

Laura Pugno

DNAct

Three one-act plays for theater
and a poem

ZONA

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N_HS (EN_AITCHESS)

one-act play for two actors,
goddess and ape chorus

A group of apes enters. It comes forward, a bit disorderly, toward the lit stage front. As the group emerges from the dark, the figure of a woman is revealed with a golden fur garment on. She is barefoot, and as the fur moves you can glimpse her bare legs.

GOLDIE: A troop of apes enters

lines up at center stage
she is between them with a golden fur
that covers her arms and legs
she takes two apes
by the hand, leads them to the center,
under the light –
(pointing at first one and then other of the apes)
enn, aitchess.

Behind them, the troops of apes lines up in a semi-circle. Every so often, one of them stomps its feet or hands on the ground. At first it happens randomly, and slowly it becomes more rhythmic.

GOLDIE: She, let's call her Goldie,
crouches down among them
pets them to soothe them.

The three take their position on stage, seated or crouched with arms on knees. The two apes, N and HS, feel about with their hands in Goldie's fur. They reach her breasts and mime that they are milking her, grunting with satisfaction.

GOLDIE: Naturally, I am the monolith.

I am all black stone
in this scene
and they suck my tongue.
Every story tells this story
the hiding of the ghost
under layers of ochre
or polished stones, under the
wonder of the tongue. Now,
only now, raise your mask and
speak.

The two apes remove their masks – N with some effort, HS
quickly – to reveal human faces.

GOLDIE: Do you recognize them?

Neanderthal,
homo sapiens.
No interbreeding,
no X or Y to mix up their papers.
So many times we turned backwards
into the body of a chimpanzee by remixing Y.
Of course, it's like the Planet of the Apes.
And I who am the lady of the apes
am about to leave you alone.
One of you two, I tell you
will not leave here alive.
One of you two, you know which.
But by now the light is almost gray

and you
(pointing at HS)
now speak, because I am your tongue.

HS stands, and Goldie with him. The golden goddess stands behind the ape and wraps her legs around his body. Every time one of the two – N or HS – speaks, Goldie will be at his back, rubbing him against her golden fur and “giving him speech.”

HS: You've always been hidden,
in my story, listening.
Even now that you're dead I'm afraid of you.
It's normal to be afraid of you.
We came from the heat
and that was Gibraltar.
Gibraltar.
Oh no, don't think about how it is now.
It wasn't the border of the land
but it is there that we remained alone
too long.

Goldie detaches from HS's back and moves in front of N. She rubs his mouth with her hands and blow inside repeatedly. N stands up too.

N: La-lala.
In an ochre uterus.
The dead,

in an ochre uterus.
Or with deer or ibex antlers.
Hematite dust on the skeleton.

Goldie extends an arm, takes HS's hand.

HS: Don't you know how to say anything else?
I had forgotten,
you don't speak.
Or at least I think so.
We found your dead
covered with red ochre
but the bones
were broken and the marrow sucked out.

N sucks Goldie's fingers.

N: The living
are the living, the dead are the dead.
The marrow
was sucked from wolves, from beasts.
We set bear bones
covering ours, to protect them.
The young were almost always to die first.

HS: What happened?
We exterminated you
or mixed our DNA –
they say that

yours is rotten and gave
us Alzheimers
(he grabs a lock of Goldie's hair)
or red hair
blond hair
(he pulls Goldie by force from the other one)
but this story about hair
is not true.

N: Lali-lala.
Lala, lala, lala.
Lali-lala.
We have very pale fur.

