

OVER THE RAINBOW

by Raphaël Kessler

Curated by Francisco Lacerda

Private View Only

Sep 15th – 16th Oct, 2018,
9am to 7pm, Monday to Friday
15 Set – 16 Out, 2018,
9h00 – 19h00, Segunda a Sexta

Where?

Late Birds Lisboa
Tv. André Valente 21, 1200-024
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It was with great pleasure that I set about to curate the present exhibition of Raphaël Kessler's photographic works. Held in conjunction with Late Birds Lisbon, the sequence now exhibited at the lobby gallery is a promising insight into the daily life of the LGBT community. Like most big European capitals, Paris and Amsterdam have an exciting mix of avant-garde art, culture and talent. However, minorities are still unrepresented and thus somewhat forced to exist in disconnection from their contemporary society. When Raphaël Kessler explores hidden messages in people or groups of people, he approaches them from behind, above, bottom, top, or front, making them highly visible and giving the viewer a sense of latency. Walking away from the exhibition we know that yes, those people exist; but also that no, other than a source of curiosity and amusement they are not yet fully recognized.

My decision to curate Kessler's testimony is also a reflection of my respect for the importance of freedom in Art. Before the revolution of April 25th, 1974, Portuguese people lived under a fascist regime, where nothing of this sort would ever be tolerated – neither in photography nor in daily life. Attesting to how long it takes to shed old habits and principles, same-sex marriage in Portugal only became legal since 2010. Transitory Art is naturally poised to lead such changes, refusing the terminology of past, fighting for full freedom of expression, imploding traditional codes of self-control and refusing fashionable boundaries. I also invited Damien Arness-Dalton and Clara Pinto-Correia to share some words about LGBT.

Foi com grande prazer que decidi assumir a curadoria do trabalho do fotógrafo parisiense Raphaël Kessler, em exibição no lobby do Late Birds Lisbon. Juntamente com o Late Birds Lisbon, esta sequência oferece-nos uma visão de conjunto da comunidade LGBT raramente presente na Arte contemporânea. De facto, e muito embora Paris e Amesterdão seja indiscutivelmente um mix estimulante de arte, cultura, e talento vanguardistas, as suas minorias continuam sub-representadas – e, como tal, de certa forma existem à margem da restante sociedade. Quando Kessler explora as mensagens subliminares de pessoas ou grupos de pessoas, conseguimos vê-las de frente, de trás, de cima, de baixo, o que hiperboliza a sua existência e lhes confere um estatuto latente que faltava preencher. Saímos do lobby sabendo que sim, que estas pessoas existem; mas que não, ainda não estão devidamente representadas.

Decidi passar o testemunho de Kessler também como expressão do meu respeito pela importância da liberdade na Arte. Antes da Revolução do 25 de Abril de 1974, os portugueses viviam sob uma ditadura fascista que nunca toleraria nada desta ordem – nem em fotos, nem na vida real. Os velhos hábitos e princípios não se descartam facilmente, e o casamento entre pessoas do mesmo sexo só foi aprovado por lei em Portugal em 2010. A Arte Transitória está naturalmente vocacionada para estimular estas mudanças, recusando a terminologia do passado, lutando pela liberdade de expressão, implodindo os códigos tradicionais de autocontrolo e recusando as barreiras impostas pela moda do momento. Desta forma decidi convidar a escrever sobre LGBT, Damien Arness-Dalton e Clara Pinto-Correia.

TOP MIDDLE OR BOTTOM by Damien Arness-Dalton

Top

He is masculine and takes charge
A man who knows what he wants
His cock size? hopefully large
exercising his powerful dominance
Throwing it down slapping it around Arsehole tight like a
cats anus
If exclusively top it remains thus
The Alpha male, Selfishly giving
To greedy holes that are in need of filling.

Middle

He is felixaeble and enjoys versatility
Flipping to and fro according to flow
Selective pleasures chosen desire
Shared between man and men
He will give anything a go
Nothing to prove or show
but sexually free giving and taking expressively.

Bottom

She likes it up the bum
Her arse stretched for tops to fetch
Labeled feminine yet masculine
Thresholds of pain and ability
Size queens seeding and breeding
Lying on her tum, doggy style in the rectum
Douched clean and popped up ready to receive
Passive aggressive receptacle of cock
They have it on lock.

POR CIMA, NO MEIO, POR BAIXO por Damien Arness-Dalton

Por cima

É masculino e é ele quem manda
Um homem que sabe o que quer
O malho? Deve ser grande
Para exercer uma dominância poderosa
A puxar por ele e a bater-lhe bem
Com o cu apertadinho como um ânus de gato
Quem é só por cima fica sempre por cima
É o Macho Alfa na sua oferta egoísta
Aos orifícios que anseiam por alguém que os encha

No meio

É flexível e ama a versatilidade
Por um lado ou por outro, ao sabor da onda
Tem prazeres selectivos e desejos escolhidos
Numa partilha de homem com homens
Há de experimentar o que quer que seja
Sem nada a provar ou a mostrar
Mas sexualmente livre para dar e tomar
Expressivamente.

Por baixo

Gosta daquilo no rabinho
E espeta-o bem para quem vem por cima
Dizem-na feminina mas é masculina
E explora os limites da dor e do encaixe
Tamanho grande a suar e a escorrer
Barriga para baixo, no rabo à canzana
Depois de se lavar e amaciar para receber
Receptáculo passivo-agressivo do marginalho
Fecha-o dentro de si.

