

OJOBOCA, INSIDE / OUTSIDE

According to their official biography, Anja Dornieden and Juan David González Monroy are a filmmaker couple who have lived and worked in Berlin since 2010 under the moniker of OJOBOCA (literally EYEMOUTH). Together they practice what they call Horrorism, which, paraphrasing the amateur Egyptologist I.I. Pearson, present in the notes of *Heliopolis Heliopolis* (2017) appears to be a kind of *meticulously elaborate and wildly implausible simulation*, which aims to create traumatic prolapse that includes the body of the spectator and that of the film itself, both interpreted as sense organs to be violated in epiphanic transmutation. Their universe displays an evident interest, on the one hand, in figures such as the *beginner*, the *amateur*, the *ragpicker*, interpreted as agents of the dislocation, counterfeiting and derision of History, *losers*, and, on the other hand, but in a complementary measure, in the cinematographic scenarios of the *mockumentary*, a derisive overturning of *vérités et mensonges*, of *found footage* as a discarded object, orphaned and anonymous and finally of *horror*, dreamy like an amniotic drift, a non-place submerged by ancestral and *bright darkness* (*Heliopolis Heliopolis*).

The horrific, conceived by the duo as a sort of amateurish ritual, on a small scale – a board game for beginners - playful, perishable, defecating, impossible, it degenerates the idea of Cinema understood as an archetypal practice. In OJOBOCA the filmic enunciation, the *médium*, translated into *Heliopolis Heliopolis* in an architectural design, ingenious atavistic deception, *primitive simulacrum*, in reality enacts a subgenre, *body horror* or *biological horror*. This filmic practice, continuing a whole literary tradition that goes from Mary Shelley to Franz Kafka, up to William S. Burroughs, owes its noblest features to David Cronenberg, especially with *Shivers* (1975) - the original title of which should have been *Orgy of the Blood Parasites - The Thing* (1982) and *The Fly* (1986). The rituals of the subgenre essentially perpetrate a loss of control of the body which is exposed to mutations and diseases, hybridization and sexual or animal aberrations, zombifications, in an unconditional desecration of the nature of the human and animal body intended as biologically efficient organs. A funding characteristic of this genre is the renunciation of any type of psychological strategy of a proselytistic nature, of spectatorial identification, in favor of a sensory experience of time-space displacement that crosses a line, falling into an abyssal syncope. In the center, the infesting, mutant figure of the Monster, the performing body, acting and not acted upon, *demon*, minister of forces, Antonin Artaud would say. Citing OJOBOCA through the notes of *Heliopolis Heliopolis* and embracing the aforementioned idea of the media's transfiguration of the term *model* - architectural and urban - in *film*, although from an upended perspective, at least in the expository hierarchy of their own limits of comparison, it would seem that their cinema *possesses* the same tension towards that drift of aquatic oblivion pursued in body horror:

The model was never meant to be built, but was used during the ritual to induce a trancelike state of mind. In a hallucinatory haze, the student wanders through an imaginary city, which resembles neither a maze nor a tower, but an endless body of water in which the temples float like islands.

In the films of OJOBOCA, the spectator, called upon *vis-à-vis* by the *presence* of an obstinately seductive voice-over and by the automatic scrolling of typed titles and explicative placards, experiences a

metamorphosis, invited to transcendently gush into the demonic folds of the sensible, transient *fragrance* (*The Skin is Good*, 2018), or as is written in *Heliopolis Heliopolis* about the geology of the *outside*:

...gutters awaiting the secretions of the residents, the beast's open mouth dripping with foul ooze.

The practice, the meticulous gesture, is enacted by the duo as a propulsive and perverted push, *the strangulated phallus* (*Heliopolis Heliopolis*) from the *inside* as interiority, psyche and conservation to the *outside* as surface, gesture and otherness. Going beyond the *inside*, the psychological sensibility, the Cinema, *planned intoxication* (*Heliopolis Heliopolis*), sphere of the self that dominates feeling without becoming sensitive, without extinguishing itself in the act of taking action, means going beyond the limits of History and its constant thematization, of the archetypal petrification of time, the domain of Cronus.

