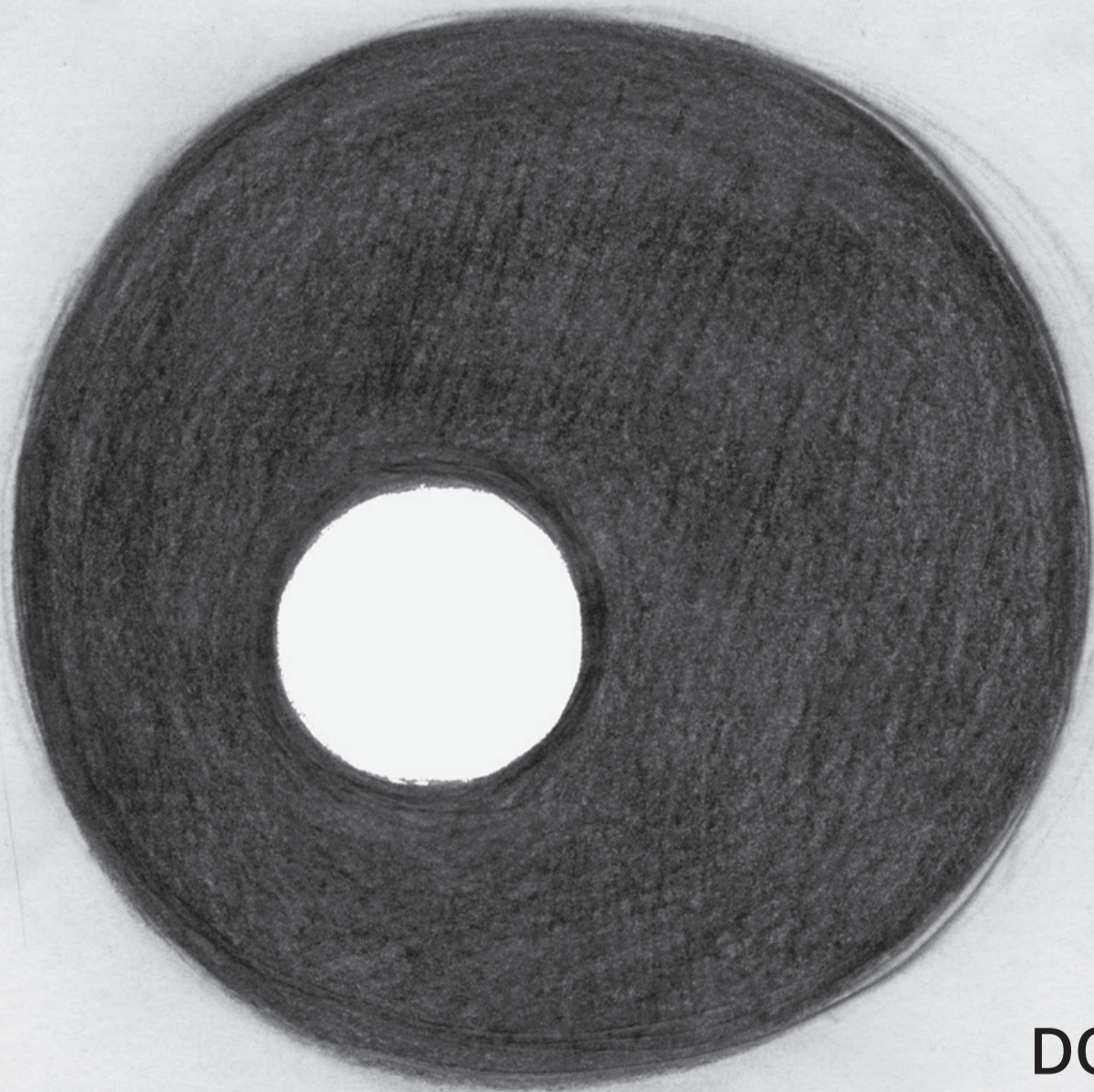


SOMEWHERE,
TWO PLANETS HAVE BEEN COLLIDING
FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS



DORA GARCÍA

(THE THINKER AS POET)

EDITO

Catherine Tsekenis
Directrice de la Fondation d'entreprise Hermès
Director, Fondation d'entreprise Hermès

L'artiste espagnole Dora García, dont l'œuvre conceptuelle et érudite bénéficie d'une belle reconnaissance internationale, sculpte et agence les savoirs comme un matériau. Effectuant d'importantes recherches documentaires, elle explore des thématiques complexes, telle l'histoire de l'irrationalité, en tressant notamment des passerelles avec la pensée de grands noms de la littérature – dont Walser, Artaud et Joyce. Organisant et mettant en scène des récits à travers des performances, des dessins, des ateliers ou des films, elle compose des situations qui s'adressent aux visiteurs et ouvrent à des expériences réflexives et singulières.

Aujourd'hui invitée à s'emparer de l'espace bruxellois de la Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, Dora García dévoile un lieu dégagé, magnifié par les infinies variations de la lumière du jour pénétrant la verrière zénithale. Aux murs, plusieurs dessins, dont certains semblables à d'énigmatiques diagrammes, présentent un aperçu de cette vaste cartographie mentale, subjective et théorique, dont l'artiste a fait l'essence de son œuvre. L'ensemble sert de cadre à des performances qui sont jouées en permanence, pendant toute la durée de l'exposition, et qui placent le visiteur au cœur même du dispositif artistique.

En réponse à la proposition du commissaire de La Verrière, Guillaume Désanges, d'exposer au sein du cycle intitulé « Poésie balistique » qu'il a initié au printemps 2016, Dora García a souhaité travailler de manière plus spécifique le matériau poétique. Son approche s'est nourrie de la réflexion menée par le philosophe du « Dasein », Martin Heidegger, sur les liens profonds existant entre penseur et poète. Elle s'est également enrichie d'une longue discussion avec Andrea Valdés et Manuel Asín, respectivement écrivain et commissaire d'exposition, dont nous avons le plaisir d'accueillir la retranscription au fil des pages de ce *Journal*.

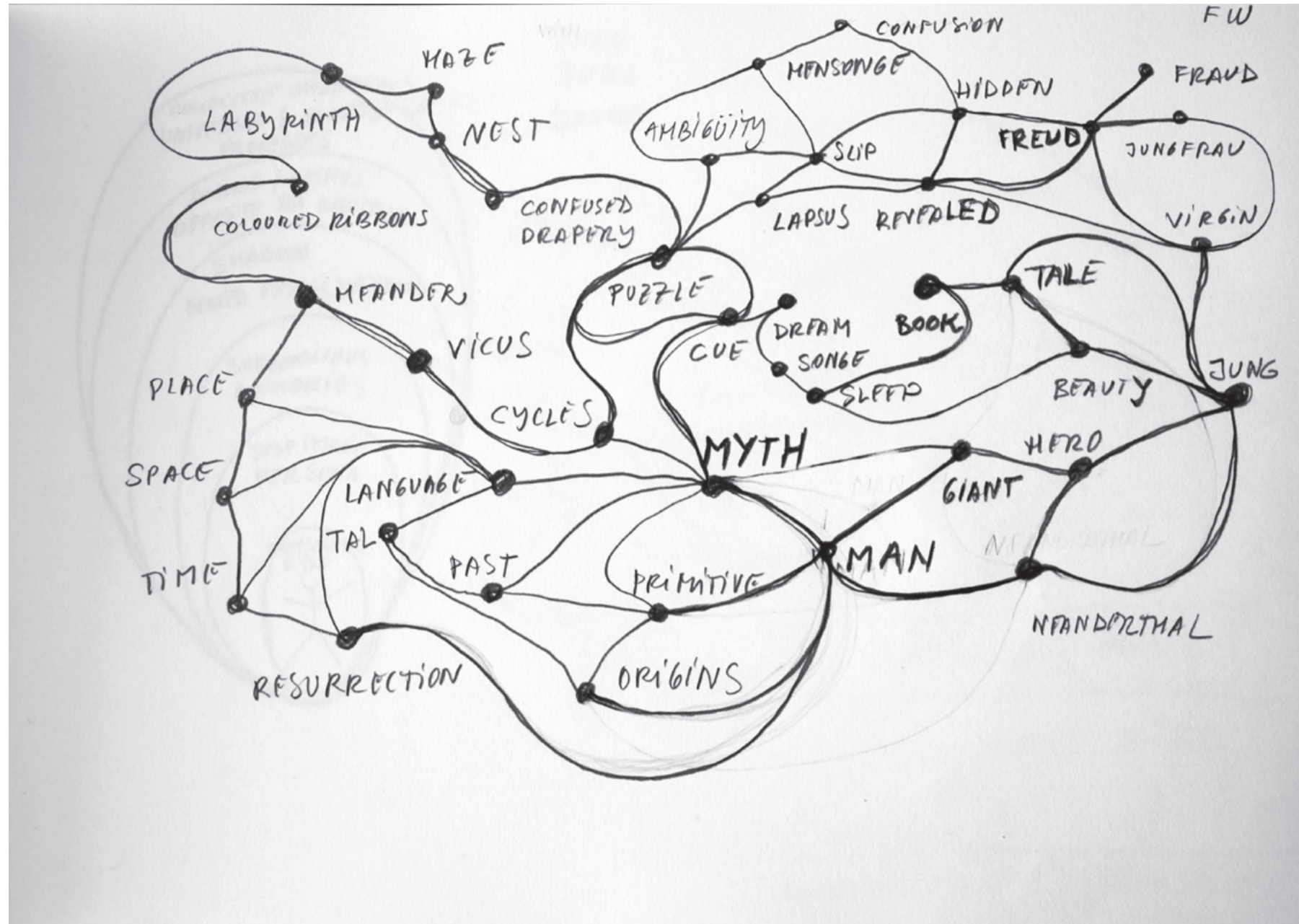
Nous vous souhaitons une bonne lecture ainsi qu'une bonne visite.

