

## The generative art of *finitudiness*

**Enrica Colabella**

*Domus Argenia*

[www.generativeart.com](http://www.generativeart.com)

[enrica.colabella@generativeart.com](mailto:enrica.colabella@generativeart.com)

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### **PREMISE**



Paul Cézanne is the greatest modern landscape artist. *Avenue at Chantilly* [1] tales the fascination of this vista down a woodland walk in a cultivated park deeply and emotionally. Cézanne's blocks and planes of color go beyond the immediacy of impressionism to convey a mysteriously personal, psychological relationship to what he sees – the avenue seems to lead to a secret, a revelation, a truth. Nature reflects a state of mind: a walking toward finitudiness. That is art.

If we imagine crossing this picture from the down border toward the center following one direction, when this meets over the horizon perspective line, this point is a point of *finitudiness*, unique unrepeatable.

### **Leaves**

*...Rozmowa z wami konieczna jest i niemożliwa! A conversation with you is necessary and impossible,-*

*Pilna w życiu pospiesznym! urgent in a hurried life*

*Odłożona na nigdy! and postponed for never.*

Wisława Szymborska, "The Silence of Plants" [2]

Each leaf is alone on a tree of thousands of leaves, but conscious of belonging to the same organic whole. It lives; it grows in a single whole following the variation of time and space with the seasons, until it falls to the ground solitary and faithful in its condition as a species. The space that performs itself in the variation of time follows the natural laws of permutation and is unique and unrepeatable each day in daylight and night change. A change whose laws we know in-depth and of which we now foresee almost every detail. However, their brightness continues to stupefy those who are still open to the impressions of beauty. This

generative space in continuous mutation is in the time of finitudiness, where time endures at discontinuous intervals in the continuity of its progression, performing traces as factual stones of continuity beyond the natural limit of the end. This is one of the most impressive sources of inspiration for art, from the prehistoric Nuraghe stones able to follow the shadows of the moon to Giotto, Piero della Francesca in his lights without shadows, to Leonardo, Cezanne, Tintoretto, Canaletto, Caravaggio, and many others. These artists have gained knowledge from observing the changes in Nature's finitudiness, where they *abducted* visionary science transposed into their art. One place where the generative process of nature becomes more evident and complex is the world of poetry. The mystery of the word between sound and significance worked firstly as translation into a language, above all popular with the tale art and then founding in Dante over the world the only great inventor of the Italian language with his opera: "The Divine Comedy".

A tale:

*Fintudiness*, by learning from Nature

Nostalgia is remembering the road backtraces.

On sultry midday at the end of September, a small leaf fell from its tree. Shocked and full of fear, she turned to greet her father, mother, brothers, sisters, and dear bird friends. Suddenly, thunder forced her to look ahead. Moreover, she saw her little shadow shouting at her: "*Stay away. Don't come down, or I will die*". Vain shouts. She glided to the ground, fragile in the wind. Alone and crying, she felt a feeble tremor on her skin.

*"Don't be afraid, I am a little ant, your new friend. When you get drier, I will take a small fragment of you with me to my house. You will see: you will find many other leaves that have fallen before you. Do not cry: the friendly bird will bring another piece of you back to the tree as a blanket for your babies and you will see your loved ones again. In addition, the wind will carry you far away and you will see wonderful places full of birds singing and perfumed flowers. You will find happiness in the sudden warm sun before the winter frost. The terrifying silence of Nature will be dissolving for you, welcoming you. Follow your destiny and learn to listen in silence."*

The leaf withered quickly. A tender sparrow picked it up by one of its edges and placed it in its little nest. Immediately the leaf returning to the tree reached out to find its loved ones. It made all her familiar sounds. Nothing. An earthly silence hung over her tender heart. Desperate, she began to cry, but suddenly the memory of the little ant moved her from fear. She remembered how he had taught her to stay still, silent, and listen to the wind, after having synchronized herself to her breathing, whether it was slow or strong. So repeating the rhythm of her breathing, she began a little nenia:

*"Sing, sing, sweetheart  
To the sea, your song will arrive,  
Only a deaf dog might not hear it.  
People closed to your heart,  
Soon will follow you and kindness  
You will spread from your short notes.  
Sing, sing, ever do not doubt.  
The comfit fairy will listen to you.  
The flowers too at your rhythm will  
dance.  
Sing, sing, sweetheart, to the sea will*

arrive your song  
Only a deaf dog might not hear it. People  
closed to your heart,  
Soon will follow you and kindness you  
will spread from your short notes  
Sing, sing, ever do not doubt. The comfit  
fairy will listen to you.  
Bricking the flowers at your rhythm to  
dance”...

### FINITUDINESS IN DANTE



*“O voi ch’avete li ‘intelletti sani, /  
O you who have sound intellects,  
Mirate la dottrina che s’asconde/  
Consider the hidden teaching  
Sotto ‘l velame de li versi strani”. /  
Behind the veil of these strange verses.  
Inf. IX, 61-63*

Dante's vision is always constantly poised between the question of human finitudiness, of its intellectual limitation, and the need not to abdicate to his investigation.

### Variations in generative language

The language that Dante uses in the *Commedia* is new and extremely varied. It is not the illustrious vernacular mentioned in *De vulgari eloquentia*, but is based on the Florentine dialect, which is used in all its aspects, both literary and

every day, with popular, slang, and obscene terms.

Dante also uses dialect voices from other places in Tuscany and other regions of Italy, from the North to the South, and uses many words from Latin from French and Provençal. In addition, he uses 'allotropes', i.e. he uses different ways to write the same word.

In the Italian language of our times, there are expressions that come from Dante's *Commedia*. We find them in the pages of newspapers, we hear them on television, and we use them ourselves in our daily lives, also without knowing where they come from.

### Dante's perfect language

Although the *De vulgari eloquentia* is an apologia of the vulgar tongue Dante wrote it in Latin.

He was a thinker, an erudite politician educated in scholastic philosophy. He knew and practiced the *locutio secundaria*, or grammar, which is put before the language of which his work concerns. About the oral language that has no rules, but is the only one, that we learn from childhood, Dante affirms that the vernacular is the noblest language in that is the one used firstly, because it is completely natural. The popular vernacular of which the greatest example will be the language of Dante is how a modern poet heals the post-Babelian wound.

The second book of *De vulgari eloquentia* is an effort on the part of the poet to establish the conditions, the rules, the *forma locutionis* of the only conceivable perfect language, the Italian of Dante's language.

Dante assumes the role of restorer of the

perfect language and for this reason, he emphasizes the strength of the multiplicity of languages, their capacity to renew themselves, to change over time.

## The symbolic structure of La Divina Commedia: *numbering*

As the medievals knew, numbers are not random. They have significance. Are there special numbers that emerge between the *Cantiche*, and do they speak to each other?

The most famous Dante expert of the 20th century, **Charles Singleton**, in *Dante's Commedia: Elements of Structure of 1954* [3], pointed out a particular element: everything in the Commedia is **perfect, calculated, measured, and calibrated**. However, there is a random element: **the length of the cantos**.

They did not seem to respond to any particular criteria. Singleton thus tried to report the scheme of each canto, putting the number of verses in sequence, and realized something strange: that there is **a group of seven cantos** in purgatory whose quantity and length cannot be random.

These are cantos in which Dante explicitly focuses on the heart of the work: *the nature of love*, the dynamics of love as *the nature of God and man*, and *the great problem of freedom*. Why the number **seven** and not another? Seven is the number of creation, the number of men who live and walk on this earth.

Seven are the sacraments and the theological and cardinal virtues, seven are the capital sins. It tends to be the man before the coming of Christ, the man of the creation generated by God

who commits the original sin.

A parenthesis, but essential to understand the symbolic structure of the Comedy from the inside. As the medievals knew, **numbers are not random, they have meaning**. Are there special numbers that emerge between the Cantos, and do they speak to each other? For example, Nembrini [4] talks about a reflection on the cross: strangely, the Divine Comedy does not have the cross, not only at the level of the content of the text but also as a formal element, that constitutes the text itself.

