

Aurora's Games, by Bia Machado

To take responsibility for renewing the world. What is new about that? Nothing. Years ago, yes, many years ago, men and women did that. They could have kept on hunting and harvesting fruit, but they decided to start planting and domesticating animals. Then they invented cities, trade, and wars. At least, that is the story they tell us at school.

To take responsibility for renewing the world is also part of a story we are not told in school: some inspired mystics say God created the world and the creatures to be acknowledged . By acknowledging God, the world and the creatures, mankind delivers on God's wish. Impressive accounts of this human adventure are exposed in the Chauvet Cave. Or in the Brazilian National Serra da Capivara Park. Painting well before writing. Just like God, initially, painted the world.

To take the responsibility for renewing the world is, in fact, the most commonplace and simple experience there is. Every day, since the paleolithic age, man has imagined the scenes of their own internal worlds. They wander through this vast land of imagination as hunters-gatherers, as warriors, or as leaders. As victims of all kinds of oppression or as heroes of a saga yet to be told. They natter on with God.

But few know how to convey this conversation to us.

Recently, I visited my friend Mariana's cave. I watched her pursuit of the best shade of paint. I heard her deep silences in each color, in each stroke. I traveled slowly and hurriedly through her gazelle-like eloquence in a heated dialogue with her old, slow, and terribly insightful moon.

I crossed, in seconds, the long hours in which she would combine in a headstrong, serene observation on the details of a green (or mauve, or purple...) leaf with a confident opinion about the pool lanes. How can someone combine such disparate things?

I mean, how can someone combine serene obstinacy with confident opinion? Or maybe, how can a cross become a pool lane and the entire gentleness of the world land on the branch of a yoga position? But my questions do not expect an answer per se; that is not what this is about. The perplexity I experience is enough.

The profusion of life and conversation that Mariana suggests- proposes-responds to, with a vitality that would make the leap of a cat over a bird feel like slow motion, renders thinking unnecessary: the present is here.

If the cross can become a straight line in water, this means that the liquid we are made of in the matter of life does not erase the shapes, it does not negate the marks. Neither does it allow them to harden. There is no reason to erase the past if life demands courage.

As land produces, water transforms. Mariana's liquid brush seduces the land to show its secrets, to smile other nuances. Ah, the teachers of our time do not understand discipline or obedience: come learn from Mariana, who obeys in a disciplined way the subtle joys, underlying the arduous search to conscientiously listen to what each shape wants to show, at each moment, with each breath.

While her work is at the same time artisan and ruler of the world, subject and monarch, without humility or pride. It is the fairy of the lake that explores both the drawings of the wind on the surface of the water and the secrets of the stones hidden in the bottom, red, green, blue and white.

And, yes, they are all here, around the table: Armando, Maria Ângela, Juliana, Livia and Tom, my friend Layla's friend. All of them know that the stories of each person can blend and, from the stock of the past, take other forms, other threads, other lights in the older and joyous hands of a painter who writes poetry in color, with the authority of someone who takes upon herself the responsibility for renewing the world.

While Tom and Layla, each in their corner, devour their robust bones... natural... with no chemistry.

Bia Machado

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