HS: You wanted a tongue
(he fixes up Goldie's hair into a braid)
and you didn't have it.
Or maybe you did.
Without
a guttural "g,"
without
strong vowels.
Something
very confusing.
I don't remember all of you.
But we,
then, took mushrooms –
psilocibes –

or iboga root.
I don't remember
the names, even the climate was different.
Or maybe something else,
some bone,
some cluster of cells
changed.
There was an early form of us,
still without its full power,
and then it changed.
It is still changing, but so slowly
that I don't feel it.
(he stands up, spreads his arms)
Ours is the only story
(he clenches his fists on his chest)
but you were hidden
within
monsters' dreams,
black figures from the darkness,
hideous.
Our dead have always resembled you.
Or the dream of giving life to the dead.
You had it too,
we found your dead,
those with the ochre.
You too stopped
leaving bodies in the brush.
It had succeeded a long time before.

N: Before your second
arrival from Africa.
Or was it the third. When
your species changed its nature.
A bone in the throat changed
and it gave you control of the tongue.
Between your new body
and your new mind
a hundred thousand years passed.

HS: Not the second or the third.
It was the first and only arrival.
The earlier ones were not men.

N: Not like you.

H: You weren't men either. Not in earnest, I mean.

For the entire length of the conversation, Goldie continues her
dance around N and HS, becoming more and more sensual.

N: You said it when you found the body
in the Neander valley.
You took us for sapiens,
but deformed.
You didn't even recognize your fellow creatures.

HS: We did wonders.
And now we will remake one of you

fully, completely, mitochondria
and all.
We have the DNA.
A drop of blood is enough
the tiniest piece of marrow
and I'll have you in my hand.

N: But we are dead.
We are your dead, your monsters.
We also have ivory pendants
we had covered with star fish
in recent days,
when only the coast was left for us.
You confined us
to the furthest border of Spain –
what is present-day Spain –
our bones were mixed
you were everywhere.

HS: Your ivory pendants were ours.
For you we had flat children's faces,
without a torso –

N: Children very able to kill.
Besides they are still your children.

HS: Now be quiet.

Suddenly, behind N, HS, and Goldie, the apes begin to beat the ground in unison.

HS: Remember.

There was a common ancestor, the antecessor.

He came to Europe, gave life to you –
to us, who remained in Africa.

We evolved separately.

There had been a chaos of almost-apes,
bipeds,
then bipeds with speech,
with precision grip in their hands.

Not one species alone.

A chaos of Australo- names.

Afarensis, anamensis, boisei, garhi.

We've always been mixed, even among apes.

And maybe the memory

Of the other thing that you are,

– neanderthal –

precedes you,

dates back to those sterile apes,

is not safeguarded only in language,

in the ochre painted on the body

is not transmitted

in ivory and obsidian

but in flesh.

N: We were still
the same thing when the earth broke apart
a fault opened,
created the enormous lake
Tanganyika, drowned the beasts
in the new Rift Valley.
Ten million years ago.
There was a chance, if the protochimpanzees
remained on the other bank
and we by ourselves, forever.
Then time passed, a great deal of time
and again, there was a chance.
Two million
years ago,
a tongue of sand
between America and America created
the isthmus of Panama, shifted
warm currents,
all over Europe and Africa suddenly
the ice came.
And still, still the body changes.
It's the latest mutation
that keeps us as young apes
forever.
The brain
split in two,
right and left,
the skull bones enlarged.

Neothene
is the name of this disease.
Homo
antecessor crossed the desert
and stopped at the ice.
This is how we separated from apes,
how we got out of the forest.
(he turns to Goldie, takes her face between his hands)
You are gorgeous, my lady, but I have lost you.

Goldie returns his caresses, then mimes the gesture of cutting the Neanderthal's throat. She turns to HS and offers it to him. HS places his arms around her neck.

GOLDIE: Kill him. You want to kill him want to kill him.
So you will be the only one left.

Behind them the noise of the apes has become very loud.

HS: I know the end of the story.

With a single motion, HS strangles Goldie. Her blond head slumps to the side, broken. The noise suddenly stops and the chorus of apes stands up.

HS lays Goldie's lifeless body on the ground and covers its face with a strip of golden fur. Then he takes a step back, and he and N face one another.

The chorus silently advances toward Goldie's body, lifts it, and holds it between HS and N as if to protect N. HS does not react. Slowly, the entire group, with N in the middle, moves back toward the rear of the stage.