A LEVEL ABOVE by Clara Pinto-Correia

We all have our idea of home in our minds, but we don't know what it looks like. It's just that kind of magic that oversees life on earth: the moment we pass by it, or look at a painting, or set anchor at the beach where it stands, we know we came to the right place and that our soul will flourish if we dare to stay there.

Daring to fight for what makes us happy is what happiness is all about.

I've never been into eloquent speeches or brilliant metaphors. Heroic Able Dog Malachi sure is.

All the crew members call him Mike, but his birth name is really Malachi. The other three words were the grades he had been progressively gaining thanks to his amazing feats on board. Mike had once been a completely black young puppy from a Portuguese Water Dog breed of eight, born at my house as part of a side-business of mine cut short as the War marched on. These puppies are irresistible young kids. My special friend the now deceased Captain Adams-Wooly came over for lunch on a certain Sunday when Mike was six-month-old, and the only youngster left because I meant to keep him in my family due to his rare perfection. But Wooly was so overwhelmed with the charms of that playful acrobat seemingly made of rubber and covered with shiny curls, and sincerely begged so much promising even more in return, that I eventually was not able not to offer Mike to him – even though after all his promises he didn't satisfy my sole request of receiving his younger daughter in return. Maybe I shouldn't say this about a deceased War Hero, but truth is he didn't keep his promise and maybe God doesn't sleep indeed – they were torpedoed by a Fritz submarine up inside the dense clouds of the Arctic Sea, in such a way that it was impossible to give them anything coming the least bit close to a proper funeral.

Adams-Wooly was not only my best friend, but we shall come back to this later.

The point here is that he had made his will before entering the line of duty, and, amazingly or revealingly enough for a married man with six most well-mannered children, he had left me the pieces from his art collection he knew I really esteemed, together with his entire library, that gave me nights and nights on end of incredible travels over worlds apart. Also, it was clearly stipulated in the will that should anything happen to him I was to be the one and only and sole heir to Malachi.

Oh, we were both so happy.

I had raised Mike since birth, and up to his first six months, during this fantastic period when dogs learn the most, I had feasted his brain on everything one should know about everything that is not written in none of the books of any Naval School. I had been taking him with me to safe sailing trips to nearby places because I noticed right away he positively loved the experience – not necessarily the case with all Portuguese Water Dogs. It hadn't taken me long to notice I had a very special dog in my hands. He was more than intelligent, he was visionary and had his own special powers. Other than that, he positively adored observing people and their ways. And then he adored giving it back to them.

The Maoris were a great example, and that was right at the first time our Destroyer sailed all the way from the fogs of London to the splendors of Adelaide, with impossible battle plans and several dangerous seas in our way, but the amazing powerful forests of the Antipodes awaiting us as a reward. Mike was happy as a clam with the whole experience, learn to smell the Fritz a hundred miles away in no time, and spent the whole trip absorbing, absorbing, absorbing – and then sometimes, when he thought I wasn't looking, giving his first shots at delivering, with tones and looks already to die for – while he was still registered as “Pup”.

It turns out that our men were desperate from all that time at sea, craved fresh meat above all other fresh things not counting fresh beer, and we may all have our differences but does anyone ignore human nature – these were guys, these guys saw Moas for the first time in their lives, went ecstatic because these were huge hens they could easily kill with Maori daggers, they also could set up a huge barbecue next to the carcass, and in the meantime someone, somehow, would arrive from the city with drinks for all.

And so we drank, we ate, and drank and ate a full second round, and went on overdoing this joyous fest so intensely that pretty much all of us ended up sleeping by the fire, without a care in the world. As far as I'm concerned, I had not been very interested in being there from the first moment, so I was present more as one of those little sacrifices your comradery forces you into, but hey – I should feast with the boys to thank them for all their efforts, and without really feasting my presence would be meaningless, and that Moa was a formidable bird.

The next day I was informed by the Governor of Adelaide that we had screwed up everything we possibly could. We had no better idea but to fool around in a Maori sacred ground, where just about nobody goes on normal days, and punishments for these violations are so severe nobody even mentions them by words. We went hunting Moa without asking for permission to the Hunting Chiefs, so we messed up with terminally powerful guys, the kind that every year fight each other to the Last Man Standing to decide who keeps the honor of holding the post and deciding who's allowed inside or not. We used Maori weapons as though they were ours, even though Maoris consider their instruments, hunting, musical, religious, or other, badly tainted and forever useless if anyone else uses them to the end they were created for. We had done all this to a warring and well-armed nation that truly enjoyed a good fight and was constantly just waiting for a good reason to have a good one, and that therefore wouldn't take lame excuses from anyone. Besides, what lame excuse did we have? We had plainly used other people's daggers and hunt in another people's land. "We didn't know"? But they were right there! "We're filthy imperialists"? How could they understand the meaning of such expressions that early in history, nobody was putting things that way, yet.

There being no wise decision for an act wise enough to sooth the catastrophe, I decided to play the sacrificial lamb and marched over by myself to the Maori village, where – why was I not surprised. I found everybody sitting around and Mike conversing with a huge guy with even more facial tattoos than the others that must be the chief. He waved to me and gestured for me to sit in their circle, with Mike wagging his tail and making his Speech Face.

What's my dog been doing? I asked.

Well, said the chief with a placid smile. Basically, he started by explaining that acts like last night's are to be expected since you are a bunch of filthy imperialists, but by now everybody knows that, as far as we're concerned. But then we went into the truly marvelous part. He's been explaining what we were not able to read in our dreams, our visions, and our nightmares of the last two weeks, ever since this all started. Some passages were impossible to read even to Te Pito Te Henua, the woman who goes to the right place, connects to the center of the earth, and sees the light.