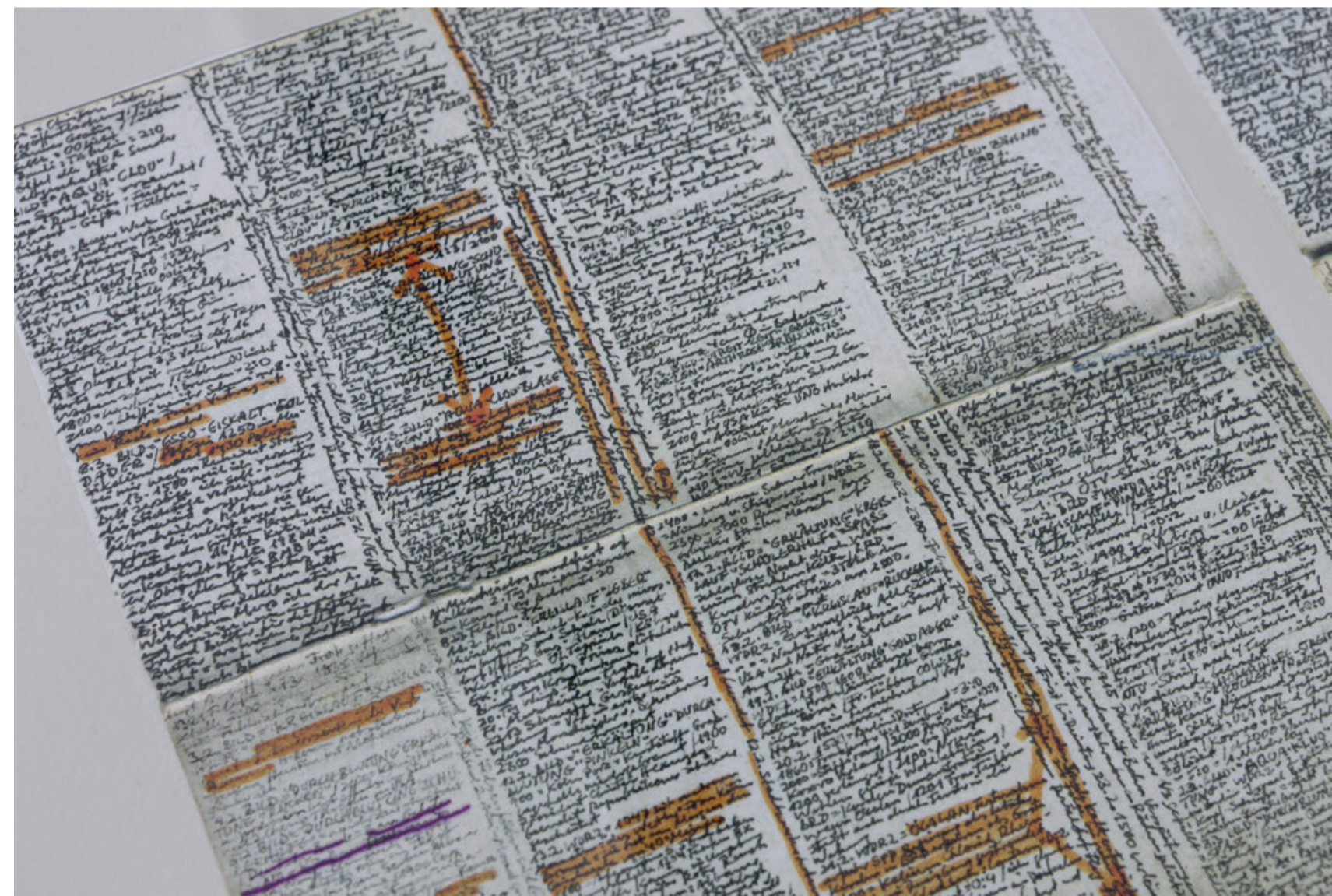
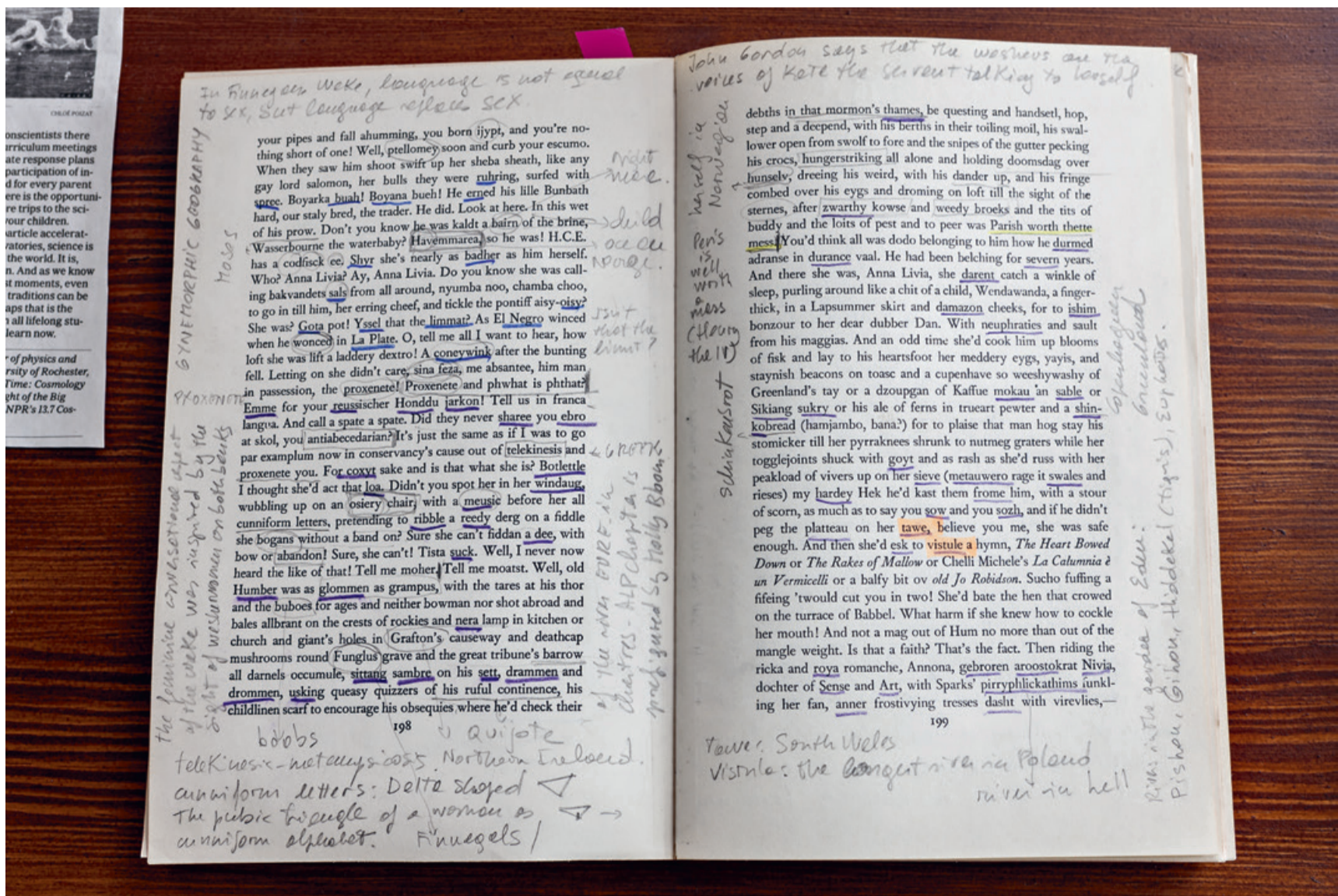
Spanish artist Dora García is internationally renowned for her conceptual and erudite work. She sculpts and arranges knowledge as a material in its own right. Using extensive documentary research, she delves into complex topics such as the history of the irrational, subconscious mind, and forges links with the great names in literature – including Walser, Artaud and Joyce. Her performances, drawings, workshops and films are centred around stories which she organises and stages, conjuring situations designed to engage the visitor and trigger unique, introspective experiences.

