



# Jornal O Cola

FROM HUMANITIES TO HUMANITIES

REPORT

## 25 YEARS CELEBRATING CINEMA

Get to know the history of  
FLUL's Nucleus of  
Cinema and Video!

(p. 15)



### MADNESS!

«We are cowards. We fear the questions. Well, not me! I live the questions! The doubt does not haunt me, it is the fountain that gives me life. Every day I am reborn – how can I admit to being the same person as yesterday?»

p. 2

### BONES

«When the silence swallows the night  
And no voice comes to save me  
My body doesn't control  
Neither wants to control  
Everything that encompasses me  
and that wants to kill me.»

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### O ESQUELÉTICO SALVO DA FORÇA POR DEUS

«He was so skinny, so gaunt and featherlight that when he was sentenced to be hanged, his weight was not enough for the rope to do its job when they put his head in the noose.»

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# Top 5 Livrarias em Lisboa

## 1. Greta Feminist Bookshop

Greta, a project by Lorena Travassos, is a bookstore and a space that sells artistic and literary material produced by women, such as books, graphic arts, magazines and zines. As a bookstore, it offers self-published books or books published by "small" publishers that don't have a place on the shelves of the big bookstores. It also hosts debates, workshops and book launches. There is also room for the development of gender studies, contributing to the feminist debate. Greta is a safe place for communities to meet and debate. Above all, it is "an open space [for] anyone interested in getting to know the publications and artistic productions produced by women."

## 2. Piena - Libri Persone Visioni

Piena is the first independent Italian bookshop in Lisbon. It is described by Elisa Sartor and Sara Cappai, partners and friends, as being "the right place for those looking for the Italian language to feel closer to home or for those who want to discover and get to know it without having to take a plane. It's a bridge that connects Portugal and Italy." On the shelves of this bookshop, you can find novels, short stories and essays by Italian authors, as well as foreign books translated into the same language. This space also hosts literary events and events dedicated to art in all its forms. It is a place of cultural exchange between different communities that is well worth a visit.

## 3. Sá da Costa Bookshop

Sá da Costa, a bookshop founded in 1913, is now over a century old and located in the city center. It's a "must" stop if you're mainly looking for rarities from the 15th to the 20th century and manuscripts, modern literature and even more recent books! As well as stacks and shelves full of books, there are paintings, old photographs, records and magazines, postcards, maps and many other

fascinating objects that turn this bookshop into an antique shop and museum! The bookshop also hosts various events, such as painting, sculpture and jewelry exhibitions, as well as workshops and book launches.

## 4. Travessa Bookshop

Travessa, a bookstore that originally opened in 1975 in Rio de Janeiro and later expanded to Príncipe Real in Lisbon, is the ideal place for book lovers. It doesn't just sell books (in Portuguese, English, French or Italian), but also "literary merchandise." Holding regular events, from book launches to dialogues with authors, this bookshop is guaranteed to be a lively place that all readers should visit!

## 5. INDIE not a bookshop + Déjà Lu

INDIE not a bookshop is a recent bookshop (created during the pandemic) dedicated to all things literature: although it sells mostly books in English, you can also find works in Portuguese, signed by the respective authors, literary merchandise and even artistic posters! This bookstore also holds discussion events with authors and book launches/presentations and, more recently in partnership with its "neighboring" bookstore, Déjà Lu, where you can find second-hand books at very affordable prices. It also has its own book club and creative writing workshops.

## Madness!

Author: Alexandra Guțu  
Translation: Maria Pires  
Illustrator: Alexandra Guțu

Dear Campos soul, how I wish you would reincarnate in me! And how I will accept you, difficult it is to be me. What originality? It's over! The thoughts have reached their limit – yours and mine! Let's live, then. What does it matter to us the meaning of this or that? Nothing is purely defined. We created the definitions and conformed to them. Let's continue, then.

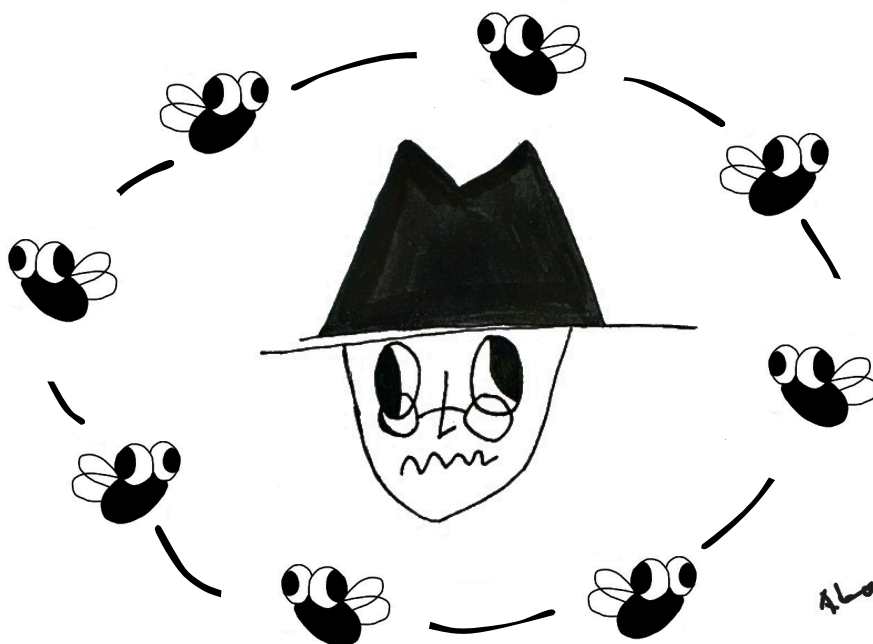
We are cowards. We fear the questions. Well, not me! I live the questions! The doubt does not haunt me, it is the fountain that gives me life. Every day I am reborn – how can I admit to being the same person as yesterday? Those philosophers... I could not be like them! What do they know about anything? Anything at all! I don't want to know anything. I was cursed, however, with this damned conscience. I don't want to think! I don't want philosophy! Damned theories... The nature they say is Man's haunts me, see how hypocritical I am! Admit it!

Ah, suffering! Man's right arm! Let's stop running from suffering.. Let's drown ourselves in the only pleasures of life – the things that do

not exist. Let us not free ourselves from the hold of imagination, our true friend. It is in her that we find the escape from this life and the horrors created by us. Let's drown in that beautiful and vast sea. Let's look at the sky and imagine all the things that do not exist. How beautiful they are! Ah, to be unconscious in our conscience. If we suffer, well, what else can we do?

What if I were a fly? To live waiting for the sound of the snap! My body twisted, crushed. To be free! Living with no fears. Just a fly. What about Man? Foolish! He thinks he's so superior to the fly and look at him. Maybe the fly is the philosopher of life! It understands life, for it knows nothing of it. How wise it is! The fly's only misfortune is the Man, what else does it have? It flies freely, with no thought. Life and death? Meanings? Definitions? Misery is all Man's! And let him keep it. But what a hypocrite I have been! How do I know if the fly does not think?

I hope to become a fly tomorrow. What a mess I am!



## An appeal for the return of the *vita contemplativa*

Author: João Amaral  
Translators:  
Maria Pires & Mariana Faísca

The pathological state in the 21st century is marked, essentially, by what we call neurological diseases, of which are highlighted: depression, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), borderline personality disorder (BPD) and hyperactivity. The tendency for the exponential rise of this type of disturbances is the result of what the philosopher Byung-Chul Han calls 'excess of positivity'. What is this concept, and what is its cause? We can consider this question and its possible answers as what is at the heart of the South Korean author's socio-psychological analysis in *The Burnout Society*.

Born in 1959, in Seoul, South Korea, Byung-Chul Han is consensually recognised as one of the great thinkers and cultural theorists in the context of contemporary philosophy. With a doctorate in the work of Martin Heidegger, Han studied Philosophy, German Literature and Theology, always in Germany, where he also became a citizen. Currently a professor at the Berlin University of the Arts, he has been teaching Philosophy and Cultural studies since 2012, and is the author of over a dozen of theoretical works and essays. *The Burnout Society*, released in 2010, is his most well-known work and not by chance. It is perhaps the example that best translates his philosophy; through which we are able to understand the main themes and concerns of his philosophical vision regarding society.

Han states that the 21st century faces a situation distinct from previous periods, in which the main afflictions were caused by reasons of bacterial or viral origin. The historical past, before the turn of the century, can be correlated to an era of immunology. That is, a society where concepts opposite to one another: friend and foe; self and other; inside and outside were specifically and critically pointed out and distinguished from one another. Just by looking at the Cold War, during which immunological terms such as 'attack', 'defence', 'friend' and 'enemy' were predominant in the discourse of the public media sphere. Now, due to the advancement of immunological technology, this state of virality has been fought against - thus, the 21st century is characterised by another pathological environment, in which the immunological state

is being replaced by another. The paradigm proves incompatible with the process of globalisation. The society that once operated based on immunology, through borders, transitions, and walls that prevented exchanges and interactions is no longer the current one:

'More and more, contemporary society is emerging as a constellation that escapes the immunological scheme of organization and defense altogether. It is marked by the disappearance of otherness and foreignness. Otherness represents the fundamental category of immunology. Every immunoreaction is a reaction to Otherness. Now, However, Otherness is being replaced with difference, which does not entail immunoreaction. (...) Such difference lacks the sting of foreignness, as it were, which would provoke a strong immunoreaction. Foreignness itself is being deactivated into a formula of consumption. The alien is giving way to the exotic. The tourist travels through it. The tourist - that is, the consumer - is no longer an immunological subject.'[1]

Thus, we find ourselves at a time when negativity is absent. The dialectic of negativity



**The feeling that each individual is the primarily responsible for their own success, through merit and overproduction, distinguishes contemporary society by the effect it has on the common individual (...). Each individual is in a constant and uninterrupted state of personal confrontation with the goal of achieving a supposed prize or material reward.**

that characterises immunology has been exchanged for the dialectic of positivity: 'Harm does not come from negativity alone, but also from positivity - not just from the Other or the foreign, but also from the Same.'[2] In a system dominated by the Same, there is no need or even concern to create immunological defence.

According to Han, the violence of positivity stems from overproduction, overperformance and overcommunication. These phenomena, which the philosopher claims had their origin in late capitalism, driven by technological forces which, in turn, contribute to economic forces, are his main concern. The interaction between political, economic and sociological aspects with issues of mental and emotional health (highlighting depression, hyperactivity, mental burnout, bipolarity and attention deficit) is at the centre of the book. According to Han, the neoliberalism that defines today's society is an increasingly individualistic and psychologically violent system, proudly affirming the illusion that 'anything is possible'.