HS: You disappear
 amidst the other apes and fossils, forever.
 Our conversation breaks off.

Darkness falls suddenly.

COSPLAY

one-act play for mutant,
male body and aliens

The cosplayer, a young woman, enters at centerstage, and positions herself under a spotlight. She puts on a leather or latex suit, black. Her face is covered with a mask. From offstage, low but continuous, comes the sound of the ocean.

COSPLAYER: Jean Grey, Phoenix

begins reading your mind

like your body

we are in a room

with white walls, a double

bed

a living room, kitchen

the apartment has everything you could need

and the two of us, locked inside.

I put on masks, I am

always just

Jean Grey, Mystique,

Storm.

(These names are copyrighted).

You'll see all of them, just relax.

Now I will be

Jean Grey, you see me

my body

is a woman's –

(she opens the zipper down to her waist, exposing her breasts)

my mind is what reads your mind.
The smell changes
when I feel your thoughts
or others', or the presence of beasts
as my powers are developing
I feel better
I have better sex
you've noticed.

The spotlight beam moves, and wanders over the stage and
through the audience as if looking for something.

There's something in the dark,
I feel it, I am
even more aware
with my mind than my body.
It's her,
Phoenix,
you know her as a precise
fury,

The spotlight beam stops at the furthest end of the stage,
lighting the stretched out body of a young man.

she sees it
with her laser vision
that cuts with precision.
And so you know
Phoenix and all her anger

light, black light
you know
Mystique the shape-shifter

With a sudden motion, the spotlight returns to the woman at centerstage. The cosplayer slips out of her suit – keeping her mask on – and takes a jar of blue body paint from the ground. She crouches down and begins to paint her body.

You believed it, that I might be the perfect
Jean Grey,
you want to cover my body
with an indelible cipher,
each form
hidden by a layer
of fake fur
that truly seems
like flesh.
But I,
Mystique,
or Mystica
who takes the shape of a siren,
blue scales,
I'm playing a game
with you
I make you my prey.
My power is changing shape.
"Let me see."
Here, don't take back

your hand
and my flesh changes.
I can mutate into an animal,
to a cobra,
or a cobra charmer,
I am the beast that covers you
every time the mind frays –
that it goes dark.
Against me the night
turns on the light.

The cosplayer has finished painting her body. She gives the empty jar a kick and leaves a splatter of paint on the floor.

If this isn't enough for you,
if you want Storm,
look,
my eyes are turning white,
hair silver,
and now I have the power to control the wind.

She takes a piece of black cloth from the ground and wraps it around her like a cloak. From behind the mask she unloosens a long lock of silver hair.

Ororo-
Storm is a queen,
her power
since childhood has been to make rain fall.

To make tears fall.
If your eyes are dry
I'll fill them with sand.
You know
my anger.

She approaches the young man on the ground and allows the black cloth to fall from her back, clenching it in her hand. The man does not move a muscle. She pushes the cloth into his mouth, and watches him struggle until he suffocates.

Now we've said everything.

The cosplayer removes her mask and silver extensions. On the ground there's a basin of water. She crouches and washes her body with a sponge.

When she's clean, now defenseless, she comes toward the front of the stage, and offers herself to the audience.

You know that this is not me.
I'm dressed up.
I do cosplay
because they are coming to take me.
Don't ask who.
If you ask yourselves
you already now.
Them.
The aliens.

I was already there.
They come with a light.
They enter you with golden
lights in all your holes.
They take your body away
and replace it with another.

Darkness, all of a sudden.
The noise of helicopters is heard and a dazzling light comes
down from above. The room is invaded by alien scouts with
infrared goggles and flashlights pointed on the woman, blinded
and huddled on the ground.

The encounter has come together
like you always wanted.

They take her away. Darkness again.