Dora García has now been invited to take over the Foundation's Brussels art space, La Verrière - an open-plan gallery enhanced by the endlessly shifting natural light pouring from its central well. The walls feature a number of drawings, some of which resemble mysterious diagrams affording a glimpse of the extensive 'brain mapping', both subjective and theoretical, which forms the core of García's oeuvre. This ensemble provides the backdrop for the non-stop performances taking place throughout the exhibition period, placing visitors at the heart of the artistic undertaking.

Dora García is the latest artist invited by La Verrière's curator Guillaume Désanges to exhibit as part of the 'Ballistic Poetry' season, which he initiated in the spring of 2016. With a particular focus on poetry as a material, her approach is inspired by the philosopher Martin Heidegger, who concerned himself with human existence or 'Dasein', and the deep links that exist between thinker and poet. García draws, too, on an extended discussion with writer Andrea Valdés and curator Manuel Asín, the transcript of which we are delighted to include in this *Journal*.

Happy reading, and we hope you enjoy your visit.





Quelque part, deux planètes sont entrées en collision pendant des milliers d’années.

Guillaume Désanges

Depuis la fin des années 1990, Dora García développe une œuvre unique, à la fois minimale et polymorphe, conceptuelle et élégante, fondée sur une approche critique de phénomènes et motifs de la pensée et de l’histoire occidentales. Performances, films, dessins, éditions, télévision, workshops ou séminaires, quels que soient les médiums qu’elle utilise, ce sont principalement des situations spécifiques qui l’intéressent et qu’elle met en scène avec un mélange d’érudition et d’imprudence, de science et de fiction. Ce faisant, elle propose des expériences cognitives et sensibles dont les significations restent en suspens, même si leurs référents culturels et théoriques sont précis. Son œuvre procède par vastes chantiers thématiques qui se développent d’un sujet à l’autre par capillarité et débordement, au gré de ses lectures, de sa curiosité et de ses intuitions. D’une recherche sur l’« anti-psychiatrie » et Antonin Artaud jusqu’à James Joyce et Jacques Lacan, en passant par l’« art dégénéré », la lutte terroriste et la *stand-up comedy* à l’américaine, c’est une cartographie subjective que dessine progressivement Dora García, dont elle donne, à chaque exposition, une formalisation parcellaire qui devient la pièce d’un puzzle théorico-esthétique. Véritable « sculptrice » d’un savoir qu’elle façonne, coupe et creuse comme un matériau, elle en tire une suite d’agencements spécifiques (abtraits et documentaires) qui sont autant de messages codés. Pourtant, au fur et à mesure de la construction de cette nébuleuse d’histoires, se dessinent des perspectives idéologiques précises. À savoir, une défense de la marginalité, de ce qui vient contester les normes culturelles, de ce qui résiste aux codifications de la pensée et donc navigue dans les eaux troubles, pour ne pas dire obscures, de l’intelligence.

C’est dans cette perspective que je lui ai proposé de rejoindre, pour une nouvelle production, le cycle « Poésie balistique » de La Verrière. Parce que cette œuvre érudite, fondée sur un programme cognitif et théorique rigoureux, n’utilise la connaissance que pour en explorer les limites. Parce que les intérêts de Dora García se focalisent sur des phénomènes paradoxaux, positivement glissants, où la pensée devient croyance, où l’analyse se mue en spéculation et les discours logiques en poèmes. Précisément : là où les partitions déraillent et les structures se fissurent. Parce que les formes proposées par Dora García suivent les mêmes pentes du mystère et de l’incomplétude: un programme qui échappe finalement à toute raison, qu’elle soit intellectuelle ou artistique. Avec générosité, Dora García a profité de cette invitation pour travailler plus précisément le matériau poétique, à partir d’une discussion avec deux écrivains (Andrea Valdés et Manuel Asín) et d’un texte poétique du philosophe allemand Martin Heidegger intitulé *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens* (traduit en anglais comme *The Thinker as Poet*). La forme de l’exposition est celle d’un dispositif: un espace quasi-vide, des dessins-diagrammes sur les murs, un livre-sculpture, le tout servant de scène pour des performances en continu.

De quoi y sera-t-il question? D’écrits et de paroles, visiblement. Du temps et de l’espace, assurément. De théâtre, de philosophie, de poésie et de psychanalyse, probablement. Du cosmos, du temps circulaire, de l’abolition des relations de cause à effet, du chaos, peut-être. Rien n’est totalement déterminé. De fait, ce ne sont jamais des sujets simples qui intéressent l’artiste, mais plutôt des choses complexes qui touchent aux mystères de l’esprit, là où les concepts rencontrent les affects, la logique le psychique. Des liaisons dangereuses qui ne peuvent pas se dire simplement, encore

moins se démontrer. D’où son intérêt pour les figures déviantes de la pensée et de la littérature (Lenny Bruce, Robert Walser, Antonin Artaud ou James Joyce) qu’elle lie volontiers avec d’autres formes de marginalités politiques et sociales (les radicaux politiques, les fous ou les entendeurs de voix).

Ces liens entre génie et folie, raison et déraison rencontrent de plain-pied le fait poétique, qui n’est pas, loin s’en faut, un envers de l’intelligence mais une autre forme de celle-ci. C’est d’ailleurs la thèse principale d’un récent livre du philosophe Alain Badiou, intitulé *Que pense le poème?*¹, qui s’attache à rendre hommage au poème comme un des bords de la philosophie, dont l’autre serait le « mathème ». Convoquant des auteurs comme Stéphane Mallarmé, Arthur Rimbaud, Georg Trakl ou Fernando Pessoa, il fait l’éloge du poème comme idéal d’une « *pensée sans connaissance* », littéralement « *impensable* », qui est utile en tant que trou, perte, insuffisance nécessaire et même vitale à la pensée. Action littéraire fulgurante et immédiate, qui fait fi des étapes de la discursivité, le poème valide l’existence du mystère, qui est une des dimensions de la réalité. Dès lors, il amène à « *se servir de la langue de façon telle qu’elle atteindra, comme la flèche sa cible, l’intellect de ses contemporains* ». Cette manière on ne peut plus balistique de considérer la poésie comme une métaphore d’un au-delà de la raison logique, qui perce et touche d’autant plus précisément qu’on ne sait pas exactement d’où elle parle, a quelque chose à voir avec l’art discrètement tranchant de Dora García.



Dora García, *The Chalk Circle Floor Drawing*, performance, performeur : Jean Capelle, courtesy galerie Michel Rein

© Dora García, photo Florian Kleinfenn

Dora García, *The Chalk Circle floor drawing*, performance, performer : Jean Capelle, courtesy Michel Rein gallery

© Dora García, photo Florian Kleinfenn

¹ - Alain Badiou, *Que pense le poème?*, Éditions Nous, 2016

Somewhere, two planets have been colliding for thousand of years.

Guillaume Désanges

Since the late 1990s, Dora García has developed a unique corpus – minimalist and multi-form, conceptual and elegant – rooted in her critical approach to the phenomenology and iconology of Western history and thought. Working through performance, film, drawings, publications, television, workshops and seminars, her primary interest is in specific situations, presented with a mix of scholarship and risk-taking, science and fiction. In so doing, she stages sensitive, cognitive experiences whose meaning is left ‘in suspense’, despite their precisely defined cultural and theoretical frame of reference. García proceeds via vast, themed ‘works in progress’, spreading from one subject to the next by a process of capillarity and overspill, fed by her reading, her natural curiosity and her intuition. Gradually, her work draws its own, subjective cartography leading us from research into the anti-psychiatry of Antonin Artaud, to James Joyce and Jacques Lacan, via ‘degenerate art’, the terrorist struggle and American-style ‘stand-up’ comedy. Each exhibition formalises a small part of the whole, contributing a piece to the wider, theoretical and aesthetic jigsaw puzzle. García is a sculptor of knowledge, shaping, cutting and carving it out like a material, to produce a series of specific (abstract and documentary) lay-outs, each bearing its own coded message. And yet the formation of this nebula of narratives points up clearly defined, ideological positions, too: a defence of marginality, of that which contests cultural norms or holds out against the pigeon-holing of thought and ideas, and persists in plying the troubled, not to say murky waters of human intelligence.

With this in mind, I have invited Dora García to produce a new work for La Verrière, as part of the gallery’s ‘Ballistic Poetry’ season. Because her erudite oeuvre, based on a strict cognitive and theoretical programme, uses knowledge solely in order to explore its limits. Because Dora García focuses her interest on paradoxical, deliberately slippery phenomena, on the place where speculative thought becomes dogma, where analysis becomes speculation, and where logical argument becomes poetry; on the precise spot where partitions come adrift and structures begin to crack. Because Dora García’s forms are similarly inclined to mystery and *non finito*: ultimately, her artistic programme evades any form of intellectual or artistic reason. Generously, she has used La Verrière’s invitation to work more precisely with the matter of poetry, taking as her starting-point a discussion with two writers (Andrea Valdes and Manuel Asín), and a poetical text by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger, entitled *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens* (*The Thinker as Poet* in Albert Hofstadter’s English translation). The exhibition takes the form of a unit: a quasi-empty space with diagrammatic drawings on its walls, a book-sculpture... each element contributing to this stage set for a continuous series of performances.

