

Eavesdropping

Carla Lonzi: *A person who sits at a table and puts down ideas, alone with herself and with this task of getting ideas down ... it seems like such an unnatural effort to me, such a tiring exercise, for me who already feels neurotic and ... yes, and the fury of all that.*

[...]

Pietro Consagra: *But, but ... I feel like when I haven' t written anything for a long time, when I haven' t sat down for a good reason — I sit down to write something for a reason, okay? — so, I feel like I will start to summarize this period I was thinking about, in which I went forward speaking, without writing. How did it seem? It seemed like I hadn' t really constructed myself. Writing forces me ... to pay attention and to distill ... what I think about things. Because it is also good to let things go, I don' t know, one enjoys this, but it is also scary, one becomes scared the brain turns to pulp ... therefore, concentrating and attempting to write it down ... Because then, exactly, according to one layer you come upon one thing, you hit on another layer and something else, slowly what one really thought about something is revealed, but one knows that there are all the ... all the layers.*¹

To work with language, the activity of writing, the act of speech, are balancing acts between a defining and unclenching, centering and decentering, constituting an identity and conjuring multitudes. The body at work, at the desk while jotting down words, spilling words onto the page, wading through the mud of language, can be stiff, painful and purportedly hopeless. But to work with language also means to *play with limits*, to try to shift boundaries, to relieve words from the tight grip of authority and make way for an intimacy between sentences and sensation. Words have the capacity to *infinitely expand*; putting them on paper or on vocal chords becomes an open, endlessly reformulated question, a *magic twist*², an ongoing exploration of one' s relationship to language, experience of the world and its articulation. Language experience is always socially bound, part of an incessant practice of regimentation, of deviation and alignment, and *it' s nice not to be able to come to an end with it*.³ This form of repetition has a clear sensual link to reading, an *invisible desire*.⁴

The writing and speaking body moves like a soft machine, more or less well oiled and running, it condenses sound and images into signs, as if it were a chemical process, just like gas turns into liquid. Sometimes things go wrong, the molecules don' t liquefy, a change of direction. Sometimes the text moves faster than oneself, you have to dance backwards, or become an *unfinished poem*.⁵

Semantic surprises, a rehearsal of phonetics, a subject on trial. Impressing lines onto paper, a dissonant beat, concussive authorship; *writing living thing*.⁶

1 Carla Lonzi, *Autoritratto / Self-Portrait*, trans. Allison Grimaldi Donahue, 1969/2021.

2 H el ene Cixous, *Gespr ach mit dem Esel. Blind schreiben*, Vienna 2017, p.8, translation mine.

3 Daniela Seel, *Immediacy, I Meet With Scepticism*, TZK Poetry 2016, p.124.

4 Jed Rasula, *Statement on Reading in Writing*, L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Magazine, on heteroglossia.tumblr.com.

5 Sophie Podolski didn' t want to become someone, an adult. And most of all she didn' t want to become a poet, because she was, and is, an unfinished poem - that was her only way to stay close to the lost path of the playful city. (from Jean-Philippe Convert in *Le Pays o  tout est permis*, WIELS 2018, p.64.).

6 Sophie Podolski in: *Le Pays o  tout est permis*, WIELS 2018, p.84.