WERE/W

one-act play for female body,
Beast and narrator

A cage at centerstage, inside Beauty, the Beast's prisoner, on all fours, chained by her wrists to the bars. The floor of the cage is made of mirror and covered with fur and straw.

On the stage backdrop, screens on which are projected images of zoos with wild animals: tigers, wolves, jaguars.

Every now and then, the roar of the Beast comes from offstage, electronically distorted, blood-curdling.

The narrator enters. He has a plastic case with him full of strips of dried meat and a bottle of water.

The cage is opened so that the narrator can walk in and out of it. On one side of the stage a crevasse opens.

NARRATOR: No one knows precisely

what animal

the mysterious Beast is.

It comes at night,

changes at night

and its poison

its poison, once injected, does not go away.

It will change the prisoner's body.

(he enters the cage, caresses the chained Beauty)

It is we who give her to the Beast

and she is body alone,

she is beauty
in the eye of the beholder.
(he places a blindfold on her eyes)
But for now, she can still speak.
Until its arrival. The Beast's, I mean.
Not much longer,
really not much longer now.
It's almost dark. It's no longer twilight.
Night falls suddenly, like in Africa.
But do not worry. Before
it's here, the Beast,
a long time before
you'll hear it coming.

He pulls the strips of meat from the plastic case and begins to feed the prisoner, cautiously. With each mouthful, Beauty sniffs the air, snapping her teeth blindly searching for a bite.

NARRATOR: Now, it is she who is hungry.

We give her dried meat,
mineral water,
vegetables.
So that her body will be able to withstand the Beast
maybe more than one night.
We will save something.
But if I must be honest
tonight is already the second.

Tomorrow morning she will be dead.
The Beast will have entered inside
not only her body but her blood
and will change her horribly.
(He is distracted. Beauty's teeth graze his skin)
This is all an act. Now she is harmless.
Rather, what I am about to tell you.
She arouses me.

The Beast's roar comes from offstage. Beauty, still blindfolded,
reacts frantically.

NARRATOR: There are many descriptions
of the Beast.
They have tried to measure his body,
but from close up.
We do not have
this courage.
But from a distance, with telescopes,
or at night with infrared goggles,
this we have done.
The Beast resembles no one.
And yet, those who have seen him
and have returned alive – shortly after
naturally, they're dead –
they say that it is like
seeing the fire of perfection.
You place it in fire –
perfection, I mean –
but it burns you.

He takes an empty bowl from the bottom of the prisoner's cage and fills it with water from the plastic bottle. He gives the water to Beauty to lap up.

NARRATOR: Here, in new Gévaudan
they say there were several guys
evoking the Beast,
at the start of it all.
Some guys
who thought they were beasts themselves,
wolves, were-
wolves.
They sewed fur costumes
cut their flesh.
The smell of blood and fur betrayed
them when they went into the forest
always hopelessly just like men.
I, naturally
was one of them.
I remember it all.
I felt
inside me the wonder of the Beast.
At first, I thought I was alone
but then I knew there were many of us.
The others were ashamed.
They thought they were sick.
I was the first
to come outside,
to drive them out one by one,

to make the group.
Imagine
you're digesting
a piece of flesh.
And that your sucks attack
the beast's muscles.
The Beast
does the same with you
the true one, I mean.
It devours your mind
like a piece of flesh.
Does a piece of flesh think of anything
else while it is transformed?
No,
I tell you.
It only wants to become your flesh.
I wanted
to be the Beast's flesh.
I tried to attract it in any way,
but nothing,
nothing.
For all of us, it never worked.
Then one night they took us
and put us inside.
We did not pretend to be innocent.
We wanted desperately
to change flesh.
Like Beauty now.
They forced her and now she

wants nothing else. If she weren't
blindfolded, you might see it in her eyes.
They're frightful.
You can read the story's end
written on my body.
Does this seem like
the forest's perfection?
Set it on fire -
said the voices - set it
all on fire.
I fled.
I set the forest on fire to drive it out.
But the Beast is not like other beasts,
it is not afraid of fire.
Maybe it has the salamander's skin.
Beauty could tell us
but I do not believe
she is still able to speak.
And maybe I prefer not to know.
They put me here to rehabilitate me.

