

Eva L'Hoest *Eilandkwesties / Matières insulaires*

14/9/25 – 26/10/25

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Dear Eva,

The new school year is in full swing and I am still lying awake. Our sleep has been deprived of us. Memories of our encounter this summer come back to me in a muddled state during my nightly monologue. I wanted to thank you for introducing me to Leda. Your resemblance is unsettling. I didn't dare say anything to you about it at the time, perhaps out of fear of associating you with her androgynous profile and all the contradictions of the myth that her first name revives.

I saw that Ostend oppressed her. Neither she nor we escape the need to work, caught in an insatiable urge for control. Entangled in our contradictions and carried away by our tentacular, technological desires, our attempts to rid ourselves of them seem ridiculous.

A strange feeling continues to creep over me when I think back of the coastal scenery and the slowness of our days. I find it difficult to put into words the faded charm of the seaside resort, the atmosphere of celebration and carnival no longer sounds like it used to. Everything is there, in the wry smiles and stiff mediocrity of the bourgeoisie hiding behind Ensor's masks. His "experience house" is a theater that lends itself to the game of appearing and disappearing that often shapes the spaces through which you guide us. I also understand that the masked faces appeal to Leda because they are so rich in psychological metaphors.

Their hypocritical attitude reminds me of the laying figures that have inspired you in the past. I see that your obsession with memory is not waning. You dig like an archaeologist in the layers of a digital world flooded with data. Leda - as a link between these realities - is a suitable subject for continuing your search for the authenticity of images, bodies, and gestures.

It is the return of Virginia W's *The Waves* that also came to mind with "the blue time of vacation" and the memory of "geometric places." Nothing has a hold on Leda as she wanders beneath the columns, captivated by the drops of water and her stream of consciousness. She escapes every classification, shifting between languages without belonging anywhere. I see her again, nonchalant, indecisive, swaying back and forth between land and sea, and her tensions.

The island issues you speak of indeed reflect her isolation. Everything obsesses her in the too slippery images passing by, orbiting, exploding. I wonder how I can still resist the crisis of time. Horse races help her analyze the nature of movement. Even when she reclaims control, nothing can save her from the threat of engulfment.

Tonight, with my mind turned to the sea, I relived something of the origin of creation. Leda led me to the ambivalence of the machine, of the matrix, between security and loss of individuality. A fluid and formless space of pregnancy. The story of the myth - and its heroic and tragic companions of fate - resonates as a metaphor for our time and the technological cocoon. The moon is blood red, everything is swaying. I no longer know whether Leda and her swirls ever existed.

All I have left is the triptych, the glowing box from which the bodies emerge. I cling to its tangible presence. Its fine contours testify to both stubbornness and precision. Haunted by the fear of her own disappearance - and of dematerialization - Leda is said to have given shape to hubris, pouring in all her desires and drifts. A fleshly invitation to reconnect.

Goodbye,

Antoinette

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