

Mapping a Transnational Memory:
the case of person N.N.

moon & horse

sound installation of two fairytales

Igor Sevcuk

@

AIR Berlin Alexanderplatz
Schöneberger Ufer 57, 10785 Berlin, Germany

Supported by Mondriaan Fund





wooden small table

Mix media on canvas & ABA diary-entry from 20 August

Looking at the photo projection: his eyes, one brighter than the other. What else? Dark hair - I recall his daughter remembering it as too rough to caress. Wide nostrils, I would say like in a horse. Did he have time to walk in the Tiergarten (with half-closed eyelids sniffing certain scents, a mixture of herbs, water, stones, bark,...)?

Meanwhile, the only creature that looked at me while walking at the Tiergarten was a hunting horse. I met this sculpture at the avenue in between Spanish embassy (build in 1938) and Siegestsäule (relocated in 1939). Most of the Tiergarten's monuments are still marked by the 'time of svastika'. Except for trees – the ones planted before 1945 do not exist.



moon & horse

The sound installation of two fairytales is an adaptation of:

The Cure

'A Forest', the song from the album *Seventeen Seconds* (1980)

Walter Benjamin

'The Moon', the story from *Berlin Childhood around 1900* (version 1932-1934)

Oxana Timofeeva

The History of Animals: A Philosophy, chapter: 'Oedipus the Horse' (2018)



The two tracks of voice and other sounds swing between:

- a. bathroom
- b. bedroom

moon

- a. * (note of the bass guitar from the song 'A Forest')
- b. The moon ...
- a. * *
- b. the moon ...
... has no part in the theater of our daily existence.
- a. *
- b. The light streaming down from the moon
has no part in the theater of our daily existence.
The terrain it illuminates ... seems to belong to some
counter-earth or alternate earth.
- a. counter-earth or alternate earth.
- b. It is an earth
different from that to which the moon is subject as satellite,
for it is itself transformed into a satellite of the moon.
... the creation has finally made its way back home,
- a. *
- and can again don
the widow's veil which the day had torn off.
- b. *
- The course of my sleep was disturbed
...
I awoke,
I was effectively unhoused,
a. (sigh) I was effectively unhoused,
for my room
seemed willing to accommodate no one besides the moon.
- b. *
- a. As happy as I was to receive ...

(interaption from everyday life)

Igor: I think I hear dishes, a lot of dishes...
danging each other, banging each other.
Dang-dang, (sound of walking)
bang-bang . (sound of doors)
Can you please make less noise?

Go Eun: Could I just ... ?
It is so much bang and dang... I think it is not helping.

Go Eun: By the way, we should leave in thirty minutes

Igor: Yea, but stop making noise. (sound of doors)
Yea, great: bang and dang.

As happy as I was to receive from my nocturnal surroundings a sign of life –

be it only the echo of my own – it was nonetheless an unreliable sign,
and was waiting, (sound of flashing water)
like a false friend, to dupe me at the very moment I least expected it.
(sound of doors) ... like a false friend, to dupe me at the very moment I least expected it.
(sound of doors and walking) ...

- b. The gurgling of the water, the noise with which I put down first the
carafe and then the glass – it all struck my ear as repetition.
For every spot on this alternate earth to which I was transported
appeared wholly occupied by what once had been.
Thus, each sound and each moment came toward me as the double of itself...
Anxiety ...
When the nightlight, flickering, then brought peace to my hand and me,
it appeared that nothing more remained of the world than a single, stubborn question.
When the nightlight, flickering, (singing)

- a. *
brought
When the nightlight, flickering,
then brought peace to my hand and me,
it appeared that nothing more remained ... (stop singing)
remained
of the world than a single, stubborn question.
... this question nested in the folds ... that shielded me from noise.
... a residue of many past nights ...
... it was the other side of the feeling of strangeness which the moon had brought on.
The question was: Why is there anything at all ...
Why is there anything at all in the world?
(the sound of finger tapping on the surface of the table) ...

- b. *
My childhood was already nearing its end when,
... the moon seemed willing to assert its claim to the earth ...
High above the horizon-large, but pale – it stood, in the sky of a dream,
looking down on the streets of Berlin.
It was still light outside. Gathered around me were the members of my family ...