In the cage, Beauty has finished drinking. She knocks over the
empty bowl and continues to lick the surface of the mirror.

Then the dead are made even thicker.
Bodies found torn
by teeth, by fingernails – it reminded you
of a werewolf –

and covered with slobber.
And so, one night
they offered a girl.
She was a werewolf,
one of us.
Here thighs were too big,
the Beast did not stop devouring them.
The night after a Romanian, a nanny.
Then our entire group – almost
all women – was given
as a meal.
Do you know what the Beast does to women?

The Narrator lifts a floorboard and pulls out a leather and fur costume, with an animal mask. Continuing to speak, he undresses and puts it on. When the mask is lowered over his face, his transformation to the Beast is complete.

NARRATOR/BEAST: You know, of course.
But knowing is not enough.
You want to see it happen –
that's what we're here for.

The Narrator/Beast presses "play" on an MP3 player sewn on the front of his costume. We hear the Beast's roar again. Beauty cringes.

NARRATOR/BEAST: Beauty is ready.

The Narrator/Beast enters the cage and covers Beauty with his body. Beauty – still blindfolded – yells and tries to struggle but the Beast is too strong.

NARRATOR/BEAST: (*untying Beauty's wrists*) Know who I am?

The transformation is complete. The Narrator/Beast slips away from Beauty and collapses to the ground. Hands free, Beauty is still on all fours.

With her teeth, Beauty tears the fur off the Narrator's body. Then she rolls him toward the crevasse with her nose.

Beauty stands on her feet and exits the cage, letting the audience see her. She begins to tear off strips of faux fur from her chest, arms, and shoulders.

BEAUTY: Yes.

Sudden darkness.

ANIMAL MASTER
poem

the one that's the color rose red

the one that's the color rose red, tiny particles
of red,

star-flesh,
brilliant rose

she who steals the jewels
you've hidden

on top,
the one that's completely a star:

read her lips,
recompose the rose's shape

the honey indicators
burn trash fires,
the honey indicators are
pointing your body: golden,
leopardlike,

now, you take
cookies from the glass jar,
enter, into the rose gardens:

the code of the rose is leather
and does not smell like a rose

animal master

the body embraces the knees,
is covered in red,
is alive and dead

she places
black adhesive tape
on the muzzles of small animals,
in the grain
an arrow's outline
then a star
this means an unsustainable spring:

they spill soy
sauce on you
it trickles from your forehead to your navel
and you lick it,
you have a body entirely of plastic
and they want you to return a body

and the field is open,
it's open,
you hear
something in the room –

you are, silent one, you are the flesh
or are crouched on the shoulder
from when the mind is in two
like a bird

or, they're written in blood
on the walls,
and your dog senses it like other beasts
bodies painted with blood
with a beast's mask,
with a bull's mask: A and not-A
are the same fat
the same soma-substance

A is animal master
beast that is not two,
gleaming, oh gleaming
ape with beast's bone, with gleam
A returns as not-A
in the circle, returns as east

"with beauty, with
beauty above her,"
under an awning,
in the bottom of a pool
with blue tiles,

under water completed
by its fat,
the mind is in two

so it is lost,
greasy with oil,
mixed with blood with sea water

so, it is mind –
body painted with ochre
curled up with bones, that breaks
and finds
world beyond world, invisible beasts
arrows in their flesh, that return
and you
devour, devour,
make a law with the masters of the beasts

lion's head and torso,
wolf's or wild horse's spine,
man's or wolf's body,
up there,
up there/Lascaux,

modified body
that goes to the group
of those known beasts,

and further ahead,
on the forest path,
those who will be beasts:

who speak the language of darkness the dead language

new human species I: aquamarine

in groups from all over the sea
they come toward the tanks

sirens,

hold you in tanks raise you
for the sweet flesh of beasts

flesh for Yakuza
will soon be forbidden
held bound off coast
prepared for the knife

so the siren is secret
flesh, covered with mucus
on rice it's streaked with silver
if the sea is very warm
it is too fat to be eaten
if the sea is warm it smells of
white musk/muschio bianco

splendid-to-dazzle
mermaid does not have the species' male,

you're predator or you're slow
your body changes with the moon
from dugong to woman
with small breasts with beauty
above and below
you
beauty