The researcher, J. J. Dummings proposes that Heliopolis Heliopolis was in effect a very large maze. According to him, students were sent into the maze, blindfolded and naked with their bodies covered in duck grease. Their goal was to find the models of the city's main temples and destroy them. To do this they would have used their bodies as torches. (Heliopolis Heliopolis)

The destruction of the temple, of the *index*, passes through a solicitation to the *outside*, as the *deepest mystery, a fathomless unknowing, the oceanic abyss and inexhaustible thirst* (*Heliopolis Heliopolis*) and is equivalent to enacting otherness as a stage of revelation, epiphany, going out of the self and absence. Artaud would say, *To Have Done With the Judgment of god*:

It comes from the fact, one fine day, man stopped the idea of the world. Two roads were open to him: that of the infinite outside, that of the infinitesimal inside. And he chose the infinitesimal inside.

OJOBOCA, extension of the eye by means of the mouth, as an orifice of the rectum, point of escape, not phagocytizing but rejecting, anti-authoritarian, is expressed in mechanical-demonic and agamic forms first as a *simulacrum* that is oral (*Heliopolis Heliopolis*, 2017), musical (*Comfort Stations*, 2018) and of the typewritten word (*The Skin is Good*, 2018). The enunciator becomes enunciated - it erupts in a *modest discrediting of itself* according to *Heliopolis Heliopolis* - abandoning itself loyally to the oppression of interlocution and, in so doing, becomes mental matter, it disappears demystifying itself, it overflows from the sphere of its inner universe, *overturns* the domain of History which, on the contrary, exhausts the sensitive nature of the object, naming it.

To summon the skin demon, one has to say the skin prayer (see attached). Before one says the skin prayer, one has to take command of the skin receptacles (see package). But the skin receptacles must never be touched. They are objects of the mind. One may only interact with the skin receptacles through sense memory. How can one remember what has never been physically experienced? (The Skin is Good).

By discerning himself, through a sacred receptacle of brute nudity, the *interviewer* as well as the *interviewee*, desire, despite the fact that their skin imprisons them, historicizing them, to take the form of blessed excrement.

The skin is good but its mutations are not yet sublime or at least bewildering to being of low intellect. (The Skin is Good).

The eye-excretion becomes barbarous, ignorant, insubordinate, young boy and old man (the *outside* in *Heliopolis Heliopolis*), in a sickly and desertifying mechanical repetition. In *Comfort Stations*, in a sense a public toilet, the terrifying ritual takes place. The music, which initially characterizes from within, is extinguished in a desperate gesture of survival and so the matter comes out *spurting*, like *urine, shit, a venerable feast* (a sign indicating the *outside* in *Heliopolis Heliopolis*). Emmanuel Levinas would say: things are bare, metaphorically, only when they are devoid of ornament. Things are often opacities, resistances, ugliness. Ornament does not provide for revelation, freezing the sensible in the code, in itself, *celebrating the ages, praise for those who built and composed them* (a sign that this time indicates the *inside* in *Heliopolis Heliopolis*).

In that sense OJOBACA practices a cruel ritual of otherness, that disfiguring form that in the theater of Artaud assumes the aspect of an inhuman gesture, to the extent that, lacking any finality and rejecting any form of reward, perverts the representation by becoming truth, revelation, a magical and putrid, esoteric and animal, sensitive and demented act. Gilles Deleuze says in an interview entitled *A comme Animal (L'Abécédaire)*:

One writes for the readers, that is, towards them, for them, but also for a non-reader, or rather, in the “place of”, as Artaud would say in affirming that he writes for the idiots, in their place, and in the place of animals, like Hugo von Hofmannsthal, who, in his animal-becoming, used to say that he felt a rat in his throat.

Giuseppe Boccassini