

Maria Laet. The might beyond duality.
Suzana Vaz, Rio de Janeiro, July 2009

The presence or suggestion of one line within a field carries two ideas, duality and division. While the idea of duality is a universal expression for the primordial polarity that presides every cosmic creation, the idea of division is a generative principle that assists the process of evolution of everything created, for it indicates separation from the whole, thus, individuation, as much as fusion with the whole, the potential goal enunciated by any gap and, as it were, its creative teleology.

Maria Laet has been working with these issues in ways that mitigate language and the framing of her creative process inside a cultural mode. Her choice of materials and mediums avoids meaning, any codification of sense, bringing nearer the very episode of creation. In Laet's own words, 'there is an act, as a ritual, in which the first poetry of the work is condensed. I refer to it as the first poetry because it gives birth to the work, it is in its most pulsating state, intense and precarious. Like the moment of the act, the 'doing' of it, its preceding moment, the birth of the idea, the intuitive involvement with the work, the development of that intuition, also bears this pulsating and precarious quality'¹

In her creative process, she uses candid objects, concrete and accurate, like a needle, or bearing a quality of elasticity or fluidity, such as gauze, balloons, a thread. She also uses natural elements or substances, such as air, wind, sand, wood sticks, chalk, or milk, whereby her poetics of creation can be homologized to the creative dynamics of nature, in opposition to the codified means of the established artistic creation.

Her images are the record of specific moments of a durational creative flow or action, such as blowing a drop of ink, revolving around a balloon, sewing sand, and therefore the recording mediums are rather literal, almost documental: video, photography, drawings that remained as traces of an action, in this case the frottage of cracks.

The recording of cracks by frottage allows for a minimal intervention by the drawer, an action in which the paper is the surface of contact, peeled after the drawing is finished.

Laet's images are paradoxical and charged with symbolic power. They show something only divined and not yet clear, as if apprehending the unseen happenings of the psyche, setting forth its secrets, revealing a hidden knowledge. What powerful, magical, fluid white substance gently irrupts through the hard dark barrenness of the asphalt, glowing in splendour? What magical power resides in the action of sewing that will mend the myriads of sand grains into a unified fabric? These images are primordial, archetypal, belonging to the category of the 'conjunction of opposites', which, on whatever plane it is realized, represents a transcending of the phenomenal world, abolishment of all experience of duality². They resonate with the fundamental items of an unconscious, experimental, embodied, core knowledge, an embedded

information that concerns the energetic dynamics of the psyche and its redeeming, transcending force.

¹ LAET, Maria (2008). The potential space and the artistic experience. Master's Degree Dissertation. TrAIN, UAL. p. 39.

² ELIADE, Mircea (1990). Yôga, Immortality and Freedom (orig. publ. 1954. Le Yoga. Imortalité et Liberté. Paris: Librairie Payot). New York: Princeton University Press. p. 269.