

Dream Symptoms.

How can you find silence in a noisy room?
Eliminate the noise and you will discover the silence
that was always there, and is everywhere (...)
*There is no need to search for the truth; you only
have to put an end to false ideas... Vedic Precept*

Now reality and time have started to warp and the old Cartesian signs are losing their horizontal reference points. Now the abysses of the mystery are (re)casting their dark shadow over the still flow of life. Now the son is turning desperately to his Mother or vice versa, while they knowingly betray each other. Now souls, friends, brothers and sisters are selling each other out not for three gold coins, but for a piece of crap, a few sequins, a little fame and emptiness, while death or our continued existence snake their way through the seductive vicissitudes and successive playing cards of the marketplace. And in the middle of all this chaos, in the midst of this reality show, ignorance, decrepitude, offensiveness, despair or desolation of a God that is both deaf and dumb (perhaps dead, as the old German¹ would say?), we are but a dream or a transparent playing card, (a deck) which invariably keeps the majority of things from us. *Everything is so arcane.*

Rodéz shows us his rolling, utilitarian *Geo*(from George)*graphy*. His ordinary-looking figure wanders through the limbos of a memory that is clear, familiar and intimate, where fiction cannot be distinguished from reality, wakefulness from *sleep*, nightmare from *dream*. Borges was right in saying there are incorrect truths, and that there are falsehoods so true that they fuse, confuse and infuse the established limits of the eye which sees, calling into question the reactive projection of the World, which in reality does not operate outside us. For the outer does not exist; everything is inside our heads. *The Universe is a mental creation that is held in the mind of All That Is*². **A symptom of the past.**

I look again across George's homely yet bloody landscape, bringing with me these bright colors and charged words. These are *symptoms of a dream* of many voices and many eyes, which, when shared, conjures up common roots, something endemic to us both. I stop to knead each clump of dough, to finger each shred of truth behind the brushstroke, the veneer, the frame, the color or other occupational hazards. George paints memories. **He dreams like he paints.** He feels his vomit inside, which he then secretes cleansing his unconscious and gravity until they are seen in their natural light; *one in the many, without division, without egocentric possessiveness.* As Zen teaches us: *If you pull yourself away from the phenomenon, it will swallow you up. If you pursue emptiness, you are turning your back on it (...)* *If you wish to find, don't be in favor or against anything (...)* *free yourself from love and hate, then the way will appear in all its clarity (...)* *When spirit becomes as one without being attached to its oneness, the ten thousand things become inoffensive, I no longer suffer; they no longer have power over me (...)* *The swing of the pendulum is no longer subject to such oscillations*³. *Luck that clings to the World tastes of death*⁴. George understands the words of Saint Bernard⁵: ***Nothing can hurt us except ourselves; the evil that afflicts me I carry with me and I never really suffer but for my own guilt.***

In his rich palette I have seen Marat's dagger rise up from the palace bath. I have seen the crook of the aristocrat Laureano, his bed, the Maternal dose of sleeping pills, the child that screams below the staircase, the old man sobbing alone on a park bench, a mouth that gives itself to another, the crosses, the enclosed areas of impossibly opposed perspectives, never-ending corridors between two worlds (alertness/lethargy), between and inside ourselves, and electricity... always that electric pulse where our stubborn eyes are fixed. I discover the incandescence of tungsten in each image, and even a book that seems to evoke Santeria. I see the television, the **antidote** ready in the syringe, or the blue dress of *La vieille dame indigne*... the fallen angel or risen demon's disguise, always the worst and best way of looking at things.

In theory he lives all this as an active participant. He is at the same time both

protagonist and witness, in the skin of Cain, in the exile of Ulysses, in the songs of David, in the hands of Lilith. It is a human and spiritual reality, ordered, balanced and protected.