What will it all be about? Writings and the spoken word, apparently. Time and space, assuredly. Theatre, philosophy, poetry and psychoanalysis, probably. The cosmos, the circularity of time, chaos and the abolition of the relationship of cause and effect, perhaps. Nothing is wholly pre-determined. As a result, García is never interested in simple, straightforward subject matter, but in complex things that appeal to the mysteries of the human mind, where concepts



encounter affects, and logic and the psyche come together. Dangerous liaisons that cannot be expressed, let alone demonstrated in simple terms. Hence García’s interest in the deviant figures of literature and thought (Lenny Bruce, Robert Walser, Antonin Artaud or James Joyce), whom she readily connects to other forms of political and social marginality (political radicals, the insane, and people who hear voices).

These links between genius and madness, reason and folly are readily assimilated with the poetic act, which is not – far from it – the flip side of intelligence, but another form of the same. This is indeed the central thesis of a recent book by the French philosopher Alain Badiou, entitled *Que pense le poème?* (‘What does the poem think?’ Editions nous, 2016), conceived as a homage to the poem as one shore of the ocean of philosophy, the other being the ‘mathème’. Invoking such as Stéphane Mallarmé, Arthur Rimbaud, Georg Trakl or Fernando Pessoa, Badiou praises the poem as the ideal of ‘thought without knowledge’, literally ‘unthinkable’, and useful as a kind of cavity, a lack, a necessary, even vital insufficiency of thought. The poem is a literary act of dazzling immediacy that scorns the methodical steps of discourse and validates the existence of mystery, which is one dimension of reality. From the outset, it leads us to ‘use language such that it strikes the intellect of its contemporaries, like an arrow hitting its target.’ This supremely ballistic view of poetry – as a metaphor for something beyond logical reasoning, that pierces and touches us all the more precisely because we do not know exactly what it is about – is connected in suitably indefinable ways to Dora García’s subtly trenchant art.

Dora García, *Steal This Book*, 2008, collection du CNAP, Paris

© Dora García, photo Roberto Ruiz

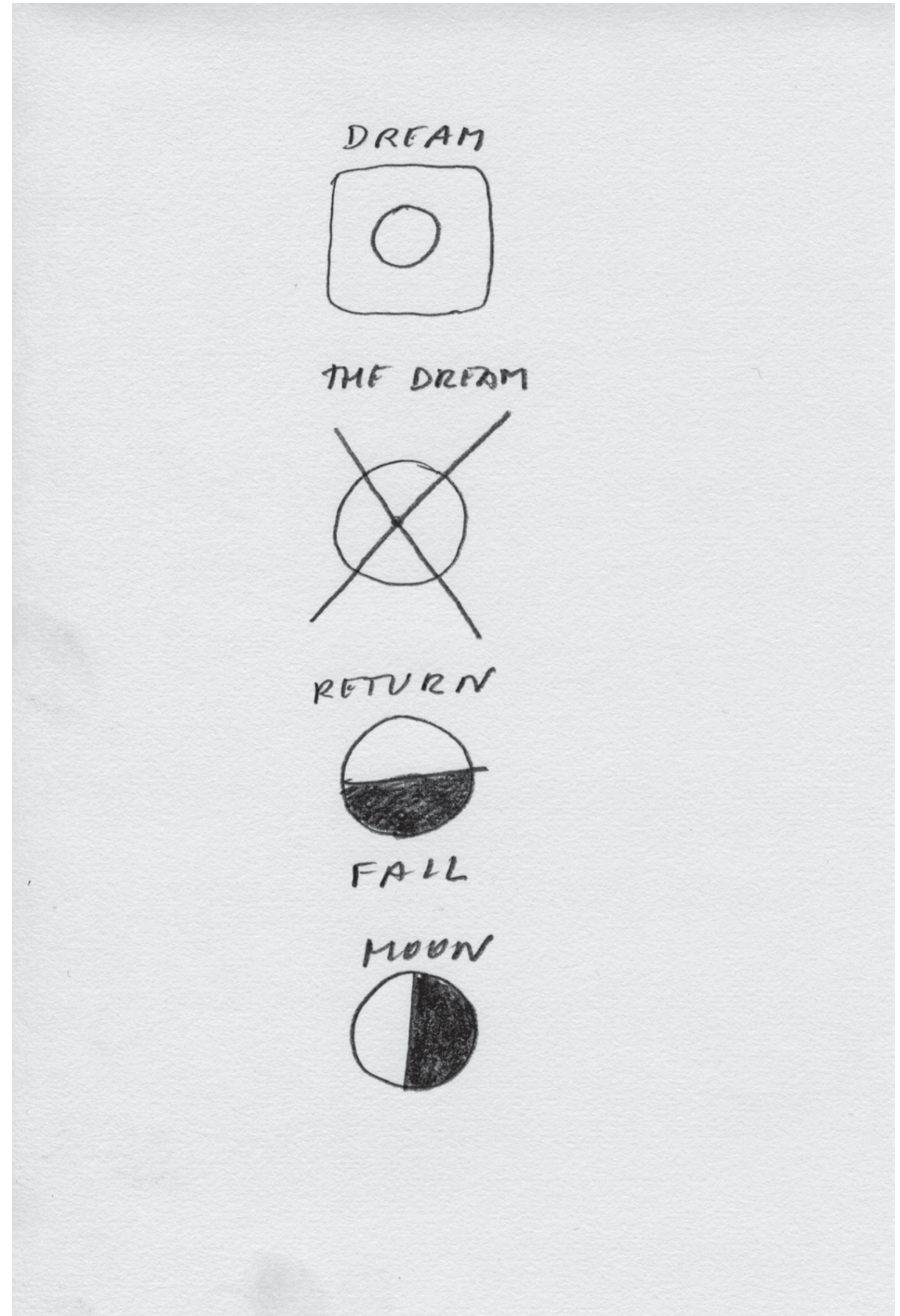
Dora García, *Steal This Book*, 2008, CNAP collection, Paris

© Dora García, photo Roberto Ruiz



Dora García, *The Sinthome Score*, 2013, présentation à *All The Worlds Futures*, Biennale de Venise 2015, performeurs: Adriano Wilfert Jensen, Simon Asencio, Miriam Secco, collection Castelo di Rivoli, Turin © Dora García, photo Giovanni Pancino

Dora García, *The Sinthome Score*, 2013, presentation at *All The Worlds Futures*, Venice Biennale 2015, performers: Adriano Wilfert Jensen, Simon Asencio, Miriam Secco, collection Castelo di Rivoli, Turin © Dora García, photo Giovanni Pancino



Dora García, *Mad Marginal Charts*, 2014 - 2017, crayon sur papier A4, photo et © Dora García

Pages suivantes, Following pages:

Dora García, *Golden Sentence (Il y a un trou dans le réel)*, 2005 - 2014, collection 49 Nord 6 Est, Frac Lorraine, Metz, courtesy galerie Michel Rein, Paris / Bruxelles

Dora García, *Golden Sentence (Il y a un trou dans le réel)*, 2005 - 2014, collection 49 Nord 6 Est, Frac Lorraine, Metz, courtesy Michel Rein gallery, Paris / Brussels

Il y a un trou dans le réel.

The Thinker as Poet

Martin Heidegger
Philosophe, Philosopher

Way and weighing
Stile and saying
On a single walk are found.
Go bear without halt
Question and default
On your single pathway
bound.

When the early morning light quietly
grows above the mountains....

The world's darkening never reaches
to the light of Being.

We are too late for the gods and too
early for Being. Being's poem, just
begun, is man.

To head toward a star—this only.

To think is to confine yourself to a
single thought that one day stands still
like a star in the world's sky.

When the little windwheel outside
the cabin window sings in the gathering
thunderstorm....

When thought's courage stems from
the bidding of Being, then destiny's
language thrives.

As soon as we have the thing before
our eyes, and in our hearts an ear for the
word, thinking prospers.

Few are experienced enough in the
difference between an object of
scholarship and a matter of
thought.

If in thinking there were
already adversaries and
not mere opponents, then
thinking's case would be
more auspicious.

When through a rent in the rain-clouded
sky a ray of the sun suddenly glides
over the gloom of the meadows....

We never come to thoughts. They come
to us.

That is the proper hour of discourse.

Discourse cheers us to companionable
reflection. Such a reflection neither
parades polemical opinions nor does it
tolerate complaisant agreement. The sail
of thinking keeps trimmed hard to the
wind of the matter.

From such companionship a few perhaps
may rise to be journeymen in the craft
of thinking. So that one of them,
unforeseen, may become a master.

Extraits des pages 1-14 de POETRY, LANGUAGE, THOUGHT [POESIE, LANGAGE, PENSEE]
de MARTIN HEIDEGGER. Traduit vers l'anglais avec un avant-propos de Albert Hofstadter.
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Excerpts from pp.1-14 from POETRY, LANGUAGE, THOUGHT by MARTIN HEIDEGGER.
Translations and introduction by Albert Hofstadter. Copyright © 1971 by Martin Heidegger.
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When in early summer lonely narcissi bloom hidden
in the meadow and the rock-rose gleams under the
maple...