A beautiful woman with great white hair closed her eyes and nodded to me.

Our dreams all had seven colors, like the rainbow, but then they had some more none of us had ever seen before. Within those strange colors we saw your boat coming. We saw men with a filthy smell killing birds cowardly by theft and treason. We saw a white man with many auras, sent to us to represent the differences white men can have in their quest for happiness but we could not hear what he said. And all of us saw people, people, meaningless, scary clouds of people. Now Mike has been filling the blanks for us. It's a good thing your ship came, you know? What we now know might be as horrifying as to keep us up at night right, but at least we know. And we can see time rolling through all of it until there is no time no more. And we have a much better idea of where to look for the light when most lose their joy and the world gets dark. Will Mike come back? Because we don't know that.

Mike told me something as to being about time to get going back to camp.

And then he slept his little heart away for an eternity.

All that effort, all that carnival of seeing things, communicating with whatever it is that dogs can communicate with and we can't, then passing his messages to people around him, then convincing them, then talking to me, -- you might think it curious but talking to me, and me to him, was easily the easiest part of Mike's day, so just imagine how tired he was at the end, and what started earning him his first grades. Because the Lower Deck wanted, never because I said so. I would never start a movement to promote my own dog while we were fighting a war.

Anyway, Mike's Naval Instruction progressed to the point where the boys gave him a blue collar with golden stripes, and with the title HEROIC inscribed in red. Mike couldn't be prouder and gave them a short speech to say so. In the end he performed one of his impossible acrobatic rubber numbers, everybody clapped, and this is how our Heroic Able Dog keeps the Lower Deck happy under the worst possible circumstances. We were all a bit uneasy because our Destroyer was now escorting the small boats looking for mines set at sea by the enemy, and then there were friendly mines too, and all of this was happening, all over again, exactly where a Fritz submarine had exploded Adams-Wooly's Destroyer to pieces inside a dense fog. You could almost hear the dead whispering, but you couldn't understand what. It was bitterly cold, our decks seemed to leak more and more by the hour, and if it weren't for Mike's capacities to see through the clouds and feel movements through gigantic blocks of ice nobody would care to stay afloat past a certain point of flagellation by the ire of the elements. But we strutted on. We had a secret weapon. No, not all creatures are the same and not all great friends stay in touch in the same way. Mike started joining me at the bridge more and more, cutting straight to the chase not mincing words: my lover was saying we had to do this, my lover was instructing us to prepare that. How could Mike hear Adams-Wooly right where he had perished, with such clarity that he could pass on combat orders, I'll obviously never be able to explain. But no-one needs an explanation for how the boys' morale went up and the whole crew got combative and animated once word leaked out: we were being guided from heaven by a dead Destroyer Captain who loved me, and who passed his directions to me through Mike who had special powers and adored me. We were going to win.

As the waters got free from any evidence of Fritz Navy, who in its hurry to clear the area sent many interesting items overboard including countless bottles of a noticeable diversity of excellent wines – which shows the notion of losing that battle had never crossed their minds before – there was less and less talk of loving deceased people sending messages. But, on the other hand, there was increasing talk of yet another recent feature from the European Cabinet de curiosités: Our Lady of Fatima. They might never have believed a word about her, but now, after everything they'd witnessed, none of them knew what to make of a lady strangely prone to show up above trees in great radiance ever since 1917, and then talk to little shepherds in a weird language nobody was able to understand. A young boy who had great talents for radios and photographs started coming to the bridge quite often when he was off-duty and I was there alone with Mike, to converse on things related with boats and places people would be able to get themselves after the War now that all this technology was there to serve. Then, one night, as there was really nobody listening, he asked me whether I really believed there was a lady showing up over trees, her feet surrounded by a perfect circle of white clouds, playing hide and seek with child-shepherds and telling them those things seemingly behind understanding.

Well, I said. No one would believe us if we were to tell them about Mike's perplexing powers and amazing capacities for making himself understood with us.

Yes, the youngster insisted. But at least we understand him. From what I've heard, nobody understands the lady. There is a difference.

Maybe the lady is already talking from a different level, you know, a level above Mike's. Maybe we've been waiting to get there.

In all due respect, what do you mean a level above, Boss?

Remember those dreams the Maoris were having? And somehow Mike filled in the blanks for them? Just consider the rainbow, for one. It might not have gold at the end, but it has something more precious than gold, it has the mystery of vision. On the one side you have infra-red from the night, and ultraviolet from the sun, and there are already some glasses and binoculars making it possible for us to start to see two entire fields of vision we didn't even know was there before. So there you have it. Join two more colors to our rainbow, and you'll see an infinity of new combinations. Now that's a paradigm shift in the making, no question.

Boss, please. Talk to me, not that dead friend of yours.

OK Son, you listen to my class, then. By adding just two colors to the rainbow we changed the world we see it – the way we can see it, if we dare to look. But it is a huge change, because there is a huge number of brave people. And I would say that, once started by the instruments that allow us to see things differently, thousands of persons were immediately seduced by these possibilities in the entire world. And in our generation, because of the way we have been travelling during the Wars, we have been meeting more and more different people, different societies, different rules and ideals for togetherness, we have been meeting the entire world and sure enough we have been changing while this new rainbow kept opening more and more, and more and more people chose to live by it regardless of how hard they had to fight so that their equals accept their choice of their new lives, and if these numbers will continue to grow because – ask Mike! He can tell the difference immediately, and you know why? Because if people want something in live, Goldarned, people want to be happy.