As happened, for example, in the construction of cathedrals, where the shape of the plan was decided first, which then determined the whole architecture. The other two very important numbers are ten (or seven plus three): man meeting God at the moment of the incarnation and the coming of Jesus. Ten is the number of God who comes to meet man, therefore the number of mercy. In addition, the number thirteen is often indicated as the number that brings together the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament, the One God, and the Trine God. The knot that binds the two epochs and therefore the moment of Jesus, of salvation and redemption. Franco Nembrini explores this incredible universe of numbers in the Divine Comedy, without becoming a philologist, but expounding original suggestions that have grown up throughout his experiences of studying and frequenting the Comedy.

They are not superstructures, but the key to penetrate its soul opening up a world of meanings that we have superficially unlearned to read.

## The language of numbers and

## 'gematria'.

The fact that Dante structured his works on a numerical grid is apparent even to a superficial reading of the Convivio and the Commedia. There are the three canticles, the number of verses and cantos in each canticle, the number 9, Beatrice's years, etc... Manfred Hardt's study introduces us to a typically medieval world of unsuspected dimensions, that of numbers and their symbolism, which substantiates all of Dante's poetics.

"Dante's poetic work," the researcher observes, "based on numbers represented for him one of the central sectors of his artistic creativity. In composing his great poem Dante not only calculated continuously but, and this seems more important, he calculated and had to calculate before writing. An exact numerical order had to precede the drafting of the work based on a strategy supported and determined by the number'. Dante's famous definition of poetry as "fictio retorica muiscaque poita" (De vulg. el. II, iv, 3), i.e. the poetic text "is at the same time structured according to the rules of music", which is an exact mathematical science that produces harmony, rhythm, and sound by means of precise relationships and proportions, means nothing more.

In Dante's culture, there is the De musica of Boezio and St. Augustine, but it is certain that he succeeds in putting all his opera, form and contents, into "regulated numbers and time". The Middle Ages knew certain mathematical techniques and procedures that led to the use of number for cryptographic purposes and symbolic uses in a system of linguistic and numerical signs. These Dante knew well and applied systematically as Hardt

investigates by revealing to us the language of "gematria" in tables and demonstrations that show a symbolic numerical network, most evident in Paradise, to show that Dante is "a messenger of God."

"The numbers form a second sign system of hidden but original expressiveness'.

Bruno D'Amore, as a follow-up to previous research, distinguishes in the Commedia the mathematical verses typical of Arithmetic, Probability, Logic and Geometry, referring to the basic instruction Dante received in Florence from the maestri d'Abaco in Santa Croce. We need only recall the famous reference to arithmetic in the verses Cacciaguida directs to Dante (Par. XV, 55-57). However, we also find the calculation of probability (Purg. VI, 1-3), as in several places we have clear evidence of the study of formal logic, in the sense that this discipline assumed at the time, i.e. Grammar-Rhetoric-Dialectic. Disciplines that Dante together with his friend Cavalcanti had learned at the Faculty of Jurists in Bologna, protected by the emperor, what did not happen in the Faculty of Theology at the Sorbonne, under the guidance of the Pope. Logic with all its procedures emerges at several points both in the De vulgari eloquentia and in Paradiso (Par. XII, 134- 135; VI, 19-21; XIII, 98-99) but the most evident proof that Dante frequented it with nonchalance is found (Inf. XXVII, 112- 123) when a "negro cherubino" and St. Francis dispute the soul of Guido da Montefeltro. The devil wins, who replies grinning at the saint: "*maybe/you didn't think I was a layman!*" by virtue of an overpowering reasoning of logic, that leaves St. Francis with a lot of noses.

## GEOMETRY

About all the mathematical disciplines, geometry was the one most familiar to Dante, who referred to it in frequent comparisons, images, and paraphrases, as the architect and urban planner that he was.

