

bruno cançado garden

*The Garden represents a dream of the world,
that transports you out of the world.*

Jean Chevalier

It is necessary to start with an assumption: gardens are an image of the excellence of the imposition of man's power, in this case applied to nature. Believing that it is up to us humans to transform or cultivate it, we have given very little importance to something that in the meantime, overlaps any distinction between the parts: the fact that there is and always has been culture in nature. Just study the works of Arte Povera, remember what Bachelard wrote about the real existence of an intimate and extraordinary correspondence of the universe to man¹, or read the wonderful trials of Maurice Maeterlink about the intelligence of flowers, the life of bees and the life of ants, to name a few.

Columns, reliefs - one of them plowed -, a centipede, a piece of concrete, and, finally, a stone that crushes the edge of a concrete cube: this is the sculpture garden that Bruno Cançado presents in his first solo exhibition in Central Gallery. A garden of concrete - both white and reinforced -, cement and asphalt, but also of beeswax, stone, and wood.

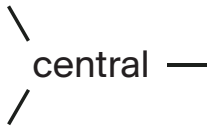
The forms of pillars or columns were proposed in two works, however as opposed to being reduced to the elements of support of any constructive structure, they are not perpendicular to the ground but favor, in some way and even subtly, the horizontal position. In creating a falling motion in solid things, Bruno dismisses the column of its function and above all makes this element, the emblem of civilization, assume a greater inclination towards nature than towards culture. Both of the pillars are concrete, one of which has a crack that causes it to hang while the other can't hold itself upright and is dropped from its base towards the ground. What keeps this second pillar partially erected are three other beams that not fortuitously, instead of being made of concrete, cement, or asphalt, are made of wood. A material that is, par excellence, material, and curiously in Latin before meaning material meant construction timber. The tendency towards horizontality, as Rosalind Kross problematized in *Formless: A User's Guide*, is related to the way in which animals perceive the world on which both they and their prey move. Since it is horizontal, the bond that the animal establishes with the world makes it be a true extension of its senses, especially touch and smell, so that this relationship is, ultimately, the order of sexuality. In contrast, the vertical/upright position would be that from which the world is seen, with distance, by man².

It is as if many of these sculptures presented by Bruno were metonymies of the garden's own paradox, meaning, we observe the vain efforts to prescribe geometry to the materiality of these pieces.

Since most of the time the garden is associated with paradise, with something metaphysical, it is important for us to observe in the meantime that this celestial plane, of which it would be the terrestrial image, almost never contemplated something that escapes what is rationality understandable. It is by Marco Fábio Quintiliano, Roman orator of the first century AD, famous for

1 *A água e os sonhos*. BACHELARD, 2013.

2 *L'informe*. BOIS; KRAUSS, 2003.



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condemning the excess³, the adage: Is there anything more beautiful than a garden arranged in such a way that, whatever the observer's point of view, only unveils straight rows? (and it wouldn't be necessary to go that far, as for Le Corbusier the garden was a means to construct an organized environment different from the surroundings, and Burle Marx distributed the species in a truly plastic way.)

In the Lost Gardens of Babylon was a Fountain of Immortality, in ancient Greece the gardens were symbols of everlasting and ever renewing fertility, and in ancient Rome memories of a lost paradise. In Islam, Ala is the gardener and according to Saint John of the Cross, God himself is a garden.⁴ If man encounters in the garden an expression of his power over what threatens to escape him- namely inconstancy, that which he himself sublimates to call himself a man-, the maintenance of the garden will be this eternal labor whose passage of time will become inutile. Bruno's Garden takes over, however, while that (between) place that gathers more than it sets apart, in itself, culture and nature, already continually frustrates the human attempts to give order to chaos, impregnating the culture, finally, volubility and instability that are believed to be proper only to what is "savage". If we wanted to approach the Garden that the artist has created from some other garden, perhaps we could do so in relation to the ambiguous way in which the Aztec culture understood it: capable of incorporating, to the same extent, the exuberance for natural beauty and fearful beings and monstrosities.

It is not by chance that the centipede is the only animal in this Garden, whose etymology goes back to both the scolopendra and the scorpion, and to which Bruno gives the form of an aqueduct, from an "m" or an "n" whose legs multiply. Another emblem of civilization, the letter has existed from very early on, like the garden, conceived like an image of something divine on earth, in this case like the materialization of the Word of a god. But the transcendence that the letter permits us is not just in the sense of revelation and luckily does not only lead to an orderly plan, like the paradisiac gardens. Moreover, Bruno's Centipede is not a letter, but an animal. In effect, the origin of the majority of the letters is, besides human gestures, drawings of animals, according to archeological studies, "m" would represent water and "n" a snake. But the fact is that, according to the artist, adding a "leg" to his "m" turns it into vibration, into sound⁵. Ignoring lexical questions and proposing the transcendence of letters, he suggests something more researched, for example, by Dadaist Hugo Ball, namely the taking of the letter while "sound is phonetic, primitive, but abstract, more simply material and concrete, labial and infantile."⁶ One of the first to perform readings aloud of his abstract poems and his poetry of unknown words, Ball sought to renounce language while claiming to return to the most intimate alchemy of the word, spreading finally, the abandonment of language: That the image of man disappears more and more from the painting of our time and that most things exist only by their disintegration, the fact that the human face has become ugly and worn is another omen, and all the objects in our environment, execrable. For reasons of the same order, the fact of poetry leaving language will not take long.⁷

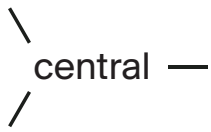
3 Ovunque c'è eccesso c'è male.

4 *Dicionário de símbolos*. CHEVALIER, 2016.

5 Conversation with the artist.

6 *Dada & les dadaïsmes*. DACHY, 2011.

7 BALL, 1916 apud DACHY, 2011.



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The abandonment of language comes, as Bruno proposes, as an urgency that his concrete garden that tends to collapse already pronounces. Perhaps that is why he had sent me the VIII poem of *The People's Rose* by Drummond.

*The poet
Declines all responsibility
In the march of the capitalist world
And with his words, intuitions, symbols, and other weapons
Promises to help
To destroy it
Like a quarry, a forest,
A worm.*

And to which I would like to respond with a passage from *La victoire*, penultimate poem of the Calligrammes, of Apollinaire.

*O mouths, man is looking for a new language
About which the grammarian of any language will have nothing to say
And these old languages are so near dying
That it is really by habit and lack of audacity
That we use them for poetry [...].⁸*

// Marina Câmara

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