

**Silences and voids in Chekhov's
poetic: nature as part of the scene
in *The Seagull* and images-poem
for a short play**

***Silêncios e vazios na poética de
Tchékhov: a natureza como parte
da cena em *A Gaivota* e imagens-
poema para uma peça curta***

Autora: Susana Fuentes
Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro,
Rio de Janeiro, Brasil
Edição: RUS Vol. 13. Nº 22
Publicação: Agosto de 2022
Recebido: 30/05/2022
Aceito: 19/08/2022

<https://doi.org/10.11606/issn.2317-4765.rus.2022.198774>

FUENTES, Susana.
*Silences and voids in Chekhov's poetic: nature as part of the scene
in *The Seagull* and image-poems for a short play*
RUS, São Paulo, v. 13, n. 22, 2022, pp. 138-161.



Silences and voids in Chekhov's poetic: nature as part of the scene in *The Seagull* and image-poems for a short play

Susana Fuentes*

Abstract: In Anton Chekhov's short stories, space is shaped as the story begins, landscape speaks of presences, memories, voids. And nature itself also appears as a vivid character. Conversation is composed of silences and space. In "Verotchka", nature takes part in the action, shadows move from one place to another, clouds, trees, mist. The storm at the end of the short story "The murder" speaks of desolation and loneliness, but also of strength and life: out of darkness, nature opens a space, a wild space, to converse with time. And in Chekhov's plays, nature forges this flow of life on the stage, people in their silences, the unspoken, amidst the expectations, the objects, and the sounds on the stage. In *The Seagull*, the play within the play – the monologue written by Treplev and played by Nina in front of the lake – we encounter a text that has no place, yet still is very close to our times, for it speaks of emptiness where a world of losses can be found. Silences ask to be heard – and this poor moon lights its lantern in vain. Silences that triggered image-poems for a short play.

Resumo: Nos contos de Tchekhov o espaço se forma desde o início da história, a paisagem fala de presenças, memórias, vazios. E a natureza aparece como personagem vívida. A conversa é feita também de silêncios e espaço. No conto "Viérotchka", vemos uma natureza que participa na ação, sombras que se movem de um lugar para outro, nuvens, árvores, névoas. A tempestade no final do conto "O assassinato" fala de isolamento e solidão, mas também de força e vida: a natureza abre um espaço na escuridão para a conversa com o tempo, o espaço bravo. Nas peças de Tchekhov, ela também se faz presente nesse fluxo da vida no palco, as pessoas em seus silêncios, o não dito, no meio das expectativas, os objetos, os sons. Em *A Gaivota*, a peça dentro da peça, monólogo escrito por Treplev e interpretado por Nina em frente ao lago – há um texto sem lugar, muito próximo do nosso tempo no entanto, pois fala de vazios onde há um mundo de perdas. Silêncios que pedem uma escuta – e esta pobre lua acende a sua lanterna em vão. E a partir desses silêncios, imagens-poema para uma peça curta.

Keywords: Images; Nature; *The Seagull*; Scene; Creative Process

Palavras-chave: Imagens; Natureza; *A gaivota*; Cena; Processo criativo

* PhD in Comparative Literature from the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), where she also carried out post-doctoral research with funding from CAPES/FAPERJ, writer, actor. <http://lat-tes.cnpq.br/8807829530921217>; <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5529-6900>; fuentes.susana@gmail.com

Visuallity, texture, rhythm, senses, experiencing space as a vivid element. The landscape in Chekhov, the place of de-centering, the anguish, the loss, the one who leaves, ir-retrievably, or the one who is about to leave, the melancholy, the intensity, the nothingness present in his short stories and plays. In many of his short stories, Anton Chekhov (1860-1904) builds a possibility to stand still, to see and to imagine, to narrate as a way whereby something can move in silence, through impossibility. As we read in Walter Benjamin: "finding words for what we have before our eyes is something that can be very difficult. But when they come, they strike with small hammers against the real until they tear the image from it, as from a copper plate".¹ And this image of a great emptiness can be seen, as well as the movement that takes place from this feeling of seeing and being seen, and the objects and details in Chekhov's vision of people, prisoners, nurses, animals, sounds, silences, objects, all these imprint his writing with a singularity that talks to us in the midst of so much loss.

The storm at the end of the short story "The Murder" (1895) speaks of desolation and loneliness, but also of strength and life: out of darkness nature opens a space to conversation with time, the wild space. And if in Chekhov's plays there is also nature forging this flow of life on the stage, people in their silences, the unspoken, amidst the expectations, the objects, the sounds on the stage also in his stories something not said creates action and is part of it.

In Chekhov short stories as "The Murder" we are taken away from the continent, across the sea, into an unbridgeable dark night, when the prisoners are awakened to carry coal for a steamer arriving at dawn. But there would be no coal, it was a mistake, and they were awakened for nothing. One of the

¹ BENJAMIN, 2015, p. 65-66. (translation by Susana Fuentes).

prisoners raises his eyes and sees the sea. And thinks of his homeland. But this character – who had ended up there for the murder of his brother because of a fight over a glass of olive oil – symbolically, throughout a transformation while staring at the landscape, articulates something within himself, and at that moment he manages to build something internally. In the midst of the darkness, in front of the sea, he looks at the sky and says: It's going to rain.