With George our innocence is not lost. His colors stand out in their purity, bright and pristine. They are a *bridge* to a symbolic reading, which is direct, clear and diaphanous, like a child that vows always to be a child. I see this in his work **Bridge Over Water**, an urban atmosphere, dark, “*architelluric*”, with the *shark*, perhaps a *dolphin* (with snapping jaws so as not to show good without evil and vice versa) that crosses the road (throwing itself absurdly against a vehicle) and survives, overcoming death. Or perhaps it simply swims menacingly or gently in the asphalt amidst the blue that engulfs all. (Blue is such a popular color. Perhaps it is the one most commonly found in its pure state in nature and most people say they are either fond of it or that it is their favorite color. I have never understood, thinking aloud, how you can prefer one color to another. I can’t imagine grass without its greenness, or blood without its redness.) In this work he sees blue as being omnipresent, providing a kind of civilizing uniformity that is occasionally splattered with rare exceptions: *the travelers, the lights of the sky in the background*. But this blue slowly washes over everything. Now these wise travelers seem to have disregarded, forgotten or not to have heard of that slogan from the sixties: “All aboard that train!” Well, we’ve all missed the train. In fact it is a train that has *derailed*, but not in the past but in the perpetual present. This is **no more than archaeology of a mirage that is dead and buried** - the utopian disaster. The great ideals of the enlightenment have degenerated into virulent processes of unscrupulous orchestration, toxic industries, monstrous bombs, invincible asylums, which in the words of Allen Ginsberg⁶ would be: *Skyscrapers (which) stand in the street like endless Jehovahs, leading us toward and educating(?) us in the pleasure of the Apocalypse, whose smokestacks and antennae crown the cities...* I see despotic chancre and awful democratic tyrannies, in search of “the good”, “the all-mighty”, “the all-solving”, the “all-philanthropic”. To paraphrase this secular Nazism, that is to say ours (the one we see every day): we are working at our own *final solution* or form of hard-line positivism that is as psychotic as evil itself (that is if evil is believed in).

From this Manichaeic version and through this inverted psychology, **the obsessive search itself for good has let loose evil, but this time in an even more violent and abrasive way and without admitting any opposing values**. As a natural consequence, **the empire of “good”** (the representative democracies of the moment among other subjectivities or other points of view of certain civilizations) **has inflamed religious fundamentalism...** but this is only another reversion of the phenomenon (its mirror image). We are caught between *civil war* and this immoral, *self-seeking peace*... The *welfare state* is none other than the “*ill-fare*” caused by the *ferociousness of our systems of protection, our traffic and industrial casualties, and our domestic, spiritual, political and post-civilization victims of appropriation and generalized “virtuality” (meaning the extermination of the real) that we see in this relentless catastrophe that is our western Babel*. George in a display of disobedience shows his balls or rather puts them on the hood of the *automobile* (the mobile self) as he swims salmon-like against the current... *because he is from the lineage of Sinbad, the genealogy of travelers. His eyes carve lines in the air while their roots are on the road throwing off streaks of lightning as they move along the dark and solitary highway*.

In the same way I feel this *Dolphin Water Bridge*... the simple, primeval broth from whence we emerged lean and shark-like. I feel the structure of cosmic dust between stars, of seas between continents, of land between countries, of air between bodies, of silence between words, of blood between viscera and organs, of plasma between cells, of magnetism or simply of space between atoms... arches that contain everything or nothing... For **everything is essentially the emptiness that fills it**. In the words of George himself: “*In my work there is a great emptiness (...) the colors serve as a camouflage... a mirage to distract the person who is looking, a non-realization of the emptiness that lives within me*”⁷.

His words have a double meaning. First: *“The determination to pass from one side of life to the other by overcoming all fears and insecurities produced by the mind”*. And the second he confides in me in the form of a confession: *“To have you(r)/company by my side to **share the journey** despite the distance that separates us”*⁸. This journey of living and being that faces us every day, the journey of centuries, of eons, through universal and private space, through the transcendent and the mundane. A non-dual system of representation. The divine and the worldly... fact and fiction... the internal and the tangible.