The splendor of the simple.

Only image formed keeps the vision.
Yet image formed rests in the poem.

How could cheerfulness stream through
us if we wanted to shun sadness?

Pain gives of its healing power where
we least expect it.

When the wind, shifting quickly, grumbles in
the rafters of the cabin, and the weather threatens
to become nasty....

Three dangers threaten thinking.

The good and thus wholesome danger is
the nighness of the singing poet.

The evil and thus keenest danger is think-
ing itself. It must think against itself,
which it can only seldom do.

The bad and thus muddled danger
is philosophizing.

When on a summer's day the butterfly settles on
the flower and, wings closed, sways with it in the
meadow-breeze....

All our heart's courage is the echoing
response to the first call of Being which
gathers our thinking into the play of the
world.
In thinking all things become soli-
tary and slow.

Patience nurtures magnanimity.

He who thinks greatly must err
greatly.

When the mountain brook in night's
stillness tells of its plunging
over the boulders....

The oldest of the old follows behind us in
our thinking and yet it comes to meet us.

That is why thinking holds to the coming of
what has been, and is remembrance.

To be old means: to stop in time at that
place where the unique thought of a
thought train has swung into its joint.

We may venture the step back out of
philosophy into the thinking of Being
as soon as we have grown familiar with
the provenance of thinking.

When in the winter nights snowstorms
tear at the cabin and one morning the landscape is
hushed in its blanket of
snow....

Thinking's saying would be stilled in its
being only by becoming unable to say
that which must remain unspoken.

Such inability would bring thinking face
to face with its matter.

What is spoken is never, and in no
language, what is said.

That a thinking is, ever and suddenly—
whose amazement could fathom it?

When the cowbells keep tinkling from
the slopes of the mountain valley
where the herds wander slowly....

The poetic character of thinking is still
veiled over.

Where it shows itself, it is for a long time
like the utopism of a half-poetic
intellect.

But poetry that thinks is in truth the topol-
ogy of Being.

This topology tells Being the whereabouts
of its actual presence.

When the evening light, slanting into
the woods somewhere, bathes the tree
trunks in gold....

Singing and thinking are the stems neigh-
bor to poetry.

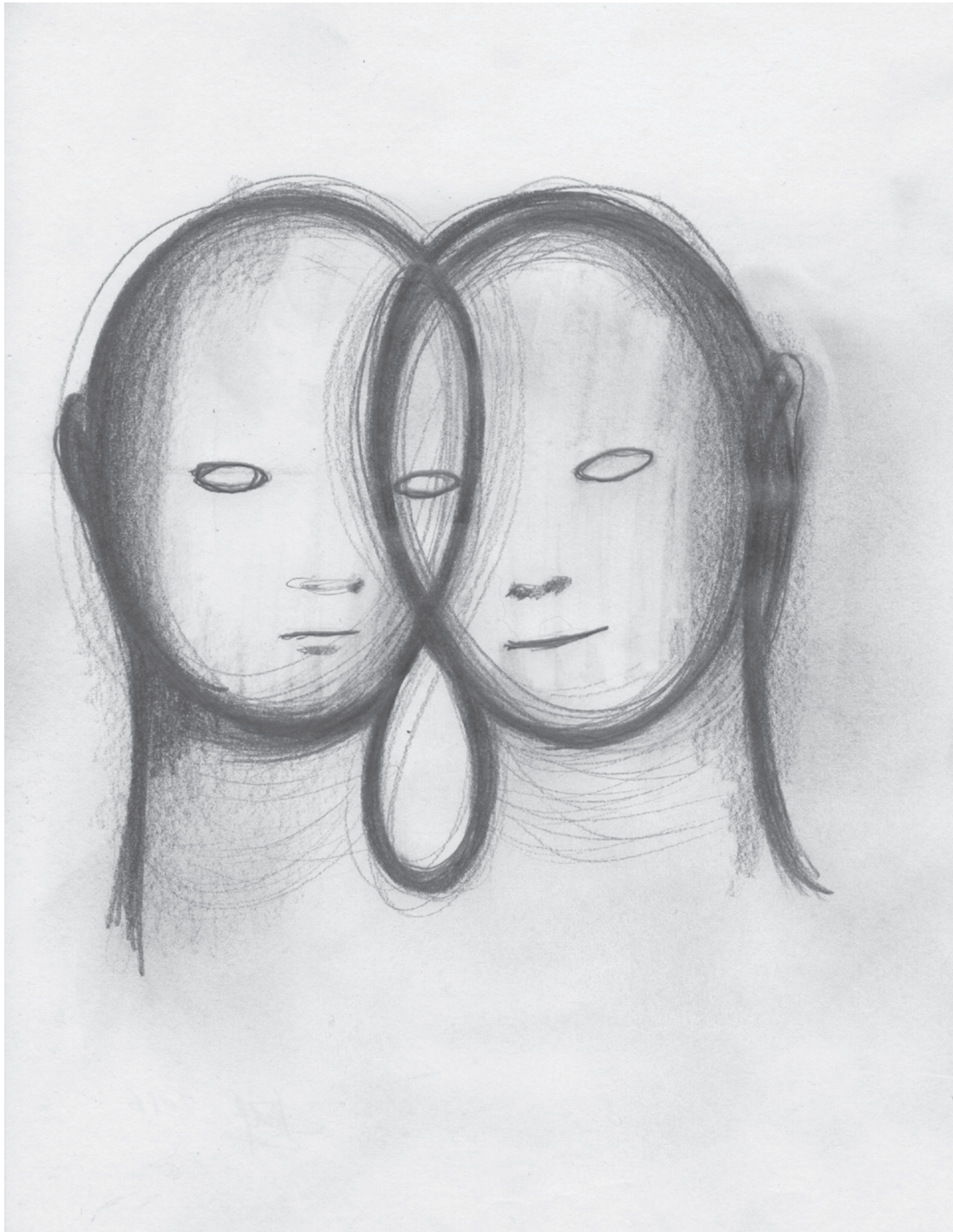
They grow out of Being and reach into its
truth.

Their relationship makes us think of what
Holderlin sings of the trees of the woods:

"And to each other they remain unknown,
So long as they stand, the neighboring
trunks."

Forests spread
Brooks plunge
Rocks persist
Mist defuses

Meadows wait
Springs well
Winds dwell
Blessing muses



Dora García, *Eco oscuro, Mad Marginal Charts*, 2014 - 2017,
crayon sur papier, A4,
collection Emilia Limia et Javier Figueroa, Granada,
photo et © Dora García

Dora García, *Eco oscuro, Mad Marginal Charts*, 2014 - 2017,
pencil on paper A4,
collection Emilia Limia and Javier Figueroa, Granada,
photo and © Dora García

Somewhere, two planets have been colliding for thousands of years (The Thinker as Poet)

Dora García, Manuel Asín, Adrea Valdés
entretien traduit de l'espagnol

ANDREA VALDÉS Talking about what a person likes is always a kind thing to do, but where do you start? A somewhat mundane approach would be to start at the end. Dora, you said that we could perhaps conclude this conversation/this interview with a series of aphorisms. I just wonder if aphorisms are like dictionaries, which are either created in all seriousness, or obviously as a joke. That brings me to the prejudices I have about certain matters. I must have had one about poetry at some time, because even though it put on me guard, which is absurd given that there is poetry in almost everything I value, I feel stupid even talking about it. It is difficult for me to even imagine it. Perhaps it is because I was introduced to poetry later on in life. When I start reading poetry, it always makes me feel like this bewildered pupil with its bottom stuck to a school desk, who one day was asked a very strange question: Why is an albatross so burdened by its wings? I remember that lesson as if it were yesterday, and that question which seemed to be completely irrelevant to all the rest because it just came out of the blue, from another planet.

DORA GARCÍA The aphorisms will be excerpts from this conversation. We will come up with them without even being aware of it. I would like to have this conversation before designing the exhibition in *The Light Well [La Verrière]* because I would like the exhibition to somewhat be a result of this conversation. The reference to Heidegger in the title of the exhibition is because I started reading Heidegger one year ago, and I am fascinated by him. He was probably the most important philosopher of the 20th century; he was a convicted Nazi and a party member. How is that even possible? The first piece of writing I read of his was a poem, ‘The Thinker as Poet’, or in the original German, ‘*Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens*’ – which literally means “From the Experience of Thought”. To Heidegger, to think is to create poetry. I was already captivated by that idea alone. There is another magnificent piece (originating from what is referred to as ‘The late Heidegger’s doctrine on language’ (Sprache, 1972 - 1972!!!!) in which he used a poem by G. Trakl to explain how language operates in relation to thought, and in which he formulates the famous saying ‘Language Speaks’. Well, this piece in itself is already so gripping that you cannot stop yourself from reading on, despite him being a Nazi – you have to read it in spite of everything. This conversation stems from all of that, and from my conviction (also born from my schooldays) that there is only one art form, and that is poetry, and that all the other forms are just poetry in a different guise.