Mike wagged his tail, barked a happy bark, and stated pulling pleasantly by the radio operator's uniform sleeve as though this was all happening in a game.

Boss, just about murmured the raio operator. What's he saying.

That the microscope aldo completely changed the way we see the world in cas I need anther metaphor. OK Son, do you understand?

You know Boss, I'm scared shitless I understand it all.

Then you understood perfectly. It's amazing that something so precious might be born from such a horrible War. But still it's true that this War was the trigger for our world-wide travels, where we incidentally met people who were looking exactly for the same kind of joy we were looking for ourselves, had quiet night-long conversations with soldiers leaving to the Front the next day, or were blessed enough to discover some of those special people who taught us something we plainly didn't know. I was stationed up here in the Artic before Mike was born. There wasn't all that much to do, so Kadlu's iceberg didn't take long to become my home away from home. It happened to be the season of the auroras, and the sky was constantly tearing down full length in green and orange stripes, then blue and silver, there was this magical silence all over the valley and all around the camp, and the two of us laying there skin to skin holding hands as we watched the lights, under those huge fur blankets, swearing to each other we'd meet again. And of course, we will. After we win the war.

So, you're gay, Boss?

No, not only. That would limit my map of the human heart where each one of us searches for its one fulfillment. I'm bi. I also love women. Maybe less seriously, but I do. Remember those Southern Seas Islands where we touched at for fresh water and fresh fruit on our way to New Zealand, when Mike was a Pup? Oh, if I could I'd take home a good half-dozen of those girls. They're perfect. And they laugh without sin. Whenever I could I wen to the local dance bar just for the thrill of dancing with them, and it was always them, you know, initiating the talk, staring at me in the eye: "my horse is outside, what do you prefer, you ride in the back or you go to the ship by yourself?" – something to this effect, infectiously flirtatious, straight to the point but funny, without a trace of malice and certainly not with money in mind, at all. Beautiful girls, so beautiful, I totally understand Matisse. Oh, wait a second, wanna know who's a real straight gay, gay as hell, believe me? Olsen! Remember Olsen? The guy from Norway who sold the ivory with our stories to the Cingalese jeweler and was badly short-changed? While we were in Colombo we went out to drink sometimes, and he never, once, had anything nice to say about any woman. So once I spent the night with him, certainly out of desire, but honestly, also out of sorrow. He invites me to dinner at his place next night and I figure it's one of those get-drunk-till-you-puke sessions, all the other guys had that kind of look, but – what could I do, I had already been a bit snobbish with that crowd, poor Olsen, I'm going. Kid, I'm telling you, I arrive there and it's only me, and he's throwing me a dinner like it's the Eastern Tour d'Argent, honestly. Only the two of us, marvelous cushions on the floor, candles, incense, flowers floating on water inside gorgeous containers, sitar music really vibrant and mysterious, he's serving dinner barefoot with a black tunic and orange silk pants floating inside, doesn't let me get up not even once, several courses, each one of them with a different fabulous wine... he had cooked all that just for me... and when I start thanking him he moves over and shuts me up with kisses, but what kisses. Son, we never, ever, slept during that night. A man so skinny, so blonde, so silent, and suddenly he becomes a tiger, but a crazy tiger, a creative tiger, with an intense desire that knows no end. I went back to ship – and to everybody's mockeries, and little did they know – wandering what on earth had all that sudden passion been all about. From what I heard later, I realized Olsten cooked really well, had opened a small restaurant by the docks but the War made him close it, and his foremost pleasure in life was to receive distinguished and sophisticated guests to spoil them rotten. Those kinds of people just about vanish in a port taken over by the Infantry, you see. As I said, we get our joy in many different ways, even if the end result is the same.

You're not ashamed, Boss, to say things like you've been saying...

No, Son. I hear other guys describing their adventures with women and I feel ashamed for all of us men, because they're gross, gross, gross. You tell a beautiful story where your partner is a man, or several, and you're poetic, where's your flaw? Just chose your audience well. We're not there yet.

Where, Boss?

At the time when all our different options will be looked upon as just exactly there, your own option.

There are more?

Why, are you disrespecting women? I spoke of gays, and I spoke of bis. But there are also lesbians, right? Like the Great Dane who rules over our kitchen.

They both broke in laughter imagining Ms. Hellcoyt with dog's cheeks and dog's paws. Mike growled in frank disapproval.

Ah, youngster, Mike's right as usual, we're not being fair. She has that face and that temper, screams to take care of the simplest thing on earth, throws herself shamelessly at any unaware newcomer that might accidentally replace someone – I learned recently that her favorite line is "this is war and we might die, so..." – but the truth is she has a heart of gold. One of these days Mike will tell you some things about what she does for her people in the kitchen.

Boss, please. You talk to Mike. I just understand the main point, like all the others.

Mike can show you a main point. She's a good person, Hellcoyt, right Mike? But this young boy never gets to see that part.

Mike placidly and sweetly leaked the boy's hand.

The boy almost cried.

And you know who also was a lesbian, Son? My own good Mother was and had four kids. All boys.

Your Mother, Boss?