The feeling that each individual is primarily responsible for their own success, through merit and overproduction, distinguishes contemporary society by the effect it has on the common individual, on the way people see themselves and their life goals. Han compares this interpersonal relationship to the master-slave relationship. Each individual is in a constant and uninterrupted state of personal confrontation with the goal of achieving a supposed prize or material reward, to the point where behaviour becomes hyperactive, draining and excessively competitive.

At one point, there's mention of the famous French thinker Michel Foucault, known for originating post-structuralism. Han establishes a distinction between his theory of the society of positivity and the theory of a society of discipline envisioned by Foucault. On one hand, the two present a certain connection (and even continuity), as they aim to criticise the capitalist obsession when it comes to the incentive of maximising production at any cost, which operates, in both theories, in the face of the 'social subconscious'. However, Byun-Chul Han thinks that, once the limits of disciplinary technology have been reached, it was necessary to impose on the population a paradigm shift that continued to have as its essential function the increase of productivity. The subject, unconscious in the face of social injustices, has already completed the disciplinary phase. Now,

the focus is simply and solely on increasing productivity. And, according to Han, the ideal way to make this system a reality is through the disappearance of negativity (which was at the base of the disciplinary society imagined by Foucault), betting on excess positivity. The great asset of the society that operates under excess positivity rather than negativity is the tremendously perverse scheme to impose on the individual the illusion that he is a free being. 'The complaint of the depressive individual, "Nothing is possible" can only occur in a society that thinks "Nothing is impossible"'[3].

What is, then, the solution that can be presented to us for this deplorable situation to which we are all subjected? In order to present us with the ideas that will help us overcome the violence of individualism, Byung-Chul Han decides to invoke (more than once) another figure in the philosophy field, a critic of the age of modernity: Friedrich Nietzsche. After a chapter in which he contests the *vita activa* defended by Hannah Arendt in *The Human Condition*, Han alludes to Nietzsche and the importance of the opposite philosophy: the *vita contemplativa*. In the fifth chapter – *The Pedagogy of Seeing* – the author's essential interest is the denunciation of activities so praised and concepts so valued in a society in which eternal competition reigns. The notion of multitasking is, according to Han, an authentically commonplace practice in the animal kingdom. Going even further, he suggests that it is what distinguishes the irrational animal from the human being. Ordinary multitasking, characteristic of wild animals, is precisely what prevents them from achieving rationality. An irrational animal must divide its attention between several tasks. 'Active men are generally wanting in the higher activity... in this regard they are lazy. [...] The active roll as the stone rolls, in obedience to the stupidity of the laws of mechanics.'[4]

He goes on, by indicating that cultural and scientific advances are mostly due to the capacity for contemplation and reflection, as opposed to incessant and futile activity. What Han calls 'immersive reflection' is increasingly out of use, being replaced by hyperactive attention. Since the mind of the average man in the twenty-first century has no time – or space – for boredom, it consequently has no time for 'creative freedom'.

Also in the third chapter, *Profound Boredom*,

the idea that this is necessary for a really creative or healthy action to take place is defended. It is only through the contemplative gaze and a deep attention – not superficial, that is, focused on the essence of things, rather than the hyperactive and multitasking – that Man comes into contact with the world and is able to express art of value. Ideally, through that expression you can find your own value in that same world. Distancing himself from the sociologist Alain Ehrenberg, Han criticises the analogy that the Frenchman makes between the individual in today's society and Friedrich Nietzsche's 'Übermensch'. In opposition to Ehrenberg, he considers that the current subject of performance is anything but 'über' sovereign before himself. The subject of the performance is destined to the state of depression; it is a working animal that does nothing but exploit itself. It is predator and prey at the same time. Han, substantiating by means of a direct quotation, emphasises Nietzsche's position on the unhappiness that is hyperactivity and, in opposition, the importance that contemplativeness brings with it.

'Even Nietzsche, who replaced Being with Will, knew that human life ends in deadly hyperactivity when every contemplative element is driven out: *From lack of response our civilization is turning into a new barbarism. At no time have the active, that is to say the restless, counted for more. That is why one of the most necessary corrections to the character of mankind that have to be taken in hand is a considerable strengthening of the contemplative element in it.*'[5]

References:

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## 50 Years of April 25 International Congress

50 years later, the revolutionary process of 1974-75 continues to be the subject of discussion in various disciplines of the social sciences and humanities, through multiple approaches that help to understand it in all its complexity.

As part of the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the April Revolution, the 50 Years of April 25 International Congress will be held at the University Rectory from May 2 to 4, 2024.

## May spring come

Author: Catarina Pereira  
Translator: Mariana Faísca  
Illustrator: Mariana Faísca

And I just want spring to come,  
Come once more, to hear the swallows chirp  
And feel the buzzing of the bees inside my eardrum.  
Smell the breeze of the sun on my skin.

And I just want spring to come,  
Come once more, to feel your warm touch  
And question your words.  
Listen to what they said about me to your friends and acquaintances.

And I just want spring to come,  
Come once more, but with you by my side.  
And that you laugh more, louder, and exaggerated,  
With your voice dragged and hoarse, ancient.

And I just want spring to come,  
Come once more, without much thought.  
And without remembering our mortality,  
Our ends and our final path.

And I just want spring to come,  
Come once more, shameless,  
And that you don't forget me.  
That you look after me, here and then.

And I just want spring to come,  
To come once again, but hurry!  
And that it never ends,  
So that my time with you never ends.

And I just want spring to never end,  
May it be infinite, to never say goodbye to you  
And to never forget your voice.  
To be forever and ever Grandma's pride.



## The emaciated man saved from the noose by God

Author: Manoel Teixeira  
Translator: Catarina Pereira

He was so skinny, so gaunt and featherlight that when he was sentenced to be hanged, his weight was not enough for the rope to do its job when they put his head in the noose. The crowd watching the execution granted that there was no other explanation for the incident than an unequivocal sign from the Almighty that the fortunate man's life should be preserved. A true miracle never seen before. From the punishing fury that the mob feels when it comes to an alleged criminal, they leapt to the ecstasy of faith. The one that shows us the enlightening will of God and elucidates us about the mission that brought us to Earth in His name.

From that day forward, no other job was more dignified and praised; no other task was more prioritised to the village population, than to protect the life and body of Reynard from any danger that would ravage his existence. With the exception, perhaps, of the great fire that broke out in the Chapel of Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted, also known as the Mother Church. Although it was the only one within a five-kilometre radius and of such size that it could barely fit all of the eighty-six faithful, living in the village, as many as the population census recorded. Minus the three deaths that had occurred in the meantime and adding the two births, of twins, and a solitary Dutch immigrant who had recently arrived. Yet, the chapel burned for a solid fifteen minutes, while the elders discussed the priority of extinguishing the church fire. In view of the protection ordered by God-Himself for the revered body of Reynard, and before the desperate pleas of the parish priest, who never tired from repeating that since the fire was in the chapel where the Holy Body of Christ resides, no other work would be more worthy in His eyes at that moment. There were also those who argued that the chapel had been built in the midst of great controversy over the patron saint to whom it should be consecrated, some of whom at the time wanted to dedicate it to Our Lord Comforter of the Afflicted. Although the vast majority voted for the Lady Mother of Christ, Our Lord is Our Lord and to be passed over a Lady, even the Mother of his Son made man, must not have pleased the

Almighty. The argument that the decision had been made democratically by the majority of a bunch of sinners must be of little value in His judgement. Euclid was able to persuade them to chain Reynard inside Benedict' cottage, leaving only a young sacristan to guard him, who was crippled and would be of little use in the improvised position of firefighter. Only on the condition that the parish priest would bless the chains beforehand, as he would not bind His protégé with ungodly artefacts. In a hurry, the priest made the sign of the Cross above the metal shackles that someone had brought from who knows where, while the others crossed themselves with their heads down. When they raised them, the priest was already running towards the chapel, shouting: "Come on! Come on! Bring the buckets! Buckets with water!" The small chapel was entirely lined with carvings in its interior, which were the pride of those parishioners throughout the region. However, carving is, as we know, painted woodwork. Not the kind on which these words are written, but gilded with gold leaf. Moreover, some say that those minutes of indecision determined the end of the chapel as it had been known until then! The official thesis, however, pinned the blame on the unacceptable delay that the local fire brigade took from the county seat. A mere twenty-seven kilometres away from mountain roads and horse tracks, having arrived at the fire after the devoted villagers. It's estimated that they took at least twenty one minutes.

Reynard, on the other hand, managed to free himself from the chains that the priest's urgency had left loose and escaped from the cottage, taking advantage of a moment of weakness on the part of the sacristan, for whom the monotony of waiting caused an overpowering drowsiness. He escaped in such a way that to this day, apart from the kind reader and us, of course, who can see him clandestinely taking a boat, Amazonas arriba, fleeing from the local authorities after yet another unforgivable blunder, no one has heard from him. The escape was immediately attributed by the sacristan in distress - or rather, in an ecstasy of Revelation - to the will of God, who performed two divine plans on the same day: the destruction of the feminist

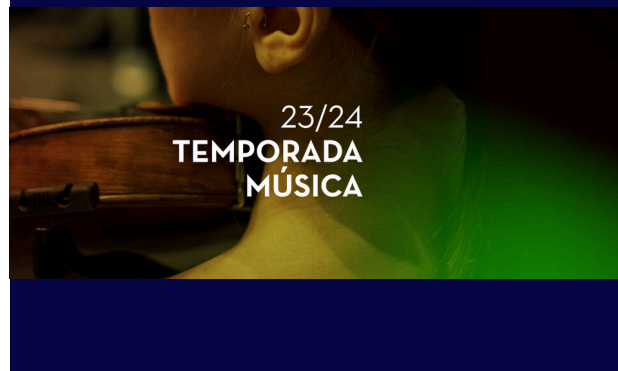
worship chapel so that another could be built in direct tribute to Him, and the liberation of Reynard so that he could be given new and sacred missions. The scene of the sacristan's disbelief at the empty cottage was even compared in an extraordinarily perceptive way by a Vincentian with the description in the Holy Gospel of St Matthew of the discovery by Mary and Mary of the Sacred Tomb of Jesus Christ, which was unoccupied on the third day after the Crucifixion. The angel and the earthquake were missing, of course, but the fire and the thunder could well be found in the no less apocalyptic scene of the hermitage burning down. It was certainly a mystery because if we know that Jesus was resurrected because he presented himself to the apostles in that capacity, we know that no one else has heard from Reynard.

Seven years on, the discussion in Joe's tavern had yet to be settled between the supporters of the Chapel and the thesis of arson or, at the very least, involuntary boycott (or not) by the firefighters. And those who believe that it was all God's plan and that the miracle of salvation and the mystery of the blessed Reynard's escape proves it.

## Season Finale Concert

The Season Finale Concert by the Academic Orchestra of the University of Lisbon will take place at the Aula Magna of the University of Lisbon on June 29 at 9pm, as part of the Music at the University of Lisbon program.