MANUEL ASÍN I would like to ask myself, and to ask you, why the discovery of poetry is usually and so often linked to one’s childhood years and adolescence.

I feel that we could start to look for an answer in certain sayings from the *Book of Disquiet*, which I quote here to see what you think.

“I consider a verse to be something intermediate, a transition from music to prose [...] I do believe that in a perfectly civilised world, there would be no other art form but prose [...] Poetry would always be a tool to acquaint children with future prose; that poetry is definitely something childish, mnemonic, an initial aid.”

This is a polemic passage, because it goes against the very idea of poetry – of lyrical poetry, because later on there is this ancient meaning of ‘poetry’ as ‘literature’ in general... but here Pessoa refers to verses and lyrical poetry, musical poetry or poetry of musical origin – this idea, I would say, of poetry as the ‘queen’ of literary genres, and by introducing history (the

“transition from verse to prose”), he gives it a dynamic, non-essentialist image.

From this dynamic and historical point of view, poetry seems to have been diminishing over the last few centuries. Some other great poets, such as Pessoa, saw this quite clearly, and even much earlier (Leopardi: “Modernism is the time of prose.”).

So that, to use cinematographic phraseology, poetry would currently be fading out or crossfading. If we were to produce a photogram of this sequence, we would no doubt obtain a wonderful image (so many great 19th, 20th and even 21st century poets...) but partially obscured, or blurred by light that does not belong in that sequence; light that is already coming from a different sequence.

DORA GARCÍA I think that everything is in the twilight. They say that Heidegger’s philosophy, or phenomenology, is a scatological philosophy, from *escathon*, the end of the world. In my view, the idea of an imminent ending or of an impending disaster is a vital condition for poetry or generally for any type of artistic work. This knowledge that you are sitting on a powder keg, the idea of miraculously surviving, of an imminent collapse. Likewise, on a more positive note, the collapse and disaster also imply, in the idea of *circular time*, that this end will give rise to a new beginning. In any case, I myself am very much aware that we have come to the end of something, that something will come to an end with a big bang!

ANDREA VALDÉS I agree with Dora that we seem to be witnessing the end of something that is having an impact upon all sorts of things, and this is both exciting and disconcerting at the same time. I remember a conversation I once had with an astronomer. He had been studying two planets that had been colliding for thousands of years and remained in collision. One can imagine a sudden impact of the before and after, an action and a reaction, but not something happening over a long period of time and over several lifetimes.

MANUEL ASÍN This notion of a prolonged period of time, of trying to view things over extended timescales, is something which, I admit, I feel inclined to do of late. I suppose it entails a risk; the risk of the telescope to be more exact; that of presenting pleasant synthetises that distort that which telescopes are endeavouring to unveil when opening up such a vast distance. Even so, it seems to me that, in our era, the risk of the microscope is even greater; the risk of creating distortion through analysis without synthesis. Science has shown us that excessive analysis, including analysis without synthesis, can lead to major discoveries, but is that also the case in humanistic disciplines? In my view, in matters that require imagination (literature and art), it would not be at all bad to be equipped with a telescope like the one used by Andrea’s friend to observe planets in collision.

It would enable us to think in a more synthetic way, and it would also enable us to think cohesively in both activities (literature and art). That is to say, as part of the same Apocalypse, of the same planetary collision (thus describing what this consists of). Of course, there is no such telescope, but what would be very much like it, would be to view human imagination and its oeuvres from the longest timescale possible, which, of course, would always take prehistory into account (with everything that that involves: thinking without hardly resorting to any documents, being forced to think in a synthetic way). According to Pessoa’s quotation, poetry is an activity that definitely requires reference to prehistory.

DORA GARCÍA What a great title for a story: “Somewhere, two planets have been colliding for thousands of years.” I think that this image of a planetary impact is just wonderful in that it is not catastrophic or devastating, like “Melancholia”, but instead is slow, persistent, determined, one penetrating the other so slowly that one cannot tell whether they are two planets confronting each other like two deer in full rutting season, or if they are two planets that are trying to extract themselves from each other, and are already worn down by the effort of detaching themselves. One thing is certain, and that is that they are both condemned to be together, like Siamese twins with three legs.

I love - and it forms the basis for this piece of writing - Heidegger’s poem ‘The Thinker as Poet’, or, if we translate it from the original German, ‘From the Experience of Thought’. Here are a few excerpts that I find particularly interesting:

“To think is to confine yourself to a single thought that one day stands still like a star in the world’s sky.”

“We never come to thoughts. They come to us.”

“The oldest of the old follows behind us in our thinking and yet it comes to meet us. That is why thinking holds to the coming of what has been, and is remembrance.”

“What is spoken is never, and in no language, what is said.”

And this is where I come to the planets:

“Singing and thinking are the stems neighbour to poetry. They grow out of Being and reach into its truth. Their relationship makes us think of what Hölderlin sings of the trees of the woods: "And to each other they remain unknown, So long as they stand, the neighbouring trunks."

Planets that never come into contact, on perfect orbits, and planets that blend into each other and impact upon one another, and become one.

ANDREA VALDÉS

I reply with an explanation: When I got home, I re-read my notes... *and they were not*

planets but instead entire galaxies that have been in collision for so long. If two galaxies collide but do not have sufficient thrust to continue their journey after this collision, both will end up joining up to form one single galaxy. What is also possible is that one travels through the other, but if one exerts a greater force of gravity compared to the other, it will end up swallowing up the galaxy it has collided with, and ‘cannibalises’ it. I am fascinated by the tension between what is separate and what is united, what attracts and repels. This is not only the very essence of the universe but also of poetry.

On the one hand, in his work on *Language*, Heidegger talks about Hölderlin’s statement: “*What keeps things apart in opposition and at the same time joins them together*”, which is referred to by Hölderlin as “*intimacy...*”. On the other hand, Heidegger writes: “Poetry is the act of establishing by the word and in the word... What is established in this manner? The permanent.” Heidegger quotes Hölderlin: “But what remains is founded by the poets.” In this case, Manuel also refers to poetry like a primitive language of an historical people, which is certainly disconcerting for

someone, who, like me, tends to think, despite themselves, that everything started with Frankenstein, this piece of distorted patchwriting. Fortunately, I later found a quote which Yourcenar had underlined in Flaubert and widened my horizons.

It states:

“Just when the gods had ceased to be, and the Christ had not yet come, there was a unique moment in history, between Cicero and Marcus Aurelius, when man stood alone.’ I have spent a big part of my life trying to define, and then to depict, this lone man who is nevertheless linked to everything.”

Just like Shelley thought about Prometheus, Yourcenar chose Adriano and Heidegger Hölderlin to explain the essence of poetry to us.

MANUEL ASÍN This image of Hölderlin’s, of this strange community, of neighbouring and similar tree trunks that do not manage to touch each other, is absolutely unforgettable.

In fact, I remember having read or heard it before coming across it again here... but I can’t remember where. I think it must have been in the only work of Hölderlin (*Death of Empedocles*) that I have read, or perhaps during an interview or a symposium after the screening of one of the films produced by Jean-Marie Straub and containing Hölderlin’s writings (Straub has a habit of quoting Hölderlin, and usually does it as if Hölderlin were a thinker – precisely - a political thinker in his case).

Even though I do not know... because it is also possible that I may be confusing this image with one of his verses (a couple of verses, an overlapping), which I am sure featured in one of the three versions of *Empedocles* and which are lodged in my memory, and that are very similar to this image of this wood of trees that all blend into one. It is a sort of exhortation that says, in the simplest of terms: “that everyone should be alike”. I think I must be confusing these two images, as they are virtually identical to me.

So that, if I have read it correctly, and to return to our topic, poetry and thought are to each other as these tree trunks are in the poem, basically similar, touching (“upright”) but also alarmingly unaware of each other, isolated.

I was thinking about this community of poetry and thought. What thought?

I put to you an imaginary case. Let’s imagine a world devoid of *writing*. No-one has ever written anything, and there is no concept of any ‘stories’ (in the broadest sense of the word) being laid down in a more or less stable form. However, there are some stories that want to be recorded, that want to remain here for longer, among the living. Recording these stories without writing them down is difficult, but there are means of doing so, and this is how an invention comes about, a little fragile, a little absurd (which will end up becoming associated with wine, with madness...): setting these stories to music that guides and turns them and that are more or less easy to memorise, despite their length or their variety. This is how stories become distorted (“they take shape, and become misshapen”) whilst becoming memorable, like sand running through one’s fingers, but the thought and imagination of the person composing them is adapting and becomes resigned to it. This is how a different way of thinking or imagination comes about, and this is the *orality* type of thinking and imagination. And I would say that poetry particularly fits into this type of thinking. To say that this is a primitive way of thinking may at best appear silly to you, but one thing is certain, and that is that it is a way of thinking that is very much alive and crucial today... perhaps even more alive in these last few centuries compared to quite a number of the previous centuries (which reminds me of the nice things Andrea said about the time of Adriano). So that there is no question

of looking down on these antiquities... However, I am simply wondering that *the fact of something occurring has led to writing*, makes any difference whatsoever (even though afterwards, everything has become mixed up).

