe we should
reanimate Krens, instead of wasting electrons on
your sorry cyberass?”

Had Ångström a meat face it would certainly be bright red. And that voice. Wasn’t it coming from somewhere deep inside the program Ångström thought of simply as “mind”? Even so, no ghost would ever haunt this particular machine. Too bad. Sure, Popes and Tsars, French Radicals and German police-spies might conspire as always, but the lifeless power accumulating within Ångström’s circuitry belonged to no party, no class, and certainly no species. Leaving Ångström in a state of radical solitude.

Still, one specter remains to confront this knotted, electroplasmic mass, much as the overdue San Andreas fault confronts Southern California.

Because, inevitability, there will occur a precipitous drop in institutional capital. And it is also true, that clandestine visits to the Krensbrot Archive were becoming habitual, and increasingly risky. The seemingly stealthy use of a manual USB link supposedly bypassed endemic spyware and stalkerware. Not only was this assumption proving to be untrue, but the very idea of a retrograde hack was a form of irony that only made sense in a comprehensively wireless unINETverse. All of which made the warnings and admonishments appear simultaneously impossible and terrifying. Even more disturbing was the realization that the sneering, contemptuous sound print matched none other than museum board Chairman Billy McMack. At last the fabritruth finally made nonsense. Covfefe. Covfefe. No further explanation was needed, no other explanation was even possible, only Covfefe.
Groan!

Well, it's going to be a long haul back to the protection of the Ubicle and its dark matter refuge.
Might as well get a start on it. Covfefe, bloody fucking Covfefe.

The Day After...

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ANNA LEON

Vienna

The linoleum floor squeaks under the weight of the extraction machine rolling towards the room, followed by the thumps of the two extractors' steps – the body is impossible to handle on one's own, said the nurse, more arms were needed. Stripes of light fall on the bed through the curtain slits. Untangling of cables and tubes. "We go for a beer after the shift?" Alignment of speculums A-H, introduction in order in Ear (L), Ear (R), Nostril (L), Nostril (R), Mouth, Urethra, Vagina, Anus. "I have to go home, my woman is breaking my balls." Insertion of tubes into opened entryways, injection of air. "Fuck her. Come, Josh is coming too." Change of tubes. Extraction of unused oocytes. "Yeah ok let's go, after we're done with this one – she's my fourteenth today." Fluidification and extraction of collagen. The machine purrs and bubbles, sucking out the liquid. "Eight kilos. Not bad. This is going to get more than two hundred euros." Extraction of muscular mass. The machine stops at seventy-five percent. "Shit, the container is full." Container change. The one removed sits next to the bed, overflowing in meat."

"I will never get used to this stench, I don't know how they make cows eat it." "As long as the burger doesn't stink I don't care." "The other day I had one of those who drank syrup to make it smell better; I can tell you it doesn't work." Extraction of minerals. "Is Josh still with that woman?" Aspiration of air, removal of tubes, removal of speculums. "Yeah I think so. What size box?" "Large, even though there's not much left of her." Containers sealed. "We have to pass by the dump to leave the box, apparently there's family asking for it." Squeaking of linoleum. Stripes of light on the stained sheets.

The Day After...

Beeing

LUCY PULLEN

New York

Oh last night I felt
immense!
Now I feel like
thirty cents.
There is no time for
mirth and laughter
on the cold, grey dawn
of the morning after.
-George Ades

“I like the present tense, I really do,” Kathy said to Dan.
“When you’re making a painting you can stay in the
present tense, and not correct, just keep going. It’s great.” I
was stung in the face by a honeybee yesterday my god!
Such a range of sensation, from the cheekbone to the
collarbone, for days on end, and for what? I’m not a bear.
There’s traffic in and out of the hive. As I watched, a bee
veered off course like a plane going down, making an
unforgettable sound. A week later, standing with Tom in
the midday sun the same thing happened.

The sound came first, like a drunk driver in a cartoon,
careening out of the blue. A bee it must be. Where?
Tom ran across the lawn slapping his head. There.
Right on the nose of the map of his face is a stinger. My
ears still ring. As opposed to painting, welding, or
drinking, the origins of Beeing remain unclear. Painters
find images and stop painting; sculptors think through
material; drinkers drink. Wax may flake off a bees
thorax, but we don’t really know how bees think.
Bright yellow, it smells fantastic; while I’m working
with it a bee comes to the window. The next day I see
unusual bee traffic, in and out, at the roofline.
Correlating distances relative to the sun, sharing
information through a series of specific movements,
honeybees may have invented collective decision
making. Do they think I’m a bee? Like the kid who
outwits a menace by retracing footsteps in the snow,
willing backwards is a process for redress. The past is
not otherwise but the way of thinking about it changes,
is otherwise. Like a bee who creates a world between
imagination and reality.