Yes. During her two final years in College she had a crazy passion for a school mate after many a short affair with enchanting guys – she was beautiful, fun, and intelligent, my Mother. She was a very good singer, too. And she was brave. So she managed to receive a grant to join the famed Voice Academy of the town where the other girl's family estate was located. This other girl had specialized in Art and Design, so she got a position creating sets for the Academy! They lived in heaven with a very small budget for a couple of years, hiding wherever they could, daring to indulge during dangerous circumstances, spending entire Saturday afternoons in bed in my Mother's small rented house... But sure enough, both their families decided to marry them to somebody convenient before they would be considered old maidens, chose the candidates and made the arrangements without even talking to them, and finally the four parents joined with the two daughters for breakfast to discuss the dresses and the guest list. It was the last time they saw each other. At their joint wedding. After Adams-Wooly died and she received my new

library – I was at sea – she confirmed what she had already known in her heart for a long time. First time I came home on leave she told me all about how everything froze in time after she wore that wedding band. How having sex with a man was a sacrifice to her, and her husband didn't even try to make it good. How she had been the perfect spouse to my father anyway, how she had educated us to the best of her capacities, but how at the same time she lost her voice, and she understood she had to completely forget about herself, or else her live would be a living hell.

Your grandparents never told her anything.

And my father never tried to give her any pleasure.

Could she have been bi, with a better sexual partner for a husband?

I very much doubt. If just the thought of having sex with a man strikes you as sacrifice before you even try, there's not much hope. And the times were not ripe yet for lesbians to plainly use that argument to divorce their husbands or to plainly refuse to marry them, see.

Do you think they can do that now?

No! Yet I do think that being a lesbian, like being a gay, at least is no longer that horribly weird way of choosing to live it used to be. If nothing else, then because categories are mounting in their diversity. Bis, Gays, Lesbians... and what do you think of Ts?

Ts?

Ts are that weird light in the rainbow of their dreams the Maoris couldn't understand before talking to Mike – Mike wagged his tail proudly and stood by the Captain as though certifying his words. It stands for Transsexuals. All those who are born inside a body with one gender, but everything in them, from their sensitivity to their way of managing conflicts, is typical of the other gender. They can't do much more than passing themselves out for the gender they feel they are, but doctors are predicting Great Things. Hormonal treatments, surgeries, treatments of all sorts that will indeed pass one gender to the other. And in due time, I'm sure, we'll discover more and more colors that have always been there, but we couldn't see them before. And then we'll have more pleasures, be happier, and in consequence fight less. Will society accept our differences, then? Well, history always shows society dragging its feet behind us, always complaining and calling us immoral, we all know that – but now we have so many people like you travelling the world and getting to meet each other, even the slow social response might finally change. And if we have easy days and time to explore our own depths in absolute freedom, oh, we can't even imagine. We don't even know what's over the rainbow. But, for the time being, this is the nascent difference we already have to offer to the world: LGTB. But it's still a secret, you hear me? The Navy is certainly not ready yet. You mention this to a less educated comrade, you let the word get around in whatever simplistic and stupid form it will take, and Son, it's Court-Martial, you hear me? Court Martial for the two of us. The fields are ploughed, and we're planting the seeds while everybody looks the other way. But we need those seeds to grow into healthy and resisting plants all over the world, and people must enjoy eating them. Do you understand?

OK Boss, I can keep my mouth shut. But could I at least help through some seeds to the fields?

Why do you think I wasted my time telling you all this?

Mike barked joyously through the blinding fog.

And so it begins.

These stories, together with beautiful illustrations, were registered above the Artic Circe by a seal hunter called Kadlu, when he had the venture of capturing a huge sea lion with two tick and shiny ivory teeth. However, one of Kadlu's kids lost that carving next summer, when his dog-pulled sleigh broke down at Lake Netilling beach, in Nikorosing, where a Lake Inuit found it next spring and sold it to a man from Imagem who worked as interpreter at a whaler of Cumberland Sound, and that man sold it to Hans Olsen, who later was quartermaster on a huge steamer carrying tourists to Cape North, in Norway. When the tourist season was over, the steamer made a connection between London and Australia, with a stopover in Ceylon, where Olsen sold his huge engraved piece of solid ivory to a cingalese jeweler in exchange for two fake sapphires. I found it under some rubbish in an old house in Colombo and translated it from beginning to end.

OS SEGREDOS DO ARCO-IRIS por Clara Pinto-Correia

Todos temos em mente uma certa ideia da casa dos nossos sonhos, mas não sabemos o que é nem com o que é que é se parece. Faz parte da magia que sustenta a vida na Terra: passamos por ela, ou vemo-la numa pintura, ou ancoramos na sua praia, e é quando sabemos que chegámos ao sítio certo e que a nossa alma há de florescer se nos atrevermos a lá ficar.

O arrojo de lutarmos pelo que nos faz felizes é a verdadeira essência da felicidade.

Nunca fui muito de discursos eloquentes nem de metáforas brilhantes. O Heroic Able Dog Malachi é que gosta mesmo desse género de coisa. Malachi foi o nome próprio que eu lhe dei. Trouxe-o para bordo do contratorpedeiro aos seis meses porque era evidente que o bicho não queria outra coisa que não fosse a vida de marinheiro, e além disso, para mim, já era evidente que o cão tinha poderes, isso a bordo dá sempre jeito, e então em tempo de guerra nem se fala. Por exemplo, uns meses depois de o termos inscrito no livro dos registos de bordo como Pup, quando eu dei pelo que a marujada andava a fazer no Último Convés pela calada da noite quando as águas estavam calmas, já o cão se estafava todo a ressuscitar os mortos da maior estimacão de cada um deles. Aquelas sessões mediúnicas tiveram que ser reguladas a ferro e fogo senão já ninguém fazia mais nada a bordo, mas concorreram para que se lhe conferisse uma promoção imediata para Able Dog Malachi, com direito a grau inscrito numa coleira linda com galonas de cobre que ainda estou para saber de onde saiu.