Admission is free, subject to capacity. For more information, see the University of Lisbon's cultural agenda.





# 25 YEARS CELEBRATING CINEMA

**In conversation with Filipe Afonso and Marta Carvalho, current members of NUCIVO, and Professor José Duarte, professor of Cinema, researcher at the Center for English Studies at the University of Lisbon and former member, we had the opportunity to learn more about the origins of the nucleus and how it has evolved over the years.**

Today, the Nucleus of Cinema and Video [Núcleo de Cinema e Vídeo, NUCIVO] might be made by many and the most diverse people, but what now is a group of filmgoers committed to sharing their passion for cinema, once was only one single element before.

Founded in 1999 by a group of six students, NUCIVO is a project integrated in the Student Council of the School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Lisbon (FLUL), that was born from the passion of its members for the seventh art. On its 25th birthday, NUCIVO celebrates with much more than just half a dozen members and lovers of cinema.

Nowadays, NUCIVO counts with a team formed by about 40 members, in which 15 are active participants. Filipe Afonso and Marta Carvalho manage the group. Bianca Burlacchini and Cristiano Jesus do the proofreading or editing of the written content. Joana Moretti does the management of the blog (the website of NUCIVO)

Bárbara Cintra manages the podcast called PodNUCIVO. Fernando Sousa does the graphic and visual art. And the rest of the members play other roles, like the writing of film analysis and reviews.

In a conversation with Marta and Filipe, it was mentioned that it is hard to refer to a form of cinema that the group doesn't support.

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**Whether we have too many or only a few people, we continue because we have passion and dedication to the group**

Marta Carvalho on the love and devotion for cinema.

**FILIFE AFONSO**

COORDENADOR DO NUCIVO

**MARTA CARVALHO**

COORDENADORA DO NUCIVO

## TOP 5 FILMS

1. *KILL BILL* (TARANTINO, 2003)
2. *ALIEN* (SCOTT, 1979)
3. *CHILDREN OF MEN* (CUARÓN, 2006)
4. *PARIS, TEXAS* (WENDER, 1984)
5. *ANOMALISA* (KOFFMAN, 2015)

## TOP 5 FILMS

1. *STALKER* (TARKOVSKY, 1979)
2. *DOUBLE IDENTITY* (WILDER, 1944)
3. *THE EXORCIST* (FRIEDKIN, 1973)
4. *BREATHLESS* (GODARD, 1960)
5. *ALICE* (ŠVANKMAJER, 1988)





NUCIVO, since 1999, aims to offer to the whole student community the opportunity to “expand their cinematic horizons and thus enrich their academic experience”. After its creation, the group leaned essentially in documentary production and editing. It is the case with the short film or mockumentary (leaning to political activism), entitled *Drogas em Letras* [Drugs at Humanities], produced in 2005 by Gonçalo Tocha, one of the founders of the group. This short film comes as an ironic and satirising response to the news about drug trafficking at FLUL.

An evidential difference of the evolution and growth of the group along its 25 years is in the importance given to the invitation and to the participation of producers in events hosted in the faculty, as the case of the recently invited producer, João Gonzalez. At the time that Professor José Duarte integrated the group, for example, this was not possible. Today, NUCIVO has a bigger influence and extension of what would be imaginable at the time of its formation.

Nowadays, the group does cinema cycles that are open to the whole academic community. The decision and thematic choice of the cinema cycles, Marta Carvalho tells us, leans on the month in question and the occurrences and/or events happening on that month (for example, festivities, important dates, cultural, social, and political conjectures of today, etc.)

NUCIVO's former members include José Duarte and Gonçalo Tocha, film lovers who have developed their professional careers hand in hand with their passion for films.

José Duarte is a professor at FLUL and a researcher at the Center for English Studies. He has been developing research in the areas of Film Studies, Television, Popular Culture, and Science Fiction, among others.

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**What I particularly like now is the dynamism that is being imprinted on NUCIVO and, above all, the type of activities that are becoming more and more widespread, and the enthusiasm with which people participate. I'm saying this because, in the sessions I've been to, there are almost always more people in the room than when I was a student.**

Prof. José Duarte sobre os projetos atuais do núcleo.



**JOSÉ DUARTE**

FORMER NUCIVO MEMBER

**TOP 5 FILMS**

1. *PARIS, TEXAS* (WENDER, 1984);
2. *IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE* (KAR-WAI, 2000)
3. *SPIRITED AWAY* (MIYAZAKI, 2001)
4. *TODO SOBRE MI MADRE* (ALMODÓVAR, 1999)
5. *OS VERDES ANOS* (ROCHA, 1963)

Gonçalo Tocha was one of the founders of NUCIVO, where he was responsible for its programming and production and for making political documentaries for six years, including *Drogas em Letras* (Drugs at Humanities). He is currently a Portuguese cinema film director and producer. His work includes the award-winning *Balaou* (2007), a tribute film to his mother shot in São Miguel; *É na Terra não é na Lua* (2011), a feature film shot on the island Corvo, in Azores; and his most recent film *The Mother and the Sea* (2013), about the fisherwomen of Vila Chã. Alongside his filmmaking career, Gonçalo Tocha is also a musician and composer.

Since its creation, NUCIVO has organised and held film cycles and screenings at the faculty with guests (professors, film critics, among others) presenting and debating the featured films. In 2020, these activities were temporarily interrupted due to the pandemic restrictions.

Filipe Afonso joined the group in December 2021 with the intention of writing reviews. He recalls the effects of the pandemic, which have compromised the life of NUCIVO, because in September 2022 there had still been no return to the "normal" cinema sessions. It was at this time that Filipe accepted the position of manager, but he, as told to us, had to "improvise" and, together with Tara Meija, they "resurrected" the group for the post-pandemic era.

This led to the creation of the NUCIVO blog, officially launched on February 3rd, 2020, where members share articles, suggestions, reviews and analyses of films; and of PodNUCIVO, the podcast on Cinema and other audiovisual media, created on October 13th of the same year, to continue the filmgoing dialogue during confined times: a true test of adaptability and reinvention. At the time of this report, PodNUCIVO has around 82 episodes available on Spotify.

NUCIVO keeps the public up to date with its activities on social networks like Facebook, Instagram, X and, as a video and film group should, a Letterboxd account where the group's favourite films are listed, as well as reviews of films watched by members, a film diary, and more!

NUCIVO stands out not for its use of technical language that is difficult to understand, but for its democratising approach to language, refusing to "close off" or "turn

exclusive" the world of cinema. It is a group based on the idea that anyone can and should take part in conversations and interpretations of cinema, due to the very nature of the seventh art. Marta Carvalho explains that: "Cinema must be horizontal. It's neither beneficial nor necessary to become hierarchical, nor to use a specific vocabulary for everyone to understand. Even when we screen the films at our sessions, we always try to establish a horizontal conversation with people, interacting and explaining it. The cinema is a social art. The revolution is made in cinema, for example. We try to convey the idea that you don't need a prerequisite to like something, as is often understood in the art world."

Filipe Afonso also tells us that, at the beginning of his time at the group, NUCIVO was interested in showing films that were more mainstream and, for that reason, more accessible. He tells us that this is not necessarily a bad thing, but believes that, as a film club, there is the possibility of showing films outside of North American cinema or the Letterboxd top 250.

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**We are really offering the quality of cinema that NUCIVO should always offer and I hope that we will be able to broaden and diversify our offer**

Filipe Afonso

As a student group, NUCIVO has made a significant contribution to the academic life of students, followed by the inevitability of "idle" time, unregulated schedules and long "breaks". There are also many people who simply enjoy being at the faculty, even if they are not taking classes. With this purpose, a variety of extracurricular activities have been organised by the faculty's various centres, including NUCIVO. It differs from others in that it essentially offers culture by introducing canonical films that, as such, should be part of anyone's audio-visual education - films that many people get to know thanks to the accessible and free of charge film screenings at college.

The relevance of NUCIVO and the importance of student groups was emphasised by Professor José Duarte, who reiterated that one of the primary functions of any university group is to create relationships between students. In an interview, the professor also explained that NUCIVO has several partners, not only within the faculty, such as the Centre for English Studies, but also outside the institution, such as the Goethe Institut Portugal or Indie Lisboa.

Filipe Afonso tells us that, as an active member of the centre, he has come to realise that “each person's cinematic journey differs greatly” and that “NUCIVO is an asset that helps to take the introductory step into cinema.”

Marta Carvalho explains that the main objective they wanted to achieve is to “show the group out there”. The preparation and logistic work of large cycles can be exhausting, and it becomes a challenge if needed to be continuously done in big scales, explains Filipe. Hence, the concern to ensure that the investment of time and effort is recognized and celebrated through the participation of students in the cycles. The group resumed organising its cycles in 2022 and, since then, there have even been proposals for projects outside of it, such as the Palestine Cycle, a cycle that garnered massive public support, being even announced on the channel Antena 2.

However, NUCIVO's work is not limited to just organising cycles. As filmgoers, they attend cinema events and, in January of this year, they even met with the director Paulo Carneiro at a screening of his latest film *Via Norte*. After interviewing him, Paulo Coelho asked NUCIVO to promote the film and, due to this conversation, the group is currently in contact with the producer and the director. For NUCIVO members, recognition from the cinema world is “gratifying”

Anyone who wants to be part of the group is welcome, as call auditions are always open. The only entry requirement is that people who want to be part of the community should be committed and active participants. To have a role in it, you need to have two things: “investment and passion for cinema” explained the management. They offer students the possibility of writing reviews and participating in the group's film sessions, in addition to providing them with a space for cinematic debate with people of common interest.

The influence of the centres inside and outside FLUL is clear. The comments of some of the people who watched the Noirvember Cycle shed light to this fact:



“I think that all initiatives that bring in new things, different from those that are more institutional, and that are brought by students are fundamental within the university, and should be welcomed [...] I see that they are people who work with a lot of quality, not just something amateur, with a lot of knowledge. [...] In all degrees belonging to FLUL [undergraduate, doctoral and professional], it seems to me that it is very important to have a diversity of proposals happening within the faculty, this is what makes a university be a place of thought.”

Mafalda Mendes, Senior Technician at FLUL

“I think it's really cool to have these types of initiatives, such as, bringing people together to share these hobbies that we all have, especially watching films. It even gives us a space to discuss these films later. I could watch this at home, but then it's just for me. It's good to bring filmgoing students together and showcase films that we wouldn't have had the opportunity to experience otherwise. Even though we are from different faculties, we are enjoying the same films. [These are films] that people our age might not look for as much, it's great that they're making them available. We, young people, are not so much the target of these films, I think these initiatives open us more to get to know them.”