The convict, with no one to talk to, looks at the mist, and in the midst of tears perceives that a storm is coming. Meanwhile, he is called to leave the shore and to come back. And we follow his thought at the end of the story, as he feels the storm to come:

[...] He looked with strained eyes into the darkness, and it seemed to him that through the thousand miles of that mist, he could see home, could see his native province, his district, Progonnaya, could see the darkness, the savagery, the heartlessness, and the dull, sullen, animal indifference of the men he had left there. His eyes dimmed with tears; but still he gazed into the distance where the pale lights of the steamer faintly gleamed, and his heart ached with yearning for home, and he longed to live, to go back home to tell them there of his new faith and to save from ruin if only one man, and to live without suffering if only for one day.

The cutter arrived, and the overseer announced in a loud voice that there would be no loading.

"Back!" he commanded. "Steady!"

They could hear the hoisting of the anchor chain on the steamer. A strong piercing wind was blowing by now; somewhere on the steep cliff overhead, the trees were creaking. Most likely a storm was coming.²

In Chekhov's notes from his journey to the Sakhalin island, there is a singularity that transcends the report, or, better said, contaminates it. In *The Island of Sakhalin (1891-1894)*, we read:

The vast sea, shimmering under the sun, raises a muted rumor while, down below, the distant shore beckons temptingly, calling to itself, and a sadness and melancholy comes over me, as if I would never leave this Sakhalin again. I look

² CHEKHOV, 2014, "The murder", ch.VII, para. 5.

at the shore on the other side and it gives the impression that, if I were a convict, I would flee from there at any price, at all costs.³

And further on Chekhov writes down "dog", "chain", "cannon", "bell", and the "siren". As in the short story "A Doctor's visit", "the sounds quiver the soul, make the body sick", there are heights and down and in the distance, the waves are seen but it is the head that is caught in a never-ending circle. There are traces of movement in the distance, but the watchman is the only one who will be able to see the ships coming and going.

Chekhov and his images – what he is able to see – from the most adverse and meaningless situations, something can emerge.

When Benjamin speaks of memory [Gedächtnis], of the work of digging and remembering, it is the naming of the place that matters, the investigator indicating the place where he or she has been: "the work of true recollection [Erinnerung] must be less that of a report, and more that of the exact indication of the place where the researcher has taken possession of these memories".⁴ Here we think of the narrator and his undeniable mark, wondering that – where he or she has been – becomes part of his or her personal experience.

How essential this is to get through present times so to preserve the path in direction to otherness, and face up absences of a collective good, the loss of the conversation with oneself, in the sense grasped by Hannah Arendt, the loss of the space to dialogue, when each one, each person no longer feels a part of a whole.

In "The murder", before the storm, the character's soul is transformed in its encounter with the dark of night. It is nature that opens a space to look at itself in conversation with time, the landscape that communicates through its strength. And even before getting there, the prisoner discovers on the train that he feels nostalgia – in the moment he perceives in

³ TCHÉKHOV, 2018, p. 80 (translation by S.F.)

⁴ BENJAMIN, Op. cit., p.101 (translation by S.F.)

the landscape traces of what he will never see again. An internal shift, staring the immense place occupied by the present.

To see is also to lose, in the sense Didi-Huberman points out. And on this road where Chekhov walks, and where his characters walk, this being alone, being in relation to space, opens up to this astonishment. This is the amazement of the kind Didi-Hubermann evokes when he writes of the artist Toni Smith. Toni Smith, who on the road at night sees chimneys, lights, lampposts, wires. And in the dark of the night, simple things show an emptiness, the one thing that is not there, “the moment of split – lies in the fact that the road itself was absolutely deprived of these ‘punctuations’, these references, these last signs, but what was distant was still visible and identifiable”.⁵ Scratches on the landscape that build memories – in this space of absences.

In Chekhov’s short stories, space is shaped as the story begins, landscape speaks of presences, memories, voids. And nature appears also as a vivid character, speaking of beauty and death, reminding us it will be there when we leave. As in “The lady with the dog” (1889), Gurov and Anna Sergeevna at Oreanda, the sound of the sea, now and then when there was no Yalta, no Oreanda, the sound rising up from below, indifferent and monotonous as it will be when “we are all no more”.⁶ Or in “A boring story/ from the notebook of an old man” (1889), when we follow Katya and Nikolay Stepanovitch through the pine-wood, nature is as beautiful as ever, but the emeritus Professor guesses it will not notice his absence when he is dead. Sometimes it the dust, it is about its luminosity, or heat, or, as in “The murder’s” final scene, it is enough to stare at the sea in the night – and simply to gaze off in the distance and predict a tempest.