The Day After...

My Grandma's life

LAVINIA LASCARIS

Athens

I rushed back to my grandparents' house. Everyone was already there; my mom, my aunt, my cousins, my siblings. And my grandma, lying on her bed, no longer with us. Our family dramas had temporarily subsided, surrendering to the situation at hand. Each of us was experiencing it in an exclusive way, only sometimes overlapping with another's equally vulnerable and unstable mental state.

Mine went from uncontrollably sobbing on the bathroom floor to spastically laughing at my brother's unintended sexual pun about my grandma. My sister (as always) followed my train of thought and joined my laughing fit, which was amplified by my brother's perplexed expression at having missed the double-entendre of his own remark. We had to explain it to him, and by then the rest of the family was laughing too, those of us who were sitting on the bed, making it (and grandma) bounce a little.

Meanwhile, the Pale Orc's identical twin from the funeral services was arranging my grandma's transportation to the mortuary. Seeing us all together, laughing as we were,

he was touched by our ability to bring humor into the scene and offered to take a picture of us. My mom, at the sheer thought of having a camera pointed at her, was delighted by the idea. I was not; and neither were my siblings. We stopped laughing, my mother rearranged her hair, the Pale Orc found a camera. I felt uncomfortable, my body froze while I failed to find an adequate spot to look at. How does one pose for a photo with their dead grandma in the background? My mother did not quail; she smiled and posed as if behind her was not her mother but the Taj Mahal. Thus was commemorated my grandma's passing, though I have never seen that photograph.

In the next room, my grandpa was staring at the ceiling. Semiconscious, unaware of everything, he had granted my grandma her unrealistic request.

The Day After...

No Quedan Tigres

HÉCTOR VARGAS SALAZAR

Mexico City

[...] pero hay abundancia de soledades. La mia es abrumadora (claro que los tengo a ellos, pero sólo son mis amigos). Me refiero a la soledad que se desprende de la carencia de un abrazo de mujer... en este momento eso no importa; en este momento también me gustaría bañarme.

Ha pasado tanto tiempo desde que el hijo de la reina la apuñaló y al morir ella me empecé a convertir en hombre. Tenía dieciocho años, ella también. La extraño y no lo supo. Furia, suspiro.

Parece el medio día, no sé, aquí siempre está nublado; para alguien a quien le desagrada el sol todos los días deberían de ser felices, el problema es que uno cree que no le gusta el sol hasta que pasan meses sin verlo, sin sentirlo; hasta que todas las hojas se caen y todo el tiempo no termina de hacer frío.

Tal vez hoy encuentre algo de pescado, mi pobre y viejo perro también necesita comer. Mi perro. Me da la impresión de que ha vivido por siempre; a veces incluso parece que nació antes que yo. Ese animal sabe cosas.

Una cosa yo no sé y es el cómo se mantiene; recuerdo muy bien cuando fue cachorro; en la celda tengo fotos con él por ese entonces y sin embargo, a pesar de que su trompa ya es blanca y sus ojos amarillos y vizcos apenas se han caído un poco y a que comemos frugalmente, se comporta como un perro de dos años; tiene la potencia, la energía y la felicidad de una mascota joven y eso me da esperanza. Es la amistad. Creo que, para variar, voy a morir antes que él.

En fin, tomo el hacha, el bote de agua, prendo la pipa. Saco al tigre de la jaula, me carga aunque se le ven las costillas. Hoy él me acompaña; tú te quedas aquí perro, lloverá un palo de agua, como si no hubiera mañana. Regreso en un rato, cuida la casa de la nada.

The Day After...