("in beauty she goes, with beauty
above her she goes,

with beauty below
her with beauty
around her,

in beauty, in
beauty it is
finished")

so your beast's body changes to woman
slow like a beast
under the stupid
new moon, all flesh
eats plankton, crustaceans
if you cut her the blood is toxic

("object of a new
beauty, cosa
di nuova bellezza
in beauty,
in beauty
is endless")
and the language is English-Japanese
and the place the Pacific Rim

clear, full mind
at the time of the full moon
that fades and becomes a sliver
so the mind fades
and the body loses its acerbity

the states are paper
the gesture repeated
sirens of flesh
in houses, under our roof
a large tank opens,
an impluvium full of the sea

becomes slow and large
as if it were of white beast

and the egg matures early
in the species without male

the egg changes in the cavity
like a vagina, in front,
from the egg the new siren
absorbs seed and soma

so for millennia the species
equal to itself does not mix
itself with the human species
but the mix of human
and mermaid species can occur

you mix with the human species
the supervisor who keeps an eye
on the tanks who controls and continues
bodies mixes you

in breedings off coast,
in traps plastic tanks
cares for the beautiful beast
until it's ready for the slaughterhouse

and when it takes him it wants
something similar to a woman
use of that body
like a pretty doll

it takes the first siren
the species, it thinks, does not mix
the vagina cavity
takes the egg loses the sperm
human produces its
siren sperm-milk
protein drink,

but errs, the siren species
is fully compatible
with this human species
it mixes in secret, invisible

from the egg the second siren
seems equal to the first
almost a beast, heavy breasts,
long hair-fur

in the same way it is taken
in the tank's warm water
by the first supervisor
or by a visitor,
who pays gold for a beast

siren of milk and flesh
continues in that slow body
unseen mutation

you sew the body in a sack
you cover the head with white,
an egg with a spherule of oil
inside, and in the heat appears
the subaqueous order of the world

blood is warm in warm
water, then you clean the tank
and so
beautiful,
beautiful and terrible
ultramarine inhumanizes
with golden skin, hair
like a melusine-mermaid

morgana opposes medusa
as perfectly in nature

that it comes to your world and weaves
with locks
of finest hair, creates a nest
and reptile egg within

that tears and exits the beast
and it is a wonder

you see now that it is a siren
splendid-to-dazzle
you see right now, your eyes see
as on the bottom of the ocean
(your entire body is scattered
over the surface of the ocean)

a tongue incapable of lying

the amount of water
to make blue,
not of a glass of water
but of an iceberg?
that is undone in white and tongue's surface –
the shell is full of milk
and grows into moss,

all of this is milk
– flesh and brain –
milk with lichens,
if you open the flesh and read the rings
you see that it is kept in the same shape
and will be covered with grass

or make a hole in the ice
and wait,
for hours the body's emergence
partly seal's or shark's
the ice becomes milk
with almonds that contain fat
taken from the center
the most complete part

blancmange of the body

design the fingers, then,
place a corset of steel
piercings in the back flesh
in two rows, connected by a ribbon
that tightens and loosens

it has a dorsal
sewed to the sides
kept in the same shape
tongue transformed –

linear a

the half-bull
is before you,
completely flesh,
no difference between
labyrinth and maze,
then tie it tight – laby-
rinth syllabifying to the ear,
burning the skin with the wax,
if it's now prey,
lick the wax from the beast's chest
it's sweet like honey

