

ILARIA BOFFA

SELECTED POETRY

The Distance

I.

There's a distance that cannot be covered.
The journey appears circular, a repetition
of the night and its perimeter.
When a dog runs, it does not look behind,
there's no measure of its own being.
Retrievers know how to please their master.

But linden trees soothe each frail creature. Step by step
over the meadow, the look crosses corn fields.

A fallow land will bring silence.

II.

Far, too far, continents
burn in the distance, attracted by gravity
and the beloved soil.
That line of melancholy rends the soul
like a sharp thread.
Where's patience that is supposed to be embraced?

Waiting is our mutual gift.

SELECTED POETRY

III.

Today I see just trees, expanses of trees.
I am a tree. My roots extend till the centre of the earth
and a shiver climbs back to the top of the canopy.
And afterward I become sap, dense sap.
Slow molasses over a carpet of salt.

It's the way to sink into the abyss,
the body learns fragmenting and recomposing bones.

On the pond's bank, it lies down, contiguous, sensing
each curve, all the eddies, the muddy algae.

Where have you been?
Your figure draws a rainbow and I smell
your musky hair bringing
the forest into the world.

Now I know who we are.

Days of aloofness have receded at last.

Underneath the Sycamore Tree

I.

Underneath the Sycamore tree, intruders rest their shadows.
Peculiar hats, long tousled hair, pale skin, hands.
Secular the gaze in the eye.
That place beneath the surface where everything
happens and visitors confuse their luggage.
Is going down an attempt to avoid constraints?
Severing any relationship with the present.
In that instant intruders arrive.

Deprived of repose, they linger - dowers of stars and remains.

SELECTED POETRY

II.

Perhaps when yesterday comes again
it will bring the aroma of a looming aurora,
heaving and pristine.
And we'll talk about the end of the world,
million dollar hotels under urban heavens.

I'll be your *Eloise*.

III.

Would you come to the suburbs?

She endures fires and misery,
she drives to the underpass,
she shares the celestials.

Would you?

Periphery is physical awareness
of discontinuity.

SELECTED POETRY

It's there

I.

It's there, in the gaze of monotony,
in these jazz notes that make me drift into the afternoon.

It's there, I know you're right
and I'm just trying to survive desire.

You're there, folding my edges like an origami frog,
an imperfect overlapping of leaps.

II.

I met a funambulist,
a *slackliner* to be precise.

He was tall, very tall and I imagined
this vertical man dancing over the city,
a Chagall figure.

Innocent and controlled, I walk behind him.

I feel he oversimplified the scenario
but I live the movement.

A semi-bucolic hamlet is what I am.

I see garden boots
when zooming on the outdoors

I hear our names barked.

SELECTED POETRY

Swallows

I.

Swallows love geometries.
On the river, a hue of remembrance.

Write on her skin a poem of loss.
Carve with precision and be gentle
while you shudder.

In this disarray of fractured bonds
she flies with swallows and nests passion
in the colonnade arches of her hometown.

Is that you talking about encounters?

And the heights where breaths are rarefied
where there's still wonder and magnificence.

Those heights,
borders of discontent and rapture.

Those heights.

BOFFA

Rhythmic Delay Requires a Pause

I.

The sign says Moira Orfei circus is coming to town.

Suddenly a gust of magnesium carbonate and animal life
brings sad nostalgia to the nostrils.

Another memory dismembered and murmuring.

The boy crossing the street crosses himself
and he's his own corner
it was at the corner, an automatic gesture
he did it while talking with his grandmother.

In the suburbs every morrow is gaseous
and poignant in its ordinary nature, a space delay
suspension before and after history acceleration.

Then here, faltering and syncopated I foretell the future.

SELECTED POETRY

II.

These harmonies plan a journey
with no return, nearly helical. Loop
by loop they propel towards primitive solitudes
savage territories.

I looked for you in the night but I reinforce boundaries
exposing limbs to the precipice.
And often exhausted, I gave up.

Don't leave me over there.

Faster and Faster and Faster

I.

The asphalt is fluid, and the air is wet,
and you're faster and faster and faster.
Suburbia rides its own horse, galloping
across plains and factories.
But you're young
and abrasive, arrogant and splendid
on the top left side of this picture.
The season offers tart persimmons, though.
You increase speed.

Don't stop.

SELECTED POETRY

II.

The blossoming desert, the ancient sundial,
morning rain on the windows,
all of these are only a name.

Shall she retrace the decline?

III.

Immersed in the light, the Venice lagoon lies
immortal. Oh *Serenissima, nouvelle Atlantis*
you'll drown the secret prematurely
and all your descendants will go back
to the *banlieue* of their dreams.

Faster and faster and faster.

SELECTED POETRY

Radiance in Solitude

I.

There's radiance in solitude
and bewilderment is a sound.
The slap received by an intimate crowd.
It's what's left after a soiree started in great anticipation.

Reminiscences build a definite fence
and mark a contour that flees from saturation.
In here fullness, in here vastness.

Because peripheria is a non-place, the passage through,
that keeps the edge as everything converges.

Please, decentralise this malaise.