Students outside FLUL, Audiovisual and Multimedia, Master degree, IPL, ESECS Clara Belbut, Marcos Silva and Marcelo Silva.



This year marks the 25th anniversary for the Nucleus of Cinema and Video of FLUL. Hence, we invite you, O Cola and NUCIVO, to celebrate the life of the group by participating in more cinema sessions, which are not only a free pastime to combat annoying “gaps” in time, but also a promising offer of culture and an excellent space to meet interesting people with a huge passion for the seventh art.

As previously mentioned by Professor José Duarte, initiatives carried out by and for students are an excellent way to strengthen social bonds between themselves. Being part of groups like NUCIVO not only offers a self-learning tool that allows individuals to better understand their fields of interest, but also integrate into a group of people with whom they can socialise and compare different points of views, which, inevitably, is a form of personal growth and construction.

### Follow the work of NUCIVO!

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## Past Summers

Author: Alexandra Guțu  
Translator: Mariana Faísca  
Photography: Alexandra Guțu



summer 2019

I walked through the vast fields of corn that were ready to harvest – they had gotten so big. And the sun! It shone with such force upon them, upon me! The greens, the yellows... and the blue sky! We played like there was no tomorrow. We ignored the sound of my grandma when she told us to go back home, that the day had come to an end and the playing too, to not stray away from home, lost in the greenery.

The blonde, let's call him, lived beyond the yellow and green fields. I wondered what was hiding from me on that side. What unknown world would reveal itself to me one day? At that time, I would sink without fear into the small pleasures of my life. After all, I was a child, what did I know? I just wanted to run and play freely for whole days.

To this day, I don't know what was beyond the fields, I did not find time to find answers to my daydreams. And every summer was like this. As the child that I was, walking and running from one side to the other, climbing trees and eating my grandmother's green apples - although she would not let us. How I long for these sunny days!

everyone else lived on the way to the bottom of the hill. It was a long walk down, but there was always someone waving at me. Ah! And the afternoons spent playing cards, the sore losers! Today I feel sad. There was no place in my memory that kept the names of those smiling people.

At the end of the hill, there was a huge store that sold, among many things, the flavors of my childhood. The ice cream of my beautiful Moldova. The taste of the summer of my youth. It feels so good to keep that memory with me. We would spend afternoons there, even when my grandmother wouldn't allow us the sweet fresh taste.

It was coming to an end, the heat. We packed our bags, our memories, and all our love and returned to Portugal. We said goodbye without ever knowing that this could be the last time for many years. We don't remember the names, but we remember the faces and smiles so distinctly.

Years later, after just a decade, we returned. We walked through all the known places, even those we had never been to - they were far away and the grandparents did not let us. We

see our mother's old school, and how she smiles. This time, I swore to myself to take a camera. Since I was little, I dreamed of returning, it became my mission to be able to show the world my parents' land, and how beautiful and charming it is. Poor thing, for sure, but she does not lack a drop of love or affection, tenderness, and hospitality. I take a picture of my mother, later, even of my father, this time at his school. I'm always with my camera, my dream came true.

We went back to my grandparents' house; a neighbour is leaving the house. I will never forget his look or the smile he offered me. I don't remember his name, but I remember his face. He moves on but tells me nothing.

My grandmother tells me that, later, someone is coming to visit us. She is the grandmother of two old brothers who were friends of ours, a boy and a girl. They are no longer here. I remember them as copies of me and my brother. They also emigrated, to Ireland. Their grandma knew I was in the village.

Finally, my grandmother calls for me. I leave the house, look at the bright grapes that make the refreshing shade at the entrance of the house, and see a lady at the entrance. She sees me, smiles with all her teeth and hugs me hard. Almost cries with joy, and so do I. I lost a piece of my tongue, but I realize she's happy to see me. And how much I missed her too. She brought me a chocolate. I'm delighted to hear them talk.

It's the next day and it's a beautiful summer day. I take my camera and tell my mother that I'm going down the hill, that I won't go very far. Each step means a photograph; perhaps it seems an exaggeration, but I can explain. It may be said that it is perhaps a materialistic desire, but for those who kept this little land in their memory, the happiness of returning home and being able to point the finger and say 'This is where I spent every summer as a child!' is a feeling that I'm unable to contain!

I walk lightly down the hill. It's a shame. So many houses that I've visited. Their grandparents stayed. Most of them have already married or gone to the big city to study. Some even emigrated. It remains a feeling of longing, but a masked pride. We all grew up and went our separate ways. 'Do you remember me?', I think inside. As a child it was difficult to say goodbye, I always hoped to return. I told them: 'Don't forget me!' or 'We'll

be back soon!'. I look around and take the last pictures of this sweet village.

I return home, the next day we will return to the city. I say goodbye to my grandparents. And say goodbye to Moldova. One day I will return. In Portugal, I show all my memories with love, tell my friends all the stories and this time you can see what I've always seen in my head. Now I write it and I can't contain the happiness I feel when I think about those summers!

# Beyond Binary: Masculinity and Gender in On “Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous”

*‘Do you remember the morning, after a night of snow, when we found the letters FAG4LIFE scrawled in red spray paint across our front door?’*

*The icicles caught the light and everything looked nice and about to break.*

*“What does it mean?” you asked, coatless and shivering. “It says “Merry Christmas”, Ma”, I said, pointing. “See? That’s why it’s red. For luck.” [1]*

When studying sociological structures within society, some themes always appear as crucial focal points. Among these, there is masculinity, queerness, gender, and violence, for example. Some of these themes are apparent in Ocean Vuong’s debut epistolary novel, *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*. He attempts to bring to the stage insight into the often-overlooked perspective of an underprivileged gay boy of Vietnamese descent. Within the narrative, he navigates through the main character, Little Dog, the interplay between masculinity, patriarchy, sexuality, and gender roles. This essay seeks to dissect and expound upon the presentation of these themes in *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*, aiming to shed light on perspectives that may have been, for a long time, marginalised or underexplored within the academic discourse.

## **Navigating Ocean Vuong: A Portrait of the Author**

*‘I guess what I mean is that sometimes I don’t know what or who we are. Days I feel like a human being, while other days I feel more like a sound. I touch the world not as myself but as an echo of who I was. Can you hear me yet? Can you read me?’ [2]*

When delving into the tapestry of contemporary literature, few voices resonate as strongly as that of Ocean Vuong, an award-winning poet whose artistry navigates the often turbulent waters of taboo subjects. Born in the United States to Vietnamese refugees haunted by trauma, Vuong’s literary prowess is a testament to the power of storytelling as a means of self-discovery and cultural

reclamation.

At the heart of his literary oeuvre lies the New York Times bestselling novel, *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*, his masterful debut that unravels as a touching letter from the protagonist, Little Dog, to his illiterate mother. This is obvious throughout the entire book, especially since he speaks directly to her, in sentences such as: ‘It is a beautiful country because you are still in it. Because your name is Rose, and you are my mother and the year is 1968—the Year of the Monkey’. [3]

This semi-autobiographical narrative serves as a canvas upon which Vuong paints depictions of queerness, the elusive nature of freedom, and the intricate idea of identity. The title itself, *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*, serves as a declaration, it’s a celebration of the marginalised, the unseen, and the beauty inherent in communities often overlooked. The choice of the word ‘gorgeous’ is deliberate, since within the American context, especially within the queer community, this adjective is a powerful declaration for the LGBTQI+ people, an act of empowerment. When asked to explain the title, in an interview given to Amanpour and Company (2019), his explanation shows his need for inclusivity.

*‘I think for me I dare call poor black, brown and yellow bodies gorgeous. It felt like “Here’s my chance to say it out the gate”. The first sentence in the book is the title, and I wanna start with beauty, because that’s a given to me, that’s a fact. These people are beautiful, and I wanna start there and then show the world how they’re beautiful.’ [4]*

## **Redefining Strength: Masculinity and Patriarchal Threads**

*‘I did not know then what I know now: to be an American boy, and then an American boy with a gun, is to move from one end of a cage to another.’ [5]*

Pilcher and Whelehan (2004) describe masculinity as ‘the set of social practices and cultural representations associated with being

a man'. They expand on how the concept of masculinity/masculinities may vary depending on perspective: on one side, masculinity is 'the result of physiological factors, such as hormones or chromosomes', for example, while on the other side, more academically critical, 'masculinities are understood as a form of power relation, both among men themselves and between men and women'. [6]

In Ocean Vuong's novel, masculinity is portrayed in rather complex and nuanced ways. The protagonist, Little Dog, grapples with traditional notions of this concept, and this is apparent in the context of his relationship with his mother and with the men he is involved with.

**Vuong defies the norms of stereotypical masculinity through the exploration of vulnerability and tenderness in the male characters. To discuss the types of masculinity encountered in this novel, Trevor, a child raised to symbolise the epitome of American masculinity - Hegemonic masculinity, will be introduced.**

Pilcher and Whelehan (2004) describe this concept as 'the culturally dominant ideal of masculinity centred around authority, physical toughness and strength, heterosexuality and paid work'. [7] In this novel, we see this concept in action, as well as the failure within it. Trevor is a farmer, an American white boy struggling to fit the ideal of masculinity he's been introduced to and taught all his life. America holds up these standards to men since they're only boys, and this will end up being the cause of Trevor's demise as he crumbles under his elder's expectations. For Trevor, liking the same gender is already a concept he struggles with, and we see this in different scenes where the two characters have sexual intercourse. When he tries bottoming for the first (and last) time, the result is as follows:

*'But it was over before it began. (...) He pushed me back, sat up. "Fuck." He stared straight ahead. "I can't. I just—I mean..." He spoke into the wall. "I dunno. I don't wanna feel like a girl. Like a bitch. I can't, man. I'm sorry, it's not for me —" He paused, wiped his nose. "It's for you. Right?"'* [8]

Trevor grapples with a profound sense of embarrassment, refusing to be penetrated, which stems from his knowledge that he doesn't conform to the societal standards he's been taught. In his perspective, assuming a submissive role, particularly as a bottom, evokes feelings of inadequacy as a man, reminiscent of outdated expectations imposed on both men and women. He fears being perceived as 'girly' or like a 'bitch' because not embodying conventional masculinity raises existential questions for him. If he feels like a girl, he can't be a man, and if he can't be a man, what is he? If he cannot adhere to the dominant male role, what does that make him? Ocean Vuong approaches this subject in an interview for Amanpour and Company (2019):

'I wanted to address these tropes of shame around queerness and sexuality. The thing that I wanted to portray was that Little Dog's relationship with this white farm boy portrays the difference in how they approach shame. Trevor is incredibly ashamed of his queerness because it is the antithesis, the absolute antithetical of what American masculinity is. He, in a way, crumbles from it, and he loses himself, literally. Because he can't be a man and if he's not a man he's not human, in American standards. Whereas Little Dog, having been raised by Vietnamese women, was much more comfortable with his sexuality, his family understood. He comes from a different tradition, where there was more malleability in sexuality and in fact, he's better off in his queerness than this American boy who is supposed to have everything, including ultimate freedom.' [9]

The reality he faces is the potential for social ostracism and physical violence directed towards him. An important feature in hegemonic masculinity is the need men feel for approval from other males, which means they'll go to any lengths to achieve such acceptance. They may seek this approval through muscular bodies, impressive sexual scorecards, high-end cars, high-paying jobs, and even violence against women, children, and men, mainly homosexual. It's an attempt at asserting dominance, per se [10]. This is the way Trevor was raised with his alcoholic

father serving as an example, and this is what he's failing at.