A Guerra deu cabo da moral de muitos homens só pela rudeza das condições em que foram obrigados a viver. Mas nunca deu cabo da moral do Mike. E ter por perto um cão que invoca os mortos, que sente o cheiro de um Fritz a milhas de distância, que troca casualmente impressões com os Maoris quando por acaso temos de ir em manobras à Nova Zelândia e lhes profanamos a Terra Sagrada com uma grande orgia de Moa no churrasco bem regado com várias sortes de álcool local e ainda estamos para ali a fazer podres de bêbedos – um cão que faz o que fez o Mike levanta a moral de qualquer Tripulação. Voltámos para o contratorpedeiro ainda encharcados em adrenalina enquanto nos caía em cima o quanto tínhamos estado perto de uma morte horrível em solo amigável, o tamanho e o horror das armas dos Maoris iam subindo de dimensão a cada segundo que passava na memória de cada um de nós – mas ainda nem tínhamos levantado a escada e já eu tinha o Mike perfilado à minha frente, a cauda a varrer o cão de entusiasmo.

Então e agora vamos dar-te que grau, rapaz? perguntei-lhe eu.

Heroic! gritou o jovem operador de rádio que se tinha juntado a nós depois das mortes do Ártico e era bastante melhor nas suas funções do que seria de esperar. Heroic Able Dog Malachi! Salvou-nos a vida a todos, caraças!

Os homens desataram todos aos berros de aprovação, o Malachi levantou-se nas patas de trás para ladrar aprovativamente com a dignidade do cargo, e o Mestre Foguista trouxe logo lá de baixo uns cabos de aço tão brilhantes que faziam doer os olhos para lhe enrolar na coleira.

A meio da travessia de volta, já os Americanos andavam a picar os miolos aos Japoneses e aquele mar era um quarto de vigia permanente, o operador de rádio começou a ganhar o hábito de deixar as maquinetas dele todas ligadas e vir fumar uns cigarros para o meu lado quando me via sozinho na ponte com o Mike. As capacidades do nosso cão, e a minha capacidade de falar com ele de homem para homem em caso de necessidade, permitiam-nos falar de quase tudo. Mas isso foi até à conversa da Nossa Senhora de Fátima, e foi só porque eu estava irritado

com o Mike. Pela única vez desde que ele tinha nascido, havia ali uma questão de quem manda a bordo que o meu próprio cão andou muito perto de transgredir.

Mas acredita nessa Senhora, Boss? Uma Senhora muito linda, com os pés descalços em cima de umas nuvens de algodão, que aparece numa árvore a falar com uns pastorinhos que não percebem nada do que ela diz?

Não sei se é verdade, não sei se não é verdade, seja como for ninguém percebe nada do que ela diz portanto não adianta de nada ela aparecer, sei é que se mando o meu próprio cão calar a boca que essa visão não me interessa o meu cão não tem nada que continuar a ter essa visão, rapaz. Um cão pode ter milhões de visões. E ele não que só está a ter esta, e só está a ter esta, e que ter uma visão não é nenhum cinema, e que se um cão tem uma visão é porque aquilo vai ser muito importante, o raio que o parta do muito importante, rapaz, aquilo é em Portugal, um país que nem entra nesta guerra, isso, rosna para aí, falta-me mais ao respeito, falta, queres perder as galonas, não queres?

Boss, com todo o devido respeito. Podemos voltar à parte em que ninguém entende o que a Senhora diz?

E então?

Boss, a gente também não entendia o que nos dizia o radar e agora sabemos deste mundo e de outros mundos o que nunca saberíamos. E eu não gosto de falar do que não sei mas pense no arco-íris e agora com todo este trabalho do infravermelho e do ultravioleta também ficou à vista um mundo inteiro que não se podia ver.

Exactamente. Sabemos, vemos, mas é por que entendemos.

Mas nós entendemos as coisas que o Mike entende?

Não. Mas entendemos o Mike.

Boss. A Senhora que ninguém entende pode já estar no nível acima.

Qual nível, rapaz?

Boss, o nível que está à espera de ser entendido.

Para quê?

Pois, se ainda não entendemos ainda não sabemos. Mas uma coisa lhe garanto, de certeza: há de ser para sermos mais felizes.

Então e o menino com essa carinha e esse corpinho não é feliz porquê?

Senti o focinho do Mike que vinha lambe-me a mão no escuro. Tinha-se chegado a nós em pezinhos de lã e estava a apresentar as suas desculpas mesmo na hora certa. Quando começo a brincar com alguém o Mike dá por isso ainda antes de mim.

O operadorzinho de rádio é que não tinha dado por nada, o que teve a vantagem de despachar logo ali a parte importante da questão.

Porque é horrível estar apaixonado e ter que me esconder com o homem que amo de uma sociedade que nos condena, Boss, pronto, como é que quer que gente assim entenda seja o que for?

Tem calma, rapaz. Eu também tenho de esconder essas actividades e não é por isso que estou para aqui a ter ataques de nervos no Mar do Japão no meio da Guerra.

O Boss também é gay?

Não fillho, sou bi que sempre se conhece mais gente.

Com todo o devido respeito, Boss, como é que soube?

Disse-me a minha Mãezinha, que é lésbica.

A Senhora Sua Mãe, Boss?