- a. Only my sister (turning of the book page)...
Only my sister was missing ...
Suddenly ...
(repetition in different tonalities and speeds of voice)
suddenly, suddenly, suddenly, suddenly, suddenly

- b. *
a. the full moon up in the sky began ever more rapidly to expand.
b. Suddenly, the full moon up in the sky began ever more rapidly to expand.
Suddenly, the full moon up in the sky began ever more rapidly to expand.
Coming nearer and nearer ... it tore the planet asunder.
[The house] broke into a thousand pieces,
and the bodies which had been there flew apart in all directions...
Nothing could hope to pass through it unchanged.
“If there is **[no]** pain now, then there’s ... God,”
I heard myself conclude,
and,
at the same time, I collected what I wanted to take across.
I put it all in a verse. It was my farewell.
“O star and flower, spirit and dress, love, grief, time, and ... ”

- a. (parallel repetition in different tonalities and speeds of voice)
“O star and flower, spirit and dress, love, grief, time, and; eternity!”
- b. ... I was already awake.
... this awakening set no limit to the dream, as others did,
disclosed no goal,
(sound of ambulance on the street outside)
its goal had escaped the dream, and ...
- a. *
- b. the moon
– which I had come to know as a child –
- a. the moon
had dissolved before another succession of the world. (singing)
- b. * * *



horse

- b. ... the sources of Aristotle's knowledge of animal's habits are not merely observations but also legends, rumours, anecdotes, stories told by people, eyewitness accounts.
- a. ... In a nutshell, ...
Animals, humans, plants ... are
- b. Animals, humans, plants ... are all involved in a matter of great consequence, a maintenance of the cosmos ...
- a. (laughing)
~~~~~ (the intro sound from the song 'A Forest' )
- b. Furthermore,  
... this is truly a strange story.  
In fact, ...  
it ... assumes that some animals are really inclined ... to observe a law.  
The Aristotelian horse behaves as ...  
a human person.
- a. *Come closer and see* (lyric of the song 'A Forest' )  
*See into the trees*  
For Bataille ...
- b. [there is] ... the mathematical precision
- a. *Come closer and see*  
*See into the trees*  
For Bataille ...
- b. there is ... the mathematical precision  
and nobility of the **[horse-like]** expression of harmony: ...
- a. b. there is ... the mathematical precision  
and nobility of the **[horse-like]** expression of harmony: ...
- a. ~~~~~
- b. ... the aesthetic degradation of the horse's image ... is ... a form of transgression
- a. ...  
*Come closer and see*  
*See into the dark*  
*Just follow your eyes*  
*Just follow your eyes*  
*I hear her voice*  
*Calling my name*  
*The sound is deep*  
*In the dark*  
*In the dark ...*
- b. ...  
It seems that the reproduction of the conditions of ... life requires a permanent effort.  
... The failure to maintain harmonious existence reveals  
the fragility of the cosmos.
- a. ~~~~~
- b. ... the forces of chaos ...  
invasions, wars, revolution, epidemics,  
floods, earthquakes, fires ...
- a. **[dot, dot, dot]**

b. Fear of entropy makes us ... distressed ...

a. **[dot, dot, dot]**

...

*I hear her voice*

*And start to run*

*Into the trees*

*Into the trees*

*Into the trees*

b.

...

Of course, the people at the top present chaos and barbarism as the ... undesirable alternative to the status quo.

Crazy barbarian horses are ...

unfamiliar with the high ideals of harmony and perfection.

They lead a kind of life, ... full of ... danger, ... bereft of ... any high ideals.

a. **[dot, dot, dot]**

b. ... Were it not for wise police measures,

the world would cease to be intelligible and ... the night would fall;

a. ~~~~~

b. ... sweet, human-like ... animals would be displaced by maddened, barbaric **[monkeys]**

a. ~~~~~

b. Human-horses would transform into ape-horses.

a. ~~~~~

b. ... They would cease to care about keeping order, and, ... still less would they 'kneel before the king'.

a. ~~~~~

... the initially 'good' ... law sensitive ... horse ... the Oedipus ... goes mad and becomes an absurd and

a. **[suiss ...]**

b. **[suicidal]** animal.

There is no place for him in this glorious police world ...

... He

... he is doomed to become an outcast,

since he has come to know something that he should not have known, according to his rank.

Perhaps it would have been better for him to put his trust in the human ... in his stableman,

but he was doomed all the same.

a.

...

*Suddenly I stop*

*But I know it's too late*

*I'm lost in a forest*

*All alone*

*The girl was never there*

*It's always the same*

*I'm running towards nothing*

*(Again and again and again and again)*

*And again*

b. a.

...

(cracking fingers and horse-like sounds)

a.

\*

