
SHORT — CUT

DIONÍS ESCORSA . THE INSIDE-OUT BALCONY

Breathing air already breathed: Thoughts on lockdown, infected by
a poem by Federico García Lorca

Be fruitful and multiply.

Genesis 1:22

Under the multiplications
There is a drop of duck's blood.

Federico García Lorca. *New York (office and denunciation) 1929*

Something is wrong with architecture these days. This might be because of the abuse it suffered during confinement. It seems to be infected by the virus. It's feverish and lacks oxygen. Its immune (that is, anti-communitarian) function is in overdrive; some kind of spatial multiplication has attacked it from the outside. It is only building closed rooms, has stopped making passages, stairways or doors. It raises walls and bars, it plugs up pipes,

tightens bolts. It keeps the greenery at a distance and no longer creates public spaces. The streets have gone, the blocks of buildings merge seamlessly. The windows join up to the neighbours' in front. We are all locked into an infinite prison, *in the last feast of pneumatic drills*.

Architecture was not made to have to work above the moon, or like a spaceship. Its compartments are not airtight. The algorithms running through it are beginning to show a number of errors. *You yourself are the earth as you swim through office numbers*.

The image of the street stretches out through the middle of the window frame before reaching the floor of the building. The fold unfolds again, this time towards the inside. There it drops off signalled passers-by, who move haphazardly through the flat. Incorporeal, masked presences, who multiply as they talk and talk. These people are the different images you yourself can acquire. We don't know whether they have come to infect or to reinforce the domestic immune system. I know them all, all I can say about them is that they had already been here, had already come into the flat. But they are paler now, they can't get out of the frame of the screen, they have become images, they are art. *I spit in all your faces*.

We are used to seeing people in a frame: the entirety of the cavern as a painted landscape has only made its reappearance with the invention of 3D glasses. The frame articulates the need to separate and sequence scenes. It introduces narrative time. Our current frames are luminous and more versatile than the obsolete window, which has not framed anybody for some time: the streets are empty. Screens will soon be projecting light like the sun's into our architectural interiors, and will air them when we turn them on. *But I didn't come to see the sky. I'm here to see the clouded blood, the blood that sweeps machines over waterfalls*.

In these days of lockdown, I have been working with others inside the polyhedral glow of screens. Here is the pleasure of being stored in the devil's legion of servers. Even the dog's face is starting to look like a thin broken line. Right now, the rectangle is approaching the balcony and grabbing hold of a baby pigeon that has fallen out of its nest and a woman who's taking care of it. *It's better to sob while honing the blade, or kill dogs on the delirious hunts, than to resist at dawn the endless milk trains, the endless blood trains, and the trains of roses manacled by the perfume dealers*.

On the stage appears a devil who is filming. The pigeon chick has a cloud attached to its wings. The woman bathes it and feeds it seeds with a syringe. Her grandparents are waving from an identical balcony, also framed. It's hard to comprehend the puppets' nervous system, because it's electric. No longer do the walls feel rough, they give off light. I stare at my hands, I'm a kitchen, a bed and a toilet. Is architecture sickened or is it perverse?

I denounce everyone who ignores the other half, the half that can't be redeemed, who lift their mountains of cement where the hearts beat inside forgotten little animals.

These repetitions, emptied spaces or blockages affect space the way an evil algorithm would. Architecture's lack of neutrality is sharpened. As it fragments, it organises the story of an expansion, but also stages its own destruction. *Every day in New York, they slaughter four million ducks, five million hogs, two thousand doves, to accommodate the tastes of the dying.*

Landscape can no longer feign its own indifference. In images, it complains of being forgotten. It has long ago donned a mask and joined the troupe of phantom puppets scurrying around the flat. It has become just another algorithm. We are a virus to landscape. *What shall I do now? Set the landscapes in order? Order the loves that soon become photographs, that soon become pieces of wood and mouthfuls of blood?*

Just in case, I avoid multiplication, I close off the mirrors and mask the frames. Outside, the virus is spreading like a necrosis. We hope it will just be a costume the landscape has chosen to wear for a moment, and that the little pigeon's condition won't get any worse. We will have to frame it if it coughs. *This is not hell, but the street. Not death, but the fruit stand.*

Dionís Escorsa, BARCELONA, SEPTEMBER 2020

NEW YORK (OFFICE AND DENUNCIATION)

To Fernando Vela

Under the multiplications,
there's a drop of duck's blood;
under the divisions,
there's a drop of sailor's blood;
under the additions, a river of tender blood.
A river that comes singing
past bedrooms in the boroughs —
and it's silver, cement or wind
in New York's mendacious dawn.
I know the mountains exist.
And wisdom's eyeglasses,
too. But I didn't come to see the sky.
I'm here to see the clouded blood,
the blood that sweeps machines over waterfalls
and the soul toward the cobra's tongue.
Every day in New York, they slaughter
four million ducks,
five million hogs,
two thousand doves to accommodate the tastes of the dying,
one million cows,
one million lambs,
and two million roosters
to smash the skies to pieces.
It's better to sob while honing the blade
or kill dogs on the delirious hunts
than to resist at dawn
the endless milk trains,
the endless blood trains
and the trains of roses manacled
by the perfume dealers.
The ducks and the doves,
and the hogs and the lambs
lay their drops of blood
under the multiplications,
and the terrified bellowing of the cows wrung dry
fills the valley with sorrow
where the Hudson gets drunk on oil.
I denounce everyone

who ignores the other half,
the half that can't be redeemed,
who lift their mountains of cement
where the hearts beat
inside forgotten little animals
and where all of us will fall
in the last feast of pneumatic drills.
I spit in all your faces.
The other half hears me
devouring, pissing, flying in their purity,
like the superintendents' children
who carry fragile twigs
to the emptied spaces where
the insect antennae are rusting.
This is not hell, but the street.
Not death, but the fruit stand.
There is a world of shattered rivers and distances just beyond our grasp
in the cat's paw smashed by a car,
and I hear the earthworm's song
in the hearts of many girls.
Rust, fermentation, quaking earth.
You yourself are the earth as you swim through office numbers
What shall I do now? Set the landscapes in order?
Order the loves that soon become photographs,
that soon become pieces of wood and mouthfuls of blood?
No, no: I denounce it all.
I denounce the conspiracy
of these deserted offices
that radiate no agony,
that erase the forest's plans,
and I offer myself as food for the cows wrung dry
when their bellowing fills the valley
where the Hudson gets drunk on oil.

Federico García Lorca

<https://victormv.wordpress.com/poems/new-york-oficina-y-denuncia/>



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