Without doubt **what I write is drawn from his own externalized blood** (which seems quite daring, but in fact isn't) because one's work or one's body does not finish or begin with oneself. Rather we are in all cases an immanent prolongation of all things... of things in ourselves, of ourselves in the other, at one, in *the one*. Versus-uni. Universe, unity of the diverse.

If **reason's dreams produce monsters...**⁹ and a dream, an ideal can be a trap, then for George: *“It also serves to free us if we learn to recognize and collect the information placed before us by the dream, as if it were a surrealist film. Look for the message, the solution(?), or the why”*. In the words of Alejandro Jodorowsky, the multitalented artist and mystic, this would be: *to learn from **Lucid Dreams***; a dialogue of signs or a merging with the unconscious. For if no solution exists (there doesn't always have to be one, as things are the way they are without the vice of positivist interpretations), there will be at least answers, (re)actions, other questions. Now there are no certainties (rather it is a matter of substituting questions for questions), but these, at least, are (will be) new(?) questions. *“Act, live and be at peace with this”*¹⁰, proposes George.

His art is drawn from the subconscious. This is what art and artists are, a modern equivalent of a shaman, a contemporary high priest(ess) of ritual or, and this is the worst possible interpretation, **a closet psychoanalyst**.

I am drawn to the association with **Pandora** and her box of “nasties”, with the nets, the screens and telematics; a kind of goddess or ghost draped in canvas and silks. In her *right* hand, she holds a dark-bluish tongue (perhaps it is her own gown), a tongue turned purple by poisoning or asphyxiation... If we go deeper into the psychology of color, we can see the media and the new tyrannies (the market, technology, politics) obtain forms, ambiances, messages by way of seductive colors and easy-to-digest metaphors so that their goal meets with no resistance (*freely accepted psychopathologies*). These are ways of softening up, dazing and subjecting the viewer through “aesthetification”, even death.

In George's work I think his use of color is also very psychological, but in his case wild and primal. Hardly mixing paints, he works straight from the tube to the canvas. It is an imposing style, which expresses his expansive and extrovert nature. He makes much use of Tachism, much akin to Transvanguardism and understands Clemente and Basquiat, falling somewhere between Post-Expressionism and Pop Art. His spontaneous brushstrokes depict chaos, sincerity, Informalism and a free and easy style so removed from traditional techniques. Freehand copies of text fragments, crossings out, scribbling, even the scratch marks on the material (canvas, cardboard, paper) give his work an uninhibited looseness, a freedom the figures cannot contain. He breaks any “staticity” or rigidity in the masses of color, not just with brush and acrylic but chalk, pastels, graphite, charcoal, pen and ordinary pencil. His emphasis is on the drawing... on the essence of the drawing itself.

In my view, instead of placing center stage the *frontal reason* for things, which would signify nostalgia and a desire for the anthropocentric reconstruction of the literalness of his exposition, he presents an *oblique and furious Manierism*. He thus removes the focus from the exclusive, hierarchical and privileged viewpoint by making eclectic references. The lightness and ethereality of color, its fine shades and contrasts, show his fervent desire to find purity and essentiality within the pictorial medium, just as artists such as Balthus, Brice Marden, Alex Katz and G. Morandi have done.

Today we know that there have been both many achievements and failures in art (in projects that have not always been desirable). On the one hand we have the metaphysical sphere, which can evoke at will uncontrollable feelings and passions, tears, ecstasy, emotions and fanaticisms, including cults; while on the other hand, logically, there is the material dimension, such as transformation, the transubstantiation of clay into gold, change or the generation of a new scale of values, the *philosopher's stone*, *Orpheus material*, and/or *alchemic essence*... (On one occasion Picasso, not having any money on him, paid the bill in a restaurant by painting something on his napkin. And it is not surprising that the vulgar pigments and powders that represent the fields of Arlés are today worth thousands of dollars. Who wouldn't want to have some of the Dutchman's sunflowers even if it means showing you are so vulgar that you cannot tell the difference between value and price? And this is just one among many examples.) **An artist is a miracle, a dreamer, a producer of dreams, a worker of miracles.** This affirmation does not only touch the transcendental sphere of ideas, spirituality or metaphysics, but also the most profane and ordinary: immediacy, power and money (and in both his work and life he nearly always takes huge risks).