Pois, coitadinha. Aquela sociedade ainda era pior do que esta, e não acredito que o meu Pai alguma vez se tenha preocupado com o prazer dela. Mas fez-lhe seis filhos, todos rapazes, imagina, pobre mulher, tão linda e tão inteligente, e sempre tão boa esposa. Alguma coisa notou em mim que se fartou de me dizer que nunca quisesse saber das opiniões dos outros, e quando eu comecei a ficar mais vivaço não houve esquema que não me tenha escondido, e não se fez mais de parva porque não podia, enfim. E agora, quando começou a Guerra, nós tínhamos de sair com o nosso contratorpedeiro nesta viagem de onde sabemos lá se voltamos, e ela então contou-me toda a história da sua vida. Toda. Fascinante. Fascinante, uma mulher fascinante.

Fiquei arrepiado, Boss.

Deixa lá. É pior nascer num corpo de mulher e na cabeça ser homem, ou ao contrário, sabes, isso, isso sim, deve ser um tormento.

Ah Boss, tenha mais fê na Ciência, mais uns vinte anos e já resolve uma coisa dessas com umas operações, e umas hormonas, e assim.

Engraçado. Então achas mesmo que as coisas vão mudar por causa do que a tal Senhora que apareceu em cima das árvores disse a uns gajos brutos e ignorantes como os Portugueses?

Senti logo os dentes do Mike contra os meus dedos. O danado não perdia uma da conversa.

Boss, tome a Senhora como a metáfora para O Nível Acima. Eu acredito que isto agora vai mesmo mudar, e mudar depressa, olhe, por causa desta puta desta Guerra. Nós temos o nosso desejo de viver como queremos. Mas depois temos a capacidade de aceitação da sociedade. Essa costuma vir sempre atrás a arrastar os pés, e sempre a protestar, mas toda esta troca de conhecimentos, Boss, entre tantos jovens, devido às viagens que a Guerra nos tem obrigado a fazer, pense bem, nunca tinha havido nada assim. Nunca tantas pessoas diferentes tinham falado tanto umas com as outras. É muito capaz de bastar isso para descobrirmos que, afinal, o arco-íris é enorme. E tenho a certeza de que, com o tempo, iremos descobrindo cada vez mais cores, tendo cada vez mais prazeres, e sendo cada vez mais felizes. E então, quando tivermos tempo para nos explorarmos em total liberdade, talvez a vida nos reserve surpresas que agora nem somos capazes de imaginar – está a ver? A tal parte que a gente ainda não consegue nem entender.

OK, rapaz. Condecorar-te não posso, mas posso considerar a situação suficientemente perigosa para te dar acesso a todos os nossos códigos do rádio. Faz lá as tuas explorações à tua vontade que eu não me meto. Mas isto é tudo um segredo, ouviste? Põe-te a falar com um amiguinho qualquer da camarata e é Court Martial para os dois, ouviste? Ah, e já agora avisa aqui o Comandante se por acaso vires para aí uma Senhora em cima de uma árvore a falar com uma porrada de analfabetos meio escuro numa linguagem que ninguém entende.

Desta vez o Mike rosno, e rosno com gosto. Depois mudou completamente de registo e saltou-me para o colo, num antigo hábito de cachorrinho que agora era uma rotina diária de nós os dois.

Já viste, menino? Está a nascer o Sol.

É assim que se começa, Boss.

*Parece que Kadlu gravou todas estas aventuras, em texto e desenho, no marfim de um dente enorme de narval, enquanto durava a Noite do Ártico. Esse dente foi encontrado na praia durante o Dia do Ártico por um Inuit do Rio, dois anos depois de Kadlu ter integrado a Aviação Americana. O Inuit do Rio deu a peça a um norueguês que estava de passagem num navio turístico gigantesco, contra quase tudo o que havia à venda na Merceria do Porto. Fora da época turística o navio turístico passava a navio da Marinha Mercante, e foi a esse título que acabou por aportar no Ceilão depois de muitas aventuras. Em Colombo o norueguês vendeu o corno a um joalheiro pelo preço de duas safiras falsas. Quando abrimos lá a nossa galeria fiz limpezas o dia inteiro, e encontrei o corno debaixo e uma pilha de revistas velhas. Traduzi o texto o mais escrupulosamente possível.

About Raphaël Kessler

Raphaël Kessler born in 1990, in Paris. He started photography in early 20's, in the street, trying to connect with people and also technically improving himself with a film camera. As a militant, he went to protests with camera, and he understood the importance of testimony in the photography daily process and historically talking. With his friend Hannibal Volkoff who is also a photographer, they support each other by going in front of the action, aware of the risks they take but not conceding with any threat from the police. Police, who were overreacting most of the time or letting things gone too far. Most media and the politicians use it to discredit any social movements. Raphaël Kessler LGBT fight, it is personal. He thinks that it's a fight for diversity and acceptance of the others who are different based on their sexual preferences or sexuality from the "normality" (it hurts even he writes it). It's also to respect equality between human beings which is for him very important.

Raphaël Kessler nasceu em 1990, em Paris. Começou a fotografar no início dos anos 20, na rua, tentando se conectar com as pessoas e tecnicamente aperfeiçoando-se com a sua fotografia. Como militante, ele foi a protestos com máquina fotográfica, e ele entendeu a importância do testemunho e história através da fotografia. Com o seu amigo Hannibal Volkoff, que também é fotógrafo, eles se entreadjudam, conscientes dos riscos que correm, mas sem sofrer com qualquer ameaça da polícia. Polícia essa, que abusa a maior parte do tempo. A maioria dos meios de comunicação sociais e os políticos usam a violência para desacreditar qualquer movimento social. Raphaël Kessler faz parte da comunidade LGBT. Ele pensa que é uma luta pela diversidade e aceitação dos outros que são diferentes com base nas suas preferências sexuais, que não são consideradas "normais". É também uma forma de respeitar a igualdade entre os seres humanos, que é para ele muito importante.