He had studied it with particular passion during the three years he spent on Euclid's texts. The history of the exact sciences in Dante's time offers us an admirable picture of encounters between civilizations, not yet sufficiently studied but rich in perspectives. One of Dante's most famous mathematical passages on geometry we found in the last verses of the last canto of Paradiso XXXIII, 133-38: *"Qual è il geométra che tutto s'affige per misurar lo cerchio, e non ritrova, pensando, quel principio ond'elli indige, Tal era io a quella vista nuova; veder voleva come si convenne l'imgo a cerchio e come vi s'indova"*.

We are talking here about the squaring of the circle, which Dante considers impossible (Conv. II, xii, 27). II, xii, 27) but the position of these two tercets at the supreme moment of the vision of God, says a lot about the importance that Dante gave to geometry (the geometric optics is in Purg. XV, 16-21), whose language derives largely from Aristotle as the geometric simile of the pentagon that "contains" the square, as the square "contains" the triangle, which is remembered in the Convivio.

Dante's unique culture - scientific and literary-philosophical - coexisted in a mutually enriching manner. This works as an intellectual treasure that would show all its richness in Leonardo a couple of centuries later.

## Figural realism in Dante art

Auerbach was the first to realize that the greatness of Dante's art was that it fused reality and metaphor; Dante's poetry was able to both narrate the very concrete, psychological, and everyday events of human beings and enclose these narrative parables within an infinitely broader horizon of meaning. This is what he called figural realism, where the finitudiness borderer performs an art poem of human history.

## NATURA NATURANS in DANTE



What was meant by science in Dante's time?

Patrick Boyde [5] rightly points out that 'the distance between Dante's concept of physics and astronomy and ours is greater than that between the earth and the moon. Today, science aims at the reliable interpretation of facts by the application of rigorous experiments... between science so conceived and the Dante that is taught in schools the distance is literally infinite.

What remains unchanged is nature and all its laws, that natural world we now call the environment, laws that in Dante's time could only be intuited, but not yet

demonstrated.

Patrick Boyde reports on the meaning of the word *Scientia* in Dante's time.

"In Medieval Latin the sense is still firmly tied to the participle *sciens/scientis* and therefore to the verb *scire* 'to know'...*scientia* is opposed to the sensible, the particular, mere opinion, experience...*faith, hearsay, fable, metaphor, all that is approximate.*

*Scientia* tends towards certitude and truth...it is the object of the *intellectus speculativus* and not of the *intellectus praticus*..."

It is beyond doubt that when Dante wrote the second treatise of the *Convivio*, he placed physics above the seven liberal arts: physics what for Dante is *filosofia naturalis*.

The physics of our time continues Boyde is as much a descendant of natural philosophy as Italian is of Latin. However, the term has changed meaning over the centuries.

For Dante, nature is the object of study of the *filosofia naturalis*, nature is a harmonious system, which God uses to 'make' by medium, he who can 'create' without medium.

Boyde concludes by reminding us of the stupendously simple verses with which Dante expresses the relationship between God and nature, between 'creating' and 'doing', between 'what does not die and what can die'.

These words express the sense of order and measure in the relationship between man and God that is in the soul of Dante, the scientist of his time:

*Ciò che non more e ciò che può morire*  
*That which does not die and that which*  
*must*

*Non è se non splendor di quella idea/*  
*Are nothing but a bright reflection of that*

*Idea*

*Che partorisce, amando, il nostro sire/  
Which our Lord, in loving, brings to birth*  
*(Par. XIII 52-55)*

**"Ciò che per l'universo si squaderna"**

*Nel suo profondo vidi che s'interna/  
In its depth I saw contained/  
Legato con amore in un volume,  
By love into a single volume bound,  
Ciò che per l'universo si squaderna.*  
*The pages scattered through the*  
*Universe*  
*(Par. XXXIII, 85-87)*

Dante's last two labours, the *Questio* all about cosmology and the *Eglogues*, an unexpected example of bucolic poetry, can serve as starting points for us to look at nature through Dante's eyes.

Dante observes the world '*universaliter atque membratim*' therefore 'the whole and the details', an eye that sees the great whole and at the same time captures every single detail'.