Little Dog, on the other hand, was raised in an environment shaped by two women, as previously noted. Surrounded by various expressions of femininity, he developed a heightened sense of confidence in his sexuality and self-identity as a gay man. In this character, we see the concept of homosexual masculinity at play. Unlike Trevor, he didn't succumb to societal norms, but he also never adopted stereotypically feminine traits, such as wearing dresses, as we can see in this excerpt, after Little Dog comes out to his mom:

*"Tell me", you said from behind the palm on your chin, "are you going to wear a dress now?"*

*"Ma—"*

*"They'll kill you", you shook your head, "you know that."*

*"Who will kill me?"*

*"They kill people for wearing dresses. It's on the news. You don't know people. You don't know them."*

*"I won't, Ma. I promise. Look, I never wore one before, have I? Why would I now?"* [11]

He simply expressed his gender identity authentically in whatever way it felt right to him, but this isn't a common experience. Little Dog became acutely aware that Trevor's case differed from his own during their intimate moments, recognizing the impact societal expectations had on Trevor's self-acceptance. Soon after the previous excerpt, where Trevor refuses to be a bottom, Little Dog follows with: 'I had thought sex was to breach new ground, despite terror, that as long as the world did not see us, its rules did not apply. But I was wrong. The rules, they were already inside us.' [12]

As Villanueva (2023) explains, with his relationship with Trevor, 'he is exposed to a shameful display of toxic hypermasculinity' [13]. 'The first time we fucked, we didn't fuck at all' [14]. This may seem confusing, but in reality, Little Dog simply doesn't believe what they did was sex, from a heteronormative standpoint. When they do have 'real sex', as Villanueva (2023) points out, 'Little Dog expresses the shame that Trevor must have felt, and that it was his fault'. [15]

'He breathed hard above me. Trevor being who he was, raised in the fabric and muscle of American masculinity, I feared for what would come. It was my fault. I had tainted him with my faggotry, the filthiness of our act exposed by my body's failure to contain itself.' [16]

This American masculinity is, as has been pointed out before, hegemonic masculinity, which takes a top stand within the institution of the patriarchy. To understand it, however, we need to understand what exactly this institution is. Cranny-Francis et al. (2002) describe patriarchy as 'a shorthand to indicate a social system in which maleness and masculinity confer a privileged position of power and authority (...)' . Though the term still raises controversy nowadays, for a variety of reasons, it is still widely used to represent the 'enemy' which equal rights gender activists fight against. Frequently, 'the phrases "male hegemony" or "hegemonic masculinity" are used by some instead of the term "patriarchy" in reference to the widespread domination of men in the social, economic and cultural spheres'. [18] Nevertheless, as depicted by the central characters in this novel, the patriarchy imposes detrimental effects not only on women but also on men. The unrealistic expectations associated with conformity to masculinity norms become evident in Trevor's subsequent downfall.

'I didn't know that would be the last time I'd see him, his neck scar lit blue by the diner's neon marquee. To see that little comma again, to put my mouth there, let my shadow widen the scar until, at last, there was no scar to be seen at all, just a vast and equal dark sealed by my lips. A comma superimposed by a period the mouth so naturally makes. Isn't that the saddest thing in the world, Ma? A comma forced to be a period?' [19]

Ocean Vuong, in an interview for Strand Book Store (2019) provided the following explanation, which helps understand his vision on the subject:

'I think we often talk about queer tragedies, the tragic queer stories, and I never felt that to be true, because when we frame it like that

we often look at queerness being innately faulty in itself – that is the queerness that is the tragedy, that is the queerness that makes these lives tragic. In fact, it's hegemonic masculinity and its patriarchal structures that made these lives lose themselves within it.' [20]

### **A War Against Norms: Gender Constructs in Play**

"What were you before you met me?"  
 "I think I was drowning"  
 "And what are you now?"  
 "Water" [21]

The concept of gender, with its enduring historical roots, has persisted over time. As Pilcher and Whelehan (2004) explain, 'It was used as an analytical category to draw a line of demarcation between biological sex differences and the way these are used to inform behaviours and competencies, which are then assigned as either "masculine" or "feminine"'. [22]

In contemporary society, gender continues to function as a pretext for relegating women to a lower social standing than men. These distinctions are evident across various realms of society, spanning economic, educational, professional, and even recreational spheres. The traditional gendering of things and assignment of gender roles is an aspect newer generations are fighting adamantly against, subsequent to the recognition of the need for more inclusivity.

Gendered norms are all over society, and that's why there are distinctions in clothing styles, toys, advertising, haircuts, sports, occupations, and even colour. The prevailing notions dictate that dresses are exclusively for women, toy cars are designated for boys, men are discouraged from having long hair, football is a sport for men and certain colours like pink and blue are rigidly associated with girls and boys, respectively. These instances, among many others, are just a few examples of the presence of gendered expectations in our direct surroundings.

In *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*, gender is not a fixed or binary concept, but rather a

spectrum. Rose, the recipient of the letter, the author's illiterate immigrant mother, is the perfect example of this. She defies traditional gender norms by exemplifying strength and courage not always associated with conventional femininity. Despite working in a profession often labelled as a 'woman's job', the nail salon industry, Rose demonstrates remarkable resilience. Her role requires enduring toxic conditions, where she must contort herself and endure mistreatment, all in the pursuit of providing for her family.

*"The most common English word spoken in the nail salon was sorry. (...) Again and again, I watched as manicurists, bowed over a hand or foot of a client, some young as seven, say, "I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm so, so sorry," when they had nothing wrong, (...) hoping to gain warm traction that would lead to the ultimate goal, a tip—only to say sorry anyway when none was given.*

*In the nail salon, sorry (...) no longer merely apologizes, but insists, reminds: I'm here, right here, beneath you. It is the lowering of oneself so that the client feels right, superior, and charitable. In the nail salon, one's definition of sorry is (...) charged and reused as both power and defacement at once. Being sorry pays, being sorry even, or especially, when one has no fault, is worth every self-deprecating syllable the mouth allows. Because the mouth must eat.' [23]*

In another illustrative instance, Rose's resilience shines through when Little Dog becomes the target of bullying, solely based on the colour of his bike. Rose, despite her insistence on Little Dog embodying qualities associated with being a 'man' and an 'American', stands by her son's side in the face of adversity. Little Dog himself comes to the painful realisation of how much power a colour has, but that does not stop him from not wanting to conform. He doesn't want to change his ways, and his mother supports that.

*"The large boy took out a key chain and started scraping the paint off my bike. It came off so easily, in rosy sparks. (...) I wanted to cry but did not yet know how to in English. So I did nothing. That was the day I learned how dangerous a color can be. That a boy could be knocked off that shade and made to reckon histrespas. Even if color is nothing but what the light reveals,*

that nothing has laws, and a boy on a pink bike must learn, above all else, the law of gravity. That night, in the bare-bulb kitchen, I knelt beside you and watched as you painted, in long strokes that swooped, with expert precision, over the cobalt scars along the bike, the bottle of pink nail polish steady and sure in your hand.' [24]

### Final Impressions: Wrapping Up On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous

'It's the chemicals in our brains, they say. I got the wrong chemicals, Ma. Or rather, I don't get enough of one or the other. They have a pill for it. They have an industry. They make millions. Did you know people get rich off of sadness? I want to meet the millionaire of American sadness. I want to look him in the eye, shake his hand, and say, "It's been an honor to serve my country".' [25]

*On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*, by Ocean Vuong, is a fantastic novel in terms of analysing themes such as masculinity and gender norms, as well as their subsequential results. It highlights different types of masculinity within a patriarchal society that harms both men and women. There is a clear distinction in the masculinity between the two characters: Little Dog was raised by two Vietnamese immigrant women (Lan and Rose, though we specifically talked about the latter), both of whom defy gender norms placed on women; and Trevor was raised by his American alcoholic father, who raised him between a gun and a belt. Through these characters, we get a better understanding of how hegemonic masculinity can be harmful to everyone and everything that surrounds it. Is it justifiable to defend a societal framework when it does nothing but perpetuate impossible, unreasonable and unrealistic standards?

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# Grandpa

Author: Mariana Raminhos  
Translator: Catarina Pereira  
Photography: Mariana Raminhos

No one told me it was going to be difficult, or possibly they told me, however, they didn't tell me about this weight I carry whenever I'm aware. As I walk past your house, I see the window without your company, the one where you stowed your arms while doing the pools. When I walked into the building, I remembered the moments when I was a child and you went to pick me up from school – the mister with the shambled and greyed out moustache that got so happy whenever he saw me. These times won't come back, but I would go back there without hesitation.

The moment my grandmother opened the door, I saw relief. She had a flower dress, but seemed tired. The afternoon passed by us, we snacked and, between conversations, I told her about Lisbon. How I like life there, where coffee and cream pastries had become routine and how it wouldn't be the same if I hadn't met the people I call so affectionately friends today. She told me about her yearnings, and especially about how much she missed you. You know how the women in this family are, we don't shut up.

In the kitchen, grandma and I heard your voice and she got up to help you. We leaned against the windowsill to soak up the sun and you, at her leisure, started reading the car's licence plates on the street. Grandma insisted and, with some difficulty, you were able to throw some letters into the conversation, but I know. I have within me this sentence that you are delivering yourself, that what keeps you here is a greater love, one that you promised to be eternal. But I also know she will understand that we are all selfish and we just don't want to go through this suffering, which is inevitable. However, I remember you and when I do, I think about the times you made me laugh, the days you took care of me, the times you made me feel at home. Because, for you, I was a granddaughter, blood from your blood that carries the whole generation that went through this same pain of seeing their grandpa pass.

I have all the drownings and fears of when your time comes. I feel a tightness in my heart just writing about it. However, words will never carry the comfort of being with you at the table and our eyes meeting; how much our smile exchanges

were like sunny summer days – eternal. I have this injustice within me, that speaks with Death and asks not to take you. However, your shadow continues to get smaller and smaller, the disease doesn't forgive you and it seems inhumane not to count all the seconds you're still here with us. I look at you at the window and recognize you. I see you staring at the sky, but I mutter that you belong on Earth.