About USIA

USIA is a influential and international contemporary, modern and masterpiece online art gallery. Founded near 2009 by Francisco Lacerda, the brand USIA have a team with decades of investment expertise in Europe, Americas, Middle East, Africa and Asia. Our Clients and Partners are Ultra UHNWI , Dealers, Auction Houses, Private Investors, Entrepreneurs and Art Investors. USIA makes a unique contribution to global culture, enriching the dialogue between the public and artists of different generations, cultures and disciplines. USIA is anchored in fundamental principles that center on respect for Human Rights and Climate Change, Nation, location, language, religion, ethnic origin or any other status.

A USIA é uma galeria on-line de arte internacional moderna, contemporânea, e de obras-primas, fundada em 2009 por Francisco Lacerda. Os seus princípios centram-se no respeito plenos direitos humanos e pela mudança climática, bem como pelas nações, localizações, línguas, religiões, culturas, origens étnicas e outras características distintivas. A sua marca conta com uma equipa com décadas de peritagem já investida na Europa, nas Américas, no Médio Oriente, na Ásia, e em África. Os clientes e sócios da USIA são dealers, leiloeiros, investidores privados, empreendedores, e investidores em Arte. Desta forma, a USIA faz uma contribuição única para a cultura global, enriquecendo o diálogo entre o público e os artistas de várias gerações, culturas, e disciplinas.

About Late Birds

The Late Birds Lisbon is a top-rated, All-Male Gay Guesthouse in Lisbon. Queer Art section allows you to enjoy Paintings, Pictures, Sculptures from 'Queer' artists. O Late Birds Lisboa é um Resort Gay que possui uma galeria de arte Queer de pintura, escultura, entre outros.

About Francisco Lacerda

Focused on its International Customers since the very beginning. Francisco Lacerda has curated more than 60 exhibitions around the world. Francisco Lacerda is member of the Gia Alumni Portugal and UK, making GIA the exclusive brand for diamond certification of USIA worldwide Clients. Francisco Lacerda has background in Management, Visual Arts, Gemology, Art Business and Art Law. Francisco has curated artist like Tran Trong Vu, Mahmud Rustamov, Teymur Rustamov, Luke Nugent, Gillian Hyland, Pedro Calapez and Lee Cheng. Francisco Lacerda, já fez a curadoria de mais de 60 exposições em todo o mundo. Francisco é membro da Gia Alumni Portugal e UK, o que faz da GIA a marca exclusiva para certificação de diamantes dos clientes da USIA em todo o mundo. Os seus estudos e interesses envolvem Gestão, Artes Visuais, Gemologia, Negócio de Arte e Direito Artístico. Já representou artistas como Tran Trong Vu, Eva M. Paar, Mahmud Rustamov, Teymur Rustamov, Luke Nugent, Gillian Hyland, Pedro Calapez e Lee Cheng, em diferentes fases das suas carreiras.

About Damien Arness- Dalton

Damien Arness- Dalton is a Queer Londoner. Born and raised. A poet and writer who shares experiences of his own sexuality and queerness. Studied at the Royal Central School and Speech and Drama in BA Hons Drama Applied Theatre and Education. He delivers educational events inspiring young people and new audiences facilitating learning in politics and Science Communication. An advocate and collector of LGBTQIA+ History. Co founder of Queerseum / A Queer Museum for London.

Damien Arness- Dalton é um Londrino Queer. Este poeta e escritor Londrino, partilha a sua vida sexual e Queer através as suas experiências pessoais. É licenciado pela Royal Central School and Speech and Drama e tem um BA Hons Drama Applied Theatre and Education. Através dos seus eventos de serviço educativo para jovens, inspira o público pensamentos políticos e científicos contemporâneos. É também um activista da LGBTQIA+ History. Fundador do Queerseum / A Queer Museum for London.

About Clara Pinto-Correia

Clara Pinto-Correia is a Portuguese-born novelist, journalist and educator. The daughter of a physician, she was born in Lisbon and earned a doctorate in cellular biology from the University of Porto. She was an adjunct professor in Veterinary and Animal Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She wrote a weekly column for the Portuguese newspaper Diário de Notícias. In 1984, she published her first novel Watercress (Agrião), followed by Goodbye Princess (Adeus, Princesa) in 1985. Adeus, Princesa was made into a movie in 1992. Clara Pinto-Correia é cientista, investigadora, escritora e jornalista, nascida em Lisboa e com o seu trabalho de investigação, docência, e escrita desenvolvido tanto em Portugal como nos Estados Unidos. Dos seus 57 livros publicados até ao presente destacam-se, em investigação, FEAR, WONDER, AND SCIENCE in the age of reproductive biotechnology (com Scott Gilbert, Columbia University Press, August 2017) e TODOS OS CAMINHOS, o primeiro romance da trilogia A TIRANIA DA DISTÂNCIA (Quatro Estações, Outubro 2017).

Organização

Participating venues
Late Birds Hotel
United State of International Artists

Curadoria

Curator
Francisco Lacerda

Textos e Traduções

Texts and Translation
Clara Pinto-Correia
Damien Arness- Dalton

Produção, Suporte Técnico, Design Gráfico

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United State Of International Artists

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