George has confessed to me: "*The eye in my painting is the monster*". (He's Cuban in origin over and above the usual political considerations and the current Cuban context, or rather he is *post-Cuban*. In other words Cuba is the place that was left behind, the place he took off from, the place his family is from, but not the place he arrived at or traveled to.) "*It also represents my window to Hell (...) at the same time a personal and political message (...) the monstrous can become a blessing when we learn to combat it*"¹¹. As a principle, as a way of vindicating what is real this statement takes on the status of belief or creed. **A commitment to the figure**, to the form, to the eye, to subjectivity and representation. He attempts (with frank self-criticism) to recognize the Cyclops, the *Big Brother* or the tyranny of the sought-after "objectivity" of the visor in times of ideological extremes. **Behind every look, every form, every representation there is a loss, a castration, an exclusion, a generalization, a forgetting of differences, a fragmentation of the real** that contradicts to a certain extent those historic words (of a certain egocentric poet): *I do not search, I find*¹². So groggy from this reconciliation of paradoxes, George **paints by letting his art be illumined by the unconscious**. He dissolves critical intelligence and draws upon the well of dreams and subliminal material or **metabolic processes of internal realism**; an exposition that is openly symbolist, metaphoric and/or merely descriptive, almost surreal or literary. The paintbrush does not see all but neither does the eye. **To look is to (re)create, to make possible the miracle of the World; to recapture it so as to lose (it) again.**

His work turns out to be the painting of things... in memory of the distinguished Cuban Eliseo Diego¹³ and his *inventory of surprises; a naming of things*, but not all things, just his things. He is not just depicting local or everyday life and customs but showing us his identification with the simplicity that inhabits all greatness, that secretly and invisibly underpins and sustains the living... It is here where George's charged currents so often stir us/stones from their stillness. This leads us to discover that nothing is what it appears, but in its illusory duality it is and will always be something more than what it seems.

In the end we are made happy or miserable as much by simple and subtle things as by major events, regardless of how we lead our lives. *History often seems to be no more than a picture book - just one picture after another - which reflects man's fervent and blind desire: the desire to forget. Does not each generation always destroy, through forms of prohibition, through absolute silence, and ridicule exactly that which the previous generation deemed most precious? Have we not just witnessed how for years whole nations forgot, denied and repressed the reality of a long, terrible and horrifying war and, with the wave of a wand, made it disappear? And are we now not seeing how these very same nations are trying to recall, after having rested for a while with the aid of enthralling soap operas (art and other dreams), that which a few years ago they organized and suffered?*¹⁴ In George, art is a/this personal matter, the determination to

remember, to improve, to undergo **therapy**, to **search for or recapture the dream...** of an escape fugue, not a running away, but a counterpoint, a confrontation, a wild syncopation between colors and forms, which in daring combination evoke the fall... The vertigo of his fingers creates a symphony... full of furious, incomprehensible notes *of the same dream*. They later take on the form of this profound, excessive, extravagant, exuberant and motley procession, all the excessive aesthetics of the *tropics*, but not those of Henry Miller¹⁵, but of lights and shadows, colors and Suns, swamps and the Caribbean. Drawing on his life experience in Florida, he creates harmony and desperation; something that in the words of Baltasar Gracián¹⁶ would be: *The confidence that is the mother of carelessness*.

He works like a child that cannot distinguish between what he desires and what is his, and quite naturally goes, takes, transforms and treasures. His conscience appeals to intuitive and parasympathetic mechanisms of internal Worlds (internal dialogue). This is almost an allegory of those verses of Rabindranath Tagore¹⁷: *The canal loves to think rivers exist solely to supply it with water*, all waters... a tear that does not deny it is an ocean, but in the same way an ocean (in awareness) that knows itself in the tiniest tear.