## Relational-Transformative History

Author: Madoka  
Translation: Isis Perestrelo Vieira  
Illustration: Maia Aguiar

Be my eternal light,  
The flame filled with purity and captivation.  
The one who will smite  
The tomorrow thought was filled with desperation.

In the night's contemporaneity,  
When you are with me, there is always this gleaming.  
Voices unfamiliar to me called you a falsity,  
But only you comfort me through my suffering.

I marvel at you, dusk until dawn,  
But when like magic, the sun is gone,  
I spend more time with you and I'm delighted,  
Alas, in a pseudo-mortar you were designed!

If I'm not with you, I feel like a nuisance.  
If you're with me, I feel euphoric.  
A relationship in dosages with a lifetime continuance,  
Something that will turn me into a concept of rhetoric.

I free you from the cage where I find you slumbering,  
Look at your light, pink, striking colouring.  
As we dance, I notice the beauty of your sways,  
And I win, because you have me with your ways.

A roller coaster narrative,  
Relational-transformative filled story,  
A tale that contains a pretty witch,  
A text that strikes my being into a schism...

I consume this flame in obscurity  
So that you believe in the beauty of a miracle.  
A scientific act of pure ecstasy  
Because if I didn't have you, I would only be one more casualty.

Thank you, my dear chemist,  
Because you brought me help and illumination.

Thank you, my dear medication,  
Because, only then, will the boy be shot down.



Maia  
Aguiar

# Academic Agenda

Want to get involved in the academic spirit?  
In this Academic Agenda we introduce you to some events that will take place at the University of Lisbon, where you can participate for free.



## Exhibition: "A paz, o pão, a habitação...": April's values in stickers

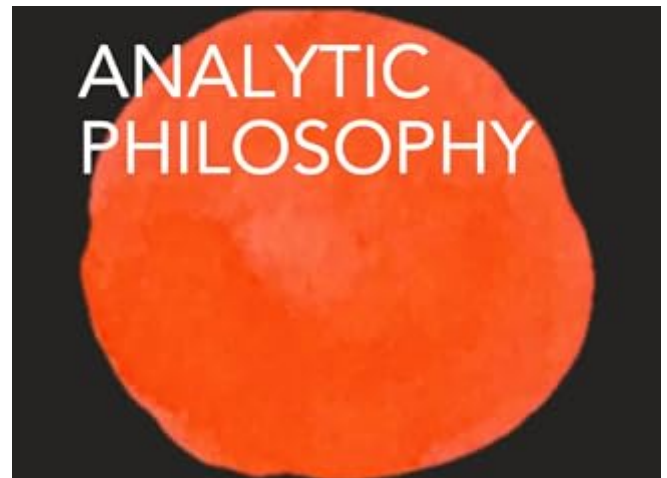
This exhibition will be on show at the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon from May 22 to September 30. The opening will take place on May 22 at 5pm.

Using stickers, a common means of dissemination at the time, this exhibition on the timelessness of April's values is also a way of celebrating popular expression.

## 9th National Meeting of Analytic Philosophy

The 9th National Meeting of Analytic Philosophy, organized by the NOVA Institute of Philosophy, will be held at NOVA FCSH from June 10 to 12.

The National Meeting of Analytic Philosophy is organized under the auspices of the Portuguese Society of Analytic Philosophy (SPFA). This year's guest speakers are Teresa Marques, Graham Priest and Ernest Sosa.

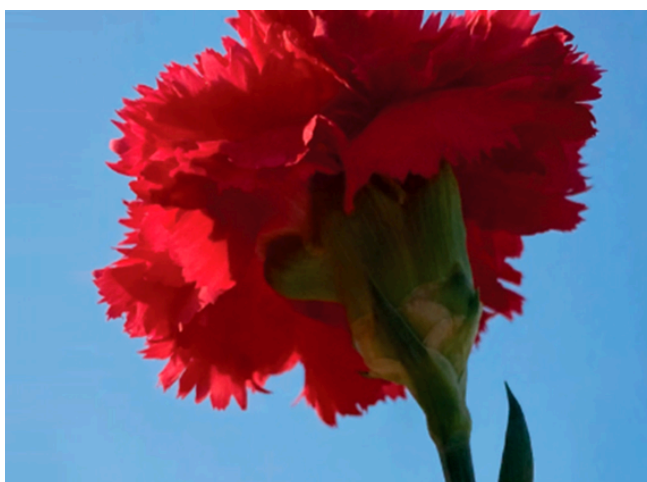


## Concert for a Summer Night

The *Concerto para uma Noite de Verão* ["Concert for a Summer Night"], by Coro de Câmara da Universidade de Lisboa, takes place at Aula Magna, located in the Rector's Office of the University of Lisbon, on June 22 at 9pm, as part of the Music at the University of Lisbon programme.

Admission is free, limited to space crowding. The duration is 1h15. For more information, see the University of Lisbon's cultural programme.

Here you can find events such as concerts, congresses and colloquiums of academic interest, as well as celebratory events of the 50 years of Freedom Day. You can find more information about them in the “Schedule” section of the University of Lisbon and the School of Arts and Humanities websites.



### ICS Conference 2024: 'Democratize, Decolonize, Develop'

This conference will be held on June 17 at the Institute of Social Sciences and aims to reflect on the past, present and future of the concepts of decolonization, democratization and development, which were central to the April revolution. What challenges do the "three Ds" of April pose for social science research today? How can we re-evaluate the meaning of each of these concepts from the perspective of anthropology, political science, history and sociology?

### Meeting of Academic Orchestras

The Meeting of Academic Orchestras, with the participation of the Academic Orchestra of the University of Lisbon, the Medical Orchestra of Lisbon and the Academic Orchestra of the University of Coimbra, takes place at the Aula Magna of the University of Lisbon, on May 5, at 6pm, and is part of the Music at the University of Lisbon program.

Admission is free, subject to space crowding.



### 10 Years 10 Visits - Visit 8

As part of its 10th Anniversary Celebrations in 2023, 10 iconic spaces from the University of Lisbon will open to the academic community, the public and the city. Visit 8 will include the Museu Nacional História Natural e da Ciência, Jardim Botânico de Lisboa, on May 18th, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.

The visit will be guided and free of charge, with registration required up to 24 hours in advance. For more information, see the University of Lisbon's cultural program.



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## The Poem of the Train

Written by Clara Raposo  
Translated by Bruna Bastos  
Illustrator: Mariana Faisca

In a corner of this land,  
that sins in good service,  
there is a sound that always misses  
and that no one notices.  
It's a rushed train  
that passes through the station.  
And today, for a while,  
I was about to hold its hand.

Always the same pace,  
always the same destination,  
always the same murmur  
of the group in folly.  
It runs here every hour,  
with no time to hesitate.  
But, by exception, now  
He wanted to stop for me.

It was an exchange of looks,  
mine and its windows;  
It was on that slowing of pace  
at the end of star hour;  
It was in this freezing of time,  
in this made-up future  
that I set foot on the entrance  
and almost saw myself next to you.

But the train has passed.  
The sun has grown.  
The train started.  
And here I stayed,  
surrendered to the day, still,  
sad,  
that out of this fantasy  
I was left with nothing.



# Gustav Holst's Planets and its Connection to Mythology, Astronomy, and Astrology

Author: Mariana Monteiro  
Translator: Mariana Faisca  
Illustrator: Maia Aguiar

In *The Planets*, Gustav Holst interconnects astronomy, astrology, and classical mythology, presenting us with a classic composition, composed of seven movements, which we can almost characterise as an immersive experience, with such profound impacts on contemporary soundtracks that it is impossible not to understand the enormous similarities between this composition and the soundtracks of films such as *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, and *Interstellar*.

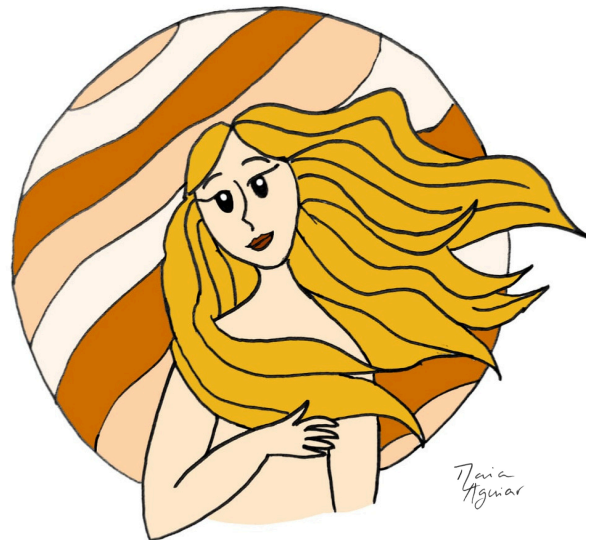
Using a varied orchestral range, Holst intends, through sonority, to characterise each planet of the solar system, projecting on them the essence of certain gods of the Greco-Roman pantheon and their respective astrological meaning. The exception to the rule is Earth and Pluto, which was discovered more than a decade after the end of composition, and later categorised as a dwarf planet.

Throughout the composition, written over a period of just three years, Holst then proposes a mythological and astrological reading of each planet. Opening the composition, we have Mars, relating to War, which presents us with such a lucid and vivid sound that it is difficult not to imagine a war scenario. Astrologically, the red planet, with its hostile and unforgiving appearance, represents the way we act and take action, and is our most primitive impulse.

On the other hand, Venus brings Peace, which presents itself in a calm movement, which embodies harmony and tranquillity. This is, perhaps, a different representation from what we are used to seeing in literary pieces, namely in the *Iliad*, or *Os Lusíadas*. However, Holst's Venus embodies a response to Mars, according to Imogen Holst, the composer's daughter. The goddess of love, with astrological correspondence in this same area, was here connected to the concept of tranquillity.

In third place is Mercury, the winged Messenger, the shortest suite for the planet with the shortest orbit (around the Sun). The name of the movement comes from its mythological image, since Mercury, the

messenger god, is usually depicted with wings on his sandals and helmet. Holst composed a very restless Mercury, in which we have the feeling of never being settled anywhere, always hopping from one side to the other, representing the rapid flight of this messenger, an astrological symbol of communication.



The father of the gods, Jupiter, the bringer of Joy, appears in fourth, in a tone of imposing exuberant vitality, and quite solemn. Astrologically, it represents expansion, growth, and prosperity, which is linked to the characterisation of the god and the cadence and harmony of the suite, being a truly majestic representation of the one who reigned on Olympus.