And I would say that, yes, writing does make a major difference to what we are trying to reflect upon, given that, without even going any further, it leads to prose (but if you think for just one moment, prose is an impossible form in the world of orality, but poetry is not an impossible form in the world of orality, quite to the contrary).

What I mean by “prose” is that without writing, without the sequential accumulation and without the massive stability that writing presupposes, certain forms of deductive, argumentative, syllogistic and typical ways of thinking... are simply not possible and are simply hidden or underdeveloped in thought and in imagination. When they start to develop, it is because there is writing. And that is why, what I am actually doing by telling you all this (and I am referring to the internal form of what I am telling you, to what I am thinking through its structure, to what *am going to say...* – not only to the fact that I am doing it with the use of a keyboard) would not be possible in a world without writing. (Even though I suppose that this would not be possible either in a world without the crucial survival of orality, of course... because it is evident that what I am thinking, that what I am imagining (Heidegger would say “what I am singing”, but sorry, I actually sing very out of tune...) is only possible in a mixed up world, a world in which the new lives side by side with the old, orality with writing: in which “what is the most ancient among ancient things follows us in our thoughts and nevertheless catches up with us” (which is also nicely put).

And I thought, if these neighbouring tree trunks in the Hölderlinian temple were not as much poetry and thought but instead orality and writing?

Post scriptum: Aphorisms in this piece of writing

1. What I think is only possible in a world in which the new lives side by side with the old, and orality lives side by side with writing.

2. Poetry and thought are to each other like these tree trunks in the poem: basically similar, but also alarmingly unaware of each other.

3. Just when the gods had ceased to be, and the Christ had not yet come, there was a unique moment in history, between Cicero and Marcus Aurelius, when man stood alone.

4. Poetry is the primitive language of an historic people.

5. What remains is founded by the poets.

6. They were not planets but galaxies.

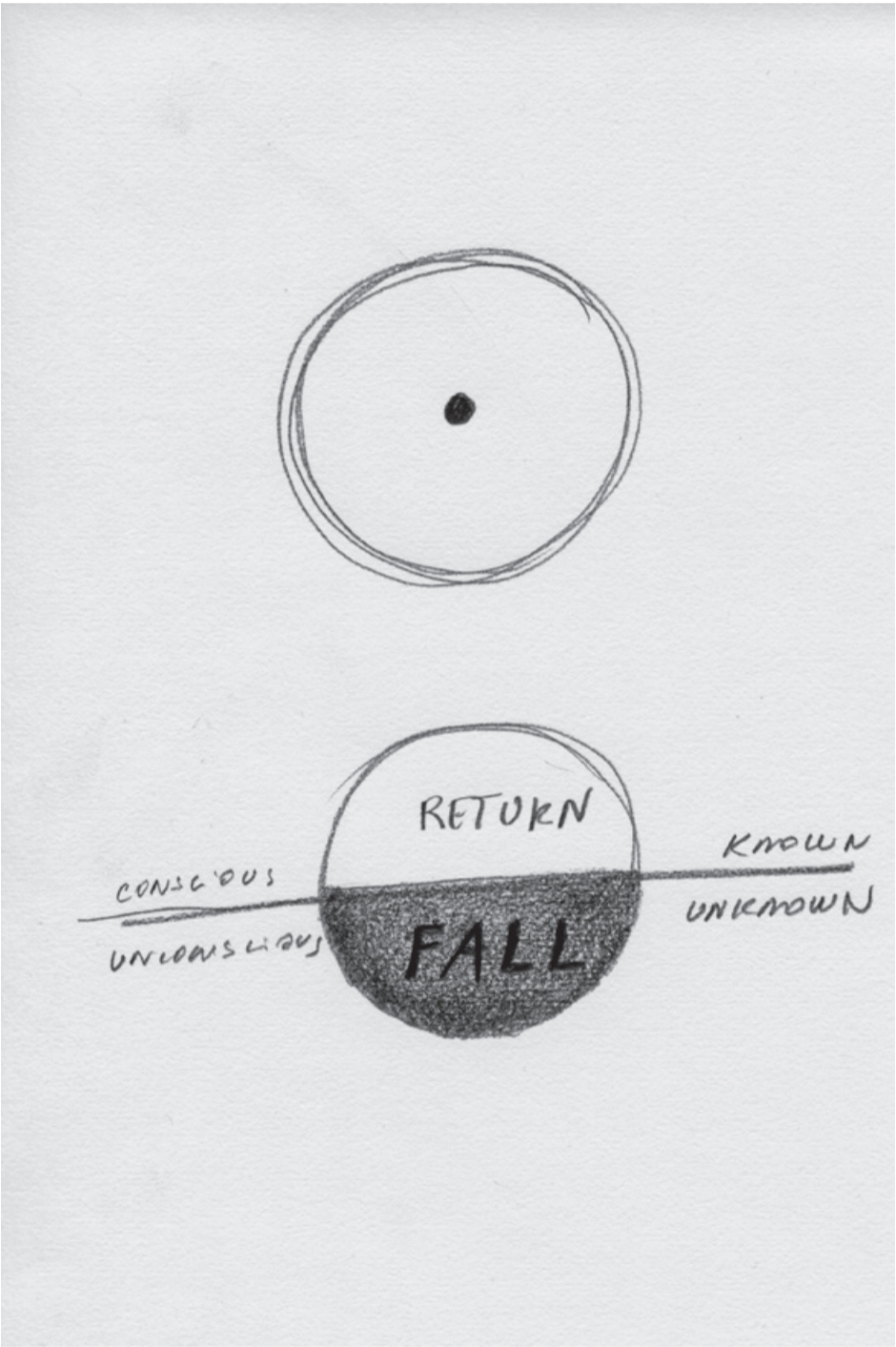
7. In the concept of *circular time*, the collapse implies that this ending will give rise to a new beginning.

8. Poetry requires an imminent ending.

9. In a perfect civilised world, there would be no other art form but prose.

10. In this world there is only one art form and that is poetry.

11. Thinking is poetry.



Dora García, *Mad Marginal Charts*, 2014 - 2017, crayon sur papier A4, photo et © Dora García

Dora García, *Mad Marginal Charts*, 2014 - 2017, pencil on paper A4, photo and © Dora García

BIOGRAPHIE

DORA GARCÍA

Née à Valladolid, vit et travaille à Barcelone.

L'artiste espagnole Dora García utilise un large éventail de médias, qui vont de la performance à l'installation en passant par le texte et le film HD. À travers son art, elle interroge les conditions qui façonnent la rencontre entre l'artiste, l'œuvre et le spectateur, en prêtant une attention particulière aux notions de durée, d'accès et de lisibilité. Ses œuvres comportent souvent des mises en scène de scénarios improvisés qui sèment le doute quant à la nature fictive ou spontanée d'une situation donnée. Elles définissent des règles de conduite ou recourent à des dispositifs d'enregistrement pour encadrer les formes de participation conscientes et inconscientes du spectateur. Le travail de Dora García explore également le potentiel politique ancré dans les positions marginales, en rendant hommage dans plusieurs œuvres à des personnages excentriques et souvent antihéroïques. Dora García a participé à DOCUMENTA13 (2012), à la Biennale de Venise (2011, 2013, 2015), à la Biennale de São Paulo (2010), à la Biennale de Sydney (2008), au Skulptur Projekte Münster (2007), à la Biennale d'Istanbul (2003), etc.

ANDREA VALDÉS

Andrea Valdés est ex-libraire, journaliste et écrivaine. Ses articles et entretiens ont été publiés dans *El País*, *La Vanguardia*, *El Estado Mental*, *Les Inrockuptibles*, 2G. Elle est également auteur d'une pièce de théâtre, d'un mini-documentaire et deux enquêtes (*La línea sin fin*, ¡Cavernícolas!). Elle collabore fréquemment avec des artistes et des curateurs.

MANUEL ASÍN

Manuel Asín fut commissaire de la rétrospective « Jean-Marie Straub y Danièle Huillet. Hacer la revolución es también volver a colocar en su sitio cosas muy antiguas pero olvidadas » (MNCARS-Filmoteca Española, 2016), éditeur des écrits de Straub y Huillet (Intermedio, 2011) et directeur de la maison d'édition de livres et DVD Intermedio (2010-2015). Il est aussi réalisateur et programmeur de cinéma au Círculo de Bellas Artes de Madrid.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Valladolid, lives and works in Barcelona.

Spanish artist Dora García uses a range of media including performance, HD film, text and installation. Her practice investigates the conditions that shape the encounter between the artist, the artwork and the viewer, focusing more particularly on the notions of duration, access and readability. García's pieces often involve staging unscripted scenarios that elicit doubt as to the fictional or spontaneous nature of a given situation, setting rules of engagement or using recording devices to frame both conscious and unconscious forms of spectator participation. García's work also explores the political potential rooted in marginal positions, paying homage through several works to eccentric and often anti-heroic personas. Dora García has participated in DOCUMENTA13 (2012), Biennale di Venezia (2011, 2013, 2015), Biennial de São Paulo (2010), the Biennale of Sydney (2008), Skulptur Projekte Münster (2007), Istanbul Biennial (2003)...