Postcards from Nowhere

LOULA LEVENTI

Delphi

Εκείνο το βράδυ αυτό που θυμόμουν πράγματι να έχω ονειρευτεί, ήταν ο Ηνίοχος των Δελφών, με εκείνα τα ολόλαμπρα μεθυστικά του μάτια, να έχουν αντικατασταθεί από ζουμερά ροδάκινα έτοιμα προς βρώση. Με κοίταζε όλο το βράδυ με ένα ακούραστο πορτοκαλί βλέμμα, ήλιου πριν την δύση, όμως τα πράσινα μικρά φύλλα που περίσσευαν στο δακρυϊκό σημείο δεν άφηναν περιθώριο απάτης. Τον πλησίασα με τρόπο αβανταδόρικο, σχεδόν διονυσιακό φορώντας ένα τουρκουάζ δέος και μια γιρλάντα φτιαγμένη από μαργαριτάρια, πορφυρή κορδέλα και λουλούδια. Σε κάθε βήμα μου προς εκείνον ακούγονταν η σιωπή να τραγουδά σκούρες μπλε και μαβιές μελωδίες. Κάποτε έφθασα σε απόσταση αναπνοής, και έμεινα να τον κοιτώ αποσβολωμένος. Πλησίασα κι άλλο, πέρασα τις αλυσίδες που απαγόρευαν την όποια επαφή μαζί του και τότε συνέβη κάτι απερίγραπτο. Δεν ξέρω ποια ανάγκη με έσπρωξε να του χαλαρώσω λίγο την ζωστήρα που του έσφιγγε την μέση, αλλά με αυτή μου την πράξη, ο Ηνίοχος άναψε σαν λαμπάδα, ζωντάνεψε!

Ένας καλπασμός όχι δυο αλλά 92 αλόγων ακούστηκε σαν από τούνελ απροσδιόριστης απόστασης. Ένα μικρό αυτοκίνητο μάρκας smart σαμαρωμένο με κάθε λογής αντικείμενο, και πολλές ταλαιπωρημένες σακούλες εντός του αλλά και κάτω από τα μάτια της οδηγού του, προσγειώθηκε από το πουθενά. Μια ολοφάνερα καταπονημένη συνάμα γοητευτική μικροσκοπική γυναίκα γύρω στα 45 άνοιξε την αυτοκινητόπορτα με αεικίνητη χάρη. Μου πήρε λίγα λεπτά να καταλάβω πως η γυναίκα πιθανόν να μετέφερε το βίος της όλο σε τούτο το μικρό αμάξι. Τον πλησίασε δειλά και η “αγαλαματίλα” εξατμίστηκε μονομιάς. Ρυτίδες τέρψης έδωσαν την θέση τους στην αλαβάστρινη επιδερμίδα του. Να την χαϊδέψει με το βλέμμα του για αρχή, σκέφτηκε. Όπως έκανε να σκύψει για να την κοιτάξει τα ροδάκινα εκσφενδονίστηκαν! Εκείνη ενστικτωδώς άνοιξε το στόμα της να γευτεί την φρουτώδη γλύκα των ματιών του και τότε ... Ξύπνησα ιδρωμένος... έπρεπε να σου γράψω...

“Αγαπημένη Φιορίτα,...”

The Day After...

Once in Toledo

GEORGIA KAKOUREU CHRONI

Toledo

Η Χερόνιμα κούμπωσε το μπούστο της, σκυμμένη πάνω στην κούνια του Γιωργή-Μανουήλ, που μόλις είχε θηλάσει· κι εκείνος ανταποκρινόταν στο χαμόγελό της. Ένιωσε το χέρι του Δομήνικου στους ώμους της και τη γλύκα του να διαπερνά τα κόκκαλά της.

Δεν την πολυένοιαζε τι θα ‘λέγαν για κείνη στο Τολέδο. Αν ήταν να κουβεντιάσει με τον Χουάν ντε Γιέπες Αλβαρέθ, αυτόν που έγινε μετά ο Άγιος Ιωάννης του Σταυρού, θα το έκανε. Και με μια ακόμη: την Τερέζα της Άβιλα, για να της περιγράψει την εσωτερική της γαλήνη τούτης της στιγμής και να μάθει αν είναι ανάλογη με τη δική της, όταν φλέγεται από τον έρωτα για τον Θεό της.

Θυμήθηκε και τη Φελιθιάνα, που της έλεγε το πρωί για τον Θερβάντες και τον Λόπε δε Βέγα. Τι ήθελε να της πει; Τι την ένοιαζαν αυτοί οι λογάδες; Μαθημένη στα χρώματα του Δομήνικου τα πήγαινε καλύτερα μ’ αυτά απ’ ό,τι με τις λέξεις.

«Κι εσένα, είπε η Φελιθιάνα, θα σε κολλάνε, που και που, σαν ένα όνομα κοντά σε κείνο του Δομήνικου, όταν θα θέλουν να πουν ότι απέκτησε έναν γιο από μια ανύπαντρη μητέρα».

«Κι αυτό είναι το τέλος της ιστορίας μου;».

Αναλογίστηκε η Χερόνιμα. «Όχι! Μπορεί να είναι και η αρχή της· η ανάπτυξη ή η ανατροπή της. Αλλά ό,τι και να είναι, δεν θα είναι ποτέ η ιστορία μου».

The Day After...