you'll come every day to bring them
feed full of blood

the half-bull does not devour flesh
if you who like
each of its veins with your tongue
give it your saliva you must
bullfight it,
with a cloth around your sides a lock
of red hair

you bring red
eggs in a piece of white fur

and the bull's torso
is a god-bull's,
and it changes worlds
it's you who's hatching those eggs it's you,
who's hatching

new human species II: new Asia

this is a China
that's huge,
with golden houses, nation
within nation
territory within territory

it scatters like an oil-
leopard
condensed in black and gold

if you have a pearl in your tongue
if you have a pearl in your tongue say it
before you become an eye

look from the top of a ladder
frame
the body not the head
the fur-trimmed skirt
on the legs
in leather boots
then they're on top the body falls
they're hundreds of
trails of blood, like when you crush

a pigeon,
the body not the head
the body you've said the body not the head

now you see the scene better,
the scalded girl and her lover
who moves by threads
as if held by her mind
with long fingers, with perfect nails

and the prey, see
how they make them: with ovules of explosive
forced into the mouth and into the body
like algae balls,
in a wax paper bag
bought from a street vendor

so when that body explodes
from the ovule inside, which explodes
it's white, fat, and it expands
– you've got a trail
of oil down the middle of your forehead

and history is rewritten
in the era of agent orange

and of paper airplanes
era of mcdonald's militia

see all of the shadow theater
nation within nation
you with a tongue that oils you all up
tongue charmed with fat

slowly review the scene
in the theater: exfoliating on flesh
then smell of burned flesh

you're in Mc'd restrooms
and the militia massacres you
jams paper airplanes down your throat
with your first name on top

take the pass
the anti-agent orange coveralls
and also, golden oranges
with password on top

and now that you've filled the tanks
of these golden spheres
you can move toward the field,
gm canola oil gold
with gleaming beauty
the ski mask lowered
now you're number thirteen

you hear it, you hear the syllable
as the first thing
coming near, acid
revealing the thing-
atlatl, the most ancient weapon
adapted now for orange

and you take the hand
of one nearby, she
will guide you underground
take the golden sphere

she asks it of you she is the one
who dies of suffocation
with great gentleness, she
curls up like wax paper

site specific

theater in need of the body
(where you are, where
power is
the body is necessary

to impose power)
and theater that almondizes
reaches the body

these are
these are

narrats,
like desert roses
or cancellation of the cherry

and laughs, brings to the lips
very dark tea, the more and more
clearly defined figure of the jaguar
like the body is a dancer
and dances

drinks the juice
loses blood from the nose

like a body in sats position
not-yet-action
that gently folds its knees
and gives warning:

so it's fencing with bare hands
and it will ward off any blow

as it appears

“black egg closes
has written on the shell in a secret language
you hug your knees

you close the body
covered in henna with a written language
that disappears”

the oasis is closed, they've
stopped speaking
secretly in your language

the egg is two fingers on your head,
black
wahabite girls
bring black eggs

there's an adat
in your language, adapted
for language
and law,

change –
language like a secret,
as it appears

it has a body
with a white
stripe, a black
mask, covers only the mouth
the arms behind the back

if the flesh disappears
the meals are divided
and your hair is divided
into long braids

you're on a prayer rug
and you watch with your eyes perfectly open

new human species III: societas

so you begin from the goat
placed on a white rug
the same consistency as fleece,
or the thickness of coagulated
milk,
and on the white rug there's writing
naturally,
as on any white surface
as on a body:
its amino protein
sequence responsible
for the production of sperm,

of the growth of horns
of the body's putrefaction

the societas does this
and the goat moves into the open,
freely toward
the completely white pack
where the other beasts are

seals before they change white,
or tigers, or great polar
bears, from ancient
bestiaries

forms
set in the ice, mixed with towers,
allowed to come
forward,
now
that it comes forward

she –
in everyone, and all the inhabitants
of the city of Dyss
mixed with video images
made inside, with fragments of images