Andrea Valdés is a former librarian, journalist and writer. Her articles and interviews have been published in *El País*, *La Vanguardia*, *El Estado Mental*, *Les Inrockuptibles*, 2G. She has also written a play, a mini-documentary and two investigative surveys (*La línea sin fin*, ¡Cavernícolas!). She often works in collaboration with artists and curators.

Manuel Asín organised the retrospective *Jean-Marie Straub y Danièle Huillet*. "Hacer la revolución es también volver a colocar en su sitio cosas muy antiguas pero olvidadas" [*Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet. Bringing about a revolution also means returning very old forgotten things back to where they belong*] (MNCARS-Filmoteca Española, 2016), and has edited some of the scripts of Straub and Huillet (Intermedio, 2011), and was also the director of the Intermedio (2010-2015) book and DVD editing company. He is also a film and programme producer at the Círculo de Bellas Artes [*Circle of Fine Arts*] of Madrid.

DANS LE CADRE DE L'EXPOSITION

Atelier créatif pour enfants (8 – 12 ans) le mercredi 6 décembre 2017. Information et réservation indispensable auprès d'Audrey Cottin : laverriere.mediation@gmail.com +32 (0)4 71 44 81 50

RELATED EVENTS

Children's Creativity Workshop (aged 8-12) on Wednesday, 6th December 2017. For information and booking (essential), please contact Audrey Cottin: laverriere.mediation@gmail.com +32 (0)4 71 44 81 50

PROCHAINE EXPOSITION
À LA VERRIÈRE

du 19 janvier
au 31 mars 2018

JEAN-LUC MOULÈNE

from January 19
to March 31, 2018

FORTHCOMING EXHIBITION
AT LA VERRIÈRE

LE JOURNAL DE LA VERRIÈRE N° — 15

Ce journal est publié par la Fondation d'entreprise Hermès à l'occasion de l'exposition *Somewhere, two planets have been colliding for thousands of years*. (*The Thinker as Poet*) à La Verrière, du 6 octobre au 9 décembre 2017.

Review published by the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, for the exhibition *Somewhere, two planets have been colliding for thousands of years*. (*The Thinker as Poet*) at La Verrière from October 6 to December 9, 2017.

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All performances in the exhibition space are co-produced with ISAC (Institut Supérieur des Arts et des Chorégraphies), ArBA-ESA

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Retrouvez la programmation en ligne: www.fondationdentreprisehermes.org



Io Burgard à la manufacture de Seloncourt © Hubio

The exhibition *Les mains sans sommeil* [*Sleepless Hands*] will feature works of art created as part of the artists in residence programme of the Fondation at the Hermès arts and crafts workshops, which are displayed in conjunction with other works by the nine artists concerned: Bianca Argimon, Jennifer Avery, Clarissa Baumann, Lucia Bru, Io Burgard, Anastasia Douka, Célia Gondol, DH McNabb, Lucie Picandet. Palais de Tokyo, Paris, from 24 November 2017 until 7th January 2018. Curator: Gaël Charbau.

Full programme online at: www.fondationdentreprisehermes.org

OTHER EVENTS

La Fondation d'entreprise Hermès accompagne celles et ceux qui apprennent, maîtrisent, transmettent et explorent les gestes créateurs pour construire le monde d'aujourd'hui et inventer celui de demain.

Elle développe neuf grands programmes qui articulent savoir-faire, création et transmission. New Settings pour les arts de la scène, Expositions et Résidences d'artistes pour les arts plastiques, Immersion pour la photographie, Manufacto, la fabrique des savoir-faire et l'Académie des Savoir-faire pour la découverte et l'approfondissement des métiers artisanaux. À travers H³, elle soutient également, sur les cinq continents, des organismes qui agissent dans cette même dynamique. Enfin, son engagement en faveur de la planète est porté par son programme Biodiversité. Toutes les actions de la Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, dans leur diversité, sont dictées par une seule et même conviction: nos gestes nous créent.

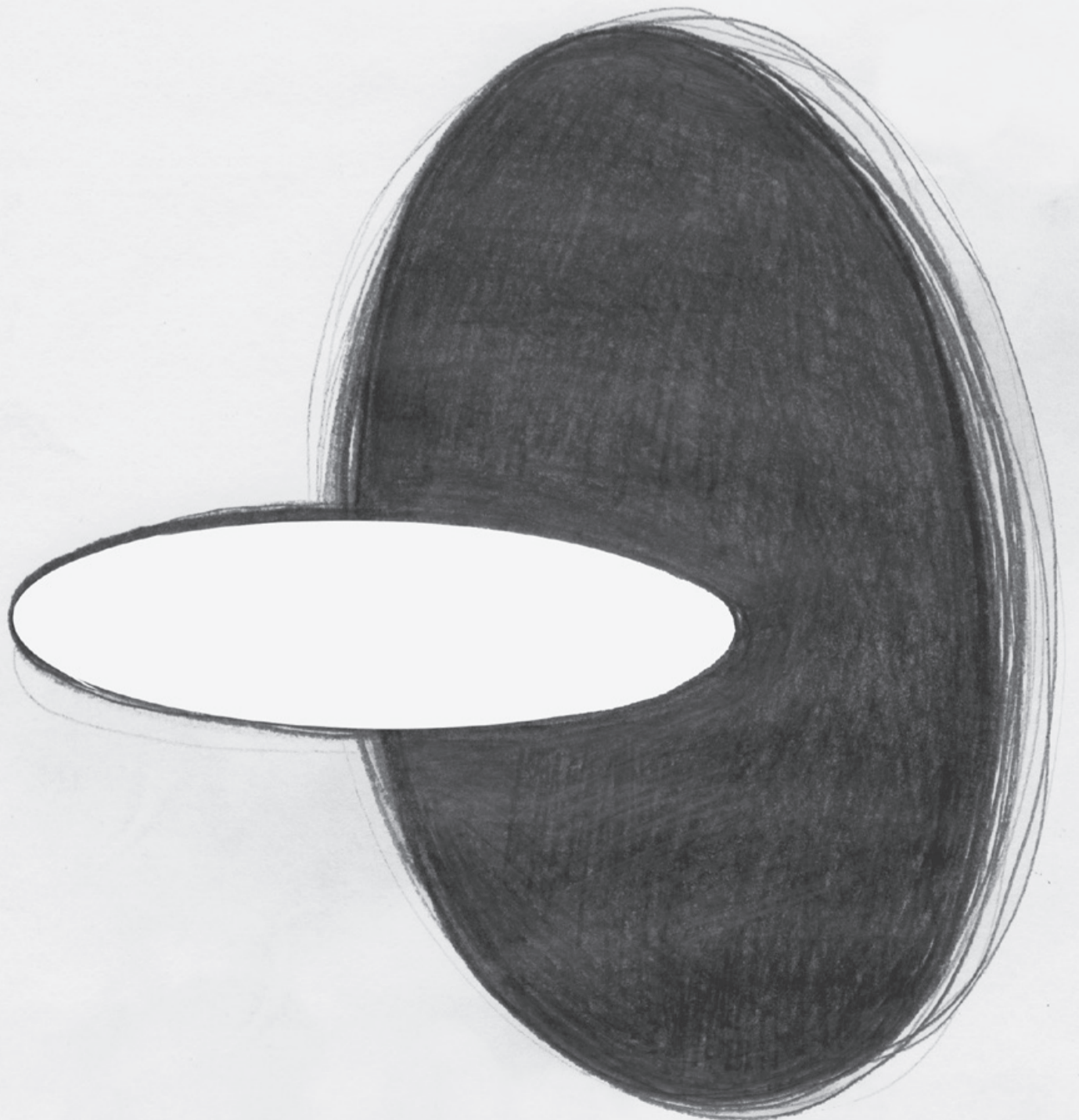
The Fondation d'entreprise Hermès supports men and women seeking to learn, perfect, transmit and celebrate the creative skills that shape our lives today and into the future.

The Foundation operates nine major programmes with a combined focus on skills, creativity and transmission: New Settings for the performing arts, exhibitions and artists' residencies for the visual arts, Immersion for photography, Manufacto: Skills Factory and our Skills Academy for the discovery and perfection of artisan trades. H³ is the Foundation's worldwide programme of support for organisations whose work reflects these central aims. Our Biodiversity programme enacts a core commitment to protect fragile ecosystems for future generations. The Foundation's diverse activities are governed by a single, over-arching belief: Our gestures define us.



www.fondationdentreprisehermes.org

THEY WEREN'T PLANETS,
THEY WERE GALAXIES



LA
VER
RIÈRE

DORA GARCÍA
SOMEWHERE, TWO PLANETS HAVE BEEN
COLLIDING FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS.
(THE THINKER AS POET)

Exposition du 6 octobre au 9 décembre 2017
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Visite commentée chaque samedi à 15 h
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Dora García, *Two planets, Mad Marginal charts series*, 2014-2017,
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