A singular tone, like a minor chord in music yet filled with luminosity, in its pain of distance, is the beginning of Chekhov’s short story “Verotchka” (1887). Memories of things past, brought present, conjured out of dust but with radiant light:

⁵ DIDI-HUBERMAN, 1998, p.100 (translation by S.F.)

⁶ CHEKHOV, 2014, n.p.

Ivan Alexeyitch Ognev remembers how on that August evening he opened the glass door with a rattle and went out on to the verandah. He was wearing a light Inverness cape and a wide-brimmed straw hat, the very one that was lying with his top-boots in the dust under his bed.⁷

He is leaving the house that welcomed him during his work, and now he is going back to the city. "He had grown familiar with the whole house down to the smallest detail, with the cosy verandah, the windings ai of the avenues, the silhouettes of the trees that fell over the kitchen and the bath-house."⁸

In this short story, nature may be said to take part in the action, shadows moving from one place to another, clouds, trees, mist, all answering to Ognev as he steps into the scene.

Nature is something living, it establishes tones as characters and readers are driven into the same space within the very scene:

"The spaces between the bushes and the tree-trunks were filled with a fine soft mist soaked through and through with moonlight, and, as Ognev long remembered, coils of mist that looked like phantoms slowly but perceptibly followed one another across the avenue".⁹

Along with Ognev something moves, announcing its presence, alive, breathing. Not in the background, but intertwined with his steps.¹⁰ Pauses, silence, rhythm. Dramatic elements that convoke space. As we notice in the text, even "the spaces between the bushes" are made visible and gain volume, these spaces in between become visible. Moon is there with light and fog, lines that "slowly but perceptibly followed one another".¹¹ This avenue where phantoms like foggy ghosts were making their way between the blank spaces. Now there is Vera, forever lost, making her way back, and the man she loved is now lost in the dust of his room, evoking memories of

7 CHEKHOV, 2014, n.p.

8 Idem.

9 Idem.

10 Idem.

11 Idem.

things past (the same old hat under the bed, the same old coat, these objects – the only witnesses of his memories).

Ognev remembers that “his old friend Karo, wagging his tail amicably, came up to him and sniffed his hand. This was the one living creature who watched him walk two or three times round the house, stand near Vera’s dark window, and with a deep sigh and a wave of his hand walk out of the garden.”¹²

Here also there is the importance of building silences and time in narrative. Elements that come not from what is said, but from actions, be it to stand still or to look at. Opening a dramatic space in narrative. To wait, to look at, to touch in a given circumstance. And between the narratives we may notice different echoes: Ognov, in “Verotchka”, smells the scent in the air... the dog sniffs his hand... Even the dog Karo breathes a movement, like the old mare in the end of “Misery” (1886), the old mare, the only one to listen to Iona, the sledge-driver looking in anguish for someone to talk to. Karo, the dog in “Verotchka” appears wagging his tail, sniffing Ognov’s hand. He sees yet how Ognov shakes his hand and sighs deeply.

Image-poems for a short play

The actuality of Chekhov, silences and displacements, working on image-poems that dialogue with *The Seagull* and also with some letters by Chekhov¹³ – attentive to this Chekhovian poetic where nature is present, and silences and its voids. Imagined for a short theatrical play, the images of *The Seagull or life around the lake, Act 1* were presented at the II Colóquio de Tradução e Criação at UFF (Fluminense Federal University), in 2018. As a work in progress, it was presented also in Bremen, Germany, at the Paradox venue, with the support of Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, in 2019 – together with performance/reading of the poems.

¹² Idem.

¹³ FUENTES, 2022.



film-poem the seagull or life around the lake act 2

#1- film-poems for a short play, the work with images, or a play-poem in process.

More recently, "Act 1" and "Act 2" were also online at Casa Dirce/UERJ – State University of Rio de Janeiro, when "Lectures. Russian short stories and memory narratives" a 2020 project born at UERJ, was recipient of the Local Actions Award "Lei Aldir Blanc" in 2021, 2022.

And "Act 2" was presented during the REECAS Northwest Conference, at Ellison Center, UW, Seattle, United States, in 2022.

I have worked in a dialogue with the play thinking territories, crossing the city, attentive to the life on the margins. Bringing also readings from Chekhov's letters and short stories, I revisit spaces, silences. Something that is not said builds the narrative. And convoke the senses. As we perceive in Chekhov's

stories absences, space, pause, movement, attentive to a theatrical element to these stories.

As said before, open to voids and silences, space and nature appear in Chekhov's narratives already building a tone that will be present in his plays. The author who inaugurated the paths for the modern short story and also for new forms on the theater, bringing ordinary life that flows in the rendering of the scene, texture, time. And in Elena Vássina words, "in Chekhov's dramas the action is driven by pauses, silences, changes of mood".¹⁴ Hence, let us perceive space as an important part, its vivid presence in different moments, as the lake in *The Seagull* in its different appearances, or the stage built in front of the lake. In Act 4, the impression it causes as we hear Medviedenko complaining that the old stage is still there, "It stands there like a skeleton, bare and ugly, and the curtain bangs in the wind. When I walked by it yesterday evening, it seemed to me as if someone was weeping there".¹⁵

In Chekhov's short story "Verotchka", we read:

The whole world seemed to consist of nothing but black silhouettes and wandering white shadows. Ognev, seeing the mist on a moonlight August evening almost for the first time in his life, imagined he was seeing, not nature, but a stage effect in which unskilful workmen, trying to light up the garden with white Bengal fire, hid behind the bushes and let off clouds of white smoke together with the light.¹⁶

And it may remind us of Trepliev/Nina's performance on the lake shore, the failure, the effects, the moon above the horizon reflected in the water.

