

Naturbühne

She is sitting on a narrow bed. A radio can be heard in the background beside her. A desk fan hums. Staring forward blankly, a vague premonition fixes itself in her mind's eye. Time is running out. She stands up, picks up her pants from off the floor and puts them on.

She is lying next to somebody in a wooden bed. They are both wearing white cotton underwear. They have just finished masterbating together and are now breathing deeply. The bedsheets are silky white. The person in the bed next to her says that he is leaving. The air stops moving..

They walk outside, barefoot, through the woods until they arrive at an empty playground at the top of a tall hill where they stop to sit.

She smiles, "I have to tell you, when you showed me the photos from your last project, it was hard for me to keep distance. Since we have kind of a sibling relationship. It made me think of that film we watched, *Days of Heaven*, with the brother and the sister."

He kisses her ear softly. She recalls that existence occurs there, where meaning arises. She listens to the sound of running water from a nearby stream.

"I talked with someone whom I hadn't spoken to in four years", he allows, looking out, off the side of the hill, to the extreme distance.

"What do you have there?", she puts to him suddenly, seeing a bright orange folder in his bag.

"It's a book I ordered for you and wanted to give to you; It's a book about love, which is kind of a topic for you. It was after we had that long talk about love -- when we went to see the goats. I read some of it and thought of you. *Lob der Liebe* by the philosopher Alain Badiou. Have you heard of him? I haven't read it yet, just some parts. It's supposed to be a radical defense of love, which is unusual."

"Would you like an apple?" The summer rolls she'd brought for lunch fall apart in her hands. She offers him her extra pair of socks to wear as gloves as it grows colder and he puts them on, laughing at their lack of thumbs.

She goes deep underground, underneath the university, to make loud noises that nobody can hear. "You know, there are open vowels and there are

closed vowels,” she says didactically, hoping he will acknowledge the difference between them. She performs examples of open and closed vowels.

“Do you believe that restoring the essential *mystery* of the past could keep us from repeating it?”, she asks.

“Maybe recovering the life of forgotten stories can address particular aspects of ourselves that are indeed there, for example, how we indeed have a compulsion to ritualistically repeat acts of violence. By addressing this truth, we regain the agency to choose how we want to perform it: we can choose to perform it symbolically, in the aesthetic realm, so that it doesn’t need to be made concrete.”

“Is that what you’re showing not limited to your perspective?”, she challenges. “Is it not subjective?”

“It’s just that what I’m showing does not belong to any one person, can not entertain being reduced to one individual. It’s ‘outside’ of myself. All of the music I’ve made was an expression of my personal taste. *That* was subjective, in that taste is locked up inside of an individual. But desire, like hope, crosses that gap in lived experience. It’s that reaching out or across, to the other. Maybe ‘universal’ isn’t the right word to describe it.”