

The Texts Collection is a program that accompanies and amplifies artistic practices by generating a collection of monographic texts for Hangar residents. Each artist has the possibility to commission a text about their work from an author of their choice—local or international; known or to be known—in editorial dialogue with Hangar. The intention is to produce publications on their practice in general—beyond this work or that particular work—designed for agile circulation and reedition, ensuring a long life, and contributing to expanding the networks and frameworks of artistic practices.

Through this editorial device, artists can count on a comprehensive and in-depth text that captures their ways of doing and thinking holistically, integrating different projects to build an overall view of their practices. The *Texts Collection* also provides artists the opportunity to establish a writing relationship as a starting point, rather than as the result of a project or exhibition.

Don't worry, I got you to kosie Ioanna Gerakidi

Notes on reflecting on tokosie's practice when
abusing
or forgetting
the limits of language cause there's more
like
touch and smell sense
the essence
of getting lost or nothing is a priori concrete
well sometimes things solidify and then they either turn into prisons
or safe spaces
and
history beauty optics ethics poetics
oh
and on how much you can take
and it's ok if you can't
don't worry
I got you

1

I don't know where to start from, perhaps because I can't use a stable and catholic system like words, to speak about fluid compositions and liquid identities, about water and its transformative nature, about deep oceans, their unexplored ecosystems and communities of species, that humans have never encountered. So I asked AI, not really believing I'd find the words or discourses or starting points I was looking for; I just wanted to encounter the language of a more than human species, their theses on these subjects. I tried by using key words like fluid compositions and female identity in the arts, deep ocean and feminism, structures of hierarchy and power and their

relation to underwater entities. The answers I got were lacking of history, memory, intersectionality, identity, agency; the typed words had nothing to do with my writing subjects. They were voiceless.

The reason why I'm doing this introduction is not because I want to demonise artificial intelligence, its future potential or the ways it has already allowed for other kinds of labour, evolution, engagement with language or sentiment or growth. It's because I realised that the ways I look at and with tokosie's work, or think through its practice, its methods of materialising an uncanny ephemerality, its unknown encounters, its trust and faith in that, which exist in parallel with the canonical ways of perceiving life, it can only be personal. And a personal viewpoint, brings along my agonies and fears, my interpretations and ways of engaging with affective labour, with inductions and myths and spells and voices and movements, of species, human, non-human, or more than human.

I met tokosie about 5 years ago and got to know the fragmentary qualities of its practice, whilst working with it closely. Why fragmentary? Because both through its way of lingering over various media and through its visual schemes and themes, there is a methodology that legitimises the fragment, the break, the ruin. It gives a value to that which otherwise remains dismissed. And it does so, without mystifying the broken nature of objects, feelings, ethnographies or identities; its tenderness "stays with the trouble", to use the words of Donna Haraway, of being torn apart, neglected, but also of willfully choosing in solitude, forming personal and social contexts that exist beyond the norm. Its practice is about taking that risk and coping with the consequences.

2

[...]

She had wanted to tell them
of spume and anoxic waters
of congeries of burnt women
waxing bacterial

That for a woman to survive
and keep surviving

Is extremophilia: waiting for language
to culture her like agar

[...]

Daisy Lafarge, *Life Without Air*

3

Back then, tokosie gifted me a piece of a broken sculpture, it was pink, with hanging chains; it looked like a libidinal talisman, a safe space that can be carried around, when lacking of comfort, when being triggered, when not fitting in the imposed surroundings.

Now, for writing this text, it's sent me its portfolio. I was happy to see that its practice hasn't altered its axes much. Multilayered connotations of how alternative worlds and omniverses and communities can be built and grow together are still present in most of its works. In its sculpture "multi-cultural kelp", a large scale installative piece bringing together textiles from different regions and ethnographies, the sense of togetherness was present, utilising the underwater environment as a parable to speak about resisting, belonging, evolving.

Kelp, in its work, is a parable. Kelps are not plants. They are not consistent, solid organisms. They are amalgamations, compositions of vexed biological identities. These completely unrelated group of organisms come together, showing us, human beings, how we can stand in solidarity with one another, how to feel love for one another; tokosie's work embodies this ambience, grounds it to the human current.

Accordingly, for its work "puddle of glow" (a series of small sculptures tracing glow, and through it the occasionally intense presence of femininity) the premise was an empowerment coming from within. The once repressed and muzzled by the dominant narratives and power structures shining quality, finally occupies the space it deserves, becomes visible, dominates the room; and it does so with empathy, tenderness, softness, but also with sexuality, perplexity and resistance to the linear form. Laces, foams, vinyls, pink, black and sky blues, are some of the colours representing this complex nature that finds its power in intersectionality.