The *questio* is an example of his view from above and from outside this '*aiola* that makes us so ferocious'. The *Eglogues*, on the other hand, immerse the reader in the peace of a minute nature seen through the filter of memories.

The '**whole**' is revealed in the language of mathematics, physics and geometry, astrology and astronomy, the '**particulars**' show themselves in geography, the environment, the landscape, as they manifest themselves in the natural world. Different sciences that Dante's time placed in a hierarchical order in which theology predominated: Maierù shows us how Dante in fact overcomes these traditional barriers, certainly giving importance to theology, which he treats at length (*Conv. II, XIII*

and XIV) but not to theologians.

Dante's approach to the classification of the sciences, typical of medieval thought, is in fact very personal and free. For Dante, the true philosopher is "*he who loves each part of wisdom*", philosophy has wisdom as its object and "*has love as its form*" (Conv. III, xiv, 1), and science is above all a "*loving use of wisdom*" with its own language.

### **Animated nature**

Living nature, plants and flowers and fruit, is certainly the one on which Dante dwells most throughout the three Canticles. Not because of any particular expressive qualities as Boyde observes, who studies this aspect at length, but because of the richness of the entire "imaginative complex". This is important as a term of comparison between the order and security of the generation of seeds and fruit in the vegetable kingdom, in relation to the world of man where it can be found that "it is of its seed the lesser the plant". Dante observes Plants and flowers in relation to their habitat, as in the description of the reed, one of the most detailed naturalistic descriptions. Where a close relationship is between the "soft silt" of the beach and the flexibility of the plant that adapts by bending to the force of the wind.

Flowers are not very frequent in the *Commedia*, and, like gems, are remembered for the colours that rhyme with smells, and serve Dante in his comparisons with human feelings. Think of the 'little flowers' that appear unexpectedly in the *Inferno* (Inf. II, 127-130). "*What little flowers from the nocturnal frost, folded and closed, then the sun whitens them, they all stand open in their stems; such as I became*

*tired of my virtue.*" The naturalistic observation in Dante is always adherent to reality even when Beatrice leads Dante into the centre of the white rose of the Blessed (Par XXX, 124-126). "*Nel giallo della rosa sempiterna Che si degrada e dilata e redole Odor di lode al sol che sempre verna*". "*In the yellow of the everlasting rose which degrades and expands and renews itself smells of glory to the sun whichever comes.*" Dante looks on animals with more attention because they can move and in this, they come closer to human beings and lend themselves to many comparisons that are very often traditional. Dante observes animals with more attention because they can move and in this they are close to human beings and lend themselves to many comparisons that are very often traditional. Thus, the fox is astute, the lion is courageous, a whole bestiary inherited from classical fables, from the Bible, from Ovid and Lucano, that Dante knows. He surpasses them in the description of metamorphoses: in fact, Dante's nature is almost never static; the environment for him is a living whole in transformation and movement, as can be seen above all by observing the animals.

The ability to describe in a tour de force of nine cantos the transmutation of one animal into another with often-repugnant detail greatly surpasses Dante's lesson in the metamorphoses of Ovid and Lucano. Think about the transformation of man into a serpent in the circle of thieves (Inf. XXV, 94-135). Dante creates a whole ranking of greatness among 'his' animals, but above all, he forms a scale of nobility starting from those inserted as emblems in heraldic arms. We also find two fantastic animals, which Dante must have seen in the bestiaries and encyclopaedias of his time, with



reference to Christian symbolism: the pelican and the Arabian phoenix. Dante, however, "*when he is in the mood*", as Boyde observes, to whom we owe a meticulous analysis of Dante's bestiary, knows how to look at animals with great originality and the eyes of a naturalist, as when he observes ants moving in a line, a dog scraping itself, an ox licking its nose. A point of view that greatly anticipates the realism of the Baroque painters. Among the animals, birds were the ones most observed by Dante by their movement, and by what distinguishes them, their flight:

A good example of this is Canto V of the Inferno, where the impetuous wind of sexual appetite breathes, carrying Paolo and Francesca together with a flight of different birds, the songbirds, the migratory grubs, then the pigeons that Dante sees with their wings 'raised and steady' as they are approaching the nest. But bird also means harmony of song, which Dante transforms as usual into his "alchemy of metaphor ad homine". The Earthly Paradise would be incomplete without the song of birds such as the skylark and the nightingale, but the greatest role in the hierarchy of symbols in Dante's imagery is definitely played by the eagle, which Dante charges with a particular political symbolism.