In *The Seagull*, let us think of the play within the play, a monologue written by Treplev and played by Nina in front of the lake: grotesque scene before the eyes of the small audience, the general soul of the world. And there each thing that has life, the moon and its lantern, the world and its soul, everything is interwoven, even what has ceased to exist. But

¹⁴ VÁSSINA, 2009, p. 65. (translation by S.F.)

¹⁵ CHEKHOV, 2002, n.p.

¹⁶ CHEKHOV, 2014, n.p.

only Treplev takes it seriously, and the doctor appreciates it. Silences that ask to be heard, "and this poor moon lights its lantern in vain". Remembering here Treplev's play, it names what is not there anymore.

And if there are no listeners, whom to tell? To whom can I tell of my joy or unhappiness? Resonating here the question in the title to the short story "Misery", and the urge to find a living soul who is able to listen.

Each time, this world at risk. With the image-poems for a short play, in dialogue with Chekhov's *The Seagull*, I revisit the play within the play, the passage written by Kostia and staged by Nina. In the play, Treplev writes the world after the end, the memory of the world. A text so to speak immersed in symbols, and which will be staged on the improvised stage, in this monologue for Nina. In approximations, senses constructed in reading, dialogues with the work (shades of the Bakhtinian great time), echoes of a silence can be heard: let us remember what Chekhov had written of the colony in Sakhalin Island: "no crickets are heard on winter nights and... above all, there is no homeland."¹⁷ And we remember how in *The Seagull*, in that monologue about the soul of the world, everything has ceased to exist, the sound of the beetles, or the cry of the birds, none of it is heard anymore. "In the meadow the cranes give their waking cry no more and in May the cockchafer are no longer heard in the lime groves."¹⁸

In this sense, I turned my attention to this monologue written by the young writer Treplev for the improvised stage in front of the lake, in the scene that takes place on the estate of his uncle, Sórin. His mother, Arkadina, a renowned actress – and her lover Trigorin, a celebrated writer, both experienced in their careers, will attend the play. Treplev writes about the end of all living things, in the text interpreted by Nina, dressed in white, on the stone:

Men, lions, eagles and partridges, antlered deer, geese, spiders, silent fish which live in the water, starfish and organ-

17 TCHÉKHOV, 2018, p. 45 (translation by S.F.)

18 CHEKHOV, 2002, n.p.

isms invisible to the eye – in short, all life, all life, all life has been extinguished after completing its sad cycle ... For thousands of centuries the earth has not borne a single living being, and this poor moon lights her lantern to no purpose.¹⁹

Faced with the critical and piercing gaze of Treplev's mother, the scene becomes naïve, and yet there is a freshness to it, as the doctor friend of the family, Dorn, who appreciates the play, even says. He sees something new in it, and is touched by it somehow.

Nina at first despises the text because, as she says, there are no living characters, yet in the last act of *The Seagull*, when she bids farewell to Treplev, she will recall this text as something true, authentic, and she says the words again. Now everything has been left behind, and it is a different life, and she realizes that her work on stage is not about glory and glamour, but about believing and following her vocation. Life rips in different directions and she needs to find strength to move on.

A man came by chance, saw a seagull. Bored, he killed it... "An idea for a short story..." Trigorin, writes down in his notebook, when talking to Nina near the lake where he saw the seagull shot down by Treplev. She, Nina, the seagull. And we can echo her voice. One day, a man out of boredom, kills the seagull, destroys her, a topic for a short story – a theme for what we lose, things so fragile and so strong are wounded, destroyed each day of our lives. A theme for a short play,