As we move towards the last part of the composition, we understand that a dark tone is growing. One of the last places is occupied by Saturn, which brings Old Age, Holst's most cherished suite. A pendulum movement in the first part of the suite invokes the sound of a clock, and Saturn, or Kronos, represents the passage of time, inseparable from the inevitable death, as we understand in the representations in which he appears with a sickle in his hand, with astrological correspondence, also signifying authority. The composition then moves on to a part of greater turbulence and confusion, which culminates in

a climax, symbolising the acceptance of death as the ultimate, natural, and unavoidable destiny of human life.

This is followed by Uranus, the Magician, a mystical movement that begins with a menacing tone, constant throughout the suite, with rapid alternations between high and low notes and a rather fast tempo, possibly illustrating the primitive deities, characterised by enormous selfishness and cruelty, or perhaps the astrological aspect of the planet, which translates both rebellion, connected to freedom and independence, it undoubtedly wants sudden changes. The name of the movement may derive from its ending, in which the rapid changes and what could be described as symphonic chaos are suddenly pushed away, like a magician disappearing behind a smokescreen.

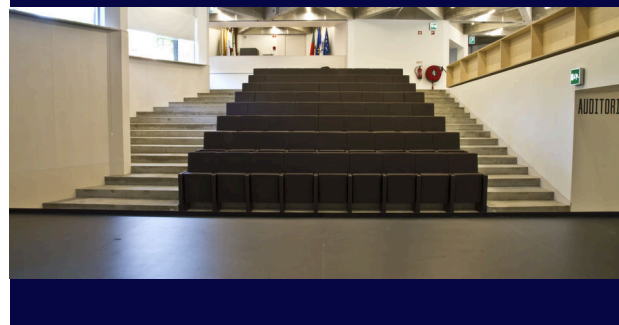
Neptune, the Mystic, closes the composition on a note of enormous mysticism, an almost sinister tone, in a composition that seems to be extremely distant, even untouchable, and that is lost more and more with the end of the movement. Just as Neptune is the outermost planet in the solar system, the god Neptune is in the depths of the ocean, something that can also be related to movement, with its great oceanic feeling. The sensation of distancing, present in the whole movement, but especially in the final part, with the chorus, which subtly diminishes and which we can imagine to be a chorus of Nereids, is linked both to a distance in the universe, from the planet, and to a distance in the ocean, from the god; and the feeling that he is untouchable is strongly linked to his astrological aspect, which translates both intuition and illusion, both extremely mystical terrains, where the suite finds its name.

This composition, an extremely complete and interdisciplinary work, which not only covers the areas of astronomy, astrology, and mythology but also connects them, brings to light reiterations of the representations of various mythical figures, suggesting new readings of entities that we already know. It's an extremely enriching sound experience.

## Clube dos Inéditos - reading of "Homem Cão" by Rui Sousa

On May 29, there will be a session of Clube dos Inéditos [Unpublished Club] - Ciclo de Nova Dramaturgia Portuguesa 2024, at Caleidoscópio, at 18:30. Admission is free.

The Club will read "Homem Cão", by Rui Sousa, a 1984-style play-torture about the loyalty and innocence of a family that sees their secret thoughts and past stories as a test of their loyalty to the social state.



## The other side of the mirror: the curse of Dané

Author: Inês Alexandra Santos  
Translator: Catarina Almeida

*“Am I truly perfect?” “How long will it last?”  
“Do other people see me as I want them to see  
me?”  
“Are they still captivated?”*

Women in their toilette have always attracted misogynistic disdain and the wrath of those who censor them. The act of perfecting her beauty hides a heart of stone and is nothing more than the reflection of *vanitas*. Her *coquetterie*? The inevitable downfall of her husband.

When we contemplate the exquisite portraits of women from the Renaissance, we are held captive by their grace, beauty and elegance. There is, however, one mundane object that, although frequent in oil painting, has a whole symbolic aspect buried beneath the variety and richness of the Renaissance works: the mirror.

This essay will take the reader on a journey into the reflection and history of the mirror, tracing its historical evolution and its use in art and literature over the centuries. Based on Plato's theory of ideas, the myth of Narcissus and Freud's complex and controversial ideas, the symbolism of the mirror in Renaissance art will be analysed in relation to *vanitas* and the ephemerality of feminine beauty.

A journey through the history of the mirror, exploring its multifaceted role in Renaissance art and culture, “The other side of the mirror: the curse of Dané” unlocks the secrets of this enigmatic object and provides the reader with its hidden meanings in Renaissance female portraiture.

Despite its initial imperfections and irregularities, the mirror was considered a magical tool by our ancestors. This allowed men to uncover, through the visible, what had hitherto remained invisible.

The invention of the mirror was first attributed to Hephaestus, the Greek god of fire and metal. Scenes of Corinthians admiring themselves on small polished metal discs can be seen on pottery from the 5th century BC. Decorated with mythological imagery, these mirrors could also be made of silver and other precious metals. Since the technology of the time didn't allow it, and as long as it didn't

the production of flat, thin and transparent glass, these primitive mirrors were concave and convex. The former magnifying the reflected object, the latter diminishing it.

The Renaissance, a movement developed in response to the mediaeval period, brought major progress in numerous areas between the 14th and 16th century, such as the replacement of the egg-based tempera technique with oil painting, orthogonal projection, and perspective. In addition to artistic developments, there was a whole wave of scientific and architectural advances that were reflected in the innovative mirror production process during the Renaissance.

Although Lorraine had numerous glassworks, the supremacy of the glass industry belonged to Venice, the place par excellence of the crystalline mirror throughout the 16th century. Maria de Medici was one of the first people to replace the oiled paper that lined the windows of her palace with “crystal clear” stained glass. An unprecedented luxury. The expansion of mirror production as a luxury commodity in Venice took place together with the practice of painting in the *Cinquecento*, leading to an increase in the representation of mirrors. With their luxurious reputation, mirrors began to spread in the homes of the wealthy. By the middle of the 17th century, they were already filling urban bourgeois homes and, finally, they became typical and accessible even to those who went to the big fairs with little money: between 1638 and 1648, one in three homes had a mirror, if not more (Melchior-Bonnet, 2001).

The story of the mirror reveals human beings' fascination with reflection and the duality of the revealing nature that the object exerts on reality. These attributes have been utilised in various contexts throughout history, from the mystical and religious to the scientific and artistic. At the same time, the mirror raises philosophical questions about the nature of reality and our perception of it.

The mirror is the tool of knowledge: it lectures us about our ephemeral nature,

ensuring that the one looking at the reflection doesn't think of themselves as God. In this way, Alcibiades, an Athenian orator from the 5th century, establishes the object not as conducive to a passive reflection, but to one that prompts transformation. According to him, the true mirror was the beloved or the friend, the one who would gift us with its sight and gaze, and who would give a reflection so crystal clear that it would allow us to look inside ourselves.

For Alcibiades' contemporary, the illustrious philosopher Plato, there were two worlds: the visible world and the intelligible world. This visible world was, in a way, an imitation of the intelligible world. Although it produces a more realistic-looking image than oil painting, the mirror's reflection doesn't come from any reality, as it lacks a foundation and consistency. Reflection, devoid of the concept of space and time, resembles "form" in its transcendent character, bringing us closer to the symbolic. In turn, the "form" of beauty is the quality shared by everything that is beautiful: this is what makes us call individuals, objects, and landscapes "beautiful". Given its immateriality, Plato recognised that reflection served the spiritual consciousness and the intelligible world. From an Athenian perspective, it was inconceivable to love an ugly person. Thus, Eros, the god of love, is by association a bridge between intelligible beauty and visible beauty, therefore a "path" to the intelligible world.

Since Plato's theory suggests that the objects in the physical world are mere mimics of an ideal form or essence, the myth of Narcissus, which is part of the prodigious mythological collection of Ancient Greece, can be seen as a warning regarding the limitation of the physical. By confusing his reflection with the ideal form of Beauty, Narcissus falls in love with himself, eventually leading, in numerous versions of the myth, to his own damnation.

Shortly after he was born, a prophecy sealed Narcissus' fate: he would live a long life as long as he never marvelled at his own appearance. As a child known for his beauty, Narcissus grows up surrounded by romantic proposals, suitors of both sexes, and sighs of awe all around him. With his growth, marked by constant flattery, also comes the exponential rise of a pride that leads him to reject all those who approach him romantically.

One day, while walking through the woods, Narcissus comes across a body of water. On his knees and with his hands already deep in the water, he saw himself reflected in the mirror rippling in the breeze. His eyes locked onto those of who was reflected in the water and he fell helplessly in love with his own beauty. From then

on, he spent as much time as he could admiring himself, letting the seasons, hunger, and thirst pass him by. Eventually, he realised that he would never be able to be with his reflection and, grieving, he died next to the mirror of his beloved, of hunger and thirst. The gods, taking pity on him, turned him into a flower: Narcissus.

To the traditional myth, 12th century French mediaeval poetry adds a twist to the story that allows Narcissus to "learn his lesson" before dying: he realises that this feeling is in vain, as well as that loving someone else, like Dané – daughter of the king of Thebes and a suitor Narcissus had rejected – would purge him of his morbid fate. Therefore, he gets up and prays that she will come to meet him in the spring: the gods guarantee his wish. Debilitated by hunger and thirst, Narcissus loses his voice. When he meets Dané, in the hopes of explaining why he rejected her, he gestures to the body of water where he was admiring himself, begging her to forgive him. Grateful for his remorse, Dané forgives Narcissus and the two end up dying together.

Unrequited love kills and only the love of a living woman can match the love of a man. To break the cycle of "self-absorption", the man projects his own vision of perfection onto the woman. From that moment on, she acts as a mirror of her beauty or, in other words, the image of man's own ideal. This way, Narcissus can live his life knowing that his ideal is preserved in the woman who can reciprocate his love. The mediaeval myth clarifies one of the literary and mythological reasons why narcissism is not usually associated with man: its price is emasculation, represented by the loss of his strength and voice and, ultimately, represented by his death.

The reflection we see in the mirror is always an illusion. Lacan demonstrated that the identity we establish with the other side of the mirror depends on *méconnaissance* or insouciance: we see an image onto which we project a mental fantasy.

In his work "Nicholas Nickleby", captures this fantasy through the scene in which a servant observes Mrs. Squeers looking at herself in the mirror "(...) she saw—not herself, but the reflection of some pleasant image in her own brain" (O'Gieblyn, 2019).

Dickens, however, missed a crucial detail: the woman is never alone and never sees her reflection as a mental fantasy of herself, but

rather as what she embodies and represents – a vision.



Fig.1- 'Venus of Urbino', Ticiano 1534, Illustrates John Berger's analysis of the status of women in the following paragraphs

According to John Berger, a man's presence depends on the promise of power that he embodies. Power that can be moral, physical, social, sexual, and many others. The object of this power, however, is always beyond the individual. In contrast, the woman's presence expresses the attitude she has towards herself and what she accepts, defining what can and cannot be done to her.