We all know that behind each of our achievements and dreams there is/was invariably something or someone there to help us realize them. Each link in the chain, each intricate step that takes us further into the dark labyrinth, with Minotaur or not, was none other than a shining light, a guiding star that enchants and points to the four cardinal-points, because we know *life is but a dream...* So what are dreams? **Dreams are mysterious confirmations and puzzling symptoms of a certainty**. We experience the strange sensation of waking each day to this other insistent and no less strange limbo that invades us as soon as we open our eyes, and which we call reality.

George is fascinated by this (dream) language which partly veils or recaptures wakefulness (depending on your perspective), and his work echoes George Herbert Mead's¹⁸ sound advice for enjoying a peaceful coexistence with others (dream-reality), which also seems to apply to art: *Love your neighbor but don't knock down your garden fence*. While Lin Yutang¹⁹ says: *It is important for man to dream but it is just as important for him to be able to laugh with and at his dreams*.

People often tell the story in Spain of how during a sitting of the Parliament, the Speaker, amid the general state of boredom in the House, noticed Don Camilo José Cela²⁰ was nodding off. "Is the right honorable gentleman asleep?" he asked in a reproachful tone. To which the Member of Parliament replied: "No, sir, I am not asleep. I'm sleeping! You know", he went on, "it's not the same to be fucked up as to be fucking!" To which one could add even when dreaming.

AdriáNomada

(*conspirator*)

¹ **Frederich Nietzsche**. *Gott ist Tot* (Alianza Editorial).

² **Hermes Trimengisto**. *The Kibalion*. The books of the three initiates (The Emerald Table).

³ **Arnaud Desjardins**. *Zen and Vedanta* (Circle of Readers), pp. 46, 72.

⁴ **Santiago Feliú**. *Popular song*, Cuba.

⁵ **Saint Bernard of Clairvaux** (1090-1153). Driving force behind and propagator of the *Cistercian Order*. The most important man in twelfth-century Europe.

⁶ **Allen Ginsberg** (1926-1997). One of the leading American poets of the Beat generation along with Jack Kerouac and William Burroughs. His writings include *Howl & Other Poems* 1956, and *Kaddish* 1961.

⁷ Personal E-mail, informal conversations with the artist (the modification to the text is mine). Dialogue from February 2005.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ **F. Goya**. Written on one of the etchings of the series *Los Caprichos*.

¹⁰ Ibid. Conversations with the artist... February 2005.

¹¹ Ibid. Conversations with the artist... February 2005.

¹² **Pablo Picasso.**

¹³ **Eliseo Diego** (1920-1996). Narrative poet, Cuban essayist, Doctor Honoris Causa 1992, University of Colombia. Awarded the National Prize for Cuban Literature and the Juan Rulfo Prize.

¹⁴ **Hermann Hess.** *Lektüre für Minuten* (Suhrkamp Verlag. Frankfurt am Main. 1971) (the modification to the text is mine).

¹⁵ **Henry Miller** (1891-1980). American poet and novelist. His works include *The Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn* and *Sexus, Plexus, and Nexus*.

¹⁶ **Baltasar Gracián y Morales** (1601-1658). Aragonese writer, humanist and theologian, regarded as one of the most important thinkers of his age. His works include *El Criticón* and *Oráculo manual y arte de Prudencia* (The Art of Wordly Wisdom. A Pocket Oracle).

¹⁷ **Rabindranath Tagore** (1861-1941). Indian poet, novelist and humanist. Awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913.

¹⁸ **George Herbert Mead** (1863-1931). American historian and philosopher. Founder of Pragmatism.

¹⁹ **Lin Yutang** (1895-1976). Well-known Chinese philologist and writer with great knowledge of different cultures. He studied at universities such as St. John in Shanghai, Harvard and Leipzig. Between 1923 and 1926 he was lecturer in English philology at the University of Peking.

²⁰ **Camilo José Cela** (1916-2000). Spanish writer. Awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1989 and the Cervantes Prize in 1995. Author of novels, poetry, memoirs and travel books. At the time he was Member of Parliament for the ruling party.