



I cried endlessly in this movie.
Just waterfalls sprouting from the
the innermost crevice
where lid meets the eye
meets the highest
extent of the nose
The water must have come from rain
Rain pouring down at the peak of my brain
Or maybe it was snow
The peak of my brain in a spot unreached
I could finally feel the origin of
These waterfalls
at this specific
Waterfall

the opening scene of *Una Mujer Fantástica*
is a long pan of a waterfall

The thing I loved most about
A Fantastic Woman is Daniela Vega.
I've never felt such strong adoration.
It became so clear when I saw her face filling
the entirety of a screen
at Arclight theater in Hollywood.

We can exist
Not only can we exist
we can thrive
Not only can we thrive
We can experience incredible traumas
and overcome
Not only can we overcome
but we
can be fucking stunning while doing so
And I mean beauty in
In every
possible way

Earlier in life I did ecological work in Ecuador
and prior to that was in other parts of South America
under different circumstances
I saw how trans women were treated there
Some of my earliest memories of
seeing other trans women
was while walking around Lima or Quito or Guayaquil
I could see what society at that time
Thought of trans women as people
People with similar minds to myself
It was heart wrenching

To see Danielas face so large
So present
In a mainstream theater so far away
From Chile

I felt for the first time in almost 30 years
What it feels like to feel mirrored
To see a latinx trans woman on the big screen

surviving against the odds
To make it to this point
In life
To see her play a character that she said
is similar to parts of her own story
And look so incredibly on point
So incredibly stoic
So incredibly vulnerable and realistic in
conveying /acting out the emotions
and experiences of
Marina

While most likely reliving
And confronting her own trauma
For the believability of her role

I've never understood how powerful
mirroring could be
How much once it's experienced the
The void that always existed is
Then less vacant
The void that needs to see people
Like oneself thriving and being strong
The void that needs to see someone
Like them cared about
Loved
And respected
To not look in the mirror
see oneself
And feel utterly alone
Am I the only one like me ?

I was told a part of the experience of adjusting to hormone replacement therapy is having
A hormonal experience similar to that of a young girl going through puberty
Experiencing feelings that relate to the younger earlier part of the human experience

I feel overwhelming **love** for Daniela Vega.
More than feeling mirrored I admire her very existence

This exhibition is about Daniela
If I could spell her name in the stars
I would

-Puppies Puppies (Jade Kuriki Olivo)

notes on this exhibition:

This exhibition, echoes the structure of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. There are three avatars represented: Cielo Oscuro, the subject of two portraits hanging in the office, the voice of the artist in the press text and depicted in a drawing as a person made of stone whose tears are waterfalls¹, and actor Daniela Vega as she stars in *Una Mujer Fantástica*. All three people are latinx trans women.

Oscuro, who was photographed on the first day of hormone replacement therapy, is a kind of Ghost of Transition Past, just beginning the process that Puppies began about a year ago.

The press text reflects Puppies in the present, a piece of writing based on similar writings that the artist produces as part of the therapy required by doctors for her to be allowed to transition. Just as the ghost of Christmas present shows Scrooge something invisible to him in the present moment, this kind of free writing is a tool used by her psychologist to help her see aspects of herself that are not generally visible to her in daily life.

The hopeful image of the ghost of Puppies' future is an actor who is further in the process of transitioning, and in the process of constructing a thriving, confident life for herself. Vega, who helped write the film using events from her life and whose masterful performance carries *Una Mujer Fantástica*, has turned the hardships of her existence into power, pride, and (at least as she represents herself in the interviews Puppies has watched over and over) happiness.

Unlike Dickens' story, wherein the ghosts offer lessons to Scrooge, Jade offers something to her ghosts: support and encouragement to her past a trans woman 9 years younger than her (as a condition of the work, proceeds from the sale of these photos will be donated to help fund Oscuro's transition), compassion and understanding to her present self, and an unbridled love for her future self.

¹ Alison Veit, *Jade*, 2018
graphite on paper