Since nothing she does fails to contribute to her presence, the woman is forced to scrutinise everything she appears to be and everything she does. What she looks like to others, what she looks like to men, is crucial to the success of her life. "Men act and women appear. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at, seen." (Berger)

The Renaissance painting of the naked body never paints the real protagonist: the audience in front of the painting: the Man. Everything is organised and curated for his gaze. It is for him that his "visions" have taken on their nakedness, for he observes them while still clothed.

Many paintings illustrate the woman's "obsession" and taste for adornment in front of the mirror with a moralistic pretext regarding vanity and, consequently, provoke an immediate doom of the painted woman.

A naked woman is painted because the sight is pleasing, but as soon as a mirror is placed where her gaze falls, suddenly the subject of the work is vanity: the same woman who had portrayed herself for her own pleasure.

Unlike the metamorphosis of Narcissus, there is no redemption in this type of

painting. Narcissism therefore possesses a fatal nature: "nothing of value comes from the life or death of a narcissistic woman". (Meyers, 2002)

The act of holding up a mirror in the image gives rise to a whole change of meaning that is promoted not only due to the shameful Catholic Renaissance discourse that involved women in general, but also by what I call "Dané's Revenge".



Fig.2- 'Venus with a mirror', Ticiano 1555, Illustrates "Dané's revenge", analysed by the author

In his theory, Freud explains that man experiences what is known as "attachment" or "analytic love": he loves, like children, the person who takes care of him and on whom he depends.

Their main need comes from a desire to love others. Therefore, he idealises his love partner, whoever that may be.

In contrast, Freudian ideas assign a predominantly narcissistic role to women: unlike men, women love only themselves and strongly desire to be loved by men, not to love them.

Because Narcissus projected his love for himself onto Dané, hoping, as Freud said, for someone to love who reflected his own self, when the woman picks up a mirror, Narcissus sees Dané, taking from the mirror not only the person he chose to love, but also his reflection: his true love.

Unlike Narcissus, who believes he is in love with a beautiful "other", women are conditioned to believe that they will perish if the image on the glass disappears because, in fact, that is what happens. When beauty expires and the man no longer recognises his self-love in the woman, he will push her away from his affection.

From its humble origins as a primitive reflective surface to its luxurious Renaissance status, the mirror has been a source of fascination and inspiration for artists and writers. Its multifaceted nature as a tool for self-reflection, self-deception and self-discovery continues to captivate our imagination and challenge our perceptions of the world around us and ourselves. When we look in the mirror, we are forced to confront our own vanitas, the ephemeral nature of our existence and the question of what it means to be truly perfect and, in this case, what it means to be truly a woman.

The oppressive weight of the viewer's gaze is and will always be present: "In the mirror I try to recognize him, who watches me through my eyes in the mirror" (Arthur Feldman, Titian 2021). The idea of being free from this gaze seems impossible. Dané's curse reminds us that we will always be confined to this role of being "seen" by others and by ourselves.

Despite everything, vanitas is a well-known harbour that, over the centuries, has been shone upon by those before us. Today, they raise powerful tides for those who wish to enter with ill intent and offer refuge to those who feel they have nowhere to anchor:

"Pride in one's appearance, earned by time and attention devoted to it, is a way of positively identifying the self with one's body, ... an antidote to the historical traditions and contemporary tendencies that alienate women from their bodies" (Meyers, 2002).

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## 10 Years 10 Visits - Visit 9

As part of its 10th Anniversary Celebrations in 2023, 10 iconic spaces from the University of Lisbon will open to the academic community, the public and the city. Visit 9 will include Ajuda – Belém: Jardim Botânico da Ajuda, Jardim Botânico Tropical, and will take place on June 15th, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.

The visit will be guided and free of charge, with registration required up to 24 hours in advance. For more information, see the University of Lisbon's cultural program.

## A Praise of Reform

Author: Carolina Franco

Editor: Mariana Faísca

Illustration: Maia Aguiar

Dear Elizabeth,

Despite believing this letter may never find you, I will nonetheless write it. Your advocacy for women's rights and gender equality has inspired me. For the first time, I believe I am a citizen of this country just like any man. Your commitment is like no other and I respect the strength it must have taken to make such a controversial stand in front of the world. So, it is in your name that I make a decision. I choose to resist.

In a world that insists on defining women's worth based on their marital status, I refuse to comply. I refuse to obey silly societal expectations that come with gender roles. I am not property of men, if I wish to marry it will be because I have found love and solace in someone of the same standing as me. I refuse to bow down to anyone but God, I will not conform to fit neatly into the mould society has cast for me – for women. You've declared our rights, and our sentiments.

I will chart my own course, despite being acutely aware of the consequences my actions may uphold. I am ready to be frowned upon for my decision to deviate from the norms.

Fueled by the fire of your convictions and of the women who signed under you, I find the strength to withstand any judgement or criticism. I will not fear nor cower.

Why should my fulfilment lie in loveless marriage? Are women born and raised so we can be useful to men? If so, how different are we from cattle? They seek to confine and limit us because they know we're much more than they'd like us to be – brainless housewives with no personal opinions or desires.

I write to you to express my gratitude for the path you have paved. As I navigate this uncharted territory, my comfort lies in the knowledge that there are women such as me, who refuse to be confined to the limitations society sets within this unequal, unjust world. Every woman who takes a stand on this matter acts like a guiding star in my life, a light that reminds me why I made this choice when doubt or uncertainty comes knocking at my door. So, I thank you for being a beacon of hope and courage. Your legacy continues to inspire and empower, and for that, I am profoundly grateful.

With my deepest admiration,  
Janette Alston



This is a letter written by the fictional character Janette Alston from the short story "The Two Offers", by Frances Ellen Watkins. In this letter, she thanks Elizabeth Cady Stanton, an American writer and activist who was a leader of the women's rights movement, after she wrote the "Declaration of Sentiments" in 1848.

## next lives

Written by Xavier Cardoso  
Translated by Bruna Bastos

TI sit here on this sinking boat  
with all that I did, more I could not give.  
impossible to forget your beauty, your taste.  
I drown in the thought of my constant misfortune.  
I speak to you, but I don't feel like we´re talking.  
I'd rather give everything and die than being alive without love.  
never forget that we never got to watch the sea.  
the waves went, the waves came, but you didn't want to come back.

I carry in my hands the candle of your absence.  
our love history was a show with no audience.

with you I didn't believe in fleetingness,  
because in me there was a belief in our immortality.  
You left and now I have craved in me the word saudade.

naked souls are always well-lived people,  
maybe we'll see each other in next lives.

## Bones

Written by Clara de Freitas  
Translated by Bruna Bastos

When the silence swallows the night  
And no voice comes to save me  
My body doesn't control  
Neither wants to control  
Everything that encompasses me and that  
wants to kill me.

Every tiny sound makes me fall apart  
And every breath makes me want to stop.

I focus on my being,  
In the shell of who I am  
– A completely hollow woman  
That wants to love, but never loved before.

And with each movement I desire sleep,  
Because I just listen.  
Listen to each bone, each muscle and  
hamstring  
That composes me and allows me to breathe,  
That allows me to cry, that allows me to make  
mistakes.  
And in that moment, I want to break and ripe  
them all.

When the silence swallows the night, I start to  
pray.  
On my knees, I listen to the sound of someone  
who begs,  
But never the sound of who I want to talk to,  
Of whom help I come to wait.

The sky is uninhabitable, but still, I keep  
staring;  
I keep focusing on the prayer,  
So that I can erase my sound.  
And, God, speak!

## A Silent Voice

Written by: André Lomba Miguel  
Translator: Catarina Pereira

In you I faced ingratitude. In me, you planted the seed of doubt that made me underestimate the person I am. You didn't hurt me, you just confined me in my own world. You value your friends a lot, but you were unable to accept me as someone to whom you should provide the appropriate value, even after I gave it to you. You care for those of your own blood, but you were unable to care or who gave you their hand to welcome you. I gave you the needed proof of my love, I gave you what you possibly never had and it could have been more, much more, but you didn't take it. Despite all the time it has been, I haven't forgotten, no. You can't forget something like that. You just knew how to devalue everything. You left without due reason. And to this day you still think you have the reason, that your choice was wise, that the wrath that you planted in me is worth as much as a small particle of dust...

You asked me to leave. You begged for it. You did it because of your selfishness and because you didn't want to see the good I still kept inside me. With me, you were what you could never be with anyone else. With me, you were insensitive and I was only able to see dissatisfaction on your part when you turned your back. You think your details are thorough, but consider mine scandalous and a reason for abandonment. Despite your imperfection, I still offered to stand by you. But as expected, you went away.

Because of you, my world got sick. If I had been the fearful one, everyone would have confronted me. The truth also is that I would have never been as brave as you were. But what you did was not an act of courage, no. It was an act of negligence. And of course I could never oppose it. But you could, if it had been the opposite. I know well enough what the opinions of others would be if it had been me instead of you.

You did what you thought was best. And you still have the audacity to feign the victim and accuse me for the crossing of our paths. What victory do you want with this after all? Do you feel the need to yell? Do you want to bury me in your own words? With your begging that is not begging, but pretence? For what? So that no one knows who you were with me? To spread something that is not true?

Your cry is fake. There is no innocence in your voice. Mine is silent, but it's the one that carries the truth, unique and pure. It's the voice you don't want others to hear.

In a way, I feel flattered by you giving me this stage, by pointing these spotlights at me. But it's still a bit of a nuisance that you consider me a threat and want to make your audience understand that. But the real danger is you. You are able to speak the sweetest and most delicate words to the thousands of people in this world who suffer from diseases, go hungry, live wars every day and who most likely would never return the kindness, but you are unable to give due value to someone like me who also has their torments and disappointments, as well as their own sadness, and who did what they thought was the best to do to have you. Yes, that's dangerous.

I hope you understand one day. That you know what it is to feel disregarded by someone. That you know what it's like to feel it on your own skin, like I felt with you. I believe that by that time you will be wanting something better than loneliness, but that will no longer be my problem. Don't fear me anymore, as the vengeance in me was temporary and in other hands I found the appropriate comfort I would never find with you. Wanting you was a mistake that cost me too much.

Don't deceive yourself thinking I've ever missed it. I don't walk around this world thinking I've lived something beautiful with you. For me, it was lost time. Don't deceive yourself thinking this won't happen to you someday. That, one day, you will not eventually feel a spear of depreciation piercing you and scaring your heart the same way I felt when you sent me away.

If one day you think you should scream, scream all you want, but it will come out like the wind. No one will hear you, because truth won't come out of your mouth. Only words that are unfounded and that will serve you nothing at all. You will choke on those words. That shout will never be my eternal grave, but yours. A deaf scream, where no one will hear it, where truth doesn't exist, where from each letter a poison that you want everyone to hear will drip... as no one will listen.



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