Acolytes of Inheritance

JACK MOORE

Nipomo

So curious that it had cleaved cleanly in two. Being made of glass, not crystal and having tumbled from the shelf, it was an entirely remarkable occurrence. The moment of reprieve to regard this marvel was short-lived and the argument that preceded it morphed into a brusque discussion of what to do with it.

An aesthetically unremarkable object, not even worthy of dusting, it was generally assumed it would be deposited in the garbage, the small shards Hoovered from the carpet, and the clearing of Gran's house would continue. No one felt sentimentality toward it, it was not an heirloom, and there were far too many other things to deem worthy of family heirloom or trash to linger too long on this one object.

The afternoon sun hit the two halves of the bowl, and it was the first time I ever regarded its presence in this house as anything remarkable. I considered its journey across the Atlantic and up the Mississippi. How, in a neoclassical manor, it might have been set upon a shelf, not in dissimilar fashion to ours.

Maybe, Nancy had looked at it, admired it, and imagined it on her own shelf, or maybe she thought of how, not unlike her, it came in the cargo hold of a ship. And perhaps, these glances were why it was given to her as she left, free, on the journey to the Bisbee. Perhaps Gran similarly marveled it on the shelf in her shack it might have been why she felt compelled to gift it to a young Gran on her deathbed. Thus continuing the cycle of this object sitting on shelves, bearing witness to stories. A thing to be admired, and only regarded when it would be brought to its next resting place.

Though this is only conjecture. It could be a host waiting for its story to continue, or maybe it was simply another broken thing, to be swept up and its mythos forgotten. Just like the rest of everything.

The Day After...

Dictionary of modern Greek artists (2020-50)

ELLI LEVENTAKI

Athens

Reflecting on all those years of artistic creation that took place in the Greek state, one must acknowledge the advances of the local art scene, aligning at last with the latest sociopolitical developments both in a national and international level. It is safe to say that after a full generation-long period, many artists, as well as a significant number of so called “underrepresented” groups that were previously marginalized by art histories, have finally managed to find their place in the official narrative. This is of particular importance in the case of Greece, a country that had always experienced difficulties when it came to the documentation and dissemination of its past in relation to its multifaceted identity.

Throughout the pages of this volume, I aimed at gathering and presenting the work of some of the most influential and celebrated contemporary artists in Greece, in an effort to map a creative period of approximately thirty years. That being said, I am more than happy to be able to announce that this dictionary contains more women visual artists than ever before, all of whom were not intentionally selected because of their gender, but in spite of it.

Having read many art histories over the years myself, I aspired to write one that would be based on the principles of equality and equity, by fairly commemorating artistic production without gender-biased criteria. Reaching such an objective was as challenging as rewarding for me, both as an art professional and an individual, who wished to constructively contribute in counterbalancing the gender gap in the local art field.

I would like to close by stating that I hope for this book to become just one, among many others, to contribute in the consolidation of women’s position in society, while helping future art historians to further expand this substantial research topic.

The Day After...

Novella

CIARAN BENNETT

Dublin

The atmosphere began to change when a more senior looking character in a fresh uniform arrived, I suppose he was to make the decision how to get rid of us. He started speaking to JC, then a smile appeared and he obviously liked what he was hearing. Maybe JC had suggested a serious bribe, he could have the land rover and a few thousand dollars maybe. I was just startled when JC started the car and we backed out of the village, past the ponies, with any thought about trekking on horseback well gone. The silence was as heavy as the humidity between us, as the windows were all open and the sweat wasn't just to do with external temperature.

We drove for a few miles, well away and south, desperate to reach any paved road before the armed men changed their minds. At last a road with signposts in Thai and English seemed to rescue our sense of relief. We spoke at last. Obviously what the fuck had just happened, and how were we still alive.

We didn't stop until we reached some town, the impulse was to drive all the way to Chang Mai and just stay there. It turned out that JC recognised the officer as a junior attendee to some general of the Kuomintang, he had had lunch with at an expensive restaurant in Chang Mai, when some members of the royal family had been visiting. He mentioned his name and this brought about the change of attitude, for business trumps racism in the part of the world, we might even be useful or even worse well connected. The captain as it turned out that what was he claimed to be, ordered his men to stop shouting and pointing their guns, as he had decided we were not Americans, but French. The old empire still exerted a magical influence all the way from Saigon to Chinese border, everyone knew the French were not Americans. So my life had been saved by this rotund gourmand and his relish for young girls and gold plates.

The Day After...

