

## **Leila Peacock & Gil Pellaton**

Opening: 09.06.23 from 18:00 – 23:00

09.06.23 – 15.07.23

### **Additional Texts**

#### **Text based on an email exchange between the artists since February**

Long ago, on a dying world, the weather forecast predicted clear skies and a gentle breeze.

There was still some confusion about the present state of things in the age in which this story takes place. Things had ceased to correspond as they should. But every coincidence contains elements of the marvellous, and hope prevailed for now.

The stories the people told stories with were shifting. They speculated on their future selves hoping to metamorphose into their own best versions, but the recipe had been lost, along with so many other minded things. The only path that lay open was a renewal of possible beginnings to elude the cosmic endgame.

Meanwhile the river runs on and on and on until it bursts at last into a cluster of words, ideas, prophecies where the sea begins...

– Leila Peacock & Gil Pellaton

#### **Text by Stefanie Hessler**

Her words squeeze through a tiny hole in a thing that holds something else. This thing, she knows, might be a bottle, a container, a carrier bag of food, stories, and love—the original form(s) of technology before spears and swords. It can be a body, with words oozing out from its protective shield. Their letters' waists are compressed to fit through the perimeter of the hole. A miniscule opening in a metal womb. From the contact, the skin of the words is scuffed and reddened at the edges. In the moist darkness of the aluminum belly there is no light, no vision, only a primary soup of language. To make it outside the letters have to get in formation. Producing temporary linearity for comprehension. But as soon as eyes and ears and hands and noses and mouths avert they reshuffle and morph into new shapes.

Once outside, her vowels bounce off of nature's consonants. Some ricochet against the polished surface from which they emerged, others dive into the surrounding moss. Now on the move, the words crawl towards somebody else's mouth. Their taste reminds her of...

The warm earthy spice melts on her tongue like a syllable. Its softened edges are ready to adhere to other alphabets. Fragments are forming a sound, a word, a sentence, a story, a lifetime of memories, a culture, a civilization, a living planet, a galaxy

leaving a hole that is a mouth. The trembling of her body emanates into the world as breath and sound. Its vibrations travel and reach out to touch and move new molecules as they dissipate into the universe.

Before the conception of a body as a whole there were its unspoken parts. Organs held together by physics, attached to each other through language and desire. Edges only seem impermeable from a distance, but as she is dragging herself closer, they turn out to quiver with openings. Her body attaches to their seams. A shape. A proposal?

Her growls travel through a story. When it rains she stakes out a tent, and when her bones are dried she turns a page.

Her story deposited in a bag, it leaks and drips as she walks. Words come spilling through its mesh, leaving a trace in the world of the impossible archive that is her body. The carrier drags against the sweet softness of rotting forest floors, against rocks and insects and that tree who knows its name and sends her roots. Her words refresh moss and bore asphalt. Letters become lines become marks repelled by someone else's nylon polyester coat. Dripping down comes grief for the body that was whole, flowing up goes hope for leaks and burrows.

She offers her body as a story. As her memory forgets words, it searches for shapes and finds attachment. The hole is bigger now, it leaks and receives. Words hold things, she writes. And bodies hold words.

### **Text on the Aluminium Sheets by Leila Peacock (left followed by right)**

The queen sends the bird after her son, it departs. The Lady of the Forrest sends the bees after the thief, they depart. The sister sends her brother for the cure, he departs. The magic horse does battle with the serpent to retrieve the elixir. The child arrives at the palace of gold and finds the door locked. The girl crosses the red river to face the fire fiend. The old woman ceases searching only to find the stag with antlers of gold waiting at her door. The three goblins bemoan their initial misfortune. The dragon demands the king's child. The queen demands the dragon's egg. A finger-nail sized man with an elbow-length beard laughs. The dead man finds his soul has been abducted by a dragon. A bear with fur of iron carries off the witch's children. A witch returns the son of an old couple. The hero abducts his brother's bride. The dragon abducts the light of the kingdom. The chicken frees all of the animals in the king's zoo. The girl steals the talisman, A firebird steals the sorcerers apples. A servant bewitches the ants to eat her master. A water sprite demands the king's first born. The sister, who is a witch, eats her brother to protect him from the north wind. The kind fly saves poor boy from a dreadful end. The cunning child reveals that ancient secret. The mountain opens to reveal the lost world. The poet journeys to the land of the dead. The revellers dance themselves to death. The girl escapes the locked room. The goat is an enchanted frog. The frog is an enchanted cat. The lion is afraid of his own reflection. The beast awakes. The monster overcomes itself. The dog wins the game. The lovers are returned to each other. The animals protect the eternal flame. When the others arrived we understood they were always here with us.

