

"PIRANHA": THE GREAT REASON

About the Brazilian dancer and performer Wagner Schwartz (currently living and working in Paris), I wrote, one day after a memorable intervention at the Llansol colloquium at the Arrabida Convent (2003), "a text becomes gesture and body, untying its knots." Wagner Schwartz (which literally means "the darkness challenger", as I wrote in 2003) returned again with a solo performance, alone with the prodigy of his body, entitled "Piranha - The Dramaturgy of Migration", on May 14th, at the 13th Factory Festival (of Movement), which took place at the Balletteatro Auditorium in Porto [Portugal].

The coordinates of this performance, just like the previous one, follow an epigraph from Maria Gabriela Llansol's text "Finite": "To work the hard matter, moves the tongue; to live almost alone attracts, little by little, the absolutely alone."

In Wagner Schwartz's new show, where "Piranha is the metaphor of a body in reclusion" (read in the program), the absolutely alone is the body exposed (under a focus of intense light); body ex-posed, placed outside himself, body ex-cess, ec-static body. Vibrant and energetic presence progressively in-tolerable, because it is the living proof of the intuition of Spinoza (and then also Llansol) that "nobody knows what a body can do." Indeed it is. I witnessed it, full of amazement before the im-probable, and fearing of that the body would fail.

Everything happens in a time of such intensity that seems outside of time, despite the clear progression in the process of tension and pursuit that seeks to sustain the continuous spasm of the body under siege. So Llansol also envisioned, in a limit-situation, in "Amigo e Amiga" ("Friend and Friend"): "... fragments that are beginning to pulse on all sides of my body. It happens to be an exciting incommunication"; and "the matter turns into energy." And, Llansol continuous, the body thereby enclosed in a square of (black) light granted to it, becomes the "emissary of a strange beauty."

Wagner's body in this performance is led to unthinkable areas (because they are not attainable by thought), zones of risk, of eruption, of ecstasy, and of revolt - and of all their reversals of beauty, there, before our incredulous eyes, at the "sheer intention" of that "body-risk" (as Llansol says in yet another book).

What we see is the embodiment of violence of all processes of mutation, of displacement, of migration, forced or not, conscious or not, in a body absolutely alone. Here we are in the pure, dense but also beautiful, "escarpment of mutation", with all that it can contain: "the fear, the cold, the transport, his body torn apart, the sudden idea and feeling, hands clasped and estranged _____ and all its reversals" (Burning Text Joshua). It seems to me that this is the theme of Piranha, of Wagner Schwartz, a brilliant and terrible acting (because we know, "every Angel is terrible", and the sublime participates of this terror) from his "tuned body" 'in which a spirit becomes body in the body, a full body, pure immanence with soul (the soul, we read in Spinoza, is the idea - inseparable - from the body).

But to get even closer to the in-describable experience of this show (insinuated by a short video, made only of words, as if announcing, by absolute contrast, the pure, vibrant image of the body below), to challenge the boundaries of words, to glimpse the depths of the "fissure of desire" (Artaud), you may need to turn to someone who, like Friedrich Nietzsche, whom Llansol calls "the man of the book" and "master of images and eternity" (and of the knowledge of the body), speaks in *Zarathustra* of the body as "the great reason." In his trance, in transit to the regions that understanding will never reach, Wagner Schwartz's body-mind-soul knows it, recognizes it without recourse to minor reasons, the vast grounds of his body, as Nietzsche says, "does not say 'I', but does 'I'."

Piranha is this: a body besieged, bombed, strafed by unremitting digital noise that translates the violence of a contemporary time: insensitive, amorphous, ever equal and unaware of the large and subtle reason of the body and the land and the self that itself becomes - un-knowing itself. Of a body in the process of doing what the 'I' does, with nothing to say, says all: shows himself, exposes himself, transcends himself. Becomes the body alone, absolutely alone.

João Barrento

[Philosopher, essayist, translator of German Philosophy and Literature, director of the Espaço Llansol ["Llansol Residence"], he is one of the most important intellectuals of Portugal. He has published books such *A palavra transversal* (1996), *Uma seta no coração do dia* (1998), *A espiral vertiginosa* (2001), *A alma e o caos* (2001), *O cardo e a rosa* (2002), *O poço de Babel* (2002), *Ler o que não foi escrito* (2005), *A escala do meu mundo* (2006), *O género intranquilo* (2010) and the notebooks of Llansol.