### **DANTE, a generative voice**

*"Dante's imagination is visual ... it's visual in the sense that he lived in an era when men still saw visions ... We have nothing but dreams ..."* Eliot

"La Divina Comedia" is a continuous dialogue between master and disciple, between Virgilio and Dante and between Dante and Beatrice for arriving to see

Paradise and to listen to the celestial spheres music as visions that need a science.

The hendecasyllable is the ideal metrical tool to erase any rhetoric of the verse and translate it into a musical orality that from the language of the troubadours brings the Italian language to a pure generation of beauty in extreme musical adaptability.

These maximal instruments, together with an incredible number of inner rules yet to discover, even at a distance of so many centuries, never reach the perfect comment, which in an organic vision of art is unattainable. The Divine Comedy is the perfectible work par excellence, to which all the great poets, not only of the Italian mother tongue, have dedicated study and deep reflection, thanks too at pluralistically translations.

Dante is the father of Italian language, the only one over all world generated directly by an artwork of a poet.

In my generation, we learned at school by memory long fragments of Divina Commedia. Therefore, we were connected with our previous generation that was costumed in quoting Dante fragments as a true voice in their real life.

Yeats too, followed this tradition:

"I read Dante only with a prose translation beside the text. Forty years ago, I began to puzzle out the Divine Comedy in this way; and when I thought I had grasped the meaning of a passage, which especially delighted me, I committed it to memory. ; So that, for some years, I was able to recite a large part of one canto or another to myself, lying in bed or on a railway journey. Heaven knows what it would have sounded like had I recited it aloud; but it was by this means that I steeped myself in Dante's poetry."

## CONTINUITY IN FINITUDINESS: Poetry, a not linear vision

*E' come stare ai bordi di un pozzo/  
It is like standing at the edge of a well  
Un pozzo secco pieno solo di lacrime  
invisibili. / A dry well filled only with  
invisible tears.*

"After finitudiness" [6] contingency seems to represent only an epidemics skin of our time alive complexity.

Good feelings transcend any intelligence. They reach out to touch places precluded to human and artificial intelligence. A single tear of a child weighs much more heavily in the knowledge of life and the world than any exact science established and in fieri. It touches the unexplored that is closed in the depths of life.

The world of individual researchers, of poets, of solitary voices is disappearing among the rivers of icons substituting letters. Almost a new wave of domination without laws or rules, but falsely emphasized by technology.

A goodbye to the fantasy of the alphabet that linked sounds and letters to connect different seeds in new visions of the world. All is silent about harmony. The intention is to make the infinite tract disappear in the palm of one's hand, as a discovery of one's adherence to an organic vision of the universe, where the very small manages to contain the immense. Every word becomes just a product to be negotiated, to be sold, to be distributed without any consciousness or responsibility for the act. It is too late to identify the incipit. It is as useless as looking for a grain of sand in the sea.

However, we can still give hope of extinguishing false exaltations, idolatries,

and misdirection with a sweet deception of rigor achieved through self-awareness. We must learn to listen to our hearts as the first truth. If we do not know it, if we hide its beats, its impulses, how can we proceed to fully understand the reality of our time, where we are alive? It is an incipit, but necessary and hopeful enough to proceed.

Continuity in finitude suddenly breaks down

Finitude suddenly breaks continuity,  
Like a butterfly's wing struck by the brutal delirium of envy:  
Sudden, inexorable, and punctual dart:  
without escape.

You cross the path, light in your walking  
with your eyes downcast.

Looking for small flowers among the wild grass,  
like the smell of life in purity.