Its work "shine!" comes to further expand on these subjects, whilst bringing the monstrous, the hermaphroditic, the "defected" in the forefront. Tents are protecting the wounded or the ones considered as Others, reflecting surfaces and lights and rough cuts and cables and bioplastics. And all the above elements come together composing a universe, where slowness, sadness or just denial to follow the rhythms of an accelerationist production are not only allowed, but they are even encouraged. And through this other world the depths of the history and of psyches torn apart, come to the surface giving us permission for a living otherwise.

4

[...]

this morning I killed a fly
had I been a State
I would have destroyed a city

[...]

Time, Etel Adnan

5

There's a resonance between Adnan's words and tokosie's work, as they both bring together what would otherwise be oppositional. Does Adnan speak metaphorically about the power we, human beings, have over other species and the ways we exploit or abuse it, by emphasising on the consequences it'd had to the world, her being the state? Or does she want to encounter, even temporarily and through an imaginary state, the power exercised over us, which never allowed for other voices and bodies and cultures to thrive when the ruling axes have been formed by the few? Even if the answer includes both, or much more, tokosie's work allows for such oxymoronic sentiments to be revealed. Whilst feeling through the lives of others, it also encounters the anger, the turmoil, the resistance that comes with being othered. And it does so unapologetically.

6

In Jackie Wang's poetry book, *The sunflower cast a spell to save us from the void*, I read, "To turn oneself again toward the sun, is an act of faith", a quote by Hélène Cixous, a poet and theorist, whose words somehow magically appear to me when writing about that which fearlessly appears uncanny. Tokosie's practice can restore faith, when choosing to engage with its gestures, their ephemerality, their brightness, their ways of allowing an unfiltered, an unmediated relationship with play. Its works make worlds that long to be occupied as ways of bringing back a feeling of belonging that has been forgotten.

7

I watched a movie the other day, it was fictional but very tender, one of the protagonists was called Mantis, and I wouldn't know what mantises represent if I haven't worked closely with Lito Kattou, an artist whose work thinks through this insect, this animal species as a vessel for altering the systemic representations of feminine identity and along, our perception of death and protection, of cannibalism and tenderness, of birth and sex and nurturing. The night before, my dad has sent me an email with an image of newborn mantises. The morning after, baby mantises were all over my own garden. It all made sense all of a sudden. Do you know what mantises do? They kill their partner after sex, to make sure they won't hurt their babies. Other species perform their instincts unconditionally too, like lions when they fight for their tribe's needs, like having access to water and food; or bunnies when they run as fast as they can in order to escape from the bites of snakes, which most of the times cannot be escaped. And I know all this, because my partner is a Sagittarius, and watches this kind of stuff.

There's a kind of alternative knowledge production when studying how other species live, not only literally but also metaphorically and that exact kind of observation is what tokosie's work is forcing us, viewers, to do, to be part of synaesthetically. What happens when the rational, linear, humanised knowledge that supports only the canonical way of being and becoming starts learning from other ways of attachment and escape, love and resistance? And not in order to engage with nonhuman practices as inhumane methods, or with vandalistic reactions as escaping mechanisms, but in order to show us other schemes of encountering life.

8

It all started in the depths of a sea which never had a name, her waters her not yet explored, not yet spoiled. Her structures, fluid and untamed, they were hosting nymphs and mermaids and deities, giving birth to creatures that the human eye has never seen before. I don't know how these species were called either, their transformative nature wouldn't allow for a concrete name anyway. The species were altering their form every time they wanted, they had no fear of risking their identities. They were becoming one another fearlessly, they were multilayered and kind and generous; they were sharing their fears and agonies, and sometimes you could hear them crying alone as

well; but you knew they have chosen their temporal solitude, as they never felt excluded, abandoned or unloved. The presence of these species was not marked in time, their lives had nothing to do with humanity as we know it. How do we know about them? They left us, human beings, a letter, before they leave earth, before they migrate to another planet, where they could transfer their wisdom, their knowledge, movements.

9

I don't have access to that letter, but it could be summoned in the words of Kathy Acker, whose words I used when I first thought through tokosie's work. She said: "I am looking for the body, my body, which exists outside its patriarchal definitions. Of course that is not possible. But who is any longer interested in the possible?"