The how and the why are the least of our worries here, for beyond the seven moun-

tains and past the fiery river a bell rang out, and a red bird flew into blue sky, and everyone knew that the tale had come to an end. Whistle, whistle the story is done. And my tale went from valley to valley and I remained with the good people. Tell me a story in return and feed me bread. Three apples fall from the sky, one for the storyteller, one for listener and one for the heroine. And so we reach the end of the tail and this tale. For it was and it was not, so let us dance in the square regardless. And so my story ends, and the spinach is eaten by the goat. And they lived happily until death turned their lives too into a story to be told. And when all had come to pass, for three days they ate, drank and made merry. Here's a cat and here's a dog, this tale has already melted away like a candle and is finished. And they're happy and ate many sweets. And many happy years came and went. I wish all your everafters were so sweet. And they were very happy and would still be alive if they had not died. And if they have not already died then they are out there somewhere living happily. And at the last came an animal with a very long nose and blew the story out. At last their misery was ended and they could live joyfully together. And that's the length of it. Disaster there, feast here, and so it went. And whoever doesn't believe me can go and jump in the river. A cat in the forrest put up his tail and the tale was done. And the cat out in the swamp lifted its tail and the adventure was finished.

And they went over the bridge and I went over the stepping stones, they were drowned and I survived. And my story travels on to other homes, bless the mothers and fathers of its new listeners. This story shall go to heaven and come back hot and fresh on the next narrator's lips. Snip, snap, snout, this adventure is told out. And I have come to the end, and yet the story lives on. Now our tale comes to and ends but the crow hasn't arrived at his nest. And I was there too and drank mead and wine until dawn. And so it is, until today my love.

### **Quotes selected by Leila Peacock**

"The proper subject of poetry is a believable impossibility."

Giambattista Vico (Axiom 383)

"I saw the likeness of a great mountain the colour of iron, and on it sat a figure in great brightness, so bright that it dazzled my eyes. Light-filled shadows stretched out on either side: they were wings of astounding breadth and height. And before this figure, at the roots of the mountains there stood an image covered with eyes, and because of the eyes I could not make out the human form beneath. And in front of her was the figure of a child dressed in a pale tunic and white shoes, I could not see her face because of the bright light pouring down on her head from the man seated on the mountain. But many living sparks sprang fourth from the man on the mountain and hovered round these figures most pleasingly. In the mountain itself many small windows were visible, at which there appeared the faces of men, some pale, some pure."

Hildegard Von Bingen Scivias (I,i)

"Obviously a folktale is born out of life; however the wonder tale is a weak transcript of reality. Everything that derives from reality is secondary. To determine the origins of the wonder tale, we must draw upon the broad cultural material of the past. The forms that, for one reason or another, are defined as basic are linked with religious concepts of the remote past."

Vladimir Propp Theory and History of Folklore, 'Transformation of the Wondertale'

“Wonder - is not precisely Knowing  
And not precisely Knowing not -  
A beautiful but bleak condition  
He has not lived who has not felt -”  
Emily Dickenson, 1331

“If we analyse the principles of thought on which magic is based, they will probably be found to resolve themselves into two: first, that like produces like or that an effect resembles its cause; and, second, that things which have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance after the physical contact has been severed. The former principle may be called the Law of Similarity, the latter the Law of Contact or Contagion. From the first of these principles, namely the Law of Similarity, the magician infers that he can produce any effect he desires merely by imitating it: from the second he infers that whatever he does to a material object will affect equally the person with whom the object was in contact.”

James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, ‘Sympathetic Magic’

“O augury user! Know and be aware that the prophet Yunus, peace be upon him, has come up as your augury - -the one who came out of the belly of the fish with great difficulty by the decree of God. It indicates attainment of desires and goals from a place that you did not consider. . . Legitimate fortune will come to you from some place, and you will become rich on the condition that you behave bravely in this intention and show no uncertainty. Even if it is difficult in the beginning, it will be pleasant in the end, and its pleasure is larger than its difficulty. . .”

The Topkapi Persian Falnama, ‘Jonah and the Whale’ (Folio 27b)