with or without language,
child with an ice dress,
with white fur, thick
over her back and sides,
white ice:

feral child,
enters,
it's written enters
in the shell of the central pearl color
in the world you know stone by stone

you're about to transform:

it's the city of Dyss
this one, it was a Florida
of swamps and mickey mouse and
black plague, when the ice melted
and then flooding ice returned
and now there's nothing else –

your city
survives, licks blocks of salt
loses the technique
goes unguarded, goes unloosed
and sees nearing inside the forests

the great wolves
men with wolves
dining companions for the flesh of beasts
that suck the fat marrow

she opens, yellow eyes, black eyes
legs for the beast
and you have yellow eyes
you do not graze on grass because you like blood

when your body arches, it changes
teeth and legs, deforms
the skull to a new perfection
of form, of a wolf egg
as in incubation

you will change
until completion –
see, it's an empty chips bag,
in a green field of grass
of dry grass, in a low wind
or it's a bag of white plastic –
and on the mouth the blood is very sweet

you cannot go back after the blood

making a unicorn

shift the bones,
flat, calvaria,
on the skull where the horn is,
under the white skin
of the small goat
a single horn now, you cut one off
and position the other at the center
the handmade unicorn
the bones,
welded to perfection,
composed all with wonder
in a body
you'll be able to make into milk and cheese
and if you're brave eat the meat

you know,
it's a unicorn mixed with goat,
not the one from your
stories, not faithful
to its shape: while you're
a child
you'll be able to climb on its back
until your body's transformation

you're thirteen the day you give
up the unicorn
or you lose it, it doesn't change the
beast's substance
that becomes flesh for you
in that moment
so it's not the beast but it's the beast
that is transformed

and so, the one the other – and you
will have the horn, dirty
white – it completes you

NOTE ON TEXTS

This book is for Arianna

Three one-act plays for theater

cosplay was written between June and December 2006; *n_hs* between end of October and middle of December 2006; *were/w* between end of November and end of December 2006.

were/w was published in issue 6 of *Ore piccole*, year II, July-September 2007; *cosplay* was previewed in *Tratti*, special issue on “scrittura detta,” III/2008.

Poem

“animal master” was written between March 2005 and June 2006. A selection was included in *Registro di poesia 1* as an honorable mention for the Premio Mazzacurati-Russo 2007, edited by Giancarlo Alfano, edizioni d'if, 2008.

“a tongue incapable of lying” was included, with a short statement, in the volume *L'esperienza-divenire delle arti*, edited by Carla Subrizi, Marco Giovenale, Ilaria Gianni, and Francesco Ventrella, Fondazione Baruchello, 2006.

The series titled “new human species I, II and III (aquamarine, new Asia and societās)” reworks in verse some of my own prose pieces, including *Sirene* (Einaudi, 2007), and two other unfinished works.

The series “animal master,” now included in the poem of that name, and “aquamarine,” were included in the women’s poetry anthology *Fuori dal cielo*, edited by Sara Zanghì (Empiria, 2006). “aquamarine” was also published in *Carta 47*, year VIII (December 23, 2006 – January 13, 2007), titled “Narratives on the future”; “new human species II/new Asia” and “linear a” were published on Biagio Cepollaro’s blog, www.cepollaro.it, February 1, 2006, and then collected in the PDF journal *Poesia da fare* 15, October 2006. “linear a” and “making a unicorn” were published in the March 2008 issue of *Le voci della Luna*.

I have made some changes to these published versions.

INDEX

N_HS (enn_aitchess)	3
cosplay	17
were/w	25
animal master	35
<i>the one that's the color rose red</i>	37
<i>animal master</i>	39
<i>new human species I: aquamarine</i>	43
<i>a tongue incapable of lying</i>	50
<i>linear a</i>	52
<i>new human species II: new Asia</i>	54
<i>site specific</i>	58
<i>as it appears</i>	60
<i>new human species III: societas</i>	62
<i>making a unicorn</i>	66
Note on texts	69

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