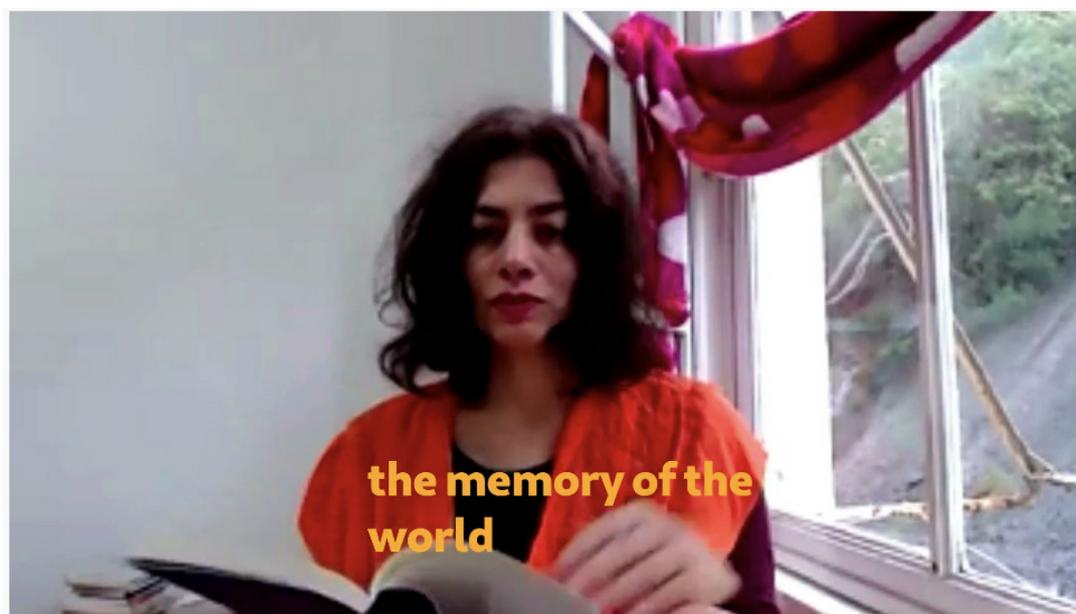
to those who come after us
subject for a short play
subject for a country
wounded in mid-flight.

aos que virão depois de nós
tema para uma peça curta
tema para um país
ferido em pleno voo.²⁰

Remembering, thinking the world. Again, each time, this

¹⁹ Idem.

²⁰ FUENTES, 2021, p. 20 (translation by S.F.)



film-poem the seagull or life around the lake act 2

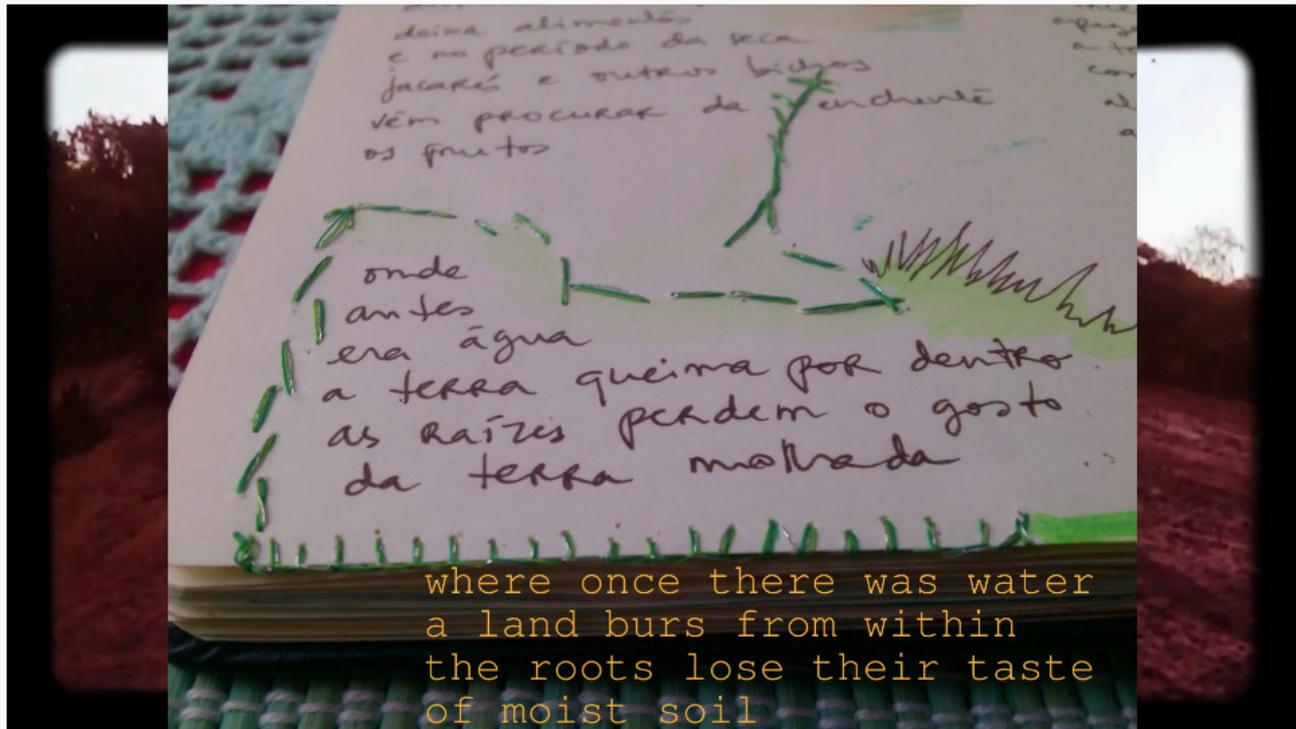
#2- part of the poem.

world at risk. Lives in danger, silenced, at risk of being lost – what insists in its strength and fragility. Against erasements and flames. Thinking and remembering, as Hannah Arendt writes – this necessary state that prevents us from being taken over by barbarism.²¹ He who destroys, because doesn't think and remember, is incapable of creating. Hence, attentive, also, to some of Anton Chekhov's short stories, this study aims to think of our contemporary world and its silences, and spaces, as significant elements that inform and build narratives and sensibilities.