You trace small imaginary traces with  
your mind, traces of a time to come/  
Of hope and desire, almost subtended by  
your walk, but a living trait in your steps.  
You finally leave the fists of hidden anger  
and dream with open palms of hope for  
life.

It is the sun, that warms your heart: you  
can leave behind the pain of impiety, a  
faint trait.

An indefinable perfumed air circulates,  
evoking childish plots of pure smiles  
among running games.

We will carry with us the memory as a  
continuity of life of the first smell of warm  
grass between our fingers.

Or will everything be shrouded in the  
deepest darkness of nothing forever?  
A fragile hope moistens your forehead.  
It's now that we live, an instant of  
continuity; finitude becomes dust to feed  
dreams now and forever.

## Il Canto

*Una punteggiatura lunga sospesa/  
A long suspended punctuation  
Quel pensare che sia il tempo/ That  
thinking that it is time  
Ad accarezzare l'amore/  
To caress love.*

When we sing, our subjective experience of time is diametrically opposed to the experience of time during listening.

Singing (and *antiphonal psalmody* in particular) is not only oriented inwards but also outwards, i.e. it is the archetype of the dialogue between two subjects.

Through the experience of a common phenotype, however, even what was distant becomes closer and in this way, we become a unique and unrepeatable element of the community.

## The silence

Silence is something animated! What we call silence actually lives in the most fleeting sounds.

As a result of a significant transformation of the soundscape on planet Earth, our way of listening is also slowly changing.

In the vicinity of our homes, it has happened that the enormous range of more delicate sounds, especially those related to the world of nature, which in the distant past constituted an entirely obvious component of everyday life, has been relegated by us to the background of perception.

## Silence in the listening: a space border of finitudiness

*“Conticuere omnes intentique ora  
tenebant/They became silent and intent  
held their faces.”*

Virgil tells us at the opening of the second book of the Aeneid. They are all together, with their whole attentive faces. Aeneas is about to tell Dido of his painful vicissitudes, and then he is about to speak; they all make themselves ready to listen, and keep silent. That verb, **conticuere**, indicates precisely the action of the silence of all that makes space for the individual to be heard. Sight and hearing come together to welcome what arrives. Listening implies silence: outside and inside. I am silent outside to allow the voice to reach me; I am silent inside to allow the voice to make space in me and become content, an object of reflection, confrontation, criticism.... The voice I hear may come from a person speaking in front of me, I may hear it on the radio, on TV, I may read it: always, however, it requires that I create a space of silence so that my senses and my mind can be prepared to see, hear, understand. In the silence of listening, I also see and hear what is not directly in front of me: when I read I listen to that voice that comes from reading. It is an extraordinary process following a silent border of finitudiness.

## IMPRESSIONS:

*From a certain angularity.*  
Before I was born, I felt I was in transit.  
Then, in the world, just waiting.



Francis Bacon:

*“Do not read to contradict and refute, nor to accept for granted, not to find subject matter for gossip and conversation, but to weigh and evaluate.”*

*Beyond Bacon's Tabulae: cicatrizing elms*



Bacon's *Tabulae* are empty: they evoke ghosts of dissolving fears.

Horror no longer transpires from the beyond; it is hidden here and kills by multiplying.

Our time is very small, the last fathers declaimed to their dispersed children. Hidden, the unearthed code now lives in the laboratories of death and artifice. Quantities of numbers list sickness and death every day almost globally. Here is the mystery, but we seem to be blind to the truth beyond imagination. Hope seems to lie flat on a pavement of grey stones, without words or pity.

In the old box, the real world now turns slowly, odorless and silent, expanding darkness.

The global pandemic is new to humans, presaging boundless slavery and fearful emptiness of soul.

Without ghosts: no past for no future. Small hands weave hopes among healing elms.

Silent prayers, visions of the mind, break the ritual of hating towards brightening dawn.

Flex your body and mind to the living hope of natural sound: God's silence will change to song.

Music will flood the hearts of those who listen to the beauty and transmute hope into the true life of love.

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