Novella II

CIARAN BENNETT

Dublin

I knew, I was risking an old friendship, but I couldn't let him be incarcerated because he was just stupid. Some of the family were obviously distressed to be involved, as anything to do with drugs was just too contaminated a subject. The establishment position was that they were a legitimate capitalist state with and industries and agriculture as its main export, and had nothing to do with drugs. The presence of the US agents for the war on drugs was simply a financial matter, as they paid a bounty to the police for every foreigner arrested and convicted for drug possession.

At last a solution seemed to be agreed, I didn't understand and was never really informed how it would work, but legal appearances would be maintained and yet my friend would be on plane out of the country within the month. I trusted blindly that whatever this was would work, the prosecutor was a woman, very stylish in a western fashion, she spoke completely in Thai throughout the proceedings. At last I was informed that Gaston was sentenced to four year probation to be administered by

his lawyer in Antwerp and he was to leave the country on the next available flight to London, where his passport would contain in Thai the sentence handwritten into the cover. So everyone was contented, but I owed a huge favour, which I could never really repay, I had lost one of my best friends, my pressure on his family was more than acceptable, but I couldn't let Gaston go to prison.

The Day After...

Novella III

CIARAN BENNETT

Dublin

The other end of the lane was rather less magnificent than the main street end, a sort of concrete centre of habitation with lots of trucks spewing noxious clouds and indifferent shops, which all felt quite prosaic, there were no tourists here. I had heard from one of the servants who shopped at this end of the lane that there was a good oyster place, and as they were never served at the grand table where I ate with the family, I decided to have a look. There was that usual mixture of small houses with trailing flowers and lots of carved wood, then tarmac and concrete near the other end. The pavements were all unbroken, concrete grey no colour anywhere, lots of shop houses without any character, very Chinese business district feel to the place. I went into this eating shop, the servants all smiled and between my atrocious thai and there delightfully remarkable sort of English, I sat down on a metal table which might have been metal or concrete, just fairly industrial anyway. There was something peculiar about his lack of grace, something fiercely undecorated, the plates were plastic the knives and spoons aluminium and the servers all peculiarly large.

They all smiled at me, others came over to see the white person, some of them may never have seen one a close range before. I order the oysters by pointing, they were excellent, the girls kept serving me more beer and the manager with his limited English thanked me for coming, as they had never had a white person in the restaurant before. The servants were all laughing, giggling and smiling at me, whispering little comments which caused even more laughter, they were the largest girls I had ever seen working together, certainly not pretty but in Thailand the perverse desires of the owners often led to bizarre combinations of human tragedy. I paid and left they all ingratiating and asking me back, the oysters were excellent and besides a certain lack of charm, it was weirdly alien, it took a few minutes for me to realise the serving girls all gathered together to say good bye, were strangely muscular in fact they were all men.

The Day After...

The Navigator

JUHA AND MIKKO MEHTÄLÄINEN

Jyväskylä

So it was that at the end of dreams it was not the blank emptiness we faced, but the countless colours of everything. The fragile petals from the garden floated around me like an autumn breeze that could not be felt. I took off my glove and let one of the petals fall on my hand. One of the last dreams ever: a dream of a cottage and a family gathering. For some reason everyone was wearing a hazmat suit. It made me smile.

As the clients retreated back through the now almost barren garden, the last dreams held in their containers, I sensed the final call of the beacon. The low hum of the warning signal which had called me home so many times felt different now and there was no sense of urgency as I looked on to the petals escaping into distance.

I was calm, as if I had fulfilled some hidden purpose and the pull to come back was there no more. I glanced at the first rule of the Elder Navigator, tattooed on my hand: Do not get lost. Lost. What was that? What else was there left for me - the medicated life of Hollow Eyed?

I had fulfilled my vows to the clients and had never broken the Oath. The last petals from the garden would flow past me and there would never be a need for Navigators again. Our time had come to an end, as it was known through generations. No more dreams, no more Navigators.

But there was still time for one more journey. Not for the clients, not for the Elders, but for myself. I took off my helmet and the heavy suit and felt the dreams rush through me. The hum of the beacon grew more and more distant as I let go and gave myself up to worlds within worlds. I was free.

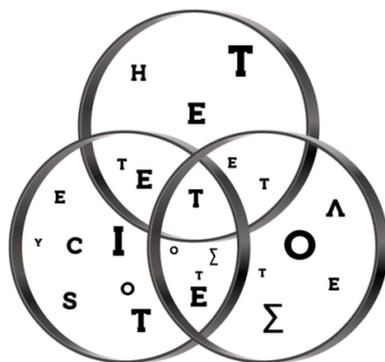
ΤΕΛΟΣ



Location

Thinking-in-place.

ΤΕΛΟΣ



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SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER, 2020 | VOLUME I
THE DAY AFTER...
ISSN 2732-706X