As for *The Seagull*, the monologue, a text on the margin within the play, the text by Treplev that has no place, how close it is, thinking of it in these times, of the emptiness of a world of losses, of wounds – of wars.

In this regard, in questions, echoes, silences, this study-essay-work-in-progress aims to contribute to a dialogue with Chekhov's work, considering its importance to our times. Helping us to follow over ruins, with the pieces and remains,

21 Cf. ARENDT, 2004, p.162 (translation by S.F.)



film-poem the seagull or life around the lake act 2

#3- image-poem

organizing chaos and oblivion, and the violence of erasure. A construct as part of a play – poem – image in my dialogue with readings of Chekhov, crossing the space of the city, coming and going from the university building, thinking of our institutions of culture and memories, Brazil national museum in flames, in 2018, and the trees and lives on the margins of the waters – and on the edge of the city, our losses, and how they become very close.

In that place on the margins, the voices in Chekhov's off-centered space, and which are heard now, come to us, vibrate. Around the lake. Around the corner of the cities.

Being able to listen. To see, to perceive. Senses and textures that we bring to our repertoire make us alive. As in many of Chekhov's works, a sparkling dust may come out of a glance at an object, unnoticed until then.

The film-poem act 1 shows in images and movement, cross-

ing the city, lines turned into poems that will be read in film-poem act 2. From the bus, through the window we see the boats, the margins of the water, all this life on the path towards university, at the classroom entrance explosion of light, as we read on the black board: "A gaivota ou a vida em torno do lago/ The seagull or life around the lake". A letter by Chekhov, crossing times, Rio and Moscow, students claiming for liberty, the right of expression

E nesse diálogo com minhas leituras de Tchekhov , viver a universidade, trazê-la para a cena teatral (poema vídeo imagens), e por ela os caminhos da cidade. A tradução na conversa entre espaços, gêneros, formas, e tradução como o "abalo do estrangeiro na língua" (Benjamim).

In film-poem act 2, the landscape changes from the city paths, subway, street protests, university rooms as characters, to inside space (pandemic had already started, differently from the first scenes in act 1 that take place in 2018). And it changes also bringing other losses: of the roots, water, earth, life by the lake. The intense life on the shores, all that is alive. If in film-poem act 1 culture, the vulnerable, the invisible ones, culture in danger appear as we had the national museum on fire, and the question comes: what is so strong but fragile that can be lost every day, or is in danger of being lost, in film-poem act 2 a light is thrown towards the plural identities that speak our land, the roots, the animals, their lives taken by fire in the Pantanal.

As we read in the image above the poem crossing the page:

Where once there was water
a land burns form within
the roots lose their taste
of moist soil

onde antes era água
a terra queima por dentro
as raízes perdem o gosto
da terra molhada²²

22 FUENTES, 2021, p.27.



film-poem the seagull or life around the lake act 2

#4 – image-poem

And in view of further losses – fires in the Pantanal, when a quarter of the vast wetland in Brazil has burned, in 2020. Listening to the animals, the plants, the land and those who live in the lines that cross the cities. On the colors on a collage by artist Rita Gaspar, a dialogue with the images of grey trees on the background, their shadows, and the rain, its insistence, its presence.

A letter to us, and the leaves in flames, or green leaves, red leaves, alternate in the sequence so to touch paradigms that bring the tension between life and its flame, this dance of fragility and strength, life and death as a cycle or, as destruction: out of idleness, a man comes and kills the seagull. In this tension, the leaf, the flame, its colors, and the letter. Preserving, bringing from one hand to another, a letter capable of making this movement of bringing hither and thither, seagull, phoenix. The seagull refuses to die.

Here a part of act 2:

act 2²³

a letter to us

the end
of the centuries
within the play
the poem
within the play
the world
within the play

konstantin writes the world after the end
the memory of the world
a text for nina
the play
within
the play
a gesture
for the improvised stage

[through the classroom window
the field
the tree and a stool
a boat
the garbage dump in the landscape
on the blackboard
a drawing of a lake
and a stage
with pieces of curtain
and splatter of paint
on the blackboard
one reads
life around the lake
museum

nina

seagull

ashes

phoenix

23 FUENTES, 2021, p. 13-14

ato n. 2
uma carta até nós

o fim
dos séculos
dentro da peça
o poema
dentro da peça
o mundo
dentro da peça

kóstia escreve o mundo depois do fim
a memória do mundo
um texto para nina
a peça
dentro
da peça
um gesto
para o palco improvisado

[pela janela da sala de aula
o campo
a árvore e um banquinho
o barco
a caçamba de lixo na paisagem.
no quadro negro
o desenho do lago
e do palco
com bocados de cortina
e pedaços de tinta
no quadro
se lê
a vida em torno do lago
museu

nina
 gaivota
cinzas
 fênix

[..]

