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ELIZABETE BALČŪS

AQUIS LUCIDUS

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I dream of myself bare
freed from flesh
a moment before the word
gives me voice a moment
before in mid-leap
the world encases me
like moss
impenetrable space

before in mid-leap
the world encases me
like a wave

The world, a moment before its creation. I see it when deep asleep, in dreams, in my mind's tranquil eye. In the deepest deep and highest height, I glimpse its traces. I remember myself as colour, before skin bloomed all over it, warm and delicate. I forget myself like a wave washes a wave away, to be born anew.

I take the shape of my body
like water takes the shape of its vessel
forgetting the river for a while

I take the shape of the world
I grow like a stream
grows into the sea
skin grows over skin
like moss over a stone
a hand over a warm
hand

I dream of myself
before in mid-leap
the world like water
closes in on me

The world before judgment – where things exist in and of themselves. In phenomenology, there exists the term «epochē» which represents abstaining from any judgment about the external world, from everything that is not consciousness. It is an attempt to observe the world before the mind has had a chance to invent it. Water is often used as a symbol for communication, connection, and identity – for everything fluid and capable of assuming various forms. Language, too, can be perceived as a vessel of a certain shape, seemingly rendering water (an idea) definite and confined by its form, imposing on it the assumption that the vessel existed before there ever was water, that water must have found its true form within the vessel.

Elina Vendija Rībena

I once found myself in a dream in the interstitial space, or waiting place, before one of my births on Earth. The people in that place did not have bodies, but they had colours. I am orange. The different colours were wandering around the high-rise, steamy and humid, waiting for their turn in the big pool, or birth on Earth. I knew that I was not in the in-between space for the first or the last time. When it was my time, I put on my best jump, said goodbye to the other colours and said: «We will meet hundreds of thousands of times, you just won't remember it.» Eagerly and intrigued, I jumped into the water and with insane speed and bliss for my precise leap, like a fountain, I hit the Earth. On this journey the water erased my memories, but I knew that because I was bright orange, the water could not completely erase all my colour. Here I am, trying to remember what the water tried to wash away.

Elizabete

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Elizabete Balčus (1990) is a performance artist and musician who transforms herself into an art object in her performances. Her soundscapes and audiovisual performances lead the listener through echoing loops of flute and ethereal voice, free jazz improvisations, and clicking electropop beats in an oscillating trance between awokeness and sleep.

Born in Riga, Elizabete Balčus grew up in a very creative environment, part theatre, part architect's office, and participated in various theatre productions before going to school. At a very young age, Elizabete started music school, specialising in the flute. In 2016, Balchus released the album *Conarium* on the UK label Liminal Noise. The album was included in the book *Perfect Sound Whatever* by British comedian James Acaster as one of the best albums released in 2016. Her album *Hotel Universe* was released on Montreal-based label Mothland in September 2022.

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