Also the image of writing, the movement that it conveys, a word written on the blackboard, on the wall, marking a trajectory in time, and within the city, leaving its prints to those who come after us. Subject for a short play. Subject for a country wounded in mid-flight.

The image of the letter evoked in act 2, as we just read “a letter to us [...] the poem/within the play/the world/within the play” appears and returns in the film-poem “entr’act: letter leaf flame”.



film-poem the seagull or life around the lake act 2

#5 – image-poem in act 2 – it brings images of act 1 being presented at Paradox, in Bremen, November 2019, with support of Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung. The word Gaivota/Seagull written on the blackboard has its origin in actual space/time of a class I was giving at the university (Russian literature and culture at UFRJ 2018, as I was working with the students creative writing/monologues after the play by Chekhov). Bringing to the scene the space of the university, and thinking the trajectories that cross its space, is part of the project as well: to think this instant shared. How it travels, as word/image inscribing itself on the cities. And to think the space of the blackboard on different walls, crossing lines and borders.



gaivota entreato carta folha flame

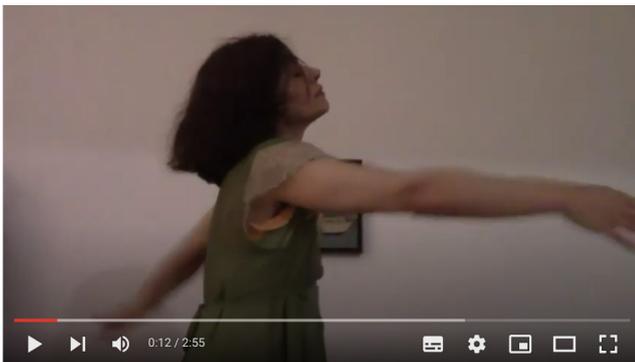
#6 – entr’act – letter, leaf, flame – a dance, a movement, flight and fire, leaf or flame, a letter to us.



gaivota entreato carta folha flame



gaivota entreato carta folha flame



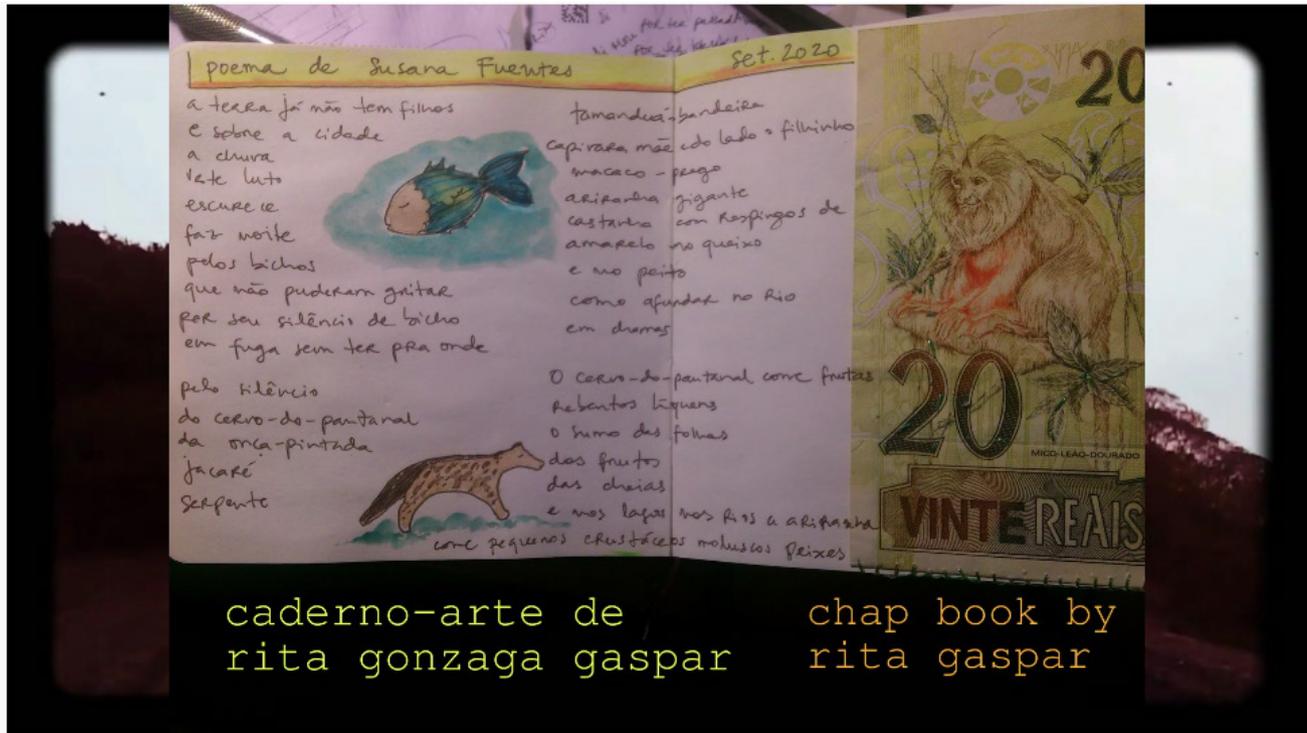
gaivota entreato carta folha flame

#7 and #8 – entr’act – letter, leaf, flame – instant of the letter: Holocaust Memorial in Berlin, November 2019. In this entr’act the letter appears next in this never stopping movement, on the steps of a building in Moscow, during the same travel to present works in the two cities, just before pandemic. Then, without being able to leave our homes, the dance and research continues between the walls # 9



film-poem the seagull or life around the lake act 2

#10 – image-poem – the insistence of the rain, and a thin, solitary tree, losing its leaves or are they starting to sprout? the void, a presence that insists, alone, and asks to be seen. Landscape as character in its silence.



film-poem the seagull or life around the lake act 2

#11 – image-poem – dialogue with nature on collage by artist
Rita Gaspar – for the poems of *The Seagull or life around the lake*
(FUENTES, 2021)



#12 – Film-poem for a short play. After pandemic, the process returns bringing the dialogue between cities and within arts, thinking, as I had originally, the scene on stage, film-poems for a short-play. August 2022, at Kumpelnest 3000, Berlin, I was invited to present the work in progress at “1. Sarau artístico” created and organized by dancer and poet Wanderson Wanderley.

As part of the film-poem, poem-play, as I said about image #1, the lines, the words, happening outside the pages, moving in different expressive ways, as the many lives around the lake insist in details, dancing, crossing spaces inside, outside, as we may see below on the image #13. A frame from act 2 - other living creatures join the space, the instant of a little flight within the house or a long route in the air, into the green.

#13 – act 2 image-poem/ photos and images by Susana Fuentes



film-poem the seagull or life around the lake act 2

References

- ARENDDT, Hannah. "Algumas questões de filosofia moral". Tradução de Rosaura Eichenberg. In: ARENDT, Hannah. *Responsabilidade e julgamento*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2004. p. 112-212.
- BENJAMIN, Walter. "Imagens de pensamento". Edição e Tradução de João Barrento. In: BENJAMIN, Walter. *Imagens de pensamento/Sobre o haxixe e outras drogas*. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2015. p.7-132.
- CHEKHOV, Anton. *Anton Chekhov Plays*. Translated by Peter Carson. London: Penguin Books, 2002.
- CHEKHOV, Anton. "Verotchka", "The Murder". Translated by Constance Garnett. In: CHEKHOV, Anton. *Complete Works of Anton Chekhov*. Hastings, East Sussex: Delphi Publishing, 2014.
- DIDI-HUBERMAN, G. "A dialética do visual, ou o jogo do esvaziamento". Tradução de Paulo Neves. In: DIDI-HUBERMAN, G. A. *O que vemos, o que nos olha*. São Paulo: Editora 34, 1998. p. 79-116.
- FUENTES, Susana. *A gaivota ou a vida em torno do lago: tema para uma peça curta*. Rio de Janeiro: 7Letras, 2021.
- FUENTES, Susana. "Apagamentos da memória e lugares de pensamento – lembrar, pensar o mundo com Tchékhev". In: Silva, Douglas Rosa da; Pivetta, Rejane; Bittencourt, Rita Lenira (org.). *Literatura: modos de resistir*. Porto Alegre: Bestiário / Class, 2021. Available at: <https://abralic.org.br/congresso/downloads/publicacoes/ABRALIC-eixo-3-volume-2-literatura-modos-de-resistir.pdf> (Accessed: 30 May 2022).
- FUENTES, Susana. *The Seagull or life around the lake, film-poem / act 1*. Susana Fuentes: Rio de Janeiro, 2022. (4'29") minutes. Available at: <https://youtu.be/qwulkinYZaY> (Accessed: 19 August 2022).
- FUENTES, Susana. *The Seagull or life around the lake, film-poem / act 2*. Susana Fuentes: Rio de Janeiro, 2022. (3'44") minutes.

Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnbfVMbT-3vA>

(Accessed: 30 May 2022).

FUENTES, Susana. *The Seagull or life around the lake, film-poem / entr'act*. Susana Fuentes: Rio de Janeiro, 2022. (2'55") minutes. Available at: <https://youtu.be/V2fGQcyHK-c> (Accessed: 19 August 2022).

TCHÉKHOV, Anton. *A Dama do Cachorrinho e Outros Contos*. Tradução, posfácio e notas de Boris Schnaiderman. São Paulo: Editora 34, 2006.

TCHÉKHOV, Anton. *A Ilha de Sacalina: Notas de viagem*. Tradução e apresentação de Rubens Figueiredo. São Paulo: Todavia, 2018.

TCHÉKHOV, Anton. *O Assassinato e outras histórias*. Seleção, tradução e prefácio de Rubens Figueiredo. São Paulo: Cosac Naivy, 2006.

VÁSSINA, Elena. *A.P. Tchekhov: Um clássico contemporâneo da literatura russa*. Revista Cult, São Paulo, v. 12, n. 132, fev. 2009, p. 62-65.